

TEACHING TIME AND TEACHERS' WORKING TIME

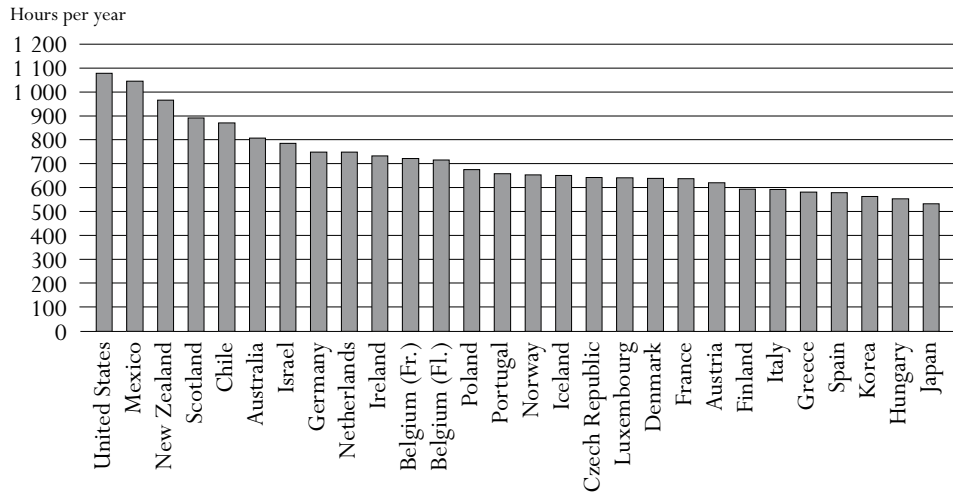
This indicator focuses on the statutory working time of teachers at different levels of education as well as their statutory teaching time. Although working time and teaching time only partly determine the actual workload of teachers, they do give some valuable insights into differences among countries in what is demanded of teachers. Together with teachers' salaries (see Indicator D3) and average class size (see Indicator D2), this indicator presents some key measures of the working conditions of teachers.

Key results

Chart D4.1. Number of teaching hours per year in lower secondary education (2004)

Net contact time in hours per year in public institutions

The number of teaching hours per year in public lower secondary schools averages 704 hours but ranges from 534 hours per year in Japan to over 1 000 hours in Mexico (1 047 hours) and the United States (1 080 hours).



Countries are ranked in descending order of the number of teaching hours per year in lower secondary education.

Source: OECD, Table D4.1. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2006).

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Other highlights of this indicator

- The number of teaching hours per year in public primary schools averages 805 hours (10 more than in 2003), but ranges from around 650 hours or less in Denmark, Japan and Turkey to 1 080 hours in the United States.
- The average number of teaching hours in upper secondary general education is 663 hours, but ranges from less than 500 in Japan (466 hours) to more than 1 000 hours in the United States (1 080 hours).
- The composition, in terms of days, weeks and hours per day, of teachers' annual teaching time varies considerably. For instance, while teachers in Denmark teach for 42 weeks in the year (at all ISCED levels) compared with 36 weeks per year in Iceland, the total teaching time (in hours) for teachers in Iceland is greater than for teachers in Denmark.
- Regulations of teachers' working time also vary. In most countries, teachers are formally required to work a specific number of hours; in others, teaching time is only specified as the number of lessons per week.

D4

Policy context

In addition to class size and the ratio of students to teaching staff (see Indicator D2), students’ hours of instruction (see Indicator D1) and teachers’ salaries (see Indicator D3), the amount of time teachers spend teaching affects the financial resources which countries need to invest in education. Teaching hours and the extent of non-teaching duties are also important elements of teachers’ working conditions and are related to the attractiveness of the teaching profession.

The proportion of working time spent teaching can be interpreted as a measure of teachers’ workload, thus providing information on the amount of time available for other activities such as lesson preparation, correction, in-service training and staff meetings.

