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# FINAL DOCUMENT - AMENDED

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# READING GUIDE

In what follows, the final version of the Documents drafted by each of the four roundtables is provided:

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 1. Common Defence and Anti-terrorism                 | pg. 1  |
| 2. Digital Single Market                             | pg. 4  |
| 3. International Cooperation and Neighbouring Policy | pg. 7  |
| 4. Education   | pg. 13 |

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# FULL DOCUMENT

## COMMON DEFENCE AND ANTI-TERRORISM

*Recognizing* the worrisome trends in the global geopolitical scenario,  
*We underline* the need and responsibility for the European Union to acknowledge these developments and adapt its policies accordingly.

*Considering* the need to find a sustainable balance between hard and soft power to guarantee security and enhance and sustain long-lasting peace and democracy,

*We believe* that the Union should avoid any tendency to over-militarize its security policy; consequently, the EU should develop sufficient resources in its non-violent, pre-emptive capacities, including measures promoting peace and diplomacy.

*The Union should consider* hard power primarily as a necessary tool to guarantee the impact of soft power and manage it in an efficient and effective way, with military interventions being a last resort.

*Recognizing* the progress achieved on joint defence R&D efforts, and understanding that the next intermediate steps will necessarily address defence industry consolidation and efficient procurement, the EU should start developing strategic instruments, such as a shared strategic culture, continental security doctrine and power projection.

*Considering* the recent development of the PESCO,

*We believe* this to be an excellent opportunity to increase standardization of equipment across member countries, to eliminate unnecessary logistical complications in a crisis scenario. Such practice would induce cost savings by taking advantage of economies of scale on R&D, procurement and maintenance, and facilitate the provision of necessary material.

*We also recognize* that PESCO could strengthen the position of EU Member States in NATO, by coordinating the strategic aims among PESCO members.

*We suggest* that, in order to enhance the structured cooperation, the Union should further develop the specialization process of Member States, recalling the role of the Country Framework in R&D and production of armaments. We also support the provision of larger powers to the European Defence Agency, to enhance the technical capacities of all Member States.

*We highlight* the ability of Member States to participate to varying extents in multi-speed projects, both on the level of involvement and participation. We further recognize that the benefits of the project should reflect the degree of commitment of Member States.

*Considering* the previously mentioned elements, we recognize that the PESCO also provides a unique opportunity to help overcome the East-West divisions within the Union.

*Recognizing* the results of the UK referendum of June 2016, and *being aware* that the Brexit scenario will significantly weaken the EU defence capabilities,

*We hope* to see that the current levels of cooperation won't be dramatically reduced in light of Brexit.

*We encourage* that, despite Brexit, there will still be efforts to pool resources, technological know-how and continued reciprocal operational support. Considering also the key role played by the UK in terms of transatlantic relations, we fully support the maximum British involvement in future EU Defence Projects, with the potential development of a unique consultative and/or interactive status.

*We acknowledge* that Brexit poses challenges and immediate repercussions to current balance of powers within NATO and therefore requires, France and Germany's roles in particular within the Alliance to be redefined in accordance with the EU Agenda and interests.

*We also recognize* that the proportion of the EU's natural gas market will change dramatically when the UK leaves the Union. The leverage Russia's "Energy Weapon" and energy blackmail can exert will be considerably more pronounced and effective against the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkans. We therefore encourage Member States to ambitiously pursue mitigation measures such as, but not limited to, an Energy Union, diversified source portfolios, and emergency gas provisions to mitigate the effectiveness of these tactics.

*Acknowledging* the importance of cooperation within the EU in Security Affairs, taking into account capacity-building as one primary strategy to address defence challenges, *We suggest* a further development of the Military Exchange Programme, and the improvement of the know-how sharing for both students and trainers, by investing in the TOT (Training of Trainers)

*We call* for a Panel of Experts to be established by the EU Military Committee, with the task of researching further options of closer cooperation in military training and capacity building.

*We also highlight* the need to foster civilian higher education security curricula, to create a pan-European strategic culture. Defence cannot concern just policy makers with military background.

*Given* the current issues in coordination for operations on the ground,

*We suggest* shifting the command over EU policing and military training missions to decentralized regional headquarters, encouraged to lodge requests for resources at the European level and create a constant information loop between EU institutions, Member states and local realities.

