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## I

(Resolutions, recommendations and opinions)

## RESOLUTIONS

## COUNCIL

**Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning**

(2011/C 372/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

WHEREAS:

The *Europe 2020* strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth acknowledges lifelong learning and skills development as key elements in response to the current economic crisis, to demographic ageing and to the broader economic and social strategy of the European Union.

The crisis has highlighted the major role which adult learning <sup>(1)</sup> can play in achieving the *Europe 2020* goals, by enabling adults — in particular the low-skilled and older workers — to improve their ability to adapt to changes in the labour market and society. Adult learning provides a means of up-skilling or reskilling those affected by unemployment, restructuring and career transitions, as well as makes an important contribution to social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development.

AND HAVING REGARD TO:

1. The European Parliament Resolution of 16 January 2008 on adult learning: *It is never too late to learn*, which urges Member States to promote the acquisition of knowledge and to develop a culture of lifelong learning, notably by implementing gender equal policies designed to make adult education more attractive, more accessible and more effective.
2. The Council conclusions of May 2008 <sup>(2)</sup> on adult learning, which established for the first time a set of common priorities to be addressed in the adult-learning sector, paved the way towards intensified European cooperation between the various stakeholders, and proposed a series of specific measures for the period 2008-10 (hereafter referred to as the 'Action Plan') aimed at increasing participation in, and raising the quality of, adult learning.
3. The Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 21 November 2008 on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong-learning strategies, which highlighted the importance of guidance as a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their life paths in learning, work and other settings.
4. The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 <sup>(3)</sup>, which established a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') which is fully consistent with the *Europe 2020* strategy and whose four objectives — relating to lifelong learning and mobility, quality and efficiency, equity, social cohesion and active citizenship, as well as creativity and innovation — are equally relevant for adult learning.
5. The 2010 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the 'Education & Training 2010' work programme <sup>(4)</sup>, which stressed that in adult learning it is also important for provision to cover the full range of key competences, and noted that there is a major challenge to ensure that all learners benefit from innovative methodologies, including those in adult learning.
6. The *Europe 2020* flagship initiatives:
  - *An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs*, which calls on Member States to ensure that people acquire the skills needed for further learning and the labour market through general, vocational and higher education, as well as through adult learning,

<sup>(1)</sup> For the purposes of this text, the term *adult learning* covers the entire range of formal, non-formal and informal learning activities — both general and vocational — undertaken by adults after leaving initial education and training.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 140, 6.6.2008, p. 10.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ C 117, 6.5.2010, p. 1.

- *The European Platform against Poverty*, which proposes the development of innovative education for deprived communities in order to enable those experiencing poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and to take an active part in society,
  - *Innovation Union*, which promotes excellence in education and skills development in order to ensure future growth from innovation in products, services and business models in a Europe faced with an ageing population and strong competitive pressures.
7. The Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the social dimension of education and training <sup>(1)</sup>, which noted that expanding access to adult education can create new possibilities for active inclusion and enhanced social participation.
8. The Council Decision of 21 October 2010 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States <sup>(2)</sup>, which seeks to promote effective incentives for lifelong learning of those within and outside employment, '*ensuring every adult the chance to retrain or to move one step up in their qualification*'.
9. The Council conclusions of 18-19 November 2010 on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET) <sup>(3)</sup>, which actively encouraged greater individual participation in continuing VET, increased investment in human resources development, in-company training and work-based learning, and closer collaboration between training institutions and employers, particularly in the training of low-skilled workers.
- WELCOMES THE FACT THAT
- Work has been initiated on all priority areas of the 2008-10 Action Plan, albeit at different speeds in each country:
- Adult-learning reforms are increasingly anchored in overall developments in education and training, notably the development of national qualifications frameworks and lifelong-learning strategies.
  - Quality assurance has been raised as an important issue in adult learning and strides are being made in developing the professional profile and training of adult-learning professionals, the accreditation of adult-learning providers and improved guidance services for adults.
  - Outreach and learning opportunities are increasingly being targeted at those with the lowest levels of qualifications, thus giving them better prospects of integration into work and society.
- Non-formal and informal learning, which represent much of adult learning, are increasingly being recognised and validated but take-up of validation opportunities is often still too low.
  - A start has been made on improving monitoring of the adult-learning sector.

#### NEVERTHELESS RECOGNISES THAT:

In order to face both the short and long-term consequences of the economic crisis, there is a need for adults regularly to enhance their personal and professional skills and competences. Given the current instability in the labour market and the need to reduce the risk of social exclusion, this applies particularly to the low-skilled and the low-qualified. However, all adults — including the highly qualified — can benefit significantly from lifelong learning.

Yet there is a growing consensus that adult learning is currently the weakest link in developing national lifelong-learning systems. Participation in adult learning has continued to fall, from 9,8 % of the 25-64 year-old population in 2005 to only 9,1 % in 2010, thus making the increased 'ET2020' target of 15 % by 2020 an even greater challenge. Obstacles such as low motivation and a lack of care facilities to help women and men combine family and work responsibilities with learning therefore need attention.

As in other sectors, adult learning should embrace the shift to policy based on learning outcomes in which the autonomous learner is central, regardless of where he/she learns — at work, at home, in the local community, in voluntary activities, or in education and training institutions — and develop the multi-faceted model of governance that this requires.

In order to achieve an adult-learning sector capable of supporting the *Europe 2020* strategy, much more remains to be done in relation to effective and efficient financing; in relation to the provision of second-chance opportunities and the acquisition of basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, but also digital skills; in relation to targeted learning for migrants, early school leavers and young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), as well as for people with disabilities and older adults; and in relation to cooperation with employers, social partners and civil society.

Implementing the Action Plan has also highlighted the difficulty of adequately monitoring the adult-learning sector, due to a lack of sufficient statistical data and evaluation of policy measures. Evidence-based policy-making in the field of adult learning calls for comprehensive and comparable data on all key aspects of adult learning, for effective monitoring systems and cooperation between the different agencies, as well as for high-quality research activities.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 135, 26.5.2010, p. 2.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 308, 24.11.2010, p. 46.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 324, 1.12.2010, p. 5.

## CONSIDERS THAT:

Lifelong learning covers learning from pre-school age to post-retirement<sup>(1)</sup>. Adult learning is a vital component of the lifelong-learning continuum, covering the entire range of formal, non-formal and informal learning activities, general and vocational, undertaken by adults after leaving initial education and training.

In order to build on the achievements of the 2008-10 Action Plan, while complementing existing policy initiatives in the areas of school education, higher education (Bologna process) and VET (Copenhagen process), there is a need for a renewed 'European Agenda for Adult Learning' aimed at enabling all adults to develop and enhance their skills and competences throughout their lives.

Adult learning can make a significant contribution to meeting the *Europe 2020* goals of reducing early leaving from education and training to below 10 %. Particular attention should accordingly be paid to improving provision for the high number of low-skilled Europeans targeted in *Europe 2020*, starting with literacy, numeracy and second-chance measures as a precursor to up-skilling for work and life in general. Acquiring basic skills as a foundation for developing key competences for lifelong learning<sup>(2)</sup>, addressing the problem of early school leaving<sup>(3)</sup> and tackling issues such as the education and social inclusion of migrants, Roma and disadvantaged groups require concerted action in both school and adult education.

At the same time, the substantial contribution which adult learning can make to economic development — by strengthening productivity, competitiveness, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship — should be recognised and supported.

In this context, there is also a considerable need to step up efforts to achieve the target set within the *Europe 2020* strategy of ensuring that at least 40 % of young adults complete tertiary or equivalent education. Meeting this challenge would contribute to developing a competitive economy based on knowledge and innovation which makes full use of its resources and human capital.

## THEREFORE CALLS FOR:

The adoption of a renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning which will continue, complement and consolidate work in the field of adult learning under the four strategic objectives identified by the Council in the 'ET2020' strategic framework. While initially focusing on the period 2012-14 (see the Annex hereto), this Agenda should be seen in the context of a longer term vision for adult learning which — in the period up to 2020 — will endeavour to raise the sector's profile in general and, more specifically, to:

- (i) enhance the possibilities for adults, regardless of gender and their personal and family circumstances, to access high-quality learning opportunities at any time in their lives, in order to promote personal and professional development, empowerment, adaptability, employability and active participation in society;
- (ii) develop a new approach to adult education and training which focuses on learning outcomes and learner responsibility and autonomy;
- (iii) foster greater awareness among adults that learning is a lifelong endeavour which they should pursue at regular intervals during their lives, and particularly during periods of unemployment or career transition;
- (iv) encourage the development of effective lifelong guidance systems, as well as integrated systems for the validation of non-formal and informal learning;
- (v) ensure the comprehensive provision of high-quality formal and non-formal education and training for adults aimed at acquiring key competences or leading to qualifications at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), supported by civil society and the social partners, as well as by local authorities;
- (vi) ensure flexible arrangements adapted to different training needs of adults, including in-company training and workplace-based learning;
- (vii) foster greater awareness among employers that adult learning contributes to promoting productivity, competitiveness, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, and is an important factor in enhancing the employability and labour market mobility of their employees;
- (viii) encourage higher education institutions to embrace less traditional groups of learners, such as adult learners, as a means of displaying social responsibility and greater openness towards the community at large, as well as responding to demographic challenges and to the demands of an ageing society;
- (ix) promote the role of social partners and civil society in articulating training needs and developing learning opportunities for adults, as well as optimise the involvement of central, regional and local authorities;
- (x) promote a balanced allocation of education and training resources throughout the life cycle on the basis of shared responsibilities and strong public commitment, particularly to second-chance opportunities and the development of basic skills;

<sup>(1)</sup> Council Resolution of 27 June 2002 on lifelong learning (OJ C 163, 9.7.2002, p. 1).

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

<sup>(3)</sup> As emphasised in the June 2011 Council Recommendation (OJ C 191, 1.7.2011, p. 1).

- (xi) involve social partners and raise their awareness of the benefits, also to them, of learning in the workplace, including basic skills provision;
- (xii) make well-developed learning provision for seniors, in order to promote active, autonomous, and healthy ageing, and which uses their knowledge, experience, social and cultural capital for the benefit of society as a whole;
- (xiii) make a strong commitment to promoting adult learning as a means of fostering solidarity between different age groups (for example, by means of an 'intergenerational pact') and between cultures and people of all backgrounds.

ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE MEMBER STATES TO:

1. Focus their efforts over the period 2012-14 on the priority areas detailed in the Annex hereto, thereby contributing to implementation of the four priorities of the 'ET 2020' strategic framework, in accordance with national contexts and legislation.
2. Ensure effective liaison with the relevant ministries and stakeholders, the social partners, businesses, relevant non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations, with a view to improving coherence between policies on adult learning and broader socio-economic policies.
3. Actively cooperate at EU level in order to support the successful implementation of the abovementioned priority areas, notably by:
  - (i) making full use of the lifelong-learning tools agreed at EU level to promote adult participation in learning;
  - (ii) using the opportunities provided by the Lifelong Learning Programme — in particular under *Grundtvig* and *Leonardo da Vinci* — and its successor programme from 2014, as well as the structural funds and other instruments, where appropriate, in order to co-finance supporting initiatives;
  - (iii) using the open method of coordination, with the support of the Commission and through the relevant European networks, to promote mutual learning and the exchange of good practices and experience in the field of adult learning;
  - (iv) designating a national coordinator, in order to facilitate cooperation with the other Member States and the Commission in implementing the adult-learning agenda.

AND INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:

Work with and support Member States in developing and implementing the renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning outlined above and, specifically, in carrying out the priorities for the period 2012-14 detailed in Annex I, notably by:

- (i) ensuring complementarity and coherence between the policy initiatives undertaken in accordance with this Resolution and those developed in the context of other relevant policy processes within the 'ET2020' strategic framework, the Copenhagen process, the Bologna process, the EU modernisation agenda for higher education, and initiatives such as those on literacy and early school-leaving which require a concerted approach involving school education and adult learning, and promoting the adult-learning dimension within each of these;
- (ii) establishing close ongoing liaison with the national coordinators designated in the Member States and the other participating countries;
- (iii) enabling Member States and organisations supporting adult learning to share information on their policies and practices, and on their evaluation of both, through the organisation of peer-learning activities and reviews, conferences, workshops and other appropriate instruments, and, within available resources, improving data collection on adult learning as part of the updated coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks scheduled for 2013;
- (iv) strengthening the knowledge base on adult learning in Europe by commissioning studies and reinforcing the capacity of existing research structures relevant for analysing adult-learning issues, including cooperation with Eurydice and Cedefop and other relevant institutions and making full use of their information and research capacities;
- (v) pursuing and intensifying cooperation with relevant international organisations such as the OECD (in particular by exploiting the results of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences — PIAAC), the UN (in particular Unesco) and the Council of Europe, as well as other relevant regional or worldwide initiatives such as the Europe-Asia lifelong-learning 'hub' (ASEM);
- (vi) harnessing the funds available at European level to support the implementation of this agenda for adult learning;
- (vii) reporting on implementation of the agenda as part of the 'ET 2020' joint progress report.



