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Plateforme européenne de la société civile pour l'éducation tout au long de la vie  
European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning – EUCIS-LLL

## EUCIS-LLL PRESS RELEASE

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### Investing in Education: a sine qua non condition to reach 2020 targets

***Brussels, 14 November 2014 /// The Education and Training Monitor 2014 reveals the alarming situation in investment in education across Europe. 19 Member States cut their education expenditure in 2012. This goes against Member States' EU commitments to invest in growth-friendly public investment as stated in the last Annual Growth Surveys. Moreover, the messages from EU Budget negotiations of "conciliation" talks between the European Parliament and the Council on the EU budget for 2015 are worrying as proposed cuts by the Council amendments would effect fields such as education and research. This sends a very negative signal to European citizens especially at the time when hopes have been raised about the €300 billion Investment Package announced by M. Juncker. The time has also come to hear concrete proposals how the Package will support greater cohesion and solidarity in Europe. EUCIS-LLL calls on Member States to stick to their European commitments in order to reach the Europe 2020 targets.***

The European Commission has published a third annual [Education and Training Monitor 2014](#), accompanied by twenty-eight country reports and [visualisation tool](#) to evaluate the performance and progress of the Member States in relation to the ET 2020 targets. The monitor reveals the huge challenges remaining for investment in education – a topic that will be tackled in a EUCIS-LLL round table "[Efficient and equitable funding of education: a target beyond reach](#)" during LLL Week on 9<sup>th</sup> December. Promoting investment in education and skills was mentioned in the Country Specific Recommendations for most Member States. However over the last number of years Member States have cut their spending in education<sup>1</sup>. The Annual Growth Survey 2014 states that "in terms of

*expenditure, Member States need to find ways to protect or promote longer term investment in education, research, innovation, energy and climate action.”* EUCIS-LLL thus calls Member States to stick to their European commitment.

The cost of non-investing in education especially for the most vulnerable groups is very high. Lower-skilled adults in literacy are for instance twice less likely to be employed but also to access basic welfare services, participate in democratic and associative life or even develop a sense of social cohesion<sup>2</sup>. One of the key findings of the monitor is moreover that **socio-economic and socio-cultural inequalities** continue to impact negatively upon educational outcomes. Parental education attainment still determines to a large extent one's own education attainment. According to the monitor, ten countries received Country Specific Recommendations to **focus on disadvantaged learners in particular** – given the challenging school dropout rates amongst disadvantaged and the need to improve inclusiveness and quality in all levels, from early childhood care to adult education. To tackle this, **EUCIS-LLL is calling for a new flagship initiative in EU2020 on inclusive education** to fight inequalities and discrimination in education and training. EUCIS-LLL also considers this should be a key priority on the announced Investment Package for which EUCIS-LLL is looking forward to hear concrete proposals to support education and training for a greater cohesion and solidarity in Europe.

EUCIS-LLL is also concerned about ongoing developments in the recent phase of “conciliation” between the European Parliament and the Council on the **EU budget for 2015** proposed by the Commission. The possible cuts on research and education by the Council in their amendments to the European Commission's 2015 budget would be harmful for both Erasmus+ and Horizon2020 not only in terms of worsening or disrupting the payments for beneficiaries but also by disregarding the role education and research can play to answer the numerous challenges Europe is facing at the moment. EUCIS-LLL thus calls on Member States to safeguard those important programmes that contribute to implement the political goals set for 2020.

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1. The Education and Training [Monitor 2014](#)
  2. Survey of Adult Skills [PIACC](#), OECD

#### Notes to the editors:

*The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL) is an umbrella association that gathers 36 European organisations active in the field of education and training, coming from all EU Member States and beyond. Currently these networks represent more than 45 000 educational institutions (schools, universities, adult education and youth centres, etc.) and associations (involving students, teachers and trainers, parents, HRD professionals, etc.) covering all sectors of formal, non-formal and informal learning. Their members reach out to several millions of beneficiaries. Download our brochure in [23 languages!](#)*

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