



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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*Mr Liviu DRAGNEA
President of the Camera
Deputaților
Palace of the Parliament
Str. Izvor nr. 2-4, sector 5
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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion concerning the Communication on improving and modernising education {COM(2016) 941 final}.

The Commission welcomes the Camera Deputaților's views and agrees on the need to improve the quality and performance of education systems in Europe so that they can keep up with societal change and serve all children and young people.

To support Member States in addressing these challenges, the Commission adopted several new initiatives on school and higher education on 30 May 2017 including a Communication on school development and excellent teaching for a great start in life {COM(2017) 248 final}; a Communication on a renewed EU agenda for higher education {COM(2017) 247 final}; and a proposal for a Council Recommendation on tracking graduates {COM(2017) 249 final}.

The Communication on school development and excellent teaching promotes the view that all young people must have the chance to develop a set of key competences, ranging from literacy and foreign languages to mathematics, science, digital and coding skills, civic and social competences, entrepreneurship competences as well as transversal skills such as creativity and critical thinking. Project- and problem-based learning, on-the-job experiences or community service learning increase young people's motivation, put subject content into context and offer opportunities for the development of social, civic, and entrepreneurship competences. What is more, evidence shows that science, technologies, engineering and mathematics education is more effective when linked to economic, environmental and social challenges or to arts and design, demonstrating its relevance for daily life. It is against this background that the Commission is currently conducting a review of the European Union framework on key competences for lifelong learning¹ and will, as announced in the 'New Skills Agenda for Europe', present the results of this review by the end of 2017.

¹ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

As indicated by the Camera Deputaţilor in its Opinion, the family is the first and most important place for children to grow and develop. In the Commission's view, early childhood education complements the central role of the family and care laying the essential foundations for successful lifelong learning, social integration and employability.

As regards efficiency in education, the Commission is working to strengthen cooperation between education and economic policies. Good education governance systems have to find the right balance between autonomy and accountability.

On the development of higher education in the European Union, the renewed higher education agenda sets out its plans for four key areas: (i) ensuring graduates leave higher education with the skill sets they and the modern economy need; (ii) building inclusive higher education systems; (iii) making sure higher education institutions contribute to innovation in the rest of the economy; and (iv) supporting higher education institutions and governments in making the best use of the human and financial resources available.

To ensure that higher education can help boost growth and job creation, universities need to tailor curricula to current and anticipated needs of the economy and society, and prospective students need up-to-date and solid information to help them decide what courses to choose. This is why the Commission has presented a proposal for a Council Recommendation on tracking graduates.

In all these areas of school and higher education policy, cooperation at European Union level supports Member States with data analysis, evidence sharing, identifying good practices, and offering opportunities for exchanging experiences and mutual learning. This type of voluntary cooperation offers added-value to Member States as it helps them to take informed decisions. In addition, the European Union offers financial and technical support to Member States, notably through Erasmus+, the European Structural and Investment Funds and the Structural Reforms Support Service.

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

Yours faithfully,

*Julian King
Member of the Commission*