



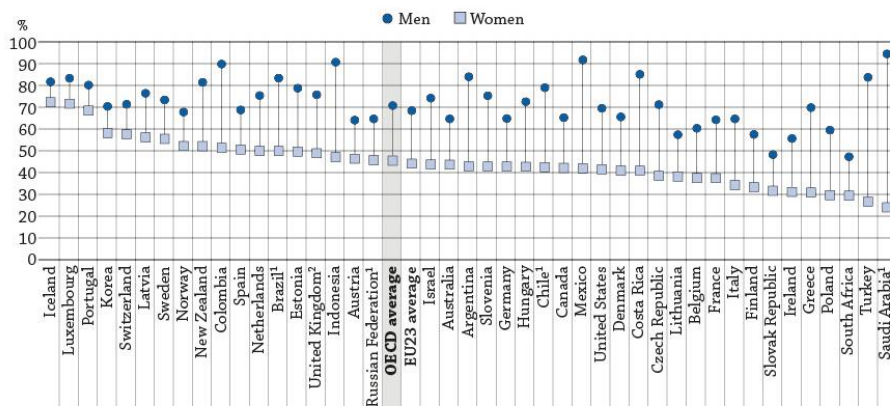
## EDUCATION AT A GLANCE 2018

*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 OECD and partner countries.

### Saudi Arabia

- **Educational attainment at all levels is improving across generations in Saudi Arabia.** The percentage of those who have not attained upper secondary education among 25-34 year-olds was 31% in 2014, less than half of the respective share among 55-64 year-olds (69%), but still twice the OECD average (15% in 2017).
- Tertiary educational attainment of young adults was also lower in Saudi Arabia (26% in 2014) than on average across OECD countries (44% in 2017), but the **first-time entry rate in bachelor's programmes was higher in the country (66%) than on average across OECD countries (59%) in the same year.**
- **The employment rates of young men and women differ substantially in Saudi Arabia, especially when educational attainment is low. The 70 percentage-point gender gap in employment rates for young adults with below upper secondary education is the highest** across OECD and partner countries with available data.
- In most OECD and partner countries the employment situation improves with higher educational attainment. In Saudi Arabia, the usual relationship is reversed: in 2014, **tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds had a higher unemployment rate (20%) than those without an upper secondary qualification (2%).**
- **The proportion of women in the teaching profession falls with rising levels of education:** 100% of pre-primary teachers were women (OECD average: 97%), compared with 41% at tertiary level (OECD average: 43%).
- **Enrolment rates of children under age of 6 in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services have increased recently,** but they are still well below the OECD average for children under the age of 6, when compulsory education begins.

Figure 1. Employment rates of 25-34 year-olds with below upper secondary education, by gender (2017)



1. Year of reference differs from 2017. Refer to the source table for details.

2. 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 (17% of adults aged 25-64 are in this group).

Countries are ranked in descending order of the employment rate of 25-34 year-old women with below upper secondary education.

Source: OECD / ILO (2018), Table A3.2. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-36-en>).

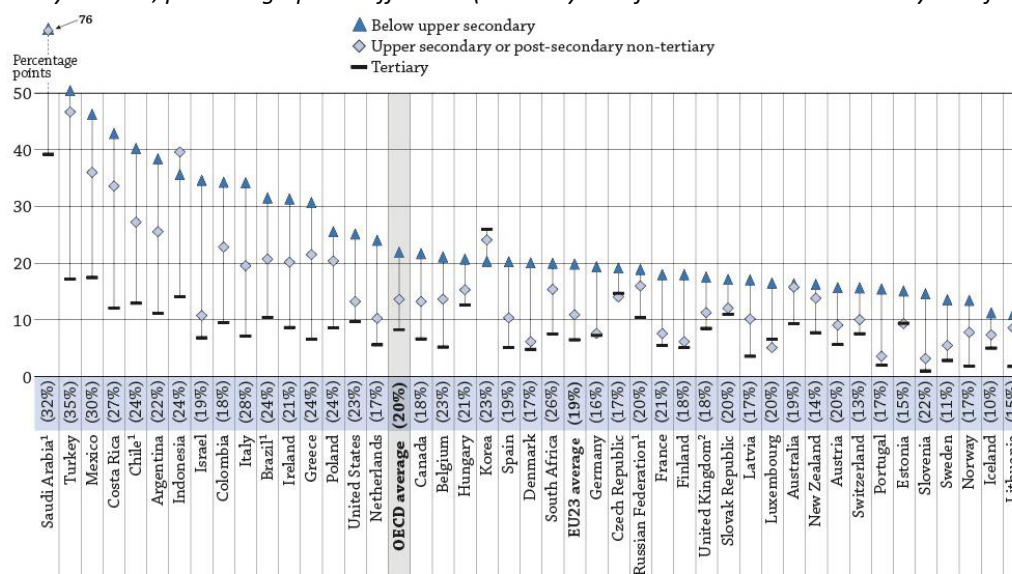
StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888933802057>

