

2545th Council meeting  
**- Education, Youth and Culture -**  
Brussels, 24 and 25 November 2003

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Minister for Cultural Assets and Activities  
Ms Letizia MORATTI  
Minister for Education, the Universities and  
Research  
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<sup>1</sup>

- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- The documents whose references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site <http://ue.eu.int>.
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the above mentioned Council Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

## ITEMS APPROVED WITHOUT DEBATE

### *EDUCATION*

- ERASMUS MUNDUS\* - Public deliberation.....I
- E-LEARNING\* - Public deliberation.....I

### *ENVIRONMENT*

- Waste electrical and electronic equipment – *Public deliberation* ..... II

## **PARTICIPANTS**

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

### **Belgium :**

Mr Paul VAN GREMBERGEN

Flemish Minister for Home Affairs, Culture, Youth and the Civil Service

Mr Bernd GENTGES

Minister for Education and Training, Culture and Tourism (German-speaking Community)

Mr Hans NIESSEN

Minister for Youth and the Family, the Protection of Monuments, Health and Social Affairs (German-speaking Community)

### **Denmark :**

Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM MIKKELSEN

Deputy Permanent Representative

Ms Ulla TØRNÆS

Minister for Education and Research

### **Germany :**

Ms Christina WEISS

Minister of State to the Federal Chancellor, Federal Government Representative for Culture and Media

Ms Ute ERDSIEK-RAVE

Minister for Education, Science, Research and Art of Land Schleswig-Holstein

Mr Wolf-Michael CATENHUSEN

State Secretary to the Minister for Education and Research

Mr Peter RUHENSTROTH-BAUER

State Secretary

### **Greece :**

Mr Petros EFTHYMIU

Minister for Education and Religious Affairs

Mr GEROU

Secretary-General

Mr SAKELLION

Secretary-General for Youth

### **Spain :**

Ms Pilar DEL CASTILLO VERA

Minister for Education, Culture and Sport

Mr Cristóbal GONZÁLEZ-ALLER

Deputy Permanent Representative

### **France :**

Mr Jean-Jacques AILLAGON

Minister for Culture and Communication

Mr Christian MASSET

Deputy Permanent Representative

### **Ireland :**

Mr John O'DONOGHUE

Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism

Mr Noel DEMPSEY

Minister for Education and Science

### **Italy :**

Mr Giuliano URBANI

Minister for Cultural Assets and Activities

Ms Letizia MORATTI

Minister for Education, the Universities and Research

Ms Grazia SESTINI

State Secretary for Labour and Social Policy

### **Luxembourg :**

Ms Anne BRASSEUR

Minister for Education, Vocational Training and Sport

Mr Christian BRAUN

Deputy Permanent Representative

### **Netherlands :**

Mr Henne SCHUWER

Deputy Permanent Representative

### **Austria :**

Ms Elisabeth GEHRER

Federal Minister for Education, Science and Culture

Mr Frank MORAK

State Secretary, Federal Chancellery

### **Portugal :**

Mr Pedro ROSETA

Minister for Culture

Mr David JUSTINO

Minister for Education

Ms Maria da Graça CARVALHO

Minister for Science and Higher Education

**Finland :**

Ms Tanja KARPELA  
Ms Tuula HAATAINEN

Minister for Culture  
Minister for Education and Science

**Sweden :**

Ms Marita ULVSKOG  
Mr Thomas ÖSTROS

Minister for Culture  
Minister for Education and Science

**United Kingdom :**

Mr Alun PUGH

Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language (Welsh Assembly)

Mr Charles CLARKE

Secretary of State for Education and Skills

Mr Peter PEACOCK

Minister for Education and Young People (Scottish Executive)

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**Commission :**

Ms Viviane REDING

Member

## The Governments of the acceding States were represented as follows<sup>2</sup>

**Czech Republic :**

Ms Petra SMOLÍKOVÁ  
Mr Jaroslav MŮLNER

Deputy Minister for Culture  
Deputy Minister for Education, Youth and Sport

**Estonia :**

Mr Toivo MAIMETS  
Mr Margus RAHUOJA

Minister for Education and Research  
Deputy Head of Mission

**Cyprus :**

Mr Pefkios GEORGIADES

Minister for Education and Culture

**Latvia :**

Ms Ingūna RĪBENA  
Mr Karlis SADURSKIS

Minister for Culture  
Minister for Education and Science

**Lithuania :**

Ms Roma ŽAKAITIENĖ  
Mr Algirdas MONKEVICIUS

Minister for Culture  
Minister for Education and Science

**Hungary :**

Mr István HILLER  
Ms Marta SCHNEIDER

Minister for National Cultural Heritage  
Deputy State Secretary

**Malta:**

Mr Jesmond MUGLIETT

Minister for Youth and the Arts

**Poland :**

Mr Maciej KLIMCZAK  
Ms Ewa FREYBERG

Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Culture  
Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Education

**Slovakia :**

Mr Martin FRONC  
Mr Juras NOCIAR

Minister for Education  
Deputy Permanent Representative

**Slovenia :**

Ms Andreja RIHTER  
Mr Slavko GABER

Minister for Culture  
Minister for Education, Science and Sport

<sup>2</sup> This was the first meeting of the Council in which the ten acceding States participated with active observer status.

