

1. EDUCATION LEVELS AND STUDENT NUMBERS

Who participates in education?

- Access to education for 5-14 year-olds is universal in all OECD and most partner countries with available data.
- Enrolment rates among 15-19 year-olds are above 75% in 34 of the 40 OECD and partner countries with available data.
- Enrolment rates among 20-29 year-olds increased by 10 percentage points on average between 1995 and 2012 among OECD countries.
- More than 20% of 20-29 year-olds in all OECD countries, except Luxembourg, Mexico and the United Kingdom, were in education in 2012.

Significance

The deep structural changes that have occurred in the global labour market over the past decades suggest that better-educated individuals will continue to have an advantage as the labour market becomes increasingly more knowledge-based. Education systems need to instil the skills students need to make them employable and enable them to pursue lifelong learning throughout their working lives. This section examines the evolution in access to education from 1995 to 2012, focussing on the number of young people who continue studying once compulsory education has ended.

Findings

Most people of school age in OECD countries have participated in an average 13 years of formal education, and this is increasing – a 5-year-old in an OECD country in 2012 could expect to participate in more than 17 years of education, on average, before reaching the age of 40. The expected duration of education ranged from more than 13 years in India and Indonesia to more than 19 years in Australia, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden. Women can expect to be enrolled in full-time education for 17 years while men can expect to be enrolled for 16 years, on average.

Compulsory education corresponds to primary and lower secondary programmes in all OECD countries, and upper secondary education in most of these countries. Between the ages of 5 and 14, enrolment rates are higher than 90%, i.e. there is universal coverage of basic education in all OECD and most partner countries with available data.

Based on 2012 data, enrolment rates among 15-19 year-olds were at least 80% in 29 of the 42 OECD and partner countries with available data, and 90% or higher in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland and Slovenia.

In 2012, an average of 28% of 20-29 year-olds in OECD countries were enrolled in some type of education. The highest proportions of this age group enrolled in education (more than 40%) are found in Denmark, Finland, Greece and Iceland. The only countries with less than 15% are Colombia, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Mexico and South Africa. Among 20-29 year-olds, 30% of women and 27% of men participate in education in OECD countries.

Trends

Between 1995 and 2012, enrolment rates for 15-19 year-olds in OECD countries increased steadily by around 10 percentage points, from an average 74% to 84%. While rates increased by close to 30 percentage points during this period in Turkey, and by more than 20 percentage points in the Czech Republic, Greece and Hungary, they remained virtually unchanged in Belgium (about 94%) and Germany (about 90%). In France, the enrolment rate for this age group fell from 89% to 84% during this period. There has been growth, too, in enrolment rates for 20-29 year-olds. From 1995 to 2012, the enrolment rate for this segment of the population has grown by 10 percentage points on average among OECD countries.

Definitions

Data for the 2011-12 school year are based on the UOE data collection on education statistics, administered annually by the OECD. Except where otherwise noted, figures are based on head counts and do not distinguish between full-time and part-time study because the concept of part-time study is not recognised by some countries.

