Attended events

(May 2016 – March 2017)

# Launch of the new skills agenda for Europe.

Launch event on 20 June 2016, Brussels, Charlemagne Building.

Carine De Smet, EUNEC secretariat, participated at the launch event.

[Keynote speech](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/thyssen/announcements/keynote-speech-launch-event-new-skills-agenda-europe-brussels_en) by Commissioner Marianne Thyssen

It is the first time a European Commissioner is responsible for skills. Ms Thyssen takes up the engagement to take this responsibility. But it is a transversal concern, and commitment of stakeholders is needed to make the agenda work.

Employability is not a dirty word. Education and training must prepare young people for the labour market. Some challenges are common to all Member States: for example related to skills needed for health workers. We need to act together on these common challenges.

This agenda is different and will have real impact.

It will raise basic skills all over Europe. The Skills Guarantee will enhance basic skills. In practice: Member STates are encouraged to put in place frameworks to assess skills, offer tailored learning.

It will foster stronger cooperation between education and training, businesses and social partners.

It will help to make better use of existing skills across Europe; we cannot avoid to waste available talents. Need for skills recognition.

Key note by Farid Tabarki, founding director of Studio Zeitgeist and columnist in ‘Het Financieele Dagblad’. Author of ‘The end of the middle. What a society of extremes means to people, businesses and government’. Member of Platform Onderwijs 2032 in the Netherlands.

Mr Tabarki draws the picture of the changing society, where everybody is connected. The pyramid model of society (centralization) is being replaced by a transparent world; we are melting to a different kind of society, from a very structured system towards ‘the liquid society’. (The liquid modernity, by Zygmunt Bauman), with two inmportant rules: change is the only permanence and uncertainty is the only certainty. What are the implications for skills? Finding ones talents will be the main goal of education. Knowing yourself is important. Civic and social skills will become extremely important. In a liquid society, you need more ‘feminin’ skils than masculin skills (were needed in the well structured society). Need for more entrepreneurial skills, need to take risk!

Interactive panel, opened by Tibo Navracsics, commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

Panel with Mr Bartolo, minister for Education and Employment in Malta; Mr Michel Servoz, DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission; Ms Jazlowiecka, Vice-Chair of Employment and Social Affairs Committee, European Parliament; Ms Martine Recherts, DG EAC, European Commission; Mr Andreas Schleicher, Director Education and Skills OECD, Ms Lowri Evan, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SME’s, European Commission.

One of the conclusions: We don’t need changes in bits and pieces: education has to be reinvented completely. We have failed, we have to find new ways of living together; it starts at young age, it starts with education.

# The European Education, Training and Youth Forum

Brussels, 20-21 October 2016

The European Education, Training and Youth Forum is an annual event which brings together key stakeholders in education, training and youth.

This year's Forum focused on how to best deliver on the New Skills Agenda for Europe adopted by the Commission on 10 June 2016. EUNEC president Manuel Miguéns participated at the Forum.

The Forum opened with a panel with representatives from the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council, who outlined the main aims and actions of the New Skills Agenda. The second panel was an interactive discussion among stakeholders on the [Ten Actions](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-2039_en.htm) covered by the [New Skills Agenda](http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15621&langId=en) and included a system of online voting to allow participants to map their expectations and pose questions on specific initiatives. The Forum program included interactive and innovative workshops where participants had the opportunity to contribute to upcoming initiatives and discuss implementation of announced actions. The closing panel looked ahead on how to take forward the conclusions of the Forum for delivery of the New Skills Agenda.

[Programme](http://ec.europa.eu/education/forum_en#programme)

[Report](http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20161028-views-from-education-training-youth-forum_en?newsletter_id=253&utm_source=eac_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EAC%20&utm_content=Views%20from%20the%20European%20Education,%20Training%20and%20Youth%20Forum&lang=en)

# The Slovak Presidency: a step forward for adult education

Vleva (Liaison Agency Flanders – Europe), 8 November 2016

Carine De Smet, EUNEC secretariat, participated at this event

## Why a skills guarantee?

Paul Holdsworth, team leader skills for adults, DG EMPL, European Commission

The reasons why the Commission is working on this skills guarantee, are the wider consequences of low skills, for the individual and for society.

For the individual:

* Less chance of employment, less rewarding jobs, poverty risks;
* Less adaptability;
* Less participation in lifelong learning;
* More socially excluded;
* Poorer health;
* Lower civic participation;
* Less trust in state.

For society:

* Less economic growth;
* Less social cohesion, less effective integration policies;
* Poor democratic life;
* Higher regional disparities.

Moreover, there is a massive gap between the amount of adults with a need for education, and the percentage of low skilled that actually participate in formal, non-formal or informal education.

