EDUCATION POLICY OUTLOOK

BRAZIL

With a focus on international policies

OECD

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

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Education Policy Outlook

This policy profile on education in Brazil is part of the Education Policy Outlook series, which presents comparative analysis of education policies and reforms across OECD countries. Building on the OECD's substantial comparative and sectoral policy knowledge base, the series offers a comparative outlook on education policy. This country policy profile is an update of the **first policy profile of Brazil** (2015[1]) and provides: analysis of the educational context, strengths, challenges and policies; analysis of international trends; and insight into policies and reforms on selected topics in Brazil and other education systems. It is an opportunity to take stock of progress and where the education system stands today from the perspective of the OECD through synthetic, evidence-based and comparable analysis. This country policy profile has been prepared in **two versions**. Both offer an analysis of current strengths, challenges and policy priorities for Brazil with a respective focus on:

1. **national and subnational policies**, to analyse the evolution of ongoing and emerging related policy efforts in Brazil, including education responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. **international policies** that may serve as possible inspiration to federal and subnational policy makers as they work to strengthen Brazil's education system.

Drawing on desk-based research of national and international evidence, as well as exploratory interviews with education policy stakeholders from across the system, these reports speak directly to Brazilian policy makers and implementation actors.

Designed for policy makers, analysts and practitioners who seek information and analysis of education policy that takes into account the importance of national context, the country policy profiles offer constructive analysis of education policy in a comparative format. Each profile reviews the current context and situation of a country's education system and examines its challenges and policy responses, according to six policy levers that support improvement:

- Students: How to raise outcomes for all in terms of 1) equity and quality and 2) preparing students for the future;

- Institutions: How to raise quality through 3) school improvement and 4) evaluation and assessment; and

- System: How the system is organised to deliver education policy in terms of 5) governance and 6) funding.

Country policy profiles also contain spotlight boxes on selected policy issues relating to the Education Policy Outlook's work on resilience and responsiveness and which have particular relevance in the context of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. These aim to draw attention to specific policies that are promising or showing positive results and may be relevant for other countries.

In addition to the country-specific profiles, the Education Policy Outlook series includes a recurring publication offering comparative analysis of policy priorities, trends and evidence of progress or impact. Based on this analysis, as well as ongoing collaboration with over 40 education systems, the Education Policy Outlook began work to develop a **Framework for Responsiveness and Resilience in education policy**, to be launched in November 2021. As part of this work, *Lessons for Education from COVID-19: A Policy Maker's Handbook for More Resilient Systems* (2020[2]) was published to support countries in the context of an ongoing pandemic.

Annex B summarises key figures quoted in the different sections of this document.

More information is available from the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills (www.oecd.org/education/) and its web pages on the Education Policy Outlook (www.oecd.org/education/policy-outlook/).

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In Brief

Figure 1. Trends in key educational outcomes

Reading performance (PISA 2009-18)

Educational attainment among 25-34 year-olds (2000-19*)

Since first participation in PISA, Brazil has maintained student performance in reading, with an average score of 413 points in 2018, compared to an OECD average of 487. This is positive, given that the PISA 2018 sample covered 65% of 15-year-olds in Brazil, up from 53% in 2000. In 2018, 67% of 25-34 year-olds in Brazil[1] had at least upper secondary education, and 21% had a tertiary qualification, compared to OECD averages of 85% and 45% in 2019. However, growth in upper secondary attainment between 2009 and 2019 exceeded the OECD average growth, with that of tertiary equalling it.

Note: "Min"/"Max" refer to OECD countries with the lowest/highest values. [*] For Brazil, latest available data is from 2018.
Sources: OECD (2019[3]), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume I): What Students Know and Can Do*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/5f07c754-en; OECD (2020[4]), *Education at a Glance 2020: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en.

Students

- Brazil continues a long period of **growth in educational participation and attainment** since 2000, with more recent progress in participation in early childhood education and care (ECEC) and higher education. For the latter, this has also benefitted disadvantaged students. In PISA, Brazil has also maintained performance in reading, with some improvements in mathematics and science while considerably increasing the number of students covered by the test.

- Several system-level practices have the **potential to address ongoing equity challenges as students move through the system**, including the extended duration of compulsory education and recent efforts to increase the flexibility of student pathways. The new National Common Curricular Base (*Base Nacional Comum Curricular*, BNCC, 2017/18) is also crucial in supporting equity through establishing universal minimum learning requirements regardless of background.

Institutions

- In Brazil, **students view their teachers positively** and perceive them to be enthusiastic; according to evidence from PISA, this is strongly related to higher student outcomes at school level in Brazil.

- Within a context of expansion of schooling, Brazil's **teachers are qualified to a higher level** than eight years ago, with most now holding a tertiary qualification. Recent initiatives aim to raise quality further, establishing national guidelines for initial teacher education (ITE), continuous professional development (CPD) and, currently under development, school leaders.

- Brazil has a **well-renowned programme of system evaluation** of student outcomes, which feeds into school improvement plans. Emerging national and subnational practices aim to strengthen evaluation in ECEC and vocational education and training (VET), and, in some cases, enhance improvement-focused career progression for teachers.

System

- Brazil's education system has a **highly decentralised governance structure** across the federal government, 26 states and 1 federal district[2], and 5 570 municipalities.

- In this context, **collaboration and consultation are key**: Brazil has several formal spaces for stakeholder engagement and there are promising emergent or small-scale initiatives for horizontal collaboration at federal and subnational level.

- A relatively **high share of national wealth is dedicated to education**. School funding is largely decentralised, but a commitment to redistributive mechanisms goes some way to reducing the inequalities this creates.

Selected indicators and key policy issues

Figure 2. Equity and quality

Difference in reading performance by student characteristics, 2018¹ (PISA)

Score points

Advantaged students outperform disadvantaged | Students who attended 2 years of ECEC outperform those who did not* | Students in private schools outperform those in public schools* | Students with a growth mindset outperform those without*

Legend: Brazil | OECD average | Max | Min

Share of low and high performers in reading, 2009-18 (PISA)

%

Legend: Brazil | OECD average

Low performers

High performers

2009 2012 2015 2018

Figure 3. Preparing students for the future

Transitions from education to work among 18-24-year-olds, 2019² (EAG)

%

Legend: Not employed, or in education or training (NEET) | Not in education, employed | In education

Brazil | OECD average

Upper secondary graduation rates, 2018 (EAG)

Legend: Theoretical duration | Theoretical duration plus 2 years

Brazil | OECD average | Brazil | OECD average
General | Vocational

Figure 4. School improvement

Students' perceptions of their learning environment, 2018 (PISA)

Legend: OECD | Brazil | Min | Max

Index of teacher support | Index of disciplinary climate | Index of students' sense of belonging at school

Share of principals reporting supports for teachers to embed ICT, 2018 (TALIS)

%

Legend: Advantaged schools | Brazil | Disadvantaged schools

Incentives for teachers | Sufficient technical and pedagogical skills among teachers | Sufficient time for lesson preparation | Sufficient professional learning resources

Key policy issues

Raising outcomes for all while addressing the inequities facing many. Multidimensional inequities related to parental education, geography and ethnicity, as well as socio-economic background, mean that universal approaches alone will not be enough. Brazil must implement holistic, individually responsive efforts for the most vulnerable. Brazil must also improve the quality of compulsory education: half of students in Brazil did not achieve minimum proficiency (PISA Level 2) in reading in 2018, while only 1.4% were high achievers (Level 5 or above), compared to OECD averages of 23% and 8.8%.

Tackling low completion rates across the system. To reduce inefficiencies and realise the high returns that education in Brazil promises, raising completion rates and reducing drop-out is crucial. To this end, ensuring career guidance and support is available from a young age can help students make informed decisions about their future. Strengthening the alignment of skills supply and demand through nationwide and regional skills analysis and anticipation could also help improve student transitions into the labour market.

Empowering educators to drive improvement at institution level. This means enhancing school leaders' and teachers' professional skills, but also ensuring conducive working conditions, adequate decision-making powers at school level and improvement-focused accountability measures. Educators and other school-level actors should also be supported to better nurture more positive learning contexts for students to ensure that they do not miss out on valuable learning time.

Figure 5. Evaluation and assessment

Share of students whose principals reported the following uses of student assessments, 2018 (PISA)

■ Brazil ◆ OECD average

To inform students' retention or promotion | To monitor the school's annual progress | To judge teachers' effectiveness | To identify aspects of instruction/ curriculum to improve

Share of teachers whose principals report the following occurs after formal appraisal, 2018 (TALIS)

■ Never ■ Sometimes ■ Most of the time ■ Always

Brazil | OECD average | Brazil | OECD average
Discuss measures to remedy any weaknesses in teaching | Develop a development/ training plan

Key policy issues

Aligning student assessment at system and classroom level with large-scale reforms and short-term priorities. Brazil has undertaken wide efforts to strengthen evaluation infrastructure at school and tertiary levels. At institutional level, educators need support to engage more actively with monitoring and evaluation data for school and professional improvement, as well as with student formative assessment that drives classroom learning.

Figure 6. Governance

Share of principals reporting that their school has the following level of autonomy according to task, 2018 (TALIS)

■ Autonomous ■ Mixed ■ Non-autonomous

Brazil | OECD Average | Brazil | OECD Average | Brazil | OECD Average | Brazil | OECD Average
Appointing or hiring teachers | Deciding on school budget allocations | Determining course content | Determining course offer

Enhancing policy processes to facilitate the implementation of recent ambitious reforms. Brazil is highly decentralised across federal government, states and municipalities. This makes it all the more necessary for Brazil to work on enhancing coherence and alignment across actors, as well as promoting vertical and horizontal collaboration structures that effectively support quality improvement. Quality assurance in distance education also matters.
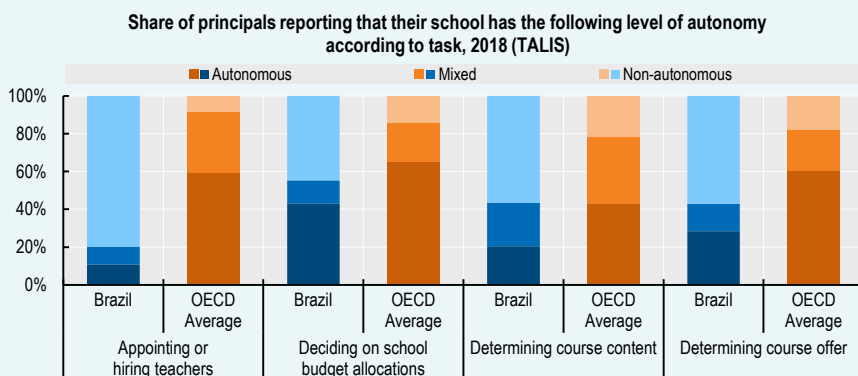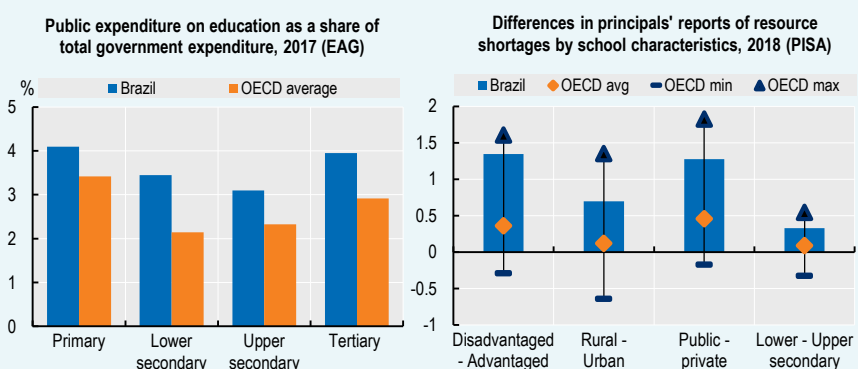
Figure 7. Funding

Public expenditure on education as a share of total government expenditure, 2017 (EAG)

■ Brazil ■ OECD average

Primary | Lower secondary | Upper secondary | Tertiary

Differences in principals' reports of resource shortages by school characteristics, 2018 (PISA)

■ Brazil ◆ OECD avg ─ OECD min ▲ OECD max

Disadvantaged - Advantaged | Rural - Urban | Public - private | Lower - Upper secondary

Reviewing funding priorities to ensure that public finances reach those who need it most and where returns are highest. To facilitate this, tying funding to outputs and outcomes could also reduce resource inefficiencies, prevalent across the system.

Notes*: "Min"/"Max" refer to OECD countries with the lowest/highest values; [*] Score point difference after accounting for students' socio-economic status and language spoken at home; [**] For Brazil, latest available data are from 2018.

Sources: OECD (2019[3]), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume I): What Students Know and Can Do*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/5f07c754-en; OECD (2019[5]), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume II): Where All Students Can Succeed*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/b5fd1b8f-en; OECD (2019[6]), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume III): What School Life Means for Students' Lives*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/acd78851-en; OECD (2020[7]), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume V): Effective Policies, Successful Schools*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/ca768d40-en; OECD (2020[4]), Education at a Glance 2020: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en; OECD (2020[8]), *TALIS 2018 Results (Volume II): Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/19cf08df-en.

International responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the persistent challenge facing Brazil's education system of raising learning outcomes for all while addressing the inequities facing many **[Read More]**. As Brazil continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and works to recover from what has been over a year of institutional closures and remote learning for many students, both immediate priorities and longer-term structural reforms must be considered. Based on Brazil's context and the experiences of other education systems working to reopen institutions and recover learning losses, three priorities for immediate policy action emerge:

- **Strive for a more coherent response** through a national strategy for learning recovery;
- **Support educators to develop new skills and knowledge** to capitalise on new priorities and means of delivery;
- **Address learning gaps with urgency** to minimise disruption to students' educational journeys.

An international example: Chile

To provide **a more coherent short term response** to the pandemic, Chile launched a Curricular Prioritisation package (2020) to better guide schools in navigating distance, hybrid and in-person delivery modes. This package offers guidance to balance curricular areas, ensure coherence and progression across the school year, and facilitate successful transitions. It identifies essential learning objectives for all school levels and subjects, with an additional differentiated plan for vocational training. The prioritisation covers two academic years, dedicating this time to recovery and consolidation of essential learning. The Ministry held a virtual conference about curricular prioritisation and has provided online training with a focus on classroom application and teacher well-being to support schools and teachers to familiarise themselves with it. In addition, a dedicated Online Learning for Teachers (Aprendo En Línea Docente, 2020) portal houses more than 20 000 pedagogical resources, including learning guides and teaching strategies linked to the prioritised objectives, videos, webinars guidelines, resources for students and assessment tools. The process is voluntary, and schools have the autonomy to adapt it to their own context **[See forthcoming framework below ([9])]**.

To further **support educators**, Chile's Tutors for Chile (*Tutores para Chile,* 2020) network brings together initial teacher education candidates to facilitate tutorials for school students. The nature of these tutorials is determined by the host school, in liaison with the teacher training institution and the trainee teacher. Tutorials may take place online or in person but a supervisor must be present to monitor the work and give a final evaluation to the trainee teacher. Weekly hour-long tutorials over a period of three to four months target students in critical moments in education, such as final-year or transition-year students. One tutor supports up to three students. In this way, tutors support schools in helping students overcome learning gaps created or exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis while continuing their own training, gaining the practical experience and professional guidance required for qualification **[Read More]**.

Finally, to help **diagnose students' learning needs** on the return to in-person teaching, Chile implemented the Comprehensive Assessment of Learning (*Diagnóstico Integral de Aprendizajes*, DIA, 2020). Schools that resume in-person teaching must register on the DIA platform, which assesses cognitive and non-cognitive skills in core areas such as reading and mathematics to identify learning gaps and losses. The tool is flexible, with schools able to administer the assessments when they want, and receive results and analytical reports immediately. The platform offers three types of assessment: those collecting information on the socio-emotional well-being of students and some socio-emotional skills essential to face crises; for younger students, an interactive diagnosis generates evidence through an activity; and, for older students, short self-report questionnaires generate a report at course level. Chile also provides video mentoring to management teams to support implementation and carried out a sample evaluation at the end of 2020 to determine the status of student learning and the impact of the pandemic at national level **[Read More]**.

Possible relevance for Brazil

With a long period of school closures, as has been the case for Brazil, Chile has developed a broad range of resources to help schools navigate education delivery and meet essential learning objectives. Gaining further insight into these approaches, their strengths, and associated challenges could help advance Brazil's implementation of the BNCC in the pandemic context, while also supporting schools to reopen and recover learning. The BNCC forms a basis on which priorities in core subjects can be identified. Hence, investing resources in developing associated pedagogical tools, such as videos, assessments, teaching strategies and even learning standards, as done in Chile, can also provide longer-term benefits for curricular implementation (see Spotlight 4). A prioritisation exercise of the skills that all students must acquire is particularly important in Brazil, where already large inequities are likely to have been exacerbated by prolonged school closures during the pandemic. Diagnostic assessments of learning gaps then become a critical next step in ensuring that students' needs are fully met. By providing a national tool to achieve this, Chile established a mechanism to determine the system-level impact of the pandemic at the same time as providing more individualised feedback to schools and learners, helping to reduce the burden on education actors. Finally, by mobilising teacher candidates to support remedial efforts, Brazil could not only increase the scope of interventions but also use it as an opportunity to strengthen practical components within initial teacher education and begin implementing elements of recent reforms in that area (see "School Improvement").

Spotlight 1. Highlights of previous OECD reviews and recommendations for Brazil

Relevant **international policies** of potential interest included in this country policy profile	Key challenges identified and recommendations previously provided by the OECD

STUDENTS

- **Ireland:** National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy (2011-20)

- **Germany:** Good Daycare Facilities Act (*Gute-KiTa-Gesetz*, 2019)

- **Portugal:** Education Territories for Priority Intervention (*Territórios Educativos de Intervenção Prioritária*, 1996, updated in 2006, 2012)

- **Latvia:** Tackling Early School Leaving project (2017-22)

- **Canada:** Labour Market Information Council (2017)

- **United Kingdom:** Discover Uni platform (2019); Unistats platform (2012)

- **Portugal:** Students' Profile at the End of Compulsory Schooling (*Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória*, 2017)

- **Portugal:** Project for Autonomy and Curricular Flexibility (*Projeto de Autonomia e Flexibilidade Curricular*, PAFC, 2017)

COVID-19 responses:

- **Chile:** Curricular Prioritisation package (2020)

Key challenges identified [2014, 2015, 2018a, 2020a, 2020b]: The OECD has previously identified considerable disparities in education access and outcomes in Brazil across all levels, primarily due to students' socio-economic status and geographic location. The OECD has also noted that Brazil faces high rates of secondary school drop-out, which reflect a low level of core social and cognitive skills. The ongoing challenge of ensuring that all youth leave education with the skills required in the labour market had also been identified. Connected to this, the OECD reported challenges related to ensuring rigorous and systematic skills assessment and anticipation, measures for recognising prior learning and reducing the heterogeneity of training provision. Finally, the OECD noted that Brazil has faced high levels of unemployment for those age 18-24.

Summary of previous OECD recommendations: For ECEC, the OECD previously recommended that Brazil continue expanding access, prioritising disadvantaged families and regions. For older students, the OECD proposed increasing access to full-day schooling and making school more engaging and relevant by increasing subject choice. The OECD also recommended ensuring the early detection of students at risk of dropping out and providing individual, tailored support. Further recommendations have included strengthening links between schools and the labour market through expanding VET programmes and access to work-based learning, and enhancing employment services for young people. The OECD has also proposed better aligning training supply and university curricula with labour market demand using skill anticipation assessments and multi-stakeholder dialogue at local level, as well as facilitating formal and transparent certification of tertiary education and vocational training, particularly in online provision, and ensuring training subsidies adapt to the specific needs and context of the student and the local area. Finally, the OECD previously suggested that Brazil create a one-stop shop for youth to obtain information and advice about programmes and services available to them.

INSTITUTIONS

- **Germany:** Education Alliances (*Bündisse für Bildung*, 2013)

- **Chile:** The School Leadership Strengthening Policy (*Política de Fortalecimiento del Liderazgo Directivo Escolar*, 2014)

- **Chile:** Good School Leadership and Management Framework (*Marco de Buena Dirección y el Liderazgo Escolar*, 2015)

- **Australia:** Formal recommendations for the improvement of initial teacher education (2014)

- **Ireland:** Digital Strategy for Schools (2015-20)

- **Finland:** Digital Tutor-Teacher (2016)

- **Korea:** Knowledge Spring (2020) and the 10 000 teachers online community (2020)

- **Turkey:** new regulations on distance education (2020) and Distance Education Centres (*Uzaktan Eğitim Merkezi*) in higher education

- **Australia:** Australian Children's Education and Care Quality

Key challenges identified [2014, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, 2020a, 2020b]: The OECD has previously identified challenges related to teacher quality, noting that recruits generally have low skill levels relative to other tertiary graduates in Brazil and that wages are comparatively low. Furthermore, the OECD noted that levels of on-the-job support and training are very heterogeneous across the country. At the same time, the OECD highlighted that school management is often low quality, partly as a result of political appointment practices. In higher education, the OECD identified challenges related to the design and implementation of national standardised assessments, as well as a need for greater transparency and rigour in institutional accreditation processes. In relation to student and adult VET, the OECD highlighted wide variation in training quality.

Summary of previous OECD recommendations: The OECD has previously recommended that Brazil improve the quality of education through ensuring that teaching is perceived as a rewarding and high-status career attracting the most qualified graduates, including

Authority (ACECQA, 2010)

- **Australia:** National Quality Framework for ECEC (2009)
- **United Kingdom:** Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2011)
- **Norway:** Assessment for Learning Programme (2010-18)

COVID-19 responses:

- **Chile:** Tutors for Chile (*Tutores para Chile,* 2020)
- **Chile:** Comprehensive Assessment of Learning (*Diagnóstico Integral de Aprendizajes*, DIA, 2020)

through enhancing remuneration, training and performance incentives. The OECD also suggested rewarding high-performing schools and better supporting low-performing schools to improve. More recently, the OECD suggested standardising curricula for teacher education to include more practical experience and introducing regular evaluation and support for novice teachers. It also recommended introducing temporary bonuses for qualified teachers to teach in difficult schools and better allocating teachers to schools according to skill needs across school types. For higher education, the OECD recommended improving the reliability and accessibility of information on higher education institutions' accreditation and outcomes. The OECD also recommended that Brazil improve higher education quality assurance by increasing the weight of outputs and outcomes in the institutional evaluation process and gathering feedback from a wider range of stakeholders. The OECD also proposed the introduction of systematic evaluations and certifications of vocational training programmes. In the area of digital education policy specifically, the OECD recommended more regular monitoring and evaluation based on pre-defined targets and indicators, and promoting information sharing on impactful initiatives.

SYSTEM

- **New Zealand:** Blueprint for Education System Stewardship (2016) and the Education System Stewardship Forum
- **Ireland**: School Excellence Fund (2017)
- **Australia:** Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA, 2011)
- **Australia:** Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA, 2011)
- **Australia:** Higher Education Standards Framework (2015, updated 2021)
- **Ireland:** Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) and the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT, 2013)
- **Portugal:** Curriculum Guidelines for Pre-School Education (*Orientações Curriculares para a Educação Pré-escolar*, 2016)
- **New Zealand:** National Standards (2010)
- **Austria:** Goal-oriented budgeting (2009)
- **Berlin** (Germany): the Bonus programme (2014)
- **Ireland**: Expert Group on Future Funding for Higher Education (2014)

Key challenges identified [2014, 2015, 2018b, 2020b]: The OECD previously noted the size and complex structure of education governance in Brazil as challenges to policy coherence, impact and implementation. In addition, a highly decentralised system together with large economic disparities has led to high variation in quality and outcomes. New national standards aim to address this, and the OECD has emphasised the need for federal and state governments to take the lead in co-ordinating implementation, noting that this has typically been weak leading to high spending inefficiencies, largely in secondary education. The OECD also noted that a disproportionate amount of spending goes to public tertiary provision.

Summary of previous OECD recommendations: The OECD previously recommended that Brazil review education funding, prioritising equity and cost-efficiency to increase focus on improving outcomes. In 2014, the OECD proposed increasing basic education spending through a higher Fundeb budget and gradually raising the share of national wealth spent on education towards the OECD average. More recently, in higher education, the OECD suggested that Brazil create an independent quality assurance agency, examining how this might support state and municipal systems. In relation to vocational and adult training, the OECD recommended that Brazil scale up resources for related policies, in particular for low–skilled, unemployed and informal workers, linking subsidies to outcomes. Finally, the OECD advised Brazil introduce nationwide learning standards and curricula to improve adult basic education.

Note: The information on key challenges and recommendations in this Spotlight draws from a desk-based compilation from previous OECD publications (subject to country participation). The Spotlight is intended for exploratory purposes to promote policy dialogue, and should not be considered an evaluation of the country's progress on these recommendations. Causality should not be inferred either: while some actions taken by a country could correspond to previous OECD recommendations, the OECD acknowledges the value of internal and other external dynamics to promote change in education systems.

Main sources: OECD (2014[10]), *Investing in Youth: Brazil*, Investing in Youth, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264208988-en; OECD (2015[11]), "Brazil Policy Brief: Developing Skills and Education for Growth", *OECD Better Policies Series*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd.org/policy-briefs/brazil-developing-skills-and-education-for-growth.pdf; OECD (2017[12]), *Economic Policy Reforms 2017*: Going for Growth, OECD Publishing, Paris**,** https://doi.org/10.1787/growth-2017-en; OECD (2018[13]), "Getting Skills Right: Brazil", *Getting Skills Right*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264309838-en; OECD (2018[14]), "Rethinking Quality Assurance for Higher Education in Brazil", *Reviews of National Policies for Education*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264309050-en; OECD (2020[15]), *Going Digital in Brazil*, OECD Reviews of Digital Transformation, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/e9bf7f8a-en; OECD (2020[16]), *OECD Economic Surveys: Brazil 2020*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/250240ad-en.

