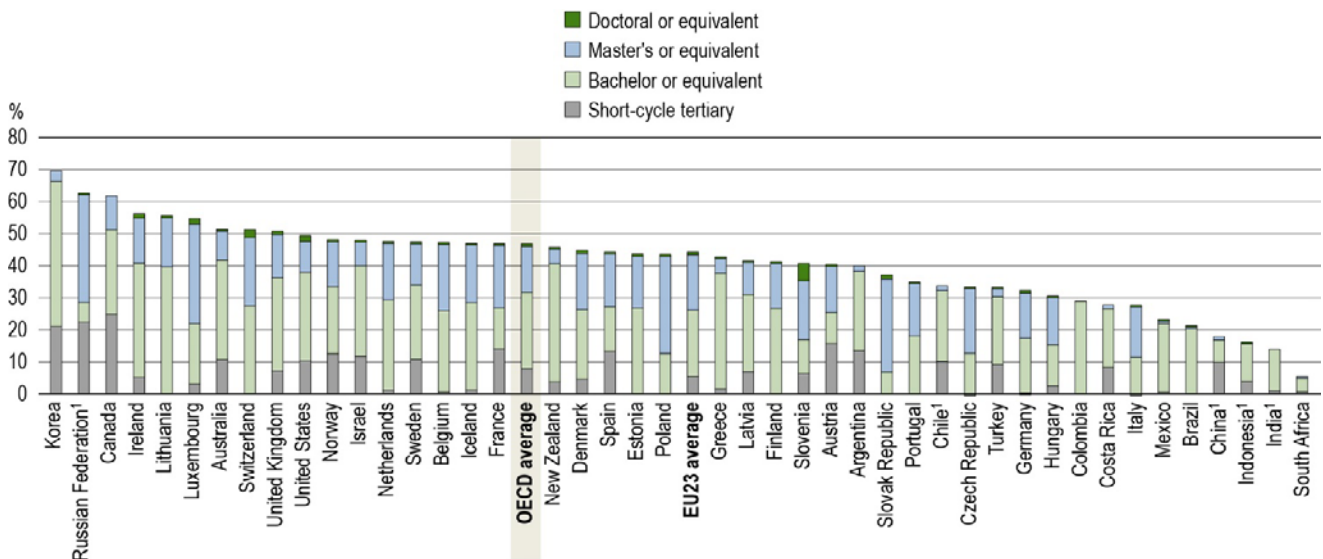


Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators (OECD, 2019^[1]) is the authoritative source for information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of education systems in OECD and partner countries.

Switzerland

- In Switzerland, 44% of 25-64 year-olds held a tertiary degree in 2018, compared to 39% on average across OECD countries. The share of tertiary educational attainment is higher for the younger generation.
- Switzerland has the second highest share of doctorate holders among OECD countries. Doctoral programmes seem to be very attractive to international students.
- Completing at least an upper secondary degree considerably improves employment prospects in Switzerland, especially for younger adults. Due to the prominence of vocational programmes, the employment rates for those with upper-secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education are similar to those for tertiary degree holders.
- The gender gap in educational attainment is moderate in Switzerland, but disparities remain across fields of study. Men are over-represented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), while fields related to health and welfare are strongly dominated by women.

Figure 1. Distribution of 25-34 year-olds with tertiary education, by level of tertiary education (2018)



Note: Some categories might be included in other categories. Please refer to Education at a Glance Database, <http://stats.oecd.org> for details.

1. Year of reference differs from 2018. Refer to Table A1.1 for more details.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the total percentage of tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds.

Source: OECD (2019), Education at a Glance Database, <http://stats.oecd.org>. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>).

