

4. THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Who are the teachers?

- About 58% of primary teachers and 63% of secondary teachers are at least 40 years old, on average in OECD countries.
- Some two-thirds of teachers and academic staff are women on average in OECD countries, but the proportion of women among teaching staff tends to decline at higher levels of education: from 97% at the pre-primary level to 41% at the tertiary level.
- Thirteen OECD countries require that teachers at some or all levels of education participate in continuing training/education.

Significance

This section presents a profile of the teaching workforce. Getting a better understanding of the teaching workforce means countries can anticipate teacher shortages and work to make the teaching profession a more attractive career choice.

Findings

On average across OECD countries, 58% of primary teachers are at least 40 years old. This proportion exceeds 70% in the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy and Sweden. In only seven countries – Belgium, Brazil, Ireland, Israel, Korea, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom – are more than half of primary teachers under the age of 40. The age distribution of teachers at the secondary level is roughly the same. On average among OECD countries, 63% of secondary teachers are at least 40 years old. In Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany and Italy, however, the share rises to 70% or more. The proportion of secondary school teachers aged 50 or older is larger than that of primary school teachers in most countries.

Across all levels of education, women represent two-thirds of the teachers and academic staff, but the percentage of women teachers declines from each level of education to the next. For example, on average across the OECD area, women account for almost 97% of teachers at pre-primary level; 82% at primary level; less than 68% at lower secondary level; 56% at upper secondary level; and 41% in tertiary education. The share of women at the tertiary level varies considerably between countries: from about one-third or less of the teaching staff in Japan and Korea (19% and 34%, respectively) to more than half in Finland, New Zealand, the Russian Federation and South Africa (51%, 52%, 56% and 53% respectively).

The duration of teacher training for pre-primary education varies widely among OECD countries. It ranges from two years for basic certification in Japan, Korea and the United States, to five years in France and Portugal. Teacher training for upper secondary teachers ranges from 3 to 4 years in England and Israel to 6.5 years in Germany. Furthermore, 11 OECD countries and Indonesia require that teachers

acquire a license or supplementary credential to become fully certified.

Continuing education for teachers takes on new significance with the rising demand for both differentiated instruction to address a wider range of learning styles and the integration of technology to connect the classroom to the outside world. Only 13 OECD countries now require continuing education for teachers, but that number is likely to increase in the coming years.

Trends

Between 1998 and 2010, the proportion of secondary teachers aged 50 or older climbed from 28.8% to 34.2% on average among countries with comparable data. This increase is particularly large in Austria, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, with an increase of 8 percentage points or more.

Definitions

Data on teachers by age and by gender refer to the 2009-10 school year and are based on the UOE data collection on education statistics administered by the OECD in 2011.

Data refer to the academic year 2009-10 and are based on the 2011 OECD-INES Survey on Teachers and the Curriculum.

Going further

For additional material, notes and a full explanation of sourcing and methodologies, see *Education at a Glance 2012* (Indicator D5).

Areas covered include:

- Age distribution of teachers by country and level of education.
- Gender distribution of teachers by country and level of education.
- Teachers' knowledge and skills.
- Requirements to enter the teaching profession.
- Level of government at which different types of decisions about teachers are taken.

Further reading from OECD

Educating Teachers for Diversity: Meeting the Challenge (2010).

Evaluating and Rewarding the Quality of Teachers: International Practices (2009).

