

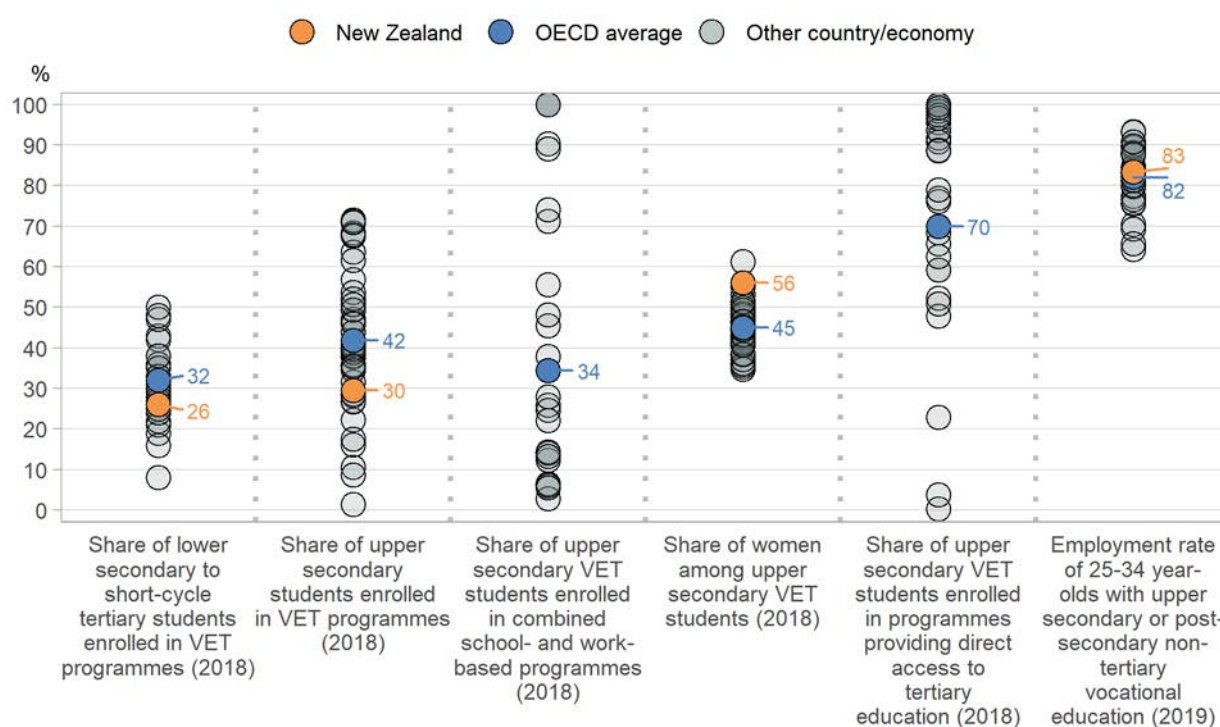
Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators is the authoritative source for information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of education systems in OECD and partner countries.

## New Zealand

### Participation and outcomes of vocational education and training

- Vocational education and training (VET) programmes attract a diverse range of students, including those seeking qualifications and technical skills to enter the labour market, adults wishing to increase their employability by developing their skills further, and students who may seek entry into higher education later on.

Figure 1. Snapshot of vocational education



**Note:** Only countries and economies with available data are shown. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

**Source:** OECD (2020), indicator A3 and B7. See Education at a Glance Database. <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

- About one in three students from lower secondary to short-cycle tertiary level are enrolled in a VET programme on average across OECD countries. However, there are wide variations across countries, ranging from less than 20% of students enrolled in vocational education to more than 45% in a few countries. While VET programmes in New Zealand are mainly reported against upper

secondary and lower secondary levels of education in *Education at a Glance*, the VET system is largely distinct from the schooling system. In New Zealand, 26% of students are enrolled in vocational programmes, lower than the OECD average (32%), with the majority of lower secondary to short-cycle tertiary VET students (46%) found in upper secondary education (Figure 1).

