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(Resolutions, recommendations and opinions)

RESOLUTIONS

COUNCIL

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

of 15 November 2007

on education and training as a key driver of the Lisbon Strategy

(2007/C 300/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

HAVING REGARD TO:

1. The strategic goal set for the European Union by the March 2000 Lisbon European Council ⁽¹⁾ 'to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion', as well as the European Council's specific mandate to Education Ministers 'to undertake a general reflection on the concrete objectives of education systems, focusing on common concerns and priorities while respecting national diversity'.
2. The common objectives set under the detailed work programme adopted by the March 2002 Barcelona European Council ⁽²⁾ on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe (the 'Education and Training 2010' work programme), as well as the development of the open method of coordination which opened up perspectives for further cooperation within the Union in the field of education and training.
3. The Council Resolution of 27 June 2002 on lifelong learning ⁽³⁾, which invited the Member States to promote lifelong learning for all by developing and implementing comprehensive and coherent lifelong learning strategies.
4. The mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy conducted by the Spring 2005 European Council and, in particular, the Integrated Guidelines subsequently adopted for the period

2005-2008 which called for an expansion of investment in human capital and the adaptation of education and training systems in response to new competence requirements ⁽⁴⁾.

5. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 14 November 2006 on efficiency and equity within education and training, which stressed that the development of efficient and equitable high quality education and training systems contributes significantly towards reducing the risks of unemployment, social exclusion and wasted human potential in a modern knowledge-based economy ⁽⁵⁾.
6. The Spring 2007 European Council conclusions ⁽⁶⁾, which stressed that education and training are prerequisites for a well-functioning knowledge triangle (education-research-innovation) and that they play a key role in boosting jobs and growth,

NOTING the recent Commission communication ⁽⁷⁾ assessing the first three years of the revised Lisbon Strategy aimed at enhanced growth, competitiveness and innovation and setting out some key challenges for the future.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. SN 100/1/00 REV 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 142, 14.6.2002, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 163, 9.7.2002, p. 1.

⁽⁴⁾ Council Recommendation 2005/601/EC on the broad guidelines for the economic policies of the Member States and the Community (2005 to 2008) and Council Decision 2005/600/EC on Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 298, 8.12.2006, p. 3.

⁽⁶⁾ Doc. 7224/07, paragraph 15.

⁽⁷⁾ COM(2007) 581 final — Commission communication entitled: *The European Interest — succeeding in the age of globalisation*.

WITH A VIEW to ensuring that education and training in a lifelong learning perspective are fully recognised for the indispensable role they play in the Lisbon Strategy and contributing to the forthcoming proposals on the next cycle of the Lisbon Strategy, as well as forging stronger reciprocal links between the new cycle and the related 'Education and Training 2010' work programme.

WITH A FURTHER VIEW TO highlighting the added contribution of education and training not only to the Lisbon goals on growth and jobs, but also to meeting other challenges facing European societies, such as increasing globalisation, evolving demographic trends and migration, technological progress, climate change and sustainable development.

STRESSES that:

1. Education and training form one apex of the knowledge triangle and are crucial to providing research and innovation with the broad skills base and creativity which these require. They represent the cornerstone on which Europe's future growth and the well-being of its citizens depend.
2. The implementation of comprehensive and coherent lifelong learning strategies should meet the aims of efficiency and equity, while promoting excellence, innovation and creativity. Education and training systems should not only provide the foundations for greater economic competitiveness and individual employability, but also ensure stronger social cohesion, sustainable development, personal fulfilment and the more active involvement of citizens in society.
3. Making improved provision for early childhood education, encouraging the acquisition of key competences, increasing the attractiveness of vocational education and training, developing lifelong guidance, increasing access to and excellence in further and higher education, expanding adult learning, as well as improving the quality of teacher education, provide effective means of ensuring that all citizens are better qualified and thus better able to participate actively in social and economic development.
4. Faced with the increasing diversity of students' backgrounds, education and training provide an essential means of integration into European economies and societies and of promoting intercultural dialogue.
5. The framework conditions for lifelong learning could be strengthened by encouraging the development of learning organisations and partnerships involving stakeholders and

employers, and by developing the infrastructures for e-learning, the identification of skills needs, the validation of learning outcomes and lifelong guidance, as well as by exploring possible new funding arrangements.

ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, within their respective competences, to:

1. Emphasise the significance of education and training in the overall Lisbon Strategy, in particular by highlighting in the 'Competitiveness' part of the Integrated Guidelines for growth and jobs their crucial place within the knowledge triangle, alongside research and innovation, and by stressing in the 'Employment' part of the Guidelines that lifelong learning is fundamental to enabling European citizens to succeed and participate fully in the knowledge economy, as well as to ensuring that all groups, including those at risk of exclusion, can develop the knowledge, skills and competences needed to do so.
2. Highlight the contribution of education and training not only to promoting employment, competitiveness and innovation, but also to fostering social cohesion, active citizenship and personal fulfilment, and meeting the other challenges which European societies currently face.
3. Ensure that education and training policies dovetail with policies in other fields, such as research, enterprise and innovation, the information society, employment, social affairs, youth, culture, health, migration and external relations, enhance cooperation between the Education Council and other Council formations and consider ways of taking greater account of stakeholders' views.
4. Strengthen the Education Council's strategic role in the open method of coordination in education and training, in particular by feeding the results into policy-making processes at both European and national levels, and by developing a solid knowledge base for education and training policy.
5. Ensure clear links between the 'Education and Training' work programme and the Lisbon integrated Guidelines for growth and jobs, whilst improving organisation of the joint work between the Member States and the Commission in this field, and — with regard to the work programme beyond 2010 — continue the process of reflection on the programme's main priorities and on how to develop a more integrated approach to education and training in a lifelong learning perspective.