

EU says school children lack e-learning facilities

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Pupils use tablets during courses in a classroom at the Leonard de Vinci 'connected' middle school in Saint-Brieuc, western France on September 12, 2013.

With 63 percent of Europe's nine-year-olds in schools missing vital digital equipment, the European Commission launched a vast plan Wednesday to promote e-learning from primary school to universities.

The EU executive said that only half of Europe's 16-year-olds are in

digitally well-equipped schools—offering recent equipment, fast broadband and high connectivity—while 20 percent of secondary students have never or almost never used a computer in class.

And while more than 90 percent of Latvian, Lithuanian and Czech schools have Internet access, only 45 percent of schools can offer online access to children in Croatia and Greece.

Universities meanwhile need to increase online learning through MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), that allow people to access education anywhere, anytime, and through any device.

To help students develop digital skills required for jobs, the Commission said it will provide backing to projects that improve open learning and digital resources under the "Opening up Education" action plan.

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