



EDUCATION
TRAINING
YOUTH

Proposals 1995 - 1999

**Socrates
Leonardo
Youth for
Europe III**

EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

**THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS
FOR THE THREE PROGRAMMES ARE EXPECTED
TO BE ADOPTED AT THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS
OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS:**

**YOUTH FOR EUROPE III ON 30 NOVEMBRE 1994
(YOUTH MINISTERS) ;**

**SOCRATES ON 5 DECEMBRE 1994
(EDUCATION MINISTERS) ;**

**LEONARDO ON 6 DECEMBRE 1994
(SOCIAL AFFAIRS MINISTERS).**

INTRODUCTION

Under the Maastricht Treaty, European cooperation can now be developed at all levels of education. The new five-year (1995-99) programme will concern pupils, students and staff from nursery schools to universities, including teacher training colleges, language learning institutes and a wide range of higher education establishments.

The programme, called Socrates, will apply in 17 or more countries, reflecting the widening influence of the European Union. As its name is intended to suggest, it is designed to bring out the best in each individual and each education system, not to introduce uniformity.

In building on the lessons of previous initiatives and pilot projects, the programme will bring transnational cooperation, the EU's particular contribution, to bear on the many difficult issues now being raised in education.

The aim is to help provide an education of good quality for all young Europeans, based on respect for their personal qualities and circumstances, preparing them to meet the future actively and with confidence in the open, outward-looking Europe of the 21st century.

“SOCRATES”

The proposal comprises three chapters and follows in the line of the ERASMUS and LINGUA programmes, involving a gradual switchover to more simplified and rationalised management. While new actions will be launched to complement existing ones, the draft decision also constitutes a considerable innovation. For the first time, all levels of education are covered.

Chapter I covers higher education. Following on from ERASMUS, it mainly concerns the mobility of students and teachers. The budget has been slightly increased. Management of grants will remain in the hands of the national grant-awarding authorities (NGAAs). At the same time, new features and qualitative and quantitative improvements are proposed. Thus the European Community's course credit transfer system (ECTS) will be extended, and higher education establishments will be gradually offered institutional contracts integrating all their activities with a European dimension: this will provide a simplified framework for their projects and applications for financial aid. Subject-specific networks will be set up to group and disseminate more widely activities which are part of the inter-university cooperation programmes (ICPs). The number of ICPs can thus be kept down. Since some 95% of students will not be involved in exchange schemes, priority will be given to introducing the European dimension into studies for everyone, e.g. via the organisation of courses with a specific European content, or the teaching of Community languages.

Chapter II is completely new. It includes nursery, primary and secondary education.

Action 1 is designed to encourage the creation of partnerships between schools based on joint teaching activities with a common objective, such as learning Community languages or the use of new technologies. Priority is given to initiatives aiming to help all young people to make a success of school, to equal opportunities for boys and girls, and to providing for pupils with special needs or particular abilities.

Participation has been made as simple as possible. Each school will contact a structure set up at national level to manage this action.

The partnerships will generate theme-based networks whose function is to monitor the quality of the teaching products emerging from the partnerships and to disseminate them throughout the educational structures.

Action 2 takes over and expands, by increasing the available budget, the actions designed for the children of migrant or itinerant workers, occupational travellers and gypsies.

Teacher training is a central factor in promoting good education, as was confirmed in the reactions to the Green Paper put out by the Commission on the European dimension in education.

The SOCRATES programme therefore offers not only possibilities for cooperation between schools in initial teacher training (action 1 of chapter I) but also a specific action targeted at continuing training (action 3 of chapter II). The latter will enable continuing training establishments catering for educational staff to establish training modules and teaching materials jointly. These establishments can together form a network around a common theme. Moreover, a small number of mobility grants will be made available for the first time to enable the staff concerned to go on a continuing training course in another Member State.

Chapter III contains measures covering all levels of education.

Action 1 presupposes consolidation of the actions of the LINGUA programme, which are all continued (action III targeted at the business world has been incorporated into the LEONARDO programme) and supplemented by a new support measure for periods of training (as foreign "assistants") for future language teachers. These teachers will thus have the opportunity to obtain grants for periods of language immersion in the countries in which the language they teach is spoken, while the continuing training establishments for such teachers will continue to be able to prepare training on a joint basis. There will be further Community assistance for the preparation of innovatory teaching materials for teaching the less widely used languages.

Management procedures and structures remain the same as those established for the LINGUA programme. The priority given to the languages less widely used and taught in the Community is retained.

Action 2 is a major innovation in that it specifically concerns open and distance learning (ODL), which offers considerable potential for diversifying and expanding education and training provision.

This action will make it possible not only to encourage transnational cooperation in this area but also to improve the quality of ODL products.

Action 3 is designed to promote information and the exchange of experience in all forms on subjects of mutual interest, including pilot projects on the quality and evaluation of teaching.

Eurydice, the EU education information network, and its European unit will be called on to consolidate and expand the range of information they can generate and exchange. They will be encouraged to pursue comparative descriptions of education systems in the different Member States, while also carrying out analyses of trends and prospects in education.

