

Foreword

OECD countries have long emphasised the development of skilled people through education and training, in recognition of the positive link between human capital and economic growth and productivity. But as countries seek new sources of growth to underpin a strong and sustainable future, they increasingly seek to know more about the types of skills that support innovation and the best ways to develop them. Innovation holds the key to ongoing improvements in living standards, as well as to solving some of the pressing social challenges facing OECD and non-OECD economies alike. Skilled people play a crucial role in innovation through the new knowledge they generate, the way they adopt and adapt existing ideas, and their ability to learn new competencies and adapt to a changing environment.

This book seeks to increase understanding of the links between skills and innovation and to highlight where further analysis would be useful. It was prepared under the auspices of the OECD Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry's Working Party on Research Institutions and Human Resources (RIHR). This group's mandate encompasses analysis of the skills base for research and innovation and its 2009-10 programme of work included a project on developing human capital for research and innovation. The project was also linked to the OECD's Innovation Strategy, a wider endeavour to address countries' needs for a more comprehensive, coherent and timely understanding of how to promote, measure and assess innovation and its underlying dynamics. The secretariat of RIHR and the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) co-led the Strategy's work on human capital for innovation.

The project began with an international meeting in Bad Honnef, Germany, on 17-18 November 2008, organised jointly by RIHR and CERI and hosted by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. This meeting, *Advancing Innovation: Human Resources, Education and Training*, brought together participants and experts from 27 delegations, and enabled country representatives to make recom-

mendations regarding the human capital issues to be addressed by the OECD Innovation Strategy. Expert analyses of workforce skills and innovation and learning organisations were subsequently commissioned by RIHR and CERI and were presented at the first RIHR meeting in May 2009. Following the direction of delegates, the Secretariat presented a draft report on Skills for Innovation and Research at the second RIHR meeting in June 2010. The analysis also contributed to the OECD's Innovation Strategy report.

The work has benefited from valuable input from RIHR delegates and experts, as well as from members of the Secretariat. It was authored by Sarah Box and Ester Basri of the OECD Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry.



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