

LMF1.6: Gender differences in employment

Definitions and methodology

This indicator captures gender differences in employment through six measures. The first four focus on gender differences in employment participation and the extent to which men and women participate in paid work, and the last two on the degree to which men and women hold different types of jobs:

- i) The *gender gap in the employment rate* (15-64 year olds), with the gender gap measured as the percentage point difference between the male employment rate and the female employment rate. Definitions of employment follow [ILO guidelines](#).
- ii) The *gender gap in the full-time equivalent employment rate*, with the full-time equivalent employment rate calculated as the employment rate (15-64 year olds) multiplied by average usual weekly working hours, divided by 40. The resulting full-time equivalent rate can be interpreted as the proportion of the population that would be employed *if* all those in employment worked a full time 40-hour working week. The gender gap is again calculated as the percentage point difference between the male and the female rate.
- iii) Men's and women's *part-time employment rates*, defined as part-time employment as a percentage of total employment. Part-time employment is defined as usual weekly working hours of less than 30 hours per week in the main job (see comparability and data issues).
- iv) The *gender gap in the employment rate by level of educational attainment* (25-64 year olds), with educational attainment measured using the standard three-part ordinal variable based on the ISCED 2011 classification system: 'low education' corresponds to a highest level of educational attainment at ISCED 2011 levels 0-2 (early-childhood education, primary or lower secondary education); 'medium education' reflects a highest level of educational attainment at ISCED 2011 levels 3-4 (upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education); and 'high education' corresponds to a highest level of educational attainment at ISCED 2011 levels 5-8 (short-cycle tertiary education, bachelor or equivalent, master or equivalent, doctoral or equivalent). The gender gap is again calculated as the percentage point difference between the male and the female rate.
- v) *Women's share of managerial employment*, defined as the proportion of managers that are women. 'Managers' are defined in most cases as workers with jobs classified in ISCO08 category one, though data for certain countries continue to use the older ISCO88 classification system.
- vi) Men's and women's *temporary employment rates*, defined as the proportion of employees in temporary employment. 'Temporary employment' is defined here as work under a fixed-term or temporary contract.

This document, as well as any data and any map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Note by Türkiye: The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Türkiye recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Türkiye shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Türkiye. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

Other relevant indicators: : Maternal employment (LMF1.2); Employment profiles over the life-course (LMF1.4); Gender pay gaps for full and part-time workers (LMF1.5); The distribution of working hours among in couple households (LMF2.2.) and in single-parent household (LMF2.3); Educational attainment by gender (CO3.1).

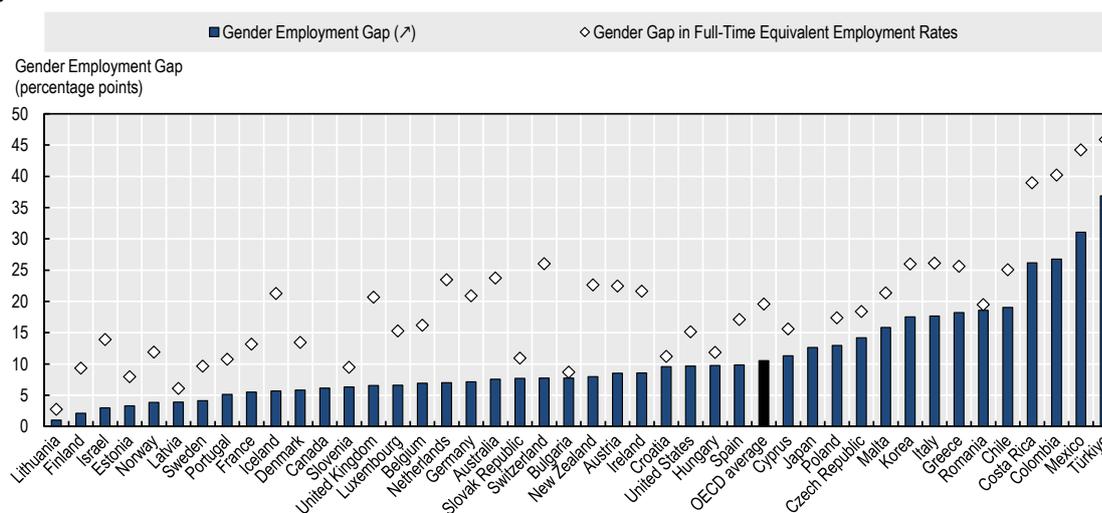
Key findings

Across the OECD, women are less likely to be employed than men, though the size of the gap differs considerably between countries (Chart LMF1.6.A). In 2021, the OECD average female employment rate (65%) was around 10 percentage points lower than the OECD average for men (75%). In some countries (e.g. Finland, Iceland, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden), the gap in 2018 was only around 5 percentage points or less. In others (e.g. Mexico and Türkiye) it was higher than 30 percentage points.

Gender gaps in employment widen once working hours are taken into account (Chart LMF1.6.A). In all OECD countries, the gender gap in the full-time equivalent employment rate is larger than the gap in the standard employment rate. In several eastern European and Baltic countries (particularly Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania, but also the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and some non-OECD EU member states such as Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania) the gap in the full-time equivalent rate is only marginally higher than the gap in the standard employment rate. This suggests that in these countries, gender differences in employment are determined mostly by differences in the ability to find employment in the first instance. In other countries, such as Australia, Iceland, New Zealand, the Netherlands and Switzerland, the gap in the full-time equivalent employment rate is much larger (by around 15 percentage points or more) than the gap in the headcount employment rate. In these countries, highly unequal working hours contribute heavily to overall gender differences in paid work.

Chart LMF1.6.A. Gender gaps in employment rates and full-time equivalent employment rates

Gender difference (men minus women) in the employment rate and the full-time equivalent employment rate, 15-64 year olds, 2021



Notes: The full-time equivalent employment rate is calculated as the employment rate for 15-64 years old multiplied by the average usual hours worked per week per person in employment (both dependent and self-employment), divided by 40. For the United States, the full-time equivalent is calculated based on usual working hours for dependent employees only. For Korea, working hours refer to actual weekly working hours in all jobs. Data refer to 2018 for Australia and to 2020 for Türkiye and the United Kingdom.

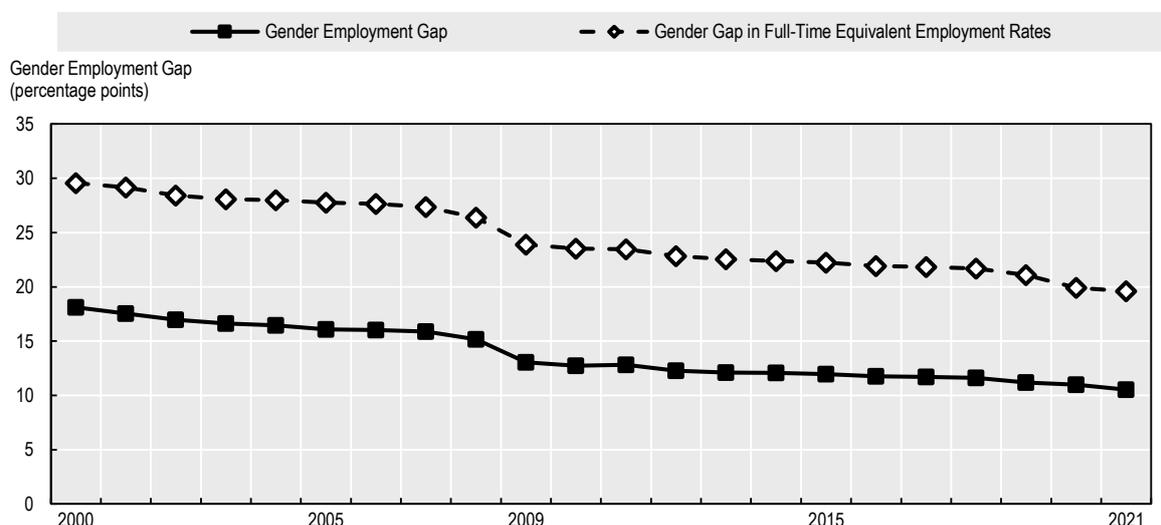
Source: [OECD Employment Database](https://oe.cd/fdb).

