

Government at a Glance 2021 Country Fact Sheet



Australia

Australia's public finances have been heavily affected by COVID-19.

Australia absorbed the largest change in its structural primary balance of any country in the OECD last year from 0.1% of potential GDP to -8.5%.

Chapter 2 – Public finance and economics



[Figure 2.6. General government structural primary balance as a percentage of potential GDP, 2007, 2019 and 2020](#)

Australia is performing well on diversity and inclusion in the public sector, and can improve further.

Australia ranks 8th in the OECD for women in senior management in the public sector (47%, Figure 3.7), and 9th on development of a diverse public workforce (Figure 6.5). However, it also has the 3rd largest gap in youth representation in politics among OECD members (Figure 3.12).

Chapter 3 – Public employment



[Figure 3.7. Gender equality in public sector employment and in total employment, 2019](#)



[Figure 3.12. Share of members of parliament aged 40 and under and people aged 20-39 as a share of voting-age population, 2020](#)

Chapter 6 – Human resources management



[Figure 6.5. Pilot index: Development of a diverse central government workforce, 2020](#)

Australia performs well in delivering healthcare and justice, but can improve on education.

Australia is above the OECD average for citizen satisfaction with healthcare (83%, Figure 14.1) and confidence in the judiciary (60%, Figure 14.3). However, satisfaction with education has fallen sharply in the past decade to 67% (Figure 14.2).

Chapter 14 – Serving citizens



[Figure 14.1. Citizen satisfaction with the health care system, 2010 and 2020](#)



[Figure 14.2. Citizen satisfaction with the education system and schools, 2010 and 2020](#)



[Figure 14.3. Citizen confidence in the judiciary system and the courts, 2010 and 2020](#)