EQUITY AND QUALITY: BRAZIL HAS INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION, BUT MULTIDIMENSIONAL INEQUITIES PERSIST

Strengthening **student performance** for all emerged as a common policy priority across several OECD countries from 2014, with a particular focus on raising achievement among low performers (2018[17]). Analysis shows this is both a key challenge and a priority for Brazil. From 2000-18, Brazil expanded educational participation considerably while successfully maintaining stable reading performance and increasing mathematics performance in PISA by an average of 4.6 points every three years. In science, Brazil reduced the share of low performers by 5.6 percentage points from 2006. Efforts to enhance performance must continue, however, as important challenges remain. In PISA 2018, 15-year-olds in Brazil performed well below the OECD average in reading (see Figure 1), mathematics (384 compared to 489) and science (404 compared to 489). In each, Brazil had a higher share of low achievers than many OECD countries: 23% of students achieved at least minimum proficiency (PISA Level 2) in reading, mathematics and science, compared to an OECD average of 64% (see Figure 2). National data indicate that the share of students reaching grade-related minimum proficiency falls during upper secondary education, particularly in mathematics (2020[18]).

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) policies can increase the equity of education systems and raising access and quality were priorities for many education systems from 2008-17 (2018[17]). In Brazil, pre-school education (*educação infantil - pré-escola*), a two-year programme, generally begins at age four. Prior to this, children can attend daycare (*educação infantil – crèche*). Brazil has been working to increase ECEC enrolment, extending compulsory education to begin at 4 years old in 2009. By 2018, participation in pre-school was above the OECD average, at 90% of 4-year-olds and 100% of 5-year-olds. However, for younger children, participation is lower: in 2018, only 65% of 3-year-olds were enrolled in ECEC compared to an average of 78%. At the current rate of progress, Brazil will not meet the National Education Plan (*Plano Nacional de Educação*, PNE) goal of 50% enrolment for 0-3 year-olds by 2024 (2020[19]). The 25 percentage point gap in participation rates between the lowest and highest socio-economic quintiles is a particular concern (2020[19]). PISA 2018 data indicate that in Brazil, as in other countries, ECEC can have an impact on later educational performance when children attend for two years. However, this impact was not as positive in Brazil as on average across the OECD. Alongside expanding participation, Brazil must therefore ensure quality.

According to OECD evidence, some **system-level policies** can favour equitable outcomes, such as a longer period of compulsory education, delayed tracking and limited ability grouping. Compulsory education in Brazil is from age 4 to 17, slightly longer than most OECD countries. Students are first tracked into different pathways at age 15, one year before the OECD's most common age. Grade repetition appears to be a relatively frequent practice in Brazil: in 2018, 34% of 15-year-olds reported having repeated a grade, compared to 11% on average, with considerably higher rates among disadvantaged students. Evidence suggests that key transition years (Years 3 and 6, and Grade 1[3]) have the highest concentration of repeaters (2018[20]). However, in Brazil, as in other countries, grade repetition does not lead to higher outcomes; in Brazil it also contributes to a high rate of age-grade distortion which can exacerbate drop-out rates (2018[21]). Among many education systems across the OECD, preventing grade repetition was identified as an emerging policy priority in 2018 as its costliness and inefficiency are increasingly recognised (2018[17]). Brazil also experiences informal school segregation with an above-average isolation index for high-achieving students (0.30 compared to 0.21) and the socio-economically advantaged (0.33 compared to 0.19), despite only a small share of schools using academic selection. Private schools may contribute to this: advantaged students are more likely to attend private school, where, even after accounting for socio-economic status, students scored 37 points higher in reading in PISA 2018. There is evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic may have reduced participation in private schooling (2021[22]). Nevertheless the quality of public schools in Brazil must increase to mitigate the inequities resulting from the existence of socially-exclusive private schools.

Brazilian education faces **multidimensional equity concerns** requiring holistic responses that consider long-standing socio-economic, geographic and ethnic disadvantage. Socio-economic disadvantage is a key driver of low performance in Brazil, explaining 14% of the variance in reading scores in PISA 2018 compared to 12% on average across the OECD. Advantaged students outperformed their disadvantaged peers by 97 points in reading in Brazil, compared to an average gap of 89 points. Intergenerational trends in Brazil also show that two-thirds of children of parents without basic education do not attain it themselves (2020[16]). Geography plays a role: in the more rural North and Midwest, ECEC enrolment was well below the national average in 2018 (2019[23]) while across many PNE goals, the North and Northeast lag in education coverage and quality (2020[19]). Black and mixed children generally form the majority of those in poverty and are more prone to an accumulation of social and educational deprivations (2018[21]).

Prolonged **school closures during COVID-19** are likely to have exacerbated these inequities: around 30% of disadvantaged students in Brazil, as well as those in rural schools, reported having access to a computer at home for school work in 2018, compared to nearly 90% for advantaged students or those in private schools. Across the OECD, policy work to address inequities has typically focused on prioritising specific groups for targeted supports or resources (2018[17]). While this remains important, there is also growing international momentum for individually responsive efforts and holistic approaches that consider the multiple vulnerabilities interacting to diminish opportunities and outcomes for some children (2020[2]). In Brazil, both approaches will be critical in the COVID-19 recovery and beyond.

Where does Brazil stand on education **equity and quality**?

Key strengths

- Brazil has **greatly expanded participation** in education, particularly in ECEC, while maintaining, and in some cases improving, performance.
- The **long duration of compulsory education** may foster greater equity as younger students move through the system.

Key challenges

- Increasing the share of students achieving **minimum proficiency** in the core PISA disciplines.
- Enhancing the **quality of ECEC and equity of access** to increase the positive impact on future outcomes.
- Analysing the **intersectionality of inequities** to design supports for those with multiple vulnerabilities.

Building on **international experiences** to move forward

Raising student performance was a policy priority widely identified across several OECD education systems from 2008-17. A key principle of action to address this is establishing educational outcomes as a main target rather than focusing on increasing spending. International policy trends to make it happen include expanding and enhancing educational opportunities, providing educational support and reinforcement for students from diverse backgrounds, or engaging with families and communities (2018[17]).

- **International example: Ireland**'s National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy (2011-20) established performance targets (and intermediate benchmarks) for literacy and numeracy at primary and secondary levels to be met by 2020, in consultation with various stakeholders. The Strategy mobilised six arms of action, each with discreet targets and measures: training teachers; developing school leaders; engaging parents and communities; clarifying curricula expectations; mobilising assessment tools; and targeting supports to needs. Ireland also introduced a school self-evaluation process explicitly focused on literacy and numeracy in its first cycle (2012-15). An interim review found considerable progress, with several targets met ahead of time. Goals were therefore revised, with priorities reoriented towards less performant areas (i.e. numeracy, disadvantaged schools), and new measures identified for each arm of action **[Read More]**.
- **Possible relevance for Brazil: National Literacy Policy (*Política Nacional de Alfabetização, 2019*).** Ireland's strategy established a clear, shared vision focused on learning outcomes, with detailed related planned actions. This facilitated ongoing monitoring, essential in ensuring progress and good practice were identified and built upon. The Strategy also promoted policy continuity as targets extended across multiple administrations. Policy alignment efforts also facilitated implementation.

Increasing access to and quality of ECEC was another policy priority identified across education systems from 2008-18. Implementing monitoring systems is a key principle of action, and related international policy trends to address the challenge include facilitating the transition to primary education, with a growing focus on more targeted supports for disadvantaged children (2018[17]).

- **International example: Germany**'s Good Daycare Facilities Act (*Gute-KiTa-Gesetz*, 2019) formally steers efforts to promote ECEC quality and equity within a federal system across ten priority areas. To support action, the federal government established a dedicated fund of EUR 5.5 billion and made individual agreements with the Länder, legally enabling them to receive and invest funds according to local needs, realities and priorities **[Read More]**.
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** The updated **National Plan for Early Childhood (*Plano Nacional pela Primeira Infância, 2020*).** By formalising priority areas within law, Germany's Act steers subnational policy while individual agreements with states establish a mechanism through which progress and action can be monitored at subnational and federal level. They can also help to ensure that funding is more outcomes-focused, thus promoting greater efficiency.

Addressing the intersectionality of inequities through holistic, flexible interventions has been a key international principle of action in the COVID-19 response and a driver of future responsiveness and resilience. Related pointers for action include promoting a local or personal approach to interventions and maintaining and adjusting supports over a sustained period (2020[2]).

- **International example: Portugal**'s Education Territories for Priority Intervention *(Territórios Educativos de Intervenção Prioritária, 1996, updated in 2006, 2012)* targets areas with high shares of disadvantaged students and above-average early school-leaving rates. By 2014, TEIP had reduced drop-out and improved results, although gaps remained. Since 2015/16, participating schools must design and implement multi-annual strategic improvement plans and self-evaluate progress annually; school reports then feed into national evaluations **[Read More]**.
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** Territorial approaches can serve to address inequities in Brazil by responding more flexibly and specifically to local needs, and bringing together different support services in the community. Furthermore, through this policy, institutions and educators in more challenging circumstances can benefit from additional technical support, as well as supportive and constructive accountability mechanisms aimed at ensuring quality student outcomes, regardless of circumstance.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE: BRAZIL HAS HIGH RETURNS TO EDUCATION BUT LOW COMPLETION RATES HINDER THEIR FULFILMENT

The capacity of a country to effectively develop **skills and labour market perspectives** can play an important role in the educational decisions of the population. In 2018, 14% of 25-64 year-olds in Brazil had not completed primary education, and 47% had not completed upper secondary, compared to OECD averages of 2% and 22% in 2019. This is changing in Brazil: the share of 25-34 year-olds with less than upper secondary education in 2018 was half that of 55-64 year-olds. Educational attainment is increasingly influential in Brazil: those without upper secondary education, for example, were more vulnerable to declining employment rates from 2015. In 2018, 31% of 18-24 year-olds in Brazil were not employed nor in education or training (NEET), more than twice the OECD average of 14% in 2019 (see Figure 3). The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to exacerbate this: Brazil's overall unemployment is projected to grow from 12% in 2019 to 15% in 2022 (2020[16]). Such challenges are not unique to Brazil; from 2008-17, many education systems identified improving transitions to work and reducing NEET rates as policy priorities (2018[17]).

Upper secondary education (*ensino médio*) is compulsory in Brazil and takes place in either general or technical institutions, usually over three years. Upon completion, students receive a diploma enabling access to higher education. Despite growing student participation and attainment at this level, performance is often low (see "Equity and Quality") and drop-out rates are high. In 2018, only 53% of students graduated after 3 years (theoretical duration), increasing to just 61% after 5 years, by which point most of those who had not completed the programme were no longer enrolled. Drop-out rates among students in the lowest income quintile are eight times higher than for those in the highest (2020[16]). Reducing early school-leaving was identified as a policy priority for several OECD education systems from 2008-17 (2018[17]); by enhancing flexibility and transparency around what students are able to learn in upper secondary, current reforms in Brazil align with some common international responses (see Spotlight 2).

Vocational education and training (VET) can ease entry into the labour market, yet many VET programmes across the OECD make insufficient use of workplace training. VET has been an area of policy focus for many education systems, with increasing attractiveness and employer engagement as commonly identified priorities (2018[17]). In Brazil, upper secondary VET (*Educação Profissional e Técnica*) can be integrated (general and technical courses at the same institution), concomitant (separate institutions) or, most commonly, sequential (on completion of general education). In PISA 2018, VET students in Brazil outperformed their peers in general programmes by 39 score points in reading, after accounting for socio-economic status, reversing the OECD trend. Research suggests that Brazil's model, which combines general and technical curricula, strengthens learning through greater focus on application (2020[24]); however, the use of admissions tests for many VET schools is also a contributing factor. VET enrolment in Brazil is low, though: only 11% of upper secondary students in 2018 were in vocational programmes, well below the OECD average of 42% and the PNE target of 25% by 2024. Completion rates are also low: in 2018, only 58% of upper secondary VET students had graduated by 2 years after the theoretical duration (see Figure 3). Current reforms target the integrated model, which has lower drop-out rates, and aim to increase participation (2018[25]) (see Spotlight 2).

Ensuring equal access to **higher education** and improving quality, already identified as common policy priorities across many OECD countries (2018[17]), are also relevant for Brazil. Higher education mostly takes place in universities in Brazil, but also in federal institutes, university centres or colleges. Most students are enrolled in 4-5 year Bachelor's programmes but postgraduate qualifications, including professional Master's, are increasingly popular. Entry is typically based on students' results in the optional National Examination of Upper Secondary (*Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio*, ENEM), although alternative or additional criteria may apply. Entry to public higher education institutions (HEIs), which do not charge tuition fees and are often higher performing, is more competitive. As such, educational inequities that accumulate across compulsory schooling can negatively impact access to quality, affordable tertiary education. Yet growth in tertiary attainment has benefitted disadvantaged and non-white students too (see "Recent policies and practices"). It also produces high returns: in 2018, tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds were employed at a rate 11 percentage points higher than their peers with upper secondary attainment, with a wage premium of 144%, compared to OECD averages of 9 percentage points and 54%. Perhaps as a result, in PISA 2018, 75% of Brazil's 15-year-olds reported expecting to complete higher education, including 68% of those without minimum proficiency in core PISA subjects. This mismatch may ultimately contribute to high non-completion rates: only one-third of Bachelor's students in Brazil graduated within the theoretical duration in 2017. Timely career guidance can help students recognise the benefits of education and develop realistic expectations but, in PISA 2018, around one-quarter of Brazil's 15-year-olds attended schools without guidance. International examples could help Brazil strengthen career guidance and develop nationwide skills anticipation and graduate tracking systems (2020[16]).

