

The Magazine

Education and training | Culture | Youth | Multilingualism | Sport

N°33

Education, culture and youth in Europe – results and challenges



The Magazine ³³

SUMMARY



New challenges, new opportunities
PG 4



Get your KICs
PG 8



Creating solutions
PG 14



A creative vision
PG 18



The learning curve
PG 20



Getting in Tune
PG 24



Learning on the move
PG 26



Students without borders
PG 28



Happy Birthday, Leonardo
PG 30



Life lessons
PG 34



The culture club
PG 38



Open doors, open minds
PG 42



Forever young
PG 44



Getting into the game
PG 46



Crunching the numbers
PG 50



All about EVE
PG 54



Commission Roma conference
PG 56



Briefs
PG 59

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Foreword

by Jan Trzczyński, new Director-General in DG Education and Culture of the European Commission

It's become fashionable to say that Europe "faces daunting challenges" or is in a "period of crisis". While the terminology may seem tiresome, that does not make it any less resonant. This is a crucial time. In politics, economy, culture and social sphere many hard decisions face policymakers, politicians, and the public. DG Education and Culture, with its wide and deep portfolio of responsibilities in sectors important to our society, is very much part of Europe's crisis-response effort. And why not? In taking the economic steps necessary to move beyond the crisis, European leaders must never lose sight of the social part of the equation. Tough economic medicine may be required, but a long-range view that includes important efforts to improve European education and culture is crucial to achieving a meaningful recovery.

EU leaders recognize that education and culture play an important and increasing role in helping bring about not just an economic improvement in the short term, but creating a more sustainable, socially strong economy with benefits for all Europeans over the long term. President Barroso has underlined that education and training are a key part of the EU agenda for moving beyond the crisis, for creating new jobs, fostering innovation and boosting the economy. The approach is one that plans for a future where development is sustainable, and where capital is looked at in a human context – and not just as a balance sheet.

"Knowledge is the engine for sustainable growth," reads the draft Europe 2020 Strategy, to be adopted at the June 2010 European Council. "In a fast-changing world, what makes the difference is education and research, innovation and creativity." This new initiative gives Education and Culture a more visible role in the economic/social agenda of the EU. Education and training will be at the heart of Europe's policy strategy for growth and social cohesion.

Last year the EU shined a bright spotlight on the importance of increasing knowledge. Under its European Year of Creativity and Innovation banner, we brought together thousands of

people interested in ways Europe can encourage new thinking and boost creativity and innovation. Even though the EYCI special designation was only for 2009, we plan to build on the lessons learned last year.

Which brings us to 2010 – a year to remember, as several of the EU's best-known educational and cultural programmes mark important anniversaries and milestones. The European Capitals of Culture and European Heritage Days, events that have done so much to bring the idea of European integration closer to the people, both mark their 25th anniversary this year. The Youth Programme, which now involves 130 000 young people a year, is 20 years old. The Leonardo da Vinci programme, which promotes vocational training in Europe, is celebrating its 15th anniversary and the Grundtvig programme, which fosters innovation in adult learning, is 10 years old this year.

To be sure, EAC's programme for the year is about more than just celebrating the past. It's about building on these achievements to make a better future. On the following pages you will learn about several of the areas in which the EU is making a difference with its Education and Culture programmes – from initiatives designed to reduce early school leaving and increase participation in adult education and training to renewed efforts in the realm of cultural identity, such as the increasingly popular European Capitals of Culture initiative.

In other areas – such as the Lifelong Learning Programme and the project to encourage the mutual adjustment of qualifications and recognition of academic credentials – European policymakers are looking at ways to share the experience of EU Member States with other countries and continents. And then there are new areas of interest to policymakers: under the Lisbon Treaty, sport becomes an official EU competence.

Also this year, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology's Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) get under way. This new initiative brings together universities, research centres, businesses and innovation breeding grounds for a synergized effort to forge new tools to address tomorrow's challenges.

So while some might choose to wring their hands over Europe's future, we policymakers are rolling up our sleeves. As you'll see in this edition of the Magazine, we're eager to get to the important work ahead – transforming educational and cultural policy from innovative ideas to coordinated action that benefits Europe's economic and social well-being.



NEW CHALLENGES, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

EU 2020 highlights crucial role for Education and Training policies

Two important European Commission initiatives launched late last year are welcome developments for those of us working on education and training. In September, President Barroso produced his “Political Guidelines for the Next Commission”; in November, the Commission adopted the Communication “A Consultation on the Future EU 2020 Strategy”.

These two texts hold out a prospect which has been sought after by the education community for some time: that education and training should be at the heart of Europe’s policy strategy for growth and social cohesion. This message has formed part of the dialogue we have had with the ministries of education under the open method of coordination since 2002 — and education and training have indeed been part of the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs. But President Barroso’s new message is loud and clear: education and training should be at the heart of the post-Lisbon strategy and should take centre stage in the Union’s overall socio-economic strategic reflections.

This is good news — the reward for years of patient work spent in establishing that education and training, while still very much a Member State or regional competence, is a legitimate European-level concern. Education policy makers and education ministers have learned to trust the Commission’s involvement in this area and the value of policy cooperation, exchange and mutual learning. Now the importance of this cooperation is being validated at the highest level. At the same time, as we look forward to the start of a new decade under a new Commission, and as we face up to the short-term but severe shock of recession and the longer term pressures of demographic ageing, global warming and globalisation, it also presents us with a challenge. Our work on modernising education and training must step up a gear.

The Barroso guidelines

President Barroso’s “Political Guidelines for the Next Commission” set out his broad vision for the future. Notably, he embraces not only education and training, but also other

aspects of EAC’s policies, notably our vision of a European culture based on our shared cultural and linguistic heritage, where diversity is the essence of our identity in Europe.

Education is highlighted as part of the Commission’s strategy for exiting the economic crisis. We need to raise the quality of education, extend lifelong learning and upgrade skills; the President refers to the importance of the New Skills for New Jobs agenda and the work of our programmes in helping to equip people with education and skills. In order to boost growth and social cohesion, he says, we must invest heavily in new skills for tomorrow’s jobs. He also notes that creativity and skills are driving our competitiveness and the transformations of the last decade, and calls for a fresh approach emphasising innovation and human skills as solutions for Europe in a globalised world. The approaches to education and training discussed during the European Year of Creativity and Innovation have clearly left their mark.

These guidelines recognise that, while the EU has benefited from the flow of migrants into the workforce, we need to do more to **integrate migrants** into society, and, echoing our EAC Green Paper, points to the crucial role education and training can play in this effort.

The Commission President also proposes building our programmes into a wide-ranging **EU youth and mobility initiative**, “**Youth on the move**”. Giving all young people the chance to spend part of their educational pathway in other Member States would not only bring benefits for the individuals involved, but would also promote cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and languages. This is intended to be one of the flagship actions of the second Barroso Commission.





EU 2020 Strategy

“Knowledge is the engine for sustainable growth. In a fast-changing world, what makes the difference is education and research, innovation and creativity.”

The message of the Commission’s consultation paper on EU 2020 Strategy could not be clearer. As we move past the economic crisis, we need to construct our world on new foundations, and the principal one is knowledge. The Commission’s consultation text lists three priority areas for future EU action: creating value by basing growth on knowledge; empowering people in inclusive societies; and creating a competitive, connected and greener economy. Education and training are paramount in the first two, and play an important role in the third.

The first priority, “**Creating value by basing growth on knowledge**”, emphasises education, research, innovation and creativity as sources of future growth and prosperity. It highlights in particular the need to reduce the number of low-achievers in basic skills and the number of early-school-leavers. It also highlights the important role of universities, of our mobility programmes and of improving the framework conditions for innovation and creativity. And it puts forward the idea of the 5th freedom: the free circulation of people, knowledge and technology. This links strongly with President Barroso’s “Youth on the Move” initiative.

All of this gives a much **broader role to education and training** than it currently enjoys as part of the so-called “micro-economic pillar” of the Lisbon strategy. To date, this has tended to focus on entrepreneurship education or the contribution of research rather than education to innovation. The new proposed approach gives education and training much higher status and visibility, putting it at on a more balanced footing with research.

The second priority, “**Empowering people in inclusive societies**”, also stresses education and training. Here the focus is on the acquisition of new skills, lifelong learning, better chances for people with a migrant background and a more positive attitude towards risk-taking and a capacity to innovate. This draws heavily on the exchanges over the years within the Education and Training 2010 process and, specifically, on the new broad strategic objectives and priorities adopted by the Education Council in May on the **strategic framework**. It sees true social inclusion as being built by a combination of labour market, social and education policies. And it points directly to issues such as the education of migrants and the key competences agenda, which feature strongly in our new “ET 2020” Education and Training Strategic Framework.

Knowledge-based growth and development built on high standards of education and training will be key also to realising the third priority of “**Creating a competitive, connected and green economy**”.



The consultation paper also includes high-level backing for the priority objectives of our education and training agenda, such as:

- ▶ **Fighting inequality and poverty by tackling early-school-leaving and low-achievers in basic skills.**
- ▶ **Turning our universities into a true engine for knowledge and growth, through reforms including closer cooperation with business, and to open them up to lifelong learning.**
- ▶ **Offering all young people learning mobility opportunities.**
- ▶ **Raising skill levels, including digital and entrepreneurial skills, for the new jobs ahead, including in the green economy.**
- ▶ **Making lifelong learning the backbone of new flexible learning and working pathways.**

Finally, the EU 2020 consultation paper addresses how the future process should be managed. The vision is of a greater involvement than was the case for the Lisbon process of stakeholders, the European Parliament and national parliaments. This more open approach can only be helpful to our interests. But, more importantly, the consultation text talks about involving all of the relevant sectoral formations within the Council of Ministers. In other words, for the first time there would be an explicit role within the process for the Education, Youth and Culture (EYC) Council, something which has been problematic under Lisbon.

The way forward

As we have noted, all of this is positive. There is a confirmation at the highest level that the policy issues being highlighted in our open coordination with Member States are the right ones. Furthermore, there is a demand for stronger action on a wide range of our policy initiatives. This DG, and its partners in the education ministries and the wider stakeholder world, have been given an opportunity to project their work to the highest political level. The education and training world must seize this opportunity and deliver the modernisation of systems which President Barroso and the other leaders of Europe are seeking of them.





GET YOUR KICS

The EIT's new Knowledge and Innovation Communities promise to **boost** Europe's entrepreneurial education

A more innovative Europe? New opportunities for students, researchers and businesses? A better connection between bright new ideas and the market? The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) has just taken a major step towards all three of those goals with the selection last December of its first Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs).

KICs are highly integrated partnerships bringing together universities, research centres, businesses and other actors from the innovation web in order to find new and marketable solutions to the challenges of tomorrow. The first three KICs operate in the areas of climate change mitigation and adaptation ("Climate KIC"), sustainable energy ("KIC InnoEnergy") and the future information and communication society ("EIT ICTlabs").

The KICs act under the umbrella of the EIT and follow a performance and results oriented approach. They were chosen by the EIT's decision making body – the Governing Board – on the basis of their potential to bring about truly innovative ideas, products and services in these fields.

The KICs are expected to create real impact in terms of:

- ▶ Contributing to ongoing developments in higher education and acting as a catalyst for **improvements in curricula and learning and teaching methods.**
- ▶ Supporting entrepreneurship education with the goal of **delivering top entrepreneurial people.**
- ▶ Promoting entrepreneurship in new and existing private companies, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), start-ups and new business models, leading to new **business creation.**
- ▶ Bringing **Europe wide opportunities** for local and regional companies and education institutions.
- ▶ Bringing people from different parts of the innovation web together in co-location centres where they can work with face-to-face contact and promote **mobility of knowledge.**
- ▶ Promoting technical and non-technical research and technology leading to **full exploitation of innovation opportunities.**
- ▶ Fostering a motivating and enabling IPR policy **allowing broad usage of IPR in and outside Europe.**
- ▶ Creating a strong EIT brand **restoring pride in Europe's innovation and entrepreneurship.**



Such impact is indispensable if Europe wants to remain competitive in tomorrow's knowledge economy and if it wants to offer attractive opportunities for students, researchers and entrepreneurs. The KICs have been conceived in a way as to meet these objectives and to thrive on the beneficial effects these elements have on one another. For example, better trained entrepreneurs will help local companies to open up new business opportunities and new markets. In turn, a more successful local SME environment will create new and attractive jobs. The development of new curricula will better match not only the needs of the job market, but also offer graduate and PhD students more mobility between different universities as well as between academic and corporate partners.

The KICs' co-location centres will play a crucial role in this regard. They are the main nodes where teams from across the innovation web will work together on a specific (sub)topic of each KIC, involving higher education institutions, research centres, companies and other partners, such as technology transfer centres or local and regional authorities. By working closely together on a day-to-day basis, students, researchers and entrepreneurs will tear down barriers to the free flow of knowledge between them, thereby allowing new ideas to flourish.