## **ITEMS DEBATED**

### **CULTURE**

#### **COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE BODIES ACTIVE AT EUROPEAN LEVEL IN THE FIELD OF CULTURE – *Public Deliberation***

The Council reached unanimous political agreement on the Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community action programme to promote bodies active at European level in the field of culture (10304/03), on the basis of a Presidency compromise which the Commission endorsed. The Portuguese delegation stated that it intended to abstain at the later stage of formal adoption of a Council common position. The Commission submitted a statement on the application of Decision 1999/468/EC on the committee procedure.

The European Parliament's opinion at first reading was delivered on 6 November.

The Presidency compromise on which political agreement was reached entails the following changes to the original proposal:

- regarding the selection of beneficiaries of grants, under the initial proposal the Commission did not have to publish calls for proposals when the budget heading explicitly named a beneficiary. The same applied when the budget identified beneficiaries and the amounts allocated to each of them, if the total amount of the budget heading concerned was entirely pre-determined by the budgetary authority. The draft budget for 2004 contains a list of organisations, as in previous years, and no calls for proposals have been prepared for 2004. The Presidency compromise thus aims to continue the practice of the budget heading and establishes an Annex II listing the organisations that may receive grants for 2004 only; the compromise also enables grants to be awarded on the basis of calls for proposals as from 2005.
- the proposed period of five years is reduced to three – 2004/2006 – and the overall budget should increase from EUR 31 million as provided for in the Commission proposal, for five years (2004-2008), to EUR 19 million. It should be noted that it is for the budgetary authority to fix this sum, which is currently under review;
- the corollary of this reduction in the programming period and appropriations would be that the deadline for evaluation of activities, originally scheduled for 31 December 2007 at the latest, would be 31 December 2005;
- a committee procedure has been established to apply this Decision using the Culture 2000 programme committee to manage funding.

The aim of the programme is to establish a basic act for training and support for bodies active at European level and for specific actions in the field of culture. This Decision will provide a legal basis for activities where none currently exists. The programme provides for three categories of grants:

- for the activities of the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages (EBLUL) and the Mercator network of information and documentation centres;
- for the activities of organisations of European cultural interest;
- for actions to preserve the sites of Nazi concentration camps as historical monuments.

### **THE FUTURE OF THE COMMUNITY CULTURAL PROGRAMME AFTER 2006**

The Council held an exchange of views on the future of cultural cooperation after 2006, based on the mid-term review of the "Culture 2000" programme (2000-2004) and on the future of the programme (2007-2013). The Presidency submitted three topics for discussion by the Ministers:

- Generally speaking, on fostering and developing cultural exchanges between the future Member States and the "15", the Member States and the acceding States recorded their broad agreement to the idea of easier access for the acceding States to European cultural programmes via specific actions.
- Similarly, regarding the promotion of external Community cultural action, most of the Member States referred to the importance of collaboration in the field of culture with third countries, and the contribution of Europe's cultural diversity.
- Lastly, a large majority of the Member States and the acceding States deemed it necessary to press on with the creation of an internal market in culture and achieving the aims of promoting transnational cultural cooperation in Europe, in particular through promotion of cultural mobility of artists and works of art.

By way of introduction the Commission representative noted that the mid-term evaluation report on the Culture 2000 programme had revealed a number of shortcomings, including the fact that Community projects were too thinly spread, which ran counter to the aims pursued. In future years the Commission wanted to refocus on fewer objectives, in order to optimise the added European value of those programmes. The representative said that in the first quarter of 2004 the Commission would submit a proposal for a Decision on a "new generation" Culture 2000 programme, for the period 2007-2013, followed by the results of the public consultations on this subject and the ex-ante evaluation of the future programme.

"Culture 2000" is a Community programme established for a duration of five years (2000-2004) with a budget of EUR 167 million. It gives grants to cultural cooperation projects in all artistic and cultural fields.

A proposal for a Decision extending the programme for two years (2005-2006) is currently being considered by the Council and the European Parliament.

## **THE FUTURE OF AUDIOVISUAL POLICIES**

The Council held an exchange of views on the basis of the Commission's mid-term evaluation of the MEDIA Plus and MEDIA Training audiovisual programmes (2001-2005) and on the basis of a Presidency document.

That document noted the lack of coherence between the different audiovisual policies and the serious consequences for this sector, as competition from third countries in Europe resulted to a considerable extent from the lack of investment by the industry in the distribution, exploitation and development of works. The European industry was in some disarray faced with the multiplication of audiovisual services brought about by the introduction of digital technologies.

The Presidency submitted three topics for discussion by the Council:

- integration of the new Member States into the mainstream actions of the MEDIA programme (training, development, distribution): the acceding States, supported by a majority of Member States, wanted positive discrimination in favour of the future Member States, in the form of more flexible eligibility criteria for funding audiovisual programmes, particularly in the field of training, and preferential transitional measures for the acceding States;
- incorporation of digital technology in MEDIA actions through the development of the current pilot projects: the majority of Member States noted the importance of digital technology in the audiovisual sector and the speed at which it was developing;
- access to finance by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the audiovisual sector in partnership with the European Investment Bank; a majority of Member States noted how difficult it was for SMEs to gain access to this sector, emphasising the precarious nature of their financial situation, which frequently depended on the success of a single project.

