



# European Education Area Strategic Framework **Working Group on Equality and Values** Work Programme





# Working Group on Equality and Values in Education and Training

## Initial Work Programme

November 2021

### Introduction

As part of the new cycle of European cooperation in education and training, in line with the Commission Communication of 30 September 2020 on achieving the European Education Area by 2025<sup>1</sup> and the Council Resolution of 26 February 2021 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)<sup>2</sup>, seven new working groups – the EEA strategic framework Working Groups – will contribute to the EU's policy cooperation process in the sector of education and training. Building on the results of the ET2020 Working Groups, they will each focus on one of the themes of common interest: Early Childhood Education and Care, Schools, Higher Education, VET, Adult Learning, Digital Education and Equality and Values in education and training.

### The Working Group on Equality and Values – objectives

The Working Group on Equality and Values will focus on structural reform to promote equality in education and training. It aims to provide inspiration for policymakers and practitioners who strive to improve equality in education and training systems across the EU and contribute to developing evidence-based procedures to assess and improve policies in the Member States through mutual learning.

The Working Group will examine relevant areas related to equality, as set out in Priority Area 1 and 2 of the Council Resolution of 26 February 2021 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) and contributing to the implementation of the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching<sup>3</sup>. The work will also support the follow-up of the respective equality strategies including the Gender equality strategy<sup>4</sup>, EU anti-racism action plan<sup>5</sup>, EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation<sup>6</sup>, LGBTIQ equality strategy<sup>7</sup>, Action plan on integration and inclusion<sup>8</sup>, European democracy action plan<sup>9</sup>, the EU Strategy on the rights of the child<sup>10</sup> and the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life (2021-2030)<sup>11</sup>. The Working Group will also follow the implementation of EEA actions announced under the quality, inclusion and gender equality dimension of the Commission Communication of 30 September 2020 on achieving the European Education Area by 2025.

1 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0625>

2 [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226(01))

3 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018H0607%2801%29>

4 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152>

5 [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-anti-racism-action-plan-2020-2025\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-anti-racism-action-plan-2020-2025_en)

6 [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/new-eu-roma-strategic-framework-equality-inclusion-and-participation-full-package\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/new-eu-roma-strategic-framework-equality-inclusion-and-participation-full-package_en)

7 [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/lesbian-gay-bi-trans-and-intersex-equality/lgbtiq-equality-strategy-2020-2025\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/lesbian-gay-bi-trans-and-intersex-equality/lgbtiq-equality-strategy-2020-2025_en)

8 [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files\\_en?file=2020-11/action\\_plan\\_on\\_integration\\_and\\_inclusion\\_2021-2027.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files_en?file=2020-11/action_plan_on_integration_and_inclusion_2021-2027.pdf)

9 [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/european-democracy-action-plan\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/european-democracy-action-plan_en)

10 [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child/eu-strategy-rights-child-and-european-child-guarantee\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child/eu-strategy-rights-child-and-european-child-guarantee_en)

11 [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-antisemitism/eu-strategy-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-jewish-life-2021-2030\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-antisemitism/eu-strategy-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-jewish-life-2021-2030_en)

The Working Group will implement the dual approach of inclusive education for all and targeting specific population groups to ensure their effective equal access to quality education, which includes both group-focused approaches (e.g. gender equality, anti-racism, equality of Roma, inclusion of people with migrant background, LGBTIQ people, people living with disabilities/special educational needs **and** people from different religious groups’) and cross-cutting (horizontal) issues (e.g. fighting segregation in education, managing diversity and building a sense of belonging in a lifelong learning perspective). The Working Group activities will build on the work carried out by the Working Group on Promoting Common Values and Inclusive Education under the previous ET 2020 mandate, which included work on anti-radicalisation, citizenship education, building bridges through inclusive history education, countering disinformation, and the inclusion of refugees and migrants in education and training.

