

Education and Training Questions

General Issues

- Does EU action, as opposed to national government action, in the areas of education and vocational training generally benefit or disadvantage the UK? Can you point us to any published evidence or analysis in support of your view?

DE comment: DE feels that EU action generally benefits the north of Ireland. The evidence would be the publication of the European Skills Framework and in general the benefits accrued from the Comenius programme.

- Are there any specific EU activities in the areas of education and training that you consider particularly beneficial or particularly disadvantageous to the UK?

DE comment: The Comenius programme was particularly beneficial as was the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning which assists in comparing national qualification systems.

- Do you think the EU, as opposed to national government, should do more or less in relation to education and training? If so, where and why?

DE comment: DE feels that the status quo should be maintained.

- What other areas of EU competence or activity have an impact on education and training in your sector and how?

DE comment: Peace programme and youth work would have an impact.

- What challenges or opportunities are there for the UK in further EU action on education?

DE comment: Any increase in EU activity may exacerbate the difference existing in the UK due to the responsibility for education being devolved. Further EU action could cause more difficulties.

- What international bodies or arrangements other than the EU are important to education and training in the UK? How does your experience of dealing with them compare with the EU's activity in this sphere?

DE comment: The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is important to education and training. There is more effective communication.

The Programmes

- For the specific programmes which are funded and managed via the EU (such as Erasmus or Leonardo), what are the benefits or disadvantages of having EU rather than national responsibility and funding for these activities?

DE comment: EU programmes create a more accessible linkage between countries through their international dimension.

- Can you point to evidence which shows that language learning has improved through participation in the programmes?

DE comment: The British Council has produced figures which show that language learning has improved through participation in the programmes.

- How would you describe the costs and benefits to your organisation of participating in the programmes?

DE comment: Schools and youth organisations have benefitted from the Comenius and Youth in Action programmes by being able to drawdown EU funds which enables them to develop links and exchanges with other countries. Costs are minimal to DE compared to the amount of EU funding drawn down.

Policy Co-ordination

- Have you noticed any change in EU activity or emphasis since the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon and the introduction of Europe 2020, and, if so, where has this manifested itself and in what ways? Have these changes been helpful or unhelpful?

DE comment: There is no evidence either way.

- Is it appropriate that Europe 2020 focuses on early school leaving and the completion of tertiary education?

DE comment: Yes.

- Has the adoption of EU education policy frameworks or Council Recommendations had any impact on your sector?

DE comment: The publication of the European Skills framework has had a positive impact on Education.

- How does policy co-operation on education in the EU compare with other organisations, for example the OECD?

DE comment: The OECD has been more useful.

- Can you point to examples of reform in national policy which have resulted from EU co-operation in education and training?

No DE comment.

- How would you assess the costs and benefits to policy makers of participation in education policy co-operation at EU level?

DE comment: There are modest costs and benefits. Education policy co-operation at EU level has a broad consensus.

Youth Questions

General Issues

- What evidence is there that EU action in the area of Youth benefits or disadvantages the UK?

DE comment: The Youth in Action programme is a good evaluation of the benefits.

- Do you think the EU should do more, or less, in relation to Youth, and why?

DE comment: DE considers that the level of EU involvement is about right. DE's policy for youth work in education, Priorities for Youth, states "it is clear that across regions, countries and at European level, youth work is recognised as an important aspect of learning, on the continuum of educational provision". It also states "At European level, there are initiatives and funding opportunities which local youth organisations should be encouraged to explore."

- Do you think the EU focuses on the right aims and priorities in the Youth field?

DE comment: The EU youth strategy 2010-2018 is acceptable. Young people should be encouraged to participate in society.

- Have you noticed any change in EU activity or emphasis since the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon and the introduction of Europe 2020, and, if so, where has this manifested itself and in what ways? Have these changes been helpful or unhelpful?

DE comment: There is no evidence either way.

- Has the adoption of the Structured Dialogue had any impact on your sector and how?

DE comment: DE does not take part in the Structured Dialogue and as such has nothing to add.

- What other areas of EU competence or activity have an impact on your sector and how?

DE comment: EU activity in the areas of employment and justice have had an impact on education.

- What international bodies or arrangements are important to your sector beyond the EU?

DE comment: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. International Labour Organisation Conventions.

- Has the EU had an impact on young people's opportunities to have a voice in policy and decision making, or on organisations' work to involve young people in shaping services?

DE comment: Yes through the Youth in Action programme.

- Has the EU had an impact on young people's social inclusion in the UK?

DE comment: Yes, through the Youth in Action programme and in the future through the Erasmus+ programmes and the fund for European Aid to the most Deprived.

Youth Programmes

- What are the benefits or disadvantages of having EU rather than national funding for activities under the Youth Programme?

DE comment: EU programmes create a more accessible linkage between countries through their international dimension.

- What do you think about the criteria and conditions set by the EU for applying for and receiving funding?

DE comment: DE is not aware of any difficulties.

- What do you think about the aims and activities of Erasmus+ in comparison to the Youth in Action programme?

DE comment: The aims and activities are consistent but it is too early in the Erasmus + programme to measure the results.