

## EDUCATION AT A GLANCE 2015

*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 34 OECD countries and a number of partner countries.

# AUSTRALIA

### Educational attainment, skills and participation in the labour market

*Higher educational participation at all ages makes lifelong learning a reality in Australia. Those with higher levels of attainment and skills are far more likely to have a job, but differences in earnings are more balanced than in other OECD countries.*

- A significant share of adults aged 40-64 participate in education in Australia: 7% are enrolled in full-time or part-time programmes, 5 percentage points higher than the OECD average. Since 2010, when the government first started removing the caps on public university places and providing a place for every domestic bachelor's student admitted to university from 2012, the overall number of students aged 30-39 enrolled in all levels of education has risen to 13%, exceeding the OECD average by 7 percentage points. Only Finland, Iceland and Sweden have similar numbers of adults in this age group participating in education.
- The unemployment rate among Australians who had completed a master's programme in the previous year was 3.9%, close to the OECD average of 4.5%, while the overall unemployment rate for those with a bachelor's degree or equivalent was 2.7%, nearly 5 percentage points less than those who had only completed lower secondary education.
- In Australia, a person with tertiary education and a literacy proficiency of Level 4 or 5 is 2.6 times as likely of being employed as someone with below upper secondary education and a literacy proficiency of Level 1 or below.
- Quite balanced earnings are a good sign of inclusive societies. Tertiary-educated Australian adults (25-64 year-olds) earn 34% more than those who attained upper secondary education, compared to 60% on average across OECD countries, and 76% for the United States. In turn, someone without upper secondary education earns 17% less than someone who has, against an OECD average of 23%.
- The earning premiums for completing tertiary education are more marked for women than for men in Australia. Tertiary-educated women earn 53% more than upper secondary-educated women, while men earn 41% more. They also earn 75% of what tertiary-educated men earn, on a par with the OECD average.

## Equity in education

*Participating in early childhood education plays a significant role in young people's cognitive development and in later school performance. Australia has succeeded in raising the enrolment rates of its 4-year-olds.*

- Following the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education, the percentage of 4-year-olds participating in early childhood education in Australia has risen from 51% in 2005 to 80% in 2013. It is now on a par with rates for OECD and partner countries with available data.
- Early childhood education plays an important role in improving the school performance of students. Those with at least one year of pre-primary education outperformed their peers who had not attended pre-primary education by 27 score points in PISA 2012, the equivalent of over half a year's schooling.
- Expenditure per student in all early childhood education is USD 10 146,<sup>1</sup> among the highest across OECD countries, compared with an average of USD 7 886.

## Tertiary education: Short-cycle, bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes

*Since the government began uncapping the number of government-funded places in tertiary programmes in 2010, the long-term rise in tertiary enrolment has continued – for both domestic and international students.*

- In Australia, the proportion of men aged 25-34 who had completed an academic tertiary programme increased by 15 percentage points between 2000 and 2014 to 43%; women in the same age range increased their attainment by 19 percentage points. On average across all OECD countries with comparable data, the increase in attainment rates for that period was only 11 percentage points for men but 18 percentage points for women.
- Nevertheless, at bachelor's or equivalent level, 58% of graduates in 2013 were women, the same as the OECD average. Women were half of all doctoral graduates compared with 47% for the OECD.
- More than 4 million students in 2013 were enrolled in tertiary education outside their country of citizenship. In Australia, international students make up 18% of total tertiary enrolment. This places Australia second only to Luxembourg among OECD countries and well above the OECD average of 9%. There are 21 foreign students for every Australian student who studies abroad.
- Only one in five (21%) of the foreign students enrolled in Australian higher education institutions come from countries whose official language is English. This may reflect the fact that students intending to study abroad may wish to improve their English through total immersion in a native English-speaking country.
- The large proportion of international students continues to have a significant effect on some Australian data. For example, when international students are excluded from the calculation, entry rates into bachelor's or equivalent tertiary programmes in Australia shrinks by 15 percentage points, although it still remains the second highest among OECD countries with available data.
- The proportion of international students has increased at every level. In 2013 they made up 12% of those enrolled in short-cycle tertiary programmes, 14% of bachelor's or equivalent students,

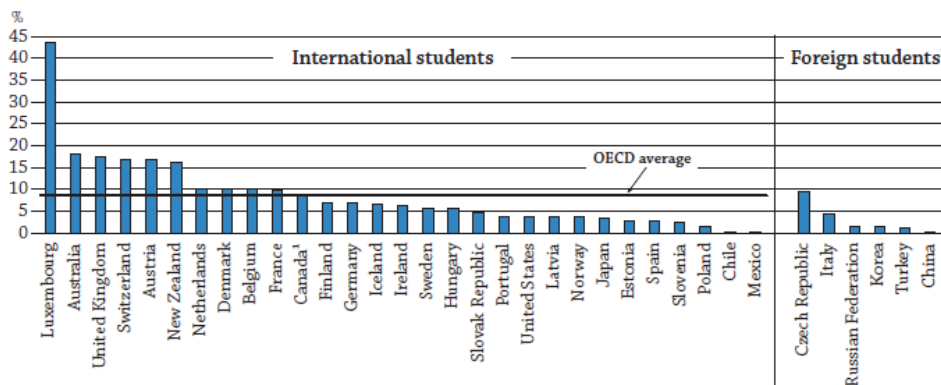
<sup>1</sup> Values reported in equivalent US dollars (USD) have been converted using purchasing power parities (PPPs).

