



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.

France

This note on France focuses on six major topics covered in the present edition of *Education at a Glance*, all of which particularly concern France.

From nursery school to secondary school (enrolment, teaching environment and results of the PISA Computer-Based Assessment of Student Skills)

In France, a large number of children attend nursery school.

In most OECD countries, children are now enrolled in early childhood education before the age of five. Based on the average for all OECD countries, over seven children in ten (74%) are enrolled in an early childhood education institution at the age of three. This figure increases to 88% for children enrolled in pre-primary or primary education at the age of four. In OECD countries which are also members of the European Union, the figure is 91%.

France is one of a group of countries (along with Belgium, Denmark, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom) with widespread school attendance at the ages of three and four (at least 95% of three- and four-year olds are enrolled in pre-primary programmes in these countries). In contrast, fewer than 60% of four-year-olds are enrolled in school in Colombia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey (see Table C2.1 and Chart C2.1).

With high levels of state funding of nursery schools, representing a significant proportion of GDP. However, in relation to the number of children enrolled in pre-primary school, expenditure per child is below the average for OECD countries.

Public expenditure on childcare and early education represents a significant proportion of French GDP. At 0.7% of GDP in 2012, it was above the average for pre-primary education in OECD countries, which was 0.6%. However, the fact that early childhood education is available to the great majority of children in France means that annual expenditure per child in school is lower in France. Across all institutions (public and private), the average was USD 8 008 in OECD countries compared to only USD 6 969 in France (see Table C2.3).

When compared to primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education, pre-primary education receives the highest percentage of private expenditure in most OECD countries. In France, the share of private expenditure on pre-primary education is among the lowest in the OECD (7% in France, versus an average of 20% in OECD countries). Nevertheless, this percentage varies greatly depending on the countries, from 5% and below in Belgium, Latvia and Luxembourg to 50% and above in Australia and Japan (see Table C2.3).

... and leading to a higher ratio of students to teaching staff (teachers and auxiliaries) in France than in most OECD countries.

The ratio of students to teaching staff is a telling indicator of the resources allocated to childcare and early education. There are over 20 students per teacher (not including non-teaching staff such as auxiliaries, for example) in Chile, China, France, Indonesia and Mexico but under 10 students per teacher in Estonia, Iceland, New Zealand, Slovenia and Sweden, and an average of 14 students in OECD countries (see Table C2.2).

Some countries rely heavily on auxiliary staff in pre-primary education. Twelve of them have better ratios of students to contact staff than teaching staff. There are also far fewer students (at least two fewer) per member of contact staff than per teacher in Austria, Chile, China, France, Norway and the Russian Federation (see Table C2.2).

Early education is particularly beneficial for immigrant children.

France is one of the few countries with widespread school attendance at the age of three and four, which is a considerable asset for children. Early education is particularly beneficial for immigrant children. According to the results of the PISA 2012 assessment for 15-year-old immigrant students who arrived in an OECD country before the age of six, there was a difference in performance between those who were enrolled in pre-primary education and those who were not which represented the equivalent of two years of schooling. The benefits are particularly visible for immigrant students in Finland, France, Israel and the United States. This is particularly relevant in the United States, where the percentage of immigrant children enrolled in an early education programme is relatively low (see Chart C2.2).

Furthermore, immigrant children who arrived in an OECD country between the ages of six and ten scored 19 points lower in PISA reading comprehension tests than those who arrived before the age of six. The difference in score was over 39 points (representing the equivalent of approximately one year of schooling) in France as well as in Belgium, Finland, Germany and Israel (see Indicator C2).

Contrary to popular belief, students in France attend more hours of classes than the average for OECD countries at both primary level and collège (lower secondary level)...

Students in France attend more hours of classes than the average for OECD countries in primary and secondary education alike, with the differential from the average tending to rise with the level of education. In OECD countries, compulsory instruction time for primary students averages 804 hours per year (versus 864 hours in France) and 916 hours at lower secondary level (versus 991 hours in France, see Table D1.1).

They spend more time studying basics (mathematics and reading comprehension) than most of their neighbours. This is particularly visible in primary education.

On average, primary students in OECD countries spend the largest share of time studying reading, writing and literature (an average of 22% of instruction time in OECD countries). But the figure varies considerably from one country to the next. France is the OECD country where the largest proportion of time is spent on reading, writing and literature, with 37% of instruction time.

The time spent studying mathematics varies even more between countries, averaging out at 15% of total compulsory instruction time at primary level. Mathematics accounts for at least 20% of compulsory instruction time in France (21%), Germany (20%), Mexico (24%) and Portugal (27%), while in Denmark, Greece, Korea and Poland it only accounts for 14% or less (see Table D1.3a).

In terms of the time spent teaching basics, France is closer to the OECD average for lower secondary students, who spend an average of 39% of the compulsory curriculum on three subjects:

reading, writing and literature (14%), modern foreign languages (13%) and mathematics (12%). In France, these three subjects account for 46% of overall compulsory instruction time, with 14% spent on reading, writing and literature, 17% on modern foreign languages and 14% on mathematics (see Table D1.3b).

In France, the number of instruction days per year attended by primary students is the lowest of all OECD countries, even since the reform of the primary school timetable in 2014.

Countries also allocate annual instruction time differently over the year. In OECD countries in 2015, primary students attended an average of 185 instruction days per year. In France, this fell to 162 instruction days per year, the lowest number across the OECD. In contrast, primary students attended at least 200 instruction days per year in Brazil, Colombia, Israel, Italy, Japan and Mexico (see Table D1.2).

Note that before the reform of the school timetable, France was even further from the norm for OECD countries. The reform increased the average number of instruction days attended per year by primary students from 144 to 162, thereby bringing France more in line with the trend among its European neighbours.

In France, class size at the primary and secondary level is relatively similar and slightly above the OECD average. According to the results of the TALIS 2013 survey, the addition of an extra student to a class of average size at the lower secondary level leads to a 0.5 percentage point reduction in the amount of time devoted to learning and teaching.

