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Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Directorate A: Lifelong learning: horizontal policy issues and 2020 strategy
Unit A.2: Skills and Qualifications

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MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION POINTS OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE EQF ADVISORY GROUP BRUSSELS 11-12 JUNE 2012

The referencing process

The AG discussed the presentation of the referencing reports of Austria and Luxembourg.

Action points:

- Cedefop and Council of Europe to prepare a summary of comments/questions made by the EQF Advisory Group on the Austrian and Luxembourg referencing reports as presented in the meeting of the EQF Advisory Group on 11-12 June (the record and summary of the comments of the AG will be enclosed to the detailed minutes of AG15)
- Austria and Luxembourg to send their referencing reports to the Commission when it is ready to be published on the EQF portal

One country (Italy) plans to present its draft national referencing report to the EQF Advisory Group in the meeting of the EQF AG on 25-26 September 2012.

Action points:

- 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 June 2012.
- Country representatives to send their report on referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF (and its English translation) to the Commission one month before the presentation of the full report in the EQF AG meeting – IT by 25 August 2012.
- AG members to volunteer for providing detailed written comments on the IT referencing report by 25 August 2012.

The AG discussed progress made in the referencing processes of Slovenia.

Action points:

- Slovenia to take advantage of the discussion to finalise its referencing report (see the summary of specific comments in the detailed minutes of AG15)

Second Milestone of the EQF Recommendation

Based on the information country representatives provided in a simple survey on national approaches to implement the second milestone of the EQF Recommendation, the Commission presented an overview of how countries indicate or plan to indicate the relevant EQF levels in

certificates and diplomas and in Europass Supplements. AG members confirmed the usefulness of information on the state of play and national solutions for the implementation of the second milestone. The AG called for further work on communication on and the visibility of the EQF at European and national levels as well as on strengthening cooperation on ensuring the EQF is implemented in a coherent and consistent way all over Europe, including by indicating the relevant EQF level in all new certificates, diplomas and Europass supplements.

Action points:

- AG members to provide written responses to the discussion questions in note AG15-3 by 5 September 2012
- Country representatives to regularly provide information to the above mentioned overview of national developments.
- Commission to prepare regular updates also on the state of play of the implementation of the second milestone of the EQF as part of the presentation of the overview of national development in implementing the EQF. Next such overview to be prepared for the next meeting of the EQF AG on 25-26 September 2012.
- Commission to present a proposal on a EU-wide communication and branding strategy of EQF in autumn 2012 to raise awareness of holders and providers of certificates, diplomas and Europass supplements.

Peer learning activities

The AG welcomed the report from the peer learning activity on qualifications related to EQF levels 5, which took place on 19-20 April 2012 in Brussels.

Action points:

- Commission to send the report on the PLA on qualifications related to the level 5 of the EQF to the EQF AG
- AG members to disseminate the results of the PLA as appropriate

Mandate of the Learning Outcomes Group (LOG)

The AG discussed the proposal for the new mandate of the Learning Outcomes Group (LOG). As the new mandate suggests extensive coordination between stakeholders in various education and training sub-systems, the AG requested time for broader consultations and to provide written comments on the proposal.

Action points:

- AG members to send their written comments on note AG15-6 to the Commission by 30 June 2012
- Commission to review the proposal following comments from the AG by the meeting of the AG on 25-26 September.

Support to national developments

The Commission presented the state of play of the assessment of final reports of EQF NCP grants 2010 and informed that all grant agreements for 2011 have been signed. The EACEA confirmed the timeframe for the EQF NCP grants 2012: the publication of the grant request documentation is expected after the summer holidays, with agreements to start in November 2012.

Joint EQF/Ploteus Portal

The AG was informed about the proposal of the EQF portal steering committee on the development of the EQF portal and plans for joining the EQF and the Ploteus portals. The AG agreed that until mid-2013, the Portals will share a common technical platform but displayed as separate services. Further work on quality assurance, branding, governance structures and users' needs will be carried out with expert support from the EQF portal steering committee and the Ploteus Coordination group. The AG also agreed that both groups should discuss in common meetings the aforementioned issues related to the integration of the portals.

Action points:

- Commission to present and discuss plans for the future integration of the EQF and Ploteus portal in the next meeting of the Ploteus Coordination group.
- Commission to organise joint meetings of the EQF Portal Steering Committee and the Ploteus Coordination Group
- EQF portal steering committee to continue conceptual work on EQF search function: search categories and make a proposal to the EQF AG in autumn 2012
- EQF NCPs in countries that have presented their referencing report to contribute to testing the feasibility of the search criteria
- EQF NCPs to contribute to testing the technical feasibility of the interconnection of national databases with the EQF portal during summer - autumn 2012

Bucharest Communiqué

The AG was informed about and discussed the outcomes of the Bucharest Ministerial Conference of Ministers of Higher Education in the Bologna Process on 26-27 April 2012. The AG welcomed strong coordination between the implementation of the EQF and the QF EHEA, while it requested further in-depth work at European and national levels on the implementation of the learning outcomes approach, quality assurance and the recognition of foreign qualifications. The AG also encourages that countries prepare – on a voluntary basis - single reports presenting the results of referencing to the EQF and self-certification to the QF EHEA.

Action points:

- AG members to provide written responses to the questions in note AG15-4 by 5 September 2012.
- Commission and Council of Europe to continue coordination and further strengthen synergies between the implementation of the EQF and QF EHEA.

Other developments

The AG received the report of the study of the European Parliament on the state of play of the implementation of the EQF. The results of the study will be presented in the next meeting of the EQF AG on 25-26 September 2012.

The AG was informed about the latest developments in the Copenhagen Process.

The AG was informed and discussed the main thrust of the Commission proposal for a Council recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The AG was informed about the developments in the qualifications pillar as well as overall implementation of ESCO.

The EQF AG was informed about the intention of Ireland to organise a presidency conference on qualifications frameworks in the 1st semester of 2013.

The next meeting of the EQF Advisory Group will be on 25-26 September 2012. Further planned EQF Advisory Group meeting dates in 2012: 29-30 October (if necessary), 4-5 December.

NCP meeting: 6-7 November 2012, Brussels