

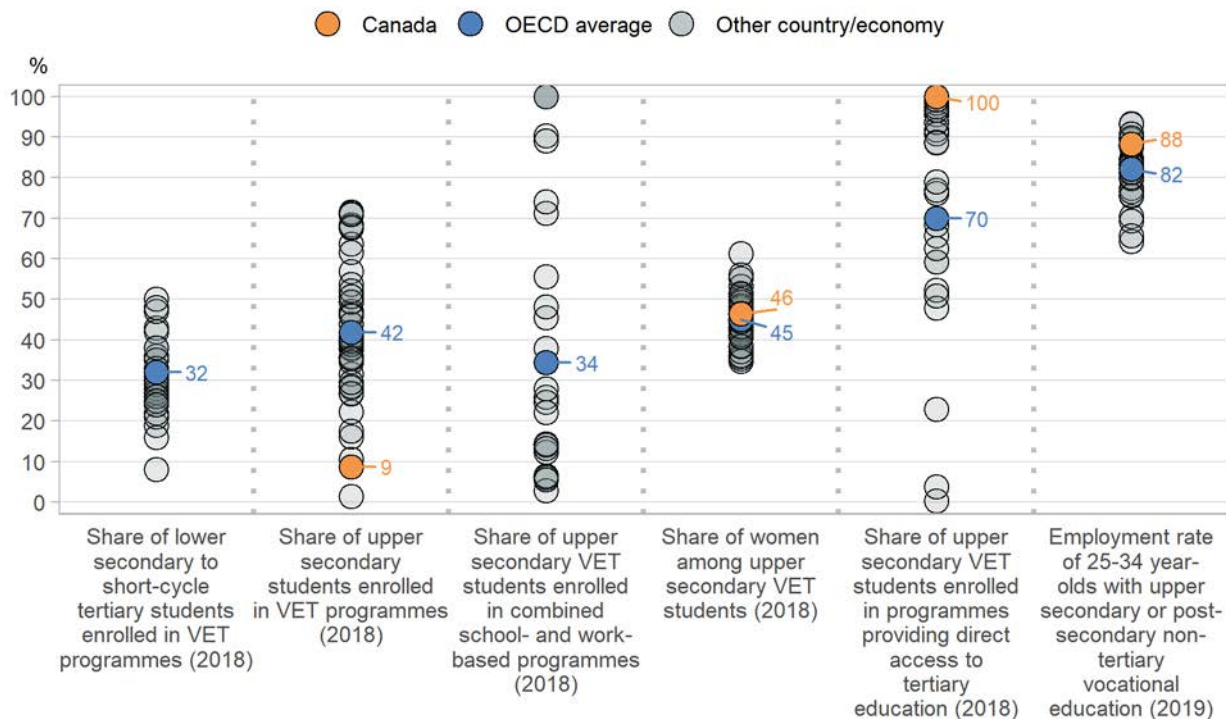
Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators is the authoritative source for information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of education systems in OECD and partner countries.

Canada

Participation and outcomes of vocational education and training

- Vocational education and training (VET) programmes attract a diverse range of students, including those seeking qualifications and technical skills to enter the labour market, adults wishing to increase their employability by developing their skills further, and students who may seek entry into higher education later on. In Canada, there is no distinct vocational path at upper secondary level, although optional vocational courses are offered within the general track. At the upper secondary level, separate VET programmes are only found in Quebec. Therefore data shown on upper secondary VET programmes in Canada are only reflective of VET programming in Quebec, though upper secondary VET courses are available in other provinces and territories. VET programmes at the post-secondary non-tertiary level are found across the country, however can be somewhat under-reported for Canada.

Figure 1. Snapshot of vocational education



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

Source: OECD (2020), indicator A3 and B7. See Education at a Glance Database. <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

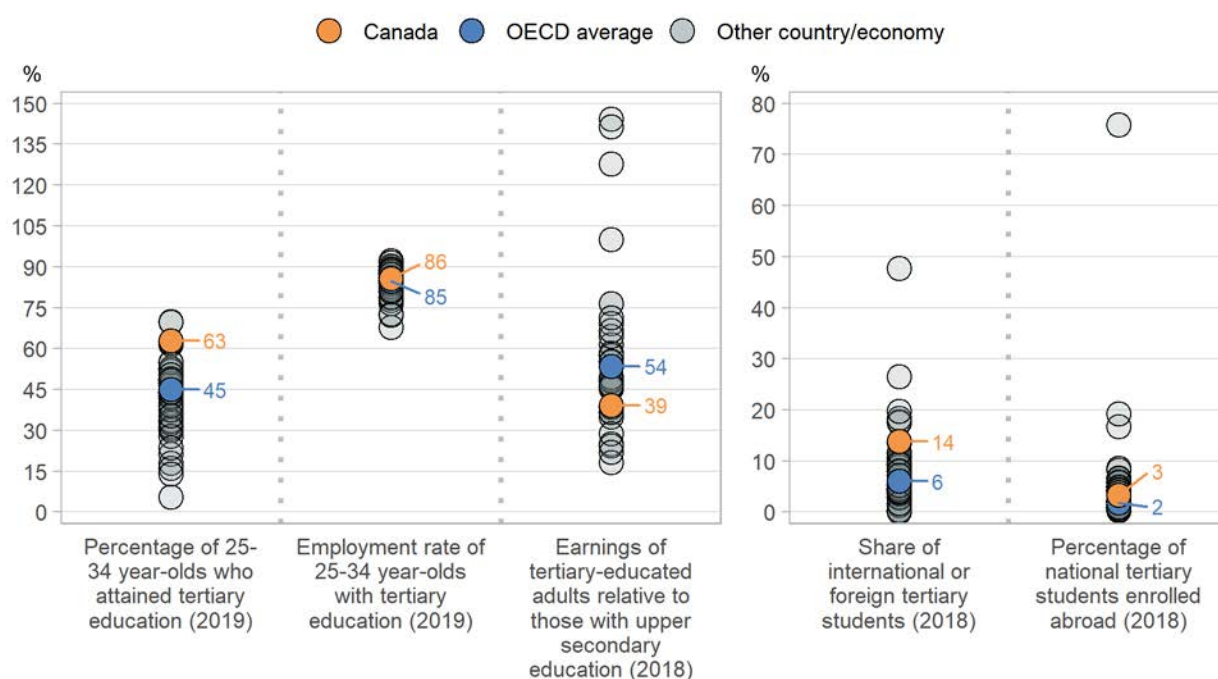
- VET is an important part of upper secondary education in most OECD countries. On average, 9% of all upper secondary students opt for VET programmes in Canada, a lower proportion than the OECD average of 42% (Figure 1).
- To support upper secondary vocational students' transition to post-secondary education and improve their career prospects, many countries have created direct pathways from vocational programmes to higher levels of education. In Canada, all upper secondary vocational students are enrolled in programmes that offer the chance of direct access to tertiary education, higher than the OECD average of 70% (Figure 1).
- In 2019, 10% of 25-34 year-olds in Canada held an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary vocational qualification as their highest educational level while 21% held a general one. The employment rate of younger adults with a vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education tend to be higher than the employment rate of those with general qualifications at this level (by 9 percentage points on average across OECD countries). Canada follows this pattern, as 88% of 25-34 year-olds with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary vocational qualification are employed compared with 74% of those with a general qualification (Figure 1).
- In some countries, including Canada, the employment rate of younger adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary vocational programmes is higher than for adults with tertiary education. Most of these countries have upper secondary or post-secondary vocational programmes with strong and integrated work-based learning or/and vocational programmes designed to offer students direct entry to the labour market. Similarly to most OECD countries, the employment advantage in Canada decreases with age. Among 45-54 year-olds, this employment rate of adults with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualification is 85% and 79% for adults with a general qualification.
- On average across OECD countries, adults with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary vocational education have similar earnings to their peers with a general education at this level. While the difference in relative earnings between adults with general and vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment is less than 5 percentage points in about one quarter of OECD and partner countries, it is 18 percentage points in favour of vocational qualifications in Canada. This can be explained by the uniqueness of the VET system in Canada: upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary general programmes only includes ISCED 3, while upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary vocational programmes only includes ISCED 4. As a result, it is not unexpected that adults attaining ISCED 4 have higher earnings than adults who attained ISCED 3.
- Poorer labour-market prospects of VET qualifications combined with higher tertiary attainment may have contributed to the decline in the share of adults with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary vocational qualification across generations in many countries. In Canada, among those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest attainment, 30% of 55-64 year-olds (older adults), compared with 33% of 25-34 year-olds (younger adults) held a vocational qualification. In comparison, the equivalent OECD averages are 72% for older adults and 59% for younger adults.