Evidence and explanations

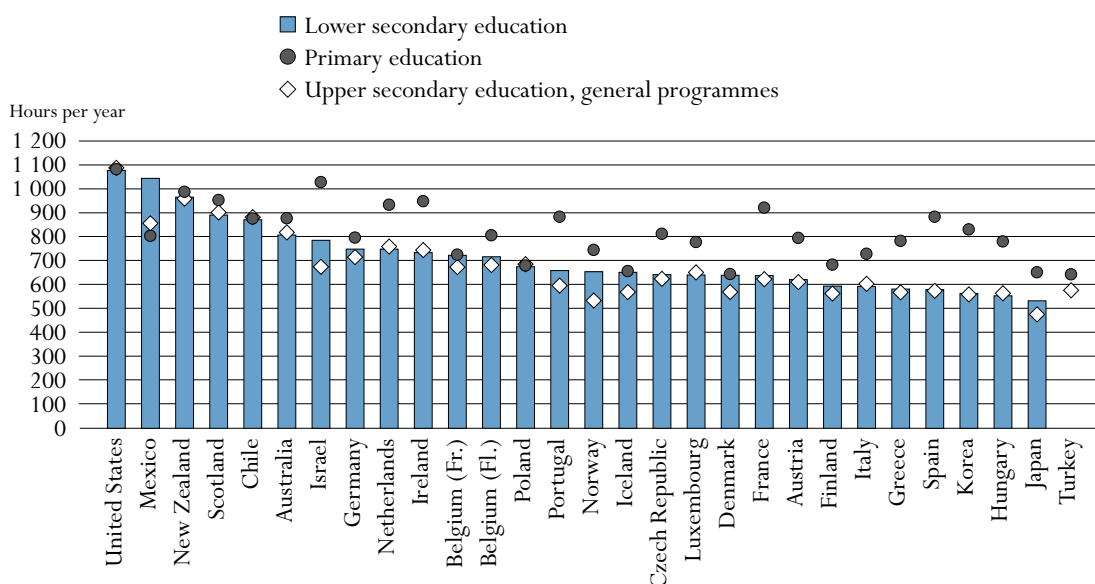
Teaching time in primary education

In both primary and secondary education, countries vary in the number of teaching hours per year required of the average public school teacher. Primary education teaching hours are usually higher than secondary education.

In OECD countries, a primary school teacher teaches an average of 805 hours per year (10 more than last year), but this varies from 650 hours or less in Denmark, Japan and Turkey to 900 hours or more in France, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Scotland and over 1 000 hours in the United States and in the partner country Israel (Chart D4.2 and Table D4.1) (see Annex 3 for details at www.oecd.org/edu/eag2006).

Chart D4.2. Number of teaching hours per year, by level of education (2004)

Net contact time in hours per year in public institutions



Countries are ranked in descending order of the number of teaching hours per year in lower secondary education.

Source: OECD, Table D4.1. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2006).

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Teaching time can be distributed quite differently throughout the year. For instance, Korea is the only country in which primary teachers teach for 6 days per week and yet total annual teaching time is around the average because the hours taught per day is less than average. Denmark and Iceland provide an interesting contrast in this respect as both countries have similar annual net teaching time in hours (Chart D4.4). However, teachers in Denmark must complete in principle 200 days of instruction in 42 weeks, compared to 175 days in 36 weeks in Iceland. The number of hours taught per day of instruction provides the explanation for this situation.

Teachers in Iceland must complete 25 less days of instruction than teachers in Denmark, but these days would each include, on average, 3.7 hours of teaching compared to 3.2 in Denmark. Teachers in Iceland must provide just over half-an-hour more teaching time per day of instruction than teachers in Denmark. Therefore, a relatively small difference in teaching time per day can lead to a substantial difference in the number of days of instruction per year teachers must complete.

Teaching time in secondary education

In lower secondary education in OECD countries, teachers teach an average of 704 hours per year. The teaching load ranges from less than 600 hours in Finland (595 hours), Greece (583 hours), Hungary (555 hours), Italy (594 hours), Japan (534 hours), Korea (565 hours) and Spain (581 hours) to more than 1 000 hours in Mexico (1 047 hours) and the United States (1 080 hours) (Chart D4.2 and Table D4.1).

