

## Chapter 4. Education governance: Policy priorities and trends, 2008-19

*This chapter identifies developments in policy priorities related to education governance between 2008 and 2019, both from the perspective of participating education systems in OECD member countries and non-member economies, and previous OECD country-based work. Such policy priorities, often shared by different education systems, include tackling unclear or unbalanced division of responsibility between national and local authorities and school; defining national education priorities and goals; putting in place quality assurance mechanisms; and engaging stakeholders in decision-making processes, among others.*

*Taking a comparative approach, this chapter also analyses policy trends identified for education governance between 2008 and 2019, providing evidence of progress or impact for a selection of policies.*

---

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

## Highlights

- This chapter **analyses policy priorities and trends on education governance** across participating education systems in terms of the **need to refine formal structures of education systems to streamline decision making, setting ambitious and measurable goals to steer the system** in a coherent direction, and **engaging a greater variety of stakeholders**.
- Compared to the other topics analysed in this report, governance-related priorities were observed in more education systems. The **most frequently observed governance-related policy priorities** from 2008 to 2019 were: **achieving a clear and balanced division of responsibility between national and local authorities and schools** (identified in 32 education systems); **defining national education priorities and goals** (identified in 27 education systems); **engaging stakeholders in decision making** (identified in 24 education systems); and **putting in place quality assurance mechanisms** (identified in 20 education systems). Strengthening data collection for monitoring and accountability was observed less often (identified in 12 education systems).
- The **most frequently observed trends in governance policy developments** between 2008 and 2019 were on policies to **refine education system's formal structures** (by creating agencies and mechanisms for quality assurance and decentralising decision making) and policies to **review education system's objectives** (through the use of national strategies and plans, and the modernisation of curricula and qualifications frameworks). Some policies on stakeholder engagement were collected as well, although to a lesser extent.

## Setting the scene

Governance refers to how decision making happens in education systems. It refers to the institutions and dynamics through which education systems allocate roles and responsibilities, determine priorities and designs, and carry out education policies and programmes. In today's increasingly complex social environments, many countries are working to ensure effective planning, implementation and delivery of education policies.

Governing education systems has become more challenging in recent years due to their increasing complexity (Burns and Köster, 2016<sup>[1]</sup>). Complexity has increased because parents and society, in general, are more diverse and educated, and also more demanding that schools cater to students' individual needs. Complexity in education also increases because more information about student achievement and schools is publicly available, forcing education policy and practice to be based on evidence and not merely on traditional practices. Many large-scale social and economic changes such as the replacement of low-skills jobs resulting from technological change, higher expectations due to the expansion of access to higher education, the decline in the student population due to demographic changes, or the increased interconnectedness and international migration are also creating new challenges that call for new governance models and mechanisms.

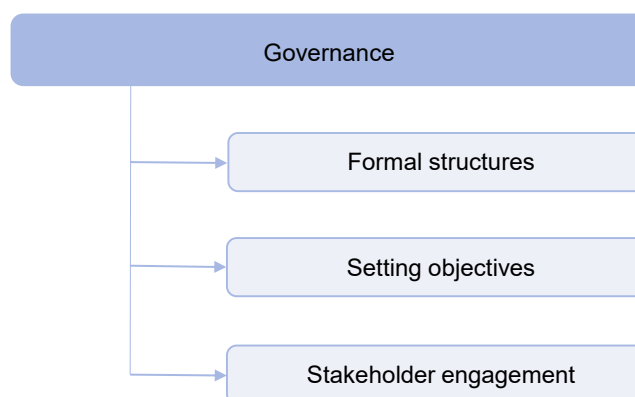
Countries govern these changes in different ways. For example, in many countries, the relationship between the central and local levels has become less hierarchical and more fluid and open to negotiation (Burns and Köster, 2016<sup>[1]</sup>). Ministries are no longer the only actor involved in governing education systems; instead, multiple actors, operating at

different levels, including schools and parents and local communities, are engaged with and shape education policies, processes and outcomes.

Effective governance can be viewed in two ways. The first is related to which institutions and actors are involved in a decision-making process and how these are expected to interact. The second refers to how governments carry out policies in practice, and how they set priorities, plan and implement new policies through a mix of leverage and consultation (OECD, 2011<sup>[2]</sup>; Fazekas and Burns, 2012<sup>[3]</sup>).

According to the Education Policy Outlook Analytical Framework, education governance can be analysed by looking at the formal structures and processes in place to deliver education policy and the stakeholder engagement process for policy making. Effective systems have a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities and find the right balance between central and local direction, set concrete objectives and policy priorities for their education system, and engage stakeholders in the process (see Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1. Education governance as defined by the Education Policy Outlook Analytical Framework**



Source: OECD (2015<sup>[4]</sup>), *Education Policy Outlook 2015: Making Reforms Happen*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264225442-en>.

With this framework as a basis, this chapter provides a comparative overview of the evolution of policy priorities related to education governance as identified by the OECD in previous country-based work and as reported by participating education systems at different points between 2008 and 2019.

General principles of action, as identified by the OECD to support countries in tackling these priorities, are then explored.

The chapter also analyses policy trends in over 160 education policy developments undertaken mainly during 2008-19. Half of the policies collected have been in place since at least 2014, offering evidence of progress or impact in most cases. Throughout this chapter, evidence of progress or impact is included, in order to assist the reader in analysing factors relevant to the implementation of these policies (also see Chapter 1 and the Reader's Guide).

All of the policy reforms relating to education governance and collected by the OECD are listed in the policy trends tables included in this chapter; more detailed descriptions of each of these policies and, where possible, their progress or impact, can be found in Chapter 8.

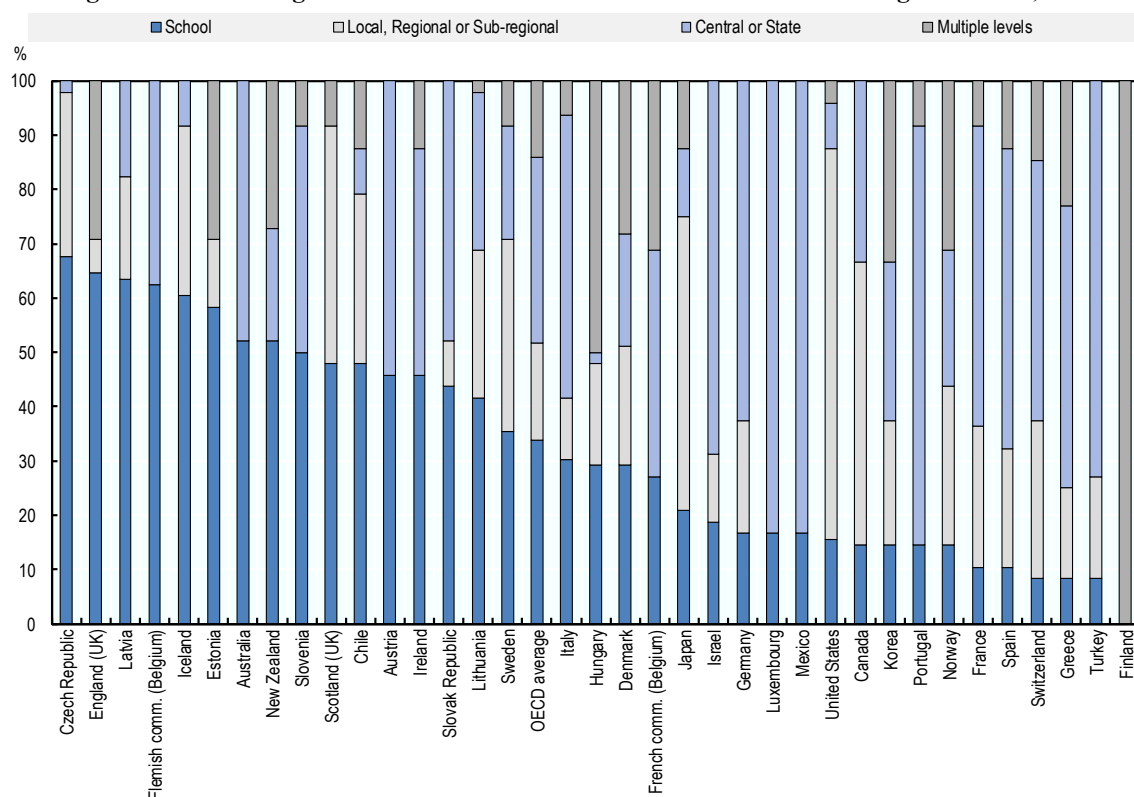
## Refining formal structures

The formal structures of an education system are the institutional arrangements that organise positions of authority and guide interaction and communication between education policy makers, school owners and administrators, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders (Arum, Beattie and Ford, 2010<sup>[5]</sup>).

Policy issues analysed in this chapter as relevant for an education system's formal structures are, for example: the type of government (federal or unitary); the organisation of the education system policy-making process (institutions/actors that intervene in policy design and delivery); and how education is delivered (public, private with public support, or private). The public agencies and institutional mechanisms of quality assurance, and the degree of centralisation (versus local and school autonomy) of governance, are also key features of the structure of an education system.

Whereas in some countries most educationally relevant decisions are taken centrally, in others some responsibilities are assigned to regional or local levels of administration, and still in others, schools are largely autonomous to make decisions such as teacher hiring, defining their budget or choosing their academic assessments of student performance (OECD, 2015<sup>[4]</sup>).

On average across OECD countries in 2017, some 34% of decisions about diverse aspects of public lower secondary education were taken at the central or state level, and a similar share was taken at the school level (Figure 4.2). More than 70% of decisions were taken by the central or state level in Luxemburg, Mexico, Portugal and Turkey. By contrast, 60% or more of decisions were taken at the school level in the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom (England), Latvia, Belgium (Flemish Community) and Iceland.

**Figure 4.2. Percentage of decisions taken about education at each level of government, 2017****Notes:**

1. Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of decisions taken at the school level.
2. A set of 23 decisions are included in the figure that refers to the organisation of instruction (e.g. instructional time), personnel management (e.g. hiring and dismissal of principals and teachers), design of programmes of study and course content, and resource management (e.g. allocation and use of resources in schools).
3. Lithuania was not an OECD member country at the time of preparation of *Education at a Glance 2018*. Accordingly, Lithuania does not appear in the list of OECD member countries and is not included in the zone aggregates.

Source: OECD (2018<sup>[6]</sup>), *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933997417>

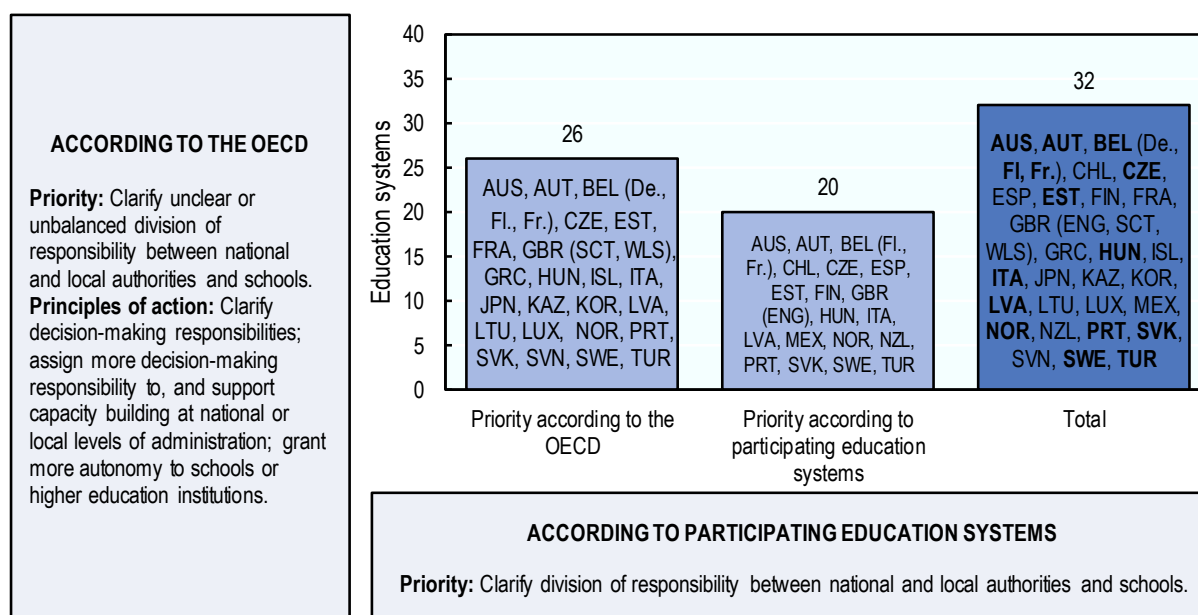
The degree of centralisation or decentralisation in a system is not necessarily good or bad. It depends on contextual needs and has its own specific challenges. For example, with more decentralised education systems, a stronger challenge that emerges is developing adequate capacity and accountability instruments to accompany the process at local levels, so the actors can effectively manage their increased autonomy. In terms of recentralisation, or clustering at intermediate levels, besides capacity building or the development of relevant monitoring mechanisms, another key challenge is ensuring reactivity to local contextual needs (Burns and Köster, 2016<sup>[1]</sup>).

