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Commission

# Structural indicators for monitoring education and training systems in Europe 2023

## Equity in school and higher education



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## INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the 2023 data collection on the structural indicators for monitoring education and training systems in the area of **equity in school and higher education**. It follows the publication of two previous Eurydice reports related to equity. The first, *Equity in School Education in Europe: Structures, policies and student performance* <sup>(1)</sup>, relates to school education and was published in 2020. The second, *Towards equity and inclusion in higher education in Europe*, covered higher education and was published in 2022 <sup>(2)</sup>.

The current report builds on these two Eurydice reports in the sense that it provides an update on a selection of key indicators. Despite offering up-to-date data, it is a stand-alone report and does not aim to replicate what the previous reports on equity in education offered. Thus, this short report does not offer an exhaustive mapping of all systemic features related to education or an analysis of which systemic features are more important for equity in school education, like the 2020 Eurydice report did.

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<sup>(1)</sup> European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2020. *Equity in School Education in Europe: Structures, policies and student performance*. Eurydice report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, [doi:10.2797/286306](https://doi.org/10.2797/286306).

<sup>(2)</sup> European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2022. *Towards equity and inclusion in higher education in Europe*. Eurydice report. Publications Office of the European Union, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2797/631280>.

Likewise, the present report does not aim to establish if or how well the higher education systems are aligned to the *Principles and guidelines for strengthening the social dimension in higher education* <sup>(3)</sup>, as the 2022 Eurydice report did. What the current report strives for is to offer the Directorate-General for Education and Culture, education authorities in Europe (and beyond) and other interested stakeholders an up-to-date snapshot of the presence (or absence) of certain top-level measures supporting equity in school and higher education.

The report contains 11 simple indicators and 4 composite (scoreboard) indicators on key policies in the following broad areas:

1. top-level financial support for equity in school education;
2. top-level non-financial support for equity in school education;
3. top-level financial support for equity in higher education;
4. top-level non-financial support for equity in higher education.

The report contains information for the 2022/2023 academic year. Participating countries include the EU Member States, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Türkiye <sup>(4)</sup>.

## INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS ON EQUITY IN SCHOOL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Equity in education refers to the attainment of educational achievements and qualifications, irrespective of the learner's socioeconomic, cultural, racial or other background. Unlike strict equality, equity does not necessarily imply the same treatment for all individuals or groups. The final goal is maximum inclusivity and helping all potential and actual learners to reap the benefits of quality education <sup>(5)</sup>.

Equity in education is an important policy area for the EU, as is attested, for example, in the Council conclusions of 2021 <sup>(6)</sup>. It is a priority area for European cooperation in education, and one of the proposed concrete actions is 'supporting data collection and innovation for inclusion and gender equality in education' (Council of the European Union, 2021, p. 17). Hence, the present report contributes to this end. Furthermore, it answers the Directorate-General for Education and Culture's request for relevant and up-to-date data on top-level measures promoting equity in school and higher education.

In total, the report presents the data for 15 indicators, four of which are scoreboard (i.e. composite) indicators effectively summarising the data of the other 11 indicators. Two scoreboard indicators deal with supporting equity in school education and two more with higher education. Following the traffic-light colour pattern of other Eurydice reports (e.g. European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2022), the scoreboard indicators summarise, on the one hand, the findings of the individual indicators while illustrating, on the other, how rich (or poor) the support arsenal of the education systems is.

<sup>(3)</sup> See [http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome\\_Ministerial\\_Communique\\_Annex\\_II.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique_Annex_II.pdf).

<sup>(4)</sup> This report is based on information from 38 European education systems. Switzerland does not participate in the project on structural indicators for monitoring education and training systems in Europe.

<sup>(5)</sup> For greater elaboration and a brief literature review, see European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2020.

<sup>(6)</sup> Council of the European Union, 2021. Conclusions on equity and inclusion in education and training in order to promote educational success for all (2021/C 221/02), *Official Journal of the EU*, C 221/3-13.

It is important to highlight three specifications regarding this report. First, all indicators have been previously published in the Eurydice reports on equity in school education (European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2020) or higher education (European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2022). Any changes are minor, in the sense that they relate to improved wording or slightly modified response categories.

Supporting equity in school education		Supporting equity in higher education	
(12) Financial support	(13) Non-financial support	(14) Financial support	(15) Non-financial support
(1) for schools enrolling disadvantaged students	(3) for schools enrolling disadvantaged students	(6) for higher education institutions (HEIs) linked to quantitative equity-related targets	(9) requirement for equity-related competences in initial teacher education (ITE)
(2) for teachers working in schools with a large number of disadvantaged students	(4) for teachers working in schools with a large number of disadvantaged students	(7) for student accommodation, meals and transport	(10) regulations or recommendations on HEIs offering training on diversity or inclusion to academic staff.
	(5) regulations or recommendations dealing with educational segregation	(8) for HEIs, to train academic staff on diversity or inclusion	(11) for HEIs for offering training on diversity of inclusion to academic staff

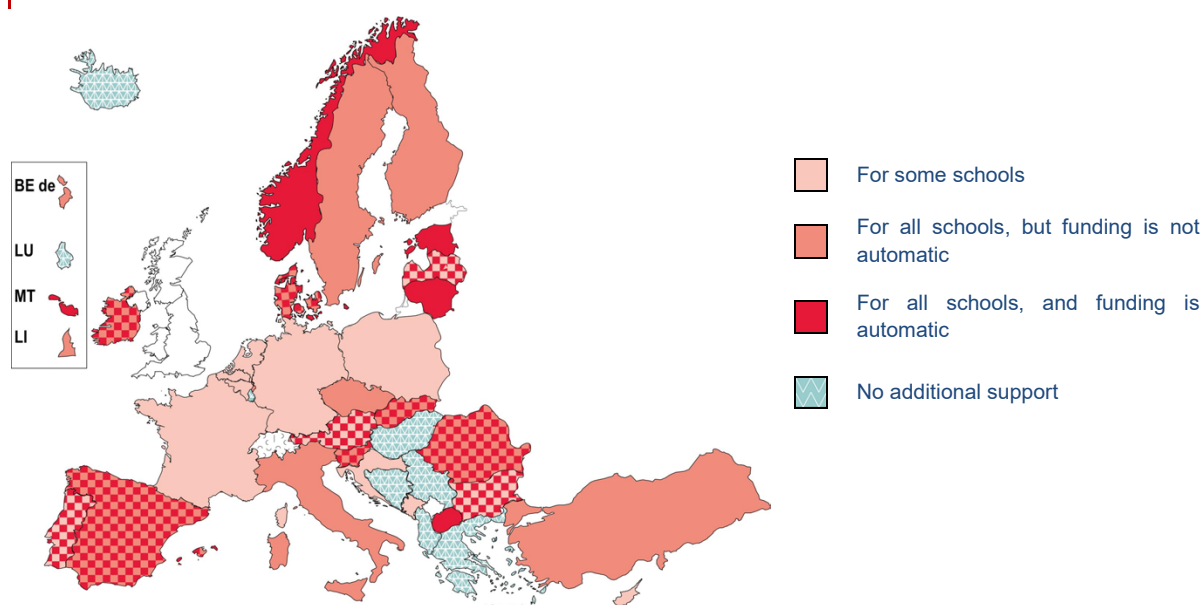
Second, all the school education figures reported refer to one education level (ISCED 24) for the simple reason that it is impossible to present 15 figures multiple times in a short report such as this. Whenever there are major deviations between ISCED 24 and ISCED 1 or ISCED 34, they are mentioned in the text. Third, like most Eurydice reports, the reported measures refer to top-level measures only. Thus, it is possible that additional measures are adopted at the regional, local or school level. Such measures, however, are beyond the scope of the report.

The outline of the 15 indicators is presented in the table above. Each simple indicator is visually represented by a single figure. Thus, indicators 1 to 5 are represented by Figures 1 to 5 respectively, covering equity support in school education. Indicators 6 to 11 are represented by Figures 6 to 11, dealing with support in higher education. Finally, indicators 12 to 15 are represented by Figures 12 to 15; these are the scoreboard indicators for equity in school education (Figures 12 and 13) and in higher education (Figures 14 and 15).

