This indicative roadmap is provided for information purposes only and is subject to change. It does not prejudge the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content and structure.

**A. Context, problem definition**

(i) What is the political context of the initiative?
(ii) How does it relate to past and possible future initiatives, and to other EU policies?
(iii) What ex-post analysis of the existing policy has been carried out and what results are relevant for this initiative?

Skills issues and policies are major features in the Europe 2020 policy vision. The ‘Agenda for new skills and jobs’ and ‘Youth on the move’ initiatives, as well as ‘Innovation Union’ and ‘A Digital Agenda for Europe’, underline the importance of skills and announce a series of actions related to that dimension. Coherently with this policy context, and building upon the actions already implemented, this Initiative will propose policy objectives and specific instruments addressing several challenges related to skills: raise the level of basic skills, promote transversal competences such as entrepreneurship, digital literacy and multilingual skills, and improve skills management and forecasting, also in connection with qualifications policies.

**Low levels of basic skills** are a bottleneck for smart and inclusive growth, two of the priorities of Europe 2020. An adequate level of skills is a prerequisite to the further updating of skills, which is both an economic necessity, as low skilled occupations increasingly require additional competences for performing demanding, non-routine jobs, and an equity imperative, in order to counter increasing income polarisation on the labour market. Improving the level of basic skills is also a necessity for reaching the Europe 2020 education headline target of reducing early school leaving below 10% and increasing tertiary attainment over 40% by 2020.

The importance of basic skills such as literacy and numeracy is not declining, on the contrary. The massive and growing impact of digital media in professional and daily life increases the importance of reading and writing, and starts to change their nature. However, they are not enough. The strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020) stresses the importance of transversal competences such as entrepreneurship, digital competence and multilingualism.

ET2020 specifically emphasises the importance of achieving the Barcelona objective to enable citizens to communicate in two languages in addition to their mother tongue from a very early age and invites the Commission to develop proposals for a benchmark on language skills.

The Europe 2020 flagship ‘An Agenda for new skills and jobs (NSaJ): a European contribution towards full employment’ proposes specific actions at EU level on better anticipating and matching of skills and labour market needs to be carried out in partnership with Member States, social partners, labour market and education institutions. The proposals set out in the Agenda include an EU Skills Panorama aiming to develop the responsiveness of education and training systems to labour market demands and to improve transparency and mobility on the labour market. It should be the starting point for a more coordinated effort to reduce skills gaps and shortages. It should feed into existing networks and working groups at European level to analyse shared challenges and potential common solutions.

The Communication will deal with each challenge with a coherent perspective. Complementary staff working documents will be produced on the different issues.

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1 COM(2010) 682 final
2 COM(2010) 477 final
3 COM(2010) 546 final
4 COM(2010) 245 final
5 COM(2010) 682/3
What are the main problems which this initiative will address?

**Insufficient progress in improving the provision of basic skills and in tackling inequalities**

Low levels of basic skills have important individual costs, leading to forgone income over the lifetime of the individual, low self-esteem and stymied aspirations. At the same time, low levels of basic skills are a considerable hurdle to future learning. Low skilled Europeans are currently 7 times less likely to engage in learning than the rest of the population. Unfortunately, education systems in the EU Member States make slow and uneven progress in improving the provision of basic skills to students. By current trends the EU is not on track to reach the 2020 benchmark on basic skills reducing the share of 15-years olds with insufficient abilities in reading, mathematics and science to less than 15% across Europe. Last decade some indicators follow even a negative trend, for ex. the share of low-achievers in reading increased from 21.3% in 2000 to 24.1% in 2006, while for mathematics the share rose from 20.2% to 24% (PISA surveys).

There is evidence of insufficient policy and pedagogical focus within Member States on the group of low achievers in basic skills. Teacher education and continuing professional development on the acquisition of basic skills is inadequate and insufficient, both at primary and at secondary level, as well as an insufficient focus on achieving an adequate level of basic skills for all across all levels of schooling. The coverage of basic skills programmes for adults is also inadequate, as is their attractiveness and accessibility, namely with insufficient recognition of prior learning and a lack of adult training on basic skills, particularly among the low skilled.

