



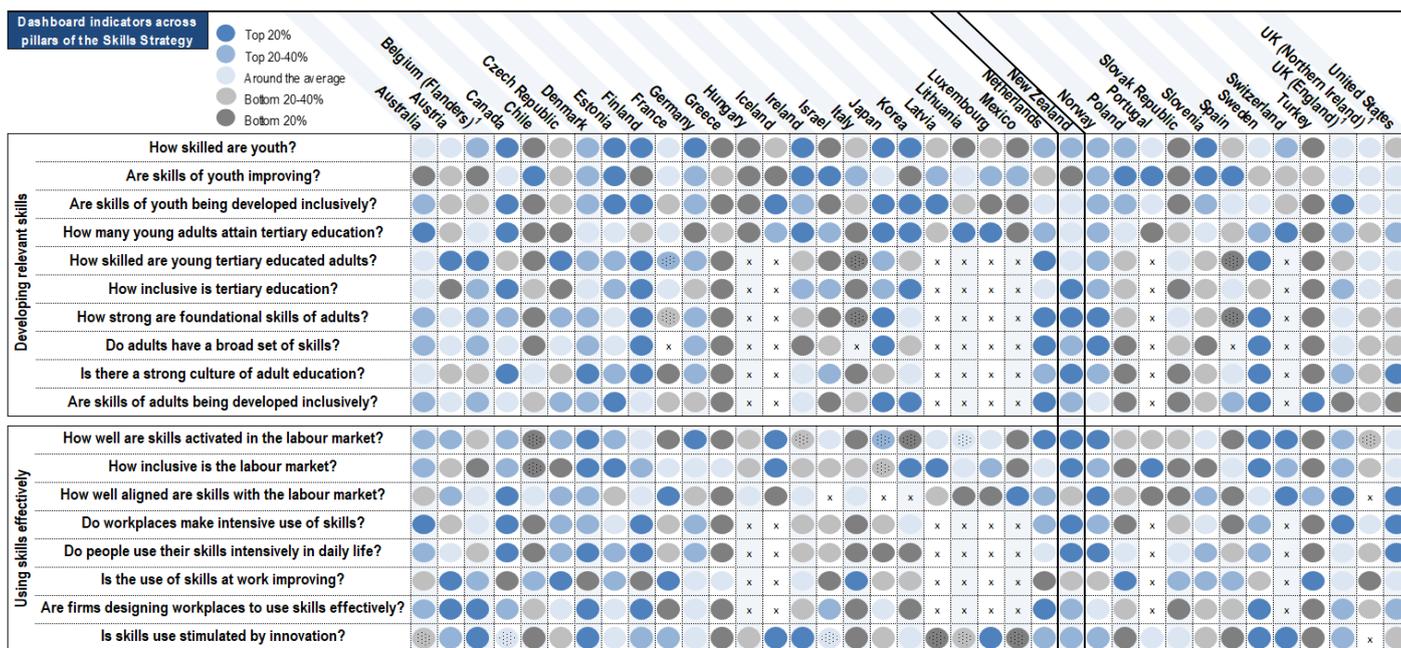
### 2019 OECD Skills Strategy: New Zealand

Since its launch in 2012, the OECD Skills Strategy has provided countries with a strategic and comprehensive approach to assessing their skills challenges and opportunities. The 2019 OECD Skills Strategy incorporates lessons learned from applying the OECD Skills Strategy framework in eleven countries, including new evidence about the implications of so-called megatrends, such as globalisation, digitalisation, population ageing or migration. It also accounts for new evidence about skills policies that work under the proper governance arrangements, including effective co-ordination and accountability mechanisms, efficient funding from different sources and information systems. This document describes the key findings for New Zealand.

### The 2019 OECD Skills Strategy



### OECD Skills Strategy Dashboard: summary indicators of skills performance



Notes: Indicators are selected, aggregated and normalised in a way to ensure that a higher value and being among the “Top 20%” reflects better performance. Colours in the dashboard represent the quintile position of the country in the ranking, with dark grey indicating performance at the bottom, and dark blue indicating performance at the top of the ranking. The “x” indicates insufficient or no available data for the underlying indicators, and dotted circles indicate missing data for at least one underlying indicator. Only OECD sources have been used (see OECD (2019) for overview).

1. For Belgium (Flanders), United Kingdom (England and Northern Ireland), a combination of regional (PISA and PIAAC) and national data have been used. Note on Israel: The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and are under the responsibility of relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

### New Zealand’s skills performance

The OECD Skills Strategy Dashboard provides a snapshot of New Zealand’s comparative skills performance. New Zealand enjoys a stable economy, with strong growth and high levels of well-being. Employment has expanded in recent years, reversing much of the increase in unemployment since the onset of the global financial crisis. Furthermore, the country consistently ranks among the best in internationally comparative indicators of economic performance and well-being.

A highly skilled population has been the foundation for this success. New Zealand ranks among the top 20% of countries in some areas of developing relevant skills – the foundational skills of adults, the culture of adult education and the inclusiveness of tertiary education. On this last point, in the New Zealand’s Tertiary Education Strategy 2014 – 2019, the country seeks an improved achievement among Māori and Pasifika learners, considering that by

2030, 30% of New Zealanders will belong to either of these indigenous groups.

Additionally, enrolment of children in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is well above the OECD average. The Ministry of Education is engaging with the families of the hardest-to-reach children to improve their education and skills outcomes by, for example, raising participation in early childhood education for Māori, Pasifika and low socio-economic communities. Moreover, the performance of 15 year olds in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is among the strongest of participating countries.

Despite these successes, there continue to be areas in which New Zealand could do better. For example, the skills of young New Zealanders have not improved over time and are actually declining. In addition, New Zealand's performance with respect to the inclusivity with which skills are being developed among youth is only average. Furthermore, tertiary attainment and the skill levels of tertiary graduates are only around the OECD average.

As for the effective use of skills, the Dashboard indicates that New Zealand ranks among the top 20% of countries for the activation of skills in the labour market; the inclusiveness of the labour market; the intensive use of skills in workplaces; and the intensive use of skills in everyday life. However, New Zealand is also among the

bottom 20-40% in regards to the alignment of skills with the labour market, and the use of skills at work is not improving much over time.

The country has important imbalances between the skills of workers and the skills needs of the labour market. As digitalisation has been increasing the demand for high-skilled workers, employment is gradually shifting towards high-skilled occupations. The country has made efforts to overcome these challenges by, for example, implementing initiatives for the general population, such as the Engineering e2e (education to employment) programme, established to achieve the official target of an additional 500 engineering graduates annually. However, the stronger demand for high-skilled workers in New Zealand has been met to a great extent through international migration instead of through facilitating the development of skills in the general adult population.

New Zealand has taken important steps to boost its skills system, and in 2008 the country engaged in a comprehensive Skills Strategy Action Plan. Still, New Zealand could benefit from a renewal of its strategic vision for the future to ensure that all of its people have the skills to respond to the challenges and opportunities of a complex and rapidly changing world. A whole-of government approach and effective stakeholder engagement will be essential for achieving this aim.

### Key recommendations for improving the performance of countries' skills system

#### Developing relevant skills over the life course: Making skills systems responsive

- Making each stage of learning a foundation for success in the next
- Enabling policies to support learning in adulthood
- Supporting teachers to become lifelong learners
- Financing adult learning
- Harnessing the power of technology as a tool for learning

#### Using skills effectively in work and society: Making the most of everyone's potential

- Make full use of everyone's skills
- Making the most of migrants' skills
- Activating skills to build more inclusive and cohesive societies
- Making intensive use of skills in work
- Aligning skills with the needs of the economy and society
- Aligning skills policies with industrial and innovation policies

#### Strengthening the governance of skills systems: Tackling increased complexity

- Promoting co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration across the whole of government
- Engaging stakeholders throughout the policy cycle
- Building integrated information systems
- Aligning and co-ordinating financing arrangements

#### Further reading

OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Strategy 2019: Skills to shape a better future*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [//doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en).

OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Outlook 2019: Thriving in a Digital World*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/df80bc12-en>.

OECD (2017), *OECD Economic Surveys: New Zealand 2017*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco\\_surveys-nzl-2017-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-nzl-2017-en)

OECD (forthcoming), *Strengthening the Governance of Skills Systems*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

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