*Given* the recent developments following the approval of PESCO, the technical nature of the subject and the need for an in-depth analysis that would help open the debate on the future of European Defence,

*We require* further elaboration on the matter, through the drafting by the Political and Security Committee of a concrete proposal that should clarify the following elements on the possible development of a European Army:

- Distinction needs to be made between an offensive and a defensive approach; considering the values of peace, democracy and rule of law which are at the heart of the European Union, our preliminary analysis leans towards a defensive stance;
- Following the theories of integration which are applied to the EU Institutions, a decision should be made with regard to whether this entity should exist in a supranational or an intergovernmental capacity. Should the Union opt for a supranational organisational structure, the decision-making power would lie in the hands of the Parliament, in order to provide the Army with a direct democratic mandate. However, we recognise that such a system could undermine the efficacy of the decision-making process, thus an alternative could be an intergovernmental solution. In this case, authority would be delegated to the Council of the EU;
- A further element to be defined would be whether participation in such an army should be compulsory or on a voluntary basis. Compulsory participation may be regarded as a significant step toward integration, however, we recognise that military decisions are at the core of a State's foreign policy. We also respect that there are certain Member States who follow a policy of neutrality in military matters;
- Following from the last point, decisions should be taken on the possibility for Member States to opt for different speeds of integration of their national armed forces into a united European army;
- All aforementioned elements should be considered in compliance with the best practices of transparency and accountability;
- *We also require* further elaboration on alternative proposals to the European Army, in terms of increased cooperation between national armed forces, beyond the framework of PESCO.

*Considering the practice of defensive forces,*

The only exceptions of this would be constituted when addressing an international crisis that is working in conjunction with an intervention that the UNSC has mandated, under Article 7 of the Charter of the United Nations, and agreed upon unanimously at the European Council.

*We acknowledge* the rationale behind the United States and NATO asking the EU to increase military expenditure, yet we unanimously agree that it should be invested towards the EU's agenda and interests, not withholding the possibility to pursue joint initiatives.

*We recognize* that an EU defensive force could also be deployed in the framework of bilateral and multilateral agreements/relationships with non EU Member States and International Organisations. This is a vital condition in an attempt to prevent further alienation and distrust within the international community.

*Considering* that information sharing is a key aspect in the intelligence field, and acknowledging that the "Passenger name record" is a useful tool aimed at facilitating information sharing among EU Member States, *we exhort* European authorities to exploit the PNR system more efficiently in order to face terrorism in a more effective way. However, due regard should be paid to data protection.

*Being aware* of the current constraints under the Lisbon Treaty, we would in the future suggest an extension of the powers of the European Attorney; specifically, we would propose to broaden its competences now limited to the financial sector, to other transnational policy areas, where terrorist threats are concerned.

*Recognizing* the importance of social integration practices as pre-emptive measures against terrorist threats, we encourage Member States to strengthen their efforts on such topic both with soft policies as awareness campaigns, as well as more structured interventions.

*Appreciating* EU's efforts and EEAS' actions in Peacebuilding, conflict prevention and mediation, *We stress* the existing gap in the field of sustainable peacebuilding; indeed, along with EU peacebuilding missions and mediation efforts that focus on countries external to Europe, there is also the necessity to strengthen the conflict transformation, prevention and peacebuilding capacities within the EU itself. We therefore call for the creation of a specific PESCO initiative focused on peacebuilding and Infrastructure for Peace (I4P).

Along with the investments in common defence, *we highly recommend* the EU to enhance its commitment to Peacebuilding and an I4P, recognizing its potential for decreasing tensions through investments made into sustainable peace structure.

*Recognizing* that I4P is based on grassroots and participatory peacebuilding practices, it's crucial to create institutions and structures rooted in European societies,

*We suggest* I4P to include:

Different actors such as civil society organizations, state institutions and inter-governmental agencies. Their competences would include addressing causes, effects and impacts of a conflict, in form of (1) a government infrastructure (2) a civil society infrastructure and (3) an infrastructure on a European level, working as a coordination mechanism for both.

On the European level:

*We would* suggest the development of a specific Committee or Office if deemed necessary, which would coordinate with the existing structures in charge of Peacekeeping, recalling that the definition of peace is that of "a shared society with limited societal conflict".

On the national level:

*We encourage* the development of relevant Institutions, in the form of Ministries, Departments or others.

Also, *we recommend* the creation of Peacebuilding Support Offices in the government. These would act as advisors on (1) revising legislation passed by governments which might act as drivers of societal conflict; (2) strengthening state and societal resilience and transforming underlying structural causes and drivers of violence.

