

Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers

The OECD Synthesis Report

What have we learned?

Prof. Anne Sliwka

sliwka@uni-trier.de

In collaboration with Paulo Santiago & Phillip McKenzie
International Conference

Marienlyst/Denmark

18th November 2005

Policy context

- Teachers are the most significant resource in schools - teachers vary widely in performance, and lifting teacher quality is the policy most likely to improve student performance
- Many countries have concerns about the teacher workforce in terms of shortages of well-qualified applicants, and whether enough teachers have the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of modern schooling. The ageing of the profession is compounding such concerns.
- Teachers express concern about the image and status of teaching, workload and stress, and the future of their profession

OECD OCDE


Policy context (continued)

- And yet, most countries are spending more on schools than ever before: student-teacher ratios have fallen, and average teacher salary has risen in real terms (salaries are generally based on experience, and the workforce has aged)
- However, teaching appears to have lost its competitive edge:
 - many other job possibilities for graduates
 - teacher salaries have fallen relative to GDP per capita
 - limited prospects for teacher career growth
 - mixed perceptions of the work ("important but difficult")
 - less attractive to "high achievers" and males


OECD OCDE

Policy context (continued)

- Many countries now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape and benefit from substantial changes in the teacher workforce:
 - ☞ Many new teachers will be starting in the next 5-10 years
 - ☞ A younger workforce implies less budgetary pressure, and potentially frees resources for renewal and development
 - ☞ But, if teaching is not perceived as an attractive profession for able people, and teaching does not change in fundamental ways, school quality could decline
- Policy frameworks and initiatives do make a difference
 - ☞ Differences among countries (some countries have an over-supply)
 - ☞ Recent improvements within countries (which suggests the teacher labour market is cyclical, and not necessarily in long-term decline)



- Making Teaching an Attractive Career Choice
- Developing Teachers' Knowledge and Skills
- Recruiting, Selecting and Employing Teachers
- Retaining Effective Teachers in School
- Developing Teacher Policy



