

Education at a Glance 2023

Country note

Mexico

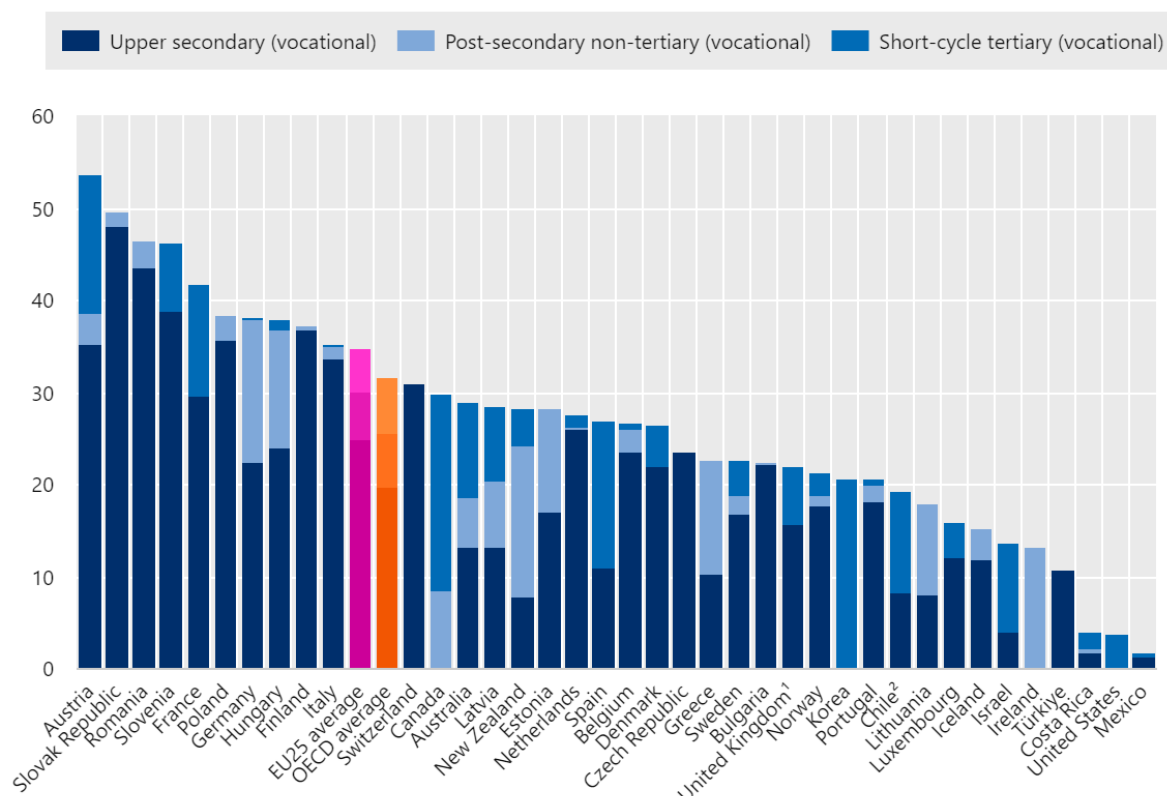
This country note provides an overview of the key characteristics of the education system in Mexico. It draws on data from *Education at a Glance 2023*. In line with the thematic focus of this year's *Education at a Glance*, it emphasises vocational education and training (VET), while also covering other parts of the education system. Data in this note are provided for the latest available year. Readers interested in the reference years for the data are referred to the corresponding tables in *Education at a Glance 2023*.

