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ЧЕТВЪРТЪК 14 ЯНУАРИ 2010 Г.
JUEVES 14 DE ENERO DE 2010
ČTVRTEK, 14. LEDNA 2010
TORSDAG DEN 14. JANUAR 2010
DONNERSTAG, 14. JANUAR 2010
BRÜSSEL

AUSSCHUSS FÜR KULTUR UND BILDUNG

ANHÖRUNG VON ANDROULLA VASSILIOU
DESIGNIERTES KOMMISSIONSMITGLIED
BILDUNG, KULTUR, MEHRSPRACHIGKEIT
UND JUGEND

NELJAPÄEV, 14. JAANUAR 2010
ΠΕΜΠΤΗ 14 ΙΑΝΟΥΑΡΙΟΥ 2010
THURSDAY, 14 JANUARY 2010
JEUDI 14 JANVIER 2010
GIOVEDÌ 14 GENNAIO 2010
CETURTDIENA, 2010. GADA 14. JANVĀRIS
2010 M. SAUSIO 14 D., KETVIRTADIENIS
2010. JANUÁR 14., CSÜTÖRTÖK
IL-HAMIS, 14 TA' JANNAR 2010
DONDERDAG 14 JANUARI 2010
CZWARTEK, 14 STYCZNIA 2010
QUINTA-FEIRA, 14 DE JANEIRO DE 2010
JOI 14 IANUARIE 2010
ŠTVRTOK 14. JANUÁRA 2010
ČETRTEK, 14. JANUAR 2010
TORSTAI 14. TAMMIKUUTA 2010
TORSDAGEN DEN 14 JANUARI 2010

4-002

VORSITZ: DORIS PACK

(Die Sitzung wird um 13.05 Uhr eröffnet.)

4-003

Die Vorsitzende. – Ich darf Sie alle begrüßen, besonders diejenigen, die wir noch nicht gesehen haben, und freue mich, dass Frau Androulla Vassiliou, die vormalige Kommissarin mit Zuständigkeit für Gesundheit, unter uns ist. Sie wird ein neues Portfolio anstreben. Sie ist von Kommissionspräsident Barroso gebeten worden, sich mit unseren Themen zu beschäftigen, mit Erziehung, Kultur, Mehrsprachigkeit und Jugend. Ich darf die Kolleginnen und Kollegen daran erinnern, dass wir Leitlinien für die Anhörung haben. Ich möchte sie Ihnen vorlesen: Das Parlament bewertet die designierten Kommissionsmitglieder aufgrund ihrer allgemeinen Befähigung, ihres Einsatzes für Europa und ihrer persönlichen Unabhängigkeit. Es bewertet ferner die Kenntnis ihres künftigen Geschäftsbereichs und ihre Kommunikationsfähigkeiten.

Die designierte Kommissarin hat fünf Standardfragen beantwortet, die Sie alle in Ihren Unterlagen haben. Sie können sie lesen, auch ihr *Curriculum vitae*. Ich möchte die Anhörung folgendermaßen organisieren: Zunächst gebe ich Frau Vassiliou für zehn Minuten das Wort, dann werden die Koordinatoren des Kulturausschusses jeweils eine Frage stellen. In diesem Fall wird Herr Sonik, der nicht da sein kann, von Herrn Messerschmidt ersetzt. Dann werde ich die anderen Mitglieder des Kulturausschusses bitten zu sprechen. Die Redezeit ist nach dem d'Hondtschen Verfahren zwischen den Fraktionen aufgeteilt. Davon hat jeder Kenntnis erhalten. Dann wollen wir den Mitgliedern des Ausschusses für Beschäftigung und soziale Angelegenheiten das Wort geben, die heute mit uns zusammen die Anhörung durchführen. Der Ausschuss für Beschäftigung und soziale Angelegenheiten ist für diese Anhörung ein so genannter assoziierter Ausschuss, weil er Interesse am Thema Berufsausbildung hat.

Dann möchte ich die Mitglieder des Ausschusses für Industrie, Forschung und Energie bitten, ihre Fragen zu stellen. Und dann wird schließlich Frau Vassiliou noch einmal die Möglichkeit haben, abschließend etwas zu sagen.

Für Fragen und Antworten stehen nicht mehr als jeweils fünf Minuten zur Verfügung und zwar folgendermaßen: Eine Minute für jede Frage, zwei Minuten für die designierte Kommissarin zur Beantwortung, dann noch einmal eine Möglichkeit zur Nachfrage für eine Minute, wenn nötig, und eine Minute dann für die abschließende Antwort der designierten Kommissarin.

Ich darf Sie daran erinnern, dass wir darauf achten müssen, dass die Fragen kurz gestellt werden. Ich werde so streng sein, wie es mir meine Kollegen in den letzten drei Tagen vorgemacht haben. Ich werde Ihnen das Wort

entziehen, wenn Sie sich erdreisten, zu lange zu sprechen.

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich darf auch den Dolmetschern danken. Heute sind ja alle Sprachen hier vertreten. Nun, Frau Vassiliou, darf ich Ihnen das Wort erteilen zu Ihrer Einführung. Bitte sehr!

4-004

Ανδρούλλα Βασιλείου, προτεινόμενη Επίτροπος. – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, έντιμα μέλη, οι ακροάσεις των υποψηφίων Επιτρόπων ενώπιον του Κοινοβουλίου αποτελούν έκφραση της δημοκρατίας, και, ως πρώην μέλος της Βουλής των Αντιπροσώπων της Κύπρου, είναι ιδιαίτερη τιμή για εμένα που συμμετέχω για δεύτερη φορά στη διαδικασία αυτή.

Μετά τις θετικές εμπειρίες της θητείας μου ως Επιτρόπου Υγείας, με ικανοποίησε ιδιαίτερα η πρόταση του Προέδρου Barroso να αναλάβω το χαρτοφυλάκιο της Παιδείας, Πολιτισμού, Πολυγλωσσίας και Νεολαίας. Είναι ένα χαρτοφυλάκιο που μας φέρνει πιο κοντά στους πολίτες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και που μας προσφέρει τα μέσα να τους βοηθήσουμε άμεσα να αντιμετωπίσουν τις προκλήσεις του μέλλοντος.

Επιτρέψτε μου να μοιραστώ μαζί σας μια προσωπική εμπειρία, η οποία αποτέλεσε την πρώτη μου επαφή με το νέο μου χαρτοφυλάκιο. Πριν από μερικούς μήνες τράβηξε την προσοχή μου μια συζήτηση μεταξύ Κυπρίων και Φινλανδών μαθητών Γυμνασίων σε μια κυπριακή ραδιοφωνική εκπομπή. Μόλις είχαν ολοκληρώσει μια κοινή μελέτη στα πλαίσια του προγράμματος Comenius της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής. Ενθουσιασμένοι με την προσπάθειά τους εξηγούσαν πώς τους βοήθησε να αντιμετωπίσουν και να καταλάβουν όχι μόνο τις διαφορές τους αλλά και το τι τους ενώνει.

Αυτή είναι και η ουσία του ευρωπαϊκού εγχειρήματος: ενότητα στην ποικιλομορφία. Για μένα η συζήτηση αυτή μεταξύ των νέων μαθητών ήταν εξαιρετικό παράδειγμα των δυνατοτήτων που έχουμε για να πετύχουμε αυτόν τον στόχο.

Προβλέπω σε στενή συνεργασία μαζί σας για τις βασικές μου προτεραιότητες:

- να ενισχύσουμε την επιμόρφωση των πολιτών και να διευρύνουμε την πρόσβαση στην παιδεία και την εκπαίδευση, με έμφαση στις εξειδικεύσεις που αντιστοιχούν στις ιδιαιτερότητες της σημερινής οικονομίας, λαμβανομένης υπόψη της οικονομικής κρίσης,
- να αυξήσουμε τις ευκαιρίες και την κινητικότητα της νεολαίας μας,
- να δημιουργήσουμε ένα περιβάλλον που θα προάγει τον πολιτισμό και τη δημιουργικότητα σε ατομικό επίπεδο αλλά και για την κοινωνία γενικότερα.

4-005

If Europe is to compete successfully in the new world economy, we must unlock excellence in education, in research and in innovation. We must equip our young

people to secure the high-skilled jobs of the future by upgrading skills and the quality of education.

Higher education is crucial – despite the real progress made under the Bologna process, not enough of our universities match the best in the world. Vocational education and training as well as education for adults need modernising; and we must also strengthen teachers' training, since good teachers are still the number one factor in pupils' success.

The benefits of the new economy must be shared more equally if we are to exit the recession and move to a smarter, greener, knowledge society. This means actively helping the one in six young people who leave school early; the one in five 15-year-olds with poor reading skills; and the 80 million people who are trying to survive with only low and basic skills.

Increasing investment in education and training is the best way to build a Europe where everyone has the skills to grasp new opportunities after the crisis. Your support in helping secure European budget resources for education and training is crucial. In this respect, securing the support of national governments, regional authorities and the private sector will be an important challenge for all us.

The proposed EU 2020 strategy allots a key role to education and training as drivers of the higher skills that will fuel sustainable, knowledge-based growth in Europe.

I intend to draw on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, the Marie Curie actions and the Erasmus Mundus programme to energise and modernise higher education and build Europe's global attractiveness for study and research.

I also intend to discuss with you how we can help the European Institute of Innovation and Technology to grow as a flagship for Europe's knowledge-based future.

Marie Curie actions will reinforce our efforts to bring together the European Areas of Higher Education and Research so that knowledge, and the researchers, students and staff who generate it, move freely across borders. This will help us develop transnational excellence in research and education and transform them into innovation.

Another major priority is streamlining and expanding learning mobility through our new 'Youth on the Move' initiative. As our programmes show, learning mobility is extremely effective in enhancing skills and employability and opening people's minds to other cultures.

Our goal is to offer all young people in Europe, whatever their learning path, the opportunities to gain personal and job skills through learning mobility. Other learners, especially teachers, should also be able to benefit from mobility on a much larger scale.

My aim is to set out the future framework of Youth on the Move this summer and propose as soon as possible a new Youth on the Move programme.

As President Barroso has stated in his Political Guidelines, this new initiative will make a decisive contribution to cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and multilingual learning.

4-006

Je souhaite, Madame la Présidente, à travers l'Agenda européen de la culture, promouvoir ces valeurs européennes fondatrices, mais aussi soutenir la créativité et l'innovation. Il faudra pour cela libérer tout le potentiel de l'industrie européenne de la culture et de la création. Un livre vert permettra d'identifier les actions européennes et nationales qui donneront la possibilité aux créateurs européens de mieux s'exprimer.

Je compte également, dès que le nouveau collège est confirmé, présenter une proposition pour la mise en œuvre d'un label du patrimoine européen. Il me semble en effet hautement symbolique de commencer notre coopération en matière de culture européenne en célébrant et en donnant plus de visibilité aux sites qui incarnent les idéaux européens.

L'Europe est bien plus qu'un projet économique ou politique. C'est un projet qui vise à préserver et à renforcer notre diversité culturelle et nos valeurs. Ainsi, je me réjouis que le Président ait complété ce portefeuille par le programme MEDIA. Le cinéma est et doit rester un vecteur d'expression majeur de la culture européenne. Ce programme MEDIA concrétise l'engagement européen, qui est fort et ancien dans ce domaine.

L'action communautaire doit aider à faire émerger, de la diversité culturelle de l'Europe, une industrie compétitive sur la scène internationale, contribuant ainsi à la croissance en Europe. Tel est notre défi. Je m'appuierai pour cela sur nos succès, en portant une attention particulière à l'impact des technologies numériques sur le cinéma. Je serai également attentive à une meilleure diffusion du cinéma européen sur la scène mondiale.

Notre objectif doit être ainsi de promouvoir la diversité culturelle et linguistique, et ceci également dans la conduite de nos politiques externes. Ce patrimoine culturel, unique et varié, qui caractérise l'Union doit porter avec force notre voix et nos visions dans le monde global d'aujourd'hui. En cela, la convention de l'UNESCO nous donne une base légale solide et nous avons déjà progressé afin d'introduire des priorités culturelles dans d'autres politiques. Je pense que nous pouvons faire plus encore.

En particulier sur les droits d'auteurs, il s'agit d'assurer un équilibre entre une rémunération juste des artistes – ce qui est vital pour la création et la diversité culturelle – et un accès plus large et plus facile à la culture. Je

compte, à ce titre, travailler en étroite collaboration avec mes collègues commissaires sur un nouvel agenda numérique qui respecte cet équilibre.

Enfin, je m'efforcerai évidemment de soutenir le multilinguisme, la diversité linguistique et l'apprentissage des langues comme vecteurs d'employabilité et comme partie intégrante de notre patrimoine pour les générations futures.

