

How's Life in the Russian Federation?

The figure below shows the Russian Federation's relative strengths and weaknesses in well-being, with reference to both the OECD average and the average outcomes of the OECD partner countries considered in *How's Life? 2017* (i.e. Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Lithuania, the Russian Federation and South Africa).

The Russian Federation has several areas of strength relative to both the OECD and the partner countries. At 70% in 2016, the **employment rate** in the Russian Federation is the highest among the OECD partner countries, and higher than the OECD average (67%). Rates of both adults' upper secondary **educational attainment** (almost 95%) and students' **cognitive skills at age 15** are the highest among the OECD partner countries, and above the OECD average. **Long-term unemployment** is low compared to several partner countries, and stands below the OECD average.

Social support is in line with both the OECD and partner country average: 90% of Russians reported having friends or relatives whom they can **count on** in times of trouble in the period 2014-16.

The Russian Federation performs better or close to the OECD average, but below the average for partner countries in one area: **housing** is more **affordable**, on average, than in the OECD, but is less affordable than among the OECD partner countries.

There are also some areas where the Russian Federation's performance is above average for the partner countries but below the OECD average. The **homicide rate** is lower than the average of OECD partner countries, but exceeds the OECD average. 52% of Russians feel **safe walking alone at night** in the area where they live, above the partner country average (43%) but below that for the OECD (almost 69%).

The Russian Federation also has several areas of weakness compared to both the OECD and the other partner countries. The share of people living in housing without access to **basic sanitation** is high compared to both the OECD and partner country averages. **Life expectancy** is close to the average of the partner countries but 9 years below the OECD average. **Voter turnout** (65% in 2012) stands below both the OECD average (69%) and that of the partner countries (70%). Finally, both **air quality** (measured in terms of mean exposure to outdoor air pollution by fine particulate matter, PM_{2.5}) and satisfaction with local **water quality** lie below the OECD and partner country averages.

Current well-being strengths and weaknesses in the Russian Federation

Strengths	Strengths relative to the OECD average	Strengths relative to partner countries	Weaknesses
Above average for both the OECD and partner countries	Above the OECD average, but below partner countries' average	Above partner countries' average, but below the OECD average	Below average for both the OECD and partner countries
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Employment  Long-term unemployment  Working hours  Educational attainment  Cognitive skills at 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Housing affordability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Homicides  Feeling safe at night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Basic sanitation  Life expectancy  Voter turnout  Water quality  Air quality

Note: Both the OECD and partner country averages are typically population-weighted (see the online data annex for further details). Only headline well-being indicators with a complete or almost complete coverage of OECD partner countries are considered (i.e. one or no missing countries per indicator). Where further information for the Russian Federation is available, it is presented on the following page.

Additional information, including the data used in this country note, can be found at:

www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-2017-country-notes-data.xlsx

Change in the Russian Federations' average well-being over the past 10 years

Dimension	Description	Change
 Income and wealth	Household net adjusted disposable income increased by 11% between 2011 and 2014, but remains considerably lower than the OECD average level.	↗
 Jobs and earnings	The employment rate has risen by 6 percentage points since 2005, compared to 1.2 points for the OECD on average. At 1.6% in 2016, the long-term unemployment rate has almost halved from 2005 (2.8%), while job strain has improved by more than 8 percentage points over the past decade.	↗ ↗ ↗
 Housing conditions	The average number of rooms per person has remained stable over the past 10 years. Basic sanitation has improved: the share of households lacking an indoor flushing toilet has fallen from 18.8% to 14.8%. Housing has become more affordable since 2011, with the average share of household disposable income spent on housing costs falling by 1 percentage point.	↔ ↗ ↗
 Work-life balance	At just below 0.2%, the share of employees working 50 hours or more per week in 2016 is very similar to the level reported in 2005.	↔
 Health status	The 10-year change in life expectancy at birth cannot be assessed, due to a recent break in the data. However, between 2005 and 2013 life expectancy increased by 5 years. The percentage of adults reporting to be in “good” or “very good” health has also increased, by 6 points between 2012 and 2016.	↗ ↗
 Education and skills	Over the last 10 years, the percentage of adults attaining an upper secondary level of education increased by over 4 points.	↗
 Social connections	Social support has increased, with the share of the population reporting that they have relatives or friends whom they can count on to help in case of need rising from 86% to 90%.	↗
 Civic engagement	At 65%, voter turnout in the 2012 presidential elections was considerably lower than in 2008 (70%), with a stronger decline than for the OECD average.	↘
 Environmental quality	The percentage of people satisfied with their local water quality is currently 24 points higher than 10 years ago. However, annual exposure to PM _{2.5} air pollution has remained relatively stable over the past decade.	↗ ↔
 Personal security	The homicide rate fell from 25 deaths per 100 000 in 2005 to 11.3 in 2011 (the latest available year). The proportion of people declaring that they feel safe when walking alone at night has increased by 25 percentage points.	↗ ↗
 Subjective well-being	Average levels of life satisfaction have increased from 5.1 (on a 0 to 10 scale) to 6.0 over the past decade.	↗