The output of educational institutions and the impact of learning

- High-quality VET programmes integrate learners into labour markets and open pathways for further personal and professional development. However, the quality and importance of VET programmes differ greatly across countries. In some countries, half of all young adults (25-34 year-olds) have a vocational qualification as their highest level of educational attainment, while the share is in the low single digits in other countries. In Mexico, 2% of 25-34 year-olds have a VET qualification as their highest level of attainment (Figure 1): 1% at upper secondary level and 1% at short-cycle tertiary level.
- Across the OECD, unemployment rates for 25-34 year-olds with vocational upper secondary attainment are lower than for their peers with general upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment. This is not the case in Mexico, where 4.5% of young adults with vocational upper secondary attainment are unemployed, compared to 4% of those with general upper secondary attainment.
- Although an upper secondary qualification is often the minimum attainment needed for successful labour-market participation, some 25-34 year-olds still leave education without such a qualification. On average across the OECD, 14% of young adults have not attained an upper secondary qualification. In Mexico, the share is higher than the OECD average (43%).
- Workers in Mexico aged 25-34 with vocational upper secondary attainment earn 17% more than those without upper secondary attainment, whereas the earning advantage for workers with general upper secondary attainment is 16%. However, in almost all OECD countries, tertiary degrees provide a significantly larger earnings advantage. In Mexico, 25-34 year-old workers with bachelor's attainment (or equivalent) earn 61% more than their peers without upper secondary attainment, while those with master's or doctoral attainment (or equivalent) earn 143% more.
- Tertiary attainment continues to increase among the working age population. On average across the OECD, tertiary attainment is becoming as common as upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment among 25-64 year-olds. In Mexico, 21% of 25-64 year-olds have tertiary attainment, a smaller share than those that have upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment (23%).

Figure 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^[11]).

- On average across OECD countries, 14.7% of young adults aged 18-24 are not in education, employment or training (NEET), while in Mexico the corresponding figure is 20%. Reducing NEET rates among young adults is a particularly important challenge in all countries because those who become NEET face worse labour-market outcomes later in life than their peers who remained in education or training at this age.

Access to education, participation and progress

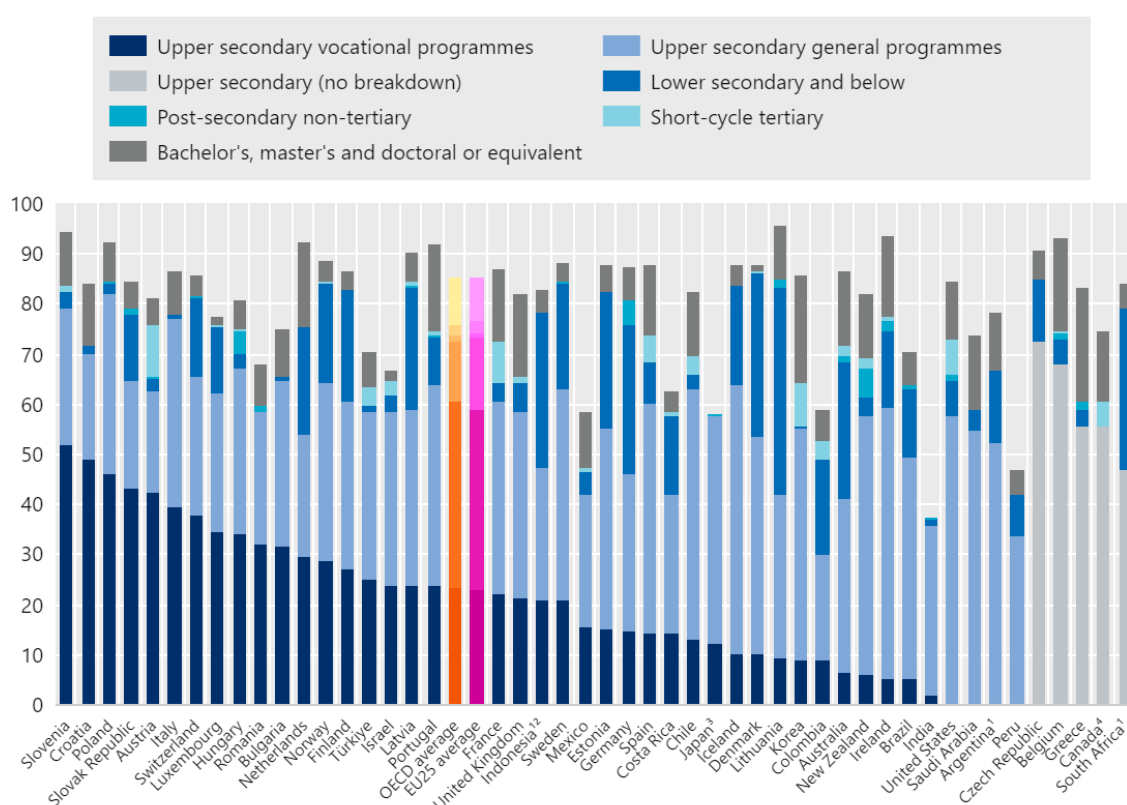
- Participation in high-quality early childhood education (ECE) has a positive effect on children's well-being, learning and development in the first years of their lives. In Mexico, 8% of 2-year-olds are enrolled in ECE. This increases to 39% of 3-year-olds, 81% of 4-year-olds and 75% of 5-year-olds.
- Compulsory education in Mexico starts at the age of 3 and continues until the age of 17. Students typically graduate between the ages of 17 and 18 from general upper secondary programmes. The

