



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

Extra funds for education, youth and creativity will boost jobs, says Commission

Brussels, 11 July 2011 – As part of its strategy for boosting employment, the European Commission is aiming to nearly double the number of young people, teachers and researchers who get EU grants for study and training abroad, from 400 000 recipients per year now to almost 800 000 in future. This is one of the key objectives behind the significant increase in EU investment for **education, youth and creativity** proposed by the Commission in its budget plan for 2014-2020, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, Androulla Vassiliou, told a press conference today. Improving education and training and helping people acquire the right skills is crucial for meeting future job needs and fighting poverty. Investing more in the creative industries will also boost job opportunities in a sector which represents 4.5% of EU GDP and 3.8% of employment.

Commissioner Vassiliou, speaking at the launch of a new report on literacy policy ('Teaching Reading in Europe', see [IP/11/846](#)), commented: "*This budget is excellent news for people and organisations active in education, creativity and innovation. Investing in these areas is one of the best business and employment plans for the future of Europe. We want to encourage more people to seize the opportunity to study, work or volunteer abroad because this experience is invaluable for skills development and job prospects. Our focus is on measures that achieve added value and contribute to the Europe 2020 objectives for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.*"

As part of the Commission's proposal, a new programme for education, training and youth would allocate €15.2 billion (+ 73%) over seven years. As well as increasing study and training grants, it will target support at modernising education systems, more cross-border cooperation between education institutions and policy reforms. This is the highest increase in the proposed budget, underlining the priority given to investing in knowledge for the future in Europe.

The new '**Creative Europe**' programme, encompassing the current Culture, MEDIA and MEDIA Mundus schemes, will support the cultural and creative sectors with a budget of €1.6 billion (+37%). The focus will be on helping organisations and enterprises that operate across borders and have a strong link to the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity.

The **European Institute of Innovation and Technology** and the **Marie Curie Actions**, which support skills, training and career development of researchers, will be part of the EU's new 'Horizon 2020' strategy for research and innovation, which would receive €80 billion (+46%) under the budget proposal. The aim is to boost Europe's global competitiveness and help create jobs and ideas of tomorrow.

Next steps

The Commission will present detailed proposals for the new programmes in the autumn.

Background

Education, training and youth

Currently, around 400 000 young people, students, teachers and researchers benefit from EU grants for study, training and volunteering abroad every year. But demand for places is huge and one in every two applicants is turned down due to insufficient resources. The new programme would allow the EU to support up to 800 000 people per year. This investment will also be a catalyst for modernising universities, training institutions and schools.

The programme will give the EU the means to better support co-operation between education institutions and the world of work. It would allow the EU to help Member States design and apply effective education policies and reforms and transfer innovative approaches to others. The Commission also proposes to develop, with the European Investment Bank, a programme to provide guaranteed loans for Master's students on a full degree course abroad. This '**Erasmus for Masters**' scheme would address a current gap in financial support.

The education, training and youth programme will also include a sub-programme for **sport** focusing on tackling transnational threats such as doping, violence and racism in sport, developing dual careers for athletes and supporting grassroots organisations.

Creative Europe

The 'Creative Europe' programme will help to preserve cultural heritage and to increase the circulation of creative works inside and outside the EU. The Commission will also propose a financial instrument, run by the European Investment Bank, to provide debt and equity finance for cultural and creative industries. The programme will play an important role in stimulating cross border co-operation, promoting peer learning and making these sectors more professional.

EU support in the creative sector has a significant leverage effect in attracting further public and private investment. This improves competitiveness, especially among small businesses, helps to create job opportunities and contributes to innovation and to local and regional development.

More value for money

The existing EU programmes in education and youth have been very successful in boosting mobility. For instance, 2.5 million students have benefitted from EU support for studies and company placements in other countries through the Erasmus programme.

Funding through the new programmes would be complemented by significant support for education, training and culture through 'Horizon 2020' and the Structural Funds. For example, in the current budget (2007-2013), around €72.5 billion is being spent on education and training across Europe's regions, and similar levels of spending can be expected in the future.

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