



Briefing Note: *Education at a Glance 2021* NZ Summary Report

To:	Hon. Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon. Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	1 September 2021	Priority:	Medium
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	Yes		

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is for you to:

Note that the OECD will release the 2019 edition of *Education at a Glance* on 16 September 2021 at 9pm, New Zealand time.

Note that the *New Zealand Summary Report* has been prepared alongside *Education at a Glance* and will be ready to release on 16 September 2021 at 9pm, New Zealand time.

Summary

- When compared to other OECD countries, New Zealand's education system saw minimal impact in 2020 as a result of COVID-19.
- The relative performance of New Zealand's education system remains high overall, and there have been no significant declines in key indicators.
- The high-level international nature of the *Education at a Glance* indicators hides the huge amount of variability within the New Zealand education system, which is our greatest challenge.
- The theme of *Education at a Glance 2021* is Equity; this is examined in terms of gender and migration status but not ethnicity or socioeconomic status.
- The OECD's *Education at a Glance* publication attracts considerable media attention overseas, however in New Zealand media, sector and political attention is typically more limited.

Proactive Release

- a **agree** that the Ministry of Education release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you. This briefing can only be released on or after 17 September 2021, as the OECD material is embargoed until the *Education at a Glance* report is released on 16 September 2021 at 9pm, New Zealand time.

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree.



Alexander Brunt
Deputy Secretary
Evidence, Data and Knowledge

1 / 09 / 2021



Hon Jan Tinetti
Associate Minister of
Education

03/09 2021

Background

1. *Education at a Glance* is an annual report comparing the education systems of the 38 OECD countries and a number of partner countries and economies over a large range of indicators.
2. The report has been provided to countries under **embargo** until its release at 9pm on 16 September 2021 (New Zealand time).
3. This year a physical copy of the full report will not be available; the full report will be available for free on the OECD's website (<https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/>).
4. *Education at a Glance*'s stated purpose is to support system performance assessment and policy development with international evidence. It also provides ongoing opportunities to promote those aspects of our system that are performing well.
5. The indicators in *Education at a Glance 2021* cover the country as a whole, with gender, age and migration status used as demographic variables. The high-level nature of the *Education at a Glance* indicators hides the huge amount of variability within the New Zealand education system, which is our greatest challenge. However, *Education at a Glance* remains the most extensive reference for assessing New Zealand's education system in an international context.
6. Each year the Ministry prepares a summary report to release alongside *Education at a Glance*. The *New Zealand Summary Report* compares and contextualises how New Zealand's education system performs in an international context. This is important because we need to point out where our data is comparable to other jurisdictions, and where care needs to be taken with these comparisons (for example, defining lower and upper secondary education, and flow-on effects from this with regards to teacher salaries).

Key Findings in *Education at a Glance 2021*

7. New Zealand sits above the OECD average in terms of our rates of 3-5 year olds who were enrolled in education in 2019.
8. A higher percentage of New Zealand young adults had an upper secondary qualification in 2020 than the OECD average of 40%.
9. Over 80% of New Zealand adults aged 25-64 years old had at least an upper secondary qualification in 2020, above the OECD average.
10. New Zealand had a below average share of 18-24 year-olds that were not in education, employment or training in 2020.
11. In 2019 international students made up about 20% of all diploma level and above students in New Zealand, above the OECD average of 6%.
12. Employment rates in New Zealand for diploma-level and above educated young adults were higher than the OECD average in 2020.
13. New Zealand has a higher percentage of female teachers at each level of education than the OECD average, and higher percentages of both teachers under the age of 30 and teachers aged 50 and above compared to the OECD averages in 2019.

14. The salary data for New Zealand teachers was provided for the 2019 year; the majority of submitting countries and OECD average are for the 2020 year. Most recently on 1 July 2021 teachers received 3% increases in their salary rates; due to the timing of the data reported these increases are not included in *Education at a Glance 2021*.
15. New Zealand spent 6.2% of our GDP on education in 2018, ranking us 4th within the OECD.

Key Risks and Benefits

16. A key risk of this report is *Education at a Glance* is based off previous years' data; recent changes in New Zealand's education system, such as recent pay increases for teachers, are not covered by the 2021 report. This could lead to some confusion in the media, however we are preparing careful messaging around this.
17. For the 2021 edition of *Education at a Glance* and the accompanying *New Zealand Summary Report*, data is from four time periods: educational attainment and labour market outcomes use 2020 data, education workforce data 2019/2020, other education indicators 2019 data, and financial indicators the 2018/2017 financial year. There is a risk that the media may not pay close attention to the specific dates that data has come from, and therefore misreport the results. Media attention on *Education at a Glance* is traditionally minimal, however.
18. A key benefit of the 2021 edition of *Education at a Glance* is that it is one of the last snapshots we will get on the performance of New Zealand's education system in an international context before the effects of COVID-19 are widely seen.

Next Steps

19. The *New Zealand Summary Report* will be ready to release on 16 September 2021, at 9pm New Zealand time. We will work with your office on the timing of the release.

Annexes

Annex 1: *How Does New Zealand's Education System Compare? New Zealand Summary Report of the OECD's Education at a Glance 2021*

Annex 2: Communications plan

Proactively Released

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