



European
Commission



Promoting common values,

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION and the

European dimension
of teaching

Heads of State and Government discussed education and training at the Gothenburg Social Summit on 17 November 2017, guided by the Commission's Communication 'Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture'. This resulted in the European Council conclusions of 14 December 2017 calling on Member States, the Council and the Commission to take the agenda discussed in Gothenburg forward. The Recommendation follows up on that political agreement.



"As Ministers responsible for education and as European Commissioner, we have a special duty to ensure that the humanist and civic values we share are safeguarded and passed on to future generations. We remain united in our efforts to promote freedom of thought and expression, social inclusion and respect for others, as well as to prevent and tackle discrimination in all its forms."

Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education, Paris, 17 March 2015

In the aftermath of the economic crisis, EU Member States face serious social challenges that question their ability to maintain cohesive societies, put at risk the foundations of their democratic systems and hinder the emergence of a common sense of belonging. At the same time, there is a widespread lack of knowledge of the European Union, of its basic functioning and objectives, that favours misinformation. Moreover, Europeans know little about the social and cultural identities of other Member States which prevents a deeper understanding and the emergence of a collective sense of belonging across the EU. The proposed Recommendation will help Member States promote common values, mobility, inclusive education and a European dimension of teaching. The aim is to create the basis for a deeper sense of belonging at local, national and European level.

It promotes a European dimension of teaching by offering:

- an understanding of the European context and common heritage and awareness of the cultural and social diversity of the Member States of the European Union;
- ◆ an understanding of the origins of the European Union and how it works;
- an increase in the participation of students and teachers in the e-Twinning network;
- ◆ expanded school mobility under Erasmus+, especially short-term exchanges among European schools.

Key topics important to citizens to fully understand their role as responsible and active members of European societies:

• **Rights and responsibilities of European citizens (96%* of respondents)**

• **Shared values of the European Union (95%* of respondents)**

More than 80%

of respondents* believe that the most effective approaches to teaching and learning content are:

- citizenship education
- curricula that focus on different cultures, religions and beliefs
- intercultural understanding through arts and culture
- curricula to enhance knowledge and understanding of shared values

More than 98%*

agree that education should offer support to all learners according to their needs.

More than 17%*

observe that the support is currently being provided.

Most effective approaches that help teachers:

- Supporting teachers in learning innovative approaches
- Empowering teachers to deal with diversity in the classroom
- Creating a space for dialogue on controversial issues

It promotes common values through:

- citizenship and ethics education and an open classroom climate;
- ◆ helping young people develop critical thinking and (social) media literacy;
- active participation of teachers, parents, students and the wider community in school governance;
- ◆ giving young people the opportunity to participate in community activities.

It encourages the provision of inclusive education by:

- including all pupils in quality education from an early age;
- ◆ supporting pupils and students according to their individual needs;
- making effective use of the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education.

It supports teachers and teaching through:

- adequate initial and continuous teacher training to respond to the diverse needs of learners;
- ◆ exchanges and peer learning programmes, guidance and mentoring for teachers.

Over half a million teachers have already taken part in e-Twinning since its inception. The Commission's goal is to reach 1 million teachers over the next 10 years. The Commission also wants to boost mobility for school pupils and teachers by increasing their participation from 100,000 pupils and 60,000 teachers in 2017 to 250,000 pupils and 100,000 teachers in 2020 and, if possible, even further in the subsequent programme period.