

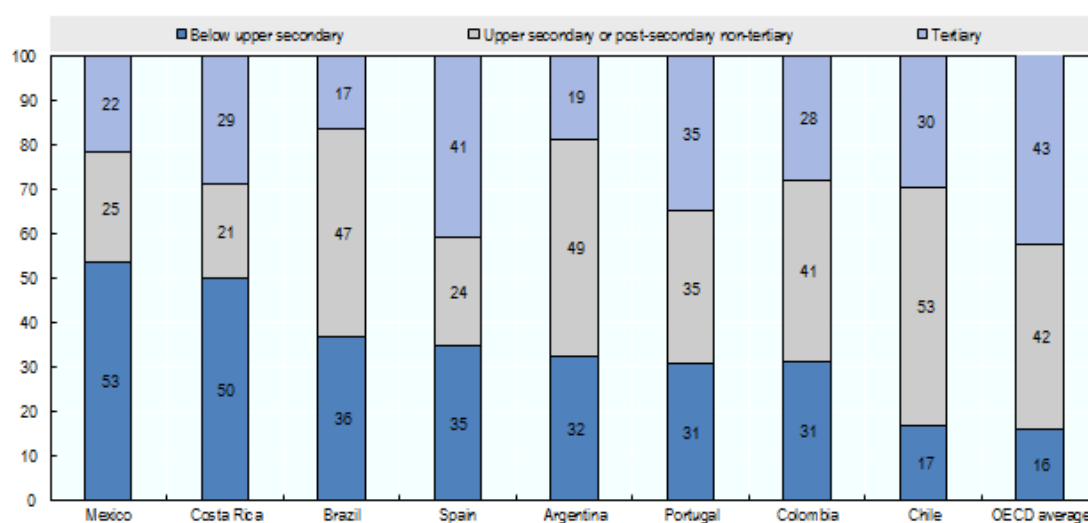
## EDUCATION AT A GLANCE 2017

*Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators* is the authoritative source for information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of education systems in the 35 OECD countries and a number of partner countries.

### Ibero-American countries

- Among the five Ibero-American countries with available data, **new tertiary entrants are more likely to choose science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields than the OECD average (27%) in Colombia (29%) and Mexico (32%),** and are equally or slightly less likely to in Chile (27%), Portugal (25%) and Spain (26%).
- **Between 2005 and 2016, most Ibero-American countries have seen a large decline in the share of young adults (25-34 year-olds) without an upper secondary qualification,** but they have not yet reached the OECD average of 16%.
- **Among the Ibero-American countries, only Spain is around the OECD average tertiary attainment rates among young adults,** with 41% holding a tertiary qualification compared to 43%. The share is particularly low in Argentina (19%) and Brazil (17%).
- **In most Ibero-American countries, except Colombia, a very large share of spending in educational institutions from primary to tertiary level goes on current expenditure;** in Mexico and Portugal as much as 96% of educational spending is allocated to current expenditure. On average, the figure is 91% across OECD countries.
- On average across OECD countries, 15% of 18-24 year-olds are neither employed nor in education or training (NEET). **In the six Ibero-American countries with available data, young people are more likely to be NEET than the OECD average:** 21% in Chile, 25% in Colombia and Costa Rica, 23% in Mexico, 18% in Portugal and 23% in Spain.

Figure 1. Educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds (2016)



Note: Year of reference is 2015 for Brazil and Chile.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of young adults with Below upper secondary education.

Source: OECD / ILO / UIS (2017), Table A1.2. See Annex 3 for notes ([www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm](http://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm)).

### Box 1. Ibero-American countries covered in EAG 2017

Ibero-America includes Brazil, Portugal, Spain and all Spanish-speaking countries in North, Central and South America.

