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## OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Council conclusions on the contribution of education and training to strengthening common European values and democratic citizenship

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Delegations will find attached the abovementioned Council conclusions, approved by the Council (Education, Youth, Culture and Sport) at its meeting on 23 November 2023.

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**Council conclusions on the contribution of education and training to strengthening common  
European values and democratic citizenship**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING that Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union states that the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

EMPHASISING the Union's commitment to promote and uphold these values and contribute to their preservation and development, as stated in Articles 3(1) and (5) of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

RECALLING THE POLITICAL CONTEXT as set out in the Annex to these conclusions.

RECOGNISING that:

1. All Member States share challenges due to the impact of economic, political, social, cultural and technological changes, to global migration and to other sources of social concern and political polarisation such as persistent socio-economic inequalities, together with the increase in divisive nationalist tendencies, xenophobia, racism, antisemitism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, interphobia and intolerance based on gender or sexual orientation, hate speech and radicalisation, leading to violent extremism. This comes on top of a difficult decade for the European Union, with the rise of populist and anti-European movements, and the disintegrative process of Brexit.
2. The recent global crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic, has also had a profound impact on our democratic societies, posing unprecedented challenges to the relationship between the state and society, the reliability of information and, ultimately, the capacity of democratic institutions to cope with rapidly changing societal needs and demands. This also impacts quality, equality and equity in education and training.

3. Russia's unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, accompanied by a steady stream of large-scale disinformation, represents not only an attack on Ukraine, but also contempt for international law and for universal values such as peace, and a direct threat to the EU as an area of peace, security and freedom.
4. Our open democratic societies depend on public debate that allows well-informed citizens to express their will and opinion through free and fair political processes. Media literacy, the safe, critical and responsible use of digital technologies with a human-centred perspective, and a proper understanding of the ongoing challenges related to mis- and disinformation are therefore essential for informed democratic participation and, ultimately, for learning processes. Developments in Artificial Intelligence, entailing both risks and opportunities, also underline the critical role of these factors, which are also key to combating stereotypes and harmful norms.
5. The challenges related to sustainable development and climate change call for a fair and inclusive green transition, as well as the need to engage and involve society as a whole in the process, and to combat controversial positions.
6. All of these challenges and risks can have consequences, such as social polarisation, political disaffection and detachment from democratic institutions and their participatory processes, which has led to growing concern in European societies. They demonstrate that there is a need to continue defending our democracies, and strengthening our common European values, as referred to in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. They have also shown the added value of the European Union in addressing these challenges and risks and in finding common solutions.

7. The ambition of achieving the European Education Area is underpinned by a series of key educational values and principles that need to continue to be strengthened, such as quality, equality, equity, success for all, inclusion, respect and diversity<sup>1</sup>.
8. In this context, education and training systems are required not only to anticipate, adapt and respond appropriately to the new challenges, but also to contribute to the future of our democracies and the EU, by shaping active, engaged and creative citizens who are aware of their shared values and able to improve their living environment. The common European set of values put forward through education and training enables and drives the socio-economic status that the EU enjoys globally.

TAKES NOTE of:

1. The EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027<sup>2</sup>, which highlights the need to equip young people with the necessary resources to become active citizens and agents of positive change inspired by EU values and a European identity<sup>3</sup>, and the EU Youth Dialogue, which emphasises the need to strengthen citizenship competences among young people and their sense of belonging to society and the European Union.
2. The EU strategy on the rights of the child<sup>4</sup>, which establishes as one of its priority thematic areas the empowerment of children to be active citizens and members of democratic societies.

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<sup>1</sup> Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) (OJ C 66, 26.2.2021, p. 1).

<sup>2</sup> Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1).

<sup>3</sup> Eleven European Youth Goals were developed in the course of the 6<sup>th</sup> cycle of the Structured Dialogue under the title 'Youth in Europe: What's next?': 'connecting EU with youth', 'equality of all genders', 'inclusive societies', 'information and constructive dialogue', 'mental health and well-being', 'moving rural youth forward', 'quality employment for all', 'quality learning', 'space and participation for all', 'sustainable green Europe' and 'youth organisations and European programmes'.

<sup>4</sup> COM(2021) 142 final.

