

Key Competences Review 2017

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sir/madam,

In conversations with Commissioners Navracsics and Ms. Reichters the founder of the Reading & Writing Foundation, Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands (who's is also UNESCO's Special Envoy on literacy), has mentioned the importance of emphasizing the alarming literacy crisis which effects 1 out of 5 Europeans.

We wish to share with you our strong belief in promoting literacy as a precondition for success in any other policy area and in the past we have shared this message with the Commissioners Timmermans, Dombrovskis and Thyssen as well. All the recommendations on how to tackle the European literacy crises are easily summarized in the following report issued by the Commission:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-hlg-exec-sum_en.pdf

Until now, the literacy journey has brought us:

- 2012 final report EH High Level Group of Experts on Literacy commissioned by Commissioner Vassiliou which we would strongly advise you to use as reference in the KCF revision.
- 2014 ELINET network started for 2 years (funding ended 2016)
- 2015 Start of PublicLibraries2020 programme by the Reading & Writing foundation in Brussels which brings together library organisations and advocates from across the EU to raise awareness of the value of public libraries as partners for social and economic development under the Europe 2020 strategy.
- 2015 The UN adopted Sustainable Development Goal 4.6. - specifically on literacy which is a unique opportunity
- 2016 UNESCO launched the Global Alliance on Literacy (GAL) to put literacy higher up on the political agenda (and we are happy your colleague mister Garkov is participating in GAL)
- 2016 Launch of Commissioner Thyssen' Skills Agenda, which puts basic skills at the heart and mentions the fact that about 70 million Europeans lack sufficient reading, writing and numeracy skills
- 2017 European Pillar of Social Rights- high level conference where UNESCO's Special Envoy HRH Princess Laurentien was invited by

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Commissioner Thyssen and Dombrovskis to speak about the relationship between literacy and social rights

2017 Review and adoption Key Competences Framework

We hope the KCF revision will mention the alarming share of EU population that lack basic skills, the EU High Level Report on Literacy¹ and recommend the importance of 'literacy' in its wider meaning

What Europe needs is the acknowledgement that low literacy is a major factor in holding back the development of cohesive societies, communities and economic effectiveness. Action on literacy needs to go higher on the political agenda across different policy areas and the KCF revision is a great opportunity for this.

Your revision will, I hope, help kick-start an ambitious, comprehensive and structural approach within and across EU Member States to prevent and reduce literacy problems.

Kind regards,

Catharina Rinzema

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf