

Conferences and Events
in the Field of Education during
the Hungarian Presidency of the EU
(First Semester, 2011)

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Preface by MS RÓZSA HOFFMANN

Minister of State for Education

Dear Colleagues,



As Minister of State for Education I am honoured to present you the programme and priorities for education of the Hungarian EU Presidency.

The economic and financial crisis deeply affecting our economies and nations, and the urge to renew our Lisbon goals of cooperation had called for a well established and ambitious European strategy. The headline targets and the initiatives and actions defined in Europe 2020 require a structured and coordinated approach in all policy areas in order to meet the challenges ahead of us.

Education policies are implemented in the present; however, our future largely depends on their success. Targeted and effective investment in education and training is needed in times of crisis as well – even more – if education is to make a difference in the future of our nations and of Europe. Like our partners in the Spanish – Belgian – Hungarian Presidency Trio, we are convinced that education and training will have to play a significant role in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy as this was decided by the heads of our governments last June. We firmly believe that education and training are crucial factors in developing the skills and competences that enable people to reach their goals in life and become good citizens.

As Chair of the Education Council during the Hungarian Presidency I will continue the work of our Trio partners. With the education ministers of the Member States, we shall continue thinking and acting together to strengthen the social dimension of education, and find solutions to the new problems challenging the schools of the 21st century. We are committed to reducing the number of early school leavers and to promoting youth mobility. The more young people are able to study and gain work experience in other European countries the more they become active, reflective and responsible citizens of the European Union. As talented, innovative and creative members of our society they should become capable of leading us all to a better future.

Based on the above principles, the education programme of the Hungarian Presidency was worked out in close cooperation with the European Commission. The main themes of the meetings and conferences are as follows:

- reinforcement of the role of education and training in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy and in the European Semester,
- fighting early school leaving, reducing the number of early school leavers,
- promoting learning mobility,
- policy measures to ensure equitable access to high quality early childhood education and care and establishing the European cooperation,
- the concept of active citizenship, related policies and school practices,
- valuing diversity in higher education within the agenda of modernising higher education,
- supporting talented children.

Dear Reader, now our task is to take forward European cooperation in order to shape education policy in Europe in a way that best serves our young ones so that they are more prepared for the challenges of the future. I look forward to working with you at the inspiring meetings and conferences listed in this publication.

Rózsa Hoffmann

Minister of State for Education

Ministry of National Resources

Preface by MR SÁNDOR CZOMBA
Minister of State for Employment Policy

Dear Readers,



As Hungarian Minister of State for Employment Policy and also in charge of vocational training and adult education it is my pleasure to present you briefly the priorities of our Presidency regarding these two areas.

As you will learn from this brochure and its intended programmes, the most important priority on the area of vocational education and training (VET) is the promoting of practical training, supporting the work-based training routes in a more intensive way that is to introduce into training inevitable, more labour market oriented relevance. In addition, increasing the attractiveness of vocational training is also on the agenda, parallel with enforcing the permeability among different forms and levels of education and training, raising flexibility accordingly.

In respect of adult education, while studying Hungarian priorities, you will identify our commitment to improve the quality of provision and to increase the possibilities for adults to go “one step up” – to achieve a qualification at least one level higher than before. Supporting colourful ways of workplace training is not going to diminish, but rather to serve competitiveness of the country, of the enterprise and of the individual at the same time. These efforts coincide with those enlisted in the EU Action Plan on Adult learning for three years (2008–2010), obviously as not only Hungarian challenges.

The overall national policy objective of the Hungarian Government is to raise the really low employment rate that by adequate education and training – among other measures – could significantly be improved. Within, a relevant, efficient and effective vocational training and adult education would largely contribute to attain important social and economic targets.

Dear Reader, I am looking forward to and sincerely hope that this brochure, and generally the thematic policies and events of the upcoming Hungarian Presidency will well serve the above noble aspirations.

