

## ***Joint Memorandum of Understanding***

### **“Central European Cooperation in Education for Lifelong Learning”**

The Minister of Education, the Arts and Culture of Austria,  
the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic,  
the Minister of Education and Culture of Hungary,  
the Minister of Education of the Slovak Republic and  
the Minister of Education and Sport of Slovenia,

- in view of the importance of deepening the regional relations in the European Union,
- with the aim to cooperate in the building of a European Education Area,
- based on the long-standing bilateral and multilateral relations between Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia,
- in recognition of the many common interests and complementary strengths which our countries share,
- with the intention of deepening and facilitating cooperative work as well as the exchange of views, good practice and expertise in the field of education and training for lifelong learning,

DECLARE their intention to strengthen common efforts within the framework of a “Central European Cooperation in Education” (CECE),

HAVE REACHED THE FOLLOWING UNDERSTANDING:

#### **Article 1**

This Joint Memorandum of Understanding shall build upon the Joint Memorandum of Understanding “Young People are Europe’s Future” of 18 February 2004 entered into between the Ministers of Education from Hungary, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Austria.

## **Article 2**

The objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to establish a framework for close institutional partnership and cooperation in the field of education and training between Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia in order to pursue the goals laid down in the preamble.

## **Article 3**

The CECE should cooperate in matters of common interest on a policy, programme and project level, which are dealt with at national level but also within the European Union and by European and other international organisations such as OECD, UNESCO, Council of Europe, etc.

## **Article 4**

With an emphasis on the regional aspect of the CECE, the main scope of cooperation will be the implementation of the "Detailed Work Programme on the Follow-up of the Objectives of Education and Training Systems in Europe"<sup>1</sup>, including vocational education and training (Copenhagen Process), the establishment and implementation of lifelong learning strategies and other issues of specific interest to CECE members.

## **Article 5**

The primary purpose of this Joint Memorandum of Understanding is multilateral cooperation. However, bilateral cooperation might be considered as appropriate for the purpose of launching a specific project while other countries shall have the opportunity to join in at a later stage.

## **Article 6**

The activities described herein will be coordinated by the Regional Conference of Directors General, which will elaborate a concrete work programme and agree upon an informal chair on a rotational basis<sup>2</sup> for twelve-months' working periods each. This Conference should be convened by the chair at least once every working period.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ of the European Communities 2002/C 142/01

<sup>2</sup> Rotation will be scheduled in the following order: Hungary, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Austria, the Czech Republic.

#### **Article 7**

The respective chairing country will coordinate the CECE on the level of director generals and administrative officers. The chair should promote the implementation of the work programme and is responsible for the administrative support of the cooperation. Each chairing country should organise an event during its term dealing with a specific topic of the agreed work programme in order to bring together the respective experts from all CECE members.

#### **Article 8**

At regular intervals, the progress of cooperation within the CECE should be discussed and evaluated. When considered appropriate, a meeting of the Ministers of CECE member countries could be organised in order to generate high-level political commitment for certain issues.

#### **Article 9**

Networking shall be encouraged for the pooling of expertise in the field of education and training in order to use synergies in research on education and training undertaken in national as well as international contexts and to make full use of the EU Peer Learning Process.

#### **Article 10**

With the aim to support the countries of the Western Balkan region and their regional cooperation, this network and specific projects could be opened up regarding the transfer of and access to expertise when and where appropriate.

#### **Article 11**

Each side will bear its own costs for the involvement in common activities, for example travel and subsistence costs of its visitors or costs for expertise. Costs for common meetings will be discussed and included in the planning process.

#### **Article 12**

The present Memorandum will not result in the creation of any new obligations regarding international law nor shall it have any effect on existing legislation. It


becomes effective on the day of signing or according to the signatory countries' internal regulations for the duration of five years and may be renewed.

Vienna, 12 April 2007

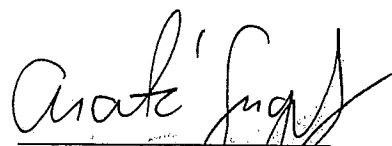
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