

Towards Helsinki Communiqué
Follow-up of the Copenhagen - Maastricht process

**Questionnaire for
the European Directors General for Vocational
Training
and European Social Partners**

Please complete and return this questionnaire by email to:
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The deadline for the return is 14 April 2006

Towards Helsinki Communiqué - DGVT members' and Social Partners' views on future priorities and strategies

Context of this questionnaire

Maastricht Communiqué on future Priorities of Enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training, issued on 14. December 2004, stipulates that "Another Ministerial meeting will be held in two years, to evaluate implementation and to review priorities and strategies for VET within the Education and training 2010 work programme."

This Ministerial meeting will be organised in December 2006 during the Finnish Presidency. During the meeting a Helsinki Communiqué will be issued, preceded by Council conclusions, to be approved in the Education Council 13-14 November.

The upcoming Finnish Presidency aims to undertake the preparatory work on the conclusions and the Communiqué in cooperation with the participating countries, the European social partners and the Commission. In the spirit of openness, the Presidency is sending the attached questionnaire to the participating countries and social partners.

We wish to emphasise that this short inquiry is not meant to go in to detail or to map all aspects related to the Copenhagen - Maastricht process and its implementation. The aim is to stimulate discussion on some pivotal points. We do not expect exhaustive replies, but rather guidance on main policy lines to support the review of future priorities and strategies.

There are four sets of questions:

- General appraisal and evaluation of the Copenhagen process: what should be the focus in the near future and beyond 2010;
- European level priorities: views on the future priorities;
- National level priorities: views on the relevance of the current priorities in national contexts; proposals for priorities 2007-8;
- Implementation of the process and its outcomes.

Based on the replies, the Finnish Presidency will produce a first draft conclusions/communiqué. This will be done in close cooperation with all parties involved, in particular the previous and future Presidencies, the social partners and the Commission.

In addition to this inquiry made by the Finnish Presidency, Cedefop together with the Commission is planning to update and renew the questionnaire sent to DGVTs in preparation for the Maastricht review in 2004. The aim is to provide a background document for the ministerial meeting including an overview of progress in implementing the Copenhagen/Maastricht process. These two inquiries are complementary and both feed back to the process from different perspectives.

1. General appraisal and evaluation of the Copenhagen process; focus in the future

The Process on Enhanced European Cooperation was officially launched in Copenhagen in November 2002 and reviewed in Maastricht in December 2004. Since 2002 a number of initiatives and concrete results have emerged.

1.1. How would you assess the impact of the Copenhagen process at the European level and more specifically in your country?	
1.2. Have there been any major difficulties or obstacles in the process?	

As agreed in Maastricht, the process is more closely linked with the Education and Training 2010 work programme.

1.3. In your opinion, what consequences does this have for the visibility and impact of the Copenhagen process?	
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When looking at the process as a whole, what do you consider should be the main objectives or priorities ...

1.4. ... for the period to come after Helsinki Ministerial meeting (2007- 2008)?	
1.5. ... for the period beyond 2010?	

So far the process has been predominantly a European process and has had little contact with non-European countries.

1.6. Should the process or some elements of it be opened for cooperation with 3rd countries?	
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The Copenhagen Declaration and the Maastricht Communiqué laid down the priorities for cooperation and development of VET systems at European and national levels.

1.7. How should the future orientations be reflected in the Helsinki Communiqué and the preceding Council Conclusions?	
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2. European level priorities

The priorities agreed in Maastricht for European level cooperation included e.g. the development of EQF and ECVET, examination of the role of VET teachers and trainers and improvement of VET statistics.

2.1. What should be the next step - what do you consider should be the European level priorities for 2007 - 2008?	
2.2. Are there any specific areas where the European level cooperation should be further accentuated and emphasized? E.g. common principles of sustainable financing of VET and public and private investments in VET?	

3. National level priorities

The Maastricht Communiqué included, for the first time, priorities at national level. These reflected the common view of the participating countries on how to respond to the European challenges in the field of VET in national contexts.

3.1 Please assess, in general terms, the relevance of the national level priorities from the perspective of your country.	
3.2 Which priorities are particularly relevant in your national setting?	
3.3. Are the current priorities relevant also for 2007 – 2008 period, how should they be updated or should some of the priorities be emphasized more than the others? Are any new priorities needed?	

4. Implementation of the process and its outcomes

The advancement of the process and mutual learning have been supported by benchmarking, comprehensive progress reports and new approaches like peer learning activities in the different policy areas.

4.1 Do we possibly need new mechanisms in order to advance the implementation of the priorities already agreed at European and national levels?	
4.2 Should the progress reporting on and monitoring of the process be streamlined and adjusted?	

In line with the current focus of the process, work so far has taken place predominantly at the policy level. VET providers have mainly been involved through Europass and by promoting the priorities through projects funded by the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

4.3. Would the process be strengthened by active involvement of VET Providers? If so, how should this be done?	
4.4. What kinds of measures have so far been undertaken in your country to inform VET providers and other stakeholders about the process and its outcomes?	

5. Other

5.1. Any other reflections, suggestions on the orientation of the new Council conclusions and the Communiqué or any further proposals on issues to be raised in them?	
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Your country and organisation	
Contact person	

Thank you!