



Education, youth, culture and sport council

Brussels, 23-24 November 2015

*The Council will start on Monday at 10.00 with **Youth** issues and will be preceded by the usual informal meeting ("structured dialogue") between representatives of European youth organisations, the President of the Youth Council configuration, Commissioner Navracsics and the ministers from the expanded troika (LV, LU, NL and SK). The subject under discussion will be **youth work in the digital age**.*

*The afternoon session, beginning at 15.00, will be devoted to **Education** items, following the working lunch of Education ministers, which will discuss the promotion of **language learning and inclusion through (high quality) early childhood education and care**.*

Both sessions will be chaired by the Luxembourg Minister for Education and Youth, Claude Meisch. The Commission will be represented by Commissioner Navracsics.

*The Council proceedings will resume on Tuesday, at 10.00, with **culture and audiovisual** matters under the chairmanship of the Luxembourg minister for Culture, Maggy Nagel. Commissioner Navracsics will represent the Commission also on this second day.*

*In the course of a working lunch following the Council session, culture and audiovisual ministers will discuss the **digitisation of cultural heritage**.*

***Sport**-related issues will be dealt with in the afternoon, starting at 15.00, chaired by minister for Sports, Romain Schneider*

*The **Sport session** will also be preceded by a working lunch, in the framework of the "structured dialogue" between representatives of the sports movement, ministers from the member states of the expanded troika and the Commissioner, addressing the subject "**social integration through sport**".*

*A common strand of the EYCS Council will be the current **migratory and refugee crisis**: each of its configurations will address migration related issues. The Presidency will send a letter to the President of the EU Council and to the President of the Commission presenting a summary report of the debates which will take place during the Council meeting.*

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Press conferences: Monday at the end of the meeting (+/- 18.00) and Tuesday after lunch (+/- 14.30) and at the end of the meeting (+/- 17.45)

*Press conferences and public events can be followed by video streaming: <http://video.consilium.europa.eu/>
Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery: <http://tvnewsroom.consilium.europa.eu>*

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

YOUTH

The Council is expected to adopt:

- **the 2015 Joint Report** on the implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation **in the youth field** (2010-2018);
- the **EU Work Plan for Youth** (2016-2018)
- a resolution **on improving young people political participation** in the democratic life of Europe.

Ministers will also discuss, in public deliberation, **the role of youth policy** and youth work regarding **migration**.

EDUCATION

The Council is expected to adopt the **2015 Joint Report** on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020).

It is due to adopt conclusions on **reducing early school leaving** and promoting success in school.

Ministers will also discuss, in public deliberation, **strategies for integrating migrants through education**.

CULTURE

The Council will adopt conclusions on

- **culture in the EU external relations**, in particular regarding development cooperation
- **intercultural dialogue**, in the context of the Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018)

Ministers will also have a policy debate on common actions to combat the **destruction and trafficking of cultural heritage** in conflict areas

SPORT

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on

- the **representation of the EU member states** in the **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)** Foundation Board
- the promotion of **physical and sport activities for children**

Ministers will also hold a public debate on the **educational potential of sports**, in particular for the integration of people with a migrant background and newly arrived refugees.

YOUTH

EU Youth Report

The Council is expected to adopt the 2015 joint report on the implementation of the renewed framework for **European cooperation in the youth field** ([13635/15](#));

The 2009 resolution establishing a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010 -2018) set out overall objectives, fields of action and realistic means for implementation and follow-up. This nine-year period is divided into three-year work cycles, each divided into two sub-cycles of 18 months each, which are regularly monitored by the Commission and the Council through the Youth Reports.

The present report evaluates progress towards the goals and priorities of the cooperation framework in the period 2013-2015, based on an assessment of young people's situation and policy measures taken at EU and member state level. It also assesses the implementation of the "structured dialogue" with young people and proposes new policy recommendations and priorities for the next three year period (2016-2018),

The report underlines that youth employment and employability remained top priorities for the EU and its member states throughout 2013-2015, with the support of the **Youth Guarantee** scheme² - launched in 2013 to offer young people a job, an apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education within four months of leaving school or becoming unemployed - the **European Social Fund**, the **Youth Employment initiative** and the **Erasmus+ programme**.

