

Korea is also successful in fostering inclusivity in skills development. For example, Korea has a comparatively high share of tertiary-educated adults whose parents both have less than tertiary education. In addition, there is a relatively small skills gap between high-low educated adults in Korea.

Korea has also been relatively successful in fostering a learning culture among adults. Korean adults have an above average willingness to participate in adult education and the participation rate of adults in formal and/or non-formal education is about on par with the OECD average.

Despite this strong performance, there continue to be areas in which Korea could improve. For example, the mean literacy scores of Korean adults with tertiary education, as measured by the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), is below the OECD average for tertiary educated adults. Furthermore, Korean adults have comparatively low levels of problem-solving skills.

Moreover, Korea could bolster its performance in activating the skills of adults, as its labour force participation rate is

lower and the gender employment gap is higher than the OECD average. Korea could also make more intensive use of the skills of its workers and Korean firms could increase their adoption of high-performance workplace practices, which have been found to improve skills use.

Korea has taken important steps to respond to many of these challenges. For example, the 2019 amendments in the Lifelong Learning Act aim to enhance the accessibility of adult education, especially targeting economically and socially disadvantaged groups. It also aims to encourage continuous adult education by providing a voucher and by recognising prior learning. Moreover, the Workforce Development and Training Act, updated in 2019, expands funding for vocational training for the employed and unemployed.

Still, Korea could benefit from a renewal of its strategic vision for the future to ensure that all of its people have the skills to respond to the challenges and opportunities of a complex and rapidly changing world. A whole-of-government approach is needed to achieve this aim.

Key recommendations for improving the performance of countries' skills system

Developing relevant skills over the life course: Making skills systems responsive

- Making each stage of learning a foundation for success in the next
- Enabling policies to support learning in adulthood
- Supporting teachers to become lifelong learners
- Financing adult learning
- Harnessing the power of technology as a tool for learning

Using skills effectively in work and society: Making the most of everyone's potential

- Make full use of everyone's skills
- Making the most of migrants' skills
- Activating skills to build more inclusive and cohesive societies
- Making intensive use of skills in work
- Aligning skills with the needs of the economy and society
- Aligning skills policies with industrial and innovation policies

Strengthening the governance of skills systems: Tackling increased complexity

- Promoting co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration across the whole of government
- Engaging stakeholders throughout the policy cycle
- Building integrated information systems
- Aligning and co-ordinating financing arrangements

Further reading

OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Strategy 2019: Skills to shape a better future*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [//doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en).

OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Outlook 2019: Thriving in a Digital World*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/df80bc12-en>.

OECD (2018), *OECD Economic Surveys: Korea 2018*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/19990707>.

OECD (forthcoming), *Strengthening the Governance of Skills Systems*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Contact

Samuel Kim, Policy Analyst, OECD Centre for Skills: samuel.kim@oecd.org

For more information on OECD National Skills Strategy project, contact

Montserrat Gomendio, Head of the OECD Centre for Skills: montserrat.gomendio@oecd.org

Andrew Bell, Head, National Skills Strategy projects: andrew.bell@oecd.org