



The Magazine

Education and training | Culture | Youth | Multilingualism | Sport | Citizenship

N°32

knowledge for European recovery

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

Erasmus: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/erasmus>

Erasmus Mundus: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus>

Culture: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/index_en.html

Culture portal: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/portal/index_en.htm

Multilingualism: <http://ec.europa.eu/languages>

Sport: <http://ec.europa.eu/sport>

Citizenship: <http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship>

Youth: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth>

Youth portal: <http://europa.eu/youth/>



Visit the European year
of creativity and innovation website
Answer the "Creativity Quiz" and
win a 1 giga USB key

► <http://create2009.europa.eu/creativityquiz>

Subscribe to The Magazine

The Magazine provides a periodical survey of education and culture issues in Europe with in-depth articles and reports on EU policies in the fields of education, training, youth, culture, languages, sport and civil society.

It is available in German, English, Spanish, French, Italian and Polish.

To subscribe see:

► http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/mag_en.html

Do you need further copies of *The Magazine*?

Order them from eac-info@ec.europa.eu

© European Communities, 2009



Publications Office

ISSN 1023-372-5



9 771023 372009



The Magazine ³² SUMMARY



Education and training during the crisis
a springboard for European recovery
PG 5



The dawn of a new era
for EU youth policy
PG 9



Building higher skills and lifelong learning
through enhanced European cooperation
PG 13



Young people and the financial crisis:
challenge & opportunity
PG 19



Health & well-being
of young people in Europe
PG 23



Youth in-Action an EU programme investing
and empowering young people.
PG 26



Spread those wings and volunteer!
European Voluntary Service (EVS).
PG 28



2011
The European Year of Volunteering
PG 31



Higher education goes global
PG 32



The Jean Monnet programme:
20 years of food for thought
PG 35



Culture and creativity are part of
Europe's economy
PG 39



European Awards: create, innovate & cooperate
in education and training in Europe
PG 43



Looking at the next ten years of the
Bologna process
PG 47



What makes the wealth of nations?
PG 50



The 2009
European year in full swing
PG 53



Conference
"Creativity and Innovation"
best practices from EU"
PG 56



EIT - Drive forward innovation in Europe
PG 58

LATEST NEWS



9 May 2009
Creativity and Innovation in the spotlight
during EU open door day

This year, the European institutions in Brussels opened their doors to the public for the Festival of Europe on Europe Day. More than 30 000 visitors got a chance to see what the EU does for them and debate European issues with those who deal with them every day. To mark the European Year for Creativity and Innovation 2009 young and old were invited to explore their creative side in an action painting space set up for the event. The paintings and messages thus created by visitors survived the day and were on exhibition at several of the Commission's buildings in Brussels during the summer.

8 July 2009
Going abroad to learn –
more opportunities for young people

How to boost the opportunities for young people in Europe to develop their skills and knowledge by going abroad? The European Commission has published a Green Paper on "Promoting the learning mobility of young people" in a bid to consult the public on this question. Spending a period in another country for studying, learning, work experience or volunteering is not only a plus for one's personal development - it can also help young people find jobs later on. The EU has a long track record of supporting young people through various programmes and initiatives. But at less than 1% of all young people in Europe going abroad still remains the exception rather than the rule.



30 July 2009
Erasmus reaches the 2 million students mark

New figures on the EU's Erasmus programme suggest that by mid 2009 participation has exceeded the mark of 2 million students. According to the latest detailed figures more than 182 000 European students and 27 000 academics went abroad for studies, placements or teaching in the academic year 2007/2008 with the support of the programme. New opportunities offered by Erasmus include work placements – which around 20 000 students did – and training abroad for university staff. Student exchanges with Erasmus, counting both studies and placements abroad, grew by 5.2 % compared to 2006/07, while the increase for study mobility alone was of 2.1 %. The countries sending most Erasmus students as a share of their student population were Liechtenstein, Austria, the Czech Republic and Spain.

In absolute terms, Germany was the country with the highest number of outgoing students, followed by Spain, France and Italy. As in previous years, Spain remained the most popular destination for Erasmus students, with France in second place, followed by Germany and the United Kingdom.

16 July 2009
New education report: longer schooling, fewer pupils
and teachers in Europe

A new report presented by the European Commission in July 2009 identifies both major positive trends and serious challenges for education systems across Europe. Positive news include: the increasing enrolment of 4-year olds in pre-school education, a significant rise in the numbers of students in higher education and a general trend towards longer periods of compulsory schooling. Demographic change, on the other hand, is a major challenge according to the report, since it means both fewer children of school age in Europe and teacher retirement on a very large scale in many countries in the near future. 'Key Data on Education in Europe' 2009, which was produced by the Eurydice Network, also states a universal trend to greater autonomy of schools in Europe.



28 September 2009
Twelve literary talents receive new EU Prize

Twelve European authors were awarded with the 2009 European Union Prize for Literature. The awards were handed out by the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Ján Figel', and the patron of the prize, Swedish author Henning Mankell in a ceremony in Brussels.

The Prize consists of an award to one talent from each of the countries selected to participate in a particular year. The 12 countries selected for the 2009 Awards were Austria, Croatia, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden. The European Union Prize for Literature is co-financed by the EU's Culture Programme and by a consortium composed of the European Booksellers Federation (EBF), the European Writers' Council (EWC) and the Federation of European Publishers (FEP).

September 2009
Umeå and Riga to be the European
Capitals of Culture in 2014

Umeå in Sweden and Riga in Latvia will be the European Capitals of Culture in 2014. Being a European capital of culture is a golden opportunity to promote two distinct cities and towns every year as well as to show off Europe's cultural richness and diversity. Following a previous decision Sweden and Latvia are the two EU Member States eligible to showcase a European Capital of Culture in 2014. The two cities were recommended on the basis of a two-round selection process by international juries.

© EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, 2009
PUBLISHED BY KAREL BARTAK
GRAPHIC DESIGN BY STEFANO MATTEI
REPRODUCTION IS AUTHORISED PROVIDED THE SOURCE IS ACKNOWLEDGED.

EUROPE DIRECT IS A SERVICE TO HELP YOU FIND ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EUROPEAN UNION
FREEPHONE NUMBER (*): 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11
(*CERTAIN MOBILE TELEPHONE OPERATORS DO NOT ALLOW ACCESS TO 800 NUMBERS OR THESE CALLS MAY BE BILLED.)
MORE INFORMATION ON THE EUROPEAN UNION IS AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET (© [HTTP://EUROPA.EU](http://europa.eu)).
CATALOGUING DATA CAN BE FOUND AT THE END OF THIS PUBLICATION. - LUXEMBOURG: OFFICE FOR OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, 2008
ISSN 1023-3725
PRINTED IN BELGIUM
PRINTED ON WHITE CHLORINE-FREE PAPER

© EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, 2009
REPRODUCTION IS AUTHORISED PROVIDED THE SOURCE IS ACKNOWLEDGED.
LUXEMBOURG: OFFICE FOR OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
2009 – 60 PP. — 21 X 29,7 CM
ISSN 1023 - 3725

> HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS OUR PRICED PUBLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE FROM EU BOOKSHOP (© [HTTP://BOOKSHOP.EUROPA.EU](http://bookshop.europa.eu)),
> WHERE YOU CAN PLACE AN ORDER WITH THE SALES AGENT OF YOUR CHOICE. THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICE HAS A WORLDWIDE NETWORK OF SALES AGENTS. YOU CAN OBTAIN THEIR CONTACT DETAILS BY SENDING A FAX TO (352) 29 29-42758.



Foreword

Europe's capacity to create and innovate is now, more than ever, vital. Like the world around it, Europe is suffering from the economic downturn. The speed and scale of our emergence from this downturn depend heavily on how we exploit creativity and innovation, both as a short term response and to develop new opportunities in the longer term.

We need to exploit new ways of working and develop new paths to prosperity as a means to claw our way back to prosperity and growth. But, irrespective of the current crisis, we need to innovate: the skills that people require are changing fast, as jobs and society as a whole adapt to new challenges - technological change, global competition, ageing populations, environmental sustainability and new social structures. The only certainty is that Europe's future prosperity and social cohesion cannot be built on yesterday's skills and ways of working, the best preparation for the future we can make is to prepare for constant change.

Education and training will be key to if Europe is to succeed in its ambition to build its future on knowledge. It will need a workforce with skills that match the needs of a rapidly-evolving job-market, and a society made up of citizens who are capable of being flexible and mobile and who can learn, in formal and non-formal learning situations, right throughout life. If its citizens are to get the mix of skills, aptitudes and attitudes necessary to face the future, Europe's education and training systems themselves must change, become more open, use new ways of imparting knowledge and be more accessible right throughout the life cycle. Learning in the 21st century needs to be very different from what it was in the 20th century.

We need to focus on skills, on what we can do with our knowledge. Skills such as creativity, initiative-taking, entrepreneurship, cultural and civic skills are best developed in learning partnerships that extend beyond the school gate, involving the world of work. There is no more effective investment that Europe can make than in its human capital, and in developing its skills. And we need to think about how we can use the European tools at our disposal as levers both

to support individuals in their skills development paths and to help bring about the revolution in learning which is needed. Our programmes have a good track record in both respects. Think about Erasmus which has supplied a life-changing opportunity to more than 2 million Europeans and, at the same time, has changed fundamentally the way that European higher education works. We should be ambitious and imaginative in thinking how the next generation of programmes can go further to mobilise individuals and systems for new ways of learning.

But it should be remembered that skills and employability, while vital to the economy, are also major social assets. Education and learning in a broader sense are activities that help everyone live their own personal lives to the full. It is no coincidence that the same Commission directorate general is responsible for education and for culture. And the European Year of Creativity and Innovation that we are now halfway through is providing a framework for plenty of new thinking about how to maximise all those opportunities.

This issue of The Magazine highlights EU activities and reflection processes that are geared towards developing skills. It draws particularly on recent exchanges and learning through activities under the Life Long Learning Programme and it on some of the thinking taking place under the European Year of Creativity and Innovation. I hope that you find it interesting and stimulating..

Odile Quintin,
Director General for Education and Training.

enter

• PLANN

INNOVATE

ISSUE

ASSI

Education and training during **THE CRISIS** a **springboard** for European recovery

Education and training institutions across the EU are battling their way through the economic crisis. With public finances strained and companies cutting back on recruitment, prospects look as bleak for today's school leavers as for tomorrow's economic recovery. But vision and sound policy may yet turn the current economic turmoil into an opportunity.

“Those that can't do, teach”

After impacting banks and industry, the repercussions of the sub-prime crisis are now taking their toll on public services – including education and training. Harsh economic conditions are driving less fortunate students out of education and into early employment. Low profits are making it difficult for firms to pay for programmes in further education and training. And with financial markets in trouble, borrowing to fund schooling and training is proving increasingly difficult.

The problem is by no means limited to the private sector. Matters are made worse by recent declines in tax revenues, that force governments to either cut public expenditure or increase their public deficits. Schools and universities are coming under pressure from reduced budgets and high enrolment rates. They are obliged to choose between compromising on the quality of education (by increasing class sizes, cutting down on staff and teaching materials) or raising tuition fees. Some expenses, such as the salaries of teaching staff, may be protected against erosion by union pressure, but public spending on new infrastructure in schools and universities is particularly vulnerable in the current economic climate. With health and social protection also making claims on public funding, protecting education will be a difficult yet vital task.

The sizeable portion of state budgets devoted to education may seem like an attractive target for cost cutting. But reducing spending on education is like setting off an economic time bomb. Cutting investment in human capital now will have a negative impact on human capital formation in the future, and will hinder long-term economic growth. It is also important to prevent the recession from denting the employment and earnings prospects of job seekers currently

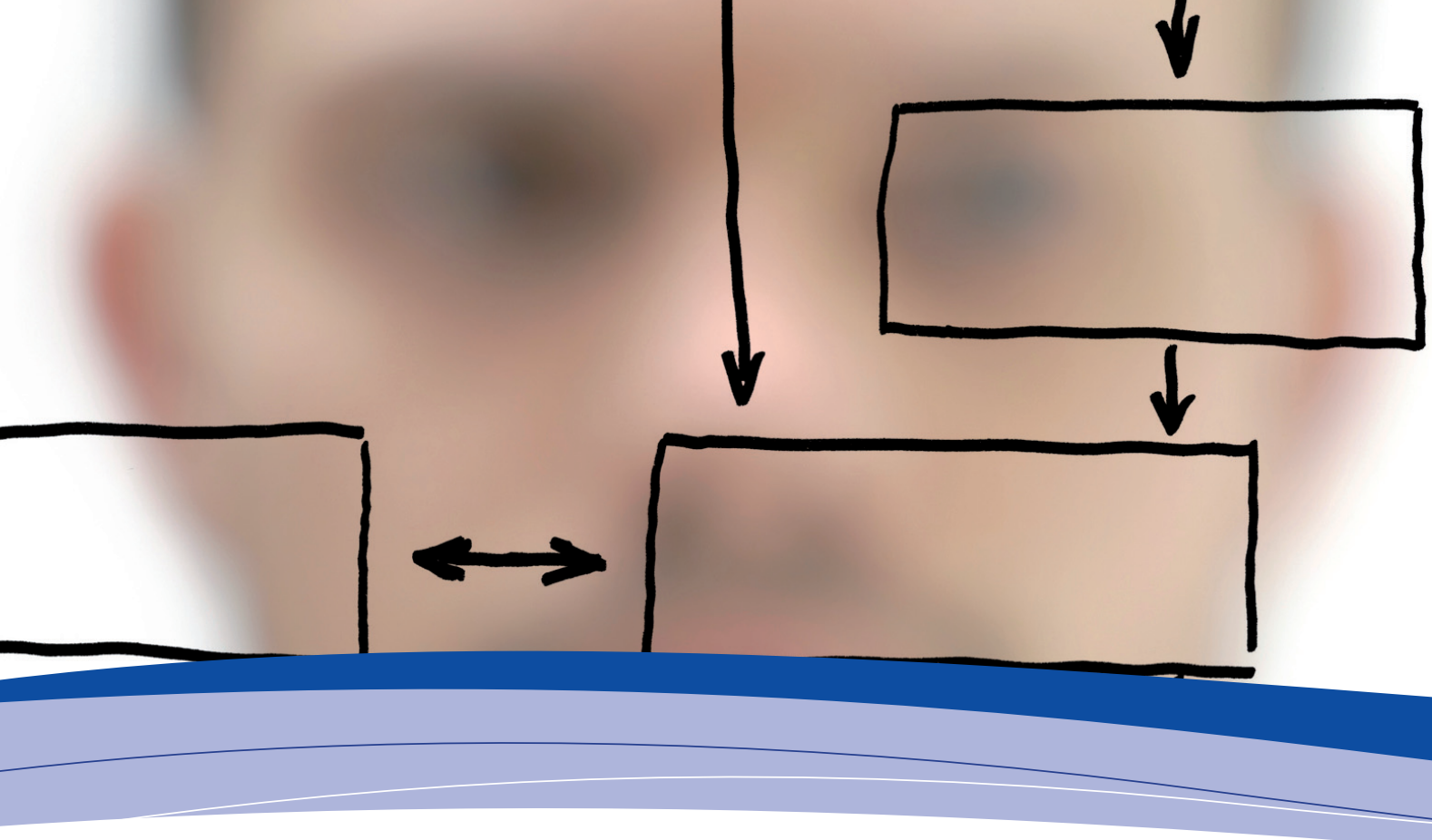
leaving school. A long-term study of employment in the United States showed that graduating during a recession has persistent negative effects on a worker's wages. In countries with strong laws protecting permanent employees, young job-seekers are likely to be offered temporary contracts that provide little training. Firms with large numbers of permanent employees may even stop training new recruits altogether and focus on the training of their current employees. Conversely, in countries with less strict legislation, permanent (and expensive) labour may be shed in a recession more easily, and replaced with younger (and cheaper) employees, who can fill apprentice positions. But even in these circumstances, poorly educated youths are at risk of getting trapped in a sequence of low-paid temporary jobs with few career prospects.

