



Fourth Stakeholders' Forum on EU cooperation in Education and Training
"Priority areas for the 2012-14 work cycle of the Strategic Framework ET 2020"
26th-27th September 2011, Brussels

European cooperation in education and training for the period up to 2020 is established in the context of a strategic framework¹ spanning education and training systems as a whole in a lifelong learning perspective (ET2020). The period up to 2020 is divided into cycles of short-term priorities for the implementation of ET2020². With the first cycle covering the years 2009 to 2011 coming to its end, the Commission is currently consulting Member States and other stakeholders in the preparation of the priority areas of the second cycle which will cover the period 2012-2014.

This Forum co-organised by DG EAC and EUCIS-LLL will allow European stakeholders to give their views on progress made during the first cycle and to make concrete proposals on the priority areas of the second cycle. Key messages from this Stakeholders' Forum will be used by the European Commission in drafting its proposal for the 2012 Joint Progress Report on the implementation of ET2020, which will be adopted by the Council and the Commission in February 2012.

Education and Training Work Programme 2020 (ET2020)

In the [Council conclusions](#) of 12 May 2009, EU Member States set up a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020').

The framework aims to address the following **four long-term strategic objectives**:

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality
2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training
3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship
4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

It also sets **five European benchmarks for 2020**:

1. **Adult participation in lifelong learning**: by 2020, an average of at least 15 % of adults should participate in lifelong learning
2. **Low achievers in basic skills**: by 2020, the share of low-achieving 15-years olds in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15 %.
3. **Tertiary level attainment**: by 2020, the share of 30-34 year olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 40 %.
4. **Early leavers from education and training**: by 2020, the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 10 %.
5. **Early childhood education**: by 2020, at least 95 % of children between 4 years old and the age for starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education.

¹ [Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training \("ET 2020"\)](#)

² [2010 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the "Education & Training 2010 work programme" \(February 2010\), Annex II.](#)

Last May, the EC presented plans for two new education benchmarks on **employability**, which would monitor the success rate of young people with different education levels in the labour market in the years after graduation, and **mobility of students**, which would measure the share of young people with learning experiences abroad. In addition, the Council also invited the Commission to work further on a possible benchmark on **language learning** by 2012.

More information: [Main policy initiatives and outputs in ET2020](#)

ET2020: Strategic objectives and priority areas in 2009-2011

The period up to 2020 is divided into cycles of short-term priorities for the implementation of ET2020³. The identification of priority areas for a specific work cycle aims to improve the efficiency of European cooperation in education and training, as well as reflect the individual needs of Member States, especially as new circumstances and challenges arise.

The short-term priorities for the first Cycle are the following:

Strategic objective 1: Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality

Pursue work on:

- **Lifelong learning strategies:** Complete the process of implementation of national lifelong learning strategies, paying particular attention to the validation of non-formal and informal learning and guidance.
- **European Qualifications Framework:** Ensure the development of national qualifications systems to the EQF by 2010, and support the use of an approach based on learning outcomes for standards and qualifications, assessment and validation procedures, credit transfer, curricula and quality assurance.

Develop cooperation on:

- **Expanding learning mobility:** Work together to gradually eliminate barriers and to expand opportunities for learning mobility within Europe and worldwide, both for higher and other levels of education, including new objectives and financing instruments, and whilst taking into consideration the particular needs of disadvantaged persons.

Strategic objective 2: Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

Pursue work on:

- **Language learning:** To enable citizens to communicate in two languages in addition to their mother tongue, promote language teaching, where relevant, in VET and for adult learners, and provide migrants with opportunities to learn the language of the host country.
- **Professional development of teachers and trainers:** Focus on the quality of initial education and early career support for new teachers and on raising the quality of continuing professional development opportunities for teachers, trainers and other educational staff (e.g. those involved in leadership or guidance activities).
- **Governance and funding:** Promote the modernisation agenda for higher education (including curricula) and the quality assurance framework for VET, and develop the quality of provision, including staffing, in the adult learning sector. Promote evidence-based policy and practice, placing particular emphasis on establishing the case for sustainability of public and, where appropriate, private investment.

