

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION****of 13 July 2001****on e-Learning**

(2001/C 204/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Bearing in mind:

- (1) The conclusions of the European Council in Lisbon of 23 and 24 March 2000 which set the strategic goal of creating a competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based economy as well as specific targets with regard to information and communications technology (ICT) and education, as well as the conclusions of the Stockholm European Council of 23 and 24 March 2001 which reaffirmed that improving basic skills, particularly IT and digital skills is a top priority for the Union.
- (2) The report from the Council (Education) to the Stockholm European Council on the concrete future objectives of education and training systems which underlines, *inter alia*, the importance of developing skills for the knowledge society and achieving the targets set by the Lisbon European Council to ensure access to ICTs for everyone.
- (3) The request at the Stockholm European Council for a new report for the spring European Council in 2002, containing a detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems.
- (4) The important commitment to the use of ICT in education and training already present in the Socrates and Leonardo Programmes as well as other existing Community instruments.
- (5) The guidelines for Member States' employment policies for 2001<sup>(1)</sup> which stress that in connection with developing skills for the new labour market in the context of lifelong learning, Member States will aim at developing e-Learning for all citizens.
- (6) The Council resolution of 6 May 1996 relating to educational multimedia software in the fields of education and training and the Council conclusions of 22 September 1997 on education, information and communication technology and teacher training for the future<sup>(2)</sup>.
- (7) The Commission's communication on 'e-Learning: designing tomorrow's education' of 24 May 2000 which sets out objectives in the light of the Lisbon conclusions and as a complement to the Commission's comprehensive 'e-Europe action plan'.
- (8) The Commission's communication entitled 'e-Learning action plan — designing tomorrow's education' of 28 March 2001 which defines common activity areas and specific measures with regard to using new multimedia technologies and the internet to improve the quality of learning and which covers infrastructure, training, high-quality multimedia services and content and dialogue and cooperation at all levels.
- (9) INVITES the Member States:
  - (i) to continue their efforts concerning the effective integration of ICT in education and training systems, as an important part of the adaptation of the education and training systems requested by the Lisbon European Council Conclusions and by the Report on concrete future objectives of education systems;
  - (ii) to capitalise on the potential of Internet, multimedia and virtual learning environments for a better and faster realisation of lifelong learning as a basic educational principle and for providing access to educational and training opportunities for all, in particular for those who have access problems for social, economic, geographical or other reasons;
  - (iii) to promote the necessary provision of ICT learning opportunities within education and training systems by accelerating integration of ICT and revision of school and higher education curricula in all relevant subject areas without losing sight of the long-term objectives and the critical approach required by educational systems;
  - (iv) to continue their efforts in the initial and in-service training of teachers and trainers in the pedagogical use of ICT, given the need to develop the digital culture as one essential element in the teacher's basic skills and to motivate teachers and trainers to make the best pedagogical use of ICT in their own teaching;

<sup>(1)</sup> Council Decision 2001/63/EC of 19 January 2001 (OJ L 22, 24.1.2001, p. 18).

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 303, 4.10.1997, p. 5.

