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**RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL**

**of 18 December 2006**

**on key competences for lifelong learning**

**(2006/962/EC)**

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 149(4), and Article 150(4) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntr1-L_2006394EN.01001001-E0001),

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntr2-L_2006394EN.01001001-E0002),

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 251 of the Treaty[(3)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntr3-L_2006394EN.01001001-E0003),

Whereas:

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| (1) | The Lisbon European Council (23-24 March 2000) concluded that a European framework should define the new basic skills to be provided through lifelong learning as a key measure in Europe's response to globalisation and the shift to knowledge-based economies, and emphasised that people are Europe's main asset. Since then, those conclusions have been regularly restated including by the Brussels European Councils (20-21 March 2003 and 22-23 March 2005), and in the re-launched Lisbon Strategy which was approved in 2005. |

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| (2) | The European Councils of Stockholm (23-24 March 2001) and Barcelona (15-16 March 2002) endorsed the concrete future objectives of European education and training systems and a work-programme (the Education and Training 2010 work programme) to achieve them by 2010. These objectives include developing skills for the knowledge society and specific objectives for promoting language learning, developing entrepreneurship and the overall need to enhance the European dimension in education. |

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| (3) | The Commission Communication ”Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality” and the subsequent Council Resolution of 27 June 2002 on lifelong learning[(4)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntr4-L_2006394EN.01001001-E0004) identified the provision of ‘the new basic skills’ as a priority, and stressed that lifelong learning must cover learning from pre-school age to post-retirement age. |

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| (4) | In the context of improving the Community's employment performance, the European Councils of Brussels (March 2003 and December 2003) stressed the need to develop lifelong learning, with a particular focus on active and preventive measures for the unemployed and inactive persons. This built on the report of the Employment Taskforce, which emphasised the need for people to be able to adapt to change, the importance of integrating people into the labour market, and the key role of lifelong learning. |

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| (5) | In May 2003 the Council adopted the European reference levels (‘benchmarks’), demonstrating a commitment to a measurable improvement in European average performance. These reference levels include reading literacy, early school leaving, completion of upper secondary education and participation of adults in lifelong learning, and are closely linked to the development of key competences. |

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| (6) | The report of the Council on the broader role of education adopted in November 2004 stressed that education contributes to preserving and renewing the common cultural background in society and to learning essential social and civic values such as citizenship, equality, tolerance and respect, and is particularly important at a time when all Member States are challenged by the question of how to deal with increasing social and cultural diversity. Moreover, enabling people to enter and stay in working life is an important part of the role of education in the strengthening of social cohesion. |

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| (7) | The report adopted by the Commission in 2005 on progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training showed that there had been no progress in reducing the percentage of low achievers in reading literacy at age 15 or in raising the completion rate for upper-secondary education. Some progress was visible in reducing early school leaving, but at current rates the 2010 European reference levels adopted by the May 2003 Council will not be achieved. Participation of adults in learning is not growing fast enough to reach the 2010 reference level, and data shows that low-skilled people are less likely to participate in further training. |

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| (8) | The Framework of Actions for the Lifelong Development of Competences and Qualifications, adopted by the European social partners in March 2002, stresses the need for businesses to adapt their structures more and more quickly in order to remain competitive. Increased team-work, flattening of hierarchies, devolved responsibilities and a greater need for multi-tasking are leading to the development of learning organisations. In this context, the ability of organisations to identify competences, to mobilise and recognise them and to encourage their development for all employees represent the basis for new competitive strategies. |

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| (9) | The Maastricht Study on Vocational Education and Training of 2004 indicates a significant gap between the levels of education required by new jobs, and the levels of education achieved by the European workforce. This study shows that more than one third of the European workforce (80 million persons) is low-skilled whilst it has been estimated that by 2010 almost 50 % of new jobs will require tertiary level qualifications, just under 40 % will require upper secondary schooling, and only about 15 % will be suitable for those with basic schooling. |

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| (10) | The Joint Council/Commission Report on the Education and Training 2010 work programme, adopted in 2004, reinforced the need to ensure that all citizens are equipped with the competences they need as part of Member States' lifelong learning strategies. To encourage and facilitate reform, the report suggests the development of common European references and principles and gives priority to the Key Competences Framework. |

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| (11) | The European Youth Pact which is annexed to the conclusions of the Brussels European Council (22-23 March 2005) stressed the need to encourage the development of a common set of core skills. |

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| (12) | The need to equip young people with necessary key competences and to improve educational attainment levels is an integral part of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs 2005-2008, approved by the June 2005 European Council. In particular, the Employment Guidelines call for education and training systems to be adapted in response to new competence requirements through better identification of occupational needs and key competences as part of Member States' reform programmes. Furthermore, the Employment Guidelines call for ensuring gender mainstreaming and gender equality in all actions and for achieving an average employment rate for the European Union of 70 % overall and of at least 60 % for women. |

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| (13) | Τhis Recommendation should contribute to the development of quality, future-oriented education and training tailored to the needs of European society, by supporting and supplementing Member States' actions in ensuring that their initial education and training systems offer all young people the means to develop key competences to a level that equips them for adult life, and which forms a basis for further learning and working life and that adults are able to develop and update their key competences through the provision of coherent and comprehensive lifelong learning. Τhis Recommendation should also provide a common European reference framework on key competences for policy makers, education and training providers, the social partners and learners themselves in order to facilitate national reforms and exchange of information between the Member States and the Commission within the Education and Training 2010 work programme, with the aim of achieving the agreed European reference levels. Furthermore, this Recommendation should support other related policies such as employment and social policies and other policies affecting youth. |

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| (14) | Since the objectives of this Recommendation, namely to support and supplement Member States' action by establishing a common reference point that encourages and facilitates national reforms and further cooperation between Member States, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States acting alone and can therefore be better achieved at Community level, the Community may adopt measures in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Recommendation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives insofar as it leaves the implementation of this Recommendation to Member States, |

