



Brazil

This country note provides an overview of key characteristics of the education system in Brazil based on Education at a Glance 2024. In line with the thematic focus of Education at a Glance 2024, it highlights issues of equity in education. Data in this note are provided for the latest available year as indicated in Education at a Glance 2024.

Highlights

- Adults without upper secondary qualification are at considerable risk of poor social and labour-market outcomes throughout their lives. Reducing the share of young adults without an upper secondary qualification has been a priority in many countries and their share has decreased between 2016 and 2023 in 28 out of 35 OECD member countries. This is also the case in Brazil. Their share of 25-34 year-olds without upper secondary educational attainment decreased by 8 percentage points between 2016 and 2023. At 27%, it remains 13 percentage points above the OECD average in 2023 (Figure 1).
- Early childhood education can help to reduce the developmental gaps that put some children at a disadvantage when they enrol in primary school. In most OECD countries, the large majority of children are enrolled in early childhood education one year before the start of primary education. In Brazil, 90% of children in this age group are enrolled, slightly below the OECD average of 96%.
- The average annual government expenditure per student in public primary institutions in Brazil is USD 3668 compared to an average of USD 11 914 in OECD countries. In most countries, expenditure increases by level of education. In Brazil government spending per student in public institutions is USD 3745 at lower secondary level (compared to an OECD average of 13 260), USD 4058 at upper secondary level (compared to an OECD average of USD 12 713), and USD 13 569 at tertiary level (USD 17 138 on average across OECD countries).
- Strong labour markets and increasing participation in education have led to a decline in the share of 18-24 year-olds who are neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET) in most OECD member countries. Across the OECD, the average NEET rate decreased from 15.8% to 13.8% between 2016 and 2023. In Brazil, the share of NEETs decreased from 29.4% to 24.0%.
- By almost all available measures, girls and women have better educational outcomes than boys and men, and in many cases the gap is widening. This is reflected in gender gaps in educational attainment. In all OECD member countries, women aged 25-34 are as likely or more likely than their male peers to have a tertiary qualification (54% compared to 41% on average across OECD countries). In Brazil, the tertiary educational attainment rate is 28% for women and 20% for men.
- Countries make different choices about whether to operate many small schools or fewer large schools. In Brazil, the median primary school has 15 students per grade compared to the OECD average of 27.

