

# Country specific recommendations in education policies 2011-2019

*This briefing focuses on policy recommendations relating to education and skills addressed by the Council to individual Member States within the framework of the European Semester, over the years 2011-2019. It applies a broad approach to 'education'-related country specific recommendations (CSRs), covering budget spending on education, inclusiveness, skills mismatches and lifelong learning. The briefing takes stock of the education-relevant CSRs issued since 2011, looks in detail at the main topics addressed, and offers an overview of the level of implementation by Member States as assessed by the European Commission.*



## Some EU policies relating to education 2011-2019

An important milestone in the EU's post-crisis governance architecture was the stronger integration of social objectives and policy coordination with the European Semester and an overarching [EU2020 strategy](#). The latter had introduced five headline targets (employment; research and development; climate change and energy; education; and poverty and social exclusion) for Member States to translate into their national targets for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In October 2014, Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker announced his ambition for the EU to achieve a *Social Triple A* rating, stating in his [opening address](#) to the plenary of Parliament that *'this is just as important as an economic and financial triple-A rating.'*

Later, on 9 September 2015, President Juncker [announced](#) the establishment of a European Pillar of Social Rights in his state of the union address to the European Parliament. This initiative was part of the work undertaken by the Commission for a deeper and fairer Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and was also part of the Commission's 2016 Work Programme. In March 2016, the Commission presented a first outline of the Pillar of Social Rights, launching a [public consultation](#) in March 2017. The [Commission communication on the European Pillar of Social Rights](#) was presented in April 2017 and was officially adopted as a [Proclamation in Gothenburg](#) in November 2017.

In addition, the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU of 2015 [focused](#) on 'deepening the EU social dimension' of the European Semester, which was introduced as a new form of institutional architecture for socio-economic policy coordination in response to the euro crisis.

Furthermore, the [New Skills Agenda for Europe](#) was adopted by the Commission on 10 June 2016. The goals and actions of this Agenda are set out in the document '[Communication: A New Skills Agenda for Europe](#)'. It launched numerous actions designed to: a) improve the quality and relevance of training and other ways of acquiring skills; b) make skills more visible and comparable; c) improve information and understanding regarding trends and patterns of demand for skills and jobs (skills intelligence), to enable people to make better career choices, find quality jobs and improve their life chances.

One may note that the Council adopted a [recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning](#) in May 2018, and a [recommendation on 'Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for](#)



[Adults'](#) in December 2016<sup>1</sup>. It is important to point out the connection between such recommendations and the targets of ET 2020 ([Education and Training 2020](#)), which is a strategic framework for European cooperation in these domains. The [Education and Training Monitor](#) gathers statistics and data related to the evolution of national education and training systems across the EU. Each report measures countries' progress towards the targets of ET 2020, and provides insights into measures taken to address education-related issues as part of the European Semester process.

On 10 September 2019, Commission President-designated Ursula von der Leyen presented her [political guidelines](#), where she committed to 'empowering people through education and skills'. In her [mission letter](#) to Commissioner Mariya Gabriel (Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth) Commission President von der Leyen delegated the following tasks related to education: to lead European Education Area project; to remove barriers to learning and to improve access to quality education; to promote excellence and networking among European universities, as well as, to foster international cooperation in education, research and innovation.

[On 8 November 2019](#), a first ever joint Council meeting bringing together EU finance ministers and education ministers was organised to discuss education policies. On the same day, the education ministers adopted a series of [conclusions on 'the key role of lifelong learning policies'](#) and a [resolution on the further development of a European Education Area](#).

On 17 December 2019, the Commission [proposed](#) its economic policy priorities for the 2020 European Semester Cycle. Some of these economic policy priorities aim at strengthening education and training systems, as well as, investment in skills, which are also reflected in the [Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy 2020](#) and related policy documents.

## Education-related country specific recommendations

Over the period between 2011 and 2019, the Council addressed 219 country-specific recommendations (CSRs) to Member States related to education<sup>2</sup>, skills and lifelong learning<sup>3</sup> (hereinafter education CSRs), as part of the European Semester. It should be noted that Member States which were under a macroeconomic adjustment programme were not subject to the European Semester surveillance framework<sup>4</sup>.