## ANNEX

**EUROPEAN AGENDA FOR ADULT LEARNING****Priority areas for the period 2012-14**

Taking into account the specific circumstances within each Member State, and in accordance with national priorities, Member States are invited, where appropriate with the support of the Commission, to focus on those areas outlined below which are most relevant to their particular needs.

**1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality**

In order to increase and widen the participation of adults in lifelong learning, in response to the agreed EU target of 15 % adult-learning participation, as well as to help boost to 40 % the proportion of young adults with tertiary and equivalent education qualifications, Member States are invited to focus on:

- Stimulating demand, and developing comprehensive and easily accessible information and guidance systems, complemented by effective outreach strategies aimed at raising awareness and motivation among potential learners, with specific focus on disadvantaged groups, early school leavers, young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), low-qualified adults, particularly those with literacy difficulties, and followed up with second-chance opportunities leading to a recognised EQF level qualification.
- Promoting the engagement of employers in workplace-based learning, with a view to developing both job-specific skills and broader skills, including by means of more flexible work schedules.
- Promoting flexible learning pathways for adults, including broader access to higher education for those lacking mainstream access qualifications and diversifying the spectrum of adult learning-opportunities offered by higher education institutions.
- Putting in place fully functional systems for validating non-formal and informal learning and promoting their use by adults of all ages and at all qualification levels, as well as by enterprises and other organisations.

**2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training**

In order to build a strong adult-learning sector, Member States are invited to focus on:

- Developing quality assurance for adult-learning providers, for example by means of accreditation systems, taking into account already existing quality frameworks/standards in other sectors.
- Improving the quality of adult education staff, for instance by defining competence profiles, establishing effective systems for initial training and professional development, and facilitating the mobility of teachers, trainers and other adult education staff.
- Ensuring a viable and transparent system for the funding of adult learning, based on shared responsibility with a high level of public commitment to the sector and support for those who cannot pay, balanced distribution of funds across the lifelong-learning continuum, appropriate contribution to funding from all stakeholders and the exploration of innovative means for more effective and efficient financing.
- Developing mechanisms for ensuring that educational provision better reflects labour market needs and that it provides possibilities for acquiring qualifications and developing new skills which increase people's capacity to adapt to the new requirements of a changing environment.
- Intensifying cooperation and partnership between all stakeholders relevant for adult learning, notably public authorities, the different providers of adult-learning opportunities, social partners and civil society organisations, especially at regional and local level in the context of developing 'learning regions' and local learning centres.

**3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through adult learning**

In order to develop the capacity of the adult-learning sector to promote social cohesion and to provide people who need it with a *second-chance* route to learning and life opportunities, as well as to contribute to reducing the share of early leavers from education and training to below 10 %, Member States are invited to focus on:

- Improving adult literacy and numeracy skills, developing digital literacy and providing opportunities for adults to develop the basic skills and forms of literacy needed for participating actively in modern society (such as economic and financial literacy, civic, cultural, political and environmental awareness, learning for healthy living, consumer and media awareness).

- Increasing the supply of and encouraging individuals' engagement in adult learning as a means of strengthening social inclusion and active participation in the community and society, and improving access to adult learning for migrants, Roma and disadvantaged groups, as well as learning provision for refugees and people seeking asylum, including host country-language learning, where appropriate.
- Enhancing learning opportunities for older adults in the context of active ageing, including volunteering and the promotion of innovative forms of intergenerational learning and initiatives to exploit the knowledge, skills and competences of older people for the benefit of society as a whole.
- Addressing the learning needs of people with disabilities and people in specific situations of exclusion from learning, such as those in hospitals, care homes and prisons, and providing them with adequate guidance support.

#### **4. Enhancing the creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments**

In order to develop new pedagogies and creative learning environments in adult learning, as well as to promote adult learning as a means of enhancing the creativity and innovative capacity of citizens, Member States are invited to focus on:

- Promoting the acquisition of transversal key competences, such as learning to learn, a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness and expression, in particular by applying the European Key Competence Framework within the adult-learning sector.
- Enhancing the role of cultural organisations (such as museums, libraries, etc.), civil society, sporting organisations and other bodies as creative and innovative settings for non-formal and informal adult learning.
- Making better use of ICT in the context of adult learning, as a means of widening access and improving the quality of provision, e.g. by exploiting new opportunities for distance learning and the creation of e-learning tools and platforms in order to reach new target groups, in particular those with special needs or who live in remote areas.

In order to underpin the above priority areas in line with the four strategic objectives of the 'ET2020' framework, Member States are further invited to contribute to improving the collection, comparability and analysis of information and data on adult learning at European, national, regional and local levels:

#### **5. Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult-learning sector**

Member States are invited to focus on:

- Participating actively in and implementing key messages resulting from major international surveys and studies such as the Adult Education Survey (AES), the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).
  - Stepping up efforts to collect sufficient baseline data on, for instance, participation, providers, financing, the outcomes and wider benefits of learning for adults and society, and extending the data coverage to the age-range beyond 64 in keeping with the prolongation of working life.
  - Strengthening the monitoring and impact assessment of the development and performance of the adult-learning sector at European, national, regional and local level, making better use of existing instruments where possible.
  - Intensifying research and in-depth analysis of issues relating to adult learning, extending the range of research to include new fields and encouraging more inter-disciplinary and prospective analysis.
  - Reporting on adult-learning policies as part of the joint progress report on 'ET2020'.
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**Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council on the representation of the EU Member States in the Foundation Board of WADA and the coordination of the EU and its Member States' positions prior to WADA meetings**

(2011/C 372/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES,

RECALLING:

- (1) The Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 4 December 2000 on combating doping <sup>(1)</sup>.
- (2) The Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 18 November 2010 on the role of the EU in the international fight against doping <sup>(2)</sup>.

RECOGNISE THAT:

- (1) The European Union and its Member States should be able to exercise their competences and play their role during the preparation, negotiation and adoption inter alia of rules, standards and guidelines by the World Anti-Doping Agency (hereafter 'WADA').
- (2) It is necessary to provide for practical modalities concerning the participation of the European Union and its Member States in the work of WADA, as well as the coordination of positions prior to WADA meetings.
- (3) The coordination of European continent positions prior to WADA meetings takes place within the Council of Europe with due regard for any applicable EU legislation.
- (4) There is a strong need for continuity in the EU Member States representation in the Foundation Board of WADA, which is supported by a political mandate and appropriate level of expertise.

CONSEQUENTLY AGREE THAT:

- (1) The representatives of the EU Member States in the Foundation Board of WADA shall be at ministerial level and that the seats be allocated as follows:
  - one seat should be allocated to one of the Member States forming the incumbent Trio Presidency,
  - one seat should be allocated to one of the Member States forming the future Trio Presidency,
  - one seat should be jointly allocated by the Member States meeting within the Council to a person responsible for sport at ministerial level with appropriate experience and knowledge (hereafter 'expert at governmental level').
- (2) Where appropriate the representatives of the Member States may be accompanied by experts from the Member State holding the Presidency and/or the Commission.
- (3) The arrangements regarding EU Member States representation in the Foundation Board of WADA as described in Annex I shall take effect as from 1 January 2013.
- (4) The guidelines for conduct between the Council, the Member States and the Commission regarding preparations for the WADA meetings as described in Annex II apply.
- (5) By 31 December 2015, the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, shall review the experience gained from the application of this Resolution and consider whether any adjustments to the arrangement established by this Resolution are needed.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 356, 12.12.2000, p. 1.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 324, 1.12.2010, p. 18.

## ANNEX I

**Arrangements regarding the EU Member States' representation in the Foundation Board of WADA**

The EU Member States agree on the following system of representation:

**REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE MEMBER STATES FORMING THE INCUMBENT AND THE FUTURE TRIO PRESIDENCIES:**

- The Member States forming the incumbent Trio Presidency choose, after internal consultation, one of them as a representative of the EU Member States in the Foundation Board of WADA. The chosen Member State shall designate, following its internal procedures, a representative to that effect. This representative shall be the person responsible at ministerial level for sport within the Member State. The Member State chosen to provide a representative and the name of that representative shall be notified to the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU.
- If the representative ceases his/her functions at ministerial level, the Member State shall designate a replacement at ministerial level.
- The abovementioned rules shall also apply to the Member States forming the future Trio Presidency.
- The term of office of the abovementioned representatives is three years.
- The representative from the Member States forming the future Trio Presidency shall remain in office also after it has become the incumbent Trio Presidency in order to ensure the continuity and maintenance of the three-year term of office.

**EXPERT AT GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL DESIGNATED JOINTLY BY THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL:**

- Proposals for an expert representative shall be submitted by the Member States no later than one month before the meeting of the Council of the EU, during which the designation is to take place. The proposals should not include ministers from the Member States forming the incumbent Trio Presidency or the future Trio Presidency. The proposals for expert representative shall be sent to the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU.
- The first designation of the member of the Foundation Board of WADA, carried out in the manner described above, shall take place at the meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council of the EU at the latest by November 2012.
- The term of office of the representative is three years.
- If the representative ceases his/her functions at ministerial level in his/her Member State, a new designation procedure shall be initiated. The current representative remains in place until the new designation procedure has been completed.

**TRANSITIONAL RULES:**

- The existing rules on the representation of the EU Member States in the Foundation Board of WADA apply until 31 December 2012.
- The term of office of the representative designated by Ireland, Lithuania and Greece shall be shortened to 18 months and start as from 1 January 2013.

**APPROVAL PROCESS BY THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL:**

- The approval of the expert at governmental level and the Member States chosen by the incumbent and the future Trio Presidencies to designate representatives to the Foundation Board of WADA, is made by the Member States meeting within the Council with sufficient advance notice.
  - The names of all the members of the Foundation Board of WADA who are representatives of the EU Member States are notified via the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU to WADA.
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## ANNEX II

**Guidelines for conduct between the Council, the Member States and the Commission regarding preparations for the WADA meetings**

Bearing in mind that in the light of the EU *acquis* and the duty of sincere cooperation, where appropriate EU and Member States positions on the issues discussed in the WADA meetings shall be coordinated, under the leadership of the Presidency, in good time and in efficient manner prior to meetings within WADA,

The Council, the Member States and the Commission agree on the following guidelines for conduct:

## NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE GUIDELINES:

- These guidelines for conduct shall apply to the preparation of all the meetings of the Foundation Board of WADA.
- These guidelines for conduct set out the arrangements between the Council, the Member States and the Commission for the preparation for these meetings, including the preceding Council of Europe meetings (Cahama).

## THE COORDINATION PROCESS:

- The coordination process should begin with an analysis of the agenda of WADA meeting jointly by the Presidency in office of the Council assisted by the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, and the European Commission.
- The Presidency will prepare a comprehensive draft position statement having regard to these arrangements and the proposal from the European Commission on matters where the EU is competent.
- The position statement shall be prepared by the Council Working Party on Sport and agreed, as a general rule, by the Committee of Permanent Representatives (Coreper), except in cases of urgency.

## RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE:

- At the Cahama<sup>(1)</sup> meetings the representative of the Presidency shall present the position statement on the points where position has been prepared. The European Commission shall present the EU position where the EU is competent and there is a position which has been agreed in accordance with relevant Treaty provisions.
- The EU and its Member States should seek to include this position in the European continent position statement prepared by Cahama.

## ADHOC COORDINATION:

- At any time where necessary, ad hoc EU and its Member States' coordination can be carried out, as a general rule, under the leadership of the Presidency. It can take place in the margins of Cahama or of WADA meetings.

## SPEAKING AND VOTING:

- The EU Member States' representatives shall speak and vote on matters in accordance with the positions agreed.

## REPORTING:

- The representative of the EU Member States in the Foundation Board of WADA from the incumbent Trio Presidency shall report on the outcome of the meeting of the Foundation Board of WADA at the next meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council of the EU.
- A written report on the outcome of the meeting of the Foundation Board of WADA should be submitted by the representative of the EU Member States in the Foundation Board of WADA from the incumbent Trio Presidency, to the Council Working Party on Sport.

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<sup>(1)</sup> The ad hoc European Committee for the World Anti-Doping Agency (Cahama), established in July 2003, is responsible for the coordination of the positions of all Parties to the European Cultural Convention, with regard to questions relating to the WADA. Ordinary meetings of Cahama are convened immediately before or after the meetings of the Monitoring Group of Anti-Doping Convention and, where possible, at least one week before the ordinary meetings of the WADA Foundation Board and Executive Committee.