Making Teaching an Attractive Career Choice

OECD OCDE

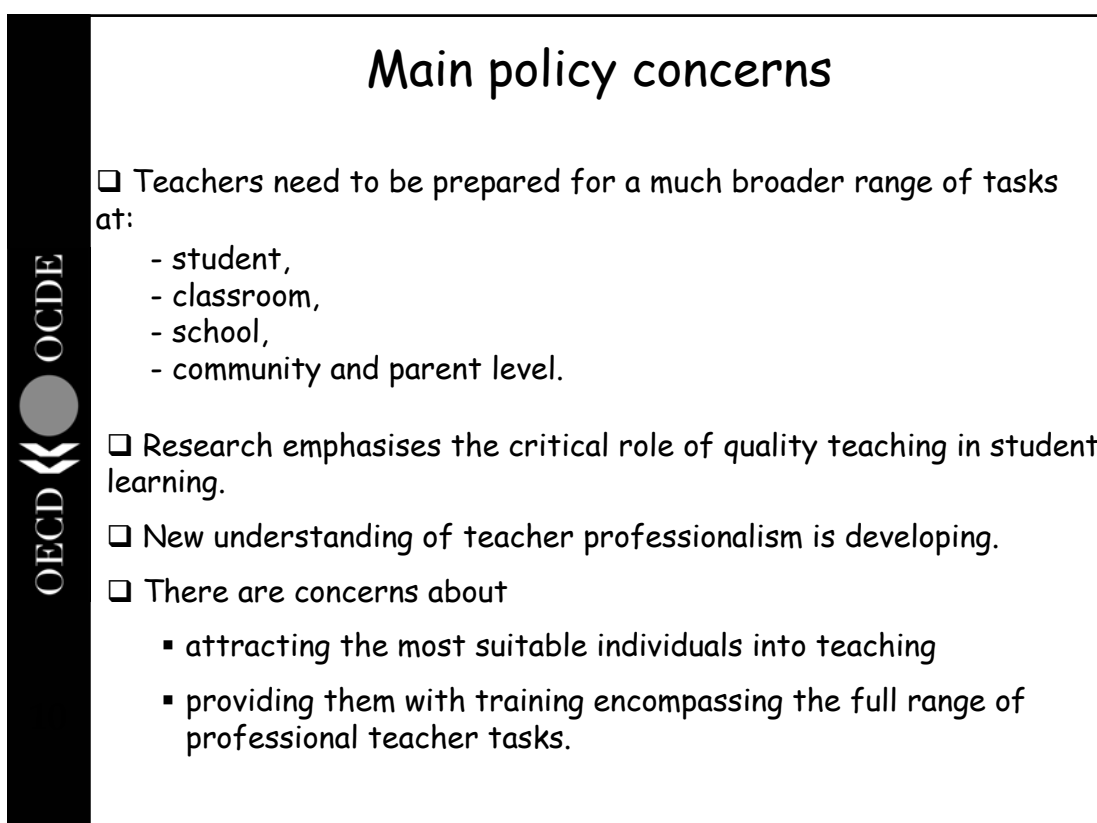
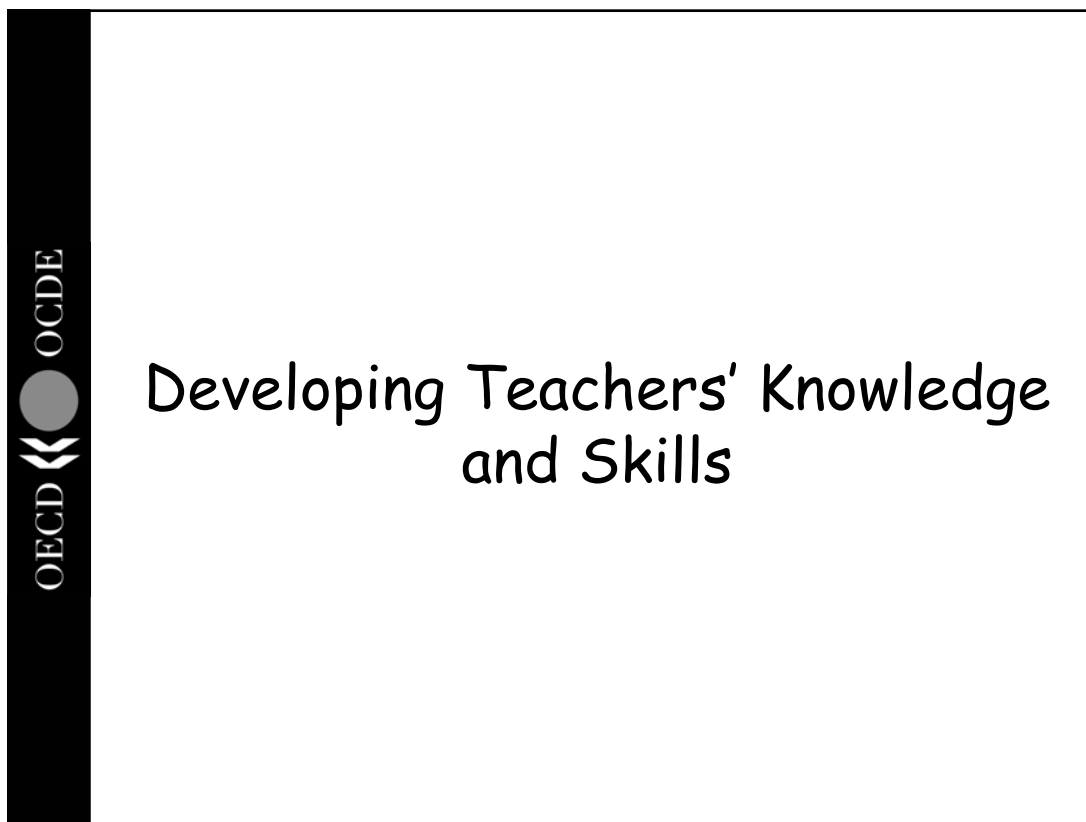
Main policy directions

- Improving the image and status of teaching
- Improving teaching's salary competitiveness
- Improving employment conditions
- Expanding the supply pool of potential teachers

OECD OCDE

Main policy directions (continued)

- Making reward mechanisms more flexible
- Improving entrance conditions for new teachers
- Rethinking the trade-off between the student-teacher ratio and average class size
- Capitalising on an over-supply of teachers



- Teachers need to be prepared for a much broader range of tasks at:
 - student,
 - classroom,
 - school,
 - community and parent level.
- Research emphasises the critical role of quality teaching in student learning.
- New understanding of teacher professionalism is developing.
- There are concerns about
 - attracting the most suitable individuals into teaching
 - providing them with training encompassing the full range of professional teacher tasks.

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Developing teacher profiles

Clear and concise standards of what teachers are expected to know and be able to do

- reflect broad range of competencies.
- provide framework to guide and integrate initial teacher education, certification, induction and on-going professional development.
- should be evidence-based and reflect student learning objectives.
- should be built on active involvement by teaching profession.