What's the answer?

Different countries are responding to the crisis in different ways (see box). One bullish answer is to make the most of it. If during a recession, time at work becomes less profitable, then there are fewer disincentives to spending time at school or in workplace training. Potential workers who remain in education don't miss out as much on making money, as overall there is less money to be made. From a company's perspective, forgone earnings – the long-term losses ensuing from the time employees spend in education or training – are lower in periods of slow economic activity.

It is up to governments to drive this process. Germany, the UK and the United States are already encouraging individuals and firms to switch their focus from production to retooling skills. These countries have set aside funds for education, in particular for school and university, as part of their economic recovery plans.



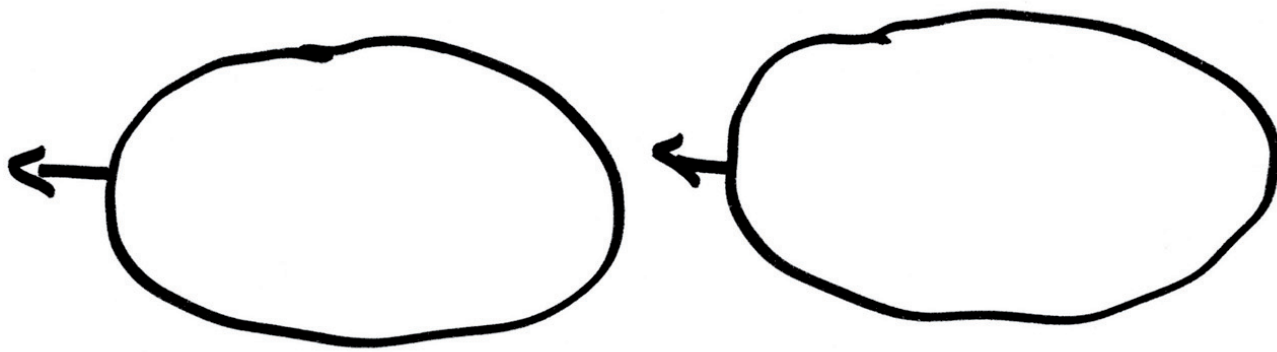


Other promising approaches include reducing company taxes for firms that provide training, offering loans to students facing financial difficulties, and promoting continued private enrolments by capping, subsidizing, or even banning tuition fees at private schools - thus avoiding an exodus of students to overcrowded public schools.

However, increased funding is not the only way to protect and promote Europe's human capital. Educational institutions can also contribute to the solution by designing small, well-targeted training programmes that place strong emphasis on their professional outcome. Programmes of this sort should deliver qualifications that are valued and recognized by the market. Structural policies can be enforced to favour product market competition. Labour market policies can help to dynamise the economy, by narrowing the gap between protected insiders and unprotected outsiders in the workforce. With no shortage of solutions and several member states already moving in the right direction, there is good reason to expect that the EU will emerge from the financial crisis stronger than ever.

Mixed responses to the crisis

- ...❖ **The government in Finland** plans to increase public investment in order to soften the blow of the economic crisis, but details are still being worked out. It is unclear whether universities will benefit from the package.
- ...❖ **The French government** is reforming its entire higher education system, allowing greater independence and providing it with an extra €5 billion in public funding. At the same time, it has, most uncharacteristically, cut back on civil servant recruitment.
- ...❖ **Universities across Germany** will be receiving new funds from the federal government for construction, maintenance and renovation of buildings. This has been confirmed by the announcement of a second stimulus package from the government, which includes investment in university infrastructure.
- ...❖ **Chronic under-financing of Greek universities** should not be aggravated by the current economic crisis. Despite announcements that the government intends to increase public funding for universities in the future, it has so far given no indication as to how much will be passed on to higher education institutions.
- ...❖ **Italian universities** expect to feel the impact of the crisis by the academic year 2010/2011, for which the government has announced decreases in public funding of around 10%.
- ...❖ **Part of the money mobilized in Norway's** stimulus package will benefit universities, notably through infrastructure expenditure on building maintenance and renovation.



...❖ **The Spanish government** adopted an action plan that will contribute €37 million to university scholarships. A further €85 million will be invested in adapting the structure and study plans of Spanish universities to the new framework for European higher education.

...❖ **The Dutch rectors' conference** has reported difficulties in negotiating with the government for public funding increases. They also express concern over research collaboration with the business sector, as companies are pulling back from their financial commitment.

...❖ **British universities** have been affected by the financial crisis in several ways. Despite reports of private schools closing because of the recession and university funds lost in Icelandic banks and endowment funds, student recruitment remains high. A €71 million "Economic Challenge Investment Fund" has been set up to enable universities to respond rapidly to the needs of employers and individuals during the crisis.

...❖ **United States**

Nearly one in two school superintendents are reducing staff recruitment and consumable supplies. Over one third are increasing the size of classes and deferring maintenance. However, the US stimulus package includes an increase in the education budget from \$89 billion in 2008 to \$174 billion in 2009.

Lessons from the past

Looking back at the United States in the 1930s, the great depression led to no noticeable loss of schooling among the African American community (the nation's most vulnerable minority) and an average of 20 days of schooling deficit for the rest.

Recessions in the 1970s and 1980s had a countercyclical effect on the demand for education. Each percentage point increase in the unemployment rate was followed by a 2 percent increase in college enrolment.

United States surveys from across the years indicate that Americans take on apprenticeships when GDP is below trend. However, the 1990s recession in the UK shows a different trend. The share of British workers taking up apprenticeship training actually went down during this period. This has also been the case in Germany, Norway and Switzerland.



SOCIAL

I'm important
here

KEEP

THE DAWNING OF

a new era for EU youth policy

Young people are one of the most vulnerable – and valuable - groups in society, and have been identified as a priority in the Commission's Renewed Social Agenda. The European Commission has now adopted a new EU Youth Strategy on "Youth – Investing and Empowering", which will guide EU youth policy in the decade to come. The strategy is part of the Commission's response to the current crisis.

Young people between 13 and 30 years of age are a scarce and dwindling resource in Europe. Their current share of 20% of the total population is projected to fall to 15% by 2050, and the current crisis reinforces the need to nurture young human capital. On the one hand, young people in the EU today may enjoy greater opportunities. But on the other hand, they also face difficult challenges, and many of them drop out of school and employment, or are threatened by poverty and social exclusion. The new EU Youth Strategy is a response to these challenges. It aims to empower young people to benefit from all the opportunities that are available to them.

Identifying concerns and aspirations

The new strategy has emerged as a development from the current framework of EU cooperation in the youth policy field, which will expire in 2009. Before starting to draft proposals for a new framework, DG EAC consulted widely, not just among young people themselves, but also among people involved in policy-making affecting youth, including local, regional and national authorities, national youth councils, the European Youth Forum, youth organisations and other stakeholders.

An on-line consultation was launched in September 2008 to sound out the opinions of young people about the current framework on youth policy and to learn about their ambitions and aspirations for the design of a future EU youth policy. Some 5,500 responses were received, mainly from young people, but also from organisations and individuals working with youth on a daily basis.

In addition, debates were organised across the Union before and during European Youth Week 2008, as part of the structured dialogue cycle with youth on "the future challenges for young people" that had been launched in April 2008. The feedback was organised via the National Agencies of the Youth in Action programme, which had supported the organisation of many of the debates.

Some 250 selected young Europeans also took part in a set of activities organised in Brussels in co-operation with the European Parliament and the European Youth Forum, as part of European Youth Week 2008. Around the central theme of 'future challenges facing young people', the participants debated with the European Parliament and drew up conclusions which were then debated with Commission Members and the European Parliament.

Member States were consulted too. This took the form of a questionnaire that assessed the current framework of cooperation and sounded out ideas for the scope and content of future cooperation.

Mobilising all key policies

After analysing the contributions from the consultation, DG EAC drafted its proposals. The new framework was adopted by the Commission on 27 April as an EU Strategy on "Youth – Investing and Empowering". This aims at making the best use of all key policies that have an impact on youth at European level and in the Member States. And in line with the EU's overall EU Social Agenda, it sets out a list of goals: creating more opportunities for youth in education and employment, improving access and full participation of all young people in society, and promoting solidarity between youth and society.

At the launch of the new EU Strategy for Youth, the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Jân Figel', said: "*Youth is our present and our future – and we must make a concerted effort to open as many avenues as possible for our young citizens, particularly also in the current time of crisis. We must empower our youth to deal with the many challenges they encounter in today's globalised world. Our new Strategy is a timely response to these challenges, and I am confident that it will open the door for a new era in the development of youth policies at EU level*".

No stone unturned

The surveys and consultations undertaken prior to the adoption of the new EU strategy identified issues relating to education, employment, social inclusion, and health as most of all preoccupying today's youth. A wide-ranging response was therefore necessary to meet the needs and aspirations of young people, and to ensure that they are empowered to benefit from all opportunities.

Accordingly, the Commission plans to take a cross-sectoral approach to all youth-related issues. The new strategy also envisages some short-term actions by the Commission and the Member States. These cover youth education, employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, inclusion, health and sport, participation, volunteering and youth global engagement.

Greater recognition of youth work

The new Strategy emphasises the importance of youth work in tackling the challenges faced by young people throughout Europe. Youth work can help to deal effectively with unemployment, school failure and social exclusion, as well as providing leisure time and increasing skills. The Strategy proposes that youth work should be supported, recognised for its economic and social contribution, and be further professionalised.

Reinforcing cooperation with Member States

The Strategy aims at helping all young people in their daily life. It is also designed to enhance their general well-being, and will rely on reinforced cooperation between Member States through the Open Method of Coordination, which has shown itself to be an appropriate tool for cooperation. The Strategy proposes additional refinements to improve coordination of youth policy still further - it will become more flexible and simplified in its reporting and will reinforce links with policy areas covered by the European Youth Pact in the Lisbon Strategy for Jobs and Growth.

More knowledge and evidence

The Commission wants to put in place a youth policy that is more evidence-based. The first step to achieve this was the Commission's first "EU Youth Report" - a compilation of data, statistics and brief analyses on the situation of young people in Europe, providing an overview of the situation in the Member States. It was launched simultaneously with the new EU Strategy for Youth, and similar reports are now expected to be published every three years, to help improve the knowledge base in the field of youth.

A permanent dialogue with young people

A structured dialogue with young people was introduced in 2007 to ensure that youth and their organizations were given a direct input into youth policy-making at EU level. The new EU Youth Strategy provides for the structured dialogue to be revised at EU level to make it more efficient, with one thematic cycle being proposed for each year. Member States are also invited to make use of the same policy-making instrument at national level, and are urged to organise a permanent and regular dialogue with young people.



Benefits for all young people

All youth should benefit from the new EU Youth Strategy. It explicitly embraces those with fewer opportunities, too. Its implementation will help create more opportunities for youth education and employment:

- ▶ **Non-formal education will be supported and developed**
- ▶ **Transitions from school to work, or from inactivity or unemployment to work, will be eased**
- ▶ **More and better investment will be made to provide the right skills for the jobs that the labour market needs to fill**
- ▶ **Talent development, creative skills, entrepreneurial mindsets and cultural expressions of youth will be promoted**

The new Strategy also aims to give all young people easier access and the chance to take part in full. It includes:

- ▶ **Healthy living for young people - physical education and sports activities will be encouraged among young people**
- ▶ **Measures to ensure the full participation of youth in society**
- ▶ **Preventing poverty and social exclusion among disadvantaged youth groups**

The Strategy has a further objective: fostering mutual solidarity between society and young people:

Youth volunteering will be supported and developed
Youth will be mobilised in global policy-making at all levels

Turning over a new page

The framework of cooperation in youth policy that was adopted in 2002 will expire in 2009. The new framework, as outlined in the new EU Youth Strategy, is scheduled to be adopted by the Council of Youth Ministers in November 2009. It will enter into force at the beginning of 2010 and will expire in 2018 (with sub-cycles for policy review envisaged every three years).





Building **higher skills** and lifelong learning through enhanced

EUROPEAN COOPERATION

Why cooperate?

A central element in Europe's strategy to meet the challenges of the future is to build higher and more relevant skills for all. Europe cannot compete on costs. It needs to lead in the innovation race.

But a greater focus on innovation means a shift away from lower skilled jobs. And since Europe cannot accept that any of its citizens should be excluded from playing an active part in the economy and in society, complementary changes are needed too. Everyone must be provided with a realistic chance to participate, to progress and to succeed – and this is where education and training come in.

Some of these challenges have been highlighted in the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs since it was launched in 2000. Europe must generate more and more jobs requiring higher and more flexible skills; it must face stiff foreign competition; and it must cope with ageing societies. These challenges have not gone away. They are still very much there – and are becoming ever more pressing.

