<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRUGES COMMUNIQUÉ 2011-2020 (DECEMBER 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'EDUCATION AND TRAINING 2020' WORK PROGRAMME (JUNE 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS FOR VET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TREATY OF LISBON (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE AMBITIONS OF LISBON (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BOLOGNA DECLARATION (1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TREATY OF MAASTRICHT (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TREATY OF ROME (1957)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEBSITES PROVIDING MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EUROPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLOPHON</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
33 ministers responsible for VET, of the EU Member States, the EFTA/EEA and candidate
countries, the European Commission and the European Social partners, adopted in December
2010 the Bruges Communiqué. The Bruges Communiqué states that by 2020 VET should be
more attractive, relevant, career-oriented, innovative, accessible and flexible than in 2010, and
should contribute to excellence and equity in lifelong learning. To achieve this, the Bruges
Communiqué delivered:
- A global vision for VET in 2020
- 11 strategic objectives for the period 2011-2020 based on that vision
- 22 short-term deliverables at national level for the first 4 years (2011-2014), with indication
  of the support at EU level
- General principles underlying the governance and ownership of the Copenhagen process

**IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF VET AND ENHANCING ITS
ATTRACTIONNESS AND RELEVANCE**

1 Making I-VET an attractive learning option
This objective will be pursued by giving attention to the quality of I-VET by developing
competences of staff, flexibility between levels, working on the image of I-VET, integrate key-
competences, develop appropriate assessment. Furthermore practical activities will promoted
for new pupils from a guidance point of view, and for those pupils in I-VET career management
skills will have a focus. Institutions are encouraged to share resources and work-based
learning should be promoted. Finally school-leavers should be monitored, whether they
continue learning or start working.
2 Fostering the excellence, quality and relevance of both I-VET and C-VET

This objective has a triple focus:

a. Quality assurance - European Framework for Quality Assurance
b. Quality of teachers, trainers and other VET professionals
c. Labour market relevance

There should be more cooperation between all stakeholders that are involved in VET, this may lead to giving more attention to work-based learning, having curricula that best meets labour market needs or continuing education.

MAKING LIFELONG LEARNING AND MOBILITY A REALITY

3 Enabling flexible access to training and qualifications

With regard to I-VET and C-VET attention should go to encouraging individuals to participate, encourage companies to invest in human capital, encourage accessible and flexible training arrangements and collaboration between stakeholders. Recognition of informal and non-formal learning is also important especially with regard to low-skilled workers facing labour changes.

4 Developing a strategic approach to the internationalisation of I-VET and C-VET and promoting international mobility

a. Economic globalisation encourages employers, employees and independent entrepreneurs to extend their scope beyond the borders of their own countries. VET providers should support them in this process by giving an international dimension to the learning content and establishing international networks with partner institutions;

b. Participating countries should encourage local and regional authorities and VET providers:
   - through incentives, funding schemes (including use of the European Structural Funds) and the dissemination of best practices
   - to develop strategies for cross border cooperation in VET, with the aim of fostering greater mobility of learners, teachers and trainers and other VET professionals.

Participating countries should promote VET that allows, encourages and - preferably - integrates mobility periods, including work placements, abroad.

c. Participating countries should systematically use and promote European transparency tools such as EQF, ECVET and Europass to promote transnational mobility;
d. Participating countries should promote opportunities for language learning for both learners and teachers in VET, and the provision of language training adapted to the specific needs of VET, with a special emphasis on the importance of foreign languages for cross-border cooperation in VET and international mobility.

ENHANCING INNOVATION, CREATIVITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

5 Fostering innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, as well as the use of ICT (in both I-VET and C-VET)

Creativity and innovation in VET, as well as the use of innovative learning methods, can encourage learners to stay in VET until they are qualified.

a. Participating countries should actively encourage VET providers to collaborate with innovative enterprises, design centres, the cultural sector and higher education institutions in forming ‘knowledge partnerships’. This should help them gain valuable insight into new developments and competence needs and to develop professional excellence and innovation.

b. ICT should be used to maximise access to training and to promote active learning, as well as to develop new methods in both work- and school-based VET;

c. Participating countries should support initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in both I-VET and C-VET in close cooperation with employers, VET providers and national business support services. To achieve this, they should encourage the provision of appropriate funding - e.g. for teaching materials, support tools and the establishment of mini-companies by learners - and should seek to enhance cooperation at regional level;

d. Participating countries should support newly established and future entrepreneurs by encouraging start-ups for VET graduates and by promoting learning mobility for young entrepreneurs.
PROMOTING EQUITY, SOCIAL COHESION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

