

Key messages, sub-themes and questions for debate in the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning

- **Key Message 1: New basic skills for all**

Objective: Guarantee universal and continuing access to learning for gaining and renewing the skills needed for sustained participation in the knowledge society

1.1. Defining the new basic skills and providing universal access to these for all citizens.

- How might a shared European framework for defining the new basic skills required for active participation in the knowledge society and economy be developed as proposed in paragraph 26 of the Lisbon conclusions?
- School and college curricula everywhere are already overloaded with ceaseless demands to incorporate new content and new skills. What can be done to relieve this pressure? What principles should inform curriculum organisation and content in the Knowledge Age?

1.2. Providing “second chances” to acquiring new basic skills. Providing universal access to “digital literacy” and other new basic skills.

- Can an individual right for all citizens to acquire and update skills through lifelong learning be envisaged?
- The proposal for Employment Guidelines 2001 (Guidelines 3, 4 and 6) calls on Member States to ensure that young people complete compulsory education and to improve adult access to learning, especially for older workers, those in part-time or temporary employment, and the unemployed. What kinds of measures would be appropriate and effective to achieve these aims as well as the aim of skills updating, more generally?
- The eLearning initiative has set the target that, by 2003, all pupils leaving school should be digitally literate. What are the priority areas for action for those groups of citizens – young and old – on the wrong side of the emerging digital divide?

1.3. Monitoring and meeting new skills needs.

- What could be effective ways to monitor and meet new emerging skills needs – and prevent skills mismatches and recruitment difficulties – through lifelong learning provision in line with the proposal for Employment Guidelines 2001 (Guideline 7)? How can testing and self-assessment tools for basic skills be further developed?

- **KEY MESSAGE 2: MORE INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES**

Objective: Visibly raise levels of investment in human resources in order to place priority on Europe's most important asset – its people

2.1. Investing more in lifelong learning and human resources development.

- How could the Structural Funds, and in particular the European Social Fund, be effectively used to target investment in the infrastructure of lifelong learning, most particularly for establishing local learning centres and installing up-to-date ICT equipment? To what extent can these resources and measures help to ensure that the quality of publicly-funded education and training does not fall behind that of privately-funded alternatives?

2.2. Providing incentives, and removing disincentives, for motivating citizens and enterprises to invest in lifelong learning – sharing the costs and the benefits.

- How can investment in learning be made more tangible and transparent for the individual and for the employer or enterprise, in particular by strengthening financial incentives and removing disincentives? What are promising ways to encourage and enable individuals to co-fund and take control of their own learning (for example, through individual learning accounts or competence insurance schemes)?

2.3. Developing flexible working arrangements to support lifelong learning.

- In what kinds of ways do progressive employers provide time and flexibility for taking part in lifelong learning, including arrangements that assist parents and carers to fit learning with their family as well as work responsibilities? How can best practice be made more accessible to enterprises throughout Europe? How might government and public service employers become effective models of good practice in these respects?

2.4. Identifying the economic and social benefits of lifelong learning – at individual, enterprise and societal levels through research.

- A concerted research-based initiative in the Member States and at Community level could help to clarify the social and economic benefits of investing in lifelong learning, including developing more transparent input and output measures. Is there sufficient collective will to do so, and how might this initiative be best launched and carried through?

- **KEY MESSAGE 3: INNOVATION IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Objective: Develop effective teaching and learning methods and contexts for the continuum of lifelong and lifewide learning

3.1. Developing high-quality, user-oriented and adaptable learning systems for different groups of active learners.

- What would be the best way to monitor and analyse the outcomes of transnational projects with a view to producing a report on effective lifelong learning methods for specified contexts, purposes and types of learner? What are the prospects for developing meaningful qualitative benchmarks drawing on comparative case-studies in this area?
- What should be the priority themes for applied educational research in the Member States and at Community level in the coming decade? How can the added value of research effort be raised through greater transnational co-operation and exchange? What could be done to support action research in education more effectively, which works closely with practitioners themselves but which is frequently undervalued in the research community?

3.2. Developing innovative teaching and learning methods in which ICT-based technology is an integral part.

- How can the development of ICT-based pedagogies be effectively combined with the search for improvement and innovation in human-based pedagogies? How can technical specialists and teachers/trainers work together more effectively to produce quality learning materials and resources? Given the growing scale of commercially-produced learning materials and resources, how can their quality and appropriate use be best monitored, including through co-operation at European level?

3.3. Supporting the development of a new role for teachers and trainers.

- Training courses and qualifications for education and training practitioners working in non-formal sectors (such as youth and community work), in adult education or in continuing training are underdeveloped everywhere in Europe. What can be done to improve this situation, including through European co-operation?

- **KEY MESSAGE 4: VALUING LEARNING**

Objective: Significantly improve the ways in which learning participation and outcomes are understood and appreciated, particularly non-formal and informal learning.

4.1. Developing innovative ways of valuing and appreciating all forms of learning - including non-formal and informal learning – to support lifelong learning and mobility.

- Innovative forms of assessment and recognition are a priority area for action. What needs to be done to establish working APEL-type systems in all Member States? In what ways might systematic information on their use and acceptability be developed and exchanged between countries? How can appropriate systems be developed to recognise competencies gained in non-formal and informal contexts, such as youth and community associations?
- With the support of the Community education, training and youth programmes, a number of assessment and recognition instruments have been co-operatively developed. These include ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme) and the European Diploma Supplement (in the higher education sector), EUROPASS (recognition for work-linked training), the EVS certificate (participation in the European Voluntary Service scheme), the ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) and various automated self-assessment tools (European pilot projects). A European diploma for basic IT skills will be developed through the eLearning initiative. How can these various instruments be extended and developed in coherent ways? What scope might there be for a broad credit-based initiative linked to the development of a common format for a ‘European cv’ as proposed in paragraph 26 of the Lisbon conclusions?

4.2. Involving, to a greater extent, those who ultimately validate credentials in practice – including the Social Partners and relevant NGOs.

- The proposal for Employment Guidelines 2001 (Guideline 4) calls on Member States to improve the recognition of knowledge, qualifications and skills to facilitate mobility and lifelong learning. What measures should be undertaken to do so? How might the existing European Forum on the Transparency of Qualifications¹ be developed in service of these aims, and what kinds of similar initiatives could enhance the development of common approaches and the dissemination of good practices for assessing and recognising competencies?
- How can communication and dialogue between the Social Partners, enterprises and professional associations be improved in order to raise mutual confidence in the validity and utility of more diverse forms of recognition?

• **KEY MESSAGE 5: RETHINKING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING**

¹ This Forum was set up as a joint initiative by the European Commission and CEDEFOP.

Objective: Ensure that everyone can easily access good quality information and advice about learning opportunities throughout Europe and throughout their lives.

5.1. Providing “holistic” information and pro-active guidance for learning and career opportunities in Europe.

- How can existing initiatives² and services be enhanced so that guidance and counselling becomes an integral part of an open Europe? What improvements are needed to provide interconnected European databases on learning opportunities throughout life?³ What are the implications of emerging ‘borderless education’ – that is, learning provided in one country and accessed from another – for guidance and counselling services?

5.2. Providing easy access to information and qualified guidance locally, as well as user-friendly tools for self-guidance

- There is a clear need to expand service provision at local level, in accessible forms and designed for specific target groups. How can innovative approaches – such as ‘one-stop-shops’ – be applied more widely across Europe? What is the role of marketing strategies in guidance and counselling, and how might they be made more effective? How can inter-agency networks be developed that enable local-level providers, via a pool of specialist sources, to offer genuinely ‘tailored’ services on an individualised basis?
- The eLearning initiative proposes that, by the end of 2002, vocational guidance and counselling services should offer universal access to information on training, labour market and career opportunities in ‘new technology’ skills and occupations. How can this target be achieved? More generally, how can further impetus be given to the development of Internet-based tools for self-guidance?

5.3. Supporting the development of training for guidance and counselling practitioners and quality guidelines for guidance and counselling services.

- What can be done to modernise and improve initial and in-service training and professional development for guidance and counselling practitioners? Where are the most urgent needs for enriched training? What kinds of projects in this field should be prioritised under the SOCRATES II, LEONARDO II and YOUTH programmes?
- How can quality of service be best assured in a mixed public and private market for guidance and counselling? Would it be appropriate to develop quality guidelines for guidance and counselling services, including through co-operation at European level?

- **KEY MESSAGE 6: BRINGING LEARNING CLOSER TO HOME**

² For example, the Euroguidance network of National Resources Centres for Vocational Guidance, the FEDORA (European Forum for Student Guidance) network, the EURES system and the Internet-based Gateway to the European Learning Area are already established or underway.

³ For 2001, Employment Guideline 7 seeks to enhance the functioning of labour markets by improving interconnected European databases on jobs and learning opportunities.

Objective: Provide lifelong learning opportunities as close to learners as possible, in their own communities and supported through ICT-based facilities wherever appropriate.

6.1. Developing multi-purpose local learning centres to make learning easily accessible at the local level.

- The Lisbon European Council conclusions (paragraph 26) propose turning schools and training centres into multi-purpose local learning centres, all linked to the Internet and accessible to people of all ages. This is a major challenge for all Member States. What kinds of projects and provision already exist that could offer promising ways forward and examples of good practice? What kinds of pilot projects should the Community education, training and youth programmes support to this end?

6.2. Making use of ICT as a means of bringing learning closer to people.

6.3. Making lifelong learning a reality at the local level through open and inclusive partnerships.

- How can mutually beneficial learning partnerships between education and training providers, youth clubs and associations, enterprises and R&D centres be profitably developed at local and regional levels? Have locally-organised audits of citizens' learning needs and employers' skills needs proved a positive tool for re-designing lifelong learning opportunities in particular communities and regions?
- The Lisbon European Council conclusions (paragraph 38) strongly favour decentralised and partnership-based implementation strategies. What kinds of incentives will encourage local and regional initiatives – such as learning cities and regions – to co-operate and exchange good practice at multiple levels, including the transnational level? Could local and regional authorities pledge a fixed percentage of their income to lifelong learning?
- What scope is there for promoting decentralised lifelong learning partnerships through developing closer links between European-level institutions (European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, Economic and Social Committee, Council of Europe) that have well-established local and regional links?