Switzerland maintains a large share of tertiary-educated adults and has the second highest proportion of doctorate holders among OECD countries

- In 2018, 44% of 25-64 year-olds had completed a tertiary qualification in Switzerland, compared to 39% on average across OECD countries. The share among younger adults (25-34 year-olds) is also higher in Switzerland than on average across OECD countries (Figure 1).
- The share of tertiary-educated young adults increased between 2008 and 2018. In Switzerland, the share of 25-34 year-olds with tertiary education increased by 13 percentage points – from 38% to 51% – over the last decade, in line with the average increase across OECD countries.
- As tertiary education has expanded among 25-34 year-olds, the share of young adults with below upper secondary, upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest educational attainment has fallen in most OECD countries. Between 2008 and 2018, the share of 25-34 year olds having attained at the most an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary degree fell from 52% to 42%, and from 10% to 7% for below upper secondary education in Switzerland.
- In 2018, 3.2% of Swiss adults held a doctorate, the second highest rate among OECD countries. At least two factors contribute to the high share of doctoral qualifications. First, Switzerland has above-average spending on research and development (R&D). Strong funding streams for R&D implies better research opportunities in the country, which in turn support the progress of doctoral students both during and after their study. Second, the country has implemented policies to improve the attractiveness of its doctoral programmes. In Switzerland, tuition fees for doctoral programmes were about 3 times lower than for bachelor's and master's degrees in public institutions in 2018. Furthermore, Switzerland recognises its doctoral students as employees rather than students, reducing their financial burden.
- In 2017, 55% of students in Switzerland enrolled in doctoral or equivalent degrees were international, compared to 22% for the OECD average. The share was similar for doctoral graduates: 57% had been international students compared with 25% on average across OECD countries.
- In most OECD countries, a bachelor's degree is the most common entry point into tertiary education. On average, 76% of first-time tertiary entrants start at bachelor's or equivalent level and only 7% enter directly at master's or equivalent level. In Switzerland, the distribution is somewhat different: 69% of first-time entrants are expected to start at bachelor's level and 29% at master's level. The majority of first-time tertiary entrants at master's level enter through master's long first degrees, which mainly comprise medical studies.
- First-time tertiary entrants tend to be older in Switzerland than in other OECD countries, as the rate for adults under the age of 25 is lower than the OECD average (47% against 49%). Deferred tertiary entry suggests a culture of lifelong learning and a preference for gaining working experience before entering tertiary education in Switzerland (OECD, 2017^[2]).
- A large share of tertiary students take longer to complete their degree than the theoretical duration of their programme. For example, in 2017, 39% of entrants to bachelor's programmes completed their degree within the theoretical duration, while 81% had completed after three additional years. The large difference is probably related to the country's admission system, where some fields of study require an additional year of preparatory courses or a year of work experience.

Higher education leads to better employment prospects, but the impact is less pronounced above upper secondary level

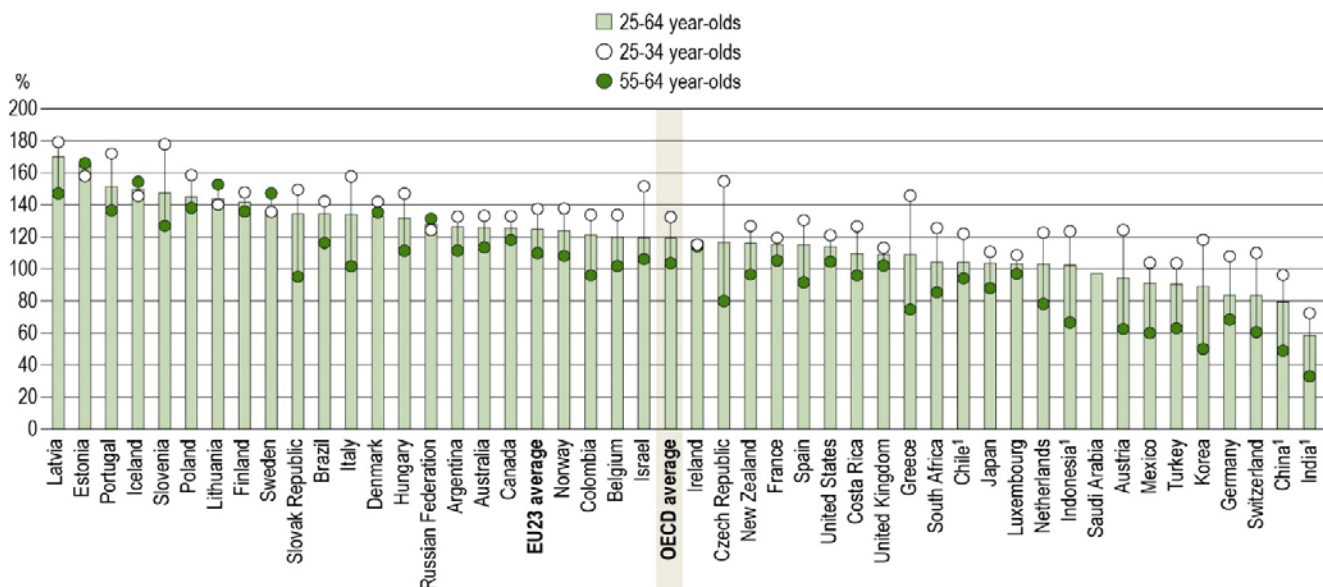
- Swiss adults enjoy higher employment rates than the OECD average. In 2018, the employment rate for those with below upper secondary education was 69% compared with 59% on average for OECD countries, for upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education it was 82% (OECD average: 76%), and for tertiary education it was 89% (OECD average: 85%).