6 Realising inclusive I-VET and C-VET

Participating countries should offer VET which increases people’s employability (in both the short and long term), which allows them to develop quality careers, satisfactory work experience, self-confidence, professional pride and integrity and which opens up opportunities for growth in their professional and personal lives. To achieve this objective, participating countries should:

a Guarantee that initial VET provides learners with both specific vocational competences and broader key competences, including transversal competences, that enable them to follow further education and training (within VET or in higher education) and to support career choices, participation in and transitions within the labour market. The knowledge, skills and competences which people acquire in VET should enable them to manage their careers and to play an active role in society;

b Make sure that adult learning systems foster the acquisition and further development of key competences. This can be carried out in cooperation with VET providers, local communities, civil society organisations, etcetera;

c Maximise the contribution of VET to reduce the percentage of early leavers from education to below 10% through a combination of both preventive and remedial measures. This can be achieved, for example, through labour market relevant VET, increased work-based learning and apprenticeships, flexible learning pathways, effective guidance and counselling, and by learning content and methods that acknowledge young people’s lifestyles and interests, while maintaining high-level quality standards for VET;

d Take appropriate measures to ensure access on an equal basis, especially for individuals and groups at risk of being excluded, in particular the low-skilled and unskilled, people with special needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds, and older workers. The participation of such groups in VET should be facilitated and encouraged through financial or other means and through the validation of non-formal and informal learning, as well as the provision of flexible pathways;

e Promote active citizenship in VET, for example by encouraging partnerships between VET providers and civil society organisations or, in accordance with national legislation and practice by promoting learner representation in VET institutions. Promotion of this kind can contribute to the validation of skills and competences acquired through voluntary activities.

TRANSVERSAL OBJECTIVES

7 Greater involvement of VET stakeholders and greater visibility for the achievements of European cooperation in VET

Greater involvement of VET stakeholders implies greater visibility for the achievements of European cooperation in VET. The European Commission and the participating countries should therefore consider investing in clear and targeted communication to different groups of stakeholders at national and European level. In order to facilitate the use of the available EU instruments, learners and all parties involved should receive extensive and tailored information.

8 Coordinated governance of European and national instruments in the areas of transparency, recognition, quality assurance and mobility

In line with the above mentioned strategic objectives, coherent and complementary use of the various European and national instruments in the areas of transparency, recognition, quality assurance and mobility should be a high priority for the participating countries in the coming years. Coordinated governance of these instruments under the Copenhagen process and stronger synergy with the instruments and principles of the Bologna process are required.

9 Intensifying cooperation between VET policy and other relevant policy areas

Participating countries and the European Commission should intensify cooperation between VET policy and other relevant policy areas, such as employment, economic affairs, research and innovation, social affairs, youth, sport and culture in order to adhere to the Integrated Guidelines of Europe 2020 and to enhance the recognition of competences and qualifications.

10 Improving the quality and comparability of data for EU policy-making in VET

EU level policy-making in VET should be based on existing comparable data. To this end, and using the Lifelong Learning programme, Member States should collect relevant and reliable data on VET – including VET mobility – and make these available for Eurostat. Member States and the Commission should jointly agree on which data should be made available first.

11 Making good use of EU support

The European Structural Funds and the Lifelong Learning Programme should be used to support the agreed priorities for VET, including international mobility and reforms implemented by the participating countries.
## 22 Short-Term Deliverables at National Level for the First Four Years (2011-2014)

### Actions at National Level

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Organise activities aimed at promoting VET attractiveness and excellence, which may include campaigns and skills competitions;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Support activities, which enable young pupils in compulsory education to become acquainted with vocational trades and career possibilities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Take adequate measures to implement the EQAVET Recommendation and make progress towards national quality assurance frameworks for VET;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>As appropriate, ensure that key competences and career management skills are adequately integrated in I-VET curricula and that they can be acquired through training opportunities in CVET;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Governments, social partners and VET providers should make the necessary arrangements to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– maximise work-based learning, including apprenticeships, in order to contribute to increasing the number of apprentices in Europe by 2012;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– create opportunities for enhanced cooperation between VET institutions and enterprises (profit and non-profit), for example through traineeships for teachers in enterprises;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– provide VET institutions with feedback on the employability of VET graduates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pursue work on setting-up monitoring systems on transitions from learning to work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Support at EU Level

