



## **Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council**

### **Brussels, 22 and 23 May 2019**

The Council meeting in the morning of 22 May 2019 will be chaired by **Constantin-Bogdan Matei**, Minister of Youth and Sports of Romania. It will be preceded by an informal breakfast gathering of the AT, RO FI and HR ministers, the Commission and representatives of European youth organisations. The topic of the discussion will be the **youth dimension of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development**.

The session of the Council begins at **10.00** with **youth** issues. Ministers are expected to adopt **conclusions on young people and the future of work** and a **resolution on the governance of the EU Youth dialogue**. They will also hold a policy debate on the topic of '**Young people as agents of democracy in the EU**', which will be introduced by two teenagers in their capacity as youth representatives.

Over lunch ministers of education will have a discussion on '**Using artificial intelligence in education: challenges and opportunities**'.

A joint press conference by ministers **Matei** and **Andronescu** and Commissioner **Navracsics** will be held approximately at **14.45** in the Justus Lipsius building press room (tbc).

The afternoon session starting at **15.00** will be dedicated to **education** matters and will be chaired by **Ecaterina Andronescu**, Minister of National Education of Romania. Ministers will adopt a **recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages**, **recommendation on high quality early childhood education and care systems** and **conclusions on the implementation of the Council recommendation on upskilling pathways**. They will also hold a policy debate on '**Building the future of Europe: the contribution of education and training to strengthening social cohesion**'.

The second day of the EYCS Council meeting will start early with an informal breakfast event during which the AT, RO FI and HR ministers and the Commission will have a dialogue with the sport movement representatives on the topic of '**Listening to the voice of athletes**'.

The Council meeting on **culture and audios-visual matters** on 23 May 2019, starting at **10.00**, will be chaired by **Valer-Daniel BREAZ**, Minister of Culture and National Identity of Romania. Ministers are expected to adopt **conclusions on young creative generations** and **conclusions on improving the cross-border circulation of European audiovisual works, with an emphasis on co-productions**. They will also hold a policy debate, entitled '**From tackling disinformation to rebuilding EU citizens' trust in the media**'.

---

<sup>1</sup> This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

Over lunch, ministers of culture and audiovisual will have a discussion on the '**Future of culture in the digital age**', highlighting digitalisation and data economy as transversal priorities of the Romanian presidency. Discussions will focus on advancing cooperation for the digitalisation of cultural heritage and fostering the promotion of European cultural content.

A joint press conference by ministers **BREAZ** and **Matei** and Commissioner **Navracsics** will be held at **14.30** in the Europa building press room.

**Sport**-related issues will be dealt with during the afternoon session, starting at 15.00 and chaired by **Constantin-Bogdan MATEI**, Minister of Youth and Sports of Romania. Ministers will first deal with the **review of the 2011 resolution on representation and coordination prior to WADA meetings**. They are also expected to adopt **conclusions on access to sport for persons with disabilities** and to hold a policy debate on '**Increasing the participation of children and young people in sport in 21st century Europe**'.

\* \* \*

*Press conferences and public events by video streaming:* <http://video.consilium.europa.eu>

*Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery:* <https://europa.eu/!hM79kk>

\* \* \*

## Young people and the future of work

The Council will adopt conclusions on young people and the future of work ([8754/19](#)). Employment has been recognised as one of the major challenges within the EU, but also worldwide, in particular for young people. They are extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in economic trends, especially at a time where the traditional notions of 'work' are being seriously challenged and reconceptualised.

In a specific youth context, the 'the future of work', as a general term describing the evolution of jobs in the medium-to-long term, is driven by demographic change and increased social expenditure due to an ageing population, the increased use of digital technologies and growing demand for higher skills, the need for higher levels of education and training and new forms of employment.

Youth employment has been high on the social policy agenda of the EU and the conclusions focus on the specific problems facing young people in the current labour environment:

- insecurity
- lack of social protection
- in-work poverty
- precarious working conditions

The conclusions propose a number of measures to address those problems:

- adaptable and responsive education and training systems
- promotion of lifelong learning
- ensuring smooth school-to-work and work-to-work transitions
- ensuring equal access to quality jobs for all young people in the future

The conclusions also recognise that the European Union should support young people's personal development and growth to autonomy, build their resilience and equip them with the necessary resources to participate in society, thus contributing to the eradication of youth poverty and all forms of discrimination, as well as to the promotion of social inclusion.

## Guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue

The Council will adopt a resolution establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue ([8760/19](#)). 'EU Youth Dialogue' (EUYD) means the dialogue with young people and youth organisations involving policy and decision makers, as well as experts, researchers and other relevant civil society actors, as appropriate. It serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection and consultation on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of the European cooperation in the field of youth. The EUYD is the evolution of the Structured Dialogue process that had been established by the resolution on a renewed cooperation framework in the youth field (2010-2018).

The EUYD's inception took place in the context of the preparations of the EU Youth Strategy (EUYD) 2019-2027, adopted in November 2018. The Youth Dialogue should contribute to the overall objectives of the EUYS through:

- encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe
- promoting equal participation between young women and men
- including diverse voices and to ensure openness to all young people to contribute to policy-shaping
- bringing about positive change in youth policy at local, regional, national and European level
- strengthening young people's' citizenship competencies and sense of belonging to the society and the European Union

## Young people as agents of democracy in the EU - policy debate

Ministers will hold a policy debate entitled 'Young people as agents of democracy in the EU', based on a presidency discussion paper ([8763/19](#)). The debate will be kick-started by two teenagers who are 16 and 17-years-old. The presidency has invited them in the context of the recently launched 'EU Children's Declaration on Child Participation in Decision-Making at National and EU levels'. The declaration is also known as the "Bucharest EU Children's Declaration" - a text drafted by the Romanian Children's Board which has been disseminated across Europe through the networks of UNICEF, EuroChild, Save the Children, the Federation of Child Protection NGOs, and European high school student associations, to get buy-in and feedback from a large number of various groups of children all over the European Union.

The debate will take place ahead of the upcoming European elections on 26 May, but also in the context of a number of elections taking place in 2019 in different EU Member States at national, regional and municipal levels. Against this background the issue of young people's involvement in politics and democratic processes is both crucial and very timely. There are recent signs that young Europeans are increasingly interested in public affairs, politics and democracy. The results of a Eurobarometer survey, released on 30 April 2019, show that 72% of young people interviewed say that, from the moment they were allowed to participate in elections until today, they voted in local, national, or European elections. The survey addressed around 11,000 young people aged between 15 and 30 years old in March 2019.

Against this background, ministers will be invited to present their views on the following questions:

1. What can Member States and EU institutions do to respond to the challenges highlighted in this paper, with a view to fostering young people's commitment to democratic principles?
2. Considering the strengths, interests and profile of today's young generations, what measures would be most effective in increasing their participation in the democratic life of the EU and its Member States?

## Comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages

Ministers are expected to adopt a recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages ([8638/19](#)). The aim of the recommendation is to explore ways to help all young people to acquire competences in two other languages in addition to their mother tongue/first language. The promotion of language learning has been a long-time target of the EU. In March 2002 the Barcelona European Council noted the need for further action 'to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching of at least two foreign languages from a very early age'. The heads of state or government reiterated in their conclusions of 14 December 2017 the ambition of 'enhancing the learning of languages, so that more young people will speak at least two European languages in addition to their mother tongue'.

Against this background, the recommendation addresses:

- the need to invest in language learning by focussing on learning outcomes
- options to improve language learning in compulsory education by increasing language-awareness in school education

Education was chosen as the first topic for the Leaders' Agenda for the Gothenburg Summit in November 2017. In December 2017 the European Council called on Member States, the Council and the Commission to take work forward on a number of key initiatives, including language learning, which is a key to facilitating learning mobility in Europe.