The number of education CSRs addressed to Member States expanded steadily between 2012 and 2014. However, it declined substantially in 2015 (less than half the number of recommendations compared with that for 2014), as also did the overall number of CSRs. In 2015, the Commission decided to reduce significantly the number and scope of the CSRs, focusing on key priority issues of macroeconomic and social relevance. As a consequence, both the absolute and relative number of education CSRs declined. Nevertheless, the rising trend in the number of education CSRs issued to

---

\*External author: Parliamentary adviser, Portuguese Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> In February 2019, the Commission published an implementation [report](#) on upskilling pathways, with the purpose of taking stock of the steps that the Member States have agreed upon to implement the recommendation. The report outlines the relevance of skills as a driver for competitiveness, innovation and growth, emphasising that investment in skills pays off, as a pathway to employability and prosperity, and also a key to social cohesion.

<sup>2</sup> CSRs linked to budgetary spending on education, reforms at any level of the education system, measures to reduce early school leaving, educational output, etc are included.

<sup>3</sup> CSRs linked to skills mismatch, apprenticeship, vocational education and training, upskilling, market-oriented skills, adult learning, lifelong learning, etc are included.

<sup>4</sup> Instead programme conditionality was enshrined in a specific Memorandum of Understanding. Hence Greece received the first Semester recommendation in 2019; Cyprus received CSRs in 2011 and 2012 (i.e. before the start of its programme in 2013) and then again in 2016, 2017 and 2018 (following the completion of the programme); as well as, Ireland and Portugal started receiving recommendations in 2014 after exiting its programme in 2013. As an exception, Spain has always been integrated into the European Semester, on account of the narrow scope, small size and short duration of the Spanish programme (recapitalisation and restructuring of the banking sector). In addition, Romania did not receive CSRs as part of the European Semester in 2011 and 2012, as equally Latvia did not in 2011, since those Member States benefitted from balance of payments assistance.

Member States has resumed from 2016 onwards. More recently, there was a significant increase, from 22 recommendations in 2018 to 30 in 2019.

In general, Member States that have received education CSRs have been targeted several years in a row. The Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and Croatia were those receiving less education CSRs during this period<sup>5</sup>. By contrast, Slovakia, the United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany and Hungary have received recommendations on educational policies each year, i.e. nine years in a row.

In 2019, for the first time, all Member States - without exception - received a recommendation on education CSRs. This is in line with the investment advice provided to the Member States in this Semester package (for more information see Box 1). In fact, the 2019 European Semester intensified the focus on investment. It should be noted that the 2019 Annual Growth Survey called for more targeted investment policies across Member States and that this year's country reports analysed each country's investment needs.

### Box 1: Communications from the Commission on the 2018 and 2019 European Semesters

Recent communications from the Commission on the respective European Semesters had discussed different aspects of the impact of education on the labour market, investment and structural reforms:

- The communication on the **2018 European Semester** - Country-specific recommendations ([COM\(2018\)0400](#), May 2018) emphasises that issues of educational inequality and its intergenerational transmission represent a threat to social cohesion and the long-term prosperity of European societies.
- The communication on the **2019 European Semester** - Assessment of progress on structural reforms, prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, and results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 ([COM\(2019\)0500](#), June 2019) identifies skills shortages and mismatches as a major obstacle to investment. It is argued that investment in people is a key complement to investment in innovation, research and infrastructure. The communication states that *'well-functioning and inclusive education and training systems can help prevent or reduce the risks of skills shortages and mismatches that are costly to society, both economically and socially, in terms of foregone growth opportunities and shrinking job opportunities for certain population groups'*.

