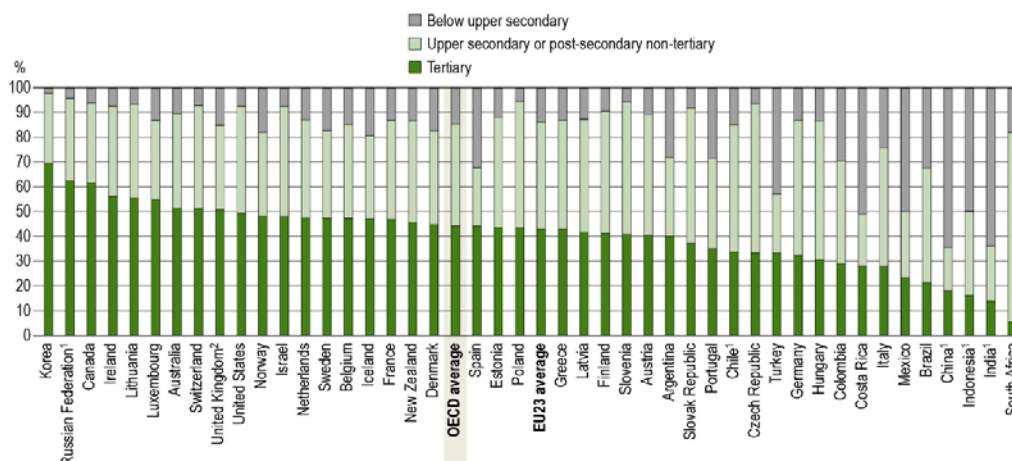


*Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators* (OECD, 2019<sup>[1]</sup>) is the authoritative source for information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of education systems in OECD and partner countries.

## Finland

- Although the **share of tertiary-educated young adults (25-34 year-olds)** has increased over the past decade, it remains **below the OECD average**. Finland's **admission system is selective**, and around two-thirds of applicants to first-degree tertiary education are rejected.
- While **employment rates are well below average for young adults without an upper secondary education** (at 49% compared to 60% on average across OECD countries), they are slightly **above average for tertiary-educated adults** (at 85%).
- Finland dedicates an **above-average share of its gross domestic product (GDP) to early childhood education and care**. However, enrolment remains **below the OECD average**, especially among younger children.
- Although their **average statutory salaries are below the OECD average**, Finnish teachers are **more likely to consider that the advantages of being a teacher clearly outweigh the disadvantages**.
- **Expenditure per student on tertiary educational institutions is above average**, although it has decreased by 9% since 2010.
- Adults (aged 25-64) in Finland **have an above-average participation in cultural or sporting activities and in formal and/or non-formal education**, especially for higher levels of educational attainment. They also rank high in terms of **work-life balance and flexibility at work**.

Figure 1. Educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds (2018)



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

2. Data for upper secondary attainment include completion of a sufficient volume and standard of programmes that would be classified individually as completion of intermediate upper secondary programmes (13% of adults aged 25-64 are in this group).

Countries are ranked in descending order of the 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>).

## The share of tertiary-educated individuals has increased over the past decade, although it remains below the OECD average

- Finland has the objective of having half of its 25-34 year-olds holding a tertiary degree by 2030. It has been getting closer to this target, as the share increased from 38% in 2008 to 41% in 2018 (Figure 1). It has risen more slowly than the OECD average, however, which went from 35% to 44% over the same period.
- Admissions to tertiary education in Finland are restricted for all programmes and fields of study. Tertiary institutions set the number of admissions after negotiating funding with the central government, and admissions to different programmes and fields are based on expected labour-market demand. As many as 67% of applicants to first-degree tertiary education are rejected in Finland – the highest proportion among countries with available data, closely followed by Sweden (63%). As in Sweden, the field of study with the highest share of students rejected is social sciences, journalism and information, where over three-quarters of applicants are rejected. In contrast, in countries such as Colombia, Denmark, Israel, Lithuania and Mexico, the highest proportion of rejected applicants is found in health and welfare.
- Finland's selective admission system, together with its civilian or military service (mandatory for 19-20 year-old men and optional for women), contribute to delayed entrance to tertiary education. Only 19% of entrants to bachelor's degrees enter directly from upper secondary education in Finland, while in most countries with available data this proportion exceeds 40%. The Finnish government has been actively trying to reduce the number of years between graduation from upper secondary and entry to tertiary education.
- In spite of its selective admissions for both national and international students, Finland attracts a high share of international students. Between 2010 and 2017, the share of international students rose from 6% to 8%, and it is now slightly above the OECD total (6%). Among international students in Finland, 39% come from Asia, which is more than in other Nordic countries like Denmark (10%), Iceland (16%), Norway (31%) and Sweden (29%). A large percentage of international students also come from Europe (30%) – 11% from the Russian Federation alone.
- Finland has high completion rates at bachelor's level. As many as 43% of students who entered a bachelor's degree completed it during the theoretical duration of the programme (compared to 39% on average among countries with available data), and 73% completed it within the theoretical duration of the programme plus three years (compared to 67% on average). These high completion rates may partly reflect Finland's selective admission system, and the financing of institutions, which is conditional to some extent on student completion rate. As in most countries with available data, women in Finland exhibit higher completion rates than men. For instance, 55% of women complete their bachelor's degrees during the theoretical duration of the programme, compared to only 28% of men.
- In 2017, 1.2% of 25-64 year olds in Finland held a doctoral degree, which is close to the OECD average of 1.1%. However, while the number of doctoral graduates in Finland remained constant between 2005 and 2017 (at around 1 900 students), it increased by 47% on average in OECD countries with available trend data. As in most countries, the most popular fields at the doctoral level are health and welfare (which attract 19% of graduates); engineering, manufacturing and construction (18%); and natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (17%). The share of international doctoral graduates is slightly above the OECD average, at 28% compared to 25%.

## A tertiary education leads to significant labour-market benefits

- As other countries, Finland experienced falling employment rates for all levels of educational attainment over the past decade. However, in Finland, this decrease mainly affected individuals with lower levels of educational attainment. While tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds saw their employment rates fall by

2 percentage points (from 87% in 2008 to 85% in 2018), those without an upper secondary education suffered a 20 percentage-point decrease (from 69% to 49%). Finland's employment rate in 2018 for young adults without an upper secondary education is well below the OECD average of 60%, while employment rates for tertiary-educated people are above average.

- As in many countries, employment rates are lower for women than for men, particularly for those with lower levels of educational attainment. Among tertiary-educated younger adults, employment rates are 81% for women and 92% for men. In contrast, the employment rate for women without an upper secondary qualification are 30%, compared to 63% for men. This gender employment gap (34 percentage points) is well above the OECD average (28 percentage points).
- Holding a tertiary degree also leads to better labour-market outcomes in terms of earnings. Adults (25-64 year-olds) who attained tertiary education earn 40% more than individuals with an upper secondary education. This value is lower than the OECD average of 57% but higher than in other Nordic countries with available data, where the earnings premium varies between 20% and 30%.

### Enrolment in early childhood education has increased in Finland but remains relatively low compared to other OECD countries

