

TEN MAIN MESSAGES OF THE REPORT (2009)

1. **Since 2000, educational performance has improved considerably in most areas identified by European Education ministers as central for achieving the Lisbon goal. However, the 2010 benchmarks for education and training set by the Council are not likely to be achieved, apart from the benchmark on increasing the number of math, science and technology graduates.**
2. **Young people stay still longer in education.** Expected time in education for young people is increasing in all countries. In Finland the average is now more than 20 years. The present economic crisis could reinforce this trend.
3. **The share of low achievers in reading literacy among pupils in secondary education in the EU is increasing.** From 2000 to 2006 the proportion of low performers in reading literacy aged 15 increased from 21.3% to 24.1%. This should be seen against a benchmark for 2010 which anticipates a significant reduction of 20%.
4. **Participation in lifelong learning is becoming a reality for the majority of people in a number of European countries** (DK, SE, IS, followed by FI, UK and NL) - and progress can be observed in almost all countries (4-64 years olds).
5. **Educational attainment levels of the adult population have improved considerably since 2000** – One out of four of the adult population in the EU have high educational attainment, but this is far behind the performance of both the US and Japan (40%). Only Finland and Norway have high education attainment rates above 35%. Moreover, the number of people with low educational attainment has fallen by approximately 1.5 million per year since 2000. Nevertheless, it still **accounts for 77 million adults or close to 30 %**.
6. **While there has been an increase in investment per student in higher education in almost all countries since 2000, the EU member states would need to invest on average over 10 000 euro more per student per year in higher education to reach the levels of the US (almost 200 billion euro more a year).** The difference is mainly due to very high levels of private investment in higher education institutions in the US.
7. **More than half a million EU students study abroad**, an increase of about 50% since 2000. Three out of four of these study in another EU country.
8. **Professional development is a feature of the lives of the vast majority of teachers. Nine out of ten teachers take part in professional development and more than half demands more professional development than they received.** The areas for which teachers express greatest need for development are: “Teaching special learning needs students”, “ICT teaching skills” and “Student discipline and behaviour”. This should be seen in the context of an **ageing teaching profession where one third of the 6 million teachers in the EU are over 50. Women count for 70% of the teacher profession.**
9. **Early teaching of foreign language is advancing in Europe.** In lower secondary education, earlier teaching of English is becoming widespread. Moreover, the number of foreign languages taught per pupil in upper secondary school education has progressed since 2000 (from 1.2 to 1.6).
10. **The three Nordic countries (SE, FI, DK), Germany, and the UK are the highest innovation performers as measured by the European Innovation Scoreboard. A strong concentration of the “creative class” with high educational attainment in and around capital cities contributes to the performance.** A process of convergence of innovation performance in the EU can be observed between the low performers (RO, LV, BG, TR) and the high performing countries.