



Resolution 2097 (2016)¹
Provisional version

Access to school and education for all children

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Europe has seen significant progress in the last two decades as regards access to school and education. Such progress, however, is of varying degrees according to the different European regions and groups of population concerned. Barriers to access to school still exist in the Council of Europe member States and they deprive children of the concrete opportunity to take their place in society.
2. The Parliamentary Assembly calls for these barriers to be lifted. It also underscores that the goal is not only to have all children attend school, but to ensure they can access quality education that will guarantee the development of their personal capacities and help them reach their full potential.
3. Moreover, access to school and quality education is not only an issue of individual justice and of equal opportunities, it is also in the interest of our societies to make the best use each person's talents and to avoid social costs linked to unemployment and dependency, which may be much higher than investment in education.
4. The Assembly therefore calls on member States to enhance their education systems in order to ensure access to quality education for all and regular class attendance until the end of the study programme. Member States should, in particular:
 - 4.1. identify priority education zones, and design action for urban and rural environments;
 - 4.2. identify groups at risk of exclusion and develop action plans for vulnerable groups, including measures to support education of children who are at risk of dropping out of school, and bring back to school those children who left it before having finished the school programme;
 - 4.3. promote networking, exchanges and mutual learning on inclusive education between schools, and the development of relations between schools and the wider community;
 - 4.4. strengthen co-operation between public authorities and families and put in place measures to protect children and ensure their access to school and regular class attendance, if families fail to do so;
 - 4.5. improve access to pre-primary education for all children, with a special focus on children from disadvantaged families, children of migrants and asylum seekers, as well as those attending schools in rural areas;
 - 4.6. support programmes that help children from minority and migrant communities to acquire adequate knowledge of the language of schooling;
 - 4.7. invest in programmes that support parental engagement in early literacy activities with the potential to promote literacy in the early primary grades; these programmes should be tailored to the cultural, ethnic and socio-economic contexts;

1. *Assembly debate* on 29 January 2016 (9th Sitting) (see [Doc. 13934](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Mr Gvozden Srećko Flego). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 29 January 2016 (9th Sitting).

- 4.8. encourage parental involvement in school activities, particularly in schools with a higher proportion of students whose parents have low levels of education or a low level of proficiency in the language of their children's schooling (for example migrant families);
- 4.9. promote academic resilience and academic success (including success "against all odds" for children from disadvantaged families), for instance by developing programmes fostering a positive school climate and motivation towards learning for socially disadvantaged students;
- 4.10. promote the inclusion in high-profile schools of students from disadvantaged families and migrant backgrounds in order to provide an equal opportunity to achieve;
- 4.11. enhance, through targeted training the ability of school managers to implement a policy of inclusiveness, to stimulate a democratic atmosphere in school and to further develop co-decision procedures on school matters;
- 4.12. enhance, through targeted training, of school managers and teachers, the prevention of violence among pupils, in school and outside of it, offline and online, in order to minimise possible conflicts among and with new students;
- 4.13. include in curricula more teaching on human rights, democracy, social justice, multicultural society, tolerance, peaceful conflict resolution and mutual respect in order to advance, in the most efficient and smoothest manner and the inclusion and socialisation of new students;
- 4.14. enhance teachers' professional education and in-service-training to enable them to implement the above-mentioned values and to foster a co-operative atmosphere in the classroom, by acting as role models;
- 4.15. support teachers' continuing professional development and, in particular, implement teacher education programmes to raise teachers' awareness of the role played by language in children's cognitive and social development and teachers' ability to manage linguistically diverse classrooms;
- 4.16. foster access to pedagogical professions for students from minority and migrant families;
- 4.17. ensure gender equality at all levels of the education system, with a special focus on disadvantaged women and girls, such as the Roma, migrants and refugees and women and girls with disabilities;
- 4.18. ensure access by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children to quality education by promoting respect and inclusion of LGBTI persons and the dissemination of objective information about issues concerning sexual orientation and gender identity, and by introducing measures to address homophobic and transphobic bullying;
- 4.19. provide adequate financial support for programmes promoting social inclusion and access to education for all, bearing in mind not only the cost of investing in education, but also the risk of not doing so.

5. The Assembly calls on member States to support actions at world level to promote access to school and education for all and, in particular, to implement the Incheon Declaration on "Education 2030: towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all", adopted at the World Education Forum held from 19 to 22 May 2015 in Incheon (Republic of Korea), and its Framework for Action adopted at the UNESCO High-level meeting on 4 November 2015. Concerted efforts with UNESCO, UNICEF and the European Commission should assist governments and national parliaments to fulfil their duty to offer every child an appropriate education, prepare children for future challenges and give them the chance to live in dignity.

6. Finally, the Assembly notes that education expenses are an investment for a better future for individuals, their surroundings and humanity worldwide. It therefore calls on governments of member States to consider adhering to the international benchmarks of 4% to 6% of gross domestic product (GDP) and/or 15% to 20% of total public expenditure for domestic investment in education. Furthermore, Europe should also reiterate its commitment to the international target of providing 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) as official development assistance (ODA) at United Nations-level.