Government resources

Australia

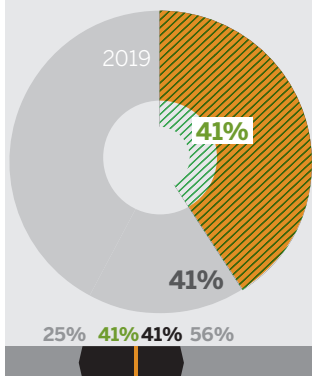
OECD

Range of OECD country values

N. A. not available

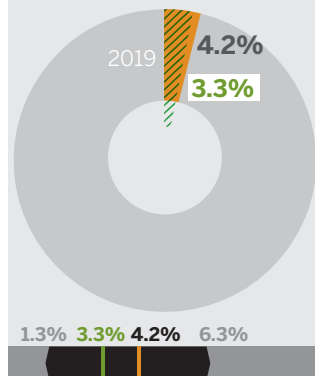
Values have been rounded

Government expenditures
(2019)
% of GDP



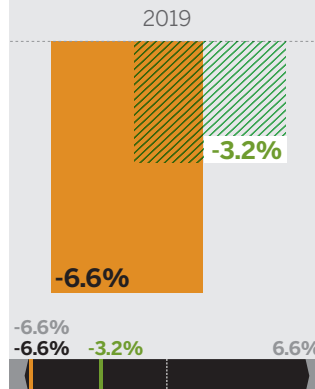
Source: OECD National Accounts

Government investment
(2019)
% of GDP



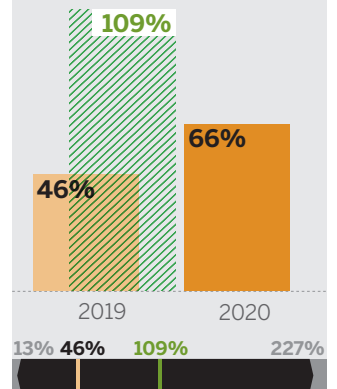
Source: OECD National Accounts

Fiscal balance
(2019)
% of GDP



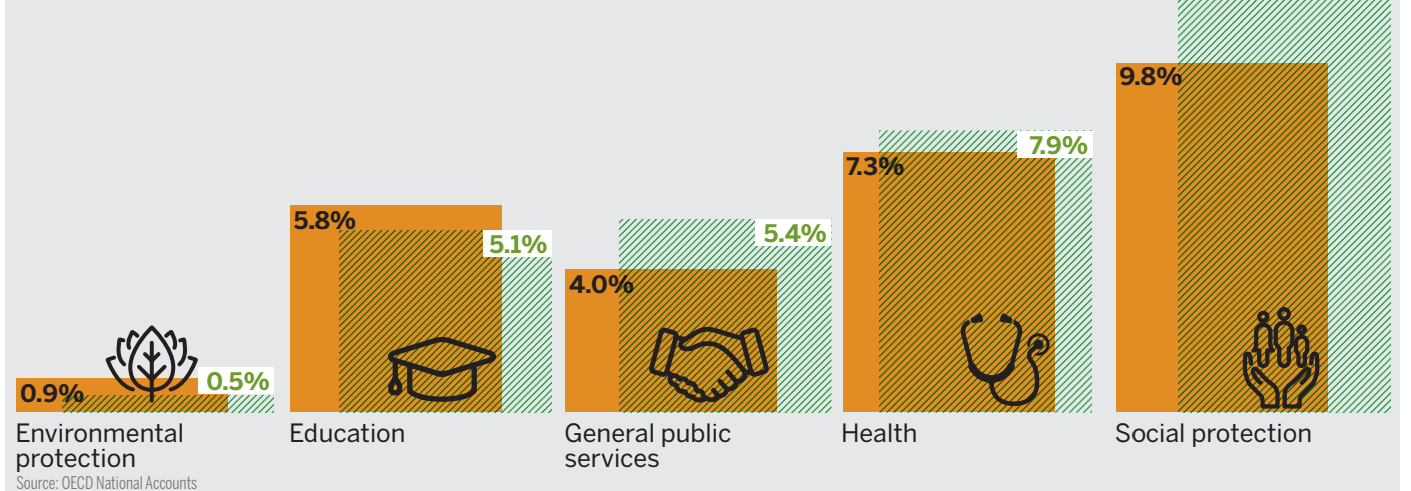
Source: OECD National Accounts

Government gross debt
(SNA definition, 2019, 2020)
% of GDP



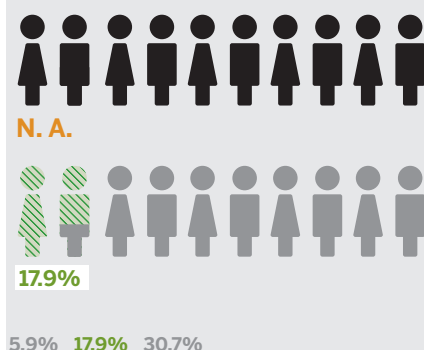
Source: OECD National Accounts

Government expenditures by selected functions (2019)
% of GDP



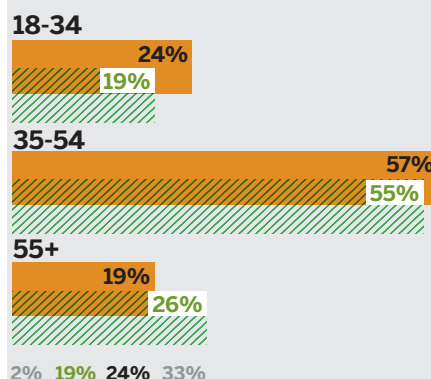
Source: OECD National Accounts

General government employment as a % of total employment (2019)



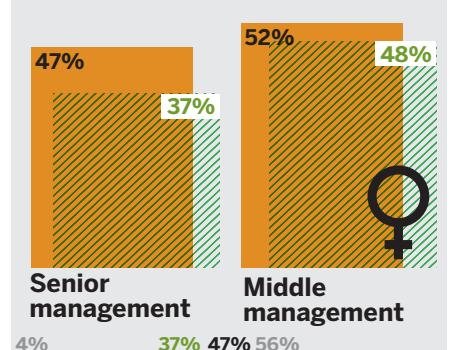
Source: OECD National Accounts

Central government workforce by age (2020)



Source: OECD Survey on the composition of the workforce in central/federal governments

Share of women in management positions in the central government (2020)



Source: OECD Survey on the composition of the workforce in central/federal governments