EU cooperation focused on social inclusion and youth empowerment, including access to rights and political participation. The Council called for a greater contribution from youth policy to the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy and confirmed its intention to better include NEETs (young people neither in employment nor education or training) and promote youth entrepreneurship. The Council also adopted the first **EU Work Plan for Youth** (2014-2015).

The report recommends the following priorities for the future work cycle of the cooperation:

- increased **social inclusion** of all young people, taking into account the underlying European values;
- stronger **participation** of all young people **in democratic and civic life in Europe**;
- easier transition of young people from youth to adulthood, in particular the **integration into the labour market**.

Member states and the Commission's actions should give particular attention to young people at risk of marginalisation, NEETs and young people with a migrant background, including newly arrived immigrants and young refugees.

Work Plan for Youth

The Council and the representatives of the governments of the member states are expected to adopt a resolution on a new EU Work Plan for Youth (2016-2018) ([13631/15](#)), building on the achievements of the previous Work Plan for Youth (2014-2015)³

It's a flexible, structured plan with a limited number of key initiatives with a precise timetable, so as to enable the EU and its member states to continue to address more efficiently the still high youth unemployment rates and the dramatic consequences of the crisis on young people.

² OJ C 120, 26.4.2013.

³ OJ 2014 / C 183/02.

In spite of a decrease in most member states after its 2013 peak, youth unemployment remains a serious concern: 8.7 million young Europeans cannot find work and the proportion facing long-term unemployment or involuntary part-time work remains high.

In total, 13.7 million are neither in employment nor education or training (NEETs) and close to 27 million are at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

The Work Plan sets out six priorities:

- Social inclusion of all young people;
- Participation of all young people in democratic and civic life;
- Transition of young people from youth to adulthood;
- Support to young people's health and well being;
- Addressing challenges and opportunities of digital era for youth policy; and
- Responses to the opportunities and challenges raised by the increasing numbers of young migrants and refugees in the EU.

These priorities are closely linked to those set out in the Joint EU Youth Report as both have the same general objectives. The Work Plan is intended as a practical tool to implement these objectives, which require reinforced cross-sectoral cooperation in the youth field. It also calls for the active involvement of youth ministries in national policy-making in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Semester.

The Work Plan may be reviewed by the Council in light of results achieved and policy developments at EU level.

Political participation of young people

The Council is expected to adopt a resolution on improving young people political participation in the democratic life of Europe (13157/15), inviting member states to develop national, regional and/or local strategies and programmes for enhancing the political participation of all young people, especially young people with fewer opportunities.

Those strategies could include in particular developing cross-sectoral cooperation between formal education and non-formal learning, promoting alternative forms of political participation, increasing local and regional participation opportunities, supporting youth work and youth organisations to foster young people's integration into society.

Young people in Europe show overall support and belief in the system of democracy and its representative bodies, but are critical of the way the system is operated in practice and the results produced. This has now become a vital issue for our democracies. Participation and active citizenship can prevent marginalisation, intolerance and radicalisation.

Young people are participating actively in civil society. However, this participation is increasingly outside of traditional political parties and structures, favouring instead less formal participation through the use of new technologies and social media.

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. It involves a diverse range of young people and youth organisations in the consultations at all levels in the member states, at the EU Youth Conferences and during the European Youth Week.

The overall thematic priority of the structured dialogue for the period 1 January 2016 -30 June 2017 will be “**Enabling all young people to engage in a diverse, connected and inclusive Europe – Ready for Life, Ready for Society**”. This theme reflects the EU Youth Report and takes into account the feedback from the pre-consultation phase, which the upcoming trio presidencies have conducted.

