MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENLARGED ACVT BUREAU

24 SEPTEMBER 2013

1. Opening

Mr António Silva Mendes, Director for Education and Vocational Training, welcomed the participants to the first meeting of the "enlarged ACVT bureau", result of the DGVT/ACVT consultation earlier in 2013. The meeting was chaired by Ms Dana Bachmann, Head of Unit for Vocational training and adult education; Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig.

Following the Member State rotation principle, the current composition for this group is: Ireland, Lithuania, Greece, Italy and Latvia. All except LV were represented at this meeting (IT through the Ministry of Labour).

At the meeting, LT proposed a slight correction to the minutes of the previous meeting (which was a joint meeting of the ACVT bureau and the Copenhagen Working Group, on 26 March 2013). As no other comments had been received, the minutes of the previous meeting of 26 March 2013 were approved with the correction.

2. Bruges Review 2014

Dana Bachmann presented the framework for the ET2020 mid-term stock-taking. Mr. Jan Varchola from the Commission presented the plans for the stock-taking of achievements under the Copenhagen process in 2011-2014, as well as the revision of the short-term deliverables for 2015-2017. Finally, Ms. Lore Schmid explained the Cedefop approach to prepare the Policy Report of achievements of 2011-2014, which Ms. Madlen Serban complemented through ETF contribution to the reporting for the candidate countries.

(For further information, see the three background documents sent prior to the meeting.)

The stock-taking of achievements in 2011-2014 at national level will be presented in the VET Policy Report, prepared by Cedefop with input from ETF for the candidate countries. This report will draw on several information sources, ReferNet reports, interviews with DGVT members and focus group meetings of the ACVT members. It
was agreed that the ACVT focus group meetings will be organised in Brussels, around the ACVT meeting. For this, each interviewed person would need to stay half-a-day either before or after the ACVT meeting, for one 90-minute session, involving representatives of a few Member States simultaneously. The meetings will be organised separately for employer and employee representatives on the one hand and for government representatives on the other hand. The planning for the meetings will be made sufficiently in advance so that the timing for these interviews could be included in the official ACVT invitation.

In the ACVT focus group meetings, it was agreed to center the discussions around two key topics on 1. The responsiveness of VET systems to the Labour Market needs and 2. Learning for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. The Commission highlighted that these themes are not guiding themes for the definition of future short term deliverables, but have been selected only for guiding the discussions in focus groups in order to have more information on progress and challenges identified in the current reporting period.

As key players in national VET policy, the DGVT members will be interviewed separately, by telephone. These interviews will be larger in scope, and their aim is to collect in-depth information on the impact of recent VET policy reforms towards reaching the strategic objectives of the Bruges Communiqué.

In this stock-taking exercise, national coordination between the DGVT and the ACVT members will be highly important.

In this context some concern was expressed about the reporting under the ET2020. Since Member States will have contributed to the VET Policy Report through ReferNet, there is a need to avoid overlaps and extra burden for them. Therefore, the ET2020 report should touch upon more cross-cutting issues, whereas the reporting for the 2014 Bruges Review would be more specific on VET issues.

MS wished that the Commission would present a larger planning of all the education and training-related reporting needs in order to see the work load involved for the MS and to minimize overlaps.

To complement the report on status of implementation at national level, the Commission will provide an overview of the implementation of the European level deliverables foreseen in the Bruges Communiqué.

On the revision of the next set of short-term deliverables (the 2014 Bruges Review, setting deliverables for 2015-2017), there was a strong consensus of a need to simplify the future short-term deliverables, reduce them in number and to prioritise the most crucial ones. It was clarified that the strategic objectives included in the Bruges Communiqué will not be revised at this stage, as they have been set until 2020.

The 2014 Bruges Review will be based on the results of the stock-taking, and will be launched early 2014 by presenting a reflection paper on progress and proposed future STDs for the next enlarged ACVT bureau (February / March 2014, exact date to be confirmed). They will also be discussed at the DGVT meeting under the EL Presidency (27-28 March, Athens).
The adoption of the new short-term deliverables will require cooperation with the Education Committee and a strong leadership from the Greek and the Italian Presidencies. In order to benefit from the experience of the previous Member State responsible for the review under the Copenhagen process, it was agreed to invite a representative from the 2010 Belgian Presidency team to the next meeting of the enlarged ACVT bureau.

The short-term deliverables will first be adopted as Council Conclusions (under the IT Presidency) and could be put forward as part of the ET2020 joint report (adoption by COM in March 2015 and by Council in June 2015).

With the considerations presented above, the enlarged ACVT bureau approved the road map and the methodology proposed.

