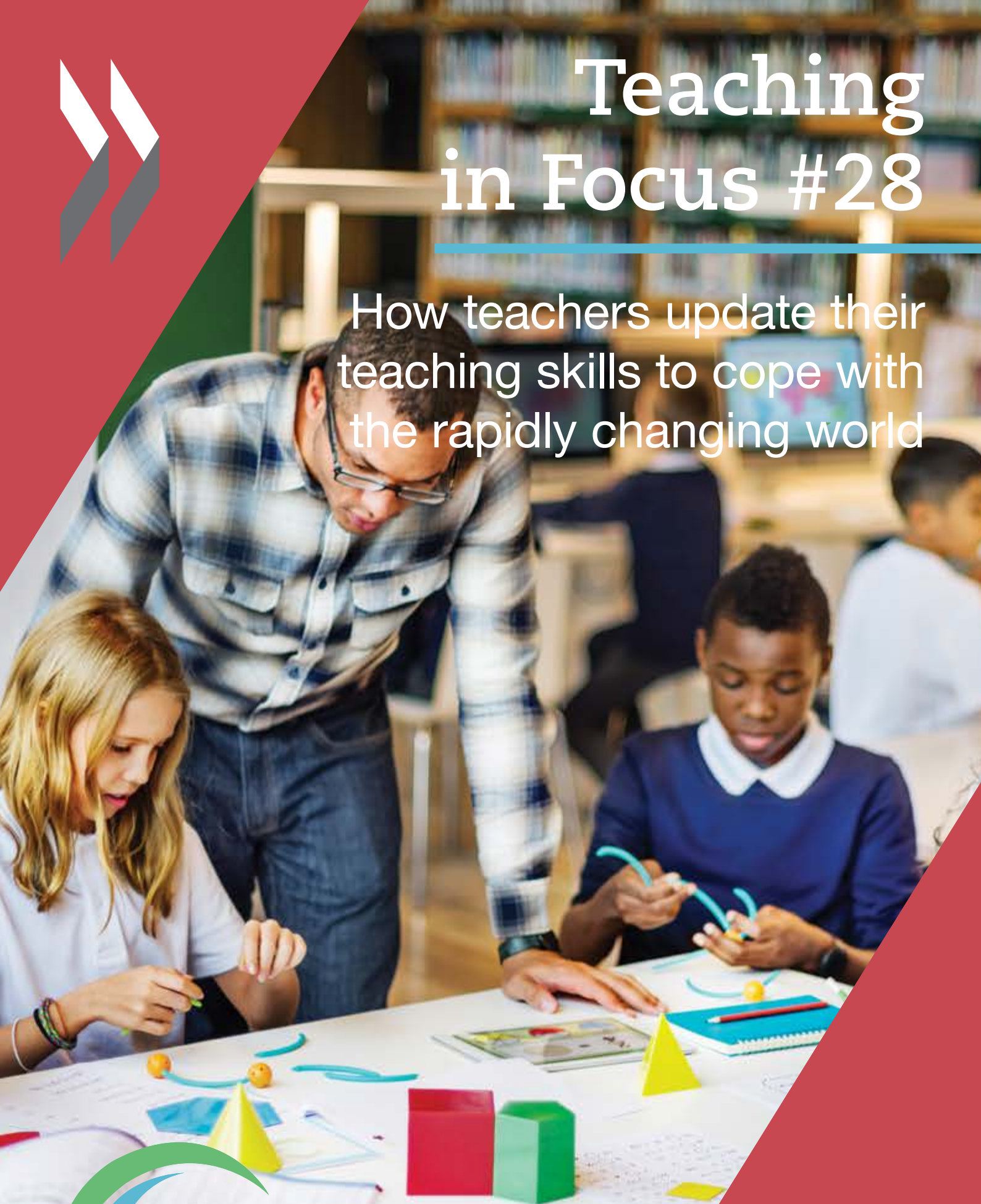
Teaching in Focus #28

How teachers update their teaching skills to cope with the rapidly changing world



Teaching & Learning

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How teachers update their teaching skills to cope with the rapidly changing world

- TALIS finds that the quality and type of professional development offered to teachers is related to several crucial dimensions of the teaching profession, such as job satisfaction and self-efficacy.
- Three out of four lower secondary teachers attended courses/seminars in the year prior to the survey, on average across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS.
- Lower secondary teachers express a particularly high need for professional development in "teaching students with special needs", "ICT skills for teaching" and "teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting".
- More than 50% of teachers in roughly half of the countries and economies participating in TALIS identify that participation in professional development activities is hindered by conflicting work schedules or a lack of incentives.

