

RESULTS FROM TALIS 2018

The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) is an international, large-scale survey of teachers, school leaders and the learning environment in schools. This note presents findings based on the reports of lower secondary teachers and their school leaders in mainstream public and private schools.

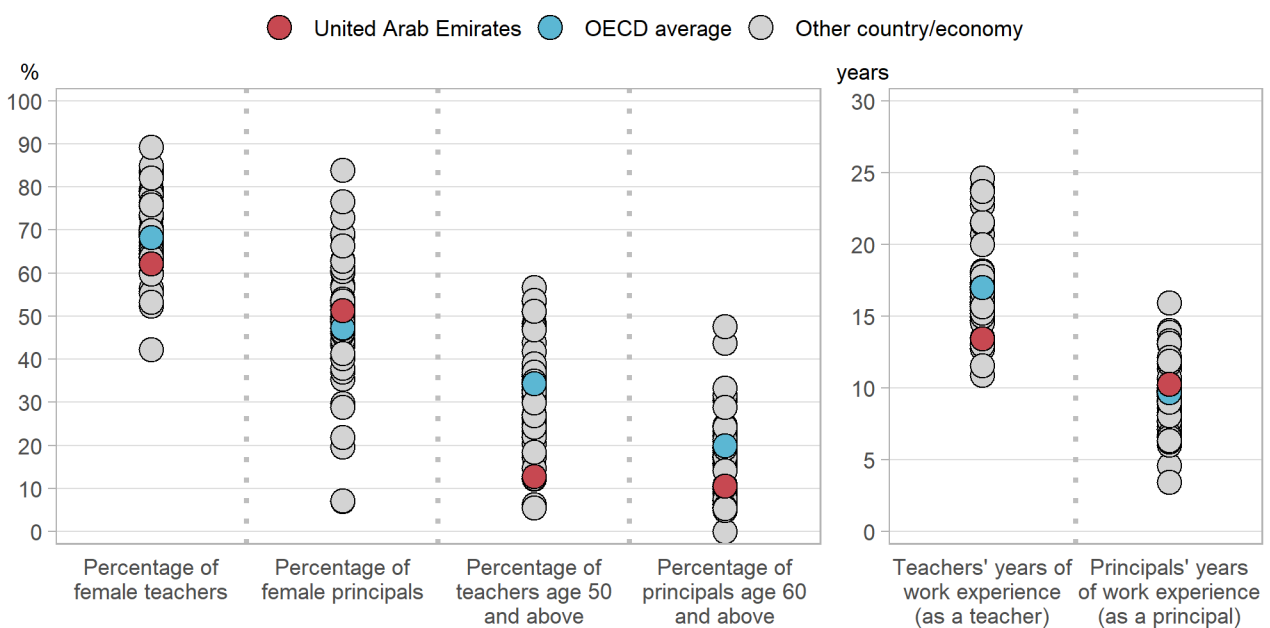
United Arab Emirates

Who are today’s principals and teachers and the students in their classrooms?

- Teaching was the first-choice career for 75% of teachers in the United Arab Emirates and for 67% in OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS. In terms of why they joined the profession, at least 97% of teachers in the United Arab Emirates cite the opportunity to influence children’s development or contribute to society as a major motivation.
- In the United Arab Emirates, teachers are, on average, 39 years old, which is lower than the average age of teachers across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (44 years old). Furthermore, 13% of teachers in the United Arab Emirates are aged 50 and above (OECD average: 34%). This means that the United Arab Emirates will have to renew one out of eight members of its teaching workforce over the next decade or so.

Figure 1. Socio-demographic and experience profiles of teachers and school leaders

Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers and principals



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown.  
 Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables I.3.17, I.3.21, I.3.1, I.3.5, I.3.9 and I.3.13.