4-007

Die Vorsitzende. – Frau Vassiliou, die zehn Minuten sind leider um. Ich muss unhöflich sein, aber ich habe es angekündigt.

Ich darf jetzt die Kollegen vom Ausschuss für Kultur und Bildung bitten, das Wort zu ergreifen. Ich werde bei Ihnen noch strenger sein.

4-008

Marco Scurria (PPE). – Nel darle il benvenuto, Commissario designato Vassiliou, volevo approfondire un aspetto di cui lei aveva parlato, e cioè capire in maniera un po' più specifica di che cosa si trattava, di questo nuovo programma di cui ci ha parlato, "*Giovani in movimento*", e capire anche come questo potesse coordinarsi, relazionarsi con un programma pluriennale che noi abbiamo, "*Gioventù in azione*", che è un programma che ha aiutato molto l'interscambio e la crescita dei giovani in Europa; e quindi capire quali sono le misure concrete che intende prendere per rendere più efficace e migliorare questo programma, con particolare riferimento anche al Servizio europeo di volontariato, che fa parte di questo programma, in previsione del 2011 che, come lei sa bene, è stato proclamato Anno europeo del volontariato.

4-009

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – The Youth On The Move programme is one which will embrace and, to some extent, simplify.

During my study of this portfolio, one thing which struck me is the numerous programmes and the diversity of expressions and terms that we use etc. which I find may be confusing to a certain extent to our people, and especially to young people who want to take advantage of it.

So in effect, when we study this new Youth on the Move initiative – which we shall certainly be preparing in cooperation with you and after taking into account your ideas – it will embrace the mobility of youth from their school years onward, and will cover researchers, culture, sport and of course the question of volunteering, which is also very important, because we find that volunteering helps young people get better experiences and increase their learning in life.

So in effect this will be our policy for mobility and youth, and not only youth, for the future – I say 'not only' because we also have to pay attention not only to young people but to adults. When we speak of life-long

learning, this does not stop after graduation or after we secure employment.

We have to continue, because the challenges are really great and because we have to give all our people, even after retirement, this possibility to increase their knowledge and experiences and be sure that until the very end they will have employment.

4-010

Marco Scurria (PPE). – Solo un ulteriore chiarimento: stiamo quindi parlando di un programma che prenderà in considerazione sia i ragazzi dalle scuole all'università, fuoriuscendo l'università, e persone che vogliono entrare nel mondo del lavoro; quindi mettendo insieme più generazioni, se vogliamo, per dare una comune sensibilità europea. Stiamo parlando di questo, se ho capito bene?

4-011

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – It is a chain, starting from primary school or pre-primary age, and finishing at the time of employment and beyond.

So we want to enrich that chain and make it strong for the whole of its length, because it is no good having a strong part of the chain and having some other parts which are weak.

With our Green Paper on Mobility, we have to see what the barriers to mobility are, and we have to face these barriers in order, as I said, to give opportunities to everybody to take advantage of this great asset of mobility.

4-012

Mary Honeyball (S&D). – My group, which is the Social Democrat Group, has called on the Commission over the years to put the interests of citizens at the heart of the 2020 strategy, and particularly in these difficult economic times, which you have talked about.

I would like to ask you whether you agree that the new EU 2020 strategy must include a strong social dimension, and I would like to know whether you believe, as I do, that that would be more effective in combating inequalities, social exclusion and poverty.

I would also like to ask you, within the context of that, if you could give us concrete ideas on how you would enhance this social integration – not just about the sort of education you have talked about, but more generally, and how you would see better-quality education and professional training achieving that.

4-013

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – My answer to your question is: of course, yes. I am in favour of social inclusion of everybody, and I think that, when we speak about giving chances to our young people and to our people in general, we should emphasise the young people who are from poor families or disadvantaged groups. I am speaking about the children of immigrants, children from families with uneducated parents who have nobody to advise them and to lead them into the

world, so, yes, we have to include everybody. And, in order to do that, it is not enough to speak about only formal education. Formal education is very welcome and is, of course, necessary, but we should expand it to other forms of education: non-formal education and informal education – this is very interesting – and also to increasing their capabilities for languages. This is also a tool for them to find employability.

And we have to match well their skills on the one hand with jobs on the other hand, so that we give them the best opportunities possible.

4-014

Mary Honeyball (S&D). – If I could just follow up. I completely agree with you about languages, but I would like to push you a bit on the unemployment, the social dimension of this, and how you would see the sort of measures you have been talking about actually leading to jobs – and it really is employment, more than anything else, that ends social exclusion.

4-015

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – In the European Union about 50% of our university graduates are unemployed. And why? We have to examine the reasons why. In some countries, I will not mention names, the figure even reaches 80% of our university graduates, so we must see, we must connect skills and knowledge with employment.

It is no good having graduates who will not find employment. We have to see what the needs of the market are. So we are carrying out a study about that, and we shall see from that what measures we have to take in order to create and enhance the possibilities of young people to get better vocational training.

Coming from the health sector, I know very well we have a shortage of doctors, we have a shortage of nurses, of specialists, and it is very appropriate to encourage young people to take up these professions because they are sure to get employment.

4-016

Hannu Takkula (ALDE). – First of all I would like to thank you for your excellent presentation.

My question is this. As you know, the educational system is different throughout Europe. This is only natural, but for instance according to PISA results there is a wide disparity in terms of educational outcomes from one Member State to another.

Do you think it is important for European cooperation to improve in terms of education, and, if so, how do you propose that this is done so as to ensure mutual benefits for each Member State from sharing expertise and ideas?

4-017

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Of course you know very well that we cannot have a unified system, that we cannot harmonise systems. The only thing that we can do is to encourage Member States to exchange their best practices and experiences, and to

support them in doing that, including through our programmes.

And we have been doing that for the last number of years. We have not succeeded perfectly, but I think that this is the only way forward: cooperation and exchange of good practices.

Setting benchmarks is not just about naming and shaming Member States but is to give them some guidance about where their weaknesses are and try to improve their weaknesses, because weaknesses and strong points are different from Member State to Member State. So we have to see what are their weaknesses in each particular case.

I know that when the big enlargement took place we had a lot of gaps in education, as in many other fields of course, and it was natural. So we are trying to give the new Member States the possibilities to improve their systems.

And we have examples of that. For example Slovenia, which had a very weak educational system, has taken advantage of our programmes and our assistance and now they can boast a great improvement. So this is the way forward: to see what the other countries have done and to try and improve everyone's systems.

4-018

Hannu Takkula (ALDE). – I do not think that anyone in this room would dispute the important role that education can serve in society.

With this in mind, the importance of teacher education should not be overlooked. How are you going to invest in European teacher education and pedagogical innovations in order to raise the level of student learning in all EU countries?

4-019

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Let me start by saying that we all agree that teachers' abilities, training, qualifications and teaching methods are very important. These are the most important factors for the success of students. I think we all have personal experiences of this.

I was reading an article last night about new technologies. It was amazing. Now, instead of having generation gaps, we have gaps every five years, because of the improvement and development of technology.

How are teachers going to cope with all this new technology when teaching languages, for example, if we do not give them continuous training? Initial education is very important, and continuous training is also very important. We have to invest in them. We also have to give them induction courses, because they enter the education system and they are unfamiliar with pedagogical aspects of education.

We have to invest in our teachers.

4-020

Malika Benarab-Attou (Verts/ALE). – Bonjour Madame Vassiliou, et bienvenue. Un quart des jeunes Européens de quinze ans a de faibles compétences en lecture. En moyenne, l'Union européenne ne cesse d'accroître son retard dans ce domaine et se retrouve aujourd'hui en dessous du seuil de référence européen. Six millions de jeunes quittent chaque année l'école sans qualifications.

En cette Année européenne de lutte contre l'exclusion sociale et la pauvreté, quelles sont vos propositions concrètes pour lutter contre l'illettrisme et assurer l'accès des personnes en difficulté, jeunes et moins jeunes, au savoir de base?

Dans cette perspective, et du fait des compétences nouvellement attribuées au Parlement européen par le traité de Lisbonne, vous engagez-vous à proposer au Conseil l'augmentation du budget alloué aux programmes d'éducation et de formation?

4-021

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – The report which came out last November shows very clearly that we have not reached the benchmarks which we set ourselves for 2010, but we have to continue. The only way forward is to insist on improving the quality and performance of our children, because we all agree that unless children have the skills that are necessary for them in life, they cannot succeed.

We must give emphasis of course to education and to the methods that we use because now, as I mentioned before, children are very much attracted by new technologies. Most probably, one of the reasons that reading literacy is weak is because our young children spend too long in front of their video games.

Of course, this is natural. Children are attracted by technology, but we have to find ways of making them interested in literature, in reading and so to improve their skills.

I think we should also make children more interested in cooperating with other children from better-off countries with better records through mobility and our programmes.

This means exchanges, and giving emphasis to teacher training and qualifications is also very important. This is what I will give emphasis to in order to reach the new, and even more ambitious, benchmarks for 2020 which we shall present this year.

4-022

Malika Benarab-Attou (Verts/ALE). – Vous n'avez pas répondu à la question concernant votre engagement pour l'augmentation du budget alloué aux programmes d'éducation et de formation.

4-023

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I am committed to doing my best to increase the budget but, as you know, it is not only up to me. I will fight for more

funds for education and training, but for that I need your support. I need the support of ministers, and in the future we will also have to rely on other partners, on local and regional authorities, and also on business, to invest more in this sector.

If we connect learning to business, then the business world will be more interested in investing in education as well.

4-024

Emma McClarkin (ECR). – My question regards the new competence in sport following the Lisbon Treaty.

How do you propose to implement an EU sports policy that will focus on the grass roots of sports? After all, this is where the most good can be done in terms of developing sport, in conjunction with other challenges such as obesity and participation of youth in society.

What are your plans for a sports policy that focuses on the development of sport at grass-root level, as well as with regard to professional sport, which unfortunately a lot of the draft legislation has focused on, particularly football?

Will you also consider other minority sports as well, and how will you deliver a sports policy that is for all sports, not just for football?

4-025

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I do regret that I could not finish my introductory speech, because the last part was devoted to sport.

But I want to stress that for me sport is really a benefit and can give a lot of benefit to everyone. Because it is not only the economic dimension but also the societal part of sport which is so important. And grass-root sport is, or should be, one of the bases of our policies in sport.

It is good for health, and I know because not long ago I organised a special conference for youth and health and sport, and physical activity of course is one of the most important sectors of that. Furthermore, sport is the best way to mobilise and energise all the young people that we have, through team work. Volunteering through sport is the best way.

And I must tell you a personal experience. I had the pleasure of working with the Special Olympics in Cyprus some years ago. I accompanied our national team to two international events and one European event, and I will never forget the benefit that those children took from sports. Some of these children are now independent human beings. They work in various businesses and they have made a life for themselves.

So sport is really a basis for our young people's future.

4-026

Emma McClarkin (ECR). – Thank you for your emphasis on the importance of sport. I totally agree. It will play a big part of your portfolio as well I hope.

Are you a sports fan yourself? What understanding do you and your team have of the governance of sport and how sporting organisations operate? And how will the sports unit work within your DG?

4-027

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – I have to be honest with you. I am a sports fan; I am not particularly a football fan.

Well, I may become one and I do not mind becoming one because my grandson is very interested in sport. My father is interested in football so I am tempted very much to learn. But for me sport is not just football. It is tennis, it is basketball, it is volleyball, it is swimming (I am a good swimmer by the way, coming from an island), so I was very much involved in sport when I was a young person.

I still take physical exercise because I give a lot of importance to that. So I will give a lot of importance to sport. And I am a good learner, so whatever I do not know, I will learn from my services.

I have excellent people in my services very devoted to sport, and I am sure that with their assistance and their help I will also be in a position to carry this part of my agenda forward.

4-028

Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL). – Merci, Madame Vassiliou, et bienvenue. La culture et l'éducation n'ont pas été, jusqu'à présent, au cœur des compétences de l'Union européenne, et je dirais que c'est tant mieux puisque, comme vous l'avez souligné, nous avons tendance à construire, d'abord et avant tout, une Europe économique.

Vous avez raison, le projet européen ne peut pas se limiter à cela. L'Europe a un formidable atout: c'est un formidable espace culturel qui est riche, notamment, de sa diversité, mais dans lequel, malheureusement, les écarts entre les plus riches et les plus pauvres continuent de se creuser, c'est vrai, y compris en matière culturelle.

C'est pourquoi je voudrais savoir comment vous pensez favoriser les formations non professionnelles – celles que vous avez appelées les formations professionnelles – qui n'ont pas, elles, comme objectif les besoins du marché. Ce que vous nous avez dit sur le programme "Youth on the move" me laisse sur ma faim de ce point de vue...

