

| LIFE-LONG LEARNING |                 |  |
|--------------------|-----------------|--|
| Education          | Education Level |  |

### 1. INDICATOR

- (a) **Name:** Life-long learning
- (b) **Brief definition:** Percentage of the population aged 25 to 64 in education or training.
- (c) **Unit of Measurement:** %
- (d) **Placement in the CSD Indicator Set:** Social/Education/Education Level

### 2. POLICY RELEVANCE

a) **Purpose:** The scale and quality of human resources are major determinants of both the creation of new knowledge and its dissemination. Key factors are the constant updating of the knowledge of the workforce, as well as the overall educational level of the working age population and the intensity of lifelong learning activities.

b) **Relevance to Sustainable/Unsustainable Development (theme/subtheme) :** Life-long learning is essential to sustainable development. As society shifts towards sustainable production and consumption patterns, workers and citizens will be needed who are willing to develop and adopt new technologies and organisation techniques as workers, as well as new attitudes and behaviour as citizens and consumers. Life-long learning can contribute to making persons more flexible, open-minded and interested in new developments.

c) **International Conventions and Agreements:** None.

d) **International Targets/Recommended Standards:** None.

e) **Linkages to other indicators:** The indicator 'lifelong learning' is closely linked to indicators reflecting educational needs such as literacy ("adult literacy rate"), numeracy, capacity-building, information and communications. Higher skilled workers have better access to the labour market and are therefore less prone to unemployment ("unemployment rate") and subsequent poverty ("percent of population living below poverty line") and social exclusion. In addition, more highly skilled workers should achieve higher labour and resource productivity and therefore contribute to growth in the economic dimension ("GDP per capita").

### 3. METHODOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

(a) **Underlying definitions and concepts:** The indicator refers to the percentage of persons aged 25 to 64 who are in education or training, as part of the total population of the same age group.

Education or training, whether or not relevant to the respondent's current or possible future job, includes all taught activities related to formal and non formal education (regular education, continuing training, training within the company, apprenticeship, on-the-job training, seminars, distance learning, evening classes, etc.). It also includes courses followed for general interest and may cover all forms of education and training as language, data processing, management, art and culture, and health or medicine courses.

**(b) Measurement method:** The indicator is calculated by using the number of persons aged 25 to 64 who answered they received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey as the nominator,, and as the denominator, the total population of the same age group, excluding no answers to the question 'participation to education and training'.

A reference period comprising the last four weeks preceding the survey has been chosen for the questions on participation in the education in order to avoid distortion of information due to recall problems.

**(c) Limitations of the Indicator:** As the data for this indicator are based on a sample of the population, the results are subject to the usual types of errors associated with random sampling. Based on the sample size and design in the various countries, basic guidelines should be implemented to avoid publication of figures that are too small to be reliable or to give warning of the unreliability of the figures.

**(d) Status of the Methodology:**

**(e) Alternative definitions/Indicators:** Different age groups will be appropriate for different countries and regions and should take account of the normal patterns of working life, education and retirement in each country. For most of Europe and North America the 25-64 age group is the most appropriate. But the 15-24 age group (in combination with other age groups) will also be applicable for countries where the majority of the young people do not continue to participate in formal education beyond the age of 15.

#### 4. ASSESSMENT OF DATA

**(a) Data needed to Compile the Indicator:** Data on the number of people aged 25 to 64 who are in education or training and the corresponding population of the same age.

**(b) National and International Data Availability and Sources:** Labour force surveys are carried out in most parts of the World, and results are often available online (see <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/lfsurvey/lfsurvey.home>).

**(c) Data References:** Data for member states of the European Union is included in the Sustainable Development Indicators Database, see [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?\\_pageid=1998,47433161,1998\\_47437052&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1998,47433161,1998_47437052&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL)

5. **AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDICATOR**

(a) **Lead Agency:** The lead agency is Eurostat (the Statistical Office of the European Communities).

(b) **Other Contributing Organizations:**

6. **REFERENCES**

(a) **Readings:**

(b) **Internet site:** <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat>