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Higher education

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The system-level indicators on higher education explore three different areas – gender equity, admission policies and STEM education. The gender equity indicator explores policy action to improve the situation, and the indicator on admission policies in the context of lifelong learning are both important aspects of the social dimension. The remaining two indicators concern measures for attracting more students to study STEM-subjects – a key policy priority in the context of the Union of Skills agenda.

The scope of the indicators is publicly funded and government dependent private higher education institutions (ISCED 5, 6, 7 and 8).

These indicators support the analysis in the [Education and Training Monitor](#), which is the European Commission's annual report on EU education and training systems.



Open Data

Gender equity

Admissions policy

Incentives for STEM

Female students in STEM

Composite indicator on policies for tackling gender equity issues in higher education, 2024/2025

This composite indicator examines whether gender issues are addressed in higher education. It comprises four elements:

The first element looks at whether a strategy for gender equality exists and is in place for all higher education institutions. A strategy can be specific document using the name 'strategy', but it may also be a document (or documents) that describe a major policy plan without, however, bearing the title 'strategy'.

The second element focuses on measurable targets. A strategy may reflect good intentions, but is most likely to be operationalised when specific targets are set. For a target to be measurable it must be quantitative in nature, and reference points for measurement need to be put in place. Thus, a target would typically take the form of a statement that, for example, the percentage of women/men in high-level academic posts would move from x % to y % by a certain date.

The third element considers to what extent stakeholder consultation has taken place, in order to ensure that a gender equality strategy is inclusive and responsive to the needs of communities in the higher education sector.

The final element of the scoreboard indicator concerns the role of external quality assurance agencies, and in particular whether they are required to monitor the implementation of the strategy within the higher education institutions. If quality assurance agencies are required to monitor implementation, this gives a strong sense of the importance of gender issues in the higher education sector.