

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000242/25
to the Commission
Barbara Bonte (P/E)
(21 January 2025)**

Subject: Development aid to Pakistan

The EU provides approximately EUR 100 million a year in development aid to Pakistan. Part of these funds go to education.

1. What control mechanisms does the Commission have in place to ensure that these funds do not serve to strengthen Islamic extremist education in Pakistan?
2. Education across the EU is suffering from a dramatic drop in quality, teacher shortages, and problems directly linked to mass migration. In light of this, what arguments can the Commission put forward to justify funding education in other continents — particularly Islamic education?

Submitted: 21.1.2025

**Answer given by Mr Síkela on behalf of the European Commission
(24 March 2025)**

In Pakistan, the EU has been supporting education reforms in Balochistan ⁽¹⁾ and in Sindh ⁽²⁾.

This support extends to the school education departments of the provincial governments, which oversee financing and operations of only the state schools. The EU support is focusing on institutional capacity strengthening, school rehabilitation, training of teachers, and learning.

To ensure that the EU support is in line with EU values, the subjects and content for teachers' training are specifically selected. For example, the teachers' training support to Balochistan school education department covers English, mathematics and science.

The EU scrutinises its projects including those on education via field visits, reporting, results oriented monitoring missions, evaluations and other monitoring mechanisms.

The EU's investment in education takes place under the framework of the EU's Global Gateway (GG) strategy ⁽³⁾ towards enhancing EU's global role and economic security. GG is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals ⁽⁴⁾ and with Europe's industrial capacity and interests.

The quality and sustainability of GG investments will depend, however, on the availability of an educated, skilled, and competent workforce.

Improving employment and educational opportunities in countries with significant migration outflows to Europe also directly addresses some root causes of migration.

The EU is committed to education as a basic human right, in particular in fragile, emergency or post-conflict settings, recognising that everyone deserves access to education regardless of geographic or cultural backgrounds ⁽⁵⁾.

The EU's investments support education pathways and studies that lead to recognised accreditation and qualifications within formal education systems.

⁽¹⁾ Balochistan Education Support Programme II (BES II) adopted in 2019 as part of the Annual Action Programme 2019, C (2019)7736. This support will end in 2025.

⁽²⁾ Development through Enhanced Education Programme (DEEP) adopted in 2017, C (2017)8796. This support ended in 2024.

⁽³⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/global-gateway_en

⁽⁴⁾ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

⁽⁵⁾ COM(2018) 304 final — Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/news/Communication_on_Education_in_Emergencies_and_Protracted_Crises.pdf