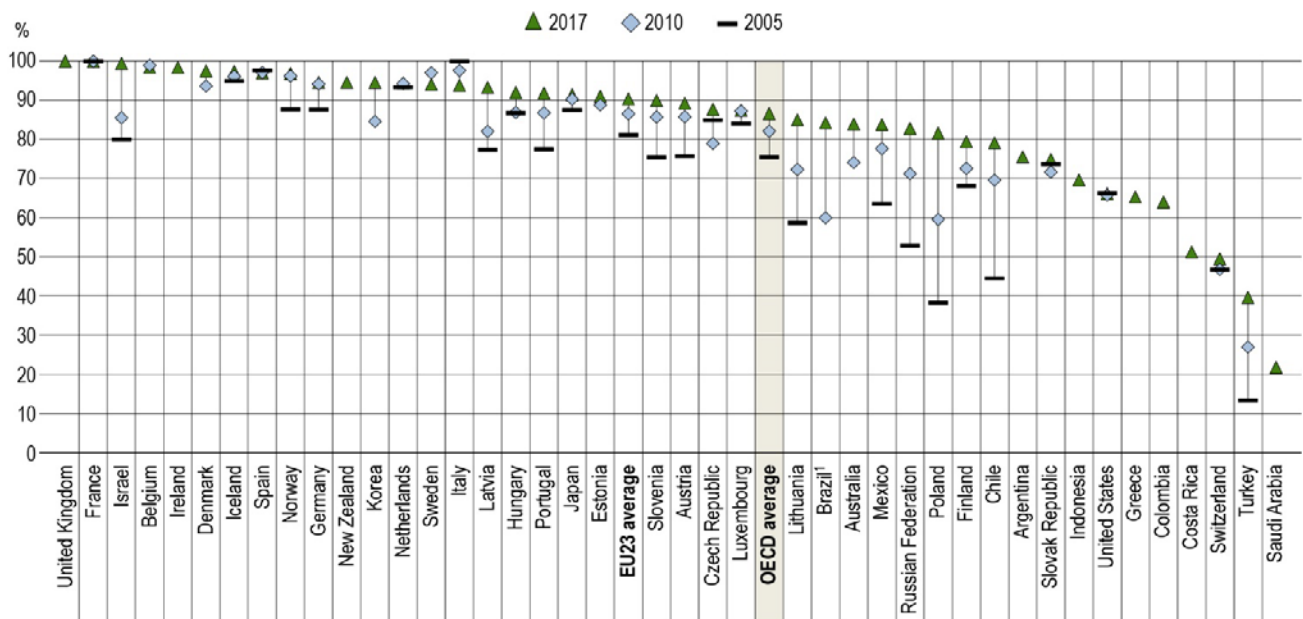
- Early childhood education can contribute to children's cognitive and social development, and help lay the foundation for later educational outcomes (OECD, 2017<sup>[2]</sup>). Between 2005 and 2017, the enrolment rate in Finland among children aged 3 to 5 increased from 68% to 79% (Figure 2). It remains below the OECD average of 87%, however, and below other Nordic countries where enrolment rates vary from 94% to 98%.
- As in other countries, enrolment rates in early childhood education and care (ECEC) increase significantly with children's age. Among children under 2, 16% are enrolled in ECEC services, which is below the OECD average of 21%. By the age of 4, 80% of children are enrolled, although this remains below the OECD average (87%).
- In Finland, the great majority of children enrolled in early childhood education and care attend public institutions (86%). This is well above the OECD average (67%) but similar to other Nordic countries like Denmark, Iceland and Sweden.
- Ensuring appropriate funding is important, as it helps recruit trained staff and provide facilities and materials that foster children's development. In 2016, Finland spent around USD 12 800<sup>1</sup> per child on early childhood education and care, which is well above the OECD average of around USD 8 600. This expenditure represents 1.2% of gross domestic product (GDP), which is also higher than the average (0.8%). Nonetheless, this is below other Nordic countries with available data (1.7% in Iceland, 2% in Norway and 1.9% in Sweden).
- At the pre-primary level (which in Finland corresponds to ECEC programmes for children aged 3 to 6, there are only 10 children per teaching staff member, compared to 16 on average across OECD countries. ECEC teachers in Finland are required to hold either a bachelor's or equivalent degree (the most common requirement among countries with available data) or a master's degree.

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<sup>1</sup> Values reported in equivalent US dollars (USD) have been converted using purchasing power parities (PPPs) for GDP.

**Figure 2. Change in enrolment rates of children aged 3 to 5 years (2005, 2010 and 2017)**

Early childhood education (ISCED 0) and primary education



1. Year of reference 2012 instead of 2010

Countries are ranked in descending order of the enrolment rates of 3-5 year-olds in 2017.

**Source:** OECD (2019), Table B2.2. See *Source* section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>).

## Salary, the school environment and workload all influence teachers' decisions to enter – and remain in – the profession

- On average, teachers' net teaching time in Finland is below the OECD average. Teachers spend 677 hours per year teaching at the primary level, 592 hours at the lower secondary level and 550 hours at the upper secondary level (general programmes) – all of which are around 100 hours less than the respective OECD averages.
- Although teachers earn an above-average salary at the beginning of their careers (from primary to upper secondary education), statutory salaries do not increase as much with experience as in other countries. As a result, teachers' salaries at the top of the scale are actually below the OECD average. For instance, a teacher at the top of the scale in primary education earns around USD 44 700 in Finland, compared to around USD 55 400 on average across OECD countries.
- When compared to other tertiary-educated workers, however, teachers in Finland are better off than in other OECD countries. For instance, a teacher in lower secondary education (general programmes) earns 98% of the salary of other tertiary-educated full-time workers, compared to 88% on average across OECD countries. In upper secondary general education, teachers' salaries exceed those of other tertiary-educated workers by 11%. This finding may reflect the fact that teachers in primary, secondary and tertiary education are required to hold a master's degree, which yields important earnings advantages compared to bachelor's degrees. When compared to similarly educated full-time workers, teachers' relative salaries are lower: they earn 84% of the salaries of similarly educated workers when teaching at the lower secondary level and 94% at the upper secondary level.
- The school environment, together with teachers' workload and salaries, can have an impact on their job satisfaction. In Finland, 92% of teachers consider that the advantages of being a teacher clearly outweigh the disadvantages – which is the highest proportion among OECD countries, well above the average

