












Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2020/2243(INI)	Procedure completed
The European Education Area: a shared holistic approach		
Subject 4.40.01 European area for education, training and lifelong learning		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Culture and Education (Associated committee)	 ŠOJDROVÁ Michaela	10/12/2020
	Committee for opinion	Shadow rapporteur	
	 Employment and Social Affairs (Associated committee)	 ROS SEMPERE Marcos	
		 CICUREL Ilana	
		 RIBA I GINER Diana	
		 DA RE Gianantonio	
		 MELBÄRDE Dace	
		 BARRENA ARZA Fernando	
		Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
		 CICUREL Ilana	09/04/2021
European Commission	Commission DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	Commissioner GABRIEL Mariya	

Key events			
26/11/2020	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/02/2021	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
11/10/2021	Vote in committee		
18/10/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0291/2021	Summary
10/11/2021	Debate in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2020/2243(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 57; Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/9/04668

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE680.925	23/04/2021	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE693.784	10/06/2021	EP	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE689.863	08/09/2021	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0291/2021	18/10/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0452/2021	11/11/2021	EP	Summary

The European Education Area: a shared holistic approach

The Committee on Culture and Education adopted an own-initiative report by Michaela OJDROVÁ (EPP, CZ) on the European Education Area: a shared holistic approach.

The need for a European Education Area (EEA)

The right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning is proclaimed in the European Pillar of Social Rights as its first principle. Moreover, Members considered that education and culture are key to achieving personal and social advancement and well-being, fostering European citizenship and driving job creation and ensuring that the EU is a globally competitive and resilient player. They stressed that the EEA is a unique opportunity to gain European added value through mobility programmes such as Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps with which further synergies are requested.

Bridging institutional and stakeholder approaches

Members called on the Commission and the Member States to establish a concrete European Education Area Strategic Framework 2030 (EEASF 2030) by the end of 2022 and to commit to the type of participation required from Member States and other levels of government, including local and regional authorities, as well as the EU institutions, and to devise effective multi-level governance arrangements that respect the principle of subsidiarity, while aiming to generate European added value.

Taking note of the different approaches on the EEA, which express a common wish to provide fresh impetus to the European project, Members underlined the need for more collaboration on education across Europe and beyond in order to develop common approaches and solutions to common challenges. The Commission's efforts to foster an EEA is appreciated, however, Members called for a more holistic approach which requires meaningful cooperation and coordination between all actors. They warned that Commission's proposals are still mainly a strategic outline rather than a concrete policy roadmap. In this regard, Members suggested the establishment of clear mid- and long-term priorities with achievable targets and deadlines for the actions that should be adopted.

Moreover, Members emphasised the urgent need to develop a common implementation strategy and roadmap that includes the EU institutions, Member States and all the relevant stakeholders, including local and regional authorities and civil society, and defines their respective responsibilities and opportunities.

Common strategic priorities and EU-level targets

All EU institutions and Member States are called on to agree on the same vision, priorities, targets and benchmarks regarding the EEA. Members, on the other hand, underlined the importance of establishing academic freedom and pedagogical autonomy as core principles of the EEA. They stressed the importance of improving working conditions and the need for teachers and educators to be adequately remunerated for their work. Stressing the need for a greater European dimension in education as well as improved teacher training, Members support the creation of a common framework for the shaping and development of teacher qualifications across the Member States. The report also supports the initiative of the Commission to set up teacher academies and suggests that an adequate name for them would be the Comenius Teacher Academies. European history and cultural heritage should be taught and a common framework on citizenship education with a European dimension should be developed according to Members.

In addition, the report called for a common system of recognition, validation and certification of digital skills, qualifications and credentials, to reduce gaps in digital competences across Europe.

Member States and the Commission should provide the requisite funding for the establishment, implementation and development of the EEA and the establishment of a dedicated financial instrument in the 2028-2034 multiannual financial framework with a view to developing the EEA further and facilitating the mutual recognition of qualifications. The report reiterated its call to allocate at least 10 % of the funding under the Recovery and Resilience Facility to education, including digital education.

