

## 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.

### ICELAND

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

*Most young people in Iceland will enter tertiary education with a high proportion going on to master's programmes, and many will continue on later in life, especially among women.*

- Across OECD countries, 67% of young people are expected to enter a tertiary programme, and 82% of them before the age of 25. In Iceland, first-time tertiary students are older: while 86% of young people are expected to enter a tertiary programme eventually, 69% of them do so before they turn 25.
- At 80%, entry rates into bachelor's programmes are 23 percentage points higher in Iceland than the OECD average. This number is also higher than Finland (55%) and Sweden (47%).
- Entry rates into master's programmes are 39%, the second highest among the OECD countries, but only 52% of students start their master's before the age of 30. Across OECD countries, around 22% of young people are expected to enter a master's programme over their lifetime and 73% do so before the age of 30.
- In 13 of the 23 OECD member countries with available data, enrolment rates among 30-39 year-olds were higher among women than men. Iceland has one of the highest rates of women of this age participating in education (17%), with a gender gap of almost 6 percentage points, while the OECD average is 7%, with a gender gap of 2 percentage points.

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

*Employment rates among non-tertiary educated adults in Iceland are higher than the average but still lower than for those with a tertiary education.*

- At a mere 4.7%, Iceland has one of the lowest unemployment rates for adults with a below upper secondary education across the OECD member countries, and the lowest of its Nordic neighbours. On average, some 12.8% of adults with below upper secondary education are unemployed across the OECD countries.
- Across OECD countries, just over half of adults with below upper secondary education are employed (56%), compared with 74% of adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary and 83% of adults with tertiary qualifications. In Iceland, the employment rates for adults without an upper secondary qualification are much higher; 77% are employed, compared with

87% of adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualifications and 91% of adults with tertiary qualifications.

- The majority of 15-34 year-old non-students with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education in OECD countries were able to find employment in the year following their graduation. In 2013, the employment rate among these non-students in Iceland was 84%, over 20 percentage points higher than the average of 61% across the 26 OECD countries with available data.

## Financing of education

*Since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008, expenditure on tertiary institutions has fallen in Iceland but it still invests more of its wealth in education than average.*

- Between 2000 and 2012, expenditure per student by educational institutions increased by an average of 43% in those countries with available data for all years. Since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008, expenditure per primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary student continued to increase for 20 countries, but not in Iceland where it fell by 8%.
- On average across OECD countries, expenditure per tertiary student increased by about 3% between 2000 and 2005 and by 11% between 2005 and 2012. In Iceland, however, there was an actual decrease of 13% in expenditure by tertiary educational institutions between 2000 and 2012.
- In 2012, OECD countries spent an average of 5.3% of their gross domestic product (GDP) on educational institutions from primary to tertiary; Iceland spent 6.4%. On average among OECD countries, expenditure on primary and lower secondary education amounted to 2.5% of GDP, but reached 3.3% in Iceland.

