



Primary school class sizes as at 2010 - OECD 'Education At A Glance 2012'. Countries are ranked in descending order of public school class size.

The Gonski review calls for dramatic funding increases and everyone has their ideas on how to spend it. Some want to hire more teachers - but do smaller class sizes improve the quality of education?

What does OECD data tell us?

- Worldwide, from 2000 to 2010 class sizes reduced by one student.
- Generally, since 2000, class sizes decreased in countries with larger classes and increased or stayed constant in countries that had the smallest class sizes.
- In countries where private primary schools are more prevalent - such as Australia, Belgium, Denmark and France - there may be large differences in class size between public and private schools. However, where these differences are large, it is the private schools which have more students per class.
- Data indicates that when families choose private schools, class size is not a determining factor in their decision.
- In the majority of countries, including Australia, private schools have larger class sizes than public schools.

#### OECD Average

Primary - public schools: 21.3 / private schools: 20.3  
 Secondary: public schools: 23.3 / private schools: 22.4

#### Australia

Primary: public schools: 23.2 / private schools: 24.9  
 Secondary: public schools: 22.8 / private schools: 25.3

“The OECD study, “Teachers Matter” noted that reducing class size, while it may improve education for targeted groups of students, such as young children or disadvantaged students, is expensive and has not been proven to increase student achievement...”

Korea, with one of the largest public school class sizes, is number 1 on the PISA reading rankings.

Luxembourg, with the smallest class size, sits at number 30 in PISA rankings, significantly below the OECD average.

“The OECD suggests it might be better to keep class sizes constant, raise teacher salaries and increase support to assist teachers. It has found evidence that more OECD countries are raising salaries than reducing class sizes.”