Commissioner Reding said she would be presenting a proposal for a "new generation" Decision for in the first quarter of 2004 which would cover regulatory aspects and support policies for the audiovisual sector for the period 2007-2013 (MEDIA). She emphasised the importance of this instrument in the past, noting that in recent years 90% of films distributed outside their country of origin had received MEDIA support.

Two proposals for Decisions extending the current MEDIA Plus programme for a further year (2006) are currently being considered by the Council and the European Parliament.

## **MUSEUMS – *Council Resolution***

The Council unanimously adopted a Resolution on cooperation between cultural institutions in the field of museums, subtitled "Towards a cultural area of European museums". The Resolution reads as follows:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. **REFERRING** to the Treaty establishing the European Community;

2. **BEARING IN MIND** the Council Resolution of 25 June 2002 on a new work plan on European cooperation in the field of culture <sup>1</sup>, which includes among other priorities
  - (a) circulation of works and persons in the cultural sector;
  - (b) integration and participation of new Member States in the cultural field;
  - (c) enhancing synergies with other Community areas and activities, including for example in the areas of education and training, youth, research and information and communication technology;
  - (d) improving the dissemination of information in order to facilitate access of citizens to cultural action of the Community;
  - (e) cooperation in the different fields of cultural administration, including management and administration of cultural goods;
3. **RECALLING** the Regulation on export of cultural goods and the Directive on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State, as well as the Council Resolution concerning the Commission's report on the application of these;
4. **RECALLING ALSO** the Council Resolution of 21 January 2002 on culture and the knowledge society that called, among other things, for digitisation of cultural content;
5. **AIMING** to intensify further the cultural links between Member States in order to promote knowledge of common cultural heritage and cultural diversity within Europe; and to reflect how to take account of these crosscutting issues, if necessary, in consideration of the programme to succeed Culture 2000;
6. **BEARING IN MIND** that "cultural institutions" in the context of this Resolution comprise a large number of different bodies. These cultural institutions may include, among others, museums, galleries, competent authorities, research, training and restoration institutes as well as university departments;
7. **BEARING FURTHER IN MIND** that police and customs authorities are important actors in combating illicit trafficking of cultural goods,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 162, 6.7.2002.

**STRESSES THE NEED FOR IMPROVED COOPERATION AMONG MEMBER STATES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS, WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT EACH MEMBER STATE'S LEGISLATION:**

**A. Cooperation in the field of research and further training in the sector of cultural heritage**

1. Exchange of experience in the field of training with the aim of increasing research and cooperation between staff of cultural institutions.

Consideration will be given to the possibility whereby staff working for such cultural institutions can be hosted by the Member States for a period of a few weeks and training seminars can be organised on scientific, administrative, exhibition-preparation and museum-management matters.

2. Standards and good practice applied in various countries in the following sectors:

- Protection of heritage
- Conservation and restoration of collections and cultural heritage sites
- Documentation, inventory and digitisation of collections and cultural heritage sites
- Display techniques, methods and interpretation
- Learning in museums
- Criteria for exhibitions (for example, policy on loans, conditions for circulation)
- Management and administration of museums
- Development policies

**B. Cooperation in the field of conservation and restoration and reproduction of artefacts and monuments**

1. Conservation and restoration of artefacts (including archaeological finds, paintings, sculptures, etc.) and monuments by joint teams from the Member States, with publication of results making good use of the know-how and technical equipment of each participant and comparing conservation and restoration criteria and methods.
2. Reproduction and digitisation of artefacts for study and teaching purposes.
3. Research of archaeological sites by joint teams from the Member States. Comparative study both on the criteria used for such development and on the relationship between the "archaeological stock" and the natural environment.
4. Comparative research from different countries on the balancing of infrastructural development with the protection of archaeological and architectural heritage.

**C. Cooperation in combating illicit trafficking of cultural goods**

1. Protection and recovering of cultural goods, including archaeological assets that have no documentation as to origin.

2. Stepping up joint activity to prevent illicit trafficking in cultural goods.
3. Establishing or reinforcing cooperation among Member State administrative structures in this field, and also between cultural institutions and administrative structures.

#### **D. Cooperation in relation to exhibitions**

1. Organisation of exhibitions. Particular encouragement could be given to exhibitions that are organised by joint groups of scholars and experts from the Member States' institutions and dealing with issues concerning the contacts, influences and relationships between the peoples of Europe over the course of history.

Encouragement could be given to exhibitions that are of notable significance in terms of new knowledge and acquisitions and fulfil the relevant protection criteria.

2. Circulation of artefacts, art works and collections. The cultural institutions and museums of the Member States could promote the circulation for exhibition purposes of collections and of individual works of art within the European area, thereby bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore.
3. Comparison of Member State legislation and practices on organising international exhibitions and transporting artefacts and collections, in particular with regard to public guarantees relating to insurance costs as well as provisions concerning third party claims on lent works.

#### **CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES TO FOSTER INTENSIFIED CULTURAL COOPERATION WHICH OFFERS:**

1. To scholars the possibility of pursuing further the study of the documentation concerning the many facets of works of art, artefacts and monuments, especially digitised and photographic documentation.
2. To staff of the institutions and museums of the Member States – through adequate training programmes and seminars – the possibility of investigating matters of common interest in more depth, making a critical comparison between the various criteria and methods that have been adopted and/or trialled in the various countries and at the same time helping to establish cooperation in the particular sector.
3. To facilitate access, including virtual access, to cultural heritage in order to provide better information and deeper knowledge of cultural heritage and to increase public awareness concerning illegal activities in connection with cultural goods.

