

# 1. EDUCATION LEVELS AND STUDENT NUMBERS

## Who participates in education?

- Access to education for 5-14 year-olds is universal in all OECD and G20 countries with available data.
- Enrolment rates among 15-19 year-olds are above 75% in 31 of the 39 OECD and G20 countries with available data.
- Enrolment rates among 20-29 year-olds increased by more than 10 percentage points on average between 1995 and 2011 across OECD countries.
- More than 20% of 20-29 year-olds in all OECD countries, except Mexico and the United Kingdom, were enrolled in education in 2011.

### Significance

A well-educated population is essential for economic and social development; societies therefore have a real interest in ensuring that children and adults have access to a wide range of educational opportunities. In times of economic hardship, the advantage of education for labour-market prospects becomes even clearer. This section examines the evolution in access to education from 1995 to 2011, focusing on the number of young people who continue studying once compulsory education has ended.

### Findings

Virtually all people in OECD countries have access to at least 13 years of formal education, and this is increasing – a 5-year-old in an OECD country in 2011 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 14 years in Luxembourg to more than 19 years in Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden. Women can expect to be enrolled in full-time education for 16.7 years while men can expect to be enrolled for 16.3 years, on average.

Compulsory education comprises primary and lower secondary programmes in all OECD countries, and upper secondary education in most of these countries. Between ages 5 and 14, enrolment rates are higher than 90%, i.e. there is universal coverage of basic education in all OECD and other G20 countries with available data.

Based on 2011 data, enrolment rates among 15-19 year-olds were above 75% in most OECD and G20 countries with available data and higher than 90% in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland and Slovenia.

In 2011, 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 and Greece. The only OECD countries with less than 20% are Mexico and the United Kingdom. Among other G20 countries, in Indonesia and Saudi Arabia, less than 15% of adults in this age group were enrolled. Among 20-29 year-olds, 29% of women and 26% of men participate in education in OECD countries.

### Trends

Between 2000 and 2011, enrolment rates for 15-19 year-olds increased steadily by around 8 percentage points, from an average 76% in 2000 to 84% in 2011, in nearly all OECD countries. These increases may reveal the general awareness of the benefits of participating in education in a restricted labour market. France is the only exception, with an enrolment rate decreasing from 87% to 84% during this period. There has been growth, too, in enrolment for 20-29 year-olds. Over the past 16 years, the enrolment rate for this segment of the population has grown by close to 10 percentage points on average across OECD countries. In the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Korea and Sweden, these rates have increased by more than 15 percentage points, while they have grown by less than five percentage points in Canada, France, Mexico, Norway and Portugal.

### Definitions

Data for the 2010-11 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.

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

### Going further

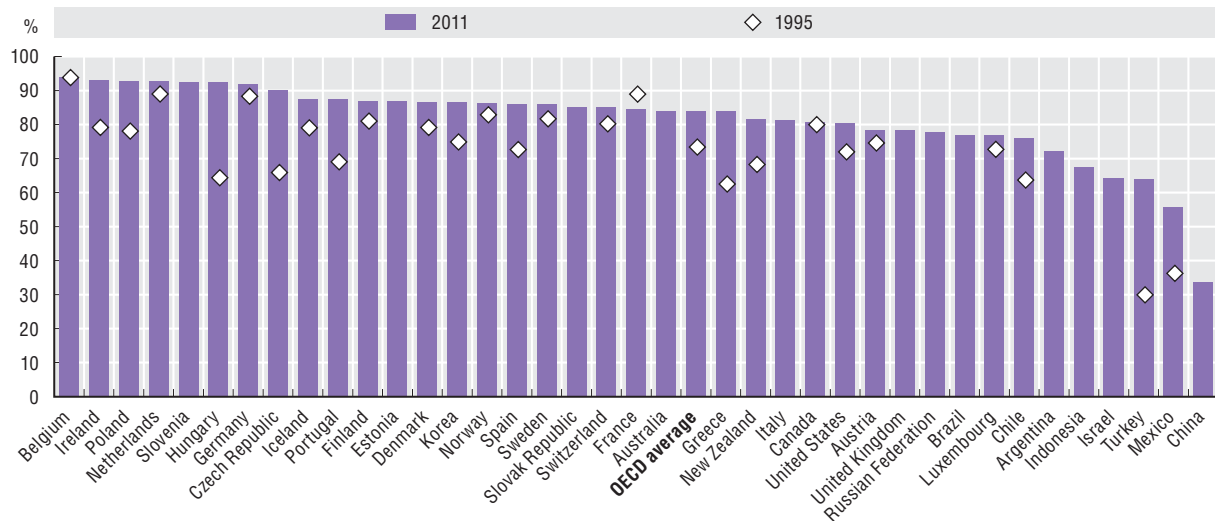
For additional material, notes and a full explanation of sourcing and methodologies, see *Education at a Glance 2013* (indicator C1).