The average primary school class in OECD countries has 21 students, compared to 23 in France (and over 29 students in Chile and China, but almost half as many in Luxembourg). In OECD countries, the number of students per class tends to increase by an average of two between primary and lower secondary education. Accordingly, the average lower secondary school class in OECD countries has 24 students compared to 25 in France (see Table D2.1).

While class size has no global influence on student performance, there is evidence to suggest a positive correlation between these two variables within specific groups and in certain contexts, such as teaching institutions considered “at-risk” and students in difficulty. The TALIS 2013 survey also revealed, unsurprisingly, that there is a correlation between class size and the time spent on teaching and learning, with more time spent on maintaining classroom discipline when class sizes are higher. More specifically, the addition of an extra student to a class of average size leads to a 0.5 percentage point reduction in the amount of time devoted to learning and teaching.

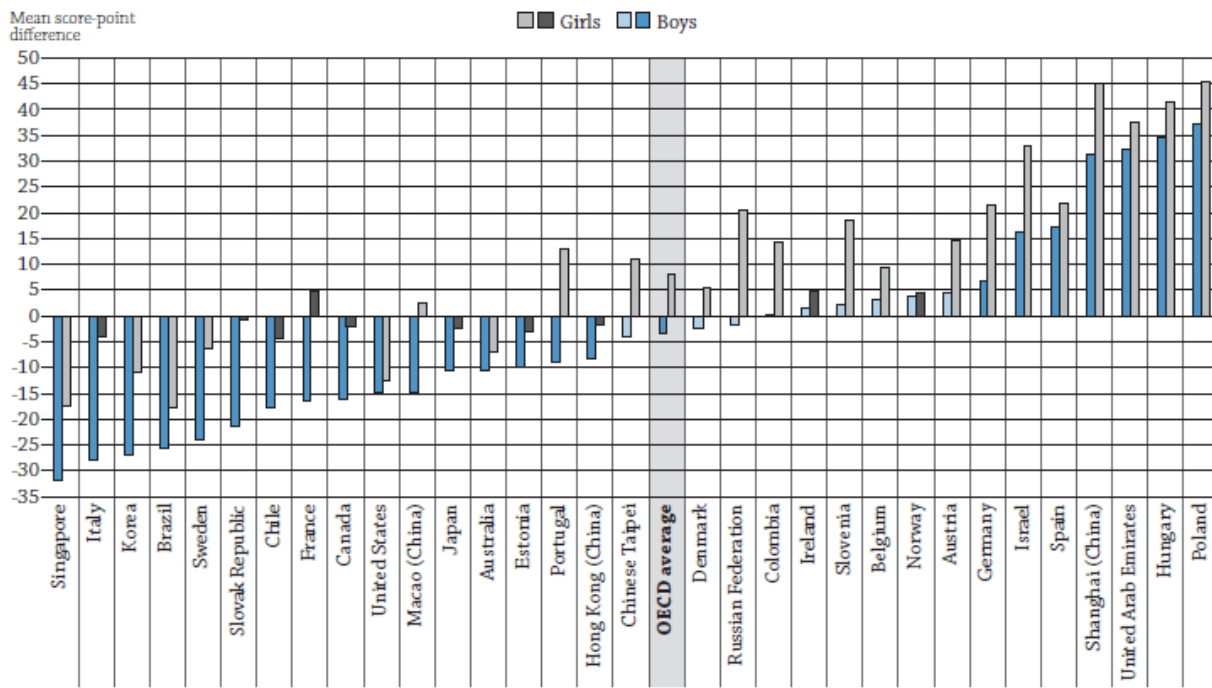
In France, 15-year-old boys obtain better results in computer-based PISA assessment whereas girls’ results remain the same across all assessment formats.

The PISA 2012 survey assessed the extent to which students were capable of gathering and processing information, not only on paper but also on a computer. The results showed that some countries are more successful than others in helping students acquire the skills necessary to fully participate in the digital age. For example, 15-year-old students (boys and girls) obtained better scores in digital reading comprehension than print reading in Australia, Brazil, Korea, Singapore, Sweden and the United States, whereas they performed better in pencil-and-paper tests than in computer-based assessments in Germany, Hungary, Israel, Poland, Shanghai (China), Spain, and the United Arab Emirates (see Table D8.3 and Chart D8.3).

While the benefit of computer-based testing for boys is plain to see, girls fare less well with this format. In France, 15-year-old boys improved their reading comprehension score by 16 points (versus the OECD average of 4 points) in the computer-based PISA assessment compared to the pencil-and-paper assessment. In contrast, the score for girls of the same age fell by 5 points

(versus an OECD average of 8 points) in the computer-based tests compared to the pencil-and-paper tests.

Chart D8.3. Mean score-point difference between paper-and-pencil and computer-delivered reading test¹ (PISA 2012)
15-year-old students, by gender



Note: Differences that are statistically significant are marked in grey and dark blue.

1. Negative figures mean that 15-year-old students have obtained better performances on computer-delivered reading test.

Countries and economies are ranked in ascending order of the mean score-point difference between paper-and-pencil and computer-delivered reading test of boys.

Source: OECD, Table D8.3. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

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It can therefore be concluded that girls outperform boys in reading comprehension regardless of the format of assessment, but that the gap is narrower in computer-based tests (see Table D8.3 and Chart D8.3).

Nevertheless, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the classroom only improves student performance in certain contexts, such as when use of the Internet and computer software helps to increase study time and practice.

Students' self-reports show that they typically spend at least 25 minutes on line each day at school in OECD countries. On average, during a typical school day, the time spent on line at school is 58 minutes in Australia, 46 minutes in Denmark, 42 minutes in Greece and 39 minutes in Sweden. In contrast, at least 50% of students claimed that they do not use the Internet at school in Germany, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Macau (China), Poland, Shanghai (China), Singapore, Turkey and Uruguay (see Table D8.1, no data are available for France).

However, there is no linear correlation between the extent of Internet use in class and PISA reading scores. The results of the PISA assessment suggest that some use of computers in the classroom can be more beneficial than no use at all, but that intensive use tends to be associated with significantly lower average scores in OECD countries. The use of ICT is only associated with better student performance in certain contexts, such as when computer software and Internet connections help to increase study time and practice.