(La présidente retire la parole à l'orateur)

4-029

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Of course, vocational training is part of the chain for our learning process. Some of our best workers and some of our good professionals are graduates of good vocational training institutes. And we have to strengthen this, because it is very important.

But I think, what we have done with the higher education area through the Bologna Process, we have not succeeded with in the case of vocational training. So we have to complete our study and see what the weaknesses are. We have to strengthen the vocational training institutes, and we have to emphasise quality, mobility and employability and see how best we can help Member States converge their systems in order to be recognisable, of course, and enhance the ability of mobility in this sector as well.

Regarding the Youth on the Move programme: vocational training, of course, goes hand in hand with our efforts, because we place a lot of emphasis on skills – and how do we obtain skills? Through education, but also through vocational training.

4-030

Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL). – Pardon, j'ai dû mal me faire comprendre. Justement, ce qui me gêne, c'est qu'on soit un petit peu obsédé par les questions de formation professionnelle et d'adaptation aux besoins du marché. Tel est le cas, notamment, de la communication que nous venons d'étudier sur universités et entreprises.

Ce qui m'inquiète, c'est le creusement des écarts en matière culturelle au sens étroit du terme. Je citerais les sciences humaines, par exemple, qui semblent de plus en plus réservées à une élite et qui laissent à l'écart de plus en plus de population.

Je pense, pour illustrer mon propos, qu'Europeana, de ce point de vue, est un bon exemple de ce que nous pouvons faire ou de ce que nous risquons de faire si nous ne prenons pas cette construction de l'Europe culturelle à bras-le-corps.

4-031

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – To give all our people the ability to get a better access to culture is very important. Europeana is a great project for the Commission and others, and we have to cooperate even more in strengthening Europeana in order to respond to other challenges that we have.

In order to succeed in doing that, I think we have to cooperate more with Member States. Member States really have to help in doing that, and, not only that, to have better standards for our digital society. This is something which we shall take forward with my fellow Commissioners, because the Commission must have coordinated action in this field. I am sure that the Commissioners who are involved in this in the new Commission will cooperate very well in carrying forward our objective.

4-032

Morten Messerschmidt (EFD). – Jeg vil gerne vende tilbage til noget af det, som De nævnte i indledningen, nemlig spørgsmålet om en europæisk identitet. Når jeg ser tilbage på den måde, som pengene på kulturbudgettet igennem de sidste fem år er blevet brugt på, så er der en række poster, som slår én med forundring. Man har finansieret golfhoteller i Portugal, bygget virtual life-

byer i Sverige, man har brugt masser af penge på at arrangere maratonløb i Grækenland og dukketeater i Baltikum. Jeg har meget svært ved at se, hvordan de forskellige besynderlige aktiviteter – som jeg må sige for mit eget vedkommende bedst kan karakteriseres som det rene pjank og spild af penge – hvordan de på nogen måde er med til at opbygge en europæisk identitet. Så jeg ville være glad for, om De kunne uddybe dette.

4-033

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Infrastructure for culture is of course important. It is needed. But it is not the objective of our programmes.

Of course we have other programmes under other DGs, regional programmes which may help in doing that, and I hope that Member States take advantage of those programmes for their infrastructure.

But what we are interested in as DG EAC is to give impetus to the human aspect of culture, to give the possibilities to our artists to create, to have intellectual output, also to exchange ideas and get inspiration from other countries. These are the sort of programmes we want and these are the objectives we want to achieve.

I mentioned for example the European Heritage Label in my introductory speech, and this is, I am sure, something that Parliament is in favour of. It will give a great sense of belonging to our people and to our citizens, knowing of course the various cultural sites that come under this heading, because these will be interconnected and will give more knowledge to our people about history, our cultural diversity and so on.

This is one type of programme that will, I think, strengthen our intercultural dialogue and diversity.

Another way is the European Capitals of Culture. I was listening to what was happening to this year's Capitals of Culture, in Essen for example which was traditionally an industrial area, and now with this allocation of the title of Cultural Capital of Europe, Essen will be converted into a much wider centre.

4-034

Morten Messerschmidt (EFD). – Jeg skal bare forstå det, De siger, fuldstændig rigtigt, nemlig at hvis De ser tilbage på de sidste fem års brug af skatteyderkroner på kulturbudgettet, så synes De, at pengene er brugt på enhver måde rigtigt, og at De mener, at Kommissionen kan have en hel blank samvittighed i forhold til de projekter, som er blevet realiseret for at skabe grobund for kulturelle aktiviteter. Jeg skal bare lige have det fuldstændig på det rene. Jeg tror nemlig, at der er rigtig mange i vores medlemslande – vi her i salen skal jo vælges af vælgere – at der er rigtig mange vælgere og borgere, som synes, det er dybt besynderligt, at sådanne projekter tildeles så store beløb samtidig med, at der skæres ned på forskning og sociale aktiviteter og andre ting. Derfor vil jeg bare gerne have en fuldstændig klar melding om, hvor De står i denne sag. Er De enig i, at der er blevet spildt penge, og at det ikke vil ske under Dem som kommissær, eller vil De fortsætte med spildet?

4-035

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – Well, I want to believe that the Commission and the European institutions (because it is not just the Commission) have been very careful in how they have spent the taxpayers' money.

But I can say that it is my commitment to see that money is spent where it has a direct influence on the people, and in such a way that we can make a difference to the ordinary citizens of Europe who look up to us to do something better to improve their lives.

And of course culture is part of Europe, it is the basis of Europe, and we have to spend some money on that, but we have to make sure that we spend the money in the best possible way to enrich the lives of our young people and of the citizens in general.

4-036

Die Vorsitzende. – Wir kommen jetzt zu Fragen der Mitglieder des Ausschusses für Kultur und Bildung. Ich beginne.

Frau Vassiliou, Sie haben vorhin auf das Thema Lehrerbildung angespielt, und auch ein Kollege hat schon danach gefragt. Sind Sie bereit, in das neue Programm für lebenslanges Lernen gerade dieses Thema mitaufzunehmen und vor allen Dingen nicht nur die Aus- und die Fortbildung ins Auge zu fassen, sondern auch die Mobilität? Denn Lehrer, die noch nie im Ausland waren, können auch Kinder nicht zu guten Europäern erziehen. Ich hoffe, dass die Kommission im Programm „Lebenslanges Lernen“ hier einen stärkeren Fokus setzt.

4-037

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think we all agree that mobility should be structured mobility. It is not mobility for tourism. It is mobility which serves a purpose, and studies have proven that mobility helps people who participate to increase their skills and chances for a better life. So mobility will be part of our policies. But as I said, after very careful study to see what the barriers for mobility were and what the benefits of mobility were, and built on our past experience with mobility, mobility should remain a central part of our education.

Now, coming to your question on teachers – yes, teachers should be encouraged to have more mobility. I know that, once a person starts his employment, his career, well, it is not very easy to leave the family and go abroad and get new experience. But we should encourage them, and we should give them some motives to do that, because the mobility of teachers is just as important as mobility of students and, of course, of other adults.

4-038

Die Vorsitzende. – Frau Vassiliou! Können Sie mir zusagen, dass es in dem neuen Programm „Lebenslanges Lernen“ einen Teil geben wird, der *Comenius Teacher* oder ähnlich heißen wird?

4-039

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Comenius Teacher is of course a very important addition to our Comenius Programme and I must express my gratitude to you, Mrs Pack, for highlighting this Comenius Teacher aspect of the programme, because it is indeed very important.

But of course, as it is a new aspect, we have to strengthen it and support it in order to develop it in the same way as Comenius Individual Mobility for pupils.

The latter is starting this year, but only 13 Member States will participate. Why? Because they are not very happy, or they are not very sure about the security of our young people, so we have to give them this security, we have to make sure that this Comenius Individual Mobility programme will secure the security and protection of the young people of the age of 15 and 16 who decide to go abroad under this scheme.

(The Chair cut the speaker off.)

4-040

Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D). – Señora Vassiliou, usted tendrá también la responsabilidad de la cartera de Multilingüismo y le quería hacer una pregunta en este sentido.

Usted sabe perfectamente que el Tratado de Lisboa prevé que en 2014 algunas tomas de decisiones tendrán en cuenta el criterio también de la población, además de los Estados. En el caso del uso de las lenguas, contamos con un Reglamento desde el primer día que empezó esta historia de éxito de la Unión Europea, cuando eran cinco países, tres lenguas oficiales; en estos momentos, 27 países, 23 lenguas oficiales. Esto ha conducido a algunas anomalías en el uso de las lenguas.

¿Estaría usted dispuesta a empezar a pensar, a estudiar, la posibilidad de introducir el criterio de población también en la normativa sobre el uso de las lenguas en el Parlamento Europeo?

4-041

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – As you know, the use of languages is based on a Council Regulation of 1958. This Regulation has been amended several times; after each enlargement. The last one of course was in 2007. The Council Regulation says that all 23 official languages should be equal, should be recognised and should be respected.

But we should go a bit further; the Treaty speaks of linguistic diversity, and we should respect that. Linguistic diversity does not just mean the 23 languages. It means regional and minority languages – about 60, I believe. We also have to respect the 400 or so languages that are spoken by the immigrant communities.

So we should make every effort to maintain this diversity and respect this diversity. After all, this diversity is part of European culture and we should respect it. But, I must say, any amendment to this

Council Regulation is the Council's decision, which has to be taken unanimously. Unfortunately the Commission has no right to make proposals to the Council on this issue.

4-042

Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D). – Lo sé, señora Vassiliou. Lo que pasa es que, después de tantos años de unos usos que, a mi modo de ver, han producido unas anomalías, creo que estaríamos ya en un momento de recapacitar un poco. Ya sé que es cuestión del Consejo – lo sé– y que están realmente, en general, muy poco dispuestos a revisar, pero me gustaría mucho que, en algún momento, usted pudiera pensar en si esto que le estoy diciendo tiene sentido, justamente para el apoyo, para el desarrollo de la diversidad cultural y lingüística de la Unión Europea.

4-043

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I want to assure you that I am a great believer in cultural diversity, especially coming from a small island state, and I can assure you that our policy throughout our programmes should be to encourage multilingualism and cultural diversity, especially linguistic diversity. We will do whatever is within my competence, and the competence of the Commission, because we believe in this linguistic diversity of our peoples.

4-044

Pál Schmitt (PPE). – Tisztelt biztos asszony! Én is a nyelvi sokszínűségről fogok magyarul hozzászólni és kérdést feltenni. Ez Európa egyik legfontosabb értéke, amelynek védelmét a Szerződés is garantálja. Különösen igaz ez az őshonos nemzeti kisebbségek számára, amelyeknek identitását nagymértékben meghatározza, hogy tanulhatnak-e anyanyelvükön, illetve használhatják-e a nyelvüket a közigazgatási eljárások során. Szeretném felhívni a figyelmét, hogy Szlovákiában nemrég életbe lépett egy olyan államtvény, nyelvtörvény, amely súlyosan diszkriminálja a nem szlovák anyanyelvű állampolgárokat, amelyek elég jelentős részét teszik ki a lakosságnak. A törvénynek így szól egy sora: „a szlovák nyelv előnyt élvez a Szlovák Köztársaság területén beszélt többi nyelvvel szemben,„ Sőt, akár 5000 eurós büntetést is kiróhatnak egyes esetekben. Kérdésem: mit kíván tenni annak érdekében, hogy az Európai Unióban egyetlen nyelvi kisebbséget se érhesen hátrányos megkülönböztetés?

4-045

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Yes, I am aware of this new Slovak law which came into force in September. It is a very wide law and one has to follow very carefully how this law is applied, because whether we as the Commission can do something is only through the application of this law and how it is applied.

As you very well know, the European Commission can only intervene in the case of minority languages in a certain state and language policy through European law, through the execution or process of European law.

We cannot in general intervene in decisions by the Member States regarding language policy.

I must, however, stress the fact that the protection of minorities, and their languages, is part of human rights. The Convention on Human Rights is very important. It has been ratified by all Member States, and I think the Member States have a duty to abide by their obligations under human rights and other international obligations, but it is not something that the Commission can help with.

I must say I was pleased to see the joint statement that was made by the Prime Minister of Slovakia and the Prime Minister of Hungary to the effect that they will cooperate very effectively to see that the interests and the rights of minorities are fully respected. They have also, I think, agreed that the High Representative from the OSCE will advise them during the process to see that this is applied properly.

The Commission will follow the process very closely and see that nothing is done by them which prejudices European law.