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Initial teacher education

- Improve selection into teacher education
 - Information and counselling
 - Assessment
 - Early school experience
 - Incentives for high potentials
- Provide more flexible forms of initial teacher education
 - Modular, part-time, distance education
 - Alternate routes for mid-career changers
- Strengthen partnerships between teacher education institutions and schools
 - Overt and deliberate partnerships
 - Earlier and broader field experience

Policy priorities

Strengthening induction programmes

- Formalize induction programmes
- Qualify mentor teachers
- Provide sufficient resources for induction
 - reduced teaching obligation for mentors and beginning teachers
- Link successful completion of induction to certification

Policy priorities

Integrating professional development throughout the teaching career

Provide incentives for lifelong learning of all teachers

- Entitle teachers to release time and/or financial support for professional development
- Create incentives: e.g., link professional development to teacher appraisal and career advancement
- Link individual teacher development with school improvement needs

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

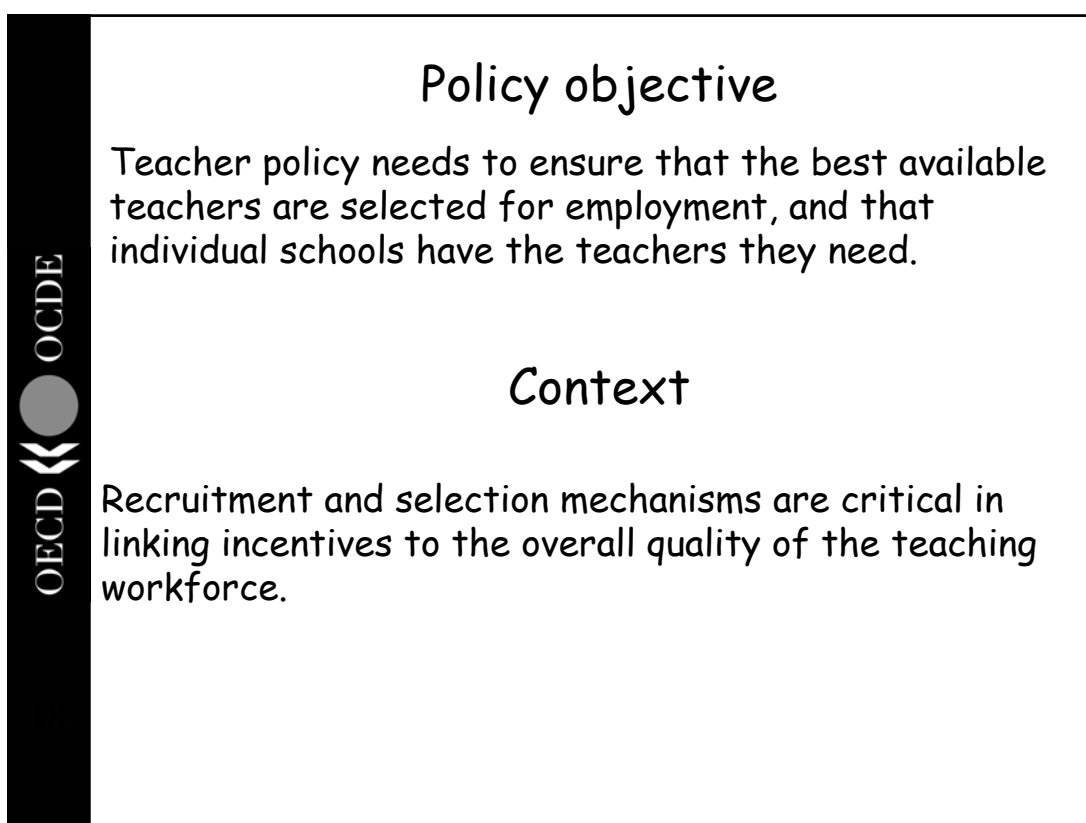
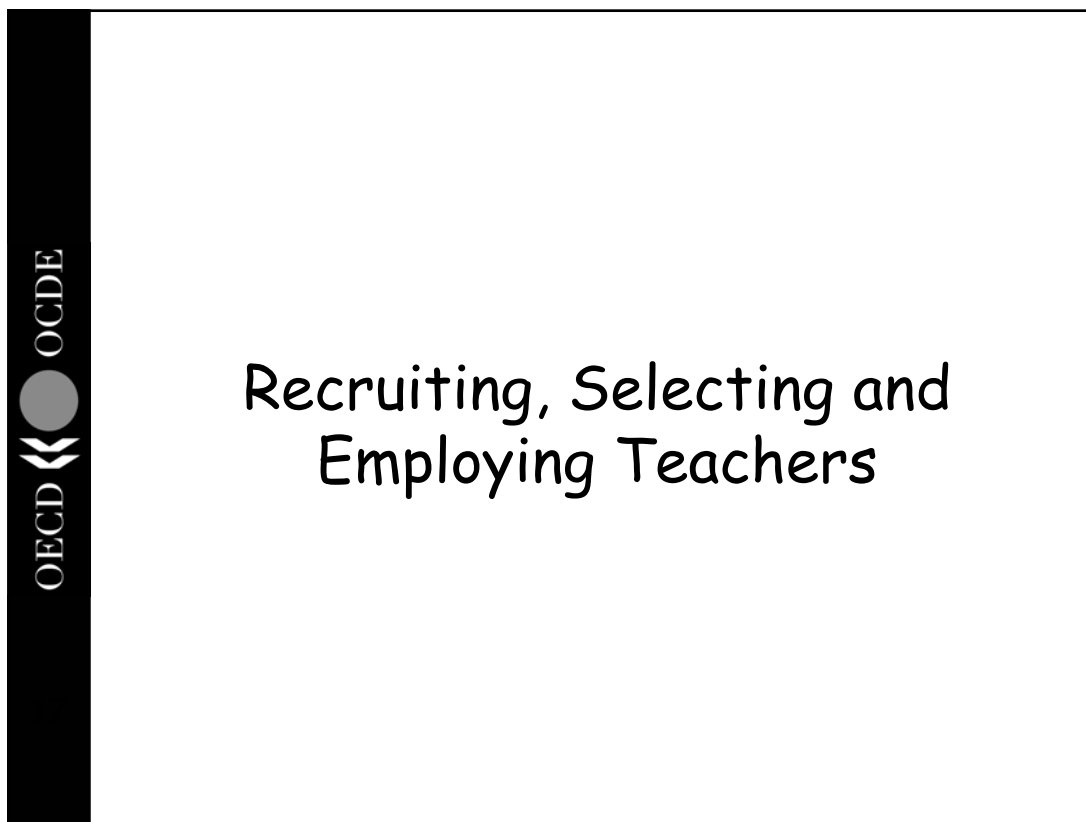
- Broaden the range of different professional development opportunities, e.g.
 - peer review and action research
 - mutual school visits
 - teacher and school networks
- Provide more coherent framework for professional development, develop teachers' learning communities
 - training, practice and feedback
 - follow-up rather than "one shot events"
 - teacher portfolios