## IV

(Notices)

## NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

## COUNCIL

**Council conclusions on the eastern dimension of youth participation and mobility**

(2011/C 372/03)

THE COUNCIL AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL:

## RECALLING THAT:

1. Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides for European Union action to be aimed at encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socio-educational instructors, and the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe;
2. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union has allowed the EU to strengthen the delivery of its foreign policy; cooperation with neighbouring countries can now be broadened to cover the full range of issues in an integrated and more effective manner;
3. Mobility is significant in promoting mutual understanding and economic development, while raising awareness of different attitudes to life and the different situations of young people all over Europe. Among other advantages, mobility is indispensable for exchanging ideas, spreading innovation, tackling employment and social issues, establishing strong relationships between people, assisting personal development, and encouraging the acquisition of soft skills, as well as promoting intercultural competences and fighting prejudices; it is, besides other issues, a key to unleashing all young people's potential and achieving the Europe 2020 objectives;
4. In the context of an overall increase in mobility, which leads to frequent interactions between people of different nationalities, cultures, religions and beliefs, the European Union has a growing role at the international level in promoting respect for democracy, freedom, equality and human rights and appropriate standards of intercultural dialogue;
5. 'Participation' and 'youth and the world' were included as two priority fields of action in the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018);
6. The EU Youth Conference was held from 5 to 7 September 2011 in Warsaw, Poland, during which it was stressed that there was a particular need for:
  - cross-sectoral cooperation between youth NGOs and decision makers as well as for further research to assess the impact of youth cooperation and mobility,
  - accessible information about EU Member States and eastern European and Caucasus countries, both via online and offline channels,
  - overcoming visa barriers which remain the most persisting obstacle to youth cooperation between the EU and its neighbouring countries,
  - strengthening and expanding resources and programmes such as the Youth in Action programme in order to focus more on mobility issues and the involvement of young people in decision-making processes,
  - prioritising youth participation in democratic life in Europe in EU policies, e.g. by launching special programmes that support youth cooperation between eastern European countries (EEc) and EU Member States.

## RECOGNISE THAT:

7. The enlargement of the European Union on 1 May 2004 brought about a historical shift for the Union in political, geographical and economic terms, further reinforcing the need for cooperation between the EU and its neighbours, including those from the EEC<sup>(1)</sup>;
8. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)<sup>(2)</sup> of the European Union, which has recently been evaluated and included in a new framework by the Communication 'A new response to a changing neighbourhood', sets ambitious objectives based on commitments to shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms; the democratic developments and transformation that are taking place in the European Union's closest neighbours to the east and south, have also increased the strategic importance of the European Neighbourhood Policy and of measures strengthening civil society and on enhanced opportunities for exchanges and people-to-people contacts with a particular focus on the young people.
9. In this context, the Eastern Partnership (EaP)<sup>(3)</sup> is an initiative of strategic significance for the stability and security both of the eastern European countries participating within the framework of the ENP and of the EU as a whole. Its important aim is to strengthen civil society, which is one of the foundations of an efficient democratic state. That area of cooperation, which includes, youth participation and cooperation, should have an even more prominent role within the EaP;
10. Facilitating people-to-people contacts and enhancing dialogue with civil society have been identified as essential elements of the EU-Russia Partnership for Modernisation<sup>(4)</sup>;
11. The European Union has already made efforts to provide special residence permits to third-country nationals who apply for admission to the territory of a Member State, in order to get involved in voluntary activities<sup>(5)</sup>, which is an important step forward;
12. The need to establish mobility partnerships with the southern and eastern European countries (EEC) has recently been emphasised by the European Council<sup>(6)</sup>.

(1) For the purposes of this document the eastern European countries are the following: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia.

(2) The ENP framework covers 16 of the EU's closest neighbours — Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

(3) The EaP initiative covers the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

(4) [http://eeas.europa.eu/russia/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/russia/index_en.htm)

(5) Council Directive 2004/114/EC of 13 December 2004.

(6) Conclusions of the European Council (23/24 June 2011), EUCO 23/11.

With a view to the future shape of these partnerships, there is a need to take into account the strengthening of young people's mobility for learning mobility, including non-formal learning in another country, which can take such forms as youth work, including youth exchanges and voluntary activities;

13. Youth exchange programmes are a good tool, especially for young people with fewer opportunities to gain intercultural experiences and develop personal and language skills;
14. Developing the international cooperation of young people, youth workers and youth leaders from the European Union and the EEC constitutes a significant contribution to building confidence in the region, thus shaping future relations in Europe in the context of potential difficulties;
15. The European Neighbourhood policy involves the European Union's and the Member States' activities in relation to 16 countries neighbouring the EU. In this context and considering their potential contribution to the ongoing democratisation processes, it could be envisaged to apply similar initiatives to the ones set out in this document in the relationships with the southern Mediterranean countries.

## IDENTIFY THE GENERAL NEED TO:

16. Support international youth cooperation, dialogue and mutual understanding between young people, youth workers and youth leaders from the EU and EEC as an important tool to support European citizenship and democratisation processes;
17. Facilitate the access of young people to learning mobility, including young people, youth workers and youth leaders from the EEC travelling to the European Union, as well as young citizens of the European Union travelling to any country of eastern Europe;
18. Encourage mutual learning between the Member States, youth organisations and young people in the area of cooperation with third countries, in particular with the EEC, through raising awareness of youth policies and strengthening the quality of information on mobility opportunities and participation.

ACCORDINGLY AGREE THAT:

19. Supporting two-way mobility and greater participation in non-formal learning activities of young people, youth workers and youth leaders from the EU and EEC can bring numerous advantages for:
  - (a) young people, in developing their skills and competences so that they increase their employability, learn innovative approaches, and develop their understanding of other cultures in an increasingly globalised, multicultural world, and in giving them the opportunities to reflect upon ways to increase their participation in democratic life in various contexts;
  - (b) civil society organisations, particularly youth organisations and those working with and for young people, enabling effective peer learning on how to empower young people and increase their participation, in terms of intensifying various types of cooperation among young people;
  - (c) communities in the EU that host young people from EEC and local communities in the EEC region hosting youth from the EU, especially for the development of their intercultural competences;
  - (d) the family and peer groups of the young people involved in mobility, after their return to their home countries, in the context of their perceptions of the EU and intercultural sensitivity;
  - (e) civil society of the EEC due inter alia to their experience of a culture of democracy and the information they receive on the practicalities of democratic life, as well as on sustainable development, and the promotion of common values such as mutual understanding, democracy, solidarity and respect for human rights;
  - (f) Europe as a whole, in building up the intellectual capital that will further shape and influence civil society;
20. Supporting active participation in society by young people, cross-border mobility and contacts between people will support the exchanging of ideas, spreading of innovations and building of partnerships and may thus facilitate changes in the long term, reducing socioeconomic disparities between societies;
21. Supporting the delivery of quality information tools, exchanging good practice between the EU and EEC, and ensuring access to information on reliable partner organisations would help to strengthen networking, deepen cooperation between youth organisations in the EU and EEC and ensure safety of participants involved in this cooperation; the SALTO (support for advanced learning and training opportunities) Resource Centres and Eurodesk have been an important network for support in this regard;
22. Further developing and promoting voluntary activities, youth work and entrepreneurship has the potential to have a positive influence on young people's employability and to facilitate their active involvement in society;
23. Due to the fact that geographical distance in some cases may be an obstacle to cooperation and mobility, the potential of virtual mobility in ensuring access to and exchange of information regarding youth participation and youth employability should be developed further;
24. Greater mobility and cooperation depends much on interest about and knowledge of the partner country and, in particular, its youth culture as a whole; in order to raise this interest and the level of knowledge, it is of special importance to present and promote culture to motivate young people to cooperate with each other;
25. Young people can find lack of language skills a considerable obstacle to communication. The role of European educational and youth programmes is one of many routes to raise their language skills and promotion of learning of foreign languages should be supported;
26. Easier access to visas for young people from outside the EU, in particular the EEC, can be made possible e.g. by visa facilitation agreements, which are one of the most efficient tools to boost mobility in general;
27. The Council of Europe's experience and expertise in cooperating with the EEC make it an important partner in implementing activities involving young people from the EEC, and the European Union — Council of Europe youth partnership has been a valuable tool, fostering synergies between the European Union and Council of Europe in this respect;
28. Existing programmes and instruments supporting mobility, mainly within the European Union, could be strengthened and broadened to those young people, volunteers, youth workers and other people working with youth from the EEC or wishing to cooperate with those countries; this refers particularly to the 'Youth in Action' programme, 'Lifelong Learning' programme, the EU-CoE youth partnership including the European Knowledge Centre of Youth Policy, the SALTO (support for advanced learning and training opportunities) Resource Centres network, the Eurodesk and the European Youth Portal;



29. The European Youth Forum and youth organisations at all levels, in their activities, can also play a crucial role by representing and advocating the needs and interests of young people in the context of cooperation between youth from the EU countries and their peers from the EEC;

30. Experience gained in cooperation with other neighbouring regions should be used to shape the tools for youth cooperation with the EEC.

THEREFORE INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE, TO:

31. Promote youth exchanges and mobility programmes for young people and youth organisations, including volunteers, youth workers, researchers and those working with young people in the EU and neighbouring countries, especially from the EEC, by sharing good practices of cooperation between the organisations active in the youth field, so that every young person can have an opportunity for mobility and participation in Europe;

32. Reduce barriers in mobility and participation inter alia by promoting the learning of foreign languages, supporting the delivery of quality information in that field, etc.;

33. Report on the 'Youth and the World' field of action in the Youth Report 2012 and subsequent EU youth reports;

34. Examine the results of the study on 'Youth participation in democratic life in Europe', which will be finalised in 2012, with a special focus on its possible implications for young people of the EU and the EEC as well as share the outcomes of research concerning young people and their participation in order to increase knowledge on youth;

35. Consider continuing to organise exchanges of good practices in the field of youth policies between the EEC and EU countries in cooperation with the Council of Europe and other international organisations with a view to promoting youth participation and mobility.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES, TO:

36. Actively participate in the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Platforms, especially Platform 4, 'Contacts between people', within which the development of initiatives for youth could be supported;

37. Reinforce cross-sectoral cooperation between different policy fields and relevant authorities to continue reflecting on barriers to the two-way mobility of young people from countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy, for example by finding possible ways to facilitate the issuing of visas to young people from the EEC, when and where appropriate;

38. Take advantage of cooperation with youth information structures such as the Eurodesk and the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA) and make use of the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYC) to promote opportunities for participation and mobility.

INVITE THE COMMISSION TO:

39. Sustain and enhance the eastern dimension in future EU programmes for youth, without prejudice to negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework;

40. Continue fostering youth cooperation between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries in the framework of the Eastern Partnership youth programme;

41. Adapt the European Youth Portal to make it useful and accessible for all young people, from all across Europe, including the EEC;

42. Consider developing the European 'Youth on the Move' card initiative within the limits of its competence, so as to include young people, from all across Europe, including the EEC.

## ANNEX

**Political background**

- Council Directive 2004/114/EC of 13 December 2004 on the conditions of admission of third-country nationals for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service.
  - Council Decision 2010/37/EC of 27 November 2009 on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011).
  - Decision No 1719/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing the 'Youth in Action' programme for the period 2007 to 2013.
  - Conclusions of the European Council (23/24 June 2011), EUCO 23/11.
  - Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) (OJ C 311, 19.12.2009).
  - Council Recommendation 14825/08 of 18 November 2008 promoting mobility of young volunteers across the European Union.
  - Council Conclusions of 19 November 2010 on the 'Youth on the Move' initiative — an integrated approach in response to the challenges young people face (2010/C 326/05).
  - Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011 'Youth on the move' — promoting the learning mobility of young people (2011/C 199/01).
  - Council Resolution of 19 May 2011 on encouraging new and effective forms of participation of all young people in democratic life in Europe (2011/C 169/01).
  - Communication from the Commission 'Europe 2020 — A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' COM(2010) 2020.
  - Joint Communication by the high Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission, 'A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood — A review of European Neighbourhood Policy', COM(2011) 303.
  - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 3 December 2008 entitled 'Eastern Partnership' (COM(2008) 823).
  - Joint Communication to the European Council, the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions — 'A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the southern Mediterranean' (COM(2011) 200).
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**Council conclusions on the protection of children in the digital world**

(2011/C 372/04)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING the political background to this issue as set out in Annex to these conclusions,

WELCOMES WITH INTEREST:

— the Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the application of the Council Recommendation of 24 September 1998 concerning the protection of minors and human dignity <sup>(1)</sup> and of the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on the protection of minors and human dignity and on the right of reply in relation to the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and online information services industry <sup>(2)</sup> — PROTECTING CHILDREN IN THE DIGITAL WORLD <sup>(3)</sup>; and in particular the fact that the report addresses current challenges for the protection of minors in online and digital media;

TAKES NOTE OF:

— the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility <sup>(4)</sup>;

UNDERLINES THAT:

1. in order to maximise opportunities offered by audiovisual media and the Internet, a safe media environment for minors is necessary and should be based on principles of human dignity, safety and respect for private life;
2. media literacy and awareness-raising are important tools that can improve substantially the digital skills of children, parents and teachers and develop their critical approach to audiovisual and online content; given the rapid changes in the digital environment it is, however, important to strengthen efforts in this regard;
3. measures against illegal online content, such as child pornography, involve different approaches than measures aimed at preventing minors from coming into contact with harmful online content;

4. it is important that Member States, the Commission, the audiovisual industry and online service providers are conscious both of the new challenges for the protection and empowerment of minors that are linked to the developments taking place in the field of audiovisual and online information services, and of the existing instruments responding to these challenges;

5. while the promotion of various measures aiming at the better protection and empowerment of minors has been actively pursued in Member States, there is still persistent concern that the level of protection and media literacy achieved is generally not sufficient and that some of these measures lack continuity;

RECOGNISES THAT:

1. while the independence of the media has to be respected, the media industry has a crucial role in awareness-raising and protecting and empowering minors in the digital world;
2. Member States have differing approaches to protecting minors and promoting the development of good practices and standards in the media where self-regulation and co-regulation are two solutions among several possible;
3. the use of technical systems (such as filtering, age verification systems, parental control tools), whilst not solutions on their own, can, as long as they are applied in an efficient way, be suitable means to provide the access of minors to content that is appropriate for their age;
4. awareness-raising and media literacy have shown to be important tools for improving the ability of children to cope with potential risks encountered in the digital world;
5. the Safer Internet Programme and projects funded by it, such as the EU Kids Online <sup>(5)</sup> or INSAFE <sup>(6)</sup>, have proven to be valuable for awareness raising and research;
6. social networking sites are increasingly popular among minors and present great opportunities in private and educational contexts, but they also involve potential risks;

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 270, 7.10.1998, p. 48.<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p. 72.<sup>(3)</sup> 14268/11 + ADD 1 — COM(2011) 556 final, SEC(2011) 1043 final.<sup>(4)</sup> COM(2011) 665.<sup>(5)</sup> [www.eukidsonline.net](http://www.eukidsonline.net)<sup>(6)</sup> European network of Awareness Centres ([www.saferinternet.org](http://www.saferinternet.org)).

