



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 16.07.2021
C(2021) 5445 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion concerning the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 {COM(2020) 625 final}.

The Commission welcomes the support of the Camera Deputaților for the Communication. The views expressed by the Camera Deputaților concur with the objectives of actions envisaged within the European Education Area, but also under several other Commission initiatives. The Commission would like to recall that the European Education Area actions are reinforced and intrinsically linked to the European Skills Agenda, the Digital Education Action Plan and the European Research Area, and that are underpinned by different EU funding opportunities, such as the Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027), the European Social Fund Plus and the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

The Commission has taken due account of the observations presented by the Camera Deputaților in its Opinion and will take them into consideration in its further development, implementation and evaluation of the European Education Area.

In response to the more technical comments in the Opinion, the Commission would like to refer to the attached annex.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaților and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

*Mariya Gabriel
Member of the Commission*

*Mr Ludovic ORBAN
President of the Camera Deputaților
Palace of the Parliament
Str. Izvor nr. 2-4, sector 5
RO – 050563 BUCHAREST*

ANNEX

The Commission has carefully considered each of the issues raised by the Camera Deputaților in its Opinion and is pleased to offer the following clarifications:

Point 2: supporting non-formal education, vocational training and volunteering for older people

The Commission would like to reiterate that these issues have been addressed in the European Skills Agenda. For example, the action “Skills for life” envisages work on the new priorities of the European Agenda for Adult Learning, focusing on non-formal learning, voluntary work of older people and their skills development.

Point 4: EU-level target on entrepreneurship education

Concerning the possibility of introducing new EU-level targets, such as the one related to entrepreneurship education, in 2025 the Commission will publish a full report on the European Education Area. Based on the report, the Council will be able to review the strategic framework, including EU-level targets, and make any necessary adjustments. However, as entrepreneurship is one of the eight key competences defined in the 2018 Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning¹, the possibility of an EU-level target on entrepreneurship competence was already analysed and discussed in the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks before proposing the new targets. Serious doubts emerged about the possibility to ‘benchmark’ this area, given the diverse policy landscape in Member States, the need for common operational definitions and the lack of reliable cross-national data sources. While strategically important, entrepreneurship education was deemed not to have reached a sufficient level to justify the possibility of an EU-level target yet. Therefore, instead of adopting a target in this area, the preferred option was to continue exploring and monitoring possible indicators in this area. In addition, based on and with the expert opinion of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks, the Commission will continue examining the possibility for new indicators or EU-level targets in other areas, such as inclusion and equity, teaching profession, sustainability and greening of education and training systems.

Point 15: EU level targets

The Commission would like to reassure the Camera Deputaților that it will continue supporting Member States in achieving seven EU-level targets in education and training, as presented in the Council Resolution of 18 February 2021 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)².

¹ [Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1.](#)

² [Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond \(2021-2030\).](#)

Points 6 and 13: investments in infrastructure

In its Communication, the Commission expressed the intention to intensify work on investment as part of the European Education Area. It also encouraged Member States to use resources available under the Recovery and Resilience Facility, for example, to invest in digital equipment and improve the energy efficiency of education and training buildings; to support institutions in providing digital and online learning; and to train education and training staff to make the best use of those devices and improve their teaching methods. Furthermore, in cooperation with the European Investment Bank, the Commission will support Member States in making use of available sources of financing, including through the InvestEU programme. Specific support will be given to local, regional and national authorities to facilitate mutual learning, analysis and sharing of good practices on investment in education infrastructure. In addition, the recently launched Expert Group on quality investment in education and training will undertake an evidence-based evaluation of different education and training policies and related costs, including on education infrastructure and digital education, informing future policies that can deliver higher education outcomes and increase equity while making the best use of available resources.

Point 7: linking schools and science

The Commission concurs with the Camera Deputaţilor on the need to strengthen the connection between research and school education³. Against this backdrop, the “Researchers at Schools” initiative under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions will allow young researchers to discuss with teachers and pupils the latest research projects results on topics such as climate change, sustainable development, digitalisation and health.

Points 8 and 14: inclusive, green and digital aspects of the Erasmus+ programme

In general, the Commission considers that dissemination and exploitation of results are an important part of every Erasmus+ project. The Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027) is introducing dedicated inclusion measures aimed at better promoting social inclusion and improving outreach to people with fewer opportunities, including those living in rural and remote areas. These planned inclusion measures range from dedicated financial mechanisms for participants and organisations, to targeted communication, awareness raising activities and easier-to-access activity formats. In line with the Digital Education Action Plan, the Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027) will facilitate developing accessible and high-quality digital learning, foster the capacity of teachers and trainers to use digital tools and content, and promote distance and blended learning. Furthermore, Erasmus+ funding will also enable increasing knowledge and understanding of sustainability and climate action, as well as developing competences needed to create sustainable societies, lifestyles and economies.

³ ISCED levels 1 to 3 (International Standard Classification of Education 2011): 1. Primary education 2. Lower secondary education 3. Upper secondary education.

Point 10: exchange of best practices between Member States

As proposed in the Communication, and agreed in the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030), there will be a continuation of mutual learning arrangements under the next cooperation cycle. The Commission would like to confirm to the Camera Deputaților that it will continue supporting exchanges of best practices that have provided valuable support to Member States in their reform efforts. The Commission is preparing for the set-up of the European Education Area platform, as announced in the Communication on achieving the European Education Area by 2025. This will be an attractive and user-friendly entry portal, through which everybody – from EU policy makers and Member States authorities to stakeholders and the general public – will be able to find all relevant information on education and training under the wider European Education Area umbrella.

Point 11: including European Education Area issues for discussion at the Conference on the Future of Europe

The Commission is pleased to confirm that the future of education, the Union's priorities and addressing common challenges in education have already been included in the agenda. On the recently launched multilingual digital platform⁴, participants can share their ideas, attend or organise events around many different topics, such as lifelong learning, early childhood education and care, schools, vocational education, training and traineeships, higher education, adult education, multilingualism, mobility opportunities, mutual recognition of diplomas, networks across universities in Europe, education, business and innovation.

Point 12: European perspective in education

The Commission welcomes the attention that the Camera Deputaților has given to the European perspectives on education. In order to promote the European way of life, sustainability and EU values, the Jean Monnet Actions in the new Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027) have been expanded to schools and vocational education and training institutions, opening funding possibilities for teacher training and networking.

⁴ <https://futureu.europa.eu/?locale=ro>