



European Youth in Transition to
Education and Labour



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Design, Implementation and Outcomes of the First Two Rounds of OSES-Delphi and Design of Research Tools for the Concluding Rounds

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Purpose and scope of the deliverable

This volume is the qualitative companion to the OSES-Delphi Text Report (Volume One) and the Quantitative Report (Volume Two). It documents the qualitative questions of the first two OSES-Delphi waves and presents the analysis of the open-ended comments: the distribution of verified comment records across statements, countries and thematic areas in Wave 1 and Wave 2, the Wave 2 special questions (Biggest Risk, Contributing Factors and Policy Measures), a cross-wave synthesis of comment-field use, and country-level qualitative summaries.

Document history

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List of project-specific terms and abbreviations

CEDEFOP	The European Centre for the Development of Professional Training (an EU Agency)
DPA	Data-Processing Agreement
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
EDU-LAB	The EU-funded project “European Youth in Transition to Education and Labour”
EEA	European Education Area
EEI	Exploratory Expert Interview
ETF	European Training Foundation
GE	General education
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IQR	Inter-Quartile Range (Q3 – Q1)
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
Md	Median
OSES	International Online Survey of Experts and Stakeholders (the WP3B policy Delphi)
PMB	Project Management Board
PVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
SD	Standard deviation
TVET	Professional and vocational education and training
WP	Work package
W1 / W2	Wave 1 / Wave 2 of the Delphi; S01–S30 = statement codes

Codes for EDU-LAB target countries

FI Finland	IT Italy	UK the United Kingdom
AT Austria	GR Greece	PL Poland
XK Kosovo	PT Portugal	DE Germany

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1 Introduction and Methodological Notes

1.1 Methodological Note

The qualitative analyses presented for the two Delphi waves follow different analytical approaches that reflect the distinct objectives of each survey round.

The primary purpose of **Wave 1** was to explore experts' expectations regarding future developments in education, labour markets and the transition from education to employment. Consequently, the open comments primarily explain **why** experts considered particular developments likely, identify underlying contextual factors and elaborate on the broader societal processes associated with the proposed scenarios.

By contrast, **Wave 2** adopted a more solution-oriented perspective. Experts were explicitly invited to identify the **Biggest Risks**, the **Contributing Factors** underlying the projected developments and the **Policy Measures** considered most appropriate to address these challenges. As a result, the qualitative material collected during the second Delphi wave is substantially more structured and directly oriented towards policy development.

Wave 2 is more explicitly policy-oriented than Wave 1. The policy recommendations in this report are therefore derived from the qualitative components of the Delphi study, especially the Wave 2 risk, contributing-factor and policy-measure fields. They are analytical syntheses of submitted comments and must not be read as a policy package endorsed by every participant.

To preserve the distinction between the waves, the Wave 1 chapter reports recurring policy-relevant themes as exploratory implications; explicit proposals are analysed primarily in the Wave 2 chapter.

1.2 General Conceptual Note: Cross-sectional and Longitudinal Perspectives in a GDPR-Compliant Delphi Design

One of the distinctive methodological features of the EDU-LAB Delphi study is that it combines the characteristics of a traditional iterative Delphi survey with those of a longitudinal re-contact panel. Rather than treating the two survey waves exclusively as successive cross-sectional samples, the study design enables two complementary analytical perspectives: the analysis of changes at the aggregate level and the analysis of response stability and opinion change among the same experts who participated in both survey rounds.

This distinction is particularly relevant in research conducted under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Participation in the second Delphi wave was not automatically available to all respondents from Wave 1 but depended on explicit consent for future re-contact obtained at the end of the first survey. Consequently, longitudinal participation was conditional upon informed consent rather than being an inherent characteristic of the original Delphi sample.

From this perspective, three analytically distinct populations can be distinguished throughout the study.

- **First**, the **Wave 1 Delphi sample** represents the complete cross-sectional expert panel participating in the first survey round (N = 433).
- **Second**, the **Re-contact Consent Panel** consists exclusively of those experts who explicitly agreed to be contacted again for a subsequent Delphi round. This population defines the group that was actually eligible for longitudinal follow-up under GDPR-compliant research conditions.
- **Third**, the **respondent-level longitudinal base is smaller than the 207-case Wave 2 cross-section**. Of the 207 completed Wave 2 questionnaires, 205 were linked to a Wave 1 record within the Wave 1 analysis sample (N = 433). One additional late completer was linked to a Wave 1 record outside that N = 433 base, and one manually added Wave 2 participant had no Wave 1 record. One Wave

2 case matched two duplicate Wave 1 records and was excluded from within-person analysis, leaving a unique within-person base of N = 204; N = 202 had at least one comparable rating pair.

This conceptual distinction has important methodological implications. Conventional Delphi studies generally compare aggregate distributions between survey rounds and evaluate changes in consensus, disagreement and uncertainty at the group level. Such analyses remain fully applicable within the EDU-LAB study and constitute the primary basis for assessing the evolution of expert consensus between Wave 1 and Wave 2.

Respondent-level analyses use only the reconciled longitudinal subsets described above. Aggregate Wave 1–Wave 2 comparisons use the full cross-sectional samples (N = 433 and N = 207) and cannot by themselves distinguish opinion change from differences in sample composition.

Importantly, the distinction between these analytical populations also changes the interpretation of participation between survey rounds. Describing the reduction from the Wave 1 sample to the matched longitudinal panel solely as panel attrition may be misleading because not all Wave 1 participants were eligible for longitudinal follow-up. Continued participation required explicit consent for re-contact and subsequent participation in the second survey. Under these conditions, participation should be interpreted as a two-stage process comprising consent for longitudinal follow-up and successful re-participation.

1.3 Overview of the qualitative Analysis of the OSES Delphi for Wave 1 and Wave 2

In addition to the quantitative Delphi results, participants were invited to provide qualitative comments throughout both survey waves. These comments served several purposes. They enabled experts to explain their quantitative ratings, identify underlying mechanisms, discuss contextual differences and elaborate on possible future developments beyond the predefined survey items. Consequently, the qualitative material complements the statistical findings by providing explanatory depth and contextual interpretation that cannot be captured by quantitative indicators alone.

The qualitative analysis identifies recurring themes, qualifications, disagreements and submitted policy proposals. Comment counts and lengths remain descriptive measures of written field use; quantitative ratings provide the evidence on consensus and convergence.

2 Delphi Wave 1

2.1 Description of the Sample of Delphi Wave 1

A total of 433 experts completed the questionnaire. Only fully completed questionnaires were included in the quantitative and qualitative analyses. Responses submitted after the official end of the field phase were excluded from the analytical sample, even where questionnaires had been completed in full. The field phase was conducted from March 4th to April 10th 2026. The following table presents the number of fully completed questionnaires by country.

2.1.1 Completed Questionnaire per Country (ranked)

Country	Completed Questionnaires
Finland	71
UK	36

Kosovo	55
Germany	30
Poland	34
Austria	58
Portugal	38
Greece	38
Italy	47
Other	26
Total	433

The table below provides a ranked overview of voluntary open-comment records aggregated across all statements. **The total number of open comments is 1,533.** Open-ended comment records by country are shown below.

2.1.2 Number of open Comments in Wave 1 per Country (ranked)

Rank	Country	Number of Comment Records
1	Finland	470
2	Kosovo	245
3	The UK	228
4	Austria	154
5	Germany	103
6	Poland	95
7	Italy	59
8	Greece	51
9	Portugal	50
10*	<i>Vietnam</i>	22
11	<i>The Netherlands</i>	13
12	<i>Spain</i>	13
13	<i>Belgium</i>	12
14	<i>France</i>	10
15	<i>Norway</i>	3
16	<i>Hungary</i>	2
17	<i>Czechia</i>	2
18	<i>Bulgaria</i>	1

*The fields highlighted in the table indicate responses provided by international experts who do not reside in the countries participating in the project but were nevertheless invited to take part in the study, as the inclusion of an international expert perspective was considered highly relevant to the overall research design and analytical framework.

TOTAL		1.533
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2.2 Distribution of Open Comments Across the Questionnaire

Across the 30 Wave 1 statements, earlier items generally received more comment records than later items, but the sequence is not monotonic. Because the comment fields were optional and the topics differed, the counts are consistent with a questionnaire-order effect but do not establish fatigue as its cause.

The table below presents the overall distribution of open comments across all statements and participating countries.

2.2.1 Overall Distribution of open Comments across all Statements and participating Countries.

Rank	Statement	Statement Formulation	Theme	Number of Comment Records
1	Statement 1	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	Education and Training	84
2	Statement 2	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	Education and Training	82
3	Statement 5	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	Education and Training	67
4	Statement 4	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g.: violence, bullying, disengagement)	Education and Training	64
5	Statement 3	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	Education and Training	63
6	Statement 11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	Labour Market and Employment	63
7	Statement 6	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	Education and Training	59
8	Statement 12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	Labour Market and Employment	59
9	Statement 7	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	Education and Training	54
10	Statement 20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	54
11	Statement 17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	50
12	Statement 9	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	Labour Market and Employment	49

Rank	Statement	Statement Formulation	Theme	Number of Comment Records
13	Statement 13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	Labour Market and Employment	49
14	Statement 14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	Labour Market and Employment	49
15	Statement 15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	Labour Market and Employment	47
16	Statement 27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	Inclusion and Disadvantage	47
17	Statement 29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	Inclusion and Disadvantage	47
18	Statement 8	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	Education and Training	45
19	Statement 10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	Labour Market and Employment	45
20	Statement 21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	45
21	Statement 22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	44
22	Statement 23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	44
23	Statement 25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	Inclusion and Disadvantage	44
24	Statement 26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	Inclusion and Disadvantage	44
25	Statement 28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	Inclusion and Disadvantage	44
26	Statement 24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	Inclusion and Disadvantage	41
27	Statement 16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	39
28	Statement 18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	39
29	Statement 19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	38

Rank	Statement	Statement Formulation	Theme	Number of Comment Records
30	Statement 30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	Inclusion and Disadvantage	34
	Total			1,533

2.3 Early Section of the Questionnaire (Statements 1–5)

Statements 1–5 produced 360 comment records. S01 had 84, S02 82, S05 67, S04 64 and S03 63. These are frequencies of written field use, not measures of importance or agreement.

2.3.1 Early Section of the Questionnaire: Number of Comments by Statement

Statement	Statement Formulation	Number of Comment Records
Statement 1	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	84
Statement 2	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	82
Statement 3	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	63
Statement 4	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	64
Statement 5	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	67

The higher counts at the beginning of the questionnaire are descriptive. They do not show that the comments were more detailed or that respondents rated these issues as more important.

2.4 Middle Section of the Questionnaire (approximately Statements 10–20)

For S10–S20, the highest verified counts were S11 = 63, S12 = 59, S20 = 54, S17 = 50 and S13/S14 = 49. S16 and S18 each had 39 and S19 had 38.

The pattern shows continued use of optional comment fields in the middle of the questionnaire. No causal explanation for the differences in counts is inferred from frequency alone.

2.4.1 Middle Section of the Questionnaire: Number of Comments per Statement

Statement	Statement Formulation	Number of Comment Records
Statement 10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	45
Statement 11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	63

Statement 12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	59
Statement 13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	49
Statement 14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	49
Statement 15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	47
Statement 16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	39
Statement 17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	50
Statement 18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	39
Statement 19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	38
Statement 20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	54

2.5 Final Section of the Questionnaire (Statements 21–30)

2.5.1 Final Section of the Questionnaire: Number of Comments per Statement

Statement	Statement Formulation	Number of Comment Records
Statement 21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	45
Statement 22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	44
Statement 23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	44
Statement 24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	41
Statement 25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	44

Statement 26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	44
Statement 27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	47
Statement 28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	44
Statement 29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	47
Statement 30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	34

Within Inclusion and Disadvantage, the highest verified counts were S27 = 47, S29 = 47, S28 = 44, S25/S26 = 44 and S24 = 41. S30 had 34, the lowest count in Wave 1; it is therefore not presented as a high-comment late item.

Statement	Topic	Number of Comment Records
Statement 27	Gender stereotypes and career pathways	47
Statement 28	Reliance on parental support in education	44
Statement 29	Digital infrastructure and regional inequalities	47
Statement 30	Discrimination against minority groups	34

Several later statements nevertheless retained counts in the mid-40s. This limits a simple linear fatigue interpretation but does not identify topic salience as the cause.

2.6 Methodological Interpretation

The distribution is compatible with both questionnaire position and statement-specific differences, but the comment-frequency data alone cannot separate these mechanisms.

2.7 Possible Questionnaire-Order Effect

One possible dynamic is a moderate questionnaire-order or fatigue effect. Such effects can occur in longer online questionnaires with the features listed below. The present frequency pattern is compatible with this explanation but does not establish it as the cause.

- repeated Likert-scale evaluations,
- multiple thematic blocks,
- and optional open-ended response fields.

In such settings, respondents often continue completing the quantitative ratings while becoming more selective in providing additional written comments. Consequently, lower frequencies of comments in later sections should not automatically be interpreted as indicating lower relevance of the respective topics.

2.8 Statement-Specific Commenting Activity

Some later statements received more comment records than adjacent items. This shows non-monotonic commenting activity; it does not by itself demonstrate importance, controversy, normative sensitivity or consensus.

The content analysis documents explanations, qualifications and disagreements within the submitted comments. Those interpretations are based on text content, not inferred from raw frequency.

Theme D contained 301 comment records in total. Its statement counts varied from 34 to 47; the frequency pattern is reported descriptively without assigning a latent level of salience.

2.9 Substantive Implications

High comment counts indicate frequent use of an optional written field. They do not independently establish controversy, uncertainty, relevance or agreement.

Lower counts likewise do not establish lower importance or broader consensus. Questionnaire position, prompt interpretation and willingness to write may all contribute.

Accordingly, the report uses frequency only to describe where comments were submitted. Substantive interpretations rely on the comment content, while consensus claims rely on quantitative ratings.

2.10 Country-Level Distribution of Open Comments by Statement

The submitted Wave 1 comments show recurring thematic overlap across country groups, while comment volumes vary from 51 in Greece to 470 in Finland. This is a descriptive pattern in the corpus, not evidence of national consensus.

Educational quality and basic skills recur in several country groups. The statement counts document where comments were submitted; they do not establish a shared national ranking or common level of concern.

Labour-market transitions, employability, skills matching and institutional response recur in comments from several country groups. The text does not quantify how prevalent these concerns were among participants.

Comments concerning childcare, educational inequality, socioeconomic background and parental support appear across several country groups. The content supports a recurring theme, not universal agreement.

Some national differences nevertheless emerged. Finnish respondents submitted comments across the entire questionnaire, including many on future skills, institutional adaptation and educational governance. Austrian comments displayed a comparatively strong focus on literacy, educational investment and childcare. German respondents emphasised educational governance, labour-market alignment and future workforce needs, while UK comments frequently highlighted educational inequalities, social disadvantage and transitions. Kosovo generated a comparatively balanced distribution across most statements, with comments spanning education, labour markets and social inclusion. These differences describe variations within the submitted corpus rather than fundamentally different or representative national narratives.

Overall, educational quality, labour-market transformation, inequality and institutional capacity recur in the submitted comments. Country profiles remain descriptive and should not be interpreted as population positions or as a common European consensus.

2.10.1 Austria: Total number of open comments from Austria: 154

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Austria	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	10
Austria	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	12
Austria	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	12
Austria	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	9
Austria	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	10
Austria	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	8
Austria	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	6
Austria	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	4
Austria	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	3
Austria	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	3
Austria	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	7
Austria	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	10
Austria	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	6
Austria	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	3

Austria	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	5
Austria	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	3
Austria	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	4
Austria	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	4
Austria	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	3
Austria	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	4
Austria	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	3
Austria	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	2
Austria	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	1
Austria	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	4
Austria	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	3
Austria	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	3
Austria	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	2
Austria	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	5
Austria	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	3

Austria	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	2
		Total	154

Data-based interpretation of the Austria distribution (Wave 1)

The table contains 154 Wave 1 comment records from 58 completed questionnaires in Austria, equivalent to 2.66 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Austria records account for 10.0% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 30 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S02/S03 = 12, S01/S05/S12 = 10, and S04 = 9. Using the fifth-highest count (10) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S02, S03, S05, and S12 and contains 54 records (35.1% of the country/group total). Every statement received at least one record; the minimum was 1, observed for S23. This is a relatively concentrated upper tier.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 71 (46.1%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 37 (24.0%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 24 (15.6%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 22 (14.3%). Theme A is the largest component and stands +12.3 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within Austria, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S03 (long-term COVID-19 effects on learning), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), and S12 (childcare constraints on labour participation). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S03 (+3.7 percentage points), S12 (+2.6 percentage points), and S02 (+2.4 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S23 (-2.2 percentage points), S27 (-1.8 percentage points), and S22 (-1.6 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

The profile is therefore broad in coverage but substantively weighted towards the education system itself. The co-occurrence of basic-skills, pandemic-learning, early-childhood and childcare prompts places educational foundations and the conditions that support participation in the same descriptive profile.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 154 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.2 Finland: Total number of open comments from Finland: 470

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Finland	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	22
Finland	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	18
Finland	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	16
Finland	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	18
Finland	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	19
Finland	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	17
Finland	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	19
Finland	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	15
Finland	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	17
Finland	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	16
Finland	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	21
Finland	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	16
Finland	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	14
Finland	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	17

Finland	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	15
Finland	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	11
Finland	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	15
Finland	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	11
Finland	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	12
Finland	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	19
Finland	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	15
Finland	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	16
Finland	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	18
Finland	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	9
Finland	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	18
Finland	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	15
Finland	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	15
Finland	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	11
Finland	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	15
Finland	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	10

		Total	470
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Data-based interpretation of the Finland distribution (Wave 1)

The table contains 470 Wave 1 comment records from 71 completed questionnaires in Finland, equivalent to 6.62 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Finland records account for 30.7% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 30 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S01 = 22, S11 = 21, S05/S07/S20 = 19, and S02 = 18. Using the fifth-highest count (19) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S05, S07, S11, and S20 and contains 100 records (21.3% of the country/group total). Every statement received at least one record; the minimum was 9, observed for S24. This leaves most records distributed outside the highest-count tier.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 144 (30.6%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 116 (24.7%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 117 (24.9%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 93 (19.8%). Theme A is the largest component and stands -3.2 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within Finland, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S11 (overqualification), and S20 (curriculum adaptation to emerging occupations). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S23 (+1.0 percentage points), S25 (+1.0 percentage points), and S22 (+0.5 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S02 (-1.5 percentage points), S01 (-0.8 percentage points), and S24 (-0.8 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

Finland combines the largest absolute comment volume with a notably dispersed statement profile. No single prompt dominates the record set; the pattern instead links skills, vocational pathways, curriculum adaptation and overqualification across the education-employment interface.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 470 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.3 Germany: Total number of open comments from Germany: 103

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Germany	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	7
Germany	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	9
Germany	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	5
Germany	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	4
Germany	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	4
Germany	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	5
Germany	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	4
Germany	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	5
Germany	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	3
Germany	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	3
Germany	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	5
Germany	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	2
Germany	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	2

Germany	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	4
Germany	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	5
Germany	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	2
Germany	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	3
Germany	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	1
Germany	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	1
Germany	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	3
Germany	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	3
Germany	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	5
Germany	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	2
Germany	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	4
Germany	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	1
Germany	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	4
Germany	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	4
Germany	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	1

Germany	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	2
Germany	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	0
		Total	103

Data-based interpretation of the Germany distribution (Wave 1)

The table contains 103 Wave 1 comment records from 30 completed questionnaires in Germany, equivalent to 3.43 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Germany records account for 6.7% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 29 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S02 = 9, S01 = 7, and S03/S06/S08/S11 = 5. Using the fifth-highest count (5) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S02, S03, S06, S08, S11, S15, and S22 and contains 46 records (44.7% of the country/group total). No record was entered for S30, while the smallest positive count was 1 for S18, S19, S25, and S28. This is a relatively concentrated upper tier.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 43 (41.7%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 24 (23.3%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 20 (19.4%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 16 (15.5%). Theme A is the largest component and stands +8.0 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within Germany, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S03 (long-term COVID-19 effects on learning), S06 (vocational diversification of education), S08 (status preferences for university over vocational training), and S11 (overqualification). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S02 (+3.4 percentage points), S22 (+2.0 percentage points), and S08 (+1.9 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S30 (-2.2 percentage points), S12 (-1.9 percentage points), and S25 (-1.9 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

The German distribution is more concentrated on the education block than the pooled Wave 1 profile. The leading literacy count is accompanied by several mid-level counts on competencies, vocational pathways, status preferences and overqualification, producing a cluster around educational preparation and qualification structures.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 103 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.4 Greece: Total number of open comments from Greece: 51

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Greece	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	2
Greece	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	4
Greece	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	3
Greece	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	1
Greece	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	2
Greece	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	1
Greece	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	2
Greece	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	1
Greece	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	2
Greece	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	1
Greece	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	2
Greece	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	2
Greece	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	3
Greece	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	2

Greece	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	1
Greece	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	1
Greece	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	1
Greece	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	1
Greece	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	2
Greece	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	2
Greece	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	1
Greece	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	1
Greece	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	1
Greece	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	2
Greece	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	1
Greece	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	2
Greece	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	2
Greece	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	2
Greece	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	2
Greece	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	1
		Total	51

Data-based interpretation of the Greece distribution (Wave 1)

The table contains 51 Wave 1 comment records from 38 completed questionnaires in Greece, equivalent to 1.34 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Greece records account for 3.3% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 30 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S02 = 4, S03/S13 = 3, and S01/S05/S07 = 2. Using the fifth-highest count (2) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S02, S03, S05, S07, S09, S11, S12, S13, S14, S19, S20, S24, S26, S27, S28, and S29 and contains 38 records (74.5% of the country/group total). Every statement received at least one record; the minimum was 1, observed for S04, S06, S08, S10, S15, S16, S17, S18, S21, S22, S23, S25, and S30. The large combined share results from many statements tied at the threshold, not from a narrow concentration on a small number of prompts.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 16 (31.4%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 13 (25.5%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 10 (19.6%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 12 (23.5%). Theme A is the largest component and stands -2.4 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within Greece, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S03 (long-term COVID-19 effects on learning), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), and S09 (AI-related career-entry pathways). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S13 (+2.7 percentage points), S02 (+2.5 percentage points), and S03 (+1.8 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S04 (-2.2 percentage points), S06 (-1.9 percentage points), and S01 (-1.6 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

Because the total is low, small numerical differences create visible rank differences. The table is nevertheless useful in showing that written-field use was not confined to one domain: all four themes received records, even though most individual statement counts remain between one and three.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 51 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.5 Italy: Total number of open comments from Italy: 59

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Italy	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	5
Italy	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	5
Italy	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	3
Italy	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	4
Italy	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	3
Italy	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	4
Italy	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	2
Italy	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	2
Italy	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	1
Italy	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	2
Italy	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	3
Italy	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	3
Italy	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	2
Italy	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	1