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Policy document on the role of vocational excellence for smart and sustainable growth;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Consider European support for VET promotion campaigns, including Eurobarometer on VET attractiveness;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Encourage skills competitions at European and/or global levels;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Guidance and technical support for EQAVET implementation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Review the implementation of EQAVET at national level in 2013;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Thematic networking of Quality Assurance projects within the Leonardo da Vinci Programme;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vademecum/study on successful work-based learning models (with input from Cedefop);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Strengthen the anticipation of skills and competences development, notably through skills forecasts (Cedefop) and by setting up European Skills Councils;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop a common language aimed at bridging the world of education &amp; training and the world of work (ESCO), consistent with other EU instruments, such as the EQF;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Consider the adoption of an EU benchmark for employability on the basis of a Commission proposal;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Work on best practices and guiding principles with respect to the changing profiles of VET teachers and trainers (together with Cedefop).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Flexible Access to Training and Qualifications, Internationalisation of VET and International Mobility (Objectives 3+4)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>In order to maximise the contribution of VET to the ‘ET2020’ 15% benchmark on the participation of adults in lifelong learning, review the use of incentives, rights and obligations for all stakeholders involved, and take appropriate action to encourage participation in C-VET;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Implement the EQF Recommendation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Develop and promote the use of procedures for the validation of non-formal and informal learning supported by EQF/NQFs and guidance;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Provide integrated (education, training, employment) guidance services closely related with labour market needs;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ACTIONS AT NATIONAL LEVEL**

**FLEXIBLE ACCESS TO TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS, INTERNATIONALISATION OF VET AND INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY (OBJECTIVES 3+4)**

11 Progress towards ECVET implementation in line with the Recommendation, and participate in testing ECVET for mobility;
12 Take appropriate measures to boost mobility in VET.

**SUPPORT AT EU LEVEL**

- Periodic review of ECVET implementation (together with Cedefop);
- Thematic networking of ECVET projects within the Leonardo da Vinci programme;
- Recommendation on learning mobility (2011);
- Consider the adoption of an EU benchmark for VET mobility on the basis of a Commission proposal (2011);
- Proposal for a quality framework for traineeships;
- Promote mobility for apprentices, including by means of a support portal, within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme/ Leonardo da Vinci Programme;
- Develop a European skills passport as part of Europass by 2012.

**INNOVATION, CREATIVITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (OBJECTIVE 5)**

13 Encourage partnerships for creativity and innovation (VET providers, higher education institutions, and design, art, research and innovation centres);
14 Encourage effective and innovative, quality-assured use of technology by all VET providers (including public-private networking and partnerships) supported by the necessary equipment, infrastructure and networks, with continuing improvements that reflect developments in technology and pedagogical understanding;
15 Take measures to promote entrepreneurship, e.g. by promoting the acquisition of relevant key competences, enabling practical experiences in enterprises, and involving experts from businesses.

- Set up an EU-level VET / Business Forum with a focus on the following themes:
  - role of VET in the knowledge triangle;
  - transitions from VET to business: how to support VET graduates in starting up enterprises.

**INCLUSIVE VET (OBJECTIVE 6)**

16 Take preventive and remedial measures to maximise the contribution of VET in combating early leaving from education;
17 Consider specific measures aimed at raising the participation of low-skilled and other "at risk" groups in education and training, including by developing flexible pathways in C-VET and using appropriate guidance and support services;
18 Use ICT to maximise access to training and to promote active learning, as well as to develop

- Vademecum of best practices on inclusion of "at risk" groups through a combination of work-based learning and key competences;
### Actions at National Level

| New methods in both work- and school-based VET, in order to facilitate the participation of "at risk" groups; |
| Use existing monitoring systems to support the participation of "at risk" groups in VET: see short-term deliverable 6. |

### Transversal Objectives (Objectives 7-11)

| Establish communication strategies for different stakeholder groups, focused on implementation and the added value of tools (ECVET, ECTS, referencing of NQFs to EQF, quality Assurance systems in line with EQAVET); |
| Set up structured cooperation mechanisms between VET sector and employment services at all levels (policy and implementation), including the social partners; |
| Contribute to improving EU level data on I-VET students, including mobility and employability. |