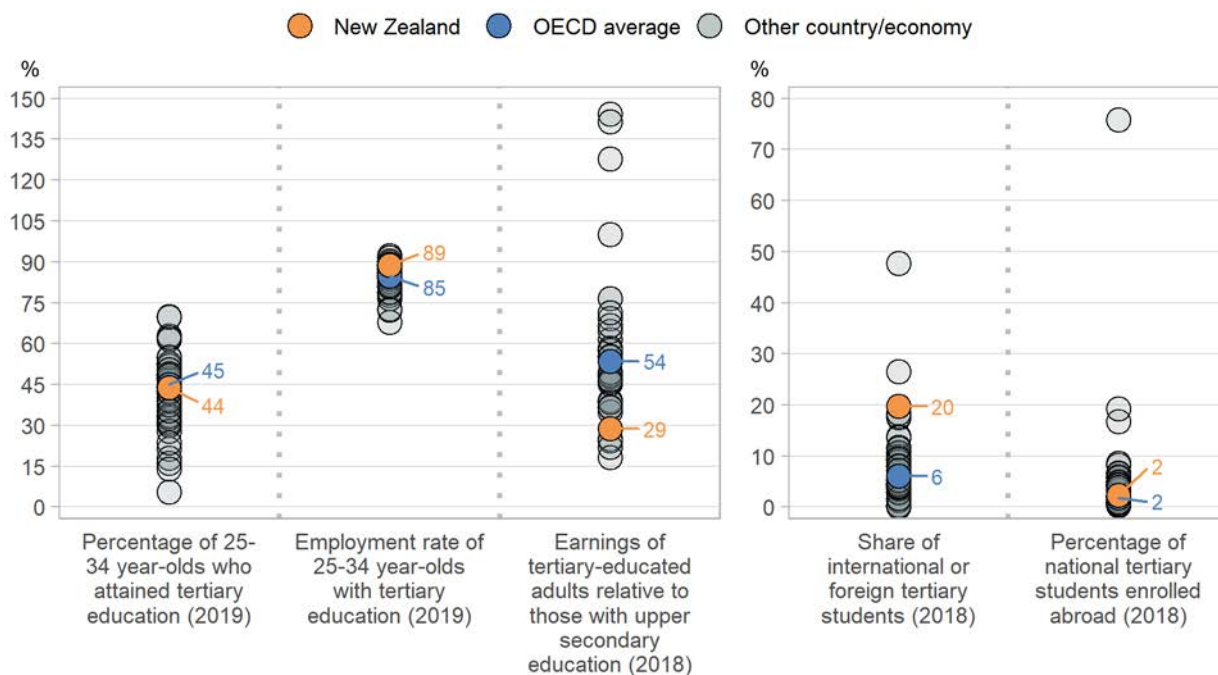
- VET is an important part of upper secondary education in most OECD countries. On average, 30% of all upper secondary students are enrolled in VET programmes in New Zealand, a lower proportion than the OECD average of 42% (Figure 1). Certain fields of study are more common than others at this level. In New Zealand, the most common broad field is arts and humanities with 29% of upper secondary vocational graduates earning a qualification in this field, compared to 6% on average across OECD countries.
- The average age of enrolment in upper secondary vocational programmes across OECD countries (21 years) tends to be higher than for general programmes (17 years), a pattern also found in New Zealand. The average age of enrolment in upper secondary education is higher for students in vocational programmes (31 years) than for students in general programmes (17 years). The share of upper secondary vocational students tends to increase with age. In New Zealand, the share of students enrolled in VET programmes at upper secondary level is 11% among 15-19 year-olds (OECD average: 37%), and 90% among 20-24 year-olds (OECD average: 62%).
- To support the transition of students who have completed vocational programmes at upper secondary level to post-secondary education, many countries have created direct pathways from vocational programmes to higher levels of education. This is less the case in New Zealand where most students are enrolled in upper secondary vocational programmes that do not offer the chance of direct access to tertiary education. However, these programmes offer their graduates opportunities to continue their education at the post-secondary non-tertiary level (ISCED 4), often in the form of one or two years training courses.
- In New Zealand, among those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest attainment, 65% of 55-64 year-olds (older adults), compared with 57% of 25-34 year-olds (younger adults) held a vocational qualification. In comparison, the equivalent OECD averages are 72% for older adults and 59% for younger adults.
- On average across OECD countries, the ratio of students to teaching staff is similar in both upper secondary vocational and general programmes. In New Zealand, there are 12 students for every teaching staff member in general programmes and 20 in vocational ones. This difference reflects typical staff-student ratios found in schools versus those found in post-school settings.

