

# COVID-19: The second year of the pandemic

In 2020, 1.5 billion students in 188 countries and economies were locked out of their schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students everywhere have been faced with schools that were open one day and closed the next, causing massive disruption to their learning (OECD, 2021<sup>[1]</sup>). As vaccines became widely available over the course of 2021, the situation started to improve gradually and countries lifted many of the measures that were imposed in earlier stages of the pandemic. Nevertheless, important disruptions to the learning process continued to persist throughout the school year 2021/2022 (or 2021). The OECD – in collaboration with UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank – has been monitoring the situation across countries and has collected data covering the years 2020, 2021 and the first quarter of 2022.

This data collection is the fourth in a series of surveys tracking developments in the provision of education throughout the pandemic. The survey covers a range of topics from school closures and remote learning to gradual returns to in-class instruction and contingency strategies and from the organisation of learning and the working conditions of teachers to issues of governance and finance. This fourth wave of data collection is also forward looking, analysing countries' learning recovery policies, as well as digitalisation measures to build on the initiatives and innovations adopted during the pandemic.

This section of *Education at a Glance* presents the main findings from this data collection, providing a snapshot of the current situation in OECD countries and insights into the evolution of national responses to the COVID-19 crisis. In countries with federal systems, such as Canada and the United States, many decisions on how to manage the pandemic were not made at the national level but at more local levels of government. Some of these decisions are not captured by the data collection and are therefore not reflected in this section. More details on this can be found on line (OECD COVID-19 database).

## School closures and the return to in-class learning

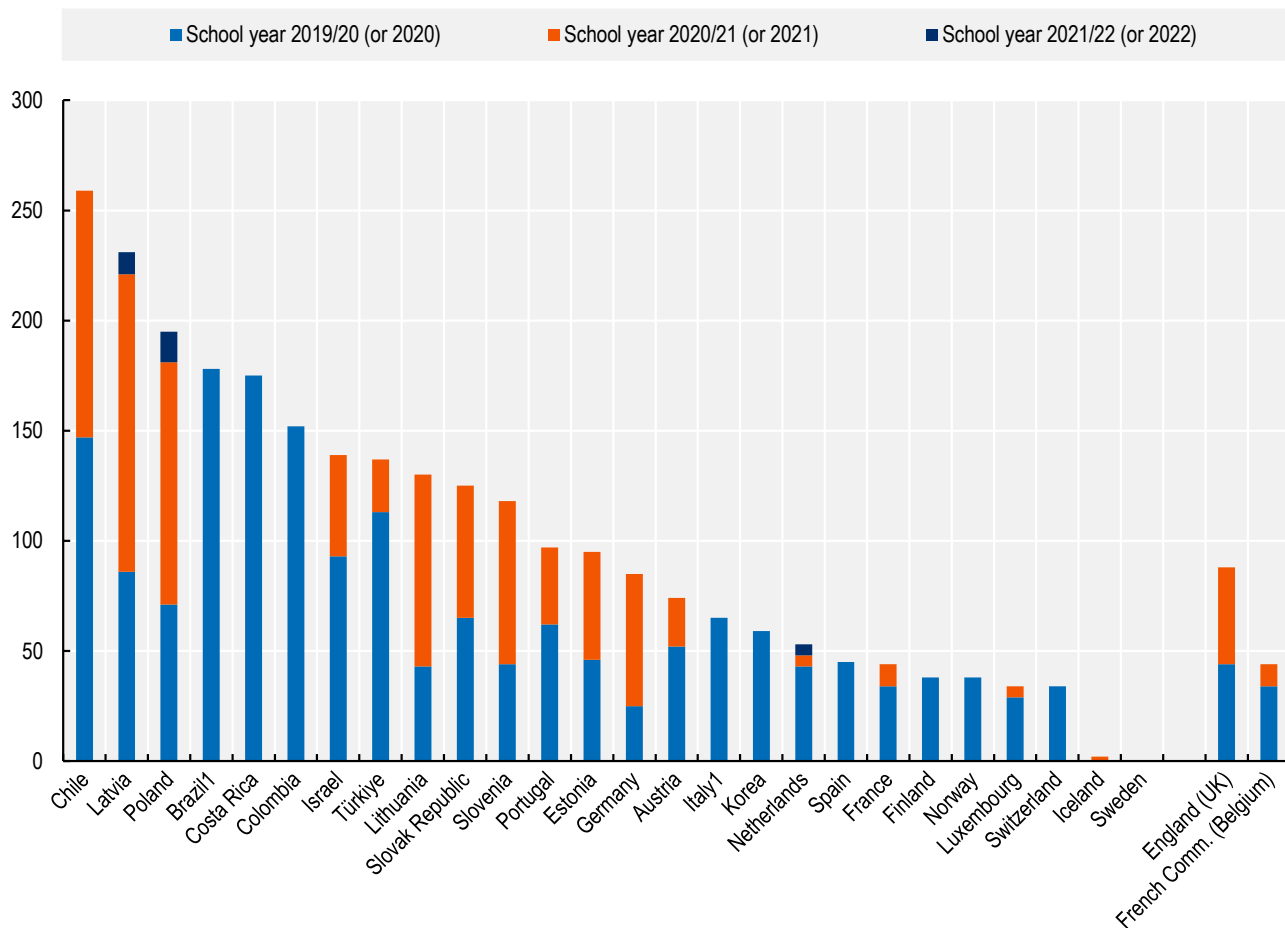
### ***School closures and health protocols for reopening***

