

Responsiveness of education systems to special needs

The labour market is changing fast: some low-skilled jobs are progressively being replaced by automated processes. New jobs require information and communication technology (ICT) skills as well as analytical skills and creative thinking. The education system plays helps prepare youth for the jobs of the future. Responsiveness in this context involves ensuring that citizens from different backgrounds, income levels and living conditions have equal education opportunities.

Youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) is one of the main challenges for OECD countries, especially following the 2007-08 crisis. In OECD European countries, 5.2% of youth aged 18-24 years fit into this category in 2018 (a 1.7 p.p. improvement from 2012). In total, 10.7% of people aged 18-24 years left school before or upon completing lower secondary education (i.e. early leavers) in 2018, 2.1 p.p. down from 2012. While most countries were able to reduce the number of young people experiencing these conditions, in Greece, Portugal and Ireland these were halved.

In 2010 Germany launched the Education Chains initiative to support young people in transitioning from school to vocational training. The initiative includes a potential analysis to help youth discover their own strengths and talents. For example, Practice-oriented Workshop Days provide them with practical insight into roughly 18 occupational fields for them to identify jobs which match their interests.

Schools require lower secondary education teachers who are qualified to respond to the needs of students to encourage them to continue their studies. Across OECD countries, 31% of principals reported a shortage of teachers with competence in teaching students with special needs (i.e. those who are mentally, physically, or emotionally disadvantaged). Further, 18% indicated that they lacked staff qualified to teach in multicultural settings, and 16% do not have enough teachers skilled to deal with socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

The governance of schools is another dimension that affects the responsiveness of education systems. In the OECD, on average, 38% of all decisions are taken at the school level or after consultation with it, with 23% of all decisions are taken by the school within a framework set by higher authorities, and 10% in full autonomy.

The degree of autonomy conceded to schools varies across OECD countries, with some granting them little decision-making power and others fostering decentralised governance. The Netherlands allows schools to take 92% of all decisions, 11 times more than Greece and Turkey. England allows schools to take 48% of decisions in full autonomy, while around 33% of OECD countries do not grant them any decision-making power.

Methodology and definitions

Data for figure 11.17 come from the 2018 and 2012 rounds of the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU LFS), a large quarterly household sample survey

(over 1.7 million interviews) of people aged 15 and over. Early leavers from education and training are defined by Eurostat as persons aged 18-24 who have completed at most lower secondary education (ISCED 2011 levels 0-3C) and were not involved in education or training in the four weeks before the interview. The indicator is expressed as a percentage of the people aged 18-24 with such criteria out of the total population within that age range. A person between 18-24 years who is not currently studying nor working is considered a NEET (not in employment, education or training).

Data for figure 11.18 come from the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) conducted by the OECD. The survey is composed of two questionnaires, one sent to principals and another to teachers. A minimum of 200 schools were selected per country. The figure reports the results of the survey sent to principals of lower secondary education (ISCED 2), which asked "To what extent is this school's capacity to provide quality instruction currently hindered by any of the following issues?"

Data for figure 11.19 come from the 2017 OECD Survey on Decision-Making, which was completed by a panel of experts on lower secondary education in each country. The survey covers levels of decision making in lower secondary institutions and their autonomy, by type of authority. The domains involved the organisation of instruction (e.g. instruction time), personnel management (e.g. hiring), planning and structures (e.g. creation of schools) and resource allocation and use. The results are reported as a percentage of all decisions.

Further reading

Carcillo, S. et al. (2015), "NEET Youth in the Aftermath of the Crisis: Challenges and Policies", *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 164, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5js6363503f6-en>.

Figure notes

On data for Israel, see <http://doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

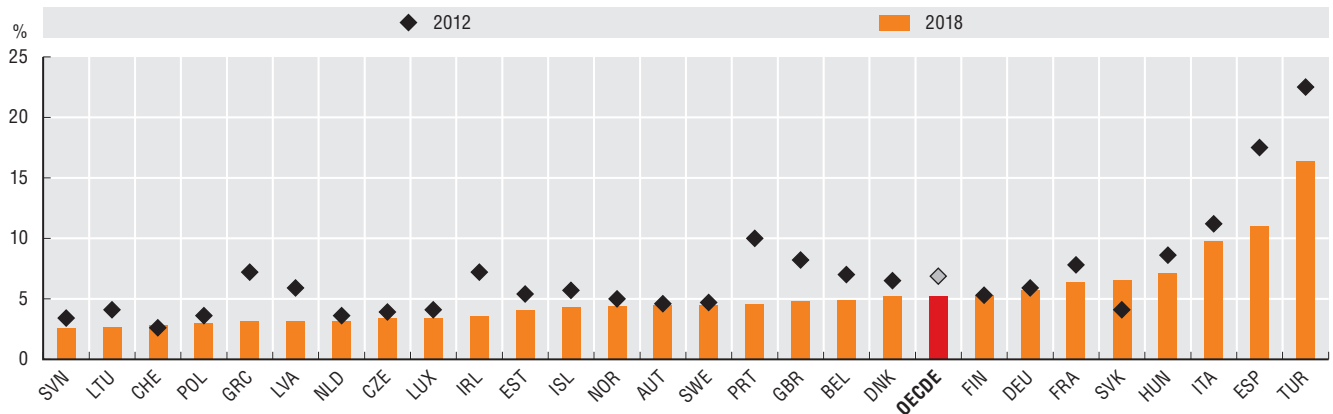
11.17. Data are only available for OECD European countries.

