

NOT WORKING, NOT LEARNING

Definition

Data on population and educational attainment come from OECD and Eurostat databases, which are compiled from National Labour Force Surveys. This request for data expands the request on labour force status by completed level of education and aims at describing the transition process of 15-29 year-olds from school to work.

The work status refers to the International Labour Organisation definition of employment, unemployment and not in the labour force. The type of employment refers to full-time or part-time employment based on a threshold definition of 30-usual-hours cut-off on the main job. Full-time workers are those who usually work 30 hours or more on their main job.

The school status is understood in terms of education and/or training currently being received in the regular educational system.

Overview

Almost everyone in OECD countries has compulsory education to age 16. Having a good basic education is important, but what happens next sets the stage for adult working life. In many countries this varies considerably depending on whether you are a girl or a boy.

The average 15-year-old in an OECD country in 2010 could expect to spend the next 15 years as follows: seven years in education; five and a half years in a job, one year unemployed, and about a year and a half neither in education nor seeking work. But while girls will spend more time in education (7.2 years against 6.9 for a boy), they will spend less time at work, just 5.0 years compared with 5.9 for boys, and twice as long neither working nor learning, at 1.8 years compared with 0.9 for boys.

These figures, however, do not show how many young people are not working, learning or jobseeking at any given moment, or whether there are wide gender differences. In fact, some 18% of young women aged 15-29 in OECD countries were neither in education, employment or training (NEET) in 2010, compared with just under 14% of young men in the same age group. But situations vary widely from one country to another.

The NEET gender gap has narrowed over the years. In 1997, in the 22 OECD countries for which figures are available, there were twice as many women NEET as men, 21.7% against 10.5% for men. Before the crisis hit in 2008, in the 32 OECD countries for which figures are available, women (17.1%) were still far more likely than men (10.6%) to be in the NEET group. During the crisis, the rate for women has edged up (nearly 18% in 2010) while that for men has increased more sharply (to nearly 14%).

At a time of economic slowdown some young people may prefer to continue their education if they are unable to find work. The proportion of 15-29 year-olds in education has

increased by around two percentage points for both men and women since 2007, to reach an average of 48% for women and 46% for men, but here again the situation varies widely between countries. In Turkey, for example, the proportion of women in education has risen from 21% to 28% since 2008, although women are still twice as likely as men to be NEET (52% compared with 21%). In Mexico, the gender gap is even wider: young women are three times more likely than young men to be NEET. These large disparities may be related to culture; it is likely that these young women have opted to start a family rather than pursue a career.

In other countries however, the crisis has seen fewer people continuing their education. In France, the number of 15-29 year old women in education has fallen from 46.4% in 2008 to 44.8% in 2010, while during the same period the number of men has fallen from 45.2% to 42.8%. In only a few OECD countries – Canada, Ireland, Israel and Spain, are young men more likely than young women to be NEET. The gender gap is narrow however.

Sources

- OECD (2012), “Indicator C5 Transition from school to work: where are the 15-29 year-olds?”, *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing.

Further information

Analytical publications

- OECD (2012), *Closing the Gender Gap, Act Now*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2012), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2010), *Off to a Good Start? Jobs for Youth*, OECD Publishing.

Websites

- OECD Education, www.oecd.org/education.
- OECD Labour markets, human capital and inequality, www.oecd.org/employment/labourmarketshumancapitalandinequality.