Italy	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	1
Italy	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	1
Italy	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	2
Italy	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	2
Italy	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	1
Italy	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	2
Italy	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	1
Italy	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	0
Italy	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	0
Italy	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	1
Italy	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	1
Italy	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	1
Italy	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	1
Italy	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	1
Italy	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	2
Italy	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	2
		Total	59

Data-based interpretation of the Italy distribution (Wave 1)

The table above contains 59 Wave 1 comment records from 47 completed questionnaires in Italy, equivalent to 1.26 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Italy records account for 3.8% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 28 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S01/S02 = 5, S04/S06 = 4, and S03/S05 = 3. Using the fifth-highest count (3) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S02, S03, S04, S05, S06, S11, and S12 and contains 30 records (50.8% of the country/group total). No record was entered for S22 and S23, while the smallest positive count was 1 for S09, S14, S15, S16, S19, S21, S24, S25, S26, S27, and S28. This is a relatively concentrated upper tier.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 28 (47.5%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 13 (22.0%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 9 (15.3%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 9 (15.3%). Theme A is the largest component and stands +13.7 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within Italy, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S03 (long-term COVID-19 effects on learning), S04 (school responses to behavioural problems), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), and S06 (vocational diversification of education). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S02 (+3.1 percentage points), S01 (+3.0 percentage points), and S06 (+2.9 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S22 (-2.9 percentage points), S23 (-2.9 percentage points), and S09 (-1.5 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

The Italian distribution is visibly education-centred. The leading prompts concern competencies, literacy, behavioural programmes and vocational diversification, while two system-interface statements received no comment record. This contrast is descriptive of where optional text was supplied, not evidence that the omitted topics were considered unimportant.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 59 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.6 Kosovo: Total number of open comments from Kosovo: 245

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Kosovo	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	12
Kosovo	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	9
Kosovo	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	9
Kosovo	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	10
Kosovo	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	10
Kosovo	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	8
Kosovo	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	9
Kosovo	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	6
Kosovo	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	8
Kosovo	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	8
Kosovo	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	8
Kosovo	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	9
Kosovo	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	9
Kosovo	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	8

Kosovo	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	7
Kosovo	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	7
Kosovo	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	9
Kosovo	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	9
Kosovo	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	7
Kosovo	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	8
Kosovo	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	8
Kosovo	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	7
Kosovo	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	9
Kosovo	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	8
Kosovo	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	7
Kosovo	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	7
Kosovo	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	7
Kosovo	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	8
Kosovo	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	8
Kosovo	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	6

		Total	245
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Data-based interpretation of the Kosovo distribution (Wave 1)

The table above contains 245 Wave 1 comment records from 55 completed questionnaires in Kosovo, equivalent to 4.45 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Kosovo records account for 16.0% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 30 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S01 = 12, S04/S05 = 10, and S02/S03/S07 = 9. Using the fifth-highest count (9) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S02, S03, S04, S05, S07, S12, S13, S17, S18, and S23 and contains 104 records (42.4% of the country/group total). Every statement received at least one record; the minimum was 6, observed for S08 and S30. The large combined share results from many statements tied at the threshold, not from a narrow concentration on a small number of prompts.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 73 (29.8%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 57 (23.3%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 64 (26.1%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 51 (20.8%). Theme A is the largest component and stands -4.0 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within Kosovo, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S03 (long-term COVID-19 effects on learning), S04 (school responses to behavioural problems), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), and S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S18 (+1.1 percentage points), S23 (+0.8 percentage points), and S24 (+0.6 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S02 (-1.7 percentage points), S11 (-0.8 percentage points), and S06 (-0.6 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

Kosovo shows both high volume and broad dispersion. Counts remain within a relatively narrow range across the thirty prompts, so the table supports a system-wide reading rather than a single-issue interpretation: education, employment, transition institutions and inclusion all generated repeated written-field use.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 245 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.7 Poland: Total number of open comments from Poland: 95

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Poland	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	4
Poland	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	5
Poland	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	3
Poland	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	2
Poland	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	2
Poland	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	2
Poland	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	4
Poland	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	2
Poland	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	2
Poland	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	2
Poland	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	2
Poland	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	4
Poland	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	2

Poland	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	3
Poland	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	3
Poland	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	4
Poland	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	2
Poland	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	3
Poland	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	4
Poland	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	4
Poland	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	3
Poland	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	3
Poland	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	3
Poland	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	4
Poland	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	4
Poland	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	4
Poland	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	5
Poland	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	3
Poland	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	4

Poland	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	3
		Total	95

Data-based interpretation of the Poland distribution (Wave 1)

The above table contains 95 Wave 1 comment records from 34 completed questionnaires in Poland, equivalent to 2.79 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Poland records account for 6.2% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 30 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S02/S27 = 5 and S01/S07/S12/S16 = 4. Using the fifth-highest count (4) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S02, S07, S12, S16, S19, S20, S24, S25, S26, S27, and S29 and contains 50 records (52.6% of the country/group total). Every statement received at least one record; the minimum was 2, observed for S04, S05, S06, S08, S09, S10, S11, S13, and S17. The large combined share results from many statements tied at the threshold, not from a narrow concentration on a small number of prompts.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 24 (25.3%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 18 (18.9%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 26 (27.4%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 27 (28.4%). Theme D is the largest component and stands -5.4 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within Poland, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S12 (childcare constraints on labour participation), S16 (youth mental health and life skills), and S19 (the extended juvenile phase and workplace engagement). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S27 (+2.2 percentage points), S19 (+1.7 percentage points), and S16 (+1.7 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S05 (-2.3 percentage points), S04 (-2.1 percentage points), and S11 (-2.0 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

Poland differs from the pooled profile because the inclusion and transition themes jointly account for more records than education and training. Gendered career pathways, mental health, curriculum adaptation, inequality and socioeconomic background sit alongside literacy rather than behind it.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 95 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.8 Portugal: Total number of open comments from Portugal: 50

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Portugal	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	2
Portugal	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	5
Portugal	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	1
Portugal	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	2
Portugal	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	3
Portugal	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	2
Portugal	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	1
Portugal	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	1
Portugal	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	1
Portugal	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	1
Portugal	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	3
Portugal	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	3
Portugal	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	1
Portugal	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	1

Portugal	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	1
Portugal	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	1
Portugal	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	3
Portugal	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	3
Portugal	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	2
Portugal	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	2
Portugal	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	1
Portugal	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	2
Portugal	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	0
Portugal	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	1
Portugal	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	1
Portugal	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	1
Portugal	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	1
Portugal	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	1
Portugal	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	2
Portugal	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	1

		Total	50
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Data-based interpretation of the Portugal distribution (Wave 1)

The table contains 50 Wave 1 comment records from 38 completed questionnaires in Portugal, equivalent to 1.32 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Portugal records account for 3.3% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 29 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S02 = 5 and S05/S11/S12/S17/S18 = 3. Using the fifth-highest count (3) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S02, S05, S11, S12, S17, and S18 and contains 20 records (40.0% of the country/group total). No record was entered for S23, while the smallest positive count was 1 for S03, S07, S08, S09, S10, S13, S14, S15, S16, S21, S24, S25, S26, S27, S28, and S30. This is a relatively concentrated upper tier.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 17 (34.0%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 11 (22.0%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 14 (28.0%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 8 (16.0%). Theme A is the largest component and stands +0.2 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within Portugal, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S11 (overqualification), S12 (childcare constraints on labour participation), S17 (media and influencer effects on programme choices), and S18 (instability and fragmentation in education-to-work transitions). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S02 (+4.7 percentage points), S18 (+3.5 percentage points), and S17 (+2.7 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S23 (-2.9 percentage points), S03 (-2.1 percentage points), and S07 (-1.5 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

The Portuguese distribution has one clear maximum at S02 but otherwise a comparatively flat middle. Several prompts across labour-market participation and transition processes share the next count level, suggesting that the optional comments were distributed across a connected set of education-to-employment issues.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 50 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.9 United Kingdom: Total number of open comments from The UK: 228

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
The UK	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	13
The UK	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	10
The UK	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	6
The UK	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	11
The UK	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	10
The UK	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	7
The UK	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	4
The UK	S08	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	6
The UK	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	9
The UK	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	7
The UK	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	7
The UK	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	8
The UK	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	8
The UK	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	6

The UK	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	7
The UK	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	8
The UK	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	9
The UK	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	5
The UK	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	6
The UK	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	8
The UK	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	8
The UK	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	8
The UK	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	8
The UK	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	7
The UK	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	5
The UK	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	5
The UK	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	6
The UK	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	10
The UK	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	8
The UK	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	8

		Total	228
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Data-based interpretation of the United Kingdom distribution (Wave 1)

The table contains 228 Wave 1 comment records from 36 completed questionnaires in the United Kingdom, equivalent to 6.33 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the United Kingdom records account for 14.9% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 30 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S01 = 13, S04 = 11, S02/S05/S28 = 10, and S09 = 9. Using the fifth-highest count (10) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S02, S04, S05, and S28 and contains 54 records (23.7% of the country/group total). Every statement received at least one record; the minimum was 4, observed for S07. This leaves most records distributed outside the highest-count tier.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 67 (29.4%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 52 (22.8%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 60 (26.3%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 49 (21.5%). Theme A is the largest component and stands -4.4 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within the United Kingdom, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S04 (school responses to behavioural problems), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), and S28 (reliance on parental help). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S28 (+1.5 percentage points), S30 (+1.3 percentage points), and S16 (+1.0 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S07 (-1.8 percentage points), S03 (-1.5 percentage points), and S11 (-1.0 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

The United Kingdom combines high comment intensity with complete statement coverage. Its leading set joins competencies, school behavioural programmes, literacy, early-childhood investment and reliance on parental help, which gives the distribution both an education-system and an inequality dimension.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 228 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.10.10 “Other Countries” Total number of open comments from “other Countries”: 78

Country	Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
Other Countries	S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	7
Other Countries	S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	5
Other Countries	S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	5
Other Countries	S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	3
Other Countries	S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	4
Other Countries	S06	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education	5
Other Countries	S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	3
Other Countries	S08	Society’s status preference for universities over vocational training will persist	3
Other Countries	S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	3
Other Countries	S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent	2
Other Countries	S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications	5
Other Countries	S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents’ labor participation	2
Other Countries	S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	2

Other Countries	S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	4
Other Countries	S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors	2
Other Countries	S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	1
Other Countries	S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	2
Other Countries	S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	0
Other Countries	S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement	0
Other Countries	S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	2
Other Countries	S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	2
Other Countries	S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition	0
Other Countries	S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	2
Other Countries	S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	1
Other Countries	S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	3
Other Countries	S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities	2
Other Countries	S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	4
Other Countries	S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	2

Other Countries	S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	1
Other Countries	S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination	1
		Total	78

Data-based interpretation of the Other Countries distribution (Wave 1)

The table contains 78 Wave 1 comment records from 26 completed questionnaires in the combined Other Countries group, equivalent to 3.00 comments per completed questionnaire. The pooled Wave 1 value is 3.54, and the Other Countries records account for 5.1% of all 1,533 comments. Written input is present for 27 of the 30 statements. These figures measure use of the optional comment fields; they do not measure agreement, endorsement or the number of distinct experts who held a particular view.

The largest statement counts are S01 = 7, S02/S03/S06/S11 = 5, and S05 = 4. Using the fifth-highest count (5) as a tie-preserving threshold, the upper group comprises S01, S02, S03, S06, and S11 and contains 27 records (34.6% of the country/group total). No record was entered for S18, S19, and S22, while the smallest positive count was 1 for S16, S24, S29, and S30. This leaves most records distributed outside the highest-count tier.

Aggregation by the four predefined themes gives the following profile: Theme A (Education and Training) = 35 (44.9%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 20 (25.6%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 9 (11.5%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 14 (17.9%). Theme A is the largest component and stands +11.1 percentage points from its pooled Wave 1 share of 33.8%. The comparison is compositional: it shows how the submitted records are distributed within the combined Other Countries group, not whether the theme is objectively more important in that country.

At statement level, the leading prompts connect S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S03 (long-term COVID-19 effects on learning), S06 (vocational diversification of education), and S11 (overqualification). The table therefore supports an interpretation of the written-field use as a cluster of linked education, labour-market, transition and inclusion issues to the extent shown by the counts. It does not reveal whether comments supported the statement wording, challenged its assumptions, supplied exceptions or proposed measures; those functions belong to the qualitative content analysis rather than to the frequency table alone.

Relative to the pooled distribution across the same thirty prompts, the largest positive within-profile differences occur for S01 (+3.5 percentage points), S06 (+2.6 percentage points), and S03 (+2.3 percentage points). The largest negative differences occur for S22 (-2.9 percentage points), S18 (-2.5 percentage points), and S19 (-2.5 percentage points). These percentage-point differences are useful for identifying which prompts occupy more or less of the local comment profile, but they are not inferential tests and should not be treated as statistically significant country effects.

The residual group is heterogeneous and must not be read as a single national context. Its education-heavy profile identifies the prompts that elicited text across the combined cases, but differences among the countries represented in this category cannot be recovered from the aggregate table.

Accordingly, the defensible conclusion from this table is descriptive: it identifies the breadth, concentration and thematic location of the 78 submitted records. Cross-country differences may also reflect sample size, respondent composition, willingness to write and differential interpretation of deliberately future-oriented statements. The numerical pattern should therefore guide, but not substitute for, the reading of the underlying comments.

2.11 Cross-Country Comparison of Open Comments for Wave 1

Wave 1 contains recurring themes across the submitted country groups, but the uneven volumes and voluntary nature of the comments prevent an inference of national or Europe-wide consensus.

Within the submitted texts, respondents often linked educational, economic, demographic and societal processes. The report treats these as recurring connections in the corpus, not as views held by all experts.

Education, disciplinary and digital skills, critical thinking, adaptability and lifelong learning recur in comments across several statements. The corpus also contains conditional arguments about reform and access.

The quality, accessibility and responsiveness of education systems recur in the submitted comments, including references to investment, teachers, governance, equal access, literacy, TVET and broader educational aims. These themes are not interpreted as a position shared by every respondent.

Labour-market transformation, ageing, skills shortages, career pathways and institutional cooperation recur in the submitted comments, together with qualifications about policy, migration and implementation.

Social inequality and unequal opportunities recur in comments across several statements and country groups. The material contains different emphases and qualifications, so the theme is not interpreted as unanimous concern.

Governance, institutional capacity and public investment also recur in the comments. These passages show that some respondents treated outcomes as policy-contingent; they do not establish a single agreed causal model.

Country-specific distributions show overlapping topics together with large differences in comment volume. The overlap is descriptive and does not rank national priorities.

Literacy, educational investment, TVET and future skills received comments in several groups. This pattern is reported as recurring written attention rather than a shared perception among all experts.

Skills mismatch, employability and institutional response recur in comments related to S13, S20 and S21. These themes do not establish a shared country position.

Childcare, educational inequality, socioeconomic background and parental support recur across country groups. The comments do not quantify the prevalence of these views.

Some national differences nevertheless emerged. Finnish respondents submitted comments across the entire questionnaire, including many on future skills, institutional adaptation and educational governance. Austrian comments displayed a comparatively strong focus on literacy, educational investment and childcare. German respondents emphasised educational governance, labour-market alignment and future workforce needs, while UK comments frequently highlighted educational inequalities, social disadvantage and transitions. Kosovo generated a comparatively balanced distribution across most statements, with comments spanning education, labour markets and social inclusion. These differences describe variations within the submitted corpus rather than fundamentally different or representative national narratives.

The cross-country synthesis therefore identifies recurring themes and differences in emphasis within the submitted comments; it does not infer a common European position.

2.12 Country-specific patterns in the open comments (Wave 1)

The following country profiles describe the comments received from each group. They are not representative country rankings and do not establish national priorities, especially where comment counts or respondent cells are small.

Austrian records include literacy, educational investment, childcare, TVET, labour-market alignment and demographic conditions. The profile is descriptive of submitted comments only.

Finland submitted the largest Wave 1 comment volume. The records include education governance, competencies, lifelong learning, democratic participation and social cohesion; volume is not interpreted as greater engagement.

German records include workforce development, governance, TVET, educational standards and labour-market alignment. No national prevalence or priority is inferred.

Comments submitted from Greece, Italy and Portugal include references to social inclusion, unequal educational opportunities, youth unemployment, public investment and social protection. The report describes these entries without claiming a shared Southern European position.

Kosovo records include educational reform, labour-market development, institutional capacity, social inclusion and opportunities for young people. They do not establish one national development perspective.

United Kingdom records include employability, educational inequality, guidance, skills and labour-market flexibility. The profile is not a population estimate.

The profiles show thematic overlap as well as differences in submitted emphasis. Neither pattern demonstrates that a view was held by all experts or that one topic had greater national importance.

2.13 Cross-Country Similarities

Across country groups, education, labour-market change, social inclusion and institutional capacity recur in the submitted comments. This recurring pattern is analytically relevant but is not evidence of broad consensus.

Education is discussed across country groups in relation to foundational skills, adaptability, labour-market change and wider societal functions. These recurring references do not establish a common national or European position.

Education–labour-market alignment, vocational pathways and transversal competencies also recur. The comments contain different qualifications and do not demonstrate broad convergence on one educational model.

Social inclusion and equal educational opportunities recur across several country groups. The qualitative comments document arguments and qualifications but do not measure agreement or national prevalence.

Institutional adaptability and governance are also recurring topics. Any claim about agreement on their importance must come from the quantitative ratings, not from voluntary comment frequency.

Several comments link education, labour markets, demographic change, technology, inequality and governance. The content supports a systems-oriented strand in the corpus, not a shared understanding held by all country groups.

2.14 Main Cross-Country Differences

The country material contains differences in emphasis, but the uneven and voluntary comment base does not support ranking the salience of issues between countries. The observations below are descriptive tendencies within the submitted text.

Economic, labour-market and societal framings appear in different country sections. The report does not quantify those framings as national differences.

Social inclusion and educational equity also recur with different examples across country groups. Those examples are not used to rank countries.

Institutional development, governance and reform appear in several country sections, including Finland and Kosovo. The observations remain descriptive of the submitted comments.

Technological transformation is described both as opportunity and risk. The corpus contains conditional and critical interpretations across country groups.

Differences in the breadth of country comment distributions are visible in the verified matrices. They may reflect topic, sample and writing-pattern differences and should not be converted into national priority rankings.

2.15 Emerging Policy Priorities - Emerging Strategic Priorities resulting from Wave 1

Wave 1 did not explicitly elicit policy measures. The following items are policy-relevant themes inferred from the qualitative components of the Delphi study, not recommendations endorsed by all participants.

Submitted comments referred to investment in education, infrastructure, teachers and early childhood provision. These references justify retaining investment as an area for consideration, without establishing its rank or consensus support.

Other comments referred to curriculum and qualification reform, TVET and the balance between occupational and broader educational aims. The content shows several positions rather than one agreed reform model.

Lifelong learning, career guidance, institutional cooperation and flexible pathways also recur. They are reported as policy-relevant themes derived from the comments, not as quantified preferences.

Reducing educational and social inequalities is another recurring theme, including socioeconomic background, regional disparities and access to support. The comments do not establish a common ordering of policy priorities.

Governance and coordination are mentioned in relation to education, labour-market institutions, employers and policy makers. These observations informed Wave 2 follow-up questions.

Taken together, Wave 1 provided exploratory policy-relevant themes. Wave 2 then elicited contributing factors, risks and proposed measures more directly. Recommendations in this report are syntheses of those qualitative components.

2.16 Ratio of Open Comments per Completed Questionnaire for Wave 1

To further contextualise optional comment-field use across countries, the ratio between the total number of open-comment records and the number of completed questionnaires was calculated for each participating country group.

This indicator is methodologically informative because it provides an exploratory indication of:

- how intensively experts used the optional qualitative comment fields,
- and the average qualitative commenting intensity per completed questionnaire.

Calculation: Number of open-comment records in a country group divided by completed questionnaires in that group, rounded to two decimals.

2.16.1 Mathematical formula:

$$\text{Comments per Questionnaire} = \frac{\text{Number of Comments}}{\text{Completed Questionnaires}}$$

Example Finland:

$$\frac{470}{71} = 6.62$$

Overall value:

$$\frac{1533}{433} = 3.54$$

All values rounded to two decimal places.

Importantly, this measure should not be interpreted as an indicator of data quality, expertise, or substantive relevance. Rather, it functions as a descriptive measure of the relative frequency with which respondents supplemented their quantitative Delphi ratings with additional qualitative reflections.

The table below shows substantial cross-country variation in the frequency with which participants used optional qualitative fields. The pooled Wave 1 rate was 3.54 comment records per completed questionnaire.

The highest Wave 1 rates were Finland (6.62 comment records per completed questionnaire), the United Kingdom (6.33) and Kosovo (4.45). These values describe optional written-field use only; they do not demonstrate stronger engagement, expertise or substantive relevance.

The lowest Wave 1 rates were Italy (1.26), Portugal (1.32) and Greece (1.34). The data show fewer qualitative records per completed questionnaire in these groups but do not identify why the rates differ or how respondents approached the closed-ended items.

Overall, optional comment-field use varied across country groups in both total volume and comment records per completed questionnaire. The differences remain descriptive.

2.16.2 Ratio of Comments per Completed Questionnaire Wave 1 (ranked)

Country	Completed Questionnaires	Number of Comment Records	Comments per Questionnaire
Finland	71	470	6.62
UK	36	228	6.33
Kosovo	55	245	4.45
Germany	30	103	3.43
Poland	34	95	2.79
Austria	58	154	2.66
Greece	38	51	1.34
Portugal	38	50	1.32
Italy	47	59	1.26
<i>Other</i>	26	78	3.00
Total	433	1,533	3.54

Comment records per completed questionnaire varied across country groups. The ratio measures optional written field use only; it does not measure expertise, quality, commitment, national importance or consensus.

The highest Wave 1 rates were Finland 6.62, United Kingdom 6.33, Kosovo 4.45 and Germany 3.43 comment records per completed questionnaire.

Higher ratios indicate more frequent use of optional comment fields in the relevant country groups.

Austria recorded 2.66 comment records per completed questionnaire in Wave 1. This is a descriptive rate and does not support an inference about thematic breadth or respondent engagement.

Country differences in the rate are reported without attributing them to topic selectivity or national response quality.

The lowest Wave 1 rates were Italy 1.26, Portugal 1.32 and Greece 1.34.

2.17 Methodological Interpretation

The observed differences should be interpreted cautiously. Higher frequencies of open comments do not necessarily imply:

- greater expertise,
- stronger substantive engagement,
- higher policy relevance,
- or better response quality.

Similarly, lower frequencies should not automatically be interpreted as indicating weaker engagement or lower importance of issues. Cross-country variation in commenting intensity may also reflect:

- differing survey cultures,
- national response styles,
- varying norms regarding optional text fields,
- language-related factors,
- time constraints,
- or differing interpretations of the role of open comments within the Delphi process.

