Education and training sytems: work programme on the follow-up of the concrete objectives

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PURPOSE : to present the draft detailed work programme for the follow-up of the report on the concrete objectives of education and training. CONTENT : the Stockholm European Council ratified the "objectives report" and re-emphasised the importance of education and training: "Improving basic skills, particularly in IT and digital skills, as a top priority to make the Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. This priority includes education policies and lifelong learning as well as overcoming the present shortfall in the recruitment of scientific and technical staff. It is in response to this mandate that the Commission is proposing this draft as a basis for a policy debate at the Education Council on 29 November 2001 with a view to adopting a joint final report at the Education Council on 14 February 2002. The joint report would then be forwarded to the Barcelona European Council in spring 2002. To recall, the "Objectives report" identified three major objectives: quality, access and opening up the education and training systems to the wider world. It then sub-divided these further. The follow-up to the "Objectives report" should include: - an assessment of the extent to which the objectives identified in the report have been achieved, to allow the Education Council to present a report to the European Council whenever this seems appropriate; - an improvement at all levels in the forming and implementation of education and training policies; - the strengthening of cooperation and exchanges of best practice among Member States, which will make this work more effective. The methods which the Commission proposes to apply in order to achieve these objectives include benchmarking, exchange of best practices, peer review, indicators and support structures.