The EIT expects the KICs to be operational very soon and to see first results already by the end of 2010. Students and young researchers will be able to start taking part in the first KIC-labelled courses and programmes by the Autumn term. Entrepreneurs can start benefitting from new business opportunities generated by the KICs. And we all can expect to see the first steps towards finding new solutions for some of the most outstanding challenges we face for the future.

For a look at some individual KICs, see the accompanying articles.

Sustainable Energy KIC InnoEnergy



Concept

InnoEnergy is a strongly integrated alliance of reputable players from the education, research and industry sectors. The partners have jointly developed a strategy to tackle the weaknesses of the European innovation landscape and aim to be the leading motor for innovation in the field of sustainable energy.

Focus

The KIC will create economic and societal value by developing ideas from mind to market. This entails training technology leaders with an entrepreneurial mindset and connecting key players across the innovation chain through projects, platforms and events. State-of-the-art innovation and entrepreneurial support will be offered and continuously improved. The adopted technological approach covers the most challenging areas of the Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan) and addresses the transition of the system as a whole.

Structural elements

InnoEnergy will systematically produce innovation by creating critical mass and integrating different actors of the knowledge triangle in a sustainable and structured manner. To achieve this, InnoEnergy will be organised and managed as a business. Its installation as a European Company (SE) provides stability and creates self-reinforcing mechanisms leading to sustainability.

Co-location centres

Karlsruhe, Grenoble, Eindhoven/Leuven, Barcelona, Kraków, Stockholm.



Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Climate KIC



...❖ Concept

Addressing climate change requires a huge transformation of the global economy. Climate-KIC's mission is to accelerate and stimulate the innovation for this transformation and ensure benefits for Europe. The KIC will achieve this by creating a community with world-renowned innovation capability and climate change knowledge. By 2014, it will be the natural place for companies to locate climate R&D centres, for top students to look for climate education, for researchers to look for inspiration and for policy makers to seek advice. It will have created significant industrial value and high-skill jobs for Europe and built the critical mass to be self-sustaining.

...❖ Focus

Climate-KIC will initially focus on achieving excellence in four areas: assessing climate change & managing its drivers, transitioning to low-carbon resilient cities, adaptive water management and zero carbon production. These fields were selected for their mitigation-adaptation potential as well as innovation and job creation opportunities.

...❖ Structural elements

The four areas will form the core structural elements, each with a world-renowned lead responsible for the entire chain from education to commercialisation. Work will be embedded in five co-locations responsible for creating local innovation ecosystems to drive entrepreneurship and venture creation, whilst linking into a network of implementation sites. The core partners consist of major companies, academic institutions and regional agencies that have the strength to make the KIC a success. A joint not-for-profit entity will ensure effective governance.

...❖ Co-location centres

London, Zürich, Berlin metropolitan area, Paris metropolitan area, Randstad metropolitan area.

Future Information and Communication Society EIT ICT Labs



...❖ Concept

EIT ICT Labs, the KIC for the future information and communication society, aims at radical transformation of Europe into a knowledge society with an unprecedented proliferation of internet-based services. It will establish a new partnership between business and academia based on trust, transparency and mobility of ideas and people. The consortium connects world-leading companies, globally renowned research institutes and top-ranked universities all dedicated to speeding up innovation. EIT ICT Labs will generate faster transformation of ideas and ICT technologies into real products, services and businesses, boosting Europe's future competitiveness in all sectors of society.

...❖ Focus

EIT ICT Labs will equip students, researchers and businesspeople with skills and inspiration for creativity, risk-taking and entrepreneurship. By re-aligning the activities in the European Higher Education Area, the European Research Area and high-growth ICT companies the EIT ICT Labs will leverage regional, national, and EU-level funding instruments. EIT ICT Labs will foster international top talent and tap into under-utilised innovation and entrepreneurial resources such as non-core IPR, women, students, and cost-driven innovations for the next billion users. Committed to an open innovation approach, the EIT ICT Labs will catalyse the creation of strong ventures and help them to grow to become the future world leaders in the ICT arena.

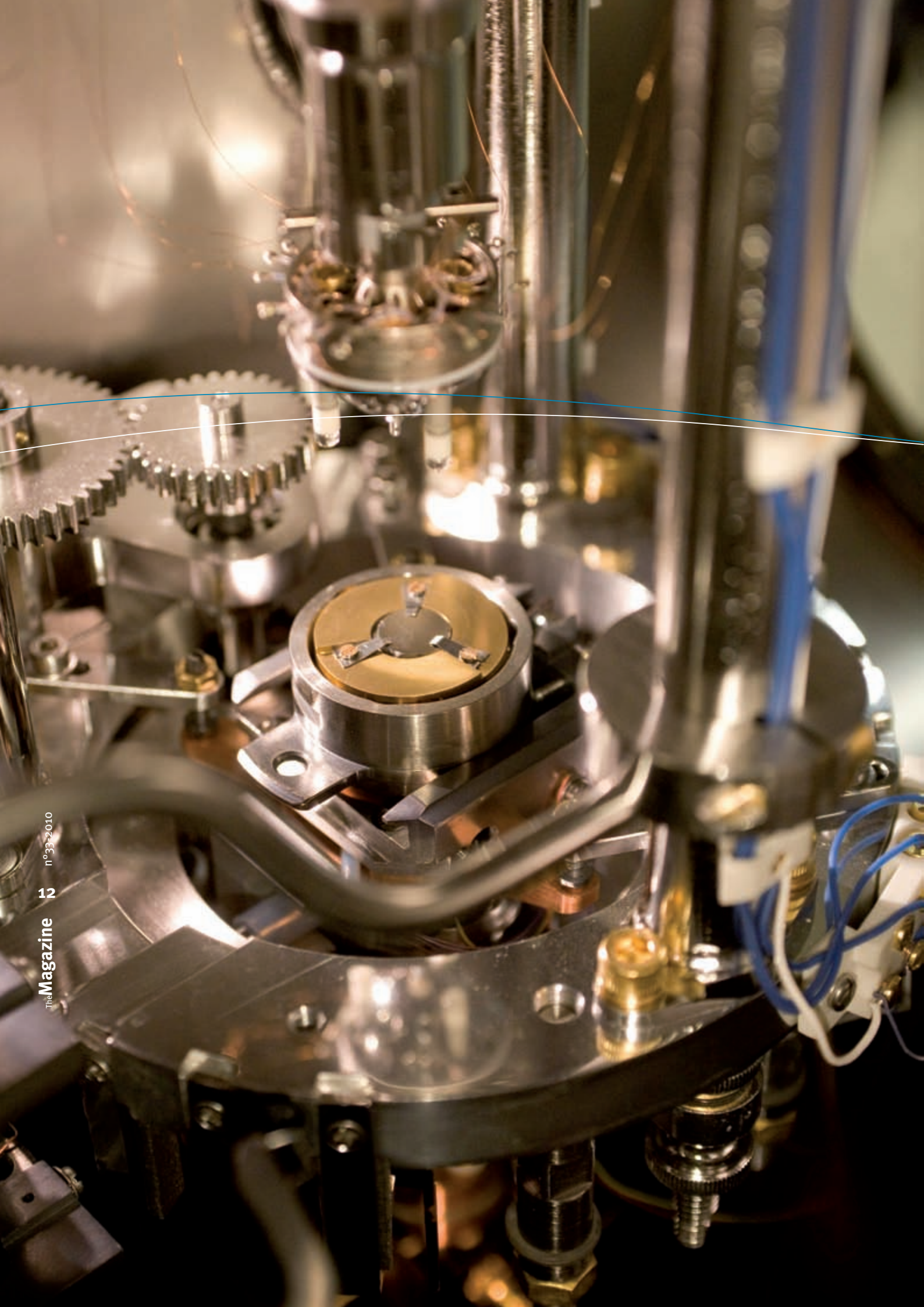
...❖ Structural elements

EIT ICT Labs will build upon five co-location centres to create a world-class network of innovation hotspots. The consortium covers the entire value chain in the dynamic ICT sector, thereby facilitating the capture of new business opportunities. Cohesion and efficiency will be achieved by combining strong CEO-type management and clear IPR policies for open innovation with the agility of bottom-up initiatives provided by an extensive network of local and international innovation partners.

...❖ Co-location centres

Berlin, Eindhoven, Helsinki, Paris and Stockholm.







KIC START

A year of **new beginnings** for the European Institute of Innovation and Technology

An interview with EIT Director Gérard de Nazelle



2010 is an important year for the European Institute of Innovation and Technology: the EIT is being established in its new home in Budapest, and it will reach financial independence; also, the EIT's Knowledge and Innovation Communities will get started and become fully operational. EIT Director Gérard de Nazelle outlines the Institute's priorities for the coming year.

How do you see the EIT developing as a role model?

The establishment of the KICs, the EIT's innovation test-beds, will be accompanied by an intensive learning process focusing on the effectiveness of co-location, leadership, processes and governance and interactions with stakeholders – business in particular. The EIT will build up strong interactions with a broad base of European and international stakeholders, as well as with EU bodies, to share and analyse the vital success factors of KICs, so that the EIT becomes a role model inspiring new innovation partnerships in the EU and beyond.

What are the next steps for the EIT?

In 2010 the EIT is following three main objectives: delivering the KICs, establishing its headquarters in Budapest in spring 2010 and reaching financial autonomy by the end of June 2010. The start of the first KICs – as one of the EIT's top priorities – is marked by the conclusion of Framework Agreements between the EIT and the KICs, which cover a strategic horizon of seven years and are implemented on an annual basis.

What does the roadmap for the KICs look like? When will they become fully operational?

To give them a running start, the EIT is awarding a €3 million start-up grant to the KICs. So the KICs can immediately start putting in place organisation and management structures, the IP board, the business plan, as well as securing the commitment of the various partners. The KICs will become fully operational shortly after the signature of the first annual grant agreements due by June 2010.



The EIT Headquarters will be finished and operational in spring 2010. The EIT staff starts working from the new EIT Headquarters in Budapest by spring 2010.

Creating SOLUTIONS

In 2009, the European Year of Creativity and Innovation laid the groundwork for Europe's future success

“Imagine, Create, Innovate.” Under that slogan, the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009 has promoted thousands of activities across Europe and beyond, raising awareness of the importance of creative and innovative approaches in different sectors of human activity.

Throughout 2009, from its opening event in Prague to its closing conference in Stockholm, the initiative gathered momentum – and the quality and diversity of activities presented by Member States left an encouraging feeling of progress. By the end of the year, more than a thousand events aimed at diverse audiences had been held under the creativity and innovation banner across Europe. This is all the more remarkable considering that the EYCI had no specific funding.

This level of mobilisation of people in Europe shows the breadth of support for the EYCI's objectives. The Year has been generally perceived as a timely and relevant initiative, especially in the current economic climate. “The European Year of Innovation and Creativity 2009 will help to unlock Europe's creative and innovative potential, a task that has become even more important in times of economic crisis,” the then-European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Training and Youth Ján Fígel' said at the initiative's official launch.

One of the key outcomes of EYCI is the “Manifesto for Creativity and Innovation in Europe.” This document is the result of work done by the Ambassadors of the Year, leading Europeans from the fields of culture, science, business, education, design and the arts. It is an all-embracing call for action, with “Seven commandments” and “Seven lines of action” covering areas from education and research to design and a green economy. The Ambassadors presented the Manifesto to Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso on 12 November and its echoes resound in the consultation document on the new political agenda EU 2020 published shortly afterwards.

Promoting debate

The Commission organised seven “flagship conferences” meant to promote debate throughout the Year and to ensure that all key policy issues were dealt with from a European point of view. The first of these, “Creativity & Innovation – Best Practice from EU Programmes”, examined creativity and innovation in various projects funded by the EU Programmes for Education and Training (Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig, Leonardo da Vinci); Youth; Citizenship and Culture; Media; the Framework Programmes (research) and the Structural Funds.

Another of the conferences, “Can creativity be measured?”, examined ways of measuring creativity in an international, comparative manner over both the short- and long-term. Organized by CRELL (Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning)



and DG Education and Culture, the conference brought together the best experts in the field, and it turned out to be a seminal one.

The conference “Creativity, Innovation, People: The Regional Dimension of Creativity and Innovation” had a regional/local approach, exploring creativity and innovation from the people’s point of view, and demonstrating how they relate to everyday life and to societal priorities and concerns. Notable good practices were chosen in areas with growth potential, such as soft energies, health services, ICT and the creative industries.

