

the condition of education 2004



INDICATOR 17

International Comparison of Transition to Postsecondary Education

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2004*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2004* visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004077>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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Transition to College

International Comparison of Transition to Postsecondary Education

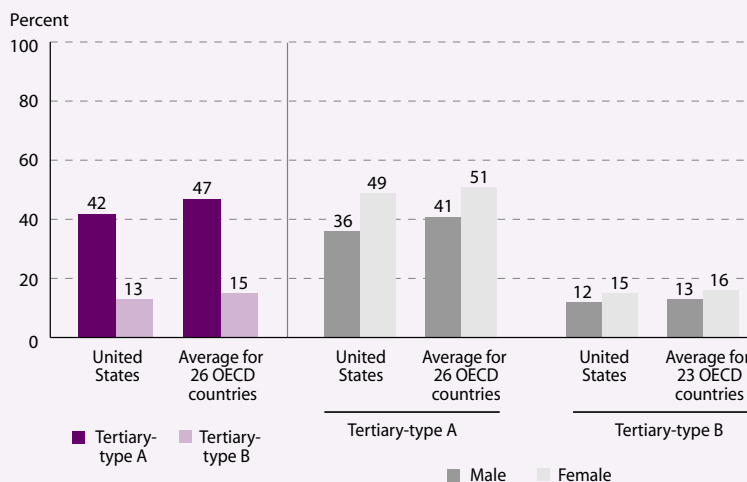
First-time entry rates into programs that lead to a bachelor's or higher degree increased in many OECD-member countries from 1998 to 2001. In 2001, the U.S. rate was lower than the OECD country average.

Rates of entry into postsecondary education provide an indication of the degree to which a country's population is acquiring higher-level skills and knowledge. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) calculates these rates for its member countries by adding the entry rates for each single year of age from 15 to 29 and for older students in 5-year age groups. Doing so promotes comparability across countries that have different typical entry ages.¹ In addition, the OECD distinguishes between postsecondary (or tertiary) programs that are based largely on theory and designed to prepare students for advanced research programs or high-skill professions (*tertiary-type A*) and those that focus on occupationally specific skills for direct entry into the labor market (*tertiary-type B*). In the United States, tertiary-type A programs are mostly offered at 4-year institutions and lead to bachelor's degrees. Tertiary-type B programs are often provided at community colleges and lead to associate's degrees.

Among the OECD countries with available data, the average first-time entry rate into tertiary-type A programs rose from 40 percent in 1998 to 47 percent in 2001 (see supplemental table 17-1). Increases occurred in 20 of the 22 OECD countries with data. In 2001, the U.S. first-time entry rate was 42 percent. Australia, Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, and Sweden had entry rates of 60 percent or more. Females had higher rates of entry into tertiary-type A programs than males in 19 of the 26 OECD countries, including the United States. In contrast, males had higher entry rates than females in a number of countries (e.g., Japan, Korea, Mexico, and Turkey).

In general, entry rates into tertiary-type B programs are lower than in type A programs. In 2001, the average first-time entry rate into tertiary-type B programs was 15 percent for the 23 OECD countries with data and 13 percent for the United States. Females in many OECD countries, including the United States, had higher entry rates into tertiary-type B programs than males.

TRANSITION TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: First-time net entry rates into postsecondary (tertiary) education for the United States and the OECD country average, by program type and sex: 2001



¹For further details on the calculation of entry rates, see supplemental note 7.

NOTE: Entry rates for tertiary-type A and B programs cannot be combined to obtain the total tertiary-level entry rate because entrants into both types of programs would be double counted. For further details on the classification of postsecondary education programs used in this indicator, see supplemental note 7.

SOURCE: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Center for Educational Research and Innovation. (2000). *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 2000*, table C3.1, and (2003) *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 2003*, table C2.1. Data from OECD Education Database.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Supplemental Note 7