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Improve the provision of professional development

- Open up market for professional development by encouraging a range of providers in response to school and teacher demand
- Evaluate impact of different approaches to professional development
- Inform schools and teachers about effective strategies and programmes



Policy priorities

Using more flexible terms of employment

Employment status based on a system of on-going contracts with the requirement that teachers renew their certificates after a period of time, such as every 5-7 years:

Principles:

- Teachers achieve employment security by continuing to do a good job, rather than by regulation;
- Periodic review provides the opportunity to recognise and acknowledge quality teaching.

Pre-requisites:

- Ensuring an open, fair and transparent system of teacher evaluation undertaken by individuals properly trained;
- Ensuring that teachers have opportunities to improve their practice, thereby improving their ability to secure their posts;
- Creating fair but speedy mechanisms to address poor performance.

Policy priorities

Providing schools with more responsibility for teacher personnel development

Schools need to have more responsibility - and accountability - for teacher selection, working conditions, and development.

Pre-requisites:

- Developing school leaders' skills in personnel management;
- Providing disadvantaged schools with greater resources;
- Improving information availability in the teacher labour market;
- Monitoring the outcomes of a more decentralised approach;
- Creating independent appeals procedures to ensure fairness and protect teachers' rights.

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Broadening the criteria for teacher selection

The selection criteria for new teachers need to be broadened to ensure that the applicants with the greatest potential are identified

Implications:

- Weight accorded to seniority to be reduced in some systems;
- Greater weight to be given to characteristics which are harder to measure - e.g. enthusiasm, commitment and sensitivity to student needs;
- For countries which rely on competitive examinations, there is the need for clear statements of what beginning teachers need to know and be able to do as effective practitioners.

