

Canada

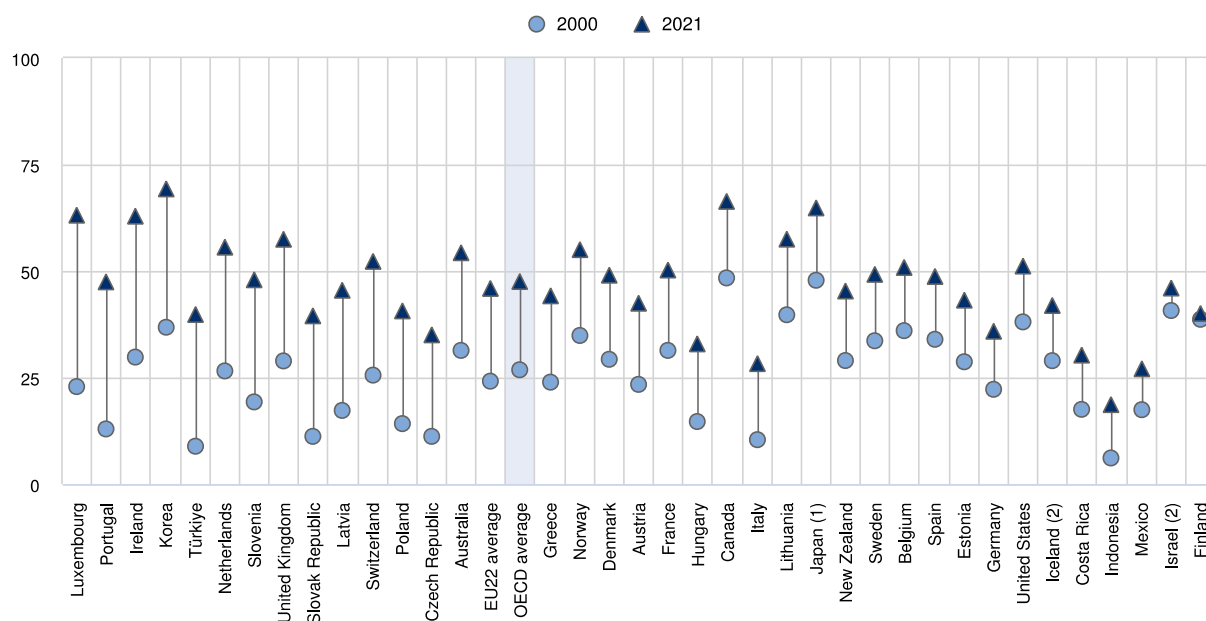
The output of educational institutions and the impact of learning

- Educational attainment has been increasing throughout the OECD, in particular at tertiary level. Between 2000 and 2021, the share of 25-34 year-olds with tertiary attainment increased on average by 21 percentage points. In Canada, the share also increased albeit at a slower pace, by 18 percentage points (from 48% in 2000 to 66% in 2021) (Figure 1). Canada is one of the 14 OECD countries where at least half of 25-34 year-olds have a tertiary education.
- Upper secondary attainment is often seen as a minimum qualification for successful labour market participation. Although the general increase in educational attainment has seen a parallel decline in the share of 25-34 year-olds without upper secondary attainment, 14% of young adults across the OECD still left school without an upper secondary qualification. In Canada, the share is 5%, which is lower than the OECD average.
- Higher educational attainment is often associated with better employment prospects and Canada is no exception. In 2021 the employment rate among 25-34 year-olds with tertiary education in Canada was 30 percentage points higher than among those with below upper secondary attainment and 10 percentage points higher than among those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment. On average across OECD countries, the employment rate among 25-34 year-olds with a tertiary qualification was 26 percentage points higher than among those with below upper secondary attainment and 8 percentage points higher than among those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment. While the positive link between educational attainment and employment rates holds for both men and for women across the OECD, it is particularly strong for women. In Canada, 38% of women with below upper secondary attainment were employed in 2021, compared to 84% of those with tertiary attainment. In contrast, the figures were 65% and 87% for men.
- Across the OECD, the labour market benefits of tertiary attainment have proved especially strong during economic crises. This was also the case during the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada. Between 2019 and 2020, unemployment for 25-34 year-old workers with below upper secondary attainment increased by 4.3 percentage points, by 5.2 percentage points for workers with upper secondary attainment and by 3.3 percentage points for workers with tertiary attainment. In 2021, unemployment for workers with below upper secondary attainment fell by 2.1 percentage points, compared to 2020, by 2.9 percentage points for workers with upper secondary attainment and by 2.3 percentage points for workers with tertiary attainment.
- Educational attainment affects not just employment prospects, but also wage levels. On average across the OECD, 25-64 year-old workers with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment earn 29% more than workers with below upper secondary attainment, while those with tertiary attainment earn about twice as much. In Canada, the earnings advantage of tertiary-educated workers was smaller than the OECD average. In 2019, workers with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment earned 30% more than those with below upper secondary attainment and those with tertiary attainment earned 69% more.

