



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 22 October 2010

15010/10

**EDUC 176
SOC 662**

NOTE

from: Council General Secretariat
to: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1) / Council

No. prev. doc. : 14321/10 EDUC 154 SOC 597
No. Cion prop.: 11130/10 EDUC 117 SOC 421

Subject: Draft conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-2020
- Adoption

In the course of several meetings, the Education Committee has prepared the above set of draft conclusions with a view to their adoption at the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council on 18-19 November 2010.

The text now meets with the agreement of all delegations, subject only to possible linguistic reservations.

The Permanent Representatives Committee is accordingly invited to confirm the agreement reached in the Education Committee and to forward the text to the Council for adoption and subsequent publication in the Official Journal.

**Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council,
on the priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training
for the period 2011-2020**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

AWARE THAT

1. On 12 November 2002 the Council approved a Resolution on the promotion of enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training¹, which subsequently served as the basis for the declaration adopted by the Ministers responsible for vocational education and training (VET) of the EU Member States, the EFTA/EEA and candidate countries, and by the Commission and the European Social Partners at their meeting in Copenhagen on 29 and 30 November 2002, as the strategy for improving the performance, quality and attractiveness of VET, commonly referred to as the "Copenhagen process".
2. The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning² advises Member States to develop the provision of key competences for all as part of their lifelong learning strategies, in order to offer all young people the means to develop such competences to a level which forms a sufficient basis for further learning and working life.

¹ OJ C 13, 18.01.2003, p. 2.

² OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

3. The Council Resolution of 15 November 2007 on new skills for new jobs³ highlighted the urgency of anticipating future skills needs in order to equip people for new jobs within the knowledge society, by implementing measures which aim at matching knowledge, skills and competences with the needs of the economy and preventing potential skills gaps.
4. The Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning recognised the key role which adult learning can play in meeting the goals of the Lisbon Strategy, by fostering social cohesion, providing citizens with the skills required to find new jobs and helping Europe to better respond to the challenges of globalisation, and invited the Member States to address a series of specific measures relating to adult learning⁴.
5. The Council conclusions of 21 November 2008 on youth mobility⁵ invited Member States to give every young person in vocational education and training the opportunity to participate in a mobility scheme and to increase the opportunities for mobility in the context of VET.
6. The Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008, on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies⁶, emphasised the need to help individuals to identify their existing skills and to define the learning goals required to improve their career prospects.
7. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 12 May 2009⁷ on enhancing partnerships between education and training institutions and social partners, in particular employers, in the context of lifelong learning encouraged Member States actively to promote such partnerships.

³ OJ C 290, 4.12.2007, p. 1.

⁴ OJ C 140, 6.6.2008.

⁵ OJ C 320, 16.12.2008.

⁶ OJ C 319, 13.12.2008.

⁷ Doc. 9876/09.

8. The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET 2020”)⁸ established such cooperation for the period up to 2020 in the context of a framework which spans education and training systems as a whole in a lifelong learning perspective.
9. In its conclusions of 25-26 March 2010 and of 17 June 2010⁹, the European Council laid down two headline targets for education and training in the context of the *Europe 2020* Strategy. It also invited the Commission to present the actions required at EU level to implement that strategy, notably through a number of flagship initiatives.
10. The Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on competences supporting lifelong learning and the ‘new skills for new jobs’ initiative¹⁰, urged Member States to do more to support the acquisition, updating and further development of the full range of competences in the area of vocational education and training, as well as to support the initial and continuing professional development of teachers and trainers in VET, including for the purpose of equipping them to take on the new roles implicit in a competence-based approach.
11. The Council conclusions of 10-11 May 2010 on the social dimension of education and training¹¹ invited the Member States to strengthen the acquisition of key competences through vocational pathways and programmes, and to better address the needs of disadvantaged learners.

⁸ OJ C 119, 28.5.2009.

⁹ Documents EUCO 7/1/10 REV 1 and EUCO 13/1/10 REV 1 respectively.

¹⁰ OJ C 135, 26.5.2010.

¹¹ OJ C 135, 26.5.2010.