The rising demand for tertiary education

- The expansion of tertiary education is a worldwide trend. Between 2009 and 2019, the share of 25-34 year-olds with a tertiary degree increased in all OECD and partner countries. In Canada, the share increased by 7 percentage points during this period, lower than the average increase across OECD countries (9 percentage points). In part, this likely reflects the already high proportion of Canadians in 2009 with tertiary education. In 2019, 63% of 25-34 year-olds had a tertiary degree in Canada compared to 45% on average across OECD countries (Figure 2).

- From the gender perspective, younger women are more likely than younger men to achieve tertiary education in all OECD countries. In Canada, 71% of 25-34 year-old women had a tertiary qualification compared to 55% of their male peers, while on average across OECD countries the shares are 51% of younger women and 39% of younger men.
- Young people can face barriers to labour market entry as they transition from school to work, but higher educational attainment increases their likelihood of being employed and is associated with higher incomes. On average across OECD countries, the employment rate in 2019 was 61% for 25-34 year-olds without upper secondary education, 78% for those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest attainment and 85% for those with tertiary education. In Canada, the shares are 57% for below upper secondary, 79% for upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary and 86% for tertiary attainment. Having a tertiary qualification also carries a considerable earnings advantage in most OECD and partner countries. In Canada, in 2017, 25-64 year-olds with a tertiary qualification with income from full-time, full-year employment earned 39% more than full-time, full-year workers with an upper secondary education compared to 54% on average across OECD countries (Figure 2).
- International student mobility has been expanding quite consistently in the past twenty years. In 2018, 5.6 million tertiary students worldwide had crossed a border to study, more than twice the number in 2005. In Canada, the share of foreign or international students increased from 10% in 2014 to 14% in 2018. Meanwhile 3% of Canadian tertiary students are enrolled abroad compared to 2% in total across OECD countries (Figure 2). English-speaking countries are the most attractive student destinations overall in the OECD area, with Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States receiving more than 40% of all internationally mobile students in OECD and partner countries. Among students leaving Canada to study, the most popular destination country is the United States.

Figure 2. Snapshot of tertiary education

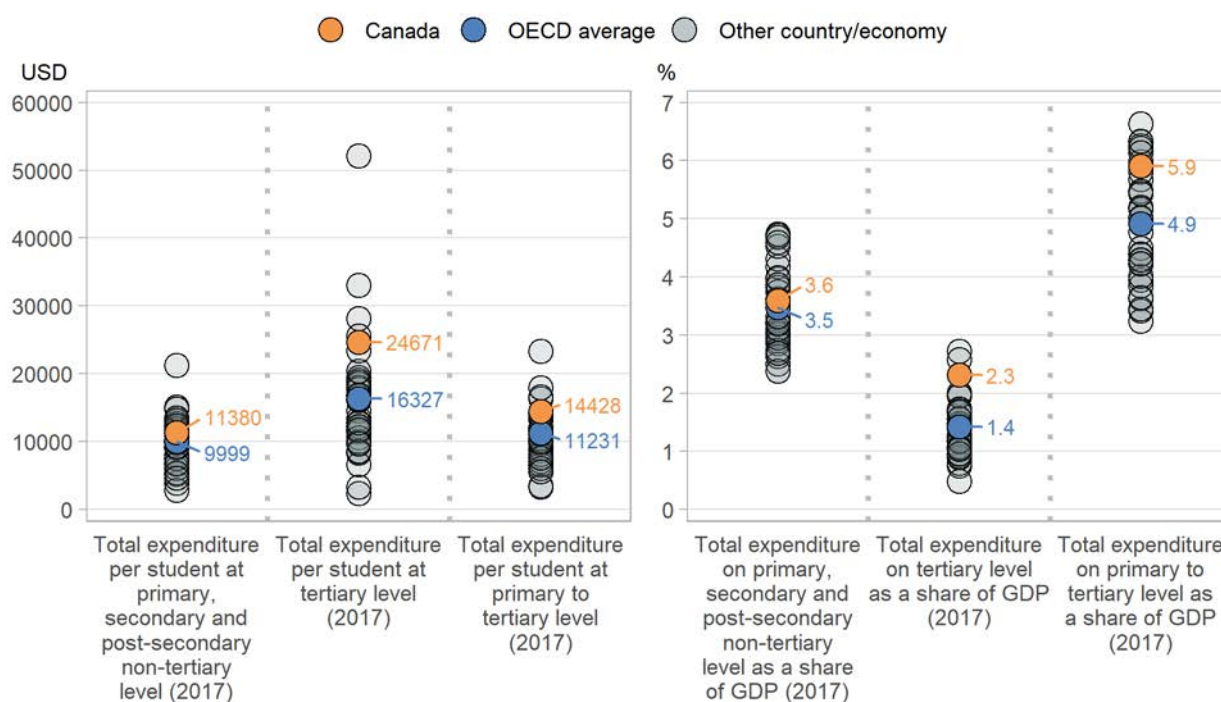


Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

Source: OECD (2020), indicator A1, A3, A4 and B6. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

Investing in education

- Annual expenditure per student on educational institutions from primary to tertiary level provides an indication of the investment countries make in each student. In 2017, Canada spent more on primary to tertiary educational institutions per full-time student than the OECD average, investing a total of USD 14 428 per student compared to USD 11 231 on average across OECD countries (Figure 3).
- The way education is provided influences how resources are allocated between levels of education and between public and private institutions. In 2017, Canada spent USD 11 380 per student at non-tertiary level (primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education), USD 1 381 higher than the OECD average of USD 9 999. At tertiary level, Canada invested USD 24 671 per student, USD 8 344 more than the OECD average (Figure 3). Expenditure per student on private educational institutions is higher than on public institutions on average across OECD countries. However, this is not the case in Canada, where total expenditure on public institutions from primary to tertiary level amounts to USD 14 829 per student, compared to USD 7 913 on private ones.
- Among OECD countries, Canada spent the eighth highest proportion of its gross domestic product (GDP) on primary to tertiary educational institutions. In 2017, Canada spent on average 5.9% of GDP on primary to tertiary educational institutions, which is 1 percentage point higher than the OECD average. Across levels of education, Canada devoted a slightly above average share of GDP at non-tertiary levels and an above average share at tertiary level (Figure 3).
- Between 2012 and 2017, expenditure per student from primary to tertiary education increased by an average annual growth rate of 1.3% across OECD countries. In Canada, expenditure on educational institutions grew at an average rate of 0.6% a year, while the number of students grew on average by 0.9% per year. This resulted in an average annual growth rate of -0.2% in expenditure per student over this period.
- Tuition fees in public institutions in Canada are among the highest for a bachelor's programme across countries with available data. National students are charged USD 5 493 per year for a bachelor's degree, 25% more than they paid on average in 2007/08. While loans may reduce the upfront cost, students are required to repay them once they start work. In Canada, among students with debt upon graduation, students' average debt upon graduation is USD 18 182.
- Capital costs represent a higher than average share of expenditure on primary to tertiary institutions in Canada. At primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary level, capital costs account for 8% of total spending on educational institutions, 1 percentage point above the OECD average. At the tertiary level, capital costs represent 10%, the same as the average across OECD countries.
- Compensation of teachers and other staff employed in educational institutions represents the largest share of current expenditure from primary to tertiary education. In 2017, Canada allocated 74% of its current expenditure to staff compensation, the same as the average across OECD countries. Staff compensation tends to make up a smaller share of current expenditure on tertiary institutions due to the higher costs of facilities and equipment at this level. In Canada, staff compensation represents 64% of current expenditure on tertiary institutions compared to 82% at non-tertiary levels. On average across OECD countries, the share is 67% at tertiary level and 77% at non-tertiary level.