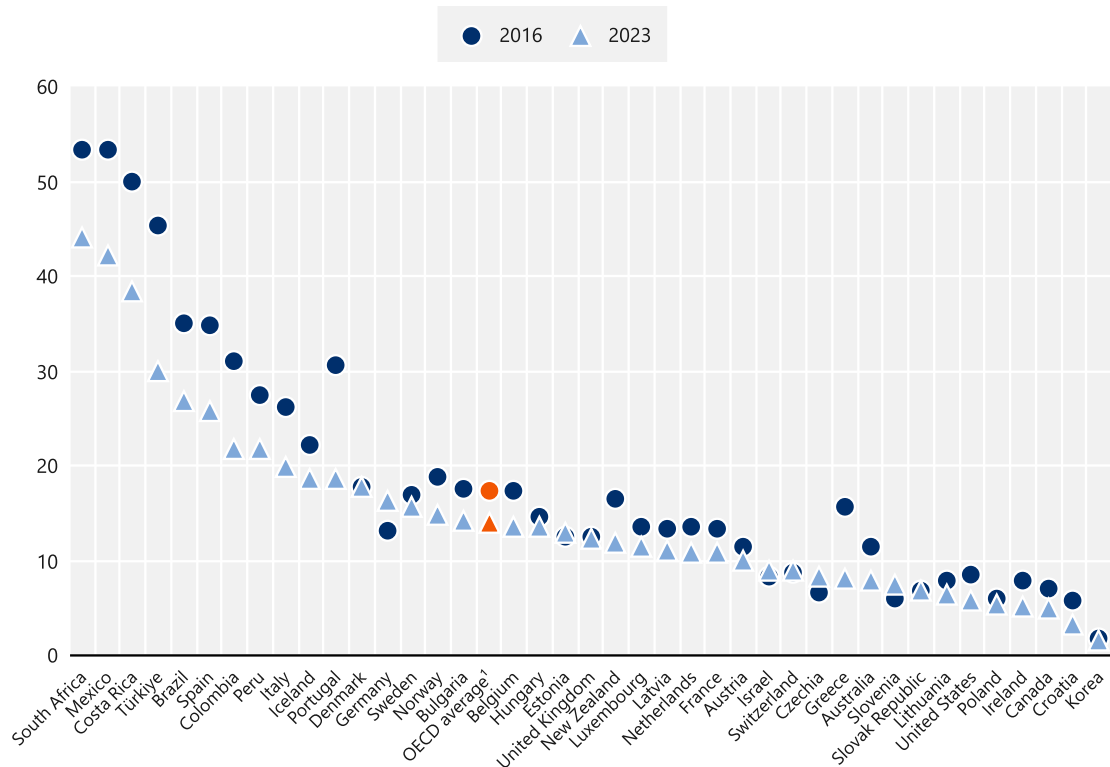


The output of educational institutions and the impact of learning

- Adults without upper secondary qualification are at considerable risk of poor social and labour-market outcomes throughout their lives. Reducing the share of young adults without an upper secondary qualification has been a priority in many countries and their share has decreased between 2016 and 2023 in 28 out of 35 OECD member countries. This is also the case in Brazil. Their share of 25-34 year-olds without upper secondary educational attainment decreased by 8 percentage points between 2016 and 2023. At 27%, it remains 13 percentage points above the OECD average in 2023 (Figure 1).
- The difficult labour-market situation faced by workers without an upper secondary qualification is reflected in employment rates among 25-34 year-olds. In Brazil, 64% of 25-34 year-olds without an upper secondary qualification are employed, compared to 75% of those with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualification. The corresponding OECD averages are 61% and 79%, respectively. Moreover, workers without an upper secondary qualification are at risk of earning very low wages in most OECD countries. In Brazil, 59% of 25-64 year-olds with below upper secondary educational attainment earn at or below half the median income compared to 37% of workers with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary educational attainment and 19% of workers with a tertiary qualification. Across the OECD, the respective shares are 28%, 17% and 10%.
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- By almost all available measures, girls and women have better educational outcomes than boys and men, and in many cases the gap is widening. This is reflected in gender gaps in educational attainment. In all OECD member countries, women aged 25-34 are as likely or more likely than their male peers to have a tertiary qualification (54% compared to 41% on average across OECD countries). In Brazil, the tertiary educational attainment rate is 28% for women and 20% for men.
- Although girls and women clearly outperform boys and men in education, the picture is reversed when they enter the labour market; the key measures of labour-market outcomes are generally worse for women than for men. Women aged 25-34 are less likely to be employed than men, with the gap typically widest for those with below upper secondary educational attainment and narrowest for those with tertiary attainment. In Brazil, only 44% of young women with educational attainment below upper secondary educational level are employed, while the corresponding share for young men is 80% (the corresponding OECD averages are 47% and 72%). In contrast, 85% of young women with a tertiary qualification are employed, while the corresponding share for young men is 92% (the corresponding OECD averages are 84% and 90%). However, tertiary attainment does not help to reduce the wage gap between men and women. Across the OECD, young women with a tertiary qualification earn on average 83% of the wage of their male peers, while the corresponding fraction is 75% in Brazil. Among those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment, young women earn on average 84% of the wage of their male peers across the OECD and 74% in Brazil.

Figure 1. Trends in the share of 25-34 year-olds with below upper secondary educational attainment (2016 and 2023)

In per cent



1. The OECD average is derived from the unweighted mean of all countries with available and comparable data for both years. Countries are ranked in descending order of the share of 25-34 year-olds with below upper secondary attainment in 2023.

