Society at a Glance 2011

OECD SOCIAL INDICATORS

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OECD

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Please cite this publication as:
OECD (2011), *Society at a Glance 2011: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD Publishing.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/soc_glance-2011-en

ISBN 978-92-64-09852-7 (print)
ISBN 978-92-64-09853-4 (PDF)
ISBN 978-92-64-11112-7 (HTML)

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Foreword

This is the sixth edition of Society at a Glance, *the OECD's biennial overview of social indicators. As with its predecessors, this report addresses the growing demand for quantitative evidence on social well-being and its trends across OECD countries. It updates some indicators included in the previous five editions and introduces several new ones.*

The 2011 report heralds the arrival of four new OECD member countries: Chile, Estonia, Israel and Slovenia. These countries are included in Society at a Glance *for the first time. Data on Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, and South Africa are also included separately where available.*

This report features a special chapter on unpaid work (Chapter 1). It also provides a guide to help readers in understanding the structure of OECD social indicators (Chapter 2), and a summary of the main trends (Chapter 3). Indicators are then considered. More detailed information on indicators, including some not included in this print edition, can be found on the OECD web pages (www.oecd.org/els/social/indicators/SAG).

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Acronyms and Conventional Signs

OECD country ISO codes

Australia	AUS	Japan	JPN
Austria	AUT	Korea	KOR
Belgium	BEL	Luxembourg	LUX
Canada	CAN	Mexico	MEX
Chile	CHL	Netherlands	NLD
Czech Republic	CZE	New Zealand	NZL
Denmark	DNK	Norway	NOR
Estonia	EST	Poland	POL
Finland	FIN	Portugal	PRT
France	FRA	Slovak Republic	SVK
Germany	DEU	Slovenia	SVN
Greece	GRC	Spain	ESP
Hungary	HUN	Sweden	SWE
Iceland	ISL	Switzerland	CHE
Ireland	IRL	Turkey	TUR
Israel	ISR	United Kingdom	GBR
Italy	ITA	United States	USA

Other major economy country ISO codes

Brazil	BRA	Indonesia	IDN
China	CHN	Russian Federation	RUS
India	IND	South Africa	ZAF

Conventional signs

. . Not available.

(↘) in the legend relates to the variable for which countries are ranked from left to right in decreasing order.

(↗) in the legend relates to the variable for which countries are ranked from left to right in increasing order.

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OECD Social Indicators
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Chapter 1

Cooking and Caring, Building and Repairing: Unpaid Work around the World[1]

Unpaid work and well-being

Families devote substantial unpaid time to productive activities such as cooking, cleaning and caring. This unpaid work increases overall consumption of goods and services and represents implicit income (Becker, 1965). As countries industrialise, a large part of the household production of food, clothing and caring for family members may be transferred to markets and purchased by families. At a national level, well-being is often proxied by aggregate income or production per head (*e.g.* GDP per capita) and changes in well-being by the corresponding growth rate. But levels of well-being will be under-reported if there is a considerable amount of unpaid work. Additionally, well-being gains will be over-reported if GDP growth occurs because of reductions in unpaid work and increases in paid work (Stiglitz *et al.*, 2009).

Ignoring home production may also bias measures of income inequality and poverty rates (Abraham and Mackie, 2005). For instance, families where one parent does the cooking and cleaning and looks after the children will have a higher disposable income than households with the same income and hours worked, but where both parents do paid work and buy cleaning and childcare services in the market. While standard income-based living standards treat these two families as identical, Frazis and Stewart (2010) show that an inequality measure including valuation of family production is more equally distributed as unpaid work varies much less than paid work across households.

In addition to unpaid work within the home, people also carry out vital unpaid work for relatives and for the wider community. Voluntary work, such as helping out neighbours, caring for people of all ages with or without disabilities, supporting charities, assisting immigrants, training sports teams, and administering schools, also contribute directly and indirectly to societal well-being.

This special chapter sheds light on the importance of unpaid work as an important well-being indicator by making use of detailed time-use surveys for 26 OECD countries, and for China, India and South Africa.

What is unpaid work?

Unpaid work is the production of goods and services by family members that are not sold on the market. Some unpaid work is for consumption within the family, such as cooking, gardening and house cleaning. The products of unpaid work can also be consumed by people not living in the household, *e.g.* cooking for visiting friends, mowing lawns of an elderly relative, or coaching the local children's football team.

The boundary between unpaid work and leisure is determined by the "third-person" criterion. If a third person could be paid to do the activity, it is considered to be work. Cooking, cleaning, childcare, laundry, walking the dog and gardening are therefore all examples of unpaid work. On the other hand, someone else cannot be paid to watch a movie, play tennis, or silently read a book on another's behalf as the benefits of the activity would accrue to the doer (the third person), and not to the hirer (Ironmonger, 1996). Consequently these latter activities are considered to be leisure.

Some unpaid work, *e.g.* playing with children, walking the dog, cooking or tending a garden, is often enjoyable (see *Society at a Glance 2009* on reported enjoyment of various activities). This form of satisfaction is a benefit that cannot be transferred to another person. Thus the level of enjoyment of the person doing the activity cannot be used to distinguish between work and leisure (Hill, 1979).

Measuring unpaid work

Time-use surveys record how people allocate their time, typically using a 24-hour diary. In addition, these surveys provide information on the context of the activity – where people did it, with whom they did it and what other activities they did at the same time, the frequency of the activity – and the socio-economic characteristics of the person and their family.

Several issues may significantly affect country comparability of time-use data, including the collection methodology, the length of diary time slots, and the number of days on which diaries are completed (Miranda, 2011). Ideally, time-use surveys are spread over the whole year and thus contain a representative proportion of weekdays and weekend days, as well as public and school holidays. Some countries, however, only cover particular periods in the week or year, typically chosen to avoid seasonal biases such as those due to public holidays or annual leave for workers. This is the case, to varying degrees, for Canada, China, Denmark, France, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Mexico and South Africa. Excluding holiday periods leads to an over-estimation of annual paid working time and an under-estimation of unpaid work and leisure time for these nine countries. Second, Ireland and Mexico use a simplified variant of the time-use diary. Thus, time-use estimates for Ireland and Mexico are much less precise than for other countries. In addition, in the Mexican time-use survey, respondents are asked about their time use during the seven days prior to the interview. Given the large time lapse between the activity and the interview, responses are likely to be rougher estimates of the true time use. As time-use surveys were taken in different years, with countries at different stages in the economic cycle and with access to different levels of technology, this may be another reason for between-country variations observed.

To improve cross-country comparability, where possible, data consider populations aged 15-64. Activities are aggregated into five main categories: 1) unpaid work; 2) paid work or study; 3) personal care; 4) leisure; and 5) other time use. "Unpaid work" includes activities like routine household work (*e.g.* cooking, cleaning and gardening), caring for children and other family and non-family members, volunteering, and shopping. "Paid work or study" covers full-time and part-time jobs, unpaid work in family business/farm, breaks in the workplace, time spent looking for work, time spent in education, and homework. "Personal care" covers sleep, eating and drinking, and other household, medical, and personal services (hygiene, grooming, visits to the doctor, etc.). "Leisure" includes hobbies, watching television, computer use, sports, socialising with friends and family, attending cultural events, and so on. "Other" contains religious activities and civic obligations, as well as unspecified time use.

Time spent on travel is treated as a derived activity and classified in the same category as the activity to which it is linked, even though, strictly speaking, travelling does not follow the third-person criterion of unpaid work, as it is not possible to hire someone to travel on one's behalf. Journeys can, however, also have multiple destinations. Often people try to save time by combining travel to work with dropping off their children at school or shopping on the way home. As a rule, travelling time is recorded in the time-use surveys

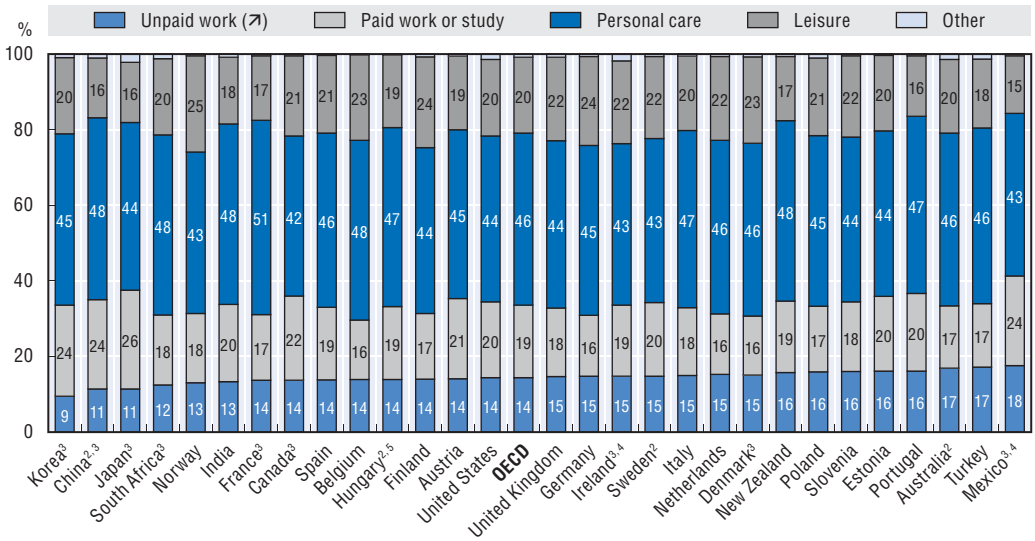
according to the destination. For example, driving from home to work is regarded as travel related to paid work, from work to school as travel related to childcare, from school to the grocery store as travel related to shopping, and from the grocery store to home as travel related to shopping.

Time use in OECD countries and emerging economies

Across the 29 countries for which data are available (all OECD averages used here are unweighted averages of the countries presented in the charts), people average 3.4 hours per day (24-hours) on unpaid work, or 14% of the day (Figure 1.1). There is much variation in unpaid work between countries. Mexicans spend the most time on unpaid work, about four and a half hours per day. People in Japan, Korea and China do the least unpaid work, about half the time of Mexicans. In all countries, personal care, including sleeping and eating, takes up most of people's time, accounting for 46% of a 24-hour day on average. The remaining time is spent on leisure (20% of people's total time) and in paid employment or study (on average 19% of people's time). Less than 1% of a day is devoted on average to religious activities and other unspecified time use.

Figure 1.1. **People spend one-tenth to one-fifth of their time on unpaid work**

Time use by main activity in percentage of total time use for the population aged 15-64 over the period 1998-2009[1]



1. Australia: 2006; Austria: 2008-09; Belgium: 2005; Canada: 2005; China: 2008; Denmark: 2001; Estonia: 1999-2000; Finland: 1999-2000; France: 1998-99; Germany: 2001-02; Hungary: 1999-2000; India: 1999; Italy: 2002-03; Ireland: 2005; Japan: 2006; Korea: 2009; Mexico: 2009; the Netherlands: 2006; New Zealand: 1998-99; Norway: 2000-01; Poland: 2003-04; Portugal: 1999; Slovenia: 2000-01; South Africa: 2000; Spain: 2002-03; Sweden: 2000-01; Turkey: 2006; the United Kingdom: 2000-01; the United States: 2008.
2. For a number of countries it was not possible to restrict the sample to the population aged 15-64. The age limits are Australia: 15+; China: 15-74; Hungary: 15-74; Sweden: 20-64. A different upper age limit is unlikely to affect time use significantly. A lower age limit will diminish the importance of unpaid work.
3. Surveys for Canada, China, Denmark, France, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Mexico and South Africa do not cover a complete calendar year and thus, to varying degrees, under-represent holidays. As people do more unpaid work on weekends, excluding holidays overestimates paid work and underestimates unpaid work and leisure.
4. Ireland and Mexico use a simplified time-use diary. Mexicans are also asked about their time use during the seven days prior to the interview. Hence, estimates for Ireland and Mexico are less precise.
5. For Hungary, only pre-prepared tables on time use are available and the categories are not always entirely comparable with the aggregations used for the other countries. The comparison of Hungary with other countries should thus be interpreted with caution.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011, for more details).

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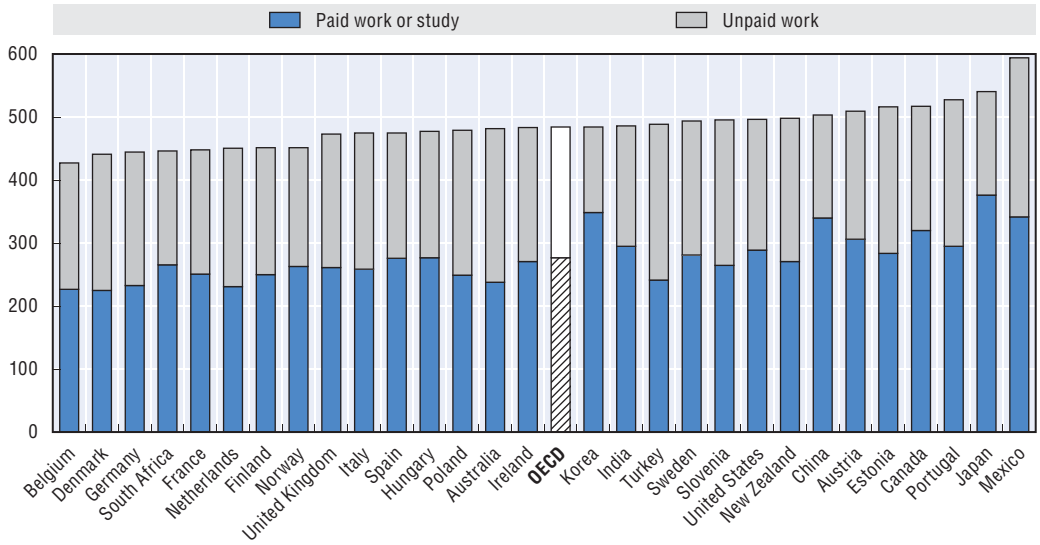
Be it paid or unpaid, people spend about one-third of their time working. Total working time is lowest in Western Europe and South Africa and highest in Japan and Mexico (Figure 1.2). In Japan and Mexico, people work respectively nine and ten hours per day in total. People in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and South Africa work about seven to seven and a half hours per day. In most countries, time spent on paid work exceeds time spent on unpaid work, with the exceptions of Australia and Turkey. While the average paid working time may seem low, it should be borne in mind that the figures cover weekdays, weekends and holidays, and include the employed and non-employed.

Figure 1.2. **Total working time is lowest in Western Europe and highest outside Europe**

Total minutes worked, paid and unpaid, per day



Note: Travelling time related to paid and unpaid work is included in the respective categories. See Figure 1.1 for country-specific notes.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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Countries with high paid work time, like China, Japan and Korea, tend to have low unpaid working time. The opposite is true for Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Turkey (Figure 1.3). The apparent trade-off between unpaid and paid work is also reflected in the lower variation for total working time across countries compared with that of paid work and unpaid work.

Differences between men and women

In all countries women do more unpaid work than men (Figure 1.4). The gender gap averages 2.5 hours per day. But there is significant divergence in the gender gap across countries. For instance, Turkish, Mexican and Indian women spend per day 4.3-5 hours more on unpaid work than men, while the difference is only a little over one hour in the Nordic countries. Indian and Mexican gender differences are driven by the long hours women spend in the kitchen and caring for children. In Southern Europe, Korea and Japan, women also do considerably more unpaid work than the men.

Figure 1.3. **Trade-offs between paid and unpaid work**

Minutes of paid and unpaid work

Note: Travelling time related to paid and unpaid work is included in the respective categories. See Figure 1.1 for country-specific notes.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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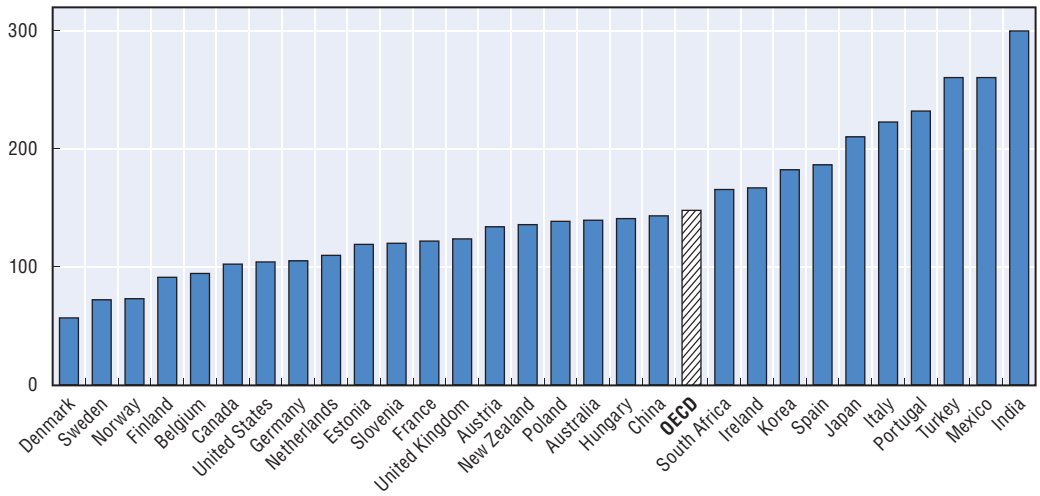
Figure 1.4. **Women do more unpaid work than men in all countries**

Female less male unpaid working time in minutes per day



Note: See Figure 1.1 for country-specific notes.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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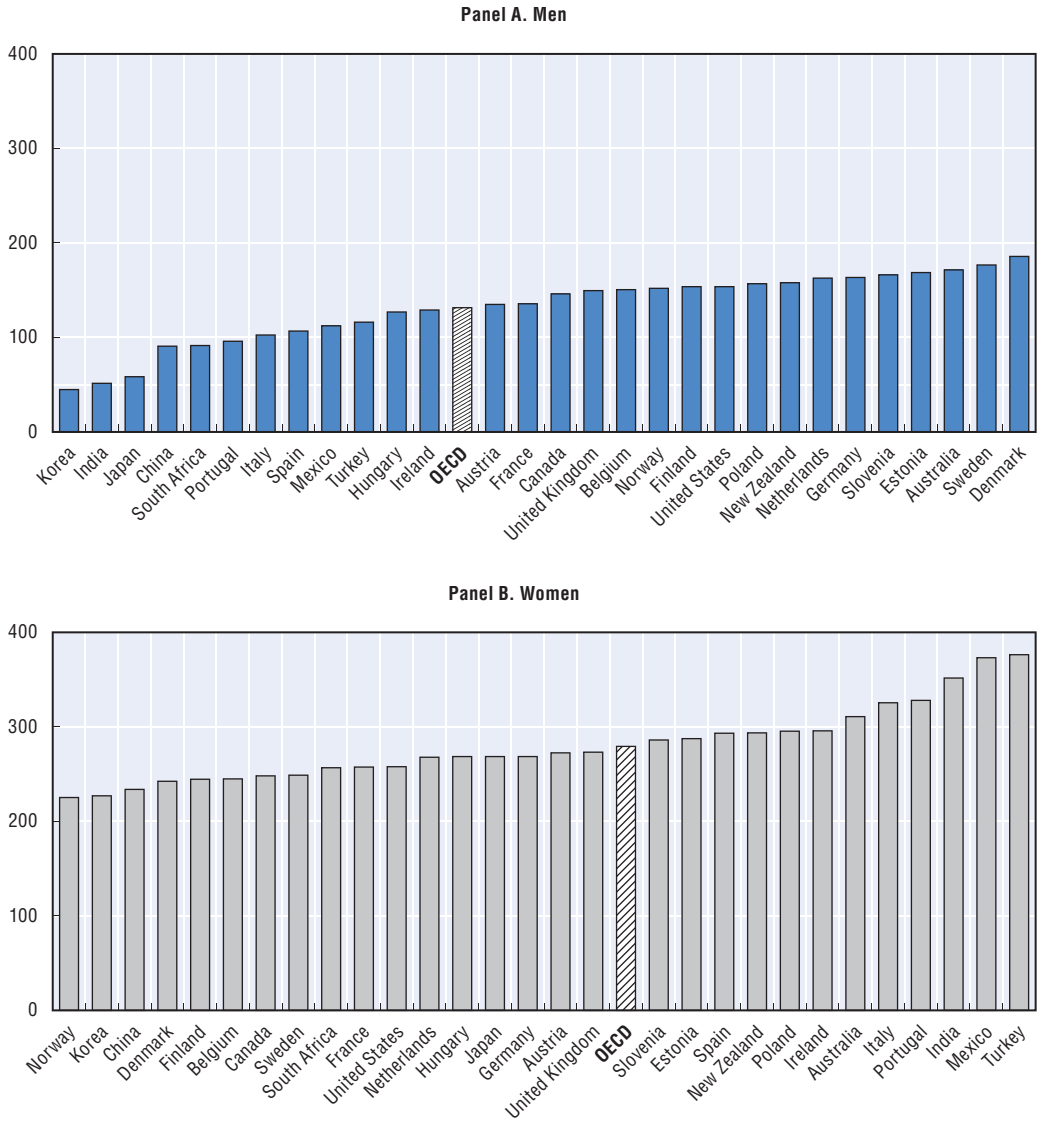
Countries with the largest gender gap in unpaid work are also those countries where men devote relatively little time to unpaid work (Figure 1.5, Panel A). Men's unpaid working time averages less than an hour a day in Korea, India and Japan, 1.5 hours in China and South Africa, nearly two hours in Turkey, Italy, Mexico, Portugal and Spain, and 2.5 hours in the rest of the countries shown here. The low amount of men's unpaid work is not always compensated by high amounts for women (Figure 1.5, Panel B). In China, for instance, both men and women spend very little time on unpaid work in comparison with other countries. In Australia, on the other hand, both sexes are at the top of the unpaid work ranking.

Figure 1.5. **Asian men spend the least hours in unpaid work, Mexican and Turkish women the most**

Minutes of unpaid work per day



Note: See Figure 1.1 for country-specific notes.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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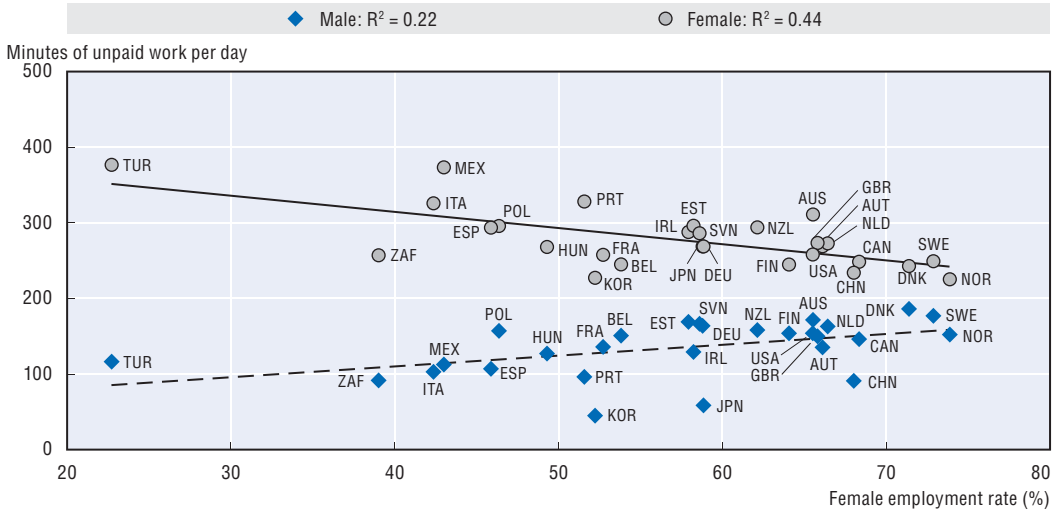
What drives large gender differences in unpaid work? Women have become increasingly active in the paid labour market over the past few decades and have decreased their unpaid working time. There is a strong negative correlation between a country's female employment rate and women's average unpaid working time (Figure 1.6). Part of women's reduced unpaid work is picked up by men, as shown by the positive correlation between a country's female employment rate and men's average unpaid working time. But even in the country with the highest unpaid working time among men – Denmark – men still devote less time to unpaid work than women in Norway, the country with the lowest female unpaid working time.

Figure 1.6. **Men do more unpaid work as women do more paid and less unpaid work**



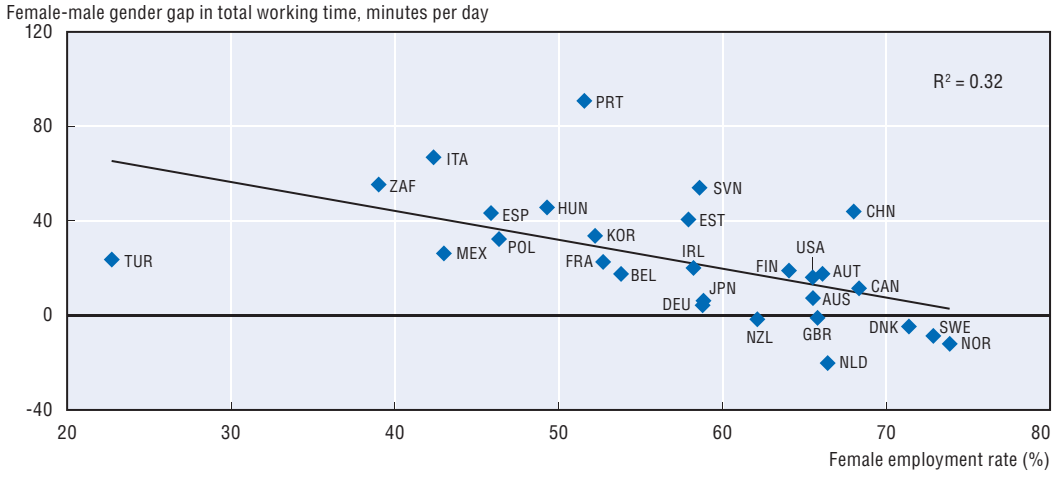
Note: The female employment rates are for the population aged 15-64 years and correspond to the year during which the time-use survey was undertaken. See Figure 1.1 for country-specific notes.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011) and OECD Labour Force Surveys for female employment rates.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381532

Part of the reason for women's higher share of unpaid work is their shorter time in paid work. As shown in Figure 1.7, the gender difference in total working time – the sum of paid and unpaid work, including travelling time – is close to or below zero for countries with high female employment. Longer hours spent on housework and caring by women are compensated with shorter paid work hours. Part-time paid work for women is common in Australia, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, where more than 40% of women work on a part-time basis (OECD, 2007). In countries with a relative lack of

Figure 1.7. **Countries with high female paid employment have a more equal gender division in total working time**



Note: The female employment rates are for the population aged 15-64 years and correspond to the year during which the time-use survey was undertaken. See Figure 1.1 for country-specific notes.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011) and OECD Labour Force Surveys for female employment rates.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381551

opportunity for part-time work, particularly in Southern Europe, the presence of children is an important factor associated with women's exit from the labour market (Lewis *et al.*, 2008). These countries are also those were women work much longer hours in total (Figure 1.7).