Consequently, the present indicator should be understood as an exploratory descriptive measure rather than a substantive ranking of countries.

2.18 Analytical Relevance for the Delphi Process

The ratio is useful for documenting how often optional written fields were used relative to the number of completed questionnaires.

- It does not identify how many unique respondents commented on each topic.
- It does not measure the importance or depth of qualitative reflection.
- It does not replace content analysis or quantitative Delphi measures.

The Wave 1 country ratios are therefore descriptive only.

No substantive ranking of countries is derived from these rates.

Recurring themes are analysed separately from commenting intensity.

2.19 Verified Wave 1 Comment Records by Thematic Area / Topic Block

2.20 Overall Pattern

Exact comment totals differ by thematic block. These totals describe the composition of the 1,533-record Wave 1 corpus.

Verified thematic totals are reported in the table below.

Thematic Area / Topic Block	Comment Records (share of 1,533)
Education and Training	518 (33.8%)
Labour Market and Employment	361 (23.5%)
Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	353 (23.0%)
Inclusion and Disadvantage	301 (19.6%)

2.21 Education and Training = Largest Verified Comment Volume

Education and Training contains 518 comment records. The statement-level counts are reported in the tables below.

Statement	Number of Comment Records
S1 – Double competencies (disciplinary + IT)	84
S2 – Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling	82
S5 – Early childhood education investment	67
S4 – Behavioural problems in schools	64
S3 – COVID-related learning impacts	63

Education and Training contains 518 comment records (33.8% of Wave 1). This is the largest corpus component, not a measure of policy importance or agreement.

2.22 Labour Market and Employment = 361 Comment Records

Labour Market and Employment contains 361 comment records. This total describes corpus composition only.

Statement Number	Number of Comment Records
S11 – Overqualification	63
S12 – Childcare and labour participation	59
S13 – Youth employment vulnerability	49

S14 – Employer expectations vs training provision	49
S15 – Ageing workforce and labour shortages	47

The submitted comments include labour-market restructuring, qualifications, demographic pressure and institutional matching.

2.23 Inclusion and Disadvantage = 301 Comment Records

Inclusion and Disadvantage contains 301 comment records. Later questionnaire position is not used to infer fatigue, salience or normative intensity.

Statement	Number of Comment Records
S27 – Gender stereotypes and career pathways	47
S29 – Digital infrastructure and regional disparities	47
S28 – Reliance on parental support in education	44
S25 – Resource inequities between public and private schools	44
S26 – Social class and educational opportunities	44
S24 – Educational inequalities and segregation	41
S30 – Discrimination against minority groups	34

The content includes inequality, discrimination, social exclusion and digital access.

2.24 Transitions and Systemic Interfaces = 353 Comment Records

Transitions and Systemic Interfaces contains 353 comment records. The verified statement counts are listed below.

Statement	Number of Comment Records
S20 – Curriculum adaptation to emerging occupations	54
S17 – Media and influencers shaping educational choices	50
S21 – Social partnerships	45
S23 – Integrated guidance centres	44
S16 – Youth mental health and life skills	39
S18 – Fragmented transitions to employment	39
S19 – Extended juvenile phase	38

The highest verified counts in this block are S20 = 54, S17 = 50, S21 = 45 and S23 = 44; S16 and S18 each have 39, and S19 has 38.

2.25 Statements with the Highest Number of Wave 1 Comment Records

2.25.1 Top 10 Statements by Number of Open Comments

Rank	Statement	Theme	Number of Comment Records
1	S1 – Double competencies (disciplinary + IT)	Education and Training	84
2	S2 – Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling	Education and Training	82
3	S5 – Early childhood education investment	Education and Training	67
4	S4 – Behavioural problems in schools	Education and Training	64
5	S3 – COVID-related learning impacts	Education and Training	63
6	S11 – Overqualification	Labour Market and Employment	63
7	S12 – Childcare and labour participation	Labour Market and Employment	59
8	S6 – Vocational diversification	Education and Training	59
9	S20 – Curriculum adaptation	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	54
10	S7 – Neglect of TVET	Education and Training	54

Analytical Interpretation

The ranking identifies statements with frequent use of the optional comment field. S02 has 82 records; the Top 10 composition is unchanged (S03/S11 and S07/S20 are tied).

High counts do not independently indicate uncertainty, controversy, normative sensitivity, policy relevance or consensus.

Note: The non-monotonic pattern limits a simple fatigue explanation. The report does not infer a causal mechanism from comment frequency alone.

2.26 Length of Comments measured by Words and Characters (Overall and per Country)

The final verified report does not publish a Wave 1 country or statement ranking by comment length because no harmonised audited Wave 1 length table was used in this correction. This avoids mixing qualitative inspection with reproducible length statistics.

Where comment length is discussed, it is treated as descriptive only and not as a proxy for quality, importance, reflection depth, ambiguity, controversy or consensus.

Note: The individual comment record remains the unit of analysis; all substantive themes are derived from content, not from an assumed relationship between length and analytical value.

2.27 Preliminary Analytical Observations

Wave 1 contains 1,533 comment records. No numerical Wave 1 length comparison is used for country or statement ranking in this final report.

2.28 Countries with Particularly Long and Elaborated Comments

No country is ranked by comment length without a harmonised audited Wave 1 calculation.

Length-analysis item	Final verified treatment
Country ranking in Wave 1	Not reported: no harmonised audited Wave 1 length table was used for this final report.
Statement ranking in Wave 1	Not reported: qualitative inspection is not a substitute for a reproducible length calculation.
Interpretation	Comment length is descriptive and is not evidence of quality, importance, consensus or national priority.

2.29 Statement-Specific Differences in Comment Length

No statement is ranked by comment length without the same reproducible cleaning and tokenisation rule.

Evidence type	Permissible interpretation
Comment count	Frequency of use of an optional written field.
Comment length	Extent of written text after the stated cleaning rule.
Content analysis	Recurring themes, qualifications and submitted proposals.
Quantitative ratings	Consensus, disagreement and convergence measures.

2.30 Methodological Interpretation and Outlook

Comment length alone cannot identify analytical complexity, perceived ambiguity, disagreement or policy salience.

Accordingly, Wave 1 interpretation relies on verified counts and textual content; consensus and uncertainty remain properties of the quantitative Delphi ratings.

Note: The integration with quantitative ratings is performed with these evidence types kept explicitly separate.

3 Delphi Wave 2

3.1 Description of the Sample of Delphi Wave 2

A total of 207 questionnaires were completed by the field closure on 10 June 2026 at 18:00 and retained in the Wave 2 cross-sectional dataset; no completed case was removed during cleaning. Invitations were primarily token-based re-contact of Wave 1 participants. The reconciliation also records one manually added

participant without a Wave 1 record and one late completer linked to a Wave 1 record outside the Wave 1 N = 433 analysis base.

3.2 Sample Structure

Wave 2 did not re-collect sociodemographic information. Country is taken from the linked Wave 1 record within the N = 433 analysis set (205 of 207 cases; Main Report, Section 5.2). The two cases without such a link — one Wave 1 completer after the cut-off and one manually added participant — are grouped, together with respondents from outside the nine EDU-LAB project countries, as Other countries / not linked.

The verified distribution is Austria 35, Finland 33, Italy 33, Kosovo 26, Portugal 17, Germany 17, Poland 12, Greece 8, United Kingdom 8 and Other countries / not linked 18. Total N = 207.

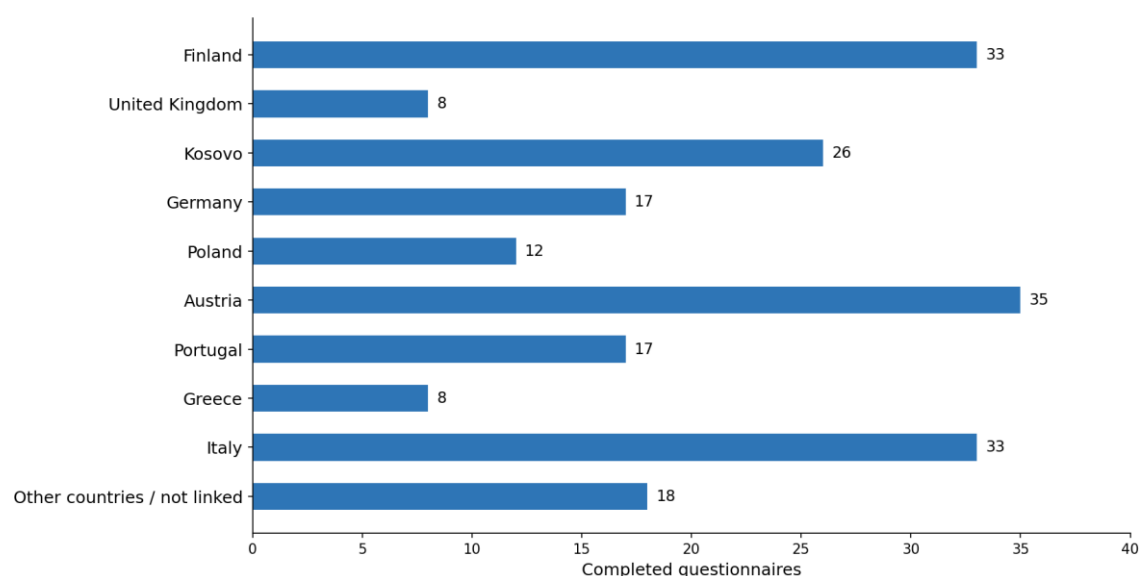
All project-country groups are represented, but the country cells are uneven. Cross-country results are therefore descriptive and are not population estimates.

3.2.1 Distribution of Wave 2 Respondents by Country

Country / group	Completed Questionnaires
Austria	35
Finland	33
Germany	17
Greece	8
Italy	33
Kosovo	26
Poland	12
Portugal	17
United Kingdom	8
Other countries / not linked to a target country	18
Total	207

Source: EDU-LAB Delphi Survey – Wave 2 (N = 207 completed questionnaires; 205 linked to a target country, 2 not linked), Horizon Europe Project EDU-LAB (2025–2027), Grant Agreement No. 101177428. Calculations and data processing by Economica, Institute of Economic Research, Vienna.

3.2.2 Wave 2 completed questionnaires by country



Source: EDU-LAB OSES Delphi Survey, Wave 2 final dataset (N = 207; field phase closed 10 June 2026, 18:00).

The table below reports verified voluntary open-comment records across all Wave 2 statements. The total is 793.

3.2.3 Voluntary open-comment records by country / group — Wave 2

Rank	Country	Number of Comment Records
1	Finland	122
2	Austria	113
3	Germany	108
4	Other countries / not linked	96
5	The UK	91
6	Kosovo	80
7	Poland	62
8	Portugal	57
9	Italy	52
10	Greece	12
	Total	793

Note: The 793 voluntary Wave 2 open-comment records comprise 640 Biggest Risk comments, 85 Contributing Factors - other comments and 68 Policy Measures - other comments. Counts refer to comment records, not to unique respondents.

Source: EDU-LAB Delphi Survey – Wave 2 (N = 207 completed questionnaires), Horizon Europe Project EDU-LAB (2025–2027), Grant Agreement No. 101177428. Calculations and data processing by Economica, Vienna.

3.3 Questionnaire Design and Statement Selection in Wave 2

Wave 2 was intentionally designed as a targeted reassessment rather than a repetition of the full Wave 1 questionnaire. The objective was not to re-evaluate all 30 original statements, but to focus respondent attention on those areas where the first Delphi round had revealed disagreement, uncertainty, divergent assessments or particularly relevant policy implications.

As a consequence, only 21 of the 30 original statements were carried forward into Wave 2. The remaining nine statements were excluded from further reassessment because the Wave 1 results suggested comparatively stable assessments, lower analytical priority, or limited added value from an additional Delphi round. The following statements were therefore not included in Wave 2:

3.3.1 Not included Statements in Wave 2

Statement	Statement Formulation
S6	Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education
S8	Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist
S10	Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent
S11	Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications
S15	Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors
S19	Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement
S22	Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition
S26	Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities
S30	Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination

The 21 retained statements were organised into four analytically distinct blocks reflecting their Wave 1 response patterns:

- **Block 1 – Polarised Statements** (2 statements)
- **Block 2 – Diverging Statements** (8 statements)
- **Block 3 – Uncertain Statements** (3 statements)
- **Block 4 – Consensus Statements** (8 statements)

Importantly, the reassessment strategy differed across blocks. While respondents were asked to re-evaluate key dimensions for the Polarised and Diverging statements, the Uncertain and Consensus blocks introduced new judgement tasks specifically designed to explore the sources of uncertainty and the feasibility of policy implementation. This block-specific design reduced respondent burden while simultaneously generating more targeted information on the most analytically relevant issues identified during Wave 1.

3.4 Sociodemographic Information and Longitudinal Linkage

Wave 2 did not re-collect sociodemographic information. Individual tokens enabled linkage where a corresponding Wave 1 record existed; the reconciliation exceptions are reported below rather than treated as fully matched cases.

Within the Wave 1 N = 433 analysis base, 205 Wave 2 cases were linked. One additional late completer linked to Wave 1 ID 1041 outside that base, and one manually added Wave 2 case had no Wave 1 record. Harmonised country is valid for 206 cases and unavailable for one.

Within-person analyses use the unique reconciled base of N = 204, not all 207 Wave 2 cases; N = 202 contributed at least one comparable rating pair. Full comparability of all 207 cases is therefore not claimed.

3.5 Open Comment Records by Country / Group

Wave 2 contains 793 voluntary comment records: 640 Biggest Risk records, 85 Contributing Factors — Other records and 68 Policy Measures — Other records. Counts are records, not unique respondents.

3.5.1 Voluntary Open Comment Records by Country / Group

Rank	Country	Number of Comment Records
1	Finland	122
2	Austria	113
3	Germany	108
4	Other countries / not linked	96
5	United Kingdom	91
6	Kosovo	80
7	Poland	62
8	Portugal	57
9	Italy	52
10	Greece	12
TOTAL		793

The distribution of comments does not simply mirror the country composition of the Wave 2 sample; substantial differences in commenting intensity are evident across country groups.

Note: The 793 records provide a substantial text corpus. Corpus size alone does not demonstrate engagement quality, agreement, representativeness or endorsement of policy recommendations.

3.6 Distribution of Open Comments Across the Questionnaire

The Wave 2 sequence shows non-monotonic differences in comment counts. Because Wave 2 used selected statements and multiple prompt types, frequency alone cannot establish a survey-fatigue or topic-salience effect.

It should be noted that Wave 2 differed substantially from Wave 1 in both structure and purpose. Rather than reassessing all 30 statements, Wave 2 focused on 21 selected statements grouped into four analytical blocks reflecting different patterns of expert disagreement, uncertainty and consensus identified during the first Delphi round. In addition, the qualitative questions varied across blocks and included open-ended

questions on perceived risks as well as optional open-text responses associated with contributing factors and policy measures.

Across all fields, 793 comment records were retained: 640 Biggest Risk, 85 Contributing Factors and 68 Policy Measures. These totals describe the verified corpus.

The following table reports all 793 comment records by statement.

3.6.1 Voluntary Open Comment Records by Statement

Rank	Statement	Statement Formulation	Theme	Number of Comment Records
1	Statement 2	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	Education and Training	94
2	Statement 7	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	Education and Training	70
3	Statement 1	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	Education and Training	50
3	Statement 13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	Labour Market and Employment	50
5	Statement 5	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	Education and Training	48
6	Statement 16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	45
7	Statement 17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	42
8	Statement 18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	37
9	Statement 25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	Inclusion and Disadvantage	34
10	Statement 21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	33
11	Statement 12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	Labour Market and Employment	30

11	Statement 29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	Inclusion and Disadvantage	30
13	Statement 23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	28
14	Statement 4	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	Education and Training	26
14	Statement 9	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	Labour Market and Employment	26
14	Statement 20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	26
14	Statement 27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	Inclusion and Disadvantage	26
14	Statement 28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	Inclusion and Disadvantage	26
19	Statement 3	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	Education and Training	25
20	Statement 24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	Inclusion and Disadvantage	24
21	Statement 14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	Labour Market and Employment	23
	Total			793

Across all three Wave 2 fields, S02 has 94 comment records and S07 has 70; S01 and S13 each have 50, and S05 has 48. The table is rebuilt from the verified 793-row raw file.

In the separate Biggest Risk field, the corresponding leading counts are S02 = 77, S07 = 57, S01 = 45 and S13 = 42. The all-comment and Biggest Risk-only bases are not mixed.

All 21 retained statements have comment records. Differences in counts show different frequencies of written field use and do not establish controversy, importance or consensus.

Note: Substantive interpretations in the following sections are based on the submitted text and are reported together with qualifications and disagreement.

3.6.2 Distribution of Biggest Risk Comment Records Across Statements

Rank	Statement	Statement Formulation	Theme	Number of Comment Records
1	Statement 2	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	Education and Training	77
2	Statement 7	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	Education and Training	57
3	Statement 1	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	Education and Training	45
4	Statement 13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	Labour Market and Employment	42
5	Statement 5	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	Education and Training	38
6	Statement 17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	34
7	Statement 18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	31
8	Statement 16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	29
9	Statement 25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	Inclusion and Disadvantage	28

10	Statement 21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	25
11	Statement 29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	Inclusion and Disadvantage	25
12	Statement 23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	24
13	Statement 12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labour participation	Labour Market and Employment	23
14	Statement 28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	Inclusion and Disadvantage	23
15	Statement 4	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioural problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	Education and Training	22
16	Statement 24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	Inclusion and Disadvantage	21
17	Statement 9	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	Labour Market and Employment	20
18	Statement 27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	Inclusion and Disadvantage	20
19	Statement 14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	Labour Market and Employment	19

20	Statement 20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	19
21	Statement 3	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	Education and Training	18
	TOTAL			640

3.7 Additional Open Comments on Contributing Factors and Policy Measures

In addition to the statement-specific Biggest Risk comments analysed in the previous section, Wave 2 generated a further body of qualitative material through the open-text “Other” response options attached to the Contributing Factors and Policy Measures questions. These questions formed part of the block-specific follow-up design introduced in Wave 2 and invited respondents to specify additional factors or policy measures not adequately captured by the predefined response categories.

The Biggest Risk field is the closest Wave 2 counterpart to the general Wave 1 statement comment. The two Other fields extend structured answer categories and contain supplementary factors, proposals, and qualifications.

The 85 Contributing Factors — Other and 68 Policy Measures — Other records are analysed as qualitative additions. Policy recommendations derived from them are analytical syntheses, not options endorsed by all participants.

3.7.1 Overall Distribution of Additional Open Comments.

Comment Type	Number of Comment Records
Contributing Factors — Other	85
Policy Measures — Other	68
Total	153

The 153 Other-field records provide supplementary explanations, proposals and qualifications outside the predefined categories. They do not establish causal mechanisms, priority or endorsement.

3.8 Polarised Statements

The Polarised block contains S02 and S07, classified from the quantitative Wave 1 ratings. Together they generated 134 Biggest Risk comment records in Wave 2. Their high comment volume documents written activity but does not independently prove controversy or consequence.

The 134 records contain arguments, concerns, qualifications and different expectations. Their volume does not establish that respondents considered these statements more important or more contested than other statements.

3.8.1 Biggest Risk Comments – Polarised Statements

Statement	Statement Formulation	Number of Comment Records
Statement 2	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	77
Statement 7	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	57
Total		134

3.9 Qualitative Analysis

S02 comments repeatedly discuss literacy, numeracy, communication, social exclusion, employability, democratic participation and economic consequences. Other comments question the scenario's inevitability or describe possible mitigating reforms. This is a content summary of the submitted records, not a measure of agreement.

S07 comments discuss the balance between university and vocational pathways, skills shortages, the status of TVET, permeability and technological change. The records include both concern about neglect of TVET and challenges to the statement's assumption.

Across S02 and S07, education–labour-market alignment and inequality recur. The report does not infer consequence or explanatory power from the block's comment count.

3.10 Statement 2: Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm

S02 comments describe potentially severe educational, labour-market, democratic, social and economic consequences of declining literacy, while also containing qualifications and disagreement about whether the scenario would occur.

The most frequently recurring theme concerned the risk of social exclusion and labour-market marginalisation. Respondents warned that insufficient literacy would reduce employability, increase unemployment and contribute to a growing number of young people unable to participate effectively in economic life. Closely linked to this concern was the perceived risk of skills shortages, with several comments arguing that societies facing demographic decline cannot afford to lose large numbers of potential workers due to inadequate basic competencies.

A second major theme focused on social polarisation and inequality. Many respondents suggested that declining literacy would widen existing social divisions and further disadvantage already vulnerable groups. Several comments explicitly referred to increasing poverty, exclusion and social unrest as possible long-term consequences.

A third prominent theme concerned the implications for democracy and active citizenship. Numerous respondents argued that individuals with limited literacy skills are more vulnerable to misinformation, manipulation and political radicalisation. In this context, declining literacy was frequently linked to concerns about democratic resilience, civic participation and the broader functioning of democratic societies.

Finally, respondents also highlighted the potential impact on economic competitiveness and societal development. Several comments described declining literacy as a threat to innovation, productivity and long-

term economic prosperity, with some characterising the scenario as a major socio-economic setback affecting society as a whole.

Overall, the submitted S02 comments often frame literacy as relevant to economic participation, social integration and democratic stability. They do not establish consensus on the statement's likelihood.

3.11 Statement 7: Focus on University Education Will Neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)

S07 comments discuss the relationship between educational pathways and labour-market needs, including possible skills shortages and the future role of TVET.

Skills shortages and labour-market imbalances recur in the submitted records, with examples referring to technical and skilled occupations. The frequency of those themes is not converted into a prevalence estimate.

The status and attractiveness of vocational education also recur, together with references to investment, political attention and training opportunities.

Some records connect educational pathways with social inequality, permeability and lifelong learning.

Other records challenge the statement and suggest that technology or labour-market demand could strengthen vocational education. These qualifications remain part of the interpretation.

Overall, the S07 corpus contains arguments about workforce development, economic consequences, social cohesion and the future position of TVET; no common respondent position is inferred.

3.12 Block 1 Summary

The qualitative evidence from the two polarised statements reveals a common underlying concern regarding the capacity of education systems to prepare young people for future societal and labour-market challenges. While Statement 2 focuses on the erosion of fundamental literacy and basic skills, Statement 7 highlights the potential neglect of vocational pathways and technical competencies. In both cases, respondents emphasised the close relationship between educational outcomes, labour-market participation and social cohesion.

Across the submitted S02 and S07 comments, social inequality, labour-market mismatch, skills shortages and societal consequences recur. The comments also contain qualifications and disagreement about the statements' likelihood and wording.

The block's 134 records show frequent use of the Biggest Risk field. They do not quantify how many respondents shared a view or establish the issues' importance.

