



Newsletter N°9 April 2008

EUCIS-LLL

European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning

IVTH EUCIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 5 MARCH 2008

EUCIS-LLL members met for their fourth General Assembly on 5 March 2008 in Brussels. In the morning session, members adopted the activity, financial and moral reports as well as their action plan for 2008-2010. The platform welcomed two new members, EAICY (European Association of Institutions of Non-Formal Education for Children and Young People) and ISCA (International Sport and Culture Association). The board thanked the members for their contributions in 2007, a year that showed rich events and perspectives. For 2008 and onwards, the platform has identified four main priorities in its action plan: structuring the network and strengthening the links between the members; reinforcing its position as a source of proposals; setting up « Lifelong Learning Weeks » and participating in the promotion of European civil dialogue.

In the afternoon, the members welcomed other European networks to participate in a debate about the role and contribution of civil society organisations in the creation of a European era of knowledge. EUCIS-LLL presented three projects, the Liaison Group contribution

to the Economic and Social Committee opinion on the Lisbon Strategy in which EUCIS-LLL contributed, EUCIS-LLL proposal to implement “Lifelong Learning Weeks” in each member state and EUCIS-LLL contribution to the EU French presidency “Education” event: the “European Education Fair”, 27-30 November 2008, Paris.

Gordon CLARK, head of unit in DG EAC, was invited to respond to two major issues: how to integrate civil society organisations' expertise and experience into the definition of an updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training and how to ensure that civil society organisations are better integrated into the implementation of National lifelong learning strategies. He announced that the European Commission was about to organise a Forum of civil society stakeholders on future perspectives in E&T in May 2008. EUCIS-LLL has published an information note (in [French](#) only) to explain the context.

To receive the minutes of the general assembly as well as the speakers' presentations contact [Audrey Frith](#).

NEW WEBSITE AND INTRANET : WWW.EUCIS.NET !

The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning has just published its new website: www.eucis.net. It presents the platform's goals, activities, members and other useful information. It also proposes a “resource centre” that should be enriched by members' contributions in the future. Indeed, many of our networks and their members are publishing interesting researches or tools that one cannot find easily in libraries. The website could be used as a tool to gather all this information and to share it with the public. It also proposes an index that will help the users to find the data according to key words. The website will also

centralise the different events organised by the members notably in the frame of the “lifelong learning weeks”. This represents a new challenge for the development of the platform and will require the involvement of all the members! The website is only available in French for the moment, the English version should be published soon.

The members will also have access to an Intranet. This tool will be very useful in order to share information and to create virtual working groups. It can also be used by the members in the frame of their cooperation projects.

EESC LIAISON GROUP CONTRIBUTION TO THE LISBON STRATEGY

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has established the Liaison Group with European civil society organisations and networks in 2004. The role of the Liaison Group, whose remit is to be a forum for political dialogue, is to guarantee a coordinated EESC

approach vis-à-vis European civil society organisations and networks, and to follow up joint initiatives. The Liaison Group is made up of EESC representatives and of 15 representatives from different sectors of European civil society.

The Liaison Group has been working on a contribution to the European Economic and Social Committee opinion on the Lisbon Strategy. Tommaso Grimaldi, vice-president of EUCIS-LLL, was elected reporter for the Liaison Group. This contribution, adopted on 19 December 2007, is attached to the CESE's synthesis report that will be presented during the spring 2008 Council. It puts forward three priorities: recognise the full role of the social dimension in the strategy, implement an efficient civil dialogue and coherent lifelong learning strategies.

European civil society organizations request the translation of the Lisbon Strategy into a concrete action plan providing the corresponding resources and political and institutional authorities. European civil society cannot be asked to come up to the expectations of the Lisbon Strategy, if it is not invited to participate in the process of priority-making. They therefore urge for a bottom-up approach in which we intend to play an active part.

You can [download](#) the EESC opinion on the Lisbon Strategy here.

NGOs CONCERNED BY U-TURN ON EUROPEAN TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

The Commission adopted a Green Paper and opened a public consultation on a European Transparency Initiative in May 2006. The initiative deals with 3 main topics: lobbying, the introduction of legal obligations for Member States to publish the information about the beneficiaries of funds under shared management and the Commission's consultation practices.