3. The outcomes of the Conference on the Future of Europe concerning education, in which, among other things, citizens recommended developing ‘future-proof education and life-long learning in Europe’ focusing, inter alia, on ‘civic education about democratic processes, as well as EU values and history of Europe’ and ‘guaranteeing a minimum level of education on the EU and especially its democratic processes, including the history of European integration and European citizenship’<sup>5</sup>.
4. The 2021 and 2022 European Parliament resolutions proposing a comprehensive set of recommendations for a renewed European citizenship education and highlighting the will to encourage a European common identity through, among other things, a common academic programme, and to strongly integrate a European dimension into education<sup>6</sup>, and a common framework on citizenship education with a European dimension, including learning about European values and the development of common pedagogical material and approaches<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Conference on the Future of Europe – Report on the Final Outcome, May 2022 (Plenary proposals 46 and 37).

<sup>6</sup> European Parliament resolution of 6 April 2022 on the implementation of citizenship education actions (2021/2008(INI)) (OJ C 434, 15.11.2022, p. 31).

<sup>7</sup> European Parliament resolution of 11 November 2021 on the European Education Area: a shared holistic approach (2020/2243(INI)) (OJ C 205, 20.5.2022, p. 17).

5. The Commission's communication of 18 November 2022 on progress towards the achievement of the European Education Area<sup>8</sup>, which invites Member States, other EU institutions and stakeholders to reflect together on deep challenges and future-oriented measures such as 'enhancing European citizenship education', as well as the Union of Equality strategies<sup>9</sup> adopted by the Commission, which emphasise the important role of quality and inclusive education and training as an enabler for progress towards a Union of equality for all, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

UNDERLINES the vital role of education and training in shaping the future of Europe. The actions associated with the strategic priorities established by the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) involve, among other things, bringing a European perspective to education and training, and providing learners with an insight into what Europe and the Union mean in their daily lives. That means enhancing critical thinking and promoting civic, intercultural and social competences, mutual understanding and respect, and ownership of democratic values and fundamental and human rights in all levels and types of education and training.

STRESSES that, in the context of the mid-term review process of the European Education Area, in its Resolution of May 2023 on 'The European Education Area: Looking to 2025 and beyond'<sup>10</sup>, the Council recognises that particular attention should be paid to improving the acquisition of key competences to enable the full personal, social, civic and professional development of all European citizens.

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<sup>8</sup> COM(2022) 700 final.

<sup>9</sup> Five equality strategies were adopted in 2020 and 2021 to make progress towards a Union of Equality: the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (COM(2020) 152 final); the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (COM(2020) 698 final); the EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025 (COM(2020) 565 final); the EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation 2020-2030 (COM(2020) 620 final); and the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 (COM(2021) 101 final).

<sup>10</sup> OJ C 185, 26.5.2023, p. 35.

AGREES that:

1. Education for democratic citizenship contributes to strengthening Europe's resilience in times of crises, as well as of rapid and profound changes, and must have a central place in education and training policies, as it is the gateway to learning about common European values and democratic citizenship. This is particularly relevant, not only in the context of education and training, but also for society as a whole, which must be actively involved. All citizens in the EU (including newcomers and those with a migrant background) need to develop the necessary competences to participate actively and responsibly in our societies.
2. Education for democratic citizenship should be based on the development of key competences, including the social, cultural and emotional dimensions, as well as the ability for critical thinking and reflection. It should be based on teaching and learning through, about and for democracy and, in particular, on citizenship competence as the ability to act as a responsible citizen and fully participate in civic and social life<sup>11</sup>, both offline and online, not only at local and national level, but also at European and international level. In this regard, education for democratic citizenship should be linked to education for global citizenship and education for sustainable development, and to respect for human rights as a basis for democracy, and in its European dimension should involve, among other elements and in accordance with national circumstances:

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<sup>11</sup> As defined in the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1).

- a) understanding the common European values that underpin the Union<sup>12</sup>;
  - b) having a knowledge of the history of European integration, the EU, its aims and the functioning of its institutions, so that all citizens are in a position to reflect on its relevance and added value and can participate actively in European democratic processes;
  - c) having the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable practical and active engagement in the democratic processes in the EU<sup>13</sup>;
  - d) becoming more aware of diversity and of European and global cultural identities.
3. It is essential to foster common European values and democratic citizenship in all levels and types of education and training, and for people of all ages. This involves exploring new educational and training actions at national and European level, as well as reinforcing existing ones, and also the willingness to cooperate and agree, where appropriate, on common tools, content, approaches, definitions and objectives, in order to respond to what European citizens need and expect, and to continue to contribute to the European project and its defence against internal and external threats.