### The rising demand for tertiary education

- From the gender perspective, younger women are more likely than younger men to achieve tertiary education in all OECD countries. In New Zealand, 48% of 25-34 year-old women had a tertiary qualification compared to 39% of their male peers, while on average across OECD countries the shares are 51% of younger women and 39% of younger men.
- In New Zealand, the average age of first-time entrants to tertiary education in 2018 was 23 years, higher than the OECD average of 22 years. Structural factors, such as admission procedures, the typical age at which students graduate from upper secondary education, or cultural perceptions of the value of professional or personal experiences outside of education may explain the differences in the average age of entry to tertiary education across countries.
- If current entry patterns continue, it is estimated that 49% of young adults will enter tertiary education for the first time in their life before the age of 25 on average across OECD countries (excluding international students). In New Zealand, 48% of young adults will enter tertiary education by that age and most of them will enter at bachelor's or equivalent level.

- Short-cycle tertiary programmes are generally designed to be vocationally oriented and represent the second most common route of entry into tertiary education on average across OECD countries, after bachelor's programmes. If current entry patterns continue, 12% of adults are expected to enter short-cycle tertiary education before the age of 25 in New Zealand, compared to 10% on average across OECD countries. In New Zealand, women make up 53% of students in such programmes, compared to 52% on average across OECD countries.
- Young people can face barriers to labour market entry as they transition from school to work, but higher educational attainment increases their likelihood of being employed and is associated with higher incomes. On average across OECD countries, the employment rate in 2019 was 61% for 25-34 year-olds without upper secondary education, 78% for those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest attainment and 85% for those with tertiary education. In New Zealand, the shares are 69% for below upper secondary, 82% for upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary and 89% for tertiary attainment. Having a tertiary degree also carries a considerable earnings advantage in most OECD and partner countries. In New Zealand, in 2018, 25-64 year-olds with a tertiary degree with income from full-time, full-year employment earned 29% more than full-time, full-year workers with upper secondary education compared to 54% on average across OECD countries (Figure 2).
- International student mobility has been expanding quite consistently in the past twenty years. In 2018, 5.6 million tertiary students worldwide had crossed a border to study, more than twice the number in 2005. In New Zealand, the share of foreign or international students increased from 19% in 2014 to 20% in 2018. Meanwhile 2% of New Zealand tertiary students are enrolled abroad (Figure 2). English-speaking countries are the most attractive student destinations overall in the OECD area, with Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States receiving more than 40% of all internationally mobile students in OECD and partner countries. Among students leaving New Zealand to study, the most popular destination country is Australia and the United States.
- Beyond the economic and employment outcomes, higher educational attainment is related to greater social benefits. For example, those with a tertiary education are more likely to feel they have a say in what their government does. In 2016, on average across OECD countries participating in the International Social Survey Programme, 41% of tertiary-educated adults agreed with this sentiment compared to 28% of those with below upper secondary education. In New Zealand, 50% of tertiary-educated adults feel this way compared with 28% of those with below upper secondary education.

Figure 2. Snapshot of tertiary education



**Note:** Only countries and economies with available data are shown. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