Government policies, such as working-time regulations, family policies and gender equality initiatives, can influence women's roles in unpaid work (Baker, 1997; Gornick and Meyers, 2003; and Hook, 2006). On the one hand, publicly subsidised formal childcare relieves mothers of some childcare responsibilities and encourages their paid work. On the other hand, long parental leave arrangements are primarily used by women, reinforcing traditional gender roles and damaging mothers' labour attachment. Non-transferable paternal entitlement to paid leave increase chances of more equal leave sharing between mothers and fathers, but so far there is no evidence of the longer-term effect on the division of housework (OECD, 2011).

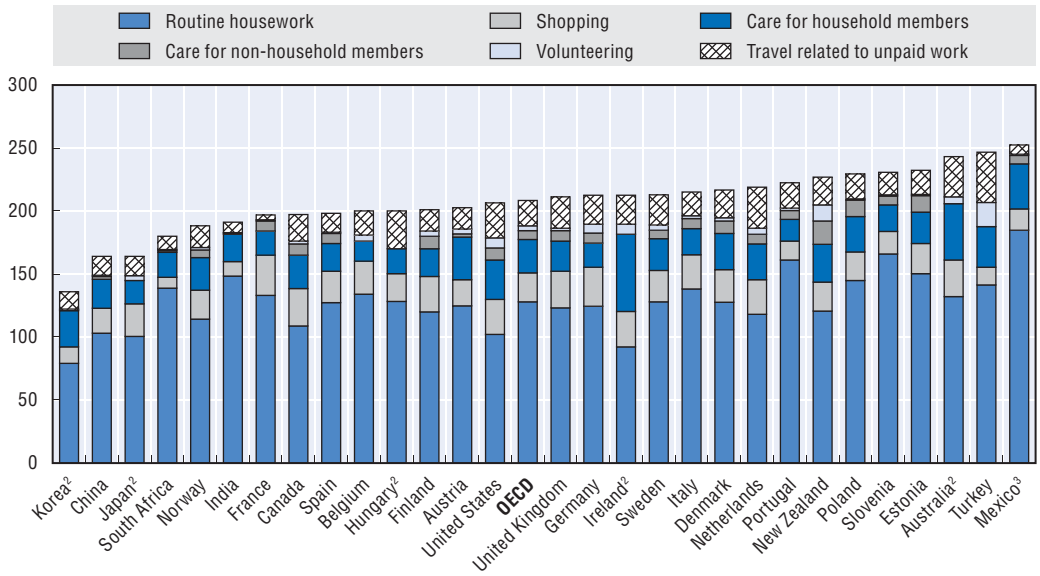
Types of unpaid work

Routine housework

Most unpaid work is routine housework – cooking, cleaning, gardening and home maintenance. Across the 29 countries, people spend on average two hours and eight minutes per day on housework (Figure 1.8). The total duration varies, however, greatly across countries, as does the importance of routine housework within total unpaid work. For instance, Koreans spend only 1.4 hours per day on housework, but it accounts for 60% of their total time spent on unpaid work. Australians, on the other hand, devote on

Figure 1.8. **Routine housework is the largest component of unpaid work**[1]

Minutes of unpaid work per day by main categories



1. See Figure 1.1 for additional country notes.
2. For Australia, Hungary and Ireland, care for household members cannot be separated from care for non-household members. In the Korean and Japanese time-use surveys, there is no distinction between care for household members and care for non-household members. Instead they make a distinction between family care and care for others. All care for family members is consequently included in the category care for household members, irrespective of whether the family members live in the household.
3. For Mexico, travelling time cannot be separated from the activity to which it is linked, except for some travel related to childcare. Each of the sub-categories is thus slightly overestimated.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381570

average more than two hours to routine housework but it represents only half of their total unpaid working time. Compared with the other components of unpaid work, there is less variation across countries in routine housework (coefficient of variation of 0.17).

Care for household members and shopping are typically the next largest unpaid work categories, lasting respectively 26 and 23 minutes per day on average. The relative importance of both time categories differs across countries, but there is less variation in shopping (coefficient of variation of 0.26) than in caring (coefficient of variation of 0.34). The variation across countries is largest for voluntary work (coefficient of variation of 1.10), with the average daily volunteering time ranging from less than one minute in India and Korea to 8 minutes in Ireland and the United States.

Childcare

Childcare is often combined with other activities, *e.g.* cooking while a child is playing in another room. Time-use surveys deal with multitasking by recording both "primary" activities ("what were you doing?") and "secondary" activities ("were you doing anything else at the same time?"). One limitation of such an approach is that primary activities tend to be meticulously tracked while secondary ones are usually overlooked (and in some countries not even collected). Some surveys encourage respondents to report their secondary activities by listing clear examples on the diary form. However, as not all countries do such priming, recording of secondary activities can vary across countries (Folbre and Yoon, 2007).

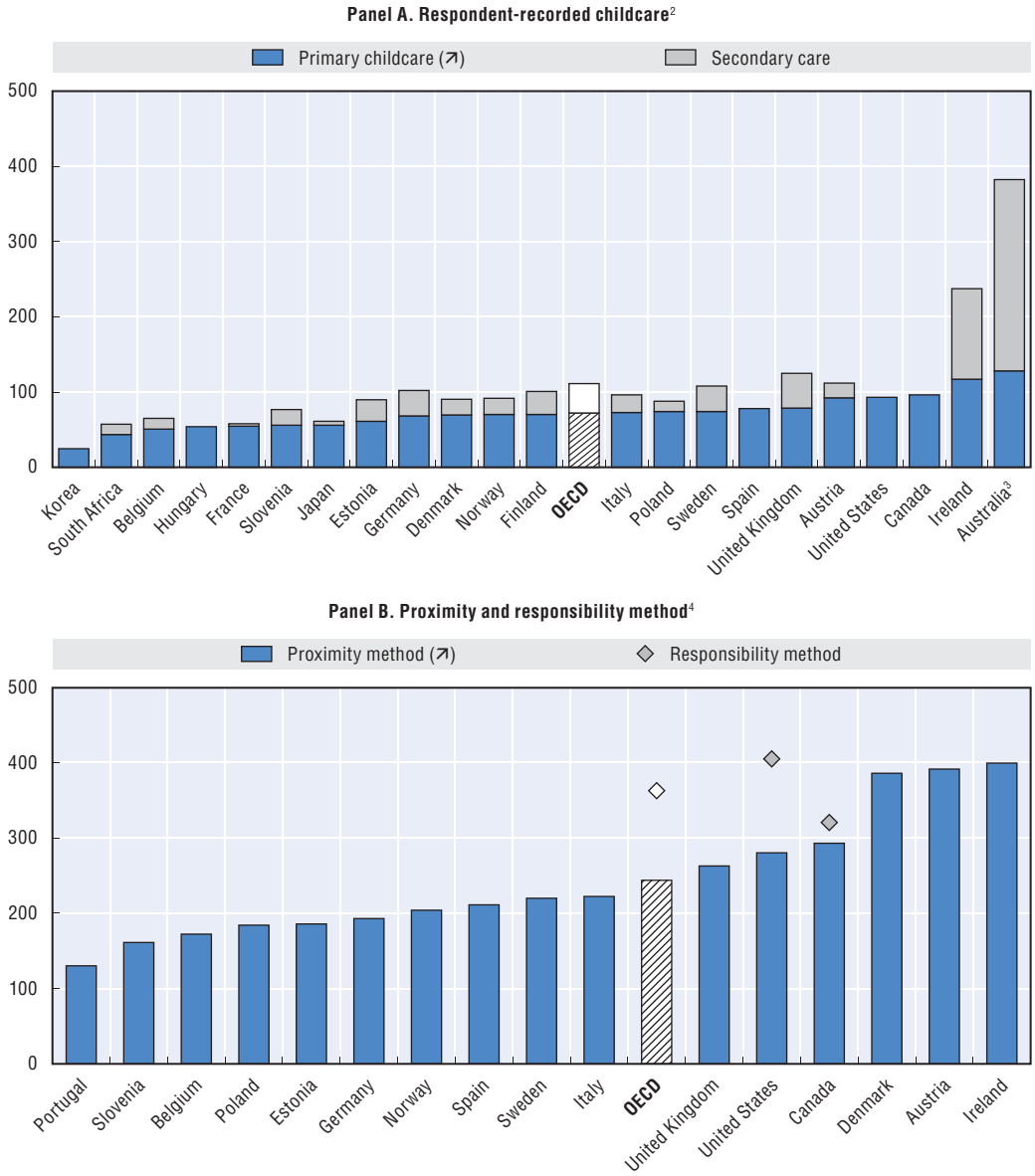
Several surveys try to capture the diffuse nature of childcare by including additional childcare questions. These questions are defined either as the time spent in the proximity of a child (*e.g.* "who was with you?") or as the time being responsible for a child (*e.g.* "was a child in your care?" or "were you looking after a child?"). The advantage of such questions is that they are more likely to pick up respondents who would otherwise not record their responsibility. They also better capture passive childcare, which is fundamentally different from active childcare as it constrains other activities rather than being an activity in itself (Budig and Folbre, 2004). On the other hand, both the proximity method and the responsibility method may overstate childcare when several adults share the caring responsibility for the child.

Figure 1.9 sets out the different methodologies of measuring childcare: the respondent-recorded method in Panel A and the proximity and responsibility method in Panel B. Across the 22 countries for which consistent data are available,[2] parents average 1 hour and 12 minutes per day on childcare as a primary activity. Adding secondary childcare raises the average substantially to almost two hours per day.[3] Total time devoted to (primary) childcare is lowest in Korea, Belgium and Hungary – occupying less than one hour per day – and highest in the Anglophone countries. The impact of priming respondents is visible in the extremely high childcare estimates for Australia. The Australian time diary gives clear examples of secondary childcare which encourage parents to record passive childcare. The largest category of secondary childcare in Australia is child minding, accounting for almost four hours per day for parents of children under 15 years of age.

Panel B of Figure 1.9 compares two measures of *passive* childcare. In the 16 countries which added a proximity question to their time-use survey, parents spend on average four hours per day with their children. The responsibility method (asked only in two countries) provides even higher estimates of childcare, reaching 6.7 hours per day in the United States and 5.3 hours in Canada, although the difference with the proximity

Figure 1.9. **Parents' active and passive childcare**

Minutes of childcare per day[1]



1. See Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.8 for additional country-specific notes.
2. Respondent-recorded childcare refers to the amount of time spent on childcare that respondents report themselves in their time-use diaries, either as a primary or secondary activity. The estimates refer to care for children under the age of 18, except for Australia and Canada (less than 15 years).
3. Estimates for Australia also include time spent on care of non-household children. However, this is unlikely to affect the results significantly as such care tends to be low. For instance, in the United States, parents devote on average 77 minutes per day to care for children of their own household, compared with two minutes for non-household children.
4. The proximity method measures passive childcare by time spent in the presence of a child. The responsibility method measures passive childcare based on the amount of time respondents are responsible for the care of a child. Unfortunately, the age cut-off for both methods differs significantly across countries: 10 years in most European countries – with the exception of Denmark (18 years), Ireland (18 years), and Portugal (14 years) – 15 years in Canada and 13 years in the United States.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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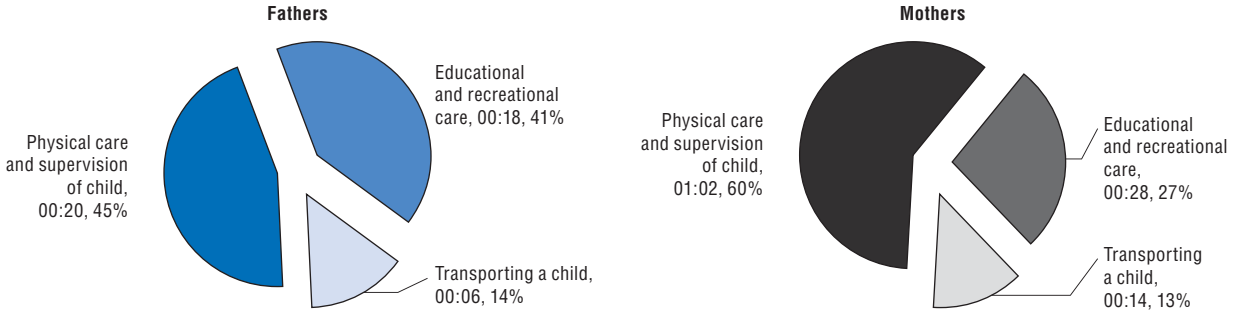
method is minimal for Canada. The country ranking of passive childcare is very similar to the active childcare measures in Panel A, with Slovenia and Belgium at the bottom and Austria, Denmark and Ireland at the top.

Not only does the total amount of time devoted to childcare differ by parental gender, but it also differs by type of activities. A distinction can be made between: 1) *physical care*, such as meeting the basic needs of children, including dressing and feeding children, changing diapers, providing medical care for children, and supervising children; 2) *educational and recreational childcare*, such as helping children with their homework, reading to children, and playing games with children; and 3) *travel* related to any of the two other categories, *e.g.* driving a child to school, to a doctor or to sport activities. Mother's childcare time is dominated by physical childcare and supervision, accounting for 60% of their childcare activities (Figure 1.10). Fathers, on the other hand, spend proportionally more time in educational and recreational activities than mothers, *i.e.* 41% of their total childcare time compared with 27% of mothers' total childcare time. Still, mothers spend more than twice as much time in childcare than do fathers, a pattern which holds for all countries and the different subgroups. On average in the 22 countries for which data are available, childcare takes up 42 minutes per day for fathers whereas it occupies 1 hour and 40 minutes of mothers' time.

Figure 1.10. **Women devote most of their time to physical childcare, while men devote most of their time to teaching, reading and playing with their children**

Time devoted to different types of primary childcare



Note: The figures are unweighted averages over the 21 countries for which data is available. The estimates refer to care for children under the age of 18, except for Australia and Canada (under 15). See Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.8 for country-specific notes.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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Caring for adults

Caring for adults is part of the insurance function of families and of great importance in an environment where populations are ageing rapidly. Care for adults receives much less attention in time-use surveys than care for children does. However, many surveys do not even publish caring for the elderly as a separate category. In addition, adult care is not separated by the age of the person that is being cared for, so it is often impossible to make a distinction between care for an ill or disabled spouse or other relative. Only the Korean time-use survey has separate categories for care for parents, spouse and other family members. Differences in definition and presentation thus make the comparison of adult care across countries extremely difficult.

Table 1.1 lists the countries' average duration of adult care according to a range of different classifications used. In the first ten countries, care for adult household members can be separated from care for children, as well as from care for non-household members. In those countries, adult care takes up 0.2 to 6 minutes per day. Similar results can be

Table 1.1. **Different classification of adult care across countries complicates comparison**[1]

Minutes devoted to adult care (excluding travel)

	Total (↗)	Men	Women
Caring for adult household members			
Netherlands	0.2	0.2	0.2
South Africa	0.6	0.2	1.0
Denmark	0.8	0.9	0.8
Austria	1.2	0.5	1.8
India	1.3	0.6	2.1
United States	1.9	1.5	2.4
Canada	2.0	1.0	3.0
Portugal	2.0	0.0	3.0
Turkey	3.4	3.3	3.6
Mexico	6.0	3.0	8.8
Caring for adult family members[2]			
Japan	2.9	1.0	5.0
Korea	4.0	2.0	5.0
Caring for adults[3]			
Ireland	8.0	3.1	13.0
Australia	9.0	7.0	11.0
Other domestic work[4]			
Poland	1.0	1.0	2.0
Slovenia	2.0	2.0	3.0
Finland	4.0	4.0	5.0
France	4.0	4.0	4.0
Italy	4.0	3.0	4.0
United Kingdom	4.0	4.0	4.0
Estonia	5.0	6.0	5.0
Belgium	8.0	7.0	9.0
Germany	9.0	7.0	11.0
Spain	11.0	5.0	16.0
Sweden	11.0	10.0	13.0
Norway	12.0	11.0	13.0

1. See Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.8 for country-specific notes.
2. Care for adult family members also includes care for family members who do not live in the household.
3. Care for adults covers both household adults and non-household adults.
4. Other domestic work includes household management and care for adults.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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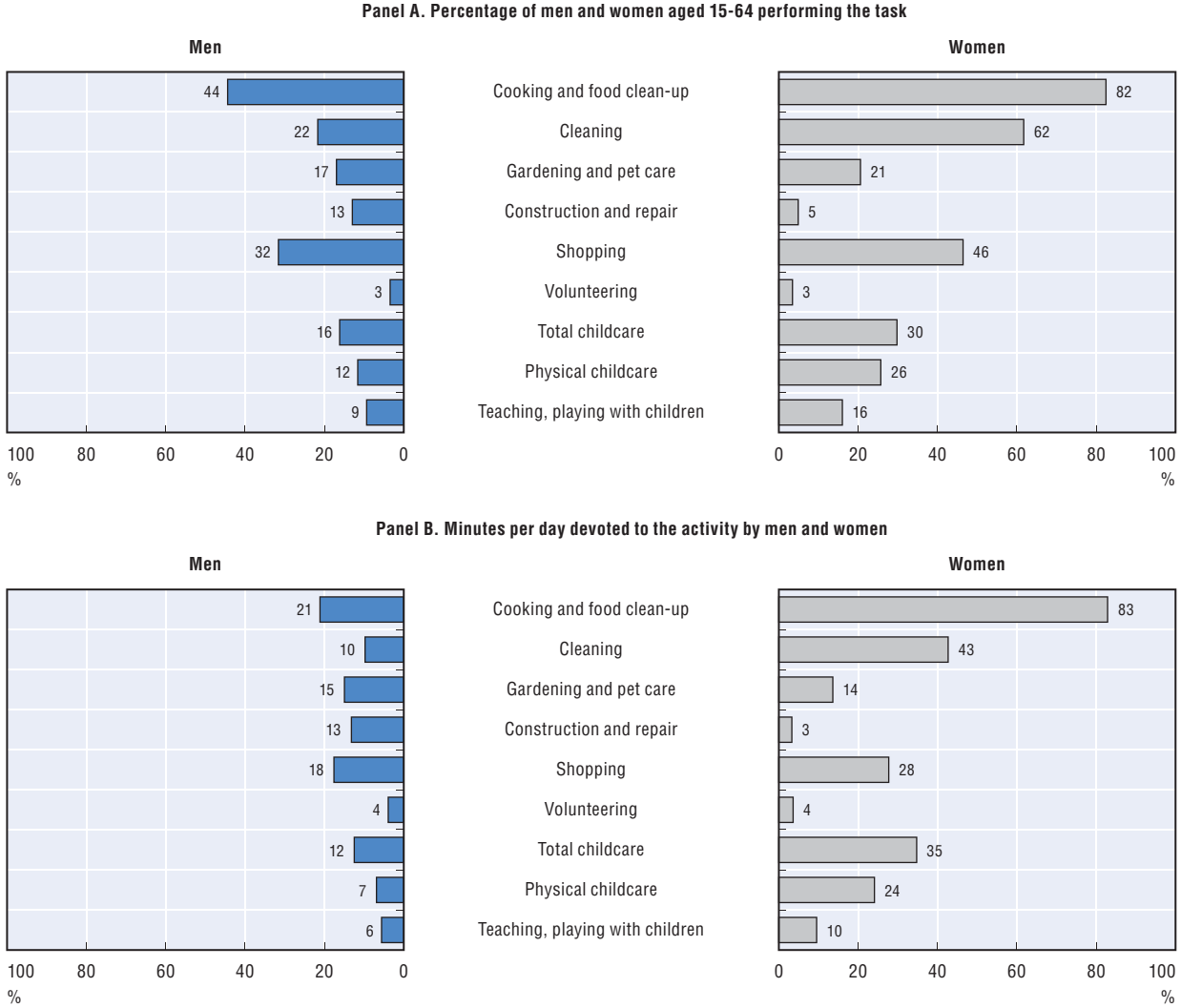
found for Japan and Korea, where these numbers also cover care for family members who do not live in the household. In the Australian and Irish time-use surveys, care for household adults cannot be separated from care for non-household adults and the average time spent on adult care is visibly higher. For the twelve European countries of the Harmonised European Time Use Survey (HETUS), adult care is classified together with household management under the category "Other domestic work". For most countries, the total time spent on these activities is noticeably higher than in the previously discussed countries. However, in Poland and Slovenia, and to a lesser extent in Finland, France, Italy and the United Kingdom, the total minutes devoted to other domestic work are very low (one to four minutes per day), suggesting that people spent very little time in adult caring. Finally, women devote on average more time to adult caring than men irrespective of the classification used (with the exception of Estonia). But the difference is much smaller than for childcare.

Women cook, clean and care and men build and repair

Men and women do different sorts of unpaid work. Typical male tasks are construction and repair work (Figure 1.11). Men also devote slightly more time to gardening, pet care and volunteering, but their participation rates in these activities are equal to those of women. Tasks that have traditionally been thought of "women's work" (*e.g.* cooking and cleaning) continue to be primarily performed by women. In the countries surveyed, 82% of women prepare meals on an average day, while only 44% of men do. The average time spent by women on cooking is four times the time spent by men (Figure 1.11, Panel B).

Figure 1.11. **Women cook, clean and care while men build and repair**



Note: See Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.8 for country-specific notes. The percentages are unweighted averages over the 29 countries for which data is available. The statistics presented in Panel B reflect the average time use for *all* people, including those who do not perform the task.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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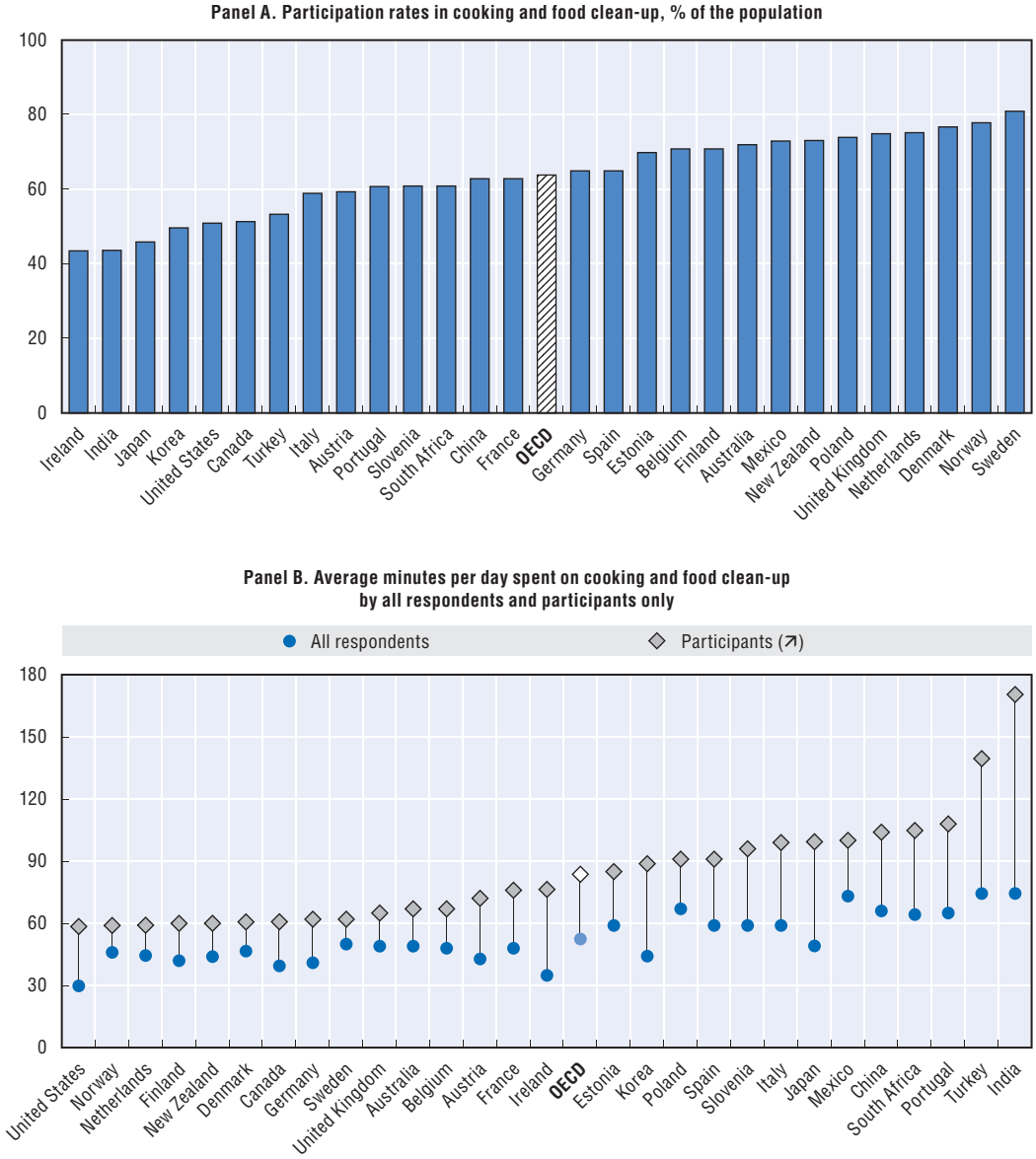
Who cooks and for how much time?

The data presented in the previous sections provide information on the average time use for *all* people. However not everybody does unpaid work. It is thus interesting to look at both the participation rates in different types of unpaid work and the time spent in those

activities by those who perform the activity. This section focuses on cooking, the predominant type of unpaid work.

In the 28 countries for which data are available, nearly two-thirds of people cook on an average day. But the participation rate ranges from a minimum of 44% in Ireland and India to more than 75% in the Nordic countries.[4] Yet conditional on participation, the opposite ranking is found for the actual cooking time (Figure 1.12, Panel B). While less than half of the adults cook in India, those who do cook spend nearly three hours per day in the kitchen. In Norway and Denmark, on the other hand, the large majority of the population engages in cooking, but they devote barely one hour to it.