## 1. Financial support for schools enrolling disadvantaged students

The first indicator on equity in education refers to the availability of additional financial support for schools enrolling disadvantaged students. Additional financial support is necessary, in order to meet the increased needs for providing quality education in a school with many disadvantaged students. For example, to be able to offer targeted pedagogical and/or psychological support to disadvantaged students, it may be necessary to hire additional personnel. Obviously, the financial amounts granted differ between countries and probably between schools, which makes international comparison difficult. What is possible to compare, however, is whether such support is provided automatically or not (e.g. when schools need to apply for such support) and whether it is offered to all or only some schools. Figure 1 presents the results.

**Figure 1: Additional top-level financial support for schools enrolling disadvantaged students (ISCED 24), 2022/2023**



Source: Eurydice.

The first thing that stands out is that additional financial support should not be taken for granted. Specifically, it is not available in Greece, Luxembourg, Hungary, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland or in Serbia. In 13 education systems it is available only for some schools. In the remaining education systems, additional support is offered to all schools with disadvantaged students, but 15 education systems offer it automatically while 13 do not <sup>(7)</sup>.

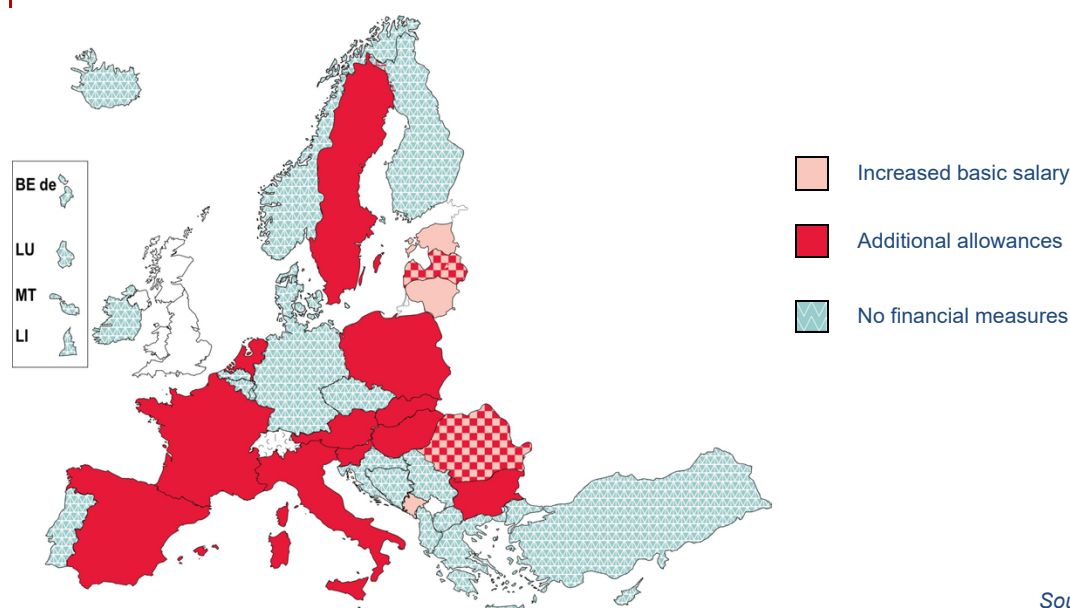
<sup>(7)</sup> Note that in some education systems there is more than one stream of additional funding. For instance, it is possible that some additional funding may be offered to all schools automatically and other funding may be offered again to all, but only conditionally.



## 2. Financial support to teachers who work in schools with disadvantaged students

To tackle inequity in schools it is important to financially support not only the schools, but also the teachers who often have to work in difficult environments, tackle multiple tasks or face other challenges. It is important, therefore, to try to motivate teachers working in schools with disadvantaged students, and one way of motivating them is offering them more money. Such additional remuneration can come in the form of an increased basic salary or an additional allowance.

**Figure 2: Top-level financial measures for teachers working in schools with a large number of disadvantaged students (ISCED 24), 2022/2023**



Source: Eurydice.

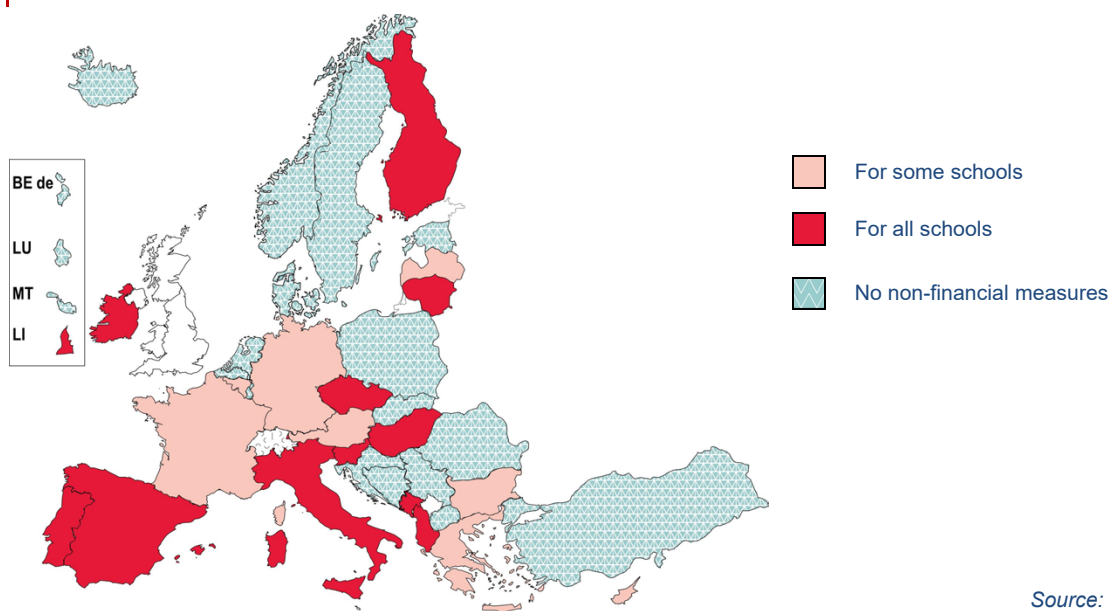
Figure 2 shows that in 13 education systems teachers in schools with many disadvantaged students receive financial support in the form of an additional allowance. The Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), Romania and Montenegro instead offer an increase in the teachers' basic salary. Only two countries (Latvia and Romania) try to incentivise teachers in schools with a large number of disadvantaged students by offering both additional allowances and an increased basic salary. Note that most (i.e. 22) education systems do not have top-level financial measures for teachers in schools with many disadvantaged students.

### 3. Non-financial support for schools enrolling disadvantaged students

Figure 3 shifts the attention to the non-financial support measures offered by top-level authorities to schools with disadvantaged students. Because non-financial support can take many forms, ranging from providing language support classes or teaching assistants to adjusting the school programme or redrafting schoolbooks, the questionnaire focused on whether non-financial support exists as such, and whether it is available to all or only to some schools.

According to our latest Eurydice survey findings, non-financial support to schools with disadvantaged students is not widespread in Europe. In fact, in lower secondary, there are more countries not offering it than countries offering it to all or just some schools. As Figure 3 reveals, as many as 18 education systems do not make non-financial support available at all. This contrasts with 8 education systems offering it to some schools and 12 offering it to all schools.

