Basic information

1995/2312(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Training, education: teaching and learning, towards the learning society. White Paper **Subject** 4.40 Education, vocational training and youth	

Key players

European Parliament	**Committee for opinion**	**Rapporteur for opinion**	**Appointed**
	ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy	TRAKATELLIS Antonios (PPE)	23/04/1996
Council of the European Union	**Council configuration**	**Meetings**	**Date**
	Education, Youth, Culture and Sport	1920	1996-05-06

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
29/11/1995	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1995)0590	Summary
28/02/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
06/05/1996	Debate in Council		Summary
18/02/1997	Vote in committee		
18/02/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0056/1997	
10/03/1997	Debate in Parliament		
12/03/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
14/04/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1995/2312(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148

Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	EMPL/4/07363

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0056/1997 OJ C 115 14.04.1997, p. 0004	18/02/1997	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0092/1997 OJ C 115 14.04.1997, p. 0053-0085	12/03/1997	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1995)0590	29/11/1995	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0750	10/01/2000	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0114/1996 OJ C 182 24.06.1996, p. 0015	21/03/1996	
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0880/1996 OJ C 295 07.10.1996, p. 0025	10/07/1996	Summary

Training, education: teaching and learning, towards the learning society. White Paper

1995/2312(COS) - 29/11/1995 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: this White Paper on Education and Training is designed to provide an analysis and put forward guidelines for action in the fields of education and training at both Member State and Community level. The main lines of action at European level envisaged for 1996 include objectives to: . encourage the acquisition of new knowledge, . bring schools and the business sector closer together, . combat exclusion, . develop proficiency in three European languages, . treat capital investment and investment in training on an equal basis. SUBSTANCE: with this White Paper, the Commission is launching the debate on the contribution the European Union should make to the development of quality education in preparation for the 21st century. Its analyses and proposals will be debated in the Member States throughout 1996, the European Year of Lifelong Learning. * The challenges of education and training in Europe: The White Paper firstly states that the position of each European citizen in the future society will depend on the knowledge he has acquired. Furthermore, Europeans and their Member States must take responsibility for education and training today and work to ensure that they are more effective in the light of rising unemployment and exclusion within the Union. The Community will have to deal with three upheavals in the years ahead: - the globalisation of trade, which implies a general increase in the qualifications required, - the advent of the information society, which is radically transforming the nature of work and organisation of production, - the acceleration of scientific and technical progress. To counterbalance the harmful effects of these three upheavals, the Commission sets out two key responses: - reasserting the value of cultural identity: the ability to grasp the meaning of things, comprehension and creativity, which are the key factors in adapting to the economy and to employment, the essential basis for the acquisition of new technical skills; - developing employability, through the mobility of workers and students. To facilitate this mobility, there must be genuine recognition of knowledge within the European Union, over and above paper qualifications. * The lines of action proposed by the White Paper: the Commission proposed five major lines of action: - encouraging the acquisition of new knowledge: this involves a system of "personal skills cards", which would indicate a person's knowledge and validate his professional and technical abilities which were not

necessarily recognised through a qualification. The Commission hopes that the mutual recognition of knowledge units obtained by students will become more widespread and that any students obtaining a grant may be able to use it for courses in any other Member State. It also states its intention to launch calls for proposals for the development of multimedia educational software; - bringing schools and the business sector closer together at European level: providing support for networks of apprenticeship centres in the various countries, fostering apprentice/trainee mobility along the lines of the Erasmus model, defining a European apprentice/trainee charter; - combating exclusion by providing second chances particularly for those wishing to return to school. Young people threatened with exclusion must have access to classes with fewer pupils where the pace of teaching and pedagogical methods are customised, to placements in industry, and to multimedia training facilities. To achieve this, the White Paper proposes to redirect additional European funding from programmes such as Socrates or Leonardo which complement local and national initiatives; - enabling young people to develop proficiency in three Community languages: defining a "European quality label" which would be granted to schools which have developed language learning to the highest level and enable these schools to work within a network. The recruitment of teachers from other countries of the European Union to teach their mother tongue would be systematically encouraged; - treating capital investment and investment in training on an equal basis: the Commission believes that it is necessary to review companies' fiscal and accounting approaches so that part of the sums they set aside for training personnel can be included in their accounts as intangible investment. Similarly, "training fund" schemes should be devised for those who wish to update their knowledge or re-embark upon training.

