

SCIENCE AND EDUCATION FOR SOCIETY (SEFS) WORKING GROUP

ANNUAL PLAN 2023

WORKING GROUP LEADERS

Berwyn Davies, Welsh Higher Education Brussels – Welsh Government, abd@aber.ac.uk

Leonardo Lorusso, Regione Lombardia, leonardo_lorusso@regione.lombardia.it

Caroline Sundberg, Lärosäten Syd (Universities in South Sweden), caroline.sundberg@fsi.lu.se

OBJECTIVES

The Science & Education for Society Working Group addresses topics related to the concept of place-based universities and engagement with society and citizens while also working on the role of education in S3 as well as education and skills for research and innovation. The Working Group facilitates information sharing, knowledge development, and aims to strengthen existing and build new relationships with the EU institutions. Facilitating project development is also part of the Working Group's scope.

CONTEXT

Please explain shortly how the Working Group's aims and activities are linked to the wider R&I landscape and the ERRIN missions:

- Key EU level priorities, strategies, and events that the Working Group aims to follow up in 2023:
 - 2023 European Year of Skills
 - EU Skills Agenda - Pact for Skills
 - Large scale Skills cooperations and Regional Skills Partnership
 - Reskilling and upskilling of our workforce and attract the right skills to Europe
 - Cybersecurity Skills Academy (non-legislative, Q3 2023)
 - Skills and education for sustainability
 - linked to Council recommendation to stimulate learning for the green transition and sustainable development
 - Green Skills: Swedish EU Presidency will plan to focus on this theme (with Council Conclusions debated) on the 7th of March 2023
 - Sectorial Pact for skills map of the ERRIN's regions participation
 - EC Communication [Harnessing Talent in Europe: a new boost for EU Regions](#)
 - EIT's Deep Tech Talent Initiative - Join the Pledge

- European Education Area (EEA) in relation to ERA and European Higher Education Area (EHEA); mid-term Review of European Education Area (of course, this topic is not necessarily focused on higher education, but rather the whole spectrum of different levels of education); [EEA Progress Report was published in November 2022](#)
 - Swedish Presidency priorities in the Education Council: mutual recognition of qualifications and the Council recommendations announced by the Commission on digitalisation in the area of education.
 - Erasmus+ Mid-Term Review
 - The Long-term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas: The vision identifies several areas of action towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040. The European Startup Village Forum (28th of February) intends to promote knowledge exchange and cooperation activities and to work as an open space where institutions and stakeholders can meet, discuss and shape action for startup-driven innovation in rural areas. Furthermore, it aims to collect the commitment of public and especially private organisations to support Startup Villages
 - European Universities initiative - map of the ERRIN's regions participation
 - European Network of Innovative Higher Education Institutions (ENIHEI) in relation to European Innovation Agenda, particularly the role of higher education institutions driving innovation forward
 - Evidence based to evidence informed policymaking and the impact on science for society
 - linked to the EC SWD [Supporting and connecting policymaking in the Member States with scientific research](#)
 - 10-11 October 2023: European conference on science for policy in Brussels organised by DG-RTD, JRC, DG-REFORM with support of the Spanish EU presidency. Ministries will be invited, and stakeholders will be invited to contribute to the themes and at the conference.
 - Cooperation with CHARTER, Erasmus+ funded Blueprint project: regional dimension of skills in cultural heritage, jointly with the Cultural Heritage & Tourism WG
- Important funding programmes for the Working Group and how does the WG aim to facilitate project development:
 - Erasmus+ centralised actions are of interest
 - [Partnership for Excellence - Centres of Vocational Excellence](#) (Deadline 8 June 2023)
 - [Partnerships for Innovation - Forward-Looking Projects, on f.eg. Digital Education](#) (Deadline 15 March 2023)
 - [Alliances for Education and Enterprises](#) (Deadline 3 May 2023)
 - [Alliances for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills \(implementing the 'Blueprint'\)](#) (Deadline 3 May 2023)
 - Last call for new European Universities (expected to be published in Autumn 2023)

- How does the group support partnership building and collaborate with other European organisations or networks?
 - JRC – Science meet regions initiative
 - Cooperation or joint events with UAS4 Europe, OECD (Entrepreneurial skills)
 - EARLALL, European Association of Regional and local authorities for Lifelong learning
 - IGLO – Working Group on Higher Education, UniLion Network: collaborate on sessions where a regional dimension could be added.
- What topics and tailored activities could be proposed for less active regions, for example tackling topics directed to widening countries?
 - When organising exchange of regional examples, the SEFS Working Group will take an inclusive approach.

ACTIVITIES

Kicking of the European Year of Skills: state of play of the Pact for Skills and its regional dimension

23 February 2023 | 10:00-12:00 (in person meeting)

Following up on the Skills session of ERRIN's AGM in December 2022, this first SEFS WG meeting will kick off the EU Year of Skills in the ERRIN network and is open to members of all Working Groups. In this in person meeting, ERRIN members will get a dive into the Pact for Skills, learn about the current state of play of this first flagship of the new European Skills Agenda that is establishing large scale skills partnerships for European Industrial Ecosystems and Regional Skills Partnerships. Furthermore, we will discuss with the European Commission, and their contractor Ecorys supporting the Pact for Skills, about the regional dimension of the Pact for skills and showcase good practises of regions.

