



## News from ECOEI

### Consultation Meeting on the Reform of Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions

ECO Secretary General held consultations with the heads of delegations of the Member States and ECO Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions on the mandated reform in these ECO bodies on 2-6 February 2018.

The Heads of Delegation discussed and reviewed the overall performance of ECO Institutions, establishment of inter-secretariat coordination mecha-

nism, and financial and administrative issues. After feedbacks received from the member states, a comprehensive evaluation report on reforms will be developed by the secretariat and submitted to the COM for consideration.

### ECO 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Council of Ministers

ECOEI President Assoc. Dr. M. Akif KİREÇÇİ participated in ECO 23<sup>rd</sup> Council of Ministers Meeting held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on 16-17 April 2018.

The Council of Ministers (COM) represents the highest decision making body of ECO and is composed of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member states. During their deliberations, The Minister of Foreign Affairs and representatives of the Member States also reaffirmed their countries' commitment and support to regional cooperation. The "Dushanbe Communiqué" including salient points of cooperation among the Members of ECO as a regional organization in charge of significant regional issues approved.

## Education in Numbers

### How Do Policies Affect Gender Equality in Education?

The educational pathways for girls are not always the same with those of boys. Traditionally, all societies have given preference to males over females when it comes to educational

opportunity, and disparities in educational attainment and literacy rates today reflect the social and education policies and practices of the past. The 1990 World Conference on Education for All marked the beginning of intensified international support for assuring access to quality education for

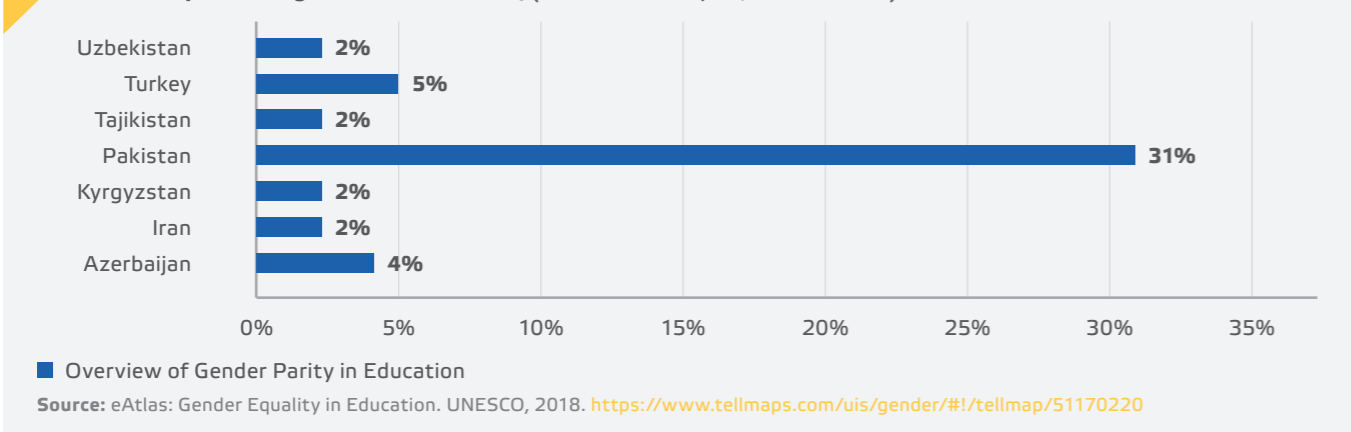
girls, a cause that was reaffirmed ten years later at the World Education Forum in Dakar and by the Millennium Development Goals of 2000. Gender Equality is one of the major Sustainable Development Goals, and has also fully been integrated into education goals and targets.

Despite the policies that address specific inequalities in education, disparities between girls and boys are still a major setback. Gender disparities can take many forms in different countries such as low enrollment rates,

high dropout rates or survival rates in school life expectancy and could be affected by factors like government policies or cultural and economic backgrounds. Due to these factors, girls are deprived of full and equal oppor-

tunities for education. While the latest data show a global progress towards reducing the disparity at the primary school<sup>1</sup>, significant proportion of girls are still out of school.

