

## RESULTS FROM TALIS 2018: VOLUME II

The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) is an international, large-scale survey of teachers, school leaders and the learning environment in schools. This note presents findings based on the reports of lower secondary teachers and their school leaders in mainstream public and private schools.

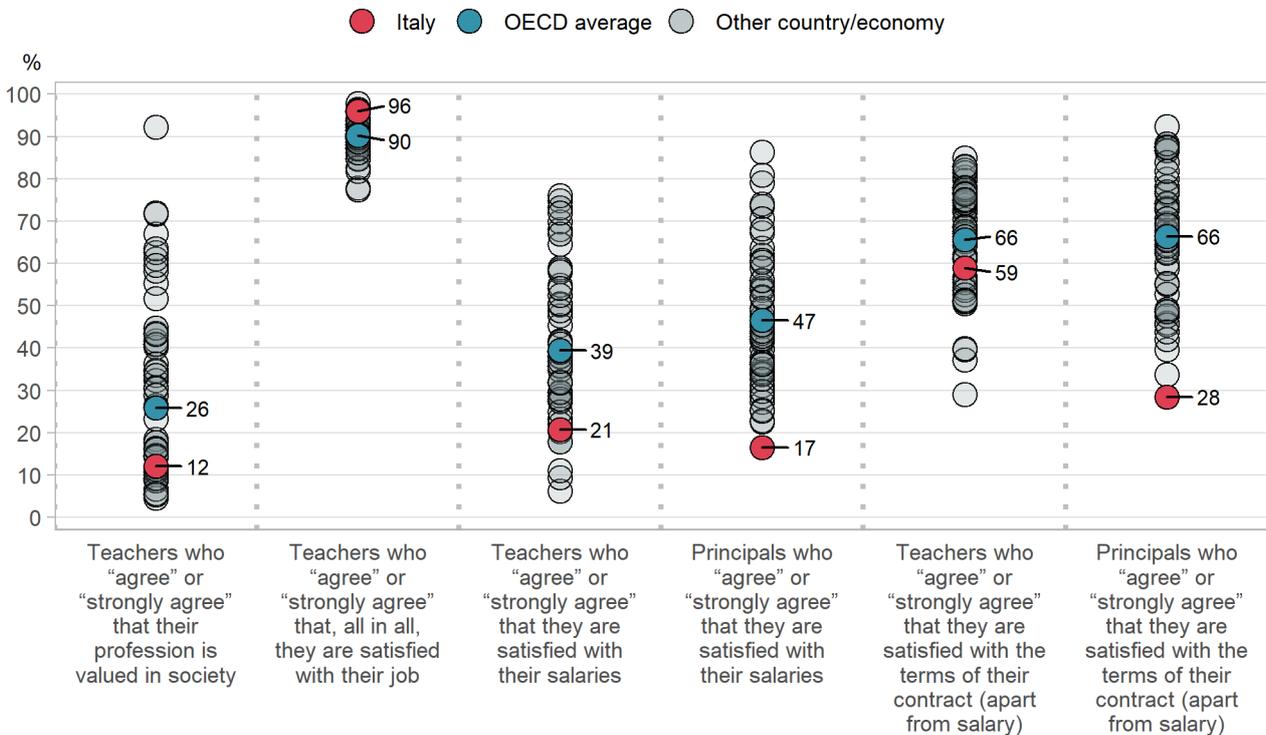
### Italy

#### I. What teachers and school leaders say about their jobs

- The status of the teaching profession can be an important factor for recruiting and retaining teachers. To get a sense of the perceived status of the teaching profession, TALIS 2018 asked teachers whether the teaching profession is valued in society. In Italy, 12% of teachers “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement that their profession is valued in society, which is lower than the average across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (26%).

Figure 1. Teachers’ and school leaders’ satisfaction with their jobs

Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers and principals



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown.

Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables II.2.1, II.2.16, II.3.56, II.3.65, II.3.59 and II.3.66.

