

Vocational Education and Training Network Meeting

Thursday September 10, 2015 Budapest,

There were 40 people in attendance; apologies were received from M'Hamed Dif, Lars Heineman, Barbara Stalder, and Franz Kaiser

Reports were presented:

- **VETNET Meeting, Porto, 2014 - Margaret Malloch/Michael Gessler**

A joint report was made on the Porto Conference, which had 77 papers in the programme, some innovations introduced including a market place meeting as the last item in the conference programme. This provided an opportunity to reflect on the conference and to plan for Budapest. For Budapest, the Network had 102 papers, 6 symposia, 1 joint session and 1 poster.

- **The International Journal For Research in Vocational Education and Training - Michael Gessler**

Michael reported on the success of the journal which is continuing in gaining in strength. The Open Source utilised is free and support is also provided by the ITB. Scopus has been applied for. Reviewing is rigorous with an acceptance rate of approximately 50%. The journal is linked with TVET@Asia and also has a Nordic link.

- **WERA - Pekka Kamarainen**

Pekka reported that the focus on international work had contributed to joining us together with contributions to the journal and to conferences. Our focus has been international lived practice. The focus of WERA is shifting and therefore we may not necessarily apply for renewal.

Our alliance can continue with EERA bearing in mind that WERA is an association of individuals and EERA an association of associations.

- **ECER 2015 Early Researchers Conference Programme Lazaro Moreno**

Lazaro noted the successful early researchers' conference and encouraged everyone to bring the opportunity to take part in this section of the conference to their doctoral students. He also asked if anyone is interested in taking over as Chair of the Emerging Researchers.

- **ECER 2015 Main Conference Programme Budapest VETNET 2015**
Margaret Malloch, Karen Evans

Karen and Margaret provided an overview of the development of the programme, thanking reviewers, chairs, discussants and presenters.

A deliberate effort was made to generously support and encourage new researchers and papers from countries that have not been able to participate very much in the conference previously, particularly Eastern Europe. Karen presented with a group in the Organisational Leadership Network and suggested that further interaction with this group is worth following up. There were 102 papers, 1 poster, 1 workshop (later withdrawn) and 1 joint session with Network 22 Research in Higher Education a set of papers on 'Different International and Educational Perspectives in Student Collaboration'.

Magdolna Benke's excellent work in the organisation of the VETNET dinner is also recognised with appreciation.

- **International Research Network Ludger Deitmer**

Ludger continues in his encouragement of international research networking and projects and participation in conferences. Journal submissions are encouraged. Ludger has also actively supported the Early Researchers conference.

- **Chairman of ECER Sessions M'Hamed Dif**

M'Hamed was unfortunately unable to attend the conference; the Chairs of sessions handled the role positively. Network members also chaired Early Researcher Conference sessions, and more volunteers for this would be appreciated.

- **Interdisciplinary Cooperation** Lorenz Lassnigg
Lorenz outlined progress for interdisciplinary cooperation and ideas for future development.

- **Cooperation with other Research Groups** Christoph Nagele
Christof has a range of strategies and plans for this activity for 2016.

- **Cooperation with Higher Education** Martin
Mulder

Martin informed the Network of the Higher Education Conference in Amsterdam in July 2016 on higher education, for which a joint session is being considered. Submissions close January 2016.

From the conference website:

'Given the multi-level nature of the issues at stake within higher education, representatives of major EU and US networks of higher education researchers decided to combine their expertise and organize this joint conference in the Summer of 2016 at the Dutch capital of Amsterdam. Also a number of national higher education associations are actively involved. Particular purpose of this conference is to unite the macro, meso and micro levels of higher education research, therefore covering the scholarship of learning, teaching and organizing.

Important dates

The Higher Education Conference July 13-15th 2016

Submission Deadline: January 15th 2016

Results review March 1st 2016

End early bird April 15th 2016

Theme:

The Higher Education sectors across Europe and beyond find themselves currently in a crucial transition, as a range of problems involving multi-level developments are at stake. While the impact of cross-national developments such as the Bologna process and the shaping of the European Area of Higher Education have become increasingly visible, universities had to deal with massification, transparency and accountability coinciding with fewer supply of financial means, leading to the implementation of more business-oriented features into the university. While non-tenured academic staff covers an increasing part of the employees, in terms of numbers and output, their prospects to continue their careers within academics are deteriorating. At the same time, students are demanding more democratic decision-making and financial transparency, with a focus on quality instead of quantity. Learning and research have become part of a big-business type of environment, while academic standards are included in systems of accountability. This setting requests a more holistic perspective on higher education and what makes its practice succeed.

For those coming from further afield, you might be interested in combining your trip to HEC2016 with the [Higher Education Close Up 8](#) which will take place in Lancaster from 18th-20th July 2016, and has the theme Locating Social Justice in Close-Up Research in Higher Education.'

- Working Party for updating VETNET regulations – Martin Mulder, Johanna Lasonen, and Joanna Burchert and Pekka Kamarainen

Martin reported on developments to date. Martin, Johanna and Joanna will present to the next conference their update of the VETNET regulations, which will build on the existing documentation and the work of the EERA/ECER Board, Officers and Link Convenors. Pekka Kamarainen will advise on the revisions.

Business Arising from the Reports

An amendment was passed adding Natasha Kersh as the member with the Portfolio focussing in Encouragement of Eastern European participation.

The inclusion of discussants for paper sessions had been found to add to the general quality of debate and consideration of the issues presented. This innovation was discussed in greater length in the Moot session at the end of the conference with a recommendation that guidance as to what this role entails be provided.

VETNET Board and Committee

The VETNET Board and Committee ~ membership and office bearers

Marja-Lena Stenstrom is retiring from the Board; her contribution as a conference organiser (Helsinki) reviewer and Board member has been positive and constructive.

The Network thanked Marja – Lena for her contribution. Petri Nokelainen was nominated and approved to take this place for Finland.

Future directions and challenges for VETNET

Planning for 2016: there is potential interest in the ECER initiatives to have video presentations as part of the conference programme. This will certainly be of interest to VETNET members.

We want to encourage new members, submissions to the Dublin conference, encourage people to upload their papers, gain additional reviewers, and encourage contributions to the Journal.

Michael announced that he is stepping down as Chair at the next Conference and Margaret indicated that her term of office as Link Convenor will also be completed then.

Karen is stepping down from her work in co – co-ordination of the Conference Programme. We thanked Michael and Karen for their excellent contributions to the Network and for this Conference.

Michael nominated Christof Nagele and Barbara Stalder as potential incoming convenors. Given the review of the Network regulations and the overall EERA agenda for transparency and open processes, an election is planned for the 2016 conference.

The Network Meeting concluded with a happy recognition of the major work and long term contribution to VETNET by Pekka Kamarainen. Pekka was awarded with a Certificate of Recognition of Service, a well deserved acknowledgement and applauded by all.

M.Malloch.

December 2015.

