

Newsletter

Education councils in the EU. Balancing expertise, societal input and political control in the production of policy advice

“Customize information in the process and products to the different principals and audiences”

(from the research micro recommendations)

Eunec was created in 2000 as a platform for cooperation between several European education councils to strengthen participative processes at European level.

At the occasion of its 10th anniversary, the network is proud to present the results of a large study on ‘Education Councils in the EU’, realized by the KU Leuven Public Management Institute under the supervision of Prof. Dr. M. Brans and Drs. J. Van Damme, with the support of the Jean Monnet Programme of the European Commission.

The study presents a conceptual model, in which the research team aims to bring together key components and insights of the theoretical framework in a model that can be readily used for analyzing education councils and advisory processes. It contains comparative basic factsheets for a number of education councils in the EU; and it presents the results of an explorative in-depth analysis of six education councils. This stage of the project is built upon detailed interviews within the council, focusing around two pieces of advice,

both selected by the appropriate council, one a self defined ‘success’ and one a self defined ‘failure’.

The conclusions comprise policy recommendations, divided into a meso and a micro dimension. Meso recommendations appeal to the policy actors; micro recommendations are useful for education councils themselves, and outline possible routes and mechanisms for increasing their legitimacy.

Full text of the publication on www.eunec.eu.



EUNEC wishes you all an inspiring 2011!

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Prof. Dr. Marleen Brans at the EUNEC conference in the Flemish Education Council (Vlor)

The Belgian Presidency of the EU: EUNEC takes part

The executive committee of EUNEC has been invited to take part in the conference on **'Quality assurance and transparency as interface between Vocational Education and Training, Schools and Higher Education to enhance mobility and to support easier pathways to lifelong learning'** in Bruges on 6 December.

The keynote speech was presented by Ms Barbara Kelly, Director FETAC (Further Education and Training Awards Council-IE), who also wrote the background paper for this event.

Most of the day was consecrated at workshops. EUNEC represen-

tatives from CEF, Vlor and the Lithuanian Council participated at workshops on the role of learning outcomes and qualification standards in quality assurance; on the involvement of stakeholders; on self evaluation and internal quality assurance.

Conclusions of the conference were presented by Ms Hélène Clark, Director of the LLL Programme at the European Commission, and by Ms Micheline Scheys, Secretary General of the Department of Education and Training at the Flemish Ministry.

Read more on www.education2010.be.



"Education is too important to be left solely to the educators."

Francis Keppel

"The European Commission should support Member States to further develop and integrate their systems by facilitating cross-sectoral cooperation and exchanges of good practice."

Barbara Kelly



EUNEC executive committee meeting in Brussels (3 December 2010)

At the executive committee meeting, EUNEC members mainly prepared the three year application for a Jean Monnet grant and discussed the work programme and the budget for the next three years.

The network will continue to focus on the **critical conditions of participative policy making** and concentrate on the dissemination of the results of the study on education councils in the EU, trying to stimulate the debate on the research recommendations.

In May 2011, the Hungarian Education Council will host a seminar on the theme of **'New**

skills for jobs. An opportunity for modernization of VET?', in Budapest.

In October 2011, EUNEC will organize a conference on the theme of **'Bildung and converging competences for Lifelong Learning'**. The Portuguese Education Council kindly accepted to host the conference, that will take place in Lisbon.

During the last few years, the network improved its communication strategy; we intend to elaborate our communication tools, in particular our website.

Another important agenda item is the work on the statutes; the

discussions in this working group are still ongoing. At the moment, EUNEC members realize that, considering a change of the network statutes, we first have to reconsider the definition of the mission of our network. The working group will continue the debate and present a proposal to the next executive committee meeting, to be held in Budapest in May 2011.

Members discussed the main policy lines in education and training in Europe, and reported on the events they attended as representatives of the network.

Minutes of the meeting at www.eunec.eu.

EUNEC anniversary conference on 1-2-3 December in Brussels

The conference on **'Participation and stakeholder involvement in education policy making'** was hosted by two Belgian education councils. EUNEC welcomed more than 50 participants, coming from 15 different European countries.

