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Attended events October 2013 – May 2014

1. **Presentation of the European Commission Communication ‘European Higher Education in the World’**

By Mr Harald Hartung, European Commission, DG EAC (Brussels, Vlor, 5 December 2013)

Why an internationalization strategy at EU-level?

The EU hosts about 45 % of all the international students; this percentage seems to stay the same in spite of the changes in mobility flows. What changes is the approach: students are more and more the ones in the driving seat: universities will have to adapt their offer to the students’ needs in order to stay competitive. Employers see a lack of transversal skills with the graduates (communication skills, problem solving skills, team working). Those are exactly the skills that students develop when they leave their home environment. Students with international experience have more chances on the labour market.

Pillars of a comprehensive internationalization strategy

* International mobility

International mobility for students, staff and researchers; two-way mobility schemes; quality framework; more supportive visa procedures.

* Internationalization of curriucula and digital learning

The aim is to put expertise together.

Need for a certain level of mastery of the language of instruction for students (B1) and for staff (B2).

ICT, OER (Open Educational Resources) and MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) will radically change the work of universities. Experiences of blended learning (MOOC combined with the presence of a teacher to explain) proof to be successful. MOOC started originally in Germany, and is now developing fast in the US. Positions in the EU are mixed. In any case, the EU has to explore benefits and possibilities of MOOC’s, including the challenges (copyright, quality insurance, recognition..) in order not to miss the train.

* Strategic cooperation and partnerships

The aim is to develop joint and double degree programmes, which are very rewarding. Focus also on international training opportunities with employers.

Toolbox for the implementation of this strategy

Programmes

* Erasmus +
* Marie Slodowska-Curie
* EIT

Actions

* Credit mobility
* Joint master en PhD degree
* Strategic partnerships
* Knowledge alliances
* Capacity building (cooperation with third country universities)
* Policy support

Mr Hartung also pleads for strategic cooperation with alumni and for good use of U-Multirank (a search tool at the disposal of EU stakeholders: students, staff, enterprises).

[Ppt of Mr Hartung](http://www.eunec.eu/sites/www.eunec.eu/files/attachment/files/doc_057_ehe_world_hh_05_12_2013.pdf)

1. **Presentation of the Education and Training Monitor 2013**

By Mr Stan Van Alphen, European Commission, DG EAC (Brussels, executive committee meeting, 11 December 2013)

[Ppt of Mr Van Alpen](http://www.eunec.eu/sites/www.eunec.eu/files/management/attachments/doc_061monitor_handout.pdf)

1. **Presentation of the OECD REPORT ‘**[**Art for Art's Sake? The Impact of Arts Education**](http://www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/arts.htm)**’.**

By Mr Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, co-author of the report.

Brussels, 12 December 2013

This report gives an overview of what is known by scientific research about the impact of arts education on the development on non-artistic competences (maths, language, social competences). Besides, it is an explicit plead in favour of the intrinsic value of arts education.

[Ppt of Mr Vincent-Lancrin](http://www.vlor.be/sites/www.vlor.be/files/brussels_-_arts_education_-_december_2013.pdf)

1. **Bigger schools, better governance?**

Brussels, 14 March 2014

This round table has been organized by OVSG (Education Secretariat of Cities and Commuites of the Flemish Community) and by Vleva, the Flemish-European Liaison Office.

In Flanders, in May 2013, the proposals has been launched to set up local school groups with on average 6000 pupils. The round table was structured around the following questions:

* Are bigger schools key for more efficient governance?
* Do bigger schools offer a better educational offer than smaller schools?
* Is human resources managements and management of infrastructure more efficient at a bigger scale?
* What is the role of local authorities?

Educational experts from the Netherlands, Scotland, Flanders and Sweden presented their policy practice.

[Programme, pictures and presentations](http://www.vleva.eu/event/bigger-schools-better-governance)

1. **Digital wave: supporting a cultural shift in learning systems?**

Policy debate, organized by EUCIS LLL, European Parliament, Brussels, 4 March 2014

This policy debate takes stock of the latest European policy developments in the field of new technologies and lifelong learning, and deepens the reflection on the direction to take in 2014 onwards. The 2013 Commission Communication on “Opening Up Education” as well as the recent actions undertaken in the framework of the Digital Agenda are discussed, as well as several key questions: will new technologies really support a cultural shift in the way we teach and learn in Europe? How to make sure more accessible learning opportunities and quality standards go hand in hand? To prepare the debate, participants were invited to consult EUCIS-LLL [position paper](http://www.eucis-lll.eu/news/eucis-lll-news/eucis-lll-position-on-opening-up-education-maintreaming-and-priorizing-digital-access-in-lll/?utm_source=EUCIS-LLL+general&utm_campaign=a21bd2a326-EUCIS_LLL_newsletter_57_Aprilr_20129_28_2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f4e5c60751-a21bd2a326-9697749) on the topic.