EMPHASISE THAT

1. Both initial VET (I-VET) and continuing VET (C-VET) share the dual objective of contributing to employability and economic growth, and of responding to broader societal challenges, in particular promoting social cohesion. They should offer young people, as well as adults, attractive and challenging career opportunities, and should appeal equally to both women and men, to people with high potential and to those who, for whatever reason, face the risk of exclusion from the labour market.
2. The future European labour market will be simultaneously confronted with an ageing population and shrinking cohorts of young people entering initial education and training systems and labour markets. At the same time, it will have to meet the challenges of continuous technological development and changing economic requirements. As a result, adults - and in particular older workers - will increasingly be called upon to update and broaden their skills and competences through continuing VET.
3. The current economic downturn may have a serious effect on investment in VET. Due to budgetary constraints, innovative solutions are required to secure sustainable funding for VET and to ensure that resources are efficiently allocated and equitably distributed.
4. Skills mismatches may impede productivity, growth and competitiveness. It is necessary to anticipate skills needs and shortfalls at all levels of qualification, and to transfer the results into policy and practice, with a view to improving the match between VET provision and the needs of the economy, citizens and society at large.
5. Shaping VET is the shared responsibility of national governments, social partners, employers and other relevant stakeholders, such as sectoral organisations, VET providers, teachers, trainers, and learners: all have a mutual interest in closer cooperation.

6. European and national policies should stress that in the knowledge society vocational skills and competences are just as important as academic skills and competences.
7. Given its role in European societies and economies, it is crucial to sustain and further develop excellence in VET. World class VET is of the utmost importance in sustaining Europe's position as the strongest exporter of industrial products in the world. A high performing VET sector is also very important for maintaining Europe's social welfare model.

ACKNOWLEDGE THAT

The Copenhagen process has played a crucial role in raising awareness of the importance of VET at both European and national level¹². The cooperation developed under the process has led to agreement on common European objectives and targets, discussion of national models and initiatives, and the exchange of best practice at European level. The current economic crisis emphasises even more the importance of VET. However, increased awareness of VET's importance does not necessarily result in additional resources and funds.

European cooperation in VET has brought about significant developments in national policies and led to the creation of important European instruments for transparency, the recognition of qualifications and competences, and quality assurance: Europass¹³, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)¹⁴, the European Credit System for VET (ECVET)¹⁵ and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQAVET)¹⁶.

¹² See 2010 progress reports of Cedefop and ETF.

¹³ Decision No 2241/2004/EC - OJ L 390, 31.12.2004.

¹⁴ See OJ C 111, 6.5.2008.

¹⁵ See OJ C 155, 8.7.2009, p.11.

¹⁶ See OJ C 155, 8.7.2009, p.1.

The European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning supports and promotes the introduction of “comprehensive” national qualifications frameworks which cover general education, VET and higher education and which are based on learning outcomes. By changing the perspective from an input-oriented learning process to learning outcomes, such frameworks create opportunities for lifelong learning and help to achieve a better match with labour market needs. In the majority of countries a tangible shift from input-oriented learning processes to learning outcomes is becoming evident in both policy and practice.

Member States increasingly believe that European tools can support transparent, permeable, flexible and inclusive national qualifications systems. Currently, however, not all available European tools are used to their full potential. Although a European area of education and training is emerging, the original aim of removing obstacles to mobility has not yet been achieved. Learning mobility in VET needs to be further enhanced.

Just as the Copenhagen process enhanced the role of VET under the Lisbon Strategy (2000-2010), the aim of these conclusions should be to help achieve the priorities of the new *Europe 2020* Strategy for jobs and growth and its associated flagship initiatives. VET should also play its part in achieving the two headline targets set in the education field, namely - by 2020 - to increase the percentage of 30-34 year olds that graduate from tertiary or equivalent education to at least 40%, and to reduce the share of early school leavers to below 10 %.

Objectives in the VET field should also remain consistent with the overall objectives and priorities laid down in the "ET2020" strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training. European cooperation under the Copenhagen process should contribute to the development of a European area of education and training, where qualifications acquired in one country are recognised in other European countries, in order to promote the mobility of young people and adults. On the one hand, the diversity of European VET systems is an asset which serves as a basis for mutual learning. On the other hand, transparency and a common approach to quality assurance are required in order to build mutual trust between diverse systems.

