

Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture

The Commission's Contribution to the Leaders' Working Lunch
Gothenburg, 17 November 2017

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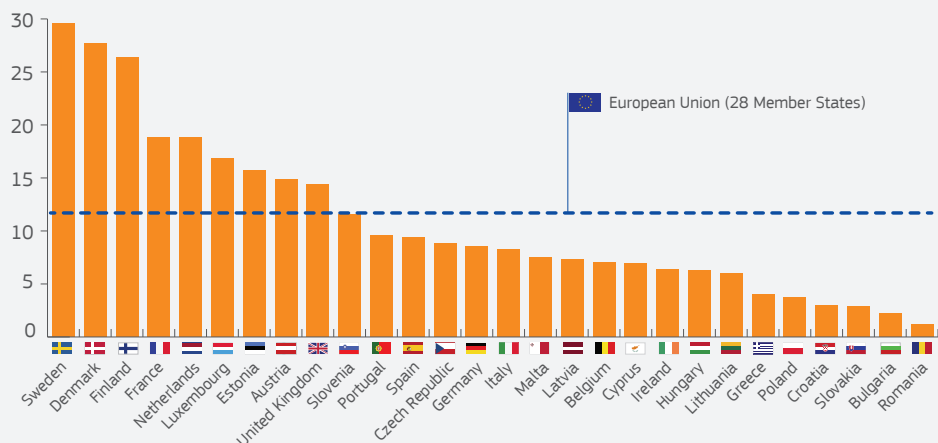
LEARNING THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES

WHAT EXISTS TODAY

Today only **11%** of EU working age citizens participate in lifelong learning.



Participation in lifelong learning per Member State in %



Source: Eurostat, 2016

According to the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey, 15-year-olds who had not attended pre-primary education had a **three times greater risk** of being low performers than those who had attended early childhood education and care for more than one year.

- ▶ Since 2000, Member States have been cooperating to improve and modernise their education and training systems:
 - ▶ A **Framework for European cooperation in education and training** sets common strategic objectives from early childhood education, to school and vocational education and higher education and adult learning.
 - ▶ Member States have established common **benchmarks** to measure their performance and highlight their achievements. The EU benchmark is to engage 15% of the population in lifelong learning activities.
 - ▶ The Commission has supported this process by providing evidence and policy guidance; it has helped to develop a tool that has the potential to become an **EU database on 'what works' in education and training**.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

- ▶ **European policy cooperation in the field of lifelong learning has led to effective improvements in the education and training systems of the Member States.** Many Member States were stimulated to design and test national reforms of education systems from childhood education and care to secondary education or access to training for adults.



The EU has made good progress on **reducing early school leaving**: from 14% in 2010 to 11% in 2016 (EU target: below 10%).



The EU has made progress on **tertiary educational attainment**: from 34% in 2010 to 39% in 2016 (EU target: 40%).

WHAT CAN BE DONE IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS?

- ▶ **In May 2018, adopting a Recommendation on a European reference framework for quality in early childhood education and care.**
- ▶ **Member States to implement the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation** of December 2016 to ensure adults have basic skills.
- ▶ Encourage a **closer involvement of Member States' education institutions in regions** that are defining specialised strategies to address growth and employment challenges, notably to ensure that the skills required are available in the territories concerned. The Commission will provide support to Member States by identifying models of good practice and by strengthening guidance, technical assistance and peer learning (through the Smart Specialisation Platform or the Structural Reform Support Service).

POSSIBLE INITIATIVES WITH A 2025 PERSPECTIVE

- ▶ **Relaunch and update the framework for European cooperation in education and training** by reinforcing lifelong learning.
- ▶ **Increase the EU benchmark for participation in lifelong learning to 25%.**
- ▶ Establish a **more ambitious benchmark for early childhood education and care**, with 95% of children participating.
- ▶ **Reduce** the EU benchmark for **low achievers** (from 15% to 10%) and the share of **early school-leavers** (from 10% to 5%).



The political ambition would need to be aligned with the means to act and reflected in the future discussions on EU finances.