

Education and training in Europe: Member States made further progress

The European Commission supports Member States in ensuring that their education systems deliver. The Monitor, the EU's flagship annual publication on education and training, is an important part of this work. Citizenship education is the main focus of this year's report, reflecting the role of education in fostering engagement, inclusion and an understanding of citizens' rights. Using a range of examples, the Monitor finds that Member States are working to ensure that young people learn how our democracies and institutions work and about the values the European Union is built on. The latest edition of the Monitor also shows that Member States have made further progress towards the [targets](#) for reforming and modernising education systems the EU set itself for 2020 – reaching or getting very close to some of them.

Tibor **Navracsics**, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *“I am pleased to see that Member States are working hard to meet their agreed targets for education set for 2020 and to enable young people to become engaged members of our communities – the latter is particularly encouraging as we approach next year's European Parliament elections. I am proud that, together, we have given fresh impetus to this goal: earlier this year, Member States adopted a Recommendation I had put forward on promoting our shared values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching.”*

The 2018 edition of the Education and Training Monitor shows that, once again, Member States have made progress towards their headline targets. However, differences between and within countries remain, showing that more reforms are needed. This is particularly the case for basic skills, where a bigger effort is required to ensure that young people learn to read, write and do maths properly – a precondition for them becoming active, responsible citizens.

The share of pupils dropping out of school without a diploma fell to 10.6% in 2017, very close to the objective of less than 10% by 2020. This, nevertheless, still means that more than one in ten pupils face difficult prospects for further education or for a solid entry into the labour market, including due to fewer opportunities available for adult learning.

The percentage of those completing tertiary education rose to 39.9%, almost reaching the goal of 40% agreed on for 2020. And 95.5% of children aged four years or older participated in early childhood education and care, slightly more than the target of at least 95%.

The Monitor also looks at how much Member States spend on education which is an important investment in economic and social development. In 2016, public funding for education rose by 0.5% in real terms compared to the previous year. However, many Member States are still investing less in education than they did before the economic crisis, and thirteen Member States actually

spent less on it.

Background

The Commission's Education and Training Monitor 2018 is the seventh edition of this annual report that shows how the EU's education and training systems are evolving by bringing together a wide array of evidence. It measures the EU's progress on [six Education and Training 2020 targets](#). The analysis of education challenges and trends recorded in the Monitor helps to inform the treatment of education issues in the annual European Semester process. Furthermore, it will help to identify where EU funding for education, training and skills should be targeted in the EU's next long-term budget.

The Monitor analyses the main challenges for European education systems and presents policies that can make them more responsive to societal and labour market needs. The report comprises a cross-country comparison, 28 in-depth country reports, and a [dedicated webpage](#) with additional data and information.

Education is high on the EU's political agenda. The Commission is working full speed with Member States towards building a [European Education Area](#) by 2025, which is about enhancing learning, cooperation and excellence. It is also about opening up opportunities for all, strengthening values and enabling young people to develop a European identity. The reforms encouraged by the Education and Training Monitor have a key role in this. Along with the European Education Area, the [Erasmus+ programme](#), the [European Structural and Investment Funds, including the Youth Employment Initiative](#), the [European Solidarity Corps](#) as well as [Horizon 2020](#), and the [European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#) help stimulate investment and support policy priorities in education.

To underpin the strengthened ambition in this area, the Commission has proposed to significantly boost funding for young people and learning in the EU's next long-term budget.

For more information

[Monitor website](#)