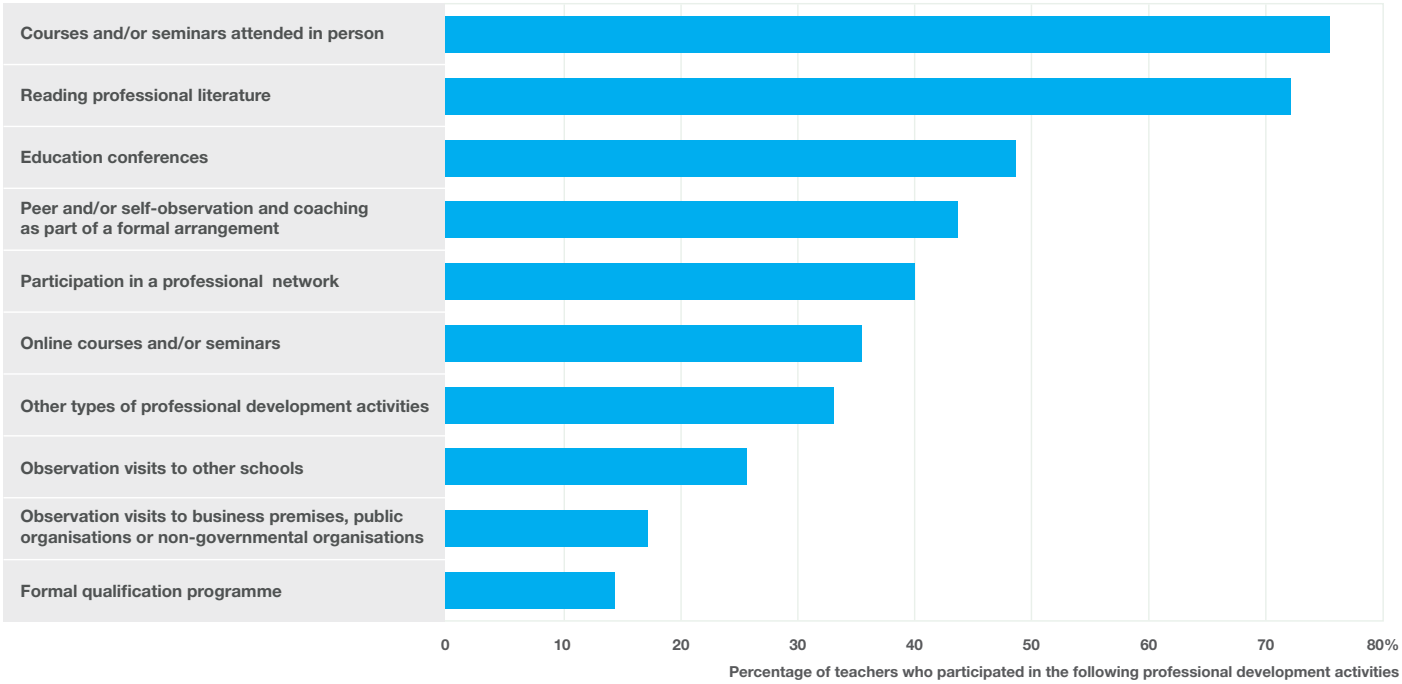
Participation in professional development activities is commonplace among teachers

Teachers' participation in continuous professional development (CPD) activities allows them to develop and update their skills, knowledge and expertise for the benefit of student learning. Participation in CPD activities, in addition to initial training and induction programmes, is almost universal across OECD countries, and is a constituent element of teachers' professionalism.

According to the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), 94% of lower secondary teachers report that they participated in a continuous professional development activity at least once in the year prior to the survey, on average across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS. The participation rate exceeds 90% in most countries, and is still above 80% in Brazil, Chile, France, Portugal and Saudi Arabia.

Professional development activities have various formats (Figure 1). The most common are "courses and/or seminars attended in person" (76%) and "reading professional literature" (72%), followed by "education conferences" (49%), and training based on peer learning and coaching (44%).

Figure 1. Types of professional development attended by teachers
Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers



Note: The OECD average covers 31 countries (see OECD, 2019, Annex B).
This figure refers to professional development activities in which teachers participated in the 12 months prior to the survey.
Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Table I.5.7.

What is TALIS?

The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), established in 2008, is the first major international survey of teachers and school leaders on different aspects that affect student learning. It gives a voice to teachers and school leaders and allows them to provide input into educational policy analysis and development in key areas.

The international target population for TALIS is lower secondary teachers and their school leaders in mainstream public and private schools. In each country, a representative sample of 4 000 teachers and their school principals from 200 schools was randomly selected for the 2018 study. Across all survey components, approximatively 260 000 teachers responded to the survey, representing more than 8 million teachers in 48 participating countries and economies.