Particular care will be taken to ensure that the system of presentation and the facilities for museums, sites, etc. are multi-layered, so as to accommodate the various types of user, including those with disabilities, while ensuring the reliability and verification of information at every level, even the most elementary.

**ALSO CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION**

To promote, as appropriate, cooperation among Member States' cultural and museum institutions, including through working groups, in order to develop practical follow-up to this Resolution with pilot projects to be implemented by the Member States.

AND AGREES to review the implementation of this Resolution in the course of the first half of 2005."

This Resolution will be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities at a later date.

The purpose of the Resolution is to strengthen cooperation between Member States in the field of research and training in the cultural heritage sector, by suggesting that a host country organise scientific and administrative training seminars for the staff of cultural institutions. Other initiatives are proposed in the field of restoration and reproduction of monuments and artefacts, including comparison of restoration methods and conservation techniques. Combating illicit trafficking of cultural goods is also mentioned.

**CINEMATOGRAPHIC WORKS – *Council Resolution***

The Council unanimously adopted a Resolution on the deposit of cinematographic works in the European Union. The Resolution reads as follows:

**"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,**

Whereas:

1. The Council Resolution of 26 June 2000<sup>1</sup> on the conservation and enhancement of European cinema heritage calls on Member States to cooperate in the restoration and conservation of cinema heritage including through recourse to digital technologies, to exchange good practice in this sector, to encourage progressive networking of European archival data and to consider the possible use of these collections for educational purposes.
2. The Commission Communication on certain legal aspects relating to cinematographic and other audiovisual works<sup>2</sup> examined the legal deposit of audiovisual works at the national or regional level as one of the possible ways of conserving and safeguarding the European audiovisual heritage and launched a stocktaking exercise of the situation of deposit of cinematographic works in Member States, candidate countries and EFTA countries.
3. The Council (Cultural/Audiovisual affairs) at its meeting of 5 November 2001 welcomed the content of the Commission Communication and the approach taken by the Commission.
4. The European Parliament, in its Report on the Commission Communication on cinema of 5 June 2002, also underlined the importance of safeguarding the cinematographic heritage.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 193, 11.7.2000.

<sup>2</sup> 12258/01 AUDIO 32, COM(2001) 534 final of 26.9.2001.

**RECALLS** that the Council of Europe Convention for the protection of the Audiovisual Heritage requires its States Parties to "introduce, by legislative or other appropriate means, the obligation to deposit moving image material forming part of its audiovisual heritage and having been produced or co-produced" in its territory. The Convention, that also calls for voluntary deposit of moving image material forming part of its audiovisual heritage as well as ancillary material, was open for signature on 8 November 2001 and has been signed by 4 EU Member States.

**TAKES NOTE** that the Commission stocktaking exercise shows that at least two-thirds of Member States have a system of compulsory deposit for all cinematographic works, or at least for those that have received public support.

**REAFFIRMS** that European cinematographic works are an essential manifestation of the richness and diversity of the European cultures and that they constitute a heritage that has to be conserved and safeguarded for future generations.

**STRESSES** that European cinematographic works forming part of Member States' audiovisual heritage shall be systematically deposited in national, regional or other archives, in order to ensure their preservation.

**INVITES THE MEMBER STATES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO:**

1. Put in place efficient systems of deposit and preservation of the cinematographic works forming part of their audiovisual heritage in their national archives, film institutes or similar institutions, if such systems do not yet exist. The systems should cover national cinematographic works as far as practicable, or at least those cinematographic works that have received public support at national and/or Community level. The systems could be based on a legal or contractual obligation, or on other measures having the same effect in terms of preserving the cinematographic heritage.
2. Provide for the possibility of educational, cultural or research use, or other non-commercial use of a similar nature, of deposited cinematographic works, in all cases in compliance with copyright and related rights.
3. Exchange good practice and cooperate with each other in this area.

**INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:**

1. Consider possible ways to develop further cooperation between Member States in this field in accordance with the Treaty establishing the European Community, concerning for example:
  - the exchange of information on deposit and preservation of important European films,
  - the encouragement of cooperation between film archives,
  - the improvement of coordination of inventories of film collections,
  - the increase of young persons' knowledge of the European cinematographic heritage,
  - the taking into account of film heritage in actions and initiatives to promote media literacy.

2. Continue the exchange of experiences and best practices from Member States in the group of cinema experts already established by it, and report to the Council on the progress achieved."

The conclusions suggest that the Member States set up effective systems for the deposit and conservation of cinematographic works, where such systems are lacking, and introduce cooperation between Member States in this field.

## EDUCATION

### **PROMOTION OF BODIES ACTIVE AT EUROPEAN LEVEL AND SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING** – *Public Deliberation*

The Council reached unanimous political agreement on the basis of a Presidency compromise, which took account of the European Parliament's opinion, on the proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community action programme to promote bodies active at European level and support specific activities in the field of education and training (10051/03). The political agreement opens the way to the subsequent formal adoption of a Council common position.

The European Parliament's opinion at first reading was delivered on 6 November (14381/03).

