

# Education at a Glance 2022

OECD Indicators



# Greece

## The output of educational institutions and the impact of learning

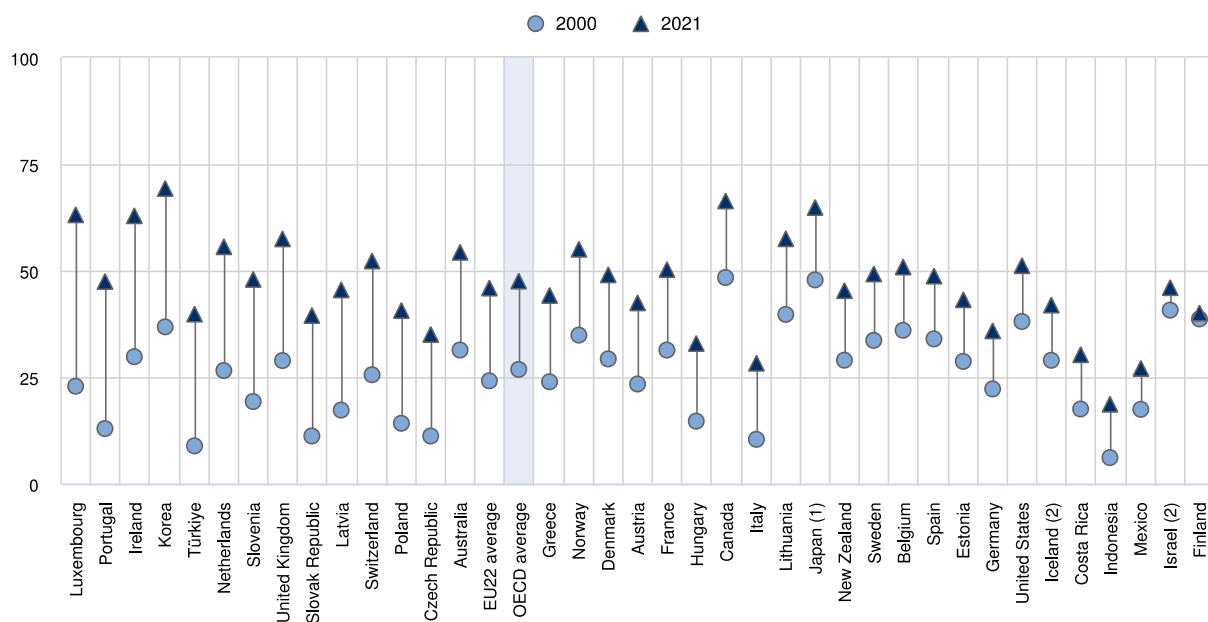
- Educational attainment has been increasing throughout the OECD, in particular at tertiary level. Between 2000 and 2021, the share of 25-34 year-olds with tertiary attainment increased on average by 21 percentage points. In Greece, the share also increased albeit at a slower pace, by 20 percentage points (from 24% in 2000 to 44% in 2021) (Figure 1). Greece remains one of the 12 OECD countries where tertiary education is still less common than upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as the highest level of attainment among 25-34 year-olds.
- 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 Greece, the share is 8%, which is lower than the OECD average.
- Higher educational attainment is often associated with better employment prospects and Greece is no exception. In 2021 the employment rate among 25-34 year-olds with tertiary education in Greece was 23 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. 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 Greece, 20% of women with below upper secondary attainment were employed in 2021, compared to 65% of those with tertiary attainment. In contrast, the figures were 64% and 75% for men.
- Across the OECD, the labour market benefits of tertiary attainment have proved especially strong during economic crises. However, this was not the case during the COVID-19 pandemic in Greece. Between 2019 and 2020, unemployment for 25-34 year-old workers with below upper secondary attainment fell by 4.7 percentage points, by 1 percentage point for workers with upper secondary attainment and increased by 1.7 percentage points for workers with tertiary attainment. In 2021, unemployment for workers with below upper secondary attainment increased by 4.2 percentage points, compared to 2020, while it fell by 4.1 percentage points for workers with upper secondary attainment and by 0.8 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 Greece, the earnings advantage of tertiary-educated workers was smaller than the OECD average. In 2018, workers with upper secondary or

post-secondary non-tertiary attainment earned 28% more than those with below upper secondary attainment and those with tertiary attainment earned 82% 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 Greece. In 2021, the difference between the region with the highest share of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary attainment (Attica, at 45%) and that with the lowest share (Ionian Islands, at 19%) was 26 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](https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2022_X3-A.pdf)).

