

## EDUCATION AT A GLANCE 2016

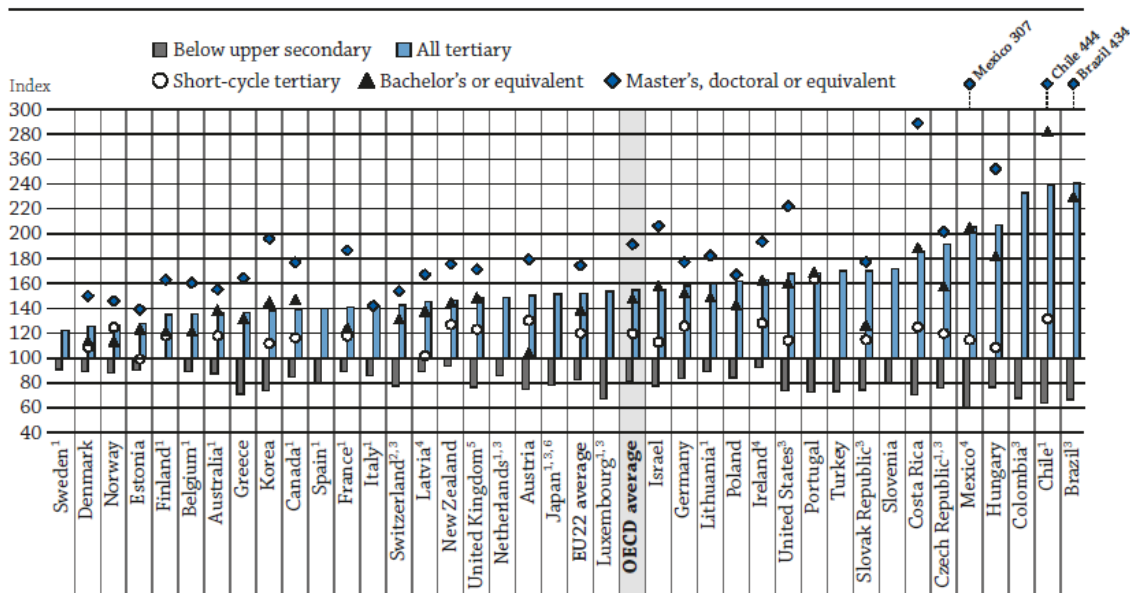
*Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators* is the authoritative source for information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of education systems in the 35 OECD countries and a number of partner countries.

The topics covered in this country note were selected according to data availability.

### Colombia

- On average, 78% of young women in Colombia are expected to graduate from upper secondary education at some point in their lives, compared to 62% of men. This is one of the largest gaps across OECD and partner countries.
- Teachers from pre-primary to upper secondary programmes earn more on average than their tertiary-educated peers in Colombia. In most OECD countries, teachers at these levels earn lower salaries than similarly qualified workers.
- In 2013, Colombia spent an average of 6.6% of its gross domestic product (GDP) on educational institutions from primary to tertiary. This is considerably above the OECD average of 5.2%, and other Latin American countries like Argentina (5.5%), Brazil (5.2%), Chile (5.5%) and Mexico (5.2%).
- The return on tertiary education is very high in Colombia, perhaps due to the limited number of workers who have attained it: 84% of all workers with bachelor's degrees were employed and those with tertiary education earned 233% more than workers with only an upper secondary education.

**Figure 1. Relative earnings of adults working full time, by educational attainment (2014)**  
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. Year of reference differs from 2014. Refer to Table A6.1 for details.

2. Some levels of education are included with others. Refer to "x" code in Table A6.1 for details.

3. Index 100 refers to the combined ISCED levels 3 and 4 of the educational attainment levels in the ISCED 2011 or ISCED-97 classification.

4. Earnings net of income tax.

5. Data for upper secondary attainment include 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).

6. Data refer to all earners.

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

Source: OECD, Table A6.1. 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/10.1787/888933397166>

## Gender gaps in education and employment persist

- On average, 78% of young women in Colombia are expected to graduate from upper secondary education at some point in their lives, compared to 62% of men. Although graduation rates generally tend to be higher for women than for men, this 16 percentage-point gap is one of the highest among all OECD and partner countries. The female upper secondary graduation rate in Colombia is higher than in other Latin American countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica and Mexico, but is lower than in Chile and on average across the OECD (88%).
- Compared to OECD countries, Colombia displays good gender balance in almost all fields of study at the tertiary level. For example, in Colombia two women for every man graduate in the field of education, compared with the OECD average of four women for every man. Similarly two men graduate for every woman in engineering in Colombia, compared with three men for every woman in OECD countries.
- As is the pattern on average across OECD countries, the gender pay gap in Colombia increases with the level of educational attainment. Women without upper secondary education earn 20% less than their male counterparts, which is a smaller gap than in Brazil (33%), Mexico (26%), Chile (23%) and the average across OECD countries (24%). Among tertiary-educated adults, women earn 25% less than men with the same level of education, slightly better than the OECD average of 27%.
- As in most OECD and partner countries, the share of female teachers declines as the educational level increases. Most teachers in pre-primary (96%), primary (77%) and lower secondary (54%) schools are women, but at the upper secondary and tertiary levels women are a minority. Women make up only 36% of the academic staff in tertiary education in Colombia; 9 percentage points less than Brazil, and 5 less than the OECD average.

