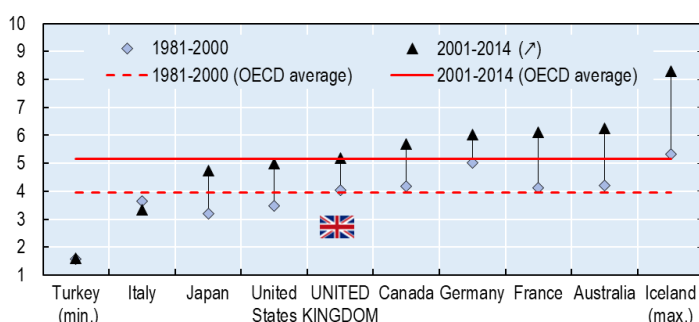




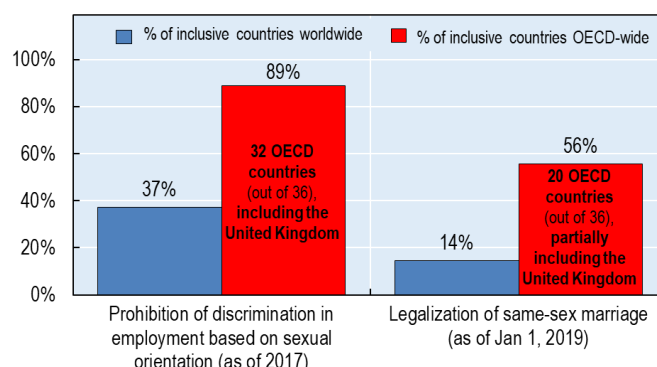
The 2019 edition of *Society at a Glance* examines trends in social well-being across the OECD. It features a special chapter on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people: their numbers, how they fare in terms of their economic situation and well-being, and what policies can improve LGBT inclusivity. 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]

Fig.2. There is still a long way before sexual and gender minorities meet full-fledged legal recognition, and the United Kingdom is no exception



Note: Same-sex marriage is legal in only some parts of the territory in the United Kingdom. Source: [Figure 1.18 of OECD Society at a Glance 2019]

A SPOTLIGHT ON LGBT PEOPLE

The United Kingdom is one of the 15 OECD countries that include a question on self-identification as heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual in at least one of their nationally representative surveys. The share of LGB people in the United Kingdom is sizeable (2.6% according to the 2012 wage of the UK Household Longitudinal Survey) and on the rise [Figure 1.4 of OECD 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, the United Kingdom 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. The United Kingdom is no exception: UK citizens are only halfway to full social acceptance of homosexuality, scoring nearly five on a 1-to-10 acceptance scale (in line with the average OECD score) [Figure 1 above]. Moreover, only a minority of UK respondents (45%) would accept that a child dresses and expresses herself/himself as a child of the other gender [Figure 1.8, Panel B].

Low acceptance of LGBT people 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]. For instance, LGB people in the United Kingdom are 11% less likely to hold a high managerial position than heterosexual people. Experimental data confirm that this penalty at least partly reflects labour market discrimination: with the same curriculum vitae, homosexual UK applicants are nearly 10% less likely to be invited to a job interview than heterosexual UK applicants.

Representative survey data also point to widespread psychological distress among LGBT individuals. LGB people in the United Kingdom show lower life satisfaction than heterosexual people [Figure 1.16]. 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. In the United States, for instance, same-sex marriage policies caused a reduction by nearly 15% of suicide attempts among adolescents who self-identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual.

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. The United Kingdom has a proud record in this area and will include questions to measure LGBT identities in the 2021 census. Legally prohibiting anti-LGBT discrimination and ensuring equal rights for LGBT individuals is also essential to improve their situation. While the United Kingdom is one of the 32 OECD countries that prohibit discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation, same-sex marriage is still not legally recognized in Northern Ireland [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

Affordable housing is a challenge

More than one in three households in the United Kingdom (36%) rent their home, a relatively high share compared with the OECD average (26%) [Figure 6.13]. **The housing cost burden is particularly large for low-income people.** More than half of all low-income households in the United Kingdom (51%) spent more than 40% of disposable income on their rent in 2016, putting the United Kingdom seventh in the OECD ranking [Figure 6.14]. The share is considerably lower for low income households that own a dwelling with a mortgage (35%).

Incomes are low while inequality and poverty are high

Median disposable household income in the United Kingdom is – at 22 500 US PPP in 2016 – just below the OECD average of 23 000 US PPP, and almost half of the median income in Luxembourg 41 200 US PPP [Figure 4.1]. **The United Kingdom ranks sixth highest among OECD countries in terms of income inequality,** with a Gini coefficient of 0.35 and just below Lithuania and the United States [Figure 6.1]. The richest 10% of income earners get more than a quarter (28%) of all income and more than half (52%) of all wealth is concentrated among the top 10% of wealthiest households [Figure 6.2].

Cash support is targeted to the poorest

Public social spending in the United Kingdom amounts to just over 20% of GDP, a similar share as OECD countries on average [Figure 6.10]. Health accounts for the bulk (36%) of public social expenditure, as in other Anglophone countries and most other countries outside Europe [Figure 6.11]. **Cash social benefits tend to be better targeted to the poorest than in many other OECD countries:** one third of public cash transfers goes to the poorest 20%, compared with less than one fourth in OECD countries on average [Figure 6.12].

Qualification mismatch despite high education spending

Total expenditure on educational institutions per full-time equivalent student reaches 13 400 US PPP [Figure 5.10], compared with 10 400 US PPP on average across the OECD. Even so, **41% of UK workers are mismatched by qualifications.** About 28% of all workers are under-qualified (second largest share in the OECD), while 14% of workers are over-qualified [Figure 5.9].

High underage alcohol consumption

Underage drinking in the United Kingdom is significantly above the OECD average, especially for girls. Nearly one in three (31%) 15-year-old girls in the United Kingdom report having been drunk at least twice in their life, compared with one in five in the OECD [Figure 7.16]. The United Kingdom is one of just three OECD countries to have higher underage drinking rates for girls (31%) than for boys (26%) and this gender gap is the largest.

Violence against women

In the United Kingdom, **29% of women report having experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner** in their lifetime, a share considerably above the OECD average of 22% [Figure 8.7]. Social acceptance of domestic violence against women is an obstacle to addressing violence against women. One in ten women in the UK say that a husband may be justified in hitting or beating his wife [Figure 8.8]. Women in the United Kingdom also feel less secure walking alone at night than men, but the share of the population who feels unsafe (22%) is lower than in OECD countries on average (26%) [Figure 8.9].

High internet take up, but frequent cyberbullying

At 95%, the share of people in the United Kingdom who use the internet is among the highest in the OECD [Figure 8.13]. Internet usage is almost universal among youth, but also many 55-74-year olds use internet (86%), compared with an OECD average of 67% for that age group. Young people (aged 14-24) spend on average more than five hours per day online, while the OECD average stands around four hours 20 minutes [Figure 8.14]. **About one in four adolescents in the United Kingdom report having been the victim of cyberbullying,** either by message or by picture [Figure 8.15]. The share reaches 18% in England and Wales and 22% in Scotland, compared with 14% in the OECD on average. The risks are considerably higher for girls than for boys (28% versus 16% in Scotland).

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