- Like in most OECD countries, in Switzerland, adults without an upper secondary qualification are penalised in the labour market. In 2018, having at least upper secondary education halved the risk of unemployment. Moreover, in 2017, tertiary-educated workers earn almost twice as much as those with below upper secondary education.
- The transition from an upper secondary or a post-secondary non-tertiary degree to a tertiary qualification does not lead to significant improvements in employment prospects in Switzerland. In 2018, among younger adults, the difference in employment rate was 3 percentage points, which is half the OECD average. Such a small difference suggests great interest within the country's labour market in people with vocational education. For instance, in Switzerland, the majority of vocational students participate in combined school- and work-based programmes, which smooth the transition from education to work.

Gender gaps in educational attainment and employment have narrowed over the last decade, but stark gender differences remain in the fields of study

Figure 2. Share of tertiary-educated women as a percentage of the share of tertiary-educated men, by age group and gender (2018)

25-34 year-olds, 55-64 year-olds and 25-64 year-olds



1. Year of reference differs from 2018. Refer to Table A1.1 for more details.

Countries are ranked in descending order of percentage point difference for the age group 25-64.

Source: OECD (2019), Education at a Glance Database, <http://stats.oecd.org>. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>).

- The expansion of tertiary education between 2008 and 2018 has been particularly beneficial for young women in Switzerland. The proportion of young women with tertiary education rose from 35% to 54%, while the OECD average increased from 40% to 51%.
- In 2018, the share of young women with tertiary degrees was 10% higher than the share of young men in Switzerland, compared to 32% of the OECD average (Figure 2). However, in Switzerland, the share of young women with tertiary degrees was 16% lower than the share of young men in 2008.
- The gender gap in the employment rate also narrowed between 2008 and 2018 in Switzerland: it decreased 4 percentage points among those with below upper secondary education, 3 percentage points among those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education, and 2 percentage points among those with tertiary education. However, men still have more often gainfully employed than women at any level of

educational attainment. In particular, among younger generation with below upper secondary degrees, the employment rate was 20 percentage points higher for men than for women in 2018.


- About one-third of tertiary-educated 25-64 year-olds have a degree in business, administration and law, which is the most popular field of study in Switzerland. Engineering, manufacturing and construction (18%) and health and welfare (14%) are also popular tertiary qualifications.
- However, Switzerland has a stronger gender bias in terms of field of study. Women dominate in health and welfare. For instance, in 2017, 77% of first-time tertiary entrants to bachelor's programmes who enrolled in health and welfare were women, on a par with the OECD average. In contrast, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) seems to be a masculine domain, as only 22% of students in bachelor's degree who specialised in STEM fields were women, compared to 30% on average across OECD countries.

References

OECD (2019), *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [1]
<https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>.

OECD (2017), *Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [2]
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2017-en>.

For more information on **Education at a Glance 2019** and to access the full set of Indicators, visit www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm.

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=CHE&treshold=10&topic=EO>.

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On 25 May 2018, the OECD Council invited Colombia to become a Member. While Colombia is included in the OECD averages reported in this note, at the time of its preparation, Colombia was in the process of completing its domestic procedures for ratification and the deposit of Colombia's instrument of accession to the OECD Convention was pending.

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.

