



## 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.*

### Saudi Arabia

#### Early childhood through upper-secondary education and post-secondary non tertiary education

*Fewer children than average are enrolled in the early stages of education, but enrolment rates at secondary levels are about the OECD average. Relatively few secondary students enrol in vocational programmes.*

- In 2013, 32% of 4-year-olds were enrolled in pre-primary education in Saudi Arabia. While participation is low compared to the OECD average of 88%, it was comparable to Colombia or Turkey (35%) and almost double the rate for Indonesia (19%).
- In 2013, 88% of 5-14 year-olds were in education in Saudi Arabia, below the OECD average of 98%, but enrolment rates reached or exceeded the OECD average for older age groups. The enrolment rates for 15 and 16-year-olds in Saudi Arabia were at the OECD average (97% and 94% respectively), and the rate for 17-year-olds was 90%, above the OECD average of 88%.
- Many countries have recently renewed their interest in vocational education and training (VET) programmes, but in Saudi Arabia the percentage of students enrolled in upper secondary vocational education hardly exceeded 5%.
- In Saudi Arabia, as in most OECD and partner countries, most students are enrolled in public institutions: 90% of primary students (the same as the OECD average), 92% of lower secondary students (the OECD average was 86%) and 80% of upper secondary students (the OECD average was 81%).

#### Educational attainment, skills and participation in the labour market

*Despite significant progress in both upper secondary and tertiary attainment rates among younger adults, educational attainment is still lower than in most OECD countries.*

- In 2013, 65% of 25-34 year-olds in Saudi Arabia had attained at least upper secondary education, compared with 28% of 55-64 year-olds. This represents an increase of 37 percentage points, the fourth greatest after Korea (+44 percentage points), Portugal (+42 percentage points) and South Africa (+39 percentage points). Despite this, in 2013, only just over half of 25-64 year-olds had attained at least an upper secondary education (51%), still lower than the OECD average of 76%, or the G20 average of 64%.
- In 2013, 26% of 25-34 year-olds have completed tertiary education in Saudi Arabia, a much larger proportion than among 55-64 year-olds, where the figure was 14%. This represents a

12 percentage points increase, similar to the OECD average of +10 percentage points between the same age groups, but far below Estonia (+22 percentage points), Korea (+31 percentage points) and Lithuania (+26 percentage points). In total, 22% of 25-64 year-olds had gained a tertiary qualification in 2013 in Saudi Arabia compared with the OECD average of 33%, and the G20 average of 28%.

## Equity in education and the labour market

*Saudi Arabia has experienced the greatest improvement in women's attainment for upper secondary education between the generations, and has seen a reversal in men and women's tertiary attainment rates. However, women still make up a low share of master's and doctoral graduates.*

- In 2013 in Saudi Arabia, 68% of 25-34 year-old women had attained at least upper secondary education, compared with 11% of 55-64 year-old women. This increase of 57 percentage points is the greatest among OECD and partner countries, above Korea (+54 percentage points), Portugal (+49 percentage points) and South Africa (+45 percentage points). Among men, the increase in attainment rate between those age groups was 24 percentage points, which is one of the tenth largest changes. As a consequence, a greater proportion of 25-34 year-old women had attained at least upper secondary education than men of that age, whereas among 55-64 year-olds, more men than women had at least upper secondary education.
- This reversal is even more obvious for tertiary education. In Saudi Arabia, among 55-64 year-olds, 20% of men had completed tertiary education in 2014, compared with 4% of women, whereas among 25-34 year-olds, the figure was 21% for men and 32% for women. However, proportions of tertiary educated 25-34 year-olds in Saudi Arabia were still below the OECD averages of 36% for men and 46% for women.
- In 2014, 60% of first-time graduates from bachelor's or equivalent programme were women in Saudi Arabia, well above the OECD average of 58% and the G20 average of 55%. However, the proportion of women among graduates of higher tertiary programmes is much lower than the average: 40% of first-time graduates from master's and 24% of first-time graduates from doctoral programmes were women, compared with the OECD averages of 56% and 47% respectively and the G20 averages of 51% and 42% respectively.
- Some fields of study have very high proportions of women students, such as education, and health and welfare, where almost four out of five graduates are women on average across the OECD countries. In Saudi Arabia, no field of study enrolls such a large proportion of women. Conversely, in the field of engineering, manufacturing and construction only 3% of graduates were women, against the OECD average of 24%. The lowest proportion among all other countries was 12%, in Japan.

