

Teachers' salaries

Teachers' salaries represent the largest share of expenditure and investment in formal education and can have a great impact on the structure of the teacher workforce and the quality of teaching. The education sector competes with other sectors for the best-qualified employees. Teachers' salaries may strongly influence graduates' choice to join the teaching profession, and teachers' choice to stay in their job. Attractive teachers' salaries hence help sustain the supply of highly-skilled teachers in the face of an ageing teacher workforce and/or a growing school-age population, and thus ensure that those with the greatest competencies for teaching choose their career path accordingly (OECD, 2016).

In order to compare teachers' salaries, the analysis has to account for the type and level of education, whether primary, lower secondary or upper secondary school teachers. The data presented here compare the starting, mid-career and maximum statutory gross salaries of lower secondary teachers with typical qualifications in public institutions. The comparison comes with a caveat as international comparisons should consider that statutory salaries are just one, albeit major, component of teachers' compensation. Variations between countries in social benefits, both employers' and employees' social contributions, differences in taxation as well as bonuses and allowances can result in differences in total compensation. Moreover, teachers' salaries have not been adjusted for differences in contractual working hours and holidays that may be relevant for national and international comparisons. Still, these data can provide an indication of differences in the returns to teaching experience in OECD countries.

Teachers' salaries increase with their level of experience. On average, teachers' annual statutory salaries in OECD countries after 15 years of experience are at 44,407 USD in 2014. There are great differences in salaries across countries: in Luxembourg, teachers earn about 113,000 USD per year, while they earn less than 20,000 USD in Hungary, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Statutory salary increases for teachers throughout their career also vary considerably. While the difference between salaries at the bottom and the top of the scale is about 58,000 USD in Luxembourg possible increases in teachers' salaries are below 10,000 USD in Norway, Denmark, the Slovak Republic, Turkey and the Czech Republic.

In OECD countries with available data, teachers are paid on average 91% of the earnings of employees with tertiary education. In seven OECD countries, teachers' salaries are higher than the earnings of tertiary-educated workers, with Mexico being the front-runner, where teachers' salaries are 74% higher. Salaries for teachers are virtually the same as for tertiary-educated workers in Greece, Germany and Switzerland. Salaries are lower than the tertiary educated average wage for teachers in 21 OECD countries. For example, in the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic teachers are paid less than half of the earnings of employees with a tertiary degree.

Methodology and definitions

Statutory salaries refer to scheduled salaries according to official pay scales. The salaries reported are gross (total sum paid by the employer before tax) less the employer's contribution to social security and pension (according to existing salary scales). They are for a full-time teacher with typical qualifications at the beginning of the teacher career, after 15 years of teaching experience and at the maximum annual salary (top of the scale). Statutory salaries as reported in this indicator must be distinguished from actual expenditures on wages by governments and from teachers' average salaries. Moreover, this indicator is not directly comparable to the data on compensation of employees in central/federal government presented in this chapter.

Gross teachers' salaries were converted to USD using PPPs for private consumption from the OECD *National Accounts Statistics* database.

Teachers' typical qualifications refer to the level of qualifications that teachers typically have (i.e. the qualifications held by the largest proportion of teachers in a given year). The typical qualifications may include certificates and qualifications obtained while in the teaching profession that go beyond minimum qualifications. The definition varies by country. Please see Box D3.2 of *Education at a Glance 2016* for further details.

The relative salary indicator is taken from Table D3.2b of *Education at a Glance 2016* (online). Teachers' salaries represent statutory salaries after 15 years of work experience. Earnings for workers with tertiary education are average earnings for full-time, full-year workers aged 25-64 with an education at ISCED 5/6/7 or 8 level.

Further reading

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

Figure notes

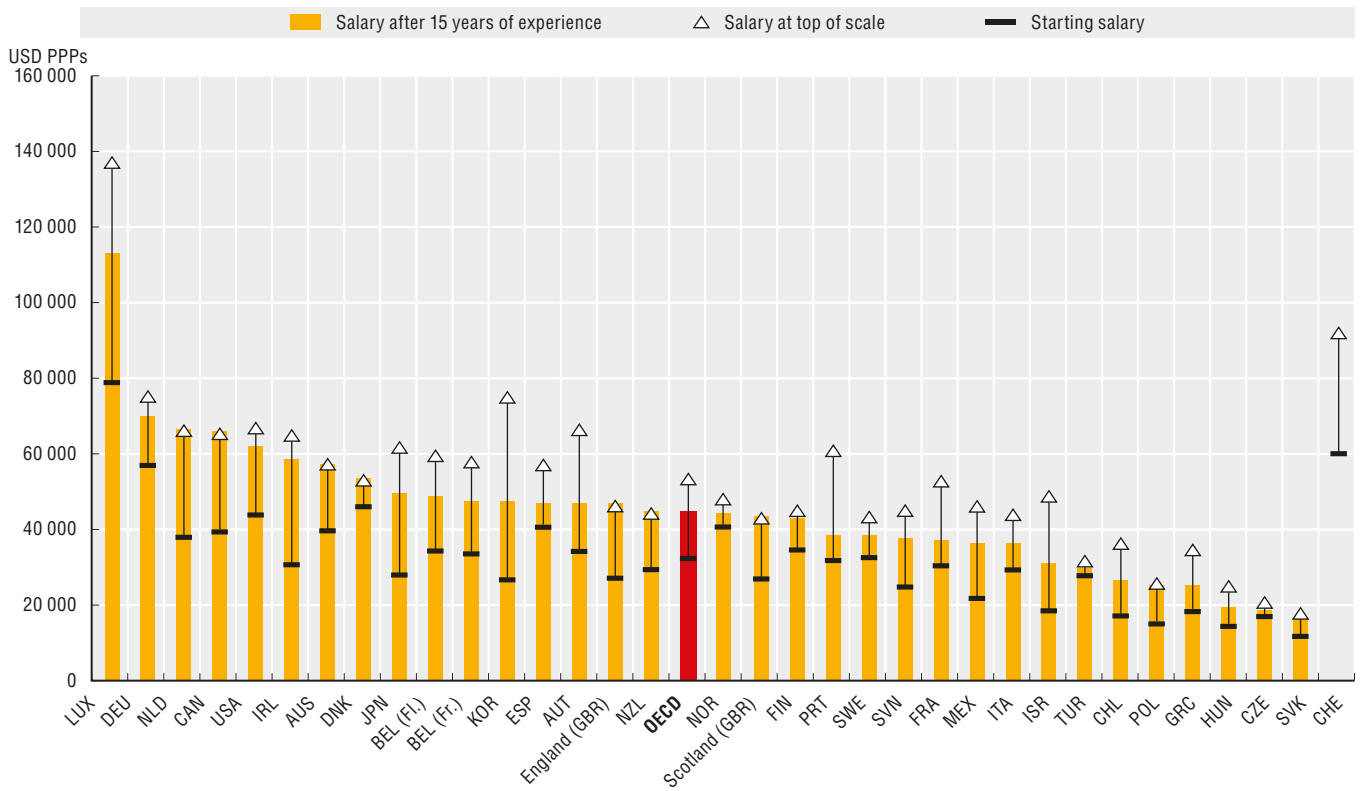
Belgium is presented as Belgium (Fr) and Belgium (Fl). The United Kingdom is presented as England and Scotland. Data are actual base salaries for the United States.