This initial work programme aims to provide a framework for the first stages of the Working Group activities and will be updated at a later stage. The work programme is based on the mandate for the Working Group on Equality and Values in Education and Training as agreed with the Education Committee of the Council of the EU.

This work programme includes:

- An overview of the expected outputs of the Working Group (as specified in the mandate)
- An overview of the initial themes which will be addressed in the Working Group activities
- A list of potential additional themes to be addressed later in the Working Group activities, or jointly with other Working Groups

The annexes comprise:

- Annex 1: the draft roadmap (initial timetable) for the Working Group activities
- Annex 2: the working methods to be used by the Working Group
- Annex 3: the list of issues to be addressed by the Working Group as set out in the mandate
- Annex 4: the terms of reference of the Working Group
- Annex 5: the rules of procedure of the Working Group

### 1. Expected Working Group outputs

In addition to the overarching goals of stimulating mutual and peer learning, the mandate calls on the Working Group to produce several tangible outputs. These outputs should be produced jointly by the Working Group, with inputs and contributions from all Working Groups experts. They will include:

- **Thematic fiches** on promoting equality in education e.g. policy guidance on innovation for gender equal education (e.g. addressing underperformance of boys) and development of the European perspective in education, ensuring inclusion of children with special educational needs / disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic and racial minorities (in particular Roma), students with a migrant background, LGBTIQ students, fighting school segregation, etc.
- **Guidance for the use of disaggregated data** (e.g. by sex, gender, age, disability, racial, ethnic, migrant background, sexual orientation) for the purposes of (impact) assessment of policy reforms and good practices.
- **Collection of inspiring practices** in the implementation of the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching, to add to the Compendium of inspiring practices started under the previous ET2020 Working Group on Promoting Common Values and Inclusive Education (2018-2020).

## 2. Overview of the initial themes to be addressed by the Working Group

In line with the dual approach to inclusive education, the Working Group will address both group-specific themes and cross-cutting (horizontal) themes. It will also touch on some themes which are primarily the focus of other Working Groups. The sections below set out: (a) the initial themes to be addressed by the Working Group in 2022, (b) the themes which could be addressed in future (from 2023) and (c) the other themes of interest which could be addressed transversally or are likely to be addressed primarily by other Working Groups.

### a) Themes to be addressed by the Working Group in 2022

Type of theme	Theme	Potential outputs
Group-specific themes	<p>Addressing gender gaps in education and training and unequal opportunities for girls and boys, women and men in all their diversity.</p> <p><i>Could include: better gender sensitivity in learning processes, and in education and training institutions; combatting gender stereotypes; addressing other gender-specific problems, such as bullying, online violence and sexual harassment, to which girls and women are primarily exposed; addressing the general underperformance of boys.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thematic Fiche on promoting gender equality in education and training</li> <li>• Inspiring practices for the compendium</li> </ul>
	<p>Inclusion of ethnic minorities (including Roma) in education and training / tackling racism, prejudice and stereotyping</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thematic Fiche on the inclusion of ethnic minorities (including Roma) in education and training / tackling racism, prejudice and stereotyping</li> <li>• Inspiring practices for the compendium</li> </ul>
Cross-cutting themes	<p>Tackling all forms of discrimination<sup>12</sup> (e.g. ethnic, religious, gender, socio-economic status, etc.), prejudice or bias in education and training, and promoting equality and non-discrimination</p> <p><i>Could include: bullying/cyber-bullying, harassment, creating a safe environment for learning, radicalisation, countering disinformation, challenging stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes and fighting specific forms of discrimination, hate speech, racism and intolerance, such as islamophobia/anti-Muslim hatred, antigypsyism and antisemitism.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thematic Fiche on tackling discrimination, prejudice or bias in education or training</li> <li>• Inspiring practices for the compendium</li> </ul>
	<p>Collection and use of disaggregated data to promote inclusion in education and training</p> <p><i>(NB This theme would not be addressed as a separate topic, but rather integrated as a focus in all other themes addressed)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance on the use of disaggregated data</li> </ul>

