



# OECD Higher Education News

August 2015

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[Upcoming events; OECD and higher education activities;](#)  
[OECD publications and resources; News from our Members](#)

## Upcoming events

### **Register Now for the Higher Education Futures Conference!**

**14-15 October 2015, with pre- and post-conference events**

[Registration](#) for the conference is now available.

In addition to the main event, there are [satellite events](#) on 13 and 16 October and [post-conference activities](#) on 16 October. Find out more about the conference [online](#).

**Deadline for registration:** 9 October 2015

**Fee:** SGD 600

[www.oecd.org/edu/imhemeetings](http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhemeetings)



## OECD and higher education activities

### **Informal Working Group on Higher Education**

The first meeting for 2015 of the OECD's Informal Working Group on Higher Education was held on 24-25 June in Paris. The Informal Working Group discussed the two strands of work being developed on higher education: *Benchmarking Higher Education Systems Performance* and an *In-depth Analysis of Higher Education Systems' Labour Market Relevance and Outcomes*.

Benchmarking higher education systems performance will develop multidimensional measures to benchmark the performance of higher education systems across a range of performance dimensions. This project will enable comparisons across countries, identify strengths and weaknesses of each country's system, and provide a basis for peer learning and the development of strategies for improvements in the performance of higher education systems. *(Continued over...)*



The in-depth analysis of higher education systems' labour market relevance and outcomes will address the quality of higher education systems from the perspective of labour market relevance and outcomes. This project will focus on whether the system produces higher education graduates with the mix of knowledge and skills needed by the labour market and the outcomes of graduates as they transition into the labour market.

Participants in the June meeting shared their experiences in assessing and measuring performance of their higher education systems at a national level and what they are doing to address concerns around labour market relevance and outcomes. Countries provided feedback to the Secretariat on the development of rigorous analytical and conceptual frameworks for the two strands of work.

The Informal Working Group will next meet in December in The Hague. This meeting is being generously hosted by EP-Nuffic.

[Complete your details online](#) to be kept informed about higher education work!

### **Skills will drive inclusive economic growth in Portugal**

In the course of 2014, the OECD worked closely with Portugal on a collaborative project to build a more effective skills strategy. [The diagnostic report](#), released in April this year, applies the framework of the OECD Skills Strategy to identify 12 skills challenges for Portugal as it seeks to maximise its future skills potential. These skills challenges were distilled from a series of four interactive workshops held in Lisbon and Porto in 2014, which engaged a wide range of stakeholders. The report includes a rich set of evidence from OECD and other sources, and offers concrete examples of how other countries are tackling similar skills challenges.



Higher education is a key part of the skills strategy. Forging stronger links between university research and business would contribute to better use of high-skilled human resources in Portugal and contribute to creating good quality jobs while boosting global competitiveness. Improved innovation capacity may contribute to reducing unemployment rates (Challenges 4 and 5) and will have positive impact on economic growth, thus contributing positively to the overall financing of the skills system (Challenge 10). Securing the high skills levels needed in the future will require attention not only to tertiary education, but also to promoting high quality upper and post-secondary VET programmes with more advanced curricula and flexible pathways between VET and higher education (Challenge 2).

For more on skills and skills policies around the world, visit [skills.oecd.org](http://skills.oecd.org).

### **The Great Skills Race: Innovations in U.S. Education and Training from a Global Perspective**

Simon Field, Senior Analyst, OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training and Adult Learning, was part of a panel of discussants at the New America Foundation event "[The Great Skills Race: Innovations in U.S. Education and Training from a Global Perspective](#)" on 21 May 2015 in Washington D.C. [View the video of this event.](#)

#### **Find the OECD Higher Education Programme on...**



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Education-



OECD Higher Education  
Programme – IMHE

Image: <http://icons.vootheme.com>

[Who's Who in the OECD Higher Education Programme](#)

## **Other activities**

### **EAIE Glasgow 2015**

The [2015 EAIE Conference & Exhibition](#) will take place in Glasgow from 15-18 September and will have as theme "A Wealth of nations". This global meeting will gather more than 5000 international higher education professionals from over 90 countries and will host 600+ exhibiting organisations. The conference programme features [200+ activities](#) among which [177 \(poster\) sessions](#), [21 workshops](#), [10 campus tours](#), [2 panel discussions](#) and 23 [networking events](#). Make sure to [secure your spot](#) by **26 August** and join Europe's largest international higher education conference!

