



## The Estonian Presidency Programme for the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council (EYCS)

### Education

During the Estonian Presidency, we will focus on the changing role of learning and teaching, and the relationships between education and the labour market. We believe that providing all target groups with equal opportunities for high-quality education, skills and knowledge development and self-realisation throughout their lifespan contributes to the formation of an inclusive, democratic and competitive Europe.

The Estonian Presidency will proceed with the initiatives triggered by the new skills agenda, and the subsequent Commission communications on education and youth. The emphasis is on the need to modernise education, because the roles of teachers, learners and schools are changing in lifelong learning. The existing traditional approaches to teaching and learning, which have so far justified themselves, may not necessarily correspond to the expectations of the learners and societies of the future. The gaps between generations and different social groups in skills, values and behaviour are deepening, and the education system has to do its best to reduce these gaps. In particular, the Estonian Presidency aims to focus first on challenges related to modernising schools and higher education.

In respect to modernising education, reinforcing the relationships between education and the world of work requires special attention. In providing studies, schools have to, more than ever, consider the needs and abilities of their learners, and the changes in the world of work brought about by new technologies. It is important to pay attention to the quality of teaching both in schools and in work-based learning. In order to achieve better results, we have to establish regular contacts and feedback loops between education provision and labour market outcomes, and ensure the use of evidence-based information at different levels of the education system. One of the goals of the Estonian Presidency in this context is to reach an agreement on the recommendations on graduate tracking, drawing attention to data collection and studies on the success of the graduates of vocational education schools and higher education institutions in the labour market.

We also plan to continue with reviewing the Europass draft decision, the purpose of which is to establish a new web-based platform that would cover a number of different EU online tools and information about the skills, qualifications and learning opportunities offered in Europe, and to modernise e-tools for the users to document and represent their skills, qualifications and work experience. Estonia hopes to reach an agreement on the general approach at the Council level, and, if possible, continue with trilogues.

### Young people

During the Estonian Presidency the discussions on the next EU Youth Strategy will gain further momentum. In the strategy, common grounds for cooperation in youth work and youth policy starting from 2019 are agreed upon. In cooperation with our trio partners Austria and Bulgaria, we want to help create better opportunities for dialogue between youth and policy makers and ensure that the next EU Youth Strategy will be prepared with the active participation of young people.





The path of future developments is paved by smart youth work, which through digital solutions and innovation, creates new opportunities for reaching out to young people, involving them, and understanding them better. Estonia wishes to inspire the Member States to pursue this issue by introducing the concept of smart youth work in Europe, and preparing the Council conclusions on smart youth work.

Volunteering enables young people to develop their competences and contribute to solving challenges that are of importance to society. Estonia is aiming to advance discussions on the proposal for a regulation of the European Solidarity Corps, which creates new opportunities for youth to contribute to social cohesion and solidarity in Europe.

## **Audiovisual**

One of the most important goals of the Estonian Presidency is the renewal of EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive and reaching the necessary agreements with the European Parliament. Updating the Audiovisual Media Services Directive is a part of the EU Digital Single Market strategy, which aims to bring up to date the movement of content services on different platforms and create a clear and coherent legal environment for the development and distribution of services in the digital era. The updated regulation will be based on the common values, aims and principles of the EU in order to ensure a more equal treatment of providers of audiovisual media services and greater legal certainty to all participants. This, in turn, will foster more favourable conditions for the emergence and development of new services, providing consumers with more interesting content and choice.

## **Culture**

In the cultural sector, we will continue working within the framework of the Council's Work Plan for Culture (2014-2018), and concentrate on access to culture in the digital age, with a focus on audience development. Digital technologies have changed the ways people access, use and produce cultural content. Relying on the work of the open method of coordination (OMC) group, we will explore what these changes require from cultural institutions. Estonia plans to draft Council conclusions on this topic.

Estonia is ready, in close cooperation between culture and customs sectors, to proceed with the Commission proposal on import rules of cultural goods into the European Union as soon as the proposal is submitted.

We will also continue the work with the Friends of the Presidency group, started during the Maltese Presidency, which deals with the EU strategic approach to international cultural relations.

## **Sports**

In the field of sports, we wish to focus on the role of sports coaches in society. Coaches are key people in the area of sports and exercise; they interact with athletes and representatives from all demographic groups in society. In today's world, which is characterised by a rapid pace of life, computer-use and minimal physical activity, and where parents have less and less time to spend with their children, the





role of coaches in society is ever more important. We plan to adopt the Council's conclusions on the role of coaches in society, which aim to acknowledge that a coach also contributes significantly in other areas of life, such as education, health awareness, social inclusion, integration, cohesion of communities, etc. We will explore how coaches can contribute to people's personal development, and to the development of society in a wider sense, as well as to sports, and what could be done to help coaches perform better in their evolving role. Leading up to opening of the European Week of Sport, we wish to highlight the topics of physical activity and dual career of athletes.