HEREBY RECOMMEND:

That Member States develop the provision of key competences for all as part of their lifelong learning strategies, including their strategies for achieving universal literacy, and use the ‘Key Competences for Lifelong Learning — A European Reference Framework’ (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Reference Framework’) in the Annex hereto as a reference tool, with a view to ensuring that:

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| 1. | initial education and training offers all young people the means to develop the key competences to a level that equips them for adult life, and which forms a basis for further learning and working life; |

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| 2. | appropriate provision is made for those young people who, due to educational disadvantages caused by personal, social, cultural or economic circumstances, need particular support to fulfil their educational potential; |

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| 3. | adults are able to develop and update their key competences throughout their lives, and that there is a particular focus on target groups identified as priorities in the national, regional and/or local contexts, such as individuals needing to update their skills; |

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| 4. | appropriate infrastructure for continuing education and training of adults including teachers and trainers, validation and evaluation procedures, measures aimed at ensuring equal access to both lifelong learning and the labour market, and support for learners that recognises the differing needs and competences of adults, is in place; |

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| 5. | coherence of adult education and training provision for individual citizens is achieved through close links with employment policy and social policy, cultural policy, innovation policy and other policies affecting young people and through collaboration with social partners and other stakeholders; |

HEREBY TAKE NOTE OF THE COMMISSION'S INTENTION TO:

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| 1. | contribute to Member States' efforts to develop their education and training systems and to implement and disseminate this Recommendation, including by using the Reference Framework as a reference to facilitate peer learning and the exchange of good practices and to follow up developments and report on progress through the biennial progress reports on the Education and Training 2010 work programme; |

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| 2. | use the Reference Framework as a reference in the implementation of the Community Education and Training programmes and to ensure that these programmes promote the acquisition of key competences; |

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| 3. | promote the wider use of the Reference Framework in related Community policies, and particularly in the implementation of employment, youth, and cultural and social policy, and to develop further links with social partners and other organisations working in those fields; |

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| 4. | review the impact of the Reference Framework within the context of the Education and Training 2010 work programme and report, by 18 December 2010, to the European Parliament and to the Council on the experience gained and the implications for the future. |

Done at Brussels, 18 December 2006.

*For the European Parliament*

*The President*

J. BORRELL FONTELLES

*For the Council*

*The President*

J.-E. ENESTAM

[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntc1-L_2006394EN.01001001-E0001)  [OJ C 195, 18.8.2006, p. 109](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:C:2006:195:TOC).

[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntc2-L_2006394EN.01001001-E0002)  [OJ C 229, 22.9.2006, p. 21](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:C:2006:229:TOC).

[(3)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntc3-L_2006394EN.01001001-E0003)  Opinion of the European Parliament of 26 September 2006 (not yet published in the Official Journal) and Council Decision of 18 December 2006.

[(4)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntc4-L_2006394EN.01001001-E0004)  [OJ C 163, 9.7.2002, p. 1](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:C:2002:163:TOC).

**ANNEX**

**KEY COMPETENCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING — A EUROPEAN REFERENCE FRAMEWORK**

**Background and aims**

As globalisation continues to confront the European Union with new challenges, each citizen will need a wide range of key competences to adapt flexibly to a rapidly changing and highly interconnected world.

Education in its dual role, both social and economic, has a key role to play in ensuring that Europe's citizens acquire the key competences needed to enable them to adapt flexibly to such changes.

In particular, building on diverse individual competences, the differing needs of learners should be met by ensuring equality and access for those groups who, due to educational disadvantages caused by personal, social, cultural or economic circumstances, need particular support to fulfil their educational potential. Examples of such groups include people with low basic skills, in particular with low literacy, early school leavers, the long-term unemployed and those returning to work after a period of extended leave, older people, migrants, and people with disabilities.

In this context, the main aims of the Reference Framework are to:

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| 1) | identify and define the key competences necessary for personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social cohesion and employability in a knowledge society; |

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| 2) | support Member States' work in ensuring that by the end of initial education and training young people have developed the key competences to a level that equips them for adult life and which forms a basis for further learning and working life, and that adults are able to develop and update their key competences throughout their lives; |

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| 3) | provide a European level reference tool for policy makers, education providers, employers, and learners themselves to facilitate national and European level efforts towards commonly agreed objectives; |

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| 4) | provide a framework for further action at Community level both within the Education and Training 2010 work programme and within the Community Education and Training Programmes. |

**Key Competences**

Competences are defined here as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. Key competences are those which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment.

The Reference Framework sets out eight key competences:

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| 1) | Communication in the mother tongue; |

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| 2) | Communication in foreign languages; |

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| 3) | Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; |

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| 4) | Digital competence; |

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| 5) | Learning to learn; |

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| 6) | Social and civic competences; |

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| 7) | Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and |

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| 8) | Cultural awareness and expression. |

The key competences are all considered equally important, because each of them can contribute to a successful life in a knowledge society. Many of the competences overlap and interlock: aspects essential to one domain will support competence in another. Competence in the fundamental basic skills of language, literacy, numeracy and in information and communication technologies (ICT) is an essential foundation for learning, and learning to learn supports all learning activities. There are a number of themes that are applied throughout the Reference Framework: critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision taking, and constructive management of feelings play a role in all eight key competences.

**1.   Communication in the mother tongue**[**(1)**](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntr1-L_2006394EN.01001301-E0001)

Definition:

Communication in the mother tongue is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts; in education and training, work, home and leisure.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

Communicative competence results from the acquisition of the mother tongue, which is intrinsically linked to the development of an individual's cognitive ability to interpret the world and relate to others. Communication in the mother tongue requires an individual to have knowledge of vocabulary, functional grammar and the functions of language. It includes an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction, a range of literary and non-literary texts, the main features of different styles and registers of language, and the variability of language and communication in different contexts.

