


# Government at a Glance 2021 Country Fact Sheet





## United States


**The United States has high fiscal and structural deficits.** The fiscal deficit was -6.6% of GDP in 2019 (Figure 2.1). The structural primary deficit was -9.5% of potential GDP in 2020 (Figure 2.6). Both were the highest in the OECD. General government expenditures in 2019 were 38.1% of GDP, close to the OECD average of 40.8% (Figure 2.22). However, revenues were 31.5% of GDP in 2019, below the OECD average of 37.7% (Figure 2.16).

### Chapter 2 – Public finance and economics

 [Figure 2.1. General government fiscal balance as a percentage of GDP, 2007, 2019 and 2020](#)

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

 [Figure 2.16. General government revenues as a percentage of GDP, 2007, 2019 and 2020](#)

 [Figure 2.22. General government expenditures as a percentage of GDP, 2007, 2019 and 2020](#)


**The United States has seen a major increase in representation of women in ministerial positions.** The proportion of women in ministerial posts in the United States increased from 16.7% in 2017 to 46.2% in 2021. This was the third largest increase among OECD members (Figure 3.11).


### Chapter 3 – Public employment

 [Figure 3.11. Gender equality in ministerial positions, 2012, 2017 and 2021](#)

**The United States has high levels of poverty and income inequality.** The United States has the highest poverty rate in the OECD (17.8%, Figure 13.9), and the third highest level of income inequality (Figure 13.7). Taxes and transfers do less to lower inequality than in most OECD countries (Figure 13.8).

### Chapter 13 – Core government results

 [Figure 13.7. Differences in household income inequality among the working-age population pre and post-tax and government transfers, 2018](#)

 [Figure 13.8. Difference after taxes and transfers in the Gini coefficient score for the working-age population, between 2012 and 2018](#)

 [Figure 13.9. Relative poverty rate after taxes and transfers, 2012 and 2018](#)