More information is available at www.oecd.org/education/talis.

Professional development has a high impact on teaching practices

Four out of five teachers (82%) report that professional development has a positive impact on their teaching practices, on average across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Table I.5.15). The perceived training benefit is particularly high in Alberta (Canada), Australia, the Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (CABA, Argentina), Japan and Singapore, where 90% or more teachers report a positive impact. In contrast, in Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Malta, Sweden and Turkey, only about 70% of teachers seem to find their professional development activities impactful.

Teachers generally report that the most effective professional development activities are "built on the teachers' prior knowledge" (91%, on average across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS) and "It provided opportunities to practise/apply new ideas and knowledge in the teacher's own classroom" (86%). Content-driven activities combined with active learning and collaboration opportunities seem to be the most effective types of CPD.

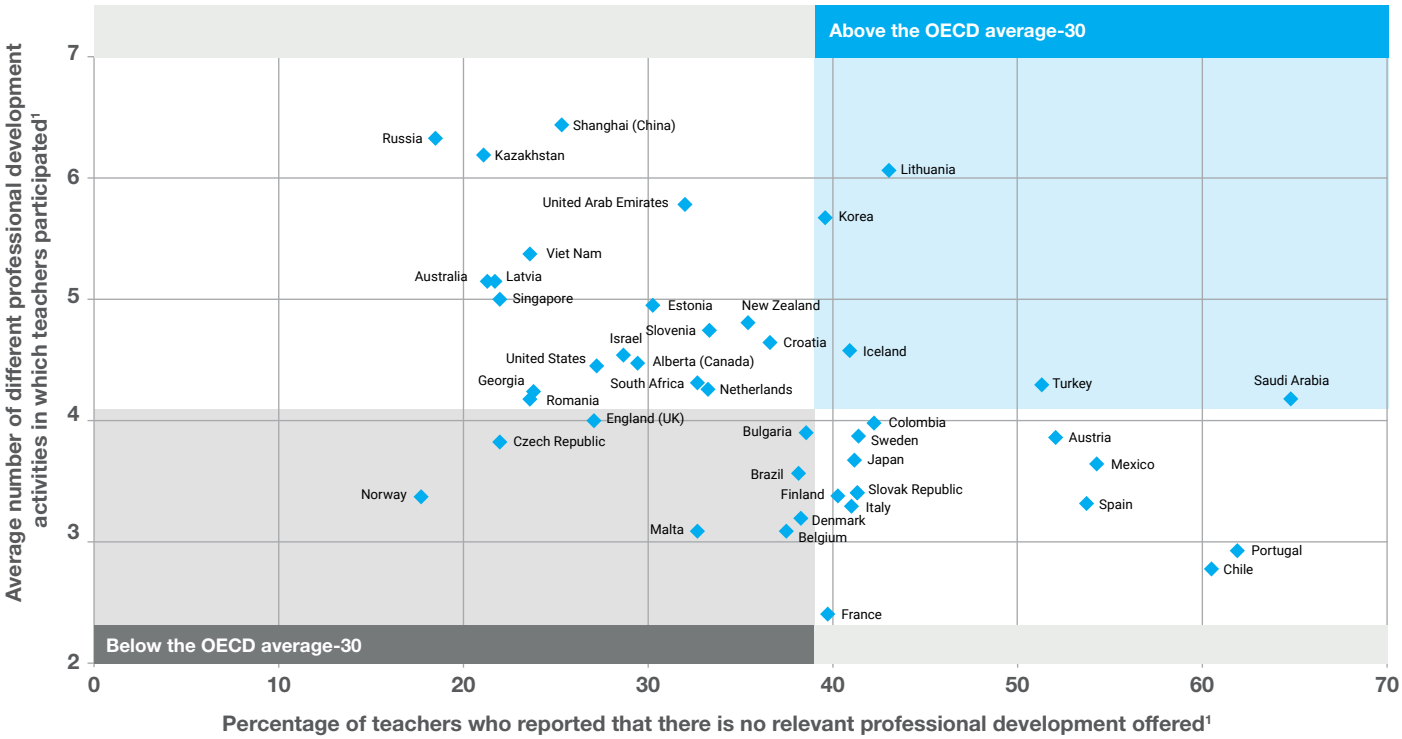
Participation in impactful professional development is positively associated with various dimensions affecting the teaching profession, such as teachers' job satisfaction (observed in 46 out of 48 TALIS countries and economies) and self-efficacy (observed in 33 out of 48 TALIS countries and economies) (OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Table I.5.13 and I.5.14).

