

EDUCATION  
AT A GLANCE 2014

*Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators* is the authoritative source for accurate and relevant information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of the education systems in the 34 OECD member countries, as well as a number of G20 and partner countries.

## Australia

**There has been a large increase in tertiary enrolments over the last 12 years among both national and international students.**

In Australia, the proportion of young adults who entered academic tertiary programmes (tertiary-type A) increased by more than 40 percentage points between 2000 and 2012. On average across all OECD countries with comparable data, the increase in entry rates was only 10 percentage points between 2000 and 2012.

More than 4.5 million students in 2012 were enrolled in tertiary education outside their country of citizenship. **In Australia, international students make up 18% of total tertiary enrolment**, placing it second behind Luxembourg among OECD countries, well above the OECD average of 8.0%. This large proportion of international students can have a significant effect on some Australia data. For example, when international students are excluded from the calculation, entry rates into tertiary-type A programmes in Australia shrink by more than 25 percentage points. However, this still remains the second highest among OECD countries with available data and indicates that despite the large proportion of international students, entry into tertiary education among national students is still very high in Australia.

**Though enrolment in pre-primary education has increased and investment per student is high, enrolment and overall investment remain below the OECD average.**

It is rare in Australia for children to enter into pre-primary education at the age of three, **with just 18% of 3-year-olds enrolled, compared with 70% on average across OECD**. The enrolment rate of 4-year-olds in Australia increased by more than 20 percentage points to 76% between 2005 and 2012, but this rate remains well below the OECD average of 84%.

**Annual expenditure on pre-primary education (for 3-year-olds and older) is USD 10 734 per student in Australia**, much higher than the average for OECD countries of USD 7 428, and more than double the expenditure in Chile, Hungary and Switzerland where annual expenditure per student is around USD 5 000 or less. Expenditure on pre-primary education accounts for an average of 0.6% of GDP across OECD countries. However, **in Australia only 0.1% of GDP is spent on pre-primary education**, compared with 0.8% or more in Chile, Denmark and Luxembourg. The comparatively low aggregate spending in Australia reflects early childhood education programmes typically starting at a later age and being shorter in duration, with children transitioning into primary education earlier than in many OECD countries.

Moreover, on average across OECD countries, most spending on early childhood education comes from public funding: 81% versus 19% from private funding. In Australia, **private expenditure exceeds public on early childhood institutions, with 55% coming from private and 45% from public.**

### Australia has low unemployment rates, even for adults without an upper secondary education, and a significant share participate in education.

The Australian economy has remained relatively strong throughout the economic recession. As a result, the unemployment rate for 25-64 year-olds with a tertiary degree is quite low, at 2.8%. However, **Australia also has one of the lowest unemployment rates for adults without an upper secondary education among OECD countries, at 6.2%.** The unemployment rate of adults with the same level of education is much higher in Canada (11%), and more than double in the United States (14%).

Enrolment in education programmes is not limited to a particular age range. Based on 2012 data, a significant share of Australia's adult population participates in education: **19% of adults aged 30 and over participate in education, compared with the OECD average of 8.0%.** This is mostly explained by larger part-time enrolments in these age groups. In addition, according to the 2012 Survey of Adult Skills<sup>1</sup>, 56% of the adult population participated in formal and non-formal education in Australia in 2012, one of the highest rates among OECD countries, though slightly below the United States at 59%.

### Other findings

- **More than 30% of tertiary-educated adults perform at Level 4 or 5** – the highest levels – in literacy proficiency on the Survey of Adult Skills. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest rate and on a par with tertiary-educated adults in Finland, Japan, the Netherlands and Sweden.
- **The difference in earnings between adults with and without a tertiary education is smaller than the OECD average:** across OECD countries, 25-64 year-olds who have a tertiary degree earn 51% more on average than adults who have completed a post-secondary non-tertiary education. In Australia, the difference in earnings between these two groups is much less, at 35%.
- **More young women than men hold a tertiary degree:** although across OECD countries older men (55-64 year-olds) are more likely to hold a tertiary degree than women in the same age group (25% on average compared with 23%), young women, (25-34 years old), are now more likely to hold a tertiary qualification than men. This also holds true for Australia, where 53% of women in this age group have attained a tertiary degree compared with 42% of men.

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<sup>1</sup> The Survey of Adult Skills is a product of the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).