# Government resources

United States

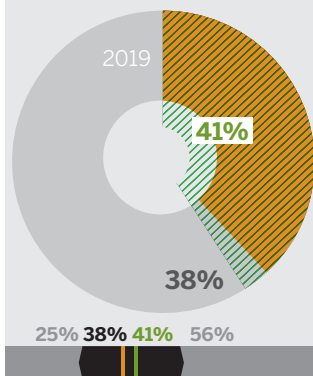
OECD

Range of OECD country values

N. A. not available

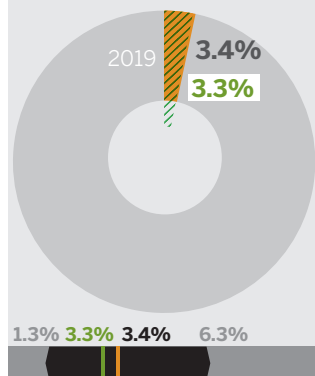
Values have been rounded

**Government expenditures**  
(2019)  
% of GDP



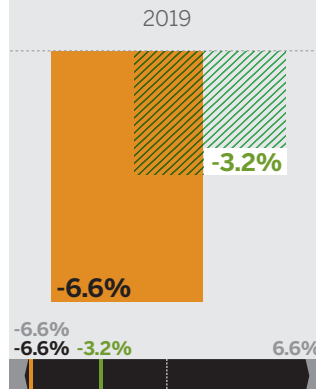
Source: OECD National Accounts

**Government investment**  
(2019)  
% of GDP



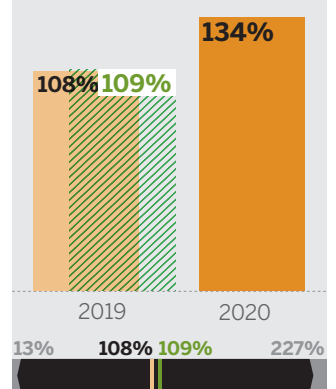
Source: OECD National Accounts

**Fiscal balance**  
(2019)  
% of GDP



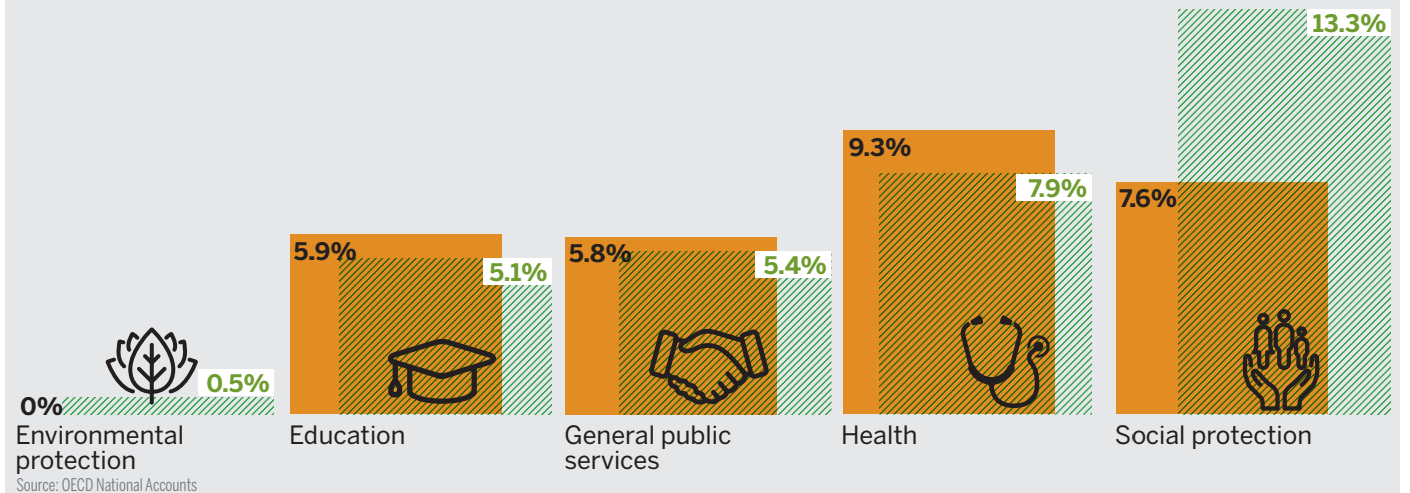
Source: OECD National Accounts

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



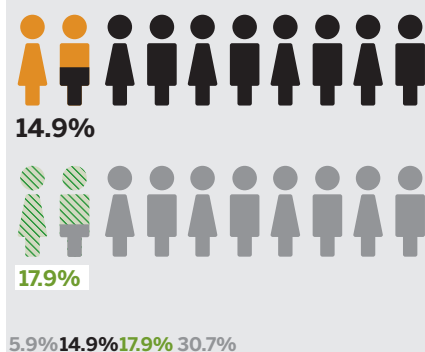
Source: OECD National Accounts

**Government expenditures by selected functions** (2019)  
% of GDP



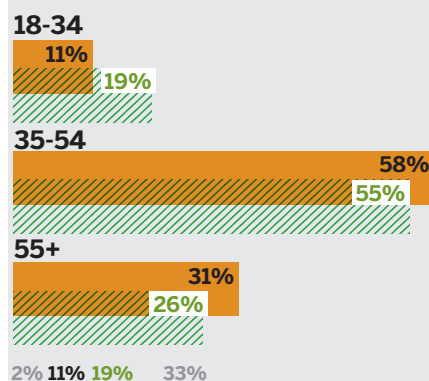
Source: OECD National Accounts

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



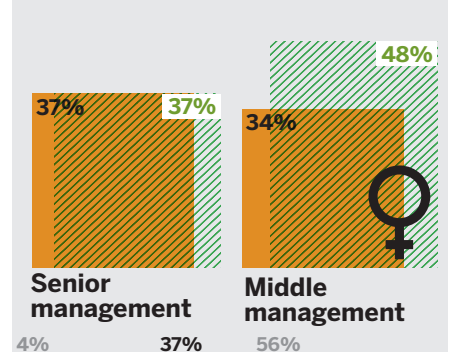
Source: OECD National Accounts

**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

United States

OECD

Range of OECD country values

