

DIGITAL LITERACY IN THE NETHERLANDS

Soshynska V.

Ph.D., Associate Professor

Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, Ukraine

There are six European Commission priorities for 2019-2024 and this paper is dealing with EU's digital strategy 'Shaping Europe's Digital Future'. Among other aims, it supports an inclusive digital society where citizens have the skills to seize the opportunities of the digital world. EC stresses that 47% of the EU population is not properly digitally skilled [1], that is why the question of measuring and developing of digital literacy in European countries are significantly important.

According to statistics, the Netherlands is one of the EU member states with the largest number of population with high level of digital skills [2]. Using StatLine Netherlands data portal, we have explored expenditure on education and researches in the Netherlands as well as compared the average level of digital literacy in EU and the Netherlands particularly.

So, Statistics Netherlands' database offers a wealth of data on the Dutch economy and society [3]. Recent data suggest that the Netherlands total population is 17 424 106 (March 2020). The Table 1 below shows the total expenditure on education in country during 2015 – 2018. It contains data of Research and Development (R&D) personnel and R&D expenditure on in-house research and development activities. The figures are provided for the following sectors: businesses, institutions, institutes of higher education [4].

Table 1.
Total expenditure on education in the Netherlands, 2015-2018

Year	Total population	Education, million euros	Research and development			
			All sectors		Higher education	
			Employed persons	million euros	Employed persons	million euros
2015	16 979 120	42 250	202 501	14 808	38 988	4 393
2016	17 081 507	42 764	207 461	15 235	38 424	4 304
2017	17 181 084	44 273	210 220	16 072	39 522	4 506
2018	17 282 163	46 458	219 839	16 748	39 500	4 550

StatLine gives an overview of the number of enterprises in the Netherlands that conducted technological innovation projects, or have conducted these with or without success. These enterprises are called innovators. Such data about enterprises with innovation indicate that in 2014–2016 total number of enterprises with product and/or process innovation is 19 916 and is equal to 38% of the population [5]. Thereby the Government of the Netherlands is striving to make a considerable contribution to their citizens becoming smarter, better skilled and more creative, who will get the best possible free access to information.

PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN SCIENCE AND PRACTICE

Koninklijke Bibliotheek (KB), the national library of the Netherlands [6], is including into process of realizing this Government's strategic plan. It actively works to increase the available amount of digital content for research and reading, learning and informing. In this manner, making knowledge and information available, KB offers opportunities for development and education, using digital standards. Librarians are sure – it is very important, in order to achieve a digital society, to increase the impact of the results of scholarly research. Because we will not be able to operate effectively without sharing knowledge and getting a high level of digital skills.

Table 2.
Increasing digital skills in the Netherlands, 2015-2019

	Year	Digital skills, % of population			Total indicators, % of population L+B+A
		Low	Basic	Above	
1	2015	20	30	43	93
2	2016	17	32	45	94
3	2017	16	32	48	96
4	2019	16	30	50	96

It was found that in 2019 the Netherlands takes the first place among Western Europe countries – 96%, followed by Luxembourg and Switzerland – 95%, Germany – 92%, Belgium – 90%.

The author concludes that the indicators of the Netherlands are more compared with indicators of Northern Europe countries: Iceland – 99%, Norway – 98%, Denmark – 97%, Sweden – 96%, Finland – 95%, United Kingdom – 94% (Figure 1).

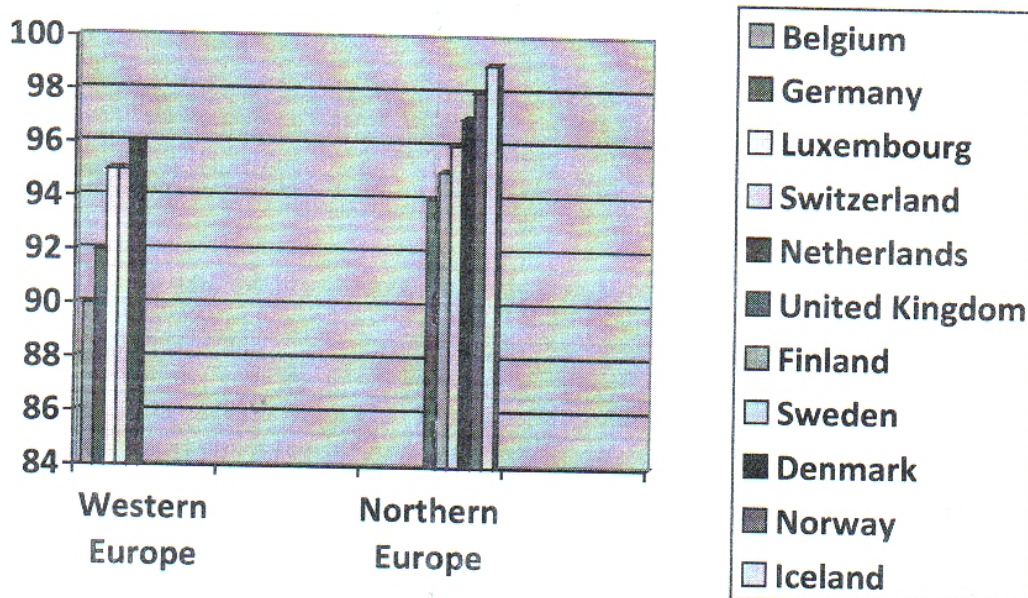


Figure 1. Digital skills level in Western and Northern Europe, 2019

PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN SCIENCE AND PRACTICE

It should be noted that the population all countries of Northern Europe, except United Kingdom, are less than in the Netherlands. This indicates if the population is smaller, the process of raising the level of digital skills is faster.

References

1. Shaping Europe's digital future, Policy, Economy & Society, (2019, December 2), URL <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/economy-society>.
2. The Netherlands ranks among the EU top in digital skills, (2020, February 14), URL <https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2020/07/the-netherlands-ranks-among-the-eu-top-in-digital-skills>.
3. CBS Open data StatLine, URL <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/en/>.
4. Research and development; key figures per implementation sector, (2019, November 4), CBS Open data StatLine, URL <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/en/dataset/84644ENG/table?ts=1589008703332>.
5. Enterprises with innovation; key figures, (2018, August 22), CBS Open data StatLine, URL <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/en/dataset/80066eng/table?ts=1589032405541>.
6. Koninklijke Bibliotheek (KB), National Library of the Netherlands, 2020, URL <https://www.kb.nl/en>.