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Multilingualism is vital in developing the European Education Area

Press release from EFA MEP Diana Riba

EFA MEP **Diana Riba** has welcomed today's vote in the European Parliament supporting the development of the European Education Area, and specifically the recognition of the importance of multilingualism, including all European languages.

The European Education Area is an initiative of the European Union designed to encourage co-operation between EU countries in the field of education and prevent structural barriers to learning and skills from negatively impacting employment prospects.

The European Parliament today voted in favour of creating the European Education Area by 2025, with EU support to help the member states. MEPs are keen that investments in education, training and skills should be a part of the member states recovery and resilience plans aimed at recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Whilst regretting that the proposals are not ambitious enough in some respects, Diana Riba MEP welcomed the specific recognition of the advantages of multilingualism, including skills in all European languages, not only the 24 official EU languages.

Diana Riba said:

“For the European Education Area to be successful it must be inclusive, accessible and cohesive. We are pleased to have reached an agreement where we talk about education alongside concepts such as the climate crisis, green and digital transition, gender gaps or discrimination and where, beyond the purely economic perspective, we emphasize continuous learning, non-formal training or volunteering.

“This European Commission must turn words into action.

“European values, including diversity, must be the foundation for shaping education in Europe. That’s why it’s excellent news that this text speaks clearly about multilingualism and that it underlines the importance of learning all the languages of the Member States, languages that go beyond English and, of course, beyond the restrictive definition of twenty-four official languages that we unfortunately still have in this room and that do not correspond to the fertile linguistic reality of Europe.”

“This is the Europe we support: a Europe that recognises in each language a vision of the world worthy of dignity, and that sees in each language a source of wealth and strength. The future of Europe will also be shaped by how we shape its education: we have an opportunity and we must not miss it.”

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Diana Riba i Giner

EFA President and first Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group

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