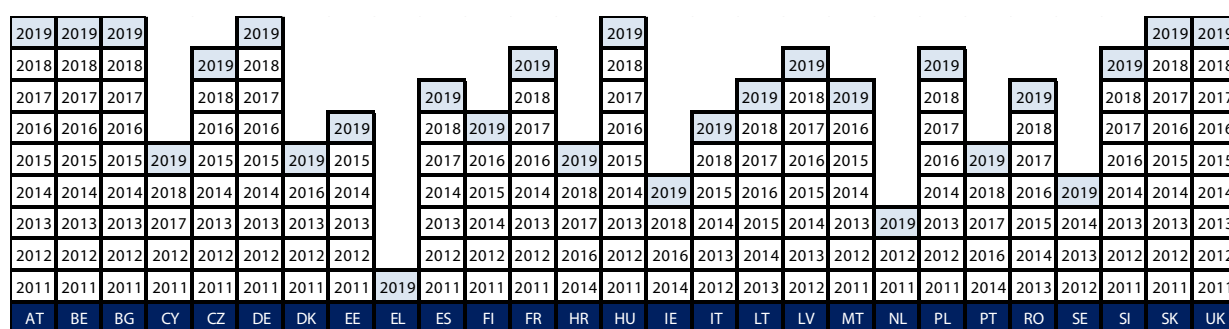
The 2019 CSRs were focused on inclusiveness, as only limited progress has been made in this domain, and on access to quality education and training, as it is key to equip all citizens with skills and competences, in a lifelong learning perspective that takes into account future needs.

In particular, in the recent two rounds of CSRs the recommendations focused on:

1. Access to quality and inclusive mainstream education for disadvantaged groups, in particular Roma: CSRs have been issued to Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia;
2. Quality and achievement in basic skills in Austria;
3. Reducing early school leaving in Spain;
4. Improving the situation of teachers and strengthening the attractiveness of the teaching profession in the Czech Republic and Italy;
5. Increasing the labour market relevance of education in Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania and Spain;
6. Improving adult learning in Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Slovenia, and vocational training in Cyprus, France and Italy;
7. Increasing the capacity of vocational education and training in Cyprus, Greece and Latvia.

<sup>5</sup> In this accounting, Portugal, Ireland and Cyprus were excluded for the reasons explained above.

**Figure 1: Education CSRs by Member State**



Source: EGOV based on the CSRs adopted by the Council in the period 2011-2019.

### Topics addressed by education CSRs

This note follows the categorisation adopted by the Commission, which separates CSRs in education from CSRs in skills and lifelong learning, based on the distinction traditionally made between the respective concepts of education and training. Usually, the concept 'Education System' includes pre-school, compulsory, upper secondary and higher education.

The CSRs with which this paper is concerned in the core education field address: a) structural or quality weaknesses of the educational system related to curricular reform or modernisation, schools and teacher investment; and b) social vulnerabilities of the education system related to inclusiveness concerns (regarding immigrants and other vulnerable groups).

It is frequent for Member States to receive annual recommendations, both in core education fields and on skills and lifelong learning (Table 1). However, most of these recommendations are oriented towards strengthening labour market capacities. In general, there is a balanced distribution between the recommendations addressed to education and the ones addressed to skills and lifelong learning, with the exception of the years 2011, 2015, 2016 and 2017.

**Table 1: Number of education sub-CSRs by type (2011-2019)**

Year	Number of education sub-CSRs addressing		
	Education only	Skills and lifelong learning only	Education AND Skills and lifelong learning
2011	3	9	11
2012	9	8	15
2013	24	24	8
2014	31	29	15
2015	19	7	0
2016	10	7	5
2017	11	7	3
2018	10	11	7
2019	1	0	20

Source: EGOV based on the CSRs adopted by the Council in the period 2011-2019.

A more detailed categorisation of CSRs, by country and year, is listed in Annex 2, reflecting a wide range of policy recommendations.

It is possible to identify three recurring topics in education CSRs in the sub-field of skills and lifelong learning, which are closely bound up with the labour market, unemployment, and the need to meet the challenges of technological and digital transformation. These are:

1. CSRs addressing skills mismatches and market-relevant skills;
2. CSRs fostering lifelong learning, adult learning and reskilling or upskilling (including vocational education and training);
3. CSRs for improving inclusiveness in education and training, especially for persons with a migrant background and people with disabilities.

