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Europe 2020: Policy development and country analysis
Skills and qualifications strategies; Multilingualism policy

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DRAFT MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION POINTS
OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE EQF ADVISORY GROUP
BRUSSELS, 26-27 SEPTEMBER 2013

The EQF AG discussed and with few requests for clarification approved the revised working methods of the EQF AG, which reflects the extended scope of work of the EQF AG – to follow the implementation of the Council recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning and its actual working methods.

Action point:

- Commission to revise the working methods of the EQF AG as agreed and send it to the members by email

Delegations from the six economic regions of UNESCO who are involved in national or regional qualifications framework development attended the EQF AG meeting to learn about the implementation of the EQF and its governance

The EQF referencing process

Three countries (BE-fr, IS, RO) confirmed to present their national referencing report to the EQF Advisory Group in the meeting of the EQF AG on 16-17 December 2013.

Action points:

- Country representatives of BE-fr, IS, RO to send the Commission their report on referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF (and its English translation) by 17 November 2013.
- AG members to indicate their interest in providing detailed written comments on the referencing report of BE-fr, IS, RO by 31 October 2013.
- Country representatives to inform the Commission about changes in their referencing roadmaps and in particular the date of the presentation of their referencing report to the EQF AG by 31 October 2013.
- Country representatives to update information on national approaches to implement the second miles of the EQF by 31 October 2013.

Providing overall coherence of EQF implementation

The EQF AG was informed about latest relevant developments in the Bologna Process and the Copenhagen Processes.

The EQF AG discussed the results of the survey on international qualifications and agreed that 2-3 specific cases of international qualifications will be analysed as regards specificities of qualifications, quality assurance and implications of including these qualifications in NQFs. It was further agreed that bodies that had been identified as developing and awarding international qualifications will be invited to the AG meeting to exchange views. First discussions will take place with international organisations defining international standards for qualifications.

Action point:

- Commission to invite representatives of international organisations defining international standards for qualifications for exchange of views in the meeting of the EQF AG on 16-17 December 2013

The EQF AG approved the data model of the EQF portal qualifications search function. This allows for the full development of this service and the interconnection of national qualifications databases with the EQF portal late 2013. The AG was also informed that financial support from Erasmus+ will be available in 2014 to support the development of and interconnection of national qualifications databases with the EQF portal.

Action points:

- Commission to fully develop the search function of the EQF portal
- Country representatives to work on the interconnection of national qualifications databases with the EQF portal

The Commission presented the state of play of ESCO, as well as the test version of the ESCO portal, which will be launched during the "ESCO goes live" conference on 23-24 October. The AG welcomed the presentation as showing the portal made ESCO concrete. The AG endorsed the appointment of Brigitte BOUQUET (FR) as second EQF representative on the ESCO Board (together with Wilfried BOOMGAERT), succeeding to James Calleja, who was recently appointed as new Cedefop Director.

Cedefop presented the main findings of its study on qualifications related to EQF level 5. The EQF AG welcomed the valuable information on the variety of qualifications as well as the use of learning outcomes and methodologies used for qualifications related to EQF level 5.

Action points:

- Cedefop to send the EQF AG the full study report when it becomes available

The AG welcomed the Commission's proposal for a peer learning activity on learning outcomes and quality assurance, which will take place on 27-28 November in Leuven.

The Commission informed the AG about the Commission position regarding the use of the EU logo for the branding of the EQF. The Commission will make concrete visual proposals for the next meeting of the EQF AG on 16-17 December 2013.

Action points:

- Commission to prepare proposals for the next meeting of the EQF AG

The AG was informed that Hong Kong formally requested the Commission to relate the EQF and the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework, informal discussions are on-going

with Australia in this respects. ETF presented the Southern Mediterranean qualifications project which uses EQF concepts for exchange of experiences and qualifications between 4 countries in the region and ES, FR, IT. The AG agreed to start discussions on how the EQF should be used in cooperation with third countries in its next meeting.

Action points:

- Commission to prepare a discussion note

Validation of non-formal and informal learning

The AG discussed the proposal for the structure of the one-off national report that MS agreed to prepare in response to the Council recommendation on VNFIL by 2018. Some MS expressed concerns that the 2018 deadline for the report is too far away to get authorities already engaged now. In order to maintain momentum, the Commission was requested to propose possible steps for a roadmap leading up to the 2018 deadline. Some members asked for clarifications with regards to the mandatory/facultative nature of the structure, and suggested that national reports should focus on the progress made rather than describe existing validation arrangements. The revised national report structure and the roadmap will be discussed in the next meeting.

Action points:

- AG members to send written comments on the national report structure and make suggestions for possible steps in the requested roadmap by 20 October
- Commission to prepare the revised national report structure and the roadmap for the next meeting of the AG

Commission and Cedefop presented the state of play of the update of the European Inventory and the review of the European Guidelines on validation and the role of AG in these. A first draft proposal for European Guidelines will be sent to the AG members in October and discussed in depth in the next AG meeting.

Action points:

- Commission to send the proposal for European Guidelines to the AG in October

The next meeting of the EQF Advisory Group will be on 16-17 December 2013 in Brussels. The meetings in 2014 are planned for 26-27 February in Birmingham, 28-29 April, 18-19 June in Brussels.

A joint meeting of NCPs, National Europass Centres and Euroguidance Centres will be held on 6 November, Belgium. The fourth joint meeting of the EQF NCPs and the Network of National Coordinators of the QF EHEA will be held on 7 November 2013, Belgium.

The PLA on learning outcomes and quality assurance will take place on 28-29 November 2013 in Leuven.