



## NEXT Committee

Entrance Statements

*Committee concerning the next future of education,  
science, technology and innovation*

### Synoptic Table

*The following table is not meant as a complete synthesis of the Entrance Statements.  
Its aim is to simplify the recognition of the final decisions took by the different  
Parliamentary Groups during the online training.*

Parliamentary Group	Issues to discuss	Proposed solutions
EPP	Youth enemployment New ways of teaching	(a) Make easier technological transfer from university to industry (b) Improve ITC Education and strengthen the teaching of subjects like finance, economics and business as part of high school curricula (c) Free educational resources available online for free
S&D	Common European Educational System	(a) Ensure that all citizens of the European Union have the same educational opportunities, achievable with a common educational curriculum. (b) Boost linguistic skills to facilitate people movement across the linguistic borders of EU countries and increase work opportunities

Parliamentary Group	Issues to discuss	Proposed solutions
ECR	<p>(1) Improve the skills of youth  (2) make high education more attainable</p>	<p>(a) Continuing the convergence of European High Education (Bologna Process)  (b) Make education more focused on skills requested by job-market  (c) increase mobility and exchange EU programs for Young people  (d) reform copyrights legislation</p>
ALDE	<p>(1) Education as a vital instrument to tackle social inequalities, youth unemployment, and foster social inclusion  (2) Eco-efficient economy</p>	<p>(1.a) reciprocal recognition of academic degree in European Higher Education Area  (1.b) boosting Vocational Education and Training  (1.c) mobility and exchange programs for young people  (1.d) revitalising of non-national languages  (2.a) structural funds towards improvements in the efficiency of buildings.</p>
GUE/NGL	<p>(1) Better jobs and educational opportunities for all thanks to innovative strategies  (2) Tackle climate changes</p>	<p>(1.a) public and free high education  (1.b) European mobility programs to study abroad  (2.a) electric and hybrid vehicles and buses  (2.b) funds to retrofitting buildings and improving lighting and equipment  (2.c) funds for heating systems that use renewable sources  (2.d) Developing ICT to manage city infrastructure and traffic.</p>

## Entrance Statements

### EPP

Education, science, technology and innovation are areas of crucial importance for the future prosperity of the European Union. Nowadays, Education is highly bound to technology, languages and multicultural issues and the EPP considers it necessary to ensure a quality educational policy is being provided in all the member countries. In a society like ours, any educational programme should take into account the needs of globalisation and its effects of the students. Firstly, they can gather knowledge more easily from various sources and that is why the focus has to be put on developing their critical thinking skills. Moreover, education has to instil values of citizenship and tolerance, while at the same time emphasising inclusion and accommodating any special needs of the students.

According to various scientific studies, Europe has attained significant achievements in science and technology. Such research and development efforts form an integral part of the European economy. Europe has been the home of some of the most prominent researchers in various scientific disciplines, notably physics, mathematics, chemistry and engineering. Scientific research in Europe is supported by industry, by the European universities and by several scientific institutions. The raw output of scientific research from Europe consistently ranks among the world's best. This is exemplified by the work of The European Organisation for Nuclear Research, known as CERN, which is a European research organisation that operates the largest particle physics laboratory in the world. In the last 20 years it has made important discoveries in particle physics, resulting in a deeper understanding of the field, and setting a foundation for the incorporation of this knowledge into technologies used in daily life. However, it is also important to remember the negative consequences of advancements in technology. Previous centuries' dependence on fossil fuels had resulted in devastating ramifications on the world's environment. Global warming, the sea-level rise, and extreme weather will reduce the amount of habitable space, causing massive deaths and migration. It is crucial to remember that with the introduction of new technologies come unforeseeable consequences, both in the environmental and socio-political sphere.

Considering innovation and technology, European Union's future is directly connected to its power to innovate. This quality is of paramount importance, especially when considering European industries. Industry accounts for 80% of Europe's exports, and as such, it is one of the largest investors in private sector research and development, with around 65% of investments coming from manufacturing. Innovation is also crucial to remaining competitive, as studies show that companies that prioritise it have the highest increase in turnover. Furthermore, 79% of companies that introduced at least one innovation since 2011 experienced a 25% increase of their turnover. However, the European Union continues to lag behind other competitors, like the United States. The most innovative companies of the world, like Google or Tesla, are more often than not American. Whole regions are designated to be incubators of new ideas, which can be exemplified by the culture and entrepreneurship present in places like the Silicon Valley.