Over the past two decades, the gender gap in employment rates almost halved, from 18% in 2000 to 10.5% in 2021 on average across OECD countries (Chart LMF1.6.B). The gender employment gap declined in all OECD countries except in Poland and Sweden; it declined most in Luxembourg and Spain by around 20 percentage points. During the same period, the average full-time equivalent (FTE) employment rate declined by almost 10 percentage points, from 30% in 2000 to 20% in 2021.

Both average gender employment gaps (including the FTE) particularly declined in 2009 as male employment was more affected by the great financial crisis than female employment (OECD, *Society at a Glance*, 2014). Both average gender employment gaps also kept declining over the course of the COVID crisis, where women's employment recovered strongly after the initial blow in 2020 (OECD, *Employment Outlook*, 2022).

Chart LMF1.6.B. Declining trends in average gender gaps in employment rates and full-time equivalent employment rates

Gender difference (men minus women) in the employment rate and the full-time equivalent employment rate, 15-64 year olds, OECD unweighted average, 2000 to 2021

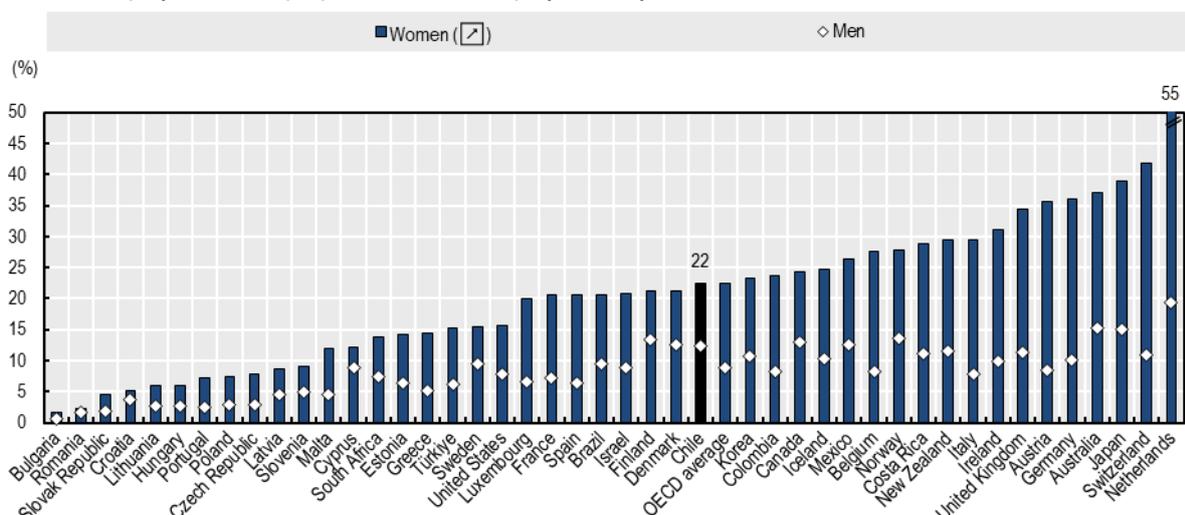


Notes: The full-time equivalent employment rate is calculated as the employment rate for 15-64 years old multiplied by the average usual hours worked per week per person in employment (both dependent and self-employment), divided by 40. From 2021, data from the European Labour Force survey might be affected by a methodological break ([Eurostat, 2022](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&plugin=1)).
Source: [OECD Employment Database](https://data.oecd.org/).