In the core of the education sector five recurrent topics were identified:

1. CSRs focusing on investment-related education policies or on ensuring expenditure in education;
2. CSRs calling for reforms on all levels of education;
3. CSRs targeting early school leaving;
4. Some CSRs calling for improvements regarding teacher's skills and the teaching profession<sup>6</sup>;
5. More generic CSRs emphasising the need to improve the quality, outcomes and inclusiveness of education.

A time-series or cross-section distribution analysis delivers a clear pattern regarding the distribution of topics. However, lately there seems to be a shift in education CSRs towards greater inclusiveness, as recommendations directed at education and training systems aimed at ensuring equality of access for disadvantaged groups (migrants or people with disabilities), become more prominent (see Box 1).

## Implementation of education CSRs

In order to facilitate the assessment of the implementation of CSRs, the analysis provided by the Social Scoreboard feeds into the preparation of the Country Reports and it complements the more qualitative assessment of economic and social challenges across the EU (see Box 2). The following three indicators of the Social Scoreboard are especially relevant: early leavers from education and training between ages 18 and 24; adult participation in lifelong learning; and share of population with basic overall digital skills or higher. In 2018, for the first time, the Country Reports provided an in-depth analysis of country-specific challenges identified by the Social Scoreboard (notably 'critical situations').

**In terms of implementation of the 2018 education CSRs**, the following can be noted based on the [annual screening](#) of the assessments by the Commission of the implementation of the CSRs:

- Twelve Member States made limited progress in implementing the 2018 education CSRs (15 CSRs were issued) in relation to the following policy aspects: improving educational outcomes and inclusiveness for disadvantaged groups; improving quality of education; fostering lifelong learning, reskilling and upskilling, etc.
- Ten Member States made some progress in implementing the 2018 education CSRs (12 CSRs were issued) in relation to the following policy aspects: fostering lifelong learning, reskilling and upskilling; improving labour market outcomes; implementing education reforms, etc.
- One Member State implemented the 2018 education CSR and addressed it substantially for the policy aspect of reform of vocational education and training.

<sup>6</sup> Commissioner Navracsics presented the 2019 Education and Training Monitor at the second [European Education Summit](#) on 26 September 2019. Teachers are the main focus of the latest edition, as they are considered the key factor impacting on students' learning within the school environment.

- The implementation record of the CSRs has been uneven. However, a cross-section analysis shows that a limited level of implementation is found in Member States including Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Belgium, Spain and Germany, while Finland, France, Portugal and Ireland show better implementation rates.

**Box 2: What is the methodology for attributing a certain mark to a Member State for an indicator of the Social Scoreboard?**

The scoreboard is a reference framework to monitor 'societal progress' within the three dimensions of the Pillar: equal opportunities and access to the labour market; dynamic labour markets and fair working conditions; and public support/social protection and inclusion. Twelve areas have been selected in which societal progress can be measured, associated with one of the three dimensions referred to above.

The first policy domain of the Pillar dimension 'equal opportunities and access to the labour market' is 'Skills, education and lifelong learning', which is relevant for education CSRs. The Commission states: 'Basic skills in language, literacy, numeracy and ICT, which are the first building blocks for learning, remain a challenge for a significant share of the population, from children to adults. To increase quality and relevance of education outcomes, education and training systems need to become more effective, equitable and responsive to labour market and societal needs'.

The scoreboard benchmarks EU Member States' performances vis-à-vis the EU and the euro area averages, and each mark is a reflection of levels for a certain indicator, also taking into account longer-term trends.