EAG 2017 has data for the following Ibero-American countries:

- European OECD countries: Portugal and Spain
- Latin American OECD countries: Chile and Mexico
- Latin American OECD accession countries: Colombia and Costa Rica
- Latin American OECD partner countries: Argentina and Brazil

## A low share of adults with an upper secondary or tertiary education

- In the majority of OECD countries, education now begins for most children well before the age of 5 – 78% of 3-year-olds are enrolled in early childhood education (either early childhood educational development programmes or pre-primary education) across OECD countries. Enrolment rates in Spain (95%) and Portugal (79% in pre-primary only) are above this average, but the Latin American countries with available data are at least 15 percentage points (and up to 72 percentage points) below it: 40% in Argentina, 60% in Brazil, 56% in Chile, 5% in Costa Rica and 46% in Mexico.
- In general, in Ibero-American countries the pattern of educational attainment is quite different from the OECD average; in particular, they all have a larger share of young adults (25-34 year-olds) without an upper secondary degree and a smaller share with a tertiary degree (Figure 1).
- On average across OECD countries, the share of young adults who did not complete upper secondary education fell from 21% in 2005 to 16% in 2016. In most Ibero-American countries, the share has fallen faster than across the OECD in recent years, although the shares were still higher than the OECD average in 2016. During the period 2005-16, the percentage of young adults who did not complete upper secondary education fell from 66% to 53% in Mexico, from 57% to 31% in Portugal and from 62% to 50% in Costa Rica. The share also fell in Chile from 26% to 17% between 2010 and 2015, and in Argentina from 41% to 32% between 2005 and 2015. In Spain the share remained almost unchanged over the period 2005-16.
- Women make up between 52% and 57% of upper secondary graduates in general programmes across Ibero-American countries, about the same as the OECD average of 55%. Women are on average under-represented in upper secondary vocational programmes across OECD countries, at 46% of graduates, but this is not the case in most Ibero-American countries with available data: they make up 57% of graduates in Brazil, 49% in Chile, 52% in Costa Rica, 50% in Mexico and 52% in Spain. However, in Portugal, only 45% of upper secondary vocational graduates are women.
- The average age of graduates from upper secondary general education is 18 in Ibero-American countries, the same as the OECD average, except for Brazil and Chile where the age is 19. The average age of graduates from upper secondary vocational education is 20 in Brazil, 18 in Chile, 19 in Costa Rica, 18 in Mexico and 21 in Portugal, all below the OECD average of 22, and at 26 years in Spain.
- In 2016 (or the latest available year), 43% of young adults across OECD countries had a tertiary degree, but among the eight Ibero-American countries with data available, only Spain is around this average with a share of 41%. In Portugal the share is 35% and all other Ibero-American countries have a share of 30% or below. Tertiary attainment is particularly low in Argentina (19%) and Brazil (17%) (Figure 1).

## Gender bias in the choice of field of study is less than for the OECD as a whole

- Entry rates estimate the proportion of people who are expected to enter a specific type of tertiary education programme during their lifetime. Based on current patterns, it is estimated that an average of 57% of young adults in OECD countries will enter a bachelor's or equivalent programme over their lifetime. Among the seven Ibero-American countries with available data, only Chile has a similar expectation (57%), and Argentina a slightly lower one (53%). In the other countries the estimated entry rates are at least 9 percentage points below the OECD average: 44% in Costa Rica, 46% in Portugal and 48% in Spain and are more than 22 percentage points below the OECD average in Colombia (28%) and Mexico (35%).
- Among the five Ibero-American countries with available data, new entrants to tertiary education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields were comparable to the OECD average. In 2015, 27% of new entrants to tertiary education in OECD countries chose a STEM field of study on average, with the largest share selecting engineering, manufacturing and construction. In Colombia (29%) and Mexico (32%), the share was larger than the OECD average while Chile (27%), Portugal (25%) and Spain (26%) were at or slightly below it.
- Women tend to be under-represented in STEM fields, but this is less marked in some Ibero-American countries. For instance, in 2015, the share of female new entrants to engineering, manufacturing and construction was at or

above the OECD average of 24% in Colombia (32%), Mexico (27%), Portugal (28%) and Spain (24%). In Chile, however, the share was even lower, at 17%.