### Support at EU Level

| Inclusive VET (Objective 6) |
| Support the achievement of the above objectives through the Lifelong Learning Programme and, where appropriate, the European Structural Funds; |
| Support peer-learning between participating countries and innovative projects; |
| Setting up an enhanced coordination procedure for the implementation of common European tools in the field of education and training; |
| European communication strategy on European transparency tools; |
| Develop structured cooperation with VET provider associations at EU level; |
| Strengthen structured cooperation between the education and training and the employment policy fields; |
| Improve EU level data on I-VET students, including mobility and employability; |
| Social partners at all levels should continue to play an active role in the Copenhagen process (governance and ownership) and contribute to the realisation of the above mentioned short-term deliverables; |
| Report on VET developments in Member States and partner countries; |
| Reinforce exchanges with enlargement and neighbourhood countries. |
GENERAL PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE GOVERNANCE AND OWNERSHIP OF THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS

- Member States should make a strong commitment to implementing the priorities of the Copenhagen process within the Europe 2020 national reform programmes;
- Reporting under the Copenhagen process should be incorporated into that of the “ET 2020” strategic framework. This would provide the most efficient way of contributing to reporting on the Europe 2020 Strategy, and would increase the visibility of VET in lifelong learning;
- Cooperation in the area of VET should be intensified. The open method of coordination should continue to serve as the main mechanism for such cooperation. Peer learning and innovative projects should provide means of supporting national policy developments;
- The Directors-General for Vocational Training (DGVT), the European Social Partners and the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training (ACVT) should continue to play an active role in the governance of the Copenhagen process;
- Cedefop and the ETF should continue, according to their specific mandates, to support policy development and implementation, to report on progress towards the strategic objectives and the short-term deliverables, and to provide evidence for policy-making in VET;
- VET provider organisations should be encouraged to cooperate at European level with a view to promoting the above objectives;
- Policy dialogues and exchanges of experience with our global partners can contribute to meeting present and future challenges. Exchanges and cooperation with potential candidate countries, with neighbourhood countries assisted by the ETF and with international organisations, particularly the OECD, the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organisation and UNESCO, should be strengthened. The right of participation in these activities should be ensured for all participating countries;
- A new list of short-term deliverables should be drawn up by 2014 based on the above mentioned strategic objectives.
European education and training policy has been given added impetus since the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, the EU's overarching programme focusing on growth and jobs. Knowledge, and the innovation it sparks, are the EU’s most valuable assets, particularly as global competition becomes more intense in all sectors. While national governments are responsible for education and training, some challenges are common to all Member States: Ageing societies, skills deficits of the workforce and global competition need joint responses and countries learning from each other.

European cooperation in education and training for the period up to 2020 should be established in the context of a strategic framework spanning education and training systems as a whole in a lifelong learning perspective. Indeed, lifelong learning should be regarded as a fundamental principle underpinning the entire framework, which is designed to cover learning in all contexts - whether formal, non-formal or informal - and at all levels: from early childhood education and schools through to higher education, VET and adult learning.

Five benchmarks are agreed for 2020:
1. at least 15% of adults should participate in lifelong learning.
2. the share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15%.
3. the share of 30-34-year-olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 40%.
4. the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 10%.
5. at least 95% of children between 4 years old and the age for starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education.

Four strategic objectives 2020 and priority settings for each policy cycle (cycle 2009-2011) are agreed. With a view to achieving the four strategic objectives under the ‘ET 2020’ framework, the identification of priority areas for a specific work cycle should 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:

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: Relate all 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.
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.

• ‘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.

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 drop-outs 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.

4. ENHANCING INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY, INCLUDING ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AT ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Pursue work on:

• Transversal key competences: 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).

• Partnerships: Develop partnerships between education and training providers and businesses, research institutions, cultural actors and creative industries, and promote a well-functioning knowledge triangle.
The Copenhagen process has played a crucial role in raising awareness of the importance of VET at both national and European level. Progress is most evident in the common European tools, principles and guidelines which have been developed to make qualifications more transparent, comparable and transferable, as well as to improve flexibility and quality of learning. These tools (Europass, EQF, ECVET and EQAVET) establish a basis to move towards a real European education and training area.

The impact of the Copenhagen process on countries' VET policies has been both quick and strong: it has triggered profound reforms, amongst others the development of national qualifications frameworks with a view to implementing the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the shift to a learning outcomes approach. By changing the perspective from an input-oriented learning process to learning outcomes, comprehensive frameworks which include general education, VET and higher education, can help create transparent, permeable and flexible national qualifications systems.

