



مَرْكَز الْإِحْصَاء  
STATISTICS CENTRE

# Educational attainment

## 2024

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# 1. Overview

## 1.1. Introduction

Abu Dhabi's education sector is a key element in raising an educated and promising generation, ready to serve the nation and contribute effectively to society. Abu Dhabi's Department of Education and Knowledge strictly oversees public, private, charter schools, as well as higher education institutions, to raise the quality of education to meet international standards. This monitoring ensures that all residents have access to quality education, thereby supporting the ambitious goals set out in the Abu Dhabi Vision 2030 and the Abu Dhabi Plan.

This methodology includes key indicators such as: proportion of population by level of education, dropout rate, secondary school graduates, graduates of applied technology schools, and graduates of higher education. This is an important tool for understanding the educational situation, assessing the success of the educational system and highlighting educational gaps between different groups.

## 1.2. Concepts and definitions

In the context of our educational achievement analysis, several key concepts have been identified to ensure clarity and consistency through data collection and reporting:

- Educational attainment: The highest level of education an individual has successfully completed. This is usually measured with respect to the highest education programme successfully completed which is typically certified by a recognised qualification.
- Graduate: A person who has successfully completed the final year of a level or sub-level of education.
- Dropout: It defines as the student who leave the specified level in the educational system without obtaining a qualification.

## 1.3. Abu Dhabi special considerations

Abu Dhabi is an emirate of seven emirates in the United Arab Emirates. The data collected is limited to the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Thus, certain restrictions are applied in collecting and obtaining data. However, since administrative sources used to collect data relevant to educational attainment statistics also operate at the Emirate level, this should not be a factor affecting the quality of the data and therefore the compilation of these statistics can be considered accurate and not subject to any specific limitations.

## 1.4. Classifications and standards applied

International Standard Classification of Education: UNESCO's framework for classifying education and related qualifications programmes into internationally agreed levels and fields. It provides a unified approach to regulating education systems, ensuring consistency in the classification and comparison of education statistics across countries. Educational programmes are disaggregated by levels and fields of education.

## **1.5. Available breakdown**

The Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi publishes a wide range of indicators related to educational attainment statistics. These are published according to the following levels:

Percentage of population by level of education:

- Age Group
- Gender
- Citizenship

Population with at least general secondary education:

- Gender and Age Group

Dropout rate by grade:

- Educational stage
- Gender
- Citizenship
- Region
- Sector

Secondary School Completion rate:

- Gender

Secondary school graduates:

- Sector
- Gender

Graduates of higher education:

- Citizenship, Gender and Sector
- Sector
- Gender
- Field of study
- Citizenship

Emirati graduates from private higher education:

- Field of study

Non-Emirati graduates from private higher education:

- Field of study

Graduates of applied technology schools:

- Region
- Gender
- Stream

The main variables are also divided by:

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Region:

- Abu Dhabi Region
- Al Ain Area Region
- Al Dhafra Region

Citizenship:

- Emirati
- Non-Emirati

Age Group:

- Less than 15
- 15-19
- 20-24
- 25-29
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-44
- 45-49
- 50-54
- 55-59
- 60-64
- 65+

Sector:

- Governmental
- Private
- Charter

Educational level:

- Less than primary
- Primary
- Lower secondary
- Upper secondary
- Post secondary
- Bachelor
- Higher education

Education stage

- Kindergarten
- Cycle 1
- Cycle 2
- Secondary

Stream:

- Advanced
- General

## **1.6. Importance and objectives of the indicator**

Educational achievement indicators are important measures to understand and improve access to education in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. They are essential to inform educational policy, planning and individual decision-making processes. The main objectives of the analysis of these educational indicators of achievement include:

Policy development and improvement: educational attainment and dropout rates help policymakers develop targeted strategies to improve quality and access to education. For example, addressing high drop-out rates in specific demographics can lead to tailored strategies, such as mentoring programmes or additional resources, ensuring that policies are effective and responsive to diverse students' needs.

