

Is the literacy rate of young adults improving?

32. Youth literacy rate

The literacy rate of young adults reflects the primary education received during the last ten years.

Access to primary education is an essential stake for the Millennium development objectives as well as for the UNESCO « Education for All ».

The MSSD has taken up this objective in the Mediterranean for all the young adults, insisting on its importance in rural areas and for girls in order to reduce the great number of gaps that still exist in the Mediterranean.

Between 1990 and 2007, the literacy rate of young adults improved greatly in all of the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries. It is satisfactory in most of the northern Mediterranean countries.

The Mediterranean average is above the worldwide average of 84%.

A ratio of the literacy rate of girls compared to boys less than 1 indicates a deficit in girls' education. This was the case for 6 countries in 2007: Turkey, Syria, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt Algeria and Morocco.

In this latter country, the parity index is lower than the developing countries average (94%).

Definition

Number of literate people between the ages of 15 and 24, expressed as a percentage of the total population of this age group. People are considered as literate when they can read, write, and understand a short simple text concerning their daily life. (Millenium Indicator n°8).

Precautions / Notes

Measurement of literacy can vary from the simple question "Can you read and write or not?" to tests to assess the levels of literacy. In some cases literacy is roughly measured in censuses merely with individual statements or by estimating the population not attending school or uneducated.

The definitions of literacy used in the national surveys often differ from the UNESCO one. The types of survey carried out to estimate the literacy rate are also different from one country to the next and from one year to another.

The data resulting from these surveys should, therefore, be considered with precaution.

Sources / References

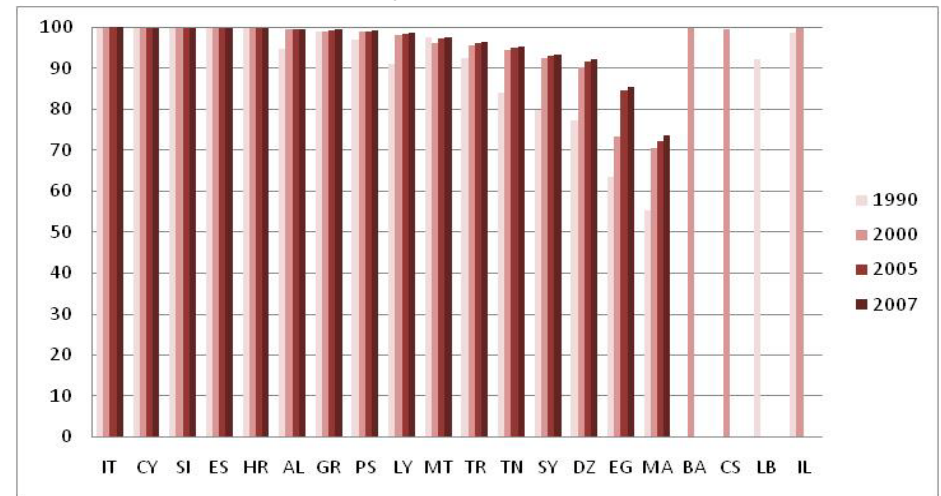
UNESCO, Statistics Institute.

UNESCO, « Education for all » programme, 2005 report.

The Millenium Development Goals Report 2008, United Nations, 2009

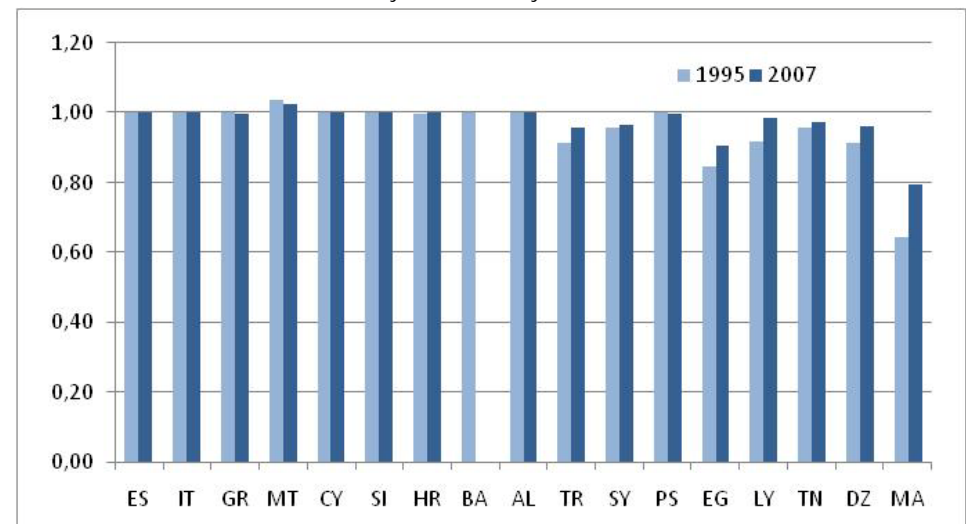
United Nations Statistical Division, The Millennium Indicators Database.

Youth literacy rate (15 to 24 years old) (in %)



Source: UNESCO

Youth literacy rate: Girl/Boy ratio, 1995 - 2007



Source: UNESCO