MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION POINTS
OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE EQF ADVISORY GROUP
LEUVEN, 31 MARCH – 1 APRIL 2014

The EQF referencing process

The AG discussed information from Greece in response to the comments made by the EQF AG on the presentation of the Greek referencing report on 26-27 February 2014. The Greek report provides sufficient information for each of the referencing criteria. Taking into account the ongoing implementation of several measures in the establishment of the NQF, Greece was invited to inform about the developments in a year from now. The AG accepted the report on the condition that the issues raised by one of the social partners, which stepped down from the steering group are clarified.

Action points:
• Commission to clarify bilaterally with Greece, as well as with the ETUC, the issues raised by one of the social partners,
• Cedefop and Council of Europe to prepare a summary of comments/questions made by the EQF Advisory Group on the national referencing report of Greece as presented in the meeting of the EQF Advisory Group on 31 March – 1 April 2014 (the record and summary of the comments of the AG will be enclosed to the detailed minutes of AG24)

Four countries (KY, NO, RO, SK) confirmed to present their national referencing report to the EQF Advisory Group in the meeting of the EQF AG on 5-6 June 2014. Slovakia and Sweden presented the state of play of the development of their national qualifications framework and the process of referencing to the EQF.

Action points:
• Slovakia and Sweden to take advantage of the discussion to finalise their referencing report (see the summary of specific comments in the detailed minutes of AG24)
• Country representatives of KY, NO, RO, SK: to send the Commission their report on referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF (and its English translation) by 6 May 2014.
• AG members to indicate their interest in providing detailed written comments on the referencing report of KY, NO, RO, SK by 30 April 2014.
• 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 30 April 2014.
• Country representatives to update information on national approaches to implement the second miles of the EQF by 30 April 2014.

Providing overall coherence of EQF implementation

The AG discussed the Commission’s proposal for the priorities for the follow-up to the results of the evaluation. The AG welcomed the proposal; however, asked the Commission to update the timetable for the planned work for the AG. The AG also requested that the AG should develop a strategy to address issues related to the coherence of the referencing results.

Action points:
• Commission to revise the timetable; prepare input for discussions on 1) guidance on how the impact of national qualifications frameworks could be assessed and monitored at national level; 2) further guidance on referencing criteria 3 and 4 and 3) a systematic approach to the follow-up of the presentation of national referencing reports to the EQF AG and European coordination for ensuring the coherence of the referencing results.
• Commission, in cooperation with Cedefop and the Council of Europe, to analyse the notes summarising the comments made by the EQF AG and summarise the results to support the discussions of the AG on the development of a systematic approach to the follow-up of referencing reports by June 2014.
• Commission to set up bilateral meetings with countries that have not presented their first referencing report to the EQF AG, if the countries wish so, by June 2014.

The Commission presented a proposal for the visual emblem of the EQF, which takes into account the new visual identity policy of the Commission.

Action points:
• AG members to provide written response to the Commission which proposal(s) they could indicate in their national certificates, diplomas and qualifications databases by 30 April.

In line with the approach agreed in the EQF AG in its 23rd meeting of 26 and 27 February to explore the role of the EQF in cooperation with third countries, representatives from Australia attended the meeting and presented the Australian Qualifications Framework to the EQF AG. The presentation was much appreciated by the AG and it was agreed that COM would start technical work with Australia, including the analysis of the risks and benefits of aligning the two frameworks. Representatives from AT, FR and UK have volunteered to support the technical expert work with Australia. The EQF AG will be kept informed about the expert discussions.

Action points:
• Representatives of the AG, the Commission and Cedefop to participate in the expert meeting with Australia on 2 April.

The EQF AG had a first discussion on the possible relationship between the PISA and
PIAAC results and proficiency levels in these international surveys and the implementation of the EQF. The EQF AG agreed that it was important to continue the reflection on this theme and that further evidence and analysis is necessary on the relationship between proficiency levels and EQF levels.

Action points:
- Commission to check the possibility of launching a study on this theme by June 2014 and inform the EQF AG about the outline of the study

The AG discussed the Commission's proposal for a peer learning activity on the master craftsman qualifications.

Action points:
- AG members to indicate their interest in participating in this peer learning activity by 12 April.

The EQF AG discussed the latest developments in ESCO
COM presented on the possible use of learning outcomes terminology in ESCO i) the feedback received from MS and ii) the result of two workshops, requested by the ESCO Board. After discussion it was agreed that COM will share the renewed mandate for the ESCO Board with the EQF AG, keep the EQF AG informed on all relevant ESCO developments and consult the EQF AG on topics that concern both EQF and ESCO.

The EQF AG was informed about the relevant developments in the Bologna Process.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning

The AG agreed on a series of peer learning activities in support to the implementation of the Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning: 1) Using and writing learning outcomes: validation vs. formal education (3 October 2014), 2) Costs and benefits of validation and 3) Skills Audit (both in 2015). France and Norway presented their national approaches to the validation of non-formal and informal learning. The presentations were much appreciated by the AG.

Action points:
- Commission to present a proposal for the peer learning activity on Using and writing learning outcomes: validation vs. formal education in the meeting of the AG on 5-6 June 2014.

The next meeting of the EQF Advisory Group will be on 5-6 June 2014 in Brussels. The following meetings in 2014 are planned for 1-2 October and 2-3 December in Brussels.

The meeting of the EQF NCPs will take place on 24 June 2014 in Brussels.

The European conference that will present and discuss the results of the public consultation on the European Area of Skills and Qualifications will take place on 17 June 2014 in Brussels.