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**MEETING OF THE PLATFORM OF EUROPEAN ASSOCIATIONS OF VET PROVIDERS  
BRUSSELS, 28 MAY 2015**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

The first meeting of the expert group with the 6 European Associations of VET providers<sup>[1]</sup> took place on 28 May 2015.

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed the participants in the new setting of the expert group and acknowledged the work done so far with the 6 European associations of VET providers. The minutes of the previous still informal meeting with the follow up undertaken were distributed. This will be a recurrent practice in order to translate discussions into actions.

**2. Work programme expert group**

A first **draft mandate** proposing the work to be done in the next 2 years was presented briefly by the Commission. It contained only some broad ideas for policy areas to be addressed by the group. Comments on the proposal were requested to be sent by the end of June 2015.

EVTA underlined that the participation to the events of DG EMPL by VET providers should be more coherent and coordinated. EfVET wished to strengthen the role of each member organisation at national level, improving cooperation with national authorities in view of the participation in the expert group. Members could play the role of 'testers' for pilot projects of new policies and also promote initiatives, such as the Youth Guarantee, in each country. The awareness within DG EMPL about the expert group could be increased.

Some explanations were also given by the Commission about the future Skills Agenda to be developed by DG EMPL and related instruments such as Sector Skills Alliances and the future of European Sector Skills Councils under Erasmus+. Since these two instruments had overlaps, notably regarding the gathering of skills intelligence, it had been proposed to revise Sector Skills Alliances by integrating the activities of the former European Sector Skills Councils.

The focus for the topic of the mandate 'Leadership in VET, Teachers, trainers' should be framed under work-based learning (EVBB proposal). As Cedefop and ETF were not present, their contribution to the expert group could be explored in the next meeting.

Funding of initiatives was also discussed and possibilities under Erasmus+ could be further explored.

Comments should be sent by beginning of September together with possible written suggestions on dissemination activities to bring EU policies at grass-root level and ensure Erasmus+ projects' results and good practices are fed into policy.

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<sup>[1]</sup> EVTA, EUproVET, EUCEN, EURASHE, EVBB and EFVET

The Commission presented the **feasibility study** recently launched by DG EMPL in order to map the state of play of VET providers associations at national level. The aim was to get an overview of cooperation with national authorities and test the added value of a potential European network of national associations of VET providers. The 6 associations will be invited to a validation workshop to (provisional date 30 October 2015) to discuss the findings and conclusions of the study.

### 3. Declaration for Riga event

The **draft Joint Declaration on the Riga conclusions** was briefly presented by VET providers and discussed by the participants. Comments of the Commission were mainly related to the alignment of recommendations to the five medium-term deliverables.

It was underlined that the declaration was a key step for the work and visibility of the European VET providers' associations. Their participation to the Riga Ministerial event was also explained, highlighting the major progresses in terms of official involvement, compared to 2010.

A revised version of the document would be sent by 8 June 2015.

### 4. Information by VET Associations

The Associations informed the Commission of **their activities**:

- **EUCEN** overviewed their projects and upcoming conference (Building bridges between VET and HE in Istanbul, where Unit EMPL/C5 will participate).
- **EURASHE** work focused on permeability, recognition of prior learning and interplay between ESG and EQAVET; they will intervene at the 40 years Cedefop Conference on 12 June.
- **EVBB** announced their annual conference in Brussels devoted to 'Training and Skills for employment and development', from 22 to 25 October (overlapping with EfVET – the need to coordinate better the dates was underlined); they overviewed their multiannual programme (2015 WBL, 2016 youth unemployment and 2017 quality and transparency in mobility) with specific working groups on different themes (WBL, Youth employment/NEETs and VET and HE).
- **EfVET** informed about their conference in Cyprus, devoted to excellence in VET from 21 to 24 October where Unit EMPL/C5 will participate. They will produce a brochure of ongoing projects (2013-2015) as well as a collection of best practices (ex. in the field of guidance).
- **EUpromVET** explained they cooperated with EU Employers on a study on cost effectiveness of apprenticeships (presented also at the ACVT of May) as well as in a project concerning entrepreneurship (under COSME). Their annual conference will be organized in conjunction with the EDISON project on Entrepreneurship Education on 30/11-1/12/2015 in the Netherlands.
- **EVTA** presented the idea of a **VET Week** organized jointly by all 6 associations and the Commission, to be held in the first semester of 2016. There was a broad support to the idea. It should be developed further in terms of purpose, concrete outputs and target groups.

The VET Week could also be one concrete output in the mandate of the expert group. It could serve for the purpose of:

- reviewing the implementation of VET deliverables (EVBB)
- monitoring progress towards the commitments defined in the Joint Declaration activities (Eucen)
- dissemination and raising the profile of VET paths (EfVET).

The Commission would explore if the event could be held in the framework of the European Business Forum on VET. Proposals in writing should come early September.

The above information about activities and projects is shared by the Commission with other Services/colleagues, when relevant.

The Chair confirmed the possibility of having participation from the Commission at their events to disseminate EU policies and also to meet their members when visiting Brussels. It would also be possible to publish interviews with Commission officials, on different topics for their newsletters, for example on the new MTDs or on teachers and trainers. It is important for the Commission that members' organizations are well informed. The Commission would continue to send a mail with useful links/information to the expert group for further dissemination (associations will make it relevant/forward for their members). EVBB proposed to organize regional events where Commission would meet the grass root level as this was found to be very effective in previous occasions.

## **5. Mutual recognition of professional qualifications**

DG GROW and DG EMPL provided an update on the activities in the field of the **Regulated professions** and the links with ESCO (follow up from the previous meeting of VET providers). Common training principles to be established by at least 10 Member States can be relevant also for VET professions.

## **6. Update on current Commission policy issues related to education and training**

DG EMPL informed participants about the **EFSI** (Juncker) Fund and its functioning. The Commission asked for ideas which could be relevant in the education and training field.

VET providers also stressed the importance of **social inclusion** as a priority of members' organizations (re-insertion in the labour market, upgrading of skills). In the next meeting, it could be explored how to work together and updates of DG EMPL inclusion policies (also by other Directorates) could be provided.

### **FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS**

Inputs from VET providers were requested for the following points:

1. Mandate of the group (end June 2015) (done)
2. Future possibilities of Erasmus+ for VET providers (beginning of September 2015)
3. A detailed concept for the VET week (beginning of September 2015) (done)
4. Dissemination activities to bring EU policies at grass-root level and ensure Erasmus+ projects' results and good practices are fed into policy (beginning of September 2015)
5. Possible ideas in the field of E&T for the 'Juncker' Investment package (EFSI)

The Commission will:

1. Explore with EACEA the possibility for project leaders to participate in VET week at own expenses
2. Inform about the launch of consultation on 16 new sectors in ESCO project (done)
3. Provide updates of DG EMPL policies at the next meeting of the group
4. Send a calendar of events for second semester by end June (together with the minutes of this meeting) (done)

It was requested to hold the meetings on Fridays if possible.

The next meeting of the group is scheduled for **30 October 2015**.