Figure 3. Snapshot of the financial resources invested in educational institutions

Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown. Expenditure in national currencies is converted into equivalent USD by dividing the national currency figure by the purchasing power parity (PPP) index for GDP. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

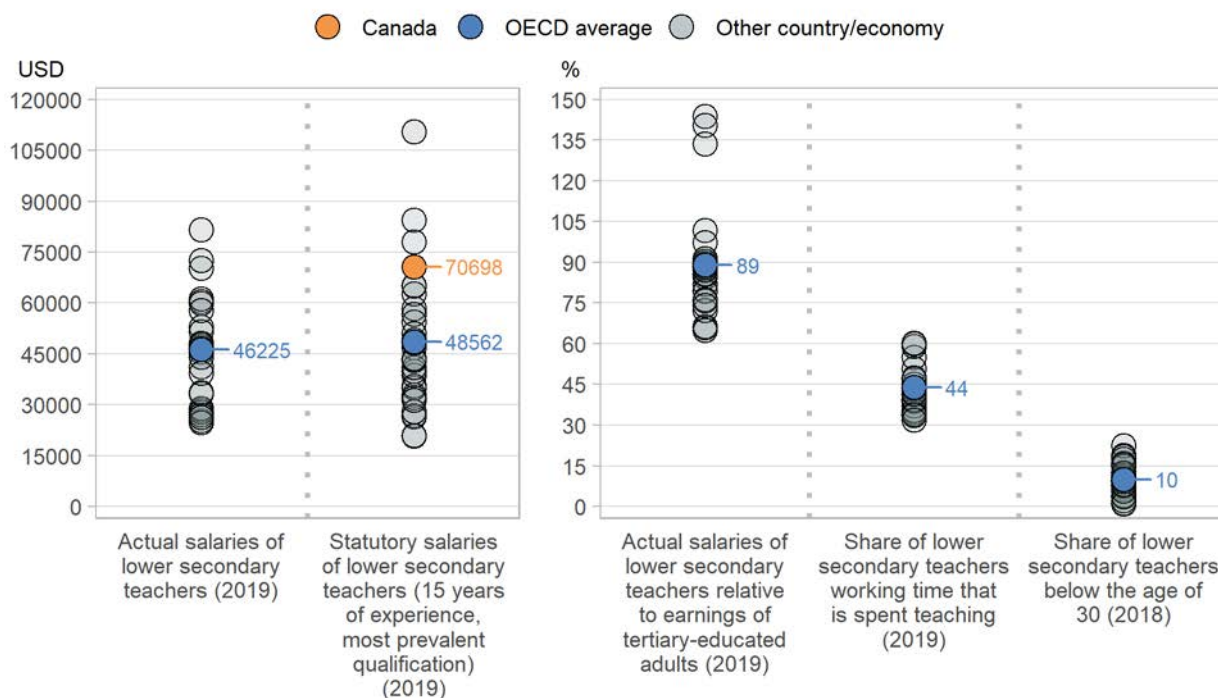
Source: OECD (2020), indicator C1 and C2. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