3.13 Block 2: Diverging Statements

The Diverging Statements block comprised eight statements for which respondents in Wave 1 generally agreed on the direction of the development but differed considerably regarding its magnitude, urgency or expected impact. Unlike the polarised statements, these issues did not divide respondents into opposing camps. Instead, disagreement emerged primarily through varying assessments of how strongly the anticipated developments would affect young people, education systems and labour markets in the future.

The eight Diverging statements generated 262 Biggest Risk comment records. This is the largest block total, partly because it contains the largest number of statements; it is not interpreted as a ranking of importance.

3.13.1 Biggest Risk Comments – Diverging Statements

Statement	Statement Formulation	Number of Comment Records
Statement 1	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	45
Statement 5	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	38
Statement 13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	42
Statement 16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	29
Statement 17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	34
Statement 21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	25
Statement 23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	24
Statement 29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	25
Total		262

3.14 Qualitative Analysis – Diverging Statements

The comments associated with the diverging statements reveal a recurring concern with the capacity of institutions to adapt to rapidly changing social, technological and economic conditions. Although respondents generally agreed on the direction of the developments described, they frequently differed in their expectations regarding their pace, scope and long-term consequences.

Skills adaptation and educational responsiveness recur in comments on S01, S05 and S29, including digital skills, interdisciplinary competencies, early intervention and unequal access. These are themes in submitted text, not quantified priorities.

Labour-market vulnerability and youth transitions recur in S13, S21 and S23 comments, including work experience, precarious employment, institutional cooperation and transition support.

A third recurring theme involved the growing influence of social and psychological factors on educational and career trajectories. The comments on Statements 16 and 17 highlighted concerns regarding mental health challenges, social media influences and changing patterns of information consumption among young people. Respondents frequently argued that these factors increasingly shape educational aspirations, career decisions and long-term life opportunities, while also creating new risks associated with misinformation, unrealistic expectations and psychological vulnerability.

Some comments discuss social partnerships, guidance services and digital infrastructure as possible mechanisms; others question institutional capacity, scale or speed of implementation.

The Diverging classification comes from the quantitative Wave 1 ratings. The qualitative material documents different expectations, mechanisms and qualifications and is not used to claim broad acceptance of a direction of change.

3.15 Block 3: Uncertain Statements

The Uncertain classification derives from the quantitative results. The submitted comments add concerns, conditions and qualifications; they do not show that respondents shared the same interpretation of importance.

The Uncertain Statements block comprised three statements for which respondents in Wave 1 expressed comparatively high levels of uncertainty. Unlike the Polarised Statements, uncertainty did not arise primarily from opposing viewpoints, and unlike the Diverging Statements, respondents did not merely differ in the intensity of their assessments. Instead, these statements were characterised by a lack of confidence regarding future developments and the difficulty of predicting how the issues concerned would evolve over time.

In Wave 2, respondents were therefore invited not only to reconsider the statements themselves but also to reflect on the sources of uncertainty surrounding them. Together, the three statements generated 82 Biggest Risk comments, providing valuable insight into the complex social, institutional and structural factors that contribute to uncertainty in these areas.

3.15.1 Biggest Risk Comments – Uncertain Statements

Statement	Statement Formulation	Number of Comment Records
Statement 18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	31
Statement 25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	28
Statement 28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	23
Total		82

3.16 Qualitative Analysis – Uncertain Statements

The comments associated with the uncertain statements reveal a strong awareness of the complexity and interconnectedness of educational and social inequalities. Respondents frequently emphasised that the future development of these issues depends on a wide range of economic, political and institutional factors, making precise predictions particularly difficult.

A central theme across all three statements concerned the risk of growing inequalities and unequal life chances. Respondents repeatedly warned that structural disadvantages may accumulate over time, particularly for young people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, migrant families and other vulnerable groups. Many comments suggested that educational systems continue to reproduce

existing inequalities and that without targeted interventions these disparities may become increasingly entrenched.

The comments on Statement 18 focused primarily on the changing nature of school-to-work transitions. Respondents highlighted labour-market volatility, technological transformation, changing employment patterns and the increasing prevalence of non-standard forms of work as factors contributing to uncertainty. Several comments argued that future transitions are likely to become more fragmented and less predictable, while others pointed out that the extent of these developments will depend heavily on economic conditions and policy responses.

For Statement 25, respondents frequently discussed inequalities in educational resources, infrastructure and learning opportunities. Many comments expressed concern that differences between schools and educational institutions may widen due to unequal funding, regional disparities and varying levels of political support. At the same time, several respondents noted that future policy decisions could either exacerbate or reduce such inequalities, contributing to the uncertainty reflected in the quantitative findings.

The comments related to Statement 28 centred on the role of families in supporting educational success. Respondents repeatedly emphasised that parental education, language skills, financial resources and familiarity with educational systems remain important determinants of educational outcomes. Some comments warned that increasing reliance on parental support could disadvantage students whose families are less able to provide educational assistance, thereby reinforcing existing inequalities. However, other respondents pointed to compensatory measures within schools and support services that could mitigate these risks.

Across the three Uncertain statements, comments discuss complexity and forecasting difficulty. Comment content does not establish that all respondents regarded the issues as equally significant.

3.17 Block 4: Consensus Statements

The Consensus label derives from the quantitative Wave 1 ratings. Wave 2 qualitative interpretation remains separate and reports risks, qualifications and proposed conditions.

The eight statements generated 162 Biggest Risk records. This volume shows continued use of the written field but does not independently measure concern or consensus.

3.17.1 Biggest Risk Comments – Consensus Statements

Statement	Statement Formulation	Number of Comment Records
Statement 3	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	18
Statement 4	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioural problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	22
Statement 9	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	20
Statement 12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labour participation	23

Statement 14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	19
Statement 20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	19
Statement 24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	21
Statement 27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	20
Total		162

3.18 Qualitative Analysis – Consensus Statements

The qualitative records for the Consensus block contain consequences, qualifications and implementation concerns. They are not treated as a second measure of the quantitative agreement that defined the block.

One of the most prominent themes concerned the persistence of structural inequalities and disadvantage. Comments relating to Statements 12, 24 and 27 repeatedly highlighted the ways in which social background, gender, family circumstances and access to resources continue to shape educational and labour-market opportunities. Respondents frequently warned that without sustained policy intervention, existing inequalities could become further entrenched and contribute to increasing social polarisation.

Institutional adaptation recurs in comments on S04, S14 and S20, including skills requirements, demographic change, technology, governance and investment.

The comments related to Statement 9 focused primarily on technological transformation and the growing influence of artificial intelligence on education and employment. Respondents generally recognised the potential benefits of new career pathways and emerging forms of work but also warned about increased uncertainty, unequal access to opportunities and the possible displacement of traditional entry routes into employment. The comments suggest that technological change is viewed simultaneously as a source of opportunity and risk.

For S03, comments discuss learning, social development and mental wellbeing, while differing on the magnitude, persistence and causal role of COVID-19. The recurring theme is reported without claiming broad agreement.

Policy intervention is proposed in a subset of the block's comments. The submitted measures are reported as proposals and do not demonstrate agreement on one intervention or policy package.

The label Consensus Statements derives from the quantitative Delphi ratings. Their qualitative comments add risks, qualifications and implementation concerns; the voluntary texts are not a separate consensus measure.

Across the four blocks, comments refer to education, labour-market transitions, skills, technology, inequality and institutional response. These are recurring themes, not an engagement or importance ranking.

3.19 Cross-Cutting Themes Across the Wave 2 Open Comments

The cross-cutting synthesis groups recurring concerns in the 640 Biggest Risk records. It summarises the content without treating recurrence as consensus, prevalence or causal evidence.

3.20 AI and Digitalisation

Digital skills, artificial intelligence, technological adaptation, unequal access and changing career pathways recur across several statement comments. The corpus includes both risks and opportunities.

3.21 Inequalities and Social Disadvantage

Concerns regarding social inequalities represented one of the most prominent themes throughout the qualitative material. Respondents repeatedly emphasised the persistence of disparities linked to socio-economic background, educational attainment, geographic location, migration status and access to resources. Many comments suggested that existing inequalities may become further entrenched if emerging challenges are not addressed effectively. Across multiple statements, some comments warned that unequal opportunities in education and employment could contribute to growing social polarisation, exclusion and disadvantage.

3.22 Labour Market Transformation

A third cross-cutting theme concerned the ongoing transformation of labour markets. Respondents frequently discussed changing skill demands, demographic developments, labour shortages and the evolving relationship between education and employment. Many comments highlighted the need for greater flexibility, adaptability and lifelong learning in response to rapidly changing economic conditions. At the same time, concerns were expressed regarding precarious employment, unstable transitions and the vulnerability of young people entering increasingly complex labour markets.

3.23 Parental Background and Family Resources

Parental education, resources, language, familiarity with education systems and family support recur in comments on educational outcomes and inequality. The material does not quantify their relative importance.

3.24 Mental Health and Well-Being

Mental health concerns featured prominently across a range of statements. Respondents frequently referred to the long-term consequences of psychological stress, social isolation and the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mental well-being was often discussed in connection with educational performance, employability, social participation and life skills. Many comments emphasised that mental health challenges should not be viewed as isolated individual problems but as broader societal issues with significant implications for education systems, labour markets and social cohesion.

3.25 Governance and Policy Capacity

A final cross-cutting theme concerned the ability of institutions and policy makers to respond effectively to emerging challenges. Across many statements, respondents questioned whether existing governance structures, educational systems and labour-market institutions possess the necessary capacity, resources and flexibility to implement effective solutions. Concerns regarding fragmented responsibilities, insufficient coordination and delayed policy responses appeared repeatedly throughout the comments. At the same time, respondents frequently stressed that many of the risks identified in the Delphi exercise are not inevitable and could be mitigated through proactive, evidence-based and coordinated policy interventions.

3.26 Overall Synthesis

Taken together, the content analysis documents recurring connections among the reported themes; it does not establish statistical relationships or one shared causal model.

- Educational inequalities,
- technological transformation,
- labour-market change,
- mental health concerns and

The content analysis identifies recurring links among education, technology, labour-market change, mental health, inequality and institutional capacity. These links occur in the submitted text and are not statistical causal effects.

3.27 Country-Level Overview of Open Comments

Across country groups, several themes recur, including educational inequality, labour-market transformation, digitalisation, skills and institutional response. The overlap is descriptive and does not demonstrate national consensus.

Note: Given the comparatively small number of comments, the observations for Greece should be interpreted as illustrative rather than representative.

3.27.1 Austria (113 comments)

Austrian respondents provided a particularly diverse set of comments across all three open-comment formats. The comments frequently emphasised social cohesion, democratic participation, labour-market integration and the risks associated with educational disadvantage. Compared to several other countries, Austrian respondents made extensive use of the additional open-text fields on contributing factors and policy measures, often providing detailed explanations and policy-oriented reflections.

3.27.2 Finland (122 comments)

Finland generated the largest number of qualitative comments in Wave 2. The comments frequently focused on educational quality, future skills requirements and the relationship between education systems and labour-market transformation. Respondents repeatedly highlighted literacy, digital competencies and the need for educational adaptation in response to technological change. Concerns regarding educational inequalities and the long-term consequences of policy decisions were also prominent.

3.27.3 Germany (108 comments)

German records include structural and institutional issues, labour-market requirements, skills, TVET, educational inequality, workforce development and demographic change. These are descriptive themes in the submitted comments.

3.27.4 Greece (12 comments)

The 12 Greek records include educational disadvantage, labour-market uncertainty and social inequality. The cell is too small for a broader or representative country inference.

3.27.5 Italy (52 comments)

Italian respondents frequently highlighted educational inequalities, youth transitions and labour-market challenges. Several comments referred to the difficulties young people face when entering employment and the need for stronger connections between education and labour-market requirements. Social inclusion and the role of public policy were also recurring themes.

3.27.6 Kosovo (80 comments)

Kosovo's 80 records are all Biggest Risk comments and include education, employability, labour-market opportunity and social mobility. No national prevalence or priority is inferred.

3.27.7 Poland (62 comments)

Polish respondents frequently discussed educational adaptation, labour-market demands and the challenges associated with technological and economic transformation. The comments also reflected concerns about social inequalities and unequal access to opportunities. Compared to several other countries, Polish respondents provided a relatively high number of additional comments on contributing factors.

3.27.8 Portugal (57 comments)

Portuguese records include education systems, social inclusion, labour-market developments, skills and institutional support. The country section describes the submitted text only.

3.27.9 United Kingdom (91 comments)

Respondents from the United Kingdom frequently highlighted issues relating to social inequality, educational disadvantage and labour-market uncertainty. Several comments focused on the risks associated with unequal access to opportunities and the consequences of persistent socio-economic disparities. The UK group also supplied a comparatively large number of additional comments on contributing factors and policy measures; this documents use of those optional fields, not the strength or prevalence of interest in the topics.

3.27.10 Other Countries (96 comments)

Note: Other Countries combines heterogeneous contexts. Its records include educational inequality, labour-market transitions, digitalisation, social inclusion and policy responses, but cannot be read as one country position.

3.28 Methodological Interpretation

3.28.1 Survey Fatigue Effect

Comment counts vary across questionnaire position, but the selected-statement design and different prompt types prevent a causal attribution to survey fatigue. The sequence is reported descriptively.

3.28.2 Topic Salience and Thematic Activation

S02 and S07 have the largest Biggest Risk counts. This identifies concentrated written activity; it does not by itself establish salience, controversy or perceived policy importance.

3.28.3 Substantive Implications

The content analysis documents recurring systemic connections and different qualifications across the corpus. Coordinated policy approaches are discussed as proposals derived from the qualitative material, not as a package endorsed by all experts.

3.29 Country-Level Distribution of Open Comments by Statement

3.29.1 Austria: Total number of open comments from Austria: 113

Austria submitted 113 records. The highest all-field counts were S02 = 18, S07 = 10 and S05 = 9; S13 and S16 each had 7. Counts identify written activity only.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	5
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	18
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	4
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	3
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	9
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	10
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	4
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	4
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	7
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	3
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	7
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	5
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	6

S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	4
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	5
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	3
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	1
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	4
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	3
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	3
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	5
	Total	113

Data-based interpretation of the Austria distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 113 comment records associated with 35 completed questionnaires in Austria, equivalent to 3.23 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 14.2% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 21 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 60 records (53.1%) come from Biggest Risk, 28 (24.8%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 25 (22.1%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02 = 18, S07 = 10, S05 = 9, S13/S16 = 7, and S18 = 6. Applying the fifth-highest value (7) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S02, S05, S07, S13, and S16, accounting for 51 records (45.1%). All 21 retained statements received at least one record; the minimum is 1, observed for S24. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 49 (43.4%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 18 (15.9%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 30 (26.5%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 16 (14.2%). Theme A is the largest component, +3.9 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S13 (young people's exposure to hiring and dismissal risks), and S16 (youth mental health and life skills), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S02 (+4.1 percentage points), S05 (+1.9 percentage points), and S18 (+0.6 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S24 (-2.1 percentage points), S01 (-1.9 percentage points), and S17 (-0.9 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Austria was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

Austria is distinctive in the large contribution of the two additional open fields. Almost half of its records are Contributing Factors or Policy Measures comments, so the all-field distribution captures considerably more than risk identification alone.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 113 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

3.29.2 Finland Total number of open comments from Finland: 122

Finland submitted 122 records. The highest all-field counts were S02 = 21, S07 = 15 and S13 = 10, followed by S01 = 8 and S17/S21 = 7.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	8
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	21
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	1
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	3
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	6
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	15
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	2
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	2

S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	10
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	3
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	4
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	7
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	5
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	3
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	7
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	5
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	3
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	6
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	4
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	5
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	2
	Total	122

Data-based interpretation of the Finland distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 122 comment records associated with 33 completed questionnaires in Finland, equivalent to 3.70 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 15.4% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 21 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 106 records (86.9%) come from Biggest Risk, 8 (6.6%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 8 (6.6%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore

not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02 = 21, S07 = 15, S13 = 10, S01 = 8, and S17/S21 = 7. Applying the fifth-highest value (7) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S02, S07, S13, S17, and S21, accounting for 68 records (55.7%). All 21 retained statements received at least one record; the minimum is 1, observed for S03. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 54 (44.3%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 17 (13.9%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 31 (25.4%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 20 (16.4%). Theme A is the largest component, +4.8 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S13 (young people's exposure to hiring and dismissal risks), S17 (media and influencer effects on programme choices), and S21 (partnerships between education, business and academia), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S02 (+5.4 percentage points), S07 (+3.5 percentage points), and S13 (+1.9 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S16 (-2.4 percentage points), S03 (-2.3 percentage points), and S12 (-2.1 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Finland was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

Finland's profile is led by the two polarised education statements, followed by youth labour-market vulnerability. Most records are Biggest Risk comments, while the additional fields provide a smaller but still visible layer of causal and policy elaboration.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 122 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

Note: The Finnish pattern is descriptive of the submitted records and is not interpreted as a national priority ranking.

3.29.3 Germany: Total number of open comment records from Germany: 108

Germany submitted 108 records. The highest all-field counts were S02 = 10, S07 = 9, S01/S05 = 8 and S16/S28 = 7.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
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S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	8
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	10
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	3
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	3
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	8
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	9
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	1
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	5
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	6
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	5
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	7
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	6
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	6
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	2
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	2
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	4
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	5

S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	5
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	2
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	7
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	4
	Total	108

Data-based interpretation of the Germany distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 108 comment records associated with 17 completed questionnaires in Germany, equivalent to 6.35 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 13.6% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 21 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 98 records (90.7%) come from Biggest Risk, 5 (4.6%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 5 (4.6%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02 = 10, S07 = 9, S01/S05 = 8, and S16/S28 = 7. Applying the fifth-highest value (7) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S02, S05, S07, S16, and S28, accounting for 49 records (45.4%). All 21 retained statements received at least one record; the minimum is 1, observed for S09. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 41 (38.0%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 17 (15.7%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 27 (25.0%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 23 (21.3%). Theme A is the largest component, -1.5 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S16 (youth mental health and life skills), and S28 (reliance on parental help), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S28 (+3.2 percentage points), S14 (+1.7 percentage points), and S24 (+1.6 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S02 (-2.6 percentage points), S09 (-2.4 percentage points), and S21 (-2.3 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Germany was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

Germany combines high comment intensity with full coverage of the retained statements. The record set is predominantly risk-oriented, but the leading education prompts are followed by mental health, parental support and early-childhood investment, preventing an exclusively skills-based reading.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 108 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness. Those distinctions are essential when integrating the table with the qualitative content analysis and the quantitative median/IQR results.

3.29.4 Greece: Total number of open comments from Greece: 12 comments

Greece submitted 12 records: S02 = 4; S05, S07 and S13 = 2 each; S01 and S16 = 1 each. The small cell does not support a broader country profile.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	1
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	4
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	0
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	0
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	2
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	2
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	0
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	0
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	2
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	0
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	1
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	0

S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	0
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	0
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	0
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	0
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	0
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	0
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	0
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	0
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	0
	Total	12

Data-based interpretation of the Greece distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 12 comment records associated with 8 completed questionnaires in Greece, equivalent to 1.50 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 1.5% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 6 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 12 records (100.0%) come from Biggest Risk, 0 (0.0%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 0 (0.0%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02 = 4, S05/S07/S13 = 2, and S01/S16 = 1. Applying the fifth-highest value (1) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S02, S05, S07, S13, and S16, accounting for 12 records (100.0%). The all-field table contains no record for S03, S04, S09, S12, S14, S17, S18, S20, S21, S23, S24, S25, S27, S28, and S29; the smallest positive count is 1 for S01 and S16. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 9 (75.0%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 2 (16.7%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 1 (8.3%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 0 (0.0%). Theme A is the largest component, +35.5 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S13

(young people's exposure to hiring and dismissal risks), and S16 (youth mental health and life skills), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S02 (+21.5 percentage points), S05 (+10.6 percentage points), and S13 (+10.4 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S17 (-5.3 percentage points), S18 (-4.7 percentage points), and S25 (-4.3 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Greece was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

The Greek profile is highly concentrated because only twelve records were submitted and all belong to the Biggest Risk field. It should therefore be reported as a small set of observed responses, not as a stable national hierarchy of Delphi topics.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 12 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

3.29.5 Italy: Total number of open comments from Italy: 52

Italy submitted 52 records. S02 and S07 each had 7, S01 had 6, S17 had 5, and S16/S29 had 4 each.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	6
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	7
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	1
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	1
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	2
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	7
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	1
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	1

S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	1
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	0
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	4
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	5
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	2
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	0
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	3
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	2
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	1
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	2
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	1
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	1
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	4
	Total	52

Data-based interpretation of the Italy distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 52 comment records associated with 33 completed questionnaires in Italy, equivalent to 1.58 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 6.6% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 19 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 37 records (71.2%) come from Biggest Risk, 9 (17.3%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 6 (11.5%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore

not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02/S07 = 7, S01 = 6, S17 = 5, and S16/S29 = 4. Applying the fifth-highest value (4) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S02, S07, S16, S17, and S29, accounting for 33 records (63.5%). The all-field table contains no record for S14 and S20; the smallest positive count is 1 for S03, S04, S09, S12, S13, S24, S27, and S28. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 24 (46.2%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 3 (5.8%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 16 (30.8%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 9 (17.3%). Theme A is the largest component, +6.7 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S16 (youth mental health and life skills), S17 (media and influencer effects on programme choices), and S29 (digital infrastructure and urban-rural disparities), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S01 (+5.2 percentage points), S07 (+4.6 percentage points), and S17 (+4.3 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S13 (-4.4 percentage points), S20 (-3.3 percentage points), and S14 (-2.9 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Italy was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

Italy combines a strong education profile with transition-related records on media influence, mental health and digital infrastructure. The additional open fields account for more than one quarter of the total, so causal and policy elaboration materially shape the all-field count.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 52 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

3.29.6 Kosovo: Total number of open comments from Kosovo: 80

Kosovo submitted 80 records. S02 had 8; S01, S04, S05, S09, S13, S16, S17, S18, S21, S25 and S27 each had 4. The broad distribution is not a ranking of national priorities.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	4
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	8
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	3

S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	4
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	4
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	4
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	4
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	3
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	4
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	3
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	4
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	4
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	4
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	3
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	4
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	3
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	3
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	4
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	4
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	3