Key Facts for Switzerland in Education at a Glance 2019

Source	Main topics in <i>Education at a Glance</i>	Switzerland		OECD average		EU23 average	
Tertiary education							
Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds							
2018							
Table A1.1	Short-cycle tertiary	**		7%		5%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	22%		17%		14%	
	Master's or equivalent	19%		13%		15%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	3%		1%		1%	
Tertiary attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by gender							
2008							
Table A1.2	Men	42%	49%	31%	38%	28%	36%
	Women	35%	54%	40%	51%	38%	50%
	Total	38%	51%	35%	44%	33%	43%
Distribution of first-time tertiary entrants by education level							
2017							
Table B4.1	Short-cycle tertiary	2%		17%		12%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	69%		76%		80%	
	Master's or equivalent	29%		7%		8%	
Share of international or foreign students, by education level¹							
2017							
Table B6.1	Bachelor's or equivalent	10%		4%		7%	
	Master's or equivalent	29%		13%		13%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	55%		22%		22%	
	All tertiary levels of education	18%		6%		9%	
Employment rate of 25-64 year-olds, by educational attainment							
2018							
Table A3.1	Short-cycle tertiary	**		82%		82%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	88%		84%		84%	
	Master's or equivalent	88%		88%		88%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	92%		92%		93%	
	All tertiary levels of education	89%		85%		86%	
Employment rate of tertiary-educated 25-64 year-olds, by field of study							
2018							
Table A3.4	Education	87%		84%		85%	
	Business and administration and law	88%		86%		87%	
	Engineering, manufacturing and construction	92%		89%		89%	
	Health and welfare	90%		87%		88%	
Relative earnings of full-time full-year 25-64 year-old workers, by educational attainment (upper secondary education = 100)							
2017							
Table A4.1	Short-cycle tertiary	**		120		121	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	139		144		138	
	Master's, doctoral or equivalent	167		191		174	
	All tertiary levels of education	153		157		152	
Upper secondary and vocational education and training (VET)							
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment rate							
2018							
Table A1.2	Share of 25-34 year-olds with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary as their highest attainment	42%		41%		44%	
Percentage of first-time upper secondary graduates with a vocational qualification							
2017							
Table B3.1	Vocational programmes	**		40%		46%	
Age at graduation from upper secondary education, by programme orientation							
2017							
Figure B3.1	General programmes	**		18		19	
	Vocational programmes	**		21		21	
Share of women among upper secondary graduates, by programme orientation							
2017							
Figure B3.2	General programmes	57%		55%		56%	
	Vocational programmes	46%		46%		46%	
Employment, unemployment and inactivity rates of 25-34 year-olds, with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education							
2018							
Table A3.3	Employment rate	86%		78%		79%	
	Unemployment rate	5%		7%		8%	
	Inactivity rate	10%		16%		14%	
Total expenditure on upper secondary educational institutions, in USD² per full-time equivalent student, by programme orientation							
2016							
Table C1.1	General programmes	**		USD 9 397		USD 9 671	
	Vocational programmes	**		USD 10 922		USD 11 320	
Early childhood education and care (ECEC)							
Enrolment rate of 3-5 year-olds in education							
2017							
Table B2.2	ECEC and primary education	50%		87%		90%	
Share of children enrolled in private institutions							
2017							
Table B2.3	Pre-primary level (ISCED 02)	5%		34%		27%	
Ratio of children to teaching staff							
2017							
Table B2.3	Pre-primary level (ISCED 02)	18		16		15	
Expenditure on children aged 3-5 enrolled in education							
2016							
Table B2.4	Annual expenditure per child, in USD ² per child	USD 12 607		USD 8 141		USD 8 926	