7. measures to ban illegal content and to address harmful content have been taken, in particular through voluntary commitments made by service and content providers, and have proven to be one of the successful ways to improve the safety of minors in the digital world;
8. reporting points for illegal content (hotlines <sup>(1)</sup>) can support detecting and pursuing illegal content and can empower users to notify such content on the Internet;
9. the Audiovisual Media Services Directive contains provisions on the protection of minors for both linear and non-linear audiovisual media services;

INVITES MEMBER STATES, WITH DUE RESPECT FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, TO:

1. continue the work on the protection of minors by promoting widespread use of awareness-raising campaigns to address children, parents, teachers and others working with children, and by promoting consistency in teaching online safety and media literacy in schools as well as in early childhood education and care institutions;
2. encourage providers of online media content, Internet service providers, social networking sites and online discussion forums to take full account of the protection of minors in the design of their services and to develop and adhere to relevant codes of conduct;
3. encourage the development and labelling of and access to quality and appropriate content for minors;
4. encourage the use of appropriate technological tools for the protection of minors (e.g. dedicated search engines, parental controls) and ensure that those tools are widely available and user friendly;
5. monitor existing measures to combat illegal and harmful content in order to ensure their effectiveness;
6. encourage a wider and more frequent application of self-regulatory rating systems (such as PEGI and PEGI online) to online and offline video games and a better enforcement of age ratings in the retail market in order to prevent 'under age' sales of online and offline video games;
7. enhance cooperation concerning illegal and harmful Internet content originating in other Member States and from outside the EU, for instance through agreements with third countries when it comes to illegal content and through best practices exchange when it comes to harmful content;

8. further implement hotlines for reporting illegal online content by 2013 <sup>(2)</sup>, improve their efficiency, for instance by supporting the exchange of best practices on interactions with law enforcement authorities, make them better known and more easily accessible for Internet users and monitor them closely;

ENCOURAGES STAKEHOLDERS TO:

1. further involve users and, where appropriate, public authorities in the process of preparing or revising self-regulatory measures (codes of conduct) by the audiovisual industry and ISPs and in monitoring such measures;
2. subscribe to guidelines such as the 'Safer Social Networking Principles for the EU', implement them consistently and monitor their implementation as well as ensure a more widespread use of 'privacy by default' settings for children joining a social networking site in order to protect the safety of minors;
3. further develop and implement self-regulatory schemes that take full account of the protection of minors in the design of their services and in the tools they make available to users, and to develop, adhere to and implement codes of conduct for the protection of minors;
4. develop a pan-European code of conduct on the sale of video games to minors, fully respecting national regulations in this field;

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:

1. build on ongoing funding and actions in the field carried out mainly through the Safer Internet Programme in order to create the appropriate infrastructure and services at European level for sharing resources and tools to protect minors and empower children, parents, teachers and other carers to use the Internet and new technologies safely and responsibly;
2. consider entering into a dialogue with stakeholders and in cooperation with Member States on how to follow up the Commission report on the application of the 1998 and 2006 recommendations in this field;
3. make use of the findings of the Commission Report on the application of the Recommendations on protection of minors from 1998 and 2006 in the context of upcoming initiatives related to the protection of minors, in particular in the field of online media;

<sup>(1)</sup> Such as INHOPE (the International Association of Internet Hotlines).

<sup>(2)</sup> Action 40 of the Digital Agenda for Europe.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE, TO:

1. support law enforcement authorities to improve the procedures for identifying, notifying and removing web pages containing or disseminating child pornography by providing, where appropriate, adequate financial and human resources and by staff training <sup>(1)</sup>;
2. seek a better understanding of the positive and negative impact of the use of online and digital media, including video games, on children through surveys and research;
3. promote awareness raising and teaching of online safety in schools as well as in early childhood education and care institutions;
4. promote media literacy and the key competence for lifelong learning 'digital competence' <sup>(2)</sup> both in and outside schools;
5. update the work and reinforce the implementation of the guidelines for quality online content for children within the framework of public-private partnerships as well as through promotion of media literacy activities;
6. encourage greater consistency across Europe in the age rating and content classification systems used by Member States, while allowing for culturally based differences between Member States;

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<sup>(1)</sup> See the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA [PE-CONS 51/11].

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<sup>(2)</sup> See Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning.

## ANNEX

**Political context**

In adopting these conclusions, the Council recalls in particular the following:

- the Commission Communication of 19 May 2010 'A Digital Agenda for Europe' <sup>(1)</sup> which underlines that 'strengthening security in the digital society is a shared responsibility — of individuals as much as of private and public bodies, both at home and globally' and the Council conclusions of 31 May 2010 on Digital Agenda for Europe <sup>(2)</sup>;
- Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) <sup>(3)</sup>;
- Commission Communication of 22 April 2008 on the protection of consumers, in particular minors, in respect of the use of video games <sup>(4)</sup>;
- Decision No 1351/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 establishing a multiannual Community programme on protecting children using the Internet and other communication technologies <sup>(5)</sup>;
- the Council Conclusions of 27 November 2009 on media literacy in the digital environment <sup>(6)</sup> in which the Council responded to the Commission Recommendation of 20 August 2009 on media literacy in the digital environment for a more competitive audiovisual and content industry and an inclusive knowledge society <sup>(7)</sup>;
- the Council Conclusions of 22 May 2008 on a European approach to media literacy in the digital environment <sup>(8)</sup>;
- the Commission Communication of 20 December 2007 'A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment' <sup>(9)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> 9981/1/10 — COM(2010) 245 final/2.

<sup>(2)</sup> Doc. 10130/10.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 95, 15.4.2010, p. 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> 8805/08 — COM(2008) 207 final.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 118.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 301, 11.12.2009, p. 12.

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ L 227, 29.8.2009, p. 9.

<sup>(8)</sup> OJ C 140, 6.6.2008, p. 8.

<sup>(9)</sup> COM(2007) 833 final.



**Council conclusions on cultural and creative competences and their role in building the intellectual capital of Europe**

(2011/C 372/05)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

- the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning <sup>(1)</sup>,
- the Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on intercultural competences <sup>(2)</sup>,
- the Council conclusions of 27 November 2009 on promoting a creative generation: developing the creativity and innovative capacity of children and young people through cultural expression and access to culture <sup>(3)</sup>,
- the Council Decision of 21 October 2010 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States <sup>(4)</sup>, especially the eighth guideline,
- the Council conclusions on Europe 2020 flagship initiative 'Innovation Union': Accelerating the transformation of Europe through innovation in a fast changing world (2010) <sup>(5)</sup>,
- the Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011 on policies to reduce early school leaving <sup>(6)</sup>,
- the Council conclusions on the contribution of culture to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy (2011) <sup>(7)</sup>,
- further political context as set out in the Annex I to these conclusions as well as the best practices and evidence presented during the 'Competences in Culture' conference (Warsaw, 18-20 July 2011) <sup>(8)</sup>.

CONSIDERS THAT:

cultural and creative competences include the key competence of cultural awareness and expression <sup>(9)</sup> and intercultural competences <sup>(10)</sup>.

UNDERLINES THAT:

- cultural and creative competences encompass an ability to acquire, use and make changes in culture and they are therefore of vital importance in order for diverse cultures in Europe to flourish, and for their richness to be preserved and protected,
- the key competence of cultural awareness and expression has an important lifelong learning dimension and, as an important transversal competence, is crucial to acquisition of other key competences for lifelong learning,
- cultural and creative competences are supported by various programmes and initiatives in the Member States, and these programmes contribute towards achieving the objectives of manifold policies,
- however, in order to enhance cross-sectoral cooperation there is a need to create more favourable framework conditions for the development of increasingly effective creative partnerships <sup>(11)</sup>.

AGREES THAT cultural and creative competences are a basis for creativity and innovation, which in turn boosts smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. This is due to the fact that these competences can contribute to:

- building intellectual capital <sup>(12)</sup> which is increasingly recognised as a new source of growth and competitiveness in Europe,

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 141, 7.6.2008, p. 14.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 301, 11.12.2009, p. 9.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 308, 24.11.2010, p. 46.

<sup>(5)</sup> 17165/10.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 191, 1.7.2011, p. 1.

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ C 175, 15.6.2011, p. 1.

<sup>(8)</sup> <http://competencesinculture.pl/en/>

<sup>(9)</sup> 'Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.' Recommendation 2006/962/EC on key competences for lifelong learning further specifies the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence.

<sup>(10)</sup> 'The knowledge, skills and attitudes of particular relevance to intercultural competences are those relating to the following key competences: communication in foreign languages, social and civic competences, and cultural awareness and expression.' (Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on intercultural competences.)

<sup>(11)</sup> 'Creative partnerships between culture and sectors such as education and training, business, research or the public sector, help transfer creative skills from culture into other sectors.' (Source: Conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014.)

<sup>(12)</sup> Intellectual capital can be defined as total of intangible assets of people, enterprises, communities, regions and institutions, which, if used properly, may be the source of present and future well-being of the country. Intellectual capital is comprised of social, human, relational and structural capital.

- all forms of innovation, mainly non-technological and social innovation <sup>(1)</sup>, through their impact on production and demand, and on the design, production and market success of innovative products and services,
- development — and maximisation of the spill-over effects — of cultural and creative industries as they are embodied in the competences of artists and creators as well as audiences and consumers,
- education training and preparation for jobs including those requiring high qualifications and social skills, to employability at all the relevant stages of life and to effective functioning and development of companies,
- better overall educational achievement, reducing early school leaving and improving prospects for social inclusion as they have important motivating and socialising impacts and allow pupils to discover and develop their talents.
- achieving the aims of early childhood education and care policies,
- enhancing social cohesion and inclusion of different target groups,
- developing attitudes which have a positive impact on social and professional life, add to the quality of life, improve prospects for social inclusion and promote sustainable lifestyles,
- take action, at the most appropriate level, with a view to the emergence of creative partnerships aimed at developing cultural and creative competences,
- address social and economic development issues by better exploring the methodology used by long-term programmes set up by cultural and educational entities as well as non-governmental organisations, including within educational experimental frameworks aimed at boosting attractiveness of schools and enhancing motivation of pupils.

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

- raise awareness and recognition of relevant actions and disseminate best practice among policymakers, cultural and educational entities, enterprises and non-governmental organisations at national, regional and local level on the role that development of cultural and creative competences — especially the key competence of cultural awareness and expression — can have, in particular in:
  - acquiring other key competences for lifelong learning,
  - reducing early school leaving,
  - boosting employability and productivity in a lifelong learning perspective,
  - delivering the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), in particular its fourth strategic objective <sup>(2)</sup>,
  - promoting creativity and innovation, especially non-technological innovation,
  - designing effective youth policies,

INVITES THE COMMISSION:

when implementing its current and future actions and programmes without prejudice to discussions on the future multiannual financial framework, to:

- support creative partnerships designed to boost cultural and creative competences,
- take into consideration the specific needs and importance of support for cultural and creative small businesses and micro-companies, especially those newly established and those led by young entrepreneurs,
- increase support for mobility and cross-border training (and training for trainers) on developing cooperation between culture and education for artists, teachers, youth workers, youth leaders and volunteers,
- regularly provide information on research and studies relevant to European cooperation in the field of culture conducted under EU research and innovation programmes,
- while implementing the 'Innovation Union' flagship initiative, including the European Forum on forward looking activities, to take cultural and creative competences into account as a factor in the current social challenges, development of the intellectual capital of Europe and social innovation,

<sup>(1)</sup> 'Social innovation is about tapping into the ingenuity of charities, associations and social entrepreneurs to find new ways of meeting social needs which are not adequately met by the market or the public sector to bring about the behavioural changes which are needed to tackle the major societal challenges.' (Source: Communication from the Commission on the 'Innovation Union' flagship initiative.)