## Policy priorities

### Clarifying the division of responsibility between national and local authorities and schools

For many education systems, a pertinent policy priority refers to clarifying divisions of responsibility between national and local authorities and schools. These responsibilities include decision-making related to hiring teachers, salary increases, school budgets and curricular content (OECD, 2016<sup>[7]</sup>). Governing today's complex and multi-level education systems requires finding a balance between responsiveness to local diversity and the ability to ensure national objectives (Burns and Köster, 2016<sup>[1]</sup>). Between 2008 and 2019, this policy priority was identified in at least 32 education systems, either by the OECD in previous country-based work (26 education systems), by participating education systems (20 education systems), or both (14 education systems) (Figure 4.3).

**Figure 4.3. Clarifying the division of responsibility between national and local authorities and schools**



#### Notes:

- Priority according to the OECD:** See Annex A (OECD publications consulted) and Reader's Guide (years covered).
- Principles of action:** Component of a recommendation that draws from international evidence produced on a specific topic, either by the OECD or externally.
- Priority according to participating education system:** Based on responses to Education Policy Outlook (EPO) Surveys 2013 and 2016-17, although responses for Austria, Belgium (Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities), Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden are based on the Education Policy Outlook (EPO) Country Profiles published during 2017 and 2018. Responses given during the validation processes for all education systems in 2019 are also included (see the Reader's Guide).
- Comparing previous OECD analysis and country responses:** Education systems highlighted in bold are those where the policy priority was identified by both the OECD and the education system.

This priority was identified by the OECD for at least 17 education systems between 2015 and 2019, including Estonia, France and Kazakhstan. Between 2008 and 2014, this priority had been identified in 12 education systems, such as Australia, the Czech Republic and the

United Kingdom (Wales). In Japan, Norway and Turkey, the OECD identified this priority both before (2008-14) and after 2014 (2015-19).

In country-based studies in which the OECD identified an *unclear* division of roles and responsibilities among the actors (e.g. when there is overlap, fragmentation or inertia in financial and educational decisions), the principle of action put forward by the OECD was to clarify decision-making responsibilities. This generally referred to redefining who is responsible for what and, in some cases, creating new institutional arrangements, such as specific agencies or governmental divisions to deliver certain services.

There were also country-based studies in which the OECD identified an *unbalanced* division of responsibility across education system levels. For example, a school system may be found to be too centralised to perform adequately. A relevant principle of action is to assign more decision-making responsibility to local levels of administration and to schools and higher education institutions, as well as build capacity to help them perform their new tasks. Inversely, in cases with a need to address a lack of local capacity, especially in smaller and underfunded areas, some centralisation of responsibility through intermediate (e.g. regional or supra-municipal) agencies has been identified as a priority.

Austria and Italy are examples of education systems in which the OECD identified the need to clarify responsibilities in the education sector. In Austria, the OECD recommended ending the dual structure of provincial school boards and school departments in the provincial governments and replace it with a unitary structure (Nusche et al., 2016<sup>[8]</sup>). In Italy, the OECD underscored the need for reforms to the education system to ensure the consistency and co-ordination of the various levels of governance (OECD, 2009<sup>[9]</sup>).

In Lithuania the OECD determined that the central government needed to play a stronger role. While municipalities are responsible for decisions on school planning in Lithuania, the OECD review highlighted the need for the Ministry of Education and Science and its national agencies to monitor progress and, where appropriate, exercise a challenge function to ensure that students and teachers were not disadvantaged by any lack of willingness or capacity at the municipality level to embrace reform and provide access to a wide and rich curriculum experience (Shewbridge et al., 2016<sup>[10]</sup>).

In Iceland, the OECD recommended strengthening the capacity of municipalities to manage and oversee primary education collectively or shift these responsibilities back to the central government's education ministry (OECD, 2013<sup>[11]</sup>).

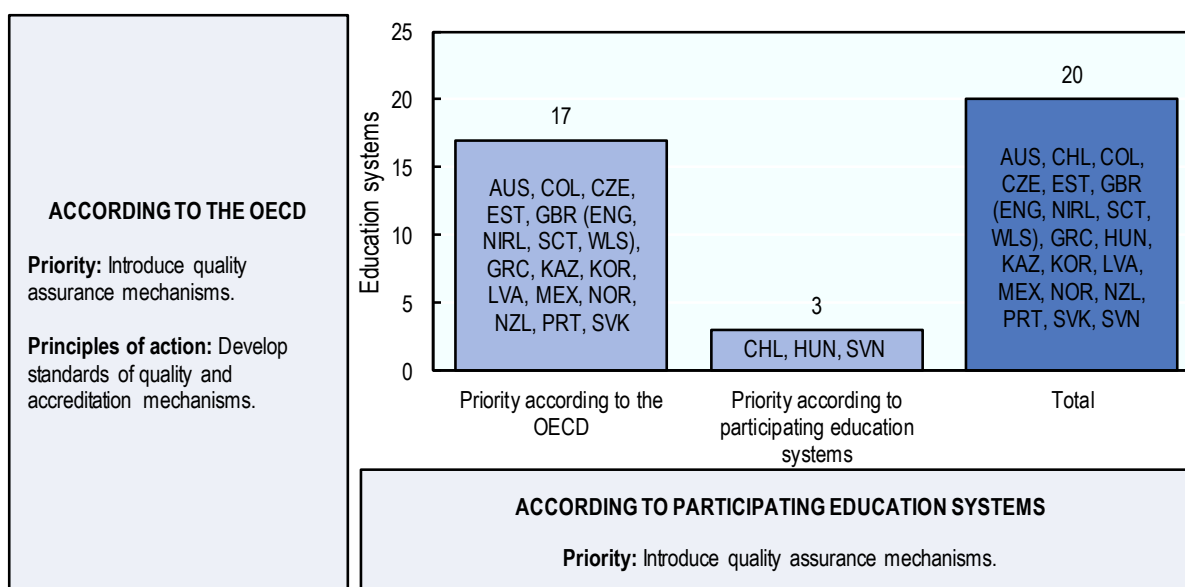
From the point of view of education systems, 20 education systems reported clarifying the division of responsibilities within the system as a policy priority to the OECD. For 18 of these education systems, including Finland and Norway, this was first reported as a priority in 2008-14. For other education systems, such as Belgium (Flemish Community) and Mexico, this priority was reported as persisting across the period 2008-19. The Czech Republic and Hungary reported this as an emerging priority in 2015-19.

The OECD collect several reforms targeting this policy priority, which are presented later in this chapter. Korea implemented a range of measures promoting school autonomy in 2008, including the transferring of decision-making authority over administrative and budget decisions from the Ministry of Education to newly established regional Offices of Education. In Portugal, among the various efforts undertaken by the government to improve the balance of responsibilities, the Project for Autonomy and Curriculum Flexibility (2017) aims at fostering autonomy and flexibility in curriculum development and management.

### Introducing quality assurance mechanisms

The introduction of quality assurance mechanisms is a priority for several education systems. This may relate to a need to define basic standards for student learning or professional standards for teachers, school leaders and school providers, or to establish a dedicated agency to monitor and ensure that quality standards are met (OECD, 2013<sub>[12]</sub>). Between 2008 and 2019, this policy priority was identified in a total of 20 education systems, either by the OECD in previous country-based work (17 education systems) or by participating education systems (3 education systems). There are no examples where this priority was identified by both (Figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.4. Introducing quality assurance mechanisms**



*Notes:*

- Priority according to the OECD:** See Annex A (OECD publications consulted) and Reader's Guide (years covered).
- Principles of action:** Component of a recommendation that draws from international evidence produced on a specific topic, either by the OECD or externally.
- Priority according to participating education system:** Based on responses to Education Policy Outlook (EPO) Surveys 2013 and 2016-17, although responses for Austria, Belgium (Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities), Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden are based on the EPO Country Profiles published during 2017 and 2018. Responses given during the validation processes for all education systems in 2019 are also included (see the Reader's Guide).
- Comparing previous OECD analysis and country responses:** Education systems highlighted in **bold** are those where the policy priority was identified by both the OECD and the education system.

The OECD identified this policy priority for at least six education systems during 2015-19, including Australia, Kazakhstan and Norway, and for seven education systems during 2008-14, including Korea, New Zealand and Portugal. For Colombia, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and the United Kingdom (England), the OECD identified this priority both before and after 2014.

General principles of action identified by the OECD include developing standards of quality and accreditation mechanisms. Educational standards are descriptions of what students should know (content standards) and be able to do (performance standards) at



different stages of the learning process. By creating a set of standards, countries aim to assess student performance against these desired measurable outcomes (OECD, 2013<sup>[12]</sup>). Similarly, governments across the world are introducing external quality assurance systems for higher education and higher education institutions (OECD, 2018<sup>[13]</sup>).

For example, in Colombia, the OECD identified the need to improve accreditation mechanisms in higher education institutions and recommended raising the minimum quality requirements for higher education centres to register and operate (OECD, 2013<sup>[14]</sup>). In Latvia, the OECD recommended establishing an external quality assurance system that meets international standards (OECD, 2016<sup>[15]</sup>).

A smaller number of education systems reported introducing quality assurance mechanisms as a policy priority. Chile, Hungary and Slovenia first reported it as a priority during 2008-14 whereas no education systems reported this priority during 2015-19.

In Australia, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency was created in 2011 as an independent national quality regulator that aims to ensure that higher education providers meet minimum standards, promote best practice and improve the quality of the Australian higher education sector. In Chile, a new agency, the division for preschool education within the Education Superintendence (Intendencia de educación parvularia), was created in 2015 to ensure that centres providing education and care for children aged 0-6 years, which are officially authorised and recognised by the Ministry of Education, comply with educational regulations.

#### *Strengthening data collection for monitoring and accountability*

Another education governance-related policy priority for education systems relates to strengthening data collection for monitoring and accountability. Education data has become increasingly available in the last decades (e.g. data on student achievement, school and teacher evaluations, etc.), and its effective use in informing education policy is a major challenge (Schildkamp, Karbautzki and Vanhoof, 2014<sup>[16]</sup>). Between 2008 and 2019, this policy priority was identified in at least 12 education systems, either by the OECD in previous country-based work (10 education systems), by participating education systems (4 education systems), or both (2 education systems) (Figure 4.5).

The OECD identified this policy priority in only one education system, Hungary, between 2008 and 2014 and in at least a further nine education systems, including Denmark, Lithuania and Sweden, during 2015-19.

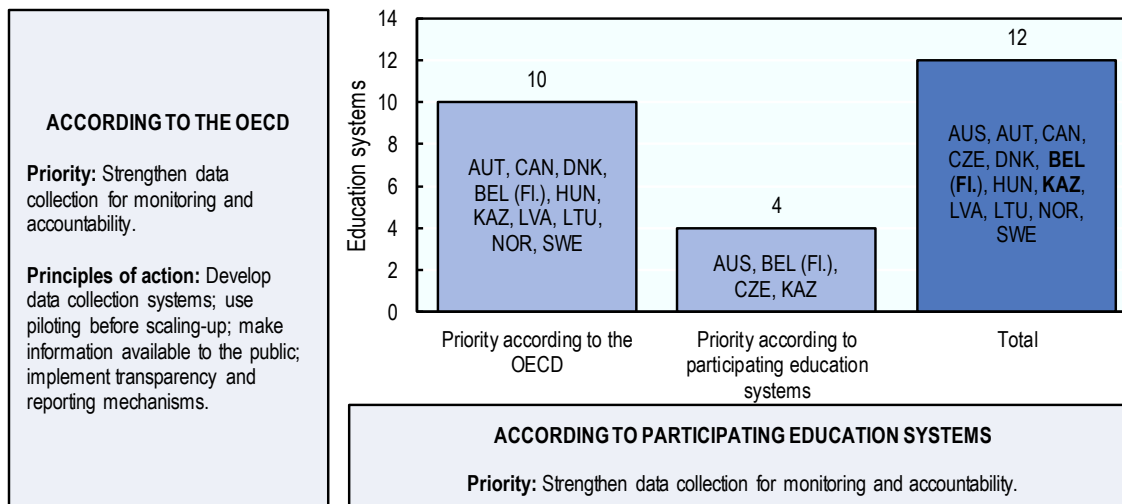
General principles of action identified include developing data collection systems; using pilot data before scaling-up; making information available to the public; and implementing transparency and reporting mechanisms.

For example, in a recent review, the OECD recommended that Denmark develop indicators and measures of system performance that permit a better understanding of how well the system is achieving its objectives (Nusche et al., 2016<sup>[17]</sup>). An OECD review of Latvia identified the need to improve public accountability (OECD, 2016<sup>[15]</sup>). In the Flemish Community of Belgium, the OECD identified the need for more transparency in financial decision making and recommended enhancing school-level reporting on resources and gathering data on locally raised funds and the services that these provide (Nusche et al., 2015<sup>[18]</sup>).

In comparison, a much smaller number of education systems reported strengthening data collection for monitoring and accountability as a priority. Australia, the Czech Republic

and Kazakhstan reported this as a priority emerging in 2015-19, while Belgium (Flemish Community) first reported this priority in 2008-14.