AGREE THAT

Cooperation under the Copenhagen process should be given fresh impetus. As the Copenhagen process is an integral part of the "ET2020" strategic framework, objectives in the VET field should remain consistent with the overall objectives laid down in that framework. Furthermore, when reviewing the Copenhagen process, account should be taken of both the experience to date and new challenges, as well as of the evolving political context over the coming decade 2011-2020, particularly in the light of the *Europe 2020 Strategy*.

In full respect of the principle of subsidiarity, the Member States are accordingly invited to consider adoption of the following:

- I. A global vision for VET in 2020;
- II. Strategic objectives for the period 2011-2020, together with a number of supporting transversal objectives;
- III. Principles underlying the governance and ownership of the Copenhagen Process;
- IV. Short-term deliverables for the first four years (2011-2014),

as detailed in sections I to IV below.

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I. A GLOBAL VISION FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN 2020

By 2020, European VET systems should be more attractive, relevant, career-oriented, innovative, accessible and flexible than in 2010, and should contribute to excellence and equity in lifelong learning by providing:

- Attractive and inclusive VET (both I-VET and C-VET), with highly qualified teachers and trainers, innovative learning methods, high-quality infrastructure and facilities, a high labour market relevance, and pathways to further education and training;
- High quality initial VET (I-VET) which learners, parents and society at large may regard as an appealing option, of the same value as general education. I-VET should equip learners with both key competences and specific vocational skills;
- Easily accessible and career-oriented continuing VET (C-VET) for employees, employers, independent entrepreneurs and unemployed people, which facilitates both competence development and career changes;
- Flexible systems of VET, based on a learning outcomes approach, which support flexible learning pathways, which allow permeability between the different education and training subsystems (school education, VET, higher education, adult education) and which cater for the validation of non-formal and informal learning, including competences acquired in the work place;
- A European education and training area, with transparent qualifications systems which enable the transfer and accumulation of learning outcomes, as well as the recognition of qualifications and competences, and which increase transnational mobility;
- Substantially increased opportunities for transnational mobility of VET students and VET professionals;
- Easily accessible and high-quality lifelong information, guidance and counselling services, which form a coherent network and which enable European citizens to take sound decisions and to manage their learning and professional careers beyond traditional gender profiles.

II. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR THE PERIOD 2011-2020

1. IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF VET - ENHANCING ITS ATTRACTIVENESS AND RELEVANCE ¹⁷

VET should have high relevance for the labour market and people's careers. In order to increase the attractiveness of VET, Member States should pursue the following objectives and actions:

1.1. Making I-VET an attractive learning option

- (a) Raise the quality of I-VET (see also 1.2 below), by improving the quality and competences of teachers, trainers and school leaders, introducing flexible pathways between all education levels and increasing public awareness of the possibilities which VET offers. This is of particular importance in Member States where VET tends to be undervalued;
- (b) Encourage practical activities and the provision of high-quality information and guidance which enable young pupils in compulsory education, and their parents, to become acquainted with different vocational trades and career possibilities;
- (c) Ensure that key competences are integrated into I-VET curricula and develop appropriate means of assessment;
- (d) Organise teaching and learning activities which foster the development of career management skills in I-VET;
- (e) Give learners in I-VET access to appropriate up-to-date technical equipment, teaching materials and infrastructures. VET providers should consider sharing costs and equipment amongst themselves and in cooperation with businesses. Work-based learning in enterprises which have the relevant infrastructure should also be promoted;
- (f) Monitor the transition of VET graduates to the labour market or to further education and training, using national monitoring systems.

¹⁷ Corresponding to strategic objective 2 of the "ET2020" framework.

1.2. Fostering the excellence, quality and relevance of both I-VET and C-VET

1.2.1. Quality assurance

- (a) High quality of VET provision is a prerequisite for its attractiveness. In order to guarantee improved quality, increased transparency, mutual trust, the mobility of workers and learners, and lifelong learning, Member States should establish quality assurance frameworks in accordance with the EQAVET Recommendation;
- (b) Member States should - by the end of 2015 - establish at national level a common quality assurance framework for VET providers, which also applies to associated workplace learning and which is compatible with the EQAVET framework.

