

Is Europe reaching the ET2020 goals? Investing in the educators of today and tomorrow: Education and Training Monitor 2019 results are out!

Brussels, October 11, 2019 - On 26 September, the European Commission held the second European Education Summit gathering over 20 European Ministers of Education across the EU. During the Summit, the [ET Monitor 2019 results](#) were launched, bearing teachers and the future of the teaching profession at the heart of the discussions. The Summit marks a high point in the European Union's commitment to the education agenda.

The **Lifelong Learning Platform - European civil society network for education** welcomes the 2019 Education and Training Monitor published by the EU Commission on September 26th, the European Day of Languages. This year's report highlights the achievement of the target on tertiary education attainment and the general progress towards the rest of the goals established in the [ET2020 framework](#). Nonetheless, the percentage of early leavers seem to have come to a worrying standstill and the number of adults receiving education or training is still far from the EU objectives.

The focus of the introductory chapter of this year's monitor is on teachers and the teacher profession. A significant number of countries have an increasing proportion of teachers over 50 or even 60 years old which, combined with the shortage of teachers with specific skills, could potentially challenge the renewal of the workforce in our educational systems. The report further elaborates on several attributes of European educators to better understand their needs in terms of motivation, recognition, working conditions and lifelong learning opportunities to make the profession more attractive.

The LLLPlatform expressed in its contribution to the [ET2020 Review 2018](#) the concern to include a new target and improve the status and access to continuous professional development of teachers and educators. Now more than ever, we emphasise the need to take this forward in the future framework. The analysis provided in this year's monitor focuses only on general traits of teachers' educational engagement per country. Instead, it would be appropriate to set the scene for a potential future benchmark to help the **EU meet the needs for professionals with specific digital skills or skills to deal with diversity and learners with special needs to harness, thus, their full potential as educators.**

While stressing the need for future benchmarks to be improved on teachers professional development, we believe that the ET Monitor hasn't yet addressed what was highlighted in the European Parliament 2016 resolution which stresses the role of external associations and NGOs in entering schools to provide children with additional skills and social competences, such as arts or manual activities, and in helping integration,

better understanding of their environment, solidarity in learning and living, and easing up the learning competences of whole classes¹. Such a development could be very beneficial in achieving the ET2020 targets.

In this regard, the E&T Monitor does not yet provide a portrait of education that reflects the perspective of civil society, or good examples of cooperation between civil society and education and training institutions. The need for monitorable and qualitative data, including the views of learners themselves, could be satisfied with the involvement of these organisations that would, additionally, result in a more realistic portrait of education in Europe addressing the value of non-formal and informal learning.

"Cooperation in education and training is a prerequisite for lifelong learning to happen. This translates into learning from each other, building each other's capacity and innovating together to put learners and educators in the centre and make their voices heard." says Luis Costa, President of the Lifelong Learning Platform.

A notable example on how Civil Society could top up available information can be observed on the benchmark concerning early leavers from education and training; here the results of Member States' efforts seem to have stagnated, for the moment, in keeping early leavers below 10%. Adding the perspective of Civil Society could, among other benefits, cater information on where school leavers go, if they pursue other forms of education, or whether they enter the labour market as, often, NGOs have an essential role in reaching these individuals that fall out of the formal educational system. The LLLPlatform intends to fill this gap by launching its shadow report on the ET2020 monitor collecting and sharing several national realities from the perspective of a number of organisations working in different sectors of education on the field. Another step in this regard has been the joint effort with Cedefop on Lifelong Learning Community Centers and the briefing note published earlier this year.²

When collecting data, methodology is relevant, but we rather believe that the fundamental aspect to improve our European educational systems is the amount of resources our governments dedicate to this matter and the use they make of them. According to this year's report, the investment in education remained invariable as a percentage of the total public expenditure. In addition, the ET Monitor 2019 shows alarming trends on how the average public expenditure on education as a percentage of Member States' GDP has systematically decreased since 2014. LLLP encourages Member States to invest in education and, therefore, to take courageous steps towards a sustainable model of education that the LLLPlatform defends as the 21st century learning paradigm: a learner-centered approach with participatory pedagogy where learners create knowledge on their own and develop the full range of "lifeskills".

This understanding of education not only results in more inclusive societies and individuals better prepared for life, but is also the answer to the increasing pressure that the world of work puts on educational systems. The demands of European job markets cannot be met with short-sighted measures aiming to provide workers with skills necessary for the present jobs or the ones in the near future, but with investments that seek structural changes in education to prepare learners to be resilient and adaptable citizens.

The Lifelong Learning Platform calls for better financing on education that supports the achievement of the ET2020 goals and beyond improving the conditions, opportunities and involvement of all stakeholders in

¹ Resolution of 23 June 2016 on follow-up of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020). https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2016-0291_EN.html?redirect

² <http://lllplatform.eu/news/lllp-edefop-policy-forum-on-community-lifelong-learning-centres/>

education and training of today and tomorrow. We look forward to the outcomes of the joint and much welcome meeting of Education and Finance Ministers in November and expect to see more trans-sectoral gatherings like this one, where education developments and challenges can be approached from wider perspectives that best reflect our local realities and needs.

**The Education and Training Monitor, an annual series that aims at capturing the progress made on education and training systems in Europe based on ET2020 targets and benchmarks, plays an important role in pressuring members states to invest in education and training systems to attain the ET2020 objectives in regard to: early school-leaving, early childhood education and care, tertiary educational attainment, early childhood education and care, tertiary educational attainment, adult participation in learning, employment rate, underachieving in reading, maths and science...*

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The [Lifelong Learning Platform](#) gathers 42 European networks working in education and training. Together, they cover all sectors of education and training including networks for secondary and higher education, vocational education and training, adult education and popular education; networks for students, school heads, parents, HRD professionals, teachers and trainers. Established in 2005, LLLP promotes a vision of lifelong learning based on equity, social cohesion, active citizenship and personal development. The platform works as a space for knowledge exchange between its member networks and uses their expertise to discuss and feed in EU policy-making, making sure that European citizens have their voices heard. In that sense, LLLP contributes to a better understanding and dialogue between the grassroots level and European institutions.