**Figure 3: Additional top-level non-financial support for schools enrolling disadvantaged students (ISCED 24), 2022/2023**

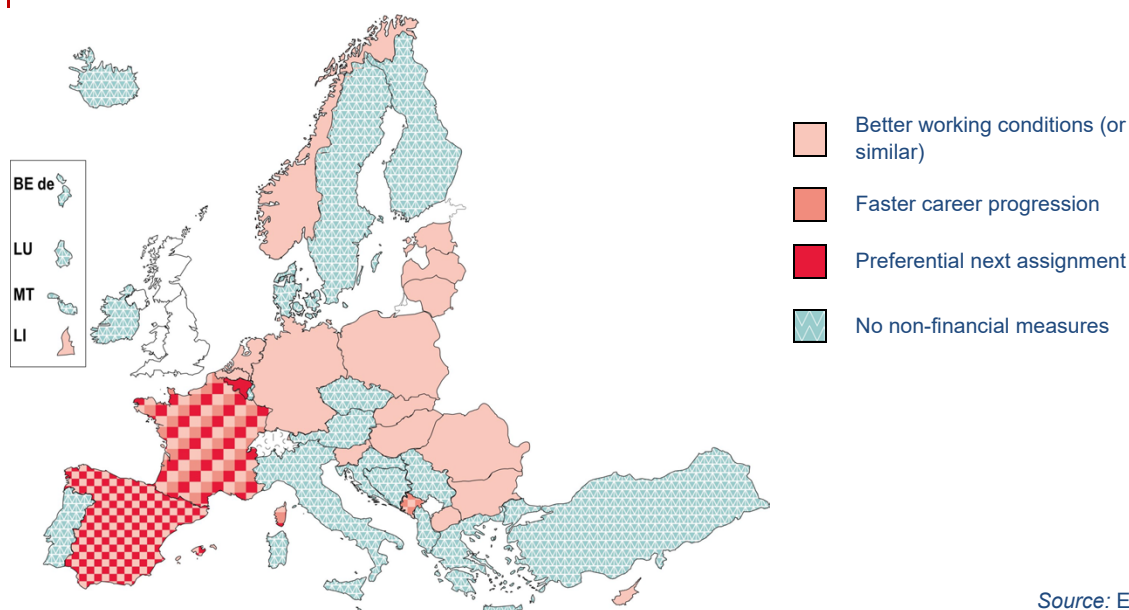


Non-financial support is marginally less common in the other education levels. In upper secondary (ISCED 34), there are 18 education systems offering non-financial support to all or some schools, while in primary education there are 19.

#### 4. Non-financial support to teachers who work in schools with disadvantaged students

To boost the incentives for teachers to work in schools with disadvantaged students, one could increase the financial reward for doing so, as was examined in Figure 2. Another way of motivating teachers to work in such schools is to deploy non-financial measures, such as offering better working conditions, preferential next assignment or faster career progression.

**Figure 4: Top-level non-financial measures for teachers working in schools with a large number of disadvantaged students (ISCED 24), 2022/2023**



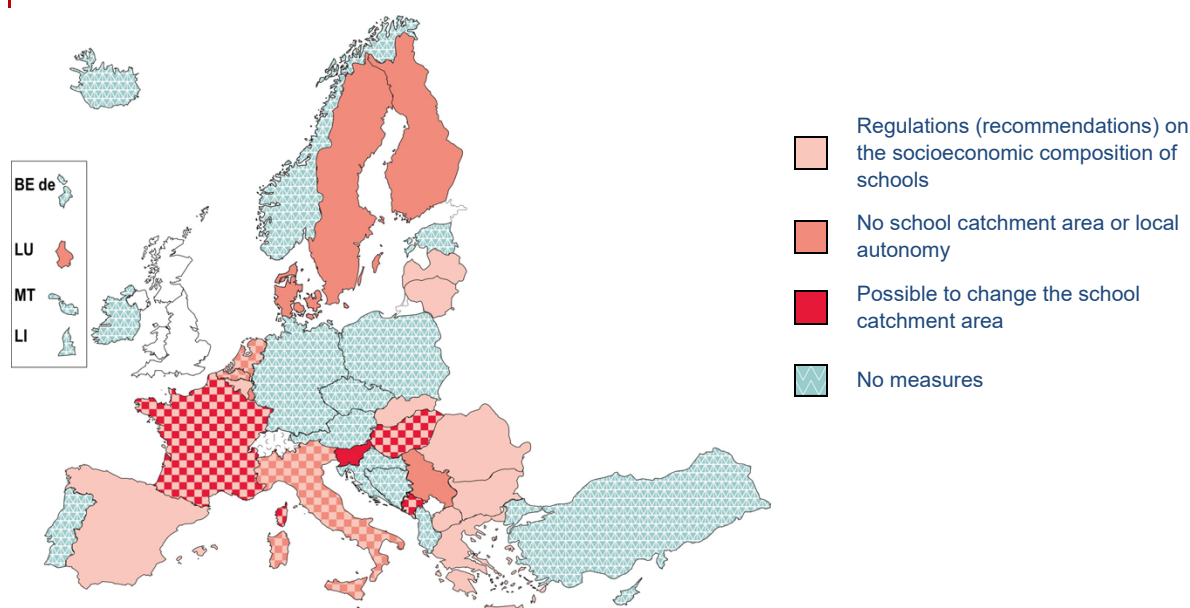
Source: Eurydice.

Even though there is a variety of possible non-financial measures to help teachers choose or stay in a school with disadvantaged students, about half of the education systems do not use them. In particular, in 18 education systems, there are no non-financial support measures. In 19 education systems teachers are provided with better working conditions. Often, this takes the form of a reduced workload or fewer students per teacher, because additional staff are being hired. As Figure 4 shows, only a few education systems focus on teachers' career prospects. A preferential next assignment is a possibility only in Belgium (French Community), Spain and in France. The chance for faster career progression is provided only by France and Montenegro.

## 5. Measures against segregation

The final form of non-financial measures to promote equity in school examined here are the existence of top-level rules that favour desegregation, i.e. rules that favour a diverse school population rather than the over-concentration of students from certain socioeconomic backgrounds. Figure 5 illustrates whether such top-level regulations or recommendations exist and whether top-level regulations or recommendations permit changing the border of the school catchment area. The latter may prove to be important because geographical segregation and educational segregation are often correlated. Disadvantaged students are more likely to reside in less expensive neighbourhoods. Therefore, if there is an inflexible school catchment area, this may lead to an overconcentration of disadvantaged students or students from certain socioeconomic backgrounds only.

**Figure 5: Top-level regulations or recommendations dealing with educational segregation (ISCED 24), 2022/2023**



Source: Eurydice.

The Eurydice survey found that just 15 of the 38 education systems have regulations or recommendations addressing the socioeconomic composition of schools. The education systems where it is possible to adjust the school catchment area to diversify the school population are significantly fewer. Changes in the catchment area are allowed in only four education systems. Of course, it should be taken into account that in eight systems the notion of catchment area is not applicable, either because there is free school choice (Flemish Community of Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Serbia) or because it is for local authorities to decide on such matters (Denmark, Finland and Sweden).

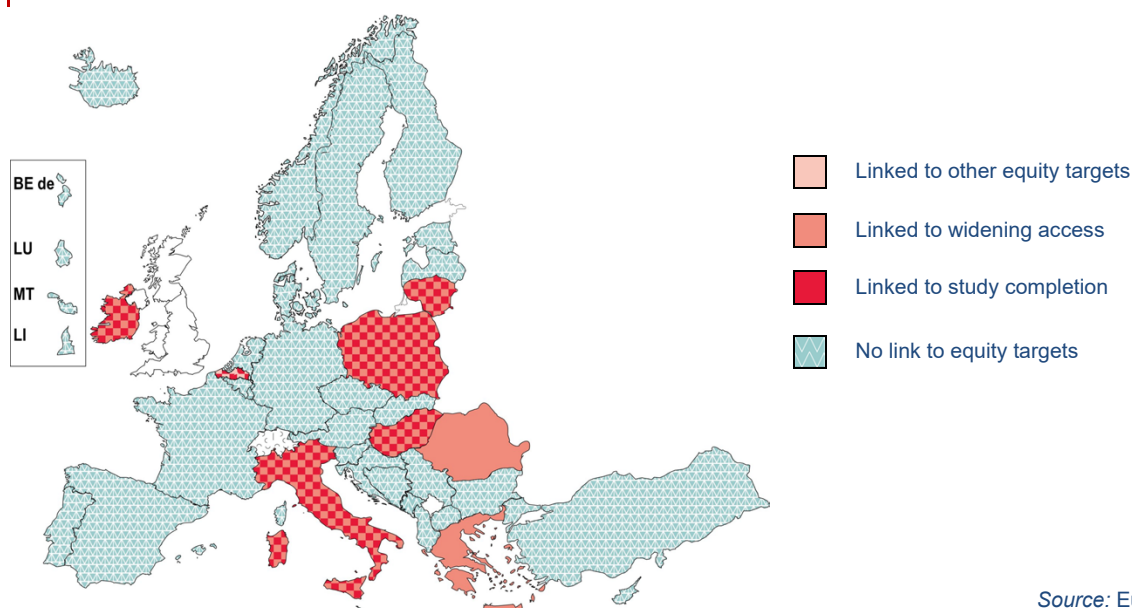
At ISCED 1, it is possible to change the school catchment area in the same countries as at ISCED 24 (Figure 5) plus Cyprus. In contrast, at ISCED 34 such a change is allowed only in France and Montenegro<sup>(8)</sup>. Regulations or recommendations on the socioeconomic composition of primary schools exist in 15 education systems (Flemish Community of Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Montenegro and North Macedonia), regulations or recommendations on the socioeconomic composition of upper secondary schools exist in 11 education systems (Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia and Montenegro).