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Making a probationary period mandatory


The satisfactory completion of a probationary period of 1-2 years should be mandatory before full certification

Pre-requisite:

- Beginning teachers should be given every opportunity to work in a stable and well-supported school environment;
- The decision about certification should be taken by a panel which is well-trained and resourced for assessing new teachers.

Meeting short-term staffing needs

Establish mechanisms to make replacement teachers readily available and provide budget flexibility to employ them




OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Encouraging greater teacher mobility

Provide incentives for and remove barriers to greater mobility of teachers within the school sector and from and to other sectors of activity

Improving information flows and the monitoring of the teacher labour market



OECD OCDE

Retaining Effective Teachers in Schools

OECD OCDE

Policy objective

Teacher policy needs to ensure that teachers work in an environment which facilitates success, and in which effective teachers wish to continue teaching.

Context

- Close connection with issues of attracting new teachers
- A low rate of teacher attrition does not indicate that all is well
- Should, or can, teaching be regarded as a lifetime career?

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Evaluating and rewarding effective teaching

There needs to be a stronger emphasis on teacher evaluation for improvement purposes.

Opportunity for teachers' work to be recognised and celebrated and help both teachers and schools to identify developmental needs

Pre-requisites:

- Teacher appraisal to occur within a framework provided by profession-wide agreed statements of standards of professional performance;
- Evaluators need to be trained and evaluated themselves;
- Evaluation frameworks and tools need to be provided.

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Evaluating and rewarding effective teaching

Evaluation can provide a basis for rewarding teachers for exemplary performance.

- Through speed at which teacher progresses in career
- Using non-monetary rewards
- Focussing on group rewards

Pre-requisites:

Need to ensure that assessment measures reflect school objectives, and take account of the school and classroom contexts in which teachers are working.

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Providing more opportunities for career variety and diversification

Dual Approach:

- (i) The creation of positions associated with specific tasks and roles, which would lead to differentiation of a largely horizontal kind - involving release time rather than differentiated pay.
- (ii) A competency-based teaching career ladder associated with extra responsibilities, which would lead to differentiation more vertical in nature.

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Improving leadership and school climate

A range of initiatives should be taken to strengthen leadership in schools:

- ❑ Improve training, selection and evaluation processes for school principals
- ❑ Establish leadership teams in schools
- ❑ School leaders to be trained and supported in conducting evaluations and linking them to school planning.

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Improving working conditions

There needs to be an explicit recognition of the wide variety of tasks that teaching actually entails

Well trained support and administrative staff can help to reduce the burden on teachers and free them to concentrate on the tasks of teaching and learning

Better facilities at school for staff preparation and planning would help in building collegiality and in programme provision

OECD OCDE

Policy priorities

Providing more flexible working hours and conditions

Create programmes that enable teachers to work part-time, take more leave opportunities, and reduce their working hours

School-systems should be more pro-active in ensuring that schools provide attractive working environments for older teachers

- Professional development activities to meet the needs of older teachers;
- Reduced working hours;
- New tasks and roles in school.

OECD OCDE

Developing and Implementing Teacher Policy

OECD OCDE

Engaging stakeholders

Essential to successful policy implementation to engage all stakeholders in the process. Teachers need a sense of "ownership" of reform

- How and when to engage stakeholders varies by country:
 - Countries where policy changes are determined by law, where the political and legislative processes dominate (e.g. Italy, Spain);
 - Countries where governments establish broad frameworks in consultation with social partners and implementation is at local level (e.g. Ireland, The Netherlands, Sweden, UK);

OECD OCDE

Examples

- The new Teaching Council in Ireland, the Institute of Teaching in Victoria/Australia and the Ontario College of Teachers (Canada) regulate professional practice, oversee teacher education and professional development.
- There are a range of benefits of "profession-led" bodies in engaging teachers.

Building collaboration

- Need to create "professional learning communities" among teachers and schools as opposed to "contrived collegiality" imposed from above
- Policy can stimulate professional learning communities e.g. through leadership strategies, building indicators, providing seed money, supporting professional self-regulation

Improving the Knowledge Base

- Activity was useful in identifying gaps in national and international comparative data regarding teachers. Promising initiatives now underway e.g. OECD INES.
- Many research gaps: (e.g. impact of alternative teacher education programs on effectiveness; relationship between career opportunities and teacher retention; cost-effectiveness of policy alternatives) .
- Need for pilot studies and monitoring and evaluation before widespread change introduced.