The biennial “European Cultural Forum” has become a major conference for cultural actors and stakeholders in Europe. More than 1000 people signed up to attend it in 2009, when the Forum and its accompanying conference “Culture in Motion” gave special attention to creativity.

The annual European Symposium organised to give policy-makers and stakeholders concerned with education and training an opportunity to engage with academics and researchers from relevant fields focused on “Creativity and Innovation in and through VET”. The symposium had two main themes: “Fostering the creativity of VET learners”, empowering them with the creative attitudes and skills increasingly needed in the workplace, and “Modernising VET systems through creativity and innovation”, making them more relevant, responsive and open to the needs of the labour market and of society at large.

“Beyond the crisis: design for a sustainable future” was the first ever conference on design organised by the European Commission. It had two main objectives: raising awareness of design thinking as a multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary process bridging creativity and innovation, culture and the economy; and strengthening Europe’s sustainable competitiveness by developing both design skills and design thinking for successful innovation. Design is at the interface between culture and the economy, between products and services and their users. It addresses aesthetic as well as functional and production needs, and it is probably the best example of the Year’s objectives.

The Commission also organised seven Brussels debates in cooperation with the European Policy Centre, to address the role and importance of creativity and innovation in the different sectors of society and economy. Each of them brought a representative of the Commission, Commissioner or Director General, together with experts in the field under discussion. The themes were: Education for creativity and innovation; Creativity and innovation in the public sector; Creativity and innovation and sustainable development; Creativity and innovation in business; Cultural diversity as basis for creativity and innovation; and Creative industries.



The Committee of the Regions, a key supporter of the EYCI, organised two main events: in April, the **Forum on “Europe’s Creative Regions and Cities”** hosted more than 300 participants proving the importance of regions and cities for a successful turn in economic development and the need to spot and stimulate creative talent; in October, creativity and innovation were core subjects in the **“Open Days 2009”** which brought more participants to Brussels for hundreds of meetings and workshops.

The First Innovation Summit, organised by Knowledge4Innovation and the Lisbon Forum, turned the European Parliament into an Innovation Showcase. The event gathered policymakers from the EU institutions, Member States, regional organizations and networks, and stakeholders from the academic and private sectors. A highlight was the session on Europe’s Future Nobel Prize Winners, with participation from European students and a focus on entrepreneurship education and the development of innovation skills.

The European Journalism Centre, in cooperation with Stanford University, organised the Seminar “Interfacing innovation,” which included 30 European journalists from across 14 European countries, some of the EYCI Ambassadors and some members of the EIT Governing Board. The seminar was part of a wider effort to develop innovation journalism in Europe.

A show of creativity

Other events vividly illustrated European creativity and underlined the philosophy of the EYCI. A Brussels concert by the Vienna Vegetable Orchestra was one example. Playing instruments made solely out of vegetables – carrot flutes, pumpkin basses, leek violins and celery bongos – the musicians create funky melodies inspired by classical and modern sources, from Stravinski to Kraftwerk to Indonesian music.

In November, the first European Innovation & Creativity Camp brought together 95 secondary school students from 25 countries. Organised by the European Commission and Junior Achievement-Young Enterprise (JA-YE) Europe, the Camp faced the students with a marathon 24-hour challenge in which they had to find solutions for how best to engage students and make education more relevant for the future. They quickly had to learn how to work together, as they brainstormed solutions and developed their ideas into business plans. The winning team developed the concept of “Face-School” and “YouSchool” to engage students in education via social networking sites.

The Orbis Pictus exhibition conceived by the artist Petr Nikl, an accompanying event for the Czech Presidency of the European Union, presented the ideas of J. A. Comenius, the Czech humanist, on a symbolic level. The main topic and purpose of the exhibition was to create a communication channel across nationalities, social classes and religions.



Success stories

The meeting of Member State national coordinators at the closing conference at Stockholm confirmed the desire for creativity and innovation in Europe. In all 23 countries represented, there have been a substantial number of activities held as part of the Year. All of them have focused on diversity, confirming a shared wide understanding of creativity and innovation; all have shown a rare capacity for reaching out both to specialised sectors and to the general public; and all have had political support.

Many countries set coordination structures involving several ministries and agencies; in at least three there was a parliamentary debate on the objectives of the Year. There was active participation at national, regional and local levels, with support from associations, businesses and civil society at large. The fact that so many social and political actors worked together to produce new networks and ideas to foster creativity and innovation is surely cause for optimism.

And the public was taking notice. The EYCI's website, <http://create2009.europa.eu>, attracted a record number of half a million visits and 1.5 million pages viewed. Daily reports about creativity and innovation in the cities and regions of Europe, rich multimedia content and a modern look and feel contributed substantially to the success of the site. Hundreds of

projects and events organised by the European governments, local authorities and by the civil society found their place on the site and the logo of the Year was widely used in a decentralised communication campaign. The written and online press showed a considerable interest in the topics of creativity and innovation with more than 3 000 articles reaching potentially one fifth of the EU population.

Looking ahead

The work done during the European Year of Creativity and Innovation will be taken further as part of the EU's new innovation strategy, for which a public consultation took place in 2009. Moreover, creativity and innovation play key roles in the EU 2020, the new strategy to make Europe a smarter, greener social market. The EU Digital Agenda highlights the role of ICT as an innovative sector and a driver of innovation in other sectors. Innovation, particularly social innovation, is an important element of the fight against poverty and social exclusion, which are the topics of the European Year 2010. Finally, creativity and innovation are one of four priorities of ET 2020, the strategic framework for policy cooperation in education and training. To be sure the European Year 2009 was a timely contribution to the debate on how to prepare the EU for the challenges ahead in a globalised world.



A CREATIVE VISION

European photographers “Imagine a new world”

“Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world.”

Albert Einstein

As part of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation (EYCI) 2009, the European Commission launched in June 2009 the “Imagine a new world” photo competition. Professional and amateur photographers were invited to produce an original work expressing their vision of a “new world”. This was an opportunity to convey their own messages about the future and to show what creativity and innovation means to them. The competition was open to residents of EU Member States, candidate countries and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Around 5 000 photos from 1 500 photographers were submitted, with Germany, France, Italy, Romania and Spain being strongly represented.

This high level of interest from across the EU showed that the competition captured the imagination of European citizens. The different approaches the entrants took to express their vision of the future reaffirmed the originality and creative potential of Europeans. The photographs cover a large spectrum of genres and give us a snapshot of Europeans’ hopes, challenges, fears and dreams.

Winners were selected based on several criteria: the photographers’ interpretation of the theme, the creativity of their works’ content and composition, technical aspects including editing, overall coherence, the artistic quality and personal style of the photographer, as well as broad appeal of the photographs.

Three winners were chosen by a jury chaired by Chris Wainwright, Professor of photography and President of the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA). The jury consisted of renowned photography and art professionals: Claude Busac, Director of PhotoEspaña, Spain; François Hébel, Director of the Rencontres d’Arles, France; Orsolya Kőrösi, Managing Director of the Hungarian House of Photography, Hungary; Vangelis Ioakimidis, Director of the Thessaloniki Museum of Photography, Greece; Elina Brotherus, photographer and video artist, Finland; Klavdij Sluban, French photographer of Slovenian origin.

Winner of the first prize was Hungarian Daniel Halasz for his “Imaginary Diary”, a complex portfolio of postcard-style images that create a new world with no boundaries in which every member of society has equal opportunities to accomplish their dreams. In this new world, these images could be in anyone’s photo album.

The jury awarded second prize to James Naylor from the United Kingdom for his portfolio “Class of 2109” – an optimistic view of how a united world could look. “Class of 2109” takes the form of a high school yearbook and focuses on the positive hybridization of cultures in future generations.



Third prize went to Vincent Bitaud from France for his portfolio “Car(e)less City”, which questions the urban structure as we know it. He imagines a future in which motor vehicles will be banned and roads will be planted with grass or crops, or even filled with water.

A fourth winner – of the “Public’s Favourite award” – was chosen by the European public through an online voting in October 2009 among 30 photographs short-listed by the jury. The winner was Balázs Szabó from Hungary with his picture “Heroes”, showing a popular Hungarian hip-hop group whose success opened up a new world for them.

At the award ceremony, which took place in Brussels on 10 November 2009, Maroš Šefčovič, then the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, gave the winners prizes in the form of photographic equipment, as well as an invitation to participate at the closing event of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation in Stockholm.

The winning pictures and those shortlisted for the Public’s Favourite Award are being shown across Europe throughout 2010 (with exhibitions in Budapest, from 11 February – 21 March 2010, in the Hungarian House of Photography in Mai Manó House; Thessaloniki: 20 April – end of May 2010, in the PhotoBiennale 2010 in the Thessaloniki Museum of Photography; and Madrid: 9 June – 25 July 2010 in PhotoEspaña 2010 in Teatro Circo Price).

The photo competition was one of several events organised by the European Commission as part of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009 (EYCI). Under the slogan “Imagine, Create, Innovate”, the initiative aims to raise awareness of the importance of creativity and innovation as key competences for personal, social and economic development. By emphasizing creativity and innovation, the EU aims at shaping Europe’s future in a global competition by fostering the creative and innovative potential in all of us.

Official website of the competition: www.imagine2009.eu
Official website of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation: <http://create2009.europa.eu>





THE LEARNING CURVE

European initiatives can help reduce the number of school dropouts

Europe's future depends on the skills of its young people. The number of jobs requiring high- or medium-level qualifications will increase in the coming decades; obviously, the European economy will need a highly skilled, creative and innovative workforce. But in today's European Union, some 6.6 million young people aged between 18 and 22 have dropped out of education and training before getting an upper secondary qualification. Yes, there have been famous examples through history of people who found success after dropping out of school, but for the overwhelming majority leaving early is a step in the wrong direction.

EU cooperation in education and in youth policy helps develop policy and mobilises national expertise in combating this phenomenon. The recently published "Policy Handbook on Early School Leaving" assembles data, research findings and examples of good practice. Here's a look at some of the Handbook's findings, as well as the European Commission's initiatives in education, training and youth policy.

Why do young people decide to give up education and training prematurely? The reasons vary considerably across the EU: they include learning difficulties, social problems or a lack of motivation, guidance and support. The motivations are often highly individual; however as a social phenomenon

early school leaving follows certain patterns. Data show that early school leavers are in general more likely to have lower socio-economic status or to belong to vulnerable groups. On average, the rate of early school leaving in Europe is double for youth with a migrant background compared to native youth (28.4% vs. 13.6%) and its incidence is generally higher among male students.

However, these individual and social conditions are also affected by educational systems and learning environments. There is no single reason why people leave school or vocational training. So there is no easy answer to the problem.

Prevention and cure

Besides being a complex phenomenon, early school leaving is also in almost all cases a process rather than a one-off event. Public policies should act as successive checkpoints interrupting the process that could culminate in early school leaving.

Participation in early childhood education and care is already an effective **pre-emptive strategy** which supports children in their development, basic cognitive skills, and future learning. It reinforces resilience against risk factors associated with early school leaving.

Preventative strategies tackle structural aspects of the educational system at the school-wide and individual-student levels. They help reduce early school leaving and provide effective support for young people at risk of dropping out.





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Compensatory strategies, such as second-chance schools, create opportunities for those who left school early but want to gain the qualifications they missed. Such opportunities are important for many early school leavers, but preventing early school leaving is the better outcome.

Be flexible

If a school education system is selective and offers few credible alternatives to so-called “underperformers”, providing individual and school-level support will be less effective at motivating at-risk students. Flexible systems with a variety of recognised learning pathways, combined with individual and school-level support, offer more educational opportunities and diminish the risk of dropping out.

Diversified and flexible pathways allow school and work to be combined and enable students to attend both vocational training and general education. This approach has been tried out in several European countries, either as a general opportunity or as pilot projects specifically addressing students at risk. Their common approach is that they allow students to gain work experience without leaving education. Students can test their abilities and experience the practical value of the theoretical knowledge they have gained at school.

Italy, for example, introduced in 2006 the possibility for students aged 15 to 18 to alternate school and work periods. The arrangement provides the possibility to obtain training credits and allows also the schools or training institutions to issue certificates attesting the competences acquired by the students.

Guidance systems

There are critical points in a student’s career at which the risk of disengagement is especially high. At these moments, guidance is a key preventative, as well as a remedial measure. Guidance can help in overcoming learning difficulties, reinforce study skills through coaching, and reduce the incidence of drop-out due to the wrong educational choices. It can also

help students and their parents to make informed choices when deciding on education or training pathways.

Several European countries have introduced career orientation into the school curriculum. For example, in Austria career guidance and counselling are an integral part of school services and “career orientation” is part of the curriculum. In the Czech Republic, career guidance at school is also supplemented by subjects such as “Education in career choice” and “Introduction into the world of work” in the curriculum.

