



The OECD Education at a Glance Report 2006

(A Preliminary Summary of Selected Statistics)

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OECD Education at a Glance 2006

Introduction

The 2006 edition of this report is now available. It is 450 pages in length so it is only possible to summarise selected aspects of it.

There are four broad sections:

- “The Output of Educational Institutions and the Impact of Learning” — This section contains data on educational attainment, graduation rates, PISA outcomes (including some data on links to socio-economic factors), labour force participation and the economic returns to education (i.e. education and earnings).
- “Financial and Human Resources Invested in Education” — This section contains data on educational expenditure.
- “Access to Education, Participation and Progression” — This section contains data on educational participation, student mobility, foreign students, education and work status of youth, and participation in adult learning.
- “The Learning Environment and Organisation of Schools” — This section contains data on instruction and teaching time, class sizes, teacher salaries, and access to ICT.

Not all OECD countries report on all measures or report in the same manner. Some non-OECD countries also report on various matters.

The focus of this briefing paper is mainly on the financial data. Further work will be done subsequently on the other sections of the report. It should be noted that the PISA data is not new data and has already been reported elsewhere – the AEU has previously provided reports on the PISA data.

Financial data, unless otherwise indicated are from 2003. The “instruction time”, “class sizes” and “teacher hours” data are from 2004. Financial and other data for non-OECD countries is not included here.

The column “Australia’s position” in most of the tables below sets out where Australia ranks (number before the forward slash) and how many countries reported (number after the forward slash).

Some Key Messages

The data show that Australia spends below the OECD average on education overall and that public expenditure on education has declined since 1995. This has been compensated for by a greater reliance on private sources of income.

In terms of schools funding overall Australia spends slightly above the OECD average, but it relies to a much greater extent than most other OECD countries on private contributions to fund schooling. Australia’s reliance on household expenditure to fund schooling is amongst the highest in the OECD and has increased as a proportion of educational expenditure since 1995.

Australia also provides much greater levels of direct public funding to private schools than most other OECD countries.

Measured against total current expenditure, Australia is below the OECD mean in remuneration of its school teachers.

In terms of both the hours per year of instruction time received by students and teachers' working time, Australia is near the top of the OECD.

Class sizes in Australia are above the OECD mean and larger than in most other OECD countries.

Further analysis of the reported data is warranted. However, due to the limitations associated definitions, data collection and reporting, caution should be exercised in interpreting OECD statistics.

Notes on Financial Expenditure Data

In many cases the OECD reports expenditure figures under aggregate headings such as "Education" or "Primary, Secondary and Non-Tertiary Post Compulsory Education" (*PSNTPC*). However, in some tables the figures are disaggregated into more specific headings. Even then, primary schooling expenditure is sometimes combined with lower secondary schooling expenditure.

The PSNTPC figures are the closest to an "All Schools" category reported. What the "non-Tertiary Post Compulsory Education" bit accounts for is not consistent across all countries, but, on the evidence of past reports, the differences are sufficiently small to be insignificant.

"Private Expenditure" (Tables A,B,C,F,G & H) refers to expenditure by private institutions and individuals, not to government expenditure on private educational institutions. The latter is dealt with in Table I. Where used, "pre-primary" refers to children 3 years and older.

Summary Tables:

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Table A – Education Expenditure as % of GDP					
	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean (weighted)	Source Table
All Education					
	Total Expenditure as % GDP	18/29	5.8	5.9 (6.3)	B2.1a
	Public Expenditure as % GDP	21/29	4.3	5.2 (4.9)	
	Private Expenditure as % GDP	3/29	1.5	.7 (1.3)	
	Comment:	Australia spends below the OECD average on education and it relies to a much greater extent than most other OECD countries on private expenditure on education. See Table G below.			

Table B – Education Expenditure as % of GDP – Trends					
All Education					
		1995	2000	2003	
	Total Expenditure as % GDP	5.5	5.8	5.8	B2.1a
	Public Expenditure as % GDP	4.5	4.4	4.3	
	Private Expenditure as % GDP	1	1.4	1.5	
	Comment:	While total educational expenditure increased (as % of GDP) from 1995 to 2003, this was due entirely to greater private expenditure as public expenditure fell.			