<sup>12</sup> Please note that it is foreseen that segregation, as a specific form of discrimination, will be addressed as a specific theme later in the Working Group programme (see section 2(b) below)

## b) Themes which could be addressed by the Working Group from 2023

Type of theme	Theme
Group-specific themes	Inclusion of people with special educational needs / disabilities in education and training
	Inclusion of LGBTIQ learners <i>(NB This theme was addressed in the previous mandate: Thematic Fiche could be reviewed and updated, if needed)</i>
Cross-cutting themes	Tackling all forms of segregation in education and training <i>(e.g. Roma, people with special educational needs / disabilities, rural/urban, religious, economic, voluntary/involuntary, etc.)</i>
	Bringing a European perspective in education and training <i>(including citizenship education and EU values)</i>
	Tools to foster diversity in the classroom <sup>13</sup> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering school-community relations / whole-school approach (including parent involvement, and student voice and agency)</li> <li>• Diversity in the teaching profession (ITE and CPD)</li> <li>• Inclusive approaches to subject teaching (maths, science, history, etc.) and teaching materials / inclusive learner-centred education</li> </ul>

## c) Other themes of interest which could be addressed transversally and/or are likely to be addressed primarily by other Working Groups

Theme	Links to other WGs
Tools to foster diversity in the classroom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering school-community relations / whole-school approach</li> <li>• Diversity in the teaching profession</li> <li>• Inclusive approaches to subject teaching (maths, science, history, etc.) and teaching materials / inclusive learner-centred education</li> </ul>	Schools WG
Tackling early school leaving	Schools WG
Environmental sustainability and inclusion	Schools WG
The impact of Covid-19 on inclusion in education and training*	DELTA
Addressing the digital divide for disadvantaged learners	DELTA
Developing ethical conduct and enhancing critical thinking, along with digital and media literacy	DELTA

<sup>13</sup> The extent to which his Working Group will focus on these particular topics is dependent on the themes covered by the Schools Working Group to avoid any overlap

<i>(NB addressed under the previous mandate)</i>	
Fostering and recognising non-formal learning, including volunteering and cross-border solidarity issues, for all	EQF AG, AL WG, Youth Expert Groups
Making lifelong learning strategies more robust and inclusive	AL WG
Fostering sustainable investment in quality and inclusive education and training	Expert group on quality investment in education
Promoting the mastering of key competences, including basic skills	Schools WG, DELTA, VET WG, AL WG

**Annex 1: Draft roadmap for the Working Group activities in 2021-2022**

Phase	Main theme	]	Deliverables
Phase 1: November- December 2021	Introduction to the Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 online WG meeting in November 2021</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Getting to know the WG experts</li> <li>Presentation of the mandate and key priority themes</li> <li>Presentation of the work of the ET2020 Working Group on Inclusive Education</li> <li>Overview of planning of activities for 2021-2022</li> <li>Discussions of overarching issues and approach</li> </ul>
Phase 2: January – April 2022	Addressing gender gaps in education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 online WG meetings in January/February</li> <li>1 online PLA/webinar in March or 2 shorter PLAs/webinars) in March and April</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thematic fiche on addressing gender gaps in education and training (including focus on gathering disaggregated data*)</li> <li>Inspiring practices for the compendium</li> </ul>
Phase 3: May – July 2022	Tackling all forms of discrimination, and promoting equality and non-discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 online WG meetings in April/May or 1 physical meeting in May</li> <li>1 online/physical PLA/webinar (or 2 shorter PLAs/webinars) in June/July</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thematic fiche on tackling all forms of discrimination and promoting equality and diversity (including focus on gathering disaggregated data*)</li> <li>Inspiring practices for the compendium</li> </ul>
Phase 4: September – December 2022	Inclusion of ethnic minorities (including Roma) in education and training / tackling racism, prejudice and stereotyping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 online WG meetings in September /October or 1 physical meeting in September</li> <li>1 online/physical PLA/webinar in November (or 2 shorter PLAs/webinars) in November/December</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thematic Fiche on the inclusion of ethnic minorities (including Roma) in education and training / tackling racism, prejudice and stereotyping (including focus on gathering disaggregated data*)</li> <li>Inspiring practices for the compendium</li> <li>Guidance on the use of disaggregated data</li> </ul>