## The gender gap in tertiary educational attainment has been reversed, but women are still disadvantaged in the labour market

- In Saudi Arabia, educational attainment is increasing: in 2014, among 25-34 year-olds the share of those without an upper secondary education was less than half (31%) of the respective share among 55-64 year-olds (69%). However, the percentage of young adults without an upper secondary qualification is still double than the OECD average (15% in 2017). The share of 25-34 year-olds with an upper secondary education was 43% in Saudi Arabia in 2014, more than double than among 55-64 year-olds (16%), and also higher than the OECD average of 41% in 2017. Tertiary attainment has also increased across the generations: in 2014, 26% of 25-34 year-olds had a tertiary education (OECD average: 44% in 2017) compared with 15% of 55-64 year-olds.
- In 2017, indeed, 66% of Saudi Arabia's population was expected to enter for the first time into a bachelor's programme over their life course, a percentage higher than the OECD average of 59%. First-time entry rates, however, were significantly lower at higher levels of tertiary education: 2% only for enrolment into a master's degree (OECD average: 24%) and 0.3% for enrolment into a doctoral programme (OECD average: 2.4%).
- However, 6% of national tertiary students were enrolled abroad in Saudi Arabia in 2016, especially in universities located in English-speaking countries. The country has indeed experienced the second largest increase (by 36%) in the number of national students enrolled abroad between 2013 and 2016, across all OECD and partner countries with available data. Most tertiary graduates in Saudi Arabia specialised in the fields of arts and humanities (23%, OECD average: 10%) and business, administration and law (21%, OECD average: 24%), as of 2016.
- Saudi Arabia is one of the OECD and partner countries where women have benefitted most from the expansion of tertiary education. The tertiary education rate among men in 2014 in Saudi Arabia was 22% for both 25-34 year-olds and 55-64 year-olds, while among women it increased from 5% of 55-64 year-olds to 31% of 25-34 year-olds. The 17 percentage-points gender gap in tertiary attainment has thus not only closed, but been reversed across the generations. However, female tertiary graduates still make up a lower share of the 25-34 year-old population compared to the OECD and G20 averages (50% and 39%, respectively).
- Only 35% of 25-34 year-old tertiary-educated women are employed in Saudi Arabia, much lower than the employment rate for their male peers (92%); this gender gap of 57 percentage points is well above the OECD average (9 percentage points). The gender disparity in employment rates is even higher at lower levels of educational attainment, reaching almost 80 percentage points among those who have attained upper secondary education (on average across OECD countries the gap is 16 percentage points). As can be seen in Figure 1, the gender gap in employment rates is 70 percentage points for those with below upper secondary education (OECD average: 26 percentage points).
- Across all the OECD and partner countries with available data, Saudi Arabia has the highest gender gaps in inactivity rates among 25-64 year-olds with below upper secondary attainment and with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education (both 76 percentage points in 2014). While the gap narrows with higher educational attainment, it is persistently higher in Saudi Arabia than the OECD average. Indeed, the gender gap in inactivity rates among tertiary-educated adults was 39 percentage points in Saudi Arabia in 2014 compared to 8 percentage points on average across OECD countries in 2017 (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Gender differences in inactivity rates, by educational attainment (2017)

25-64 year-olds, percentage-point difference (inactivity rate for women minus inactivity rate for men)



Note: The percentage in parentheses shows the inactivity rate of 25-64 year-old adults.