Sándor Czomba
Minister of State for Employment Policy
Ministry for National Economy



CALENDAR OF CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

DECEMBER

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FEBRUARY

14	Meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council	Brussels	
21-22	Conference on „ Excellence and Equity in Early Childhood Education and Care”	Budapest	Page 11
22-23	ELGPN meeting	Budapest	

MARCH

7-9	EU Adult Learning Action Plan (2008-2010) Final Conference	Budapest	Page 12
9-11	MIPIE Conference (Mapping the Implementation of Policies for Inclusive Education) (organised by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education)	Budapest	
17-18	Meeting of the Bologna Follow-Up Group	Gödöllő	Page 13
28-29	Informal Meeting of Education Ministers	Gödöllő	Page 14
31-3	Erasmus Student Network, Annual General Meeting	Budapest	

APRIL

7-9	Conference on Talent Support and First European Talent Day	Budapest	Page 15
11-12	Meeting of the Director Generals for Higher Education (DG HE)	Budapest	Page 16

MAY

15-16	Meeting of the Directors General for Vocational Education and Training	Budapest	Page 17
17-18	“Increasing attractiveness and excellence of VET through quality and efficiency” - conference	Budapest	Page 18
19-20	Meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council	Brussels	
25-26	Conference on the European Qualifications Framework	Budapest	Page 19

JUNE

16-17	Meeting of the Education Committee	Budapest	Page 20
22-27	„The future is up to you” – conference (organised by E2C – European Association of Cities Institutions and Second Chance Schools)	Budapest	

Meeting of the High Level Group on Education Budapest, 1-2 December 2010	
Objectives and content	<p>Objectives of the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the incoming Hungarian Presidency presents its priorities, – the European Commission presents its future plans, – the following Presidency Trio shortly presents its plans. <p>Main element: The role of education and training in implementing the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy</p>
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – directors general from Member States' ministries of education, – representatives of Directorate- General for Education and Culture of the European Commission, – representatives of the General Secretariat of the Council.
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**Conference on
„ Excellence and Equity in Early Childhood Education and Care”
Budapest, 21-22 February 2011**

Objectives and content	<p>The aim of the conference is to call for European cooperation in improving equitable access to high quality early childhood education and care and promoting solutions in issues of common concern, especially in breaking the cycle of disadvantage and enhancing lifelong learning. The European Commission Communication on early childhood education care will be presented and discussed, the most urgent constraints will be identified and good practices in Member States will be promoted.</p> <p>The conference addresses the issues of equitable access to quality early childhood education and care, the structure, governance and funding of early childhood education and care systems, comprehensive pedagogical frameworks and staff competences and the need for partnership with parents and the local community.</p> <p>The results of the conference will serve as an input for the Council in elaborating and adopting conclusions about improving access to quality early childhood education and care which are aimed at establishing a policy framework for further European cooperation in this field.</p>
Participants	Experts in the field, national experts and policy-makers delegated by the EU Member States, representatives of relevant international organisations, representatives of NGO's active in the field.
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**EU Adult Learning Action Plan (2008-2010) Final Conference
Budapest, 7-9 March 2011**

Objectives and Content	<p>The Hungarian Presidency wishes to contribute to the overview of the implementation of the objectives set in the European Adult Learning Action Plan.</p> <p>The aims of the event are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – assessing the results achieved in the last three years under the Action Plan, – formulating recommendations on further work needed in this field, – helping to define the role of adult learning in the strategic framework Education and Training 2020 and in the context of the overarching Europe 2020 European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. <p>For Hungary it is of fundamental interest to provide an impetus for the learning and training dimension of adult education: especially as it regards the necessity to increase the number of participants.</p>
Participants	<p>High level officials and dignitaries, both national and European, including the Commission, MEPs, Hungarian state ministers, public authorities, schools, universities, learning centres, institutions in charge of certification and accreditation, adult learning associations, foundations, NGOs, social partners, Grundtvig (and ESF) beneficiaries, the National Agencies responsible for the Lifelong Learning Programme and ESF; community organisations and European interest/civic groups as well as other international organisations.</p>
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**Meeting of the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG)
Gödöllő, 17-18 March 2011**