age range for completing vocational programmes is just as wide, with students typically graduating from vocational upper secondary programmes also between 17 and 18. This is different from most OECD countries, where graduates from vocational upper secondary programmes have a wider age range, reflecting the greater diversity of pathways into these programmes than for general ones.

- The large majority of 15-19 year-olds across the OECD are enrolled in education. In Mexico, 26% of this age group are enrolled in general upper secondary education and 16% in vocational upper secondary education. A further 5% are enrolled in lower secondary programmes and 12% in tertiary programmes. This compares to an OECD average of 37% enrolled in general upper secondary programmes, 23% in vocational upper secondary programmes, 12% in lower secondary programmes and 12% in tertiary programmes (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Enrolment rates of 15-19 year-olds, by level of education (2021)

In per cent



1. Year of reference differs from 2021: 2020 for Argentina and South Africa; 2018 for Indonesia.

2. Excludes students enrolled at tertiary levels.

3. Breakdown by age not available after 15 years old.

4. Excludes post-secondary non-tertiary education.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of students enrolled in upper secondary vocational education.

Source: OECD/UIS/Eurostat (2023), Table B1.2. For more information see [Source](#) section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[1]).

- Bachelor's programmes are the most popular programmes for new entrants to tertiary education. On average across the OECD, they attract 76% of all new students compared to 93% in Mexico. Short-cycle tertiary programmes are the second most common level of education for new entrants

into tertiary education, but their importance differs widely across countries. In Mexico, they are chosen by 7% of all new entrants.

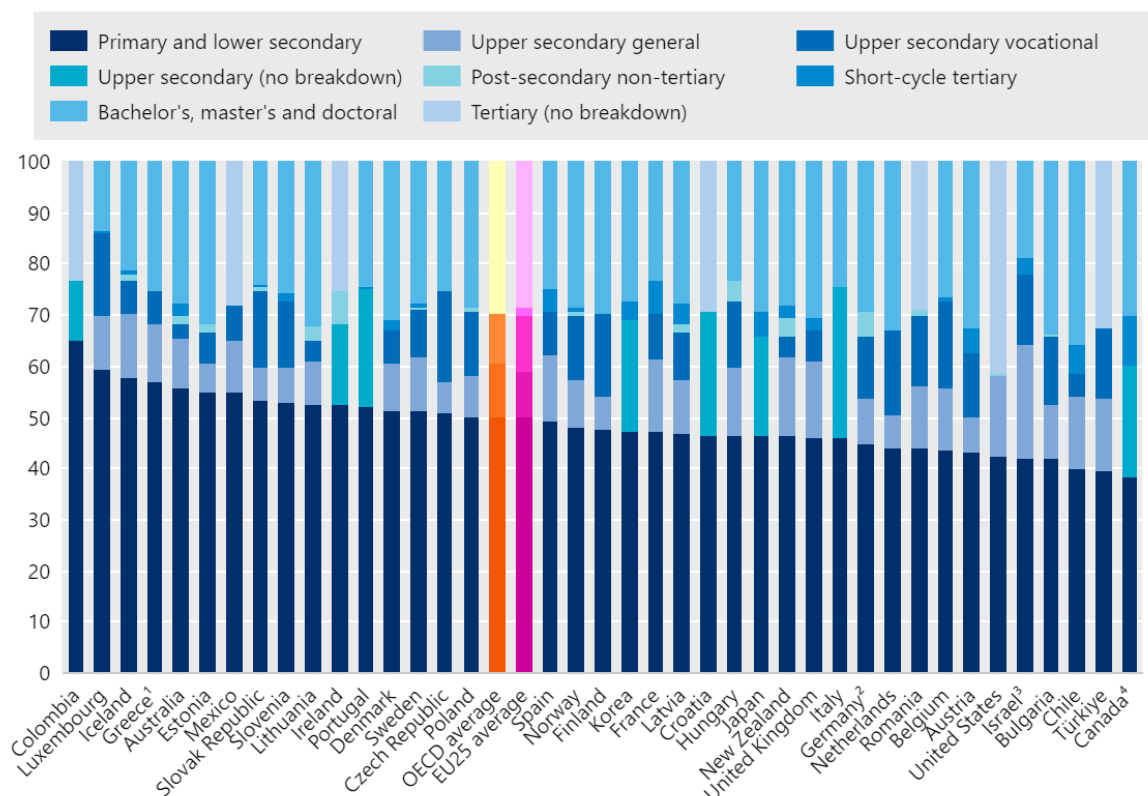
- Perhaps surprisingly, the share of international students at tertiary level has not been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in many OECD countries. However, a few countries experienced double digit declines in the share of international students. Mexico is not one of them, as the share of international students remained stable between 2019 and 2021 (1% of all tertiary students).