<sup>(8)</sup> At ISCED 1, there is local autonomy on such matters or free school choice in the French and Flemish Communities of Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Finland and Sweden. At ISCED 34, local autonomy or free school choice apply to the same list of education systems as in ISCED 1 plus Poland and Serbia.

## 6. Funding for higher education institutions linked to equity targets

Figure 6 represents the first indicator dealing with equity in higher education. Like in school education, a way to promote equity in higher education is by offering incentives for change in the right direction. With this in mind, the Eurydice survey asked if funding to HEIs is linked to quantitative (i.e. numerical) targets related to equity. The underlying assumption is that HEIs are more likely to try to widen access to their courses or to invest in study completion if they can expect additional funding from top-level authorities.

**Figure 6: Funding for HEIs linked to quantitative equity-related targets, 2022/2023**



Source: Eurydice.

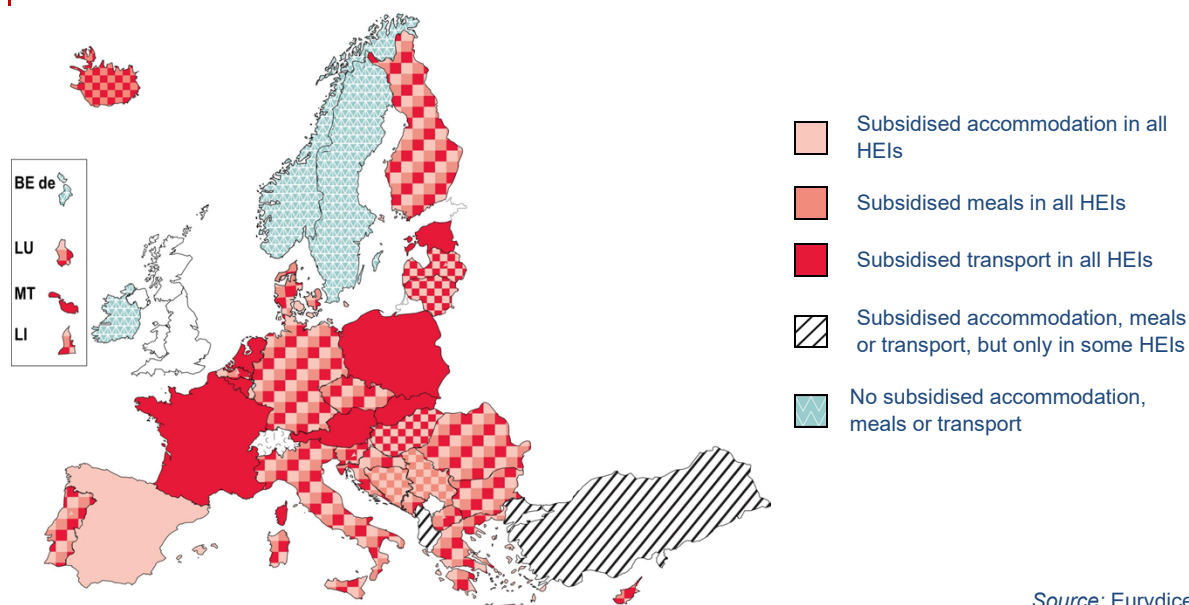
As Figure 6 suggests, linking HEI funding to equity targets is the exception rather the norm. Only seven education systems link funding to widening access; six link it to study completion. Interestingly enough, the education systems that link HEI funding to meeting targets on study completion have also targets on access widening. It is worth singling out the Flemish Community of Belgium, because in addition to a target on completion, they have also a target related to enabling more students from under-represented groups to go on a study abroad period.

## 7. Financial support for student accommodation, meals and transport

Prospective or actual higher education students with meagre financial means may find it difficult to commence or terminate their studies. Therefore, being able to find cheap accommodation, transport and meals can be of help. Consequently, top-level subsidies to HEIs, other organisations or the students directly help to address inequity problems.

Figure 7 shows how many and which education systems offer subsidised accommodation, meals and public transport. Although this type of financial support is fairly common, it is not universal. Four education systems (the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Ireland, Sweden and Norway) do not offer subsidised accommodation, meals or transport to students. Others (Albania, Serbia and Türkiye), make such support available only to some HEIs.

**Figure 7: Top-level financial support for student accommodation, meals and transport, 2022/2023**



Source: Eurydice.

The most common type of financial support that is available in all HEIs is subsidised transport (29 education systems), followed by subsidised accommodation (23 systems) and subsidised meals (20 systems). Several education systems offer more than one type of support. As many as 17 education systems offer all three types of support and 6 offer two out of three <sup>(9)</sup>.

<sup>(9)</sup> Serbia offers subsidised accommodation and meals to students from all HEIs, but subsidised transport is subject to local autonomy and the provision differs between HEIs.

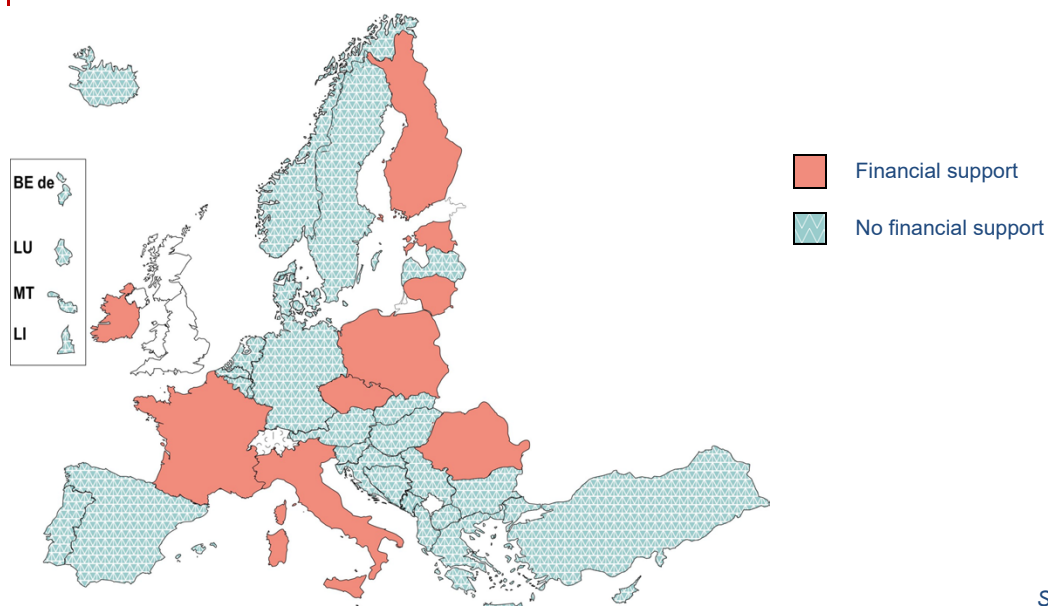


## 8. Financial support to HEIs for training staff on diversity

Equity in higher education can also be promoted by helping HEI staff become aware of challenges and opportunities related to having a diverse student body. Staff, especially academic staff who are in daily and direct contact with students, could benefit from receiving training related to matters of diversity and inclusion. This means that top-level education authorities can help HEIs fulfil this role by offering them (at least some of) the financial means.

