

Education at a Glance 2011

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Country note – Brazil

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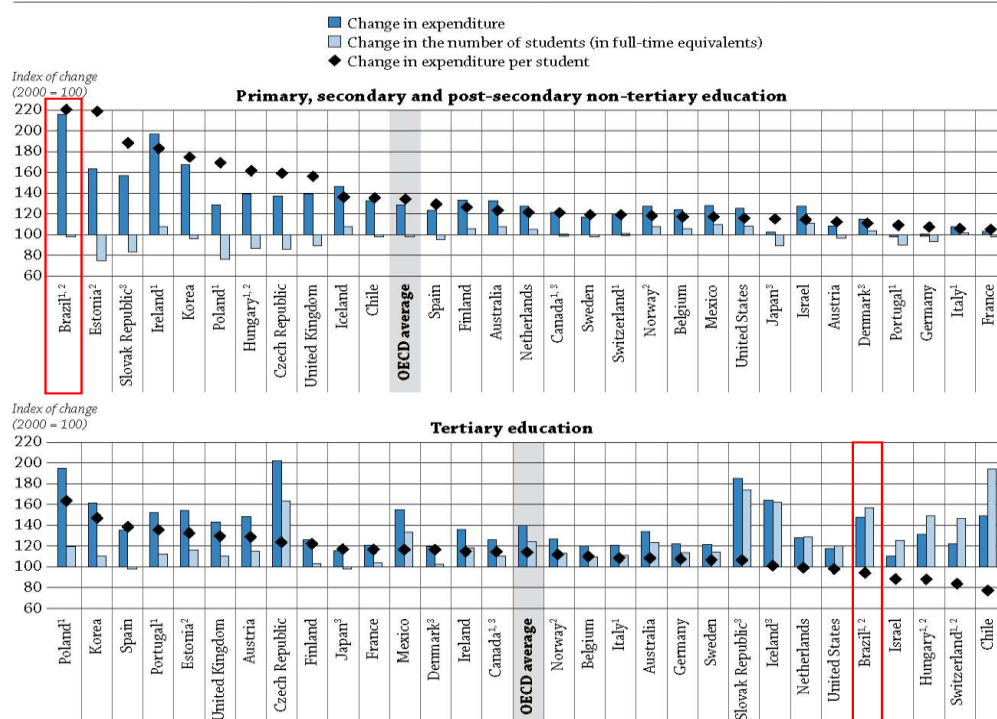
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Brazil has made a significant effort to increase investment in education...

Expenditure per student from primary to upper secondary education increased by 121% between 2000 and 2008 in Brazil, the steepest increase among 30 countries with available data. However, at the tertiary level this was still not enough to meet rising student numbers. Although educational expenditure at the tertiary level increased by 48%, expenditure per student decreased by 6%. This is because expenditure did not keep up with enrolments, which expanded by 57% (Chart B1.6 below and Table B1.5). Brazil spends the equivalent of 106% of its GDP per capita on each tertiary student by educational institutions, the highest proportion among countries. However, tertiary students represent only 3% of students enrolled in all levels of education combined (Table B1.4).

Chart B1.6. Changes in the number of students and changes in expenditure per student by educational institutions, by level of education (2000, 2008)
Index of change between 2000 and 2008 (2000 = 100, 2008 constant prices)