In the meantime, new challenges have emerged. In response to climate change and global warming, Europe is now pursuing the development of a low-carbon economy. But this can be achieved only if there is a boost to economic and social innovation. To preserve its global competitive position, Europe must attract the best brains amongst internationally mobile researchers and highly qualified workers. But it also has to meet the challenge of integrating low-qualified migrants into European society. And the economic crisis will now require additional efforts to bring Europe back onto the road to sustainable growth. In consequence, future policy development will have to combine support to rapid recovery with structural reforms permitting growth which is sustainable also in the long term.

Education and training policies can make a major contribution to meeting these challenges.

But cooperation on education and training cannot be seen in isolation. Education shapes the lives of every young person; it is one of the conditions for each of them to achieve personal independence. This means that it is also a priority for youth policies.

It is national governments that are responsible for education and training as well as for youth policies. However, many of the challenges highlighted above are common to all countries, and some of the goals will be easier to achieve if countries learn from one other. And some goals, such as helping students, learners and volunteers to move between countries, simply cannot be achieved by individual countries acting alone. There is a powerful case for cooperation at EU level.

What has been achieved so far?

With the Lisbon strategy, the European Union aimed at becoming a leading knowledge economy. Through the Education and Training 2010 work programme, launched in 2002, a lot has already been done in support of this ambition. Policy cooperation in education and training has fed into national reforms of lifelong learning and qualifications systems. It has influenced the modernisation of higher education, and helped make vocational education and training more relevant to the labour market. And shared tools and principles have emerged, with the result that the member states share the same approach to key competences, quality of mobility, validation of non-formal and informal learning, lifelong guidance, the European Qualifications Framework, and quality assurance – both in higher education and in vocational education and training.





A European Pact for Youth was agreed in 2005, initially by the Youth Council and subsequently by Heads of State and Government. The outcome has been that the "cross-sectoral youth policy" endorsed by the pact has made itself felt at European and national level within the framework of the Lisbon Strategy, in particular in emphasizing the importance of new skills for young people and acknowledging different ways skills may be acquired. The 2004 Council Resolution on voluntary activities of young people underlines the role that voluntary activities play in terms of facilitating the transition from education to work and adult life, and the Council Resolution of 2006 on the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European youth field makes clear how broad the scope of education and training can be.

But not all the goals set in the past have been met. In particular, most of the benchmarks set for education and training have not been reached. Some Member States perform at a level comparable to the best in the world, but others do not, and reading literacy and early school leaving remain substantial challenges for Europe. One out of every six young people still leaves school with only compulsory education - or less. Many learners with a migrant background succeed less in education and training than their native peers. Adults with low levels of education are seven times less likely to be engaged in continuing education and training than those with high levels.

More still needs to be done to reduce the number of early school leavers, to improve the achievement of learners from disadvantaged groups, to attract more adults into continuing education and training, and to make it easier for people to move between jobs and between countries.

The way forward in the field of education and training

European education and training systems have to increase their responsiveness and openness to the needs of the economy and society. Reform is needed if people are to be better prepared to find jobs, if businesses are to find the staff they need to succeed and innovate in the face of global competition, and if social inclusion, responsible citizenship and openness towards other cultures are to be supported. Lifelong learning must become a reality across Europe.

The Education Council recently agreed a new strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training. The aim was to promote the definition of areas of common interest, and to identify ways of working together that respect Member States' national responsibilities while making best use of the added value of European cooperation. The conclusions that the Council adopted in May identify four strategic challenges and a number of short-term priorities for 2009-11. They also suggest improved tools and working methods, including new education and training benchmarks for monitoring progress across Europe.

Four strategic challenges

The four long-term strategic challenges to guide the policy cooperation for the period to 2020 are:

- ▶ Making lifelong learning and cross-border mobility a reality
- ▶ Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training
- ▶ Promoting equity, social cohesion and citizenship,
- ▶ Enhancing innovation and creativity, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

These objectives highlight the consensus on certain fundamental challenges to our education systems. The framework covers learning in all contexts – whether formal, non-formal or informal – and at all levels: from early childhood education and schools through to higher education, vocational education and training and adult learning. But lifelong learning is a key principle underpinning the framework.

Lifelong learning is, together with mobility, seen as key in making education and training more responsive to the changes in the outside world. It can increase the attractiveness of learning and embrace flexible learning pathways, including through non-formal and informal learning. The central idea is that people must be put in a position to acquire key skills early and update them throughout their life.

Improving quality and efficiency means better results (for example in acquiring competences and skills that are relevant to the needs of society) as well as better teaching, better governance of institutions and the efficient and sustainable use of resources.



Equity, social cohesion and active citizenship are stressed because education and training have a dual function. The objective is not just excellent results, but also enabling all citizens - whatever their personal, social or economic circumstances - to acquire and develop the competences they need to get and keep a job, and to foster further learning, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue.

The fourth objective of enhancing innovation and creativity is a major new element, reflecting the importance of innovation and creativity not only for personal fulfilment, but also as a foundation for Europe's success in the future. Innovation is crucial for the development of the overall economy, and it is equally crucial that education and training systems themselves innovate so that they can adapt to the changes in the world around them.

Priorities 2009-11

To work towards these long-term objectives, the Council also identified some urgent priorities needing attention in 2009-2011. These include

- ▶ promoting lifelong learning and mobility by implementing the European Qualifications Framework and expanding opportunities for learning mobility in Europe and worldwide;
- ▶ promoting quality and efficiency by working together on the professional development of teachers and trainers and improving governance and funding of education and training institutions;
- ▶ promoting equity, social inclusion and active citizenship by mutual learning on best practices for early childhood education or the education of children from migrant backgrounds; and
- ▶ enhancing creativity and innovation by pursuing work on transversal key competences, such as learning-to-learn, or a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and by developing partnerships between education and training providers and businesses, research institutions, cultural actors and creative industries.

Not all Member States will be involved in joint follow-up work in all these areas at the same time. Countries will choose according to their own interests, needs and priorities. These short term priorities will be re-examined in 2011.

The way forward in the youth field

The New EU Strategy on Youth - Investing and Empowering was adopted by the Commission on 27 April. It is based on the current knowledge of the situation of youth, and is closely linked to the goals of the Renewed Social Agenda. Creating more opportunities for youth in education is the first field of action it proposes, and it sets out objectives for the first three years, 2010-2012, along with a list of possible actions for Member States and/or the Commission.

➔ Non-formal learning, and creativity and entrepreneurship as fields of actions

Young people will have to change jobs more often than their grand-parents and parents did. This makes it vital to acquire key competences that are flexible enough to develop appropriate skills throughout one's life. The Communication on "New Skills for New Jobs", adopted by the Commission in December 2008, refers to "the growing demand from employers for transversal key competencies such as problem-solving and analytical skills, self-management and communication skills, linguistic skills and, more generally 'non-routine' skills". In a meeting of the Youth Entrepreneurship Forum organised jointly by the European Confederation of Junior Enterprises and the European Commission, the representatives of *BusinessEurope* and *EuroChambres* emphasized the importance of soft skills acquired outside the classroom, e.g. through summer jobs, internships, youth work and youth organisations or within social networks.



Accordingly, the new EU strategy for Youth set out three objectives in non-formal and informal learning:

- ▶ developing its quality,
- ▶ recognising its outcomes,
- ▶ integrating it better with formal education

A set of actions is proposed, to be implemented by Member States and Commission within their respective spheres of competence.

Creativity and entrepreneurship is also central to the new strategy. The starting point is that every young person is different and has his or her own talent, and this potential has to be fostered. Culture stimulates creativity, and entrepreneurship education should be viewed as a means to promote economic growth and new jobs as well as a source of skills, civic participation, autonomy and self-esteem. The development of entrepreneurial spirit can also be provided outside the formal education system, by professional or voluntary 'youth workers', as, for instance, in the framework of junior enterprises.

A new role for Youth Work

Youth work can help to deal with unemployment, school failure, and social exclusion, provide leisure, increase skills and support the transition from youth to adulthood. For that reason, youth organisations have to be supported. The quality of non-formal education has to be developed and it has to be better integrated with formal education. And its outcomes should be recognized. To help in this, the Commission is developing additional tools, such as the self-assessment function of Europass, in particular for skills developed in non-formal settings, and certificates such as Youthpass.

Working together in partnership

The Open Method of Coordination continues to be the methodology for cooperation with Member States and stakeholders under the new framework in education and training and the new EU strategy for Youth. At the heart of this method lies the ambition for European cooperation to be a source of inspiration and new ideas for policy development at the national level. Member States will be supported in learning from each other through exchanging good practices and the development of European reference tools. Stakeholders will be more systematically involved. In the youth field, a working group with Member States and the European Youth Forum - and, when appropriate "emerging stakeholders" - will be set up in 2010. This will explore how to involve unorganised young people more closely. Joint Council-Commission reports will regularly evaluate progress and feed into establishing fresh priorities. The guiding principles will be partnership between the Commission, Member States and stakeholders, and the need to deliver clear and visible outcomes.

Indicators and benchmarks

In Education and Training, one element of the working methods agreed by the Council is an updated set of benchmarks for 2010-2020. These benchmarks are used to monitor progress at the European level towards key goals. Building on the existing benchmarks for 2010, the updated set will cover the entire lifelong learning perspective from early childhood education through to higher education and adult learning:

- ▶ By 2020, at least 95% of children between 4 years old and the age for starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education.
- ▶ By 2020, the share of low-achieving 15-years olds in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15%.
- ▶ By 2020, the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 10%.
- ▶ By 2020, the share of 30-34 year olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 40%.
- ▶ By 2020, an average of at least 15 % of adults should participate in lifelong learning.

In addition, future work will be undertaken in the important political areas of mobility, employability and language competences.

In the Youth field, the new EU strategy foresees a "dashboard" of existing indicators and benchmarks on youth in education and employment, and the creation of a Working Group to discuss possible 'descriptors' (light indicators) for the priorities of participation, volunteering, creativity, as well as for NEETs (youngsters Not in Education, Employment or Training)

Education and training in the post-2010 Lisbon strategy

Education and training is a crucial part of Europe's overall efforts to meet the challenges of the future. It must therefore be placed firmly within the broader discussions on economic and social reforms in the follow-up to the Lisbon strategy. The new strategic framework in education and training and the new EU Strategy for Youth provide an excellent basis for this. They stress the importance of higher and more relevant skills. They stress the dual dimension of education and training for participation in society, personal fulfilment, and the sustainable development of our economies and societies. They stress the importance of investing in human capital and of people becoming lifelong learners. Reforms in education and training take time to show results. But in order to see these results in the future, the time to act is now.







Young people and the financial crisis:

CHALLENGE & OPPORTUNITY

The current financial crisis is hitting young people hard. The youth unemployment rate is between two and three times higher than for the rest of the population. This will have long-term consequences for young people. More pressure will be put on students in education. Entry into adulthood will be delayed since young people cannot afford to establish a family and will have to continue living with their parents. What is the way out of the crisis, and what is the EU doing to lead young people back into employment? Can the current crisis also be an opportunity for creativity and entrepreneurship, and for new ideas?

The latest news

In times of crisis, young people are the age-group most significantly affected in the labour market. They are the last ones to be recruited, and the first ones to lose their jobs when times are tough. On average, youth unemployment is up to three times higher than adult unemployment across the European Union. The youth unemployment rate has been increasing steadily since April 2008, and strongly since last October. According to Eurostat, the unemployment rate among people under 25 years old was 18.3% in March this year, which amounts to more than 5 million young people. Additionally, 16 % of the EU population is at risk of poverty, a situation that is likely to prevent people from participating fully in society. At-risk-of-poverty rates range from 10% to 26% in the EU – but the reality of living on a low income carries very different social significance across Europe. To be relatively poor in a rich country is tough, but to be relatively poor in a poor country is very much tougher.

Enrolment rates in higher education have greatly increased over the last two decades. The number of students in Europe rose by 25% between 1998 and 2006, and there are one million more higher education graduates per year today than in 2000, with a total of 19 million students in higher education in the EU. This number will continue to increase as more young people turn to education because of the difficult employment market – leading in turn to a probable increase in unemployed recent graduates.

Getting young people back into employment

Although young people constitute an exceptional resource for the renewal of society, labour-market inefficiencies prevent them from being fully utilized. Successful integration of young people into the labour market is one of the most important challenges we face in the EU. Effective approaches are urgently needed to ensure the workforce can respond to skill needs in the labour market. Full employment for young people could be achieved, but three conditions will have to be met: coordination of monetary, financial and income policy; the reform of labour-market and social policies; and promoting individual autonomy through investments and improved capabilities. This should be a joint effort of society at the European, national, regional and local levels. A wide range of institutions, and in particular the social partners, have a crucial role to play.

A comprehensive mix of policy responses should include measures addressing new forms of employment, the mobility of young people, and education and training in response to labour market needs, as well as reconciliation of work, private and family life. These are the basic principles of the European Youth Pact.





The European Youth Pact and European Employment Strategy

The European Youth Pact was adopted in 2005 as a part of the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs. This brought youth policy to the top of the EU agenda, addressing issues which affect young people directly, such as education, employment and social inclusion.

The Youth Pact calls for wide mobilization for investing in youth, in education, training, mobility, fast transitions of higher quality, and facilities to provide motivation, counselling and guidance so as to integrate youth into the labour market.

Integrating young people into society and working life so that they make better use of their potential is essential for sustainable development in Europe. To promote this process, the European Employment Strategy provides guidelines for specific youth-oriented policies.

These guidelines urge helping young people into employment within a new inter-generational approach. They call for increased efforts by Member States to build employment pathways for young people and to reduce youth unemployment. They also call for inclusive labour markets, promoting employment access for disadvantaged people, and combating discrimination. The guidelines reaffirm the objective of a "new start" for young people within six months of unemployment, and within four months by 2010.

In addition to promoting better labour market access for young people, a key priority of the pact is to promote quality employment. According to recent figures, 41 % of working people between the ages of 15 and 24 were on short-term contracts, and this figure exceeded 60 % in some Member States. These contracts have triggered a debate on conditions for workers, and particularly for sensitive groups like the young.

Since the common principles of flexicurity were adopted in December 2007, the question of how to enhance both flexibility and security on the labour market has become even more acute, especially as far as young people are

concerned. Flexible employment may provide stepping stones into the labour market and help young people overcome the disadvantage of limited work experience. But there is a trend towards young people remaining for long periods in employment situations that demand high flexibility but that offer little security.

The role of Youth Ministers

Member States play the main role in implementing youth policy. And in the European Youth Pact they have already committed themselves to give special attention to young people within the Lisbon Strategy.

