Council of the European Union

Brussels, 28 January 2021
(OR. en)

5541/21

LIMITE

EDUC 19
JEUN 7
SOC 37
EMPL 25
RECH 32
COMPET 43
TELECOM 20

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	5247/21
Subject:	Draft Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond
	- Revised Presidency text

Delegations will find attached the revised Presidency text on the above mentioned topic, with a view to its finalisation at the meeting of the Education Committee on 2 February 2021.

Bold and **[…]** are used to indicate changes to the previous version (5247/21).

————————————

Draft Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training**:** towards the European Education Area and beyond **(2021-2030)**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING

–   the endorsement by the March 2002 Barcelona European Council of the 'Education and Training 2010' work programme ('ET 2010'), the establishment of a new cycle through the Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('Education and Training 2020' – 'ET 2020') and the assessment made through the 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') – which together established and gave continuity to a solid framework for European cooperation in the field of education and training, based on common objectives, aiming primarily at supporting the improvement of national education and training systems by developing complementary EU-level tools, mutual learning and the exchange of good practices using the open method of coordination,

–   the political background to this issue as set out in Annex I,

and ACKNOWLEDGING

–   that in the Rome Declaration of March 2017, the EU leaders pledged to work towards a Union where young people receive the best education and training and can study and find jobs across the continent,

–   that the EU leaders jointly proclaimed at the 2017 Gothenburg Social Summit the European Pillar of Social Rights, establishing the right to quality and inclusive education and training and lifelong learning for all as its first principle, the right to timely and tailor-made assistance to improve employment or self-employment prospects, which includes training and re-qualification, as its fourth principle, as well as children's right to affordable early childhood education and care of good quality, and the right of children from disadvantaged backgrounds to specific measures to enhance equal opportunities as its eleventh principle,

–   that education has been singled out in the European Council conclusions of 14 December 2017 as key to building inclusive and cohesive societies and to sustaining European competitiveness, putting education and training at the heart of the European political agenda for the first time,

–   *[2 sub-paragraphs moved to the end of this section]*

–   the progress achieved under the ET 2010 work programme and ET 2020 framework, especially in support of national reforms, recognizing that substantial challenges still remain if Europe is to achieve the ambitions set in the aforementioned proclamations,

–   that the Commission, together with Member States, set in motion actions to achieve this vision for the future of education and training through the establishment of a European Education Area[1], from 2018 onwards, to which the Council replied through the adoption of the Council conclusions of 22 May 2018 on moving towards a vision of a European Education Area and the Council Resolution of 8 November 2019 on further developing the European Education Area to support future-oriented education and training systems,

–   the work developed under the Bologna process, reinforced through the Rome Ministerial Communiqué of November 2020, as well as under the Copenhagen process, also recently strengthened by the Osnabrück Declaration of November 2020,

–   that the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy 2021 stresses the importance of ensuring equal opportunities and inclusive education, paying special attention to disadvantaged groups and investing in reskilling and upskilling,

EMPHASISES that:

–   Education and training have a vital role to play when it comes to shaping the future of Europe, at a time when it is imperative that its society and economy become more cohesive, inclusive, digital, sustainable, green and resilient, and for citizens to find personal fulfilment and well-being, to be prepared to adapt and perform on a changing labour market and to engage in active and responsible citizenship.

–   The COVID-19 pandemic has put unprecedented pressure on the education and training sector and triggered a widespread shift to distance and blended teaching and learning. This shift has brought different challenges and opportunities for education and training systems and communities, unveiling the impact of the digital divide and connectivity gaps within Member States, as well as inequalities among wealth groups and urban-rural settings, while also highlighting the potential of education and training to build resilience and foster sustainable and inclusive growth.

---

[1]   COM(2017) 673 final.

- The European Education Area will allow learners to pursue their studies in different stages of life and to look for employment across the EU, and Member States and stakeholders to cooperate, so that high quality, innovative and inclusive education and training, supporting economic growth and high quality employment opportunities, as well as personal, social and cultural development, become the reality in all Member States and regions across the EU.

- Furthermore, the European Education Area will be an area where learners and educational staff can easily cooperate and communicate across disciplines, cultures and borders, and where qualifications and learning outcomes from periods of learning abroad are automatically recognised.[2]

RECOGNISES that:

- The previous strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) helped to promote mutual learning in education and training through common strategic objectives, common reference tools and approaches, evidence and data from all relevant European agencies and international organisations and the exchange of good practices and peer learning between EU Member States and other stakeholders and supported the implementation of national reforms in education and training.

- An updated strategic framework of European cooperation in education and training – while fully respecting the principle of subsidiarity and the diversity of Member States' national educational systems, as well as building on the achievements of previous frameworks – will improve this cooperation in areas such as enhanced coordination, including at political level, greater synergies between different policies which contribute to social and economic growth and green and digital transitions, and strengthened communication and dissemination of outputs, within a more innovative and future-oriented perspective of support for education and training reforms.

---

[2]   In line with the Council Recommendation of 26 November 2018 on promoting automatic mutual recognition of higher education and upper secondary education and training qualifications and the outcomes of learning periods abroad, OJ C 444, 10.12.2018, p. 1.

– The COVID-19 crisis demonstrated that education and training systems must be sufficiently flexible and resistant to interruptions in their regular cycles, and proved that EU countries have the capacity to find solutions to continue the delivery of teaching and learning processes in different ways and contexts, and to ensure that all learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background or learning needs, continue to learn. The same applies for the framework of European cooperation, which should remain flexible enough to respond to both current and future challenges, including in the context of the European Education Area.

WELCOMES and TAKES GOOD NOTE of

the main elements of and, in particular, the vision set out in the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on "Achieving the European Education Area by 2025" of 30 September 2020[3], which outlines how European cooperation can further enrich the quality, inclusiveness and digital and green dimension of the EU education and training systems. This communication proposes a framework to enable cooperation with Member States and engagement with relevant stakeholders, including a reporting and analysis structure, with education target proposals to encourage and track reforms in education and training, in order to achieve the European Education Area by 2025.

and ALSO WELCOMES

– the main elements of the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on "European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience" of July 2020.[4]

---

[3]   COM(2020) 625 final.
[4]   COM(2020) 274 final.