4-046

Pál Schmitt (PPE). – Az igazság az, hogy a biztosjelölt asszony válasza megnyugtatót engem, s látom, hogy jól ismeri a helyzetet. Egy kis félelmünk van, hogy megszüntették a többnyelvűségi biztos posztot, s ez a nagyon fontos feladat most önre hárul, asszonyom. Nagyon remélem, hogy mint egy kis ország nyelvét nagyon szerető, egyébként több nyelven beszélő jelölt, szíven fogja viselni a kisebbségek vagy akár a kisebb nyelveknek a sorsát. Ön írásos válaszában azt mondta, hogy konkrét lépésekre készül a többnyelvűség terén. Tudna ebből valamit említeni?

4-047

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – The question of languages and multilingualism is very important, as I said before, and we should strive not only to increase the budget for multilingualism, but also to strengthen our programmes on multilingualism.

I believe we are going to introduce, by 2012, a new benchmark for our young people for learning languages. I think this is very important, because I am not very satisfied with the way the 'one-plus-two' decision has been applied and has been successful, but we have to strengthen these efforts in order to make every child take up languages from an early age.

4-048

Santiago Fisas Aixela (PPE). – Bienvenida, señora Vassiliou. El Programa *Jean Monnet* ha sido una herramienta muy importante para facilitar el conocimiento sobre la integración y la cooperación europea. Estimula la enseñanza, la investigación y la reflexión sobre Europa en las instituciones más prestigiosas de todo el mundo. Y el Programa *Lifelong Learning* para el período 2007-2010 equiparó el programa *Jean Monnet* al Programa *Erasmus* y al Programa *Leonardo Da Vinci*.

En ese sentido, y de cara a la preparación del nuevo Programa *Lifelong Learning*, me gustaría conocer sus ideas sobre el Programa *Jean Monnet* y saber si seguirá siendo reforzado y extendido.

4-049

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – The new programme does not mean that we shall do without the existing programmes, especially programmes which are very successful. They will be incorporated. Our aim is not to strike out programmes which are successful but to strengthen them, see where their weaknesses are and see how we can improve these programmes.

Jean Monnet has indeed been a very successful programme, because it builds up the connection between university professors and the EU. We can take advantage of their knowledge and of their interest in the EU, and it is also a very good way of making people in our Member States aware of what is happening in Europe, how we operate here and so on.

So our support for a number of European educational institutions which we have selected, which project this vision of ours of the European Union, should continue.

Our purpose is not to strike out the programmes but to strengthen them.

4-050

Santiago Fisas Aixela (PPE). – En esta nueva etapa, su cartera asume las competencias sobre la acción *Marie Curie*, que hasta ahora asumía la Dirección General de Investigación. El sistema de selección de los proyectos de esta acción tiene en cuenta, sobre todo, la excelencia de los mismos, lo que ha sido destacado por sus beneficiarios y también por el Tribunal de Cuentas.

¿Piensa continuar con el sistema establecido hasta ahora, que ha dado tan buenos resultados, o tiene alguna idea para cambiarlo?

4-051

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – I think the reason why President Barroso decided to bring Marie Curie to this DG is because we want to strengthen this learning triangle: education, research, innovation. Marie Curie is a very good programme for research, but we have to connect the three.

This does not mean that we are going to start from scratch and ignore the good work that has been done. Indeed, I intend to cooperate very closely with my fellow Commissioner for Research in carrying this forward and using researchers and encouraging them as much as in the past. I think this is very important, and I assure you we shall not do anything to harm this excellent programme, but rather to enrich this triangle, as I said, of a knowledge society.

4-052

Katarína Neved'álová (S&D). – Pani kandidátka, ja sa chcem spýtať otázku ohľadne mládežníckej politiky.

V súčasnosti sa stretávame s tým, že mladí ľudia nemajú veľký záujem o rozhodovanie alebo rozhodovací proces Európskej únie o tvorbe európskych politik alebo všeobecne majú pocit, že Európska únia sa o nich nezaujíma, a preto moja otázka znie: Ako vy vidíte v nasledujúcom období nejaký framework alebo nejaký obraz toho, ako by sa mala európska spolupráca v mládežníckej otázke uberať, ktorým smerom? A takisto, ako vidíte mládežnícke otázky v novej stratégii Európa 2020, alebo Európska únia 2020, a ako vidíte Európsky pakt mládeže?

4-053

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I heard only one question. I do not know if the interpretation was interrupted? Regarding young people's disinterest in what is happening in Europe and the gap between people – especially young people – and us, this is not only a characteristic of European matters: it is also a characteristic in many societies in the Member States. We have to attract the interest of our young people. That we have to take action to see that people are more involved in the democratic life of our societies is a new addition under the Lisbon Treaty. This should be a central point of our programmes in the future: how can we mobilise the interest of our young people in not just European affairs, but also in regional affairs, local affairs, national affairs? This is part of the process of developing the inclusion of our young people in what is taking place in Europe. They should be part of the policy-making of Europe, but also of the national Member States.

4-054

Katarína Neved'alová (S&D). – Mňa mrzí, že ten preklad nebol možno presný, ale ja som sa pýtala konkrétne, ako vidíte tie otázky, ako by sa to malo riešiť. Lebo mne sa páči, že ste povedali, že áno, treba ich viac involvovať, ale akým spôsobom to chcete robiť? A tá otázka, koniec znel: Ako to vidíte v novej Európskej stratégii 2020 a ako vidíte vlastne doplnenie Európskeho mládežníckeho paktu do tejto stratégie?

4-055

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – How am I going to build on that? We have specific sections of our programmes to involve young people in democratic life. We are going to strengthen those programmes, and even enrich them, because, as I said, the involvement and the interest of young people in what is happening in Europe and what is happening in their Member States, their municipalities and their regions is very important. We have noticed the distance between them in the last European elections, and we do not want this situation to continue – this disinterest of young people – so we should work on that.

Regarding 2020, of course our young people are part and parcel of our whole policy on education, training and new skills because they are our future. If we do not give emphasis to young people, to whom are we going to give it? This is our future.

4-056

Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE). – In these times of economic slowdown, where, as you so rightly put it yourself, even graduates have a hard time finding a job and companies are exposed to increasing competition on the world market, Europe needs to improve the dialogue between business and education.

Therefore schools and universities need to be modernised. Strategic partnerships between universities and businesses will open new opportunities for research and hence transfer of knowledge and new ways of financing the universities.

Assuming that you have the same concerns and overall objectives, and I am sure you do, my question is this: How do you intend to further develop this cooperation and increase the low transfer of knowledge between universities and businesses?

4-057

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think this partnership between universities and businesses has been very successful until now.

We see the benefits of it. I was referring before to how we can connect skills with jobs in order to give all our people the possibility to find employment.

Basing ourselves on the good experience that we had with this university/business forum, we have to expand it to vocational training. I think that is very important, and our programmes regarding the placement of students in various businesses is very important because it also gives them practical experience of what they can do. It is not only theoretical knowledge. We also have to extend this to schools.

Schools should also be connected with business. I have experience from back home where there is one week every year where every graduate of the school has to follow somebody in a profession that he or she is interested in to get experience of the profession. This is also something that we can do. Placements in jobs, in industries, in businesses is also very important.

So you are right. This university/business forum is a very good idea. I subscribe to it and it should be extended to schools and vocational training.

4-058

Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE). – My next question will be more concrete, since we already have successful tools, as you have already said, in establishing this partnership in the Member States. For instance in Denmark, where I come from, we have a so-called 'industrial PhD'. This is a scheme where three parties are involved: the university, the company and the state. Under this scheme, an employee working in a company can obtain a PhD conferred by the university. The state approves or rejects applications from the companies. Once approved, the company receives a subsidy from the state and the employee then shares his or her time 50/50 between the company and the university.

Will you, as a Commissioner, work actively to introduce an industrial PhD – comparable with the Danish one, of course – at EU level and ensure that the necessary funding will be made available?

4-059

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I have to study this carefully and see how it works. I will see how we can best take advantage of this scheme. Our work is based on cooperation and exchange of good practice. If we are convinced that this Danish example is good practice, I would say that my policy would be that good practice makes good policy. So, if we are confident that it is good practice, then, with the dialogue that we will have on this, we may adopt it as a good policy.

4-060

Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE). – Madame Vassiliou, vous avez commencé votre propos en parlant d'unité dans la diversité et vous avez mentionné la Convention sur la protection et la promotion de la diversité des expressions culturelles, adoptée par l'Unesco.

Le traité de Lisbonne, pour sa part, introduit dans ses objectifs, la référence à ce respect de la diversité culturelle et linguistique.

J'aimerais savoir quels moyens vous envisagez de mettre en œuvre pour favoriser la diversité culturelle, tant au niveau de l'Union européenne qu'au niveau externe, notamment dans les relations avec les pays les moins avancés ou les politiques de voisinage des pays méditerranéens.

4-061

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think one of our objectives is to promote and support cultural diversity and the ratification of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity. I was sorry to read that two Member States have not ratified yet. I will not name them, but I hope that very soon they will ratify. There is also a candidate country which has not ratified, and I hope it will also ratify.

We also have to promote cultural diversity in our relations with the outside world, and, when we talk about promoting the ratification of this convention, we mean also worldwide. I was very pleased to read, in the outcomes of the recent summit between the EU and China, that one of the points that were raised in their joint communiqué was that the EU and China will promote their ratification of this convention.

We are promoting cultural diversity with many other third countries. Because I think we are not living in isolation: we live in a globalised world, and our relations with the outside world should be promoted. Cultural diversity and respect for the cultural diversity of other people should be one of the bases of our relations with the outside world. Indeed, we have protocols regarding this with many countries.

I must emphasise the fact that, in our bilateral agreements with third countries, a precondition is that they have already ratified the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity, because we believe it is a necessary condition for any type of relation with the Third World.

4-062

Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE). – Justement, concernant ces protocoles, quel est votre avis sur l'introduction de protocoles de coopération culturelle dans les accords commerciaux avec les pays?

4-063

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think we have to be innovative in how we promote cultural diversity. I think trade agreements are also a good way of promoting culture because, as I said before, I think the mutual respect and understanding and cultural diversity between us is a condition precedent to any other relationship. So, if we want to encourage trade relations with other countries, we should make it possible and be absolutely sure that cultural diversity is respected and agreed.

4-064

Cătălin Sorin Ivan (S&D). – Este o întrebare din partea publicului și o voi citi așa cum a fost trimisă. Tratatul de la Lisabona a intrat în vigoare pe 1 decembrie 2009, garantând Uniunii Europene noi competențe în domeniul sportului. Întrebarea este: care este strategia dumneavoastră pentru viitorul sportului în Uniunea Europeană și în ce măsură veți promova sportul ca și catalizator al integrării și coeziunii sociale, și ca instrument pentru promovarea unui dialog intercultural?

4-065

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – As I said before in response to another question, there is a separate and very important aspect of sport, and that is the societal role of sport. I intend to work on that. Not only must we encourage sport for the sake of sport itself, but it must also be used as a tool for other policies, such as health in relation to sport and physical activity. Studies have clearly shown that lack of physical activity, to a great extent, is responsible for overweight and obesity and contributes to bad health. So we have to promote physical activity.

We now have the 2009/2010 programmes to pave the way to a more permanent programme on sport. We shall work together on this and see how best we can take advantage of this new competency under the Treaty.

I see that we have already dealt with very important aspects in sport, such as gender equality, social aspect of sport and the contribution of sport to education and training. Now we have to deal with other areas, such as violence and racism in sport. All these aspects are very important issues and I hope to be able to work closely with you in carrying these issues forward.

4-066

Milan Zver (PPE). – Dovolite mi eno bolj splošno vprašanje. Všeč mi je, da ste na začetku omenila načelo enotnost v različnosti. In dejansko Evropa postaja tudi v

šolskem izobraževalnem smislu neka *sui generis* entiteta. Potekajo razni procesi, tudi harmonizacija, če želite, kopenhagenski proces, pa bolonjski proces.

Ampak vendarle je zelo veliko težav. Omenili ste nekatere. Osemdeset milijonov ljudi v Evropi nima ustrezne izobrazbe, na drugi strani pa komaj ena desetina Evropejcev je vključena v vseživljenjsko izobraževanje. Potem, veliko je mladih, ki zapustijo zgodaj izobraževanje in tako naprej, težave z mobilnostjo, neprimerljivost šolskih sistemov in podobno.

Ali menite, da je odprta metoda koordinacije še dovolj ustrezna podlaga za sodelovanje na področju izobraževanja v Evropski uniji?

4-067

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think, yes, in this field this is the best way we can carry on our work. The problem is that we should give more emphasis to experience. As I said before on another occasion, we have different experiences and different ideas in the various Member States. We would not want to harmonise, but we have to see and learn from the good practices of others. Not to copy them entirely, but to see how they deal with a certain problem and so to see how this can be best adapted to the national environment.

This is a very good way of carrying our work forward, as has been proven with the Bologna process, for example. In the beginning, I know that ministers were very hesitant, and there are still problems with the Bologna process. We are not 100% successful, but we have been to a great extent successful, and we should continue this collaboration in other fields as well.

