



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 27.7.2018
C(2018) 5135 final

Mr Michael MÜLLER
President of the Bundesrat
Leipziger Straße 3 - 4
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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Bundesrat for its Opinion concerning the proposal for a Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning {COM(2018) 24 final}.

This proposal is part of a broader package of measures echoing the Rome Declaration of 25 March 2017¹ which called for "a Union where young people receive the best education and training and can study and find jobs across the continent". The proposed Council Recommendation also gives effect to the first principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights, which holds that "Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market"². The Council of the European Union has meanwhile adopted this Recommendation on 22 May 2018³.

In full respect of the competences of the Member States and the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, the Council Recommendation encourages Member States to actively support the development of key competences for lifelong learning for all citizens of all ages. Lifelong learning and the development of key competences aim to equip people with good levels of knowledge, skills and attitudes enabling them to be active and socially integrated citizens with decent jobs and to respond to the changing skills needs of the economy in the context of technological revolution and globalisation. The proposed Council Recommendation aims to facilitate mutual learning between Member States in order to achieve these objectives.

¹ Declaration of the leaders of 27 Member States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/25/rome-declaration/pdf>

² https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/social-summit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet_en.pdf

³ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8299-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

The Commission is pleased that the Bundesrat welcomes the update of the 2006 Recommendation on Key Competences, particularly in relation to digitalisation and cultural skills. The Commission welcomes the Bundesrat's support to the broad approach to education and training that has been a crucial characteristic of this Recommendation since its first adoption in 2006. The Commission shares the importance the Bundesrat attaches to high-quality inclusive education and the acquisition of language competences, including the learning of the official language of the host country. Similarly, the Commission agrees to the importance of promoting science, technology, engineering and mathematics education for all, and especially young girls and women.

The Commission has taken note of the concerns expressed by the Bundesrat that the Recommendation would need more clarity vis-à-vis the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in the field of education which it intends to embrace and develop further. It has also taken due note of the comments of the Bundesrat regarding opportunities for entrepreneurial experiences during school education.

Similarly, the Commission has carefully read the concerns expressed by the Bundesrat regarding the development of reference materials and competences frameworks, the approaches to assessment and validation of key competences, the development of a scoreboard, guidelines and reporting mechanisms to monitor skills development in the Union. The Commission would like to reassure the Bundesrat that future materials to support key competence development will be developed in close cooperation with Member States, as voluntary tools supporting mutual learning, with due regard to subsidiarity and with full respect of Member States' competences in the field of education. In this context, the Commission will also pay due attention to consistency, user-friendliness and visibility of tools.

The Commission hopes that these considerations address the issues raised by the Bundesrat and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Věra JOUROVÁ
Member of the Commission*