–   the main elements of the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on "Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 - Resetting education and training for the digital age" of September 2020.[5]

AGREES that:

1.   Until 2030, the achievement and further development of the European Education Area will be the overarching political objective of the new strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training, permeating all strategic **priorities** and priority areas, as set out in this resolution, bearing in mind that the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training will be the main tool to support and implement the European Education Area, contributing to its successful achievement and ambitious further development[6], through its initiatives and a common vision, in a spirit of co-creation.

2.   While moving towards the achievement of the European Education Area by 2025, the main goal of European cooperation in education and training should be to support the further development of education and training systems in the Member States which are aimed at ensuring:

   a)   the personal, social and professional fulfilment of all citizens, whilst promoting democratic values, equality, social cohesion, active citizenship, and intercultural dialogue;

   b)   sustainable economic prosperity, the green and digital transitions, and employability.

---

[5]   COM(2020) 624 final.
[6]   According to the Council Resolution of 8 November 2019 on further developing the European Education Area to support future-oriented education and training systems, OJ C 389, 18.11.2019, p. 1.

3.	European cooperation in education and training for the period up to 2030 should be established in the context of a strategic framework spanning education and training systems as a whole, in an inclusive, holistic and lifelong learning perspective. This should be underlined as the basic principle underpinning the entire framework, which intends to cover teaching, training and learning in all contexts and levels — whether formal, non-formal or informal — from early childhood education and care to adult **learning**, including vocational education and training **(VET)** and higher education, and also in digital environments. **European cooperation in education and training should also contribute to the relevant priorities of the European Semester.**

4.	The work developed under this new framework should contribute towards the green and digital transitions, in accordance with the objectives established in the communication from the Commission on "The European Green Deal" of December 2019[7], as well as the main elements set out in the communication from the Commission on "Shaping Europe's digital future" of February 2020.[8]

5.	Such aims should also be viewed in a […] global perspective, considering that cooperation in education and training has gradually become an important instrument for the implementation of EU external policies, based on European values, trust and autonomy. This will help to make the EU an even more attractive destination and partner, both in the global race for talent as well as in promoting strategic partnerships with international partners **to provide inclusive, quality education for all, in all contexts and levels of education**. As such, cooperation is an essential dimension for the achievement of the Union's geopolitical priorities, as well as the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, both globally and within EU Member States. **Fostering greater coordination among the EU and Member States, under a Team Europe approach**[9]**, will strengthen Europe's positioning as a key partner in education at global level and help cementing the links between the European Education Area and the rest of the world.**

---

[7]	COM(2019) 640 final.
[8]	COM(2020) 67 final.
[9]	**Team Europe contributes to the promotion of EU values and interests worldwide, promotes global sustainable recovery, the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the goals of the Paris Agreement.**

6.   Effective and efficient investment in education and training is a prerequisite for enhancing quality and inclusiveness of the education and training systems and improving the education outcomes, as well as for driving sustainable growth, improving wellbeing and building a more inclusive society. **While respecting the principle of subsidiarity, intensified** work on investment has a potential to aid the recovery from the current crisis and contribute to the green and digital transitions of the education and training sector.

7.   The periodic monitoring of progress towards the set objectives through systematic collection and analysis of internationally comparable data provides an essential contribution towards evidence-**informed** policy making. The strategic **priorities** outlined below should accordingly be accompanied during the period 2021-2030 by indicators and by EU-level targets, as set out in Annex II to this resolution. Building on the results achieved during the last cycle of European cooperation in education and training, these will help to measure the overall progress made at European level, and to demonstrate what has been achieved, as well as foster and support education and training systems' development and reforms.

8.   Specifically, during the next decade, the strategic framework will address the following five strategic **priorities**:

–   **Strategic <u>priority</u> 1: <u>Improving</u> quality, <u>equity,</u> inclusion and success for all in education and training**

     To thrive in the world of today, and to cope with future transformations in society, the economy and the labour market, all individuals have to be equipped with the appropriate knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes. Education and training is key for the personal, civic and professional development of European citizens.

     At EU level, the vision for quality in education and training makes mastering […] key competences **and basic skills** […] fundamental bases for future success[10], supported by highly qualified and motivated teachers and trainers, as well as other educational staff.

---

[10]   As set out in the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1.

Early leaving from education and training, which exposes young people and adults to decreased socio-economic opportunities, although reduced in the last decade, remains a challenge, particularly when thinking of the expected consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts must continue to bring down the rate of early leaving from education and training and aiming for **more** young people to obtain an upper secondary education qualification.

National education and training systems have been able to improve their performance in these areas, but there is still a need to identify political measures which can boost educational success for all learners.

By ensuring quality and inclusive education and training for all, Member States can further reduce social, economic and cultural inequalities. However, across Europe, learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, including from rural and remote areas, are overrepresented among underachievers and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted even more starkly the importance of equity and inclusion in education and training.

To ensure a truly inclusive education and equal opportunities for all learners in all levels and types of education and training, academic attainment and achievement should be dissociated from social, economic and cultural status, or from other personal circumstances.

Quality early childhood education and care plays a particularly important role, and should be further reinforced as a basis for future educational success.

All other actions towards broader inclusion **are to be encouraged**, such as supporting access to inclusive quality education for persons with disabilities[11], persons with specific learning needs, learners with migrant background and other vulnerable groups, supporting the re-entering in education in a lifelong learning perspective and providing opportunities to enter the labour market through different education and training pathways […].

---

[11] In line with the UN Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities of 13 December 2006**, which will be implemented at EU level in the course of the next decade through the Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030**.