# FULL DOCUMENT

## DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET

**[1]** *Having observed* a rising skepticism towards the European Union, we, as a young European generation, *feel* the urgent need to fight for the idea of the EU and its values. In our opinion the Digital Single Market (DSM) represents an opportunity to bring together all members states and to find the common ground which we need to rebuild trust in this institution. Moreover, the DSM implies social and economic issues which the EU cannot ignore anymore, such as digital inclusion, geo-blocking and cybersecurity.

**[2]** *Considering*

*i.* that Art. 3 TEU promotes an internal market based on a highly competitive social market economy aiming at full employment and social progress, fighting social exclusion and discrimination,

*ii.* that the various types of inequalities have a negative impact economic growth, as shown by the yearly OECD outlook (2014),

*iii.* that the digital revolution is proceeding rapidly and including every aspect of social life, we *consider* as utterly important to foster digital inclusion for those groups that may lose track of this development – as elderly people, low-income, people with disabilities, refugees and immigrants.

**[3]** Geo-blocking is a discriminatory practice that prevents online customers from accessing and purchasing products and services from a website based in another Member State.

*i.* *Acknowledging* the potential economic growth that can derive from the new possibilities of the implementation of the DSM (expand markets, foster better services and better practices, and offer more choice for consumers);

*ii.* *Taking into consideration* the economic and cultural disparities in the EU;

*iii.* *Considering* the new Regulation 2017/1128 on Cross - border portability of online content services in the internal market that came into force on 1 April 2018;

We *believe* that there exists the possibility to reach an agreement between every member state to create a common framework in which the interests of European citizens can be realised through the DSM, thanks to the elimination of different legal barriers.

**[4]** *Taking into account* the area of freedom, security and justice enshrined in Art. 67 TFEU, the EU should go on protecting its citizens in an increasingly interconnected world. This aim can be reached by improving the existing tools for cyber security and analysing possible efficient alternatives, in the light of current risks and recent events.

Further *recognizing* the entry into force of the General Data Protection Regulation on the 25 May 2018, which aims to harmonize Union law on the protection of citizens' data.

### A. Digital inclusion

**[1]** *Acknowledging* the problem of the difficulties faced by the elderly in using technology, we *propose* the implementation of showcasing projects to show the benefits of technology and digitalization, through the means of Social Funds given to Member States. Additionally, we *propose* an educational system for the elderly via old media that are regularly consumed via regional and national television stations and local workshops to establish a more direct learning experience.

**[2]** *Recognizing* the importance of banking and the vanishing of local bank branches, as well as the digitalization of public institutions and municipalities, we *propose* the creation of harmonized user interface templates adapted to the needs of the elderly, that may be voluntarily implemented by institutions to serve this group in the best possible way.

**[3]** *Taking into account* the unemployed and lower income people, we *propose* to add competences to the nascent European Labour Authority (ELA). In this way, the DSM could facilitate their access to the European labour market, through the implementation of programmes focused on:

- i.* training: e.g. enhancement of online courses created to gain new competences (languages, digital skills, etc.);
- ii.* matching labour demand and supply: e.g. improvement of online platforms.

**[4]** *Given* the estimates of the European Disability Forum, half of the disabled population could gain employment if provided with the right ICT skills. We *propose* to further develop a comprehensive system - on the model of *EUROdesk* - in which people with disabilities can take advantage of the digital technologies in order to get integrated into the labour market

**[5]** According to the outcome of the Marrakesh Treaty (2013) which addresses people who are blind, visually-impaired or otherwise print-disabled, we *suggest* to substantially raise funds to finance European R&D institutes, with the aim to develop both software and high-tech hardware that exploit the digital potential to create alternative communication devices and integrate this minority in the digital labour market.

**[6]** *Acknowledging* the importance of refugees and immigrants being socially included and becoming employable, we *suggest*:

- i.* to use digital education by setting up digital skills courses (e.g. programming courses), organized by Member States with EU funds and following EU guidelines;
- ii.* to provide information sessions locally that facilitate them to find a job (how to create a CV; motivation letter; how to use job finding platforms).

## **B. Geo-blocking**

**[7]** *Recognizing* the business model of the movie industry, which is based on territoriality and windowing, we *propose* the prohibition of geo-blocking for movies in the EU after a period of 2 years from the distribution following which most of the revenue has been generated by tickets sales and pay-tv licenses.

**[8]** *In consideration of* the European goal of increasing the cultural understanding of the people, we *propose* a limited prohibition of geo-blocking for nationally produced European content and give all Europeans access to content produced in the EU. To avoid cross-licensing of content that was produced outside the EU, it can be blocked until the non-EU producer has licensed it in a new territory.

