Life long learning: integrated action programme comprising Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig programmes and the Jean Monnet programme

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The Council held an exchange of views on the financial aspects of the Lifelong Learning programmes, taking account of the draft financial perspective (2007-2013) as well as the Commission's amended proposal.

The new integrated programme will be made up of four sub-programmes, which already exist within the current Socrates programme. They are Comenius (school education); Erasmus (higher education); Leonardo da Vinci (vocational education and training); and the Grundtvig (adult education). The programme seeks to contribute to the development of an EU knowledge-based society, which would allow for better jobs, greater social cohesions as well as greater educational mobility.

Following an inter-institutional dialogue on 4 April 2006 regarding the 2007-2013 financial perspective, the budget allocation for the Lifelong Learning programme now stands at EUR 6 970 million (in cash prices) compared to the EUR 13 620 million originally proposed by the European Commission.

Having been invited to express their views on the use of the financial resources and in particular the relative importance attached to each of the four sub-programmes, the delegations expressed broad agreement on the proposal tabled by the Commission. The Council underlined the importance that needs to be given to adult learning (Grundtvig) and to mobility – notably that of teachers and researchers under the Leonardo programme.

As a reminder, the European Parliament following its first reading of the proposed programme in October 2005, tabled a large number of amendments, which have been incorporated into the text either in whole, in part or in essence.