Table C – Expenditure as % of GDP, PSNTPC					
	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean (weighted)	Source Table
PSNTPC					
	Total Expenditure as % GDP	13/28	4.1	3.9 (3.9)	B2.1b
	Public Expenditure as % GDP	20/30	3.4	3.6 (3.5)	
	Private Expenditure as % GDP	2/24	.7	.3 (.4)	
	Comment:	As for education overall, Australia relies to a much greater extent than most other OECD countries on private expenditure on for non-tertiary education.			

Table D – Expenditure as % GDP, by Education Sectors					
	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean (weighted)	Source Table
Pre-Primary					
	Total Expenditure as % GDP	25/25	.1	.5 (.4)	B2.1c
Primary and Lower Secondary					
	Total Expenditure as % GDP	3/28	3.1	2.5 (2.6)	B2.1c
Upper Secondary					
	Total Expenditure as % GDP	22/27	.9	1.4 (1.3)	B2.1c
All Primary, secondary and PSNT					
	Total Expenditure as % GDP	14/30	4.1	3.9 (3.9)	B2.1c
	Comment:	Overall Australia is a medium-level spender on schools education. Its relatively high ranking in relation to primary education probably reflects that educational resourcing in Australia is more equally distributed between the primary and secondary schooling sectors (e.g. there is a greater degree of salary parity) than in a number of other OECD countries.			

Table E – Annual Expenditure per Student in Equivalent \$US, by Education Sectors					
	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean (weighted)	Source Table
Pre-Primary					
	Annual Expenditure per Student in Equivalent \$US	NR	NR	NR	B1.1a
Primary					
	Annual Expenditure per Student in Equivalent \$US	14/29	5,494	5450 (5,055)	B1.1a
All Secondary					
	Annual Expenditure per Student in Equivalent \$US	9/30	7,788	6,962 (6936)	B1.1a
	Comment:	% of GDP provides a better comparator as it reflects more accurately expenditure in terms of the economic capacity of a country. Nonetheless, the equivalent \$US figures confirm Australia is a medium level spender on schooling. NR = not reported.			

Table F – Index of Change in Educational Expenditure, 1995-2003					
	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean	Source Table
All Education					
	Index of Change in Educational Expenditure, 1995-2003 – Total	4/18	141	129	B2.2
	Index of Change in Educational Expenditure, 1995-2003 – Public	12/24	132	NR	
	Index of Change in Educational Expenditure, 1995-2003 – Private	4/16	174	NR	
PSNTPC					
	Index of Change in Educational Expenditure, 1995-2003 – Total	4/18	148	129	B2.2
	Index of Change in Educational Expenditure, 1995-2003 – Public	9/24	145	NR	
	Index of Change in Educational Expenditure, 1995-2003 – Private	5/16	167	NR	
	Comment:	While Australia compares well amongst the OECD in terms of increasing expenditure on education, much of this is due to increased private expenditure. NR = not reported.			

Table G – Sources of Educational Expenditure					
	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean	Source Table
Relative Proportion of Public and Private Expenditure on Ed Institutions (All Levels)					
	Public Sources	27/28	73.9	88	B3.1
	Household Expenditure	4/26	19.6	NR	
	Other Private Entities	5/22	6.5	NR	
	All Private Sources	3/28	26.1	12	
	Comment:	See Comment Table H below. NR = not reported.			

Table H – Sources of Educational Expenditure								
	Indicator	Australia's Position		Australian Figure		OECD Mean		Source Table
Relative Proportion of Public and Private Expenditure on Ed Institutions (PSNTPC) 2003 and 1995								
		03	95	03	95	03	95	
	Public Sources	25/28	16/19	83.7	85.5	92.7	NR	B3.2a
	Household Expenditure	3/22	4/11	13.7	10.5	NR	NR	
	Other Private Entities	5/16	2/8	2.6	4	NR	NR	
	All Private Sources	4/27	3/18	16.3	14.5	7.4	NR	
	Comment:	Not only does Australia rely on private household expenditure to fund non-tertiary education to a much greater extent than most OECD countries, this type of expenditure is an increasing proportion of expenditure. NR = not reported.						