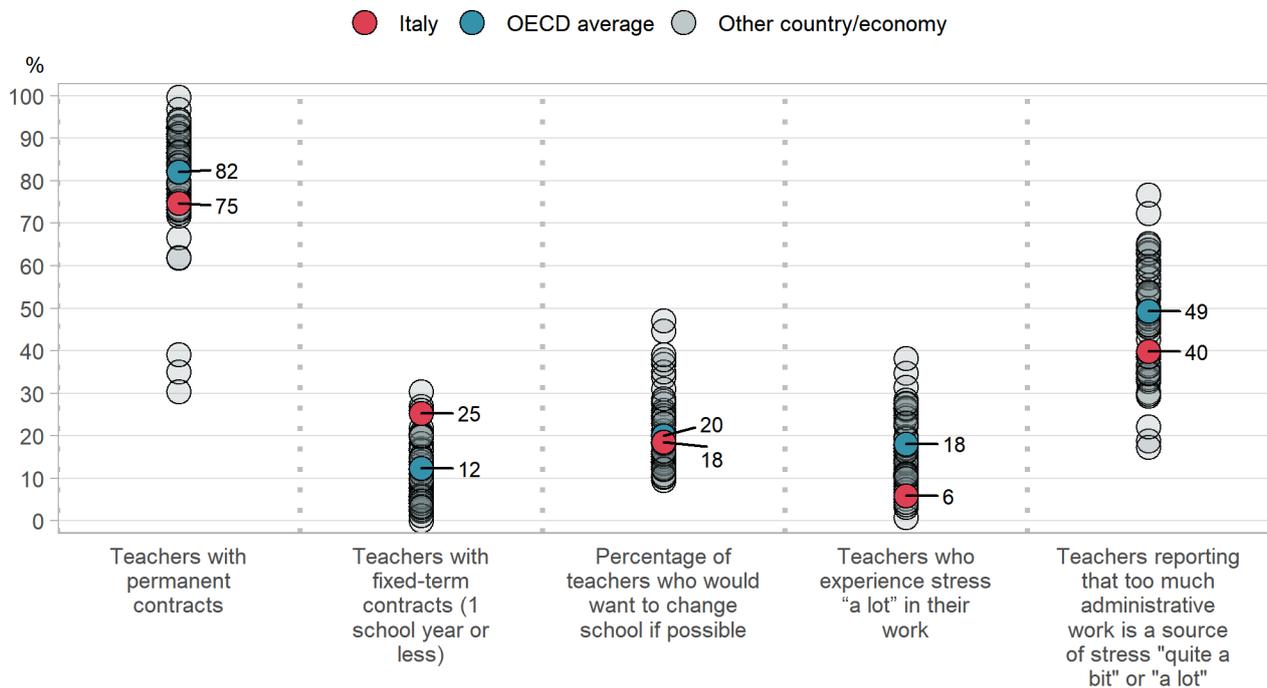
- Between 2013 and 2018, the percentage of teachers reporting that the profession is valued in society has increased in almost half of the countries and economies with available data. In Italy, over the same period, the percentage of teachers reporting that the teaching profession is valued in society has remained stable.
- TALIS defines job satisfaction as the sense of fulfilment and gratification that teachers get from their work. Job satisfaction may have a positive association with teachers' attitudes towards their work and with their performance. In Italy, 96% of teachers report that, all in all, they are satisfied with their job (OECD average 90%). Moreover, 59% of teachers are satisfied with the terms of their teaching contract (apart from salary) (OECD average 66%). In Italy, 21% of teachers report being satisfied with their salaries, which is lower than the OECD average (39%).
- Teachers' satisfaction with their salary is relatively high among novice teachers in Italy, with 48% of teachers in publicly managed schools with five years or less of teaching experience reporting to be satisfied (OECD average 43%). However, it is much lower among more experienced teachers (those with more than five years of teaching experience), with only 14% of them reporting to be satisfied with their salary in publicly managed schools (OECD average 38%). This could be due to the relatively flat salary scale characterising the Italian education system. Experienced teachers are significantly less satisfied with their salaries than novice teachers in nearly all education systems where, as is the case for Italy, statutory salaries in public institutions increase by less than 25% during the first 15 years of teaching experience.
- In Italy, 93% of school leaders report that, all in all, they are satisfied with their job (OECD average 95%). Moreover, 28% of school leaders report being satisfied with the terms of their contract (apart from salary) (OECD average 66%). In Italy, 17% of school leaders are satisfied with their salaries, which is lower than the OECD average (47%).
- The difference between privately and publicly managed schools in the share of principals satisfied with their salaries and contract terms is larger in Italy than in any other TALIS country or economy. In privately managed schools, 83% of principals are satisfied with their salary and 88% are satisfied with the other terms of their contracts, well above the OECD average for both indicators. In contrast, in publicly managed schools, only 10% of principals are satisfied with their salary and 23% are satisfied with the other terms of their contracts, among the lowest proportions across TALIS countries and economies for both indicators.