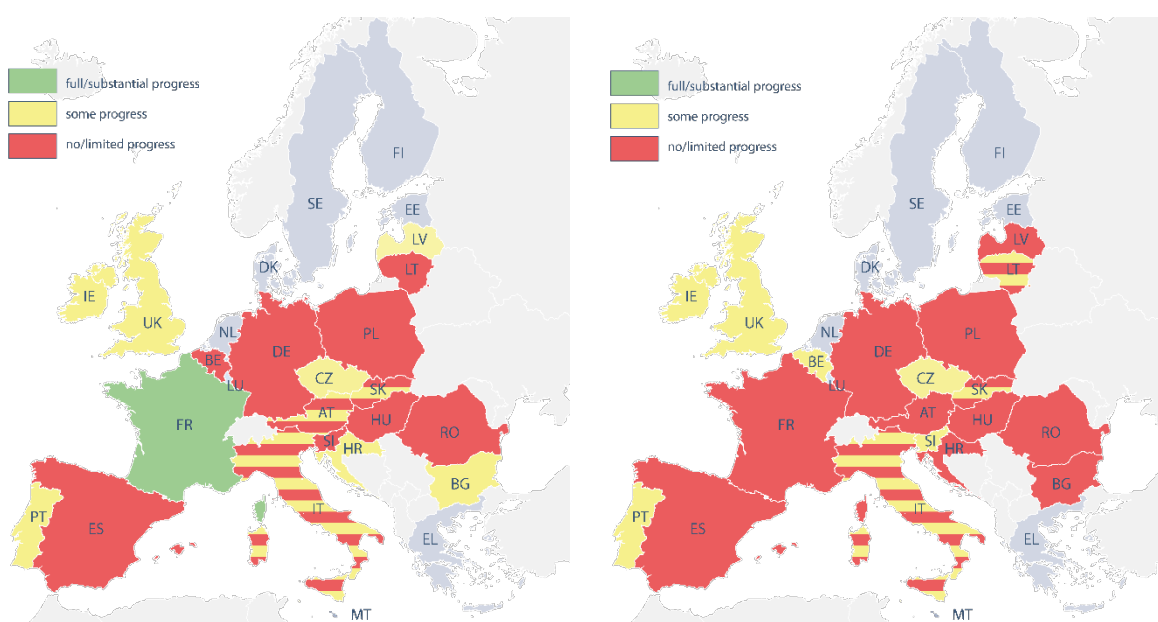
Source: European Commission [webpage](#).

As for the level of implementation, there seems to be no clear pattern as to what types of education and training CSRs register higher or lower levels of implementation by Member States. However, one can draw some cautious horizontal conclusions:

- Uneven levels of detail and specificity of an individual CSR make country comparisons difficult.
- The low implementation rate of CSRs in education worsened in the two most recent years, i.e., 2017 and 2018.
- CSRs addressed to improve inclusiveness show a very poor level of implementation.

**Figure 2:** Progress in implementing 2018 CSRs in education and training

**Figure 3:** Progress in implementing 2017 CSRs in education and training



Source: [EGOV](#) based on the CSRs adopted by the Council in the period 2011-2019.

## Some conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn:

Between 2011 and 2019, recommendations on the social aspect of education showed a moderate increase, with the exception of 2015, when the number of CSRs fell considerably. A significant increase can be observed between 2018 and 2019, when all Member States received recommendations on education.

There has been a wide range of policy recommendations within the education domain over the period in question. Lately, we can observe a content shift of the CSRs towards inclusiveness, reflecting the latest policy orientations from the Commission followed by the Council. It is recognised that the problem of inequality across the EU could be tackled by improving access to education and training. This is in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The level of implementation does not seem to be linked to the size of the country or the type of education and training CSRs. Member States on average have been struggling with implementing these CSRs.

There is a low implementation rate for CSRs in education and training, across time and across Member States. It should be noted, however, that measuring the degree of implementation of qualitative recommendations is difficult, and the results may be imprecise. The implementation level of some of the CSRs in education and training is based on social scoreboard indicators (however, the precise relation between implementation assessment and scoreboard is not clear).

It should be emphasised that reforms in education and training, as in other sectors, take time to implement and yield results. The need for this multiannual dimension has been acknowledged by the Commission. Thus the [Commission communication on the 2017 European Semester](#), issued in May 2017, proposed that the assessment of the implementation of CSRs should be carried out from both a yearly and a multiannual perspective. However, the details of the multiannual framework methodology have never been published.