<sup>(2)</sup> Strategic objective 4: Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

— work with the Member States to examine how to improve existing indicators on education while paying special attention to the areas of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship <sup>(1)</sup>,

in order to enhance the development of cultural and creative competences and their positive effects.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES and without prejudice to the discussions on the future multiannual financial framework, to:

— enhance inclusion and recognition of the potential of cultural awareness and expression in lifelong learning, youth policies and programmes, including work on better recognition of such competences acquired through non- and informal learning,

— attach greater priority to intercultural learning and creative partnerships in their cooperation with third countries, especially in programmes for young people,

— make full use of existing information networks to provide better information about successful activities that develop cultural and creative competences of young people,

— embrace the contribution of cultural and creative competences as a basis for sustainable jobs and social innovation in order to make full use of the possibilities offered by the 'Innovation Union' flagship initiative and the European Social Fund,

— where appropriate, further strengthen cultural infrastructure <sup>(2)</sup> by investing in it, including through the European Regional Development Fund,

— carry out more research to examine the potential and actual impacts of cultural and creative competences on the policy issues referred to in the first indent under 'Invites Member States to:',

— ensure that culture, education and other expert groups, including open method of coordination (OMC) groups, take the measures outlined in the Annex II to these conclusions,

— contribute to the OMC progress reporting within the EU Youth Report 2012 which assesses the first three-year work cycle of the EU Youth Strategy, and subsequent reports in the 'Creativity and Culture' field of action,

— exchange information on the actual impact of these Council conclusions, including within the framework of the final report on the results of the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See page 6, paragraph 4 of the Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training.

<sup>(2)</sup> Cultural infrastructure, in its physical and digital dimension, is a material base for cultural participation and activity. Examples include galleries, museums, theatres, cultural centres, libraries, multi-purpose spaces as well as their virtual equivalents in the digital environment.

## ANNEX I

**Further political context:**

- Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') <sup>(1)</sup>,
- Council Recommendation of 13 July 2010 on broad guidelines for the economic policies of the Member States and of the Union <sup>(2)</sup>, especially the fourth guideline,
- Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014 <sup>(3)</sup>,
- Council conclusions of 19 November 2010 on access of young people to culture <sup>(4)</sup>,
- Council Resolution of 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism <sup>(5)</sup>,
- Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on culture as a catalyst for creativity and innovation <sup>(6)</sup>
- Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) <sup>(7)</sup>,
- Final report of the Working Group on developing synergies with education, especially arts education and culture <sup>(8)</sup>,
- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative — Innovation Union <sup>(9)</sup>,
- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions — 'An agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment' <sup>(10)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 191, 23.7.2010, p. 28.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 325, 2.12.2010, p. 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ C 326, 3.12.2010, p. 2.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ C 320, 16.12.2008, p. 1.

<sup>(6)</sup> Doc. 8749/1/09 REV 1.

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ C 311, 19.12.2009, p. 1.

<sup>(8)</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/doc/MOCedu\\_final\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/doc/MOCedu_final_report_en.pdf)

<sup>(9)</sup> 14035/10.

<sup>(10)</sup> 17066/1/10 REV 1.

## ANNEX II

**Specific measures to be undertaken with regard to the expert groups, including open method of coordination groups:**

- the future OMC group on the promotion of creative partnerships <sup>(1)</sup> takes into account creative partnerships aimed at boosting cultural awareness and expression and their contribution to the success of the ET 2020 framework,
  - the future OMC group on the development of the key competence — cultural awareness and expression <sup>(2)</sup> considers these conclusions in the context of acquisition of other key competences for lifelong learning and reducing early school leaving,
  - both the abovementioned groups share the results of their work with the relevant groups in other sectors, including those dealing with recognition of informal learning, learning to learn and creativity competences, civic skills and active citizenship, media literacy, use of ICT in education, entrepreneurship education as well as early school leaving and cooperate with those groups, as far as possible, through the exchange of meeting reports and meetings of chairs,
  - all the respective groups are active channels for the dissemination of the results of best practice and relevant research undertaken at Member State and EU level.
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<sup>(1)</sup> Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014, priority C.

<sup>(2)</sup> Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014, priority A.

**Council conclusions on the role of voluntary activities in sport in promoting active citizenship**

(2011/C 372/06)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

- The Joint Declaration by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on 5 May 2003 on 'the social value of sport for young people' <sup>(1)</sup>.
- The Council Decision 2010/37/EC of 27 November 2009 on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011) <sup>(2)</sup>, which stresses the following objectives:
  - working towards an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU,
  - empowering volunteer organisations and improving the quality of volunteering,
  - rewarding and recognising volunteering activities,
  - raising awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.
- The Council conclusions of 18 November 2010 on the role of sport as a source of and a driver for active social inclusion <sup>(3)</sup>.
- The Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 'Developing the European dimension in sport' <sup>(4)</sup>, and the 2010 study on 'Volunteering in the European Union', which provide evidence of a very high degree of diversity in volunteering in sport across the EU and focus on legal arrangements and sources of financing in this field, also drawing attention to the need for the training of volunteers.
- The communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on EU policies and volunteering: 'Recognising and promoting cross-border voluntary activities in the EU' <sup>(5)</sup>.
- The Resolution of 20 May 2011 of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a European Union Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014 <sup>(6)</sup>.
- The Council conclusions of 3 October 2011 on the role of voluntary activities in social policy <sup>(7)</sup>.
- The Expert Conference 'From volunteering to leadership in sport', held on 13-14 September 2011 in Warsaw, Poland, during which special attention was given to the following issues:
  - the legacy, heritage and experience of major sport events and how they can be subsequently exploited in day-to-day voluntary activities in sport,
  - the possibilities of using the already existing pools of volunteers in the recruitment process for forthcoming sport events,
  - the need to support recognition and validation of voluntary activities in sport,
  - the need to encourage mutual learning and exchange of best practices.

## ACKNOWLEDGES THAT:

1. Having due regard to the particularities of the situation in each Member State and of all forms of volunteering, the term 'voluntary activities' refers to all types of voluntary activity, whether formal, non-formal or informal, which are undertaken of a person's own free will, choice and motivation, without concern for financial gain. They benefit the individual volunteer, communities and society as a whole. They are also an instrument allowing individuals and associations to address human, social, intergenerational or environmental needs and concerns, and are often carried out in support of a non-profit organisation or community-based initiative <sup>(8)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 134, 7.6.2003, p. 5.<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 17, 22.1.2010, p. 43.<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 326, 3.12.2010, p. 5.<sup>(4)</sup> COM(2011) 12 final.<sup>(5)</sup> COM(2011) 568 final.<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 162, 1.6.2011, p. 1.<sup>(7)</sup> Doc. 14061/1/11 REV 1.<sup>(8)</sup> Council Decision 2010/37/EU of 27 November 2009 on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (see footnote 2).



2. Voluntary activities need to be clearly distinguished from paid employment and should by no means replace it <sup>(1)</sup>. They should not perpetuate gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work and may not encourage any reduction of employees' working time or withdrawal of employees from the labour market.
3. Voluntary activities cannot replace the overall responsibility of the state to ensure and provide economic, social and cultural rights.
4. To ensure the rule of law and full respect for the integrity of the individual, voluntary activities must be subject to existing legislation and fully respect universal and fundamental rights and freedoms.

CONSIDERING THAT:

1. Sport is the biggest civil society movement in the EU. Non-profit activities and structures based on voluntary activities are a fundamental condition for the provision of sport in the majority of Member States.
2. Voluntary activities in sport are among the most attractive and popular forms of social activity in Europe and are part of the social heritage of sport. The organisation of sporting events — including those organised by professional and commercial sporting bodies — as well as day-to-day activities carried out in sport in many Member States rely on volunteers and voluntary activities.
3. Voluntary activities in sport contribute to active citizenship and to the integration of citizens with different backgrounds by creating better understanding and respect through the universal language of sport as well as contributing to the implementation of the basic values and principles of the European Union, namely: solidarity, sustainable development, human dignity, equality and subsidiarity, thus promoting European identity.
4. Engaging in voluntary activities in sport provides citizens with new skills, thereby contributing positively, among other things, to their employability and strengthening their sense of belonging to society, and can be a catalyst for social change.
5. Voluntary activities in sport can contribute to the growth and strengthening of social capital through the development of a social network based on trust and cooperation.

6. Voluntary activities in sport promote positive social attitudes based on values developed through sport, such as:

- fair play,
- teamwork,
- persistence,
- responsibility,
- leadership,
- tolerance,
- respect for others, and
- the ability to overcome obstacles.

7. The sport sector, together with voluntary activities in sport, constitutes a measurable and significant economic and social value in national economies, with potential to stimulate growth and employment rates throughout the European Union.
8. Promoting the development of voluntary activities in sport pursues the objectives of the European Year of voluntary activities 2011 and continues to fulfil the goals of the European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion 2010 as well as contributing to the objectives of the European Year of active ageing 2012.
9. Voluntary activities in sport can act as an impulse for the development and promotion of physical activity at all levels, bringing with it improvement in the well-being of citizens and reducing lifestyle diseases.
10. Voluntary activities in sport are significant as a factor contributing to the mobility of citizens through building competences and deepening experience within sport-related activities in other Member States as well as developing the European identity and promoting EU values beyond its borders.
11. Voluntary activities in sport can contribute to achieving the overall objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy by increasing mobility and through activities enhancing employability, improving public health, promoting social inclusion, education and active ageing.

<sup>(1)</sup> Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 16 May 2007 on implementing the common objectives for voluntary activities of young people (OJ C 241 of 20.9.2008, p. 1).

IN THIS CONTEXT, INVITES EU MEMBER STATES AND SPORT STAKEHOLDERS, ACTING WITHIN THEIR COMPETENCES AND HAVING REGARD TO THE AUTONOMY OF SPORTS ORGANISATIONS, TO:

1. Create favourable conditions for the development of voluntary activities in sport on the basis of, in particular:
  - the exchange of good practices between Member States and sports organisations,
  - respect for the autonomy of sports organisations, while ensuring adequate support for these organisations at Member State level,
  - the need to ensure that sports volunteers are offered the necessary training and given the opportunity to enjoy safely the benefits of volunteering.
2. Contribute to promoting a positive image of sports volunteers and of voluntary activities in sport.
3. Consider voluntary activities in sport as an important tool for raising competences and skills. To this end, there is a need to:
  - take appropriate steps to identify the competences and skills gained through non-formal and informal learning experiences relating to voluntary activities in sport, and study the possibilities for their greater recognition and validation within the framework of national qualification systems, with reference to the European qualifications framework (EQF),
  - seek consultation with the sports movement and volunteering organisations in the preparation of action.
4. Encourage cooperation between government authorities and sports organisations at local, national and European level, in order to establish networks for solving common problems that voluntary activities face.
5. Promote voluntary activities in sport as a form of non-formal and informal learning with a view to acquiring new skills and competences as well as constituting a part, along with formal education, of a dual career for athletes.
6. Promote voluntary activities in sport by, for example initiating publicity campaigns to increase awareness and promote positive attitudes towards volunteers.
7. Harness the potential of volunteers engaged in the organisation of sporting events in long-term activities at all sporting levels.

8. Explore the possible added value of establishing a reward system that recognises the most innovative voluntary projects in the field of sport.

ENCOURAGES EU MEMBER STATES AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, ACTING WITHIN THEIR COMPETENCES AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY AND TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THEIR INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE, TO:

1. Strive to eliminate undue obstacles to the development of voluntary activities in sport, including undue administrative burdens.
2. Study the development of sports based on voluntary activities within the European Union, including research on its economic and social impact.
3. Exchange knowledge, experience and best practices in the field of voluntary activities in sport.
4. Promote the development of voluntary activities in sport in national and European policies and strategies concerning sport and social affairs, education and employment.
5. Explore the possibilities for voluntary activities in sport to contribute to projects subsidised from EU funds and develop mechanisms to allow for appropriate appraisal of voluntary activities in sport.
6. Incorporate, where appropriate, aspects of voluntary activities in sport into the activities of different expert groups established in accordance with the EU Work Plan for Sport.
7. Encourage the development of voluntary activities in sport through cross-sectoral cooperation between public and private entities and civil society organisations in the areas of sport, health, culture, education, youth and social policy at local, national and European level.

INVITES THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO:

1. Give specific attention to voluntary activities and to the ability of non-profit making sport organisations to access the next generation of EU programmes, without prejudice to negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework.
2. Identify success factors, best practices and areas requiring closer cooperation at EU level, including existing obstacles to the development of voluntary activities in sport.
3. When proposing new EU legislation, assess its possible impact on voluntary activity in sport.

