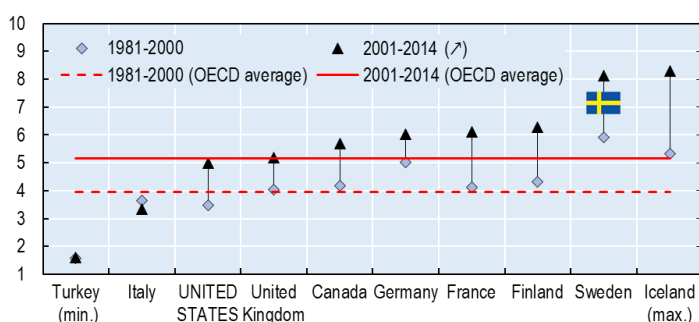




The 2019 edition of *Society at a Glance* examines trends in social well-being trends across the OECD. It features a special chapter on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people: their numbers, how they fare in terms of their economic situation and well-being, and what policies can improve LGBT inclusivity. It also includes a special chapter based on the 2018 OECD Risks That Matter Survey on people's perceptions of social and economic risks and the extent to which they think governments address those risks. The publication also presents 25 indicators on general context, self-sufficiency, equity, health and social cohesion.

Fig.1. Despite improvements, acceptance of homosexuality remains limited



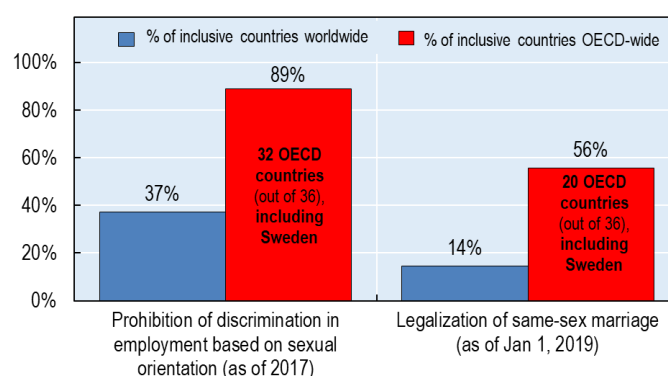
Note: Acceptance of homosexuality is measured on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that homosexuality is never justifiable and 10 means that it is always justifiable. Source: [Figure 1.6] of OECD Society at a Glance 2019].

A SPOTLIGHT ON LGBT PEOPLE

Sweden is one of the 15 OECD countries that include a survey question on self-identification as heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual in at least one of their nationally representative surveys. According to the National Public Health Survey, the average share of LGB people in Sweden amounted to 1.6% between 2005 and 2012. In other OECD countries where estimations from different survey rounds are available, the share of LGB people is on the rise [Figure 1.4 of the OECD publication *Society at a Glance 2019*]. Increasing disclosure of an LGB identity is likely to continue in the future since it is driven by younger cohorts. As most OECD countries, Sweden does not yet collect information on the share of transgender people among the adult population.

Attitudes toward LGBT people are improving worldwide and have consistently been more positive in OECD countries than elsewhere. However, there remains substantial room for progress. Sweden is an exception and performs significantly better than the OECD average regarding acceptance of homosexuality: Swedish citizens score eight on a 1-to-10 acceptance scale, three points above the average OECD score [Figure 1 above]. Moreover, a large majority of Swedish respondents (77%) would feel

Fig.2. There is still a long way before sexual and gender minorities meet full-fledged legal recognition



Source: [Figure 1.18] of OECD Society at a Glance 2019].

comfortable having a transgender or transsexual person in the highest elected political position, as a work colleague, or as a daughter- or son-in-law [Figure 1.8, Panel A].

Low acceptance of LGBT people in OECD countries puts them at risk of discrimination. Representative survey data reveal that LGBT people are penalised with respect to employment status and labour earnings [Figure 1.12]. Experimental data confirm that this penalty at least partly reflects labour market discrimination. Such discrimination is also at play in Sweden: with the same curriculum vitae, homosexual applicants are about 10% less likely to be invited to a job interview than heterosexual applicants.