11.18. Countries are sorted in ascending order regarding the shortage of teachers qualified to teach students with specific needs. Data for Canada refer only to Alberta; data for the United Kingdom refer only to England. Data for Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland and Switzerland are not available.

11.19. Belgium is presented as Belgium (Fr) and Belgium (Fl). The United Kingdom is presented as England (Eng) and Scotland (Sct).

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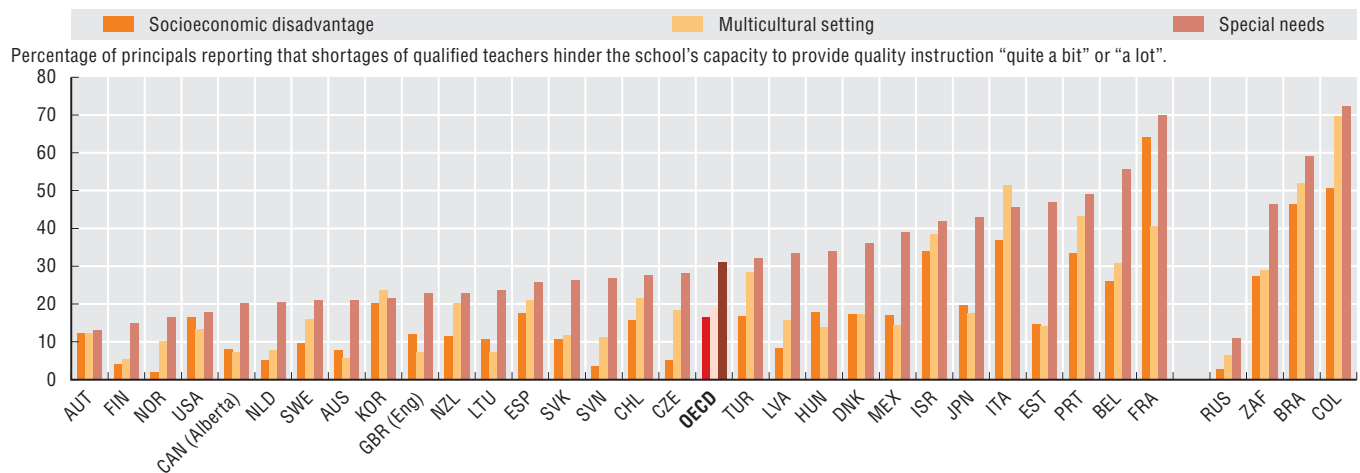
11.17 Percentage of early leavers from education and training aged 18-24 years who are not currently working, 2012 and 2018



Source: European Labour Force Survey, 2018 and 2012

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934033726>

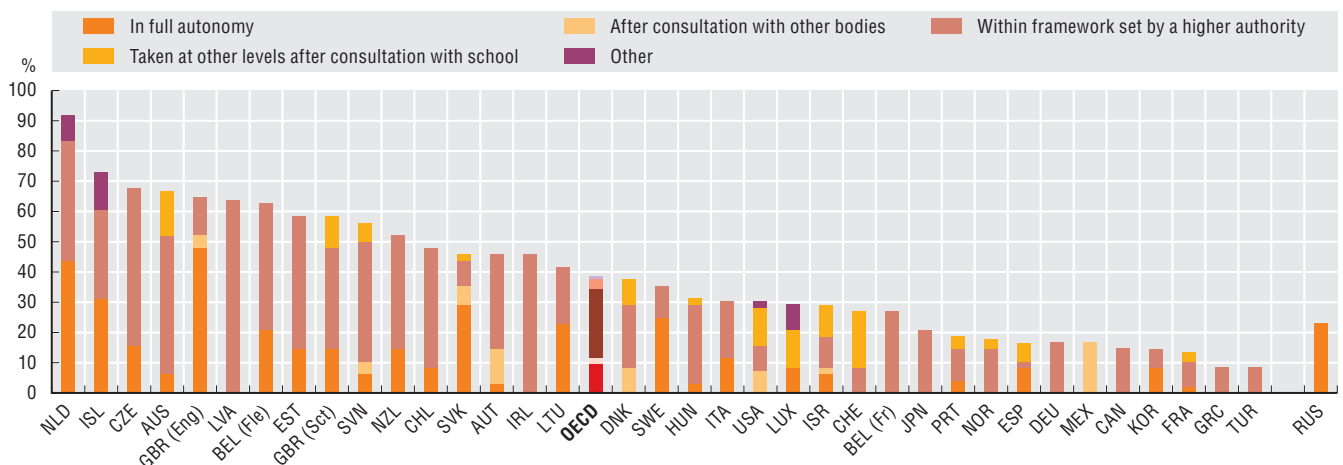
11.18 Schools with shortage of qualified teachers in teaching students with specific needs in lower secondary education, 2018



Source: OECD (2018), Teaching and Learning International Survey.

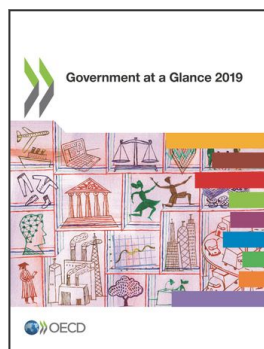
StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934033745>

11.19 Percentage of decisions taken at the school levels in public lower secondary education, 2017



Source: OECD (2018), Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators.

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934033764>



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