Currently, only 9 education systems make available financial support to HEIs to help them train their academic staff on diversity or inclusion. The great majority (29 education systems) do not have any relevant provisions.

**Figure 8: Top-level financial support to higher education institutions to train academic staff on diversity/inclusion, 2022/2023**

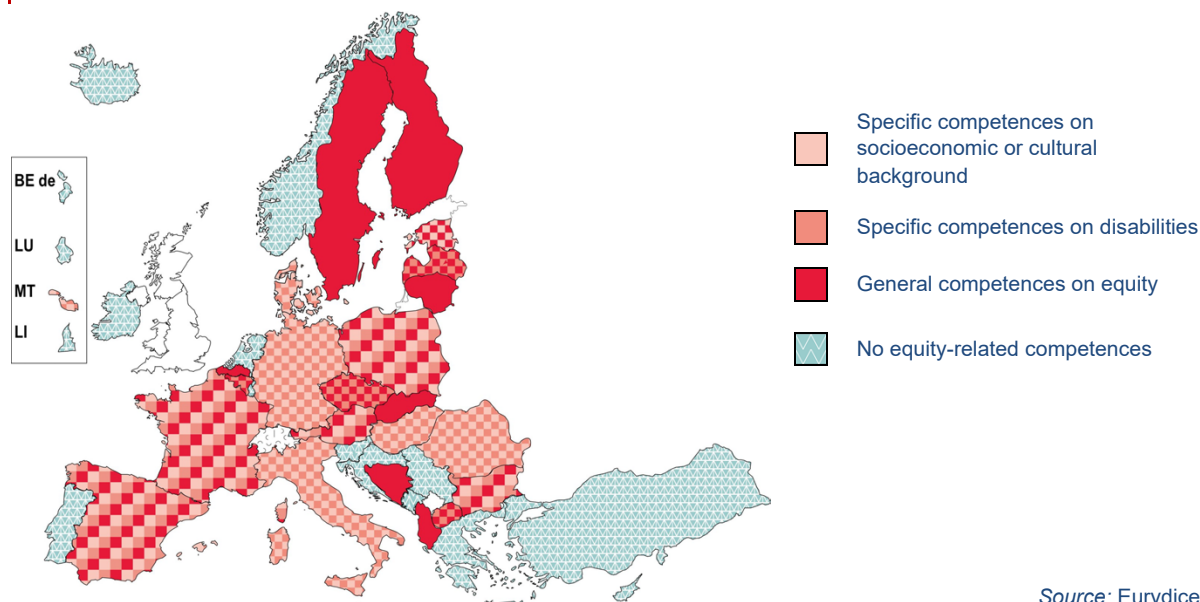


Source: Eurydice.

## 9. Requirement for equity-related competences in ITE

Regarding the non-financial support top-level authorities can offer to HEIs to promote equity, Figure 9 visualises whether ITE for lower secondary education requires its students to acquire specific or general competences related to equity.

**Figure 9: Top-level requirement for equity-related competences in ITE for lower secondary education, 2022/2023**



Source: Eurydice.

The specific competences may refer to different socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds or to competences related to pupils with disabilities. It is also possible that prospective teachers learn about equity in a more general way, thus acquiring only broad or general competences on equity.

Figure 9 reveals that indeed most, that is 15, education systems have ITE programmes that transfer general competences on equity to their students. A total of 15 education systems require ITE programmes to provide competences that help teachers educate students with disabilities. Specific competences addressing different socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds are offered by the ITE programmes of 12 education systems. Clearly, it is possible that ITE programmes offer a combination of different equity-related competences, as Figure 9 illustrates.



## 10. Regulations on HEIs offering training on diversity to academic staff

As already mentioned, one way of promoting training on diversity and inclusion among academic staff is to offer HEIs funding for that purpose (Figure 8). Another way is for top-level authorities to ask or recommend HEIs to offer such training. Top-level authorities may choose a heavy-handed approach and make such training mandatory, but given the autonomy of HEIs in most European countries, they are more likely to simply recommend that the HEIs offer training on diversity or inclusion.

**Figure 10: Top-level regulations or recommendations on higher education institutions offering training on diversity or inclusion to academic staff, 2022/2023**

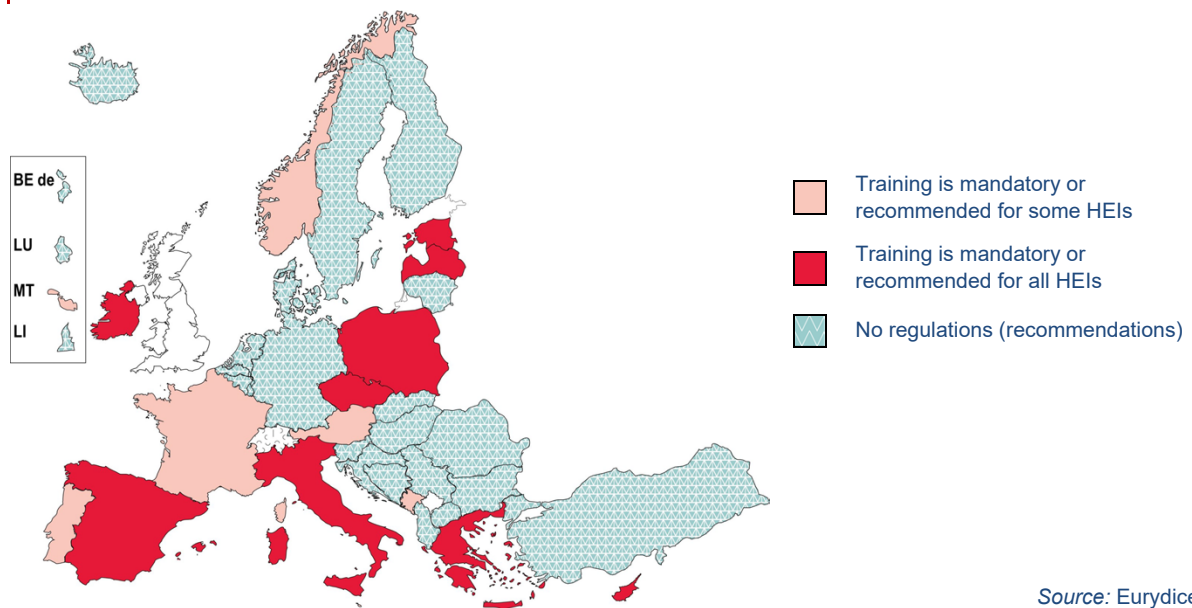


Figure 10 summarises the results in this respect. It reveals that in most cases there are no regulations or recommendations asking HEIs to provide training to academic staff on diversity or inclusion. This applies to as many as 23 education systems. In six education systems, training is recommended or mandatory, but it applies only to some HEIs. Training on diversity or inclusion is mandatory or recommended for all HEIs in only nine education systems (Czechia, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia and Poland).

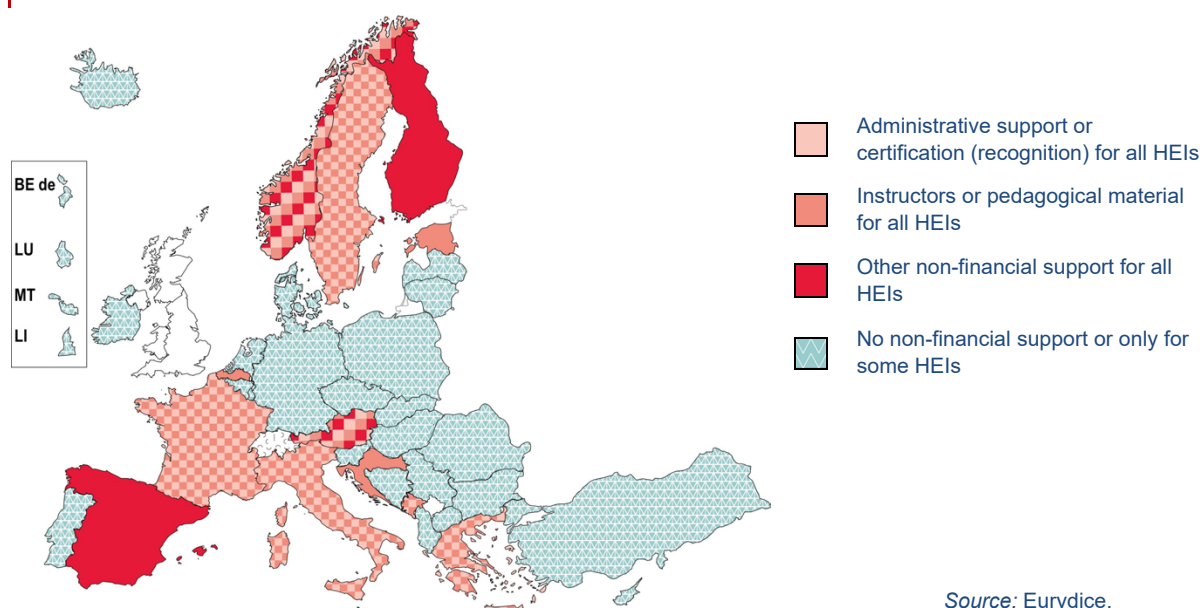
## 11. Non-financial support to HEIs for training academic staff on diversity