The upper secondary, general education teaching load is usually lighter than in lower secondary education. A teacher of general subjects has an average statutory teaching load of 663 hours per year among OECD countries. Teaching loads range from less than 500 hours in Japan to more than 800 hours in Australia, Mexico and Scotland (and partner country Chile), over 900 hours in New Zealand and over 1 000 hours in the United States (Chart D4.2 and Table D4.1).

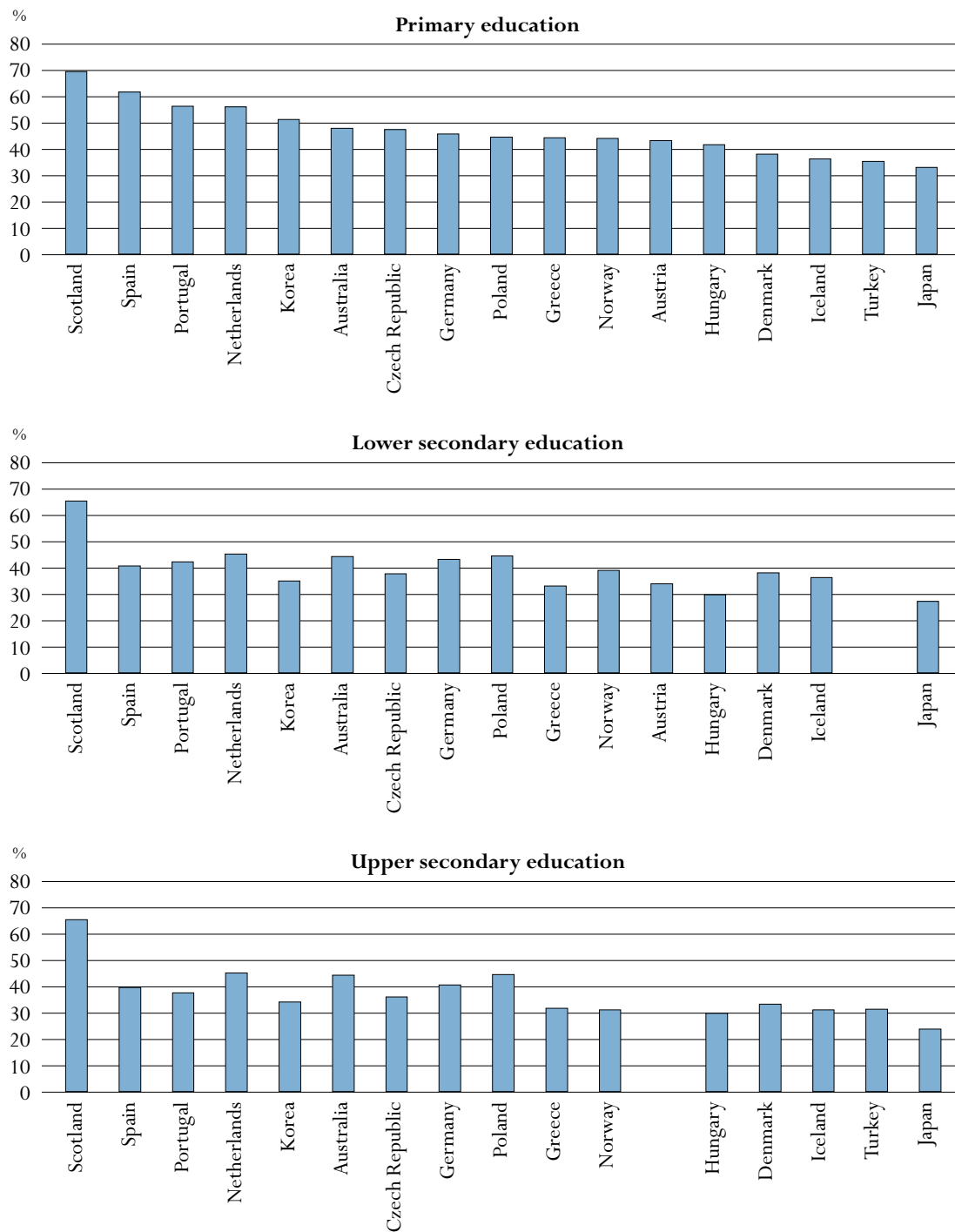
As is the case for primary teachers, the number of hours of teaching time and the number of days of instruction vary across countries. As a consequence, the average hours per day that teachers teach vary widely, ranging at the lower secondary level from three or less hours per day in Hungary and Korea to five hours or more per day in Mexico and New Zealand and six hours per day in the United States. Similarly, at the upper secondary general level, teachers in Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Korea and Norway teach for three hours or less per day, compared to five hours per day in New Zealand and six hours per day in the United States. Korea provides an interesting example of the differences in the organisation of teachers' work. In Korea, teachers must complete the highest number of days of instruction (220 days) but have the third lowest required number of hours of teaching time for lower secondary and upper secondary teachers (Chart D4.4). The inclusion of breaks between classes as teaching time, by some countries but not others may explain some of these differences.

