

Indicator A1. To what level have adults studied?

Highlights

- Despite the educational expansion experienced on average across OECD countries in recent decades, 20% of adults (25-64 year-olds) still do not have an upper secondary qualification in 2022. Forty percent have an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualification as their highest level of education, the same share as those with a tertiary degree.
- Among 25-34 year-olds with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment, vocational qualifications (attained by 23% for this age group) are more common than general qualification (18% with that level of attainment for this age group). Men are over-represented among those with vocational attainment, accounting for about 60% of the total.
- A large majority of 20-34 year-olds with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment had very little or no work experience as part of their curriculum during their vocational studies: 44% had none or less than one month, while 29% had one to six months of work experience (paid or unpaid) and 28% had seven months or more.

Context

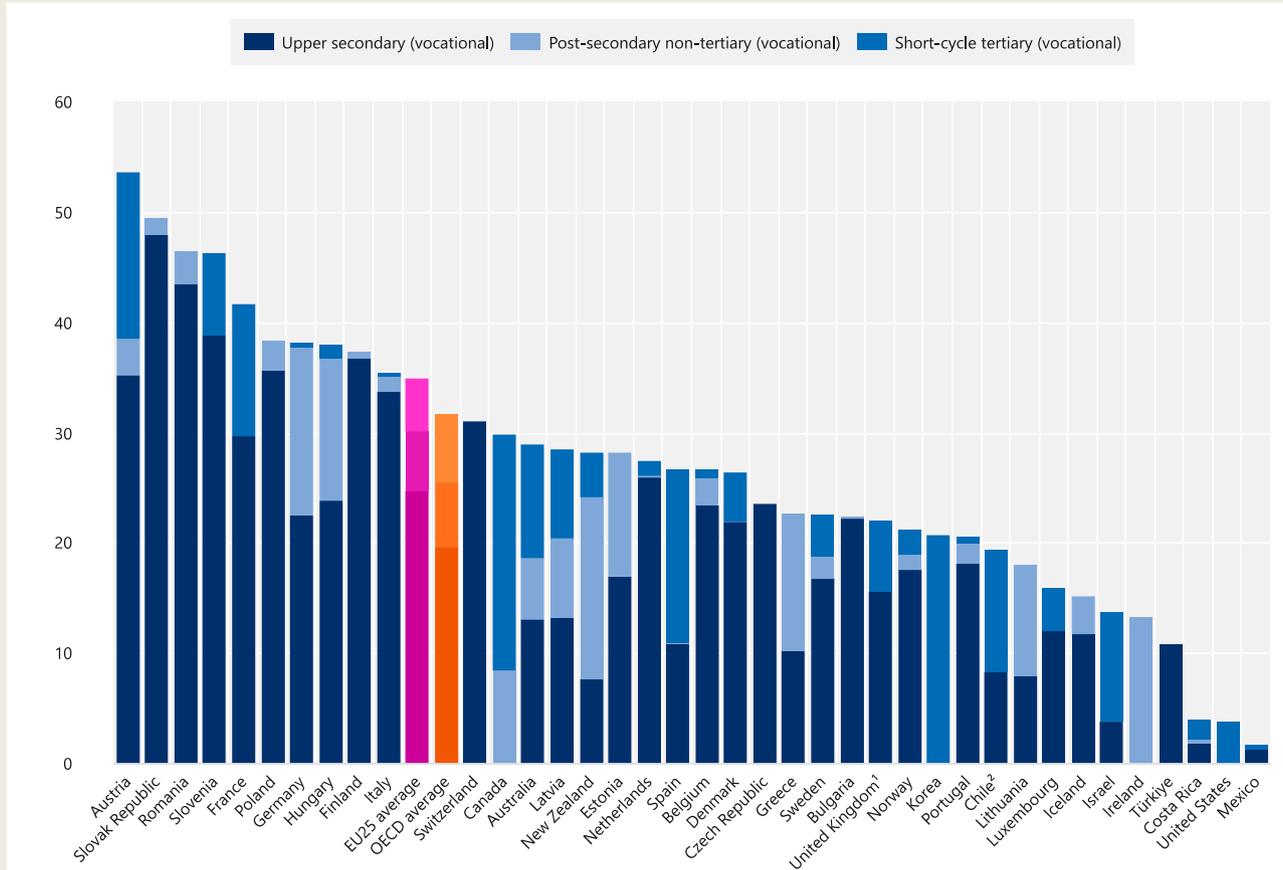
Educational attainment measures the percentage of the population holding a formal qualification at a given level as their highest level of education. It is frequently used as a proxy measure for human capital, even if formal qualifications do not necessarily mean the holders have acquired the relevant skills in demand from employers. In many professions with nationally or professionally regulated admission (e.g. medical doctors), the achievement of certain formal qualifications is an essential entry requirement. But even in occupations where formal qualifications are not mandated, employers tend to perceive formal qualifications as the most important signals of the type of knowledge and skills that potential employees have acquired. They are especially important for recent graduates, but they often affect individuals' careers throughout their working lives.

Higher levels of educational attainment are associated with positive economic, labour-market and social outcomes for individuals (see Indicators A3, A4 and A6). Highly educated individuals tend to be more socially engaged and have higher employment rates and relative earnings. While educational attainment measures formal educational achievements and not learning outcomes, higher attainment is strongly correlated with greater proficiency in literacy and numeracy (OECD, 2016^[1]). Highly educated adults are also more likely to participate in lifelong learning (see Indicator A7).

The benefits of higher attainment offer strong incentives for individuals to pursue their education. At the same time, many governments have adopted policies to expand access to education because of the societal and economic benefits. Together, these have resulted in strong increases in educational attainment in OECD and partner countries in recent decades.

Figure A1.1. Share of 25-34 year-olds whose highest level of education has a vocational orientation, by level of educational attainment (2022)

In per cent



1. 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 (9% of adults aged 25-34 are in this group).

2. Year of reference differs from 2022. Refer to the source table for more details.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of 25-34 year-olds who attained vocational upper secondary, vocational post-secondary non-tertiary or vocational short-cycle tertiary education.

Source: OECD (2023), Table A1.3. For more information see *Source* section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[2]).

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Other findings

- Among younger adults (25-34 year-olds), women are more likely to have a tertiary education than men in all OECD, partner and accession countries except India. On average across OECD countries, 54% of younger women have a tertiary degree in 2022, 13 percentage points higher than the share for younger men.
- In most countries where short-cycle tertiary education exists, it is exclusively vocationally oriented. However, in some countries, such as Canada, Norway and the United States, short-cycle tertiary degrees include both general and vocational programmes. Argentina and the Republic of Türkiye (hereafter “Türkiye”) only have general short-cycle tertiary programmes.
- Among younger adults whose highest level of education has a vocational orientation, 20% have an upper secondary vocational qualification compared with 6% each attaining a post-secondary non-tertiary vocational or short-cycle tertiary vocational qualification.