Human capital monitoring and enhancement: the importance of educational attainment levels stems from an assessment of progress in human capital development. It helps to identify disparities in access to education and guide strategies to improve participation rates.

Evaluation of the efficiency of the educational system: The assessment of dropout rates and students' progress allows educational institutions to assess the efficiency of the educational system. Monitoring these trends over time helps ensure continuous improvement in students' retention and success.

Aligning education with labour market needs: The distribution of graduates across different fields guides the alignment of educational offerings with labour market requirements that help bridge the gap between education and employment.

## **2. Indicator information**

### **2.1. Geographical coverage**

Educational attainment statistics cover the three regions of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Al Dhafra).

### **2.2. Statistical population**

The statistical community includes several statistical units:

- The population (Emiratis and non-Emiratis) aged 10 years and older in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- Graduates of secondary schools, higher education, and applied technology schools (Emiratis and non-Emiratis) from public, private and charter educational institutions, in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

- Students (Emiratis and non-Emiratis) enrolled in public, private and charter educational institutions, across various educational stages, from primary and secondary education in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

### **2.3. Periodicity**

Educational achievement statistics are collected and published annually. This periodicity ensures that the data reflects the previous academic year's and captures comprehensive information on student achievement rates and progress. The annual reports allow for tracking trends over time and provide educational authorities with relevant and timely data to guide policy decisions and strategic planning.

### **2.4. Timeliness**

The Abu Dhabi Statistics Center publishes educational attainment statistics for all users within 12 months after the reference period. For example, educational attainment data for 2023 is published in December 2024.

### **2.5. Units**

The report on educational achievement statistics is being prepared using different measurement units to provide a comprehensive view of educational participation. The main units include:

**People:** Used as a measurement unit for graduate indicators, including higher education graduates, applied technology schools' graduates, and secondary schools' graduates.

**Percentage (%):** Used to measure several indicators, such as the population percentage by education level, dropout rate, and the percentage of the population with at least upper secondary education.

### **2.6. Reference period**

The reference period for educational attainment statistics is the previous academic year. This period aligns with the academic year, where data is collected from the beginning of the school year until its end to ensure a comprehensive and accurate representation of educational attainment trends. This timeframe allows for consistent and meaningful year-to-year comparisons.

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1. Alignment to international standards**

The compilation of educational attainment statistics follows the recommendations outlined in the UNESCO International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011). This alignment ensures that data collection, validation, and reporting procedures are consistent with internationally recognized methodologies. By adhering to these standards, educational attainment statistics are comparable across different regions and countries and align with best practices for national and international educational statistical offices.

### **3.2. Data sources**

Various data sources are used to produce educational attainment statistics. These statistics primarily rely on data from the education register, which collects data from various administrative sources, including the Department of Education and Knowledge, providing comprehensive and detailed information about secondary school graduates, applied technology schools, higher education, and data on dropouts at different educational levels.

Other data related to the educational attainment of the population is collected from the census, labor force survey, and household income and expenditure survey.

Currently, the education register is being built through data from the Department of Education and Knowledge and several other administrative sources. It is recommended to follow the register in producing educational achievement indicators, as it will allow for the inclusion of all educational sectors once completed and ensure high data quality.

### **3.3. Data validation and editing**

The process of data validation and editing is of utmost importance, as it forms the foundation for subsequent statistical analysis. The Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi applies various measures to ensure data accuracy and high-quality standards. These measures include verifying that all required data is complete and meets the center's requirements, comparing the received data with the time series, ensuring consistency with statistical definitions and classifications, reviewing outliers, and validating the logical consistency of the data.

These measures ensure the continuous provision of the required data, the ongoing updating of the register data, and a specific mechanism for periodically measuring data quality to identify any deficiencies or gaps.

#### **3.3.1 Missing data adjustments**

The Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi uses a comprehensive set of administrative data from the Department of Education and Knowledge, which requires educational institutions to record all relevant data, ensuring that there is typically no missing data.