**Figure 4.5. Strengthening data collection for monitoring and accountability**



*Notes:*

- Priority according to the OECD:** See Annex A (OECD publications consulted) and Reader's Guide (years covered).
- Principles of action:** Component of a recommendation that draws from international evidence produced on a specific topic, either by the OECD or externally.
- Priority according to participating education system:** Based on responses to Education Policy Outlook (EPO) Surveys 2013 and 2016-17, although responses for Austria, Belgium (Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities), Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden are based on the EPO Country Profiles published during 2017 and 2018. Responses given during the validation processes for all education systems in 2019 are also included (see the Reader's Guide).
- Comparing previous OECD analysis and country responses:** Education systems highlighted in bold are those where the policy priority was identified by both the OECD and the education system.

Nevertheless, relevant policy efforts were identified in several education systems. For example, in Germany the programme 'Local Learning' (Lernen vor Ort, 2009-14) brought together education experts from districts and independent cities, as well as more than 180 foundations, to develop local-level, integrated, data-based education management. In the Slovak Republic, the Educational Policy Institute was established in 2013 within the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport to support the drive towards more evidence-based policy making.

### **Policy trends**

As shown in Table 4.1, policies aimed at refining the formal structures of the system collected by the EPO Survey 2016-17 can be classified into two types: agencies and mechanisms for quality assurance, and decentralisation of decision making. The first group focuses on ongoing and recent efforts to establish (or support) agencies and mechanisms regarding quality assurance with key differences found in how education systems outline goals and strategies to achieve them. The second group focuses on policies and reforms that aim to balance various roles in governance by noting key trends in education system alignment between various levels. Policies aimed at collecting data are addressed in Chapter 3.

**Table 4.1. Policies to refine education systems' formal structures, 2008-19**

Refining formal structures	
Agencies and mechanisms of quality assurance	Decentralisation of decision making
<b>Recent</b> (Implemented between 2015 and 2019)	
<b>Chile:</b> Higher Education Superintendence created as part of Higher Education Reform (2018)	<b>Austria:</b> Autonomy of Schools Package (2017)
<b>Chile:</b> Education Superintendence for Preschool and new Secretariat for Childhood Education (2015)	<b>Belgium (Fr.):</b> Steering decree 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2018 (part of the Pact for Excellence in Teaching, 2015)
<b>Czech Republic:</b> Complex System of Evaluation project (2017-22)	<b>Chile:</b> New Public Education System (2018); Local Education Services (2015)
<b>Czech Republic:</b> New National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education (2016)	<b>France:</b> University Communities (ComUE, 2017)
<b>Finland:</b> National Plan for Education Evaluation (2016-19)	<b>Hungary:</b> Government Decree on measures relating to the maintenance of vocational education and training (VET) public institutions (2015)
<b>Iceland:</b> Directorate of Education (2015)	<b>Kazakhstan:</b> Law on increasing higher education institutions' academic and organisational autonomy (2018)
<b>Latvia:</b> Transfer of the function of accreditation and licensing to the Quality Agency for Higher Education (2015)	<b>Mexico:</b> Education Regions (2015)
<b>Portugal:</b> InfoESCOLAS Portal (2015)	<b>Portugal:</b> Project for Autonomy and Curriculum Flexibility (2017)
<b>Slovak Republic:</b> Amendment to Quality Assurance (2018) with Act on Higher Education (2017)	<b>Portugal:</b> Introduction of student profiles (2017/18)
<b>Sweden:</b> Swedish School Commission (2015)	<b>United Kingdom (Scotland):</b> Regional Improvement Collaboratives (2016)
<b>Sweden:</b> Quality Assurance System in Higher Education (2017)	<b>United Kingdom (Scotland):</b> Joint Agreement on Education Reform (2018)
<b>Still in place</b> (Implemented between 2008 and 2014)	
<b>Australia:</b> Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (2011) [*]	<b>Australia:</b> Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (2009)
<b>Australia:</b> Australian Skills Quality Authority (2011)	<b>Belgium (Fl.):</b> Introduction of higher education institutional reviews (2012, reform in 2015, new Quality Assurance System, 2018)
<b>Australia:</b> Australia's Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2010)	<b>Finland:</b> Universities Act (2009); Universities of Applied Sciences reform (2014) [*]
<b>Austria:</b> Quality assurance system for general education schools (2013)	<b>Germany:</b> Local Learning (2009-14)
<b>Austria:</b> Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (2012)	<b>Hungary:</b> Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre (KLIK, 2013); renamed Klebelsberg Centre (KK, 2016)
<b>Belgium (De.):</b> Decree on Educational and Administrative Innovations in Public Education (2010)	<b>Hungary:</b> Reforms to the management model of public education institutions via the National Public Education Act (2011); amended (2016)
<b>Belgium (Fl.):</b> Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders in Higher Education (NVAO, 2005)	<b>Korea:</b> Measures promoting school autonomy (2008)
<b>Belgium (Fr.):</b> Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (AEQES, 2002)	<b>Latvia:</b> Reform of general education institutions network (2009)
<b>Chile:</b> National System for Quality Assurance of Early Childhood, Basic and Upper Secondary Education (SAC, 2011) with implementation co-ordinated through the School Quality Assurance Plan (2016-19) [*]	<b>Portugal:</b> Plan for Reduction and Improvement of Central Administration (2011)
<b>Czech Republic:</b> National Institute for Education, Education Counselling Centre and Centre for Continuing Education of Teachers (NÚV, 2011)	<b>Portugal:</b> Autonomy contracts (2008) [*]
<b>Estonia:</b> Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA, 2008)	<b>Portugal:</b> Legal Regime of Higher Education Institutions (RJIES, 2007)
<b>Finland:</b> Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC, 2014)	<b>Portugal:</b> School Leadership Reform (2008)
<b>France:</b> National Council for the Evaluation of the School System (CNESCO, 2013), replaced by School Evaluation Council (2019)	<b>Slovak Republic:</b> Effective, Reliable and Open state administration (ESO, 2013)
<b>Iceland:</b> Quality Council for Higher Education (2012)	<b>United Kingdom (England):</b> The Academies Act (2010)
<b>Iceland:</b> Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education (2010); Quality Enhancement Framework for Higher Education (QEF, 2011)	

<b>Italy:</b> National Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research System (ANVUR, 2011)	
<b>Italy:</b> National Evaluation System (SNV, 2014)	
<b>Kazakhstan:</b> The Committee for Control in Education and Science (2011)	
<b>Mexico:</b> Autonomy to National Institute for Educational Assessment and Evaluation (2012); replaced by the National System of Continuous Education Improvement (2019)	
<b>New Zealand:</b> Student Achievement Function (2010)	
<b>New Zealand:</b> Public Achievement Information (2012)	
<b>Portugal:</b> Educational Evaluation Institute (IAVE, 2013)	
<b>Slovak Republic:</b> Educational Policy Institute (2013)	
<b>Slovenia:</b> Slovenian Qualification Framework (2016)	
<b>Slovenia:</b> Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2010)	
<b>Spain:</b> National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (2012)	
<b>Sweden:</b> National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (NAHVE, 2009)	
<b>United Kingdom (N. Ireland):</b> Establishment of the Education Authority to replace Northern Ireland's five Education and Library Boards (2014)	

*Notes:*

1. All policies in this table are summarised in Chapter 8 of this report as *selected* education policies (with some evidence of progress or impact) or *additional* education policies of potential interest to other countries.
2. [\*]: Policies included in the policy focus of this chapter.
3. See Annex B for information on policies reported previously for which no further details were available.

*Source:* EPO Surveys 2013 and 2016-17, EPO Country Profiles published for Austria, Belgium (Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities), Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden (see the Reader's Guide), further policies reported by education systems during validation processes undertaken in 2019, as well as desk-based research by the OECD Secretariat (2018-19).

Analysing the progress or impact of the policies relating to agencies and mechanisms of quality assurance as collected for this report, a common ongoing challenge appears to be the establishment of collaborative relationships with the institutions they work with.

Evidence collected for both Australia and Chile recognised this as an area requiring further work. Similarly, in the Flemish Community of Belgium, the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) was advised to conduct consultations with relevant stakeholders regarding their expectations about quality assurance in higher education. Furthermore, the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre has been encouraged to extend the scope of stakeholder work to include actors beyond institutions, including other key co-ordinators at national level within both the administration and the world of work. Nevertheless, the fact that so many of these measures introduced in 2008-14 are still in place suggests that they have been making positive contributions to governance processes.

Regarding the decentralisation of decision making, the evidence collected for several education systems reported shows the complexity of these processes, which may need to be led more gradually (for example, in Latvia, daily tools for decision makers were developed, and consultations with municipalities and other actors were also launched).

### *Agencies and mechanisms for quality assurance*

Several education systems reported taking efforts to **create or modify bodies in charge of quality assurance processes**. A total of 39 education policies related to quality assurance agencies and measurements implemented during 2008-19 were selected for this report.

Among these, 28 policies were first implemented between 2008 and 2014, and 11 policies were first implemented between 2015 and 2019.

Some of these efforts consist of bringing together different bodies into one main body of quality assurance, as has been the case for Chile and Finland. Chile has established quality assurance bodies at early childhood education and care (ECEC), school and higher education (HE) levels through their development of new superintendencies in ECEC and HE (2015, 2018). The Ministry of Education of Chile heads each of these bodies in collaboration with other government institutions. In Finland, a comparable arrangement exists for the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINECC, 2014).

The Czech Republic, France, Japan, Mexico, Portugal and Spain have established or reformed institutions in charge of monitoring the overall quality of their education systems, collecting data on performance, undertaking research, and providing input for the planning and evaluation of the overall education system. For example, France's National Council for the Evaluation of the School System (CNESCO, 2013) has focused its most recent work on school inequalities of territorial origin, among other related topics. CNESCO has since been replaced by the School Evaluation Council (CEE, 2019), which will develop a methodological framework and tools to monitor schools.

The OECD also collected some examples of institutions created or reformed specifically for the higher education level. Following significant changes to the quality assurance system in 2015, the Flemish Community of Belgium's independent bi-national Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO, 2005) implemented a pilot programme (2016-17) that informed a new decree (2019) on reform to quality assurance in tertiary education. Also in Belgium, the French Community's Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (AEQES, 2002) has implemented changes to better meet the Standards and Guidance for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2011, 2012). Iceland has also been working on improving its higher education quality assurance system, through the creation of the Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education (2010) and, more recently, engaging in discussions regarding its potential application to the European Association for Quality Assurance in Education (ENQA, 2016). Membership of the ENQA has also been an objective for Latvia's recently created Quality Agency for Higher Education (AIKA) and was achieved in 2018. Other examples include Australia's Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (2011) and Chile's School Quality Assurance Plan (2016-19), which aims to co-ordinate and support the National System for Quality Assurance of Early Childhood, Basic and Upper Secondary Education (SAC, 2011).

#### Policy focus

- **Australia's Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA, 2011)** is an independent national quality assurance and regulatory agency. Its role is to **ensure that higher education providers meet minimum standards, promote best practice and improve the quality for all students** (TEQSA, 2017<sup>[19]</sup>). By complying with three regulatory principles (regulatory necessity, reflecting risk and proportionate regulation) the agency aims to support the alignment of the system with the population's social and economic needs (TEQSA, 2017<sup>[20]</sup>). The Higher Education Standards Framework is the basis for TEQSA's regulation of higher education providers and courses (Department of Education and Training, 2018<sup>[21]</sup>).

**Progress or impact:** The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency obtained an additional AUD 24.3 million over four years in the 2018–19 government budget to strengthen TEQSA’s regulatory oversight, meet the significant increase in applications for registration from prospective providers, and maintain the country’s reputation for high-quality higher education. This measure also provides TEQSA with additional resources of AUD 1.1 million in 2018-19 and AUD 660 000 annually (ongoing) to crack down on contract cheating. TEQSA had 172 registered higher education providers, as of March 2019 (TEQSA, 2019<sup>[22]</sup>). According to the third TEQSA Stakeholder Survey (2017-18), 71% of provider principal contacts rated its performance as “good” or “excellent”. This is a decrease from 80% in 2017 and 82% in 2016, although it remains high. Providers indicated that TEQSA was performing well on matters relating to “conference, quality and relevance of guidance materials and regulatory information”. Respondents that “streamlining, speed of response, consultation and case management for all and CRICOS (Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students) applications” be improved, and signalled the need to develop relationships through “engagement and visits”. The survey was sent to 235 higher education provider contacts and 42 relevant peak, professional and student bodies (PPSBs) with a response rate of 156 principal contacts (66%) and 24 PPSBs (57%) (TEQSA, 2019<sup>[23]</sup>).

