

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.

Korea

Early childhood through upper-secondary education

Average class sizes in Korea are larger than OECD and partner countries, particularly in lower secondary schools.

- As with its neighboring countries, Korean classes are generally large. The average primary school class has 24 students, compared with 21 on average for OECD and partner countries. Classes are particularly large in lower secondary schools, averaging 33 students, compared with the OECD average of 24. With Japan, Korea has the largest lower secondary class sizes of OECD and partner countries after China. Education at a Glance 2015 shows that each additional student added to the average class size is associated with a 0.5% decrease in time spent on teaching and learning, suggesting that reducing class sizes may improve learning conditions.

Educational attainment, skills and participation in the labour market

Upper secondary education is almost universal but the proportion of students in vocational upper secondary schools is low despite increasing attention paid to vocational programmes.

- Almost all young Korean adults have an upper secondary qualification: 98% of 25-34 year-olds in 2014, the highest rate among OECD and partner countries.
- In spite of increasing focus on vocational schools in Korea, most students attend general upper secondary schools. Just 18% of 15-19 year-olds attend vocational upper secondary schools, which is very low compared to the OECD average of 41%.
- Although the positive correlation between education and self-reported health in Korea is higher than the OECD average, the proportion of educated people who reported being in good health was the lowest among all OECD and partner countries. On the other hand, the percentage of those who responded that they had a say in governmental policy was the OECD average.

Korea has the highest rate of young adults with tertiary education, and the higher the level of education, the greater the relative earnings.

- The level of tertiary attainment in Korea is high due to the country's strong zeal for education. About 45% of Korean adults (25-64 year-olds) have a tertiary qualification which is above the

OECD average of 33%. Among 25-34 year-olds, the tertiary attainment rate is the highest among OECD and partner countries with available data, at 68%.

- Among adults with income from employment in Korea, those without upper secondary education earn about 29% less than those that do. Those with short-cycle tertiary education earn about 25% more, and those with a bachelor's or equivalent degree earn about 50% more. People with a master's, doctoral or equivalent degrees have the highest earnings advantage, earning twice as much as someone with upper secondary education.

Financing of education

Korea spends heavily on education as a share of its wealth overall, but public expenditure is low and the share of private expenditure among the highest in the OECD.

- Including funds from both public and private sources, Korea spent 6.7% of gross domestic product (GDP) on educational institutions from primary to tertiary levels, against the OECD and partner countries average of 5.3%.

However, the annual public expenditure on educational institutions was below the OECD average. In 2012, public expenditure from primary to tertiary education was USD 7 103¹ per student per year in Korea, while the OECD average was USD 7 971.

- The share of private expenditure on tertiary education is 71%, the largest among OECD and partner countries with available data. This is related to the high proportion of students in independent private tertiary institutions: 75% of students are enrolled in private tertiary educational institutions in Korea, the sixth highest rate among OECD and partner countries after United Kingdom (100%), Latvia (100%), Israel (90%), Estonia (82%) and Chile (80%).

Equity in education

Although traditionally more men than women in Korea tend to reach higher levels of education, gender gaps in educational attainment have been narrowed and levels of educational upward mobility are high.

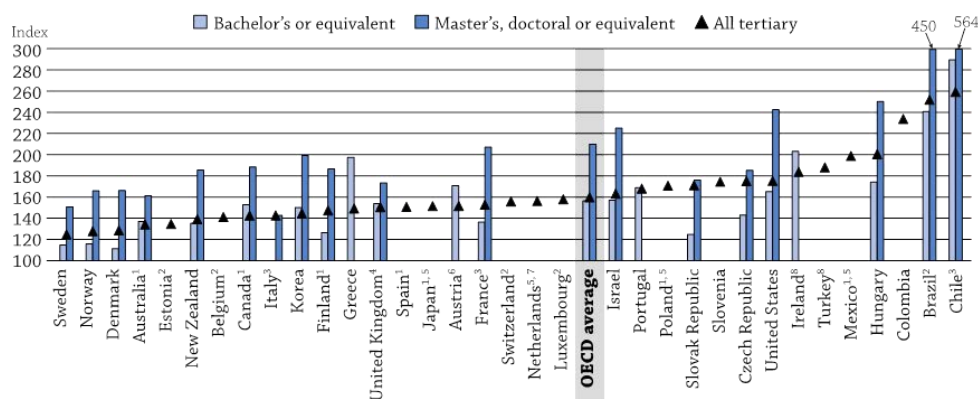
- Traditionally, men tend to be more educated on average than women in Korea. While 48% of 25-64 year-old men have attained tertiary education, the figure is 41% for women. Women make up 34% of doctoral or equivalent graduates, one of the lowest shares among OECD and partner countries.
- However, gender gaps in educational attainment have significantly narrowed, as shown by the figures for tertiary attainment among younger women. Among young adults aged 25-34, more women (72%) have a tertiary qualification than men (64%). Educational upward mobility is high: 63% of young Korean women reported achieving a higher educational attainment than their parents, the highest among countries participating in the Survey of Adults Skills.²

Figure 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

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

² The Survey of Adult Skills is a product of the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).



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).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933283686> (Education at a Glance 2015, chart A6.1)

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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Note regarding data from Israel

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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.

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=KOR&threshold=10&topic=EO>

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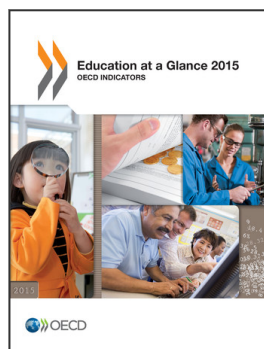
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Key Facts for Korea in Education at a Glance 2015

Table	Indicator	Korea	OECD average
Educational Access and Output			
	Enrolment rates	2013	2013
C2.1	3-year-olds (in early childhood education)	**	74%
	Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds	2014	2014
A1.4a	Below upper secondary	15%	24%
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	40%	43%
	Tertiary	45%	34%
	Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds (disaggregation at tertiary level)	2014	2014
A1.1a	Short cycle tertiary	13%	8%
	Bachelor's or equivalent	31%	16%
	Master's or equivalent	**	11%
	Doctoral or equivalent	**	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	2.7%	12.8%
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	3.3%	7.7%
	Tertiary	3.1%	5.1%
	Average earnings premium for tertiary-educated 25-64 year-olds (upper secondary = 100)	2013	2013
A6.1a	Short cycle tertiary	115	125
	Bachelor's or equivalent	150	157
	Master's, Doctoral or equivalent	200	214
	All tertiary	145	160
	Percentage of people not in employment, education or training (NEET) for 15-29 year-olds	2014	2014
C5.2b	Men	17%	13.2%
	Women	19.1%	17.9%
Financial Investment in Education			
	Annual expenditure per student (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)	2012	2012
B1.1a	Primary education	7395 USD	8247 USD
	Secondary education	8355 USD	9518 USD
	Tertiary (including R&D activities)	9866 USD	15028 USD
	Total expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions	2012	2012
B2.2	As a percentage of GDP	6%	5.2%
	Total public expenditure on primary to tertiary education	2012	2012
B4.2	As a percentage of total public expenditure	14.5%	11.6%
Schools and Teachers			
	Ratio of students to teaching staff	2013	2013
D2.2	Primary education	17 students per teacher	15 students per teacher
	Secondary education	16 students per teacher	13 students per teacher
	Average actual teachers' salaries	2013	2013
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)	**	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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