“Learning communities”

Whatever the approach, combating early school leaving is a whole-school effort, requiring clear leadership, strong ownership of the projects among teachers, parents and the community and commitment on the part of educational authorities.

School-wide initiatives aim to develop schools into “learning communities” that ensure success by mobilising key actors around a flexible framework of multifaceted educational projects. Learning communities centre on pedagogic innovation, promoting respectful and open exchange and solidarity between students and school staff. Diversity of backgrounds is considered as an asset instead of a problem.

In the Autonomous Communities in Spain, such as in the Basque country, students, teachers, school leaders, parents, community stakeholders and education authorities are involved in defining and building the educational projects for their school. A committee representing all stakeholders monitors implementation of the different steps to turn the school into a learning community, to increase standards and avoid school failure.

Thinking outside the school

Difficulties in school often have their roots outside of school. Family involvement is crucial, and improving communication between families and schools is essential. Other factors, such



as poverty, health, nutrition, and housing can also lead to school failure.

Some of the most successful measures in reducing early school leaving have been holistic solutions. Partnerships at local level are highly effective. In Ireland the networking of different local actors to provide targeted social support has been the practice for more than 20 years. These so called Area Partnerships have become more focussed on education and provide specific support for students at risk.

Adequate solutions for young people at risk have to be found not just for them, but also with them. Real partnership and dialogue ensures the ability to empower and motivate them to find new perspectives.

Social workers are an important link between young people and society and can play a significant support role. Many youth organisations offer non-formal and informal learning activities based on a participative approach and on a voluntary basis. Mentoring by trained youth workers can help young people acquire the skills to take control over their lives.

Our future frontline

Early school leaving is a major challenge for European societies and continues to be among the key priorities for European cooperation. The new Strategic Framework for cooperation on education and training (“ET 2020”) and the new Youth Strategy – Investing and Empowering (2010-2018) have reiterated their commitment to the fight against this phenomenon. Member States remain committed to reducing the rate of early school leaving to 10 % or less by 2020.

The European Commission provides also important financial support to relevant projects in this area. Fighting early school leaving is among the current priorities of the European Social Fund. The Lifelong Learning Programme supports networks and projects developing strategies to reduce early school leaving or providing second-chance education for people who finished their education and training prematurely. The Youth in Action Programme includes various measures to support youth workers and youth organisations, who contribute in many ways to tackling this issue.

Early school leaving in figures

- ❖ In **2003**, European education ministers agreed to set a benchmark of no more than 10 % of 18-to-24-year-olds prematurely leaving school by 2010. The definition of early school leavers to be used for this benchmark is the share of the population aged 18-24 with only lower secondary education or less and no longer in education or training. Early school leavers are therefore those who have achieved only pre-primary, primary, lower secondary or a short upper secondary education of less than two years, and include those who only have a pre-vocational or vocational education which did not lead to an upper secondary certification.
- ❖ In **2008**, the rate of early school leavers stood at 14.9 % in the EU, a 15 % reduction compared to the year 2000. In real terms progress has been significant: the number of early school leavers has been reduced by over one million in eight years. Progress has, however, been insufficient to reach the 10 % target for 2010. In recognition of the need for additional efforts for reducing early school leaving, the Council has renewed its commitment to the 10 % benchmark, with a target date of 2020.





GETTING IN TUNE

Europe looks at exporting its Tuning project for higher education qualifications

Last year's Bologna Policy Forum focused on global cooperation in higher education. Participants from the 46 Bologna Process countries supported efforts to establish dialogue on recognition policies and to explore the implications of the various qualifications frameworks, quality assurance and the establishment of compatible structures.

A key part of this effort is the Tuning project, an initiative launched in 2000 by a group of EU universities and strongly supported by the European Commission and the Socrates programme. The project enabled higher education institutions to adapt to internationalization and increasing mobility of students, researchers and staff.

The overall motto of the project is the tuning of educational structures and programmes on the basis of diversity and autonomy. The project seeks to understand curricula and make them comparable, by looking at generic competences and transferable skills, subject-specific competences, accumulation of credits, approaches to learning, teaching and assessment and the role of quality enhancement in the education process. The goal is for universities to "tune" their curricula without losing their autonomy and at the same time stimulate their capacity to innovate.

Increasing attention from other parts of the world

Participation in the initiative grew in the second phase of Tuning (2003-2004) with the inclusion of new and potential member states in the project. The third phase, starting in 2005, with financing from the Tempus programme, included countries from the Western Balkans, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan. The project now covers

the vast majority of the Bologna signatory states but has also drawn increasing attention from other parts of the world such as the 19 countries in Central and South America involved in Tuning Latin America, financed by the Alfa programme. The U.S.A. and Australia are also considering becoming active.

Cooperation with Africa

The 2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy and first Action Plan (2008-2010) emphasize the importance of cooperation with Africa in higher education through networking, mobility of students and scholars, and institutional support and innovation. The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment foreseen in the Action Plan further stresses these objectives. Fostering higher education in Africa is instrumental both for growth and jobs and for providing schools with more qualified teachers.

A repeated refrain from the "Developing links: EU-Africa Cooperation in Higher Education through Mobility" Conference held in December 2008 was the need to revitalise and reform higher education in Africa and to do so in cooperation across national boundaries, to establish compatible structures and systems, which would facilitate mobility within Africa (through mobility schemes such as Nyerere) as well as between Africa and Europe and other parts of the world (through programmes such as Erasmus Mundus). An African Tuning Project building on the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe and Latin America Projects was supported by the representatives of African and European Universities and by the European and African Union Commission.

Considering the increasing importance Africa is putting on the need for a quality higher education system, DG Education and Culture, in cooperation with DG Development and EuropeAid, is looking at how a Tuning approach can support these strategic objectives for Africa. The study should be completed by the end of 2010.

LEARNING ON THE MOVE

Erasmus just celebrated its two-millionth student, but the programme still faces challenges

Europe's Erasmus programme reached an important milestone in mid-2009: the two millionth European students went abroad to study. More than 22 years after it was founded, Erasmus still offers huge benefits to young Europeans seeking an often life-changing experience in another European country.

More than just an educational experience, an Erasmus period has the power to transform an individual. As one student from Belgium put it, "I realised that the experience made a whole new person of me and that I would never look at the world and Europe – my home – like I did before." This is typical of feedback from former Erasmus students, who often report that their study or traineeship period abroad was a fulfilling experience – both in educational, professional and personal terms.

In today's world, personal and professional success in life is all about having the right skills mix. Mobility programmes such as Erasmus are part of the answer to equipping young people with the toolkit and mindset required in a complex environment.

To celebrate the programme's important milestone, the European Commission, together with the national agencies implementing Erasmus, chose a student from each of the 31 participating countries to represent the 2 millionth students. The winners were selected because they brought home outstanding stories from their exchange periods abroad or overcame physical challenges (such as a young Lithuanian woman in a wheelchair). This group represents a new Erasmus generation – students who have become friends with each other, and now wonder how only a few decades ago their compatriots could have possibly been the worst of enemies.

Erasmus facts and figures

Some 163 000 European students studied with Erasmus during the academic year 2007/2008 (the latest year for which data is available). A further 20 000 students became trainees in enterprises and other organisations thanks to Erasmus.

The number of people participating in "traditional study mobility" grew by just 2%, but overall Erasmus student mobility was boosted by the new student traineeship scheme in enterprises. Some students will choose to go on a traineeship instead of a study semester abroad. And you may be surprised to learn that the age of Erasmus students ranges from 15 to 69 years – a true example of lifelong learning.

Erasmus also keeps expanding geographically. In late 2009, the Lifelong Learning Programme of which Erasmus is a part welcomed two new countries, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Switzerland may also join the programme soon. Meanwhile, European institutions of higher education continue to apply for the Erasmus University Charter to get access to Erasmus.

But Erasmus is not only about student mobility. More than 220 000 higher education teachers also travelled abroad, usually for one-week stays at partner institutions. Feedback indicates that these foreign lecturers bring positive benefits with new methods of teaching, different academic perspectives and courses taught in foreign languages.

A recent evaluation of the programme showed its extensive impact, not only for individuals, but also for institutions and on Europe's higher education systems in general. Nowadays universities and other higher education institutions across Europe make extensive use of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System initially devised for Erasmus mobility.



But the biggest change inspired by Erasmus has certainly been the reforms of the Bologna process.

Given the importance of the programme, the EU Commission trademarked “Erasmus” to protect the name for education and training purposes.

The future of Erasmus

Over the decades, Erasmus has adapted to changing needs and improved its working. The objectives ahead for the programme still remain valid: more and better mobility.

Increasing mobility will help spread the benefits of a stay abroad among students. Erasmus exchanges currently involve only around 4 % of Europe’s student population. The EU aims to reach the target of 3 million Erasmus students by 2012, but this requires a growth rate of 8 %. Yet in ten countries the number of outgoing students studying with Erasmus has decreased, sometimes by more than 10 %. In addition, significant imbalances between incoming and outgoing student numbers still exist in many countries.

Second, the quality of mobility should be improved, in particular the correct implementation of the requirements for the Erasmus University Charter.

The challenges facing students wishing to go abroad to learn can be formidable: lack of funds to complement the Erasmus grant, acquisition of appropriate language competences, uncertainty about full recognition of periods spent abroad and an information and motivation deficit.

Since 2008, EU Member States have clearly set out the desire to expand mobility for all, a political recognition of the central role of mobility in the education agenda. Ministers of the 46 countries involved in the Bologna process, including all EU States, set an ambitious pan-European benchmark in 2009: that at least 20 % of students in higher education should have a study or training period abroad by 2020. The Commission wishes to build upon the success of the Erasmus programme. For this purpose it launched a public consultation on ideas presented in its Green Paper on learning mobility for young people, which closed in December 2009.

In addition, the ambition to give all young Europeans the chance of a learning or training experience abroad has received a major impetus from Commission President Barroso. He has thrown his weight behind expanding existing instruments like Erasmus into a new EU youth and mobility initiative, called “Youth on the Move.” The successor programme to Erasmus will take shape within this framework.



STUDENTS WITHOUT BORDERS

The Lifelong Learning Programme opens up to Europe's neighbours and the world

The ability of students and workers to move both within Europe and beyond its borders for learning purposes helps them increase personal development and acquire new skills and knowledge. It also helps them find jobs.

Since its inception in 2007 the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) has been key to achieving these goals. Projects in which partners throughout Europe cooperate to develop new curricula, elaborate systems of recognition and design new learning approaches help to improve and modernise European Education and Training practice and support modernisation of Education Systems in the participating countries. They also increase competitiveness and therefore contribute to achieving the growth and employment targets set by the Lisbon strategy. As the umbrella programme of the European Union for all education and training areas, the LLP is first and foremost addressed to the 27 EU Member States but it also provides certain opportunities to open up to countries all over the world.

Here's a look at some of the initiatives.

Cooperation and networking

Starting this year some activities of the LLP will be open to the wider world. The goal is to further improve the quality of education and training in Europe by opening up to external experience. Partners from countries that do not participate in the Lifelong Learning Programme will be able to join the multilateral projects and networks coordinated by institutions from member countries.

These projects involve all the stages of education and training from school to adulthood. Broad cooperation can be developed under several existing programmes: Comenius for school education, Erasmus for higher education, Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training, Grundtvig for adult education and key activities of the transversal programme that improve language learning and better use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

For those involved in multilateral projects and networks, cooperation means the possibility to improve, disseminate and exchange best practices in education and training centres at European level and beyond. Project participants develop new teacher training courses, guidance material and new curricula for initial teacher training that can be transferred to other learning environments. Multilateral projects and networks encourage connections between educational establishments, organisations, enterprises, social partners and other representatives of working life.

This cross-border cooperation results in innovative products and methods with indisputable European value. In addition, these networking opportunities can have a real impact on the quality and transparency of the education and training systems and help participating countries with innovation and quality enhancement.

These new opportunities will be open to organisations and institutions from:

- ▶ The Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo.
- ▶ Switzerland.
- ▶ The countries addressed by the European Union's Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Russia.
- ▶ Other countries that can help develop a strategic policy dialogue in education and training or multilingualism, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Israel, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, South Korea and USA.

Outside contributions

Turkey, though not yet a member of the European Union, has fully participated since the beginning of the programme and contributes with best practices to the enhancement of the programme. Consider the case of the Akdeniz University in Antalya. Since joining the Erasmus programme in 2003-2004 this university has established 180 bilateral agreements with other higher education institutions in Europe to allow for mobility of students



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and teachers. It has set up a proactive International Relations Office, which offers support to exchange students and also draws on the experience of students who have taken part in the European Voluntary Service as part of the EU's Youth in Action programme (www.akdeniz.edu.tr).