- In the United Arab Emirates, principals are, on average, 49 years old, which is lower than the average age of principals across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (52 years old). Furthermore, 11% of principals in the United Arab Emirates are aged 60 and above, compared to 20% on average across the OECD.
- Information about the gender distribution of the teacher and principal workforces makes it possible to gauge the degree of gender imbalance in the teaching profession and of gender disparities in the scope for promotion to leadership positions. In the United Arab Emirates, only 51% of principals are women, compared to 62% of teachers. This can be benchmarked against the OECD averages of 47% of women among school leaders and 68% among teachers.
- In terms of classroom environments, relations between students and teachers are positive overall, with 96% of teachers in the United Arab Emirates agreeing that students and teachers usually get on well with each other. However, 8% of principals report regular acts of intimidation or bullying among their students, which is lower than the OECD average (14%).
- In the United Arab Emirates, 28% of teachers work in schools where at least 10% of the students have a migrant background<sup>1</sup> (OECD average 17%). At the same time, 96% of school leaders report that their teachers believe that children and young people should learn that people of different cultures have a lot in common (OECD average 95%).

### What practices are teachers using in the classroom?

- Among the range of instructional practices TALIS asks teachers about, those aimed at enhancing classroom management and clarity of instruction are widely applied in the United Arab Emirates, as well as across the OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS. For instance, in the United Arab Emirates, 80% of teachers report frequently calming students who are disruptive (OECD average 65%) and 94% report frequently explaining how new and old topics are related (OECD average 84%).
- Practices involving student cognitive activation, which are known to be important for student learning, are less widespread, with about half of teachers using these methods across the OECD. Specifically, in the United Arab Emirates, 70% of teachers report frequently asking students to decide on their own procedures for solving complex tasks, compared to 45% on average across the OECD.
- During a typical lesson, teachers spend 76% of classroom time on actual teaching and learning, on average in the United Arab Emirates, which is lower than the OECD average of 78%.
- In the past five to ten years, classroom time spent on actual teaching and learning has decreased in about half of the countries and economies participating in TALIS.
- In the United Arab Emirates, 94% of teachers routinely assess their students' progress by observing them and providing immediate feedback (OECD average 79%), while 87% of teachers report administering their own assessments to their students (OECD average 77%) and 69% of teachers frequently let students evaluate their own progress (OECD average 41%).
- Overall, a vast majority of teachers and school leaders view their colleagues as open to change and their schools as places that have the capacity to adopt innovative practices. In the United Arab Emirates, 89% of teachers also report that they and their colleagues support each other in implementing new ideas. This is higher than the average share across the OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (78%).

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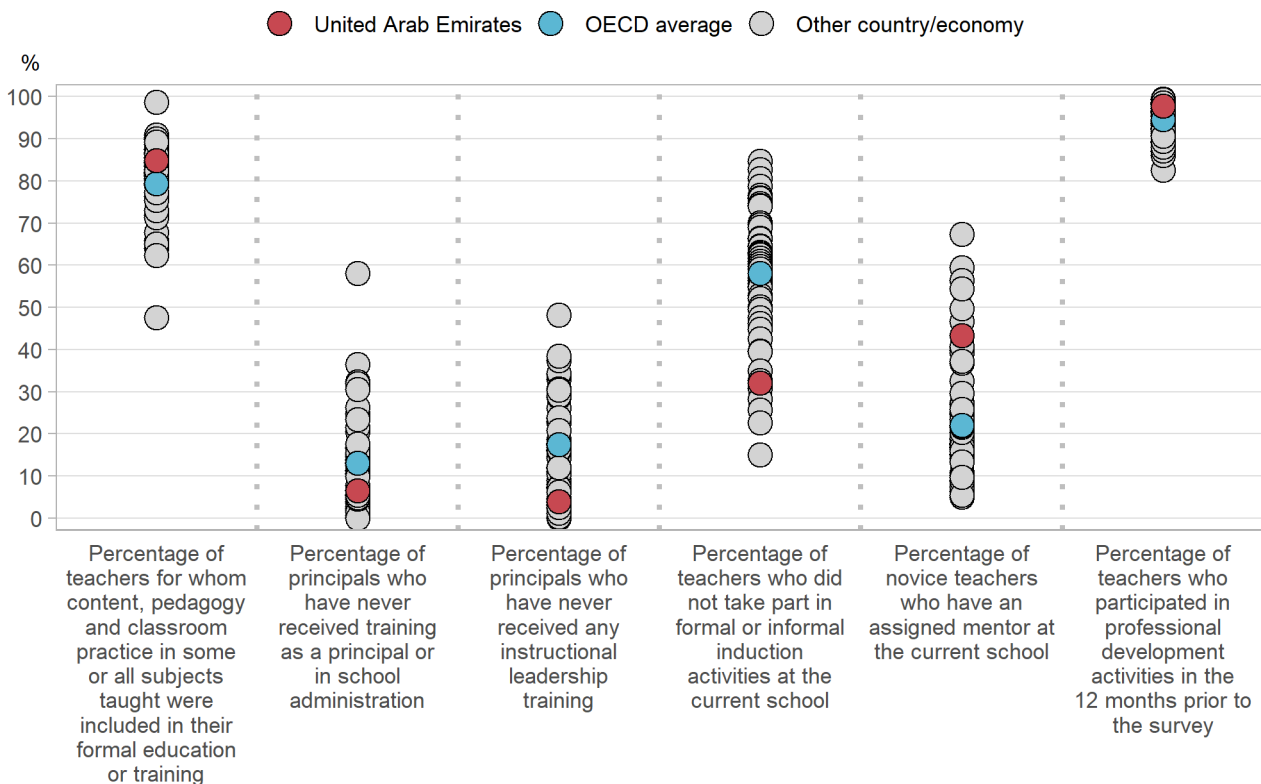
<sup>1</sup> In the United Arab Emirates, the terms “non-Emirati” or “expatriate” are used in place of “migrant”.