Share of Primary School-Age Girls Out of School, (latest available year, 2010 to 2018)

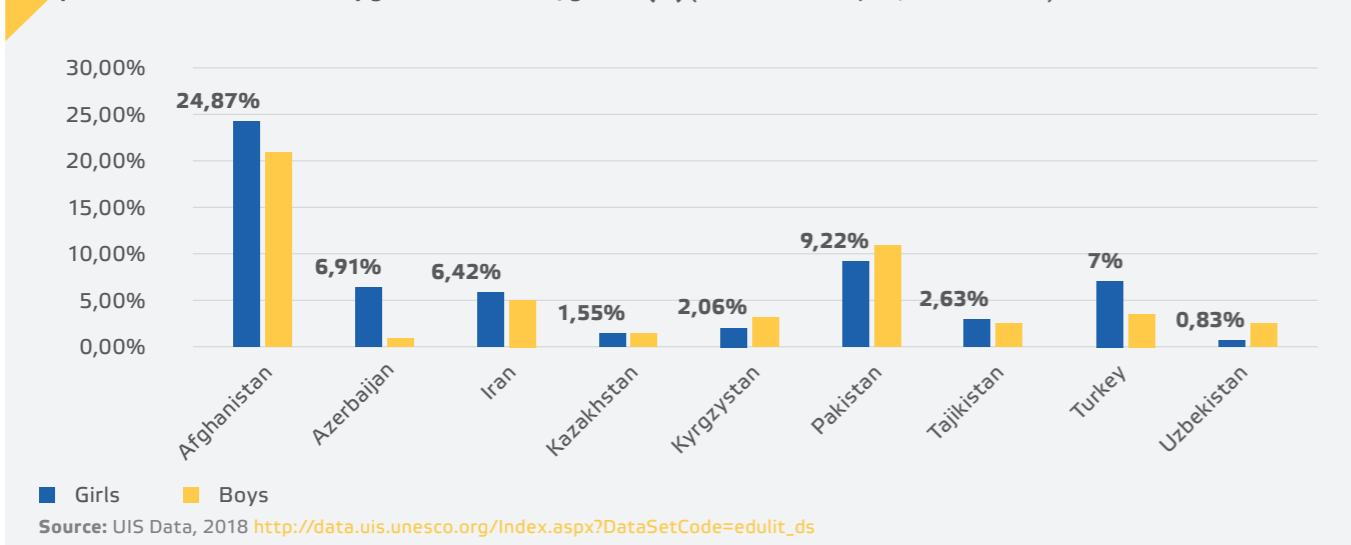


Gender inequality is also clear in dropout rates between girls and boys. Girls are also facing disadvantages at school in different forms that include biased treatment, harassment and sexist stereotypes in educational content which

affects their continuation to school. Yet, it is also important to note that "Global gender parity masks the fact that male disadvantages are emerging in high enrollment and high attainment countries, female disadvantages

persist in many low enrollment and low attainment countries. Yet, among those who enroll in primary school, females tend to complete as many grades of school as males."<sup>2</sup>

Drop-out rate in lower secondary general education, gender (%) (latest available year, 2016 to 2018)