- National averages provide only an incomplete picture of the situation in any given country. In most OECD countries, there are large differences in educational attainment across subnational regions. This is also the case in Canada. In 2020, the difference between the region with the highest share of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary attainment (66%) and that with the lowest share (39%) was 27 percentage points. These subnational variations do not only reflect differences in education opportunities. To a large degree, they are due to economic conditions and internal migration patterns.

Figure 1. Trends in the share of tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds (2000 and 2021)

In per cent



1. Data for tertiary education include upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary programmes (less than 5% of adults are in this group).

2. Year of reference differs from 2000: 2002 for Israel and 2003 for Iceland.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the difference in the share of tertiary-educated 25-34 year-olds between 2000 and 2021.

Source: OECD (2022), Education at a Glance Database, <http://stats.oecd.org/>. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2022_X3-A.pdf).

Access to education, participation and progress

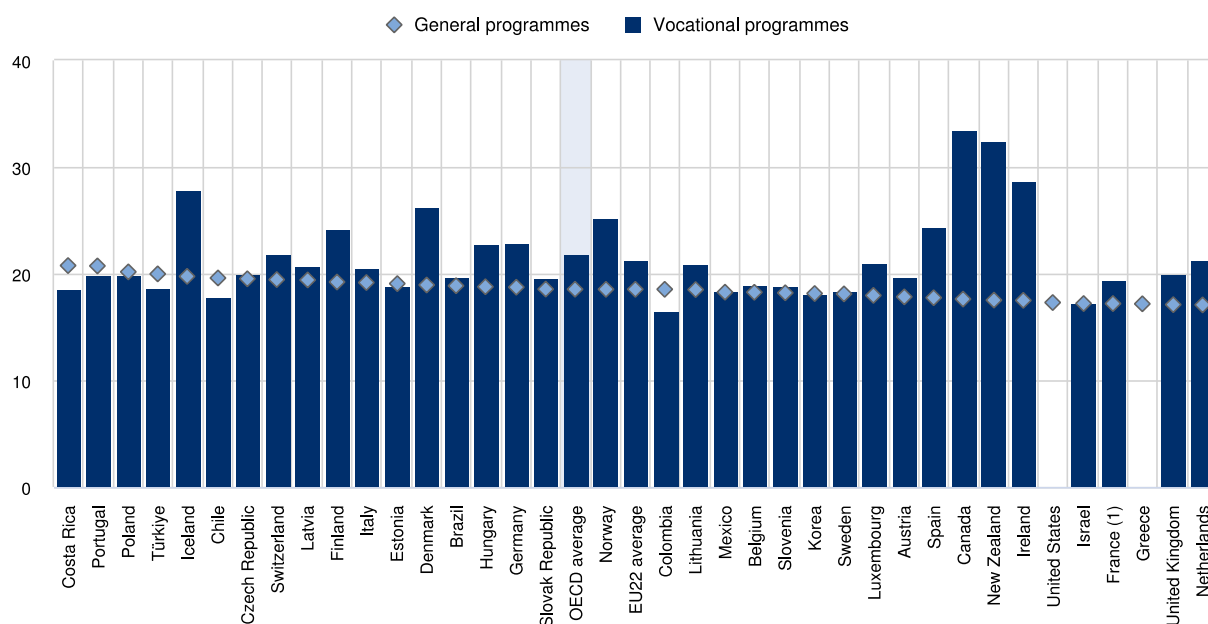
- The average age of graduation from general upper secondary programmes varies from 17 to 21 years across OECD countries and is 18 years in Canada. Differences in the average age of graduation from vocational upper secondary education are much larger and vary from 16 to 34 years across the OECD¹. These differences largely depend on whether vocational upper secondary students usually enrol in these programmes towards the end of their compulsory