Working conditions of school teachers

- The salaries of school staff, and in particular teachers and school heads, represent the largest single expenditure in formal education. Their salary levels also have a direct impact on the attractiveness of the teaching profession. In most OECD countries and economies, salaries increase with experience. On average, statutory salaries of teachers with maximum qualifications at the top of their salary scales are 78-80% higher than those of teachers with the minimum qualifications at the start of their career, for each level of education. In Canada, maximum salaries are 97% higher than minimum salaries at primary and secondary education levels.
- Statutory salaries of teachers (and school heads) in public educational institutions generally increase with the level of education they teach. In Canada, however, teachers' statutory salaries amount to USD 70 698 at the primary level (OECD average: USD 46 801), general lower secondary level (OECD average: USD 48 562) and general upper secondary level (OECD average of USD 50 701) (Figure 4).
- Large proportions of teachers in many OECD countries will reach retirement age in the next decade, while the size of the school-age population is projected to increase in some countries, putting many governments under pressure to recruit and train new teachers. In Canada, 10% of primary teachers are considered young teachers (under the age of 30), which is lower than the OECD average of 12%. On average across OECD countries, the proportion of young teachers decreases at other levels of education, to 10% in lower secondary education and 8% in upper

secondary education. In Canada, the proportion of young teachers remains at 10% at upper secondary level. Between 2005 and 2018, the proportion of young teachers at upper secondary level decreased by 4 percentage points in Canada, the same decrease as on average across OECD countries during this period.

Figure 4. Snapshot of teachers' working conditions



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown. Teachers' salaries are shown in equivalent USD converted using PPPs. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

Source: OECD (2020), indicator D3, D4 and D5. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

