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## Global Forum on Education

### 2ND OECD GLOBAL FORUM ON EDUCATION: IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS

#### FORUM REPORT

3-5 March 2008

*The following report includes the six reports submitted for each workshop in the Global Forum. The rapporteurs for the workshops were:*

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*Workshop 2: Rimantas Zelvys*

*Workshop 3: Carlos Herran*

*Workshop 4: Miguel J. Escala*

*Workshop 5: Linda Beijlsmiit*

*Workshop 6: Jørn Skovsgaard*

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## 2<sup>ND</sup> OECD GLOBAL FORUM ON EDUCATION: IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS

### Introduction

1. The Global Forum on Education is one of ten OECD Global Forums, the others being in agriculture, competition, development, governance, international investment, the knowledge economy, sustainable development, taxation and trade. The aims and objectives of Global Forums are to:

- constitute stable networks of member and non-member policy makers;
- treat global issues, *i.e.* those issues that defy solution in individual countries and regions;
- address issues on which the OECD is an important player, if not a leader, and which should be the subject of peer learning;
- be characterised by a clear focus and mid-term continuity;
- have enough flexibility to cope with evolving circumstances;
- provide for appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms;
- develop name recognition outside the OECD and serve as vehicles for international co-operation on specific subjects; and
- ensure essential support by OECD Committees.

2. Established in 2005, the Global Forum on Education aims to strengthen and expand OECD networks of education officials and experts to include a wider range of non-member economies. In particular, the Forum contributes to:

- identifying major developments, problems and issues in the moves to adapt education systems to the needs of changing economies and societies;
- relating these moves to wider trends, such as democratisation, technological change, demographic factors, the progress of science, the globalisation process, etc.; and
- considering and further developing an agenda of challenges and tasks on which further collaborative work might be undertaken between countries.

3. The 2008 Global Forum on Education was attended by 280 participants representing 32 countries, 11 international organisations or national agencies and 57 universities, non-governmental organisations or trade unions. Overall, 43 nationalities were represented (including 19 member countries).

4. As was the case for the first Global Forum in 2005, a striking feature of the deliberations was the constructive engagement with the issues, in a spirit of mutual regard, by representatives from both non-OECD and OECD countries. While at different stages of educational provision, all countries considered that the theme, “Improving the Effectiveness of Education Systems” was of relevance to them. Participants showed great interest in the topics being presented and in the reactions and contributions of participants from many varied contexts and circumstances. In many ways, the Forum itself exemplified good lifelong learning practice. Insights from research were shared, interesting experiments were discussed, policy initiatives were outlined, experiences were exchanged and problems were examined, to the benefit of all participants.

5. The Forum programme was a very full one. As well as plenary sessions, there were six workshops on focussed sub-themes of the main Forum theme. The workshops incorporated presentations from invited researchers and policy personnel, and involved animated group discussion. Reports from the workshops were presented at the final plenary session. This session also included a panel discussion at which representatives from a range of countries and organisations gave their reactions to the Forum’s deliberations and related them to the experiences of their own countries or organisations.

6. A hallmark of the Forum was the intensity of engagement by participants. A constructive atmosphere of collegiality prevailed. This was greatly aided by the skilful and efficient organisation displayed by the Dominican Republic hosts and the OECD planning team. Ideas were very much on the move at the Forum. The desire of participants for a continuation of the Global Forum concept was very much in evidence at the closing session. Participants expressed keen interest in aspects of successful implementation of education policy and practice as a theme for the next Global Forum.

7. It was noteworthy that many Forum participants also formed part of the overflowing audience of more than 500 at the Seminar, on the day after the Forum, on the OECD Review of Education Policy of the Dominican Republic. This review was given the approbation and endorsement of the authorities of the Dominican Republic as the way forward for improving the efficiency of the education system in that country.

### **Opening session**

8. Ligia Amada Melo de Cardona, State Secretary for Higher Education, Science and Technology (SEESCyT) of the Dominican Republic, speaking on behalf of the Forum co-hosts Alejandrina Germán Mejía, State Secretary for Education (SEE) and Josefina Pimentel, Director of INFOTEP (National Institute of Professional and Technical Training), opened the Forum by welcoming the participants on behalf of His Excellency, the President of the Dominican Republic, Dr. Leonel Fernandez. She thanked the OECD leaders for having selected the Dominican Republic for a Forum of such significance for the development of education in the world and in the Dominican Republic in particular. She emphasised that President Fernandez sees education as the key for driving modernisation and sustainable development in the Dominican Republic. He is committed to transforming the nation’s economy from one that depends on intensive labour to one that depends on the use of knowledge. The education system must, therefore, be transformed to be more efficient and effective, in order to drive innovation and technological development. The President has placed education at the centre of his platform for economic and social change. He is committed to transforming the economy from a labour-intensive economy to one in which value is added through the use of knowledge as its main input. Citing the report, the “State of the Future 2007,” prepared for the Millennium Project and regarding the possibilities for the year 2030, Secretary Melo underscored the need for a significant acceleration of all countries’ efforts to improve their education systems.

9. OECD Deputy Secretary-General, Aart de Geus, expressed his gratitude to the government of the Dominican Republic for their willingness to host the Forum and to the member countries and international

institutions who contributed to its organisation and content. These included Austria, the Flemish Community of Belgium, The Netherlands, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Association of Universities, the World Bank Institute and the European Training Foundation.

10. The Deputy Secretary General then introduced the overall theme of the Forum: strategies and directions on how the effectiveness of education systems can be improved in a mid and long term perspective. The Forum represents a new model of dialogue, bringing together economically developed and developing countries and major international organisations dealing with education.