Higher education

For the first time, Education at a Glance 2015 is able to provide detailed statistics for each level of higher education by using the new International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011). As a result, it is possible for the first time to compare higher education degrees, i.e. short-stream programmes, Licences (first-degree programmes), Masters (second-degree programmes) and Doctorats (doctorates).

The level of educational attainment in France has risen considerably in the past 40 years.

Over the past 40 years, France has closed the gap that it had with a great many OECD countries in regards to its population's educational attainment. The significant rise in the proportion of young people completing their studies with a secondary school diploma or the equivalent, and the successful mass expansion of higher education enrolments in the 1980s – with the creation of IUTs ("university institutes of technology") in 1966 and the development of university-level curricular pathways and *grandes écoles* – are among the achievements of the French education system.

Thus, the percentage of higher education graduates has increased significantly in the past three decades. 44% of 25-34 year-olds (versus the OECD average of 41%) in France were higher education graduates, as opposed to only 20% (versus the OECD average of 24%) of 55-64 year-olds (see Table A1.3a).

In France, short-stream higher education programmes such as IUTs/STS (level 5 in the new ISCED 2011) are very popular with young people.

There are significant differences between countries in the type of higher education degrees obtained. On average in the OECD, 17% of 25-34 year-olds with a higher education degree stopped after completing a short-stream programme, 49% stopped after obtaining a first-degree programme, 32% stopped after a second-degree programme, and 2% stopped after a doctorate (calculations based on the data in Table A1.3a).

France, however, is unlike many of its neighbours. Short-stream higher education programmes such as IUTs are very popular with young people as well as being useful in the labour market. In France, a short-stream diploma was the highest level of attainment for 40% of all 25-34 year-olds with at least one higher education degree (versus the OECD average of 17%).

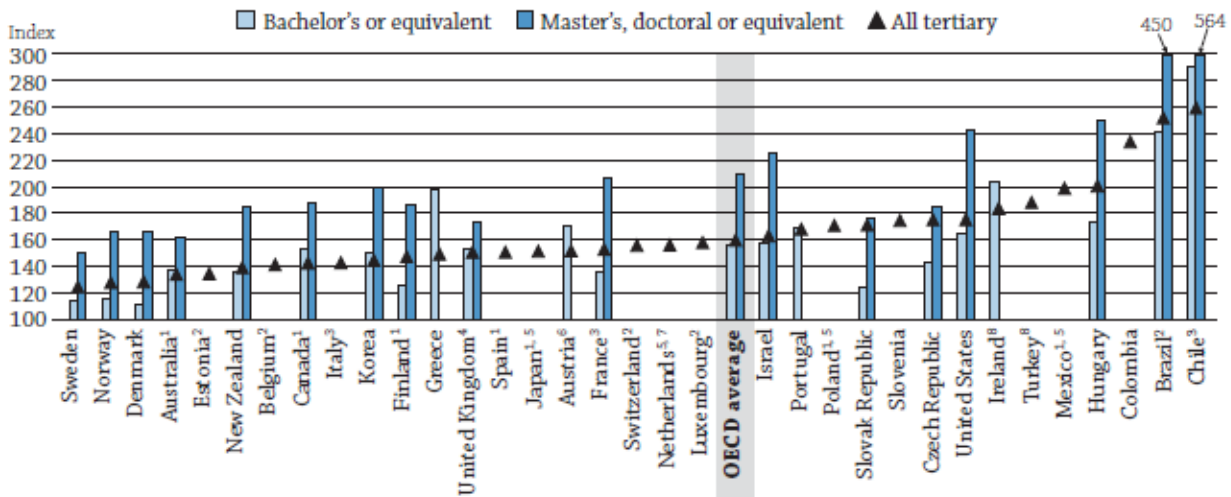
Far fewer students in France leave formal education after obtaining a *Licence*. 27% of all 25-34 year-olds in France with a higher education degree did not continue beyond a *Licence* or equivalent (versus the OECD average of 49%). Lastly, France is practically in line with the OECD average for second-degree programmes and doctorates. 31% of all 25-34 year-olds in France with a higher education degree obtained a *Masters* or equivalent (versus the OECD average of 32%) and 2% obtained a doctorate (versus the OECD average of 1%). (Calculations based on the data in Table A1.3a).

In France, a Licence is also the level beyond which further education and training bring much higher returns in terms of earnings...

In all OECD countries, earnings differentials between working 25-64 year-olds with higher or tertiary education and those with upper secondary education are more pronounced than the differentials between upper secondary and lower secondary education or below. In France, adults with tertiary education can hope to earn on average 53% (versus the OECD average of 60%) more than adults with upper secondary education (see Table A6.1a).

Chart A6.1. Relative earnings of tertiary-educated workers, by level of tertiary education (2013)

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. Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Spain: Year of reference 2012.

2. Belgium, Brazil, Estonia, Luxembourg, Switzerland: Index 100 refers to the combined ISCED levels 3 and 4 of the educational attainment levels in the ISCED 2011 classification.

3. Chile, France, Italy: Year of reference 2011.

4. The United Kingdom: Data for upper secondary attainment includes completion of a sufficient volume and standard of programmes that would be classified individually as completion of intermediate upper secondary programmes (18% of the adults are under this group).

5. Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland: Index 100 refers to the combined ISCED levels 3 and 4 of the educational attainment levels in the ISCED-97 classification.

6. Austria: Master's, doctoral or equivalent are included in bachelor's or equivalent.

7. The Netherlands: Year of reference 2010.

8. Ireland, Turkey: Earnings net of income tax.

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

Source: OECD, Table A6.1a. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

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However, earnings benefits from a first-degree programme are lower in France than in a large number of OECD countries. In France, the earnings of holders of a *Licence* or equivalent are 36% higher than for holders of an upper secondary diploma, versus an average of 57% in OECD countries. The earnings benefits from a *Licence* in France are also relatively low compared to holders of a short-stream diploma. Holders of short-stream diplomas in France earn around 27 % than holders of an upper secondary diploma, which is close to the OECD average of 26% (see Table A6.1a).

However, there are earning benefits in the labour market for second-degree and doctoral graduates, and they earn on average more than double than holders of an upper secondary diploma. This trend also applies to France. In Brazil and Chile (two countries with a relatively low proportion of graduates of higher education), holders of these diplomas are in the best position in comparison with less educated paid workers as they earn over four times as much as holders of no more than an upper secondary diploma (see Table A6.1a).

... and employability

In general, the employment rate increases as the level of educational attainment rises. For example, in most OECD and partner countries, labour market outcomes are better for second-degree graduates than for first-degree graduates.

In France, the employment rate for adults with a short-stream diploma is 84% (versus the OECD average of 79%) while it is “only” 82% for adults with a *Licence* (versus the OECD average also of 82%). The employment rates for holders of a *Masters* (87% both in France and on average in OECD countries) or a *Doctorat* (87% in France versus the OECD average of 91%) are higher than for first-degree graduates. They are also much higher than the employment rate for adults with nothing higher than a secondary school diploma or equivalent (73% in France versus the OECD average of 74%) and for those without this minimum qualification (see Table A5.1a).

Nonetheless, in over one-third of OECD countries, tuition fees are the same for first-degree and second-degree programmes.

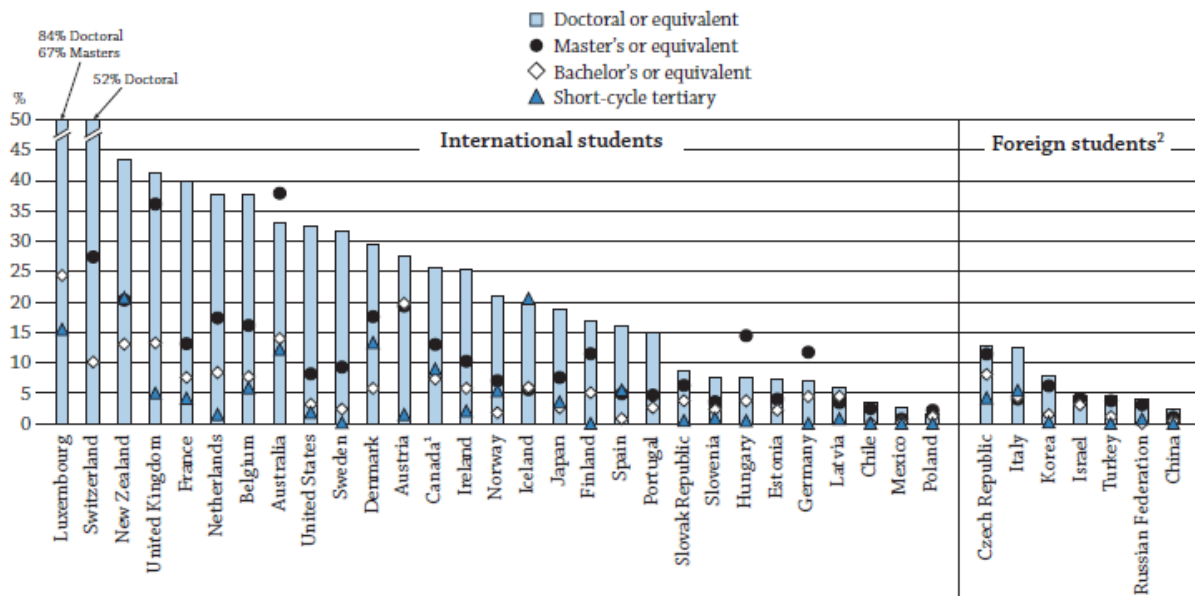
In all OECD countries, labour market outcomes are better for second-degree graduates or doctoral graduates than first-degree graduates. However, in a third of OECD countries, the annual tuition fees charged by public institutions are not much higher for a second-degree programme or a doctorate (or their equivalent) than for a first-degree programme. They are even identical in one-third of OECD countries. That said, in another group of countries there is a significant difference in the tuition fees paid by national students for a first-degree programme and a second-degree programme. In Korea and the United States, the tuition fees for a second-degree programme are 30% higher than for a first-degree programme, increasing to 60% in Australia. In Belgium (French Community) and Colombia, the tuition fees for a second-degree programme are four times higher (with tuition fees of under USD 600 for a first-degree programme in both countries) (see Tables B5.1a and B5.1c, available on line).

In the traditional university pathways in France, the tuition fees charged to *Masters* students are slightly higher than the fees charged to *Licence* students. On the whole, tuition fees across all university pathways in France remain moderate relative to other OECD countries.

The proportion of holders of doctoral degrees in France is in line with the OECD average but around 40% of doctoral graduates are foreign students.

Doctoral graduates are those who have obtained the highest level of formal education and typically include researchers with a doctorate or a Ph.D., who help create and disseminate knowledge across society. Based on graduation patterns in 2013, 1.7% of young people in France, and on average across OECD countries, will graduate from advanced research programmes. The highest advance research graduation rates in OECD countries are in Slovenia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, where at least 3% of young people, including international students, are expected to obtain a doctoral degree based on the trends for 2013 (see Table A3.1).

Chart C4.2. Student mobility in tertiary education, by ISCED level (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 doctoral or equivalent programmes.

Source: OECD, Table C4.1. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

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In France, while this figure is in line with the OECD average, around 40% of doctoral graduates are internationally mobile students (versus an average of 24% in the OECD), reflecting both the attractiveness of these pathways for international students and the greater reluctance of national students to follow them (see Table C4.1). The consequence is low enrolment rates among over-25-year-olds in France, with 8% of 25-29 year-olds in France still enrolled in education versus an average of 17% in OECD countries (see Table C5.2a).

In France, at least 62% of doctorate students in 2013 graduated in science or engineering (versus the OECD average of 44%)

The percentage of science graduates increases with the level of educational attainment. On average in OECD countries, 5% of all higher education graduates in 2013 completed a short-stream programme in science (versus 3% in France), 8% completed a first-degree programme (versus 12% in France), 9% completed a second-degree programme (versus 10% in France), whereas 27% completed a doctorate (versus 48% in France). If higher education diplomas in engineering are also taken into account, at least 55% of doctoral graduates in Canada, Chile and France completed a course in science or engineering, which is the highest proportion in OECD countries (see Table A3.5 and Chart A3.4).

France remains an attractive country for international students, hosting 6% of the worldwide population of foreign students in higher education. However, new emerging countries are starting to compete in the education market...

Over the past 30 years, the number of students studying in a country of which they are not citizens has grown sharply throughout the world, from 0.8 million in 1975 to 4.5 million in 2012 (see Box C4.1 of *Education at a glance 2014*). Internationally mobile students account for a significant proportion of tertiary education enrolments in France (10% versus an average of 9%) (see Table C4.1).

In 2013, more than half of all foreign students pursuing higher education were in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom or the United States. It is the United States that hosts the most internationally mobile students in absolute terms, (19% of the worldwide population of foreign students), followed by the United Kingdom (10%), Australia and France (6%), Germany (5%), Canada and Japan (3%) and, from countries which only have data on foreign students, the Russian Federation (3%).

The aforementioned countries (including France) account for over half of the worldwide population of foreign students. However, other countries are playing a significant role in international education (see Chart C4.3 and Table C4.6, available on line). Indeed, Austria, China, Italy, the Netherlands and Saudi Arabia accounted for a non-negligible percentage (2%) of the worldwide population of foreign students in 2013 (see Table C4.6).

... which is prompting a growing number of countries (including France) to ease their immigration policy in order to encourage the temporary or permanent residence of foreign students...

In recent years, several OECD countries have eased their immigration policies to encourage the temporary or permanent immigration of international students. This makes these countries more attractive to students, as it improves their job prospects; it also strengthens the country's talent pool to the benefit of the economy. For example, Canada and Australia allow foreign students, upon completion of their studies, to remain on their soil to find work for up to three years and four years respectively. Most other OECD countries provide foreign students with similar residence permits, which allow them to look for work but over a shorter period. The students only receive a work permit if they find work commensurate with their qualifications, based on specific criteria, before the residence permit expires. Some countries with particularly strict criteria, such as France, have recently eased them with a view to attracting and then retaining internationally mobile students (see Indicator C4).

... and which is also prompting a growing number of countries to offer programmes in English in some higher education pathways.

In higher education, there is a significant variation between European countries in terms of the percentage of institutions which offered programmes in English during the 2013/2014 academic year. Excluding English-speaking European countries, the three countries where a majority of institutions offered at least one programme entirely in English were Finland (83%), Sweden (81%) and the Netherlands (65%). These countries rank well in the list of countries with the highest enrolment of foreign students (see Chart C4.3). Broadly speaking, the percentage of institutions offering programmes in English tends to be higher in Northern, Western and Central European countries, and below average in Southern and Eastern Europe, with Slovenia (9%) and Croatia (7%) at the bottom of the table. The fact that only 16% of higher education institutions in France offered programmes in English during the 2013/2014 academic year, suggests that the country is lagging behind its European neighbours (Box C4.1).

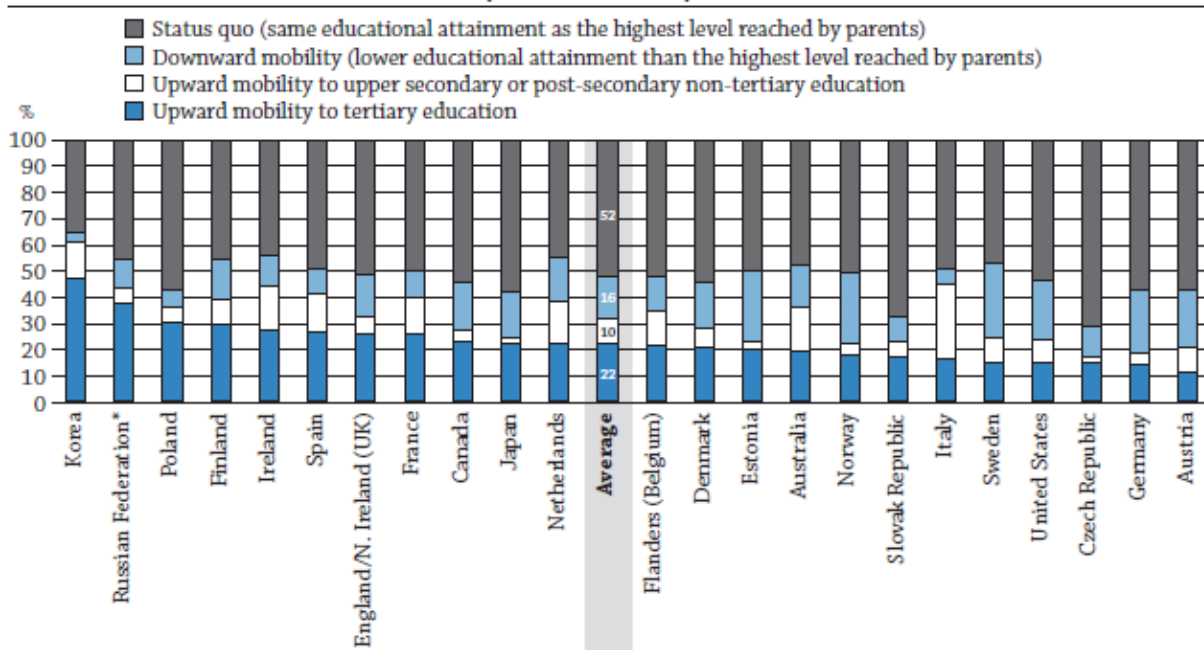
Note that the percentage of institutions offering programmes in English is not necessarily the best indicator of the extent to which English is used in tertiary education systems. When compared to another indicator, in this case the percentage of students studying in English, the correlation between the two variables is far from perfect ($r = 0.54$). Nevertheless, international data on percentage of institutions offering programmes in English are currently more reliable.

Educational attainment and gender inequality

The level of educational attainment in France has risen considerably in the past 30 years. These outcomes have led to upward educational mobility within France, where 40% of young people (25-34 year-olds) have a higher level of educational attainment than their parents.

In all countries except Estonia, Germany, Norway and Sweden, the absolute mobility of the level of educational attainment is more often upward than downward, reflecting the development of education systems. On average among OECD countries and subnational entities which took part in the 2012 OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), upward educational mobility is reflected in the fact that 25-34 year-olds have a higher level of educational attainment than their parents. 10% of young people with parents who do not have a post-secondary or tertiary level diploma have reached at least one of these levels of educational attainment (versus 14% in France), and 22% of young people with parents who do not have a tertiary level diploma have reached this level of educational attainment (versus 26% in France).

Chart A4.1. Intergenerational mobility in education (2012)
Survey of Adult Skills, educational attainment of 25-34 year-old non-students
compared with their parents



* See note on data for the Russian Federation in the Methodology section.

Countries are ranked in descending order of upward mobility to tertiary education among tertiary-educated 25-34 year-old non-students.

Source: OECD, Table A4.1a. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

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In France, 40% of 25-34 year-olds have a higher level of educational attainment than their parents (versus an average of 32% in the OECD countries participating in the OECD Survey of Adult Skills), whereas only 10% of them failed to equal their parents' level of educational attainment (versus the OECD average of 16%) (see Table A4.1a).

Among 25-34 year-olds in France, as in 40 of the 43 countries with comparable data, more women than men have attained higher education.

According to the figures for 2014, among 25-34 year-olds in France, there were higher attainment rates in tertiary education among women (49%) than among men (39%). This trend is visible in 40 of the 43 countries with available data. The widest variation in the attainment rate in tertiary education between men and women aged 25-34 is in Israel, Latvia and Slovenia, where there is a

gap of 20 percentage points or more in favour of women among younger adults (see Table A1.4b, available on line).

As educational attainment rises, so gender inequality in the labour market falls.

In France and almost all OECD countries, young women have higher levels of educational attainment than young men, but lower employment rates. However, the gender gap is much wider when the levels of educational attainment are lower than when they are higher. In France, there is a 14 percentage point gap between men (62%) and women (48%) in the employment rate among 25-64 year-olds with educational attainment below upper secondary. This gender difference in the employment rate falls as educational attainment rises, as it is only 5 percentage points among holders of a tertiary level diploma in France (versus an average of 9 percentage points in OECD countries). In France, the employment rate of holders of a tertiary level diploma in 2014 was 87% among men (the OECD average is 88%) and 82% among women (the OECD average is 79%). Note that the gender gap closed in France between 2000 and 2014, from 9 to 5 percentage points (see Chart A10.5 and Tables A5.3b and A5.3c, available on line).

Nevertheless, women with tertiary attainment earn approximately 74% of the earnings of men with the same level of educational attainment, both in France and on average in OECD countries.

Women earn less than men, even at the tertiary level of educational attainment. Based on the earnings of those working full-time and full-year, the largest difference in earnings between men and women occurs among holders of tertiary level diplomas. Among 35-44 year-olds, women with a tertiary level of education earn approximately 74% of the earnings of men with the same level of educational attainment in OECD countries. Among tertiary-educated earners, it is only in Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey that women earn at least 85% of the earnings of men, whereas they earn 65% or less of the earnings of men in Estonia, Hungary, Israel, Korea, and the Slovak Republic (see Chart A10.6 and Table A6.2a).

However, this observation also reflects the fact that women are under-represented in the highest levels of educational attainment at the tertiary level, and in some very high-paying fields of study. For example, men in France are nine times more likely than women to study engineering, construction and subjects related to the manufacturing industry, and five times more likely to do so on average in OECD countries (see Table A10.3 and Chart A10.4).

Engaging young people in the labour market and providing further education to the workforce

In France, it is difficult for the least skilled young people to find work. The country needs to ensure that education is more effective and of benefit to everyone.

On average in OECD countries, 83% of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary education are full-time, full-year workers (versus 84% in France), 74% of 25-64 year-olds with an upper secondary non-tertiary education (versus 73% in France), but only 56% of 25-64 year-olds with educational attainment below the upper secondary level (versus 54% in France). In some countries, there is a marked difference in the employment rate between those with tertiary attainment and those whose attainment is below the upper secondary level. In France, as well as in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic, and Slovenia, there is a difference of at least 30 percentage points between the two groups (see Table A5.3a).

This is an ongoing problem for young people. In 2014, 18.3% of 20-24 year-olds in France were NEETS (Neither in Employment nor in Education or Training), which is in line with the average of OECD countries. In countries like Germany, Iceland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway, they represent one in ten young people or under. In order to create prosperous

communities, promote social cohesion and generate inclusive growth, it is vital that young people be able to participate in society and the economy (Indicator C5).

Young people in France do not have enough access to learning, and vocational pathways are not, in their current form, sufficiently prized by the labour market

In France, 43% of students in upper secondary education are in vocational training. In one-third of OECD countries, this figure is over 50%, and in Austria, the Czech Republic and Finland it is equal to or greater than 70%. Vocational training in upper secondary education is often dispensed exclusively in the classroom. A certain number of countries, however, offer combined work-study programmes. In Austria, China, Denmark, Germany, Latvia and Switzerland, for example, most students take vocational courses that combine work and study, whereas just 28% do so in France and 37% on average in the OECD (see Table C1.2).

In France, vocational pathways (i.e. professional *baccalauréat*, CAP/BEP or the equivalent,) suffer from two major setbacks (although some recent initiatives have been introduced to improve the situation): they do not lead enough students into skilled jobs and only offer their graduates limited opportunities for continuing their education, even though some programmes, such as the DUT and BTS, are supposed to be open to them. In many other countries, however, a vocational qualification at upper secondary level increases one's chances of finding a job compared to general qualifications (by ten percentage points on average, among 25-34 year-olds not going on to higher education), but this is not the case in France. In fact, at 14%, the French unemployment rate for 25-34 year-olds is higher among individuals with a vocational upper secondary or post-secondary, non-tertiary qualification than among individuals with general or technological upper secondary qualifications (12%) (see Table A5.5c).