1. Year of reference differs from 2017. Refer to Table A3.1 for details.

2. 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 (17% of adults aged 25-64 are in this group).

Countries are ranked in descending order of the gender differences in inactivity rates of the population with below upper secondary education.

Source: OECD/ILO (2018), Education at a Glance Database, <http://stats.oecd.org/>. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-36-en>).

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888933802076>

## Young adults are not reaping the full benefits of greater educational attainment in the labour market

- Overall, the employment rate among 25-64 year-olds in Saudi Arabia is below the OECD average: 65% (in 2014) against 76% (in 2017). Employment rates by educational attainment are also lower than the OECD averages, except for those without an upper secondary education (60% compared with 57%). As in the OECD countries, employment rates for adults increase with educational attainment in Saudi Arabia. However, in Saudi Arabia, the employment rate for those with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education is just 5 percentage points more than for those without, compared to an average difference of 19 percentage points across OECD countries.
- Employment rates for young adults in Saudi Arabia lag even further behind OECD averages. In 2014, 62% of tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds were employed, compared to the OECD average of 84% (in 2017), a 22-percentage-point difference. However, the difference is smaller for those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education and smaller still for those with below upper secondary education. In 2014, 59% of 25-34 year-olds with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education were employed in Saudi Arabia, against 77% on average across OECD countries in 2017, an 18 percentage-point difference. Only 25-34 year-olds with below upper secondary education had an employment rate above the OECD average: 65% in 2014, against 59% on average across OECD countries in 2017, a gap of 6 percentage points the other way.
- Young adults in Saudi Arabia thus enjoy only a small improvement in employment rates from increased levels of education. Furthermore, in contrast to most OECD countries, unemployment rates for 25-34 year-olds increase with the level of educational attainment in Saudi Arabia. In 2014, around 20% of 25-34 year-olds with tertiary education were unemployed (OECD average: 6% in 2017), compared to 8% of those with upper secondary education (OECD average: 8% in 2017) and 2% of those with below upper secondary education (OECD average: 15% in 2017). Such results might point to a possible mismatch between tertiary education and the demand for labour in Saudi Arabia.
- Interestingly, inactivity rates for 25-34 year-olds in Saudi Arabia, while substantially higher than the average across OECD countries, are lower for tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds than for those with lower levels of education. In 2014, the inactivity rate in Saudi Arabia for those with a tertiary qualification was 23%, more than twice the OECD average of 11% (in 2017), 35% among those with upper secondary education or post-secondary

non-tertiary education (OECD average: 16% in 2017), and 33% among those with below upper secondary education (OECD average: 31% in 2017).

## The share of female teachers falls with rising levels of education, and the ratio of students to teachers increases

- Together with Czech Republic, Hungary and Latvia, Saudi Arabia has the highest share of female teachers in pre-primary education of all countries with available data: in 2016, 100% of pre-primary teachers were women, compared with 97% on average across OECD countries. As in most OECD and partner countries, the proportion of women in the teaching workforce falls with rising education levels. For instance, 53% of primary teachers are women (OECD average: 83%) and 41% of tertiary teachers (OECD average: 43%).
- The ratio of students to teachers in Saudi Arabia also increases with education level, whereas across OECD countries this ratio is fairly constant. At primary level there were 12 students for every teacher in Saudi Arabia in 2016, below the OECD average of 15, but at tertiary level this rises to 20 students per teacher (OECD average: 15).