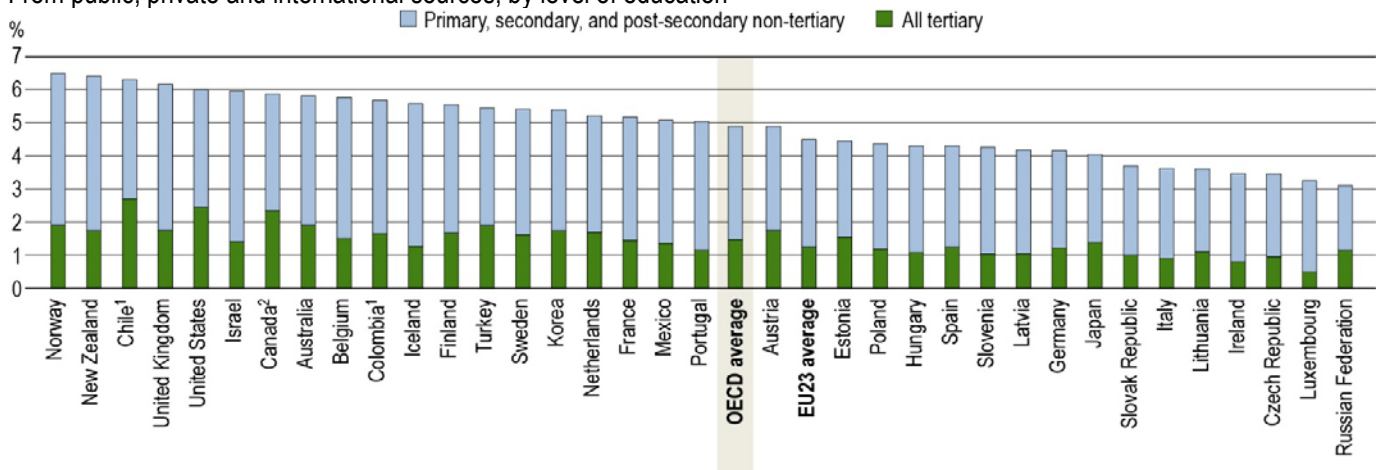
(76%). In addition, 58% of teachers declare that their profession is valued in society, which again is well above the OECD average of 26% (OECD, 2019<sup>[3]</sup>).

### Finland has one of the highest private cost-benefit ratios from attaining tertiary education

- In 2016, Finland's expenditure on tertiary educational institutions as a percentage of GDP was 1.7%, which is slightly above the OECD average of 1.5% (Figure 3). Public spending represented an above-average share of GDP (1.5% compared to 0.9%) while private spending was below average (0.1% compared to 0.5%).
- In absolute numbers, expenditure on tertiary institutions amounted to around USD 17 500 per student, which is above the OECD average (around USD 15 550). However, while expenditure per student has increased by 8% since 2010 in OECD countries, it actually fell by 9% in Finland. In addition, when expenditure on research and development is excluded, expenditure per student actually becomes slightly below average, at around USD 10 300 compared to around USD 11 050.
- Tuition fees can help bridge the gap between the costs incurred by tertiary educational institutions and the revenues they receive from sources other than students and their families. Until recently, students in Finland paid no tuition fees at the tertiary level, regardless of their country of origin. As of 2017, however, tuition fees were introduced for students from outside the European Economic Area pursuing a bachelor's or master's degree taught in English.

**Figure 3. Total expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP (2016)**

From public, private and international sources, by level of education



1. Year of reference 2017.

2. Primary education includes pre-primary programmes.

Countries are ranked in descending order of total expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP.

Source: OECD/UIS/Eurostat (2019), Table C2.1. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>).

- Even when tuition is free of charge, living expenses can result in significant costs for students. Financial support to students in Finland takes the form of loans; grants or scholarships, which benefit 58% of national students enrolled in tertiary education. The public sector does not provide loans, but it guarantees private loans for education. On average, a tertiary student in Finland borrows around USD 6 100 per year, and 57% of graduates have debt as a result of student loans. The average amount of debt at graduation



(around USD 11 700) is, however, lower than in other Nordic countries with available data, like Denmark (USD 13 900), Norway (USD 28 700) and Sweden (USD 19 100).