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted traditional schooling in 2020. During this time, the lack of vaccines and treatments compelled governments to adopt measures to reduce close contact between individuals, including school closures among other interventions. In half of the countries and other participants with available data for 2019/20, schools were fully closed (or only open for students with special educational needs and children of key workers) for at least 34 days at the pre-primary level, 45 days at the primary and lower secondary levels, and 50 days at the upper secondary level, for both general and vocational programmes (OECD COVID-19 database). The number of instruction days when schools were fully closed during the school year 2019/20 also varied considerably across the countries participating in the survey, and ranged in lower secondary education from no school closures in Iceland and Sweden to 175 days in Costa Rica (Figure 1).

While most countries shut down their school premises entirely in the early part of the pandemic, the situation improved considerably in 2021 in most cases. However, a few countries had more days of school closures in 2021 than in 2020. This was the case at all levels of education in Germany and Slovenia; at primary and secondary levels in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania; at primary level in the United Kingdom; and at secondary level in Poland. The situation returned to “normal” in most countries in 2022. Only the Netherlands (for all levels of education), Latvia (for secondary education) and Poland (for general secondary education) decided to fully close their schools for at least five days during the school year 2021/2022 (Figure 1 and OECD COVID-19 database).

**Figure 1. School closures due to COVID-19 (2020, 2021 and the first quarter of 2022)**

Number of instruction days of full closure of lower secondary schools excluding school holidays, public holidays and weekends




**Note:** The data underlying this report were produced through the Survey on Joint National Responses to COVID 19, a collaborative effort conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Data for other levels of education are available at <https://www.oecd.org/education/Results-4th-wave-COVID-Survey-OECD-database.xlsx>.

1. Data for 2021 and 2022 are missing.

Countries and other participants are ranked in descending order of the total number of days lower secondary schools were fully closed during the school years 2019/20 (2020), 2020/21 (2021) and 2021/22 (2022).

**Source:** OECD/UIS/UNESCO/UNICEF/WB (2022).

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Although most countries closed their schools fully, in some cases schools were only partially closed – either staying open in certain areas or for specific grades or levels of education, or using a hybrid-learning model to reduce the number of students in the classroom. There were partial closures at all levels of education in Iceland in 2020 (33 days), and in Colombia (125 days) and Costa Rica (67 days) in 2021. In some countries, schools were fully closed during some parts of the year, and partially closed at other times (for example in Chile, the Netherlands and Türkiye).

During the school year 2021/22, all countries with available data implemented health protocols for some periods to ensure the safe reopening of schools. At all levels of education, the most common protocol was the promotion of frequent handwashing and the use of hand sanitiser. Almost all countries used enhanced cleaning and disinfection of sites and physical distance protocols. The majority also implemented tracing protocols and adjusted school infrastructure and activities. Fewer

countries made changes to school schedules, and these were mostly at the discretion of schools, districts or the most local level of governance. The use of masks was also widely implemented across countries. Masks were required for all teachers and students from primary to tertiary in three-quarters of countries. Wearing a mask was not compulsory for young children in most countries; only one-quarter of countries with available data required this for pre-primary children. More than one in three countries implemented COVID-19 tests for students and teachers in schools from primary to upper secondary. Vaccination requirements were a little less common, and were required for teachers in approximately one-quarter of the countries (at all levels of education), and for students in 10% of countries at most, depending on the level of education (Table 1 and OECD COVID-19 database).

### ***Teacher absences***

Countries faced an increase in the number of teacher absences during the pandemic. Once schools had generally reopened, countries needed to find replacements for absent teachers to avoid closing individual classes or, in a few cases, whole schools (OECD, 2021<sup>[2]</sup>). Therefore, monitoring teachers' absences during the pandemic was key to making informed choices about how to replace them and where to allocate resources to compensate for staff shortages. However, only half of the countries with available data for lower secondary education (15 out of 30) report collecting national statistics on teachers' absences over the three school years covered by the pandemic, while 9 countries – Austria, Brazil, Chile, Estonia, Japan, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Switzerland – did not. In the six other countries (Canada, Colombia, Finland, Iceland, Korea and the United States), decisions to collect such statistics or not were made by the local level of government. At the tertiary level, only Mexico and Poland collected national statistics on academic staff absences (Table 1 and OECD COVID-19 database).

It was difficult for most countries to keep track of teacher absenteeism in primary and secondary education, and only 11 reported being able to compare figures for before and during the pandemic. Among these countries, the number of days teachers were absent varied widely: in three countries, Costa Rica, France and Spain, absenteeism among teaching staff remained the same as the year prior to the pandemic from primary to upper secondary level. However, in 8 out of 11 of countries with available data, teacher absenteeism at the primary through secondary levels increased during the pandemic. It is unclear whether increases in absences were due to the direct effects of COVID-19, with teachers becoming infected or quarantining, or to indirect effects, such as health problems from increased stress levels during the pandemic (OECD COVID-19 database).