## How are teachers and school leaders prepared for their roles?

- In the United Arab Emirates, about 2 out of 3 teachers have completed either a regular concurrent (48%) or a regular consecutive teacher education programme (18%). In addition, fast-track or specialised teacher education programmes offer an alternative pathway into the teaching profession for almost 1 out of 5 teachers (17%) in the United Arab Emirates. The United Arab Emirates display the highest share of recently trained teachers (teachers trained in the five years prior to the survey) having completed a fast-track or specialised teacher education programme (25%).
- During their initial education and training, 85% of teachers in the United Arab Emirates were instructed on subject content, pedagogy and classroom practice – a share that is higher than the average of OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (79%). In the United Arab Emirates, 68% of teachers report having participated in some kind of formal or informal induction when they joined their current school, compared to 42% of teachers across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS.
- While school principals across the OECD generally consider mentoring to be important for teachers' work and students' performance, 22% of novice teachers (with up to 5 years of experience) have an assigned mentor. In the United Arab Emirates, this share amounts to 43%.

**Figure 2. Initial and continuous training**

Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers and principals



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown.

Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables I.4.14, I.4.28, I.4.39, I.4.64, I.5.2 and I.5.10.

- On average across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS, 22% of novice teachers and 19% of more experienced teachers would like to change to another school if that were possible. In the United Arab Emirates, the respective shares are not only higher but a significant gap between novice teachers (45%) and more experienced teachers (37%) is also found.
- On average across the OECD, school leaders usually have a higher level of educational attainment than teachers. The United Arab Emirates are one of the countries and economies participating in TALIS with the highest share of principals holding a doctoral degree (10% of principals compared to 3% on average in the OECD).
- However, only half of them complete a training course or programme for principals at least once before taking up their position as principal. In the United Arab Emirates, 72% of school leaders have completed a programme or course in school administration or training for principals (OECD average 54%), and 68% have completed an instructional leadership training programme or course (OECD average 54%), before taking up their position as principal.