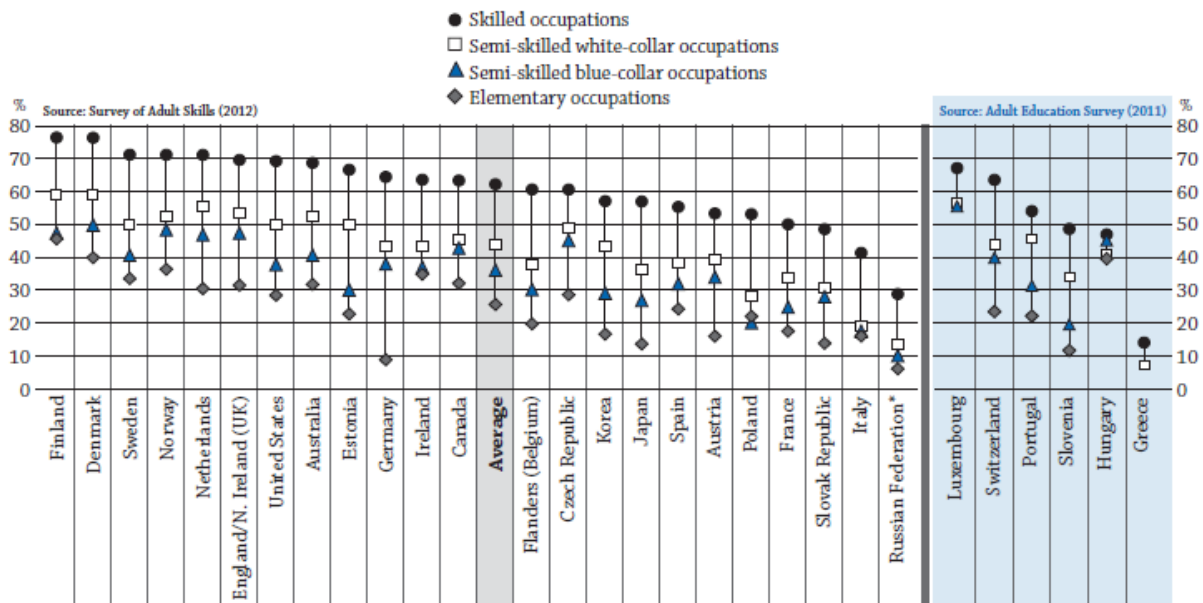
In France, after entering the job market, workers have fewer opportunities than average in OECD countries to take part in formal and/or informal training financed by their employers...

According to the OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), almost 50% of adults aged between 25 and 64 participate in formal and/or informal training activities financed by their employer in the OECD compared to 37% in France. This figure exceeds 60% in Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Norway, but falls below 40% in France, Italy, Poland, the Russian Federation and the Slovak Republic (see Table C6.2a).

...and that training is insufficiently targeted at the workers most in need of it, namely the least qualified.

Workers in skilled intellectual jobs are most likely to participate in formal and/or informal training activities financed by their employer; and workers in unskilled jobs are least likely to participate in them. Participation rates in formal and/or informal training activities financed by employers vary little between workers in semi-skilled intellectual jobs and those in semi-skilled manual jobs in Austria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Norway and the Slovak Republic, whereas they are higher among workers in intellectual jobs in most other countries including France. In France, 18% of workers in unskilled jobs participate in formal and/or informal training activities financed by their employer, while 50% of those in skilled jobs do so (see Table C6.2c).

Chart C6.2. Participation in employer-sponsored education, by occupation (2011, 2012)
Survey of Adult Skills and Adult Education Survey, employed 25-64 year-olds



Notes: The data for the countries having participated in the Survey of Adult Skills refer to "employer-sponsored formal and/or non-formal education". The data for the countries having participated in the Eurostat Adult Education Survey (AES) refer to "employer-sponsored", job-related, non-formal education and training".

* See note on data for the Russian Federation in the *Methodology* section.

Countries are ranked in descending order of participation in employer-sponsored formal and/or non-formal education among people in skilled occupations.

Source: OECD, Table C6.2c. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933284342>

Funding the education system

France invests 5.3% of its GDP in education, from primary school to university...

In 2012, like France, OECD countries earmarked an average of 5.3% of their GDP for funding their educational establishments, from primary school to higher education. This percentage is higher than or equal to 6.4% in Colombia, Iceland, Israel, Korea, New Zealand, Norway and the United States, (see Table B2.1).

...but the split between spending on primary and secondary education is imbalanced. The annual cost per student is particularly high at upper secondary level.

Unlike many countries, France shows a clear imbalance between spending on primary and secondary education. The outlay per student in upper secondary (*lycée* and equivalents), which came to USD 13 070 compared to an average of USD 9 876, is 32% higher than the OECD average, while the figure at lower secondary level is equivalent to the OECD average, at USD 9 588 compared to the average of USD 9 627, and at primary level is 15% below the OECD average (USD 7 013 compared to an average USD 8 247) (see Table B1.1a).

In France, as in over a third of OECD countries, the education sector was hit by the economic crisis between 2010 and 2012.

In 2010, investment in education had still not been hit by the economic crisis in most OECD countries. However, between 2010 and 2012, GDP rose (in real terms) in most countries, but public expenditure on educational institutions decreased in eleven of them during this period (by more than 2% in Australia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain), probably because of budget-cutting measures. France was one of these countries: public spending on

educational institutions had grown by an average of 4% between 2008 and 2010, and fell by the same proportion between 2010 and 2012 (see Table B2.4).

Investment has been far greater in higher education than in primary and secondary education in recent years.

Between 2005 and 2012, spending per student by primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary institutions rose by an average of 21% in OECD countries, but only 3% in France. During the same period, on the other hand, France increased its spending per student in higher education by 14%, compared to 11% in OECD countries on average (see Tables B1.5 a and b). In 2012, a typical OECD country spent USD 15 028 per student per year in higher education, (versus USD 15 281 in France). Spending per student in higher education exceeded USD 20 000 in Canada, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States (see Table B1.1a and Chart B1.2).

Teachers

Primary school teachers are younger in France on average than in many European and OECD countries. This is not the case for upper secondary teachers.

In some OECD countries, where a large number of teachers will retire in the next ten years and/or in which the number of students is expected to rise, governments will have to recruit and train new teachers. All evidence points to teacher quality as being the most decisive factor in student performance, so concerted efforts must be made to attract the brightest candidates to the profession.