Percentage of 15-29-year-olds not in education, training or employment

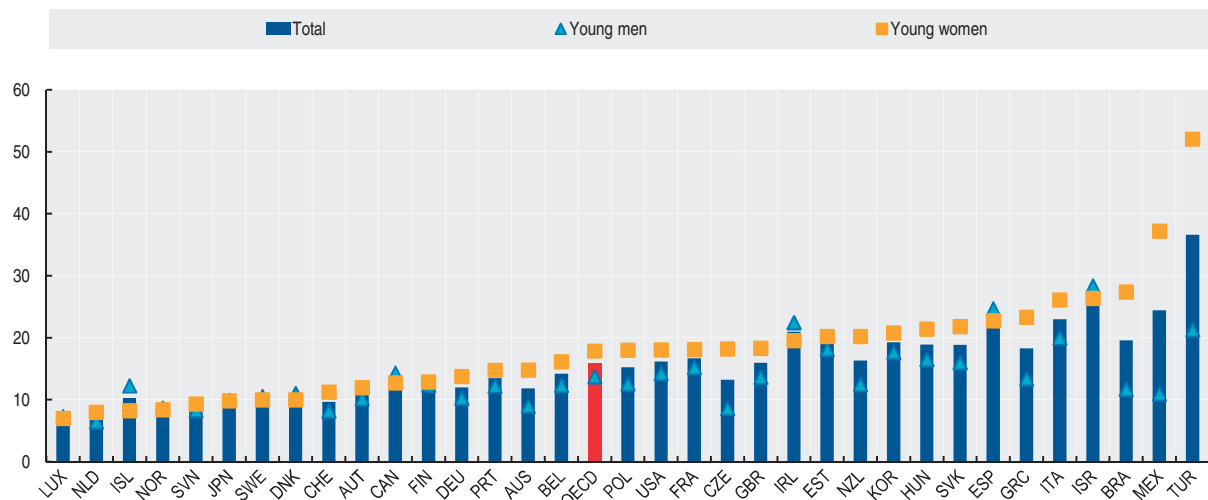
2010 or latest available year

| | Young men | Young women | Total |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|-------|
| Australia | 9.0 | 14.8 | 11.8 |
| Austria | 10.1 | 12.0 | 11.1 |
| Belgium | 12.3 | 16.1 | 14.2 |
| Brazil | 11.7 | 27.4 | 19.6 |
| Canada | 14.3 | 12.7 | 13.5 |
| Czech Republic | 8.6 | 18.2 | 13.2 |
| Denmark | 11.0 | 10.0 | 10.5 |
| Estonia | 18.1 | 20.2 | 19.1 |
| Finland | 12.4 | 12.9 | 12.6 |
| France | 15.2 | 18.1 | 16.7 |
| Germany | 10.2 | 13.8 | 12.0 |
| Greece | 13.4 | 23.3 | 18.3 |
| Hungary | 16.5 | 21.4 | 18.9 |
| Iceland | 12.2 | 8.2 | 10.3 |
| Ireland | 22.4 | 19.5 | 21.0 |
| Israel | 28.4 | 26.4 | 27.4 |
| Italy | 20.0 | 26.1 | 23.0 |
| Japan | 9.9 | 9.8 | 9.9 |
| Korea | 17.7 | 20.8 | 19.2 |
| Luxembourg | 7.3 | 7.0 | 7.1 |
| Mexico | 11.0 | 37.2 | 24.4 |
| Netherlands | 6.4 | 8.0 | 7.2 |
| New Zealand | 12.4 | 20.2 | 16.3 |
| Norway | 8.6 | 8.4 | 8.5 |
| Poland | 12.5 | 18.0 | 15.2 |
| Portugal | 12.2 | 14.8 | 13.5 |
| Slovak Republic | 16.0 | 21.8 | 18.8 |
| Slovenia | 8.3 | 9.3 | 8.8 |
| Spain | 24.7 | 22.8 | 23.7 |
| Sweden | 10.5 | 10.0 | 10.3 |
| Switzerland | 8.2 | 11.2 | 9.7 |
| Turkey | 21.3 | 52.1 | 36.6 |
| United Kingdom | 13.6 | 18.3 | 15.9 |
| United States | 14.3 | 18.0 | 16.1 |
| OECD | 13.7 | 17.9 | 15.8 |

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Percentage of 15-29-year-olds not in education, training or employment

2010 or latest available year



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932663378>



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