## II. Working conditions, career mobility and risk of attrition

- What factors could be shaping teachers' satisfaction? As well as career stability, mobility and working conditions could be playing a large role in teachers' reported levels of satisfaction. Regarding career stability, commitments to increase the financial remuneration of teachers and principals and to secure it through permanent contracts can compete with the need to limit costs and ensure flexibility in government expenditure.

**Figure 2. Teachers' working conditions, mobility and risk of attrition**

Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown.

Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables II.3.1, II.2.16, II.2.36 and II.2.43.

- In Italy, 75% of teachers have a permanent contract (an ongoing contract with no fixed end-point before the age of retirement) (OECD average 82%). At the same time, 25% of teachers in Italy are employed on contracts of one year or less, which is higher than the average in the OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (OECD average 12%). In the last five years in Italy, the proportion of teachers with a contract of one year or less has increased by seven percentage points.
- On average across the OECD, the share of teachers on fixed-term contracts is larger among younger teachers (under 30 years old) than among older teachers (age 50 or above). This difference is particularly pronounced in Italy. Less than 10% of teachers who are 50 or older in Italy have a fixed-term contract (in line with the OECD average), compared to 86% of teachers who are younger than 30 (OECD average 48%).
- Regarding teacher mobility, in Italy, 18% of teachers would like to change to another school if that were possible (OECD average 20%). On average across the OECD, teachers who would like to change to another school are less satisfied with the profession, did not pick teaching as a first-choice career and are slightly younger and less experienced in their current school than other teachers. They are also more likely to work full-time and to report teaching in a target class with a slightly higher concentration of disadvantaged students, low academic achievers and students with behavioural problems.
- Acute stress at work can be associated with teachers' job satisfaction and their intention to continue teaching. Furthermore, stressful environments and situations may affect the practices and motivation of teachers and principals, and even student achievement. In Italy, 6% of teachers report experiencing stress in their work "a lot", which is lower than the OECD average (18%).
- Almost half of the teachers in the OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS report that having too much administrative work is a source of stress they experience at work "quite a bit" or "a lot". In Italy, the three most prevalent sources of stress teachers experience at work "quite a bit" or "a lot" are maintaining classroom discipline, having too much marking and keeping up with changing

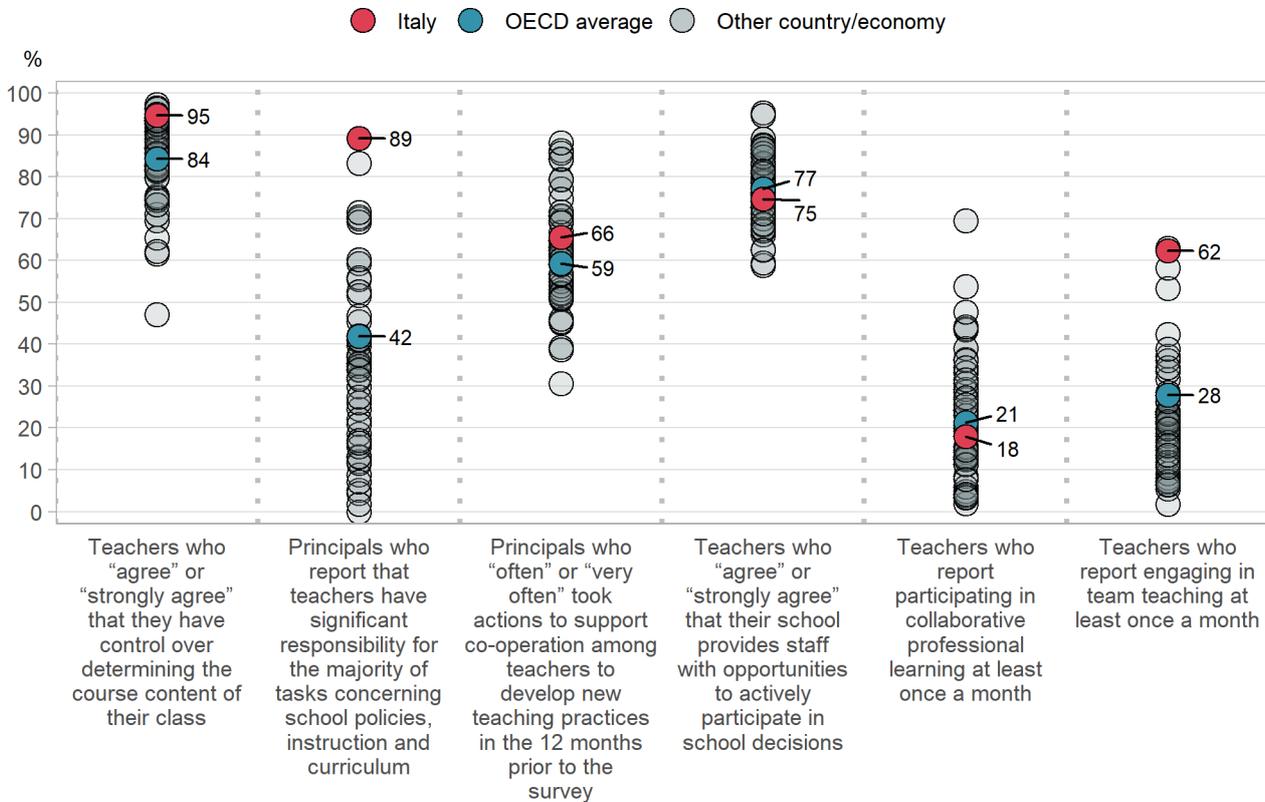
requirements from local, municipal/regional, state or national/federal authorities. For principals, the three most prevalent sources of stress are having too much administrative work to do, keeping up with changing requirements from local, municipal/regional, state or national/federal authorities and addressing parent or guardian concerns.

