


Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	2002/2073(COS)	Procedure completed
European area of education and lifelong learning: strategy and priorities		
Subject 4.40.01 European area for education, training and lifelong learning		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	CULT Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport		12/12/2001
		PSE VAN BREMPT Kathleen	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy		23/01/2002
	PSE ZORBA Myrsini		
Council of the European Union	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		12/12/2001
		GUE/NGL SCHMID Herman	
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities		18/04/2002
		PSE KARAMANOU Anna	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs2392		03/12/2001
Council of the European Union	Education, Youth, Culture and Sport	2391	29/11/2001
	Commission DG	Commissioner	
European Commission	Education, Youth, Sport and Culture		

Key events			
21/11/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0678	Summary
29/11/2001	Debate in Council	2391	
03/12/2001	Debate in Council	2392	
11/04/2002	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
04/06/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
04/06/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0224/2002	
05/09/2002	Debate in Parliament		

05/09/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0403/2002	Summary
05/09/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
13/11/2003	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2002/2073(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 050; Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/5/16119

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(2001)0678	21/11/2001	EC	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0049/2002 OJ C 278 14.11.2002, p. 0026	15/05/2002	CofR	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A5-0224/2002	04/06/2002	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T5-0403/2002 OJ C 272 13.11.2003, p. 0409-0449 E	05/09/2002	EP	Summary

European area of education and lifelong learning: strategy and priorities

PURPOSE: to improve the prospects for lifelong learning in the European Union. **CONTENT:** in November 2000 the European Commission began a consultation process through the publication of its "Memorandum on Lifelong Learning". This Memorandum was triggered by the Lisbon European Council which set Europe the ambitious target of becoming the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. Education and training plays a key role in the realisation of this goal. This Communication is the result of a series of work shops, conferences and working groups held with interested parties over the past two years and is based on over 3000 written responses received by the Commission. The Communication notes that a knowledge based economy offers European citizens a number of opportunities. These opportunities, however, can only be fully exploited if individuals are sufficiently well trained and educated to embrace the advantages of modern technology. For this reason the Lisbon Council concluded that "lifelong learning is a basic component of the European social model." Instilling an enhanced model of lifelong learning is an interesting and by no means small challenge. Statistics indicate that in 2000 the proportion of 25-64 year old in the EU who had attained upper secondary level education was just 60.3%. This leaves a large gap (estimated at around 150 million people in the EU) at risk of marginalisation. At the same time, the "Labour Force Survey 2000" concluded that only 8% of the EU's 25-64 year old participated in education and training. Clearly thus, there is some way to go before the EU can match both the commitment and the level of investment for lifelong learning that currently exists in countries such as Canada, South Korea, Norway and the United States. In terms of definitions, the Communication proposes that the following four objectives/definitions should be presented when discussing lifelong learning: 1. Personal fulfilment 2. Active citizenship 3. Social inclusion and 4. Employability /adaptability. These objectives have been established to highlight that lifelong learning is important not only in terms of filling gaps in the labour market but also in terms of the value it offers for a more inclusive, tolerant and democratic society. To foster lifelong learning for all, the Communication calls on national, local and European levels to work together with the participation of interested parties. It also goes on to list the priority demands for learning as: - Literacy, numeracy, ICT and other basic skills. - Addressing the needs of teachers and trainers. - Addressing the needs of employers and SMEs. - Understanding learners' interest. In terms of "resourcing" the Paper calls for the overall rates of public and private investment in this sector to be raised whilst at the same time seeking new approaches to investment. A further strategy for the fostering of lifelong learning is improving access to learning opportunities. The Commission urges greater visibility, integration and targeting of lifelong learning processes. This could be achieved through: - Removing social, geographical, psychological and other barriers. - Adapting entry, progression and recognition requirement to take account of non-formal and informal learning. - Tailoring measures and offering specialist provisions to meet any unmet demand. - Securing adequate investment by employers in their workforce. Lastly, a further plank in this strategy is the need to foster excellence in lifelong learning in terms of quality assurance, evaluation and assessment and or revision of strategies.?

European area of education and lifelong learning: strategy and priorities

The committee adopted the report by Kathleen VAN BREMPT (PES, B) on the Commission communication. It welcomed the principles on which

the Commission's proposals were based and said that lifelong learning was not merely a social necessity but should also be a social right for everyone. It further pointed out that transformation into a knowledge-based society meant that access to education and training must be simplified and equal access should be ensured for everyone. The committee regretted that, two years after the Lisbon European Council, little progress had been made towards developing clear and adequately funded strategies for promoting lifelong learning. It therefore urged the Commission, in close collaboration with the Member States, to establish specific targets aimed at those who had not completed upper secondary level education, the unskilled, the functionally illiterate, the unemployed, individuals with special needs and those with learning difficulties, the over-50s, immigrants and women following maternity leave. The Member States were urged to remove barriers to participation in lifelong learning, particularly age barriers, to agree on a specific target for annual expenditure and to provide fiscal and other incentives to encourage investment in lifelong learning by employers and individual citizens. Other recommendations made by the committee included a call for the Commission to develop, in close cooperation with the Member States, a European framework of basic skills to be acquired by all pupils before they leave compulsory school education. Welcoming the EIB's i2i initiative (which widened the EIB's mandate to include lending to support education), the report also called on the Commission and the Member States to facilitate EIB lending for lifelong learning. Lastly, it welcomed the reaffirmation by the Member States at the Barcelona Summit of their commitment to ensuring that all school leavers are competent in two European languages other than their mother tongue.?

European area of education and lifelong learning: strategy and priorities

The European Parliament adopted the Commission's initiative in the area of Lifelong Learning. (Please refer to the summary dated 04/06/02). The Plenary considers that the socially disadvantaged and other excluded groups should be the target for lifelong learning policies because of the difficulties they often face due to poor literacy/numeracy and ICT skills and their alienation from education and training systems. It calls for measures to provide incentives and opportunities specifically designed for such groups, at the same time, calls on further training establishments to cooperate to increase the supply of further training in the Member States. The Commission is called upon to develop a European framework of basic skills to be acquired by all pupils before they leave compulsory school education. On the other hand, public authorities are called upon to develop programmes to facilitate access to and improve the quality of training by developing local learning centres, based in schools and other locations. The Parliament calls for the competent public authorities and the Commission to devise common guidelines for skills plans and validation systems which can be used to facilitate mutual recognition of certificates, diplomas and degrees. Member States are urged to take the necessary measures to promote the identification, assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning to boost the exchange of information and experience about 'examples of good practice' at European level and to assist the Commission to draw up an inventory of national practices in this area and a framework for the exchange of experience. Member States are urged to agree on a specific target for annual expenditure on lifelong learning and to provide fiscal and other incentives to encourage investment in lifelong learning by employers and individual citizens. Lastly, the Commission is called upon to ensure that each Member State takes the legal steps necessary to offer and provide access to lifelong learning for all employees or jobseekers.?