**Council conclusions on language competences to enhance mobility**

(2011/C 372/07)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

HAVING REGARD TO

1. The conclusions of the Barcelona European Council meeting of 15-16 March 2002, which called for further action to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age <sup>(1)</sup>.
2. The Council conclusions of 19 May 2006 on the European Indicator of Language Competence <sup>(2)</sup>, which reaffirmed that foreign language skills, as well as helping to foster mutual understanding between peoples, are a prerequisite for a mobile workforce and contribute to the competitiveness of the European Union economy.
3. The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning <sup>(3)</sup>, which includes communication in foreign languages among the key competences necessary for personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social cohesion and employability in a knowledge society.
4. The Council conclusions of 25 May 2007 on a coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training <sup>(4)</sup>, which called on the Commission to further examine the development of indicators on language skills.
5. The Council Recommendation of 20 November 2008 on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union <sup>(5)</sup>, which recommended that Member States increase awareness of the importance of intercultural competences and language learning among young people in order to reduce barriers to their cross-border mobility.
6. The Council Resolution of 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism <sup>(6)</sup>, which invited the Member States to promote multilingualism with a view to strengthening social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and the European construction, the European economy's competitiveness and people's mobility and employability, as well as to promote EU languages across the world.
7. The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training 'ET 2020', which identified as priorities for the period 2009-11 the need to enable citizens to communicate in two languages in addition to the mother tongue, the need to promote language teaching, where relevant, in vocational education and training (VET) and for adult learners, and the need to provide migrants with opportunities to learn the language of the host country <sup>(7)</sup>.
8. The 2010 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission <sup>(8)</sup> on the implementation of the 'Education & Training 2010' work programme, which noted that there was a need to enhance key competences in VET and adult learning and, in particular, that more attention should be given in these fields to communication in foreign languages.
9. The Europe 2020 strategy adopted by the European Council on 17 June 2010 <sup>(9)</sup> and its two flagship initiatives: *An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs* <sup>(10)</sup>, which recognises the potential contribution of language competences to a more dynamic labour market, and *Youth on the Move* <sup>(11)</sup>, which emphasises that better language skills will inevitably be needed in order to make mobility both possible and worthwhile.
10. The Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011 on promoting the learning mobility of young people <sup>(12)</sup>, which acknowledges the importance of language learning and acquiring intercultural competences starting at early stages of education, by encouraging quality linguistic and cultural preparation for mobility in both general and vocational education.

## RECALLING THAT

The Barcelona European Council meeting in 2002 identified language competences as an essential component of a competitive knowledge-based economy. Knowledge of foreign languages is a life-skill for all EU citizens, enabling them to enjoy both the economic and social benefits of free movement within the Union.

Providing the widest possible access to mobility for all, including disadvantaged groups, and reducing the remaining obstacles to mobility, constitute one of the main strategic objectives of EU policy in the field of education and training.

<sup>(1)</sup> SN 100/02, par. 44, second indent, p. 19.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 172, 25.7.2006, p. 1.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ C 311, 21.12.2007, p. 13.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ C 319, 13.12.2008, p. 8.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 320, 16.12.2008, p. 1.

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

<sup>(8)</sup> OJ C 117, 6.5.2010, p. 1.

<sup>(9)</sup> EUCO 13/10.

<sup>(10)</sup> doc. 17066/1/10 REV 1.

<sup>(11)</sup> doc. 13729/1/10 REV 1.

<sup>(12)</sup> OJ C 199, 7.7.2011, p. 1.

While the free movement of workers within the EU single market can contribute to reducing the mismatch between labour force skills and labour market needs, learning and professional mobility continue to be severely hampered by a limited knowledge of foreign languages.

#### REAFFIRMING THAT

While responsibility for the organisation and content of education and training systems rests with the individual Member States, European cooperation plays a useful role in identifying the language competences to be developed, as well as the most effective methodologies and the most favourable conditions for doing so.

#### AND IN THE LIGHT OF

The Presidency conference on *Multilingual Competences for Professional and Social Success in Europe* held in Warsaw in September 2011, and of the conference of EU Ministers in charge of compulsory education held in Gdańsk in October 2011.

#### NOTES

- The work being done by Member States in the framework of the open method of coordination, with the support of the Commission, in order to strengthen the contribution which language education can make to enhancing the employability of young people in a labour market where knowledge of foreign languages can provide a distinct advantage.
- The activities of the Business Platform for Multilingualism established by the Commission in order to foster better use of language competences as a means of increasing the competitiveness of EU business, and especially that of small and medium-sized enterprises.
- The outcomes of the Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism on securing lifelong language learning opportunities for all, in order to enhance the social inclusion of citizens with disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as to promote linguistic diversity and intercultural dialogue.

#### WELCOMES

- The Commission's *Report on the implementation of Council Resolution of 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism*, detailing the initiatives taken and the progress made in promoting language learning and linguistic diversity.
- The 2011 update of the *Inventory of Community actions in the field of multilingualism*, mapping the activities undertaken by the different Commission services in this field over the last

three years, which strongly emphasises that multilingualism policy improves employability for EU citizens and competitiveness for EU businesses.

- Publication of the Policy Handbook *Language learning at pre-primary school level — making it efficient and sustainable*, which represents a step forward in raising awareness of the importance of language learning from a very early age.
- Publication of the report *Providing communication skills for the labour market* as a result of the work done by the 'Languages for jobs' thematic working group within the 'ET 2020' framework.

#### AGREES THAT

1. Learning mobility — meaning transnational mobility for the purpose of acquiring new knowledge, skills and competences — is one of the important ways in which citizens can strengthen their employability, enhance their intercultural awareness, creativity and personal development, as well as participate actively in society.
2. A good command of foreign languages is a key competence essential to make one's way in the modern world and labour market. Multilingualism is not only part of the European heritage but also a chance to develop a society which is open, respectful of cultural diversity and ready for cooperation.
3. Maintaining and developing — within available resources — European tools and programmes which support language learning in both formal and non-formal education contexts has a useful role to play in enhancing learning and professional mobility.
4. While general language programmes help to develop essential communication skills for everyday use, methodologies such as content and language-integrated learning (CLIL) in both general education and VET can be particularly effective in enhancing the mobility and employability of workers.
5. In order to promote CLIL, teachers and trainers — in particular in VET — should be encouraged to acquire high quality language competences and should have access to high quality teaching resources.
6. A broader choice of languages, including less-widely used languages and the languages of neighbouring countries, should — where possible and appropriate — be offered at all levels of education in a lifelong learning perspective, and greater information and guidance about these should be made available by appropriate language and cultural institutions.

7. The development of language competences among people, in particular children, with a socio-economically disadvantaged, migrant or Roma background or among those with special educational needs can contribute to ensuring better social inclusion and future professional development.
8. High quality language teaching and learning — for instance, of specialised, employment-related language — are essential for the internationalisation of higher education institutions and enhancing graduate employability.
9. Making provision for language learning throughout life, including at senior age, is also important in view of current demographic trends and of the need to ensure equal opportunities for a growing percentage of elderly EU citizens.
7. Promote measures aimed at helping both children and adults with a migrant or Roma background to learn the official language (or languages) of the host country and, if different, the language of instruction. In addition, consider the possibilities for enabling children from such backgrounds to maintain and develop their mother tongues.
8. Explore ways of recognising and validating the native language competences of children and adults with a migrant background.
9. Encourage schools, vocational and higher education institutions to adopt integrated approaches to language teaching and learning.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES TO

1. Step up efforts to achieve the Barcelona objective, for example by enhancing the provision, quality and relevance of language teaching in general education, VET and higher education, as well as in the context of lifelong learning.
2. Acknowledge the importance of evaluating performance in language teaching and learning as an important aspect of the quality assurance process.
3. Improve the initial and in-service training of language teachers and the language-related training of teachers of other subjects, as well as enhance and facilitate their mobility, eliminating administrative barriers as far as possible.
4. Encourage innovative forms of European cooperation, experimentation and new approaches to language teaching and learning, such as content and language-integrated learning (including in bilingual schools), opportunities for language immersion mobility and, where appropriate, more extensive use of ICT also in creative language learning environments.
5. Broaden — where possible and appropriate — the choice of languages offered in education and training, promoting the teaching of less widely used languages and (especially in border regions) the languages of neighbouring countries, in order to facilitate cultural, social and economic exchanges.
6. Consider including a cultural dimension in language curricula, where appropriate, as an important component for future learning and professional mobility.

10. Promote dialogue between the education world and the world of work by taking better account of the language needs of the labour market, by offering regular guidance to pupils and students throughout their educational careers and by supporting language learning in the workplace.

11. Explore the possibilities for public-private partnerships aimed at securing the provision of language skills suitable for the labour market, in particular as a means of preparing for mobility and work placements abroad.

12. Encourage the promotion of language learning initiatives and of environments conducive to language learning.

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO

1. Support Member States' efforts in the field of language teaching and learning, making full use of EU programmes and European tools for education and training.
2. Extend the work on language policy initiated under the first work cycle of 'ET 2020' within the thematic group on early language learning to include other levels of education (primary, secondary, etc.), whilst also having special regard to the VET and adult learning fields.
3. Consider submitting a proposal — drawing on the results of the European survey on language competences due to be published in 2012 and operating within available resources — for a possible benchmark on language competences, with a view to promoting continuous improvement in language education.
4. Launch and disseminate Europe-wide studies and surveys on language learning methodologies and tools, bearing in mind qualitative aspects and avoiding additional administrative burdens and costs, and make the results available to practitioners and national decision-makers.



5. Support and facilitate the exchange of information on accessible language learning resources, and encourage the Member States to make practical use of the guidelines and tools developed within EU language policy.
6. Pursue its support for the Business Platform for Multilingualism and for stakeholder initiatives of this kind.

AND INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION TO

1. Support mobility for the purpose of language learning, in order to help learners to overcome initial linguistic barriers and motivate them to acquire competence in at least two foreign languages.
2. Exchange experience and best practice, in order to improve the effectiveness of language education in equipping young people with the appropriate mix of linguistic competences and with the ability to continue acquiring new skills in accordance with future needs and interests, by promoting languages through existing and future platforms and networks for teachers and trainers.
3. Highlight the need for specific language content for professional purposes, particularly in VET and higher education, as a means of enhancing mobility and employability.
4. Further develop tools — operating within available resources and minimising administrative burdens — for monitoring progress in the field of language learning, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, in order to identify the most effective practices and areas requiring improvement.
5. Explore ways — taking existing good practice into account — of enhancing the recognition and validation of language

competences acquired through non-formal and informal education.

6. Consider using the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) in order to:
  - promote closer links between the CEFR and the National and European Qualification Frameworks,
  - widen opportunities for the certification of language competences acquired by pupils and students by the end of compulsory education and in higher education.
7. Provide a link between vocational education and training qualifications that include language skills and the CEFR, whilst making good use of the resources and experience of all relevant European institutions and stakeholders, in particular the Council of Europe and its European Centre for Modern Languages.
8. Continue to provide support via the EU programmes in the fields of education, training and youth for cooperation between educational institutions as well as for exchange programmes for pupils and students, including those in vocational education and training, in order to help them improve their language competences.
9. Support, where appropriate, both at national level and through European cooperation, the development of teaching and learning materials for less widely taught languages.
10. Without prejudice to the forthcoming negotiations, consider making language learning a priority area in the next generation of EU programmes in the field of education and training.



# Council conclusions on a benchmark for learning mobility

(2011/C 372/08)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

HAVING REGARD TO

- The Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 14 December 2000 concerning an action plan for mobility <sup>(1)</sup>.
- The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 July 2001 on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers <sup>(2)</sup>.
- The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: European Quality Charter for Mobility <sup>(3)</sup>.
- The Council conclusions of 25 May 2007 on a coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training <sup>(4)</sup>.
- The Council Recommendation of 20 November 2008 on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union <sup>(5)</sup>.
- The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 21 November 2008 on youth mobility <sup>(6)</sup>.
- The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') <sup>(7)</sup>.
- The Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-18) <sup>(8)</sup>.
- The Council conclusions of 16 March 2010 on Europe 2020 <sup>(9)</sup>.

- The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 18 November 2010 on the priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-20 <sup>(10)</sup>.
- The Council conclusions of 19 November 2010 on the *Youth on the Move* initiative — an integrated approach in response to the challenges young people face <sup>(11)</sup>.
- The Council conclusions of 14 February 2011 on the role of education and training in the implementation of the *Europe 2020 Strategy* <sup>(12)</sup>.
- The Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011: *Youth on the Move* — promoting the learning mobility of young people <sup>(13)</sup>.
- The Council conclusions of 28 November 2011 on the Eastern dimension of youth participation and mobility.
- The Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions of 7 July 2011: Mid-term review of the Lifelong Learning Programme <sup>(14)</sup>;

AND IN THE LIGHT OF

The outcomes of the Presidency conference on learning mobility held in Sopot on 17-19 October 2011.

RECALLING THAT

Learning mobility is widely considered to contribute to enhancing the employability of young people through the acquisition of key skills and competences, including especially language competences and intercultural understanding, but also social and civic skills, entrepreneurship, problem-solving skills and creativity in general. In addition to providing valuable experience for the individuals concerned, learning mobility can help to improve the overall quality of education, especially through closer cooperation between educational institutions. Furthermore, it can help to reinforce a sense of European identity and citizenship.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 371 23.12.2000, p. 4.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 215, 9.8.2001, p. 30.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 5.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ C 311, 21.12.2007, p. 13.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ C 319, 13.12.2008, p. 8.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 320 16.12.2008, p. 6.

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

<sup>(8)</sup> OJ C 311, 19.12.2009, p. 1.

<sup>(9)</sup> Doc. 7586/10.

<sup>(10)</sup> OJ C 324, 1.12.2010, p. 5.

<sup>(11)</sup> OJ C 326, 3.12.2010, p. 9.