Young people have welcomed the Pact as a sign of EU commitment to them. Governments that do not deliver on its provisions will risk provoking disappointment. In some Member States, Youth Ministers have taken on a coordinating role in their national governments. Youth Ministers emphasised in 2008 that youth employment should be a priority, and in 2009 they stressed again how young people must play a central role in the progress towards growth and jobs, social cohesion and competitiveness in Europe.

Participation and transversality

The European Union has repeatedly stressed the importance of young people's full participation in society. This is not limited to taking part in elections and non-governmental youth organisations. It extends to active involvement in the education and employment fields. In consequence, there is a need to see youth policy as transversal – a policy that crosses many policy dimensions. Employment and education are indeed closely linked; the complex interactions between them cannot be understood without taking into account other policy areas that impact on young people, such as social inclusion mechanisms and health issues.



Towards a new EU youth agenda

The Commission recognised the need for a new EU youth strategy which emphasised the cross-sectoral and transversal nature of youth policy, which is why it launched a comprehensive consultation with Member States and interested groups in spring 2008. Out of this came the Communication "An EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering", which was adopted by the Commission in April 2009. It endorses measures that will create favourable conditions for young people to develop their skills, fulfil their potential, work, actively participate in society, and engage more in the building of the EU project.

In the employment field, the strategy addresses issues such as the transition from education to employment, precarious working conditions, flexicurity, employability, the promotion of entrepreneurship, recognition of non-formal learning competences, support for young people's autonomy and the empowerment of young people.

The evolving employment market increasingly demands not only knowledge and formal education, but life skills on a wider scale. Vocational education and training are, as a result, moving away from formal training and technical skills in favour of generic skills, soft skills, digital literacy, media literacy, and the development of entrepreneurial mindsets. Non-governmental youth organisations play a central role in providing young people with these competences and the opportunities to deploy them, so they should be funded adequately, and policy should allow for their reinforcement.

Summer jobs, long-term student exchanges, volunteering activities and internships outside the formal education system are other mechanisms seen as important in providing young people with new skills.

The new EU Strategy for Youth - Investing and Empowering, proposes to support non-formal and informal education by developing its quality, recognising its outcomes and

integrating it better with formal education. The recognition of non-formal education is a major component of youth policies at EU level, and is shared by national, regional and local level policies worked out in close cooperation with youth organisations and youth services. Tools are being developed, like the self-assessment function of Europass and certificates such as Youthpass, and the non-formal learning dimension of the Youth in Action Programme and its support of youth work are to be reinforced.

Youth employment is only one of the concerns that affect young people's life. A good job is a prerequisite and a necessary condition for young people to be active and responsible citizens – but it is not enough.

European youth organisations and the surveys among young people make clear the desire for promotion of their social interests for opportunities which will help them take on the responsibilities of adult life and full citizenship. The European Union and the Member States must explicitly promote an independent lifestyle for young people, encouraging them to develop new forms of political and social involvement and to make positive use of the critical capacity typical of the new generation. When applied consistently, policies aimed at strengthening young people's autonomy can become a powerful instrument.



HEALTH & WELL-BEING

of young people in Europe

The concept of overall health as a combination of physical, mental, and social well-being is rooted in Europe's history. The ancient Greeks viewed the human body as a temple housing the mind and the soul. Health and fitness were closely connected, with a strong relation between athletics, education and health.

The Latin poet Juvenal wrote of "mens sana in corpore sano" (a healthy mind in a healthy body), and this concept was rediscovered by European Renaissance humanists.

When the World Health Organization adopted its constitution in 1946, it defined health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Nowadays, this combination of physical, mental, and social well-being is referred to as the Health Triangle: if one part of the health triangle is affected, they all are.

Young people as a target group

Attention has only recently been given to the health of younger people. For many years, health meant no more than the opposite of illness. Treatment focused on those who became ill – predominantly, the elderly.

But the accent has increasingly been put on preservation of health capital, and prevention from an early age. The realisation that health behaviours were established during childhood gave new importance to tackling issues affecting young people, such as obesity, anorexia, sexually transmitted diseases, addictions, depression, and self-harm.

Some evidence

The recent EU Youth Report reveals that most people aged 25-34 broadly define themselves as in "good" or "fair" health. Most young people also report a high level of mental well-being. But some two million young people in Europe suffer from mental disorders, including depression, schizophrenia, and disorders related to conduct, anxiety or eating. In 2006, intentional self-harm was the second most common cause of death for people aged between 15 and 29, and more than 7,000 young people committed suicide in the EU. Globally speaking, nearly one third of young Europeans aged 15-24 are affected by weight problems.

In 2006, drug consumption and addiction were also a significant cause of death: in the EU, 1,625 people aged 15-29 died because of accidental poisoning and 866 died because of drug dependence. 24 % of people aged 15-29 smoke daily. As a general pattern, young people in Europe have their first spell of drunkenness at 13 or 14.

HIV/AIDS is still considered a serious health concern across the EU. In 2006, people aged between 15 and 29 represented 27.7 % of newly-diagnosed HIV cases inside the EU.

Policy developments in the youth field

As far back as 2001, the European Commission underlined the importance of health for the participation of young people in society and for their autonomy. In 2005, in its Communication on the implementation of the European Youth Pact, the Commission stated that it would also pay attention to the health of young people, for example in relation to nutrition and obesity, alcohol and drugs use, and strategies for promoting good health.





The civil unrest and urban riots in parts of Europe in 2005 intensified the political focus on young people with fewer opportunities. The public became more aware that many inequalities still existed in the EU, and that disadvantages are also cumulative. With lower socio-economic status and levels of education come higher incidences of mental and physical health problems.

So in 2007, in its Communication "Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society", the Commission urged greater cross-sectoral cooperation to address the social dimension of health. It made proposals such as equipping youth organisations and youth workers to deal with health issues. The same year, health became a priority of the EU programme "Youth in Action".

In 2008, the French Presidency gave priority to the health and well-being of young people, and the Council of Ministers of Youth adopted a Resolution calling for partnership. It urged cooperation among those involved in formal, non-formal and informal learning, healthcare professionals, economic and social partners, especially youth associations, and the media.

A seminar in December reviewed the state of health of young people in Europe, explored good practices and made recommendations on how to assist young people, particularly the most vulnerable, to play a bigger part in conserving their own health.

The new EU Strategy on Youth – Investing and Empowering, adopted by the Commission in April 2009, made Health and Sports one of the eight main fields of action.

Public health and cooperation

In the meantime, young people have become a target group in most health sectoral policies, and in the 2nd programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-13). A task force on youth-specific aspects of alcohol has been created, and a Consensus Paper on mental health in youth and education published. Campaigns specifically directed to young people have been organized, such as the EU anti-smoking campaign HELP.

Cooperation with other policy areas has been developed. For example, following the Commission's study 'Young people's lifestyles and sedentariness' (2005), a political process was launched with Member States to exchange good practice regarding the use of physical activity and sport to combat overweight and obesity. In the employment field, the Safe Start campaign was launched in 2006 to promote youth health at the work place. In November 2008, the Agriculture Council of Ministers agreed on a Commission proposal for a European Union-wide scheme to provide fruit and vegetables to school children to fight obesity.

Empowerment of young people

Young people themselves are more and more aware of the importance of health for their life. In the online consultation launched to prepare the new EU Strategy on Youth, organisations and individuals were asked to indicate the ten main challenges or opportunities that will have the most direct impact on young people in the coming decade. Health and wellbeing is seen a main challenge by 45% of the youth organisations and 42% of the young people who answered.



The European Youth Forum, a platform of European non-governmental youth organisations, adopted a “Policy paper on the Health and Well-Being of Young People” in 2008 and published in 2009 an opinion paper on the health of young people. It underlined the need for easily accessible, non-discriminatory health services for young people, and the importance of young people's rights to make informed decisions about their health and their bodies. Informed decisions, it was suggested, are the first step towards empowerment and autonomy for young people, and a crucial aspect of general well-being.

As part of its plan to empower young people to improve their health, the Commission has set up a new Initiative on Youth and Health. This will bring together all the youth-related initiatives in health and related policy areas across the Commission. The chief aims are to prioritise the health of children and young people in Europe and to highlight important health-related youth issues that the Commission is working on, including healthy life-styles, education, workplace, media and healthy environments. The initiative emphasises dialogue and involvement of young people in tackling the health issues that affect them, and it invites young people to be active partners.

About 400 people from all across Europe, half of them aged 18 to 25, attended the two day conference on Youth and Health on 9-10 July in Brussels. The conference aimed primarily at listening to young people and at involving them in the decision-making process about their health. It also aimed at generating commitment from stakeholders to improve the health of young people. The importance of a cross-sectoral approach, a youth/adult partnership, and a youth-friendly communication on health were underlined by the participants.

High quality education was considered as a cornerstone for a healthy life. It was therefore proposed to integrate non-formal education, which is a resource for Health education, more closely into formal education, and to develop a whole-school approach involving young people, families and communities. Innovative ways to empower young people, such as role models and peer-to-peer education were also emphasized.

Conclusion

The health and well-being of young people is a good example of a comprehensive and cross-sectoral issue. Current developments at EU level show that a wide range of stakeholders can work together in pursuit of a common goal. Measures tailored to different age groups (and gender) are needed, as are increased public awareness and the involvement of young people themselves. Youth organisations have a major role to play as providers of non-formal and informal education in this area. Media and new technologies can be very useful interactive information tools too, complementing traditional information networks.

YOUTH IN ACTION

an EU programme investing in
and empowering young people.

Over the past twenty years, 1.6 million people have taken part in the European Union's youth programmes. From helping teenagers make movies to organising football championships in city suburbs, the EU has nudged a myriad of young peoples' projects forward. Now the Union looks towards bringing collaboration on youth matters closer still. But is Youth in Action, the programme currently overseeing its work, up to the task?

Since the 1980s, Member States have been cooperating on schemes that help the young to develop new skills, earn recognition and find their place in society. The first European youth programme set out to support youth exchanges and training for youth workers. Programmes have since been extended to a wider range of activities. One major step was to set up the European Voluntary Service in 2000. In 2007, the torch was passed on to Youth in Action, which has been managing Europe's work with young people since.

Youth in Action is an EU programme that tries to foster young Europeans' sense of citizenship, solidarity and tolerance. It promotes mobility within and beyond the EU borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue. Last year, over 110,000 young people and youth workers took part in its 7,000 projects across the world. The programme trains youth workers, puts youth organisations in touch with new partners, and generally promotes national youth support systems, by, for example, showcasing innovative approaches.

The EU framework for youth policy continues to evolve, and Youth in Action has a genuine role to play in its development. The huge potential of the programme may not be fully developed if it remains as a stand-alone instrument, when it also has the chance to help develop the way Europe looks at youth. This was part of the rationale behind Youth in Action when it was designed in 2004. But does the Youth in Action Programme fit with the Union's political strategy for the next decade? The answer, when the programme is checked against the objectives set out in the recently published EU Communication "Strategy for youth: investing and empowering", is a resounding yes.

...young & active...

Youth in Action is creating opportunities for young people in education and employment by offering them non-formal education. It works on the premise that skills can be acquired outside the classroom, and treats with great importance the development of non-formal learning and recognition of what it delivers. Since 2007, participants in most of the projects supported by the programme receive a "Youthpass", a certificate which describes the learning outcomes of their participation on the basis of key competences. In most cases, this experience is gathered while travelling abroad (for periods of up to a year). This provides a unique opportunity for young people to build up qualifications and master a foreign language. Youth in Action projects also develop creativity, autonomy and entrepreneurship, as participants are encouraged to think and act innovatively.

The programme also works hard to help young people participate in society by organising youth democracy projects and meetings. This year, Youth in Action supported more than 100 events to raise awareness of the European Parliament elections. Youth in Action also promotes health training for youth workers. It makes information on health available to the general public and promotes a healthy lifestyle, notably by organising sporting events.



Solidarity, a key element of the EU's vision for young people, is at the heart of Youth in Action. The Programme has developed an inclusion strategy to promote the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities. The programme reaches out to a specific group each year. In 2009, it promoted the inclusion of young people with disabilities. In 2010 it will give priority to projects tackling youth unemployment.

Volunteering is an aspect of youth development that the Union wants to focus on in its new policy framework. Youth in Action has extensive experience in this field through the European Voluntary Service. Last year, its work inspired the Council to press for all volunteer programs to meet its high standards. The European Voluntary Service is breaking new ground, notably in terms of recognition of non-formal learning.

The Youth in Action programme also has a lot to offer through its "Youth and the World" initiative. This particularly popular strand of the programme's work is designed to help young people and youth workers travel across the world to build more cohesive societies, gain mutual understanding, learn to respect different communities, and to foster intercultural dialogue. For projects stretching beyond EU boundaries, priority is given to Euro-African relations. This decision echoes the importance the Union attaches to the UN Millennium Development Goals.

...growing up...

One angle from which Youth in Action could support tomorrow's policy framework is youth work. The Commission is a strong believer in youth work and thinks it should be professionalised further. Youth in Action can help achieve this goal.

Youth work stands to gain if it includes professional life-components such as training, job shadowing, participating in meetings, building partnerships or networking. In addition, the skills gathered during these activities are the kind that can be passed on elsewhere. Youth workers who acquire them can act as "multipliers" among their peers, ultimately allowing more young people to benefit from the Programme.

In 2010, the Commission will launch a new activity to support the mobility of youth workers. Though the details of its operation are still being discussed, the pilot project is likely to offer youth workers placements for several months in NGOs or youth associations abroad.

As Youth in Action comes to an end in 2013, the Commission is already reflecting on what to propose for the years to come. The programme's mid-term evaluation next year will be a major influence on this decision, as will the final form of the policy framework. But whether Youth in Action remains in its current form or evolves into something else, the progress it has achieved will not be lost. Whatever the outcome, the future looks bright for young people in Europe.



Spread those wings and VOLUNTEER!

Every year some 5,000 young people take part in the European Voluntary Service

By offering full-time unpaid work, they learn new skills, see the world and express their commitment to their community. This opportunity is offered by the Youth in Action Programme, as part of the EU's efforts to develop solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people. The European Voluntary Service reinforces social cohesion in the European Union and encourages young people to take an interest in their citizenship.