*\*This discussion would feed into the guidance for the use of disaggregated data for the purposes of (impact) assessment of policy reforms and good practices and could be complemented based on subsequent discussions*

## Annex 2: Working methods to be used by the Working Groups

The Working Groups perform five main types of activities which aim at producing and disseminating quality outputs:

- 1) **Peer learning activities (PLAs)** co-led by the Commission and a Member State/stakeholders' representative hosting the event and with a good practice to demonstrate or a policy issue of national significance to explore. PLAs can also be coordinated by a Steering Group (of 2-3 Member States/stakeholder organisation). PLAs focus on one specific policy issue and gather Member States, EFTA and candidate countries and representatives of stakeholders selected by the Commission for which the issue at stake is a national challenge or where they have good practice to share (with a maximum of twelve Member States). They serve to analyse, compare and contrast different policy options or approaches, to develop new knowledge about the policy area, to exchange policy experience and evidence, to integrate research into policy making and to offer practical guidance to participating countries, thus focusing on excellence as much as on the modernisation of education and training systems.
- 2) **Working Group meetings** in Brussels with all Member States, candidate countries, countries of EFTA and representatives of stakeholders selected by the Commission. Working Group meetings can include a range of different working methods including keynote speeches from leading experts on particular themes, panels of speakers, breakout group exchanges, marketplaces of inspiring practices, etc.
- 3) **Online exchanges using webinars** (through Microsoft Teams) with all Member States, candidate countries, countries of EFTA and representatives of stakeholders selected by the Commission.
- 4) **Dissemination activities** of the outputs: Working Group members will also contribute to the dissemination of its outputs at European, national, regional and local levels, including through the EEA portal. The valorisation and dissemination of the Working Group's outputs could be further strengthened through various other channels, such as the European Education Summit, or the Erasmus+ National Agency network. Working Group experts have a key role to play in ensuring that exchange of information and dissemination of the Working Group results contribute to capacity-building as well as informing policy reforms in Member States and other participating countries.
- 5) **Working in synergy**: the Working Group will work in synergy with other EEA strategic framework Working Groups and Commission Expert Groups related to education and training.

Due to the pandemic, it is likely that the Working Group will have more frequent and shorter online meetings, especially at the beginning. Once the pandemic allows, it will have less frequent but longer physical meetings.

### **Annex 3: List of issues to be addressed by the Working Group (as set out in the mandate)**

- a) From the Council Resolution of 26 February 2021 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)<sup>14</sup>

