

Indicator (definition)	Tertiary educational attainment by gender, age group 30-34: The share of the population aged 30-34 years who have successfully completed tertiary (or equivalent) education (ISCED level 5 or 6)
Eurostat Unit	Education, science and culture
Other Commission DGs	DG EAC, DG EMPL
European Statistical System Working Group (WG)	Working Group on Education and Training Statistics
Date	February 2011

1. Overall assessment of accuracy and comparability (Description of quality grades under the following link: http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/dsis/structind/library?l=/general_information/quality_profiles/annex_enpdf/EN_1.0_&a=d)

A
 B
 C
 Indicator to be developed

Data is collected from reliable source applying high standards with regard to the methodology - European Union Labour Force Survey.

2. Objective and relevance of the indicator:

The indicator measures the share of population aged 30-34 who have successfully completed tertiary (or equivalent) education (ISCED 5-6) and is one of the eight Europe 2020 headline indicators.

The Europe 2020 strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth should help Europe to recover from the crisis and come out stronger, both internally and at the international level, by boosting competitiveness, productivity, growth potential, social cohesion and economic convergence.

European Council gave its political endorsement on 17 June 2010 to increase the participation in tertiary education: the share of the 30-34 years old having completed tertiary or equivalent education should be at least 40% in 2020.

Education has a central role in this important strategy in terms of fostering both societal and economic progress across the EU. It is crucial for young people's transitions from education into the labour market and for their successful integration in the society. Higher educational attainment levels increase employability and reduce poverty in the context of a knowledge-based economy.

Restriction of the indicator's relevance and other characteristics which may lead to restrictions in using it in monitoring and reporting

Successful educational attainment of younger generation already at upper secondary level is an important complementary indicator for the monitoring of the progress in the increase of the educational attainment of the population.

Selection of the age group (30-34 years) excludes persons who complete tertiary education at a higher age (i.e. people returning to formal education in their thirties).

3. Data availability: details

(**t₁**: earliest reference year available; **t₂**: latest reference year available in February 2011)

	Member States	Candidate and acceding countries	US and Japan	EEA-EFTA
t ₁	2000: BE, BG, CZ, DK, DE, EE, IE, , GR, ES, FR, IT, CY, LV, LT, LU, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK, FI, SE, UK 2004: AT	2000: IS 2002: HR 2006: MK, TR	-	2000: NO, CH
t ₂	2009: 27 Member States	2009: IS, HR, MK, TK	-	2009: NO, CH

4. Overall accuracy

High



The indicator stems from the European Union Labour Force Survey (LFS), a household survey based on European legislation.

The results are based on a sample of population (sampling rates vary between 0.3% and 3.3%) and are therefore subject to the usual types of errors associated with sampling techniques and interviews; in particular for the restricted age group. Subject to detailed quality screening both at national level and by Eurostat, figures on educational attainment fulfill the Eurostat requirements concerning reliability.

Data on educational attainment are classified using the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). The concept of the "successful completion of the level" is implemented in different ways in the national surveys and can have some impact on the accuracy (and comparability) of the indicator.

Restricted



(sources, errors, methodology, etc.)

5. Comparability across countries

High



Comparability across countries is achieved in the European Labour Force Survey (LFS) through various regulations ensuring harmonisation of concepts, definitions and methodologies for all EU Member States, EFTA and candidate countries.

The concept of the "successful completion of the level" is implemented in different ways in the countries and can have some impact on the comparability of the indicator.

In CY, students studying abroad are not covered by the survey."

Restricted



6. Comparability over time

High



Data showed in Eurostat database are comparable among years presented. Breaks in series are indicated.

Restricted



7. Development perspective for improving the quality of this indicator (including as far as possible an indication of the burden on Member States and respondents.)

From 2005 onwards, the EU LFS is conducted on a quarterly basis in all countries allowing the coverage of the 52 weeks of the year. Annual averages presenting results from 2005 (and back series from 2000 for most countries) are implemented from November 2006. This improves the representativity and reliability of results (better distribution and size of the sample), and comparability across countries.

Methodological work on the quality and comparability of statistics on educational attainment in general is ongoing.

The implementation of revised ISCED (ISCED 2011) and its impact on data on tertiary education (incl. Bologna structures like Bachelors, Masters, Doctorates) will be under discussion from 2012.

8. Contribution to the coherence of the set/potential to qualify for an integrated policy analysis

Two headline EU2020 indicators: early school leavers from education and training and tertiary educational attainment of 30-34 years-old are very relevant for the policy makers wishing to increase education levels of the young people, in particular by aiming to reduce early school leaving to less than 10% and by increasing the share of 30-34 years old having completed tertiary or equivalent education to at least 40%.

Relevant European legislation (concerning EU-LFS):

General regulations

Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 of 9 March 1998 on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community (OJ No L 77/3).

Regulation (EC) No 1991/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 October 2002 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community (OJ No L 308/1).

Regulation (EC) No 2257/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2003 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community to adapt the list of survey characteristics (OJ No L 336/6).

Regulation (EC) No 1372/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community (OJ No L 315/42)

Implementation regulations

Commission Regulation (EC) No 377/2008 of 25 April 2008 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community as regards the codification to be used for data transmission from 2009 onwards, the use of a sub-sample for the collection of data on structural variables and the definition of the reference quarters (OJ No L 114/57)

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1897/2000 of 7 September 2000 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the organisation of a labour force sample survey in the Community concerning the operational definition of unemployment (OJ No L 228/18).

[Top of the page](#)