38% of master's students and 33% of doctoral students. In every case these figures are considerably above the OECD averages of 5%, 6%, 14% and 24%, respectively.

- Nearly half of the foreign students at Australian tertiary institutions come from the People's Republic of China (35.2%), India (6.5%) or Indonesia (3.8%) – 113 000 students in total.
- Australia remains attractive in spite of the higher tuition fees for international students: For bachelor's or equivalent programmes, public institutions charge up to USD 14 546 for international students and just USD 4 473 for domestic ones.
- Australia differentiates fees by field of study based on a range of factors including the likely earnings of graduates as well as the cost of the studies.

**Figure: Student mobility in tertiary education (2013)**

*International or foreign student enrolments as a percentage of total tertiary education*




1. Year of reference 2012.

2. Foreign students are defined on the basis of their country of citizenship, these data are not comparable with data on international students and are therefore presented separately in the chart.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of international or foreign students in total tertiary education.

Source: OECD, Table C4.1. 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)).

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933284241> (Education at a Glance 2015, chart C4.1)


## References

OECD (2015), *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2015-en>.

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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.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using:



<http://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=AUS&treshold=10&topic=EO>

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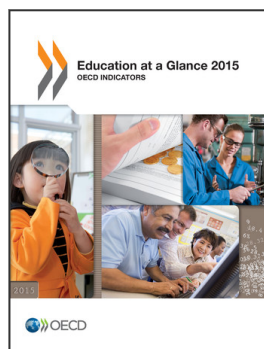
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## Key Facts for Australia in Education at a Glance 2015

Table	Indicator	Australia	OECD average
<b>Educational Access and Output</b>			
	<b>Enrolment rates</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2013</b>
C2.1	3-year-olds (in early childhood education)	62%	74%
	<b>Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2014</b>
A1.4a	Below upper secondary	23%	24%
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	35%	43%
	Tertiary	42%	34%
	<b>Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds (disaggregation at tertiary level)</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2014</b>
A1.1a	Short cycle tertiary	11%	8%
	Bachelor's or equivalent	24%	16%
	Master's or equivalent	6%	11%
	Doctoral or equivalent	1%	1%
	<b>Entry and graduation rates</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2013</b>
C3.1	Percentage of today's young people expected to enter tertiary education at least once during their lifetime	**	67%
A3.1	Percentage of today's young people expected to graduate with a bachelor's or equivalent degree in their lifetime	61%	36%
<b>Economic and Labour Market Outcomes</b>			
	<b>Unemployment rate of 25-64 year-olds</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2014</b>
A5.4a	Below upper secondary	7.8%	12.8%
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	4.6%	7.7%
	Tertiary	3.2%	5.1%
	<b>Average earnings premium for tertiary-educated 25-64 year-olds (upper secondary = 100)</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2013</b>
A6.1a	Short cycle tertiary	114	125
	Bachelor's or equivalent	137	157
	Master's, Doctoral or equivalent	161	214
	All tertiary	134	160
	<b>Percentage of people not in employment, education or training (NEET) for 15-29 year-olds</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2014</b>
C5.2b	Men	10.1%	13.2%
	Women	15.3%	17.9%
<b>Financial Investment in Education</b>			
	<b>Annual expenditure per student (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2012</b>
B1.1a	Primary education	7705 USD	8247 USD
	Secondary education	10165 USD	9518 USD
	Tertiary (including R&D activities)	16859 USD	15028 USD
	<b>Total expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2012</b>
B2.2	As a percentage of GDP	5.6%	5.2%
	<b>Total public expenditure on primary to tertiary education</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2012</b>
B4.2	As a percentage of total public expenditure	13.5%	11.6%
<b>Schools and Teachers</b>			
	<b>Ratio of students to teaching staff</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2013</b>
D2.2	Primary education	16 students per teacher	15 students per teacher
	Secondary education	12 students per teacher	13 students per teacher
	<b>Average actual teachers' salaries</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2013</b>
D3.4	Pre-primary school teachers	49535 USD	37798 USD
	Primary school teachers	50737 USD	41248 USD
	Lower secondary school teachers (general programmes)	51417 USD	43626 USD
	Upper secondary school teachers (general programmes)	51457 USD	47702 USD

The reference year is the year cited or the latest year for which data are available.

\*\* Please refer to the source table for details on this data.



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