#### **Priority area 1– Quality, equity, inclusion and success in education and training**

- i) Promoting the mastering of key competences, including basic skills, which are a prerequisite to thrive in life, to find or create fulfilling jobs and to become engaged citizens.
- iii) Bringing a European perspective in education and training, providing learners with an insight of what Europe at large, and the Union in particular, mean in their daily lives, including through widening and strengthening the Jean Monnet Actions.
- iv) Maintaining education and training institutions as safe environments, free of violence, bullying, harmful speech, disinformation and all forms of discrimination, including through further implementation of Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching.
- v) Stimulating a safe and supportive school environment as a necessary condition for concrete issues, such as tackling discrimination, racism, sexism, segregation, bullying (including cyber-bullying), violence and stereotypes, and for the individual well-being of all learners
- vi) Helping all learners reach a baseline level of proficiency in basic skills, with a special focus on groups at risk of underachievement and early school leaving, including identifying effective policy reforms to support better achievement in basic skills, specifically concerning curriculum and/or assessment, as well as the capacity of institutions and staff to be innovative and develop their learning approaches and environments.
- vii) Promoting educational success strategies at national level in order to foster the successful conclusion of education and training pathways by all learners and to reduce early leaving from education and training and low-achievement, by supporting a whole-school approach with an overall inclusive learner-centred vision of education.
- viii) Addressing the increasing diversity of learners and enhancing access to quality and inclusive education and training for all learners, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, such as learners with specific learning needs, minorities, people with a migrant background and Roma, and with fewer opportunities because of their geographical location and/or their social-economically disadvantaged situation.
- x) Addressing the issue of gender gaps in education and training, and unequal opportunities for girls and boys, women and men, by promoting more gender-balanced educational choices, challenging and dissolving gender stereotypes in education and educational careers, especially in STEAM fields of study, addressing issues such as boys' underachievement, bullying and sexual harassment, and developing a better gender sensitivity in education and training processes and institutions.
- xi) Supporting data collection and innovation for inclusion and gender equality in education.
- xii) Promoting civic, intercultural, and social competences, mutual understanding and respect, and ownership of democratic values and fundamental rights at all levels and types of education and training.
- xiii) Fostering, valuing and recognising non-formal learning including volunteering, and enhancing the inclusiveness, quality and recognition of cross-border solidarity activities.
- xiv) Developing ethical conduct and enhancing critical thinking, along with digital and media literacy.
- xv) Fostering sustainable investment in quality and inclusive education and training.

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<sup>14</sup> From the Council Resolution of 26 February 2021 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)

## Priority area 2 – Lifelong learning and mobility

ii) Making lifelong learning strategies more robust and inclusive in order to allow those who have left early to re-enter education in flexible forms through life, and those who need it to be able to access higher education and VET programmes to update or acquire skills (upskilling and reskilling) that the jobs of tomorrow require, at all stages of life.

b) In addition, some of the issues relevant to the Working Group on Equality and Values will also be explored and supported through other EEA actions and initiatives from the quality, inclusion and gender equality and lifelong learning and mobility areas, announced in the EEA Communication, such as the following:

- Jean Monnet Actions for schools and VET
- Multilingualism – Support for language teaching and learning
- Mobility of young volunteers in solidarity activities
- Framework of inclusion measures of the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps Programmes
- Pathways to School Success initiative
- Expert group on supportive learning environments for groups at risk of underachievement and for supporting well-being at school
- Implementing the European quality framework for high quality ECEC systems
- Centres for Vocational Excellence
- Micro-credentials for employability and lifelong learning
- Women in STEM and ICT.

Where relevant, examples and interesting practices from some of these actions and initiatives can also be addressed also in the Working Group on Equality and Values.

## Annex 4: Terms of reference of the Working Group



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

**Directorate A Policy Strategy and Evaluation**  
**Unit A.1 Strategy and Investments**

***Informal Commission Expert Group ‘Working group on equality and values  
in education and training’***  
Terms of reference

### 1. Background

The Commission’s Communication of 30 September 2020 on Achieving the European Education Area by 2025<sup>15</sup> (hereafter ‘EEA Communication’) and the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)<sup>16</sup> (hereafter ‘Council Resolution’) call for maintaining the format of working groups as part of the “tried and tested working arrangements” in the context of the new cycle of European cooperation in education and training. In particular, the Council Resolution stresses that the mutual learning initiatives should have “clear mandates, time schedules and planned outputs to be proposed by the Commission in cooperation with Member States”.

The overall **objective** of the new working groups shall be to **promote mutual learning on policy reform of national education systems** with a view to **effectively contributing to the achievement of the European Education Area by 2025**, and as relevant, the **Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) through tangible outputs**.

By continuing the work done under the previous strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), the new working groups shall be established as informal Commission expert groups, in compliance with the horizontal rules<sup>17</sup>. Through their respective roles and specific tasks, the expert groups will provide the Commission with advice and expertise in the policy areas that they cover, and they will be part of a governance structure that will coordinate the work and steer the development of the strategic framework, within the overarching objective of achieving and further developing the European Education Area (EEA).

