

4. WHAT MAKES A SCHOOL SUCCESSFUL – TRENDS

Teacher-student relations

- In 20 out of 38 countries, the proportion of students who reported that teachers listen to them rose significantly between 2000 and 2009.
- In 2009, more students reported that they were treated fairly by teachers and got extra help when they needed it than their counterparts did in 2000.
- Teacher-student relations improved most in countries where they had been weakest, including Germany, Korea and Japan.

What it means

Positive student-teacher relationships are crucial for establishing a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Research finds that students, particularly socio-economically disadvantaged students, learn more and have fewer disciplinary problems when they feel that their teachers take them seriously.

While the media sometimes depicts the climate in schools as becoming more difficult, PISA results show that relations between teachers and students have become more positive, and offer no evidence to support the notion that students are becoming progressively more disengaged from school.

Findings

In 2000, PISA results suggested that the majority of students were generally satisfied with the quality of their relations with teachers. By 2009, the quality of student-teacher relations was even better.

The increase in the proportion of students reporting that their teachers “really listen to what I have to say” exceeded 10 percentage points in Germany, Iceland, Japan, Korea and the partner country Albania. In 2000, three of these countries, Germany, Korea and Japan, showed the smallest proportion of students who so reported among the 26 OECD countries with comparable data. In Korea, for example, six in ten students in 2000 reported that teachers did not listen to them, while in Germany and Japan 50% of students so reported. In 2009, a clear majority of students (between 57% and 69%) in these three countries reported that teachers listen to them. In other aspects of teacher-student relations, similar patterns emerged in these countries. For example, in Germany, the proportion of students who reported that teachers would give them

extra help if they needed it rose from 59% in 2000 to 71% in 2009.

In half of the remaining countries, there were smaller increases in the proportion of students who reported that teachers listen to them; but in six countries, that proportion shrunk, particularly in Italy (71% in 2000 to 62% in 2009) and Mexico (85% in 2000 to 77% in 2009).

The proportion of 15-year-olds who reported that they could get extra help from teachers if they needed it increased by more than 10 percentage points in Germany, Poland, Portugal and the partner countries Albania and Latvia. The greatest increase was in Poland, where the proportion of students who so reported rose from 57% to 73%.

Poland also saw a similar increase in the proportion of students who reported that teachers treat them fairly: from a low 57% in 2000 to 71% in 2009. That proportion rose by 10 percentage points or more in France, Italy and the partner economy Hong Kong, China.

Definitions

PISA 2009 asked students to agree or disagree with several statements regarding their relationships with their teachers in school. These statements focused on whether students got along with their teachers, whether teachers were interested in students’ personal well-being, whether teachers took the students seriously, whether teachers were a source of support if the students needed extra help, and whether teachers treated students fairly. Similar questions were asked in 2000, so teacher-student relations could be compared across time.

Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

Going further

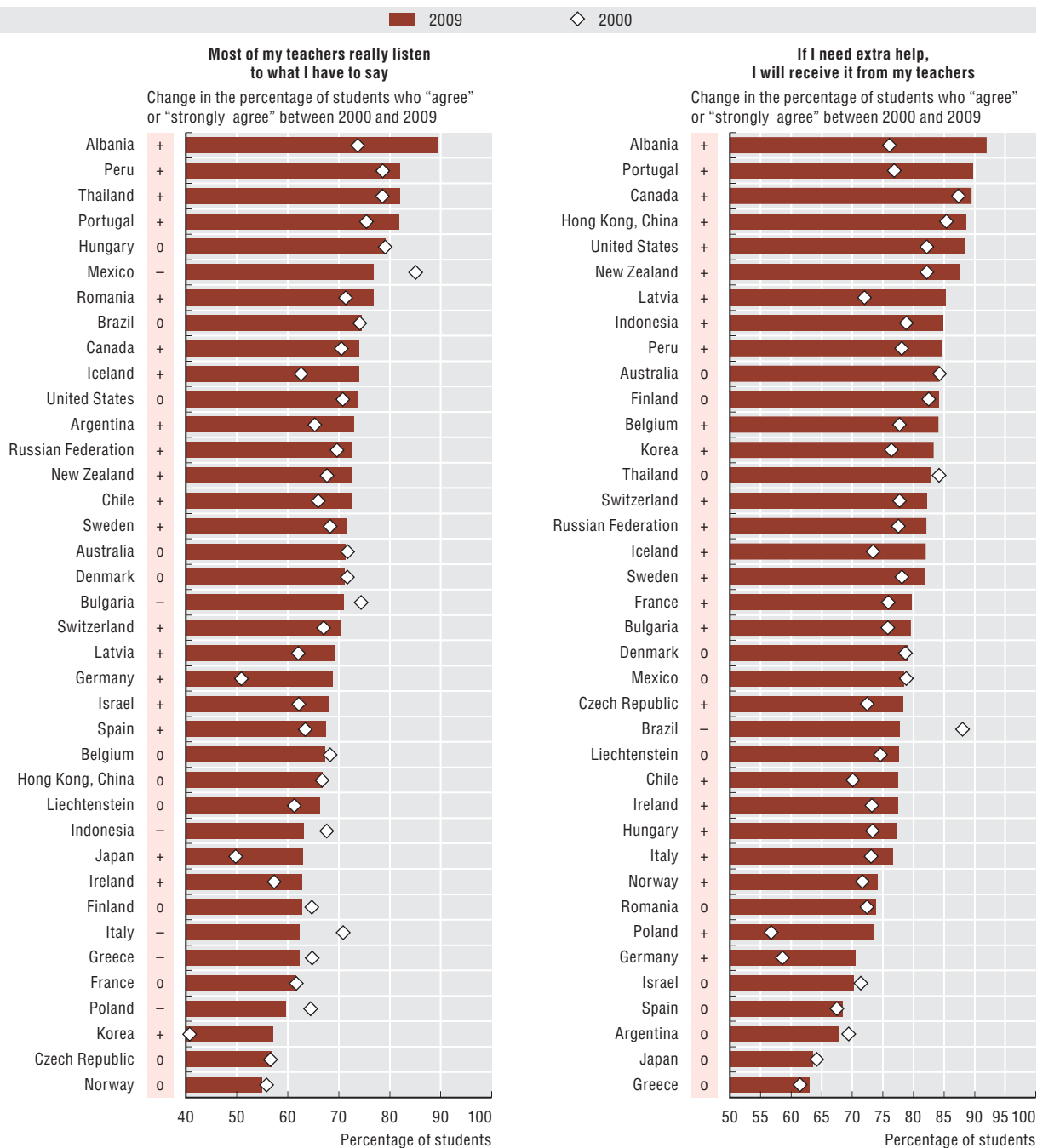
Further analysis of changes in student-teacher relationships between 2000 and 2009 is presented in *PISA 2009 Results Volume V, Learning Trends: Changes in Student Performance Since 2000*. Full data are shown in Table V.5.11 at the back of that volume.

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Figure 4.1. Change in teacher-student relations between 2000 and 2009

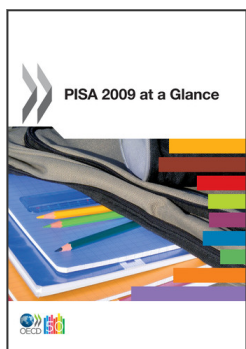
Percentage of students agreeing or strongly agreeing with the following statements



| | 2009 higher than 2000 | 2009 lower than 2000 | No statistically significant difference |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---|
| 95% confidence level | + | - | 0 |

Note: Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of students on the items in 2009.

Source: OECD (2010), PISA 2009 Results, Volume V, Learning Trends: Changes in Student Performance Since 2000, Figure V.5.11, available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932360024>.



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