## **C. Cyber security**

**[9]** *Recognising* the incoherence of national citizen identification schemes, we *propose* a European unique personal identification system connected to a common authentication system available for all public institutions and businesses. Following this path, the EU Institutions should work on data protection systems in order to enhance the right of protection of European citizens. The Estonian model of data protection shall be the standard of the European Unique Personal Identification System. This will lead to a trilateral interaction by governments, businesses and citizens. It will foster a more secure environment inside the EU and shorten reaction spans to vulnerabilities and enhance the speed of implementation of patches.

**[10]** *Recognising* the previous achievements of the EU by creating ENISA, we *suggest* to provide more funding in order to promote a coherent approach to cyber security and also create new technological tools and frameworks to prevent malicious actors from intruding critical systems within the European border.

In addition, we *propose* to increase the mandate of the ENISA to establish it as the real EU Cybersecurity Agency with all rights, competences and funding.

This would allow ENISA to access confidential information of all member state protection systems to enhance its capability to fulfil its duties in regards to protection and reaction in the case of

evidence sharing among national governments during incident response. Its mandate should include threat monitoring on a European level and the upholding and development of secure cryptography standards as well as an assessment of emerging security technology (e.g. blockchain, etc.) which might be worth implemented to enhance security.

**[1]** *Considering* that every person has different necessities and interests, it is of paramount importance to tackle the issue of digital inclusion in an individualized approach. Therefore, special instruments should be created to meet the needs of each person.

*Bearing in mind* the amplitude of the diversity of European citizens, we *recommend* further research on an effective digital inclusion.

**[2]** *Taking into account* the Second Pillar of the European Digital Single Market Strategy, that focuses on right conditions for digital nets and services, and reflecting the competences the European Commission has in the field of competition law,

*i.* We *believe* that there should be a particular focus on the DSM. Indeed, it could be profitable to merge all different separate Member States' legal frameworks into one unified system, as it happens in the Single Market: in this way non-EU enterprises would find it more profitable to do business in the EU.

*ii.* We *believe* that the European Commission (DG Competition) should pay particular attention on the alleged disappearance of physical shops, as it could entail negative consequences on Member States' markets, such as job losses.

*iii.* Furthermore, different criteria should be applied to the DSM, taking into account its structural particularities and fluidity, paying particular attention to vertical restraints.

*iv.* We *desire* for the future a common European framework without geo-blocking and other discriminatory practices, so that all Europeans can access and exercise online activities under conditions of equal treatment and fair competition.

**[3]** Conclusive to our proposals concerning cyber security, we *state* that the problem of cyber defence is not rooted in insufficient financial funding, rather in a proper coordination of efforts inside the EU, i.e. between the different Member States' Security Agencies. To tackle this issue, it is desirable to strengthen the role of ENISA and centralize certain security activities to enhance the efficiency of defence, as well as the resilience of European systems. Only with a strong collaboration, we can continue on the road towards a further digitized Europe.

# FULL DOCUMENT

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND NEIGHBOURING POLICY

### **Section 1. The EU Trust Fund for Africa**

#### *1.1 Clarification of the aims*

*Noting with concern* the contradictions in the declared aims of the EU Emergency Trust Fund,

- a.** We *encourage* the EU to discuss the incompatibility of emergency funding and resolving deep rooted causes of illegal migration and instability;
- b.** We *advise* that the Emergency Fund should be used strictly for emergencies and short-term programs;
- c.** We *recommend* the reassignment of long term projects addressing root causes to other EU development initiatives.

#### *1.2 Short term intervention*

*Recalling the commitments* made in the Valletta Action Plan and considering the potential consequences of closing traditional migration routes,

We *encourage* the increase of funding towards the development of legal migration routes particularly in transit countries.

*Recognizing* the different needs and existing rights of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection,

We *recommend* the establishment of registration centres in transit countries outside the EU for asylum seekers and refugees in collaboration with the local offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

*Noting with concern* the over flexibility of the rules governing the Trust Fund as an emergency instrument,

- a.** We *encourage* the reallocation of funds to oversight mechanisms in consultation with civil society
- b.** We *recommend*, as a requirement for the approval of a project, the justification of its emergency nature.