<sup>(12)</sup> OJ C 70, 4.3.2011, p. 1.

<sup>(13)</sup> OJ C 199, 7.7.2011, p. 1.

<sup>(14)</sup> Doc. 12668/11.

For these reasons, providing the widest possible access to mobility for all, including disadvantaged groups, and reducing the remaining obstacles to mobility constitute one of the main strategic objectives of EU policy in the field of education and training.

#### NOTES

- The Council's invitation to the Commission under the 2006 Recommendation for a European Quality Charter for Mobility to improve or develop, in close cooperation with the relevant authorities, gender-specific statistical data on mobility for education and training purposes <sup>(15)</sup>.
- The report of the High Level Expert Forum on Mobility of June 2008 and its proposal that learning mobility should be an opportunity provided to all young people in Europe.
- The target on learning mobility in higher education established under the Bologna process at Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve in April 2009.
- The Commission Green Paper of July 2009 on promoting the learning mobility of young people <sup>(16)</sup>.
- The Bruges Communiqué of December 2010, and the conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-20 <sup>(17)</sup>, which stipulate that European VET systems should provide substantially increased opportunities for transnational mobility by the year 2020.
- The Commission staff working paper of 24 May 2011 on the development of benchmarks on education for employability and on learning mobility <sup>(18)</sup>.
- The Council conclusions of 28-29 November 2011 on language competences to enhance mobility.

#### ACKNOWLEDGES THAT

- Learning mobility contributes to both the personal and professional development of young people and enhances employability and competitiveness, as testified not only by the EU programmes in the fields of education, training and youth, but also by a number of qualitative international studies on learning mobility.

- A European benchmark <sup>(19)</sup> on learning mobility accompanied by relevant indicators <sup>(20)</sup> could help to encourage and monitor the progress of Member States towards the already agreed <sup>(21)</sup> objective of increased mobility, as well as identify examples of good practice and support the development of peer learning initiatives.

- Data collection to measure progress against the European benchmark on learning mobility should be carried out within the limits of available resources.
- In order to take account of different educational environments, such a benchmark should differentiate between two main areas: higher education and initial VET.
- It is also important to accompany the benchmark with an indicator covering any type of learning mobility experienced by young people, including mobility which takes place in formal and non-formal settings.

#### INVITES THE MEMBER STATES,

while taking account of the different situations in individual Member States,

- (1) To adopt, taking into account the provisions of the Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011 on promoting the learning mobility of young people, measures at both national and European level which are aimed at increasing learning mobility and achieving the European benchmark as outlined in the Annex hereto.
- (2) On the basis of the available sources and tools, and whilst minimising administrative burdens and costs, to improve data collection on learning mobility within all cycles of higher education, initial vocational education and training, and youth learning mobility in general, in order to measure progress against the European benchmark and the indicator as outlined in the Annex.
- (3) To promote the implementation and use of EU programmes and tools designed to support learning mobility and lifelong learning, including Europass, Youthpass, EQF, ECTS and ECVET.

<sup>(19)</sup> As outlined in the 2009 strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training, this is a reference level of European average performance which is not to be considered as a concrete target for each country to reach, but rather as a collective target which Member States are invited to contribute to achieving (OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 7).

<sup>(20)</sup> To be established in the framework of the European Statistical System.

<sup>(21)</sup> See the November 2008 Council conclusions on youth mobility (see footnote 6).

<sup>(15)</sup> See footnote 3.

<sup>(16)</sup> COM(2009) 329 final.

<sup>(17)</sup> See footnote 10.

<sup>(18)</sup> Doc. 10697/11 — SEC(2011) 670 final.

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO

- (1) Work with and support the Member States, in particular with the help of Eurostat, to improve the availability of relevant indicators and statistics during the period up to 2020. In doing so, the best possible use should be made of the statistical data and household surveys available, with a view to minimising administrative burdens and costs.
- (2) Examine, in particular by means of regular progress reports, the degree to which the mobility objectives set under the 'ET 2020' framework are being met.
- (3) Report back to the Council by the end of 2015, with a view to reviewing and, if necessary, revising the European benchmark on learning mobility as outlined in the Annex.

AND INVITES THE MEMBER STATES, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE COMMISSION,

- (1) To monitor progress and performance in the field of cross-border learning mobility at both national and European level, including by collecting qualitative information on examples of good practice, as the foundation for evidence-based policymaking.
- (2) With regard to learning mobility in higher education: operating within available resources and in close synergy

with the Bologna process, to improve the collection of data on student mobility (including credit and degree mobility) at all cycles from administrative and other sources — especially at the point of graduation, in order to measure progress against the mobility benchmark outlined in the Annex (Section I — 1).

- (3) With regard to learning mobility in initial VET: to make the best use of available household surveys, in order to collect the kind of learning mobility data needed to support the benchmark outlined in the Annex (Section I — 2).
- (4) With regard to youth learning mobility in general: to make the best use of available household surveys, in order to collect the data needed to develop an indicator on the total of formal and non-formal learning mobility, including breakdowns on non-formal mobility, with a view to complementing the dashboard of EU indicators in the youth field <sup>(22)</sup>, and possibly extending the learning mobility benchmark to include youth mobility in general at some future date (Section II of the Annex).
- (5) To examine the possibility of using available surveys on teachers at all education levels, with a view to developing indicators on teacher mobility and possibly extending the learning mobility benchmark to include teacher mobility <sup>(23)</sup> at some future date.

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<sup>(22)</sup> Doc. 8320/11 — SEC(2011) 401 final.

<sup>(23)</sup> As referred to under the 2009 strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (see footnote 7).

## ANNEX

## A REFERENCE LEVEL OF EUROPEAN AVERAGE PERFORMANCE

## ('European benchmark')

## IN THE FIELD OF LEARNING MOBILITY

As a means of monitoring progress and identifying challenges, as well as contributing to evidence-based policy making, the Member States agreed in 2009 that reference levels of European average performance ('European benchmarks') should support the objectives outlined in the Council conclusions which they adopted on 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training <sup>(1)</sup>. Agreement was reached at the time on five European benchmarks and a request submitted for the Commission to submit proposals on further benchmarks, including one for learning mobility.

Having examined the proposals contained in the Commission staff working paper of 24 May 2011 <sup>(2)</sup>, the Member States also now agree to the following benchmark for learning mobility, which differentiates between two main areas — higher education and initial VET.

The European benchmark for learning mobility in the two areas outlined below complement those already adopted in May 2009. As such, they should be based solely on comparable data and take account of the differing situations in individual Member States. They should not be considered as concrete targets for individual countries to reach by 2020. Rather, Member States are invited to consider, on the basis of national priorities and whilst taking account of changing economic circumstances, how and to what extent they can contribute to the collective achievement of the European benchmark in the areas outlined below through national actions.

In addition to this, an indicator on youth learning mobility in general should be developed in the context of formal as well as non-formal learning, with a view to the possible extension of the learning mobility benchmark to include, at some future date, youth learning mobility taking place in any settings.

Learning mobility is defined as physical mobility and takes worldwide mobility into account.

**I. BENCHMARK FOR LEARNING MOBILITY****1. *Learning mobility in higher education***

With a view to increasing the participation of higher education students in learning mobility:

**By 2020, an EU average of at least 20 % of higher education graduates should have had a period of higher education-related study or training (including work placements) abroad, representing a minimum of 15 ECTS credits or lasting a minimum of 3 months.**

Shorter periods may be taken into account for measuring national mobility levels, providing these are recognised by the individual Member State within the context of a quality mobility scheme and are recorded separately.

To ensure quality and convergence with the Bologna process, the Member States and the Commission are invited to work with the relevant Bologna fora with a view to establishing harmonised thresholds for the number of ECTS credits and minimum durations of study.

Member States are encouraged to ensure the full recognition of study periods abroad.

**2. *Learning mobility in initial vocational education and training (I-VET)***

With a view to increasing the participation of initial vocational education and training students in learning mobility:

**By 2020, an EU average of at least 6 % of 18-34 year-olds with an initial vocational education and training qualification should have had an initial VET-related study or training period (including work placements) abroad lasting a minimum of 2 weeks <sup>(3)</sup>, or less if documented by Europass.**

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

<sup>(2)</sup> Doc. 10697/11.

<sup>(3)</sup> = 10 working days.

In order to ensure quality, Member States are encouraged to use relevant tools, such as Europass and the ECVET and EQAVET systems.

The benchmark — including its definition and target level — should, if necessary, be reviewed/revised by the end of 2015.

## **II. INDICATOR ON YOUTH LEARNING MOBILITY IN GENERAL**

This is a global learning mobility indicator which makes it possible to record any kind of learning experience abroad in which young people engage. It covers learning mobility of any duration within the formal education and training systems and at any level, as well as learning mobility in non-formal contexts, including youth exchanges or voluntary activities.

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**Council conclusions on the modernisation of higher education**

(2011/C 372/09)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

WHEREAS

1. Higher education systems play a crucial role in the creation of knowledge which underpins human and societal development and the promotion of active citizenship.
2. The *Europe 2020* strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth adopted in June 2010 <sup>(1)</sup> set the specific objective of improving education levels, in particular by increasing the share of young people having successfully completed tertiary or equivalent education to at least 40 % by 2020.
3. The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999 established an intergovernmental process aimed at creating a European Higher Education Area which is actively supported by the European Union, and the Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries, meeting in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve on 28 and 29 April 2009, called for higher education institutions <sup>(2)</sup> to further modernise their activities in the period up to 2020.
4. Council Directive 2004/114/EC of 13 December 2004 determined the conditions and rules for admitting third-country nationals to the territory of the Member States for a period exceeding 3 months for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service <sup>(3)</sup>.
5. Council Directive 2005/71/EC of 12 October 2005 laid down the conditions for the admission of third-country researchers to the Member States for more than 3 months for the purposes of carrying out a research project under hosting agreements with research organisations <sup>(4)</sup>.
6. The Council Resolution of 23 November 2007 on modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy <sup>(5)</sup> invited Member States to promote the internationalisation of higher education

institutions by encouraging quality assurance through independent evaluation and peer review of universities, enhancing mobility, promoting the use of joint and double degrees and facilitating the recognition of qualifications and periods of study.

7. The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training <sup>(6)</sup> stated that in order to support Member States' efforts to modernise higher education and develop a European Higher Education Area, close synergy with the Bologna process should be aimed for, in particular with regard to quality assurance, recognition, mobility and transparency instruments.
8. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 26 November 2009 on developing the role of education in a fully functioning knowledge triangle <sup>(7)</sup> identified the need to reform further the governance and financing structures of universities allowing for greater autonomy and accountability, so as to facilitate a more diversified revenue stream and more effective collaboration with the business world and to equip universities to participate in the knowledge triangle on a global scale.
9. The Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the internationalisation of higher education <sup>(8)</sup> invited the Commission to develop an EU international higher education strategy aimed at improving coherence and complementarity between existing international cooperation initiatives at both EU and national level, and which will continue to promote the attractiveness of European higher education, research and innovation in the EU's external activities.
10. The Council conclusions of 7 June 2010 on new skills for new jobs: the way forward <sup>(9)</sup> underlined the need to promote inclusive growth and to help people of all ages to anticipate and manage change by equipping them with the right skills and competences.
11. The Council conclusions of 19 November 2010 on the *Youth on the Move* initiative <sup>(10)</sup> called for efforts to enhance the quality and attractiveness of education at all levels, particularly in higher education.

<sup>(1)</sup> EUCO 13/10.

<sup>(2)</sup> In order to take account of linguistic diversity and national traditions and practices, this term is used to encompass all tertiary education institutions, including universities, universities of applied science, institutes of technology, *grandes écoles*, business schools, engineering schools, IUT, colleges of higher education, professional schools, polytechnics, academies, etc.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 375, 23.12.2004, p. 12.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 289, 3.11.2005, p. 15.

<sup>(5)</sup> 16096/1/07 REV 1.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ C 302, 12.12.2009, p. 3.

<sup>(8)</sup> OJ C 135, 26.5.2010, p. 12.

<sup>(9)</sup> Doc. 10841/10.

<sup>(10)</sup> OJ C 326, 3.12.2010, p. 9.



12. The Council conclusions of 26 November 2010 on Innovation Union for Europe<sup>(1)</sup> stressed the importance of prioritising investment in education, training and research, and of making full use of Europe's intellectual capital in order to secure long-term competitiveness and growth.

13. The conclusions of the European Council of 4 February 2011 called for the implementation of a strategic and integrated approach to boosting innovation and taking full advantage of Europe's intellectual capital, for the benefit of citizens, companies — in particular SMEs — and researchers<sup>(2)</sup>.

14. The Council conclusions of 14 February 2011 on the role of education and training in the implementation of the *Europe 2020* strategy<sup>(3)</sup> emphasised that higher education institutions should seek to improve the quality and relevance of the courses they offer, so as to encourage a wider range of citizens to enrol in higher education, and that reinforced cooperation should be promoted between higher education institutions, research institutes and enterprises with a view to strengthening the knowledge triangle as the basis for a more innovative and creative economy.

15. The Council conclusions of 19 May 2011 on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020<sup>(4)</sup> invited the Member States to set or continue working towards their goals that could focus on ensuring equal access in practice to quality education, including higher education.