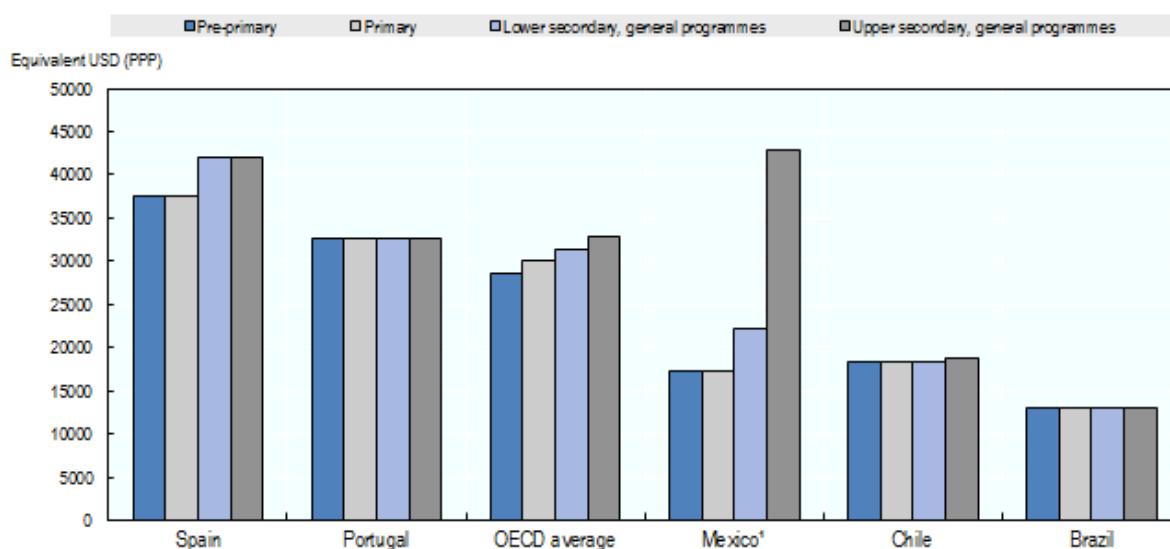
- Women are over-represented (i.e. making up more than 60% of new entrants) in the fields of education, and health and welfare in Ibero-American countries, as they are on average across OECD countries (78%). For arts and humanities, however, the share of women is below 61% in each of the five Ibero-American countries with available data, a better balance than on average for OECD countries (63%).

## Teachers face larger class sizes in most Ibero-American countries

- The average class size across Ibero-American countries is above the OECD average of 21 students in primary education and 23 students in lower secondary education. Among the six Ibero-American school systems with available data, Chile has the largest classes (30 students in primary education and 31 students in lower secondary education) and Portugal the smallest classes (21 students in primary education and 23 students in lower secondary education), in both primary and lower secondary education.
- In Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico, student-teacher ratios in primary and secondary education are considerably larger than the OECD average of 15 students per teacher in primary education and 13 students per teacher in secondary education. The ratios are somewhat lower in Costa Rica (for primary education), Portugal and Spain.

**Figure 2. Teacher's statutory salaries, based on minimum qualifications (2015)**

Annual teachers' salaries, in public institutions, in equivalent USD converted using PPPs for private consumption



1. Excludes the part of social security contributions and pension-scheme contributions paid by the employees.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the annual teachers' salaries in lower secondary education.

Source: OECD (2017). Table D3.1, available on line. See Annex 3 for notes ([www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm](http://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm)).

- Across OECD countries, statutory starting salaries for teachers with minimum qualifications average USD 28 800<sup>1</sup> at pre-primary level, USD 30 100 at primary, USD 31 500 at lower secondary and USD 32 900 at upper secondary. The equivalent salaries in Spain are considerably higher than the OECD average across all educational levels; in Portugal they are similar or slightly above the OECD average; and in Brazil, Chile and Mexico they are below the OECD average (Figure 2). In lower secondary education, for instance, the statutory starting salaries of teachers with minimum qualifications were USD 42 000 in Spain, USD 32 600 in Portugal, USD 22 200 in Mexico, USD 18 300 in Chile and USD 13 000 in Brazil.
- Unlike in most OECD countries, in Ibero-American countries teachers' salaries do not increase with the level of education they teach, except in Mexico and Spain (Figure 2). The starting salaries of teachers with minimum qualifications increase from primary to lower-secondary education by 28% in Mexico and 12% in Spain.
- On average across OECD countries, the share of female teachers decreases as the level of education increases: from 97% at the pre-primary level to 83% at the primary level, 69% at the lower secondary level and 59% at the