1.2.2. Quality of teachers, trainers and other VET professionals

- (a) Member States should improve initial and continuing training for teachers, trainers, mentors and counsellors by offering flexible training provision and investment. The ageing European teacher and trainer population, changing labour markets and working environments, together with the need to attract those best suited to teaching, make this objective even more critical. Traineeships for teachers and trainers in enterprises should be encouraged;
- (b) Member States should work together in identifying best practices and guiding principles with respect to changing competences and the profiles of VET teachers and trainers. This could be done with the support of the European Commission and Cedefop, in collaboration with its network of VET teachers and trainers.

1.2.3. Labour market relevance

The labour market relevance of VET (both I-VET and C-VET), and the employability of VET graduates, should be enhanced through various measures:

- (a) Authorities in the Member States - at national, regional, or local level - should create opportunities for enhanced cooperation between schools and enterprises in order to improve teachers' knowledge of work practices on the one hand and trainers' general pedagogical skills and competences on the other;
- (b) Member States should promote partnerships between social partners, enterprises, education and training providers, employment services, public authorities, research organisations and other relevant stakeholders, in order to ensure a better transfer of information on labour market needs and to provide a better match between those needs and the development of knowledge, skills and competences. Employers and social partners should endeavour to clearly define which competences and qualifications they need in both the short and the long term, and within as well as across sectors. The development of a common language¹⁸ aimed at bridging the world of education and training on the one hand, and the world of work on the other hand, should be continued and should be consistent with other EU instruments, such as the EQF;
- (c) VET curricula should be outcome-oriented and more responsive to labour market needs. Cooperation models with companies or professional branch organisations should address this issue and provide VET institutions with feedback on both the employability and employment rates of VET graduates;
- (d) To improve the quality and relevance of VET, Member States, and particularly VET-providers, should make use of feedback from guidance services on the transition of VET graduates to work or to further learning;
- (e) Work-based learning carried out in partnership with businesses and non-profit organisations should become a feature of all initial VET courses;
- (f) Member States should support the development of apprenticeship-type training and raise awareness of this.

¹⁸ Taxonomy of European Skills, Competencies and Occupations (ESCO).

2. MAKING LIFELONG LEARNING AND MOBILITY A REALITY¹⁹

2.1. Enabling flexible access to training and qualifications

2.1.1. With regard to Continuing VET (C-VET)

To enhance the contribution of VET towards reaching the benchmark of 15% of adults participating in education and training by 2020, Member States should:

- (a) Actively encourage individuals to participate, and VET-providers to increase their involvement in C-VET, with a particular focus on people facing transitions within the labour market (such as workers at risk and the unemployed) and on disadvantaged groups;
- (b) Establish an appropriate framework aimed at encouraging companies to continue to invest in human resources development and in C-VET;
- (c) Encourage flexible training arrangements (e-learning, evening courses, training during working hours, etc.) in order to promote access to training in different life situations and to adapt to different needs. Continuing training should embrace all types of learning, also including in-company training and work-based learning, and should be equally accessible to both women and men;
- (d) Encourage training institutions and employers to collaborate, particularly in the training of the high numbers of low-skilled workers who have at most lower-secondary education and who will benefit from approaches where basic skills are embedded in VET;

¹⁹ Corresponding to strategic objective 1 of the "ET2020" framework.

- (e) Start to develop, no later than 2015, national procedures for the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning, supported as appropriate by national qualifications frameworks. These procedures should focus on knowledge, skills and competences, irrespective of the context in which they have been acquired, for example broad adult learning, VET, work-experience and voluntary activities. Greater account should also be taken of knowledge, skills and competences that do not necessarily lead to full formal qualifications. Close cooperation with other policy areas, such as youth, sport, culture, social affairs, employment, is important in this respect;
- (f) Take specific measures to enhance the participation rate in C-VET of people facing transitions within the labour market and of groups with low participation in training, such as women, the low-skilled and older workers. In particular, Member States should seek through investment to bring the number of low-skilled people aged 25-64 years who participate in lifelong learning more into line with average participation rates for that age group.

