



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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C(2022) 5766 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Bundesrat for its Opinion concerning the proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning for environmental sustainability {COM(2022) 11 final}.

As the Bundesrat's Opinion points out, meeting the ambitions of the European Green Deal requires a concerted policy effort, including in education and training. This is why the European Green Deal and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 emphasise the key role of schools, higher education and other training institutions for a just and inclusive green transition. Providing learning opportunities for sustainability in formal, non-formal and informal education and training for all learners from an early age throughout adulthood will be crucial for achieving the sustainable transformation of the economy and society.

The Commission acknowledges the good progress made by many Member States on learning for environmental sustainability and related agendas. Germany's long-standing efforts in this area, reflected in the 'Nationaler Aktionsplan Bildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung', have shaped developments at national and international level. However, given the urgency of the climate and environmental crises, it is necessary to step up efforts in all policy areas, including education and training.

The Commission's proposal on learning for environmental sustainability builds on the important work done in this area, notably by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization through its Education for Sustainable Development programme. That is why the final name of the Council Recommendation adopted by the Council on 16 June is 'Council Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development'. The proposal stresses the importance of understanding the interconnected global challenges we face in their environmental, social, economic and cultural dimensions. It also highlights the importance of developing competences to live more sustainably and actively contribute to a more sustainable economy and society.

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This builds on and complements the holistic approach of the European Reference Framework on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, which aims to support people across Europe to gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for personal fulfilment, health, employability and social inclusion.

The Commission is also working with Member States and stakeholders to implement the Council Recommendation of 20 November 2017 on tracking graduates. The European Graduate Tracking Network, of which Germany is a valued member of the Support Group, steers this work. In parallel, work is ongoing on the Eurograduate pilot survey, which is the higher education dimension of graduate tracking. This survey is being developed with a bottom-up approach, building on existing graduate surveys at Member States. It contains three data modules, out of which only one is compulsory. The question on competencies is not in this compulsory module. Germany can influence the final length and content of both Eurograduate and the Graduate Tracking Initiative. The proposal to monitor the development of green skills is consistent with the work under way on graduate tracking.

In line with the European Union treaties, the Commission's proposal on learning for environmental sustainability fully respects the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality and recognises that Member States are fully responsible for the content of teaching and the organisation of their education and training systems.

The points made above are based on the initial proposal presented by the Commission. On 16 June 2022, the Council adopted a Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development.

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

Yours faithfully,

*Adina-Ioana VĂLEAN
Member of the Commission*