Note: For each indicator in every dimension: ↗ refers to an improvement; ↔ indicates little or no change; and ↘ signals deterioration. This is based on a comparison of the starting year (2005 in most cases) and the latest available year (usually 2015 or 2016). The order of the arrows shown in column three corresponds to that of the indicators mentioned in column two.

The Russian Federation's resources and risks for future well-being: Illustrative indicators

 Natural capital		
Indicator	Equivalent OECD tier	Change
Greenhouse gas emissions from domestic production	3	↘ 2005-2015
CO ₂ emissions from domestic consumption	1	↘ 2001-2011
Exposure to PM _{2.5} air pollution	2	↔ 2005-2013
Forest area	1	↔ 2005-2014
Renewable freshwater resources	1	.. Long-term annual avg
Freshwater abstractions	2	.. 2016
Threatened birds	1	.. Latest available
Threatened mammals	1	.. Latest available
Threatened plants	1	.. Latest available

 Human capital		
Indicator	Equivalent OECD tier	Change
Young adult educational attainment	1	↗ 2010-2015
Educational expectancy	3	.. 2015
Cognitive skills at age 15	2	.. 2015
Adult skills	2	.. 2011/2012
Long-term unemployment	2	↗ 2005-2016
Life expectancy at birth	3	↗ 2005-2013
Smoking prevalence	3	↗ 2009-2013
Obesity prevalence	2	.. 2016

 Economic capital		
Indicator	Equivalent OECD tier	Change
Produced fixed assets	3	↗ 2012-2016
Gross fixed capital formation	3	↔ 2005-2016
Financial worth of the total economy	1	↗ 2011-2015
Investment in R&D	3	↔ 2013-2016
Household debt	1	↔ 2011-2015
Financial worth of government	1	↗ 2011-2015
No data available on intellectual property assets, household net wealth and banking sector leverage.		

 Social capital		
Indicator	Equivalent OECD tier	Change
Trust in the national government	1	↗ 2005-2016
Voter turnout	2	↘ 2008-2012
Volunteering through organisations	3	.. 2012
No data available on trust in others, trust in the police and government stakeholder engagement.		

1	Equivalent to the top-performing OECD tier, latest available year
2	Equivalent to the middle-performing OECD tier, latest available year
3	Equivalent to the bottom-performing OECD tier, latest available year

↗	Improving over time
↘	Worsening over time
↔	No change
..	No data available

HOW LARGE ARE WELL-BEING INEQUALITIES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION?

What is inequality and how is it measured? Measuring inequality means trying to describe **how unevenly distributed** outcomes are in society. *How's Life? 2017* adopts several different approaches:

- Measures of “**vertical**” inequalities address how unequally outcomes are spread across all people in society – for example, by looking at the size of the gap between people at the bottom of the distribution and people at the top.
- Measures of “**horizontal**” inequalities focus on the gap between population groups defined by specific characteristics (such as men and women, young and old, people with higher and lower levels of education).
- Measures of “**deprivation**” report the share of people who live below a certain level of well-being (such as those who face income poverty or live in an overcrowded household).

Vertical inequality in terms of income, wealth and earnings could not be assessed in the Russian Federation due to data gaps. However, the available indicators suggest that skills and political efficacy (i.e. having a say in what government does) are more evenly distributed than in the OECD on average.

The Russian Federation has mixed outcomes when it comes to **gender inequality**. For example, in the OECD on average, women and men have similar results for political efficacy (having a say in government) and men score marginally higher on adult skills. Russian women, by contrast, are much less likely than men to feel they have a say in government, but fare very slightly better than men in adult skills.