Figure 1.12. **Fewer people cook in India, but those who do, cook a lot**



Note: See Figure 1.1 for country-specific notes.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Miranda, 2011).

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The United States is the only country where both the participation rate and mean time for cooking are at the bottom of the ranking. In other words, the American population attaches on average little importance to cooking relative to the other surveyed countries. The United States is also one of the countries where relatively little time is spent eating as a primary activity and where obesity rates are amongst the highest in the OECD (see *Society at a Glance 2009*).[5]

Valuing unpaid work

There are two approaches for imputing a monetary value to unpaid work. The *opportunity-cost approach* values the work at the market wage of the household member doing the time. The underlying assumption is that the household member has foregone earnings for home production. This approach may overstate values since much household production does not demand high skills. For instance, applying a brain surgeon's wage to value the time spent walking the family dog attributes a high price to a low-skilled activity. Besides, some household production is done by people who do not earn a market wage. Although their wage rate could be imputed using wages rates of workers with similar education and other observed characteristics, as these people are not working they may have some characteristics preventing them from earning this observed market wage. The *replacement-cost approach* considers what it would cost to hire a worker to perform the activity. Using a specialist's wage for each household task – *e.g.* a plumber's wage to fix a leak – overestimates the value of the input since specialists work more efficiently and need less time to perform the same task. The generalist wage approach applies the wage rate of a domestic servant or handyman to value the time devoted to all household unpaid activities.

This chapter uses both the opportunity-cost approach and the replacement-cost approach. In the former, a country's average hourly wage is used to value unpaid household work, while the average hourly wage cost for unregistered (informal) activities is used in the latter. In both cases, estimates of hourly wages are *net* of taxes and social contributions and only primary activities are taken into account.[6]

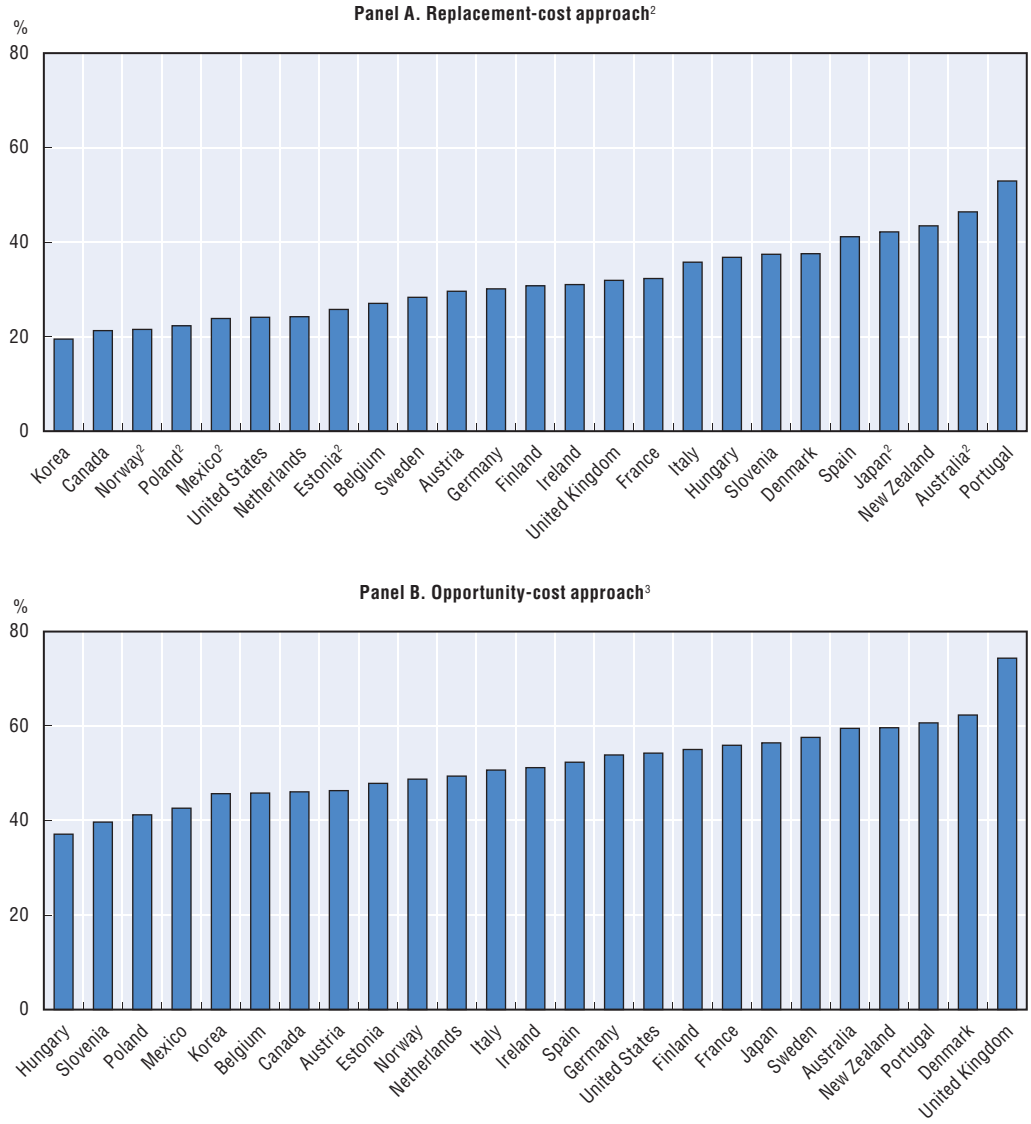
Figure 1.13 presents the value of labour devoted to household production of non-market services as a percentage of GDP for the 25 OECD countries for which data are available. The contribution of unpaid work varies greatly between countries. The replacement-cost approach suggests that the labour devoted to unpaid work accounts for 19% of GDP in Korea up to 53% of GDP in Portugal. The upper-bound estimates are provided by the opportunity-cost approach. Simple country averages of both approaches suggests that between one-third and half of all valuable economic activity in the OECD area is not accounted for in the system of national accounts. To the extent that those large populations under age 15 and over age 64 undertake unpaid work, these will be under-estimates.

Conclusion

Unpaid work matters a great deal. As shown in this chapter, unpaid work – largely dominated by cooking, cleaning and caring – is an important contributor to societal well-being in ways that differ both between countries and between men and women in different countries. The contribution of unpaid work to well-being is both in terms of current consumption (*e.g.* cleaning) and improving future well-being (*e.g.* parental investments in raising children). In all countries, women do more of such work than men, to some degree balanced – by an amount varying across countries – by the fact that they do less market work.

Figure 1.13. **Unpaid work accounts for one-third of GDP in the OECD member countries**[1]

Measured as a percentage of GDP



1. Time-use estimates for the population aged 15-64 over the period 1998-2009 are used and only primary activities are taken into account. See Figure 1.1 for country notes.
2. A country's average hourly wage cost for unregistered (informal) activities is used to value unpaid household work. For several countries, this information was not available. Instead, the following wage costs are used: wages costs for registered activities adjusted for tax and social security contributions (Australia and Japan); 50% of the average net wage for the total economy (Estonia and Mexico and Poland); the average hourly wage of a childcare worker adjusted for tax and social contributions (Norway).
3. The country's average hourly wage is used to value unpaid household work.

Source: OECD's Secretariat estimates based on national time-use surveys (see Ahmad and Koh, 2011).

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The question whether GDP growth via greater female labour force participation is a consequence of marketisation of unpaid work, rather than attributable to a rise in productivity, is not directly addressed in this chapter, although the country cross-sectional data suggest that such processes occur. It is likely that the extent of this trade-off varies across the countries considered here. It is in addressing this sort of question that the

regular collection of time-use data can be of tremendous value. Equally, consideration of unpaid work for relative inequality and for inequality over time has not been addressed here. Such work may be part of a future agenda for the OECD as new time-use surveys become available for many countries in the next few years.

Notes

1. This special chapter is a summary of a longer working paper by Miranda (2011), which can be consulted for more detail, including on technical issues.
2. There are no data on parents' childcare activities for China, India, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Turkey. For Portugal there is only information on the proximity measure of parents' childcare.
3. Time-use surveys in Canada, Hungary and the United States do not ask about secondary activities. For Spain, estimates on secondary childcare are not available.
4. Participation rates for cooking and clean-up are not available for Hungary.
5. From a cross-country perspective, the relationship is less clear-cut. The correlation coefficient for cooking time and eating is –0.05 for all respondents.
6. For more detailed information on the methodology and data sources, see the forthcoming OECD Statistics Directorate Working Paper: *Incorporating Household Production into International Comparisons of Material Well-Being* (Ahmad and Koh, 2011).

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Chapter 2

Interpreting OECD Social Indicators

The purpose of *Society at a Glance*

Society at a Glance 2011 provides a broad picture of social outcomes and social responses across the OECD. It informs responses to two questions:

- Compared with their own past and with other OECD countries, what progress have countries made in their social development?
- How effective have been the actions of societies in furthering social development?

Assessing societal progress requires indicators covering a range of social outcomes across countries and time, for example in material well-being, education and health, as well in terms of social interactions.

Societies try to influence social outcomes through government policy. A critical issue is whether policies are effective in achieving their aims. A first step is to compare the resources intended to change outcomes across countries and contrast them with social outcomes. A second, often more informative step, is to compare *changes* in resources to *changes* in social outcomes, since this approach factors out unchanging country-specific factors which may influence both resources and outcomes observed at a point in time.

The framework of OECD social indicators

The structure applied here has been informed by experiences in policy and outcome assessment in a variety of fields. The structure applied here is not a full-scale social indicators framework. But it is more than a simple list of indicators. It draws, in particular, on the OECD experience with environmental indicators. These indicators are organised in a framework known as "Pressure-State-Response" (PSR).[1] In this framework human activities exert *pressures* on the environment, which affect natural resources and environmental conditions (*state*), and which prompt society to respond to these changes through various policies (*societal response*). The PSR framework highlights these sequential links which in turn helps decision makers and the public see interconnections that are often over-looked.

A similar approach for social indicators is followed in this report. Indicators are grouped along two dimensions. The first dimension considers the *nature* of these indicators, grouping them in three areas:

- ***Social context*** refers to variables that, while not usually direct policy targets, are crucial for understanding the social policy context. For example, the proportion of elderly people to working age people is not a policy target. However, it is relevant information on the social landscape in which, for example, health, taxation or pension policy responses are made. Unlike other indicators, in most cases and for most countries, trends in social context indicators cannot be unambiguously interpreted as desirable or undesirable.
- ***Social status*** indicators describe the social outcomes that policies try to influence. These indicators describe the general conditions of the population. Ideally, the indicators chosen are ones that can be easily and unambiguously interpreted – all countries would rather have low poverty rates than high ones, for example.

- ***Societal response*** indicators provide information about what society is doing to affect social status indicators. Societal responses include indicators of government policy settings. Activities of non-governmental organisations, families and broader civil society are also societal responses. By comparing societal response indicators with social status indicators, one can get an initial indication of policy effectiveness, the more so when *changes* are considered.

While social indicators are allocated to one of the three groups above, the allocation between context and status categories is not always straightforward. For example, fertility rates may be a policy objective in some countries, while in others they are simply part of the overall context of social policy. Similarly, legal marriage may be a policy aim in some countries, whereas it may not be a policy concern in others.

An important limitation of the social context, social status and social response indicators used here is that these are presented at a national level. For member countries with a significant degree of federalism, such as Australia, Canada, Germany or the United States, indicators may not fully reflect regions within the federation, who may have different contexts, outcomes and social responses. This limitation should always be borne in mind in considering the indicators presented in this report.

The second dimension of the OECD framework groups indicators according to the broad policy fields that they cover. Four broad *objectives* of social policy are used to classify indicators of *social status* and *social response*:

- ***Self-sufficiency*** is an underlying social policy objective. Self-sufficiency is promoted by ensuring active social and economic participation by people, and their autonomy in activities of daily life.
- ***Equity*** is another common social policy objective. Equitable outcomes are measured mainly in terms of access by people to resources.
- ***Health status*** is a fundamental objective of health care systems, but improving health status also requires a wider focus on its social determinants, making health a central objective of social policy.
- ***Social cohesion*** is often identified as an over-arching objective of countries' social policies. While little agreement exists on what it means, a range of symptoms are informative about *lack* of social cohesion. Social cohesion is positively evident in the extent to which people participate in their communities or trust others.

The selection and description of indicators

OECD countries differ substantially in their collection and publication of social indicators. In selecting indicators for this report, the following questions were considered.

- What is the degree of indicator comparability across countries? This report strives to present the best comparative information for each of the areas covered. However the indicators presented are not confined to those for which there is "absolute" comparability. Readers are, however, alerted as to the nature of the data used and the limits to comparability.
- What is the minimum number of countries for which the data must be available? This report includes only indicators that are available for two thirds or more of OECD countries.
- What breakdowns should be used at a country level? Social indicators can often be decomposed at a national level into outcomes by social sub-categories, such as people's age, gender and family type. Pragmatism governs here: the breakdowns presented here vary according to the indicator considered, and are determined by what is readily available.

Chapters 4 to 8 describe the key evidence. Some of these indicators are published in other OECD publications on a regular basis (*e.g. Social Expenditure Database* and *OECD Health Data*). Others have been collected on an *ad hoc* basis. Yet others involve some transformation of existing indicators.

Throughout this volume, the code associated with each indicator (*e.g.* GE1) is used to relate it to a policy field (as listed in the tables below), while a numbering of the indicators is used to simplify cross-references. While the name and coding of indicators used in this volume may differ from those in previous issues of *Society at a Glance*, an effort is made to assure continuity in the areas covered.

General social context indicators (GE)

When comparing *social status* and *societal response* indicators, it is easy to suggest that one country is doing badly relative to others, or that another is spending a lot of money in a particular area compared with others. It is important to put such statements into a broader context. For example, national income levels vary across OECD countries. If there is any link between income and health, richer countries may have better health conditions than poor ones, irrespective of societal responses. If the demand for health care services increases with income (as appears to be the case), rich countries may spend more on health care (as a percentage of national income) than poorer countries. These observations do not mean that the indicators of health status and health spending are misleading. They do mean, however, that the general context behind the data should be borne in mind when considering policy implications.

General context (GE) indicators, including fertility, migration, family and the old age support rate, provide the general background for other indicators in this report. Household income is a social outcome in its own right, giving an indication of the material well-being of family members, as well as a contextual variable.

Table 2.1. **List of general context indicators (GE)**

GE1.	Household income
GE2.	Fertility
GE3.	Migration
GE4.	Family
GE5.	Old age support rate

Self-sufficiency (SS)

For many people, paid employment (SS1) provides income, identity and social interactions. Social security systems are also funded by taxes levied on those in paid employment. Thus promoting higher paid employment is a priority for all OECD countries. Being unemployed (SS2) means that supporting oneself and one's family is not always possible. Student performance (SS3) signals an important dimension of human capital accumulation, measured towards the end of compulsory education in most countries. Good student performance enables longer term self-sufficiency, including in paid employment. The number of years people spend on a pension is a societal response, determined by age of pension eligibility, to issues of self-sufficiency in old age (SS4). A major societal response to enable people to become self-sufficient is public and private expenditure in education (SS5).

Table 2.2 lists the chosen indicators of social status and societal response for assessing whether OECD countries have been successful in meeting goals for assuring the self-sufficiency of people and their families.

Table 2.2. **List of self-sufficiency indicators (SS)**

Social status	Societal responses
SS1. Employment	SS4. Pensionable years
SS2. Unemployment	SS5. Education spending
SS3. Student performance	
EQ1. Income inequality	*EQ4. Leaving low income from benefits*
EQ2. Poverty	*EQ5. Social spending*
EQ3. Income difficulties	

Note: Indicators in italics are those that, while presented in another sub-section, are also relevant for an assessment of self-sufficiency.

Equity (EQ)

Equity has many dimensions. It includes the ability to access social services and economic opportunities, as well as equity in outcomes. Opinions vary as to what exactly entails a fair distribution of opportunities or outcomes. Additionally, as it is hard to obtain information on all equity dimensions, the *social status* equity indicators presented here are limited to inequality in financial resources.

Income inequality (EQ1) is a natural starting point for considering equity across the whole of society. Often however, policy concerns are more strongly focussed on those at the bottom end of the income distribution. Hence the use of poverty measures (EQ2), in addition to overall inequality. Consideration of whether people can get by on their current income (EQ3) is an alternative measure of equity, incorporating an important subjective, individually determined indicator to complement the more objective, externally driven measures of EQ1 and EQ2. The ease of leaving low income for those on welfare benefits of last resort is an important factor in assessing the policy context for mobility at the bottom of the income distribution (EQ4). Social protection is a major tool through which countries respond to equity concerns. All OECD countries have social protection systems that redistribute resources and insure people against various contingencies. These interventions are summarised by public social spending (EQ5). Equity indicators are clearly related to self-sufficiency indicators. Taken together, they reveal how national social protection systems address the challenge of balancing adequate provision with system sustainability and promotion of citizens' self-sufficiency.

Table 2.3. **List of equity indicators (EQ)**

Social status	Societal responses
EQ1. Income inequality	EQ4. Leaving low income
EQ2. Poverty	EQ5. Social spending
EQ3. Income difficulties	
SS1. Employment	*HE5. Health spending*
SS2. Unemployment	
SS3. Student performance	

Note: Indicators in italics are those that, while presented in another sub-section, are also relevant for an assessment of equity outcomes.

Health (HE)

The links between social and health conditions are well-established. Indeed, educational gains, public health measures, better access to health care and continuing progress in medical technology, have contributed to significant improvements in health status, as measured by life expectancy (HE1). To a significant extent, life expectancy improvements reflect lower infant mortality (HE2). Often the health focus is on physical health, with more subjective psychological population-based indicators of health, such as positive and negative experiences (HE3), overlooked.[2] This lacuna is partly because of measurement and data problems. Yet psychological health is important for overall well-being. Having access to satisfactory air and water quality, a dimension of the local environment, is an important and often neglected part of healthy living (HE4). Health spending (HE5) is a more general and key part of the policy response of health care systems to concerns about health conditions. Nevertheless, health problems can sometimes have origins in interrelated social conditions – such as unemployment, poverty, and inadequate housing – beyond the reach of health policies. Moreover, more than spending levels *per se*, the effectiveness of health interventions often depends on other characteristics of the health care system, such as low coverage of medical insurance or co-payments, which may act as barriers to seeking medical help. A much broader range of indicators on health conditions and interventions is provided in *OECD Heath Data* and in *Health at a Glance*, a biennial companion volume.

Table 2.4. **List of health indicators (HE)**

Social status	Societal responses
HE1. Life expectancy	HE5. Health spending
HE2. Infant mortality	
HE3. Positive and negative experiences	
HE4. Water and air quality	
	EQ5. Public social spending

Note: Indicators in italics are those that, while presented in another sub-section, are also relevant for an assessment of health outcomes.

Social cohesion (CO)

Promoting social cohesion is an important social policy goal in many OECD countries. However, because there is no commonly-accepted definition of social cohesion, identifying suitable indicators is especially difficult. In *Society at a Glance 2011* considerable effort has been made to find better indicators of social cohesion.

A general measure of trust in other people (CO1) may indicate the degree to which economic and social exchange is facilitated, enhancing well-being and facilitating socially beneficial collective action. A cohesive society is one where citizens have confidence in national-level institutions and believe that social and economic institutions are not prey to corruption (CO2). Pro-social behaviour is behaviour which contributes to the positive functioning of society, such as giving money, time or helping strangers. Anti-social behaviour, typically criminal, is the contrary (CO3). High voter turnout indicates a country's political system enjoys a strong degree of participation, enabling its effectiveness and reflecting a broad public consensus about its legitimacy (CO4). The degree of community acceptance of various minority groups measures social cohesion between traditional

majorities and those often historically considered to be outsiders (CO5). It is difficult to identify directly relevant and comparable response indicators at a country level on social cohesion issues. Policies that are relevant to other dimensions of social policy (self-sufficiency, equity and health) may also influence social cohesion.

Table 2.5. **List of social cohesion indicators (CO)**

Social status	Societal responses
CO1. Trust	
CO2. Confidence in social institutions	
CO3. Pro- and anti-social behaviour	
CO4. Voting	
CO5. Tolerance	
EQ1. Income inequality	
EQ2. Poverty	

Note: Indicators in italics are those that, while presented in another sub-section, are also relevant for an assessment of social cohesion outcomes.

What can be found in this publication

In each of the five domains covered in Chapters 4 to 8 of this report, each of the five indicators chosen provides a page of text and a page of charts. Both charts and text generally follow a standardised pattern. Both text and charts address the most recent headline indicator data, with countries ranked from highest to lowest performer. Changes in the indicator over time are then considered on a chart to the right. By providing a standardised introduction and opening charts for each of the 25 indicators, interpretation is facilitated. The choice of the time period over which change is considered is partly determined by data constraints. However, ideally changes are examined over: 1) the last generation, to compare how society is evolving in the longer term; or 2) over the period of the current economic crisis (typically between 2007-09), so the extent to which recent adverse economic events are influencing social indicators can be studied. The text and charts consider interesting alternative breakdowns of the indicator, or relationships with other social outcomes or policies. Cross-plot charts with an added regression line show a statistically significant relationship at 5% or better. No added line means that there is no statistical significance at a 5% level for cross-plots.

Some focus is put on a common theme across indicators which cross-plots are considered. A recent influential publication has claimed that income inequality is the "glue" tying social indicators together in rich countries (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009). Because *Society at a Glance 2011* has high quality data on income distribution from the OECD's *Growing Unequal?* project for a large number of member countries, this hypothesis can be examined for levels and for changes in levels of income and income inequality for a number of the indicators presented here.

Finally, a boxed section on "Definition and measurement" provides the definitions of data used and a discussion of potential measurement issues.

The data underlying each indicator are available on the OECD website (*www.oecd.org/els/social/indicators/sag*), or by typing or clicking for "electronic books" on the "StatLink" at bottom right of each indicator (where data for more countries are also available).

Notes

1. The PSR framework is itself a variant of an approach which has also given rise to the "Driving force-State-Response" (DSR) model used by the United Nations Committee for Sustainable Development; and the "Driving force-Pressure-State-Impact-Response" (DPSIR) model used by the European Environment Agency.
2. Similar measures of positive mental health and life satisfaction have been used as broad mental health indicators in recent Canadian and Scottish government reports (Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2009; Taulbut *et al*., 2009), as well as being covered in recent work establishing a comprehensive health monitoring system in the European Union (Korkeila *et al*., 2003).

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Chapter 3

Society at a Glance: An Overview

There are 25 social indicators presented in *Society at a Glance 2011*. In *Society at a Glance 2009*, a summary was provided through a table which selected two indicators per chapter, chosen on the basis of their *a priori* importance and through consultation with member countries, and assigned "green" for performance in the top three deciles, "orange" for performance in the middle four deciles and "red" for the bottom three deciles.

A very similar "traffic lights" approach is taken below, but for all relevant indicators. Some of the 25 indicators are excluded because they cannot be unambiguously interpreted (a higher value being desirable and a lower value being undesirable). For the general context (GE) indicators, only household income is included. Additionally, the social response indicators (education, social and health spending and pensionable years) are not included as these are policy inputs, not social outcomes.

These exclusions leave 17 out of the 25 social indicators to be summarised in Table 3.1. As before, greens are the highest seven countries, oranges are the middle 20 countries and reds are the lowest seven countries (these numbers are adjusted proportionately when there is missing indicator data for countries). Blanks are placed where no country indicator information is available.

While it provides a very useful summary snapshot of the social situation, it is necessary to make numerous caveats about meaning and interpretation of Table 3.1 in terms of national comparisons. Different governments and different countries will have different policy priorities. Their priorities may be economic outcomes (inflation, GDP, or fiscal balance, for example) rather than social outcomes such as those considered here. In such a case having red social outcomes in Table 3.1 may be the price they are willing to pay for success elsewhere. Or, given a focus on social outcomes, they may be willing to trade-off many red outcomes for the one green social outcome they deem most desirable. Alternatively there may be other social outcomes, not considered here, which are stronger priorities at a national level. Observed patterns of reds, oranges and greens may reflect simply reflect national differences in preferences for outcomes. Equally, observed patterns may reflect lags in changes of social outcomes rather than current or recent policy settings. Lastly, the trade-offs between social outcomes may vary between countries because of societal or cultural differences, unrelated to policy choices, making it easier for some countries to generate green outcomes for a given policy effort. For all these reasons, it was deemed inappropriate to rank country performance by an aggregate social index, such as summing the numbers of green or red lights across indicators.