Lack of relevant professional development and conflicts with work schedules are major barriers to participation in CPD

Across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS, almost two out of five teachers (38%) report that there is no relevant professional development offered, and that this poses a big barrier to their participation in professional development (Figure 2). The non-alignment of the CPD offer to actual needs can affect both the overall participation in CPD activities and the number of CPD activities attended.

The country-level association between participation in a number of different CPD activities and the sentiment that there is no relevant professional development activity offered shows a moderate negative relationship (the linear correlation coefficient r is r=-.39 (r2=0.15) among the 30 OECD countries and r=-.49 (r2=0.24) among the 44 TALIS countries with available data). For instance, in Chile and Portugal, which are the two countries with the highest percentage of teachers reporting a lack of relevant professional development activities offered (60% and 62%, respectively), the number of different professional activities in which teachers participated is the lowest (fewer than three activities). On the contrary, in Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation, which are two countries with the lowest percentages of teachers reporting a lack of relevant professional development activities (19% and 21%, respectively), participation exceeds six different professional development activities. However, there are some exceptions to this general tendency: for instance, in Norway, participation in relevant activities and the reported lack of relevant activities are both among the lowest percentage across participating countries and economies. Overall participation in CPD is low in countries with the highest percentage of teachers reporting a lack of relevant professional development activities offered. For example, in Saudi Arabia, the country with the highest percentage of teachers reporting a lack of relevant professional development activity offered, only 86% had participated in CPD in the last year, which is much lower than the OECD average (94%).

Figure 2. Participation in different forms of professional development, and the availability of relevant professional development
Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers.



1. Refers to professional development activities in which teachers participated in the 12 months prior to the survey.
Note: Countries and economies are only shown if they had available data for the average number of different professional development activities in which teachers participated, and for the percentage of teachers who reported that there is no relevant professional development activity offered. The OECD average-30 includes all TALIS 2018 OECD countries, with the exception of Hungary.
Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables I.5.7 and I.5.36.

Lack of time is another barrier to teachers' participation in CPD. On average across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS, more than half of teachers (54%) report that professional development conflicts with their work schedule. Time constraints are a major barrier in most countries, and are especially severe in CABA (Argentina), Japan, Korea and Portugal, where more than three out of four teachers report this to be an issue.

Moreover, 48% of teachers report that there are no incentives for participating in professional development (OECD average 32%), which is underlined by the lack of employer support. Employers are particularly not in favour of CPD participation in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Korea, Portugal and Saudi Arabia (reported by more than 65% of teachers); while in Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Iceland, Latvia and the Slovak Republic, the lack of employer support is reported by only a small share of teachers (less than 15%).

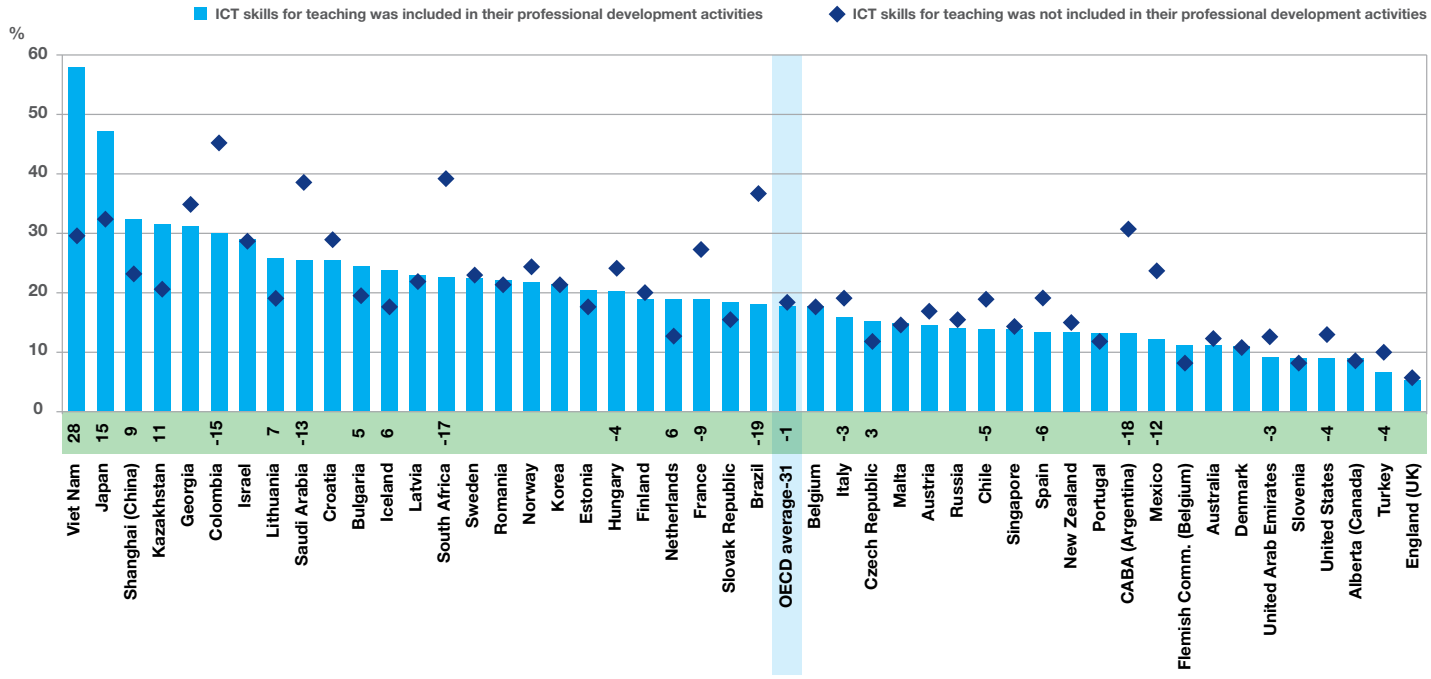
Teachers express a high need for professional development in some challenging areas