- **Chile’s National System for Quality Assurance of Early Childhood, Basic and Upper Secondary Education** (*Sistema Nacional de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Parvularia, Básica y Media*, SAC, 2011) is an **accountability system** that brings together the Ministry of Education, the National Education Council (*Consejo Nacional de Educación*, CNED), the Quality of Education Agency (*Agencia de Calidad de la Educación*, ACE, 2012) and the Education Superintendence (*Superintendencia de Educación Escolar*). The **School Quality Assurance Plan 2016-19** (launched in 2016), aims to articulate and co-ordinate the SAC (OECD, 2017<sup>[24]</sup>). Its main objectives include: 1) developing and implementing strategies by schools based on their education improvement plans (Plan de Mejoramiento Educativo, PME) and other tools available to them; 2) providing schools with continuous access to the Support and Capacity Strengthening System for Education Improvement (*Sistema de Apoyo y Fortalecimiento de Capacidades para el Mejoramiento Educativo*); and 3) providing education actors in the system with useful, pertinent and contextualised information as well as tools and resources to help them improve their schools (OECD, 2017<sup>[24]</sup>).

**Progress or impact:** An OECD review identified the National System for Quality Assurance of Early Childhood, Basic and Upper Secondary Education (SAC) as a chance for Chile to ensure that key institutions within the education system can actually reach schools and positively affect educational practice. However, SAC needs to ensure that its constituent institutions can achieve an effective model of collaboration. Co-ordination across these institutions will help educational authorities identify how to better support students as they progress through the education system. It will

also help the government identify gaps or problems as well as successes and areas of potential collaboration (OECD, 2017<sub>[24]</sub>).

### *Decentralisation of decision making*

A different policy strategy used in many education systems is **increasing the degree of decentralisation** in education decision making by transferring responsibilities for administrative and pedagogical matters from the central government to local authorities, or to schools and higher education institutions. A total of 25 education policies related to decentralisation reforms implemented during 2008-19 were selected for this report. Among these, 14 policies were first implemented between 2008 and 2014, and 11 policies were first implemented between 2015 and 2019. This is, for example, the case with Austria's Autonomy of Schools Package (2017), the French Community of Belgium's new Steering Decree (2018), Portugal's Project for Autonomy and Curriculum Flexibility (2017), France's University Communities (2017) and Finland's Universities Act (2009).

The trend towards decentralisation is not universal, however. Some decentralised systems are establishing new agencies at intermediate levels (e.g. supra-state or supra-municipal) to consolidate professional capacities and financial resources. This is the case, for example, in Chile's Local Education Services (2015), Mexico's new Education Regions (2015), and the United Kingdom's (Scotland) introduction of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs, 2017). In Hungary, the central government took over the maintenance of schools and pedagogical institutions from local governments in 2016.

### Policy focus

- **Finland's Universities Act (2009) grants further administrative and financial autonomy to Finnish universities.** Performance agreements between universities and the Ministry of Education and Culture (OKM) define operational and qualitative targets for the whole higher education sector, for each university, and for Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS). Degree targets in the agreements are also one of the bases for how universities make decisions regarding student enrolment. The UAS reform was implemented in 2014-15 with many similar aims, such as granting further administrative and financial autonomy to Finnish UAS. Since 2015, UAS institutions have been operating as independent legal entities, joining universities, which have been operating as independent legal entities since 2010, following the 2009 Act (National information reported to the OECD, 2019). Allocations of core funding for higher education institutions depends primarily on a performance-based funding model. This funding model also includes a strategic funding component (European Commission, 2015<sub>[25]</sub>).

**Progress or impact:** The Education Committee within the Finnish Parliament reviewed the Universities Act in 2016. This review focused on the evolution of the university management structure, universities' decision-making processes, and the relationship between the ministry and universities. According to the evaluation, the Universities Act has increased universities' financial and administrative autonomy. However, despite increased funding autonomy, the OKM culture maintains a strong steering influence on universities' activities (OKM, 2016<sub>[26]</sub>). In 2018, the OKM published an impact evaluation of higher education (HE) reforms.

According to the evaluation, the HE reforms have considerably changed the leadership and operating culture within HEIs. These reforms have afforded HEIs the authority to make decisions on finances while also showing evidence of strengthening their administration. However, there is evidence that some HE staff and communities feel less included in decision-making processes (OKM, 2018<sup>[27]</sup>). Despite external funding for HEIs, the majority of funds come from the government, which can still impose limitations on institutional-level autonomy. External sources primarily come from research funding organisations (such as The Academy of Finland or Business Finland), foundations, international sources like the European Union, and from business organisations. Since 2017, tuition-fee funding from students outside the EU/EEA-area has accounted for only a small proportion of HEI funding in Finland (National information reported to the OECD).

- **Portugal** issued a law in 2015 **giving municipalities** (Concelhos) **more autonomy** over education policies, school administration, curriculum management and development, administrative and pedagogical organisation, resource management and relationships between schools and the local community (Republic Diary, 2015<sup>[28]</sup>). This follows an extended period of increasing decision making at the sub-national level, in Portugal, as part of broader efforts to improve the efficiency of public services. In 2008, the government decided to expand municipalities' funding responsibilities to include lower secondary schools (municipalities have managed funding for pre-primary and primary schools since 1999). Responsibilities of school governing bodies were also reinforced, especially with regard to the selection and evaluation of the school principal. Additionally, a growing number of voluntary autonomy contracts have afforded some schools and school clusters greater autonomy for pedagogical and curriculum organisation, human resources, school social support and financial management. Conditions for granting an autonomy contract include approval of school self-evaluation reports and positive external school evaluations (OECD, 2014<sup>[29]</sup>).

**Progress or impact:** Following the 2015 law, 14 municipalities have been taking part in a four-year pilot programme assessing their capacity to manage the funds provided. Monitoring commissions have been appointed for each contract, and a final evaluation at the end of the pilot will determine the potential to scale up this system of localised control (Liebowitz et al., 2018<sup>[30]</sup>). However, given the ongoing decentralisation processes within the school system, conditions of the contracts with municipalities may change to the point of becoming redundant.

In terms of school autonomy, a first group of 24 autonomy contracts were granted in 2006 among school clusters, and schools already evaluated through the external evaluation system. This increased to almost 30 schools in 2010 (National information reported to the OECD).

In 2012, legislation was published to define procedures to follow and evaluate these autonomy contracts, and legislation in 2014 allowed school clusters with autonomy contracts to manage some parts of their curriculum



organisation. By 2014, at least 212 school clusters and schools had autonomy contracts (OECD, 2014<sup>[29]</sup>).

More recently, important national reforms such as the Profile of Students at the end of Compulsory Schooling (2017) and the PNPSE (2016) have adopted implementation models, which centre on stimulating innovation at the school level through supporting greater school autonomy.

Nevertheless, within the Portuguese education system, several key areas remain under central authority, including teacher recruitment, placement and pay, as well as curriculum and the planning of the school network. Furthermore, OECD research indicates that a lower share of decisions was taken at the school level for lower secondary education in Portugal (15%) than on average across OECD countries (34%) in 2017 (OECD, 2018<sup>[31]</sup>).

## Setting objectives

In today's interconnected and fast-changing world, effective governance requires going beyond traditional "piecemeal" and "input-output" approaches (OECD, 2017<sup>[32]</sup>). Systems-thinking and foresight emerge more clearly as tools that can support governments as they work to improve.

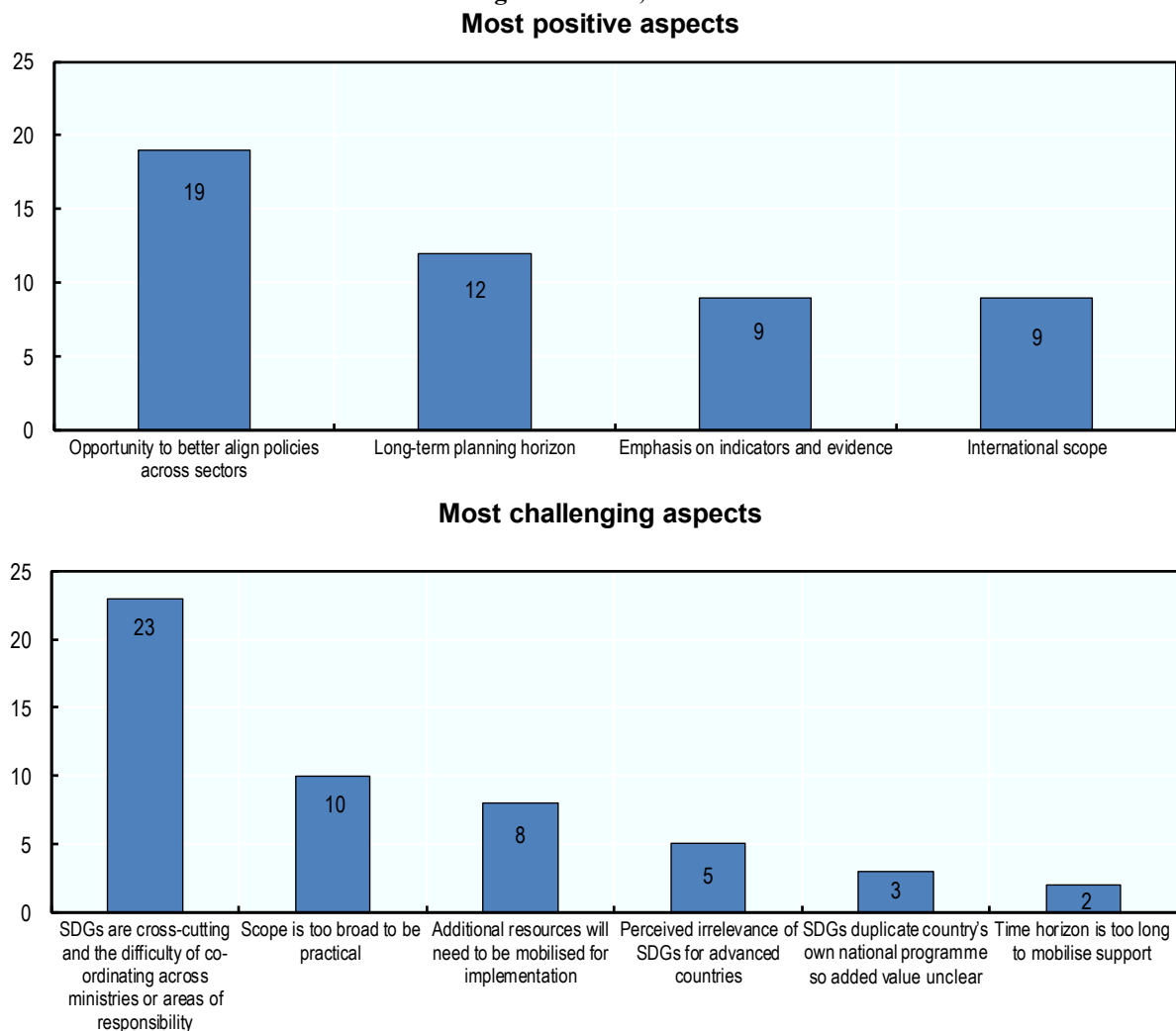
The systems-thinking approach considers the different elements and actors that may be affected by policy problems to a greater or lesser extent, as well as their dynamics and interactions. Also, the uncertainty associated with complex problems is taken into account, and citizens are understood as co-producers of government policies and services. For central governments, this means that formulating an adequate definition of the purpose and objectives of envisaged policy change is crucial. This also requires time and resources for complex analysis, as well as participatory processes of engagement with citizens and stakeholders. It means using "stewardship", or transformative leadership, to provide a strategic vision of the desired changes and to steer and monitor the implementation of proposed reforms (OECD, 2017<sup>[33]</sup>).

Furthermore, foresight has been increasingly seen as a tool to address the opportunities and challenges of complex policy problems (OECD, 2017<sup>[34]</sup>). Foresight is a type of prospective analysis that facilitates debate and systemic thinking about multiple futures. It helps to shape the future through processes of participation and engagement. Foresight is a tool to avoid being trapped by the need to deal with the short term and provide space for longer-term strategic thinking.

An example of the kind of complex policy issues that can call for the use of systems and foresight approaches to governance can be found in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The implementation of the 17 goals contained in the SDGs poses different challenges for countries, depending on their starting positions. Results from an OECD survey among 28 OECD countries and 3 OECD accession countries in 2016 suggest that countries recognise the role of centres of government and the need for foresight in delivering on the SDGs (OECD, 2017<sup>[32]</sup>). Countries in the survey also identified several significant opportunities and challenges arising from the implementation of the SDGs (Figure 4.6). Among the opportunities, the most frequently mentioned were better aligning policies across sectors, a long-term planning horizon, and the emphasis on indicators and evidence. Among the challenges, the most frequently mentioned are the difficulty of co-

ordinating across ministries or areas of responsibility, the broad scope of the goals, and the additional resources needed for implementation.

**Figure 4.6. Positive and challenging aspects of implementing the SDGs, according to governments, 2016**



*Notes:*

1. These figures include information for the following OECD countries and partner economies in 2016: Australia, Austria, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, the United States, as well as Colombia, Costa Rica and Lithuania. Information for the European Union is also included.

2. Answers reflect responses to the question, “What do you see as the two most positive aspects of the process of organising the planning for implementing SDGs from the perspective of the centre of government?” and “What do you see as the two main challenges of organising the planning for implementation of the SDGs from the perspective of the centre of government?” Answer option “Other” is not displayed.

