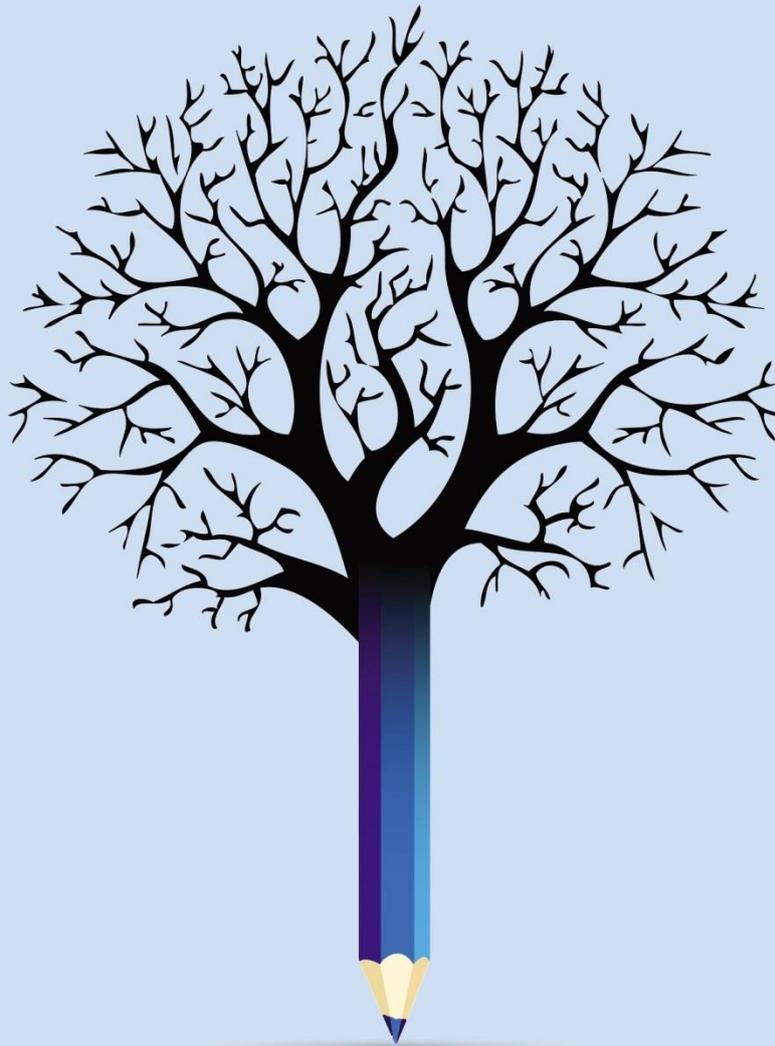




# EDUCATION POLICY OUTLOOK **NORWAY**



## EDUCATION POLICY OUTLOOK

This **policy profile on education** in Norway is part of the *Education Policy Outlook* series, which presents comparative analysis of education policies and reforms across OECD countries. Building on the OECD's substantial comparative and sectoral policy knowledge base, the series offers a comparative outlook on education policy. This country policy profile is an update of the [first policy profile of Norway](#) (2014) and provides: analysis of the educational context, strengths, challenges and policies; analysis of international trends; and insight into policies and reforms on selected topics. It is an opportunity to take stock of progress and where the education system stands today from the perspective of the OECD through synthetic, evidence-based and comparable analysis.

In addition to country-specific profiles, the series also includes a recurring publication. The first volume, *Education Policy Outlook 2015: Making Reforms Happen*, was released in 2015. The second volume, *Education Policy Outlook 2018: Putting Student Learning at the Centre* was released in 2018. Its complement, *Education Policy Outlook 2019: Working Together to Help Students Achieve their Potential* was released in autumn 2019. Designed for **policy makers, analysts and practitioners** who seek information and analysis of education policy taking into account the importance of national context, the country policy profiles offer constructive analysis of education policy in a comparative format. Each profile reviews the current context and situation of a country's education system and examines its challenges and policy responses, according to six policy levers that support improvement:

- Students: How to raise outcomes for all in terms of 1) equity and quality and 2) preparing students for the future;
- Institutions: How to raise quality through 3) school improvement and 4) evaluation and assessment;
- System: How the system is organised to deliver education policy in terms of 5) governance and 6) funding.

Some country policy profiles contain spotlight boxes on selected policy issues. They are meant to draw attention to specific policies that are promising or showing positive results and may be relevant for other countries.

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**Sources:** Subject to country participation, this country policy profile draws on OECD indicators from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) and the annual publication *Education at a Glance*, and refers to country and thematic studies such as OECD work on early childhood education and care, teachers, school leadership, evaluation and assessment for improving school outcomes, equity and quality in education, governing complex education systems, school resources, vocational education and training, and tertiary education. This profile also draws on information in the OECD Education Policy Outlook National Survey for Comparative Policy Analysis completed in 2016 by the Government of Norway, as well as information provided by the Ministry of Education and Research between 2018 and 2020 as part of the Education Policy Outlook's activities with countries.

Most of the figures quoted in the different sections refer to Annex B, which presents a table of the main indicators for the sources used throughout the country policy profile. Hyperlinks to the reference publications are included throughout the text for ease of reading, and also in the References and further reading section, which lists both OECD and non-OECD sources.

More information is available from the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills ([www.oecd.org/edu](http://www.oecd.org/edu)) and its web pages on the Education Policy Outlook ([www.oecd.org/edu/policyoutlook.htm](http://www.oecd.org/edu/policyoutlook.htm)).

In the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, some information is provided about initial responses.



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## HIGHLIGHTS

**Note:** Most of the content in this profile was written before the COVID-19 outbreak. As such, this document offers insight into pre-existing conditions that may influence the system's responsiveness in the context of the crisis and help inform longer-term efforts to strengthen resilience. Spotlight 1 summarises Norway's initial responses to the crisis. Its structure is based on work by the Education Policy Outlook in 2020 to support countries in these efforts.

### Norway's educational context

**Students:** In PISA 2018, Norway performed above the OECD average in reading and mathematics, and socio-economic status had one of the lowest impacts on students' reading scores in the OECD<sup>1</sup>. Norway's score for science was close to the OECD average. Adult literacy skills are also above the OECD average. In the same way, tertiary education attainment in Norway is above the OECD average, although upper secondary completion rates continue to be a challenge. Many features of Norway's education system favour equitable outcomes, such as a long period of compulsory education, delayed tracking, limited ability grouping and school choice. In PISA 2018, however, performance gaps between girls and boys, and between non-immigrant and immigrant students, continue to be among the highest in the OECD.

**Institutions:** Students in Norway reported high levels of cooperation and competition among students and low levels of truancy. Norway has undertaken efforts to improve the quality of initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development, which include reforms to ITE and promoting collaborative professional development practices. Teachers have benefited from below-average teaching hours and low student-to-teacher ratios. At the same time, teachers' and school principals' wages have been lower, compared to similarly educated workers. In spite of this, teachers reported comparatively good job satisfaction and feeling valued by society. High-stakes testing is limited in Norway; national tests tend to be used for school improvement and to identify students in need of extra support.

**System:** The governance and funding of Norway's education system reflect a long-established tradition of decentralisation. Public Early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres, primary, and lower secondary schools are owned and run by municipalities, and upper secondary schools by counties. In primary and secondary education, responsibilities for budgets, staffing, and student admissions are often devolved to the school level. The Ministry of Education and Research steers national policy and supervises local governance. It also has direct responsibility for public higher education institutions, which receive a block grant, but operate with relative autonomy within a regulatory framework. Norway's overall education expenditure was among the highest in the OECD in 2016. In ECEC (ISCED 0), 53% of institutions are run by private providers, but the majority of education funding, including ECEC, comes from public sources.

### Key pre-existing policy issues

Despite relatively high education expenditure, Norway's performance in PISA has stagnated over time. Reducing performance gaps between immigrant and non-immigrant students is a priority, given Norway's increasing immigrant population. In order to better prepare young people for the labour market, Norway should focus on improving upper secondary completion rates, particularly within vocational education. In this respect, increasing the number of available apprenticeships will be a priority. Another challenge is improving the salaries of teaching staff and school leaders, and attracting more qualified candidates at all education levels. Norway should also seek to better align school evaluation and teacher appraisal with competence development arrangements. With regards to funding, investment in higher education has not led to more timely completions and higher participation among more disadvantaged groups. Norway should investigate targeted and non-monetary measures to widen and encourage successful participation and timely completion.

#### Strengthening adaptability and resilience in the context of COVID-19 (see Spotlight 1)

Initial evidence suggests that pre-existing resources in the education system facilitated areas of Norway's early response to the pandemic. The ongoing focus on low-stakes, continuous evaluation and assessment for learning enabled decisions regarding national examinations to be taken swiftly and with minimal disruption. Pre-existing practices of municipal and county-level monitoring and reporting also seem to have helped Norway to more quickly ascertain challenges and concerns facing students. As Norway works to balance short-term responsiveness with longer-term strategic aims, priorities evolve. A [national expert group](#) (2020) reported that immigrants in Norway were disproportionately affected by the crisis, including increased learning disruption and greater exposure to trauma and bereavement. Some targeted supports were introduced, but such measures will need to be a focus in the longer term. Furthermore, as challenging conditions continue, the pressure on educators to find innovative and flexible solutions persists. Establishing and promoting collaborative communities could provide the supportive environments that facilitate this, while also addressing an area for development identified pre-crisis.



### Spotlight 1. The Norwegian education system's initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic. Education systems across the world have felt the force of the crisis as confinement measures triggered widespread closures of education institutions. On 12 March, Norway [announced the closure](#) of all educational institutions. Phased reopening began with kindergartens on 20 April, followed by younger primary school students and some upper secondary and tertiary students from 27 April. In light of the work of the *Education Policy Outlook* in the context of this pandemic, this spotlight offers an insight into system readiness and immediate responses across five key areas.

- 1. Ensuring continued access to learning and smooth educational pathways:** To support online learning, the Directorate for Education and Training published a [list of information and resources](#) and all schools received free access to tools for online teaching. The government launched a grant scheme for local initiatives that aim to support distance education, and committed to compensating municipal and private kindergarten providers and leisure services for lost income to ensure their survival. Grants were also dedicated to developing flexible vocational and adult education programmes and increasing study places. Norway cancelled written and oral examinations at the end of upper and lower secondary education, prioritising learning time over exam preparation during closures. Instead, school-based assessments of students' performance across the school year would inform all final grades. At upper secondary level, students who passed all subjects would receive a diploma enabling them to apply to higher education. Examinations were maintained for candidates from outside the formal school system and in higher education, where continuous assessment is less embedded, but via flexible methods which respected social distancing. For vocational students, a final assessment was still required but could be administered in flexible ways, determined by the institution.
- 2. Strengthening the internal world of the student:** During the school closures, Norway held two press conferences specifically for children, hosted by the Prime Minister and relevant Ministers. A 24-hour phone line was made available to children and young people affected by the crisis.
- 3. Providing targeted support and interventions for vulnerable children and families:** Kindergartens and primary schools remained open for children of key workers and those deemed vulnerable (children with special care or educational needs, and those with difficult home lives), including during the Easter holidays. Many municipalities and schools maintained both social and emotional welfare services and support for minority communities remotely. During the school closures, concerns grew about support for immigrant communities, specifically, and the government committed increased funds to strengthen outreach work among local voluntary organisations. Norway also committed extra funding and grants to voluntary organisations that provide education and leisure activities to children from low-income families to enable them to adapt their operations. The state special educational service for municipalities developed a resource bank to support schools to continue educating students with special education needs.
- 4. Harnessing wider support and engagement at local and central level:** As described above, several new government grant schemes supported local organisations to adapt or continue their work during the school closures. In terms of decision-making, Norway consulted social partners prior to both the school closures and reopening. At the international level, several Norwegian EdTech companies joined an [international collaborative](#) offering remote learning solutions to countries across the world.
- 5. Collecting, disseminating and improving the use of information about students:** Teachers were encouraged to regularly assess student participation and learning during school closures, the results of which would help inform students' final grades, where relevant. Several efforts to monitor student experiences at system-level helped inform the decision to reopen and other emergency measures. A survey of municipal responses ascertained local-level impressions of current and long-term consequences. [Statistics Norway \(2020\)](#) published a report on the costs of closures across the education system. A [multi-sectoral expert group \(2020\)](#) reported on the effects of emergency measures on vulnerable children and young people, specifically.