Compared to OECD countries, the gap between **young people** and **middle-aged adults** in the Russian Federation is narrow for several outcomes. For instance, there is no difference between the two groups on adult skills. Meanwhile, the young outperform the middle-aged when it comes to feelings of safety at night – while in the OECD on average there is little difference between these groups. However, in a few indicators, including income and unemployment, young Russians are lagging behind middle-aged adults by larger margins larger than in OECD countries.

In terms of unemployment, social support and life satisfaction, the gaps in well-being between people having attained a secondary education and those with a tertiary level are larger in Russia than in most OECD countries. In addition, parents’ education impacts the cognitive skills of children more than in the OECD on average.

The Russian Federation records high levels of **deprivation** in 5 out of 12 available indicators. Issues that are comparatively widespread in the country include income poverty (14.6%), a lack of social support (9%), dissatisfaction with water quality (41%) and feeling unsafe walking alone at night (40%).

Well-being inequalities in the Russian Federation

	Vertical inequality	Horizontal inequality by			Deprivation
		Gender	Age	Education	
		Women relative to men	Young relative to middle-aged	Secondary relative to tertiary	
Household income	○		●		●
Household net wealth	○		○	○	○
Earnings	○	○	○	○	
Low pay		○			○
Employment		●	●	●	
Unemployment		●	●	●	●
Housing affordability					○
Rooms per person					○
Life expectancy	○				
Perceived health		○	○	○	○
Working hours	○	○	○	○	○
Time off		○	○		
Educational attainment		●	●		●
Cognitive skills at 15	●	●		●	●
Adult skills	●	●	●	●	●
Time spent socialising		○	○		
Social support		●	●	●	●
Voter turnout		○	○	○	●
Having a say in government	●	●	●	●	●
Air quality					●
Water quality		●	●	●	●
Homicides		●			●
Feeling safe at night		●	●	●	●
Life satisfaction	○	●	●	●	○
Negative affect balance					○

Legend:
 ● top third of OECD countries
 ● middle third of OECD countries
 ● bottom third of OECD countries
 ○ data gaps
 □ no measures

BETTER LIFE INDEX

The **Better Life Index** is an interactive web application that allows users to compare well-being across OECD countries and beyond on the basis of the set of well-being indicators used in *How's Life?*. Users chose what weight to give to each of the eleven dimensions shown below and then see how countries perform, based on their own personal priorities in life.

