

# Equity and Equality of Opportunity

## Giving everyone the chance to succeed through education

► How can schools and school leaders help overcome failure?

► How do different countries respond to cultural and ethnic differences?

► What can be done to assure equity in education?

Ethnic and cultural diversity makes society richer, but reaping the full benefits requires special efforts from the education system. The **OECD Thematic Reviews on Migrant Education** examined the education outcomes of the children of immigrants in six OECD countries. Diversity in the classroom can enhance learning and prepare students for the outside world, if teachers are trained to see it as an opportunity and not an obstacle.

Language is one key to success. The project on **Globalisation and Linguistic Competencies** has explored why some individuals are successful in learning non-native languages and others not, and why certain education systems appear more successful than others at teaching non-native languages.

Across OECD countries, almost one of every five students does not reach a basic minimum level of skills to function in today's societies and students from low socio-economic background are twice as likely to be low performers. Reducing school failure pays off for both society and individuals. The report **Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools** provides policy recommendations, evidence, relevant cases and implementation strategies on how to support disadvantaged students and schools, as improving opportunities for them benefits education systems and societies as a whole.

Future work will examine students' learning outcomes in the light of their social and immigrant backgrounds.



Students have different aptitudes and interests, but they should all have a fair chance to achieve their full potential, irrespective of gender, socio-economic status or ethnic origin. They should all receive a basic minimum level of instruction, including reading, writing and simple arithmetic. Individuals and society as a whole pay a high price for a lack of education. People without the skills to participate socially and economically generally have poorer health, rely more on welfare payments, and harm their children's chances too.

**DID YOU KNOW...** Net migration to OECD countries has tripled since 1960, however until recently very little research has focused on the integration of immigrant children into school.