**Fragmented implementation of entrepreneurship education**

The development and implementation of entrepreneurship education across Europe is highly uneven, as shown by the 2008 survey on entrepreneurship in higher education and confirmed in the 2011 Budapest high level symposium on entrepreneurship education. Students’ access to entrepreneurship education varies and is often determined at institution level. Although teachers and educators are important multipliers, there is among them a lack of understanding of what entrepreneurship education entails and how it can be taught.

**Improving digital literacy**

While access to information and communication technology (ICT) is improving considerably, the effective usage of ICT is still a major problem and the gap between unconfident and proficient ICT users is widening. Education has a unique role to combat it but is lagging behind, teachers and trainers are not trained in how to teach ICT and most of the ICT based learning happens in informal learning environments.

**Educational systems are not open enough to innovative teaching through ICT**

ICT has the potential to modernise learning and teaching as it allows supporting personalised tutoring, more collaborative learning and knowledge sharing, as well as it can contribute to acquire other competences such as learning-to-learn, initiative taking and creativity. However, ICT teacher education and professional development schemes have not been successful enough to ensure effective use by teachers.

**Increasing demand for ICT professionals**

Recent forecasts indicate the EU labour market will face a shortage of up to 384,000 IT practitioners by 2015. This gap is not only for the ICT sector in terms of highly advanced ICT professionals but for all sectors. Surveys and studies have shown that there is an 85% correlation between the level of e-skilled employees and the degree of competitiveness. A huge gap between supply and demand for ICT skilled practitioners not only in the pure ICT sector but in 90% of all the other sectors has been observed in the last few years. It is therefore important to take actions to improve the e-skills of its children, youngsters, teachers, practitioners, etc.

**Insufficient knowledge of foreign languages among EU citizens:**

The Barcelona objective – to enable citizens to communicate in two languages in addition to their mother tongue from a very early age – is far from being reached in the Member States despite the efforts deployed.

Considerable discrepancies exist between the range of languages and competences taught in the formal education systems, including in vocational education and training, and those that are requested today and will be requested in the future by the labour market.
Need to improve skills forecasting and matching

There is growing evidence on skills mismatches and labour market imbalances in Europe: increasing unemployment rates, unfulfilled job vacancies, and inadequate use of skills at work. Last research available (see in particular the report on Progress towards the Common European objectives in education and training) underlines that skill mismatch is a widespread phenomenon in Europe, with over-education incidence averaging around 30% and with - at the same time - a substantial share of the population undereducated. Companies are facing more and more difficulties to recruit people with the right skills and imbalances on the labour market could be more serious in the future. Skill mismatch has negative consequences in terms of less satisfied workers, lower productivity at the enterprise level and may lead to a loss of competitiveness in general.

A strategic vision

Skill related challenges concern all Member States to varying degrees and national authorities have put in place national strategies and tools to try remedy this gap. At European level, a number of actions and instruments have been put in place. There is however at the moment, not a clear and shared vision on how these instruments interact with one another and how they contribute to the same goal, along with the national initiatives.

There is the need to provide a coherent narrative, preliminary to a strategic and integrated governance model, showing how the different European instruments in the field of education and employment fit within this model in particular: the European taxonomy on skills, competences and occupations (ESCO), the European Qualification Framework (EQF), Eures - European Job Mobility portal, Europass and its skills passport, and the EU Skills Panorama (under development and to be launched about when the Communication is released).

Who will be affected by it?

This initiative is intended to make the results of good practice and research evidence readily available to Member States on a comparable and transferable basis as well as to provide guidance and recommendations supporting policy making, therefore it will be addressed primarily to ministries responsible for education, training and employment and other relevant authorities. It will also significantly affect a wide range of stakeholders such as educational institutions, including vocational education and training, teacher education institutions, public employment services, employers, guidance centres, education and training providers as well as non-formal learning providers (NGO's, youth centres, etc.) and the industry (language industry, creative and cultural industry, ICT industry, publishing, etc.).

