



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 25 January 2008

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**EDUC 25
SOC 40**

REPORT

from : the Education Committee
to : Coreper/Council

Subject : Key messages to the Spring European Council in the field of education and training
- exchange of views and adoption

1. The "key messages" set out in the annex to this report have been prepared by the Education Committee. There are no outstanding reservations from delegations and the text is therefore submitted via Coreper for adoption by the Council.
2. In connection with the adoption of the text, the Presidency envisages an exchange of views between Ministers. An example of outcomes of a Peer Learning Activity carried out in the framework of the open method of coordination, specifically on early school leaving, will be presented by an expert working for the Commission. Ministers will then be invited on the basis of that example to reflect on how the open method of coordination could be used to support the implementation of the priorities highlighted by the Key Messages and the Joint Progress Report.

3. In their contributions the Ministers might wish to reflect on

- What lessons could be drawn from this specific presentation; and/or
- The effectiveness of OMC as a means of supporting the achievement of the goals and targets set by the Education and training work programme.

In their statements they may also wish to emphasise the relevance of any of the key messages.

**Delivering lifelong learning for knowledge, creativity and innovation –
Key messages to the Spring European Council in the field of education and training**

THE COUNCIL, meeting in its Education, Youth and Culture configuration,

RECALLING the political progress made during 2007 and early 2008, in particular:

- the Council Conclusions of 24 May 2007 on a coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training;
- the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning;
- the Conclusions of 15 November 2007 of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on improving the quality of teacher education;
- the Council Resolution of 15 November 2007 on modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy;
- the political agreement of 22 November 2007 reached on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Institute of Innovation and Technology;
- the Council Resolution of 15 November 2007 on "New skills for new jobs";
- the Council Resolution of 15 November 2007 on education and training as a key driver of the Lisbon Strategy;
- the Commission's strategic report of 11 December 2007 on the renewed Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs: *"Launching the new cycle (2008-2010) - Keeping up the pace of change"*;
- the 2008 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the "Education & Training 2010" work programme.

SUBMITS the following key messages in the field of education and training to the Spring 2008 European Council:

1. In education and training progress has been made towards achieving the 2010 goals and benchmarks, but important challenges regarding the **implementation of lifelong learning strategies** remain in a number of key areas. As a priority, Member States should take concrete action to:
 - reduce substantially the numbers of young people who still cannot read properly and the number of early school leavers;
 - improve the achievement levels of learners with a migrant background;
 - ensure that teaching is regarded as an attractive career choice by the best graduates and that teachers receive high quality initial training and continuing professional development;
 - Attract more adults, particularly low-skilled and older workers, into education and training.

2. For the **knowledge triangle** to be effective, education and training must both provide a broad knowledge and skills base in the population and develop learners' **creativity and capacity for innovation**. To this end:
 - Curricula on all levels should be developed so as to enhance the creative and innovative competences of learners;
 - A review of future skills requirements should be envisaged at European level as part of the follow-up to the "New skills for new jobs" initiative;
 - Universities should be given the necessary autonomy to develop partnerships with the business community and other national, regional and local stakeholders and so enable them to benefit from complementary private sector funding. Universities should increasingly reach out to non-traditional learners;
 - Policy cooperation between the areas of culture and education should be developed.

3. Equipping individuals with the necessary competences to engage in **intercultural dialogue** is essential for Europe as an inclusive society and a competitive economy. In addition to its intercultural role, multilingualism and language proficiency give European business a genuine competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

4. **Transnational mobility** should be further developed in its quality, scope and equity. Alongside the Lifelong Learning Programme, national and regional mobility programmes should operate in such a way as to ensure that a certain period of time spent studying abroad becomes common practice in higher education and that greater mobility is fostered in the field of vocational education and training.

ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE COMMISSION,

with a view to ensuring the continuity of the present "Education and Training 2010" work programme, as well as identifying new goals in these areas, to submit a proposal by the end of 2008 for an updated strategic framework for European cooperation in the field of education and training.