N. A. not available

Values have been rounded

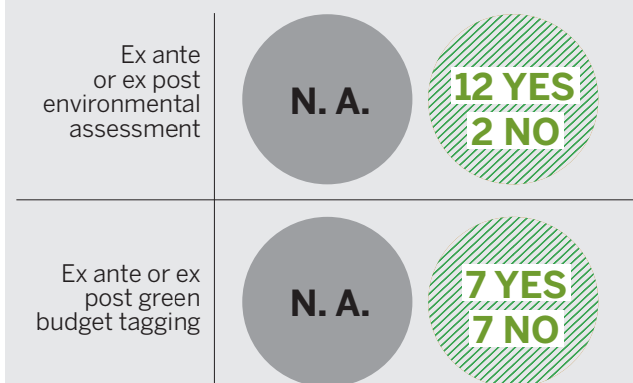
## Composite indices of public service leadership and capability (2020)

From 0 (worst) to 1 (best)



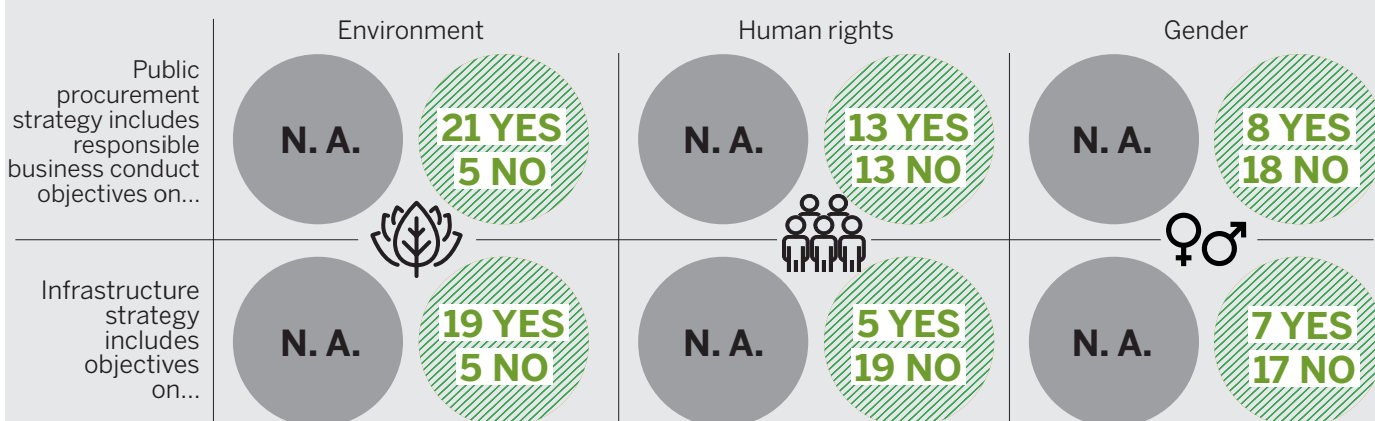
Source: OECD Survey on the composition of the workforce in central/federal governments and OECD Survey on public service leadership and capability

## Green budgeting tools (2021)



Source: OECD and European Commission – Joint survey on emerging green budgeting practices

## Objectives included in infrastructure and public procurement strategies (2020)



Source: OECD Survey on infrastructure governance and OECD Survey on leveraging responsible business conduct through public procurement

## Citizen and stakeholder participation (2020 or 2021)

Early consultation in the regulation-making process

**NOT SYSTEMATIC**

8 SYSTEMATIC, 2 NEVER, 27 NOT SYSTEMATIC



Centres of government consulted stakeholders on COVID-19 recovery

**N. A.**

18 YES, 8 NO



Centres of government consulted stakeholders on strategies to manage the COVID-19 crisis