Analysis

Education is an asset not only because of its intrinsic value, but also because it provides individuals with skills and acts as a signal of such skills. As a result, investments in education yield high returns later in life (OECD, 2020^[3]). Yet, there are differences across countries in educational attainment. On average across OECD countries, 40% of adults (25-64 year-olds) have a tertiary credential as their highest level of education, another 40% have attained upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education, while 20% have not obtained an upper secondary education (Table A1.1.). However, differences among OECD countries are large: more than 50% of adults in Costa Rica, Mexico and Türkiye lack an upper secondary qualification, while more than 60% of adults in Canada have a tertiary credential (Figure A1.2).

Below upper secondary attainment

As upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education has become more important for participation in modern economies, the share of those with below upper secondary education has declined, albeit unevenly. Among younger adults (25-34 year-olds), it has fallen by 4 percentage points for men and 4 percentage points for women from 2015 to 2022 on average across OECD countries. However, 16% of younger men and 12% of young women still did not have an upper secondary education in 2022. Among OECD countries, these percentages are highest in Costa Rica (46% of young men and 37% of young women) and Mexico (43% of young men and 43% of young women). Portugal has seen the largest decrease in the share of young men without an upper secondary qualification, from 40% in 2015 to 20% in 2022, while for young women, the biggest fall over that period has been in Türkiye, from 52% to 34% (Table A1.2).

Some countries have achieved near universal upper secondary attainment among younger adults. In Korea, only 2% of 25-34 year-olds have not attained an upper secondary education. Similarly, in both Canada and Slovenia, the shares are 6% for young men and 3% for young women, 7% and 5% in the United States, and 5% for both young men and women in Ireland (Table A1.2).

Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment, by programme orientation

As tertiary attainment has become more common across OECD countries, the share of the population with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest level of attainment has declined. However, this decline has been less pronounced than the increase in tertiary attainment because of a parallel shift from below upper secondary education to upper secondary attainment. In 2022, on average 44% of men and 35% of women aged 25-34 had an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualification as their highest level of education, which is only 2 percentage points less than in 2015 for men and 3 percentage points less for women (Table A1.2).

Upper secondary education programmes can be divided into two categories by their orientation: general programmes aim to prepare students for tertiary education, while vocational ones focus mainly on preparing them for labour-market entry (although some vocational programmes also commonly act as a route to tertiary education). Some countries do not have a distinct vocational track at upper secondary level, or have upper secondary vocational programmes that mostly target those who have completed initial education (Box A1.1). In most countries, post-secondary non-tertiary education is mainly vocationally oriented (Table A1.3).

Progression through education is not always linear. Some students with a tertiary degree may go on to pursue an additional qualification at the same or lower level as their highest qualification. For example, according to a recent study in Canada, pathways from a bachelor's or equivalent degree to a lower level of education frequently involve upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary or short-cycle tertiary education that are related to the bachelor's or equivalent degree but are more specific and focused. For example, they might go from social sciences or psychology to human resources management, from English to public relations and advertising, or from natural science to specific health fields. In some cases, these college programmes are taken by people with bachelor's or equivalent degrees that typically have very strong labour-market outcomes: for example, a registered nursing specialisation college programme (e.g. neonatal nursing) following a bachelor's or equivalent degree in registered nursing (Table A2.5 and (Wall, 2021^[4])).

Box A1.1. Different structures of upper secondary vocational education

Upper secondary education is the most common level at which vocational education and training (VET) programmes are offered across OECD countries (see Chapter B). However, the structure of vocational education and training at the secondary level can differ widely from one country to another.

Differentiated programmes: single versus multiple tracks

Some countries offer vocational education and training through a single main vocational upper secondary track in initial education, offered alongside a general education track. In these countries (e.g. Costa Rica, Estonia, Finland), this single vocational upper secondary track always yields direct access to tertiary education.

Another group of countries offer multiple vocational tracks, some of which lead to tertiary education, and some that do not. The vocational tracks with direct access to tertiary education will have a stronger element of general education (and thus help prepare students for further studies) while others will focus more on preparation for an occupation. For example, France and Mexico have one major programme with access to tertiary education, and another one without. In Germany, there are two main vocational streams at upper secondary level: apprenticeships and vocational programmes at full-time vocational schools.

Differentiated programmes: continuing upper secondary vocational study after initial schooling

Unlike the “tracks” described in the previous paragraphs, in some anglophone countries such as Ireland, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, vocational programmes are offered after initial schooling.

For example, New Zealand has a generally oriented school system with one predominant programme at the upper secondary level. Students can leave school after their 16th birthday (which typically occurs in their first year of upper secondary), but most stay for a second or third year of upper secondary schooling, typically leaving at age 17 or 18, respectively.

With some exceptions, most formal VET in New Zealand occurs after this initial schooling. School leavers have access to many VET programmes, spanning a large range of fields, at upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary or short-cycle tertiary levels. These occur in post-secondary vocational institutions, or in workplaces. They provide formally recognised qualifications and credentialled pathways for entry to the labour market.

Undifferentiated programmes

Finally, in Canada (outside of Quebec) and the United States, VET at the upper secondary level is not offered as a separate programme. Instead, vocational learning is available in the form of individual optional courses. In undifferentiated upper secondary (high school) programmes, there is no single decision point where students choose between a vocational or general programme, as students continue to take other courses in their curriculum with a general focus at the same time as pursuing vocational courses. However, if students wish to pursue a special vocational certification or endorsement, they are encouraged to make this decision early in their secondary school career, to ensure that they have the time to acquire enough credits towards the endorsement.

As with differentiated VET programmes, these upper secondary vocational courses are intended to prepare students' transition from school to the labour market or to further post-secondary vocational studies. However, as all students still receive the same upper secondary qualification, regardless of whether they chose to take any vocational courses as part of their secondary studies, they also have direct access to tertiary education should they prefer to take that pathway.