As part of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030), their overall work shall reflect the vision, milestones and specific initiatives set forth in the EEA Communication and the priority areas, issues and actions of the Council Resolution, with each working group addressing concrete policy issues and actions, in line with their specific objectives detailed in annexes to their Terms of Reference.

One of these groups will be covering issues of equality and values in education and training.

This group shall focus on structural reform to promote equality in education and training and build on the EU values dimension which was covered during the previous Education and Training 2020 mandate (i.e. anti-radicalisation, citizenship education and training, European dimension in education, disinformation, inclusion of refugees and migrants in education and training). It will also **examine relevant areas related to equality**, bearing in mind the dual approach of inclusive education for all and targeting specific population groups, i.e. both group-focused approaches (such as gender equality, anti-racism, equality of Roma, people with migrant background, LGBTIQ persons and people living with disabilities) and cross-cutting issues with societal benefits and of high importance to all discriminated and disadvantaged groups, such as fighting segregation in education,

<sup>15</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1601687240311&uri=CELEX:52020DC0625>

<sup>16</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226(01))

<sup>17</sup> C(2016) 3301 final

**managing diversity and building a sense of belonging in a lifelong learning perspective).**

Furthermore, the group shall provide ideas and inspiration for policymakers and practitioners who strive to improve equality in education and training systems across the EU. Likewise, the work will contribute to developing **evidence-based procedures to assess policies** in the Member States and provide new measures and methods to improve the equality in education and training.

The group shall start its activities in September 2021 and end the first working cycle by the end of 2025.

## **2. Subject matter**

The group of experts on Equality and Values in Education and Training ('the group') is set up.

## **3. Tasks**

The group's tasks shall be:

- (1) to assist Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) in the preparation of policy initiatives in the field of education and training in relation to equality and EU values.
- (2) to establish cooperation/coordination between the Commission and Member States or stakeholders on questions relating to the policies in the field of education and training in relation to equality and EU values.
- (3) to bring about an exchange of experience and good practice in the field of education and training in relation to equality and EU values.

**Priority areas from the Council Resolution to be addressed:** 1. Quality, equity, inclusion and success in education and training, 2. Lifelong learning and mobility, 3. Teachers and Trainers, 4. Higher education, 5. Green and digital transitions.

The specific objectives are further detailed in the annex.

## **4. Membership**

1. Members shall be organisations, Member States' authorities, other public entities including public entities from acceding and candidate countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, Union bodies, offices or agencies and international organisations (Type C, D and E Members).
2. Member States' authorities, organisations and other public entities shall nominate their representatives and shall be responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise. DG EAC may refuse the nomination by an organisation of a representative if it considers this nomination inappropriate in the light of the requirements specified in the call for applications. In such case, the organisation concerned shall be asked to appoint another representative.
3. Organisations who are members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the expert group's deliberations, who, in the opinion of DG EAC do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union or who resign, shall no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

## **5. Selection process**

1. The selection of organisations as group's members (Type C) shall be carried out via a public call for applications, to be published on the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities ('the Register of expert groups'). In addition, the call for applications may be published through other means, including on dedicated websites. The call for applications shall clearly outline the selection

criteria, including the required expertise and the interests to be represented in relation to the work to be performed. The minimum deadline for applications shall be four weeks.

2. Registration in the Transparency Register is required in order for organisations to be appointed.
3. The members of the group shall be appointed by the the Director-General of DG EAC from applicants with competence in the areas referred to in point 3 and who have responded to the call for applications.
4. Members shall be appointed for until 31 December 2025. They shall remain in office until replaced/until the end of their term of office. Their term of office may be renewed.
5. DG EAC shall establish a reserve list of suitable candidates that may be used to appoint members' replacements. DG EAC shall ask applicants for their consent before including their names on the reserve list.

## **6. Chair**

The group shall be chaired by a representative of DG EAC.

