

The 1st meeting of 'Creative Skills Europe', the European Skills Council for Employment and Training in the Audiovisual (AV) and Live Performance (LP) sectors, took place in Tallinn, Estonia, on Wednesday 29 April 2015. It was attended by over 30 participants from 10 EU countries (Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom).

Following an introduction on the European initiative, its objectives and work programme, the meeting agenda focused on two main items:

- 1) a review of the first draft of the Council report on the employment situation and skills needs of the audiovisual and live performance sectors in Europe;
- 2) a brainstorming session on the long-term development of European co-operations at sector-level in the field of employment and training.

Presentation of the draft report

The draft report was prepared with the guidance of the Council steering committee composed of European social partners and national skills organisations from four EU countries (BE, FR, NL and UK)¹. The report objective is to collect **existing employment statistics**, from as many EU countries as possible, to identify labour market trends in the AV and LP sectors across Europe. It is the first publication of the Council and it will be followed by two more, dedicated respectively to the **evolution of AV and LP skills and occupations** and to **innovative tools and national/regional strategies** developed to monitor and address skills needs in the sectors.

The first Council report is therefore aimed at informing further Council's activities, which will not be limited to collecting or analysing statistics but which will look at developing shared qualitative views on the most urgent needs in the AV and LP sectors in terms of initial and on going professional training. As a first step, however, data collection is seen by all participating stakeholders as key to acquire labour market intelligence in which to ground future skills strategies and actions. In parallel to collecting existing statistics the report will also focus on the identification of intelligence gaps in the different EU countries, and on the formulation of recommendations for improved data collection in the future.

¹ EU social partners: EURO-MEI (UNI-Europa live performance and media branch), European Broadcasting Union (EBU), Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe (PEARLE*), International Federation of Actors (FIA), International Federation of Musicians (FIM), European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) and European Coordination of Independent Producers (CEPI); National skills organisations: mediarte.be and Social Fonds Podiumkunsten (Belgium); Commissions paritaires nationales emploi et formation pour les secteurs de l'audiovisuel et du spectacle vivant (France); GOC (the Netherlands); Creative Skillset, and Creative & Cultural Skills (United Kingdom).

The report methodology was designed as a two-step process:

- a first draft prepared on the basis of the information available in the four countries represented in the steering committee (countries where skills organisations' activities are the most developed);
- a second draft enriched by the comments received during the first Council meeting and by additional national statistics collected after the meeting.

To allow for the collection of national statistics in a single document, it was necessary to compare their respective 'perimeter' and identify the eventual variations from country to country. This led to the establishment of a 'methodological grid' highlighting similarities and differences in data collection in the four focus countries.

Key employment statistics per country are therefore presented, followed by a first set of employment and skills needs trends coming out of those statistics but also of the qualitative analyses developed by the different national skills organisations on their basis.

Feedback on the report from meeting participants

Participants expressed a keen interest in having access to national data on employment and skills needs. They indeed confirmed that very few cross-border exchanges between sectoral stakeholders have taken place in this field up to this day.

Participants also recognised the importance of collecting statistics in order to ground sector policy demands, enhance its credibility and be better positioned on the government and EU institutions' agendas. The collection and use of statistics has however to be handled with care as raw data can easily lead to misleading or biased conclusions. In our sectors, for example, the number of workers not in employment, in between contracts, or active in other sectors of activities is very important and has therefore to be kept in mind when observing employment statistics. It has also been underlined that quantitative data does not necessarily allow for the identification of needs if not understood in its social and economical context. Recommendations to clarify the objectives of the report and its potential use have therefore been formulated by a number of participants.

Some comments were also received as regards the use of certain terms and the potential subtext they carry: i.e. 'positive developments' when speaking of economic growth, 'self employment' if not clearly defined in terms of legal and economic status (different from country to country), 'practical competences' when removed from their global learning environment, etc. Some participants therefore recommended to carefully review some of the terms used in the report to double-check their relevance, and to enrich the glossary annexed to the document. References from the higher education context were also offered to further improve the report.

