



Fourth General Assembly of the OECD Education Indicators Programme



The INES Compendium

Contributions from the INES Networks and Working Groups



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FOREWORD

1. The fourth General Assembly of the OECD Education Indicators programme is being held from September 11-13 2000 in Tokyo. It will, as on previous occasions, determine the objectives for OECD's quantitative work in the field of education and training over the next five year mandate 2001-2006. It is expected that this General Assembly will provide the framework for INES work to progress from the identification and measurement of knowledge and skills that are crucial for tomorrow's economies and societies, through the estimation of the economic and social returns to these skills, towards a better understanding of what the educational, economic and social factors are that contribute to skill development. The General Assembly will also provide the occasion to review important analytical perspectives that INES work could take in its next phase, in particular quantifying progress towards lifelong learning and addressing issues of equity in educational and learning opportunities and outcomes.

2. In 1999 the INES Networks and working groups were invited to consider how they might contribute to the development of a volume, intended as background documentation for participants to the General Assembly, The stated purpose of the volume (« the compendium ») was to synthesise the state of play of developmental work in the INES Networks and working groups, in areas central to future work in INES. It was to describe the current state of international statistics and indicators in the principal domains of interest in the sphere of education, including the progress achieved over the recent past, and to identify the remaining gaps where efforts might usefully be directed. The need for policy relevance was highlighted as a continuing guidepost in this exercise.

3. This volume represents a selection of the outcomes of these efforts. It represents the considered views of networks and working groups regarding achievements over the current mandate, in particular with respect to student outcomes, the measurement of skills and cross-curricular competencies, labour force outcomes of education, the school-to-work transition, indicators of continuing education and training, teachers and the conditions of teaching, decision-making, process indicators on the functioning of schools, and conceptual underpinnings for equity and lifelong learning indicators. The compendium, however, constitutes not just a stock-taking, but also a look to the future. If the progress achieved over the current mandate has been significant (see the annex to this foreword for an inventory of INES activities and outcomes since the beginning of the mandate), much still remains to be done.

4. Many of the chapters presented here present some proposals and preliminary directions for future work. More may come out of the discussions at the General Assembly itself. Current and proposed new activities can usefully be viewed in the context of the main themes of the General Assembly, namely:

- Measuring the quality of education outcomes
- Estimating economic and social returns to learning
- Identifying key determinants of educational success
- Applying cross-cutting policy perspectives in analytical work.

5. Each theme constitutes one element in an implicit cause-and-effect model of education that includes upstream determinants of quality and downstream impacts of outcomes, the whole against a backdrop of a lifetime view of learning and of a concern for equity. What makes the exercise a difficult

one is that effects, whether they be on educational outcomes or as result of these, tend to be multiply determined, so that it may be difficult to determine precisely what contributes to what and to what degree.

6. The breadth of ideas and proposals for future work will certainly outweigh the capacity of member countries and the OECD Secretariat to pursue them all. Comparability of indicators may be weak, coverage imperfect, measurement error significant. Moreover, the investment needed in some areas to bring about improvements may be out of proportion to the expected results. Whether it is desirable to pursue current work or whether resources should be transferred to new areas or areas in which progress has been limited are questions that need to be considered seriously, in the light of national policy needs. There will be need to focus attention on areas which are likely to yield dividends and which involve levers over which policy has some control. If this compendium of INES work helps to clarify what the possible options are in this regard, it will have fulfilled its intended role.

**SUMMARY OF MAIN INES ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS SINCE
THE THIRD INES GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 1995**