11. To underscore the importance of education to society as a whole and to individuals, he cited facts based on recent OECD indicators (*Education at a Glance 2007: OECD Indicators*) including:

- The estimated long-term effect of one additional year of education equals between 3 and 6% of the GDP in OECD countries.
- Employment rates rise with educational attainment in most OECD countries.
- The employment rate for graduates of tertiary education is significantly higher than those of upper secondary graduates; at the same time, unemployment rates fall with higher educational attainment.
- On the personal level, those who have attained upper secondary, post secondary or tertiary education face substantial earnings advantages. Unfortunately, there is, for instance, a remarkable difference between the earnings of females and males within a given level of attainment. Females typically earn between 50% and 80% of what males earn. This gender gap cannot be tackled by education systems alone, but calls for targeted and sustainable labour market policies.

12. To illustrate actual policy areas where education is a major instrument, the Deputy Secretary General referred to the differences among OECD countries in meeting the needs of immigrant populations. Referring to a new OECD publication, *A Profile of Immigrant Populations in the 21st Century: Data from OECD Countries (2007)*, the Deputy Secretary General emphasised that international migration is a key issue in most OECD countries. The analysis of quantitative information on students' performance as undertaken by PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) gives evidence that serious challenges lie ahead for nations in meeting the needs of immigrant populations. First generation students lag (by an average of 48 score points) behind their native counterparts on the PISA mathematical scale, but second-generation students also face similar severe performance disadvantages. On the other hand, international comparison shows that the performance disadvantage of students with immigrant backgrounds varies widely across countries.

13. The Deputy Secretary General concluded with a summary of the themes to be addressed in the Forum:

- the impact of modern technologies on learning performance;
- the professionalisation of the teaching force and teacher training and diversity;
- challenges and innovations in post secondary education and vocational training;
- international systems for learning evaluation;

- education and economic development for integration in the world economy;
- access, success and relevance in higher education

### **First Plenary Session**

14. The Chair, Claudia Schmied, Federal Minister for Education, Arts and Culture, Austria, opened the session with remarks on the importance of the workshop themes for Austria and their pertinence for all participants.

15. In the first plenary session, Bertel Haarder, Danish Minister for Education and Minister for Nordic Cooperation, presented the keynote address reflecting on lessons from education reform in Denmark. He first discussed the characteristics of an effective education system. Among the points, an effective system:

- Reflects an understanding of the important role that education plays in both society and private lives. Education contributes to the development of human, social and cultural capital. For individuals, education contributes to sustained employability, active citizenship and personal fulfilment in terms of a rewarding cultural life.
- Provides sufficient educational achievements in the population in terms of relevant skills, profound know-how and proactive and productive attitudes.
- Does not confound “improving effectiveness” with “providing more and more of the same thing.” Quite often, the abandoning of obsolete content and old procedures is a precondition for improvement.
- Provides all young people with qualifications that enable them to cope with the challenges of their ongoing education, vocational education and training and their working life.
- Identifies what the individual student needs to make progress at any level.
- Is highly responsive to the changing needs in the labour market and the social demands in a complex global economy.
- Promotes lifelong learning.

16. Minister Haarder then reviewed the challenges faced by Denmark in creating and maintaining an effective education system, including:

- The work of a Globalization Council comprising representatives of all sections of society was charged with the task of advising the government on a strategy for Denmark in the global economy. The result was a pro-active strategy, “Progress, Innovation and Cohesion – Strategy for Denmark in the Global Economy”. It includes initiatives for extensive reforms of education and training programmes, research and entrepreneurship, as well as substantial improvements in the framework conditions for growth and innovation in all areas of society.
- Improving compulsory education, reflecting findings of OECD reviews that provide evidence of the need for change.
- Reducing high drop-out rates in upper secondary education.

- Addressing new challenges to tertiary education, including reaching the target that at least half of the age cohort should complete tertiary education by 2015.
- Promoting lifelong learning, including finding ways to motivate low-skilled workers to engage in continuous learning to increase their skill levels.

17. In conclusion, the Minister emphasised the need for countries to take advantage of OECD initiatives such as PISA and the Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) to provide independent evidence regarding the performance of their education systems and to share experiences and new ideas through the OECD project on “Improving School Leadership,” and participation in conferences such as this Global Forum.

18. Charles Nanga, Inspector General in the Ministry of Basic Education for Cameroon, representing Madame Hama Adama, Minister of Basic Education, made a presentation on *L’importance de l’éducation au Cameroun et les politiques du gouvernement camerounais pour améliorer l’efficacité de son système d’éducation* [The Importance of Education in Cameroon and the Government’s Policies for Improving the Cameroon Education System]. He emphasised that the Government of Cameroon has always assigned a high priority to the development of the education sector, as reflected in the Constitutional mandate that education is a fundamental mission of the state, as well as laws and initiatives undertaken over the past two decades. He outlined the strategies currently underway to implement these legal commitments, including a substantial increase in public resources allocated to the sector. Major initiatives focus on the management of access in the face of significant increases in the numbers of children, while addressing issues of quality, equity, the interactions among the different levels and types of education, governance, and the sustained and efficient financing of the system.

**Workshop 1: Information and Communication Technology (Rapporteur: Magdalena Claro, OECD consultant, OECD New Millennium Learners Project)**

19. The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) workshop focussed on two general questions: (1) Are we adequately addressing the links between ICT and educational performance? (2) How are ICT used in initial training?

20. Regarding the first question, two more specific questions were considered: (1) Does our concept of performance embrace all the educational benefits associated with ICT? (2) What are the ICT-related competences that the knowledge society requires?

