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REPORT

on education as the cornerstone of the Lisbon process
(2004/2272(INI))

Committee on Culture and Education

Rapporteur: Guy Bono

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on education as the cornerstone of the Lisbon process (2004/2272(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission staff working paper entitled ‘Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training’ (SEC(2005)0419),
 - having regard to the joint interim report by the Council and the Commission on implementation of the detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe (‘Education and training 2010’) (Council 6905/04 of 3 March 2004),
 - having regard to the conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 22 and 23 March 2005 concerning the relaunching of the Lisbon Strategy,
 - having regard to its resolution of 9 March 2005 on the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy¹,
 - having regard to the Commission communication on the integrated guidelines for growth and jobs (2005-2008) (COM(2005)0141),
 - having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Mobilising the brainpower of Europe: enabling universities to make their full contribution to the Lisbon Strategy’ (COM(2005)0152),
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Culture and Education (A6-0245/2005),
- A. mindful of the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy covering sustainable economic growth based on knowledge with more and better jobs, job creation, greater social cohesion, the eradication of poverty in the European Union and the promotion of equal opportunities and of the European social model in the context of a knowledge-based economy and society,
- B. whereas a precondition for the attainment of the Lisbon objectives is the effective implementation of consistent and comprehensive national strategies for lifelong education, training and improved competencies, with national reforms incorporated into the European context,

¹ P6_TA-PROV(2005)0069.

- C. mindful of the need for effective implementation of the ‘Education and Training 2010’ programme at national and European level,
- D. whereas the major disparity in performance between education systems in the Union, as illustrated in the ‘Pisa 2003’ report published by the OECD, is worrying,
- E. whereas investment in education and training is a key factor in terms of human resources as well as improvement in the quality, effectiveness and accessibility of Union education and training systems,
1. Calls on the Member States to implement the ‘Education and Training 2010’ work programme with the involvement of all the relevant players;
 2. Believes that, in order to achieve the Lisbon objectives, more emphasis needs to be placed on education and that the Union should as a matter of urgency promote the convergence of the education systems of the Member States towards higher standards of performance;
 3. Believes that the specific measures to be implemented at Community and national levels in the area of education and training must be focused primarily on target groups such as young people, job-seekers and those in search of training in order to be in step with a changing job market;
 4. With the aim of developing skills in keeping with the needs of a knowledge-based society, calls on the Council, the Commission and the Member States to adopt the necessary measures and reforms to reduce administrative obstacles in order to:
 - speed up the mobility of students, trainees, workers and their families and researchers as well as the mutual recognition of qualifications,
 - ensure universal and non-discriminatory access to quality education and training and develop social inclusion policies for underprivileged young people afflicted by poverty by enabling them to acquire skills and access the labour market;
 5. Calls on the Member States to put in place suitable policies for developing new sources of jobs such as services for individuals and companies, the social economy, spatial planning and urban management, environmental protection and new industrial trades as well as traditional occupations, especially in the crafts sector;
 6. Believes that, in order to make lifelong learning a reality available to all without discrimination, it is essential to put in place innovative models of work organisation and new forms of cost-sharing between businesses, workers and public authorities by making information and communication technologies (ICT) the top priority so as to allow training within a family context as well;
 7. Records its approval of the appropriateness of the 29 indicators used by the Commission to assess the performance and progress achieved by teaching systems in Europe and of the need to develop new indicators in the key areas where they are

lacking (languages, ICT, teachers, return on investment, adult education, social inclusion and active citizenship); on this basis, calls on the Member States, in particular, to take suitable measures as a matter of priority to reduce the high number of young people leaving school prematurely without any kind of qualification since this trend is an obstacle to greater social cohesion in the Union;

8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to upgrade guidance for young people into technical courses of study with potential for jobs and integration; to this end, asks that the Union, assisted in turn by the Member States, launch an information campaign to promote technical trades of excellence among young people and their parents in order thereby to remedy their often negative social image; supports more research, research and development, mobility among researchers and students through Erasmus Mundus; urges the Commission to remove barriers to mobility and to create a pilot project aimed at framing an Erasmus-type programme for apprentices in order to facilitate access by apprentices to 'new generation' Community education and training programmes;
9. Asks the Member States to take appropriate measures to reach the objectives fixed by the Council and to ensure a 15% increase in the number of science graduates between now and 2010 while at the same time correcting the imbalance between men and women;
10. Encourages the Member States to implement a policy for lifelong education and training that is consistent at all levels of teaching including higher education and results in social inclusion as well as being tailored to social, demographic and economic change;
11. Encourages the Member States to establish programmes of systematic training in the use of new technologies in all lifelong learning and training establishments;
12. Calls on the Member States to increase the number of teachers and to put in place initial and continuous teacher training of quality in the context of continuous professional training in order to provide the teaching profession with the qualifications and skills enabling it to assume its role in the knowledge-based society over the coming decades, in particular, through teacher training in new information technologies;
13. Calls on the Member States to make a major effort to reach the crucial objective for the Union of teaching everyone on average at least two foreign languages, notably the languages of neighbouring countries;
14. Believes it is essential to strengthen the open method of coordination and the exchange of good practice in the field of education and training and fully supports the programme for peer learning activities launched by the Commission in 2005; emphasises the overriding role of European indicators for measuring the progress made towards the Lisbon objectives in the field of education and training;

15. Asks the Commission and the Member States to boost their capacity for statistical analysis in the field of lifelong training;
16. Stresses the need for the Union to guarantee sufficient methods of funding for the new integrated action programme in the field of lifelong education and training; emphasises also the need to ensure that the European Social Fund can continue to be available after 2006 in all Union Member States;
17. Asks the Council and the Commission to provide an appropriate budgetary allocation in the next financial perspective for all measures relating to lifelong education and training on which attainment of the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy will largely depend;
18. Calls on the Member States to plan for increased investment and more effective use of available resources (efficiently managing partnerships between public and private investment) in the field of education and training;
19. Calls on the Member States to frame more consistent national policies and to improve the conditions for access by job-seekers to education and training; emphasises in this respect the role of the social partners and calls on them to take on this role both in framing and in implementing policies;
20. Calls on Member States to ensure that their national Lisbon programmes, to be presented by 2006, contain a detailed account of the measures planned to raise educational performance, with timetables and targets, and that these plans are presented and debated in national parliaments;
21. Stresses the crucial role of universities in creating and spreading knowledge and urges that their importance be reinforced by strengthening synergies between European higher education, the European research area, European lifelong learning and the productive sector;
22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Member States.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Introduction

The Lisbon Strategy, launched in March 2000 with the aim of creating by 2010 'the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world' in the context of strengthening social cohesion, encompasses the whole of European society and seeks also to protect the European social model while safeguarding the distinctive features of national systems.

In order to achieve these objectives, a series of measures have been envisaged in several areas and, more particularly, in the area of knowledge in order to build a society based on lifelong education and training and to help create jobs in Europe in a cohesive non-exclusive society that encourages personal development.

Assessment and mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy

Five years after the launch of the Lisbon Strategy, the results obtained are mixed in terms of the degree to which set objectives have been achieved.

Alongside progress, delays and shortcomings have been recorded, thus prompting the call by the March 2005 European Council in Brussels on the Council, the Commission and the Member States to make the necessary reforms.

Taking, for example, the objective set by the Lisbon Strategy of cutting by half, between now and 2010, the number of young people leaving school prematurely, the results obtained have fallen far short of expectations.

On the basis of the conclusions of the Spring European Council of 22 and 23 March 2005 which undertook to relaunch the Lisbon Strategy and set itself the target of making the European education and training area a reality, the rapporteur wishes to alert the Council to the urgent need to do everything necessary to ensure that these undertakings are translated into reality.

The rapporteur calls in particular on Member States to take the necessary action to increase the general level of education and reduce the number of people leaving school prematurely through implementation of the programme entitled 'Education and Training 2010'.

Moreover, the European Council has reaffirmed the key role of lifelong training which is anyway integrated into the European employment strategy.

The rapporteur points out that, in its resolution of 9 March 2005 on the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy, Parliament drew attention to the fact that 'European excellence in the knowledge economy depends on the creation of a well-educated and highly trained workforce' and accordingly asked the Spring European Council for a mid-term review putting lifelong education and training at the heart of the Lisbon Strategy.

Rapporteur's conclusions

The rapporteur wishes to emphasise the importance attached by Parliament as a whole to the intensification of the efforts by the European Union in the fields of lifelong education and training.

However, the rapporteur wishes to point out that the attainment of these objectives will depend in large measure on suitable funding in the next financial perspective. In addition, the rapporteur believes that increased investment in the education sector at national level is essential.

The rapporteur believes that intensification and implementation of the 'Education and training 2010' programme is of overriding importance and emphasises that the assessment of results obtained helps provide an overall view, so contributing to the establishment of a European strategic framework. In the rapporteur's opinion, this programme must become a real tool for following up national and Community policies.

Dealing more particularly with lifelong education and training, the rapporteur believes it is necessary to define more consistent national policies and to improve conditions of access by young apprentices and job-seekers. He wishes to emphasise in this connection the role of the social partners both in framing and implementing these policies.

PROCEDURE

| | | |
|---|---|--------------|
| Title | Education as the cornerstone of the Lisbon process | |
| Procedure number | 2004/2272(INI) | |
| Basis in Rules of Procedure | Rule 45 | |
| Committee responsible Date authorisation announced in plenary | CULT 13.1.2005 | |
| Committee(s) asked for opinion(s) Date announced in plenary | | |
| Not delivering opinion(s) Date of decision | | |
| Enhanced cooperation Date announced in plenary | | |
| Motion(s) for resolution(s) included in report | | |
| Rapporteur(s) Date appointed | Guy Bono 18.1.2005 | |
| Previous rapporteur(s) | | |
| Discussed in committee | 15.6.2005 | |
| Date adopted | 12.7.2005 | |
| Result of final vote | for: 29 against: 1 abstentions: 2 | |
| Members present for the final vote | María Badía i Cutchet, Christopher Beazley, Guy Bono, Marie-Hélène Descamps, Věra Flasarová, Milan Gaľa, Claire Gibault, Vasco Graça Moura, Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, Ruth Hieronymi, Bernat Joan i Marí, Manolis Mavrommatis, Marianne Mikko, Ljudmila Novak, Doris Pack, Rolandas Pavilionis, Zdzisław Zbigniew Podkański, Miguel Portas, Christa Prets, Karin Resetarits, Matteo Salvini, Pál Schmitt, Nikolaos Sifunakis, Hannu Takkula, Helga Trüpel, Thomas Wise | |
| Substitutes present for the final vote | Adamos Adamou, Ivo Belet, Giulietto Chiesa, Ignasi Guardans Cambó, Nina Škottová, Åsa Westlund | |
| Substitutes under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote | | |
| Date tabled – A6 | 19.7.2005 | A6-0245/2005 |