*Considering* that one of the main objectives of the European Union is to provide security for the citizens and residents of the Member States, and this is being threatened by the increasing illegal immigration and an apparent failure in border control;

*Believing* that it is necessary to regulate every form of immigration – and progressively eliminate illegal immigration,

- a.** We *propose* to strengthen border control and simplify legal bureaucracy to those who wish to enter the EU due to climate change crisis or on-going wars or conflicts in their respective countries;
- b.** We *call upon* more control in the hotspots like the south of Italy and Greece, following the Stockholm Program;
- c.** We *encourage* the creation of a fund for African countries - also in line with the Treaty in common with the two Unions - that will improve the conditions and quality of life in critical-state, emergency areas.

*Strongly believing* in the need to improve the conditions in which the beneficiaries of international protection are currently living,

We *emphasize* the necessity to:

- a.** Guarantee the unity of the families;

- b.** Improve the living conditions in the refugees' camps;
- c.** Simplify legal bureaucracy to accelerate the asylum and residence permit process;
- d.** Provide them courses in their hosting country's language;
- e.** Provide them with medical and psychological care to improve their health.

### 1.3 Long term interventions

*Being concerned* that the causes of migration are long term issues,

*We call upon* the creation of a long-term trust funds alongside the emergency fund.

#### 1.3.1 Migrants Management

*Given* the impact of climate change as a cause of forced migration,

- a.** *We underline* the necessity of actions with local communities and state governments to help alleviate and adapt to long term climate change effects;
- b.** *We promote* multilateral efforts to combat climate change and its effects and environmental protection measures e.g. to prevent the spread of desertification in the Sahara region.

*Considering* political instability as a long-term root cause of forced migration,

- a.** *We call for* interventions supporting political stability and democracy, peace and goodwill;
- b.** *We ask for* the provision of trade benefits and incentives for democratic enforcement and for the promotion of political and human rights.

*Keeping in mind* the role of economic hardship as a driver of forced migration,

- a.** *We support* investments in long term sustainable economic growth and the creation of quality job opportunities;
- b.** *We encourage* greater collaboration with International partners, especially China, to harness their presence in the region.

*Emphasizing* the need to better implement the Geneva Convention,

*We call for* a further effort into:

- a.** Providing respect for their culture and religion in the society;
- b.** Guaranteeing free education for the children and work for the adults;
- c.** Slowing integration with communities' activities (i.e. sports, food markets);
- d.** Improving cooperation between Member States in order to protect the individuals' rights and enhance their quality of life.

#### 1.3.2 Education

*Knowing* that under-development from a limited education is one of the major motives for immigration but still underestimated,

*Underlining* that the EU Trust Fund does not make a specific reference to this,

*We propose* setting a minimum quota (i.e. 2% of the Fund) dedicated to education and culture that is focused on means such as, but not limited to:

- a.** The protection of oppressed and marginalized minority groups;
- b.** Capacity building and the expansion of educational resources in developing countries.

*Regarding the fact* that illiteracy is a crucial structural problem in many countries in Africa,

*We call for* the offering of an economic co-operation on the condition of an active engagement towards education, through:

- a.** The introduction of a mandatory education for children, in cooperation with local governments;
- b.** The spread of primary education for all ages and social classes via literacy programs adapted to all;
- c.** The provision of scientific exchange programs between European and African universities;
- d.** Investments in the creation of necessary infrastructure to provide a good education (e.g. the creation dorms, school material, etc...)

*Considering* that the lack of careers opportunities and formal institutions is the main reason of intellectual immigration,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the fact that educated Africans play an active part in the development of their continent,

*We support*:

- a.** Investments in creation of local experts working groups and formation and trainings by collaborating with concern NGOs, requiring full transparency on the provision of funds;

- b.** Investments in the enhancement of the already existing humanitarian cluster systems, including better cooperation between the NGO sector and intergovernmental agencies.
- c.** The creation of volunteering teaching programs by founding the NGOs;
- d.** The introduction of programs and develop infrastructure, in cooperation with local businesses, aiming the contribution for academic and non-academic careers opportunities.

### 1.3.3 Economic interventions

*Considering* that lack of adequate primary services and job opportunities are at the basis of irregular migration towards Europe,

*We call on* the European Union to support the creation and development of fundamental infrastructures – e.g. roads, railways – in countries which meet a fairly democratic standard, in order to create economic development and thus reduce migration flows to Europe.

Allocation of funds for infrastructure shall be granted on the basis of:

- a.** Existent level of infrastructure;
- b.** The severity of emigration from that country;
- c.** Geographical and commercial strategic position for the development of the whole region.