## Access to education, participation and progress

- In almost all OECD countries, women make up the majority of those graduating from general upper secondary education. In Greece, the share is 53% (OECD average 55%). In contrast, men are overrepresented among graduates of vocational upper secondary programmes in most OECD countries, as is the case in Greece where they make up 63% of all vocational upper secondary graduates, above the OECD average (55%).
- In Greece, 66% of 18-24 year-olds are still in full- or part-time education or training at either upper secondary or tertiary level (significantly above the OECD average of 54%). A subset of these

students (4% of 18-24 year-olds) combine their education or training with some form of employment in Greece, 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, all vocational upper secondary graduates have direct access to tertiary education. In Greece 89% of graduates from vocational upper secondary programme have direct access to tertiary education.
- As is the case in all OECD countries, a majority of students enrolled at tertiary level in Greece are bachelor's students (86%). However, the next commonest enrolment level varies from country to country. In Greece, master's students make up the second largest group of tertiary students at 10%. This is also the case in 25 other OECD countries, while in the remaining 14 countries with available data, short-cycle tertiary students form the second largest group.
- At 20%, business, administration and law was the most popular field of study among new entrants into tertiary education in Greece, which is the case in most OECD countries. Despite the growing need for digital skills and the good employment prospects of students with degrees in information and communication technologies (ICT), only a small fraction of entrants into tertiary education choose this field. In Greece, 79% of 25-64 year-olds with a tertiary ICT qualification are employed, but ICT students make up only 4% of new entrants into tertiary education. This is below the OECD average of 6%.

## Financial resources invested in education

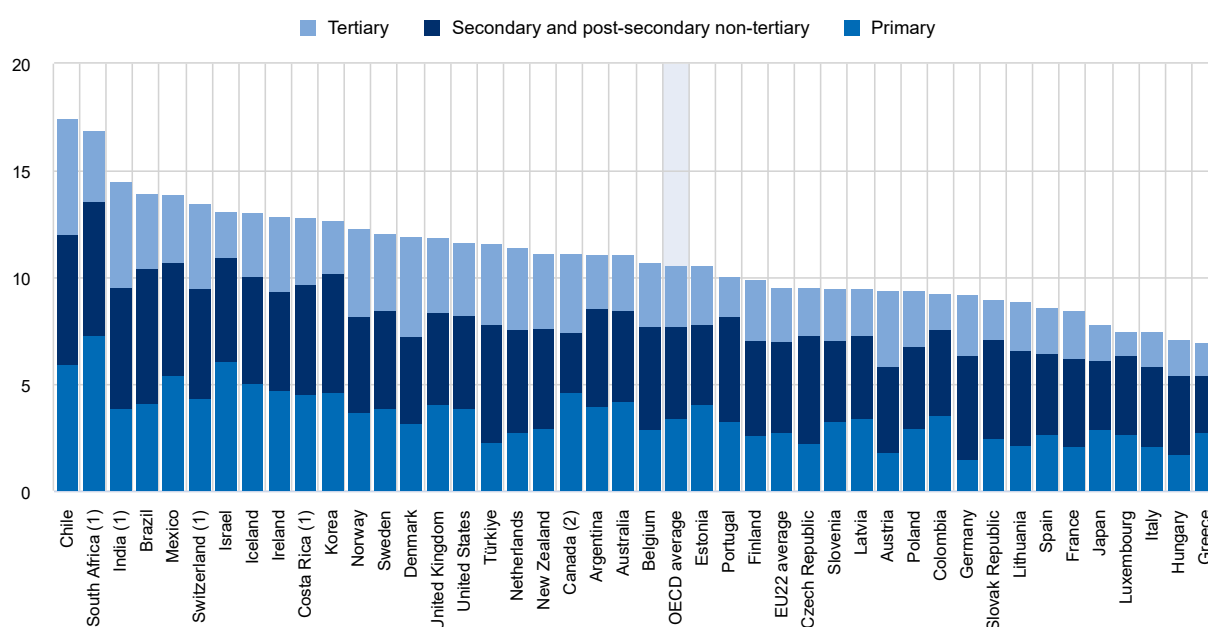
- All OECD countries devote a substantial share of national output to educational institutions. In 2019, OECD countries spent on average 4.9% of their gross domestic product (GDP) on primary to tertiary educational institutions. In Greece, the corresponding share was 3.7%.
- Public spending on primary to tertiary education was 6.9% of total government expenditure in Greece (Figure 2), lower than the OECD average (10.6%). Also, relative to GDP, public spending on primary to tertiary education (3.3%) is lower 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, Greece spent USD 5 992 per student in 2019. Its cumulative expenditure on educating a student from the age of 6 to 15 was USD 71 509, which was significantly below 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 Greece, the values are USD 7 279 at primary and USD 6 728 per student at secondary level, which are among the lowest across OECD countries.
- In contrast to lower levels of education, spending on tertiary education varies widely across OECD countries. Expenditure per student at tertiary level in Greece is lower than at other levels of education, in contrast to almost all other OECD countries. The average expenditure per student in Greece is USD 4 192 per year, which is about USD 3 100 lower than that of the primary level and USD 2 500 lower than that of the secondary level. It is among the lowest across OECD countries. The average expenditure at tertiary level (USD 17 559) is driven up by high values in a few