Source: OECD (2017<sup>[32]</sup>), *Government at a Glance 2017*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [https://doi.org/10.1787/gov\\_glance-2017-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2017-en).

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933997436>

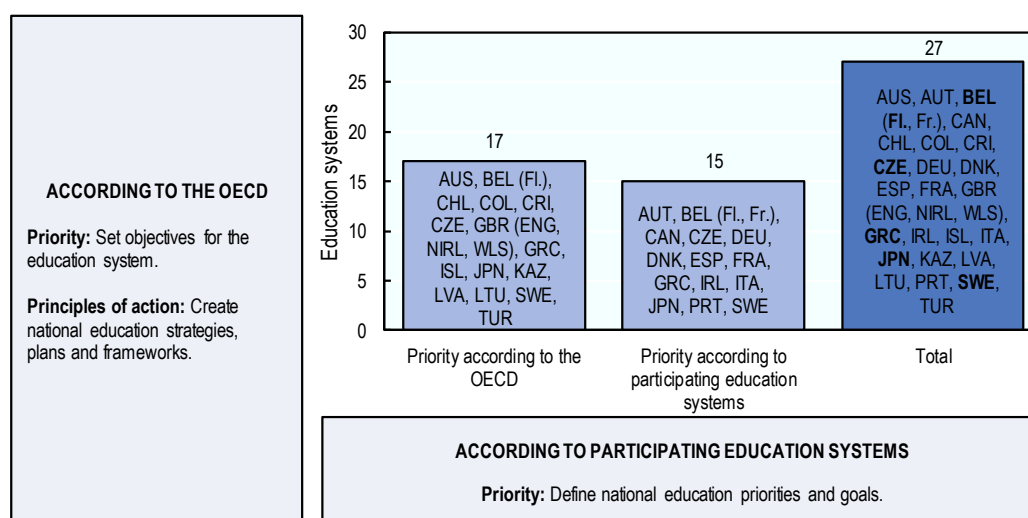
In education, a whole-of-system vision that keeps the focus on agreed goals and principles is key for effective education system governance (Burns and Köster, 2016<sup>[1]</sup>). Indeed, a common feature among top-performing education systems is setting clear learning expectations for students, and ensuring coherent policy implementation over sustained periods of time (Schleicher, 2018<sup>[35]</sup>). As seen in this section, governments (through their ministries) recognise the need to define objectives and strategic plans as a national priority and are using a variety of policy tools to put these priorities into practice.

## Policy priorities

### Defining national education priorities and goals

A policy priority shared by education systems is the need to define national education priorities and goals to help ensure policy coherence and steer the various components of a system in a common direction. This shared clarity needs to come together with adequate accountability mechanisms and capacity building to favour consistency, as well as strategic foresight to ensure continued relevance. Between 2008 and 2019, this policy priority was identified in at least 27 education systems, either by the OECD in previous country-based work (17 education systems), by participating education systems (15 education systems), or both (5 education systems) (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7. Defining national education priorities and goals



#### Notes:

- Priority according to the OECD:** See Annex A (OECD publications consulted) and Reader's Guide (years covered).
- Principles of action:** Component of a recommendation that draws from international evidence produced on a specific topic, either by the OECD or externally.
- Priority according to participating education system:** Based on responses to Education Policy Outlook (EPO) Surveys 2013 and 2016-17, although responses for Austria, Belgium (Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities), Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden are based on the Education Policy Outlook (EPO) Country Profiles published during 2017 and 2018. Responses given during the validation processes for all education systems in 2019 are also included (see the Reader's Guide).
- Comparing previous OECD analysis and country responses:** Education systems highlighted in bold are those where the policy priority was identified by both the OECD and the education system.

OECD work on governance in different education systems has identified defining national education priorities and goals as a priority in at least 17 education systems. For 13 of those, including Colombia, Iceland and Japan, the OECD identified this policy priority in 2015-19, and in 4 more education systems (the Czech Republic, Turkey and the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland and Wales)), this was identified as a priority between 2008 and 2014.

General principles of action identified by the OECD include creating national education strategies, plans and frameworks to set common expectations about the direction of the system. In its review of education in Sweden, the OECD noted that improved understanding of national priorities and resource implications for local decision making was required. It therefore recommended defining a set of education priorities that are ambitious and forward-looking, pursued consistently at all levels of the system and supported by mechanisms for building ownership through early engagement (OECD, 2015<sup>[36]</sup>).

Another principle of action is to reform curriculum to modernise learning expectations. For example, in a country review of Kazakhstan, the OECD recommended collaborative educational programmes such as joint curriculum development to exploit digital technologies and promote “internationalisation through the curriculum” (OECD, 2017<sup>[37]</sup>).

Several education systems reported defining national education priorities and goals as a policy priority. In Belgium (Flemish and French Communities), the Czech Republic, Denmark, Portugal and Sweden, this was reported as an emerging priority (2015-19), while this priority was first reported in 2008-14 by nine other education systems, including France, Ireland and Spain.

There has been extensive policy work in this area. For example, in Australia, the policy plan Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes (2006) sets out five priority areas for policy action: improving student performance; teaching quality and school leadership; preparing students for a globalised world; targeting support where it is most needed; and increasing accountability and transparency. The Danish programme, Together for the Future (2015), proposed a new set of objectives, measurable goals and targets covering all levels of education.

### ***Policy trends***

Education systems are using educational planning to prioritise different policy objectives, set goals and measurable targets, and monitor achievement. This is consistent with research findings from the OECD demonstrating the importance of having a clear vision for the education system (Schleicher, 2018<sup>[35]</sup>; Burns and Köster, 2016<sup>[1]</sup>).

The EPO Survey 2016-17 collected several policies that aimed to review the objectives of the education system. As shown in Table 4.2, these policies can be classified into two types: national strategies and plans that define goals or expected outcomes; and reforms that aim to modernise the curriculum and the standards or qualification frameworks that define learning expectations.

Table 4.2. Policies to review education systems' objectives, 2008-19

Setting objectives	
National strategies and plans	Modernising curricula and qualifications frameworks
<b>Recent</b> (Implemented between 2015 and 2019)	
<b>Australia:</b> New Child Care Package (2018), as part of the National Partnership Agreements	<b>Belgium (Fr.):</b> Harmonisation of diplomas (2016)
<b>Belgium (Fl.):</b> Master Plan for Secondary Education (2018)	<b>Finland:</b> Reform of general upper secondary education (2018)
<b>Belgium (Fr.):</b> Steering decree 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2018 (part of the Pact for Excellence in Teaching, 2015)	<b>Finland:</b> National Framework for Qualifications and Other Learning (FINQF, 2017)
<b>Canada:</b> Early Years Plan (2016-20)	<b>France:</b> Transformation of the vocational path (2018)
<b>Canada:</b> Five-year agreement between the New Brunswick Teachers Federation and the local, provincial government (2017-22)	<b>France:</b> Secondary school reform (2016)
<b>Chile:</b> Higher Education Reform (2018)	<b>France:</b> Transformation of the vocational path (2018)
<b>Chile:</b> Higher Education Information Service (2007), Higher Education Reform on strengthening the collection, validation, updating and regular dissemination of information (2016)	<b>Greece:</b> Curriculum reform (2017-19)
<b>Denmark:</b> Together for the Future (2015)	<b>Iceland:</b> Updates to National Curriculum Guides for Compulsory Schools (2015)
<b>France:</b> Plan Étudiants (2017); Parcoursup' (2018)	<b>Ireland:</b> Well-being as a subject in the lower secondary cycle (2015)
<b>France:</b> Baccalaureate Reform (2017)	<b>Korea:</b> Revision of Education Curriculum (2015)
<b>Germany:</b> Excellence Strategy (2018)	<b>Latvia:</b> Competence-based general education content (2017/18)
<b>Greece:</b> Three-year education plan (2017-19)	<b>Latvia:</b> National Centre for Education (2017)
<b>Hungary:</b> HE Strategy (2015)	<b>Mexico:</b> Educational Model for compulsory education (2017)
<b>Hungary:</b> Digital Education Strategy (2016)	<b>Norway:</b> New model for competency development (2016-17)
<b>Ireland:</b> Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families (2018)	<b>Portugal:</b> Curriculum Guidelines for Pre-School Education (2016)
<b>Ireland:</b> System Performance Framework for HE (2017-21)	<b>Slovak Republic:</b> Act on Vocational Education and Training (2015)
<b>Ireland:</b> Action Plan for Education (2016-19); a new set of strategic goals for 2019-21	<b>Slovak Republic:</b> State curriculum for primary, lower secondary and general upper secondary schools/gymnasiums (2015)
<b>Ireland:</b> International Education Strategy (2016-20)	<b>Slovenia:</b> Slovenian Qualification Framework (2016)
<b>Ireland:</b> Innovation 2020 Strategy (2015-20)	<b>United Kingdom (England):</b> Higher Education and Research Bill - Teaching Excellence Framework (2016)
<b>Ireland:</b> National Access Plan to HE (2015-19)	
<b>Italy:</b> Three-year planning of universities (2016-18)	
<b>Italy:</b> Good School Reform (2015)	
<b>Japan:</b> Compulsory Education Schools (2016)	
<b>Japan:</b> Third Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education (2018)	
<b>Kazakhstan:</b> Update of the State Compulsory Standard (SCS) of Primary Education and SCS for General and Secondary Education (2017)	
<b>Latvia:</b> Agreement with World Bank to improve governance in HEI (2016)	
<b>New Zealand:</b> Blueprint for Education System Stewardship (2016)	
<b>New Zealand:</b> Education Amendment Acts (2017, 2018)	
<b>New Zealand:</b> Better Public Services (2012)	
<b>Slovak Republic:</b> Amendments to the School Act (2015)	
<b>Slovenia:</b> Strategic Guidelines for further Implementation of ICT in the Slovenian Education until 2020	
<b>Spain:</b> Spanish Strategy for HE (2017)	
<b>Turkey:</b> Ministry of Education Strategic Plan (2015-19)	
<b>Still in place</b> (Implemented between 2008 and 2014)	
<b>Australia:</b> Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (2009), part of the National Partnership Agreements	<b>Czech Republic:</b> National System of Occupations (NSO, 2004)
<b>Australia:</b> Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals (2008)	<b>Czech Republic:</b> National Register of Qualifications System (NQS, 2006)
<b>Australia:</b> Annual Closing the Gap report (since 2007)	<b>France:</b> France Digital University (FUN, 2014); replaced by new online learning portal (2015)

Setting objectives	
National strategies and plans	Modernising curricula and qualifications frameworks
<b>Belgium (Fr.):</b> "Landscape" Decree for HE (2013)	<b>Germany:</b> German Qualifications Framework (DQR, 2013)
<b>Canada:</b> Learn Canada 2020 (2008)	<b>Hungary:</b> Decree on the National Core Curriculum (2012); reformed (2016)
<b>Czech Republic:</b> Strategy for Education Policy until 2020 (2014) [*]	<b>Ireland:</b> Framework for Junior Cycle (2014)
<b>Czech Republic:</b> Long-Term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System (2011, modified in 2015)	<b>Latvia:</b> Vocational education curricula (2008-20) [*]
<b>Denmark:</b> Reform of primary and secondary schools (Folkeskole, 2014)	<b>New Zealand:</b> New Zealand Curriculum (2007) and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (2008)
<b>Germany:</b> HE Pact 2020 (2007-23)	<b>Norway:</b> Knowledge Promotion Reform (2008, modified in 2016) [*]
<b>Germany:</b> Quality Pact for Teaching in Higher Education (2010)	<b>Norway:</b> National Qualifications Framework for HE (2009)
<b>Hungary:</b> Lifelong Learning Strategy (2014)	<b>Norway:</b> National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (2011)
<b>Ireland:</b> National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy (2011-20)	<b>Turkey:</b> Standards for Primary Education (2011-12)
<b>Italy:</b> National Operational Programme (2014)	<b>Turkey:</b> Standards for Preschool and Primary Education Institutions (2014)
<b>Mexico:</b> Pact for Mexico (2012)	
<b>Mexico:</b> Educational Reform of Mexico (2013)	
<b>New Zealand:</b> Tertiary Education Strategies (2014-19); development of a new International Education Strategy (2019-25) [*]	
<b>Slovenia:</b> National HE Programme (2011-20), based on the NHEP Resolution	
<b>Slovenia:</b> Opening up Slovenia Initiative (2014)	
<b>Spain:</b> National Reform Programme (2012)	
<b>Turkey:</b> Tenth Development Plan (2014-18)	
<b>Turkey:</b> Strategic Plan for the Ministry of National Education (2010-14)	
<b>Turkey:</b> Strategic Vision 2023 (TSV, 2008-23)	

Notes: "HE" stands for higher education.

1. All policies in this table are summarised in Chapter 8 of this report as *selected* education policies (with some evidence of progress or impact) or *additional* education policies of potential interest to other countries.

2. [\*]: Policies included in the policy focus of this chapter.

3. See Annex B for information on policies reported previously for which no further details were available.

Source: EPO Surveys 2013 and 2016-17, EPO Country Profiles published for Austria, Belgium (Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities), Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden (see the Reader's Guide), further policies reported by education systems during validation processes undertaken in 2019, as well as desk-based research by the OECD Secretariat (2018-19).