Individuals should have the skills to communicate both orally and in writing in a variety of communicative situations and to monitor and adapt their own communication to the requirements of the situation. This competence also includes the abilities to distinguish and use different types of texts, to search for, collect and process information, to use aids, and to formulate and express one's oral and written arguments in a convincing way appropriate to the context.

A positive attitude towards communication in the mother tongue involves a disposition to critical and constructive dialogue, an appreciation of aesthetic qualities and a willingness to strive for them, and an interest in interaction with others. This implies an awareness of the impact of language on others and a need to understand and use language in a positive and socially responsible manner.

**2.   Communication in foreign languages**[**(2)**](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntr2-L_2006394EN.01001301-E0002)

Definition:

Communication in foreign languages broadly shares the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue: it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts (in education and training, work, home and leisure) according to one's wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and between the different languages, and according to that individual's social and cultural background, environment, needs and/or interests.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

Competence in foreign languages requires knowledge of vocabulary and functional grammar and an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction and registers of language. Knowledge of societal conventions, and the cultural aspect and variability of languages is important.

Essential skills for communication in foreign languages consist of the ability to understand spoken messages, to initiate, sustain and conclude conversations and to read, understand and produce texts appropriate to the individual's needs. Individuals should also be able to use aids appropriately, and learn languages also informally as part of lifelong learning.

A positive attitude involves the appreciation of cultural diversity, and an interest and curiosity in languages and intercultural communication.

**3.   Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology**

Definition:

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| A. | Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. Building on a sound mastery of numeracy, the emphasis is on process and activity, as well as knowledge. Mathematical competence involves, to different degrees, the ability and willingness to use mathematical modes of thought (logical and spatial thinking) and presentation (formulas, models, constructs, graphs, charts). |

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| B. | Competence in science refers to the ability and willingness to use the body of knowledge and methodology employed to explain the natural world, in order to identify questions and to draw evidence-based conclusions. Competence in technology is viewed as the application of that knowledge and methodology in response to perceived human wants or needs. Competence in science and technology involves an understanding of the changes caused by human activity and responsibility as an individual citizen. |

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

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| A. | Necessary knowledge in mathematics includes a sound knowledge of numbers, measures and structures, basic operations and basic mathematical presentations, an understanding of mathematical terms and concepts, and an awareness of the questions to which mathematics can offer answers.An individual should have the skills to apply basic mathematical principles and processes in everyday contexts at home and work, and to follow and assess chains of arguments. An individual should be able to reason mathematically, understand mathematical proof and communicate in mathematical language, and to use appropriate aids.A positive attitude in mathematics is based on the respect of truth and willingness to look for reasons and to assess their validity. |

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| B. | For science and technology, essential knowledge comprises the basic principles of the natural world, fundamental scientific concepts, principles and methods, technology and technological products and processes, as well as an understanding of the impact of science and technology on the natural world. These competences should enable individuals to better understand the advances, limitations and risks of scientific theories, applications and technology in societies at large (in relation to decision-making, values, moral questions, culture, etc).Skills include the ability to use and handle technological tools and machines as well as scientific data to achieve a goal or to reach an evidence-based decision or conclusion. Individuals should also be able to recognise the essential features of scientific inquiry and have the ability to communicate the conclusions and reasoning that led to them.Competence includes an attitude of critical appreciation and curiosity, an interest in ethical issues and respect for both safety and sustainability, in particular as regards scientific and technological progress in relation to oneself, family, community and global issues. |

**4.   Digital competence**

Definition:

Digital competence involves the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology (IST) for work, leisure and communication. It is underpinned by basic skills in ICT: the use of computers to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

Digital competence requires a sound understanding and knowledge of the nature, role and opportunities of IST in everyday contexts: in personal and social life as well as at work. This includes main computer applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, databases, information storage and management, and an understanding of the opportunities and potential risks of the Internet and communication via electronic media (e-mail, network tools) for work, leisure, information sharing and collaborative networking, learning and research. Individuals should also understand how IST can support creativity and innovation, and be aware of issues around the validity and reliability of information available and of the legal and ethical principles involved in the interactive use of IST.

Skills needed include the ability to search, collect and process information and use it in a critical and systematic way, assessing relevance and distinguishing the real from the virtual while recognising the links. Individuals should have skills to use tools to produce, present and understand complex information and the ability to access, search and use internet-based services. Individuals should also be able use IST to support critical thinking, creativity, and innovation.

Use of IST requires a critical and reflective attitude towards available information and a responsible use of the interactive media. An interest in engaging in communities and networks for cultural, social and/or professional purposes also supports this competence.

**5.   Learning to learn**

Definition:

‘Learning to learn’ is the ability to pursue and persist in learning, to organise one's own learning, including through effective management of time and information, both individually and in groups. This competence includes awareness of one's learning process and needs, identifying available opportunities, and the ability to overcome obstacles in order to learn successfully. This competence means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn engages learners to build on prior learning and life experiences in order to use and apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts: at home, at work, in education and training. Motivation and confidence are crucial to an individual's competence.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

Where learning is directed towards particular work or career goals, an individual should have knowledge of the competences, knowledge, skills and qualifications required. In all cases, learning to learn requires an individual to know and understand his/her preferred learning strategies, the strengths and weaknesses of his/her skills and qualifications, and to be able to search for the education and training opportunities and guidance and/or support available.

Learning to learn skills require firstly the acquisition of the fundamental basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that are necessary for further learning. Building on these skills, an individual should be able to access, gain, process and assimilate new knowledge and skills. This requires effective management of one's learning, career and work patterns, and, in particular, the ability to persevere with learning, to concentrate for extended periods and to reflect critically on the purposes and aims of learning. Individuals should be able to dedicate time to learning autonomously and with self-discipline, but also to work collaboratively as part of the learning process, draw the benefits from a heterogeneous group, and to share what they have learnt. Individuals should be able to organise their own learning, evaluate their own work, and to seek advice, information and support when appropriate.

A positive attitude includes the motivation and confidence to pursue and succeed at learning throughout one's life. A problem-solving attitude supports both the learning process itself and an individual's ability to handle obstacles and change. The desire to apply prior learning and life experiences and the curiosity to look for opportunities to learn and apply learning in a variety of life contexts are essential elements of a positive attitude.

**6.   Social and civic competences**

Definition:

These include personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Civic competence equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

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| A. | Social competence is linked to personal and social well-being which requires an understanding of how individuals can ensure optimum physical and mental health, including as a resource for oneself and one's family and one's immediate social environment, and knowledge of how a healthy lifestyle can contribute to this. For successful interpersonal and social participation it is essential to understand the codes of conduct and manners generally accepted in different societies and environments (e.g. at work). It is equally important to be aware of basic concepts relating to individuals, groups, work organisations, gender equality and non-discrimination, society and culture. Understanding the multi-cultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies and how national cultural identity interacts with the European identity is essential.The core skills of this competence include the ability to communicate constructively in different environments, to show tolerance, express and understand different viewpoints, to negotiate with the ability to create confidence, and to feel empathy. Individuals should be capable of coping with stress and frustration and expressing them in a constructive way and should also distinguish between the personal and professional spheres.The competence is based on an attitude of collaboration, assertiveness and integrity. Individuals should have an interest in socio-economic developments and intercultural communication and should value diversity and respect others, and be prepared both to overcome prejudices and to compromise. |

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| B. | Civic competence is based on knowledge of the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, and civil rights, including how they are expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and international declarations and how they are applied by various institutions at the local, regional, national, European and international levels. It includes knowledge of contemporary events, as well as the main events and trends in national, European and world history. In addition, an awareness of the aims, values and policies of social and political movements should be developed. Knowledge of European integration and of the EU's structures, main objectives and values is also essential, as well as an awareness of diversity and cultural identities in Europe.Skills for civic competence relate to the ability to engage effectively with others in the public domain, and to display solidarity and interest in solving problems affecting the local and wider community. This involves critical and creative reflection and constructive participation in community or neighbourhood activities as well as decision-making at all levels, from local to national and European level, in particular through voting.Full respect for human rights including equality as a basis for democracy, appreciation and understanding of differences between value systems of different religious or ethnic groups lay the foundations for a positive attitude. This means displaying both a sense of belonging to one's locality, country, the EU and Europe in general and to the world, and a willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels. It also includes demonstrating a sense of responsibility, as well as showing understanding of and respect for the shared values that are necessary to ensure community cohesion, such as respect for democratic principles. Constructive participation also involves civic activities, support for social diversity and cohesion and sustainable development, and a readiness to respect the values and privacy of others. |

**7.   Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship**

Definition:

Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports individuals, not only in their everyday lives at home and in society, but also in the workplace in being aware of the context of their work and being able to seize opportunities, and is a foundation for more specific skills and knowledge needed by those establishing or contributing to social or commercial activity. This should include awareness of ethical values and promote good governance.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

Necessary knowledge includes the ability to identify available opportunities for personal, professional and/or business activities, including ‘bigger picture’ issues that provide the context in which people live and work, such as a broad understanding of the workings of the economy, and the opportunities and challenges facing an employer or organisation. Individuals should also be aware of the ethical position of enterprises, and how they can be a force for good, for example through fair trade or through social enterprise.

Skills relate to proactive project management (involving, for example the ability to plan, organise, manage, lead and delegate, analyse, communicate, de-brief, evaluate and record), effective representation and negotiation, and the ability to work both as an individual and collaboratively in teams. The ability to judge and identify one's strengths and weaknesses, and to assess and take risks as and when warranted, is essential.

An entrepreneurial attitude is characterised by initiative, pro-activity, independence and innovation in personal and social life, as much as at work. It also includes motivation and determination to meet objectives, whether personal goals, or aims held in common with others, including at work.

**8.   Cultural awareness and expression**

Definition:

Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

Cultural knowledge includes an awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and their place in the world. It covers a basic knowledge of major cultural works, including popular contemporary culture. It is essential to understand the cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe and other regions of the world, the need to preserve it and the importance of aesthetic factors in daily life.

Skills relate to both appreciation and expression: the appreciation and enjoyment of works of art and performances as well as self-expression through a variety of media using one' s innate capacities. Skills include also the ability to relate one's own creative and expressive points of view to the opinions of others and to identify and realise social and economic opportunities in cultural activity. Cultural expression is essential to the development of creative skills, which can be transferred to a variety of professional contexts.

A solid understanding of one's own culture and a sense of identity can be the basis for an open attitude towards and respect for diversity of cultural expression. A positive attitude also covers creativity, and the willingness to cultivate aesthetic capacity through artistic self-expression and participation in cultural life.

[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntc1-L_2006394EN.01001301-E0001)  In the context of Europe's multicultural and multilingual societies, it is recognised that the mother tongue may not in all cases be an official language of the Member State, and that ability to communicate in an official language is a pre-condition for ensuring full participation of the individual in society. In some Member States the mother tongue may be one of several official languages. Measures to address such cases, and apply the definition accordingly, are a matter for individual Member States in accordance with their specific needs and circumstances.

[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN#ntc2-L_2006394EN.01001301-E0002)  It is important to recognise that many Europeans live in bilingual or multilingual families and communities, and that the official language of the country in which they live may not be their mother tongue. For these groups, this competence may refer to an official language, rather than to a foreign language. Their need, motivation, and social and/or economic reasons for developing this competence in support of their integration will differ, for instance, from those learning a foreign language for travel or work. Measures to address such cases, and apply the definition accordingly, are a matter for individual Member States in accordance with their specific needs and circumstances.

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| 28.5.2009    | EN | Official Journal of the European Union | C 119/2 |

**Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (‘ET 2020’)**

2009/C 119/02

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

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|   | RECALLINGthe endorsement by the March 2002 Barcelona European Council of the ‘Education and Training 2010’ work programme which — in the context of the Lisbon Strategy — established for the first time a solid framework for European cooperation in the field of education and training, based on common objectives and aimed primarily at supporting the improvement of national education and training systems through the development of complementary EU-level tools, mutual learning and the exchange of good practice via the open method of coordination, |

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|   | and ACKNOWLEDGINGthat cooperation under the aforementioned work programme, including the Copenhagen process and initiatives in the context of the Bologna process, have led to significant progress being made — notably in support of national reforms of lifelong learning, the modernisation of higher education and the development of common European instruments promoting quality, transparency and mobility — but that substantial challenges still remain, if Europe is to achieve its ambition to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, |

**EMPHASISES that:**

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| 1. | Education and training have a crucial role to play in meeting the many socio-economic, demographic, environmental and technological challenges facing Europe and its citizens today and in the years ahead. |

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| 2. | Efficient investment in human capital through education and training systems is an essential component of Europe's strategy to deliver the high levels of sustainable, knowledge-based growth and jobs that lie at the heart of the Lisbon strategy, at the same time as promoting personal fulfilment, social cohesion and active citizenship, |

**RECOGNISES that:**

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| 1. | While valuing European diversity and the unique opportunities which this affords, and while fully respecting the Member States’ responsibility for their education systems, an updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training — building on the progress made under the ‘Education and Training 2010’ work programme — could further enhance the efficiency of such cooperation and provide continuing benefits and support for Member States’ education and training systems up to the year 2020. |

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| 2. | Education and training have made a substantial contribution towards achieving the long-term goals of the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs. In anticipation of future developments with this process, efforts should therefore be maintained to ensure that education and training remain firmly anchored in the broader strategy. It is also essential that the framework for European cooperation should remain flexible enough to respond to both current and future challenges, including those arising under any new strategy after 2010, |

**NOTES WITH INTEREST**

the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on ‘An updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training’[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr1-C_2009119EN.01000201-E0001).

**AGREES that:**

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| 1. | In the period up to 2020, the primary goal of European cooperation should be to support the further development of education and training systems in the Member States which are aimed at ensuring:

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| (a) | the personal, social and professional fulfilment of all citizens; |

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| (b) | sustainable economic prosperity and employability, whilst promoting democratic values, social cohesion, active citizenship, and intercultural dialogue. |

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| 2. | Such aims should be viewed in a worldwide perspective. Member States acknowledge the importance of openness to the world at large as a prerequisite for the global development and prosperity which — through the provision of excellent and attractive education, training and research opportunities — will help the European Union achieve its objective of becoming a world-leading knowledge economy. |

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| 3. | European cooperation in education and training for the period up to 2020 should be established in the context of a strategic framework spanning education and training systems as a whole in a lifelong learning perspective. Indeed, lifelong learning should be regarded as a fundamental principle underpinning the entire framework, which is designed to cover learning in all contexts — whether formal, non-formal or informal — and at all levels: from early childhood education and schools through to higher education, vocational education and training and adult learning.Specifically, the framework should address the following four strategic objectives (detailed further below):

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| 1. | Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality; |

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| 2. | Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training; |

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| 3. | Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; |

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| 4. | Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training. |

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| 4. | The periodic monitoring of progress towards a set objective provides an essential contribution towards evidence-based policy making. The strategic objectives outlined above should accordingly be accompanied during the period 2010-2020 by indicators and by reference levels for European average performance (‘European benchmarks’), as set out in Annex I to this document. Building on the existing benchmarks, these will help to measure at European level the overall progress made and to show what has been achieved. |

**Strategic objective 1:   Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality**

The challenges posed by demographic change and the regular need to update and develop skills in line with changing economic and social circumstances call for a lifelong approach to learning and for education and training systems which are more responsive to change and more open to the wider world. While new initiatives in the field of lifelong learning may be developed to reflect future challenges, further progress with ongoing initiatives is still required, especially in implementing coherent and comprehensive lifelong learning strategies. In particular, work is needed to ensure the development of national qualifications frameworks based on relevant learning outcomes and their link to the European Qualifications Framework, the establishment of more flexible learning pathways — including better transitions between the various education and training sectors, greater openness towards non-formal and informal learning, and increased transparency and recognition of learning outcomes. Further efforts are also required to promote adult learning, to increase the quality of guidance systems, and to make learning more attractive in general — including through the development of new forms of learning and the use of new teaching and learning technologies.

As an essential element of lifelong learning and an important means of enhancing people's employability and adaptability, mobility for learners, teachers and teacher trainers should be gradually expanded with a view to making periods of learning abroad — both within Europe and the wider world — the rule rather than the exception. In so doing, the principles laid down in the European Quality Charter for Mobility should be applied. To achieve this will require renewed efforts on the part of all concerned, for instance with regard to securing adequate funding.

**Strategic objective 2:   Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training**

High quality education and training systems which are both efficient and equitable are crucial for Europe's success and for enhancing employability. The major challenge is to ensure the acquisition of key competences by everyone, while developing the excellence and attractiveness at all levels of education and training that will allow Europe to retain a strong global role. To achieve this on a sustainable basis, greater attention needs to be paid to raising the level of basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, making mathematics, science and technology more attractive and to strengthening linguistic competences. At the same time, there is a need to ensure high quality teaching, to provide adequate initial teacher education, continuous professional development for teachers and trainers, and to make teaching an attractive career-choice. It is also important to improve the governance and leadership of education and training institutions, and to develop effective quality assurance systems. High quality will only be achieved through the efficient and sustainable use of resources — both public and private, as appropriate — and through the promotion of evidence-based policy and practice in education and training.

**Strategic objective 3:   Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship**

Education and training policy should enable all citizens, irrespective of their personal, social or economic circumstances, to acquire, update and develop over a lifetime both job-specific skills and the key competences needed for their employability and to foster further learning, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue. Educational disadvantage should be addressed by providing high quality early childhood education and targeted support, and by promoting inclusive education. Education and training systems should aim to ensure that all learners — including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with special needs and migrants — complete their education, including, where appropriate, through second-chance education and the provision of more personalised learning. Education should promote intercultural competences, democratic values and respect for fundamental rights and the environment, as well as combat all forms of discrimination, equipping all young people to interact positively with their peers from diverse backgrounds.

**Strategic objective 4:   Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training**

As well as engendering personal fulfilment, creativity constitutes a prime source of innovation, which in turn is acknowledged as one of the key drivers of sustainable economic development. Creativity and innovation are crucial to enterprise development and to Europe's ability to compete internationally. A first challenge is to promote the acquisition by all citizens of transversal key competences such as digital competence, learning to learn, a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness. A second challenge is to ensure a fully functioning knowledge triangle of education-research-innovation. Partnership between the world of enterprise and different levels and sectors of education, training and research can help to ensure a better focus on the skills and competences required in the labour market and on fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in all forms of learning. Broader learning communities, involving representatives of civil society and other stakeholders, should be promoted with a view to creating a climate conducive to creativity and better reconciling professional and social needs, as well as individual well-being,

**FURTHER AGREES that:**

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| 1. | In endeavouring to achieve the above strategic objectives and thereby ensure an effective contribution to national reforms, the following principles should be observed in the period up to 2020:

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| (a) | European cooperation in education and training should be implemented in a lifelong learning perspective making effective use of the open method of coordination (OMC) and developing synergies between the different education and training sectors. While fully respecting Member States’ responsibility for their educational systems and the voluntary nature of European cooperation in education and training, the OMC should draw on:

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| — | the four strategic objectives for European cooperation outlined above, |

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| — | common reference tools and approaches, |

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| — | peer learning and the exchange of good practice, including the dissemination of outcomes, |

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| — | periodic monitoring and reporting, |

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| — | evidence and data from all relevant European agencies[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr2-C_2009119EN.01000201-E0002), European networks, and international organisations[(3)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr3-C_2009119EN.01000201-E0003), |

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| — | making full use of the opportunities available under Community programmes, particularly in the field of lifelong learning. |

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| (b) | European cooperation in education and training should be pertinent and concrete. It should produce clear and visible outcomes which should be presented, reviewed and disseminated on a regular basis and in a structured manner, thereby establishing a basis for continuous evaluation and development. |

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| (c) | The Copenhagen process in the field of vocational education and training is an important aspect of European cooperation under the open method of coordination. The aims and priorities pursued under this process should contribute to achieving the objectives set out in this framework. |

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| (d) | In order to support Member States’ efforts to modernise higher education and develop a European Higher Education Area, close synergy with the Bologna process should also be aimed for, in particular with regard to quality assurance, recognition, mobility and transparency instruments. |

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| (e) | Where relevant, cross-sectoral cooperation should be sought between EU initiatives in education and training and those in related policy areas — particularly employment, enterprise, social policy, youth policy and culture. With specific regard to the knowledge triangle, special attention should be paid to the synergies between education, research and innovation, as well as to complementarity with the aims of the European Research Area. |

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| (f) | Well-functioning cooperation using new, transparent ways of networking is needed not only between the relevant EU institutions, but also with all relevant stakeholders, who have a considerable contribution to make in terms of policy development, implementation and evaluation. |

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| (g) | Policy dialogue with third countries and cooperation with international organisations should be reinforced, thereby providing a source of fresh ideas and comparison. |

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| (h) | Where appropriate, financial resources from the European Structural Funds may be used to enhance education and training systems in accordance with the overall strategic objectives and Member States’ priorities. |

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| 2. | The success of the open method of coordination in education and training depends on the political commitment of Member States and on effective working methods at European level. From this perspective, and with a view to greater flexibility, the working methods used in the context of European cooperation should be based on the following:

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| (a) | Work cycles: the period up to 2020 will be divided up into a series of cycles, with the first cycle covering the 3 years from 2009 to 2011. |

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| (b) | Priority areas: for each cycle, a number of priority areas for European cooperation based on the strategic objectives will be adopted by the Council on the basis of a Commission proposal. The European priority areas will be designed to allow either for broad cooperation between all the Member States or for closer cooperation between a more limited number of Member States, in accordance with national priorities. The priority areas for the first cycle under this new framework are set out in Annex II hereto. |

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| (c) | Mutual learning: European cooperation in the aforementioned priority areas can be carried out by such means as peer learning activities, conferences and seminars, high level fora or expert groups, panels, studies and analyses and web-based cooperation and, where appropriate, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. All of these initiatives should be developed on the basis of clear mandates, time schedules and planned outputs to be proposed by the Commission in cooperation with the Member States (see also paragraph (f) below). |

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| (d) | Dissemination of results: to enhance visibility and impact at national and European level, the outcomes of cooperation will be widely disseminated among all relevant stakeholders and, where appropriate, discussed at the level of Directors-General or Ministers. |

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| (e) | Progress reporting: at the end of each cycle — and in the case of the first under the new framework, no earlier than the beginning of 2012 — a joint Council-Commission report should be drawn up. This will evaluate the overall progress in achieving the objectives under this framework during the most recent cycle and/or in a particular thematic area which would be defined by the Commission in cooperation with the Member States (see also paragraph (f) below). Joint reports should be based on national reports drawn up by the Member States, as well as on existing information and statistical data. The joint reports may be developed to include factual analyses of the different situations in individual Member States, with their full agreement. The joint reports should also serve as the basis for establishing a fresh set of priority areas for the following cycle. |