The European Fair Trade Association (EFTA) countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, have been fully involved in the Lifelong Learning Programme from the beginning as well and have contributed with best practices. The Smectrat project, or Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Consulting and Training Network of Schaan in Liechtenstein, encourages e-Learning in small and medium sized enterprises (www.smectra.net).

The EMMA project, or European Network for Motivational Mathematics for Adults, of the National Centre for Learning in Working Life in Oslo, Norway, highlights situations in daily life – and not just at work – where mathematical skills are needed. Many adults in Europe still lack some of these very basic skills. The EMMA project has made a valuable contribution to tackling this problem. Besides raising awareness of the issue, it has given researchers, experts and policy makers a platform to meet and discuss and to find the best strategies of improving adult numeracy in Europe (www.statvoks.no/emma).

New candidates

The candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will implement in 2010 measures preparing for participation in the programme. This includes involvement in several mobility actions where, for instance, students from these two countries are sent for learning periods abroad.

The Jean Monnet Programme

Within the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Jean Monnet programme – named after the European Union's leading founding father – has been open to applications from higher education institutions world-wide since 2001. Apart from promoting teaching and research into European integration as a subject at universities, the Jean Monnet programme stimulates universities throughout the world to explain the European Union's model for peaceful coexistence and integration. Jean Monnet professors have played a particularly important role in preparing the candidate countries for EU membership.

Today the Jean Monnet programme reaches 62 countries on the five continents and brings together a network of 1500 professors. It funds Jean Monnet Chairs, Jean Monnet Modules, information and research activities and Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence in such countries as China, Japan, Russia, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Argentina.

Professor Siniša Rodin successfully developed a single Jean Monnet Module at the University of Zagreb (awarded in 2001) into a particularly dynamic vehicle of spreading knowledge about the European Union throughout Croatia. His Module of 2001 has since given way to a Jean Monnet Chair and two additional Modules. All lecturers working at the Chair's European Public Law Department are members of the Croatian accession negotiating team. Within the framework of Zagreb's Europe House and the European Movement, the Jean Monnet Chair team is playing a leading role in explaining the idea of European integration and its particular link with civil rights and liberties. Furthermore, the Chair notably launched the now renowned Jean Monnet seminar series in Dubrovnik, a new Master of European Studies programme and the Croatian Yearbook of European Law and Policy.

More information can be found at the following websites:
<http://ec.europa.eu/llp> (section "how to participate")
<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/>





HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LEONARDO

The da Vinci Programme celebrates 15 years of vocational training on the move

This year the Leonardo da Vinci Programme celebrates its 15th anniversary – an excellent occasion to take stock of its successes in improving vocational education and training in Europe.

At least half of Europe's young people choose vocational training pathways to start their professional education. Later in their careers, continuous vocational education and training (VET) helps keep their skills and competences in line with new technological and social developments. The unemployed have a particular need to keep up with changes in the labour market. The Leonardo da Vinci programme has been addressing these topics since its beginning, stimulating cooperation and exchange of experiences in vocational training as well as encouraging mobility of instructors and trainees. The programme is the main implementation tool of the European Vocational Training Policy, developed as part of the so-called "Copenhagen Process," which was launched in 2002 to promote cooperation among European countries on VET.

An amalgam of several predecessor programmes, Leonardo da Vinci was the first integrated Community action programme for vocational training. The programme was adopted by the Council under Article 127 of the "Maastricht Treaty" which established that the Community shall implement a vocational training policy which shall support and supplement the action of the Member States.

- ▶ Comett (1986-1994) – cooperation between companies and universities.
- ▶ Eurotecnet (1990-1994) – innovation on training.
- ▶ Force (1991-1994) – continuous training.
- ▶ Petra (1987-1994) – young people vocational training.
- ▶ Lingua (1990-1994) – promotion of languages.

The programme has gained a wide reputation for the promotion of transnational mobility by allowing participants to gain a working or training experience abroad. It has supported placements for more than **600 000 people in training** and exchanges of experiences between **110 000 teachers and trainers in VET**. The programme has grown steadily – from supporting mobility for some 20 000 young people in 1995 to 70 000 per year today. These experiences assisted young people in their personal development by helping them to gain self-esteem, to improve their language skills, and to understand different cultures, work techniques and organisations. Evidence shows that their periods abroad also positively influenced their employability.

The "Study on the Impact of Leonardo da Vinci Mobility Experiences of Trainees" carried out in 2008 at the request of DG EAC shows that vocational skills gained during a period of vocational training abroad pay dividends during the subsequent career.

- ▶ 58% of unemployed people received a job after their training abroad.
- ▶ 32% of employed people found a workplace in another country.
- ▶ 27% improved the quality of their jobs and 34% got jobs with greater responsibility.
- ▶ 86% of all former participants are interested in another stay abroad, or in a professional life in another country.
- ▶ 83% are willing to improve their language skills, and are making use of their acquired competencies and techniques.





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But Leonardo da Vinci is not only about mobility. Innovative multilateral projects aim to transform vocational systems and practices, to improve their quality, make them respond better to labour market needs, become more transparent and provide support to developments in VET policy. They also help different sectors innovate and become more competitive. Every year, Leonardo finances about 330 projects for the transfer of innovation and about 45 projects for Development of Innovation and Networks.

The projects vary from a crisis management course for seafarers that was accepted as standard not only in Sweden (Securitas Mare) but in other European countries, to training for disabled people in Poland to prepare them for telework, to projects such as developing a European reference framework for training general operators in the chemical industry.

Since the programme's launch, one of its main advantages has been its **transnationality**. Every project has had to encompass partners from at least two (mobility) or three (multilateral

projects) different countries. The programme has brought together thousands of partners from all over Europe to work jointly on common project ideas. Each partnership has created the potential for stable networks of transnational co-operation and exchange of good practice.

Over the years, the Leonardo da Vinci programme has grown progressively. In the beginning it served to raise awareness, by connecting people in different countries and helping them learn from each other. It developed to become more strategic, a test-bed for entire vocational systems, especially in the reform processes of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In many countries, its mobility strand is the main support for people in vocational training, apprentices and graduates who want to experience a traineeship abroad. The demand is significantly higher than the budget availability. It was integrated into the Lifelong Learning Programme alongside Erasmus, Comenius and Grundtvig in 2007 and will continue to play an important role in education and training.

Personal experiences in mobility

- ...✦ **Petr Novotny**, a Czech from a small village in Northern Bohemia who worked in the car repair shop of his father, said he could not imagine himself going abroad. But Petr went to France and now says: *"I worked as a car mechanic and electro mechanic. I knew from home how to make all kinds of repairs and soon I was allowed to make the same repairs as other workers. I was the only 'universal' worker in the workshop as other employees were specialized."*
- ...✦ **Markus Wasinger**, 25, an Austrian, went to Sweden to work for five months in a carpenter's shop. He learned to work with solid wood and became integrated in the whole production process of many carpentry projects. He says: *"It wasn't only a good experience to discover Europe and meet new people; it was also an excellent opportunity for my language skills."*
- ...✦ **Pauline Illy**, from France, went to work in a TNT depot in Dublin. She summarises her stay: *"Personally, it helped me to become more patient and tolerant. I made a lot of friends, too."*



Good practice examples developed with Leonardo da Vinci

- ...❖ **The Europass training** instrument, a record of the professional experiences gained through a stay abroad, was directly based on results from Leonardo da Vinci projects.
- ...❖ **ECDL-European Computer Driving License**, the development of the widely used computer literacy certification in Europe has been supported by LdV.
- ...❖ **CoBaTrICE** – international competency based training programme in intensive care medicine which can be used Europe-wide.
- ...❖ **Smectra.net** – Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Consulting and Training Network, a simple but effective concept for implementing e-learning in SMEs.
- ...❖ **AccesSchool** – a project to improve access to education and training for persons with special needs.

Objectives of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme

- ...❖ To improve and expand mobility throughout Europe of people involved in initial vocational education and training and in continuing training, and to increase placements in enterprises to at least 80 000 per year by the end of the Lifelong Learning Programme.
- ...❖ To improve cooperation between institutions or organisations providing learning opportunities, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout Europe.
- ...❖ To facilitate innovation in the field of vocational education and training; to improve the transparency and recognition of qualifications and competences, including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning.
- ...❖ To encourage the learning of modern foreign languages.
- ...❖ To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for life-long learning.

More information at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc82_en.htm

LIFE LESSONS

The Grundtvig programme marks a decade of innovation in adult learning

What do Somali refugees in Liverpool, the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana and prison staff in the Bulgarian town of Lovech have in common? Surprising though it may seem, they are all among the participants in the EU's programme for adult learning, "Grundtvig", which this year celebrates its tenth anniversary.

Named after the Danish pastor N.F.S. Grundtvig, who is widely regarded as the founder of the Nordic tradition of lifelong learning, Grundtvig is the sectoral programme devoted to European cooperation in non-vocational adult learning – formal, non-formal and informal – within the EU's overall Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). It pursues two overarching strategic objectives: to help the Union address the educational challenge of an ageing population, and to develop innovative ways of providing adults with pathways to improve their knowledge and skills.

Never has this been more important than it is today. The EU still has almost 80 million low-skilled adults, and participation rates in learning vary widely – from over 30% of the adult population in a few (mostly Nordic) countries, down to under 2% in those at the other end of the spectrum. The economic and financial crisis of the past two years has also had a profoundly social dimension, accentuating the divide between the more affluent sections of the population and those at risk of social marginalisation.

Adult learning is vital to helping to turn this situation around. It has a crucial economic function in raising the knowledge, skills and competence profile of the adult population. It is a driving force for combating social cohesion – not least through initiatives in inter-generational and inter-cultural learning, including increasingly important measures to promote the integration of ethnic minorities. It encourages active engagement with and involvement in society. There is the

sometimes belittled but nonetheless fundamental role of adult learning in helping people to derive a sense of personal fulfilment from their lives. Furthermore, adult learning has immense untapped potential for encouraging Europe's adult population to develop a stronger feeling of identity with the developing Union. Successive referendums have shown that we neglect this task at our peril.

With just €60 million per year at its disposal – a modest 4% of the overall budget for the Lifelong Learning Programme – Grundtvig cannot address all the learning needs of Europe's adult population. What it can and does do, however – in tandem with the policy initiatives taken by the Union in recent years and in particular the **Adult Learning Action Plan** adopted by the Commission in 2007 – is to show how European cooperation and mobility can help Member States tackle the problems and exploit the rich potential of the adult learning sector. Grundtvig develops exciting new pedagogical approaches and materials, improves the profile and competences of the staff in the field, creates sustainable networks for professionals and experiments with exciting new forms of adult learner mobility. It offers all participants a direct and positive experience of what "Europe" can mean to their lives.

These achievements are all the more noteworthy given that the adult learning sector – particularly as regards "non-formal" and informal learning – is far less structured and far more diverse than the others and varies widely from country to country. Furthermore, it is a sector with very little previous tradition of



practical cooperation on European projects and partnerships until Grundtvig came along.

Central to the ethos of Grundtvig is the inclusive nature of the programme. Grundtvig is open to all types of staff (teachers, managers, counsellors, etc.) working with organisations that offer non-vocational learning opportunities for the adult population. These include learning providers, local and regional authorities, NGOs at local, regional or national level, cultural organisations (museums, libraries, etc.) as well as prisons, hospitals, sports clubs, homes for senior citizens and other unorthodox places of adult learning. In short, Grundtvig's role in reinforcing civil society is paramount to the programme.

In a sense, Grundtvig takes over where the other sectoral programmes stop, by:

- ▶ Providing **“second chance” learning opportunities** for citizens who did not obtain a qualification the first time around.
- ▶ Reaching out to **marginalised groups** who would not otherwise engage fully with lifelong learning, and promoting their full integration in society (e.g. disadvantaged urban youth, people with disabilities, ethnic minority groups and people in prison / ex-offenders).
- ▶ Engaging with **older citizens** (often through projects to encourage **inter-generational learning**), not only to improve their learning opportunities but also to exploit their rich experience and life-wisdom for the benefit of society as a whole.

- ▶ And, perhaps most important of all, by reinforcing the sense of **active citizenship** among the adult population.

Adult learning has been a part of the DG EAC programmes since 1995 when – at the insistence of Germany – it was added to the Commission's proposals for the Socrates I programme (1995-1999). However, it was not until the advent of Socrates II (2000-2006) that the sub-programme for this sector was given the name “Grundtvig”. This led to much greater visibility, and the “decentralised actions” introduced in 2001 – Learning Partnerships and individual grants for in-service training of adult education staff – managed by the “National Agencies” for the programme, proved to be a major and highly successful innovation.