2.1.2. With regard to both I-VET and C-VET

- (a) Facilitate transitions from education and training to work, and between jobs, by providing integrated guidance services (employment services and counselling services), as well as career management skills, for both young people and adults. It is crucial that the service providers involved are able easily and objectively to exchange information and to develop the quality of guidance services;
- (b) Develop or maintain post-secondary/higher VET at EQF level 5 or higher, as appropriate, and contribute to achieving the EU headline target of 40 % with tertiary or equivalent education;
- (c) Promote flexible pathways between VET, general education and higher education, and enhance permeability by strengthening the links between them. To achieve this aim, as well as greater participation in lifelong learning, Member States should accelerate the establishment and implementation of comprehensive national qualifications frameworks based on learning outcomes;
- (d) The Commission and the Member States should work towards increasing coherence between the two European credit systems - ECVET and ECTS.

2.2. Developing a strategic approach to the internationalisation of I-VET and C-VET and promoting international mobility

- (a) Economic globalisation encourages employers, employees and independent entrepreneurs to extend their scope beyond the borders of their own countries. VET providers should support them in this process by giving an international dimension to the learning content and establishing international networks with partner institutions;
- (b) Member States should encourage local and regional authorities and VET providers – through incentives, funding schemes (including use of the European Structural Funds) and the dissemination of best practices – to develop strategies for cross border cooperation in VET, with the aim of fostering greater mobility of learners, teachers and trainers and other VET professionals. Member States should promote VET that allows, encourages and - preferably - integrates mobility periods, including work placements, abroad;
- (c) Member States should systematically use and promote European transparency tools such as EQF, ECVET and Europass to promote transnational mobility;
- (d) Member States should promote opportunities for language learning for both learners and teachers in VET, and the provision of language training adapted to the specific needs of VET, with a special emphasis on the importance of foreign languages for cross-border cooperation in VET and international mobility.

3. ENHANCING CREATIVITY, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP²⁰

Fostering innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, as well as the use of ICT (in both I-VET and C-VET)

Creativity and innovation in VET, as well as the use of innovative learning methods, can encourage learners to stay in VET until they are qualified. In doing so, VET can contribute to implementing the Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on promoting creativity and innovation²¹.

- (a) Member States should actively encourage VET providers to collaborate with innovative enterprises, design centres, the cultural sector and higher education institutions in forming "knowledge partnerships". This should help them gain valuable insight into new developments and competence needs and to develop professional excellence and innovation. Such partnerships could also be helpful in introducing experience-based learning methods, encouraging experimentation and adapting curricula;
- (b) ICT should be used to maximise access to training and to promote active learning, as well as to develop new methods in both work- and school-based VET;
- (c) Member States should support initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in both I-VET and C-VET in close cooperation with employers, VET providers and national business support services. To achieve this, they should encourage the provision of appropriate funding - e.g. for teaching materials, support tools and the establishment of mini-companies by learners - and should seek to enhance cooperation at regional level;
- (d) Member States should support newly established and future entrepreneurs by encouraging start-ups for VET graduates and by promoting learning mobility for young entrepreneurs.

²⁰ Corresponding to strategic objective 4 of the "ET2020" framework.

²¹ OJ C 141 of 7.6.2008, pp. 17-20.

4. PROMOTING EQUITY, SOCIAL COHESION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP²²

Inclusive I-VET and C-VET

Member States should offer VET which increases people's employability (in both the short and long term), which allows them to develop quality careers, satisfactory work experience, self-confidence, professional pride and integrity and which opens up opportunities for growth in their professional and personal lives. To achieve this objective, Member States should:

- (a) Guarantee that initial VET provides learners with both specific vocational competences and broader key competences, including transversal competences, that enable them to follow further education and training (within VET or in higher education) and to support career choices, participation in and transitions within the labour market. The knowledge, skills and competences which people acquire in VET should enable them to manage their careers and to play an active role in society;
- (b) Make sure that adult learning systems foster the acquisition and further development of key competences. This can be carried out in cooperation with VET providers, local communities, civil society organisations, etc;
- (c) Maximise the contribution of VET to reducing the percentage of early school leavers to below 10% through a combination of both preventive and remedial measures. This can be achieved, for example, through labour market relevant VET, increased work-based learning and apprenticeships, flexible learning pathways, effective guidance and counselling, and by learning content and methods that acknowledge young people's lifestyles and interests, while maintaining high-level quality standards for VET;

²² Corresponding to strategic objective 3 of the "ET2020" framework.

