

The education systems in OECD countries ensure universal access to primary and secondary instruction. Compulsory education generally starts at the age of 6 and ends at 16 years (OECD, 2018). Most countries have both public and private institutions, allowing parents to decide according to their financial resources and preferences. Access to tertiary education depends on the degree attained upon completion of secondary education (especially in countries with a tracking system, where students are split into groups according to their academic achievement), the perceived net benefits of longer studies, the availability of places and funding opportunities (e.g. credit programmes, scholarships), among others.

Enrolment at ages 3 and 4 has increased across OECD countries in recent years, although there are disparities between countries. On average, 89% of the children aged 4 years and 79% of those aged 3 attended early (or primary) education institutions in 2017. While several countries have achieved full enrolment from age 3, France, Hungary, Israel and the United Kingdom have achieved around 100%. Greece and Poland have experienced a growth of respectively 16 p.p. and 18 p.p. in enrolment rate at age 4 since 2012. Although just above one-third of children aged 4 are enrolled in Turkey, the enrolment has grown by 17 p.p. since 2012.

On average, private (i.e. all non-governmental sources) funding accounts for less than one-third of the education budget. At the primary, secondary and post-secondary (non-tertiary) levels, less than 10% of the funds in OECD countries came from private sources in 2015. The proportion rises to roughly 18% for pre-primary education and more than triples for tertiary education (31%).

There are large variations in the funding of education systems across OECD countries, which can be attributed to different policies. Finland, Norway and Sweden rely exclusively on public funds for primary, secondary and post-secondary education, while in Turkey 25% of costs are borne by private sources. Belgium, Ireland and Luxembourg fund pre-primary education exclusively from public sources, while more than half of the expenditures on pre-primary education in Japan come from private sources.

Some countries encourage enrolment in tertiary education by investing public funds at this level. The share of private funds for tertiary education in Austria, Finland, Iceland, Luxembourg and Norway accounted for 8% or less in 2016, while it was 64% and over of the total expenditures in Chile, Japan, United Kingdom and United States. Public expenditures on tertiary education are above 1.8% of GDP in Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden (in comparison to the OECD average of 1.2%), which allows universities in these countries to charge low or no tuition fees.

Those who decide to pursue a tertiary diploma, generally enrol directly upon completing secondary education. On average, almost half of the citizens of OECD countries

entered tertiary programmes by the age of 25. In Chile, 70% of citizens enrolled by the age of 25. Some people may decide to enrol later on to update or acquire new skills. In Denmark and Switzerland, although almost 70% of the population (excluding international students) enrolled at any point, around 50% did so before turning 25. On average, the first-time entry-rate in tertiary education is 65% across the OECD, decreasing to 58% when excluding international students. In New Zealand, the first-time entry rate is 89%, but decreases to 61% when excluding international students.

#### Methodology and definitions

Data for all figures come from the UNESCO-OECD-Eurostat (UOE) data collection on education statistics. Private spending includes all direct expenditure on educational institutions, whether partially covered by public subsidies or not. The classification of education levels follows the 2011 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Early childhood education (ISCED 0) includes two types of programmes: early childhood educational development (ISCED 01) and pre-primary (ISCED 02). Early childhood education has an international education component that targets children below the age of entry into primary. Full enrolment means that at least 90% of the population is enrolled at a certain age. The net entry rate for a specific age is obtained by dividing the number of first-time entrants of a certain age by the total population of the same age. The sum of net entry rates is computed by adding the rates for each year of age.

#### Further reading

OECD (2019), *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>.

OECD (2017), *Starting Strong 2017: Key OECD Indicators on Early Childhood Education and Care*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://doi.org/10.1787/9789264276116-en>

#### Figure notes

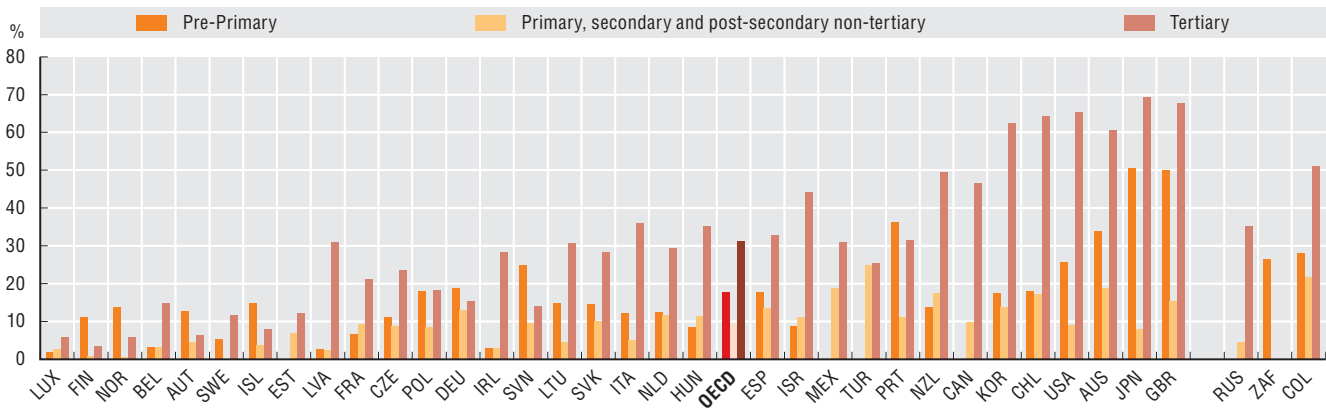
On data for Israel, see <http://doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

