



OECD Indicators of Education Systems





Message from the OECD Secretary-General

The challenges faced by 21st century economies and societies are daunting: addressing the human and social consequences of an international financial crisis, meeting development goals, encouraging green growth and responding to climate change, ageing societies and the knowledge economy.

Education is a critical part of any response. Knowledge increases both wealth and well-being; university graduates in most countries earn more. Our research shows that people who complete upper secondary education are much more likely to report good health than those who do not. Yet education systems need to do a much better job in providing equitable educational opportunities – starting in early childhood, and continuing throughout life. They need to equip people with knowledge, skills and tools to stay competitive and engaged.

Education is an investment in the future. Our work on education aims to make that investment strong, effective and fair.



Angel Gurría
OECD Secretary-General





What is INES?

The Indicators of Education Systems (INES) programme is an authoritative source for accurate and relevant information on education around the world. It provides data on the performance of the education systems in the OECD's 34 member countries and a set of partner countries, including non-member G20 nations.

INES enables education systems to assess themselves in light of other countries' educational performance by providing a rich and internationally comparable set of indicators on:

- The output of educational institutions and the impact of learning on economic and social outcomes.
- The financial and human resources invested in education.
- Access to education, participation and progression.
- The learning environment and organisation of schools.

The indicators are published annually in *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, the INES programme's flagship publication. First published in 1992, *Education at a Glance* currently contains more than 100 charts, 200 tables, and 90 000 figures. The report is prepared in English and French. Translated versions include Chinese, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish.

INES members (2012)



*OECD partner countries.

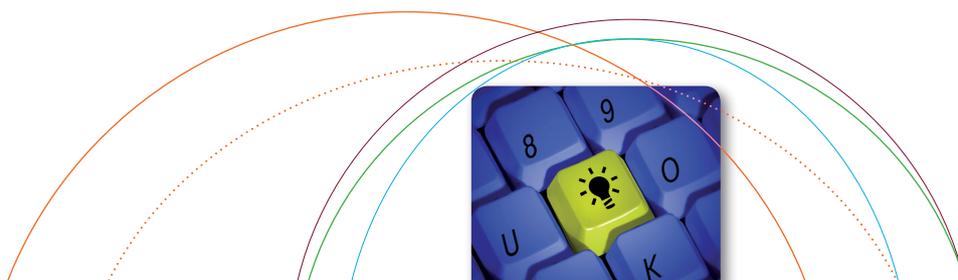


Through *Education at a Glance* and its other products, the INES programme seeks to:

- **Support countries' understanding** of their education systems by placing them in a global context.
- **Catalyse reforms** to educational policy and practice in member and partner countries by providing valuable information on where they stand in different areas.
- **Promote sound education policy development** in member and partner countries by highlighting successful educational outcomes and strategies.
- **Accelerate improvements in education** by enabling member and partner countries to learn from each others' experiences.

INES speaks to the needs of a wide variety of users, including:

- **Policy makers** seeking to understand and improve the performance of their national education systems.
- **Researchers** looking for comparative global statistics on education.
- **Educators** who want to learn more about successful educational practices across the world.
- **Members of the public** interested in learning about the state of education in their country and around the world.





What issues does INES address?

INES offers detailed, comprehensive data on:

- **The entire national education system** of participating countries, regardless of who owns or sponsors the institutions concerned, or how education is delivered.
- **All levels of education**, including early childhood education, primary and secondary education, tertiary education, and adult education and training.
- **Different types of students**, including students from different age groups and social backgrounds.
- **Different kinds of education**, including public education, government-dependent and independent private education, vocational education and training, special education programmes, and other specialised programmes.

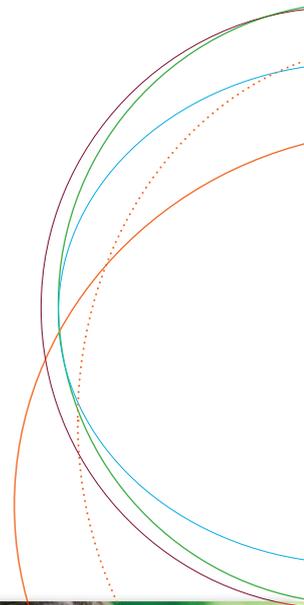
INES is an evolving programme. Each new edition of *Education at a Glance* seeks to cover additional countries and include new indicators that are related to education policy issues prioritised by members of the OECD, such as:

- Analyses of the **returns on education**, both for individuals and countries.
- The development of **early childhood education and care** systems around the world.
- **School accountability** in public and private schools.
- **Tuition-fee reforms** in higher education.
- The **globalisation of higher education** and changing patterns of student enrolment.
- The scope of **adult education and training**.



INES also covers a series of recurrent themes that are important for education policy makers, practitioners, researchers, and the general public. Key questions in *Education at a Glance* have included:

- *The output of educational institutions and the impact of learning*
 - How many students finish secondary and tertiary education?
 - How does educational attainment affect participation in the labour market?
 - What are the social outcomes of education?
 - What are the earnings premiums from education?
- *The financial and human resources invested in education*
 - How much public and private investment in education is there?
 - How much do tertiary students pay, and what public subsidies do they receive?
 - On what resources and services is education funding spent?
- *Access to education, participation and progression*
 - Who participates in education?
 - How many students will enter tertiary education?
 - Who studies abroad, and where?
 - How have 15-29 year-olds transitioned from school to work?
- *The learning environment and organisation of schools*
 - How much time do students spend in the classroom?
 - What is the student-teacher ratio, and how big are classes?
 - How much are teachers paid?





What does INES produce?

In addition to *Education at a Glance*, the INES programme disseminates a wide variety of products designed to assist policy makers, educators, researchers, and members of the public in obtaining the information they seek, in formats that best meet their needs:

Education Indicators in Focus

Released each month, these briefs highlight specific indicators in *Education at a Glance* that are drawing public attention, are of particular interest to policy makers and practitioners, or are new to the publication. Containing a mix of engaging text, charts, and policy insights, the briefs provide a detailed overview of a specific issue or question in a short, highly readable format.

Education at a Glance Country Notes

Released each September, Country Notes present key data from *Education at a Glance* by country, using a brief, easy-to-read format, with charts. The notes present the most important findings for each level of the country's education system, and highlight specific areas of success and challenge. They also provide insight into recent developments in the country's education system, and connect *Education at a Glance* findings to the country's current education policy discourse.

Education at a Glance Highlights

Also released annually, the *Highlights* publication offers a snapshot of the internationally comparable data in *Education at a Glance*. Like its sister publication, it presents key charts and tables on education levels, student numbers, the economic and social benefits of education, education financing, and school environments.



Education at a Glance Navigator

Designed for policy makers, researchers, and practitioners, the Navigator is an online tool that enables users to search for specific indicators in *Education at a Glance* and compare the results of different countries through online charts and tables. Users can also construct data reports for individual countries and reports comparing multiple countries. The Navigator is linked to the text version of *Education at a Glance*, where users can investigate specific indicators further.

OECD.stat

Designed primarily for researchers, *OECD.stat* houses the raw survey data that countries submit to construct the indicators presented in *Education at a Glance* and other OECD publications, as well as metadata that provides context and explanations for countries' data. *OECD.stat* allows users to retrieve data to conduct their own analyses of education systems in participating countries.

In addition to these resources, the OECD website contains a variety of presentations, media releases and other resources on education. Data from *Education at a Glance* are also used in other OECD publications and databases, such as:

- *OECD Factbook*
- *Your Better Life Index*
- *Education Today*
- The OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard





How does INES work?

The INES programme is overseen and co-ordinated by three key bodies:

- The **Education Policy Committee**, which oversees the strategic direction, coherence, and quality of the OECD's overall work on education.
- The **INES Advisory Group**, which co-ordinates INES-related work with other programmes in the Education Directorate and advises the Education Policy Committee.
- The **INES Working Party**, which sets priorities and standards for data development, analysis and reporting for INES, and provides direction on the dissemination of the programme's policy advice, analysis, and research to a wide range of stakeholders.

Each of these groups meets biannually and consists of national representatives from some or all of the OECD's member and partner countries. Eurostat, the European Commission and UNESCO are also observers to the INES programme.

In addition, two networks of technical experts from member and partner countries develop and refine indicators for the INES programme:

- The **INES Network for the Collection and Adjudication of System-Level Descriptive Information on Educational Structures, Policies and Practices** (NESLI), which focuses on system-level indicators in education.
- The **INES Network on Data Collection and Development on Economic, Labour Market and Social Outcomes of Education** (LSO), which focuses on the labour-market outcomes of education.



The data used by the INES programme to publish *Education at a Glance* and other products comes from several key sources:

- The annual **UNESCO, OECD and EUROSTAT (UOE) survey**, which collects data on the enrolment of students, new entrants, graduates in various levels of education, educational personnel, class size, educational finance, and other aspects of education.
- Surveys administered by the **NESLI** and **LSO** networks.
- The OECD **Programme for International Student Assessment** (PISA), a global assessment of student learning outcomes in the key areas of reading, mathematics, science and problem-solving.
- The OECD **Teaching and Learning International Survey** (TALIS), a comprehensive survey of the conditions of teaching and learning.
- The OECD **Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies** (PIAAC), a survey that measures the skills and competencies of adults and how those are used at work, at home and in the community.

Ad-hoc surveys are also administered from time to time to collect other information prioritised by member countries, such as completion rates at the secondary and tertiary levels, data on student mobility, and student loan data.

Each year, the OECD's 34 member countries and its partner countries participate in the UOE data collection, and most of these countries also participate in the NESLI and LSO data collections. The INES team also collaborates with the other G20 countries not included in these groups to collect comparable data.

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