## Salary, the school environment and workload all influence teachers' decisions to enter – and remain in – the profession

- The statutory salaries of teachers from pre-primary to upper secondary programmes with 15 years of experience are 43% higher than the average salaries of full-time, full-year workers with tertiary education. In most OECD countries, teachers at these levels earn less than workers with the same educational attainment.
- Although teachers' statutory salary scales are the same across levels of education, salaries vary considerably according to teachers' years of experience and qualifications. Teachers with maximum qualifications at the top of their careers earn 3 times or more than teachers at the start of their career. This large gap compared with OECD countries (where the average difference is over 1.8 times more), demonstrating that experience in teaching is valued in Colombia.
- Colombian principals rely, to some extent, on their academic staff to improve their schools' management. Nearly 85% of lower secondary principals reported providing staff with opportunities to make decisions concerning the school at least once a month, against an OECD average of 72%. In addition, 46% of them report asking teachers to participate in reviews of management practices, again above the OECD average of 29%.

## High-quality education needs sustainable funding

- In 2013, Colombia spent an average of 6.6% of its GDP on educational institutions from primary to tertiary education. This is considerably above the OECD average of 5.2%, and is higher than in other Latin American countries such as Argentina (5.5%), Brazil (5.2%), Chile (5.5%) and Mexico (5.2%).
- In 2013, expenditure on primary education alone represented 2.1% of GDP and at secondary level 2.2% of GDP, compared to the respective OECD averages of 1.5% and 2.2%. However, expenditure on early childhood education was below average: 0.5% of GDP against an OECD average of 0.8%. This is also slightly below other Latin American countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico.
- Colombia has a higher share of private expenditure on education than on average across OECD countries. Some 23% of expenditure on primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education comes from private sources – the highest share of all OECD and partner countries and more than two times the OECD average of 9%. At tertiary level, 49% of expenditure comes from private sources, against an OECD average of 30%.
- Public expenditure on education is highly centralised in Colombia and there are no transfers between levels of government. Central government is responsible for 85% of expenditure on primary to post-secondary non-tertiary

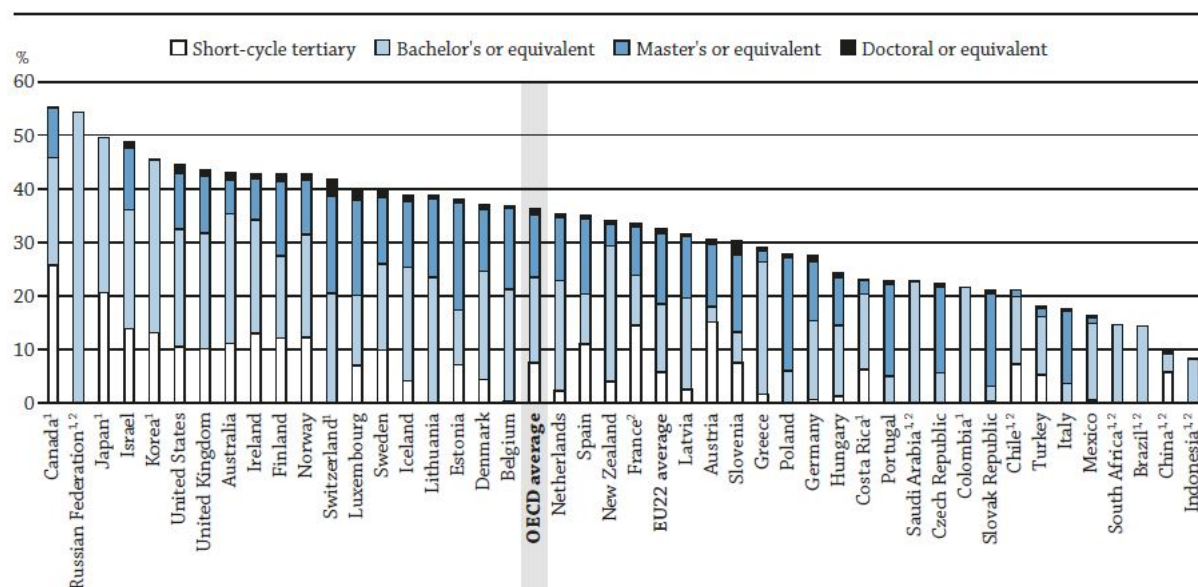
education, compared with an OECD average of 41% of final funds, and for 96% of expenditure on tertiary education, against an OECD average of 85% of final funds.