With the adoption of the revised Financial Regulation the EU has committed itself to full transparency about who receives monies from the EU budget. There will be annual ex-post publication of beneficiaries of money received from the Structural Funds as from 2008 and of money received under the Common Agricultural Policy as of 2009. With this, the European Commission has achieved its first objective. Things are more complicated for the other two objectives.

The Commission decided to set up a public register for all interest representatives working to influence

decisions taken in EU institutions. It should be finalised by spring 2008. NGOs are convinced that with the register presently planned by the Commission, people would still not have any real indication of who exactly is working to influence EU decision-making, let alone on whose behalf lobbying of EU legislators is taking place. NGOs observe that this will reduce the usefulness of the register and undermine its credibility and the one of the European Commission as a whole. The Civil Society Contact Group thus urged the European Commission to apply high standards of transparency for a strong and meaningful register of interest representation in Brussels. The register should not hide the names of lobbyists and not avoid giving precise information about the financing of lobbying activities.

[Download](#) the CSCG letter to the President of the Commission, José Manuel Barroso.

CIVIL SOCIETY CONTACT GROUP POSITION ON THE EU BUDGET REVIEW

In May 2006, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission agreed that the Commission should undertake a fundamental review of the EU budget free from the constraints of a negotiation on a financial framework. This review aims to set out the structure and direction of the Union's future spending priorities; to examine how the budget works, how to get the right balance between continuity and responding to new challenges. Finally, the review will take a look at the best way of providing the resources necessary to fund EU policies. The European Commission has launched a broad consultation with interested parties at local, regional and national levels, as well as at the European level, to stimulate an open debate on EU finances.

The Civil Society Contact Group has just submitted its contribution to the EU budget review consultation. For a long time the EU budget has been the result of horse-

trading between national interests. For the Civil Society Contact Group, it is time it becomes a real European budget serving the public interest. In their position paper, the members proposed a set of principles that should guide the UE towards a value and rights based budget. For instance, the EU budget should respect and promote the values and rights as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and contribute to achieving the Treaty aims and objectives. EU money being public money, it should serve the European public interest by respecting the principles of solidarity and sustainable development. Furthermore, public budgeting and spending must be a transparent and accountable process and should allow for meaningful participation of public interest organisations.

You can download this contribution on the [CSCG website](#).

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S CITIZEN AGORA ON CLIMATIC CHANGES, 12-13 JUNE 2008

Following the outcome of the recent World Climate Conference (Bali 2007), and pending the next global summits on the topic (Poznan in late 2008 and Copenhagen in late 2009), the European Union intends to use the whole of this year to look closely at all its policies in this field: energy, transport, agriculture, trade, the environment, development, social policy, research, education, industry, etc.

The European Parliament is inviting European civil society, represented by 500 of its most important organisations, to express its views freely and frankly on

this crucial matter and to put forward its analyses and draw up proposals, while also defining its own role in what is to be done.

EUCIS-LLL is a member of the European Parliament task force on the organisation of the Agoras. We have the opportunity to send 27 representatives (one per UE country) to the Agora and to propose speakers and moderators. If you are interested please contact the [coordinator](#) very rapidly.

More information about the Agora of the European Parliament [website](#).

RESULTS OF THE STUDIES ON IMPLEMENTING AND DEVELOPING AN ECVET SYSTEM

ECVET aims for better comparability and compatibility between different national VET and qualification systems. The system, which should be implemented by member states by 2012, is a voluntary framework to describe qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes. Each of these units will be associated with a certain number of ECVET points developed on the basis of common European standards.

The European Commission supported projects in order to analyse the implementation and development of an ECVET system. Two studies have just been published:

- ECVET Reflector: study on the implementation and development of an ECVET system for initial vocational education and training

- ECVET Connexion: study on the feasibility of an ECVET system for apprentices (test phase).

More information about the studies on the European Commission's [website](#).

EUCIS-LLL had published a [position paper](#) on ECVET in the frame of the public consultation opened by the European Commission from Nov. 2006 to March 2007.

TESE - THESAURUS FOR EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN EUROPE, EURYDICE

This thesaurus concentrates on education systems and policies in Europe. TESE is already available in 10 languages online (aims to 14 languages). With the thesaurus you may:

- search for a specific descriptor and access the site's indexed resources directly using this descriptor;

- navigate the TESE hierarchy to find the descriptor which corresponds best to your search;

- download the TESE in different formats for use in your information system;

- send your suggestions for future updating.