The Presidency compromise entailed the following changes to the original proposal:

- the duration of the programme has been reduced to **3 years** (2004-2006) instead of 5 (2004-2008);
- the budget would accordingly be reduced from EUR 129,620 million to EUR 77 million. It should be noted that it is up to the budgetary authority to take this decision, which is under review.

The purpose of the Decision is to establish a basic act for the award of grants to promote bodies active at European level and for the support of specific activities in the field of education and training. As the proposal is essentially intended to respond to the technical need to give a legal basis to support activities where none currently exists, the sums provided are broadly based on the sums granted under the European Union's budget for the 2003 financial year. The original proposal introduces the following distinction between two groups of beneficiaries: grants are paid by the Commission from the budget to a number of beneficiaries – specified institutions in the field of education and training – indicated in the Annex to the proposal; grants are paid to other bodies – European associations active in the field of education or training – on the basis of calls for proposals.

The proposal provides for three categories of grant:

- grants for the operation of bodies named in the Decision;
- grants for the operation of other organisations pursuing an aim of general European interest;
- grants for the other activities mentioned above (support for activities in the field of higher education concerning European integration; support for activities contributing to the achievement of the objectives of education and training systems; support for training in European law). These grants are awarded on the basis of annual calls for proposals.

### **EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS IN EUROPE**

The Council held a useful exchange of views on the basis of a Presidency questionnaire concerning a draft joint interim report on implementation of the detailed work programme for the pursuit of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe.

A majority of delegations could agree on the following points:

- the pursuit of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe should be geared towards action. A high-level working party is therefore unnecessary at this stage.
- the Commission's steering of training and education actions must be non-bureaucratic, flexible and observe the principle of subsidiarity. Annual reports from the Member States are therefore not necessary.
- the work programme and the reference indicators must take into account the specific characteristics of each Member State and their respective levels.
- the interim report must emphasise the steps forward and progress made by the Member States in implementing the detailed work programme.

Commissioner Reding noted the delegations' remarks, particularly with regard to the efforts made since implementation of the programme, and welcomed the collective recognition in Europe of the need to step up Community action in the field of education. She said that the Commission had a duty to give a warning that the objectives set under the Lisbon strategy might not be attained by 2010. She agreed to submit an evaluation report covering a period of two to three years.

The Education Ministers and the Commission must submit to the Spring 2004 European Council a progress report on the achievement of the objectives set under the Lisbon strategy for education and training systems in Europe. The main objective is to foster the emergence of a competitive, knowledge-based society by 2010. The Education Council and the Commission will therefore adopt an interim report on 26 February 2004, to be presented to the European Council.

### **ACTION PLAN FOR LANGUAGES**

The Council took note of the Commission's presentation of its action plan for 2004-2006 on "Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity" (11834/03). The action plan was forwarded to the Council in July 2003. The European Year of Languages 2001 had highlighted the need to improve language knowledge and linguistic diversity.

Commissioner Reding referred to the success of the European Year of Languages in 2001, which was the prelude to the Commission's action plan produced in 2003, after wide public consultation. She emphasised that although language teaching was a matter for the individual Member States, the Community's task was to facilitate and improve cooperation and exchanges between the Member States. The action plan provided for 45 different projects between 2004 and 2006 using available funds and existing programmes.

The action plan is to cost EUR 7,3 million over three years, allocated to various programmes with the available resources. There are three actions planned:

- lifelong language learning;
- better language teaching;
- building a language-friendly environment.

Funding is to be found by redirecting currently available resources. Commissioner Reding mentioned the difficulty of establishing evaluation criteria for language knowledge, and in particular school-leaving tests, without an appropriate instrument in the Member States. She wanted to draw up, by 2004, a call for tender for the design and administration of language skill tests for school-leavers. She recalled that the main aim of this plan was, in the medium-term, to enable every pupil to learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue.

An evaluation report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council is scheduled for 2007. The action plan must take into account enlargement, with the additional 10 new Member States, the fact that many European citizens lack language skills, and the growing need to find common languages and diversify means of communication.

**COMBATING THE SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE – Council Resolution**

The Council unanimously adopted a Resolution on "Making school an open learning environment to prevent and combat early school leaving and disaffection among young people and to encourage their social inclusion".

The Resolution suggests in particular that Member States promote partnerships between schools, parents' associations, enterprises and local authorities and support the training of educators, trainers and teachers.

The Resolution reads as follows:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

AWARE THAT

1. The Lisbon European Council of March 2000 acknowledged the strategic role of education and training in achieving a more competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy and promoting inclusion, employment, social cohesion and personal and professional fulfilment; it also drew attention to effective teaching for all, a goal achievable by constantly seeking ways and means of making learning more attractive.
2. The June 2001 Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council entitled "*Promoting young people's initiative, enterprise and creativity: from exclusion to empowerment*" recognises that helping young people to be more proactive and creative is a means of preventing and counteracting social exclusion and a strategy for developing young people's personal and professional empowerment.
3. The November 2001 Commission White Paper "*A new impetus for European youth*" recognises the strategic priority of the "youth" dimension and the fact that it cuts across other policies, affirming the importance of the European Union's commitment to encouraging active citizenship on the part of young people and to quality teaching and training by setting a high value on, among other things, the non-formal dimension of learning, voluntary work and developing young people's autonomy and spirit of initiative.
4. To promote these objectives, the November 2001 Commission communication "*Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality*" and the June 2002 Council Resolution on lifelong learning stress the importance of the role of the European Union in supporting and promoting implementation of lifelong learning strategies to create a culture of learning in which formal, non-formal and informal learning all have a part to play.