21. In terms of the educational benefits related to the use of information technologies, there was consensus that the traditional notion of performance does not seem to account well enough for the educational benefits of the use of these technologies in schools. The fact that research in this area has not been able to provide sufficient evidence regarding the impact of technologies on learning does not mean that there is no impact. Recent research is starting to revise the methodologies used with the idea that they have, in many cases, been inadequate, based on simplistic cause-effect models or on inappropriate questions. It is argued that new research regarding the impact of information technologies should consider a multifactor model of analysis; it should move from a perspective based on a traditional subject-based concept of performance, to a new concept based on new competences demanded by the knowledge society, such as knowledge management skills or higher-order thinking skills. This necessarily implies formulating new research questions regarding school performance and designing special instruments to answer to them. The presentations in the first part of this workshop described research and policy initiatives based on this general perspective.

22. Fritz Scheuermann, from the European Commission's Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning (CRELL), presented the main strands of development of CRELL in terms of the use of international indicators to measure different aspects of the use and impact of ICT in education. He claimed that there is a need for large-scale longitudinal studies that take into account the complex interactions between various types of ICT implementation and the effects of other factors, such as school-based intervention, socio-economic status and school expenditures. Additionally, he argued that in order to thoroughly study the impacts of ICT, it is necessary to look at three levels: the macro level (policy), meso level (ICT, curriculum and organisation) and micro level (teaching and learning practices).

23. Josep Maria Mominó, Dean of the Faculty of Education and Psychology of the Open University of Catalonia, presented evidence regarding the multifactor and complex relationship between ICT and educational performance. He presented a research project called the Catalonia Internet Project: Schools in the Network Society (<http://www.uoc.edu/in3/pic>) that showed that information technologies are appropriated in different ways by students, depending on their background and individual characteristics, and that not all kinds of Internet use for educational purposes positively influence academic performance. For example, they found that the better the academic performance of students, the greater the likelihood of using the Internet for educational purposes – as opposed to leisure purposes. Additionally, parents' frequency of use and young peoples' experience of the Internet are positively related to performance. From the other side of the relationship, they found that using the Internet for researching information showed a statistically significant positive relationship with academic performance, while using ICT for information exchange and collaboration showed no effect. In the light of this data he proposed to formulate new research questions in this area, such as "In what way does the traditional concept of academic performance help us to measure the skills necessary in the Network Society?" Or move from the question: "What are technologies doing to students and young people?" to the question "How are young people appropriating technology in order to improve their academic performance?"

24. The question regarding the ICT-related competences that the knowledge society requires was directly addressed in two presentations. Heeok Heo, Associate Professor, from the SunChon National University of Korea, presented a research initiative that aims to measure the development of new competences as a consequence of ICT use and their impact in three domains of educational performance: cognitive, affective and socio-cultural domains. Two types of competences are considered: traditional school-related competences (attitudes, knowledge, skills) and life competences linked to a knowledge society (ICT-driven life style, knowledge as societal capital, cultural diversity and emergence of lifelong learning). In the second presentation, Hugo Nervi, manager of the digital competences area in Enlaces, Chile, presented the general framework for a progression map of ICT-related competences that aims to follow-up students throughout their school experience in four areas: technology, information, communication and ethics. An instrument is currently being designed to measure these competences in 14-15-year-old Chilean students. Both studies are expected to have their first results during the present year.

25. From the policy perspective, two national ICT for education plans were presented. Firstly, João Pedro Gomez Ruivo, Action Plan Executive Coordinator in the Ministry of Education of Portugal, presented the new ICT for education policy in his country and talked about the importance of developing and complementing different types of research methods to understand the effects of ICT in schools: project-oriented surveys, in-depth interviews, visits to schools, national and international good and bad practice surveys and pilots. He also presented the new role of the Ministry of Education as an orchestrator of the different ICT initiatives developed in the different areas of society. Secondly, Lorenzo Guadamuz Sandoval, Chief Technical Advisor of SEESCyT and President of Innova Technology S.A. in the Dominican Republic presented the general framework of the ICT for education initiative in this country. He talked about the main limitations to the impact of educational performance through ICT: (1) the limited use in some school-subjects; (2) the distance between what students expect from the use of technology in the classroom and how they are actually used; (3) the fact that students are usually more competent in the

use of Internet and computers than their teachers; and (4) the inadequate preparation of teachers in methodologies of ICT use in the classroom. Despite these barriers, he claimed that there has been a positive effect in terms of awareness in the school community and homes regarding the importance of ICT for learning.

### *How are ICT used in initial training?*

26. The difficulty of teachers in integrating information technologies as expected in their teaching was identified as an important barrier regarding the impact on learning through the use of ICT in the classroom. As Ann-Britt Enochsson, Senior Lecturer from the University of Karlstad in Sweden, put it, it seems that teachers have difficulties in taking advantage of their technological competence and applying it to the way they teach. A common diagnosis of this problem was that initial training institutions do not seem to be preparing teachers adequately to use technology in the classroom. In fact, as Tim Magner, Director of the Office of Educational Technology in the United States claimed, initial surveys show that there is a distance between what initial training institutions claim about teacher preparation to use ICT in the classroom and what teachers actually do in the classroom. This is why the Office of Educational Technology are designing a study starting this year that aims to learn about what is being taught to new teachers with regard to the use of ICT for teaching and how these teachers are applying this in their actual teaching. In a similar vein, Ann-Britt Enochsson presented the design of a comparative study among OECD countries in terms of the main models used to prepare teachers in these countries and their corresponding results. Both studies include not only surveys, but also a more in-depth approach through interviews and case-studies.

27. In addition, Maruja Gutiérrez-Díaz, from the European Commission, presented projects and studies developed in the context of the European Schoolnet, which show that although teachers have a good perception of technologies and use them in the classroom, there is no ICT culture, and no important changes in the teaching practices have occurred as an effect of ICT use. She claims that ICTs are being underused in their potential for creativity, communication with and between pupils and the personalisation of learning pathways. This is why she believes that there is a need for hands-on experience and peer networks, guidance and personalised support. She suggests that a holistic approach is needed for teacher training in ICT that includes initiatives at the system level, competence level, initial training level and professional development level.