In many OECD countries, gender differences in working hours are driven by disproportionately high rates of part-time employment among women workers (Chart LMF1.6.C). In some countries (again, mostly eastern European countries) the female part-time employment rate is only slightly higher than the male part-time employment rate. In others, however, part-time employment rates for women are roughly four times the size of those for men (e.g. Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland). In the Netherlands, 55% of employed women work part-time, far higher than the share for employed men (19%).

Chart LMF1.6.C. Gender differences in part-time employment

Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment, by sex, 2021

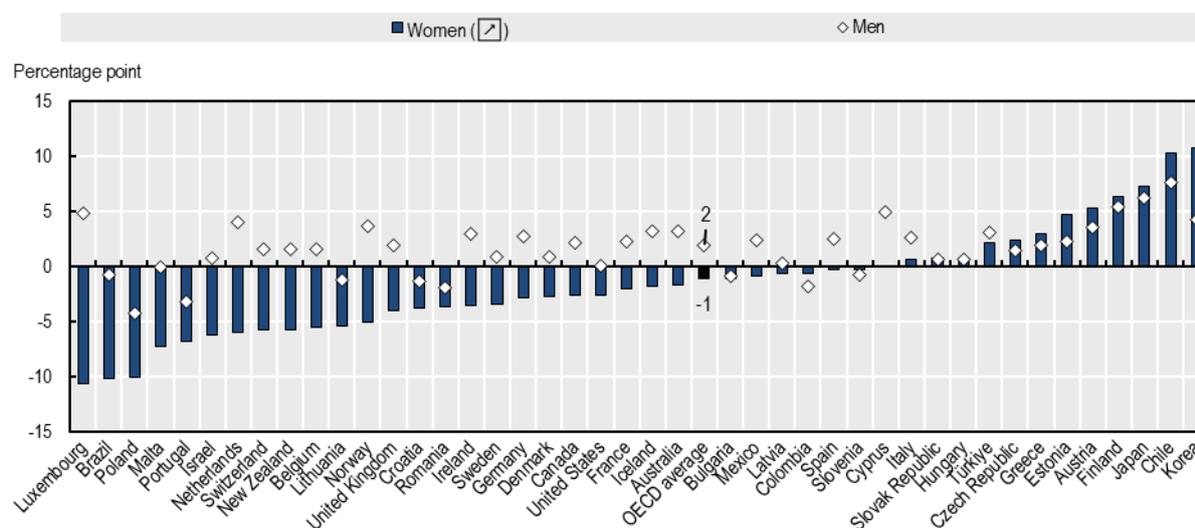


Notes: Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment. 'Part-time' refers to people who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. For the United States, data reflect part-time employees among dependent employees only. For Japan and Korea, data refer to actual weekly working hours in all jobs. Data refer to 2018 for Australia and to 2020 for the United Kingdom.
Source: [OECD Employment Database](https://data.oecd.org/).

Trends in part-time employment are mixed (Chart LMF1.6.D). More than half of all OECD countries have seen women's part-time employment rates fall since the mid-2000s, sometimes by as much as ten percentage points or more (e.g. Luxembourg and Poland). In others, however, women's part-time employment has increased. In Korea, women's part-time employment rate has increased by over 10 percentage points since 2005, from 12.4% to 23.2% in 2021. Men's part-time employment rates, meanwhile, have increased in almost all OECD countries. (Belgium, Colombia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia are the exceptions). Finland, Japan and Chile have seen the largest increases – in all three, men's part-time employment rate has increased by over 5 percentage points since 2005.

Chart LMF1.6.D. Change in part-time employment

Percentage points change in the proportion of employed in part-time employment, by sex, 2005-2021



Note: Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment. 'Part-time' here refers to persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. For the United States, data reflect part-time employees among dependent employees only. For Japan and Korea, data refer to actual weekly working hours in all jobs.