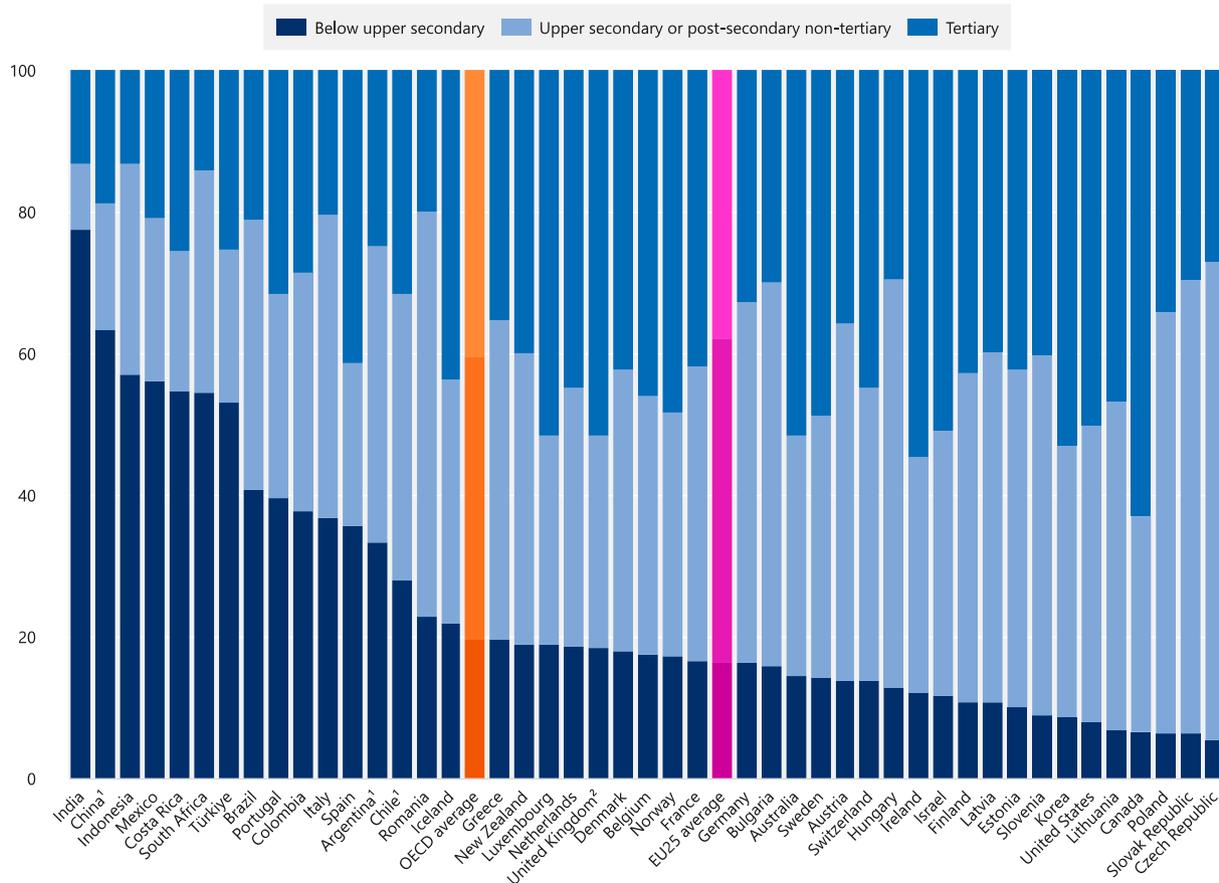
Among OECD countries where the qualification exists, the share of younger adults with vocational upper secondary attainment varies widely across OECD countries. On average across OECD countries, 20% of 25-34 year-olds have vocational upper secondary education as their highest level of education. In Mexico, 1% of younger adults have this level of educational attainment, while in Finland and Slovenia the share is almost 40%, and it reaches 48% in the Slovak Republic (Figure A1.1).

Vocational post-secondary non-tertiary attainment also varies widely. The share of 25-34 year-olds who have a vocational post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest qualification averages 6% across OECD countries. In Costa Rica, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain, less than 1% of younger adults have this level of educational attainment while the figure is 15% or more in Germany and New Zealand (Figure A1.1).

On average, among 25-34 year-olds, vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualifications are more common than general qualifications at this level (23 versus 18%). However, there are a few exceptions: general upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment exceeds vocational attainment among younger adults by 30 percentage points or more in Chile and Israel, by about 25 percentage points in Costa Rica and Mexico, and by about 10 percentage points in Canada (Table A1.3).

Figure A1.2. Educational attainment among 25-64 year-olds (2022)

In per cent



1. Year of reference differs from 2022. Refer to the source table 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 (11% of adults aged 25-64 are in this group).

Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of 25-64 year-olds with below upper secondary attainment.

Source: OECD (2023), Table A1.1. For more information see Source section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[2]).

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Men aged 25-34 are over-represented among those with vocational attainment compared with women, accounting for 60% of the population with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary vocational attainment (Figure A1.4). However, in Chile, Costa Rica and Mexico, women account for more than 50% of 25-34 year-olds with this educational attainment, while their share is less than 30% in Canada (Figure A1.4).

Students in vocational education may have the opportunity to gain experience in the labour market as part of the curriculum during their studies, and thus to acquire relevant skills and knowledge alongside their studies. As shown in Box A1.2, among the 20-34 year-olds with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment, only 28% gained 7 months or more of work experience (paid or unpaid) while studying on average across the OECD countries participating in the European Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS). Again, the differences among countries are large: the rate exceeds 80% in

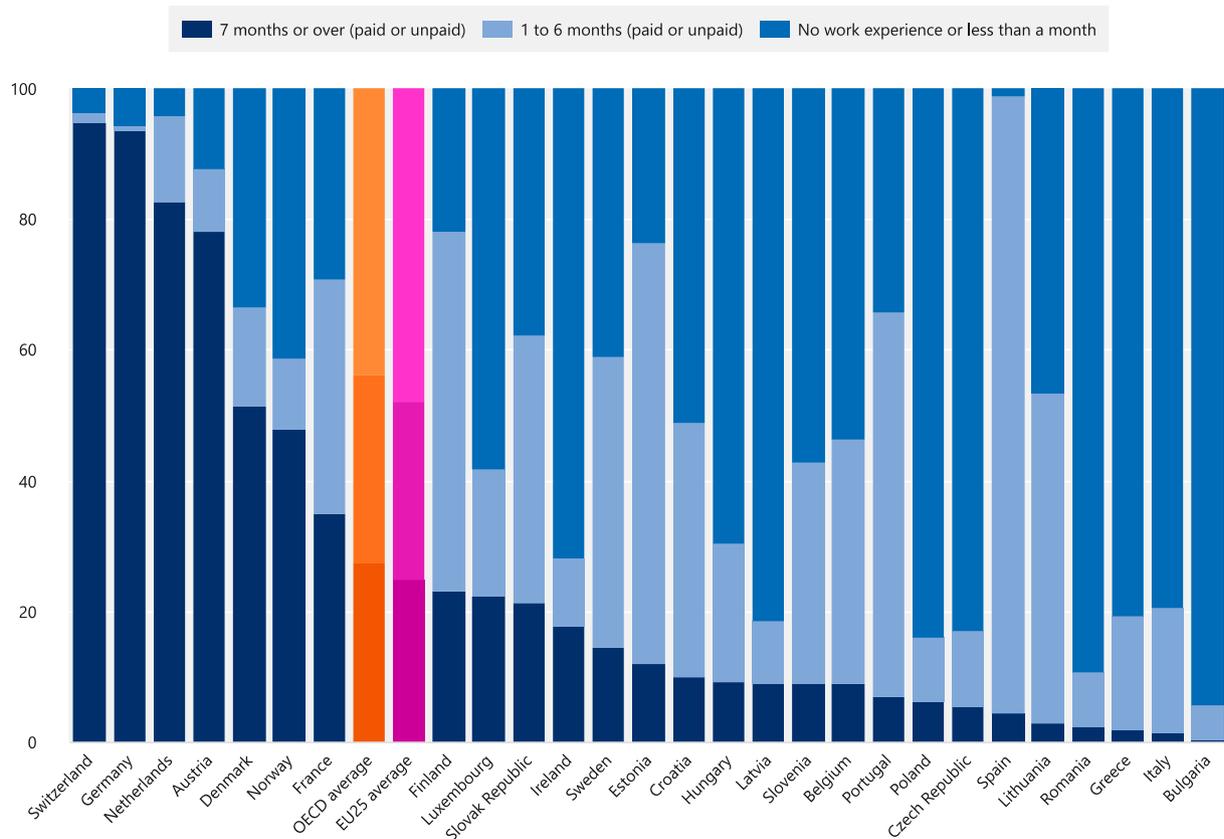
Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland, but does not reach 20% in most of the other OECD and accession countries taking part in EU- LFS (Figure A1.3).

