

Education, Youth, Audiovisual, Culture and Sport Council

13 May in Brussels

*The Council will start on Monday at 10.00 with the **education** session, chaired by the Latvian minister for Education and Science, Māriņa Seile. The Commission will be represented by Commissioner Navracsics.*

*The Council meeting will be preceded (8.45-10.00) by the traditional informal meeting ('structured dialogue') between representatives of European youth organisations, youth ministers from the member states of the expanded troika (IT, LV, LU and NL) and Commissioner Navracsics. Participants will discuss **priorities for the future agenda of EU youth policy**.*

*Ministers will be invited to express their views on what **European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020")** has achieved to date and how and in which direction it should develop, in the context of the mid-term stocktaking and the preparation of the **2015 Joint Report**.*

*The Council is also due to adopt conclusions on the role of **early childhood education and primary education**.*

*The morning session will be followed by a working lunch for education ministers, which will address the issue of the **accessibility of education and the effectiveness of investments**.*

***Youth issues** will be dealt with in the afternoon beginning at 15.00. The Council will adopt conclusions on **cross-sectorial policy cooperation** and on **youth work**.*

*Ministers will also discuss how to improve **young people political participation** in the democratic life of Europe.*

*On Tuesday at 10.00 the Council will resume with the **audiovisual and culture** items, chaired by the Latvian minister for Culture Dace Melbārde. Commissioners Oettinger (for the audiovisual items) and Navracsics will be present.*

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

Ministers will examine the future of the **European audiovisual policy**, following the recent Commission communication "A Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe".

The Council is expected to adopt a decision designating the **European Capital of Culture for the year 2019**. The Council is also due to adopt the conclusions on **cultural and creative cross-overs**.

At lunchtime, ministers from the member states of the expanded troika (IT, LV, LU and NL), representatives of the sports movement and Commissioner Navracsics will convene in the framework of the 'structured dialogue' to discuss **synergies between the sports movement and the education systems in member states**.

The **sport session** will start at 15.00, under the chairmanship of the Latvian minister for Education and Science, Māriņa Seile.

The Council will adopt conclusions on **the role of grassroots sport** and will exchange views on best practices for the cooperation between education institutions and the sports sector in order to **promote physical activity, in particular among young people**.

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EDUCATION

The role of early childhood education and primary education

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on the role of early childhood education and primary education in fostering creativity, innovation and digital competence.

The conclusions examine ways and means to ensure that today's young people are equipped with the skills needed to meet the challenges of an increasingly digital economy and society.

They also emphasise the part which creativity, innovation and digital resources can play in the learning process itself, as well as the importance of ensuring that teachers are suitably trained and schools adequately prepared for this task.

ET 2020 mid-term stocktaking

In public deliberation, ministers will express their views on the **achievements of European cooperation in education and training to date and how and in which direction it should develop**. In order to structure the debate, ministers are invited to consider three questions prepared by the Presidency ([8039/15](#)).

ET 2020 is the key European-level framework that helps member states to modernise their education and training systems, thus contributing to the overall political priorities set under the Europe 2020 strategy. The ET 2020 strategic framework was adopted in May 2009 ([OJ C 119, 28.5.2009](#)) and established four broad long-term objectives which European cooperation in education and training should seek to achieve by the end of this decade:

- making lifelong learning and mobility a reality
- improving the quality and efficiency of education and training
- promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship
- enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

Collective progress towards these priorities - as well as the longer-term strategic objectives - is regularly monitored by the Commission, which periodically publishes a joint progress report on implementation of ET 2020. The next edition of this report is due for publication this summer.

In February 2014, the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council invited member states and the Commission to increase the added value and enhance the effectiveness of ET 2020 and its underlying governance and working arrangements.

Since 2015 marks the half-way stage in the process, the report will therefore review the ET 2020 framework as a whole and put forward proposals for adjustment. The outcome of the ministerial debate will also feed into the 2015 joint report.

Any other business

- Follow-up to the informal meeting of EU education ministers (Paris, 17 March 2015) on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education
 - Information from the Presidency, the French delegation and the Commission(8496/15)
- Work programme of the incoming presidency
 - Information from the Luxembourg delegation

YOUTH

Cross-sectorial policy cooperation

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on enhancing **cross-sectorial policy cooperation to effectively address the socio-economic challenges facing young people** ([7863/15](#)). Cross-sectorial policy cooperation is also one of the three main priorities set out in the recently adopted EU Work Plan for Youth 2014-2015 ([OJ C 183/02, 14.6.2014](#)).

Although significant steps have been taken to improve the situation of young people in Europe, youth unemployment rates remain high with increasing numbers of long term unemployed and demotivated young workers who have a higher risk of social exclusion. There is still a skills gap between education and the world of work and the transition from school to work is often difficult.