Public governance practices

Australia

OECD

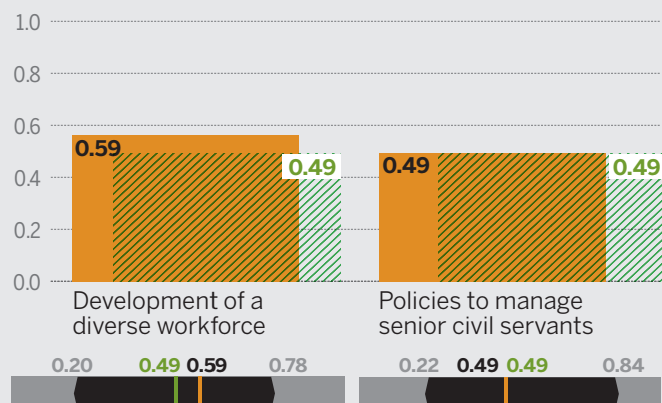
Range of OECD country values

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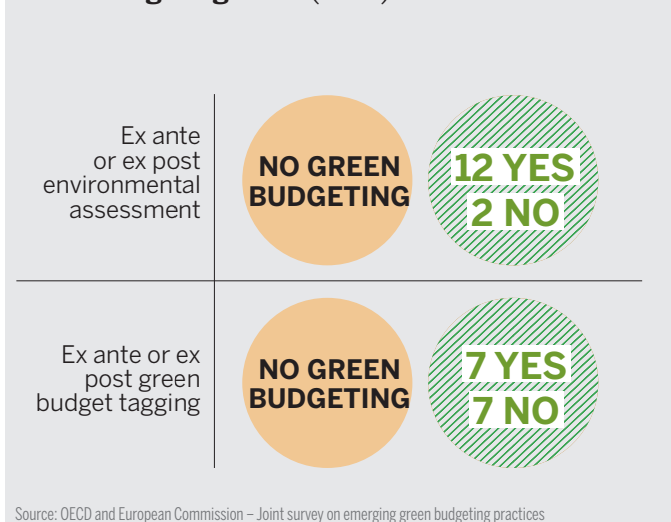
Composite indices of public service leadership and capability (2020)

From 0 (worst) to 1 (best)

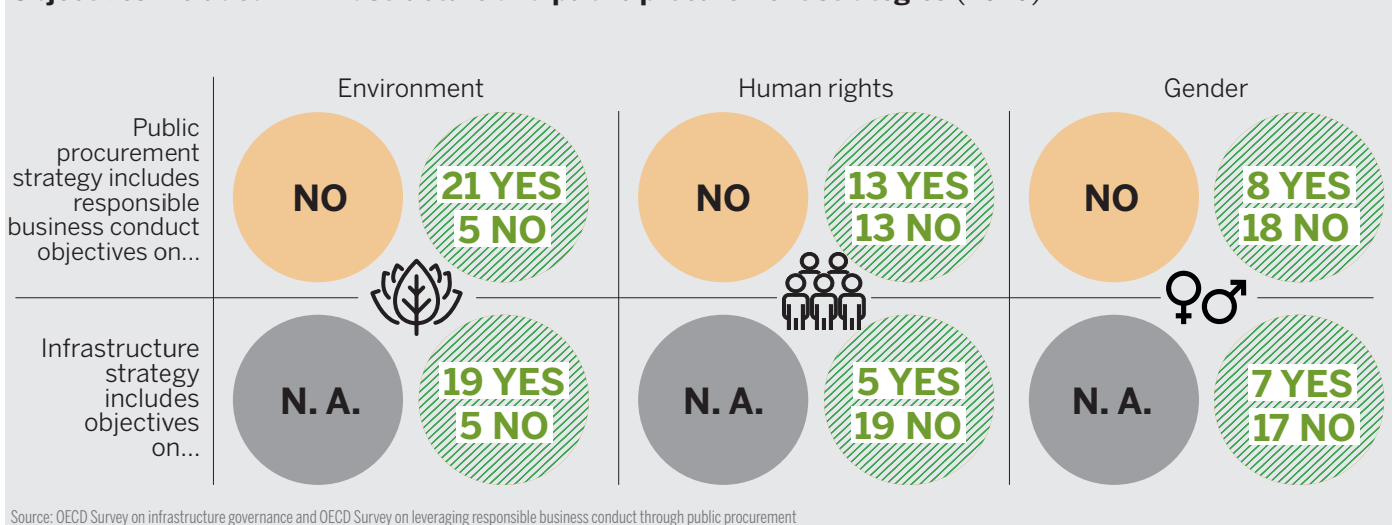


Source: OECD Survey on the composition of the workforce in central/federal governments and OECD Survey on public service leadership and capability