- (d) Take appropriate measures to ensure access on an equal basis, especially for individuals and groups at risk of being excluded, in particular the low-skilled and unskilled, people with special needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds, and older workers. The participation of such groups in VET should be facilitated and encouraged through financial or other means and through the validation of non-formal and informal learning, as well as the provision of flexible pathways;
- (e) Promote active citizenship in VET, for example by encouraging partnerships between VET providers and civil society organisations or, in accordance with national legislation and practice, by promoting learner representation in VET institutions. Promotion of this kind can contribute to the validation of skills and competences acquired through voluntary activities.

5. TRANSVERSAL OBJECTIVES TO SUPPORT THE 4 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- (a) **Greater involvement of VET stakeholders and greater visibility for the achievements of European cooperation in VET** - Greater involvement of VET stakeholders implies greater visibility for the achievements of European cooperation in VET. The European Commission and the Member States should therefore consider investing in clear and targeted communication to different groups of stakeholders at national and European level. In order to facilitate the use of the available EU instruments, learners and all parties involved should receive extensive and tailored information;
- (b) **Coordinated governance of European and national instruments in the areas of transparency, recognition, quality assurance and mobility** - In line with the four strategic objectives, coherent and complementary use of the various European and national instruments in the areas of transparency, recognition, quality assurance and mobility should be a high priority for the Member States in the coming years. Coordinated governance of these instruments under the Copenhagen process and stronger synergy with the instruments and principles of the Bologna process are required;

- (c) **Intensifying cooperation between VET policy and other relevant policy areas** - Member States and the European Commission should intensify cooperation between VET policy and other relevant policy areas, such as employment, economic affairs, research and innovation, social affairs, youth, sport and culture) in order to adhere to the Integrated Guidelines of *Europe 2020* and to enhance the recognition of competences and qualifications;
- (d) **Improving the quality and comparability of data for EU policymaking in VET** - EU level policy-making in VET should be based on existing comparable data. To this end, and using the Lifelong Learning programme, Member States should collect relevant and reliable data on VET – including VET mobility –and make these available for Eurostat. Member States and the Commission should jointly agree on which data should be made available first;
- (e) **Making good use of EU support** - The European Structural Funds and the Lifelong Learning Programme should be used to support the agreed priorities for VET, including international mobility and reforms implemented by the Member States.

III. PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE GOVERNANCE AND OWNERSHIP OF THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS

- Member States should make a strong commitment to implementing the priorities of the Copenhagen process within the *Europe 2020* national reform programmes;
- Reporting under the Copenhagen process should be incorporated into that of the “ET 2020” strategic framework. This would provide the most efficient way of contributing to reporting on the *Europe 2020* Strategy, and would increase the visibility of VET in lifelong learning;
- Cooperation in the area of VET should be intensified. The open method of coordination should continue to serve as the main mechanism for such cooperation. Peer learning and innovative projects should provide means of supporting national policy developments;
- The Directors-General for Vocational Training (DGVT), the European Social Partners and the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training (ACVT) should continue to play an active role in the governance of the Copenhagen process;

- Cedefop and the ETF should continue to support policy development and implementation, to report on progress towards the strategic objectives and the short-term deliverables, and to provide evidence for policy-making in VET;
- VET provider organisations should be encouraged to cooperate at European level with a view to promoting the above objectives;
- Policy dialogues and exchanges of experience with our global partners can contribute to meeting present and future challenges. Exchanges and cooperation with potential candidate countries, with neighbourhood countries assisted by the ETF and with international organisations, particularly the OECD, the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organisation and UNESCO, should be strengthened. The right of participation in these activities should be ensured for all Member States;
- To facilitate the periodical progress reporting by national governments and the social partners, a list of short-term deliverables should be drawn up.

IV. SHORT-TERM DELIVERABLES

2011 – 2014

Using the abovementioned objectives as a basis, and while fully respecting the responsibility of Member States for the organisation and content of their education and training systems, a number of short-term deliverables have been determined for the next four years (2011-2014).²³ These are set out below:

1. IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF VET – ENHANCING ITS ATTRACTIVENESS AND RELEVANCE

1.1. ENHANCING ATTRACTIVENESS AND EXCELLENCE

Actions at national level:

- a) Organise activities aimed at promoting VET attractiveness and excellence, which may include campaigns and skills competitions;
- b) Support activities, which enable young pupils in compulsory education to become acquainted with vocational trades and career possibilities.

