


EDUCATION
AT A GLANCE 2013

IRELAND

Growing educational attainment

If current patterns of graduation continue, 89% of young people in Ireland today will obtain an upper secondary qualification in the course of their lifetimes. Educational attainment in Ireland has increased significantly since 2000. The proportion of adults with below upper secondary education has decreased by 16 percentage points while the proportion of adults with tertiary education has increased by virtually the same amount, reaching 38% in 2011. This boost in educational attainment in recent years is largely due to the younger generations; 38% of 25-34 year-olds have an upper secondary education as the highest level of attainment and 47% have tertiary qualifications. This represents not only an important cross-generational change compared with older adults (with attainment rates of 29% and 23% respectively), but places Ireland above the OECD average of 39% of 25-34 year-olds with a tertiary qualification. For this age group, Ireland is now ranked behind only Canada, Japan and Korea.

Standing against the crisis and investing in the future

Between 2005 and 2010 the number of students at primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education has increased by 8%. In the same period, expenditure per student rose by 33%, an increase above the OECD average of 17%. Indeed, the total cumulative expenditure per student by educational institutions over the theoretical duration of primary and secondary studies adds up to USD 129 662 in 2010. This amount placed Ireland above the OECD average of USD 106 320 and, among countries with similar average theoretical duration of studies (i.e. 13 years or more), only behind Denmark (USD 147 595), Luxembourg (USD 251 036) and Norway (USD 168 125). At tertiary level, in 2010 the number of students grew by 9% and expenditure showed an increase of 28% compared with 2005. The cumulative expenditure per student by educational institution amounted to USD 51 865 for all services, below the OECD average of USD 57 774 but above expenditure in other countries with a similar average duration of tertiary studies including Hungary (USD 28 764) and Slovenia (USD 31 097).

NEETs: an increasing concern

Despite these achievements in educational attainment and funding, 15-29 year-olds in Ireland spend less time in education (6.3 years) than their peers in other countries including Denmark (8.9), Finland (8.4), Germany (7.7), and the average of OECD countries (7.1 years). This is particularly important given that, on average, young people in Ireland will spend more than three years either unemployed or out of the labour force altogether. For some of them, the path out of unemployment seems to have been a return to education: since 2008 young people in Ireland have increased the expected amount of time they will spend in education by almost one year.

However, a significant proportion of young people are at risk of finding themselves neither employed nor in education or training (NEET), hampering their future integration into the labour market. NEET levels in Ireland were below the OECD average and rather stable until 2007, with rates for 15-29 year-olds around 10%. From 2008, probably as a result of the financial crisis, rates doubled to reach 22% in 2011. The proportion of NEETs is even higher among young people in their twenties. While 9.4% of 15-19 year olds are in this situation, more than a quarter of 25-29 year-olds are (28.1%). The effects are most marked for those with the highest levels of attainment: in 2008 NEET rates for people with tertiary education in Ireland (6.8% of 15-29 year-olds) were below the OECD average (10.6%) whereas in 2011, the rate was on par with the OECD average, around 13%.

A difficult period for the labour market

Ireland seems to be still in a post-crisis impasse and is one of the OECD countries, together with Hungary and Italy, in which employment rates are at or below OECD averages for all levels of educational attainment. In addition, employment rates for women are in most cases significantly lower than those for men.

Perhaps the most worrying effect of the economic crisis in Ireland is soaring unemployment. Unemployment rates among 25-64 year-olds who did not attain an upper secondary education has reached 21.7%. This represents an increase of 13.5 percentage points between 2008 and 2011, more than three times the OECD average increase of 3.8 percentage points. Among tertiary-educated adults, unemployment rates rose by 4.1 percentage points to reach 7.1% during the same period (OECD average: 1.5 percentage points). Younger adults were the hardest hit. Between 2008 and 2011, unemployment among 25-34 year-olds who did not attain an upper secondary education increased by 21.5 percentage points, going up to 37%. Among tertiary-educated young adults the increase was 5.2 percentage points, reaching 8.7%. Again, these unemployment rates are higher than the OECD averages of 18.1% and 6.8% respectively, and the average increases in unemployment rates are far greater than those across OECD countries in the same period and for the same levels of attainment (4.5 percentage points and 2.2 percentage points respectively).

