

Copenhagen, 24 November 1996

EPA-ETUCE COMMON DECLARATION

European society is experiencing a fast and constant evolution. Life styles and environments are changing, the cultural practices and the traditional values are being questioned.

Knowledge and know-how are changing in a society where information is omnipresent. . . .

Young people are at the heart of these upheavals. They feel anxious about their future and about the persistent unemployment. However, they must face the challenge of their Europe with confidence.

European young people need clear commitments and constructive proposals for their future and they must be prepared to take responsibility for their lives.

They will need to acquire vocational, cultural and interpersonal skills which can be provided by the family and the school.

We, the parents, the teachers and the education staffs are responsible for giving them the best means for a successful professional and social integration.

Our education and training systems are at the heart of these necessary changes and of the process of preparing young people for their world. The systems will serve our young people well when they provide:

- reliable knowledge and the capacity to integrate its developments;
- quality initial education and training giving young people the essential tools and motivation to develop lifelong learning.

This can be achieved through a common will to establish efficient cooperation and regular dialogue between education staff and parents.

This shared educational process aims at young people's development and maturity; it integrates the influences and responsibilities placed on youth, on parents, on teachers and trainers and also the responsibilities on the sociocultural environment.

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These influences must be harmonious, they must jointly develop and respect the child's personality.

Education and training of quality must be constructed by parents, teachers and education staffs who must respect their different responsibilities and be brought together by a shared will to create around pupils and students favourable conditions and an atmosphere for the acquisition of basic knowledge, and the rational integration of external influences as well as education for responsibility.

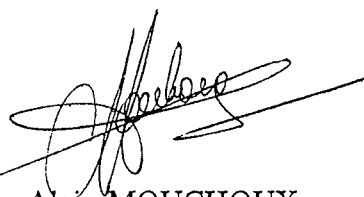
In Europe, the education trade unions and the parent associations, showing concern about young people's futures, about economic and social advances and the quality of education and training systems, particularly of the education and training services, must coordinate their efforts to create or strengthen cooperation and dialogue between parents and teachers and to influence the educational policies of European Governments.

Our specific but convergent and intertwined responsibilities will be translated into a harmonious partnership for our children if we create a powerful common bond of efficient cooperation and regular dialogue between teachers, trainers and parents at local, national and European level.

The ETUCE and EPA call on their members to act in this way in order to develop and improve education and training, while respecting their goals and practices, their national and regional competence and responsibilities, as well as the parents and the teachers' specific roles.



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