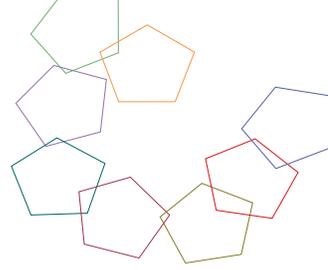


# Introduction

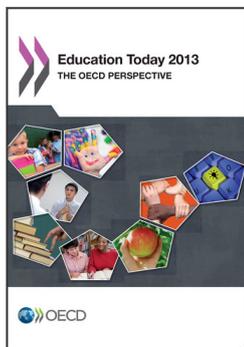


This summary report is based on results from OECD work produced in recent years by the Directorate for Education, and especially in the past three to four years. The background to its preparation is explained in the Foreword. The approach chosen focuses on results and policy orientations which are published and hence in the public domain. Only generalised findings about developments, policy or practice relevant across most OECD countries have been included. So, not covered are: studies or reviews of single countries; publications which provide exchange of information on promising practice without broader analytical conclusions; work plans and programme intentions; and clarifying statements of problems, challenges or issues.

As with the 2010 edition of *Education Today*, the publication is divided into eight chapters, devised as a structure to reflect well the different areas of educational work and to bring out policy conclusions and messages. It is produced entirely in modular format rather than as a continuous narrative. Each of the sections is divided into, respectively, *Introduction*, *Key Findings* and *Policy Directions*. Each modular text is introduced by the key message it contains or, where the module is in the form of a list of messages, these are highlighted instead. Each text also includes the title and chapter reference to the OECD report from which it comes, and these titles are brought together in a bibliography at the end of each chapter. A selection of illustrative figures and boxes has also been included to complement the text. This report uses the OECD *StatLinks* service and below each table and figure is a stable URL.

In reporting findings and conclusions, the volume avoids reference to specific projects, organisational units and internal structures within the Directorate for Education as these are largely uninteresting to the external audience. The introductions to each chapter do, however, make some connection to particular projects and future plans as an additional signpost for linking outcomes and messages to the work being undertaken.

In order to stay within manageable limits, this resource is highly selective of all the possible findings and policy orientations regarding education at the OECD. As the included texts are removed from the fuller analyses from which they are taken, there is a natural risk of oversimplification with short conclusions taken out of their wider analytical context. For both of these reasons, therefore, it is strongly advised that users looking for more than the headline messages should refer back to the original OECD source for the fuller picture.



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