

Foreword

Education was central to Brazil's social and economic development in the first decade of the millennium. Higher enrolment rates at every level of education, a reduction of inequalities in access and falling rates of illiteracy have meant that young people entering the workforce are much better educated than previous generations. However, in the past few years, economic growth and social progress have stalled and, in some cases, gone into reverse. More recently, the COVID-19 outbreak has and continues to cause severe human suffering in Brazil, and plunged the economy into another, even deeper economic recession. The social and economic effects of the pandemic have hit the most vulnerable individuals and communities hardest, increasing the risks of poverty and exacerbating inequalities.

If education is to support the country's recovery, the progress that has been achieved in recent decades needs not only to be sustained, but also accelerated. The challenges faced by Brazil are significant and call for redoubled, well-resourced and sustained efforts to improve the *quality* and *equity* of education provision, alongside immediate measures to deal with the effects of the COVID-19 crisis. Our report provides suggestions for policy makers on how to meet this challenge.

The publication was prepared by the OECD, at the request of the Brazilian foundations, Todos Pela Educação and Instituto Sonho Grande, who provided invaluable insights into the Brazilian context and policy developments.

The report was developed drawing on internationally comparative data on education in Brazil, in particular the extensive range of data collected by the OECD. The experiences of other countries and how they have tackled challenges similar to those now faced by Brazil, along with the insights from consultations with national experts, also inform the analysis. The report benchmarks with OECD and a set of comparator emerging economies the whole education system from early childhood education and care to tertiary education, focusing on:

- Access and participation
- Learning and labour market outcomes
- The allocation, use and efficiency of financial, human and material resources
- School leaders, teachers and teaching
- The school climate and student well-being

The report highlights the many strengths of Brazil's education system, identifies the main challenges ahead and offers policy implications for the future.

I hope this report will support Brazil in building a stronger and more equitable education system able to shape the country's future and help Brazilians realise their dreams. The OECD is ready to help Brazil in this effort.

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