

PRESS RELEASE

PUBLIC LAUNCH OF THE LEARNOVATION STAKEHOLDERS' ROUNDTABLE

Brussels, 5th of March 2008

Will the 5th of March 2008 be remembered as a landmark for European policy making in education and lifelong learning? Only time will tell, surely it represents an important achievement in terms of consensus building around the issue of innovation in European lifelong learning.

Following the initiative of nine major European networks dealing with lifelong learning, e-learning and education that decided to support the **Learnovation initiative**, representatives from more than 40 key EU and national lifelong stakeholders gathered in the European Commission to discuss a new vision of innovation in learning, that embeds ICT for learning as well as lifelong learning in a comprehensive and future-oriented perspective, and to share ideas and proposals on how to bring the Learnovation initiative forward.

The **Learnovation Stakeholders Round Table**, launched on the 16th October 2007 in the context of the eLearning Conference organised within the Portuguese Presidency of the EU, intends to propose itself as a new interlocutor to help European policy makers at all institutional levels to accelerate and strengthen the impact of innovation policies affecting education, training, lifelong learning but also the European economy and society according to the renewed Lisbon strategy. The Roundtable wants to operate as an independent body able to complement the institutional consensus building mechanism and the voice of the most consolidated representative bodies of educational institutions.

The **nine European networks** which decided to take part in the LEARNOVATION Stakeholders Roundtable are: EADL – European Association for Distance Learning, EDEN – European Distance and eLearning Network, EFMD – European Foundation for Management Development, EFQUEL – European Federation for Quality in eLearning, ELIG – European Learning Industry Group, ESU – European Student Union, EUCEN – European University Continuing Education Network, EuroPACE and MENON.

During the first Open Session of the Roundtable, which included participation of key actors such as representatives of three Directorates General the European Commission (DG Education and Culture, DG Enterprise and Industry, DG Information Society), the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, the Slovenian Presidency, the **Learnovation Manifesto** was presented, the policy priorities for action for 2008-2009 were discussed, and the working methods of the Roundtable were shared with the participants.

Creativity, innovation and change were highlighted as being essential for the Knowledge Society in the interventions by Mrs Godelieve Van den Brande and Mr André Richier of the European Commission, and Mr Brian Holmes of the Executive Agency. So too was the essential role of lifelong learning in general, and e-learning, e-skills and digital-competence in particular. There needs to be a strong coherence between the Learnovation vision and EC policy objectives and this new initiative was

welcomed as an important and useful exercise to support EU and national policy making.

Prof Mirko Zorman, Chair of the Education Committee in the Council of Ministers, opened the Round Table discussion by stating the importance of the theme of innovation and creativity in the agenda of the presidency semester and appreciated the possible role of the Roundtable as a mediator of the dialogue with stakeholder.

In his closing remarks, Prof Jean Claude Burgelman underlined the centrality of the theme addressed by the Learnovation initiative within the present phase of development of the Lisbon process, as concerns both innovation of European learning systems and the contribution of learning to the broader society.

To know more about the initiative and to join the operation, please visit www.learnovation.eu.



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

The Learnovation initiative is being supported by a project under Key Activity 3 (ICT) of the Lifelong Learning Programme, funded by DG Education and Culture and managed the Executive Agency for Education, Culture and Audiovisual.

The networks supporting the Learnovation initiative are:



The **European Association for Distance Learning** is the European association of schools, institutions and individuals working in correspondence and distance education. With members from over 20 European countries, the Association is a representative forum for the exchange of information and ideas on current practice and developments in the expanding field of distance learning. Nearly all member states of the European Community are represented in the EADL. But the EADL has also members in Norway, Russia, Switzerland and Turkey.



EDEN - the **European Distance and E Learning Network** - exists to share knowledge and improve understanding for professionals in distance and e-learning across the whole of Europe and beyond, and to promote policy and practice for this field of endeavour. EDEN is for all those concerned with distance and e-learning, in all sectors and phases of education and training. With more than 1000 individual members and 197 institutional members, EDEN holds annual conferences attracting more than 550 participants; holds additional conferences on research and on the schools sector every two years; supports its own open source journal EURODL (www.eurodl.org); and provides support and advice for a range of projects in the European sphere.



The **European Foundation for Management Development** is an international membership organization, based in Brussels, Belgium. With more than 650 member organizations from academia, business, public service and consultancy in 75 countries, EFMD provides a unique forum for information, research, networking and debate on innovation and best practice in management development. EFMD is recognized globally as an accreditation body of quality in management education and has established accreditation services for business schools and business school programmes, corporate universities and technology-enhanced learning programmes.



The **European Learning Industry Group**, ELIG, is an open consortium of leading ICT companies and eLearning content providers who seek to promote eLearning throughout Europe, in schools, universities, the workplace and homes.



ESU, the **European Students' Union** is the umbrella organisation of 49 national unions of students from 38 countries and through these members represent over 10 million students. The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the educational, social, economic and cultural interests of students at a European level towards all relevant bodies and in particular the European Union, Council of Europe and UNESCO.



EUCEN, the **European University Continuing Education Network** was founded in 1991 and is now the largest European multidisciplinary Association in University Lifelong Learning. It is registered in Belgium as an international non-governmental non-profit making organisation and has 212 members from 42 countries.



EuroPACE is a European non-profit association of universities, educational organisations and their networks, with the main objective of fostering networked e-learning for virtual mobility, for internationalization of higher education, for knowledge creation and sharing, and for lifelong learning.



The **European Foundation for Quality in eLearning** - EFQUEL - is a European membership organisation, with the mission is to enhance the quality of eLearning in Europe by providing services and support for all stakeholders. EFQUEL is built on principles of dialogue and inclusiveness to promote excellence and innovation to achieve Learning Europe.



MENON is a European research and innovation network, active at national, European and international level, providing information and advice to policy makers, education communities, and the ICT industry on issues related to innovation and changes in Education and Training, Lifelong Learning and Knowledge Society developments in Europe and worldwide.