Analysis shows that there is limited provision of outreach, of guidance and of individualized support. Provision is hardly tailored to the individual adult, and flexibility of access and provision is limited.

**Building blocks of the proposal:**

* Good practices from member states;
* Data on basic skills (pisa, piaac, …);
* Academic research.

**What is this proposed skills guarantee?**

The target group are adults without upper secondary education, not eligible for the Youth Guarantee; the aim is to work on their literacy, numeracy and digital skills and to reach EQF level 4.

**Three step approach:**

* A chance of skills assessment for everybody;
* A tailored offer of education/training, filling the gaps;
* Validation and recognition.

## Education Priorities of the Slovak EU Presidency and state of affairs of the Skills Guarantee

Ivan Hromada, Head of unit Education, Youth, Sport, Research at the Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU.

*The Slovak Presidency*

The motto of the Slovak Presidency is fostering and development of talent. Key topics in the field of education are:

* Developing the New Skills Agenda for Europe (revision EQF recommendation; proposal Skills Guarantee recommendation; Europass decision; skills for labour market as well as skills for life);
* Fostering and development of talent (flagship conference in Bratislava on 12-13 September 2016; ministerial debate on November Council)
* Supporting the prevention of radicalisation.

*State of affairs of the Skills Guarantee*

The European Commission has made the proposal for Skills Guarantee; the Education Committee has worked hard on the proposal, leading to some amendments (= compromise). This is still a working document. The final document has to be approved by the ministers in November. These are the most important amendments:

* The title ‘Skills Guarantee’ created problems to most Member States (the word ‘guarantee’ is too strong, certainly for a measure with no additional budget; it also would give the impression of legal implications, and this frightened Member States); ‘guarantee’ will be replaced by ‘Upskilling pathways: new opportunities for adults’.
* The EQF level 4 was too ambitious for some Member States; now refering to EQF 3 or 4, depending on national circumstances;
* It is left tot he Member STates to identifie priority target groups; Member States also have to outline measures, there is no EU action plan for implementation;
* Commission will take stock by 31 December 2018 in the framework of existing reporting procedures.

## EPALE: the added value for you

Karine Nicolay, EPALE coordinator, EPOS gives a demonstration of the content of the website.

## Intermediate results of the European Project GOAL

Nadia Reynders, Coordinator GOAL at the Flemish Department of Education and Training

Project GOAL is one of the projects under the Erasmus+ programme Key Action 3, prospective initiatives, European Policy Experimentation. GOAL stands for Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners and aims to set up educational guidance services for low educated adults in 6 countries across Europe: Belgium (Flanders), Czech Republic, Iceland, the Netherlands, Lithuania and Slovenia. These educational guidance services will be organised as a policy experiment in which evaluation of the process and the outcomes will play a crucial role. The project is coordinated by the Department of Education and Training, Flanders.

The objective of the project is to test and evaluate educational guidance services for low educated adults to support policy development and implementation.

Interesting slides: the analysis of the ‘clients’ (according to age, education, language, nationality, ..).

## Review of the results of the Dutch Presidency

Jelle Reynaert, counsellor for education and training at the General Representation of the Flemish Government at the Permanent Representaiton of Belgium to the EU

The Dutch colleagues could not complete the foreseen agenda (due to delay in the work of the Commission), which gave room for stocktaking of the educational/political agenda, related to terrorist attacks and refugee crisis.

Education Council meeting 24 February 2016

* Lunch on ‘Education and refugee crisis: contribution of citizenship and language education’
* Adoption of council resolution on promoting social economic development and inclusiveness in the EU through eudcation: the contribution of education and training tot he European Semester. Calls for targeted reforms and investments and for cooperation education – labour market. Education is not only crucial for employment, but also one of the best means for fighting social exclusion.
* Debate on the upcoming Skills Agenda
* Discussion on the follow-up of the 2015 Paris Declaration, on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education.

Education Council meeting 30 May 2016

* Joint lunch with youth ministers on prevention of violent radicalisation;
* Council conclusions on developing media literacy and critical thinking through education and training;
* Debate on modernisation of higher education in Europe.

[Link to all presentations](https://www.vleva.eu/event/vaardighedengarantie)

# Expert meeting on key competences

European Commission, 9 November 2016

Carine De Smet, EUNEC secretariat, and Roos Herpelinck, EUNEC executive committee, represented EUNEC at this expert meeting.

*Key competence review: information by the Commission*

First step in the review process: take a look at the definitions, the text of the existing framework, identify what works and what does not, identify gaps.

Definition 2006: ‘Each competence is a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes. All individuals need these key competences for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. There are basic skills (language, literacy, numeracy and science: foundation for all learning), and transversal skills.

Since 2006, two additional competence frameworks have been developed: for digital and for entrepreneurial competences. Today will not focus on these two competences, as there is already a lot of input.