Inclusive education and training also entails developing gender sensitivity in the learning processes and in education and training institutions and challenging and dissolving gender stereotypes, especially those that constrain the choices of boys and girls for their field of study. Traditionally male- or female-dominated professions should be further promoted to persons of the under-represented sex. Further work is also needed towards a proper gender balance in leadership positions in education and training institutions.

Digital technologies play an important part in making learning environments, learning materials and teaching methods adaptable and suitable to diverse learners. They can promote genuine inclusion – provided that digital gap issues, both in terms of infrastructure and of digital skills, are addressed in parallel.

– **Strategic <u>priority</u> 2: Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality for all**

Societal, technological, digital, environmental and economic challenges are increasingly affecting the way we live and work, including the distribution of jobs and the demand for skills and competences. The high number of career transitions the average European citizen is expected to go through, coupled with the increase of the retirement age, make lifelong learning and lifelong career guidance**, including with outreach activities,** essential for a just transition, as education and skills levels, including digital skills, continue to be a fundamental factor in the labour market.

Lifelong learning permeates the overall vision and objectives for education and training in the EU and encompasses all levels and types of education and training, as well as non-formal and informal learning, in a holistic way.

Further progress is still required in providing quality lifelong learning for all learners, including through ensuring permeability and flexibility between different learning pathways in various forms and levels of education and training, as well as validation of non-formal and informal learning.

[…] **E**ducation and training systems should become more flexible, resilient, future-proof and appealing, reaching out to a more diverse learner body and offering recognition and validation of prior learning, upskilling and reskilling training opportunities, including at higher qualification levels and throughout the working life[12], supported by initiatives such as the **European Universities and** Centres of vocational excellence, which **were** launched through the Erasmus+ programme.

Average participation **of adults in learning** in the EU remains low, which puts at risk a truly sustainable and fair economic growth in the Union. Innovations in learning pathways, new educational approaches, including individual approaches, and **in** learning environments in all education and training institutions, including higher education institutions, as well as in workplace and community settings, are a pre-condition to better accommodate the needs of a wider range of learners, as a growing number of adults will need reskilling and upskilling.

In addition, measures should be strengthened to enable **and motivate** adults to acquire basic skills, so that equal opportunities can be guaranteed and greater social participation could be ensured, thus enabling a holistic approach to adult […] learning.

As an essential element of lifelong learning and an important means of enhancing personal development, employability and adaptability, mobility for learners, teachers**,** teacher trainers and staff should continue to be expanded as a key element of EU cooperation and a tool to enhance quality and inclusion in education and training and promote multilingualism in the EU. It is important to strive for a balance in the mobility flows in order to stimulate optimal brain circulation **and to monitor it through graduate tracking**.

Further efforts must be made to remove existing obstacles and barriers to all types of learning and teaching mobility, including issues related to access, guidance, **student services** and recognition, and also in light of the impact of any current or future travel restrictions.

---

[12] In line with the objectives set out in the Council Recommendation of 24 November 2020 on VET for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience (OJ C 417, 2.12.2020, p. 1) and in the Osnabrück Declaration of 30 November 2020.

Moreover, to reinforce cooperation **between education institutions** and **foster** mobility, there is still work to be done in areas such as the automatic mutual recognition of qualifications **and** study periods abroad and quality assurance. Continued efforts are needed to make use of European initiatives to facilitate mobility, including those funded under Erasmus+. *[moved from priority 4]*

– **Strategic <u>priority </u>3: Enhancing competences and motivation in the education profession**

Teachers, trainers**,** educational and pedagogical staff and education and training leaders, **at all levels,** are at the heart of education and training. To support innovation, inclusion, quality and achievement in education and training, educators must be highly competent and motivated, **which** require**s** a range of professional learning opportunities and support throughout their careers.

More than ever, attention needs to be paid to the well-being of teachers, trainers and educational staff in education and training systems, which is an important factor also for the quality of education and training, as it affects not only teacher satisfaction but also the quality of teaching.

There is also a need to increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession and revalorise it, which becomes increasingly important as EU countries face shortages and the ageing of teachers.[13]

Furthermore, the pivotal role of education and training leadership should be taken into account when developing favourable environments and conditions for the development of competences and motivation of teachers, trainers and educational staff, thus ensuring that education and training institutions operate as learning organisations. Initiatives such as the European Teachers Academies, which will be launched through the Erasmus+ programme, will facilitate networking**, knowledge sharing** and mobility among institutions providing teachers and trainers with opportunities for initial education, induction and continuous professional development, sharing of best practices and innovative pedagogies, allowing for **mutual** learning at a European scale.

---

[13] As stressed in the Council Conclusions of 9 June 2020 on European teachers and trainers for the future, OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, p. 11.

–   **Strategic <u>priority</u> 4: Reinforcing European higher education**

The higher education sector and higher education institutions themselves have demonstrated their resilience and ability to cope with unforeseen changes, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis sharpened the challenges that remain, but also created opportunities for further development within the foreseen higher education transformation agenda.

Over the next decade, higher education institutions will be encouraged to find new forms of deeper cooperation, namely by creating transnational alliances, pooling their knowledge and resources and generating more opportunities for student and staff mobility and participation, as well as for boosting research and innovation, including through the full roll-out of the European Universities initiative.

[paragraph moved to priority 2]

Successful work has already been done towards creating a European Higher Education Area (EHEA), within the Bologna process. **It will be important in future to continue working within the Bologna process. whilst** creating further and stronger synergies with the European Research Area (ERA)**, avoiding parallel or double structures or instruments.**

-   **Strategic <u>priority</u> 5: Supporting the green and digital transitions in and through education and training**

The green and digital transitions are the core focus of the Union's agenda for the next decade. Both the transition to an environmentally sustainable, circular and climate-neutral economy as well as a more digital world, will have significant social, economic and employment impacts. Without ensuring that all citizens obtain the necessary knowledge, competences, skills and attitudes to cope with these changes, a socially just transformation of the EU will be impossible.