5. The contribution of school in combining formal, non-formal and informal learning is an element in implementing strategic objective 2 of the Report on the concrete future objectives of education and training systems<sup>1</sup> as defined by the Barcelona European Council (15 and 16 March 2002): open learning environment (2.1); making learning more attractive (2.2); supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion (2.3).
6. In its conclusions of 5 and 6 May 2003, the Council, establishing benchmarks of European performance for the purposes of the "Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems", reaffirmed that by 2010 an average rate of no more than 10% early school leavers should be achieved, taking into account the starting points of the individual Member States.
7. During the Nicosia Conference of 27 and 28 June 2003 the European Ministers for Education highlighted the crucial role of school in preparing young people to develop active citizenship at local, national and European level.

#### UNDERLINE THAT

1. The course of action outlined above gives prominence to the fundamental role of young people in the creation of a knowledge-based Europe and provides the framework of reference strategies for promoting the social inclusion and therefore the employability of young people and removing the obstacles which stand in the way, the major one being early school leaving, as well as other forms of disaffection among young people.
2. Diversification and flexibility of education and training paths are important tools to satisfy individual needs and enhance individual aptitudes.
3. With that in mind, the places where learning takes place assume particular importance, be they formal, or non-formal and informal, such as youth centres and associations including voluntary work as a tool for acquiring social skills and abilities. The latter not only represent added value in terms of social cohesion, with their collaborative educational practices, but help to instil a sense of community in young people and hence develop the active, informed citizenship aspect.
4. The open method of coordination is to be used in complementing action by the Member States to support the achievement of common European objectives, with full regard for specific national responsibilities.

#### RECOGNISE THAT

1. The prime task of school is to work, through education, to provide successful training for every young person, by supporting their aspirations and making the most of their abilities.
2. School is important for the contribution it can make in enhancing the knowledge which young people acquire in various contexts, and which is necessary for them to get their bearings, develop self-awareness and make independent and positive choices in life.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 58, 5.3.2002.

3. It is important to encourage young people to take part in the various management levels of educational institutions.
4. There is a need to increase family awareness and to encourage families to take part in school life and activities.
5. There is a need to identify cross-cutting methods whereby formal education and training systems can interact with the family, with local education agencies and with structures offering informal learning opportunities through shared experience (such as voluntary work), so that young people can acquire the values, capacities and skills which they find particularly rewarding.
6. It is also advisable to strengthen, in line with objectives 3.1 and 3.2 of the Work Programme on the follow-up to the common objectives, the links and the synergy between school and working life, to encourage in young people the sense of enterprise and initiative required for the establishment of a knowledge-based society.
7. It is advisable to strengthen cooperation and to increase complementarity between the various Community instruments, including the Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and Youth Programmes, the European Social Fund and the guidelines on social inclusion, in order to render more efficient the integration of measures.

#### INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

to promote measures designed to make school an open place of learning, able to propose solutions to the problems raised by young people themselves and by other groups and institutions which contribute to their personal and social growth, for example:

promoting and supporting synergies and joint activities between schools and other local partners, such as voluntary work bodies, parents' associations, enterprises, local authorities and other education agencies; these activities may occur also, and where appropriate, in centres where they can meet and work in synergy in order to encourage communication between generations and to offer young people adequate support to enable them to make their own plans in life, test their aptitudes and attain their personal and social fulfilment;

promoting and supporting school projects and initiatives aimed at making young people aware of social problems and instilling in them a commitment to social welfare, by encouraging the knowledge and implementation of good voluntary work practice, whether in school or in cooperation with schools.

supporting training of educators, teachers, trainers, tutors, careers officers and head teachers in the teaching practices, organisational methods, areas of knowledge, methodologies and instruments needed to promote complementarity between formal and non-formal learning, as a strategy to prevent and counteract early school leaving and disaffection among young people;

making best use of family participation in school life and activities to prevent and overcome forms of disaffection which have developed within and outside the school environment.

exchanging good partnership practices including positive discrimination measures, and initiatives funded by the European Social Fund which are already implemented by schools, youth associations and voluntary work bodies for the purposes of interaction between formal, non-formal and informal learning and prevention of early school leaving;

encouraging more efficient integration and complementarity between the Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and Youth for Europe Community programmes, particularly through joint actions, and enhancing cooperation between Member States on the priorities of the objectives process, in order to support informal learning and the prevention of early school leaving;

fostering the inclusion, within the framework of the new Community programmes, of measures which pursue the aims of this Resolution."

This Resolution will be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities at a later date.