28. Finally, from a government perspective, Kircho Atanasov, Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Bulgaria, described the teacher training initiatives being developed by the Ministry in Bulgaria. There are three main initiatives: provision of computer equipment and communication infrastructure with Internet connection, training teachers to acquire digital key competencies and creating e-contents to be included in education. The enormous effort made by Bulgaria through their policy of in-service teacher training emphasises the importance of ensuring student competence during initial teacher training.

### *Conclusions*

29. It seems that the traditional notion of performance does not account sufficiently for the educational benefits of the use of these technologies in and outside schools. New research and government initiatives are starting to address the question of ICT effectiveness to improve educational performance from a different perspective; one that considers their contribution to the development of new competences demanded by the knowledge society instead of direct subject-based learning. Although there is not yet enough evidence on this, several presentations in this workshop showed that new instruments and research initiatives are being developed that might provide new insights on this topic.



30. Initial training institutions do not seem to be preparing teachers adequately to use technologies in the classroom. Better initial teacher training in terms of how best to take advantage of ICT for teaching seems to be very important for achieving the full potential of ICT benefits for student learning. The presentations in this second part of the workshop described important research initiatives that aim to look in more depth at this topic and propose new solutions for initial training at national and international levels.

**Workshop 2: Professionalisation of the teaching force and teacher training and diversity (Rapporteur: Rimantas Zelvyis, Professor, Vice-Rector for Research, Vilnius Pedagogical University, Lithuania)**

31. During the introductory workshop presentation, Professor John Coolahan pointed out the centrality of the teacher to the aims of the knowledge society and lifelong learning strategy. He listed key school characteristics sought by the knowledge society. Two key dimensions directly related to these characteristics were suggested for the discussion during the workshop:

- teacher education for diversity;
- improving school leadership.

32. Seven papers presented at the workshop addressed these key dimensions. The workshop report will concentrate on four main points that emerged as a result of the presentations and discussions that followed.

***Qualified and motivated teachers are a necessary precondition for successfully dealing with diversity***

33. The presentation of Simon Schwartzman, from the Institute of Studies on Work and Society, Brazil, was mainly dedicated to this issue. The presenter pointed out that in most countries the teaching profession is a second choice, with low status and adverse selection. Poorly educated teachers are unable to act as role models for the students and cannot attend to the needs of students coming from minority and also poorly educated families. In other words, the task of coping with diversity issues for them is too difficult.

34. As education becomes more important and awareness of its problems becomes more visible, countries are likely to invest more on education and on improving the status of the teaching profession. It is unlikely, though, that the teaching profession will become a highly prestigious one in most countries. Still, one could expect that teaching would become an acceptable and challenging career wherein personnel would be better positioned to improve general educational standards.

***Teacher education for diversity is a highly challenging activity and the best working tools and practices are still to be developed***

35. Tracey Burns and Francisco Benavides, from the OECD, reported on the Centre for Educational Research's (CERI) research on Teacher Education for Diversity. Research was aimed at identifying common challenges countries are currently confronting in their teacher training for diversity, sharing experiences and examples of good teacher education and developing "teacher friendly" outcomes. However, research revealed a lack of sound empirical data and evaluation of policy, and weak connections between researchers, policymakers and teachers. A report by Hersheela Narsee, from the National Department of Education in South Africa, also revealed the highly challenging nature of teacher education for diversity. Based on the South African experience, the report points out the multiple challenges that teachers are facing. For example, most teachers were trained for the apartheid context; desegregation is

accompanied by major political changes. Many teachers believe that the new human rights framework is not a solution, but a problem.

***Clear and sustainable education policy on diversity issues can make a difference***

36. The evidence of this was presented in a report of Matthew O’Meagher from the New Zealand Embassy in Chile. He pointed out that New Zealand, like South Africa, has a very clear policy concerning multiculturalism that aims at integrating Asian and Maori students. The South African example also shows that governmental intervention, *e.g.* establishing a Directorate on Race and Values, focussing on teacher training, developing new curriculum and other initiatives may bring positive results. However, in New Zealand, government does not regulate how teachers are trained; government just provides learning opportunities for their professional development. Schools experience a large degree of autonomy and that leads to a second key dimension – improving school leadership.

***In order to operate effectively, school heads need systematic leadership training***

37. Deborah Nusche, from the OECD, reported on the research on school leadership in which 22 countries participated. Research revealed multiple challenges faced by school leaders today, including innovation overload, increased responsibilities, unattractive work conditions, etc. Possible answers to these challenges are:

- redefining school leadership roles;
- distributing school leadership responsibilities;
- developing knowledge and skills for effective school leadership;
- making school leadership a more attractive profession.

38. The presentation by Michael Schratz, from the University of Innsbruck, Austria was aimed at sharing the Austrian Leadership Academy experience in leadership training. He stated that currently the basic training of school heads is mainly based on management and administration. In schools, there is a lot of management and a lack of leadership. Professor Schratz introduced the idea of collegial team coaching, which should influence the pattern of how professionals in leadership positions go about improving their organisations.

39. The final conclusion was: effective leadership in autonomous schools provides better opportunities for quality teaching for all, including successfully dealing with the challenges of diversity.