What do we know about the implementation of the recommendation 2006? Implementation has been uneven on several levels:

* Across countries;
* Across sectors (in schools and youth, less in VET and adult education)
* Across competences (easier implementation for competences related to a subject);
* Implementation in an interdisciplinary manner is difficult.

What do we want to do with this review?

* Continue the paradigm shift from static conception of curricular content to dynamic competences acquisition;
* Clarify and update concepts;
* Strengthen commonly shared understanding of key competences;
* Include skills and attitudes that are not highlighted enough in the 2006 framework.

Timeline:

* Autumn/Winter 2016: prepare process of consultation (ETY Forum, this expert seminar, ET 2020 meetings, drafting consultation paper and questions);
* Spring/Summer 2017: public consultation;
* March 2017: networks conference KeyCoNet, Sirius, …
* Other expert meetings spring/summer 2017;
* Key competences conference in June 2017.
* Proposal for revised key competences framework Autumn/Winter 2017.

*Post-it session:* after short discussion face-to-face with other participants, all participants are asked to write down ‘Today, it is important to …’.

Some conclusions:

* Strong emphasis on the ‘human’ element, personal development;
* Need for update and revision, no big changes need to be proposed;
* Importance of transversal skills;
* Opportunity to share approaches about what has happened in order to move forward.

*Discussion in small groups* (8 persons): participants are asked to talk about direct and indirect experiences in implementation, to identify challenges and suggest tools and processes. Agreement on the fact that the key competences framework is a good instrument: everything is in it, but implementation is the question (need for reform of curricula, of teacher training, …). The framework is ten years old, but far from being implemented in all member countries.

*In the afternoon:* working session one focuses on basic competences, working session two focuses on transversal competences.

# Inclusive and equitable education for all – implementing a universal agenda

Educaid.be annual conference 2016, Brussels, 17 November 2016, 170 participants

Educaid is a national Belgian platform that brings together institutions, organisations and individuals active in the field of education and training within the context of the Belgian Development Cooperation. The platform aims to develop and support Belgian education policies. Educaid.be formulated general considerations and recommendations related to the SDG’s and specific recommendations for ‘Early Childhood and Primary Education’, ‘General Secondary Education’, ‘Development of Technical and Vocational Skills’, ‘Higher Education’ and ‘Basic Education for Young People and Adults’.

## Keynote speech 1: Global Education Monitoring Report 2016: ‘Education for people and planet: creating sustainable futres for all’, by Katarzyna Kubacka

The message is not positive: if the world continues ‘business as usual’, the SDG’s will not be reached by 2030. Some of the goals (for instance universal secondary education) will only be reached by the end of the century. UNESCO insists on the crucial role for education and calls for more sustainable investment.

## Keynote speech 2: ‘The learning generation. Investing in education for a changing world’, by Bridget Crumpton

The presentation focuses on the recommendations by a report published by the ‘International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity’ (in short: the Education Commission), based in Washington. Plead for increasing the international financing for education, and improve its effectiveness. Recommendation also to prove the (long term) cost-effectiveness of education (positive impact on health, peace, democracy, employment …) and to engage all actors in investment mechanisms. Develop global accountability for this learning generation, encourage reporting and advocacy (at international, national, regional level) is an important challenge (Who is accountable to whom for what? This issue is related to the theme of governance in education, EUNEC 2016 in Amsterdam). UNESCO will mobilize pioneer countries to champion recommendations to reform and investment.

## Panel on SDG4, the new paradigm

SDG 4 is to ‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’. It includes 10 targets, to be reached by 2030.

In comparison to the previous MDG goals (Millennium Development Goals 2000-2015), this goal:

* Does not confine itself to primary education;
* Does not just target quantitative criteria, but insists on the quality of the education provided.

Furthermore, SDG 4 is linked to all other SDG’s, especially goal 5 on gender equality, target 8.6 aiming to reduce the proportion of youth not in education, employment or training, and target 13.3 aiming to improve education (…) on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning systems’.

Some highlights from the panel discussion:

* Education is a human right and a public good: governments are in the driving seat, they have this responsibility (there should not be any shifting of the responsibility by the state to private actors);
* Not SDG target will be met if not met by all;
* Capacity of governments and civil society are crucial for progress;
* Teachers play a critical role in achieving SDG 4: need for adequate numbers of highly trained, qualified and motivated teachers at all levels of education, within well-resourced, well-organized systems. ICT is just a tool, the interaction between teacher and pupil cannot be replaced by ICT.
* Shift from focus to access to education for all, to quality education for all.

Presentations and illustrations: <https://www.educaid.be/nl/conference-2016-presentations>

Information on the speakers <https://www.educaid.be/nl/conference-programme-2016>

Pictures <https://www.educaid.be/nl/conference-2016-pictures>