### **KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY – Council Resolution**

The Council also adopted a Resolution on "Development of human capital for social cohesion and competitiveness in the knowledge society". The Resolution reads as follows:

#### **"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

aware that

- from 2000 to the present, the European Council has concluded that cooperation on education and training is a prerequisite for *building a competitive knowledge-based economy*;
- the constant socio-demographic and economic changes in Europe, particularly in the context of enlargement, demand that strategies be redirected to enhance the pursuit of common objectives and to ensure that investments in education and training systems are effective and efficient;
- human capital is a strategic resource for the overall development of Europe, and the education and training policies of States should be directed towards the lifelong personal development of each individual and at increasing citizens' participation in social cohesion and economic development;
- in 2002 the Council of the European Union and the European Commission adopted a work programme to achieve certain common objectives, approved and shared, to be achieved in the short and medium term. The work programme was accepted by the Barcelona European Council of 2002;
- in the Commission communication of November 2002 on *"Strengthening the coordination of budgetary policies"*, attention was drawn to the positive effect that investments in human capital and knowledge can have on growth and employment levels;

- the conclusions of the March 2003 European Council emphasise the importance of investment in human capital as a prerequisite for the promotion of European competitiveness, the achievement of high growth and employment rates and the transition to a knowledge-based economy;
- the 2003 Commission communication "Investing efficiently in education and training: an imperative for Europe", analysing the relevance and contribution of education to core elements of the Lisbon strategy, points out that the EU suffers from under-investment in human resources and that the efficiency of both public and private investments needs to be maximised through the coordination of education and training policies with employment policies, taking account of the process connected with the work programme on follow-up to the common objectives and the lifelong learning strategy;
- the Resolution on social and human capital building in the knowledge society adopted in July 2003 by the Council emphasises the strategic value of social capital and human capital and the need to develop their interaction in the areas of learning, work and social cohesion;
- the Conclusions of the October 2003 European Council confirm that investing in human capital, in particular through increasing financing in education and a better integration with labour and social policies, is crucial for Europe's growth potential.

stresses that

- it is the Community's duty to contribute to the development of quality education and implement a vocational training policy whilst fully respecting the responsibilities of the Member States as well as to work together with the Member States with the aim of building a competitive knowledge-based economy;
- the objectives set in education and training policy should, whilst taking into account the harmonious development of young people into self-reliant, responsible and cultivated citizens as one of its main aims, increasingly complement those of economic and labour policy in order to combine social cohesion and competitiveness;
- the effectiveness and efficiency of investments in education and training systems, in line with objective 1.5 on making the best use of resources, must be enhanced for a greater development of human capital;
- increasing awareness of the role of education and training as a fundamental factor in social and economic development makes it possible to consider financial interventions in these fields as an investment rather than a cost and to envisage innovative ways of developing research and innovation; human capital is in fact a lever for social cohesion and economic growth.

agrees that

- the role of education and training is a fundamental factor in social and economic development; it is possible to consider financial interventions in these fields as an investment rather than a cost and to envisage innovative ways of developing research and innovation; human capital is in fact a lever for social cohesion and economic growth;
- the necessary resources for human capital development should be made available, from public or private national and European sources including, where appropriate, the Structural Funds, the Community programmes in education and training and the EIB; making the best use of resources is a strategic factor for the overall development of Europe;
- actions, research and analysis on the contribution of human and social capital to economic – development in Europe by European bodies, such as the EIB and others, are important tools for effective education and labour policies;
- coherence and complementarity should be further promoted between education and training policies and social and labour policies, to make lifelong learning a reality;
- the Member States and the Community should aim to develop a specific European angle on such complementarity, strengthening the link between the "Objectives process", the Employment Guidelines and the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines."

This Resolution will be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities at a later date.

## YOUTH

### **PROMOTION OF BODIES ACTIVE AT EUROPEAN LEVEL IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH**

#### ***– Public deliberation***

The Council reached unanimous political agreement on the basis of a Presidency compromise which took account of the European Parliament's opinion, on the proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community action programme to promote bodies active at European level in the field of youth (10184/03). The political agreement, based on a Presidency compromise, opens the way to the subsequent formal adoption of a Council common position.

The European Parliament's opinion at first reading was delivered on 6 November.

The Presidency compromise entailed the following changes to the original proposal: the distinction between two groups of beneficiaries is clarified: grants are paid directly by the Commission from the budget for permanent activities of the European Youth Forum, composed of national youth councils. Grants are paid to other bodies pursuing an aim of general European interest in the field of youth on the basis of calls for proposals. The budget is set at EUR 13 million; that decision, which is under review, is for the budgetary authority to make.

The purpose of the Decision is to establish a basic act for the award of operating grants to bodies active at European level in the field of youth, for a period of three years (2004-2006). As the proposal is essentially intended to respond to the technical need to give a legal basis to support activities where none currently exists, the sums provided are broadly based on the sums granted under the European Union's budget for the 2003 financial year. The total amount initially proposed was EUR 11,520 million over the period 2004-2006.

The action programme comprises two parts:

- grants for the operation of the European Youth Forum;
- grants for the operation of international non-governmental youth organisations.

### **FUTURE OF COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH – *Council Resolution***

The Council adopted a Resolution on common objectives for participation by and information for young people and held a stimulating exchange of views on links between youth policy and other sectors, the outcome of which will be used by the Commission in its future initiatives. The debate concentrated on the effectiveness of national initiatives taken in the context of a combined approach to the youth sector and other sectors and complementarity between national and Community programmes.

The Resolution reads as follows:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

Whereas:

1. The Commission White Paper entitled "A new impetus for European youth" presented on 21 November 2001 sets out a new framework for European cooperation on youth affairs.
2. In its conclusions of 14 February 2002 the Council (Education and Youth) recognised the White Paper as the starting point for the establishment of a framework for European cooperation on youth affairs.
3. When it established a new framework for cooperation in the youth field, in its Resolution of 27 June 2002, the Council adopted the open method of coordination, calling in particular on the Council to establish, taking into account a Commission draft, the common objectives and a timetable for follow-up reports from the Member States for each priority, as appropriate. It also stressed that those policies and initiatives that affect young people both at national and at European level take into consideration matters such as the needs, the situation, the living conditions and the expectations of youth.

