

Gender Equality Index 2019. Work-life balance

Gender equality in education standing still even as women graduates outnumber men graduates

With a total EU score of 63.5 points, the domain of knowledge remained virtually static between 2015 and 2017 and only improved by 2.7 points over the entire 12-year period from 2005 (Figure 17). The slow but positive change in the domain has been propelled forward by improving educational attainment among men and women. This is one of the few domains where a gender gap has been reversed since 2005 – women now outperform men in tertiary educational attainment in most Member States. However, gender segregation in education and the generally low participation levels in formal and non-formal education and training among women and men remain major hurdles, holding back overall progress in this domain.

Most Member States experienced hardly any improvement in the knowledge domain from 2015. An increase was registered in Estonia (+ 2.3), Spain (+ 2.1) and Czechia (+ 1.7), while scores dropped in Cyprus (– 2.0), the United Kingdom (– 1.4) and Denmark (– 1.3). As Figure 18 illustrates, the greatest overall progress between 2005 and 2017 was achieved in Cyprus (+ 13.1), Greece (+ 8.5) and Spain (+ 8.1). The biggest setbacks were in the United Kingdom (– 5.4), Germany (– 1.6) and Denmark (– 1.4).

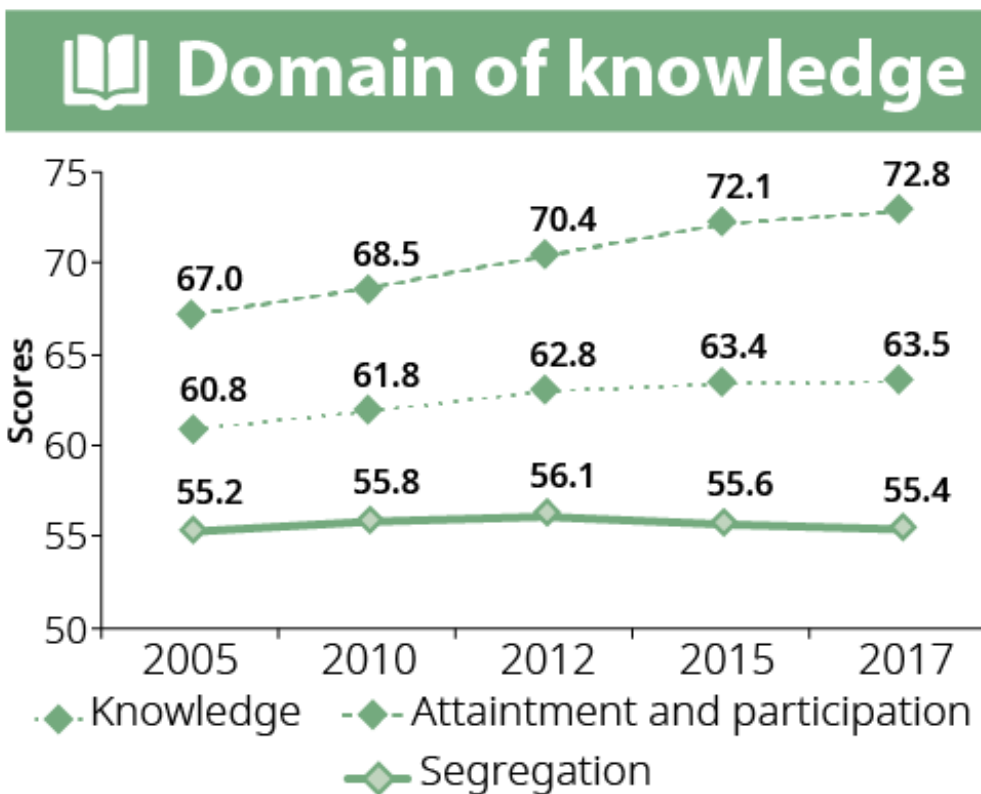


Figure 17: Scores for the domain of knowledge and its sub-domains, EU, 2005-2017

Over the 12-year period, the sub-domain of attainment and participation achieved the highest increase in the domain of knowledge: from 67.0 to 72.8 points (Figure 17). Luxembourg and Czechia made the most significant improvements in this area (+ 18.9 and + 17.9 points respectively), with seven other Member States progressing by more than 10 points (IE, EL, FR, MT, NL, AT, PT). The situation deteriorated in three Member States: the United Kingdom (- 6.0), Poland (- 1.5) and Slovenia (- 1.0).

