

# 3

## Life at school and support from home

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This chapter examines students' experiences and behaviour at school, and how these changed during and after the pandemic. It also explores whether schools provide a climate that nurtures learning and well-being, and whether they involve parents in their children's education. The chapter also provides data and analyses on violence and bullying at school, and on pre- to post-COVID shifts in the incidence of bullying.

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For Australia\*, Canada\*, Denmark\*, Hong Kong (China)\*, Ireland\*, Jamaica\*, Latvia\*, the Netherlands\*, New Zealand\*, Panama\*, the United Kingdom\* and the United States\*, caution is advised when interpreting estimates because one or more PISA sampling standards were not met (see Reader's Guide, Annexes A2 and A4).

Schools' contribution to the overall success and resilience of education systems largely depends on their capacity to create and maintain a learning environment that nurtures students' learning and well-being, even in challenging times. PISA 2022 data show that teacher support and parental involvement in student learning decreased in many countries and so did bullying at school. At the same time, results suggest that strengthening support from teachers and parents is vital for improving performance and equity – even during times of disruption – across education systems. Students in resilient education systems also reported feeling safer at school and were less likely to skip school or arrive late for school.<sup>1</sup>

## What the data tell us

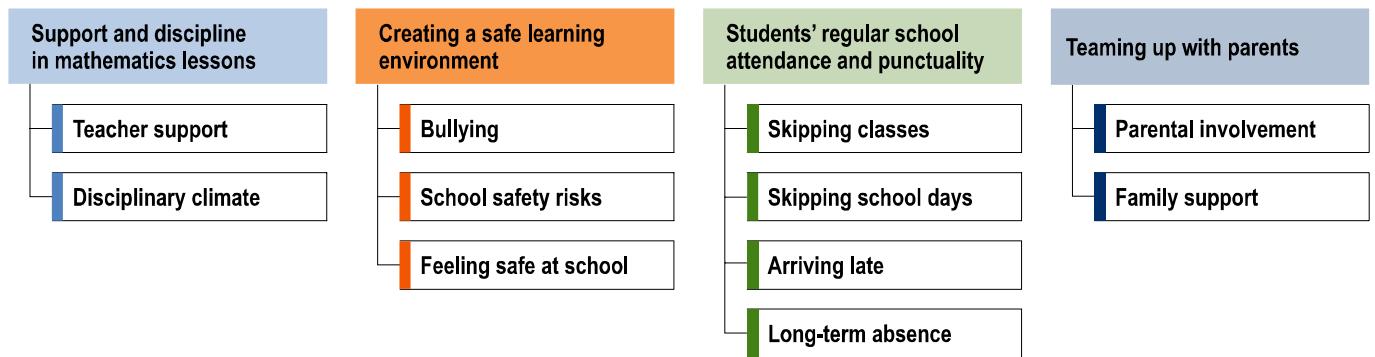
- Teacher support, parental involvement in student learning as well as student truancy decreased in many countries and so did bullying at school. At the same time, results suggest that strengthening support from teachers and parents as well as regular attendance of students and school safety are vital for education systems' resilience.
- Some 30% of students, on average across OECD countries, reported that, in most or every mathematics lesson, they get distracted using digital devices; 25% of students reported that they get distracted by other students using these devices in class.
- Around 10% of students reported feeling unsafe on their way to or from school, or in places outside of the classroom, on average across OECD countries. Some 20% of students reported that they are bullied at least a few times a month and reported observing vandalism and threats from fellow students at school or fights on school property in which someone got hurt. Around 10% of students saw gangs in school or saw a student carrying a gun or knife at school.
- In one in five education systems, more than 50% of students had skipped a class or a day of school in the two weeks prior to the PISA test; in Baku (Azerbaijan), the Dominican Republic, Italy, Kosovo, Paraguay, Romania, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye more than 60% of students had done so.

As displayed in Figure II.3.1, this chapter discusses these and other components of resilience, i.e. characteristics of the climate in schools that were associated with education systems' resilience in PISA 2022 (see Chapter 1). The components pertain to four different areas (Cohen et al., 2009<sup>[1]</sup>; Wang and Degol, 2016<sup>[2]</sup>; Thapa et al., 2013<sup>[3]</sup>):

- **Support and discipline in lessons** – whether students feel supported in their learning and whether the disciplinary climate in class allows for students to concentrate on learning. Since the core subject of PISA 2022 was mathematics, the chapter examines support and discipline in mathematics lessons.
- **Creating a safe environment for learning on line and off line** – whether schools create a safe space where students are protected from physical and emotional harm, such as violence or bullying on line or off line.
- **Students' regular school attendance and punctuality** – whether students attend school regularly and arrive punctually instead of skipping school or arriving late.
- **Teaming up with parents** – whether schools work with parents and families to assist students in their education and development.

Annex A1 provides details about how the indicators examined in this chapter were constructed.

Figure II.3.1. School life as covered in PISA 2022

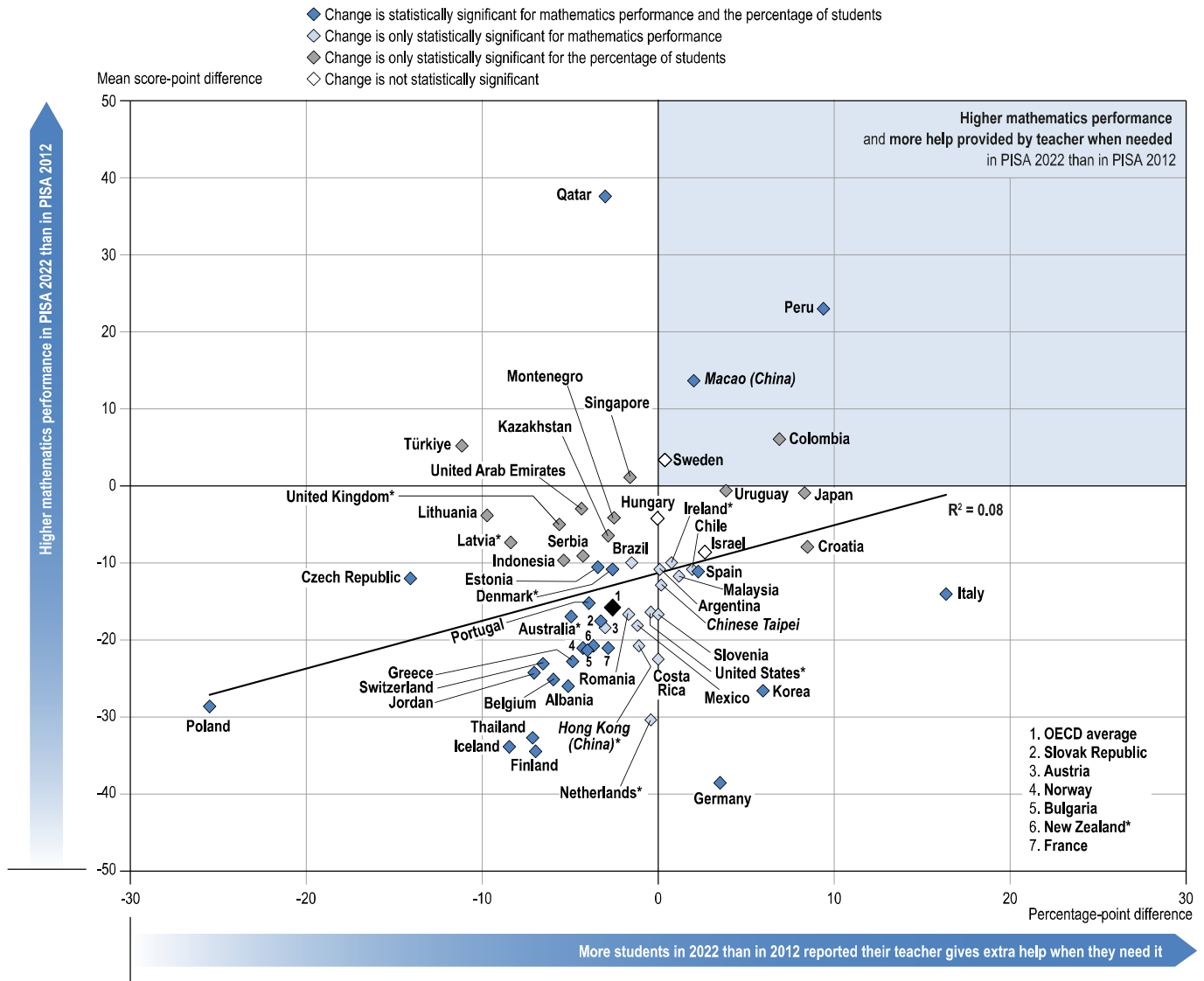


### Components of resilience: Providing support and discipline in mathematics lessons

Across all education systems in 2022, students in high-performing systems reported a better disciplinary climate in mathematics lessons (Table II.B1.3.76). Moreover, students in all systems that were resilient in mathematics performance, except Australia\*, reported a disciplinary climate better than the OECD average (Figure II.1.1 and Tables II.1.1 and II.B1.3.9). Fewer disruptions in class give teachers more time to cover the curriculum and use diverse teaching strategies, and students' can concentrate better on their tasks (Mostafa, Echazarra and Guillou, 2018<sub>(4)</sub>).<sup>2</sup>

Students in all systems that were resilient in mathematics performance, except for students in Lithuania and Switzerland, reported teacher support in mathematics lessons that was above the OECD average; however, students in systems where students scored higher and reported a greater sense of belonging at school reported less teacher support (Table II.B1.3.76).<sup>3</sup> More important, education systems that saw no deterioration between 2012 and 2022 in teacher support (no decrease in the percentage of teachers giving extra help when students need it) showed stable or improving mathematics performance (Figure II.3.2 and Table II.B1.3.77). Peru, for example, showed an increase in teacher support of nine percentage points and a 23 score-point improvement in mathematics performance. While many resilient systems did not show a positive trend in teacher support, these data reflect a decade-long evolution in which teacher support remained stable or declined in most countries over this period (see below). No data on teacher support in mathematics were available for the pre- to post-COVID period.<sup>4</sup>

Figure II.3.2. Change between 2012 and 2022 in teachers giving extra help and mathematics performance