There is a need to enable a profound change in individuals' behaviour and skills, starting with the education and training systems and institutions as catalysts. Education and training institutions need to include the green and digital dimensions in their organisational development. This requires investments, namely into digital education ecosystems, not only to integrate a perspective of environmental sustainability and basic and advanced digital skills across all levels and types of education and training, but also to ensure that education and training infrastructures are accordingly prepared to deal with and educate for these changes. Reorienting education and training institutions to a whole-institution approach**, modernising Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields of study** and creating inclusive, healthy, sustainable educational settings **are** critical for achieving the needed changes for the green and digital transitions. In addition, businesses, national**, regional** and local authorities and relevant stakeholders need to develop strategies and shared ownership accordingly.

FURTHER AGREES that:

1. In endeavouring to **work within the strategic framework, on the basis of the strategic priorities described above and in order to achieve the European Education Area and support its further development**, the following principles should be observed in the period up to 2030:

a) European cooperation in education and training should enable the EU and the wider education and training community to deliver on initiatives supporting mainly the achievement of the European Education Area by 2025, but also the Digital Education Action Plan, as well as the European Skills Agenda. Based on strengthened guidance from the Council **and in line with the Open Method of Coordination**, this requires boosting flexible cooperation methods and strengthening synergies with other initiatives in education and training.

b) European cooperation in education and training should be implemented in an inclusive, holistic and lifelong learning perspective, sustaining and deepening the tried and tested mutual learning arrangements tools, instruments and policy support available, namely those from ET 2020 and under the open method of coordination, and developing synergies between the education and training sector and other policy areas, where appropriate. While fully respecting Member States' competences in the area of education and training and the voluntary nature of European cooperation in education and training over the next decade, the strategic framework should draw on:

i) the five strategic **priorities** for European cooperation outlined above;

ii) common reference tools and approaches;

iii) peer learning, peer counselling and the exchange of good practice, with particular focus on the dissemination and clear visibility of outcomes, as well as national impact;

iv) periodic monitoring and reporting, including through the EU-level targets, the annual Education and Training Monitor, in connection also with the European Semester, while using the expertise of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks and avoiding additional administrative burdens on the Member States;

v) comparable evidence and data from all relevant European agencies, European networks, and international organisations, such as, for example, the OECD, UNESCO, and the IEA;

vi) the expertise of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks, which should be the first forum of discussion on the shared EU-level targets and indicators and future areas of focus, as well as the cooperation with other relevant sectors (employment, social and research sectors) to ensure appropriate and fit for purpose indicators;

vii) making full use of the opportunities available under EU programmes and funds and instruments, particularly in the field of education and training, including for lifelong learning.

c) European cooperation in education and training should be pertinent, concrete and effective. Further efforts should be made to ensure that clear and visible outcomes are planned in advance and then presented, reviewed and disseminated on a regular basis and in a structured manner, through European and national fora, thereby establishing a basis for continuous evaluation and development.

d) In order to support Member States' efforts to facilitate the foreseen transformation of higher education in Europe and to promote the cooperation of higher education institutions, close and structured synergies with the EHEA and Bologna process should be ensured, in particular with regard to quality assurance, recognition, mobility and transparency instruments, avoiding parallel or double structures and instruments already developed in the EHEA.

e) The Copenhagen process is an important aspect of European cooperation under the open method of coordination in the field of VET, which will contribute to achieving the strategic **priorities** set out in this framework.

f) Cross-sectoral cooperation should be enhanced between relevant EU initiatives in education and training and those in related policy areas and sectors — particularly employment, social policy, research, innovation, youth and culture. Particular attention should be paid to fostering a better dialogue between the Education Committee and the Employment Committee, ensuring a timely exchange of information[14]. As regards the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, in particular its first**, fourth** and eleventh principles, particular attention should be paid to its monitoring, carried out by the 'social scoreboard', which will track trends and progress across Member States and will feed into the European Semester.

---

[14] Following the adoption and in line with the Council Resolution of 27 February 2020 on education and training in the European Semester: ensuring informed debates on reforms and investments, OJ C 64, 27.2.2020, p. 1

g) With specific regard to the "knowledge square" (education, research, innovation and service to society), special attention should be paid to policy and funding synergies between education and training, research and innovation, namely in the context of the ERA and the European Education Area, while ensuring consistency with the EHEA.[15]

h) European cooperation, especially with a view to achieving the European Education Area, requires transparent and consistent dialogue and networking, in a co-creation perspective, not only between the Member States and the Commission, but also with all relevant stakeholders.

i) Policy dialogue with third countries and cooperation with international organisations, such as Council of Europe, OECD and UNESCO, should be reinforced, thereby providing evidence and data, but also inspiration and a source of fresh ideas and different working methods for comparison and improvement.

j) Financial resources from Erasmus+, the European Structural Funds, […] REACT-EU, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, and other Union funding programmes and mechanisms should be used to enhance education and training systems in accordance with the overall **objective of achieving the European Education Area** and Member States' priorities**, within the strategic priorities of the new framework**.

k) The achievement of the European Education Area, given the fundamental role of education and training for recovery and building social and economic resilience, calls for an increased focus on investment in education. The Commission, together with Member States, will intensify work on investment, including fostering debate at appropriate high-level political fora**, when relevant**, such as joint exchanges between EU finance ministers and EU education ministers, as well as with other institutions, such as the European Investment Bank and the European Parliament.[16]

---

[15] **This work could be supported at technical level.**
[16] **At technical level, an expert group on quality investment in education and training will support this process, helping to maintain focus on national and regional investment.**

2.	The successful use of the open method of coordination within the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training depends on the political commitment of Member States and on strengthened guidance from the Council and effective working methods at European level, that should be based on the following:

a)	Work cycles – The period up to 2030 will be divided up into two cycles, with the first cycle covering the 5 years from 2021 to 2025, following the timeline proposed by the Commission in its communication on the achievement of the European Education Area, and the second cycle until 2030. The first cycle should enable the achievement of the European Education Area by 2025.