**Source:** OECD (2020), indicator A1, A3, A4 and B6. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

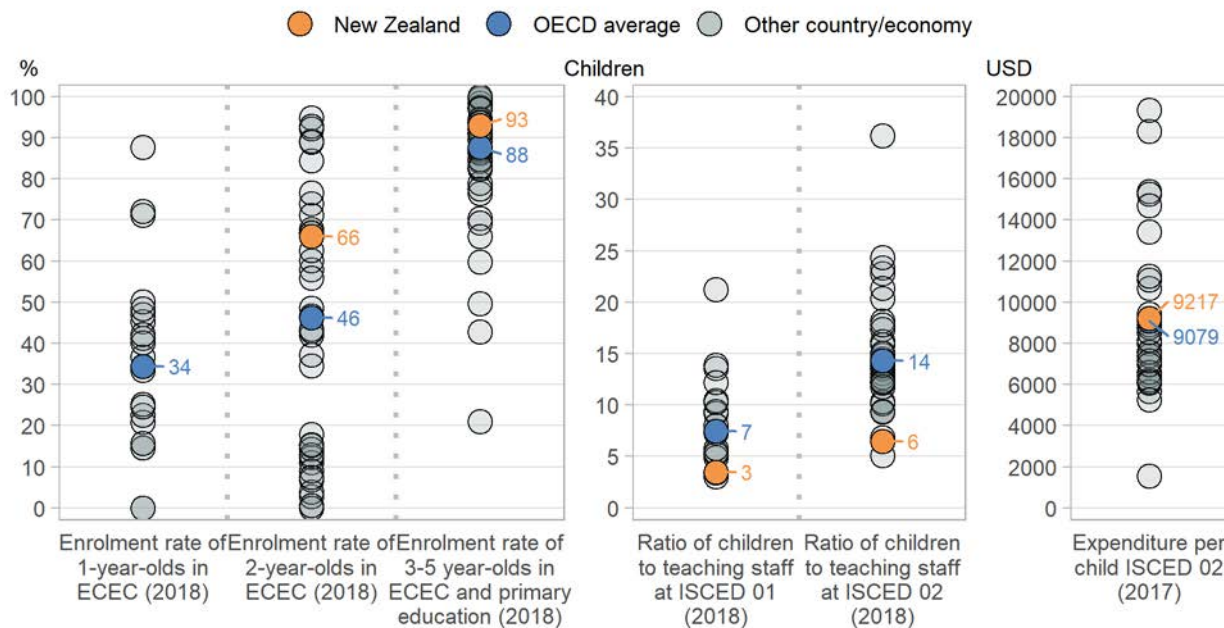
## Starting strong

- Early childhood education and care (ECEC) has experienced a surge of policy attention in OECD countries in recent decades, with a focus on children under the age of 3 in many countries. Among 2 year-olds, the enrolment rate at ISCED 0 is 66% in New Zealand, 20 percentage points above the OECD average of 46% (Figure 3).
- In many OECD countries, ECEC begins for most children long before they turn 5 and there are universal legal entitlements to a place in ECEC services for at least one or two years before the start of compulsory schooling. While compulsory education begins at age 5 in New Zealand, 93% of 3-5 year-olds in 2018 are enrolled in ECEC programmes and primary education in New Zealand, compared to 88% on average across OECD countries (Figure 3).
- Public provision of early childhood education and care is an important factor in ensuring broad access to affordable ECEC. On average across OECD countries, more than one in two of the children in early childhood educational development services (ISCED 01) and one in three in pre-primary (ISCED 02) are enrolled in private institutions. In New Zealand, all children enrolled in ECEC attend private institutions.
- The workforce is at the heart of high-quality early-childhood education and care: stimulating environments and high-quality pedagogy are fostered by better-qualified practitioners and high-quality interactions between children and staff facilitate better learning outcomes. In that context, lower child-staff ratios are found to be consistently supportive of staff-child relationships across different types of ECEC settings (NICHHD, 2002). In New Zealand, there are 3 children for every teacher working in early childhood educational development services (ISCED 01) compared to 7

on average across OECD countries. In New Zealand, the ratio of children for every full-time equivalent (FTE) teacher working in pre-primary education (ISCED 02) is 6 compared to 14 on average across OECD countries (Figure 3).

- Sustained public financial support is critical for the growth and quality of ECEC programmes. In 2017, annual total expenditure in pre-primary settings (ISCED 02) averaged USD 9 217 per child in New Zealand, slightly higher than the average across OECD countries (USD 9 079) (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Snapshot of early childhood education and care**



**Note:** Only countries and economies with available data are shown. Annual expenditure per child is shown in equivalent USD converted using PPPs. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