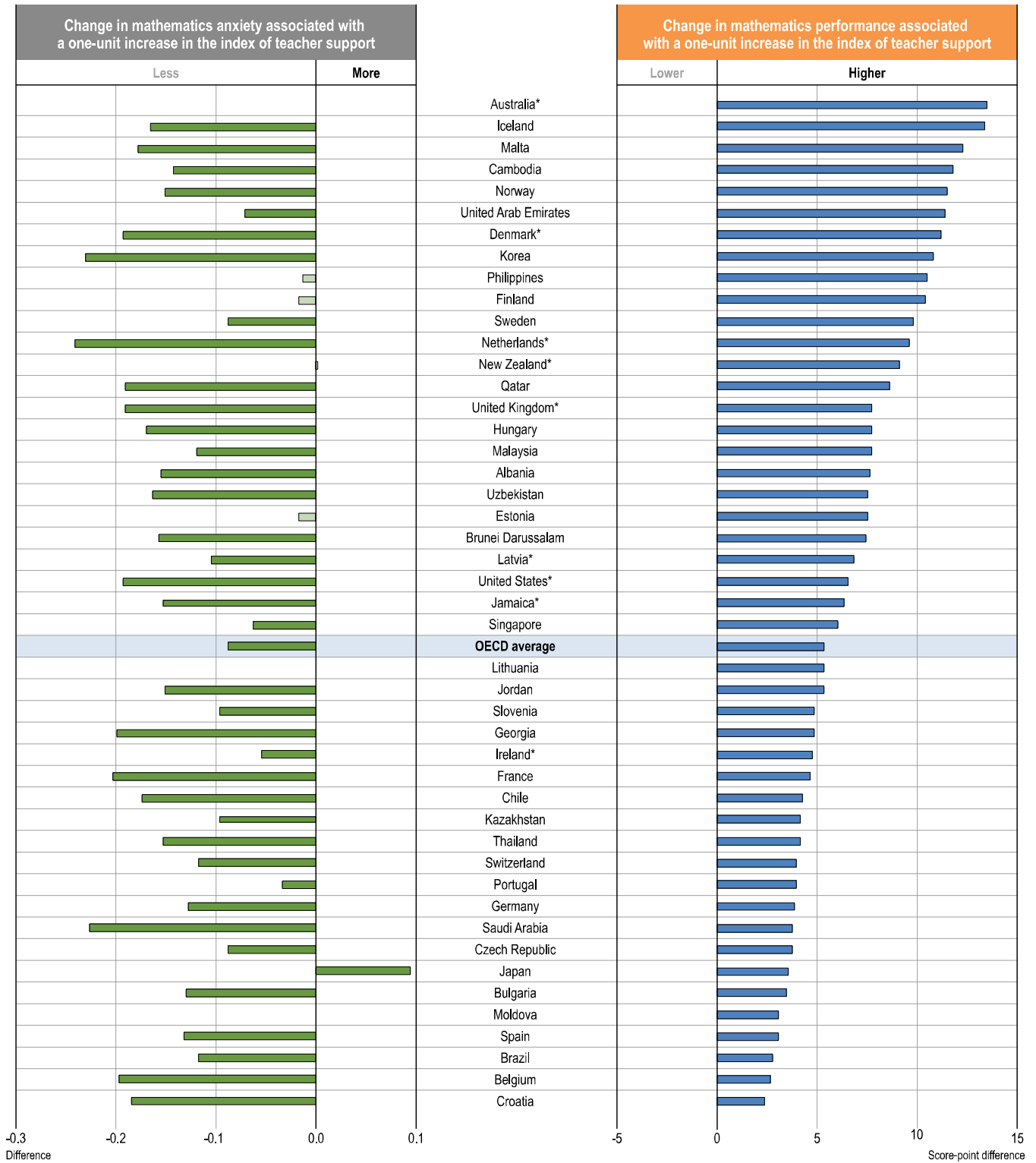
Note: The vertical axis shows the change between 2012 and 2022 in the percentage of students who reported that in most lessons or every lessons their teachers gave them extra help when they needed it.

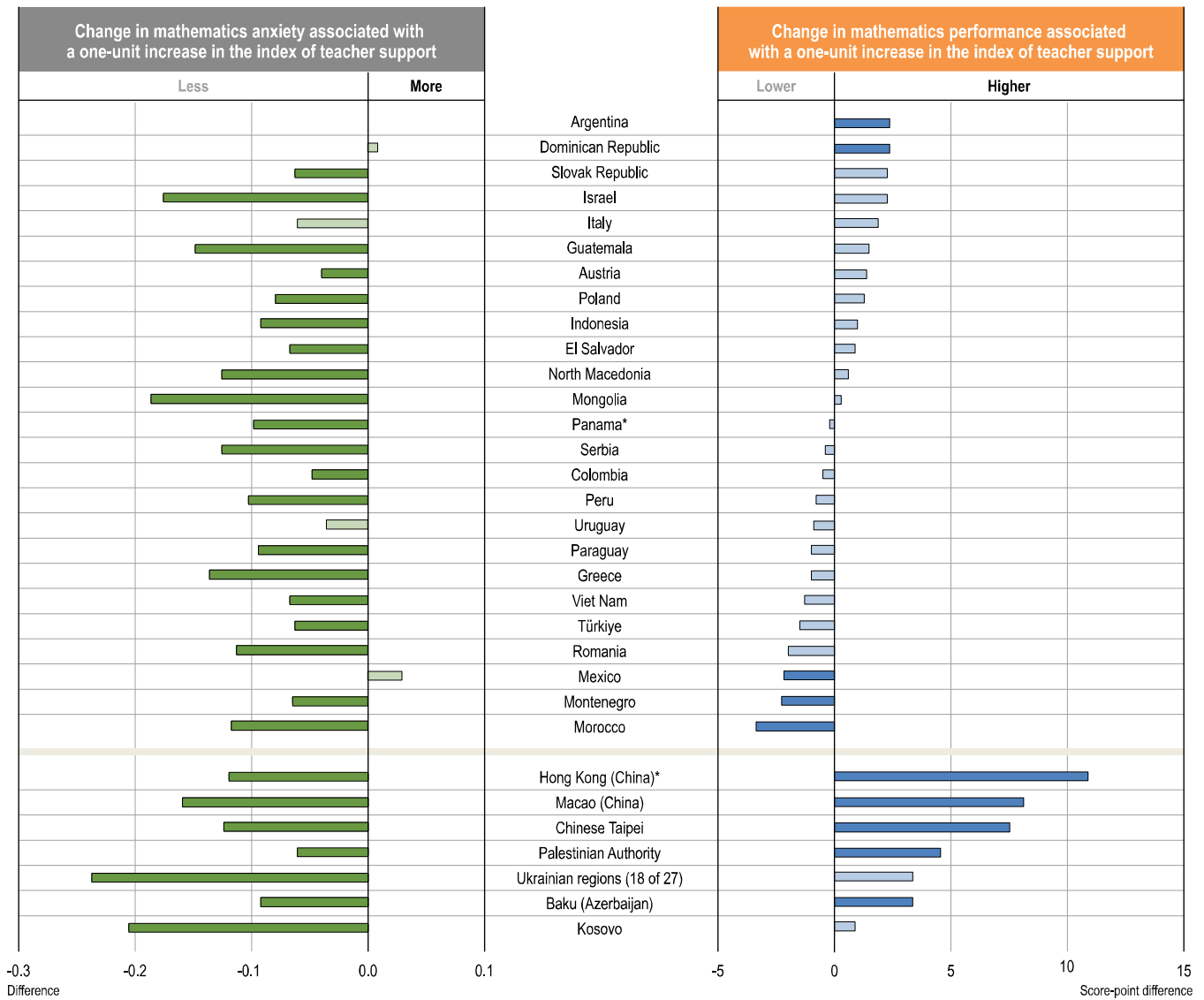
Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3; and Volume I, Annex B1, Chapter 5.

**Students with supportive teachers performed better and suffered less from anxiety**

In most education systems, students who reported more support from teachers and a better disciplinary climate in mathematics lessons scored higher in mathematics and reported greater well-being (Tables II.B1.3.5, II.B1.3.7, II.B1.3.13, II.B1.3.15). The latter includes students’ sense of belonging at school, overall satisfaction with life, confidence in their capacity for self-directed learning and less mathematics anxiety. The association with mathematics performance was particularly strong in Australia\*, Cambodia, Denmark\*, Finland, Hong Kong (China)\*, Iceland, Korea, Malta, Norway, the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates (see Figure II.3.3) where a one-unit increase in the index of teacher support was associated with an improvement in mathematics performance of ten score points or more (on average across OECD countries, the improvement amounted to five score points). Differences in the strength of the association could reflect differences in the degree of support provided by teachers.

Figure II.3.3. Teacher support, and anxiety towards and performance in mathematics





Notes: Statistically significant values are shown in darker tones (see Annex A3). The results are based on linear regression analysis, after accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profile. The socio-economic profile is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS). Countries and economies are ranked in ascending order of the change in mathematics performance associated with a one-unit increase in the index of teacher support. Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

Figure II.3.3 also shows that in most school systems, students who scored higher in mathematics reported less anxiety towards mathematics when they perceived their teachers to be more supportive, after accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profile (Table II.B1.3.8). The countries with the strongest negative associations (i.e. the more teacher support, the less anxiety towards mathematics) were Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark\*, Estonia, Hungary and Norway, while the only country with a positive association (i.e. the more teacher support, the more anxiety) was the Dominican Republic.

### ***Many students did not receive the support needed to succeed in school***

PISA 2022 results suggest that further efforts are needed to ensure that students receive necessary and relevant support from teachers. In half of all countries/economies and on average across OECD countries, teacher support deteriorated from 2012 to 2022 (Table II.B1.3.4)<sup>5</sup>. For instance, the share of students who reported that the teacher gives extra help when students need it in most or every lesson decreased by three percentage points. In 2022, around 30% of students, on average across OECD countries, said that the teacher only in some lessons, or never or almost never, gives extra help when students need it and helps students with their learning (Table II.B1.3.1). Almost 40% of students reported that, in most lessons, the teacher does not show an interest in every student's learning or does not continue teaching until students understand. In the Czech Republic, Greece and Poland, close to or over 50% of students reported such a lack of teacher support.

Nevertheless, in a few countries/economies, the share of teachers who support their students grew between 2018 and 2022. In Croatia, Italy, Japan and Peru, for example, the share of students who reported that the teacher gives extra help in most or every lesson when students need it grew by over eight percentage points (Table II.B1.3.4). In Guatemala, Paraguay and Singapore over 75% of students in 2022 reported that, in most or every lesson, the teacher gives help when needed and continues until students understand.

### ***One in three students become distracted when using digital devices in class***

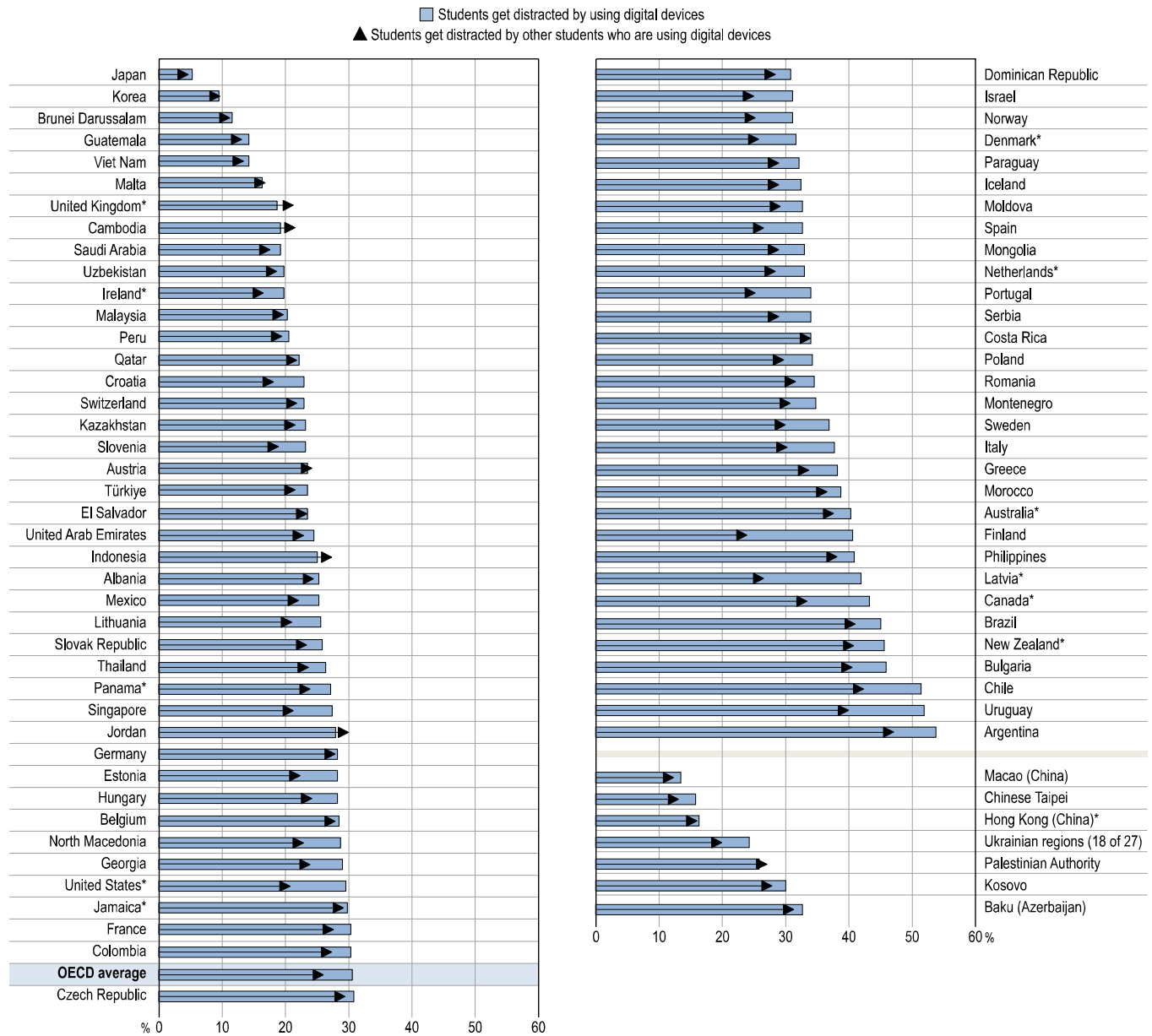
PISA 2022 data show that many students study mathematics in a disciplinary climate that is not favourable to learning even though, on average across OECD countries and in around a third of all education systems, the disciplinary climate improved between 2012 and 2022 (Table II.B1.3.12). However, over 20% of students across OECD countries reported that they cannot work well in most or all lessons; and more than 40% of students in Bulgaria, Morocco and Türkiye reported so (Table II.B1.3.9). Moreover, in over 40% of countries/economies the share of students who reported that students cannot work well in some or every lesson increased during the period – and in Australia\*, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Macao (China) and the United Kingdom\* by over ten percentage points. At the same time, in Japan, Korea, Peru, the Slovak Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam the share of students who so reported decreased by the same amount.

Apart from “traditional” disciplinary problems, such as students not listening to what the teacher says, or trying to learn in a noisy and disorderly classroom, one in three students, on average across OECD countries, also reported that, in most or every mathematics lesson, they get distracted using digital devices (Figure II.3.4 and Table II.B1.3.9). Equally important, around one of four students indicated that, in most or every lesson, they get distracted by other students who are using digital devices, the teacher has to wait a long time for students to quiet down, and students do not start working for a long time after the lesson begins.

PISA 2022 results highlight the importance of finding effective ways to limit the distraction caused by using digital devices in class (see Box 5.1. in Chapter 5). The frequency with which students become distracted by other students who are using digital devices in class is among the disciplinary aspects that shows the strongest association with mathematics performance (Table II.B1.3.13). On average across OECD countries, students who reported that this happens in at least in some mathematics lessons scored 15 points lower in mathematics than students who reported that this never or almost never happens, after accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profile. A similar pattern is observed in 80% of systems with available data. However, this issue does not seem to be as consequential in some systems as it is in others. For example, only 4% of students in Japan and 9% in Korea reported that they become distracted by other students who are using digital devices in every or most mathematics lessons. In these two countries, the difference in mathematics performance related to this type of distraction amounts to 10 score points or less. While on average across OECD countries 25% of students reported that they become distracted in every or most mathematics lessons, less than 15% of students in Brunei Darussalam, Guatemala, Macao (China), Chinese Taipei and Viet Nam so reported (see Figure II.3.4 and Table II.B1.3.9).

Figure II.3.4. Distraction from digital devices in mathematics lessons

Percentage of students who reported that the following happens in every or in most of their mathematics lessons



Countries and economies are ranked in ascending order of the percentage of students who reported that they get distracted by using digital devices.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

Finding effective ways to limit distractions is also important for student well-being (Tables II.B1.3.15). For example, in all countries/economies students who perceived the climate in their mathematics lessons to be less disruptive were less anxious towards mathematics (Table II.B1.3.16).

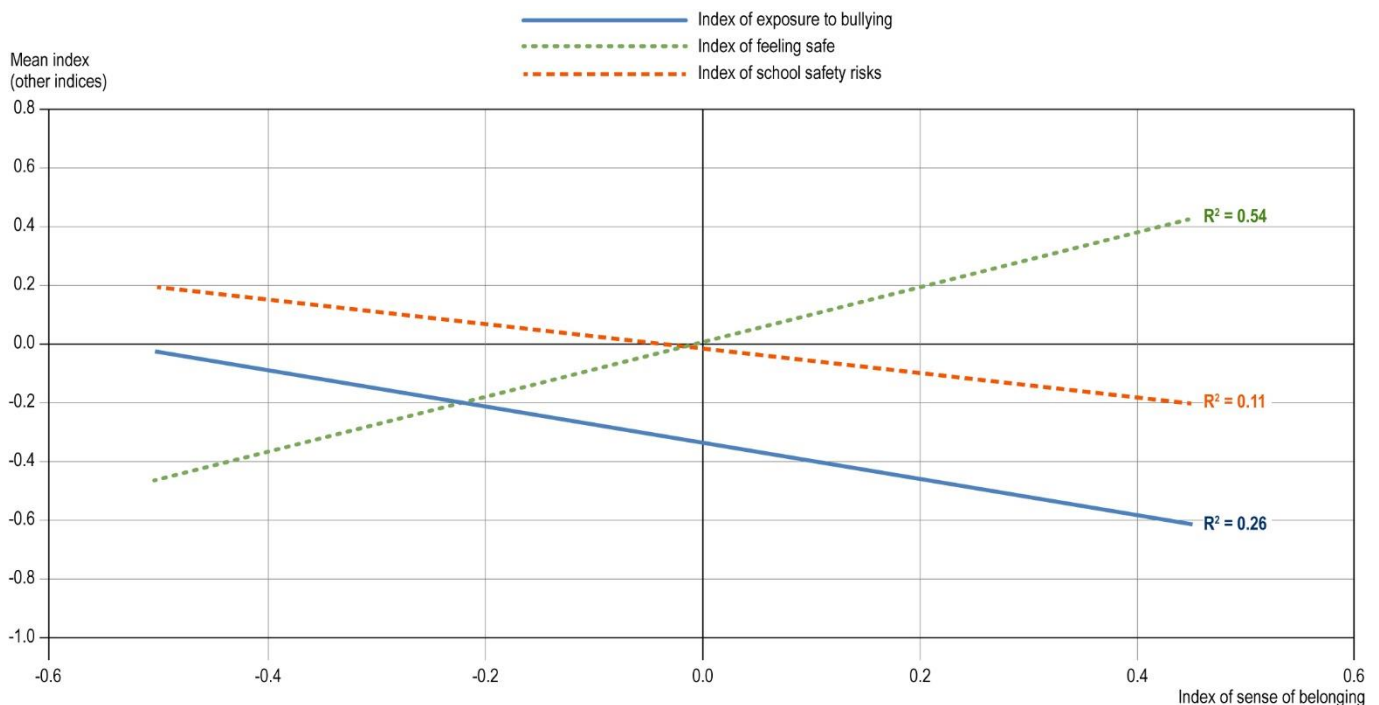


## Components of resilience: Creating a safe environment for learning on line and off line

PISA 2022 data show that students in high-performing systems and systems with a greater average sense of belonging at school reported feeling safer and less exposed to risks and bullying at their school (Table II.B1.3.76). Figure II.3.5 shows that the relationship between feeling safe at school and sense of belonging at school is particularly strong. The association between all indicators of school safety are stronger in OECD countries than across all countries/economies.<sup>6</sup> This could be a sign that the type of risks and safety concerns beyond OECD countries/economies are much more heterogeneous in nature and magnitude. In addition, different cultural and social norms may affect how students in different countries perceive various types of violence and bullying, and whether such behaviour is more accepted socially.

### Figure II.3.5. Students' safety at school and sense of belonging

System-level analysis (68 countries and economies)



Note: Positive values in the index of school safety risks indicate that students perceive greater risks at their school. Positive values in the index of bullying indicate that students were exposed to more bullying at their school.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapters 1 and 3.

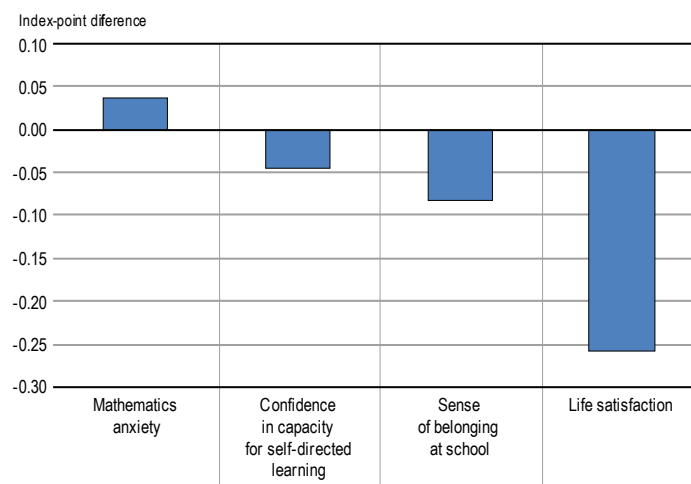
In most systems resilient in well-being (i.e. stable or increasing sense of belonging at school between 2018 and 2022 and above average sense of belonging in 2022) the reported incidence of bullying<sup>7</sup> was below the OECD average, as were reported risks at school (Figure II.1.1 and Tables II.B1.3.23 and II.B1.3.30). Students in most of these systems also reported feeling safer than on average across OECD countries. For example, in Austria, Finland and Switzerland the proportions of students who reported feeling safe at school and who reported a strong sense of belonging at school were well above the OECD average.

## Students who reported feeling safer at school performed better and enjoyed a greater sense of well-being

Feeling safe at school was positively related to a range of aspects of well-being, but particularly strongly to sense of belonging and life satisfaction, while negatively related to mathematics anxiety (Tables II.B1.3.22). Conversely, being exposed to bullying and safety risks at school is negatively related to all of these aspects, except for mathematics anxiety (Figure II.3.6 and Tables II.B1.3.28 and II.B1.3.36). On average across OECD countries, students who reported feeling safe and were not exposed to bullying or risks at school have a stronger sense of belonging at school, feel more confident about their capacity for self-directed learning and are overall more satisfied with life. They are also less anxious.

### Figure II.3.6. School safety risks and student well-being

Change in the following indices per one-unit increase in the index of school safety risks; OECD average



Notes: All values are statistically significant (see Annex A3).

Positive values in the index of school safety risks indicate that the student perceives greater risks at their school than the average student in OECD countries.

All linear regression models account for students' and schools' socio-economic profile, and mathematics performance.

The socio-economic profile is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS).

Items are ranked in descending order of the change in indices per one-unit increase in the index of school safety risks.

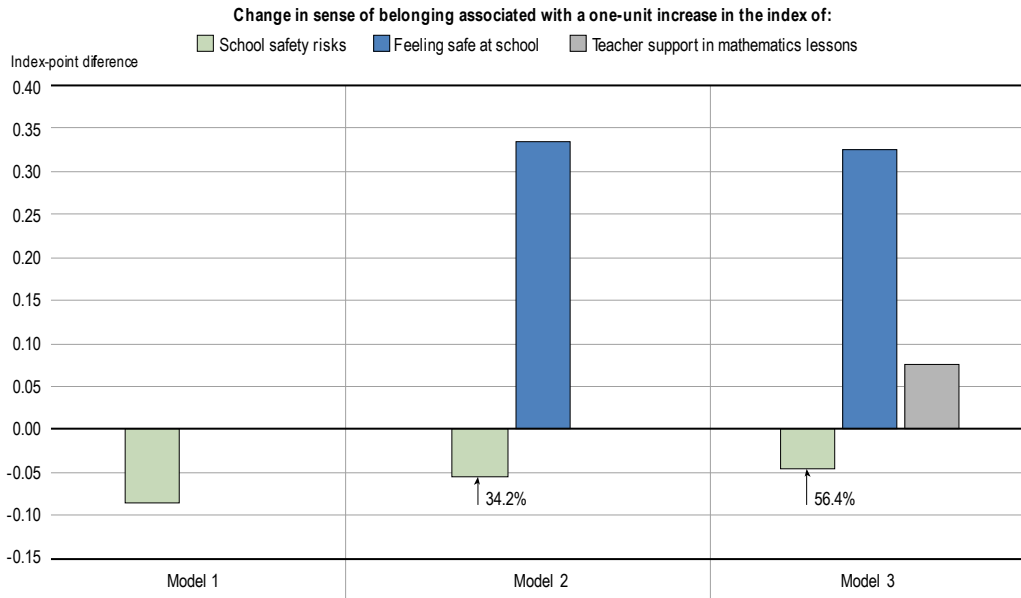
Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

## In unsafe schools, teachers provided less support and students felt less safe and connected

Violence at school may make students feel unsafe and make it hard for teachers to work well. Through its adverse effects on teachers and the overall school climate, violence may hinder students from creating strong bonds at and with school. PISA cannot test the causal nature of these relationships, but it can provide an indication of how plausible the hypothesis is. PISA 2022 found a negative association between school safety risks and students' feeling of safety at school, and teacher support at school (Table II.B1.3.29). Albeit relationships being low, they remained significant even after accounting for the socio-economic profile of students and schools. The findings shown in Figure II.3.7 reveal that, on average across OECD countries, the relationship between school safety risks and sense of belonging at school weakens by 36% after accounting for the index of feeling safe at school, and by 53% after also accounting for teacher support. Similar results are observed in many other countries/economies. These findings are in line with the notion that safety risks and sense of belonging at school are, to a great extent, indirectly related through their impact on students' feeling of safety and teachers' capacity to provide students with support.

**Figure II.3.7. Association between sense of belonging and selected aspects of school climate**

OECD average



Notes: All values are statistically significant (see Annex A3).

Results based on linear regression analysis, after accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profile.

The socio-economic profile is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS).

The three linear regression models use the same sample.

The percentage of the association between the index of school safety risks and the index of sense of belonging, after accounting for socio-economic profile, that is mediated by the indices of feeling safe at school and teacher support in mathematics lessons is shown above the blue bars.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

**Many education systems and schools need to bolster efforts to improve student safety**

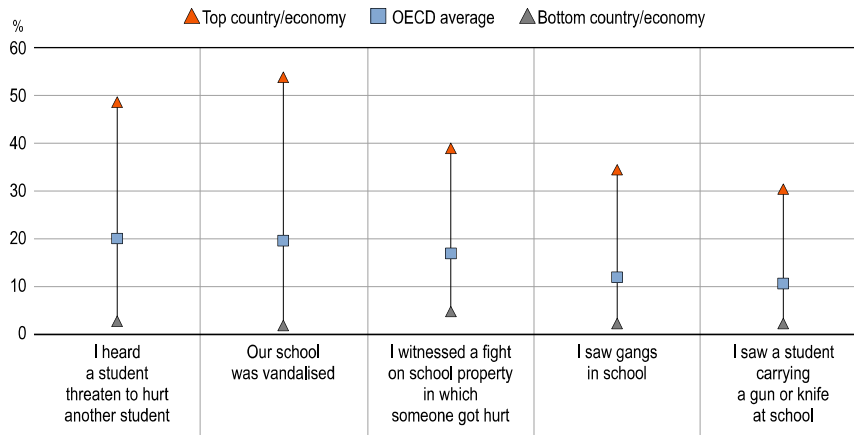
Overall, students feel safe at school, particularly in their classrooms. However, PISA 2022 results suggest that education systems could consider improving safety on students' way to or from school, or in places outside of the classroom, such as hallways, cafeterias or restrooms. About 10% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed that they feel safe in these places, on average across OECD countries. In Jamaica\*, Moldova and Morocco around 25% of students reported feeling unsafe outside the classroom; in Baku (Azerbaijan), Jamaica\* and Moldova more than 15% of students felt unsafe even in their classroom. However, in many systems, including Belgium, Croatia, Ireland\*, Korea, the Netherlands\*, Portugal, Serbia, Singapore, Switzerland and Chinese Taipei, less than 5% of students felt unsafe in their classroom or in other places at school.

Feeling safe at school might also depend on whether students are confronted with risks at school, and PISA shows there are considerable differences across countries in this regard. Figure II.3.8 shows that, on average across OECD countries, the most common risks that students encounter at school are vandalism (20% of students so reported) and threats from fellow students (20%), followed by fights on school property in which someone got hurt (17%). Though less common, one out of ten students saw gangs in school (12%) or saw a student carrying a gun or knife at school (11%).

However, less than 5% of students in Guatemala, Kazakhstan and Korea reported that they have seen gangs in school, while 30% of students or more in Brunei Darussalam, Kosovo and Thailand reported so (Table II.B1.3.23).

### Figure II.3.8. School safety risks

Percentage of students who reported that the following happened at school during the four weeks prior to the PISA assessment; OECD average



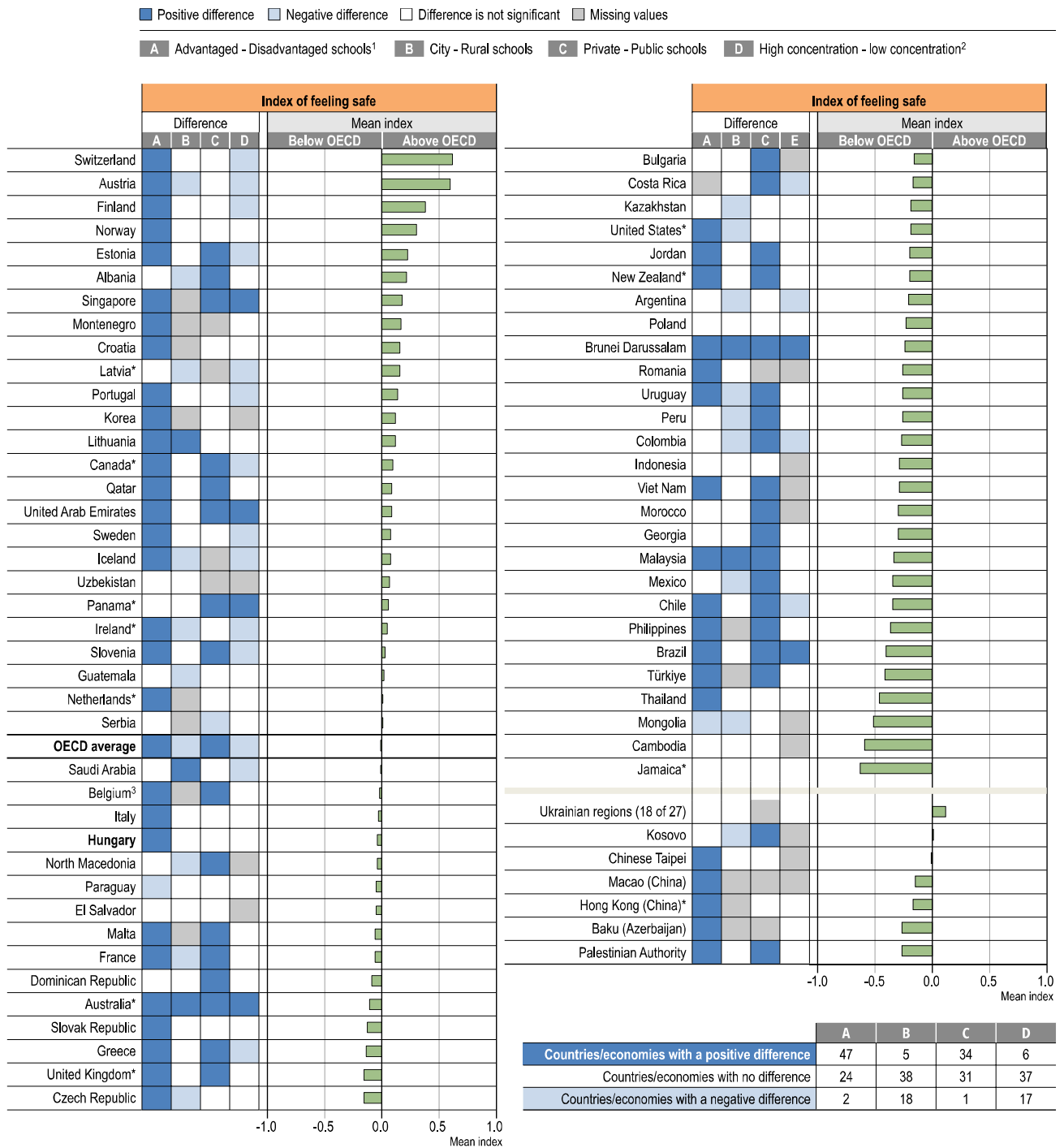
Items are ranked in descending order of the percentage of students at the OECD average.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

PISA results also suggest that certain types of schools require stronger efforts to improve safety. Across OECD countries and in most education systems, students in socio-economically disadvantaged schools were more likely than students in advantaged schools to report feeling unsafe (Figure II.3.9 and Table II.B1.3.19). However, in a third of education systems, students in both types of schools felt equally safe; and in Mongolia and Paraguay more students who attended disadvantaged schools reported feeling safe at school than did their peers in advantaged schools.

Figure II.3.9. Feeling safe, by school characteristics

Based on students' reports



1. The socio-economic profile is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS). A socio-economically disadvantaged (advantaged) school is a school in the bottom (top) quarter of the index of ESCS in the relevant country/economy.  
 2. A school with a low (high) concentration of immigrant students is a school where less than (at least) 10% of students have an immigrant background.  
 3. Questions about the type of school were not asked in the Flemish-speaking Community of Belgium. Data for Belgium represent only the French-speaking and German-speaking Communities.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the index of feeling safe.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

Across OECD countries, students attending urban and public schools, and schools with a high concentration of students with an immigrant background felt less safe than their peers who attended rural and private schools, and those with a low concentration of immigrant students. However, in over 60% of education systems students felt equally safe no matter if they attended private schools or schools with a low or high concentration of immigrant students.

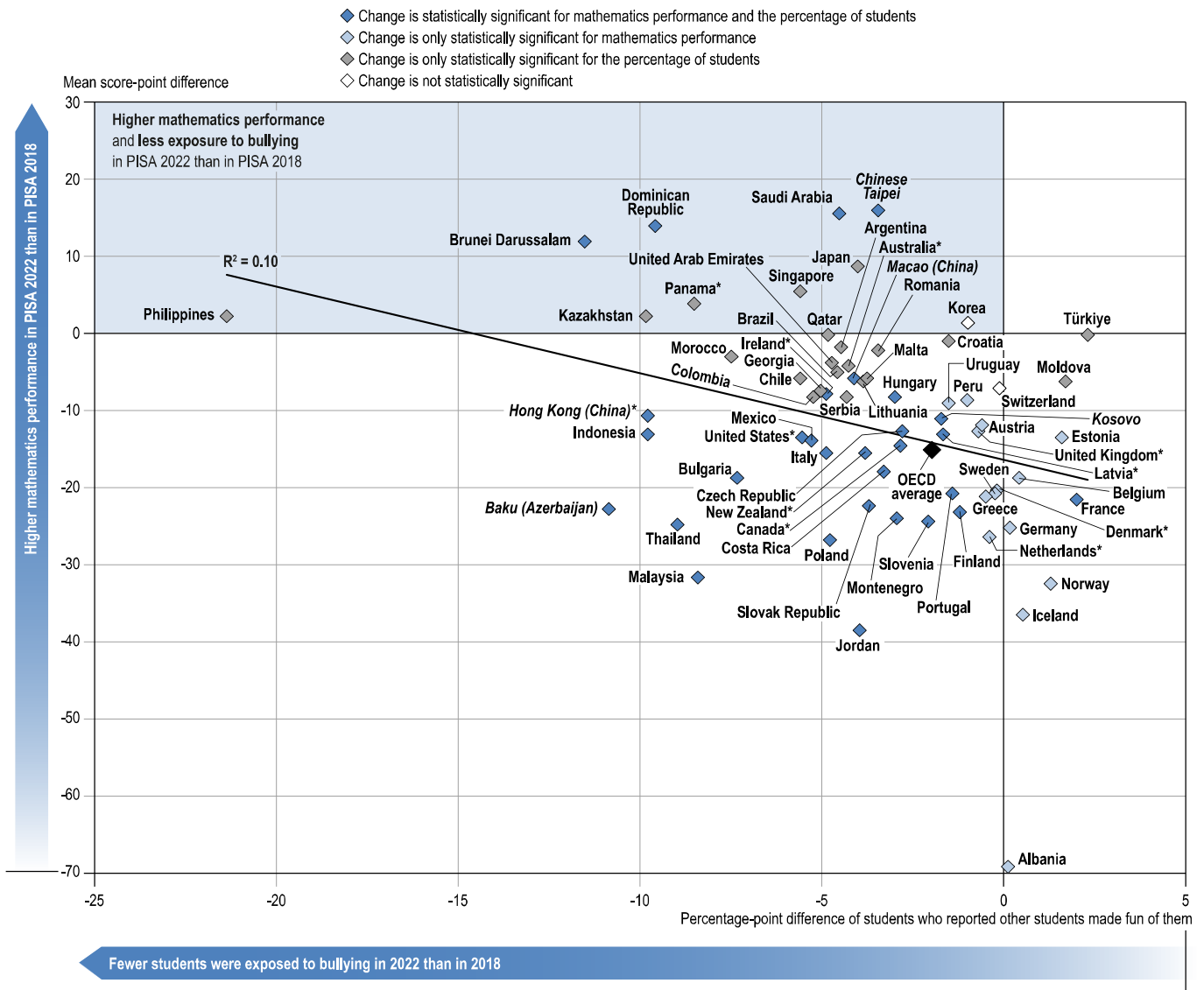
Differences observed between types of schools may partly result from differences in the extent to which students from different groups feel safe at school (Table II.B1.3.18). For example, socio-economically disadvantaged students and those with an immigrant background reported feeling less safe than advantaged students and those without an immigrant background. Girls were more likely than boys to report feeling unsafe at school, on average across OECD countries and in all but one partner education system (United Arab Emirates). The gender gap was particularly wide in Belgium, the Czech Republic and France.

### ***Bullying decreased, especially in resilient systems***

Bullying occurs in all PISA-participating countries/economies; but results from PISA 2022 show a break in the previously observed trends of increasing bullying.<sup>8</sup> In 2022, the incidence of all types of bullying examined between 2018 and 2022 decreased by around two to three percentage points, on average across OECD countries (Table II.B1.3.33). However, there were large differences between countries/economies in bullying trends. For instance, the incidence of making fun of others decreased by ten percentage points between 2018 and 2022 in Baku (Azerbaijan), Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines, while it increased by two percentage points in France, Moldova and Türkiye.

Results across all countries/economies also show that the performance in mathematics of students, particularly disadvantaged students, in education systems where bullying decreased between 2018 and 2022 improved more than in other systems (Figure II.3.10 and Table II.B1.3.77). For example, in Brunei Darussalam, the Dominican Republic and Saudi Arabia the percentage of students who reported that other students made fun of them shrank by 5 to 12 percentage points while average mathematics scores in these systems improved by 12 to 16 points (Tables II.1 and II.B1.3.33). Disadvantaged students' performance improved even more – by 13 to 27 score points. However, none of these systems was classified as resilient in equity because none of them was either fair (“fair” meaning that all students, regardless of their background, can achieve at high levels) or high-performing in 2022 (Figure II.1.1 and Table II.1). In all countries/economies that were resilient in mathematics, except Korea, fewer students in 2022 than in 2018 reported that other students made fun of them (Figure II.1.1 and Table II.B1.3.33).

**Figure II.3.10. Change between 2018 and 2022 in students' exposure to bullying and mathematics performance**



Note: The horizontal axis shows the change between 2018 and 2022 in the percentage of students who reported that at least a few times a month other students made fun of them.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3; and Volume I, Annex B1, Chapter 5.

**Bullying was still pervasive in 2022**

Nonetheless, bullying at school remains pervasive. On average across OECD countries, 20% of students reported being bullied at least a few times a month (Table II.B1.3.30). In some systems more students were exposed to frequent bullying: in Brunei Darussalam, Jamaica\*, Jordan, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, the Philippines, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates over 15% of students were frequently bullied, while in Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, the Netherlands\*, Portugal and Chinese Taipei around 5% of students or less were frequently bullied (i.e. those in the top 10% of students across all countries/economies who reported that they are exposed to bullying; Table II.B1.3.30).

In all countries and economies verbal and relational bullying (e.g. making fun of other students, spreading nasty rumours) occurred more frequently than physical bullying (e.g. hitting or pushing other students around, taking away

or destroying things that belong to other students; Table II.B1.3.30). However, there were large differences across countries/economies. For example, in Jamaica\* and the Philippines over 10% of students reported that they were threatened by other students at least a few times a month, which is in stark contrast to results in Japan, Korea and Chinese Taipei where only 1% of students reported so. Students are exposed to bullying and threats also on line, despite recent efforts in many countries to keep students safe in digital environments (see Box II.3.1).

### Box II.3.1. Policies and programmes to support student safety in the digital environment

Countries implement different policies or programmes to support student safety in the digital environment, including: providing information or implementing awareness-raising activities on digital safety, implementing safe log-in and single sign-in programmes in schools (as is the case in many countries, including Greece, Norway and Switzerland), and using secure content policies and filters (Burns and Gottschalk, 2020<sup>[5]</sup>). Media and digital literacy education can also be a powerful tool to empower students to tackle pressing challenges they increasingly face, such as separating fact from opinion in the digital environment (Hill, 2022<sup>[6]</sup>). Countries have different approaches to co-ordinating the media literacy landscape. Many, including Belgium, France and the Netherlands\*, have statutory actors who create resources, deliver training and conduct research, in collaboration with schools and other stakeholders. Finland and the United Kingdom\*, for example, have dedicated media literacy strategies focused on empowering citizens by mitigating digital risks, such as disinformation, hate speech and digital abuse.

Many OECD education systems have reported that cyberbullying is high on the list of policy priorities and that they have implemented programmes or policies to combat cyberbullying (Gottschalk, 2022<sup>[7]</sup>). These approaches often fall under one of three broad categories:

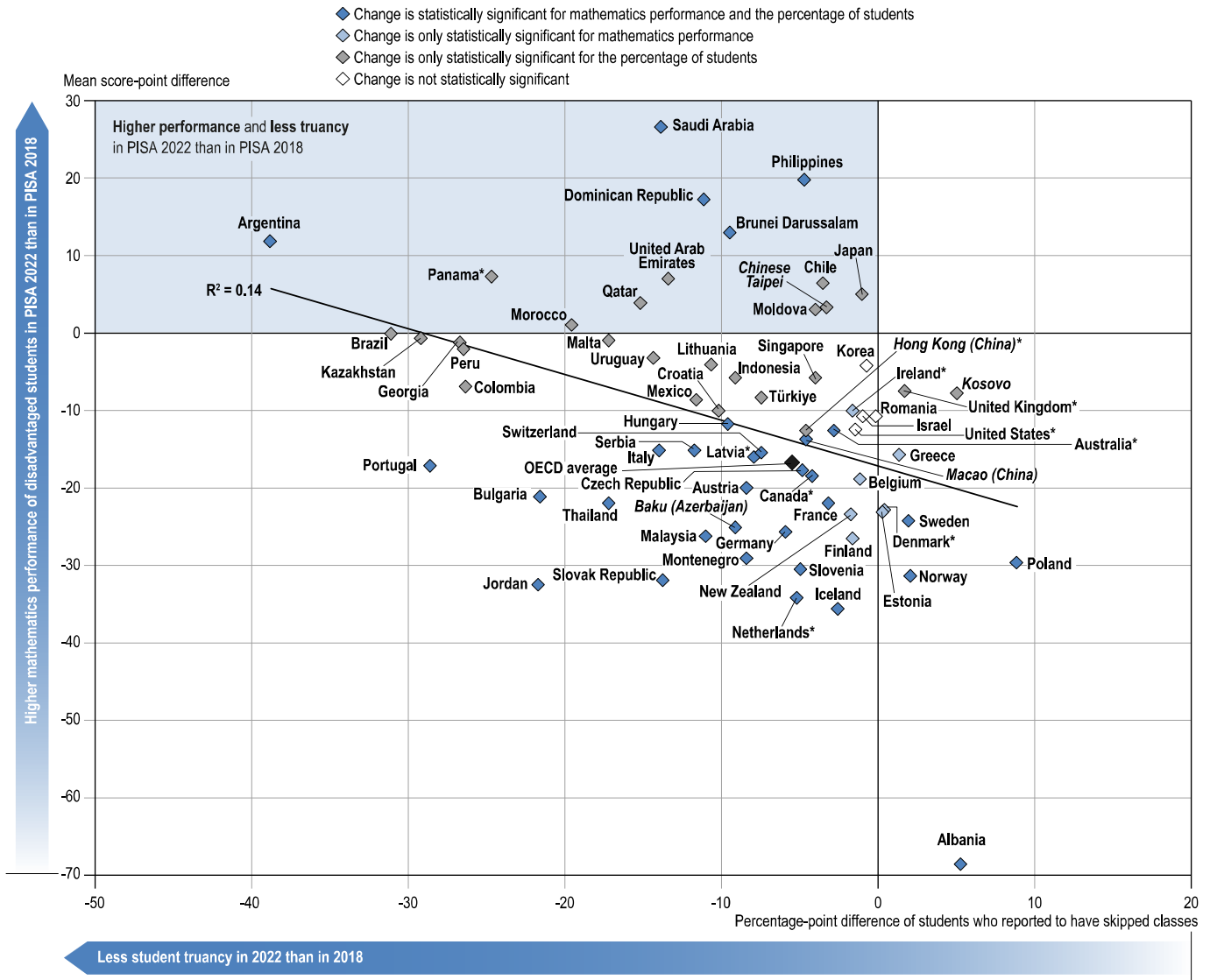
- **Policy or legal frameworks to combat cyberbullying.** Frameworks are sometimes obligatory for schools or districts to adopt, and legal responses can be specific to cyberbullying or address it through existing laws, such as those focusing on harassment, defamation or even copyright.
- **Reporting mechanisms and safety support outside of schools.** This can consist of hotlines, helplines or digital systems to report serious cases of cyberbullying and be referred to specialist support. In some countries safer Internet centres provide support to parents, students and teachers about digital risks in general.
- **School-based interventions and teacher training.** Some interventions focus on skill-building (e.g. social and emotional skills, such as empathy) or aim to promote positive peer relationships through tutoring schemes, for example. Many programmes incorporate a teacher training element to assist teachers in identifying cyberbullying and understanding its implications, and in programme implementation. However, research suggests that school-based interventions tend to be more effective when implemented by digitally savvy experts.

### Components of resilience: Ensuring students' regular school attendance and punctuality

Across all education systems, students in high-performing education systems were less likely to have skipped classes or school days and were more punctual<sup>9</sup> in the two weeks prior to the PISA test (Table II.B1.3.76). Students in high-performing systems and in systems with a higher average sense of belonging at school were also less likely to have been truant from primary, lower secondary or upper secondary school for three months or longer, though these students tended to be in systems that are more socio-economically fair. Equally important, the average mathematics performance of disadvantaged students in systems where the incidence of student truancy decreased (i.e. fewer students in 2022 than in 2018 had skipped classes) improved during the same period, after accounting for per capita GDP (Figure II.3.11 and Table II.B1.3.77).



**Figure II.3.11. Change between 2018 and 2022 in student truancy and mathematics performance among disadvantaged students**



Note: The horizontal axis shows the change between 2018 and 2022 in the percentage of students who reported that they had skipped classes at least once in the two weeks prior to the PISA test.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapters 2 and 3; and Volume I, Annex B1, Chapter 5.

**Students who attended classes regularly and punctually performed better in mathematics**

In most education systems in 2022, students who attended classes regularly and punctually performed better in mathematics as compared to their peers who skipped school or classes and arrived late for school (Tables II.B1.3.44 and II.B1.3.46). In Hong Kong (China)\*, Korea, Norway, Portugal and Chinese Taipei truant students scored over 40 points lower than their peers who had attended school regularly. On average across OECD countries, the difference in mathematics performance between truant and non-truant students was 27 points. Students also scored lower in mathematics when their schoolmates had skipped school or had arrived late for school, not only when they themselves played truant (Table II.B1.3.45).

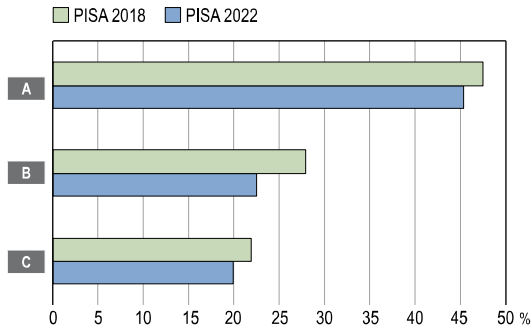
***Regular attendance and punctuality improved in many, but not all, education systems***

On average across OECD countries, students' regular attendance at school and punctuality improved between 2018 and 2022 (by two to five percentage points, Table II.B1.3.43). While this was the case in most education systems, in one out of ten countries/economies, the incidence of truancy and lateness increased during the period (Figure II.3.12). For instance, in Albania, Australia\*, Canada\*, Ireland\*, New Zealand\*, Poland, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom\* and the United States\* the share of students who had skipped a whole day of school – and in Albania, Cambodia, Kosovo and Poland the share of students who had skipped some classes – in the two weeks prior to the assessment grew by over five percentage points.

Nonetheless, even in 2022 many students in OECD countries and beyond arrived late for class or skipped classes or whole days of school (Table II.B1.3.37). In two out of ten education systems, over 50% of students had skipped a class or a day of school in the two weeks prior to the PISA test; in Baku (Azerbaijan), the Dominican Republic, Italy, Kosovo, Paraguay, Romania, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye more than 60% of students had done so. On average across OECD countries, around 30% of students reported that they had skipped a class or a day of school in the two weeks prior to the PISA test.

Figure II.3.12. Change between 2018 and 2022 in student truancy and lateness

Percentage of students who reported that the following happened at least once in the two weeks prior to the PISA test



↑ Increase in PISA 2022 compared to PISA 2018  
 ↓ Decrease in PISA 2022 compared to PISA 2018  
 = Difference is not significant

A	B	C	
9	7	12	Countries/economies with an increase
25	11	14	Countries/economies with no difference
39	55	47	Countries/economies with a decrease

OECD	Change between PISA 2018 and PISA 2022 in student truancy and lateness		
	A Arrived late for school	B Skipped some classes	C Skipped a whole day of school
OECD average	↓	↓	↓
Australia*	=	↓	↑
Austria	↓	↓	↓
Belgium	↓	=	=
Canada*	↓	↓	↑
Chile	↓	↓	↓
Colombia	↑	↓	↓
Costa Rica	=	↓	↓
Czech Republic	↓	↓	↓
Denmark*	=	=	=
Estonia	=	=	=
Finland	↓	=	=
France	↓	↓	↓
Germany	↓	↓	=
Greece	=	=	=
Hungary	↓	↓	↓
Iceland	=	↓	=
Ireland*	=	=	↑
Israel	=	=	↓
Italy	↓	↓	↑
Japan	=	↓	=
Korea	=	=	↓
Latvia*	=	↓	↓
Lithuania	↓	↓	↓
Mexico	↓	↓	↓
Netherlands*	↓	↓	↓
New Zealand*	=	=	↑
Norway	=	↑	=
Poland	↑	↑	↑
Portugal	↓	↓	↓
Slovak Republic	↓	↓	↓
Slovenia	↓	↓	↓
Spain	↓	↓	=
Sweden	↑	↑	=
Switzerland	↓	↓	↓
Türkiye	↓	↓	=
United Kingdom*	↑	↑	↑
United States*	=	=	↑

Change between PISA 2018 and PISA 2022 in student truancy and lateness			Partners
A Arrived late for school	B Skipped some classes	C Skipped a whole day of school	
=	↑	↑	Albania
↑	↓	↓	Argentina
↓	↓	↓	Baku (Azerbaijan)
↑	↓	↓	Brazil
↓	↓	↓	Brunei Darussalam
=	↓	↓	Bulgaria
↑	↑	↑	Cambodia
↓	↓	↓	Croatia
↓	↓	=	Dominican Republic
=	↓	↓	Georgia
↓	↓	↓	Guatemala
↓	↓	↓	Hong Kong (China)*
↓	↓	↓	Indonesia
↑	↓	↓	Jordan
=	↓	↓	Kazakhstan
↑	↑	↑	Kosovo
↓	↓	↓	Macao (China)
=	↓	↓	Malaysia
=	↓	↓	Malta
↓	↓	↓	Moldova
↓	↓	↓	Montenegro
=	↓	↓	Morocco
↓	↓	↓	Panama*
↓	↓	↓	Paraguay
=	↓	↓	Peru
↓	↓	↓	Philippines
↓	↓	=	Qatar
=	=	↓	Romania
↓	↓	↑	Saudi Arabia
↓	↓	↓	Serbia
↓	↓	↓	Singapore
↓	↓	↓	Chinese Taipei
=	↓	↓	Thailand
↓	↓	↓	United Arab Emirates
↓	↓	↓	Uruguay
↓	↓	↓	Viet Nam

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

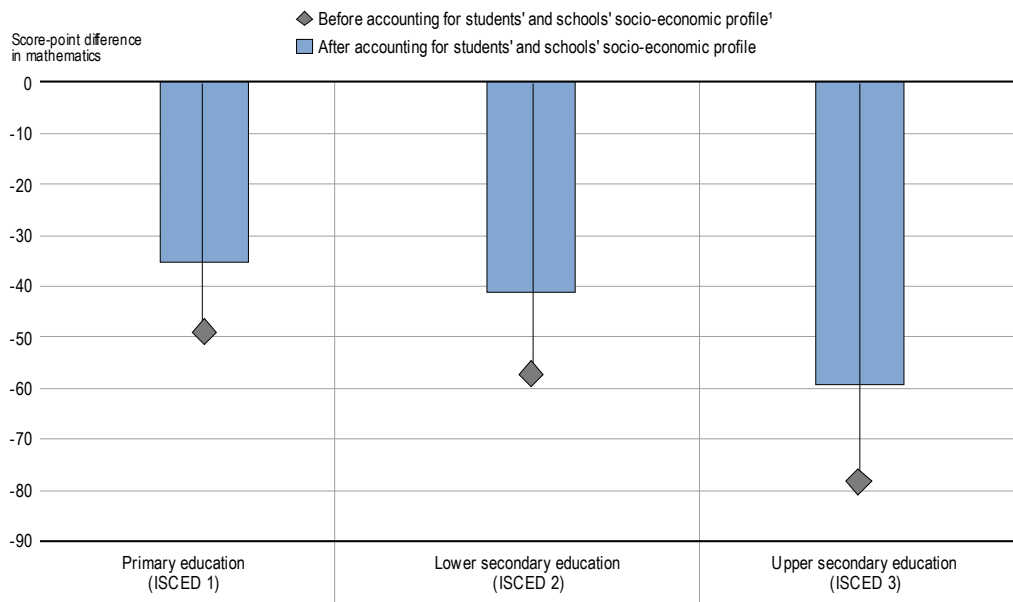
**Long-term absenteeism is rare, but seems particularly harmful to students’ academic success**

Long-term absenteeism (i.e. missing school for more than three consecutive months) is uncommon (Table II.B1.3.49).<sup>10</sup> While in Baku (Azerbaijan), Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Morocco, Paraguay, the Philippines and Uzbekistan 15% or more of students had missed class for more than three consecutive months at least once, on average across OECD countries only 8% of students reported that they had missed more than three consecutive months of primary, lower or upper secondary school (ISCED-1, ISCED-2 and ISCED-3).

Nevertheless, PISA 2022 data suggest that long-term absenteeism is particularly harmful to students’ academic success, especially at higher levels of education (Figure II.3.13). While students who missed school for longer in primary education scored 35 points lower in mathematics, students who did so in lower or upper secondary education scored 41 and 59 points lower, respectively, than their peers who did not miss school for such long periods, on average across OECD countries (Table II.B1.3.52). Therefore, it is important to understand and address the causes of long-term absenteeism (see Box II.3.2).

**Figure II.3.13. Long-term absenteeism and performance in mathematics**

Change in average mathematics performance when students reported that they had missed school for more than three consecutive months at least once, by education level; OECD average



1. The socio-economic profile is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS).

Notes: All score-point differences in mathematics are statistically significant (see Annex A3).

Long-term absenteeism refers to the percentage of students who reported that they had missed school for more than three consecutive months, at least once, at any education level.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

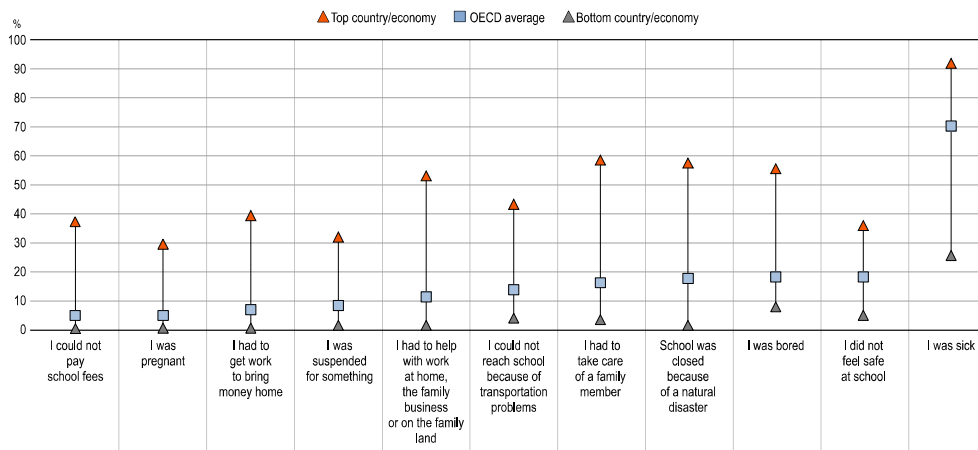
### Box II.3.2. Reasons for students' long-term absenteeism

PISA 2022 data show that students stay out of school for longer periods for different reasons. By far the most common reason reported by students who missed school for more than three consecutive months at any education level was illness (71% on average across OECD countries, Figure II.3.14 and Table II.B1.3.55). Nonetheless, boredom or a lack of safety at school were also common reasons: two out of ten students across OECD countries missed school for longer due to those reasons. While schools can do little to prevent illness, they can address a lack of motivation among students, and much can be done to make schools safer. PISA results show that boys and students in lower secondary school are more likely to suffer from a lack of motivation: the two groups cited boredom as a reason for long-term absenteeism more often than girls and students in upper secondary school, on average across OECD countries and in most countries/economies (Table II.B1.3.56).

Unsurprisingly, there are notable differences across countries/economies in students' reasons for long-term absenteeism (Table II.B1.3.55). In Jordan, the Palestinian Authority and the United Arab Emirates one out of four students missed school for a long period because they were suspended. In Albania, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia more than 15% of students stayed away from school for longer because they were pregnant. According to more than 40% of 15-year-old students in Ireland\*, Jamaica\*, Macao (China), the Philippines and the United Kingdom\*, natural disaster prevented them from attending school. Some 30% of students or more in Cambodia, Indonesia, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Paraguay, the Philippines, Romania, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates reported that they had to work either outside the home, at home, in the family business or on the family land. In Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates being unable to pay school fees was commonly cited as a reason for missing school for three consecutive months or longer; in Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Panama\*, the Philippines, Romania, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates more than 30% of students who had missed school for long periods cited problems with transportation as the reason.

Figure II.3.14. Reasons for long-term absenteeism

Percentage of students who reported the following reasons for having missed school for more than three consecutive months



Items are ranked in ascending order of the percentage of students at the OECD average.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

## Components of resilience: Teaming up with parents to support learning and well-being

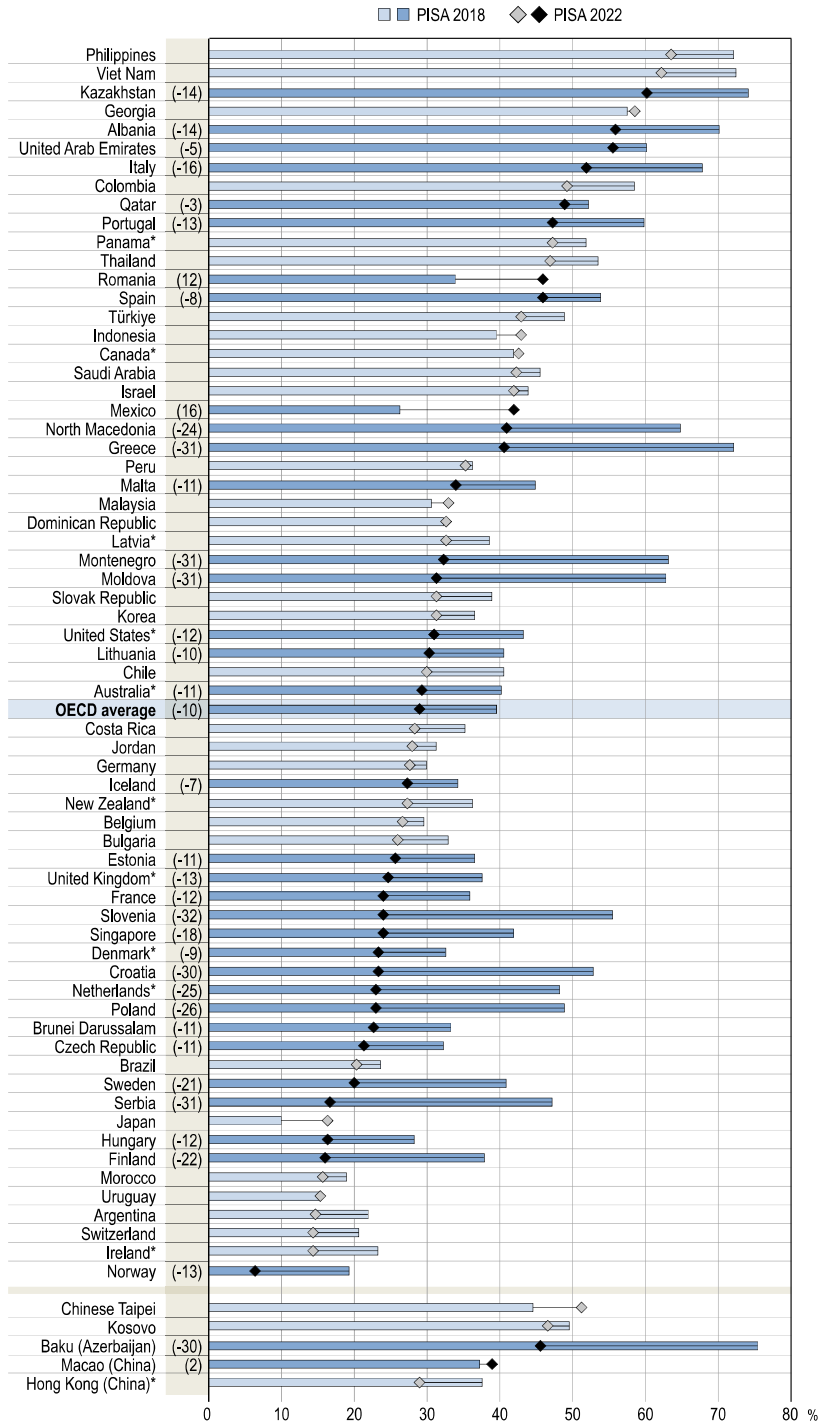
When schools were closed due to COVID-19, students' learning and well-being depended more than ever on a supportive home environment. However, the PISA 2022 results show that schools in many countries were not successful in using the COVID-19 experience as a catalyst for strengthening school-home partnerships<sup>11</sup> (Ulferts, 2022<sup>[8]</sup>).

### ***In many education systems parental involvement in students' learning decreased***

PISA trend data collected from school principals show that the percentage of parents who were involved in school decreased substantially between 2018 and 2022 in many countries/economies, especially the share of parents involved in learning-related activities (Figure II.3.15 and Table II.B1.3.67). On average across OECD countries, the share of students in schools where most parents discussed their child's progress with a teacher on their own initiative or on the initiative of one of their child's teachers shrank by ten and eight percentage points, respectively. However, these negative trends were observed in less than half of all PISA-participating countries/economies. In a few countries/economies parental involvement increased: in Macao (China), Mexico and Romania there was greater parental involvement in parent-initiated discussions; in Brunei Darussalam, the Dominican Republic, Georgia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates more parents were involved in teacher-initiated discussions. Parental involvement in other activities remained relatively stable in most countries/economies during the period, on average across OECD countries and in most countries/economies.

Figure II.3.15. Change between 2018 and 2022 in parent-initiated talks about students' progress

Percentage of students in schools whose principal reported that at least 50% of students' parents are involved in discussing their child's progress with a teacher on their own initiative



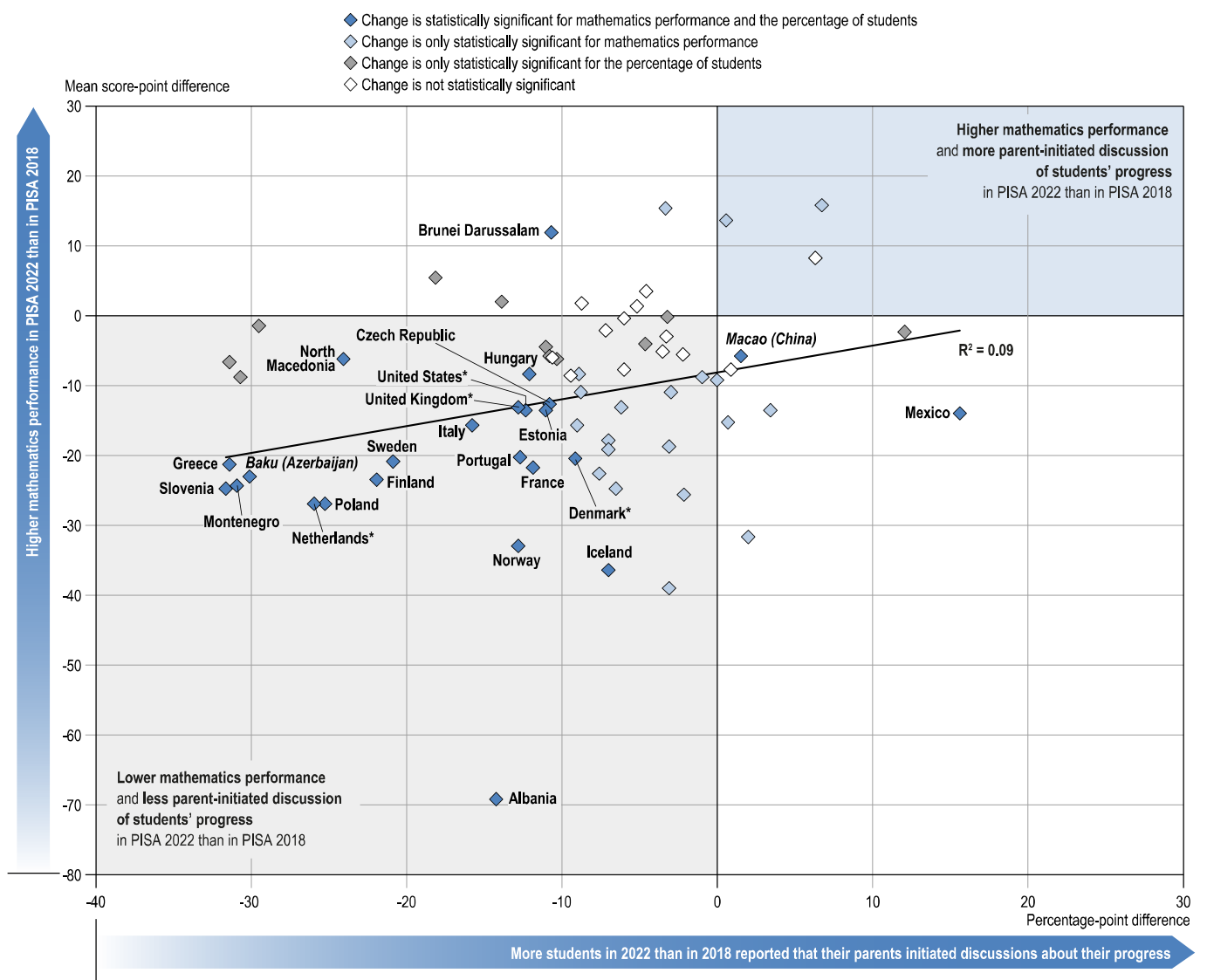
Note: Changes between PISA 2018 and PISA 2022 that are statistically significant are shown in a darker tone and in brackets, next to the country/economy name (see Annex A3). Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the percentage of students in these schools in PISA 2022.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

### Education systems with more positive trends in parental involvement showed stable or improved performance

In fact, the systems that had more positive trends in parental involvement between 2018 and 2022 (i.e. systems in which the share of parents who discussed their child’s progress with a teacher on their own initiative decreased less) showed more stable performance in mathematics (Figure II.3.16 and Table II.B1.3.77). This was particularly true for disadvantaged students. However, these systems saw a weakening of students’ sense of belonging at school. The results may indicate that students felt pressured to improve their performance, which might have strained their emotional connection to school. Advantaged students in education systems where parents became more involved in physical or extracurricular activities between 2018 and 2022 showed more stable or improved performance in mathematics.

**Figure II.3.16. Change between 2018 and 2022 in parent-initiated talks about students’ progress, and mathematics performance**



Note: Only countries and economies that show statistically significant changes between 2018 and 2022 in mathematics and in the percentage of students who reported that their parents initiated discussions about their progress are shown.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapters 2 and 3.



**Students who were supported at home had more positive attitudes towards school and learning**

Support at home is important for student learning but also for their well-being. Students in education systems with more supportive families reported a stronger sense of belonging at school (see Figure II.3.17 and Table II.B1.3.76).

**Figure II.3.17. Family support and sense of belonging**



Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

In all countries/economies, students who enjoy more support from their families reported a greater sense of belonging at school and life satisfaction, and more confidence in their capacity for self-directed learning (Table II.B1.3.75). In most countries/economies, these students also reported feeling less anxiety towards mathematics.