Table 3.1. **Overview of the social situation in OECD countries**

"Green circles" denotes countries are in the top two deciles, "red diamonds" those in the bottom two deciles and "yellow triangle" those in the six intermediate deciles

	GE1	SS1	SS2	SS3	EQ1	EQ2	EQ3	EQ4	HE1	HE2	HE3	HE4	CO1	CO2	CO3	CO4	CO5
	Median equivalised household income, in USD PPPs	Employment to population ratio for population aged 15-64	Unemployment rate for the population aged 15-64	PISA mean scores on the reading literacy scales	Gini coefficient of income inequality	Poverty rate	Percentage finding it difficult or very difficult to manage on current income	Percentage of average gross wage to reach a poverty threshold of 60% of median income for lone parents with two children	Life expectancy at birth	Infant mortality rate	Rate of positive experience	Percentage of persons satisfied with water quality	Percentage of people expressing high level of trust in others	Corruption index	Pro-social behavior	Voting rates	Tolerance of diversity
	2007	2009	2009	2009	2007/08	2007/08	2010	2009	2008	2008	2009	2009	2007/08	2010	2010	2009 or most recent	2010
Australia	●	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	●	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	●	●	●
Austria	▲	▲	●	. .	▲	●	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Belgium	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲
Canada	●	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	. .	▲	▲	◆	●
Chile	◆	◆	▲	◆	◆	◆	◆	. .	▲	◆	●	▲	◆	▲	▲	●	▲
Czech Republic	▲	▲	▲	◆	●	●	▲	◆	◆	▲	◆	▲	▲	◆	▲	▲	◆
Denmark	▲	●	▲	▲	●	●	●	●	▲	▲	●	●	●	●	▲	●	▲
Estonia	◆	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	◆	◆	◆	▲	◆	◆	▲	▲	◆	▲	◆
Finland	▲	▲	▲	●	●	▲	●	▲	▲	●	▲	●	●	●	▲	▲	▲
France	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Germany	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Greece	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	▲	◆	◆	◆	◆	▲	▲
Hungary	◆	◆	◆	▲	▲	●	◆	▲	◆	◆	◆	▲	▲	◆	◆	▲	▲
Iceland	●	●	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	◆	●	●	●	●	. .	▲	▲	●	●
Ireland	●	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	●
Israel	▲	◆	▲	◆	◆	◆	◆	▲	▲	▲	◆	◆	▲	◆	▲	▲	◆
Italy	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	◆	. .	◆	▲	▲	▲
Japan	▲	▲	●	●	▲	◆	▲	●	●	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	◆	▲	◆
Korea	▲	▲	●	●	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	▲	◆	▲	◆	▲	▲	◆	◆
Luxembourg	●	▲	●	◆	▲	▲	●	◆	▲	●	▲	▲	. .	▲	▲	●	▲
Mexico	◆	◆	▲	◆	◆	◆	◆	. .	◆	◆	●	◆	◆	▲	▲	◆	▲
Netherlands	▲	●	●	●	▲	●	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	●	●	▲	●
New Zealand	▲	●	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	●	●	▲	●
Norway	●	●	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	●	▲	▲	▲	▲
Poland	◆	◆	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	◆	◆	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	◆	◆
Portugal	▲	▲	◆	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	◆	◆	◆	▲	▲
Slovak Republic	◆	▲	◆	◆	●	●	▲	▲	◆	◆	◆	▲	▲	▲	◆	◆	▲
Slovenia	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	. .	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲
Spain	▲	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	▲	◆	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●
Sweden	▲	●	▲	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	●	▲	▲	●	●	▲	▲	▲
Switzerland	●	●	●	▲	▲	▲	. .	◆	●	▲	▲	●	●	●	●	◆	▲
Turkey	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	▲	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	▲	◆	●	◆
United Kingdom	●	▲	▲	▲	◆	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	▲	▲
United States	●	▲	▲	▲	◆	◆	▲	◆	▲	◆	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	◆	▲

Source: Compilation from OECD Social Indicators in *Society at a Glance 2011* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/indicators/SAG*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932382178

4. GENERAL CONTEXT INDICATORS

1. Household income
2. Fertility
3. Migration
4. Family
5. Old age support rate

1. Household income

Definition and measurement

Data on annual median equivalised household disposable income came from the income distribution project (OECD, 2008). Disposable income was gross household income after deduction of direct taxes and payment of social security contributions. It excluded in-kind services provided to households by governments and private entities, consumption taxes, and imputed income flows due to home ownership. People were attributed the income of their household. Household income was adjusted for household size by assuming a common equivalence scale of 0.5.

In previous editions, net national income (NNI) per capita was used as the income measure. Following recommendations of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi commission, the income measure in *Society at a Glance* changes in 2011 to a household-based one. Median household income is conceptually stronger for social purposes. It more closely relates to family income than NNI per capita. In addition, median household income creates a link with the poverty data (see EQ1 and EQ2), which uses the median household income data in its calculation. Data was provided to the OECD by national consultants and was based on common methods and definitions applied to national micro data. While this approach improves cross-country comparability, national data sets still differ from one another in ways not readily standardised. In some countries, median income come from different data sources over time, and this adds further data error. It is likely that household income measures, while conceptually stronger for social purposes, have a lower degree of international comparability than the national income aggregates. To reflect this imprecision, household income figures were rounded to the nearest USD 1 000.

For cross-country comparison, national currency measures of income were converted into the United States dollars (USD) using purchasing power parity exchange rates (PPPs). These PPPs reflect the amount of a national currency required in each country to buy the same basket of goods and services as a dollar does in the United States. Both income and PPP estimates are affected by statistical errors, so differences between countries of 5% or less are not considered significant.

After subtracting taxes and adding welfare benefits household income provides an indication of the goods and services families can purchase on the market. It is thus an absolute objective indication of material quality of life. Household income is adjusted for family size and the adjusted measure is attributed to every person in that household. Half of all people have higher and half lower income than the median.

In 2007 half the people in Turkey and Mexico had household incomes less than USD 5 000. Half the people in Luxembourg had incomes about seven times higher (GE1.1). Low household income countries included those in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean and much of Eastern Europe, as well as the two Latin American countries – Chile and Mexico. Higher household income countries included Norway and the United States. Country income rankings using equivalised household income were similar to those calculated using per capita net national income (NNI). However, using a household rather than an NNI measure changed country income rankings considerably for some countries. Sweden fell seven places and New Zealand and Korea rose by five places.

Household income growth between the mid-1980s and 2007 averaged about 1.5% across the OECD (GE1.2). By way of comparison, per capita gross domestic product (GDP) growth was more than half a per cent higher, and NNI growth was higher by a similar amount. Such differences can cumulate considerably over a generation. OECD average growth also hides huge country variations. Mexico, Portugal and Spain were countries where household income growth was equal to or higher than conventional national aggregates. Household income growth was especially low relative to national aggregates in Belgium, Chile, Luxembourg, Hungary, and Japan. Reasons for differences between household and aggregate production growth measures could be due to the household focus, rather than of the nation as a whole, the focus on medians, rather than averages, the different methods of adjusting for numbers of people, or measurement errors in the statistics.

Further reading

OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

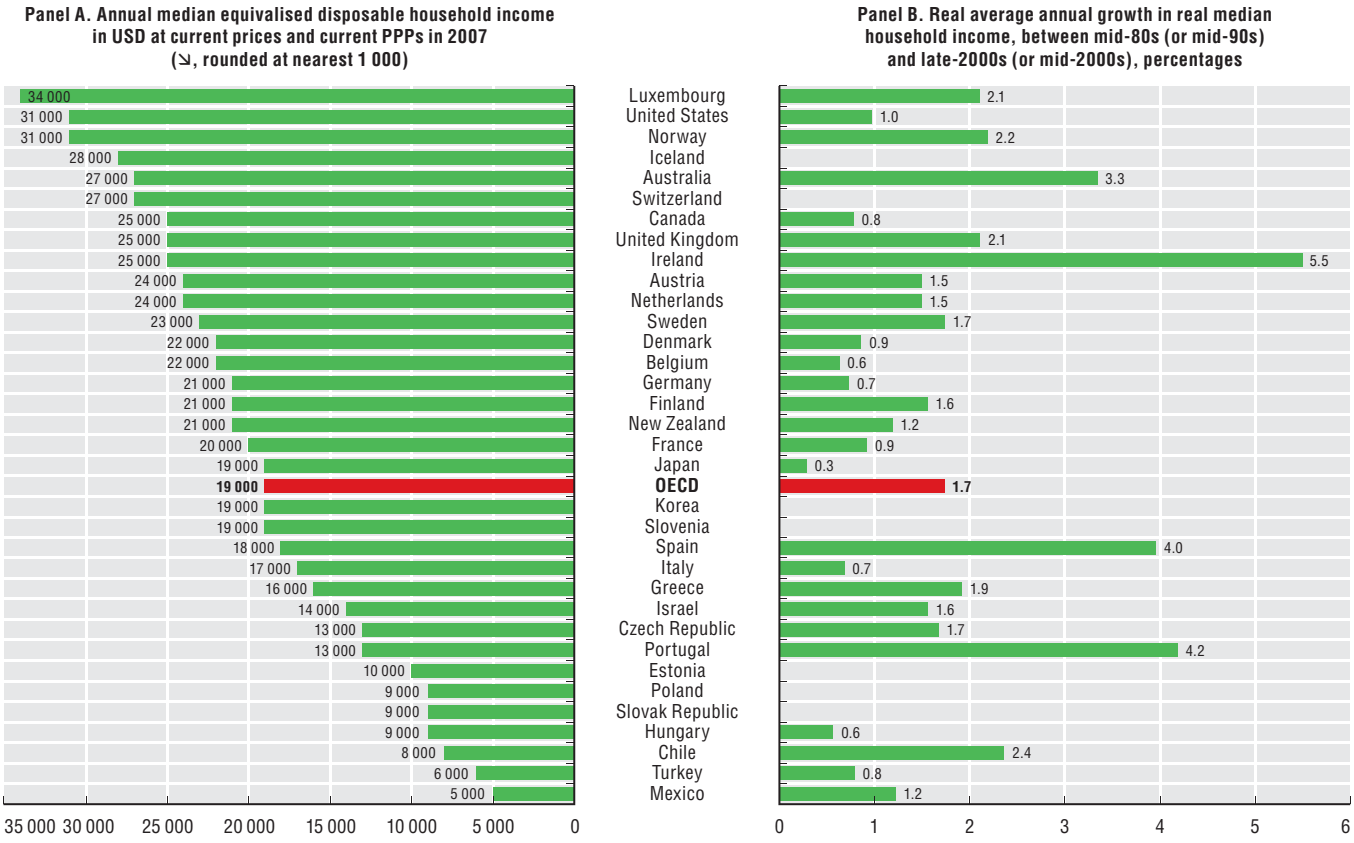
Stiglitz, J., A. Sen and J.P. Fitoussi (2009), "Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress", *www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/documents/rapport_anglais.pdf*.

Figure note

Figure GE1.1, Panel B: Median income changes over a 10-20-year period are not available for Estonia, Iceland, Korea, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Switzerland. Changes are available from mid-1990s for Australia, Chile, Israel and Portugal.

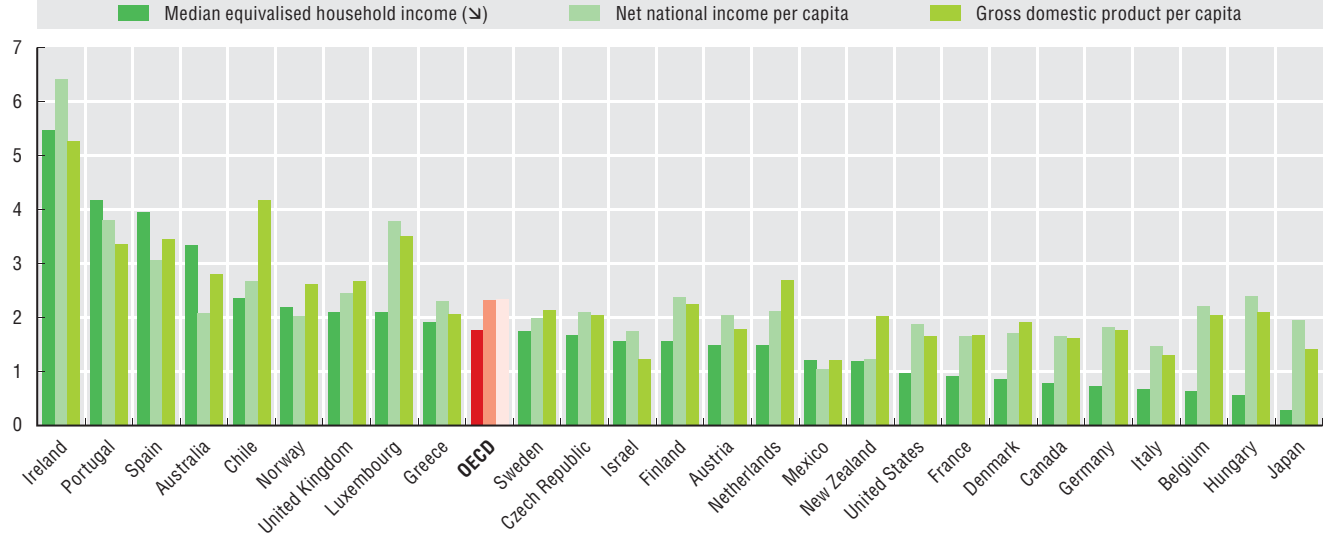
Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

GE1.1. Median equivalised income of OECD countries varies between USD 5 000 and 34 000



GE1.2. Household income grows slower than national accounts measures of material well-being

Real annual average growth in median household equivalised income, NNI per capita and GDP per capita, between mid-1980s (or mid-1990s) and late-2000s (or mid-1990s), in percentages



Source: OECD Database on Income Distribution and Poverty (www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality) and OECD National Accounts Database (www.oecd.org/statistics/nationalaccounts).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381684

2. Fertility

Definition and measurement

The total fertility rate is the number of children that would be born to each woman at the end of her childbearing years if the likelihood of her giving birth to children at each age was the currently prevailing age-specific fertility rates. It is computed by summing up the age-specific fertility rates defined over five-yearly intervals. Assuming no net migration and unchanged mortality, total fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman ("replacement") ensures broad population stability. Data typically come from civil population registers or other administrative records. These are harmonised according to United Nations and Eurostat recommendations. The exception is Turkey, where fertility data are survey-based.

The total fertility rate indicates the number of children an average woman has if she were to experience the exact age-specific fertility throughout her life. Allowing for some mortality during infancy and childhood, the population is replaced at a total fertility rate of a little over two.

In 2009, fertility was well below replacement level in most countries, averaging 1.74 across the OECD (Panel A, GE2.1). The highest rate was in Israel, where women had 0.74 more children than the next highest fertility country, Iceland. In addition to Israel and Iceland, New Zealand and Turkey had above replacement fertility (2.1 children per woman). Anglophone and Nordic countries were typically at the higher fertility end, while continental Europe (France is the one major exception) filled out the low fertility end, along with Japan. Fertility rates were notably low in Korea, with two parents replacing themselves in the next generation by little more than one child.

Fertility generally declined across the OECD countries over the last 25 years (Panel B, GE2.1). The declining trend arose out of postponement of family formation and a decrease in desired family size. Rising female education and employment, insufficient support to families juggling work and children, a need to generate a secure job and income, or growing housing problems may have all also played a role. Falls were especially pronounced – by around two children per woman on average – in Turkey and Mexico. Falls of one child per women were also experienced in Poland and Japan. The same period also saw modest rises in fertility rates in 14 OECD countries, including five Nordics and five Anglophone countries, and the contiguous nations France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. The largest rises were in Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands. These rises amounted to between a third and one half of an extra child on average per woman.

There was a moderate recovery in average fertility rates between 2000 and 2009. However, trends have been quite heterogeneous (GE2.2). Fertility rates continued to decline or remained stable in Austria, Japan, Hungary, Korea, Portugal and Switzerland – all low fertility countries. Fertility was more likely to rebound in countries with higher starting fertility rates, even recovering over replacement level in New Zealand and Iceland. This fertility rebound stalled in many OECD countries in 2009, possibly as a consequence of the economic crisis.

Further reading

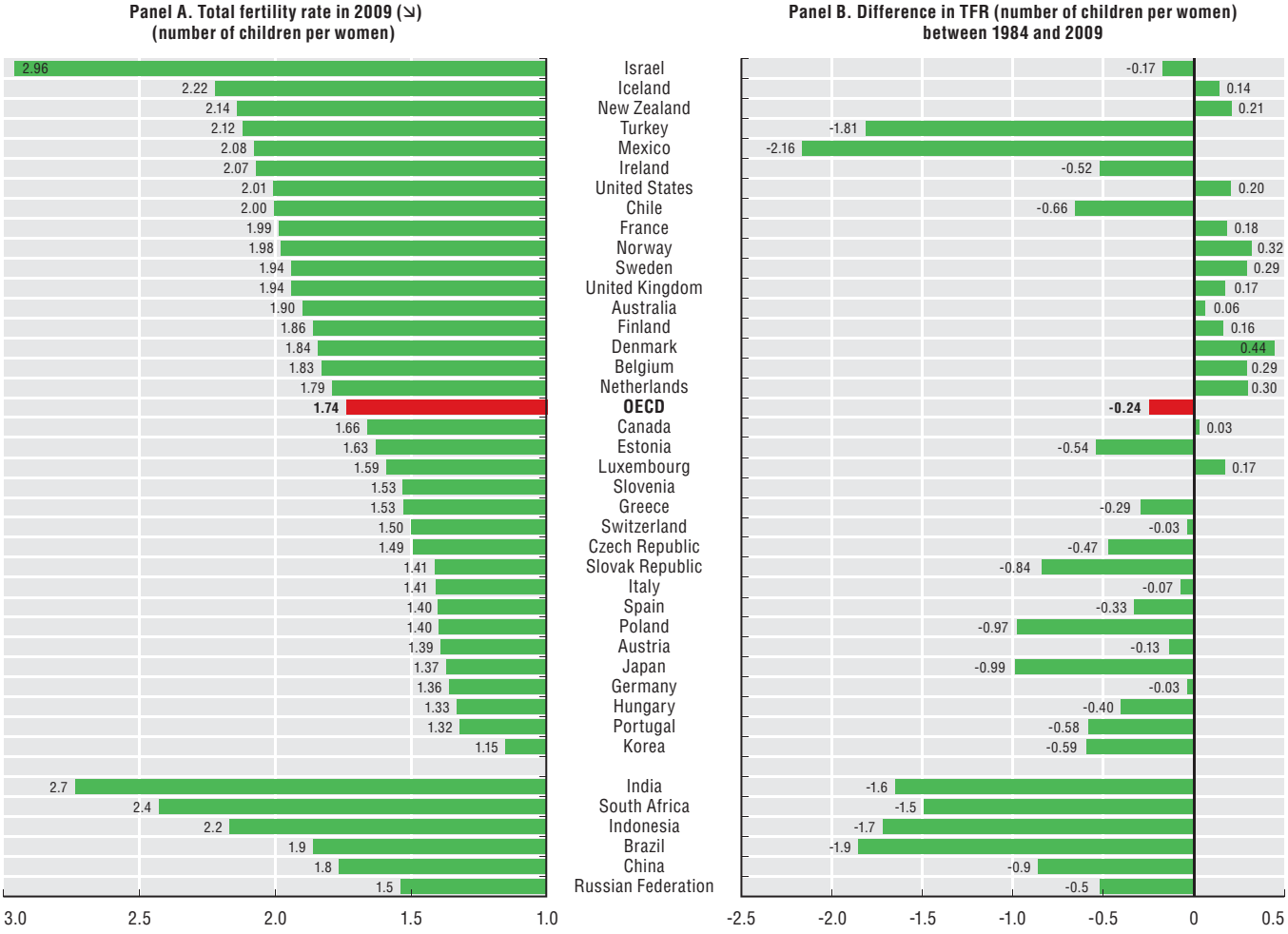
OECD (2010), *OECD Family Database*, Indicator SF2.1, "Fertility Rates", *www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database*.

Figure note

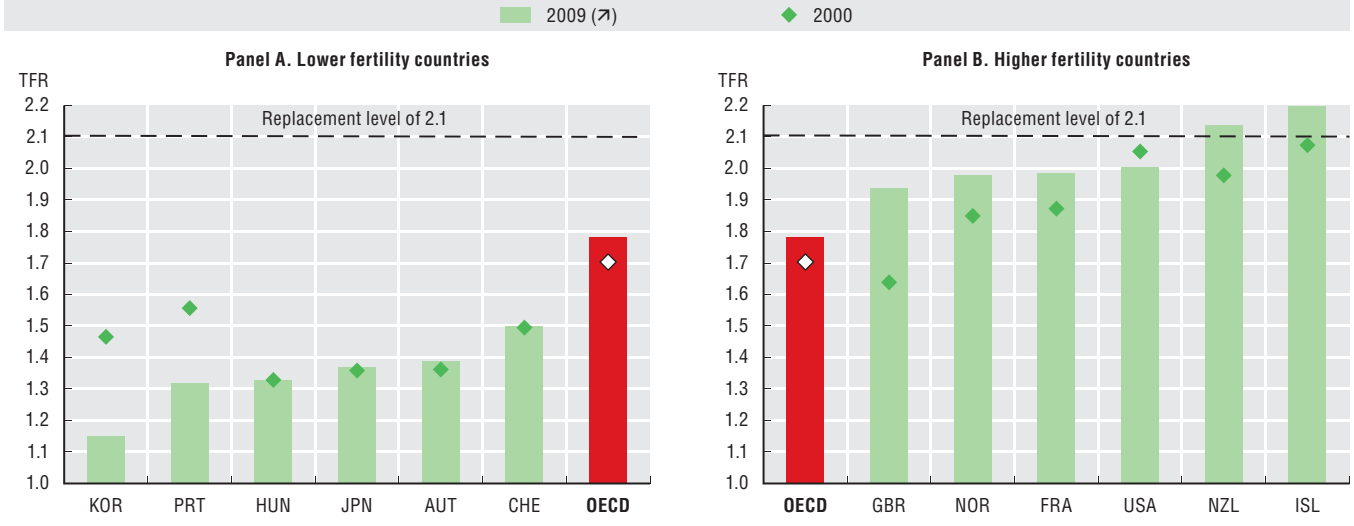
Figure GE2.1: 2008 for Chile, 2007 for Canada.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

GE2.1. Fertility rates across the OECD are typically below replacement level with a moderate decline over the last generation



GE2.2. Countries with higher fertility rates have had a bigger recent rebound



Source: National statistical offices and World Development Indicators (*http://data.worldbank.org*) for China, India and Indonesia.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381703

3. Migration

Definition and measurement

Immigrants are, in the first instance, defined as those who are foreign-born. In general, the foreign-born population is substantially larger than the share of foreign nationals. More information on the origin and characteristics of the immigrant population in OECD countries, and on data sources, can be found in OECD (2010). 2009 PISA data, used here to consider the migrant status of 15 year-old school pupils and their parents, is described in SS3 below.

Migrant integration is an issue for many OECD governments, both to enhance employment and because a lack of integration risks social tensions. Immigrant integration is mainly an issue in Western Europe. For some OECD countries like Greece, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, and Turkey, where people are attracted by better prospects elsewhere, emigration – especially of the young and the skilled – may be a more pressing policy issue.

In 2008 OECD countries differed considerably in the size of their migrant populations. Overall, around 12% of the OECD population were foreign-born in 2008. Two-thirds of OECD countries had immigrant populations exceeding one in every ten people in their population (Panel A, GE3.1). The share of the foreign-born was highest in Luxembourg, Israel, Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand, where it exceeded one in five of the population. By contrast, foreign-born populations were negligible in Mexico, Chile and Turkey, all of which are relatively low income countries.

The foreign-born share rose in all countries of the OECD between 1995 and 2008, excepting in Israel (Panel B, GE3.2). Ireland and Spain have had large rises, while rises in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom have been around or below OECD average rates. Israel had a large fall in the foreign-born share, mainly due to the fact that older Israeli cohorts had a very high proportion of foreign-born people.

Children of immigrants account for a significant part of the youth population in OECD countries. The rate is substantially higher than the number of children born overseas (GE3.2). In Luxembourg in 2009, 57% of 15 year-olds had at least one parent born abroad. The figure exceeds one in three children with a migrant parent in Australia, Switzerland, New Zealand, Canada and Israel, and one in five for 14 OECD countries in total. Differences between the two measures of "immigrant" children can be large. For example, in France one in four children aged 15 have at least one migrant parent, but only one in twenty children are actually born abroad.

Over the period 2000 to 2009, most countries had an increase in the proportion of children with at least one migrant parent, with the biggest rises – in excess of 8 percentage points – coming in Ireland, Spain and Portugal (GE3.3). Some countries – including Germany, Switzerland and Sweden – even experienced falls in numbers of foreign-born students but rises in numbers of students with foreign-born parents.

Further reading

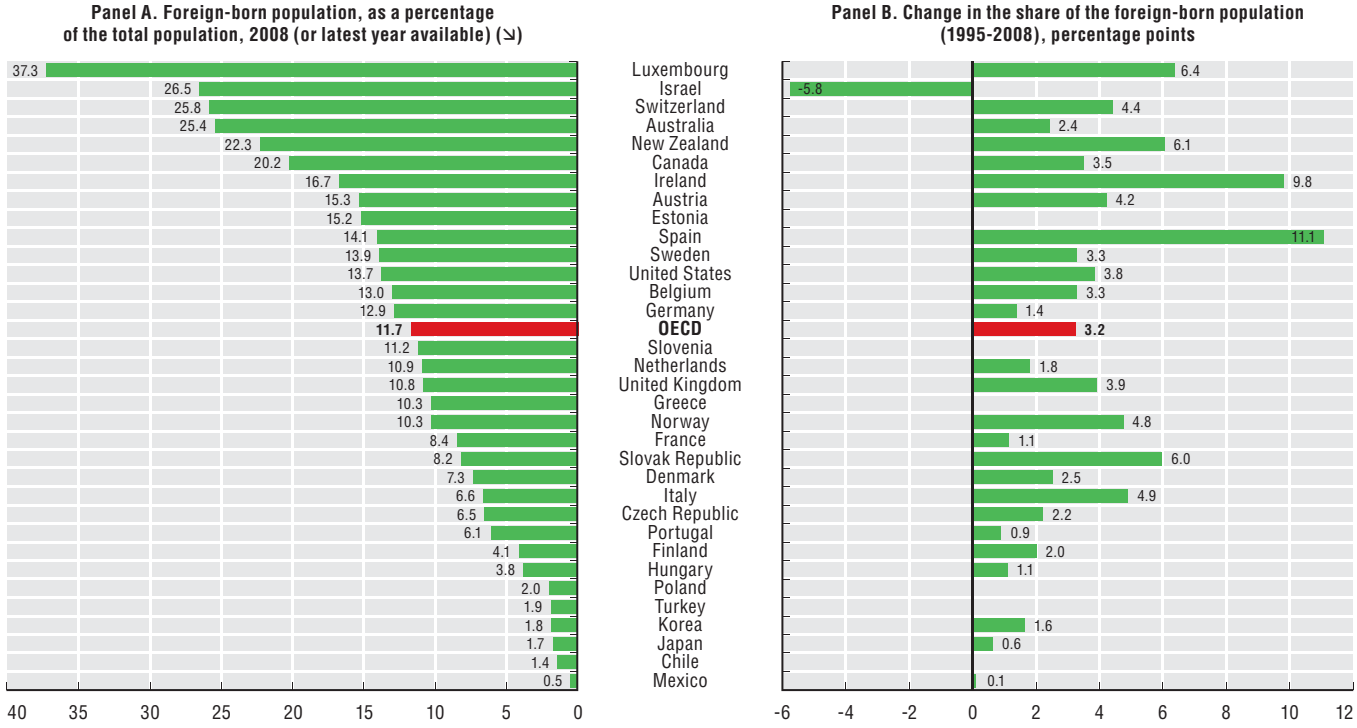
OECD (2010), *International Migration Outlook*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Figure note

Figure GE3.1, Panel A: Data for Chile, Italy, Japan and Korea refer to the foreign population. 2000 for Mexico and Turkey, 2001 for Greece, 2002 for Chile and Poland, 2003 for Germany, 2005 for Estonia, 2007 for Belgium, Hungary, Israel and Slovenia. Figure GE3.1, Panel B: Changes are not available for Chile, Estonia, Greece, Poland, Slovenia and Turkey. Change refers to 1995/2000 for Mexico, 1995/2003 for Germany, 1995/2007 for Belgium, Hungary and Israel, 1996/2008 for Ireland and New Zealand, 1998/2008 for Austria and the Czech Republic, 1999/2008 for France and 2001/08 for the Slovak Republic.