Support at EU level:

- Policy document on the role of vocational excellence for smart and sustainable growth;
- Consider European support for VET promotion campaigns, including Eurobarometer on VET attractiveness;
- Encourage skills competitions at European and/or global levels.

²³ Following discussions among the Directors-General for Vocational Training (DGVT) and within the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training (ACVT).

1.2. IMPROVING QUALITY AND RELEVANCE

Actions at national level:

- a) Take adequate measures to implement the EQAVET Recommendation and make progress towards national quality assurance frameworks for VET;
- b) As appropriate, ensure that key competences and career management skills are adequately integrated in I-VET curricula and that they can be acquired through training opportunities in C-VET;
- c) Governments, social partners and VET providers should make the necessary arrangements to:
 - o maximise work-based learning, including apprenticeships, in order to contribute to increasing the number of apprentices in Europe by 2012;
 - o create opportunities for enhanced cooperation between VET institutions and enterprises (profit and non-profit), for example through traineeships for teachers in enterprises;
 - o provide VET institutions with feedback on the employability of VET graduates;
- d) Pursue work on setting-up monitoring systems on transitions from learning to work.

Support at EU level:

- Guidance and technical support for EQAVET implementation;
- Review the implementation of EQAVET at national level in 2013;
- Thematic networking of Quality Assurance projects within the Leonardo da Vinci Programme;
- Vademecum/study on successful work-based learning models (with input from Cedefop);
- Strengthen the anticipation of skills and competences development, notably through skills forecasts (Cedefop) and by setting up European Skills Councils;
- Develop a common language aimed at bridging the world of education & training and the world of work (ESCO), consistent with other EU instruments, such as the EQF;
- Consider the adoption of an EU benchmark for employability on the basis of a Commission proposal;
- Work on best practices and guiding principles with respect to the changing profiles of VET teachers and trainers (together with Cedefop).

2. MAKING LIFELONG LEARNING AND MOBILITY A REALITY

2.1 SUPPORTING LIFELONG LEARNING

Actions at national level:

- a) In order to maximise the contribution of VET to the "ET2020" 15% benchmark on the participation of adults in lifelong learning, review the use of incentives, rights and obligations for all stakeholders involved, and take appropriate action to encourage participation in C-VET;
- b) Implement the EQF Recommendation:
 - o development of comprehensive NQFs based on the learning outcomes approach. Use the NQF as a catalyst for creating more permeability between VET and higher education, for developing or maintaining VET at post-secondary/higher EQF levels, and for realising flexible learning pathways;
 - o referencing NQF levels to EQF levels by 2012;
- c) Develop and promote the use of procedures for the validation of non-formal and informal learning supported by EQF/NQFs and guidance;
- d) Provide integrated (education, training, employment) guidance services closely related with labour market needs;
- e) ECVET implementation: see section 2.2 below.

Support at EU level:

- Policy handbook on access to and participation in C-VET;
- Guidance and technical support for EQF implementation, notably with view to applying a learning outcomes approach;
- Mapping of developments of NQF by CEDEFOP and ETF;
- Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (2011);
- Progress report on the development of lifelong guidance policies, systems and practices - 2011 (CEDEFOP, ETF and ELGPN).

2.2. ENHANCING MOBILITY

Actions at national level:

- a) Progress towards ECVET implementation in line with the Recommendation, and participate in testing ECVET for mobility;
- b) Take appropriate measures to boost mobility in VET, including:
 - Encourage a greater number of I-VET students and VET professionals to participate in transnational mobility;
 - Encourage local and regional authorities, as well as VET providers, to develop an internationalisation culture and internationalisation strategies, including cross-border mobility;
 - Address legal and administrative obstacles related to the transnational mobility of apprentices and trainees;
 - Encourage professional chambers, business organisations and other relevant organisations to support the host and sending enterprises in providing appropriate conditions for apprentices and trainees in transnational mobility;
 - Ensure the provision of language learning and intercultural competences in VET curricula;
 - Make optimal use of other EU tools (e.g. EQF, EQAVET, Europass) for enhancing the mutual recognition of qualifications and competences.