The Commission submitted its proposal on 22 May 2018 as part of the so-called second education package, consisting of a communication and proposals for Council recommendations on language learning, mutual recognition of diplomas and early childhood education and care.

## **High quality early childhood education and care systems**

Ministers will adopt a Council recommendation on high quality early childhood education and care systems ([7976/19](#)). Definition of early years is usually from birth to the age of 6. The aim of the Recommendation is to support Member States in their efforts to improve access to and quality of their early childhood education and care systems, whilst recognising that Member States are primarily responsible in this area. It states that investing in early childhood education and care is a good investment only if the services are of high quality, accessible, affordable and inclusive. It also refers to evidence that only high-quality early childhood education and care services deliver benefits and that low quality services have significant negative impact on children and on society as a whole.

The importance of early childhood education and care has been widely recognised. The European Pillar of Social Rights calls for access to affordable and good quality early childhood education and care and the UN Sustainable Development Goal 4.2 foresees that all girls and boys should have access to quality early childhood development care and pre-primary education by 2030.

Along with the recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages and a recommendation on the mutual recognition of diplomas, the recommendation on high quality early childhood education and care systems is part of the Commission's second education package presented on 22 May 2018.

## **Implementation of the Council recommendation on upskilling pathways: new opportunities for adults**

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on the implementation of the Council recommendation on upskilling pathways: new opportunities for adults ([8639/19](#)).

In November 2016 the Council adopted a recommendation on upskilling pathways, which was part of the wider 'Skills package' published by the European Commission in June 2016. The recommendation called for a strategic and coordinated approach to provide learning opportunities to the Union's low-skilled and low-qualified adults in order to enhance their basic skills or to allow them to progress towards higher qualifications. The recommendation also called on member states to inform on the implementation measures at national level and on the Commission to issue a report on the implementation. The conclusions are a response to the Commission's report, presented to the Council's Education committee in March 2019.

The conclusions recognise the progress achieved at national level and call on the member states, among others, to:

- put in place sustainable long-term measures for adult upskilling and reskilling
- adopt a coherent strategic approach to basic skills provision for low-skilled and/or low-qualified adults
- raise employers' – especially SMEs' – awareness of the importance of upskilling and reskilling and of available support mechanisms for adult skills development

## **Building the future of Europe: the contribution of education and training to strengthening social cohesion - policy debate**

Based on a presidency discussion paper, ministers will hold a policy debate, entitled 'Building the future of Europe: the contribution of education and training to strengthening social cohesion' ([8653/19](#)). The aim of the debate is to reflect on the concrete future steps for the development of the European Education Area by 2025, in particular with respect to strengthening social cohesion.

The first leaders discussion in the process towards the European Education Area, held at the Social Summit in Gothenburg, Sweden, on 14 November 2017, was devoted to the role of education and culture. On that occasion, the Commission presented a vision for a European Education Area by 2025. In this context, the European Council conclusions of 14 December 2017<sup>2</sup> recognised education and culture as “key to building inclusive and cohesive societies, and to sustaining our competitiveness.” At the same time, the European Council called for the Commission, the Council and the member states to examine possible measures addressing “the need for an inclusive, lifelong-learning-based and innovation-driven approach to education and training”.

Against this background and in view of the debate, the presidency has put forward to ministers the following questions:

1. Which are the necessary next steps in European cooperation in education and training in order to achieve the objective of creating the European Education Area by 2025?
2. What are the most successful projects or practices in your country promoting a learning culture based on common values and strengthening social cohesion? How can cooperation in education and training at European level strengthen such a learning culture between learners of all ages?