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

Going further

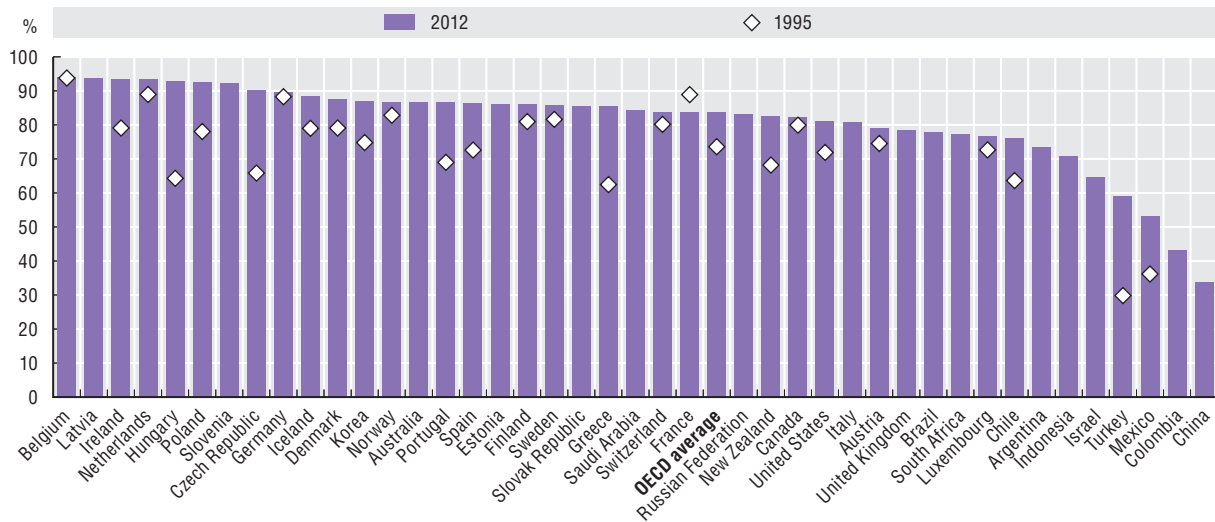
For additional material, notes and a full explanation of sourcing and methodologies, see *Education at a Glance 2014* (Indicator C1).

Areas covered include:

- Students in primary, secondary and tertiary education, by type of institution or mode of enrolment.
- Proportion of young adults in education.
- Expected number of years in education.

Figure 1.3. Enrolment rates of 15-19 year-olds (1995, 2012)

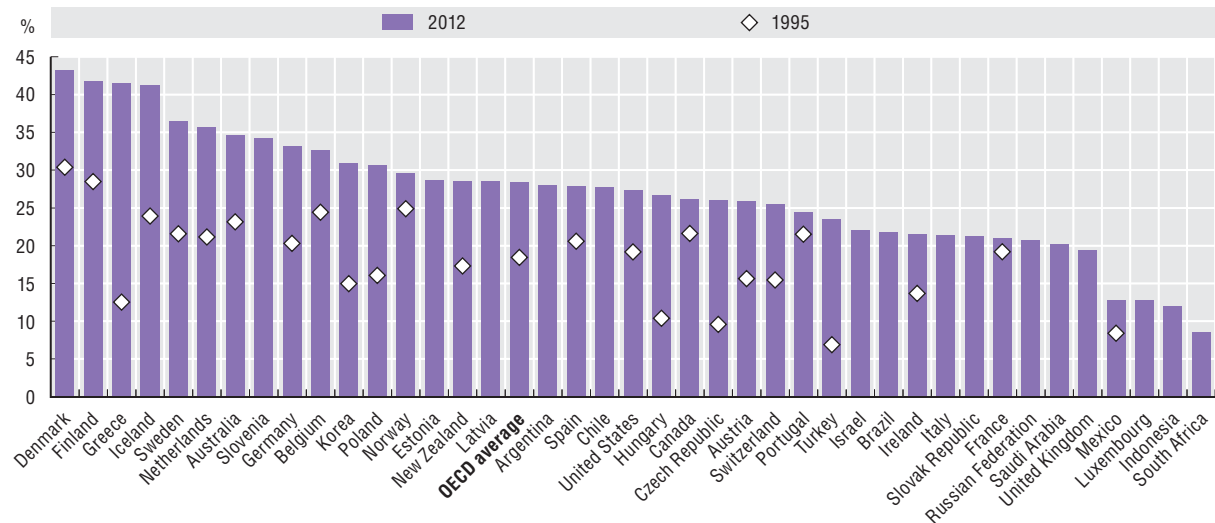
This figure shows the increase or decrease in the percentage of 15-19 year-olds enrolled in full-time and part-time education.



Source: OECD (2014), Education at a Glance 2014, Chart C1.2, available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933118314>.

Figure 1.4. Enrolment rates of 20-29 year-olds (1995, 2012)

This figure shows the increase in the percentage of 20-29 year-olds enrolled in full-time and part-time education.



Source: OECD (2014), Education at a Glance 2014, Chart C1.1, available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933118295>.



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