**Workshop 3: Challenges and Innovations in Post-secondary and Vocational Education (Rapporteur: Carlos Herrán, Senior Economist, IDB)**

***Context and Relevance***

40. Changes in the world economies and labour markets, stemming from globalisation and the ever-faster introduction of computers, telecommunications and automation technologies, have transformed comparative advantage into a global competition for new skills and lifelong learning. Today, it is literally true that economic competitiveness ultimately depends on being able to stay at the forefront in the generation and application of knowledge. This poses daunting challenges to education systems at all levels, from basic to higher education. These challenges are more visible for post-secondary and vocational education systems and institutions, since they are at the centre of the school-to-work transition of new

entrants to the labour force, in addition to facing the constant re-training and lifelong learning needs of adults.

### ***Workshop Objectives***

41. In this context, the workshop on “Challenges and Innovations in Post-secondary and Vocational Education” had three objectives, namely to:

- Provide an overview of the challenges from global labour markets and their implications for education systems, particularly for post-secondary and vocational education.
- Illustrate how different systems (mainly in Europe and in Latin America and the Caribbean) have adapted and developed innovations to cope with these challenges.
- Identify some best practices and lessons learned from international experiences, which are relevant to education policy makers and practitioners participating in the Global Education Forum.

42. Workshop organisation was a joint effort of the Inter-American Development Bank and the OECD, which allowed six experts from different parts of the world to present the main topics of discussion from the comparative perspective of European and Latin-American systems and institutions. The workshop discussion focussed on post-secondary training and vocational education since a parallel workshop addressed the topic of university-level higher education.

### ***Workshop Structure***

43. In order to achieve the workshop objectives, the workshop was structured in two sessions. The first session provided an overview of the challenges faced by training systems, the ways they have adapted to cope with those challenges and the resulting innovations; this was done both from a European and a Latin-American and Caribbean perspective. The second session focussed on identifying lessons learned and best practices from international experience and illustrating them with concrete country cases.

### ***Main Issues and Highlights from the Discussion:***

44. The European perspective was introduced by Xavier Matheu de Cortada, Head of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the European Training Foundation, based in Turin, Italy. The LAC perspective was provided by Fernando Vargas, from ILO/CINTERFOR, based in Uruguay. The two presentations identified some common challenges, in particular those arising from changes in the economy and the labour markets. World trends in the generation of new jobs were identified, including changes in economic sectors and required qualifications. Employment generation continues to shift from the primary and secondary sectors to the tertiary sector and from manual and routine occupations to managerial positions. New jobs demand increasingly higher qualifications, while requiring command of a set of new basic skills, ranging from language and communication, mathematical and scientific problem solving competencies and team working and ICT skills. At the same time, some important differences between LAC countries and OECD countries were identified. In particular, the lack of basic skills resulting from significant gaps in quality basic education in most LAC countries, the higher share of informal, low productivity jobs and, at the same time, the scarcity of post-secondary education alternatives for the growing numbers of secondary school graduates who cannot enter universities or find productive employment. Some of the main innovations presented included the development of the common European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit Transfer System (ECVET), both of them intended to enhance the flexibility of TVET education and facilitate transit between institutions and

education systems within and across countries and between education and work in the European labour market. Innovations among LAC systems and TVET institutions can be grouped in three broad categories: changes in the pedagogical models of training (including changes in curricula, materials and organisation for delivering training), managerial and financing changes favouring private partnerships and different institutional blueprints, and service diversification to develop a more robust interface with the productive sectors and the business communities. Last, but not least, the two presentations illustrated the necessary diversity of training programmes and institutions to cater to a variety of target populations in different economic and social contexts. The two presentations were followed by questions-answers and discussion.

45. The second session of the workshop focussed on identifying lessons learned from international experiences and illustrating some of the best practices with concrete country case presentations. A presentation by Claudio de Moura Castro, from Faculdade Pitagoras, Brazil, provided a framework for country cases, by tracing the origins of TVET systems around the world, recognising the hybrid DNA of training systems, which developed from the two worlds of school (technical schools) and work (apprenticeships). The presentation identified some of the key challenges and risks of training systems, including the fact that training cannot create its own demand (jobs) and must, therefore, constantly confront the risk of mismatch between supply and demand. Training institutions must strive to achieve the right balance between solid basic competencies and increasingly specialised skills, while providing meaningful work experience to favour employability of its trainees. Effective training systems require a foundation of basic cognitive skills, which should be provided by a high quality basic education. Otherwise, the efficiency and effectiveness of training is in jeopardy and training institutions must devote costly resources to developing remedial programs for functionally illiterate students. This, in turn, compounds the social stratification of education systems and the pervasive problems of low status and lower returns from TVET programmes compared to general academic education. The controversy surrounding the advantages and disadvantages of early tracking may have a lot to do with this problem, which suggests that tracking in itself is not good or bad; the problem lies in tracking students when they have not mastered the basic cognitive competencies that are essential to continue learning.

46. Against this backdrop of lessons learned from international experience, two country cases were presented, the first one by Liesbeth van Welie, from The Netherlands Ministry of Education, and the second one by Gaby Hostens, from the Education Department of the Flemish Community of Belgium. They illustrated some of the dilemmas, strengths and challenges of TVET policies and programs in their own countries. In the case of The Netherlands, the presentation highlighted the diversity of options for TVET: starting at the secondary level, the flexibility of transfer between those alternatives and the majority share of secondary enrolment represented by TVET tracks. The latter is a common characteristic of European systems, in contrast to LAC systems where TVET institutions represent a very small fraction of secondary and post-secondary enrolment. The Netherlands has developed a nationwide System of Centres of Excellence, each one specialising in a range of competencies with strong associations to specific sectors of the economy and local firms. The Flemish system is largely a school-based system that guarantees compulsory education until age 18, through a variety of options and school providers among which parents can choose freely. As in The Netherlands, schools enjoy a large degree of autonomy in designing their curricula and hiring teachers. The main challenges the Flemish system faces are in providing relevant work opportunities for trainees and in hiring and retaining teachers with the right balance of teaching and work experience; a typical dilemma of most school-based systems. These two presentations were followed by a presentation from Mr. Luis Sanchez-Noble, a Dominican business leader who has been very much involved in the discussions of the Dominican Republic ten year education plan and training programmes.