Peer learning activities and the exchange of good practices have helped to create a sense of ownership of the process and stimulated further activities. But more and better communication is needed to involve the stakeholders: social partners, VET providers, civil society and learners.

VET policies alone do not suffice to address socio-economic challenges and make mobility and lifelong learning a reality. Comprehensive approaches are required which link VET to other policies, in particular employment and social policies.

The evaluation of the Copenhagen process (2002-2010) gave new impetus for the meeting in Bruges, where a new Communiqué was to be conducted. In December 2010 the ministers of VET of the EU Member States, the EFTA/EEA and candidate countries, the European Commission and the European Social Partners adopted the Bruges Communiqué.

The start
In October 2001 in Bruges, the Directors-General in charge of VET in the EU Member States started a bottom-up process, analogous to the Bologna process for higher education, in order to bring about more intense joint action. Subsequently, thirty-one countries and the European Commission signed a declaration in Copenhagen in November 2002 containing a strategy to improve the performance, quality and attractiveness of European VET in order to achieve the Lisbon objectives.

How does the Copenhagen process work in practice?

The Copenhagen process acts at four levels:

1. Political: The process plays an essential role in emphasizing the importance of VET to political decision makers. It facilitates agreeing common European goals and objectives, discussing national models and initiatives and exchanging good examples at a European level. At national level, the process contributes to strengthening the focus on VET and has inspired national reforms.

2. Common Tools: Developing common European tools and principles aimed at enhancing transparency and quality of competences and qualifications, and facilitating mobility of learners and workers. The process paves the way towards a European labour market, and a European VET area complementary to the European area for higher education.

3. Mutual learning: Supporting European cooperation and fostering mutual learning. It allows the participating countries to consider their policies in light of experience from other countries and provides a framework for working together, learning from others, sharing ideas, experiences and results.
Taking stakeholders on board: The process strengthens the involvement of different stakeholders and enables their contribution to common goals.

**Results**

Since the adoption of the Copenhagen declaration the process is reviewed every two years. In Maastricht (2004), Helsinki (2006), Bordeaux (2008) and Bruges (2010). Priorities and objectives were set to guide VET policy developments for the following two years.

**Overview of the most important results achieved since 2002**

- The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) was adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 23 April 2008. The EQF will relate different national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework. The EQF will cover all educational sectors, general and vocational, and all education sectors. Most European countries are developing or revising their qualifications frameworks to be compatible with the EQF. As of 2010 EQF will make it possible to compare qualification levels. In 2011 the Netherlands will implement the EQF.
- In May 2009 a Commission proposal for a Recommendation on a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework was adopted. It is designed to support Member States to promote and monitor quality improvement in VET. It provides a common basis for further development of quality principles, reference criteria and indicators.
- In June 2009 a Commission proposal for a Recommendations on a European credit system for VET (ECVET) was adopted. This system will facilitate the recognition of knowledge, skills and competences gained by individuals in different learning environments or though periods of VET abroad.
- Council Resolution on strengthening policies, systems and practices in the field of guidance throughout life, which brings a coherent approach to this topic across education and training sectors at Community and national levels
- Council Conclusion on the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning endorse a set of common European principles to help develop confidence and trust in this rapidly emerging sector.
The Treaty of Lisbon amends the current EU and EC treaties, without replacing them. It provides the Union with the legal framework and tools necessary to meet future challenges and to respond to citizens’ demands. Entered into force on 1 December 2009:

1 A more democratic and transparent Europe, with a strengthened role for the European Parliament and national parliaments, more opportunities for citizens to have their voices heard and a clearer sense of who does what at European and national level.
2 A more efficient Europe, with simplified working methods and voting rules, streamlined and modern institutions for a EU of 27 members and an improved ability to act in areas of major priority for today’s Union.
3 A Europe of rights and values, freedom, solidarity and security, promoting the Union’s values, introducing the Charter of Fundamental Rights into European primary law, providing for new solidarity mechanisms and ensuring better protection of European citizens.
4 Europe as an actor on the global stage will be achieved by bringing together Europe’s external policy tools, both when developing and deciding new policies. The Treaty of Lisbon gives Europe a clear voice in relations with its partners worldwide. It harnesses Europe’s economic, humanitarian, political and diplomatic strengths to promote European interests and values worldwide, while respecting the particular interests of the Member States in Foreign Affairs.
The next important milestone was reached in Lisbon. European leaders – the EU now had fifteen Member States – expressed their ambition to make Europe the most dynamic and competitive region in the world. To achieve this requires a well-educated and highly versatile labour force. Knowledge is evolving at an increasingly rapid pace, and people must keep up with this evolution throughout their lifetimes. To reach their goals, European leaders decided to apply the open method of coordination. This approach gives more leeway to European leaders to take their own initiatives and to achieve the objectives at an unequal pace.