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<sup>12</sup> As expressed in Article 2 TEU and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

<sup>13</sup> For example, through the European Citizens' Initiative.

INVITES MEMBER STATES, with due regard to institutional autonomy and academic freedom, and in accordance with national circumstances, to:

1. STRENGTHEN the promotion of common European values and democratic citizenship as vectors for cohesion and inclusion<sup>14</sup>, in all levels and types of education and training (formal, non-formal and informal) from an early age and throughout life. To this end:
  - a) ENCOURAGE the development of citizenship education, based on citizenship competence and other competences, as part of national education and training policies, strategies and plans, in all levels and types, and especially throughout compulsory education and vocational education and training (VET), as well as throughout other public institutions such as libraries.
  - b) ENHANCE knowledge and understanding of the EU, especially of its history, its symbols, its aims and functioning, including its interrelation with Member States' democratic processes, as well as of major issues shaping European political life.
  - c) SUPPORT the strengthening of a positive and inclusive sense of identity and belonging at local, regional, national and EU level, based on common European values.
  - d) RAISE AWARENESS of the relevance of formal, non-formal and informal cultural education and training to facilitate knowledge both of the diversity of European societies and of their common values and cultural references.

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<sup>14</sup> Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching (OJ C 195, 7.6.2018, p. 1).

- e) **STRENGTHEN** essential links between, on the one hand, education on common European values and democratic citizenship and, on the other hand, education for sustainable development and education for digital citizenship, enabling European learners and citizens to adapt to and participate and engage actively in democratic, fair, sustainable and digital societies, through a lifelong learning process.
  - f) Taking into consideration social challenges such as digital security and privacy, cyberbullying, disinformation, hate speech and radicalisation, **ENHANCE** effective media literacy, especially in digital contexts and social networks, with a special focus on critical thinking and ethical awareness, with a view to empowering people to make informed decisions.
2. **INCORPORATE** a permanent concern for attention to equality and diversity into the specific context of the teaching of common European values and democratic citizenship. In this respect:
- a) **BUILD** a culture of inclusion with mechanisms to detect and take action against possible dynamics of exclusion, discrimination and violence based on grounds such as origin, membership of minority groups, disability, gender, sexual orientation or other personal or social conditions.
  - b) **FOSTER** actions focused on newcomers to the EU to facilitate the acquisition of a citizenship competence, bearing in mind their cultural frameworks of origin and, in accordance with national circumstances, **ENCOURAGE** the development of educational and training materials, projects and processes based on an intercultural approach.

3. FOSTER high-quality, innovative, participative and inclusive educational guidelines, content, methodologies and education and training actions, adapted to the context of the European Union and to the specific characteristics of the different education and training systems, which facilitate the development of citizenship competence, the acquisition of common European values and learning about the EU. Accordingly, and where appropriate:
- a) ACKNOWLEDGE that cooperation with international organisations can help reinforce the development of citizenship competence and the acquisition of common European values. In particular, with regard to the Council of Europe, MAKE BETTER USE of the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education and of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in the context of the EU. TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION its initiatives and tools for promoting democracy and human rights and for reinforcing knowledge of our common European history and awareness of our unity within the multicultural dimension of European societies<sup>15</sup>.
  - b) PROMOTE cooperation through the exchange of good practices among education and training institutions and all relevant educational actors at EU level on curriculum development, delivery and assessment. CONSIDER EXPLORING cooperation on common content and approaches.
  - c) INCLUDE diverse learners, generating easy-to-read materials with global accessibility, adapting formats and content to the different groups.

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<sup>15</sup> In this respect, consolidated initiatives such as the European Centre for Modern Languages or more recent ones such as the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe can be taken into account.

- d) FOSTER volunteering and non-formal and informal education and training activities in the development of competences related to the promotion of common values, solidarity, social commitment and democratic citizenship. PROMOTE the recognition and updating of such formative experiences, for example through micro-credentials.
  - e) FACILITATE a digital approach and PROMOTE the generation of informative, educational and communicative content related to democratic citizenship and common European values, in formats adapted to the new channels of the information and communication society.
4. SUPPORT education and training institutions to facilitate an appropriate environment that provides opportunities for exercising and learning about citizenship and democratic participation through practice. To this end:
- a) ELIMINATE all types of discrimination and segregation in learning environments, so that they are safe and inclusive spaces, free from violence of any kind, and consistent with the values of pluralism, tolerance, respect, justice, solidarity, equity and gender equality.
  - b) PROMOTE the right of children and young people to be heard and fully participate in the social, educational, cultural, artistic and recreational life of their environment, in order to facilitate the progressive learning of active citizenship.