1. Public institutions only (for Canada, in tertiary education only; for Italy, except in tertiary education).
 2. Public expenditure only (for Switzerland, in tertiary education only).
 3. Some levels of education are included with others. Refer to "x" code in Table B1.1a for details.
 Countries are ranked in descending order of the change in expenditure per student by educational institutions.
Source: OECD, Table B1.5. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2011).
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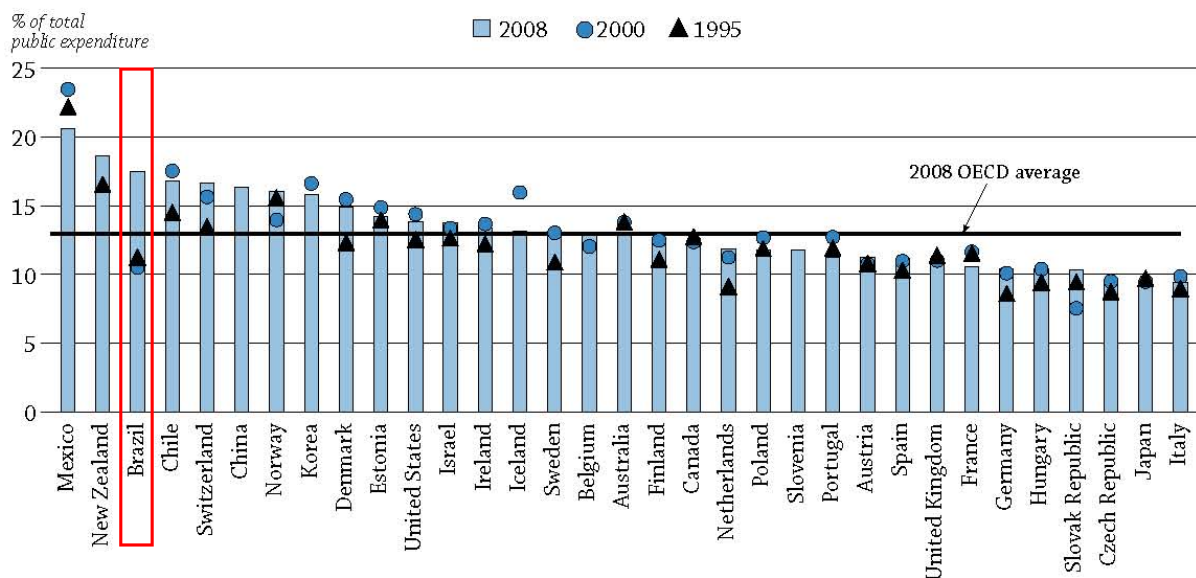
...but overall national income invested in education remains below the OECD average.

Although spending on educational institutions as a share of GDP rose by 1.8 percentage points in Brazil (from 3.5% in 2000 to 5.3% in 2008), the steepest increase among 32 countries with available data, it was still slightly below the OECD average of 5.9% in 2008 (Table B2.1). In Brazil, primary and secondary education accounts for 77% of combined expenditure on educational institutions, or 4.1% of the combined GDP.

Education is a high priority in Brazil, as shown by the significant shift in public funding towards education.

Public expenditure on education as a percentage of total public expenditure indicates the extent to which governments prioritise education in relation to other areas of investment. Although total public spending accounts for a relatively small proportion of GDP in Brazil, the greatest increase in the share of public expenditure relative to the total public budget was seen in expenditure on education. Spending on education relative to total public spending grew from 10.5% in 2000 to 17.4% in 2008 – the third highest proportion among countries with available data (Chart B4.1 below and Table B4.1).

Chart B4.1. Total public expenditure on education as a percentage of total public expenditure (1995, 2000, 2008)



Countries are ranked in descending order of total public expenditure on education at all levels of education as a percentage of total public expenditure in 2008.

Source: OECD. China: The national Statistics Bulletin on Educational Expenditure 2009. Table B4.1. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2011).

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More Brazilian students are participating in secondary education...

Brazil's increases in investment in primary and secondary education have led to greater participation in secondary education. One way of measuring participation in education is by the number of years in which at least 90% of students are enrolled in school. Between 2000 and 2007, this number increased by one year in Brazil, meaning that more than 90% of students in Brazil now spend at least nine years in formal education. During the same period, the age at which compulsory education ends rose from 14 to 17 years (Table C1.1).

Not only were efforts made to keep young students in education longer, but older Brazilians are relatively active in education too. Some 8.6% of 30-39 year-olds in Brazil were enrolled in education, which is more than the OECD average of 6.2%. Similarly, 2.5% of Brazilians over 40 years are enrolled in an educational institution, compared to 1.5%, on average, in OECD countries (Table C1.1a). Adult education and second-chance opportunities account for a sizeable proportion of upper secondary programmes. Some 10% of graduates from general upper secondary programmes in Brazil are 25 years or older (Table A2.1).

