

Chapter 8

What students with an immigrant background expect in their future

This chapter examines differences between immigrant and native students in their expectations for further education and a career. In many countries immigrant students are more likely to expect to attend university and to work in managerial and professional occupations. However, many of the immigrant students who hold ambitious expectations for themselves have not acquired the level of skills that would enable them to make a smooth transition into tertiary education and succeed in the labour market.

Notes regarding Cyprus

Note by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to “Cyprus” relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the “Cyprus issue”.

Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

Note regarding data from Israel

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and 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.

What the data tell us

- On average across OECD and EU countries, immigrant students are eight percentage points more likely to expect to complete tertiary education than native students of similar socio-economic status and academic performance.
- Immigrant students are less likely than native students to hold ambitious but realistic expectations for future education. On average across OECD countries, the percentage of students who expect to complete tertiary education and who also attain baseline academic proficiency is four percentage points lower among immigrant students than among native students (five percentage points lower across EU countries).
- On average across OECD countries, immigrant students are 11 percentage points more likely than native students of similar socio-economic status and academic performance to expect to have a high-status career, such as manager, professional or associate professional (9 percentage points more likely across EU countries). However, they are ten percentage points less likely to expect so and also attain baseline academic proficiency (ten percentage points less likely across EU countries). In Mexico, for every immigrant student who holds ambitious and realistic career expectations, there are approximately nine native students with similar expectations; in CABA (Argentina), Bulgaria, Brazil, FYROM and Tunisia, the ratio is also above one to two.

Many migrants decide to leave their country as a way to improve their and, particularly, their children's economic condition and well-being. Notwithstanding hardships and difficulties faced, most have an ambition to succeed that often surpasses the aspirations of families in their host country (OECD, 2015).

Previous chapters in this report show how the likelihood that students with an immigrant background will be academically, socially, emotionally and motivationally resilient depends on the specific background of individual students, as well as the characteristics of the schools these children attend and the principles guiding the organisation of schooling in different countries. Although it is crucial to identify if and how different education systems support students with an immigrant background in their daily lives as teenagers, it is also important to examine if and how education systems support and promote these students' aspirations and equip them with the skills and mindset that will help them reach their life goals.

Chapter 7 in this report describes how immigrant students are less likely than their native peers to attend pre-vocational and vocational school, and Chapter 3 shows that immigrant students tend to have greater achievement motivation, measured by the extent to which immigrant students report strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement "I want to be the best, whatever I do", than their native peers. Immigrant students' achievement motivation and their preference for academically oriented studies that require time and resources to complete, is noteworthy, even more so given widespread concerns over lack of engagement and motivation to learn among secondary school students, especially socio-economically disadvantaged students, in many countries (OECD, 2013).

Immigrant students' achievement motivation and willingness to pursue tertiary level education signals their desire to improve their socio-economic status. However, as previous chapters in this report show, too many immigrant children lack the foundation skills that are necessary to succeed in school. Without solid foundation skills, they will be unlikely to realise their ambitions.

Although PISA data do not allow to identify the longer term outcomes of the group of students with an immigrant background who was surveyed in 2015, it is possible to describe the educational and career expectations of these students and of their families. This chapter discusses the proportion of immigrant students who hold ambitious education and career expectations who reach baseline levels of proficiency in reading, mathematics and science and compares this to the proportion of students with an immigrant background who do not reach baseline levels of proficiency and to the proportion of native students with similar background characteristics who do. These students are most likely to fulfil their ambitions.

Table 8.1 ■ Snapshot of the expectations of immigrant students for the future


		<div><div></div>Countries/economies with values above the OECD average</div>	<div><div></div>Countries/economies with values not significantly different from the OECD average</div>	<div><div></div>Countries/economies with values below the OECD average</div>			
		Percentage of immigrant students who expect to earn a university degree	Percentage of immigrant students who expect to earn a university degree and who have baseline levels of academic proficiency	Relative risk for immigrant students of not expecting to earn a university degree while also attaining baseline levels of academic proficiency	Percentage of immigrant students who expect to work as managers, professionals or associate professionals	Percentage of immigrant students who expect to work as managers, professionals or associate professionals and who have baseline levels of academic proficiency	Relative risk for immigrant students of not expecting to work as managers, professionals or associate professionals while also attaining baseline levels of academic proficiency
OECD average		41.37	29.9	1.08	79.05	48.61	1.23
EU average		36.95	27.55	1.08	75.16	48.38	1.25
OECD	Australia	7.87	6.7	0.97	69.41	40.72	1.36
	Austria	8.83	7.06	1.47	c	c	c
	Belgium	16.27	14.14	1.04	65.23	45.11	1.26
	Canada	17.25	13.74	1.15	74.69	48.06	1.62
	Chile	19.15	16.88	0.99	82.61	54.53	1.2
	Czech Republic	22.16	13.17	0.93	62.31	31.14	1.43
	Denmark	22.57	18.47	0.95	83	59.88	1.02
	Estonia	22.6	17.94	1.11	67.57	38.92	1.41
	Finland	24.61	12.78	1.3	82.92	32.69	1.65
	France	25.42	17.9	1.23	68.37	38.93	1.37
	Germany	25.73	23.54	1.39	75	60.83	1.33
	Greece	26.41	23.46	1.02	61.61	43.04	1.35
	Hungary	26.62	20.74	1.02	74.11	52.52	1.2
	Iceland	27.83	5.08	1.15	74.74	7.41	1.24
	Ireland	29.13	24.27	1.09	77.95	46.01	1.3
	Israel	30.72	25.37	1.09	64.02	43.66	1.2
	Italy	32.74	12.42	1.15	c	c	c
	Japan	34.6	24.26	0.94	84.31	53.62	1.25
	Korea	35.29	25.83	1.12	84.57	52.27	1.4
	Latvia	35.54	16.63	1.22	51.91	25.55	1.07
	Luxembourg	36.1	27.58	1.04	77.52	48.4	1.32
	Mexico	36.75	13.57	1.2	52.77	23.96	1.47
	Netherlands	37.49	3.82	1.12	76.09	3.83	1.16
	New Zealand	38.83	31.82	1.17	68.05	47.5	1.51
	Norway	39.9	31.84	1.06	85.15	53.83	1.26
	Poland	40.87	31.97	1.31	81.63	48.44	1.43
	Portugal	40.99	31.16	1.51	c	c	c
	Slovak Republic	43.8	2.57	1.33	88.03	4.11	1.48
	Slovenia	47.45	44.93	0.9	77.4	69.68	0.87
	Spain	49.66	28.61	1.49	71.17	32.99	1.4
	Sweden	50.21	32.25	1.01	83.73	45.27	1.36
	Switzerland	50.72	12.48	1.11	90.15	19.82	1.21
	Turkey	51.84	47.36	1.21	81.07	70.8	1.23
	United Kingdom	52.44	47.13	0.77	76.05	64.23	0.68
	United States	54.42	45.78	0.92	88.47	71.32	0.93
Partners	Albania	55.27	41.06	1.06	90.84	56.15	0.98
	Algeria	56.06	44.27	1.03	68.61	51.4	1.12
	Brazil	57.14	47.89	0.8	86.31	66.31	0.83
	B-S-J-G (China)	59.18	37.89	0.86	81.31	44.14	0.92
	Bulgaria	59.54	34.52	1.19	81.77	42.48	1.15
	CABA (Argentina)	60.03	26.77	1.22	91.59	28.96	1.32
	Colombia	60.22	47.72	0.78	90.9	64.39	0.98
	Costa Rica	60.54	48.31	1.03	77.32	54.44	0.99
	Croatia	60.56	6.42	1	94.58	6.46	1.01
	Cyprus*	36.78	37.71	1.1	80.5	41.47	1.04
	Dominican Republic	67.34	34.07	0.95	85.28	42.86	0.87
	FYROM	67.84	57.79	0.73	84.69	66.97	0.8
	Georgia	71.69	32.65	1.05	78.32	31.35	1.12
	Hong Kong (China)	73.04	16.17	1.19	89.44	19.25	1.16
	Indonesia	74.53	50.8	1.22	86.95	54.28	1.24
	Jordan	77	72.84	0.59	96.55	87.79	0.55
	Kosovo	77.5	67.76	0.67	92.19	78.16	0.66
	Lebanon	77.58	50.72	0.62	97.05	59.19	0.53
	Lithuania	81.32	47.4	0.61	93.97	52.09	0.57
	Qatar	m	m	m	81.81	4.99	1.04
	Romania	m	m	m	90.4	31.61	1.87
	Russia	m	m	m	79.19	4.31	1.16
	Singapore	m	m	m	80.33	31.02	1.01
	Thailand	m	m	m	85.81	30.02	0.93
	Trinidad and Tobago	m	m	m	74.06	6.17	1.07
	Tunisia	m	m	m	91.92	19.3	1.05
	United Arab Emirates	m	m	m	86.46	57.43	0.92
	Uruguay	m	m	m	76.27	37.86	0.94
	Viet Nam	m	m	m	75.96	28.38	1.17

* See note at the beginning of this Chapter.

Note: Only countries/economies with valid data for at least one outcome are shown.