With the introduction of the “Lifelong Learning Programme” Grundtvig has continued to innovate and expand, and in 2009 a further series of new actions was introduced, comprising additional mobility opportunities for staff (visits & exchanges and assistantships) and learners (workshops and senior volunteer-ing projects). The response has been highly encouraging.



Over the ten years of the programme, support has been provided across the 30-plus LLP countries for around:

- ▶ 670 multilateral projects and networks for developing and transferring innovation, involving some 4 000 partners.
- ▶ 1 500 learning partnerships involving over 7 000 partner organisations and an estimated 100 000 individual participants.
- ▶ 10 500 grants for individual staff mobility.
- ▶ 200 workshops for adult learners and 45 projects for the development of senior volunteering as a form of informal adult learning (in their first year of operation 2009 alone).

Grundtvig – celebrating the first decade

For its tenth anniversary, the programme has adopted the motto: “Grundtvig – a decade of European innovation in adult learning”. Events are being held across Europe throughout the year, culminating in a Grundtvig European Conference to be held in September – fittingly in Denmark.

A Brussels event in January attracted some 330 participants – policy-makers, project practitioners, NGOs and leading experts on adult learning – from across the EU and beyond and was widely acclaimed as being a highly successful launch of the Tenth Anniversary festivities. A selection of 50 of the best Grundtvig projects and partnerships was chosen for presentation at the event, which also marked the beginning of the DG EAC contribution to the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

The conference was opened by Maria-João Rodrigues, policy adviser to the EU institutions and a key figure in the “Lisbon strategy”, who strongly underlined the importance of adult learning in all its facets for the success of the new EU 2020 strategy. That view was echoed and further developed in the closing speech by Odile Quintin, then-Director-General of DG EAC. Conference participants called for the importance of adult learning – including the less directly vocational aspects which are at the heart of Grundtvig – to be better reflected in the next generation of the Lifelong Learning Programme, beginning in 2014.

Alan Smith

Grundtvig Coordinator & Deputy Head of Unit EAC-B4 (“Adult Education; Grundtvig”)

The Grundtvig Actions

Decentralised Actions

Learning Partnerships (LPs)	Practical, smaller scale projects, often involving local providers, between at least 3 countries around a subject of common interest, generally with strong learner involvement.
Mobility for adult education staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-service training courses in another European country. • Visits & exchanges for non-formal training activities such as job-shadowing, teaching assignments or visiting conferences / seminars. • Assistantships of 3-10 months.
Mobility for adult learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops bringing together learners from several European countries. • Senior volunteering projects 50+.
Mobility for adult learners Preparatory Visits	For the purpose of preparing cooperation projects and partnerships.

Centralised Actions

Multilateral Projects	Larger scale, output-oriented projects involving at least 3 countries, to develop and transfer innovation.
Thematic Networks	Networks of organisations from at least 10 countries, each in a specific field of adult learning, to promote needs analysis, inter-project cooperation and strengthen the interface between policy and programme.
Accompanying measures	Projects to underpin the programme which would not be eligible under the main Actions (dissemination, etc.).







THE CULTURE CLUB

How the European Capitals of Culture grew to become one of the best-loved EU initiatives

From birth to maturity

On a windy January day 25 years ago, two cultural icons sat in the Athens airport waiting out a flight delay. The glamorous former actress Melina Mercouri, then Greece's Minister of Culture, and her French counterpart, the charismatic Jack Lang, were fresh from a meeting of Europe's culture ministers. As they chatted, they agreed it was a shame that there were so few occasions of that kind. Mercouri proposed launching a series of yearly events that would spotlight cities around Europe and their role in European culture. Lang was keen, and no sooner had the two reached their respective destinations than they started the process that would result in the European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) programme. Their idea was to bring Europeans closer together by highlighting the richness and diversity of European cultures, and by raising awareness of their common history and values.

Fast-forward to the present day, and the European Capitals of Culture programme – which this year celebrates its 25th anniversary – is Europe's most ambitious cultural project both in scope and scale, with budgets far exceeding those of any other cultural event. Among other things, its aim is to make Europeans aware of what European cities designated as cultural capitals have in common. So far, almost 50 cities have sported the title and the event has acquired considerable prestige among Europe's citizens.

Until 2004, the designation of European Cities of Culture was an inter-governmental affair in the hands of the Council of Ministers, without the involvement of external experts or any formal assessments. Starting in 2005 the European Capital of Culture scheme became a fully fledged Community Action, with a new designation process that would apply until 2012. A chronological list of Member States was drawn up indicating the order in which they were entitled to host the event. An international panel was set up to assess the suitability of the cities proposed by Member States. Among various criteria, each city had to include a project involving cultural cooperation across Europe's borders.

In 2006, the rulebook was given another shake-up, and the selection procedure was made more competitive for cities starting with the 2013 title. From now on, a selection panel made up of experts chosen by the European institutions (Commission, Parliament, Council of Ministers and Committee of the Regions) and by the Member State concerned assesses the proposals against clear criteria: the European dimension of the event, the participation of citizens and the long term effects of the Year. It settles its choice on one city and then the EU Council of Ministers officially designates the city.



After that, an advisory panel nominated by the European institutions accompanies the cities in their preparations and if they have met all their obligations, the European Commission awards a financial prize named after Melina Mercouri.

25 years of success stories

A study by an independent expert on the 1995-2004 European Capitals of Culture showed that the vast majority of organisers felt the event had been beneficial to the cities both from a cultural point of view and for their long long-term development, even though each European Capital of Culture has had its own identity so far.

But the event is a serious investment in terms of time, staff and money. The amounts invested in operational expenditures have ranged from €6 million to €100 million over the past 25 years. National and local entities are the main sources of the funding; the Commission also makes a contribution from the Culture Programme – originally for an amount of €500 000, and now €1.5 million.

Why have cities been so keen to invest large sums of money and energy into organising these cultural years? Some see it as a question of building up local pride and self-confidence, others want to stimulate interest in culture. It is always an opportunity for the city to reap enormous benefits for itself in cultural, social and economic terms, as well as to foster its regeneration and to raise its visibility and profile on an international scale. It is also a real tourist attraction: the average increase in overnight stays in a Capital when compared to the previous year was about 12 % in the period 1995-2003. The success of Liverpool 2008 led to an increase in tourism of 25%-27%.

The experts who prepared and managed Lille 2004 estimate that €1 invested in the event from public funds has generated €10 in the long-term economic cycle of the city – and that the event helped it to leap forward several years in terms of development. Liverpool 2008 estimated that, among other things, they had 15 million visits to cultural events, and the event generated over £800 million in revenue.

But the benefits are not just economic; the Capitals make an important contribution to social cohesion through the emphasis on citizen involvement which results in many outreach projects, volunteer programmes, activities targeted at school children and young people, as well as events in public spaces in order to also help those who would not normally visit cultural events to experience the arts.

Another tangible legacy is infrastructure development. Sometimes this entails the refurbishment of existing cultural venues or the building of new ones, which of course live on after the event. In some cases the prospect of the title acts as a stimulus to bring forward other infrastructure developments, such as the building of new roads, which can be fundamental for resituating and opening up a city geographically.

There are other legacies that are more difficult to measure. For example, many Capitals indicate that the experience helps to professionalise the cultural operators in the city, lays the foundations for new partnerships with cultural institutions elsewhere, and generally gives them a more international outlook and interest in future international cooperation. In some cases it also gives city authorities greater confidence to bid for other international events.

European Capitals of Culture are proof that culture has a major role to play at the heart of the EU's sustainable development policies, because they are part of the long-term development of European cities and their regions, as well as a stimulus for dynamism, creativity, and social inclusion. The most successful Capitals are those that have sought to embed the event as part of a long-term strategy and commitment by the city to culture-led development.

But what makes them unique is that the Capitals give Europeans a chance to enjoy their common history and values, to cooperate in new initiatives and projects, and to experience the feeling of belonging to the same European community – in other words, to experience our unity in diversity.



OPEN DOORS, OPEN MINDS

European Heritage Days help us understand history... and prepare for the future

This autumn the European Heritage Days (EHD) event celebrates its 25th anniversary. Millions of people will visit buildings and sites all over Europe to find more about their heritage. The European Heritage Days not only raise awareness about Europe's rich history, they also boost tourism, generate employment and contribute to social cohesion.

The European Heritage Days initiative is a joint action between the European Union and the Council of Europe. It was built on a concept conceived in France in 1984 aimed at involving the general public in their natural and cultural heritage by opening doors that are normally closed to the general public. Today these European events (usually held at the end of September) attract tremendous public interest every year, with more than 20 million people in 49 countries visiting theatres, private houses, offices, farms, banks, palaces, residences and warehouses whose owners or caretakers have agreed to open their doors free of charge.

From the outset the EHD have played a pivotal role in bringing people together to celebrate their heritage. Inclusion, a key element in the EU's vision for the future, is at the core of the idea. Over the past 25 years the EHD have brought people together regardless of their age or cultural background, encouraging them to get involved in each others' history – to see the bigger picture – and to see the links connecting them across Europe.

The idea behind the European Heritage Days may seem rather simple – show heritage “just” by opening doors – but in fact the concept is more sophisticated than that. Its aim is to involve people, to help develop a sense of ownership of our

common European heritage and to spark ideas on its role in sustainable development. The history of this event proves that its down to earth approach appeals equally to the broader public, the experts and policy makers.

The open days have “pulling power”, attracting thousands of people to the ever-growing number of buildings and sites involved in the scheme. They also help to shape attitudes about the role heritage plays in their daily life. The EHD is all about involvement: of owners or administrators (who sometimes need to be coaxed to open their doors to the general public), of scores of volunteers who organise the events and see to their smooth running, of the visitors (some of whom actively become involved in heritage) and of heritage experts and officials in charge of heritage policy.

The EHD idea shows that heritage is alive and kicking – that a great part of our heritage is still in use. More importantly it shows that these buildings mean a lot to people because of the values they represent.

How it works

The initiative is a joint action undertaken between the European Union and the Council of Europe in partnership with the national organisations in charge of the event in their respective countries. Funding for the EHD comes from government departments, heritage organisations, private companies and individuals wishing to be involved.

European funding is aimed at the European coordination of the event, including an annual exchange of experiences between the national coordinators, the European Heritage Forum, where developments in the European heritage sectors are discussed, together with the challenges facing the heritage sector.



Each country organises its part in the European Heritage Days and aims at opening doors over the course of a weekend, usually at the end of September. The days are organised with a common logo and a common motto: “Europe, a common heritage”.

Success stories

The EHD have played an important role in bringing people together within communities, but also in getting them to reach beyond these communities through the network of heritage organisations in 49 countries. Some countries have developed projects to bridge gaps between generations and cultures. Over the past 25 years the EHD initiative has been a testing ground for new ways of involving people in their culture. Getting young children to visit monuments is a growing challenge, but the EHD show that there are ways of involving them. In the Netherlands, for example, children were trained to guide visitors around sites.

The initiative also helped new alliances to develop between heritage organisations, owners and administrators and municipal authorities. In some cases the EHD helped to kick start a dialogue between stakeholders about heritage protection and it contributed to the development of effective policies, for example in the training of skills required for the upkeep and maintenance of heritage buildings. These are essential for Europe’s position as a top cultural tourist destination. They also have a positive effect on employment development in cities and regions across Europe.

Challenges ahead

Europe has seen enormous geographic, social, political and technological changes over the past 25 years. Our heritage management will need to adapt to the changes we are still experiencing, including the economic crisis, massive immigration, an aging society, and climate change.

The European Union and the Council of Europe have stimulated debate within the context of the EHD on the challenges facing us. Since 2008 the EHD have included an annual Heritage Forum, at which coordinators reflect on new, crucial and intriguing questions and also take a closer look at familiar ones which they aim to tackle from a contemporary perspective. In 2009, for example, the Heritage Forum considered heritage, creativity and innovation.

The main challenge ahead is increasing the EHD’s visibility across the EU, for example by developing a greater synergy between events and involving the mass media, such as television. As Mark Horton, the presenter of “Coast” (a UK television series) pointed out, with the right strategy heritage can be a top draw for television viewers. “Coast” is viewed by 5 million people in the UK every week. The potential is definitely there, but it needs to be strategically tapped into.

Find out more about European Heritage Days, the participants and the events:
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/EHD/default_en.asp







FOREVER YOUNG

After 20 years of increasing success, the EU's youth programmes continue to grow

In 1989 – two years after the launch of Erasmus, the European Union's first educational programme – Youth for Europe was created to support youth exchanges “designed specifically to enable them to acquire skills relevant to their young and adult professional life”.

Over the past 20 years, several programmes have helped achieve that goal, which recognizes that we learn not only in school but in the world at large. To date, more than 1.6 million young people and youth workers have taken part in non-formal educational activities. Every year, Youth in Action involves over 130 000 people in projects to develop both their employability and their sense of citizenship.