- One way to investigate the incentives to invest in tertiary education is by considering costs and benefits. In Finland, the gross earnings benefit from obtaining a tertiary education is USD 457 100 for men and USD 356 400 for women. While further education yields higher earnings over the course of an individual's career, private benefits from investing in education also depend on countries' tax and social contributions systems. In Finland, taxes and social contributions are significant, as they represent around 40% of the gross earning benefits for men and women. Despite this high percentage, Finland has one of the highest benefit-cost ratios from obtaining a tertiary education – at 11.3 for men and 13.1 for women, compared to 8 on average across OECD countries for both genders. This means that for every dollar an individual spends on tertiary education, the additional earnings he can expect to receive throughout his working life are much higher in Finland than on average in OECD countries.


### **Tertiary-educated adults in Finland are likely to participate in social activities and adult learning**

- Returns to education are not limited to financial or economic measures, but also include social and health outcomes. Finland has one of the highest participation rates in cultural and sporting activities – and, as in other countries, this increases with the level of educational attainment. For instance, 76% of adults (25-64 year-olds) without an upper secondary education reported having participated in these types of activities over the past 12 months, compared to 98% of tertiary-educated adults. This compares to OECD averages of 56% and 92% respectively.
- Adults in Finland are also more likely to participate in formal voluntary activities than in other countries, especially if they have attained tertiary education. While 26% of adults without an upper secondary education reported having taken part in voluntary activities over the past year, this proportion goes up to 43% among tertiary-educated adults. On average across OECD countries, these shares are much lower: 15% for those without upper secondary education and 31% for those with a tertiary degree.
- Work-life balance is an important dimension of well-being, and one that does not necessarily improve with educational attainment (Statistics Canada, 2016<sup>[4]</sup>; Konishi and Dufour, 2016<sup>[5]</sup>; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001<sup>[6]</sup>). Among countries with available data, Finland has the lowest share of tertiary-educated adults reporting that their job has a negative impact on their family life: 40%, compared to 51% on average across OECD countries. For all levels of educational attainment, Finland also has the highest share of individuals reporting high or very high degrees of flexibility at work, with values ranging from 41% for those with below upper secondary education to 51% for those with tertiary education.
- In addition, adults in Finland are likely to take part in formal and/or non-formal education or training, especially those with high levels of educational attainment. Participation rates range from 36% for individuals who have not attained upper secondary education to 50% for those with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualification and 66% for those with a tertiary degree. These compare to OECD averages of 26%, 44% and 66% respectively.
- Although both men and women (aged 25-64) are more likely to enrol in adult education and training than in other countries, there is a large gender gap in enrolment rates. While 48% of men in Finland declared having participated in formal and/or non-formal education and training over the 12 months, this proportion rises to 60% for women. On average across OECD countries, this gender gap is significantly lower, with enrolment rates of 47% for men and 48% for women.

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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:  **Education GPS**

<http://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=FIN&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.

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#### 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 Finland in Education at a Glance 2019

Source	Main topics in <i>Education at a Glance</i>	Finland		OECD average		EU23 average	
	Tertiary education						
	Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds	2018					
Table A1.1	Short-cycle tertiary	11%		7%		5%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	17%		17%		14%	
	Master's or equivalent	15%		13%		15%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	1%		1%		1%	
	Tertiary attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by gender	2008	2018	2008	2018	2008	2018
Table A1.2	Men	29%	34%	31%	38%	28%	36%
	Women	48%	50%	40%	51%	38%	50%
	Total	38%	41%	35%	44%	33%	43%
	Distribution of first-time tertiary entrants by education level	2017					
Table B4.1	Short-cycle tertiary	**		17%		12%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	93%		76%		80%	
	Master's or equivalent	7%		7%		8%	
	Share of international or foreign students, by education level <sup>1</sup>	2017					
Table B6.1	Bachelor's or equivalent	6%		4%		7%	
	Master's or equivalent	13%		13%		13%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	22%		22%		22%	
	All tertiary levels of education	8%		6%		9%	
	Employment rate of 25-64 year-olds, by educational attainment	2018					
Table A3.1	Short-cycle tertiary	84%		82%		82%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	86%		84%		84%	
	Master's or equivalent	88%		88%		88%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	97%		92%		93%	
	All tertiary levels of education	87%		85%		86%	
	Employment rate of tertiary-educated 25-64 year-olds, by field of study	2018					
Table A3.4	Education	88%		84%		85%	
	Business and administration and law	86%		86%		87%	
	Engineering, manufacturing and construction	91%		89%		89%	
	Health and welfare	89%		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	124		120		121	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	123		144		138	
	Master's, doctoral or equivalent	168		191		174	
	All tertiary levels of education	140		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	49%		41%		44%	
	Percentage of first-time upper secondary graduates with a vocational qualification	2017					
Table B3.1	Vocational programmes	55%		40%		46%	
	Age at graduation from upper secondary education, by programme orientation	2017					
Figure B3.1	General programmes	19		18		19	
	Vocational programmes	24		21		21	
	Share of women among upper secondary graduates, by programme orientation	2017					
Figure B3.2	General programmes	58%		55%		56%	
	Vocational programmes	53%		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	76%		78%		79%	
	Unemployment rate	9%		7%		8%	
	Inactivity rate	16%		16%		14%	
	Total expenditure on upper secondary educational institutions, in USD <sup>2</sup> per full-time equivalent student, by programme orientation	2016					
Table C1.1	General programmes	USD 8 441		USD 9 397		USD 9 671	
	Vocational programmes	USD 8 270		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	79%		87%		90%	
	Share of children enrolled in private institutions	2017					
Table B2.3	Pre-primary level (ISCED 02)	12%		34%		27%	
	Ratio of children to teaching staff	2017					
Table B2.3	Pre-primary level (ISCED 02)	10		16		15	
	Expenditure on children aged 3-5 enrolled in education	2016					
Table B2.4	Annual expenditure per child, in USD <sup>2</sup> per child	USD 10 961		USD 8 141		USD 8 926	