Table I – Distribution of Total Public Expenditure on Education (PSNTPC)								
	Indicator	Australia's Position		Australian Figure		OECD Mean		Source Table
	Direct Public Expenditure on Public Institutions (%)	25/29		77.1		86.7		B4.2
	Direct Public Expenditure on Private Institutions (%)	4/24		19.7		10.7		
	Indirect Public Transfers and Payments to the Private Sector (%)	13/27		3.1		3.4		
	Comment:	Australia provides much greater levels of direct public funding to private schools than most OECD countries.						

Table J – Teacher Compensation

	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean	Source Table
	Compensation of Teachers as a % of Current Expenditure (PSNTPC)	12/20	60	63.6	B6.2
	Comment:	Measured against total current expenditure, Australia is below the OECD mean in remuneration of its teachers. The OECD Report contains a number of tables on teacher salaries which will need to be examined.			

Table K – Compulsory and Intended Instruction Time in Public Institutions

	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean	Source Table
Average Number of Hours per Year of Total Compulsory Instruction Time					
	Ages 7-8	1/25	981	758	D1.1
	Ages 9-11	3/25	982	808	
	Ages 12-14	4/25	966	894	
	Age 15 (typical program)	9/23	964	910	
	Age 15 minimum required program)	3/9	949	865	
Average Number of Hours per Year of Total Compulsory and Non-Compulsory Instruction Time					
	Ages 7-8	3/27	981	785	D1.1
	Ages 9-11	4/27	982	831	
	Ages 12-14	5/27	1010	928	
	Age 15 (typical program)	6/25	1020	962	
	Age 15 minimum required program)	5/11	1005	911	

Table L – Class Sizes

	Indicator	Australia's Position	Australian Figure	OECD Mean	Source Table
Average Class Size – Primary					
	Public Institutions	19/23*	24.2	21.5	D2.1
	Private Institutions	20/22*	24.5	20.3	
	Comment:	Australia has relatively large primary class sizes in comparison to most other OECD countries. * indicates how Australia compares in terms of lower average class sizes – e.g. for public schools, 18 other OECD countries report a lower class size average.			
Average Class Size – Lower Secondary					
	Public Institutions	17/23*	24.4	23.8	D2.1
	Private Institutions	16/21*	25.7	22.8	
	Comment:	Australia has relatively large secondary class sizes in comparison to most other OECD countries. * indicates how Australia compares in terms of lower average class sizes – e.g. for public schools, 16 other OECD countries report a lower class size average.			

Table M – Teachers’ Working Time					
	Primary				
	No. of Weeks of Instruction	3/27	40	38	D4.1
	Number of Days of Instruction	4/25	197	187	
	Net Teaching Time in Hours	9/27	874	805	
	Working Time Required in School	6/14	1215	1129	
	Total Statutory Working Time in Hours	4/18	1824	1698	
	Lower Secondary				
	No. of Weeks of Instruction	3/27	40	37	D4.1
	Number of Days of Instruction	4/24	197	186	
	Net Teaching Time in Hours	5/26	809	704	
	Working Time Required in School	6/12	1238	1131	
	Total Statutory Working Time in Hours	4/17	1824	1691	
	Upper Secondary/General Programs				
	No. of Weeks of Instruction	2/28	40	37	D4.1
	Number of Days of Instruction	3/25	197	185	
	Net Teaching Time in Hours	4/27	809	663	
	Working Time Required in School	6/13	1238	1087	
	Total Statutory Working Time in Hours	3/17	1824	1690	
	Comment:	This data is consistent with the data set out in Table K above. Australia’s teachers and students spend more amount of time in instructional activity than those in most other OECD countries.			