Selected indicators of system readiness (OECD)		Norway	Average	Min	Max
<i>Students' readiness (according to students' self-reports in PISA 2018)</i>					
1	Percentage of disadvantaged students who are academically resilient	12.3%	10.3%	7.6%	15.6%
2	Percentage of students in disadvantaged schools with access to a computer at home that they can use for school work	94.2%	81.5%	23.5%	96.5%
<i>Teachers' readiness (according to lower secondary teachers' self-reports in TALIS 2018)</i>					
3	Percentage of teachers with a high level of need for professional development related to ICT skills for teaching	22.2%	17.7%	5.3%	39.0%
4	Percentage of teachers agreeing that most teachers in the school provide practical support to each other when applying new ideas	84.9%	77.9%	64.7%	86.5%

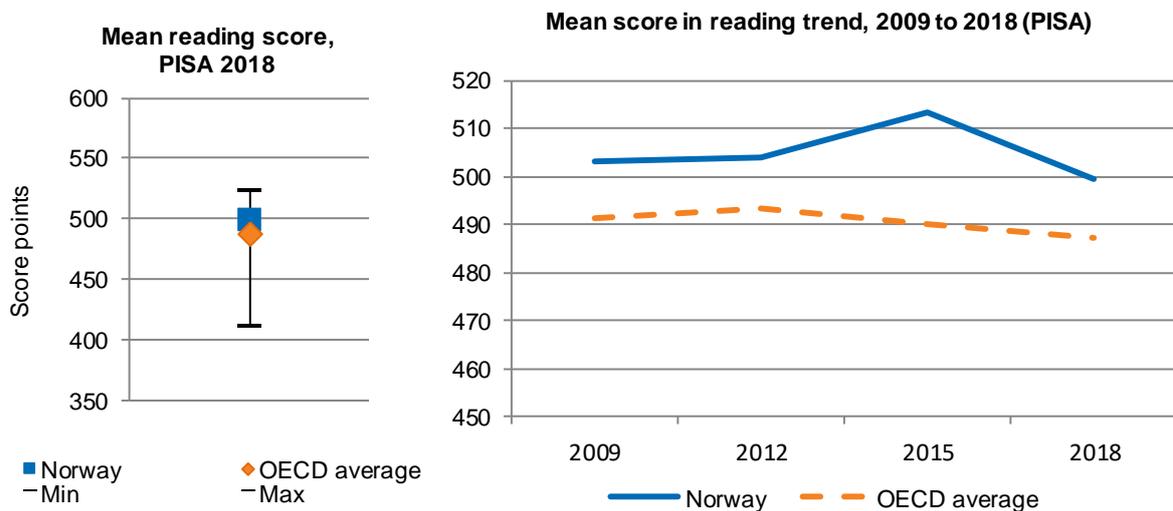
Note: The information presented in this spotlight covers key measures announced or introduced **before 05 May 2020**.



**Key trends in performance and attainment**

In PISA 2018, Norway scored 499 points on average in reading; this was close to the OECD average of 487 points. Norway's PISA reading performance has broadly remained unchanged over time. In the *Survey of Adult Skills* (PIAAC), Norway's performance was above the OECD average, though performance in literacy was lower among young people.

**Figure 1. Trends and comparative performance of 15-year-olds in reading, PISA**

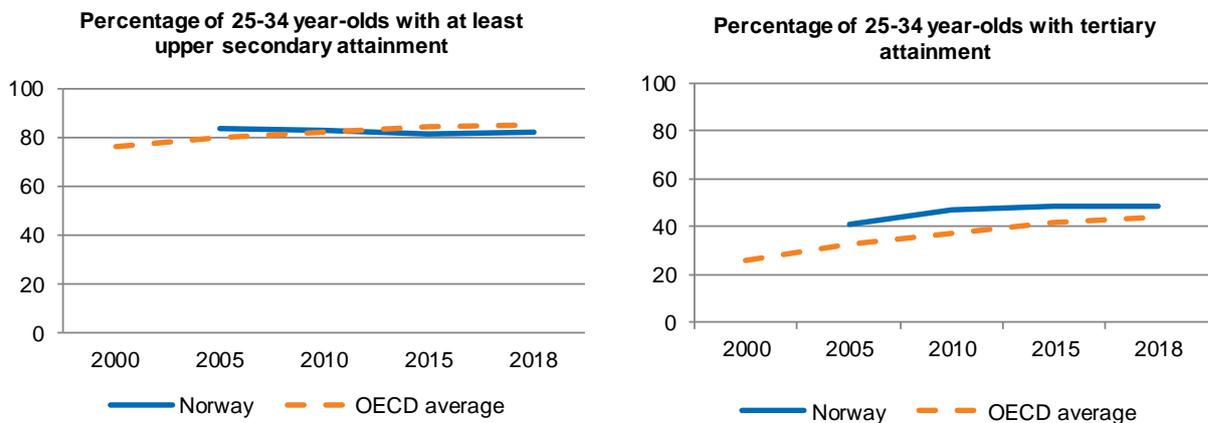


Note: "Min"/"Max" refer to OECD countries with the lowest/highest values.

Source: OECD (2019), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume I): What Students Know and Can Do*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5f07c754-en>.

Between 2005 and 2018, Norway saw a slight but steady decrease in the share of 25-34 year-olds with at least upper secondary attainment; this is now below OECD average levels. In 2018, some 82.8% of 25-34 year-olds in Norway had attained at least upper secondary education. At the same time, tertiary attainment among 25-34 year-olds gradually increased between 2005 and 2018, although this growth has been moderate compared to other OECD countries on average. Despite this levelling off, Norway has remained above the OECD average in tertiary attainment. In 2018, 48.2% of adults aged 25-34 had completed tertiary education, compared to an OECD average of 44.3%.

**Figure 2. Evolution of secondary and tertiary attainment among 25-34 year-olds, 2000-18**



Source: OECD (2019), *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>.

**Spotlight 2. Key policies, challenges and previous OECD recommendations for Norway****Main policies from Norway included in this country policy profile****Key challenges identified and recommendations previously provided by the OECD to Norway****STUDENTS**

- Measures extending right to Early childhood education and care (ECEC) to all children aged 1+ (2009). New regulations and subsidies programme (2015/16) to remove financial barriers to ECEC
- Measures to promote ECEC among immigrant families (2019)
- The revised Framework Plan for Kindergartens (2017), which replaced the previous Framework (2006) and included regulation on transition between ECEC and primary education
- Homework Assistance Programme (2006-2008) increasing coverage to include Grades 1-10 (2014)
- Certificate of Practice Scheme (*Praksisbrev*, 2008) fully implemented and fully enforced (2014)
- The Qualifications Passport for Refugees (2016)
- The Strategy for Skills Policy (2017-2021)

**Key challenges identified [2015, 2016, 2018, 2019]:** Performance gaps between boys and girls have been a long-standing concern in Norway, and have become more pronounced in recent years. A number of OECD reports have highlighted Norway's low upper secondary completion rates, particularly in Vocational education and training (VET) programmes. In these analyses, the relatively academic nature of VET in Norway, and the failure of some students to secure an apprenticeship placement, were identified as contributing to low completion rates. The OECD also identified that the relatively small number of low-skilled jobs in the Norwegian labour market mean that immigrants with low skills and education have poor labour market outcomes. There was also a need to develop practices that support labour market relevance and outcomes in higher education.

**Summary of previous related OECD recommendations:** Based on the experiences of other countries, the OECD has identified a number of policies and practices that could help raise the attainment of boys. These include providing tools and guidelines to teachers on managing behaviour in the classroom, promoting tutoring and mentoring programmes for underachieving boys, and smoothing transitions between ECEC and primary education. To increase the number of available apprenticeship places in VET, the OECD previously recommended raising employers' awareness of financial incentives and broader support available to them. It also recommended strengthening these incentives by lowering the cost for employers, either by increasing subsidies or by reviewing remuneration procedures for apprentices. Introducing work-based learning at an earlier stage would mean that students are better prepared for apprenticeships and more likely to secure a placement. In addition to this, the OECD recommended introducing subsidised apprenticeship programmes to support immigrants' integration into the labour market. To enhance the labour market relevance of higher education, the OECD proposed strengthening existing mechanisms that support collaboration between higher education institutions and employers and promote work-based learning.

**INSTITUTIONS**

- Promotion of the Status and Quality of Teachers strategy (2014). Includes reforms to Initial Teacher Education and introduction to five-year integrated masters programmes (2017)

**Key challenges identified [2015, 2016, 2018]:** The OECD identified a need to better define the scope of ECEC monitoring procedures and to clarify and separate the roles of the municipalities. It also identified a need to improve the proportion of qualified staff in ECEC. Norway's new competence



- Competence for the Future Kindergarten strategy (2018-2022)
- The new competence development model for schools (2017)
- Leadership development training for school principals (2009)
- The Assessment for Learning programme (2010-2018)
- Changes to higher education accreditation processes (2017)

development model sets out to improve the quality of teacher professional development. The OECD identified that the implementation strategy needs to be further developed for the model to achieve its aims.

**Summary of previous related OECD recommendations:** The OECD recommended introducing a mandatory qualification level for working with children in ECEC and developing a quantified national strategy for reducing the number of unqualified staff already in the system. It also recommended developing independent procedures for evaluating the quality of ECEC. The OECD made a number of recommendations to ensure the successful implementation of the competence development model. These include refining the objectives of the model, reviewing policy tools, clarifying stakeholder roles and responsibilities, gathering data for improvement, designing a communication and engagement plan, securing financial and human resources, and establishing a timeline for implementation.

## SYSTEM

- A National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (NQF, 2011)
- New Curricula and Programme Structure for upper secondary VET (2020/21)
- Knowledge Promotion 2020 (2018-2020)
- National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (2009)
- Change to ECEC funding (2011, 2015/16)
- Changes to performance-based component of higher education funding (2017)
- Performance agreements for higher education (2016)
- Mergers of universities and university colleges (2015-2017)
- The Norwegian Roadmap for Research Infrastructure (2018-2028)

**Key challenges identified [2014, 2016, 2018, 2019]:** Norway has a highly decentralised education system, giving municipalities a high level of autonomy in the implementation of policy reforms and in the day-to-day running of schools. Although this has its advantages, according to the OECD, Norway has also encountered challenges in aligning local and national goals and in ensuring the consistent implementation of policy reforms. The OECD also identified a need to expand data collection and exchange in the evaluation of lifelong learning programmes.

**Summary of previous related OECD recommendations:** The OECD called for greater alignment of different levels of governance and resources to ensure effective policy implementation across Norway's decentralised education system. It recommended developing clear implementation strategies that engage different stakeholders, reinforcing the role of key actors at different levels of the system, and developing a culture of evidence in which data is used strategically. To improve data collection and exchange, the OECD recommended strengthening reporting on local-level implementation of employment and social support to promote the sharing of best practices.

*Note:* The information on key challenges and recommendations contained in this spotlight draws from a desk-based compilation from previous OECD publications (subject to country participation). The spotlight is intended for exploratory purposes to promote policy dialogue and should not be considered an evaluation of the country's progress on these recommendations. Causality should not be inferred either: while some actions taken by a country could correspond to previous OECD recommendations, the OECD acknowledges the value of internal and other external dynamics to promote change in education systems.