S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	3
	Total	80

Data-based interpretation of the Kosovo distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 80 comment records associated with 26 completed questionnaires in Kosovo, equivalent to 3.08 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 10.1% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 21 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 80 records (100.0%) come from Biggest Risk, 0 (0.0%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 0 (0.0%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02 = 8 and S01/S04/S05/S07/S09 = 4. Applying the fifth-highest value (4) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S02, S04, S05, S07, S09, S13, S16, S17, S18, S21, S25, and S27, accounting for 56 records (70.0%). All 21 retained statements received at least one record; the minimum is 3, observed for S03, S12, S14, S20, S23, S24, S28, and S29. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 27 (33.8%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 14 (17.5%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 22 (27.5%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 17 (21.2%). Theme A is the largest component, -5.7 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S04 (school responses to behavioural problems), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), and S09 (AI-related career-entry pathways), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S04 (+1.7 percentage points), S09 (+1.7 percentage points), and S27 (+1.7 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S07 (-3.8 percentage points), S02 (-1.9 percentage points), and S01 (-1.3 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Kosovo was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

All Kosovo records are Biggest Risk comments and every retained statement received text. The distribution is comparatively even: apart from S02, the leading group consists of many prompts with the same count, supporting a broad risk landscape rather than one dominant issue.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 80 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

3.29.7 Poland: Total number of open comments from Poland: 62

Poland submitted 62 records. The highest counts were S02 = 6, S16 = 5 and S05/S07 = 4.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	3
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	6
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	3
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	3
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	4
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	4
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	2
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	3
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	3
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	2
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	5
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	2
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	3
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	2
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	3

S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	2
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	3
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	2
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	2
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	2
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	3
	Total	62

Data-based interpretation of the Poland distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 62 comment records associated with 12 completed questionnaires in Poland, equivalent to 5.17 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 7.8% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 21 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 47 records (75.8%) come from Biggest Risk, 10 (16.1%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 5 (8.1%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02 = 6, S16 = 5, S05/S07 = 4, and S01/S03 = 3. Applying the fifth-highest value (3) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S02, S03, S04, S05, S07, S12, S13, S16, S18, S21, S24, and S29, accounting for 46 records (74.2%). All 21 retained statements received at least one record; the minimum is 2, observed for S09, S14, S17, S20, S23, S25, S27, and S28. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 23 (37.1%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 10 (16.1%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 17 (27.4%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 12 (19.4%). Theme A is the largest component, -2.4 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S03 (long-term COVID-19 effects on learning), S04 (school responses to behavioural problems), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), and S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S16 (+2.4 percentage points), S24 (+1.8 percentage points), and S03 (+1.7 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S07 (-2.4 percentage points), S02 (-2.2 percentage points), and S17 (-2.1 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Poland was Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

Poland's leading education counts are accompanied by the highest national count for S16. Additional Contributing Factors and Policy Measures records form a substantial minority, giving the table both a risk-identification and an explanatory-policy component.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 62 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

3.29.8 Portugal: Total number of open comments from Portugal: 57

Portuguese respondents submitted 57 records. The highest counts were S02 = 6, S13 = 5 and S17 = 4; several statements had 3.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	3
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	6
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	2
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	3
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	2
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	3
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	1
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	3
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	5
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	1

S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	3
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	4
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	3
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	3
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	1
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	3
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	2
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	3
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	2
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	1
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	3
Total		57

Data-based interpretation of the Portugal distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 57 comment records associated with 17 completed questionnaires in Portugal, equivalent to 3.35 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 7.2% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 21 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 56 records (98.2%) come from Biggest Risk, 0 (0.0%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 1 (1.8%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02 = 6, S13 = 5, S17 = 4, and S01/S04/S07 = 3. Applying the fifth-highest value (3) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S02, S04, S07, S12, S13, S16, S17, S18, S20, S23, S25, and S29, accounting for 45 records (78.9%). All 21 retained statements received at least one record; the minimum is 1, observed for S09, S14, S21, and S28. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 19 (33.3%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 10 (17.5%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 17 (29.8%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 11 (19.3%). Theme A is the largest component, -6.1 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S04 (school responses to behavioural problems), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S12 (childcare constraints on labour participation), and S13 (young people's exposure to hiring and dismissal risks), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S13 (+2.5 percentage points), S04 (+2.0 percentage points), and S20 (+2.0 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S07 (-3.6 percentage points), S05 (-2.5 percentage points), and S21 (-2.4 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Portugal was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

Portugal is almost entirely represented by Biggest Risk records. The leading literacy and youth-employment counts are therefore best read as the distribution of risk elaboration, with virtually no contribution from the two additional open fields.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 57 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

3.29.9 United Kingdom: Total number of open comments from UK: 91

The United Kingdom submitted 91 records. S01, S05, S07, S09, S12, S13 and S16 each had 6; S03, S18 and S20 each had 5; S02 had 4.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	6
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	4
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	5
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	3
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	6

S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	6
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	6
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	6
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	6
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	3
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	6
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	4
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	5
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	5
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	4
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	3
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	3
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	4
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	3
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	1
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	2
	Total	91

Data-based interpretation of the United Kingdom distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 91 comment records associated with 8 completed questionnaires in the United Kingdom, equivalent to 11.38 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 11.5% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 21 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 56 records (61.5%) come from Biggest Risk, 21 (23.1%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 14 (15.4%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S01/S05/S07/S09/S12/S13/S16 = 6. Applying the fifth-highest value (6) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S05, S07, S09, S12, S13 and S16, accounting for 42 records (46.2%). All 21 retained statements received at least one record; the minimum is 1, observed for S28. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 30 (33.0%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 21 (23.1%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 27 (29.7%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 13 (14.3%). Theme A is the largest component, -6.5 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S09 (AI-related career-entry pathways), S12 (childcare constraints on labour participation), and S13 (young people's exposure to hiring and dismissal risks), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S09 (+3.3 percentage points), S12 (+2.8 percentage points), and S03 (+2.3 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S02 (-7.5 percentage points), S07 (-2.2 percentage points), and S28 (-2.2 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for United Kingdom was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

The United Kingdom has the highest number of comments per completed questionnaire and the broadest use of the additional fields after Austria. Its distribution is comparatively flat across several education and labour-market prompts, while the large CF/PM component adds explanatory and policy-oriented material.

Note: The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 91 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

3.29.10 Other Countries: Total number of open comments from “Other Countries”: 96

Other Countries submitted 96 records. S07 and S02 each had 10, S01 and S13 each had 6, and S05, S09, S17 and S27 each had 5. The group is heterogeneous and cannot be interpreted as one country profile.

Statement Number	Statement	Number of Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	6
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	10
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	3
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g. violence, bullying, disengagement)	3
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	5
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	10
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	5
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation	3
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	6
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	3
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	4
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	5
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	3
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	4
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	4
S23	Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established	3

S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	3
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	4
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	5
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	3
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	4
	Total	96

Data-based interpretation of the Other Countries distribution (Wave 2)

The Wave 2 table contains 96 comment records associated with 18 completed questionnaires in the combined Other Countries group, equivalent to 5.33 comments per completed questionnaire. This compares with 3.83 across all 207 Wave 2 completions. The country/group contributes 12.1% of the 793-record qualitative corpus, and records occur for 21 of the 21 retained statements. Comment intensity is a paradata indicator of written activity, not a measure of response quality or national salience.

The field composition is analytically important: 88 records (91.7%) come from Biggest Risk, 4 (4.2%) from Contributing Factors - Other, and 4 (4.2%) from Policy Measures - Other. The all-field table must therefore not be relabelled as a Biggest Risk table. Where the two additional fields are substantial, they change both the volume and the substantive function of the written material.

The largest all-field statement counts are S02/S07 = 10, S01/S13 = 6, and S05/S09 = 5. Applying the fifth-highest value (5) as a tie-preserving threshold gives an upper group of S01, S02, S05, S07, S09, S13, S17, and S27, accounting for 52 records (54.2%). All 21 retained statements received at least one record; the minimum is 3, observed for S03, S04, S12, S14, S18, S23, S24, and S28. This describes concentration within the submitted text fields and must not be converted into a ranking of national policy priorities.

Theme aggregation produces the following distribution: Theme A (Education and Training) = 37 (38.5%); Theme B (Labour Market and Employment) = 17 (17.7%); Theme C (Transitions and Systemic Interfaces) = 23 (24.0%); Theme D (Inclusion and Disadvantage) = 19 (19.8%). Theme A is the largest component, -0.9 percentage points from the pooled Wave 2 share of 39.5%. The leading statement cluster covers S01 (combined disciplinary and IT competencies), S02 (literacy after eight or nine years of schooling), S05 (public investment in early childhood education), S07 (the relationship between university education and TVET), S09 (AI-related career-entry pathways), and S13 (young people's exposure to hiring and dismissal risks), showing which parts of the selected Wave 2 agenda elicited the greatest amount of writing in this group.

Compared with the pooled 793-record statement distribution, the largest positive within-profile differences are S09 (+1.9 percentage points), S27 (+1.9 percentage points), and S07 (+1.6 percentage points); the largest negative differences are S18 (-1.5 percentage points), S16 (-1.5 percentage points), and S02 (-1.4 percentage points). These are descriptive percentage-point contrasts. They are especially sensitive to small totals and ties and are not evidence of statistically reliable country differences.

In Wave 1, the largest thematic component for Other Countries was Theme A (Education and Training), based on the thirty-statement instrument. Wave 2 retains only 21 statements and uses different open fields, so the two distributions are not directly equivalent. Any apparent persistence or shift can be described as continuity in the location of written-field use, but not as individual-level change or a longitudinal country effect.

The combined Other Countries group is predominantly risk-oriented and covers all retained statements. As in Wave 1, it cannot support a national interpretation; its value lies in showing the range of prompts that elicited text across heterogeneous additional contexts.

The permissible interpretation is consequently bounded by the observed data: the table shows where 96 comment records occur, how they divide across three comment functions, and how they are distributed by statement and theme. It does not show the direction of opinion, the prevalence of a view among all respondents or national representativeness.

3.30 Qualitative Commenting Intensity Across Countries

The ratio of all comment records to completed questionnaires is reported as a descriptive commenting-intensity measure for each harmonised country group.

For Wave 2, the calculation is based on all qualitative comments recorded in the dataset, including both the 640 statement-specific Biggest Risk comments and the additional 153 comments provided through the Contributing Factors — Other and Policy Measures — Other response options. In total, the qualitative dataset comprises 793 comments generated by 207 completed questionnaires.

3.31 Calculation: Number of Comments per completed Questionnaire

Comments per Questionnaire = Number of Comments ÷ Completed Questionnaires

Example Finland:

$$122 \div 33 = 3.70$$

Overall value:

$$793 \div 207 = 3.83$$

All rates are rounded to two decimals. Group denominators follow the Wave 2 country distribution of the Main and Quantitative Reports (linkage within N = 433); the two cases not linked to a target country are included in Other countries / not linked.

Country / group	Completed Questionnaires	Comment Records	Comments per Questionnaire
United Kingdom	8	91	11.38
Germany	17	108	6.35
Other countries / not linked	18	96	5.33
Poland	12	62	5.17
Finland	33	122	3.70
Portugal	17	57	3.35
Austria	35	113	3.23
Kosovo	26	80	3.08
Italy	33	52	1.58

Greece	8	12	1.50
Total	207	793	3.83

The indicator is not a measure of expertise, response quality, policy importance, commitment or consensus. It only records how frequently optional written fields were used relative to completed questionnaires.

The highest verified Wave 2 rate is the United Kingdom ($91 \div 8 = 11.38$), followed by Germany ($108 \div 17 = 6.35$), Other countries / not linked ($96 \div 18 = 5.33$), Poland ($62 \div 12 = 5.17$) and Finland ($122 \div 33 = 3.70$).

Portugal records 3.35, Austria 3.23, Kosovo 3.08, Italy 1.58 and Greece 1.50 comment records per completed questionnaire.

The data do not identify why the rates differ. National response style, sample composition, topic mix and individual willingness to write are possible explanations, but none is estimated here.

The overall rate is 3.54 in Wave 1 and 3.83 in Wave 2. Because the waves differ in prompts, statement count (30 versus 21), statement selection and panel composition, the small increase is descriptive only.

The 3.83 rate documents continued use of optional written fields in Wave 2, but it is not evidence of sustained panel engagement or of a causal effect of the Wave 2 design.

Quantitative ratings remain the basis for consensus and convergence; qualitative comments provide textual explanations, qualifications and proposals.

3.32 Statements with the Highest Biggest Risk Comment Counts

The ranking uses only the 640 Biggest Risk records and excludes the 153 records from the two Other fields.

The ranking describes where respondents used the Biggest Risk field. It does not show that a statement was more important, controversial or worthy of attention.

S02 has 77 Biggest Risk records and S07 has 57. Their quantitative classification as Polarised comes from the rating data, not from comment volume.

The next counts are S01 = 45, S13 = 42, S05 = 38, S17 = 34, S18 = 31, S16 = 29 and S25 = 28. S21 and S29 are tied at rank 10 with 25 each and are both included.

No causal interpretation of the ranking is made from frequency alone.

3.32.1 Top 10 Statements by Biggest Risk Comment Records (rank-10 tie included)

Rank	Statement	Statement Formulation	Theme	Number of Comment Records
1	Statement 2	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	Education and Training	77
2	Statement 7	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	Education and Training	57

3	Statement 1	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	Education and Training	45
4	Statement 13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	Labour Market and Employment	42
5	Statement 5	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	Education and Training	38
6	Statement 17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	34
7	Statement 18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	31
8	Statement 16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	29
9	Statement 25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	Inclusion and Disadvantage	28
10	Statement 21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	25
10	Statement 29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	Inclusion and Disadvantage	25

3.33 Methodological Interpretation

The concentration of comments among a relatively small number of statements is consistent with the overall logic of the Wave 2 Delphi design. Unlike Wave 1, which covered all 30 statements, Wave 2 focused specifically on statements that had previously been identified as:

- **Polarised Statements** (2 statements)
- **Diverging Statements** (8 statements)
- **Uncertain Statements** (3 statements)
- **Consensus Statements** (8 statements)

Consequently, it is unsurprising that several of these statements continued to receive substantial qualitative input.

S02 and S07 are prominent in the count ranking. The counts document written activity; substantive interpretation requires their comment content and the separate quantitative ratings.

Across the Top 10, education, labour-market, transition and inclusion themes are represented. This is a corpus description, not a hierarchy of policy importance.

3.34 Length of Comments Measured by Words and Characters (Overall and per Country) for Wave 2

Length is calculated from the cleaned English-text field for all 793 records. The technical '[Already in English]' marker is removed; words are counted as ASCII alphanumeric tokens separated by spaces or punctuation, and characters include spaces and punctuation in the cleaned text.

The verified distribution is right-skewed and ranges from 0 to 269 words. Length is descriptive and is not a proxy for quality, importance, agreement or reflection depth.

Translation, language and individual writing style may affect length. Country comparisons therefore remain descriptive.

The same cleaning and tokenisation rule is used in every Wave 2 length table and in the Reflection Matrix.

3.34.1 Overall Comment Length Statistics

Indicator	Verified Value
Number of Comment Records	793
Mean Words per Comment Record	21.1
Median Words per Comment Record	13.0
Minimum Words	0
Maximum Words	269
Mean Characters per Comment Record	138.9
Median Characters per Comment Record	86.0
Minimum Characters	1
Maximum Characters	1,725

3.35 Analytical Observations

Across all 793 records, the verified mean is 21.1 words and the median is 13.0; mean characters are 138.9 and median characters 86.0. The maximum is 269 words / 1,725 characters.

The skew shows that a smaller set of long records raises the mean above the median.

3.35.1 Comment Length by Country

Country / group	n Comment Records	Mean Words	Median Words	Mean Characters	Median Characters
Portugal	57	34.6	22.0	245.5	150.0

Austria	113	28.5	22.0	181.4	148.0
Finland	122	27.8	18.0	180.7	116.5
Greece	12	24.9	22.0	162.6	141.5
Germany	108	19.1	12.5	134.2	86.0
Other countries / not linked	96	18.7	12.0	126.7	86.5
Kosovo	80	15.2	10.0	92.9	60.5
Italy	52	15.1	12.0	97.8	74.0
United Kingdom	91	13.5	8.0	86.8	59.0
Poland	62	11.8	9.0	74.1	62.5

3.36 Cross-Country Differences

Portugal has the longest mean text (34.6 words), followed by Austria (28.5), Finland (27.8) and Greece (24.9). Poland has the shortest mean (11.8). These are text-length differences, not engagement or quality rankings.

Country means reflect the records submitted by the participating respondents and may be affected by translation and writing style. No national trait is inferred.

Differences from Wave 1 are not interpreted because the final report does not use a harmonised audited Wave 1 length ranking.

3.36.1 Comment Length by Comment Type

Comment Type	n	Mean Words	Median Words
Biggest Risk	640	21.9	13.0
Policy Measures — Other	68	18.4	12.0
Contributing Factors — Other	85	17.0	10.0

3.37 Differences Between Comment Types

Mean words are 21.9 for Biggest Risk, 18.4 for Policy Measures — Other and 17.0 for Contributing Factors — Other. The prompt formats differ, so the contrast is descriptive.

The two Other fields extend predefined categories and are shorter on average, but length does not measure the substantive value of a record.

3.38 Statements Generating the Longest Comments

The recalculated Top 10 under the verified cleaning rule is reported below.

Rank	Statement	Verified Mean Words per Comment Record
1	S29	27.27
2	S27	26.62
3	S25	25.32
4	S20	24.88
5	S13	23.54
6	S05	23.27
7	S21	22.94
8	S04	21.42
8	S09	21.42
10	S14	21.30

S29, S27, S25 and S20 have the highest verified mean word counts. This ranking identifies longer text, not greater complexity, importance, controversy or policy sensitivity.

3.39 Relationship Between Comment Frequency and Comment Length

Comment count and mean comment length do not coincide. S02 has the highest count but a below-median mean length; S29, S27 and S25 have lower counts and longer means.

Counts and lengths are separate descriptive properties. Neither identifies unique-participant breadth or depth of reflection without additional analysis.

3.40 Methodological Interpretation and Outlook

Length is retained as a reproducible descriptive statistic only. It is not used to identify highly reflective statements, national styles, ambiguity, uncertainty or consensus.

The verified Wave 2 statistics are reported without a causal comparison to Wave 1 length.

Content coding and quantitative Delphi indicators provide the appropriate evidence for themes and consensus; length remains an auxiliary corpus measure.

3.40.1

Country / group	n Comment Records	Mean Words	Median Words	Mean Characters	Median Characters
Portugal	57	34.6	22.0	245.5	150.0
Austria	113	28.5	22.0	181.4	148.0
Finland	122	27.8	18.0	180.7	116.5
Greece	12	24.9	22.0	162.6	141.5
Germany	108	19.1	12.5	134.2	86.0
Other countries / not linked	96	18.7	12.0	126.7	86.5
Kosovo	80	15.2	10.0	92.9	60.5
Italy	52	15.1	12.0	97.8	74.0
United Kingdom	91	13.5	8.0	86.8	59.0
Poland	62	11.8	9.0	74.1	62.5

4 Cross-Wave Synthesis: Data Basis and Summary Figures

4.1 Data Basis and Reconciliation

Wave 2 contains 793 open-comment records: 640 Biggest Risk, 85 Contributing Factors — Other and 68 Policy Measures — Other. Wave 1 contains 1,533 comment records — all non-empty entries in the 30 optional comment fields of the N = 433 analysis set, excluding placeholder entries ('-', '--', 'N/A') that three respondents had entered in every field. This is the basis of the Main Report (Table 69). Seven Wave 1 rows with a missing or malformed statement code were restored from the identical statement formulation; no substantive source row was discarded.

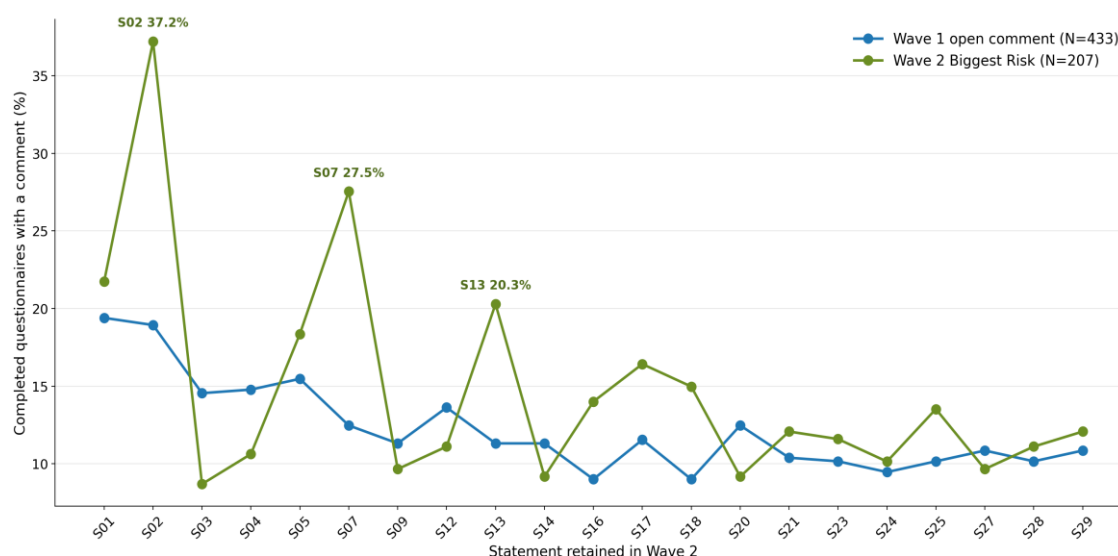
Comment counts measure written field use, not agreement, importance or representativeness. Country totals are comment records, not unique respondents. Percentages are rounded and may not sum to 100%.

4.2 Executive Summary Figures

4.2.1 Persistence of Qualitative Comment-Field Use

Persistence of Qualitative Engagement Across Delphi Waves

Rate-based comparison of statement-specific comments; prompts differed between waves



Sources: Wave 1 Open Comments (1,533 records, N = 433 analysis set) and Wave 2 Open Comments workbook (640 Biggest Risk rows). Denominators: 433 and 207 completed questionnaires.

The figure compares the share of completed questionnaires associated with a statement-specific comment in each wave. Wave 1 is based on the general open-comment field for 433 completed questionnaires; Wave 2 uses the Biggest Risk field for 207 completed questionnaires. Rates, rather than raw counts, are therefore used to make the different panel sizes visible. The comparison remains descriptive because the prompts and the set-up of the two waves were not identical.