The open method of coordination consists of four elements:
1 to formulate guidelines for medium and long-term objectives;
2 to fix qualitative and quantitative indicators and benchmark topics;
3 to translate common guidelines into national policy objectives;
4 to assess activities periodically as a mutual learning process.
THE BOLOGNA DECLARATION (1999)

Twenty-nine countries confirmed in Bologna their willingness to strive towards a European space for higher education. The most important undertakings are that every country commits itself to basing its higher education on the bachelor’s-master’s system, transparency and the start of the introduction of a system of quality assurance.
In 1993, the now twelve Member States signed the Treaty of Maastricht. Concerning the policy, the consequences of the Treaty was the application of the principle of subsidiarity to European VET:

This principle means that action at EU level will be taken only if it is more effective than taking it at national, regional or local level. Each Member State is still responsible for the organisation and the content of its own VET. Hence the European VET policy is of a supportive nature. The 1995 Commission White Paper: “Teaching and learning – towards the learning society” specifies this.

To turn policy into action, funds became available through the Leonardo da Vinci programme for VET, which started in 1995.
TREATY OF ROME (1957)

This treaty established the European Economic Community (EEC). Although the six Member States acknowledged that a common VET policy would contribute to harmonious development of national economies and the common market, it was only in 1963 that the European Council laid down how it wanted to reach this common policy. They then established the Advisory Committee for Vocational Education (ACVT), in which the social partners obtained a special role.

Until the mid-eighties, VET policy was limited to a series of non-binding resolutions. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Education (Cedefop), however, was created in 1975 to promote the exchange of information and the mutual comparison of training standards. In addition, a series of promotion programmes were launched: COMETT, ERASMUS, PETRA I and II, LINGUA, FORCE, EUROTECNET, and Helios I and II.
WEBSITES PROVIDING MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EUROPE

GENERAL
Ministry of Education, culture and Science
www.minocw.nl

European Commission
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc60_en.htm

Cedefop European Centre for the Development of VET
www.cedefop.europa.eu

CINOP International Agency
www.internationalagency.nl

PROGRAMMES
Lifelong Learning Programme 2007 - 2013
http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/newprog/index_en.html
www.na-lll.nl (Dutch)

Leonardo da Vinci The Netherlands
www.leonardodavinci.nl

POLICY
Dutch policy developments: Internationalisation agenda 2009-2011
www.internationaalagentschap.nl/2_739_MBO_Internationalisation_Agenda_2009-2011.aspx

Europe 2020, a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

Summaries of the Union's legislation
http://europa.eu.int/scadplus

Education and training 2020' work programme

Copenhagen Declaration 2002

The Copenhagen process (2002 - ) for VET

New Skills for New Jobs
http://www.newskillsnetwork.eu/id/560

Strategic framework for European cooperation in and training (ET 2020)
Maastricht Communiqué 2004

Helsinki Communiqué 2006

Bordeaux Communiqué 2008

Bruges Communiqué 2010

Valuing learning outside formal education and training

Europe 2020 flagship initiative Youth on the move
http://europa.eu/youthonthemove/events_en.htm

Council Resolution Guidance 2008

**INSTRUMENTS**

Europass
http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu
www.europass.nl *(Dutch)*

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

European Quality Assurance Reference Framework

Recommendations on a European credit system for VET (ECVET)

The European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET)
www.eqavet.eu

Search engine for VET in Europe
http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/

Young People's page on Europe
www.go-europe.nl *(Dutch)*

Info about work placements during VET
www.workplacement.nl *(Dutch)*
National Agency Lifelong Learning
Programme Leonardo da Vinci
Study Visits
Euroguidance
European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network
Europass consortium
National Coordination Point EQAVET
National Coordination Point ECVET

www.internationalagency.nl