*Main sources:* 2016, 2019: *The Economic Survey of Norway*; 2018: *Higher Education in Norway: Labour Market Relevance and Outcomes*; 2015, 2018, 2019: *Education Policy Outlook Comparative Report*; 2018: *Investing in Youth – Norway*; 2018: *The Gender Gap in Educational Outcomes in Norway*; 2015: *Early Childhood Education and Care Policy Review – Norway*; 2019: *Improving School Quality in Norway: The New Competence Development Model*.



## EQUITY AND QUALITY: PROMOTING ACCESS TO ECEC IN AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE SOCIETY

Norway has combined **above-average performance** in reading, with some above-average PISA equity indicators. In PISA 2018, Norway's share of low performers was smaller than the OECD average, with 19.3% of students achieving levels of proficiency below Level 2 in reading, compared to the OECD average of 22.6%. In the same way, some 11% of students in Norway were top performers in reading, meaning that they attained Levels 5 or 6 in the PISA reading test (the OECD average was 9%). Students' scores were also above the OECD average in mathematics, and around the OECD average in science. However, despite relatively high spending on education, Norway's PISA scores have remained stable across PISA cycles in the three main domains assessed. Norway had some of the lowest performance gaps relating to students' socio-economic background across OECD countries. In PISA 2018, socio-economic status explained 7.5% of the variance in reading scores, which was well below the OECD average of 12%. At the same time, performance gaps related to gender or immigrant background remained comparatively high. The average reading score for boys was 47 points lower than for girls, compared to an OECD average difference of 30 points. The [OECD \(2018\)](#) recently identified a number of policies and practices that could help Norway address these gender performance gaps. Students from immigrant backgrounds scored 33 points less in reading compared to their peers with a non-immigrant background, after accounting for gender and students' socio-economic profile. This performance difference was greater than the OECD average gap of 24 score points.

**Early childhood education and care (ECEC)** policies can increase the equity of education systems and help overcome language barriers between native speakers and minority language students. Norway has invested highly in ECEC and taken measures to increase participation among underrepresented groups (see "Recent policies and practices"). In 2017, enrolment rates for 2-3 year-olds were amongst the highest in the OECD. Some 92% of 2-year-olds and 96% of 3-year-olds were enrolled in ECEC, compared to 62% and 79%, respectively, at OECD average. ECEC in Norway combines education and childcare (as opposed to education-only programmes offered in other countries). Children can attend on a full- or part-time basis. Overall, children in Norway benefit from almost twice the number of net teaching hours in their last year of ECEC, with 1 680, compared to the OECD average of 911 hours in 2014. The recently updated [Framework Plan for Kindergartens \(2017\)](#) regulates the provision of education and care for 0-5 year-olds aiming to clarify expectations for staff and strengthen requirements to promote diversity, health and inclusion. It is supported by measures to raise staff competence (see "School Improvement").

According to OECD evidence, some **system-level policies** can favour equity, such as a longer period of compulsory education, delayed tracking, and limited ability grouping and school choice. Compulsory education in Norway begins at age 6 and ends at age 16. Students are first tracked into different educational pathways at the age of 16, which is the most common age among OECD countries. Evidence from PISA 2015 suggests that ability grouping levels are among the lowest in the OECD. Norway also benefits from the absence of grade repetition and had low levels of school-level segregation and performance variation between schools in PISA. In 2018, Norway's score on the PISA isolation index (0.09), which measures the extent to which disadvantaged students are isolated from advantaged students, was the lowest in the OECD. In PISA 2018, only 10.6% of the total variance in reading scores was explained by school-level variation, compared to 29% on average.

Performance differences between students from **immigrant and non-immigrant background** have continued to be a priority in Norway, as the country's population becomes increasingly diverse. In PISA 2018, students with an immigrant background made up 12.4% of the student population, increasing by 5.6 percentage points between 2009 and 2018 compared to an OECD average increase of 3.2 percentage points. Norway has some relatively positive indicators of immigrant inclusion. Evidence from PISA 2018 suggests students with immigrant backgrounds in Norway were less likely to be concentrated in certain schools, although there was still some segregation (Norway scored 0.36 in the isolation index of immigrant students, compared to 0.45 on average). Furthermore, in PISA 2018, 83.4% of students with an immigrant background in Norway reported that they do not feel like outsiders in school (the OECD average was 77.1%). However, in TALIS 2018, only 15.3% of teachers in Norway reported feeling "well prepared" or "very well prepared" to teach in a multicultural or multilingual setting, compared to 25.5% on average. [National research \(2020\)](#) suggests that various negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are more keenly felt by immigrant communities. Norway introduced some measures to mitigate this (see Spotlight 1); these efforts will need to be strengthened as medium- and longer-term consequences on educational progress become clearer.

### Key strengths and challenges in equity and quality (pre-crisis analysis)

#### Key strengths

- High performance in reading and mathematics.
- Positive equity indicators related to students' socio-economic background.
- Extensive ECEC provision with a continued focus on improving quality and access.

#### Key challenges

- Performance in PISA has stagnated across cycles.
- Persistent performance gaps related to gender and immigrant background.



### Recent policies and practices

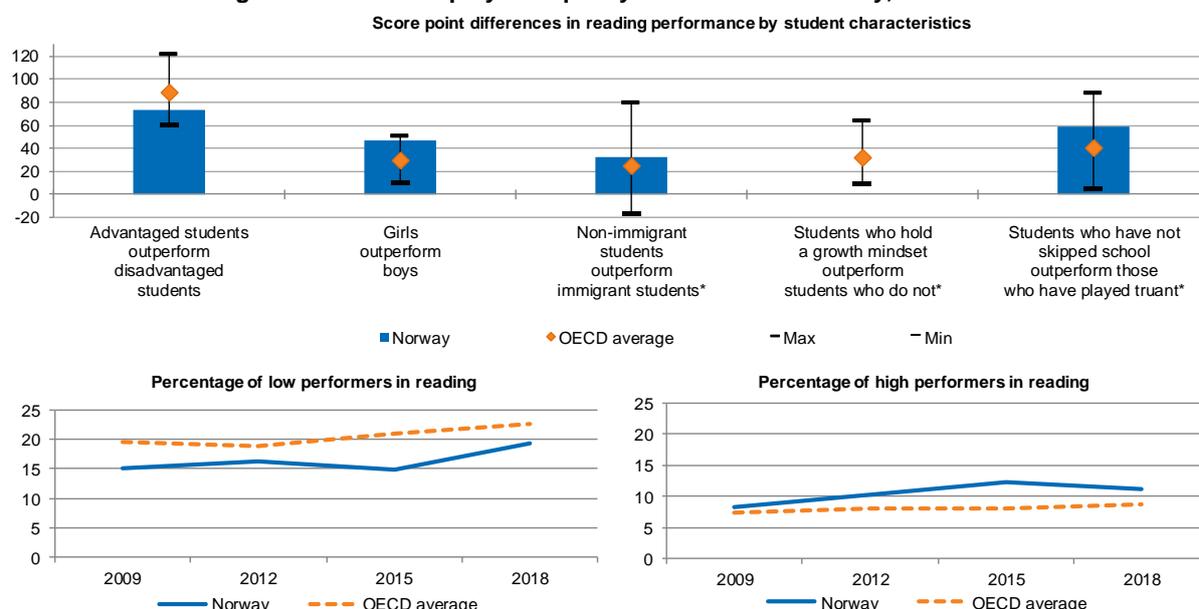
Norway implemented several [measures to increase participation in ECEC](#) between 2009 and 2019. In 2009, Norway extended the statutory right to ECEC from the age of 1. This opened access to children whose parents were unwilling or unable to participate in the labour force. Furthermore, recent funding measures aiming to remove financial barriers to participation are likely to benefit low-income families and families from immigrant backgrounds (see “Funding”). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Norway protected access to ECEC to some extent by keeping services open to certain students and prioritising the sector when reopening (see Spotlight 1).

The government has also developed a set of resources to support municipalities in actively engaging families from immigrant backgrounds. The [Directorate for Education and Training’s website](#) brings together successful measures previously used by municipalities to recruit immigrant children into ECEC. Municipalities can download information sheets for parents in ten languages. These explain what ECEC is and why children should attend.

After a successful pilot programme (2006-08), the [Educational Act](#) (2010) introduced a requirement for municipalities to offer eight hours per week of homework assistance to students in Grades 1-4 from 2010. The aim is to reduce the impact of parents’ level of education on student achievement, and has since been extended to all levels of compulsory education. An [evaluation of the homework assistance offer](#) (2013) found a school-level association between the level of participation and an improvement in schools’ national test results, but could not report on the effect on individuals. Students from immigrant backgrounds were found to be more likely to participate. Emerging aspects for improvement included the need to ensure that performance gaps between the most and least advantaged students do not increase, and that students from all backgrounds benefit.

The [Qualifications Passport for Refugees](#) (QPR) was piloted by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) in 2016. The passport aims to map, summarise, and present information on a refugee’s education, qualifications, and work experience. In the context of the 2015 refugee crisis, the NOKUT worked alongside the UK NARIC to develop the [European Qualifications Passport for Refugees](#) (EQPR). This formed the basis of the 2016 pilot in Norway. An [evaluation of the pilot](#) (2016) found that the cost of issuing a qualifications passport was 90% lower than pre-existing accreditation procedures. The finalised process involves a structured interview with an evaluator and analysis of available documents. Following successful pilots in Norway and Greece, a three-year project was launched in 2018 with additional partners including Italy, Germany, the Netherlands and the Council of Europe. The European Qualifications Passport also provided the model for the pre-pilot of a [UNESCO Qualifications Passport for Refugees and Vulnerable Migrants](#).

Figure 3. Selected equity and quality indicators for Norway, PISA 2018



Note: “Min”/“Max” refer to OECD countries with the lowest/highest values; [\*] Score point difference after accounting for students’ socio-economic status and language spoken at home.

Sources: OECD (2019), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume I): What Students Know and Can Do*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5f07c754-en>; OECD (2019), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume II): Where All Students Can Succeed*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b5fd1b8f-en>; OECD (2020), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume III): What School Life Means for Students’ Lives*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/acd78851-en>.



## PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE: ENSURING SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION AND LABOUR MARKET RELEVANCE IN POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION

The capacity of a country to effectively develop **skills and labour market perspectives** can play an important role in the educational decisions of the population. In the OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) in 2012, 16-64 year-olds in Norway scored 278 points, compared to the OECD average of 268 points. Norway's literacy and numeracy scores were consistently higher than the OECD average across most age groups. In literacy, 16-24 year-olds performed closer to the average, while 16-19 year-olds specifically performed slightly below average, suggesting a need to strengthen efforts on literacy outcomes from earlier education levels. Labour market conditions for 15-29 year-olds in Norway have been among the most favourable in OECD countries. In 2016, youth employment stood at 59%, compared to the OECD average of 52%. Similarly, NEET rates (the proportion of those aged 18-24 that are not employed or in further education or training) were among the lowest in the OECD in 2018, at 8.8% (OECD average: 14.3%). However, the NEET rate for 15-29 year-olds increased by around two percentage points between 2008 and 2018. The [OECD 2014](#) reports that Norway has taken measures to better anticipate the needs of the labour market (see "Recent policies and practices").

