



University and College Union

‘Further, higher, better’

**Submission to the government’s
second Comprehensive Spending
Review**

Section 8

8 International comparison of higher education spending as % of GDP

Public expenditure on higher education institutions in the UK in recent years has been consistently below that of key competitor countries such as France, Germany and the USA, as well as the average for the OECD. However, public spending on institutions as a proportion of GDP by the UK was at approximately twice the level as spending in Japan.

Public expenditure on higher education institutions as % of GDP 1998-2002

	France	Germany	Japan	UK	USA	OECD country mean
	%	%	%	%	%	%
1998	1.01	0.97	0.43	0.83	1.07	1.06
1999	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.8	1.1	1.0
2000	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.0
2001	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.9	1.0
2002	1.0	1.0	0.4	0.8	1.2	1.1

Includes private expenditure on institutions subsidised by public funds.

Source: OECD, Education at a Glance (series, to 2005), table B2.1b (Data for earlier years was not in a directly comparable series).

Comment

We are concerned that UK public expenditure on higher education institutions is consistently below key competitor nations and the OECD average. We call on the government to monitor international comparators with a view to increasing public spending on institutions to the level of the OECD country mean.