[Webpage of the event](http://www.eucis-lll.eu/events/past-public-hearings/policy-debate-digital-wave-supporting-a-cultural-shift-in-learning-systems-4-march-ep/?utm_source=EUCIS-LLL%20general&utm_campaign=a21bd2a326-EUCIS_LLL_newsletter_57_Aprilr_20129_28_2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f4e5c60751-a21bd2a326-9697749)

1. **Training session on Erasmus+**

Brussels, 5 March 2014

Organized by EUCIS LLL, Brussels, 5 March 2014

Erasmus + in practice: seizing the opportunities for civil society

The session focused on success factors and on the place given to European civil society organisations in the new programme. Presentations by

* Trine Jakobson, Deputy Head of Unit ‘Programme Coordination Erasmus +’
* Suzy Vercammen, AEF- Europe
* Audrey Frith, director of EUCIS LLL
* Thierry Dufour, Bureau International Jeunes Bruxelles
* Renilde Reynders, EPOS

Information on strategic partnerships, assessed by the national agencies:

* If a EU-wide organization applies for a strategic partnership, this application will be judged more severely than an application by a small partner (proportionality)
* There is a very limited budget for strategic partnerships. In Belgium, there is room for maybe three or four partnerships. (total budget in Flanders = 460.000 euro). Advice: apply for a strategic partnership in another EU country (as a lot of EU wide organizations are based in Brussel, and competition is tough). Apply in the country of one of the branch organizations.
* The budget enhanced with 40 %, but over the 7 years. The first year, the increase is very limited. After one year, the Commission will decide on increases, based on, amongst other things, the number of applications.
* National agencies don’t have the expertise to assess applications of bigger EU-wide projects. They need training, they don’t acquire extra staff or budget. They will have to organize training for their experts, as well as for the selected beneficiaries.
* To have a quality application does not guarantee funding. Some applications received 85 % by the experts, and still were not selected because of limited budget.

Success factors for applications (decentralized and centralized)

* Be clear and be coherent;
* Strong link with ET 2020 and Europe 2020: demonstrate how the WP will realize the EU objectives (pages 26 and 27 of the programme guide)
* Be excellent
* Prove impact; try to find ways to prove impact through measurable indicators
* Insist on the needs: WHY do you want money
* Be unique: don’t repeat what others do, check the compendia
* Be realistic in terms of staff
* Address equity and inclusion
* Have a clear communication plan
* Use the logo of the programme for website, flyer, publications, .. The European Commission asked the Agencies to be more strict on this point

1. **Stakeholder meeting SIRIUS Vlor, 19/3/2014**

Brussels, Flemish Education Council, 19 March 2014

The increased representation of people with a migrant background amongst education stakeholders in European schools is an important issue to the SIRIUS European policy network, and was highlighted as a common objective amongst the Brussels stakeholders in a SIRIUS meeting that took place in March 2013.

This is an important topic as immigrants and their descendants are under-represented in the education sector and in the organisations that influence school and education policy. Increased diversity within school leadership/staff/parental organisations will not only improve the attitudes of the native population, but also the outcomes of the students with a migrant background. Furthermore, it will increase the involvement of the immigrant community and improve social integration in general.

The main objective for this meeting is to discuss practical and policy measures on how to effectively increase the diversity among educational practitioners in order to develop recommendations informing European and national policy makers about concrete steps to achieve these aims.

[Report, summary, agenda, participants’ list and presentations](http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/the-face-of-diversity-how-to-increase-the-representation-of-people-with-a-migrant-background-in-education-stakeholder-meeting-report/)

1. **European Commission Stakeholder Group on Early School Leaving and on Early Childhood Education and Care**

Brussels, 31 March 2014

Meeting of the stakeholder group on school policy

Brussels, 31 March 2014

This is the new name of the stakeholder group on early childhood education and care and on early school leaving.

Presentations by Nora Milotay, coordinator of the thematic working group on ECEC and Annalisa Cannoni, coordinator of the thematic working group on ESL.

Introduction by the head of unit

The reason of being of this ‘school policy’ group is the objective to enhance the cooperation in the field of school education (a kind of Bologna or Copenhagen for school education).

In all the activities, there is an important focus on migration issues. Amongst the participants, there are a lot of representatives of Roma and migrant organizations.

Towards a European Quality Framework in Early Childhood Education and Care

Annexed: DOC 015, ppt presentation

The work of the thematic working group on ECEC resulted in a number of statement related to access, workforce, curriculum, evaluation and monitoring, governance and funding. All the statements are in the annexed presentation.

Next steps: There will be a stakeholders consultation on ECEC, and this will probably be one of the priorities of the Italian Presidency of the EU.

Update on most recent developments in ESL and Teacher Education (TE)

Annexed: DOC 016, ppt presentation

The final report of the Thematic Working Group on ESL is presented (DOC 017), as well as the two reports of the Thematic Working Group on ‘Teacher Professional Development’: ‘Supporting teacher educators for better learning outcomes’ (DOC 018) and ‘Supporting teacher competence development for better learning outcomes’ (DOC 019).

Plenary discussion on possible contribution of stakeholders

Bottom line of the discussion: participation of stakeholders offers benefits for all: stakeholders benefit from the support of the Commission; the Commission benefits from the input by the stakeholders.

How does the European Commission see further involvement of stakeholders? The Commission wants the cooperation with stakeholders to be very concrete, and take stakeholders viewpoints to the discussions at Council level. Stakeholders are the eyes of the Community to the reality. Build more structured interaction with stakeholders is an important concern for the European Commission.

For this Working Group, the Commission will try to enhance the interaction via Synapse. The Commission wanted Synapse to be a real communication tool between the Commission, members of the Thematic Working Group and members of the Stakeholders Working Group. But the names of the members of the Thematic Working Group cannot be published, so it is difficult to open Synapse to TWG and SG group members. The Commission is working to resolve this logistical problem. They will also look into the development of new and better online communication tools.

Presentation of Erasmus +

By Katerina Kapounova

Apart from technical information, Mrs Kapounova stresses the increased importance of the link of the funded actions and projects with EU policy lines.