I mentioned before the divergence in vocational training. I think we should cooperate very closely with Member States. I know for example in the Czech Republic we have very good vocational training institutes. See how we can adapt them, how we can modernise them and how we can recognise the degrees or diplomas that they award so that we better facilitate this spreading of education and experience.

4-068

Milan Zver (PPE). – Seveda imate Evropska komisija, kakor tudi druge evropske inštitucije, omejene možnosti za neposredni vpliv in oblikovanje šolstva, izobraževanja v Evropi.

Pa vendarle, nekatere procese pa lahko pospešite, med drugim tudi vprašanje večjezičnosti v šoli. Pred tremi, štirimi leti je bila zelo aktualna ideja o evropskem jezikovnem indikatorju, ki ga je komisar Figel zelo promoviral. In kasneje se je ta ideja, ta koncept... nekoliko se je manj slišalo o njem.

Pa me zanima vaše mnenje: ali imate resni namen, da bi to proučevanje, raziskovanje tovrstnih veščin, jezikovnih veščin med mladimi po Evropi, ponovno obudili in morda čez nekaj let začeli izvajati tovrstne raziskave?

4-069

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I believe that this is something I will carry forward, because I believe in it. I have two married daughters, I have small grandchildren, and I always tell my daughters that I regret the fact that in my time I did not have many opportunities to learn languages. I am trying to improve my language competence now, but I am in charge of multilingualism. I have to do more of that, but it is a bit difficult at my age.

We have to start with very small children. It is amazing how children can pick up languages. They are like sponges, so we should not worry that we are going to confuse them. I have seen children from mixed marriages, for example – how they speak to one parent in one language and to the other parent in another language, and they speak a third language at school with their friends. So children are able to absorb, and we should give them the chance to learn more languages, not only just for learning but as a vehicle, as a tool, for a better life.

4-070

Ivo Belet (PPE). – I would like to return to the sports field and to the specific aspect of the lack of legal certainty. I think that the European Parliament has made clear that you have to get rid of governance on a case-by-case basis.

This is particularly relevant in three domains, three issues: collective selling of media rights on the one hand, public financing of sports infrastructure, and also the situation of players' agents – not just about football but all sports.

Especially with the new competence that we have under the Lisbon Treaty, there are a lot of expectations of the sports world, and my question is very concrete. Are you willing to prepare guidelines in order to deliver more legal certainty on these specific points: collective selling, players' agents and so on?

4-071

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – As you very correctly pointed out, we cannot have a general rule for everything. We have to take it theme by theme and you mentioned three themes.

I am willing to work closely with my services, but most importantly with the sports movement, in order to find the best possible solution in these cases. I also have to work closely with my fellow Commissioners, because there are EU laws involved: competition, internal market, freedom of movement, freedom to provide services. All these issues are very important in EU law and we have to respect them, but we have to see how the specificity of sport can be taken into account and find the best possible solution in order to reach the objectives that you mentioned.

4-072

Ivo Belet (PPE). – I would like to repeat my question concerning guidelines. Are you willing to prepare guidelines?

Secondly, the fight against doping: that is another challenge for you – for us – and, more specifically, the fact that there is perhaps a breach or a contradiction regarding the privacy of players and athletes. What is your specific opinion on the whereabouts of the WADA anti-doping code, and would you be willing to have it modified?

4-073

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – On your first question, I have to see what the possibilities are for me. I have to work with my services and see whether guidelines are something we can do. I will speak with the Legal Service and with other Commissioners involved and see whether guidelines would be the solution. But what I can promise you is that I am open to dialogue to see how best we can promote this.

On anti-doping, we have had a long dialogue with WADA, who have improved their rules to a great extent. There is still room for improvements but my personal opinion on the ‘whereabouts’ rule is that we should always apply the proportionality rule, asking: is this proportionate in view of the right of privacy?

We had a Belgian case recently of the two tennis players who were sanctioned, banned from playing for one year, because of failure to comply with the whereabouts rule. We are awaiting, of course, the decision of the court on that and the Commission will study the case because there has been a complaint.

4-074

Knut Fleckenstein (S&D). – Frau Kommissarin! Auf europäischer Ebene gibt es bereits ein Netzwerk einiger nationaler Kulturinstitute, UNIC. Dieses Netzwerk dient ja als Rahmen für die Zusammenarbeit dieser Institute in der Konzipierung und Durchführung von multilateralen Kulturprojekten und Initiativen. Was halten Sie von dem Gedanken, auf europäischer Ebene Kultur als einen Bestandteil der EU-Außenbeziehungen zu integrieren, und zwar im Sinne einer auswärtigen EU-Politik?

4-075

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I have already mentioned the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity. Of course, we first have to see to it that it is ratified worldwide.

We also have to include cultural diversity in our relations with the outside world because, as I said, we are living in a globalised world. We have to respect cultural diversity, and cultural exchanges and relations between the various EU states and other parts of the world – other countries – are very important in increasing mutual understanding and bringing our peoples closer together. So it is very important.

4-076

Knut Fleckenstein (S&D). – Ich kann es ganz kurz machen. Ich beziehe mich auf den letzten Teil Ihrer Antwort. Würden Sie auf EU-Ebene so etwas in dieser Art auch organisieren, oder sind Sie eher der Meinung,

dass dies Sache der einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten ist, bzw. wie würden Sie diese in eine solche Politik miteinbinden?

4-077

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – It depends what you mean by organising. If you mean by bringing EU and third countries together, we are already doing that, and we already have programmes which encourage cultural exchanges, the promotion of foreign cultures in the EU and vice-versa and, of course – I will just mention one example – during the Shanghai Expo we intend to use it as a means of projecting EU culture and diversity to China and also to visitors from other countries.

But we have also done that with other countries in Brussels and, I am sure, in many other states. For example, I heard yesterday, speaking to my services, that when Liverpool was European Capital of Culture, they had an exhibition of Indian art, they had an exhibition of Chinese art, and they had an exhibition of African art. This is also a way to promote these exchanges.

4-078

Gianni Vattimo (ALDE). – Ho redatto una domanda in francese che potrà leggere, ma voglio riassumerla: le università europee dei diversi paesi hanno degli accordi per il riconoscimento reciproco a livello europeo dei titoli che danno.

C'è però molta differenza, nei singoli paesi, nei modi in cui si promuove il lavoro degli studenti, per esempio l'assistenza, le borse di studio, le residenze. Ci sono università in Italia che hanno 300 000 iscritti.

Quello che io domando è: può l'Europa fare qualcosa per cercare che i singoli Stati promuovano meglio tutti questi aspetti paralleli e importanti per la formazione universitaria dei giovani?

4-079

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I know that there is a very wide gap between Member States regarding what they are doing for student mobility, especially regarding grants, accommodation, transport in buses etc. There is a very wide gap. But you know the limitations that we have. We cannot impose on Member States or universities, because one of our objectives is to have autonomous universities – independent universities – and we have to respect the autonomy of the universities. But we can encourage Member States to do that because, if they see the usefulness and the interest of their students which they get from mobility abroad, they will do the same for foreign students in their country. But I will tell you where we can help.

We are now talking with the European Investment Bank, which gives low-interest loans for students. But this depends on the bilateral agreement between Member States and the Bank, and this cannot be otherwise. But we are now trying to encourage the Bank to have a uniform system for student loans for every Member

State. Each Member State will have to agree who will take over the management of these loans, but it will be one way of encouraging and promoting students' mobility at this level.

4-080

Gianni Vattimo (ALDE). – Vorrei aggiungere soltanto che pensavo, in realtà, ho una risposta io anche, a una specie di criterio di Maastricht per il riconoscimento dei titoli a livello europeo.

Se in un paese le università non raggiungono una tale percentuale di borse di studio, se le università sono troppo grandi, eccetera, si riduce la loro possibilità di aver riconosciuti i titoli.

Una certa impositività dell'Unione su questo si può fare, proprio facendo leva sul riconoscimento internazionale dei titoli di studio.

4-081

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – The only thing I can promise you is that we have the next Ministerial Conference on the Bologna Process next March. It will be 10 years after the Bologna Process, and we will have the meeting of the ministers in Budapest and Vienna.

What I can promise you is that I will discuss it with the ministers, because I can see the benefit of it, but the ministers have to take it up. They have to see the benefit as well, they have to see what the possibilities are, because this of course also has financial implications. Every Member State will have different situations, so I will discuss it with the ministers and see what we can do in this field.

4-082

Helga Trüpel (Verts/ALE). – Ms Vassiliou, I regret that I have to talk from behind you.

You already mentioned in your presentation the necessity of finding a good balance or equilibrium between easy access to the internet – free access – on the one hand and on the other hand to respect copyright. I want to add, especially today, that we know we do not want to have a politically centred internet as exists in China or Iran.

The issue is how to find good models or solutions for this balance. Therefore I would like you to elaborate a little bit.

4-083

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Even with the development of technology, we cannot doubt – and I do not think anybody doubts – the right of creators and intellectuals to be properly rewarded for their work. Otherwise we will not have creative work. So we must reward them. But, as you said, at the same time we have to open up these new technologies to improve access for our citizens to knowledge and culture.

There are many difficult issues involved in this. What I can promise you is that I will work closely with my

fellow Commissioners – the Competition Commissioner and the Internal Market Commissioner – to see how we can find the best possible solution in these cases, and also, of course, how best we can strengthen our European project. The same goes for many other issues, such as digital libraries, where we have to see how best we can combine, on the one hand, the interest of our writers and our publishers and, on the other hand, the interest of our readers and of the public in having easier access to books and literary work.

So there is a very important balance we have to strike. This needs a very open and very frank dialogue not only between Commissioners but also with the all-important stakeholders in this case.

4-084

Helga Trüpel (Verts/ALE). – So that means that we already have common conferences with the different stakeholders, your fellow Commissioners, to really find very good, balanced and pragmatic solutions.

4-085

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Of course, this is my commitment. I know that there have been several initiatives in the past. I think what we need now is coordination, because the Commission has to take coordinated action in this, in close collaboration, as I said, with all the important stakeholders, because we have to take into account the interest of all sides.

4-086

Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR). – Dziękuję za zaszczycenie nas swoją obecnością i za możliwość wymiany opinii. Jedynie dwa programy z obecnych programów Unii Europejskiej skierowane są do młodzieży z krajów spoza Unii Europejskiej, między innymi Erasmus Mundus, o którym Pani Komisarz mówiła. Mam na myśli przede wszystkim młodzież z obszaru post-sowieckiego. Chciałbym się zapytać, czy Pani przewiduje możliwość zwiększenia finansów właśnie na te programy i czy w programie, który Pani zaproponowała, czyli „Youth on the Move”, przewiduje Pani też możliwość skierowania tego programu właśnie do młodzieży z obszaru Partnerstwa Wschodniego?

4-087

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I hope so. I hope that we can include those young people as well and those people. But, in addition to the Erasmus Mundus, which I think is a fantastic programme and we should strengthen it and give it a new impetus, let us not forget the new addition to our portfolio, which is Marie Curie. This is a fantastic opportunity for young researchers – not only from the European Union but also from outside – to work with our researchers and enrich the experience of our people in this area of research.

For my part – and this is understandable, in order to succeed in giving impetus to all these programmes – of course I will try for a bigger budget in this field. But on this I will need your support. The support of Parliament is very important, because we are now starting the new negotiations on the budget and on the new financial framework. I cannot make a commitment now, but

certainly I will make every possible effort to see that culture, education and multilingualism are well taken into account in our new framework.

4-088

Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR). – Myślę, że możemy zapewnić Panią, że ze strony Parlamentu będzie Pani miała wsparcie dla tego typu działań. Natomiast czy ja mógłbym uzyskać od Pani gwarancję czy zapewnienie gwarancji nie tego, że Pani się będzie starać i że Pani ma nadzieję i że zrobi Pani wszystko w tym kierunku, ale że pod Pani rządami, przy Pani obecności w Komisji fundusze na dotychczasowe programy dotyczące młodzieży z Europy Wschodniej, z państw nienależących na razie do Unii Europejskiej zostaną rzeczywiście zwiększone i czy w tym programie, który Pani zaproponowała, znajdą się fundusze na to, żeby ta młodzież mogła korzystać z naszych doświadczeń i z naszego bogactwa.

4-089

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I would be very happy if I could give you a commitment. I could give you, as I said, a commitment that I will do my best. But that is the maximum I can do. It is not up to me only.

It is as if you were asking a minister in your country who is in charge of education and in charge of research to say whether he or she is interested in increasing her budget to carry on her work in this field. Of course he or she will be welcoming increases. So will I. But I am very pleased to hear that I will have the support of Parliament. I had no doubt about it, because I know how committed members of this committee are in this field, and I have no doubt that you will support me. But we also need the support of Member States and of the Council, and we need the support of stakeholders, because their role in pressing for more money in this is very important.