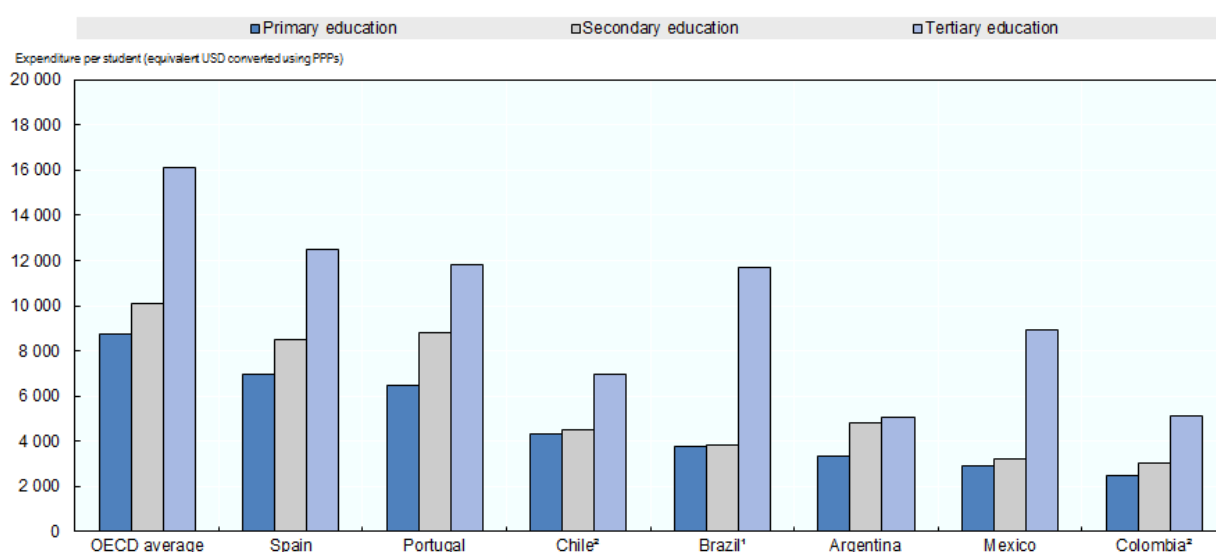
<sup>1</sup> Values reported in equivalent US dollars (USD) have been converted using purchasing power parities (PPPs) for GDP.

upper secondary level. In Ibero-American countries the share of women teachers is lower. Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Spain have the greatest gender balance, while Brazil, Chile and Portugal have the greatest gender imbalances.

### Although Ibero-American countries devote a large share of public expenditure on education, spending per student is low

- Annual expenditure per student in Ibero-American countries is roughly half of the OECD average from primary to tertiary education including R&D activities (Figure 3). In 2014, OECD countries spent an average of USD 10 800 a year on educating each student from primary to tertiary education: USD 8 700 per primary student, USD 10 200 per lower secondary student, USD 10 200 per upper secondary student and USD 16 100 per tertiary student. Overall, spending was about 20% lower in Portugal and Spain than the OECD average, about 50% lower in Brazil and Chile, and between 60% and 70% lower in Argentina, Colombia and Mexico.

**Figure 3. Annual expenditure per student by educational institutions for all services, by level of education (2014)**  
Expenditure on core, ancillary services and R&D, in equivalent USD converted using PPPs, based on full-time equivalents



**Note:** PPP and USD stand for Purchasing Power Parity and United States Dollars respectively.

1. Public institutions only.

2. Year of reference 2015.

Countries are ranked in descending order of expenditure on educational institutions per student in primary education.

