Basic information

2010/2234(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
European cooperation in vocational education and training to support the Europe 2020 strategy **Subject** 4.40.15 Vocational education and training 4.40.20 Cooperation and agreements in the fields of education, training and youth	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	HIRSCH Nadja (ALDE)	08/07/2010

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection	SEHNALOVÁ Olga (S&D)	01/12/2010
CULT Culture and Education (Associated committee)	BADIA I CUTCHET Maria (S&D)	24/06/2010
FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	SENYSZYN Joanna (S&D)	28/09/2010

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Education, Youth, Culture and Sport	3046	2010-11-18

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	VASSILIOU Androulla

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
09/06/2010	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2010)0296	Summary
21/10/2010	Committee referral announced in Parliament		

21/10/2010	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
18/11/2010	Debate in Council		Summary
16/03/2011	Vote in committee		Summary
23/03/2011	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0082/2011	
06/06/2011	Debate in Parliament		
08/06/2011	Decision by Parliament	T7-0263/2011	Summary
08/06/2011	Results of vote in Parliament		
08/06/2011	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2010/2234(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	EMPL/7/04271

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE452.809	15/11/2010	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE454.516	15/12/2010	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE450.958	28/01/2011	
Committee opinion	FEMM	PE454.683	01/02/2011	
Committee opinion	IMCO	PE456.624	01/03/2011	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0082/2011	23/03/2011	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0263/2011	08/06/2011	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2010)0296	09/06/2010	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2011)8071	24/10/2011	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	PT_PARLIAMENT	COM(2010)0296	20/12/2010	

European cooperation in vocational education and training to support the Europe 2020 strategy

2010/2234(INI) - 09/06/2010 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to give a new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (VET) to support the Europe 2020 strategy.

BACKGROUND: the quality of human capital is crucial for Europe's success. VET must play a dual role: as a tool to help meet Europe's immediate and future skills needs; and, in parallel, to reduce the social impact of and facilitate recovery from the crisis. These twin challenges call for urgent reforms. The case for better skills development[1] in Europe is even more urgent in the light of the global race for talent and rapid development of Education and Training (E&T) systems in emerging economies such as China, Brazil or India.

Initial vocational education and training (IVET) must equip young learners with skills directly relevant to evolving labour markets, such as e-skills, and highly developed key competences; such as digital and media literacy to achieve digital competence ; it has a particular role to play in addressing Europe's high youth unemployment. In addition, as the traditional life sequence of "training-work-retirement" will be modified with mid-life changes of careers and occupations, adults must be able to update their skills and competences through **continuing vocational education and training (CVET)**.

The EU Ministers in charge of VET, European Social Partners and the European Commission will review the priorities under the Copenhagen process in December 2010.

European cooperation in VET so far has been successful, particularly in the establishment of a number of EU common tools to enhance transparency and portability of qualifications. However, the agenda set in Europe 2020 clearly calls for a **much bolder approach to reforms of VET systems**.

The re-launch of European cooperation in VET at the end of 2010 should be the result of a close partnership between Member States, the Commission and the Social Partners. It should comprise the **definition of priorities for the coming 10 years, with shorter term objectives to be regularly reviewed** by the stakeholders. This Communication constitutes the contribution of the Commission to the agenda for the modernisation of VET in the EU and provides policy responses to support the Europe 2020 Strategy.

CONTENT: the aim of this Communication is therefore to propose a vision for the future of VET. It builds on and contributes to the Europe 2020 strategy and the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training up to 2020. It also takes into account the EU's renewed social agenda and the EU Strategy for Youth.

This communication outlines several possible ways to give VET a new impetus:

(1) A key role of VET in lifelong learning and mobility: the key actions in VET to support lifelong learning and mobility should focus on:

- flexible "à la carte" concepts to maximise the access to continuing VET delivered by employers, traditional training providers and higher education institutions and coupled with appropriate financial incentives;
- genuinely open pathways from VET to HE and development of tertiary VET programmes;
- high degree of validation of non-formal and informal learning;
- integrated guidance and counselling services to facilitate transitions and learning and career choices;
- by 2020, systematic use of EQF, ECVET and Europass aimed at transparency of qualifications and portability of learning outcomes;
- transnational mobility strategies at the level of VET providers facilitated by appropriate mobility support structures.

(2) Increasing attractiveness and excellence of VET through quality and efficiency: the key actions to improve the quality and efficiency of initial and continuing VET should aim at:

- implementing quality assurance systems at national level, as recommended by EQAVET framework;
- developing a competence framework for teachers and trainers in initial and continuing VET;
- providing the workforce with high quality labour market relevant vocational skills by increased use of different forms of work-based learning;
- strengthening the development of key competences to ensure the adaptability and flexibility of learners and workers;
- making VET provision more responsive to evolving labour market needs based on forward planning tools in cooperation with social partners and public employment services.

(3) Equity and active citizenship: initial VET can contribute significantly to combat drop outs, improve educational equity and promote upward social mobility of groups at risk by:

- providing high quality training focused on work-based learning adapted to individual needs;
- pathways from VET to HE accessible to groups at risk;

- appropriate "tracer systems" to monitor the employment rates of VET students, in particular of those belonging to groups at risk.

Continuing VET is particularly well placed to increase the labour market participation of groups at risk through:

- flexible and modularised individual learning pathways;
- work-based learning focused on the acquisition of key competences;
- guidance services and validation of prior learning, particularly for migrants in order to facilitate their integration into society.