b)	Priority areas – For each cycle, a number of priority areas for European cooperation, based on the strategic **priorities**, will be agreed by the Council, taking into account the overall objective of achieving the European Education Area and its further development. The European priority areas should allow for all Member States to cooperate on broader issues, but will also allow for more specific and closer cooperation between groups of Member States to tackle emergent challenges and specific policy needs. The priority areas for the first cycle under this new framework are set out in Annex III.

c)	Mutual learning – European cooperation in the aforementioned priority areas should be carried out by such means as peer learning and peer counselling activities, conferences and seminars, **workshops,** high level fora or expert groups, panels, studies and analyses, web-based cooperation and, where appropriate, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. All of these initiatives should be developed on the basis of clear mandates, time schedules and planned outputs, to be proposed by the Commission in cooperation with the Member States.

d)	Common reference tools and approaches – Mutual learning can be inspired by or lead to the development of reference tools and approaches, that are built on joint analysis and support further policy development at different governance levels (EU, national, regional, local, sectoral etc.).

e)	Governance mechanism – The strategic framework, during the first cycle, should maintain all the tried and tested mutual learning arrangements of the ET 2020, such as the working groups, Directors-General formations and peer learning instruments, and maintain the involvement of other relevant governance bodies. Member States and the Commission will adapt those arrangements to the new strategic **priorities** and will work together to set up governance solutions to facilitate efficient communication of information from the technical to the political level, when necessary, and coordinate the work to be done under the strategic framework, without creating unnecessary structures or additional burdens for the Member States.

f)	Dissemination of results – To enhance visibility and impact at national and European level, the outcomes of cooperation will be widely disseminated among all relevant stakeholders and, where appropriate, discussed at the political level.

g)	Monitoring of the process – To promote the delivery of results through the open method of coordination, as well as ownership of the process at both national and European level, the Member States and the Commission will work closely together to take stock of the work done at technical level, evaluating the process and its outcomes. Annual monitoring will also take place through the Commission's Education and Training Monitor, which tracks progress towards achieving **all** the proposed EU-level targets and indicators**, including sub-indicators, in the field of** education and training, and also contributes to the European Semester Process. *[changed order of paragraphs g and h]*

h)	Progress reporting – At the end of the first cycle, by 2025, it will be necessary to revisit the set of priority areas in order to adjust them or set new ones for the following cycle, based on current challenges and to reflect on the progress made, including towards developing governance solutions that are proportionate to the political ambition of the European Education Area. In 2022 the Commission will publish a European Education Area Progress Report, taking stock and evaluating the achievements towards the European Education Area through the strategic cooperation framework and proposing next steps, as necessary, and in 2023, will also organise a mid-term review event. Both the progress report and the mid-term review will also be taken into account in the Council's agreement on possible new priority areas after 2025.

3.   In 2025, the Commission will publish a full report on the European Education Area. On the basis of this evaluation, the Council shall review the strategic framework — including EU-level targets, governance structure, and working methods - and make any necessary adjustments for the second cycle, as appropriate, to adapt to the reality and needs of the European Education Area or any other major developments in the European Union.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES to:

1.   Work together, with the support of the Commission and using the open method of coordination as outlined in this resolution, to enhance European cooperation in education and training in the period up to 2030 on the basis of the five strategic **priorities**, the principles and working methods described above, and of the priority areas agreed for each cycle (those for the first cycle 2021-2025 being outlined in Annex III).

2.   Consider, on the basis of national priorities and with due respect for national competences in the area of education and training, measures at national level aimed at achieving **progress within** the **strategic priorities** outlined in the strategic framework and contributing to the collective achievement of the **European Education Area and of the** EU-level targets identified in Annex II. Draw inspiration from mutual learning at European level, when devising national education and training policies.

3.   Where appropriate, consider how and to what extent they can contribute to the collective achievement of the EU-level targets through national measures and actions, thus establishing national targets in accordance with the specificities of their education and training systems and taking into account national circumstances, including the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the economy and society, and within the education and training sector itself.

4.   Support the governance structure presented above and the working methods chosen, taking ownership of the process.

5. Make effective use of EU policies and funding instruments to support the implementation of national measures and actions to achieve the **progress along the** strategic **priorities** and related targets at EU and national level, in particular in the context of recovery and green and digital transitions.

INVITES THE COMMISSION, IN LINE WITH THE TREATIES AND WITH **FULL RESPECT FOR** SUBSIDIARITY to:

1. Support and work with the Member States — during the period up to 2030 — in cooperating within this framework on the basis of the five strategic **priorities**, the principles and working methods described above, and the EU-level targets and agreed priority areas outlined respectively in Annexes II and III.

2. Work with the Member States **until the end** of 2021, **in order to agree on a suitable governance structure to** coordinate the work **and steer the development of** the strategic framework**, within the overarching objective of achieving the European Education Area**, reflecting also on the issues that need to be taken further to higher political discussion, without creating additional burdens for the Member States, while ensuring their ownership of the process.

3. **Work with the Member States and provide specific support to local, regional and national authorities to facilitate mutual learning, analysis and sharing of good practices on investment in education infrastructure.**

4. Analyse, in particular through progress reporting, the degree to which the strategic **priorities** of this framework have been met as regards the achievement of the European Education Area, but also in the area of European cooperation in education and training at national level.

5. Conduct work on proposals, based on and with the expert opinion of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks, for possible indicators or EU-level targets in the areas of inclusion and equity, of the teaching profession as well as of sustainability, including greening of education and training systems.

6. Work with the Member States to analyse how to improve data collection and analysis for existing EU-level targets and indicators, with a view to fostering evidence-**informed** policy making, including with the expertise of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks, and report back to the Council on these discussions.