**Source:** OECD (2020), indicator B2. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

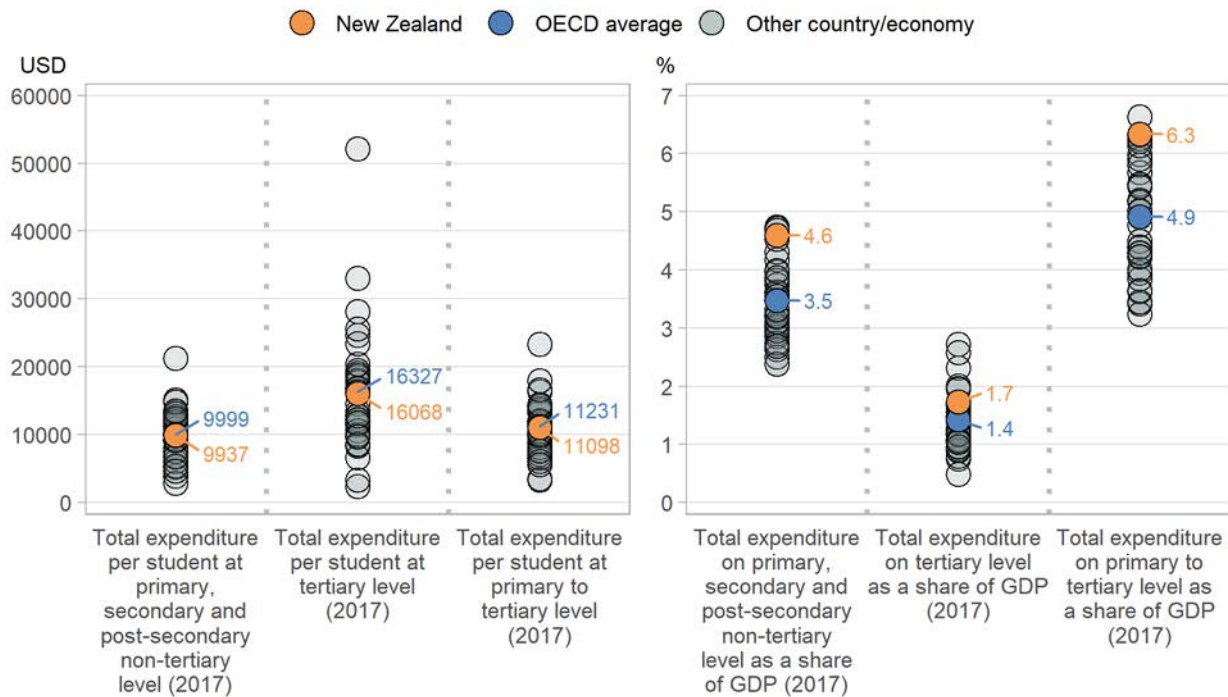
## Investing in education

- Annual expenditure per student on educational institutions from primary to tertiary level provides an indication of the investment countries make in each student. In 2017, New Zealand spent just under the average on primary to tertiary educational institutions per full-time student than the OECD average, investing a total of USD 11 098 per student compared to USD 11 231 on average across OECD countries (Figure 4).
- The way education is provided influences how resources are allocated between levels of education and between public and private institutions. In 2017, New Zealand spent USD 9 937 per student at non-tertiary level (primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education), USD 62 slightly lower than the OECD average of USD 9 999. At tertiary level, New Zealand invested USD 16 068 per student, USD 259 less than the OECD average (Figure 4). Expenditure per student on private educational institutions is higher than on public institutions on average across OECD countries. This is also the case in New Zealand, where total expenditure on public institutions from primary to tertiary level amounts to USD 11 040 per student, compared to USD 11 839 on private ones.



- In most OECD countries, expenditure per upper secondary student varies according to programme orientation. Spending per student on upper secondary vocational programmes tends to be higher than for upper secondary general ones due to the higher cost of equipment, lower student-to-teacher ratios, and work-based requirements of such programmes. On average across OECD countries, expenditure per student in upper secondary vocational programmes was USD 1 470 higher than in general programmes in 2017. New Zealand follows the same pattern: spending per student amounted to USD 13 859 in upper secondary vocational programmes, USD 1 855 higher than spending per student on general ones at the same level. This difference reflects the provision of programmes in New Zealand as expenditure in post-school settings, where vocational programmes are provided, is often higher than for programmes in school settings.
- Among OECD countries, New Zealand spent the second highest proportion of its gross domestic product (GDP) on primary to tertiary educational institutions. In 2017, New Zealand spent on average 6.3% of GDP on primary to tertiary educational institutions, which is 1.4 percentage points higher than the OECD average. Across levels of education, New Zealand devoted an above average share of GDP at non-tertiary levels and an above average share at tertiary level (Figure 4).
- Between 2012 and 2017, expenditure per student from primary to tertiary education increased by an average annual growth rate of 1.3% across OECD countries. In New Zealand, expenditure on educational institutions grew at an average rate of 1.2% a year, while the number of students grew on average by 0.6% per year. This resulted in an average annual growth rate of 0.6% in expenditure per student over this period.
- Tuition fees in public institutions in New Zealand are among the highest for a bachelor's programme across countries with available data. National students are charged USD 4 541 per year for a bachelor's degree 19% more than they paid on average in 2007/08. Public transfers to the private sector play an important role in the financing of tertiary education in New Zealand and in providing financial support to students. They account for 15% of the total funds devoted to tertiary educational institutions, the fifth highest share across OECD countries. While loans may reduce the upfront cost, students are required to repay them once they start work. In New Zealand, students' average debt on graduation is USD 24 406.

