

Education Systems' Response to COVID19

Brief: May 10, 2020

To date, schools are still closed or partly closed in 178 countries, with about 73% of students out of school. 167 countries still have full school closures.¹

Overview of school closures (source: World Bank teams and news outlets)

	Africa	EAP	ECA	LAC and North America	MENA	SAR	Total
Closed	41	14	44	40	20	8	167
Partly closed	2	5	2	2	0	0	11
Open with limitations	0	3	3	1	0	0	7

- *Denmark, China, Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, Uruguay and Nicaragua have introduced some level of school reopening nationwide. Few countries (Germany, France, Austria, Netherlands) are planning gradual reopening of schools with very strict social distancing measures and optional attendance. Singapore reopens for a second time.*
- *Out of seven countries where schools are open with limitations, two (Sweden and Belarus) never closed their systems*

1. *More schools are reopening with strict safety measures and optional attendance*
- *Singapore will reopen schools for the second time gradually on May 19th, after they have been shuttered again in mid-April. Priorities will be given to graduating classes where students are preparing for standard exams and those who require support during the summer holidays, which will begin in May instead of June this year. Austria, France, and Germany are among those that will begin to send kids to schools but with enforcement of strict distancing measures.*

Brief Highlight – Germany Reopens Schools, cautiously

While Germany has announced it will reopen schools gradually starting May 11th, making this the largest return of students across Europe, it is doing so with great precaution, watching for lessons of other countries who have reopened their economies. On May 6th, the Chancellor's office announced that schools would start reopening but local authorities would have to close schools and all but non-essential shops once again if the number of new cases rose to more than 35 in every 100,000 in their area within a seven-day period. The decision on when and how to reopen will rest with the federal states (Länder). While some states will require masks, others have deemed them illegal and will not require them of students and teachers. Teachers unions have called on authorities to not leave schools alone and support teachers as they navigate this new environment.

The state ministry of schools in North Rhine-Westphalia state scheduled the reopening of primary and general schools as of May 11 with children attending on a rolling basis - each grade goes to schools on a separate day of the week. Additionally, the following measures have been introduced:

Guaranteed transition/promotion: Due to the shortened school year, the usual transfer regulations have been waived and pupils are allowed to move to the next grade at the end of the school year. However, this arrangement only applies to grades which do not offer degrees or certificates at completion.

Extension of the repetition options: Students who wish to do so may choose to repeat their current grade without future penalties. The parents and the school must come to this decision mutually.

National exams to be replaced by summative assessments: The national exams at grade 10 (Zentrale Prüfungen 10) in the subjects German, Mathematics and English will be replaced this year by written exams administered by the school's teachers anytime after May 12 but before the end of the school year.

Abitur examination for 2020 and 2021 will have less strict verifications in case of significant deviations from the average performance, however the possibility of an improvement in grades through an oral examination at the request of the pupil is preserved.

¹ Source: World Bank Education GP dashboard. Additional resources including details on country responses and data are regularly added to the *landing page* on the Education Global Practice website. There, you will also find links to the school closure [dashboard](#), a [guidance note](#), and other resources. [Link here](#). For other questions regarding this brief, please contact Kaloipe Azzi-Huck or Tigran Shmis.

Collectively the measures focus on **maintaining social distancing among students and teachers**, enforcing new health protocols (repeated hand washing; masks for teachers and students in middle and high schools (France), limiting movement and intermingling of students by not carrying out extra curricular activities (Singapore), having teachers change classes rather than students (France); adding regular disinfections of buildings, classes and materials; and incorporating expansive communication and awareness campaigns . Austria is splitting students in Mon/Wed/Fri and Tues/Thurs shifts that alternate weekly.

- In France, the return to school has begun with the priority classes preparing for exams. By May 25th all primary, secondary and lycée students would be back. In the [Netherlands](#) primary school will reopen on May 11 following the advice of their infectious disease control institute, secondary schools could follow by June if no more outbreaks take place.
- [Denmark](#) saw an increase in the infection “R” rate (calculated as the number of persons an average infected person passes the virus to) after its Phase I reopening of economy and schools up to grade 5. But authorities are confident the increase is manageable and will proceed with Phase II, which includes schools for older grades.