Financial resources invested in education

- All OECD and partner countries devote a substantial share of their domestic output to education. In 2020, OECD countries spent on average 5.1% of their gross domestic product (GDP) on primary to tertiary educational institutions. In Mexico, the corresponding share was 4.5% of GDP, of which 36% was dedicated to primary education, 19% to lower secondary education, 17% to upper secondary education and 28% to tertiary education (Figure 3).
- Funding for education in absolute terms is strongly influenced by countries' income levels. Countries with higher per capita GDP tend to spend more per student than those with lower per capita GDP. Across all levels from primary to tertiary education, Mexico spends USD 3 239 annually per full-time equivalent student (adjusted for purchasing power), compared to the OECD average of USD 12 647. Expenditure per student is equivalent to 18% of per capita GDP, which is below the OECD average of 27%.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for education systems across the world. On average across the OECD, expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions per full-time equivalent student (including expenditure on research and development) grew by 0.4% from 2019 to 2020 (the first year of the pandemic and the latest period with available data). In Mexico, it decreased by 9.6%. This change in expenditure per student is the result of total expenditure on educational institutions decreasing by 10.7% and the total number of full-time equivalent students decreasing by 1.3%.
- The distribution of spending between general and vocational upper secondary programmes depends on a variety of factors, such as the number of VET students, the fields of study within VET programmes and the importance given to VET relative to general programmes. In Mexico, 10% of all funding for educational institutions is spent on general upper secondary education and 7% on vocational upper secondary education (11% and 10% respectively on average across the OECD).
- Government sources dominate non-tertiary education funding in all OECD countries, while the private sector contributes 9% of the total expenditure on educational institutions on average. Private funding in Mexico accounted for 13% of expenditure at primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary levels.
- In most countries, private sources accounted for similar shares of expenditure on general and vocational programmes at upper secondary level. However, in a few countries the differences in the share of private funding between general and vocational programmes were wider. In Mexico, the private sector is responsible for 17% of expenditure on general upper secondary programmes and 21% of expenditure on vocational upper secondary programmes.
- On average across OECD countries, more than half of government expenditure on primary to post-secondary non-tertiary education comes from subnational governments. In Mexico, 27% of the funding comes from the central government, after transfers between government levels, 73% from the regional level.

Figure 3. Total expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions, by level of education (2020)

In per cent



1. Year of reference differs from 2020. Refer to the source table for more details.

2. Upper secondary vocational programmes include lower secondary vocational programmes.

3. Upper secondary programmes include lower secondary programmes.

4. Primary education includes pre-primary programmes.

Countries are ranked in descending order of total expenditure on primary and lower secondary institutions.

Source: OECD/UIS/Eurostat (2023), Table C2.1. For more information see *Source* section and [Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#) (OECD, 2023^[1]).

Teachers, the learning environment and the organisation of schools

- Teachers' salaries are an important determinant of the attractiveness of the teaching profession, but they also represent the single largest expenditure category in formal education. In most OECD countries, the salaries of teachers in public educational institutions increase with the level of education they teach, and also with experience. On average, annual statutory salaries for upper secondary teachers in general programmes with the most prevalent qualification and 15 years of experience are USD 53 456 across the OECD. In Mexico, the corresponding salary adjusted for purchasing power is USD 62 681, which is equivalent to MXN 742 034.
- Between 2015 and 2022, statutory salaries of upper secondary teachers in general programmes (with the most prevalent qualification and 15 years of experience) declined in real terms in roughly half of all OECD countries with available data. In Mexico, upper secondary teachers' salaries increased by 3% between 2015 and 2022.