7. Work with the Member States to examine, after 2025, the EU targets and indicators for which the set timelines do not coincide with the ten-year period encompassed by this framework, reporting back to the Council on possible new values for these targets and indicators.

8. Present and regularly update a systematic overview and roadmap of ongoing and planned policies, cooperation tools, funding instruments, initiatives and targeted calls at Union level, which contribute to the achievement of the European Education Area and to the development of the European cooperation in education and training.

8a. Present the Action Plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights, and in particular its first, fourth and eleventh principles.

9. Establish a European Education Area Platform as an interactive public gateway to support access for Member States and stakeholders to information, actions, services, instruments, results, as well to promote cooperation and exchanges.

————————————————

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1.   Council Conclusions on strategic framework for European Cooperation in education and training (ET2020) (12 May 2009)

2.   **Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning (20 December 2011)**

3.   Council Recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning (20 December 2012)

4.   Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education (Paris, 17 March 2015)

5.   2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020) – New priorities for European cooperation in education and training (23 and 24 November 2015)

6.   Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on promoting socioeconomic development and inclusiveness in the EU through education: the contribution of education and training to the European Semester 2016 (24 February 2016)

7.   Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of Regions – A New Skills Agenda for Europe (10 June 2016)

8.   Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults (19 December 2016)

9.   Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on inclusion in diversity to achieve a high quality education for all (17 February 2017)

10. Council Recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (22 May 2017)

11. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture: The European Commission's Contribution to the Leaders' meeting in Gothenburg (17 November 2017)

12. Council Recommendation on tracking graduates (20 November 2017)

13. Council Conclusions on school development and excellent teaching (20 November 2017)

14. Council conclusions on a renewed European Agenda for higher education (20 November 2017)

15. Conclusions of the European Council (17 December 2017)

16. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Digital Education Action Plan (17 January 2018)

17. Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (15 March 2018)

18. **Decision (EU) 2018/646 of the European Parliament and of the Council on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) (18 April 2018)**

19. Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning (22 May 2018)

20. Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education and the European dimension in teaching (22 May 2018)

21. Council conclusions on moving towards a vision of a European Education Area (22 May 2018)

22. Council Recommendation on promoting automatic mutual recognition of higher education and upper secondary education and training qualifications and the outcomes of learning periods aboard (26 November 2018)

23. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Coordinated Plan on Artificial Intelligence (7 December 2018)

24. Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages (22 May 2019)

25. Council Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care systems (22 May 2019)

26. Council conclusions on the future of a highly digitised Europe beyond 2020: 'Boosting digital and economic competitiveness across the Union and digital cohesion' (7 June 2019)

27. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - 'The European Green Deal' (11 December 2019)

28. Council Conclusions on the key role of lifelong learning policies in empowering societies to address the technological and green transition in support of inclusive and sustainable growth (8 November 2019)

29. Council conclusions Towards an ever more sustainable Union by 2030 (9 April 2019)

30. European Council: The New Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 (20 June 2019)

31. Council Resolution on further developing the European Education Area to support future-oriented education and training systems (8 November 2019)

32. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'A strong Social Europe for just Transition' (14 January 2020)

33. Council Resolution on education and training in the European Semester: ensuring informed debates on reforms and investments (20 February 2020)

34. **Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions "A new ERA for Research and Innovation (30 September 2020)**

35. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 (30 September 2020)

36. Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future (9 June 2020)

37. Council conclusions on countering the COVID-19 crisis in education and training (26 June 2020)

38. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on "European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience" (1 July 2020)

39. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 – Resetting education and training for the digital age (30 September 2020)

40. Council Recommendation on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience (24 November 2020)

41. Council conclusions on digital education in Europe's knowledge societies (24 November 2020)

42. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027 (24 November 2020)

43. Rome Ministerial Communiqué (19 November 2020)

44. Osnabrück Declaration on vocational education and training as an enabler of recovery and just transitions to digital and green economies (30 November 2020)

EU-LEVEL TARGETS - Reference levels of European average performance in education and training

As a means of monitoring progress and identifying challenges, as well as contributing to evidence-**informed** policy making through systematic collection and analysis of internationally comparable data, a series of reference levels of European average performance in education and training ('EU-level targets') should support the strategic **priorities** outlined in the resolution for the period 2021-2030. They should be based solely on comparable and reliable data and take account of the differing situations in individual Member States. They should not be considered as concrete targets for individual countries to reach by 2025 or 2030. As described in this Resolution, Member States are invited to consider the establishment of national equivalent targets.

On this basis, the Member States agree to the following seven EU-level targets to be reached:

1. **Low achieving 15-year-olds in basic skills**[17]

   The share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15%, by 2030.

2. **Low achieving eight-graders in digital skills**[18]

   The share of low-achieving eight-graders in computer and information literacy should be less than 15%, by 2030.

---

[17]   The data source is the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA), as collected and administered by the OECD. The target measures the share of 15-year-olds who fail to reach level 2 on the PISA scale for reading, mathematics or science.

[18]   The target is based on the Computer and Information Literacy (CIL) survey from the International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) executed by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The ICILS target population comprises students in their eighth year of schooling.

3. **Participation in early childhood education and care**[19]

At least **96**% of children between 3 years old and the starting age for compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education, by 2030.

4. <u>**Early leavers from education and training**</u>[20]

The share of **early leavers from education and training should be less than 9%,** by 2030.

5. **Tertiary level attainment**[21]

The share of **25**-34 year-olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least **45**%, by 2030.

6. **Exposure of VET graduates to work based learning**[22]

The share of recent graduates from VET benefiting from exposure to work-based learning during their vocational education and training should be at least 60%, by 2025.

7. **Participation of adults in learning**[23]

At least **47**% of adults aged 25-64 should have participated in learning during the last 12 months, by 2025.

---

[19]   The data source is Eurostat, online data code: [educ_uoe_enra21].