Adult education in Brazil is critical in addressing low attainment. Education for Youth and Adults (*Educação de Jovens e Adultos,* EJA) offers 6-month modules to people aged over 15 returning to formal education; short training courses (*Cursos FIC*) offer professional qualifications. The OECD noted that, despite relatively high enrolment, EJA is rarely tailored to adults' needs, resulting in low completion (2020[16]) while FIC courses are very heterogeneous in quality and availability (2018[13]). High drop-out rates across the education system mean that individual and societal investments do not consistently result in expected economic and social returns, inhibiting efficiency and resilience.

Where does Brazil stand on preparing students for the future?

Key strengths

- **Labour market** and **financial returns** to education are high.
- **Participation and attainment** levels in vocational and general education are growing, including for disadvantaged students at tertiary level.

Key challenges

- Reducing **drop-out and non-completion** rates across different programmes and education levels.
- Increasing **participation and quality across the VET** offer.
- Strengthening the **alignment of skills supply and demand** through tailored, evidence-based provision and guidance.

Building on international experiences to move forward

Reducing drop-out and early school leaving was a common international policy priority from 2008-18. Key principles of action to address this challenge include providing more and earlier individualised support to students at risk of falling behind and favouring policies that encourage students to re-engage with school. International policy trends to make it happen include improving learning opportunities and student guidance, updating course curricula and increasing training in high demand fields (2018[17]).

- **International example:** Latvia's Tackling Early School Leaving project (2017-22) targets at-risk students in general and vocational education through prevention and intervention across three levels: students, institutions and system. An interim evaluation highlighted the individual support given to students (participants receive an individual needs assessment and support plan) as a key success factor, positively impacting learners' progress, well-being, relationships with teachers and attitudes to learning. The strategy had also strengthened staff capacity to support students, and improved co-operation between learners, parents and teachers, and across government levels. A co-ordinated database promotes information sharing between institutions and local and national government, and supports the ongoing evaluation of different measures [**Read More**].
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** Early intervention at subnational level could complement the **School Active Search** *(Busca Ativa Escolar,* **2017***)* strategy's efforts in Brazil. Importantly, Latvia's strategy builds educators' capacity to provide individualised support through training opportunities, quality guidance and developing a shared knowledge base of what works.

Addressing skills mismatch is another policy priority commonly identified across OECD education systems. Making VET more relevant to labour market needs is a key principle of action. Related international policy trends include strengthening the links between education qualifications and the labour market and connecting employers with job seekers (2018[17]).

- **International example:** Canada's Labour Market Information Council (2017) aims to bring together the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to improve the timeliness, reliability, and accessibility of labour market information. As well as conducting its own research and analyses related to employment, earnings, and skills and labour demand, the Council produces data dashboards, centralising information from different sources. Evaluations praise the prioritisation of collaboration with partners and stakeholders, and the use of multiple complementary approaches to data collection [**See forthcoming framework abaixo** [9])].
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** **New Pathways** (*Novos Caminhos,* **2019**)**.** Canada's approach to strengthening and disseminating labour market information offers an example of effective collaboration in a federal system and how Brazil can capitalise on information and expertise at different levels of the system to achieve a richer understanding of the labour market. This could also better inform Brazil's efforts to overcome several VET-related priorities previously identified by the OECD including regional skills anticipation and targeted resourcing (2020[16]).

Improving guidance to help students make better orientation and career decisions is a principle of action to increase equal access to tertiary education and to lower NEET rates, both of which have been identified as international policy priorities (2018[17]).

- **International example:** The **United Kingdom**'s Discover Uni platform (2019), supports prospective higher education students in deciding whether, where, and what to study. It builds on the Unistats platform (2012), which incorporated data on student satisfaction and labour market outcomes for recent graduates from already existing surveys, as well as course-level pedagogical and logistical information provided by institutions. Discover Uni presents this data, and provides advice and guidance for prospective students on finance and study options [**See forthcoming framework abaixo** [9])].
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** Brazil's increased **tertiary participation and attainment** must result in high returns for individuals and societies. This means now prioritising quality over quantity, ensuring all students entering and investing in tertiary education leave with a valuable qualification. This requires students to be well-informed about the performance outcomes of HEIs and their courses. At the same time, greater transparency about courses, institutions and their outcomes could also promote healthy competition and constructive accountability among institutions. The example emphasises the way in which information efforts of this nature can be built up over time to become increasingly rich and complex; digital technologies support this process.

Spotlight 2. Supporting upper secondary reform through international experience

Brazil's **New Upper Secondary (***Novo Ensino Médio,* **NEM, 2017)** faces contextual constraints that may hinder its successful implementation **[Read More]**. Among these is that state- and school-level actors must implement the NEM simultaneously with the BNCC for upper secondary, which creates a high demand on their resources and capacity. At the same time, a sense of ambiguity persists among some education actors on how ENEM will align with the new organisation of learning at upper secondary level. There is also a perceived lack of transparency and consistency in implementation progress. These aspects result in a reluctance among some implementation actors to move forward and calls for further efforts focused across three priority areas:

- **Facilitating adequate and timely support**, both technical and financial;
- **Aligning national assessments** with the aims and objectives of NEM and BNCC; and
- **Enhancing monitoring and evaluation** of implementation.

An international example: Portugal

The experience of **Portugal** could be useful to Brazil. Portugal's Students' Profile at the End of Compulsory Schooling (*Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória*, 2017) established a new framework for teaching, learning and assessment delineating what young people are expected to achieve by age 18 for each discipline at all levels of compulsory schooling. At the same time, and to accompany the principle of transversality underpinning the framework, Portugal simultaneously introduced the Project for Autonomy and Curricular Flexibility (*Projeto de Autonomia e Flexibilidade Curricular*, PAFC, 2017), which grants volunteer schools autonomy over 0-25% of their total curriculum time to support them to design learning experiences in line with the aims of the Profile.

The initial pilot phase of PAFC was supported by a national implementation plan that aimed to provide a strategy based on flexibility, dynamism, communication and reflection. During this pilot phase, five regional teams were created to support and monitor implementation in participating schools, consisting of representatives from the most relevant central agencies and bodies. These teams are the first point of support for schools and are also tasked with promoting learning within and between schools. A new national-level technical support team also became tasked with ensuring horizontal (across regions) and vertical (across governance levels) alignment, and managing data collection and digital support tools. In addition, a national co-ordination team consisting of the directors of various central agencies was charged with the alignment with other policies and conducts the overall monitoring and evaluation.

Evaluations have praised the comprehensive consensus-building efforts during the pilot phase, the Ministry's openness to feedback and the heightened energy, enthusiasm and collaboration witnessed among participating students, staff and other actors. At the same time, as the policy matured, it faced some challenges to be tackled that offer potentially relevant lessons for Brazil. These include heterogeneity in implementation approaches and some resistance from school actors who perceive a lack of time and space to collaborate, and excess administrative burden. Furthermore, there was an identified need to anticipate and address possible sources of tension as students, staff and parents navigate between innovation and tradition. To strengthen this policy, recommendations provided included continuing the programme on a voluntary basis and maintaining collaborative networks even as participant numbers increase. Portugal was also advised to channel resources into capacity building and to establish lighthouse schools that cascade good practice, as well as a national observatory to monitor progress and foster synergies. These past insights informed Portugal's wider and more formal introduction of autonomy and curricular flexibility and regional teams were established to monitor and support schools by means of school networks at local and national level. These teams and support structures also proved a useful resource in the initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic **[Read More]**.

Possible relevance for Brazil

Regional technical support teams, mirrored at national level, help bring national-level resources and expertise closer to implementation actors in schools and can foster a more targeted and responsive delivery of support. Adopting an initial voluntary approach may have supported these efforts further in Portugal. At the same, Portugal has taken advantage of the heterogeneity of implementation progress, appointing higher-performing schools to provide support to other schools. Peer collaboration has also been promoted in other ways to further extend the support available to schools. Portugal has also encountered problems posed by tensions between high-stakes examinations and new efforts to modernise curriculum and the organisation of learning. This emphasises the need for Brazil to proactively address this tension both through more open dialogue and updating the examination matrix. Finally, embedding the monitoring and evaluation processes within the technical support bodies can also help shine light on good local innovations while developing data collection processes that are both horizontal and vertical helps make them more comprehensive.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: STUDENTS IN BRAZIL VIEW THEIR TEACHERS POSITIVELY BUT EDUCATORS COULD BE MORE SUPPORTED IN THEIR PRACTICE

Developing **positive learning environments** for students that enable school leaders and teachers to succeed is essential in raising achievement. Students in Brazil view their teachers positively, reporting very high levels of support and teacher enthusiasm, with index values of 0.43 and 0.22, compared to OECD averages of 0.01. This has important implications: at school level in Brazil, a one-unit increase in teacher enthusiasm correlates with an increase in reading scores of 30 points, compared to an OECD average increase of 8 points. However, students also reported low sense of school belonging and low disciplinary climate which can reduce engagement and inhibit instruction (see Figure 4). Lower secondary teachers in Brazil reported spending 67% of class time on teaching and learning, compared to 78% on average, with much of the difference dedicated to keeping order. Furthermore, half of students participating in PISA 2018 in Brazil reported skipping at least one day of school in the two weeks prior to the test, compared to around one-fifth on average; the share reporting exposure to bullying at least a few times a month was also well above average.

Attracting, retaining and developing good-quality **school leaders** is critical in improving learning environments and promoting effective school leadership. In Brazil, principals are predominantly female (77%), comparatively young and qualified to Bachelor's level or equivalent (94%). Selection, appointment and training differ across the country. The PNE formalised intentions to appoint principals on technical merit and performance, yet, in 2018, 70% of municipalities reported resorting to political nomination (2019[26]). The OECD (2021[22]) noted that the role remains largely administrative and bureaucratic. Brazil is currently developing a Common National Matrix of Competences for School Leaders (2021[27]) (*Matriz Nacional Comum de Competências do Diretor Escolar*), expected to be formalised in 2021, which could help address such challenges by clarifying key competencies and responsibilities. Efforts to improve training will also be important. In line with OECD averages, only around one-third of Brazilian principals participating in TALIS 2018 had received instructional leadership or school administration training prior to taking up their role and fewer than average had been trained in teaching or education. The highest reported barriers to participation in continuous professional development (CPD) activities were cost and lack of employer support. Indeed, 81% of Brazilian principals reported needing more support from the authorities in general, compared to 66% on average.

A strong supply of highly qualified and engaged **teachers** is vital in every education system. Common policy priorities for OECD education systems, such as improving teacher qualifications, skills and development, and attracting quality candidates, are also relevant to the Brazilian context (2019[28]). Teachers in Brazil are young but ageing, predominantly female and mostly qualified to Bachelor's level or equivalent, although the share with a postgraduate qualification is growing. The most common route into teaching is the Bachelor's equivalent degree (*licenciatura*) in secondary education, or pedagogy for ECEC and primary. Other routes include an upper secondary teaching qualification for ECEC and primary (*magistério*) or pedagogical complement (*complementação pedagógica*) for tertiary graduates from other fields. Teaching has not typically attracted high-performing candidates in Brazil: only 30% of them in 2014 had above-average grades in ENEM (2020[29]). Thus, in the short term, quality initial teacher education (ITE) and CPD to ensure high standards is crucial, while taking steps in the medium term to make the profession more attractive. Brazilian teachers view their ITE positively, with a consistently higher-than-average sense of preparedness across all components included in TALIS 2018. Yet, to ensure all trainees receive quality ITE with adequate opportunities for practical application, Brazil will need to monitor and better regulate the growing number of distance providers (see "Governance"). In 2017, 61% of trainee teachers in Bachelor's programmes were enrolled in a remote degree (2019[30]). Public school teachers on permanent contracts must be hired through a competition (*concurso*) administered by states or municipalities, followed by a 3-year probation; the OECD (2021[22]) has noted that this is rarely a developmental process. Teachers in Brazil have a legal right to CPD (2009). In 2018, 87% reported participating in at least one CPD activity in the 12 months prior to the TALIS survey and 82% felt this positively impacted their teaching (OECD averages: 94% and 82%). Increasing CPD participation is a PNE goal but enhancing quality will be critical, too (see "Recent policies and practices").