- On average across OECD countries, in full-time equivalent terms, there are 14 students for every teaching staff member in general upper secondary programmes and 15 students per staff member in vocational upper secondary programmes. In Mexico, in full-time equivalent terms, there are 27 students per staff member in general upper secondary programmes, higher than the OECD average. In vocational upper secondary programmes, in full-time equivalent terms, there are 16 students for every teaching staff member (slightly above the OECD average).

References

- OECD (2023), *Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/d7f76adc-en>. [1]
- OECD (2023), Education at a Glance Database, <https://stats.oecd.org/>. [2]
- OECD (2023), *Education at a Glance 2023: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e13bef63-en>. [3]

More information

For more information on *Education at a Glance 2023* and to access the full set of indicators, see: <https://doi.org/10.1787/e13bef63-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 *Education at a Glance 2023 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes* (<https://doi.org/10.1787/d7f76adc-en>).

For general information on the methodology, please refer to the *OECD Handbook for Internationally Comparative Education Statistics 2018* (<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264304444-en>).

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

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

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

Questions can be directed to:

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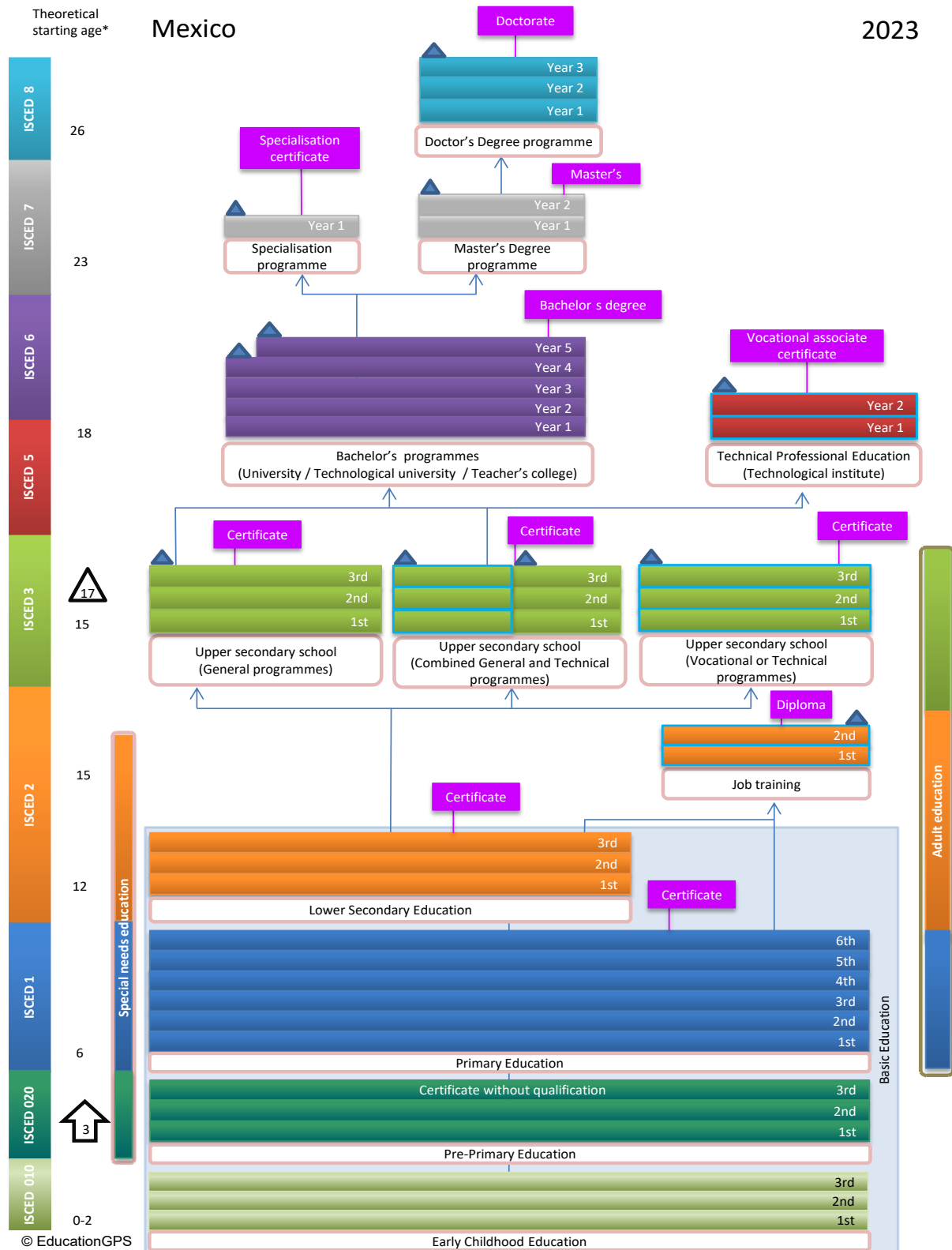
Key facts for Mexico in *Education at a Glance 2023*