In this context, the Luxembourg Presidency will also present to the Council the final **recommendations on political participation of young people** ([12651/15](#)) resulting from the EU Youth Conference that took place in Luxembourg from 21 to 24 September

The role of youth policy and youth work with regards to migration

Ministers are invited to reflect on how youth policy and youth work can best address the challenges raised by increasing migration flows, on the basis of a Presidency background document ([13640/15](#)).

According to Eurostat⁴, 81% of the 689 000 people who applied for asylum in EU countries this year (through August) were younger than 35; more than half (55%) were aged 18 to 34.

In order to structure the ministerial debate, the Presidency put forward the following questions:

- Taking into account best practices previously submitted by Member States, what is the role of youth work at national, regional and local levels regarding the integration of young people with migrant backgrounds and what are the main challenges for youth work in this regard?
- With reference to the EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018 and the priority for youth policy to respond to the opportunities and challenges raised by migration, which initiatives should be taken at EU level? How can youth policy engage in fruitful cross-sectorial cooperation on this topic, especially with the education, culture and sports sectors?

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ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database

EDUCATION

New priorities for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020)

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

- 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 long-term objectives, as well as towards a set of short-term priorities and jointly agreed benchmarks, is regularly monitored by the Commission, which periodically publishes a progress report on the implementation of the ET 2020 framework, along with a fresh set of short-term priorities.

The current report not only takes stock of progress during the most recent work cycle (2012-2014) but - since 2015 marks the half-way stage in the process - also reviews the framework as a whole and puts forward proposals for improvement. These seek essentially to provide greater focus, improve governance and ensure better dissemination of the results of European cooperation.

For the remaining five years up to 2020 the number of new priority areas has been reduced from 13 to 6 with a view to ensuring that education and training systems promote employability, skills and innovation, increase social mobility and equality, help to prevent radicalisation and lay the foundations for democratic values and active citizenship.

Reducing early school leaving

The Council will adopt conclusions on reducing early school leaving and promoting success in school, which take stock of the progress being made in this field, with a view to consolidating and improving measures aimed at tackling this problem.

The conclusions also invite member states to make the best use of the funding opportunities offered by EU instruments such as the Erasmus+ Programme, the European Social Fund and the European Fund for Strategic Investments to support comprehensive policy measures in this area and to promote cooperation in and around schools.

Early school leaving is a serious issue throughout Europe, both for individuals and society as a whole. Low levels of education not only have severe consequences for the young people concerned, they also bring high economic and social costs for society.⁵

⁵

According to 2014 data, 11.1% of 18 to 24 year-olds have left education and training without completing an upper secondary programme, amounting to around 4.4 million young people.

This was acknowledged by the European Council in June 2010 which established the objective of **reducing early school leaving to an average of no more than 10% across Europe** as one of the headline targets under the Europe 2020 strategy for jobs and growth. In 2011 EU education ministers followed this up by adopting a recommendation setting out prevention and intervention measures aimed at tackling the problem and involving a broad range of concerned parties both inside and outside the education system. (OJ C 191, 1.7.2011)

Over the last five years there has been consistent progress towards the 10% benchmark and the EU average currently stands at 11.1% (down from 14.2% in 2009). However, significant discrepancies remain between and within member states.

Education and migration

Ministers will discuss **strategies for integrating recently arrived migrants** and people with a migrant background, on the basis of three questions presented by the Presidency.

- In the context of Europe's increasingly multicultural societies and particularly in the light of the current refugee crisis, how can education and training contribute to the successful integration of recently arrived migrants and people with a migrant background?
- What specific challenges does your country face in this regard and how are these being met?
- How might action at EU level provide added value?

Other Business

- **Paris declaration**

The French delegation will inform the Council on the European follow-up to the Paris declaration of 17 March 2015 on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non discrimination through education.

CULTURE

In this session the focus will be on how **culture can best reinforce the action of the EU in the international scene**. Ministers will address in particular development cooperation, integration of migrants and refugees, fight against destruction and illicit trafficking of cultural heritage, as well as digitisation of cultural heritage.