Box A1.2. Work experience of adults with vocational attainment

The EU-LFS includes a question about the work experience as part of the curriculum adults had during their studies (at the highest level of education they have completed). Figure A1.3 shows data on the work experience gained during their studies by 20-34 year-olds with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment. Its focus on individuals' highest qualification means the figure does not capture vocational education and training (VET) graduates who progressed to tertiary education, or completed a vocational programme after a tertiary qualification (see Indicator A2). These data complement the information in Box A1.1 as they offer a recent historical perspective (many survey respondents completed their programme several years ago), they reflect actual participation in work experience rather than design features of the programme and they also include work experience that may not be connected to the programme itself.

Figure A1.3. Distribution of 20-34 year-olds with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment, by type of work experience while studying (2022)

In per cent



Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of 20-34 year-olds with 7 months or over of work experience, paid or unpaid.

Source: OECD (2023), Table A1.4, available on line. For more information see Source section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[2]).

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Among OECD and accession countries participating in EU-LFS, in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland a large share (78% or more) of these young adults report having at least seven months' work experience during their studies (paid or unpaid). These countries have a strong tradition of apprenticeships, mostly at upper secondary level (in Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland post-secondary non-tertiary VET sector is small, and in Germany it includes apprenticeships for upper secondary graduates). Longer periods of work experience tend to be paid – only in the Netherlands and the Slovak Republic do more than 15% of 20-34 year-olds with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment report unpaid work experience of seven months or more (Table A1.4, available on line).

Shorter periods of work experience are more common. At least half of 20-34 year-olds with VET as their highest qualification report having had work experience of one to six months in Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Portugal and Spain. In these countries, VET students tend to work for defined periods of time while they are in education. In just a few countries both shorter and longer periods of work experience are equally common – examples include France, Ireland and Luxembourg. These results might be driven by the co-existence of school-based vocational programmes and apprenticeships (as in France), as well as work experience that young people may pursue outside their education programme (Figure A1.3).

On average, about 44% of 20-34 year-olds with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment report not having had any work experience, or only very short periods (less than a month) during their programme. In 9 OECD and accession countries taking part in EU-LFS this is the case for over two-thirds of respondents (Figure A1.3). In some cases, these low figures might conceal earlier work experience – such as learners who gained work experience during upper secondary VET and progressed to post-secondary non-tertiary VET but did not have any work experience at that stage. But a more common explanation is likely to be that a large share of students leave VET with very little or no work experience.

Tertiary attainment, with a focus on short-cycle tertiary

Rising educational attainment is strongly reflected in the increases in tertiary attainment rates over the past few decades. On average across OECD countries, the share of 25-34 year-old men with a tertiary degree (i.e. short-cycle tertiary, bachelor's, master's or doctoral or equivalent) has increased from 36% in 2015 to 41% in 2022. Among women of that age, the share has risen from 47% to 54%. In seven OECD countries, more than half of all 25-34 year-old men have a tertiary degree in 2022, and this is the case for women in all but twelve OECD countries. There are eight OECD countries where tertiary attainment among younger men is below 30% and the rate is lower than 30% for younger women only in Mexico (Table A1.2).

Some countries are expanding their VET provision at tertiary level. In Germany, for example, the Excellence initiative for VET aims to increase the attractiveness of VET programmes at tertiary level. In addition, some vocational qualifications in Germany are now equivalent to bachelor's and master's degrees. As there is no internationally agreed definition of the orientation of educational programmes at tertiary level (see Textbox in Indicator B5), the following analysis focuses exclusively on short-cycle tertiary programmes.

Short-cycle tertiary

On average across OECD countries, 8% of 25-34 year-olds have a short-cycle tertiary degree as their highest attainment, but the share varies widely across countries. In seven OECD countries, the share is less than 1% of younger adults, while it exceeds 20% in Canada and Korea. In Austria, it is the most common attainment level among tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds (Table A1.3).

There is no clear pattern by gender on short-cycle tertiary attainment among 25-34 year-olds. On average there is not a large gender gap across OECD and partner countries with data for this level of education, but this conceals wider differences in some countries. In Japan, Indonesia and the Netherlands, women make up 65% or more of younger adults with this level of education as their highest qualification, while in Italy and New Zealand it is men who account for 60% or more. As for any category of tertiary education, the gender ratio depends on the fields that are offered (Figure A1.4 and see Indicator A3 in (OECD, 2022^[5])).

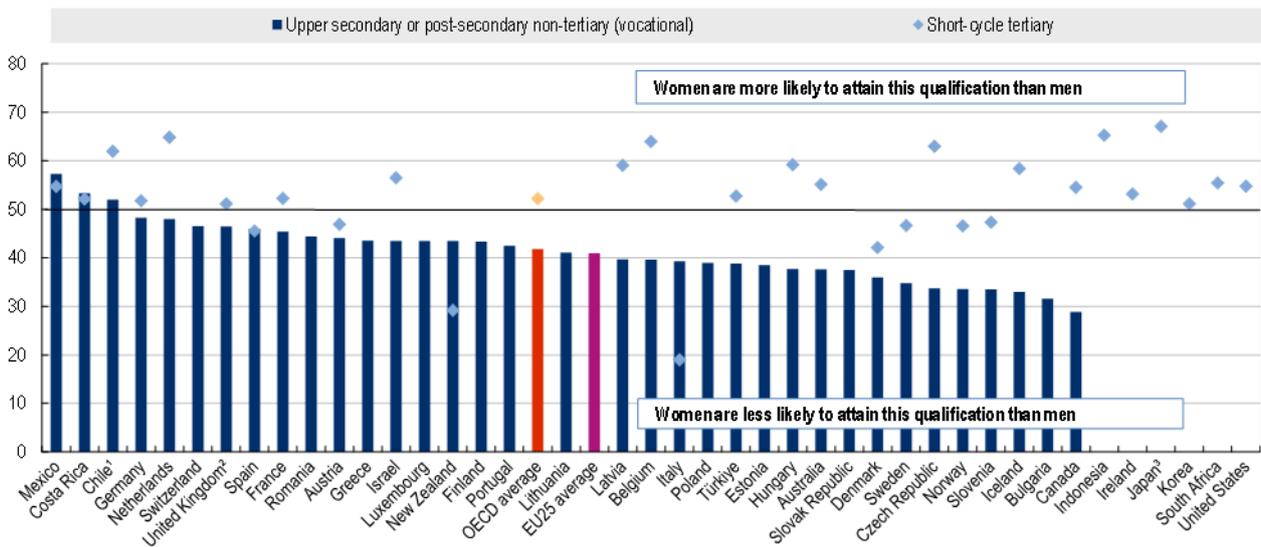
In most countries where short-cycle tertiary education exists, it is exclusively vocationally oriented. However, in some countries, such as Canada, Norway and the United States, short-cycle tertiary degrees combine or offer both general and vocational programmes. Argentina and Türkiye only have general short-cycle tertiary programmes (Table A1.3). On average

across OECD countries, 6% of 25-34 year-olds have a vocational short-cycle tertiary degree as their highest attainment. In nearly one-third of OECD countries, less than 2% of younger adults have this level of educational attainment but it exceeds 10% in a similar proportion of countries and exceeds 20% in Canada and Korea (Figure A1.1).