¹ Data on upper secondary vocational programmes in Canada is only reflective of the education system in the province of Quebec. In other Canadian jurisdictions, vocational training is offered within the general post-secondary system, although vocational learning opportunities are available at the secondary level across the country.

education or in mid-career. In Canada, the average age of graduation from vocational upper secondary education is 34 years, which is above the OECD average at 22 years (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Average age of first-time upper secondary graduates, by programme orientation (2020)

In years



1. Average age is based on all graduates instead of first-time graduates.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the average age of first-time upper secondary graduates in general programmes.

Source: OECD/Eurostat/UIS (2022), Tables B3.1 and B3.2. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2022_X3-B.pdf).

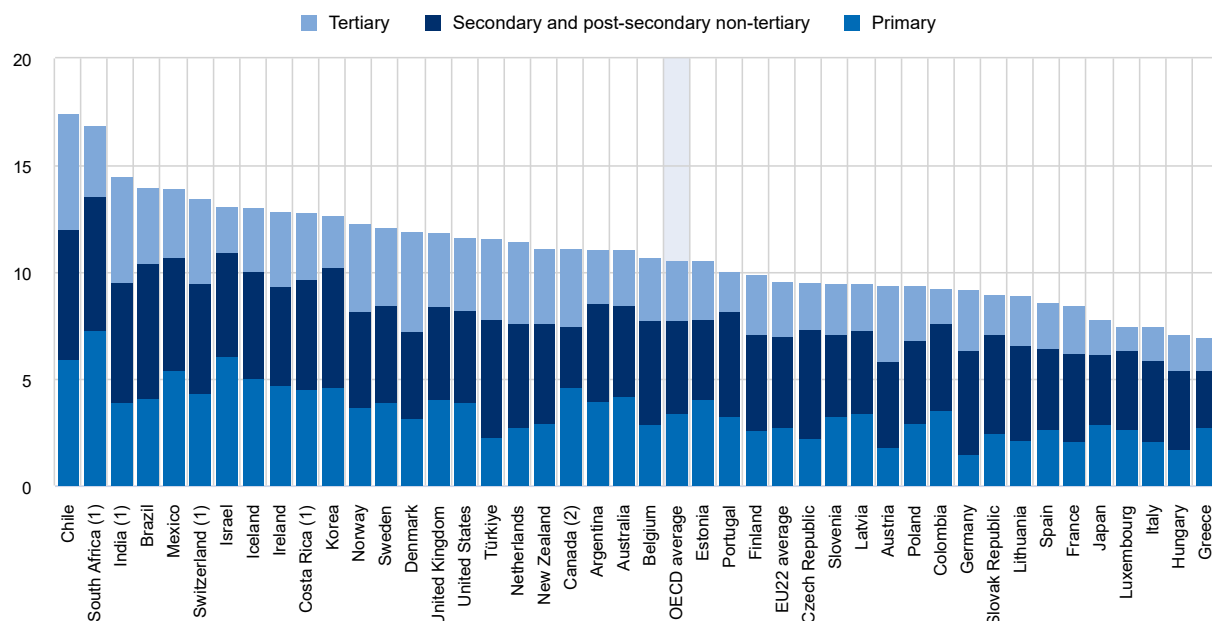
- In almost all OECD countries, women make up the majority of those graduating from general upper secondary education. In Canada, men and women are equally represented. In contrast, men are overrepresented among graduates of vocational upper secondary programmes in most OECD countries, as is the case in Canada where they make up 51% of all vocational upper secondary graduates, below the OECD average (55%).
- In Canada, 49% of 18-24 year-olds are still in full- or part-time education or training at either upper secondary or tertiary level (below the OECD average of 54%). A subset of these students (21% of 18-24 year-olds) combine their education or training with some form of employment in Canada, compared to 17% on average across the OECD.
- One significant difference across countries' education systems is on whether or not vocational upper secondary programmes provide access to tertiary education. In 12 OECD countries and other participants, including Canada, all vocational upper secondary graduates have direct access to tertiary education.
- As is the case in all OECD countries, a majority of students enrolled at tertiary level in Canada are bachelor's students (60%). However, the next commonest enrolment level varies from country to country. In Canada, short-cycle tertiary students make up the second largest group of tertiary students at 24%. This is also the case in 13 other OECD countries, while in the remaining 26 countries with available data, master's students form the second largest group.