**Source:** OECD / UIS / Eurostat (2017). Table B1.1. See Annex 3 for notes ([www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm](http://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm)).

- As in almost all countries, expenditure per student by educational institutions in Ibero-American countries increases along with educational level. In Brazil and Chile, however, expenditure per primary and secondary student is similar, and in Argentina the spending per tertiary student is only slightly above the spending per secondary student (Figure 3).
- Spending per student is similar across OECD and Ibero-American countries as a share of per capita gross domestic product (GDP). On average OECD countries spend 27% of per capita GDP educating each student, while Brazil and Portugal spend at least 30%, and Argentina, Chile and Mexico spend less than 23%. In Colombia and Spain the annual expenditure per student per capita GDP are around the OECD average, 24% and 26%, respectively.
- Ibero-American countries tend to devote a slightly higher share of their GDP to education than the average across OECD countries, ranging from 5.8% in Colombia and Portugal to 4.3% in Spain. In the case of Spain the birth rate is very low and therefore this indicator is not as relevant as the spending per student as a share of per capita GDP. In 2014, OECD countries spent on average 5.2% of their GDP on educational institutions (from primary to tertiary levels), ranging from 3.6% in Luxembourg to 6.6% in the United Kingdom.
- Public institutions in OECD countries spend on average 4.4% of GDP on education (from primary to tertiary levels), while only 0.8% is funded by private institutions. In Ibero-American countries a larger share of spending comes from private sources, especially in Chile (1.8%) and Colombia (1.9%).
- Across Ibero-American countries, public spending on primary to tertiary education makes up a larger share of all government expenditure than the OECD average of 11.3%. The share of public spending allocated to education is particularly large in Latin America, at 16% in Brazil and Chile, 19% in Costa Rica and 17% in Mexico. These high

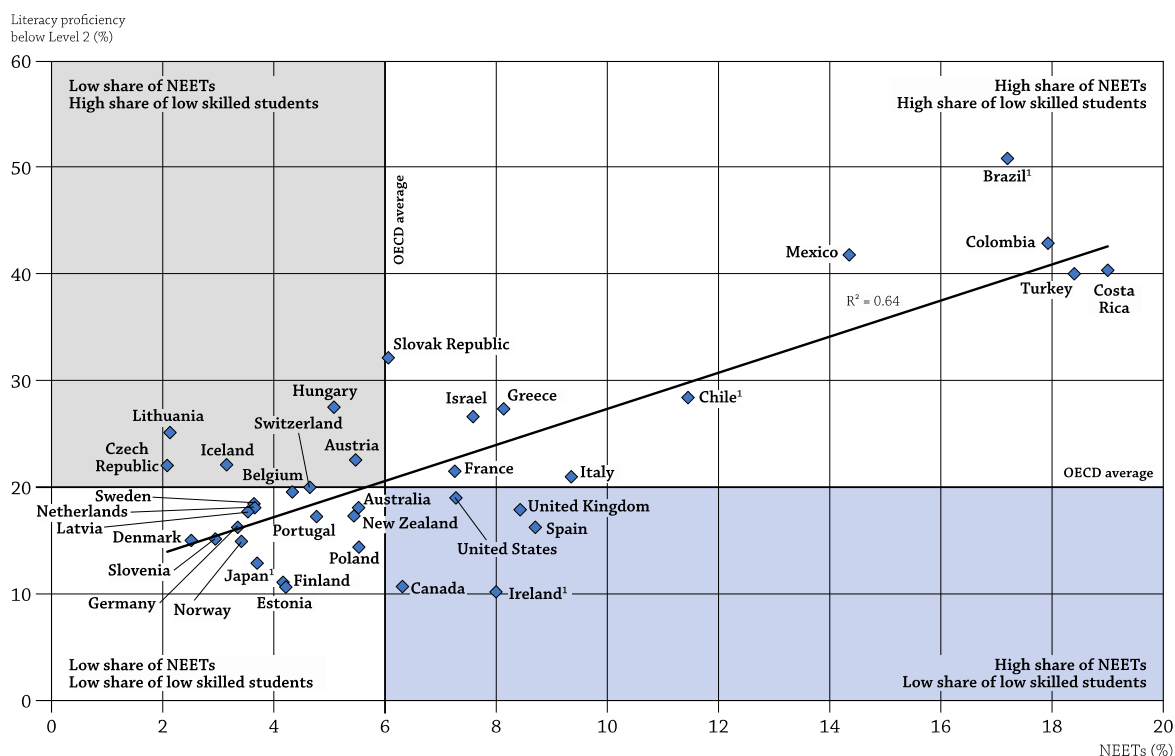
percentages reflect as much the importance Latin American countries attach to education, as their low fiscal capacity.