### How do teachers and school leaders keep up-to-date in their profession?

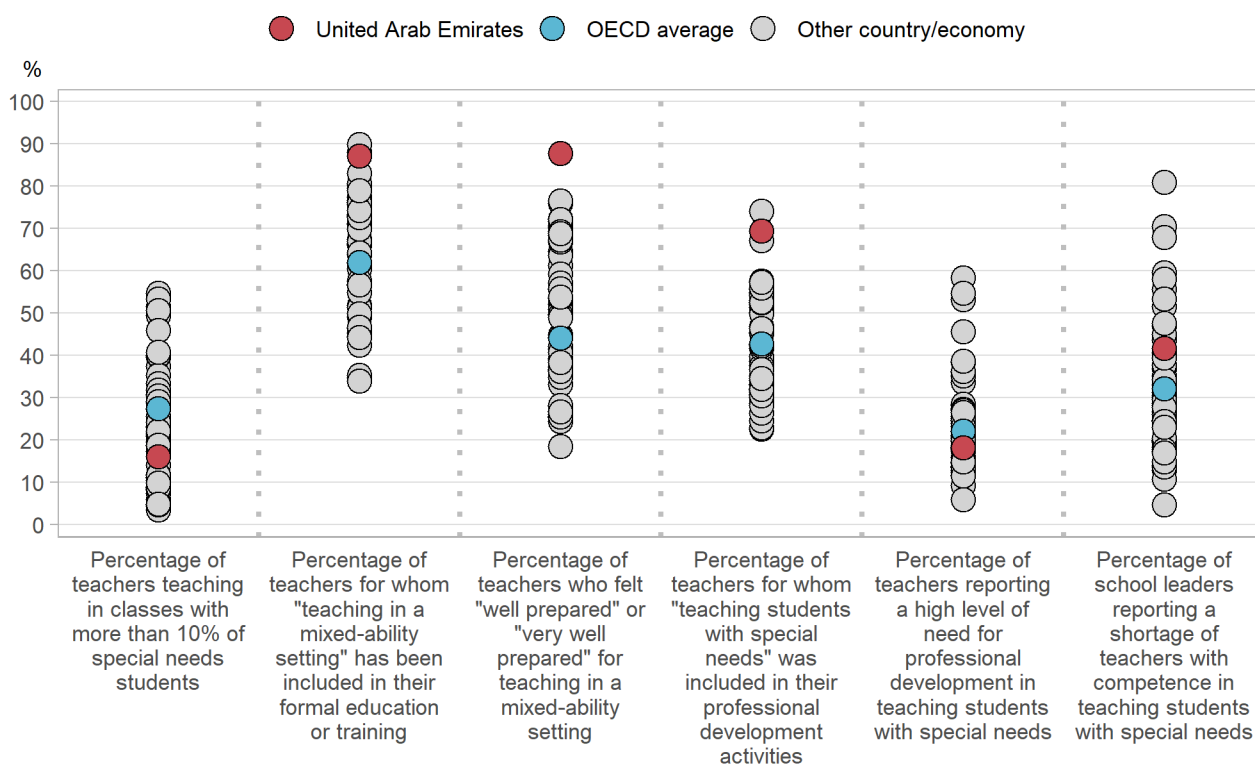
- Taking part in some kind of in-service training is commonplace among teachers and principals in the United Arab Emirates, with 98% of teachers (OECD average 94%) and 99% of principals (OECD average 99%) attending at least one professional development activity in the year prior to the survey.
- Attending courses and seminars is one of the most popular types of professional development for teachers across the OECD. In the United Arab Emirates, 88% of teachers participate in this kind of training, while 86% of teachers participate in training based on peer learning and coaching. Moreover, 70% participate in professional networks as part of their professional development, which is one of the highest shares across countries and economies participating in TALIS (OECD average 40%). It is interesting to note that teachers, across the OECD, report that professional development based on collaboration and collaborative approaches to teaching is among the most impactful for them.
- Teachers in the United Arab Emirates appear satisfied with the training they received, as 88% report that it had a positive impact on their teaching practice, a share that is higher than the average of OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (82%). The United Arab Emirates are one of the countries with the highest shares of teachers reporting that their most impactful training included active and collaborative learning, or that it took place at the teacher's school and involved most colleagues from the school. In addition, for 94% of teachers, their most effective training provided opportunities to practise/apply new ideas and knowledge in the teacher's own classroom (OECD average 86%).
- It is also true that teachers who report participating in such impactful training tend to display higher levels of self-efficacy and job satisfaction. The association is particularly strong in the United Arab Emirates.
- But some areas of professional development are still lacking, according to teachers. Across the OECD, developing advanced ICT skills is one area in which teachers say that they need more training, along with teaching in multicultural/multilingual settings and teaching students with special needs. Among these three areas, teachers in the United Arab Emirates expressed a particularly high need for training in teaching students with special needs.