*Alarmed about* the waste of economic potential brought about by corruption within governments,

*We recommend* that the European Commission sets up a supervisory body/group with the aim of:

- a.** Advising national governments and providing best practices on the reduction of corruption,
- b.** Liaising with governments to ensure the transparent allocation of funds granted under the African emergency fund.

*Considering* the emerging importance of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) for the development of the economy in these regions,

*We suggest:*

- a.** The increase of funds dedicated to MSMEs,
- b.** The re-evaluation of the allocation criteria on the basis of their effectiveness so far
- c.** A review of its criteria in order to maximise the efficiency of these funds.

*Aware of* the special relationship between certain Member States and African countries as a result of past colonialism,

*We exhort* these Member States to share their knowledge and good diplomatic relations in order to strengthen cooperation between the European Union and the African states and create best practices for good economic relations.

*Given* the migration crisis that affected the European Union Member States and the subsequent clash of cultures,

*We propose* both European citizens and migrants to be involved in a process that reshapes the idea of migration, which should involve:

- a.** On the one hand, we should educate, inform and sensitize the European citizens through social campaigns and common activities promoted and organized by the European Institutions explaining in particular how funds are invested in order to fight against nationalist feelings and promote the European identity;
- b.** On the other hand, we should call for partnerships negotiation with the African countries to establish a channel to get legal visa for refugees and to make them aware of the core European Values (Respect for human dignity and human rights, peace, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law).

## **Section 2. European Neighbouring Policy**

*Considering* the dependence of Eastern Partnership countries on Russian energy resources, *we call on* the EU to promote alternatives for energy acquisition such as:

- a.** The development of good diplomatic relations between these countries in order to increase energy sharing amongst them (e.g. Armenia and Azerbaijan);

- b.** The investment in renewable resources available in each of these countries – e.g. solar energy in the southern Caucasus;
- c.** The availability of EU funds for the development of fundamental infrastructure to enhance energy transportation.

*Alarmed by* the increasing unwanted military presence of Russian troops or bases on Eastern Partnership territories,

*We invite* the European Union to:

- a.** Strongly reaffirm its support for these countries;
- b.** Increase diplomatic relations with Russia with the aim of enhancing peace-building and stability through non-military means.

*Noting with concern* that the government of Belarus has not demonstrated significant positive developments in the areas of human rights, rule of law, democracy and good governance, as well as the recent drift of the government of Belarus towards strong ties with Russia (e.g. membership of the Eurasian Economic Union),

- a.** *We ask for* the EU to temporarily halt funding towards this country until positive signals are demonstrated in the areas note above;
- b.** *We suggest* that the EU should increase its efforts to strengthen diplomatic ties, and recommend best practices and solutions to the Belarusian government.

*Recognizing* that some governments in the Eastern Partnership - namely those of Armenia and Moldova - support further integration with Russia and have in recent years strengthened ties with it,

*We ask* the EU to reduce funding to these governments until they reaffirm their commitment to closer ties with the EU, in light of Russia's own non-compliance with EU values and principles. This reduction in funding should not come to the detriment of the local population, but should only be aimed at preventing support for Russian interests with EU funds.

*Noting* that Russian culture, language, and traditions are deeply embedded in all Eastern Partnership countries as a result of their shared past, and that Russia continues to impose its own values and prevents reforms from taking place,

*We suggest* the EU to start collaborating with national governments which plan on implementing educational reforms aimed at making their countries more open to international cooperation.

*Taking into account* that education and social and cultural exchange is a crucial driver of cooperation and integration, and thinking about academic collaboration and exchange,

- a.** *We call for* the expansion of EU-wide educational programs (including the Erasmus and Da Vinci programs) to include the transition countries;
- b.** *We should develop* scientific and research collaboration between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries;
- c.** *We should create* a Committee to promote cultural exchanges between institutions such as museums and galleries which can share collections and put on exhibitions and concerts at partner institutions. The Committee should promote sharing of expertise and know-how for art conservation and restoration, with an emphasis on preserving the culture and heritage of the transition countries;
- d.** *We propose* the creation of an online public job platform for Academics to facilitate medium term job experience opportunities across the EU and transition countries.

*Given the importance* of furthering mutual understanding and relations and the role that travel plays in this:

- a.** *We demand* an easing of bilateral visa restrictions with a view to moving towards completely VISA free travel, as in the case of Georgia;
- b.** *We propose*, in the short term free, visa travel for academics and scientific researchers, aiming to create a network of knowledge, research and expertise across the region.