Figure 4. Snapshot of the financial resources invested in educational institutions



**Note:** Only countries and economies with available data are shown. Expenditure in national currencies is converted into equivalent USD by dividing the national currency figure by the purchasing power parity (PPP) index for GDP. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

**Source:** OECD (2020), indicator C1 and C2. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

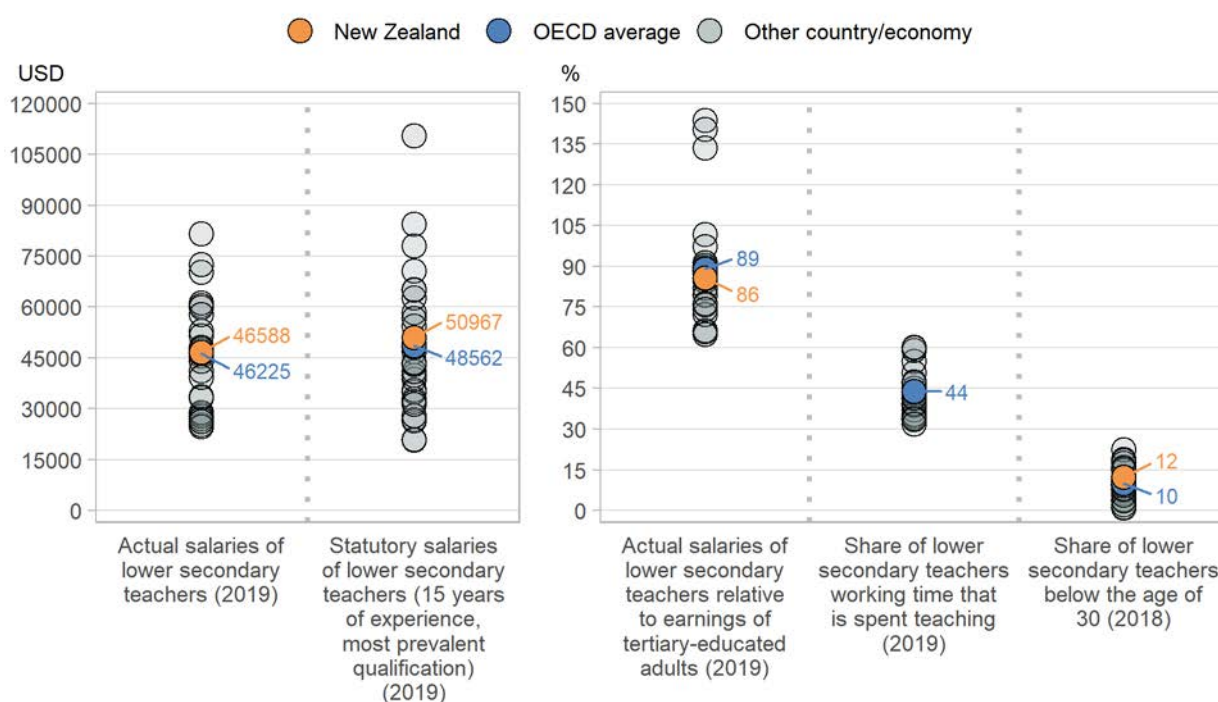
## Working conditions of school teachers