The effects of teacher absenteeism on pedagogical continuity depend to a large extent on how countries handle the situation. Countries can respond to teacher absences in various ways: replacing absent teachers with temporary teachers, having other teachers within the same school taking over teaching duties from absent colleagues, using non-teaching staff to supervise students, or closing the classes with absent teachers. The most common practice has been replacing absent teachers with other teachers or temporary staff. In 12 of the 18 countries for which data are available for lower secondary education, schools relied on pre-existing pools of teachers to replace those who were absent during the pandemic. Some countries also needed to create pools of temporary teachers. This happened in 7 of the 19 countries with available data, namely Austria, Estonia, France, Israel, Korea, Mexico and Slovenia (Table 1).

### ***National examinations during the pandemic***

Many countries rely on examinations to certify students' completion of upper secondary education and assess who can progress to the next level of education. The pandemic strongly disrupted national examinations in upper secondary education, particularly during the school year of 2019/20. A number of education systems revised the content, format and mode of delivery of their national examinations in response to the COVID-19 crises. In 18 out of 29 countries with data available, exams were postponed and rescheduled in 2019/20, while other countries and participants cancelled examinations in favour of alternative approaches, such as teacher-assessed grades, for high-stakes decision making (the French Community of Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Israel, the Netherlands, Norway, the Slovak Republic, Sweden and the United Kingdom). Other alternatives to national exams in 2019/20 included adjusting the way they were administered, and introducing alternative assessments or validations of learning, such as appraisals of student learning portfolios showing progress over a specific period of time (OECD COVID-19 database).

After heavy disruptions during the first stage of the pandemic, national examinations largely returned to normal during the academic year 2020/21. The most common adjustments to exams in upper secondary general education (observed in 19 out of 25 countries) were related to enhanced health and safety measures, such as extra space between desks to ensure social

distancing during exams. A significant share of countries and other participants (14 out of 27) also adjusted the content of examinations, for example, the subjects covered or the number of questions asked. Only the French Community of Belgium, Denmark, Israel, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom cancelled exams in favour of alternative approaches in 2020/21. In 2021/22, examinations returned to their pre-pandemic form in most countries, with only Israel reporting cancelling exams and using alternative assessment approaches (OECD COVID-19 database).

## Financial support for education during the crisis

Policy choices or external shocks, such as demographic changes or economic crises, can influence the allocation of public funds across sectors. The COVID-19 crisis has disrupted education on an unprecedented scale. Maintaining learning continuity amid school closures and ensuring schools reopened safely, all required additional financial resources beyond those budgeted for prior to the pandemic. As the sanitary crisis evolved into an economic and social crisis, governments have had to take difficult decisions about the allocation of funds across sectors.

The results of previous survey (OECD, 2021<sup>[1]</sup>) showed that, during 2020, about two-thirds of OECD countries increased their education budgets in response to the pandemic, with the remaining one-third keeping spending constant. Public education spending continued to rise in 2021, which may reflect investment in measures to keep schools open. At least 75% of countries with available data increased the financial resources directed to primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions compared to 2020 levels. The latest COVID-19 survey quantifies the amount of the budget increases, which helps to estimate whether the increases were sufficient. When the financial year 2021 is compared to the previous financial year, most countries reported moderate increases of 1-5% to their budgets for primary to upper secondary education, with only 10 out of 27 countries with available data reporting increases of 5% or more. Only Colombia reported moderate decreases to their public budgets between 2020 and 2021 (Table 1). Similar patterns exist for pre-primary and tertiary education. In some countries, these changes to public spending on education represent a break with pre-pandemic trends. In Colombia, for example, total government expenditure on education increased by 10% on average between 2015 and 2019 (Figure C4.3).

Responsibilities for spending decisions related to COVID-19 differed across levels of education in line with the general distribution of responsibilities across levels of government. At primary and secondary levels, policies were more likely to be adopted systematically for all schools, while at tertiary level, greater decentralisation meant measures might differ across institutions and universities. For example, at primary and secondary levels, 14 out of 30 countries reported hiring temporary staff at a national level in response to the pandemic for the school year 2020/21 (2021), while only 3 out of 26 countries reported having done so at the tertiary level. The decision to hire temporary staff was deferred to local authorities or schools in 7 countries at primary and secondary levels, and 10 countries at tertiary level (Table 1 and OECD COVID-19 database).