4-090

Lothar Bisky (GUE/NGL). – Frau Vassiliou! In der neuen Jugendstrategie ist viel die Rede von digitaler Inklusion von Jugendlichen. Ich habe nun die etwas speziellere Frage, ob Sie dort schon Vorstellungen haben, welche Initiativen Sie unternehmen möchten, um die digitale Inklusion von Jugendlichen zu fördern.

4-091

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – As I said in my introductory speech we have the new programme, the Media programme.

Cinemas are going digital next year, and we have to support them, otherwise we shall be left only with those big cinemas which show American, Indian and Brazilian films.

I have nothing against them, but we have to promote our own European audiovisual work. We have to help European cinema to become digital, so digital work is very important for the future, and that is what we have to incorporate in our new strategy.

4-092

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Firstly, I must say that I am very pleased with your robust proclamation of your interest in sport and the importance sport plays in the lives of our citizens. You did say that the last part of your speech was devoted to sport and you did not get an opportunity to deliver it. Can you, therefore, make that part available to us for our digestion?

Secondly, could it be taken that sport, being the last part of your speech, is also the least of your priorities? I think that impression could be taken from your written responses where sport only features twice; the word 'sport' is mentioned twice in relation to the new possibilities on the Lisbon Treaty, where you indicated that you hoped to make some proposals in 2011.

So my question to you is this: Firstly, if sport is so important, why not make those proposals in 2010 rather than in 2011? Secondly, you also made strong mention today of cultural diversity, and rightly so, and I would ask you what part indigenous sports will play in those proposals given their critical contribution to the rich cultural diversity right across the Union which you mention.

4-093

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Let me assure you that the fact that sport was last in the speech does not in the least mean that it was less in importance. Sometimes the last is the most important because it leaves an impression. I do apologise that I was not able to give this impression, but I want to assure you that I will give a lot of importance to sport because I believe in sport.

I have said repeatedly here that sport for me is a vehicle for achieving a lot of good things, like health, teamwork, education and training in sport, and gender equality.

Regarding indigenous sports – there must be indigenous sports, I am sure – they must be considered as part of our cultural diversity. Indigenous sports are also part of the culture and the everyday life and traditions specific to a certain Member State so we have to promote indigenous sports. In what way? Through our programmes.

I am not saying that we should give money for the running expenses of clubs for indigenous sports, but we should support them in having programmes, in having training, in extending and spreading these – I am sure interesting – sports to other Member States. Why not? I am sure they will be interesting.

So I would be very pleased in the future if you would tell me your ideas about these indigenous sports and we shall discuss ways and means of supporting actions in this direction.

4-094

Seán Kelly (PPE). – We will take you up on that offer and, based on your responses, I am prepared to give you a sporting chance.

The only thing you did not say is whether you will be making proposals in 2010 rather than 2011. Finally, I just might suggest that in giving speeches in future – especially if Doris Pack is in the chair – you might put sport in the first or second paragraph, because she takes no prisoners.

4-095

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – The programme on sport will start in 2011 because the current preparatory actions for sport for the last three years run until 2010, so we shall continue with these. On the basis of our experiences during these preparatory actions we shall formulate together, in cooperation with you, our programme for sport for the future.

4-096

Iosif Matula (PPE). – Astăzi piața muncii în Uniunea Europeană a devenit foarte mobilă, foarte dinamică, dar și foarte complicată. În acest context educația continuă, formarea continuă și reconversia profesională au și vor avea un rol determinant. Credeți că educația continuă și reconversia profesională trebuie să rămână în sistemul educativ actual sau într-unul paralel, gestionat de ministerul muncii, cu sau fără patronate și mediul privat?

4-097

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think the needs in the various Member States are different. Retraining is certainly very necessary because, as I said, the needs of our education are changing because of changing technology. The needs of the market are changing. It is becoming more competitive. It is becoming more skill-oriented. So every Member State has different needs. But we should certainly cooperate on this, and we should see how, as I said before, we can best cooperate with business to see how one can profit from the other and have a better match between education and the world of work.

This is a process which has to start and continue, because it will be necessary.

What I can say is that it is now obvious to everybody that the more skills you have, the more guarantees you have that you will not be unemployed. This is our experience from this crisis, because those who have been worst hit by this crisis are young and less skilled people.

The times have passed when low-skilled people could find work. In the future, average and high levels of skills will be important in most jobs. So we have to give a lot of emphasis to that.

4-098

Iosif Matula (PPE). – Voiam doar să întăresc și să spun, să întreb: cum vede doamna Vassiliou rolul patronatelor, al mediului privat, chiar al unui sistem privat paralel de educare continuă și reconversie profesională și riscurile pe care le presupune? În general, a răspuns și sunt mulțumit.

4-099

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – I think for this we need the cooperation of the social partners. It

is very important not only for employers but also for the workers' trade unions to express an opinion about their experiences and their needs. There should be cooperation between universities, training institutes, vocational training institutes, and the business world, employers and trade unions – all social partners.

4-100

Csaba Sógor (PPE). – The Lifelong Learning Programme, which entered into force in 2007, has now become a larger, more encompassing and unifying programme.

Do you see the budget as being large enough to cover the seven different programmes that exist and to provide the 33 participating countries with the same opportunities to benefit from the programme?

Adding to the first question, how will you make sure that there are adequate quality control mechanisms, as well as fair balance, among the participating countries? What is the current view on creating a legal framework for such a mechanism? This is an important question, as we have seen with the recent language rights problems in Slovakia.

Also, what is the current state of play concerning a statistical information system to provide data to measure the efficiency of the new programme?

4-101

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Certainly budgets are never enough, and, in this Lifelong Learning Programme, yes, we think that one of the problems is that we might not have the increase that was foreseen. One example is the Erasmus Programme, where we were hoping that by 2012 we would have three million students participating. I do not think we shall reach that target, and one of the reasons is that funds are not enough.

But you also rightly pointed to the question of quality. Let me remind you that quality is also part of the charter which is usually signed with universities participating in these programmes. They have to give assurances of the quality of the programme, and of course our responsibility is to see that these assurances are implemented.

So, quality is important, budget is important, but we also have to encourage Member States' regions to take advantage of this unique opportunity to invest in these programmes, and this partnership between the European Union Member States and regions and the universities is very important for the better development of these programmes.

4-102

Csaba Sógor (PPE). – My second question has already been put by my colleague Mr Schmidt, regarding the protection of minority languages. You answered it, so thank you very much.

4-103

Συλβάνα Ράπτη (S&D). – Κυρία Βασιλείου, καλώς ήρθατε. Θα σας βάλω στην πρόκληση να υποστηρίξετε την πολυγλωσσία και τη χρήση της στην πράξη, απαντώντας μου, αν θέλετε, στη δική σας γλώσσα και τη δική μου.

Η ερώτησή μου είναι η εξής: πώς θα ενθαρρύνει και θα υποστηρίξει η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση την παροχή κατάρτισης και δια βίου εκπαίδευσης προκειμένου να παρασχεθούν οι ειδικότητες για τις θέσεις εργασίας του μέλλοντος; Αναφέρομαι βέβαια στις πράσινες θέσεις εργασίας. Θα υποστηρίξετε ισχυρότερες πολιτικές και δημοσιονομικά μέσα σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, ούτως ώστε να βελτιωθούν οι δεξιότητες και τα προσόντα του εργατικού δυναμικού;

4-104

Ανδρούλλα Βασιλείου, προτεινόμενη Επίτροπος. – Έχετε απόλυτο δικαίωμα ότι για να μπορέσουμε να βοηθήσουμε τους νέους μας να αποκτήσουν τις ειδικότητες που χρειάζονται πρέπει να εκμεταλλευτούμε τις εμπειρίες και τα στοιχεία που είμαστε σε θέση να συλλέξουμε – και νομίζω ότι το CEDEFOP στη Θεσσαλονίκη κάνει πολύ καλή δουλειά στον τομέα αυτόν και προσβλέπουμε στις μελέτες που έχει αρχίσει να εκπονεί για τις ανάγκες της εργασίας στο μέλλον – με σκοπό να προσφέρουμε την ευκαιρία στους νέους να αποκτήσουν την εξειδίκευση που θα τους επιτρέψει να βρουν εργασία.

Ομολογώ ότι με μεγάλη λύπη διαπίστωσα ότι η Ελλάδα είναι μία χώρα στην οποία το 80% των αποφοίτων των Πανεπιστημίων δεν βρίσκουν εργασία. Τι πρέπει λοιπόν να κάνουμε; Πρέπει να δούμε πού οφείλεται αυτό και να εξετάσουμε τις συγκεκριμένες ανάγκες της αγοράς στην περίπτωση αυτή. Πρέπει να προσφέρουμε εκείνες ακριβώς τις ειδικότητες και τις δεξιότητες που απαιτούνται για τους νέους, διότι το να αποφοιτήσεις απλά από ένα Πανεπιστήμιο χωρίς εξειδικευμένες γνώσεις και εμπειρίες δεν είναι αρκετό. Πρέπει λοιπόν η έμφαση να δοθεί στην αναζήτηση τέτοιων ευκαιριών για τους νέους μας.

Τώρα, τα μέσα για την επίτευξη αυτού του στόχου παρέχονται μέσω των προγραμμάτων μας, και θα ενθάρρυνα πάρα πολύ την Ελλάδα να εκμεταλλευθεί όσο γίνεται περισσότερο τα προγράμματα που διαθέτουμε. Φυσικά, είναι και θέμα κονδυλίων και για τον λόγο αυτό πρέπει να εξετάσουμε με ποιον τρόπο μπορούμε, στα πλαίσια των οικονομικών δυνατοτήτων και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης αλλά και της Ελλάδας, να προωθήσουμε τα κατάλληλα προγράμματα που θα βοηθήσουν τους νέους μας.

4-105

Συλβάνα Ράπτη (S&D). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, θα μπορούσα να συνεχίσω με μία δεύτερη ερώτηση;

Κυρία Επίτροπε, πολύ σωστά μιλήσατε και συμφωνώ μαζί σας για το Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο για την Ανάπτυξη της Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης (CEDEFOP) που λειτουργεί στη Θεσσαλονίκη. Υπάρχει βεβαίως και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ίδρυμα Επαγγελματικής Εκπαίδευσης

καθώς και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ινστιτούτο Καινοτομίας και Τεχνολογίας.

Κατά τη γνώμη σας, πώς βλέπετε και πώς θα μπορέσετε να συντονίσετε τη δραστηριότητα αυτών των τριών οργανισμών έτσι ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί μία κοινωνία της γνώσης ανταγωνιστική και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς;

Θα ήθελα, αν μπορείτε να μου πείτε πιο συγκεκριμένα αν έχετε ήδη σκεφθεί τί θα προτείνετε ώστε αυτή η συνεργασία να γίνει αποτελεσματική.

4-106

Ανδρούλλα Βασιλείου, προτεινόμενη Επίτροπος. – Νομίζω ότι θα πρέπει να αντιμετωπίσουμε χωριστά το Ευρωπαϊκό Ινστιτούτο Καινοτομίας το οποίο είναι ίδρυμα πολύ υψηλού επιπέδου και σκοπό έχει να συνδυάσει την εκπαίδευση, την έρευνα και την καινοτομία.

(Στο σημείο αυτό, παρεμβαίνει διευκρινιστικά η κ. Ράπτη)

4-107

Συλβάνα Ράπτη (S&D). – Συγνώμη που διακόπτω. Επειδή μιλήσατε προηγουμένως για την ανάγκη της τεχνολογίας και την εμπλοκή της με την κατάρτιση, γι' αυτό ακριβώς το προσθέτω και γι' αυτό πιστεύω ότι θα πρέπει να υπάρξει συνεργασία.

4-108

Ανδρούλλα Βασιλείου, προτεινόμενη Επίτροπος. – Πολύ σωστά. Θέλω να πιστεύω ότι το Ευρωπαϊκό Ινστιτούτο Καινοτομίας θα γίνει το έμβλημα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης δεδομένου ότι η τελευταία απόφαση του Ινστιτούτου στην επιλογή των προγράμματα 'kicks' ήταν πολύ επιτυχημένη με αποτέλεσμα να προσελκύσει το ενδιαφέρον μεγάλων κέντρων καινοτομίας, έρευνας και εκπαίδευσης και είμαι σίγουρη ότι θα πετύχει στο ρόλο του. Απλά θεωρώ ότι δεν μπορούμε να συνδέσουμε τα άλλα δύο κέντρα με το Ινστιτούτο. Φυσικά, το κάθε ένα εξ αυτών διαδραματίζει τον ρόλο του και αυτό είναι ένα στοιχείο που θα εκμεταλλευτούμε.

