REVIEW OF THE 2006 FRAMEWORK OF KEY COMPETENCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Consultation Strategy

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Consultation objectives

The objective of the consultation is to gather input for informed changes to the current Key Competences Framework. The consultation is conceived in such a way to enable participation of a wide range of stakeholders, policy makers, researchers and practitioners. While there are some specific questions to be addressed, the consultation will also provide space for general statements or questions with regard to the role of key competence frameworks at EU level.

The consultation aims to gather inputs on the following topics:

- Current strengths and weaknesses in implementation of the 2006 Key Competences Framework;
- Priority areas where changes to the Framework are necessary to address the needs of current and future education and training;
- Tools and processes which could additionally support efforts in key competences development for all on various levels, European, national, regional and local and in different education and training sectors.

The updated Key Competences Framework will be successful if it can be used in different education and training sectors as well as informal and non-formal learning contexts in different countries. In this sense the objective of the broad consultation process is also to create ownership of the updated Key Competences Framework.

Main questions to be raised (especially within public consultation) relate to the overall structure of the Framework, definitions of individual competences and their scope and usefulness of tools and processes to assist in implementation of competences based teaching and learning.

Consultation process

The consultation process started in June 2016 and will continue in 2017. A revised Framework on Key Competences is foreseen for adoption in the 4th quarter of 2017. Consultation consists of several methods to ensure involvement of all target groups as well as assessment of previous implementation and foresight planning identifying key competences that will be needed in the future. Public consultation to inform the Review is planned in 1st quarter of 2017. Inputs from the consultation will be analysed and used by the Commission to help draft a revised Recommendation on Key Competences.

Consultation Timeline
- ET 2020 High Level Group on Education meeting (Bratislava, June 2016)
- ETY Forum consultation (Brussels, October 2016)
- Expert seminar of the revision of the KCF (Brussels, November 2016)
- Collaborative Space on the School Education Gateway (www.schooleducationgateway.eu) (launched November 2016)
- Cultural Affairs Committee (Brussels, November 2016)
- ET 2020 High Level Group on Education meeting (Malta, November 2016)
- ET 2020 Working Group on Citizenship Education (Brussels, November 2016)
- ET 2020 Directors General Schools Meeting (Bratislava, December 2016)

- Interviews with stakeholders as part of study on the assessment of the implementation of the 2006 Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (January-June 2017)
- Youthpass advisory group meeting (Brussels, February 2017)
- Two meetings with expert on foresight as part of Study: Prospective Platform – Key Competences for the next generation (Brussels, February and April 2017)
- Public consultation on 'Your Voice in Europe' (February - May 2017)
- Directors General HE meeting (March, 2017)
- Advisory Committee on VET meeting - covers both VET and Adult learning (April, 2017)
- Conference of EU policy networks in the field of school education (Brussels, April 2017)
- Directors General Schools Meeting (Malta, April 2017)
- Cultural Affairs Committee (Brussels, April 2017)
- Directors General VET meeting - covers both VET and Adult learning (May, 2017)
- Conference on the Key Competence Framework (Brussels, June 2017)

Consultation stakeholders

The consultation process will allow participation of different stakeholders. The following stakeholders are identified:

- National, regional and local educational authorities in Member States, policy makers in education, training and youth policies
- Policy networks and organisations in the area of education, training, youth work, non-formal learning such as organisations of educators or trainers, leaders of educational institutions, cultural organisations etc.
- Education and training institutions and providers, youth work organisations and networks, civil society organisations
- Practitioners in education, training and youth policies
- Organisations with a strong interest in education, training, youth and culture (even if it is not their direct focus) such as social partners, employment services, career guidance services
- Researchers and academics in education, training, youth, culture
- All learners, adult workers, young people, job seekers, low-qualified and low-skilled people, volunteers

Background

The European Parliament and the Council adopted in 2006 a Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. Key competences are those competences all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. The Recommendation defines competences as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

It sets out eight key competences:

- Communication in the mother tongue;
- Communication in foreign languages;

- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;

- Digital competence;

- Learning to learn;

- Social and civic competences;

- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and

- Cultural awareness and expression.

Key competences should be acquired by:

- young people at the end of their compulsory education and training, equipping them for adult life, particularly for working life, whilst forming also a basis for further lifelong learning, knowledge acquisition and skills development;
- adults throughout their lives, through a process of developing and updating skills.

To foster a common understanding of digital and entrepreneurial competences the Commission has developed a European Reference Framework for Entrepreneurship and a Framework for Developing and Understanding Digital Competence in Europe.