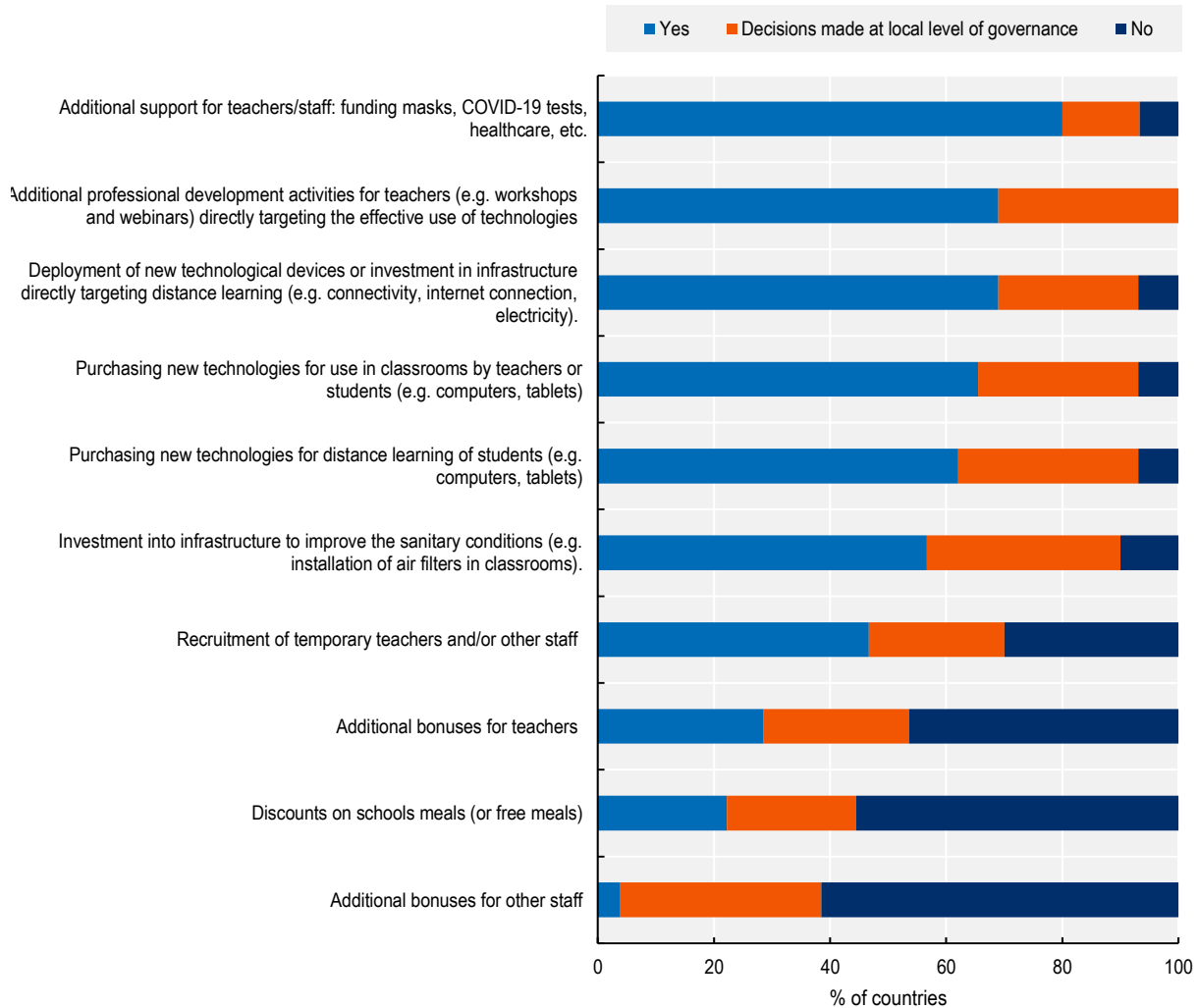
Spending to support teachers was common during the pandemic. The provision of masks, COVID-19 tests or other healthcare-related support was the most frequently adopted measure. At primary and secondary levels, 24 out of 30 countries invested in such measures in 2021, while a further 4 countries reported that these measures were left to the discretion of schools, districts or local levels of government. More than two-thirds of countries also invested in the professional development of teachers with a focus on developing digital skills in 2021. In 2022, the proportion of countries pursuing such policies on professional development of teachers had declined slightly, to 60%. Hiring temporary staff to ease the burden on teachers was less common (47% of countries in 2021 and 43% in 2022) and providing additional bonuses to teachers even less so (29% in 2021 and 28% in 2022). On the later, only 8 out of the 28 countries with data available – namely France, French Community of Belgium, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia, paid some or all teachers bonuses in 2021 to compensate for the challenges faced during the pandemic (Table 1, Figure 2 and OECD COVID-19 database).

Many children from low-income families rely on school meals to eat, but only a minority of countries reported providing discounted or free school meals during the COVID-19 crisis. Only 6 out of 27 countries with data available in 2021 reported additional expenditure on free or discounted school meals at the national level, while an additional 6 countries devolved those measures to the local level. Colombia is one of the few examples where meals were distributed to children who were not able to go to school, in some cases including nutritional support for the whole family. Along with Colombia, Chile, Latvia, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States were the other countries reporting additional expenditure on subsidised school meals at primary and secondary levels (Table 1 and Figure 2).

Many large countries devolved decisions on COVID-19 support measures to lower levels of authority. In Canada, Sweden and the United States most the measures implemented were at the discretion of provinces, municipalities, counties or states.

**Figure 2. Share of countries adopting COVID-19 support measures with a direct impact on public budgets (2020/21 or 2021)**


Primary and secondary education, in per cent



**Note:** The data underlying this report were produced through the Survey on Joint National Responses to COVID 19, a collaborative effort conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Data for other levels of education are available at <https://www.oecd.org/education/Results-4th-wave-COVID-Survey-OECD-database.xlsx>.

Measures are ranked in descending order of the share of countries and other participants adopting them at the national level.