## **Young creative generations**

Ministers will adopt conclusions on young creative generations (8401/19). The conclusions take into account the political background highlighting the importance of creating a Union where young people receive the best possible education and training and can study and find jobs across the EU. The conclusions also recognise the need for a more strategic approach to children's and young people's participation in culture, unlocking the potential of digital technologies so as to foster their creativity and critical thinking, and develop skills that prepare them for life. At the same time, the conclusions encourage measures that facilitate a smooth transition from the education system to the labour market.

The Council invites member states and the Commission to address the following five priorities:

- promoting better access to culture and participation in culture for children and young people, including for those with fewer opportunities
- reinforcing cross-sectoral cooperation, with a focus on the synergies between culture and education
- facilitating youth entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative sectors
- fostering the emergence of new young talent
- promoting digital skills and media literacy.

In May 2018 the European Commission adopted the New European Agenda for Culture, which underlines the importance of culture and creativity for society and for the competitiveness of the European economy. On 27 November the Council adopted the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022, which recognised that stronger orientation towards the needs of specific groups, such as young people, is necessary for improved cohesion and well-being.

---

<sup>2</sup> EUCO 19/1/18 REV 1.

## **Improving the cross-border circulation of European audiovisual works, with an emphasis on co-productions**

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on improving the cross-border circulation of European audiovisual works, with an emphasis on co-productions (8002/19). The conclusions recognise Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity as an important asset for the European audiovisual sector. They also stress that by promoting diversity and shared European values, audiovisual content fosters a sense of belonging to a common cultural space. The Council identifies two lines of action to improve the circulation of European audiovisual works:

- direct measures to encourage co-productions
- supporting a sustainable ecosystem for co-productions

Acknowledging the Commission's New European Agenda for Culture and in alignment with its objectives, in November 2018 the Council adopted the above-mentioned Work Plan for Culture, which set out five priorities for cooperation at European level in cultural policy-making:

- sustainability in cultural heritage
- cohesion and well-being
- an ecosystem supporting artists, cultural and creative professionals and European content
- gender equality
- international cultural relations.

## **From tackling disinformation to rebuilding EU citizens' trust in the media**

Ministers will hold a public policy debate entitled 'From tackling disinformation to rebuilding EU citizens' trust in the media', based on a presidency discussion paper ([8808/19](#)).

The fight against disinformation has been an important priority of the Romanian presidency. It is a theme which has been addressed in several Council formations (General Affairs Council, Foreign Affairs Council, Justice and Home Affairs Council) with the aim of identifying an urgent and coordinated response to newly emerged challenges, especially in the context of the European elections.

As a follow-up to the call launched by the European Council in its conclusions of 28 June 2018, inviting the Commission and the high representative to present specific proposals for a coordinated approach by the EU institutions and the member states, a Joint Communication on an Action Plan against disinformation was published in December 2018, setting out key actions for tackling disinformation, structured around four pillars:

- improving detection and analysis
- strengthening coordinated and joint responses
- mobilising the private sector, namely online platforms and industry
- raising awareness and improving societal resilience.

The debate will be an opportunity to take stock of the results achieved and at the same time to identify possible courses of action to be taken in the future. Against this background, ministers will be invited to consider the following questions:

1. On the very first day of the European elections, how do ministers assess the actions carried out so far at EU level to tackle disinformation and ensure quality media, in the interest of the EU citizens?
2. How should the coordinated approach among member states and the European institutions be stepped up in order to tackle current challenges? Should European audiovisual policy be strengthened and, if so, what should it focus on in order to rebuild EU citizens' trust in the media?

## **Representation and coordination prior to WADA meetings**

In the context of the review of the 2011 resolution on representation and coordination prior to WADA meetings, the Council will adopt a resolution on the representation of EU member states in the WADA Foundation Board and their coordination prior to WADA meetings ([8709/19](#)). The resolution recalls that three seats in WADA's Foundation Board are allocated to the representatives from EU member states. It also refers to the agreement between the representatives of the governments of the member states that representatives of the EU member states in the Foundation Board of WADA will be at ministerial level and the seats will be allocated as follows:

- one seat will be allocated to a person in charge of sport at ministerial level from one of the member states forming the incumbent trio presidency
- one seat will be allocated to a person in charge of sport at ministerial level from one of the member states forming the future trio presidency
- one seat will be jointly allocated by the member states meeting within the Council to a person responsible for sport at ministerial level (expert at governmental level).