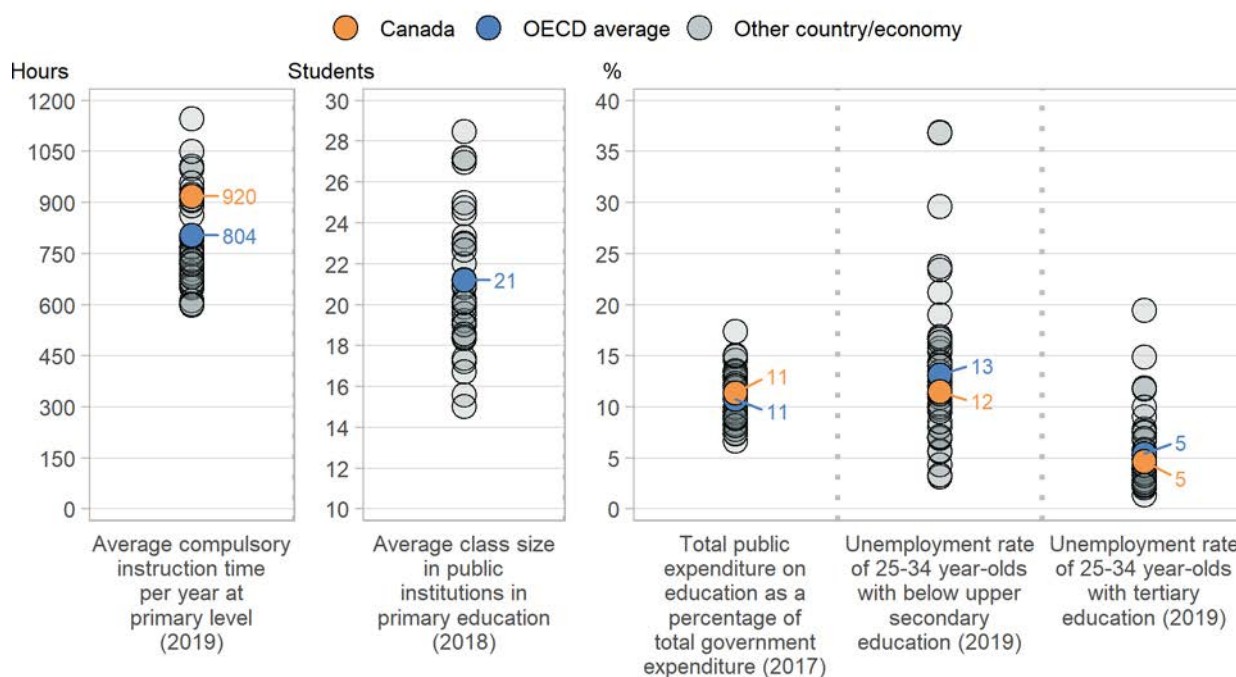
The impact of COVID-19 on education

- The global 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has sent shockwaves around the world. In a first effort to contain the virus, many countries have imposed a lockdown and schools and/or universities have closed for several months across all OECD and partner countries. In Canada, the closures were localised from 13 March 2020 and on 23 March 2020, closures became nationwide. By the end of June, Canada had experienced 16 weeks of effective school closures in some form, compared to 14 weeks on average across OECD countries (UNESCO, 2020). However, the actual impact in some countries may have been less severe as some of these periods included scheduled school breaks. It is also important to note that school closures do not imply that learning and teaching were suspended, as education systems across Canada pivoted to remote learning strategies.
- Excluding the non-compulsory part of the curriculum, students in public institutions in Canada attended classes for 920 hours per year on average at primary level and 924 hours at lower secondary level in 2019. Each week of school closure therefore represents about 25 hours of compulsory instruction time at the primary level and 25 hours of compulsory instruction time at lower secondary level during which students have physically not attended school (Figure 5). During

this time, many OECD and partner countries have turned to distance learning to ensure the continuity of education.

- While there is uncertainty about the likely overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education expenditure, governments will face difficult decisions on the allocation of resources, as government funds are injected into the economy and the health sector. In 2017, public spending on primary to tertiary education as a share of government expenditure in Canada was 11%, the same as the OECD average of 11% (Figure 5).
- The crisis may have a severe impact on the internationalisation of higher education as the delivery of online course material and travel restrictions may raise questions among international students' perception on the value of obtaining their degree from an institution abroad. Canada, with a higher share of international students than in total across the OECD, may be more strongly affected than other countries.
- A decrease in the share of international students may have repercussions on the funding model of some higher education institutions, as foreign students may pay higher tuition fees than domestic ones. This is the case in Canada: international and foreign students pay USD 15 714 more per year in tuition for a bachelor's programme in a public institution than national students (USD 5 493).
- Unemployment may increase, as the economy struggles to cope with the reduced activity that resulted from the lockdown. Those with lower educational attainment are the most vulnerable, as they are the less likely to benefit from remote working. In 2019, before the pandemic hit, 12% of young adults with below upper secondary education in Canada were unemployed compared to 5% of tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds (Figure 5). In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, the unemployment of young adults without an upper secondary education increased by 3.7 percentage points between 2008 and 2009 in Canada compared to 1.4 percentage points among those with tertiary education.

Figure 5. Snapshot of indicators relevant to the impact of COVID-19 on education



Note: Only countries and economies with available data are shown. The years shown in parentheses is the most common year of reference for OECD and partner countries. Refer to the source table for more details.

Source: OECD (2020), indicator A3, D1, D2, and C4. See Education at a Glance Database <http://stats.oecd.org/> for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

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More information

For more information on Education at a Glance 2020 and to access the full set of Indicators, visit www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm

For more information on to the methodology used during the data collection for each indicator, the references to the sources and the specific notes for each country, visit Annex 3 of the publication (<https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>).

For general information on methodology, please refer to the OECD Handbook for Internationally Comparative Education Statistics: Concepts, Standards, Definitions and Classifications (<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264304444-en>).

Updated data can be found on line at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en> and by following the *StatLinks* 2 under the tables and charts in the publication.

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<https://gpseducation.oecd.org/>

The calculation on the number of weeks of school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic is based on data from UNESCO (UNESCO, 2020). For general information on the methodology considered for the data, please refer to the [methodological note](#).

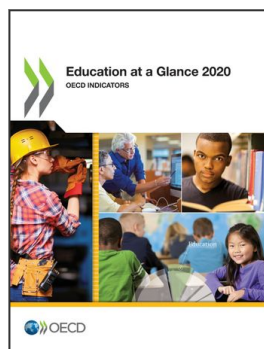
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On 15 May 2020, the OECD Council invited Costa Rica to become a Member. While Costa Rica is included in the OECD averages reported in this note, at the time of its preparation, Costa Rica was in the process of completing its domestic procedures for ratification and the deposit of the instrument of accession to the OECD Convention was pending.

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