...there has been a dramatic rise in upper-secondary education attainment levels...

A comparison of educational attainment among 25-34 year-olds and 55-64 year-olds indicates marked progress in attaining an upper secondary education in Brazil. The proportion of the younger group with at least an upper secondary education is 28 percentage points higher than that of the older group – the 10th largest difference among 35 countries with available data (Table A1.2a).

... and Brazil is slowly catching up with OECD countries in overall secondary and tertiary attainment levels.

In 2007, 63% of 25-64 year-olds had not completed an upper secondary education, and 27% had completed upper secondary education. Within three years, the proportion of adults who had not attained an upper secondary education had fallen to 59%, and the proportion with an upper secondary education had increased to 30% (Table A1.4). However, the proportion of 25-64 year-olds with an upper secondary education is below the OECD average (44%).

Between 2007 and 2009, the proportion of 25-64 year-olds with a tertiary degree had risen by only 1 percentage point to 11% – a slower rate than the OECD average. However, because of the size of its population, this represents, in absolute numbers, more than 10 million people. As such, Brazil holds 4.1% of the total population with tertiary education in OECD and G20 countries. This represents the 7th largest share among 40 countries with available data (Table A1.3a). However, given that Brazil already has lower tertiary attainment levels than the OECD average, if the low tertiary attainment rates among 25-34 year-olds are maintained, the proportion of adults who have a tertiary degree is likely to fall further behind that of other OECD countries.

Brazilians without baseline qualifications have more difficulty entering the labour market...

Even in the best of times, the transition from education to work is a complex process, affected by such variables as the length and quality of the schooling received, national traditions, the state of the labour market, economic conditions and demography. Some 30.1% of 15-19 year-old Brazilians are not in education. Of these, 16.1% are employed, 4.3% are unemployed and 9.7% are not in the labour force. Of special concern are the 9.7% of young adults who are not in education and also not in the labour force, as they are at particular risk of receiving little or no support from the welfare system (Table C4.2a).

More educated 15-29 year-olds in Brazil are less likely to be unemployed. Among young people not in school, only 6.2% of tertiary graduates in Brazil are unemployed compared to 10.2% of those with an upper secondary education and 5.5% of those without an upper secondary education (Table C4.3). The lower unemployment rate among those without an upper secondary education is largely explained by the fact that this group is much more likely not to be in the labour force and not to be looking for work, so this group is not captured in unemployment data. Indeed, in Brazil, 26% of the 15-29 year-olds not in education and without an upper secondary education are not in the labour force, compared to 15% of those with upper education and 6% of tertiary graduates (Table C4.3).

The lack of an upper secondary qualification is a serious impediment to finding work. Young Brazilians without an upper secondary education who are not in education are 21 percentage points less likely to get a job (Table C4.2d).

...where demand for upper secondary and tertiary graduates remains strong...