## **Access to sport for persons with disabilities**

Ministers will adopt conclusions on access to sport for persons with disabilities ([8699/1/19](#)). 'Disability' is defined as any physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses or activities. It usually refers to attributes that are severe enough to interfere with, or prevent, normal day-to-day activities.

The main aim of these conclusions is facilitating access to grassroots sports by all persons with disabilities, in line with the overarching aim of promoting social inclusion and the general principles and objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

While sport for persons with disabilities is not a new concept, its full potential as a powerful, low-cost means to foster greater inclusion and well-being for persons with disabilities is only beginning to be realized.

## **Increasing the participation of children and young people in sport in 21st century Europe**

Based on a presidency discussion paper, ministers will hold a public policy debate on 'Increasing the participation of children and young people in sport in 21st century Europe' ([8801/1/19](#)).

The benefits of playing sports are well-documented. However, on average interest in playing sports is decreasing in the EU, with almost a quarter of all young Europeans (15-24-year olds) not engaging in any sport or exercise at all. Special Eurobarometer surveys show that non-participation has increased by 7 percentage points from 2009 to 2017.

Among the main reasons for these developments are the competition on the 'leisure market', the attractiveness of home-based leisure (e.g. computer gaming, watching and/or interacting with audiovisual content), the costs involved in playing sport and too much focus on commercial aspects.

Along with the above concerns, the discussion will take into consideration the attitudes and profile of current generations of children and young people. Surveys show that they are interested in sports because sports facilitate social interactions and support, help with weight management and above all are a source of enjoyment. There are also clear indications that incoming generations of young people are more inclined to follow not only well-established sports but also emerging ones.

To steer the debate, the presidency will put to ministers the following questions:

1. How can public authorities and the sport movement cooperate at EU and Member State level in order to boost sport participation rates among children and young people?
2. What measures can be undertaken at EU level in order to strengthen the links between elite and grassroots sport with a view to better supporting sport's social and educational function?

## **Any other business (22/05/2019)**

### **DiscoverEU**

The European Commission will report on the first results of the 'DiscoverEU' initiative and will give an overview of the next rounds of this European Parliament Preparatory Action in 2019, as well as the proposed integration of DiscoverEU into the new Erasmus programme as of 2021 ([8819/19](#)).

### **World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth and the Youth Forum "Lisboa +21" – Lisbon, 22 & 23 June 2019**

Information from the Portuguese delegation ([8825/19](#)).

### **France's bid to host the WorldSkills Competition in 2023**

Information from the French delegation ([8771/19](#)).

### **Work programme of the incoming Finnish presidency**

Information from the Finnish delegation on the priorities in the areas of youth and education.

## **Any other business (23/05/2019)**

### **Nomination of Veszprém for the European Capital of Culture 2023**

Information from the Hungarian delegation ([8817/19](#))

### **Fifth centenary of the first circumnavigation of the world, led by Fernão de Magalhães and Juan Sebastián Elcano**

Information from the Spanish and Portuguese delegations ([8810/19](#))

### **Meetings of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) (14-16 May 2019, Montréal, Canada)**

Information from the EU member states representatives in the WADA Foundation Board.

### **Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (match fixing) – ways forward for the EU**

Information from the Danish delegation ([8796/19](#)).

### **Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Serbia to host either the Euro 2028 championship or the 2030 World Cup (Thessaloniki, 13 April 2019)**

Information from the Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian delegations.

### **Work programme of the incoming Finnish presidency**

Information from the Finnish delegation on the priorities in the areas of culture, audiovisual and sport.