## **7. Operation**

1. The group shall act at the request of DG EAC, in compliance with the horizontal rules<sup>18</sup>.
2. Meetings of the group shall, in principle, be held on Commission premises or virtually, depending on the circumstances.
3. DG EAC shall provide secretarial services. Commission officials from other departments with an interest in the proceedings may attend meetings of the group and its sub-groups.
4. In agreement with DG EAC, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.
5. Minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and on the opinions delivered by the group shall be meaningful and complete. Minutes shall be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair.
6. The group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus.

## **8. Sub-groups**

1. DG EAC may set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by DG EAC. Sub-groups shall operate in compliance with the horizontal rules and shall report to the group. They shall be dissolved as soon as their mandate is fulfilled.
2. The members of sub-groups that are not members of the group shall be selected via a public call for applications, in compliance with point 6 and the horizontal rules<sup>19</sup>.

## **9. Invited experts**

DG EAC may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group or sub-groups on an *ad hoc* basis.

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<sup>18</sup> C(2016) 3301, Article 13.1.

<sup>19</sup> C(2016), Articles 10 and 14.2.

## 10. Observers

1. Organisations and public entities other than Member States' authorities may be granted an observer status, in compliance with the horizontal rules, by direct invitation.
2. Organisations and public entities appointed as observers shall nominate their representatives.
3. Observers' representatives may be permitted by the Chair to take part in the discussions of the group and sub-groups and provide expertise. However, they shall not participate in the formulation of recommendations or advice of the group and sub-groups.

## 11. Rules of procedure

On a proposal by and in agreement with DG EAC the group shall adopt its rules of procedure by simple majority of its members, on the basis of the standard rules of procedure for expert groups, in compliance with the horizontal rules<sup>20</sup>. Sub-groups shall operate in compliance with the group's rules of procedure.

## 12. Professional secrecy and handling of classified information

The members of the group and their representatives, as well as invited experts and observers, are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy, which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members of the institutions and their staff, as well as to the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of Union classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443<sup>21</sup> and 2015/444<sup>22</sup>. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

## 13. Transparency

1. The group and its sub-groups shall be registered in the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities ('the Register of expert groups').
2. As regards the group and sub-groups composition, the following data shall be published on the Register of expert groups:
  - a. the name of Member States' authorities;
  - b. the name of other public entities, including the name of third countries' authorities;
  - c. the name of member organisations; the interest represented shall be disclosed;
  - d. the name of observers.
3. All relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions, shall be made available on the Register of expert groups. In particular, DG EAC shall publish the agenda and other relevant background documents in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Exceptions to publication shall only be possible where it is deemed that

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<sup>20</sup> See Article 17 of the horizontal rules.

<sup>21</sup> Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41).

<sup>22</sup> Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001<sup>23</sup>.

#### **14. Meeting expenses**

1. Participants in the activities of the group and sub-groups shall not be remunerated for the services they offer.
2. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group and sub-groups shall be reimbursed by the Commission. Reimbursement shall be made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission departments under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

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<sup>23</sup> These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.

## **Annex 5: Rules of procedure of the Working Group**

### **RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON: WORKING GROUP ON EQUALITY AND VALUES IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

The WORKING GROUP ON EQUALITY AND VALUES IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Having regard to the creation of the group by DG EAC,

Having regard to the standard rules of procedure of expert groups<sup>24</sup>,

HAVE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

#### *Point 1*

##### **Operation of the group**

The group shall act at the request of DG EAC, in compliance with the Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups<sup>25</sup> ('the horizontal rules').

#### *Point 2*

##### **Convening a meeting**

1. Meetings of the group are convened by the Chair, with the agreement of DG EAC either on their own initiative, or at the request of a simple majority of members after DG EAC has given its agreement.
2. Joint meetings of the group with other groups may be convened to discuss matters falling within their respective areas of responsibility.
3. In principle, meetings of the group shall be held on Commission premises or virtually, depending on the circumstances.