# OECD publications and resources

## ***Adults, Computers and Problem Solving: What's the Problem?***

### **[On iLibrary](#)**

This report provides an in-depth analysis of the results from the Survey of Adult Skills related to problem solving in technology-rich environments, along with measures concerning the use of ICT and problem solving. The report finds that problem-solving proficiency is strongly associated with both age and general cognitive proficiency, even after taking other relevant factors into account. Proficiency in problem solving using ICT is related to greater participation in the labour force, lower unemployment, and higher wages. By contrast, a lack of computer experience has a substantial negative impact on labour market outcomes, even after controlling for other factors.



## ***Adults with low literacy and numeracy skills: A literature review on policy intervention***

### **[On iLibrary](#)**

Identifying effective policy interventions for adults with low literacy and numeracy skills has become increasingly important. The PIAAC Survey of Adult Skills has revealed that a considerable number of adults in OECD countries possess only limited literacy and numeracy skills, and governments now recognise the need to up-skill low-skilled adults in order to maintain national prosperity, especially in the context of structural changes and projected population ageing. Against this background, this literature review examines the current evidence on policy interventions for adults with low literacy and numeracy skills to clarify which targeted policy levers could best enhance socio-economic returns.



**[How to help adult learners learn the basics](#)** – on the [educationtoday](#) blog by *Hendrickje Catriona Windisch, Analyst, Education and Skills Directorate*

## ***Green Growth Newsletter***

### **[Issue 29, July 2015](#)**

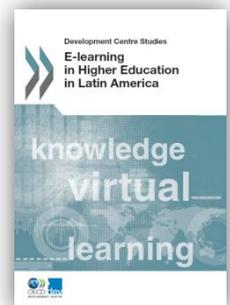
Highlights of this issue include a retrospective look at the Secretary-General's lecture at the LSE on Climate, the International Tax Dialogue Forum on Tax and the Environment, new publications by APT and CTPA, the forthcoming publication of the Green Growth Tracking Report and its "save the date" webinar, as well as information on the Green Growth and Sustainable Development Forum. [You can also check out previous issues.](#)



## ***E-Learning in Higher Education in Latin America***

### **[On iLibrary](#)**

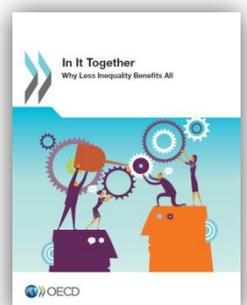
This report analyses the incorporation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in higher education in Latin America, focusing mainly on what is commonly referred to as "e-learning". Access to and quality of higher education, financial constraints and relevance to the needs of the labour market are all crucial challenges facing the higher education system in the region. The study attempts to understand how ICTs and new learning and teaching practices can help to meet these challenges. The report also provides the results of a questionnaire showing the degree of implementation and the impact of e-learning on a group of higher education institutions in Latin America and includes a set of policy recommendations in this area.



## ***In It Together: Why Less Inequality Benefits All***

### **[On iLibrary](#)**

The gap between rich and poor keeps widening. Growth, if any, has disproportionately benefited higher income groups while lower income households have been left behind. This long-run increase in income inequality not only raises social and political concerns, but also economic ones. It tends to drag down GDP growth, due to the rising distance of the lower 40% from the rest of society. Lower income people have been prevented from realising their human capital potential, which is bad for the economy as a whole. This book highlights the key areas where inequalities are created and where new policies are required, including: the consequences of current consolidation policies; structural labour market changes with rising non-standard work and job polarisation; persisting gender gaps; the challenge of high wealth concentration, and the role for redistribution policies. *(Continued over...)*



Also...