Hanna, from Estonia, was involved in circus groups for children, and in a senior drama group at the Theaterpädagogisches Zentrum der Emsländischen Landschaft e.V. Lingen. This German academy for theatre, dance, and circus arts gets young people involved in cultural activities and promotes European awareness. For months, she helped students organise cultural events, directed her own show, and co-organised a European symposium on "Amateur theatre - a multi-generational model in European comparison". Hanna says the experience enriched her by giving her additional knowledge of the cultural field. It also brought her into contact with new people from different cultures, and gave her the opportunity to acquire new skills. She learnt how to manage cultural projects, and met experts and professionals in this field.

How does the European Voluntary Service work?

EVS is open to all young people aged 18 to 30. Volunteers can develop new skills and benefit the communities they work with. There is no charge for taking part, and volunteers receive board and lodging, insurance cover and an allowance for the duration of the project. Special measures are taken to encourage young people with fewer opportunities to participate - for instance, their minimal enrolment age is lowered to 16.

EVS activities can also be carried out in groups of up to 100 volunteers - which was notably the case during the Euro2008 football championship in Austria and Switzerland.

EVS has focussed on culture, youth, sports, social care, cultural heritage, the arts, civil protection, the environment, and development co-operation. Two things they all have in common are a clear European dimension and an emphasis on learning by the volunteer. EVS is a mutually beneficial process, designed so that participants learn new skills and get to know each other's culture.

Created as a pilot project in 1996, the European Voluntary Service has matured into one of the key activities of the Youth in Action Programme. Demand for the programme now largely exceeds the possibilities offered by its budget. Many Member States organise national schemes for volunteering. But EVS stands out as one of the few possibilities focussed on volunteering abroad.

The programme's most popular aspects are its novelty and the quality of its projects. EVS maintains core values and quality standards to ensure all its projects offer a meaningful experience to volunteers. Organisations interested in hosting EVS volunteers or coordinating an EVS project first need to prove their worth to the programme during a three-year accreditation period. Recognition for having participated in an EVS project is another part of this quality assurance. Since 2007, experience gained by volunteers is formally recorded on an internationally recognised Youthpass.

Inspired by the programme's success, the Commission launched a new political initiative in the field of volunteering in 2008.



Tomáš, a young Czech with Down's syndrome, was involved in a project on solidarity and tolerance among young people. It was part of an art festival in Žilina, Slovakia, and he says it gave him the opportunity to learn new skills, and discover new interests. Living and working in a foreign country allowed Tomáš to assert his independence. He gained confidence and learnt a great deal on arts and crafts and communication. He also performed in several art shows. By including people with disabilities in community life and cultural events, the project built a bridge between people with and without disabilities.



Going beyond the European Voluntary Service

The European Commission is proposing a new EU strategy for Youth, which would include volunteering as one of the eight primary targets for Member States to incorporate in their youth policies over the next decade.

The Commission believes it is important the EU offers more voluntary opportunities for young people, making it easier for them to volunteer, especially for projects abroad. It also aims to raise public awareness of the value of volunteering, and to further develop its efforts to win recognition for volunteering as an important form of non-formal education.

Cross-border youth volunteering was recently given a boost by the first ever Council Recommendation in the youth field, which was adopted by EU Member States in November 2008. This endorses cooperation between organisers of voluntary activities across Member States. It recommends that volunteering activities, whether set up by public or private institutions, should remain open to young people from all EU countries. This will give more young people the opportunity to discover other countries, languages and cultures by taking part in voluntary activities.

The Council also urges Member States to raise awareness of cross-border volunteering and to recognise its outcomes (notably through instruments such as Europass and Youthpass). It stresses the importance for Member States of developing self-assessment tools to assure the quality of their volunteering programmes, and of encouraging youth workers and young people in youth organisations to travel abroad.

In March 2009 the Czech Presidency organised a kick off conference for the implementation of the Recommendation, in which policy-makers, youth and volunteering organisations, researchers and young people participated. The Commission actively supports the implementation through the establishment of an expert group and the creation of a Youth Volunteer Portal.

Moreover, the European Commission has recently decided to propose that 2011 be designated the "European Year of Volunteering". The overall purpose of the European Year will be to encourage and support – notably through the exchange of experience and good practices – the efforts of the Member States, local and regional authorities and civil society to create the conditions conducive to volunteering in the European Union. It is expected that the European Year will lead both to an increase in volunteering and to greater awareness of its added value.



Cécile, from France, helped run a youth TV magazine in Slovenia. For nine months, she introduced young people - many of them from poor backgrounds and Roma origin - to the world of media. She organised video workshops, and helped them develop ideas and direct their own films. Cécile learnt a lot about working with people of all ages and from different cultures and backgrounds. The young Roma taking part in the project particularly enjoyed the opportunity to express themselves through film. One young girl made a documentary called Grandmother Told Me, which portrayed past and present Roma ways of life.

EVS illustrates how a European programme can explore potential and then inspire national practices to build on its success. The scheme will continue to play a major role in transnational volunteering. But now the work of Member States will increase the scale and scope of volunteering, offering more opportunities for more young Europeans.



2011

The European Year of Volunteering

Each year millions of people from all over the EU offer their help to make their community a better place. In recognition of their work, the European Commission has chosen 2011 to celebrate the European Year of Volunteering.

...in need of a volunteer...

Volunteers are EU citizens of all ages and walks of life that are investing time in youth clubs, hospitals, schools, sport clubs and other pillars of society to make a contribution to their community. This expression of civic participation strengthens values of solidarity and social cohesion. It fosters a unique relationship between organisations and their target audience, and often helps to identify new needs in society.

Volunteering doesn't just benefit society. It also makes life more meaningful for volunteers. It allows them to acquire skills that complement their education, and can be used in their future jobs. In today's crisis-ridden economy, the support that volunteering provides to people without a job in updating and improving their skills and competencies is also hugely important.

The private sector is aware of these benefits, and many companies support their staff who do voluntary activities. Often this is part of companies' corporate social responsibility strategies, and it also helps to boost staff morale and motivation.

But society is changing. Despite the overall success of these schemes, the number of volunteers is on the decline, and many voluntary organisations are faced with an increasingly unstable membership. The sector has to develop new forms of participation and short-term engagement if it wants to continue its work in the EU's evolving social landscape.

...a Year to remember...

The European Year of Volunteering can help with this task. With strong support from volunteering organisations, a wide range of events are being prepared so that volunteers from right across the EU can exchange experiences, and share good examples and best practices. The Commission is leaving the organisation of the Year in the hands of the

volunteer organisations themselves, limiting its own direct involvement to projects on volunteering run through other EU programmes. This way, volunteers and their organisations will have maximum opportunity to learn from one another, and together, to pave the road ahead.

The European Year will also improve the quality of volunteering, by giving public authorities a clear idea of its potential, so that they in turn identify new ways of integrating these schemes into their activities. Publications and debates will be organised to bring Member States, regional and local communities and civil society up to speed with what volunteering has to offer and how they can work towards building a more receptive environment for this kind of work.

However, the Year's main purpose remains to communicate the value of volunteering to the general public. Volunteering has an important role in society, but there has been a lack of official rewards and recognition for this kind of work. So the Year will highlight the role of volunteering in strengthening the sense of belonging and commitment of individuals to their society, and in improving people's chances of finding work. EU citizens who have never taken part in volunteering will be able to find out about it, and may, as a consequence, one day decide to become volunteers themselves.

For further information:

🔗 http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_en.htm

Higher education goes GLOBAL

Improving the quality of human resources ranks high on every government's agenda. Countries around the world are pinning their future on a better-skilled workforce, wider access to knowledge, and fast-tracked innovation. As a result, education and training are under the spotlight in the EU's relations with the rest of the world.

Since its foundation, the Union has battled to improve mobility, strengthen people-to-people contact, and build partnerships between institutions. Erasmus Mundus, its new umbrella for cooperation in higher education, offers a huge opportunity to export these values worldwide in what is becoming the largest network of scholars in history.

The Erasmus programme is one of the most popular creations of DG Education and Culture.

Over the past 20 years, it has allowed more than 2 million EU students to follow part of their studies in another European university. But the tremendous success and impressive scale of Erasmus reflect only a modest part of the EU's ambitions for cooperation on higher education. For decades now, the DG has been sowing the seeds of change by setting up academic collaborations with universities from around the world and exchanging advice with them on how best to manage higher education.

A good example of this is the Tempus programme, which was established after the fall of the Berlin Wall to help modernise higher education in Central and Eastern Europe. At the time, the idea of a European Community which included former communist countries seemed - to say the least - unlikely, but the EU already appreciated the potential of academic cooperation with its neighbours.

Tempus has developed extensively since its foundation in 1989.

The programme now covers 27 countries in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. It has helped train a new generation of academics and managers, and supported vital reforms in higher education across these regions.

It has offered help in developing new curricula and joint degrees, and has introduced quality assurance measures so that these curricula remain in line with market demand. It has also contributed to modernising university governance and helped create partnerships with the labour market.

The benefits run both ways. Tempus brings European universities closer to new partners and markets abroad. Short-term collaborations between universities (usually based on 2-3 year projects) often lead to long-lasting academic partnerships and sometimes even result in joint diploma courses. They raise the international profile of European expertise, which in turn increases EU citizens' career prospects abroad and attracts new talent to European universities.

Similar collaborations have taken shape with higher education systems all over the world. In 1994, the Commission launched the ALFA Programme to help finance university cooperation between the EU and Latin America. Since 2002, the Alban Programme offers scholarships to high-level Latin American students and academics. Asia-Link and Edulink foster collaborations with Asian and ACP countries respectively.



The EU also cooperates bilaterally with the US and Canada on matters of higher education and vocational training. Both countries share Europe's challenges as a knowledge-based economy. Similar initiatives exist with other industrialised countries, notably Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea. And the Commission is now interacting with Russia, China, Brazil, Israel, India and Mexico as well.

Erasmus Mundus

Broadly speaking, all the EU's programmes cooperate on policy, build institutional capacity and promote academic exchanges in different parts of the world. In 2004, Erasmus Mundus was launched as the first attempt to bring all their actions together under a single flagship. In its first few years of existence, the programme has focused on creating jobs and backing economic growth. It has done so by developing Europe's knowledge-based society, as set out in the Lisbon Strategy. Erasmus Mundus operates within the framework established by the Bologna Process: a three-cycle structure, ensuring quality and developing qualifications that can be recognised and used abroad. The aim of the programme is also consistent with one of the EU's founding premises: it fosters intercultural dialogue with people from all over the world.

The EU's efforts are already paying off.

Regions modernising their higher education system use the EU's external education programmes as models for reform. Policy developed through European cooperation – such as the Bologna process, the agenda for modernisation of higher education and the European Qualifications Framework – are gradually forging a reputation as sensible responses to the challenges facing the world economy. With the wind in its sails, the EU is increasing the budget of Erasmus Mundus from €230 million to nearly €1 billion.

The programme has been given new objectives and a wider scope. It will now be responsible for joint doctoral programmes, full scholarships for EU students, and full participation of non-EU universities in the academic consortia offering joint courses. The programme will independently promote EU external policy objectives and help non-EU countries develop their higher education systems.

Europe has set itself the ambitious goal of becoming a world leader when it comes to knowledge. It will settle for nothing less than a modern higher education system that is both excellent and equitable. The Union has much to offer the world, but also much to learn from it. Going global will be at the heart of the EU's policy on education and training in the years ahead.

The Jean Monnet Programme: 20 YEARS of food for thought

For the past twenty years, the Jean Monnet Action has been introducing university courses on European integration and stimulating academic debate on EU policy.

Initially launched as a pilot programme, it has attracted 700 universities worldwide and created a network of some 1,500 academic experts on European integration. Today, it stands alongside Erasmus, Leonardo and Comenius as an autonomous and successful EU programme.

The Jean Monnet Action owes its existence to farsighted academics and Commissioners who pushed for teaching on European integration at higher education institutions as far back as 1989. They had already grasped that European integration, a concept that only started taking shape at the time of Schuman's landmark declaration in 1950, represented a tectonic shift in human development. Their vision was for the construction of Europe to be studied as an unprecedented political, economic, social and historical phenomenon. This implied getting universities on board to design courses on the subject, and finding academics researching it – both tasks that proved easier than might have been expected.

One year after the college of Commissioners approved the action, it had already taken shape in universities and among professors of the then 12 Member States. After three more years, it had expanded into candidate countries - first to Poland and Hungary, and four years later, to the Czech Republic. Part of this success may be explained by the emphasis the Jean Monnet label placed on academic freedom and on the critical, independent opinion of the work it funded. As such it rapidly built a reputation for credible research among academics in the field of European affairs. In 2001, the action became the first activity of the Directorate General for Education and Culture to open its doors to universities, professors and students from around the world. By 2007, the number of courses on European integration was growing so fast that the Jean Monnet Action was promoted to the status of a Community programme.

Today, the Jean Monnet Programme has helped fund thousands of research projects. It has set up more than 130 Centres of Excellence and almost 800 Chairs for academic experts around the world. With over 2,000 teaching modules currently endorsed by the programme, the essence of European integration reaches out to a public of 250,000 students every year. The Jean Monnet network draws 1,500 professors together from across 61 countries around the world. Its expansion reflects the widespread academic interest in Europe's construction. This confirms the singularity and importance of the process of integration.

Jean Monnet activities

→ Academic debate and research into EU policy

Ever since it was established, the Jean Monnet Action has been bringing academics from across Europe together to debate EU policy. These events have come to be known as the Jean Monnet Conferences. They have grown into such a successful forum for exchange that the European Commission draws on them as a source of innovative policy advice. It is confident that the independent and critical views of academics will help guide Europe towards political and economic unity. The Presidents of the European Commission who have conducted Jean Monnet conferences all agree that the ability of academics to formulate critical analysis and identify concrete proposals for the future is a valuable tool for the EU.

The programme has brought academic and political spheres closer in this respect. Jean Monnet Conferences frequently accompany the evolution of EU institutions. They were at the origin of the recent focus on Intercultural Dialogue, which led to the European Year in 2008, and they suggested integrating the gender dimension into the European Constitution. The outcomes of these conferences have also been taken into account in the EU's management of the Euro, governance, sustainable development, and relations with the World Trade Organisation,

Every year the Jean Monnet Programme also helps organise national and regional initiatives that explore current European issues. These meetings have taken the form of colloquiums, seminars, round tables, summer schools and long-term international research projects. Regardless of the format, special attention has always been paid to ensuring the participation of academics.

→ Support to teaching and research activities

The Jean Monnet programme is perhaps best known for pioneering university teaching on European integration. In various ways, it remains intensely active in this field today.