Students/trainees, workers and those seeking a job will benefit from improved matching between education and labour market policies which enable to find more easily a job and to adapt more rapidly to new working environments. Companies should also benefit from a more skilled labour force in tune with their needs.

Finally, all citizens are potentially affected as transversal competences should be acquired by young people at the end of compulsory education, equipping them for adult life, particularly for working life, whilst forming a basis for further learning. Equally, these competences should also be acquired by adults throughout their lives, through a process of developing and updating skills. In particular, better competences in foreign languages allow citizens to take full advantage of living in the multicultural and multilingual European society and can improve employability and mobility on the labour market.

(i) Is EU action justified on grounds of subsidiarity?
(ii) Why can Member States not achieve the objectives of the proposed action sufficiently by themselves? (Necessity Test)
(iii) Can the EU achieve the objectives better? (Test of EU Value Added)

In education and training the EU has only supporting competences as defined by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Member States are responsible for the content of teaching and the organisation of their education systems. In employment, the EU has essentially the role of promoting collaboration between Member States and coordination between their employment policies towards the guidelines defined by the Council and the Member States. In particular, article 145 of the TFEU, says that "Member States and the Union shall […] work towards developing a coordinated strategy for employment and particularly for promoting a skilled, trained and adaptable workforce and labour markets responsive to economic change […]".

The challenges faced by Member States are often similar and many are in the process of designing or implementing policy measures to address them. No Member State is in a position to have a comprehensive overview of such measures, nor to investigate under which conditions they are effective and what elements may be transferable to other contexts. To seek to do so on a bilateral basis would be so inefficient as to be wholly impractical. Member States have therefore themselves asserted their need for closer working through the Open
Method of Coordination to develop more effective policy responses to these issues, and have asked for input from the Commission. The European Parliament and the Council adopted in 2006 a Recommendation on Key Competences. As for basic skills, new efforts are necessary in the context of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). The purpose of the initiative will be to make the results of good practice and research evidence more readily available to Member States on a comparable and transferable basis, but it will not infringe their exclusive competence for the structure and content of their systems.

The initiative will address explicitly one of the most salient issues in skills policy, and will set out the main and most effective policy levers for achieving the ET 2020 objectives, based on experience across all Member States.

The EU can also add value by providing insights into how the EU and its Member States can respond to the challenges of skills mismatch and labour market policies. It can also facilitate mutual learning between countries on how to develop and implement such policies. Through instruments and actions such as the EU Skills Panorama, Europass, Eures, the European Qualifications Framework, the revision of the Directive on Professional qualifications, the Commission increases transparency on EU labour market and supports the mobility of workers and students. These actions take their full sense at European level as it refers to the European labour market as a whole. Similar actions could be done on a national level but by adding the European dimension, some of the skills gaps observed at national level could be solved by having a more fluid and mobile European labour market. The success of Europass and Eures show that common tools are used by citizens themselves. Specific issues need to be treated at European level to be effective. This is the case for example of migration policies and its potential support to meet skilled shortages.

The initiative will therefore provide an adequate response to the demand of the Member States to the Commission to intensify policy cooperation on skills and will provide focal points for further cooperation and policy development.

**B. Objectives of the initiative**

**What are the main policy objectives?**

To respond to the problems identified the following policy objectives are proposed:

**For basic skills:**

- To improve the level of basic skills across all age ranges in Europe and in particular to help Member States achieve the benchmark on basic skills (reducing the proportion of low achievers at the age of 15 from 20% to 15%).

- To help Member States in developing effective and efficient policies supporting higher achievement levels in basic skills. To support them in defining the main elements of a policy framework, outlines the most effective policies across Europe and provides political support for reform initiatives.

- To broaden the cooperation and exchange of experiences between Member States at an operational level.

**For entrepreneurship, e-literacy and multilingualism:**

- To support Member States in their efforts to accelerate the promotion and implementation of entrepreneurship education at all levels of education and training in a lifelong learning perspective.

- To foster Member States’ exchanges of experience and good practices for entrepreneurship education at an operational level.