### III. Supporting professional autonomy, collegiality and collaboration

- TALIS shows promising directions to take to make the job of teachers more rewarding and fulfilling. Teachers' autonomy is an important factor for promoting experimentation in the classroom. In Italy, 95% of teachers report having control over determining course content in their class, compared to 84% on average across the OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS. In Italy, teachers reporting higher levels of control over their class are more likely to report working in innovative school environments.
- Opportunities for teachers to have a voice in developing the school vision and goals are an integral component of teacher leadership. In Italy, 89% of principals report that their teachers have significant responsibility for the majority of the tasks related to school policies, curriculum and instruction, which is higher than the OECD average (42%).
- According to school principal reports, teachers in Italy have significant responsibility in "choosing which learning materials are used" in 95% of schools (OECD average 75%), "deciding which courses are offered" in 95% of schools (OECD average 39%), "determining course content" in 88% of schools (OECD average 52%), and "establishing student assessment policies" in 66% of schools (OECD average 42%). The proportion of principals in Italy reporting significant responsibility for teachers in the other tasks related to school policies, curriculum and instruction is lower and closer to the OECD average.

**Figure 3. Autonomy, collegiality and collaboration**

Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers and principals



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown.

Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables II.5.32, II.5.31, II.5.12, II.4.24 and II.4.1.

- Innovation in schools requires the support of peers and the guidance of school leaders. In Italy, 81% of teachers say that they work in a collaborative school culture characterised by mutual support (OECD average 81%). Furthermore, 66% of principals in Italy took actions on a regular basis to support co-operation among teachers to develop new teaching practices in the 12 months prior to the survey, which is statistically not significantly different from the OECD average (59%).
- School leaders can foster collegial and participative working environments. In Italy, 75% of teachers report that their school provides staff with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions (OECD average 77%). On average across the OECD, teachers reporting that their school provides staff with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions tend to engage more often in some forms of collaboration.
- Professional collaboration can become a solid foundation for innovative and effective practices. On average across the OECD, teachers who engage in professional collaboration, which involves a higher degree of interdependence among teachers, also tend to report more frequent use of effective teaching practices, such as cognitive activation. However, professional collaboration is not a frequent practice across the OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS. In Italy, only 18% of teachers report participating in collaborative professional learning at least once a month (OECD average 21%) and 62% engage in team-teaching with the same frequency (OECD average 28%). In Italy, the proportion of female teachers engaging in team teaching is significantly larger (by 5 percentage points) than

among male teachers (while on average across the OECD, there is no difference between the two genders).