► Jean Monnet Chairs and ad personam Jean Monnet Chairs are awarded to highly-qualified professors who dedicate their teaching activities to European integration.



- ▶ Centres of Excellence are established by bringing together the brainpower and resources of universities to study and research European integration and to share their work with the broader public.
- ▶ University courses dealing with aspects of European integration are eligible for funding as European teaching modules.
- ▶ The research activities of European Community Studies Associations, groups of academic experts in European integration, are also supported by the programme.
- ▶ The programme also helps set up transnational research groups on European issues, often of a regional nature.

Allocating funds fairly among all these activities is a tricky task. Reflecting the values of academia, Jean Monnet projects are attributed exclusively on the basis of scientific merit. This process is carried out each year in total transparency, relying entirely on peer-review. A large body of high-level professors who are experts in European integration examine all applications and rank them according to the interest of their research goals. Their decisions are implemented by the Commission, with the programme's budget constituting the only limit. Because of the programme's emphasis on critical opinion and academic excellence, it is essential it guarantees total neutrality in choosing its reviewers. Applications are presented directly by European universities to the Executive Agency without transiting through ministries, permanent representations or national agencies. These measures have earned the approval of the academic community.

❖❖❖ Specific institutions and associations

The Jean Monnet programme also awards operating grants to European associations active in education and training. An obvious case is the programme's support for the university centres currently spearheading the study of European integration. These are the European Institute in Florence, the College of Europe in Bruges and Natolin, the Academy of EU Law in Trier, the European Institute of Public Administration in Maastricht, the International Centre for European Training in Nice, and the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education in Denmark. Given its nature and objectives, the programme constitutes a natural label for the activities of these high-level centres.

The Jean Monnet programme was incorporated into the EU Life-long Learning Programme in 2007. This decision was acclaimed by the academic community as it extended the range of activities that could be financed under the Jean Monnet label, and granted the Programme a very desirable sense of sustainability.

Anniversary

EU politicians attach great importance to how academic observers perceive the state of European construction. In the fast-paced era of globalisation, the insight offered by critical, external analysis is all the more important. Despite its impressive achievements since Schuman's speech, the EU still has plenty of challenges ahead of it in the decades to come. The financial crisis must be solved and unemployment reduced. Answers must be found to the ageing of the population, to the risks of irreversible damage to our environment, to the need for secure access to sustainable energy, and to keeping European companies competitive in tomorrow's global economy. The Jean Monnet network will be there to help Europe meet these challenges. Just as it has done in the past for sustainable development, the Euro, and enlargement, it will continue to identify paths of action and explain their benefits to EU citizens.

The 20th anniversary of the Jean Monnet programme celebrates the millions of young minds that have devoted their studies to Europe's construction. It celebrates the growing wealth of research on this subject, the strong network of professors, and the ever-closer links between politicians and academics in the EU. The programme's work has grown into a powerful channel for transmitting knowledge on European integration, and the Union will continue to rely on it in the years to come.





Culture and creativity are part of EUROPE'S ECONOMY

The spectacle of crashing banks and rising unemployment has induced despair among many citizens over their economic prospects. However, a glance at the bigger picture can put these anxieties into perspective. The creativity, the skills, and the rich cultural heritage of Europeans are assets that stand Europe in good stead as it tackles the current crisis. We should learn to value them, as they have great potential not only for our own personal development but also for our economy.

Culture counts

Even in purely commercial terms, culture is big business. The industries related to it have an annual turnover of more than €650 billion. The sector accounts for 2.6% of the EU's Gross Domestic Product¹. Added value in the cultural sector exceeds that of chemical products, food and beverages and real estate. Also, from 1999 to 2003, the sector consistently generated more jobs than most other sectors did.

Moreover, these benefits are only the icing on the cake. Culture has profound influences on the wider economy. It provides the essential media content for the information and communication sectors to distribute and for digital devices to receive, thus assuring the development of these strategic European industries. It shapes attitudes to cities or countries, influencing people's choices about where to live, to study, to work, to take their holiday or to start a business. Perhaps most importantly, culture opens up the imagination. It nurtures hidden skills and encourages people to create, to innovate, and to enjoy their lives.

How it works

Under the EU treaties, culture remains a responsibility of each country. Most of the EU's work either complements the action of national governments or stimulates exchanges among them. But in view of the important role that culture is given in the Lisbon Treaty, the Commission has since 2007 been promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue as a way of creating new jobs, boosting economic growth, and improving the Union's international relations.

For 2007-2013, the Commission has set aside more than €5 billion for culture. Just over half of this sum is allocated to preserving cultural heritage. €1.8 billion is devoted to developing cultural infrastructure, and €590 million to improving cultural services.

The EU agenda on culture focuses on "shared" objectives. As part of a partnership approach, the Commission has developed new working methods with Member States and with a broad range of government agencies, organisations, and companies working in Europe's cultural sector. Working with such a wide network provides insights into the full impact of the financial crisis on the EU's cultural and creative sectors.

The Commission will bring all these stakeholders together to discuss the development of culture in Europe in a series of conferences. These so-called Cultural Forums will allow the exchange of ideas and feedback from people in the field that will help design future policy. It will also boost awareness of the role public funding of culture plays in Europe's economy and society. The next Forum will take place in September 2009. Another in 2010 will assess the results of this new approach.



The EU co-funds cultural cooperation

The European Commission has set aside €400 million to encourage trans-national cooperation between European cultural organisations developing not-for-profit-projects. In 2008 its Culture Programme co-funded 264 projects developed in partnership by over one thousand organisations from all over Europe.

These projects reached several million Europeans, provided direct and indirect employment in the cultural sector, increased trans-national mobility, and provided training skills.

MAP XXL is an example of what the Culture Programme has made possible. This project promotes cross-border mobility. It brings together 104 partners in 26 countries for encounters and exchanges that result in the production of art. The project promotes co-productions, develops training tools for young artists, and provides support for new partnerships. With the support of the Culture Programme, MAP XXL is expected to reach approximately 70,000 people through its various activities over the coming years.

Fantasy Design is another success story. This three-year project developed design-school education in five European countries. It involves 57 professional designers, and some 200 design educators and school teachers, who have worked together to stimulate the creativity and interest of young people in design, and to develop special training and teaching materials. The project reached over 4,000 people between 5 and 17 years of age, and some of their creations were displayed in an exhibition that toured around Europe.

Awards for Excellence

As part of the Culture Programme, the European Union also grants awards for outstanding work by EU citizens in the fields of contemporary architecture, cultural heritage, popular music and contemporary literature. These prizes recognise dedication and talent among people working in the culture sector, and help stimulate the circulation of European work.

Every two years, the EU presents the Mies van der Rohe Award and the Emerging Architect Special Mention to architects of exceptional creativity. The jury selects the winners among built works less than two years old, on the basis of the building's concept, technical feats and construction.

The 2009, the winner was the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet Theatre in Oslo, developed by Snøhetta architects. The Emerging Architect Special Mention went to STUDIO UP/ Lea Pelivan and Toma Plejić for the Gymnasium 46°09'N/16°50'E - a high school and sports hall - in Koprivnica, Croatia.

The Norwegian National Opera and Ballet was commissioned by the national Ministry of Church and Cultural Affairs. Reconnecting the city with its waterfront, this building is the first element in the transformation of Oslo's bay area. As well as being an opera and ballet house of the highest international standards, its marble-clad roof offers an attractive place for people to meet and enjoy performances in the open air.

Snøhetta employs 120 people from 17 countries. The building cost €500 million, and it is expected to programme 300 shows a year, attracting 250,000 visitors and employing 600 people from all kinds of professions.

For the Emerging Architect Special Mention, the jury was impressed by the attention these young architects paid to the building's functionality and its impact on the environment. A system of shutters above the sports hall and ducts through the cantilevered classrooms of the top floor ensure a constant flow of cool air during the summer months while the double polycarbonate skin creates a 'greenhouse effect' in winter. The building transforms the suburban periphery of Koprivnica, standing as a landmark and a meeting place for the young people of the town.

The **EU Prize for Cultural Heritage** is a joint award from the European Commission and Europa Nostra to initiatives that bring out the many facets of Europe's cultural heritage. It has rewarded efforts in the restoration of buildings, urban and rural landscape rehabilitation, archaeological site interpretation, and care of art collections. In 2009, it went to the "Macro Future" and "Alternative Economy City" projects in Rome for the conservation of an empty 19th century food-factory complex. Well-planned conservation has transformed it into a social and cultural centre.

The building houses "Macro Future", which is an extension of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome and will soon provide space for regular exhibitions. The "Alternative Economy City", also housed in the complex, is an innovative space for projects related to sustainable development. The entire project succeeds in bringing the past into the present, highlighting new technologies and the cultural services needed to preserve the touch of humanity in today's gigantic cities.





A prize was also awarded to the "Sustainable Aegean Programme" in Athens for its outstanding work on raising awareness of sustainable development. The Aegean Islands boast unique landscapes, deep cultural heritage and a rich ecosystem. These are driving forces of economic development in an area centred on tourism.

But many of these treasures are at risk because of inconsiderate real estate development. The aim of this project is to raise public awareness of the advantages for locals if they insist on planning for construction and create the conditions for long-term development in these islands.

Already 138 proposals from 24 different countries have been entered for next year's award. Seven of these will soon be selected by the jury to compete for the grand prize.

The EU Border Breakers Award is presented to musicians whose debut album reaches a broad audience outside their home country. Since modern music has an important role in Europe's culture and economy, the EU wants to encourage its emerging artists to make the most of the internal market so that they reach audiences across borders. The winning musicians are selected on the basis of their international sales and live performances abroad. In 2009, ten awards were presented at the Eurosonic Festival in Groningen in the Netherlands.

<http://www.european-border-breakers.eu/index.html>

The first EU Prize for Contemporary Literature will soon be awarded to a promising European author to help promote his or her work internationally. The prize was introduced this year to attract attention to the full richness of Europe's literary diversity. The European Booksellers Federation, the European Writers Council and the Federation of European Publishers will select today's European talents in the field of contemporary literature from all the countries participating in the Culture Programme.

They will do this in three rounds over three consecutive years. The first countries participating in the selection will be Austria, Croatia, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden. A literary personality will also be selected to act as Ambassador for the prize.

European Capitals of Culture

The Culture Programme also helps fund the European Capitals of Culture. This EU award is given each year to the European city proposing the most ambitious programme of social inclusion and cross-border cooperation. Programmes must have a strong European dimension and a long-term influence on the city's cultural, social and economic development.

A recent report on Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture 2008 shows how culture played a major role in rejuvenating this post-industrial city. The selection process and the event itself actually generated €800 million in the Liverpool City Region in 2008 alone. It led to cooperation between private and public sectors, individuals and organisations, cultural bodies and artists. All these partners came together to make this event a great success. As many as 15 million people flocked to the city's cultural attractions in 2008, generating £4 billion for the local economy. It greatly boosted Liverpool's image as a creative and cultural hub and led to long-term increases in the public attendance at many cultural venues, including museums

Other examples show the positive impact of cultural events on economic growth and employment. Lille, the European Capital of Culture in 2004, claims that the title helped the city gain ten years in terms of regeneration, and that for every euro the public sector invested in the event, €8 were gained in economic activity. The legacies include industrial buildings revamped into cultural venues (such as Les Maisons Folies) and a forward-looking Lille "3000" strategy, which continues to use cultural events to drive the development of the city.

The Culture Programme, the European cultural awards and the experience of the European Capitals of Culture demonstrate how public and private investment in culture unlock creative potential, help cultural works circulate in Europe and contribute to economic recovery. What Europe risks losing in the current financial crisis may in fact be dwarfed by what it stands to gain from its cultural heritage. All the pieces needed for an unprecedented economic upturn are at hand. Fitting them together remains a question of looking at them with the right attitude.

More information on the Culture Programme can be found on:
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm
 or can be provided by the Cultural Contact Points which are operating in most countries participating in the Programme.





EUROPEAN AWARDS

Create, innovate & cooperate in education and training in Europe

European Awards were made to 18 projects for their creative and innovative work in school education (Comenius), higher education (Erasmus), vocational education and training (Leonardo da Vinci), adult learning (Grundtvig), language learning and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The winning projects were chosen from among the many entries because of their important role in modernising education and training systems in Europe. They all involved organisations throughout Europe.

★ ICT

★ GRUNDTVIG

★ LEONARDO DA VINCI

★ ERASMUS

★ COMENIUS

European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Ján Figel', and the Czech Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, Ondřej Liška agreed that the projects were a tangible demonstration that creativity and innovation are high on the agenda of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Commissioner Figel' said: "The prize-winning projects are special because they show how partner organisations from across Europe can work together to develop creative and innovative approaches, tools and training materials in education and training. In doing so, they underline just how our Lifelong Learning Programme works to inject creativity and innovation into education and training. They will be a source of inspiration for everyone gathered here, and for our fellow-stakeholders around Europe, who can now transfer these ideas and creativity to their own activities."

↓ Ondřej Liška at the plenary session



→ the projects winning the gold award



★ **COMENIUS**

SCHOOL EDUCATION

*The Learning Teacher
Barn- och ungdomsförvaltningen
Child and youth administration
Karlstad, SWEDEN*

Teacher quality is the most important in-school factor affecting students' performance. This network focussed on the changing role of European teachers from static 'all knowing' teachers to dynamic 'lifelong learners'. It developed guidance material, and organised conferences, seminars and courses which helped professionals to acquire new knowledge and skills.



★ **LEONARDO DA VINCI**

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Réseau d'échanges pédagogiques européens de la Fédération européenne des écoles de cirque professionnelles (FEDEC) École Supérieure des Arts du Cirque - Brussels, BELGIUM

This project organised a series of European-level workshops for circus specialists and their students. Exchanges of good practices resulted in a training programme of seven modules, supported by teaching films. Each module is dedicated to the technical aspects of circus disciplines as well as safety and rigging. The products of the projects are not only tools for all teachers and trainers of circus art, but are also of special interest to sports educators.



★ **ERASMUS**

HIGHER EDUCATION
CLIOHnet

*Creating Links and Innovative
Overviews to Enhance Historical
Perspectives in European Culture -
Università di Pisa, ITALY*

CLIOHnet is an innovative history network with more than eighty universities and other partners throughout Europe. By stimulating critical awareness of history, the work is useful for academics, learners of all ages and European citizens in general. The project has also given rise to an online research network, CLIOHRES.net, which has produced a library of historical knowledge that offers a new transnational dimension to European history.