**Source:** OECD/UIS/UNESCO/UNICEF/WB (2022).

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## Assessment of learning and other losses

Understanding the learning losses due to the pandemic will be essential if governments are to develop targeted policies to address them. The return to in-person schooling in 2021 offered most countries the opportunity to assess learning and other losses over the 2020/21 school year and to implement remedial activities if needed. An increasing number of countries have taken steps to implement standardised assessments of learning since the beginning of the pandemic. At primary level, around 62% of countries with available data reported that standardised tests for students took place in 2020/21, rising to over 90%

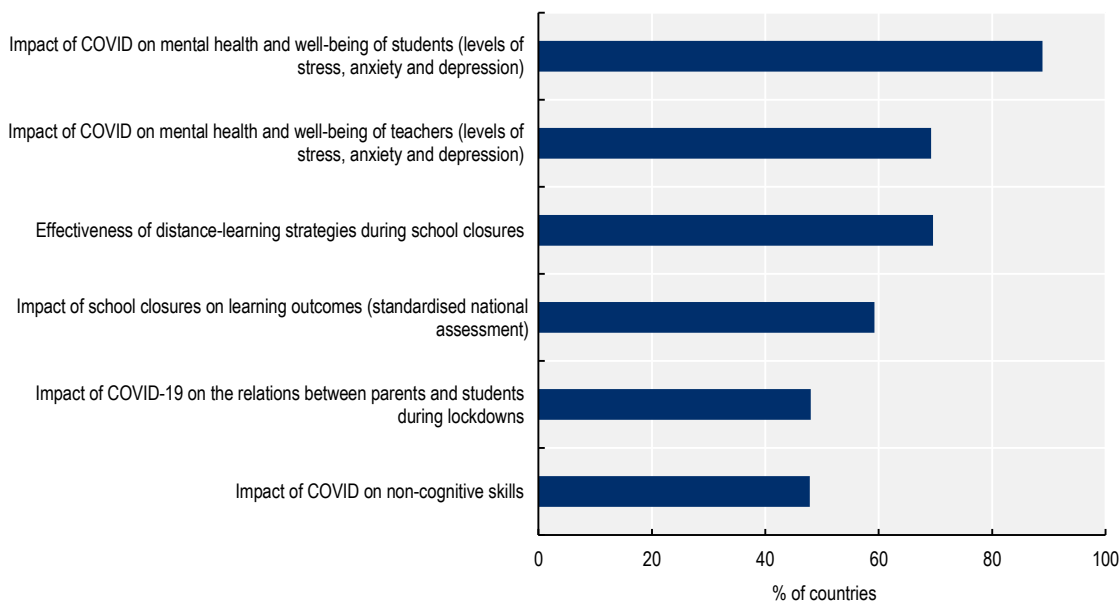
in 2021/22. Similarly, the share of countries in which standardised tests for secondary students were conducted increased between 2020/21 and 2021/22, from around 54% to 84% at lower secondary level and from 70% to nearly 89% at upper secondary level in general programmes. Studies to evaluate the impact of school closures on learning outcomes were undertaken at a national level in more than half of the countries with available data (at any level from primary to upper secondary). This shows not only that countries are aware of the need to monitor the impact of the pandemic, but also the importance of standardised assessments in doing so (OECD COVID-19 database).

Assessments have covered learning losses in both reading and mathematics in a large majority of countries since 2020 (22 at primary level and 23 at lower secondary level, out of 24 with available data). Only 9 countries also assessed learning losses in science at primary and 13 countries at lower secondary level. Assessments of educational losses have been less common at pre-primary and tertiary levels, with only 3 countries having assessed the effects of school closures at a national level on pre-primary students and 4 on tertiary students. For pre-primary education, one major reason for the lack of assessments is the difficulty in setting up assessments for the youngest students. At tertiary level, national assessments are rare due to tertiary institutions' high levels of autonomy in most countries (OECD COVID-19 database).

Evaluations have not been limited to the impact of the crisis on learning. Since 2020, all countries with available data except Mexico, the Slovak Republic and Türkiye have undertaken studies on the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and well-being of primary and secondary students at the national level. Similarly, more than two-thirds of countries assessed the impact on health and well-being of primary and secondary teachers. In contrast, at most half of the countries with data available have undertaken studies on the impact of school closures on non-cognitive skills or on the relationships between parents and students during lockdowns, even though long periods of social isolation during the pandemic might also have had significant consequences in these areas (Figure 3 and Table 1).

**Figure 3. Share of countries undertaking studies to evaluate the effects of the pandemic (2021 and 2022)**

Lower secondary education, in per cent



**Note:** For some countries, the school year corresponds to the calendar year (i.e. 2021 instead of 2020/2021 and 2022 instead of 2021/2022). The data underlying this report were produced through the Survey on Joint National Responses to COVID 19, a collaborative effort conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Data for other levels of education are available at <https://www.oecd.org/education/Results-4th-wave-COVID-Survey-OECD-database.xlsx>.

Evaluations are ranked in descending order of the share of countries and other participants undertaking them.

**Source:** OECD/UIS/UNESCO/UNICEF/WB (2022).

Various forms of distance learning were the main policy response to school closures and 16 out of 23 countries have examined the effectiveness of their distance-learning strategies at lower secondary level. In contrast to other assessments, tertiary education was more equally represented in this area: 14 countries assessed the impact of distance learning in tertiary education. This is an indication that distance learning was seen as particularly relevant in tertiary education (OECD COVID-19 database).