Figure 4.9. **Age distribution of teachers, 2010**

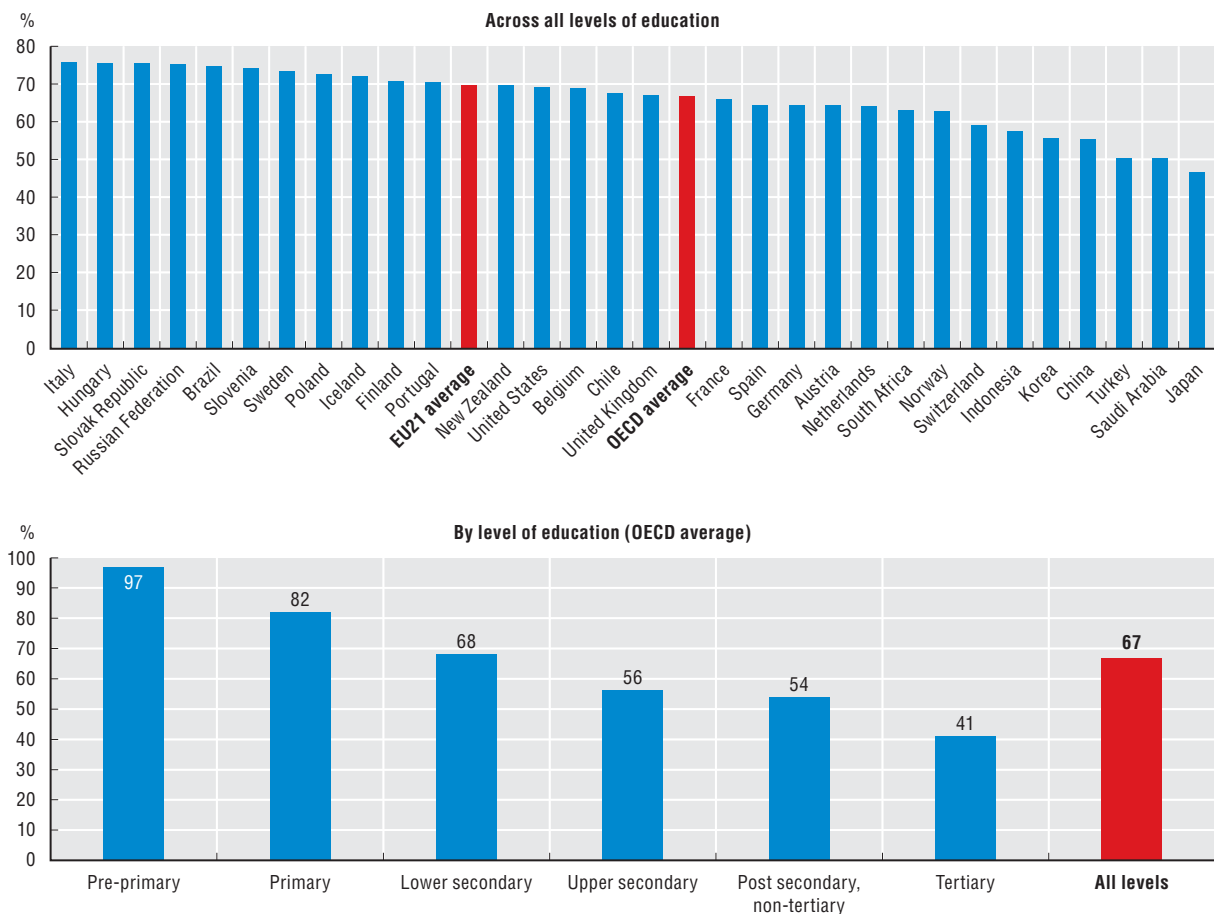
This figure shows the average percentage of teachers in each age group in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education in OECD countries.



Source: OECD (2012), *Education at a Glance 2012*, Tables D5.1 and D5.2, available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932668375> and <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932668394>.

Figure 4.10. **Gender distribution of teachers, 2010**

The upper chart shows the percentage of teachers who are women across all levels of education, by country. The lower chart shows the percentage of teachers who are women by level of education, on average in OECD countries.



Source: OECD (2012), *Education at a Glance 2012*, Table D5.3, available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932668413>.

TODAY'S LESSON: MATH

$3 + 3 =$

$2 + 5 =$

$3 + 2 =$

$3 + 5 =$

$+$







5. SPECIAL SECTION: EQUITY

What is equity in education?

Access to early childhood education

Access to secondary and tertiary education

Access to the labour market

Access to lifelong learning

Does parental education affect students' chances?

Integrating immigrants' children

Reducing the gender gap



From:

Education at a Glance 2012 Highlights

Access the complete publication at:

https://doi.org/10.1787/eag_highlights-2012-en

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2012), "Who are the teachers?", in *Education at a Glance 2012: Highlights*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1787/eag_highlights-2012-28-en

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