

Agency in action: School leadership for a sustainable tomorrow

Collaborative Leadership for Resilient Educational Institutions

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The future will always surprise us

Impact

Climate change



Economic inequality



Natural disasters



Pandemics



Armed conflict



General Artificial Intelligence



Ageing



Polarisation



Energy shocks



Uncertainty

Unclassified - Non classifié



Trends Shaping Education



Aims

Foster **long-term strategic thinking** in education

Explore **plausible futures** to make better decisions in the present

Stimulate **reflection, conversation and reframing**

Methods



Analysis of global megatrends *outside of education*
to raise pertinent questions
for education

Development of future thinking tools
to anticipate changes, support
innovation & help stress-test
current policies

Audience



Policy
makers

Curriculum
designers

Teacher
educators

Researchers

School
leaders

Teachers
and
students



OECD Trends Shaping Education project

Strategic foresight FOR education



TSE report series



TSE Spotlights

Strategic foresight IN education



Community for Future-Fit Education Systems



Comparative analysis of country practices



Education Policies for a Sustainable Future

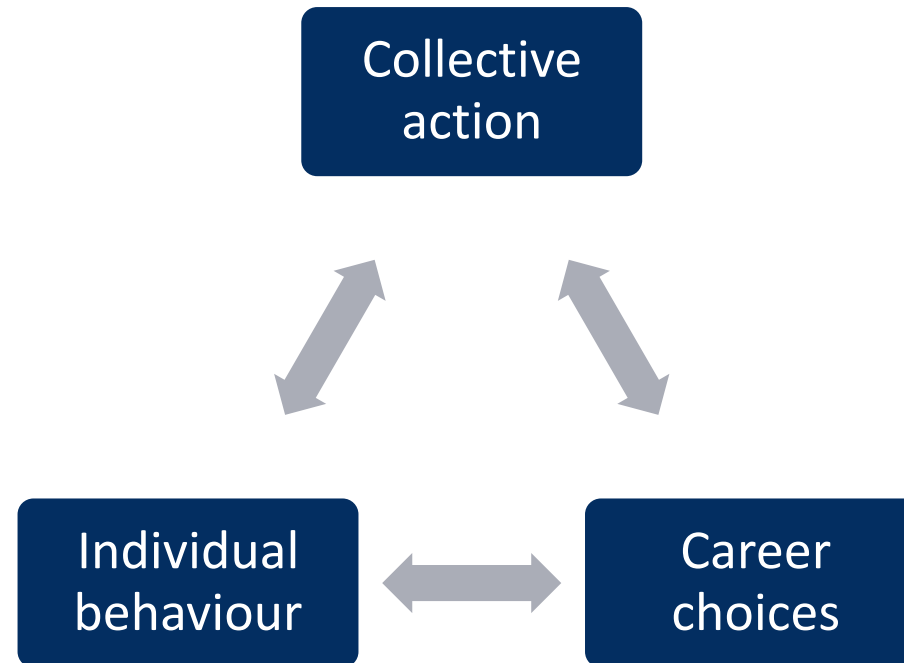


Empowered Citizens, Informed Consumers and Skilled Workers

Designing Education and Skills Policies for a Sustainable Future



Agency matters both for citizen participation and job choices





Trends Shaping Education 2025: Key messages

**Launched on 23 January 2025
In Helsinki, Finland**



Available online: scan the QR code or download
from: <https://doi.org/10.1787/ee6587fd-en>



Trends Shaping Education 2025





Trends Shaping Education 2025

Main themes



Global conflict and cooperation

- Armed conflict and international migration; global trade and energy security; climate change, green tech and science cooperation.



Work and progress

- Changing labour markets and opportunities for young people; socio-economic and gender equality; our digital and sustainable lives.



Voices and storytelling

- Democracy and diverse voices; polarisation, populism and fake news; digital discourse and connected devices.



Bodies and minds

- Mental health and addictions; environmental health threats and fertility; disability, medical technology and care work.

Cross-cutting themes: technology, sustainability and (in)equality



2. Global conflict and co-operation



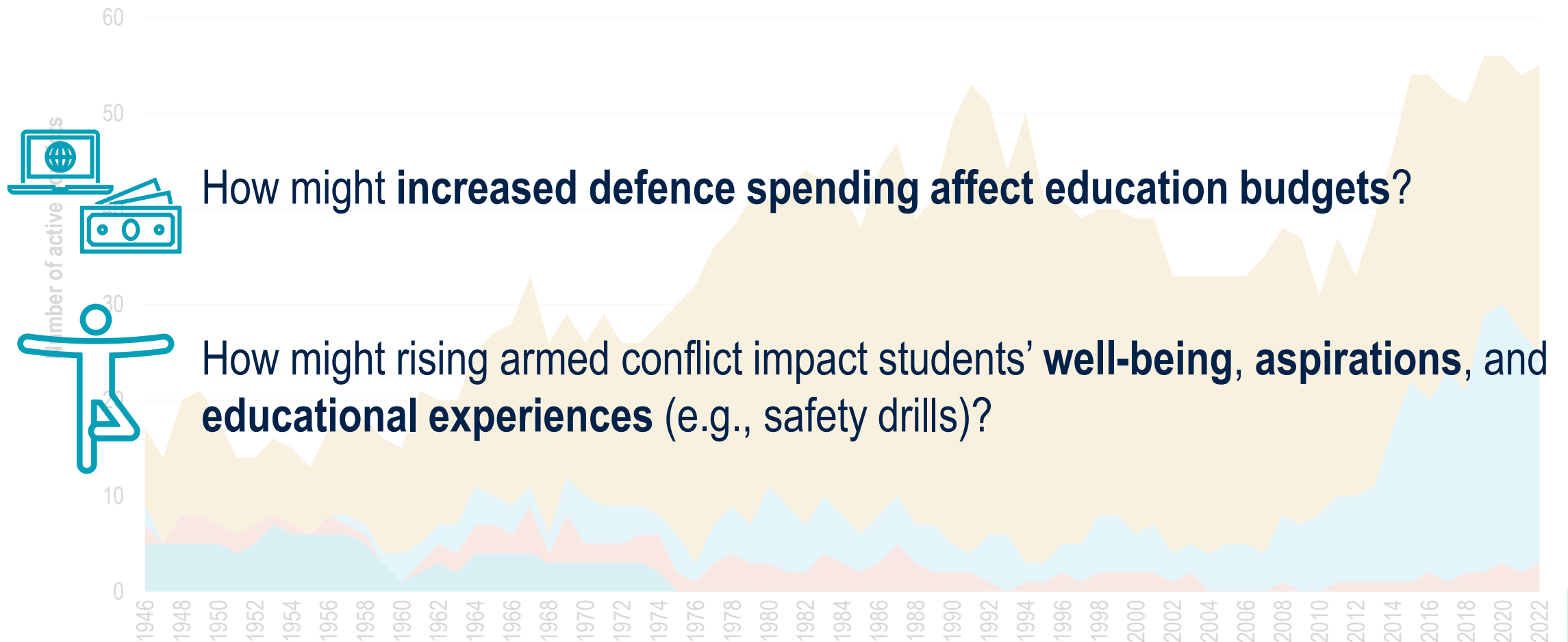
Global conflict on the rise

Figure 2.1

State-based armed conflict by type, worldwide (1946-2022)

And education?

■ Extrasystemic ■ Inter-state ■ Internationalised intra-state ■ Intra-state





Percentage of population exposed to maximum temperatures exceeding 35°C annually, OECD and OECD-like countries (1979-2022)

And education?

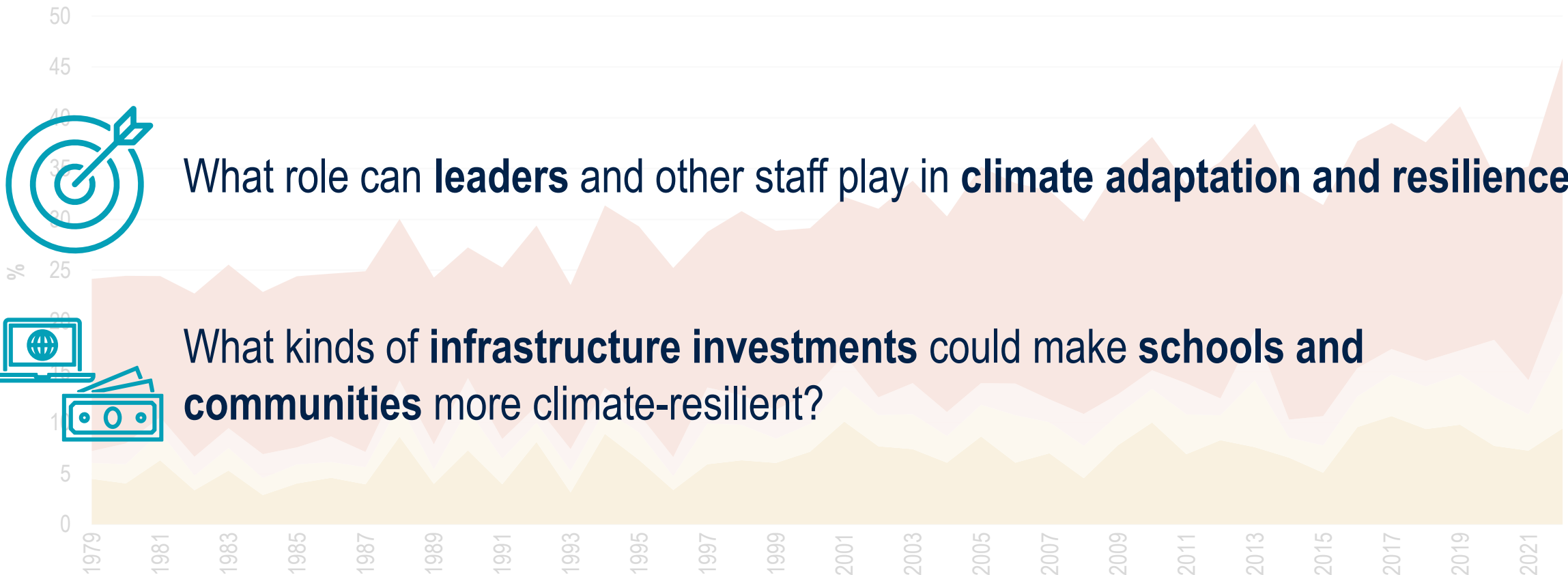
from 2 to 4 weeks from 4 to 6 weeks from 6 to 8 weeks over 8 weeks



What role can **leaders** and other staff play in **climate adaptation and resilience**?



What kinds of **infrastructure investments** could make **schools and communities** more climate-resilient?



A background image showing several construction workers wearing high-visibility orange and yellow safety vests. They are holding yellow hard hats. The image is slightly blurred and has a warm, orange-toned filter. The text '3. Work and progress' is overlaid in the center in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

3. Work and progress



Converging world, unequal societies

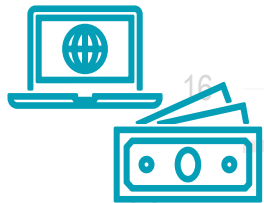
Figure 3.5

Income inequality, within and between countries, global (1820-2020)

And education?

Within-country inequality

Between-country inequality



What policies could help **reduce financial burdens on families** and increase availability and **affordability for all**?



What is the role of education in promoting **ethical reasoning, solidarity** and **social cohesion**?

2 1820 1840 1860 1880 1900 1920 1940 1960 1980 2000 2020



Work-life balance is improving overall

Figure 3.4

And education?





4. Voices and storytelling



Democracy in decline?

Figure 4.1

Voter turnout in parliamentary elections by world region (1960-2023)

And education?

Africa Americas Asia Europe Oceania Global



How can education **promote active and informed citizenship** while **acknowledging legitimate concerns** about the functioning of democracy?



Beyond teaching, how can **schools help democracy thrive within their walls** as well as **locally**?



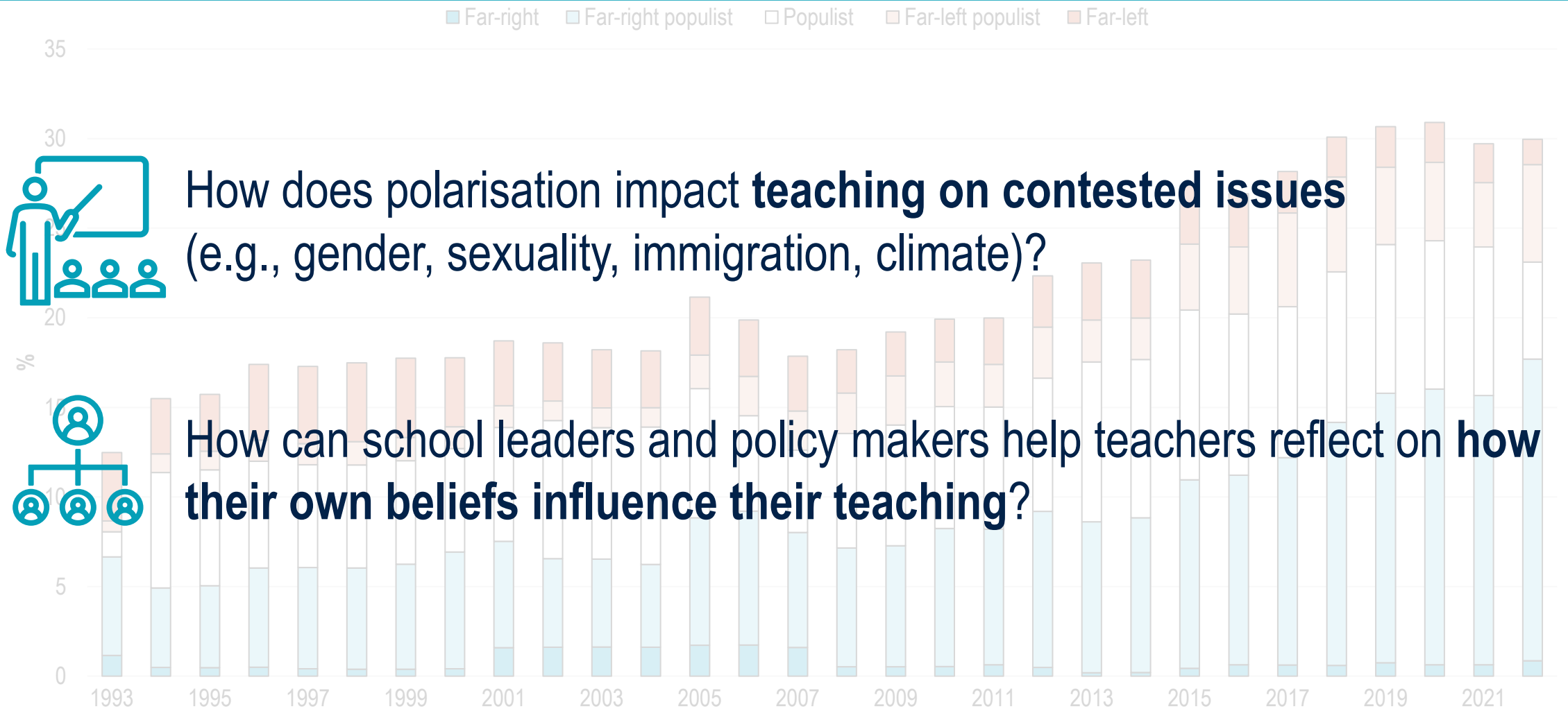


A populist wave

Figure 4.6

Vote share of parties by category, 31 European countries (1993-2022)

And education?





5. Bodies and minds

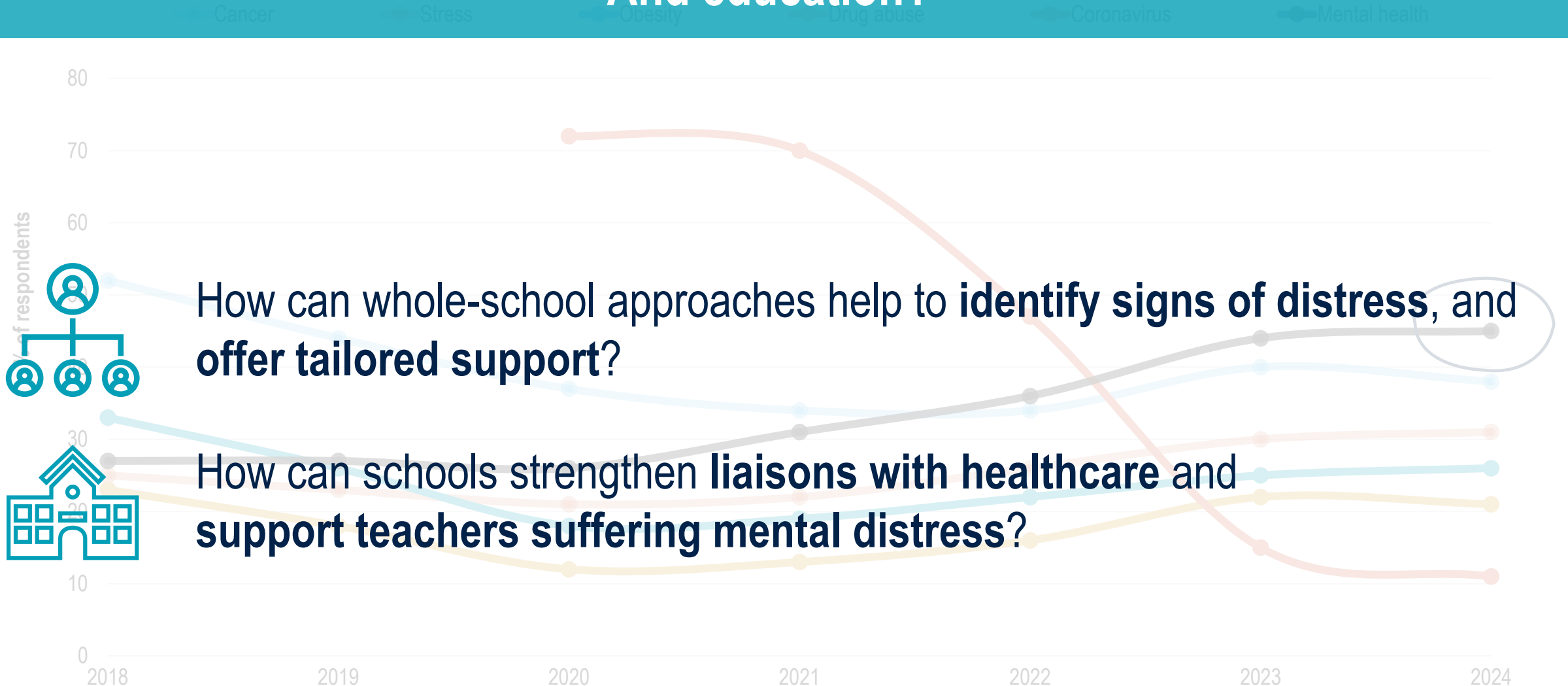


Mental health has become a top health concern

Figure 5.1

Biggest health problem according to survey respondents across 31 countries (2018-2024)

And education?





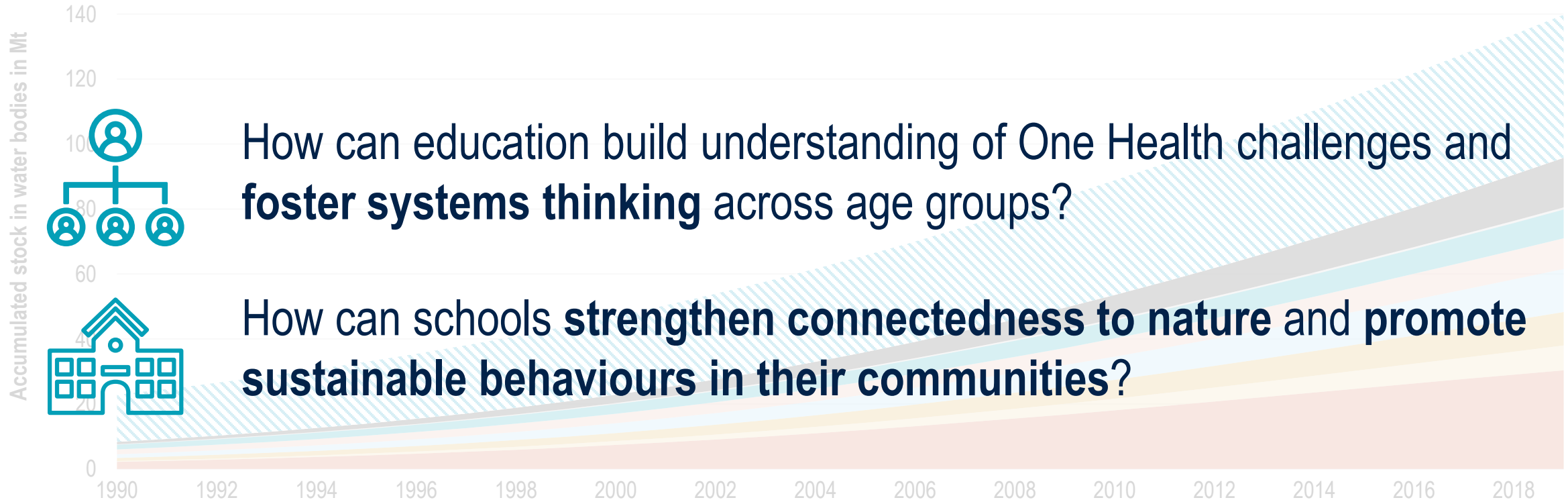
Accumulated plastic stock in water bodies is rising

Figure 5.5

Plastics leakage to oceans, rivers and lakes in million tonnes, OECD and other countries and regions (2019)

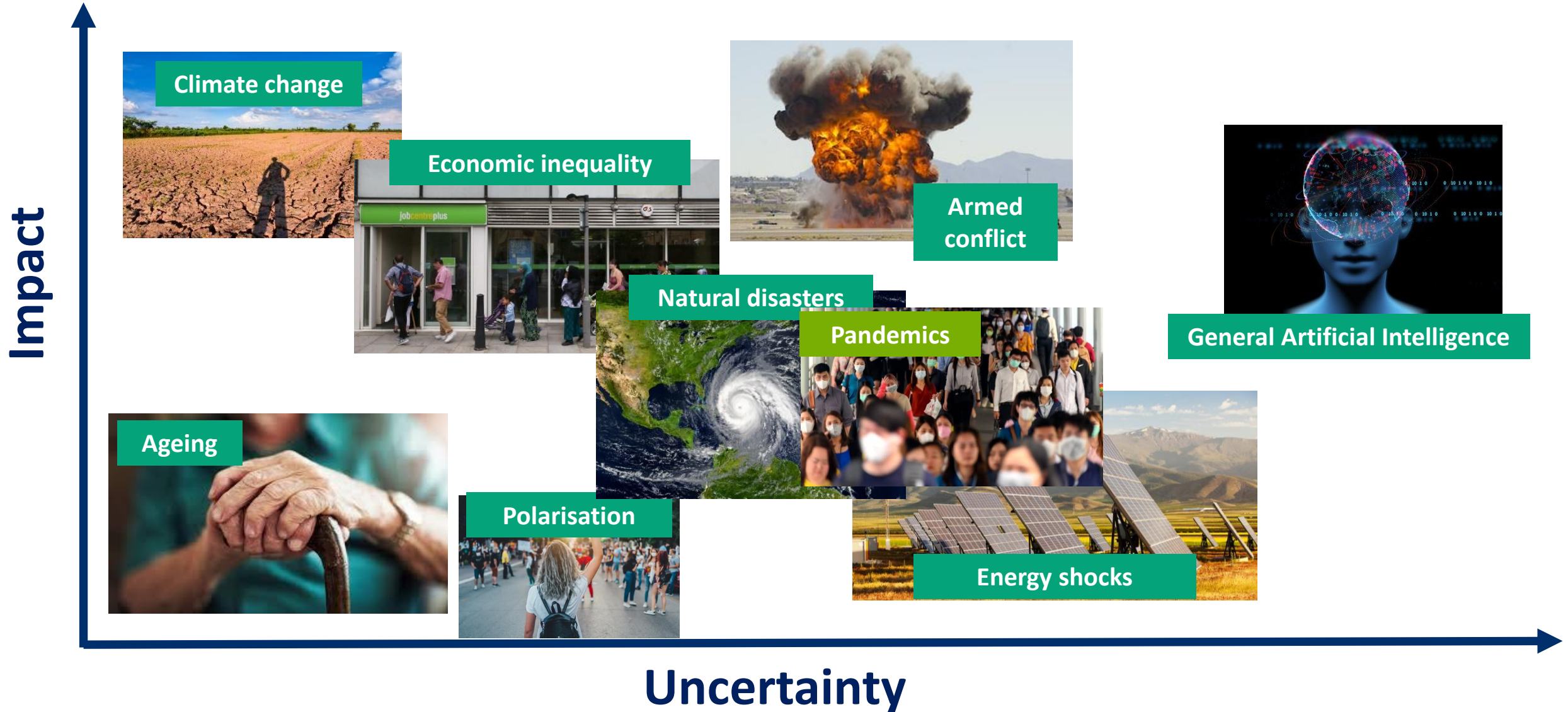
And education?

China India Latin America Other Africa Other Eurasia MENA Other EU Other non-OECD Asia OECD





But what does this mean for leadership?





Same practices, different emphasis



Armed
conflict



Economic inequality

The ways in which leaders apply these basic leadership practices – not the practices themselves – demonstrate responsiveness to, rather than dictation by, the contexts in which they work

Leithwood et al, 2020



Climate change



Polarisation



The leadership practices

DOMAINS OF PRACTICE



Set directions

- Build a **shared vision**
- Identify **specific, shared, short-term goals**



Build relationships and develop people

- Stimulate growth in the **professional capacities** of staff
- **Build trusting relationships** with and among staff, students and parents



Develop the organisation

- Build **collaborative culture** and distribute leadership
- Connect the school to its **wider environment**



Improve instructional programme

- **Allocate resources** in support of the school's vision and goals
- **Buffer staff from distractions** to their instructional work



Which practices become critical...

...in increasingly polarised societies?



Build productive relationships with families and communities



Provide instructional support



Buffer staff from distractions to their instructional work



Which practices become critical...

...as mental health concerns increase?



Build a shared vision



Stimulate growth in the professional capacities of staff



Allocate resources in support of the school's vision and goals



Which practices become critical...

...for environmental sustainability?



Structure the organisation to facilitate collaboration



Connect the school to its wider environment



Maintain a safe and healthy school environment



Turn and talk



- Which are most significant **trends shaping school leadership** in your context?
- Which **leadership practices** do feel become more important in times of **change and disruption**?



The leadership practices

DOMAINS OF PRACTICE



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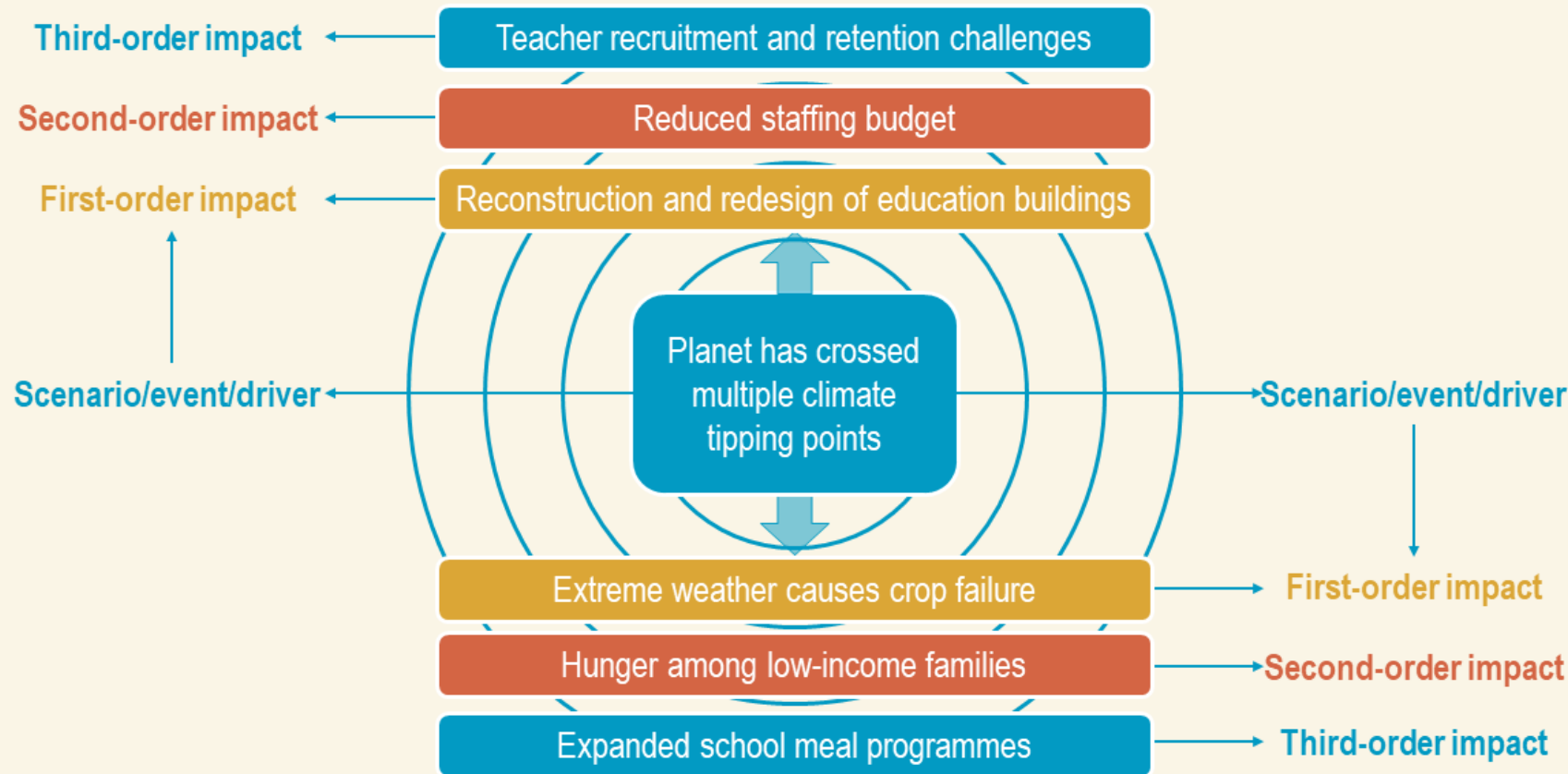
A brass telescope is positioned diagonally across the frame, pointing towards the upper right. It is set against a background of a cityscape under a cloudy sky. The telescope has a long, polished brass barrel with several adjustment rings and a mounting base. The city below is a dense urban area with many buildings, and the sky is filled with soft, white clouds.

Setting directions with strategic foresight

Futures thinking tools from Trends Shaping Education 2025



Future thinking tools: the futures wheel



1. **Choose** a scenario, trend, or event that challenges your assumptions about the future of your system or organisation.
2. **Identify** as many direct impacts as possible (first-order impacts).
3. **Identify** the direct impacts of each of the first-order impacts on your list (second-order impacts).
4. **Repeat** the process, identifying the direct impacts of the second-order impacts (third-order impacts).



Future scenarios



Continuation



**A Fragmented
world**



**Uneven
progress**



**Culture in
Conflict**



**Mixed
prognosis**



Voices and Storytelling – in 2040

Future 2



No representation without participation



Citizens serve on local assemblies
for six months each year



Representatives chosen by lottery
conduct national policy reviews



User-owned social networks
replace commercial social media



Education institutions are **governed by councils of staff, students, and caregivers**



Academic staff support local assemblies with skills workshops and research syntheses



Learners balance a **core curriculum** with **public policy specialisms**





Voices and Storytelling – in 2040

Future 2

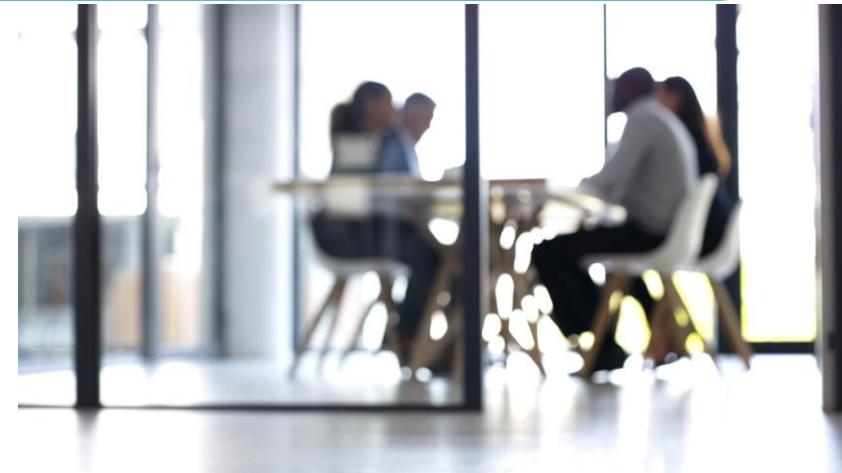


No representation without participation



Mina, early childhood director

I thought this 'distributed leadership' business would lighten my load, but it often feels like managing more voices. The more affluent parents had plenty to say in Council, but some immigrant parents barely spoke. The local university helped us design a more inclusive parent participation model, which is making a difference. Luckily, a few parents in finance have taken on the budget work that used to eat up my time. I worried our kids would struggle in a democratic classroom. With parents' influence, it's hard to know if kids' views are really their own, but they've done a great job establishing classroom rules, and they're better at following them than before.





Scenarios and stakeholders

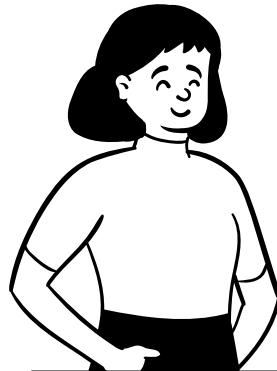
What **challenges** and **opportunities** do these futures present for different education stakeholders?



Priya, advisor,
Ministry of
Education



Gabriel, parent
and part-time
student



Eva, university
professor



Elias, 14-year-
old student



Mina, early
childhood
director



Daniel, school
teacher



Collaboration as the key



Within the institution

Structure the organisation to facilitate collaboration

Build collaborative culture and distribute leadership



Beyond the institution

Connect the school to its wider environment

Build productive relationships with families and communities

The roles and responsibilities of school leadership now extend far beyond one person's capacity

Educators face increasingly complex and multifaceted challenges

Trends and disruptions highlight the school's role within its wider community



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For more information, please visit
<https://www.oecd.org/en/about/projects/trends-shaping-education.html>



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Q&A