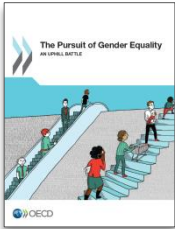


How does FRANCE compare?



The 2017 OECD report *The Pursuit of Gender Equality: An Uphill Battle* explores how gender inequalities persist in social and economic life around the world. Young women in OECD countries have more years of schooling than young men, on average, but women are less still likely to engage in paid work. Gaps widen with age, as motherhood typically has negative effects on women's pay and career advancement. Women are also less likely to be entrepreneurs, and are under-represented in private and public leadership. In the face of these challenges, this report assesses whether (and how) countries are closing gender gaps in education, employment, entrepreneurship, and public life. The report presents a range of statistics on gender gaps, reviews public policies targeting gender inequality, and offers key policy recommendations.

Progress towards equality slows down

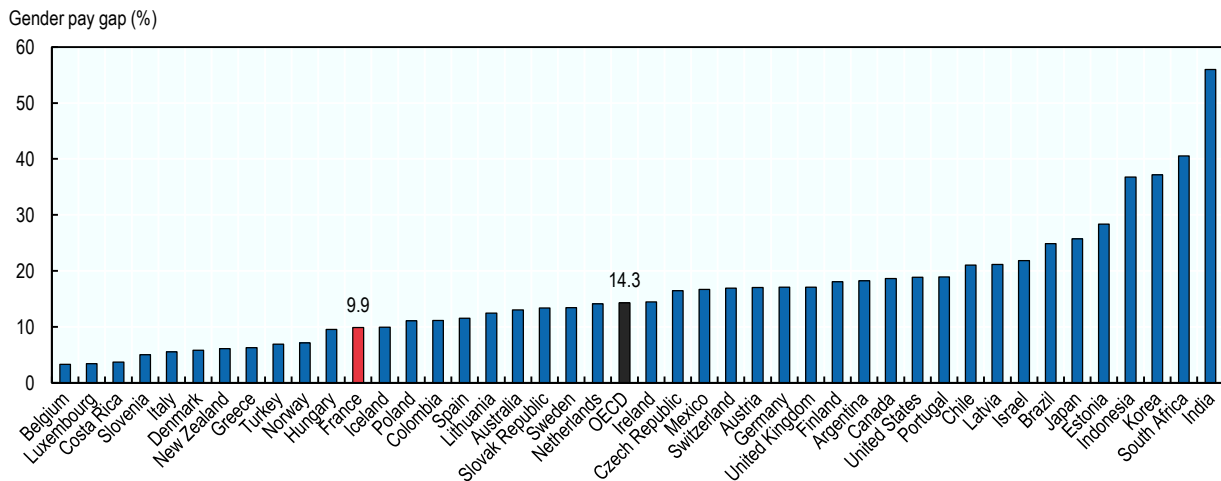
Young women's gains in educational achievement in recent decades have been a powerful driver of gender equality in France. The proportion of young women aged 25-34 with tertiary education is now about 8 percentage points higher than that of similarly-aged men (though still below the OECD average). However, even though young women make up the majority of university graduates, they account for only 38% of science graduates. This is below the OECD average and is 18 percentage points lower than in Portugal, where young women now make up the majority (56%) of science graduates [Chapters 6 and 7].

The employment rate of women (61%) is also comparatively high, which leads to a relatively low gender gap in labour market participation [Chapter 11], although France's gender gap is almost twice as high as the gap in Nordic countries.

France's median gender wage gap for full-time workers is comparatively low (9.9% versus 14.3% OECD average), but this rate has barely changed since the mid-2000s [Chapter 13]. This gap partially reflects the glass ceiling often encountered by women during their careers. Related to this, less than one-third of senior executives in France are women.

Gender equality has been at the heart of policies aimed at reconciling work and family life in France for several decades. For this reason, France ranks favourably with other countries in terms of women's employment and benefits to reconcile work and family life. However, unequal access to services and subsidies continue to be obstacles to achieving equality in the division of paid and unpaid work more broadly across society.