Develop cooperation on:

- **Basic skills in reading, mathematics and science:** Investigate and disseminate existing good practice and research findings on reading performance among school pupils and draw conclusions on ways of improving literacy levels across the EU. Intensify existing cooperation to improve the take-up of maths and science at higher levels of education and training, and to strengthen science teaching. Concrete action is needed to improve the level of basic skills, including those of adults.

³ [2010 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the "Education & Training 2010 work programme" \(February 2010\), Annex II.](#)

— **'New Skills for New Jobs'**: Ensure that the assessment of future skill requirements and the matching of labour market needs are adequately taken on board in education and training planning processes.

Strategic objective 3: Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship

Pursue work on:

— **Early leavers from education and training**: Strengthen preventive approaches, build closer cooperation between general and vocational education sectors and remove barriers for dropouts to return to education and training.

Develop cooperation on:

— **Pre-primary education**: Promote generalised equitable access and reinforce the quality of provision and teacher support.

— **Migrants**: Develop mutual learning on best practices for the education of learners from migrant backgrounds.

— **Learners with special needs**: Promote inclusive education and personalised learning through timely support, the early identification of special needs and well-coordinated services. Integrate services within mainstream schooling and ensure pathways to further education and training.

Strategic objective 4: Enhancing innovation and creativity, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

Pursue work on:

— **Transversal key competences**: In accordance with the December 2006 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council, take greater account of transversal key competences in curricula, assessment and qualifications.

Develop cooperation on:

— **Innovation-friendly institutions**: Promote creativity and innovation by developing specific teaching and learning methods (including the use of new ICT tools and teacher training). — **Partnership**: Develop partnerships between education and training providers and businesses, research institutions, cultural actors and creative industries, and promote a well-functioning knowledge triangle.



Synthesis diagram

The role of education and training in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy

Education and training have a fundamental role to play in achieving the 'Europe 2020' objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, notably by equipping citizens with the skills and competences which the European economy and European society need in order to remain competitive and innovative, but also by helping to promote social cohesion and inclusion.

Two **Europe 2020 headline targets** are set up to improve education systems: reducing **school drop-out** rates to less than 10% and increasing the share of 30-34 years old having completed **tertiary education** to at least 40%.

In the [Council conclusions on the role of education and training in the implementation of the 'Europe 2020' strategy](#) (February 2011) the Council invites the Commission to take particular account of the headline targets and of appropriate measures taken under the '**Youth on the Move**' (YoM) and '**Agenda for New Skills and Jobs**' (ANSJ) initiatives, when proposing the mid-term priorities for the next cycle of ET2020.

YoM is an integrated strategy for young people, embracing both education/training and employment, aiming at raising the overall quality of all levels of education and training in the EU, especially Higher Education, by promoting student mobility and trainees' mobility, and improve the employment situation of young people.

ANSJ highlights the need to upgrade skills and to boost employability.

Education and training also have a substantial contribution to make in the other flagship initiatives, such as '**Digital Agenda**', '**Innovation Union**' and the '**European Platform against Poverty**'.

More information: [Europe 2020](#) / [Youth on the Move](#) / [Agenda for New Skills and Jobs](#)

Joint Council/Commission progress report on education and training 2012

Every two years the European Council and the Commission publish a joint report on the overall situation in education and training across the EU and assessing progress towards common objectives. This report uses data from the Commission's [annual progress reports](#), but takes a strategic view, delivering a series of key messages and recommendations for future approaches.

Timeline

- 26-27 September 2011: Stakeholders' Forum on EU cooperation in Education and Training.
- End November 2011: Commission Communication, Draft 2012 Joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Education & Training 2020 work programme.
- February 2012: Adoption of the Joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Education & Training 2020 work programme.

More information: [Joint Council/Commission progress reports on education and training](#)