Source	Main topics in <i>Education at a Glance</i>	Finland		OECD average		EU23 average	
	Social outcomes and adult learning						
	Participation in formal and/or non-formal education, by educational attainment <sup>3</sup>	2016					
Table A7.1	Below upper secondary	36%		n.a.		26%	
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	50%		n.a.		44%	
	Tertiary	66%		n.a.		66%	
	Participation in cultural or sporting activities in the last 12 months, by educational attainment <sup>4</sup>	2015					
Table A6.1	Below upper secondary	76%		n.a.		56%	
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	88%		n.a.		77%	
	Tertiary	98%		n.a.		92%	
Financial resources invested in education							
	Total expenditure on educational institutions, by level of education <sup>2</sup>	2016					
Table C1.1 and C2.1		USD/student	% GDP	USD/student	% GDP	USD/student	% GDP
	Primary	USD 9 447	1.4%	USD 8 470	1.5%	USD 8 548	1.3%
	Lower secondary	USD 15 041	1.1%	USD 9 884	0.9%	USD 10 302	0.9%
	Upper secondary	USD 8 315	1.3%	USD 10 368	1.1%	USD 10 308	1.0%
	Tertiary (including R&D)	USD 17 541	1.7%	USD 15 556	1.5%	USD 15 863	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	99%	1%	90%	10%	92%	8%
	Tertiary (including R&D)	92%	3%	66%	32%	73%	24%
	Total public expenditure on primary to tertiary education	2016					
Table C4.1	As a percentage of total government expenditure	10.4%		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	0.66	0.83	0.78	**	0.78	1.16
	Primary	0.89	1.23	0.84	1.25	0.85	1.24
	Lower secondary (general programmes)	0.98	1.42	0.88	1.34	0.89	1.34
	Upper secondary (general programmes)	1.11	1.49	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' careers <sup>2</sup>	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 30 027	USD 32 871	USD 31 276	USD 42 078	USD 30 615	USD 41 354
	Primary	USD 33 916	USD 42 180	USD 33 058	USD 45 947	USD 32 987	USD 45 748
	Lower secondary (general programmes)	USD 36 629	USD 45 555	USD 34 230	USD 47 675	USD 34 261	USD 47 772
	Upper secondary (general programmes)	USD 38 842	USD 49 175	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	**	**	1 024 hours	1 613 hours	1 062 hours	1 550 hours
	Primary	677 hours	**	783 hours	1 612 hours	754 hours	1 539 hours
	Lower secondary (general programmes)	592 hours	**	709 hours	1 634 hours	673 hours	1 572 hours
	Upper secondary (general programmes)	550 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	37%		36%		39%	
	Share of female teachers, in public and private institutions	2017					
Table D5.2	Primary	80%		83%		87%	
	Lower secondary	75%		69%		72%	
	Total number of compulsory instruction time, by level of education	2019					
Table D1.1	Primary	3 905 hours		4 568 hours		4 258 hours	
	Lower secondary	2 423 hours		3 022 hours		3 002 hours	
	Upper secondary	**		**		**	
	Average class size by level of education	2017					
Table D2.1	Primary	20		21		20	
	Lower secondary	19		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>.