## Enrolment rates in non-compulsory early childhood education and care are well below the OECD average

- In Saudi Arabia, as in the most of the others OECD and partner countries, early childhood education and care (ECEC) is not part of compulsory education, which begins with primary education at age 6. Despite recent increases, enrolment rates for children under this age are still lower than the OECD average. In 2015, only 1% of 3-year-olds were enrolled in any ECEC services. In 2016, the enrolment rate had increased to 5%, but remained well below the OECD average of 76%. The enrolment rate for 4-year-olds increased by 12 percentage points in Saudi Arabia between 2015 and 2016, reaching 22% (OECD average: 88%). By the age of 5, 50% of children were enrolled in some educational programme (ECEC or primary), against 95% on average across OECD countries, but this was up from an enrolment rate of 37% in 2015. By the age of 6, the enrolment rate in Saudi Arabia was 97% in 2016, close to the OECD average of 98%.
- In 2016, 56% of children attending pre-primary education were enrolled in public institutions in Saudi Arabia (OECD average: 68%); the ratio of children to teaching staff in all institutions (both public and private) was 11:1, lower than on average across OECD countries (14:1).
- Compulsory education starts at age 6 and ends at age 14, but enrolment in secondary education was universal until age 17 in Saudi Arabia. In contrast, on average across OECD countries, 90% of 17 year-olds were still enrolled in education in 2017.

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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.

Lithuania was not an OECD member at the time of preparation of *Education at a Glance* and is therefore not included in the zone aggregates mentioned in the publication. However this country note, produced at a later stage, includes updated figures for the OECD and EU averages including Lithuania and therefore may differ from the figures mentioned in *Education at a Glance*.

### References

OECD (2018), *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>.

For more information on **Education at a Glance 2018** 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:

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### Key Facts for Saudi Arabia in Education at a Glance 2018

Source	Main topics in <i>Education at a Glance</i>	Saudi Arabia	OECD average	G20 average			
<b>Equity</b>							
<b>Educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds by gender</b>							
<b>2017</b>							
		<b>% Men</b>	<b>% Women</b>	<b>% Men</b>	<b>% Women</b>		
Table A1.2	Below upper secondary	32%	29%	17%	14%	28%	26%
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	46%	40%	46%	37%	41%	36%
	Tertiary	22%	31%	38%	50%	32%	39%
<b>Share of girls among repeaters in secondary general programmes</b>							
<b>2016</b>							
Table B1.3	Lower secondary	45%		39%		39%	
	Upper secondary	35%		42%		41%	
<b>Early childhood education and care (ECEC)</b>							
<b>Enrolment rates in ECEC at age 3</b>							
<b>2016</b>							
Table B2.1a	ECEC services (ISCED 0) and other registered ECEC services	5%		76%		**	
<b>Share of children enrolled in pre-primary education (ISCED 02), by type of institution</b>							
<b>2016</b>							
Table B2.2	Public institutions	56%		68%		58%	
	Private institutions	44%		32%		42%	
<b>Vocational education and training (VET)</b>							
<b>Enrolment in upper secondary education, by programme orientation</b>							
<b>2016</b>							
Table B1.3	Percentage of upper secondary students enrolled in vocational programmes	**		44%		**	
<b>Tertiary education</b>							
<b>Employment rate of 25-64 year-olds, by educational attainment</b>							
<b>2017</b>							
Table A3.1	Short-cycle tertiary	**		81%		**	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	75%		84%		**	
	Master's or equivalent	**		88%		**	
	Doctoral or equivalent	**		92%		**	
	All tertiary levels of education	75%		85%		**	
<b>Financial investment in education</b>							
<b>Total expenditure on educational institutions per full-time equivalent student, by level of education (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)</b>							
<b>2015</b>							
Table C1.1	Primary	**		USD 8 539		**	
	Secondary	**		USD 9 868		**	
	Tertiary (excluding R&D activities)	**		USD 11 049		**	
<b>Teachers and the learning environment</b>							
<b>Share of female teachers in public and private institutions</b>							
<b>2016</b>							
Table D5.2	Primary	53%		83%		75%	
	Lower secondary	**		69%		61%	
	Upper secondary	**		60%		54%	
	Tertiary	41%		43%		43%	
<b>Average class size by level of education</b>							
<b>2016</b>							
Table D2.1	Primary	**		21		**	
	Lower secondary	**		23		**	

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 these data.

Cut-off date for the data: 18 July 2018. Any updates on data can be found on line at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en>.





**From:**  
**Education at a Glance 2018**  
OECD Indicators

**Access the complete publication at:**  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2018), "Saudi Arabia", in *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-81-en>

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