The last individual indicator on equity in higher education deals once more with the training of the academic staff, but in terms of non-financial support means. Thus, Figure 11 demonstrates if top-level authorities help all HEIs to offer training on diversity or inclusion by providing them with instructors, pedagogical material, administrative support, certification or other forms of recognition or achievement.

Similar to the findings on other types of support for training on diversity or inclusion (Figure 8 and Figure 10), top-level non-financial support is not very widespread in Europe. Still, non-financial support does exist and takes different forms.

Whereas 26 education systems do not offer any form of non-financial support to HEIs, 12 do. Most of the education systems offering non-financial support for training on diversity or inclusion offer both types of support distinguished here: administrative support (and/or certification) and instructors (and/or training material). Some education systems (Spain, Austria, Finland and Norway) appear to be offering other types of non-financial support for training. For example, in Spain and in Finland top-level authorities commission research projects related to equity, the findings of which can be adopted by HEIs.

**Figure 11: Top-level non-financial support to higher education institutions for offering training on diversity/inclusion to academic staff, 2022/2023**



Source: Eurydice.

## SCOREBOARD INDICATORS ON EQUITY IN SCHOOL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

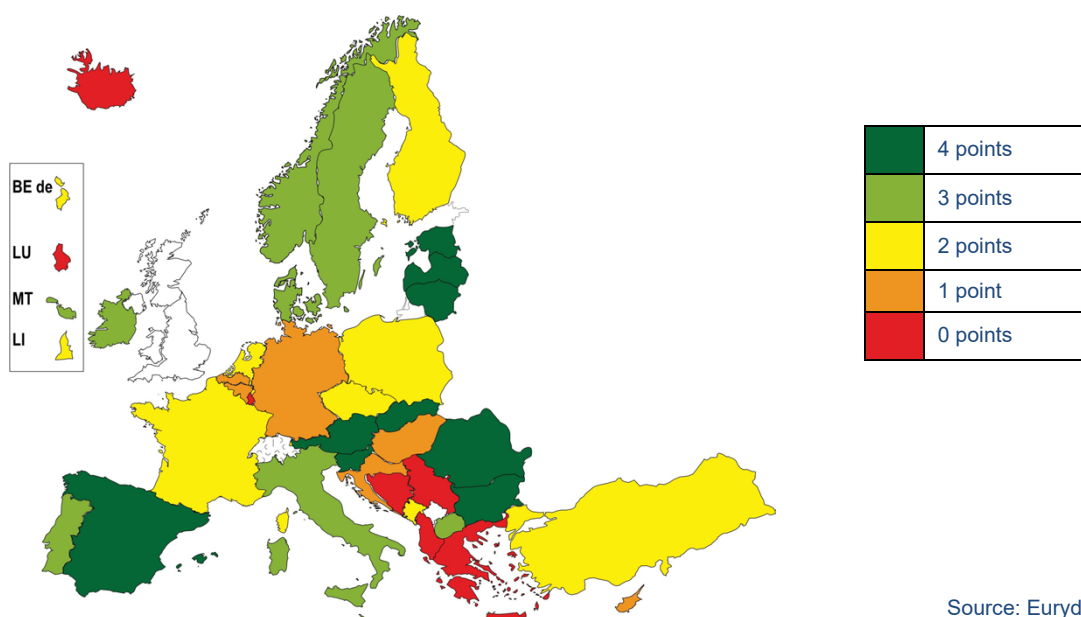
Having briefly gone through the 11 simple indicators related to equity in school and higher education, the remaining part of the report focuses on the composite indicators (Figures 12 to 15). As the term suggests, the various simple indicators relating to the same topic (financial or non-financial to school or higher education, respectively) have been combined to yield meaningful composite indicators. The objective behind the creation of the composite indicators was to produce scoreboard indicators which help the reader to get a quick yet clear overview of where Europe stands in terms of top-level support measures for equity in school and higher education.

Each scoreboard indicator is composed of two or three simple indicators. The transformation of simple indicators into scoreboard indicators is based on a point system which differs from one scoreboard indicator to another. This is discussed in some detail in the sub-sections below. Here we can note that the scoreboard indicators follow the same traffic-light system (red, orange, yellow, light green, dark green) as in other Eurydice reports (e.g. European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2022). The logic is straightforward. The more conditions an education system meets, the more points it gets and the more it moves away from the lower-end colour categories (red and orange). To ensure that no education system reaches the highest colour category (dark green) by meeting the conditions of only one simple indicator, the scoring system has been adjusted accordingly.

## 12. Scoreboard 1: financial support for equity in school education

Scoreboard 1 combines the data from Figures 1 and 2 dealing with financial support for equity in school education. Education systems can get a maximum score of 4 points, but to do that they need to demonstrate that they have the conditions associated with indicators (1) and (2). This means that there should be additional top-level financial support to all schools with disadvantaged students and it should be automatic (see Figure 1). There should also be financial support for teachers working in schools with disadvantaged students in the form of either an increased basic statutory salary or additional allowance (see Figure 2). Anything less than that will yield fewer score points.

**Figure 12: Scoreboard indicator 1: financial support for equity in school education (ISCED 24), 2022/2023**



Source: Eurydice.

### Scoreboard indicator categories

The score is calculated with the following formula.

(1) Additional financial support to schools with disadvantaged students (max. 3 points):

- to all schools and automatically: 3 points; **OR**
- to all schools, but not automatically: 2 points; **OR**
- to some schools with disadvantaged students (automatically or not): 1 point.

#### AND

(2) Financial support to teachers in schools with disadvantaged students (max. 1 point)

- Teachers receive an increased basic statutory salary or additional allowance(s): 1 point.

**Dark green.** Bulgaria, Estonia, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia achieve the highest score.

**Light green.** Eight education systems fall under this category: Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Sweden, North Macedonia and Norway.

**Yellow.** Nine education systems score 2 points: the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Czechia, France, Netherlands, Poland, Finland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro and Türkiye.

**Orange.** Six education systems score 1 point: the French and Flemish Communities of Belgium, Germany, Croatia, Cyprus and Hungary.