## Annex 1: Education and training CSRs 2011-2019

MS	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
AT	CSR4	CSR2,5	CSR5	CSR3	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	10
BE	CSR2	CSR5	CSR6	CSR4,5	CSR3	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	10
BG	CSR5	CSR4	CSR4	CSR4	CSR4	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR4	9
CY	CSR5	CSR5					CSR5	CSR5	CSR3	5
CZ	CSR4,6	CSR3,6	CSR6	CSR5	CSR4	CSR3		CSR2	CSR2	10
DE	CSR1,3	CSR1,3	CSR1,2	CSR1,2	CSR1	CSR1	CSR1	CSR1,2	CSR1,2	15
DK	CSR3	CSR3	CSR2	CSR2					CSR1	5
EE	CSR4	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3				CSR2	6
EL									CSR2	1
ES	CSR2,6	CSR2,6	CSR4,5	CSR1,3,4			CSR2	CSR2,3	CSR2	13
FI	CSR4	CSR3		CSR3	CSR3	CSR2			CSR2	6
FR	CSR3	CSR2,3	CSR6	CSR7		CSR3	CSR3	CSR2	CSR2	9
HR				CSR3		CSR2	CSR3	CSR2	CSR2	5
HU	CSR4	CSR4,6	CSR4,6	CSR4,6	CSR5	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR2	12
IE				CSR3		CSR1		CSR2	CSR2	4
IT		CSR3	CSR4	CSR6	CSR5			CSR4	CSR2,3	7
LT			CSR3	CSR3	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	7
LU	CSR4	CSR4	CSR5	CSR2,4					CSR3	6
LV		CSR3,7	CSR3,5	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	10
MT	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR2	CSR2			CSR3	7
NL	CSR1	CSR1							CSR2	3
PL	CSR4	CSR3,4	CSR3,4	CSR2		CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	10
PT				CSR4		CSR5		CSR2	CSR2	4
RO			CSR4,5	CSR5,6	CSR3	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR3	9
SE		CSR3	CSR4	CSR4					CSR2	4
SI	CSR2,5	CSR2,5	CSR3	CSR3		CSR2	CSR2	CSR1	CSR1	10
SK	CSR5	CSR5,6	CSR3,4	CSR3,4	CSR2,3	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	CSR2	13
UK	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR3	CSR2	9
TOTAL	23	32	28	33	16	19	16	22	30	219
AS % OF CSRs	19,49%	23,19%	19,86%	21,02%	15,69%	21,35%	20,51%	30,14%	31,25%	22,08%

Source: EGOV based on the CSRs adopted by the Council in the period 2011-2019.



## Annex 2: Education and training CSRs: policy aspects and implementation 2011-2019

MS	Recommendation	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
AT	Improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged groups (incl. those with migrant background)	CSR4	some	some	limit		some	limit	limit	CSR2
AT	Improve strategic planning in higher education			some	limit					
AT	Improve labour market outcomes					limit		limit	some	
BE	Foster lifelong learning, re- and up-skilling	CSR2	some	limit						
BE	Improve quality and inclusiveness of education and training				limit			some	limit	CSR2
BE	Pursue education and training reforms						some		limit	
BE	Address skill shortages and mismatches		some		some	some				CSR2
BG	Adopt School Education Act			no	no	subst.				
BG	Reform all levels of education	CSR5	limit	limit	some					
BG	Improve access to good-quality early schooling			no		limit				
BG	Reform vocational education and training				some					
BG	Improve quality and inclusiveness of education and training				limit		limit	limit	some	CSR4
BG	Foster upskilling and lifelong learning				limit				some	
CY	Promote market-relevant skills		some							
CY	Deliver on reforming education and training system, and increase participation in vocational education and training	CSR5						limit	limit	CSR3
CZ	Ensure accreditation, governance and financing of higher education			no	limit					
CZ	Adopt higher education reform					subst.				
CZ	Raise the attractiveness of teaching profession				some		subst.			
CZ	Implement comprehensive evaluation framework	CSR6	limit	some	limit					
CZ	Strengthen capacity and improve inclusiveness of education and training	CSR4			limit	limit	some		some	CSR2
DE	Increase availability of all-day schools				some					
DE	Ensure expenditure on education	CSR1	subst.	limit						
DE	Focus investment-related policy on education				limit	limit	limit	limit	limit	CSR1
DE	Improve educational outcomes and skills of disadvantaged groups	CSR3	limit	some	limit				limit	CSR2
DK	Improve the quality of the education system	CSR3	some	some						
DK	Improve educational outcomes and skills of disadvantaged groups				some					
DK	Foster lifelong learning, re- and up-skilling			some						
DK	Focus investment-related policy on education									CSR1
EE	Promote market-relevant skills		some							
EE	Reform all levels of education			subst.						
EE	Foster lifelong learning and vocational education and training			some	some	some				
EE	Improve attractiveness of vocational education and training				limit					
EE	Improve capacity and relevance of the education and training system	CSR4			some					CSR2
EL	Focus investment-related policy on education									CSR2
ES	Foster lifelong learning, re- and up-skilling	CSR2	some	limit						