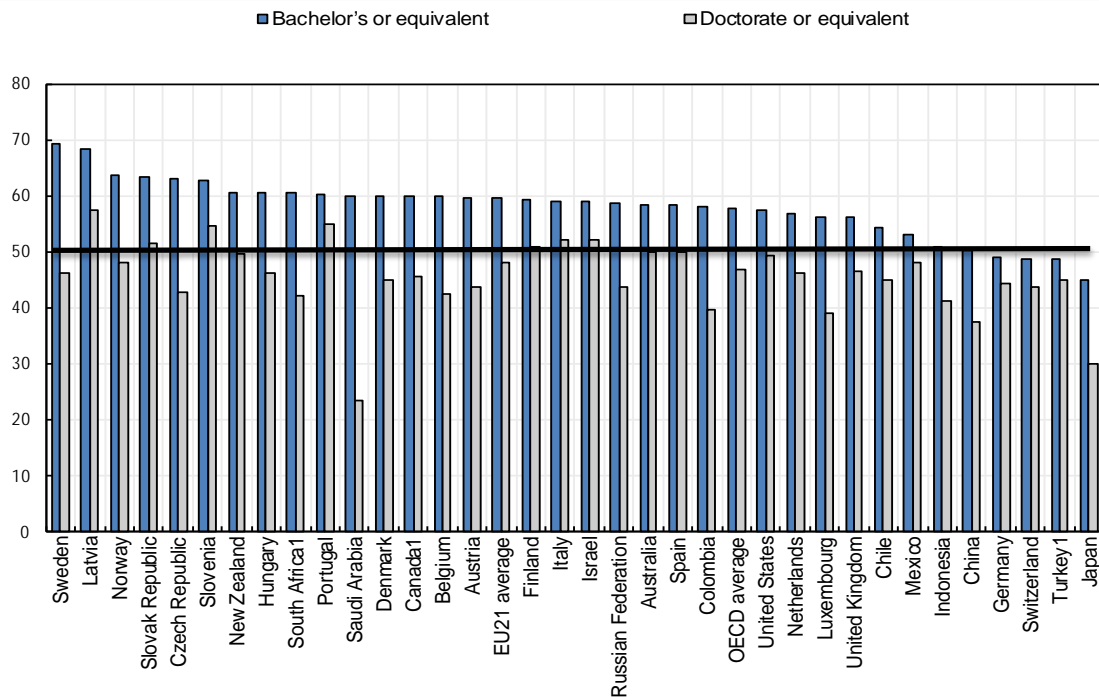
## Tertiary education: short-cycle, bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes

*Most tertiary students are enrolled in public institutions and an above-average proportion of students in Saudi Arabia graduate from humanities and arts programmes. Whereas many Saudi students pursue studies abroad, Saudi Arabia also enrolls a significant proportion of foreign students.*

- In all OECD countries except Korea, the fields of social sciences, business and law provide the largest share of tertiary graduates. In Saudi Arabia, although a large proportion of tertiary graduates (26%) in 2013 earned a degree in these fields, an even larger proportion (28%) graduated from the field of humanities and arts. This may be related to the fact that Saudi Arabia is the birthplace of Islam and home to Islam's two holiest shrines in Mecca and Medina. The field of engineering lag behind, with 9% of tertiary students graduating from engineering, manufacturing and construction programmes (OECD average: 14%).