The nature and sectoral coverage of programmes offered at this level varies considerably across countries and is reflected in attainment data. For example, in the Czech Republic short-cycle tertiary education is limited to a specific programme in the performing arts (conservatoire programmes in music, singing and drama). In Germany short-cycle tertiary education only covers short master craftsman programmes, while longer master craftsman programmes are offered at bachelor's or equivalent level. In contrast, in Austria short-cycle tertiary level includes both master craftsman programmes and years 4-5 in higher technical and vocational colleges, which follow-up on three-year upper secondary vocational programmes in the same colleges. They target a wide range of fields, from technology to business administration and artistic design. Canada also has a large short-cycle tertiary sector, which plays an important role in developing occupational skills, as upper secondary education is predominantly general and, with the exception of Quebec, there are no distinct vocational tracks at that level. Short-cycle tertiary education includes a wide range of programmes, such as undergraduate certificates, college diplomas and applied certificates in a variety of fields including business, health and technology (OECD, 2022^[6]). In Canada, community colleges provide short-cycle tertiary education. Among the qualifications individuals can obtain are: wilderness first-aid, baking and pastry, electronic systems engineering technology, and child and youth care (Skolnik, 2021^[7]).

Figure A1.4 Share of women among those with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary or short-cycle tertiary attainment (2022)

In per cent; 25-34 year-olds



1. Year of reference differs from 2022. Refer to the source table 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 (9% of adults aged 25-34 are in this group).
 3. Data for tertiary education include upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary programmes (less than 5% of adults are in this group).
 Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of women among 25-34 year-olds with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment and in alphabetical order for countries for which data on this level of education are not available.
Source: OECD (2023), Education at a Glance Database, <http://stats.oecd.org/>. For more information see Source section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[2]).

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Variations in educational attainment by subnational regions

National level data often hide significant regional inequalities. For instance, in Colombia, the share of 25-64 year-olds with below upper secondary attainment varies from 6% in Nariño to 57% in Cauca, a difference of more than 50 percentage points.

In Canada, Portugal and Türkiye, the difference between the regions with the largest and the smallest shares of adults with below upper secondary attainment is 30 percentage points or higher (OECD, 2023^[8]).

The region containing the capital city tends to have a smaller share of adults with lower educational attainment than other regions in a country. This is the case for both upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment and below upper secondary attainment. The capital region has the smallest share of adults in both these categories in 20 out of 34 countries with available data. In contrast, in Belgium, the Brussels Capital Region has the highest share (22%) of adults with below upper secondary attainment. In Ankara region in Türkiye, about one in four adults (23%) have upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment, which is the highest share across regions (OECD, 2023^[8]).

In most OECD countries, overall tertiary attainment rates vary widely across subnational regions. Among countries with available data, the share of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary degrees frequently varies by a factor of two across regions. For example, in Spain, the shares range from 23% to 56%, while similar-sized differences exist in many other countries.

In contrast, short-cycle tertiary attainment is relatively homogeneous across subnational regions. Among countries with available data, the United States has the largest difference in the share of the 25-64 year-olds with short-cycle tertiary attainment between two regions, with a 14 percentage point difference between the District of Columbia (3%) and North Dakota (17%). In Australia, Chile, Costa Rica, Israel, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, the difference does not exceed 5 percentage points (OECD, 2023^[8]).

Diversity in attainment within countries has important policy implications. For example, some regions within a country might face shortages of skilled workers, while in others, workers with the same qualifications are unemployed. It is therefore important to look beyond national averages and develop policies that can be adapted to regional contexts (OECD, 2023^[8]).

Just as they tend to have smaller shares of adults with lower attainment, in many countries the capital region has exceptionally high tertiary attainment levels. Partly, this is due to the high number of tertiary-educated workers employed in national administrations, which have their seat in the capital regions. More importantly, however, the capital region is often home to the country's largest city. Urban areas are also more likely to host universities and tend to have higher rates of tertiary attainment than rural areas.

When interpreting the results for subnational entities, readers should take into account that their population size can vary widely within countries. For example, in 2022, in Canada, the population of Nunavut is 40 526 people, while the population for the province of Ontario it is 15 109 400 people (OECD, 2023^[8]).

Definitions

Age groups: **Adults** refer to 25-64 year-olds; **younger adults** refer to 25-34 year-olds.

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education successfully completed by an individual.

Levels of education: See the Reader's Guide at the beginning of this publication for a presentation of all ISCED 2011 levels.

Vocational programmes: The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011) defines vocational programmes as education programmes that are designed for learners to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies specific to a particular occupation, trade, or class of occupations or trades. Such programmes may have work-based components (e.g. apprenticeships and dual-system education programmes). Successful completion of such programmes leads to vocational qualifications relevant to the labour market and acknowledged as occupationally oriented by the relevant national authorities and/or the labour market.

Methodology

Educational attainment profiles are based on annual data on the percentage of the adult population (25-64 year-olds) in specific age groups who have successfully completed a specified level of education.

In OECD statistics, recognised qualifications from ISCED 2011 level 3 programmes that are not of sufficient duration for ISCED 2011 level 3 completion are classified at ISCED 2011 level 2 (see the *Reader's Guide*). Where countries have been able to demonstrate equivalencies in the labour-market value of attainment formally classified as the "completion of

intermediate upper secondary programmes” – such as achieving five good General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs) or equivalent in the United Kingdom (note that each GCSE is offered in a specific school subject) – and “full upper secondary attainment”, attainment of these programmes is reported as ISCED 2011 level 3 completion in the tables that show three aggregate levels of educational attainment (UNESCO-UIS, 2012^[9]).

Most OECD countries include people without formal education under the international classification ISCED 2011 level 0. Averages for the category “less than primary educational attainment” are therefore likely to be influenced by this inclusion.

For more information see the [OECD Handbook for Internationally Comparative Education Statistics](#) (OECD, 2018^[10]) and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[2]).