- (v) to encourage those responsible for educational and training establishments as well as local, regional and national decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders to acquire the necessary understanding of the potential offered by ICT for enhancing new ways of learning and pedagogical development in order to integrate and manage ICT effectively;
- (vi) to accelerate the provision of equipment and of a quality infrastructure for education and training, taking into account technical progress: hardware, software and Internet access within educational and training establishments, and relevant human resources for ensuring help, support and maintenance services;
- (vii) to encourage the development of high-quality digital teaching and learning materials to ensure quality of online offers; to provide appropriate support mechanisms to facilitate the choice of quality products for teachers and managers of educational and training establishments;
- (viii) to take advantage of the opportunities that digitisation and documentary standardisation offer for facilitating access and increasing the educational and pedagogical use of public cultural resources, such as libraries, museums and archives;
- (ix) to support the development and adaptation of innovative pedagogy that integrates the use of technology within broader cross-curriculum approaches; to foster new approaches, based on a more extensive use of innovative pedagogical methods and software and the use of new devices and experiences in order to stimulate learners' knowledge and motivation and so foster, as a part of teaching, critical attitudes among learners to content on the Internet and other media;
- (x) to exploit the communication potential of ICT to foster European awareness, exchanges, and collaboration at all education and training levels, and especially in schools; to consider the possibility of integrating these European experiences in curricula, and to support and strengthen physical and virtual mobility as an important part of education, developing the new skills and competencies required to live and work in a multilingual and multicultural society;
- (xi) to support and stimulate virtual meeting places for cooperation and exchange of information, experience and good practice, which will take into account new pedagogical approaches and new forms of cooperation between learners, and between teachers or trainers and to stimulate European networking at all levels in the field of educational multimedia, educational use of Internet, ICT-mediated collaboration and learning, and other uses of ICT in education and training;
- (xii) to capitalise and build on the experiences gained in the framework of initiatives such as the European School-net and European Network of Teacher Education Policies (ENTEP);
- (xiii) to foster the European dimension of joint development of ICT-mediated and ICT-complemented curricula in higher education, by encouraging further common approaches in higher education certification models and quality assurance (following the Sorbonne/Bologna process); to provide incentives to establishments, faculties or departments achieving innovative and pedagogically sound work at European level, in this area;
- (xiv) to enhance research in e-Learning, in particular on how to improve learning performance through ICT, pedagogical development, implications of ICT-based teaching and learning and to stimulate international cooperation in this regard;
- (xv) to promote partnership between the public and private sectors as a contribution to the development of e-Learning in order to encourage exchange of experiences, the dialogue on future requirements for multimedia learning materials; and technology transfer;
- (xvi) to monitor and analyse the process of integration and use of ICT in teaching, training and learning, to provide existing quantitative and qualitative information, and to develop improved observation and evaluation methods, in order to share experiences and to exchange good practices with a view to contributing to the follow-up to the Report on the concrete future objectives of education and training systems;
- (10) INVITES the Commission:
- (i) to pay particular attention in its implementation of the e-Learning Action Plan, to the work related to the key priorities expressed in the Report on the concrete future objective of education and training systems such as exchange of good practice and experiences between Member States, including experiences from other countries;

- (ii) to continue supporting existing European portals and to encourage the development of other portals to facilitate access to educational content and to promote collaboration and exchange of experiences in the area of e-Learning and pedagogical development, especially with a view to:
- supporting transnational virtual meeting places,
  - stimulating European networking at all levels and in this context establish and provide networks for the benefit of teacher training,
  - supporting directories of existing quality Internet resources.
- (iii) to implement support actions at European level, in particular to share experience and information about products and services in the field of multimedia educational software and, in this context, to propose methods for assistance and advice in the selection of qualitative and pedagogical multimedia resources; the establishment of cross-border links between producers, users and managers of education and training systems in order to promote quality in products and services and better correspondence between supply and demand; to support information and communication actions and European-wide debate in all the above matters;
- (iv) to examine together with Member States whether the 'eSchola, a week for e-Learning in Europe', could develop into an on-going activity that includes an annual high-profile event;
- (v) to support the testing of new learning environments and approaches in order to take into account the growing differentiation of learners' styles, cultures and languages, and to foster, in cooperation with Member States, virtual mobility and transnational virtual campus projects, especially in the field of languages, science and technology, art and culture;
- (vi) to undertake strategic studies on innovative approaches in education, on the pedagogical aspects of new technologies, on the strengths and weaknesses of the European educational multimedia sector, and on the potential of cultural institutions and science centres as new learning environments;
- (vii) to intensify, in the framework of Community programmes, research, experimentation and evaluation on pedagogical, socioeconomic and technological dimensions of new ICT-mediated approaches, and on their adaptation to users' needs; to actively disseminate the results of this research with a view to facilitating its transfer to the education and training systems and to professional publishers and providers;
- (viii) to support the development of European multilingual educational resources, platforms and services, taking into account, when necessary, education and training-related aspects of intellectual property rights and the use of new distribution methods, and the development and promotion of internationally aspected standards and open source software;
- (ix) to report to the Council on the results of the above-mentioned activities no later than December 2002, in order to facilitate an overall evaluation of their results and decisions on further actions. An interim report shall also be presented to the Council in November 2001.
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