Gender pay gap, 2015 or latest available year



Notes: Gender gap in median earnings for full-time employees. The gender gap is defined as the difference between male and female median monthly earnings divided by male median monthly earnings for full-time employees. Data for France refer to 2014. See [Figure 1.3](#)

Summary indicators of gender equality

	Gender gap in share that have attained tertiary education (25-34 year-olds, p.p)	Female share (%) of graduates in science, maths and computing	Gender gap (p.p.) in the labour force participation rate	Female share (%) of managers	Gender pay gap (median earnings, full-time employees, %)	Gender gap (p.p.) in the share of workers who are employers	Female share (%) of seats in parliament
France	-8.4	38.2	7.9	31.7	9.9	3.7	39.0
OECD average	-11.9	39.2	12.2	31.2	14.3	3.3	28.7
OECD maximum	0.6 (TUR)	56.9 (PRT)	42.0 (TUR)	44.3 (LVA)	37.2 (KOR)	4.6 (ISR)	47.6 (ISL)
OECD minimum	-28.4 (LVA)	21.3 (CHL)	3.0 (FIN)	10.5 (KOR)	3.3 (BEL)	1.7 (NOR)	9.5 (JPN)

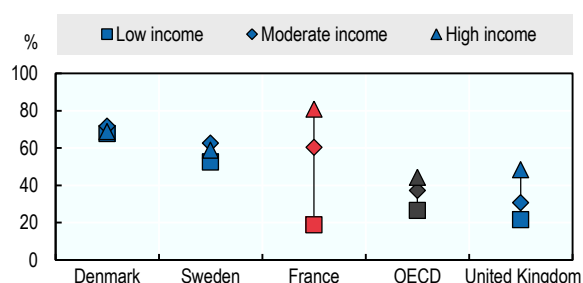
Note: BEL = Belgium, CHL = Chile, FIN = Finland, ISL = Iceland, ISR = Israel, JPN = Japan, KOR = Korea, LVA = Latvia, NOR = Norway, PRT = Portugal, SWE = Sweden, TUR = Turkey. For the female share of seats in parliament, data refer to 1st December 2016, except for France where they refer to 1st September 2017.

In a survey carried out for *The Pursuit of Gender Equality*, governments identified the three most important gender inequality issues in their country as violence against women, the gender wage gap, and the unequal sharing of unpaid work. Many OECD countries are now prioritizing these issues in policy, and many are also pushing to get more women into public and private sector leadership.

Unequal access to childcare

Access to early childhood education and care is essential to support parents in balancing paid work with childcare responsibilities. However, in France, access to care for young children is heavily skewed in favour of higher-earning households. Only 20% of low-income households access third-party care, whereas 80% of children in higher-income families are in formal childcare. The decision to provide lower-income families with additional financial support to access childcare can help reduce the gap between lower-income and higher-income families' access to childcare.

Participation in formal childcare by income level, 2014

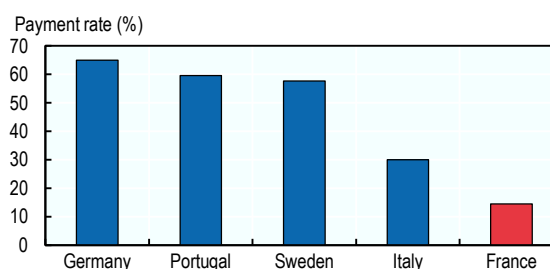


Notes: Participation rates for 0-2 year-olds. See [Figure 17.2](#).

Families cannot afford for men to take parental leave

Parental leave is an important policy lever aimed at advancing greater gender equality in the distribution of unpaid household tasks following the birth of a child. Each parent in France has access to a non-transferable allotment of six months of parental leave. However, the monthly payment of €392 is low compared with other European countries. For this reason, very few fathers take parental leave; only about 5% of benefit recipients are men. The 2014 reform of this benefit has not had the anticipated impact of increasing uptake of parental leave among men.

Parental leave average payment rate, 2016

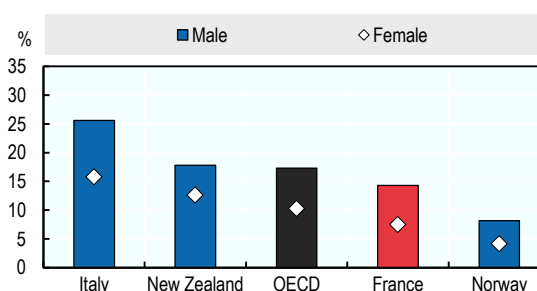


Note: The "average payment rate" refers the proportion of previous earnings replaced by the benefit over the length of the paid leave entitlement for a person earning 100% of average national (2015) earnings. See the [OECD Family Database](#).

Encouraging entrepreneurship among women

Women are less likely than men to start a business: 14% of employed men are employers with employees, compared to about 7% of women [Chapter 24]. The reasons for this gender gap are partly cultural: about 35% of women and 46% of men consider themselves to have the skills, knowledge and experience to start a business, and the gap between men and women has widened since 2012. Access to financial resources is also a determinant [Chapter 25]: more than 26% of men, but less than 17% of women believe that they would have access to financing to enable them to build a business.

Self-employment rates, 2016 or latest



Notes: Self-employed as a percent of all employed, by gender, 15-64 year-olds. Data for New Zealand and the OECD average refer to 2015. See [Figure 24.1](#).