4-109

Marian Harkin (ALDE). – In one of your written responses to our questions, you spoke of your goal to promote the interests of European citizens. As you are probably aware, one hundred million European citizens volunteer and, indeed, voluntary activity and active citizenship is very much part of European culture. As Mr Scurria has already said, 2011 has been designated the European Year on Volunteering. So in the context of your work on that year, I would just like to ask you two questions. Firstly, how would you hope to create synergies between existing European programmes – such as Youth in Action, Europe for Citizens, and Lifelong Learning – and activities of the year 2011? Secondly, how do you see the European Year on Volunteering contributing to the up-skilling and employability of volunteers?

4-110

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – As you said 2011 is the year of volunteering. The decision

has already been taken. Action has started in that direction. I regret the fact that I will not be the leading Commissioner on that, but of course I will be cooperating fully with my fellow Commissioner.

I think voluntarism should be given a push, but in the right direction. Because my fear is that we should not allow volunteering to displace paid jobs, or give employers the opportunity to use a volunteer worker as a substitute for a paid job.

Volunteering is in itself a very useful concept. We should promote it for the sake of enhancing the experiences and the knowledge of our people, but not so that it can be exploited by employers.

So during this year I think we should find ways to see how best we can promote voluntarism, maintaining this balance between paid work and volunteer work.

4-111

Marian Harkin (ALDE). – I absolutely agree with the Commissioner that volunteering should not under any circumstances displace paid work.

Going back to the fact that it is a non-formal learning experience for many volunteers, I think it certainly enhances their professional skills and competences and I think, without any doubt, it facilitates their reintegration into the labour market. In that way, it contributes to employability. So if you might just keep that in mind in any initiatives that you are proposing or any synergies between some of the EU programmes that are already in place.

4-112

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – We have specific programmes on volunteering, and they have proved very successful. Our studies show the benefit of volunteer work in enhancing the skills and the knowledge and experiences of our people.

Something that I want to emphasise is the contribution of volunteering work to the social involvement of the people who volunteer in public life. It helps them to understand better the needs of society and to understand the benefit of their work and their contribution to society. So the societal aspect of volunteering is a very important aspect, and that is why I say that all programmes regarding volunteering work should be strengthened.

4-113

Elisabeth Schroedter (Verts/ALE). – Sie sprachen davon, in Ihrer Aktion zur beruflichen Bildung auf alle Bedürfnisse der Bevölkerung einzugehen und gleichzeitig den Anforderungen der Wirtschaft gerecht zu werden. Ich gehe davon aus, dass Sie damit die Initiative *New Jobs in a Green Economy* Ihrer Vorgänger meinen.

In einer EU-Studie zu diesem Thema wurde festgestellt, dass der größte Bedarf an Fortbildungsmaßnahmen bei älteren Arbeitnehmern und Arbeitnehmerinnen liegen

wird, vor allem bei denen, die in den Branchen arbeiten, die in der nachhaltigen Wirtschaft nicht mehr gebraucht werden. Was sind Ihre Initiativen dazu? Wollen Sie diesen Menschen konkrete Fortbildungsangebote vorschlagen bzw. die Mitgliedstaaten dazu inspirieren, darauf besondere Aufmerksamkeit zu legen, vor allen Dingen auch, um die Potenziale der Arbeitnehmer und Arbeitnehmerinnen nicht brachliegen zu lassen, sondern sie wieder in den Integrationsprozess in die Wirtschaft hineinzubringen?

4-114

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – Indeed, I think giving adults the opportunity to continue their learning process is very important. Lifelong learning is all about that.

Lifelong learning should start from the pre-school years and continue – well, they had a slogan in my services which I did not like because it is a bit morbid – ‘to the grave’ they said. I would not say ‘to the grave’; I would say ‘even after retirement’. We have to keep active throughout our life.

So our lifelong learning programmes are not just for young people, but also for adults who want to keep active. We should encourage that because it is good for everybody.

Coming from the health sector I can say that one of our policies was active long life – not just long life, but active long life. In order to be active in our later age – well, take it from me, I remain active because I think I should remain active, so I have to keep learning. So these possibilities should be given to all our people.

4-115

Elisabeth Schroedter (Verts/ALE). – Noch einmal zurück zu der Initiative *New Skills for Green Jobs*. Das braucht einen Unterbau. Die Wirtschaft beklagt sich, dass sie nicht genügend ausgebildete Kräfte hat. Was wollen Sie in der Grundschulausbildung in den Mitgliedstaaten anschieben, damit vor allen Dingen für Kinder aus armen Familien die Möglichkeit gibt, alle hohen Bildungsschritte auch zu erreichen? Was wollen Sie dafür tun, dass auch diese Talente genutzt werden? Haben Sie da konkrete Vorstellungen?

4-116

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think the inclusion of everybody in our programmes is very important. I said before that we should emphasise children who do not have the opportunity, through their family, to do things that they want to do: in education, training and mobility. That is why we should emphasise people from these categories – immigrants included, because they are part of our society.

Matching the needs of the market to the skills that we give to our young people is not just in order to serve our economies: it is to give better prospects to our young people for a better life. This is the purpose of all our policies: to give a better life to our people, whatever age, whatever background they come from, whatever

capabilities they have. Because even children with special needs have capabilities, and we have to explore all capabilities in each particular case.

4-117

Nadja Hirsch (ALDE). – Frau Vorsitzende, sehr geehrte Frau Vassiliou! Wir haben oft das Problem des Fachkräftemangels, besonders in naturwissenschaftlichen und technischen Bereichen. Auf der einen Seite haben wir im erzieherischen, im pädagogischen Bereich das Problem, dass wir fast keine Männer haben, keine Kindergärtner oder keine männlichen Lehrer in der Grundschule. Auf der anderen Seite könnten vielleicht viele Frauen den Mangel in den technischen Bereichen auffangen.

Insofern meine Frage an Sie: Was, können Sie sich vorstellen, ist der Grundstein für diese Entscheidung, welcher Beruf letztendlich gewählt wird? Das wird ja nicht in den letzten beiden Klassen der Schule entschieden, sondern viel früher. Also, was können Sie sich vorstellen? Welche Programme können Sie sich auch vorstellen, um noch mehr zu differenzieren, damit Mädchen ermutigt werden, in technische Bereiche zu gehen, und auf der anderen Seite auch Männer dazu ermutigt werden, vielleicht in nicht-klassische Männerberufe zu gehen?

4-118

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – You have touched upon a subject that is very close to my heart: gender equality. I think it starts with the family. It is the family and the school who have to encourage young people; young girls to take science or young boys to take teaching.

In my home country, 95% of the teachers nowadays are women and this is not healthy. Of course we want women to work, but we also want the children to have experience of both sexes. Therefore, we have to have equality in all professions.

I think both the family and the school have to take a very active role in encouraging young children as to what they should do in their life. But we also have a role to play: giving them the chance to try. This is, I think, a good model to present to children when they are still at school and to let them see how the various professions work.

When you are at the age of 16 or 17, you do not really know what law is, or economics or construction or teaching. They have to try it out. They have to see. They have to follow. They have to see and judge for themselves whether it is something they like. But usually, I am afraid, mothers say to their daughters: ‘You will make an excellent teacher’; and they will say to the boys: ‘Oh, you will make an excellent plumber’, or ‘you are going to make an excellent researcher’. No! They can be anything.

I remember a very nice incident that occurred when Mrs Brundtland was Prime Minister of Norway. A student,

who was a boy, asked the teacher: ‘Madam, can I also become a prime minister?’

Role models are very important. I hope we can correct this unusual situation.

4-119

Nadja Hirsch (ALDE). – Ich habe noch eine Frage. Das geht in eine vielleicht etwas spezielle Richtung, ist aber ein Thema, das für Sie sicherlich auch eine Herausforderung sein wird.

Wir haben in der Charta der Grundrechte das Recht auf Bildung verankert, und wir haben in Europa ja sehr viele Kinder von illegalen Einwanderern und illegal eingewanderte Jugendliche. Einige Länder gehen jetzt daran und versuchen, genau diesen Kindern und Jugendlichen den Zugang zu Bildung zu ermöglichen. Sehen Sie hier eine Möglichkeit, es – sicherlich auch in Zusammenarbeit mit anderen Kolleginnen und Kollegen aus den anderen Kommissionsressorts – den Mitgliedstaaten zu ermöglichen, dieses Grundrecht auf Bildung auch für diese Kinder und Jugendlichen umzusetzen?

4-120

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think we owe it to all children to have proper education and training. This is part of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which I think we all support and which we have ratified.

So we have to encourage the Member States to do that. I know that it varies from state to state according to their social policies and to the financial needs of the state, but it is something that we should encourage. It is part of human rights for every child.

4-121

Alajos Mészáros (PPE). – Being a former university professor, my question addresses the Bologna Process in European higher education, which has been, by now, successfully implemented in the majority of higher education facilities, in particular in EU Member States. Do you consider this process to be a success story in general – does it work well, and is it efficient? Or does it need, in your opinion, further refinements or amendments, especially in respect of mutual recognition of diplomas and student migration between particular universities?

4-122

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I consider the Bologna Process a success; it is a success story, but we have not reached the end of the road. As I mentioned before, we shall very soon be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Bologna Process, but I think on that occasion we have to renew our commitment to continue.

We have succeeded to a certain extent in bringing about the convergence of universities with this three-cycle system, but on the other hand we have to think of quality, university ranking, the autonomy of the university, the financing of universities. All these are

very important issues which I think we have to take up in the future.

4-123

Alajos Mészáros (PPE). – How would you evaluate the few years' existence and work of the European Institute of Technology and Innovation, and do you think, in general, that the idea of establishing common institutions in a European context, integrating European brains in higher education and research, is the right way to achieve excellence?

4-124

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think my answer is a big 'yes'. I think the Institute of Technology, which has just started working, is an excellent model of, as I said, joining the triangle of education, research and innovation. They have successfully completed the choice of the first three KICs and we hope that, by the autumn, they will start operating and will have their first postgraduate students.

I am also very happy for another reason. One of our objectives was to attract business people – industry – in order to complete the triangle, and we have succeeded. We had many companies – big companies who participated in the process, in the competition – and also we have good participation from the new Member States, from the eastern European countries – I know we had participants from Hungary and Poland. So it is very successful.

4-125

Ioan Enciu (S&D). – Țin să vă felicit pentru nominalizarea dumneavoastră ca și comisar și să vă urez să vă îndepliniți toate proiectele în decursul mandatului dumneavoastră.

Aș avea o întrebare legată de biblioteca digitală, proiectul Europeana, proiect care utilizează fonduri comunitare. Aș dori să știu cum veți sprijini dumneavoastră în viitor dezvoltarea acestui proiect ca și bază de date digitală, așa cum ar trebui să funcționeze, sau ca un portal către alte biblioteci, cum funcționează în prezent, caz în care de fapt el este o reclamă pentru informații furnizate de alte site-uri, informații pe care cetățenii europeni trebuie să le plătească.

4-126

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – Well, the digital society is a reality and we have to really support the work in that field.

But you must understand of course that we are supporting maybe thousands of projects. I have only been learning about this portfolio for three or four weeks, so please give me time to get acquainted with all these projects.

I am afraid I do not particularly know about this project, but I assure you that I will make sure to find out more about it and I will come back to you.

4-127

Ioan Enciu (S&D). – Aș dori, pentru viitor, să știu: în cazul în care biblioteca Europeana va deveni ceea ce ar trebui să fie, adică o bază de date, veți fi de acord cu asigurarea accesului gratuit la întregul conținut al acestei biblioteci pentru instituțiile educațional-culturale? Întrucât știm cu toții, studenții, elevii, profesorii, cercetătorii reprezintă garanția dezvoltării viitoare a Europei, dar având barieră problema drepturilor de autor?

4-128

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner designate. – Well, I will start from the last point which you made, on copyrights. I said from the very beginning that I think all writers must have the right to be properly rewarded for their work, so copyright is a fact we cannot dispute.

Accordingly, if we have to pay copyrights, we will see whether it is feasible to offer it free to our people, and if we offer it free to our European citizens, well, what about the citizens from other parts of the world who want to take advantage of that? It will be rather discriminatory.

What I assure you I will do is to study this. First of all, let us complete the project. It is a very important project and we all have to work hard to complete the project, and then see whether we can offer this.

4-129

Die Vorsitzende. – Ich möchte Herrn Enciu noch darauf hinweisen, dass Europeana zum Portfolio von Frau Kroes gehört.