2. *In contrast, more countries have extended closures, cancelled the school year or delayed examinations. Meanwhile, remote learning continues.*

- Tajikistan, having delayed closing of schools or lockdown weeks after the rest of Europe, announced that schools will remain closed till August 2020.
- [Ireland has announced its schools will remain closed](#) till September. Italy’s COVID-19 epicenter Northern Lombardy is most likely remain closed until September as well. The UK has an ongoing debate about keeping the closures of schools until September.

- The West African Examination Council, who administers the West African Senior Secondary School Certification Exam ([WASSCE](#)) issued a [statement that its exams \(scheduled to take place in May/June across Ghana, the Gambia, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone\) are postponed](#) but not cancelled. Issues arose when parents demands refunds on account of exam cancellation. The examinations are a huge undertaking in each country and it is not clear when they would take place. 118 countries have implements some sort of multimodal remote learning. However only 34 have virtual online classes. The vast majority has at least some basic material in the internet (116 countries), but that does not reach the whole population as internet access at home is around 50% in middle income countries. 88 countries are relying on TV content and 44 are disseminating lessons via radio.

NGOs step up to support remote learning in Africa – Rising Academy in Liberia

Having learned a lot during the Ebola crisis, [Rising Academy](#), a regional education NGO had developed radio content that allowed it to begin offering distance learning in Liberia within days of school closures. The team has developed materials for radio programming (for students as well as for teachers), workbooks for complementary support to the radio content and the SMS platform for further engagements with students and for monitoring and feedback purposes.

3. *Studies, tools, and guidelines emerge on the Coronavirus’ impact on learning and students*

- A country tool or estimating COVID19 impacts on learning and student outcomes has been developed by the WB education team. The link describing the tool and how to use it can be found [here](#).
- [A small study in Australia found](#) that the rates of transmission among students was extremely low.
- [Projecting the potential impacts of COVID-19 school closures on academic achievement](#), a study just released from Brown University, projects that **students are likely to return in fall 2020 with only 68% of the learning gains in reading and 50% of the learning gains in math**, compared to what they they would have had learned in a typical year.

4. Key resources and links

The following summarizes the latest research and policy papers on COVID19 produced by the Bank. More can be found at the [Bank education website](#)

- [FULL REPORT: The COVID-19 Pandemic: Shocks to Education and Policy Responses](#)
- [Framework for Reopening Schools](#) - April 20
- [Educational Television & COVID-19](#) - April 17 Guidance Note
- [15 Ways to Support Young Children and their Families in the COVID-19 Response | COVID-19 & ECD](#)
- [Supporting Tertiary Education for Continuity, Adaptation, and Innovation](#) - April 9 Guidance Note
[Principles to Maximize Countries' Effectiveness in Designing and Executing Remote Learning](#) - April 7 Guidance Note [French | Spanish | Russian]
[Guidance Note on Education Systems' Response to COVID19](#) - March 25 [French | Russian]

A recent [CNN piece](#) ran a piece highlighting the impact of COVID19 in photos depicting social distancing. Images shared in the link offer a profound insight into potentially the new learning environment.

Annex 1 – Breakdown of Remote Learning Approaches by Country

(based on information received by May 4, 2020.)

Region	Country	No remote learning/ No Info received	Multi modal (# of modes used)	Virtual Interactive classes	Recorded classes online	Other Online Tools	Television	Radio	Paper-based
		47(23%)	118(59%)	34(17%)	83(41%)	116(58%)	86(43%)	44(22%)	8(4%)
AFRICA	Benin	X							
AFRICA	Botswana						1		
AFRICA	Burkina Faso						1		
AFRICA	Burundi	X							
AFRICA	Cabo Verde							1	
AFRICA	Cameroon						1		
AFRICA	Central African Republic							1	
AFRICA	Chad					1			
AFRICA	Comoros	X							
AFRICA	Congo, Dem. Rep.		2			1	1		
AFRICA	Congo, Rep.						1		
AFRICA	Cote d'Ivoire					1			
AFRICA	Equatorial Guinea	X							
AFRICA	Eritrea	X							
AFRICA	Eswatini	X							
AFRICA	Ethiopia		3			1	1	1	
AFRICA	Gabon		2			1	1		
AFRICA	Gambia, The		2				1	1	
AFRICA	Ghana		2			1	1	1	
AFRICA	Guinea		3			1	1	1	
AFRICA	Guinea-Bissau	X							
AFRICA	Kenya		4		1	1	1	1	
AFRICA	Lesotho	X							
AFRICA	Liberia		3			1	1	1	
AFRICA	Madagascar		3			1	1	1	
AFRICA	Malawi		2			1		1	
AFRICA	Mali						1		
AFRICA	Mauritania							1	
AFRICA	Mauritius		4		1	1	1	1	
AFRICA	Mozambique		2				1	1	
AFRICA	Namibia					1			
AFRICA	Niger							1	
AFRICA	Nigeria		4		1	1	1	1	
AFRICA	Rwanda		2			1		1	
AFRICA	Sao Tome and Principe						1		
AFRICA	Senegal		2			1	1		
AFRICA	Seychelles				1				
AFRICA	Sierra Leone		2			1		1	
AFRICA	Somalia							1	

AFRICA	South Africa		3		1	1	1	
AFRICA	South Sudan							1
AFRICA	Sudan	X						
AFRICA	Tanzania		2			1	1	
AFRICA	Togo	X						
AFRICA	Uganda		2		1			1
AFRICA	Zambia					1		
AFRICA	Zimbabwe		2		1			1
EAP	Brunei Darussalam	X						
EAP	Cambodia				1			
EAP	China		4	1	1	1	1	
EAP	Fiji		2			1		1
EAP	Hong Kong SAR, China		3	1	1	1		
EAP	Indonesia		3	1	1	1		
EAP	Japan		3	1	1	1		
EAP	Kiribati					1		
EAP	Korea, Rep.		3	1	1	1		
EAP	Lao PDR	X						
EAP	Macao SAR, China	X						
EAP	Malaysia		2			1	1	
EAP	Maldives		3			1	1	1
EAP	Marshall Islands	X						
EAP	Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	X						
EAP	Mongolia		2		1		1	
EAP	Myanmar	X						
EAP	Nauru	X						
EAP	New Zealand		3		1	1	1	
EAP	Palau	X						
EAP	Papua New Guinea	X						
EAP	Philippines		2		1	1		
EAP	Samoa	X						
EAP	Singapore		3	1	1	1		
EAP	Solomon Islands	X						
EAP	Thailand					1		
EAP	Timor-Leste		5		1	1	1	1
EAP	Tonga	X						
EAP	Tuvalu	X						
EAP	Vanuatu					1		
EAP	Vietnam		3		1	1	1	
ECA	Albania		2		1	1	1	
ECA	Armenia		2		1	1		
ECA	Austria		3		1	1	1	
ECA	Azerbaijan		3	1	1		1	
ECA	Belarus	X						
ECA	Belgium		2		1	1		
ECA	Bosnia and Herzegovina		3		1	1	1	

ECA	Bulgaria		4	1	1	1	1	
ECA	Croatia		4	1	1	1	1	
ECA	Cyprus				1			
ECA	Czech Republic		2			1	1	
ECA	Denmark		3	1	1	1		
ECA	Estonia		2	1		1		
ECA	Finland		2	1		1		
ECA	France		3	1	1	1		
ECA	Georgia		3	1		1	1	
ECA	Germany		2	1		1		
ECA	Greece		3	1		1	1	
ECA	Hungary				1			
ECA	Iceland		2		1	1		
ECA	Ireland		2		1	1		
ECA	Italy		4	1	1	1	1	
ECA	Kazakhstan		4		1	1	1	1
ECA	Kosovo	X						
ECA	Kyrgyz Republic		3		1	1	1	
ECA	Latvia		2	1		1		
ECA	Lithuania		2		1	1		
ECA	Luxembourg		2	1	1			
ECA	Moldova		4	1	1	1	1	
ECA	Montenegro		2			1	1	
ECA	Montserrat	X						
ECA	Netherlands					1		
ECA	North Macedonia		4		1	1	1	1
ECA	Norway		2	1	1			
ECA	Poland		2		1	1		
ECA	Portugal		2	1		1		
ECA	Romania		3	1		1	1	
ECA	Russian Federation		4	1	1	1	1	
ECA	San Marino	X						
ECA	Serbia		4		1	1	1	1
ECA	Slovak Republic		2	1		1		
ECA	Slovenia		2	1		1		
ECA	Spain		3		1	1	1	
ECA	Sweden				1			
ECA	Switzerland				1			
ECA	Tajikistan	X						
ECA	Turkey		3		1	1	1	
ECA	Turkmenistan	X						
ECA	Ukraine		2		1		1	
ECA	United Kingdom		2		1	1		
ECA	Uzbekistan		3		1	1	1	
LAC/N.A.	Anguilla	X						
LAC/N.A.	Antigua and Barbuda	X						
LAC/N.A.	Argentina		5		1	1	1	1
LAC/N.A.	Aruba					1		
LAC/N.A.	Bahamas, The				1			

LAC/N.A.	Barbados	X							
LAC/N.A.	Belize		2		1	1			
LAC/N.A.	Bermuda	X							
LAC/N.A.	Bolivia	X							
LAC/N.A.	Brazil		2		1	1			
LAC/N.A.	Canada		3	1	1	1			
LAC/N.A.	Cayman Islands	X							
LAC/N.A.	Chile		3		1	1	1		
LAC/N.A.	Colombia		4		1	1	1	1	
LAC/N.A.	Costa Rica		4		1	1	1		1
LAC/N.A.	Curacao	X							
LAC/N.A.	Dominica	X							
LAC/N.A.	Dominican Republic		4		1	1	1	1	
LAC/N.A.	Ecuador		4		1	1	1	1	
LAC/N.A.	El Salvador		2			1	1		
LAC/N.A.	Grenada		2	1	1				
LAC/N.A.	Guatemala		2		1	1			
LAC/N.A.	Guyana		3				1	1	1
LAC/N.A.	Haiti		3		1		1	1	
LAC/N.A.	Honduras		3			1	1	1	
LAC/N.A.	Jamaica		4		1	1	1		1
LAC/N.A.	Mexico		3		1	1	1		
LAC/N.A.	Nicaragua					1			
LAC/N.A.	Panama					1			
LAC/N.A.	Paraguay		2			1			1
LAC/N.A.	Peru		3			1	1	1	
LAC/N.A.	Puerto Rico	X							
LAC/N.A.	Sint Maarten (Dutch part)	X							
LAC/N.A.	St. Kitts and Nevis	X							
LAC/N.A.	St. Lucia	X							
LAC/N.A.	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	X							
LAC/N.A.	Suriname	X							
LAC/N.A.	Trinidad and Tobago		2		1	1			
LAC/N.A.	Turks and Caicos Islands	X							
LAC/N.A.	United States		6	1	1	1	1	1	1
LAC/N.A.	Uruguay		3	1	1	1			
LAC/N.A.	Venezuela, RB						1		
MENA	Algeria		2				1	1	
MENA	Bahrain		3		1	1	1		
MENA	Djibouti		4		1	1	1	1	
MENA	Egypt, Arab Rep.		4	1	1	1	1		
MENA	Iran, Islamic Rep.		2		1	1			
MENA	Iraq					1			
MENA	Israel		2		1	1			
MENA	Jordan		3		1	1	1		
MENA	Kuwait						1		

MENA	Lebanon	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	
MENA	Libya	3		1	1	1			
MENA	Malta	X							
MENA	Morocco	3		1	1	1			
MENA	Oman	X			1	1			
MENA	Qatar	2		1	1				
MENA	Saudi Arabia	3		1	1	1			
MENA	Syria (added)			1					
MENA	Tunisia	2			1	1			
MENA	United Arab Emirates	2		1	1				
MENA	West Bank and Gaza	4		1	1	1	1		
MENA	Yemen, Rep.					1			
SAR	Afghanistan	3		1		1	1		
SAR	Bangladesh	3	1		1	1			
SAR	Bhutan	3			1	1	1		
SAR	India	3		1	1	1			
SAR	Nepal							1	
SAR	Pakistan	3	1	1	1				
SAR	Sri Lanka	2			1	1			
Summary out of 201 countries		47(23%)	118(59%)	34(17%)	83(41%)	116(58%)	86(43%)	44(22%)	8(4%)
	No remote learning/ No Information at this time	Multi modal (# of modes used)	Virtual Interactive classes	Recorded classes online	Other Online Tools	Television	Radio	Paper-based	