With a view to development of the key competences for active citizenship:

- partnerships between VET providers, local communities, civil society organisations, parents and learners should be strengthened.

(4) Innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship: VET can support creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship of learners by:

- providing experience-based and active learning to promote the acquisition of e-skills, a risk-taking culture, initiative, curiosity, intrinsic motivation and the critical thinking of individuals;
- including entrepreneurship in the competence framework of VET teachers and trainers.

European cooperation in vocational education and training to support the Europe 2020 strategy

2010/2234(INI) - 18/11/2010

The Council adopted conclusions on the priorities for European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-2020.

The conclusions set out a **global vision for vocational education and training (VET) in 2020**, aiming at a more attractive, relevant, career-oriented, innovative, accessible and flexible European VET system than in 2010.

They also establish four long-term strategic objectives for the period from 2011 to 2020, which reflect those adopted under the overarching "ET 2020" strategic framework, namely:

1. improving the quality and efficiency of VET - enhancing its attractiveness and relevance;
2. making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
3. enhancing creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship;
4. promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship.

The text also sets out a programme of short-term deliverables related to these priorities, for the years 2011 to 2014. The conclusions will feed into the discussions at the informal ministerial meeting specially devoted to VET on 7 December in Bruges and serve as a basis for a special communiqué to be adopted by that meeting.

European cooperation in vocational education and training to support the Europe 2020 strategy

2010/2234(INI) - 08/06/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution in response to the Commission communication entitled ‘A new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the Europe 2020 strategy’.

The resolution notes that **the youth unemployment rate is now 21%**, which is twice as high as the general rate of unemployment at EU level and is one of the most pressing challenges in Europe, and is thus one of the goals being pursued to reduce the school drop-out rate below 10%. Another goal is to increase women’s participation in the labour market by 70% by 2020. However, the Commission communication failed to take the gender dimension into account.

Parliament considers that **education and training are key factors for successful participation in the labour market** and the ability to make life decisions, given a situation where more than 5.5 million young Europeans are without work, are at risk of social exclusion and face poverty and a lack of opportunity after leaving school. The transition from education to work and between jobs is a structural challenge for workers all over the EU.

The resolution underlines that demography and longevity are such that working lives will, as a matter of course, be longer and more varied. Lifelong learning, education, the new digital economy, the adaptation to new technologies and the implementation of the EU 2020 goals are all ways to secure employment and a better standard of living.

Members consider that **vocational education and training tailored to learners’ individual needs** is of decisive value, increasing the possibility for individuals to deal with competitive pressures, increasing the standard of living, and achieving socio-economic cohesion and better integration, in particular of specific groups such as migrants, people with disabilities, or early school-leavers and vulnerable women.

In this context, the role of the Member States and the Commission should be primarily to help create an environment where enterprises can succeed, develop and grow – to grow they need a reduced tax burden and predictability so they can plan and make investments. **Exchanges of best practices**

are important in order to increase the number and improve the quality of pupils who opt for technical training in Member States, which fares poorly as far as pupil numbers and quality are concerned.

Recognising the importance of modernising vocational education and training as well as the importance of both initial and continuing vocational education, Parliament recommends, *inter alia*, the following:

- the Member States are called upon to make use of the positive experience with the dual system within **Vocational Educational and Training (VET)** in example countries, where the system has led to the longer-term integration of young workers into the labour market and to higher employment rates for young workers;
- **VET programmes should be extended** to comply with the principles of lifelong learning and initial and continuing training;
- the importance of encouraging **regular further training courses** as part of lifelong learning is stressed;
- the Member States are called upon to ensure that **vocational training and life-long-learning are geared more closely to the needs of the labour market** and allow for entry into and mobility within it. There is a need for better and greater interaction between the world of education, work, vocational education and training as a vital link between the world of education and that of work;
- the Member States should establish and implement **quality assurance systems** at national level and develop a competence framework for teachers and trainers and the Commission is encouraged to develop and **update regularly a chart giving a region-by-region picture of training qualifications and demand**;
- the **link between education and training**, particularly the pathway from vocational to higher education, demands that the opportunities for link-ups between vocational training and university education be expanded, with special emphasis on integrating them into mechanisms for the provision of career information, guidance and counselling;
- the importance, at local and regional level, of fostering effective synergies and **reliable forms of cooperation between schools, training agencies, research centres and firms**, in order to overcome the inward-looking nature of education systems and the mismatch between knowledge and skills and the needs of the labour market and to make young people, in particular women, more employable is emphasised;
- better cooperation among the Member States' different education systems – bridging those differences and ensuring mutual recognition of certificates and diplomas among the Member States – should be emphasised in order to heighten cross-border collaboration and aid mobility;
- Parliament calls for a specific EU initiative to attract girls to the MINT (mathematics, informatics, natural sciences, and technology) professions and to **combat the stereotypes** that still dominate these professions;
- the Commission and the Member States are called upon to **render the European Social Fund management more flexible** bearing in mind the changing nature of the labour market;
- the Member States and the Commission are urged to **further improve the recognition of informal and non-formal learning**. Members point to best practices in this field, especially with ESF-funding, which prove that the recognition of skills, wherever they are learned, leads to more successful integration into the labour market.

lastly, the Member States are asked, as far as vocational education and training are concerned, to take into consideration the individual needs of low-skilled workers, migrant learners, people belonging to an ethnic minority, vulnerable women, the unemployed, people with disabilities and single mothers and at the same time that particular attention be paid to the **Roma minority**.