

The Eurobarometer survey was carried out in all 28 Member States between 26 April and 11 May where 28 000 people from different social and demographic groups were interviewed face-to-face. The survey provided important data on a number of issues that are relevant to current policies on education and skills in Europe. The survey highlights EU citizens' attitudes towards the education that they have received and the priorities for education and training in their country, as well as their views on the most important aspects of education, and the main skills that education can provide. The survey was run as a part of European Commission consultation on the European Area of Skills and Qualifications.

The main findings of this Eurobarometer survey on skills and qualifications are as follows:

- The most important aspects of education relate to individual teachers, in particular the teacher's ability to engage and motivate students. This is also the area seen as needing the most improvement. The other aspects of education that are seen as in most need of improvement are learning environments that stimulate students' creativity and curiosity (41%) and practical work experience with a company or organisation (37%).
- EU citizens acknowledge that various skills can be obtained outside of formal education, most notably foreign language skills and skills that can be used in different jobs. EU citizens think that basic skills (e.g. reading and writing, and numeracy) are the most important type of skill that education provides. This is chosen by 62% of respondents, ahead of the other types of skill included in the question: job-specific skills (34%), skills that can be used in different jobs (30%), specialised skills in specific subjects (26%) and foreign language skills (24%).
- Attitudes to respondents' own education are generally positive, particularly their experience of school education (86% say this was good).
- Nearly three-quarters of EU citizens (73%) agree that their education or training has provided them with the necessary skills to find a job in line with their qualifications, while around a quarter (23%) of EU citizens feel that their education or training has not provided them with the necessary skills.
- Just over half of respondents (56%) think that their qualifications would be recognised in other EU Member States. Similar proportions also think experiences of working or studying in another Member State would be recognised in their own country.
- 6% of EU citizens say that they have tried to work or study in another EU Member State, including remote working or distance learning, but were not able to do so. The main reason for this, in relation to their qualifications, was that they were not recognised by either their prospective employer (12%) or by the education institution (7%), or that they did not have enough information on whether their qualifications would be recognised in another EU Member State (17%).
- Only 9% say they know the level of the European Qualifications Framework to which their qualifications correspond, and just 12% more have heard (in general) about the European

Qualifications Framework.

- A third of EU citizens (34%) say that they have heard of at least one of the various tools for documenting skills and qualifications, most commonly the Europass CV (15%).
- More than two-thirds (69%) assume that a combination of skills or competences acquired in different ways can be used to obtain a qualification.
- A quarter of respondents (24%) have used a career guidance service. This varies considerably by Member State; in some countries, only 3% of respondents say they have used a career guidance service. The main reason for never having used a career guidance service is the lack of access (45%).
- The majority of EU citizens have positive views about the availability and usefulness of career guidance services; for example, 71% agree that they are useful for making the right choice for further studies.
- In total, 44% of EU citizens say that they have looked for information of some kind on education, training or career guidance. Just over half of respondents (56%) say they found it at least quite easy to find the information they needed.
- Only 18% of EU citizens say they are aware of at least one of the European information points (e.g. Europass contact centres).

EU citizens were also asked about the quality of education and training and it appeared that EU citizens are mostly positive towards the education and training that they have received. A high proportion of EU citizens say that the education they received at school was very or fairly good (86%), while 12% say that it was bad. A quarter say that their school education was very good. Views are also generally positive towards vocational education, with 83% describing this as good and 10% as bad, there are positive views of higher education (75% good, 9% bad); attitudes towards courses for adults are also generally positive (66% good, 11% bad); respondents are somewhat less positive about online education (41% good, 15% bad).

Across individual EU Member States, in several countries, 90% or more of respondents say that their school education was good; the highest figures are in Finland and Latvia (92%). Respondents are most likely to describe their school education as bad in Denmark (20%) and in three countries that have been particularly affected by the crisis: Greece (18%), Spain (16%) and Ireland (16%).

The proportion of respondents that have received vocational education varies by individual Member State. If 'not applicable' answers are excluded, the most positive views are found in the Czech Republic (89% say their vocational education was good), Hungary (89%) and Sweden

Opinions of European Union citizens about education and training and its quality

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(88%). No countries have particularly negative view.

More information:

European Commission press release "Education and training is not up to the job, say quarter of Europeans in survey": http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-685_en.htm

European Commission. Special Eurobarometer 417 "European area of skills and qualifications. Report: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_417_en.pdf

Public consultation on the European Area for Skills and Qualifications: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/consultations/skills_en.htm