

BELGIUM

RANK IN EU-27

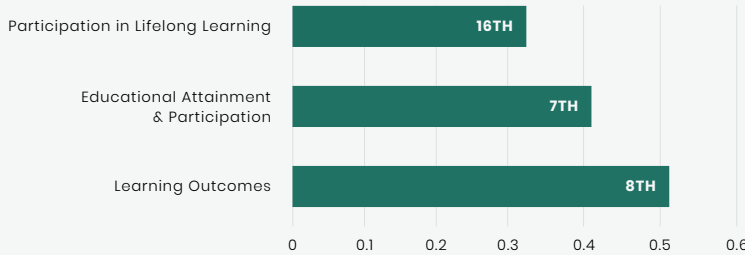
21ST

OVERALL SCORE

0.575

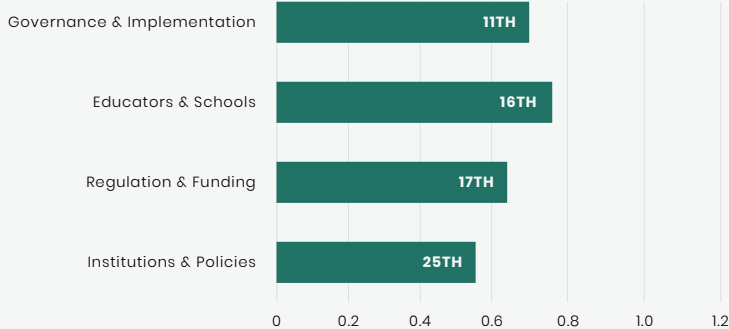
LEARNING PARTICIPATION AND OUTCOMES

RANK
9TH



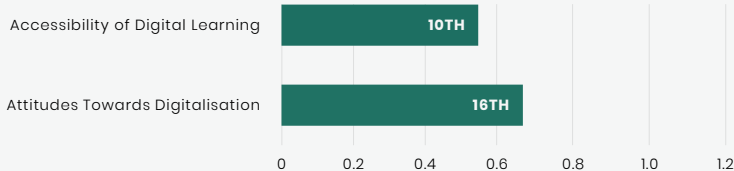
INSTITUTIONS AND POLICIES FOR DIGITAL LEARNING

RANK
23RD



AVAILABILITY OF DIGITAL LEARNING

RANK
10TH



MAIN OBSERVATIONS

- Belgium ranks 21st in Europe on the overall index. The country is around the average in terms of availability of digital learning but among the worst European performers when it comes to institutions and policies (23rd).
- Belgium policymakers are aware of the importance of digital learning even though it has not been set as an explicit priority at the time of this study. It is also worth mentioning that education is a competence of the language communities under the division of competences across the federal and regional levels. As such, the country's ranking suffers from the non-alignment between the policies set at different levels.

TAKEAWAYS:

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS COUNTRY?

- Overall, Belgium is still ranked among EU countries as one with the highest exposure to digitalisation and whose populations are best equipped with adequate skills and lifelong learning that enable them to benefit from digitalisation.
- This can be partially explained by the fact that digital skills are explicitly part of the curriculum.
- Still, digitalisation not being a priority, the country also suffers from not always sufficient means to invest in innovation/experimentation and skills development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Even though the regulatory framework is not harmful to digital learning, the lack of coordination between the different institutions and the absence of a unique policy clarifying responsibilities can be damaging in the long run and lead to further inequalities among the regions.
- Specifically, digital learning should be further developed at the lower level through support to schools on media literacy topics, accessibility and ICT-based special needs provisions, and ICT-curriculum reform, including by supporting teachers and trainers' pilot practices.

KEY REFERENCES

Digital Wallonia (n.d.), Digital Skills in Wallonia, Available at: <https://www.digitalwallonia.be/en/posts/digital-skills-in-wallonia> Digital Wallonia (n.d.), Ecole numérique [Digital School], Available at: <https://www.digitalwallonia.be/en/projects/ecole-numerique>

Vlaamse Overheid (2014), "Beleidsnota Onderwijs" [Policy Paper Education], Available at: <https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/beleidsnota-2014-2019-onderwijs>

Digital Belgium (n.d.), Available at: <http://digitalbelgium.be/en/> Alexander De Croo (2018), "Digital Belgium Skills Fund trekt 5,6 miljoen euro uit voor 37 nieuwe projecten" [Digital Belgium Skills Fund makes available 5,6 million euros for 37 new projects], Available at: <https://www.decroo.belgium.be/nl/digital-belgium-skills-fund-trekt-56miljoen-euro-uit-voor-37-nieuwe-projecten>

PHOTOGRAPHY: Marius Badstuber on Unsplash.com