Furthermore, foreign companies often recruit the most promising, highly educated and creative citizens of the EU, resulting in a large scale brain-drain. Consequently, the EPP believes that boosting new methods, products, and ideas through innovation enhancing regulations is of crucial importance. This can be approached through tackling three general areas. Firstly, education has to be improved by devising and implementing teaching methods that promote creativity, imagination, critical thinking and digital skills necessary for work with new technologies. Secondly, processes that challenge the commonly accepted status quo should be encouraged rather than hindered and obstructed. This can be achieved by introducing regulation that provides incentives for people to do so, through reducing the administrative burden for new businesses, and providing opportunities for people who can bring forth new and better goods and services. Finally, regulation easing technological transfers from university to industry, can facilitate the incorporation of new ideas through acquisition, and patenting. Patents encourage innovation by allowing new inventors to profit from their discoveries. At the same time, they improve the allocation of resources as they encourage rapid experimentation and ex-post conveyance of knowledge across various companies.

As far as technology is involved, the EPP has a strong stance on the issues concerning informative technologies and digitalisation of Europe. The EPP welcomes any efforts for digitalising Europe and contributing to the upcoming European Digital Single Market. In order to put an emphasis on the importance of this topic, the EPP has published a policy paper called 'Boosting eSkills – decoding its potential' which proposed how to help complete the digital transformation of Europe, which could potentially bring hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions in profit. It is expected that the completion of the European Digital Single Market will increase the EU GDP by 4% by 2020. This is why the EPP has also decided to launch a campaign, which is supposed to encourage member states to invest in the digital skills of their citizens in order to minimise the future gap on the digital job market. Some of the proposals were meant to encourage private companies to help citizens acquire e-skills; encourage women, children and youth to actively join ICT; integrate e-skills into primary and secondary education, as well as standardise Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and grant students with ECTS points for their completion; to heed to and to adopt the recommendations of the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DIGICOMP), etc. This way, the EPP puts its hopes in technology and ICT in particular in order to help strengthen the economies and provide more growth, prosperity and integration for the EU in the nearest future.

However given the socioeconomic climate of our times the EPP believes that Youth unemployment is one of the most urgent issues concerning Europe. In some regions in Europe, almost 50% of young people are unemployed. But there is proof that the necessary skills to start up businesses and companies could be acquired at school. The subjects finance, economics and the business environment should be part of school curricula and should be accompanied by mentoring, career guidance as well as practical experience. A sense for initiative and entrepreneurship needs to involve fostering an entrepreneurial mind-set characterised by initiative, creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives.

Increased use of digital resources within the education systems is important because it enables young people to absorb new knowledge in an innovative way. In Europe, data shows that going online is a part of children's activities from a very young age. The use of new technologies allows learning in a variety of environments, making it easier for students to cooperate while at the same time enabling the learning process to be more adapted to the individual. In addition, the large increase in the number of educational programs and other educational resources that are available online for free can help ensure quality education for young people, which is extremely important given the high rate of unemployment among the youth.

## **S&D**

One of the pillars of the European social democratic party is achieving equality amongst citizens of member countries. And seek to carry out socio-economic reforms that favor social class workers. Also, we try to double the budget for research, since it is our belief it is essential that we move forward towards a better future. Another idea proposed is the use of renewable energies. We need to respect and take care of the environment, and we think this is a good way to start doing it. Regarding education, we want to encourage students to apply for Erasmus scholarships as a good opportunity to be in contact with a different culture and language. More particularly:

### **Education field**

Once each country is responsible for the innovations that result but also for the development of its citizens, it is very important to pay special attention to educational programs and general education as the foundation of development. A good educational system that includes schools, institutes and universities, must provide a good structure of learning, and teaching for children, and students. The technology as an aid to teaching and learning, gives the opportunity to students to develop many of their skills, to communicate faster with each other and give them all the information directly and in conjunction with images and animation videos. It may be difficult for many countries to provide money for new systems markets, but through these kids will go to new knowledge paths which would give them the opportunity to learn through interaction with various aspects of life. Furthermore, an extra future "tool" for education could be teamwork. The skill of working well with other people is the key that opens doors in the labor market. For years, colleges have been ignoring the power of teamwork and the achievements that could not have been made without it. Cooperative learning is the heart of problem based learning. Group work gives the opportunity to students to share thoughts and ideas and through their collaboration to develop both their knowledge and entrepreneurial and social competences. Working with other students in the framework of the year of school including the University gives prospects in afterward human life and relations with others.

## **Research and Innovation**

Today there's no way that any country alone or any scientist alone could do excellent research and innovation. Excellent research is about collaboration. Einstein was the sole author of his papers", but the recent paper announcing the detection of gravitational waves "had more than 1,000 international authors" and the first Higgs Boson paper "had over 5,000".

Our effectiveness and credibility rests upon the quality of our research output, our professionalism, and our respect for the highest standards of ethics. This requires a rigorous smart regulation agenda, respecting subsidiarity and proportionality and devoting our attention to where we can bring clear added value through our research.

The big breakthroughs that will contribute to Europe's knowledge economy – and to solving global challenges – will not be from one person, or one university or one nation. They will be global. That's what we mean about European science, that European science is a benefit that goes beyond the amount of money [in EU research programmes]. It's a very important amount of money, but it goes beyond that because it's about the network effects...That's why science has to be a European endeavour, a global endeavour." More broadly in terms of the European exchanges created by EU programmes, the Erasmus+ student mobility programme is of major importance. To thrive in the information economy we need to be open to the world, we need to be innovative, and we need to be building academic partnerships with our close neighbours, not turning our backs on them.

Only last year, a group of leading international linguists, wanted accessibility to their research results to be independent of expensive commercial publishers. So what did they do? They left the editorial boards of their academic journals and embarked on a new venture. They found an open access publisher that could make their dream of low-cost open access into a viable reality. So, instead of asking ourselves how to stop the unstoppable... Let's ask ourselves how we're going to make openness work for us.

## **Science**

Imagine you are living in Europe in the year 2030. What does your society look like, where do you live and what occupies your time? Over the next 15 years, change will not only continue; it will be accelerated by technological possibilities and the growing interconnections between science and society. For policy-makers in Europe, scientific, engineering and technological innovations offer opportunities to improve life for European citizens and provide benefits for sustainable development worldwide. Cross-disciplinary and integrated foresight thinking is essential to prepare for many of the possible futures we face and to manage the accompanying risks. We emphasise the plurality of possible futures, because it is important to remember that the future we get and the way we will be able to address tomorrow's challenges will be shaped by our actions today. Science for health and medical care: In a few years, 20% of the European population will be over 65 years old , with a resulting increase in diseases such as dementia, diabetes, arthritis and cancer . The rapid evolution of antibiotic resistant bacteria means that simple bacterial infections that are now treated with common antibiotics, will again become life-threatening. This already causes a large number of deaths amongst those whose immune systems are compromised. Science for Environment, climate and energy: Future worldwide settlements will be affected by demographic change and environmental conditions. Globally, more than 50% of people

live in cities and the UN predicts that around two thirds of the global population will be urbanised by 2050 . In contrast, in certain parts of the industrialised world (such as in former East Germany), cities are shrinking due to a population decline or migrations caused by economic recession, challenging the economic viability of public infrastructures. Mega-cities with more than 10 million inhabitants will compete with each other on a global scale and consume and emit on a massive scale; shaping such cities to reduce their ecological impact will be a challenge. Anthropogenic global warming, intensified land use, significant sea-level rise, extreme weather and reduced precipitation in the subtropics will render many settlements unsustainable, and eventually uninhabitable.

We think the most urgent issue to discuss is education. It is important that we establish a common European basis, so get equal opportunities between countries.

