



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Youth and sport
Youth

Brussels, 18 March 2013
EAC/D1/LL (2013)

MINUTES

Subject: Second meeting of the Expert Group on Peer-learning on creative and innovative potential of young people

Venue: JES Brussel, Werkhuizenstraat 3-5, 1080 Brussel

Date: 19 February 2013

Purpose of the meeting

The meeting focused on presentation of relevant policy, experience from practice, and the definition of a framework for the recognition of the value of and the promotion of youth work in the context of employability.

Participants: See list of participants enclosed.

1. Welcome and Presentation by JES Brussel

The host of the meeting from the Flemish part of Belgium, Patrick Manghelinckx, director of JES BRUSSEL (Youth and the City in Brussels) welcomed the participants. He gave a tour of the youth centre, showing how it concretely supports local and visiting youth groups through the centre's various activities. He also presented an overview of the current situation of young people in Belgium.

2. Presentation of peer-learning activities at national level

Françoise Kremer, from the French Community of Belgium, presented good practice case from her region on efforts to test and recognise skills gained by non-formal learning in cooperation with employers. She also invited the Scouts Movement in the French-speaking Community to presented their approach to validation of competences gained when acting as a scouts leader. The project includes an online self-assessment tool allowing individuals to create their own skills' profile. It was developed in partnership with business schools.

(presentations on Sinapse)

3. Information from the European Commission: Europe 2020 and Employment agenda (including the [Youth Opportunities Initiative](#); Recommendation on Establishing a [Youth Guarantee](#); European Social Fund)

Ms Brigitte Degen, DG Employment and Social Affairs, presented the latest policy developments on youth employment. The Commission presented in December a **Youth Employment Package** which included a proposed **Recommendation to Member States on introducing the Youth Guarantee** to ensure that all young people up to age 25 receive a quality offer of a job, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. It was adopted by the Employment Ministers Council in February 2013.

(presentation on Sinapse)

4. Update by John Bamber and Manfred Zentner

John Bamber and Manfred Zentner presented their views to refine the context and themes of this expert group (i.e. policies, initiatives, terminology, target group, milestones, etc),.

John Bamber outlined the importance of an evidence base and how evidence from various sources could be constructively used for the expert group's work. Additionally he defined what an evidence-informed approach means for the expert group. In his model "theory of change", he interlinked all the aspects of the mandate to show how the expert group could look at the relationships between non-formal and informal learning, skills and competences, innovation and creativity and employability.

Manfred Zentner focused on the purpose of the group, its outcomes and results. He proposed to focus on terminology, evidence, models of good practice, outcomes of projects/models (influence / measurements / evaluation). He underlined that understanding of the use and benefit of non-formal learning is needed in policy domains other than youth (such as employment or formal education), in economy and the labour market. The outcome of the expert group should help foster such understanding.

(presentations on Sinapse)

Following these presentations a discussion was held. UK highlighted the importance of using existing definitions, studies and research projects in the different Member States. Consultations of employers or education & training bodies could provide an important input, and UK would welcome a stronger focus on social entrepreneurship of the expert group. Also, the European Youth Forum's study on participation in youth organisations and employability was mentioned as a relevant source.

Following remarks on the role of youth work in non-formal learning, COM mentioned, that the Irish presidency proposes to set up a thematic expert group to examine quality in youth work. COM also mentioned the ongoing study on the value of youth work in the EU countries, which should present results after summer.

SI reminded that non-formal learning is mostly about the holistic development of citizens. DE proposed that the group should address cross-sectorial cooperation, notably to induce changes into current labour market systems.

DK proposed to focus on “skills and creativity” as a source of initiative, which is especially important in areas or sectors with few or no jobs. UK mentioned an international network on entrepreneurial education and mentoring as well as business networks among entrepreneurs. FR emphasised the need to deal with “empowerment” of young people.

5. Confirmation of chairman

John Bamber was appointed chair of the expert group. It was decided to organise the work into 3 subgroups, with 2 vice-chairs supporting the work of the chair.

6. Discussion in subgroups

During the discussion in the subgroups, experts discussed the desired outcomes and target group(s) of the work of the expert group. After sharing the ideas in the plenary, the group decided to summarise these comments and on this basis define the group's further work plan, which would be done by John Bamber, Manfred Zentner and Thomas Bach. The conclusions of this, prepared by the chair, are attached.

The next meeting will take place on 15-16 April and spread over 2 days.