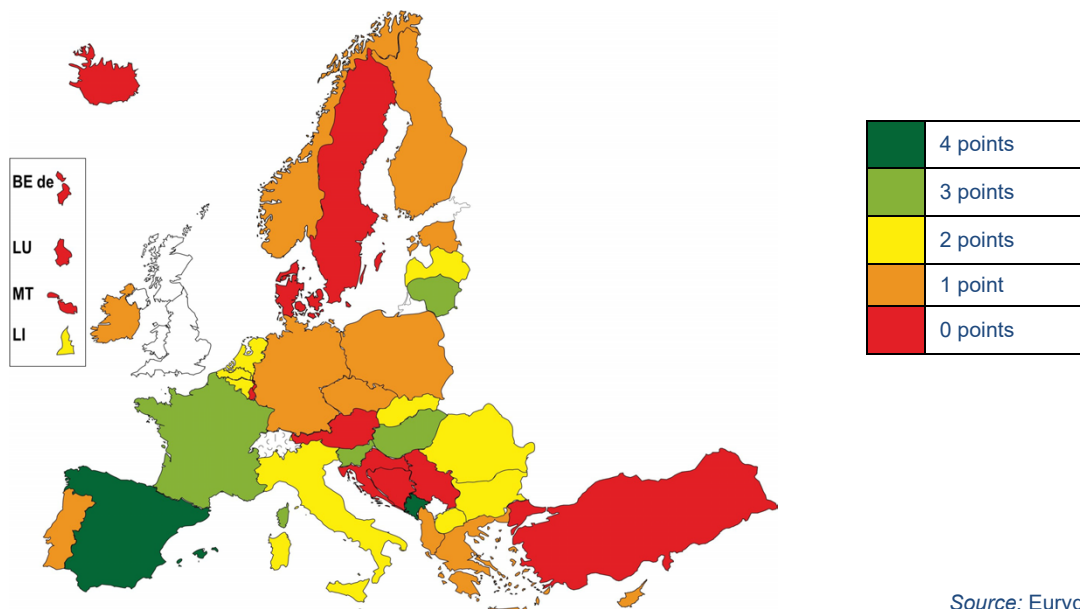
**Red.** Greece, Luxembourg, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland and Serbia do not meet any of the Scoreboard 1 criteria.

All in all, 17 education systems reach the two highest categories in terms of financial support for equity in school education. It is of some comfort that nine education systems have an average score (yellow category), but it is less comforting that six education systems offer no additional top-level financial support at all.

### 13. Scoreboard 2: non-financial support for equity in school education

Scoreboard 2, which focuses on non-financial support, draws on three simple indicators (Figures 3 to 5). Like for scoreboard 1, to get the maximum points, an education system will need to meet at least one condition from each simple indicator, as demonstrated in the categories box of Figure 13.

Figure 13: Scoreboard indicator 2: non-financial support for equity in school education (ISCED 24), 2022/2023



Source: Eurydice.

#### Scoreboard indicator categories

The score is calculated on the basis of the following formula.

- (1) Additional non-financial support to all schools with disadvantaged students: 1 point.

#### AND

- (2) Teachers in schools with disadvantaged students receive one or more forms of non-financial support (max 2 points):
  - better working conditions **OR** other comparable form of non-financial support: 1 point;
  - faster career progression **OR** preferential next assignment: 1 point.

#### AND

- (3) Regulations (recommendations) on educational segregation (max. 1 point):
  - on the socioeconomic composition of schools: 1 point; **OR**
  - on the possibility change the borderline of the school catchment area: 1 point.

**Dark green.** Only two education systems: Spain and Montenegro.

**Light green.** Four education systems: France, Lithuania, Hungary and Slovenia.

**Yellow.** A total of 10 education systems mark 2 points. The French and Flemish Communities of Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Liechtenstein and North Macedonia.

**Orange.** A total of 11 education systems fall under this category: Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Cyprus, Poland, Portugal, Finland, Albania and Norway.

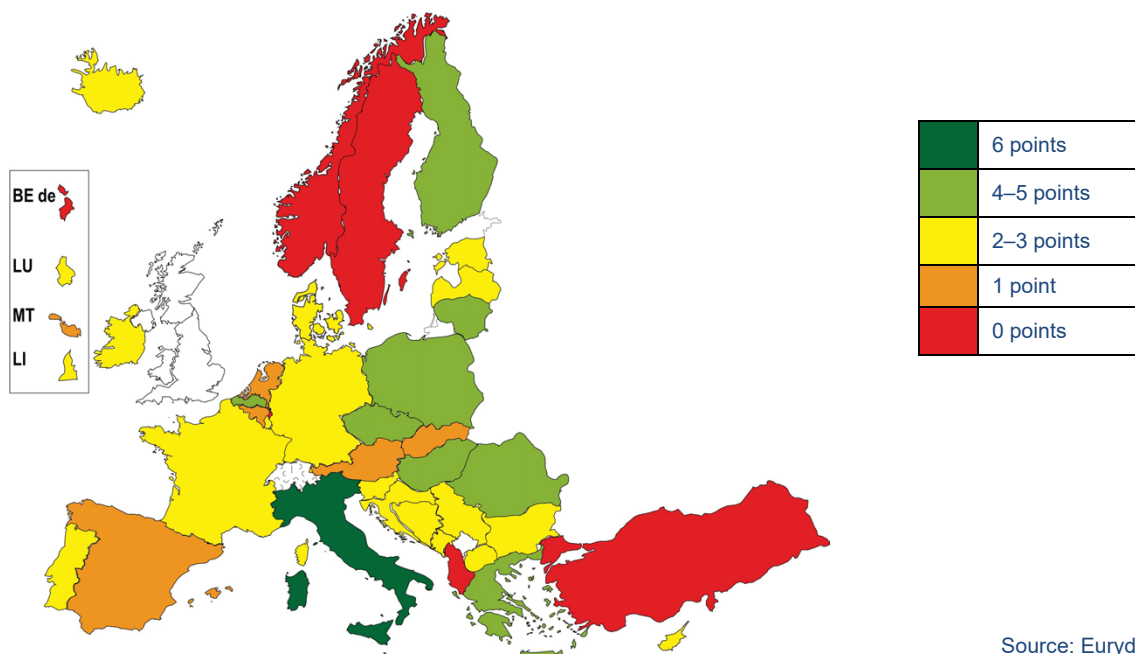
**Red.** A total of 11 education systems: the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Denmark, Croatia, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Sweden, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Serbia and Türkiye.

If financial support for equity in school education in Europe appears underwhelming, Scoreboard 2 shows that the situation is considerably worse in terms of non-financial support. As Figure 13 highlights, more than half of the education systems' top-level authorities either offer no non-financial support or only one type of it – usually better working conditions for teachers in schools with disadvantaged students or some kind of non-financial support to schools.

## 14. Scoreboard 3: financial support for equity in higher education

Scoreboard 3 differs from the two previous scoreboards, not only because it deals with higher education instead of school education, but also because the score scale is broader (0–6). This is the result of having relatively more response categories in indicators (6), (7) and (8) (see Figures 6 to 8).

Figure 14: Scoreboard indicator 3: financial support for equity in higher education, 2022/2023



### Scoreboard indicator categories

The score is calculated on the basis of the following formula.

- (1) Funding to HEIs is linked to equity-related targets (max. 2 points):
  - targets related to widening the access to higher education **OR** other comparable target: 1 point;
  - targets related to the completion **OR** other comparable target: 1 point.

#### AND

- (2) Financial support to all HEIs for (max. 3 points):
  - accommodation: 1 point;
  - meals: 1 point;
  - public transport: 1 point.

#### AND

- (3) Financial support to HEIs to train staff on diversity or inclusion: 1 point.

**Dark green.** Italy.

**Light green.** Eight education systems: the Flemish Community of Belgium, Czechia, Greece, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Finland.

**Yellow.** 18 education systems: Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, France, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

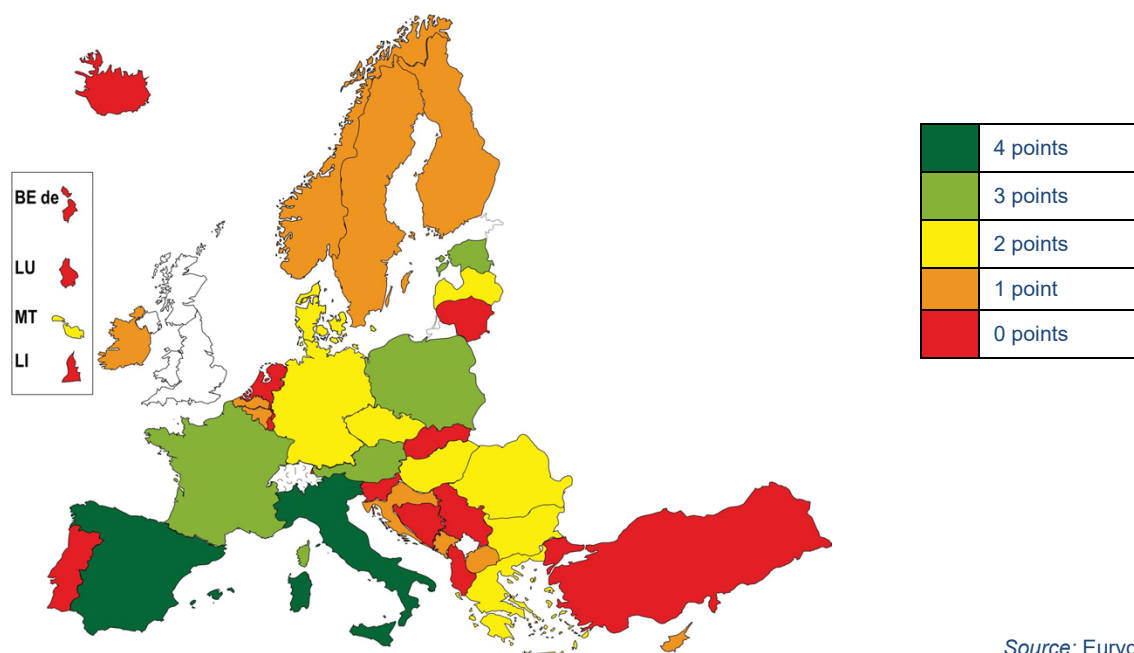
**Orange.** Six education systems: the French Community of Belgium, Spain, Malta, Netherlands, Austria and Slovakia.