Source

Data on population and educational attainment for most countries are taken from OECD databases, which are compiled from National Labour Force Surveys by the OECD Labour Market, Economic and Social Outcomes of Learning (LSO) Network. Data on educational attainment for Argentina, the People’s Republic of China, India, Indonesia and South Africa are taken from the International Labour Organization (ILO) database.

Data on the distribution of young adults with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment, by type of work experience while studying are from EU-LFS for all countries participating in this survey.

Data on subnational regions for selected indicators are available in the OECD *Regional Statistics Database* (OECD, 2023^[8]).

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Indicator A1 Tables

Tables Indicator A1. To what level have adults studied?

Table A1.1.	Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds (2022)
Table A1.2.	Trends in educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by programme orientation and gender (2015 and 2022)
Table A1.3.	Educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by programme orientation (2022)
WEB Table A1.4.	<i>Distribution of young adults with vocational upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment, by type of work experience while studying (2022)</i>

StatLink  <https://stat.link/yoj1u8>

Cut-off date for the data: 15 June 2023. Any updates on data can be found on line at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eaq-data-en>. More breakdowns can also be found at <http://stats.oecd.org/>, *Education at a Glance Database*.

Table A1.1. Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds (2022)

Percentage of adults with a given level of education as the highest level attained

	Below upper secondary						Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary			Tertiary					All levels of education
	Less than primary	Primary	Completion of intermediate lower secondary programmes	Lower secondary	Completion of intermediate upper secondary programmes	Total	Upper secondary	Postsecondary non-tertiary	Total	Shortcycle tertiary	Bachelor's or equivalent	Master's or equivalent	Doctoral or equivalent	Total	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
OECD countries															
Australia	0	3	a	11	a	15	28	6	34	12	29	9	2	51	100
Austria	x(2)	1 ^d	a	13	a	14	47	3	50	15	6	14	1	36	100
Belgium	3	4	a	11	a	18	35	2	37	1	25	19	1	46	100
Canada	x(2)	2 ^c	a	5	a	7	21	10	30	26	24	12 ^a	x(12)	63	100
Chile ¹	6	4	a	19	a	28	41	a	41	10	19	2 ^d	x(12)	31	100
Colombia	x(4)	x(4)	a	37 ^a	1	38	34 ^a	x(7)	34	x(11)	28 ^d	x(11)	x(11)	28	100
Costa Rica	10	26	8	8	3	55	20	0	20	7	16	3	c	25	100
Czech Republic	0	0	a	5	a	6	68 ^d	x(7)	68	0	7	19	1	27	100
Denmark	x(2)	2 ^d	a	17	a	18	39	0	40	5	21	15	2	42	100
Estonia	0	0	a	10	a	10	38	10	48	6	15	21	1	42	100
Finland	x(2)	1 ^d	a	10	a	11	45	2	46	8	18	16	1	43	100
France	2	3	a	12	a	17	41	0	42	14	12	14	1	42	100
Germany	x(2)	5 ^d	a	11	a	16	38	13	51	1	18	12	2	33	100
Greece	1	10	a	9	1	20	36	9	45	0	25	8	1	35	100
Hungary	0	1	a	12	a	13	51	6	58	1	15	13	0	29	100
Iceland	x(2)	0 ^a	a	22	a	22	27	7	34	4	21	17	1	44	100
Ireland	0	3	a	9	a	12	18	15	33	10	28	15	2	54	100
Israel	3	3	a	6	a	12	38	a	38	11	24	14	1	51	100
Italy	1	4	a	32	a	37	41	2	43	0	6	14	1	20	100
Japan	x(7)	x(7)	a	x(7)	a	m	44 ^d	x(10)	m	21 ^c	35 ^d	x(11)	x(11)	56 ^d	100
Korea	x(2)	3 ^d	a	6	a	9	38	a	38	15	34	4 ^d	x(12)	53	100
Latvia	0	0	a	8	3	11	37	13	50	4	17	18	0	39	100
Lithuania	1	0	0	4	2	7	27	19	46	a	30	16	1	47	100
Luxembourg	1	6	a	12	a	19	28	2	30	5	15	29	3	51	100
Mexico	9	15	2	27	4	56	23	a	23	1	18	2	0	21	100
Netherlands	2	4	a	13	a	19	36	0	37	2	24	17	1	45	100
New Zealand	x(4)	x(4)	a	19 ^d	a	19	26	15	41	4	30	5	1	40	100
Norway	c	0	0	17	a	17	33	1	35	12	21	14	1	48	100
Poland	0	1	a	6	a	7	56	3	60	0	8	25	1	34	100
Portugal	1	20	a	18	a	40	28	1	29	0	10	21	1	31	100
Slovak Republic	0	1	0	5	0	7	62	2	64	0	4	24	1	29	100
Slovenia	0	0	a	8	a	9	51	a	51	8	12	16	4	40	100
Spain	2	5	a	29	a	36	23	0	23	13	11	16	1	41	100
Sweden	x(2)	3 ^d	a	9	3	14	29	8	37	10	20	17	2	49	100
Switzerland	0	1	a	12	a	14	41 ^d	x(7)	41	x(11,12,13)	25 ^d	17 ^d	3 ^d	45	100
Türkiye	4	33	a	16	a	53	22	a	22	7	16	2	0	25	100
United Kingdom ²	0	0	c	18	11	19	19	a	30	9	26	14	2	51	100
United States	1	2	a	5	a	8	42 ^d	x(7)	42	11	25	12	2	50	100
OECD average	2	5	m	13	m	20	36	6	40	7	19	14	1	40	100
Partner and/or accession countries															
Argentina ¹	3	14	m	16	m	33	42	a	42	x(11)	23 ^d	x(11)	1	25	100
Brazil	11	17	a	13	a	41	x(9)	x(9)	38	x(11)	20 ^d	1	0	21	100
Bulgaria	1	2	a	13	a	16	54	0	54	a	9	20	0	30	100
China ¹	2	17	a	44	a	63	18	0	18	10	8	1 ^d	x(12)	19	100
Croatia	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
India	34	13	a	30	a	78	8	1	9	x(11)	10 ^d	x(11)	3	13	100
Indonesia	13	26	a	18	a	57	30	a	30	3	10	1	0	13	100
Peru	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Romania	1	2	a	15	5	23	54	3	57	x(14)	x(14)	x(14)	x(14)	20	100
Saudi Arabia	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
South Africa	9	9	a	37	a	55	30	1	31	2	11	1 ^d	x(12)	14	100
EU25 average	1	3	m	12	m	17	41	5	46	5	15	17	1	38	100
G20 average	7	10	m	18	m	33	30	m	33	10	18	9	1	35	100

Note: See StatLink and Box A1.3 for the notes related to this Table.