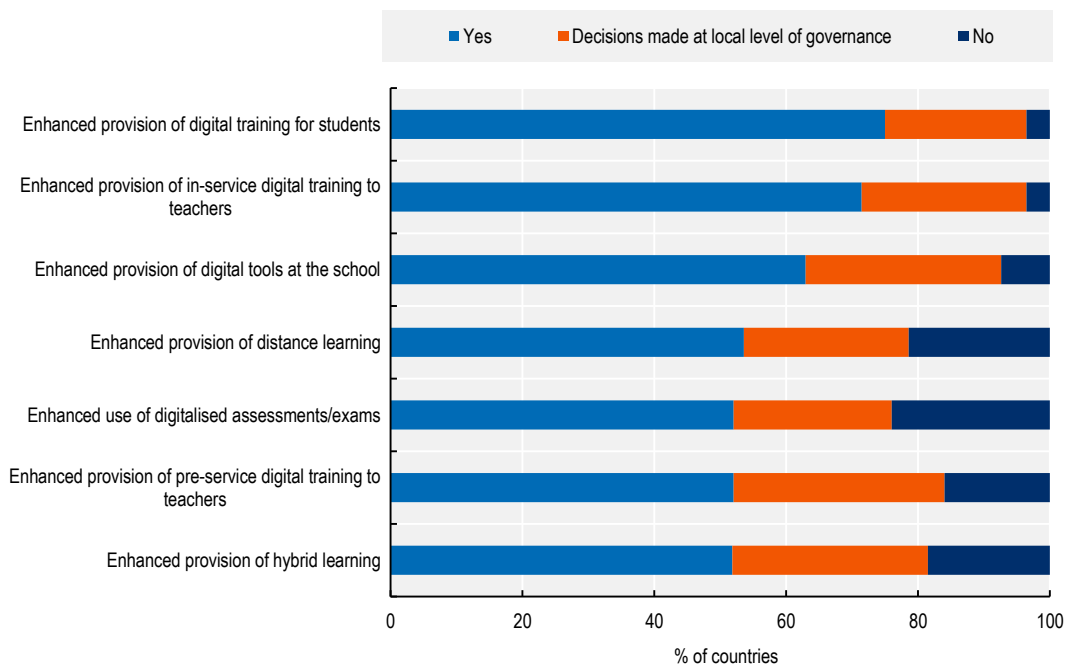
## Recovery and lessons learned

### Maintaining and developing digitalisation measures

The pandemic forced countries to adopt solutions for digital teaching and learning to compensate for periods when in-person lessons were limited or not possible at all. Although many of these solutions were implemented as emergency measures, they have proved valuable beyond periods of remote learning. The lessons learned through the adoption of emergency response measures during the pandemic have also helped facilitate the transition to digital tools in education.

**Figure 4. Share of countries planning to maintain or develop digitalisation measures implemented due to COVID-19**

Lower secondary education, in per cent



**Note:** The data underlying this report were produced through the Survey on Joint National Responses to COVID 19, a collaborative effort conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Data for other levels of education are available at <https://www.oecd.org/education/Results-4th-wave-COVID-Survey-OECD-database.xlsx>.

Digitalisation measures are ranked in descending order of the share of countries and other participants planning to maintain or develop them at the national level.

**Source:** OECD/UIS/UNESCO/UNICEF/WB (2022).

StatLink  <https://stat.link/l4buzo>

Digital platforms should offer effective and equitable resources for in-school and out-of-school learning. Many countries recognise that, when done well, digital platforms facilitate access to education and reduce inequity in learning outcomes. Thus, 17 out of 27 of countries with available data plan to continue the enhanced use of digital tools at lower secondary

education, while continuing the enhanced provision of distance or hybrid learning to all levels of education from primary to upper secondary. Consequently, 13 out of 25 countries plan to increase pre-service digital training for lower secondary teachers at the national level. In-service digital training will also be provided to existing teachers at lower secondary education in most countries (Figure 4 and Table 1).

Although the majority of countries plan to continue their increased use of digital tools, changes to the regulatory or institutional framework governing digital education have not been widespread. 54% of countries with available data had made no changes to either the regulatory or the institutional framework on digitalisation and had no plans to do so. While a number of countries did introduce changes to their regulatory or institutional framework during the pandemic, only four have plans for further changes: Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg and the Slovak Republic.

### ***Planned recovery measures***

It is crucial for countries to have clear strategies for recovery in education to address the impact of the pandemic on young people's learning, development and mental health. Across the countries with available data, national measures to provide students with additional support have focused more on primary to upper secondary education than on other levels. 24 out of 30 countries with available data implemented national programmes at the primary to upper secondary level to give students additional support in the school year 2021/22. In contrast, only 19 out of the 28 countries with available data implemented similar programmes at pre-primary levels. In some instances, this might reflect the length of school closures, which were often shorter for pre-primary than other levels of education. In Austria, Estonia and Latvia, for example, pre-primary was the only level of education where schools were not fully closed due to COVID-19 at any point during the pandemic (OECD COVID-19 database).

Concerns about students' mental health were at the forefront of countries' national recovery measures in the school year 2021/22. In 21 out of 30 countries with data available, extra psychological and socio-emotional support was provided for primary and secondary students due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 5). In addition, more than 60% of the countries with data reported implementing new measures in 2021/22 that included teacher training in how to support primary and secondary students' mental health and well-being (Figure 6).