Students who attain baseline academic proficiency are students who reach at least PISA proficiency level two in all three PISA core subjects – math, reading and science.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Tables 8.2, 8.4, 8.9 and 8.11.

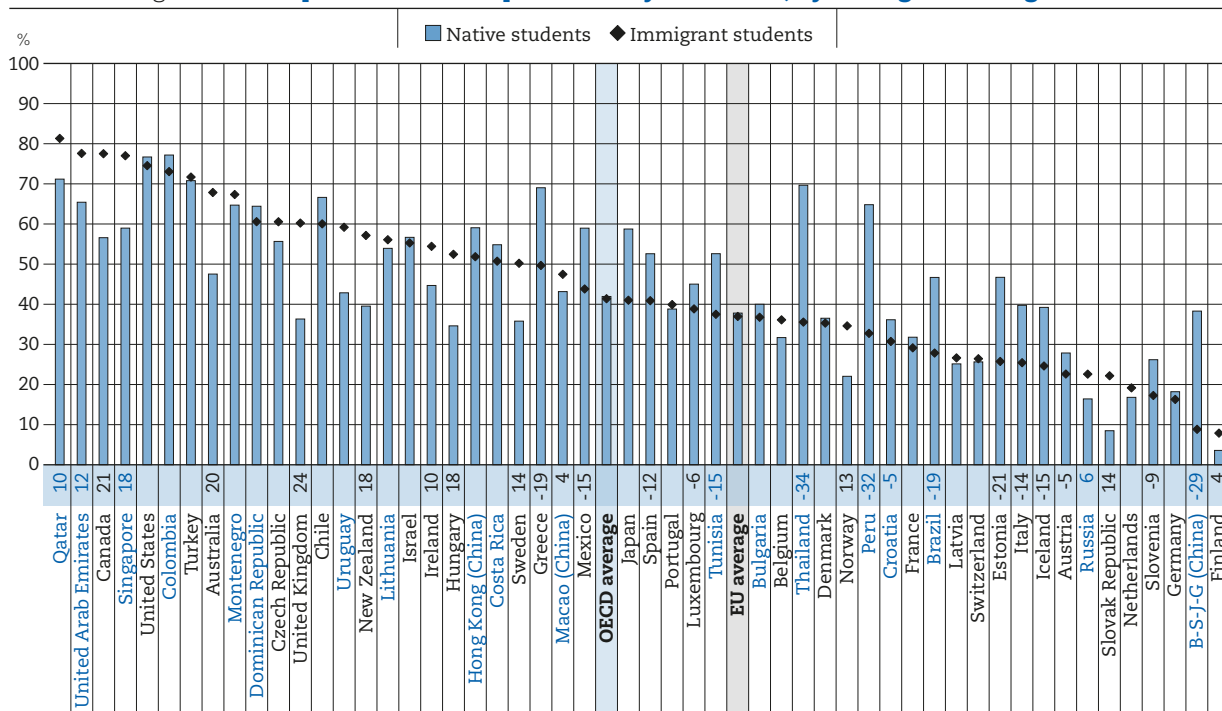
StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682984>

The chapter also examines the persistence of education gaps between immigrant and native students across generations, and whether such differences have been reduced among more recent cohorts.

Expectations of further education

Students who hold ambitious expectations about their educational prospects are more likely to put effort into their learning and make better use of the education opportunities available to them to achieve their goals (OECD, 2012; Borgonovi and Pal, 2016; OECD, 2017; Nurmi, 2004; Beal and Crockett, 2010; Morgan, 2005; Perna, 2000). Therefore, expectations of further education, in part, become self-fulfilling prophecies. When comparing students with similar levels of skills and similar attitudes towards school, those who expect to graduate from university are more likely than those who do not hold such expectations to eventually earn a university degree (OECD, 2012). Countries and economies vary widely in the extent to which their students expect to graduate from university. Such differences reflect historical differences in levels of participation in tertiary level education, the availability and quality of vocational education and training, in the relative returns associated with attending tertiary studies, in the structure of the local labour markets, as well as the incentives available to students to pursue tertiary level education.

Figure 8.1 ■ Expectation to complete tertiary education, by immigrant background



Notes: Only countries with valid data for immigrant students are shown.

Statistically significant differences between immigrant and native students are shown next to country/economy names. For the OECD and EU average, this number refers only to the subset of countries/economies with valid information on both groups of students.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the percentage of immigrant students who expect to complete tertiary education.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Databases, Table 8.2.

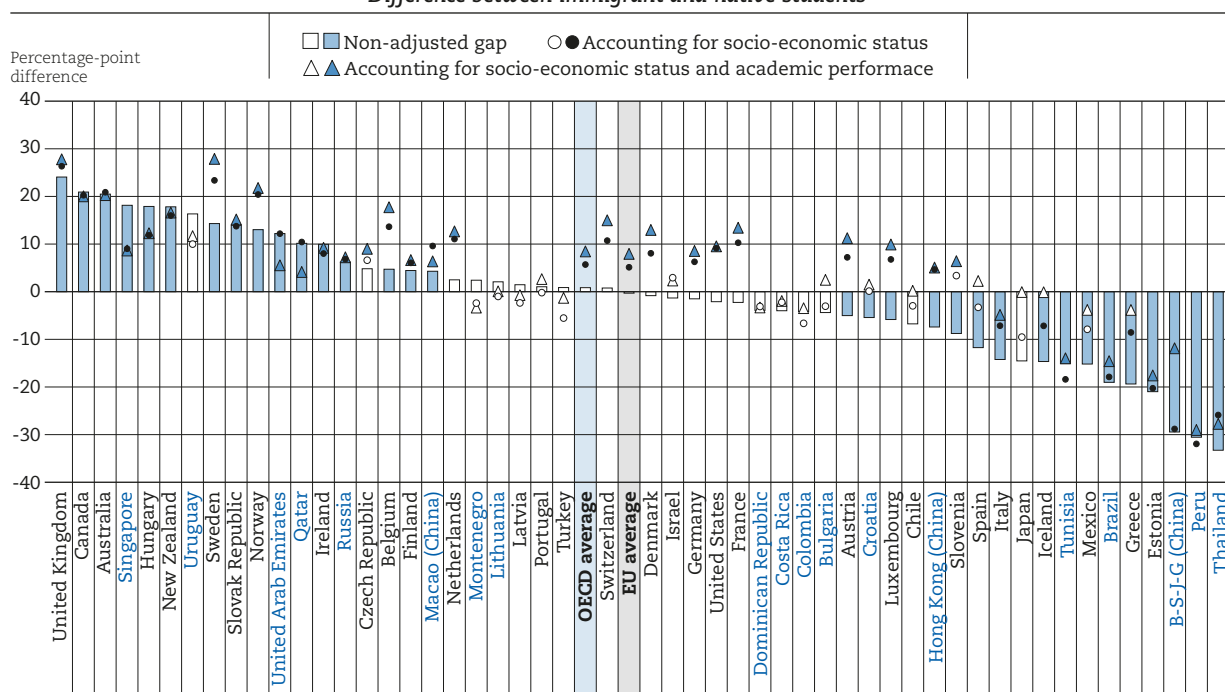
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682794>

Figure 8.1 shows that in 24 of the 57 countries and economies with available data in PISA 2015, more than one in two 15-year-old students expected to complete a university degree (ISCED level 5a or 6); in Korea, as many as three out of four students expected to do so. Between 2003 and 2015, many of the countries and economies with available data saw a substantial increase in the percentage of 15-year-olds who expect to earn a university degree (OECD, 2016). However, countries vary widely in whether students' skills match their expectations, and whether other factors, such as their immigrant background, are related to students' expectations of further education.

Despite the considerable challenges they often face, many immigrant students hold high educational expectations. In 15 countries and economies out of 52 with available data, immigrant students who participated in PISA 2015 were more likely to expect to complete tertiary education compared to native students (Figure 8.1) (results for other groups of students with an immigrant background can be found in Table 8.2 available on line); in 11 countries they were over 10 percentage points more likely. In 16 countries and economies, native students held more ambitious expectations for their education. These results are particularly remarkable because they do not account for the socio-economic status and academic performance of students – two of the factors that influence the probability of expecting to complete tertiary education, and that differ between immigrant and native students.

Figure 8.2 reveals that, when comparing students of similar socio-economic status and, even more so, when comparing students of similar socio-economic status and academic performance, immigrant students are more likely than native students to hold ambitious expectations for their education. In 27 out of 52 countries and economies with available data, immigrant students were more likely to expect to complete tertiary education; the opposite was true in only 7 countries and economies. On average across OECD and EU countries, the percentage of immigrant students who expected to earn a university degree was eight percentage points greater than the percentage of native students who expected to do so. The difference between immigrant students and native students of similar socio-economic status and academic performance was greater than 15 percentage points in Australia, Belgium, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, the Slovak Republic, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In Norway and Sweden, the unadjusted gap already stood at 13 and 14 percentage points respectively, but accounting for academic performance and socio-economic status increased it by a significant degree.

Figure 8.2 ■ **Difference in the expectation to complete tertiary education**
Difference between immigrant and native students



Notes: Only countries/economies with valid estimates of the immigrant-native gap are shown.

Statistically significant differences are marked in a darker tone.