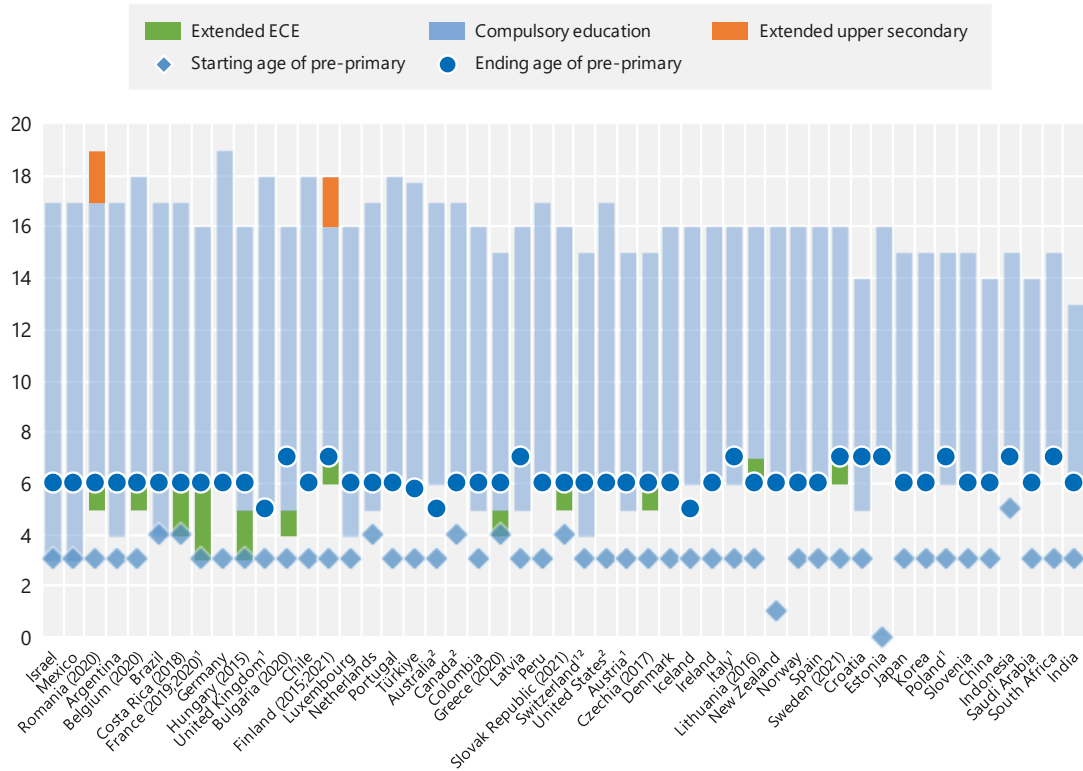
Source: OECD (2024), Table A1.2. For more information see *Education at a Glance 2024 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes* (<https://doi.org/10.1787/e7d20315-en>).

Access to education, participation and progression

- Early childhood education can help to reduce the developmental gaps that put some children at a disadvantage when they enrol in primary school. In most OECD countries, the large majority of children are enrolled in early childhood education one year before the start of primary education. In Brazil, 90% of children in this age group are enrolled, slightly below the OECD average of 96%.
- Although most children and youths participate in education in the years before and after compulsory education, not all do so. In order to increase enrolment in the early years or among youths, twelve OECD member and accession countries have increased the duration of compulsory education over the past decade. On average across OECD countries, compulsory education now lasts 11 years (Figure 2). In Brazil compulsory education is longer, lasting 13 years, from the age of 4 to 17.

Figure 2. Duration of compulsory education (2022)

In years



Note: The year in parentheses indicates when policy changes were made to the duration of compulsory education. In addition, extended ECEC/extended upper secondary refers to the extension in the duration of the relevant level since 2013.

1. There are other compulsory activities to complete by the end of compulsory education (see Table B2.1).

2. Starting age, ending age, and duration of compulsory education may vary at sub-national level.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the duration of compulsory education.

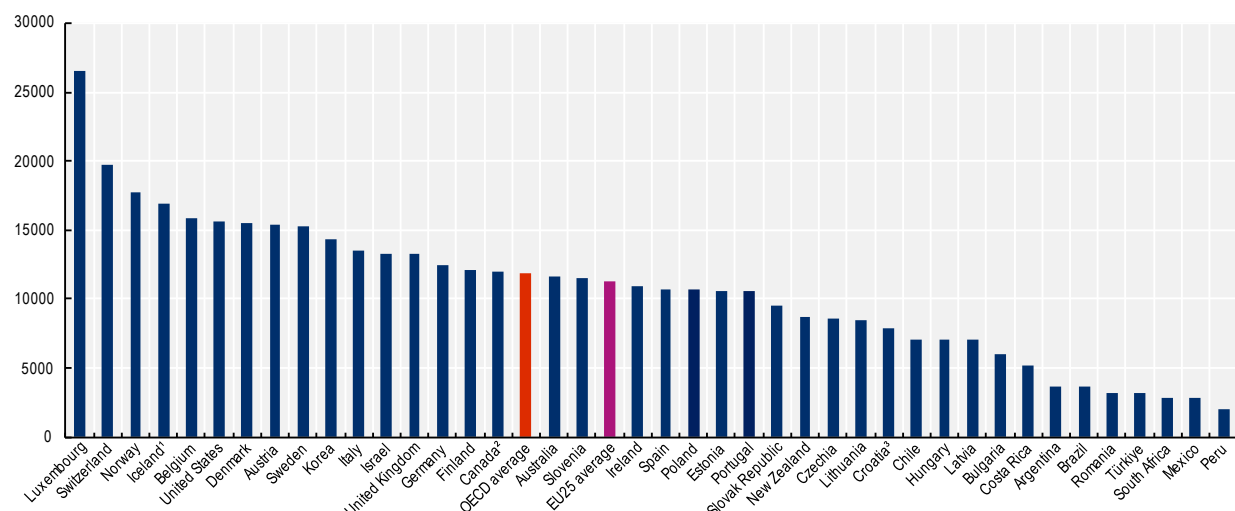
Source: OECD (2024), Table B2.1. For more information see Education at a Glance 2004 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/e7d20315-en>).

- Across the OECD, 63% of students who graduated with a bachelor's degree did so from public institutions. However, private education is slowly becoming more common across all levels of tertiary education and the share of graduates from private institutions has grown by 3 percentage points between 2013 and 2022. In Brazil, the share of bachelor's graduates from private institutions increased from 77% to 81%.
- Many countries seek to attract internationally mobile tertiary students, as they often pay higher tuition fees and, if they decide to stay in the country after graduation, bring valuable skills to the labour market. Across the OECD, a total of 6% of all tertiary students are internationally mobile in 2022. In Brazil, the share is 0%, unchanged from 2013.

Financial resources invested in education

- The average annual government expenditure per student in public primary institutions in Brazil is USD 3668 compared to an average of USD 11 914 in OECD countries. In most countries, expenditure increases by level of education. In Brazil government spending per student in public institutions is USD 3745 at lower secondary level (compared to an OECD average of 13 260), USD 4058 at upper secondary level (compared to an OECD average of USD 12 713), and USD 13 569 at tertiary level (USD 17 138 on average across OECD countries).
- Early childhood education has received much attention in recent years because of its importance, especially for children from disadvantaged families. In Brazil, public investment in early childhood education relative to GDP has increased by 29% between 2015 and 2021. Across the OECD, it has increased on average by 9% over this period.

Figure 3. Government expenditure per full-time equivalent student in public institutions, primary education (2021)



1. At primary level, expenditure from the central government on government-dependent private institutions is included in expenditure on public institutions.

2. Primary education includes pre-primary programmes.

3. Primary includes lower secondary education.

Countries are ranked in descending order of government expenditure per full-time equivalent student in public institutions at primary level..

Source: OECD (2024), Table C3.1. For more information see *Education at a Glance 2024 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes* (<https://doi.org/10.1787/e7d20315-en>).



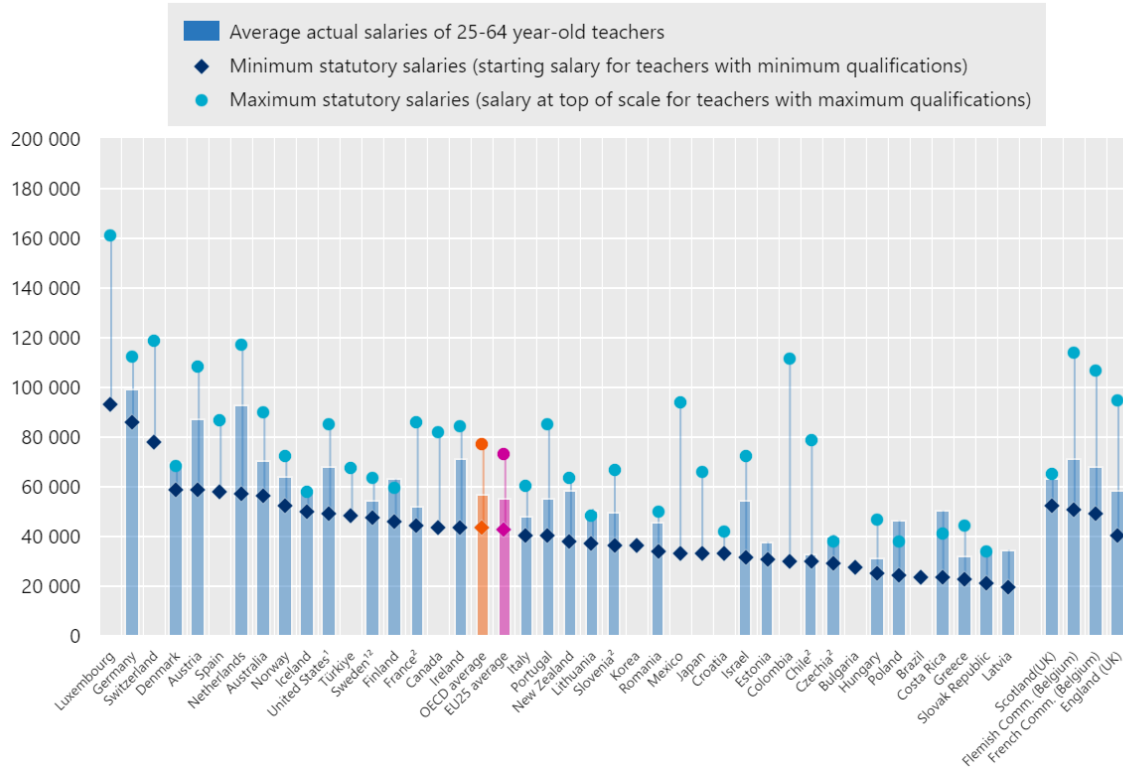
- The distribution of government expenditure on education by level of government differs between countries. In some countries, all final expenditure on education comes from central governments, whereas in other countries all final expenditure comes from local or regional governments. In Brazil, 10% of funds for primary schools come originally from the central government, 14% from regional governments and 76% from local governments. Most of central government funds are then transferred to lower levels of government and are spent at regional or local level. The central government is responsible for 2% of final expenditure on primary education, the regional governments are responsible for 16%, and local governments are responsible for 83%.
- Governments have to decide how to allocate funds across policy areas. Education (including R&D) is a major expenditure item and accounts for 10.0% of all public expenditure on average across the OECD. In Brazil, this share is similar with 10.6%.
- Between 2015 and 2021, government expenditure on education (primary to tertiary levels) decreased by 2.5% per year, on average, in Brazil. Across OECD countries, government expenditure on education increased by 2.1% annually over this period. The share of public expenditure on education as a share of total government expenditure decreased from 11.2% in 2015 to 10.6% in 2021 in Brazil. Across OECD countries, there was a slight decrease over the same period from 10.9% to 10.0%.