Over the years Europe's youth programmes have offered increasingly richer opportunities for both young people and youth leaders. At first largely confined to youth exchanges, these projects now cover a wide range of activities, including youth initiative projects, efforts to promote participatory democracy, and mobility opportunities for youth leaders. The year 2000 marked a milestone with the incorporation of European Voluntary Service, which allows young people to spend up to a year in another country doing volunteer work – a unique living experience that combines non-formal learning and the exercise of citizenship and solidarity. All of these programmes share certain characteristics, such as a transnational dimension, strong attention to participation of young people with fewer opportunities and the fact that these programmes are open to all youth, regardless of their status as student, apprentice, unemployed or other.

In the 2000s, a policy framework for young people, the European Programme for Youth, became the main instrument to support these guidelines. Youth in Action helps, for example, to support a structured dialogue with youth, as well as policy initiatives to promote youth volunteering directly inspired by the experience gained through the European Voluntary Service.

Today, the Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013) aims to promote active citizenship – and in particular European citizenship – as well as to develop solidarity among young people, strengthen the social cohesion of the EU, promote mutual

understanding and integrate European cooperation into youth policies. Like other programmes in the field of education and culture strongly characterized by the principle of subsidiarity, Youth in Action offers to those involved the chance to compare their practices and enrich their experiences by sharing them at European level. In this context, it is essential not only that young people benefit from the programme (though they are necessarily limited in number given budget constraints; fewer than one application in two can be accommodated), but also that it has a long-lasting, structural effect. Hence the importance of supporting what this programme can offer to youth organizations, NGOs, municipalities, and youth workers. And the importance of paying particular attention to the dissemination and exploitation of the results of projects supported by Youth in Action.

It is also in this spirit that the Commission has launched a new initiative aimed at Europe's regions, a partnership approach to structuring their activities for young people in a European context. There were many applications for proposals in 2009, a level of interest that could strengthen this promising new component of the programme in the coming years.

Another evolution of the programme is on the way. The Treaty of Lisbon has introduced something new in the field of youth: it states that the activities of the EU must encourage youth participation in democratic life in Europe. This fully justifies the increasing use of projects to support participatory democracy and encourage meetings between young people and political leaders.

These recent developments illustrate the flexibility of a youth programme that, during a rich 20-year history, has helped provide young Europeans with better opportunities to participate fully in society.





GETTING INTO THE GAME

Under the Lisbon Treaty, the EU now has specific powers in the **sport sector**

Sport plays an important role in European society. With more than 700 000 clubs, sport is the most important sector for self-organised civil society in the EU. And obviously, countless people practise sport and physical activity outside organised structures. It's healthy, promotes integration and education, and reinforces positive values that are conducive to the development of the individual and of society as a whole. Through its professional and commercialised segments, sport makes an important contribution to European economic growth and jobs. But despite the importance of sport to Europe, the EU had no explicit jurisdiction over it until the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009.

Over the years, the EU has gradually developed a policy approach to sport based on other competence areas in the Treaty. This allowed the institutions to deal directly or indirectly with sporting matters. The approach dates back to the 1984 Fontainebleau European Council and the Adonnino Report on "A People's Europe". At that time, the Community's policy focused on sport's potential to achieve "European goals" – as a tool to strengthen the image of Europe in the minds of its citizens. In 2000, the European Council adopted the Nice Declaration on Sport, which focused on the social importance of the sector and the need to preserve its special characteristics. In July 2007, the European Commission

adopted the White Paper on Sport and at the end of the same year EU Member States signed the Lisbon Treaty, which included specific provisions on sport for the first time.

A new role

The Lisbon Treaty calls on the EU to promote European sporting issues, notably by taking account of sport's special nature, its structures based on voluntary activity and its social and educational functions. More specifically, EU action should be aimed at developing the European dimension in sport, by promoting fairness and openness in sporting competitions and cooperation between bodies responsible for sports, and by protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportspeople. The Treaty also calls on the EU and its Member States to foster cooperation with third countries and competent international organisations in the field of sport. The Treaty allows for the adoption of incentive measures (i.e. a programme) and of Council recommendations, but explicitly excludes any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States.

Despite the new policy approach, one thing hasn't changed: due to its cross-sectoral nature, sport will continue to be strongly influenced by other policy areas where the EU has supporting competence, notably health, culture, education, vocational training and youth. This is also true in areas where the EU has a shared competence with the Member States to legislate, notably the Internal Market, social policy, economic, social and territorial cohesion, justice and home affairs, research and development cooperation. Sport, in particular when it is carried out as an economic activity or related to governance aspects, is also subject to a policy area where the EU has an exclusive competence: the establishment of the





competition rules necessary for the functioning of the Internal Market. Finally, sport also continues to be subject to general principles enshrined in the Treaties such as those relating to non-discrimination.

What will change?

Starting this year, sport policy has become integrated into the formal structures at the EU Council of Ministers. A new Council Working Party on Sport has been set up to prepare the meetings of EU Sport Ministers in the Council. This is an important change because Council recommendations, resolutions or conclusions will carry more weight than the conclusions adopted in the past by Sport Ministers at their informal meetings.

It is the Commission's role to propose suitable action allowing for the achievement of the objectives outlined in the Treaty. The guiding principle for the Commission's policy response will be to ensure the EU added value of proposed actions and to meet the ultimate goal: to serve EU citizens. This will be a challenging task, partly because the Treaty text leaves room for interpretation and partly because many different stakeholders ranging from grassroots to sport's top tiers will wish to see their diverging interests reflected in the new EU approach.

Both the European Court of Justice and the Commission have acknowledged that sport is an economic sector unlike any other and has specific features that should be accounted for at EU level. But just because professional sports leagues need the freedom to make their own rules does not mean they are exempt

from EU law. After a structured dialogue with the sport sector, in particular its professional segments, the Commission has further clarified how specific sport-related policy can be addressed under EU law. The approach will be theme-by-theme, reflecting the diversity of the sport sector and addressing topics such as anti-doping, mobility and nationality, dual training, volunteering, professional-amateur sport relations and funding of sport. The EU recognises the autonomy of sport, but the EU as a legal space has fundamental rules which need to be respected also in the sport sector. For example, FIFA's proposed 6+5 rule on nationality of players would, if applied within the EU, disregard one of the most fundamental Treaty provisions: the prohibition of direct discrimination based on nationality.

Next steps

As a basis for the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty in the field of sport, the Commission intends to adopt a Communication on sport in the summer of 2010. The Commission is currently consulting with stakeholders to find a balanced approach and to fine-tune the topics to be included in its Communication. The new approach will be based on the experience gained with implementing the White Paper on Sport and should further develop areas such as the implementation of the EU Physical Activity Guidelines or the application of the European Qualifications Framework in the field of sport. The Communication will also have to take account of developments that require EU-level debate or action because they endanger the fairness and openness of competitions, for example questions relating to integrity and ethics in sport including match-fixing and doping.



The Treaty notion of “incentive measures” for sport can be expected to translate into a Commission proposal for an EU Sport Programme. This will be the first of its kind. Through the transfer of knowledge, formation of networks, exchange of best practices, better coordination, or mobility of some categories of professional staff, the sport programme should promote good governance and foster sport’s social, health and educational functions.

In view of the diversity of the sport sector, a key condition for a successful implementation of the sport provisions in the new Treaty will be continued coordination with other EU policy areas (e.g. health, education), programmes (e.g. Lifelong Learning), funds (e.g. European Regional Development Fund) and actions (e.g. European Year of Volunteering).

Another condition will be the further enhancement of cooperation and dialogue structures in sport. Cooperation needs to continue within the informal structures that have been developed with the Member States over the past years. At the political level, this includes informal meetings of EU Sport Ministers and EU Sport Directors, as well as the work carried out in six thematic EU Working Groups (sport & health, anti-doping, sport & economics, non-profit sport organisations, education and training in sport, and social inclusion in and through sport).

On the external side, the EU will step up its cooperation with third countries and with competent international organisations in the field of sport, such as the International Olympic Committee, the World Anti-Doping Agency, the World Health Organisations and the Council of Europe.

The Commission is committed to using the opportunities provided by the Lisbon Treaty for giving sport a firm and permanent role on the EU agenda.





CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

How Eurydice supports European cooperation in education

The EU's Eurydice Network was created in 1980, when education ministers realized they needed a mechanism to increase and improve the circulation of information on education. Today, 30 years later, Eurydice is still going strong, though its mission has expanded greatly.

For its first 10 years Eurydice's central role was to act simply as a hub for the exchange of information and – in the days before the Internet – to host a question and answer service for policy makers. In 1990, a new Council Resolution marked a step change in its activities and purpose, calling for Eurydice to “assist [in the] the drawing up of comparative analyses, reports and surveys on common priority topics determined inter alia in the Education Committee and at the regular meetings of senior officials”.

On the basis of this Resolution, the Network developed a methodology for the comparative analysis of education systems, performing thematic studies of certain aspects of education systems and publishing the first Community indicators on education (the Key Data on Education publication). At the time there was no Treaty article on education and Eurostat was not engaged in specific data collection on education, so Eurydice was very much leading the way.

Eurydice became an integral part of Socrates, the Community action programme in education from 1995 to 2006 and since 2007 it has been included as an action in the Lifelong Learning Programme. Since September 2008 Eurydice has been part of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

Today, the Eurydice Network provides a vast source of comparable information on European education systems and policies and a wide range of comparative analyses on topics

ranging from arts and cultural education in schools to the reforms in Higher Education. It includes national units in the 31 European countries in the Lifelong Learning Programme – all EU Member States plus Turkey, Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland. The role of the national units, which are mainly based within education ministries, is to provide the central Eurydice unit in the Executive Agency with information and data on their education systems and to promote Eurydice products at national level.

The information provided by Eurydice national units is essentially normative and qualitative, relating to official documents such as laws, decrees, regulations and recommendations. The main Eurydice unit combines this information with other data sources – such as statistical data from Eurostat, the UOE database (a joint UNESCO, OECD and Eurostat database) and the results of international education surveys – in order to produce the final reports.

Eurydice's new mission

The policy context in which Eurydice operates has changed significantly since it began. Not only is there now an article on education in the Treaty but the Lisbon Strategy introduced the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) to the field of education. This method is based on voluntary cooperation of the Member States and soft law mechanisms such as guidelines, indicators, benchmarking and sharing of best practice. In 30 years, the





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European Union has progressed from a situation where cooperation in education was almost non-existent – and where Eurydice’s initial task was therefore simply to enable the exchange of information between Member States – to one where the OMC provides a framework for adopting common goals and evaluating and improving Member States’ progress.

Eurydice’s central purpose remains to support European cooperation in education. But since the nature of that cooperation has changed, in particular through the OMC, the work of the network must also change. The Eurydice Work Programme 2010-2011 takes account of this and gives a clear direction for its future activities. In particular:

- ▶ The Network has been assigned the following mission: “To provide those responsible for education systems and policies in Europe with European-level analyses and information which will assist them in their decision making.”
- ▶ The Network is to support in particular the work undertaken by the Commission and the Member States in the context of the new OMC strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET 2020”), as adopted by the Council in May 2009.
- ▶ Further to the last Ministerial Declaration of the Bologna Process on higher education reform, Eurydice will also play a role in the reporting on progress in the Bologna Process over the next decade.
- ▶ In order to ensure greater policy relevance and a more user-friendly delivery, the network will overhaul the content and production process of its publications and introduce a new website.

Work in progress

The 2010-2011 Eurydice Work Programme gives the Network a clear and stable purpose for the next two years – one that is closely linked to the priorities and benchmarks of “ET 2020”. For example, Eurydice will produce three major studies on the teaching of literacy, mathematics and science in schools. Their essential purpose will be to assist policy and decision makers in achieving the new benchmark on low achievers in basic skills, namely to reduce the share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science to less than 15 % by 2020.

The Programme also includes publications that support the policy agenda in Higher Education. For example, Eurydice published Focus on Higher Education 2009/10 for the Bologna Process Ministerial Conference in March in Budapest and Vienna. For the Ministerial Conference in 2012 the Network will prepare a report on progress since 2010.

The “Key Data” indicator series will include new editions focusing on learning and innovation through the use of new technologies, and on Higher Education. The Network will also start the preparation of a third edition of Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe. Other topics to be covered are learning mobility, civics education, adult learning, and regulations on the repetition of school years.

Finally, a revision of the national system descriptions will be undertaken in order to better support work under “ET 2020”.

The Eurydice Network has played an important part in educational cooperation and developments at the European level over the past 30 years. In updating its mission and by supporting “ET 2020”, it intends to continue doing so over the next decade.