Teaching time contrasts between levels

In France, Hungary, Korea, Portugal, Spain and partner country Israel, a primary teacher is required to teach over 220 hours more than a lower secondary teacher and, except in Hungary, 250 hours more than an upper secondary teacher (general programmes). By contrast, there is little or no difference in Belgium (French Community), Denmark, Iceland, New Zealand, Poland

Chart D4.3. Percentage of teachers' working time spent teaching, by level of education (2004)

Net teaching time as a percentage of total statutory working time



Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of teachers' working time spent teaching in primary education.
 Source: OECD, Table D4.1. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2006).

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and the United States, and the partner country Chile, between primary and secondary teachers in the number of required instruction hours they must complete. Mexico is the only OECD country that has secondary teachers who complete a significantly greater number of hours of instruction than primary teachers. In Mexico, required teaching hours for lower secondary teachers is just over 30% greater than for primary teachers. Upper secondary teachers in Mexico have a lower number of hours teaching than lower secondary teachers but their required teaching hours are still 6% higher than for primary teachers (Chart D4.1). This is largely because of a heavier daily teaching load.

In interpreting the differences in teaching hours between countries, it should be noted that net contact time, as used for the purpose of this indicator, does not necessarily correspond to teaching load. Whereas contact time in itself is a substantial component, the preparation for classes and necessary follow-up (including correcting students' work) also need to be included in comparisons of teaching loads. Other elements of teaching load (such as the number of subjects taught, the number of students taught, and the number of years a teacher teaches the same students) should also be taken into account when establishing average teaching load. These factors can often only be assessed at the school level.