Teachers, the learning environment and the organisation of schools

- In 2023, the minimum statutory salaries (starting salary with minimum qualifications) of lower secondary teachers in Brazil reached USD 23 018, 47% lower than the OECD average of USD 43 058 (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Lower secondary teachers' average actual salaries compared to the statutory minimum and maximum salaries (2023)

Annual salaries of teachers in public institutions, in equivalent USD converted using PPPs for private consumption



Note: Actual salaries include bonuses and allowances.

1. Actual salaries for minimum and maximum statutory salaries.

2. Year of reference for actual salaries differs from 2023. Refer to the source table for more information.

Countries and other participants are ranked in descending order of the starting salaries for teachers with the minimum qualifications.

Source: OECD (2024), Table D3.3 and the OECD Data Explorer, <https://data-explorer.oecd.org/>. For more information see *Education at a Glance 2024 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes* (<https://doi.org/10.1787/e7d20315-en>).

- The work of teachers consists of a variety of tasks including teaching, but also preparing lessons, grading assignments and communicating with parents. The number of hours that teachers are contractually obliged to teach varies greatly across countries. In Brazil, teachers at lower secondary level have to teach 800 hours annually. This is above the OECD average of 706 hours per year.
- Countries make different choices about whether to operate many small schools or fewer large schools. In Brazil, the median primary school has 15 students per grade compared to the OECD average of 27. The largest 5% of primary schools in Brazil have 93 or more students per grade, while the OECD average is 91 or more. At the other end of the scale, the smallest 5% of primary schools have 2 or fewer students per grade compared to an OECD average of 5 or fewer students per grade. Although small schools are important for ensuring primary education is accessible, especially in sparsely populated rural areas, they can be costly to run and may have to resort to multi-grade teaching.
- Most education systems involve students and parents in the governance of public schools. In most countries, it is compulsory for parents' representatives to be included in the governing board of public



schools. Student participation is less widespread, but still common. In Brazil, the participation of parents in governing body of public schools is required, and the participation of students is also required.

- Student-teacher ratios vary between countries and between levels of education. On average across the OECD, there are 14 students per teacher in primary education, 13 students in lower secondary education and 13 students in upper secondary education. In Brazil, the corresponding numbers are 23 in primary education, 22 in lower secondary education and 22 in upper secondary education. While lower student teacher ratios allow teachers to focus more on the needs of the individual, they require higher overall spending on teacher salaries and have to be weighed against alternative spending priorities.
- Between 2013 and 2022, the average age of teachers has increased across the OECD. In lower secondary education, 36% of teachers are 50 years or older, compared to 35% in 2013. Brazil has fewer teachers aged 50 or older, with only 25% of teachers being in this age category, up from 19% in 2013.

More information

For more information on Education at a Glance 2024 and to access the full set of indicators, see: <https://doi.org/10.1787/c00cad36-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 2024: Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes (<https://doi.org/10.1787/e7d20315-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://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/5q> and by following the StatLinks  in the publication.

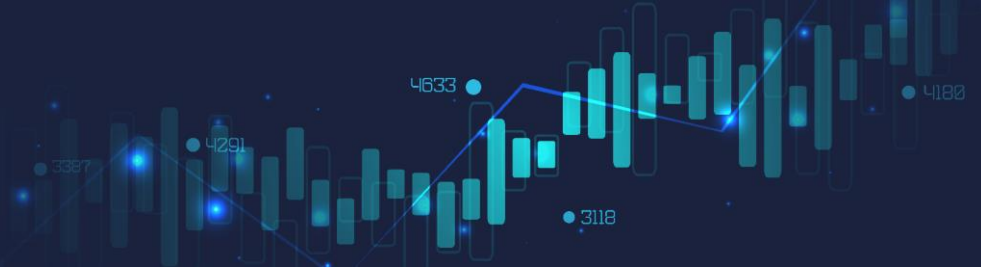
Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using the Education GPS: <https://gpseducation.oecd.org/>.

Questions can be directed to the Education at a Glance team at the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills: EDU.EAG@oecd.org.

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