According to evidence of progress or impact for the policies collected, when it comes to national strategies and plans, some of the most effective policies appear to be those that introduce specific, measurable target outcomes. This allows for improved monitoring that produces useful feedback across the implementation period. For example, the Czech Republic is making positive progress towards its 2020 goals for ECEC participation and lower secondary attainment. A 2017 review recommended improving communication between education stakeholders and improving the quality of administration at all educational levels to support the achievement of the goals.

With regard to curricular reform, many countries are opting for implementation plans that put the focus on local levels of governance, either through schools and institutions or municipalities. For example, Norway's efforts to increase student competency development is implemented according to differentiated measures based on municipalities' needs and developmental capacity. This allows for local context to play a more central role in decision making.

### *National strategies and plans*

**National strategies and plans** have been a major part of educational governance during the last decade. These policies serve to set up policy goals, actions, and monitor results. The OECD Secretariat selected 55 national strategies and plans enacted between 2008 and 2019 for this report. Among these, 22 policies were first implemented at some point between 2008 and 2014 and 33 policies were developed more recently, between 2015 and 2019.

In some cases, strategies and plans encompass all education levels, from pre-primary to higher education, as in the Czech Republic's Strategy for Education Policy until 2020 and Turkey's Ministry of Education Strategic Plan (2015-19). In other cases, there is a focus on specific education levels, as seen in Denmark's Folkeskole reform (2014). Other collected strategies and plans focus on higher education, such as New Zealand's Tertiary Education Strategy (2014-19), or Germany's Higher Education Pact 2020. Plans and strategies focusing on primary and secondary education are particularly common among the policies collected by the OECD for this report.

National strategies and plans also differ in terms of their components, which vary according to contextual needs. Some of them focus on defining general goals or priorities for the education system and do not propose specific targets or actions to achieve them. This appears to be the case in Australia's Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008), Canada's Learn 2020 (2008), the Czech Republic's Strategy for Education Policy (2014), Turkey's Tenth Development Plan (2014-18) and New Zealand's Blueprint for Education System Stewardship (2016). Other national strategies and plans also include specific actions to achieve their goals by using empirical measures to monitor results and progress. This is the case for the Czech Republic's Long-Term Plan for Education (2011, modified in 2015), Hungary's Lifelong Learning Strategy (2014) and Ireland's National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People (2011-20).

#### Policy focus

- **The Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020 (2014) guides education policy making.** It defines the purpose of education through its four primary objectives: 1) personal development that is conducive to the quality of human life, 2) the preservation and development of culture as a system of shared values; 3) the pursuit of active citizenship as a prerequisite for the development of society, based on solidarity, sustainable development and democratic governance; and 4) preparation for employment. The strategy's priority areas are: 1) reducing inequalities in education; 2) supporting quality teaching and teachers as the key prerequisite for quality teaching; and 3) governing the education system in an accountable and efficient manner (MEYS, 2014<sup>[38]</sup>). The European Commission's Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education makes up one of the principal funding streams for the implementation of the specific measures of the strategy (Eurydice, 2018<sup>[39]</sup>).

**Progress or impact:** To establish responsible and effective management of the education system, the Czech School Inspectorate began assessing schools in 2015/16 by focusing on new criteria, conditions, courses and the results of education (Czech School Inspectorate, 2016<sup>[40]</sup>). Since 2015/16,

as part of its annual report, the Czech School Inspectorate included overviews of the development of the implementation of the Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic (Czech School Inspectorate, 2016<sup>[40]</sup>). For example, the participation in pre-school education had reached 91.8%, moving closer to the minimum target of 95% of enrolment by 2020. The government had also made amendments to make the last year in pre-primary school compulsory by 2017. At the same time, the Inspectorate considered “problematic” the level of literacy identified in 6<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school and in the first year of selected secondary schools, according to an Inspectorate’s survey.

The government set the goal of having no more than 5.5% of the population with education ISCED 2 (lower secondary education) as their maximum attainment and outside of the formal education system (the rate was at 5.4% in 2014). The government also set the goal of increasing the number of teachers below the age of 36 by 2020, which was 23.1% in the 2013 Strategy.

Besides the Inspectorate, further evidence shows that achievements have been made as regards the goal to foster partnerships between schools and employers (European Commission, 2017<sup>[41]</sup>). In 2016, a standard procedure for contractual relationships was established to encourage employers to uphold quality standards in practical training (European Commission, 2017<sup>[41]</sup>). Although the goals related to each priority have not yet been achieved, the conclusions of the 2017 external evaluation of the 2020 Strategy confirm the persisting relevance of its three priorities (MŠMT (Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy České republiky) [Ministry of Education, 2017<sup>[42]</sup>). The review recommends improving communication between education stakeholders as well as improving the quality of administration at all educational levels. If the ministry decides to create a new strategy or update the 2020 Strategy, it should reflect on the concept of education in the digital age or the update of its educational objectives and content (Eurydice, 2018<sup>[43]</sup>).

- **New Zealand’s Tertiary Education Strategy (TES, 2014-19) focuses on developing relevant skills for entry into the labour market for at-risk youth, and on improving achievement rates of Māori and Pasifika youth.** The strategy also seeks to improve literacy and numeracy among adults, improve the quality of research-based institutions, and build international relationships to improve teaching and expand access programmes and institutions abroad. Through these priorities, the government seeks to build strong links between the tertiary education system and the labour market, local communities and the global economy (Ministry of Education, 2018<sup>[44]</sup>).

**Progress or impact:** In 2015, the government allocated funding to increase the number of people enrolled in apprenticeships from 42 000 to 50 000 by 2020, with the intention of particularly benefiting participants in Māori and Pasifika Trades Training (Ministry of Education, 2017<sup>[45]</sup>). Three new information and communication technology (ICT) graduate schools provide industry-focused education and research, built on connections made with



related high-tech firms. Following the approval of the Tertiary Education Strategy, the government anticipated the following demographic changes: a peak in 2018 of 18-22 year-olds in New Zealand, followed by a decline; and an increasing share of young people identifying as Māori, Asian and Pasifika, increasing until 2031. This changing context poses challenges to support achievement and transitions into the labour market for all students (Ministry of Education, 2017<sup>[45]</sup>).

Between 2014 and 2015, the proportion of individuals aged 15-24 who were not in employment, education or training (NEET) remained stable at 14%, while 83.3% of 18-year-olds achieved NCEA Level 2 (ISCED 3) or equivalent, an increase of 9 percentage points since 2011. Māori and Pasifika youth (aged 18-24) continue to have lower participation rates in tertiary education; however, Māori and Pasifika degree-level graduates had smaller employment gaps with their peers immediately after graduation, compared to graduates with lower level qualifications.

Between 2005 and 2015, the number of international doctoral students increased from 704 to 4 066, which was reported as a success due to the government's policy of domestic fees for international PhD students. In 2016, the government announced the development of a new International Education Strategy that will develop objectives to broaden the scope of international education through to 2025 (Ministry of Education, 2017<sup>[45]</sup>). Work is currently underway on developing a new TES for release in mid-2019.

### *Modernising curricula*

Another key policy trend regarding the revision of educational objectives is the **modernisation of curricula**. A total of 32 education policies related to curricular reforms implemented during 2008-19 were collected for this report. Among these, 13 policies were first implemented between 2008 and 2014, and 19 policies were first implemented between 2015 and 2019. Many of these reforms aim to introduce a competency-based approach to instruction and learning, as opposed to the more traditional content-based approach (Echazarra et al., 2016<sup>[46]</sup>).

For example, Latvia's National Centre for Education (2017) started the development and implementation of new competency-based general education content, covering pre-school to upper secondary education. Some of these policies also have the explicit goal of updating their curricula to prepare students with 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills, which include not only knowledge and cognitive skills, but also social and emotional skills, and attitudes and social values such as democracy, citizenship and sustainable development (OECD, 2015<sup>[47]</sup>). Policy efforts in this direction were collected for Mexico, through the New Educational Model for compulsory education (2017) and Norway's Knowledge Promotion Reform (2008, modified in 2016).

Education systems have been working to reform curricula to respond to large-scale changes brought about by the globalised knowledge economy, which increasingly requires a more complex set of skills and interactions across borders. In Slovenia, for example, the new National Higher Education Programme (2011-20) seeks to increase foreign-language study programmes and the share of international students and faculty in higher education institutions. The curricular reforms focused on vocational education are of particular

interest, which aim to match students' skills with labour market needs. New qualification requirements and apprenticeships often accompany changes in vocational education and training (VET) programmes' curricula, as in France's Transformation of the Vocational Path (2018), Latvia's vocational education curricula reforms (2008-20) and the Slovak Republic's Act on VET (2015).

#### Policy focus

- Since 2009, **Latvia** has been carrying out a **comprehensive programme of reforms that touches upon the overall operation and content of vocational education**. It aims to improve the attractiveness and quality of VET pathways, increase relevance through greater engagement with social partners, modularise programmes and occupational standards and increase work-based learning.

**Progress or impact:** During 2010-15, the number of VET schools under the Ministry of Education and Science's responsibility were rearranged from 60 to 24. Following procedures established in 2013, 17 of those had been granted the status of vocational education competence centre (VECC) by the end of 2016 (OECD, 2017<sup>[48]</sup>). This status is awarded to centres that surpass specific benchmarks related to the quality of provision and the development of partnerships (Cabinet of Ministers, 2013<sup>[49]</sup>). In terms of curriculum, Latvia managed to update 230 of 242 occupational standards by the end of 2018, despite a slow start. However, modularisation has been slower, and 172 of 242 modular programmes remained to be developed as of the end of 2018. Latvia now expects to finalise the reform by the end of 2021 instead of 2020 (European Commission, 2019<sup>[50]</sup>). Changes related to embedding work-based learning (WBL) approaches have made positive progress. A WBL pilot programme launched in 2013/14 included six vocational schools covering 148 students and 29 companies, and in 2016, Latvia developed and adopted new regulations to implement WBL (OECD, 2017<sup>[48]</sup>). In the academic year 2017/18, some 1 000 students were enrolled in WBL programmes and over 4 000 students in work practice. A total of 18 professional education institutions now offer WBL for second- and third-level professional qualifications. Also, up to 230 vocational programmes covering 85 professional qualifications now include embedded WBL components (European Commission, 2019<sup>[50]</sup>).

- In 2006, **Norway** introduced the **Knowledge Promotion** (Kunnskapsløftet) reform (explained as well in Chapter 6). While results from international studies (such as PISA 2015; PIRLS [Progress in International Reading Literacy Study] 2016; TIMSS [Trends In International Mathematics and Science Study] 2015; ICICLES 2013 and ICCS [International Civic and Citizenship Education Study] 2016) show an overall positive development in results from Norwegian schools after its introduction, some challenges persist related to low student performance and dropout. There are ongoing efforts that aim to renew the reform. In a white paper presented in 2016, the Ministry of Education highlighted the need to update subject curricula with fewer and more clearly articulated competence objectives; to integrate topics on democracy and citizenship, sustainable development, and public health and well-being for students' social development; and to revise the core curriculum for primary and secondary education (Norwegian Ministry of

Education and Research, 2016<sup>[51]</sup>). The new subject curricula will come into force by autumn 2020.

**Progress or impact:** A 2017 white paper (Meld. St. 21 [2016-17] Lærelyst – tidlig innsats og kvalitet i skolen) highlights that between 15-20% of students who leave primary school do not have the necessary competencies to cope with further education and working life. This figure is equivalent to roughly 10 000 students every year. Along with subject curricula as a main lever, Norway is continuing to support ECEC initiatives that can better prepare students for primary school. The Ministry of Education and Research has also proposed and approved a new model for competence development, Prop. 1 S (2016-17) that differentiates measures based on municipalities' needs and developmental capacity as part of a decentralised municipality-level scheme. This measure puts municipalities and local governing bodies in more control of competency-related initiatives, allowing local context to play a more central role in decision making.