Objectives and content	<p>The Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG), composed of representatives from the countries of the European Higher Education Area and of international higher education stakeholder organisations, is in charge of the monitoring and taking forward of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (created by 2010 as a result of the Bologna Process) by the ministers responsible for higher education of Member States.</p> <p>At its meetings held every six month, the BFUG discusses developments in the EHEA work plan, results from EHEA working groups, actions to be taken for further consolidation of the EHEA and provides room for the sharing of experiences. The BFUG's meeting is organised in connection with that of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education.</p>
Participants	<p>Delegations from the 47 countries of the European Higher Education Area, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the European University Association (EUA), the European Students' Union (ESU), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), BUSINESSEUROPE, Education International (EI) Pan-European Structure and the UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education</p>
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**Informal Meeting of Education Ministers
Gödöllő, 28-29 March 2011**

Objectives and content	<p>The Hungarian Presidency, in accordance with the EU 2020 strategy and the Council Decision on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011) intends to lay emphasis on active citizenship education and to provide an occasion for the discussion of its policy and practice in the framework of an informal meeting of education ministers.</p> <p>In the first part of the meeting the ministers would review what type of knowledge, skills and attitudes make up an active, responsible European citizen who is able to live up to the challenges of modern life. In the second part of the meeting, the Hungarian Presidency would provide a framework for the ministers to discuss how active citizenship education can be put into practice, or else, what kind of schools can prepare students to become active citizens.</p> <p>The expected outcome of the meeting is presidential conclusions summing up the lessons of the event.</p>
Participants	<p>Education ministers from EU countries, from EFTA countries and from countries which are candidates to accession, representatives of the European Commission and of the General Secretariat of the European Council, the Council of Europe, OECD</p>
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Conference on Talent Support and First European Talent Day Budapest, 7-9 April 2011	
Objectives and content	<p>By organising a Presidency conference on Talent support in the EU, we would like to provide an occasion for a professional discussion about the role of talent support in education and to initiate international cooperation in this field.</p> <p>Based on the idea that every child is potentially gifted, our aim is to call the attention to the fact that developing a culture to promote and foster talents increases social mobility and cohesion, stimulates and spreads innovation and creativity, contributes to economic growth, and leads to higher competitiveness, and in this way it will definitely contribute to the main objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.</p> <p>The conference will focus on the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – overview of talent support in the EU Member States, presentation of good practices, – examination of the link between talent support, social cohesion and economic development, – exploring the means, challenges and possibilities of talent support and possibilities for cooperation at a European level, – launching the „European Talent Day” initiative.
Participants	representatives of national authorities, NGOs and international organisations, EU officials (200-250 persons)
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Meeting of the Director Generals for Higher Education (DG HE) Budapest, 11-12 April 2011

Objectives and content	<p>The discussions in the DG HE Meeting will survey the role of national (regional) governments in creating the regulatory framework for governance in the higher education systems, and the institutional governance itself, as well as the relationship between the two. The dialogue will strongly focus on the necessary extent of diversity between higher education institutions (HEIs) (their status, missions and profile) and within HEIs.</p> <p>The issues of diversity, differentiation and governance will be reviewed in line with two key-dimensions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Governing diverse HE systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – diversity within the HE system, – the main consequences of diversity for governance, – governance which supports innovation. 2. Governance of higher education institutions with different profiles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient institutional governance tools for purposeful and conscious management
Participants	<p>Directors General for Higher Education and Chairs of National Rector Conferences from Member States and also from EFTA countries, representatives of ESU, representatives of the Hungarian Student Union, European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture - Directorate C, representatives of the European HE organisations and associations (EUA, EURASHE, etc.)</p>
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Meeting of the Directors General for Vocational Education and Training Budapest and Gödöllő, 15-16 May 2010

