

ETUC and ETUCE position on ET2020

to the meeting with DG EAC of 5 June, 2014

[Education and Training 2020 strategic framework](#) was set up in 2009 based on headline targets and benchmarks. Two of its benchmarks were put into the overall EU2020 strategy in 2010 (higher education attendance, early school leaving). The *Country Specific Recommendations of the European Semester Process* are based on these targets:

4 strategic objectives:

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality
2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training
3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship
4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, use of ICT, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

Member States agreed on the following *five benchmarks*:

1. **Adult participation in lifelong learning:** By 2020, an average of at least 15 % of adults should participate in lifelong learning
2. **Low achievers in basic skills:** By 2020, the share of low-achieving 15-years olds in reading, mathematics and science (3) should be less than 15 %
3. **Tertiary level attainment:** By 2020, the share of 30-34 year olds with tertiary educational attainment (4) should be at least 40 %
4. **Early leavers** from education and training: By 2020, the share of early leavers from education and training (5) should be less than 10 %.
5. **Early childhood education:** By 2020, at least 95 % of children between 4 years old and the age for starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education

Our suggestions

General analysis

1. The strategies set up in 2009 were referring to well-developed economies/societies/labour markets, which have been strongly undermined by the crisis.
2. Targets and benchmarks in the ET2020 strategy should be made coherent with the ones in the EU2020 strategy, since in their previous version they have been adopted in different moments and contexts.

Transversal objectives

1. ET strategies and priorities should be **integrated in the Economic governance/European Semester process**

2. European and national level **social partners should be included in partnerships agreements and contractual arrangements** between the EC and the MS
3. **Proper social/structured dialogue** should be set both at EU and national level, to implement such strategies/priorities. **Proper involvement of social partners at all levels** (EU, national, local, sectoral) should be ensured, in the different fields and activities (setting/implementation/monitoring); social partners contribution/role should be **explicitly mentioned in the different strategies**
4. Social partners involvement in setting/implementing/monitoring the strategies/priorities/short-term deliverable at national level is a key issue: the **lack of involvement can undermine the process** and make SP contribution to the current consultations more difficult

We wish to add the following to the main objectives:

1. Ensure proper social partners' involvement in all the stages of implementation of the strategic objectives, at all levels. Strengthen national and European-level social dialogue on the design and implementation of education and training policies.
2. Ensure appropriate sustainable funding to modernising ET, increase national public spending for ET.
3. Two new additional priorities should be added, corresponding better to the changed economic and social situation: Quality Assurance and Employability.

New benchmarks to be added to the existing ones:

They should be linked to existing problems, such as quality learning and teaching, funding education and training, obstacles to transition from ET to further learning and to the labour market, lack of employability among youth, workers and adults, level of low skilled adults:

1. Increase the average of young people participating in **apprenticeships and work-based learning** schemes up to (? %)
2. Increase the average of workers participating in **workplace learning** and adults participating in **CVET and lifelong learning** up to (? %)
3. Decrease the average of EU working age population with **low literacy and low numeracy skills** from 20% to 5% (see [PIAAC results](#))
4. Decrease the average of EU working age population having **low ICT skills** from 25% to 5% (see [PIAAC results](#))
5. Increase the average of EU population participating in ET paths linked to **innovative and transversal skills**
6. Increase and sustain **investment in education and training**.
7. **Increase number of quality educated teachers** in all forms and sectors of education. Ensure high quality induction phase and continuous professional development for teachers at all levels and in all sectors of education and training. Minimum 10 % of the working time of teachers in all education sectors should be spent on continuous professional development.
8. **Ensure proper social partners' involvement** in all the stages of implementation of the strategic objectives, at all levels. Strengthen national and European-level social dialogue on the design and implementation of education and training policies.

Additional strategic objectives

The existing 4 strategic objectives can be confirmed, but they should be better adapted to the current context and the actual needs of learners, and declined through additional and clearer thematic objectives:

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality

1.1 Lifelong learning strategies original sub-heading should be kept but adding the following:

- Improvement of teaching the 8 key competences, especially the “learning to learn” competence, taken into consideration the PIAAC results
- Integrate CVET, adult learning and workplace learning in the lifelong learning strategies.

1.2 European reference tools original subheading should be kept, but establishment of the European Area for Skills and Qualifications should be highlighted, as a tool which would simplify all existing EU transparency, qualifications and transparency tools for the understanding and use of the citizens, education and training actors, social partners.

1.3 Learning mobility original subheading should be kept and to add:

- Ensure full recognition of diplomas, certificates, skills and competences (formal, non-formal and informal) by the employers and between education institutions and agencies, e.g. Teacher Councils
- Ensure social partners involvement in improving recognition paths both in the labour market and at workplace level.

1.4 Additional objective to be added: Ensure further learning and employability through proper transfer and recognised pathways.

2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

2.1 Basic skills (literacy, mathematics, science and technology), languages original sub-heading should be kept but adding the following:

Improve learning and teaching of 8 key competences and basic skills with equal importance

2.2 Professional development of teachers, trainers and school leaders original sub-heading should be kept but adding the following: quality of teaching, attractiveness, recruitment and retention of the teaching profession in all education sectors should be ensured with appropriate working and learning environment.

Gender equality among teachers in all education sectors should be achieved.

2.3 Modernising/Optimising higher education and increasing tertiary attainment levels original sub-heading should be kept but adding the following:

Improve relevance of higher education studies to employment and further improvement of 8 key competences.

2.4 Attractiveness and relevance of VET original sub-heading should be kept but adding the

following:

- Improve quality and attractiveness of initial and continuous VET and workplace learning, adult participation in lifelong learning
- Improve the number and quality provision of apprenticeships and dual systems to increase employability rate of young people via implementing European Alliance for Apprenticeship, Quality Framework for Traineeship and Youth Guarantee scheme), continuous VET/workplace learning/adult learning to up-skill/retrain workers and increase their employability (set up a European Alliance for Workplace Learning)
- Identify transparent definitions and set up proper quality frameworks for adult learning, apprenticeships and dual systems, and workplace learning and CVET

2.5 Efficient funding and evaluation original sub-heading should be kept but adding the following:

Member states must ensure sustainable funding to education and training

2.6 Additional title to be added: **Improve paths and systems to improve quality assurance, guidance and counselling**

3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship

3.1 Early School Leaving

3.2 Early childhood education and care (ECEC) original sub-heading should be kept but added the following: Free access to high quality ECEC facilities for all children should be ensured and staff should have proper teacher education **at master level.**

3.3 Equity and diversity original sub-heading should be kept but added the following:

- Equality in the teaching profession should be achieved: attracting men into ECE and general education, and increasing number of women into school leadership and HE teaching and research.
- Ensure equal access to ET, and permeability between the different education and training paths. Define specific actions for disadvantage people

4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

4.1 Partnerships with business, research, civil society original sub-heading should be kept but added the following:

- a) **Partnerships with SOCIAL PARTNERS, business, research, civil society**
- b) Strengthen national and European-level social dialogue on the design and implementation of education and training policies

4.2 Transversal key competences, entrepreneurship education, e-literacy, media literacy, innovative learning environments original sub-heading should be kept but Transversal skills should be mentioned under point 1

To be added here the following:

- c) **Modernising ET** *via Transversal key competences, entrepreneurship education, e-literacy, media literacy, innovative learning environments*
- d) Ensure opening up of and innovation in ET
- e) Fully exploit the potential of new technologies in ET, spread ET paths on new technologies