*Being aware of* the power of cultural relations and the historic links between the EU and the transition countries,

- a.** *We should reinforce* existing cultural programs

- b.** We *call for* a cultural festivals and events for young people across the EU and transition countries to promote cultural exchange and engagement among young people from different EU and transition countries;
- c.** We *propose* a Committee to organize and sponsor cultural events and exchanges for sport, music and the arts. This would include events such as sports and music tours, grants and awards to support and showcase the work of writers, musicians and artists from transition countries in the EU and vice versa with a view to promoting cultural understanding;
- d.** We *put forward* the creation of expositions of transitions countries in EU countries and vice versa to showcase and celebrate the region, and the diversity and shared ties.

*Considering* the domains of the European Neighbouring Policy, namely good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights,

- a.** We *recommend* prioritizing the principle of conditionality as a main tool of incentivizing partner states' cooperation;
- b.** We *suggest* continued implementation of the principle of "more for more" to reward the reform efforts of partner countries.

*Recalling* the Global Strategy for the European Union Foreign and Security Policy (2015) and the very specific context of each partner country,

- a.** We *call upon* the development of tailored country-specific foreign policy;
- b.** We *stress* the importance of using appropriate indicators when assessing progress on economic and social reform.

*Noticing* the loosely defined deadlines and objectives in the formulation of Action Plans,

- a.** We *recommend* the inclusion of a clear time frame and specific aims in each Action Plan;
- b.** We *suggest* the introduction of negative consequences for missed targets as a way to incentivize compliance with Action Plans.

*Considering* the instability of political situation in the post-soviet countries and the contradicting views of its population, which are the main causes of escalated conflicts, as well as the geopolitical strategic importance of these regions for EU, we *propose*:

- a.** A stronger support the independence of post-soviet countries, taking in account national differentiation and promoting the sense of belonging to the same country;
- b.** The creation of the open-door mediation committees that will provide the dialog between the parts of transitional countries. These committees will be consisted of both local and EU representatives. The main idea is to reach understanding and mutual respect inside one country, not only by solving open conflicts but also by providing the ways to prevent them.

Considering the lack of information of EU's activities in post-soviet countries, that leads to misunderstanding,

We propose to:

- a.** Promote the good image of EU by organizing cultural and social events;
- b.** Encourage NGOs to take part in solving social issues, providing humanitarian aid and protecting human rights;
- c.** Implement exchange programs for young professionals and students from post-soviet countries (either in frames of ERASMUS and Da Vinci programs or outside of them).

*Considering* conflicts within Europe, and neighbouring countries, we propose to cooperate with the UN to increase the pressure on the conflicting parties, with:

- a.** The imposition of sanctions to be implemented in case of lack of cooperation and, as a last resource;
- b.** Discontinue economic interactions (trade) between the UN Member States and the parties involved in armed conflicts;
- c.** The establishment of an alliance e to promote education about human rights to the people by informal education.

*Considering* that the DCFTA between the European Union and Ukraine, has shown its best results in term of modernizing Ukrainian trade relations and economic development, creating conditions for aligning key sectors of the Ukrainian economy to EU standards, We suggest:

- a. Monitoring of such Associated Agreement for future development;
- b. Taking the DCFTA with Ukraine as a key example to be used with other extra-EU countries that are part of the Neighbouring policy.

*Considering that* democratization and transition must be first and foremost home-grown processes, *We strongly encourage* the improvement of the rule of law for economic circumstances.

*Considering* the historical links between the EU and Eastern countries, *we urge* the foundation of a committee to improve the integration of post-soviet countries to the EU while respecting their own cultural, economic, military and political independence.

*Concerning* the Trust Fund should merely focus on short-term programmes that are aimed at improving the situation of forced migrants in the countries of origin as well as in their respective host countries,

*We propose:*

- a.** Fasten multilateral relationships among the sides of cooperation by organizing many levels meetings, summits and committees;
- b.** Ensure frequent reviews of the progress or accurate distribution of funds towards defined short-term goals;
- c.** Tackle urgent catastrophes resulting from climate change that lead to irreversible damages of livelihood of local communities.

*Considering* the different political, social and economic situation in the southern countries of the EU Neighbouring Policy with respect to the countries of the Eastern Partnership aforementioned, *We urge* the EU to keep in mind the necessity to implement different policies from those presented above in the various southern countries.

*Considering* the extent and severity of the issue of human trafficking, *We encourage* the European Union to take it into consideration when implementing migration management control projects.