The first day of the conference took place in the **Flemish Education Council**; EUNEC was honoured to welcome Pascal Smet, Flemish Minister of Education, Youth and Equal Opportunities, and presiding the European Council during the Belgian Presidency. Participants discussed the results and the recommendations of the study on education councils in the EU.

In the evening, the conference participants were received at the Brussels city hall and had the opportunity to visit the Magritte museum.

The second day, at the **'Conseil de l'Education et de la Formation'** (French Community) focused on trends in participative decision making. For infor-

mation on trends on European level, we invited Mr Pierre Mairesse, Director DG EAC. He was represented by Ms Lucie Davoine from Unit LLL: contribution to the Lisbon process. Ms Gina Ebner, president of EUCIS-LLL, explained how this civil society organization sees participation of stakeholders at EU level. For the national level, five representatives of our member councils illustrated how stakeholder participation is realized in their country.

We were glad to welcome finally Mr Pasi Sahlberg, from the University of Helsinki and Oulu in Finland. Due to a strike at Helsinki airport, our key note speaker had to be scheduled later in the afternoon. His contribution on 'Global educational reform movement and national educational change' was worth waiting for.

The third day of the conference, Ms Simone Barthel, president of EUNEC, presented an overview of ten years of EUNEC work: an impressive series of debates, events and statements, and lots

of warm memories of cooperation and friendship between members from all over Europe.

Finally, Mr Manuel Miguéns, secretary general of the Portuguese Council, interviewed the past and actual presidents of the network, together with Mr Domenico Lenarduzzi, one of the founding fathers of EUNEC and honorary director of the European Commission. They reflected on past and actual challenges, and looked ahead to the future.

All presentations are on www.eunec.eu. A full report of the conference will be available in early 2011.

For more information about this event, please contact eunec@vlor.be.



EUNEC general secretary Mia Douterlungne and Pascal Smet, Flemish Minister of Education



Interview with past and present presidents and Domenico Lenarduzzi

"Co-operation and networking rather than competition and disconnectedness should lead the education policies and development of education systems"

Pasi Sahlberg

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Overview of main policy lines in education and training

At the Executive Committee meeting of 3 December in Brussels, the EUNEC secretariat presented a new overview of recent developments in policy lines in education and training in Europe.

This document contains summaries and links to European policy lines. You find information about the new work programme of the European Commission for 2011, and the Conclusions of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council of 18-19 November 2010: Conclusions on priorities for enhanced European cooperation in VET for 2011-2020; on Youth on the Move; on increasing the level of basic skills in the context of European cooperation on schools for the 21st century; and on education for sustainable development.

Furthermore, the document provides information on new policy lines in specific fields within education and training: Focus on the communication from the European Commission on 'An Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment'.

In other relevant policy domains, there is much attention for the Youth on the Move initiative, with a proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning mobility and a Council Resolution on youth work. In the field of employment, we mention the report on recent developments in the EU27 labour market for young people.

The document also gives an overview of recent international studies and reports on a variety of subjects, amongst others: induction programmes

for teachers; improving health and social cohesion through education; the nature of learning. Recent OECD publications are presented: Education at a glance 2010; Trends shaping education 2010; Education today 2010.

Finally, we highlight the results of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), investigating the ways in which young people are prepared to undertake their roles as citizens in a range of countries.

Read the full document with relevant links on www.eunec.eu

EUNEC participates at international events

Simone Barthel, president of EUNEC, and Carine De Smet (Vlor) witnessed testimonials of experiences at the **15th anniversary conference of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme**, in Brussels (9 November).

We were at the **Lifelong Learning Infodays** in Brussels, on 15 November, to collect useful information on the priorities of the 2011 call; we had the opportunity to talk to the key players of the LLL programme and to other participants organising projects.

Mia Douterlungne, EUNEC general secretary, represented the network at the conference on **'Promoting Active Learning and Ageing of Disadvantaged Seniors'** at the European Parliament, on 16 November. Current trends on mature and older adult education were presented.

Finally, EUNEC participated at the colloquium on **'Youth Education to Labour Market transitions'**, organised under the Belgian Presidency of the EU on 29-30 November.



EUNEC representatives from Northern Ireland, Lithuania and Hungary