Supplemental Table 17-1



International Comparison of Transition to Postsecondary Education

Table 17-1. First-time net entry rates into postsecondary (tertiary) education for selected OECD countries, by program type and sex: 1998 and 2001

| OECD country | 1998 | | | | | | 2001 | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------|--------|------------------------------|------|--------|------------------------------|------|--------|------------------------------|------|--------|
| | Tertiary-type A ¹ | | | Tertiary-type B ² | | | Tertiary-type A ¹ | | | Tertiary-type B ² | | |
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| Country average | 40 | 37 | 43 | 19 | 16 | 22 | 47 | 41 | 51 | 15 | 13 | 16 |
| Australia | 53 | 45 | 61 | — | — | — | 65 | 58 | 72 | — | — | — |
| Austria | 28 | 25 | 31 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 34 | 31 | 37 | — | — | — |
| Belgium | 28 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 22 | 33 | 32 | 32 | 33 | 36 | 29 | 43 |
| Czech Republic | 22 | 26 | 18 | 13 | 10 | 17 | 30 | 26 | 35 | 7 | 5 | 10 |
| Denmark | 30 | 29 | 32 | 32 | 23 | 42 | 44 | 33 | 56 | 9 | 12 | 7 |
| Finland | 58 | 49 | 67 | 12 | 9 | 15 | 72 | 62 | 83 | † | † | † |
| France | — | — | — | — | — | — | 37 | 30 | 43 | 22 | 22 | 21 |
| Germany ³ | 28 | 28 | 28 | 14 | 10 | 17 | 32 | 32 | 33 | 14 | 10 | 19 |
| Hungary | 45 | 41 | 49 | — | — | — | 56 | 50 | 63 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Iceland | 38 | 29 | 48 | 16 | 13 | 19 | 61 | 42 | 80 | 10 | 11 | 9 |
| Ireland | 28 | 27 | 30 | 25 | 23 | 26 | 38 | 33 | 43 | 18 | 18 | 19 |
| Italy ³ | 42 | 37 | 47 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 44 | 38 | 50 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Japan ⁴ | 36 | 45 | 27 | 33 | 22 | 45 | 41 | 48 | 33 | 31 | 22 | 41 |
| Korea ⁴ | 43 | 48 | 37 | 46 | 49 | 43 | 49 | 52 | 45 | 55 | 56 | 54 |
| Mexico | 21 | 22 | 21 | — | — | — | 26 | 26 | 25 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Netherlands | 52 | 50 | 54 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 54 | 51 | 58 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| New Zealand | 68 | 56 | 79 | 36 | 28 | 44 | 76 | 62 | 89 | 41 | 34 | 47 |
| Norway | 56 | 45 | 68 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 62 | 48 | 76 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| Poland | — | — | — | — | — | — | 67 | — | — | 1 | # | 1 |
| Slovak Republic ³ | — | — | — | — | — | — | 40 | 40 | 39 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Spain | 41 | 36 | 46 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 48 | 42 | 54 | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| Sweden ⁵ | 59 | 50 | 69 | — | — | — | 69 | 55 | 84 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Switzerland | — | — | — | — | — | — | 33 | 37 | 29 | 13 | 15 | 12 |
| Turkey | 20 | 25 | 15 | 11 | 12 | 10 | 20 | 23 | 18 | 10 | 11 | 9 |
| United Kingdom | 48 | 45 | 51 | 27 | 25 | 30 | 45 | 41 | 49 | 29 | 25 | 33 |
| United States | 44 | 40 | 48 | 14 | 13 | 15 | 42 | 36 | 49 | 13 | 12 | 15 |

— Not available.

† Not applicable.

Rounds to zero.

¹Tertiary-type A programs provide an education that is largely theoretical and is intended to provide sufficient qualifications for gaining entry into advanced research programs and professions with high-skill requirements. Entry into these programs normally requires the successful completion of an upper secondary education (i.e., high school); admission is competitive in most cases. The minimum cumulative theoretical duration at this level is 3 years of full-time enrollment.

²Tertiary-type B programs are typically shorter than tertiary-type A programs and focus on practical, technical, or occupational skills for direct entry into the labor market, although they may cover some theoretical foundations in the respective programs. They have a minimum duration of 2 years of full-time enrollment at the tertiary level.

³Entry rates for tertiary-type B programs are calculated as gross entry rates. In Italy, only the 2001 entry rate for tertiary-type B programs is calculated as a gross entry rate.

⁴Entry rates for tertiary-type A and B programs are calculated as gross entry rates.

⁵The 1998 entry rates for tertiary-type B programs are included in the entry rates for tertiary-type A programs.

NOTE: The OECD calculates net entry rates by adding the net entry rates for each single year of age from 15 to 29 and for older students in 5-year age groups. Entry rates for tertiary-type A and B programs cannot be combined to obtain the total tertiary-level entry rate because entrants into both types of programs would be double counted. For further details on the international classification of postsecondary education programs used in this indicator, see *supplemental note 7*.

SOURCE: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Center for Educational Research and Innovation. (2000). *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 2000*, table C3.1, and (2003) *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 2003*, table C2.1. Data from OECD Education Database.