Other common recovery approaches in 2021/22 were focused on students' academic progress. 16 countries (more than 60%) with available data reported providing structured pedagogical resources and training to help primary and secondary teachers adapt and improve their teaching (Figure 6) and 13 countries (45%) increased instruction time for students at these levels of education (Figure 5). In Austria and Luxembourg, for example, summer schools were organised on a national level for primary and secondary students (BMBWF, 2022<sup>[3]</sup>; Schouldoheem, 2021<sup>[4]</sup>).

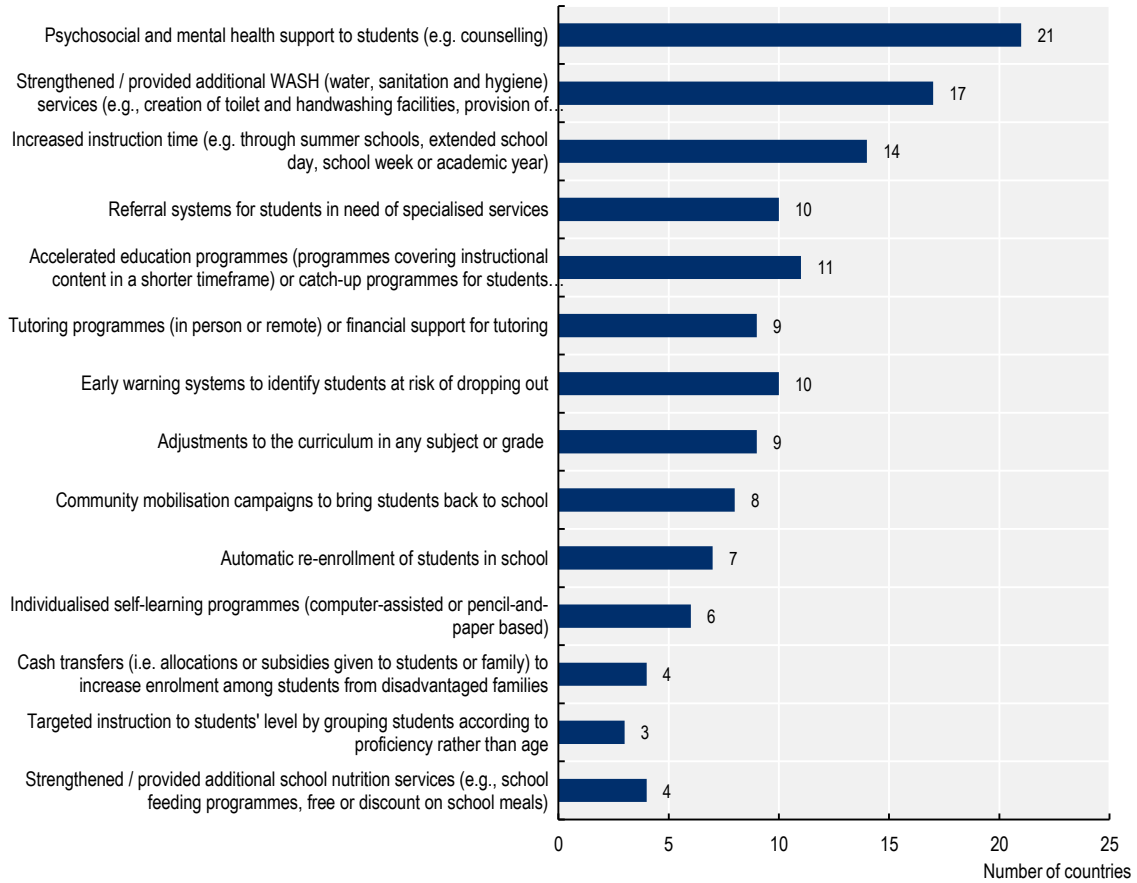
While many countries plan to continue some recovery measures, they will be scaled back during the school year 2022/23 compared to the previous year. For example, only 6 countries with available data reported planning increased instruction time for the school year 2022/23, less than half the number for 2021/22. Similarly, 13 countries were planning to implement additional psychosocial and mental health support for primary and secondary students in 2022/23, compared to 21 in 2021/22. The number of countries planning to provide additional teacher training on mental health and well-being in 2022/23 was also only 12.

The longer recovery measures last, the more important it becomes to evaluate their effectiveness and adjust them as needed. At the primary and lower secondary level, 15 out of 19 countries with available data reported that they have assessed the national recovery programmes implemented in 2021/22 in a standardised way, or that they plan such assessments. At the upper secondary level, the share of countries assessing recovery plans is slightly lower, with 14 out of 20 countries with available data, while it is significantly lower at pre-primary level, with 7 out of 14 countries with available data.



**Figure 5. Number of countries implementing recovery policies for students due to COVID-19 (2021/22 or 2022)**

Primary to upper secondary education



**Note:** For some countries, the school year corresponds to the calendar year (i.e. 2022 instead of 2021/2022). The data underlying this report were produced through the Survey on Joint National Responses to COVID 19, a collaborative effort conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Data for other levels of education are available at <https://www.oecd.org/education/Results-4th-wave-COVID-Survey-OECD-database.xlsx>.