★ **LANGUAGES**

*Barrier-free language learning
► an approach designed for
adults with learning disabilities
► Sverigefinska folkhögskolan
► Institute of adult education -
Haparanda, SWEDEN*

This project has developed a way of teaching English as a foreign language to adults with intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties. "English without Frontiers" works for people who want to learn English for a job, just for fun, or so they can communicate when abroad. It is a very flexible course that takes into account the special educational needs of this group of learners.



★ **GRUNDTVIG**

ADULT LEARNING

*Inclusive teaching material
for Adults: the Roma
Dromo Kotar Mestipen
Association of Roma women
Barcelona, SPAIN*

The EducaRom project tries to eradicate inequality in society - in particular, inequality to women - and has recognised the value of education in overcoming discrimination and exclusion. The project has created the first-ever tailor-made set of learning materials for Roma women, designed by Roma women from organisations in different EU member states. By providing a space for exchange and dialogue, the project helped give a stronger voice to these women.



★ **ICT**

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

*An educational dimension of
conflict resolution through cultural
production - Humak University
of Applied Sciences. Helsinki,
FINLAND*

The project applied an innovative approach to distance-learning about the theatrical method 'Theatre of the Oppressed', founded by the Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal. An online learning platform, with video-conferences and teaching material based on theatre performances, functions as a 'forum-theatre' where the audience interacts directly and changes the plot of the play. The project combined the knowledge of art teachers and ICT experts. The outputs have been produced in nine languages.

The European Lifelong Learning Programme Awards in a nutshell

The annual celebration of the European Lifelong Learning Programme Awards has been an important event since 2007. Outstanding projects funded under the EU's education and training programmes are honoured at an award ceremony during the programme's annual conference, under the auspices of the EU Presidency.

The awards were first made at the launch of the Lifelong Learning Programme on 6 May 2007 in Berlin. In Ljubljana in 2008 the awards were focused on Mobility projects, and this year in Prague the chosen theme was Creativity and Innovation.

The annual conference of the Lifelong Learning Programme, which forms the backdrop to the awards ceremony, provides the opportunity for discussing the state of play of the programme, the challenges, and future steps. The awards are normally associated with the publication of European Success Stories, and with other communication activities such as an exhibition of the winning projects.

The awards distinguish and reward successful projects, and they also inspire other projects, and stimulate enhanced quality of education and training projects in general. They serve as showcases for the outcomes of the best European projects, and promote the visibility of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Innovation and Creativity as key elements in the Lifelong Learning Programme

The annual Lifelong Learning Programme conference debated innovative and creative policy approaches and programme initiatives to support education and training systems in Europe.

For Commissioner Ján Figel', lifelong learning - that is, training and retraining - can help people to find the way out of the current economic crisis. The Lifelong Learning Programme funds learning and mobility of individuals, and contributes to the European-level policy initiatives in education and training that aim at restoring Europe's competitiveness. Member States have defined their common objectives and are committed to the future of lifelong learning. Through the open method of coordination, they work together to make lifelong learning and mobility a reality, and to improve the quality and efficiency of education and training.

At the same time, they promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship and enhance creativity and innovation at all levels of education and training in Europe.

The need to unleash Europe's creative and innovative potential was underlined by Odile Quintin, Director General of Education and Training. "We need to focus on skills, on what we can do with our knowledge. Skills such as creativity, initiative-taking, entrepreneurship, cultural and civic skills are best developed in learning partnerships that extend beyond the school gate, involving the world of work", she said. It was in this context that the European Commission launched the initiative New Skills for New Jobs, designed to ensure a better match between the skills that workers have and the jobs that are available.

The participants at the conference agreed that creativity refers to the act of producing new ideas while innovation is the process of applying them in a given context. The actions of the programme, with their appeal to different target groups in all sectors of education and training, provide an environment where creativity and innovation can grow, and mobility schemes and work placements foster entrepreneurship and cooperation between the worlds of education and business.

Hélène Clark, Director responsible for Lifelong Learning, told the conference that more visibility is needed for the results of projects within the EU education and training programmes. Better transfer of innovation and mainstreaming of results and processes into national policies are also future challenges. One big step in this direction is the recently launched platform EVE (espace virtuel d'échange). Via this IT platform European citizens can access project results of all programmes supported by the by the Education and Culture Directorate General.



Detailed information about all the winning projects can be found in the brochure: Lifelong Learning Programme: "Creativity and Innovation. European Success Stories" at

• http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/index_en.html





Looking at the next ten years of the BOLOGNA PROCESS

It is now ten years since the Bologna declaration of 1999 started the reform of the structure and content of European higher education. This April, another ministerial conference in Belgium – in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve - reflected on how the European Higher Education Area should evolve over the next decade, up to 2020. There was agreement on a target for 2020 of 20% of graduates to spend some time abroad for study or training, and on the establishment in every country by 2020 of measurable targets for a wider reach for higher education, particularly among groups currently under-represented.

Ministers responsible for higher education from 46 European countries assessed the achievements of the Bologna process. The latest Bologna Stocktaking Report, presented to ministers during the meeting, concluded that good, if somewhat uneven, progress had been made in implementing the Bologna reforms. The Commission's latest report in support of the process confirmed this positive conclusion and indicated that substantial progress had been made, including on structural reforms. The focus, it said, should now be on modernising national policies and on achieving concrete implementation of the reforms of Europe's higher education institutions.

The European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Ján Figel', said: "The Bologna Process has led to greater compatibility and comparability of systems of higher education. Among other things, it has made Europe a more attractive destination for students from other continents. While there is still some work to meet the objectives that were set out in 1999, we need to continuously move forward to address new challenges, particularly in the current economic crisis. Higher education has a key role to play in supporting sustainable economic recovery and in stimulating innovation. The universities must modernise, and the widespread recognition of this need by governments not only in Europe, but also around the world, gives the Bologna Process the vital support it needs for success."

The Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué on "the European Higher Education Area in the new decade", adopted by ministers at the meeting, said: "We pledge our full commitment to the goals of the European Higher Education Area, which is an area where higher education is a public responsibility, and where all higher education institutions are responsive to the wider needs of society through the diversity of their missions... We consider public investment in higher education of utmost priority."

The aim, the communiqué went on, is to ensure that higher education institutions have the resources they need so that they can continue fulfilling their purposes - preparing students for life as active citizens in a democratic society; preparing students for their future careers and enabling their personal development; and creating and maintaining a broad, advanced knowledge base and stimulating research and innovation.

"The necessary ongoing reform of higher education systems and policies will continue to be firmly embedded in the European values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom and social equity, and will require full participation of students and staff", ministers said.





“In the decade up to 2020 European higher education has a vital contribution to make in realising a Europe of knowledge that is highly creative and innovative. Faced with the challenge of an ageing population Europe can only succeed in this endeavour if it maximises the talents and capacities of all its citizens and fully engages in lifelong learning as well as in widening participation in higher education.”

- Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, April 2009

The accent was on accelerated technological developments with new providers, new learners and new types of learning. “Student-centred learning and mobility will help students develop the competences they need in a changing labour market and will empower them to become active and responsible citizens.”

Priorities for the decade to come include a constant focus on quality, upholding the diversity of education systems, recognition of the value teaching, research, community service, and engagement in social cohesion and cultural development. Specifically:

→ **Social dimension:** equitable access and completion: “The student body within higher education should reflect the diversity of Europe’s populations. We therefore emphasize the social characteristics of higher education and aim to provide equal opportunities to quality education. Access into higher education should be widened by fostering the potential of students from underrepresented groups and by providing adequate conditions for the completion of their studies”.

→ **Lifelong learning as an integral part of education systems:** “The accessibility, quality of provision and transparency of information shall be assured... qualifications may be obtained through flexible learning paths, including part-time studies, as well as workbased routes”.

→ **Employability:** “With labour markets increasingly relying on higher skill levels and transversal competences, higher education should equip students with the advanced knowledge, skills and competences they need throughout their professional lives. Employability empowers the individual to fully seize the opportunities in changing labour markets. We aim at raising initial qualifications as well as maintaining and renewing a skilled workforce through close cooperation between governments, higher education institutions, social partners and students”.

→ **Student-centred learning:** “the necessity for ongoing curricular reform geared toward the development of learning outcomes. Student-centred learning requires empowering individual learners, new approaches to teaching and learning, effective support and guidance structures and a curriculum focused more clearly on the learner”.

→ **Education, research and innovation:** “Higher education should be based at all levels on state of the art research and development thus fostering innovation and creativity in society. We recognise the potential of higher education programmes, including those based on applied science, to foster innovation. Consequently, the number of people with research competences should increase”.

→ **International openness:** “We call upon European higher education institutions to further internationalise their activities and to engage in global collaboration for sustainable development.”

→ **Mobility:** “mobility of students, early stage researchers and staff enhances the quality of programmes and excellence in research; it strengthens the academic and cultural internationalization of European higher education. Mobility is important for personal development and employability, it fosters respect for diversity and a capacity to deal with other cultures. It encourages linguistic pluralism, thus underpinning the multilingual tradition of the European Higher Education Area and it increases cooperation and competition between higher education institutions.”

→ **Data collection:** “Improved and enhanced data collection will help monitor progress made in the attainment of the objectives set out in the social dimension, employability and mobility agendas, as well as in other policy areas, and will serve as a basis for both stocktaking and benchmarking.”

→ **Multidimensional transparency tools:** “mechanisms, including those helping higher education systems and institutions to identify and compare their respective strengths, should be developed in close consultation with the key stakeholders”.



❖ **Funding:** “Higher education institutions have gained greater autonomy along with rapidly growing expectations to be responsive to societal needs and to be accountable. Within a framework of public responsibility we confirm that public funding remains the main priority to guarantee equitable access and further sustainable development of autonomous higher education institutions. Greater attention should be paid to seeking new and diversified funding sources and methods.”

Together, the Bologna reform efforts have created new opportunities for universities and students. The launch last year of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education is helping to raise the visibility of European higher education and boost confidence in institutions and programmes within Europe and worldwide.

What students want from higher education

A recent Eurobarometer Survey among students in higher education shows that students want wider access to higher education and that universities should open up cooperation with the world of work and to lifelong learning. For example, an overwhelming 97% of students believed that it was important to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the labour market. A large majority (87%) also agreed that it was important for higher education institutions to foster innovation and an entrepreneurial mindset among students and staff, and that there should be a possibility to undertake work placements in private enterprises as part of a study programme. More students want to study abroad and a majority want more information about the quality of higher education institutions in order to make informed study choices.

...an international forum...

Reflecting the interest from countries outside Europe in the reforms taking place in the European Higher Education Area, for the first time a 'Bologna Policy Forum' also took place between the 46 countries participating in the Process and 20 countries from outside Europe. Higher education ministers or their representatives from the US, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, China and another nine countries around the world discussed how the Bologna Process could help worldwide cooperation in higher education.

A final communiqué recorded agreement for closer and more regular links between the members of the Bologna Forum and countries outside the EU.

A quick guide to the Bologna Process

The Bologna Process aims to create a European Higher Education Area by 2010, in which students can choose on the basis of clear information from a wide range of high quality courses, and benefit from smooth recognition procedures. The Bologna Declaration of June 1999 put in motion a series of reforms to make European Higher Education more compatible and comparable, more competitive and more attractive for Europeans and for students and scholars from other continents.

Reform is still needed if Europe is to match the performance of the best-performing systems in the world, notably the United States and Asia.

The three priorities of the Bologna process are:

- ❖ **Introduction of the three cycle system**
(bachelor/master/doctorate);
- ❖ **Quality assurance**
- ❖ **Recognition of qualifications and periods of study.**

Every second year, Ministers responsible for higher education in the 46 Bologna countries meet to measure progress and set priorities for action. After Bologna (1999), they met in Prague (2001), Berlin (2003) and Bergen (2005), London (2007) and Leuven/Louvain-La-Neuve, Belgium (April 2009).

What Makes the WEALTH OF NATIONS?

Evolution is not just limited to biology. Economies are evolving all the time too – and faster!

It is not so long ago that we still predominantly just made things. Economies were based on things we grew, or things we dug out of the ground, like iron ore, gold, or oil. We used materials to make things - general manufacture of things like tools or gates or carts, and later specialised high-tech sectors of things like cars or computers. Then the emphasis shifted towards services, like banking, or retail, or catering, with a focus on customer care.

The evolution has now progressed even further, from 'things' to 'thinks'. Wealth is now created by people and organisations specialised in thinking, and that offer solutions, in terms of management, or market access, or consultancy.

And as evolution continues, it shifts us still further from 'things' and 'thinks' into the realm of 'brings'. New forms of wealth are generated in and by the world of communication, in which space and time are collapsed and the customary limits are transcended, by technologies such as the internet, and the use of these technologies for work (such as outsourcing European banking back-offices to India) or entertainment (with television and cable movie channels).

The next step – which is already well underway - is the move from 'thinks' to 'links'. Here, wealth is generated through networks providing constant access and availability, with services such as Google, YouTube, FaceBook, or LinkedIn, allowing people to be at the crossroads themselves – in touch at the i-nod, as it were.

The distance (and distinction) between Microsoft and Google illustrates how fast the evolution is. Microsoft is a high-tech version of a classic wealth-creation approach. It offers software rather than hardware, but it still makes its money by selling a product (or a licence) to the customers who are the users of the product. It is expensive, and guards the gate against intruders. It lives on exclusivity, and defence of intellectual property is central to its model. It is endangered



by spontaneity, and relies solely on Microsoft-employed people to generate its product. It functions on computers – the internet is not necessary to its survival.

By contrast, Google's principal service to its customers, its search facility, is offered on-line for free. It does not sell anything to the people who use its search services. Instead, it generates wealth from its advertisers merely because it is there, because it attracts all users, because it is at a crossroads between many users, and is more effective the more it is used by more people. It thrives on spontaneous creation, and relies on non-Google employed people for much of its vitality. In addition, it lives on the internet, and traditional computers are not necessary to its survival.

The ultimate stage of this progression is to the 'non-thinks' – which covers aspects that depend on creativity or design, and that are appreciated not so much because they are functional but because they appeal or entertain.

Overall, it is a progress from the material, to the intellectual, and to the emotional.

Value is created not through things, but from usage of knowledge, and by abstract thinking and by models that link what has previously been un-linked. Increasingly, the accent is on left-side of the brain skills, on arts and creativity. As economies evolve, the attention is less directed towards the material and more towards the non-material. The qualities that appeal are human rather than technocratic, answering the desire for play, for spirit, for people-contact, for atmosphere and for colour.