A comprehensive **upper secondary** system offers students five general academic programmes and ten vocational programmes. The system is flexible, allowing students to move easily between general and vocational tracks. While almost all students who have completed compulsory education begin an upper secondary school programme, many struggle to complete their studies. In 2015, only 57.0% of upper secondary students completed their education within the theoretical duration of their programme, but this share increased to 74.7% two years after the theoretical completion date. The OECD averages were 68.2% and 75.4%, respectively. These figures suggest that some students in Norway need more time to complete, compared to their peers in other OECD countries, but this may not always suffice. According to the [OECD \(2018\)](#), students with low achievement in compulsory education, those whose parents did not attain upper secondary or tertiary education, and students from immigrant backgrounds are particularly likely to drop out. In 2018, 82.2% of 25-34 year-olds in Norway had at least upper secondary level attainment, compared to the OECD average of 85.4%. Norway's low upper secondary completion rates are a concern given the poorer employment prospects for those without upper secondary level attainment. In 2017, the unemployment rate for 25-34 year-olds who did not complete upper secondary education was 9.7%, compared to 4.3% for those who did. The [OECD \(2018\)](#) identified that low educational attainment is also the primary risk factor for NEET status; in 2015, more than half of NEETs had not completed upper secondary education.

**Vocational education and training (VET)** can ease entry into the labour market. In 2017, the share of students following vocational upper secondary programmes, at 49.7%, was close to the OECD average (43.1%), but completion rates were particularly low in VET. A key challenge seems to be a mismatch between the offer of apprenticeship places and student demand. The [OECD \(2018\)](#) proposed measures to reduce the costs borne by employers as a way of creating incentives to offer apprenticeships, as well as more targeted measures aimed at supporting students at risk of dropping out. Norway has recently developed a [new VET curriculum](#) (2020) in consultation with professional councils (see "Governance"). The new courses offer earlier specialisation in a professional field; this should better prepare students for the transition to work-based learning.

**Higher education** is well-valued by Norwegian society. Some 48.2% of 25-34 year-olds had a tertiary-level qualification, compared to the OECD average of 44.3% in 2018. Employment rates for 25-34 year-olds with tertiary education were among the highest in the OECD in 2018, although labour market outcomes varied according to field of study. Upward mobility at tertiary level is also amongst the highest in OECD. In 2016, 33% of 30-44 year-olds whose parents did not attain tertiary education had completed tertiary education, compared to an OECD average of 20%. However, many of those who enter higher education struggle to complete their studies, and first-generation university students are still more likely to drop out. In 2017, only 44% of students completed within the expected timeframe. The [OECD \(2018\)](#) stressed the importance of higher education institutions in Norway making use of practices that enhance labour market relevance, such as work-based learning and interactive teaching methods.

Participation in **adult learning** can support workers to adapt to changed economic circumstances. Adult learning has an important place in Norway's education system and the [OECD \(2019\)](#) reported high participation rates. Adults who have not completed school have a statutory right to certified primary- and secondary-level education, following the objectives of mainstream curriculum. The state also provides language and social studies courses for newly-arrived immigrants, and financial support to study associations, folk high schools, and distance learning providers.

### Key strengths and challenges in preparing students for the future (pre-crisis analysis)

#### Key strengths

- Comparatively high scores in literacy and numeracy for adults of different age groups.
- Participation rates and educational mobility in higher education among the highest in the OECD.

#### Key challenges

- Enhancing the labour market relevance of VET and higher education.
- Improving upper secondary and tertiary completion rates.



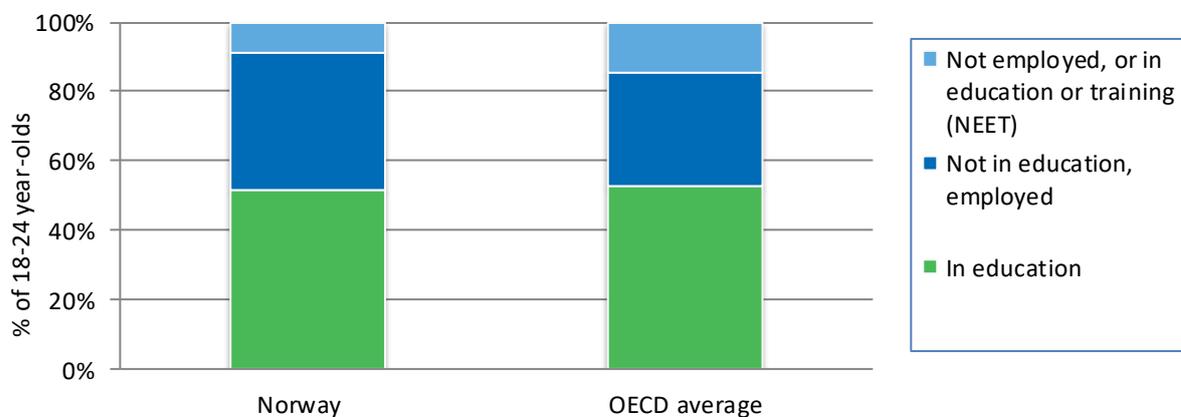
### Recent policies and practices

The [Certificate of Practice Scheme](#) (*Praksisbrev*) is an alternative VET pathway aimed at students who are struggling in mainstream VET. Its aim is to improve completion rates among these students. The scheme was piloted between 2008 and 2011 and was adopted as a permanent arrangement in 2016. Whereas most VET programmes in Norway involve two years of school-based learning before beginning a two-year apprenticeship period, certificate of practice candidates alternate between school-based training and training in enterprise. At the end of the programme, students can transition to the journeyman's certificate (a formal VET qualification) or continue their training in a particular trade. An evaluation by the Norwegian Research Institute (NIFU) found that 49% of Certificate of Practice students obtained an apprenticeship after completing the programme, compared to 29% of students in mainstream VET. The evaluation linked the success of the programme to the degree of work-based learning, which was a better fit for some learners than school-based learning. Giving students the opportunity to establish contact with enterprises early in the programme also meant that these students were more likely to secure an apprenticeship with the same employer.

In partnership with the OECD, Norway developed and implemented [The Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy](#) (2017-2021). On the basis of diagnostic workshops involving a wide range of stakeholders, the [Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report for Norway](#) (2014) outlined nine challenges facing Norway. These included reducing the VET dropout rate, ensuring strong foundational skills, and making better use of data on current and projected labour market needs to inform educational choices. The overall aim of the resulting skills strategy is to ensure that individuals and businesses have the skills that will give Norway a competitive business sector, an efficient and sound public sector, and an inclusive labour market. Implementation of the strategy is monitored through a Skills Policy Council, made up of representatives from different ministries, as well as various social partners and the voluntary sector. These partners have identified broad priority areas which frame the objectives for the strategy. The strategy's objectives include improving the collection and dissemination of data on Norway's labour market needs and using this to inform careers guidance, developing flexible programmes for continuing education, and enhancing skills among adults with weak labour market participation. The government is due to announce a revised strategy in 2021. As the government commits more funds to expanding VET and adult education in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (see Spotlight 1), aligning new provision with the key objectives and actions of the Skills Strategy will be important.

The Norwegian government has been working on a [Skills Reform](#), and is due to present a white paper to parliament in 2020. A key pillar of the skills reform is the Skills Program, which brings together a range of adult learning initiatives. These include the allocation of funding for short, flexible digital skills courses designed in collaboration between the business, VET, and higher education sectors. The government has also allocated [funding for industry-based training](#) (2020) in sectors where the need for skills has evolved. The government covers the costs of expanding current VET provision and developing new training programmes, while industry partners determine the content of new courses and recruit participants. The government has already established programmes with industry partners - in the local care sector and in construction and industry - and has issued a call for proposals from other sectors.

Figure 4. Percentage of 18-24 year-olds in education and not in education, by work status, 2018



Source: OECD (2019), *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>.



## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: BUILDING A CULTURE OF COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Developing positive **learning environments** for students which enable school leaders and teachers to succeed is essential to raise achievement in school. In PISA 2018, Norway had one of the largest shares of students reporting cooperation (87%) and competition (69.2%) taking place in the classroom. The respective OECD averages are 62% and 49.9%. There is evidence that suggests a comparatively more effective learning time spent in Norwegian schools and classrooms. Only 13.6% of 15-year-olds reported skipping at least one day of school in the two weeks prior to the PISA test, compared to the OECD average of 21.3%. Furthermore, in TALIS 2018, Norway was one of the few countries with an increase in the share of reported time spent on actual teaching and learning in the classroom. This increased by 1.3% between 2008 and 2018, and now stands at 82.3%. However, novice teachers and more experienced teachers in Norway had some of the largest gaps in self-efficacy in controlling disruptive behaviour in the classroom, with a difference of 15 percentage points (compared to the OECD average of 9.3 percentage points).

Attracting, retaining and developing good quality **school leaders** is key to improving the quality of learning environments and promoting effective school leadership. Norwegian school leaders are recruited by school owners when positions become available. A [qualification for new school leaders](#) is in place since 2009, but this remains non-mandatory. In TALIS 2018, a majority of school leaders in Norway reported that they participate in courses/seminars or education conferences, or in a network of principals. Activities with less participation include peer and/or self-observation and coaching as part of a formal arrangement (15.8%, compared to the TALIS average of 47.2%) and participation in formal qualification programmes (23.9%, although still above the TALIS average of 15.7%). The [OECD](#) (2019) recently reported that school leaders' capacity to develop communities of learning was unevenly distributed across the system and suggested that it should be a focus for principals' professional development. Since 2018, principals who have completed initial principals' training are offered a range of [leadership development modules](#). [One module](#) aims to develop principals' instructional leadership skills to support the implementation of the new school curriculum (see "Governance").

A strong supply of highly-qualified and engaged **teachers** is vital in every education system. Norway has been undertaking efforts to improve the quality of initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development. These efforts include the replacement of the four-year bachelor's ITE programme with a five-year integrated master's programme in 2017 (see "Recent policies and practices"). In the same way, promoting collaborative professional development practices has become the focus of Norway's new competence development model for schools (see Spotlight 3). In TALIS 2018, 94% of teachers reported having attended at least one professional development activity in the year prior to the survey (OECD average: 94%). Still, only 78% of those surveyed felt this training had a positive impact on their teaching practice; this was below the TALIS average of 83%. In addition, only 25% had participated in collaborative forms of professional development, such as peer learning and coaching. According to evidence from TALIS, this is often the kind of professional development activity that teachers find most useful.

**Teaching conditions** in Norway include below-average teaching hours and student-to-teacher ratios, with comparatively low wages compared to the OECD average. In 2017, teachers in Norway taught 741 hours per year at primary level, and 663 hours at lower secondary level, compared to OECD averages of 783 and 709 hours, respectively. In the same year, Norway had lower student-to-teacher ratios for primary (9) and secondary (10) compared to the OECD averages of 13 for primary and secondary. In terms of salary, in 2016, teachers earned 76% of the average salary of a similarly educated worker (OECD average: 88%). Teachers in Norway reported comparatively good job satisfaction and feeling valued in society in TALIS 2018. Some 75.0% of teachers in Norway said that if they could choose again, they would still become a teacher (OECD average: 75.6%) and 34.8% felt that the teaching profession was valued in society (OECD average: 25.8%). However, Norway's [background report](#) (2017) for the OECD's initial teacher preparation study identified shortages of trainee teachers for years 1-7; this points to a need to reflect on how to attract more highly-qualified candidates. In addition, while school leaders in OECD countries earn on average 34% more than similarly educated workers, principals in Norway earn slightly less than their peers. This comparatively lower earnings premium could reduce incentives to become a school principal.

### Key strengths and challenges in school improvement (pre-crisis analysis)

#### Key strengths

- Students and teachers report positive learning environments, and teachers report good job satisfaction and feeling valued.
- Recent reforms seek to improve teachers' initial training and continuing professional development.

#### Key challenges

- Improving collaborative professional development for teachers and school leaders.
- Attracting enough applicants to ITE in years 1-7.
- Comparatively lower wage premiums for school leader lead to staff shortages.



### Recent policies and practices

In a White Paper published in 2017, the Government of Norway introduced a new competence development model for schools to develop collaborative professionalism through a decentralised approach (see Spotlight 3).