- To propose an European-wide approach and instruments supporting Member States in the integration of ICT and digital literacy into lifelong learning policies.

- To support Member States mainstreaming eLearning in national policies for the modernisation of education and training, including curricula development, assessment of learning outcomes and the professional development of teachers and trainers.

- To support developing of better targeted language education in order to reduce the barriers to mobility.
To achieve a better match between the skills acquired through language teaching and the needs of the labour market.

To propose a European language benchmark based on the results of the European Survey on Language Competence, so as to achieve the "mother tongue + 2" Barcelona objective, as requested by the Council.

For skills anticipation and management:

- To help citizens to record their skills through the EU Skills passport.
- To improve skills forecasting by establishing the EU Skills Panorama.
- To encourage collaboration and exchange of information on skills anticipation and matching.
- To improve transparency and mobility of workers in the Union.

Towards an integrated governance:

- To improve governance, communication and dissemination between the various stakeholders and partners stemming from the lack of communication between the worlds of education and work.
- To create stronger synergies between the various European instruments and tools.

Do the objectives imply developing EU policy in new areas?

No.

### C. Options

| (i) | What are the policy options being considered? |
| (ii) | What legislative or 'soft law' instruments could be considered? |
| (iii) | How do the options respect the proportionality principle? |

The options outlined below reflect the possible quasi-legislative or soft-law instruments available in the field of education and training. All options have in common that they must respect the principle subsidiarity and so focus on informing and convincing Member States of the effectiveness and efficiency of particular policy approaches.

**Option 1 (baseline option):** Continue to cooperate with Member States within the existing OMC. Priorities have already been set under the Education and Training 2020 programme and the employment guidelines provide the objectives Member States should aim at when defining their employment policies. This allows for continuing cooperation with Member States within the existing OMC through the existing mutual learning programme, working groups, expert groups or organising seminars and conferences. Cooperation can be pursued separately on literacy and on mathematics and science, as well as on adult education issues, entrepreneurship, digital e-literacy, media literacy and multilingualism. There is no common synthesis or political endorsement of the policy messages at the level of the Commission. The language benchmark can be negotiated with the Council independently.

**Option 2:** Commission Communication and accompanying Staff Working Documents (SWD). This format allows key messages to be conveyed concisely for each of the main domains covered: basic skills, transversal competences and skills management and forecasting, while the main outcomes of the expert exchanges in different groups are summarised in three detailed supporting Staff Working Documents, one for each domain, which may be complemented by specific Policy Handbooks.

The Communication would (1) synthesise the main messages on how to improve the levels of basic skills across the skills areas (literacy, mathematics, sciences), identifying key factors common to all basic skills and thus strengthening the potential beneficial impact and (2) propose a set of new concrete actions to support Member States promoting the integration of ICT and digital literacy into lifelong learning policies (e.g. Creative Classrooms), the development of entrepreneurship education at all levels of education, and the definition of a new language benchmark based on the results of the European Survey on Language Competences, (3) provide new impetus to the implementation and further development of instruments and policy cooperation in skills management and forecast, such as the EU Skills Panorama, paving the way for an integrated governance at European level, (4) provide a basis for further collaboration and guides also policy development in Member States, including the better use of existing possibilities to support initiatives within EU funding programmes.
Option 3: Commission Proposal for a Council Recommendation. In addition to the measures outlined in the baseline scenario and the greater authority conferred by Option 2, this option would add a more prescriptive dimension, including specific actions addressed by and to Member States, and a more formal reporting mechanism. Ideally, a Council Recommendation in this field would set out a unified policy framework, to be adopted by all Member States. However, wide existing differences in the situation and provision and even definition of skills across Member States would make a unified policy framework very complex. It would also require a higher level of detail, which could infringe on the exclusive prerogatives of Member States in the area of education and training.

### D. Initial assessment of impacts

What are the benefits and costs of each of the policy options?