- The salaries of school staff, and in particular teachers and school heads, represent the largest single expenditure in formal education. Their salary levels also have a direct impact on the attractiveness of the teaching profession. Statutory salaries of teachers (and school heads) in public educational institutions increase with the level of education they teach. In most OECD countries and economies, they also increase with experience. On average, statutory salaries of teachers with maximum qualifications at the top of their salary scales are 78-80% higher than those of teachers with the minimum qualifications at the start of their career, for each level of education. In New Zealand, maximum salaries are 53% to 66% higher than minimum salaries at primary and secondary education levels.
- Teachers' actual salaries reflect their statutory salaries and additional work-related payments. Average actual salaries depend also on the characteristics of the teaching population such as their age, level of experience and qualification level. In New Zealand, teachers' average actual salaries amount to USD 45 872 at the primary level (slightly higher than the OECD average of USD 43 942), USD 46 588 at the general lower secondary level (slightly higher than the OECD average of USD 46 225) and USD 50 301 at the general upper secondary level (slightly higher than the OECD average of USD 49 778) (Figure 5).
- Teachers' average actual salaries remain lower than those of tertiary-educated workers in almost all countries, and at almost all levels of education. Teachers' average actual salaries at pre-primary (ISCED 02), primary and general secondary levels of education are 80-94% of the earnings of

tertiary-educated workers on average across OECD countries and economies. In New Zealand, the proportion ranges from 84% at primary level to 86% at lower secondary level and 93% at the upper secondary level (Figure 5).

- The average number of teaching hours per year required of a typical teacher in public educational institutions in OECD countries tends to decrease as the level of education increases, from 993 hours at pre-primary level (ISCED 02), to 778 hours at primary level, 712 hours at lower secondary level (general programmes) and 680 hours at upper secondary level (general programmes). In New Zealand, teachers are required to teach 1 230 hours per year at pre-primary level, 922 hours per year at primary level, 840 hours at lower secondary level (general programmes) and 760 hours at upper secondary level (general programmes).

Figure 5. Snapshot of teachers' working conditions



**Note:** Only countries and economies with available data are shown. Teachers' salaries are shown in equivalent USD converted using PPPs. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