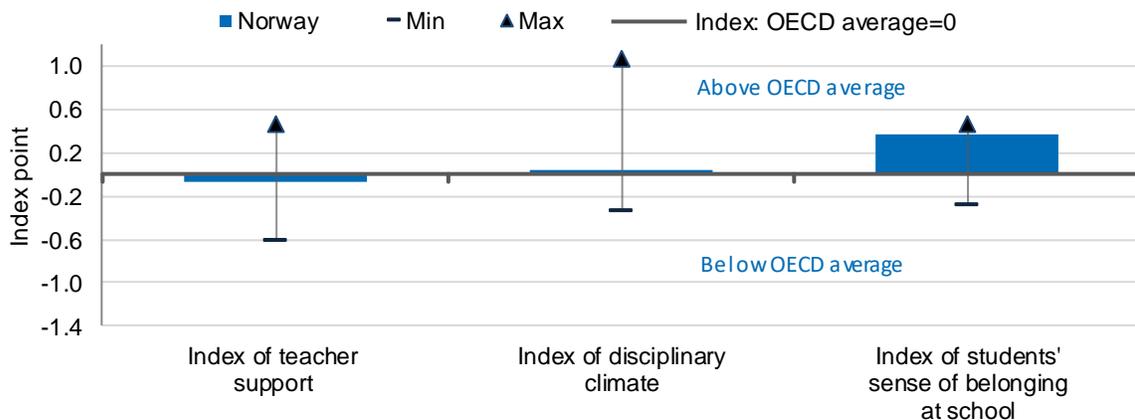
The [Competence for the Kindergarten of the Future strategy \(2018-2022\)](#) seeks to raise competence levels of all ECEC teachers, assistants and managers, thus supporting the aims of the new Framework Plan for Kindergartens. County Governors manage state funds that have been made available for professional development. These can be used for ECEC centre-based training for all staff, or for basic skills, professional, and master's-level qualifications for individual staff. The county governors are also required to convene regional cooperation forums to ensure the alignment of skills development practices across the region, and for quality assurance purposes. ECEC centre leaders are responsible for whole-staff skills development initiatives. The Directorate for Education and Training has worked with higher education providers to develop professional training for ECEC teachers in fields such as learning and education management, science and mathematics, and language development. A separate programme for ECEC leaders seeks to build capacity in pedagogical and administrative leadership. The strategy is evaluated on a yearly basis, and will be reviewed in 2022. An [evaluation](#) (2019) found that leadership training for ECEC leaders emphasised competence in managing, changing and developing the ECEC centre as an organisation in accordance with the framework plan. Stakeholders found the collaboration between ECEC providers and the higher education sector to be innovative and demanding.

In recent years, Norway has taken a number of measures to improve teachers' initial preparation. In 2017, the four-year ITE bachelor programme was extended to a five-year integrated master programme. This gives trainee teachers greater opportunities to undertake work-based learning in schools. Students also complete a practice-based thesis that supports research and development initiatives. Other reforms introduced include a minimum requirement for ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits in teachers' specialist subjects and an increase in the minimum grade requirement for mathematics.

In addition, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research worked alongside the ECEC, school, and higher education sectors to develop [Teacher Education 2025: National Strategy for Quality and Cooperation in Teacher Education](#) (2017). The strategy aims to improve the quality of teacher education and to promote collaboration between different stakeholders. Teacher education institutions (TEIs) have established partnerships with local ECEC centres and schools and their owners. These partnerships work to deliver high-quality teaching placements in initial teacher training and to conduct practice-based research and development projects.

Norway has also undertaken moves to strengthen the support for novice teachers in schools. A [framework for the induction of newly qualified teachers](#) (2018) sets out the principles of effective teacher induction. Informed by current research, it outlines the responsibilities of different stakeholders. This is complemented by [guidance for school owners](#) (2019) on designing induction programmes, and training for mentors of newly qualified teachers.

Figure 5. The learning environment according to students, PISA 2018



Note: "Min"/"Max" refer to OECD countries with the lowest/highest values.

Source: OECD (2020), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume III): What School Life Means for Students' Lives*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/acd78851-en>.



### Spotlight 3. A new competence development model for professional development and school improvement

A government white paper (2017) advocated that national competence development frameworks did not allow for local adaptation, and that previous attempts to create a baseline for national competence standards had left municipalities feeling disempowered. It set out the need for a competence development system that was responsive to local needs and empowered local-level stakeholders in the context of further decentralisation.

The new competence development model is based on three complementary pillars:

- **A decentralised system** that channels funds directly to municipalities to ensure they implement competence-raising measures. Municipalities can therefore set priorities within the framework of national goals, and universities and university colleges support municipalities in the provision of training.
- **A follow-up scheme** that provides support to school owners who report weak results over time. This builds on the successful [Advisory Team Programme \(2009\)](#). Experienced school leaders and local administrators support schools and school owners in meeting their improvement goals.
- **An innovative scheme** that seeks to develop research-based knowledge about the education system. The state defines requirements for evaluation and quality, while the municipalities and research communities work to develop the measures they wish to test.

Although the policy is centrally designed, and the majority of the funding comes from central government, competence development is driven by local analysis of needs. In order to apply for national funding, school owners must contribute 30% of the grant from their own funds to ensure that funding from the national, municipal and county levels are used to meet the same goals. Municipalities are encouraged to collaborate in order to determine priorities and to decide how funds will be used. The Competence for Kindergarten of the Future strategy (2018-2022) also makes use of a decentralised model, in which county governors manage competence development funds (see “School Improvement”).

The OECD has worked with Norway to support the successful implementation of this new model. The resulting [OECD report](#) (2019) concluded that the model was well-suited to Norway’s decentralised education system, but required a carefully thought-out implementation strategy to ensure it results in effective changes in teaching practices across schools in Norway. Accordingly, the OECD has proposed a set of recommendations to support the model implementation. In particular, the report suggests that the model could be better aligned with teacher appraisal and school evaluation procedures.



## EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT: IMPROVING LEARNING THROUGH FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND TEACHER APPRAISAL

Defining strategies for evaluation and assessment is an important step towards improving student outcomes and developing a better and more equitable school system. The highly decentralised nature of Norway's education system makes evaluation and assessment all the more important. Some [research](#) (2014) suggests that while Norway has introduced mechanisms for defining specific educational outcomes and determining who is responsible for achieving them, Norway's accountability procedures do not include the kind of high-stakes incentives used in other countries. Instead, these procedures place the responsibility on local actors to monitor performance and make improvements if necessary. This approach was fully mobilised during the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, where system-level statistical and expert analysis combined with rapid, local-level reporting to offer timely insights into the impact of school closures (see Spotlight 1).

**System evaluation** is mainly the responsibility of the Directorate for Education and Training, through the Quality Assessment System. Key performance indicators include Norway's results in international assessments, national tests, students' final assessments and the Pupil Survey. These are presented annually in The Education Mirror. In higher education, the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) is responsible for quality control and stimulating quality development.

**School evaluations** are mainly conducted internally in Norway and there are no systematic inspections or external reviews of individual schools. School self-evaluation is mandatory, and school owners are charged with ensuring it takes place. They also conduct visits to schools to ensure quality and compliance. Since 2014, the county governors' offices have carried out regular inspections of the schools in their county. These reports are made available to the public and used for quality development. In addition, a [school portal](#) contains data on the education system at school, municipality, county and national level and is used by the relevant bodies to inform school improvement. It includes data from national tests and examinations as well as student, parent and teacher surveys. In PISA 2015, 98.5% of schools in Norway reported conducting self-evaluations (compared to the OECD average of 93.2%), while 63.9% of schools reported being externally evaluated (compared to 74.6%). In 2019, the [OECD](#) (2019) recommended aligning school evaluation procedures with the new competence development model (see Spotlight 3) so that competence development priorities are informed by an assessment of a school's strengths and weaknesses. This move could also further incentivise schools and teachers to engage with the model.

According to OECD evidence, **teacher appraisal** can strengthen professionalism and performance, provided it emphasises developmental evaluation and facilitates progression across a career. In Norway, 62.0% of lower secondary teachers had school principals who reported formally appraising their teachers at least once a year in TALIS 2018, compared to the OECD average of 63.5%. Although teacher appraisal is compulsory in Norway, there are no common processes, national performance criteria or reference standards for teacher appraisal. The most common source of feedback for teachers is an annual employee dialogue with the school leader. However, in TALIS 2018, 55% of teachers' principals reported that formative discussions follow appraisal either most or all of the time compared to an OECD average of 63%, and 16% had school principals who reported that a development or training plan is mostly or always put in place after appraisal, compared to 46% on average.

**Student assessment** practices, and assessment for learning in particular, have been a focus in Norway since the launch of the Knowledge Promotion reform in 2006. In TALIS 2018, however, only 69% of teachers reported routinely assessing students' progress by observing them and giving them immediate feedback, which was below the OECD average of 79%. In addition to this, only 71% of teachers said they gave their own assessments to students (OECD average: 77%). This suggests there is still progress to be made in terms embedding a culture of formative assessment in Norwegian schools. Three types of nationally designed student assessments complement teacher-based classroom assessment: mapping tests focused on identifying students in need of additional support (in Years 1-4), national basic skills tests (in Years 5, 8 and 9), and sample-based assessments at the end of compulsory education and upper secondary education. These are intended as tools for school improvement and have low stakes for students. In PISA 2015, the share of students enrolled in secondary schools where standardised tests are used to make decisions on students' promotion or retention was among the lowest in the OECD, at 5% (OECD average: 31%).

### Key strengths and challenges in evaluation and assessment (pre-crisis analysis)

#### Key strengths

- Norway has a variety of national and international instruments that support the monitoring of education quality.
- A strong emphasis on formative assessment at different levels of the system.

#### Key challenges

- Aligning school evaluation and teacher appraisal with competence development procedures.
- Improving the quality of teacher appraisal in order to develop greater coherence of processes and expectations across the system.

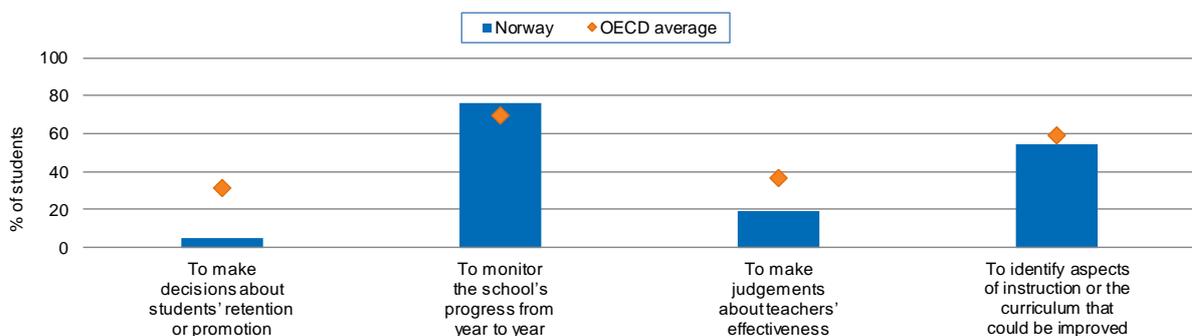


### Recent policies and practices

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on formative assessment in Norway. The [Assessment for Learning Programme \(2010-18\)](#) was developed to support schools, training providers, and local authorities in improving formative assessment practices. Some 320 municipalities and 630 schools were involved in the programme across its two phases (2010-14 and 2014-18). The Directorate for Education and Training set guiding principles for the content and organisation of the programme, while local authorities were charged with local-level implementation. The Directorate also organised seminars and conferences for participating local authorities and provided online training and resources for schools. The [final report](#) (2018) of the programme found that, in many cases, participation had led to a more learning-driven assessment culture, increased use of formative assessment practices, improved curriculum planning, and an improved research and development culture among schools. However, reports also found variation in schools' and local authorities' understanding of what constitutes good assessment practices. There was also variation in the scope of change, indicating that some schools and local authorities needed more time to bring about significant change in assessment practices. In addition to this, data from the student survey revealed that there was still progress to be made in embedding student self-assessment. While 58% of local authorities participating in the sixth cohort had concrete plans to continue assessment for learning after the end of the programme, there was variation in how specific and committed these plans were. Formative assessment plays an important role in Norway's new [core curriculum](#) (2020) (see "Governance"). The Directorate for Education and Skills has also produced a [bank of resources](#) to support assessment for learning across the curriculum. These efforts to embed formative assessment practices likely proved advantageous during the COVID-19 pandemic as formative assessment became the chief form of monitoring student progress during school closures (see Spotlight 1).