The first employment and skills needs trends identified by the report on the basis of the statistics from the four focus countries seem to resonate in the national contexts of most participants present. When possible, those trends will be double-checked and solidified on the backdrop of additional national statistics to be provided after the meeting.

What skills development strategies really need, however, is data at 'occupations level', that is to say how many people are active in the different sector occupations; a type of data rarely available

so far². This is a very big challenge that has to be taken up by governments and EU institutions (see ESCO initiative³). An analysis of the job offers in the sector could also be a very interesting source of information, as would be the numbers of the students enrolled in AV and LP related education programmes in the EU different countries.

As regards the priorities emerging from the analyses of the statistics, multiskilling has been a key concern in the journalism field for several years already. The right balance between the acquisition of new skills and the quality of the training and of the skills acquired needs to be found in order to enhance the workers' skillset rather than weaken it.

Professional transition – for performers, such as dancers, but also for other artistic or technical occupations rendered obsolete by technological developments or the transformations of career paths – also remains a key skills issue too often neglected by policymakers. The need to accompany transitions is even higher in the AV and LP sectors where the age pyramids show that many workers leave the sector as early as 30 or 35 in certain countries.

Another important trend in most EU countries is the increasing use of the 'freelance/self-employment' status in the AV and LP sectors. It will be important to make sure the data collected is as solid as possible, as 'self-employment/freelance work/independent work' does not cover the same realities and the same legal/economic status in the different EU countries.

Multiskilling, the specificities of the age pyramid and the increased necessity for workers to occupy different jobs/have different legal statuses in the course of a career certainly has consequences on the work/life balance and on the employability of the professionals in the sector. Those are very important issues to be addressed, not only in a 'skills' perspective but also in a social and economic one.

Finally a strong call was made for the development of 'collective'/mutualised skills initiatives to counter the precariousness of workers in some subsectors and the increasing number of 'freelancers' having limited or no access at all to on going training opportunities. EU initiatives can also help smaller countries access skills developments programmes that they could not have implemented otherwise, while bigger countries can use the EU dimension to co-fund or enlarge – in terms of partnerships – national or regional initiatives.

Existence and collection of statistics in additional countries

Following the plenary feedback session, participants splitted in two groups to explore whether similar statistics to the ones presented in the report existed in the six new countries represented at the meeting, namely Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Romania, Spain and Sweden. In each of the working group, an exchange of experience took place between those countries and representatives from the four focus countries (France, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom).

Discussions in the working groups allowed for the emergence of further differences/similarities in the field of data collection between countries.

² For the moment usable occupational statistics are only available in the UK

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/home>

In the first group, for example, it was mentioned that, in Belgium, detailed employment data (but no statistics per occupations) is collected by the national social security office and is easily accessible to all interested stakeholders. Statistics on freelancers and temp workers are however a lot more difficult to access. In France, the main sources of data for the AV and LP sectors are sectoral retirement funds but, through this source, once again, only employed workers are covered. A supplementary pension fund and the data provided by employers in this context, is an additional source of information for the live performance sector in Flanders.

As regards the three 'new countries' represented in this working group – Romania, Finland and Sweden – participants confirmed that, if no employment sectoral statistics have been gathered in their country so far, some useful statistics are available. They volunteered to help the Council in accessing them.

In the second working group, statistics gathering in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands were discussed. In those two countries, the development of labour market intelligence to better understand employment trends and design relevant skills strategies has been on the sector agenda and part of the formal mandates of the national sector skills organisations for years. In addition to gathering statistics provided by the Office for National Statistics, skills organisations also developed their own statistical tools such as employers' or workforce surveys.

In Estonia, Spain and the Czech Republic, statistics exist but have not necessarily been organised in a sector and/or skills perspective yet. Further research will be needed to identify the exact sources and collect the relevant data. Participants also offered their help in this challenging task.

In Estonia, the Ministry of Culture publishes every 3 years a report that includes cultural statistics. Additional data could be integrated in this report following suggestions coming out of our project or of other sector initiatives.