- In 2013 Colombia's cumulative expenditure per student from primary to secondary level was about USD 27 054.1 This amounted to only 22% of the average cumulative expenditure for education in OECD countries, and it is also lower than in Brazil, Chile and Mexico. Annual expenditure per student at the tertiary level (USD 6 391 per year) is also below the OECD average and other Latin American countries.
- Tuition fees to attend private universities at bachelor or equivalent level in Colombia are five times higher than for public universities; this represents the largest difference between public and private universities among countries where data is available.
- However, Colombia has made enormous progress in funding educational programmes. Between 2004/05 and 2014/15, the number of students who benefitted from a student loan to access tertiary education increased by 202%, the highest increase after Brazil (509%) and Italy (544%).

## Tertiary education has a strong impact in the labour market

- In 2014, 84% of 25-64 year-olds with a bachelor's degree were employed, compared to 77% among those with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary degree as their highest level of attainment. Those with a bachelor's degree earn over two times more (233%, precisely) than a worker with upper secondary education (Figure 1).
- However, only 22% of the 25-64 year-old age group have attained a tertiary degree in Colombia (Figure 2). These figures are in line with those of other Latin American countries, but 13 percentage points below the OECD average. If current patterns are maintained, 16% of young adults in Colombia are expected to graduate from a bachelor's or equivalent programme at some point in their lifetime against an OECD average of 38%, 10% from a short-cycle programme and 8% from a master's or equivalent programme.
- Colombian tertiary education has been developing an international dimension. In 2014, 1.3% of all Colombian tertiary students were enrolled in programmes abroad, comparable to the OECD average of 1.6%. Colombian students who go abroad for master's or doctorate programmes are concentrated in the United States (26%), followed by France (15%), Spain (11%) and Germany (10%).

**Figure 2. Percentage of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary education, by level of tertiary education (2015)**



1. Some levels of education are included in others. Refer to the source table for more details.

2. Reference year differs from 2015. Refer to the source table for more details.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary education, regardless of the level of tertiary attainment.

Source: OECD. Table A1.1. 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)).

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

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#### 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.

#### References

OECD (2016), *Education at a Glance 2016: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2016-en>.

**For more information on Education at a Glance 2016** 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:  **EducationGPS**  
<http://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=COL&treshold=10&topic=E0>.

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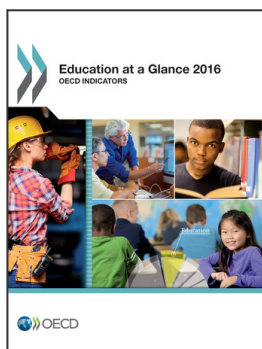
## Key Facts for Colombia in Education at a Glance 2016

Source	Main topics in <i>Education at a Glance</i>	Colombia		OECD average	
Gender					
Chart A5.2.	Employment rate of 25-64 year-olds, by educational attainment	2015			
		Men	Women	Men	Women
	Below upper secondary	89%	55%	66%	46%
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	89%	65%	81%	67%
	Tertiary	90%	79%	88%	80%
	Percentage of people not in employment, nor in education or training (NEET)	2015			
		Men	Women	Men	Women
Table C5.2	15-29 year-olds	11%	31%	12%	17%
Table A3.4	Percentage of female graduates, by tertiary levels of education	2014			
		% Women		% Women	
	Short-cycle tertiary	52%		56%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	57%		58%	
	Master's or equivalent	56%		57%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	38%		47%	
Vocational Education and Training (VET)					
	Distribution of enrolment, by programme orientation	2014			
		General	Vocational	General	Vocational
Table C1.3a	Upper secondary education	74%	26%	56%	44%
Financial Investment in Education					
Table B1.1	Annual expenditure per student, by level of education (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)	2013			
	Primary education	**		USD 8 477	
	Secondary education	USD 2 835		USD 9 811	
	Tertiary (including R&D activities)	USD 6 391		USD 15 772	
Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)					
Table C2.3	Expenditure on all early childhood educational institutions	2013			
	As a percentage of GDP	0.5%		0.8%	
Teachers					
Table D2.2	Ratio of students to teaching staff	2014			
	Primary education	24 students per teacher		15 students per teacher	
	Secondary education	25 students per teacher		13 students per teacher	
	Tertiary education	**		17 students per teacher	
Tertiary Education					
Table A1.2	Percentage of adults who have attained tertiary education, by tertiary level of educational attainment and age group	25-34 year-olds	25-64 year-olds	25-34 year-olds	25-64 year-olds
	Short-cycle tertiary	**	**	8%	8%
	Bachelor's or equivalent	27%	22%	21%	16%
	Master's or equivalent	**	**	14%	11%
	Doctoral or equivalent	**	**	1%	1%
Other: Education and Social Outcomes					
Table A8.3a	Life satisfaction today and in five years for 25-64 year-olds, by educational attainment <sup>1</sup>	Life satisfaction today	Life satisfaction in 5 years	Life satisfaction today	Life satisfaction in 5 years
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	82%	95%	83%	87%
	Tertiary	**	**	92%	94%

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

1. Educational attainment categories collected by Gallup World Poll may differ from ISCED-A 2011.

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



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