Teachers' working time

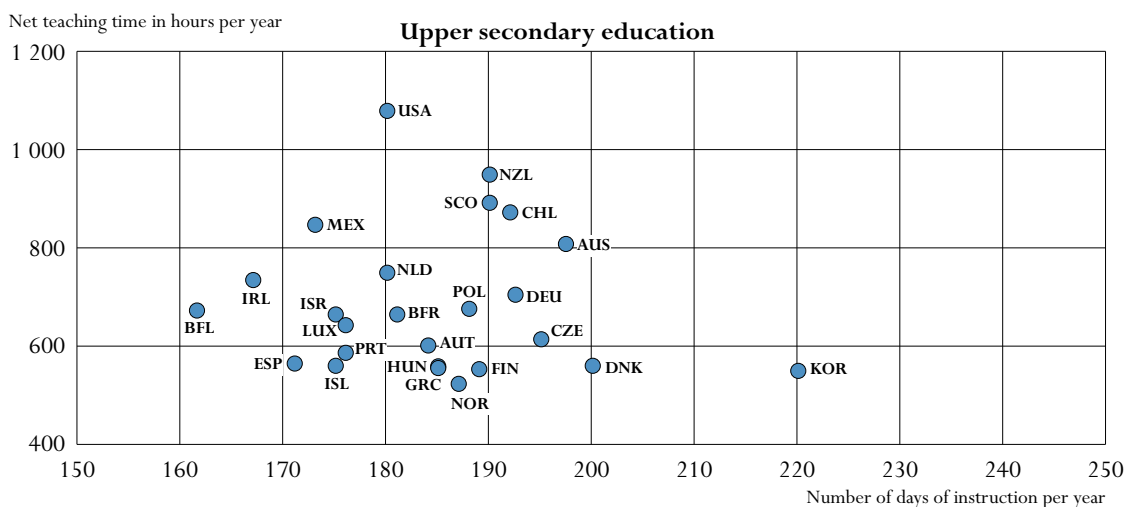
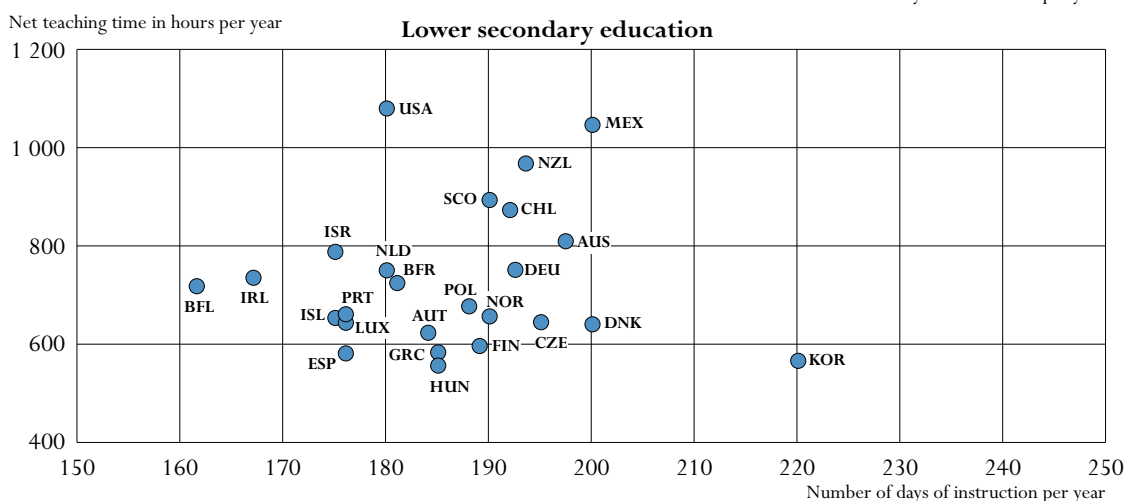
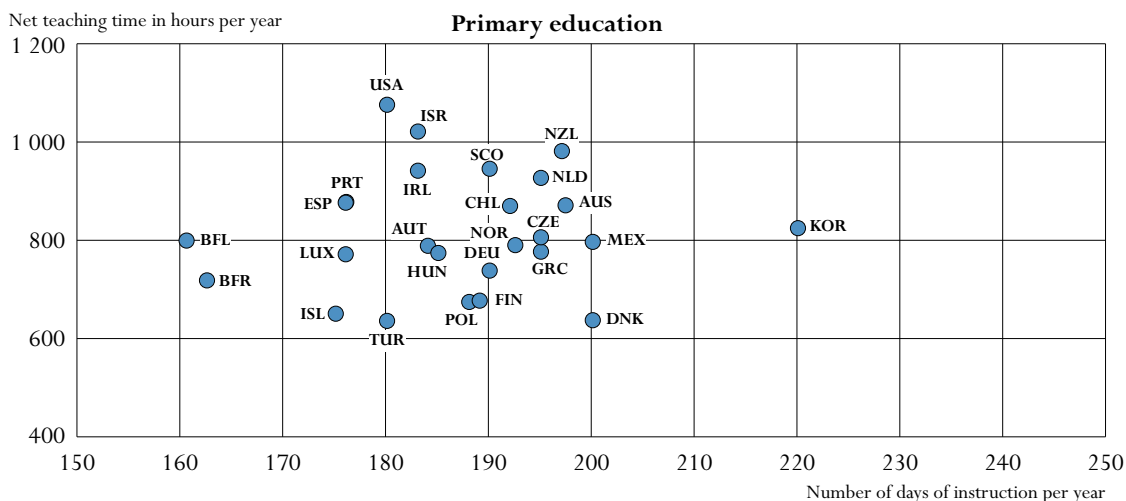
The regulation of teachers' working time varies widely among countries. While some countries formally regulate contact time only, others establish working hours as well. In some countries, time is allocated for teaching and non-teaching activities within the formally established working time.

