

**Joint Eurostat-OECD**  
**guidelines on the measurement of educational attainment**  
**in household surveys**  
**Version of July 2014**

**Annex for EU countries**

## **Eurostat statistics – classification of ISCED level 3 programmes of partial level completion in EU surveys and indicators**

The level of detail at which data on educational attainment is collected in EU surveys varies. The EU-LFS (which is the main source for statistics on educational attainment) as well as the Adult Education Survey (AES) collect detailed information on educational attainment that allows the identification of ISCED level 3 programmes of partial level completion (code 302 in EU-LFS and AES, covering codes 342 and 352 of ISCED-A). However, other EU surveys such as EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) or the ICT household survey where educational attainment is a background variable collect information at the ISCED 2011 1-digit level only. Therefore harmonised guidelines for the allocation of ISCED level 3 programmes of partial level completion in EU surveys are necessary.

For EU statistics on educational attainment provided by Eurostat from the EU-LFS or the AES, ISCED level 3 programmes of partial level completion are considered within ISCED level 3 (upper secondary education). The reasons for taking this approach are:

- In the ISCED level 3 categories of programmes, only codes 341 and 351 (and not 342 and 352) refer clearly to programmes which are 'insufficient for level completion' and thus to be classified at the lower level.
- The criteria applied for partial level completion of ISCED level 3 are: (a) duration of at least two years; (b) cumulative duration of at least 11 years; and (c) that a recognised qualification is awarded. Programmes classified as 'partial level completion' are therefore considered to have more significant educational outcomes than those classified as 'insufficient level completion' (which are to be classified at ISCED level 2), and thus qualify for inclusion in ISCED level 3.
- The criteria of duration and award of a recognised qualification listed above also apply to ISCED level 3 programmes of completion without direct access to tertiary programmes (343 and 353).
- A similar approach had already been adopted for ISCED 97 and continuing to follow this approach will therefore not affect the time series on educational attainment (including those on early leavers from education and training).

Eurostat will provide information on the approach taken to assigning codes 342 and 352 for educational attainment (code 302 in the EU-LFS and the AES) in the metadata accompanying the statistics. Moreover, for the EU surveys which collect more detailed information on ISCED level 3 programmes (EU-LFS and AES) it will be possible to disseminate additional data on all of the different types of ISCED level 3 programmes/qualifications.

EU-LFS and AES coding of educational attainment is defined in Commission Regulation (EU) [No 317/2013](#) (which amends all sectorial regulations dealing with educational attainment data).

Accordingly, ISCED level 3 programmes of partial level completion should be classified as ISCED level 3 for educational attainment in all EU surveys which collect data on educational attainment at 1-digit level of ISCED 2011 (e.g. EU-SILC, ICT household survey, etc.).

## **Calculation of the indicator on 'Early leavers from education and training' under ISCED 2011**

The indicator 'Early leavers from education and training' is defined as follows:

*'The percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and who were not in further education or training during the last four weeks preceding the survey'.*

The concept of 'at most lower secondary education' corresponds to ISCED 97 levels 0, 1, 2 or 3C short.

Clarification needs to be provided on the correspondence between ISCED 97 and ISCED 2011 to ensure comparability over time. This is particularly necessary for the following educational attainment levels:

a) *'ISCED 97 level 3C short'* (considered as early leavers from education and training)

*ISCED 97 level 3C short* refers to educational attainment from ISCED level 3 programmes of less than two years.

This concept remains the same under ISCED 2011. It relates to codes 341 and 351 for education programmes (*'insufficient for level completion or partial level completion, without direct access to post-secondary non-tertiary education or tertiary education'*) and codes 244 and 254 for educational attainment (*'recognised successful completion of an upper secondary general/vocational education programme insufficient for level or partial level completion'*).

The ISCED 2011 codes for educational attainment 244 and 254 (200 in the EU-LFS) will therefore be included when calculating the indicator on early leavers from education and training.

b) *'ISCED level 3 programmes of partial level completion'* in ISCED 2011 (not considered as early leavers from education and training)

It should be noted that very few countries have programmes of this type.

The concept of *'partial level completion'* did not exist in ISCED 97. As the minimum duration of such programmes is two years, they could be found in ISCED levels 3A, 3B or 3C long, and educational attainment resulting from these was not considered in the indicator on early leavers from education and training.

The same approach will be followed under ISCED 2011.

In ISCED 2011, educational attainment resulting from programmes classified as 'partial level completion' is coded as 342 or 352 (*partial level completion, without direct access to post-secondary non-tertiary education or tertiary education*).

The ISCED codes 342 and 352 (code 302 in the EU-LFS) will not be included when calculating the indicator on early leavers from education and training.

EU-LFS coding of educational attainment is defined in Commission Regulation (EU) [No 317/2013](#).