ES	Review expenditure on education		some		some					
ES	Improve quality of vocational training			some	limit					
ES	Increase the quality of primary and secondary education				some					
ES	Enhance guidance and support for groups at risk of early school leaving	CSR6			limit					
ES	Improve education outcomes					some	limit	limit		CSR2
ES	Increase relevance of education				limit		limit	limit		CSR2
FI	Foster lifelong learning, re- and up-skilling	CSR4								
FI	Foster vocational training				some					
FI	Reduce skills mismatches		subst.			some	some			
FI	Enhance labour market-relevant skills					some				CSR2
FR	Foster lifelong learning, re- and up-skilling	CSR3	some	some						
FR	Pursue reforms of vocational education and training		some	some	some			limit	subst.	
FR	Target educational inequalities and early school leaving				some					
FR	Reform compulsory education				some					
FR	Enhance labour market-relevant skills					some				
FR	Address skills shortages and mismatches									CSR2
HR	Improve education outcomes				some					
HR	Foster up- and re-skilling					limit	limit			
HR	Improve adult education							limit		
HR	Deliver on education reform and improve access to and relevance of education and training							limit	some	CSR2
HU	Foster lifelong learning, re- and up-skilling	CSR4	some	some	no		some			CSR2
HU	Reform higher education			limit	limit					
HU	Promote market-relevant skills			some						
HU	Prevent early school leaving		limit	no	limit					
HU	Facilitate transition between different stages of education				limit	no				
HU	Improve teaching skills					some				
HU	Improve educational outcomes and inclusiveness of disadvantaged groups			no	limit	limit	limit	limit	limit	CSR2
IE	Focus investment-related policy on education						some			
IE	Facilitate re- and up-skilling				some			some	some	CSR2
IT	Implement education reform and expand vocational education		some	limit		subst.				
IT	Review public funding for universities				some					
IT	Implement reform of active labour market policies to ensure equal access to training								some	
IT	Foster vocational education and training				limit				limit	
IT	Improve educational outcomes and foster upskilling				some					CSR2
IT	Improve skills of public employees									CSR3
LT	Focus investment-related policy on education						limit			
LT	Address skills mismatches			some						
LT	Improve quality and efficiency of all education and training levels				some	some		some	limit	CSR2
LT	Improve teachers' skills					limit				
LT	Improve educational outcomes							limit		