Trends and recommendations

Draft report 1 closes on recommendations inspired by the statistics collected and their qualitative analysis. Employment and skills needs trends put forward will have to be double-checked and completed on the backdrop of additional national data to be collected after the meeting.

During a very rich session, participants reflected on those recommendations and proposed new perspectives to be explored in the report and in the next steps of the Council activities.

An education representative launched the discussions with a feedback on the term 'competence-based learning', which limits the understanding of the role of the schools if not put in a broader context that includes the academic side of learning. Education provider should facilitate the acquisition of specific/applied skills but also help students acquire the ability to learn new skills in the course of their career.

Other participants suggested that, in order to avoid misunderstanding, some topics should be deepened and their objectives clarified to allow for the drafting of EU wide recommendations that make sense in different national contexts. This is the case, for example, for the term apprenticeship, which can have a different meaning in different countries (a 'dual vocational education' programme in some countries; on-the-job /informal learning in others).

Participants also suggested giving a more important place to on-going training, as a key tool for the acquisition of skills at different stages of a career in fast-paced professional environments. The on-going training of teachers has also been underlined as key to ensuring up-to-date educational programmes, in parallel to the constant necessity for schools and the industry to stay in contact and exchange on developments in the sector on a regular basis.

A focus on talent management is also key as leaders/managers have to have the relevant skillset to understand, identify and develop talents in their sector. Training of HR professionals is therefore important, as is the development of 'training-the-trainers' programmes.

An understanding of where the jobs are and what developments are at work in the different professions should finally be promoted in all education systems in order to offer relevant training solutions.

Conclusions and next steps

The meeting ended with a feedback session on the proceedings of the day, and with a discussion on the priority themes to be addressed by the Council in the months to come.

Participants praised the importance of European exchanges to shed light on national and local practices and develop a collective vision for further action. Skills issues in the AV and LP sectors are numerous and complex, which will render the task of drafting 'a simple plan that fits all' impossible. Important trends can however be identified related to the technological shift, the increasingly precarious careers, and the necessity to invent and adopt new business models.

Concrete initiatives could be developed around existing EU initiatives (ESCO, EQF, etc.) but also around transversal issues that equally affect professionals in different EU countries (professional transitions, multiskilling, etc.). Actions should be grounded on the experiences acquired by previous projects and on the expertise of those stakeholders that have been active in the skills development field for many years already.

Networking and deepening exchanges is greatly needed and the Council should continue facilitating the discussions through online and physical meeting spaces. Thematic working groups around key topics such as apprenticeships, the development of new business models, or professional transitions could be set-up.

Annex I – Agenda of the day

08:30 – 09:00	Registrations
09:00 – 09:30	Welcome words Presentation of the project and of the agenda of the meeting <i>William Maunier, EURO MEI and Allan Jones, EBU</i>
09:30 – 10:00	Presentation of draft report 1 on the employment situation and skills needs of the audiovisual and live performance sectors <i>Daphne Tepper, Creative Skills Europe</i>
10:00 – 11:00	Collecting feedback on draft report 1 <i>Moderation: Anita Debaere, Pearle</i>
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:30 – 13:00	Peer learning workshop on draft report 1: The collect of data in the different EU countries GROUP A: <i>Moderator: Allan Jones, EBU / Rapporteur: Richard Polacek, EURO MEI</i> GROUP B: <i>Moderator: Dearbhal Murphy, FIA / Rapporteur: Anita Debaere, Pearle</i>
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>
14:00 – 14:15	Feedback, outputs and conclusions of workshop
14:15 – 15:00	First discussion on trends to be highlighted in the report and on recommendations to be put forward <i>Moderation: Elena Lai, CEPI</i>
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee break
15:15 – 16:15	Working session on the long-term development of a European co-operation at sector-level on employment and training <i>Moderation: Richard Polacek, EURO MEI</i>
16:15 – 16:30	Conclusions and next steps

Simultaneous translation in English and French provided during the entire day.