countries, including in Greece. At 39%, the share of research and development (R&D) expenditure makes up a larger fraction of expenditure on tertiary education in Greece 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, while this share was 7% in Greece in 2019. In contrast, private expenditure at tertiary level was higher in all OECD countries. In Greece, the share of private expenditure at tertiary level reached 13%, which was below the OECD average of 31%.

**Figure 2. 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](https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2022_X3-C.pdf)).

## Teachers, the learning environment and the organisation of schools

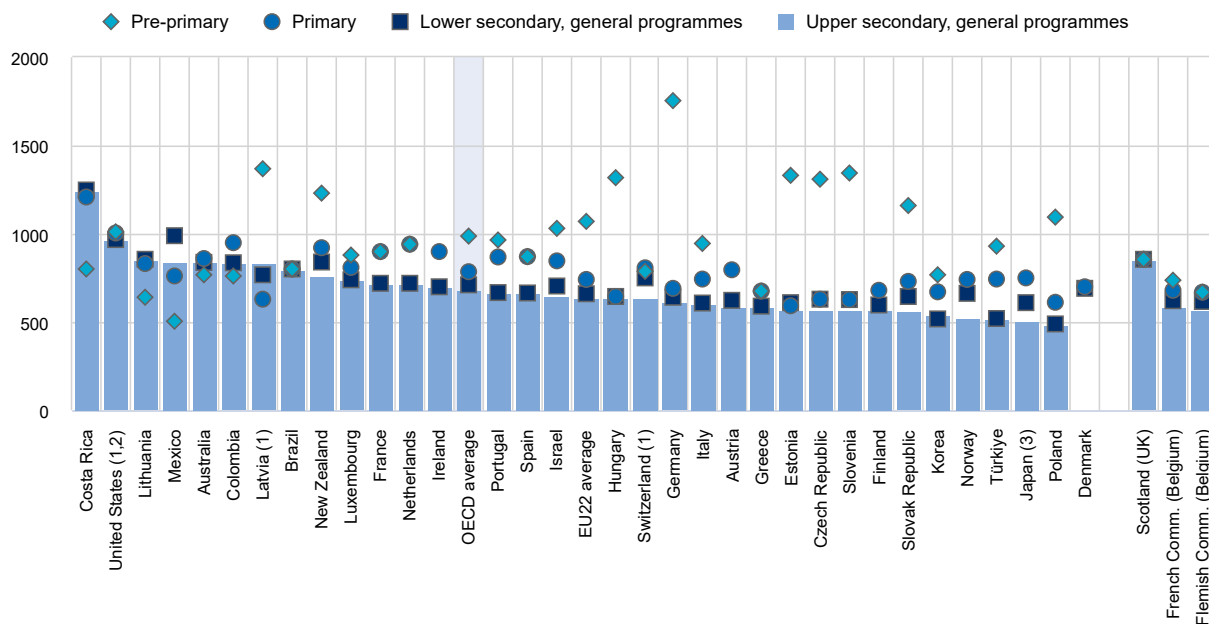
- The salaries of teachers and school heads are an important determinant of the attractiveness of the teaching profession, but they also represent the single largest expenditure item in formal education. In most OECD countries, the statutory salaries of teachers (and school heads) in public educational institutions increase with the level of education they teach, and also with experience. Actual salaries also increase with the level of education. On average across OECD countries, actual salaries range from USD 41 941 at the pre-primary level to USD 53 682 at the upper

secondary level. In Greece, actual salaries average USD 27 660 at pre-primary level and USD 29 023 at upper secondary level.