Opportunity lies in recognising this shift, and in valuing the skills and attitudes that make it possible to benefit from it. Nietzsche was ahead of his time, and acutely aware of the possibilities of an open-handed approach, as he presented it in his depiction of the three ages of human spirit. He characterised the distinct approaches as those of the camel, the lion, and the child.

The camel, he said, accepts his life and its discomforts. He puts up with his past and with the customs of his nation. He does his duty. He is serious, stoical, and long-suffering. The lion rebels against his past, his situation, his culture, the circumstances of his life. He attacks the burden. He is a harsh critic of traditional values. He does not attack the past arbitrarily; he attacks it because he suffers from it.

The child does not rebel. He turns joyously toward life and embraces it, with a new-found innocence. He says "yes" to life, despite its apparent injustices and absurdities. He possesses "joyful wisdom." It is the standpoint of the artist – and is emblematic of the standpoint of those best equipped to survive in the evolution of economies.



The 2009 European Year **in full** SWING

The success of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation was already clear halfway through 2009. Collaboration between the EU institutions and Member States, between regional and local governments, and with civil society at large, had led to the organisation of numerous events and the implementation of significant policy initiatives. They were all spreading the key message of the Year: creativity is a driver for innovation and a key factor for the development of personal, occupational, entrepreneurial and social competences, as well as the well-being of all individuals in society.

The Year of Creativity and Innovation was initially conceived in very different economic circumstances. But in the current financial and economic crisis, creativity and innovation have taken on even greater importance. These are the very qualities that can help Europe emerge more quickly from the crisis, and in better shape. By a trick of fate, this European Year was the right idea at the right time.

The Year received a media launch in Brussels on 5 December 2008, under the auspices of Ján Figel', European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Training and Youth. Jordi Savall, Karlheinz Brandenburg and Edward de Bono attended the event in their quality of Ambassadors of the Year. And a creative performance of the Vienna Vegetable Orchestra illustrated how artists could play music on instruments made uniquely of carrots, cabbage and the like.

The official launch on 7 January was directly linked to the start of the Czech presidency in Prague

In his speech to mark the start of the Presidency, President Barroso referred to the Year as one of the instruments which would help to tackle the crisis which was just unfolding at the time.

In parallel, Prague hosted the first meeting of the Ambassadors for the European Year – personalities from the worlds of arts, culture and design, education and research, business and gastronomy, who have endorsed the Year.

The Czech Presidency organised numerous international events participation on the topics of creativity and innovation. For example, Richard Florida and Vaclav Havel were two of the contributors to the Forum on Creative Europe, along with other researchers, policy makers, practitioners, economists and thinkers who came together to debate creativity in the economy, education and society.

The Czech Presidency also forged two sets of Council Conclusions related to creativity and innovation: one on Culture as a catalyst for Creativity and Innovation, and the other on the new strategic framework the Commission had proposed for policy cooperation in the field of education. Creativity and innovation have been declared a top priority of this framework, one of its four "pillars". We hope that their importance will also be endorsed by the new Lisbon Strategy to be adopted in 2010.

Sweden is taking the agenda forward under its presidency by hosting a number of important conferences. One on "Promoting a creative generation", in the context of the Year of Creativity and Innovation and the European Agenda for Culture, will focus on the creativity and cultural habits of children and young people. Another, on the "knowledge triangle" of education, research, innovation, at the beginning of September, will provide an input to the Education Council at its meeting in November. It should boost understanding of the role of education in increasing the innovation potential of investment in research. Sweden will also host the closing event of the Year, which will be an opportunity for a first presentation of its results.



Brussels debates

Following the success of the Brussels debates on intercultural dialogue in 2008, the European Commission teamed up with the European Policy Centre to organise a new series dedicated to creativity and innovation. The four debates organised so far - knowledge society, education, public sector and sustainable development – featured Commissioners and Directors General, Ambassadors of the European Year, and experts from the business world and from non-governmental organisations, and generated wide public interest and participation. Three further debates are planned for the autumn – on business, cultural diversity and creative industries.



"Open days"

On the 9 May 2009, Creativity and Innovation was in the spotlight during EU open door day. This year, the European institutions in Brussels opened their doors to the public for the Festival of Europe on Europe Day. More than 30 000 visitors got a chance to see what the EU does for them and for debate European issues. To mark the European Year for Creativity and Innovation 2009, young and old were invited to explore their creative side in an action painting space set up for the event. The paintings and messages created by visitors survived the day and were on exhibition at several of the Commission's buildings in Brussels during the summer.

Couleur Café Festival with the interactive exhibition Orbis Pictus

The 20th anniversary of the Couleur Café Festival was more colourful and intercultural than ever! The European Year was present with the interactive exhibition Orbis Pictus, under the patronage of Commissioner Figel'. Present previously in the Commission's premises in the Madou Tower and part of the cultural programme of the Czech presidency, Orbis Pictus – described as "the gateway to the world of creative human imagination" – is an invitation to touch and play with musical and optical instruments inspired by the Czech renaissance humanist and scholar Comenius.



© Nathalie Nizette

"Imagine a new world"

In June, the European Commission launched a photo competition for professional and amateur photographers from across the EU. The theme - "Imagine a new world" - challenged participants to show how they could adapt in our rapidly changing society, and how they could project themselves into the Europe of the future. A jury of photography professionals will select three winners, and the public will be able to vote online for the Public's Favourite award on the dedicated site of the competition www.imagine2009.eu



The Manifesto for Creativity and Innovation

now being drafted by the 27 European Ambassadors for Creativity and Innovation, will be presented in the autumn. Over and above their participation in events during the Year, the manifesto is intended to be their lasting collective contribution, in the form of an inspirational public call for action and a reference for developing our thinking about the future.

"Can creativity be measured?"

was the title of a conference in Brussels at the end of May. Organised by CRELL, the education research team of the JRC, it brought together experts to set the basis for future research on how to assess and measure creativity as personal capacity, as a stimulating educational environment, or as a factor for economic competitiveness.

"Talentia Declaration"

The Navarra Region has produced the "Talentia Declaration" on the importance for regions of growing and attracting talent, which is currently inspiring the creation of a think tank to develop its ideas.

The Learnovation network

held a conference in Brussels which led to "Ten imperatives for change", the starting point of a consultation of education stakeholders on the desired future of European education and lifelong learning. Learnovation will report on the results of this consultation before the end of the Year.

<http://create2009.europa.eu>

As the backbone of the communication campaign, the website became a central information platform about what is happening in Europe on creativity and innovation- at local, regional, national or European level. Hundreds of items of news, press releases, events and videos illustrate the Year.



The website has also played a central role in a branding campaign. More than 700 events contributing to the Year at different levels and in different countries granted permission to use the logo of the Year. Further requests continue at a rate of up to 100 a month – demonstrating the impact of the Year far beyond Brussels.

"What I would like to see at the end of the Year is that the citizens of Europe understand better that by promoting human talents and the human capacity to innovate, we can actively shape Europe for the better, to help it fully develop its potential, both economically and socially," said Ján Figel', Commissioner for Education, Culture, Training and Youth.

An essay on economic prosperity

This year in Italy, half a million high-school students spent from three to six hours writing an essay, their first in a series of exams that will lead to their baccaalaureat diplomas, and one of the optional titles was the Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009 - in particular how creativity and innovation can contribute to economic prosperity with a view to finding innovative and original solutions in personal, occupational and social life.

"creativity and innovation week"

In Luxembourg, the "creativity and innovation week" organised in May by Luxinnovation reached 15 000 people, with workshops on topics ranging from gastronomy to architecture.

Innovation Value Institute

In Ireland, the Innovation Value Institute was launched in June by the Prime Minister of Ireland, Brian Cowen, together with high level executives of the National University of Ireland Maynooth and Intel. Advancing research on the management of information technologies is one of the key aims. IVI's mission is to create the global standard to realise the business value from IT investments.

300 events organised by some 400 organisations

For the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009, the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation is supporting more than 300 events organised by some 400 organisations. Alongside higher education policy and the promotion of R&D and entrepreneurial innovation, the programme is one of the main axes of the Ministry's agenda: creating an environment which fosters scientific activity, technological development, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Competition on creative ideas

Portugal has launched a national competition on creative ideas chaired by Leonel Moura, the Portuguese conceptual artist who was nominated as a European Ambassador for Creativity and Innovation. The public are invited to submit videos that they have created on the themes of visions, design and technologies, to an interactive website <http://criar2009.gov.pt>

European Year of Creativity & Innovation 2009

CONFERENCE

"Creativity and Innovation" best practices from EU"

The Conference in Brussels on 2-3 March was one of the flagship events of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation. An exhibition showing the results of 20 star projects from around Europe was organised in the margins of the Conference.

Getting the best possible results and the most long-lasting impact from EU-funded projects was at the heart of the discussions at this conference. In plenary sessions and in workshops, the participants examined "Creativity and Innovation" from the perspectives of lifelong learning, entrepreneurship, cultural expression and awareness, and creative partnerships.

Out of more than 100 proposals, 35 projects were chosen by a panel of independent experts as showing good practice in creativity and innovation. Some were selected for their methodological approach, others for the way they tackled a theme or solved a problem. Projects were also chosen because they showed how to build innovative capacities in the individuals and organisations involved, or because they demonstrated innovative and creative ways of cooperating.

The event was attended by policy makers, project promoters and representatives of civil society from the fields of education, training, entrepreneurship, culture, citizenship, youth and regional policy. The cross-sectoral approach allowed participants from diverse sectors and backgrounds to meet and exchange ideas.

Commissioner Ján Figel', European Commissioner for education, training, culture and youth, cut the virtual ribbon that launched the online platform EVE (Espace Virtuel d'échange). This new tool will allow easy access to the results of EU-funded projects in education, training, culture, youth and citizenship. EVE will enable project promoters to learn from successes of the past, to give more visibility to their projects and to develop new networks. Project results displayed on EVE will include learning materials, project websites, participants' personal testimonials, and new forms of European partnerships.



► http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/eve/



Commissioner Figel' says he does not fear that the promotion of creativity will be lost because of crisis-driven pressures for greater innovation in business . “I don't think there is a shift away from creativity but there is a very logical need to be attentive to the economic and social side of this situation, because people are losing their jobs and we need to respond. This is not a cyclical crisis – it's not the usual ups and downs of the business cycle. It's systemic, and the response must be innovative. Those who are innovative will get out faster and stronger,” Figel' said.

Jakub Dürr, Deputy Minister for Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic, stressed the need for increased investments in research, innovation, human capital and education, against the background of the current economic and financial crisis. He also urged reforms in education systems across Europe, to ensure that they provide the new skills needed for tomorrow's jobs, and promote innovative and creative mindsets, with learning by doing, and problem-solving rather than knowledge transmission.

Other speakers at the conference spoke of the need for investment in closer collaboration between universities, research centres, the public sector and businesses, so as to create greater synergies. Inter-sector and multi-sector partnerships and partnerships that break with traditional frameworks are more likely to lead to creativity and innovation, they concluded.

The European Union has an important role, the meeting stressed. European added value can be achieved through financial backing for projects in their initial phase, through infrastructure support that allows project promoters to concentrate on their core objectives, or through the creation of brands such as the 'European Capitals of Culture'.

All documentation from the Conference can be accessed at:
 ● http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/valorisation/conf-marchog_en.html



The chosen projects have been compiled in a brochure, available in three languages, which can be downloaded from the Commission's website at :

● http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/





DRIVE FORWARD

innovation in Europe. EIT

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is developing rapidly. Since the inauguration of its Governing Board in September 2008, a lot of progress has been made. In early April, the EIT launched the first call for proposals for the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) with a view to selecting the first two or three of these partnerships by the end of the year. The Governing Board has made it clear that entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education will have to play a major role in the KICs.

Daria Golebiowska-Tataj, a member of the Governing Board's Executive Committee, is part of the Board's internal working group responsible for entrepreneurship. She recently organised an EIT seminar dedicated to this issue.

Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education play an important role for the EIT and its KICs. Why did the EIT Governing Board put so much emphasis on these issues?

Entrepreneurship and innovation are two sides of the same coin. It is the EIT's mission to drive forward innovation in Europe, and entrepreneurship will be a strong motor if we want to achieve this goal.

Don't forget that innovation means bringing new ideas and products to the market. To do so you need entrepreneurial people – or, more generally, an entrepreneurial spirit.

So far, however, the culture of entrepreneurship is somewhat underdeveloped in Europe. At the EIT we are convinced that this needs to change. Therefore, we not only want to create appropriate framework conditions, but we are already starting 'upstream' to educate entrepreneurial people.

And how will the EIT ensure that this is implemented?

As you know, a major vehicle for the EIT's operation will be the KICs. We have recently published the first call for KIC proposals and have made our objectives clear in the selection criteria: A credible and convincing plan about how to promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education is a condition sine qua non for succeeding in the KIC selection.

And it will certainly not be sufficient to offer a simple training course on entrepreneurial skills. There will have to be a comprehensive scheme, including 'learning by doing' or even by 'trial and error'. Entrepreneurship cannot be taught. It needs to be learned.



Industry involvement in the EIT and its KICs is a 'must'. However, in times of economic crisis, will companies not find it difficult to dedicate resources to such a new initiative?

The situation has not been made easier by the global economic situation. At the same time, this is also an opportunity – and I think many in industry have understood the signals of the time. Investment in R&D but also in the skills and knowledge of people is the right thing to do. If we succeed in educating a new generation of entrepreneurial people, this will indeed be a very smart investment. It will generate a lasting and sustainable positive effect on our economies and societies at large. The EIT is therefore starting up at the right time.

What are the next steps for the EIT and how is entrepreneurship reflected?

We have two important tasks in front of us this year. First, the Governing Board will agree on its first three-year work plan this summer. In the context of the three-year plan, we have discussed a number of ideas for EIT actions to foster entrepreneurship. Secondly, we shall select the first two or three KICs at the end of the year.

And entrepreneurship will not only be a major criterion for selection, but will also be supported and closely monitored by the Governing Board during the entire life of the KICs.

KICs will be in a position to make this come true by promoting entrepreneurship, educating innovative entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial innovators, transferring research knowledge to innovation and into the market, and finally by incubating start-ups with high growth potential.

More information on EIT
• <http://eit.europa.eu/>

