

## *Foreword*

As highlighted in the OECD Action Plan for Youth, successful engagement of youth in the labour market is crucial not only for their own personal economic prospects and well-being, but also for overall economic growth and social cohesion. Therefore, investing in youth is a policy priority in all countries, including Australia, and requires concerted action to develop education systems and labour market arrangements that work together well.

Following the launch of the OECD Action Plan for Youth in May 2013, the OECD is working closely with countries to implement the plan's comprehensive measures in their national and local contexts and to provide peer-learning opportunities for countries to share their experience of policy measures to improve youth employment outcomes.

This work builds on the extensive country reviews that the OECD has carried out previously on the youth labour market and vocational education and training (*Jobs for Youth, Learning for Jobs* and *Skills beyond School*), as well as on the OECD Skills Strategy.

The present report on Australia is the fifth of a new series on Investing in Youth which builds on the expertise of the OECD on youth employment, social support and skills. This series covers both OECD countries and countries in the process of accession to the OECD, as well as some emerging economies. The report presents new results from a comprehensive statistical analysis of the situation of disadvantaged youth in Australia exploiting various sources of survey-based and administrative data. It provides a detailed diagnosis of the youth labour market and education system in Australia from an international comparative perspective, and offers tailored recommendations to help improve school-to-work-transitions. It also provides an opportunity for other countries to learn from the innovative measures that Australia has taken to strengthen the skills of youth and their employment outcomes.

The work on this report was mainly carried out within the Social Policy Division of the Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs (ELS). The report was prepared by Stéphane Carcillo, Raphaëla Hye, and

Claire Keane, and Sebastian Königs, with assistance from Bérengère Patault (École Polytechnique), and under the supervision of Monika Queisser (Head of the Social Policy Division). The report benefited from many useful comments provided by Stefano Scarpetta (Director, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs) as well as by staff in the OECD Economics Department and the Directorate for Education and Skills.

## *Acknowledgements*

The OECD Secretariat would like to thank the Australian Department of Employment and Department of Social Services for their excellent support in carrying out this project, and for organising the initial fact-finding mission in April 2014 as well as a seminar in Canberra in June 2015. In particular, Roxarne Armstrong, Kathryn Mandla, Geoffrey Moore, Denis O’Dea and Dave Ramsey deserve special thanks for their considerable contributions to ensuring a successful completion of this project. The OECD Secretariat is also extremely grateful to Myles Burleigh and Bruce Caldwell from the Australian Bureau for Statistics, to Liz Pugh from the Department of Employment and to Nicole Watson of the HILDA Survey team at the Melbourne Institute for the assistance and advice on data issues, as well as for the information and feedback provided by officials from the Department of Education, the Department of Human Services, and other Departments and organisations in Australia.

This review uses unit record data from the Research and Evaluation Database (RED) provided by the Australian Department of Employment as well as from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey. The HILDA Project was initiated and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS), and is managed by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research (Melbourne Institute). The findings and views reported in this report, however, are those of the authors and should not be attributed to either the Commonwealth or the Melbourne Institute.



**From:**  
**Investing in Youth: Australia**

**Access the complete publication at:**  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264257498-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2016), "Foreword and acknowledgements", in *Investing in Youth: Australia*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264257498-1-en>

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