Objectives and content	<p>The meeting of the Directors General for Vocational Education and Training (DG VT) in Hungary forms an integral part of the policy consultation forums supporting the implementation of VET priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy.</p> <p>The overall objective of the DG VT meeting is to discuss what concrete steps could bring us closer to the fulfilment of the vision defined in the Bruges Communiqué. The focus will be on the issue of making VET an attractive option for the young and on the need to guarantee a high quality apprenticeship. Legal and administrative obstacles to placement mobility will be presented, and participants will be able to discuss the initiative of a policy network of VET trainers.</p>
Participants	Directors General responsible for VET of Member States and Candidate Countries, representatives of the European Commission, CEDEFOP, ETF and the European Social Partners
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**“Increasing attractiveness and excellence of VET through quality and efficiency” - conference
Budapest, 17-18 May 2010**

Objectives and content	<p>Youth unemployment is very high in Europe (close to 21%), the number of early school leavers is still too elevated which increases the risk of becoming inactive and living in poverty besides raising the economic and social costs. VET should therefore strive to contribute both to the development of economy and employment as well as to promote social inclusion. To achieve this, VET should offer an attractive and high quality provision for young people. Therefore, closely connected to the themes of conferences organized under the Belgian Presidency, Hungary is organising a conference under the title ‘Increasing attractiveness and excellence of VET through quality and efficiency’. The conference is planned to follow the meeting of the Directors General for VET (DG VT) during the Hungarian Presidency.</p> <p>The conference will focus on how VET can offer an attractive and challenging career option for the young and how vocational excellence is to contribute to the smart and sustainable growth of Europe. Special attention will be paid in sections to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – demonstrating excellence and value of vocational skills, – attracting people to VET through targeted incentives, – contribution of higher VET to smart growth.
Participants	<p>About 20 Hungarian and 100 foreign experts from the EU 27 Member States, Candidate Countries, EEA countries and from the European Social Partners and the decentralised Agencies of the EU.</p>
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**Conference on the European Qualifications Framework
Budapest, 25-26 May 2011**

Objectives and content	<p>The Conference on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) offers an outstanding opportunity to reckon with the experience of EQF implementation at a European scale, as well as on member state level; and also to explore new ways and orientations for utilizing the potential the EQF has. After meeting the deadline of 2010, it is high time to draw conclusions from the lessons learnt, identify further challenges and to provide a starting point for the reflection process to be completed by April 2013.</p> <p>The main foci of the conference are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – analysis of the implementation process of the EQF Recommendation, – EQF in the context of Europe 2020 and New Skills for Jobs, – processes and difficulties in connection with implementing NQF in member states, – overview of other policy tools for operating QFs (e.g. lifelong guidance), – operation and impact of NQF at national level and overview of future tasks. <p>Keynote speeches during the plenary intend to inform participants about the overall policy context regarding the EQF, further (international) opportunities for EQF and the impact of NQF on different aspects of the education and labour market. In the workshops participants shall discuss the lessons learnt from referencing the impact of Qualifications Framework and learning outcomes on institutions and explore the NQF potential as communication tools.</p> <p>The Conference will provide participants with an opportunity to share experience in their response to the immediate and medium term impacts and prospects of the EQF at national and European level. The Conference is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the potentials of qualifications-related instruments and mutual trusts for EQF. It also enriches further discussions of EQF and its LLL-related issues at a European level.</p>
Participants	Representatives of EU and Western Balkan countries, the European Commission, the European Council, ETF, EQF AG members, National Coordination Points, international organisations
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Meeting of the Education Committee Budapest, 16-17 June 2011	
Objectives and content	<p>The last meeting of the Education Committee during the Hungarian EU Presidency.</p> <p>Objectives: to close the work programme of the Hungarian Presidency and to sum up the results.</p>
Participants	<p>Delegates from the ministries of Member States, representatives of the European Commission.</p>
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