As for survey data, missing data is reviewed and completed in the field during data collection. A multi-method approach is adopted, and when statistical estimates are used, data from previous time periods and relevant indicators are utilized, along with other internal and external indicators, to accurately estimate the missing values.

### **3.4. Data processing**

The Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi uses a comprehensive set of administrative data from the Department of Education and Knowledge, which requires educational institutions to record all relevant data. Therefore, there is no need for the center to process the data.

As for the statistical survey data, the accuracy of the data is ensured during the data collection period and processed using appropriate statistical methods.

### **3.4.1. Linking different datasets**

There is no linkage of datasets with the Department of Education and Knowledge to produce educational attainment statistics; instead, the results of the indicators are obtained directly from the department.

### **3.4.2. Statistical calculation method**

Here is how indicators calculate the most important statistics:

**Educational attainment of population 10 years and over:** [total population 10 years and over according to educational attainment/total population 10 years and over]  $\times 100$ .

**Proportion of the population with at least upper secondary school:** [total population of 25 years and over with at least upper secondary school/total population of 25 years and over]  $\times 100$ .

**Drop-out ratio by grade:** [total number of students dropping out of school in a given school year/( total number of students enrolled in schools in a given school year + total number of students dropping out in a given school year)]  $\times 100$ , broken down by grade.

**Secondary school graduates:** Total number of secondary school graduates in Abu Dhabi.

**Secondary completion rate:** [population between 3 and 5 years of age above the age of formal admission to the last grade of secondary school who have completed secondary/population between 3 and 5 years of age above the age of formal admission to the last grade of secondary school]

**Graduates of applied technology schools:** Total number of graduates of applied technology schools in Abu Dhabi

**Graduates of higher education:** Total number of graduates of higher education in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

### **3.4.3. Seasonal adjustment**

Educational attainment data is collected annually. Seasonal adjustment is not necessary and would not yield valuable insights for understanding trends and long-term educational planning.

### **3.4.4. Chain linking**

Chain linking is not applied to the production of educational achievement statistics.

## **4. Special cases**

Educational attainment statistics do not provide specific cases of the indicators.

## **5. Outputs and quality**

### **5.1 Dissemination and accessibility**

The statistics are published on the Bayaan platform of the center.

## **5.2. Length of available dataset**

Educational attainment statistics are generally available starting from 1962, except for the applied technology school graduate indicators, which start from 2022, the secondary school graduate indicators, which start from 2024, and the indicator for the percentage of the population with at least upper secondary education, which also starts from 2024.

## **5.3. Methodology changes**

No changes have been made to the methodology, as this is the first methodology for educational attainment statistics in 2024.

## **5.4. Data coherence and comparability**

Data consistency and comparability are critical in producing robust educational achievement statistics that align with international standards and best practices in educational statistics, through adherence to the International Standard Classification of Education. This approach allows for meaningful comparisons across different regions, demographic groups, and time periods, thereby enhancing the usefulness and reliability of educational achievement statistics for policymakers, researchers, and educational authorities. Additionally, it is important to consider changes in the education system in Abu Dhabi when making comparisons through years, especially if there are long time series involved.

## **5.5. Data accuracy and potential sources of errors**

Regarding administrative data, errors can arise during the data collection stage inaccurately or inconsistently. To mitigate such errors, the consistency of the data is verified, and internal logical checks are performed.

As for statistical survey data, the data's accuracy is verified upon receipt by linking and comparing it with other relevant databases. This allows for comparisons between the data and available data from previous years to ensure consistency, enabling the addition and correction of essential information when needed.

## **5.6. Revision policy**

To ensure the accuracy of the data and statistical products provided by the Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi and other governmental entities and companies within the decentralized statistical system, the Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi and other entities are committed to continuously revising data to improve and develop it. This revision includes revising official published statistics, whether through printed documents or approved publications by the Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi or any other entity within the statistical system. The policy outlines the general rules for reviewing issued and published statistics, how users will be informed about potential revisions, the classification of the revision, and the supporting documentation covering all aspects of the review.