[20]   **i.e. the share of the population aged 18-24 with only lower secondary education or less and no longer in education or training (EUROSTAT/Labour Force Survey).**

[21]   Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey. Online data code: [edat_lfse_03]**.**

[22]   This will cover the age group 20-34, having left education and training 1-3 years ago. The indicator will be based on data that will be collected from 2021 onwards as part of the Eurostat European Union Labour Force Survey (EU LFS) as defined in the variable identifier 'HATWORK' in the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2240. This refers to work experiences at a workplace in a market or non-market unit (i.e. in a company, government institution or non-profit organisation) that were part of the curriculum of the formal programme that led to the highest level of education successfully completed. If a respondent had several work experiences, the cumulative duration of all work experiences should be considered. The work experiences should be expressed in full-time equivalents.

[23]   Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey **data** collection from 2022 onwards.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING DURING THE FIRST CYCLE: 2021-2025

With a view to progressing along the five strategic **priorities** under the strategic framework for European cooperation, the identification of priority areas**,** concrete issues **and actions** for a specific work cycle should improve the efficiency of European cooperation in education and training, as well as reflect the individual needs of Member States, including when facing new circumstances and challenges.

The priority areas, as referred to in this resolution, together with the most relevant concrete issues **and actions** reflect the need to: (i) pursue cooperation in areas where key challenges remain and linked to more recent challenges; (ii) develop cooperation in areas regarded as particularly important during this work cycle.

If Member States deem necessary, the work on specific priority areas can continue in subsequent work cycles, with due regard to subsidiarity and national circumstances.

Priority area 1 - Quality, <u>equity</u>, inclusion and success in education and training

Concrete issues <u>and actions</u>

i) **Promoting the m**astering of **key competences**[24]**, including** basic skills, […], which are a prerequisite to thrive in life, to find or create fulfilling jobs and to become engaged citizens.

ii) […]

iii) Fostering and supporting language **teaching and** learning and multilingualism, enabling learners, teachers and trainers to benefit from a genuine European learning space, by further implementing the 2019 Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages, including in VET.

iv) Bringing a European perspective in education and training, providing learners with an insight of what Europe at large, and the Union in particular, mean in their daily lives, including through widening and strengthening the Jean Monnet Actions.

v) Maintaining education and training institutions as safe environments, free of violence, bullying, harmful speech, disinformation and all forms of discrimination, including through further implementation of Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching.

vi) Stimulating a safe and supportive school environment as a necessary condition for concrete issues stated above, and for the individual well-being of all learners. *[moved, ex-para xvi]*

---

[24] **As set out in the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p.1.**

vii) Helping all **learners** reach a baseline level of proficiency in basic skills, with a special focus on groups at risk of underachievement and early school leaving **by identifying effective policy reforms to support better achievement in basic skills, specifically concerning curriculum and/or assessment, as well as the capacity of institutions and staff to be innovative and develop their learning approaches and environments.**

viii) Promoting educational success strategies at national level in order to foster the successful conclusion of education and training pathways by all learners **and to reduce early leaving from education and training and low-achievement, by supporting a whole school approach with an overall inclusive learner-centred vision of education.**

ix) Addressing the increasing diversity of learners and enhancing access to quality and inclusive […] education and training for all learners, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, such as learners with specific learning needs, minorities, people with a migrant background and Roma, and with fewer opportunities because of their geographical location and/or their social-economically disadvantaged situation, while tackling discrimination, racism, **sexism,** segregation, bullying (including cyber-bullying), violence and stereotypes.

x) Implementing the European quality framework for high quality early childhood education and care systems.

xi) *[moved to priority 2]*

xii) Addressing the issue of gender gaps in education and training, and unequal opportunities for **girls and boys,** women and men, by promoting more gender-balanced educational choices, challenging and dissolving gender stereotypes in education and educational careers**, especially in STEM fields of study,** addressing issues such as boys' underachievement, bullying and sexual harassment, and developing a better gender sensitivity in education and training processes and institutions.

xiii) Supporting data collection and innovation for inclusion and gender equality in education.

xiv) Promoting civic, intercultural, and social competences, mutual understanding and respect, and ownership of democratic values and fundamental rights at all levels and types of education and training […].[25]

xv) Fostering, valuing and recognising non-formal learning including volunteering, and enhancing the inclusiveness, quality and recognition of cross-border solidarity activities.

xvi) Developing ethical conduct and enhancing critical thinking, along with digital and media literacy.

xvii) [paragraphs deleted - contents moved]

xviii) Fostering sustainable investment in quality and inclusive education and training.

---

[25]   **As outlined in the "Declaration on Promoting Citizenship and the Common Values of Freedom, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination through Education".**

Priority area 2 - Lifelong learning and mobility

Concrete issues and actions

i)   Relaunching and continuing lifelong learning strategies and addressing the transition phases within education and training, while promoting, through high-quality career guidance, transitions to and between vocational education and training, higher education and adult **learning**, including non-formal and informal learning, and from education and training to work.

ii)   Making lifelong learning strategies more robust and inclusive in order to allow those who have left early to re-enter education in flexible forms through life, and those who need it to be able to access higher education and VET programmes to update or acquire skills (upskilling and reskilling) that the jobs of tomorrow require, at all stages of life.

iii)   Ensuring that **education and training systems, including** adult **learning** systems support **all learners in accessing** a changing labour market and **in contributing to their personal development, become** more agile, resilient, future-proof, attractive and tailored to the green and digital transitions, should provide upskilling and updating training opportunities throughout the working life, and should strength**en** the cooperation with other stakeholders, such as companies or other workplaces.

iv)   Implementing the Osnabrück Declaration on vocational education and training as an enabler of recovery and just transitions to digital and green economies.

v)   Strengthening the key role of higher education and VET systems in supporting lifelong learning and reaching out to a more diverse student body. **Exploring the concept and use of** micro-credentials **can** help widen learning opportunities and **could** strengthen the role of higher education and **VET** in lifelong learning by providing more flexible and modular learning opportunities, and offering more inclusive learning paths. *[moved from priority 1]*

vi) Updating of the renewed European agenda for adult learning.

vii) Promoting the […] freedom for learners, teachers and trainers, and other education and training staff, to be mobile and for institutions to freely associate with one another in Europe and beyond, through learning mobility and cooperation across borders. Further efforts must be made to remove existing obstacles and barriers to all types of learning and teaching mobility, including issues related to access, guidance, **student services** and recognition.

viii) Updating the learning mobility framework accompanying the strengthened Erasmus+ programme to enable mobility opportunities for a much wider variety of participants, foster green and digital mobility, including by blending online and physical exchanges, and to encourage balanced mobility.

ix) Continue working towards the full implementation of the Council Recommendation on promoting automatic mutual recognition of higher education and upper secondary education and training qualifications and the outcomes of learning periods aboard (26 November 2018).