# Key Facts for Australia in Education at a Glance 2014

Table	Indicator	Australia		OECD average		Rank among OECD countries and partner countries*
Educational Access and Output						
	Enrolment rates	2012	2005	2012	2005	
C2.1	3-year-olds (in early childhood education)	18%	17%	70%	64%	34 of 37
	4-year-olds (in early childhood and primary education)	76%	53%	84%	79%	29 of 38
C1.1a	5-14 year-olds (all levels)	100%		98%		1 of 44
	Percentage of population that has only attained below upper secondary education	2012	2000	2012	2000	
A1.4a	25-64 year-olds	24%	41%	24%	34%	15 of 36
	Percentage of the population whose highest level of attainment is upper secondary education	2012	2000	2012	2000	
A1.4a	25-64 year-olds	35%	31%	44%	44%	30 of 37
	Percentage of population that has attained tertiary education	2012	2000	2012	2000	
A1.3a A1.4a	25-64 year-olds	41%	27%	33%	22%	7 of 37
	25-34 year-olds	47%	31%	40%	26%	8 of 36
	55-64 year-olds	33%	19%	25%	15%	7 of 36
	Entry rates into tertiary education	2012	2000	2012	2000	
C3.1b	Youth expected to enter tertiary-type A programmes before turning 25	77%	m	48%	m	1 of 35
	Graduation rates	2012	2000	2012	2000	
A2.2a	Percentage of today's young people expected to complete upper secondary education in their lifetime	m	m	84%	76%	
A3.2a	Percentage of today's young people expected to complete university education (tertiary-type A) in their lifetime	m	36%	38%	28%	
Economic and Labour Market Outcomes						
	Unemployment rate of 25-64 year-olds - Men and Women	2012	2008	2012	2008	
A5.4a	Below upper secondary	6%	6%	14%	9%	31 of 35
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	4%	3%	8%	5%	32 of 36
	Tertiary	3%	2%	5%	3%	30 of 36
	Unemployment rate of 25-64 year-olds - Women	2012	2008	2012	2008	
A5.4c (Web)	Below upper secondary	6%	6%	13%	9%	30 of 35
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	5%	3%	9%	6%	28 of 35
	Tertiary	3%	2%	5%	4%	27 of 35
	Average earnings advantage for 25-64 year-olds with tertiary education**	2012 or latest year available		2012 or latest year available		
A6.1a A6.1b (Web)	Men and women	134		159		27 of 33
	Men	141		164		25 of 33
	Women	153		162		24 of 34
	Average earnings penalty for 25-64 year-olds who have not attained upper secondary education**	2012 or latest year available		2012 or latest year available		
A6.1a A6.1b (Web)	Men and women	83		78		9 of 33
	Men	85		78		8 of 33
	Women	88		75		3 of 34
	Percentage of 15-29 year-olds neither employed nor in education or training, by highest level of education	2012	2008	2012	2008	
C5.3d (Web)	Below upper secondary	15%	15%	15%	14%	15 of 35
	Upper secondary	11%	9%	16%	14%	26 of 34
	Tertiary	8%	7%	13%	11%	28 of 34

# Key Facts for Australia in Education at a Glance 2014

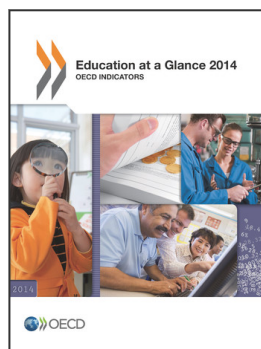
Table	Indicator	Australia		OECD average		Rank among OECD countries and partner countries*
Financial Investment in Education						
	Annual expenditure per student (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)	2011		2011		
B1.1a	Pre-primary education	10734		7428		4 of 36
	Primary education	8671		8296		13 of 38
	Secondary education	10354		9280		12 of 38
	Tertiary education	16267		13958		11 of 37
	Total expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP	2011	2000	2011	2000	
B2.2	Percentage of GDP	6%	5%	6%	5%	22 of 37
	Total public expenditure on education	2011	2000	2011	2000	
B4.2	As a percentage of total public expenditure	14%	14%	13%	13%	10 of 34
	Share of private expenditure on educational institutions	2011		2011		
B3.1	Pre-primary education	55%		19%		2 of 33
B3.1	Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	16%		9%		5 of 36
B3.1	Tertiary education	54%		31%		7 of 34
B3.1	All levels of education	28%		16%		6 of 33
Schools and Teachers						
	Ratio of students to teaching staff	2012		2012		
D2.2	Pre-primary education	m		14		
	Primary education	16		15		19 of 36
	Secondary education	12		13		23 of 37
	Number of hours of teaching time per year (for teachers in public institutions)	2012	2000	2012	2000	
D4.2	Pre-primary education	884		1001		18 of 28
	Primary education	871	882	782	780	9 of 33
	Lower secondary education	809	811	694	697	6 of 33
	Upper secondary education	801	803	655	628	5 of 33
	Index of change in statutory teachers' salaries for teachers with 15 years of experience/minimum training (2005 = 100)	2012	2008	2012	2008	
D3.5	Primary school teachers	104	100	103	103	11 of 26
	Lower secondary school teachers	105	102	102	103	10 of 25
	Upper secondary school teachers	105	102	101	103	10 of 25
	Ratio of teachers' salaries to earnings for full-time, full-year adult workers with tertiary education	2012		2012		
D3.2	Pre-primary school teachers	0.89		0.80		7 of 25
	Primary school teachers	0.93		0.85		8 of 28
	Lower secondary school teachers	0.93		0.88		10 of 28
	Upper secondary school teachers	0.93		0.92		12 of 28
New data from the Survey of Adult Skills				Australia		Average of countries with available data
	Students in tertiary education... (20-34 year-olds)			2012		2012
A4.1a	...whose parents have not attained upper secondary education			16%		9%
	...whose parents have an upper secondary education			24%		37%
	...whose parents have a tertiary education degree			59%		55%
	Adults in formal and non-formal education			2012		2012
C6.1(L)	25-64 year-olds			56%		51%

\* Countries are ranked in descending order of values.

\*\* Compared to people with upper secondary education; upper secondary = 100.

The Survey of Adult Skills is a product of the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies

m': data is not available. 'n': magnitude is either negligible or zero. 'c': there are too few observations to provide reliable estimates.



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