Financial resources invested in education

- All OECD countries devote a substantial share of national output to educational institutions. In 2019, OECD countries spent on average 4.9% of their gross domestic product (GDP) on primary to tertiary educational institutions. In Canada, the corresponding share was 5.7%. Between 2008 and 2019, funding for educational institutions from all sources grew by 16% in Canada. However, over the same period of time, the increase in GDP was higher with 22%. As a consequence, expenditure on educational institutions as a share of GDP fell by 0.3 percentage points over the same time period.
- Public spending on primary to tertiary education was 11.1% of total government expenditure in Canada (Figure 3), higher than the OECD average (10.6%). Also, relative to GDP, public spending on primary to tertiary education (4.7%) is higher than the OECD average (4.4%).
- Spending on educational institutions as share of GDP or public budgets are important measures of the importance that countries place on education in their budgeting decisions. However, they do not show the total amount of funding per student because GDP levels, public budgets and student numbers vary from country to country. Across primary to tertiary education, OECD countries spend an average of USD 11 990 per student (in equivalent USD converted using PPPs for GDP) on educational institutions each year. In comparison, Canada spent USD 14 391 per student in 2019. Its cumulative expenditure on educating a student from the age of 6 to 15 was USD 109 695, which was slightly above the OECD average of USD 105 502.
- Across OECD countries, the provision of education at primary and secondary levels in terms of curricula, teaching styles and organisational management leads, on average, to similar patterns of expenditure per student from primary to post-secondary non-tertiary levels. OECD countries as a whole spend on average around USD 9 923 per student at primary and USD 11 400 per student at secondary level. In Canada, the values are USD 10 570 at primary and USD 14 564 per student at secondary level.
- In contrast to lower levels of education, spending on tertiary education varies widely across OECD countries. Expenditure per student at tertiary level in Canada is higher than at other levels of education, as is the case in almost all other OECD countries. The average expenditure per student in Canada is USD 22 335 per year, which is about USD 11 800 higher than that of the primary level and USD 7 800 higher than that of the secondary level. It is among the highest across OECD countries. The average expenditure at tertiary level (USD 17 559) is driven up by high values in a few countries. At 0%, the share of research and development (R&D) expenditure makes up a smaller fraction of expenditure on tertiary education in Canada than on average across OECD countries (29%).
- Public funding dominates non-tertiary education (primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary) in all OECD countries, even after transfers to the private sector. On average across the OECD, private funding accounts for 10% of expenditure at primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary levels, the same share observed in Canada in 2019. In contrast, private expenditure at tertiary level was higher in all OECD countries. In Canada, the share of private expenditure at tertiary level reached 46%, which was significantly above the OECD average of 31%.

Figure 3. Composition of total public expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure (2019)

Primary to tertiary education (including R&D), in per cent



1. Year of reference differs from 2019. Refer to the source table for more details.

2. Primary education includes pre-primary programmes.

Countries are ranked in descending order of total public expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure.

Source: OECD/UIS/Eurostat (2022), Table C4.1. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2022_X3-C.pdf).

Teachers, the learning environment and the organisation of schools

- Between 2015 and 2021, on average across OECD countries with data for all reference years, the statutory salaries of teachers at lower secondary level (general programmes) with 15 years of experience and the most prevalent qualifications increased by 6%. In contrast, in Canada, statutory salaries of teachers at lower secondary level largely stagnated (in real terms).