## Teaching students with diverse ability levels and needs

- On average in the United Arab Emirates, 16% of teachers work in classes with at least 10% of students with special needs (i.e. those for whom a special learning need has been formally identified because they are mentally, physically, or emotionally disadvantaged), which is lower than the average of OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (27%).
- In the United Arab Emirates, 87% of teachers were trained to teach in mixed-ability settings as part of their formal teacher education or training, at the same time 88% of teachers on average felt prepared to teach in such settings when they finished their studies.
- Furthermore, although 69% of teachers on average participated in professional development activities including teaching students with special needs in the 12 months prior to the survey, training in teaching special needs students is the professional development topic with the highest percentage of teachers reporting a high need for it – 18% in the United Arab Emirates (compared to 22% across the OECD).
- On average in the United Arab Emirates, 42% of school principals report that delivery of quality instruction in their school is hindered by a shortage of teachers with competence in teaching students with special needs (compared to 32% across the OECD).

**Figure 3. A snapshot of teaching students with diverse ability levels and needs**

Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers and principals



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown.

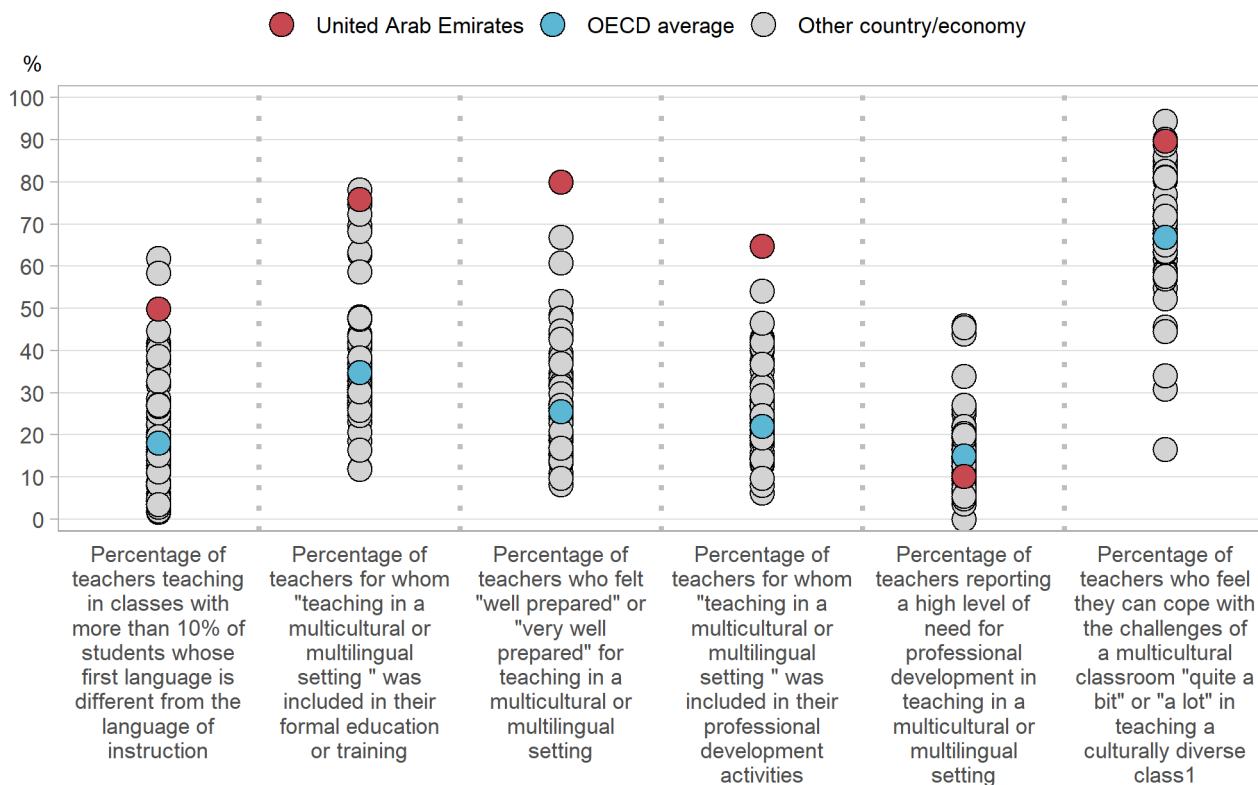
Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables I. 3.28, I. 4.13, I. 4.20, I. 5.18, I. 5.21 and I. 3.63.