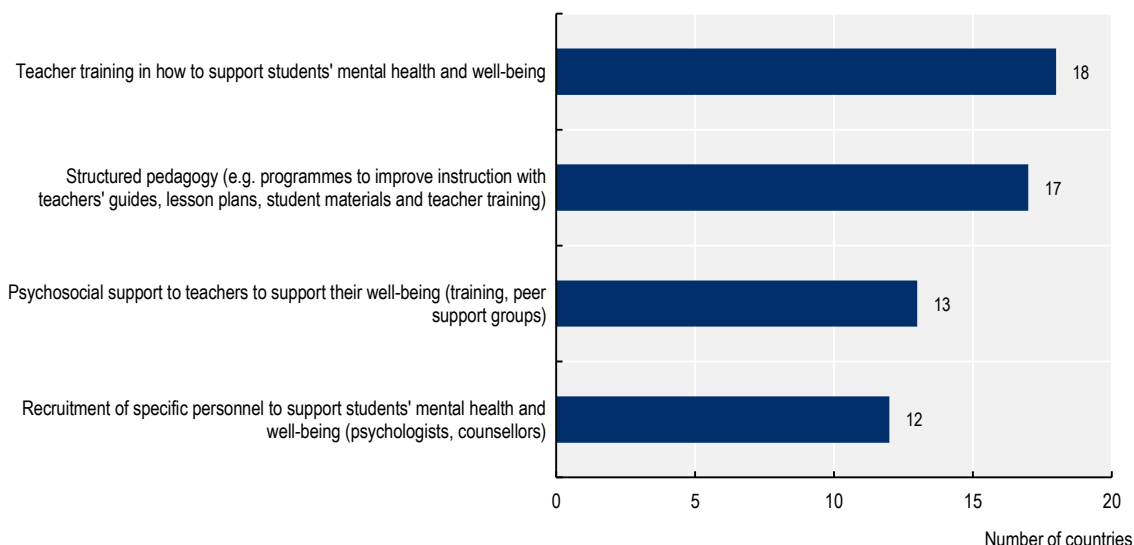
*Measures are ranked in descending order of the number of countries and other participants implementing them.*

**Source:** OECD/UIS/UNESCO/UNICEF/WB (2022).

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**Figure 6. Number of countries implementing recovery policies for teachers due to COVID-19 (2021/22 or 2022)**

Primary to upper secondary education



**Note:** The data underlying this report were produced through the Survey on Joint National Responses to COVID 19, a collaborative effort conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Data for other levels of education are available at <https://www.oecd.org/education/Results-4th-wave-COVID-Survey-OECD-database.xlsx>.

*Measures are ranked in descending order of the number of countries and other participants implementing them.*

**Source:** OECD/UIS/UNESCO/UNICEF/WB (2022).

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## Definitions

The schools were **fully closed**: The schools were "fully closed" when there were government-mandated and/or recommended closures of educational institutions (e.g. closure of buildings for students) that affected all or most of the student population enrolled at a given level of education. In some cases, schools were still open over this period for students with special educational needs (SEN) and children of key workers but schools were "closed" for most of the student population. If schools are theoretically open for some grades, but the government orders or recommends that parents keep their children at home if possible (resulting in a very low attendance), then the schools are considered fully closed. When schools were fully closed, various distance education strategies were deployed to ensure educational continuity (see definition below).

The schools were **partially opened**: The schools were "partially opened" in situations where the government mandated and/or recommended: (a) partial reopening in certain areas, and/or (b) a phased (re-)opening by grade level or age and/or (c) the use of a hybrid model combining in-person at school and distance education. When schools were partially open, various distance education strategies are deployed to ensure educational continuity. "Partially open" includes the following cases where schools are:

- Fully Open only in certain areas/regions;
- Fully Open only for certain grades;
- Fully Open with only a reduction of students per classroom (e.g. distance learning for some of them and in-person classes for the others);
- Any combination of the above three cases.

**Distance education strategies during school closure:** The closure of schools has led to different strategies to avoid as much as possible the loss of instruction during this period. In some cases, each day planned at the beginning of the year as in-person instruction at the school was provided at distance during periods when schools were closed (i.e. school buildings closed to all or most students, teaching/learning in virtual mode for each day of instruction). In other cases, various distance education strategies may be deployed to ensure continuity of education during school closures, but distance education did not necessarily fully compensate for the instructional time that students would have received if the schools had remained open (i.e. school buildings closed to all or most students, teaching/learning in virtual mode for some but not all days of instruction). Only in rare cases have no strategies been implemented to provide distance education during school closures and to compensate the loss of instruction (i.e. school buildings closed to all or most students, no teaching/learning activities organised). Instruction during “virtual opening” may have been delivered synchronously (i.e. where the learning group interacts at the same time) or asynchronously (i.e. teacher and the pupils interact in different places and during different times).

**Hybrid learning:** the use of a hybrid approach combining in-person and distance learning.

**Distance education:** Education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies used for instruction may include the following: paper (e.g. books, take-home packages); TV; radio; Internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcasts, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fibre optics, satellite or wireless communication devices; audio conferencing; and video cassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with the technologies listed above.

**Distance education course:** A course in which the instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education. Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as distance education.

**Distance education programme:** A programme for which all the required coursework for programme completion is able to be completed via distance education courses.

## Source

The data underlying this report was produced through the Survey on Joint National Responses to COVID-19 School Closures, a collaborative effort conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Designed for government officials responsible for education, the survey collected information on national or regional education responses to school closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## COVID-19 table

Table 1. COVID-19: The second year of the pandemic

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**WEB Table 1**      *Main findings from the COVID-19 survey, by theme*

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