

24 and 25 March 2010

Education – Business Forum

Thematic Forum on School-Business Cooperation

In February 2008 the University - Business Forum was launched as a European platform for dialogue between stakeholders from business and higher education. Its activities since then have stimulated knowledge transfer, facilitated the exchange of good practice throughout Europe and have led to long-term partnerships. Its success has resulted in a proposal to extend the scope of cooperation between education and business to other levels of education, particularly to schools.

School - business cooperation has been taking place for several decades and became popular from the 1980s onwards. One of the main triggers was the high rate of youth unemployment. Increasing the employability of young people and improving transition from school to work led to many initiatives at local, regional and national level. Work placements, visits to companies and career guidance were the most frequent measures taken. The interest of business in this form of cooperation was the ability to meet potential future recruits and to improve their public relations and cooperation with local community, but also to adapt their initial training programmes for newcomers.

School – business cooperation has also developed in broader ways, which no longer focus only on one-off events and measures. In effect they foster changes in the education system and address educational standards, new skills and competences, teaching styles and the organisation of teaching and learning in schools. This is perhaps most widespread in mathematics, science and technology. It also takes other forms such as mini-companies at schools, entrepreneurship education and business related school projects.

But although many initiatives have led to well established cooperation schemes, the exchange of good practice, the identification of success factors and quality indicators, and evaluations and impact assessment are still scarce. The Thematic Forum on School – Business Cooperation aims to start the exchange of experience and good practices at the European level. Instead of addressing school-business cooperation in all its facets, it will focus on four main topics: MST, transversal competences, motivating and guiding school students and teacher education.

The objective of this conference is to highlight and explore some of the best of what's being done in this field in Europe, to learn from each other's experiences, and to identify ways in which the EU can support the development of high-quality school-business initiatives in the future.

24 March 2010

10:45	Opening - Odile Quintin , Director-General DG Education and Culture
11:15	Keynote speech 1 – business perspective
	Jan-Eric Sundgren (SE), Senior Vice President of AB Volvo, convenor of the working group on societal changes of the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT).
11:45	Keynote speech 2 – school education perspective
	Frank Vandenbroucke (BE), Member of the Flemish Parliament and Minister of State, former Flemish Minister of Work, Education and Training and vice Minister President in the Flemish Government and former Federal Minister of Social Affairs and Pensions.
12:15	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00	Topic I: Maths, science and technology
	<p>Schools, business people and policy makers realise that it is essential for sustainable economic growth in Europe to increase young people's interest in MST. Many initiatives have been taken to increase school – business cooperation in order to reach this goal. Through 'peer learning' facilitated by the Commission, the Member States have developed a Compendium of Good Practices in MST teaching and learning. A high-level expert group chaired by Michel Rocard identified the importance of inquiry based science education, which could raise the interest of young children and in the slipstream increase opportunities for cooperation between schools, business and other stakeholders.</p> <p>This session will outline different approaches to increasing young people's interest in MST and will discuss how school-business cooperation can contribute, and it will look into the political initiatives in Europe that would be necessary to reach this objective.</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frank Stefan Becker (DE), Senior consultant Siemens AG• Valérie Hemmo (FR), Independent public policy professional and rapporteur of Rocard report Science Education Now!• Gerard Jacobs (NL), Director JET-NET (Youth and Technology Network)

15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:00	Topic II: Transversal competences
	<p>In the Europe of tomorrow, it will be more and more important to be able to develop new ideas, to think critically and to create innovative solutions. Due to rapid changes in society, both in working life and in personal life, increased adaptability is crucial, and this can be advanced through enhancing transversal competences. These competences equip people to better master their careers in a globalised economy, to be flexible enough to seize opportunities when they arise, to be innovative and creative and to lay the foundation for lifelong learning habits. Projects show that learning through experience, such as using models of real companies, are an excellent way to help learners to develop both technical and transversal skills – such as teamwork, problem-solving, communication and language skills.</p> <p>This session will focus on approaches to learning and teaching transversal competences (with a special focus on entrepreneurship education).</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caroline Jenner (CAN), CEO Junior Achievement Young Enterprise (JA-YE) • Wouter van den Berghe (BE), Managing director of Tilkon consultancy • Jean Gordon (FR), Director at European Institute of Education and Social Policy • Ivan Diego Rodriguez (ES), Project coordinator Entreprise Education Valnalon
17:30-18:30	<p><i>End of first day</i></p> <p><i>Time for networking and Cocktail offered by the European Commission</i></p>

25 March 2010

9:00	Topic III: Motivation
	<p>Research has shown that pupils' motivation for learning depends to a huge extent on their active involvement in the learning process. Business-school cooperation can play a large part in helping to motivate young people, especially those at risk of dropping out of education prematurely, to acquire the skills they need for future study and careers and to develop entrepreneurial attitudes. But for this to happen, the form of such cooperation must be right, and a change in teaching styles will often be needed.</p> <p>This session will focus on how to motivate and interest young people for learning, how to enhance motivation within school-business cooperation activities, and how to embed guidance and career counselling into wider cooperation schemes.</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Karoli Hindriks (EE), Young entrepreneur prize winner• Lena Bondue (BE), Director of the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)• Germaine Noonan (IE), Programme Manager of The Schools' Business Partnership at BITC
10:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00	Topic IV: Teachers and Teacher Training
	<p>School – business cooperation brings many benefits but also demands a lot from schools.</p> <p>It needs school leadership teams with a vision that places the school at the heart of a much wider learning community, who understand the benefits of cooperation with enterprise, and who work to bring new partners into the life of the school community.</p> <p>To be able to promote the spirit of enterprise, school leaders need to provide a learning environment where risk-taking is welcomed and where teaching and learning takes place in a cooperative way. It requires teachers skilled in teamwork and collaboration, attitudes of creativity, and the ability to move away from tired formulae to work with enterprise to devise new learning opportunities for pupils. This is a serious challenge for many schools and many teachers and these skills and attitudes need to be reflected in the content of initial teacher education and in-service training.</p> <p>This session will address current needs and options for improving teacher</p>

	<p>education.</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elisabeth Schmid (DE), Manager Arbeitskreis SchuleWirtschaft • Martin Rømer, General Secretary ETUCE • Linda Brownlow (UK), Co-director of the Entreprising Careers centre at the University of Strathclyde • Bettina Backström-Widjeskog (FI), Educational developer and lecturer in pedagogics at Novia –University of Applied Sciences
12:30	Summary – Rapporteur Ben Butters , Director European Affairs at Eurochambres
12:50	Concluding remarks – Hélène Clark , Director DG Education and Culture
13:00	<i>Lunch</i>