Erasmus+ programme for education, training, youth and sport 2014-2020

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In public deliberation, the Council took note of an oral report by the Presidency on the state of play concerning the new "ERASMUS FOR ALL" programme for the period 2014-2020.

At their previous meeting in May 2012, EU Education Ministers had adopted a partial general approach on the proposal, i.e. a preliminary agreement on the whole text, with the exception of any provisions with budgetary implications (for further details on the partial general approach, please refer to Council debate of 10/05/2012).

The outstanding provisions concern:

- the total budget for the Programme,
- the breakdown between the various sectors,
- the proposed new Master's student loan guarantee facility aimed at promoting mobility for students taking their Master's degree in another Member State.

On this last issue, the Presidency reported that, in addition to following the developments in the European Parliament, it had conducted a detailed technical examination of the proposal for a Master's student loan facility and its implications, partly in preparation for the future negotiations with the Parliament, and partly in readiness for an overall agreement on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

Convergence of interinstitutional views: further work on the proposal would be carried out after the Council session, in the light of the amendments adopted by the Parliament's Culture and Education Committee. The Presidency indicated that despite some divergences, the respective positions of the Parliament and the Council appeared relatively close in many areas, and that it hoped to ensure that the future Irish Presidency had a good basis on which to finalise an agreement with the European Parliament in the first half of 2013.

The Commission recalled that the main features of the new "Erasmus for All" were EU added value, flexibility and streamlined procedures. It also underlined the importance of keeping the widely known ERASMUS brand name, and disagreed with the Parliament's suggestion for a new name.

To recall, in its draft report dated 20 July 2012, the European Parliaments rapporteur on this file, Doris PACK (EPP, DE), proposed changing the name of the programme ERASMUS FOR ALL to the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Regarding the Master's student loan guarantee scheme in particular, the Commission indicated that it would soon be sending an explanatory letter to ministers on this issue.

Lastly, the Council called on Member States to ensure that the new programme received the level of financing it needed, given what it represented for young Europeans and its potential to boost growth and jobs.

Irish Presidencys work programme: the Council took note of information from the Irish delegation on the incoming Presidency's priorities for the next half-year in the field of education, namely the pursuit of negotiations on ERASMUS FOR ALL, initiatives on skills development and teacher training as well as the social dimension of higher education.