Moreover, the entrance of immigrants and their children in European countries and their integration into these raises many problems and this is an issue that needs immediate solution. An issue that have to be addressed is the education and their integration and mainly their second generation. The fact that they do not know the native language of the country and the habits and manners , constitutes an obstacle to join it, and particularly in educational system. First of all, it is important to inform indigenous and children of every country for coexistence and rights of these people and the same be done with immigrants . On the other hand, is useful to be sent voluntary teachers in areas where are many immigrants in order to start some learning programs in domestic language and culture. More generally, volunteering can be very useful in the case of refugees because it incurred by each Member less expensively while it gives alongside opportunities for learning and integration of these people.

**Our proposals to the Parliament are:**

- Europe needs a common educational system. We must ensure that all citizens of the European Union have the same educational opportunities. This would be easier to achieve if all EU countries have the same educational curriculum.
- Another issue we should point out is the need to know the different EU languages. In this way it should give more importance to languages. This would encourage employment opportunities within the Union.

**ECR**

The current policies and structures of the European Union, largely designed to meet the needs of the 1950s, make it unfit to meet the challenges of the 2050s. This must change. Europe needs a new direction if it is to respect the rights of its member states and fulfill the expectations of their citizens. It needs a fresh approach that is not stuck in the past but embraces the changes needed to build a better future. It needs new policies to modernise the economy so its industries and business can be competitive in the global marketplace. It needs reform so it is able to generate jobs and prosperity in the century ahead.

The ECR is at the forefront of generating forward-looking policy proposals to design a European Union that can support its member states by focusing on areas where common action can offer added value to achieve shared goals. Unconstrained by out of date dogmas and an obsession with the past, the ECR seeks to develop new ideas that can change Europe for the better in a demanding international environment.

To this end, the ECR has established Policy Groups to develop new options for reform. On this website we will keep you updated about their progress and share with you their ideas for change. We very much hope you will join in the debate and contribute your own thoughts and suggestions about how the European Union should change to help its member states and their citizens thrive in the twenty-first century.

### **Current problems with education**

A high quality education is still overly dependent on socio-economic factors and not open to all. In the context of the economic crisis, the youth unemployment rate in the EU is 23 per cent. At the same time, the OECD has found a significant gap between the skills of citizens and those that employers look for. Employers are not finding digital skills required by technological advances. The economic crisis has also forced countries to cut public spending. Even though education spending can help economic growth, over half of EU Member States have cut spending on education and training.

### **MAIN ECR PRIORITIES**

The ECR Group always keeps focus on European added value in the field of Culture and Education policies in the EU.

The European Parliament's Culture and Education committee is responsible for education, culture, youth, sport and the cultural and educational aspects of the EU's media policy. While we recognise that education policy is the sovereign domain of Member States, there is a great deal of benefit to be had in improving cooperation and the exchange of best practice between countries. For this reason we closely follow the implementation of the Bologna Process, which is based on a declaration signed in 1999 that attempts to promote comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications. We believe that along with pursuing cooperation amongst signatory countries, (there are currently 47), the Bologna Process can positively contribute to improving skills and employability, and help students and higher education institutions to succeed in an increasingly competitive global environment.

The ECR Group has always supported mobility and exchange programs seeing in them a real added value for Europeans. The Erasmus+ Program offers opportunities to participants from education, training, youth and sport organizations to study, work, volunteer, teach and train abroad in other EU countries. Therefore overseeing the successful implementation of Erasmus+, with its seven year budget of €14.7 billion, is a key priority for the ECR's members. In the field of Culture the ECR Group tries to safeguard and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and to promote Europe's cultural heritage.

We promote facilities for the cultural and creative sector and better cooperation amongst artists and creators at European level. ECR Members also strive to balance the varying interests of improving access to culture whilst at the same time protecting the rights of authors. In today's society we face an evolving model of accessibility to cultural content, such as music and films online, and with it the need to put in place a legal system that reflects this emerging reality faced by consumers and rights holders.

## **ALDE**

Education is one of the pillars that sustain our society, especially when it comes to the promotion of skills development, growth and job creation. Education is a vital instrument to tackle social inequalities, youth unemployment, and foster social inclusion. That is why we need Education to be included in the Europe 2020 strategy. We need a better regulated process for the recognition of higher education diplomas among the different countries. This is the only way to foster coordination among national agencies and evaluate, improve the quality of education in Europe. Furthermore, ALDE calls on the countries of the European Higher Education Area to implement the agreed reforms, and stresses the importance of guaranteeing the mutual recognition of academic degrees. The European Parliament recalls the European higher education area can become a reference of academic excellence worldwide. EU can bring important added value to national education strategies. An example is given by the extremely successful mobility programme. Cross-border mobility and experience are essential to the functioning of the European labour market and will ultimately drive economic growth. Especially in times of austerity it is absolutely essential to continue investing ambitiously in human capital and improve the employability of young people. Student mobility is a key contributor to helping students find the most suitable education. Studying abroad can greatly contribute to acquiring additional skills valued by employers such as languages and flexibility. European Liberals and Democrats consider mobility in vocational education and training (VET) essential for ensuring personal development, improvement of language skills and employability. While most university students participate in exchange programmes, still only 1% of apprentices and other young people currently in professional training are involved in a mobility programme. ALDE report shall draw the Commission's and Member States' attention to the need to implement measures to foster mobility in vocational education, such as creating a one-stop shop to centralise information and to facilitate contacts among all actors involved in mobility programmes. Experience-oriented education and of course the learning and training mobility within it, incorporates inputs from the business environment and enables participants to react in a flexible way to the rapidly changing world. This becomes increasingly important since the labour market demands professional and real-world knowledge and skills. If adequately developed, VET can help talented youths and adults break out of unemployment and reach their full potential. Even amid the economic crisis, Europe is facing acute shortage of skilled labour. Parallel with the unemployment queues, an estimated 2 million unfilled jobs are available across Europe. While the problem has traditionally been linked to low-skilled jobs, filling jobs in high-skill sectors, such as

engineering and IT, is also becoming increasingly challenging. European education and training systems need investment, updating and reform if the right skills for employability are to be delivered. The mismatch between education and skills and the demands of the labour market highlights the need for reform. Investment in education systems offers a practical approach to addressing the skills gap which is exacerbating the youth unemployment crisis. By 2020, 20% more jobs will require higher level skills, yet at present 70 million Europeans have low or no formal qualifications. These disparities must be tackled. We all see massive untapped and hidden potential across Europe. But it is very worrying that large gaps also exist between EU countries. Obviously, better collaboration, better sharing, and better utilisation of talent across the EU could be a real game-changer in the long term, as this will have a positive impact on growth, learning, jobs, and eventually Europe's competitiveness. The EU shall finally moves towards a common vocational education and training. This initiative will enhance social cohesion and integration and will sustain innovation, growth and employment. The Commission has to ensure support to the Erasmus+ projects. This should be done by providing sufficient financial means and by broadening their capacity to provide mobility in VET programs. However, this program is not just about investing in education in other countries, thereby broadening the horizons of students. Erasmus clearly strengthens cross-cultural communication and mutual understanding, and enables young people to experience the very rich, colourful and beautiful mosaic of diversity in Europe For these reasons we should highlight the importance of EU funding and European institutions' contributions to help Member States preserve and promote cultural heritage, while putting forward solutions to reach its full social, economic and environmental potential. Cultural heritage is a core element of our identity. In the midst of the current crisis of European identity and values, this report aims to put cultural heritage higher on the political agenda. We suggest some concrete changes in order to improve both the European policy in the field and the implementation of the European programmes and actions in relation to cultural heritage. To name just a few, the report calls for the designation of a European Year for Cultural Heritage as well as for the creation of a single EU Portal with information on European funding available for cultural heritage through the European programmes. The group of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) underlines the importance of supporting, protecting and promoting languages that are at risk of disappearing. When languages are lost, most of the knowledge that went with them gets lost. ALDE calls on Member States to propose action plans for the promotion of endangered languages based on shared good practices already available within a number of language communities in Europe. The variety of languages tells us a lot about the variety of ways in which we can approach and view issues. Each language is also essential to its native speakers as a source of identity. Languages deserve protection. Some 255 languages are spoken in Europe, half of which have a threatened status. Of these, 90 have been identified as seriously endangered or in a critical situation. These endangered languages include the Sami languages spoken in Northern Finland, for example, where we are working to ensure their survival by providing extra funding for Sami language primary school instruction, as well as for Sami media, including radio and TV. Endangered languages need to be effectively protected throughout the EU. The Basque language is in good health in the south of the Basque country, but is endangered in the Basque speaking areas of France. We propose concrete measures that will help to