**Source:** OECD (2020), indicator D3, D4 and D5. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

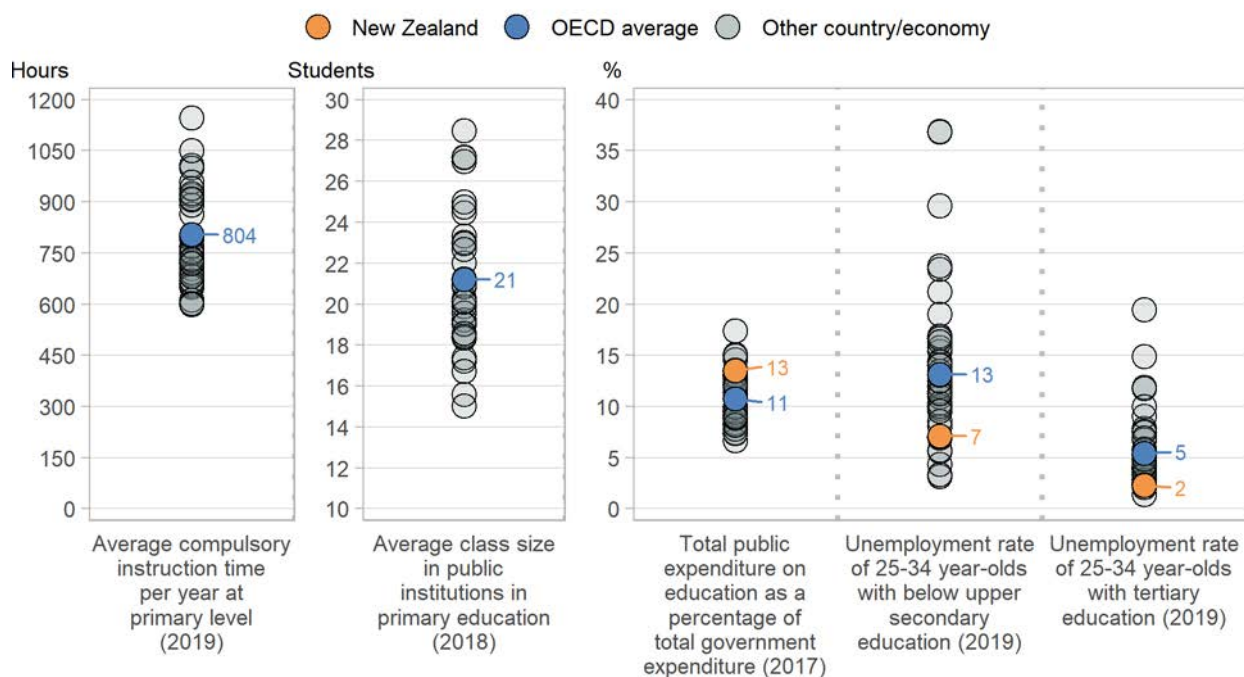
## The impact of COVID-19 on education

- The global 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has sent shockwaves around the world. In a first effort to contain the virus, many countries have imposed a lockdown and schools and/or universities have closed for several months across all OECD and partner countries. In New Zealand, the closures were nationwide from 24 March 2020 and schools started progressively reopening on 29 April 2020. By 19 May 2020, schools had fully reopened. By the end of June, New Zealand had experienced 8 weeks of effective school closures in some form, compared to 14 weeks on average across OECD countries (UNESCO, 2020). However, the actual impact in some countries may have been less severe as some of these periods included scheduled school breaks.



- While there is uncertainty about the likely overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education expenditure, governments will face difficult decisions on the allocation of resources, as government funds are injected into the economy and the health sector. In 2017, public spending on primary to tertiary education as a share of government expenditure in New Zealand was 13%, higher than the OECD average of 11% (Figure 6).
- As unemployment rises, private funding of education may also be at risk. The impact may be most severe in those countries and levels of education that rely most heavily on household expenditure, in particular early childhood education and care and tertiary education. This is less the case in New Zealand. In pre-primary education (ISCED 02), private sources accounted for 14% of total expenditure in New Zealand in 2017, slightly lower than the OECD average of 17%. At tertiary level, 49% of total expenditure comes from private sources, compared to 29% on average across OECD countries.
- The crisis may have a severe impact on the internationalisation of higher education as the delivery of online course material and travel restrictions may raise questions among international students' perception on the value of obtaining their degree from an institution abroad. New Zealand, with a higher share of international students than in total across the OECD, may be more strongly affected than other countries.

Figure 6. Snapshot of indicators relevant to the impact of COVID-19 on education



**Note:** Only countries and economies with available data are shown. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

**Source:** OECD (2020), indicator A3, D1, D2, and C4. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

- Unemployment may increase, as the economy struggles to cope with the reduced activity that resulted from the lockdown. Those with lower educational attainment are the most vulnerable, as they are the most unlikely to benefit from remote working. In 2019, before the pandemic hit, 7% of

young adults with below upper secondary education in New Zealand were unemployed compared to 2% of tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds (Figure 6). In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, the unemployment of young adults without an upper secondary education increased by 2.8 percentage points between 2008 and 2009 in New Zealand compared to 1.1 percentage points among those with tertiary education. During this time, New Zealand saw an increase in institution-based participation in education coupled with a decrease in participation in workplace-based education. As part of the COVID-19 response, the New Zealand government has provided two years of free trades training to support employers to retain their trainees and apprentices during the crisis.

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## More information

**For more information on Education at a Glance 2020 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)**

For more information on to the methodology used during the data collection for each indicator, the references to the sources and the specific notes for each country, visit Annex 3 of the publication (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

For general information on methodology, please refer to the OECD Handbook for Internationally Comparative Education Statistics: Concepts, Standards, Definitions and Classifications (<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264304444-en>).

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

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The calculation on the number of weeks of school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic is based on data from UNESCO (UNESCO, 2020). For general information on the methodology considered for the data, please refer to the [methodological note](#).

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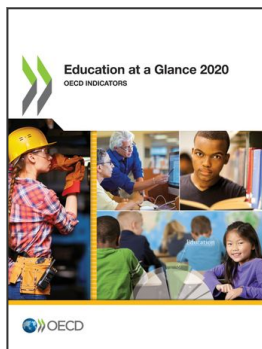
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On 15 May 2020, the OECD Council invited Costa Rica to become a Member. While Costa Rica is included in the OECD averages reported in this note, at the time of its preparation, Costa Rica was in the process of completing its domestic procedures for ratification and the deposit of the instrument of accession to the OECD Convention was pending.

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