This meeting will be an information and networking session directed towards Brussels-based people fostering a better understanding of the European Pact for Skills. It will provide an excellent basis for other forthcoming Skills related meetings and activities, zooming into sectoral and cross-cutting skills challenges in the ERRIN Working Groups:

- **ICT Working Group: Digital skills and cybersecurity (Q2/Q3 2023)**
 - With the European Year of skills in mind, this WG meeting will look at several EU initiatives in the field of digital skills and cybersecurity: the Digital Education action plan 2021-2027, the proposed Council recommendation on improving the provision of digital skills and the Cybersecurity Skills Academy. We will also have the opportunity to evaluate how the DEP can contribute and foster the development of relevant digital skills in the EU. Possible joint meeting with the Science and Education for Society Working Group.
- **Health Working Group: Skills in Health (10/2023)**, possibly as EWRC side event

- In the context of the 2023 European Year of skills, this meeting will stress the issue of skills shortages in the field of health. The Health WG will showcase initiatives and projects from ERRIN member regions and their stakeholders that make health careers more attractive. Other projects that help to train/retrain the skills force so that their skills are better adapted to new jobs and to public health organisations and company's needs will also be showcased. Focus on skills linked to the innovation agenda (digital skills, skills for clinical trials staff, etc)
- **Transport Working Group: EWRC event - Skills in the mobility sector (10/2023)**
 - The rapid shift towards a climate-neutral Europe and digital transformation is changing the way we live, work and learn. Innovation in the mobility sector will offer solutions to a wide range of growing challenges like congestion, lack of space and air quality. However, the sector must be prepared in order to avoid the loss of jobs for citizens. Many people will need to acquire new skills and move to new jobs, and it will be crucial to ensure the possibility to train, upskill and reskill workers to ensure their job in a new working environment. Moreover, a specific focus must be on women in transport. Currently, only 22% of transport workers are women. Much has to be done to strengthen women's employment and equal opportunities for women and men in the transport sector.
- **Bioeconomy Working Group:**
 - Skills for the green transition and sustainable development are of interest to the Working Group, which will explore the possibility to connect to the [Gothenburg European Office](#) which is planning for an event focusing on Green Skills (and potentially CCRI) under the European Week of Regions and Cities skills for sustainability.
- **Smart Specialisation Working Group:**
 - Interest in the topic of skills. Interesting to follow up on new EU Talent Booster Mechanism, particularly the second pillar of the initiative: A new initiative on the 'Smart adaptation of regions to demographic transition' will kick off in 2023 to help regions with higher rates of departure of their young people to adapt to the demographic transition and invest in talent development through tailored place-based policies.
- **Design & Creativity Working Group: skills in Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI)**
 - Interest to have a better understanding of the Large scale Skills Cooperation for CCI under the Pact for Skills ¹
- **Energy & Climate Working Group: skills in Energy**
 - Interest to have a better understanding of skills needs the Energy field (Q3/Q4)

¹

Among ERRIN members, Lund University signed up for the CCI Pact for Skills charter.

Coordinating WG Leaders: Berwyn and Leonardo

Coordination with other WG's on EU Year of Skills activities for 2023: Berwyn

Evidence based and evidence informed policy

20 April 2023 | 10:00-12:00 (online)

This meeting will offer SEFS and Policy WG's members an opportunity to learn about the European Commission's Staff Working Document on how to support and connect policymaking in the Member States with scientific research. We will exchange on regional good practises set up within the JRC initiative 'Science meets regions'. Furthermore, ERRIN members will have the opportunity to share their challenges, identify gaps & needs and discuss with DG RTD representatives' practical ways forward towards more evidence based and informed policy making in Europe. This session will pave the way for regional stakeholders' input for the scheduled conference (DGRTD) in Brussels on 10-11 October 2023, in which ERRIN will seek to get the membership involved.

This meeting will be an information session directed towards Brussels-based people.

Coordinating WG Leaders: Caroline and Mikael

Where do the European Network of Innovative Higher Education Institutions and the European Innovation Agenda come together? The role of Higher Education Institutions driving regional innovation forward.

30 May 2023 | 10:30-12:00 - joint in person meeting of SEFS and Policy WG's

This meeting will take stock of the European Network of Innovative Higher Education Institutions which was set up to develop collective innovative thinking on how higher education can drive innovation. The network was first announced at the first European Education and Innovation Summit in June 2022. At the fifth Education Summit in December the same year the network presented their ten recommendations and one note on innovation in European Higher Education. This meeting, jointly organised by the SEFS and Policy Working Groups, will foster a better understanding of the network and their work. In this information session, we will exchange with the the Secretariat of ENIHEI, held by the University of Salamanca and exchange about the learnings and future perspective of the Swedish member, Malmö University and discuss how it can contribute to the objectives of the European Innovation Agenda, and the regional innovation valleys in particular.

Coordinating WG Leaders: Caroline and Mikael

Skills forecasting and anticipation from an ecosystem perspective

17 October 2023 | 10:00-12:00 in person meeting at Wales House

This meeting will focus on the challenges of skills forecasting and skills anticipation from an ecosystem perspective. This information meeting will provide insights on how the European Commission is working on Skills intelligence and forecasting. During the meeting, several (inter)regional practices will present how they organise the skills forecasting and/or skills development, possibly linked to the regional Smart Specialisation Strategies. The practices will showcase a diversity of ongoing practices from a sectoral or cross-sectoral perspective, from an interregional or European approach.

Wrapping up ERRIN's Skills 2023 roadmap and future perspectives

27 November 2023 14:00-16:00 in person meeting at Lombardy Regional Office

This final session of the SEFS WG year, will present the learnings of ERRIN Roadmaps activities? The meeting will be led by the SEFS Working Group in cooperation with thematic/cross-cutting WG on the Skills activities of 2023.

Coordinated by Berwyn, with support of WG leaders of other WG