Teaching conditions in Brazil include larger classes and teaching load, yet teachers are somewhat increasingly satisfied with their career choice. Class sizes decreased from 2005, to 23 and 27 students at primary and lower secondary levels respectively in 2018 (OECD averages: 21 and 23). By law, Brazilian teachers should devote one-third of their working hours to non-teaching activities, yet lower secondary teachers in TALIS 2018 reported spending 75% of their time teaching. Unlike most OECD countries, only 43% of lower secondary teachers in Brazil had full-time contracts in 2018, and 20% worked in multiple schools; temporary contracts are also common. Teacher contracts and hours worked may therefore limit time spent on CPD, collaboration and school cohesion. Brazil has a National Salary Floor, but career trajectories and pay vary by state. Salaries tend to rise with years of service and further qualification; some states tie increases to management responsibilities, challenging contexts or performance (2019[31]). In 2017, 45% of municipalities were not complying with the salary floor (2017[32]) and, in TALIS 2018, only 18% of lower secondary teachers in Brazil reported being satisfied with their salary (OECD average: 39%). At the same time, 76% of Brazil's lower secondary teachers reported that they would choose to be a teacher again, equalling the OECD average after increasing by 6 percentage points since 2013.

Where does Brazil stand on school improvement?

Key strengths	Key challenges
• Students have **positive opinions of teachers**, according to PISA 2018. • Despite a growth in demand for teachers and school leaders, there is a **high level of tertiary qualified staff**.	• Nurturing more **positive learning contexts** for students to ensure they do not miss out on valuable learning time. • **Professionalising the school leader role** further through enhanced appointment and training processes. • Providing **quality professional development** to teaching staff while making the profession more attractive.

Building on international experiences to move forward

Improving learning conditions in schools was an international policy trend also identified from 2008-19. Related principles of action include expanding learning time, reducing administrative work or enhancing the physical infrastructure (2019[28]). Nurturing positive learning climates across the full spectrum of children's life spaces is also a policy pointer for resilience (forthcoming[9]).

- **International example:** **Germany**'s Education Alliances (*Bündisse für Bildung*, 2013) provide disadvantaged students with extra-curricular activities run by local education alliances of cultural, education, and youth sector actors, as well as parents. The programme aims to promote students' success in education, societal participation and lifelong learning. Service providers receive training and are encouraged to collaborate and share knowledge with other alliances across the country. Evaluations have praised the collaborative partnerships, and the support they receive. Many were able to continue their activities safely during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing critical support to disadvantaged students at a time when they needed it most **[Read More]**.
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** **New More Education Programme (*Programa Novo Mais Educação,* 2016)**; federal and subnational full-time education initiatives. By mobilising local actors and parents, Germany expanded educational opportunities for the most vulnerable without increasing the burden on educators. Capacity-building efforts and mechanisms for sharing good practice help promote quality provision. At the same time, convening a wider range of actors to advance the work of institutions could be an effective way for Brazil to mobilise resources and enhance responsiveness to local contexts (forthcoming[9]).

Improving school leaders' competencies and raising the attractiveness of the role were policy priorities identified across OECD education systems from 2008-19. Principles of action to address this challenge include expanding professional development, enhancing the status and working conditions of school leaders, and establishing clear professional standards (2019[28]).

- **International example:** **Chile** introduced various reforms to strengthen school leadership with efforts to enhance and incentivise training (2010), as well as targeted efforts for those in challenging contexts, including higher salaries, competitive open selection and greater responsibilities and powers (2011). The School Leadership Strengthening Policy (*Política de Fortalecimiento del Liderazgo Directivo Escolar*, 2014) aimed to more clearly define school leaders' role as agents of change, improve selection and training, establish school leadership centres and build an evidence base to support related policy making. In addition, the Good School Leadership and Management Framework (*Marco de Buena Dirección y el Liderazgo Escolar*, 2015) aimed to better focus the work of school leaders and their professional development **[Read More]**
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** **Common National Matrix of Competences for the School Leader (*Matriz Nacional Comum de Competências do Diretor Escolar,* under consideration)**. In Chile, several policies have built on each other to provide more comprehensive support to school leaders, emphasising the need for policy complementarity at federal and subnational level, in Brazil's case. Building an evidence base is also important: Chile's school leadership centres have led several research and innovation projects in school leadership and built up a credible national and international profile.

Improving teacher qualifications, skills and training was one of the most commonly identified policy priorities from 2008-19. Principles of action included establishing clearly defined standards of what teachers need to know and do and improving training; related policy trends included establishing professional frameworks and enhancing initial teacher education (ITE) (2019[28]).

- **International example:** **Australia** identified several formal recommendations for the improvement of ITE (2014). Reforms focused on quality assurance, strengthening selection (e.g. introducing a national literacy and numeracy test), expanding practical components and making final assessment more robust. Providers must demonstrate the impact of their programmes on teachers and student learning **[Read More]**.
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** **National Curriculum Guidelines for ITE (2019)** and a **Common National Base for ITE (*BNC-Formação,* 2019)**. In Australia, expert research by an independent group helped establish consensus for reform within a federal system. The twin approach of increasing accountability for providers and making assessment of candidates more rigorous can instil a shared responsibility for raising standards.

Spotlight 3. Strengthening digital education through international experience

Brazil has made considerable progress in enhancing the accessibility and use of digital tools to improve education. However, several challenges remain **[Read More]**. Although efforts to enhance digital infrastructure and equitable access remain crucial, as digital technologies fulfil a larger role in education provision - a process accelerated by the pandemic – further enhancing the focus on pedagogies, educators and institutions becomes increasingly important. In Brazil, there is also a need to better regulate and ensure the quality of provision as digital courses become increasingly widespread, particularly in higher education. This calls for further efforts focused across three priority areas:

- **Establish a national strategy** which builds on progress and opportunities brought about during COVID-19;
- **Develop tools and spaces to support educators** to effectively embed digital pedagogies; and
- **Promote higher quality application** of digital tools in tertiary education.

International examples: Ireland, Portugal, Korea and Turkey

Ireland's Digital Strategy for Schools (2015-20) aims to embed Information and Communications Technology (ICT) more deeply across the school system. Informed by results of the ICT Census in Schools (2013) and consultation with stakeholders, including students, it addresses four themes: teaching, learning and assessment through ICT; continuous professional development (CPD); leadership, research and policy; and ICT infrastructure. To support school-level planning, implementation and evaluation, Ireland developed a Digital Learning Framework (DLF, 2017) as a roadmap for schools. The DLF was initially trialled, then revised and implemented nationally from 2018/19, with an extensive professional development programme for educators. A more longitudinal study of the DLF and its implementation is underway; findings will help inform training requirements for schools and future policy **[Read More]**.

Finland's Digital Tutor-Teacher (2016) initiative developed a network of digital champions across school education. The role is undertaken by a teacher who embraces new pedagogies and promotes the digitalisation of teaching. Actions carried out at the tutor's school may include organising training on digital pedagogy, conducting competence surveys, providing technical guidance or networking with peers. By 2018, the government had appointed tutors across 90% of municipalities, over 80% of whom had been trained via the government's discretionary transfers. Evaluations indicate that the initiative was well-received; ongoing challenges include demand for a more regional focus to the network, clearer guidance from the Ministry as to areas of focus, and securing a long-term funding strategy. Particularly at upper secondary level, the model has been influential in supporting the implementation of curricular reform, and early evidence indicates that the tutors were a valuable resource during school closures in 2020 **[Read More]**.

Korea's Knowledge Spring (2020) online platform for teachers is an autonomous and personalised remote teacher training system. Via a range of digital tools and spaces, teachers and instructors can flexibly organise and operate teaching materials, content and training times to suit their identified needs, with expert teachers providing the content. The Knowledge Spring builds on the 10 000 teachers online community (2020), made up of representatives from nearly every school in the country and established to support teachers in implementing distance learning during school closures in 2020. By promoting further collaboration between teachers and enabling customisation of learning material, the Knowledge Spring differs greatly from existing institutional-led training models **[Read More]**.

Turkey introduced new regulations on distance education (2020) enabling HEIs to deliver 40% of all formal programmes offered through distance modalities while also introducing the expectation that at least 10% of all formal programmes will be delivered remotely. To support HEIs to capitalise on these new regulations, public universities will be assigned additional staff and research assistants to work in new or existing Distance Education Centres (*Uzaktan Eğitim Merkezi*). Having established 20 new Distance Education Centres in 2020, every public university in the country now has one; the government also recently passed a recommendation to establish Centres in all foundation universities. These Centres support institutional practices for distance education and conduct related research. The Higher Education Council is also implementing a training programme to raise the competencies of staff within the Centres **[Read More]**.

Possible relevance for Brazil

These examples can serve as inspiration for Brazil at both federal and subnational level. Institution-based initiatives, as in Finland and Turkey, appear particularly relevant as they enable tools and training to be adapted to the specific needs of the students and educators within them. At the same time, personalised approaches to supporting educators to embed digital technologies, whether provided at scale, as in Korea, or on a more individual basis, as in Finland, can better address educators' needs. Nevertheless, in these instances it is essential that teachers are able to identify their own needs: tools such as Ireland's ICT Census or the Digital Learning Framework can support that process. Finally, the professionals who are assigned to build capacity among teachers should have their own training and development opportunities. Establishing networks between these professionals, as in Finland, may be particularly impactful.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT: BRAZIL HAS STRONG SYSTEM-LEVEL EVALUATION, BUT ROOM FOR MORE FORMATIVE APPROACHES IN INSTITUTIONS

Defining strategies for evaluation and assessment is an important step towards improving student outcomes and developing a better and more equitable education system. **System evaluation** can provide evidence to help decision makers craft informed policies and increase the transparency of education system outcomes. At federal level, system evaluation consists of the National System for Evaluation of Elementary Education (SAEB) and the National Higher Education Assessment System (SINAES). They are overseen respectively by the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP) and the National Higher Education Assessment Commission (CONAES). INEP also conducts annual censuses of basic and higher education, and produces other evidence to support policy processes. Many states and municipalities also administer their own standardised assessments of student learning. According to INEP (2018[33]), most follow formative principles using assessment as an education management tool, but could focus more on input- and process-related quality indicators. Brazil also participates in several international assessments of student learning. Overall, better articulation between system monitoring assessments at different administrative levels could enhance efficiency; recent efforts in ECEC and VET (see "Recent policies and practices") should be considered for alignment too. Thus, as previously identified for many education systems across the OECD (2019[28]), developing a coherent evaluation and assessment framework covering the full education system is a priority for Brazil.

Brazil's system evaluation tools feed into **school evaluation** and monitoring. The National Education Quality Index (IDEB), based on SAEB results and indicators related to student transitions, provides performance scores at school, municipal, state or national level from primary to upper secondary education. These are then used to inform improvement planning and performance targets at each of these levels. In PISA 2018, a similar share of Brazilian principals as on average among their peers in OECD countries indicated that schools are likely to conduct self-evaluation (96% compared to 95%). However, it is less likely to be mandatory in Brazil. External school evaluation is more common in Brazil than on average and more likely to be mandatory. The OECD (2014[10]) previously reported that IDEB helped foster greater focus on school quality and improvement. However, more recently, the OECD (2021[22]) noted that it could be strengthened to more fully capture key system challenges such as equity and balance increasingly high-stakes uses. Indeed, TALIS 2018 data indicate that Brazilian educators feel related pressure: 52% of teachers and 67% of principals reported being held responsible for students' achievement as a key cause of stress, compared to 44% and 46% on average. This may negatively impact teachers' attitudes towards their careers and the attractiveness of the profession (see "School Improvement").

According to OECD evidence, **teacher appraisal** can strengthen professionalism and performance if it includes both improvement and career progression components. In Brazil, appraisal is not obligatory, nor are there national guidelines or common teacher standards. Many states and municipalities have appraisal policies in place, although a comparative study (2019[34]) found that of 24 states with such policies, only 14 were enforced. Nevertheless, TALIS 2018 data indicate that Brazilian teachers are evaluated regularly: 77% of lower secondary teachers' principals reported formally appraising their staff compared to an OECD average of 63%. Furthermore, appraisal appears more development-focused in Brazil: larger-than-average shares of teachers had principals who reported that, following appraisal, they mostly or always hold discussions to address weaknesses in teaching (93% compared to 63%) and produce a development plan (60% compared to 46%). At the same time, several state policies have higher-stakes outcomes for teacher appraisal, such as consequences for career progression or remuneration, and teacher attendance and student performance in external evaluations are the most common evaluation criteria, as opposed to the observation of teaching practice (2019[34]). Yet in Brazil, as elsewhere, in TALIS 2018, teachers were more likely to consider the feedback they received to be impactful when it was based on classroom observation. Moving forward, Brazil should consider efforts to increase consistency in appraisal practices, ensuring a focus on formative approaches.

