



Leaders' Agenda

November 2017

Education and culture

In Bratislava and Rome, we highlighted the importance of education, culture and policies geared towards the youth. Education (including life-long learning) and culture are important not only for competitiveness but also for the inclusiveness and the cohesion of our societies. Member States and regions remain primarily responsible for these areas under the treaties and the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality must be respected. There is also a strong tradition of autonomy of education and cultural institutions. But the EU can play an important supporting and coordinating role.

We will soon celebrate the 30 years' anniversary of the Erasmus programme. It is widely recognised as a major success, having benefited more than 9 million people across Europe. As a fundamental instrument, it will remain at the heart of EU mobility and exchange policy.

In the area of culture the EU could build on initiatives such as the European Capitals of Culture, or 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage to further the promotion of our cultural heritage. Thought should also be given to use public events supported by the EU as instruments to promote the diversified European cultural richness.

In terms of instruments, the Union can, subject to appropriate Commission initiatives, adopt, in particular, incentive measures and recommendations under Articles 165, 166 and 167 TFEU (excluding any harmonisation). It can also act through Council and European Council conclusions. In some cases, the objectives can be pursued through pilot projects, through intergovernmental initiatives between all or some of the Member States and through processes like the Bologna one. Efforts can also be stepped up through increased financing which will need to be addressed in the context of the next MFF.

To further our education and culture agenda, a certain number of concrete ideas have been suggested by Member States:

- Step up mobility and exchanges so as to enhance the possibility for young Europeans to spend time in another European country, whether they are students or apprentices.
- Encourage the creation of a network of European Universities from different Member States, with integrated study programmes and curricula that enable students to study abroad and attend classes in at least two languages.
- Promote mutual recognition of secondary education diplomas and the development of new curricula allowing for exchanges across European high school systems.
- Promote multilingualism by aiming at all students speaking at least two additional European languages.
- Launch a reflection on the Future of Learning to respond to future trends and the digital revolution, including Artificial Intelligence.
- Promote the mobility and participation of students in cultural activities through a «European Student Card».
- Envisage an Erasmus for young professionals of the Arts.
- Enhance the ability of creative industries to access start up capital and financing.

Leaders are encouraged to state their overall approach to enhanced EU efforts in the area of education and culture and indicate if they agree with the ideas outlined above or would like to propose new or alternative ones.

On the basis of the discussion, the President of the European Council will put forward draft conclusions in view of the next European Council meeting.