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1995/2312(COS) - 12/03/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Susan WADDINGTON (PSE, UK) on the Commission's white paper on 'education and training - teaching and learning- towards the learning society', Parliament criticized the Commission's approach, which concentrated almost exclusively on young people and considered that the debate should be expanded to cover lifelong learning and widened to include the following groups: - children, - adult workers, - women, - people excluded or marginalized from society, - enterprises. . with regard to children: it considered that efforts should be made to introduce children to a wide curriculum and that it should foster equality between the sexes. It was not convinced by the proposal in the white paper on the creation of second-chance schools which risked the creation of ghetto schools. To the extent that general education was a key instrument in preventing the exclusion of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, the main aim must be to reintegrate young people into the mainstream education system. Parliament called for increased opportunities for education for disadvantaged groups and suggested the establishment of learning partnerships with these people (including the families of pupils and students) in order to fight against illiteracy. Fearing in particular that new cuts in education budgets could only widen social divisions, Parliament called for urgent research in order to act against educational failure which was very costly. . with regard to young people: Parliament criticized the white paper for underemphasizing the role of education and training in preparing young people for social, egalitarian, democratic and working roles in adult life. It therefore proposed: - striving for a more balanced mix between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, - delaying streaming decisions between general and vocational routes, - developing cooperation and mobility in general education, - providing career advice services (in particular for those leaving compulsory schooling), - encouraging young people to participate in opportunities for active citizenship, work experience, entrepreneurial and voluntary action, - avoiding the creation of educational courses which lead to dead ends. . with regard to women: the conditions must be created to enable women to access education and training. . with regard to disadvantaged groups: opportunities for access to education and training systems must be improved in particular for the long-term unemployed. Parliament called on the public authorities to provide for systems of 'continual chances' for disadvantaged people. Parliament also made a certain number of recommendations in particular in the following areas: . the teaching environment and teachers: it called on the Commission to support schemes to improve knowledge of languages. A certain number of objectives were set: - proficiency in the mother tongue, - good functional knowledge of a first foreign language (starting from primary education), - passive knowledge of one or more other foreign languages (languages related to the mother tongue or languages of neighbouring countries), - undertaking that a maximum choice of foreign languages is offered in secondary education, - adequate teacher training. It also called for support for the use of educational multimedia. . the employed and enterprise: it believed that governments should encourage investment in continuing education and learning by: - ensuring every worker's right to appropriate training, - finding ways of accrediting newly acquired skills and achievements, - targeting training for less skilled workers, - addressing the difficulties experienced by workers in small and medium sized undertakings. . partnerships and resources: the Commission was encouraged to promote debate between the social partners on practical means for promoting investment in education and training. Partnerships should be established between local and regional authorities, non-governmental organizations, local people and enterprises to provide access to training for all sectors of the population. It called on the Member States to step up their cooperation and to organize exchanges and courses. The states should also redirect their resources in order to promote lifelong learning and training. . EU role: recalling that the EU could only initiate in this matter while the main powers lay with the Member States, Parliament expected the Council and the Commission to pay greater attention, including in financial terms, to education and training as a means of promoting employment. It did not share the Commission's view that no additional resources were needed to meet the challenges of our society as regards education. It drew attention to the fact that programmes such as SOCRATES and LEONARDO DA VINCI , as the financial framework for the measures proposed, are already underfunded. It therefore called on the budgetary authority to increase funding for these programmes. With regard to financial aspects it also called on the Commission to explore the opportunities offered by tax incentives, training levies, distance learning techniques, etc. in order to encourage training. Noting that the recognition of qualifications obtained outside mainstream education and training posed great difficulties, Parliament called for greater transparency with regard to the substance of vocational certificates and the recognition of qualifications at European level. Parliament called on the Commission on the basis of Article 126 and 127 of the EU Treaty to: - promote dissemination of information on the prevention of school failure and support teachers specialising in assistance to low achievers, in particular through new information technologies; - fund partnership projects for the implementation of strategies to build an inclusive learning society (mentoring schemes for those at risk of exclusion, women, immigrants); - encourage the development of good practice to improve integration of disadvantaged people in the learning society. The Commission was also called on to submit a detailed proposal for the setting up of a European apprenticeship scheme and to prepare on the basis of the White Paper a more detailed and comprehensive proposal in the light of the criticisms and contributions made by Parliament in its resolution. A revised plan was therefore expected by Parliament based on its recommendations.