[What's your share of the pie? Compare your income!](#) This tool allows users to see whether their perception is in line with reality, when looking at their position within their country's income distribution. With the objective of better understanding people's perceptions of income inequality, [Compare your income](#) will gather information allowing the OECD to do different types of analysis regarding the perception of income distribution in different countries.

## ***It's a matter of trust***

### **[On the educationtoday blog](#)**

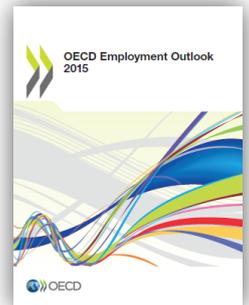
*by Andreas Schleicher, Director, Directorate for Education and Skills*

The world is rapidly becoming a different place, with globalisation and modernisation imposing huge challenges to individuals and societies. Schools need to prepare students to live and work in a world in which most people will need to collaborate with people of diverse cultural origins, and appreciate different ideas, perspectives and values; a world in which people need to decide how to trust and collaborate across such differences, often bridging space and time through technology; and a world in which their lives will be affected by issues that transcend national boundaries. [Read more...](#)

## ***OECD Employment Outlook 2015***

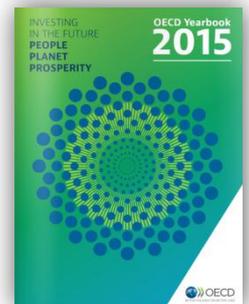
### **[On iLibrary](#)**

The 2015 edition of the OECD Employment Outlook provides an in-depth review of recent labour market trends and short-term prospects in OECD countries. Chapter 1 looks at recent labour market developments focusing on minimum wages, while Chapter 2 draws on the OECD's International Survey of Adult Skills and considers skills and wage inequality. Chapter 3 looks how policies to get job seekers back into work can help make labour markets more inclusive, while Chapter 4 examines job quality in terms of earnings mobility, labour market risk and long-term inequality. Finally, Chapter 5 discusses how job quality in emerging economies can be enhanced.



## ***OECD Yearbook 2015***

[This year's Yearbook](#) focuses on major topics such as people, prosperity and planet and features editorials by Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the OECD, Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Netherlands, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales and Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations.



## ***No one left behind?***

### **[On the educationtoday blog](#)**

*by Dirk Van Damme, Head of the Innovation and Measuring Progress division, Directorate for Education and Skills*

When societies move forward, not everyone benefits in the same way or to the same extent. Some social groups change faster than others, while other groups risk falling behind. Change in education is no exception. In understanding social change it is critically important not only to look at the average change, but also to look at how change affects the entire population. [Read more...](#)

## ***Focus on vocational education and training (VET) programmes***

### **[On iLibrary](#)**

In 2012, in more than one-third of OECD countries, over half of all upper secondary students participated in pre-vocational or vocational programmes, but less than 30% of those students were exposed to work-based learning. Countries with well-established and high-quality vocational and apprenticeship programmes have improved youth employment opportunities. However, in many OECD countries, the share of young people who are neither employed, nor in education or training (NEET) is still higher for graduates from upper secondary VET than from upper secondary general programmes. Students who enter vocational programmes are less likely to graduate than those who are enrolled in general programmes. Moreover, they are nearly five times less likely to enrol in further education than graduates from general secondary schools with similar proficiency in literacy.