Socio-economic status is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS). Only students with non-missing values for the index are considered.

Academic performance is measured by whether a student achieved at least PISA proficiency Level 2 in all three core PISA subjects – science, reading and mathematics.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the difference in the percentage of immigrant and native students who expect to complete tertiary education, before accounting for socio-economic status and academic performance.

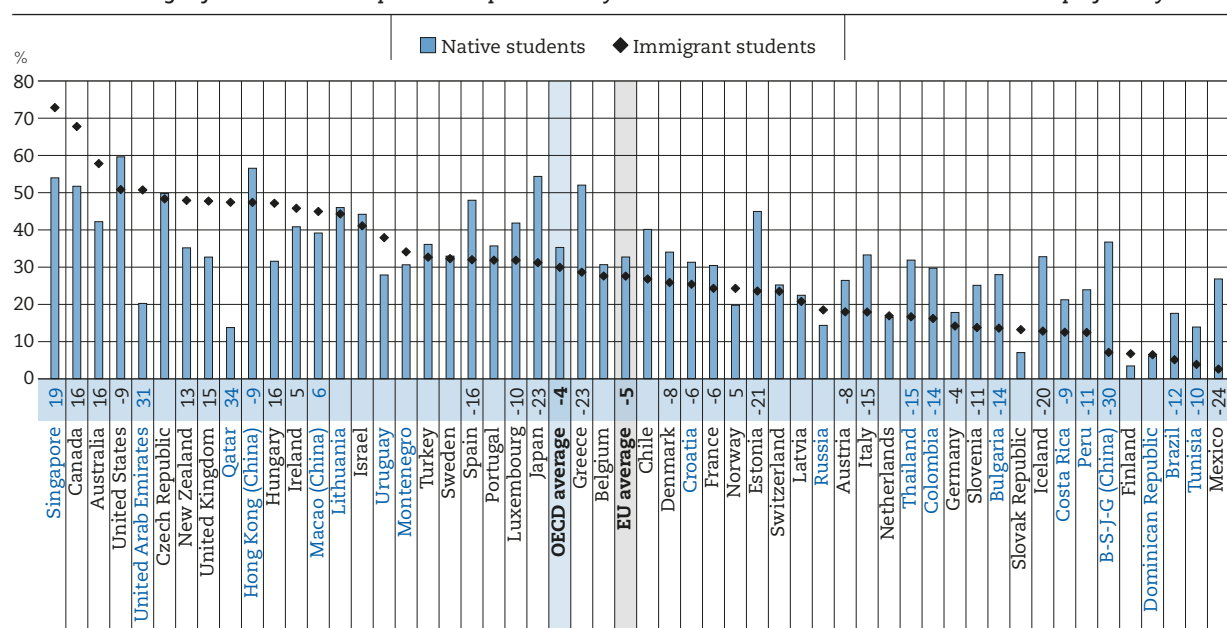
Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table 8.3.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682813>

Immigrant students who hold high educational expectations often lack the academic skills to fulfil them. Students who do not reach baseline levels of proficiency in the core PISA subjects – science, reading and mathematics – are unlikely to be able to realise ambitious academic goals and unlock their full potential. On average across OECD countries, only 74% of immigrant students who held ambitious expectations for their education reached baseline levels of academic performance in reading, mathematics and science (78% across EU countries). By contrast, 87% of native students (89% of native students across EU countries) who held ambitious educational expectations attained baseline academic proficiency, about 15 percentage points more than the percentage of immigrant students who fit this profile (Table 8.4 available on line).

When students who expect to complete tertiary education also have foundation skills, they are more likely to be able to achieve their goals. Immigrant students whose academic skills match their educational ambitions are more likely to be successful beyond their secondary education. Figure 8.3 shows the percentage of immigrant and native students who expect to complete tertiary education and who reach baseline levels of proficiency in reading, mathematics and science. In 24 out of 52 countries and economies with available data, the percentage of students who held ambitious but realistic expectations of further education was lower among immigrant students than among native students. The opposite was true only in Australia, Canada, Hungary, Ireland, Macao (China), New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom. On average across OECD countries, immigrant students were four percentage points less likely than native students to hold ambitious educational expectations and attain baseline academic proficiency (five percentage points less likely across EU countries). The difference was greater than 15 percentage points in Beijing-Shanghai-Jiangsu-Guangdong (China) (hereafter “B-S-J-G [China]”), Estonia, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain and Thailand.

Figure 8.3 ■ **Students with ambitious but realistic educational expectations, by immigrant background**
Percentage of students who expect to complete tertiary education and who attain baseline academic proficiency



Notes: Only countries with valid data for immigrant students are shown.

Statistically significant differences between immigrant and native students are shown next to country/economy names. For the OECD and EU average, this number refers only to the subset of countries/economies with valid information on both groups of students.

Students with ambitious but realistic educational expectations are those who expect to complete tertiary education (ISCED levels 5a and 6) and also attain at least PISA proficiency Level 2 in all three core PISA subjects – science, reading and mathematics.

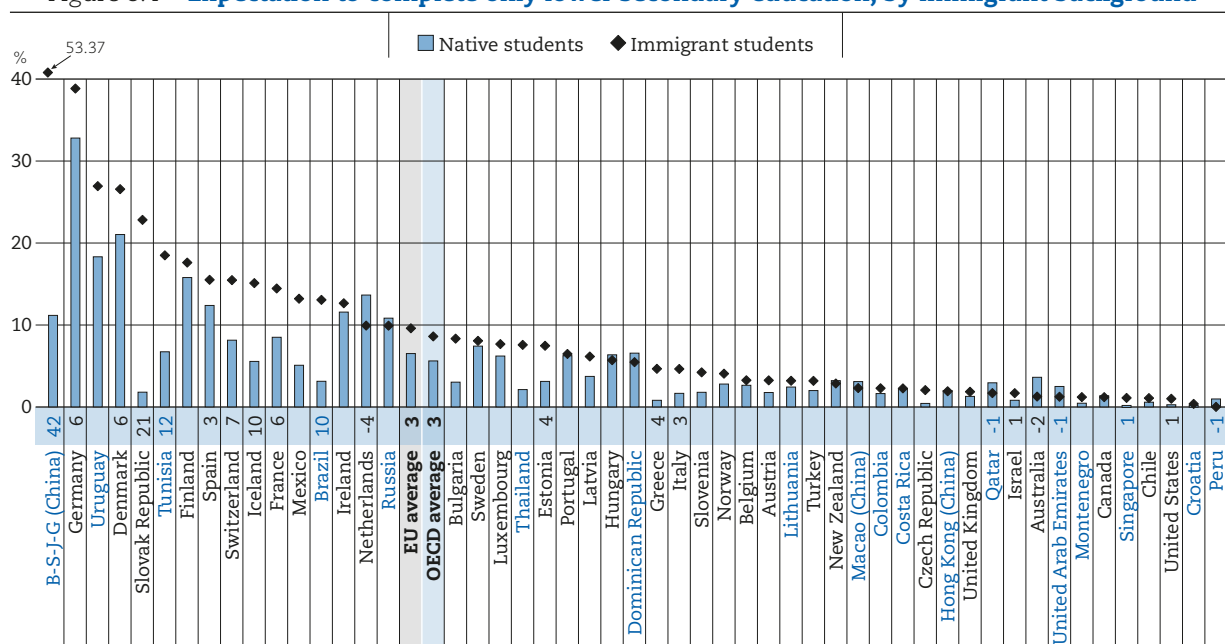
Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the percentage of immigrant students who expect to complete tertiary education and who attain baseline levels of academic proficiency.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table 8.4.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682832>

Educational expectations can become self-fulfilling prophecies not only for ambitious students, but also for those with low – or no – ambition. Students who are socio-economically disadvantaged and struggling academically are more likely to be discouraged and generally hold low expectations about their academic career. This can lead to even less motivation and effort in their schoolwork, resulting in lower academic achievement and a greater likelihood that they will not complete their studies. Figure 8.4 reveals that in 16 out of 52 countries and economies with available data, immigrant students were more likely than native students to expect to complete only lower secondary education (ISCED level 2). The difference was remarkably large in B-S-J-G (China) (42 percentage points) and the Slovak Republic (21 percentage points) (results for all groups of students with an immigrant background can be found in Table 8.5 available on line).

Figure 8.4 ■ **Expectation to complete only lower secondary education, by immigrant background**



Notes: Only countries with valid data for immigrant students are shown.