Source: [OECD Employment Database](https://oe.cd/fdb).

Gender gaps in employment rates are not identical across all socio-economic groups. For instance, Table LMF1.6.A, shows that in almost all OECD countries, gender employment gaps decrease with education. On average across the OECD, the gap among men and women with high education is only 8 percentage points, compared to 21 percentage points among men and women with low education. However, there are some exceptions. In Korea, for example, the gender gap is smaller among men and women with less than upper secondary levels of education than it is among those with upper secondary or tertiary education, mostly because employment rates are comparatively high among less educated women.

Table LMF1.6.A. Gender gap in employment rates by educational attainment

Employment rates for men and women by level of education attained, 25-64 year olds, 2020

	Below upper secondary			Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary			Tertiary Education		
	Gender			Gender			Gender		
	Male	Female	Gap	Male	Female	Gap	Male	Female	Gap
Australia	65.8	47.6	18.2	81.4	65.5	15.9	86.4	77.6	8.7
Austria	60.6	49.3	11.3	80.1	72.3	7.8	88.9	83.1	5.8
Belgium	55.8	36.6	19.2	79.4	66.4	13.0	88.6	84.2	4.4
Canada	62.0	42.8	19.2	75.8	62.4	13.4	83.5	76.3	7.2
Chile	82.1	45.2	37.0	85.4	59.9	25.5	90.9	79.1	11.8
Colombia	81.8	40.6	41.2	80.5	51.4	29.1	82.3	68.0	14.2
Costa Rica	77.3	36.1	41.3	81.4	48.1	33.3	81.7	72.4	9.4
Czech Republic	67.0	48.8	18.2	90.0	76.2	13.8	94.7	77.9	16.8
Denmark	69.5	49.9	19.6	85.8	77.5	8.2	90.7	85.2	5.5
Estonia	68.4	50.6	17.8	83.2	74.2	9.0	89.0	82.9	6.1
Finland	59.2	44.9	14.3	78.0	71.6	6.5	89.1	85.1	4.0
France	61.5	45.4	16.2	76.5	68.1	8.4	87.5	83.0	4.5
Germany	70.3	55.4	14.9	84.6	79.8	4.7	90.9	86.1	4.8
Greece	66.1	36.0	30.1	74.4	49.9	24.5	80.9	70.6	10.2
Hungary	66.5	46.7	19.8	87.0	70.1	16.9	94.2	79.9	14.4
Iceland	76.2	63.1	13.0	86.2	74.7	11.5	89.5	86.1	3.4
Ireland	63.2	36.6	26.7	82.0	61.3	20.7	89.3	80.5	8.9
Israel	58.4	37.9	20.5	74.8	65.7	9.1	89.6	84.6	5.0
Italy	66.9	34.8	32.2	80.5	60.3	20.2	86.0	76.9	9.1
Japan	94.6	77.7	16.9
Korea	70.3	55.4	14.9	80.8	59.6	21.2	87.2	65.4	21.8
Latvia	70.0	54.6	15.4	78.7	72.0	6.7	88.8	85.6	3.2
Lithuania	55.8	51.8	4.0	77.2	68.4	8.8	90.3	89.6	0.6
Luxembourg	67.1	53.8	13.3	77.0	72.3	4.7	88.2	81.7	6.5
Mexico	85.1	43.0	42.1	84.9	52.6	32.3	84.4	68.8	15.6
Netherlands	73.6	52.7	20.9	87.1	77.0	10.1	92.1	86.9	5.2
New Zealand	78.2	62.8	15.4	89.2	73.8	15.4	92.1	84.4	7.7
Norway	67.0	53.5	13.5	83.4	74.0	9.4	90.1	88.4	1.7
Poland	60.1	32.4	27.6	82.2	58.8	23.4	93.5	86.0	7.5
Portugal	76.9	62.0	14.9	84.2	79.2	5.0	87.4	88.3	-0.8
Slovak Republic	43.5	30.5	13.0	82.4	70.5	11.9	89.6	77.9	11.7
Slovenia	56.2	41.1	15.1	80.1	69.4	10.7	91.6	89.5	2.1
Spain	66.4	44.9	21.5	75.6	62.3	13.3	83.4	77.0	6.4
Sweden	72.2	52.3	20.0	87.7	81.3	6.4	90.3	88.5	1.8
Switzerland	77.9	61.7	16.2	85.3	77.4	7.9	92.5	84.7	7.8
Türkiye	71.9	28.9	43.0	78.9	32.8	46.1	83.0	62.2	20.8
United Kingdom	72.5	55.9	16.6	84.7	75.8	8.9	89.8	83.4	6.4
United States	66.3	42.1	24.3	75.0	62.5	12.4	86.6	77.9	8.7
OECD average	67.8	46.7	21.1	81.7	66.9	14.8	88.5	80.7	7.8
Argentina	81.7	45.6	36.1	90.5	58.9	31.6	88.2	76.2	12.0
Brazil	67.0	36.6	30.4	78.7	55.6	23.1	86.0	74.7	11.3
India	92.5	27.1	65.4	89.4	20.7	68.7	84.4	28.4	55.9
Indonesia	90.6	58.0	32.6	89.3	53.7	35.6	89.2	75.8	13.3
Bulgaria	57.9	37.5	20.4	79.0	67.9	11.1	89.9	86.0	3.9
Croatia	50.8	29.4	21.4	72.0	59.3	12.7	85.7	81.7	4.0
Cyprus	76.8	50.0	26.8	78.0	61.9	16.1	86.8	80.4	6.4
Malta	80.1	44.5	35.6	86.1	76.9	9.2	92.7	86.0	6.7
Romania	73.4	40.2	33.2	79.5	59.9	19.6	90.9	87.0	3.9

