



2018/2034(INI)

15.5.2018

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on employment and social policies of the euro area
(2018/2034(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Nikolaos Chountis

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes with concern the persistent socio-economic disparities in the euro area; believes that equal access to inclusive and quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for everyone is a precondition for socio-economic convergence; points, in this regard, to the persistent disparities across Member States and social groups with respect to the EU's headline education indicators;
2. Is deeply concerned that, in the EU28, the average rate of general government expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP fell year-on-year from 2009 to 2016¹; regrets that the education sector has been severely hit by austerity and stresses that well-resourced public education systems are vital for equality and social inclusion; calls, therefore, for a shift in the euro area's macroeconomic policy mix towards increased public spending on education and training;
3. Stresses that social disadvantage is frequently a predictor of poor educational outcomes and vice versa; insists that a properly funded, quality education and lifelong learning system can help break this vicious circle and promote social inclusion and equal opportunities;
4. Supports student and worker mobility in the EU and the euro area; is concerned, however, that substantial differences in living and working standards in the euro area trigger involuntary migration, further exacerbating the effects of the so-called brain drain; calls for future education and employment policies to reverse this phenomenon;
5. Calls for a genuine revision of EU and Member States' education, training and skills policies to deliver education and lifelong learning for inclusion; highlights that these policies should promote personal and societal development in a holistic manner and not simply be designed to meet labour market demands.

¹ Eurostat data.