Source: OECD/IL0/UIS (2023). For more information see Source section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[2]).StatLink  <https://stat.link/ji2qlh>

Table A1.2. Trends in educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by programme orientation and gender (2015 and 2022)

Percentage of 25-34 year-olds with a given level of education as the highest level attained

	Below upper secondary				Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary												Tertiary			
					By programme orientation								Total							
	General		Vocational		Total		2015		2022		2015		2022		2015		2022			
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
(1)	(2)	(4)	(5)	(7)	(8)	(10)	(11)	(13)	(14)	(16)	(17)	(19)	(20)	(22)	(23)	(25)	(26)	(28)	(29)	
OECD countries																				
Australia	12	11	10	7	18	18	18	16	27	16	24	14	45	34	41	30	42	54	49	63
Austria	9	11	12	9	7	9	7	9	48	39	42	35	55	48	50	43	36	41	39	48
Belgium	19	16	14	11	11	11	11	10	33	24	31	21	43	35	42	30	37	49	44	59
Canada	8	5	6	3	27	20	24	16	15	6	12	5	42	27	36	21	50	68	58	76
Chile ¹	17	16	14	11	44	42	40	37	11	11	9	8	55	52	49	45	28	31	37	44
Colombia	35	30	26	19	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	41	39	45	41	24	32	29	39
Costa Rica	54	49	46	37	19	18	24	26	2	3	2	3	20	20	26	29	26	31	28	34
Czech Republic	6	6	7	7	x(19)	x(20)	36	33	x(19)	x(20)	30	16	69	56	66	50	24	38	27	43
Denmark	21	15	20	15	11	10	12	11	33	23	28	16	44	33	40	27	35	52	40	58
Estonia	14	10	12	8	22	19	21	15	33	20	33	23	55	39	54	37	31	51	34	55
Finland	12	8	10 ^a	8 ^b	14	10	14 ^b	12 ^b	41	33	41 ^a	34 ^b	55	43	55 ^a	45 ^b	33	49	35 ^b	47 ^b
France	15	12	12	10	9	11	8	10	35	28	33	26	45	39	41	36	40	49	47	54
Germany	13	12	17	15	8	6	10	8	51	51	38	38	59	57	48	46	29	31	35	40
Greece	20	12	9	7	25	23	27	21	20	18	25	20	46	41	52	42	34	46	39	52
Hungary	15	13	13	14	12	16	16	21	47	32	45	29	59	48	60	49	26	38	27	37
Iceland	32	21	31	14	17	21	21	20	21	12	19	11	38	33	40	31	30	46	29	55
Ireland	11	8	5	5	29	23	22	15	14	11	13	14	43	35	35	29	46	58	60	66
Israel	10	7	10	7	47	34	50	33	6	3	4	3	53	37	54	36	36	56	36	57
Italy	29	22	25	19	9	16	10	17	43	30	42	28	52	47	52	45	19	31	23	35
Japan ²	m	m	m	m	x(25)	x(26)	x(28)	x(29)	x(25)	x(26)	x(28)	x(29)	x(25)	x(26)	x(28)	x(29)	58 ^d	61 ^d	62 ^d	69 ^d
Korea	1	2	2	2	34 ^d	25 ^d	35 ^d	22 ^d	x(7)	x(8)	x(10)	x(11)	34	25	35	22	65	73	63	77
Latvia	20	10	14	7	28	20	27	19	26	16	24	17	54	36	51	36	26	54	35	57
Lithuania	14	6	9	4	21	17	21	14	19	12	21	15	41	29	42	29	45	65	49	67
Luxembourg	18	13	13	9	1	1	15	15	28	25	15	12	37	32	31	28	45	55	57	63
Mexico	56	55	43	43	22	21	29	28	2	3	1	1	24	24	30	29	20	21	27	28
Netherlands	16	12	11	8	10	6	9	6	33	31	27	25	43	37	36	31	41	51	52	61
New Zealand	19	19	14	11	15	15	19	19	32	23	27	21	46	38	47	40	35	43	39	49
Norway	20	17	19	13	14	11	9	8	25	15	25	13	40	26	34	21	40	57	47	66
Poland	8	4	8	5	12	12	15	14	46	31	46	31	58	43	61	45	34	53	31	50
Portugal	40	27	20	14	20	20	20	18	15	13	23	17	35	32	43	35	25	41	37	52
Slovak Republic	7	7	7	7	4	4	4	5	66	49	61	38	69	53	65	43	23	40	28	51
Slovenia	7	4	6	3	12	12	10	8	50	32	48	28	62	43	58	36	30	53	36	60
Spain	40	29	32	21	14	13	12	11	11	11	12	10	25	24	24	22	35	47	44	57
Sweden	20	15	17	12	15	14	15	13	26	17	24	13	41	31	39	27	39	54	44	61
Switzerland	9	9	9	9	10	11	8	8	37	32	33	30	46	43	41	38	45	48	50	53
Türkiye	44	52	32	34	15	12	16	14	14	9	13	9	28	21	29	22	28	27	39	44
United Kingdom ³	14	13	14	11	22	21	14	13	16	14	17	15	38	35	31	28	48	52	55	61
United States	10	9	7	5	47 ^a	41 ^a	47 ^a	38 ^d	x(7)	x(8)	x(10)	x(11)	47	41	47	38	42	51	46	56
OECD average	19	16	16	12	18	17	19	17	28	21	26	19	46	37	44	35	36	47	41	54
Partner and/or accession countries																				
Argentina ⁴	37	28	30	24	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	49	49	54	54	15	23	16	22
Brazil	41 ^b	32 ^b	32	24	45 ^b	49 ^b	x(22)	x(23)	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	45 ^b	49 ^b	48	49	14 ^b	20 ^b	19	27
Bulgaria	17	18	16	17	21	24	27	28	37	18	30	15	58	42	57	43	25	40	28	40
China ⁴	63	66	m	m	x(19)	x(20)	m	m	x(19)	x(20)	m	m	19	16	m	m	18	18	m	m
Croatia	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
India ⁴	83	77	62	69	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	8	13	16	12	8	11	22	19
Indonesia	51	56	42	43	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	36	29	43	36	13	15	15	21
Peru	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Romania	26 ^a	27 ^a	22	21	7 ^a	8 ^b	7	8	44 ^b	37 ^a	50	43	51 ^b	45 ^b	57	50	23 ^b	28 ^b	21	28
Saudi Arabia	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
South Africa	54	49	53	47	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	x(19)	x(20)	x(22)	x(23)	37	40	36	38	9	11	11	15
EU25 average	17	13	14	11	14	13	16	14	35	26	33	23	50	40	48	38	33	46	38	52
G 20 average	33	31	26	24	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	38	34	39	34	30	36	37	44

Note: See StatLink and Box A1.3 for the notes related to this Table.

Source: OECD/ILO/UIS (2023). For more information see Source section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023⁽²⁾).

