

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003023/25
to the Commission
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(21 July 2025)**

Subject: Need to support science and technology in education

School pupils in the EU are underperforming in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) compared to their peers internationally.

According to the OECD's 2022 PISA study, pupils in the EU performed below the OECD average in mathematics, with only 22% achieving a high level of proficiency, compared to 44% in Singapore and more than 30% in China. The present skills gap seriously limits the EU's future competitiveness in the area of emerging technologies and in our digital sovereignty.

International examples show that the timely and systematic integration of STEM education at all levels — with practical approaches, enhanced teacher training and links to industry — is paying off. Such practices have already been adopted in Singapore, Israel, the US and Norway.

The EU has taken positive action (e.g. Girls Go Circular, EU Code Week, Digital Education Action Plan), but broader, coordinated and long-term reforms are needed.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. In order to achieve the EU's STEM targets for 2030, does it consider that it would be effective and reasonable for Member States to coordinate in the development of national STEM strategies, highlighting smart, modern and effective teaching methods?
2. With which tools does it support innovative entrepreneurship to develop smart educational tools for our schoolchildren, in the early stages of education?
3. How does it support the expansion of mathematics and physics competitions for school pupils?

Submitted: 21.7.2025

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

The EU's educational performance is declining, with 30% of students not reaching a minimum proficiency in mathematics and around 25% in reading and science ⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾. Also, the share of top performers is steadily declining.

To reverse this worrying trend and empower the education and training sector to have a stronger impact on Europe's competitiveness, the Commission has adopted the action plan on Basic Skills ⁽³⁾ and the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Education Strategic Plan ⁽⁴⁾ under the Union of Skills ⁽⁵⁾.

The Commission believes that mutual learning between Member States, in combination with EU support, is key to promoting excellence in STEM education.

Member States are and will be invited to coordinate the development of their national STEM strategies through the current and future European Education Area strategic framework 2026-2030, currently under discussion in the Council.

A European STEM Executive Panel will advise on strategic issues and provide recommendations to foster cooperation between business and education in STEM, building on a STEM Skills intelligence.

Deepening cooperation with the Education Technology (EdTech) ⁽⁶⁾ sector is key to driving innovation. In 2026, the Digital Europe Programme will fund an EdTech accelerator ⁽⁷⁾ to incubate and scale innovative EU companies, building on the Digital Education Hub Accelerator ⁽⁸⁾ which already supported innovative entrepreneurship in education, including in early childhood education.

⁽¹⁾ <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/881521>.

⁽²⁾ https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2023/12/pisa-2022-results-volume-i_76772a36/53f23881-en.pdf.

⁽³⁾ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/document/action-plan-on-basic-skills-legal-document>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/document/stem-education-strategic-plan-legal-document>.

⁽⁵⁾ https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/skills-and-qualifications/union-skills_en.

⁽⁶⁾ Education Technology (EdTech) industry combines education and technological advances, producing and distributing software, hardware, platforms, tools and services for education and training (i.e. teaching, learning, assessment) in formal and non-formal setting.

⁽⁷⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/work-programme-2025-2027-digital-europe-programme-digital>.

⁽⁸⁾ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/digital-education-hub/accelerator-programme>

The Union of Skills announced a 2030 Roadmap on the future of digital education and skills, which will seek to establish long-term partnerships with EU-based EdTech.

Erasmus+ funding can support a wide variety of projects to enhance STEM education, including competitions ⁽⁹⁾ in schools and a European STEM Week in 2026.

⁽⁹⁾ See project example at: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2020-1-FR01-KA202-080157>.