Strong **student assessment** practices can inform and shape effective initiatives for educational improvement. As of 2019, through SAEB, Brazil administers biannual national standardised assessments in Portuguese and mathematics in Years 2, 5, 9 (when natural and human sciences are also assessed) and Grade 3. Accompanying questionnaires help contextualise the results. Students also sit the ENEM at the end of upper secondary (see "Preparing Students for the Future"). Revisions to both are an urgent priority for Brazil to support the implementation of the NEM and BNCC (see Spotlights 2 and 4). Tertiary students sit the mandatory National Examination of Student Performance (ENADE) to assess knowledge and skill acquisition, administered in three-year cycles. The OECD has reported a need to re-evaluate the objectives and design of ENADE to ensure that it is fit for purpose (2018[14]). The central role of all of these standardised assessments in Brazil's evaluation and assessment framework makes improving them a priority. At the same time, evidence suggests room to enhance more formative approaches to student assessment. In 2018, in comparison to OECD averages, lower secondary teachers in Brazil reported providing written and immediate feedback to students more frequently but students perceived receiving it less frequently, with an index value of -0.16, compared to 0.01. Principals' perceptions of parental involvement in discussions on student progress were also below average. Analysis of international evidence and COVID-19 policy responses indicate that formative assessment and feedback support learning recovery (2020[2]). As schools in Brazil reopen and attention shifts to remediation, supporting teachers to diagnose learning losses and conduct formative assessment will be key. International approaches to the COVID-19 recovery can help serve as inspiration in this regard.

Where does Brazil stand on education **evaluation and assessment**?

Key strengths

- **Evaluation infrastructure** is in place at federal level to provide information on system performance at school and tertiary education, and is emerging in other areas.
- Within a decentralised system, **national quality indicators for schools** help offer some consistency.

Key challenges

- Supporting educators to engage with **monitoring and evaluation data** for school and professional improvement that is constructive and does not cause excess stress.
- Strengthening the **use of student assessment** to support learning through a more formative focus.

Building on **international experiences** to move forward

Introducing quality assurance mechanisms was a common policy priority for OECD education systems from 2008-19. Related principles of action included developing quality standards and strengthening accreditation efforts. A common response was to establish agencies and mechanisms of quality assurance (2019[28]).

- **International example:** In **Australia,** the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA, 2010) was established to support the administration of the National Quality Framework for ECEC (2009) aiming to raise quality and consistency in the sector across the country through a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement. It publishes annual progress reports on the progression of the Framework **[Read More]**.
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** **National Quality Parameters of Early Childhood Education (*Parâmetros nacionais de qualidade da educação infantile*, 2018)**. Establishing an independent national authority to oversee, support and monitor the implementation of the Quality Parameters in municipalities can favour consistency while respecting subnational authority.

Purposefully disseminating information about student progress and the practices that enhance it is a key component of responsive education systems. Such efforts can promote resilience by curating information for the needs of different actors and using dissemination to signal priorities and scale up impactful local initiatives ([9]).

- **International example:** The **United Kingdom**'s Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2011) is a research charity focused on building and utilising evidence to improve equity in education. The foundation receives government and other funding to conduct action-based and desk-based research, extracting information to present as "toolkits" for educators and policy makers. These provide an overview of the strength of evidence supporting a particular course of action, and identifying low-cost, high-impact policy solutions. The work supports schools and local authorities to implement key policies: one evidence series considers the most impactful applications of additional school funding for disadvantaged students. It also informs policy making: evidence about effective remedial interventions from the pre-pandemic period informed the design of the government's National Tutoring Programme to support learning recovery post-pandemic **[Read More]**.
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** The EEF's approach helps promote evidence-based decision making across the system. At the same time, Brazil's decentralised system offers a lot of opportunity for local innovation; good practices must therefore be identified and disseminated to help build peer learning and capacity across the system.

Building student assessment competencies among teachers was an international policy priority identified from 2008-19. Key principles of action to make it happen include providing training and support, developing tools or promoting students' self-assessment. Related international policy trends include strengthening formative assessment and digital processes (2019[28]).

- **International example:** **Norway**'s Assessment for Learning Programme (2010-18) aimed to support schools, municipalities, and training providers to embed formative assessment practices and cultures. The national government set guiding principles, organised seminars and conferences for participating municipalities, and provided online training and resources for schools while local authorities established learning networks combining professional development activities, knowledge sharing, and reflection. An evaluation identified the network model as a crucial success factor, empowering local authorities and school leaders and building local expertise that could continue driving improvement beyond the programme. Formative assessment is one of the core principles of Norway's new core curriculum (2020); Norway has produced a bank of resources to support implementation, including through promoting teachers' collaborative learning **[Read More]**.
- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** Formative approaches to student assessment are key for education systems in supporting learning recovery post-pandemic (2020[2]). Norway's learning network model can inspire subnational initiatives in Brazil while the national-level measures – establishing common principles and a resource bank tied to the common curriculum, and running information and development events, can inspire efforts at federal level.

GOVERNANCE: BRAZIL HAS A COMPLEX NETWORK OF ACTORS WHO COULD BENEFIT FROM MORE CLEARLY DEFINED RELATIONSHIPS

System governance in Brazil is highly decentralised across federal government, 27 states and 5 570 municipalities; Brazil's size and diversity add further complexity. Each governance level can legislate and develop policy but MEC steers the system through national standards and frameworks. MEC co-ordinates national education policy, regulates and evaluates the system, and provides financial and technical assistance to states and municipalities to promote equity and quality (see "Recent policies and practices"). In principle, Brazil's system of shared governance is non-hierarchical, but federal government has typically enacted top-down policies (2020[35]). This may inhibit efforts to raise equity and quality which require responsiveness to local realities. Therefore, clarifying the division of responsibilities between authorities and schools, the most common policy priority among OECD countries in 2008-19 (2019[28]), is highly relevant for Brazil too. Legislative proposals to address this through a National Education System (*Sistema Nacional de Educação*) are currently awaiting assessment. MEC collaborates with other ministries, notably in ECEC, VET and research. Other relevant national-level bodies include:

- The **National Council of Education** (Conselho Nacional de Educação, CNE), a collegiate advisory body to the MEC responsible for legislation compliance and quality standards for all education levels;

- The **National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira** (Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira, INEP), a semi-autonomous agency for monitoring and evaluation;

- The **Foundation for the Co-ordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel** (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior, CAPES), responsible for graduate programme evaluation;

- The **National Committee for the Evaluation of Higher Education** (Comissão Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Superior, CONAES) evaluates and supports the development of tertiary education;

- The **National Council of State Education Secretari**es (Conselho Nacional de Secretários de Educação, CONSED) and the **National Union of Municipal Education Managers** (Education União Nacional dos Dirigentes Municipais de Educação, UNDIME), collegiate bodies for subnational authorities;

- The **National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education** (Associação Nacional de Diretores de Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior, ANDIFES) and **National Association of Private Universities** (Associação Nacional das Universidades Particulares, ANUP), tertiary-level stakeholder bodies.

Systematic, comprehensive **stakeholder engagement** is a stated goal of the PNE. In addition to CONSED, UNDIME, ANDIFES and ANUP, Brazil has several formal spaces for stakeholder participation in education policy making (e.g. the National Conference on Education, the National Forum on Higher Education) which regularly convene subnational representatives, civil society and professional organisations, and can have decision-making power. In 2019, formal stakeholder participation channels existed in all states and about 90% of municipalities (2020[19]). At school level, in TALIS 2018, Brazilian principals reported greater interaction with students, families and the local community or businesses than on average across the OECD, at 41% of working time compared to 29%. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CONSED and UNDIME played an important role in supporting states and municipalities with technical support, working to co-ordinate an agenda to guide educational actors.

Public delivery prevails at **ECEC and school level** in Brazil but, in 2019, the private sector enrolled nearly 30% of children in ECEC and around 20% of school students. At these levels, subnational authorities are responsible for the management of financial resources and teachers; municipalities primarily oversee ECEC, primary and lower secondary education, and states manage lower and upper secondary. Administrations vary greatly in size, organisation, capacity and resources, which causes marked inconsistencies. Developing more horizontal collaboration could help overcome this (2020[35]) (see "Recent policies and practices"), as could formal, competitive selection processes for key staff in subnational administrations, as already tried in some states and municipalities. Legally, all schools have pedagogical autonomy. Nevertheless, in TALIS 2018, while large shares of lower secondary principals in Brazil reported having autonomy in decisions related to student discipline and admissions, smaller shares reported the same for course offer (9%) or content (20%), for example (See Figure 6). This, along with challenges relating to school leader and teacher capacity and working conditions (see "School Improvement"), may limit schools' ability to improve quality while also making it harder to overcome inconsistencies between administrative regions. In this regard, the BNCC can play an important role, helping to guide instructional practice and reduce quality differences between schools.

Public **higher education** is predominantly a federal responsibility, with some state-managed HEIs; private institutions enrolled 75% of all tertiary students in 2019. The federal government defines the national strategy for the sector and oversees quality assurance and licensing. Institutional autonomy is guaranteed but civil service regulations apply to academic staff in public HEIs whereas private HEIs have more autonomy in this regard. The OECD has found that Brazil's quality assurance system for this education level ensures HEIs meet a minimum level of quality but does not incentivise improvement (2018[14]); international examples offer further insights. The growth of distance learning (see Spotlight 3) requires better oversight and regulation: the evaluation criteria currently applied are limited in number and scope and could better consider the unique challenges facing these modalities (2018[14]).

Where does Brazil stand on education governance?

Key strengths

- The federal government plays an important role in **steering the system**, establishing guidelines or standards in pursuit of greater consistency.
- Brazil engages a **wide range of stakeholders** in education governance and this is formally stated as a national priority.

Key challenges

- Ensuring **coherence and alignment** across all actors to support more effective and equitable policy implementation.
- Establishing and promoting **vertical and horizontal collaboration** structures that support quality improvement.
- Enhancing **quality assurance** in distance education.

Building on international experiences to move forward

Clarifying the division of responsibility across the system and defining national education priorities were among the most commonly identified international policy priorities from 2008-19. Principles of action include clarifying decision-making responsibilities and supporting capacity building at different administration levels, or creating national education strategies, plans and frameworks. International policy trends to address this challenge include decentralisation efforts and identifying and monitoring policy goals and actions (2019[28]).

- **International example:** **New Zealand**'s Blueprint for Education System Stewardship (2016) is the result of a process that brought together various governmental education agencies with the State Services Commission to identify how best to collaborate on priority outcomes for education over 4- and 10-year horizons. The agencies first engaged in a self-reflection exercise to compare their actions and collective goals. They now form a permanent Education System Stewardship Forum, sharing resources and knowledge across common priorities; this became particularly valuable during the COVID-19 crisis. An evaluation of the Blueprint found it allowed the agencies to work together more effectively under a common vision **[Read More]**.

- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** **National System for Education (*Sistema Nacional de Educação*, under discussion)**. Bringing together central level bodies, including CONSED and UNDIME, could be a first step in clarifying relationships and harmonising efforts across the system. The permanent Forum puts an emphasis on collaboration for the longer term, encouraging ongoing dialogue and protecting institutional memory as actors and administrations change. At the same time, developing priorities for the mid- and longer-term promotes both immediate action and policy continuity across administrations.

Fostering collaborative relationships between education actors, particularly those in schools, has been identified as crucial in supporting schools to reopen following the COVID-19 pandemic (2020[2]). Furthermore, nurturing more holistic, longer-term and deeper collaborations between education actors is a key driver of resilience in the face of future possible crises (forthcoming[9]).

- **International example:** **Ireland**'s School Excellence Fund (2017) encourages schools to collaborate in local, cross-level clusters. Each cluster submits an innovative proposal in government-defined target areas to receive funding of up to EUR 20 000 (EUR 55 000 for disadvantaged schools). Approaches to evaluate the strands include regular self-evaluation and reporting by participating schools, annual synthesised national evaluations and independent external evaluations **[Read More]**.

- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** The collaboration model could inspire federal and subnational efforts in Brazil to support the implementation of key reforms, particularly the BNCC, NEM and embedding digital pedagogies. The clearly-defined aims tied to national priorities, set resources, as well as development planning and ongoing monitoring, make additional funding to schools more goal-oriented. Recognising that disadvantaged contexts may require more resources is also important. In Brazil's case, the example may also inspire approaches to support collaboration clusters between municipalities as well as schools.

Introducing quality assurance mechanisms was a common policy priority from 2008-19 across many OECD education systems, with many policy efforts seen in the higher levels of education (2019[28]).

- **International example:** In **Australia**, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA, 2011) and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA, 2011) are independent national quality regulators for vocational and general tertiary education, respectively. An evaluation identified it as a helpful start in establishing a VET regulatory framework and reducing abuses in the system and provision overlap. As of 2019, TEQSA had registered 172 higher education providers based on the Higher Education Standards Framework (2015, updated 2021). Annual stakeholder surveys indicate high approval of its work **[Read More]**.

- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan of the VET offer (2020)**; **New regulations for private VET providers (2019)**. Brazil has recently introduced measures to enhance quality assurance in VET and new efforts are also required in higher education, particularly as digital provision continues to increase. Establishing independent bodies can help facilitate stakeholder buy-in, while reducing the administrative load on the national Ministry, enabling it to focus on more strategic improvements. National standards frameworks may offer greater transparency around expectations.