Follow up actions:
- Commission will prepare one single paper on the review process, incorporating the Cedefop note and explaining clearly what reporting requirements are expected from Member States
- Belgium will be asked to join the enlarged bureau for the next meeting to provide some guidance and feedback from the Bruges Communiqué process
- For the next enlarged bureau meeting a discussion paper will be prepared by the Commission setting the scene for the debate on the next set of short term deliverables

3. Events under the current and the future presidencies (DGVT meetings and conferences)

As feedback from the latest DGVT meeting in Dublin, delegates had a positive overall impression of a less formal meeting set up. However, some participants found that too many and too large questions were proposed for discussion at round tables within a short time frame. A better distribution of participants for the round table discussions was recommended to ensure a wider coverage of different countries.

The LT Presidency explained the contents of the two main VET-related events in Lithuania. The DGVT meeting of 11-12 November will contain a peer review on four VET-related themes. Member States are invited to register either as reviewed or reviewing countries. It is hoped that at least 2 countries would enrol to be reviewed on each theme. Ireland expressed their interest to be reviewed on apprenticeships issues, as they are undergoing a review of their current system. Member States are invited to bring in one DGVT member and one expert in the field of the workshop they will be attending. Each MS is free to decide on the composition of its delegation.

Cedefop is finalising the thematic introduction notes. Also country background information sheets will be available for the review. After the event, a report will be prepared containing the lessons learned from the Peer Review, and it will be presented to the Education Committee as well as to the High Level Group.

The Peer review will be followed by a half-day plenary meeting that will focus on a policy debate on the results of the Survey on Adult Skills (PIAAC) and updates and discussion on the OMC process. For the DGVT meeting, the Commission will prepare an information note including recent developments in various items in the Education and Training policy (e.g. EAfA, EQAVET evaluation, EASQ, etc).
The conference "The Role of VET in Making Education More Inclusive" will take place in the afternoon of 12 and the morning of 13 November (2 half-days).

ETUC asked the permission to send two representatives to the DGVT meeting. This permission was granted, on the condition that ETUC covers the costs of the second delegate.

The **EL Presidency** programme, as well as the DGVT meeting, will focus on e.g. bringing forward the stock-taking under the Copenhagen process, Quality Assurance at all sectors (including VET and AL), with a link to EASQ, the main results of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships and possibly PIAAC (focussing on measures taken at national level following the publication of the results).

The conference would focus on VET trainers and school teachers, and could feed into the planned Council Conclusions on teacher education.

The joint Cedefop-Commission conference for launching the VET Policy Report will take place under the auspices of the EL Pres in June, but will not be a Presidency event.

The meeting regretted the unfortunate clash of the VET conference (26 March 2014) and the DGVT meeting (27-28 March) on the one hand and the EQAVET Forum (Athens 26-27 March) on the other.

Under the **IT Presidency**, possible themes will be linking learning pathways and employment as well as transnational mobility for learning and employment, showcasing how ESF funds could be used to support learner mobility in VET and interaction of different public services (employment, guidance, education and training) at local levels. However, these priorities need to be confirmed after a consultation with the Ministry of Education. One key area of focus for the Italian Presidency will be taking forward the negotiations for the 2014 Bruges review.

It was noted that so far there was no information on **LV** plans.

**Follow up actions:**

- Participants are asked to register for the DGVT meeting and the VET conference in Vilnius and are encouraged to make best use of the peer review process in support of national reform processes.
- Italian representatives will present a proposal for priorities after consultation with the Ministry of Education.
- The Commission will follow up with Latvian representatives for defining Presidency priorities.

**4. ACVT meeting on 11-12 December 2013**

A draft containing a proposal for the agenda items for the next ACVT meeting was discussed (see the background document). The meeting agreed to this draft, but it was decided to add one further discussion item: implications of the Annual Growth Survey for VET & AL, as well as short items for the information note on the High-level meeting between Commissioner Vassiliou and the European Social Partners (to be organised on
16 October) and on the European Education, Training and youth Forum 2013 (17-18 October 2013).

It was decided to invite, as observers, to the ACVT plenary representatives of the DG Employment, VET providers and VET student organisations.

The meeting welcomed the idea to celebrate the 50 years of ACVT over a cocktail in the Centre Borchette in the evening of 11 December (after the group meetings).

Follow up

- New agenda to be prepared including the two additional items.
- When sending joint invitations for the ACVT meeting provide clear information as regards the focus meetings that Cedefop will conduct for the VET policy report.

5. Closing

Next meeting of the enlarged ACVT bureau should take place late February or early March 2014. The exact date will be proposed in due course.

The main themes of the meeting will be the first Cedefop/ETF findings from the 2011-2014 stock-taking, a draft discussion note on progress and proposed future STDs for the DGVT meeting, an updated roadmap for the 2014 Bruges review and the agenda for the ACVT meeting in June 2014.
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