- In most Ibero-American countries, except Colombia (81%), a very large share of educational institutions' spending from primary to tertiary level is devoted to current expenditure (goods and services consumed within the current year). For instance, in Mexico and Portugal as much as 96% of educational spending is allocated to current expenditure. The average for OECD countries is 91% current expenditure and 9% capital.
- On average for OECD countries, 79% of current expenditure by public educational institutions in primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education goes on compensation for teachers and other staff, compared to 67% in tertiary education. Staff compensation makes up an even larger share of current expenditure on average across Ibero-American countries. For instance, in Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Portugal at least 90% of current expenditure by public institutions is allocated to staff compensation in primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

### A large share of NEETs

- On average across OECD countries, about half (53%) of 18-24 year-olds are in education, 32% are not in education but are employed and 15% are neither employed nor in education or training (NEET). In the case of the six Ibero-American countries with available data, the percentages of NEETs are between 3 and 9 percentage points higher than the OECD average: 21% in Chile, 25% in Colombia and Costa Rica, 23% in Mexico, 18% in Portugal and 23% in Spain.

Figure 4. Percentage of 15-19 year-old NEETS (2016) and percentage of 15-year-old students with low literacy skills (2015)



Note: NEET refers to young people neither in employment nor in education or training. Low skilled students refer to 15 year-old students with below Level 2 in reading proficiency in PISA 2015.

1. Year of reference differs from 2016 for NEET rates. Refer to Table C5.1 for details.

Source: NEETS: OECD (2017), Education at a Glance Database. Literacy proficiency level: OECD (2016), PISA 2015 Database, Table I.4.2a. See Annex 3 for notes ([www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm](http://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm)).

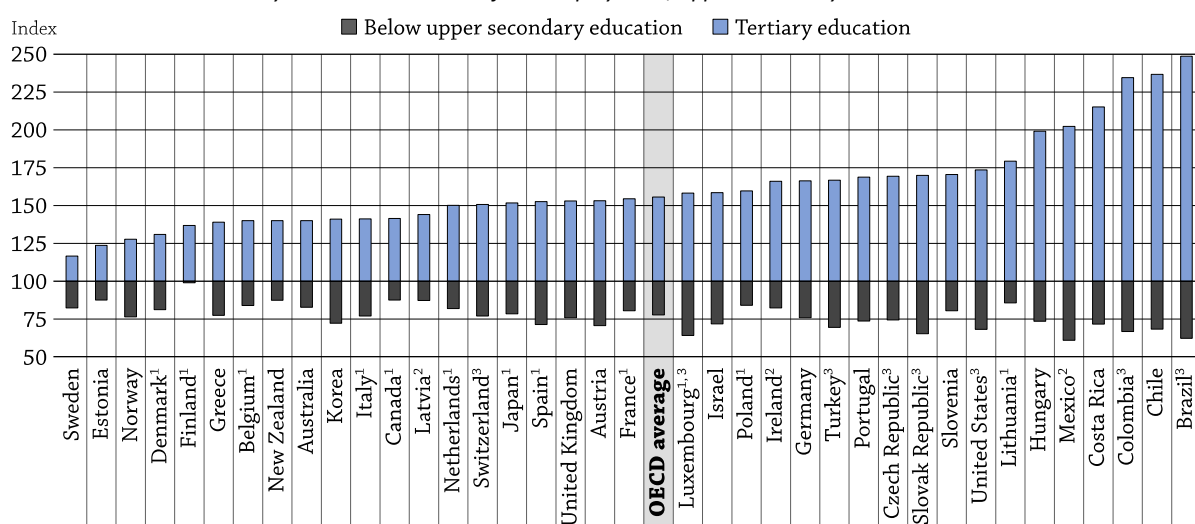
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933558496>