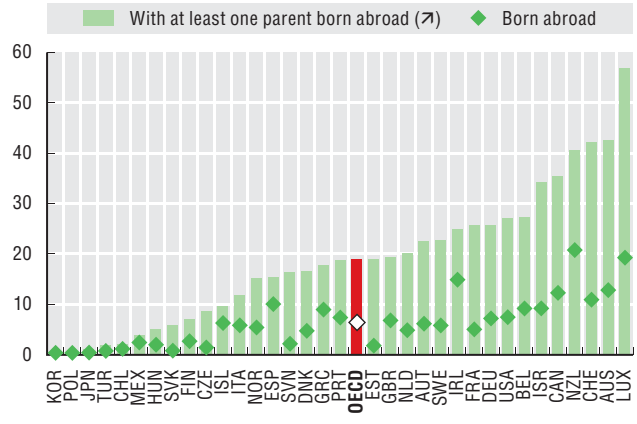
Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

GE3.1. The foreign-born population is a large minority in some OECD countries and increased significantly over the last 13 years



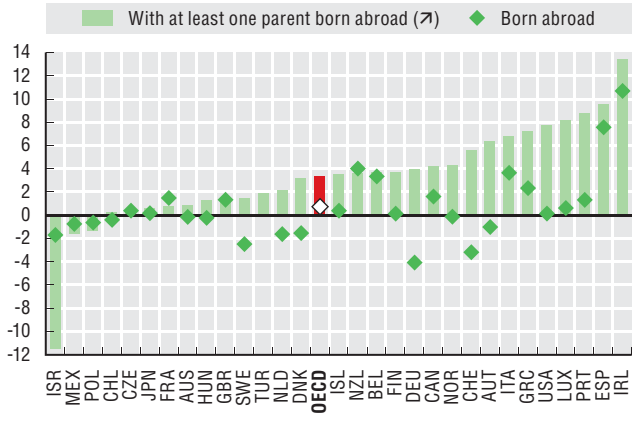
GE3.2. One in five 15 year-old school pupils has at least one parent born abroad

Percentage of 15 year-old school pupils with at least one parent born abroad and percentage of 15 year-old school pupils born abroad in 2009



GE3.3. Significant increase in the number of 15 year-old school pupil with at least one parent born abroad

Percentage point changes in the share of 15 year-old school pupils with at least one parent born abroad and of 15 year-old school pupils born abroad, 2000-09



Source: OECD (2010), *International Migration Outlook*, OECD Publishing, Paris (*www.oecd.org/els/migration/imo*); *OECD Database on Population and Vital Statistics*; Eurostat; Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas; INE Chile; Central Bureau Statistics; CBS Israel; UN Population Division; OECD PISA 2000 and 2009 (*www.pisa.oecd.org*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381722

4. Family

Definition and measurement

Data on family structure are drawn from the Gallup World Poll. The Gallup World Poll is conducted in over 140 countries around the world based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over in the entire country, including rural areas. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error. Sample sizes vary between around 1 000 and 4 000, depending on the country. The categories are self-assessed by the respondent.

Adult partnership patterns, such as marriage or cohabitation, give a broad indication of family structure. Traditional forms of partnership, such as marriage, and non-traditional forms, such as cohabitation, can be considered. Family structure has implications for child well-being, including the chances of a child being poor.

Marriage was the most common form of partnership across the OECD for the period 2006-09. On average more than half of adults aged 15 or over were married (Table GE4.1). Marriage was particularly common in Japan and Turkey where about two thirds of peoples were married. The proportion of adults married was low, under 45%, in France, and particularly low in Chile and Estonia where fewer than 40% of adults were married.

Cohabitation with a domestic partner was high among countries with low marriage rates (Table GE4.1). In Estonia, Iceland, Finland and Sweden about one in five adults cohabited with a domestic partner. Cohabitation was also higher than average elsewhere in the Nordic area. Cohabitation was uncommon in Greece, Israel, Japan, Korea and Turkey, where 0% of adults reported cohabiting.

The proportion of people divorced or separated and not re-partnered was low among the OECD countries. On average only 4% of adults were divorced and only one per cent was separated and in both cases not re-partnered (Table GE4.1). The prevalence of divorced people varied from a low of around 0 to 1% in Chile, Italy, Korea and Turkey, to a high of 9% in the Czech Republic and Estonia. Significant separation rates were only reported in Chile and Mexico.

An average of 6% of all adults were widows (or widowers) (Table GE4.1). The proportion varied from a low of 3% in Iceland, Korea and Turkey, to a high of 10% in France and Hungary. In general, the proportion of widows was higher in countries where there is a larger difference between the life expectancy of men and women.

Most children – three quarters on average – lived with married parents (GE4.2). Across the OECD, 15% of children lived with one parent, 11% lived with cohabiting parents, and only one per cent lived without parents. The proportion of children in lone-parent families was particularly high in the United States, where more than one in four children lived with just one parent. Fewer than one in ten children were in lone-parent families in Greece, Luxembourg and Spain.

Further reading

OECD (2010a), *OECD Family Database*, OECD Publishing, Paris, *www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database*.

Figure notes

Data in GE4.1 refers to 2006 for the Slovak Republic and Switzerland; 2007 for the Czech Republic; 2008 for Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Turkey; 2009 for all other countries. *Source:* Gallup World Poll, 2010.

In GE4.2, data were 2005 for Canada Japan, Switzerland and the United States; 2006 for Australia and New Zealand. For Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Switzerland cohabiting and married parents are grouped together. OECD average does not include Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Switzerland because figures for two parents cohabiting/married are not available separately. Children were defined as under 15 years old in Canada and New Zealand, and under 18 for all other countries.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

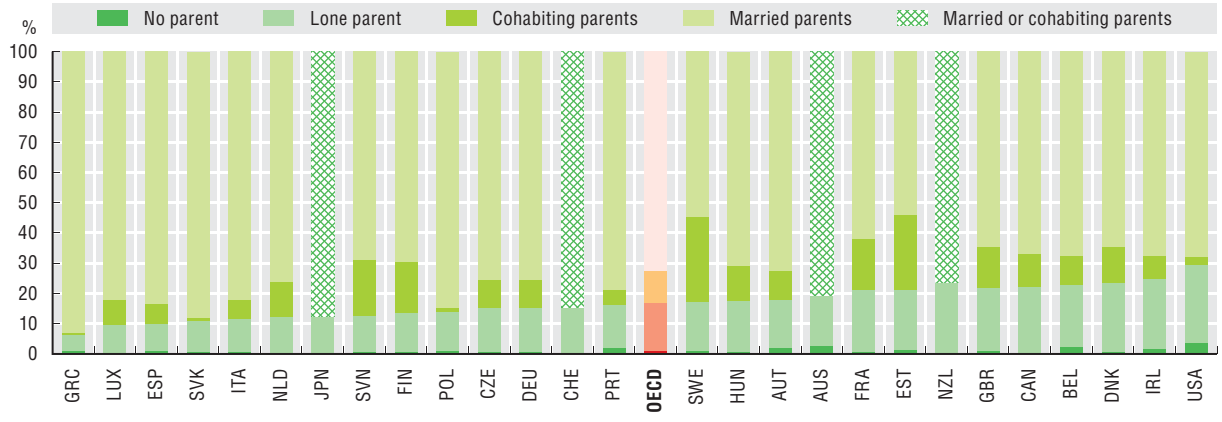
GE4.1. Marriage is the most common form of partnership across the OECD

Proportion of respondents aged 15 and over by relationship status, 2010, percentages

	Married	Domestic partner	Single/never been married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
Australia	58	7	24	4	4	3
Austria	53	10	24	6	6	1
Belgium	55	12	19	8	4	0
Canada	53	10	23	6	5	2
Chile	39	8	39	6	1	6
Czech Republic	55	4	25	6	9	1
Denmark	52	12	21	7	5	1
Estonia	39	20	21	9	9	2
Finland	53	18	16	5	7	0
France	42	11	29	10	5	1
Germany	55	7	22	9	5	2
Greece	64	0	27	6	3	1
Hungary	49	10	22	10	6	1
Iceland	49	20	23	3	3	2
Ireland	54	4	31	4	2	3
Israel	62	0	29	4	5	1
Italy	58	2	27	7	1	2
Japan	67	0	25	5	2	0
Korea	57	0	39	3	1	1
Luxembourg	58	5	26	5	4	1
Mexico	49	7	33	5	2	4
Netherlands	57	10	23	6	3	0
New Zealand	49	9	30	5	4	2
Norway	52	14	24	4	6	1
Poland	57	1	29	9	3	0
Portugal	58	4	24	7	4	1
Slovak Republic	53	2	30	9	5	0
Slovenia	52	8	28	9	3	0
Spain	55	5	30	6	2	2
Sweden	48	20	21	1	5	1
Switzerland	54	2	29	6	7	1
Turkey	66	0	29	3	1	1
United Kingdom	49	7	28	7	6	3
United States	59	2	26	5	6	2
OECD	**54**	**7**	**26**	**6**	**4**	**1**
Brazil	48	9	30	5	2	4
China	79	0	16	4	1	0
India	70	0	23	5	0	0
Indonesia	67	0	24	8	0	0
Russian Federation	53	3	21	12	9	2
South Africa	27	1	59	10	1	2

GE4.2. Most children live with two parents

Proportion of children aged less than 18 by relationship status of parents, 2008



Source: Gallup World Poll 2010 (GE4.1), EU-SILC 2008 (European Union Survey on Income and Living Conditions, Eurostat) and national statistical offices for non European countries (GE4.2).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381741

5. Old age support rate

Definition and measurement

The old age support rates relate to the number of those who are capable of providing economic support to the number of older people that may be materially dependent on the support of others. The support rate indicator used here is the population aged 20 to 64 as a ratio of those aged 65 and over. The projections for old-age support rates used here are based on the most recent "medium-variant" population projections. They are drawn from the *United Nations, World Population Prospects – 2008 Revision*.

The old age support rate is the ratio of the population who may be economically active to older people who are more likely to be economically inactive. It thus provides an old age related indicator of the number of active people potentially economically supporting inactive people. It also gives a broad indication of the age structure of the population. Changes in the old age support rate depend on past and present mortality, fertility rates and, to a much lesser degree, on net migration.

On average there was about four people of working age for every older person across the OECD in 2008 (Panel A, GE5.1). Rates in Turkey (ten people) and Mexico (nine people) exceeded this rate by a considerable amount. At the other end of the spectrum, in Germany, Italy and Japan had three or fewer working age people for every older person.

Support rates are projected to decline in all OECD countries over the next 40 years (Panel B, GE5.1). Turkey and Mexico are expected to lose over six or more working age people per older person, whereas declines will be fewer than two working age people per older person in many other OECD countries. Countries which have the highest old age support rates currently experience the biggest falls, indicating support rates becoming more similar between countries – convergence – during the next 40 years.

The historical and projected pattern of evolution of support rates differs greatly according to country (GE5.2). The chart graphically illustrates future convergence of support rates between countries. The main reason for convergence in support rates is the lagged effect of convergence in fertility rates across the OECD. The projections of support rates are highly conditional on projections of likely fertility rates over the next forty years. Whether such support rates cause policy problems depends in part on the health and labour market attachments of those over age 65, which will influence their ability to support themselves.

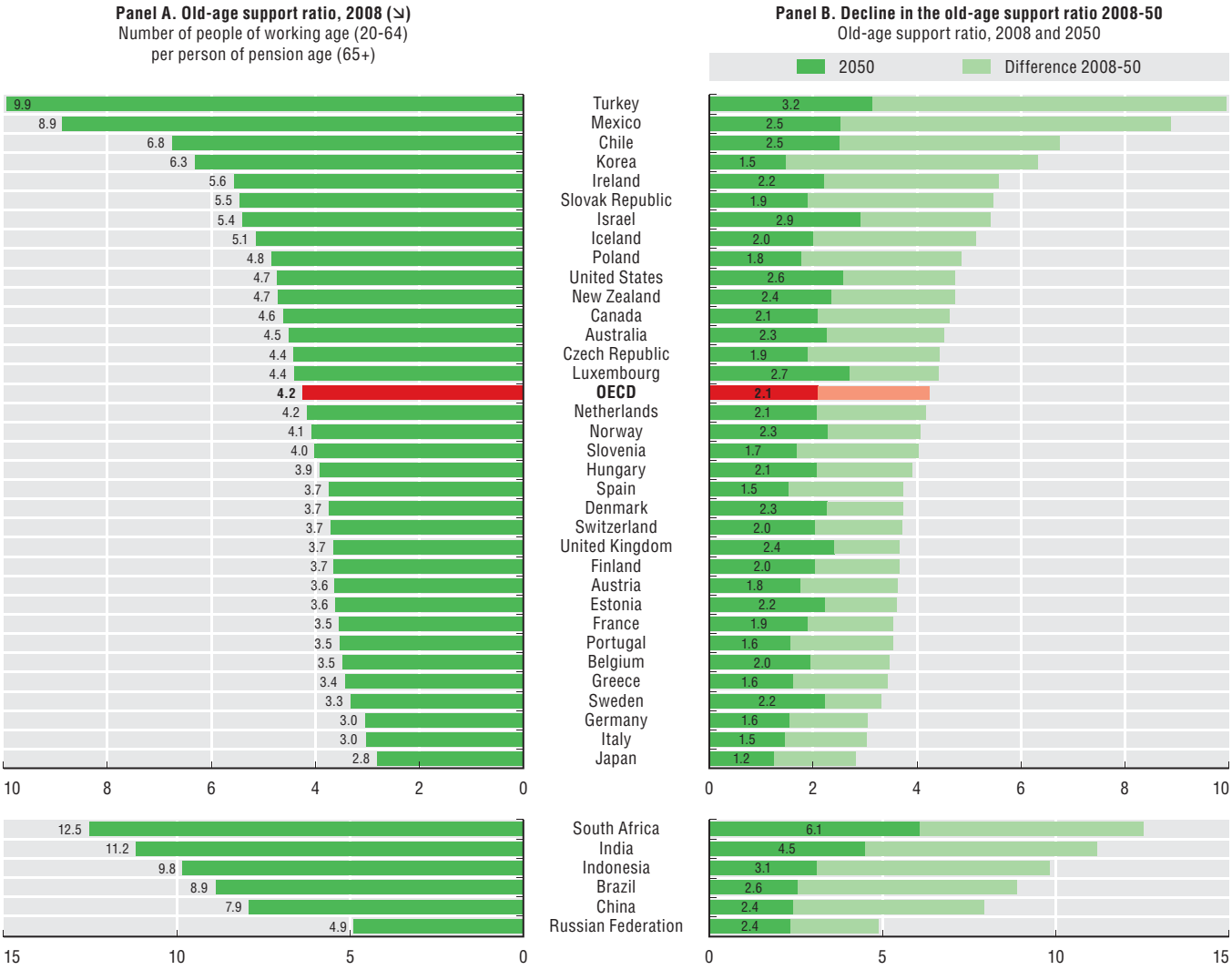
Further reading

OECD (2011), *Pensions at a Glance*, OECD Publishing, Paris (*www.oecd.org/els/social/pensions/PAG*).

Figure note

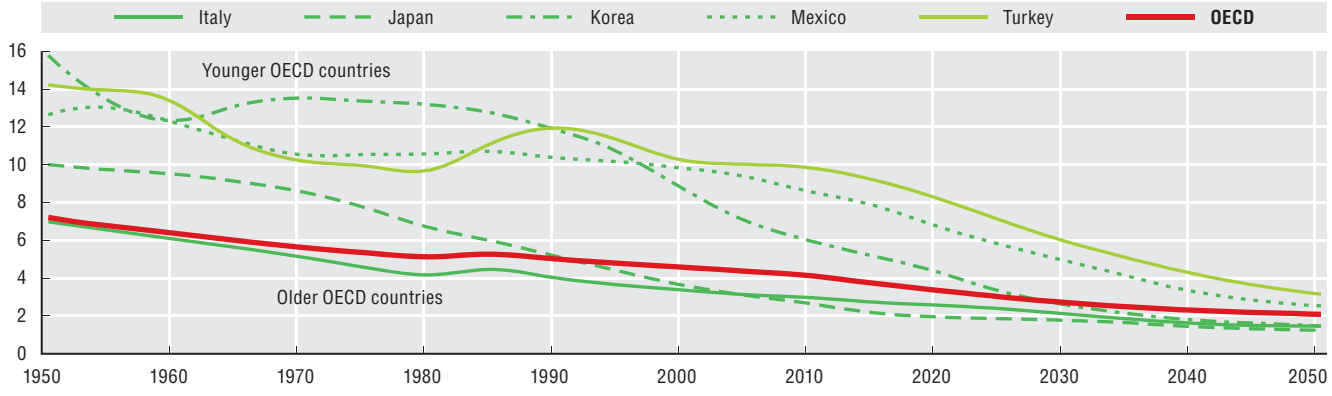
Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

GE5.1. Populations are ageing and the old-age support ratio will halve in the OECD



GE5.2. Convergence in the old-age support ratio across the OECD

Number of people of working age (20-64) per person of pension age (65+) in selected countries, 1950-2050



Source: OECD (2011), *Pensions at a Glance*, OECD Publishing, Paris (*www.oecd.org/els/social/pensions/PAG*); *United Nations, World Population Prospects – 2008 Revision.*

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381760

5. SELF-SUFFICIENCY INDICATORS

1. Employment
2. Unemployment
3. Student performance
4. Pensionable years
5. Education spending

1. Employment

Definition and measurement

A person is employed if working for pay, profit or family gain for at least one hour per week, even if temporarily absent from work because of illness, holidays or industrial disputes. The data from labour force surveys of OECD countries rely on this work definition during a survey reference week. The basic indicator for employment is the proportion of the working age population aged 15-64 who are employed. These employment rates are presented by age, gender, educational attainment and migrant status. Temporary employees are wage and salary workers whose job has a pre-determined termination date as opposed to permanent employees whose job is of unlimited duration. National definitions broadly conform to this generic definition, but may vary depending on national circumstances.

In 2009, employment rates varied by a factor of nearly two across the OECD (Panel A, SS1.1). The Swiss employment rate was nearly 80%, while the Turkish employment rate was below 45%. High employment rates were also found Nordics and the five predominantly Anglophone countries. Employment rates were noticeably lower in eastern and southern European countries, partly because of their relatively low female employment.

Due to the economic crisis, employment rates decreased in most OECD countries (Panel B, SS1.1). In most OECD countries, 2009 employment rates were lower than in 2007. Employment rates fell more than 4 percentage points in the United States, Spain, Ireland, Estonia, and Iceland. Despite the crisis, some countries have bucked the declining trend. Poland has recorded an increase in employment rates of 2% of the period, and Germany has also been relatively immune to the crisis.

Young people were much more likely to be employed on a temporary basis than prime age workers (SS1.2). This age pattern was found in all OECD countries, reflecting the fact that many young people are still in education, and those youth active in the labour market, typically with low education levels, have accumulated little job experience. The share of temporary employment was also higher for women than for men.

As in past recessions, youth were hit particularly hard by the 2008-09 recession (SS1.3). On average for the OECD area, youth employment fell by around 4%, twice the overall employment decline. While women were significantly less likely to be employed than men, overall the impact of the crisis was more pronounced on male employment. Migrants, who were slightly less likely to be employed than the native-born population, were also hit particularly hard.

Figure notes

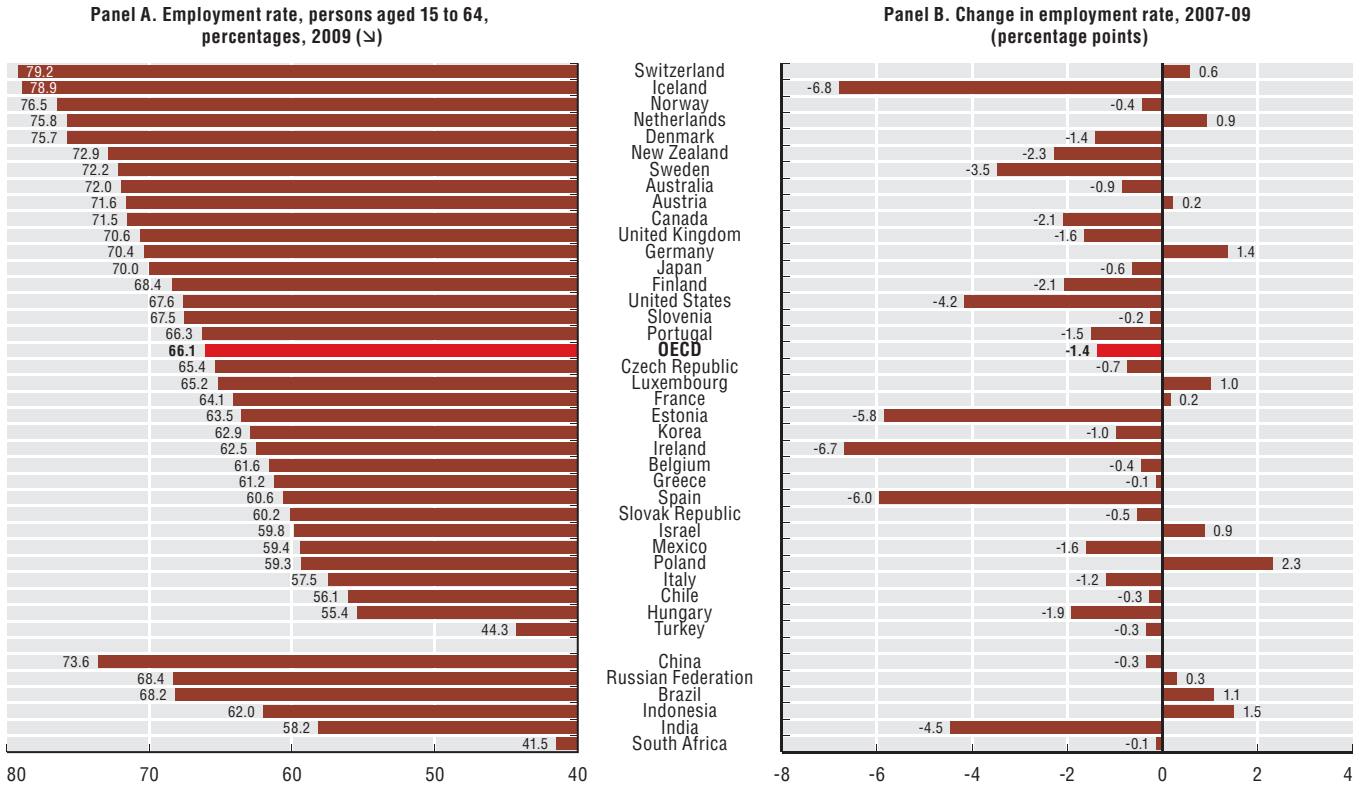
Figure SS1.1: 2005 for India, 2007 for China, and 2008 for Brazil, Israel, the Russian Federation and South Africa. Changes in Panel B refer to 2000/05 for India, 2005/07 for China, 2005/08 for South Africa, 2007/08 for Israel and the Russian Federation, and 2006/08 for Brazil. Data refer to population aged 15+ for Indonesia.

Figure SS1.2: Data are ranked in ascending order of prime age (25-54) temporary employment. Data is for 2005 for the United States and 2006 for Australia.

Figure SS1.3: Data are ranked in ascending order of employment rates of those aged 25-54. Data for Israel are for the period between 2007/08.

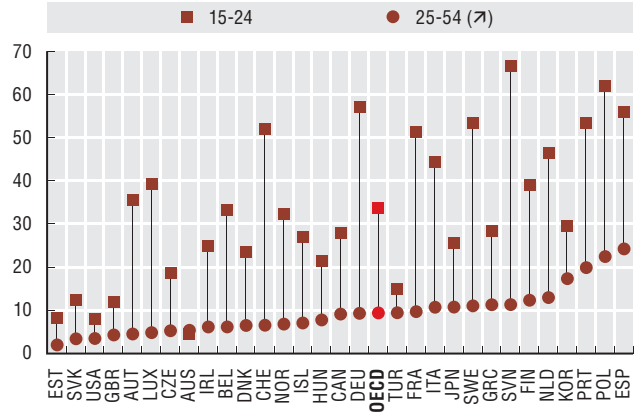
Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

SS1.1. Employment rates vary within the OECD, but the crisis hit employment in most countries



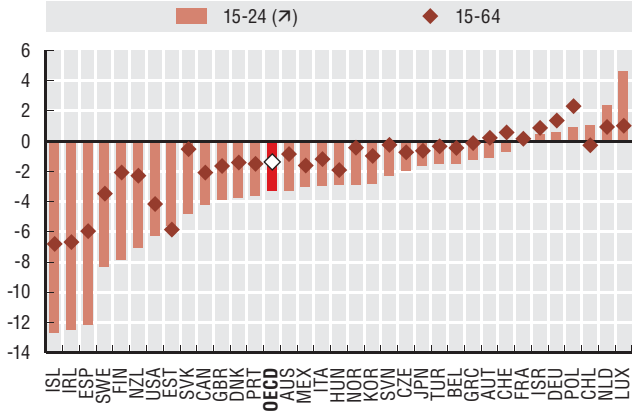
SS1.2. Young people are more likely to be on temporary contracts

Temporary employees as a proportion of total employees, by age, 2009



SS1.3. Young people have been hit harder by the crisis

Change in employment rate of the population by age, 2007-09 (percentage points)



Source: OECD (2010), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD Publishing, Paris (*www.oecd.org/els/employment/outlook*) and OECD (2010), *International Migration Outlook* (*www.oecd.org/els/mighration/imo*), *OECD-EU Database on Emerging Economies* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality/emergingeconomies*), Indonesia: ILO.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381779

2. Unemployment

Definition and measurement

The unemployment rate is the ratio of people out of work and actively seeking it to the population of working age either in work or actively seeking it (15 to 64-years old). The data are gathered through labour force surveys of member countries. According to the standardised ILO definition used in these surveys, the unemployed are those who did not work for at least one hour in the reference week of the survey but who are currently available for work and who have taken specific steps to seek employment in the four weeks preceding the survey. Thus, for example, people who cannot work because of physical impairment, or who are not actively seeking a job because they have little hope of finding work are not considered as unemployed.