Statistically significant differences between immigrant and native students are shown next to country/economy names. For the OECD and EU average, this number refers only to the subset of countries/economies with valid information on both groups of students.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the percentage of immigrant students who expect to complete only lower secondary education.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table 8.5.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682851>

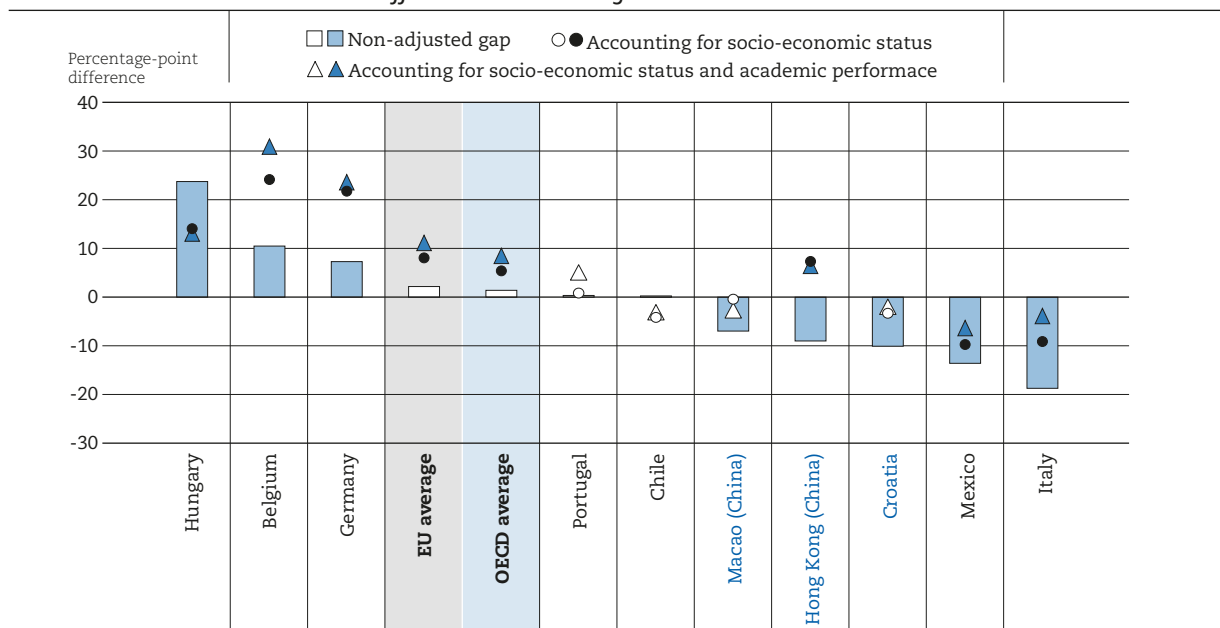
Immigrant students' socio-economic status and academic performance explain part of this difference. Table 8.6 shows that accounting for these factors greatly reduces the difference in expectations between the two groups of students. Indeed, it remains significant only in nine countries and economies, while in eight others immigrant students are less likely than their native peers to expect to finish only lower secondary education.

PISA 2012 distributed a questionnaire to the parents of students who participated in the assessment. The questionnaire was distributed in a small number of countries because it was optional and asked parents about the expectations they hold for their child's education and career. Inevitably, an element of aspiration is contained in parents' responses.

Figure 8.5 reveals that the parents of immigrant students who sat the PISA test in 2012 in Belgium, Germany and Hungary were more likely than the parents of native children to expect that their children will earn a tertiary degree. This is remarkable, given that immigrant students in these countries do not perform as well as, and their families are more disadvantaged than, non-immigrant students. When comparing students of similar socio-economic status, the difference between immigrant and non-immigrant students in their parents' educational expectations for them grows considerably larger.

In Belgium, Germany, Hong Kong (China) and Hungary, the parents of immigrant students held much higher educational expectations for their children than the parents of similarly disadvantaged non-immigrant students (results for other groups of students with an immigrant background can be found in Table 8.7 available on line). And this result holds even when comparing students of similar socio-economic status and similar academic performance (results for other groups of students with an immigrant background can be found in Table 8.8 available on line).

Figure 8.5 ■ **Difference in parents' expectation that their child will complete tertiary education**
Difference between immigrant and native students



Notes: Only countries that distributed the parental questionnaire are shown.

Statistically significant differences are marked in a darker tone.

Socio-economic status is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS). Only students with non-missing values for the index are considered.

Academic performance is measured by whether a student achieved at least PISA proficiency Level 2 in all three core PISA subjects – science, reading and mathematics.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the difference in the percentage of immigrant and native students whose parents expect them to complete tertiary education, before accounting for socio-economic status and academic performance.

Source: OECD, PISA 2012 Database, Table 8.8.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682870>

The figure also shows that, when considering families of similar socio-economic status, parents of immigrant students in Italy and Mexico in 2012 generally held lower expectations for their children's education than parents of students who did not have an immigrant background. These disparities might be due to differences among the immigrant groups settling in various countries, and the value different cultures ascribe to education qualifications. However, and more unsettling, these disparities might reflect the different barriers immigrant students face during their progress through education and the opportunities available to highly skilled immigrants in different countries. If, for example, immigrant students struggle at school and the returns to education are lower for immigrants, then parents might be less likely to expect their children to pursue a tertiary education.

The association between parents' expectations and students' academic achievement might reflect both that parents whose children attain baseline academic proficiency tend to hold more ambitious expectations for them, but also that parents' expectations and, presumably, their encouragement and support, have a positive impact on students' achievement. Results presented in Figure 8.5 therefore might suggest that immigrant students in some countries find – at home – the emotional support they need to deal with the many difficulties arising from their immigrant background.

Career expectations

In PISA 2015, students were asked to report what job they expected to hold at the age of 30. Students' responses to this open-ended question were manually coded and classified using a standardised classification (the four-digit classification numbers of the International Standard Classification of Occupations 08 ISCO-08).

Figure 8.6 reports the percentage of native and immigrant students who expect to work as managers, professionals or associated professionals (some of the occupations that are highest in social status, earnings and that typically require university-level education) (results for other groups of students with an immigrant background can be found in Table 8.9 available on line). In 21 countries and economies, students with an immigrant background were more likely than native students to hold ambitious career expectations and in 32 countries and economies, immigrant students held career expectations that were similar to those held by native students. Only in Brazil, Bulgaria, Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (Argentina) (hereafter “CABA [Argentina]”), Croatia, Greece and Luxembourg did immigrant students hold less ambitious career expectations than their non-immigrant peers.

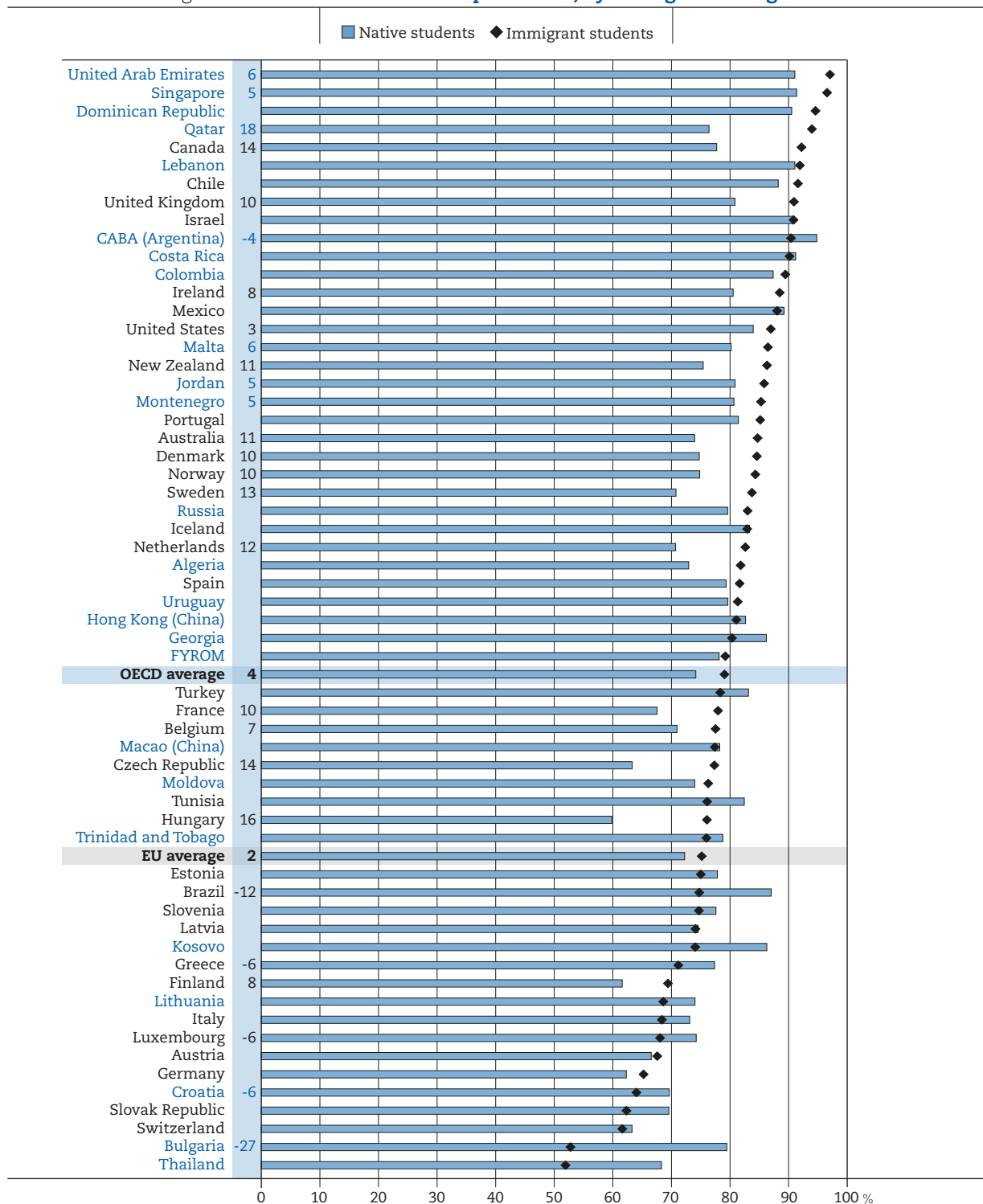
These differences are remarkable given that immigrant students generally come from less socio-economically advantaged households and that they tend to perform worse academically than native students – two factors that are negatively associated with the probability that students will hold ambitious career expectations. When comparing students of similar socio-economic status and accounting for whether they attained baseline academic proficiency, the gap in the percentages of immigrant and native students who expect to work in managerial, professional or associated professional occupation is wide. In 2015 it was significant in around half of the countries and economies with available data (Figure 8.7, results for all groups of students with an immigrant background can be found in Table 8.10 available on line). On average across OECD countries, immigrant students were 11 percentage points more likely to hold ambitious career expectations than native students, after accounting for their socio-economic status and academic performance (a difference of 9 percentage points across EU countries).