In OECD countries on average, 41% of primary school teachers are aged under 40 (versus 44% in France). In ten countries, however, namely Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Ireland, Israel, Korea, Luxembourg, Turkey and the United Kingdom, over half of primary school teachers are aged under 40 (see Table D5.1 and Chart D5.1).

In France, on the other hand, just 26% of upper secondary teachers are aged under 40, compared to 33% on average in the OECD (see Table D5.1 and Chart D5.2).

In France, primary school teachers spend 30% more time teaching their students than their colleagues at lower secondary level.

Only in France and Turkey do teachers in primary school spend 30% more hours teaching per year than those at lower secondary level. Primary school teachers in France spend 924 hours per year in the classroom, which is 152 hours more than the OECD average, which comes to 772 hours, and 276 hours more than trained secondary teachers in France (see Table D4.1).

Please note that this does not mean that secondary school teachers work fewer hours than primary school teachers, but that they spend less time with their students, which has an undeniable impact on the resources necessary to fill the classroom hours.

In France, primary and secondary school teachers' statutory salaries are significantly below the OECD average.

Statutory salaries for primary and secondary school teachers in France are below the OECD average, both for starting teachers and for those with ten or fifteen years' professional experience.

Across OECD countries in 2013, statutory salaries (i.e. excluding bonuses and overtime) for teachers with at least fifteen years' experience averaged USD 38 653 (versus USD 33 500 in France) in pre-primary education, USD 41 245 (versus USD 33 500 in France) in primary

education, USD 42 825 (versus USD 36 589 in France) in lower secondary education, and USD 44 600 (versus USD 36 897 in France) in upper secondary education (see Table D3.1).

However, when bonuses and other allowances paid to teachers are factored in, the gap between the levels of education widens (favouring secondary school teachers).

When all the bonuses and allowances paid to teachers are factored in, French teachers fare better, at least those teaching at secondary schools. The average salary for primary school teachers in France is still significantly (12%) below average for the OECD countries, but average actual pay is just 4% below the OECD average for pre-primary teachers and virtually equal to the OECD average for French teachers employed in lower or upper secondary education (average pay is 2% below the OECD average in both cases).

It should be noted, however, that actual average pay in France includes that of collège and lycée teachers holding the country's highest teaching degree (agrégation) at the end of their careers (with the highest salaries), whereas for these levels of education, statutory salaries include only the amounts corresponding to certified teachers with fifteen years' service (see Table D3.4).

In France, just 24% of lower secondary teachers taking part in the TALIS survey said that their students often used ICT for their projects or schoolwork.

On average, 40% of teachers at lower secondary level said that they asked students to use ICTs in the classroom or on project work "often" or "every lesson or almost". Behind this average lie wide disparities between countries. More than one out of two teachers said they asked students to use ICTs "often" or "every lesson or almost" in Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates), Australia, Chile, Denmark, Mexico, New Zealand and Norway, but fewer than one in four said they did so in Croatia, Finland, France, Israel, Japan, Malaysia and Serbia (see Table D8.4 and Chart D8.4).

This observation suggests that despite many governments' heavy investment in computerisation in schools, not all teachers are disposed and prepared to use ICTs in their lessons.

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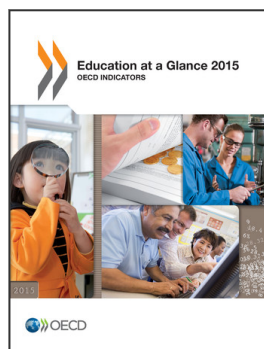
<p>Questions can be directed to: Andreas Schleicher Directorate for Education and Skills andreas.schleicher@oecd.org</p>	<p>Country Note author: Eric Charbonnier E-mail : Eric.Charbonnier@oecd.org</p>
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Key Facts for France in Education at a Glance 2015

Table	Indicator	France	OECD average
Educational Access and Output			
	Enrolment rates	2013	2013
C2.1	3-year-olds (in early childhood education)	100%	74%
	Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds	2014	2014
A1.4a	Below upper secondary	25%	24%
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	43%	43%
	Tertiary	32%	34%
	Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds (disaggregation at tertiary level)	2014	2014
A1.1a	Short cycle tertiary	14%	8%
	Bachelor's or equivalent	9%	16%
	Master's or equivalent	8%	11%
	Doctoral or equivalent	1%	1%
	Entry and graduation rates	2013	2013
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	**	36%
Economic and Labour Market Outcomes			
	Unemployment rate of 25-64 year-olds	2014	2014
A5.4a	Below upper secondary	13.9%	12.8%
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	8.5%	7.7%
	Tertiary	5.3%	5.1%
	Average earnings premium for tertiary-educated 25-64 year-olds (upper secondary = 100)	2013	2013
A6.1a	Short cycle tertiary	127	125
	Bachelor's or equivalent	136	157
	Master's, Doctoral or equivalent	207	214
	All tertiary	153	160
	Percentage of people not in employment, education or training (NEET) for 15-29 year-olds	2014	2014
C5.2b	Men	15.1%	13.2%
	Women	17.4%	17.9%
Financial Investment in Education			
	Annual expenditure per student (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)	2012	2012
B1.1a	Primary education	7013 USD	8247 USD
	Secondary education	11046 USD	9518 USD
	Tertiary (including R&D activities)	15281 USD	15028 USD
	Total expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions	2012	2012
B2.2	As a percentage of GDP	5.3%	5.2%
	Total public expenditure on primary to tertiary education	2012	2012
B4.2	As a percentage of total public expenditure	8.8%	11.6%
Schools and Teachers			
	Ratio of students to teaching staff	2013	2013
D2.2	Primary education	19 students per teacher	15 students per teacher
	Secondary education	13 students per teacher	13 students per teacher
	Average actual teachers' salaries	2013	2013
D3.4	Pre-primary school teachers	36440 USD	37798 USD
	Primary school teachers	36120 USD	41248 USD
	Lower secondary school teachers (general programmes)	42702 USD	43626 USD
	Upper secondary school teachers (general programmes)	46864 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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