Education and training systems: eLearning programme 2004-2006 for integration of information technologies

2002/0303(COD) - 19/12/2002 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to establish the eLearning Programme, a multi-annual programme for the effective integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe. CONTENT : this proposal concerns the adoption of a financial support programme. The overall objective is to improve the quality and accessibility of European education and training systems through the effective integration of new technologies (e-learning), supporting and complementing the actions of Member States in this field. The specific objectives of the programme are: - to explore and to promote ways and means of using e-learning for strengthening social cohesion and personal development, fostering intercultural dialogue, and fighting the digital divide; - to promote and develop the use of e-learning as an enabling factor for the implementation of the lifelong learning paradigm in Europe; - to exploit the potential of e-learning for enhancing the European dimension in education; - to facilitate a more structured co-operation in the field of e-learning between the diverse Community programmes and instruments and Member States actions; - to provide mechanisms for encouraging improvement of quality of products and services as well as for their effective dissemination and for exchange of good practice. There are four areas of intervention: - fighting the digital divide. Actions in this area will address the contribution of ICT for learning, in particular for those who -due to their geographical location, social situation or special needs- are not able to benefit from traditional educational and training provisions. The objective is to foster awareness and understanding of how ICT can aid these less privileged groups to acquire basic educational skills that are needed for the knowledge society. It will identify good examples and build synergies between the many projects which address these target groups. The budget available is around 25% of the total budget. - universities and higher education institutions. The priority here is better integration of the virtual dimension in physical mobility, quality assurance and the mutual recognition schemes of the Bologna Process. The objective is to encourage the development of new organisational models for European universities (virtual campus) and for European exchange and sharing schemes (virtual mobility), building on existing European co-operation frameworks (Erasmus programme, Bologna process), and providing an "e-learning dimension" to their operational tools (ECTS, European Masters; quality assurance; mobility). 30% of the total budget is available for this area. - school twinning via the Internet. The objective is to strengthen and develop schools networking, in particular via an European-wide school-twinning scheme which should make it possible for all European schools to build pedagogical partnerships with a school elsewhere in Europe, fostering language learning and intercultural dialogue. 25% of the total budget is available. - Transversal actions for the promotion of e-learning in Europe, building on the monitoring of the eLearning Action Plan. Theobjectives are the dissemination and promotion of good practice from the many projects which have been funded at the European level or by Member States and to reinforce co-operation between the various actors involved, in particular by fostering public-private partnerships. 10% of the total budget is available for this. In order to achieve its objectives, the programme will finance the following types of actions: - support for strategic pilot projects, with potential for significant impact, and clear prospects for long-term sustainability; - support for the development of research, analysis and monitoring of methods, tools, practice and trends in the design and use of 'e-learning' models for education and training; - support for strategic actions by European networks and partnerships designed to foster innovation, quality in the design and use of products and services, based on the relevant use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for education and training; - support for European platforms for dissemination, co-operation and exchange of good practice and technical and administrative assistance. The programme will be implemented over a period starting on 1 January 2004 and ending on 31 December 2006.