



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

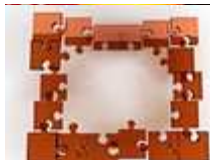
EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE

Sectoral Committee

Weekly Update

11.06.10

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...Commission

Europe 2020 Strategy and Vocational Education and Training

COM (2010) 296 COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS A new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the Europe 2020 strategy.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0296:FIN:EN:PDF>

In this Communication the European Commission presents its new vision for the future of vocational education and training. Vocational education and training is chosen by an average of around 50% of all students in upper secondary education. However, the sector needs to be modernised to make it a more attractive and high-quality option, so that it provides young people with the right skills to find a suitable job and adults with an opportunity to update skills throughout their working life. Therefore, the Commission wants to encourage more people to take up vocational education, to improve the quality of the training on offer and to make it easier to move between jobs and countries. EU ministers are expected to discuss and adopt the plan in the second half of this year.

A new impetus for European co-operation

The plans adopted by the Commission outline several possible ways to give vocational education and training a new impetus. They include:

- Ensuring that access to training and qualifications is flexible and open at all stages of life;
- Promoting mobility to make it easier to gain experience abroad, or in a different sector of the economy;
- Ensuring the highest possible quality of education and training;
- Providing more opportunities for disadvantaged groups such as school drop-outs, the low-skilled and unemployed, people with migrant backgrounds and the disabled;
- Nurturing creative, innovative and entrepreneurial thinking in students.



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10-year plan

The Commission's plans build on the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart and inclusive growth, and will also link in with the upcoming 'Youth on the Move' initiative which will support wider learning and mobility opportunities for all young people.

They constitute the Commission's contribution to a new 10-year programme of reforms under the Copenhagen Process on enhanced European co-operation in vocational education and training.

The Copenhagen Process on enhanced European co-operation in vocational education and training was launched in 2002 and is reviewed every two years. It has boosted the development of a common approach to evaluation based on results, rather than length of study or type of institution.

Summary of the Communication:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/vocational-education/doc/cs_en.pdf

European social dialogue with education workers and employers

The Commission launched a new social dialogue committee in education with teachers, trainers, lecturers and education authorities from across the EU to tackle challenges facing their sector.

This new committee brings together trade unions and employers' organisations from the sector to discuss issues such as the quality of education, classroom violence, adapting to demographic trends and the impacts of public spending cuts. Sectoral social dialogue committees can launch joint actions, adopt guidelines and conclude agreements, contributing directly to shaping EU labour legislation and policies.

European social dialogue is recognised as a tool of good governance and of social subsidiarity. In times of crisis, it has also demonstrated its role as an instrument of social resilience, helping to mitigate the negative social impact of recession.

European social dialogue refers to discussions, consultations, negotiations and joint actions involving organisations representing the two sides of industry (employers and workers).

Further information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/socialdialogue>



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Gender equality in education Traditional stereotypes remain the biggest challenge

The European Commission recently presented a new study which examines how gender inequality in education is addressed in European countries. It shows that gender differences persist in both choice of study and outcomes. The Commission study is based on the work the Eurydice network, which collects and analyses data on education systems.

Gender roles and stereotypes

With a few exceptions, all European countries have, or plan to have, gender equality policies in education. The primary aim is to challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Other objectives include enhancing the representation of women in decision-making bodies, countering gender-based attainment patterns and combating gender-based harassment in schools. Government initiatives that aim to inform parents about gender equality issues and involve them more closely in promoting gender equality in education are rare.

Girls usually obtain higher grades and higher pass rates in school leaving examinations than boys and boys are more likely to drop out of school or repeat school years. International surveys show that boys are more likely to be poor performers in reading whereas girls are more likely to be low achievers in mathematics in around one third of European education systems. However, socio-economic background remains the most important factor.

The European Commission addresses gender inequality in education both by encouraging policy co-operation between EU countries and through its funding programmes. The fight against social exclusion and gender inequality is one of the key priorities for the financial support that the EU gives to multinational education projects and partnerships through the Lifelong Learning Programme.

The **Eurydice Network** (www.Eurydice.org) provides information on and analyses of European education systems and policies. It consists of 35 national offices based in all 31 countries participating in the EU's Lifelong Learning programme (EU Member States, EEA countries and Turkey) and is co-ordinated and managed by the EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency in Brussels, which drafts its publications and databases.

Gender Differences in Educational Outcomes: study on the measures taken and current situation in Europe

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/thematic_studies_en.php



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...Sport

Free movement of sportspeople

On 3 June 2010, the European Commission closed infringement proceedings against Luxembourg over quotas for foreign footballers in Luxembourg clubs. The case was concluded following changes to the relevant rules.

The Commission opened the case in July 2004 because of rules limiting the number of foreign footballers playing for clubs in the Luxembourg Football Federation. The Commission considered that these rules could be discriminatory on the basis of nationality, representing a barrier to the free movement of workers. Following discussions with the Luxembourg authorities, changes have been made in the Statutes of the Luxembourg Football Federation which remove the discrimination at the origin of the case.

The changes focused on:

- Removing the obligation to have Luxembourg nationality;
- On the rule relating to the first licence. Statistics provided by the Luxembourg authorities showed that, in practice, this rule does not preclude employment of foreign players and therefore does not constitute any discrimination against EU nationals.

In addition, in terms of the rules relating to transfers, the Luxembourg authorities explained that this rule is temporary in nature since the status of 'transferred player' is only valid for the current year. Statistics also show that, on average, the number of players transferred is less than four per season. Based on this information, the Commission concluded that this provision is also compatible with EU law.

The current rules do not represent, in the Commission's view, discrimination on grounds of nationality.

Sport is subject to the same rules on free movement of workers in so far as it constitutes an economic activity. The EU Court of Justice has confirmed on several occasions that professional and semi-professional sportsmen are workers by virtue of the fact that their activities involve gainful employment, in particular in the Bosman case (C-415/93).

Further information

EU rules on free movement of workers – sports

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=464&langId=en>