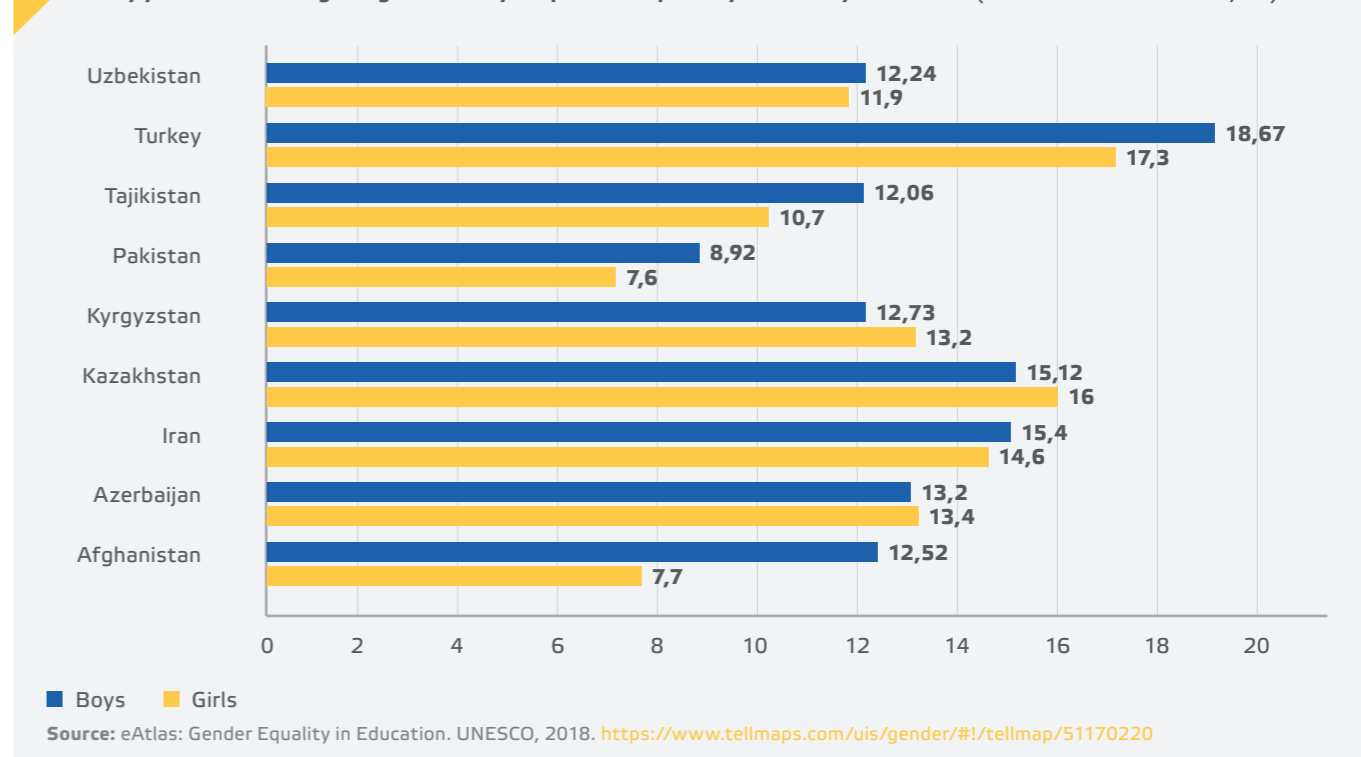


School life expectancy (SLE) is another important indicator on schooling of girls. The gap in education caused by interruption in schooling may not be compensated in any other way. When girls could not overcome

persistent barriers on education, it will affect their average year of schooling. While school life expectancy tends to increase as national wealth rises, SLE values above ten years can be found at all levels of GDP per capita, and

countries in the same economic stratum frequently have widely different SLEs. In ECO region, majority of the countries have SLE values above ten years as well.

How many years of schooling can girls and boys expect from primary or tertiary education? (2018 or latest available year)



Yet, studies show that policies could change these statistics and could help to achieve equal education opportunities for both girls and boys. Authorities could focus on persistent barriers against the education of girls, and overcome them by implementing right policies and best practices. For ex-

ample, multiple studies show female teachers have a positive impact on girls. Female teacher could improve girls' success in school as a role model and sending powerful, encouraging messages.<sup>3</sup> As gender disparity in education is affected by different factors, the solution to achieve quality in edu-

cation should be integrated into wider policies at the economic, social and political levels as well. Gender equality in education is not only essential in order to protect the fundamental human rights but also to achieve sustainable development as a society.

## Innovative Ideas for Education: Game-Based Learning

As digital and interactive learning gain pace globally, modern learning approaches pay attention to game-based techniques in education. While traditional teacher centered non-digital games were always part of the classroom experience, the increasing use of technological equipment in the classroom like mobile phones, tablets or smart phones also ease the use of multiplayer online games or individual online games in learning. Digital games may create a learning environment that is active and fun for both teachers and students as they help

teachers to find ways to grab students' attention based on their varying expectations, capabilities and personalities, and to increase their active engagement in the class.

The benefits of using games in education are supported by studies. The knowledge and skills gained through games are not only retained longer but games also improve visual attention, critical thinking, technical, and spatial-motor skills.<sup>4</sup> If integrated into learning experience successfully, the games can promote problem-solving,

goal-oriented behavior, collaboration in teams and motivation in students.<sup>5</sup> The use of games has been shown to be successful for encouraging student participation and maintaining contribution.<sup>6</sup>

The game-based learning is not solely to be used in face-to face learning but also in the realm of e-Learning. Games can be used to transmit complex learning activities through puzzles, polls and other kinds of games during e-Learning. As the participants are already online in many

<sup>1</sup> UNESCO. 2016. "Gender review: Creating sustainable futures for all," Global Education Monitoring Report. Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Psaki, S.R., McCarthy, K.J. and Mensch, B.S. (2018), Measuring Gender Equality in Education: Lessons from Trends in 43 Countries. Population and Development Review, 44: 117-142.