Culture in development cooperation

The Council will adopt conclusions on culture in the the EU external relations, in particular regarding development cooperation ([13645/1/15 REV 1](#)). This should also be seen as part of a broader context since 2015 is the European Year for Development and the United Nations recently adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁶,

On the one hand, the conclusions argue for culture to be integrated more systematically in development cooperation given its unique potential to build trust, promote mutual understanding, and facilitate deeper partnerships.

The also underline that culture and cultural and creative sectors in partner countries can contribute to the main goal of development cooperation, i.e. reduction of poverty, as they create jobs for the local population, and stimulate local development and growth. They also promote freedom of expression and intercultural dialogue.

Member states and the Commission are invited to participate in an ad-hoc task group hosted by Luxembourg, in order to ensure coherence of actions between relevant actors on the ground.

On the other hand, development cooperation being part of the EU's external action, the conclusions also look at how to strengthen the role of culture in the EU's external policy. They reflect a shift in the approach to culture in foreign policies, going from simply showing the diversity of European cultures to a more comprehensive approach aiming to develop joint capacity building and global solidarity.

The Council calls on the Commission and on the High Representative to submit to it a strategic approach to culture in EU's external relations, and has outlined for this purpose a set of guiding principles.

The Council stresses that such an approach should also address the challenges that the EU is currently facing, such as the migratory crisis, radicalisation, the rise of xenophobia, as well as the destruction and illicit trafficking of cultural heritage in conflict zones such as Iraq and Syria.

Integrating migrants and refugees via intercultural dialogue

The Council is due to adopt conclusions amending the Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018)⁷

as regards the priority on intercultural dialogue ([13646/1/15 REV 1](#)). The conclusions are part of the global response of the EU to the unprecedented flow of migrants and refugees to Europe and should be seen in the context of a broader, comprehensive strategy that the European Council called for in October 2015 ([26/15](#)).

After providing for immediate needs of those fleeing war and terror, it will be important to examine the best way to integrate them, both socially and economically, in our societies. Culture can play a relevant role in the regard.

⁶ www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda.html

⁷ OJ C 463, 23.12.2014.

The conclusions therefore propose to set up a series of meetings of experts from member states that will examine how culture and the arts can contribute to integrating migrants and refugees coming to Europe, and will gather best practices from member states.

The group will convene in the framework of the Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018 which was adopted by the Council last year. It sets priorities for cultural cooperation among member states and one of its priority areas is dedicated to the promotion of cultural diversity, culture in the EU's external relations and mobility, which includes intercultural dialogue.

Destruction and illicit trafficking of cultural heritage

Ministers are invited to express their views on the role the EU can play in the fight against illicit trafficking and destruction of cultural heritage in conflict areas ([13647/1/15 REV 1](#)).

Between 300 and 900 monuments or archaeological sites are reported to have been destroyed, damaged or looted since the beginning of the conflict in Syria in 2011⁸. This has also major security implications since illicit trafficking of cultural property is the second most important financing source for ISIS (after oil).

Although the illicit trafficking of cultural objects has been known for many years as a serious and profitable type of crime, it is in particular the brutal and deliberate attacks by ISIS against cultural heritage in Iraq and Syria that raised important issues for the international community, which has firmly and unanimously condemned those barbaric acts that lead to murders and to the disappearance of invaluable and irreplaceable parts of world heritage.

By deliberately targeting cultural heritage ISIS also aims to destroy the history and identity of the communities living in those territories, thus making post-conflict reconciliation extremely difficult.

In order to structure the debate, the Presidency put forward the following question:

Given the multitude of actors, challenges and possible solutions to combat the destruction and illicit trafficking of cultural heritage, what role could the European Union play and how could a coherent and coordinated approach be ensured, while complementing efforts undertaken at the national and international levels?

Other Business

Audiovisual Media Services Directive

The Commission will update the Council on the state of play regarding the REFIT evaluation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, as well as related issues in the framework of the Digital Single Market Strategy.

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Source: UN and the Association for the Protection of Syrian Archaeology.

