



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

Brussels, 19 April 2013

## **ICT in schools survey – many children not getting what they need; teachers need more training and support.**

Students and teachers in Europe are keen to "go digital", computer numbers have doubled since 2006 and most schools are now "connected", but use of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) and digital skill levels are very uneven. These skills and support for teachers to deliver them need a strong boost, according to a survey on the use of digital technologies in schools in Europe published by the Commission.

### **Key findings of the study:**

- Only one in four 9 year olds studies at a 'highly digitally-equipped school' – with recent equipment, fast broadband (10mbps plus) and high 'connectivity' (website, email for students and teachers, local area network, virtual learning environment).
- Only half of 16 year olds are in such 'highly digitally-equipped schools'.
- 20% of secondary students have never or almost never used a computer in their school lessons.
- Students' frequency of ICT-based learning activities in the classroom increases when schools have specific formal policies to use ICTs.
- There are marked country differences. Scandinavian and Nordic countries have the best equipment (Sweden, Finland, Denmark); while students in Poland, Romania, Italy, Greece, Hungary and Slovakia are most likely to lack the right equipment.
- Laptops, tablets and netbooks are replacing desktop computers in many schools.
- Lack of equipment does not mean lack of interest: some countries with the highest use of computer equipment are the ones with the lowest scores on equipment provisions (e.g. Bulgaria, Slovakia, Cyprus and Hungary).
- It is essential for students to have access to ICTs at both home and school.
- Most teachers believe there is need for radical policy change.
- Teachers are generally confident and positive about the use of ICTs for learning. This confidence is key: skilled and confident teachers are more important than the latest equipment to delivering digital skills and knowledge.
- However, teacher training in ICTs is rarely compulsory and therefore most teachers devote spare time to private study of these skills.
- Teachers use computers to prepare lessons more often than they use them in lessons.

## **Recommendations of the study:**

- An integrated approach to ICT teaching in schools is needed, meaning not only investment in infrastructure but also greater investment in teachers' training, rewards for teachers using ICT in the classroom, and the creation of ICT coordinator posts.
- At EU level, the Commission is recommended to work to reduce divergence in ICT teaching between countries, support projects on new approaches to teaching through digital technologies, support high quality digital learning resources for teachers and regularly monitor progress in the use of digital technologies and digital competence.

Neelie Kroes, European Commission Vice-President for the Digital Agenda, said: "ICT skills and training must be available to all students and teachers, not just a lucky few. We want our young people exposed to ICTs in school from the very beginning, and we want teachers who are confident to share their knowledge".

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, said: "We need to invest more in the development and use of ICTs in schools. Europe will only resume sustained growth by producing highly skilled ICT graduates and workers who can contribute to innovation and entrepreneurship".

Marc Durando, European Schoolnet's Executive Director, said: "Policy makers and school heads should focus on concrete measures at school level to support the use and integration of ICTs in the classroom and invest in capacity building through new training models (online communities, blended learning, etc.)".

## **Next steps**

These findings and recommendations will feed into the [Digital Agenda's effort](#) to enhance every European's digital skills, so that they can all participate fully in society. They will assist the [Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs](#) – see [IP/13/182](#) (which plans, for example, to promote Massive Open Online Courses –MOOCs- for teachers, and spread the use of incentives and coordination in teacher ICT training), and other Commission initiatives for example the [Rethinking Education Strategy](#) and the forthcoming [Opening Up Education proposal](#). These initiatives will work to ensure new generations know how to operate in a networked society where companies, the network and people are all interlinked - supporting the innovation, entrepreneurship and ICT skills that boost participation and creativity in society.

## **Background**

The study was undertaken by [European Schoolnet](#) and the [University of Liège](#). This is the third European survey of ICT in schools, and the first to survey students directly. The previous study ([eEurope 2005](#)) focused mainly on infrastructure provision; this study has broadened into how ICTs are used and perceived and competences in using ICT. The survey was carried out between January 2011 and November 2012. In four countries (Germany, Iceland, The Netherlands and the UK) the response rate was too low to be able to make reliable conclusions, therefore findings are based on over 190,000 responses from the remaining 27 countries.

## **Useful links**

[Survey of Schools: ICT in Education](#)

[European Schoolnet on the survey](#) , [Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs](#) , [Digital Agenda](#)

[Neelie Kroes](#) , Follow Neelie on [Twitter](#)

Contacts :

[Ryan Heath](#) (+32 2 296 17 16), Twitter: [@RyanHeathEU](#)

[Linda Cain](#) (+32 2 299 90 19)