Lifelong learning: key competences and access for all citizens

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The committee adopted the report by Helga TRÜPEL (Greens/EFA, DE) broadly approving the proposed recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning, subject to a number of amendments under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure:

- in the light of the Lisbon strategy, MEPs stressed the need for equal opportunities and "the achievement of an average employment rate for the EU of 70% overall and of at least 60% among women";

- emphasis should be placed on combating illiteracy, loss of literacy, digital illiteracy and innumeracy;

- Member States were urged to promote access to further training through legislative measures on study leave and to ensure proper educational opportunities for those returning to work after a long break or taking up employment following retraining;

- the introduction to the Annex was expanded to mention the main aims of the proposed reference framework. It also emphasised that people with low basic skills, early school leavers, the long-term unemployed, older people, migrants and people with disabilities needed particular support to fulfil their educational potential. Another amendment to the introduction stressed that the key competences should be seen as "guidelines" for the necessary skills in today's society and that it was not possible to master every skill referred to;

- the concepts on which civic competence is based should include justice and equality as well as democracy, citizenship and civil rights;

- the designation of Competence 7 (Entrepreneurship) should be expanded to include "Sense of initiative";

- the designation of Competence 8 (Cultural expression) should be expanded to include "cultural awareness", i.e. an awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and their place in the world.