**Red.** Five education systems: the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Sweden, Albania, Norway and Türkiye.

Figure 14 reveals that financial support for equity in higher education is varied. This type of support in Europe is average in the sense that few education systems are in the extreme ends of the scale while most (in relative terms) are in the middle (yellow category).

## 15. Scoreboard 4: non-financial support for equity in higher education

Figure 15: Scoreboard indicator 4: non-financial support for equity in higher education, 2022/2023



Source: Eurydice.

### Scoreboard indicator categories

The score is calculated on the basis of the following formula.

- (1) Equity-relevant competences in ITE programmes (max. 2 points):
  - specific competences for teaching to students of different socioeconomic backgrounds **OR** of different cultural backgrounds: 1 point;
  - specific competences for teaching to students with disabilities: 1 point.

**AND**

- (2) Top-level rules on all HEIs offering training on diversity/inclusion/equity to their academic staff (max 1 point):
  - there are rules and training is mandatory: 1 point; **OR**
  - there are rules and training is recommended: 1 point.

**AND**

- (3) Non-financial support to all HEIs to help them train their academic staff on diversity/equity/inclusion:
  - administrative support **OR** certification/recognition **OR** instructors **OR** pedagogical material **OR** other comparable non-financial support (max. 1 point).

Scoreboard 4 returns to the standard scale (0 to 4 points) and deals with non-financial support for equity in higher education. The colour classification of the education systems is given below.

**Dark green.** Spain and Italy.

**Light green.** Estonia, France, Austria and Poland.

**Yellow.** Nine education systems. Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Hungary, Malta and Romania.

**Orange.** 10 education systems: the French and Flemish Communities of Belgium, Ireland, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Sweden, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Norway.

**Red.** 13 education systems: the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Serbia and Türkiye.

What stands out in the case of Scoreboard 4 is that only two education systems manage to reach the maximum score (dark green) and only four of them get the second-best score (light green). Furthermore, given that as many as 13 education systems meet none of the conditions to get at least one point (red category), it is fair to say that in terms of non-financial support for equity in higher education, Europe has still a long way to go.



## MAIN FINDINGS

Capitalising on the previously published thematic reports of Eurydice on equity in school education (European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2020) and higher education (European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2022), the current report aimed to provide up-to-date data on a selection of key indicators. For this purpose, Eurydice has collected data on 11 relevant indicators spanning from top-level financial support to schools to top-level non-financial support measures for training academic staff in diversity or inclusion. It is useful to repeat here that the present report does not cover all possible measures, but only those of top-level education authorities that are comparable across countries and that have the greatest potential for making a difference.

Scoreboard indicators 1 to 4 help the reader to summarise the findings of the 11 indicators, but also to get a snapshot of where Europe is in terms of measures for equity in education. Somewhat surprisingly, education systems seem to be lagging mainly in terms of non-financial support measures. This concerns both schools and higher education.

In relation to school education, as Figure 4 exemplifies, nearly half of education systems provide no non-financial incentives for teachers to start or to continue working in schools with disadvantaged students. Only two countries provide for preferential next assignment for teachers and only four for faster career progression. Most countries have some financial measures in place to tackle inequity in school education. Still, as Figure 12 shows, only nine education systems automatically provide additional financial support to all schools with disadvantaged students while also financially supporting the teachers who work there.

In relation to higher education, Figures 10 and 11 reveal that more than half of top-level authorities do not demand from their HEIs to offer training to their staff on diversity or inclusion, and do not provide them with appropriate tools, such as trainers, training material or accreditation. Scoreboard 3 suggest that the situation is slightly more positive with regard to financial support. There are more education systems in the top three categories (dark green, light green and yellow) than in the bottom two (orange and red). However, a potentially powerful incentive to boost equity in higher education – linking HEI funding to specific targets – is applied by only eight education systems (see Figure 6).

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## GLOSSARY

**Better working conditions (for teachers).** Measures taken to attract good teachers to disadvantaged schools (non-financial incentives) as well as to ease the burden on existing staff thus improving retention. The measures may include reduced teaching time, reduced class sizes, improved job security, access to mentoring/coaching and others.

**Disadvantaged students.** Students who face specific challenges of such nature, that compared to their peers in school or higher education they are in a disadvantaged position. The challenge can take many forms (e.g. disability, low family income, little or no family support, being an orphan, many school moves, mental health problems, pregnancy, care duties). The disadvantage may be permanent, temporary or occasional. Disadvantaged students may be part of an underrepresented group, but not necessarily. Therefore, the terms disadvantaged and underrepresented students are not synonymous.

**Distance learning.** Education of students who are not present at an institution. This may be through online education or correspondence courses.

**Equity in education.** A principle of social justice that reflects the notion of fairness. In the context of this report, fairness refers to equal opportunity for all in terms of accessing school or higher education and progressing towards the completion of studies. A broad definition of equity refers not only to nominally equal access and progression rights (i.e. same rights for all), but also to targeted measures and rights that enhance the access and progression of certain students, even if they appear to contradict the nominal equality principle (i.e. allowing for special rights reserved to disadvantaged or underrepresented students only).

**Higher education institution (HEI).** An institution providing services in the field of higher and/or tertiary education, as defined by national law. Three types of higher education institutions are distinguished (the first two are covered by this report): public higher education institutions, government-dependent private higher education institutions and private higher education institutions.

**A public higher education institution** is an institution directly managed by a government agency/authority or by a governing body, most of whose members are either appointed by a public authority or elected by public franchise.

**A government-dependent private higher education institution** is an institution controlled/managed by a non-governmental organisation or where the governing board consists of members not selected by a public agency but receiving 50 percent or more of its core funding from government agencies, or whose teaching personnel are paid by a government agency – either directly or through government.

**Incentives.** Apart from regulations, educational authorities can also encourage schools or HEIs to follow certain policy lines or pursue certain outcomes (e.g. inclusion of disadvantaged students) through incentives. Incentives can be financial, based on funding formulas or performance-based funding, or non-financial, such as organisational or managerial support.

**Inclusion.** The process of improving the ability, opportunity and worthiness of all students, including students disadvantaged on the basis of their identity or background, to take part effectively in school and/or higher education.

**School catchment area.** A geographical area within which a school providing education at primary, lower and/or upper secondary level (ISCED 1-3) must enrol or give priority admission to resident children when they first enrol to school or transfer from one educational level to another. Public

schools and government-dependent private schools as well as different school types, including vocational schools, may share the same catchment area, or they may have a different geographical catchment area.

**Top-level or top-level authority.** The highest level of authority with responsibility for education in a given country, usually located at national (state) level. However, for Belgium, Germany and Spain, the *Communautés*, *Länder* and *Comunidades Autónomas* respectively are either wholly responsible or share responsibilities with the state level for all or most areas relating to education. Therefore, these administrations are considered as the top-level authority for the areas where they hold the responsibility, while for those areas for which they share the responsibility with the national (state) level, both are considered to be top-level authorities.

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