Recent [changes in the accreditation processes](#) conducted by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance (2017) in Education (NOKUT) seek to enhance the labour market relevance of higher education programmes. Accreditation regulations had already been revised in 2011 to include criteria on labour market relevance. These required higher education institutions to describe the relevance of their programmes for working life, to outline the skills developed through the programme, and to indicate how these skills align with the labour market. The accreditation criteria used by NOKUT now include specific indicators on labour market relevance, and the involvement of social partners such as employers has been strengthened. The accreditation panel must now include at least one representative from 'social or working life'. This aims to ensure that the employer's perspective on the labour market relevance of higher education programmes is captured throughout the accreditation process.

**Figure 6. Percentage of students in schools where the principal reported assessments of students in national modal grade for 15-year-olds, PISA 2015**



Source: OECD (2016), *PISA 2015 Results (Volume II): Policies and Practices for Successful Schools*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264267510-en>.



## GOVERNANCE: A DECENTRALISED EDUCATION SYSTEM

The administration of the Norwegian education system takes place at three levels: the central level, the county level, and the municipal level. At the central level, the Norwegian Parliament (*Storting*) and government set the goals and framework for the education system from early childhood education and care to higher education. The Ministry of Education and Research steers national education policy at all levels through legislation, regulations, curricula and framework plans. The Ministry of Education and Research also has a more direct responsibility for universities and university colleges. Norway's counties are responsible for upper secondary schools, while its municipalities are responsible for ECEC, primary and lower secondary education. The small number of private schools in Norway are owned and run by the board of the school. Other relevant bodies are:

- The [Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training](#) has national responsibility for supervising the quality and governance of ECEC and schools. It ensures the implementation of national education policy and regulations at different levels of the system. It also has operational responsibility for curriculum development and national statistics for ECEC and school education.
- The [Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education](#) (NOKUT) is an independent government agency responsible for evaluation and recognition of qualifications in higher and tertiary education.
- The [Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education](#) (Diku) manages national programmes to encourage quality development in Norwegian higher and tertiary education, as well as programmes for international cooperation (e.g. for the EU Erasmus+ programme).
- [The Norwegian Directorate for ICT and Joint Services in Higher Education & Research](#) (Unit) manages a number of essential services for Norwegian research and higher education institutions (e.g. the Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service, or the national system for student administration).
- [Skills Norway](#) (Kompetanse Norge) is a national directorate for lifelong learning. It promotes access to flexible learning in order to provide the Norwegian society with a skilled labour force.
- The [Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Governments](#) (KS) represents the views and interests of municipalities and county councils as ECEC and school owners. It is responsible for negotiations with employee organisations on issues relating to pay and conditions.
- The [County Governors' Offices](#) liaise between central education authorities and the municipalities and counties. They supervise the implementation of national policy at the regional level, handle complaints and appeals, and play a role in school inspections.

Other education **stakeholders** are trade unions (e.g. Union of Education Norway and the Norwegian Association of Researchers), student and parent organisations, the Norwegian Association of School Leaders, the Association of Private ECEC providers, the National Council for Teacher Education (NRLU), Universities Norway and the Research Council of Norway.

There is a long-standing tradition of decentralisation to the local level in the Norwegian schooling system. In 2017, 29% of education decisions were taken at the local level, compared to an OECD average of 13%. Many municipalities devolve tasks such as budget allocations, student admissions, staff recruitment, and pedagogical planning to the school level. However, the percentage of decisions taken at the school level, at 15%, was lower than the OECD average of 34%. The decentralised system is popular with different stakeholders and has advantages in terms of promoting local engagement and control. At the same time, Norway has experienced challenges in ensuring effective and consistent implementation of education reforms at different levels of the system, with enough capacity at local levels. The recent local government reform (effective January 2020) reduced the number of municipalities from 428 to 356, and the number of counties from 19 to 11. These reforms give greater power to a smaller number of municipalities, and are intended to improve the quality and equality of service provision.

The Ministry of Education and Research has overall responsibility for all public **higher education** institutions, except for those relating to the military and police. While higher education institutions have autonomy with regards to teaching and research, most administrative functions are regulated through legislation or agreements. These regulations have become less detailed over time and now provide a broad framework and a system of checks and balances. In recent years, Norway's once fragmented higher education landscape has become more unified through a series of institutional mergers (see "Recent policies and practices"). The [OECD](#) (2018) recommended that the government continue to monitor the impact of these mergers on efficiency and quality.

### Key strengths and challenges on governance (pre-crisis analysis)

Key strengths	Key challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A decentralised system that gives power to local communities.</li> <li>▪ Recent mergers in the higher education sector have the potential to allow for more effective governance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensuring the consistent and effective implementation of education policy measures, with enough capacity at local levels.</li> <li>▪ Promoting quality and efficiency within the higher education sector.</li> </ul>



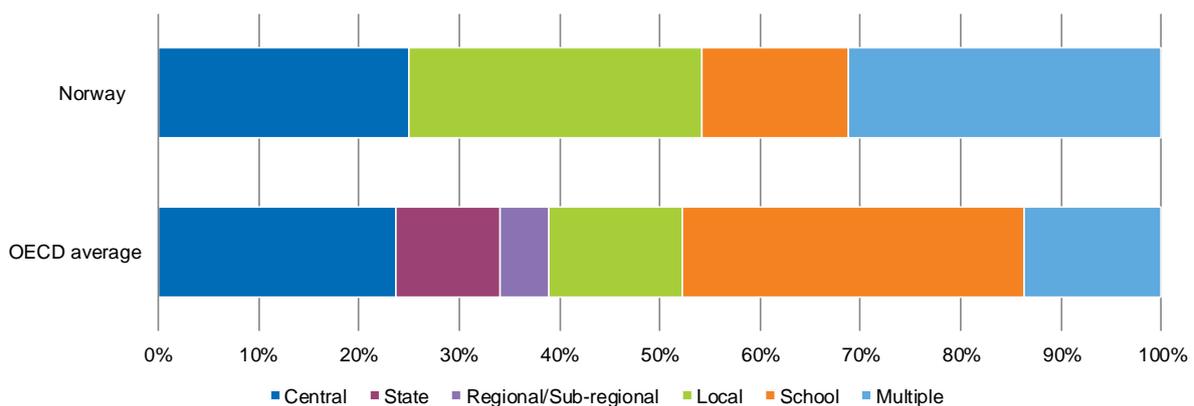
### Recent policies and practices

[Knowledge Promotion 2020](#), the new curriculum for primary and secondary school, is due to be implemented in 2020/21. Through this renewed curriculum, Norway aims to reduce curriculum overload and respond to rapid changes in society. The curriculum renewal process began in 2017. Initial drafts were prepared by the Directorate of Education and Training in consultation with teachers and other education professionals. This was followed by an open consultation process in which members of the public provided feedback on the draft curriculum. This process drew on some 14 000 contributions from the public. For the new VET curriculum components, each programme was designed in collaboration with a professional council, which defined final competences for each vocational subject. The professional councils consisted of teachers, industry representatives, and other social partners.

The [National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning](#) (2011) aims to provide an overview of the Norwegian education system, and of its different levels of qualifications. The framework places qualifications on seven levels, starting from the end of lower secondary education to doctoral level. Levels are defined in terms of learning outcomes relating to knowledge, skills and general competences. The [European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training](#) (Cedefop) (2017) reported that this development has been welcomed by different stakeholders. The framework is also intended to improve communication between the education sector and the labour market and to facilitate comparison between qualifications acquired in Norway and in other countries. Labour market stakeholders were involved in the development of the framework. These social partners generally feel the framework will improve dialogue between education providers and the labour market.

Norway's Ministry of Education and Research has overseen a series of [university mergers](#) (2015-2017) that, have reduced the number of public universities and university colleges from [33 to 21](#). There have also been some within the private higher education sector. The mergers aim to respond to some of the challenges associated with having a large number of small institutions, and are expected to improve quality and efficiency. Previously, more than half of higher education institutions in Norway had less than 2 000 students, and one-fifth had less than 500. Many of them experienced challenges attracting students and qualified staff, leading to underutilisation of facilities. Independent evaluations had also found that some institutions were 'too small' to produce internationally competitive research. The government hopes the mergers will leave Norwegian institutions better placed to compete for external funding. Based on international evidence on successful mergers, the [OECD](#) (2016) welcomed the use of performance criteria to select potential partners for mergers. The same report also highlighted the financial support given to institutions going through the process, which is important in helping institutions to manage change. In 2016, the Ministry of Education and Research established performance agreements with higher education institutions to ensure continued institutional diversity in the context of these mergers (see Spotlight 4).

**Figure 7. Percentage of decisions taken at each level of government for public lower secondary schools (2017)**



*Note:* This figure considers four domains of decision-making: 1) Organisation of instruction; 2) Personnel management; 3) Planning and structures, and; 4) Resources.

*Source:* OECD (2018), *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>.



## FUNDING: TARGETED FUNDING TO IMPROVE QUALITY AND ACCESS

Norway's **overall expenditure on education** has been among the highest in the OECD in recent years. In 2016, Norway's expenditure on primary to tertiary education as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) was the highest in the OECD, at 6.5% (OECD average of 5%). While this is undoubtedly linked to Norway's status as a relatively wealthy country, it also points to the high value placed on education in Norway. There has been particularly high investment in early childhood education, with more resources being directed towards low-income families. In 2016, expenditure per student was USD 14 344 in ECEC; this was the third highest in the OECD (OECD average: USD 8 349). Investing in the early stages of education can have high returns as it prepares students for later life. Annual expenditure per student was also above the OECD average at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. In the period 2010-16, expenditure per student increased by 9% for primary and secondary education (OECD average 5%) and by 20% for tertiary education (OECD average 8%). However, these increases in education spending have not led to improved PISA outcomes, suggesting there is room for improvement in terms of efficiency.

Norway's education system is mainly funded by **public expenditure**, with very little private funding. In 2016, the overall proportion of expenditure on education (from primary to tertiary) coming from private sources, including international sources, was 2.4%, significantly lower than the OECD average of 17.4%. Public primary and secondary schools are free of charge. Only 3.3% of children in Norway attend private primary and lower secondary schools, and most private schools receive some state funding. At ECEC level, most parents make a financial contribution towards the cost of education, although fees are regulated by the Kindergarten Act, and there are fee exemptions in place for low-income families. According to national data, both private and public ECEC centres receive public funding, which amounts to roughly 86.6% of total funding. In 2018, parental contributions covered approximately 13.4% of running costs. The government also finances most higher education expenditure. In 2016, 93% of higher education expenditure came from public sources (well above the OECD average of 66%) and only 3% came from individual households (compared to the OECD average of 23%). There are no tuition fees in public institutions, and students have access to substantial support for living expenses.

In terms of **sources of funding**, ECEC centres and schools are funded by the municipalities and counties. The municipalities and counties draw most of their revenue from local taxes, and from a redistributive grant system. This system accounts for differences in their size, school-aged population, and disadvantage factors such as parental education and immigration background. In primary and secondary education, most municipalities and counties devolve financial management to the school level. Schools receive a block grant to be used for wages and operating expenses, while responsibility for building maintenance remains with the municipalities. While counties and municipalities have a high degree of autonomy in managing their resources, a number of regulations and agreements place limits on spending and revenues. For example, salaries and working conditions are negotiated centrally with social partners. At ECEC level, there are regulations on teacher-to-child and on staff-to-child ratios and guiding principles for the space that should be made available to children.