This policy provides a global framework that enables statistical producers to define the review mechanisms for their statistical products according to their specific characteristics. The revision policy covers all indicators, statistics, and time series, regardless of their frequency (monthly, quarterly, annual, etc.). Additionally, the Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi publishes a general policy on data revision that

applies to all statistics under its responsibility, ensuring that this policy is adaptable to the characteristics of different statistics and allows for defining revision policies for all specialized areas in alignment with the general policy.

### **5.7. Limitations of dataset**

While educational achievement statistics are a valuable tool for measuring educational participation and outcomes, several limitations should be considered:

**Geographical Comparisons:** Comparing educational achievement statistics across different regions or countries can be challenging due to differences in educational systems, data collection methodologies, and classification standards.

**Data Availability:** The accuracy and comprehensiveness of educational achievement statistics depend on the availability and reliability of data from educational institutions and administrative records.

## **6. Institutional environment**

The Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi is the responsible government entity for organizing statistical activities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The center plays a pivotal role in supporting decision-makers, policymakers, and planners in the emirate. It organizes all statistical activities in the emirate in collaboration with its strategic partners within the Abu Dhabi Statistical System, in accordance with the law establishing the Statistics Center - Abu Dhabi. Under this law, the center is responsible for developing and organizing statistical work in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, as well as producing, analyzing, and publishing all official statistics related to the emirate.

## **7. Glossary**

**Student:** A student is a person of either gender, who attends any regular educational institution, public or private, for systematic instruction at any level of education.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

**School Year (Academic year):** The annual teaching or examination period during which students attend courses or take final examinations, not taking minor breaks into account. It may be shorter than 12 months but would typically not be shorter than 9 months. It may vary for different levels of education or types of educational institutions within a country.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

**Education stage:** The sub-level of an educational programme is defined in terms of theoretical duration or a specified set of modules to complete or credits to achieve. A specific stage has characteristics that are distinct from other stages of the same educational programme, and it may be individually certified by an intermediate qualification.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

Education: The processes by which societies deliberately transmit their accumulated information, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, skills, competencies and behaviours across generations. It involves communication designed to bring about learning.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

Higher education: Education provided by universities, colleges, and other institutions that award academic degrees, such as bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees. It typically follows the completion of secondary education and encompasses both undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

Graduate: A person who has successfully completed the final year of a level or sub-level of education.

(Source: Economic and Social Development of Western Asia (ESCWA))

Educational attainment: The highest level of education an individual has successfully completed. This is usually measured with respect to the highest education programme successfully completed which is typically certified by a recognised qualification.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

Upper secondary education (ISCED 3): Programmes at ISCED level 3, or 'upper secondary' education, are typically designed to complete secondary education in preparation for tertiary education, or to provide skills relevant to employment, or both. Programmes at this level offer students more varied, specialised and in-depth instruction than programmes at lower secondary education (ISCED level 2). They are more differentiated, with an increased range of options and streams available.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

Secondary education: Secondary education provides learning and educational activities building on primary education and preparing for Labour market entry, postsecondary non-tertiary education and tertiary education.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

Tertiary education: Tertiary education builds on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialised fields of education. It aims at learning at a high level of complexity and specialisation. Tertiary education includes what is commonly understood as academic education but also includes advanced vocational or professional education. It comprises ISCED levels 5, 6, 7 and 8, which are labelled as short-cycle tertiary education, Bachelor's or equivalent level, Master's or equivalent level, and doctoral or equivalent level, respectively.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)

Charter schools: Charter schools are established through collaboration between the government and private sectors publicly funded and privately operated.

(Source: Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK))

Dropout: It defines as the student who leave the specified level in the educational system without obtaining a qualification.

(Source: OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms)

Field of education: Broad domain, branch or area of content covered by an educational programme, course or module. Often referred to as a 'subject' or 'discipline'. This may also be referred to as 'field of study'.

(Source: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), 2011)



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