- c) ENCOURAGE the involvement of learners, teachers, trainers, educators, leaders of education and training institutions, parents, families and carers in participatory bodies, whether formal or informal, and collaboration and exchange between them.
- d) FURTHER PROMOTE cooperation between higher education institutions, schools, training centres, youth organisations, cultural institutions and the whole community, as synergies between formal, non-formal and informal education and training, with a whole-school approach, so that all of their members<sup>16</sup> participate actively and collaboratively and contribute to generating a positive, safe and trustworthy space that promotes the well-being of learners, teachers and educators.
- e) PROVIDE adequate support and resources to teachers, trainers, educators, leaders of education and training institutions, parents, families and carers in their key role of helping learners develop competences for social and civic life and for exercising democratic citizenship.
- f) FOSTER the acquisition of competences related to common European values and democratic citizenship in the initial training, induction and continuous professional development of leaders of education and training institutions, teachers and trainers at all levels. REINFORCE the value of these formative experiences in the access to and development of the teaching profession.

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<sup>16</sup> Including leaders of education and training institutions, teachers, trainers and other teaching staff, pupils, students, parents, families, legal guardians and carers, as well as other stakeholders: youth services, youth workers, local authorities, non-governmental organisations, companies, unions, volunteers, etc.

g) PROMOTE the democratisation and transformation of education and training institutions into role models for the construction of citizenship values, fostering governance and participation within their organisational and management processes on the basis of common European values.

5. PROMOTE the participation of education and training institutions, teachers, educational staff and leaders in existing instruments, programmes and initiatives at European, national, regional and local level that prioritise and enhance the teaching and promotion of common European values, democratic citizenship, civic engagement, a knowledge of the Union and its functioning, and active participation in democratic processes. Likewise, FOSTER greater visibility and dissemination, as well as innovation and the exchange of good practices, in these areas.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, in line with its competence, to:

1. GIVE MORE RELEVANCE to education on common European values and the promotion of democratic citizenship in the education and training policy agenda. For this purpose:
  - a) CONSIDER INCORPORATING it as a reinforced and more visible dimension in proposals for the further development of the European Education Area by 2025 and for the second (2026-2030) cycle of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030).

- b) FURTHER PROMOTE the dissemination and exchange of good practices, peer learning activities and information on measures which foster the development of common values, a sense of belonging to the EU and citizenship competence, and which improve the quality of citizenship education in all Member States, including through the use of digital technologies. Continuously REINFORCE networking, cooperation and research, in order to have the best evidence and information, and share the best educational practices in this field.
  - c) REINFORCE synergies and coordination between policies in areas related to common values and democratic citizenship, especially those aimed at children and young people, in order to increase their systemic impact.
  - d) PROMOTE the importance of the recognition of national and transnational experiences, educational and training projects and inspirational figures related to common European values, democratic citizenship, and knowledge of the European Union and its democratic processes, for example through labels, badges and other relevant initiatives.
  - e) PROMOTE the organisation of common and symbolic celebrations, competitions, simulations and initiatives as ways of experiencing democracy and bringing the reality of the European Union closer to the educational community<sup>17</sup>, at both national and European level.
2. PROMOTE education for digital citizenship and ADVANCE value-based digital transformation in education and training through the development of approaches centred on human rights and digital humanism<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> Such as the negotiation simulation events for pupils and students organised by EU institutions, including the Council (ConSIMium) and the European Parliament (Euroscola and the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme), or other initiatives with the Member States' collaboration (Back to School programme).

<sup>18</sup> Digital humanism offers a human-centric approach to navigating digitalisation and regulating frontier technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, ensuring human agency when confronted with automated decision-making systems.