Other findings:

- In Ireland, 8.6% of 15-29 year-olds who are not in education have been unemployed for more than 6 months. This percentage is almost double the average for OECD countries (3.3%) and places Ireland only behind Greece and Spain.
- There is a gradual departure from schooling after compulsory education is completed. At age 17 the rate of enrolment is 97% while by age 20 the rate has dropped to 58%. In Ireland, 48% of 20 year-olds are enrolled in tertiary education.
- Ireland is one of the few countries (together with Brazil, Chile, Hungary and Slovenia) where the relative earnings of 25-64 year-olds with qualifications from tertiary-type A (largely theory-based) and advanced research programmes are more than 100% higher than the earnings of people with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education (OECD average: 68%).

Questions can be directed to:

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Key Facts for Ireland in Education at a Glance 2013

Table	Indicator	Ireland		OECD average		EU21 average		Rank among OECD countries and other G20 countries*
Educational Access and Output								
	Enrolment rates	2011	2005	2011	2005	2011	2005	
C2.1	3-year-olds (in early childhood education)	47%	m	67%	64%	77%	73%	28 of 36
	4-year-olds (in early childhood and primary education)	95%	m	84%	79%	90%	84%	13 of 36
C1.1a	5-14 year-olds (all levels)	100%		99%		98%		5 of 38
	Percentage of population that has attained below upper secondary education	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	
A1.4a	25-64 year-olds	27%	43%	26%	34%	25%	34%	13 of 35
	Percentage of population that has attained upper secondary education	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	
A1.4a	25-64 year-olds	36%	36%	44%	44%	48%	46%	30 of 36
	Percentage of population that has attained tertiary education	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	
A1.3a	25-64 year-olds	38%	22%	32%	22%	28%	20%	12 of 36
	30-34 year-olds	49%		39%		37%		6 of 34
A1.4a	25-34 year-olds	47%	30%	39%	26%	36%	24%	5 of 36
	55-64 year-olds	23%	13%	24%	15%	21%	14%	20 of 36
	Entry rates into tertiary education	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	
C3.1a	Vocational programmes (Tertiary-type B)	24%	26%	19%	16%	15%	11%	13 of 32
C3.2a	University programmes (Tertiary-type A)	51%	32%	60%	48%	59%	46%	24 of 36
	Graduation rates	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	
A2.1a	Percentage of today's young people expected to complete upper secondary education in their lifetime	89%	74%	83%	76%	83%	77%	11 of 27
A3.1a	Percentage of today's young people expected to complete university education (tertiary-type A) in their lifetime	43%	30%	39%	28%	41%	27%	9 of 26
Economic and Labour Market Outcomes								
	Unemployment rate of 25-64 year-olds - Men and Women	2011	2008	2011	2008	2011	2008	
A5.4b	Below upper secondary	21.7%	8.2%	12.6%	8.8%	15.6%	10.4%	5 of 35
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	15.0%	4.8%	7.3%	4.9%	8.5%	5.2%	3 of 36
	Tertiary	7.1%	3.0%	4.8%	3.3%	5.2%	3.2%	6 of 36
	Unemployment rate of 25-64 year-olds - Women	2011	2008	2011	2008	2011	2008	
A5.4d	Below upper secondary	14.2%	5.5%	12.2%	9.5%	15.1%	11.0%	9 of 35
	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	11.2%	3.8%	8.0%	5.7%	9.1%	6.1%	7 of 35
	Tertiary	6.3%	2.7%	5.1%	3.6%	5.5%	3.6%	6 of 36
	Average earnings premium for 25-64 year-olds with tertiary education**	2011 or latest year available		2011		2011		
A6.1	Men and women	175		157		158		7 of 33
	Men	180		162		164		9 of 33
	Women	178		161		161		8 of 33
	Average earnings penalty for 25-64 year-olds who have not attained upper secondary education**	2011 or latest year available		2011		2011		
A6.1	Men and women	85		76		77		5 of 33
	Men	82		77		78		8 of 33
	Women	78		74		75		12 of 33
	Percentage of people not in employment, education or training for 15-29 year-olds, by level of education attained	2011	2008	2011	2008	2011	2008	
C5.4d	Below upper secondary	23.4%	17.6%	15.8%	14.4%	15.3%	13.5%	7 of 34
	Upper secondary	25.0%	12.6%	16.2%	13.6%	15.1%	11.8%	4 of 34
	Tertiary	13.8%	6.8%	13.3%	10.6%	12.3%	9.6%	15 of 34