47. Finally, the floor was open for discussion, comments and questions from workshop participants. Among the main themes discussed were: the complex political and institutional process of engaging stakeholders in developing national and international competency qualification frameworks; the various options and avenues for collaboration between training systems, firms and businesses; and the role and

potential of new technologies and distance education in delivering flexible training solutions to distant populations, even across countries.

**Workshop 4: International Systems for the Evaluation of Learning (Rapporteur: Miguel Escala, Rector, Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo)**

48. The theme of the workshop was addressed in two parts. The first part, the OECD Programme of International Student Assessment, better known as PISA, was introduced with emphasis on the comparison of the 2006 results between OECD countries and non-OECD countries. In the second part of the workshop, the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) was presented, along with the expectations for it.

49. In relation to PISA, the presentation of Bernard Hugonnier, Deputy Director for Education at the OECD, showed wide differences between participating countries, but emphasised the differences between the OECD countries and non-OECD. In the OECD countries, the number of students with a high performance is two times higher than those in the non-OECD economy participants. On the other hand, the number of students with a low performance in the non-OECD economies is two times higher than in the OECD countries. The expectations of parents seem to be lower in non-OECD economies, but students in non-OECD economies have the benefit of more science, are more confident in the usefulness of science for their future and their concerns for environmental issues are higher.

50. From the results of PISA 2006, one cannot conclude that there is a direct link between the results on PISA and the country's wealth, nor between those results and the amounts invested in education. On the other hand, it is demonstrable from the results that equity and quality can be achieved simultaneously.

51. The commentators focussed on highlighting that, rather than comparing OECD countries and non-OECD economies, the best use of data from PISA lies in the acknowledgement that there is room for improvement, as demonstrated by countries in two successive applications of the test. Innovative measures and positions aimed at achieving better results, the continuity of policies and actions and placing education at the centre of the political agenda seem to be the keys to the positive changes that PISA measures. It was stressed that the increased investment was needed, always strategically determined and focussed on educational outcomes.

52. The presentation from the Flemish Community of Belgium supports the approach above, in a region with positive results, but always with room for improvement. They learned from the results, made the right decisions to change on the whole issue of equity and allocated resources to actions that have an impact on the results.

53. In South Africa, the culture of evaluation has permeated the education system, and decision-making based on the results has been a constant that has a positive impact on improving the educational system.

54. It was stressed that the major challenge for countries is to make the maximum use of evaluation results and to bring about the measurement of results. The aim should be to develop a culture of continuous, informed improvement and the capabilities of reading data, making decisions, taking action and follow up. The extension of the educational evaluation was urged to other components of skills and values not included in PISA that also point toward civility, a result also expected from the education process.

55. In the second part, a presentation was made on the effort needed to establish TALIS and what is expected of this programme, the first results of which will be announced in 2009. The presentation by Michael Davidson (OECD) described the objectives of the programme and the content thereof. TALIS seeks to fill a vacuum in the knowledge about the teaching-learning process: knowledge of teachers and

their characteristics that undoubtedly affects the outcomes of learning; as well as to provide robust international indicators to assist participating countries in the adoption of policies related to teachers and the teaching-learning process.

56. TALIS touches on topics related to faculty development, the human management of teachers, school culture, co-operation between teachers, school leadership, and beliefs and practices of teaching. Two countries (Estonia and the Flemish Community of Belgium) explained their decision to be among the first countries participating in TALIS, motivated by the opportunity represented to participate in a research effort of this calibre and the search for identification of local practices for benchmarking to other international practices, which would lead to the decision-making necessary to adopt policies to improve the teachers' status, educational leadership and interactions inherent in the processes of teaching and learning.

57. The teachers' unions have called for TALIS to maintain a dialogue with the classroom teacher in its construction and dissemination of results.

58. In conclusion, there was agreement on a) accepting that the improvement in the equity and quality of education is possible, b) the importance of evaluations such as PISA and TALIS, and recognition of these as research efforts useful for feedback, and making decisions, policies and actions in pursuit of improving educational practices and results, and c) the need to support such improvement with the resources required to promote policies and actions identified.

**Workshop 5: Education and Economic Development for Integration into the Global Economy (Rapporteur: Linda Beijlsmit, Director, Bureau CROSS, The Netherlands)**

59. The workshop focussed on the following issues:

- How is increasing globalisation and competition from China and India affecting the skills and competencies demanded in the market?
- How can countries at different levels of development respond to these challenges?
- What emerging reforms in education and training are necessary to respond to these challenges?

60. Mrs. Ligia Amada Melo de Cardona, State Secretary for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dominican Republic, summarised, in her opening address, the challenges both developed and developing countries face in a global economy. The world is undergoing dramatic and unprecedented change making it ever more competitive. Education and training are the basic enablers of the knowledge economy and are becoming increasingly important for competitiveness and growth. Capacity building and systems for lifelong learning have become essential. It is, therefore, important to exchange ideas and ways in which different countries are dealing with the challenges of globalisation. Competitiveness depends on several factors:

- the economic and institutional regime of a country;
- the information infrastructure, as ICT has become vital;
- how innovation comes about;
- the country's education and training system.

61. Carl Dahlman, a Professor at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., focussed in his presentation on the global trends and the implications for national education and learning systems by comparing the developments in China, India, the European Union and the United States. The general trend shows that investments in knowledge are now almost as large as investments in machinery and equipment.