3.27: Data not available for Estonia, Iceland and Latvia, and for salary after 15 years of experience for Switzerland. Data are actual base salaries for 2013 for Sweden.

3.28: Data not available for Estonia, Iceland, Japan, Latvia and Sweden. Data are for 2013 rather than 2014 for Finland and France.

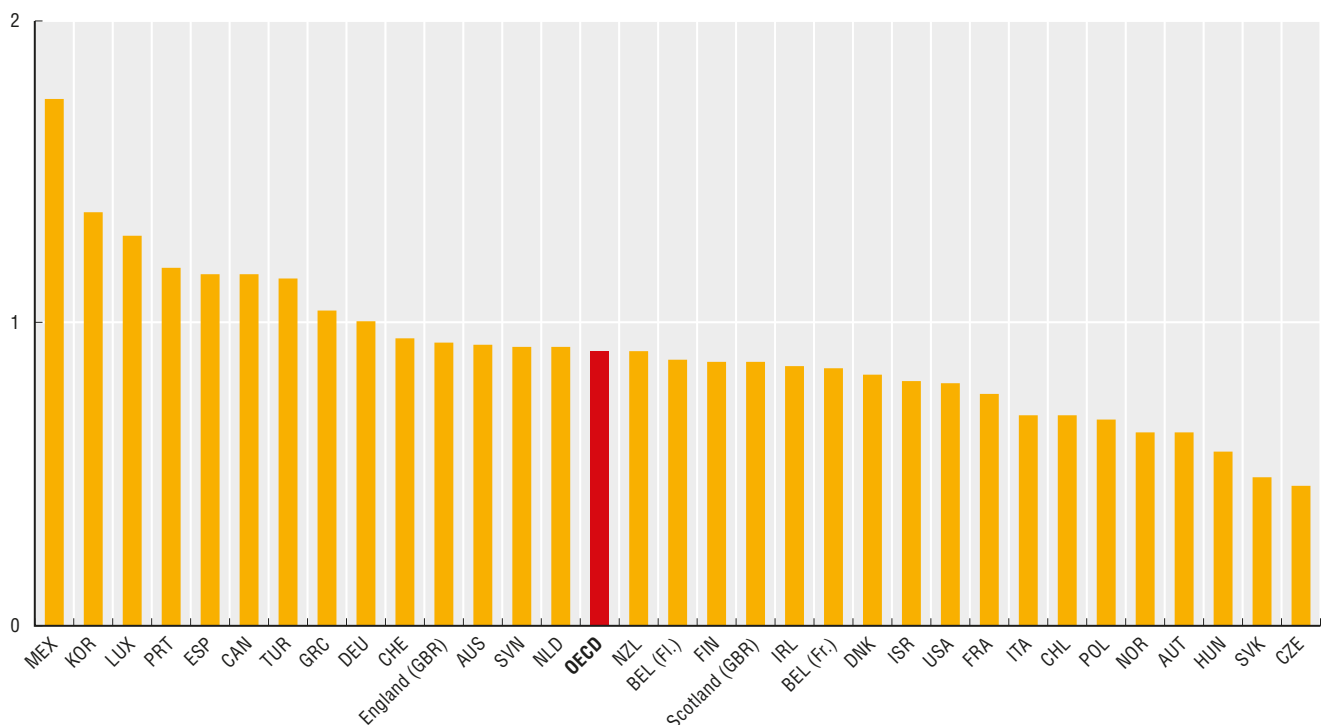
Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

3.27. Teachers' statutory salaries, based on typical qualifications, in lower secondary education in public institutions (2014)



Source: OECD (2016), Education at a Glance 2016: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2016-en>. StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933532504>

3.28. Ratio of teachers' salaries to the earnings of tertiary-educated workers (2014)



Source: OECD (2016), Education at a Glance 2016: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2016-en>. StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933532523>