The multilateral study visits for education specialists so far undertaken under the ARION programme will also be stepped up and expanded. The aim is to encourage exchanges of experience on themes of common interest (e.g. school failure) for the benefit of the participants themselves and of the policy makers in the Member States, and to make the key players aware of transnational cooperation.

Lastly, action 3 is also intended to support the national centres (Narics) providing information on academic recognition, to promote the European dimension in adult education, to provide backing for activities with a European content undertaken by associations (of parents, teachers, students), and to support information and awareness-raising activities for education professionals relating to transnational cooperation.



LEONARDO

Given the objectives of growth, competitiveness and employment the Commission put forward in its White Paper, vocational training will play a crucially important role in the future.

The LEONARDO proposal

The Commission adopted the proposed LEONARDO programme on 21 December 1993. This proposal is intended to implement a Community vocational training policy as envisaged by Article 127 of the Maastricht Treaty. Its aim is to rationalise and consolidate the impact of the PETRA, FORCE, EUROTECNET and COMETT programmes.

For consistency and clarity, the Commission proposes a single legal instrument, a single Council decision to provide the basis for Community action. The text sets out the aims, measures and all the activities falling within this vocational training policy.

The common framework of objectives and community measures

The proposal sets out to establish:

- a common framework of objectives for Community action to promote the coherent development of vocational training;
- Community measures based on this common framework to support and supplement action by and in the Member States.

The common framework of objectives has emerged from the five major objectives set by the Treaty and incorporates what has been achieved through the guidelines for the decisions which the Council has adopted for the current programmes (particularly PETRA and FORCE). This common framework sets out in detail the objectives needed for the implementation of Article 127 of the Treaty: adaptation to industrial change, improvement of initial and continuing training, access to vocational training, cooperation between training establishments and firms, exchanges of information and experience.

The systems and the market

The measures will be implemented through two major operational 'strands', which have been defined taking into account the experience gained through the current programmes:

- The first aims at consolidating the quality of Member States' training systems, arrangements and policies. It gives priority to training providers linked with public authorities who want to develop transnational cooperation for projects with an impact on the structure of initial training or continuing training systems in the Member States.
- The second aims at strengthening innovation in the training market. It primarily concerns private companies or agencies seeking to develop or market innovative products or methods.

Pathways will have to be established between these two strands, with a view to the cross-fertilization of ideas and the mutual benefit of both categories.

Three types of measures

In each of the two strands and on a basis of transnational cooperation, three types of homogeneous measures will be implemented:

- pilot projects to design and prepare training actions on a transnational basis, and to make the products and methods deriving from present or future partnerships as widely available as possible;
- exchanges of young trainees, specialists and decision-makers, which have proved their merits in the current programmes, with the emphasis on the transfer of technologies and projects which can benefit SMEs;
- surveys, analyses and exchanges of data extended to vocational training in general. The encouraging results of the FORCE programme show how worthwhile work of this type is in gradually building up an established corpus of comparable Community reference information as a yardstick for providers', and especially the political decision-makers', own indicators and information.

Consolidated financial resources

The rationalisation of the objectives and measures is combined with consolidation of the financial resources given to the vocational training programme. The Commission proposes that approximately 800 million Ecus for the 1995-1999 period be allocated to financing the various activities covered by the programme.

Involving all the players

Consultation arrangements are also being rationalised by the setting up of a programme committee, of an advisory nature, in which the social partners (employers' and workforce representatives) can contribute as observers. This configuration, which continues the experience of the FORCE and PETRA programmes, is the most appropriate formula in a context in which the social partners have a major role to play, so that the Committee can provide its full support to the Commission for the operational implementation of the programme.

The proposal contains a specific article designed to establish consistency and complementarity with other Community activities. In order to achieve a continuum between education and training the Commission will have to establish a high degree of consistency with the Socrates education programme. Operational complementarity will also be implemented with action undertaken under the Structural Funds, particularly the CIPs, inter alia in order to disseminate comparative information, undertake transnational actions using the results of pilot projects and achieving synergy with employment policies. This operational synergy will be achieved at the Community level, but above all at the national level.

Coordination of activities will also be established with the fourth R&D framework programme, in particular but not exclusively for the linking of the surveys and comparative analyses section with the research pursued in the socio-economic strand.

Specific actions for the social partners

As regards the social partners, the proposal introduces a new measure to establish suitable operational links between the activities of the programme and the work of the 'social dialogue' at the Community level. This arrangement is designed to make available to the partners all results useful to their discussions in the new context created by the adoption of the social protocol.

Monitoring will be undertaken in partnership between the Commission and the Member States and will make it possible, if necessary, to redirect certain activities. For the sake of visibility, a report on vocational training will be drawn up every two years as from 31 December 1995. For the purposes of this ongoing monitoring a partnership will be established with the Member States and for a regular assessment of the programme. The Community measures will be the subject of outside assessments.