Unemployment reduces people's ability to support themselves and their families and makes them reliant on others, especially the benefit system (SS2.1). Unemployment also has substantial psychological costs on people, leading to permanently lower life satisfaction.

The highest unemployment rate in the OECD in 2009, in Spain, was six times higher than the lowest unemployment rate, found in Norway (Panel A, SS2.1). Like Norway, Korea and the Netherlands also achieved unemployment rates below 4%, while the Slovak Republic, Ireland, Estonia and Turkey all had a current unemployment rate in excess of 12%.

The economic crisis has had a strong but variable impact on unemployment rates (Panel B, SS2.1). Between 2007 and 2009, average OECD unemployment rate increased by more than 2 percentage points. Larger rises, of 7 percentage points or more, were observed in Estonia, Spain and Ireland. Countries which succeeded in reducing their unemployment rate over this difficult period included Germany, Israel and Poland (Panel B, SS2.1).

Male unemployed was more affected by the job crisis than female unemployment. The sharp contraction of construction, an industry employing a high proportion of males, was an important factor driving different patterns by gender in a number of countries.

Young people were usually more likely to be unemployed and have also been hit harder by the jobs crisis (SS2.2). These people are more often hired with a temporary employment contract. Moreover, they also tend to be more recent entrants to employment: on the basis of the principle of the "last in, first out", they are the most vulnerable. Unemployment rates for young people reached levels of more than one in every six in Spain, Italy, Sweden, Hungary, Greece and the Slovak Republic. The pattern for less well-educated people was much more variable by country (SS2.2).

Migrants, almost everywhere, are also more likely to be unemployed compared to the population as a whole (SS2.3). Migrant unemployment gaps are especially large in Spain, Belgium and Sweden, while migrants have a slightly lower unemployment rate in Poland, Israel and Hungry.

Figure notes

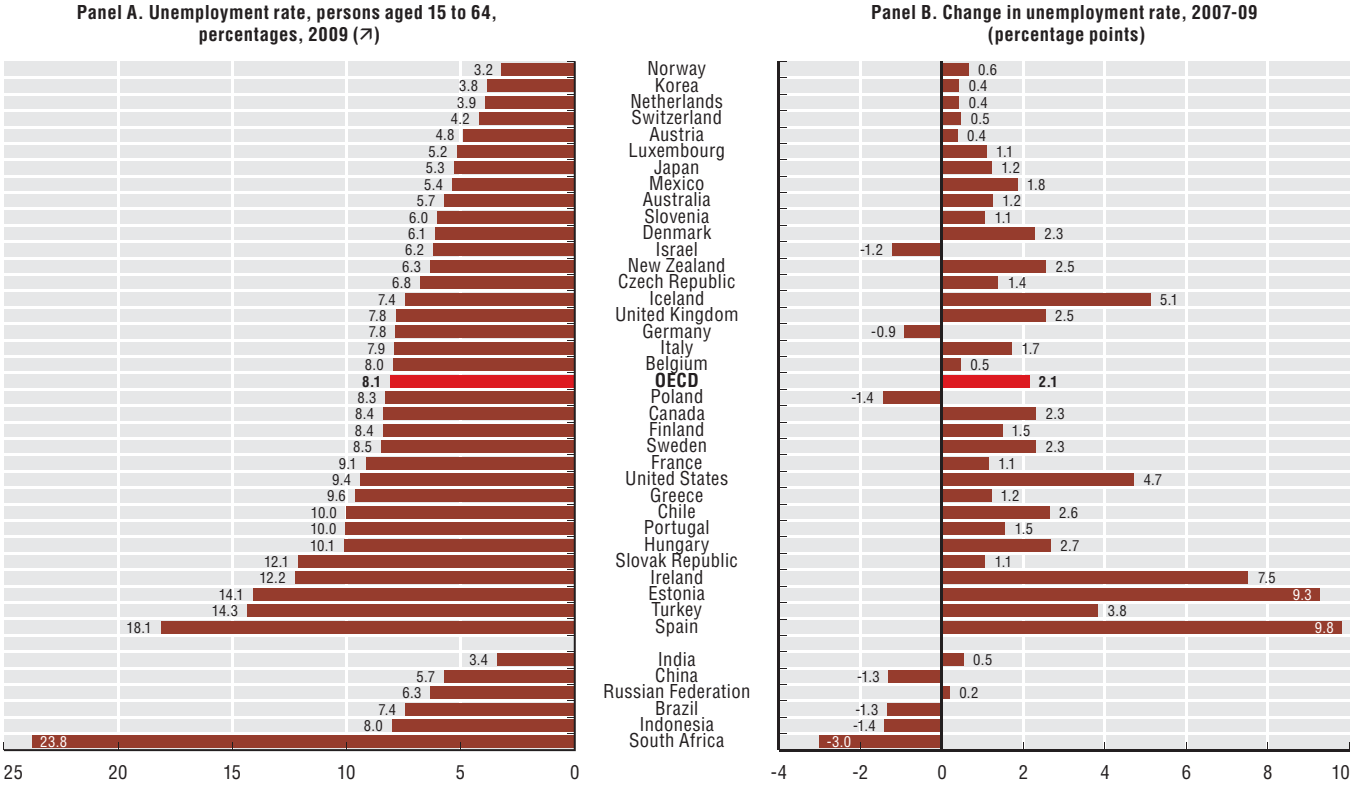
Figure SS2.1: 2005 for India, 2008 for Brazil, China, Israel, the Russian Federation and South Africa. Change in Panel B refers to 2000/05 for India, 2005/08 for South Africa, 2006/08 for Brazil and China, and 2007/08 for Israel and the Russian Federation. Data refer to population aged 15+ for Indonesia.

Figure SS2.2: Data are ranked in descending order of the difference of young people unemployment rate (15-24) with the unemployment rate for the population aged 15-64. Data by education refer to 2008.

Figure SS2.3: Data are ranked in descending order of the difference in the unemployment rate of the foreign-born from the native-born population. Data are 2007 for Estonia, Israel, New Zealand, Slovenia; and 2008 for Australia and Poland.

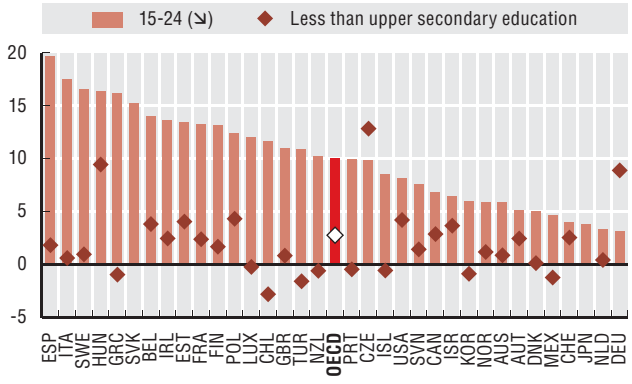
Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

SS2.1. Unemployment rates differ within the OECD, but increased in most countries over the crisis



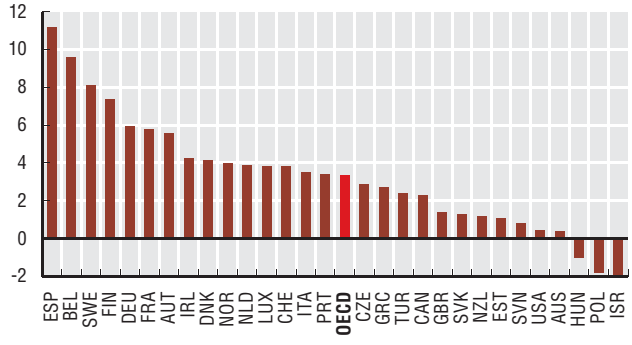
SS2.2. Young people's unemployment is much higher

Difference in the unemployment rate of young and people with low education with the unemployment rate of the population aged 15-64, 2009 (percentage points)



SS2.3. The foreign-born are more likely to be unemployed

Difference in the unemployment rate of the foreign-born population with the native-born, 2009 (percentage points)



Source: OECD (2010), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD Publishing, Paris (*www.oecd.org/els/employment/outlook*) and OECD (2010), *International Migration Outlook* (*www.oecd.org/els/migration/imo*), *OECD-EU Database on Emerging Economies* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality/emergingeconomies*), Indonesia: ILO.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381798

3. Student performance

Definition and measurement

Student performance is assessed through results from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA is the most comprehensive international effort to measure the skills of students towards the end of the period of compulsory education. In the latest results, 15-year-old students across the OECD did tests in reading, mathematics and science in 2009. In PISA comparable tests are administered under independently supervised conditions in order to assess students' competencies. PISA tests are not tied to specific national curricula. Rather, students apply knowledge to situations they might encounter in the real word, such as planning a route, interpreting the instructions for an electrical appliance, or taking information from a chart. For each subject the average score across OECD countries is 500 for the first time it becomes a major domain in PISA. Thereafter the OECD average reflects the country performances.

PISA results from the 2009 wave in reading can be compared to those from the 2000 wave, which gives the longest period for consideration of time trends.

In addition to the mean test scores for students in each country, a measure of inequality in test scores within countries, the ratio of the score in to the top to the bottom decile (or 90/10 ratio), is also used.

Student performance at age 15 has long term implications for self-sufficiency of young people. Student performance in the PISA tests indicates the cumulative effect of educational inputs from family, schools, peers and the community up to age 15. Test score performance is not the only indicator of successful schooling, but it is a highly important measure.

Reading outcomes for 15 year-olds in 2009 are highest in Korea and Finland and lowest in Chile and Mexico (Panel A, SS3.1). Comparing 2000 with 2009, reading results show gains of over 20 points in Chile, Israel and Poland (Panel B, SS3.1). The largest falls were in Ireland, Sweden, the Slovak Republic and Australia.

Generally reading gains over 2000-09 have been stronger in countries with lower initial reading scores in 2000 (Panel B, SS3.1). The correlation between reading scores in 2000 and the change in reading scores to 2009 is –0.71 for the OECD countries. OECD countries are thus converging in reading attainment. Given Korea was already a strong reading performer in 2000, their 15 point improvement over the 2000-09 period is a remarkable one.

Countries which have a high average reading score in 2009 also tend to have a smaller gap between top and bottom scores (SS3.2). Low inequality in reading scores is a particular feature of Korea, where scores of the top decile are less than one and a half times that of the bottom decile, whereas in high inequality Israel the same ratio exceeds 1.9. Given their average scores, OECD reading score inequality was particularly high in New Zealand and low in Mexico.

The relationship between inequality of scores and average scores holds, even more strongly, for changes over 2000-09 (SS3.3). Those countries that had larger gains in average scores also had bigger falls in reading score inequality. Chile had the biggest falls in reading score inequality and the largest rise was in France.

Further reading

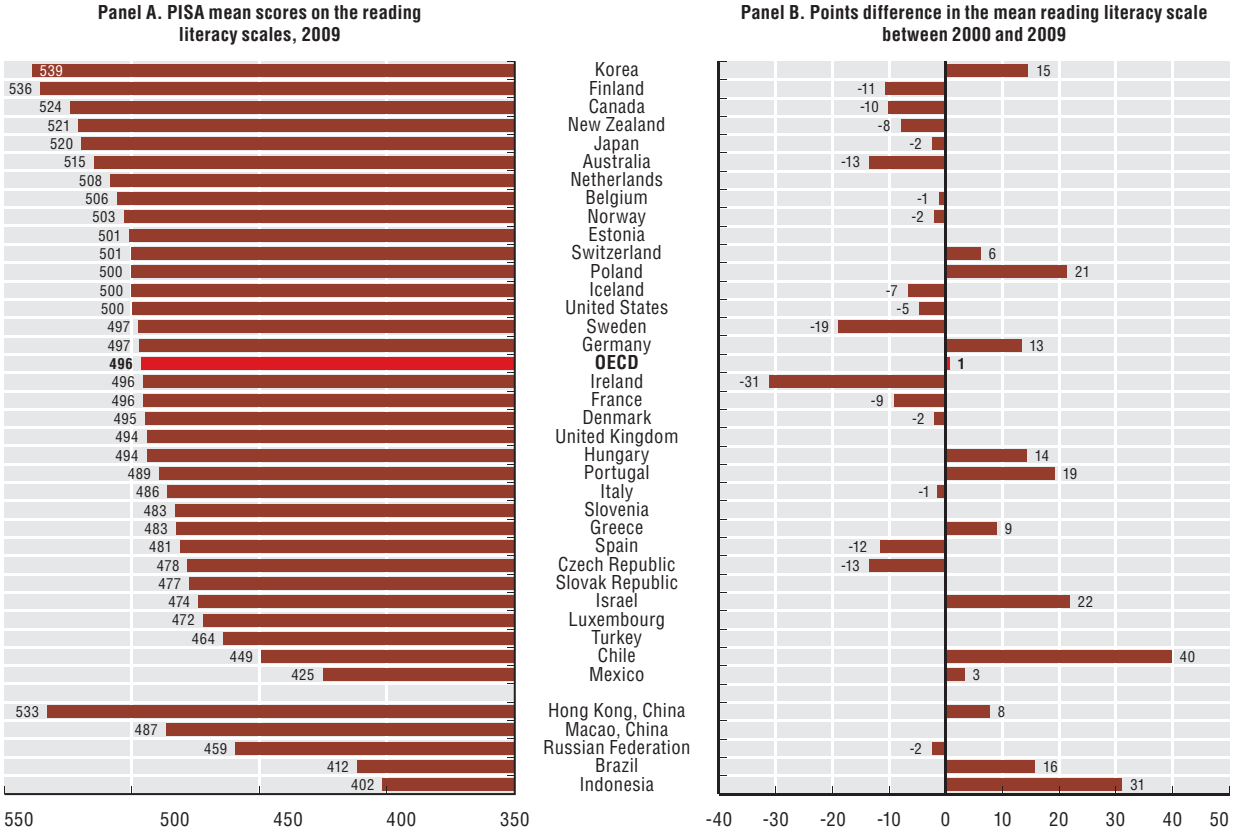
OECD (2010), *PISA 2009 at a Glance*, OECD Publishing, Paris, *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264095298-en*.

Figure note

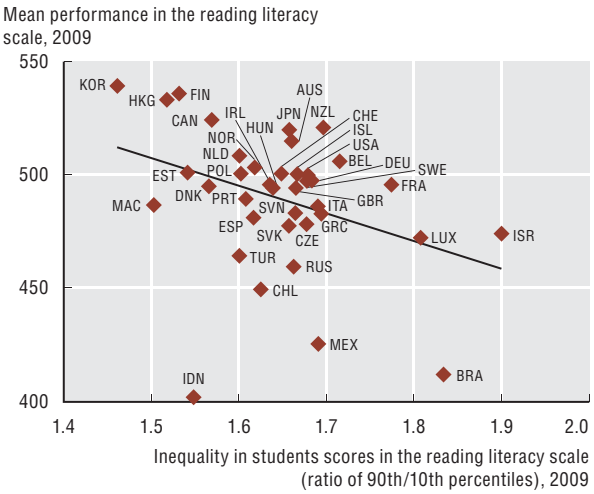
Missing data for Austria in 2009. Missing data in 2000 for Estonia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and Macao, China.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

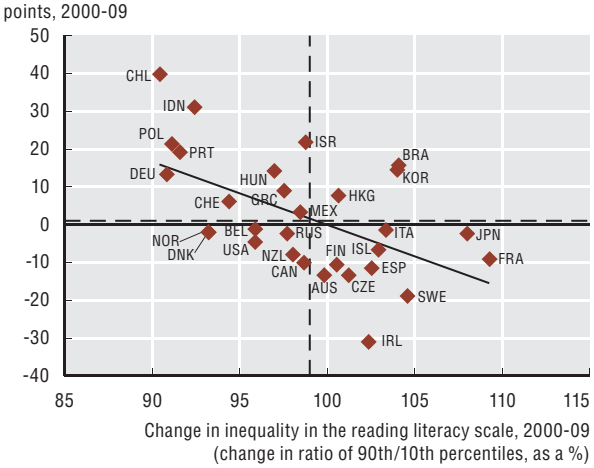
SS3.1. The biggest reading points gains between 2000 and 2009 are found in the lowest performing countries in 2000



SS3.2. Higher reading scores goes with lower inequality in scores



SS3.3. Growing average reading scores are strongly associated with falling inequality in scores



Source: OECD PISA 2000 and 2009 (*www.pisa.oecd.org*), OECD (2009), *PISA 2009 Results: What Students Know and Can Do: Student Performance in Reading, Mathematics and Science (Vol. I)*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381817

4. Pensionable years

Definition and measurement

Pensionable years is the numbers of years that men and women can expect to live following attaining a measure of the actuarially neutral pensionable age in 2010 (described here as the official age of pension entitlement), which is a policy choice variable. For more discussion of estimates of pensionable age see OECD (2011).

International comparisons of age at actual labour force exit rely on indirect measures from cross-sectional data. Indirect measures treat those above a certain age as retired if they are not in the labour force (average age at labour force exit). Net movements into retirement are proxied by the changes over time in proportions of older population not in the labour force. This indirect measure is the average effective age of retirement. The official age of retirement is also complex to pin down, especially when retirement is based on fixed years of pension contribution. For more discussion see OECD (2011).

The average effective age of retirement is derived from observed participation rate changes over a five-year period for successive cohorts of workers (by five-year age groups) aged 40 and over. Years in retirement are life expectancy estimates at age of exit from the *United Nations, World Population Prospects – 2008 Revision* dataset.

For both men and women the most common official age of pension entitlement in OECD countries is 65 (SS4.1). Age 60 is also a very common pensionable age. Higher and lower official ages exist in some countries, as do differences between men and women. In the cases where there is a gender difference, women can always get an earlier pension.

The duration of pensionable years gives an indication of fiscal pressures on the pension system in the context of an ageing population. Pensionable years exceeded 27 years for women in Italy (the highest), Slovenia, Greece and France. They exceeded 20 years for men in Greece (the highest), Italy, France, Belgium and Korea. Pensionable years were notably low for women in Iceland, Mexico and Norway, at about 19 years, and low for men – roughly 14-15 years – in the Slovak Republic, Poland and Estonia.

Men can expect to spend five fewer years reliant on a pension than women on average (SS4.1). In eleven countries women still had the right to obtain a pension earlier than men and in all countries women had a longer life expectancy. In Austria, Poland and the United Kingdom this gap was about eight years. Such a situation is likely to mean that women will be more exposed to pensioner poverty, exacerbated by earnings based pension schemes and the historical gender pay gap.

There are big differences in the age where people were estimated to actually retire, as opposed to the age at which they become pension eligible (SS4.2). The difference in actual retirement ages between Luxembourg, at the lowest, and Mexico, at the highest, exceeded 14 years for men. Men generally tended to retire later than women, with Turkey and Spain being exceptions. The actual decision to retire, as opposed to the right to obtain a pension, depends on more than the pensionable official retirement age. Relevant factors include health, labour market conditions, generosity and tax treatment of retirement income, private savings, family obligations, spousal labour supply, and workplace attitudes to older people.

Further reading

OECD (2011), *Pensions at a Glance*, OECD, Paris (*www.oecd.org/els/social/pensions/PAG*).

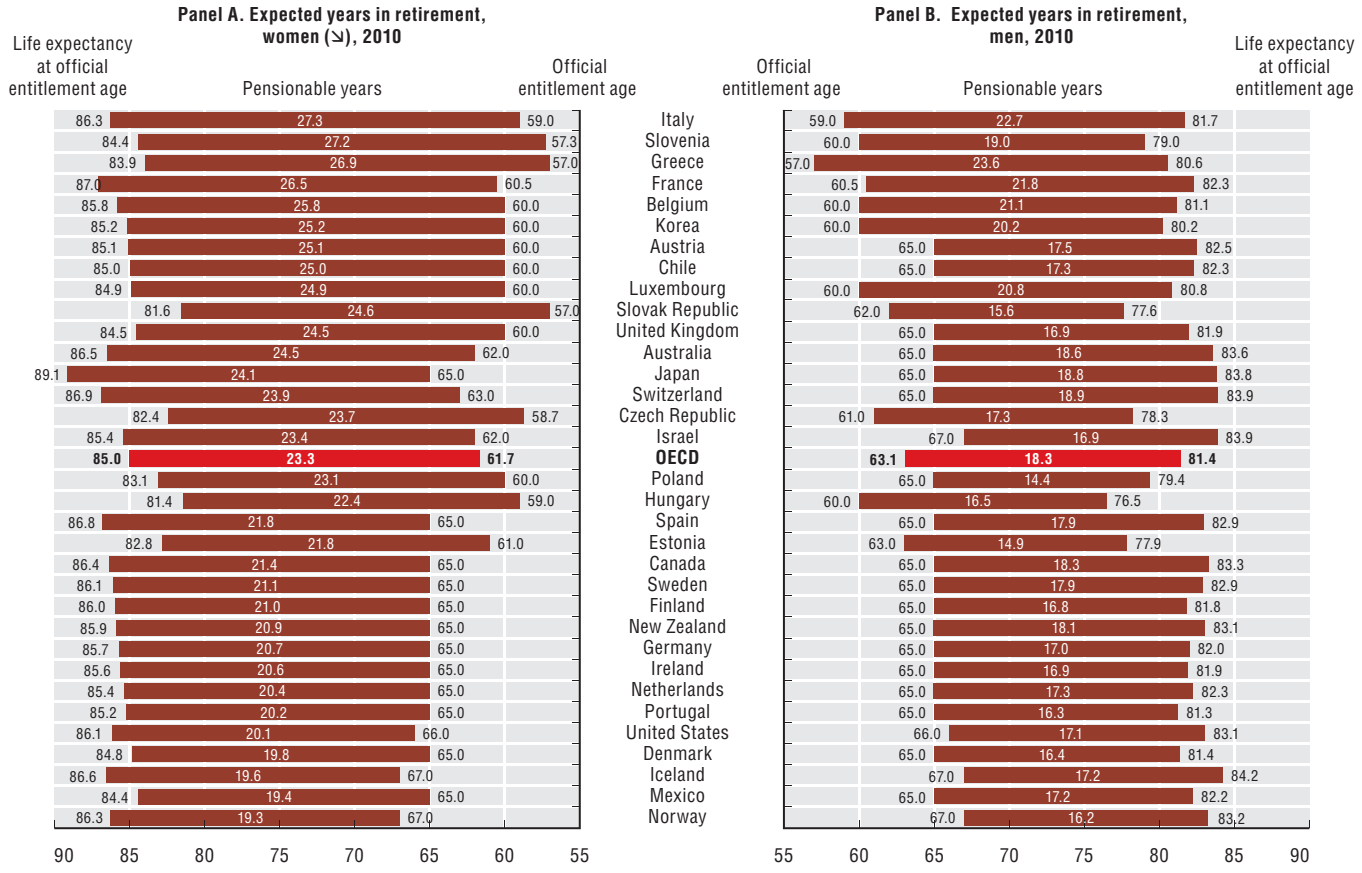
Figure notes

Figure SS4.1: Data for Turkey has been excluded from the figure as it is an outlier, with a retirement age of 41.0 for women and 44.9 for men.

In Figure SS4.2, data refer to the actual age at labour force exit.

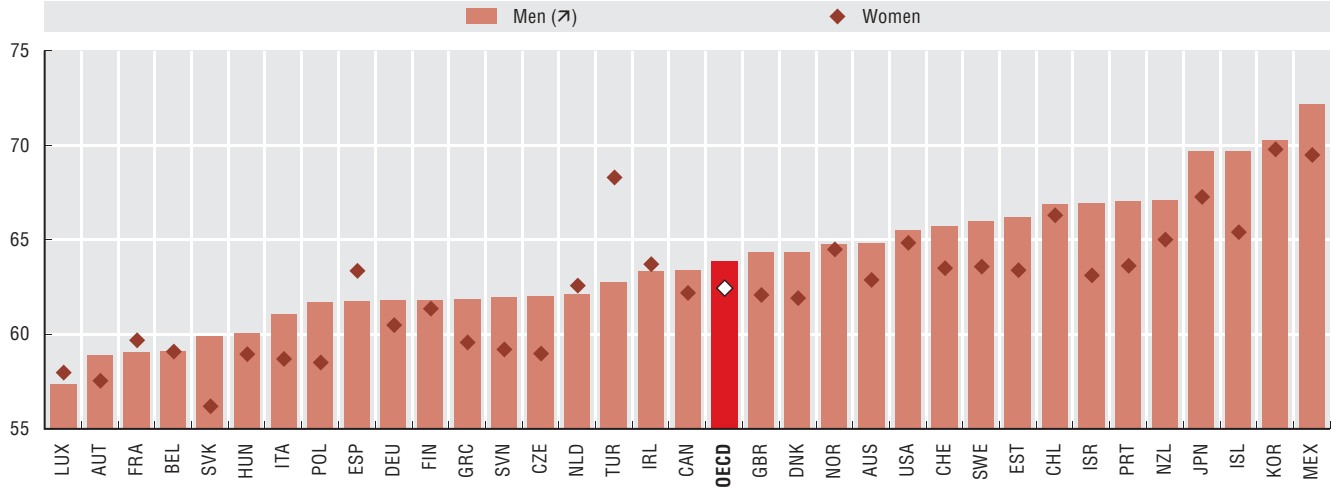
Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

SS4.1. Women have five more pensionable years than men on average



SS4.2. Men retire later than women

Average year of age at labour force exit



Source: OECD, *Pensions at a Glance* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/pensions/pag*), life expectancy estimates are from the *United Nations, World Population Prospects – 2008 Revision*.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381836

5. Education spending

Definitions and measurement

Data on per capita education spending is calculated using total annual spending on primary and secondary education and numbers of students enrolled at the same level. Latest data come from the 2007 year. Figures are for public and private spending combined, and are reported in US dollars based on purchasing power parities for the respective years. Spending comparisons over time are at 2000 prices. Cumulative spending plots the cumulative spending by age between ages 6 to 16 as a percentage of total public spending over the period.

PISA reading score data sources are described in SS3.

On average, OECD countries spent 8 000 United States dollars per child per year on compulsory education in 2007 (Panel A, SS5.1). Luxembourg spent well over USD 15 000 per child. The next highest spender, Switzerland, spent nearly one third less. Spending in Turkey was somewhat above USD 1 000. Spending was also relatively low in Chile and Mexico.