- In general, the higher a country's percentage of low-performing students at the age of 15 in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the higher the percentage of NEETs. The share of NEETs is lowest in countries with only a small share of young adults with low literacy proficiency (below PISA Level 2) such as Estonia, Finland or Japan, while it is highest in countries with the largest share of low-skilled students, such as Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Turkey. But for example in Spain there is a high share of NEETs although the share of low-skilled students is low (Figure 4).

## Tertiary graduates enjoy good labour market outcomes

- In all Ibero-American countries, employment rates for 25-34 year-olds improve with increased educational attainment. On average across OECD countries, employment rates are 24 percentage points higher for young adults with a tertiary degree than for those without an upper secondary qualification. In Chile the difference is similar, and in Argentina it is 23 percentage points. In Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico and Spain the difference is between 14 and 18 percentage points, and in Colombia and Portugal the differences are 9 and 8 percentage points respectively.
- When it comes to earnings, adults without an upper secondary education are penalised more by the labour market in Ibero-American countries than on average across OECD countries. In the seven Ibero-American countries with available data, 25-64 year-old workers without an upper secondary education have an earnings disadvantage of at least 25% compared with those with upper secondary education; the OECD average earnings disadvantage is 22% (Figure 5).
- The relative earnings advantage of having a tertiary qualification compared with an upper secondary one is also much larger in some Ibero-American countries than on average across OECD countries. In Portugal the earnings advantage is 69% and in Spain it is 53%, around the OECD average of 56%, but in the Latin American countries, the earnings advantage is more than double: 149% in Brazil, 137% in Chile, 134% in Colombia, 115% in Costa Rica and 102% in Mexico. In these countries, between 47% and 60% of tertiary-educated workers earn more than twice the median earnings for all workers, while the average across OECD countries is 24%.

**Figure 5. Relative earnings of adults, by educational attainment (2015)**  
25-64 year-olds with income from employment, upper secondary education =100



**Note:** Tertiary education includes short-cycle tertiary, bachelor's, master's, doctoral or equivalent degrees.

1. Year of reference differs from 2015. Refer to the source table for details.

2. Earnings net of income tax.

3. Index 100 refers to the combined ISCED levels 3 and 4 of the educational attainment levels in the ISCED 2011 classification.

Countries are ranked in ascending order of the relative earnings of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary education.

**Source:** OECD (2017), Table A6.1. See *Source* section for more information and Annex 3 for notes ([www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm](http://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm)).

**StatLink**  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933557375>



This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.


#### Note regarding data from Israel

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

#### References

OECD (2017), *Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2017-en>.

For more information on Education at a Glance 2017 and to access the full set of Indicators, visit [www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm](http://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

Updated data can be found on line at [OECD.Stat](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en) as well as by following the **StatLinks**  under the tables and charts in the publication <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en>.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using:  **EducationGPS**  
<http://gpseducation.oecd.org/>.

<b>Questions can be directed to:</b>	<b>Country note authors:</b>
Marie-Hélène Doumet	Gara Rojas González
Senior analyst	Alfonso Echazarra
Directorate for Education and Skills	Directorate for Education and Skills
<a href="mailto:Marie-Helene.Doumet@oecd.org">Marie-Helene.Doumet@oecd.org</a>	<a href="mailto:Gara.RojasGonzalez@oecd.org">Gara.RojasGonzalez@oecd.org</a>



**From:**  
**Education at a Glance 2017**  
OECD Indicators

**Access the complete publication at:**  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2017-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2017), "Ibero-American countries", in *Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2017-84-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to [rights@oecd.org](mailto:rights@oecd.org). Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at [info@copyright.com](mailto:info@copyright.com) or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at [contact@cfcopies.com](mailto:contact@cfcopies.com).