



EUROPEAN SYMPOSIUM ON CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN AND THROUGH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

BRUSSELS, 27 OCTOBER 2009

HOTEL BLOOM, 250 RUE ROYALE, 1210 BRUSSELS

ORGANISED WITH SUPPORT FROM THE [EENEE](#) AND [NESSE](#) NETWORKS OF EXPERTS

Each year the European Commission organises a European symposium in which policy-makers and stakeholders concerned with education and training have an opportunity to engage with academics and researchers from relevant fields. As a contribution to the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009, this year's symposium will focus on vocational education and training (VET).

Creativity and innovation mean not only the capacity to *invent*, but also the capacity to critically look at, reflect on, and improve whatever we do in contemporary life and societies with original ideas. They are neither spontaneous nor inevitable. They cannot be guaranteed, decreed or imposed, but they can be fostered through effective policies and practices, particularly in education and training.

There is a common perception that existing education and training systems more often *kill* learners' creativity than nurture it. Traditional schooling is seen to be obsessed with preparation for working life, and with the teaching and assessment of established blocks of knowledge and ways of thinking, communicating, doing and behaving, and to neglect imagination, intuition, emotions and wonderment – qualities of mind that are vital for innovation and creativity and for economic and social progress. This perception is at its most acute in relation to formal VET systems which, apart from some specific occupations such as crafts, tend to focus almost exclusively on the teaching and learning of narrow job-specific skills and tend to neglect the conditions that stimulate the creativity and innovative potential of learners. A focus on these narrow skills is unlikely to raise the motivation of trainees or to enhance the status of vocational streams of education and training. Furthermore, the disconnection between VET and creativity and innovation is probably reinforced by over-narrow perceptions of creativity and innovation: these tend to reduce the former to artistic self-expression as fostered in primary education or arts education institutions, and the latter to research-driven product innovation linked mainly to higher education and research.

The purpose of this symposium is to examine how much truth there is behind the common perceptions, to strengthen dialogue between those responsible for VET systems and the advocates of creativity and innovation, and to explore how creativity and innovation can be promoted in and through VET systems in Europe.

The 2008 Communication "[New Skills for New Jobs](#)" highlighted the growing demand from employers for key competences such as creativity and innovation, and suggested an agenda to match and anticipate these labour market skills needs. The May 2009 [Council Conclusions](#) on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020) identify enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of E&T as a key long-term strategic challenge. The aims and priorities pursued under the Copenhagen process on enhanced European cooperation in VET contribute to the achievement of these strategic objectives. The [Bordeaux Communiqué](#) highlights the role of VET in developing creativity and fostering the capacity to innovate, with the aim of increasing productivity and competitiveness. It also calls for measures to promote innovation and creativity in VET in coherence with the [Council conclusions of 22 May 2008](#) on promoting creativity and innovation through E&T. These measures are crucial for strengthening the image and attractiveness of VET, for promoting excellence and quality of VET systems, and for increasing the employability and adaptability of VET learners.

This Symposium will contribute to our reflections on the future of the Copenhagen process which will culminate in the adoption of the Bruges Communiqué in December 2010. The Bruges review will set the strategic objectives for VET up to 2020 and will contribute to the implementation of the ET2020 Strategic Framework. In this context of growing momentum, this symposium will aim to:

- underline the importance of creativity and innovation in and through VET
- identify key factors for successful and innovative VET system reform
- generate ideas to enrich the debate leading to the review of the Copenhagen process in 2010, and identify VET measures that contribute to the ET2020 strategic objective on creativity and innovation.

The symposium will debate two main themes:

- *Fostering the creativity of **VET learners** - How can VET systems empower their learners with the creative attitudes and skills that foster innovation in the workplace?*
- *Modernising **VET systems** through creativity and innovation - How to foster systemic innovation in VET? What are the key factors for successful reform and modernisation of the VET systems? How to respond to new demands and make VET systems more relevant, responsive and open to the needs of the labour market and of society at large?*

The symposium will bring together European and national policy-makers, researchers, representatives of European stakeholder organisations, European social partners, practitioners, other international organisations and other VET actors.

The European Expert Network in the Economics of Education ([EENEE](#)) and the Network of Experts in the Social Sciences of Education and training ([NESSE](#)) advise and support the European Commission in the analysis of education policies and reforms and of their implications for future policy development and cooperation at national and European level.

PROGRAMME

Symposium chair: **Mr. João Delgado**, Head of Unit for *Professional training and "Leonardo Da Vinci"*, European Commission

09:00-09:30 **WELCOME AND REGISTRATION**

09:30-09:45 **Opening** by **Mr. Jordi Curell**, Director for *Lifelong Learning: horizontal Lisbon policy issues and international affairs*, DG Education and Culture

09:45-10:15 **Keynote speech:** *Systemic Innovation in VET*, **Dr. Hanne Shapiro**, Danish Technological Institute

10:15-10:30 **Coffee/tea**

10:30-12:30 **Session 1: How to foster the creativity of VET learners**

Session chair (5' introduction): **Dr. Barbara Dorn**, BusinessEurope - Director for Education & Training, Confederation of German Employers' Associations

Speaker 1 (20'): *Conceptions of creativity and its implications for VET*

Dr. David Guile, University of London Institute of Education and NESSE network

Speaker 2 (20'): *The (Almost) Undiscovered Potential - Exploration and Analysis on Creativity and Innovation in Initial VET*, **Dr. Gabriele Stöger**, *lege_artis*, Austria

Panel discussion (3 panellists: 3' introductory statement each):

Mr. Ben Butters, Director of EU Affairs, European association of chambers of commerce and industry

Mr. Robert Loop, Director of FOREM Formation

Mr. Fritjof Karlsson, Ministry of Education and Research, Sweden

Open debate with the audience, interactive discussion with the panel and conclusions by session chair.

12:30-14:00 Buffet Lunch

14:00-16:00 **Session 2: Modernising VET systems through creativity and innovation – Key factors for successful systemic innovation in VET**

Session chair (5' introduction): **Mr. Joël Decaillon**, European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

Speaker 1 (20'): **Mr. Peter Hodgson**, President, European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EFVET)

Speaker 2 (20'): *The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurship skills and motivation*
Prof. Hessel Oosterbeek, University of Amsterdam School of Economics and EENEE

Panel discussion (3 panellists: 3' introductory statement each):

Ms. Slava Pevec-Grm, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

Ms. Mirjam de Jong, Manager international affairs, VAPRO, the Netherlands

Mr. Paul Santelmann, Association pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes and European Vocational Training Association (EVTA)

Open debate with the audience, interactive discussion with the panel and conclusions by session chair

16:00-16:30 **Conclusions and closing remarks**

Mr. João Delgado, Head of Unit for *Professional training and "Leonardo Da Vinci"*, European Commission