Context

Europe's economic and social success is based to a large extent on the competences of its population. The Annual Growth Survey for 2016 highlights the need to invest in Europe's human capital and performance-oriented reforms of education and training systems as part of the necessary efforts to restore jobs and sustainable growth[1] and thus responds to the European Commission's first political priority "A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment".[2]

The review of the 2006 Recommendation on Key Competences[3] is announced in the 2017 Commission Work Programme[4] under the Youth Initiative[5] - Communication on Improving and modernising education.[6] The review is part of the New Skills Agenda for Europe[7] and link s to the proposal for a Council Recommendation on Upskilling pathways: New Opportunities for Adults[8] addressing the low skilled adults. The Review is furthermore linked to ET2020,[9] including the Copenhagen process on vocational education and training (VET), European Agenda for Adult Learning[10] and the Agenda for the Modernisation of Europe's Higher Education Systems.[11]

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[1] Annual Growth Survey for 2016: Strengthening the recovery and fostering convergence, COM(2015) 690 final

[2] A New Start for Europe: My Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change, Political Guidelines for the next European Commission, 2014

[3] Recommendation on Key Competences for lifelong learning http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32006H0962

[4] 2017 Commission Work Programme http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/key-documents/index_en.htm

[5] http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/pdf/cwp_2017_annex_i_en.pdf

[6] http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2016/EN/COM-2016-941-F1-EN-MAIN.PDF

[7] http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en

[8] http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1224

[9] Strategic Framework for European cooperation on education and training, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/index_en.htm

[10] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32011G1220(01)&from=EN

[11] http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/policy/modernisation_en.pdf

The Review also relates to the European Pillar of Social Rights[12] stressing the role of education in enabling citizens to take full part in the labour market and society. Finally, it contributes to the achievement of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 "Education 2030",[13] in particular Target 4.7.[14]

Problem the initiative aims to tackle

A large share of the EU population currently lacks a sufficient level of basic and digital skills to be employable and take part in social life. The EU benchmark that fewer than 15% of 15-year-olds should be under-skilled in reading, mathematics and science by 2020 has not yet been reached.[15] Actually, the latest 2015 PISA data show that the EU as a whole is seriously lagging behind in all three domains and has taken a step backward.[16] In addition, by 2020, 90% of jobs will require at least some level of digital competence. Finally, 40% of employers report difficulties in finding candidates with the right skills, many of them stressing a lack of transversal skills among job applicants.[17]

In addition, the Paris Declaration of March 2015 and the ET 2020 Joint Report of November 2015, have underscored the need to deepen the role of education to ensure that pupils acquire solid social, civic and intercultural competences by promoting democratic values and fundamental rights, social inclusion and non-discrimination, as well as active citizenship. They also called for enhancing critical thinking and media literacy, particularly in the use of the Internet and social media, so as to develop resistance to of discrimination and indoctrination.

The European Key Competences Framework aims to address these issues. However, 10 years after its adoption it needs to be updated to reflect political, social, economic, ecological and technological developments since 2006, such as migration, globalisation, digital communication, the increased importance of STEM skills and social networks, and sustainable development issues.

With no new EU intervention, the support for the acquisition of key competences is likely follow different approaches in Member States and depend on the individual capacity of Member States to develop modern competence frameworks. The uneven implementation of key competences in education and training, non-formal and informal learning in Member States (Eurydice;[18] KeyCoNet;[19] CEDEFOP[20]) as well as its effects on learner's performance are likely to continue.

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[12]   http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/towards-european-pillar-social-rights_en

[13] http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/

[14] By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

[15] OECD PIAAC survey on EU working age population and PISA survey on 15 year olds.

[16] https://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20161206-pisa-2015-eu-policy-note_en

[17]   The   Missing   Entrepreneurs   2015,   http://www.oecd.org/industry/the-missing-entrepreneurs-2015-9789264226418-en.htm

[18] "Developing key competences at school in Europe", Eurydice, 2012 -
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/145en.pdf

[19]   KeyCoNet   -   http://keyconet.eun.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=78469b98-b49c-4e9a-a1ce-501199f7e8b3&groupId=11028

[20] http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/3067

Objectives of the initiative

By updating the Framework this initiative will deliver a relevant tool that can assist Member States in adequately addressing the above stated problems. The updated Key competence Framework will serve as relevant instrument for education and training policy development and reforms in Member States. It will allow for a more coherent integration of key competences for all, and especially basic skills, into national skills strategies and curricula.

By reviewing, updating and developing the 2006 Key Competences Framework the initiative aims to further promote competence-based teaching and learning across Europe. With the updated Key Competence Framework and its implementation in Member States the following results are foreseen:

- Better support to education and training systems, institutions and educators for development of competence based education, training and learning;
- Increase in the number of people equipped with basic skills and key competences.