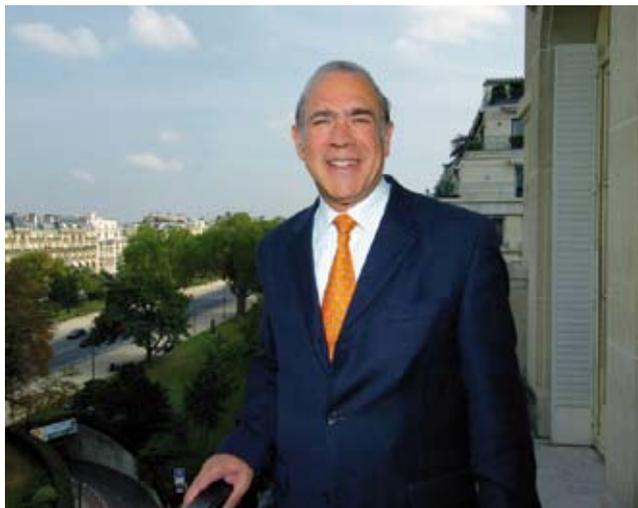


The challenges faced by 21st century economies and societies are daunting: addressing the human and social consequences of an international financial crisis, meeting development goals, encouraging green growth and responding to climate change, ageing societies and the knowledge economy.

Education is a critical part of any response. Knowledge increases both wealth and well-being; university graduates in most countries earn more. Our research shows that people who complete upper secondary education are much more likely to report good health than those who do not.

Yet education systems need to do a much better job in providing equitable educational opportunities - starting in early childhood, and continuing throughout life. They need to equip people with knowledge, skills and tools to stay competitive and engaged.

Education is an investment in the future. Our work on education aims to make that investment strong, effective and fair.



Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General

*“Education is an investment in the future”*

Without continuing commitment to education, sustainable economic recovery will elude us. As far-reaching as the labour market impacts of the crisis are, the potential social consequences may last even longer.

We need to identify the right mix of skills that will be needed for strong, sustainable and balanced growth in the 21st century. Today, education and training systems need to prepare learners for more rapid change than ever before, for jobs that have not yet been created, using technologies that have not yet been invented, to solve problems that cannot be foreseen. By focusing our efforts on how best to foster human and social capital, we help countries leverage education systems to power the future.

The OECD’s Directorate for Education helps member and non-member economies explore how skills can be matched to new needs, how to foster innovation, how to equip teachers for the 21st century, and how to reinforce the positive social impacts of education. We encourage countries to compare their performance and experience and to learn from each other.



Barbara Ischinger, Director for Education

*“Education and skills for strong, sustainable and balanced growth in the 21st century”*