- In 2013, 94% of tertiary students were enrolled in public institutions, a much larger proportion than the OECD average of 69%.
- Saudi Arabia received slightly more than 62 000 international tertiary students in 2013, 47% from neighbouring countries, making it the 13<sup>th</sup> largest host country. In turn, almost 78 000 Saudi tertiary students were enrolled abroad, 84% in an OECD country (including 55% in the United States and 15% in the EU21\* countries). Saudi students made up 2.2% of all international students enrolled in OECD countries, making it the 6<sup>th</sup> largest country of origin after China (21.9%), India (5.6%), Germany (3.9%), Korea (3.6%) and France (2.4%).

**Chart A3.3. Percentage of female graduates in tertiary levels of education (2013)**



Note: The black line shows the 50% mark.

1. Year of reference 2012.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of women graduating with bachelor's or equivalent.

Source: OECD, Table A3.4.

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/10.1787/888933283486>

\* EU21 countries are those that are members of both the European Union and the OECD. These 21 countries are Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

## References

OECD (2015), *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2015-en>.


### 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.

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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=SAU&treshold=10&topic=EO>

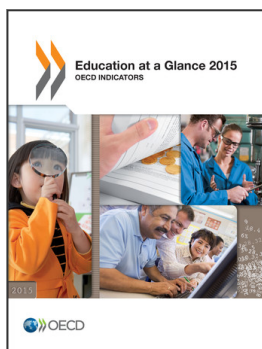
<b>Questions can be directed to:</b>	<b>Country Note Author:</b>
Etienne Albiser	Karinne Logez
Directorate for Education and Skills	Directorate for Education and Skills
<a href="mailto:Etienne.Albiser@oecd.org">Etienne.Albiser@oecd.org</a>	<a href="mailto:Karinne.Logez@oecd.org">Karinne.Logez@oecd.org</a>

## Key Facts for Saudi Arabia in Education at a Glance 2015

Table	Indicator	Saudi Arabia	OECD average
<b>Educational Access and Output</b>			
<b>Enrolment rates</b>			
C2.1	3-year-olds (in early childhood education)	2%	74%
<b>Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds</b>			
A1.4a	Below upper secondary	49%	24%
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	29%	43%
	Tertiary	22%	34%
<b>Highest educational attainment level of 25-64 year-olds (disaggregation at tertiary level)</b>			
A1.1a	Short cycle tertiary	**	8%
	Bachelor's or equivalent	22%	16%
	Master's or equivalent	**	11%
	Doctoral or equivalent	**	1%
<b>Entry and graduation rates</b>			
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	22%	36%
<b>Economic and Labour Market Outcomes</b>			
<b>Unemployment rate of 25-64 year-olds</b>			
A5.4a	Below upper secondary	**	12.8%
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	**	7.7%
	Tertiary	**	5.1%
<b>Average earnings premium for tertiary-educated 25-64 year-olds (upper secondary = 100)</b>			
A6.1a	Short cycle tertiary	**	125
	Bachelor's or equivalent	**	157
	Master's, Doctoral or equivalent	**	214
	All tertiary	**	160
<b>Percentage of people not in employment, education or training (NEET) for 15-29 year-olds</b>			
C5.2b	Men	**	13.2%
	Women	**	17.9%
<b>Financial Investment in Education</b>			
<b>Annual expenditure per student (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)</b>			
B1.1a	Primary education	**	8247 USD
	Secondary education	**	9518 USD
	Tertiary (including R&D activities)	**	15028 USD
<b>Total expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions</b>			
B2.2	As a percentage of GDP	**	5.2%
<b>Total public expenditure on primary to tertiary education</b>			
B4.2	As a percentage of total public expenditure	**	11.6%
<b>Schools and Teachers</b>			
<b>Ratio of students to teaching staff</b>			
D2.2	Primary education	**	15 students per teacher
	Secondary education	**	13 students per teacher
<b>Average actual teachers' salaries</b>			
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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