## Country specific recommendations in education policies

LU	Promote market-relevant skills	CSR4	limit							
LU	Foster lifelong learning			some	limit					
LU	Reform secondary education			limit	no					
LU	Reform vocational education and training				limit					
LU	Focus economic policy related to stimulating skills development									CSR3
LV	Reform higher education		some	limit	some					
LV	Improve vocational education and training and foster upskilling		some	some	some	some	some	limit	some	CSR2
LV	Improve financing model for higher education					some				
LV	Reform accreditation system			no						
MT	Promote market-relevant skills	CSR3		some						
MT	Improve teachers' skills					some				
MT	Reduce early school leaving		some	some	some					
MT	Foster vocational training			limit	some					
MT	Foster lifelong learning						some			
MT	Foster investment-related policy on inclusive education and training									CSR3
NL	Ensure expenditure for education	CSR1	some							
NL	Strengthen comprehensive lifelong learning and upskilling									CSR2
PL	Foster vocational education and training	CSR4	some	some	limit					
PL	Promote market relevant skills	CSR4	some	some	some					
PL	Foster lifelong learning, up- and re-skilling	CSR4		subst.	limit					
PL	Foster quality education and relevant skills			subst.	some		limit	limit	limit	CSR2
PT	Promote market-relevant skills			some	some					
PT	Foster adult up and re-skilling and promote relevant skills						some		some	CSR2
PT	Review public spending on education				some					
PT	Increase number of higher education graduates								some	CSR2
RO	Promote lifelong learning, up and re-skilling			limit						
RO	Improve access to early childhood education				limit					
RO	Improve quality and inclusiveness of education				some	some		limit	limit	CSR3
RO	Reduce early school leaving			limit	limit	limit	some			
RO	Reform vocational education and training			limit						CSR3
SE	Improve basic skills				limit					
SE	Facilitate transition between different stages of education		some		some					
SE	Improve the quality and inclusiveness of education and foster skills			some	limit					
SE	Focus investment-related policy on education and skills									CSR2
SI	Foster lifelong learning, re and up-skilling	CSR2	some	limit			limit	some	limit	CSR1
SI	Promote market relevant skills	CSR5	some							
SI	Adopt Student Work Act				full					
SI	Address skill mismatches				some					
SK	Reform all levels of education	CSR5		limit						
SK	Foster lifelong learning, re and up-skilling			limit		some		some		

SK	Reinforce activation and upskilling measures			limit	some	no	some		some	
SK	Promote market-relevant skills	CSR5	some		limit					
SK	Promote the teaching profession and improve teachers' skills			some		no				
SK	Improve educational outcomes and inclusiveness	CSR5	limit	limit	limit	limit	limit	limit	limit	CSR2
UK	Foster up- and re-skilling and promote relevant skills	CSR3	some	some	some	some	some	some	some	CSR2

Source: EGOV based on the CSRs adopted by the Council in the period 2011-2019.

The education and training CSR policy aspects is given here; please note that the assessment of progress used in this briefing is expressed with CSR policy aspect granularity. The definition of CSR policy aspects implies the following hierarchy: a CSR contains numerous sub-CSRs, and a sub-CSR may contain one or more policy aspects related to different policy measures. The assessment of progress of each policy aspect equals the assessment of progress of its sub-CSR.

### Annex 3: The scale of assessment of progress

Since 2012, the qualitative assessment of implementation was complemented with a quantitative assessment of implementation using a 5-value scale: *no progress*, *limited progress*, *some progress*, *substantial progress*, *full progress*. The following table shows the Commission’s definition of each assessment value and the traffic-light colour-code used to represent CSRs' and sub-CSRs' progress assessments in this briefing.

Commission’s definition of each assessment value and traffic-light colour-code	
<b>Fully implemented</b>	The Member State (MS) has implemented all measures needed to address the CSR appropriately
<b>Substantial progress</b>	The MS has adopted measures that go a long way in addressing the CSR, most of which have been implemented.
<b>Some progress</b>	The MS has adopted measures that partly address the CSR and/or has adopted measures that address the CSR, but a fair amount of work is still needed to fully address the CSR as only a few of the adopted measures have been implemented. For instance, a measure may have been adopted by the national parliament or by ministerial decision, but no implementing decisions are in place.
<b>Limited progress</b>	The MS has: announced certain measures, but these only address the CSR to a limited extent; and/or it has presented legislative acts at the relevant level of government, but these have not yet been adopted and substantial further non-legislative work is needed before the CSR can be implemented; and/or it has presented non-legislative acts, yet with no further follow-up in terms of implementation when this is needed to address the CSR.
<b>No progress</b>	The MS has not credibly announced or adopted any measures to address the CSR, including initial steps to address it, such as commissioning a study or setting up a study group to analyse possible measures to be taken, while clearly specified measures to address the CSR have not been proposed.

**Disclaimer and copyright.** The opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Parliament. Reproduction and translation for non-commercial purposes are authorised, provided the source is acknowledged and the European Parliament is given prior notice and sent a copy. © European Union, 2019.

Contact: [egov@ep.europa.eu](mailto:egov@ep.europa.eu)

This document is available on the internet at: [www.europarl.europa.eu/supporting-analyses](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/supporting-analyses)