Sector-specific measures and considerations

The report underlined the importance of learning foreign languages, and of English in particular. Research and innovation should be promoted in education as well as the study of cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics.

On vocational training, the report called for the creation of a European apprentices statute.

Members called for the gender gap to be closed in education, including in education and careers in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM).

The European Education Area: a shared holistic approach

The European Parliament adopted by 483 votes to 25, with 52 abstentions, a resolution on the European Education Area: a shared holistic approach.

The need for a European Education Area (EEA)

Parliament underlined the role of the EEA in increasing and improving the mobility of learners, teachers and knowledge, in fostering a sense of European belonging and civic awareness, in guaranteeing rights and values and in providing fair and equal opportunities. It called for an EEA with common European policy objectives that ensure quality, inclusive and accessible education, strengthen the exchange of good practice and provide an effective framework for European mobility.

The EEA should play a unique role in improving access to and quality of education across the Union and have a clearer geopolitical dimension so that the Union can use its educational strength strategically with its closest neighbours and partners.

A strategic framework to 2030 with effective governance

Members urged the Commission and Member States to establish, by the end of 2022, a concrete strategic framework for the EEA by 2030, with a comprehensive steering, monitoring and evaluation mechanism. It welcomed the proposal for an EEA Steering Committee, which would lay the groundwork for a structured and systematic governance framework specifying the type of involvement that will be required from Member States, other levels of government, including local and regional authorities, and the European institutions.

Taking note of the different approaches on the EEA, which express a common wish to provide fresh impetus to the European project, Members underlined the need for more collaboration on education across Europe and beyond to develop common approaches and solutions to common challenges.

Parliament stressed the need to establish clear medium and long-term priorities with achievable targets and deadlines for action. It called for the urgent development of a common strategy and roadmap for implementation involving the EU institutions, Member States and all relevant stakeholders, including local and regional authorities and civil society, and defining responsibilities and opportunities.

Common strategic priorities and EU-level targets

Parliament recommended that all EU institutions and Member States are called on to agree on the same vision, priorities, targets and benchmarks regarding the EEA. Members, on the other hand, underlined the importance of establishing academic freedom and pedagogical autonomy as core principles of the EEA while stressing that inclusion should be a central dimension of the EEA and a prerequisite for achieving quality education for all.

They stressed the importance of:

- placing the learner at the centre of the learning process and adopting a tailor-made approach to vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities or learning differences, such as those on the autism spectrum or those with high potential;
- improving the working conditions of teachers and educators and for them to be adequately remunerated;
- investing in the initial training of teachers and trainers, by giving their programmes a European dimension and providing for transnational mobility;
- establishing a common European system for the recognition, validation and certification of digital skills, qualifications and diplomas in order to bridge the digital divide in Europe.

Parliament supported the creation of a common framework for the shaping and development of teacher qualifications across the Member States. It supports the initiative of the Commission to set up teacher academies and suggests that an adequate name for them would be the Comenius Teacher Academies. European history and cultural heritage should be taught and a common framework on citizenship education with a European dimension should be developed according to Members.

Member States and the Commission should provide the requisite funding for the establishment, implementation and development of the EEA and the establishment of a dedicated financial instrument in the 2028-2034 multiannual financial framework with a view to developing the EEA further and facilitating the mutual recognition of qualifications. Parliament reiterated its call to allocate at least 10 % of the funding under the Recovery and Resilience Facility to education, including digital education.

Sector-specific measures and considerations

The resolution underlined the importance of learning foreign languages, and of English in particular. Research and innovation should be

promoted in education as well as the study of cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics.

On vocational training, the resolution called for the creation of a European apprentices statute.

Members called for the gender gap to be closed in education, including in education and careers in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM).