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The OECD project on building human capital accounts

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Human capital accounting is of great significance not only for research investigation but also for policy discussions. The OECD project aims at building human capital accounts for international comparisons. To this end, a consortium is set up with interested partners including Australia, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Sweden, and the United States.

The project reviews various approaches to measuring human capital in the literature with the purpose of finding an approach that is of solid theoretical foundation and of practical feasibility from accounting's perspective.

To implement the preferred approach advocated by Jorgenson and Fraumeni (1989, 1992), the project identifies the data requirements and compares these requirements with what is already available within the OECD statistical system.

Taking this into consideration and given the existence of divergences in terms of data availability and statistical definitions among participating countries, a number of streamlined common definitions and comparable assumptions have to be made, based on which the values of human capital stocks for individual countries are estimated.