**Higher education institutions** are funded through block grants from the Ministry of Education and Research. Both public and private institutions are eligible for them, although the amount of the grant is larger for public institutions. The block grant consists of a fixed component, which accounts for 70% of the grant on average, and a performance-based component, which accounts for 30% of the grant (see Spotlight 4). Institutions are free to allocate the grant as they choose and can supplement their income through contract research, external grants, or publications. However, higher education institutions in Norway attract very little funding from third-party sources such as business. Recent steering measures aim at encouraging universities to seek funding from external sources (see Spotlight 4). In addition to this, in spite of the substantial support given to students, and the specific financial incentives for timely completion, many students in Norway fail to complete their studies within the theoretical timeframe. While universal provision of financial support may have led to generally high participation rates, students from low-income families and young people from immigration backgrounds are still underrepresented in tertiary education. A recent [OECD report](#) (2019) recommended strengthening incentives for timely completion and investigating targeted and non-monetary measures to increase participation among underrepresented groups.

### Key strengths and challenges of funding education system (pre-crisis analysis)

Key strengths	Key challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in education has been among the highest in the OECD.</li> <li>Efforts to make education affordable to households at different education levels.</li> <li>Measures taken to improve efficiency in resource use at higher education level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance outcomes remain close to average despite high levels of investment.</li> <li>Investment in higher education has not led to timely completions or equal access.</li> <li>Engaging businesses and other stakeholders in higher education investment remains to be achieved.</li> </ul>

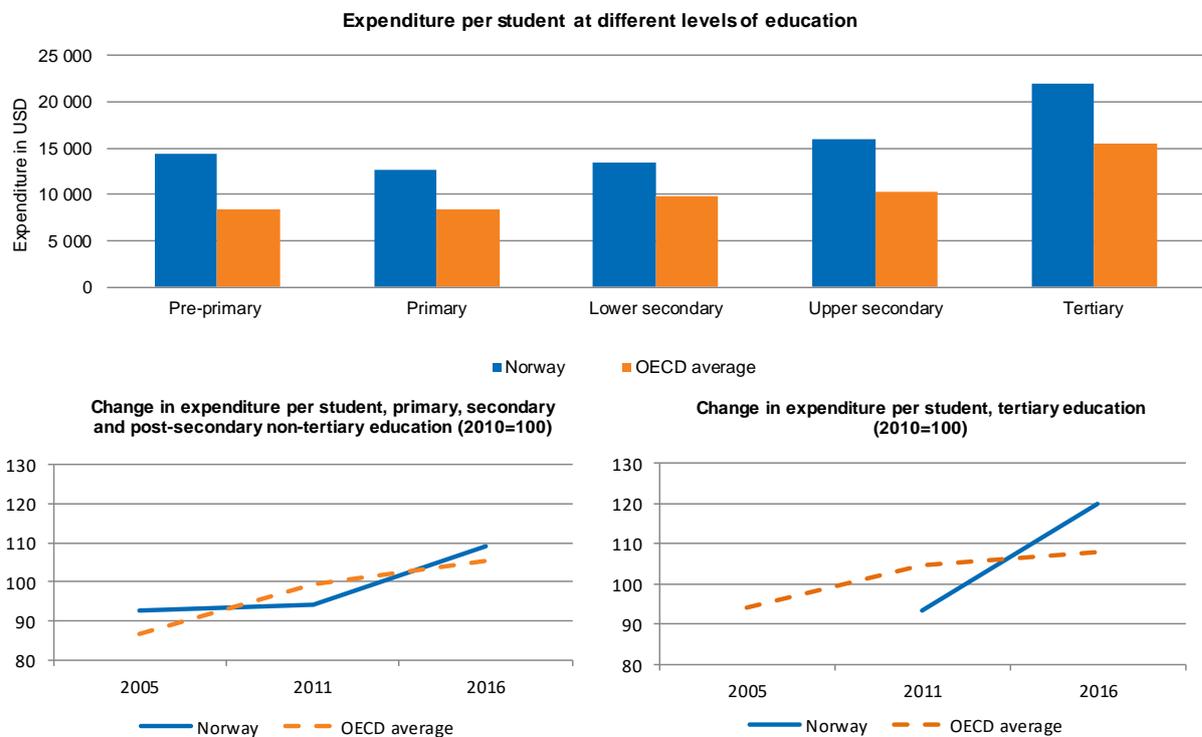


### Recent policies and practices

Norway has implemented some measures to increase affordability of ECEC attendance (2004-19). These measures include the introduction of a maximum fee for ECEC in 2004, and subsequent measures to reduce the costs borne by households. Between 2002 and 2012, the proportion of childcare costs paid by parents decreased from 37% to 15%. Further regulations introduced in 2015 mean that no family pays more than 6% of their annual income towards the cost of ECEC. ECEC providers are also required to offer discounts for siblings. Additionally, Norway has introduced a [scheme offering low-income families 20 hours of ECEC per week free of charge](#). In 2015, only 4- and 5-year-olds could benefit from these core hours, but this provision was extended to 3-year-olds in 2016 and to 2-year-olds in 2019. In the same year, this core provision was made available to families in refugee reception centres from the age of one. Since financial barriers are more likely to affect families from immigrant and minority ethnic backgrounds, removing these barriers could increase the participation of these groups, and low-income families more generally. To improve the attractiveness of ECEC for minority language and low-income families, an [OECD report](#) (2015) also recommended that Norway take actions such as expanding outreach activities and creating services tailored more specifically to the needs of vulnerable groups, and handling admissions in a more flexible way.

The [Norwegian Roadmap for Research Infrastructure \(2018-2028\)](#) directs funding to large-scale infrastructure projects in higher education. First implemented in 2010, this roadmap is envisaged as a document for continuous revisions in the wake of major funding announcements. The current version of this roadmap follows a call for proposals in 2016. The Research Council of Norway worked collaboratively with higher education institutions to identify strategic areas for infrastructure investment. Following the call for proposals, a range of projects in fields such as bio-technology, e-infrastructure, the humanities, and climate environments have either already received funding or have been deemed 'worthy of funding'. The Research Council assesses grant applications on the basis of criteria relating to national interest, scientific and strategic significance, and scale of investment. The process involves scientific review by international referees. Some of the projects on the Norwegian roadmap are supported through the [European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures Roadmap](#), which supports international collaboration and strategic planning in research infrastructure investment.

Figure 8. Annual expenditure per student (2016) and recent trends, by level of education



Source: OECD (2019), *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>.



#### Spotlight 4: Steering higher education performance through funding arrangements

Norway has introduced several revisions to its funding model for higher education. The current model was introduced in 2002 to improve overall quality, to promote student progression, and to better align higher education offers with student and labour market demand. One of the major changes at that time was the introduction of a performance-based funding component. In 2014, the government set up a panel of experts to review the funding model in light of these goals. While the panel found that the performance-based system was operating well, it suggested reforming the model to reflect changing priorities in higher education. The focus had previously been on increasing participation in higher education (thus, with a model largely based on level of activity, such as student numbers). The panel felt that the emphasis had shifted towards promoting quality, student completion, internationalisation and collaboration between higher education stakeholders.

Therefore, in 2017, the government [revised the performance-based component](#) of the funding model to include indicators on completion rates and to reward institutions that secure third-party funding. The government has also made additional funding available for international student exchanges. Performance-based funding is now awarded through specific indicators of quality, which are allocated either an open-ended budget (i.e. there is no ceiling on the amount of extra funding that institutions can receive based on their performance) or a closed-ended budget (i.e. institutions compete for a fixed pool of funds):

- *Open-ended budget:* Study point credit, Number of graduates, International exchanges, and Number of PhD graduates.
- *Closed-end budget:* Publications, EU Funding, Funding from the Research Council of Norway, and Third-party revenue (business, private investment).

Furthermore, Norway implemented performance agreements to promote labour market relevance and diversity. One of the key findings of the expert panel's report was that the funding model did not go far enough in promoting differentiation of institutional profiles in higher education. The [OECD \(2018\)](#) reported that the panel recommended the introduction of three to four-year performance agreements as a steering tool to promote diversity and improve quality within the higher education sector. The Ministry of Education and Research began making these agreements with higher education institutions in 2016.

The performance agreements are developed through dialogue between the higher education institution and the Ministry, and take the institution's strategy as their starting point. Under the current system, institutions themselves suggest the indicators for success to be used in their performance agreement. At the same time, the agreements should require institutions to help their students develop skills that are required in the labour market. They also should steer institutions towards adopting practices that enhance the labour market relevance of their programmes, such as international exchanges and collaboration with labour market partners. In this sense the agreements work to enhance the labour market relevance of higher education at the same time as supporting institutional diversity within a cohesive system.

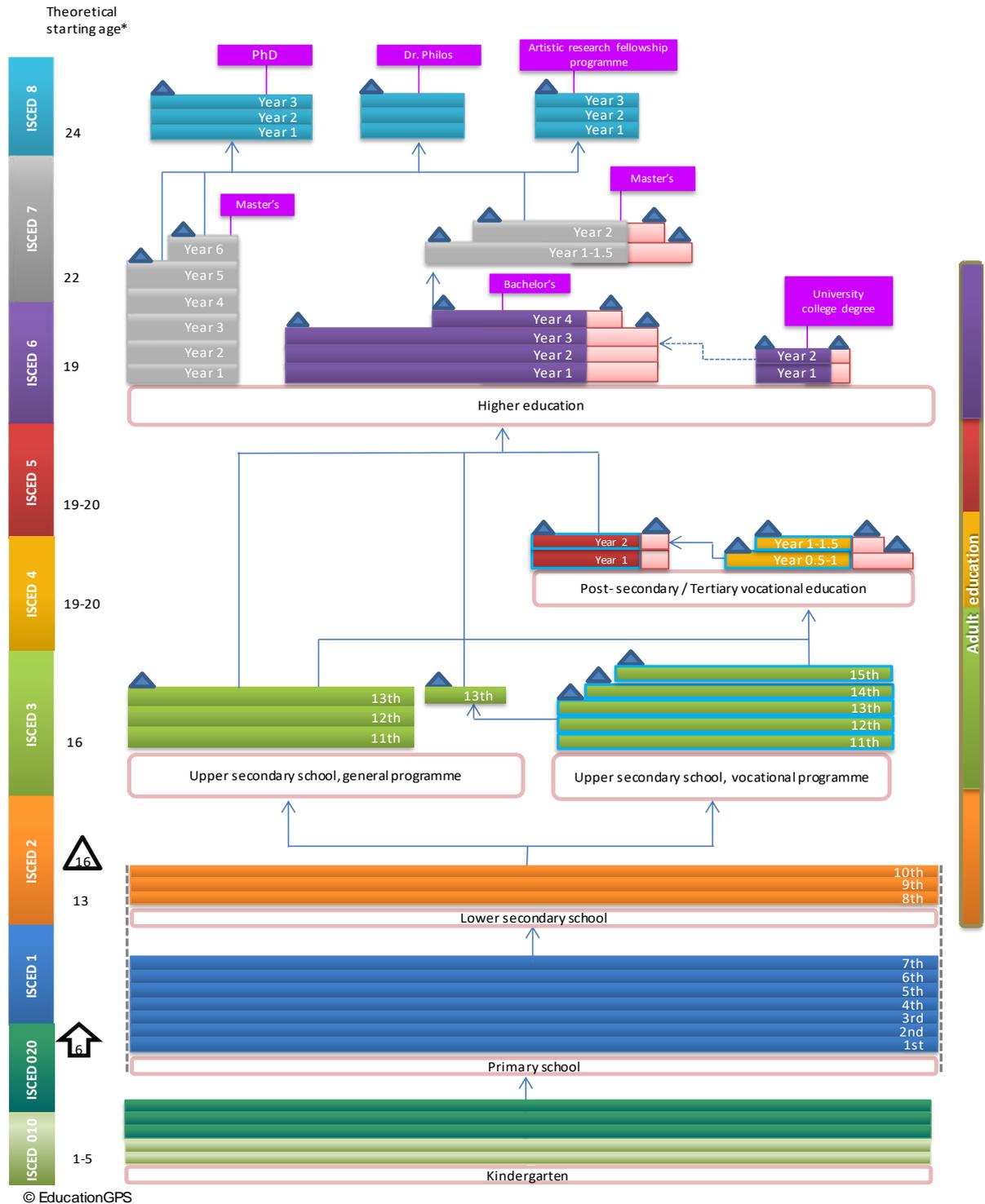
The agreements were introduced incrementally, starting with five institutions in 2016, to allow policy makers and institutions to learn from the process. By 2019, all higher education institutions had a performance agreement in place. An [OECD report \(2018\)](#) suggested that this staged approach could allow the Ministry of Education and Research to target the agreements towards improving labour market relevance and outcomes. The report recommends that Norway investigate how other countries make use of labour market outcome indicators and steer universities towards practices that enhance labour market relevance. The government has expressed its intention to link the performance agreements to performance-related funding.