Spotlight 4. Supporting curricular reform through international experiences

Brazil's **National Common Curricular Base (*Base Nacional Comum Curricular*, BNCC, 2017)** faces a range of contextual constraints that may hinder the successful implementation of this important reform **[Read More]**. Although in nearly all cases, local curricula aligned to the BNCC have now been established, there is much work to be done in supporting teachers and school leaders to implement changes to teaching and learning. At the same time, there is an opportunity to overcome the risk to implementation posed by the COVID-19 pandemic by integrating curricular prioritisation and learning recovery efforts into implementation plans. This calls for further efforts focused across three priority areas:

- **Developing a comprehensive sustained training offer** for teachers and school leaders to support classroom implementation;
- **Introducing new pedagogical materials** fully aligned to the new base curricula; and
- **Promoting assessment practices and tools** that support implementation.

International examples: Ireland, Portugal, New Zealand

Ireland's Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) and the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (2015) represent a major curricular reform for lower secondary education, as well as new assessment arrangements aiming to shift the focus from high-stakes end-of-cycle examination to a more school-based model of assessment. From the reform's inception, the government and key actors recognised the challenge implementation posed to teachers' workloads and pedagogical skills. As such, the government established a dedicated Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT, 2013) team to support implementation through a long-term national programme of professional development. This team is a specialist group located within the Department for Education and Skills and comprised of full-time skilled teachers and school leaders on secondment from the classroom, as well as practicing teachers and leaders across the country who act as part-time associates, supporting CPD delivery in their area. The JCT delivers a wide variety of training opportunities to teachers and school leaders, including: in-school visits to support planning, evaluation and training; off-site workshops in local school clusters; online webinars and videos; and an online library of exemplar materials and resources. The JCT also captures and collates teacher feedback on the reform and its implementation, as well as any associated requests for clarification **[Read More]**.

Portugal's updated Curriculum Guidelines for Pre-School Education (*Orientações Curriculares para a Educação Pré-escolar*, 2016) aim to improve alignment with the first cycle of basic education and encourage collaboration between educators during students' transition to primary education. It acts as both a reference for curriculum development and a set of general pedagogical and organisational principles for ECEC professionals. It promotes an integrated and globalised approach to content areas, providing practical examples of learning processes and staff reflection. To support implementation, trainers were recruited to run local training sessions **[Read More]**.

New Zealand introduced National Standards (2010) to support curriculum implementation. They clarify expectations of what students should know and be able to do in mathematics, reading and writing, and help educators to better identify and support students who are not on track. The Standards were established for primary level. To help implement the Standards, New Zealand also developed assessment tools and professional development opportunities for teachers, school leaders and school trustees. Students are assessed based on these national expectations at least twice a year, firstly to establish progress towards the appropriate Standard and then to assess final performance. Teachers are also expected to assess students on an ongoing basis in light of descriptions provided in the Standards and through concrete examples of what achievement looks like at different levels **[Read More]**.

Possible relevance for Brazil:

While curriculum design can be a long, drawn out process, writing a new curriculum is just the first step, as indicated by these examples. Implementation requires considerable effort – particularly support for classroom actors - and time, without which, curriculum will remain consigned to the page. Creating development opportunities for teachers is crucial and the Irish example highlights the valuable support that teachers themselves can provide to their peers. This model is mutually beneficial, as teacher trainers develop their own expertise that can help advance their own careers and further raise the quality of the profession. Furthermore, ensuring local provision of training appears important too as teachers can more easily apply learning to their context. Also, providing educators with useful practical tools to support implementation in the classroom is in itself a development process. These need to be aligned with classroom realities as far as possible, for instance by providing concrete examples of application, as in New Zealand. Finally, when designing implementation supports, policy makers need to acknowledge the close interaction between teaching, learning and assessment, and the curriculum's role in underpinning all.

FUNDING: BRAZIL HAS SHOWN COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING EDUCATION FUNDING AND REDISTRIBUTON, BUT INEFFICIENCIES REDUCE IMPACT

Among OECD education systems from 2008-19, enhancing the efficiency and equity of education spending were key policy priorities (2019[28]). Both are also highly relevant in the Brazilian context. Brazil's **overall expenditure on education**, as a proportion of national wealth is high by international comparison. In 2017, Brazil dedicated 5.1% of gross domestic product (GDP) to education[4] (OECD average, 4.1%). Furthermore, this share increased considerably from 2005, concurrent with increases in GDP itself. Recently (2012-17), the share of spending on tertiary education continued growing despite economic downturn, whereas primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary funding stagnated. Indeed, in 2017, per-student spending across primary, secondary and post-secondary education in Brazil was well below the OECD average, at USD 3 875 compared to USD 9 515. In contrast, per-student spending at tertiary level was above the OECD average and over four times that of students in lower levels. The OECD average difference was 1.4 times higher. Furthermore, analysis of MEC's spending indicates that 2020 saw the lowest budget and execution rate for compulsory education since 2010 (2021[36]). Research also indicates that, historically, the share of funding to ECEC has been low (2019[37]; 2018[38]). As the economy looks set to contract further following the COVID-19 pandemic, some reprioritisation across levels could benefit Brazil.

Brazil has made efforts to guarantee some basic educational funding. States and municipalities must designate 25% of tax revenue and federal transfers to the sector and, until 2017, at least 18% of federal revenue had to go to education. Following efforts to stabilise public debt, this spending floor was adjusted, taking federal expenditure on education in 2017 as the minimum value until 2036, with adjustments for inflation. Through Brazil's education salary (*salário educação*), 2.5% of companies' salary contributions must go to compulsory education, through the National Education Development Fund (*Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento da Educação*, FNDE) and states and municipalities. Also, as of 2013, 75% of revenue from exploration in oil and natural gas industries must go to education. The PNE established a goal of spending 10% of GDP on education by 2024. As pressure on public finances increases in the context of COVID-19, Brazil should protect these mechanisms while ensuring they produce the intended effects: a focus on expenditure targets without impact requirements may contribute to inefficiencies (2020[16]) and there is a need for more robust monitoring and accountability, tying education spending to outcomes (2021[22]). Ongoing efforts to strengthen PDDE Interactive could contribute to this (see "Evaluation and Assessment").

In Brazil, funding for public **ECEC, primary and secondary schools** comes predominantly from states and municipalities who are responsible for staff remuneration, building maintenance and educational resources, as well as activities to strengthen provision. In 2018, 42% of initial funding for primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education came from states, 44% from municipalities and 14% from central government, with most of the latter then transferred to municipalities. Decentralisation combined with strong regional socio-economic variation has resulted in large funding disparities between and within states. Several national redistributive measures are in place, notably Fundeb *(Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica e de Valorização dos Profissionais da Educação*, 2007 and 2020) (see "Recent policies and practices") which builds on objectives established in 1996 with the approval of Fundef. The FNDE's Direct Money to Schools Programme (*Programa Dinheiro Direto na Escola*, PDDE), distributes federal funds to schools to support educational activities and reform processes and is partly weighted by school context (type and location), though not students' socio-economic context. Still, inequities remain and while, according to school principals in 2018, the index of material shortages in advantaged schools is much lower in Brazil than the OECD average (-0.83 compared to -0.21), that of disadvantaged schools is much higher (0.51 compared to 0.15), for example (see Figure 7). Brazil also faces efficiency concerns, particularly related to teacher quality and high grade repetition and drop-out rates. Based on data from 2009-13, the World Bank (2017[32]) estimated that if all networks operated at the level of the most efficient, Brazil could increase student attainment and achievement by 40% in primary and lower secondary and 18% in upper secondary without further public investment. Performance-based funding mechanisms as pioneered in some states may support this (see "Recent policies and practices").

In public **higher education**, federal funding constitutes 75% of initial funds, states provide 24% and municipalities 1%. MEC allocates operating budgets to HEIs annually, based on historical patterns (current expenditure) and formulas (capital expenditure). State-level HEIs receive state funds and tend to have greater autonomy managing them. Public HEIs cannot charge tuition fees but 75% of tertiary students are enrolled in private institutions which can, and do. This is regressive, as disadvantaged students disproportionately attend private HEIs (see "Preparing Students for the Future"); scholarship and loan schemes help partly alleviate this (see "Recent policies and practices"). Per-student spending in the public sector is much higher than that in the private sector, even when accounting for research and development funding, and associated higher student outcomes appear largely due to higher performance levels on entry (2017[32]). Therefore, there is room to enhance efficiency and equity in Brazil's higher education funding. In other OECD countries, where large-scale funding reforms of this nature have been introduced, evidence of progress and impact indicates that employing evidence-informed approaches is crucial in order to ensure impact and buy-in (2019[28]). This can include undertaking expert reviews and inquiries first, and then adopting a gradual implementation model which is carefully evaluated at each stage (2019[28]). International policy experiences provide further insights.

Where does Brazil stand on education **funding**?

Key strengths

- Brazil already dedicates **a large share of national wealth** to education and has aimed to increase this further.
- System-level **redistributive policies** help reduce inequities within a decentralised funding regime.

Key challenges

- **Reorienting spending** to strengthen provision in earlier levels, where inequalities take root and returns are highest.
- Promoting more **efficient spending** practices by combining outcome indicators, input targets and better monitoring.
- Committing to **evidence-informed approaches** to funding reform to enhance equity and efficiency in higher education.

Building on **international experiences** to move forward

Improving efficiency in the use of resources was a common policy priority for education systems from 2008-19. Related principles of action to make it happen include improving the use of budget plans and achieving economies of scale through consolidation of education networks. The OECD identified investing in the earlier levels of education and introducing performance-based and needs-based funding – predominantly in higher education - as common international policy responses (2019[28]).

- **International example:** **Austria** has developed, since 2009, a new set of principles based on goal-oriented budgeting; implementation began in 2013. Through it, the federal budget establishes a set of policy goals with specific quantitative and qualitative indicators, which serve as a guideline for policy making and promoting more transparency in assessing government performance. For education, the 2015 budget included two policy goals: raising the level of education of students; and improving equity and gender equality in education. Each had three indicators, such as upper secondary graduation rates or the share of entrants to higher education. In education specifically, the establishment of the Federal Institute for Educational Research, Innovation and Development of the Austrian School System and the introduction of national education standards and examination have also enhanced the outcome-oriented nature of the system (2016[39]) **[Read More]**.

- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** By adopting a more goal-oriented approach to education funding, the federal government can both help enhance transparency and trust in the system, as well as reduce inefficiencies and promote similar efforts at subnational level. Funding-related efforts will not be enough to establish a culture of outcomes-oriented decision making – complementary policies in other areas of the education system are also required.

Improving equity in resource allocation was another commonly identified policy priority across education systems from 2008-19. Providing targeted support to disadvantaged population subgroups is a key principle of action, while related international policy trends include support for socio-economically disadvantaged children and schools and prioritising effective investment in time, human and material resources (2019[28]).

- **International example:** In **Berlin** (Germany), the Bonus programme (2014) provides additional funds to disadvantaged schools as determined by the socio-economic composition of the student body or local area. The schools must develop a performance agreement with the inspectorate and allocations are proportionate to level of disadvantage. A further performance-based component is awarded if the school meets its targets; this share increases gradually. An interim report (2016) found principals felt positively about targeted financing and support to manage heterogeneity, but further efforts were required to reduce administrative burden and ensure the fairness of the increases in the performance-based component **[Read More]**.

- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** Although **New Fundeb** (***Novo Fundeb*, 2020**) aims to more effectively redistribute funding to foster greater equality, allocating additional funds to the most disadvantaged schools or students can further support greater equity. Isolated subnational examples of performance-based funding have already demonstrated success in Brazil; the Berlin model offers an approach more focused on addressing the key challenge of equity.

Revising the sources of educational funding, particularly in higher education, was an international policy priority from 2008-19. Principles of action and observed policy trends included increasing financial aid for students, extending guarantees to tuition-free education or charging tuition fees (2019[28]).

- **International example:** **Ireland**'s Expert Group on Future Funding for Higher Education (2014) brought together experts from within and outside the government to identify issues relating to the long-term sustainable funding of higher education. The process took two years and covered six key areas: demand, benefits, income and expenditure, efficiency and effectiveness, measuring financial performance, and long-term funding. The final report published recommendations setting out multiple options for consideration by the government. Ireland then requested that the European Commission conduct an economic analysis of each option; this is intended to support consensus-building around a preferred way forward **[Read More]**.

- **Possible relevance for Brazil:** As the sector continues expanding, efforts to enhance higher education funding are key. Ensuring such decisions are built on evidence drawing from a range of experts and stakeholders can help promote buy-in.