Public and private spending on education per capita increased in most OECD countries between 2000 and 2007 (Panel B, SS5.1). The United Kingdom and Ireland increased per capita spending by major amounts – 100% and 60% respectively. In contrast, spending levels in Demark, Israel and New Zealand in 2007 were unchanged from 2000. Two relatively low spending countries – the Czech Republic and Poland – have also substantially increased per capita spending.

Across the OECD, early compulsory schooling typically receives equal investment to the later part of compulsory schooling (SS5.2). In the first half of compulsory schooling, from the start of age 6 to 11 years, about 50% educational investment in compulsory education is spent across the OECD on average. Thus 50% is also spent in the second half of compulsory education, from age 11 to 16 inclusive. The greatest contrast is between Chile and Finland. Over 60% of Chilean spending is in the first half of compulsory schooling, leaving less than 40% for the second half. In Finland the opposite is true: 40% of spending occurs in the first half of compulsory schooling and 60% in the second half.

There is no relationship between average gains in reading scores of 15 year-olds over the 2000 to 2009 period and country increases in education spending between ages 6 and 16 over the same period (SS5.3). The lack of a relationship suggests that other factors, such as curriculum, teacher training and incentives, and influences outside the school gate, may be more important than funding increases in determining reading score gains, at least in terms of funding in compulsory education.

Further reading

OECD (2010), *PISA 2009 at a Glance*, OECD Publishing, *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264095298-en*.

Figure notes

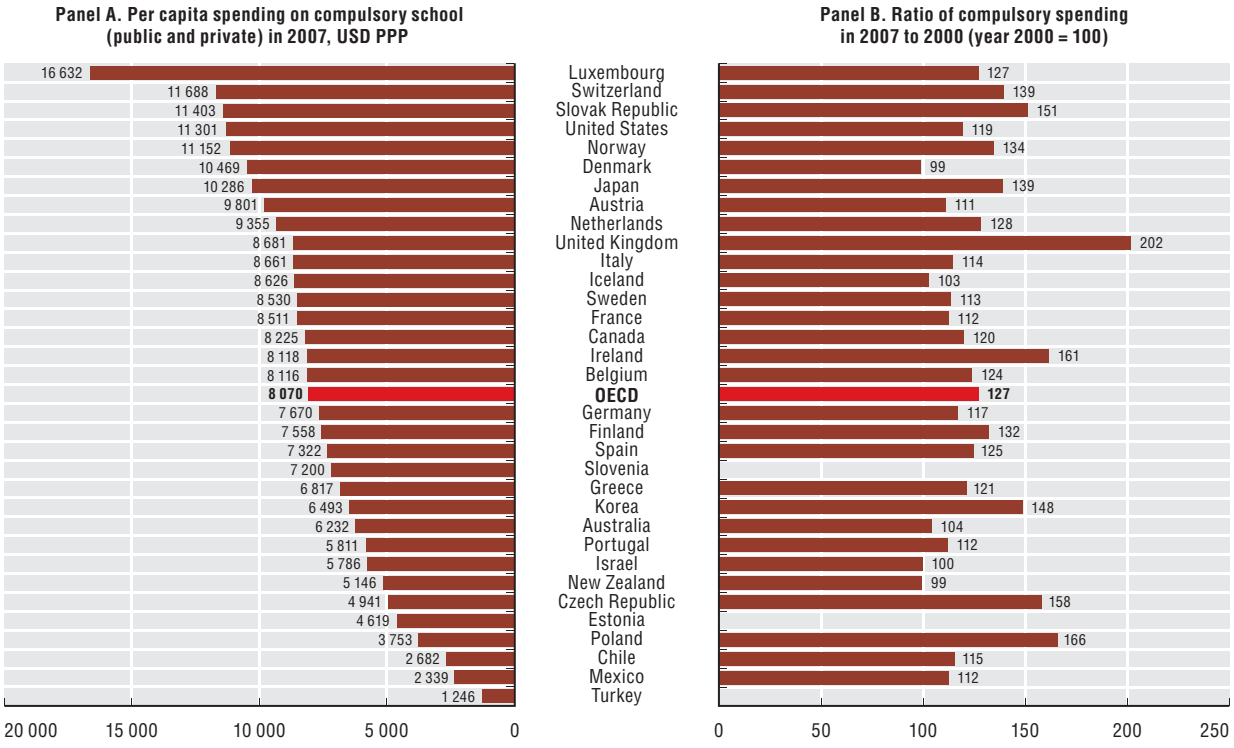
Figure SS5.1: Hungary is missing from both comparisons. Estonia, Slovenia and Turkey are missing from the comparison over time. Recent per capita spending is for 2007 except for Greece (2005) and Turkey (2006). Comparisons of spending changes over time are for 2000 to 2007 – held at 2000 prices – except for Greece (2000-05), Luxembourg (2001-07), New Zealand (1999-2007), and the United Kingdom (1999-2007).

Figure SS5.2: The OECD average does not include Canada and Turkey. Finland refers to the maximum late spender and Chile to the maximum early spender.

Figure SS5.3: Estonia, Hungary, and Slovenia are missing from the spending figures. For spending data notes see Figure SS5.1. PISA 2000 did not include the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic and Turkey. The OECD (2011) does not include 2000 reading scores for Austria and the United Kingdom.

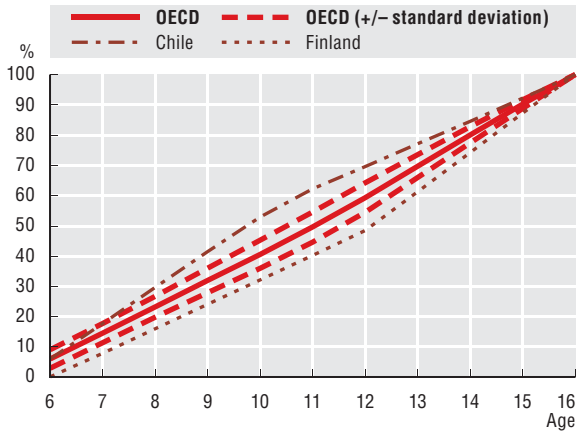
Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

SS5.1. Most OECD countries have substantially increased per capita education spending

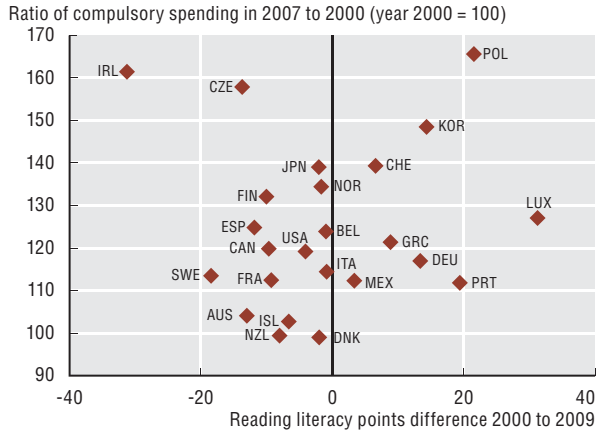


SS5.2. Chile spends more on younger and Finland spends more on older children in compulsory education

Cumulative public education spending by age of child, 6-16 years



SS5.3. No association between changes in education spending and changes in average PISA reading literacy scores



Source: OECD Education Database, 2010 (*www.oecd.org/education/database*), OECD PISA 2000 and 2009 (*www.pisa.oecd.org*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381855

6. EQUITY INDICATORS

1. Income inequality
2. Poverty
3. Income difficulties
4. Leaving low income from benefits
5. Public social spending

1. Income inequality

Definition and measurement

Measures of income inequality are based on data on people's household disposable income (see "Definition and measurement" in GE1 for more detail). The main indicator of income distribution used is the Gini coefficient. Values of the Gini coefficient range between 0 in the case of "perfect equality" (each person gets the same income) and 1 in the case of "perfect inequality" (all income goes to the share of the population with the highest income). Life expectancy data is discussed in "Definition and measurement" of indicator HE1.

Income inequality is an indicator of how material resources are distributed across society. Some people consider high levels of income inequality are morally undesirable. Others focus on income inequality as bad for instrumental reasons – seeing it as causing conflict, limiting co-operation or creating psychological and physical health stresses (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009). Often the policy concern is more focussed on the direction of change of inequality, rather than its level.

Income inequality varied considerably across the OECD countries in the late 2000s (EQ1.1, Panel A). Chile, Mexico and Turkey had the highest income inequality. OECD Anglophone countries had levels of inequality around or above the OECD average. Southern European and Mediterranean countries also tended to have higher than average inequality. Inequality was lower than average amongst the Nordic countries and continental European countries.

Since the mid-1980s, income inequality grew moderately across the OECD (EQ1.1, Panel B). However, the overall range concealed a diversity of experiences across countries and across the time period. Income inequality rose most strongly in the Czech Republic, Finland, New Zealand and Sweden. But the pattern of increasing inequality was not general. Income inequality actually fell considerably in Greece, Ireland, Spain and Chile.

Poorer countries have tended to have higher income inequality (EQ1.2). The most unequal countries in the OECD included the several of the least rich: Chile, Mexico and Turkey. Luxembourg, Iceland and Norway were all relatively rich and relatively equal, but more unequal than expected given their high incomes (above the line in EQ1.2). The United States was quite unequal, given its riches (above the line in EQ1.2), while the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Hungary and Poland managed to be quite equal, given their relatively low income (below the line in EQ1.2).

There was no strong tendency for countries that grew richer faster to have rising inequality (EQ1.3). Sometimes it is argued that rapid income growth requires paying a price – growing inequality. Alternatively, some suggest that rapid income growth brings a further gain in its wake: a more equal society. Neither of these two stylised facts is supported by the OECD income inequality data.

Further reading

OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

OECD (2011), *Causes of Growing Income Inequality in OECD Countries*, OECD Publishing, Paris, forthcoming.

Wilkinson, R. and K. Pickett (2009), *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone*, Penguin Books, London.

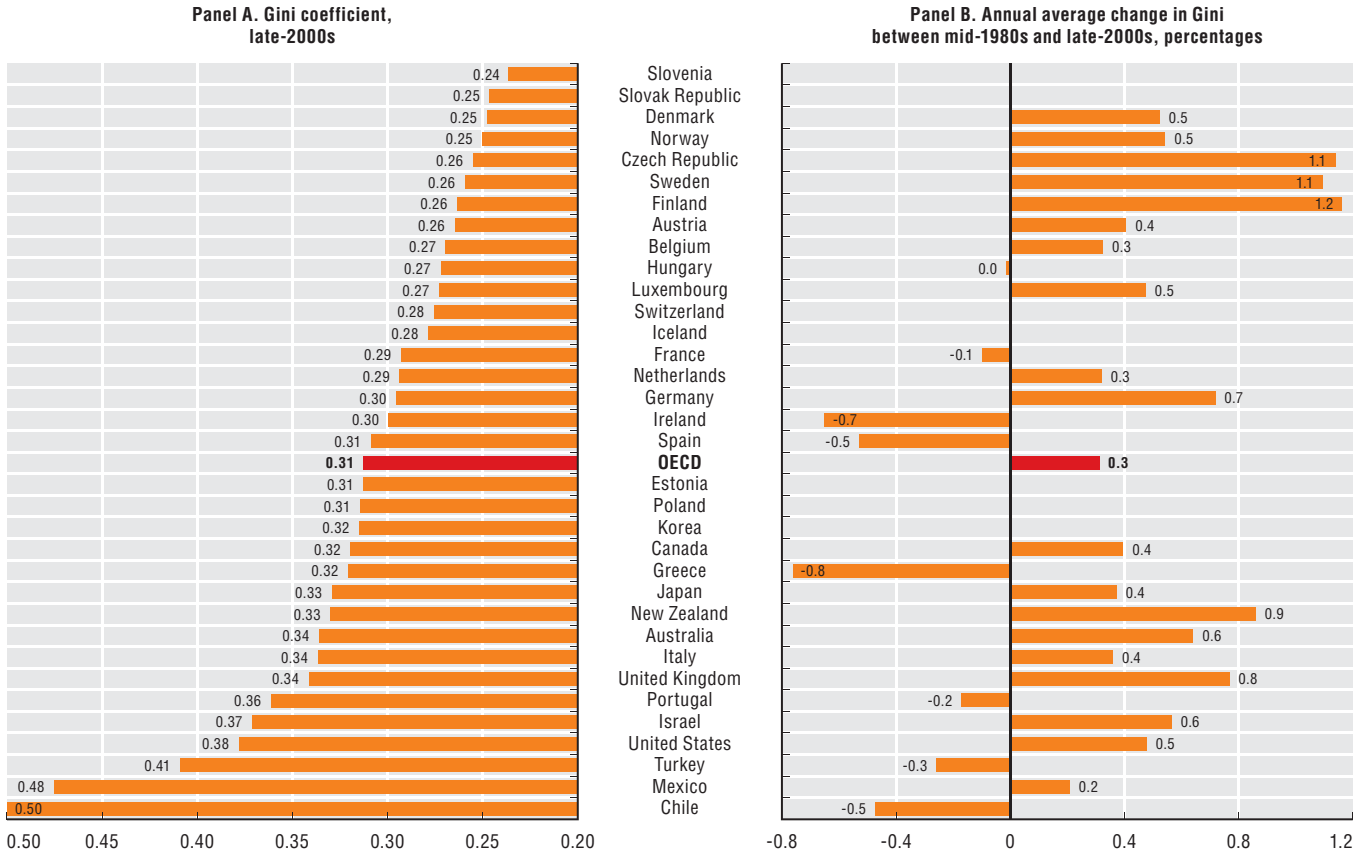
Figure notes

Figure EQ1.1, Panel A: Gini coefficients refer to mid-2000s for Greece and Switzerland.

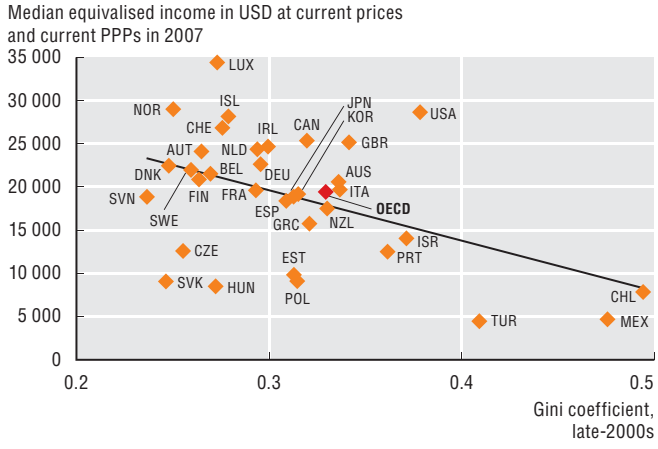
Figures EQ1.1, Panel B and EQ1.3: No changes available for Estonia, Iceland, Korea, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Switzerland. Changes are available from mid-1990s for Australia, Chile, Israel and Portugal. Changes are available until 2000 for Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Portugal and Spain, as current data from EU-SILC are not comparable with earlier years for these countries.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

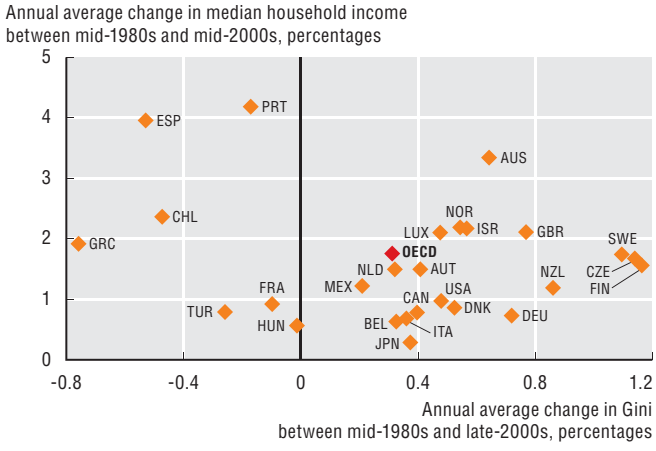
EQ1.1. Income inequality has been rising



EQ1.2. Richer countries have lower income inequality



EQ1.3. Rapid income growth does not reduce inequality



Source: Provisional data from *OECD Income distribution and Poverty Database* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381874

2. Poverty

Definition and measurement

Perceptions of a decent standard of living vary across countries and over time. Thus no commonly agreed measure of poverty exists across OECD countries. As with income inequality, the starting point for poverty measurement is equivalised household disposable income provided by national consultants (see "Definition and measurement" under EQ1. Income inequality). People are classified as poor when their equivalised household income is less than half of the median prevailing in each country. The use of a relative income-threshold means that richer countries have the higher poverty thresholds. Higher poverty thresholds in richer countries capture the notion that avoiding poverty means an ability to access to the goods and services that are regarded as customary or the norm in any given county. The poverty rate is a headcount of how many people fall below the poverty line.

Poverty measures the relative numbers of people at the bottom end of the income distribution. Often a society's equity concerns are greater for the relatively disadvantaged. Thus poverty measures often receive more attention than income inequality measures. Poverty concerns are often greater for certain groups like older people and for children, since they have no or limited options for working their way out of poverty.

The average OECD country poverty rate was 11% for the OECD (Panel A, EQ2.1). Poverty rates were particularly high in Chile, Israel and Mexico. Czech and Danish poverty rates, in contrast, were about one in twenty people. Other Nordic and European countries also had low poverty. The bottom part of the table is dominated by Anglophone countries, Mediterranean countries and the two OECD-Asia countries.

Poverty rates generally increased moderately over the period from mid-1980s to mid-2000s for the OECD (Panel B, EQ2.1). Large rises occurred in the Netherlands and Sweden. On the other hand Belgium, Greece, Chile and Portugal were most successful in reducing their poverty rate.

In some countries older people were more likely to be poor, while in other countries child poverty was a greater issue (EQ2.2). While Korea had a very high poverty rate for the elderly and low child poverty, Turkey had much higher child poverty than pensioner poverty. The United States, Chile and Mexico, sharing quite high overall poverty rates, had relatively equally high poverty rates amongst the two dependent age groups. The Nordic countries combined low poverty rates for both the young and the old.

Faster economic growth is often seen as the solution to poverty problems (EQ2.3). However, economic growth and poverty have not been strongly related within the OECD in the past generation. There is little evidence of a relationship between poverty and household income growth in either a positive or negative direction. For example, Ireland has had very rapid income growth over the period and a large rise in poverty, while income growth has stagnated in Belgium in combination with a considerable reduction in poverty.

Further reading

OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

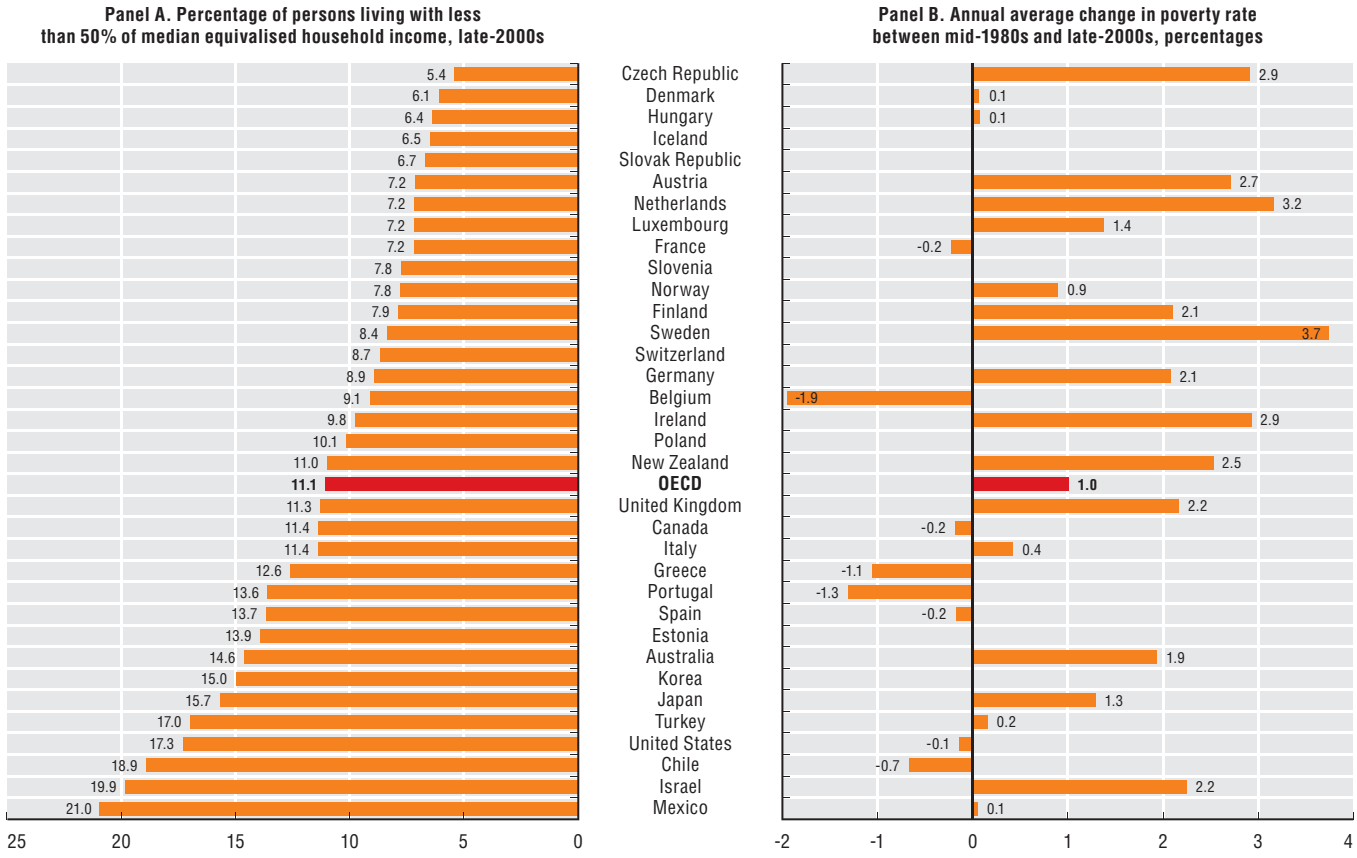
Figure notes

Figure EQ2.1, Panel A: Poverty rates coefficients refer to mid-2000s for Greece and Switzerland.

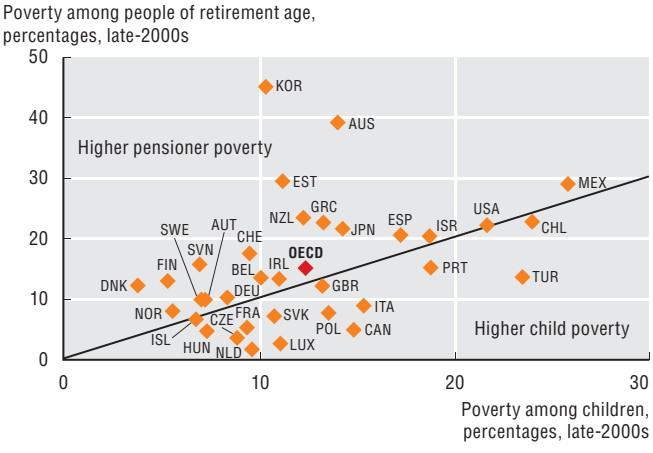
Figures EQ2.1, Panel B and EQ2.3: No changes available for Estonia, Iceland, Korea, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Switzerland. Changes are available from mid-1990s for Australia, Chile, Israel and Portugal. Changes are available until 2000 for Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Portugal and Spain, as current data from EU-SILC are not comparable with earlier years for these countries.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

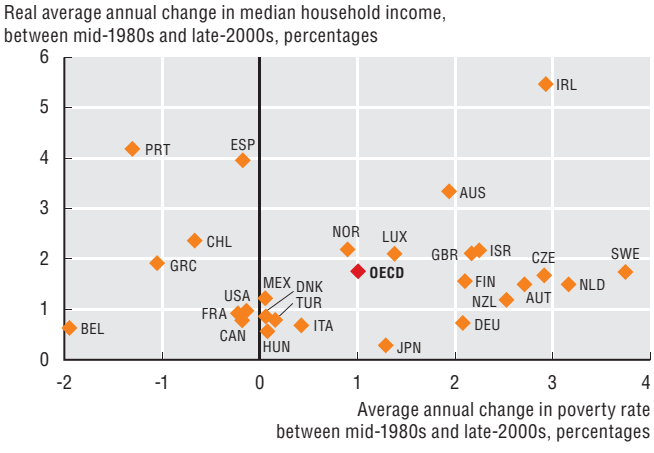
EQ2.1. Poverty has been rising



EQ2.2. Poorer pensioners or poorer children?



EQ2.3. Income growth is no poverty solution



Source: Provisional data from *OECD Income Distribution and Poverty Database* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381893

3. Income difficulties

Definition and measurement

Data on income difficulties is drawn from the Gallup World Poll. The Gallup World Poll is conducted in over 140 countries around the world based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over in the entire country, including rural areas. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error. Sample sizes vary between around 1 000 and 4 000, depending on the country. The Gallup data for this question does not include Switzerland. The data used is the response to the question "Which one of these phrases comes closest to your own feelings about your household's income these days?". The following four responses are possible: Living comfortably on present income, Getting by on present income, Finding it difficult on present income, Finding it very difficult on present income. The statistics presented combines the last two categories. Rates calculated omitted don't knows and refused from the denominator. This non-response was 11% in Italy and also high in the Russian Federation and Belgium (7%). Household income data sources are described in CO1 and income distribution data in EQ1 and EQ2.

The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality. Values range between 0 – perfect equality – and 1 – all income goes to one person.

Whether or not people report experiencing difficulties in living on their income is an alternative equity measure. The measure incorporates both a subjective component – self-assessed difficulties, possibly relative to a local reference point – and spending dimensions, both of which are not captured by the other income and income inequality measures used here as equity indicators.

About half the people in Hungary, Turkey, Greece and Mexico experienced income difficulties in the latest data (Panel A, EQ3.1). The OECD average was about one in four people. The Nordic countries had low rates, with the exception of Iceland. One in ten or fewer Danes, Norwegians and Swedes experience income difficulties.

The economic crisis has affected the numbers of people having income difficulties in many countries (Panel B, EQ3.1). But changes show considerable variation between countries. Austria, Estonia and Portugal seemed relatively immune to the crisis, with reductions in numbers of people in income difficulties. On the other hand double digit rises in the proportion of people having income difficulties were reported in Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Mexico, Spain and Turkey.