avoid such differences in cross border regions. In addition we will depoliticise the debate on the preservation and teaching of minority languages. The European Parliament defends the basic rights of the people who speak these languages. It also calls on the EU to support teaching methodologies and early learning for these languages, thereby contributing to preserve and revitalise them. If the European Union wants to stay competitive vis à vis its main competitors, the European Union should raise the level of research and development (R&D) as quickly as possible. Furthermore, R&D can accelerate the EU's transition to an eco-efficient economy using substantially fewer fossil fuels. Transition to an eco-efficient economy. So far the Commission's consultation on the EU 2020 strategy provides no concrete proposals. The Commission must strive to make low carbon technology, and wind energy available to all countries by enhanced cooperation between universities, the Commission and business. With over 40% of CO2 emissions coming from inefficient buildings, zero-emitting buildings must be a priority. The Commissioner should explore the possibilities of allocating a higher level of structural funds towards improvements in the efficiency of buildings.

## **GUE/NGL**

In the vision of GUE/NGL party, some of the ultimate goals of the European integration process are represented by the fight for more and better jobs and educational opportunities, for a respectful way to deal with our earth and its resources, for cultural exchange and diversity, for sustainable economic development and for equal rights for women and men.

The group is involved in several debates which deal with science, education, research and innovation.

### **High-quality education for all**

Every child should have equal opportunities, that's why current educational systems need new impetus, "rethinking education". It is important to develop a social education system ensuring the right to public and free high-education to everyone with a collective investment for all because a child's future must not be determined by the origin, the financial situation, and the educational standard of its parents. In particular, education has a specific role not only in combating unemployment, but also in helping people to become active members of the society, developing their personal skills and social attitudes, and to participate in the ongoing changes and developments.

Students should be supported in the best possible way so that they can develop their personal competences thanks to a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical skills and studies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics should be encouraged.

Studying abroad thanks to the European mobility programme is very important in the individual process of growth, as well. As a matter of fact, comparative studies and research, carried out among students, reveal that all the participant demonstrate a gradual recognition and acceptance of difference in other cultures and a new objectivity about their own culture as a result of their experience.

## Science

At the global level the GUE/NGL works for ambitious targets to tackle climate change and measures to help developing countries cope with global temperature increases. This is the most urgent issue that must be discussed. The world's scientists have given their starkest warning yet that a failure to cut greenhouse-gas emissions will bring devastating climate changes within a few decades.

Many hundreds of environmental organizations all over the world call for an end to the carbon market, arguing that alternative solutions exist and can be implemented now. Not only does the carbon market fail to drive reduction of greenhouse gases, it is also in itself an obstacle to reductions and decreased dependence on fossil fuels. As everyone knows, natural resources are finite and they must not be wasted, even if our future depends on wind power, wave power and solar energy. That's why renewable resources play an important role in our life.

Individuals and communities across the world should work together in order to improve transport sustainability and to reduce energy consumption. The aim is to develop smart cities which can be able to integrate sustainable energy and transport solutions with information and communication technologies and, above all, urban areas where the quality of life can be improved through cooperative efforts.

### Several solutions can be adopted such as:

- Deploying electric and hybrid vehicles and buses in place of conventional fuel-powered ones, along with associated charging stations and management technologies;
- Retrofitting buildings and improving lighting and equipment to achieve energy savings;
- Installing domestic and district-wide heating systems that use renewable sources integrated with smart energy monitoring and control technologies.
- Developing communication technologies and platforms to manage city infrastructure and traffic.

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