Annex II – Participants’ list

1	Maarten BRESSELEERS	Coordinator	Sociaal Fonds voor de Podiumkunsten	BELGIUM
2	Jan VERMOESEN	Director	mediarte.be – Fonds Social du Secteur Audiovisuel et de la Production de films en Belgique	BELGIUM
3	Didier GILQUIN	Vice-President	CSC TRANSCOM CULTURE / Fonds de sécurité d’existence des Arts de la Scène	BELGIUM
4	Anita DEBAERE	Director	Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe (Pearle)	EUROPE
5	Elena LAI	Secretary general	European Coordination of Independent Producers (CEPI)	EUROPE
6	Dearbhal MURPHY	Deputy Secretary General	International Federation of Actors (FIA)	EUROPE
7	Richard POLACEK	Policy Officer	EURO MEI- Global union in the media, entertainment, arts	EUROPE
8	Barbora VLASOVA	Project Coordinator	Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)	EUROPE
9	Barbora SMUTNA	Executive Director of HR	Czech TV / Sector Skills Council for Culture	CZECH REPUBLIC
10	Monika LARINI	Executive manager	Estonian Association of Performing Arts Institutions / Sector Skills Council for Culture	ESTONIA
11	Riina VIIDING	General Secretary	Estonian Theatre Union / Sector Skills Council for Culture	ESTONIA
12	Marion LEPIK	Assistant to Gen. Secretary	Estonian Theatre Union	ESTONIA
13	Karin REINBERG	Board member	Estonian National Producers Association	ESTONIA
14	Elen LOTMAN	Head of Film Department	Baltic Film and Media School	ESTONIA
15	Gert RAUDSEP	Chairman	Association of Professional Actors of Estonia	ESTONIA
16	Indrek IBRUS	Adviser audiovisual and media	Estonian Ministry of Culture	ESTONIA
17	Maaja-Katrin KEREM	Member of the management board	Estonian Qualifications Authority - Kutsekoda	ESTONIA
18	Siret PUUST	Coordinator International Projects	Estonian Qualifications Authority - Kutsekoda	ESTONIA
19	Yngve ROSENBLAD	Head Analyst	Estonian Qualifications Authority - Kutsekoda	ESTONIA
20	Raisa NIEMI	Producer / Vice-Chair of the Committee	Lasipalatsi Media Centre Ltd / Education and Training	FINLAND

			Committee on Theatre, Music, and Dance	
21	Ségolène DUPONT	Déléguée générale	Commission paritaire nationale emploi et formation de l'audiovisuel (CPNEF AV)	FRANCE
22	Carole ZAVADSKI	Déléguée générale	Commission paritaire nationale emploi et formation du spectacle vivant (CPNEF SV)	FRANCE
23	Sophie DUNOYER	International and European affairs	Centre de Formation Professionnelle aux Techniques du Spectacle (CFPTS)	FRANCE
24	Thomas DAYAN	Assistant General Secretary	International Federation of Musicians (FIM)	EUROPE
25	William MAUNIER	President EURO MEI	EURO MEI- Global union in the media, entertainment, and arts / France Télévisions	FRANCE
26	Daphné TEPPER	Project Director	European Sector Skills Council for the Audiovisual and Live Performance sectors	EUROPE
27	Erik STEVENS	President	GOC	NETHERLANDS
28	Lars EBERT	Senior adviser	European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA)	EUROPE
29	Leonard PADURET	Chair	Sector Committee on Culture / FAIR	ROMANIA
30	Adrian MOISE	Chair	Sector Committee on Mass Media	ROMANIA
31	César CASARES	Coordinator	Danza-T Red de Trabajadores de la Danza	SPAIN
32	Ulla BERG SVEDIN	Executive chair	KULTURAKADEMIN Trappan	SWEDEN
33	Dan WILKS	Senior Research Manager	Creative Skillset	UNITED KINGDOM
34	Pauline TAMBLING	CEO	Creative & Cultural Skills	UNITED KINGDOM
35	John BARSBY	Chair of Broadcasting Experts	European Federation of Journalists	UNITED KINGDOM
36	Allan JONES	Coordinator Audiovisual SDC	European Broadcasting Union (EBU)	EUROPE