Indicator	Country		OECD average		Source
Educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds by gender	2022		2022		Table A1.2
	% Men	% Women	% Men	% Women	
	43%	43%	16%	12%	
	30%	29%	44%	35%	
Tertiary	27%	28%	41%	54%	
NEET rates of 18-24 year-olds by gender	2022		2022		OECD (2023 ^[2])
	% Men	% Women	% Men	% Women	
	9.8%	30%	14%	15.5%	
Employment rates of 25-64 year-olds by educational attainment and gender	2022		2022		OECD (2023 ^[2])
	% Men	% Women	% Men	% Women	
Below upper secondary	88%	46%	70%	48%	
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	88%	56%	84%	69%	
Tertiary	88%	73%	90%	83%	
Enrolment rate of children aged 3 in ECEC	2021		2021		Table B2.1
	39%		73%		
Enrolment rate of 15-19 year-olds	2021		2021		Table B1.1
	59%		84%		
Share of upper secondary students enrolled in VET programmes	2021		2021		Table B1.3
	35%		44%		
Upper secondary completion rates by programme orientation	2021		2021		Table B3.1
	General	Vocational	General	Vocational	
By the end of the programme duration	m	m	77%	62%	
Two years after the end of the programme duration	m	m	87%	73%	
Expenditure on educational institutions per full-time equivalent student by level of education (in USD PPP)	2020		2020		Table C1.1
	Primary		USD 2 750		
	Lower secondary		USD 2 411		
	Upper secondary		USD 3 296		
	Tertiary		USD 5 887		
Total expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions as % of GDP	2020		2020		Table C2.1
	4.5%		5.1%		
Share of total education expenditure on upper secondary educational institutions by programme orientation	2020		2020		Figure C2.2
	General	Vocational	General	Vocational	
	10%	7%	11%	10%	
Total compulsory instruction time in primary and lower secondary education	2023		2023		Table D1.1
	m		7 634 hours		
Statutory salaries of upper secondary teachers in general programmes with the most prevalent qualifications after 15 years of experience (in USD PPP)	2022		2022		Table D3.1.
	USD 62 681		USD 53 456		
Change in statutory salaries of upper secondary teachers in general programmes with the most prevalent qualifications after 15 years of experience (in real terms)	2015-2022		2015-2022		Table D3.7
	3%		4%		
Share of teachers in general upper secondary programmes aged 50 or older	2021		2021		Table D7.2.
	m		39%		

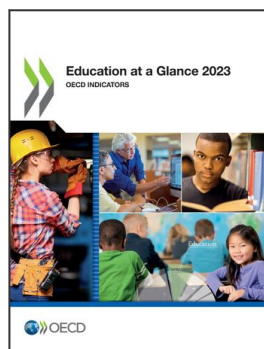
Note: The OECD average for completion rates reflects a different country coverage (see Indicator B3).

Source: OECD (2023^[2])

Diagram of the education system



Source: OECD (2023), "Mexico: Diagram of education system", OECD Education GPS, http://gpseducation.oecd.org/Content/MapOfEducationSystem/MEX/MEX_2011_EN.pdf
Please refer to "Mexico: Diagram of education system" for information on the keys.



From:

Education at a Glance 2023

OECD Indicators

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/e13bef63-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2023), “Mexico”, in *Education at a Glance 2023: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/f5fb5b52-en>

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