Eurydice provides three main types of products

•••• Descriptions and overviews of national education systems

Known as the “Eurybase” descriptive database (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php), these comprise:

- *National Education System Descriptions*: detailed information on education systems established according to a harmonised template and updated annually. This template has eleven chapters, with four focusing on specific educational levels and the others being thematically based, for example on teachers or on special educational needs.
- *National System Overviews*: short, harmonised descriptions to be updated twice a year. They give a brief but effective overview of the education systems in 31 countries, from pre-primary level to higher education.
- Finally, there is also a regular joint publication with CEDEFOP, *The Structure and Organisation of Education and Training Systems in Europe*, which is a concise descriptive summary also covering vocational education and training.

•••• Comparative thematic studies

These cover specific themes in education, such as early childhood education and care, school autonomy, higher education governance, arts and cultural education, and the integration of immigrant children. They rely mainly on descriptive and qualitative data backed up by quantitative data and are intended to support policy and decision makers in these particular areas.

•••• Indicators

This is the Key Data series of publications. The general publication (*Key Data on Education in Europe*) gives an overview of the key features of European education systems. It presents a comparative analysis on how education systems are organised, the human and financial resources invested in them, teaching processes and qualifications awarded. The other publications in this series focus on certain aspects of education systems (ICT, Higher Education and Teaching of Languages at School).

Authors: *Wim Vansteenkiste & David Hughes*, Eurydice (EACEA).



ALL ABOUT EVE

Looking for results? Check out the EU's new project information resource

EVE is the new electronic platform for sharing results of projects financed by the European Commission in the fields of Education, Training, Culture, Youth and Citizenship. It offers a single access point for useful information about thousands of projects – a valuable resource for anyone wishing to track these projects and exploit their results.

EVE (the acronym for the French “Espace Virtuel d’Echange”) is a new tool for project beneficiaries of the “Lifelong learning”, “Culture”, “Youth in Action”, “Citizenship”, “Erasmus Mundus” and “Tempus” programmes, to have visibility on the European Union website. Through its innovative, collaborative approach, EVE offers users a centralized platform for viewing most of the funded projects.

The website contains most of the projects financed in 2009, as well as thousand of projects funded previously, including those funded under the 2000-2006 Education and Culture programmes: Leonardo da Vinci, Culture 2000, European Active Citizenship, Youth and Socrates (including Comenius, Grundtvig and Erasmus).

This new tool offers better visibility for projects, enhances the exploitation of results and aims to inform the various stakeholders – from students and young people, to educational

and training bodies, enterprises, researchers, youth and cultural organisations, artists, NGOs, national, regional or local authorities, Education and Culture programme managers, decision- and policy makers and European citizens. EVE truly is a source of information for everyone.

EVE hosts information about projects and results such as:

- ▶ Learning materials, handbooks, manuals, CDs.
- ▶ Project websites, links to different databases.
- ▶ Personal testimonials from project participants.
- ▶ Documents and guidelines.
- ▶ Associations and European partnerships.

For more specific information on a certain project and its results, you can contact the project co-ordinator, whose details are included on the site.

With EVE, the information comes directly from the source. For each specific project, information is introduced and updated by the project co-ordinator. Indeed, we believe this is the best person to communicate information and results about its project.

More concretely, once a project is signed, a project sheet is introduced in EVE with the main information about the project. At the same moment, the project co-ordinator receives access to EVE. Thanks to it, the promoter can update information about his project, and add the project results and attach documents. However, none of these changes will appear online until they have been validated by the organism in charge of the management of the contract (i.e the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency or one of the National Youth agencies).

Check out EVE at <http://ec.europa.eu/eve>







COMMISSION ROMA CONFERENCE

Improving conditions and opportunities for Europe's largest minority

The conference “*EU projects in favour of the Roma community*” hosted by the Commission, took place on 10th-11th March in Brussels. DG Education and Culture organised the conference in order to share the results of various EU-funded projects related to Roma people. “*We are now at a stage where we want to transform the success of the projects into long term policies, aiming to improve the living conditions and opportunities for each member of the Roma community,*” stated Odile Quintin, then-Director-General for DG EAC.

More than 400 participants took part in the event, including policy makers, representatives of civil society and project promoters. An exhibition of 21 selected projects in the fields of education, culture, youth, citizenship, employment and regional policy accompanied the conference, while an artistic touch was brought by the photography exhibition “A butterfly flaps its wing” by Zsuzsanna Ardó, as well as the Roma music band Zongora. The conference took place under the banner of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Achievements

Andrzej Mirga, senior advisor on Roma issues to the OSCE, recalled the progress made in the last decade, especially in the field of awareness-raising. Challenges remain though, especially in terms of resolving concrete problems at the local level and in increasing an attitude of individual determination in the Roma community itself.

Reflecting on what has been achieved at the European level, Katarína Mathernová, Deputy Director-General at DG REGIO, stressed that an integrated approach is needed to include the 2 Es- education and employment- and the 2 Hs- housing and healthcare. The Roma have been most affected by the transition from the communist system to the market economy in Central and Eastern Europe. Therefore, she added, there is now more recognition at the European level that the Roma topic is much larger than a human rights and an anti-discrimination topic, as it includes a strong economic and social aspect.

She reminded that the 10 Common Basic Principles for Roma Inclusion – identified by the European Platform for Roma Inclusion – are quite innovative in their intercultural approach and in their “explicit but not exclusive targeting”.

During the conference, three young Roma activists related their personal experiences of discrimination, but also of educational and professional success; their testimonials had a strong effect on the audience. Equal access to quality education was emphasised by the young speakers as the key to giving young Roma decision-making power over their own lives, as well as the opportunities to be active in public life.

Challenges

“*The first effect of poverty is that it kills thought,*” said Professor Ian Hancock, director of the Romani archives of the University of Texas, citing George Orwell. The professor drew a complex picture of the cultural differences inside different Roma communities, but said that Roma representatives should insist on their commonalities instead of their distinctiveness, in order to have a more powerful voice in the public arena. He recalled the fear and deep psychological damage that was inflicted on the Roma population by centuries of slavery, as well as the lesser known Roma Holocaust (Porrajmos). “*The solution for the discrimination of the Roma community and the consistent association of the words ‘Roma’ and ‘problem’ rests on two keywords: communication and compromise,*” he concluded.





Bernard Rorke, director of the Roma programme at the Open Society Institute, said that non-Roma people could learn a lot from the Roma and from people working with them on the ground. *“We need a new approach so that the next generation of Roma children is not a lost generation”* he stated, *“as well as a strategy to address the challenges of the development of new extreme right groups in Europe”*. He strongly advocated against segregated schools and called for more conditionality on the distribution of European structural funds.

Way forward

It is clear that anti-discrimination legislation is not enough and that we need a combination of legislation and effective policies on the ground, said Ivan Ivanov, Director of the European Roma Information Office (ERIO). However, an approach where Roma are seen as passive recipients of funds should be avoided. Socio-economic inclusion and the respect of Roma identity are two sides of the same coin. To reach these goals, European policies should focus on a small number of priorities with a leverage effect: early childhood education, transition from school to professional life and the fight against prejudices and stereotypes.

The conference was the occasion for project promoters to present the results of their work in 3 different workshops: integration through intercultural dialogue, lifelong learning and social inclusion through community involvement and housing.

One of the transversal topics highlighted across the workshops and speeches was the role of the media, including the community media and social media, as an effective way to bridge differences between communities, to increase knowledge about the other and to touch a “mainstream” audience. Moreover, the media are a democratic empowerment tool that can help fight prejudice by giving a voice to the Roma community itself, which has rarely the chance to be heard. In this sense, media literacy is an essential skill for the representatives of the Roma community and for the wide public. Another common finding among the participants was that cooperation between different actors – educators and trainers, local authorities, employment agencies, families – is the only effective way to ensure the success and sustainability of the projects.

In the final plenary meeting, Belinda Pyke, Director for Action against discrimination in DG EMPL pleaded for an explicit recognition of Roma aspect in all EU policies. Vladimir Šucha, Director for Culture and Communication in DG EAC, insisted on the importance of Roma inclusion for the future of Europe. *“The potential of the largest European minority is immense, especially taking into account the European demographic crisis”* he said. *“We simply cannot afford not to include the Roma in employment market and not use this resource”*.

Through the presentation and discussion of a wide array of current policies, programmes and challenges, the conference built a helpful basis for re-thinking the Roma policies of the future.

BRIEFS



Appointment of new Cypriot EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth

Androulla Vassiliou, a leading Cypriot politician, was nominated by President José Manuel Barroso as EU Commissioner-designate for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. After a confirmation hearing at the European Parliament and subsequent approval of the new College of Commissioners, she officially took over responsibility for the portfolio on 10 February 2010.

In her first message she expressed her ambition to spearhead EU action in areas which affect the lives of every European citizen and to pay a particular attention to young people.

"Our youth are the future of Europe and we all need to prepare for this future. Much still requires our efforts. In this day and age it is unacceptable, for instance, that one in five 15-year-olds in the EU are barely able to read and that one in six leave school early. I will work with Member States and all our committed partners to improve literacy rates and standards of education," she said.

When enumerating her priorities, she for instance expressed her commitment to encourage more girls to study maths, science and technology, or to place a lot of emphasis on language learning. She announced that she will launch a major initiative aimed at boosting youth mobility called Youth on the Move. *"All young people should have the chance to spend part of their studies or training abroad,"* she said.

In the field of culture, "the bedrock of our civilisation", she wants to focus more on cultural and creative industries which account for 2.6% of Europe's GDP. And she is aware of the huge importance and potential of sport, recognised now by the Lisbon treaty.

10 years of the Bologna Process: European Higher Education Area launched

On 11-12 March, Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou joined Education Ministers from 47 European countries in Budapest and Vienna to launch the European Higher Education Area and to mark the tenth anniversary of the intergovernmental "Bologna Process" for higher education reform. Named after the Italian city in which it was launched in June 1999, the Bologna Process put in motion a series of reforms designed to make European higher education more compatible, comparable, competitive and attractive for students. The meeting took place against the backdrop of student protests and the Commissioner emphasised the need to listen to and intensify dialogue with students, teachers, and other stakeholders.



European Capitals of Culture: EU Celebrates 25 years of success

On 23rd and 24th March, the Commission marked the 25th anniversary of the European Capitals of Culture project, with a two-day event in BOZAR in Brussels attended by more than 500 representatives of past, present and future Capitals and many other cultural operators.

President Barroso and Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou opened the celebration, together with Doris Pack, chair of the European Parliament's Culture Committee. The first day of the conference was dedicated to the official celebration, as well as to an exchange of views between past, present and future Capitals. The second day had a more strategic dimension and looked at the impact and legacy of the event for the participating cities.

President Barroso said: *"This initiative is a clear illustration of the EU's commitment to cultural diversity, and also how culture can unite people within Europe. I would like to thank all the cities which have put Europe to the fore during their year as Capital and I wish the European Capitals of Culture every success for the next 25 years."*

Commission proposed to establish the EU-wide European Heritage Label

On the 7th of March, the European Commission proposed to establish the "European Heritage Label" as an EU-wide initiative. The aim of this Label is to highlight sites that celebrate and symbolize European integration, ideals and history. The proposed Decision to establish the Label will be submitted to the EU's Council of Ministers and the European Parliament for adoption and could come into effect in 2011 or 2012.

The main benefits of the European Heritage Label would be:

- New opportunities to learn about Europe's cultural heritage and the democratic values underpinning European history and integration.
- Increased awareness of European cultural tourism, bringing economic benefits.
- Clear and transparent criteria for participating Member States.
- Selection and monitoring procedures that would ensure that only the most relevant sites received the label.



A Eurobarometer survey reveals large disparities in attitudes to sport and physical exercise

40% of EU citizens play sport at least once a week and 65% engage in some form of physical exercise. But 25% are almost completely inactive, according to a special Eurobarometer Survey on Sport and Physical Activity published by the European Commission end march. Ireland and the Nordic countries take sport most seriously, with 23% of Irish citizens practising sport 5 times a week or more, while Sweden, Finland and Denmark score the highest ratings for exercising "regularly" or "with some regularity" (once a week or more). At the other end of the scale, only 3% of citizens in Bulgaria, Greece and Italy say they play sport regularly.

The findings have been presented at a press conference in Brussels on the 29th of March by Androulla Vassiliou, the European Commissioner responsible for sport, and Michel Platini, President of UEFA, the European football governing body. An initiative encouraging more Europeans to make sport will be presented as a Communication to the European Parliament and the Council, flanked by a proposal to establish a new Sport Programme which will support projects and supplement policies in the Member States.

Find more information on our website

Directorate-General for Education and Culture: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/index_en.html

Education & Training: <http://ec.europa.eu/education>

EIT: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eit/index_en.html

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