Table 8.10 (available on line) shows that in 2015, in most countries and economies, first- and second-generation immigrant students were equally likely to expect to work as managers, professionals or associate professionals, after accounting for their socio-economic status and academic performance. Immigrant students with at least one native-born parent tended to have more ambitious career expectations than native students, although not as ambitious as immigrant students with two foreign-born parents. In 14 out of 43 countries and economies with available data, returning foreign-born students held more ambitious expectations than native students. In Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, they were 10 percentage points more likely than native students to expect to work as managers, professionals or associate professionals. In 17 countries and economies, native students of mixed heritage had more ambitious career expectations than native students.

Although immigrant students tend to have more ambitious career expectations than native students, Table 8.11 (available on line) shows that their skills are less likely to match their ambitions. On average across OECD countries in 2015, only 62% of immigrant students with ambitious career expectations attained baseline academic proficiency (65% across EU countries), while 79% of native students with ambitious career expectations attained baseline academic proficiency (80% across EU countries). Students who lack basic proficiency in core PISA subjects are unlikely to realise their ambitious career plans. Figure 8.8 shows the percentage of immigrant and native students with ambitious career expectations and who attain baseline academic proficiency. In 29 out of 59 countries and economies with available data, immigrant students in 2015 were less likely to fall into this category. On average across OECD countries, immigrant students were 10 percentage points less likely than native students to have ambitious career expectations and attain baseline academic proficiency.

PISA shows that not only are immigrant students more likely than native students to expect to work as managers or professionals, they also tend to hold more ambitious career expectations across the whole distribution of occupations. Responses to the question about expected occupation were assigned a score on the International Socio-economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI), which ranks occupations based on social prestige. Table 8.12 (available on line) reports the expected ISEI ranking of students with different immigrant backgrounds; Table 8.13 (available on line) reports group differences controlling for the socio-economic status and academic performance of students.

Figure 8.6 ■ Ambitious career expectations, by immigrant background



Notes: Only countries with valid data for immigrant students are shown.

Statistically significant differences between immigrant and native students are shown next to country/economy names. For the OECD and EU average, this number refers only to the subset of countries/economies with valid information on both groups of students.

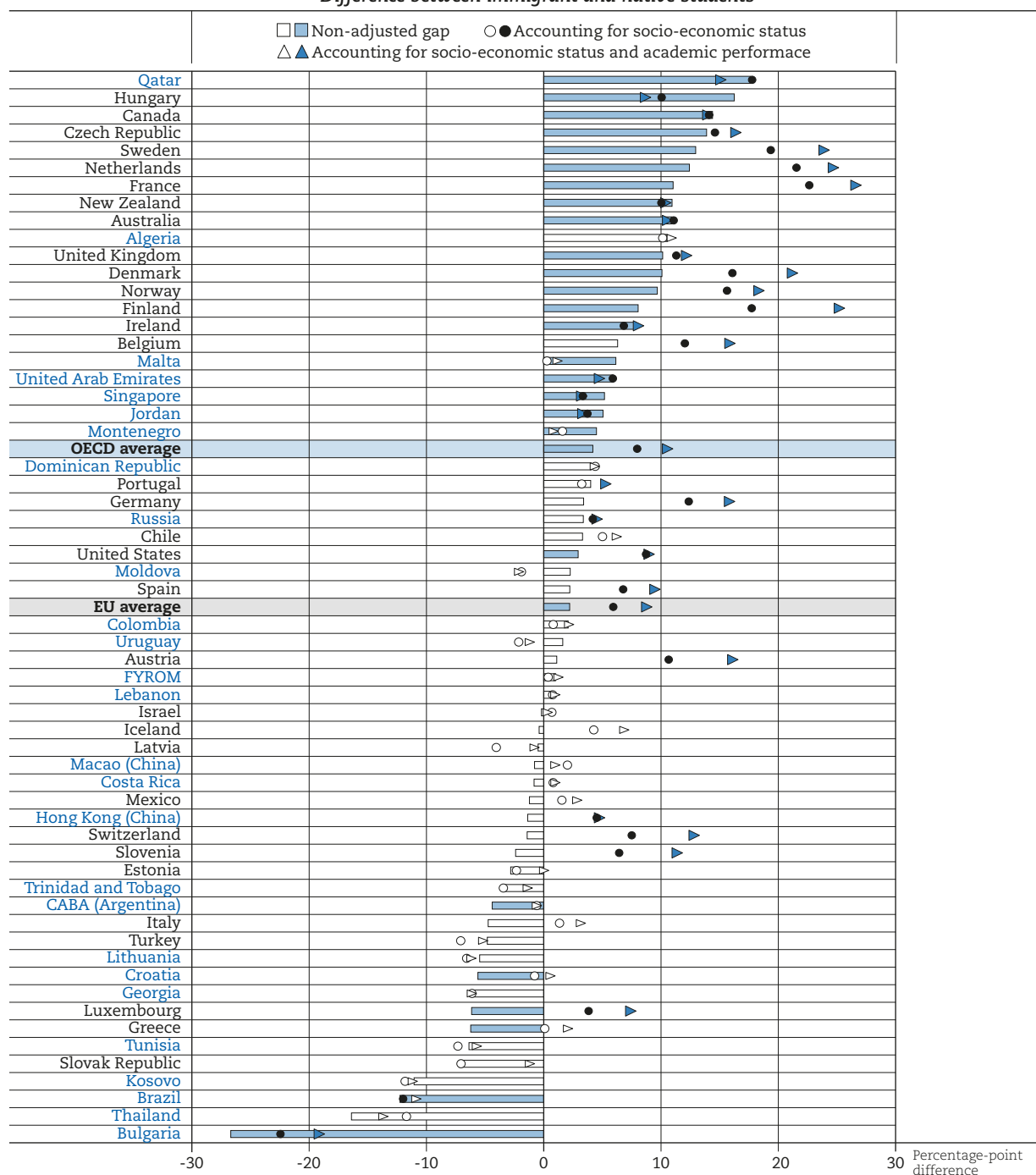
Students with ambitious career expectations are those who expect to become managers, professionals or associate professionals and technicians by the age of 30.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the percentage of immigrant students with ambitious career expectations.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table 8.9.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682889>

Figure 8.7 ■ **Difference in holding ambitious career expectations**
Difference between immigrant and native students



Notes: Only countries/economies with valid estimates of the immigrant-native gap are shown.

Statistically significant differences are marked in a darker tone.

Students with ambitious career expectations are those who expect to become managers, professionals or associate professionals and technicians by the age of 30.

Socio-economic status is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS). Only students with non-missing values for the index are considered.