## ***What do youth think?***

### **Interview with Allan Päll Secretary General of the European Youth Forum**

#### **[On the educationtoday blog](#)**

*by Marilyn Achiron, Editor, Education and Skills Directorate*

This is a tough time for young people, especially in Europe. Youth un- and underemployment is still at record highs in some countries; and as the OECD Skills Outlook 2015 reports, more than 35 million 16-29 year-olds in OECD countries are neither employed nor in education or training. More worrying still, around half of those young adults are out of school and not looking for work. What can be done to change these terrible statistics, to prevent more waste of human potential? [Read more...](#)

## ***Young people are our future: invest in their skills***

### **On the educationtoday blog**

by *Andreas Schleicher, Director, Directorate for Education and Skills*

More than 35 million 16-29 year-olds across OECD countries are neither employed nor in education or training (NEET) – and around half of all NEETs are out of school and not looking for work. These young people are likely to have dropped off the radar of their country's education, social and labour market systems. [Read more...](#)

#### **2015 access to OECD online publications**

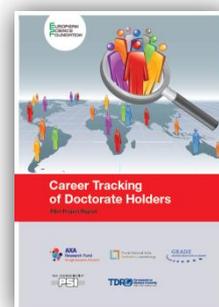
Programme members benefit from free access to OECD publications in the online database [OECD iLibrary](#). Please contact [imhe@oecd.org](mailto:imhe@oecd.org) for the 2015 login and password. **Please note:** this access is for personal use only by your organisations' main contacts.

## **Other publications**

### ***Career Tracking of Doctorate Holders: Pilot Project Report***

*European Science Foundation*

The pilot project explored the career paths of post-doctorates and doctorate alumni from five research funding and research performing organisations. The main findings include different research outputs and satisfaction levels between respondents with employment continuity and those with temporary contracts. Amongst other issues, the report discusses the growing numbers of doctorate holders in a context of academic employment bottlenecks and geographic and sectoral mobility patterns. It culminates in a set of recommendations aimed at doctoral funding and employing institutions, as well as European policy-makers. [Read more and download the report...](#)



Also...

*Times Higher Education* article [Too many PhDs](#) and [podcast](#).

### ***The European Higher Education Area in 2015: Bologna Process Implementation Report***

[This report](#) gives a snapshot of the state of implementation of the Bologna Process across the 47 countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). It provides comprehensive qualitative and quantitative information on all main aspects of higher education reforms aiming at a well-functioning EHEA. The report has been developed by Eurydice, Eurostat and Eurostudent for the Ministerial Conference in Yerevan (14-15 May 2015) and the work has been overseen by the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG).



### ***Restructuring Public Higher Education Governance to Succeed in a Highly Competitive Environment***

by *James A. Hyatt*

Given diminished governmental support, competition from private counterparts, and public demands for access to services, public universities need to respond in an effective manner to take advantage of opportunities and meet the challenges of today's highly competitive environment. [Read more...](#)

## News from our members

### ***Nine Countries Have Been Awarded With Ten UOC Doctoral Grants***

The [Universitat Oberta de Catalunya](http://www.uoc.edu) (UOC) has awarded 10 grants to doctoral students from nine different countries: Argentina, Canada, China, Germany, India, Morocco, Serbia, Sri Lanka and United Kingdom.

This doctoral grant has a maximum duration of four years and it requires annual renewal. Grant holders must achieve the training and research objectives established for each programme in order to renew the grant.

The programme also offers the possibility of developing Industrial Doctorates, offering grants for the best applicants with agreements with companies. Doctoral students undertaking an industrial doctorate will have a both a university supervisor and a tutor at the company.

Doctoral School: [www.uoc.edu/portal/en/escola-doctorat/index.html](http://www.uoc.edu/portal/en/escola-doctorat/index.html)



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### **Who are your fellow members?**

Find them at [www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/members](http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/members)



**Keep in touch with your Programme.** This e-newsletter aims to keep you informed about the activities, publications, conferences and other events linked to our member institutions and the higher education world. And if you want even more information, you'll find it on our [website](#) or by contacting [IMHE@oecd.org](mailto:IMHE@oecd.org).

(Image: jscreationzs / [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](http://FreeDigitalPhotos.net))

### **Share your news!**

Is there information about your higher education activities (e.g. conferences, publications) that you wish to **share with other members**? Let us know and we can add it to OECD Higher Education News.