4-130

Romana Jordan Cizelj (PPE). – Imam vprašanje o evropskem inštitutu za tehnologijo in inovacije, Evropskem tehnološkem inštitutu. Inštitut spada pod vašo pristojnost, povezuje pa področja izobraževanja, raziskav in inovacij, ki sodijo pod pristojnosti različnih komisarjev. Zato me zanima, kako boste zagotovili, da bodo ukrepi v zvezi z inštitutom usklajeni in ustrezno koordinirani.

Potem naslednje vprašanje: cilj je povečati konkurenčnost gospodarstva z več inovacijami in zanima me, ali boste dali poseben poudarek spodbujanju vključevanja podjetij v inštitut. Boste poskrbeli, da bo inštitut prijazen do malih in srednjih podjetij?

In naslednje vprašanje: s katerimi ukrepi boste zagotovili, da se inštitut ne bo spremenil v pošast z ogromno administracije in majhnim dejanskim izplenom?

4-131

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – First of all let me say that President Barroso is personally very interested in promoting this Institute and making it work and be successful. So it will be, I think, in the interests of all Commissioners involved to cooperate as closely as possible to make it a success.

Second, I have no doubt, having already met the President of the Board of the Institute, that he is a person

of such determination and vision and with such great experience in that field that he will make it work.

I have heard that we have a very good director of the Institute (I have not met him yet), who has already taken office in Budapest, and very soon the Institute – I think by spring – will be fully operational and independent and autonomous.

So I think after that, and when the KICs start working, we have one responsibility, and it is here that the Commission can also help. We spoke with the President, and we are going to cooperate – and I am sure Parliament would also wish to see that this is done – to pass the message of the Institute to the education society community, to the research community and to the innovation community, because we really have to make it a flagship for Europe.

4-132

Romana Jordan Cizelj (PPE). – Parlament je bil v preteklem mandatu res... je zelo podpiral ta projekt in jaz verjamem, da bomo tudi v prihodnosti uspešno sodelovali na tem področju in ustvarili resnično delujoč trikotnik znanja. Bi pa še dodala eno vprašanje glede sodelovanja izobraževalnih ustanov.

Menim, da je to pravzaprav najšibkejša točka tega trikotnika, ta povezava. In zato vas sprašujem, kako vi vidite, kakšna je lahko vaša vloga, da se bodo tudi te ustanove uspešno vključile v delovanje inštituta in da bodo izobraževanje približale potrebam gospodarstva.

4-133

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – First of all, the ranking system for universities has to be revised. Universities have to be modernised. We have experts in the field here, but as far as I know most university rankings are based on research.

However, we should take a lot of other factors into consideration, such as teaching methods, the internationalisation of universities and their outreach to the community. All these are factors to be taken into account when modernising our universities, making them more functional and giving young people the opportunity to make informed choices.

If we do this, universities will have a clear mission and students will be in a better position to choose where to study and what to study. This would really boost our universities in Europe and make them competitive with the best universities elsewhere in the world.

4-134

Chair. – Colleagues, we have been very fast and so still have a bit of time. I want to use the 'catch the eye' system to give the floor to five people for one question and one answer, with no supplementary question.

4-135

Sabine Verheyen (PPE). – Frau Vorsitzende! Sehr geehrte Frau Vassiliou! Viele der Themen, über die wir heute bereits gesprochen haben, haben einen starken regionalen und vor allem auch lokalen Bezug. Die

Programme werden durch viele Initiativen und Aktionen vor Ort auf der lokalen Ebene getragen.

Der lokalen Ebene wird durch den Vertrag von Lissabon eine stärkere Bedeutung beigemessen. Wie stehen Sie zu einer stärkeren und strukturierteren Beteiligung der regionalen und lokalen Gebietskörperschaften an der Konzipierung und Durchführung der Programme und Initiativen im Bereich Bildung, Kultur und Sport? Und wie wollen Sie gegebenenfalls eine rechtzeitige Beteiligung sicherstellen, wie z. B. bei Initiativen und Aktionen zum Jahr der Freiwilligenarbeit, damit wir mit dem, was wir hier planen und uns ausdenken, die Menschen vor Ort noch besser erreichen können?

4-136

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Education, culture and all other aspects of my portfolio, including sport, are all subjects which have to be mainstreamed into all areas.

That is why it is so important to mobilise and seek the support of Member States, and also of local authorities and regional authorities. They must see the advantage of this. From studies which we have made it is very clear that, when regional authorities put emphasis on projects like ours, it is they who benefit the most. I was very pleased to hear that DG Education and Culture was invited this year, for the first time, to participate in the open days organised by the Committee of the Regions.

4-137

Petra Kammerevert (S&D). – Frau Vassiliou, ich würde gern noch einmal auf den Kulturbereich zurückkommen, und hier speziell auf den Bereich der audiovisuellen Medien, die ja einen ganz besonderen kulturellen Faktor innerhalb unserer Gesellschaft darstellen und eben nicht nur unter wirtschaftlichen oder wettbewerbsrechtlichen Gesichtspunkten betrachtet werden dürfen.

Deshalb meine Frage: Teilen Sie die Auffassung, dass insbesondere die öffentlich-rechtlichen Medien starke Garanten für Medienpluralismus und vor allen Dingen auch für die Bewahrung der kulturellen Vielfalt in Europa sind? Wenn ja, welche Unterstützung könnten Sie sich als Kommissarin vorstellen, im Rahmen der Befugnisse der Kommission leisten zu können, um eine dynamische Weiterentwicklung der öffentlich-rechtlichen Systeme in Europa zu gewährleisten und möglicherweise sogar zu fördern? Es wäre ein wichtiger Bereich, dass wir da auch eine Kommissarin hätten, die insbesondere den kulturellen Aspekt der audiovisuellen Medien nochmals besonders betonen und sich dafür einsetzen würde.

4-138

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I agree that there should not be a concentration of the media, and the public media should be given a bigger role because they really have a role to play and should play that role in the right way.

The role of informing the public, encouraging culture and intercultural dialogue cannot be played so well by the private media, because they have other interests. They have concerns. They have their private investors' interests to take into account. You will understand, of course, that the Commission is not responsible for this area. We can show our interest and our encouragement, but Member States have their role to play in this.

4-139

Piotr Borys (PPE). – Moje pytanie dotyczy realizacji nowej strategii lizbońskiej, której celem jest stworzenie najbardziej dynamicznie rozwijającej się gospodarki. Oczywiście nie możemy tego dokonać bez przeobrażenia systemu edukacji, która powinna być w dużej mierze innowacyjna. Pani kandydatka Quinn, odpowiadająca za badania i innowacje powiedziała, że będzie kierować grupą komisarzy, którzy będą odpowiadać w swoich sektorach także za innowacje. Czy może nas Pani zapewnić, że część ogromnych środków związanych z innowacją i badaniami trafi również w przestrzeń edukacji? Mam na myśli głównie takie przestrzenie jak uczenie na odległość, e-learning, portale internetowe, całe przeobrażenie systemu kwalifikacji nauczycieli pod kątem nowych technologii.

4-140

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – When we speak about our vision for the future regarding education, training, skills etc., we are not only talking about formal university education: it is an all-inclusive effort to give our people the best skills to be able to survive and have a good life in these very challenging times. I am sure – because President Barroso attaches a lot of importance to education in the broader sense and the strengthening of this learning triangle of education, research and innovation – that I will have a good supporter in my efforts to obtain good budgetary support for these projects.

4-141

Gianni Vattimo (ALDE). – Mi ricollegherei a quello che è stato detto prima sugli audiovisivi, ma vorrei richiamare l'attenzione della Commissaria designata su questo fatto: una delle voci massime dell'esportazione degli Stati Uniti verso l'estero sono i prodotti di industria culturale – cinema, musica, audiovisivi, eccetera. – forse è la seconda voce nel bilancio.

Noi oggi abbiamo parlato molto di scuola, di istruzione, ma di questo aspetto, della cultura europea che assorbe prodotti culturali spesso eterogenei o, comunque, ideologicamente orientati, io non ho una risposta, ma dico a lei di pensarci.

4-142

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – The new media programme which comes under this portfolio is a very, very important aspect of our culture and should really be exploited to the best.

I do not think, in all honesty, that we have the right funds for such an important task because the audiovisual sector, the quality audiovisual sector – and we want to

promote quality audiovisual work – should be given more funds.

Looking at the funds available and considering of course the importance of the work, I think we should aim for more.

We have a new plan now to give, for example, guarantees to audiovisual companies because, with the credit squeeze especially, the banks are not willing to give the audiovisual sector credit and we are running this guarantee scheme in order to help them out.

But looking at the amount of money allocated, I do not think it is going to take us very far, so we should aim for more. This is just one example.

4-143

Santiago Fisas Aixela (PPE). – En la carta que le mandó el Presidente Barroso, en el tercer punto hablaba de la movilidad en el tema de las experiencias en materia de enseñanza. Yo creo que es más o menos fácil garantizar la movilidad de los estudiantes, pero ¿cómo va a garantizar la movilidad de los profesores?

Yo creo que aquí se habló, en la anterior legislatura, del famoso fontanero polaco, que podía ir a trabajar a todas partes, pero es una contradicción que un catedrático de cualquier país de Europa no pueda ir a la universidad de otro país.

¿Qué se puede hacer para mejorar esta situación?

4-144

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – I think one of our most important objectives should be to mobilise the teachers more and give them incentives. I think we have to give them some incentives, especially in the case of teachers who are already in employment: as I said before, they have their families, they cannot leave their families.

In the Marie Curie programme, for example, there is a very flexible objective, taking into account how the people, the researchers who participate, can best combine their work and their family life. This is something which shows we have to be imaginative in order to attract more teachers' mobility; but I think it is a very important objective and we have to strive for it.

4-145

László Tóké (PPE). – Ninety years ago, through the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary lost 70% of its territory and over 60% of its population. As a result of this, today about three million Hungarians live in Hungary's neighbouring countries.

In some of these countries the Hungarian community faces linguistic and cultural assimilation and serious restrictions in practising their language, tradition and religion.

This process is clearly aimed at destroying their national identities. How would you personally engage in shaping

the Union's policies so as to disclose and stop such discriminatory treatment, which is still in practice in certain Member States, and instead, protect and promote minority languages and cultures in the spirit of Europe's support for multiculturalism and rich diversity? How would you make sure?

4-146

Die Vorsitzende. – Sie hat heute mindestens dreimal darauf geantwortet. Die Antworten waren sehr befriedigend.

Wir wollen jetzt zum Ende unserer Veranstaltung kommen. Wir bedanken uns für die Disziplin der Kollegen, natürlich auch für die große Disziplin der designierten Kommissarin. Ich darf Ihnen jetzt, liebe Frau Vassiliou, noch einmal das Wort erteilen, um in einem kurzen Statement diese Sache hier abzuschließen.

4-147

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner-designate. – Madam Chair, honourable Members, thank you once again for your questions and for the very lively and fruitful debate, which I am sure will not be wasted. It is something which will enrich my experience and which I will remember to carry on in my work if I am confirmed with your agreement.

The challenges facing Europe at this juncture are significant. Under the new framework established by the Lisbon Treaty, and following the principles developed by President Barroso in his Political Guidelines for the new mandate, it is my conviction that we must invest carefully and effectively in key areas in order to have a lasting effect on the lives of all Europeans, both today and, more importantly, tomorrow.

I remember very clearly the comment made by one of the honourable Members here about wasting the taxpayer's money. I assure you that, in my work, I will make sure that what we decide and what we apply will have a direct effect on citizens' lives and will not be wasted.

We have to invest in our youth to maximise their potential and opportunities in strengthening a genuine knowledge economy based on our EU values; in lifelong learning to equip citizens of all ages with the tools and skills they need to seize the opportunities of their future; in sustainable culture and creative industries providing wider access to knowledge but, at the same time, offering fair remuneration to creators; in our rich and diverse cultural heritage which is to be celebrated and promoted; and in exploring how sports can be supported further as a medium for improving the lives of Europeans. It is no coincidence that sport was added in the Lisbon Treaty as one of our objectives.

Madam Chair, thank you very much for this experience. As I said at the beginning, this is an expression of democracy and I am very pleased to participate in this process. I value very much my cooperation with the European Parliament and you in particular, and I will try to gain from your experience – long experience for some

of you – and enrich my knowledge and capacity to cope with the very important portfolio that I have been honoured by President Barroso to take over, if I am confirmed.

(Applause)

4-148

Die Vorsitzende. – Ich kann nicht vorwegnehmen, was wir heute Abend entscheiden werden, aber ich kann Ihnen sagen, dass wir sehr gerne mit Ihnen heute hier zusammen waren und gesehen haben, dass Sie in den Gebieten, in denen wir uns wirklich sehr stark engagieren, ein ganz großes Engagement an den Tag legen, und wir hoffen, dass das dann auch andauern wird.

(Die Sitzung wird um 15.50 Uhr geschlossen.)