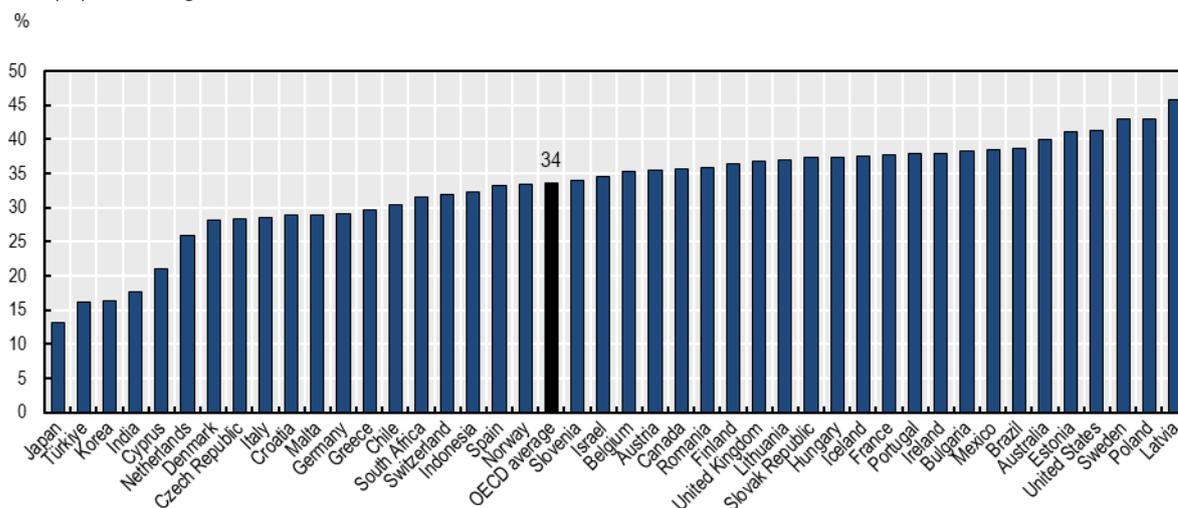
Note: Data for Chile refer to 2017, for Argentina to 2018, and for Denmark, India, Japan and Türkiye to 2019. Data for 5 EU non-OECD countries refer to age group 20-64 years old.