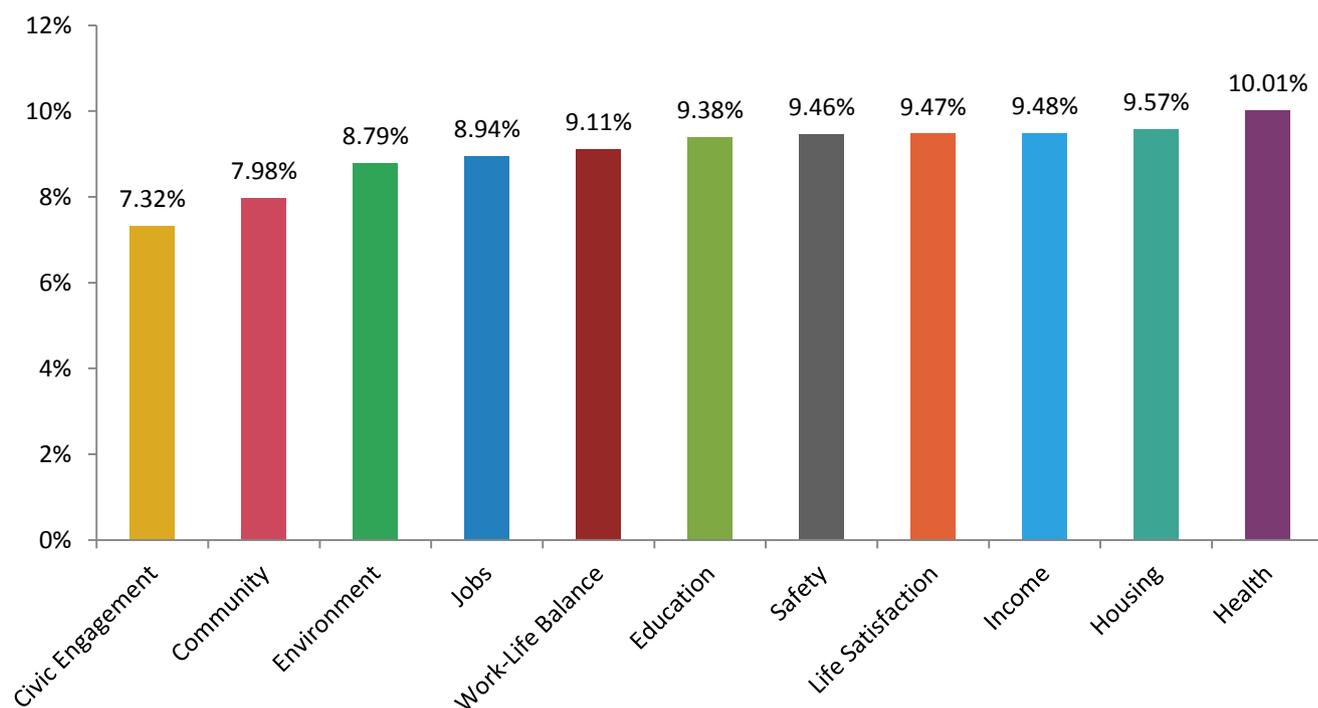


Users can also share their index with other people in their networks, as well as with the OECD. This allows the OECD to gather valuable information on the importance that users attach to various life dimensions, and how these preferences differ across countries and population groups.

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO PEOPLE IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION?

Since its launch in May 2011, the Better Life Index has attracted **over ten million visits from just about every country on the planet** and has received over **22 million page views**. To date, over 306,300 people in the Russian Federation have visited the website, making the Russian Federation the 9th country overall in traffic to the website. The top cities are Moscow (28% of visits), Saint Petersburg (12%) and Yekaterinburg.

The following country findings reflect the ratings voluntarily shared with the OECD by 2,447 website visitors in the Russian Federation. Findings are only indicative and are not representative of the population at large. **For Russian users of the Better Life Index, health, housing and income are the three most important topics** (shown below).¹ Up to date information, including a breakdown of participation in each country by gender and age can be found here: www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/responses/#RUS.



¹ User information for the Russian Federation is based on shared indexes submitted between May 2011 and September 2017.

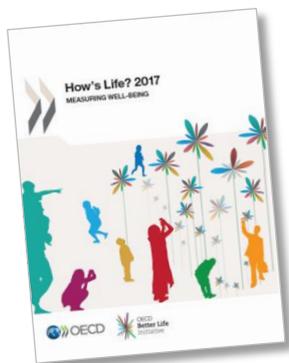
The **OECD Better Life Initiative**, launched in 2011, focuses on the aspects of life that matter the most to people and that shape the quality of their lives. The Initiative comprises a set of regularly updated well-being indicators and an in-depth analysis of specific topics, published in the *How's Life?* report. It also includes an interactive web application, the *Better Life Index*, and a number of *methodological and research projects* to improve the information base available to understand well-being levels, trends and their drivers.

The OECD Better Life Initiative:

- Helps to inform policy making to improve quality of life.
- Connects policies to people's lives.
- Generates support for needed policy measures.
- Improves civic engagement by encouraging the public to create their own *Better Life Index* and share their preferences about what matters most for well-being
- Empowers the public by improving their understanding of policy-making.

This note presents **selected findings for the Russian Federation from the *How's Life? 2017* report** (pages 1-4) and shows what **Russian users of the Better Life Index** are telling us about their **well-being priorities** (page 5).

HOW'S LIFE?



How's Life?, published every two years, provides a comprehensive picture of well-being in OECD and selected partner countries by bringing together an internationally comparable set of well-being indicators. It considers eleven dimensions of current well-being including: income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing; health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security; and subjective well-being. It also looks at four types of resources that help to sustain well-being over time: natural, human, economic and social capital.

The *How's Life? 2017* report presents the latest data on well-being in OECD and partner countries, including how lives have changed since 2005. It includes a special focus on inequalities, the well-being of migrants in OECD countries, and the issue of governance – particularly how people experience and engage with public institutions. To read more, visit: www.oecd.org/howslife.

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