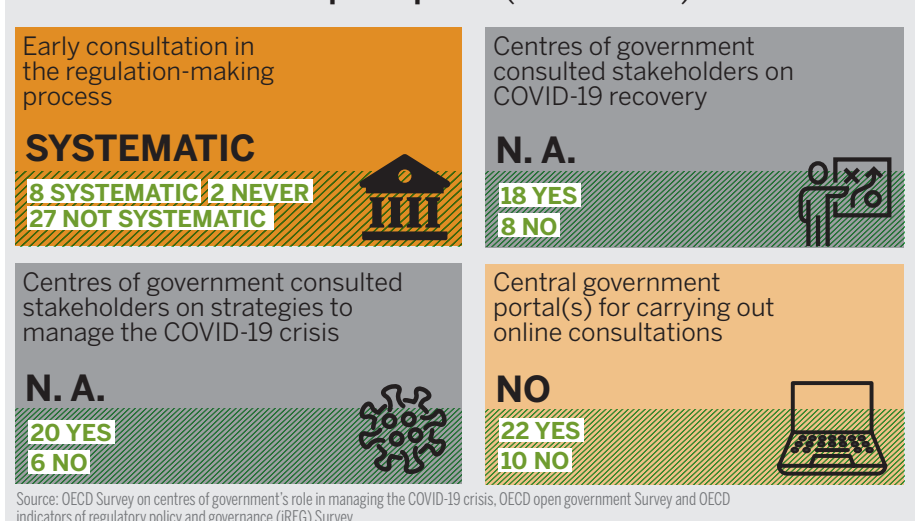
Green budgeting tools (2021)



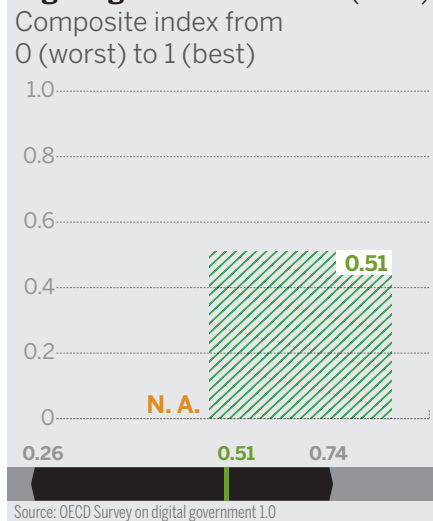
Objectives included in infrastructure and public procurement strategies (2020)



Citizen and stakeholder participation (2020 or 2021)



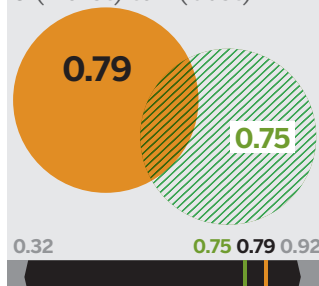
Digital government index (2019)



Government results

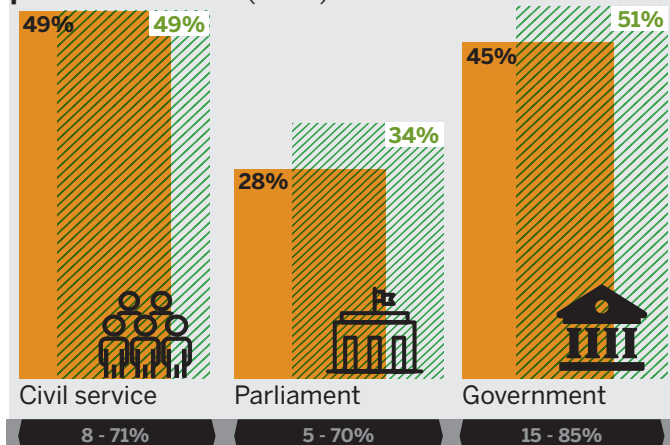
Government provides information on law enforcement, due process and respect of human rights (2020)

Composite index from 0 (worst) to 1 (best)



Source: World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index 2020

Citizens who express trust in public institutions (2020)



Source: Gallup World Poll, World Values Survey and European Values Study.