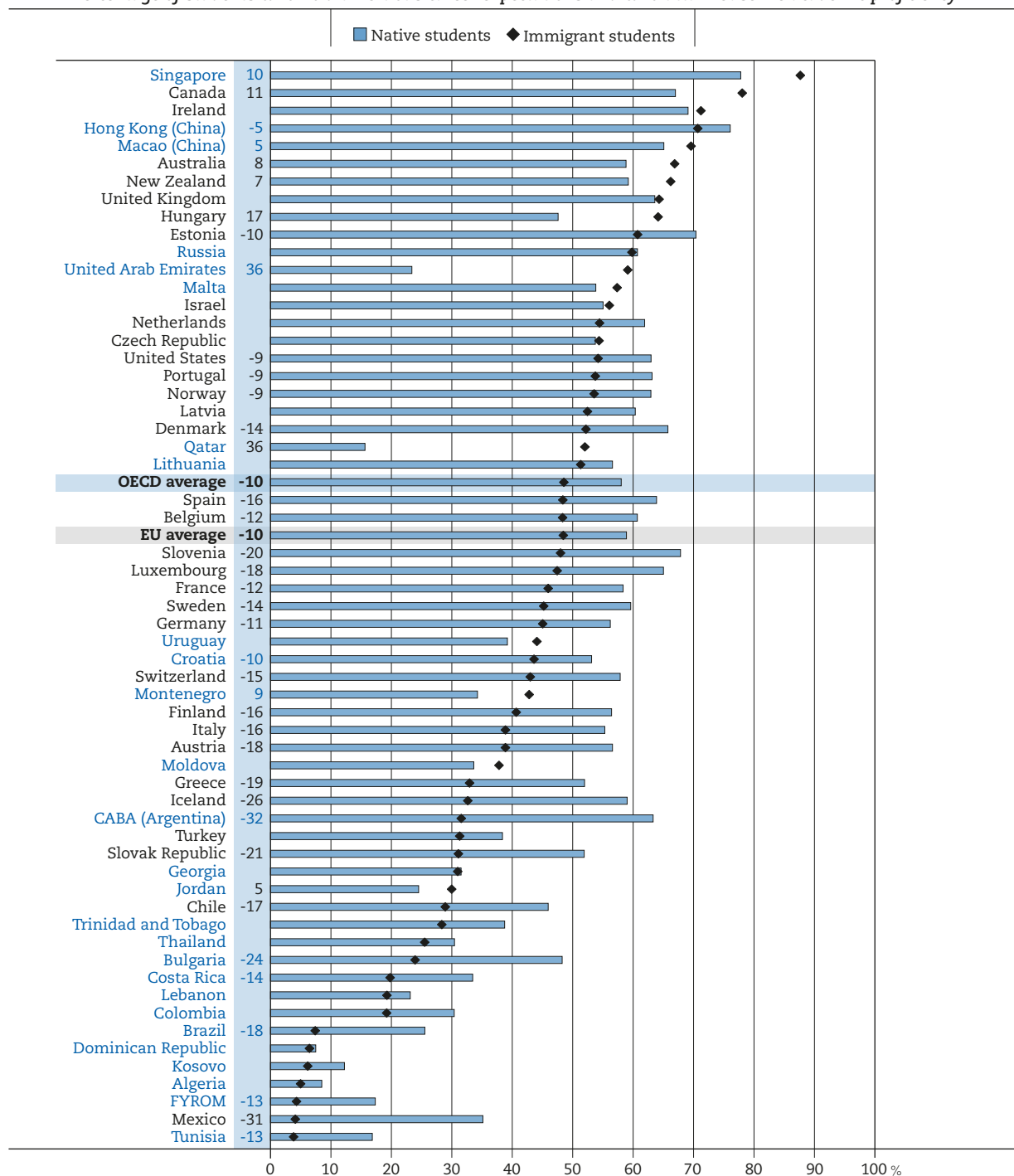
Academic performance is measured by whether a student achieved at least PISA proficiency Level 2 in all three core PISA subjects – science, reading and mathematics.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the difference in the percentage of immigrant students and native students who hold ambitious career expectations.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table 8.10.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682908>

Figure 8.8 ■ **Students with ambitious but realistic career expectations, by immigrant background**
 Percentage of students who hold ambitious career expectations and who attain baseline academic proficiency



Notes: Only countries with valid data for immigrant students are shown.

Statistically significant differences between immigrant and native students are shown next to country/economy names. For the OECD and EU average, this number refers only to the subset of countries/economies with valid information on both groups of students.

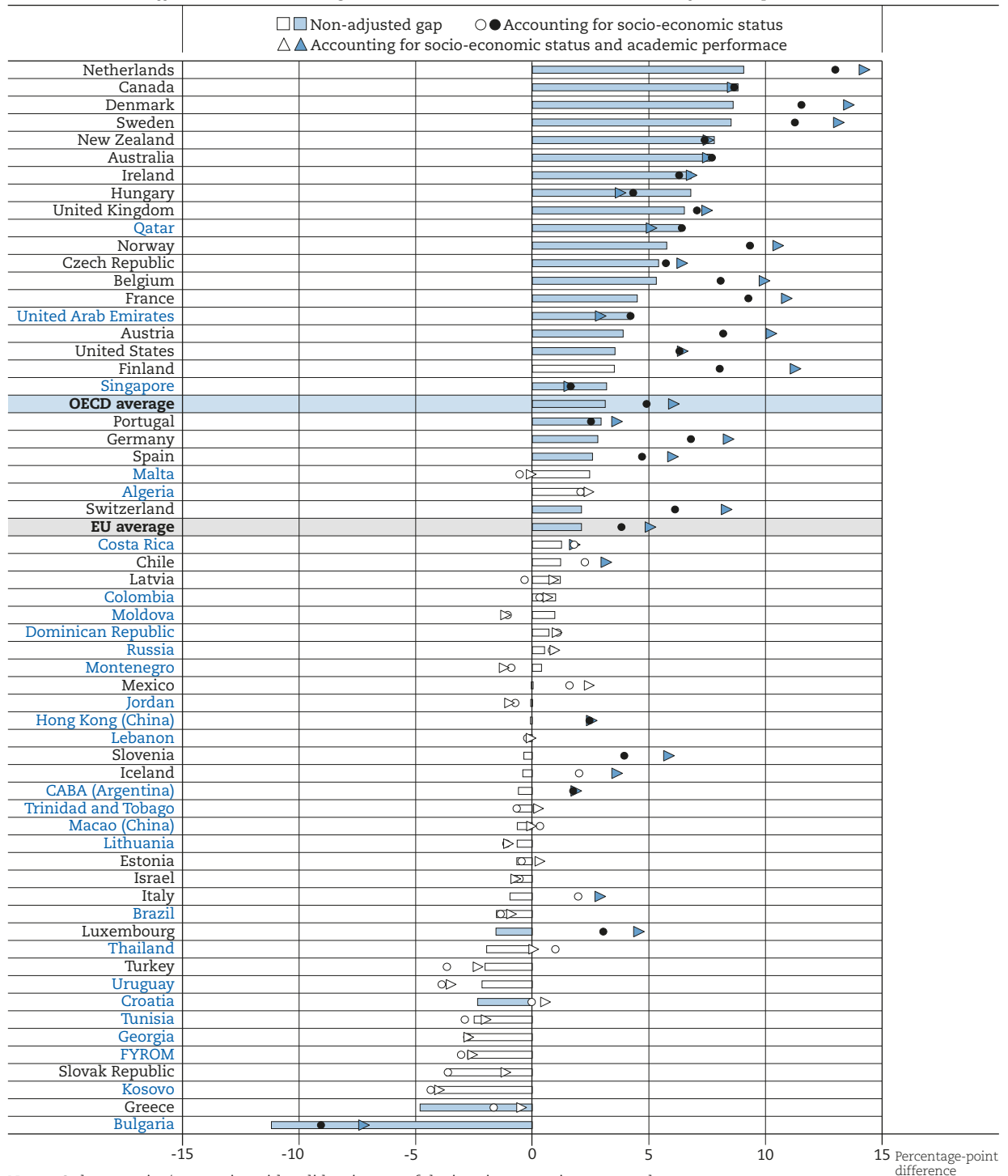
Students with ambitious but realistic career expectations are those who expect to become managers, professionals or associate professionals and technicians by the age of 30 and who achieved at least PISA proficiency Level 2 in all three core PISA subjects – science, reading and mathematics.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the percentage of immigrant students who hold ambitious career expectations and who attain baseline academic proficiency.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table 8.11.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682927>

Figure 8.9 ■ **Difference in the prestige of expected careers**
Difference between immigrant and native students in the ISEI score of their expected career



Notes: Only countries/economies with valid estimates of the immigrant-native gap are shown.

Statistically significant differences are marked in a darker tone.

Socio-economic status is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS). Only students with non-missing values for the index are considered.

Academic performance is measured by whether a student achieved at least PISA proficiency Level 2 in all three core PISA subjects – science, reading and mathematics.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the difference between immigrant and native students in the ISEI score of their expected occupation.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table 8.12.

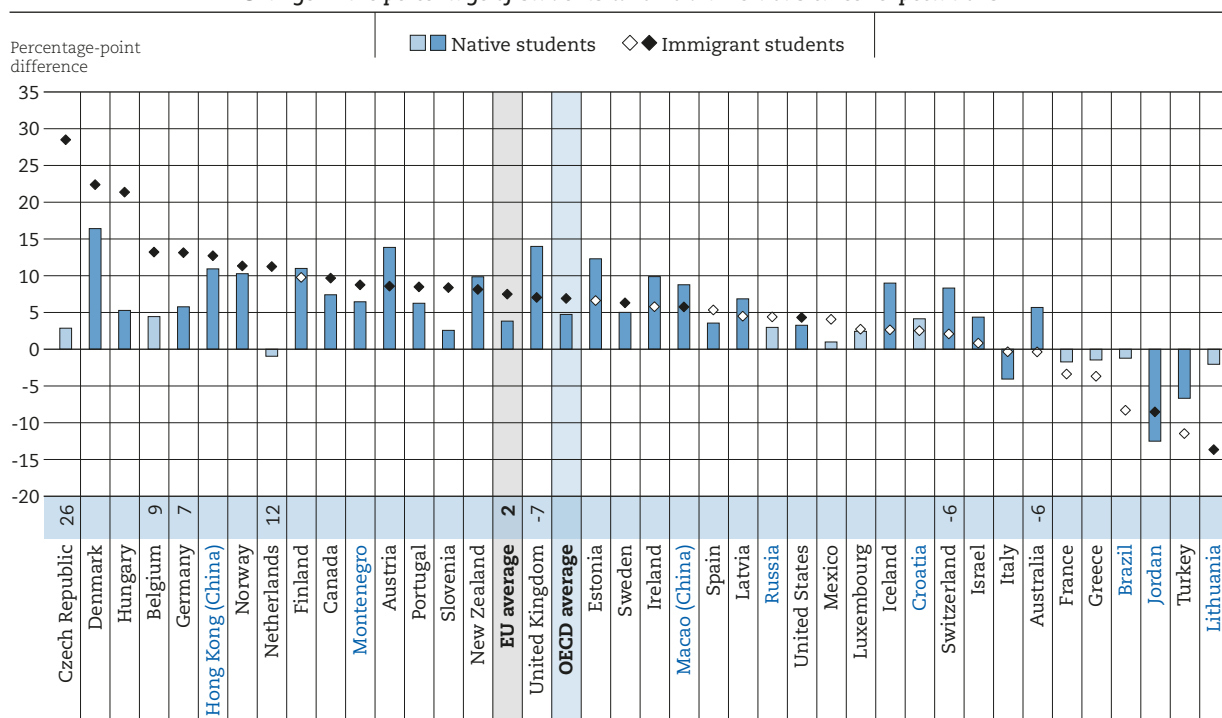
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682946>