Source: [OECD Education at a Glance](#); For Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Romania: [Eurostat Labour Market Statistics](#)

As well as differing in the extent of their paid work, men and women also often differ in the types of jobs they hold. For example, across OECD countries, women workers are consistently under-represented in top positions – they face what is often called the ‘glass ceiling’. In all OECD countries, women make up less than half of those individuals employed as managers, although again this is subject to considerable cross-country variation (Chart LMF1.6.E). Women’s access to managerial employment is relatively high in Estonia, Poland, Sweden and the United States, where 41-43% of managers are women, and especially Latvia, where they make up 46% of managers. Conversely, women find it particularly difficult to reach managerial positions in both Japan, Korea and Türkiye, where they make up only around 13-16% of managers.

Chart LMF1.6.E. Women's share of managerial employment

Proportion (%) of managers that are women, 2021



Notes: Data for Israel refer to 2017, for Türkiye and the United Kingdom to 2019, and for Australia and India to 2020. Data refer to percentage of employees that hold jobs classified in International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) 08 category one (as managers) that are women.

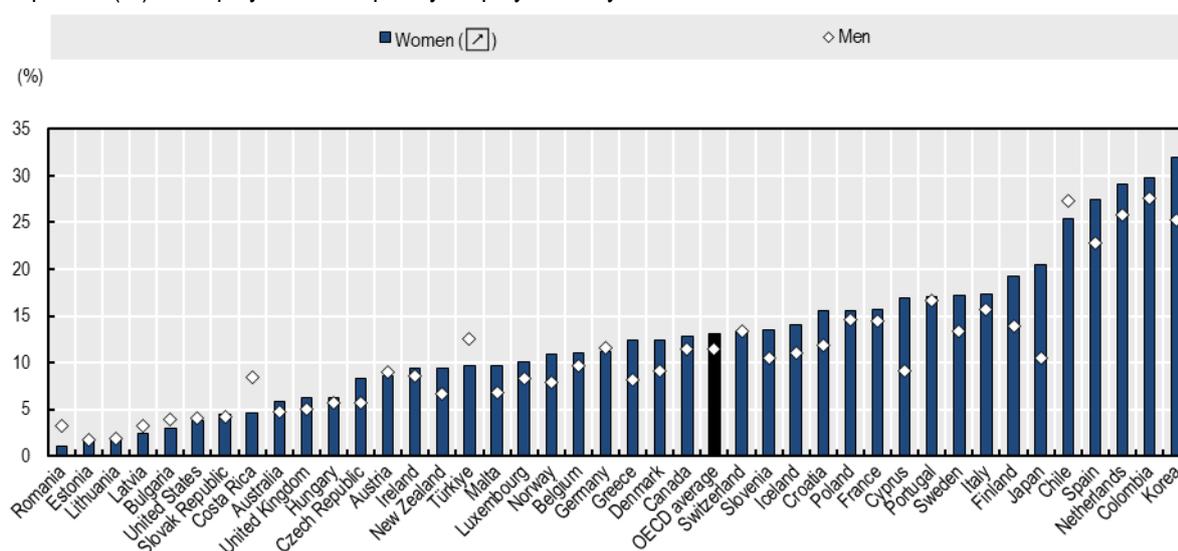
Source: ILO (2022), "ILOSTAT Database", SDG indicator 5.5.2 - Female share of employment in managerial positions (%) - via <https://ilostat.ilo.org/data>

The flip side of this ‘vertical segregation’ is that many women workers find themselves stuck in low status, poorly-paid and insecure jobs at the lower end of the labour market – the so-called ‘sticky floor’. One measure of low job quality is temporary employment. Temporary contracts are by their nature insecure, are often associated with service sector jobs that have a seasonal component (e.g. hospitality and tourism), and in many countries are not covered by certain aspects of employment protection legislation. Moreover, in many instances workers in temporary jobs cannot access a number of financial services – such as loans and mortgages – and in certain cases may also face exclusion from social security systems.

