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PRESS RELEASE

Spanish adults believe that investment in their learning should be a priority

At least two-thirds of adults in every EU Member State agree that their government should prioritise investment in learning for adults. In Spain the figure is 92%, amongst the highest in the EU, according to a survey by Cedefop.

The case for prioritising adult learning and training is strengthened by the 43% of adults in Spain who said that they lack some general skills to do their job. This figure is second only to Portugal and well above the EU average of 22%. In addition, 37% of adults in Spain said that they lacked some technical skills to carry out their job, also above the EU average of 28%.

Adults in Spain are positive about learning and training. More than 90% say that they bring real benefits and help people to find a job and to make progress in their careers. Further, 83% think that they can increase their pay and help reduce unemployment.

Perceptions differ about the quality of adult learning and training in Spain. Some 58% generally regard its quality as good or fairly good, compared to 69% in the EU. However, 93% of adults who had participated in organised learning and training in the previous year rated it as good or fairly good, the same as the EU average.

In the EU, 72% of adults agree that there are many learning and training opportunities in their country, compared to 60% in Spain. The survey reports that in the previous 12 months, 52% of Spanish adults had looked for information on adult learning and training opportunities, the highest proportion in Europe (40% in the EU overall). However, only 55% said that information was easy to find, well below the 66% across the EU.

In 22 out of the 30 European countries surveyed, the main reason adults give for not participating in learning or training is that they have no need, but not in Spain. The number one reason given by 42% of adults in Spain is the difficulties they face combining training with other commitments. Some 68% strongly support measures that provide financial help to encourage adults to participate in learning and training, compared to 56% across the EU, while 73% strongly support help with childcare, well above the European average of 54%. In addition, 69% strongly believe that better information and guidance would also increase participation, compared to 49% across the EU.

The EU has been trying to increase adult participation in learning and training and although it has risen to around 11% it remains below its target of 15% across Europe by 2020. Many Member States, fell short of this target, including Spain where participation is around 10.5%.

However, the survey shows that lack of participation is not because adults in Spain are negative about learning. With 82% saying that they need constantly to keep their skills up to date to do their jobs, the survey provides a basis to consider adult learning and training an investment priority and to reflect on how to encourage more adults to learn.

Notes

- Cedefop's [second opinion survey](#), published in 2020, provides insights into what Europeans think of adult learning and continuing vocational education and training (CVET). The survey informs policies to make VET a more attractive and effective learning option. It was, carried out between May and July 2019 and comprised 40 466 telephone interviews of people aged 25 and over living in the EU, Iceland and Norway. The survey findings are in two volumes. The first volume looks at Member States, the second volume, to be published in 2021, considers the views of demographic and socioeconomic groups across the EU.
- For EU lifelong targets see [Eurostat lifelong learning](#).

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