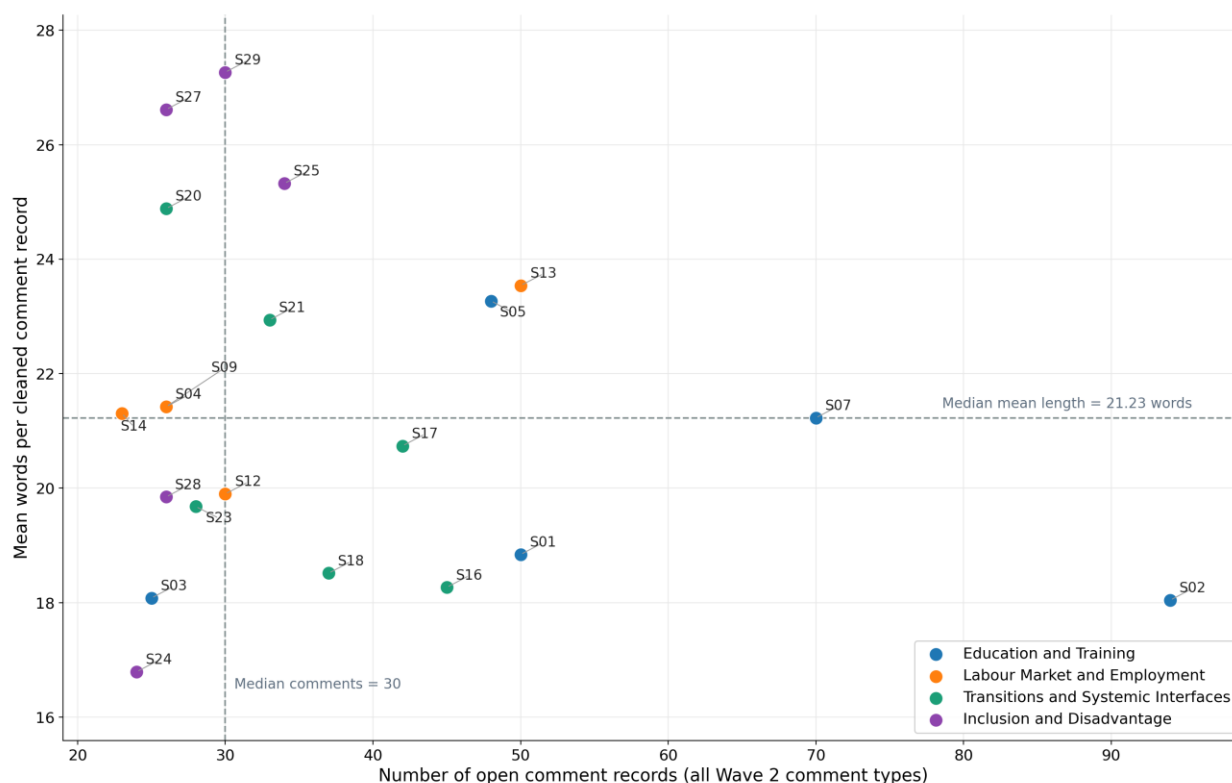
The rate-based comparison shows both continuity and change. S01 remained comparatively stable, increasing from 19.9% in Wave 1 to 21.7% in Wave 2, while S05 increased from 15.9% to 18.4%. S02 became substantially more prominent, rising from 19.4% to 37.2%. S07 increased from 12.7% to 27.5%, and S13 from 11.5% to 20.3%. S16, S17, S18 and S25 also recorded higher commenting rates in Wave 2.

By contrast, S03, S04, S09, S12, S14, S20 and S27 recorded lower rates. These changes should not be interpreted as direct evidence that a topic became more important, clearer or less contested. Differences in prompt wording, survey structure, statement selection and panel composition may also have influenced commenting behaviour. The figure therefore describes shifts in qualitative attention without establishing their causes or treating comment volume as consensus.

4.2.2 Delphi Reflection Matrix

Delphi Reflection Matrix

Commenting activity and verified cleaned comment length across the 21 Wave 2 statements



Source: verified Wave 2 open-comment workbook (793 records), Technical '[Already in English]' markers removed; words counted as ASCII alphanumeric tokens.

The recalculated Reflection Matrix relates all-comment totals to mean cleaned words per record. The median reference lines are 30 comments and 21.23 mean words; the word threshold was recomputed under the same verified cleaning rule used in the length tables.

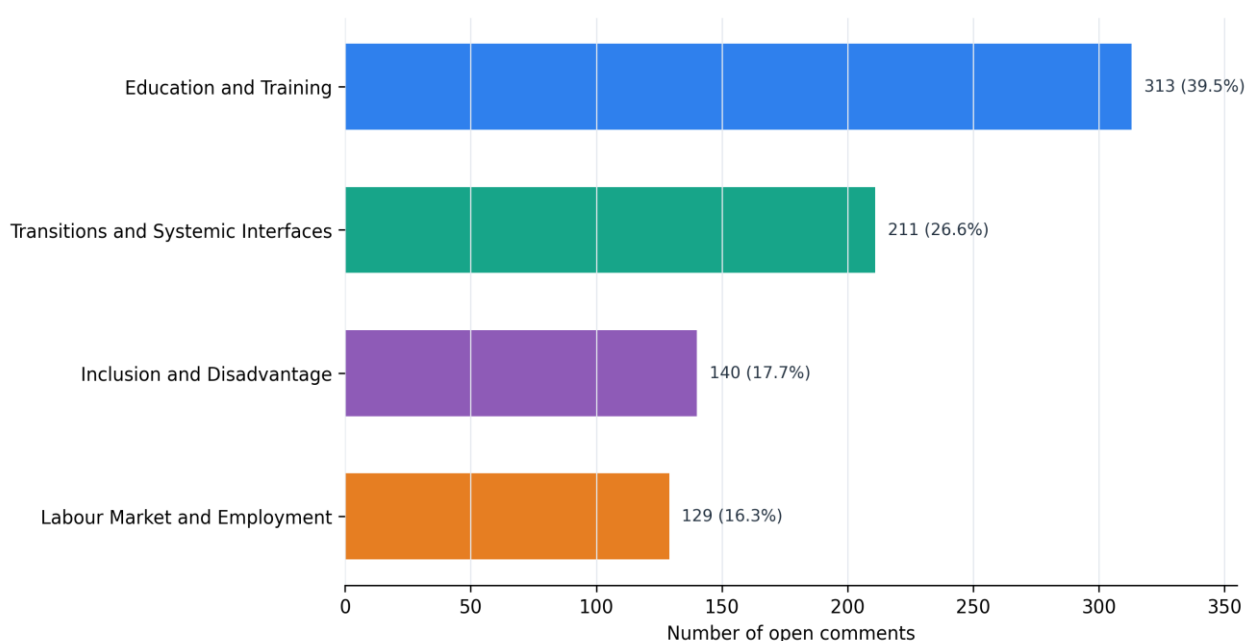
At or above both medians are S05, S07, S13, S21, S25 and S29. S01 and S02 have high counts but shorter-than-median means; S04, S09, S14, S20 and S27 have lower counts and longer-than-median means.

The matrix is descriptive. Count is not unique-participant prevalence, and length is not quality, importance, agreement or analytical depth.

4.2.3 Theme Distribution

Distribution of Qualitative Engagement Across Themes

All 793 Wave 2 comments across the four thematic domains



Source: Wave 2 Open Comments workbook (793 rows = 640 Biggest Risk + 85 Contributing Factors Other + 68 Policy Measures Other).

The figure summarises all 793 Wave 2 open comments across the four EDU-LAB thematic domains. Education and Training accounts for 313 comments (39.5%), Transitions and Systemic Interfaces for 211 (26.6%), Inclusion and Disadvantage for 140 (17.7%), and Labour Market and Employment for 129 (16.3%).

The distribution confirms that educational issues form the largest component of the Wave 2 qualitative material, while substantial comment volume is present across transition, inclusion and labour-market topics. Raw totals must nevertheless be considered in light of the number and design of statements assigned to each domain. Theme totals describe the composition of the comment corpus; they are not direct rankings of policy importance.

The figure also shows that respondents' written reflections span all four thematic domains. It does not, however, demonstrate causal relationships between them. The later content analysis indicates recurrent links among education, labour-market transitions, inequality and institutional capacity, but the bar lengths themselves measure only the volume of comments assigned to each theme.

4.2.4 Conceptual Representation of Dominant Themes in Wave 2 Comments

Dominant Concepts in Wave 2 Comments

Exact frequencies for the report's retained lexical concepts



Top concepts

1. Social	145
2. Society	58
3. Increase	48
4. Development	41
5. Economic	41
6. Support	41
7. Learning	39
8. Competences	34
9. Public	34
10. Skilled	34
11. Lack	33
12. Life	32

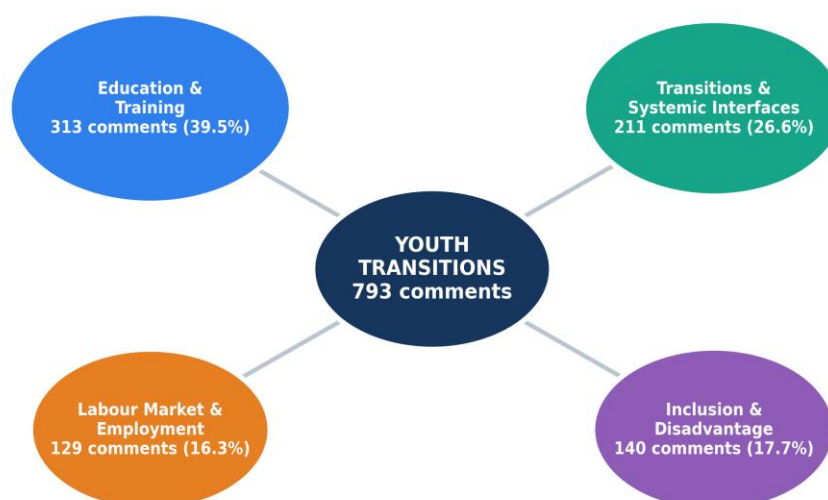
Word size reflects exact token frequencies after removing technical translation markers. Source: EDU-LAB OSES Wave 2 Open Comments (793 rows).

The above figure provides a dissemination-oriented representation of the verified retained vocabulary. Word size is based on the same exact frequencies used in the lexical table below. It is a visual summary, not an independent coding result.

4.2.5 Theme Ecosystem Map

Theme Ecosystem Map

All 793 Wave 2 comments; node size reflects comment volume



Connections represent the report's conceptual structure, not correlations or causal effects. Source: EDU-LAB OSES Wave 2 Open Comments (N=207; 640 Biggest Risk + 153 Other comments).

The map presents the four report domains as an interconnected analytical framework. The links summarise recurring relationships described in the qualitative material; they are not statistical correlations or measured causal effects.

The detailed map assigns the 21 retained statements to the four thematic domains used in the report. It documents the analytical organisation of the corpus and makes no claim that connections between domains were quantitatively measured.

The map makes the report's conceptual structure visible. Across the statement-level analyses, education and skills are repeatedly connected with labour-market matching, transition support, social inclusion and the capacity of institutions to respond. The connecting lines represent these recurring conceptual relationships within the report; they do not represent statistical correlations, causal effects or measured influence between themes.

The figure should therefore be read as a structured overview of the qualitative material. It shows where the 21 retained statements sit within the thematic framework and how the report groups related concerns, while the evidence for each substantive interpretation remains in the underlying comments and the detailed statement analyses.

4.2.6 Word Cloud – Lexical Analysis

Word Cloud – Lexical Analysis

Weighted by exact token frequency; top frequencies shown at right



Top concepts

1. Social	145
2. Society	58
3. Increase	48
4. Development	41
5. Economic	41
6. Support	41
7. Learning	39
8. Competences	34
9. Public	34
10. Skilled	34
11. Lack	33
12. Life	32

Word size reflects exact token frequencies after removing technical translation markers. Source: EDU-LAB OSES Wave 2 Open Comments (793 rows).

The data-based executive-summary figure reproduces the verified token weights recalculated from the 793 cleaned English comment texts. Generic questionnaire vocabulary and technical translation markers are not part of the retained display.

The word cloud visualises the same curated 28-term list reported in the lexical table. Word size reflects the verified frequency within that retained list. The most prominent retained term is Social (145), followed by Society (58), Increase (48), and Development, Economic and Support (41 each). Terms relating to learning, competences, vocational pathways, public services, work, access, inequality, participation and funding are also visible.

The lexical pattern indicates a strong presence of social, educational and institutional vocabulary in the retained list. This is consistent with the wider qualitative material, in which technological and labour-market developments are frequently discussed through their consequences for learning opportunities, inclusion, skills, support systems and institutional capacity.

Note: The word cloud is not a separate thematic analysis. It does not show the context in which a word was used, whether the usage was positive or negative, which respondent groups used it, or whether one concept caused another. The curated list also omits generic questionnaire vocabulary. In particular, the fact that AI is not one of the 28 retained displayed terms does not establish that technological change was unimportant; the token occurs 12 times in the cleaned corpus and must be interpreted together with the statement-specific material.

4.2.7 Lexical Analysis of Wave 2 Comments

The technical marker was removed before tokenisation. The following list reproduces the 28 concepts retained in the supplied lexical table exactly. It is a curated retained-term list, not the unfiltered ranking of every token in the corpus. Generic questionnaire vocabulary such as education, young, labour, market and risk was omitted from that supplied list.

Concept	Frequency	Concept	Frequency
Social	145	Services	30
Society	58	Children	30
Increase	48	Needs	28
Development	41	Shortage	27
Economic	41	Early	27
Support	41	Work	26
Learning	39	Opportunities	25
Skilled	34	Investment	25
Public	34	Workers	24
Competences	34	Access	23
Lack	33	Inequality	23
System	32	Digital	21
Life	32	Participation	21
Vocational	31	Funding	21

The retained vocabulary foregrounds social, educational and institutional concerns. However, absence from this 28-term display is not evidence that a concept is unimportant. For example, the token AI occurs 12 times in the cleaned Wave 2 comments but is not among the retained 28 terms. The lexical results should therefore be interpreted alongside the statement-specific analysis, not as a stand-alone ranking of policy priorities.

4.2.8 Verified Wave 2 Comment Base

Comment field	Records	Share of 793
Biggest risk	640	80.7%
Contributing factors — other	85	10.7%
Policy measures — other	68	8.6%
Total	793	100.0%

4.2.9 Statement-Level Comment Counts

Cod e	Statement	Biggest risk	CF other	PM other	All
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	45	2	3	50
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	77	11	6	94
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	18	4	3	25
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioural problems (e.g.: violence, bullying, disengagement)	22	3	1	26

Cod e	Statement	Biggest risk	CF other	PM other	All
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	38	6	4	48
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	57	8	5	70
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	20	3	3	26
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labour-market participation	23	5	2	30
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	42	2	6	50
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	19	3	1	23
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	29	8	8	45
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	34	5	3	42
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	31	3	3	37
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	19	2	5	26
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	25	3	5	33
S23	Integrated guidance centres for youth employment will be widely established	24	4	0	28
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	21	2	1	24
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	28	3	3	34
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	20	1	5	26
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	23	3	0	26
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	25	4	1	30
Total		640	85	68	793

4.2.10 Theme Distribution

Theme	Substantive label	Comments	Share
Theme A	Education and Training	313	39.5%
Theme B	Labour Market and Employment	129	16.3%

Theme	Substantive label	Comments	Share
Theme C	Transitions and Systemic Interfaces	211	26.6%
Theme D	Inclusion and Disadvantage	140	17.7%
Total		793	100.0%

The ecosystem map organises the 793 verified Wave 2 comments into the four report themes and identifies the statement codes assigned to each domain. Node size reflects comment volume: Education and Training contains 313 comments, Transitions and Systemic Interfaces 211, Inclusion and Disadvantage 140, and Labour Market and Employment 129.

4.3 Descriptive Evidence Consistent with a Qualitative Delphi Effect

Wave 2 qualitative comment-field use was concentrated in a subset of retained statements, especially S02 and S07.

The per-respondent comment rate increased most clearly for S02, S07 and S13, with additional increases for S16, S17, S18 and S25. The rate-based pattern is consistent with focused second-round reflection, but it cannot by itself establish that the Delphi process caused the concentration.

Cod e	W1 comment s	W1 (N=433)	rate	W2 Risk	Biggest	W2 rate (N=207)	Change (pp)
S01	84	19.4%		45		21.7%	+2.3
S02	82	18.9%		77		37.2%	+18.3
S03	63	14.5%		18		8.7%	-5.9
S04	64	14.8%		22		10.6%	-4.2
S05	67	15.5%		38		18.4%	+2.9
S07	54	12.5%		57		27.5%	+15.1
S09	49	11.3%		20		9.7%	-1.7
S12	59	13.6%		23		11.1%	-2.5
S13	49	11.3%		42		20.3%	+9.0
S14	49	11.3%		19		9.2%	-2.1
S16	39	9.0%		29		14.0%	+5.0
S17	50	11.5%		34		16.4%	+4.9
S18	39	9.0%		31		15.0%	+6.0
S20	54	12.5%		19		9.2%	-3.3
S21	45	10.4%		25		12.1%	+1.7
S23	44	10.2%		24		11.6%	+1.4
S24	41	9.5%		21		10.1%	+0.7
S25	44	10.2%		28		13.5%	+3.4
S27	47	10.9%		20		9.7%	-1.2

Cod e	W1 comment s	W1 rate (N=433)	W2 Biggest Risk	W2 rate (N=207)	Change (pp)
S28	44	10.2%	23	11.1%	+0.9
S29	47	10.9%	25	12.1%	+1.2

The two waves used different qualitative prompts and involved different panel sizes. Wave 1 offered a general statement-level comment field to 433 completed questionnaires, while Wave 2 asked 207 respondents for the Biggest Risk associated with selected statements. Higher or lower rates may therefore reflect the wording of the prompt, the selective reintroduction of statements, panel composition and respondents' willingness to elaborate, as well as substantive salience.

The persistence figure and the reflection matrix provide complementary descriptive information. The first shows where commenting rates remained high or changed across waves. The second shows that statements with many comments were not always the statements with the longest comments. Together they identify patterns of written-field use, not agreement, priority or causal influence.

After semantic reconciliation of Wave 1 and Wave 2 statements against the original questionnaire wording and group-code mapping, seven of the ten re-rated statements narrowed their IQR on at least one comparable dimension. Across the 24 comparable statement-by-dimension pairs, nine IQRs narrowed, fifteen were unchanged and none widened. Medians remained stable except for S21's five-year likelihood, which increased from 3.0 to 4.0. These quantitative results support a conclusion of second-round convergence without dispersion reversal. A comparison based only on the displayed Sxx labels in the later Wave 1 export is invalid because several labels are shifted. The qualitative material shows where respondents elaborated but is not a second quantitative consensus measure.

5 Contributing Factors and Policy Measures: “Other” Comments

5.1 Methodological Note

The Biggest Risk comments are analysed by statement because each response refers directly to a specific scenario. The open “other comments” attached to the Contributing Factors and Policy Measures questions serve a different purpose: they extend predefined multiple-choice categories. Across Wave 2, 85 such comments relate to Contributing Factors and 68 to Policy Measures, for a combined total of 153.

These residual fields are unevenly distributed across countries and statements. They support a detailed account of supplementary content, qualifications and additional proposals, but not a complete ranking of the factors and measures selected in the structured part of the survey. Some entries explicitly reject a statement's premise or state that no additional answer can be given. The analysis below therefore reports recurring content while preserving disagreement and does not interpret the residual fields as a separate consensus measure.

5.2 Cross-Statement Synthesis of Contributing Factors

Within the 85 residual Contributing Factors — other entries, respondents identified a set of recurring systemic conditions relevant to the future developments described in the scenarios. Because these comments supplement predefined response categories, the following themes should be read as additional considerations rather than an exhaustive hierarchy of contributing factors.

One recurring topic was public investment and the availability of educational and social resources. Comments referred to school and early-childhood funding, teacher and specialist staffing, mental-health

services, research and innovation funding, family and children's services and digital connectivity. Underinvestment was connected with weaker educational quality, unequal access, delayed reform and reduced institutional capacity to provide guidance or support. Several responses also linked public funding decisions with the ability of schools and other services to intervene early rather than respond after disadvantages have accumulated.

Another group of comments concerned the slow or uneven adaptation of education systems to societal, technological and labour-market change. Respondents mentioned curriculum revision, competence requirements, educational standards, language support, early intervention and the flexibility of institutional structures. They frequently framed outcomes as dependent on policy implementation and organisational capacity rather than on technological or demographic change alone. Some comments criticised the wording of a scenario precisely because the respondent regarded the projected development as already present, implausible or insufficiently specified.

Cooperation and coordination also recurred. Entries referred to relationships among schools, universities, employers, public institutions and civil-society organisations. Weak coordination was associated with fragmented guidance, insufficient work-based learning, limited information about competence needs and difficulties during education-to-employment transitions. Other comments described existing partnerships that already work in particular settings and cautioned against formulations that overlook the public sector or assume that the same institutional model applies everywhere.

Social inequality and unequal access formed a further cross-cutting group of concerns. Respondents mentioned family background, migration, language proficiency, regional infrastructure, family and children's services and unequal educational support. Several comments treated disadvantage as an existing condition rather than a purely future risk. These qualifications are analytically important: they show that respondents were not uniformly endorsing the scenarios, even when they identified relevant structural drivers.

Information, guidance and media environments appeared in several entries. Respondents referred to inadequate career-guidance provision, the absence of reliable institutional information, media consumption and the influence of social media. These comments linked informed educational choice with access to professional guidance and with the ability of public institutions to provide current, accessible information.

Psychological wellbeing and social support were also mentioned, especially in comments related to the COVID-19 and youth mental-health statements. Respondents referred to low-threshold support, access to psychotherapy, preventive services, social opportunities and resilience. At the same time, several participants explicitly disputed a simple causal attribution to COVID-19, arguing that the pandemic intensified a pre-existing trend or that other factors now have greater explanatory importance.

Overall, the residual comments describe funding, institutional adaptation, coordination, inclusion, guidance and support as interconnected conditions. They do not justify a claim that every participating expert selected these factors, nor do they establish their relative quantitative importance. Their value lies in extending the structured answer categories and in documenting qualifications that would otherwise be lost.

5.3 Cross-Statement Synthesis of Policy Measures

The 68 residual Policy Measures — other entries contain supplementary proposals, qualifications and occasional rejection of the question. The measures below therefore extend the predefined policy options but do not constitute a complete or ranked policy agenda.

Investment and adequately resourced services recur across the comments. Respondents proposed funding for education, early-childhood provision, teachers and support staff, mental-health and public-health services, guidance systems, research and digital infrastructure. Several measures were framed as preventive investments intended to reduce later educational, labour-market and social costs. Other entries called for

active labour-market instruments or financial incentives where respondents regarded employment decisions as primarily economic.

Educational reform and adaptability formed a second group of proposals. Respondents mentioned curriculum development, competence standards, compulsory or strengthened preschool provision, modular learning, flexible pathways and recognition of prior learning. Comments also stressed that schools need room to adapt implementation to local conditions. At the same time, the residual material cautioned against narrowing education to short-term employer requirements and retained the importance of general education, creativity, cultural awareness, social competencies and critical thinking.

Career guidance and transition support were repeatedly proposed. Suggested measures included comprehensive information platforms, professional counsellors in schools, continuous guidance across the life course and better links between educational institutions, employers and public employment services. These measures were connected with concerns about uninformed choices, skills mismatch, fragmented transitions and unequal access to reliable information.