**Option 1**, the baseline option, has limited benefits. Without the support of a more powerful formal political instrument, the outcomes of expert work within the OMC would not receive the level of dissemination, nor have the same authority conferred by a legislative document. Moreover, the synergies between the existing processes at expert level would not be exploited adequately. This could create the risk of a lost investment in the OMC processes, without a clear political follow-up. The results of the experts work within the OMC would only be disseminated to a more limited audience, consisting of technical experts and decision-makers in national ministries, as well as key stakeholders.

A Commission Communication with SWD (option 2) is a cost-effective way to make the results of good practice and research evidence readily available to Member States on a comparable and transferable basis. The Communication will contribute to focusing national debate more closely on skills and offering a range of measures to tackle the issue that have proven both effective and transferable. It will bring forward a range of evidence-based policy mechanisms which can improve policy effectiveness and coherence at national or regional level. This option allows taking stock of expert work, allow the analysis to go a step further and propose policy objectives as regards:

- low achievement in basic skills;
- teaching and learning opportunities that foster entrepreneurship, e-literacy and multilingualism;
- the development of a strategic and integrated skill governance building on factual information and analyses .

**Option 3** has the same advantages over the baseline scenario as those for option B, clearly being a more effective option than continuing the OMC processes as such. However, from an efficiency point of view it has relatively higher administrative costs, particularly if a reporting exercise is included beyond the data collection already planned, and is more likely to be challenged on subsidiarity grounds depending on the level of prescribed detail it would need to contain, while the benefits would not be higher than those provided by option 2. Option 3 presents the risk of going beyond what is needed to achieve the objectives set satisfactorily, by articulating an inevitably complex framework which is difficult to apply at national and regional level.

From the perspective of the principle of proportionality, option 2 appears to be the most appropriate. It provides a stronger dissemination than option A of key conclusions from the Open Method of Coordination and Expert Groups, without imposing further costs neither on the Union nor at national or regional/local level. It also provides a concrete answer to the explicit demands of the Council of Ministers. Compared to option 3, a Communication is also the simplest instrument possible, allowing the greatest scope to national decisions on how to reach the objectives enumerated above.

Could any or all of the options have significant impacts on (i) simplification, (ii) administrative burden and (iii) on relations with other countries, (iv) implementation arrangements? And (v) could any be difficult to transpose for certain Member States?

The policy objectives proposed can only be achieved through action by the Member States. However, in many cases it will be more a matter of reorganising and pooling the use of resources rather than allocating additional resources, as Member States have already engaged in relevant action. No specific transposition is needed.

As an example, the EU skills Panorama will imply a permanent collaboration between the European Commission and Member States to have access to their national forecasts and foresights. This should however be done in such a way that it will require limited burden for MS. Improving coordination and governance at European level could imply for Member States to appoint national representatives to take part in a limited number of meetings on an annual basis. No specific transposition is needed.
By bringing more coherence and synergies between the different instruments related to education and skills matching, it should simplify and clarify action in this field.

(i) Will an IA be carried out for this initiative and/or possible follow-up initiatives? (ii) When will the IA work start? (iii) When will you set up the IA Steering Group and how often will it meet? (iv) What DGs will be invited?

An impact assessment is not foreseen. This initiative reflects ongoing policies. Possible new actions proposed in the Communication do not require further impact assessment as they will be predominantly of non-legislative, consultative nature or related to the development of cooperation within existing OMC/other frameworks. Initiatives that might be included in the new “Erasmus for all” programme will have their impact evaluated within the relevant procedure foreseen for the entire programme.

However, there is a need to involve several DGs in the preparation of this initiative as it has strong links with initiatives under their responsibility (EMPL, ENTR, INFSO, JUST, MARKT, etc). The involvement of those DGs may take place in the context of an inter-service group.

(i) Is any of options likely to have impacts on the EU budget above €5m? (ii) If so, will this IA serve also as an ex-ante evaluation, as required by the Financial regulation? If not, provide information about the timing of the ex-ante evaluation.

No impact on the budget above €5m

E. Evidence base, planning of further work and consultation

(i) What information and data are already available? Will existing impact assessment and evaluation work be used? (ii) What further information needs to be gathered, how will this be done (e.g. internally or by an external contractor), and by when? (iii) What is the timing for the procurement process & the contract for any external contracts that you are planning (e.g. for analytical studies, information gathering, etc.)? (iv) Is any particular communication or information activity foreseen? If so, what, and by when?