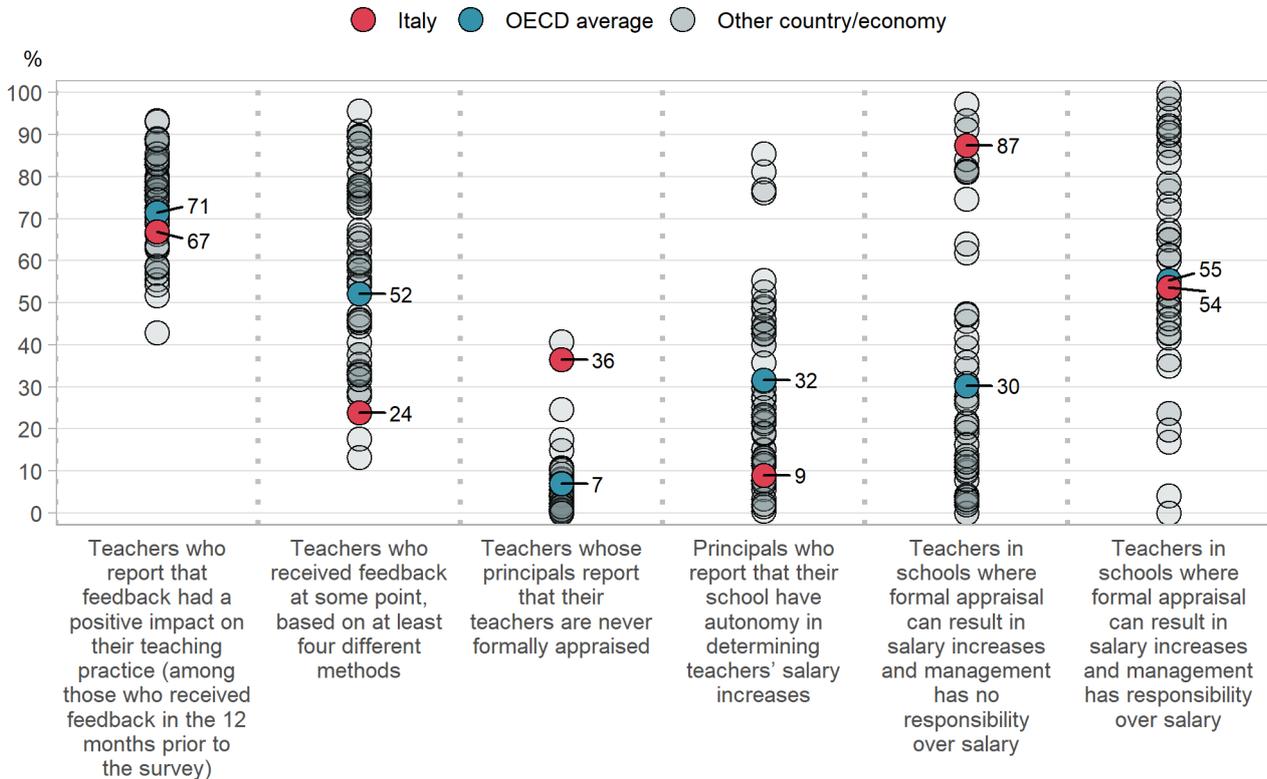
- Teachers' engagement in professional collaboration activities with their peers increased in Italy over the past few years. Italy is the only TALIS country where a significant increase occurred between 2013 and 2018 in the proportion of teachers engaging in each of the four different types of professional collaboration. The increase was largest for "teach jointly as a team in the same class" (+12 percentage points); and more moderate for "observe other teachers' classes and provide feedback" (+6 percentage points), "participate in collaborative professional learning" (+5 percentage points), and "engage in joint activities across different classes and age groups" (+3 percentage points).

#### IV. Making the most of feedback and appraisal systems

- Teacher feedback is an important lever for improving teaching quality, since it aims to improve teachers' understanding of their methods and practices. Feedback can improve teachers' effectiveness by both recognising teachers' strengths and addressing weaknesses in their pedagogical practices. In Italy, only 27% of teachers report that they have never received feedback in their schools (OECD average 10%). On average across the OECD, the forms of feedback most commonly used are based on classroom observations and students' school-based and classroom-based results. In Italy the forms of feedback most commonly used are based on school-based and classroom-based results, external results of students the teacher teaches and observation of the teacher's classroom teaching.
- In Italy, 67% of teachers who received feedback in the 12 months prior to the survey report that it had a positive impact on their teaching practice (OECD average 71%). In all countries and economies participating in TALIS, including Italy, teachers who report receiving feedback based on multiple methods are more likely to find that the feedback they received had a positive impact on their teaching. Furthermore, 24% of teachers in Italy report having received feedback at some point, based on at least four different types of methods, which is lower than the OECD average (52%).

**Figure 4. Feedback and appraisal**

Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers and principals



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown.

Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables II.4.48, II.4.47, II.3.30, II.5.1 and II.3.48.

- Appraisal systems, used to formally evaluate teachers, encourage continuous improvement of their practice by providing opportunities to acknowledge and reward teachers for their efforts. In Italy, 36% of teachers are in schools where school principals report that their teachers are never formally appraised, which is higher than the OECD average (7%).
- However, teacher appraisal has become more common in Italy since 2013. The percentage of teachers whose school principals report that their teachers are never formally appraised decreased by 34 percentage points between 2013 and 2018, the largest change observed during this period across TALIS countries and economies. A particularly large increase is observed in the percentage of teachers whose school principals report that their teachers are formally appraised at least once per year by their principal or school management team (+22 percentage points) and by their mentor or other teachers (+30 percentage points). In contrast, there is no significant change in the percentage of teachers in schools with yearly teacher appraisal by external individuals or bodies (as reported by principals).
- For appraisal to be effective, it must lead to the right consequences. For example, consequences such as appointing a mentor to improve teaching or drafting a plan for professional development are well aligned with the formative function of appraisal. In Italy, 82% of teachers work in schools where the elaboration of professional development or a training plan is a common occurrence after an assessment (OECD average of 90%), and 56% of teachers work in schools where the appointment of a mentor is a common occurrence after an assessment (OECD average of 71%).
- The goal of ensuring good performance and compliance with standards can be linked to performance incentives, such as wage increases and financial bonuses. In the last five years in Italy, the proportion

of teachers working in schools where appraisal sometimes results in a salary increase or a financial bonus increased by 62 percentage points.

- Based on principals' responses, in Italy, 9% of schools have autonomy over determining salary increases or bonuses for teachers, which is lower than the OECD average (32%).
- In Italy, the proportion of teachers who work in schools where appraisal can result in a salary increase or financial bonus is 54% in schools where school management has responsibility over salaries (OECD average 55%). In Italy, in schools where school management does not have autonomy over salaries, the proportion of teachers where appraisal can result in a salary increase or financial bonus is 87% (OECD average 30%).

## V. Key features of TALIS 2018

TALIS uses questionnaires administered to teachers and their school principals to gather data. Its main goal is to generate internationally comparable information relevant to developing and implementing policies focused on school leaders, teachers and teaching, with an emphasis on those aspects that affect student learning.

First, TALIS helps policy makers to review and develop policies that promote the teaching profession and the best conditions for effective teaching and learning. Second, TALIS helps teachers, school leaders, and education stakeholders to reflect upon and discuss their practice and find ways to enhance it. Third, TALIS builds upon past research, while informing the future work of researchers.

- Nine main themes were selected for inclusion in the TALIS 2018 survey: teachers' instructional practices; school leadership; teachers' professional practices; teacher education and initial preparation; teacher feedback and development; school climate; job satisfaction; teacher human resource issues and stakeholder relations; and teacher self-efficacy. Two cross-cutting themes were added to this list: innovation; and equity and diversity.
- The international target population for TALIS is composed of lower secondary teachers and their school leaders in mainstream public and private schools. TALIS 2018 offered three additional options: 15 countries and economies also surveyed teachers and school leaders in their primary schools (ISCED level 1), 11 countries and economies did so in their upper secondary schools (ISCED level 3) and 9 countries and economies conducted the survey in schools that participated in the 2018 OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).
- In each country, a representative sample of 4 000 teachers and their school principals from 200 schools was randomly selected for the study. Across all survey components, approximately 260 000 teachers responded to the survey, representing more than 8 million teachers in 48 participating countries and economies. In Italy, 3 612 lower secondary teachers and 190 principals completed the TALIS questionnaires.
- The first volume of TALIS 2018, *Teachers and School Leaders as Lifelong Learners*, published on 19 June 2019, explored the knowledge and skills dimension of teachers and school leaders' professionalism. The second volume, *Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals*, published on 23 March 2020, explored prestige, career opportunities, collaborative culture and autonomy.
- All data reported in this note comes from the second report. The additional sources of the data (besides the one shown on the figures) for Section I are: Tables II.2.5, II.2.27, II.3.57, II.3.63, II.3.65 and II.3.66; for Section II are: Tables II.3.4, II.3.6, II.2.22, II.2.63, II.2.43, II.2.47 and II.2.67; for Section III are: Tables II.5.5, II.5.37, II.4.24, II.4.17, II.4.6 and II.4.4; and for Section IV are: Tables II.4.37, II.4.44, II.4.55, II.3.33, II.3.42 and II.3.52.

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**References**

OECD (2020), *TALIS 2018 Results (Volume II): Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/19cf08df-en>.

**For more information on TALIS 2018** visit <http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/>

Data can be found also on line by following the *StatLinks*  under the tables and charts in the publication.

**Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using:** <http://gpseducation.oecd.org/>.

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