# FULL DOCUMENT

## EDUCATION

Education is the core of an inclusive society, that must include a good design of a system capable to create the citizens of tomorrow. It is the best way to foster innovation, growth, jobs and continuous development. As the ancient Roman poet Giovenale said, *a clay pot must be formed when it is still soft, then it is impossible to change its shape.*

Nevertheless, socio-economic scenarios are changing at an ever growing speed. If at the time of Giovenale, one could have lived his entire life without changing job, this is nowadays impossible. Key competences and skills required by the job market are likely to change several times over a single life span.

*Considering this, we think* it is imperative for EU institutions to foster models of lifelong learning, capable of including those more needy who would risk to be left behind.

**[1]** *Keeping in mind* the EU strategic framework on education and training 2020,

**1.1** We encourage the EU to take into consideration that people have different attitudes and soft skills, thus the EU should make sure that everyone has access to the educational path that suits them best.

**1.2** We propose that in primary school each student learns the same basic skills (for example, maths and languages) via general guidelines, and then has personalised path building since high school via job and university orientation. In addition, professional career ambassadors should visit schools and guide students by sharing their experience.

**1.3** Finally, we believe there should be more scholarships, aimed at fostering gender equality and integration of students from vulnerable groups and low-income households.

**[2]** *Considering* the low level of awareness about EU institutions and its issues within the citizens, we propose the following actions:

**2.1** To introduce European civic education starting from primary schools which will provide basic information about European history, institutions and functions in an objective way. Furthermore, children should learn about local, national and EU politics in a similar basic and objective way, in order to foster active citizenship.

**2.2** To improve communication towards different social groups and generations by specific channel like social media for young people and cultural associations and traditional media for elderly.

**2.3** To create a platform which will collect information about on-going EU projects with a search engine based on interest, location and age to promote the participation of citizens.

**[3]** *Considering* the evolving job market and the lack of innovation in the educational system, we propose:

**3.1** Intensive cooperation between educational system and labour market which can foster result-oriented educational structuring.

**3.2** The impact of upcoming trends like AI, big data, digitalisation, autonomous driving etc. on job market qualifications should be continuously analysed in order to optimise the structure of the educational system to prepare students for facing industry needs.

**3.3** Furthermore, the sharing of best practice examples between EU Member States can provide insights for improving national education systems.

**3.4** Moreover, we propose to create and promote a platform for internships and traineeships to facilitate entering labour markets of young adults at the EU level.

**[4]** *Considering* the current high unemployment rate due to the recent crisis and the lack of mobility in the labour market, we believe that the European Union should tackle the problem via:

**4.1** Opening up the labour market through encouraging collaboration among firms and improving mobility among employees in order to share competences and knowledge.

**4.2** Reducing mobility costs for employees via full-side benefits for families as well.

- 4.3** Promoting learning of foreign languages (English and other European languages).
- 4.4** Fostering harmonization of certifications of skills and diplomas.
- 4.5** Providing help in building effective CV via direct training, counselling and an online platform.

**[5]** *Observing* the inclusion in education about minority groups and prisoners in Europe, we *propose* the following policies:

- 5.1** Funding humanitarian associations that cares about minorities and want to start a dialogue with society via debates and give voice to the minorities, with the goal that the society learns how a minority lives and struggles.
- 5.2** Europe needs to enhance workshops for prisoners to be in contact with the society and to educate them, with subjects that are related with the idea to be a better citizen - political education, European history and culture.
- 5.3** Creating a European traineeship opportunity for the people that are leaving jail so that they can have the opportunity to be included more easily in the job market world, because more people don't want to employ people who got out from jail.
- 5.4** A new programme for the primary teachers to go to countries which have accepted refugees, so that they can teach refugees about Europe, languages and basic skills.

**[6]** *Considering* the increasing number of NEETs, we *think* that the EU should undertake the following actions:

- 6.1** A massive operation of data collection should be launched in order to better monitor this phenomenon.
- 6.2** *Given* the lack of motivation affecting NEETs, we *propose*, as a preventive measure, to create European tournaments for each field of study at the high school level. This could contribute to customise curricula and foster motivation.
- 6.3** In order to create work reinsertion opportunities, we *propose* to exploit the database mentioned in 6.1. It would be used to contact NEETs offering them possible trainings, volunteering experiences, social services, educational paths, jobs, mentoring on the EU territory according to their attitudes, skills and previous experiences.
- 6.4** *Considering* exceptional financial needs of NEETs the EU should allocate more funds to the most affected countries.
- 6.5** *Considering* the fact that NEETs are socially excluded, we *would suggest* that social events are created for NEETs to meet and share their experiences, in order to promote reintegration in society.



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