

Resolution on the System of Education in Europe

The Lisbon Strategy 2002/2010 for Education pointed out some important benchmarks with the aim to reach a high level of knowledge in the European States. The idea is to reduce as much as possible early school leavers and low achievers in basic skills. At the same time it aims to increase significantly the adult participation in lifelong learning, language learning and investment in higher education and mobility.

Furthermore, it is important to underline how the European Commission considers the importance of investments, as appropriate, of private sectors in the Educational and Training System.

Due to the existing problems for all citizens in achieving a high level of results between the States, YEPP underlines the importance of the new guidelines proposed by the European Commission concerning the idea to establish the new strategic frameworks for cooperation in education starting early in 2009 until 2020.

Currently, all these reforms are not strong enough if they are not shared by all the European Governments at the same time and at the same way for common purposes.

That is why, YEPP considers the following key points as proposals for a real growing of knowledge in some fields, that can give an input to the European Institutions.

1) The study of foreign languages.

The first Lisbon Strategy's aim was that pupils in lower secondary education should be taught at least two foreign languages. The results were that the percentage of pupils at ISCED level 3 (prevocational and vocational) learning two foreign languages in 2006 was uneven among the European States.

We agree to the idea of considering the foreign languages as the key to create a strong basis for a European society, but we consider that it is important to change the mechanism how to reach the general objective.

The importance of the creation of a multicultural society should be based on the real competences that the students can have at the end of the school process. That is why we should change the proceeding of evaluation the progress made in this area: the proposed benchmarks are based on the offer at minimum of two foreign languages at school. Our proposal is to base these benchmarks on the concrete results of the studying of languages - real competences - achieved at the end of the years of studying. So in this way we can focus our attention on the "output" instead of the "input".

Only in this way each Member State, on one hand, can have the clear picture of the situation of how to adapt their policies in this area. On the other hand the students will have the possibility to enrich their portfolio of competences.

2) The study of scientific subjects.

Secondly, our society has been living in a situation where the economic crisis and the developments of the new economies are asking for people have knowledge in scientific and technical subjects. European data shows that we should increase the number of students enrolled in the mathematic and scientific faculties, to balance out the disparities between specialised people in this area coming from third countries.

YEPP considers this aspect as a challenge and a strategy to win the competition with the other Continents.

That is why we ask the Congress to promote a stronger enhancing of the scientific and technical competences of the European students to fill this “technical and scientific emergency” that defines the big gap existing between the needs of the competitiveness of the countries and the skill required for students.

The idea is that the states have to invest less in the humanistic sectors because these are sectors that need less structural investments, encouraging the students between 14 and 18 years old to invest in technical matters that will continue later in university courses like maths, sciences and technology (point number 2 of the Lisbon Agenda).

At the same time YEPP asks EU political leaders new policies for the educational system: there is a need to have a more transparent curricula and coherence of the numbers of years of studying.

3) The mobility.

Thirdly is mobility. One of the most important and decisive points for the future of the education system is the possibility to enhance the mobility of students as well as of teachers.

After the Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus programmes, we should reinforce this aspect with new policies, in particular concerning the problem of the financing of this mobility and of the academic recognition in terms of real competences.

YEPP awakes EU Member States of the necessity to go ahead with these projects but at the same time to work promoting a more active system where students and professors, according to their abilities and competences, can move from one state to the other.

The aim of this mobility would be, to complete and to reinforce their academic background and at the same time our governments should encourage private sectors together with the public one in investing for this mobility to achieve a better performance for the professional life.

The recognition of study degrees and professional titles of a European state by an other state is a long and cost intensive process. A validity of European study degrees within the whole EU can facilitate the mobility of high skilled people.

Adopted on the YEPP congress in Rome, 04th of April 2009