- November 1995 The INES Technical Group finalised the UNESCO/OECD/EUROSTAT (UOE) data collection on education statistics which covers access to participation, progression and completion of education, educational finance and education personnel. Since 1996, this instrument has been administered annually in electronic form, replacing various paper—and-pencil data collections that the three organisations had previously administered independently.
- December 1995 Publication of *Literacy, Economy and Society: Results of the First International Adult Literacy Survey**
- October 1996 The OECD Education Committee and CERI Governing Board established the INES Steering Group to provide broad policy directions for the OECD's statistical activities in education and related fields.
- November 1996 Publication of the 4th edition of *Education at a Glance*, based on a new thematic framework and publication of the 1st edition of *Education Policy Analysis*.
- November 1996 Completion of the INES Network A survey on educational goals.
- April 1997 Adoption of the Network A data strategy for the development of information on student achievement on a regular basis by the Education Committee and CERI Governing Board.
- May 1997 Completion of the taxonomy survey of educational programmes by the INES Technical Group which provided the basis for the revision of ISCED.
- June 1997 The INES Steering Group established a programme of work for developmental work in the priority domains identified at the 3rd General Assembly in Lahti. As part of this, three new ad-hoc working groups were created: one on lifelong learning, a second on the definition and selection of skills (DeSeCo), and a third on disparities and equity.
- June 1997 Launch of the Network B pilot survey on the transition from school to work.
- June 1997 The INES Steering Group suspended Network D on attitudes and expectations.
- September 1997 Launch of the OECD/UNESCO World Education Indicators programme with 11 countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines and the Russian Federation).
- October 1997 Launch of the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).
- November 1997 Launch of the Network B data collection on fiscal and private returns to education.
- November 1997 Publication of *Literacy Skills for the Knowledge Society: Further Results from the International Adult Literacy Survey*.*

- November 1997 Publication of the 5th edition of *Education at a Glance* and the 2nd edition of *Education Policy Analysis*.
- April 1998 Publication of the 3rd edition of *Education Policy Analysis*.
- April 1998 Publication of *Human Capital Investment – An International Comparison*, drawing on Network B indicators on labour market outcomes and returns to education and training.*
- November 1998 Publication of the 6th edition of *Education at a Glance*.
- December 1998 Report by the INES ad-hoc working group on lifelong learning.
- January 1999 Incorporation of the Network B core database on labour market outcomes into the OECD education database. Implementation of ISCED-97 in the Network B surveys.
- May 1999 Publication of the *Manual for the Implementation of ISCED-97 in OECD Member countries*. This manual paved the way for considerable improvements in the comparability of the OECD education indicators. Subsequent negotiations between countries, through the Technical Group, led to a better understanding of the similarities and differences of education systems and to an improved and more comparable allocation of national programmes to ISCED-97. The 2000 edition of *Education at a Glance* was the first publication based on ISCED-97.
- May 1999 Publication *Measuring Student Knowledge and Skills - A New Framework for Assessment* that presents the conceptual framework for the PISA instruments.
- July 1999 Meeting of experts on the development of comparable measures of adult education and training.
- August 1999 Public release of the OECD education database on CD-ROM.
- September 1999 DeSeCo symposium on the definition and selection of skills.
- October 1999 Publication of the 4th edition of *Education Policy Analysis*.
- November 1999 Launch of the Second Expenditure Comparability Study.
- 2000 Data collection for the first PISA survey cycle.
- February 2000 Publication of *Investing in Education - Analysis of the World Education Indicators*, the first publication resulting from the OECD/UNESCO World Education Indicators programme.
- March 2000 Information meeting of Education Ministers on the education indicators in Copenhagen.
- June 2000 Publication of *Literacy in the Information Age: Final Report of the International Adult Literacy Survey*.*
- April 2000 Publication of *Measuring Student Knowledge and Skills - the PISA 2000 assessment* that illustrates the assessment instruments of the first PISA survey cycle.
- May 2000 Publication of the 7th edition of *Education at a Glance*, based on the revised ISCED. Dissemination supported by a new strategy that involved country press briefings.
- June 2000 International workshop on comparative data on education to work transitions.
- July 2000 Launch of the Network C survey on upper secondary schools.

August 2000 Launch of the second PISA survey cycle.

September 2000 Public release of the 2nd edition of the OECD education database on CD-ROM and through the OECD on-line dissemination system.

*Note: The three reports marked by * were not prepared formally under the aegis of INES. However, it forms an important part of OECD's work on statistics and indicators in education and training and provided material for inclusion in EAG.

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