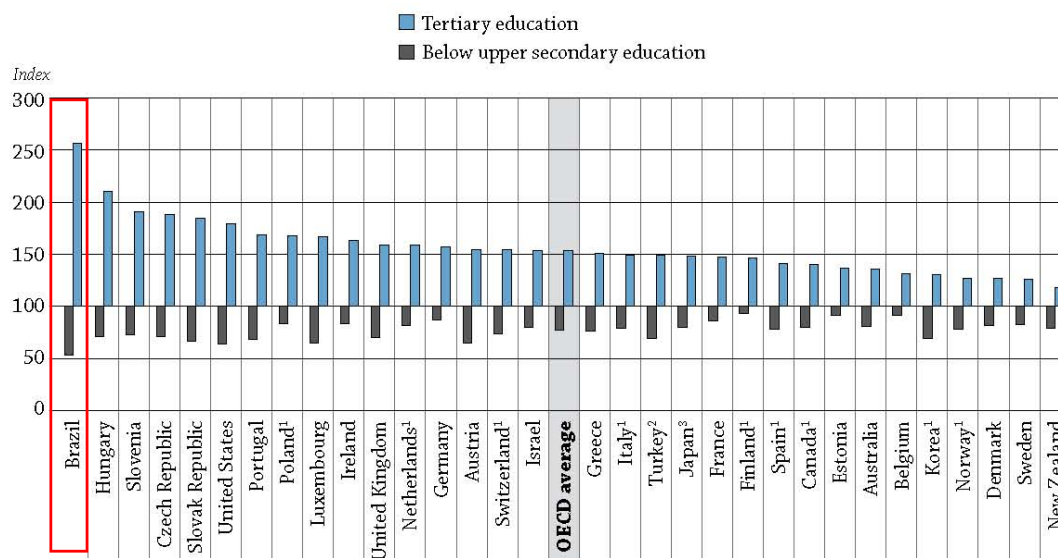
Although Brazil has a below-average share of adults with upper secondary and tertiary qualifications (30% and 11%, respectively), employment among these adults, at 77.4% and 85.6%, respectively, is higher than the average across OECD countries. Although there was a slight drop in employment of less than 0.5 percentage point between 2008 and 2009, the economic downturn during that period did not affect the labour market in Brazil to the same extent that it did in most OECD countries. On average across OECD countries, employment of individuals with upper secondary and tertiary education dropped by almost two percentage points and one percentage point, respectively (Tables A1.4 and A7.3a).

...and where the earnings premium for tertiary graduates is the highest among all countries surveyed.

The financial incentives for completing higher levels of education can motivate individuals to postpone consumption today for future rewards. Tertiary education brings substantial economic benefits for individuals. On average across OECD countries, a tertiary graduate can expect to earn over 50% more than a person with an upper secondary education. In Brazil, this premium is 156%, the highest among all countries, and provides a solid incentive for completing higher levels of education. This advantage applies to both men and women (Table A8.2 and Table A8.4). Some 68.2% of those who have completed a university or an advanced research programme also earn twice as much as the median worker in Brazil.

In contrast, the penalty for not completing an upper secondary education is harsh in Brazil, as individuals without this level of education can only expect to earn 53% of an upper secondary graduate's earnings (77% on average across OECD countries). In Brazil, 29% of those who have not completed an upper secondary education earn less than half of the median salary, and only 8% of those who have not attained an upper secondary education earn twice the national median (Chart A8.1 below and Tables A8.2 and A8.4).

Chart A8.1. Relative earnings from employment by level of educational attainment for 25-64 year-olds (2009 or latest available year)
Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education = 100



Note: Belgium, Korea and Turkey report earnings net of income tax. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia report earnings excluding data for individuals in part-time work. Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland and Slovenia also exclude data on part-year earnings.

1. Year of reference 2008.

2. Year of reference 2005.

3. Year of reference 2007.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the relative earnings of 25-64 year-olds with tertiary education.

Source: OECD, Table A8.1. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/edu/eag2011).

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Brazilian employers pay a higher price for qualified workers...

How countries fare in the global labour market does not just depend on the skills available in the labour force, but also on the price of those skills. OECD countries face increasing competition in the lower and, more recently, mid-range skills segments. But even at these levels, many countries maintain a competitive advantage through technological advances, innovation and capital investments that boost productivity levels. As the mobility of the workforce increases, it becomes more important to strike the right balance between fostering overall equity in societies and offering strong economic incentives to attract and retain skilled workers.

Brazil has lower labour costs and gross annual earnings than OECD countries, on average. Gross annual full-time earnings amount to only USD 4 840 for a 25-64 year-old worker without an upper secondary qualification, USD 8 354 for a worker with an upper secondary qualification, and USD 20 706 for a worker with a tertiary degree (Table A10.1).

... particularly those who also have work experience.