16. The Council conclusions of 31 May 2011 on the development of the European Research Area (ERA) through ERA-related groups<sup>(5)</sup> noted that the considerable progress achieved in implementing ERA should result in a continuation of the comprehensive and strategic approach to take full advantage of Europe's intellectual capital.

17. The Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011: *Youth on the Move* — promoting the learning mobility of young people<sup>(6)</sup> noted that learning mobility can make education and training systems and institutions more open, more European and international, more accessible and more efficient. It can also strengthen Europe's competitiveness by helping to build a knowledge-intensive society.

18. The Council conclusions of 28 November 2011 on a benchmark for learning mobility seek to increase the participation of higher education students in learning

mobility and set quantitative and qualitative thresholds for measuring the periods of higher education related study or training abroad.

19. The European Union has a long tradition of cooperation with third countries based on a set of policies and instruments in which higher education is playing an increasing role. Cooperation in higher education also features prominently in multilateral cooperation frameworks such as the Eastern Partnership, the Union for the Mediterranean or the Northern Dimension, and with the Western Balkans.

#### IN THE LIGHT OF

1. The first ministerial ERA conference on *Intellectual Capital — Creative Impact* held in Sopot on 20 July 2011, which highlighted the role that universities play in a globalised world as vital sources of knowledge and innovative thinking, especially with regard to strategic areas of research focused on contemporary challenges.

2. The Presidency conference on the *Modernisation of Higher Education* held in Sopot on 24-25 October 2011, which underlined the need to modernise higher education systems, especially in the face of current-day challenges such as global competition and demographic trends.

#### WELCOMES

The Communication of 20 September 2011 from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions — *Supporting growth and jobs — an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems*<sup>(7)</sup>.

#### ACKNOWLEDGES THAT

1. In the current economic climate higher education (including tertiary vocational education and training) — through its links with research and innovation — has a crucial role to play in providing the highly skilled human capital and promoting the essential research that Europe needs in its drive to secure jobs, economic growth and prosperity.

2. Graduates' qualifications do not always match the needs of the labour market and society. Public and private employers increasingly report mismatches and difficulties in finding the right people for the evolving needs of the knowledge economy.

<sup>(1)</sup> Doc. 17165/10.

<sup>(2)</sup> EUCO 2/11, p. 6, para. 16.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 70, 4.3.2011, p. 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> Doc. 10658/11.

<sup>(5)</sup> 11032/11.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 199, 7.7.2011, p. 1.

<sup>(7)</sup> Doc. 14198/11 + ADD 1.



3. Europe needs far greater numbers of trained researchers and researchers with experience outside academia, including from the private sector, in order to make its economies more research-intensive and thereby boost innovation and competitiveness.
  4. Widening participation in higher education requires growing attention to be paid to the challenges related to quality and diversity.
  5. The strength of European higher education institutions lies in their diversity, in the provision of high quality, sustainable, relevant education and research, and in the link between institutional autonomy, accountability to all stakeholders, and an ability to adapt to changing circumstances. In addition to their two traditional missions of teaching and research, a third mission linking institutions and the business sector, including at regional level, and encompassing social responsibility is of growing importance.
  6. However, the potential of European higher education institutions to fulfil their role in society and contribute to Europe's prosperity remains underexploited: Europe is lagging behind in the global competition for knowledge and talent, while emerging economies are rapidly increasing their investment in higher education.
  7. At the same time, higher education institutions too often seek to compete in too many areas, while only a few of them achieve excellence in specific areas where global competition is strong.
  8. Higher education institutions thus need to continue pursuing internal reforms based on the choice of institutional missions related to the types of intellectual capital they represent and opportunities to define themselves in relation to other national institutions.
  9. Institutional autonomy is needed to promote institutional diversity within national systems of higher education: there is a need to diversify institutional roles and missions in order to promote excellence within higher education institutions.
- AGREES THAT
1. The main responsibility for delivering and supporting reforms in higher education rests with Member States and education institutions themselves. However, the Bologna process and consequent development of the European Higher Education Area, the EU agenda for the modernisation of higher education systems and the creation of the European Research Area show that the challenges and policy responses required transcend national borders and that European cooperation has a valuable contribution to make in terms of funding support, evidence-based policy analysis and the exchange of best practice.
  2. The quality and relevance of higher education are a core condition for taking full advantage of Europe's intellectual capital.
  3. The quality of education and research is a key driver of the successful modernisation of higher education systems in Europe.
  4. Strengthening the knowledge triangle between education, research and innovation is a key condition for enabling higher education to contribute to jobs and growth, for reforming governance and financing structures, and for enhancing its international attractiveness.
  5. Developing the European Research Area increases complementarity between national systems to enhance the cost effectiveness of research investment and to intensify exchanges and cooperation between institutions collaborating in the knowledge triangle.
  6. The international mobility of students, researchers and staff, which has been reinforced since the launching of the European Higher Education Area, has a positive impact on quality and affects all key areas of reform. However, it can also pose challenges for some education systems which receive substantial inflows of students, or for those countries threatened by a 'brain drain' which results in many talented people choosing to study, and then remain, abroad.
  7. Attracting the best students, academics and researchers from outside the EU and developing new forms of cross-border cooperation are key conditions for making the European Higher Education Area and European Research Area attractive destinations in the global race for knowledge and talent.
  8. Involving employers and other stakeholders in the design and delivery of programmes is essential in terms of improving the quality and relevance of higher education.
  9. Public investment, supported by additional sources of funding, should remain the basis for sustainable higher education, especially in view of the current financial crisis in Europe.

ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE MEMBER STATES — IN LINE WITH NATIONAL PRACTICE — TO WORK WITH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, WHILE RECOGNISING THEIR AUTONOMY, AS WELL AS WITH ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS, IN ORDER TO:

1. Step up efforts to increase higher education attainment levels to achieve the *Europe 2020* education headline target of 40 % of 30-34 year olds in the EU having completed tertiary or equivalent education, given the estimate that — by 2020 — 35 % of all jobs in the EU will require high-level qualifications <sup>(1)</sup>.
2. Develop clear progression routes into higher education from vocational and other types of education, as well as mechanisms for recognising prior learning and experience gained outside formal education and training, especially by tackling challenges related to the implementation and use of national qualification frameworks linked to the European Qualification Framework.
3. Promote the systematic development of effective strategies to ensure access for disadvantaged and under-represented groups, especially by improving outreach and by providing more transparent information on educational opportunities and outcomes, as well as better guidance in order to ensure the right choice of study.
4. Increase efforts to minimise higher education drop-out rates by improving the quality, relevance and attractiveness of courses, in particular through student-centred learning and by providing relevant post-entry support, guidance and counselling.
5. Ensure that targeted financial support reaches potential students from lower income backgrounds.
6. Encourage the use of skills and growth projections and graduate employment data (including tracking graduate employment outcomes) in course design, delivery and evaluation, as well as encourage greater flexibility when designing study programmes, including interdisciplinary learning paths, with a view to enhancing graduates' employability.
7. Encourage the adoption of student-centred approaches to teaching and learning, acknowledging the needs of a diverse student body and promoting a greater variety of study modes, including by making effective use of ICTs.
8. Encourage higher education institutions to invest in the continuous professional development of their staff, and to reward excellence in teaching.
9. Tackle stereotyping and dismantle the barriers still faced by women in reaching the highest levels in post-graduate education and research — especially in certain disciplines and in leadership positions — in order to liberate untapped talent.
10. Link, where relevant and appropriate, national funding for doctoral programmes to the Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training <sup>(2)</sup>, and support the development of researcher career opportunities.
11. Stimulate the development of entrepreneurial, creative and innovation skills in all disciplines and in all cycles, and promote innovation in higher education through more interactive learning environments and a strengthened knowledge-transfer infrastructure.
12. Encourage, where relevant, a greater role for interdisciplinary research in higher education institutions, as well as enhance interlinkages between higher education and research, in order to make the knowledge triangle work more efficiently.
13. In addition to the education and research missions of higher education, encourage the further development of third stream activities such as knowledge-sharing and innovation, community engagement, lifelong learning, and relevance to regional and local development.
14. Encourage partnership and cooperation with business, for instance through reward structures, internships and work placements, incentives for multidisciplinary and cross-organisational cooperation, and the reduction of regulatory and administrative barriers to partnerships between higher education institutions and other public and private stakeholders. The effective transfer of knowledge to the market, and in this context the continuum between basic and applied research, can be achieved by implementing public policies which enhance partnerships between a wide range of entities.
15. Strengthen links between higher education institutions, employers and labour market institutions in order to take greater account of labour market needs in study programmes, to improve the match between skills and jobs, and to develop active labour market policies aimed at promoting graduate employment.
16. Strengthen quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation, including by:
  - (a) building learning mobility more systematically into curricula, where appropriate, and ensuring the efficient recognition of credits gained abroad through the effective use of transparency tools such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the Diploma Supplement, quality assurance and the European Qualifications Framework;

<sup>(1)</sup> Cedefop report 2010.

<sup>(2)</sup> Report adopted by the ERA Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility in May and finalised on 27 June 2011.

- (b) eliminating unnecessary barriers to switching institutions between bachelor and master levels and to cross-border cooperation and exchanges;
  - (c) improving access, employment conditions and progression opportunities for students, researchers and teachers from non-EU countries, including — where possible — by resolving administrative issues that create difficulties in obtaining visas;
  - (d) ensuring that quality assurance systems adequately cover franchise education;
  - (e) promoting wider institutional cooperation, including by developing courses leading to double and joint degrees.
17. Encourage more flexible governance and funding systems in higher education institutions, including mechanisms linked to performance and competition, as well as promote the professionalisation of internal management.
18. Facilitate access to alternative sources of funding, including — where appropriate — by using public funds to leverage private and other public investment.
- WELCOMES THE COMMISSION'S INTENTION TO
- 1. Support the Member States in their efforts to reform their higher education systems, making full use of EU programmes in the field of education and training, and by means of an improved evidence base, detailed analysis and increased transparency, including by:
    - (a) developing, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, an independent, performance-based transparency tool for profiling higher education institutions (U-Multirank), which takes account of the specificity of national higher education systems and acknowledges the diversity of higher education institutions across Europe, as well as allows users to create individualised multidimensional rankings;
    - (b) continuing to develop better higher education and labour market intelligence, in particular by improving data on European higher education learning mobility and employment outcomes (operating within available resources and minimising administrative burdens), and by providing specific guidance on raising basic and transversal skills and overcoming skill mismatches;
    - (c) analysing the impact of different funding approaches towards the diversification, efficiency and equity of higher education systems, as well as on student mobility;
    - (d) establishing a high level expert group to analyse key topics for the modernisation of higher education, starting with the promotion of excellence in teaching, with a view to reporting back in 2013.
  - 2. Facilitate the increase of learning mobility by strengthening the ECTS and quality assurance mechanisms, with a view to improving recognition.
  - 3. Propose, without prejudice to the forthcoming negotiations on the future EU programme in the fields of education, training and youth, an Erasmus Masters degree mobility scheme, in order to promote mobility, excellence and access to affordable finance for students taking their Masters degree in another Member State, regardless of their social background.
  - 4. Support the analysis of mobility flows and of developments in franchise education.
  - 5. Promote, together with the Member States, the coherent development of the European Research Area and the European Higher Education Area, and seek to strengthen synergies between the EU and Bologna process, including by use of the post-2013 programme in the field of education and training, with a view to contributing to the Bologna and EU 20 % mobility target.
  - 6. Continue to develop the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) by adopting the proposal for a new strategic innovation agenda designing the future of the EIT, its priorities and proposals for new KICs to be launched, especially in order to increase the innovation potential of higher education institutions in cooperation with business.
  - 7. Support the implementation of open and transparent recruitment procedures and foster cross-border and cross-sectoral researcher mobility by promoting the European Framework for Research Careers and the European initiative EURAXESS — *Researchers in Motion* <sup>(1)</sup>.
  - 8. Strengthen — within the Marie Curie actions — the mobility schemes targeted at doctoral students, including support for reintegration, and promote a European Industrial PhD scheme in order to support applied research.
  - 9. Propose a quality framework for traineeships in order to help students and graduates gain the practical knowledge needed for the workplace and obtain more and better quality placements.
- <sup>(1)</sup> Report adopted by the ERA Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility in May 2011 and finalised on 21 July 2011.

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10. Promote the EU as a study and research destination for top talent from around the world, whilst recognising the diversity of higher education institutions, and develop relations in the field of higher education with partners outside the Union, with a view to strengthening national higher education systems, policy dialogue, mobility and academic recognition, including via the Enlargement Strategy, the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Eastern Partnership, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, cooperation with the Western Balkans, the Global Approach to Migration, and the Bologna Policy Forum.

international outreach and visibility, as well as engaging with partners with a view to strengthening relationships and enhancing capacity building in the higher education sector.
  11. Develop an EU international higher education strategy in order to better reach the abovementioned goals, increasing
  12. Strengthen the long-term impact of EU funding for higher education modernisation through improved complementarity between different funding instruments, notably the future EU programme in the fields of education, training and youth, the *Horizon 2020* Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and the European Cohesion Policy instruments.
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