SPORT

EU coordination for the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) meetings

The Council and the representatives of the governments of the member states, are due to adopt conclusions reviewing the 2011 resolution on the representation of the EU member states in the Foundation Board of WADA and the coordination of their positions prior to WADA meetings.

According to the current EU arrangements, the EU and its member states coordinate joint positions for the WADA meetings. These position statements are presented by three EU member states representatives (incumbent trio representative, future trio representative and the expert minister).

The experience gained over the past three years revealed some practical problems and the present conclusions aim therefore at improving the current arrangements.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), set up in 1999, is a private law body although half of its board members represent governments. Its mission is to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against doping in sport in all its forms.

WADA is composed of a Foundation Board, an Executive Committee and several Committees. The 38-member Foundation Board is the supreme decision-making body. It is composed equally of representatives from the Olympic Movement and governments. The Foundation Board delegates the actual management and running of the Agency to the Executive Committee, which is also composed of representatives from the Olympic Movement and Governments (6 each).

Physical and sport activities for young children

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on the promotion of motor skills, physical and sport activities for young children ([13431/15](#)), inviting member states to raise awareness of the benefits of having a regular physical activity from early childhood and to implement cross-sectorial policies, with the education, youth and health sectors among others to encourage active lifestyles among children.

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 first edition of the European Week of Sport in September.

Furthermore, in the context of the **EU Work Plan for Sport (2014-2017)**⁹, an expert group was mandated to prepare recommendations to promote physical education in schools. The group completed its work in June 2015 and its report confirms that the levels of physical activity among children and adolescents in the EU are alarmingly low and have become a matter of great concern for policy makers.

It has also been recognised that special attention should be paid to the education sector and its relevant role in promoting health-enhancing physical activity during childhood and adolescence.

The early childhood is a crucial period to acquire and improve motor skills and this should be encouraged by all persons and institutions dealing with very young children before compulsory school.

In this regard, the key role to be played by sport clubs and sport federations was also underlined and various cooperation models between local authorities, schools and sport clubs should be encouraged.

⁹ OJ C 183, 14.6.2014

The educational potential of sports

Ministers will exchange views on how sport activities could help disadvantaged youth - young people with fewer opportunities, socially disconnected and vulnerable - find their place in society.

Ministers are invited by the Presidency to focus on the following questions:

- Is there sufficient awareness of the educational potential of sport, especially for disadvantaged young people, including migrants?
- How can governments support active commitment of both public and private entities towards supporting the potential of sport to foster social integration?
- Taking into account best practices previously submitted by member states, which synergies need to be identified in cross-sectorial cooperation in order to maximise the impact of sport with regards to social integration?

In order to give a wider perspective to the ministerial debate, the Presidency invited two sport personalities: **Mr Edwin Moses**, former Olympic champion and currently president of the United States Anti-Doping Agency and Chair of the Education Committee of the World Anti-Doping Agency and **Mr Richard Allicock**, project manager du Tottenham Hotspurs FC.

Other Business

- **Match-fixing**

The Council will take note of information from the Presidency concerning two decisions on signing, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on the manipulation of sports competitions with regard to both matters related and not related to substantive criminal law and judicial cooperation in criminal matters.

- **Informal meeting of ministers for sport**

The Council will be briefed by the Presidency on the main outcomes of the informal meeting of ministers for sport that took place in Luxembourg on 6 - 7 July 2015.

- **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) meetings**

The Council was briefed by the EU representatives on the outcome of the WADA meetings which took place in Colorado Springs, USA on 17-18 November 2015.

- **European Week of Sport**

The Council will take note of information by the Commission regarding the European Week of Sport that ran from 7th to 13th September 2015, which aimed at raising public awareness of the benefits of sport and physical activity. The Commission will also indicate the general guidelines for the 2016 edition [14249/15](#)

- **Work programme of the incoming presidency**

The Council will take note of information from the Netherlands delegation concerning its main priorities in the field of sport for the coming six months.