4. Further to the consultations carried out under the open method of coordination, the Commission communication [COM(2003) 184 final] of 11 April 2003 proposed a set of common objectives for participation by and information for young people,

NOTE that the Council of 5 May 2003 confirmed the importance of the priorities of participation by and information for young people.

**AGREE the following common objectives for developing these priorities**

**CONCERNING PARTICIPATION**

to develop participation by young people, by introducing and supporting action to encourage them to exercise their citizenship actively and by enhancing their effective participation in democratic life:

1. increase the participation by young people in the civic life of their community;
2. increase participation by young people in the system of representative democracy;
3. greater support for various forms of learning to participate;

**CONCERNING INFORMATION**

to develop information for young people, by improving access for young people to information in order to increase their participation in public life and facilitate the realisation of their potential as active, responsible citizens:

1. improve access for young people to information services;
2. increase provision of quality information;
3. increase participation by young people in youth information, for example, in the preparation and dissemination of information.

A non-exhaustive list of the possible lines of action for the above common objectives is set out in the Annex hereto.

**THE IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF THE COMMON OBJECTIVES:**

RECALL that implementation must be flexible, incremental and appropriate for the youth field, must respect the powers of the Member States and the principle of subsidiarity;

**INVITE THE MEMBER STATES TO:**

- specify implementing and follow-up measures, in the light of their particular circumstances and their national priorities with regard to those common objectives;

- submit reports on the national contributions to the implementation of both priorities, participation and information, by the end of 2005, after consulting young people, their associations and, if appropriate, national and regional youth councils via the channels they consider appropriate;

NOTE THAT THE COMMISSION INTENDS TO:

- prepare, on the basis of the reports on national contributions to the implementation of the common objectives, a progress report for submission to the Council in order to encourage mutual exchange of information and good practice concerning those two priorities, after consultation of the European Youth Forum, while not excluding other forms of consultation, and propose, if appropriate, amendments to the common objectives for participation and information;
- suitably inform the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions;

INVITE THE COMMISSION TO:

- convene, when appropriate, representatives of the national Administrations dealing with the youth field, in order to promote the exchange of information on the progress made and on best practice;

TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE:

The Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, will adapt or amend the common objectives, on the basis of the progress report and the amended drafts submitted by the Commission, and, when appropriate, take the necessary initiatives within the framework of the common objectives, in order to facilitate their implementation.

This Resolution will be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities for information.

## ITEMS APPROVED WITHOUT DEBATE

### EDUCATION

#### **ERASMUS MUNDUS\* - Public deliberation**

The Council unanimously adopted the seven amendments adopted by the European Parliament at second reading to the Decision establishing a programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding for 2004-2008 (8644/1/03 + 15138/03). That Decision is thus deemed to have been adopted.

The initial aim of the Decision, which is based on Article 149 of the Treaty – education policy – is to create European centres of higher education, thereby accelerating the process of convergence of degrees. By means of calls for proposals issued in the framework of the programme, the Community will provide financial assistance for the creation of EU masters courses involving at least three higher education institutions from three different Member States, and leading to the awarding of double or multiple degrees, scholarships for students from third countries and partnerships with third-country higher education institutions. Funding will be granted following calls for tender and calls for proposals.

Following the adoption of the Parliament's amendments, the Community budget allocated to these actions rises from EUR 200 million in the original proposal to EUR 230 million<sup>3</sup> - subject to confirmation after 2006 – in line with the European Parliament's opinion.

A Council statement on the procedure for adapting the reference amounts following enlargement (11183/03) is attached to the act.

#### **E-LEARNING\* - Public deliberation**

The Council unanimously adopted the amendment adopted by the European Parliament at second reading concerning the Decision establishing a programme for 2004-2006 for the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe (eLearning programme) (8642/1/03 + 15139/03). That Decision is thus deemed to have been adopted.

The aim of the Decision, which is based on Articles 149 and 150 of the Treaty (education and training) is to promote and facilitate the effective use of information and communication technologies in European education and training systems, for a period of three years (1 January 2004 to 31 December 2006). Community funding will mainly (75%) be used for the creation of European virtual campuses by integrating eLearning technology into the content of teaching and universities' technical tools, and for e-twinning of European schools and promoting teacher training. Funding will be allocated following calls for tender and calls for proposals.

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<sup>3</sup> The budget adopted by the Council's common position provided for a sum of EUR 180 million.

Following the adoption of the Parliament's amendments, the Community budget allocated to these actions rises from EUR 33 million in the Council's common position to EUR 44 million. The original proposal was for a budget of EUR 36 million.

A Council statement on the procedure for adapting the reference amounts following enlargement (11183/03) is attached to the act.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Waste electrical and electronic equipment – *Public deliberation***

The Council adopted at first reading the Directive amending Directive 2002/96/EC on waste electrical and electronic equipment (*PE-CONS 3671/03*).

This Directive lays down the rules for financing the cost of the collection, treatment, recovery and environmentally sound disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment from users other than private households.

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