Australia

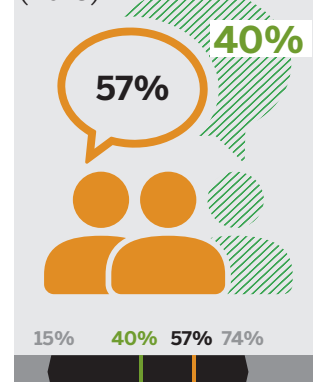
OECD

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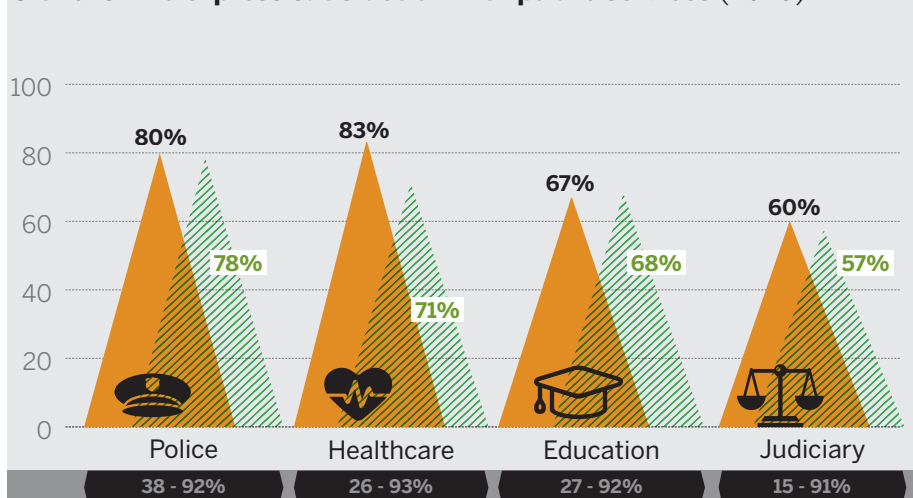
Values have been rounded

Citizens who believe they have a say in what government does (2018)



Source: OECD calculations based on rounds 8 and 9 of the ESS and the 2017-2020 round of the World Values Survey

Citizens who express satisfaction with public services (2020)



Source: Gallup World Poll

Income inequality before taxes and post taxes and transfers (GINI index, 2018)



Source: OECD Income Distribution Database

Figure notes

- Data on Public finance and economics, which are based on the System of National Accounts (SNA), were extracted on 11 May 2021 and data on General government employment were extracted on 12 April 2021. The range of country values refers to year 2019.
- Fiscal balance as reported in SNA framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.
- Government gross debt is reported according to the SNA definition, which differs from the definition applied under the Maastricht Treaty. It is defined as all liabilities that require payment or payments of interest or principal by the debtor to the creditor at a date or dates in the future. All debt instruments are liabilities, but some liabilities such as shares, equity and financial derivatives are not debt.
- The range of country values for the central government workforce by age refers to the 18-34 group.
- Data on trust in the civil service and parliament are 2018 for most countries.
- The range of country values for share of women in management positions in the central government refers to senior management.
- Citizens who express satisfaction with public services: for the judiciary and the police, the data reflect the proportion of citizens who express having confidence in the institution.
- The range of country values for income inequality before taxes and post taxes and transfers refers to GINI after taxes and transfers for the working age population.

Government at a Glance 2021

Published every two years, **Government at a Glance** provides reliable, internationally comparable indicators on government activities and their results in OECD countries.

The 2021 edition includes input indicators on public finance and employment; while processes include data on institutions, budgeting practices and procedures, human resources management, regulatory governance, public procurement, the governance of infrastructure, public sector integrity, open government and digital government. Outcomes cover core government results (e.g. trust, political efficacy, inequality reduction) and indicators on access, responsiveness, quality and citizen satisfaction for the education, health and justice sectors. Governance indicators are especially useful for monitoring and benchmarking governments' progress in their public sector reforms.



Each indicator in the publication is presented in a user-friendly format, consisting of graphs and/or charts illustrating variations across countries and over time, brief descriptive analyses highlighting the major findings conveyed by the data, and a methodological section on the definition of the indicator and any limitations in data comparability.

The Excel spreadsheets used to create the tables and figures in Government at a Glance 2021 are available via the StatLinks provided throughout the publication: <https://doi.org/10.1787/1c258f55-en>

For more information on the data (including full methodology and figure notes) and to consult all other Country Fact Sheets: www.oecd.org/gov/govataglance.htm