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, 2011)**

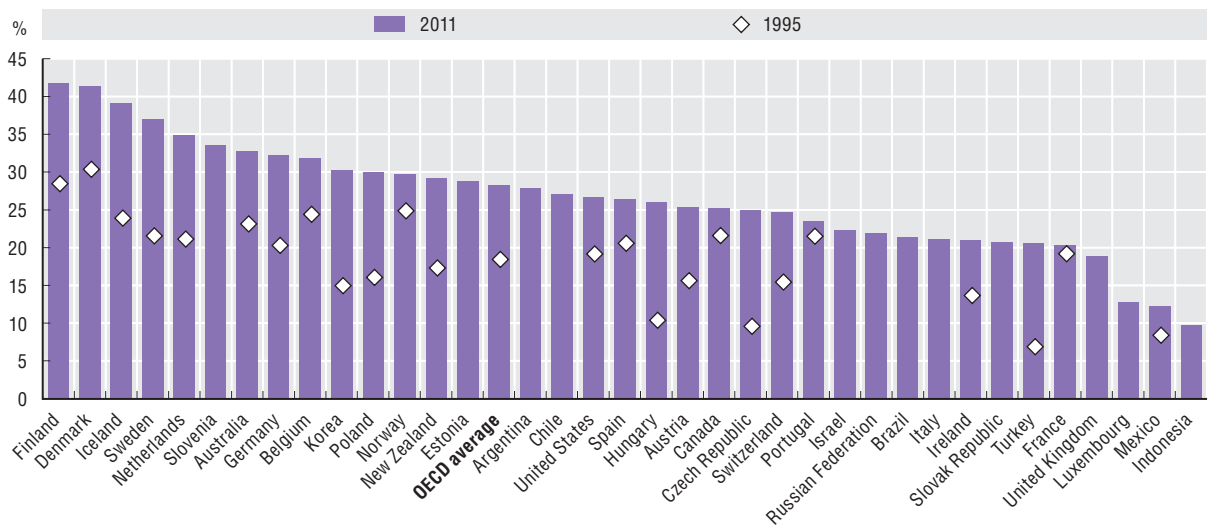
This figure shows the increase or decrease in the percentage of 15-19 year-olds enrolled in full-time and part-time education.



Source: OECD (2013), Education at a Glance 2013, Chart C1.2, available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932847336>.

Figure 1.4. **Enrolment rates of 20-29 year-olds (1995, 2011)**

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



Source: OECD (2013), Education at a Glance 2013, Chart C1.1, available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932847317>.



**From:**  
**Education at a Glance 2013**  
Highlights

**Access the complete publication at:**  
[https://doi.org/10.1787/eag\\_highlights-2013-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/eag_highlights-2013-en)

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2013), "Who participates in education?", in *Education at a Glance 2013: Highlights*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1787/eag\\_highlights-2013-5-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/eag_highlights-2013-5-en)

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