The European networks

The current programmes PETRA, FORCE, COMETT, EUROTECNET and IRIS have helped to set up the national organisational structures and technical support structures for training providers. These two levels of players fulfil an invaluable role as regards the transparency of the programmes and the preparation of projects. The proposal is designed to make the best use of these achievements and to strengthen their European dimension. The development of the network of national and operational structures will be carried out in partnership with the Member States in order to ensure a good level of transparency of the programme and in order to strengthen the dissemination of its results. The European dimension of this network, and also of the networks of practitioners, will be improved by the setting up of telematics links and of interconnected databases.

From Youth for Europe II to Youth for Europe III

Youth for Europe II expires at the end of 1994. The Commission is convinced of the usefulness of the programme in helping young Europeans to become active, responsible and caring citizens in a European society they recognise as their own. It accordingly adopted the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and the Council on a third phase of the Youth for Europe programme on 4 November 1993.

The Youth for Europe III proposal incorporates into a single programme all the Community actions so far undertaken for the benefit of the young people concerned: Youth for Europe II, youth initiative projects under the PETRA programme, youth activities under TEMPUS and the various priority actions in the field of youth.

Five main actions are envisaged:

- Intra-Community activities involving young people directly
- Actions involving youth workers
- Cooperation between Member States' structures
- Exchanges with non-Community countries
- Information for young people and research in the context of youth.

As in the first two phases, particular attention is focused on the access of disadvantaged young people to the activities of the programme: a specific article of the proposal for a decision relates to positive action for the benefit of disadvantaged young people.

Action A: Intra-Community activities directly involving young people

As the only activity which involved young people directly during the first two phases, exchanges remain the main thrust of the activities proposed for the third phase. They are not an objective in themselves but are part of the educational process of young European citizens.

Two major categories of actions are put forward:

Action A I: Exchange and mobility of young people

As exchanges are part of an educational process the proposal devotes special attention to linking these with other youth activities.

Action A II: Spirit of initiative, creativeness and solidarity of young people

This action is subdivided into two parts:

- Action A II.1: Youth initiatives

Drawing on the pilot projects for young people in the priority actions and also from the PETRA youth initiative projects, the Commission proposes to support under Youth for Europe III projects of a local, regional, national or European level in which young people are involved directly and which enable them to develop their spirit of initiative and their creativeness. These projects must be capable of developing links with other projects in two or more Member States.

- Action A II.2: Voluntary service training periods

Voluntary service activities were supported on an experimental basis during Youth for Europe II. It is the Commission's intention to pursue these activities in the third phase. It is important in a society undergoing radical economic and social change for young people to have increasing opportunities to develop their creativeness and to take part in projects which have a social or other value for the community in which they live.

Action B: Youth workers

Youth workers play a crucial role in the organisation of actions in this field at all levels.

A range of activities involving youth leaders e.g. study and training visits, directly connected with exchanges and mobility were undertaken during the first two phases of the programme

The third phase of the programme will involve two categories of actions:

***Action B I: Direct support for actions directly involving young people
(Action A)***

In addition to training activities for the "traditional" youth leaders, particular attention is paid to the training of active leaders to work with disadvantaged young people.

Action B II: Direct support for European cooperation in training youth workers

Youth for Europe III will seek inter alia to promote the exchange of experience and information within this context and to foster a Community dimension in the training and advanced training of leaders.

Three other actions are envisaged in the Commission proposal which were not included in the previous phases of the programme.

Action C: Cooperation between the structures of the Member States

With Youth for Europe III, the Commission's intention is to develop the type of action started with priority Action I: stepping up cooperation between the youth structures in the Member States. These actions are essential for genuine Community action in the field of youth. Particular attention will be paid to people in a position of responsibility in the regional and local structures who have little or no opportunity for contact at European level and for whom action of this type clearly constitutes added value.

Action D: Exchanges with non-Community countries

The experience gained with exchanges with non-Community countries under the priority actions in 1992 and 1993 underpins Action D. This action, as proposed under Youth for Europe III, is designed to give young people in the Member States a better understanding of the situation of young people outside the Community, to stimulate their solidarity in this respect and develop youth exchanges with these countries.

Action E: Information of young people and research in the youth field

Action E is based on the experience gained both under Youth for Europe and the priority actions, particularly priority Action II: information of young people. It is designed primarily to boost the multiplier effect of the programme by promoting inter alia cooperation between the structures active in the field of youth information; in other words, the aim is to facilitate broader access by young people to Youth for Europe and to information, thus making it possible to attain the objectives of the programme.

There can be no genuine Community action in the field of youth without research to help achieve better understanding of the situation of young Europeans and thus better cater for their expectations as regards Community action on youth.

At a time when the Community countries are confronted with a resurgence of racism and xenophobia, the action envisaged under Youth for Europe III is particularly important in terms of promoting active citizenship among the Community's young people and developing mutual understanding and solidarity by bringing them closer and transcending their cultural differences. The largely decentralised management of the programme will make it possible to cater as successfully as possible for the requirements of young Europeans.

