A minimal definition of literacy is being able to read, write and understand a short and simple statement about one’s everyday life. Of all 15-24 year olds living in the world, 88% are literate. Over half of this age group live in Asia.

Most of the young people living in most territories can read and write. Only five territories have lower than 50% youth literacy rates. Four of these five are in Northern Africa. Japan recorded the highest rate of youth literacy for a single territory.

The highest number of literate youth live in Eastern Asia, where the youth literacy rate is 98.9%. Of the 12 regions, 8 have youth literacy rates of over 95%.

Territory size shows the proportion of all 15-24 years old who are literate, that live there.

“The freedom promised by literacy is both freedom from - from ignorance, oppression, poverty - and freedom to - to do new things, to make choices, to learn.”

Koïchiro Matsuura, 2001