

## 5. THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

### How much are teachers paid?

- Salaries for teachers in OECD countries with at least 15 years of experience average USD 37 350 at the pre-primary level, USD 39 024 at the primary level, USD 40 570 at the lower secondary level and USD 42 861 at the upper secondary level.
- Teachers' salaries at primary-school level represent 85% of average earnings for 25-64 year-old full-time workers with a tertiary education, on average in OECD countries; upper secondary teachers are paid 92% of average tertiary earnings.
- Salaries at the top of the scale with minimum qualifications are, on average, 58% higher than starting salaries at pre-primary level and 62% higher at upper secondary level; the difference tends to be greatest when it takes many years to progress through the scale.

#### Significance

This section shows the starting, mid-career and maximum statutory salaries of teachers in public pre-primary, primary and secondary education. Since teachers' salaries are the largest single cost in formal education, teacher compensation is a critical consideration for policy makers seeking to ensure both the quality of teaching and a sustainable education budget.

#### Findings

In most OECD countries, teachers' salaries rise with the level of education they teach. For example, in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Indonesia, Poland and Switzerland (11 years of experience), the salary of an upper secondary teacher with at least 15 years of experience is at least 25% higher than that of a pre-primary teacher with the same amount of experience.

Teachers' salaries at the top of the scale with minimum qualifications in pre-primary education are, on average, 58% higher than starting salaries. This figure reaches 61% in primary education, 61% in lower secondary education, and 62% in upper secondary education. The difference tends to be greatest when it takes many years to progress through the scale. In countries where it takes 30 years or more to reach the top of the salary scale, salaries at the top of the scale are an average 80% higher than starting salaries.

Teachers with maximum qualifications at the top of their salary scales earn, on average, USD 48 937 at the pre-primary level, USD 50 984 at the primary level, USD 53 686 at the lower secondary level, and USD 55 119 at the upper secondary level. However, the salary premium for higher qualifications varies. Primary teachers who hold the maximum qualification earn at least 30% more than primary teachers with similar experience, but who hold the minimum qualification, in Israel, Mexico, Poland and Slovenia, for exam-

ple. However, in around one-third of countries with available data there is no difference.

#### Trends

Between 2000 and 2012, teachers' salaries rose, in real terms, in all countries with available data, with the exception of France, Greece and Japan. However, in most countries, salaries increased less since 2005 than between 2000 and 2005 and the economic downturn in 2008 also had a direct impact on teachers' salaries, which were either frozen or cut in some countries. As a consequence, the number of countries showing an increase in salaries, in real terms, between 2008 and 2012 shrinks to fewer than half of OECD countries.

#### Definitions

Teachers' salaries at different points of their career refer to the average scheduled gross salary per year for a fully qualified full-time teacher. Earnings for workers with tertiary education are average earnings for full-time, full-year workers aged between 25 and 64 year and with university-level, vocational tertiary or post-tertiary education. Data are from the 2013 OECD-INES Survey on Teachers and the Curriculum and refer to the 2011-12 school year. Data on teachers' salary at upper secondary level refer only to general programmes. Gross teachers' salaries were converted using purchasing power parities (PPPs) for private consumption from the OECD National Accounts database.

Information on data for Israel:  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

#### Going further

For additional material, notes and a full explanation of sourcing and methodologies, see *Education at a Glance 2014* (Indicator D3).

Areas covered include:

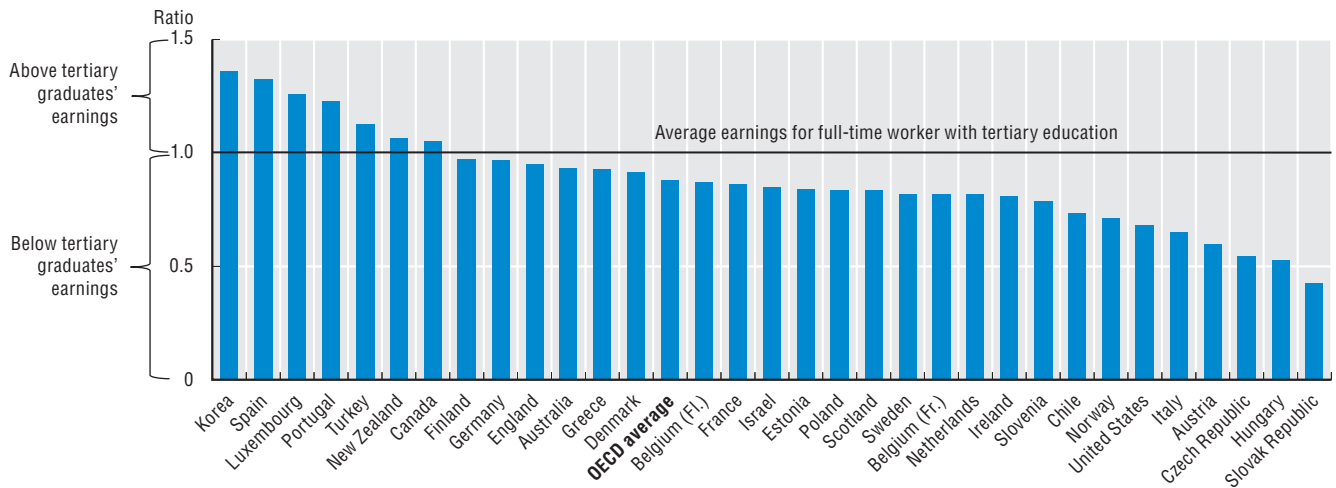
- Teachers' salaries and trends.
- Additional payments for teachers.

#### Further reading from OECD

OECD (2014), *TALIS 2013 Results: An International Perspective on Teaching and Learning*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264196261-en>.

Figure 5.5. **Teachers' salaries in lower secondary education relative to earnings for tertiary-educated workers, 2012**

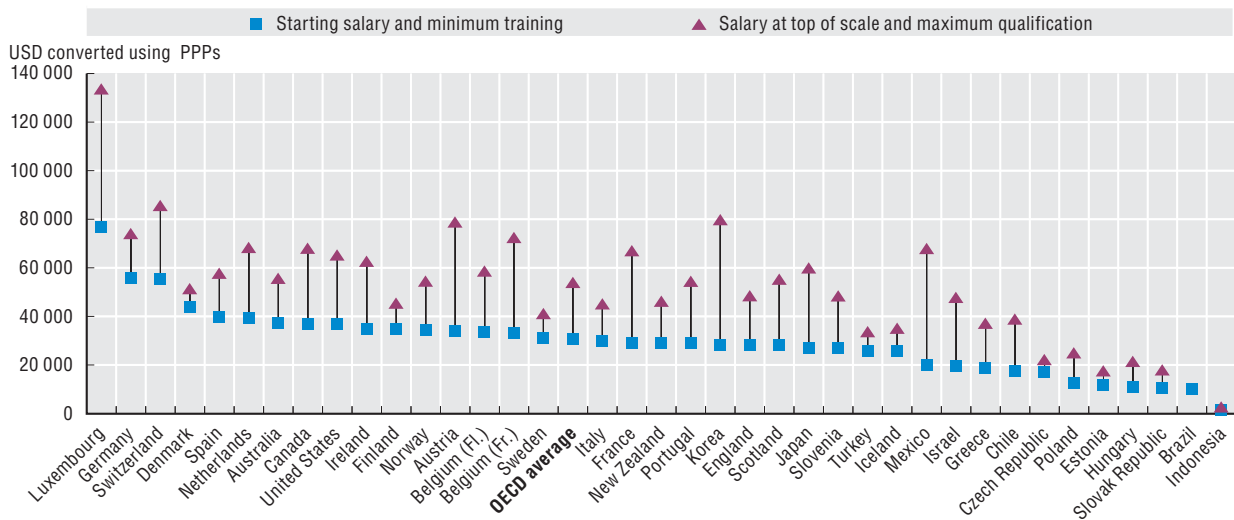
This figure compares lower secondary teachers' salaries with the earnings of other full-time workers with tertiary education.



Source: OECD (2014), Education at a Glance 2014, Chart D3.1 available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933119929>.

Figure 5.6. **Minimum and maximum teachers' salaries in lower secondary education, 2012**

This figure shows the gap between teachers' salaries at the start of their career, with minimum training and at the top of the scale with maximum qualification, in lower secondary education.



Source: OECD (2014), Education at a Glance 2014, Chart D3.2 available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933119948>.



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