

Education




Posted by: Lifelong Learning Platform





Education is not one of the core competences of the EU and so the role of the European Parliament and other EU institutions is mainly limited to supporting Member States through non-binding opinions and recommendations, benchmarking and the exchange of best practices. EU provides funding for education, most notably through the flagship Erasmus+ programme which is closely scrutinized by Members of the European Parliament. Having this in mind, here is the analysis of the Parliament's progress on a selection of topics in the field of education.


Follow-up of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020)

Vote Breakdown

 409
For

 108
Against

 65
Abstain

 130
Absent

259 votes required to pass.

In June 2016 the Parliament voted on a resolution for the *Follow-up of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020)*. The report, drafted by Zdzisław Krasnodębski (ECR, Poland), recommended that Member States make better use of this cooperation and called for stronger coordination between the EU institutions and civil society organisations in order to ensure genuine dialogue and better policy coherence. The motion was largely supported by the Parliament's largest political groups (EPP, S&D, ALDE, ECR) but opposed by the smaller groups (Greens/EFA, GUE-NGL, EFDD, ENF).

Erasmus+ and other tools to foster mobility in vocational education and training

Vote Breakdown



308 votes required to pass.

In April 2016 the Parliament adopted a resolution on *Erasmus+ and other tools to foster mobility in vocational education and training*. The report, submitted by Ernest Maragall (Greens/EFA, Spain), addressed the need to improve the quality and the quantity of mobility in the field of VET, underlining the importance of equal access to mobility for VET learners who are often from lower socio-economic backgrounds, the need to promote all available mobility options and the importance of recognising newly acquired competences. The report was largely backed by all political groups, with the exception of the ECR and EFDD groups.

Implementation of Erasmus+

Vote Breakdown



269 votes required to pass.

In February 2017 the Parliament voted on a resolution concerning the *Implementation of Erasmus+*. The report, drafted by Milan Zver (EPP, Slovenia), recalled the vital role Erasmus+ plays in fostering European identity and integration, solidarity, quality employment, social cohesion and youth labour mobility by making a positive contribution to the improvement of European education and training systems. It recognised the improvements made by the Commission in light of difficulties encountered in the first two and a half years of the programme's implementation, but called for a further reduction of bureaucratic obstacles. The report received the support of almost all political groups.

Promoting youth entrepreneurship through education and training

Vote Breakdown



328 votes required to pass.

In September 2015 the Parliament adopted a resolution on *Promoting youth entrepreneurship through education and training*. The report, submitted by Michaela Šojdřová (EPP, Czech Republic), called for education systems to include aspects of entrepreneurship in the curricula at all levels and paid special attention to the training of teachers, informal learning and the practical dimension of learning through project-based cooperation with entrepreneurs and the private sector. The motion was supported by the EPP, S&D, ALDE and Greens/EFA but largely opposed by the EFDD, ECR and GUE-NGL groups.

In June 2017 the Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and Committee on Culture and Education adopted a joint report on a New skills agenda for Europe.

In June 2017 the Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and Committee on Culture and Education adopted a joint report on a *New skills agenda for Europe*. Initially the report was heavily focused on providing learners with skills demanded by the labour market, but the Learning Learning Platform led a successful campaign with its members to make the report more balanced, taking into account other vital aspects of education relating to personal development, active citizenship and social inclusion. The report will go through final approval at the Parliament's Plenary in September 2017.

Europass

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In June 2017 the Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and Committee on Culture and Education adopted a joint report on the revision of *Europass*. In their report rapporteurs Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (EPP, Bulgaria) and Thomas Mann (EPP, Germany) emphasised the importance of the voluntary dimension of the Europass framework and its links to other tools in the field of education and training. The report also stressed that Europass should aim to improve the understanding of learning acquired in non-formal and informal settings and needs to respect the expectations and needs of all users and providers. The report will proceed to a final vote at the Parliament's Plenary later this year.

Towards 2019

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One of the main areas of work for the Parliament in the run-up to the 2019 elections will be deciding on a post-2020 successor to the Erasmus+ programme. The Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education has put forward a resolution on the *Future of the Erasmus+ programme* to be discussed at Plenary in September this year. An increased budget, adequate consideration of learners of all ages, a cross-sectoral approach to education and an enlarged governance of the programme to include beneficiaries will be among things the Lifelong Learning Platform will be advocating for in the forthcoming discussions. Further work on skills – digital skills, new skills for new forms of jobs and upskilling pathways – will also be a key area of focus for the Parliament for the rest of the current mandate.

Standout MEPS



Krystyna Łybacka

Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

MEP Krystyna Łybacka has a keen interest in education and this is at the core of her parliamentary work. She has campaigned for Erasmus+ to be truly accessible to everyone. She prepared a report on the implementation of the Bologna process and is currently working on the modernisation of education in the EU. She is also Vice-Chair of the EP Interest Group on Lifelong Learning.



Sirpa Pietikainen

Group of the European People's Party

MEP Sirpa Pietikainen has given particular focus to the importance of quality education systems which can provide people with the range of skills they need to tackle today's complex challenges and the mobility required to succeed in today's job market. In particular, she engages in regular dialogue with young people and youth organisations in Finland and at the European level,

working to raise their key needs and messages on various issues including education and skills development. She is also Chair of the EP Interest Group on Lifelong Learning.