Teachers expressed a particularly high need for CPD in "teaching students with special needs" (22%), "ICT skills for teaching" (18%) and "teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting" (15%) (OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Table I.5.21). The high need for CPD in teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting is grounded in the increased cultural and ethnic diversity of classrooms, while the need for CPD in teaching students with special needs relates to the need to improve equity in education, especially in inclusive settings. The incorporation of information and communication technologies (ICT) into the classroom is also a major challenge currently facing education systems. According to teachers, the need for training in ICT skills for teaching varies between 5% in England and 55% in Viet Nam.

The best use of ICT in teaching is widely discussed in the scientific community, and results show that high levels of need remain even after participation in professional development activities that focus on ICT skills for teaching. On average across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS, there is only one percentage point difference between

teachers who received ICT skills for teaching in their professional development activities and those who did not in terms of reporting having a high training need for ICT skills for teaching (Figure 3). In Iceland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Shanghai (China) and Viet Nam, the training need in ICT skills for teaching is more than five percentage points higher once such training has been completed. In these countries, teachers seem to want further and additional training. The opposite is true in Brazil, CABA (Argentina), Chile, Colombia, France, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Spain, where teachers report a lower training need once such training has been completed (a difference of more than five percentage points).

Figure 3. Teachers' need for professional development in ICT skills for teaching, by participation in professional development[1]
Percentage of lower secondary teachers reporting a high level of need for professional development in ICT[2] skills for teaching



1. Refers to professional development activities in which teachers participated in the 12 months prior to the survey.
2. Information and communication technology (ICT).
Note: Statistically significant differences between teachers for whom ICT skills for teaching was included in their professional development activities and teachers for whom it was not included is shown next to the country/economy name.
Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Table I.5.24.

The bottom line

Continuous professional development (CPD) is crucial for teacher's professionalism, and affects teaching practices in the classroom. In addition, teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction are higher when professional development has a positive impact on their work.

Teachers have expressed a high need for CPD in new and often challenging areas, such as teaching students with special needs, teaching in multicultural or multilingual settings, and ICT skills for teaching. However, various barriers hinder participation in CPD, such as the non-alignment of content and needs, conflicting work schedules, lack of incentives, and lack of employer support.

Lifting barriers to participation in professional development by providing incentives and support structures, such as allocated time, as well as offering relevant professional development opportunities that meet teachers' needs, are crucial for making CPD accessible and purposeful for teachers. Education systems could also build on effective forms of professional development, such as active learning and collaborative approaches, to improve the overall quality of professional development offered to the teaching workforce. These efforts can help teachers become lifelong learners and grow in their profession.

Visit

www.oecd.org/education/talis/

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For more information

OECD (2019), *TALIS 2018 Results (Volume I): Teachers and School Leaders as Lifelong Learners*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/1d0bc92a-en. This report explores the knowledge and skills dimension of teacher and school leader professionalism.

OECD (forthcoming), *TALIS 2018 Results (Volume II): Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris. This report will be published in early 2020 and will focus on prestige, career opportunities, collaborative culture, and responsibility and autonomy.

TALIS country notes present the main findings of TALIS 2018 tailored to a specific country with an international perspective www.oecd.org/education/talis/talis-2018-country-notes.htm.

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