ANNEX A: STRUCTURE OF NORWAY'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Norway

2018



Note: The key for the interpretation of this table is available at the source link below.  
 Source: OECD (2018), Norway: Overview of the Education System", *OECD Education GPS*,  
<http://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=NOR>.



ANNEX B: STATISTICS

#	List of key indicators <sup>1,2,3</sup>	Norway	Average or total	Min OECD	Max OECD
<b>Background information</b>					
<i>Economy</i>					
1	GDP per capita, 2016, in equivalent USD converted using PPPs (OECD Statistics)	57 728	42 441	14 276	107 775
2	GDP growth, 2016 (OECD Statistics)	1.1%	1.8%	0.6%	6.6%
<i>Society</i>					
3	Population density, inhab/km <sup>2</sup> , 2017 (OECD Statistics)	17	37	3	517
4	Population aged less than 15 as a percentage of total population, 2018 (OECD Data)	17.6%	17.0%	12.2%	28.4%
5	Foreign-born population as a percentage of total population, 2018 or the most recent available year (OECD Data)	15.4%	14.4%	0.8%	47.6%
<b>Education outcomes</b>					
6	Mean performance in reading (PISA 2018)	499	487	412	523
<b>Average three-year trend in performance across PISA assessments, by domain (PISA 2018) <sup>4,5</sup></b>					
7	Reading performance	1.0	0.4	<b>-4.9</b>	<b>7.1</b>
	Mathematics performance	1.5	-0.6	<b>-9.1</b>	<b>6.4</b>
	Science performance	0.6	-1.9	<b>-10.7</b>	<b>6.4</b>
8	Enrolment rates of 3-year-olds in early childhood education and care, 2017 (EAG 2019)	95.9%	79.3%	2.4%	100%
9	Percentage of 25-64 year-olds whose highest level of attainment is lower secondary education, 2018 (EAG 2019)	17.0%	14.4%	0.8%	39.9%
<b>Educational attainment of the population aged 25-34 by type of attainment, 2018 or latest available</b>					
10	At least upper secondary education, 2018 (EAG 2019)	82.2%	85.4%	50.1%	97.8%
	Tertiary education, 2018 (EAG 2019)	48.2%	44.3%	23.4%	69.6%
	Vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education, 2018 (EAG database 2020)	20.3%	24.5%	1.8%	50.1%
<b>Unemployment rates of 25-34 year-olds by educational attainment, 2018 (EAG 2019)</b>					
11	Below upper secondary	9.7%	13.7%	3.0%	37.3%
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	4.3%	7.3%	2.5%	25.1%
	Tertiary education	2.8%	5.5%	1.7%	23.2%
<b>Students: Raising outcomes</b>					
<i>Policy lever 1: Equity and quality</i>					
12	First age of selection in the education system (PISA 2018)	16	14	10	16
<b>Students performing at the highest or lowest levels in reading (%) (PISA 2018)</b>					
13	Students performing below Level 2	19.3%	22.6%	11.1%	49.9%
	Students performing at Level 5 or above	11.3%	8.7%	0.8%	15.0%
14	Percentage of students in schools where students are grouped by ability into different classes for all subjects, PISA 2015	0.5%	7.8%	0.0%	56.1%
15	Percentage of students whose parents reported that the schooling available in their area includes two or more other schools, PISA 2015	m	36.8%	20.4%	56.9%



#	List of key indicators <sup>1,2,3</sup>	Norway	Average or total	Min OECD	Max OECD
16	Percentage of students reporting that they have repeated at least a grade in primary, low er secondary or upper secondary schools (PISA 2015)	0.0%	11.3%	0.0%	42.6
17	Percentage of variance in reading performance in PISA test explained by ESCS (PISA 2018) <sup>4</sup>	7.5%	12.0%	6.2%	19.1%
18	Score difference in reading performance in PISA betw een non-immigrant and immigrant students AFTER adjusting for socio-economic status (PISA 2018) <sup>4</sup>	<b>-33</b>	<b>-24</b>	<b>-80</b>	<b>16</b>
19	Score difference betw een girls and boys in reading (PISA 2018) <sup>4</sup>	<b>47</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>52</b>
<i>Policy lever 2: Preparing students for the future</i>					
20	Mean proficiency in literacy among adults aged 16-64 on a scale of 500 (Survey of Adult Skills, PIAAC, 2012)	278.4	267.7	220.1	296.2
21	Difference in literacy scores betw een younger (25-34) and older (55-65) adults AFTER accounting for age, gender, education, immigrant and language background and parents' educational attainment (Survey of Adult Skills, PIAAC, 2012).	22.1	15.6	-8.3	37.6
<b>Share of students in upper secondary education in 2017 following:</b>					
22	General programmes (OECD Stat - INES 2020)	50.3%	58.1%	27.6%	100.0%
	Vocational programmes (OECD Stat - INES 2020)	49.7%	43.1%	9.0%	72.4%
	Combined school and w ork-based programmes (OECD Stat - INES 2020)	33.3%	18.3%	1.0%	58.0%
23	First-time graduation rates from tertiary education, 2017 (Below the age of 30, excluding mobile students / OECD Stat - INES 2020)	42.1%	36.6%	10.1%	49.9%
24	Percentage of 18-24 year-olds not in education, employment or training, 2018 (EAG 2019)	8.8%	14.3%	5.9%	29.8%
<b>Institutions: Improving schools</b>					
<i>Policy lever 3: School improvement</i>					
<b>The Learning Environment - PISA 2018</b>					
25	Mean index of teacher support in language-of-instruction lessons	-0.07	0.01	-0.61	0.47
	Mean index of disciplinary climate	0.04	0.04	-0.34	1.07
	Mean index of students' sense of belonging	0.36	0.00	-0.28	0.46
26	Percentage of teachers in low er secondary education aged 50 years old or more, 2017 (EAG 2019)	28.7%	37.0%	6.3%	54.2%
<b>Number of teaching hours per year in public institutions by education level, 2018 (EAG 2019)</b>					
27	Primary education	741	783	561	1063
	Low er secondary education, general programmes	663	709	481	1063
28	Ratio of actual teachers' salaries to earnings for full-time, full-year adult w orkers w ith tertiary education, low er secondary education, general programmes, 2016 (EAG 2019)	0.76	0.88	0.64	1.40
29	Proportion of teachers w ho believe the teaching profession is valued in society (TALIS 2018)	34.8%	25.8%	4.5%	67.0%
30	Proportion of teachers w ho w ould become a teacher again if they could choose (TALIS 2018)	75.0%	75.6%	54.9%	92.2%



#	List of key indicators <sup>1,2,3</sup>	Norway	Average or total	Min OECD	Max OECD
<i>Policy lever 4: Evaluation and assessment to improve student outcomes</i>					
31	<b>Percentage of students in schools where the following arrangements aimed at quality assurance and improvement at school are used (PISA 2015):</b>				
	Internal/Self-evaluation	98.5%	93.2%	74.8%	100.0%
	External evaluation	63.9%	74.6%	20.8%	97.4%
32	<b>Percentage of students whose school principals reported that standardised tests are used for the following purposes (PISA 2015):</b>				
	To make decisions about students' retention or promotion	5.0%	31.3%	3.4%	60.6%
	To monitor the school's progress from year to year	76.4%	69.4%	26.2%	97.7%
	To make judgements about teachers' effectiveness	19.5%	37.0%	4.4%	87.5%
	To identify aspects of instruction or the curriculum that could be improved	54.0%	58.9%	14.1%	92.4%
33	Percentage of low er secondary teachers w hose principals report conducting formal appraisal of their teachers at least once per year (TALIS 2018)	62.0%	63.5%	16.2%	98.1%
<b>Systems: Organising the system</b>					
<i>Policy lever 5: Governance</i>					
34	<b>Percentage of decisions taken at each level of government in public lower secondary education, 2017 (EAG 2018)</b>				
	Central	25.0%	23.8%	0.0%	83.3%
	State	a	10.3%	0.0%	62.5%
	Regional/Sub-regional	a	4.9%	0.0%	33.3%
	Local	29.2%	13.3%	0.0%	71.9%
	School	14.6%	34.0%	0.0%	91.7%
	Multiple levels	31.3%	13.8%	0.0%	100.0%
<i>Policy lever 6: Funding</i>					
35	Expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP (from primary to tertiary), 2016 (EAG 2019)	6.5%	5.0%	0.0%	6.5%
36	<b>Annual expenditure per student by educational institutions, for all services, in equivalent USD converted using PPPs for GDP, 2016 (EAG 2019)</b>				
	Pre-primary education	14 344	8 349	1 579	17 533
	Primary education	12 619	8 470	2 961	17 913
	Low er secondary education	13 532	9 884	2 561	21 739
	Upper secondary education	15 901	10 368	3 001	21 231
	Tertiary education	21 993	15 556	5 787	48 407
37	<b>Relative proportions of public and private expenditure on educational institutions, 2016 (EAG 2019)</b>				
	Public sources	97.6%	82.7%	62.7%	97.6%
	All private sources (includes international sources)	2.4%	17.4%	2.4%	37.3%
38	<b>Change in the share of expenditure on educational institutions, EAG 2019 (Percentage-point difference between 2010 and 2016, primary to tertiary education)</b>				
	Public sources	-1.4	-2.7	-9.8	6.3
	All private sources	1.1	2.5	-6.3	7.0
Notes					
1. The average, total, minimums and maximums refer to OECD countries except in the Survey of Adult Skills, where they refer to participating countries. For indicators 6, 13 and 17-19 the average value refers to the arithmetic mean across all OECD member countries (and Colombia), excluding Spain. For indicator 5, the average value refers to the arithmetic mean across all OECD member countries (except Japan, Korea and Poland) as calculated by the Education Policy Outlook.					
2. "m": included when data is not available.					
3. "NP": included if the country is not participating in the study.					
4. Statistically significant values of the indicator are shown in bold (PISA only).					
5. The average three year trend is the average change in PISA score points from a country's/economy's earliest participation in PISA to PISA 2018.					
6. "a": included when the category is not applicable.					



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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> On 25 May 2018, the OECD Council invited Colombia to become a Member. While Colombia is included in the OECD averages reported in this publication for data from Education at a Glance, the Programme for International Student Assessment and the Teaching and Learning International Survey, at the time of preparation of these OECD datasets, Colombia was in the process of completing its domestic procedures for ratification and the deposit of Colombia's instrument of accession to the OECD Convention was pending.

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