Cooperation across institutional boundaries was another recurring area. Respondents proposed networks, platforms, cross-sector partnerships, workplace–education cooperation and joint planning. Some comments explicitly requested inclusion of public-sector organisations alongside private employers and academia. Others warned that institutional competition for funding can impede cooperation and that partnerships need adequate staff capacity and stable programmes.

Equity-related proposals included childcare subsidies, support for care responsibilities, language assessment and individual support, services for people with disabilities, psychological and social support and measures addressing barriers to gender-atypical occupations. Several entries broadened the gender discussion by calling attention both to women in male-dominated professions and to men or boys in fields and educational pathways where they are underrepresented.

Governance and implementation conditions cut across the proposals. Respondents mentioned evidence-informed decisions, stable funding, legislation, regulatory flexibility, taxation, public-sector responsibility and the need to evaluate whether measures address underlying causes. Several entries show that experts did not agree on the appropriate instrument: some favoured public intervention, while others described particular outcomes as market processes or criticised the scenario itself.

Overall, the residual policy comments support a portfolio of investment, adaptation, guidance, cooperation, inclusion and governance measures. They do not demonstrate agreement on a single solution, and their uneven country distribution prevents the attribution of a common national position.

5.3.1 Statement Distribution of “Other” Comments

Code	CF other	PM other	Total other
S01	2	3	5
S02	11	6	17
S03	4	3	7
S04	3	1	4
S05	6	4	10
S07	8	5	13
S09	3	3	6
S12	5	2	7
S13	2	6	8

Code	CF other	PM other	Total other
S14	3	1	4
S16	8	8	16
S17	5	3	8
S18	3	3	6
S20	2	5	7
S21	3	5	8
S23	4	0	4
S24	2	1	3
S25	3	3	6
S27	1	5	6
S28	3	0	3
S29	4	1	5
Total	85	68	153

5.4 Country-Specific Findings and Differences in Contributing Factors

The country counts below are essential for interpreting the residual material. Austria and the United Kingdom account for 49 of the 85 contributing-factor comments, while Greece and Kosovo supplied none and Portugal supplied none in this field. Country-specific observations therefore describe the submitted residual comments only and must not be interpreted as national consensus.

5.4.1 Country-Specific Differences in Contributing Factors

Country/group	CF other	Share of 85
Austria	28	32.9%
Finland	8	9.4%
Germany	5	5.9%
Greece	0	0.0%
Italy	9	10.6%
Kosovo	0	0.0%
Poland	10	11.8%
Portugal	0	0.0%
United Kingdom	21	24.7%
Other Countries	4	4.7%
Total	85	100.0%

Austria (n = 28). The Austrian entries contain the broadest range of supplementary factors. They refer to political will and school-system reform, social media, migration, educational standards, early-childhood staffing and funding, employer willingness to train, access to mental-health support, guidance provision, media consumption, public funding, segregation, and digital infrastructure. Several comments challenge the

premise or wording of a statement, for example by treating a problem as already present or by disputing a direct causal attribution to COVID-19.

Finland (n = 8). Finnish entries mention esteem for and investment in education, family and children's services, inequality, the social status of vocational education, representation of VET perspectives in decision-making, workplace learning, research and innovation funding, youth employment and the integration of children from different family backgrounds. The small number supports a description of these submitted additions, not a ranked national profile.

Germany (n = 5). The German entries focus on language proficiency and individual support, resources for coping with the consequences of crisis, media behaviour, mental-health countermeasures and school funding. Each theme is represented by only one or two residual comments.

Greece and Kosovo (n = 0 each). No residual contributing-factor comments were recorded. The data therefore provide no basis for a country-specific profile in this field.

Italy (n = 9). Italian entries mention revision of training pathways, experiences related to the COVID period and wider perceptions of crisis, an alternative concern that VET may be emphasised at the expense of higher education, inadequate guidance, weak school–employer dialogue, collaboration between public and private institutions, and funding. These entries span several different statements and do not form a single national hierarchy.

Poland (n = 10). Polish entries include rejection of some scenario premises, school funding, teacher salaries and specialist staff, early competence development, childcare and social infrastructure, systemic mental-health support, and public investment in education. Funding and support capacity recur, but the small residual field does not quantify their importance relative to predefined factors.

Portugal (n = 0). No residual contributing-factor entry was recorded.

United Kingdom (n = 21). UK entries include disciplinary and AI-related competencies, investment in youth services and professional guidance, institutional competition and funding, taxation and workplace reorganisation, childcare finance, lifelong learning, career guidance, training costs, mental-health effects, curriculum leadership and questions about scenarios already being present or declining. Several entries are brief qualifications rather than substantive factor proposals.

Other Countries (n = 4). The heterogeneous residual group mentions autocratisation, inclusion of children with special needs and different language backgrounds, research on child development, and research on effective digital provision. The group combines different contexts and cannot be read as a country profile.

5.5 Country-Specific Findings and Differences in Policy Measures

The policy-measure residual field is similarly uneven. Austria and the United Kingdom account for 39 of the 68 entries. Greece and Kosovo supplied none, and Portugal supplied one. The following observations remain descriptive.

5.5.1 Country Specific – Policy Measures

Country/group	PM other	Share of 68
Austria	25	36.8%
Finland	8	11.8%
Germany	5	7.4%
Greece	0	0.0%
Italy	6	8.8%

Country/group	PM other	Share of 68
Kosovo	0	0.0%
Poland	5	7.4%
Portugal	1	1.5%
United Kingdom	14	20.6%
Other Countries	4	5.9%
Total	68	100.0%

Austria (n = 25). Austrian proposals include active labour-market measures, links between educational participation and support services, media literacy, teacher education, parental and community engagement, early-childhood investment, modular learning, mental-health and public-health services, career-information platforms, professional guidance, curriculum flexibility, cross-sector networks, funding programmes, family-policy measures and digital infrastructure. Two entries explicitly reject the premise of the question or state that no measure is required.

Finland (n = 8). Finnish comments propose competence-level requirements, rational development of the education system, alignment of study places with societal needs, stronger workplace–education cooperation and inclusion of public-sector organisations in research and innovation activities. Other entries qualify the youth-dismissal, public–private resource and gender statements and argue for a broader or differently framed policy response.

Germany (n = 5). German proposals concern adaptation of teaching and training regulations, compulsory preschool, language assessment and individual support, and shared state–employer responsibility for workforce development. One comment qualifies the dismissal scenario rather than proposing a conventional policy measure.

Greece and Kosovo (n = 0 each). No residual policy-measure entries were recorded.

Italy (n = 6). Italian entries mention listening and psychological-support services, data- and evidence-based guidance, public investment in public schools and support for people carrying care responsibilities. One respondent stated that the TVET scenario was not considered an issue.

Poland (n = 5). Polish proposals refer to social competencies, mental-health prevention and health-system funding, public investment and a critical view of private-sector–academic cooperation. They represent several distinct positions rather than one national package.

Portugal (n = 1). The single Portuguese entry proposes greater school autonomy, stronger recognition of teachers and other professionals, and a clear political and regulatory focus on essential learning. No broader national inference is possible.

United Kingdom (n = 14). UK comments address support for people with disabilities, lessons from COVID responses, taxation and financial incentives, childcare subsidies and housing costs, employment-support taxation, the role of cultural and social skills, communication and responsible employer engagement. Several entries challenge the question or state that intervention is difficult.

Other Countries (n = 4). Entries in the heterogeneous group propose attractive skilled jobs through TVET routes, flexible learning pathways, integrated qualification frameworks, recognition of prior learning and gender policy that addresses barriers in both male- and female-dominated professions.

5.6 Implications for European and National Policy

The residual comments support retaining several cross-cutting policy areas for further consideration. They do not establish a hierarchy among them:

- strengthening investment in education across the life course, including early childhood education, teacher capacity, support services and lifelong learning;
- improving the responsiveness of curricula and training pathways while preserving foundational knowledge, general education and critical thinking;
- promoting cooperation among education providers, employers, public institutions and civil-society organisations;
- expanding professional career guidance, reliable information and transition support throughout the life course;
- reducing educational inequalities through language support, early intervention, childcare and targeted services for disadvantaged groups;
- supporting digital transformation while ensuring equitable infrastructure, competencies and human support;
- investing in mental-health, psychological and social services where respondents identified these as enabling conditions; and
- strengthening evidence-informed governance, stable funding and evaluation of reforms.

The country evidence shows that implementation conditions vary and that the residual fields are too uneven for a common national ranking. European cooperation can therefore use these areas as a portfolio of issues to examine, while national and regional actors determine which instruments are appropriate to their institutional context. The comments do not support presenting any single measure as uniformly endorsed across the panel.

6 Biggest Risk — Content-Related Outcomes

The following statement-level summaries use only the 640 Wave 2 comments entered in the Biggest risk field. The number shown for each statement is the number of comment records, not the number of respondents endorsing a risk. Recurrent risks and qualifications are summarised together so that disagreement and conditional interpretations are not lost.

6.1.1 Block 1. Polarised Statements

Code	Verified statement formulation	Biggest Risk Comment Records
S02	Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm	77
S07	Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)	57

The two statements in this block generated the greatest degree of disagreement in Wave 1. The qualitative material is therefore used to explain the potential consequences identified by respondents and the qualifications they attached to highly polarising scenarios.

6.2 S02. Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 77). Across countries, submitted comments repeatedly described the potential normalisation of illiteracy or severe deficiencies in basic literacy skills as a profound societal rather than merely educational challenge. The comments suggest that the consequences would

extend well beyond schools, affecting democratic participation, economic development, labour market functioning and social cohesion.

One of the most frequently mentioned concerns was the growing erosion of democracy and civic participation. Numerous comments argued that individuals with weak literacy and critical reading skills are more susceptible to misinformation, manipulation and populist narratives. Several respondents explicitly warned that declining literacy would weaken informed democratic participation, increase political polarisation and undermine trust in democratic institutions.

A second recurring theme concerned increasing social inequality and exclusion. Comments repeatedly anticipated that insufficient literacy would deepen existing educational and socioeconomic disparities, leaving disadvantaged groups with fewer opportunities to participate in education, employment and wider society. Many respondents linked declining literacy to marginalisation, poverty, social division and, in some cases, increasing violence and social unrest.

Another frequently identified risk was the loss of human capital and economic competitiveness. Some comments warned that inadequate literacy would reduce the availability of skilled workers, exacerbate existing labour shortages and weaken countries' long-term competitiveness. Several respondents argued that societies would increasingly fail to utilise available talent, particularly in the context of demographic ageing and growing labour market demands.

Many comments also emphasised the consequences for critical thinking and lifelong learning. Rather than viewing literacy solely as the ability to read and write, respondents frequently described it as the foundation for analysing information, independent thinking, informed decision-making and continuous competence development. Without these basic competencies, individuals were considered less able to adapt to technological change, participate in civic life and navigate increasingly complex labour markets.

Several comments further highlighted broader societal and cultural consequences. Respondents anticipated a gradual decline in general education, civic awareness and social responsibility, accompanied by reduced social cohesion and increasing fragmentation of society. Some comments suggested that persistent deficiencies in basic literacy could ultimately threaten long-term social stability and economic prosperity.

Finally, a number of respondents stressed the importance of early educational investment and structural reform, arguing that failure to strengthen foundational competences would create cumulative disadvantages throughout individuals' educational and professional lives.

Qualifications and disagreement. Although many submitted comments described risks associated with declining literacy, the comments differed in their interpretation of the statement itself. Several respondents questioned whether illiteracy would genuinely become the norm, considering this scenario unrealistic. Others argued that the more relevant concern is the growing prevalence of functional illiteracy or insufficient basic competencies rather than complete illiteracy. A small number of experts also noted that the concept of literacy itself is evolving in increasingly digital societies and therefore requires careful definition when assessing future developments.

6.3 S07. Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 57). Across country groups, comments identified the growing imbalance between university education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as a significant risk for both labour markets and society. The comments consistently emphasised that neglecting vocational education would contribute to persistent skills shortages and reduce the availability of qualified workers in occupations essential for economic development.

A recurring concern was the increasing mismatch between education provision and labour market needs. Many respondents argued that an excessive policy and societal focus on higher education could reduce the attractiveness of vocational pathways, resulting in an oversupply of university graduates alongside shortages

of technically skilled professionals. Some comments warned that this imbalance would weaken labour market efficiency and reduce the responsiveness of education systems to employers' changing competence requirements.

Many comments also highlighted the economic consequences of insufficient investment in vocational education. Respondents anticipated declining productivity, reduced competitiveness and growing difficulties for employers in recruiting appropriately qualified workers. Several comments linked these developments to broader labour shortages, slower economic growth and increasing pressure on public finances.

Another recurring theme concerned the devaluation of vocational careers. Some comments suggested that continued prioritisation of university education could reinforce the perception that vocational pathways are less prestigious or less desirable, despite their growing importance for modern economies. This was viewed as contributing to structural imbalances in educational participation and workforce composition.

Several respondents further stressed the importance of modernising vocational education rather than simply expanding university participation. Some comments argued that TVET systems need to evolve alongside technological change and emerging occupational requirements to ensure that vocational qualifications remain attractive, relevant and aligned with labour market demand.

Some comments also emphasised broader social consequences, including reduced educational diversity, fewer opportunities for young people whose strengths are better suited to vocational learning, and increasing inequalities in access to appropriate educational pathways. A number of some comments warned that neglecting TVET could ultimately limit individual career opportunities while weakening the resilience of education systems.

Qualifications and disagreement. Although most respondents recognised the importance of maintaining a balanced relationship between university education and TVET, experts differed regarding the likelihood and severity of the proposed development. Some viewed the statement as reflecting an already observable trend requiring immediate policy attention, whereas others considered it a longstanding structural challenge rather than a new development. A small number of respondents also suggested that future labour market transformations may increase, rather than reduce, the value placed on vocational education, provided that TVET systems continue to adapt to technological and economic change.

6.4 Block Summary — Polarised Statements

Across S02 and S07, respondents connected weaknesses in basic literacy and the marginalisation of vocational education with social exclusion, skills shortages, weaker competitiveness and pressure on social cohesion. At the same time, both formulations attracted important qualifications. Several respondents rejected the idea that illiteracy would become the “norm”, and some argued that TVET is already protected or regaining status in their context. The block therefore combines serious assessments of potential consequences with clear disagreement about the likelihood and wording of the scenarios.

6.4.1 Block 2. Diverging Statements

Code	Verified statement formulation	Biggest Risk Comment Records
S01	Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement	45
S05	Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education	38
S13	Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns	42

Code	Verified statement formulation	Biggest Risk Comment Records
S16	Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills	29
S17	Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices	34
S21	Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed	25
S23	Integrated guidance centres for youth employment will be widely established	24
S29	Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education	25

The statements in this block shared a direction of change but differed in the expected magnitude or implications. The detailed comments illuminate risks concerning labour-market transformation, education, inclusion and institutional preparedness.

6.5 S01. Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 45). S01 records include labour-market exclusion, unequal access to disciplinary and digital competencies, education–labour-market mismatch, credential inflation and economic consequences. Other records question whether the requirement would become universal or treat it as a normal market adjustment. The synthesis therefore reports both risks and qualifications.

6.6 S05. Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 38). S05 records include unequal early opportunities, loss of human capital, intergenerational disadvantage, childcare and labour-market participation, and later remedial costs. Some comments support early investment, while others question whether one educational stage should be labelled the most critical. No common investment ranking is inferred.

6.7 S13. Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 42). S13 records include youth unemployment, insecure entry, career scarring, income loss, social exclusion and delayed independence or family formation. The submitted text also contains qualifications about the likelihood, duration and policy dependence of these outcomes.

S16. Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 29). S16 records include effects on education, employment, social participation, wellbeing and public services. The comments differ on how much can be attributed specifically to COVID-19 and often describe broader pre-existing causes. The causal disagreement remains explicit.

6.8 S17. Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 34). S17 records include unreliable information, poorly informed study choices, education–labour-market mismatch, inequality in access to guidance and pressure from commercial or online visibility. Some comments also recognise useful information channels or question the scale of the effect.

6.9 S21. Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 25). S21 records include education–labour-market mismatch, missed knowledge exchange, weaker transition support and implementation or governance constraints. Comments also note that partnership design, public-sector inclusion and institutional capacity affect outcomes.

6.10 S23. Integrated guidance centres for youth employment will be widely established

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 24). S23 records include fragmented support, delayed or unsuitable education-to-work transitions, unemployment and unequal access to guidance. Other comments stress implementation conditions or question whether a single integrated-centre model fits every context.

6.11 S29. Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 25). Respondents warned that unequal connectivity, equipment and digital competencies can prevent digital provision from reducing regional disparities and may instead reproduce or widen them. Poor infrastructure was linked to reduced access to education and training, the loss of human potential in rural areas and weaker opportunities for regional economic development.

Several comments described broader territorial effects. Where digital and educational infrastructure is insufficient, young people and families may leave rural areas, while those who remain have fewer options. Respondents also noted that transport and the availability of in-person provision continue to matter; digital access alone cannot remove all structural differences between urban and rural regions.

The limits of remote learning were a recurring theme. Respondents stressed that online provision cannot fully replace face-to-face teaching, guidance, social interaction and community experience. It may be particularly unsuitable without induction and support for learners who are educationally disadvantaged or less prepared for self-directed learning. Digital provision was therefore described most often as a complement to, rather than a substitute for, in-person education.

Qualifications and disagreement. Some respondents questioned whether a general rural-urban performance gap exists in their country, argued that socioeconomic factors are more important or assessed the risk as low where infrastructure is already adequate. Benefits were viewed as conditional on equitable connectivity, appropriate pedagogy and continued access to human support. The statement therefore describes a potential equalising mechanism, not a guaranteed outcome.

6.11.1 Block 3. Uncertain Statements

Statement number	Verified statement formulation	Biggest Risk Comment Records
S18	The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people	31
S25	Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen	28
S28	School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families	23

The statements in this block were characterised by comparatively high uncertainty. The comments are especially useful for identifying the conditions under which the developments may occur and the reasons respondents did not treat the scenarios as inevitable.

6.12 S18. The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 31). S18 records include unemployment, insecure or fragmented entry, career scarring, inequality, delayed independence and demographic or social consequences. The comments also make the scale of these risks conditional on economic context, institutions and transition support.

6.13 S25. Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 28). Respondents associated widening resource differences with a two-tier education system in which access to educational quality becomes increasingly dependent on family income, location or the ability to pay. The comments linked this development to unequal learning opportunities, reduced social mobility and the persistence or deepening of wider socioeconomic inequalities.

A second concern involved the weakening of public education. Respondents mentioned underinvestment, the possible impoverishment of public schools and reduced trust in public institutions. Several comments warned that market-oriented provision or privatisation can direct resources toward more profitable groups and locations, while public authorities retain responsibility for pupils and services that are less attractive to private providers.

The material also connected school-resource inequality with social cohesion. Respondents referred to separation between social groups, a widening divide between rich and poor and increasing conflict potential. The loss of equal educational opportunity was further associated with unused talent, weaker innovation and adverse consequences for sustainable economic and social development.

Qualifications and disagreement. The public-private distinction was described as context-dependent. One respondent noted that private schools are not necessarily better resourced in every national setting, and another did not identify a specific risk. The scale of the problem was seen as dependent on funding, regulation and the organisation of public services. The supported conclusion is therefore that widening inequities can entrench disadvantage, while the institutional mechanisms and severity vary across countries.

6.14 S28. School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 23). Respondents described unequal parental capacity to provide educational support as a mechanism through which existing disadvantages can accumulate. Parents differ in language proficiency, educational experience, time, income and familiarity with school systems. When schools transfer substantial learning responsibility to families, these differences can become differences in children's achievement and educational progression.

The comments gave particular attention to pupils from migrant or non-native families and to children whose parents have lower levels of education. Risks mentioned included missing basic competencies at the beginning of the educational pathway, weaker language development, poorer school results and reduced later opportunities. Several respondents connected these outcomes with marginalisation, loss of potential and future shortages of skilled workers.

The consequences were also described at the societal level. Respondents referred to segregation, social division, reduced cohesion and growing conflict when educational opportunities remain strongly tied to family background. The issue was therefore framed as both an equity problem and a challenge to social and economic integration.

Qualifications and disagreement. Several comments described the balance between school and family responsibility as a longstanding problem rather than a new trend. Respondents also identified ways to mitigate the risk through adequately funded schools, free early support, tutoring, language assistance, family mediation and extracurricular provision. The scale of disadvantage consequently depends on whether schools and public services compensate for unequal resources at home.

6.14.1 Block 4. Consensus Statements

Code	Verified statement formulation	Biggest Risk Comment Records
S03	The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people	18
S04	Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioural problems (e.g.: violence, bullying, disengagement)	22
S09	New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes	20
S12	Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labour-market participation	23
S14	The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen	19
S20	Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths	19
S24	Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation	21
S27	Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women	20

Note: The statements in this block achieved the strongest quantitative agreement in Wave 1. The qualitative comments nevertheless contain important qualifications, implementation conditions and risks that are not visible in the scale ratings alone.

6.15 S03. The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 18). Respondents described the possibility that disruptions experienced during the COVID-19 crisis could become embedded in learning behaviour, concentration, social development and emotional regulation. The comments referred to loss of competences, declining interest in learning and reduced confidence or self-efficacy. Several respondents were concerned that these effects could weaken educational progression and leave some young people less prepared for later training and employment.

The comments also connected educational disruption with wider labour-market and social consequences. Risks mentioned included weaker labour-market integration, more young people outside education or employment, additional pressure on welfare systems and shortages of both skilled and unskilled workers. Mental-health and behavioural problems were described as possible channels through which the educational effects might continue to influence school participation and later transitions.

A further concern was the unequal distribution of long-term effects. Respondents warned that unresolved learning losses could widen existing gaps and limit the future prospects of already vulnerable young people. In this interpretation, the risk lies not only in an average decline in learning outcomes but in the accumulation of disadvantages for groups with fewer educational, family or social resources.

Qualifications and disagreement. The magnitude and attribution of the effect were contested. Some comments regarded COVID-19 as only one of several pressures on learning and criticised the statement for giving it too much weight. Others described the crisis as a unique past event whose effects had already occurred, or assessed the future risk as low. The evidence therefore supports a conditional interpretation: lasting effects were identified, but respondents did not agree that COVID-19 alone explains current or future learning difficulties.

6.16 S04. Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioural problems (e.g.: violence, bullying, disengagement)

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 22). The comments treated violence, bullying, harassment and disengagement as direct risks to school safety, the learning environment and students' wellbeing. Respondents warned that unresolved behavioural problems can disrupt teaching, impair the learning of other pupils and contribute to deteriorating school climates. Several comments also linked these problems to mental-health difficulties, marginalisation and weaker educational outcomes.

Respondents further connected school-level behavioural problems with broader social consequences. They mentioned the normalisation of violence, increasing social conflict, erosion of social cohesion and the reinforcement of existing inequalities. In this reading, schools are not isolated from wider societal tensions: ineffective prevention and late intervention may allow problems to become more entrenched and more costly to address.