Basic skills

Very rich and reliable cross-national data is already available on basic skills. The main data sources are large-scale international education surveys. In the area of basic skills, four such surveys are carried out regularly: The OECD PISA tests take place every 3 years and cover basic skills of 15 year olds in literacy, mathematics and science; the latest available data is from PISA 2009, which was published in late 2010. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement organises regularly the PIRLS and TIMSS cross-national surveys, covering the literacy competences of students in the 4th grade and the mathematics and science competences of students in the 4th and 8th grades. The latest data in both surveys is from 2006 and a new set of data from 2011 will be published in September 2012. Available cross-national adult skills surveys include the International Adult Literacy Survey and the Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey. The latest data available dates from 1998. In 2011 the new PIAAC survey will be administered in a large number of EU Member States and the results will be published in 2013.

Complementing the studies, data and reports mentioned in this section, the main information source will come from the work of the High Level Group of experts in the field of literacy, which is planned to deliver its report in mid-2012 and from the work of the Thematic Working Group on Mathematics, Science and Technology, which will finish its activities by mid-2012. Most of the current and future information gathering is therefore take place internally, with the help of national experts.

A study on family literacy has been contracted by DG EAC in 2009 and has been finished in May 2011. A study on policy and practice guidelines on delivering basic skills for adults was published in November 2010. The Eurydice network has already completed in April 2011 a study on Teaching of reading in Europe. A Eurydice study on the teaching of mathematics in Europe will be completed in 2012.

Transversal competences

The currently available data on the use and impact of ICT in education is focusing most on primary and secondary education. The available data on language competences are limited to input data (e.g. Eurydice information about language teaching in schools) and to public opinion survey results (Eurobarometer). The same applies for entrepreneurship education, where the current available information and data is quite comprehensive, but it is primarily focusing on input data in addition to being qualitative in nature. Furthermore, there is a lack of evaluation studies and ex-post impact assessments of entrepreneurship education policies. Overall, the data does not give a complete picture of the state of these transversal competences in the EU, but points to the need for action at European level and by the Member States.
European-wide data on the use of ICT at all levels of education and training as well as on the impact on the learning and teaching needs to be gathered. An upcoming EC survey across all MS will be finalised by mid 2012. EURYDICE is completing a study on the use of ICT in formal education systems and, internationally, some large scale surveys are underway which can back up these studies. A study on the identification of the descriptors relative to being digitally competent will be completed in 2012 by DG JRC (Institute for Prospective Technological Studies- IPTS). Other studies by IPTS which could provide valuable input: Learning 2.0 for learning communities; Creative learning and innovative teaching in the Member States; The future of learning with ICT; Assessment practices through ICT.

A DG EAC study under the GHK framework contract is being finalised that maps how ten Member States are measuring the impact of entrepreneurship education. Furthermore, EURYDICE will as part of the Question and Answer Forum for Member States this year include a number of questions on entrepreneurship education.

Accurate and up-to-date data on the outcomes of foreign language teaching systems are gathered through the first European Survey on Language Competences. The results of the survey will be available at the beginning of 2012.

The launch of a second round of the European Survey on Language Competences to be carried out in 2015-2016 will be presented by the Commission to the Council by the end of 2012. Results of the first round survey, as well as the Commission Communication, will be accompanied by visibility actions in the media.

**Skills management**

The 2008 Communication "New Skills for New Jobs" (NSNJ) has presented the situation on labour markets and the challenges Europe was facing in terms of skills imbalances and future needs. Several actions announced in the 2008 Communication have already been implemented They include studies or reports (Labour market monitor, green jobs), cooperation (mutual learning, international) and development of tools (ESCO). The expert group on NSNJ nominated by the Commission following the adoption of the NSNJ Communication submitted its independent recommendations to the Commission end of 2009. Based on this work the 2010 Communication "An agenda for new skills and jobs" outlined political priorities regarding the skills agenda with the objective to equip people with the right skills for employment.