Source	Main topics in <i>Education at a Glance</i>	Switzerland		OECD average		EU23 average	
Social outcomes and adult learning							
Participation in formal and/or non-formal education, by educational attainment³		2016					
Table A7.1	Below upper secondary	35%		n.a.		26%	
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	64%		n.a.		44%	
	Tertiary	86%		n.a.		66%	
Participation in cultural or sporting activities in the last 12 months, by educational attainment⁴		2015					
Table A6.1	Below upper secondary	71%		n.a.		56%	
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	91%		n.a.		77%	
	Tertiary	98%		n.a.		92%	
Financial resources invested in education							
Total expenditure on educational institutions, by level of education²		2016					
Table C1.1 and C2.1		USD/student	% GDP	USD/student	% GDP	USD/student	% GDP
	Primary	**	**	USD 8 470	1.5%	USD 8 548	1.3%
	Lower secondary	**	**	USD 9 884	0.9%	USD 10 302	0.9%
	Upper secondary	USD 18 990	1.3%	USD 10 368	1.1%	USD 10 308	1.9%
	Tertiary (including R&D)	**	**	USD 15 556	1.5%	USD 15 963	1.2%
Share of expenditure on educational institutions, by final source of funds		2016					
Table C3.1		Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
	Primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary	**	**	90%	10%	92%	8%
	Tertiary (including R&D)	**	**	66%	32%	73%	24%
Total public expenditure on primary to tertiary education		2016					
Table C4.1	As a percentage of total government expenditure	13.5%		10.8%		9.6%	
Teachers, the learning environment and the organisation of schools							
Actual salaries of teachers and school heads in public institutions relative to earnings of full-time, full-year workers with tertiary education		2017					
Table D3.2a		Teachers	School heads	Teachers	School heads	Teachers	School heads
	Pre-primary	**	**	0.78	**	0.78	1.16
	Primary	**	**	0.84	1.25	0.85	1.24
	Lower secondary (general programmes)	**	**	0.88	1.34	0.89	1.34
	Upper secondary (general programmes)	**	**	0.93	1.43	0.95	1.43
Annual statutory salaries of teachers in public institutions, based on most prevalent qualifications, at different points in teachers' careers²		2018					
Table D3.1a		Starting salary	Salary after 15 years of experience	Starting salary	Salary after 15 years of experience	Starting salary	Salary after 15 years of experience
	Pre-primary	USD 54 388	**	USD 31 276	USD 42 078	USD 30 615	USD 41 354
	Primary	USD 58 017	**	USD 33 058	USD 45 947	USD 32 987	USD 45 748
	Lower secondary (general programmes)	USD 65 010	**	USD 34 230	USD 47 675	USD 34 261	USD 47 772
	Upper secondary (general programmes)	USD 73 250	**	USD 35 859	USD 49 804	USD 35 104	USD 49 875
Organisation of teachers' working time in public institutions over the school year		2018					
Tables D4.1a and D4.1b		Net teaching time	Total statutory working time	Net teaching time	Total statutory working time	Net teaching time	Total statutory working time
	Pre-primary	756 hours	1 930 hours	1 024 hours	1 613 hours	1 062 hours	1 550 hours
	Primary	785 hours	1 930 hours	783 hours	1 612 hours	754 hours	1 539 hours
	Lower secondary (general programmes)	748 hours	1 930 hours	709 hours	1 634 hours	673 hours	1 572 hours
	Upper secondary (general programmes)	621 hours	1 930 hours	667 hours	1 629 hours	643 hours	1 558 hours
Percentage of teachers who are 50 years old or over		2017					
Table D5.1	Primary to upper secondary	36%		36%		39%	
Share of female teachers, in public and private institutions		2017					
Table D5.2	Primary	83%		83%		87%	
	Lower secondary	55%		69%		72%	
Total number of compulsory instruction time, by level of education		2019					
Table D1.1	Primary	4 782 hours		4 568 hours		4 258 hours	
	Lower secondary	2 836 hours		3 022 hours		3 002 hours	
	Upper secondary	**		**		**	
Average class size by level of education		2017					
Table D2.1	Primary	**		21		20	
	Lower secondary	**		23		21	

The reference year is the year cited or the latest year for which data are available.

1. For some countries, data on foreign students are provided instead of international students.

2. Values reported in equivalent US dollars (USD) have been converted using purchasing power parities (PPPs) for GDP

3. EU23 average refers to the average of OECD countries that participated in the Adult Education Survey (AES).

4. EU23 average refers to the average of OECD countries that participated in the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions 2015.

** Please refer to the source table for details on these data.

Cut-off date for the data: 19 July 2019. Any updates on data can be found on line at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en>.