Results show that in 2015 in 22 out of 62 countries and economies with available data, immigrant students expected to work in a job that was more prestigious than the one expected by native students. Once socio-economic status and academic performance are accounted for, the gap was statistically significant in as many as 32 countries. In Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, the adjusted gap was larger than 10 index points, which corresponds roughly to the difference between the occupational status of the average parent in Sweden and a parent in the Dominican Republic in the PISA 2015 sample.

The PISA 2006 student questionnaire also included the question about career expectations. Responses were coded using ISCO-88, an earlier version of ISCO-08, the classification used for PISA 2015 responses. Results are still comparable at the level of the first ISCO digit because no significant changes have occurred for ISCO major groups. Therefore, the percentage of students expecting to work as managers, professionals or associate professionals by the age of 30 is comparable across PISA 2015 and PISA 2006 cycles.

Figure 8.10 ■ **Change between 2006 and 2015 in ambitious career expectations, by immigrant background**

Change in the percentage of students who hold ambitious career expectations



Notes: Only countries that participated in PISA 2006 and PISA 2015 and have valid data on immigrant students in both rounds are shown. Statistically significant differences between PISA 2015 and 2006 are marked in a darker tone.

Students with ambitious career expectations are those who expect to become managers, professionals or associate professionals and technicians by the age of 30.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the change between 2006 and 2015 in the percentage of immigrant students who have ambitious career expectations.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 and 2006 Database, Table 8.9.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933682965>

Figure 8.10 shows that in the majority of countries and economies, the percentage of immigrant students with ambitious career expectations grew between 2006 and 2015 (results for other groups of students with an immigrant background can be found in Table 8.9 available on line). On average across OECD and EU countries, it grew by approximately 7 percentage points; it grew more than 20 percentage points in the Czech Republic, Denmark and Hungary. In most countries, the percentage of native students holding ambitious career expectations also grew. Indeed, on average across OECD countries, the difference between immigrant and native students remained unchanged between 2006 and 2015.

However, on average across EU countries, the percentage of immigrant students with ambitious career expectations grew by two percentage points more than did the percentage of native students with similar expectations. In Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany and the Netherlands, the difference between the two groups grew by at least seven percentage points. In Belgium, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands, the expectations of native students remained unchanged, while more immigrant students held ambitious career expectations in 2015 than they did in 2006. In Australia and Switzerland, the difference between native and immigrant students in the percentage of students holding ambitious career shrank by six percentage points.

Spotlight on intergenerational educational mobility: Evidence from the European Social Survey

Evidence from PISA suggests that, in many countries, immigrant students are less likely than native students with similar background characteristics to reach baseline levels of proficiency but that they tend to report greater achievement motivation and to have more ambitious educational and career expectations. However, because PISA focuses on the outcomes of 15 year old students, it does not allow identifying the educational careers of immigrant students and the educational qualifications they will obtain. Moreover, while PISA clearly indicates that parental educational qualifications and broader socio-economic status play an important role in shaping their skill acquisition, it cannot illustrate differences between immigrant and native students in the overall intergenerational transmission of educational attainment, which is shaped not only by skill accumulation but also by the broader set of opportunities and barriers that students encounter beyond age 15.

This section complements analyses based on PISA data with analyses from the European Social Survey (ESS) to illustrate differences in educational attainment between immigrants and natives as well as differences across the two groups in the extent to which parental educational attainment plays a role in determining educational attainment. In order to look at changes over time while using a cross-sectional study, two age groups are considered: 25-45 year-olds and 45-65 year-olds¹.

Analyses were conducted using participants' responses to questions about the highest education level attained by themselves and by their father and mother. Due to differences between ESS rounds in the way these questions were formulated, variables representing respondents' answers were harmonised and the following categories were derived: "less than lower secondary education"; "lower secondary education"; "upper secondary education"; "advanced vocational education"; and "tertiary education". The highest between the mother and father's educational level successfully completed was used to identify parental educational attainment.

Immigrant individuals are defined as those who are either foreign-born or are native-born but have two foreign-born parents. The 27 countries considered are: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation (hereafter "Russia"), the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Tables 8.a (available on line) indicates that levels of educational attainment increased markedly in recent decades. On average across the 27 countries analysed, respondents' education level was higher than the education level of their parents both among natives and immigrants for both age groups considered. On average across the countries considered, among those aged 45 to 65, the percentages of natives and immigrants whose highest education level was less than lower secondary education were 11% and 12% respectively. Among parents of individuals in this age group as many as 37% and 38% respectively had not achieved a lower secondary degree. In this age group, 22% of natives but 25% of immigrants had obtained a tertiary degree, compared to only 9% and 14% respectively among the parents of individuals in this age group.

Among individual aged 25 to 45, the percentage of natives and immigrants whose highest education level was less than lower secondary education was considerably lower and stood at 4% and 6% respectively. Among their parents this percentage was higher, corresponding to 18% and 25%. By contrast, among individuals aged 25 to 45 as many as 32% of natives and 30% of immigrant individuals obtained a tertiary degree while only 19% of the parents of natives observed in the sample and 23% of the parents of immigrants had obtained tertiary qualifications.

Table 8.b shows that in many countries the correlation between the education level attained by the respondent and the highest education level successfully completed by his or her parents was stronger among immigrants than among individuals without an immigrant background for both age groups analysed. However, whereas among natives the strength of the correlation was somewhat weaker among younger cohorts, it was broadly similar among the two age groups among immigrants.

Table 8.b ■ Correlation between respondent's level of education and the highest level of education of their parents, by immigrant background

	45-65 year-olds			25-45 year-olds			Difference between 25-45 and 45-65 year-olds	
	Natives	Immigrants	Difference (immigrants – natives)	Natives	Immigrants	Difference (immigrants – natives)	Natives	Immigrants
Austria	0.38	0.50	0.12	0.36	0.59	0.23	-0.02	0.09
Belgium	0.45	0.50	0.05	0.44	0.51	0.07	-0.01	0.02
Croatia	0.47	0.48	0.01	0.37	0.52	0.15	-0.09	0.04
Czech Republic	0.39	0.54	0.15	0.39	0.57	0.18	0.00	0.03
Denmark	0.35	0.43	0.07	0.30	0.36	0.06	-0.05	-0.06
Estonia	0.34	0.38	0.04	0.33	0.30	-0.03	-0.01	-0.08
Finland	0.36	0.39	0.03	0.29	0.33	0.04	-0.07	-0.06
France	0.40	0.38	-0.03	0.39	0.39	0.00	-0.01	0.01
Germany	0.32	0.45	0.13	0.34	0.43	0.10	0.02	-0.01
Greece	0.39	0.44	0.05	0.42	0.50	0.08	0.03	0.06
Hungary	0.48	0.45	-0.03	0.49	0.33	-0.16	0.01	-0.12
Ireland	0.42	0.43	0.00	0.42	0.44	0.03	0.00	0.02
Israel	0.47	0.42	-0.05	0.46	0.41	-0.05	-0.01	-0.01
Latvia	0.34	0.46	0.12	0.29	0.54	0.25	-0.05	0.08
Lithuania	0.29	0.29	0.00	0.38	0.47	0.09	0.09	0.18
Luxembourg	0.42	0.52	0.10	0.39	0.52	0.13	-0.03	0.00
Netherlands	0.41	0.47	0.06	0.39	0.47	0.07	-0.01	0.00
Norway	0.38	0.33	-0.05	0.34	0.40	0.06	-0.04	0.07
Poland	0.43	0.44	0.01	0.40	0.46	0.06	-0.03	0.02
Portugal	0.43	0.44	0.01	0.44	0.44	0.00	0.01	0.00
Russia	0.36	0.33	-0.03	0.33	0.17	-0.16	-0.03	-0.16
Slovak Republic	0.39	0.40	0.01	0.41	0.14	-0.27	0.03	-0.25
Slovenia	0.42	0.52	0.10	0.36	0.44	0.08	-0.06	-0.08
Spain	0.45	0.50	0.04	0.39	0.52	0.13	-0.06	0.02
Sweden	0.35	0.38	0.04	0.26	0.39	0.13	-0.08	0.01
Switzerland	0.36	0.55	0.19	0.32	0.52	0.20	-0.04	-0.03
United Kingdom	0.34	0.44	0.10	0.36	0.42	0.06	0.02	-0.02
Average	0.39	0.44	0.05	0.37	0.43	0.06	-0.02	-0.01

Notes: Analysis based on simple correlation coefficients.