7. Annexes

Deliberations on the work of the EU expert group

Participant list of the Expert group on Peer-learning

Contact persons: *Lucie LEKESOVA (Lucie.Lekesova@ec.europa.eu);*
Joelle WILFART (Joelle.Wilfart@ec.europa.eu)

Annex

Deliberations on the work of the EU expert group - Summary of the feedback from three groups,

prepared by Dr. John Bamber

Aim and Purpose

The aim of the work is to influence key decision-makers in Member States. In particular the aim is to inform policy makers, employers, and representatives of the economy and business, about the benefits of non-formal learning in terms of the increased creative and innovative potential of young people as employees or entrepreneurs. In short, the report should be about Social and Economic Investment in Youth Creativity.

Young people are a heterogeneous group with different possibilities and challenges. They benefit unequally from formal as well as non-formal learning. For some non-formal learning is the first step towards active participation in society and the labour market, whilst for others it builds on top of their formal education. For this reason, while having universal (for young people in general) application, there should also be targeted elements (for those with particular issues and needs).

In any case, the work will foreground the benefits of non-formal learning with young people so that this work can attract funding. It is not simply about changes in young people, as if their lacking is the cause of unemployment or the economic crisis. Instead it will point to their potential contribution to improvements in social and economic conditions if the necessary investment is made. Implicit in this is a broader recognition of the potential of young people as active participants in society, as well as the labour market, and as a source of innovative ideas. Therefore the work should not just be directed towards employability but also to entrepreneurship and social innovation.

Content

The report will set out an argument about the benefits of non-formal learning to young people. It will focus on skills and competences involved in employability (understood broadly), and the return to wider society in terms of social and economic development. It will highlight the existing need for creativity and innovation in business and economic spheres. It will match the declared needs of the business sector regarding skills and competences, and the creative and innovative outcomes of non-formal learning. In essence, employers need to see the potential in the skills, capabilities, innovative and creative capacity of young people in terms of recruitment, creating jobs and in investing and developing the labour market.

Importantly, the report will provide core descriptors and definitions of the key terms (employability, innovation, creativity, non-formal learning, and young people) and show the links between these elements. It will also provide evidence in the form of tried and tested examples of practice, while highlighting effective policy implementation in a range of areas including education, welfare, and employment. The examples will demonstrate how to recognise skills and competences in this area, in a useful and

comparative way. The information should enable the target groups to understand and react to current developments, and to develop and use creative and innovative potential. For example, matrices can be used to demonstrate different types of effective work, in several countries, with various categories of young people.

Sample matrix

Examples	Category of young person		
	A	B	C
Country 1			
Country 2			
Country 3			

The report should draw attention to short, medium and long term outcomes that can be anticipated from this investment. It should be stressed that there is no quick fix, so that thinking and commitments should be long term.

Recommendations

The report should enable the target groups to react to current developments, to learn how to recognise (certify/accredit) skills and competences, and to use creative and innovative potential. Rather than make recommendations for the field of economy, it would be better to provide success stories and examples. Where recommendations and suggestions are made, these should be focusing on policy makers.

A second target group might be the field of formal education with the aim to enhance and formalise the cooperation between formal and non-formal and informal education. Here NFL and IL have to be seen as the supportive and subsidiary element for the field of formal education. Here the report should focus on recommendations rather than on models of good practice.

In making recommendations for policy at all levels (European, National, Regional, and Local), while also speaking to private sector employers, the report will emphasise collaborative efforts across all relevant sectors.

Other products

One specific initiative could be to recommend a training programme for HR specialists in identifying and recognizing the innovative and creative capacities deriving from non-formal learning. Another initiative could be to recommend a partnership between the Commission, employer organizations or large companies, and young people/youth organizations, with a view to raising awareness of non-formal learning.

Process

Young people should be seen as active participants in the resolution of the economic and social crisis. They should also contribute in some way to the report. Young people, youth organisations and youth workers should be invited to feed information into the expert group on a regular basis. There should also be regular input to the expert group from employers and people from the field of private business.

Promotion and dissemination

It will be necessary to provide information for stakeholders at European Union and national levels. The Chambers of Commerce and lead organisations in industry should be informed and seen as important target groups. In member states, actors in the field of youth policy should be the messengers for the outcomes of the expert group. There should also be cross-sector cooperation and information on the governmental level to inform, for example, the Ministries of Economy or Employment.

On the European level, the DG Employment and the DG Enterprise should be involved in the process of dissemination through various channels. Attention should also be given to the European Social Funds and European Structural Funds, and the European Semester.

Finally, the report should be included (mentioned) in recommendations and papers prepared on the EU-level, for example in Council resolutions and staff working documents.