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Vocational training; Leonardo da Vinci

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS WORKING GROUP

29 FEBRUARY 2012

1. Opening

Mr João Delgado, Head of Unit, welcomed the participants, and in particular Lithuania which is joining this working group (according to the agreed rotation rule defined in the mandate) and replacing Hungary. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. Bruges Communiqué: Stock-taking

A new roadmap containing the most important milestones in the 2012 stock-taking was presented.

This stock-taking will lead to the Council Conclusions on modernising of European VET systems. They will include the stock-taking and highlight excellence and equity in VET. Its adoption is foreseen at the Education Council meeting on 22-23 November 2012.

These Council Conclusions will be discussed at the DGVT meeting on 22-23 October, so it will be important that the Cedefop analysis be ready by 14 September at the latest. A Copenhagen Working Group meeting could then take place on 17 September to finalise the stock-taking before sending it to the DGVT members.

ETF will contribute by providing an analysis of developments in Croatia, Turkey, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, based on the ReferNet questionnaire, adapted to the needs of these countries. ETF and Cedefop will cooperate closely to guarantee that relevant information (both thematic and country-specific) is available at right time for the report. The key dates of ETF involvement will be included in the roadmap.

The Cypriot Presidency will, at a later stage, confirm the schedule of the Education Committee meetings at which these Council Conclusions will be discussed.

3. Roadmaps for future Presidencies

3.1. Cyprus

The Cypriot Presidency presented the main changes in their Presidency schedule: the DGVT meeting will take place on 22-23 October, the Council Conclusions on VET will be adopted at the November Education Council meeting in Brussels and there will not be any VET-related items on the agenda of the Informal Ministerial Meeting early October.

At the DGVT meeting, one half day will be held jointly with the Directors General of Higher Education. This part will be dedicated to permeability, with a possible declaration on pathways.

A celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Copenhagen process will be organised in the context of the Education Council meeting, most likely in the form of a dinner.

3.2. Ireland

The Irish Presidency confirmed the date of the DGVT meeting (20-21 May 2013). They plan to organise a conference linked to quality assurance. Synergies between this event and the EQAVET Annual Forum should be assured.

3.3. Lithuania

The Copenhagen semester theme under the Lithuanian Presidency will be inclusiveness / role of VET in fighting early school leaving (ESL). The Lithuanian priority theme in the field of education will be referencing of NQFs to EQF. The Lithuanian Presidency is considering bridging this theme with the question of ESL. This will possibly be the theme of the presidency conference, which would follow the DGVT meeting end of October 2013.

The Commission informed the meeting of the on-going work in the field of ESL (thematic working group, a study possibly to be launched). The Commission will start completing a roadmap for the Lithuanian Presidency with information on key input for the semester theme.

4. DK Presidency events

Denmark presented the updated draft agendas for the DGVT meeting and the VET conference.

The meeting noted the recent rise of VET on the European policy agenda. This should be reflected in the agendas of these two meetings. The theme of these two events offers an excellent possibility to respond to the current policy messages.

The statement from the DGVT to the conference is being prepared, and a questionnaire was sent recently to the members of the DGVT. The statement should reflect the governments' commitment to promote cooperation among key stakeholders as well as contain recommendations. A draft will be sent to the DGVT members before its adoption at the April meeting.

5. Communicating the Bruges Communiqué

The Commission presented a document on how the communication on the Copenhagen process could be improved. The presentation included a proposal on who (Commission, Member States, Social partners, etc) should take the lead for the communication to various target groups.

Ideally, communication should be part of mainstreamed activities and policies. However, specific communication activities are needed. It was suggested to develop tools (e.g. portals) for communication. Also, a possibility to tell stories of policy achievements, as examples of good practise, was thought to be a good way to communicate to wider public. ReferNet or other existing networks could provide support in finding suitable "stories".

In order to gain more (press) visibility, participation of high-level representatives (e.g. the Commissioner) in various VET-related events would be welcome.

Some participants signalled difficulties in communicating European programs and policies at national level. Such communication requires translating messages into the national and local needs, and targeting them at well-defined groups.

The role of the Presidency events was reflected on. The participants were asked whether these should be relatively limited expert meetings or larger visibility events, or both.

The members of the Working Group were encouraged to send their comments on the document, including the question on the role of the presidency events, to the Commission next week. A reworked version should be discussed at one of the future DGVT meetings.

6. Closing

The next meeting of this working group will be held on 17 September 2012.

Annex: List of participants

Copy: Members and participants of the Working Group
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Copenhagen Working Group - Brussels, 29 February 2012

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