62. To keep up with the fast developments in India, but especially the developments in China, countries will have to face a triple challenge:

- They need to expand access to formal education and training, at the same time looking for new approaches, including potential new providers of education and training, and new technological possibilities.
- They need to improve the quality and relevance of education and training by developing mechanisms to respond to rapidly changing needs of the labour market, such as career and job information and input from employers; updating curricula and teaching pedagogy (better content, new key core skills, learning how to learn).
- They need to develop better mechanisms to govern and finance complex systems with multiple pathways and multiple players by creating new governance systems with more input from employers, students, parents, workers; broader financing, including tuition fees for public education; a greater role for private education; the development of student and trainee loan systems; better information: career counselling, job opportunities, quality of different providers, accreditation and certification of formal education institutions and trainers, etc.

63. In his presentation, Kurt Larsen, Senior Education Specialist of the World Bank Institute, focussed on the new trends in the global context of tertiary education. He underlined increased competition in the tertiary sector, the need to accelerate the creation and dissemination of knowledge and the fact that education and skills are increasingly necessary to use and develop knowledge. There has been a rapid increase in cross-border education: in programme mobility, student mobility, institution mobility and academic mobility.

64. He discussed the OECD policy approaches to cross-border tertiary education, distinguishing between the strong economic rationales for the import of educational services:

- capacity building;
- building a better higher education system;
- strong economic rationales for the export of educational services:
- revenue generation (using cross-border education to finance the domestic higher education sector and to change its governance);
- developing higher education as an export industry;
- skilled migration;
- weaker rationales for both the import and export of education are achieving mutual understanding (academic, cultural, geostrategic, political, social-economic).

65. The main challenges (as also came forward out of the discussions) are:

- financing: making it essential to see that investments are in line with national priorities;
- quality: ideally quality control should be the responsibility of both providers and clients of educational services;
- brain drain: incentives, such as good jobs, should be provided to persuade people to return to their country.

66. In their presentations about the way their respective countries were dealing with the challenges of globalisation, both Melaneo Paredes, Minister of Trade and Industry of the Dominican Republic, and Remus Pricopie, Secretary of State, Ministry Education, Research and Youth, Romania, stressed the importance of education and training for the knowledge economy and their increasing importance for competitiveness and growth. Mr Paredes emphasised how important training managers for small and medium-sized enterprises is, underlining that education and training should be the responsibility of both governments and the private sector. Mr Pricopie maintained that developments in Romania as a European Union member state were inspired by European developments. He highlighted both the quantitative dimension of the Romanian education strategy – from early childhood to adult education through a system of lifelong learning – and the qualitative dimension – the attractiveness and relevance of learning for individuals and society. Regarding brain drain, he stressed that both “sending and receiving” countries have mutual interests in protecting migrants abroad and co-operation on skilled migration could also set the stage for co-operation through bilateral and multilateral agreements to reduce unauthorised migration.

67. On the basis of the presentations and the questions and answers during the discussions the following conclusions can be drawn:

- All countries are facing challenges, not just developing countries.
- It is not a matter of money alone, but also a matter of efficient and effective use of available resources.
- A national vision is essential.

68. Key challenges are the governance and financing of complex systems with multiple players and multiple pathways and making systems responsive and relevant to the needs of the labour market, while preserving equity and guaranteeing quality. Education is the responsibility of both government and the private sector. Both expanding and upgrading education are necessary to improve competitiveness and growth prospects as economic activity is becoming more knowledge intensive. Success is determined by the ability to undertake difficult reforms and find creative solutions drawing on the potential of the private sector, new technologies and new ways of organising and managing education and training.

**Workshop 6: Access, Success and Relevance of Higher Education (Rapporteur: Jørn Skovsgaard, Senior Adviser, International Relations Division, Ministry of Education, Denmark)**

69. The organisation of the workshop was a collaboration between the International Association of Universities (IAU) and the OECD Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE). As the title indicates, the workshop had a two-fold focus:

- The first part of the session focussed on the efforts to provide equitable access and promote successful participation in higher education of quality as an essential factor for sustainable development in all nations of the world.



- The second part of the session illuminated the roles of higher education institutions as key actors in mobilising economic, social and cultural development in their regions.

70. The workshop can be placed within the context of the on-going efforts of both IAU and IMHE in the two areas, respectively. In the case of the IAU, the association has identified equitable access, success and quality in higher education as one of the “universal” preoccupations of higher education and government leaders around the world. For this reason, and to promote more reflection on the concrete ways to address these challenges, the association has a Task Force examining this topic and elaborating an International Policy Statement to promote institutional and governmental policies and programs designed to ensure that the largest possible number and the broadest segment of the population has access to higher education. This Statement will be debated at the association’s next general conference in Utrecht this July and, hopefully, this workshop will feed into that discussion.

71. In the case of OECD/IMHE, it carried out an extensive study of higher education in regional development in 2005-2007. This study embraced reviews in 14 regions in 12 different countries. Due to the great interest in this work and the need to explore this issue further, OECD/IMHE has now launched a second phase of the review that focuses, for example, on regions in rapidly developing economies, such as Brazil and Chile. The reviews focus on how Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) contribute to human capital development, business innovation and social, cultural and environmental development in their regions. These studies will be used to draw out some of the more generic lessons learnt that could serve in other regions as they all look to their HEIs to become even stronger motors for development.

72. In both parts of the workshop, speakers took their point of departure in concrete examples and initiatives to draw out suggestions for both government and universities; they looked at the obstacles, as well as solutions that have worked, and at the challenges still standing in the way.