In most countries, teachers are formally required to work a specified number of hours per week to earn their full-time salary; this includes teaching and non-teaching time. Within this framework, however, countries differ in the allocation of time to teaching and non-teaching activities (Chart D4.3). Typically, the number of hours for teaching is specified, but some countries also regulate at the national level the time that a teacher has to be present in the school.

Australia, Belgium (Flemish Community, for primary education), England, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States, and the partner country Israel, specify the working time during which teachers are required to be available at school, for both teaching time and non-teaching time. In Greece, legislation requires a reduction of teaching hours in line with years of service. Early-career teachers undertake a teaching time of 21 teaching hours per week. After six years, this is reduced to 19 teaching hours per week and after 12 years, teaching time is reduced to 18 teaching hours per week. Finally, after 20 years of service, teaching time is 16 teaching hours per week, nearly three-quarters that of early career teachers. However, the remaining hours of teachers' working time must be spent within school.

In Austria (primary and lower secondary education), the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Scotland, the total working time that teachers have to work per year at school or elsewhere is specified (but the split between time spent at school and time spent elsewhere is not specified). In addition, in some countries the number of hours to be spent on non-teaching activities is also (partly) specified. However, it is not specified whether the teachers have to spend the non-teaching hours at school or outside school.

Chart D4.4. Net teaching time in hours by the number of days of instruction (2004)



Note: Please refer to the Reader's Guide for the list of country codes used in this chart.

Source: OECD, Table D4.1. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2006).

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Non-teaching time

In Belgium (French community), Finland, France and New Zealand there are no formal requirements for how much time should be spent on non-teaching duties. However, this does not mean that teachers are totally free in carrying out other tasks. In Austria, provisions concerning teaching time are based on the assumption that the duties of the teacher (including preparing lessons and tests, marking and correcting papers, examinations, and administrative tasks) amount to a total working time of 40 hours per week. In Belgium (French community), the additional non-teaching hours within the school are set at the school level. There are no regulations regarding lesson preparation, correction of tests and marking students' papers, etc. The government defines only the minimum and maximum number of teaching periods (of 50 minutes each) per week at each level of education (Table D4.1).

Definitions and methodologies

Data are from the 2005 OECD-INES Survey on Teachers and the Curriculum and refer to the school year 2003-2004.

Teaching time

Teaching time is defined as the number of hours per year that a full-time teacher teaches a group or class of students according to policy. It is normally calculated as the number of teaching days per annum multiplied by the number of hours a teacher teaches per day (excluding periods of time formally allowed for breaks between lessons or groups of lessons). Some countries, however, provide estimates of teaching time based on survey data.

At the primary level, short breaks between lessons are included if the classroom teacher is responsible for the class during these breaks.

Working time

Working time refers to the normal working hours of a full-time teacher. According to formal policy in a given country, working time can refer to:

- Only the time directly associated with teaching (and other curricular activities for students such as assignments and tests, but excluding annual examinations); or
- The time directly associated with teaching and hours devoted to other activities related to teaching, such as lesson preparation, counselling students, correcting assignments and tests, professional development, meetings with parents, staff meetings and general school tasks.

Working time does not include paid overtime.

Working time in school

Working time in school refers to the time teachers are supposed to spend at work, including teaching and non-teaching time.

Number of teaching weeks and days

The number of teaching weeks refers to the number of weeks of instruction excluding holiday weeks. The number of teaching days is the number of teaching weeks multiplied by the number of days a teacher teaches per week, less the number of days that the school is closed for festivities.

Further references

The following additional material relevant to this indicator is available on the Web at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/421472785265>

- *Table D4.2. Number of teaching hours per year (1996, 2004)*

Specific notes on definitions and methodologies regarding this indicator for each country are given in Annex 3 (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2006).