- Between 2015 and 2021, on average across OECD countries, 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 real terms. In Greece, real wages of teachers at lower secondary level declined by 2%.
- Teachers' average actual salaries remain lower than earnings of tertiary-educated workers in almost all OECD countries, and at almost all levels of education. This is also the case in Greece. Lower secondary (general programme) teachers in Greece earn 23.7% less than other tertiary-educated workers. School head actual salaries in Greece are only slightly higher than the earnings of other tertiary educated workers. This is different from most OECD countries, where school heads tend to earn well above the average earnings of tertiary educated workers.
- The average number of teaching hours per year required from a typical teacher in public educational institutions in OECD countries tends to decrease as the level of education increases. This is also the case in Greece.
- Based on official regulations or agreements and due to the special circumstances of the pandemic and the adjustments that had to be made on the schedule, annual teaching hours in Greece are 675 hours per year at pre-primary level, 675 hours at primary level, 590 hours at lower secondary level (general programmes) and 590 hours at upper secondary level (general programmes) (Figure 3).
- The duration of initial teacher education for primary and lower secondary teachers ranges from 2.5 years to 6.5 years across OECD countries. In Greece, initial teacher education typically lasts 4 years for prospective lower secondary teachers (general programmes). It is the same length for prospective primary teachers. As is the case in almost all OECD countries, a tertiary degree is awarded to prospective teachers of all levels of education upon completion of their initial teacher training.
- Continuing professional development is compulsory for all teachers of general programmes in most countries with data, and Greece is no exception. At secondary level, professional development activities are compulsory for all teachers.

Figure 3. Teaching time of teachers, by level of education (2021)

Net statutory teaching time in hours per year, in public institutions



1. Actual teaching time (in Latvia except for pre-primary level).
2. Reference year differs from 2021. Refer to the source table for details.
3. Average planned teaching time in each school at the beginning of the school year.

Countries and other participants are ranked in descending order of the number of teaching hours per year in general upper secondary education.

**Source:** OECD (2022), Table D4.1. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes ([https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2022\\_X3-D.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2022_X3-D.pdf)).

## Focus on tertiary education

- Among 25-64 year-olds in Greece, bachelor's degrees are the most common tertiary attainment at 25% of the population followed by master's degrees with 8% and short-cycle tertiary qualifications with 1%. This is similar to the OECD average, where bachelor's degrees are most common (19%), followed by master's degrees (14%) and short cycle tertiary qualifications (7%). As in all OECD countries and other participants, only a small fraction of the population holds a doctoral degree: the share is 1% in Greece.
- On average, tertiary attainment generates a wide range of labour-market benefits, including high employment rates. Yet, there are significant differences depending on the field of study. In 2021, employment rates in Greece were highest among tertiary-educated individuals who studied health and welfare with 84% and lowest among those who studied arts and humanities, social sciences, journalism and information at 74%. However, these differences need to be put into perspective. Even among 25-64 year-olds with tertiary attainment in the field with the lowest employment rate, this was 12.2 percentage points higher than among those with upper secondary attainment (all fields combined).
- In most OECD countries including in Greece, tertiary-educated adults have higher rates of participation in non-formal education and training than those with a lower level of educational attainment. In 2021, 3% of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary attainment in Greece had participated in

non-formal education and training in the four weeks prior to being surveyed, compared to 0% 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 Greece is 1%, below the OECD average (22%). Compared to 2013, it has decreased by 7 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 Greece, only 1% of academic staff are aged under 30, below the OECD average (8%). In contrast, the share of academic staff aged 50 or over is 52%, which is above the OECD average by 12 percentage points.

## COVID-19: The second year of the pandemic

- The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on adult learning in most OECD countries. In 2020, the share of adults who participated in a formal or non-formal education and training activity in the four weeks prior to being surveyed decreased by 2 percentage points on average across OECD countries compared with 2019. However, in 2021, participation in non-formal education and training returned to pre-pandemic levels in most countries. In Greece, a similar pattern emerged. From 2019 to 2020, the share of adults participating in a formal or non-formal education and training activity remained unchanged. From 2020 to 2021, it fell by 1 percentage point and has thus remained below pre-pandemic levels.
- 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 Greece declined in 2021. The share of NEET among young adults was 17% in 2021, below 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](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](mailto:EDU.EAG@oecd.org)

---