

# Education and training in the EU: supporting teachers is critical to build the European Education Area

Coinciding with the [second European Education Summit](#), the European Commission published today the 2019 Education and Training Monitor analysing how education and training is evolving in the EU and its Member States. The 2019 Monitor shows further progress towards important EU education and training targets, but also highlights the need to better support teachers and make the teaching profession more attractive.

Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *"To build a resilient, cohesive and fair Europe, we need to invest in education. Above all, this means investing in teachers – giving them the tools and recognition they deserve. The success of any education reform depends on teachers – that is why better responding to their needs is key to building a true European Education Area by 2025. I am proud of what we have achieved with Member States over the past years, but more work lies ahead. The Education and Training Monitor has a vital role to play in driving further reform of our education systems, helping us ensure that everyone can make the most of their talents."*

The Commission supports Member States to improve their education systems through policy cooperation, benchmarking and funding programmes such as [Erasmus+](#). The Monitor, the EU's annual flagship publication on education, is an integral part of this work. By presenting a wealth of policies and fostering dialogue, it helps Member States benchmark and improve their education systems.

This year's edition of the Monitor, the eighth, focuses on teachers. It includes and analyses the findings of an extensive survey of teachers run by the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#). This latest Teachers and Learning International Survey highlighted teachers' need for training to better tackle pressing issues such as the use of Information and Communication Technologies, teaching students with special needs and teaching in multicultural classrooms. To help address this, the Monitor recommends ensuring an appropriate number of teachers in the system, in all subjects, and across rural and urban areas. At the same time, it highlights that greater policy efforts are needed to attract the best candidates to teaching, while ensuring they are properly trained and motivated to stay in the profession.

When it comes to investment in education, the Monitor's most recent data show that public expenditure on education in the EU has remained broadly stable at EU level, while Member States still invest less in education than they did before the economic crisis of 2007-2008.

The latest edition of the Monitor reveals that Member States have now almost

reached their target for reducing early school leaving. Yet, while the share of pupils dropping out has declined from 14.2% in 2009 to 10.6% in 2018, progress has slowed since 2016. The percentage of young people holding a tertiary education diploma rose from 32.3% in 2009 to 40.7% in 2018. The Monitor also shows that higher educational attainment corresponds to higher employment rates among recent graduates and more significant participation in adult learning.

The share of children enrolled in early childhood education rose from 90.8% in 2009 to 95.4% in 2017. 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, while too many children remain at risk of educational poverty.

## **Background**

This year's edition of the Education and Training Monitor marks ten years since the start of the EU cooperation framework [Education and Training 2020](#), which was agreed upon by all Member States in 2009. It measures progress on the Education and Training 2020 targets in each Member State and informs the treatment of education issues in the annual European Semester process. Furthermore, it helps 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. Working with Member States, the Commission has laid the foundations of a [European Education Area](#), which is about enhancing learning, cooperation and excellence. At the same time, an array of EU programmes, namely the [Erasmus+ programme](#), the [European Structural and Investment Funds, including the Youth Employment Initiative](#), 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 bigger 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 (2021 – 2027).

## **For more information**

The Education and Training [Monitor website](#) (including EU and country-specific factsheets and infographics)

[European Education Summit website](#)

[European Education Area website](#)