3. SUPPORT interaction and understanding among all European citizens. To this end:
- a) ENCOURAGE mobility, twinning and transnational cooperation within the entire European educational community — pupils, students, trainees, teachers, educational staff, volunteers and leaders — in all levels and types of education and training. EMPHASISE the potential of mobility and exchanges in training for intercultural dialogue, active citizenship, the promotion of common values and the development of a sense of belonging to the European Union, as well as in strengthening the European dimension of education and in experiencing being European in a more intense and direct way.
  - b) REINFORCE learning and knowledge of the languages (including regional and minority languages) and cultures of the Member States, where appropriate and in formal, non-formal and informal settings<sup>19</sup>, in order to promote the understanding and unity of all Europeans in their diverse identities, as well as the development of citizenship competence.
4. STRENGTHEN and DEEPEN European and international cooperation in education and training on the basis of our common European values and the key educational values and principles that define European education and training systems. Accordingly:

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<sup>19</sup> To this end, it is worth continuing to support the use of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment.

- a) In all levels and types of education and training, where appropriate, DRAW INSPIRATION from the European integration developments carried out within the European Higher Education Area and the European strategy empowering higher education institutions<sup>20</sup> — such as the European Universities Alliances, or within the VET sector, the Centres of Vocational Excellence — to deepen cooperation and progress towards a European Education Area rooted in our common European values.
- b) CONTINUE TO COOPERATE to further develop more rigorous quality assurance systems in order to strengthen common quality standards, transparency, recognition and mobility in the European Education Area and the European Higher Education Area, as well as to contribute to a more cohesive Europe.
- c) CONTINUE to gradually EXTEND and REINFORCE this value-based cooperation not only to candidate partners but also to third countries, especially those of the European Neighbourhood, to promote links and enhance education, training and research systems worldwide. All this will contribute to reinforcing knowledge of the European Union, promote the shared values of the Union and its Member States, facilitate international political dialogue and European diplomacy, as well as foster the development of democratic citizenship.

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<sup>20</sup> Council conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe (OJ C 167, 21.4.2022, p. 9).

INVITES THE COMMISSION, in line with the Treaties, and with due regard for subsidiarity and national circumstances, to:

1. RAISE the profile of citizenship education and give more prominence and visibility to the contribution that the education and training sector can make to European initiatives and strategies related to strengthening common European values, democratic citizenship and knowledge of the EU.
2. In cooperation with the Member States, STRENGTHEN and PRIORITISE democratic citizenship education in the European Education Area strategic framework working groups, and especially in the Working Group on Equality and Values in Education and Training.
3. INCORPORATE democratic citizenship education and common European values into the existing monitoring processes of education and training systems and policies, avoiding additional administrative burdens on the Member States. To this end:
  - a) Taking into account comparable international data sources already available or forthcoming, USE the expertise of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks to EXPLORE the development of an improved approach to quantitative and qualitative indicators in the field of citizenship competence in the EU, both for those already available and those under development.
  - b) INCLUDE the monitoring of the development of citizenship competence in the forthcoming editions of the Education and Training Monitor, as one of the key competences of national education and training systems, insofar as new data and other evidence are available, alongside updates on national policy measures.

4. CONTRIBUTE to increasing knowledge and supporting Member States to have key data and tools to reflect on, identify lessons learned and advance in their educational practices, while avoiding additional administrative burdens on the Member States, which could decide to participate on a voluntary basis in the initiatives envisaged. For this purpose:
- a) DEVELOP more comparative and evidence-informed studies, reports and research on a regular basis, to deepen knowledge of what is being done in education and training systems towards the development of citizenship competence and its effects on learning outcomes, the promotion of common European values, democratic citizenship and knowledge of the EU<sup>21</sup>. Therefore, and among other things:
- DRAW UP a compendium of the many initiatives and good practices that Member States implement on all these topics, in order to have a more comprehensive overview.
  - PRODUCE a new Eurydice report on citizenship education and training in European education and training institutions.
  - PROMOTE specific studies and surveys at European level to evaluate the degree of knowledge of the EU and its functioning, the sense of belonging, active participation and knowledge of the rights and duties that come with being European citizens, linking education and training with the youth, culture and justice sectors, among others.

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<sup>21</sup> The most recent International Civic and Citizenship Education Study from the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement dates back to 2016, and the latest Eurydice report on citizenship education in European schools from the Commission to 2017.