## Engaging stakeholders

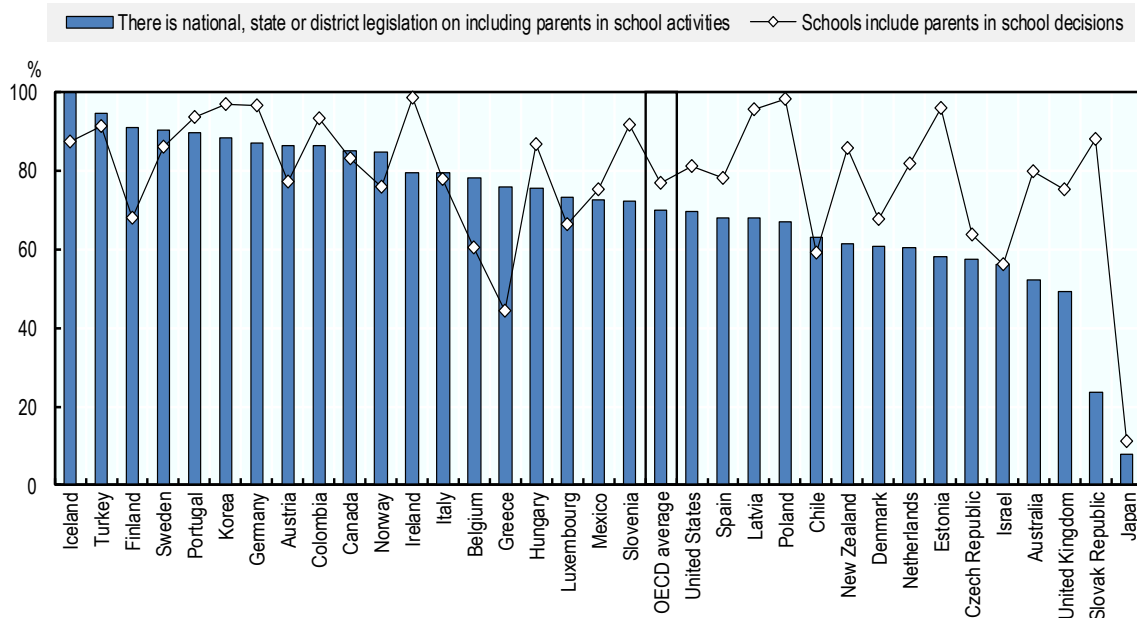
In modern education systems, stakeholders have grown in diversity and become increasingly invested in how education systems function and what they provide students. Engaging stakeholders means that a larger set of people becomes more involved in the process of making key educational decisions. It includes parental engagement in school, and it can also mean that students, organisations or the private sector from local communities or other actors participate in how schools and education systems are run.

School networks that bring together individuals or educational institutions in a horizontal partnership can be powerful forces for the dissemination of innovative educational practices among principals and teachers in different schools (OECD, 2003<sup>[52]</sup>). For example, apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning can be effective in easing students' school-to-work transitions (OECD, 2018<sup>[53]</sup>). Furthermore, union engagement with governments is another pathway of improvement followed in education systems (see Chapter 7). Research also shows a positive relationship between educational outcomes and parental engagement, understood as parents and school staff working together to support student learning (Epstein and Sheldon, 2002<sup>[54]</sup>).

The use of legislation on including parents in school activities is prevalent among OECD countries, according to PISA 2015 data. On average, across OECD countries, some 70% of 15-year-old students attend schools whose principals reported that there is a national, state or district legislation on including parents in school activities (Figure 4.8). In all participating OECD countries, except Japan and the Slovak Republic, the majority of students attend schools that operate under legal rules on parental engagement. The school practice of including parents in school decisions is also very prevalent, according to school principals' responses.

**Figure 4.8. Parental engagement: Legislation and school efforts to involve parents**

Percentage of students in schools whose principals reported that there is legislation on including parents in school activities or that the school includes parents in decisions



Source: OECD (2016<sup>[7]</sup>), *PISA 2015 Results (Volume II): Policies and Practices for Successful Schools*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264267510-en>. Tables II.3.24 and II.3.26.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933997455>

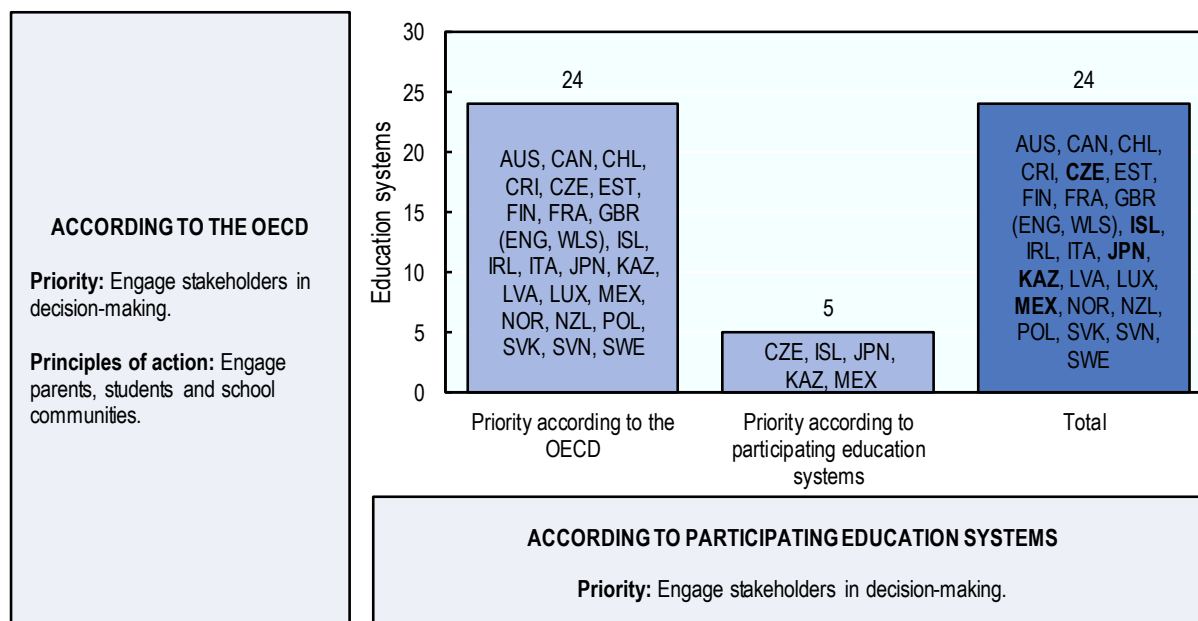
## Policy priorities

### *Engaging stakeholders in decision making*

Another policy priority related to education governance shared by many education systems refers to the need to effectively engage stakeholders in decision making processes. Exploring the views, interests and capacities of system actors is necessary to understand education policy implementation; equally, engaging stakeholders in policy design processes can ensure the key message and logic of a policy are successfully communicated and build consensus around objectives (Viennet and Pont, 2017<sup>[55]</sup>). Between 2008 and 2019, this policy priority was identified in at least 24 education systems, either by the OECD in previous country-based work (24 education systems), by participating education systems (5 education systems), or both (5 education systems) (Figure 4.9).

Previous OECD work on governance has identified engaging stakeholders in decision making as a priority across many education systems. For at least seven education systems, including France, Mexico and Sweden, the OECD identified this as a priority between 2008 and 2014. More recently, from 2015-19, the OECD identified this policy priority for 11 education systems including Australia, Canada and Poland. For six education systems (Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Slovenia and the United Kingdom [England]), the OECD identified this priority both before and after 2014 (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9. Engaging stakeholders in decision making

*Notes:*

- Priority according to the OECD:** See Annex A (OECD publications consulted) and Reader's Guide (years covered).
- Principles of action:** Component of a recommendation that draws from international evidence produced on a specific topic, either by the OECD or externally.
- Priority according to participating education system:** Based on responses to Education Policy Outlook (EPO) Surveys 2013 and 2016-17, although responses for Austria, Belgium (Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities), Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden are based on the Education Policy Outlook (EPO) Country Profiles published during 2017 and 2018. Responses given during the validation processes for all education systems in 2019 are also included (see the Reader's Guide).
- Comparing previous OECD analysis and country responses:** Education systems highlighted in **bold** are those where the policy priority was identified by both the OECD and the education system.

General principles of action include engaging parents, students and the school community; promoting school networking and peer learning; engaging employers and the private sector; and encouraging systems to be more internationally-facing, particularly at tertiary level. For example, an OECD review of the United Kingdom (England) recommended engaging parents and communities as providers of support for early childhood education and care through “play centres” open for one to five sessions each week to provide play, social and learning opportunities for children (Taguma, Litjens and Makowiecki, 2012<sup>[56]</sup>). In Poland and New Zealand, the OECD recommended enhancing collaboration between industry and higher education institutions to develop applied research (OECD, 2018<sup>[57]</sup>; OECD, 2017<sup>[58]</sup>). In Estonia, the OECD recommended financial incentives to encourage private sector participation in vocational education and training (OECD, 2017<sup>[59]</sup>).

A much smaller number of education systems reported engaging stakeholders in decision making as an explicit policy priority, although this does not necessarily mean that stakeholder consultation does not happen in other education systems. The Czech Republic, Kazakhstan and Mexico reported it as a priority during 2015-19, while this priority was first reported in 2008-14 by Iceland and Japan.

In terms of efforts to involve stakeholders, Mexico has been working to reactivate social participation councils at the school, municipality state and national levels to increase parental and societal engagement in education since 2009. These councils are composed of parents, school principals, teachers' union representatives, former students and community members (OECD, 2010<sub>[60]</sub>). Following recommendations from the OECD, Kazakhstan introduced new regulations that would provide more school autonomy in 2018, and also promoted stakeholder engagement by establishing two new Boards of Trustees in lower and higher education (OECD, 2018<sub>[61]</sub>).

### ***Policy trends***

Most decisions are made at the school level in a majority of countries, although this varies depending on whether the decision is related to curriculum, administration, personnel or other decisions (OECD, 2018<sub>[31]</sub>).

As explained above, analysis of ongoing key policies reported by education systems for this report shows that policies aimed at engaging stakeholders such as parents, students, local community, school networking, and local employers and the private sector are becoming increasingly relevant in the contemporary policy landscape. Through collaboration with the private sector and employers, education systems and policy makers are better able to align targeted goals with the skills that are needed now, as well as in the future. Table 4.3 presents some specific examples of collected policies.

**Table 4.3. Policies to engage education systems' stakeholders, 2008-19**

Engaging stakeholders
Enhancing participation in decision making
<b>Recent policies</b> (Implemented between 2015 and 2019)
<b>Australia:</b> Parental engagement, part of the Family Partnership Agreement of the Smith Family, Learning For Life Program Expansion (2016-17 to 2019-20); Learning Potential app and website (2015); ARACY Parent Engagement Project (2014-19); funded national parent bodies
<b>Belgium (Fr.):</b> Pact for Excellence in Teaching (2015-30)
<b>Estonia:</b> Reform of management at Tallinn University of Technology (2015)
<b>Greece:</b> Committee for National Social Dialogue in Education (2015)
<b>New Zealand:</b> Enhancing the role of school boards of trustees under the Education Amendment Act (2017)
<b>Portugal:</b> Schools Participatory Budget (2016) [*]
<b>Turkey:</b> School Administrative Boards of VET (2016)
<b>Turkey:</b> Turkey Maarif Foundation (2016)
<b>Policies still in place</b> (Implemented between 2008 and 2014)
<b>Estonia:</b> Reform of management at the University of Tartu (2011)
<b>Japan:</b> Revision of Act on the Organisation and Operation of Local Educational Administration (2014)
<b>Kazakhstan:</b> Establishment of Boards of Trustees in schools (2007)
<b>Kazakhstan:</b> Establishment of Boards in higher education (2008)
<b>Mexico:</b> Social Participation Councils (1992/93; reactivated in 2009) [*]

*Notes:*

1. All policies in this table are summarised in Chapter 8 of this report as *selected* education policies (with some evidence of progress or impact) or *additional* education policies of potential interest to other countries.

2. [\*]: Policies included in the policy focus of this chapter.

3. See Annex B for information on policies reported previously for which no further details were available.

*Source:* EPO Surveys 2013 and 2016-17, EPO Country Profiles published for Austria, Belgium (Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities), Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden (see the Reader's Guide), further policies reported by education systems during validation processes undertaken in 2019, as well as desk-based research by the OECD Secretariat (2018-19).

The relatively small number of policies collected for this area of governance perhaps reveals that engaging stakeholders is often seen as an important element across all policy work rather than a separate area of its own. Indeed, from looking at progress and impact collected for other policy areas, consultation and dialogue with stakeholders have been employed during policy design, implementation and review processes in a large number of education systems. However, more formal mechanisms for engagement can be valuable.

### *Increasing stakeholder participation in decision making*

Several education systems have implemented policies to **increase the involvement of local and school communities** in educational processes and decisions. One way they are doing so is by creating participatory boards or councils composed of actors such as parents, school principals, teachers, union representatives, former students and community members. This has been done, for example, by Mexico, through efforts aimed at reactivating the Social Participation Councils (1992/93, reactivated in 2009) and by Australia, through the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) Parent Engagement Project (2014-19). Some governments have trained members of these councils in topics such as education assessment and school management, or created websites to register its affiliates and provide information. Japan has also had long-standing mechanisms that foresee engagement from local stakeholders on education policy.

There are also participatory boards that have been put in place that aim to engage the private sector and local employers in the administration of vocational schools and professional programmes, as was done by Turkey's School Administrative Boards of Vocational Education and Training (2016), Kazakhstan's establishment of Boards of Trustees in schools and higher education (2007 and 2008 respectively) and New Zealand's efforts to enhance the role of school boards of trustees under the Education Amendment Act (2017).

Student voice also matters; fewer examples of formal mechanisms were collected in this area, however. In Portugal, students at secondary education level can be involved in budgetary decisions in their schools (2017), as below.

