School-to-work transition: Promoting skills for the 21st century

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Key questions

• What drives demand for skills in the region?
• What are the trends in the region today as regards youth employment?
• What skills are required by young people today to transition successfully from school to the labour market?
• How well are secondary schools in the region providing young people with those skills?
• What are the trends in the region’s education reforms targeting an improvement in skill-related learning?
• What are key areas for possible policy intervention?
• What could be possible areas of reform in secondary education?
• What can countries do to improve the transition from school to work?
What drives demand for skills in the region?

Economic demand for skills
- Deepening role of technology, knowledge for value added productivity...sustained growth...global competitiveness
  - often fueling demand for advanced, new and diverse skills

Heightening social equity & inclusion are imperative
- Demographic shifts, migration and LLL perspective
- Youth unemployment and disengagement
- Persisting inequalities, poverty and marginalization

Deepening focus on holistic development & sustainable future
- Climate change, green skills, environmental custodianship
- Global citizenship and social responsibility
- Resilience, adaptability and recovery from crises
Youth unemployment 2007–17 (rates)

Source: ILO 2012
Percent of firms identifying an inadequately educated workforce as a major constraint

Percent of firms identifying labor regulations as a major constraint

Source: Entreprise Survey 2012. World Bank/IFC
What skills are required by young people today to transition successfully to the labour market?
Pathways to skills

Young people learn **transferable skills** and **technical and vocational skills** at upper secondary school.

A primary and lower secondary education gives young people **foundation skills**

Work-based training teaches **transferable** and **technical and vocational skills** through direct work experience.
21st Century/Transferable Skills for Innovative Jobs

Source: Adapted from Damme (OECD/EDU, 2012), 21st Century Learners Demand Post-Industrial Education Systems, Presentation made at the Towards EFA 2015 and Beyond – Shaping a New Vision for Education Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand
How well are secondary schools in the region providing young people with those skills?
Not Reading Well Enough to Learn? Share of Students’ Scoring ‘Level 2 or Below’ on PISA 2012

Among students who fail to reach the baseline level of performance (Level 2) in mathematics, reading or science, meaning that, at best, they can only handle the simplest and most obvious tasks, most can be expected not to continue with education beyond compulsory schooling, and therefore risk facing difficulties using mathematics, reading and science concepts throughout their lives.
Share of Students’ Scoring ‘Level 2 or Below’ on PISA 2012

The baseline Level 2 in the PISA mathematics assessment

At that level, students can extract relevant information from a single source and can use basic algorithms, formulae, procedures or conventions to solve problems involving whole numbers.
Key areas for policy interventions

• Reform of secondary education
• Supporting school-to-work transitions
• Development of a flexible and ‘permeable’ system which allows different pathways to skills development and moving from academic to vocational training and vice versa.
• Developing lifelong learning
• Addressing inequalities
Some key reforms of secondary education

• Review qualifications and curricula
• Develop teacher training
• Provide learner with:
  – Foundational, transferable skills and entrepreneurial skills
  – Skills which enable learners to continue learning and to acquire new knowledge and be resilient in a rapidly changing environment
• Hybridization of secondary education
Improving the transition from school to the world of work: what countries can do

- Provide relevant information on jobs and working life and guidance for young people in different forms
- Inclusion of mandatory career education and orientation in the school curriculum
- Use by students of self-directed techniques of personal assessment and job and course exploration
- Opportunities for all students to combine workplace experience with education
- Systematic involvement of community members such as employers, alumni, parents, ...
- Well organised pathways connecting initial education with work and further study
- Tightly knit safety nets for those at risk