A 45-54 year-old with an upper secondary qualification and work experience can expect to gross an additional 65%, or USD 4 255, per year compared to a 25-34 year-old recent graduate. The difference in

gross annual earnings between inexperienced and experienced workers with an upper secondary qualification is significantly higher in Brazil than in other OECD countries, where the average difference is 27%. Similarly, a tertiary graduate with work experience can expect to gross an additional 62%, or USD 9 850, per year compared to a recent graduate (Table A10.2 and Table A10.4).

Brazil has a well-established system of performance accountability...

Since 1993, Brazil has used national assessments to provide formative feedback to improve instruction and determine the relative performance of students. National assessments are devised and graded by the central government and are compulsory in public schools at the primary, lower and upper secondary levels. Both mathematics and the national language or language-of-instruction are covered in the assessments. The results from national assessments (particularly the level of performance for the most recent year) are shared with school administrators, teachers, parents, students and the media in addition to education authorities.

However, Brazil does not use national examinations at any level of its school system, unlike the majority of countries with available data (Tables D5.1a,b,c and D5.2a,b,c).

...and market accountability.

Brazilian families generally have the right to choose among public schools, where funding follows students when they leave for another school. Independent private schools are also permitted to compete for students in Brazil. Tuition tax credits are available to help families offset the cost of private schooling (Table D5.5).

In educational outcomes, Brazil has a high level of vulnerability.

The percentage of vulnerable 15-year-old students in Brazil – those with reading scores below the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reading proficiency Level 2 – is about 50% compared to an average of 19% among 15-year-old students in OECD countries. The risk of having these low scores was 1.5 times as large for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, 1.3 times as large for boys as for girls, and 1.3 times as large for students whose parents have low levels of education. Although the relative risk of having low reading scores that could be associated with immigrant status is 1.9, comparatively few students in Brazil are immigrants (0.8%), therefore the reduction in vulnerability that would be gained by achieving equality for this group is small

Other findings

- The average class size in Brazil is larger than the OECD average but close to the G20 average; and the difference of class size between public and private institutions is especially marked.

	Brazil	OECD average	G20 average
Class size, primary (in number of pupils)	25	21	24.5
Difference between average class size in public institutions and private institutions (primary level, in number of pupils)	+8.8	+0.9	+1.8
Class size, lower secondary (in number of students)	29.5	24	26.6
Difference between average class size in public institutions and private institutions (lower secondary, in number of pupils)	+5.2	+0.7	+1.8

The International Standard Classification of Education – ISCED97

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 97) defines seven educational levels.

Correspondence between ISCED 97 and Brazilian educational levels

ISCED 97 levels	Brazilian educational levels
ISCED 0 (<i>Pre-primary level of education</i>)	Creche and Pré-escola Kindergarten (from 3 years old)
ISCED 1 (<i>Primary level of education</i>)	Ensino fundamental (1º a 5º ano) or equivalente Fundamental Education (1st to 5th year or equivalent)
ISCED 2 (<i>Lower secondary level of education</i>)	Ensino fundamental (6º a 9º ano) or equivalente) Fundamental Education (6th to 9th year or equivalent)
ISCED 3 (<i>Upper secondary level of education</i>)	Ensino médio High School
ISCED 4 (<i>Post-secondary non-tertiary</i>)	<i>(Not applicable to Brazil)</i>
ISCED 5 (<i>First stage of tertiary education</i>)	Educação terciária tipo B (Educação Superior em Tecnologia) Tertiary education type B (Technological Higher Education) Educação terciária tipo A (other higher education courses) – excluding pos graduation <i>lato sensu</i> – graduação, mestrado e mestrado profissional Tertiary education type A (undergraduate, master’s degree and Professional master’s degree courses)
ISCED 6 (<i>Second stage of tertiary education leading to an advanced research qualification</i>) – <i>doctoral and post-doctoral degrees</i>	Pós-graduação (<i>stricto sensu</i>): doutorado Post graduation (<i>strito sensu</i>): doctor’s degree