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Table	Indicator	Ireland		OECD average		EU21 average		Rank among OECD countries and other G20 countries*
Financial Investment in Education								
	Annual expenditure per student (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)	2010		2010		2010		
B1.1a	Pre-primary education	m		6762 USD		7085 USD		m
	Primary education	8384 USD		7974 USD		8277 USD		14 of 34
	Secondary education	11380 USD		9014 USD		9471 USD		8 of 34
	Tertiary education	16008 USD		13528 USD		12856 USD		10 of 33
	Total expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	
B2.1	As a percentage of GDP	6.4%	4.4%	6.3%	5.4%	5.9%	5.2%	14 of 33
	Total public expenditure on education	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	
B4.1	As a percentage of total public expenditure	9.7%	13.7%	13.0%	12.6%	11.4%	11.4%	29 of 32
	Share of private expenditure on educational institutions	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	
B3.2a	Pre-primary education	m		17.9%		11.3%		m
B3.2a	Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	4.1%	4.0%	8.5%	7.1%	6.1%	5.6%	21 of 31
B3.2b	Tertiary education	18.8%	20.8%	31.6%	22.6%	22.7%	14.3%	21 of 30
B3.1	All levels of education	7.5%	9.5%	16.4%	12.1%	10.7%	7.9%	23 of 29
Schools and Teachers								
	Ratio of students to teaching staff	2011		2011		2011		
D2.2	Pre-primary education	m		14 students per teacher		13 students per teacher		m
	Primary education	16 students per teacher		15 students per teacher		14 students per teacher		19 of 35
	Secondary education	14 students per teacher		14 students per teacher		12 students per teacher		13 of 36
	Total intended instruction time for students (hours)	2011		2011		2011		
D1.1	Primary education	6954 hours		4717 hours		m		1 of 31
	Lower secondary education	2806 hours		3034 hours		m		18 of 31
	Number of hours of teaching time per year (for teachers in public institutions)	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	
D4.2	Pre-primary education	m		994 hours		977 hours		m
	Primary education	915 hours	915 hours	790 hours	780 hours	777 hours	776 hours	6 of 31
	Lower secondary education	735 hours	735 hours	709 hours	697 hours	669 hours	658 hours	11 of 30
	Upper secondary education	735 hours	735 hours	664 hours	628 hours	651 hours	635 hours	10 of 31
	Index of change in statutory teachers' salaries for teachers with 15 years of experience/minimum training (2000 = 100)	2011	2008	2011	2008	2011	2008	
D3.4	Primary school teachers	132	124	120	120	121	122	5 of 23
	Lower secondary school teachers	131	123	116	116	121	121	3 of 22
	Upper secondary school teachers	131	123	117	118	118	119	4 of 22
	Ratio of teachers' salaries to earnings for full-time, full-year adult workers with tertiary education	2011		2011		2011		
D3.2	Pre-primary school teachers	0.82		0.80		0.77		9 of 22
	Primary school teachers	0.82		0.82		0.80		12 of 27
	Lower secondary school teachers	0.82		0.85		0.84		13 of 27
	Upper secondary school teachers	0.82		0.89		0.89		14 of 27

* Countries are ranked in descending order of values.

** Compared to people with upper secondary education; upper secondary = 100.

Note: Enrolment rates above 100% in the calculation are shown in italics.

'm': data is not available.