The conclusions consider strategies to strengthen the cross-sectorial approach to youth issues so that policy-makers can react more effectively and promptly to problems, making the best use of all available EU funding and programmes in this field, such as the Youth Guarantee and Erasmus+.

They also underline that certain core elements of the youth sector (youth work, non-formal learning) could be integrated into other sectors (education, employment, social policy and health) and could play a crucial role in addressing the main socio-economic problems of young people in the EU.

Youth work

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on **reinforcing youth work to ensure cohesive societies** ([8407/15](#)), which highlight the contribution of youth work to personal development, social inclusion, cultural diversity and active citizenship.

The conclusions also underline that these values are at the core of European democracies and should also be promoted and supported outside of the formal education structures.

There are estimated to be around 3 million youth workers (both voluntary and paid) in the EU, often neither recognised nor regulated by any kind of framework. Youth work plays an important role in reaching out to all young people of different backgrounds, including marginalised young people and those not in employment, education or training (NEETs).

Political participation of young people

Ministers will discuss, in public deliberation, issues relating to "Empowering young people for political participation in the democratic life of Europe". This was also the subject of the last EU Youth Conference that took place in Riga on 23–26 March, in the framework of the 'structured dialogue'². This policy debate is to some extent a response to the outcome of the conference, but with a broader scope.

The 'structured dialogue' is an important tool to promote the participation of young people in the decision-making process in the EU. It serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation in the youth field. Its overall thematic priority for the period 1 July 2014 to 31 December 2015 is empowerment.

² Joint recommendations ([8095/15](#), p.8).

Falling voter turnout is a common trend in Europe and young voters abstain more than the general population. According to Eurobarometer, 79% (EU27 average) of the respondents (aged 15 to 30) indicated that they would not consider standing as a candidate in a political election at some point in their lives.

The divide between the democratic institutions in Europe, their representatives and political parties and Europe's young citizens seems to be growing. However, it is not certain whether this signifies a decline or rather a transformation of young people's political participation in society.

For instance, it is noteworthy that on the one hand young people are often underrepresented in public offices and their concerns are frequently side-lined in politics. Yet, on the other hand, young people are more likely to believe in democracy and that voting is an effective mechanism to influence decision-making than other age groups.

Ministers are invited by the presidency ([8095/15](#)) to reflect on the following questions:

- Which are the most urgent actions to be put in place at all levels to achieve greater political participation of young people in traditional democratic mechanisms (such as elections)?
- Which are the most urgent actions to make mainstream politics more appealing and engaging for young people, as well as to raise overall youth interest and readiness to have an active role in the democratic life of Europe?
- What specific actions are needed to engage with young people that might be vulnerable to extremism and potentially radicalisation?

Any other business

- European Declaration on Youth Work drafted in the context of the Second European Youth Work Convention
 - Information from the Belgian delegation ([8491/1/15 REV 1](#))
- Work programme of the incoming presidency
 - Information from the Luxembourg delegation

CULTURE and AUDIOVISUAL

The European audiovisual policy

In public deliberation, ministers will have a first exchange of views relating to the audiovisual policy aspects of the recent [Commission communication on the Digital Single Market Strategy](#), which will be presented by Commissioner Oettinger.

The strategy is structured around three policy areas:

- better online access to digital goods and services
- creating a favourable environment for digital networks and services
- ensuring that Europe's economy, industry and employment take full advantage of what digitalisation offers

In particular, it addresses the issue of the change in viewing patterns of consumers who increasingly use portable devices to view content and want access to on-demand content regardless of national borders.

The convergence of on-line and traditional media is becoming a reality for more and more European citizens. It opens up new opportunities for industry and consumers, but also brings new challenges for policy-makers and regulators, including how to ensure the quality and cultural diversity of the digital offer.

In this context, questions have been raised on whether the current EU audiovisual regulatory framework, the 2010 Audiovisual Media Services directive (AVMS) ([OJ L 95, 15.4.2010](#)), is still adequate for the new digital era or whether it should be adapted to the converged media landscape and the new ways of consuming media content.

The Commission is currently performing a REFIT exercise on the AVMS Directive, which should be completed by the end of 2015 with a view to adopting a legislative proposal in the course of 2016.

The review of the directive should take into account issues such as scope, territorial jurisdiction, independence of regulators and protection of minors.

The debate will also address, on the basis of a presidency background document ([8351/15](#)), the more specific issues relating to the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMS) in the context of the current geopolitical situation, which is characterised by the rise of Islamic extremism and Russia's intervention in Ukraine.

The EU is now faced with a reality where media are no longer there solely to inform, educate and entertain. Content which many consider to constitute hate speech, propaganda or disinformation is circulating freely within the EU. This could even amount to a threat to national security or public order.

To structure the debate, ministers are invited to answer the following questions:

- How can we balance freedom of expression with the public interest objectives of security and stability, while at the same time maintaining a culturally diverse and high quality European audiovisual landscape?
- What steps should be taken to ensure that culturally diverse and high quality audiovisual content is supported in the implementation of the Digital Single Market Strategy?