Immigrants are defined as those who are either foreign-born or are native-born but have two foreign-born parents.


Differences between immigrants and natives are highlighted in gray. A lighter tone is applied to positive differences (i.e. correlation is stronger among immigrants) and a darker tone is applied to negative differences (i.e. correlation is stronger among natives).

Differences between age groups are highlighted in blue. A lighter tone is applied to positive differences (i.e. correlation is stronger among people aged 25 to 45) and a darker tone is applied to negative differences (i.e. correlation is stronger among people aged 45 to 65).

Only countries that participated in at least two rounds and with a sample of at least 30 immigrant individuals are included in the analysis.

Countries and economies are ranked in alphabetical order.

Source: European Social Survey rounds 1-8 (pooled data).

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933683003>

Among 45 to 65 year-olds, parental educational attainment appears to play a more important role in shaping the educational attainment of immigrants than native individuals. In this age group the difference between immigrants and natives in the correlation between parental educational attainment and the respondent's own educational attainment was particularly pronounced in the Czech Republic, Germany and Switzerland. By contrast, parental educational attainment was less strongly associated with the educational attainment of 45 to 65 year-old immigrants than among 45 to 65 year-old natives in France, Hungary, Israel, Norway and Russia. Among 25 to 45 year-olds, parental educational attainment also played a more important role in shaping the educational attainment of immigrants than native individuals and the difference was particularly pronounced in Austria, Latvia and Switzerland. By contrast, parental educational attainment was less strongly associated with the educational attainment of 25 to 45 year-old immigrants than among 25 to 45 year-old natives in Estonia, Hungary, Israel, Russia and the Slovak Republic.

Another measure of the importance family circumstances play in shaping the educational trajectory of individuals is intergenerational education mobility. This can be operationalised as the percentage of individuals in the two groups who reported having attained educational qualifications that are higher than the highest educational qualifications that were successfully completed by their parents.

Table 8.c shows that, on average across all countries analysed, the intergenerational education mobility of natives and of immigrant individuals was similar. On average across the 27 countries examined, among 45 to 65 year-olds, 50% of natives and 48% of immigrants had obtained greater educational qualifications than their parents. Similarly, among 25 to 45 year olds, 44% of natives and 43% of immigrants had obtained more advanced qualifications than their parents.

Table 8.c ■ Educational mobility, by age group and immigrant background
Percentage of respondents who report having attained an education level that is higher than the highest education level successfully completed by their parents

	45-65 year-olds			25-45 year-olds		
	Natives	Immigrants	Difference (immigrants – natives)	Natives	Immigrants	Difference (immigrants – natives)
Austria	37.72	36.80	-0.92	34.26	39.61	5.35
Belgium	55.69	53.31	-2.38	47.32	54.53	7.22
Croatia	60.92	62.86	1.93	46.66	54.12	7.46
Czech Republic	25.51	38.30	12.79	20.07	30.89	10.82
Denmark	51.84	44.50	-7.34	38.87	47.98	9.11
Estonia	62.96	61.73	-1.22	39.82	36.93	-2.89
Finland	65.03	59.38	-5.66	52.98	43.96	-9.02
France	54.54	53.13	-1.42	54.24	56.38	2.14
Germany	32.30	40.45	8.16	27.27	37.14	9.87
Greece	52.50	44.72	-7.78	72.94	47.86	-25.09
Hungary	45.86	41.46	-4.40	30.51	42.19	11.68
Ireland	60.98	49.72	-11.26	63.26	46.32	-16.93
Israel	58.61	52.33	-6.28	50.36	41.72	-8.64
Latvia	50.56	52.38	1.82	30.16	27.27	-2.89
Lithuania	67.05	48.60	-18.45	51.45	33.33	-18.12
Luxembourg	42.23	33.45	-8.78	45.20	44.81	-0.39
Netherlands	56.68	44.03	-12.65	51.36	49.46	-1.89
Norway	57.95	52.38	-5.57	41.43	43.01	1.58
Poland	57.76	61.96	4.20	49.98	51.35	1.37
Portugal	29.07	43.33	14.26	55.64	50.32	-5.32
Russia	60.39	58.62	-1.76	40.30	32.95	-7.36
Slovak Republic	47.46	40.70	-6.77	29.82	34.38	4.56
Slovenia	44.51	49.60	5.09	42.93	42.27	-0.66
Spain	48.06	48.09	0.03	66.86	50.49	-16.36
Sweden	48.87	39.94	-8.93	33.27	29.41	-3.85
Switzerland	42.13	45.77	3.64	35.79	44.83	9.04
United Kingdom	42.30	41.08	-1.22	36.42	43.06	6.64
Average	50.35	48.10	-2.26	44.04	42.84	-1.21

Notes: Statistically significant differences are indicated in bold.


Immigrants are defined as those who are either foreign-born or are native-born but have two foreign-born parents.

Statistically significant differences between immigrants and natives for each age group are highlighted in blue. A lighter tone is applied to negative differences (i.e. the percentage of immigrants who reported having attained an education level that is higher than the highest education level successfully completed by their parents is smaller) and a darker tone is applied to positive differences (i.e. the immigrants who reported having attained an education level that is higher than the highest education level successfully completed by their parents is greater).

Only countries that participated in at least two rounds and with a sample of at least 30 immigrant individuals are included in the analysis.

Countries and economies are ranked in alphabetical order.

Source: European Social Survey rounds 1-8 (pooled data).

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933683022>

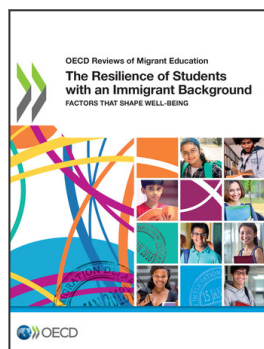
Countries differ greatly in the extent to which natives and immigrants experienced upward educational mobility. In the Czech Republic, Germany, Portugal and Switzerland, in the older cohort, the percentage of individuals who obtained greater educational qualifications than their parents was greater among immigrants than natives. By contrast, in the same age group, natives experienced greater educational mobility in Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden. Among 25 to 45 year olds immigrants were more likely than natives to obtain higher educational qualifications in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. By contrast, in Finland, Greece, Israel, Ireland, Lithuania, Spain and Sweden natives experienced greater educational mobility than immigrants.

Note

1. Due to the small number of observations at the country level, data from the first eight ESS rounds was pooled. The most recent ESS study is round eight, which contains information collected in 2016. However, at the time this analysis was conducted (December 2017), data from round eight was not yet available for Portugal and Spain. In these cases, the analysis is based on data from rounds one through seven. More information about the ESS is provided in the introductory chapter of this report. Only countries that participated in at least two rounds and with a sample of at least 30 immigrants in the pooled sample are included in the analysis. Overall, analyses are based on a sample of 233 000 25-65 year-olds in Europe, 12% of whom are immigrants.

References

- Beal, S.J. and L.J. Crockett** (2010), "Adolescents' occupational and educational aspirations and expectations: Links to high school activities and adult educational attainment", *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 46/1, pp. 258-265, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0017416>.
- Borgonovi, F. and J. Pál** (2016), "A Framework for the Analysis of Student Well-Being in the PISA 2015 Study: Being 15 In 2015", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 140, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jlpszwghvvb-en>.
- Morgan, S.** (2005), *On the Edge of Commitment: Educational Attainment and Race in the United States*, *Studies in Social Inequality*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.
- Nurmi, J.E.** (2004), "Socialization and self-development: Channeling, selection, adjustment, and reflection", in R.M. Lerner and L. Steinberg (eds.), *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ, pp. 85-124.
- OECD** (2012), *Grade Expectations: How Marks and Education Policies Shape Students' Ambitions*, PISA, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264187528-en>.
- OECD** (2013), *PISA 2012 Results: Ready to Learn: Students' Engagement, Drive and Self-Beliefs (Volume III)*, PISA, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264201170-en>.
- OECD** (2015), *Immigrant Students at School: Easing the Journey towards Integration*, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264249509-en>.
- OECD** (2017), *PISA 2015 Results (Volume III): Students' Well-Being*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264273856-en>.
- Perna, L.W.** (2000), "Differences in the decision to attend college among African Americans, Hispanics, and Whites", *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 71/2, pp. 117-141.



From:

The Resilience of Students with an Immigrant Background

Factors that Shape Well-being

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264292093-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2018), “What students with an immigrant background expect in their future”, in *The Resilience of Students with an Immigrant Background: Factors that Shape Well-being*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264292093-11-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 and any 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.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to rights@oecd.org. Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at info@copyright.com or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at contact@cfcopies.com.