- b) Building on the outcomes of the work of the Working Group on Equality and Values in Education and Training, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, and using its Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture as a basis, CONSIDER the possibility of DEVELOPING a specific, complementary competence framework for active and democratic citizenship education adapted to the context of the EU, for learners and educators. This would also allow for the assessment of competences in a similar way to other existing EU frameworks<sup>22</sup>, seeking synergies with them.
- c) DEVELOP guidelines on methodology, content and teacher training to improve the supply and quality of democratic citizenship education in all Member States to serve as a reference for policymakers.
- d) PROMOTE, as a voluntary option for the Member States, the development of specific training modules on democratic citizenship education in the EU for teachers, trainers, and leaders, as well as for policymakers, grounded in common European values, democratic citizenship, EU citizenship competence and other related key competences, in particular through relevant EU programmes<sup>23</sup> and online platforms such as the European School Education Platform (ESEP).

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<sup>22</sup> For example, GreenComp, DigComp, LifeComp and EntreComp.

<sup>23</sup> For example, through the Erasmus+ programme and initiatives such as the Erasmus+ Teacher Academies.

5. As far as the Erasmus+ programme<sup>24</sup> is concerned, GIVE FURTHER IMPETUS to the fourth of the overarching priorities of the implementation of the programme, ‘participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement’, as well as knowledge of the EU and mobility. To this end:
- a) In the implementation of these actions, EMPHASISE the need to learn more about the EU, its aims, democratic processes and functioning, and the added value it represents. For this purpose, and among other things, CONSIDER INCORPORATING tools to ensure better knowledge of the EU and common European values, prior to or in parallel with a learning mobility or cooperation partnership, such as a learning module adapted to the age and profile of the participant. Due care should be taken to avoid creating barriers to access to the programme.
  - b) EMPHASISE citizenship education and common European values in the training modules and learning opportunities carried out under the ‘Erasmus+ Teacher Academies’ initiative.
  - c) CONTINUE STRENGTHENING the coordination, visibility and dissemination of all the EU-level initiatives contributing to the reinforcement of common European values and EU democratic citizenship, and to the creation of genuine networks of interactions with the capacity to involve the education and training community in the shared construction of the EU, such as eTwinning and the European School Education Platform, the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE), the Jean Monnet actions, the Alliances of European Universities or the Centres of Vocational Excellence.

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<sup>24</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing Erasmus+: the Union Programme for education and training, youth and sport and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 (OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 1).

- d) CONTINUE REMOVING bureaucratic barriers and FACILITATE participation in the programme, taking into account the specific circumstances of small institutions and those in rural, remote, peripheral and less developed areas and outermost regions, or disadvantaged environments.
  - e) FURTHER LINK the actions of the programme with other initiatives under the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme<sup>25</sup> or the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programme<sup>26</sup>.
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<sup>25</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/692 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1381/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (EU) No 390/2014 (OJ L 156, 5.5.2021, p. 1).

<sup>26</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/888 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the European Solidarity Corps Programme and repealing Regulations (EU) 2018/1475 and (EU) No 375/2014 (OJ L 202, 8.6.2021, p. 32).

Political background

*Council of the European Union*

1. Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1).
2. Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching (OJ C 195, 7.6.2018, p. 1).
3. Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on fostering democratic awareness and democratic engagement among young people in Europe (OJ C 415, 1.12.2020, p. 16).
4. Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) (OJ C 66, 26.2.2021, p. 1).
5. Council conclusions on equity and inclusion in education and training in order to promote educational success for all (OJ C 221, 10.6.2021, p. 3).
6. Council Recommendation of 5 April 2022 on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation (OJ C 160, 13.4.2022, p. 1).
7. Council conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe (OJ C 167, 21.4.2022, p. 9).
8. Council conclusions on skills and competences for the green transition (OJ C 95, 14.3.2023, p. 3).
9. Council resolution on ‘The European Education Area: Looking to 2025 and beyond’ (OJ C 185, 26.5.2023, p. 35).

### *Ministerial declarations*

10. Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education (Paris, 17 March 2015).

### *European Commission*

11. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture: The European Commission's contribution to the Leaders' meeting in Gothenburg, 17 November 2017 (COM(2017) 673 final).
12. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 (COM(2020) 625 final).
13. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on progress towards the achievement of the European Education Area (COM(2022) 700 final).

### *European Parliament*

14. European Parliament resolution of 11 November 2021 on the European Education Area: a shared holistic approach (2020/2243(INI)) (OJ C 205, 20.5.2022, p. 17).
15. European Parliament resolution of 6 April 2022 on the implementation of citizenship education actions (2021/2008(INI)) (OJ C 434, 15.11.2022, p. 31).

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