The association between family support and student performance in mathematics varied substantially according to the different types of family support considered (Table II.B1.3.72). Higher-performing students reported that their family regularly ("about once or twice a week" or "every day or almost every day") eats the main meal together, spends time just talking with them, or asks them what they did in school that day. These students scored 16 to 28 points higher in mathematics than students who reported that their family does not do those things regularly, on average across OECD countries and after accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profile. By contrast, lower-performing students reported that their family regularly talks to them about the importance of completing upper secondary education or about their future education. These students scored 11 to 15 points lower in mathematics than students who reported that their family does not do those things regularly, on average across OECD countries and after accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profile. Families of low performers may stress the importance of upper secondary or future education more frequently to motivate students to put greater effort into their studies.

### ***Families supported their children in different ways***

Most students can count on support from their families, as they reported in 2022 (Table II.B1.3.69). However, not all types of family support were common across countries/economies. For instance, on average across OECD countries, eight out of ten students reported that parents or someone in their family eats the main meal with them and spends time just talking with them at least once or twice a week, while only six out of ten students reported that parents or someone in their family talks to them about any problems they might have at school, asks them about how well they are getting along with other students at school and talks to them about their future education.

Some of the greatest differences across countries/economies were observed when considering whether parents or someone from the family asks what students did in school that day. In Australia\*, Colombia, Croatia, Denmark\*, Germany, Hungary, Ireland\*, Italy, the Netherlands\*, New Zealand\*, Portugal, Sweden, the United Kingdom\* and the United States\* eight in ten students reported that their parents or someone in their family asks what they did in school that day about once or twice a week (Figure II.3.18). In Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Hong Kong (China)\*, Macao (China) and Thailand, Viet Nam only around one in two students reported that this occurs regularly.

On average across OECD countries and in most education systems, socio-economically advantaged students, girls and students without an immigrant background reported more support from their family than disadvantaged students, boys and students with an immigrant background (Table II.B1.3.70). Students in upper secondary (ISCED-3) as compared to lower secondary (ISCED-2) school were more likely to report family support, on average across OECD countries and in around half of all education systems with available data.

According to school principals, schools discussed students' progress more frequently with parents than students' behaviour, and more often on the teacher's, rather than on the parent's or guardian's, initiative (Table II.B1.3.58). On average across OECD countries, about 52% of students attended schools where most parents or guardians (over 50%) discussed their child's progress with a teacher on the initiative of teachers and 40% attended schools where teachers initiate discussions on students' behaviour. Only one in four students attended a school where most parents initiate discussions about students' progress and behaviour. Other forms of involvement are even less common. Only 11% of students attended schools where parents participate in local school government, and only 8% attended schools where parents are involved in physical or extracurricular activities, such as building maintenance, sports or field trips.

**Figure II.3.18. Percentage of students whose family regularly asks about school**

Percentage of students who reported that at least once a week or twice a week their parents or someone in their family asks them what they did in school that day



Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the percentage of students.

Source: OECD, PISA 2022 Database, Annex B1, Chapter 3.

**Table II.3.1. Life at school and support from home chapter figures**

Figure II.3.1	School life as covered in PISA 2022
Figure II.3.2	Change between 2012 and 2022 in teachers giving extra help and mathematics performance
Figure II.3.3	Teacher support, and anxiety towards and performance in mathematics
Figure II.3.4	Distraction from digital devices in mathematics lessons
Figure II.3.5	Students' safety at school and sense of belonging
Figure II.3.6	School safety and student well-being
Figure II.3.7	Association between sense of belonging and selected aspects of school climate
Figure II.3.8	School safety risks
Figure II.3.9	Feeling safe, by school characteristics
Figure II.3.10	Change between 2018 and 2022 in students' exposure to bullying and mathematics performance
Figure II.3.11	Change between 2018 and 2022 in student truancy and mathematics performance
Figure II.3.12	Change between 2018 and 2022 in student truancy
Figure II.3.13	Long-term truancy and performance in mathematics
Figure II.3.14	Reasons for long-term truancy
Figure II.3.15	Change between 2018 and 2022 in parental involvement in talks about students' progress and mathematics performance
Figure II.3.16	Change between 2018 and 2022 in parent-initiated talks about students' progress and mathematics performance
Figure II.3.17	Family support and sense of belonging
Figure II.3.18	Percentage of students whose family regularly asks about school

StatLink  <https://stat.link/zqer74>

## Notes

1 The literature is clear about what students need to thrive in school: they need to feel physically and emotionally safe at school, supported and intellectually challenged at the same time (MacNeil, Prater and Busch, 2009<sup>[35]</sup>; Hoge, Smit and Hanson, 1990<sup>[34]</sup>; Way, Reddy and Rhodes, 2007<sup>[36]</sup>). Parents need to feel that they are invited to participate in their child's education and in school activities (Thapa et al., 2013<sup>[3]</sup>). If students' daily life at school is built around healthy, respectful and co-operative relationships, students are less likely to be truant or to engage in deviant and risky behaviours, such as smoking, drinking or using drugs (LaRusso, Romer and Selman, 2007<sup>[39]</sup>; Gase et al., 2017<sup>[38]</sup>; Catalano et al., 2004<sup>[37]</sup>). A positive school climate is also beneficial for students' brain development (Hackman et al., 2022<sup>[20]</sup>) and helps weaken the link between socio-economic status and academic achievement (Berkowitz et al., 2016<sup>[14]</sup>; Daily et al., 2020<sup>[16]</sup>).

2 Research finds that, unsurprisingly, students in more disciplined classes perform better in mathematics (Berkowitz et al., 2016<sup>[14]</sup>; Blank and Shavit, 2016<sup>[15]</sup>; Fauth et al., 2014<sup>[18]</sup>). Students are also more interested in mathematics lessons if teachers keep noise and disruptions to a minimum (Kunter, Baumert and Köller, 2007<sup>[22]</sup>; Lazarides and Buchholz, 2019<sup>[23]</sup>).

3 Students who feel supported by their teachers show greater self-efficacy, and enjoyment of and interest in mathematics, which helps them perform at higher levels (Berkowitz et al., 2016<sup>[14]</sup>; Fauth et al., 2014<sup>[18]</sup>; Lazarides and Buchholz, 2019<sup>[23]</sup>; Yu and Singh, 2016<sup>[33]</sup>). Mathematics anxiety can be alleviated if mathematics teachers are sensitive to students' attitudes towards the subject and realise when students need extra help (Aldrup, Klusmann and Lüdtke, 2020<sup>[13]</sup>; Lazarides and Buchholz, 2019<sup>[23]</sup>).

4 In every PISA assessment, students are asked to report on teacher support and disciplinary climate in the core subject. In 2022, the core subject was mathematics; in 2018 the core subject was reading. The most recent PISA

assessment in which mathematics was a core subject was 2012. Therefore, this chapter reports only on the change between 2012 and 2022 in teacher support and disciplinary climate in mathematics lessons.

<sup>5</sup> Some caution is warranted for the interpretation of trends due to the slight modification of the questionnaire design from 2012 to 2022. The response option “Never or hardly ever” from the PISA 2012 questionnaire was changed to “Never or almost never”.

<sup>6</sup> Safety is a basic human need (Maslow, 1943<sup>[12]</sup>) and is particularly important in school so that students can build trusting relationships, concentrate on learning and stay healthy. Violence in schools, which disrupts learning and socialisation (Steffgen, Recchia and Viechtbauer, 2013<sup>[27]</sup>), can occur on school property, on the way to or from school, and during school trips and events. While violence may be committed by students, teachers or other members of the school staff, the most common perpetrators are fellow students (UNESCO, 2019<sup>[29]</sup>). School violence can take many forms (Thapa et al., 2013<sup>[3]</sup>; UNESCO, 2019<sup>[29]</sup>), including: physical aggression (e.g. the use of weapons, as well as criminal acts, like theft or arson); psychological violence (e.g. emotional and verbal abuse, such as insulting, threatening, ignoring, isolating, rejecting, name-calling, humiliating, ridiculing, rumourmongering, lying or punishing another person); sexual violence (e.g. sexual harassment, intimidation, unwanted touching, sexual coercion and rape); and bullying.

<sup>7</sup> Being exposed to physical or emotional harm, such as bullying and violence, can have severe, long-term physical and emotional consequences for students (Sobba, 2018<sup>[26]</sup>; Turanovic and Siennick, 2022<sup>[28]</sup>; Vanderbilt and Augustyn, 2010<sup>[30]</sup>; Wolke and Lereya, 2015<sup>[31]</sup>; Woods and Wolke, 2004<sup>[32]</sup>). These include poor physical and mental health (including a higher risk of suicide) and poor academic performance. Students who are frequently bullied are more likely to be dissatisfied with their life, and a prevalence of bullying in school is related to a weaker sense of belonging at school. Bullied students, especially those who were victims for years, have more trouble adjusting to adult roles, such as forming lasting relationships, integrating into work and being economically independent, and tend to avoid school, even though some researchers (Gubbels, van der Put and Assink, 2019<sup>[19]</sup>) do not find evidence of a higher risk of dropout.

<sup>8</sup> Bullying is defined as the repeated and intentional aggression towards another person, and someone’s intentional and repeated harming and discomforting of another person (Şirin, 2022<sup>[25]</sup>). Bullying can be physical (hitting, punching or kicking) and can involve extortion (forcing the victim to give away his or her possessions); it can also be purely verbal (name-calling and mocking) and relational (spreading gossip and engaging in other forms of public humiliation, shaming and inducing social exclusion) (UNESCO, 2019<sup>[29]</sup>; Woods and Wolke, 2004<sup>[32]</sup>).

<sup>9</sup> Students who skip classes or arrive late for school miss out on learning and school life. Absenteeism is associated with lower grades, greater difficulty in acquiring credentials and lower educational aspirations (Hessen and Kuncel, 2022<sup>[21]</sup>). Compared with students who do not skip classes and arrive at school on time, truant students tend to have more negative opinions about school and suffer from anxiety or depression (Gubbels, van der Put and Assink, 2019<sup>[19]</sup>). They also tend to abuse drugs or alcohol more regularly and engage in antisocial, self-harming and risky behaviour more frequently (Epstein et al., 2019<sup>[17]</sup>). Repeated and widespread student truancy is detrimental to the overall school climate and a warning sign of dropout (Gubbels, van der Put and Assink, 2019<sup>[19]</sup>).

<sup>10</sup> The data on long-term absenteeism do not account for students who did not participate in the assessment and therefore may underestimate the level of long-term absenteeism in a country. The lower participation rates observed in PISA 2022 as compared to previous cycles may be due to an increase in the proportions of long-term absenteeism among students. However, this assumption cannot be tested because no trend data is available for long-term absenteeism.

<sup>11</sup> The pandemic reminded everyone that parents’ and guardians’ involvement in their child’s education is vital (Castro et al., 2015<sup>[9]</sup>; Wilder, 2014<sup>[10]</sup>; Boonk et al., 2018<sup>[11]</sup>). Strong, effective and sustainable partnerships between families

and schools bolster students' psychological and social development and their academic achievement (Burns and Gottschalk, 2020<sup>[5]</sup>; Sheridan et al., 2019<sup>[24]</sup>).

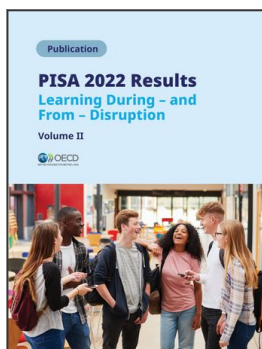
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**From:**  
**PISA 2022 Results (Volume II)**  
Learning During – and From – Disruption

**Access the complete publication at:**

<https://doi.org/10.1787/a97db61c-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2023), “Life at school and support from home”, in *PISA 2022 Results (Volume II): Learning During – and From – Disruption*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/abc8532a-en>

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