



Charter for public investment in education and training

We are civil society organisations, think tanks, foundations, and trade unions supported by academics from across the European Union. We have come together to call for a reform in public funding for education and training.

The scope of public funding for education and training must not be to simply foster learning. Wider material and immaterial inequalities in the socio-economic conditions of people's lives reaffirm the advantages and disadvantages that are at play within educational settings. The education systems in Europe and beyond therefore need to serve the reduction of socio-economic, intergenerational and gender inequalities, the realisation of social rights and the protection of the environment. The EU schemes that fund education and training should support such scope, and look beyond the narrow conception of education as a means to serve the labour market.

Recent trends in the privatisation and marketisation of education and training tend to favour a vision of education as an individual and consumable good. This ongoing process has sought to push education in the direction of human capital formation and job preparation. In this view, education is brashly depicted as an industry, as a source of profits and a zone of competitiveness - between learners, education institutions, education providers, and public authorities. The dichotomy between excellence and inclusion, leaning steeply towards the former, has eroded the space of actions for measures that promote the inclusion of learners. This is true for infrastructures, access to quality education, training and lifelong learning opportunities, digital tools and media literacy, and much more.

The concept of *education as public good* marks a disjuncture to this narrative, highlighting the purposes of education as a collective societal endeavour. In this perspective, education can be articulated as the result of a process of co-production among all components of society and not a reflection of private interests. Public funding is the only source of funding for education and training that can fulfil this potential.



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However, public funding allocated to education has seen a steep decline over the past years. While the total amount of public resources devoted to education might be increasing in some EU Member States, this does not take inflation into account, nor the diverse and increased needs of learning systems as exacerbated by the pandemic. Instead, the combined share of national budgets devoted to education and training is lower and lower every year.

We, therefore:

- Call upon European member states to **increase public investment** in their education and training systems.
- Call for **public funding devoted to education to fund education and training for its own sake**, bearing in mind that labour market rationales is just one of the many outcomes of learning processes.
- Call for **public funds to finance inclusive measures in education and training**.
- Call upon European institutions to implement reforms to the EU economic governance, including the introduction of a **golden rule for green and social investments** to exclude key education and training public funding from the debt sustainability calculations.

National governments and the European Union alike have the responsibility to ensure that education and training remain a public good for all. We will keep on reminding them.

 [Click here to sign this Charter](#) 

Organisations and entities that have already signed the charter include:

- 4Change NGDO
- AGE Platform Europe
- ANOSR - National Alliance of Student Organisations in Romania
- Association for Teacher Education in Europe - ATEE
- ATHENOI
- Centre for European Volunteering - CEV
- Center for Promoting Lifelong Learning
- DARE - Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe
- ENAIP NET
- Enfants de la lune medenine
- Eurodiaconia
- European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training - EVBB
- European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities - EASPD
- European Civic Forum
- European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education - ECSWE
- European Grants International Academy - EGInA
- Erasmus Student Network - ESN
- European Students' Union - ESU
- European university college Association - EucA



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- European University Foundation
- FEDEC - European Federation of Professional Circus Schools
- Global Parliament of Mayors Talent Cities
- ICS Rita Borsellino Palermo
- Learning For Well-being Foundation
- OBESSU - Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions
- Naturefriends Greece
- SIRIUS Policy Network on Migrant Education
- SOLIDAR Foundation
- Students4Change
- Values Unite

Add your name to the list: <https://bit.ly/InvestETSignUp>



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