Subject: Opinion on Implementation and delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2022/2002(INI))

Dear Mr Tobé,

Dear Mr Canfin,

Under the procedure referred to above, the Committee on Culture and Education has been asked to submit an opinion to your committees. At its meeting of 26 January 2022, the committee decided to send the opinion in the form of a letter.

The Committee on Culture and Education considered the matter at its meeting of 15 March 2022. At that meeting, it decided to call on the Committee on Development and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committees responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into their motion for a resolution.

Yours sincerely,

Sabine Verheyen
SUGGESTIONS

A. Stresses the importance of continuing efforts to achieve the SDGs and reiterates that even in times of budgetary restrictions, education remains a fundamental right and an essential investment that enables the achievement of all SDGs and underlines the important role of the EU through humanitarian assistance and stronger partnerships with different parts of the world, including Africa;

B. Underlines the key role that education, culture, sports, and their respective EU programmes play to achieve the SDGs and calls for the reinforcement of their international dimension whilst acknowledging the power of people-to-people diplomacy;

C. Encourages world leaders to consider connectivity and access to digital infrastructures, such as access to an affordable and quality network, as a right derived from the fundamental right to education;

D. Calls on the Commission to coordinate and support Member States with country-specific recommendations and the exchange of best practices to improve the quality and inclusivity of their educational systems and close gender and socio-economic gaps in the acquisition of basic skills and the uptake of STEAM subjects in line with the vision of the European Education Area, the green and digital transitions of the EU and SDG4;

E. Calls on Member States to make full use of GreenComp, the European Sustainability Competence Framework, to develop a systematic approach towards the development of a sustainability mind-set across ages and educational levels, which combines relevance to local, regional and national realities with a coherent approach within the European Education Area; reiterates its call to Member States to complete the European Education Area by 2025, even as an essential intermediate step towards reaching the targets set under SDG4;

F. Encourages networking between the non-formal and formal educational sectors to create professional learning communities which support teachers as they renovate pedagogical practices, foster multiple literacies, facilitate students’ ownership and nurture their emotional intelligence and resilience in the face of fears and uncertainties; draws attention to the experience of grassroots sports and cultural associations in this regard;

G. Insists that educational authorities invest to improve the quality of vocational education and training with state-of-the-art infrastructures, digitalisation processes and links to the knowledge triangle, which align the sector with environmental and social sustainability goals and position it to provide alternative pathways to skills development that contribute to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals;

H. Reminds educators of the essential role of early childhood education in instilling attitudes and values in young children that are conducive to the development of sustainability mind-sets and to engage their families in considering ways in which they too can contribute towards sustainability both as individuals and as a community;
I. Encourages youth entrepreneurship, as a mechanism to achieve the goals of sustainable development within the European Union and beyond with European tools such as Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs and the DEAR programme, given the potential to improve employment rates, secure decent livelihoods for vulnerable groups and develop innovative solutions.