ANNEX A: STRUCTURE OF BRAZIL'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Brazil   2020

Theoretical starting age*
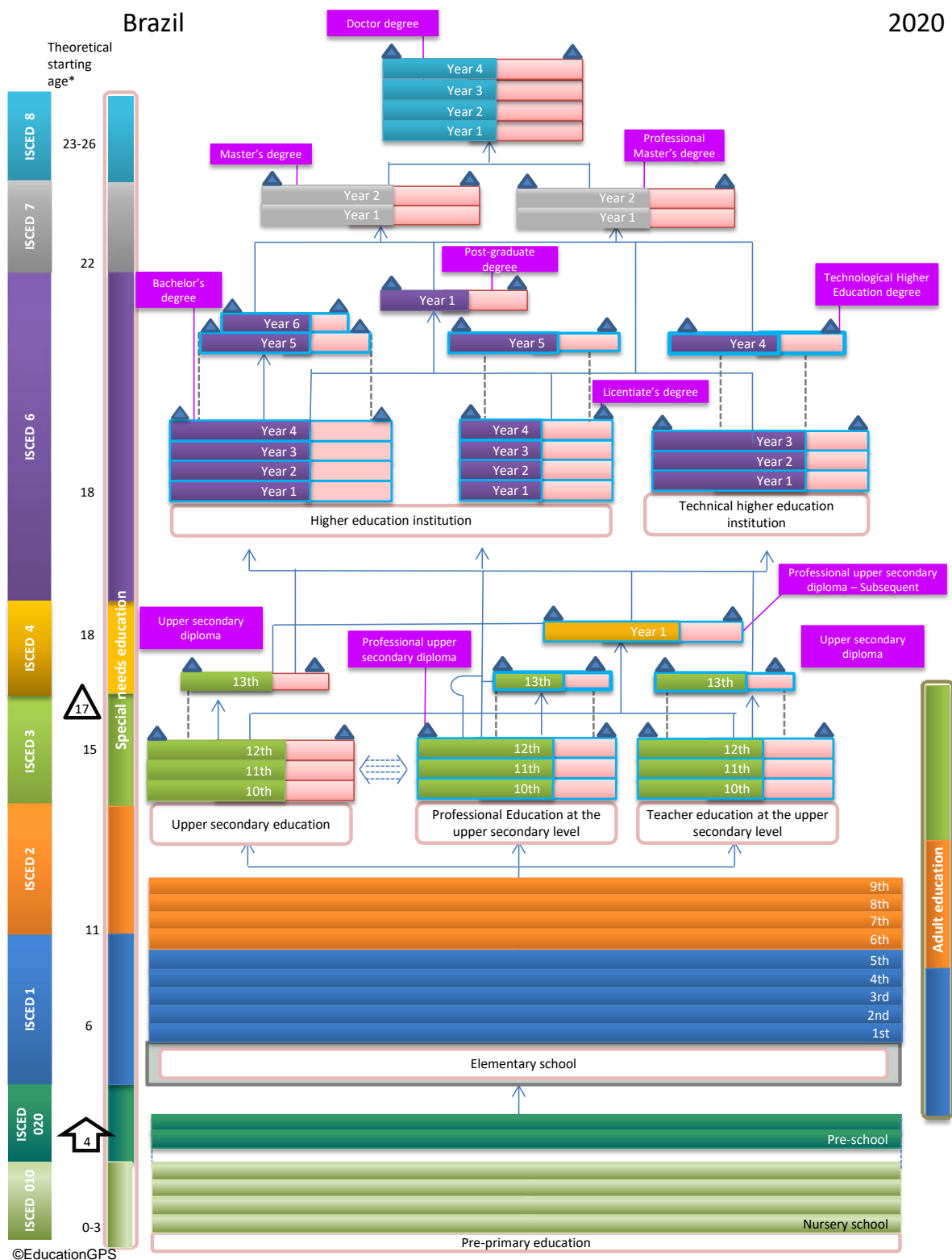
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Note: The key for the interpretation of this table is available at the source link below.
Source: OECD (2020[40]), "Brazil: Overview of the Education System", OECD Education GPS, https://gpseducation.oecd.org/Content/MapOfEducationSystem/BRA/BRA_2011_EN.pdf (accessed on 20 May 2021).

ANNEX B: STATISTICS

	List of key indicators[1,2]	Brazil	Average or total	Min OECD	Max OECD
	Background information (OECD Statistics)				
1	GDP per capita in equivalent USD converted using PPPs, 2019[6]	15 689	46 376	16 077	120 670
2	GDP growth, 2017	1.3%	2.7%	1.2%	9.1%
3	Population density, inhab/km[2], 2018	25	38	3	519
4	Population aged less than 15 as a share of total population, 2018	21.4%	17.7%	12.2%	28.4%
5	Foreign-born population as a share of total population, 2018	m	14.2%	0.9%	46.5%
	Education outcomes				
6	Mean performance in reading (PISA 2018)	413	487	412	523
7	Average three-year trend in reading performance (PISA 2018)[3,4]	2.6	0.4	**-4.9**	**7.1**
	Average three-year trend in mathematics performance (PISA 2018)[3,4]	**4.6**	-0.6	**-9.1**	**6.4**
	Average three-year trend in science performance (PISA 2018)[3,4]	2.2	-1.9	**-10.7**	**6.4**
8	Share of 3-year-olds enrolled in early childhood education and care, 2018 (EAG 2020)	65.3%	78.1%	2.5%	100%
9	*Educational attainment among 25-34 year-olds, 2019 (EAG 2020)[7]*				
	At least upper secondary education	67.5%	85.0%	51.3%	97.8%
	Tertiary education	21.3%	45.0%	23.6%	70.0%
	Vocational upper-secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education	a	25.8%	1.6%	47.1%
10	*Unemployment rates of 25-34 year-olds by educational attainment, 2019 (EAG 2020)[7]*				
	Below upper secondary	14.5%	13.2%	3.3%	36.9%
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	12.8%	7.2%	2.2%	25.5%
	Tertiary education	7.6%	5.4%	1.4%	19.5%
	Students				
	Policy lever 1: Equity and quality				
11	First age of selection in the education system (PISA 2018)	15	14	10	16
12	Share of students performing below Level 2 in reading (PISA 2018)	50.0%	22.6%	11.1%	49.9%
	Share of students performing at Level 5 or above in reading (PISA 2018)	1.8%	8.7%	0.9%	15.0%
13	Isolation index in schools for high-achieving students in reading as compared to all other students (PISA 2018)[5]	0.30	0.21	0.07	0.39
	Isolation index in schools for socio-economically disadvantaged students as compared to all other students (PISA 2018)[5]	0.24	0.17	0.09	0.27
14	Share of students reporting having repeated at least a grade in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education (PISA 2018)	34.1	11.4	0.9	40.8
15	Share of variance in reading performance in PISA explained by the index of economic, social and cultural status (PISA 2018)	14.0%	12.0%	6.2%	19.1%
16	Score difference between girls and boys in reading (PISA 2018)[3]	**25.7**	**29.7**	**10.3**	**51.5**
	Policy lever 2: Preparing students for the future				
17	Adjusted mean proficiency in literacy among 16-64 year-olds on a scale of 500 (Survey of Adult Skills, PIAAC, 2012)	NP	267.7	220.1	296.2
18	Difference in literacy scores between youngest (25-34) and oldest (55-65) adults (Survey of Adult Skills, PIAAC, 2012)	NP	15.6	-8.3	37.6
19	*Share of students in upper secondary education, by programme orientation, in 2018 (EAG 2020)*				
	General programmes	89.5%	58.1%	28.4%	91.3%
	Vocational programmes	10.5%	41.9%	8.7%	71.6%
	Vocational programmes which are combined school and work-based	a	34.4%	2.8%	100.0%
20	First-time graduation rates from tertiary education for students below the age of 30, excluding international students, 2018 (EAG 2020)	m	37.6%	8.1%	67.4%
21	Share of 18-24 year-olds not in education, employment or training, 2019 (EAG 2020)[7]	30.6%	14.3%	6.1%	32.2%

List of key indicators	Brazil	Average or total	Min OECD	Max OECD
Institutions				
Policy lever 3: School improvement				
The learning environment (PISA 2018)				
22 Mean index of teacher support in language-of-instruction lessons	0.43	0.01	-0.61	0.47
Mean index of students' sense of belonging	-0.19	0.00	-0.28	0.46
23 Share of principals reporting that teachers have the necessary skills to integrate digital devices in instruction	50.63	64.63	27.26	84.14
Share of principals reporting that the types of engagement occur "quite a bit" or "a lot" (TALIS 2018)				
24 Parental/guardian involvement in school activities	59.8%	47.9%	22.5%	89.2%
School co-operation with the local community	91.6%	71.6%	28.1%	97.8%
25 Average class size in lower secondary public schools, 2018 (EAG 2020)	28	23	16	35
26 Ratio of actual teachers' salaries to earnings for full-time, full-year adult workers with tertiary education, in lower secondary education, general programmes, 2019 (EAG 2020)	m	0.89	0.65	1.44
27 Share of teachers who believe the teaching profession is valued in society (TALIS 2018)	11.4%	25.8%	4.5%	67.0%
Policy lever 4: Evaluation and assessment to improve student outcomes				
Share of students in schools where the following arrangements aimed at quality assurance and improvement are used, either mandatorily or on the schools' initiative (PISA 2018)				
28 Internal/Self-evaluation	96.1%	94.7%	46.1%	100.0%
External evaluation	87.7%	76.9%	8.5%	100.0%
29 Mean index of perceived teacher feedback (PISA 2018)	-0.16	0.01	-0.41	0.53
30 Share of lower secondary teachers whose school principals report formally appraising their teachers at least once a year (TALIS 2018)	77.5%	63.5%	11.3%	98.1%
Systems				
Policy lever 6: Funding				
31 Public expenditure on primary to tertiary institutions as a share of GDP, 2017 (EAG 2020)[8]	5.1%	4.1%	2.9%	6.4%
Annual expenditure per student by educational institutions in equivalent USD converted using PPPs for GDP, 2017				
32 Pre-primary education	m	9 079	1 556	19 326
Primary education	m	9 090	2 782	19 690
Lower secondary education	m	10 527	2 438	23 073
Upper secondary education	m	10 888	3 418	22 427
Tertiary education	m	16 327	2 335	52 089
Relative proportions of expenditure on educational institutions (primary to tertiary) in 2017 (EAG 2020)				
33 Public sources	m	83.0%	62.6%	98.0%
Private sources (including international sources)	m	17.0%	3.1%	37.4%

Notes:
1. The average, total, minimums and maximums refer to OECD education systems except in the Survey of Adult Skills where they refer to participating countries. For indicators 6, 12 and 15-16 the average value refers to the arithmetic mean across all OECD Member countries (and Colombia), excluding Spain.
2. "m" is included when data is not available; "NP" is included if the country is not participating in the study; "a": included when the category is not applicable.
3. Statistically significant values are shown in bold (PISA only).
4. The average three year trend is the average change in PISA score points from a country's/economy's earliest participation to PISA 2018.
5. The isolation indices range from 0 to 1, with 0 corresponding to no segregation and 1 to full segregation.
6. For Brazil, the value is estimated.
7. For Brazil, the reference year is 2018.
8. Public expenditure refers to final funds, after transfers between public and private sectors.

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NOTES

On 25 May 2018, the OECD Council invited Colombia to become a Member. While Colombia is included in the OECD averages reported in this publication for data from Education at a Glance, the Programme for International Student Assessment and the Teaching and Learning International Survey, at the time of preparation of these OECD datasets, Colombia was in the process of completing its domestic procedures for ratification and the deposit of Colombia's instrument of accession to the OECD Convention was pending.

PISA 2018 defines resilient students as those who are socio-economically disadvantaged, or from an immigrant background, and who score amongst the highest performers in PISA in their own country/economy. For more information, see Volume II of PISA 2018 (listed in the References section of this document).

1. The reference year for educational attainment data, NEETs data and employment data for Brazil, quoted throughout this report, is 2018. Please see OECD (2020[4]), *Education at a Glance 2020: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en.

2. For the rest of this profile, the use of the word "states" includes Brazil's 26 administrative states and the Federal District.

3. In Brazil, the different levels that compose primary education are referenced as "Years" (i.e. in Year 1 of primary education, students are around age 6) while the term, "Grade," is used for upper secondary education (i.e. in Grade 1 of upper secondary education, students are around age 15).

4. Data refer to final funds (after transfers between public and private sectors). The data refer exclusively to public expenditure in education, and do not capture private spending or public spending on tertiary student support schemes (as opposed to institutional subsidies).

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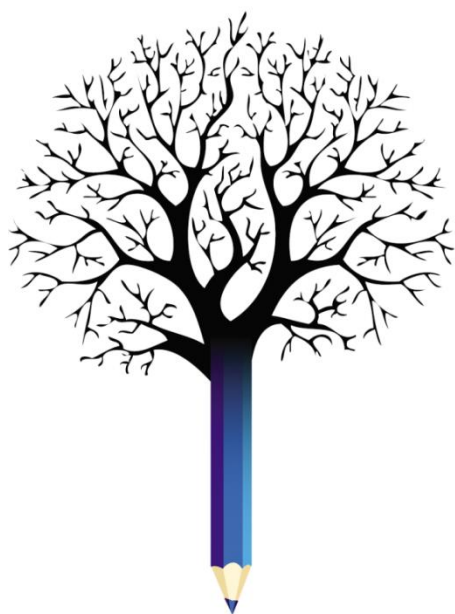
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