Existing evaluation work will be used where available. This is the case for example for the feasibility to setup European sector councils on employment and skills and for the development of ESCO, based on a stakeholders' consultation (end 2010).

Assessment of existing instruments will be based on internal information.

The communication will also be based on an external evaluation, reviewing the results of the implementation, analyse the relevance of Europass in the new policy context (in particular the EQF and national qualifications frameworks, the proposal for a Recommendation on validation, the European skills, competence and occupations classification ESCO, the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), and propose developments. It will among other analyse the reasons to develop the European skills passport. The evaluation of Europass and feasibility study of the Skills Passport will be available by 2012.

Concerning the EU Skills Panorama, the gathering of information will be performed by an external contractor between September 2011 and October 2012.

The analysis of information on skills needs and skills mismatches from various sources, including the national level, will be done by an external contractor (through a framework contract). The order form should be sent in September 2011 and first options for the Skills Panorama should be discussed beginning 2012. A first inter-service group meeting took place already on 10 May 2011 and two other meetings are foreseen in 2012. As part of the development of the EU Skills Panorama, a network of national anticipation bodies will be setup. A joint letter will be sent in September 2011 to the EMCO and Education Committees asking them to designate experts in anticipation of skills to participate in this network. It shall serve the purpose of exchange good practices on labour market tools to anticipate as well as form a advisory panel for the development of the EU Skills Panorama. A first meeting of this network is foreseen by the end of 2011 and a second one in 2012, where interim results from the development of the Skills Panorama will be presented.

The Communication will be made public at the same time as the launch of the EU Skills Panorama and the Skills Passport.

Which stakeholders & experts have been or will be consulted, how, and at what stage?

**Basic skills**

The Communication will build on the final report of the High Level Group of experts in the field of literacy on the work carried out within the Thematic Working Group on Mathematics, Science and Technology and on the work of the Working Group on Adult Learning, all ongoing under the Education and Training 2010 programme. It will also build on previous work under the Education and Training 2010 programme in the Working Group on adult...
learning and in the Cluster on mathematics, science and technology, as well as on the 2006 report of the Rocard Group, “Science Education Now”. Besides relying on the expertise of the top experts members of the Group, the independent High Level Group on Literacy has decided to contact several other relevant experts and stakeholders in order to give their views on the literacy issue. Among these experts and stakeholders are pan-European foundations and networks of academic and policy experts, organisations representing the social aspects of literacy and the disadvantaged, key business stakeholders including media and publishers and social partners.

A number of consultations with national authorities will also feed into the drafting of the Communication: During the Belgian Presidency in 2010 a Ministerial seminar was organised on the theme of basic skills. A ministerial debate on how to increase the results of low achieving students is planned by the Polish Presidency in 2011. A consultation on basic skills with the Directors General on schools from the national ministries of education is planned for 2012. A stakeholders’ meeting on schools education is planned in 2012, including a consultation on the topic of basic skills. A pan-European conference on literacy is planned by the Cypriot Presidency in September 2012, which will feed directly in the process of drafting the Communication.

Transversal competences

Cooperation with the Member States is pursued through the open method of coordination (OMC) within ET2020 strategic framework. Four thematic working groups, respectively on early language learning, on languages for employability, on entrepreneurship education and on 'ICT and education' will deliver reports with policy recommendations in 2011/2012.

A structured dialogue on multilingualism with civil society covering the Member States is ongoing through two stakeholder platforms: the civil society platform with educational and cultural organisations and the media and the business platform with social partners. Both platforms will deliver reports with policy recommendations in 2011.

The actions currently taken in the field of digital competence, entrepreneurship and multilingualism by the various Commission services are being mapped out and will be put together in a staff working paper that will constitute a framework for the new policy approach.

Skills management

Existing bodies and stakeholder groups will be consulted, in particular
- the Education Committee and EMCO
- Skillsnet experts and the new network of observatories on skills needs and mismatches
- ESCO Governing Board
- the network of the Heads of Public Employment Services
- Europass National Centres