**N. A.**

20 YES, 6 NO



Central government portal(s) for carrying out online consultations

**N. A.**

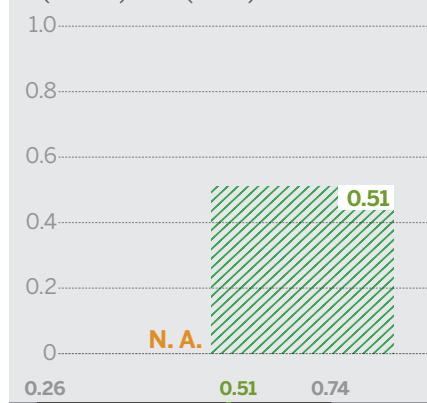
22 YES, 10 NO



Source: OECD Survey on centres of government's role in managing the COVID-19 crisis, OECD open government Survey and OECD indicators of regulatory policy and governance (iREG) Survey

## Digital government index (2019)

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

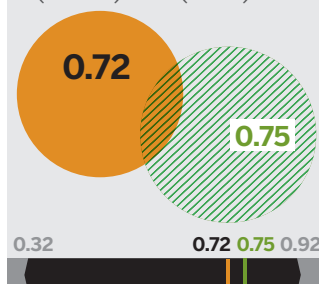


Source: OECD Survey on digital government 1.0

# Government results

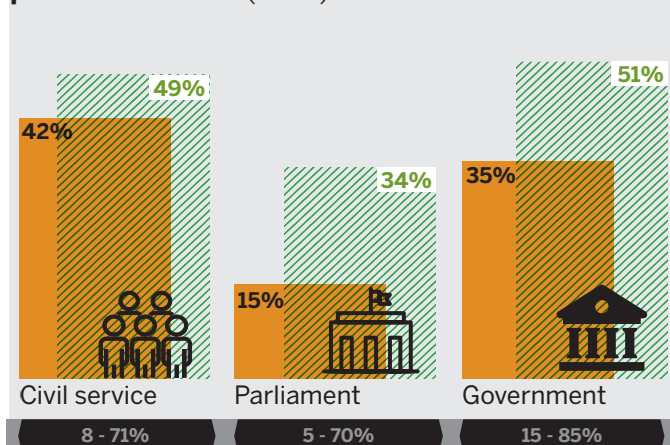
## Government provides information on law enforcement, due process and respect of human rights (2020)

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.

## United States

OECD

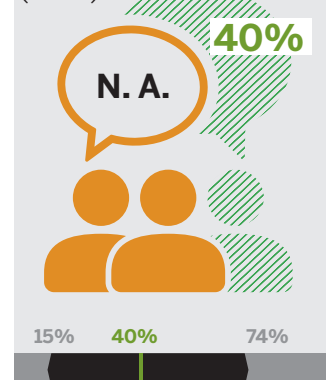
Range of OECD country values



N. A. not available

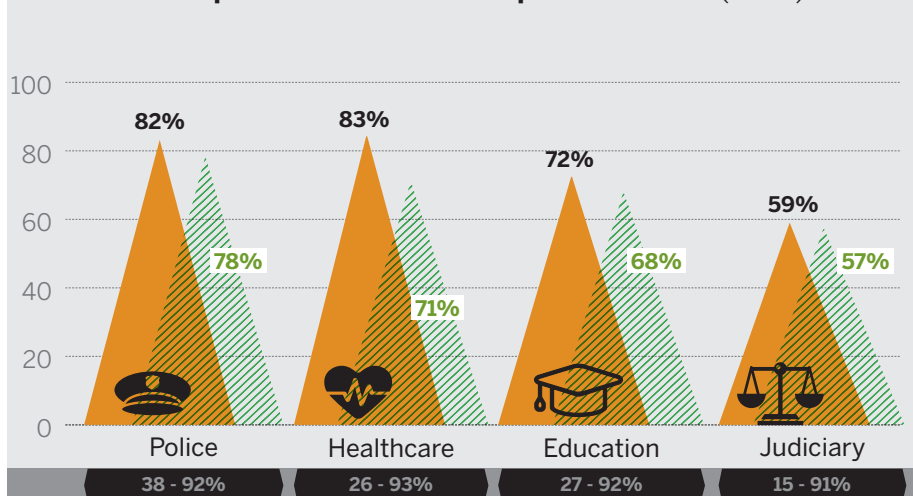
Values have been rounded

## 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/govtaglance.htm](http://www.oecd.org/gov/govtaglance.htm)