

Education and training in the EU: where do we stand?

The EU works with Member States to make education systems fit to give all Europeans the best start in life. The 2019 edition of the Education and Training Monitor shows that Member States have been successful in increasing participation in education, from the early years through to higher education. However, ensuring basic and digital skills for all remains a challenge.

The Education and Training Monitor

The Education and Training Monitor is the EU's flagship publication that analyses how education and training is evolving in the EU and its Member States.

Over the past eight years the Monitor has been instrumental in driving education reform by fostering dialogue with and between Member States, and highlighting policy measures that have delivered results on the ground.

Each year, the Monitor tracks progress towards the *Europe 2020* headline targets, the benchmarks adopted under the EU cooperation policy framework *Education and Training 2020*, and other important indicators in the sector.

This year's focus: teachers

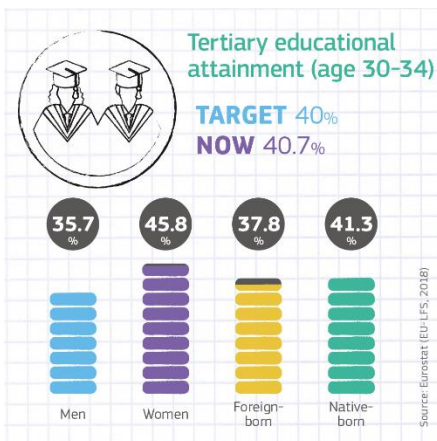
Teachers are the main focus of this year's report, as they are considered to have a decisive impact on students and what they get out of education.

More than 60% of public expenditure on education in the EU is spent on teachers, but more needs to be done to ensure that teachers' needs are effectively addressed. Policy-makers need to understand the role of teachers and better support them so that they can excel in their demanding profession. By exploring policies implemented across Europe, the Monitor offers examples that help Member States learn from each other and drive reform.

- Some Member States are soon set to experience a wave of retirements, or have an insufficient number of candidate teachers. To respond to that, **Bulgaria, Ireland** and **Lithuania** have recently started to create forecasting tools to better plan teacher supply and demand.
- Across Europe, teachers report a high need for training on 'ICT skills for teaching'. With EU support, **Latvia** is preparing teachers to use modern tools, including digital technologies. **France** recently launched a 'digital and informatics science' programme in upper-secondary schools, and created new qualifying training courses to support teachers delivering this programme.
- EU Member States are also supporting teachers to respond to the increasing diversity in the student population. Teachers in **Greece**, for example, have received dedicated training to ease integration of recently arrived migrants and psychologists have been recruited to support the teachers. **Slovenia**, with EU support, has launched a project, which helps teachers develop teaching methods to promote the benefits of diversity and multiculturalism.



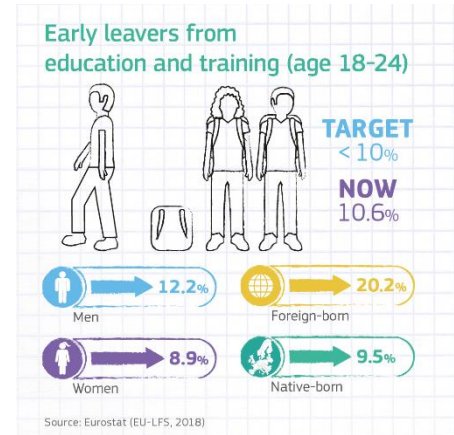
Education and Training Monitor 2019



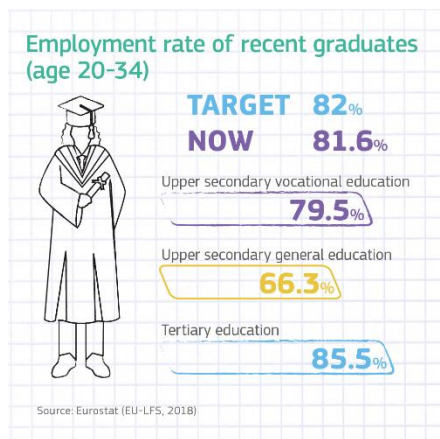
Growing participation in education and educational attainment ...

Compared to 2009, EU countries have successfully expanded participation in education. The share of children enrolled in early childhood education has risen from 90.8% in 2009 to 95.4% in 2017; and the share of young people holding a tertiary education diploma has climbed from 32.3% in 2009 to 40.7% in 2018.

The challenge in these sectors now lies in ensuring participation of disadvantaged groups, and increasing the quality of education for children and young people at risk of poverty or social exclusion. Early school leaving decreased from 14.2% in 2009 to 10.6% in 2018.



Despite important progress in reducing the share of pupils leaving education prematurely, the positive upward trend slowed down after 2016.



... and good employment rates for recent graduates on the job market

Since 2013, employment rates have been picking up again. There is a rebound in the prospects of recent graduates, which is bringing Europe back to the 82% pre-crisis level. Higher educational attainment translates into an employment premium for recent graduates: the employment rate of tertiary graduates stood at 85.5% in 2018, against 79.5% for secondary graduates from vocational education and 66.3% for secondary graduates from general orientation.

Towards basic and digital skills for all

While participation in education has been growing in Europe, one in five 15-year-old pupils still cannot solve simple reading, maths and science tasks. Coupled with the stagnating rate of adult learning in Europe, this means that the main challenge in Europe is now to ensure a high level of basic skills for all. Public investment in education is broadly comparable to levels ten years ago. However, there has been significant investment in digital equipment and infrastructure in schools in the last decade. To successfully manage the digital transformation, European schools need to implement pedagogical, technological and organisational changes. There is also a need to better understand and monitor pupils' ability to create, sort and evaluate digital information.

