



Education at a Glance 2015: Main Messages for Europe

The publication of the 2015 Education at a Glance is an important compendium for the EU. While the Commission's own publication, the Education and Training Monitor, presented on 12 November, provides very recent information about the European Member States and the European Education and Training indicators and benchmarks, Education at a Glance gives evidence for Europe in comparison with other OECD countries.

Data are an indispensable basis for policy. The Commission works with the EU Member States and their experts on translating the available data into policy messages and support for each individual Member State.

Education is crucial for the integration of migrants and minorities, for preventing radicalisation and for encouraging and supporting the integration of communities. The European Commission supports Member States to deal with the current arrival of many refugees through Erasmus+ and other financial instruments of the EU. It will also help Member States prepare schools to include migrants and minorities and to facilitate their integration and well-being. The inclusiveness of education also strengthens the efficiency of education and ultimately the competitiveness of our societies.

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is especially relevant for the integration of migrants, language learning and the development of social and emotional as well as cognitive skills. It is important that ECEC reaches not only many young children in the EU Member States – and Education at a Glance shows that a vast majority of 4 year olds receive ECEC – but it needs to be of the best possible quality. The new EU Quality Framework on ECEC will be applied not only by European Member States, but also in new studies in the field of ECEC that will be implemented by the OECD.

Teachers are at the core of any effort aimed at reforming education and encouraging students to achieve their potential. The profession needs to attract the best candidates – including those with migrant backgrounds. Teachers must also be provided with a sound and relevant preparation through Initial Teacher Education, good working conditions and school climate, supportive leadership and opportunities to develop professionally.

Participation in higher education continues to rise. For the first time, figures are broken down according to cycle and show that, among first-time graduates from tertiary education, 70% will be awarded a Bachelor's Degree. This proves that the EU Member States have successfully implemented the Bologna Process reforms.

Important European Commission activities for the EU Member States in the field of education are:

- The **Whole School Approach to Education**: where the entire school community engages in a cohesive, collective and collaborative action with strong cooperation with external stakeholders and the community at large; such approaches are supported by Erasmus+ **Strategic Partnerships**.
- The **European Toolkit for Schools** is a collection of examples and resources on effective practices to combat early school leaving and promote more inclusive learning environments. It will be integrated in the School Education Gateway on 15 December at www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/index.htm.
- A **Study on Multilingual Classrooms** with recommendations for raising the educational attainment of children who don't speak the language of instruction. The full report and the policy recommendations have been published at ec.europa.eu/languages/policy/learning-languages/multilingual-classrooms_en.htm.
- A '**Guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education**' explores ways for countries to enhance the relevance and quality of how teachers are prepared for their challenging role. Suggested policy actions are illustrated with a wide range of examples from across Europe at ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups_en.htm#schools.
- The renewal of the 2011 **Agenda for the Modernisation of Higher Education**, which includes ensuring
 - its relevance for students,
 - that higher education institutions are drivers of innovation and
 - the mutual strengthening of teaching and research.