StatLink  <https://stat.link/uzs3ly>

Table A1.3. Educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by programme orientation (2022)

Percentage of 25-34 year-olds with a given level of education as the highest level attained

	Below upper secondary	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary							Tertiary						
		By level of education						Total	By level of education						
		Upper secondary		Post-secondary non-tertiary					Short-cycle tertiary			Bachelors or equivalent	Master's or equivalent	Doctoral or equivalent	Total
		By programme orientation							By programme orientation		Total				
		General	Vocational	General	Vocational	General	Vocational	General	Vocational	General		Vocational	Total		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	
OECD countries															
Australia	9	17	13	a	6	17	19	36	0	10	10	34	11	1	56
Austria	10	8	35	a	3	8	39	47	a	15	15	13	14	1	43
Belgium	12	10	24	a	2	10	26	36	x(11)	1	1	27	23	1	51
Canada	5	20	a	a	9	20	9	28	3	21	24	30	12 ^e	x(13)	67
Chile ^f	12	39	8	a	a	39	8	47	a	11	11	28	2 ^e	x(13)	41
Colombia	23	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	43	x(12)	x(12)	x(12)	34 ^d	x(12)	x(12)	34
Costa Rica	42	25	2	a	0	25	2	27	a	2	10	20	1	c	31
Czech Republic	7	35 ^d	24 ^d	x(2)	x(3)	35	24	58	x(11)	x(11)	0	13	21	0	35
Denmark	17	12	22	a	a	12	22	34	a	4	4	23	20	1	49
Estonia	10	18	17	a	11	18	28	46	a	a	a	25	18	0	44
Finland	9	13	37	a	1	13	37	50	a	c	c	25	15	c	41
France	11	9	30	0	a	9	30	39	0	12	12	14	23	1	50
Germany	16	9	23	a	15	9	38	47	a	0	0	21	14	1	37
Greece	8	24	10	a	12	24	23	47	a	0	0	34	11	0	45
Hungary	13	18	24	a	13	18	37	55	a	1	1	12	18	0	32
Iceland	23	20	12	0	3	21	15	36	x(11)	x(11)	3	23	15	0	41
Ireland	5	18 ^d	x(2)	a	13	18 ^d	13	32	2	0	8	36	18	1	63
Israel	9	41	4	a	a	41	4	45	a	10	10	28	8	0	46
Italy	22	14	34	0 ^r	1	14	35	49	c	0	0	12	16	0	29
Japan ²	m	m	m	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	18 ^d	48 ^d	x(12)	x(12)	66 ^d
Korea	2	29 ^d	x(2)	a	a	29 ^d	x(6)	29	a	21	21	46	3 ^e	x(13)	70
Latvia	11	23	13	a	7	23	20	43	a	8	8	25	13	0	46
Lithuania	6	17	8	a	10	17	18	35	a	a	a	42	15	0	58
Luxembourg	11	15	12	a	c	15	14	29	a	4	4	19	35	c	60
Mexico	43	28	1	a	a	28	1	30	a	1	1	25	1	0	27
Netherlands	10	7	26	a	0	7	26	34	a	1	1	32	22	1	56
New Zealand	13	19	8	a	16	19	24	43	a	4	4	34	5	1	44
Norway	16	9	18	a	1	9	19	27	12	2	14	26	16	1	56
Poland	6	15	36	a	3	15	38	53	a	a	a	13	27	0	40
Portugal	17	19	18	a	2	19	20	39	a	1 ^r	1 ^r	27	17	0 ^r	44
Slovak Republic	7	5	48	a	2	5	50	54	a	c	c	8	30	1	39
Slovenia	5	9	39	a	a	9	39	48	a	8	8	23	15	1	47
Spain	27	12	11	a	0	12	11	23	a	16	16	17	17	0	51
Sweden	15	8	17	6	2	14	19	33	a	4	10	25	16	1	52
Switzerland	9	8 ^d	31 ^d	x(2)	x(3)	8	31	40	a	x(12, 13, 14)	x(12, 13, 14)	30 ^d	19 ^d	2 ^d	51
Türkiye	33	15	11	a	a	15	11	26	12	a	12	27	3	0	41
United Kingdom ³	13	14	16	a	a	14	16	30	a	6	6	34	15	2	58
United States	6	43 ^d	a	a	x(2)	43 ^d	x(6)	43	6	4	10	29	11	2	51
OECD average	14	18	20	m	6	18	23	39	m	6	8	26	15	1	47
Partner and/or accession countries															
Argentina ¹	27	x(8)	a	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	54	x(12)	a	x(12)	19 ^d	x(12)	0	19
Brazil	28	48	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	48	x(12)	x(12)	x(12)	22 ^d	1	0	23
Bulgaria	16	27	22	a	0	27	22	50	a	a	a	16	18	0	34
China	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Croatia	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
India	66	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	14	x(12)	x(12)	x(12)	16 ^d	x(12)	5	20
Indonesia	42	x(8)	x(8)	a	a	x(8)	x(8)	40	x(11)	x(11)	4	14	1	0	18
Peru	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Romania	22	7	44	a	3	7	47	54	a	x(15)	x(15)	x(15)	x(15)	x(15)	25
Saudi Arabia	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
South Africa	50	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	x(8)	37	x(11)	x(11)	3	10	1 ^d	x(13)	13
EU25 average	12	15	25	m	5	15	28	43	m	5	5	22	19	1	45
G20 average	24	m	m	m	m	m	m	36	m	m	m	24	m	1	42

Note: See StatLink and Box A1.3 for the notes related to this Table.

Source: OECD/ILO/UIS (2023). For more information see Source section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023₍₂₎).

Box A1.3. Notes for Indicator A1 Tables

Table A1.1. Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds (2022)

In most countries data refer to ISCED 2011. For Argentina and India data refer to ISCED-97. Total might not add up to 100% for the averages because of missing data for some levels for some countries.

1. Year of reference differs from 2022: 2021 for Argentina and 2020 for Chile and China.
2. Data on the completion of intermediate upper secondary programmes are included in the total of upper secondary attainment.

Table A1.2. Trends in educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by programme orientation and gender (2015 and 2022)

In most countries data refer to ISCED 2011. For Argentina and India data refer to ISCED-97. Totals for men and women are available for consultation on line (see StatLink).

1. Year of reference differs from 2022: 2021 for Argentina and 2020 for Chile.
2. Data for tertiary education include upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary programmes (less than 5% of adults are in this group).
3. 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 (9% of adults aged 25-34 are in this group).
4. Year of reference differs from 2015: 2014 for Argentina; 2012 for India and 2010 for China.

Table A1.3. Educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by programme orientation (2022)

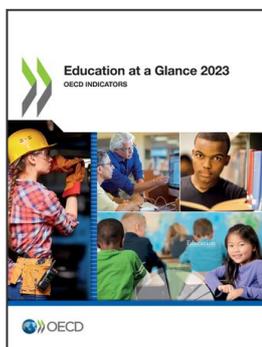
In most countries data refer to ISCED 2011. For Argentina and India data refer to ISCED-97.

1. Year of reference differs from 2022: 2021 for Argentina and 2020 for Chile.
2. Data for tertiary education include upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary programmes (less than 5% of adults are in this group).
3. 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 (9% of adults aged 25-34 are in this group).

For more information see *Definitions, Methodology and Source* sections and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[2]).

Data and more breakdowns are available in the *Education at a Glance Database* (<http://stats.oecd.org/>).

Please refer to the *Reader's Guide* for information concerning symbols for missing data and abbreviations.



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