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1995/2312(COS) - 10/07/1996 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

In this light, the ESC regards the development and modernization of education and training as a necessary precondition for the fuller development of the economic, social and cultural life of the European Union. It also compares the political will and declarations in favour of growth, competitiveness and employment with the level of investment for those purposes, which should be proportional. In conclusion, the ESC would stress the following as regards the aims and actions proposed in the White Paper on building the learning society: - it regards the five objectives set by the White Paper as key aims for building the learning society; however, it stresses that at least one more central aim should be added to these: that of the humanist dimension of the learning society; - it regards the relevant proposed actions at European level as important - but ineffectual if they are not accompanied by specific financial allocation; - at all events, the ESC regards the White Paper on education and training as a positive and important contribution by the Commission to the future of the European Union. The various forces weaving and interweaving in the construction of the European Union and of the learning society will determine in future whether the White Paper becomes a point of reference for the aspirations of today's European citizens, but also a document corresponding to the expectations of the new world which technological and scientific developments, the information society and the internationalization of the economy are building day by day.

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1995/2312(COS) - 10/01/2000

PURPOSE: To present a report on the implementation of the Commission's White Paper on "Teaching and learning - Towards the learning society' CONTENT: To recall, the five main objectives of the White Paper were as follows: 1) to encourage the acquisition of new knowledge; 2) to bring schools and the business sector closer together; 3) to combat exclusion; 4) to develop proficiency in three European languages; 5) to treat capital investment and investment in training on an equal basis. The main aim of this report is to describe the experimental, action and study phase implementing the five objectives stated above. At the present moment it is not possible to conduct a full-scale final assessment of the way the five objectives have been implemented, since many of the measures are still in progress. It is nonetheless possible to take stock of what has been done and evaluate the methodological input in relation to innovative measures conducted on the initiative of the Community institutions and bodies in conjunction with the Member States. According to this report, the implementation of the White Paper has helped define the three main dimensions of work on building a Europe of Knowledge: 1) developing the employability and adaptability of young people and workers: in this instance it is necessary to open new avenues for validating skills, to develop apprenticeship/trainee schemes in Europe (for example, EUROPASS-Training scheme) and to successfully reintegrate young people into the world of work by way of a tailor-made training pathway for young people affected by social exclusion. Other initiatives should be developed such as the launching of the European voluntary service scheme based on the concept of "learning by doing" or the development of language teaching and learning or even encouraging workers to invest in their own aptitudes and skills within a general framework of lifelong learning; 2) boosting knowledge potential : in the framework, it is necessary to open new ways of validating knowledge (automated evaluation tests for a range of general or more vocational knowledge), strengthening co-operation between schools and business in developing partnerships, combat against exclusion, become proficient in at least three Community languages and mobilise the necessary funding in order to enable people to acquire the highest level of knowledge possible; 3) help build a people's Europe: the objective being to create a common social and joint education area in order to base a real sense of belonging to a common social and cultural area and to give everyone equal access to these values and their practical expression as well as the knowledge of languages and cultures. The report highlights that by the end of 1999, the Commission has reached the following stage in the five areas pinpointed by the White Paper, these included: - a number of experimental projects, for example the European voluntary service scheme has even given rise to a newCommunity action programme; - additional work on measures which were already in progress under existing prgrammes; - new ideas and studies to find ways and means of putting these ideas into effect. Moreover, "Second chance schools" pilot projects are also very positive. These are targeted at young people who are "socially excluded" and the aim is to reintegrate them into society and the world of work by giving them a wide range of quality training opportunities. Other results are also underlined such as, the project for European labels for intiatives encouraging language learning. Lastly it is clear that some progress has been made in implementing the White Paper. Innovative experiments and activities have made a very active contribution to creating a Europe of Knowledge. The Commission and the Member States will continue to think about and discuss the matter, based on studies, seminars and expert reports. Provision has been made in the second phase of the Socrates and Leonardo Da Vinci programmes and in the new Youth for Europe programme to introduce new education and training schemes to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge skills by all groups in the European society.

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1995/2312(COS) - 06/05/1996

The Council examined the White Paper ‘Teaching and learning: towards the learning society’, which was presented by the Commission in response to an initiative from Commissioners E. Cresson and P. Flynn, with the agreement of Commissioner Bangemann. The Council of Education Ministers intended to make their contribution to the debate on fundamental issues relating to education and training at both Member State and Community level; this debate, which had been initiated in Venice (2 and 3 February 1996) during the inaugural conference of the European Year of Education and

Lifelong Learning, was to be continued through 1996 and beyond. The reflections that followed did not seek to present conclusions, but were rather a basis for intermediate comment both within the Member States and as part of a process of analysis and consolidation that would bring together the European institutions and other technical authorities, also under the Irish and Dutch Presidencies.