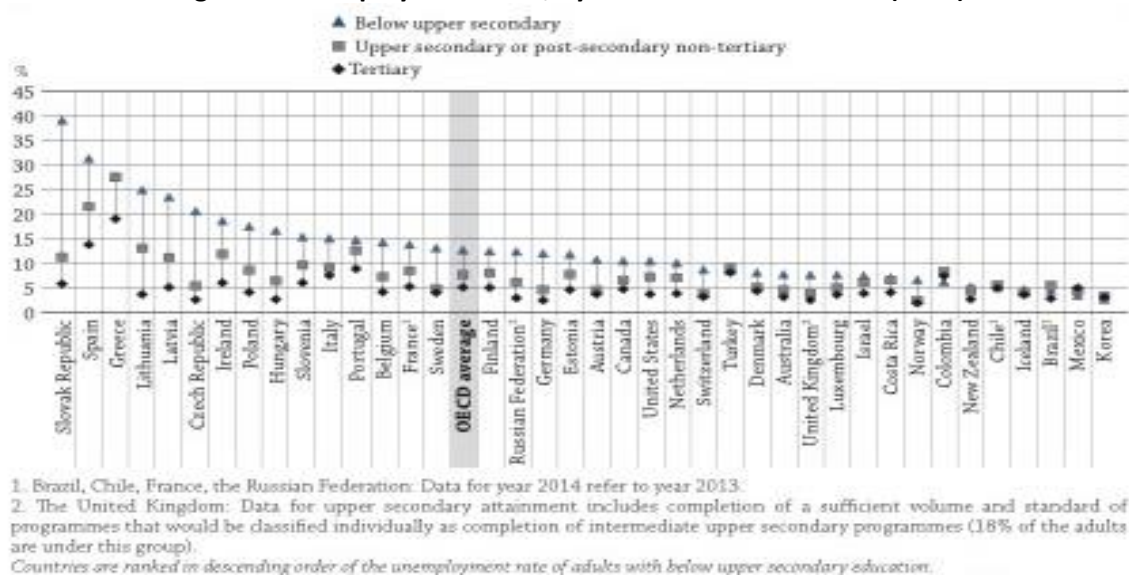
## Initial education

*Children start pre-primary education very young in Iceland and enrolment rates are extremely high compared to the OECD average.*

- In 20 of the 40 OECD and partner countries with available data in 2013, full enrolment in education (defined here as enrolment rates exceeding 90% of the population of the age range covering a certain level of studies) begins between the ages of 3 and 4. In Iceland full enrolment starts at the age of 2.
- As well as starting school younger, enrolment rates in Iceland are extremely high for the youngest pupils. In most OECD and partner countries, at least 75% of 3-4 year-olds were enrolled in either pre-primary or primary programmes, in Iceland, enrolment rates among 3-4 year-olds reached at least 96% in 2013. This is the highest percentage among all the Nordic countries except Denmark.
- Required teaching time at the pre-primary level in public schools varies more across countries than it does at any other level. The number of teaching days ranges from 144 days in France to 227 in Iceland, the highest among OECD countries.
- Despite the high number of teaching days, pre-primary teachers in Iceland have some of the lowest salaries. After 15 years of experience, the annual salary for a pre-primary teacher in a public institution is USD 28 459<sup>1</sup>, which is about USD 10 000 less than the OECD average of USD 38 653.


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

Figure 1: Unemployment rates, by educational attainment (2014)



Source: OECD, Table A5.4a.

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/10.1787/888933283600> (Education at a Glance, Chart A5.1)

## References

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


This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

## Note regarding data from Israel

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and are under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

For more information on Education at a Glance 2015 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).

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

**Questions can be directed to:**  
 Corinne Heckmann  
 Directorate for Education and Skills  
[Corinne.heckmann@oecd.org](mailto:Corinne.heckmann@oecd.org)

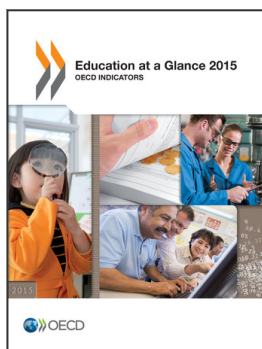
**Country Note author:**  
 David Potrel  
 Directorate for Education and Skills  
[David.Potrel@oecd.org](mailto:David.Potrel@oecd.org)

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

Table	Indicator	Iceland	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)	96%	74%
	<b>Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2014</b>
A1.4a	Below upper secondary	27%	24%
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	36%	43%
	Tertiary	37%	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	4%	8%
	Bachelor's or equivalent	20%	16%
	Master's or equivalent	12%	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	86%	67%
A3.1	Percentage of today's young people expected to graduate with a bachelor's or equivalent degree in their lifetime	**	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	4.7%	12.8%
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	4.1%	7.7%
	Tertiary	3.6%	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	**	125
	Bachelor's or equivalent	**	157
	Master's, Doctoral or equivalent	**	214
	All tertiary	**	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	9.2%	13.2%
	Women	8.5%	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	10003 USD	8247 USD
	Secondary education	8724 USD	9518 USD
	Tertiary (including R&D activities)	9377 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	5.8%	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	14%	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	10 students per teacher	15 students per teacher
	Secondary education	**	13 students per teacher
	<b>Average actual teachers' salaries</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2013</b>
D3.4	Pre-primary school teachers	**	37798 USD
	Primary school teachers	**	41248 USD
	Lower secondary school teachers (general programmes)	**	43626 USD
	Upper secondary school teachers (general programmes)	41283 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.



From:

## Education at a Glance 2015

OECD Indicators

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2015-en>

### Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2015), "Iceland", in *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2015-60-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to [rights@oecd.org](mailto:rights@oecd.org). Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at [info@copyright.com](mailto:info@copyright.com) or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at [contact@cfcopies.com](mailto:contact@cfcopies.com).