<sup>3</sup> World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education, UNESCO, 2012. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000215522>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gamification.co/2016/01/14/review-benefits-video-games-education/>

<sup>5</sup> Gee, James P. (2003). What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000215522>

<sup>6</sup> Gros, Begoña. (2006). Digital Games in Education: The Design of Game-Based Learning Environments. J Res Tech Educ. 40.

cases, it is easier to adapt games into e-Learning content. Thus, whether in the form of homework, exam or assessment, games are great option to diversify the lecture.

Games allow students to learn in innovative ways as they are designed to be pedagogical tools for the digital age where learners could also think like professionals.<sup>7</sup> Thus, it could also prepare students for knowledge and skills in real life. Students will have more autonomy and responsibility over the course material which will cultivate innovative and independent thinking. The EU supported project “Gamify Your Teaching” aims to increase competencies of teachers in working in vocational education, particularly with respect to teaching entrepreneurship skills with the use of gamification. The project lasted for 2 years and involved 7 EU countries. Besides the imme-

diated outcomes of learning activities which incorporated gamification, long term expectations of the project is to increase the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, increase the collaboration between schools, enterprises, and social partners.<sup>8</sup>

So, how should game-based learning look like? The games created and controlled by teachers should be within the familiarity and the comfort zone of not only students but also teachers as well.<sup>9</sup> The lecture content should be successfully incorporated into the game. The digital equipment should be reliable and adequate for all students. And finally, the communication between teacher and students must be efficient so that instructions, tasks and the gaining are clear to students.

Here are some of the gaming platforms that are popularly used in learning en-

vironment. Kahoot! is user-generated multiple choice quizzes that can be accessed through web and mobile app. It also allow learners to compete based on right answers and the total time to answer. Similar to Kahoot!, Quizziz is also allow users to create their own quizzes or use from existing templates for fun classroom activities. Mine-Craft EDU is specifically designed for classroom use where users can create intentional instructional experiences for literacy or history classes such as tours and exploration of ancient sites. ClassDojo is also gamified communication app where students, teacher and even parents could engage one and other by sharing content. Moreover students are the active participants which they can also win or lose point based on their activity through the app.

## Future Events and Opportunities

**November 12-13, 2018:** The 7<sup>th</sup> Global Summit on Education will be held on Malaysia on 12-13 Nov 2018. Global Summit on Education is an international conference that invites academicians, scholars & researchers with broad & diverse research interest from around the world to share trends & challenges in Education. The deadline for proposals is September 30<sup>th</sup> 2018. Please check the event website for details <http://worldconferences.net/gse/>.

**November 27-29, 2018:** Superior International Education Fair, the largest student recruitment platform in Pakistan will held on Nov 27-29, 2018 in Lahore. For further inquiries about the event please reach out [internationaloffice@superior.edu.pk](mailto:internationaloffice@superior.edu.pk).



## Education News around the World

**February 15, 2018:** Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities conducted Academic Turkish Support for international students. As a part of Turkey’s Scholarship ‘Academic Turkish’ programs are passed on to international students who are studying at universities in Turkey, in order to further their knowledge of taking notes, giving presentations, academic writing, conducting research and preparing reports.

**April 25, 2018:** Reuters announced the Top 100: Europe's Most Innovative Universities. The ranking is based on the

educational institutions doing the most to advance science, invent new technologies and power new markets and industries. Belgium based KU Leuven University ranked as most innovative university in Europe.

**May 16, 2018:** Times Higher Education announced the most international universities in the world 2018. The ranking is based on multiple consideration such as international reputation, number international staff and students. The top five universities were from Hong Kong, Singapore, United Kingdom and two from Switzerland.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/18907/how-computer-games-help-children-learn>

<sup>8</sup> <http://gamify-project.eu/about-the-project>

<sup>9</sup> Lee, Wilson . Using Games and Simulations in the Classroom.

<https://www.questia.com/magazine/1G1-199193723/using-games-and-simulations-in-the-classroom>