

Foreword

This report for Colombia forms part of the OECD Review of Policies to Improve the Effectiveness of Resource Use in Schools. Annex A gives further project details.

The “School Resources Review” aims to help countries make resource decisions that support quality, equity and efficiency in school education. The Review provides country-specific and comparative analysis on the use of financial, physical and human resources in school systems. It offers policy advice on how to govern, distribute and manage resources so that they contribute to achieving countries’ educational objectives.

Colombia was one of the countries which opted to participate with an in-depth country review. Country reviews provide detailed descriptions of national policies, a critical analysis of country-specific strengths and challenges and tailored policy advice for improving the use of school resources. This particular review aims to i) provide insights and advice to Colombian authorities; ii) help other countries understand Colombian policies and practices; and iii) provide input for thematic work of the project.

The report was co-authored by Thomas Radinger (OECD Secretariat), also co-ordinator of the review; Alfonso Echazarra (OECD Secretariat); Gabriela Guerrero (GRADE Peru), expert on school provision; and Juan Pablo Valenzuela (Universidad de Chile), expert on school finance. Annex B provides biographies of the team of authors.

The conclusions of the report were informed by a visit to Colombia to carry out interviews with a range of authorities and stakeholders and to visit school communities in different parts of the country. The visit of the review team to Colombia took place in December 2017. Paulo Santiago from the OECD Secretariat also participated in the visit to provide overall guidance and support. For the team’s itinerary, see Annex C. The report presents the situation at the time of the visit.

At the request of Colombia, this report focuses on the funding of school education (Chapter 2), the provision of school education (Chapter 3), and the development of the teaching profession (Chapter 3). Rural education represents a transversal theme of the report within the context of Colombia’s peace agreement and objectives to close rural-urban gaps in social and economic development. Chapter 1 provides the overall context for the remaining chapters. An “Executive Summary” distils the report’s key messages; a section on “Assessment and Recommendations” provides a longer overview of the analysis developed in the report. The report covers all levels of compulsory education as well as transitions between school education and other levels and programmes.

The country review was co-ordinated on the Colombian side by José Luis Sánchez, consultant to the Ministry of National Education, supported by Victoria Gómez from the Office for Cooperation and International Affairs of the Ministry of National Education. Helga Hernández, Vice-Minister for Pre-school and School Education from January 2018, and Luz Amparo Medina, Director for Cooperation and International Affairs, provided general oversight.

An important part of Colombia's involvement was the preparation of a Country Background Report authored by José Luis Sánchez. The background report is an important output of the project in its own right. It was also an important source of information for the review team. Unless indicated otherwise, the data for this report are taken from the background report. The background report and this report complement each other and should be read together for a more comprehensive analysis.

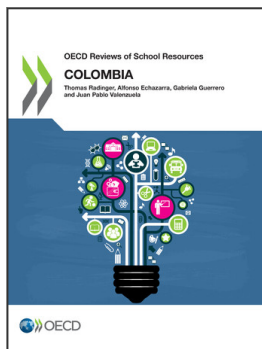
The team is grateful to the many people who met with us during our visit to Colombia despite busy schedules at the end of the year to share their views, knowledge and experience. It is thanks to them that we had the fortune to develop a better understanding of education in Colombia, and experience Colombian hospitality and culture.

We owe very special words of appreciation to the national co-ordinator, José Luis Sánchez. José Luis worked tirelessly to make the School Resources Review of Colombia a success, from the organisation of the preliminary meetings and the country review visit, to the many requests for additional data, the co-ordination of feedback on the review report and the organisation of the launch event for the report. Special gratitude is also due to Victoria Gómez who was critical in helping to get the project started and in providing essential organisational support throughout.

The great kindness and support, excellent sense of organisation, and remarkable sense of commitment and dedication of José Luis and Victoria made our visit and work not only smooth and productive but stimulating and enjoyable. The team is also very grateful to José Luis for providing an excellent background report under a challenging timeline and to all those who assisted him in this considerable task. The Ministry of National Education and its technical teams, under the leadership of Yaneth Giha Tovar, provided crucial support, contributions and clarifications for the project, and we wish to sincerely thank everyone involved.

Lastly, the team wishes to thank colleagues at the OECD. Deborah Nusche, Cláudia Sarrico and Anna Pons provided valuable comments on draft chapters, while Luka Boeskens provided analytical support for some parts of the report. Eléonore Morena provided key administrative and logistical support for the review and was responsible for copy-editing, layout and formatting of the report. Thanks to her skill and talent, the report gained greatly in clarity and legibility. Célia Braga-Schich supported the finalisation of the report. Henri Pearson coordinated communication and supported production. Amar Toor supported the social media campaign. Carmen Fernandez and Florence Guérinot facilitated the publication process. Paulo Santiago provided overall guidance and support as Head of Division for Policy Advice and Implementation.

The analysis of the report seeks to build on and strengthen efforts that are already underway in Colombia. The country's strong commitment to provide all children and young people with a high-quality education on its road to overcome its violent past was evident among all those the team met during its visit. Readers should take into account the difficulties that face anyone, no matter how well briefed, in grasping the complexity of a country and fully understanding all the issues involved. Of course, this report is the responsibility of the author team. While the team benefited from the background report and other documents, as well as the many discussions with a wide range of authorities and stakeholders, any errors or misinterpretations are our responsibility.



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