You can have access to the thesaurus on [EURYDICE website](#).

FUTURE SKILL NEEDS IN EUROPE: MEDIUM-TERM FORECAST

Cedefop, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, presents its first forecast of skill needs up to the year 2015. The study "*Future skill needs in Europe: medium-term forecast*" concludes that demand for skills and qualifications is being driven upwards in most occupations, including in so-called elementary jobs, by the continuing rise of the service sector and sweeping technological and organisational changes. The structural and other changes taking place will, if these trends continue, create many jobs at higher levels

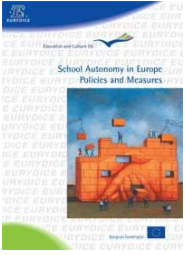
but also large numbers at the lower end of the job spectrum, with low pay and poor terms and conditions. This will pose significant problems for policy-makers concerned with issues of equity and social cohesion. It also raises concerns about job quality and mismatch, and related problems of social equality and exclusion for many European citizens.

You can download the study on the Cedefop's [website](#).

EURYDICE PUBLICATION: SCHOOL AUTONOMY IN EUROPE, POLICIES & MEASURES

Over the past twenty years, schools have been the subject of much reflection and many reforms, in

particular as regards the autonomy granted to them. Increased decision-making power has been vested in



them in order to improve democratic participation, the management of public funding for education and, especially in recent years, the quality of teaching. School autonomy remains a key issue on the political agenda of many European countries.

This study presents an outline of the current state of school autonomy in 30 European countries. It focuses on the levels of autonomy in terms of financial resource management (public and private funding) and human

resource management (school heads, teaching and non-teaching staff). It also presents the decision-making instances within schools as well as the evaluation systems (accountability) of schools which have been implemented in connection with this autonomy. A historical overview of the reforms related to school autonomy is also provided, spanning more than 20 years. Primary and lower secondary education are the levels concerned. You can [download](#) the publication here.

OECD PUBLICATION: TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT FOR ADULTS: IMPROVING FOUNDATION SKILLS



Adults with low skills in language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) are numerous in many OECD countries. They can include early school leavers, older learners who have not used their skills over time, immigrant and refugee learners or individuals with disabilities.

The consequences of these low foundation skills span the economic, health and social well-being of individuals, families and communities. Investment in this sector of adult education is therefore crucial. But what is known about whether and how programmes are meeting the needs of diverse learners?

This study looks specifically inside the programmes for adult LLN learners, with a focus on formative assessment – referring to the frequent assessment of

learner understanding and progress to identify needs and shape teaching and learning. Drawing upon evidence gathered in country reports, exemplary case studies and international literature reviews, it examines the impact and implementation of different teaching, learning and assessment practices for adult LLN learners; the way innovative programmes address the very diverse needs and goals of this population; and the policies that support or hinder effective practice.

This book provides a strong foundation for understanding the fundamental issues at stake in the adult LLN education, and can guide future policy, practice and research. It will be of particular interest to policy makers, teachers and instructors, researchers, and students. You can order this publication on [OECD website](#).

EUCIS-LLL EVENTS

- 12 June** Public hearing on “Access to lifelong learning for disabled people”, 14-17h, Brussels
- September** Public hearing (the theme and day will be communicated soon)
- 29 November** Conference on “Flexicurity and access to lifelong learning”, Salon européen de l'éducation, Paris. Organised under the UE French presidency.

EUCIS-LLL is a European platform that gathers 16 important European organisations or networks active in education or training that work together to promote a certain vision of lifelong learning: **AEGEE** (European Students' Forum); **EAEA** (European Association for Education of Adults), **EAICY** (European Association of Institutions of Non-Formal Education for Children and Young People), **ECSWE** (European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education), **EFFE** (European Forum for Freedom in Education), **EfVET** (European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training), **ETDF** (European Training and Development Federation), **EUCEN** (European University Continuing Education Network), **EUNEC** (European Network of Education Councils), **EURO-WEA** (European Workers Education Association), **EVTA/AEFP** (European Vocational Training Association), **FEEC** (European Federation for Education and Culture), **FICEMEA** (International Federation of Training Centres for the Promotion of New Education), **IAEC/AIVE** (International Association of Educating Cities), **ISCA** (International Sport and Culture Association), **SOLIDAR** (European Platform on Social Affairs, International Solidarity and Lifelong Learning).