Concrete issues <u>and actions</u>

i) Strengthening the recruitment and selection of the best and most suitable candidates for the teaching **and pedagogical** profession **at all levels and in all types of education and training**.

ii) Raising the attractiveness and the status of the teaching **and pedagogical** profession, by its revalorization in social and also in financial terms**, including through the foreseen European Innovative Teaching Award**.

iii) **Explore the possibility of d**eveloping a European guidance for the development of national career frameworks **and lifelong guidance**, thus supporting the career progression of school education professionals.

iv) **Explore the possibility of developing policy tools in a form of teacher competence frameworks to increase relevance of initial teacher education programmes as well as development of continuous professional development opportunities and to provide guidance for teachers in their career progression.**

v) Supporting initial education, induction and **continuous** professional development at all levels, especially to deal with the increased diversity of learners **and their specific needs, to tackle** early **leaving from** education and training , **to promote** work-based learning, **supporting the development of** basic and advanced **digital** competences and innovative pedagogies, including **ensuring that teacher education addresses teachers' competences** to teach in digital environments.

vi)   Creating networks of teacher education **providers, […]** through the proposed Erasmus Teacher Academies, to foster communities of practice**, provide learning opportunities to teachers, innovate** and inform national and European teacher education policies.

vii) Supporting the promotion of excellence in teaching at all levels **of education and training, through effective organisation of learning** and **structural** incentiv**es,** by promoting appropriate support mechanisms, infrastructure and teaching materials **and research-based teacher education**, as well as exploring new ways to assess the quality of teacher training.

viii) Supporting teachers and trainers in managing linguistic and cultural diversity in education and training institutions.

ix)   **Explore the possibility of d**eveloping a policy framework for increasing the number and quality of learning mobility of teachers in Europe based on their actual mobility needs.

x)   **Developing measures and** establishing **mechanisms** to improve working conditions and **to address occupational stress**, in order to foster the well-being of teachers, trainers and **pedagogical and** education staff.

xi)   Striving to reduce gender imbalances at all levels and types of education and training **related professions**.

xii) **Ensuring that t**eacher and trainer education and training programmes also prepare teachers **and trainers at all levels and types of education and training programmes** for their key role in **equipping learners with the competences** to **live, work, and act towards** sustainable development **and in enhancing well-being and mental health for all learners**.

Priority area 4 - Higher education

Concrete issues and actions

i) Encouraging closer and deeper cooperation between higher education institutions, namely by promoting **and** foster**ing** seamless transnational cooperation, which will enable alliances of higher education institutions**, such as those within the European Universities initiative,** to leverage their strengths […] **and jointly deliver transformative higher education**.

ii) **Engage in the roll-out of the European Universities initiative under the Erasmus+ programme, in synergy with Horizon Europe and other funding instruments.**

iii) Establishing an agenda for higher education transformation, with a focus on inclusion, innovation, connectivity, digital and green readiness **and international competitiveness,** as well as **fundamental** academic **values** and high ethical principles**, as well as employment and employability**.

iv) **Encourage balanced mobility flows and optimal brain circulation.**

v) Fostering the role of higher education institutions as central actors of the "knowledge square" (education, research, innovation and service to society)**, enhancing** synergies **and facilitating further work** between higher education and research.

vi) Strengthening automatic mutual recognition of qualifications and study periods abroad for the purpose of mobility **and** further learning**, while ensuring that q**uality assurance **mechanisms provide a strong basis for public trust for further learning and safeguard the autonomy of higher education institutions. Automatic recognition of** joint transnational activities and the recognition and portability of short courses, where appropriate, **should be developed** […]**.**

vii)   **[…]**

viii) **Engage in the gradual roll-out of the European Student Card initiative with the aim of benefitting all mobile students in Europe by 2025.**

ix)   Fostering the relevance of higher education to the labour market and society, e.g. encouraging the development of curricula **that encourages** more work-based learning and enhanced cooperation between institutions and employers, fully respecting the holistic approach of higher education and the autonomy of higher education institutions **and by establishing a European graduate tracking mechanism**.

Priority area 5 - Green and digital transitions

Concrete issues and actions

i)   Boosting availability, access, and quality of digital equipment and infrastructure, connectivity, open and digital educational resources and pedagogies at all education and training levels **to support education and training systems in adapting to the digital era**.

ii)   Addressing the development of basic and advanced digital skills and competences at all levels and types of education and training, formal, non-formal and informal, and also traditional, blended and distance teaching and learning, in order to face and reply to the technological and digital transformation of economy and society.

iii)   **Intensify the exchange of best practices and implementation of actions included in the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027, notably through the foreseen Digital Education Hub.**

iv)   Mobilising expertise and resources for networking, and supporting creative approaches in green education, **i.e.** through the **envisaged** Education for Climate Coalition.

v)   Promoting environmental sustainability perspectives across education and training curricula**, at all levels of education and within an inter-disciplinary approach, and promoting educational concepts, such as Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education, in order to e**mpower citizens to contribute to sustainable development.

vi)   Fostering new sustainable education and training infrastructure and renovating existing buildings ('greening of education infrastructure').