Chart LMF1.6.F shows the proportion of male and female employees on temporary contracts in 2021. Gender differences on this measure are often less pronounced than those seen in many of the previous tables and charts – generally, male and female rates of temporary employment are fairly similar. Nonetheless, women’s temporary employment rates are higher than men’s in about three-quarters of the countries covered, with the OECD average gender gap standing at almost two percentage points. Among OECD countries, differences in temporary employment are largest in Japan – where the proportion of women employees on temporary contracts is ten percentage points higher than the rate for men – but are also considerable in Finland, Greece, Korea, Spain, and Sweden. In some OECD countries (e.g. Chile, Türkiye and Costa Rica), men’s temporary employment rates are slightly higher than women’s. In large part, this can be explained by the relatively large agricultural sectors in these countries, as jobs in agriculture tend to be both dominated by men and are often offered only on a fixed-term or temporary basis.

Chart LMF1.6.F. Gender differences in temporary employment

Proportion (%) of employees in temporary employment, by sex, 2021



Note: Proportion of dependent employees with a temporary or fixed term job contract. Data for Australia and the United States refer to 2017.

Source: [OECD Employment Database](https://oe.cd/fdb)

Comparability and data issues

Data for the first three measures shown in this indicator are taken from the *OECD Employment Database*. This is a well-established source of labour market data and there are few issues around comparability, although a couple of notes are necessary:

- For Chart LMF1.6.A, the data on working hours used to compute the full-time equivalents are for most countries based on usual weekly working hours on the main job for all employed. However, data for Japan and Korea are *actual* hours worked in *all* jobs. Relative to other countries, this may lead to an overestimation of average working hours. For the United States, data cover dependent employees only.
- For Charts LMF1.6.C and LMF1.6.D, part-time employment rates are based on a harmonised definition of ‘part-time employment’ whereby all workers whose usual weekly working hours on their main job are less than 30 are considered to work ‘part-time’. Again, however, for Japan and Korea, *actual* hours worked in *all* jobs. Relative to other countries, this may lead to an underestimation of the numbers working part-time. Data for the United States again cover dependent employees only.

Data for Table LMF1.6.A are taken from *OECD Education at a Glance 2021*. *OECD Education at a Glance* classifies educational programmes on the basis of the guidelines set out in UNESCO’s *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED) framework. The data shown in Table LMF1.6.A are based on the latest ISCED 2011 classification.

The data shown in Chart LMF1.6.E are OECD estimates based on data from the ILO ILOSTAT database. Data for most countries are based on *the International Standard Classification of Occupations* (ISCO) 2008 revision.

Lastly, the data on temporary workers used in Chart LMF1.6.F come from the *OECD Employment Database*. In all countries, the definition of temporary workers includes those on fixed-term contracts, but some countries set a time limit of 12 months for an employee to be classified as “temporary” (including Australia, Japan, Norway and Switzerland). This generally leads to lower rates of temporary employment in these countries in comparison to countries that define all workers on fixed-term contracts as temporary workers regardless of contract duration.

Sources and further reading:

G7 (2022), G7 Dashboard on Gender Gaps 2022, via www.oecd.org/gender

OECD (2014), *Society at a Glance – OECD Social Indicators*;

OECD (2017) *The Pursuit of Gender Equality: an uphill battle*, <http://www.oecd.org/publications/the-pursuit-of-gender-equality-9789264281318-en.htm>;

OECD (2022, forthcoming), *Employment Outlook*

OECD Employment database, via www.oecd.org/employment/database

EU Labour Force Survey database, User Guide,

http://circa.europa.eu/irc/dsis/employment/info/data/eu_lfs/index.htm;

OECD Education database and *OECD Education at a Glance 2021*.