The material also points to implementation capacity. Comments referred to the need for preventive approaches, clear procedures and interdisciplinary support involving teachers, psychologists, social workers and counsellors. The risk is therefore not created by effective programmes themselves; it arises when programmes are absent, insufficiently resourced, introduced too late or unable to address the underlying causes of behaviour and disengagement.

Qualifications and disagreement. Because the statement describes a positive development, several responses implicitly reformulated the question and discussed the consequences of failure rather than a risk caused by the programmes. A small number offered no clear assessment. The supported conclusion is therefore conditional: effective programmes may reduce the identified risks, while weak implementation or insufficient specialist support may allow them to persist.

6.17 S09. New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 20). A central concern was that education, training and guidance systems may not adapt quickly enough to AI-related changes in employment. Respondents warned of gaps between the competencies required by the labour market and those held by young people or the existing workforce. If new entry routes develop without corresponding investment in education, reskilling and recognition of competencies, some workers may become professionally obsolete or unable to access emerging opportunities.

Several comments connected this mismatch with exclusion, unemployment, poverty and social alienation. Young people without suitable digital access, guidance or opportunities to acquire new competencies were seen as particularly vulnerable. Respondents also described possible consequences for productivity and international competitiveness if countries or education systems fail to keep pace with technological change.

The comments did not frame AI only as a labour-market technology. Some respondents raised concerns about weakened interpersonal skills, excessive reliance on AI applications and the wider social effects of algorithmic systems. These observations broaden the interpretation from occupational entry routes to the capacity of individuals and institutions to use AI without displacing essential human, social and learning processes.

Qualifications and disagreement. Several comments treated AI as an opportunity to create more flexible or competence-based entry routes, especially for non-traditional learners. Others considered the statement too generic, questioned the scale of the transformation or warned against uncritical AI hype. The consequences were therefore described as dependent on regulation, training, equitable access and the design of new recognition and guidance systems rather than as an automatic negative outcome.

6.18 S12. Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labour market participation

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 23). S12 records include reduced parental labour-market participation, gender inequality, interrupted careers, income effects and delayed family formation. The material also notes that childcare availability, affordability, quality and national institutional arrangements differ.

6.19 S14. The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 19). S14 records include skills mismatch, labour shortages, employer training responsibility, cooperation with education providers and economic consequences. The comments disagree about whether the main problem lies with employers, education systems or a longstanding structural relationship.

6.20 S20. Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 19). Respondents repeatedly identified the risk of a widening mismatch when curricula adapt more slowly than occupations and competence requirements. They linked delayed reform to qualification gaps, shortages of appropriately skilled workers, unemployment or precarious labour-market entry and lower productivity. In this view, schools and training systems risk becoming less relevant if learners leave without competencies that correspond to changing economic and societal needs.

The comments also stressed that curriculum reform can itself be poorly designed. Respondents warned that new content may be selected incorrectly, useful knowledge may be displaced and curricula may become too closely tailored to tests or short-term employer demands. The quality of classroom implementation was described as at least as important as formal curriculum change.

Several responses therefore favoured continuous exchange among schools, employers, sectoral organisations and public employment services, while recognising that some occupation-specific learning will continue to occur at work. This supports a model in which curricula provide adaptable foundations and institutions update provision using timely information rather than attempting to predict every future job in detail.

Qualifications and disagreement. Some respondents regarded curriculum adaptation as an established and ongoing process rather than a new development. Others questioned whether the effort to respond to working-life needs had already gone too far and emphasised schools' broader general-education function. The qualitative evidence therefore supports a balance between labour-market responsiveness and foundational knowledge, critical thinking and adaptability.

6.21 S24. Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 21). Respondents linked educational inequality to a deeper division of society by income, social background and access to opportunity. They described the risk of a dual system in which educational and professional outcomes increasingly depend on family resources rather than individual ability. This was associated with reduced social mobility and the reproduction of disadvantage across generations.

The comments also identified consequences for social cohesion and democratic life. Respondents mentioned distrust, social conflict, radicalisation, stronger anti-democratic movements and the possible hollowing-out of democracy. Educational inequality was therefore framed not only as an issue of individual achievement but as a threat to the capacity of different social groups to participate in a shared society.

Economic effects were also present in the material. Several comments referred to wasted talent, shortages of skilled workers and weaker long-term productivity when disadvantaged young people cannot develop or use their potential. In this interpretation, inequality imposes costs on both affected individuals and the wider economy.

Qualifications and disagreement. The comments treated the outcome as policy-contingent rather than inevitable. Funding decisions, access to high-quality education, family support and wider social programmes can either reinforce or mitigate polarisation. Some respondents also described the pattern as already established. The statement is therefore supported as a serious risk, but not as an automatic future consequence independent of policy.

6.22 S27. Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women

Biggest risks identified in the comments (n = 20). The comments located the principal risk in the persistence of occupational segregation if initiatives remain superficial or ineffective. Respondents warned that women may continue to face discrimination, restricted career choice, a glass ceiling and exclusion from fields with stronger employment or earning opportunities. This was linked to gender pay gaps, unequal economic independence and the underuse of available talent.

Several comments stressed that visibility campaigns or isolated events are insufficient when workplace cultures, family and care arrangements, education systems and legal or tax frameworks continue to reproduce gendered expectations. Opening a formal pathway does not by itself ensure equal access,

retention or progression. Respondents therefore emphasised the structural conditions surrounding occupational choice.

The material also broadened the issue beyond women entering male-dominated occupations. Some comments argued that occupational segregation should be addressed in both directions, including the underrepresentation of men in care and education. Others raised concern about boys' educational outcomes. These responses did not reject gender equality but questioned an exclusively one-directional framing.

Qualifications and disagreement. Some respondents regarded the positive development itself as low risk, while others doubted whether public policy can substantially change deeply embedded stereotypes. The comments therefore support the need for sustained, multi-level action and caution against treating the existence of initiatives as evidence that structural barriers have already been removed.

6.23 Block Summary — Consensus Statements

Across the eight consensus statements, the comments repeatedly emphasised the need for education and labour-market systems to remain adaptive, inclusive and capable of implementation. Recurring concerns included learning and wellbeing after COVID-19, school support for behavioural problems, AI-related transitions, childcare, employer involvement in training, curriculum adaptation, educational inequality and persistent gender barriers.

The qualitative material adds conditions and counterarguments to the quantitative agreement. Respondents stressed that positive outcomes depend on resources, guidance, institutional cooperation and equitable access. They also questioned overly universal formulations, distinguished longstanding problems from new developments and warned against reducing education to short-term employability. Quantitative consensus therefore does not imply identical reasoning or a single preferred policy response.

6.24 Cross-Country Comparison of Biggest Risk Comments

The country comparison below uses only the 640 Biggest risk records. It does not combine these with residual contributing-factor or policy-measure comments. Counts are descriptive and are not normalised by the number of respondents in each country because respondent-level country denominators for this open field are not contained in the supplied comment workbooks.

6.24.1 Country Comparison – Biggest Risk

Country/group	Biggest Risk Comment Records	Share of 640
Austria	60	9.4%
Finland	106	16.6%
Germany	98	15.3%
Greece	12	1.9%
Italy	37	5.8%
Kosovo	80	12.5%
Poland	47	7.3%
Portugal	56	8.8%
United Kingdom	56	8.8%
Other countries / not linked	88	13.8%

Country/group	Biggest Risk Comment Records	Share of 640
Total	640	100.0%

6.24.2 Country-by-Statement Matrix, Panel 1

Country/group	S01	S02	S03	S04	S05	S07	S09	Panel total
Austria	4	11	2	1	5	6	2	31
Finland	8	17	1	3	6	13	2	50
Germany	7	8	3	3	7	9	1	38
Greece	1	4	0	0	2	2	0	9
Italy	5	7	0	1	2	5	1	21
Kosovo	4	8	3	4	4	4	4	31
Poland	3	5	1	2	2	3	2	18
Portugal	3	5	2	3	2	3	1	19
United Kingdom	4	4	3	2	4	4	3	24
Other countries / not linked	6	8	3	3	4	8	4	36
Total	45	77	18	22	38	57	20	277

6.24.3 Country-by-Statement Matrix, Panel 2

Country/group	S12	S13	S14	S16	S17	S18	S20	Panel total
Austria	2	4	2	2	2	3	1	16
Finland	2	9	2	4	6	5	2	30
Germany	5	5	4	5	5	6	2	32
Greece	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Italy	1	1	0	1	3	1	0	7
Kosovo	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	25
Poland	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	15
Portugal	3	5	1	3	4	3	3	22
United Kingdom	2	4	2	3	3	3	2	19
Other countries / not linked	3	6	3	4	5	3	4	28
Total	23	42	19	29	34	31	19	197

6.24.4 Country-by-Statement Matrix, Panel 3

Country/group	S21	S23	S24	S25	S27	S28	S29	Panel total
Austria	2	2	1	2	1	2	3	13
Finland	5	4	3	5	3	4	2	26
Germany	2	4	5	5	2	6	4	28
Greece	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Italy	3	1	0	1	0	1	3	9
Kosovo	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	24
Poland	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14
Portugal	1	3	2	3	2	1	3	15
United Kingdom	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	13
Other countries / not linked	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	24
Total	25	24	21	28	20	23	25	166

6.25 Country-Specific Qualitative Synthesis of Identified Biggest Risks

The profiles below use only the 640 statement-specific Biggest Risk comments. Exact country and statement counts are reported before each narrative. The profiles describe the submitted comments from small, non-representative expert cells; they are not estimates of national opinion and do not imply that every expert from a country shared the same view.

6.25.1 Austria

Austria contributed 60 Biggest Risk comments. S02 generated the largest number (11), followed by S07 (6), S05 (5), and S01 and S13 (4 each). These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

Within Austria's 60 Biggest Risk records, recurring content includes educational quality and investment, labour-market participation, demographic conditions, social cohesion and digital competencies. The records also contain conditional arguments about policy and implementation. This synthesis describes submitted text only and does not represent Austrian expert opinion as a whole.

6.25.2 Finland

Finland contributed 106 Biggest Risk comments. S02 ranked first (17), followed by S07 (13), S13 (9), S01 (8) and S05 (6). These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

Within Finland's 106 Biggest Risk records, literacy, critical thinking, social cohesion, competence development, lifelong learning and demographic links recur. Some records question statement assumptions or request greater conceptual precision. These themes are descriptive of the submitted corpus and are not a national priority ranking.

6.25.3 Germany

Germany contributed 98 Biggest Risk comments. S07 recorded 9, S02 recorded 8, S01 and S05 recorded 7 each, and S18 recorded 6. These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

Within Germany's 98 Biggest Risk records, TVET, skills matching, workforce development, educational adaptation and labour-market capacity recur. The records include both risk descriptions and qualifications. No population-level German position or cross-country rank is inferred.

6.25.4 Greece

Greece contributed only 12 Biggest Risk comments. S02 received 4, S05, S07 and S13 received 2 each, and S01 and S16 received 1 each. Any interpretation must therefore remain particularly cautious. These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

The 12 Greek Biggest Risk records mention youth employment, education, inequality, institutional capacity and social cohesion, together with qualifications of individual scenarios. Because the cell is very small, these observations remain illustrative and do not support a broader country profile.

6.25.5 Italy

Italy contributed 37 Biggest Risk comments. S02 recorded 7; S01 and S07 recorded 5 each; S17 and S21 recorded 3 each. These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

Within Italy's 37 Biggest Risk records, educational quality, critical thinking, social responsibility, inequality, information environments and education-to-work transitions recur. These are themes found in the submitted records, not positions attributable to all Italian participants.

6.25.6 Kosovo

Kosovo contributed 80 Biggest Risk comments. S02 received 8; S01, S04, S05, S07, S09, S13, S16, S17, S18, S21, S25 and S27 each received 4. These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

Within Kosovo's 80 Biggest Risk records, education–labour-market alignment, employability, migration, institutional capacity, educational reform and inclusion recur. The content includes policy-oriented suggestions, but the report does not treat them as a shared Kosovo policy package.

6.25.7 Poland

Poland contributed 47 Biggest Risk comments. S02 received 5; S01, S07 and S18 received 3 each; the remaining comments were broadly distributed. These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

Within Poland's 47 Biggest Risk records, foundational skills, education–labour-market matching, inequality, adaptability and lifelong learning recur. Some records question the pace or scale of projected developments. The themes are descriptive and do not establish broad agreement or a national ranking.

6.25.8 Portugal

Portugal contributed 56 Biggest Risk comments. S02 received 5; S13 received 5; S17 received 4; and several statements received 3. These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

Within Portugal's 56 Biggest Risk records, social inclusion, education-to-work transitions, guidance, migration, lifelong learning and policy conditions recur. The comments propose several possible responses; they do not identify one most effective strategy or a position shared by all Portuguese participants.

6.25.9 United Kingdom

The United Kingdom contributed 56 Biggest Risk comments. S01, S02, S05, S07 and S13 each received 4; S03, S09, S16 and S17 each received 3. These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

Within the United Kingdom's 56 Biggest Risk records, employability, guidance, information quality, inequality, adaptability and lifelong learning recur. The submitted comments include conditional and pragmatic interpretations. They do not support a population-level UK profile.

6.25.10 Other Countries

The heterogeneous Other Countries group contributed 88 Biggest Risk comments. S07 and S02 received 8 each, S01 and S13 received 6 each, and S17 received 5. These are comment counts, not measures of national importance.

The 88 Biggest Risk records in Other Countries combine heterogeneous contexts. Education–labour-market matching, digital change, inequality, international competitiveness and institutional coordination recur, alongside different views on public intervention. The category cannot be interpreted as one country position.

6.26 Common Descriptive Pattern

S02 generated the largest number of Biggest Risk comments overall (77) and was the highest-count statement in Austria, Greece, Italy and Poland, as well as one of the highest in several other groups. S07 followed with 57 comments and was particularly prominent in Finland, Germany and Other Countries. Beyond these two statements, country distributions were broad and sample sizes varied substantially. The table therefore supports a shared concentration of written attention around basic literacy and TVET, but not a claim that countries agreed on the likelihood, severity or preferred response.

6.27 Comment-Length Statistics

Technical translation markers were removed before calculation. Words were counted as alphanumeric tokens separated by spaces or punctuation; character counts include spaces and punctuation in the cleaned English text. Length is descriptive and is not treated as a proxy for quality, importance or agreement.

Field	n	Mean words	Median words	Min–max words	Mean characters	Median characters	Min–max characters	
All Wave comments	2	793	21.1	13.0	0–269	138.9	86.0	1–1725
Biggest risk	640	21.9	13.0	0–269	144.4	88.5	1–1725	
Contributing factors — other	85	17.0	10.0	1–114	110.2	67.0	7–741	
Policy measures — other	68	18.4	12.0	1–89	122.7	77.0	5–550	

6.27.1 Comment Length by Country/Group

Country/group	n	Mean words	Median words	Mean characters	Median characters
Austria	113	28.5	22.0	181.4	148.0
Finland	122	27.8	18.0	180.7	116.5
Germany	108	19.1	12.5	134.2	86.0
Greece	12	24.9	22.0	162.6	141.5
Italy	52	15.1	12.0	97.8	74.0
Kosovo	80	15.2	10.0	92.9	60.5

Country/group	n	Mean words	Median words	Mean characters	Median characters
Poland	62	11.8	9.0	74.1	62.5
Portugal	57	34.6	22.0	245.5	150.0
United Kingdom	91	13.5	8.0	86.8	59.0
Other countries / not linked	96	18.7	12.0	126.7	86.5

6.28 Extended Cross-Country Interpretation

Across the submitted country groups, several themes recur, but the voluntary and uneven comment base does not support a claim of cross-national agreement.

Education is discussed in several groups in relation to economic resilience, social cohesion and individual opportunities.

Education–labour-market matching, technological change, digitalisation and competence development recur in multiple country groups. The text does not quantify how prevalent these views are.

Curricula, vocational pathways, lifelong learning, skills shortages and competitiveness are linked in a subset of comments, with different emphases and qualifications.

A second recurring pattern concerns social inequality and exclusion. Comments across several groups connect educational disadvantage with access to education, digital competencies, guidance, labour-market participation and social mobility. This is thematic recurrence, not broad agreement.

Education-to-work transitions, guidance, institutional cooperation and labour-market policy are also mentioned across country groups. The comments contain proposals and qualifications rather than a uniformly endorsed mechanism.

Lifelong learning and competence development recur in several groups, including references to shared responsibility among governments, employers, institutions and individuals. The qualitative material does not rank these positions.

Many comments frame outcomes as contingent on policy, institutions and public investment rather than inevitable. This is a recurring pattern across several country groups, not broad consensus.

Country differences are presented as descriptive tendencies within the submitted texts. Unequal sample sizes, commenting rates and the heterogeneous Other Countries group preclude national rankings.

References to governance, institutional capacity, competencies and adaptability vary across groups, but these observations do not represent population-level country positions.

Inequality is framed in different ways across the submitted comments. The report treats these as examples of emphasis, not as measured national differences.

Demographic ageing, migration and workforce issues appear in several country sections. Their frequency and importance are not inferred beyond the verified comment matrices.

Some comments present technological and labour-market change conditionally, while others focus on structural risks. The corpus contains both types of interpretation.

Across the qualitative material, policy and implementation are often treated as conditions shaping outcomes. No single causal model is endorsed by all participants.

7 Overall Qualitative Remarks and Conclusions

The verified Wave 2 qualitative base contains 793 comment records, including 640 Biggest Risk records. S02 and S07 have the highest Biggest Risk counts. Across all 21 retained statements, the submitted texts include risks, qualifications and disagreement; count is not interpreted as engagement, importance or consensus.

The raw comments do not support deterministic interpretations. For every block, respondents qualified statement wording, challenged universality, distinguished existing from future problems, or emphasised that outcomes depend on policy and implementation. The corrected analysis therefore reports recurring risks together with disagreement rather than presenting comment volume as consensus.

7.1 Link to the Quantitative Results of Wave 2

After semantic source reconciliation, the quantitative results provide separate evidence of second-round convergence: seven of ten re-rated statements narrowed on at least one dimension, nine of 24 comparable IQRs narrowed, none widened, and only S21's five-year likelihood median changed (3.0 to 4.0). The qualitative evidence complements these results by showing where and how respondents elaborated, but it does not replace the quantitative consensus measures.

Finally, the residual other fields are too small and unevenly distributed for detailed national profiles. They support a cautious cross-statement account of supplementary drivers and measures, while the Biggest Risk field provides the defensible basis for the statement-level and country-by-statement content analysis presented above.

Across both Delphi waves, the qualitative evidence shows continuity in the broad challenges considered by the participating experts, while Wave 2 organised the discussion more explicitly around contributing factors, risks and possible policy measures. The two qualitative prompts were not fully “identical”, and this difference must remain visible when the waves are compared.

Taken together, the verified material portrays:

- future education-to-work transitions as interconnected processes involving educational quality, foundational and digital competencies,
- vocational pathways, labour-market matching,
- guidance,
- mental health,
- childcare, inequality and
- institutional capacity.

Respondents often treated negative outcomes as contingent on policy and implementation rather than inevitable consequences of technological or societal change.

The corrected analysis therefore separates three different forms of evidence.

- First, raw comment counts and lengths describe use of the optional written fields.
- Second, the content analysis identifies risks, qualifications and proposed measures in the submitted text.
- Third, medians and IQRs provide the quantitative evidence on consensus and convergence. Keeping these levels separate prevents comment volume from being misinterpreted as agreement.

The country sections likewise remain descriptive. They document the comments received from the participating experts but cannot support population-level comparisons. This limitation is especially important for small cells and for the heterogeneous Other Countries category. The country matrices and exact counts provide the auditable basis for the narrative profiles.

Overall, the qualitative findings indicate that educational quality, lifelong learning, social inclusion, institutional cooperation and evidence-informed governance are recurring components of the experts' reasoning. The material supports integrated policy consideration, but it does not establish a single causal model, a uniform national ranking or one policy package endorsed by all respondents.

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9 Appendix: Complete Wave 1 statement catalogue

9.1.1 Theme A. Education and Training

S01 (Statement 1) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Double competencies (disciplinary plus IT) will become a universal employment requirement"

S02 (Statement 2) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Illiteracy after eight or nine years of schooling will be the norm"

S03 (Statement 3) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "The COVID-19 crisis will have long-term impacts on learning behaviour and abilities for young people"

S04 (Statement 4) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Schools will implement effective programs to address behavioral problems (e.g.: violence, bullying, disengagement)"

S05 (Statement 5) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Public investment in early childhood education will become the most critical part of education"

S06 (Statement 6): "Education will diversify through vocational pathways that promote specific skills over standardized education"

S07 (Statement 7) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Focus on university education will neglect TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)"

S08 (Statement 8): "Society's status preference for universities over vocational training will persist"

9.1.2 Theme B. Labour Market and Employment

S09 (Statement 9) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "New career entry pathways will emerge as AI transforms traditional employment routes"

S10 (Statement 10): "Work experience requirements for entry-level positions will become more prevalent"

S11 (Statement 11): "Overqualification will increase due to the growing number of academic qualifications"

S12 (Statement 12) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Lack of affordable childcare will prevent young parents' labor participation"

S13 (Statement 13) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Young people will be first to be fired and last to be hired during downturns"

S14 (Statement 14) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "The gap between employer expectations for skilled workers and employer participation in training provision will widen"

S15 (Statement 15): "Ageing workforce will create massive talent demand in certain sectors"

9.1.3 Theme C. Transitions and Systemic Interfaces

S16 (Statement 16) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Mental health challenges among youth stemming from the COVID-19 crisis will continue to affect life skills"

S17 (Statement 17) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Media and Influencers will significantly influence student program choices"

S18 (Statement 18) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "The transition from education to employment will become more unstable and fragmented for many young people"

S19 (Statement 19): "Extended juvenile phase will hinder workplace engagement"

S20 (Statement 20) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Schools will increasingly adapt curricula to emerging occupations and career paths"

S21 (Statement 21) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Social partnerships between education, the private sector and academia will be widely formed"

S22 (Statement 22): "Education and labour market policies will struggle to effectively govern young people's transition"

S23 (Statement 23) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Integrated guidance centers for youth employment will be widely established"

9.1.4 Theme D. Inclusion and Disadvantage

S24 (Statement 24) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Educational inequalities will exacerbate social polarization and segregation"

S25 (Statement 25) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Resource inequities between public and private schools will widen"

S26 (Statement 26): "Social class (socio-economic background) will continue to determine educational opportunities"

S27 (Statement 27) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Initiatives breaking gender stereotypes will open previously male-dominated career pathways to women"

S28 (Statement 28) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "School system reliance on parental help will disadvantage non-native and low-education families"

S29 (Statement 29) [carried forward to Wave 2]: "Digital infrastructure and remote learning will reduce regional disparities between urban and rural education"

S30 (Statement 30): "Minority ethnic and racial groups of young people will face intensified discrimination"