## Teaching in multicultural or multilingual settings

- On average in the United Arab Emirates, one out of two teachers (50%) work in classes with more than 10% of students whose first language is different from the language of instruction, which is higher than the average of OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (18%), and 28% of teachers work in classes with more than 10% of students who are immigrants or with migrant background (OECD average: 17%).
- In the United Arab Emirates, 76% of teachers were trained to teach in a multicultural or multilingual setting as part of their formal teacher education or training, and 80% of teachers on average felt prepared to teach in such settings when they finished their studies.
- Furthermore, although 65% of teachers on average participated in professional development activities including teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting in the 12 months prior to the survey, training in teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting is one of the top three professional development topics with one of the highest percentages of teachers reporting a high need for it – 10% in the United Arab Emirates (compared to 15% across the OECD).
- In the United Arab Emirates, global issues are systematically integrated into the curriculum of multicultural schools. For instance, according to principals' reports, 94% of schools have implemented supporting activities or organisations encouraging students' expression of diverse ethnic and cultural identities (OECD average 61%) or 96% of schools organise multicultural events (OECD average: 55%). However, on average in the United Arab Emirates, 90% of teachers feel they can cope with the challenges of a multicultural classroom "quite a bit" or "a lot" in teaching a culturally diverse class (compared to 67% across the OECD).

Figure 4. A snapshot of teaching in multicultural or multilingual settings

Results based on responses of lower secondary teachers and principals



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown.

Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, Tables I.3.28, I.4.13, I.4.20, I.5.18, I.5.21 and I.3.38.



## Key features of TALIS 2018

TALIS uses questionnaires administered to teachers and their school principals to gather data. Its main goal is to generate internationally comparable information relevant to developing and implementing policies focused on school leaders, teachers and teaching, with an emphasis on those aspects that affect student learning. It gives a voice to teachers and school leaders, allowing them to provide input into educational policy analysis and development in key areas.

First, TALIS helps policy makers to review and develop policies that promote the teaching profession and the best conditions for effective teaching and learning. Second, TALIS helps teachers, school leaders, and education stakeholders to reflect upon and discuss their practice and find ways to enhance it. Third, TALIS builds upon past research, while informing the future work of researchers.

- Nine main themes were selected for inclusion in the TALIS 2018 survey: teachers' instructional practices; school leadership; teachers' professional practices; teacher education and initial preparation; teacher feedback and development; school climate; job satisfaction; teacher human resource issues and stakeholder relations; and teacher self-efficacy. Two cross-cutting themes were added to this list: innovation; and equity and diversity.
- The international target population for TALIS is composed of lower secondary teachers and their school leaders in mainstream public and private schools. TALIS 2018 offered three additional options: 15 countries and economies, including the United Arab Emirates, also surveyed teachers and school leaders in their primary schools (ISCED level 1), 11 countries and economies, including the United Arab Emirates, did so in their upper secondary schools (ISCED level 3) and 9 countries and economies conducted the survey in schools that participated in the 2018 OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).
- In each country, a representative sample of 4 000 teachers and their school principals from 200 schools was randomly selected for the study. Across all survey components, approximately 260 000 teachers responded to the survey, representing more than 8 million teachers in 48 participating countries and economies. In the United Arab Emirates, 8 648 lower secondary teachers and 476 principals completed the TALIS questionnaires.
- TALIS 2018 findings will be released in two volumes. The first volume, *Teachers and School Leaders as Lifelong Learners*, published on 19 June 2019, explores the knowledge and skills dimension of teachers and school leaders' professionalism. The second volume, *Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals*, to be published in early 2020, will focus on prestige, career opportunities, collaborative culture and responsibility and autonomy.


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### References

OECD (2019), *TALIS 2018 Results (Volume I): Teachers and School Leaders as Lifelong Learners*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/1d0bc92a-en>

For more information on TALIS 2018 visit <http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/>

Data can be found also on line by following the **StatLinks**  under the tables and charts in the publication.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using: <http://gpseducation.oecd.org/>.

<p><b>Questions can be directed to:</b> TALIS team Directorate for Education and Skills <a href="mailto:TALIS@oecd.org">TALIS@oecd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Country note author:</b> Markus Schwabe Directorate for Education and Skills <a href="mailto:Markus.Schwabe@oecd.org">Markus.Schwabe@oecd.org</a></p>
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