Gender segregation in education remains a major block to gender equality in the EU, with this sub-domain showing almost no change from 2005 (55.2 points) to 2017 (55.4 points). Cyprus made the most substantial long-term progress in this sub-domain with an increase of 14.8 points, mostly from a greater proportion of men studying education, health and welfare, humanities and arts. Another five Member States saw a long-term increase of more than 7 points (EE, ES, IT, SI, SK). In contrast, there was significant regression for Malta (- 11.2) and Germany (- 7.7) over the same period.

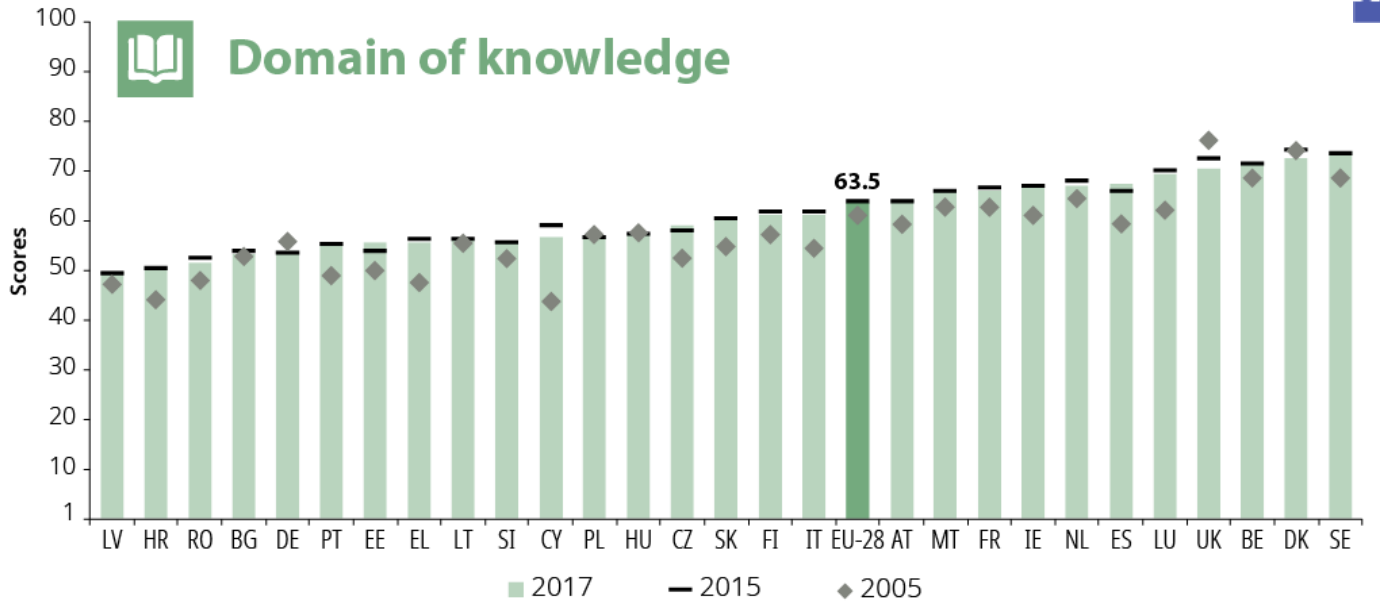


Figure 18: Scores for the domain of knowledge, EU Member States, 2005, 2015 and 2017