73. Janyne Hodder’s (President, The College of the Bahamas) intervention included an outline of the challenges to develop the College of the Bahamas as a publicly funded higher education institute in its particular context. In her conclusion she focussed on the following needs:

- public funding and public policies for capacity building in the institutions;
- tuition and financial aid – directing financial aid to capacity building in national publicly funded colleges and universities as investment in prosperity and innovation;
- philanthropy – making the case for private support of the public good;
- international support – international education seen as a bi-directional exchanges, not recruitment.

74. Dzulkifli Abdul Razak’s (Vice-Chancellor, Universiti Sains Malaysia) intervention took its point of departure in Malaysia’s strategy for higher education, the National Higher Education Plan 2007-2010, including following main items:

- widening access and enhancing equity;
- improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- enhancing research and innovation;
- strengthening HEIs;

- intensifying internationalisation;
- enculturation of lifelong learning;
- the Ministry of Higher Education's (MOHE) delivery system;
- private higher education;
- internationalisation.

75. Malaysia's targets for its higher education system include: 60% participation in science and technical subjects, 40% participation in higher education, 30% participation in post-graduate studies, 20 000 enrolment capacity per public HEI and making Malaysia a Centre of Regional Educational Excellence.

76. Rolando M. Guzmán gave a rich introduction to the higher education system of the Dominican Republic, how it relates to the overall development of the economy and how it compares to other countries in the region. The presentation dealt exhaustively with a number of issues relevant for the consideration of the role of higher education in the life and well-being of societies and individuals:

- the development in the general level of education;
- balance issues in relation to the output of the education system and labour market's demand;
- drop-out rates;
- turnovers for educated individuals;
- the academic profile;
- long-term development lines.

77. Jaana Puukka (OECD) and Francisco Marmolejo (Executive Director, CONAHEC), gave an introduction to the synthesis of the OECD thematic review on higher education and regional development. The presentation summarised some of the core findings of the OECD work on higher education over recent years. Then the presenters outlined the method of the thematic reviews and the scope of the studies. Finally, they drew up their conclusions and findings. A number of productive levers, as well as barriers, were identified and recommendations for governments and HEIs were presented:

- Governments should:
  - make regional engagement explicit in higher education legislation;
  - strengthen institutional autonomy and provide funding incentives;
  - develop indicators and monitor outcomes;
  - require HEI governance to involve regional stakeholders; encourage the participation of HEIs in regional governance;

- support collaboration between HEIs and mobilise resources for joint regional and urban strategies;
- provide a more supportive environment for university-enterprise co-operation;
- focus on human capital development.
- Higher education institutions should:
  - map the regional and the external links; carry out a self-evaluation of the institutional capacity to respond to regional needs;
  - revisit institutional missions to adopt a wide agenda of regional engagement to enhance the core missions of teaching and research;
  - establish modern administration with human resources and financial resources management systems: review recruitment, hiring and reward systems;
  - establish partnership organisations between HEIs.

78. The discussion following the presentations was constrained due to the time pressure. However, it was quite clear that common lessons had been learned from the fairly different presentations and that the issue of relevance was considered to be the over-arching one and where analysing and formulation of policy lines in this particular area must take its point of departure.

### **Second Plenary Session**

79. In second plenary session, chaired by Esther Legendre, Minister of Education, Trinidad and Tobago, Gordon Freedman from Blackboard, Inc., presented an analysis of higher education and globalisation. He indicated that globalisation presents challenges to governments, institutions, and learners. Choices between building national economies and providing for social welfare confront institutions and their funders. The requirements for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century involve the transformation of higher education institutions from simple providers of courses and degrees to more complex social and economic organisations, often with less investment, not more. Mr. Freedman stressed that an increased global commitment to higher education in policy and practice is the historical imperative early in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Finally, he summarised six top priorities for re-thinking and restructuring higher education: defining institutional missions, funding structures and arrangements, student engagement methodologies, thinking “school through higher education,” transparency and accountability practices, and ability to partner.

80. Following the presentation of reports from the workgroups, a panel discussion took place regarding the overall themes of the Forum and suggestions for the next Global Forum. Participants in the panel included representatives of Bulgaria, Cameroon, the Dominican Republic, Georgia, Pakistan, Romania, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, the Conference of Ministers of Education of French-speaking Countries (CONFEMEN), The International Association of Universities (IAU) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Among the points raised were the following:

- The need to give more attention to the practical challenges of implementing education reform and of sustaining reform over changes in political leadership and challenging economic conditions.
- The critical role of the Global Forum in addressing issues that are common to many countries. Panellists stressed the need, however, to think globally, but act locally. Lessons can be drawn

from the experience of other countries, but improving the effectiveness of education systems requires careful attention to diagnosing unique problems and developing solutions appropriate to local context and culture.

- The observation that many of the critical issues facing countries occur at the points of interface between levels of education and between education and the labour market. There is a need to break out of the silos within which levels work. The most important issues lie precisely at the intersections between these systems.
- The issues raised by globalisation require involvement of other ministries beyond education in the Global Forum's deliberations (*e.g.* finance, trade, science and technology). This observation suggests the potential benefits of engagement of other OECD directorates (*e.g.* Public Governance and Territorial Development) in future Education Forums.
- The strength of Global Forums as a means of developing stable networks of member countries and non-member economies and of continuing the format of bringing together economically developed and developing countries and major international organisations dealing with education. The venue outside of Europe was seen as a positive means to broaden participation of countries beyond those deeply engaged in issues related primarily to Europe and the EU.
- The benefits of organising a seminar on an OECD review of the education policies of the host country, the Dominican Republic, in conjunction with the Forum in which many forum attendees also participated. This format afforded attendees an opportunity to reflect on the themes of the Global Forum in the context of concrete challenges in policy implementation. It also provided education leaders of the host country with an exceptional opportunity to interact with and learn from countries throughout the world.