Representative survey data also point to widespread psychological distress among LGBT individuals. LGB respondents in Sweden are nearly ten times as likely to have attempted suicide in the year preceding the survey compared to heterosexual people [Figure 1.14]. Lower mental health among LGBT people at least partly flows from stigma. By living in a social environment that largely views heterosexuality and congruence between sex at birth and gender identity as the only way of being normal, LGBT people experience stress not undergone by heterosexual and cisgender individuals.

A range of policies can help improve LGBT inclusivity. Making LGBT individuals and the penalties they face visible in national statistics is a prerequisite for their inclusion, suggesting that Sweden could collect information on sexual orientation in a broader range of surveys, including the Swedish labour force survey and the Swedish census, and start collecting information on gender identity as well.

Legally prohibiting anti-LGBT discrimination and ensuring equal rights for LGBT individuals is also essential to improve their situation. Sweden has a proud record in this area, being among the 32 OECD countries that prohibit discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation, and among the 20 OECD countries that have legalized same-sex marriage [Figure 2 above].

Finally, educating people in countering their unconscious bias is a key component of any policy package aiming to better LGBT inclusion. Evidence shows that these interventions can be highly effective, even when they are short.

OVERVIEW OF OTHER SOCIAL INDICATORS

High permanent migration flows

Annual migration flows in Sweden represent about 1.4% of the total population in 2016 [Figure 4.7]. This share is almost double the OECD average (0.8%) and fourth highest among OECD countries, after Switzerland, Iceland and Luxembourg. It is also a sharp increase from the period 2010-15, when permanent migration flows accounted for 0.9% of the Swedish population. Even during that period, Sweden already had higher annual migration flows than the average OECD country (0.6%). By 2017, 18% of the population in Sweden was foreign-born, up from 13% a decade earlier [Figure 4.8].

Frequent interactions with foreigners

Social interactions with foreigners are more frequent in Sweden than in most other OECD countries. Sweden reports one of the highest percentages of native-born who interact at least once a week with immigrants, either in the work place (48%) or in the neighbourhood (59%) [Figure 4.9]. The averages of the 28 EU countries for which data are available are 28% and 44% respectively.

Confidence in institutions

The Swedish population has more confidence in its national government than populations in OECD countries on average, 53% versus 43% [Figure 8.4]. There is no difference between poor and rich people, unlike in many other countries. The Swedish population reports most confidence in the local police (76% of the population), followed by the judicial system (69%), the military (68%) and the financial system (57%).

Voter turnout in the last national election was 82%, the third highest rate in the OECD [Figure 8.10]. Sweden also has the lowest level of people reporting that corruption is widespread throughout the government, 17% compared with 56% on average in the OECD [Figure 8.6]

Affordable housing is a challenge

Only 13% of households in Sweden own their dwelling outright, the third lowest share in the OECD [Figure 6.13]. Instead, most Swedish households own their dwelling with a mortgage (46%), compared with an OECD average of 26%. The housing cost burden is particularly large for low-income people. Nearly half of all low-income households in Sweden (45%) spent more than 40% of disposable income on their rent in 2016. The same indicator drops to barely 9% for low-income owners with a mortgage [Figure 6.14].

Violence against women

More than one in four Swedish women (28%) report having experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime [Figure 8.7]. Reporting of such violence happens more frequently in Sweden than on average across OECD countries (22%).

One in ten women in Sweden say that a husband may be justified in hitting or beating his wife, compared with only one in thirteen women in OECD countries on average [Figure 8.8].

One out of three Swedish women (34%) do not feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live, similar to the OECD average [Figure 8.9]. Among Swedish men, the share drops to 11%, which is considerably below the OECD average of 19%. The difference by gender in Sweden is the fourth largest amongst OECD countries.

High internet take up and long hours online

Most people in Sweden (92%) use the internet and user rates are high among both younger and older generations, at respectively 95% and 88% [Figure 8.13]. While internet take up among Swedish youth is slightly below the OECD average of 97%, the take up rate for 55-74-year olds is considerably above the OECD average (67%).

Youth in Sweden spend on average about one hour per day longer online than youth in OECD countries on average: 5:31 hours versus 4:20 hours [Figure 8.14]. Cyberbullying is less frequent in Sweden than in other OECD countries: less than 10% of Swedish adolescents report having been the victim of cyberbullying, either by message or by picture (OECD average: 14%) [Figure 8.15].

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