D4

Table D4.1.
Organisation of teachers' working time (2004)

Number of teaching weeks, teaching days, net teaching hours, and teacher working time over the school year

	Number of weeks of instruction			Number of days of instruction			Net teaching time in hours			Working time required at school in hours			Total statutory working time in hours		
	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education, general programmes
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
OECD countries															
Australia	40	40	40	197	197	197	874	809	809	1 215	1 238	1 238	1 824	1 824	1 824
Austria	38	38	38	184	184	184	792	622	602	a	a	a	1 832	1 832	a
Belgium (Fl.)	37	37	37	161	162	162	803	718	673	927	a	a	a	a	a
Belgium (Fr.)	37	37	37	163	181	181	722	724	664	a	a	a	a	a	a
Czech Republic	40	40	40	195	195	195	809	644	614	a	a	a	1 704	1 704	1 704
Denmark	42	42	42	200	200	200	640	640	560	m	m	m	1 680	1 680	1 680
England	38	38	38	190	190	190	a	a	a	1 265	1 265	1 265	a	a	a
Finland	38	38	38	189	189	189	680	595	553	a	a	a	a	a	a
France	35	35	35	m	m	m	918	639	614	a	a	a	a	a	a
Germany	40	40	40	193	193	193	793	751	705	a	a	a	1 736	1 736	1 736
Greece	40	38	38	195	185	185	780	583	559	1 500	1 425	1 425	1 762	1 762	1 762
Hungary	37	37	37	185	185	185	777	555	555	a	a	a	1 864	1 864	1 864
Iceland	36	36	36	175	175	175	653	653	560	1 650	1 650	1 720	1 800	1 800	1 800
Ireland	37	33	33	183	167	167	946	735	735	1 036	735	735	a	a	a
Italy	33	33	33	m	m	m	726	594	594	806	674	674	a	a	a
Japan	35	35	35	m	m	m	648	534	466	a	a	a	1 960	1 960	1 960
Korea	37	37	37	220	220	220	828	565	550	a	a	a	1 613	1 613	1 613
Luxembourg	36	36	36	176	176	176	774	642	642	1 022	890	890	a	a	a
Mexico	41	41	36	200	200	173	800	1 047	848	800	1 167	971	a	a	a
Netherlands	40	37	37	195	180	180	930	750	750	a	a	a	1 659	1 659	1 659
New Zealand	39	39	38	197	194	190	985	968	950	a	a	a	a	a	a
Norway	38	38	37	190	190	187	741	656	524	m	m	m	1 680	1 680	1 680
Poland	39	39	39	188	188	188	677	677	677	a	a	a	1 520	1 520	1 520
Portugal	36	36	36	176	176	176	880	660	586	880	660	586	1 561	1 561	1 561
Scotland	38	38	38	190	190	190	950	893	893	a	a	a	1 365	1 365	1 365
Slovak Republic	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Spain	37	37	36	176	176	171	880	581	564	1 140	1 140	1 140	1 425	1 425	1 425
Sweden	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	1 360	1 360	1 360	1 767	1 767	1 767
Switzerland	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Turkey	38	a	38	180	a	180	639	a	567	870	a	756	1 808	a	1 808
United States	36	36	36	180	180	180	1 080	1 080	1 080	1 332	1 368	1 368	m	m	m
OECD average	38	37	37	187	186	185	805	704	663	1 129	1 131	1 087	1 698	1 691	1 690
EU19 average	38	37	37	185	183	183	804	667	641	1 104	1 019	1 009	1 656	1 656	1 640
Partner countries															
Chile	40	40	40	192	192	192	873	873	873	m	m	m	m	m	m
Israel	43	42	42	183	175	175	1 025	788	665	1 221	945	945	a	a	a

Source: OECD. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2006).

Please refer to the Reader's Guide for information concerning the symbols replacing missing data.

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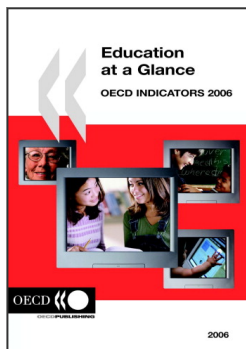
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