#### Policy focus

- As mentioned above, **Mexico** has been working to **reactivate Social Participation Councils** (Consejos de Participación Social en la Educación). Having been formally established during 1992/93, they did not function in practice before 2009 (OECD, 2010<sub>[60]</sub>). Mexico has relaunched social participation councils at the schools, municipalities and states, and at national level to increase parental and societal engagement in education. They are composed of parents, school principals, teachers, union representatives, former students and community members. In many councils, the Secretariat of Public Education (Secretaría de Educación Pública, SEP) has trained members in education assessment and management (OECD, 2018<sub>[62]</sub>).

**Progress or impact:** In 2016, a National Council (CONAPASE) was established to reflect and support the school councils across Mexico. It has quarterly national sessions and follows a formal and legal structure for consultation and operation (OECD, 2019<sub>[63]</sub>). Data indicates that the coverage of participation councils has continued to expand in recent years. In 2017, 94% of states and 65% of municipalities had their own council (National information reported to the OECD). A total of 1 597 Municipal

Councils of Social Participation in Education were registered in the Public Registry of the Councils of Social Participation in Education (REPUCE) with the slowest development seen in the State of Mexico, Oaxaca and Mexico City. The expansion has been particularly significant at the school level: in 2017, there were around 200 000 School Councils of Social Participation in education with almost 2 million counsellors participating (National information provided to the OECD) (SEP, 2017<sup>[64]</sup>).

- As part of **Portugal's** Schools Participatory Budget (2016) all public schools providing lower and upper secondary education receive an additional amount from the state budget to be used according to the democratic will of students. Groups of students develop proposals for school improvement, secure a minimum number of signatures from their peers and then submit a proposal to the school principal. Once approved, these proposals are voted on by all students. This aims to reinforce student engagement with the community and their civic values.



## References

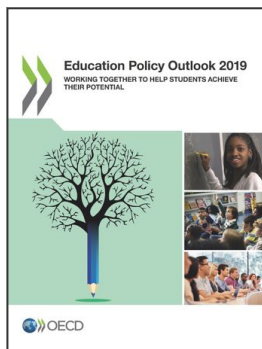
- Arum, R., I. Beattie and K. Ford (2010), *The structure of schooling: Readings in the sociology of education*, Pine Forge Press. [5]
- Burns, T. and F. Köster (eds.) (2016), *Governing Education in a Complex World*, Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264255364-en>. [1]
- Cabinet of Ministers (2013), *Regulation No. 144: Procedures for Awarding and Cancellation of the Status of Vocational Education Competence Center*, Cabinet of Ministers, Riga, <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=255589> (accessed on 23 May 2019). [49]
- Czech School Inspectorate (2016), *Annual Report of the Czech School Inspectorate for the School Year 2015/2016*, [http://www.csicr.cz/html/abstract\\_2015/html5/index.html?&locale=ENG](http://www.csicr.cz/html/abstract_2015/html5/index.html?&locale=ENG) (accessed on 5 November 2018). [40]
- Department of Education and Training (2018), *Higher Education Standards Framework*, <https://www.education.gov.au/standards-0> (accessed on 17 December 2018). [21]
- Echazarra, A. et al. (2016), “How teachers teach and students learn: Successful strategies for school”, *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 130, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jm29kpt0xxx-en>. [46]
- Epstein, J. and S. Sheldon (2002), “Present and accounted for: improving student attendance through family and community involvement”, *The Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 95/5, pp. 308-3018. [54]
- European Commission (2019), *Country Report Latvia 2019*, Publications Office of the European Union, [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file\\_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-latvia\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-latvia_en.pdf) (accessed on 12 April 2019). [50]
- European Commission (2017), *Education and Training Monitor 2017. Czech Republic*, Publications Office of the European Union, [https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2017-cz\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2017-cz_en.pdf). [41]
- European Commission (2015), *Education and Training Monitor 2015: Finland*, Publications Office of the European Union, [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/tools/docs/2015/monitor2015-finland\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/tools/docs/2015/monitor2015-finland_en.pdf). [25]
- Eurydice (2018), *Czech Republic: Ongoing Reforms and Policy Developments*, [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/ongoing-reforms-and-policy-developments-17\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/ongoing-reforms-and-policy-developments-17_en) (accessed on 14 November 2018). [43]
- Eurydice (2018), *Fundamental Principles and National Policies*, Eurydice, [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/fundamental-principles-and-national-policies-21\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/fundamental-principles-and-national-policies-21_en) (accessed on 6 November 2018). [39]

- Fazekas, M. and T. Burns (2012), “Exploring the Complex Interaction Between Governance and Knowledge in Education”, *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 67, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5k9flex2l340-en>. [3]
- Liebowitz, D. et al. (2018), *OECD Reviews of School Resources: Portugal 2018*, OECD Reviews of School Resources, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264308411-en>. [30]
- MEYS (2014), *Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020*, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Czech Republic, [http://www.vzdelavani2020.cz/images\\_obsah/dokumenty/strategy\\_web\\_en.pdf](http://www.vzdelavani2020.cz/images_obsah/dokumenty/strategy_web_en.pdf). [38]
- Ministry of Education (2018), *Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2019*, <https://www.education.govt.nz/further-education/policies-and-strategies/tertiary-education-strategy/> (accessed on 19 February 2019). [44]
- Ministry of Education (2017), *Monitoring the Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2019*, <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz> (accessed on 19 February 2019). [45]
- MŠMT (Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy České republiky) [Ministry of Education, Y. (2017), *Hodnocení naplňování Strategie vzdělávací politiky ČR do roku 2020 [Evaluation of the implementation of the Czech Republic’s Education Policy Strategy by 2020]*, [http://www.vzdelavani2020.cz/images\\_obsah/dokumenty/hodnoceni-naplnovani-strategie-vzdelavaci-politiky-cr-do-roku-20020/strategie2020\\_shrnuti.pdf](http://www.vzdelavani2020.cz/images_obsah/dokumenty/hodnoceni-naplnovani-strategie-vzdelavaci-politiky-cr-do-roku-20020/strategie2020_shrnuti.pdf) (accessed on 21 November 2018). [42]
- Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2016), *Proposal for renewal and improvement of school subjects*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/proposal-for-renewal-and-improvement-of-school-subjects/id2483423/> (accessed on 19 February 2019). [51]
- Nusche, D. et al. (2015), *OECD Reviews of School Resources: Flemish Community of Belgium 2015*, OECD Reviews of School Resources, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264247598-en>. [18]
- Nusche, D. et al. (2016), *OECD Reviews of School Resources: Austria 2016*, OECD Reviews of School Resources, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264256729-en>. [8]
- Nusche, D. et al. (2016), *OECD Reviews of School Resources: Denmark 2016*, OECD Reviews of School Resources, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264262430-en>. [17]
- OECD (2019), *Strong Foundations for Quality and Equity in Mexican Schools*, Implementing Education Policies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264312548-en>. [63]
- OECD (2018), *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>. [6]
- OECD (2018), *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>. [31]
- OECD (2018), *Education Policy Outlook: Kazakhstan Country Profile*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://www.oecd.org/edu/policyoutlook.htm> (accessed on 10 April 2019). [61]

- OECD (2018), *Education Policy Outlook: Mexico*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [62]  
<http://www.oecd.org/education/policyoutlook.htm>.
- OECD (2018), *OECD Economic Surveys: Poland 2018*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [57]  
[https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco\\_surveys-pol-2018-en](https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-pol-2018-en).
- OECD (2018), *Rethinking Quality Assurance for Higher Education in Brazil*, Reviews of National Policies for Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, [13]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264309050-en>.
- OECD (2018), *Seven Questions about Apprenticeships: Answers from International Experience*, OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training, OECD Publishing, Paris, [53]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264306486-en>.
- OECD (2017), *Education in Chile*, Reviews of National Policies for Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, [24]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264284425-en>.
- OECD (2017), *Education Policy Outlook: Latvia*, [48]  
<http://www.oecd.org/education/policyoutlook.htm> (accessed on 25 November 2018).
- OECD (2017), *Government at a Glance 2017*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [32]  
[https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov\\_glance-2017-en](https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2017-en).
- OECD (2017), *Higher Education in Kazakhstan 2017*, Reviews of National Policies for Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, [37]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264268531-en>.
- OECD (2017), *OECD Economic Surveys: Estonia 2017*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [59]  
[https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco\\_surveys-est-2017-en](https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-est-2017-en).
- OECD (2017), *OECD Economic Surveys: New Zealand 2017*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [58]  
[https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco\\_surveys-nzl-2017-en](https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-nzl-2017-en).
- OECD (2017), *Systems Approaches to Public Sector Challenges: Working with Change*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [33]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264279865-en>.
- OECD (2017), *The Next Production Revolution: Implications for Governments and Business*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [34]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264271036-en>.
- OECD (2016), *Education in Latvia*, Reviews of National Policies for Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, [15]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264250628-en>.
- OECD (2016), *PISA 2015 Results (Volume II): Policies and Practices for Successful Schools*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, [7]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264267510-en>.
- OECD (2015), *Education Policy Outlook 2015: Making Reforms Happen*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [4]  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264225442-en>.
- OECD (2015), *Improving Schools in Sweden: An OECD Perspective*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [36]  
<http://www.oecd.org/education/school/Improving-Schools-in-Sweden.pdf>.

- OECD (2015), *Skills for Social Progress: The Power of Social and Emotional Skills*, OECD Skills Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264226159-en>. [47]
- OECD (2014), *Education Policy Outlook: Portugal*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://www.oecd.org/education/policyoutlook.htm>. [29]
- OECD (2013), *OECD Economic Surveys: Colombia 2013: Economic Assessment*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco\\_surveys-col-2013-en](https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-col-2013-en). [14]
- OECD (2013), *OECD Economic Surveys: Iceland 2013*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco\\_surveys-isl-2013-en](https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-isl-2013-en). [11]
- OECD (2013), *Synergies for Better Learning: An International Perspective on Evaluation and Assessment*, OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264190658-en>. [12]
- OECD (2011), *Government at a Glance 2011*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov\\_glance-2011-en](https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2011-en). [2]
- OECD (2010), *Improving Schools: Strategies for Action in Mexico*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264087040-en> (accessed on 3 May 2019). [60]
- OECD (2009), *OECD Economic Surveys: Italy 2009*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco\\_surveys-ita-2009-en](https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-ita-2009-en). [9]
- OECD (2003), *Networks of Innovation: Towards New Models for Managing Schools and Systems*, Schooling for Tomorrow, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264100350-en>. [52]
- OKM (2018), *Assessing the Impact of Higher Education Reform (Korkeakoulu-uudistusten vaikutusten arviointi Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön julkaisuja)*, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland, <http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161051/okm33.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>. [27]
- OKM (2016), *Yliopistolakiuudistuksen vaikutusten arviointi. Loppuraportti [Impact assessment of the University Reform: Final Report]*. [26]
- Republic Diary (2015), *Diário da República, N.º 30/2015*, Conselho de Ministros, Lisbon, <https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/66487456> (accessed on 4 April 2019). [28]
- Schildkamp, K., L. Karbautzki and J. Vanhoof (2014), “Exploring data use practices around Europe: Identifying enablers and barriers”, *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, Vol. 42, pp. 15-24. [16]
- Schleicher, A. (2018), *World Class: How to Build a 21st-Century School System*, Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264300002-en>. [35]

- SEP (2017), *Quinto Informe de Labores 2016-2017 [Fifth Work Report 2016-2017]*, SEP, Mexico City, [http://www.planeacion.sep.gob.mx/Doc/informes/labores/2012\\_2018/5to\\_informe\\_de\\_labores.pdf](http://www.planeacion.sep.gob.mx/Doc/informes/labores/2012_2018/5to_informe_de_labores.pdf) (accessed on 18 February 2019). [64]
- Shewbridge, C. et al. (2016), *OECD Reviews of School Resources: Lithuania 2016*, OECD Reviews of School Resources, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264252547-en>. [10]
- Taguma, M., I. Litjens and K. Makowiecki (2012), *Quality Matters in Early Childhood Education and Care: United Kingdom (England) 2012*, Quality Matters in Early Childhood Education and Care, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264176867-en>. [56]
- TEQSA (2019), *National Register: Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency*, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/national-register> (accessed on 4 April 2019). [22]
- TEQSA (2019), *TEQSA Stakeholder Survey 2018: Report of Overall Findings*, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/teqsa-stakeholder-survey-2018-report-overall-findings> (accessed on 3 May 2019). [23]
- TEQSA (2017), *TEQSA Act*, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/teqsa-act> (accessed on 16 July 2018). [20]
- TEQSA (2017), *What we do*, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/what-we-do> (accessed on 23 August 2018). [19]
- Viennet, R. and B. Pont (2017), “Education policy implementation: A literature review and proposed framework”, *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 162, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/fc467a64-en>. [55]



**From:**

## **Education Policy Outlook 2019**

Working Together to Help Students Achieve their Potential

**Access the complete publication at:**

<https://doi.org/10.1787/2b8ad56e-en>

### **Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2019), "Education governance: Policy priorities and trends, 2008-19", in *Education Policy Outlook 2019: Working Together to Help Students Achieve their Potential*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/4581cb4d-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to [rights@oecd.org](mailto:rights@oecd.org). Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at [info@copyright.com](mailto:info@copyright.com) or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at [contact@cfcopies.com](mailto:contact@cfcopies.com).