

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000814/25
to the Commission
Nikos Pappas (The Left)
(21 February 2025)**

Subject: Addressing digital inequality in education, treating it as a threat to EU cohesion

Digital education is a key pillar of the EU strategy for the future of learning, as demonstrated by the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027). However, unequal access to digital technologies and infrastructure is creating serious educational disparities between Member States, regions and socioeconomic groups, undermining Europe's social cohesion and competitiveness.

Pupils in rural or remote areas, as well as in low-income families, have limited access to fast-speed Internet, modern digital devices and adequate training in new technologies, thereby lagging behind their peers from more well-off urban settings. At the same time, Member States' educational systems vary widely in terms of integration of digital tools in teaching.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. How does it plan to address inequalities in digital education in the context of the revision of the Digital Education Action Plan, ensuring equal learning opportunities for pupils across the EU, regardless of their geographical or socioeconomic situation?
2. Which funding instruments could be used to pay for technological equipment and digital infrastructure for the EU's most vulnerable school communities?
3. How does it intend to ensure that Member States adopt common digital education standards to reduce inequalities and give shape to a more cohesive European Education Area?

Submitted: 21.2.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(23 April 2025)**

The Council Recommendation on the key enabling factors for successful digital education and training⁽¹⁾, a flagship deliverable of the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027⁽²⁾ adopted in 2023, promotes equitable and impact-focused investment in digital education.

The recommendation calls on Member States to provide equal access to all learners by investing in high-speed Internet connectivity in all education and training institutions and closing territorial and socioeconomic gaps.

The recommendation suggests ways to increase the efficiency of spending on digital education in Member States, for example by considering alternative approaches to investment, including public-private partnerships, donation schemes, and the refurbishment of second-hand equipment. The Commission will report on the progress made in implementing the recommendation five years after its adoption.

Several EU funding instruments are devoted to digital education and skills: the Recovery and Resilience Facility⁽³⁾, the European Social Fund Plus, the European Regional Development Fund and the Erasmus+ programme⁽⁴⁾.

The European Court of Auditors concluded in 2023 that EU supported actions helped schools in their digitalisation efforts, but that Member States lacked strategic focus in the use of EU financing⁽⁵⁾.

As announced in the Union of Skills package⁽⁶⁾, based on a review of the Digital Education Action Plan, the Commission will present by the end of 2025 a 2030 Roadmap on the future of digital education and skills.

Throughout the consultations so far, stakeholders have called for an expanded and more inclusive Action Plan. In the 2030 Roadmap, the Commission will look into how to further promote equal access to digital education for all.

⁽¹⁾ Council Recommendation of 23 November 2023 on the key enabling factors for successful digital education and training (OJ C, C/2024/1115, 24.1.2024).

⁽²⁾ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/action-plan>

⁽³⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en

⁽⁴⁾ <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/833629>

⁽⁵⁾ Special report 11/2023: EU support for the digitalisation of schools <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/publications?ref=SR-2023-11>

⁽⁶⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/union-skills_en