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| (f) | Monitoring of the process: to promote the delivery of results through the open method of coordination as well as ownership of the method at both national and European level, the Member States and the Commission will work closely together in steering, taking forward and evaluating the process and its outcomes. |

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| 3. | The strategic framework — including benchmarks and working methods — may be reviewed and any necessary adjustments made by the Council in the light of any major new developments in Europe, particularly decisions taken on the EU strategy for growth and jobs beyond 2010, |

**ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE MEMBER STATES to:**

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| 1. | Work together, with the support of the Commission and using the open method of coordination as outlined in these conclusions, to enhance European cooperation in education and training in the period up to 2020 on the basis of the four strategic objectives, the principles and working methods described above, and of the priority areas agreed for each cycle (those for the first cycle 2009-2011 being outlined in Annex II hereto). |

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| 2. | Consider, on the basis of national priorities, the adoption of measures at national level aimed at achieving the objectives outlined in the strategic framework and contributing to the collective achievement of the European benchmarks identified in Annex I hereto. Further consider whether inspiration can be drawn from mutual learning at European level, when devising national education and training policies, |

**INVITES THE COMMISSION to:**

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| 1. | Work with and support the Member States — during the period up to 2020 — in cooperating within this framework on the basis of the four strategic objectives, the principles and working methods described above, and the benchmarks and agreed priority areas outlined respectively in Annexes I and II hereto. |

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| 2. | Examine, in particular through the joint progress reports, the degree to which the objectives of this framework have been met. In addition, conduct an evaluation during 2010 of the progress made in achieving the benchmarks adopted under the ‘Education and Training 2010’ work programme. |

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| 3. | Conduct work on proposals for possible benchmarks in the areas of mobility, employability and language learning, as indicated in Annex I hereto. |

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| 4. | Work with the Member States to examine how to improve existing indicators, including those on early leavers from education and training, and report back to the Council by the end of 2010 on the extent to which the coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks adopted by the Council in May 2007[(4)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr4-C_2009119EN.01000201-E0004) might be adjusted, so as to ensure its coherence with the strategic objectives under this framework. In this context, special attention should be paid to the areas of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. |

[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc1-C_2009119EN.01000201-E0001)  Doc. 17535/08 + ADD 1 + ADD 2.

[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc2-C_2009119EN.01000201-E0002)  In particular, Cedefop and the European Training Foundation.

[(3)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc3-C_2009119EN.01000201-E0003)  Whenever reference to the OECD is made or implied in this text, it is to be understood that the right of participation of all Member States in the work of that organisation should be ensured.

[(4)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc4-C_2009119EN.01000201-E0004)  Council conclusions of 25 May 2007 on a coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training ([OJ C 311, 21.12.2007, pp. 13-15](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:C:2007:311:TOC)).

**ANNEX I**

**REFERENCE LEVELS OF EUROPEAN AVERAGE PERFORMANCE**

**(‘European benchmarks’)**

As a means of monitoring progress and identifying challenges, as well as contributing to evidence-based policy making, a series of reference levels of European average performance (‘European benchmarks’) should support the strategic objectives outlined in the above conclusions for the period 2010-2020.

These benchmarks build on the existing ones[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr1-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0001) adopted under the ‘Education and Training 2010’ work programme. They should be based solely on comparable data and take account of the differing situations in individual Member States. They should not be considered as concrete targets for individual countries to reach by 2020. Rather, Member States are invited to consider, on the basis of national priorities and whilst taking account of changing economic circumstances, how and to what extent they can contribute to the collective achievement of the European benchmarks through national actions.

On this basis, the Member States agree to the following five benchmarks:

**Adult participation in lifelong learning**

With a view to increasing the participation of adults in lifelong learning, particularly that of the low-skilled:

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| — | By 2020, an average of at least 15 % of adults should participate in lifelong learning[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr2-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0002). |

**Low achievers in basic skills**

With a view to ensuring that all learners attain an adequate level of basic skills, especially in reading, mathematics and science:

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| — | By 2020, the share of low-achieving 15-years olds in reading, mathematics and science[(3)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr3-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0003) should be less than 15 %. |

**Tertiary level attainment**

Given the increasing demand for higher education attainment, and whilst acknowledging the equal importance of vocational education and training:

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| — | By 2020, the share of 30-34 year olds with tertiary educational attainment[(4)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr4-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0004) should be at least 40 %. |

**Early leavers from education and training**

As a contribution to ensuring that a maximum number of learners complete their education and training:

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| — | By 2020, the share of early leavers from education and training[(5)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr5-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0005) should be less than 10 %. |

**Early childhood education**

With a view to increasing participation in early childhood education as a foundation for later educational success, especially in the case of those from disadvantaged backgrounds:

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| — | By 2020, at least 95 % of children between 4 years old and the age for starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education. |

In addition, the Council invites the Commission to work further in the following areas:

**Mobility**

Given the widely acknowledged added value of learning mobility, and with a view to increasing such mobility, the Commission is invited to submit to the Council a proposal for a benchmark in this area by the end 2010, focusing initially on physical mobility between countries in the field of higher education, taking both quantitative and qualitative aspects into account and reflecting the efforts made and the objectives agreed within the Bologna process, as highlighted most recently at the Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve conference[(6)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr6-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0006). At the same time, the Commission is invited to study the possibility of extending such a benchmark to include vocational education and training and teacher mobility.

**Employability**

Given the importance of enhancing employability through education and training in order to meet current and future labour market challenges, the Commission is invited to submit to the Council a proposal for a possible European benchmark in this area by the end of 2010.

**Language learning**

In view of the importance of learning two foreign languages from an early age, as highlighted in the March 2002 Barcelona European Council conclusions, the Commission is invited to submit to the Council — by the end of 2012 — a proposal for a possible benchmark in this area, based on the ongoing work on language competences[(7)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr7-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0007).

[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc1-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0001)  Council conclusions of 5-6 May 2003 on reference levels of European average performance in education and training (Benchmarks) (doc. 8981/03).

[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc2-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0002)  i.e. The percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training during the 4 weeks prior to the survey (Eurostat/Labour Force Survey). Benefit can also be drawn from the information on adult participation in lifelong learning gathered by the Adult Education Survey.

[(3)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc3-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0003)  Source: OECD/PISA (the right of participation of all Member States in such work should be ensured). The relevant indicators will be monitored separately.

[(4)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc4-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0004)  i.e. The percentage of those aged 30-34 who have successfully completed tertiary level education (ISCED levels 5 and 6) (EUROSTAT, UOE).

[(5)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc5-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0005)  i.e. The share of the population aged 18-24 with only lower secondary education or less and no longer in education or training (EUROSTAT/Labour Force Survey). Efforts should be made to improve the quality of data, including by examining the feasibility of using additional data sources.

[(6)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc6-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0006)  Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Higher Education, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, 28-29 April 2009.

[(7)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc7-C_2009119EN.01000701-E0007)  Council conclusions on the European Indicator of Language Competence ([OJ C 172, 25.7.2006, p. 1](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:C:2006:172:TOC)).

**ANNEX II**

**PRIORITY AREAS FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING DURING THE FIRST CYCLE: 2009-2011**

With a view to achieving the four strategic objectives under the ‘ET 2020’ framework, the identification of priority areas for a specific work cycle should improve the efficiency of European cooperation in education and training, as well as reflect the individual needs of Member States, especially as new circumstances and challenges arise.

The priority areas, as referred to in paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c) in the ‘further agrees’ section above and detailed below, reflect the need to:

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| (i) | pursue cooperation in areas where key challenges remain; |

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| (ii) | develop cooperation in areas regarded as particularly important during this particular work cycle. |

Member States will select, in accordance with national priorities, those areas of work and cooperation in which they wish to participate in joint follow-up work. If Member States deem necessary, the work on specific priority areas can continue in subsequent work cycles.

***Strategic objective 1:*   *Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality***

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|   | **Pursue work on:**

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| — | : | Lifelong learning strategies | : | Complete the process of implementation of national lifelong learning strategies, paying particular attention to the validation of non-formal and informal learning and guidance. |
| — | : | European Qualifications Framework | : | In accordance with the April 2008 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr1-C_2009119EN.01000901-E0001), relate all national qualifications systems to the EQF by 2010, and support the use of an approach based on learning outcomes for standards and qualifications, assessment and validation procedures, credit transfer, curricula and quality assurance. |

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|   | **Develop cooperation on:**

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| — | : | Expanding learning mobility | : | Work together to gradually eliminate barriers and to expand opportunities for learning mobility within Europe and worldwide, both for higher and other levels of education, including new objectives and financing instruments, and whilst taking into consideration the particular needs of disadvantaged persons. |

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***Strategic objective 2:*   *Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training***

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|   | **Pursue work on:**

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| — | : | Language learning | : | To enable citizens to communicate in two languages in addition to their mother tongue, promote language teaching, where relevant, in VET and for adult learners, and provide migrants with opportunities to learn the language of the host country. |
| — | : | Professional development of teachers and trainers | : | Focus on the quality of initial education and early career support for new teachers and on raising the quality of continuing professional development opportunities for teachers, trainers and other educational staff (e.g. those involved in leadership or guidance activities). |
| — | : | Governance and funding | : | Promote the modernisation agenda for higher education (including curricula) and the quality assurance framework for VET, and develop the quality of provision, including staffing, in the adult learning sector. Promote evidence-based policy and practice, placing particular emphasis on establishing the case for sustainability of public and, where appropriate, private investment. |

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|   | **Develop cooperation on:**

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| — | : | Basic skills in reading, mathematics and science | : | Investigate and disseminate existing good practice and research findings on reading performance among school pupils and draw conclusions on ways of improving literacy levels across the EU. Intensify existing cooperation to improve the take-up of maths and science at higher levels of education and training, and to strengthen science teaching. Concrete action is needed to improve the level of basic skills, including those of adults. |
| — | : | ‘New Skills for New Jobs’ | : | Ensure that the assessment of future skill requirements and the matching of labour market needs are adequately taken on board in education and training planning processes. |

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***Strategic objective 3:*   *Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship***

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|   | **Pursue work on:**

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| — | : | Early leavers from education and training | : | Strengthen preventive approaches, build closer cooperation between general and vocational education sectors and remove barriers for drop-outs to return to education and training. |

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|   | **Develop cooperation on:**

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| — | : | Pre-primary education | : | Promote generalised equitable access and reinforce the quality of provision and teacher support. |
| — | : | Migrants | : | Develop mutual learning on best practices for the education of learners from migrant backgrounds. |
| — | : | Learners with special needs | : | Promote inclusive education and personalised learning through timely support, the early identification of special needs and well-coordinated services. Integrate services within mainstream schooling and ensure pathways to further education and training. |

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***Strategic objective 4:*   *Enhancing innovation and creativity, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training***

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|   | **Pursue work on:**

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| — | : | Transversal key competences | : | In accordance with the December 2006 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntr2-C_2009119EN.01000901-E0002), take greater account of transversal key competences in curricula, assessment and qualifications. |

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|   | **Develop cooperation on:**

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| — | : | Innovation-friendly institutions | : | Promote creativity and innovation by developing specific teaching and learning methods (including the use of new ICT tools and teacher training). |
| — | : | Partnership | : | Develop partnerships between education and training providers and businesses, research institutions, cultural actors and creative industries, and promote a well-functioning knowledge triangle. |

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[(1)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc1-C_2009119EN.01000901-E0001)  [OJ C 111, 6.5.2008 p. 1](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:TOC).

[(2)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN#ntc2-C_2009119EN.01000901-E0002)  [OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:TOC).