Focus on tertiary education

- Among 25-64 year-olds in Canada, short-cycle tertiary qualifications are the most common tertiary attainment at 26% of the population followed by bachelor's degrees at 24% and master's and doctoral degrees with 11%. This is different from the OECD average, where bachelor's degrees are most common (19%), followed by master's degrees (14%) and short cycle tertiary qualifications (7%).
- Despite the labour market advantages of a tertiary degree, many tertiary students do not graduate on time or do not graduate at all. In Canada, 47% of bachelor's students graduate within the theoretical programme duration. Across the OECD, the completion rate within the theoretical programme duration ranges from 12% to 69%. Completion rates three years after the theoretical

programme duration are significantly higher in most countries and the differences between OECD countries somewhat narrower. In Canada, 69% of bachelor's students have graduated within three years after the end of the theoretical programme duration, compared to 68% on average across the OECD.

- In all OECD countries, tertiary completion rates are higher for women than for men. In Canada, 73% of women graduated within three years after the end of the theoretical programme duration at bachelor's level, compared to 63% of men.
- In most OECD countries including in Canada, tertiary-educated adults have higher rates of participation in non-formal education and training than those with a lower level of educational attainment. In 2012, 65% of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary attainment in Canada had participated in non-formal education and training in the twelve months prior to being surveyed, compared to 23% of their peers with below upper secondary attainment.
- Enabling students to enrol on a part-time basis is an important way to facilitate access to tertiary education. Many part-time students would not be able to study full time, for example because they have child-care responsibilities or have to work to fund their studies. The share of part-time students at the tertiary level in Canada is 17%, below the OECD average (22%). Compared to 2013, it has decreased by 3 percentage points.
- Staff at tertiary level tend to start their careers relatively late due to the length of the education they need to qualify. In Canada, only 6% of academic staff are aged under 30, slightly below the OECD average (8%). In contrast, the share of academic staff aged 50 or over is 49%, which is above the OECD average by 9 percentage points.

COVID-19: The second year of the pandemic

- Most countries conducted assessments of the impact of school closures on learning outcomes at various levels of education and along several dimensions. In contrast, Canada did not conduct any assessments at the national level. At the subnational level, studies were conducted on the impact of school closures on learning assessments using information sources that did not include subnational assessments. Many countries also evaluated other dimensions, such as the well-being of students or the effectiveness of distance-learning strategies.
- No national programmes to support students affected by the pandemic were implemented in Canada in contrast to many other OECD countries. At the subnational level, programmes were implemented to support students affected by the pandemic. At primary to upper secondary education, measures to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic included, psychosocial and mental health support to students and additional water, sanitation and hygiene services.
- Young adults who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) for prolonged periods are at risk of adverse economic and social outcomes in both the short and the long term. After increasing during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the share of 18-24 year-olds who are NEET in Canada declined in 2021. The share of NEET among young adults was 15% in 2021, above pre-COVID levels.

References

OECD (2022), *Education at a Glance 2022: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>.


OECD (2022), "Regional education", *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/213e806c-en>.

More information

For more information on Education at a Glance 2022 and to access the full set of Indicators, see:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/3197152b-en>

For more information on the methodology used during the data collection for each indicator, the references to the sources and the specific notes for each country, See Annex 3 (https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2022_X3.pdf).

For general information on the 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  under the tables and charts in the publication.

Data on subnational regions for selected indicators are available in the *OECD Regional Statistics* (database) (OECD, 2022). When interpreting the results on subnational entities, readers should take into account that the population size of subnational entities can vary widely within countries. For example, regional variation in enrolment may be influenced by students attending school in a different region from their area of residence, particularly at higher levels of education. Also, regional disparities tend to be higher when more subnational entities are used in the analysis.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using the Education GPS:

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

The data on educational responses during COVID-19 were collected and processed by the OECD based on the Joint Survey on National Responses to COVID-19 School Closures, a collaborative effort conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the World Bank; and the OECD.

Questions can be directed to:

Directorate for Education and Skills

EDU.EAG@oecd.org



From:

Education at a Glance 2022

OECD Indicators

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/3197152b-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2022), “Canada”, in *Education at a Glance 2022: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/5ea1485d-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area. Extracts from publications may be subject to additional disclaimers, which are set out in the complete version of the publication, available at the link provided.

The use of this work, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found at <http://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.