11.8. Primary education in Canada includes pre-primary, and pre-primary in Ireland includes early childhood education. Data for Chile and Colombia are for 2017. Data for Denmark, Greece and Switzerland are not available. The shares are after transfers from the public sector.

11.9. Data are displayed in decreasing order according to enrolment rate at age 4. Data for South Africa are for 2016.

11.10. Data for Australia, Canada, Estonia, France, Ireland, Korea, Latvia and Turkey are not available.

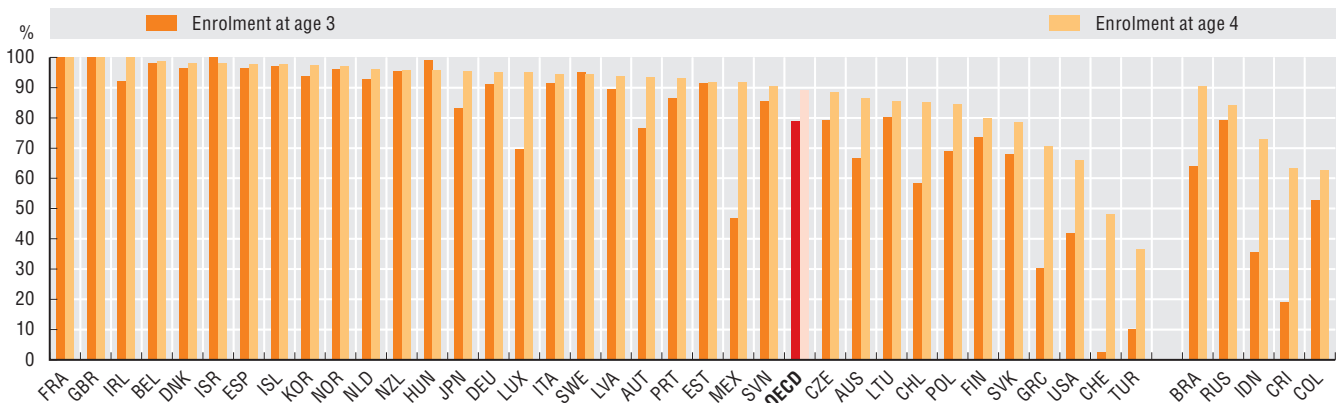
11.8 Share of private expenditures on education after transfers, 2016



Source: OECD (2019), Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators.

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934033555>

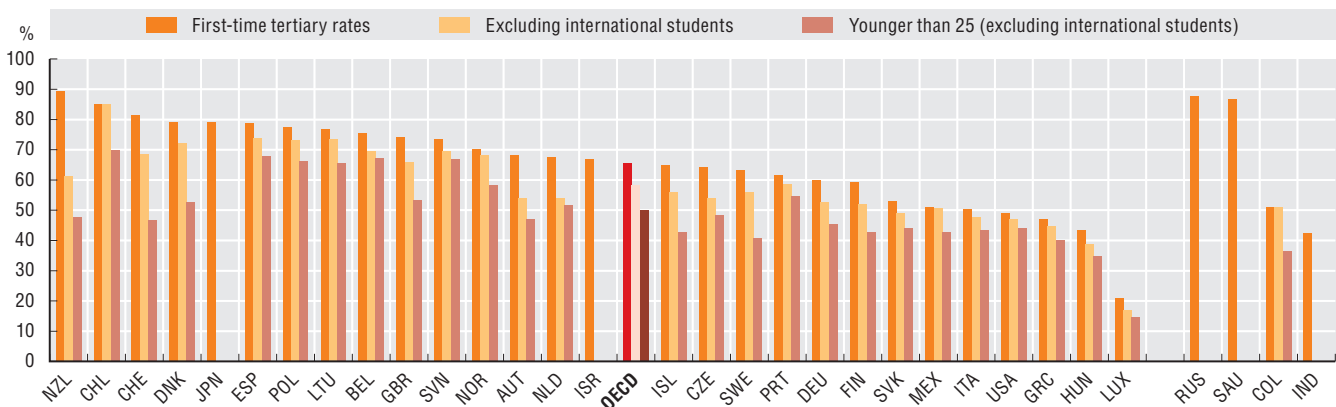
11.9 Enrolment at age 3 and 4 in early childhood and pre-primary education, 2017



Source: OECD (2019), Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators.

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934033574>

11.10 First-time tertiary entry rates, 2017



Source: OECD (2019), Education at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators.

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934033593>



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