Support at EU level:

- Guidance and technical support for ECVET implementation;
- Periodic review of ECVET implementation (together with Cedefop);
- Thematic networking of ECVET projects within the Leonardo da Vinci programme;
- Recommendation on learning mobility (2011);
- Consider the adoption of an EU benchmark for VET mobility on the basis of a Commission proposal (2011);
- Proposal for a quality framework for traineeships;
- Promote mobility for apprentices, including by means of a support portal, within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme/ Leonardo da Vinci Programme;
- Develop a European skills passport as part of Europass by 2012.

3. ENHANCING CREATIVITY, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Actions at national level:

- a) Encourage partnerships for creativity and innovation (VET providers, higher education institutions, and design, art, research and innovation centres);
- b) Encourage effective and innovative, quality-assured use of technology by all VET providers (including public-private networking and partnerships) supported by the necessary equipment, infrastructure and networks, with continuing improvements that reflect developments in technology and pedagogical understanding;
- c) Take measures to promote entrepreneurship, e.g. by promoting the acquisition of relevant key competences, enabling practical experiences in enterprises, and involving experts from businesses.

Support at EU level:

- Set up an EU-level VET / Business Forum with a focus on the following themes:
 - o role of VET in the knowledge triangle;
 - o transitions from VET to business: how to support VET graduates in starting up enterprises.

4. PROMOTING EQUITY, SOCIAL COHESION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Actions at national level:

- a) Take preventive and remedial measures to maximise the contribution of VET in combating early school leaving;
- b) Consider specific measures aimed at raising the participation of low-skilled and other "at risk" groups in education and training, including by developing flexible pathways in C-VET and using appropriate guidance and support services;
- c) Use ICT to maximise access to training and to promote active learning, as well as to develop new methods in both work- and school-based VET, in order to facilitate the participation of "at risk" groups;
- d) Use existing monitoring systems to support the participation of "at risk" groups in VET: see section 1.2. (d) above.

Support at EU level:

- Vademecum of best practices on inclusion of "at risk" groups through a combination of work-based learning and key competences;
- Council Recommendation on reducing early school leaving (2011).

5. TRANSVERSAL OBJECTIVES, GOVERNANCE AND OWNERSHIP OF THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS

Actions at national level:

- a) Establish communication strategies for different stakeholder groups, focused on implementation and the added value of tools (ECVET, ECTS, referencing of NQFs to EQF, quality assurance systems in line with EQAVET);
- b) Set up structured cooperation mechanisms between VET sector and employment services at all levels (policy and implementation), including the social partners;
- c) Contribute to improving EU level data on I-VET students, including mobility and employability.

Support at EU level:

- Support the achievement of the above objectives through the Lifelong Learning Programme and, where appropriate, the European Structural Funds;
- Support peer-learning between Member States and innovative projects;
- Setting up an enhanced coordination procedure for the implementation of common European tools in the field of education and training;
- European communication strategy on European transparency tools;
- Develop structured cooperation with VET provider associations at EU level;
- Strengthen structured cooperation between the education and training and the employment policy fields;
- Improve EU level data on I-VET students, including mobility and employability;
- Social partners at all levels should continue to play an active role in the Copenhagen process (governance and ownership) and contribute to the realisation of the above mentioned short-term deliverables;
- Report on VET developments in Member States and partner countries;
- Reinforce exchanges with enlargement and neighbourhood countries.

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ACCORDINGLY INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPETENCES, TO

1. Implement measures aimed at:
 - (i) fulfilling the global vision for VET in 2020, as outlined in Section I above;
 - (ii) achieving the strategic objectives for the period 2011- 2020, as described in section II, as well as a number of short-term deliverables for the next 4 years (2011-2014), as proposed in Section IV;
 - (iii) strengthening the governance and ownership of the Copenhagen process in accordance with the principles laid down in Section III.
2. Promote the vision, the objectives and the principles outlined in these conclusions in the broader context of the Copenhagen process, through mutual cooperation between the Member States, regional and local authorities, the Commission, candidate countries, EFTA-EEA countries and the social partners.