Cultural and creative cross-overs

The Council adopted conclusions on **cultural and creative cross-overs to stimulate innovation, economic sustainability and social inclusion** ([8346/15](#)), which highlight how culture and artistic creativity can trigger innovation and enhance competitiveness in industry and business, as well as in education, health care and the environment.

The cultural and creative sectors (CCS) cover a broad range of sectors from arts, crafts, architecture, heritage, libraries and publishing to film, television, games, music, advertising and design.

Despite numerous studies undertaken in recent years at both national and EU levels that have demonstrated the significant contribution of these sectors to GDP, job creation and exports, the synergies with other sectors have not yet been fully explored.

The conclusions call on member states to create favourable conditions to promote cultural and creative entrepreneurship, including by using innovative financial instruments.

They also recommend that education should encourage the development of transversal skills such as critical thinking, creativity, entrepreneurship and initiative taking, which are vital in today's labour market.

The Commission is invited to develop a comprehensive industrial strategy that would strengthen competitiveness and further growth of the cultural and creative industries.

European Capitals of Culture in 2019

The Council will adopt a decision designating **Plovdiv** (Bulgaria) and **Matera** (Italy) as European Capitals of Culture in 2019 ([8103/15](#)), following a recommendation from the Commission which is based on the reports of the selection panel and the positive opinion of the European Parliament.

Decision 1622/2006/EC ([OJ L 304, 3.11.2006](#)) sets out the procedure for selecting the European Capitals of Culture. Its Annex establishes the order in which the member states are entitled to nominate their city.

The European Capitals of Culture initiative was launched in 1985 and over 40 cities have been designated since then. Its aim is to promote greater mutual understanding between European citizens and strengthen a feeling of European citizenship, simultaneously highlighting the richness of European cultures and both their diversity and their shared features.

Any other business

- Destruction of cultural sites perpetrated by ISIS/Da'esh: update on culture and cultural heritage related aspects of the joint communication concerning an EU regional strategy for Syria and Iraq
 - Information from the Commission
- Financing of small scale cultural infrastructure projects under the ERDF in the current financial perspective
 - Information from the Polish delegation ([8561/15](#))
- Taking stock of the Council conclusions of 26 November 2012 on cultural governance
 - Information from the Presidency ([8489/15](#))
- Work programme of the incoming presidency
 - Information from the Luxembourg delegation

SPORT

Role of grassroots sport

The Council will adopt conclusions on **maximising the role of grassroots sport in developing transversal skills, especially among young people** ([7875/15](#)), highlighting how voluntary activities in sport as a method of non-formal and informal learning can help young people acquire skills and transversal competences that complement formal education and enhance their employability.

Sport is the largest non-governmental movement in Europe. Voluntary activities in the sport sector mainly take place at grassroots level whether as a participant, facilitator or organiser.

Non-formal and informal learning are important elements in the learning process and are effective instruments for making learning attractive, developing readiness for lifelong learning and promoting the social integration of young people.

The Latvian Presidency organised a conference on physical activities for the development of human resources on 16 February in Riga. The [outcome](#) of this conference also fed into the Council conclusions:

Physical activity as part of quality education

In public deliberation, ministers will hold a debate, on the basis of a presidency background document ([8096/15](#)), on **physical activity as an essential element of quality education at all levels**.

The debate will also benefit from input from the sport movement's representatives who participated in the working lunch, in the framework of the "structured dialogue": the **EOC** (European Olympic Committee); **EUPEA** (European Physical Education Association), **EUSA** (European University Sports Association), **CEV** (European Volleyball Confederation), **FIBA** (European International Basketball Federation) **LEN** (European Swimming League), and **IFF** (International Football Federation).

Ministers are invited to address the following aspects:

- How do you assess the cooperation between educational institutions at all levels and the sport sector in your country? Which best practice cooperation models or examples would you like to promote?
- Which are the main obstacles and challenges for such cooperation? How could more synergies and mutual benefits be created?

The promotion of physical activity is a priority of EU policy-making in the field of sport, and has been regularly addressed, in particular through the Council Recommendation on health-enhancing physical activity across sectors ([15575/13](#)), a specific chapter for sport under the Erasmus+ programme and the upcoming first edition of the [European Week of Sport](#) in September.

In the context of the EU Work Plan for Sport 2014-2017 ([OJ C 183, 14.6.2014](#)), there is an expert group mandated to prepare recommendations to promote physical education in schools, including in early childhood, and to develop interactions with the local sport authorities and the private sector.

Other business

- Council of Europe Convention on the manipulation of sports competitions
 - Information from the Presidency
 - World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) meetings
 - Information from the EU member state representatives
 - Work programme of the incoming presidency
 - Information from the Luxembourg delegation
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