#### *Point 3*

##### **Agenda**

1. The secretariat shall draw up the agenda under the responsibility of the Chair and send it to the members of the group.
2. The agenda shall be adopted by the group at the start of the meeting.

#### *Point 4*

##### **Documentation to be sent to group members**

1. The secretariat shall send the invitation to the meetings and the draft agenda to the group members no later than fourteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.
2. The secretariat shall send documents on which the group are consulted to the group members no later than seven calendar days before the date of the meeting.
3. In urgent or exceptional cases, the time limits for sending the documentation mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 may be reduced to five calendar days before the date of the meetings.

#### *Point 5*

##### **Opinions of the group**

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<sup>24</sup> C(2016) 3301 (Annex 3).

<sup>25</sup> C(2016) 3301.

1. The group shall adopt their opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus.

*Point 6*

#### **Sub-groups**

1. DG EAC may set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the DG EAC. Sub-groups shall operate in compliance with the horizontal rules and shall report to the group. They shall be dissolved as soon as their mandates are fulfilled.
2. The members of sub-groups that are not members of the groups shall be selected via a public call for applications, in compliance with the horizontal rules<sup>26</sup>.

*Point 7*

#### **Invited experts**

DG EAC may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group or sub-groups on an ad hoc basis.

*Point 8*

#### **Observers**

1. Organisations and public entities other than Member States' authorities may be granted an observer status, in compliance with the horizontal rules, by direct invitation.
2. Organisations and public entities appointed as observers shall nominate their representatives.
3. Observers' representatives may be permitted by the Chair to take part in the discussions of the group and sub-groups and provide expertise. However, they shall not participate in the formulation of recommendations or advice of the group and its sub-groups.

*Point 9*

#### **Written procedure**

1. If necessary, the group's opinion or recommendation on a specific question may be delivered via a written procedure. To this end, the secretariat sends the group's members the document(s) on which the group are being consulted.
2. However, if a simple majority of group members asks for the question to be examined at a meeting of the group, the written procedure shall be terminated without result and the Chair shall convene a meeting of the group concerned as soon as possible.

*Point 10*

#### **Secretariat**

DG EAC shall provide secretarial support for the group and any sub-groups.

*Point 11*

#### **Minutes of the meetings**

Minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and on the opinions delivered by the groups shall be meaningful and complete. Minutes shall be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair.

*Point 12*

#### **Attendance list**

At each meeting, the secretariat shall draw up, under the responsibility of the Chair, an attendance list also specifying, where appropriate, the organisations, Member States' authorities or other public entities to which the participants belong.<sup>27</sup>

*Point 13*

**Correspondence**

1. Correspondence relating to the group shall be addressed to DG EAC, for the attention of the Chair.
2. Correspondence for group members shall be sent to the e-mail address which they provide for that purpose.

*Point 14*

**Transparency**

1. The group and its sub-groups shall be registered on the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities ('the Register of expert groups').
2. As regards the group and sub-groups composition, the following data shall be published on the Register of expert groups:
  - (a) the name of Member States' authorities;
  - (b) the name of other public entities, including the name of third countries' authorities;
  - (c) the name of member organisations; the interest represented shall be disclosed;
  - (d) the name of observers.
3. DG EAC shall make available all relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions in the Register of expert groups. In particular, DG EAC shall publish the agenda and other relevant background documents in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Exceptions to publication shall only be possible where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001<sup>28</sup>.

*Point 15*

**Access to documents**

Applications for access to documents held by the group shall be handled in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001<sup>29</sup>.

*Point 16*

**Deliberations**

In agreement with DG EAC the group may, by simple majority of their members, decide that deliberations shall be public.

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<sup>27</sup> The names of the representatives of organisations, Member States' authorities or other public entities may be included only subject to their prior freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous consent, in compliance with Article 3(15) and Article 7 of Regulation 2018/1725.

<sup>28</sup> These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.

<sup>29</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43).