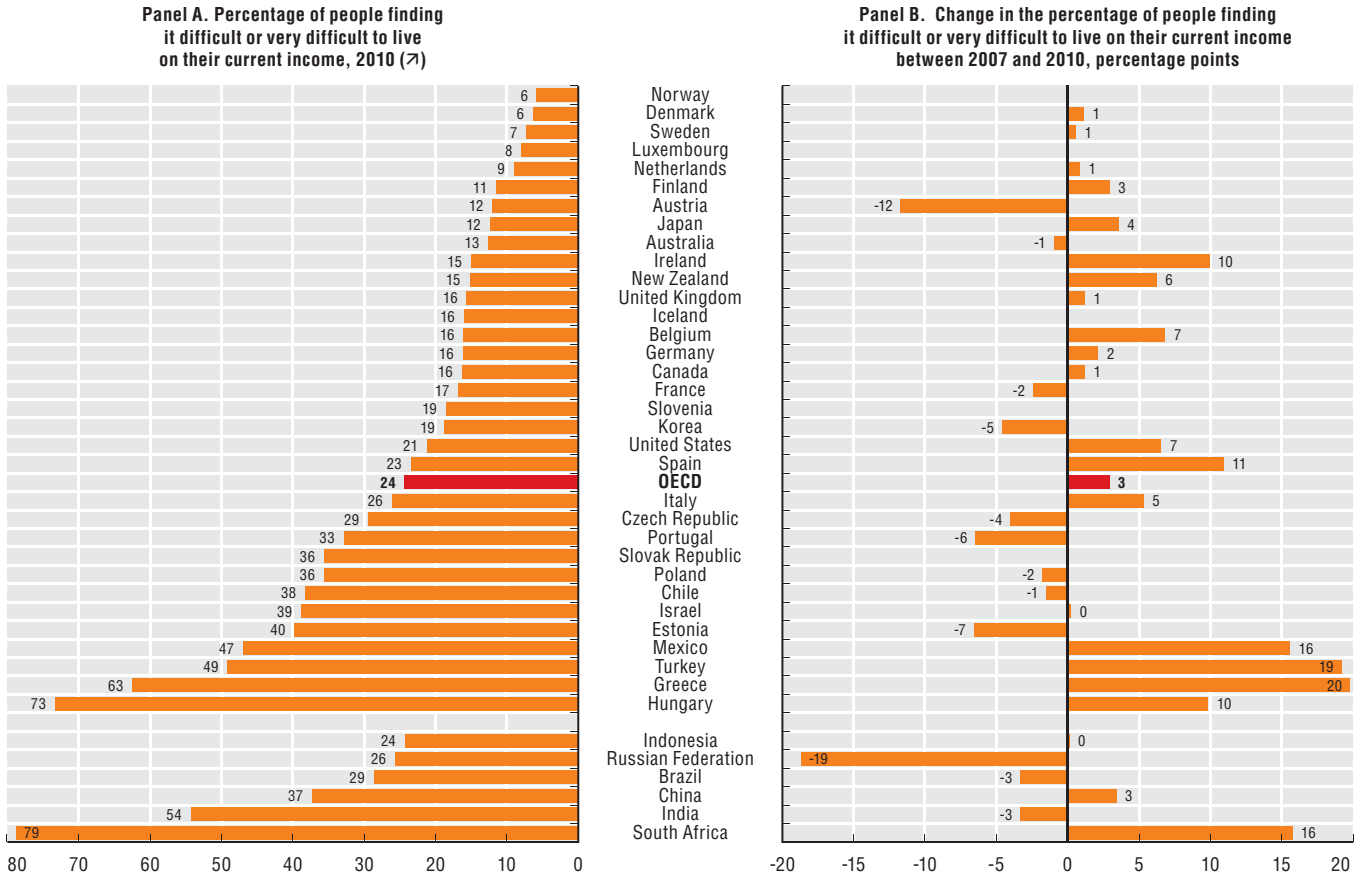
Income difficulties appear to be closer to an absolute than a relative equity measure, at least within the OECD (EQ3.2 and EQ3.3). While there is a significant relationship between income inequality and the income difficulties question, the relationship is strongest between absolute household income and inequality (poverty cross-plots show a similar relationship to income inequality). Both correlations generally provide some support for the validity of the measure. The Gini coefficient is especially high in Mexico, given the number of people reporting income difficulties. This may be because many poorer people in Mexico may be peasants supplementing low market income with considerable subsistence production.

Figure note

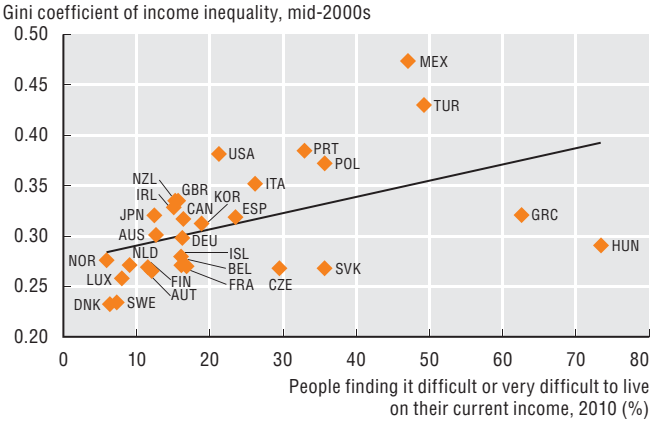
Figure EQ3.1: Data for change are not available for Norway, Luxembourg, Iceland, Slovenia and the Slovak Republic. 2006/10 for France, 2007/09 for Estonia, Israel and South Africa, 2008/10 for Finland, Austria, Ireland, and Portugal.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

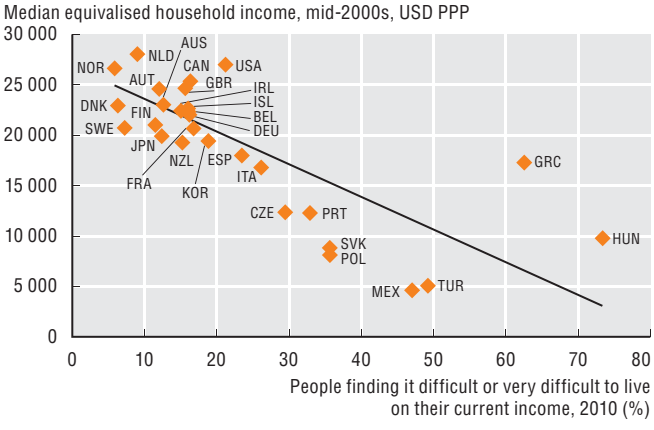
EQ3.1. A quarter of people in OECD have income difficulties and it is rising because of the crisis



EQ3.2. Income difficulties are positively related to income inequality



EQ3.3. Income difficulties are more strongly inversely related to household income



Source: Gallup World Poll (*www.gallup.com*), OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381912

4. Leaving low income from benefits

Definition and measurement

The indicators show gross earnings levels expressed as a percentage of average full time earnings, required for a family to reach a 60% median income threshold from benefits of last resort. Benefits of last resort are paid when all other sources of income are exhausted. 60% was shown because many countries have benefits of last resort above 50%. Benefit income includes family-related benefits and housing benefits (with and without), on top of core benefits. It is expressed as a percentage of average full-time wages. Income tax and social security as well as tax-related benefits are also counted. The indicators are shown for 2009 and for lone-parents and couples with two children aged 4 and 6. In the married-couple case, a one earner couple is assumed. Family incomes in these situations are simulated using the OECD Tax-Benefit Model (methodology available in *Benefits and Wages 2007* and on-line: *www.oecd.org/els/social/workincentives*). Median incomes come from *Growing Unequal?* (2008). They relate to the mid-2000s and are converted to 2009 prices. No bars are shown for countries where the sum of all benefits, excluding earnings, exceeds 60% of median income. For Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand, Switzerland, Turkey and Korea, the indicators are for 2008.

The ease with which different sort of families with dependent children can leave low income through getting a paid job from benefits of last resort is an indicator of upward mobility. This ease depends on two policy features of the tax-benefit system: the extent to which benefits of last resort push people upward towards the low income threshold and the extent to which taxes increase and benefits reduce people start getting paid work.

In 2009, when housing benefits have been taken into consideration, the ease of families leaving low income through work was high in Ireland, Japan and the United Kingdom (EQ4.1). In fact, in these countries, full take-up of the minimum benefit placed such families above the low income threshold to start with. However, only some countries pay a housing benefit. Since housing benefits often vary according to local housing costs and hence the region, actual housing benefits may be lower than shown here. Hence results are also presented excluding housing costs, which make a big difference in some countries.

Countries where it was hard for parents of both types to get out of low income include Estonia, Switzerland, the United States (EQ4.1). In the United States a job paying 80-90% of average gross earnings were required, and Swiss figures and Estonian were similarly high. Other countries make it difficult for couples with children to get out of low income via earnings. Jobs paying around 90% of average gross earnings were required in the Netherlands and Canada.

Higher benefits of last resort mean that only relatively low earnings are needed to leave low income (EQ4.2). However, for a given generosity of benefits of last resort, the ease of getting out of low income varied greatly between countries due to differences in tax and benefit abatement treatment (EQ4.2). For example, in New Zealand, Sweden and Belgium benefits of last resort for lone parents were all about 80% of the low income threshold but a job paying below 20% of the average wage was needed in New Zealand, a job paying below 40% of the average wage was needed for Sweden and a paying upward of 50% of the average wage was needed in Belgium. This variation was due to differences in abatement through the tax/benefit system as people start earning.

Further reading

OECD (2007), *Benefits and Wages: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

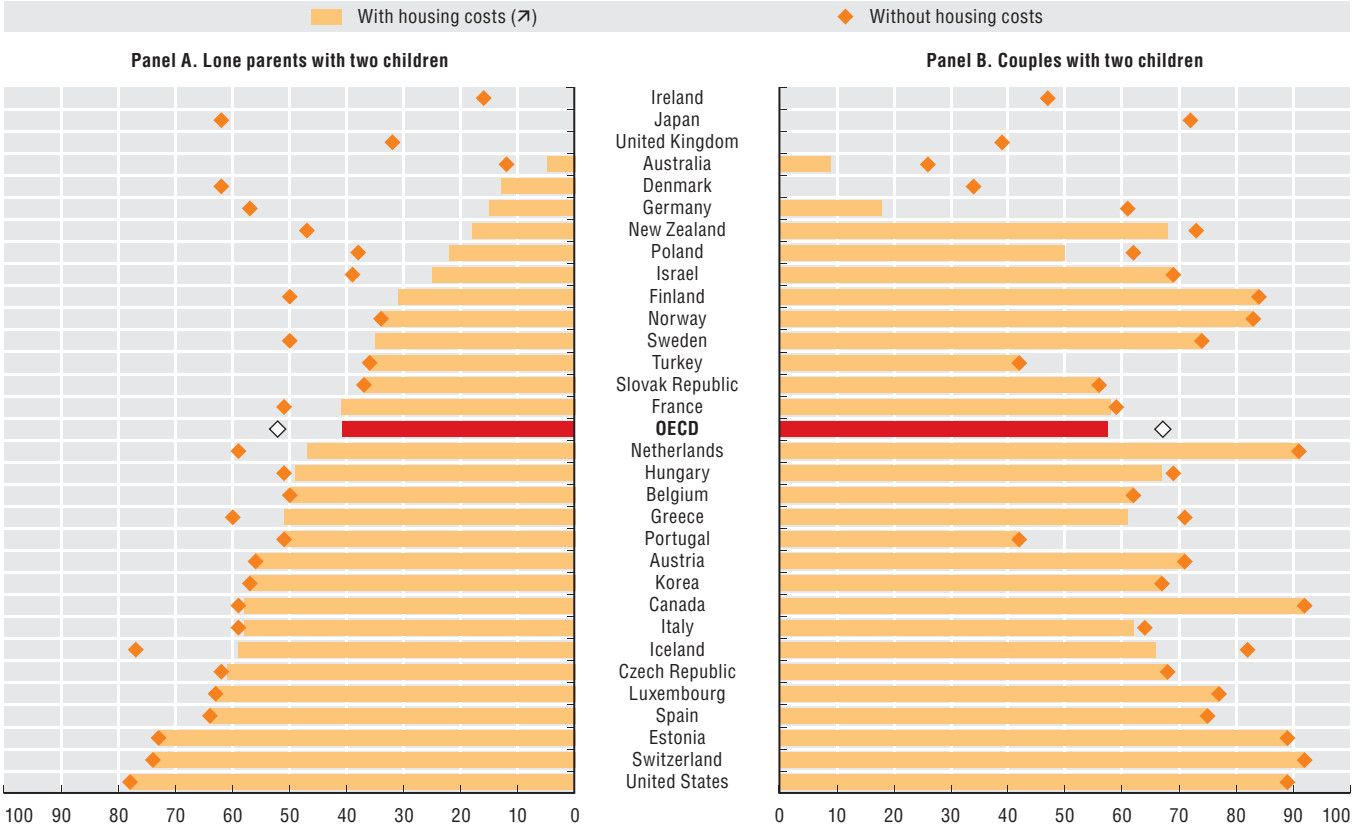
Figure notes

Figures EQ4.1 and EQ4.2: Australia, Canada, Israel, Korea, New Zealand, Switzerland and Turkey data are based on 2008.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

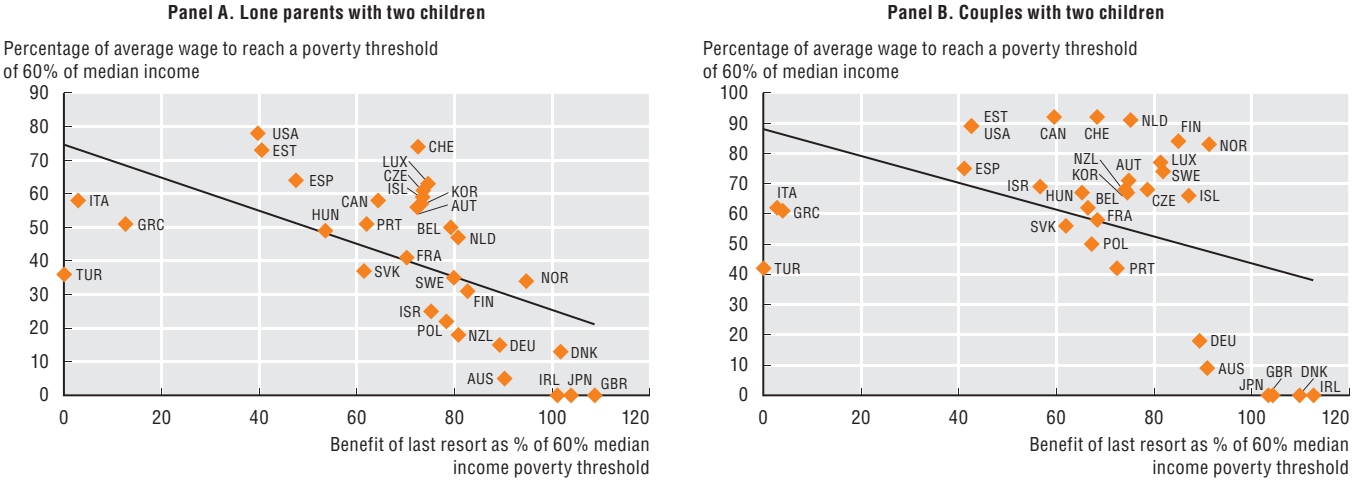
EQ4.1. The ease of leaving low income from benefit

Percentage of average gross wage to reach a poverty threshold of 60% of median income, 2009



EQ4.2. Benefit levels and net wages from getting work both matter for leaving low income

Household net income under benefit of last resort as percentage of a poverty threshold of 60% of median income, 2009



Source: OECD Tax-Benefit Models (www.oecd.org/els/social/workincentives). The median incomes are taken from OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries (www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality)* and adjusted to the year 2009 using the Consumer Price Index.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381931

5. Public social spending

Definition and measurement

Social expenditure is classified as public when general government (*i.e.* central administration, local governments and social security institutions) controls the financial flows. For example, sickness benefits financed by compulsory contributions from employers and employees to social insurance funds are considered "public", whereas sickness benefits paid directly by employers to their employees are classified as "private". For cross-country comparisons, the indicator of social spending used here refers to public spending as a share of GDP. The spending flows shown here are recorded before deduction of direct and indirect tax payments levied on these benefits and before addition of tax expenditures provided for social purposes ("gross spending"). Spending by lower tiers of government may be underestimated in some federal countries. Private social spending, which is considerable in a number of countries such as Korea and Canada, is not considered here because of the considerably greater error in the data.

The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality. Values range between 0 – perfect equality – and 1 – all income goes to one person.

Public social spending measures the amount of resources committed by the government in the areas of pensions, benefits (social support) and health. A traditional argument for much social spending is to prevent disadvantage and thus enhance equity.

In 2007, public social expenditure averaged 19% of GDP across 34 OECD countries (Panel A, EQ5.1). Country differences in spending levels were wide. Mexico and Korea spent between 6 and 10% of GDP. France and Sweden spent about 20 percentage points more. Public spending is a feature of the continental European countries. Spending shares were lower than average amongst three of the four new member countries – Chile, Estonia, and Israel. Anglophone countries, with the exception of the United Kingdom, fell below the OECD spending average. However, country rankings changed considerably when net social spending (allowing for net taxes) was considered, with the United States, which tends to redistribute through the tax system, experiencing a big rise.

Social spending has grown marginally as a share of GDP across the OECD between 1982 and 2007 (Panel B, EQ5.1). The overall picture was a slight rise, by 2.5 percentage points on average, across the OECD. Especially big increases were found in Portugal, Japan and Turkey. Social spending in the Netherlands fell as a percentage of GDP for several reasons, including low GDP in the base year, relatively rapid GDP growth, and changes in the treatment of pensions, health reform and the approach to benefit indexation.

Countries with a more equal income distribution, as measured by the Gini coefficient, tended to have higher social spending (EQ5.2). Nordic and western European countries, which spend the most, had low income inequality. On the other hand Mexico and Turkey spent little and record high income inequality. Some countries (like Portugal and Italy) had high spending and quite high income inequality, probably reflecting on the types of social spending undertaken.

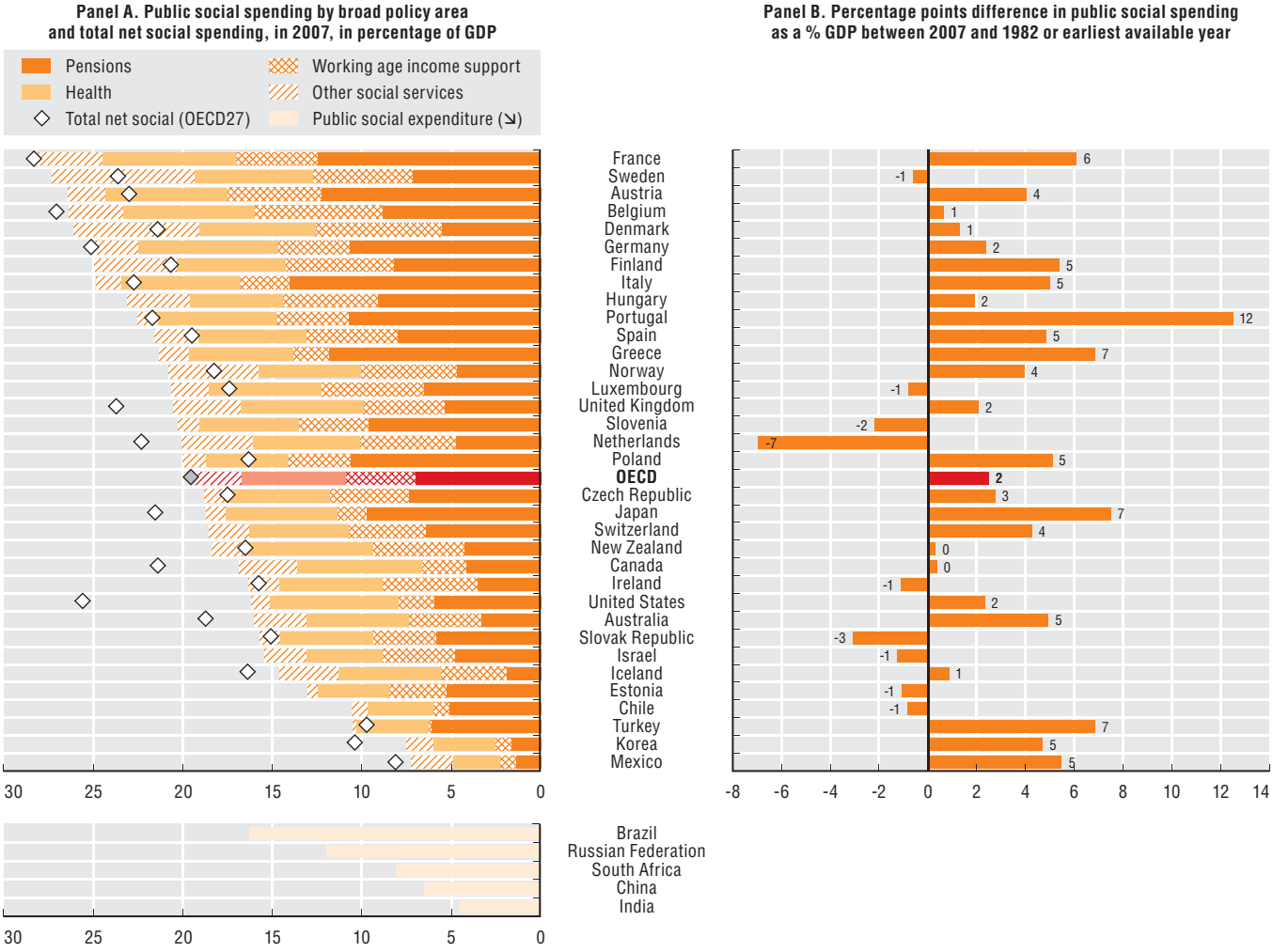
However, bigger rises in social spending experienced over the last generation in some countries do not appear to have contributed to reductions in income inequality (EQ5.2). This lack of a relationship could be because the types of social spending which rose were not income inequality reducing, or that social spending rose in some countries to try and partially offset the rise in inequality from market or other sources.

Figure note

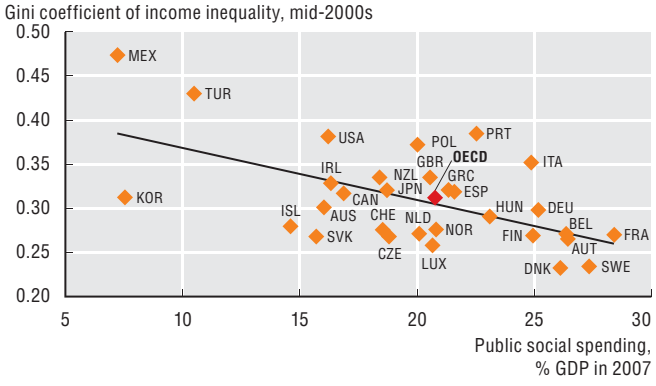
Figure EQ5.1, Panel A: Countries are ranked by decreasing order of total public social spending in 2007. Other social services include active labour market programmes (ALMPs). 2005 for Brazil, 2006-07 for India and 2008 for China.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

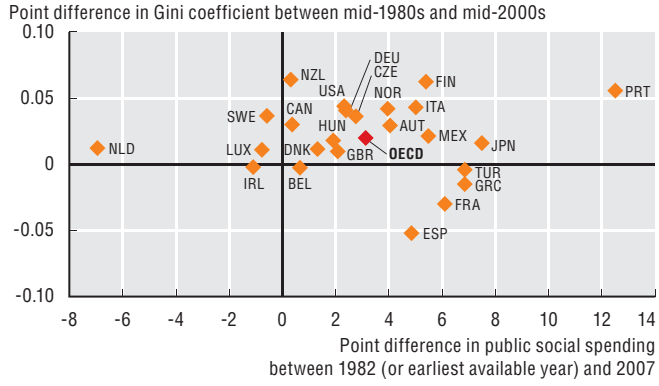
EQ5.1. More public social spending in most countries since the 1980s



EQ5.2. High social spending countries have lower income inequality



EQ5.3. There is no relationship between rising social spending and income inequality



Source: OECD (2010), *Social Expenditure Database* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure*) and OECD (2010), *Employment Outlook* (*www.oecd.org/employment/outlook*) for Brazil, China, India, the Russian Federation and South Africa, OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381950

7. HEALTH INDICATORS

1. Life expectancy
2. Infant mortality
3. Positive and negative experiences
4. Water and air quality
5. Health spending

1. Life expectancy

Definition and measurement

Life expectancy is defined as the average number of years that a person could expect to live if he or she experienced the age-specific mortality rates prevalent in a given country in a particular year. It does not include the effect of any future decline in age-specific mortality rates. Each country calculates its life expectancy according to somewhat varying methodologies. These methodological differences can affect the exact comparability of reported estimates, as different methods can change a country's measure of life expectancy slightly.

Life expectancy data was from 2008 except the following: Belgium, Canada, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States all 2007. Chile, France, Mexico, the Netherlands and Sweden all 2009. Life expectancy changes are calculated from 1983 to 2008, except for those countries where the latest figure is 2007, in which case this is used.

Household income and income inequality data are discussed in GE1 and EQ1.

The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality. Values range between 0 – perfect equality – and 1 – all income goes to one person.

Life expectancy at birth now exceeds 79 years on average across the OECD (Panel A, HE1.1). However, there is a nine year gap between the country with the highest life expectancy, Japan, and the country with the lowest, Turkey. Other higher performers include Switzerland and Australia. Unusually for a social indicator, Nordic countries are fairly evenly spread across the distribution. In addition to Mexico, lower life expectancy countries include the eastern European member countries.

The 25 years between 1983 and 2008 saw an average rise in life expectancy of about six years (Panel B, HE1.1). The increase in life expectancy in the last 25 years was accompanied by a large reduction in cross-country differences. Turkey and Korea have had the largest rises, with the United States having the smallest. A major cause was a significant convergence in infant mortality rates between countries (see HE2). But older people are also living longer. Life expectancy at older ages has increased substantially thanks to medical innovations in, for example, the treatment of heart disease. In all countries women live longer than men. However this gender gap in life expectancy generally narrowed during the past 25 years.

Median household income growth over the period was not essential to get significant gains in life expectancy (HE1.2). Countries which have had high household disposable income growth for the median person have not systematically seen greater gains than those with lower income growth in the last 25 years.

Equally, rising household income inequality was not related to changes in life expectancy over the last generation at a country level (HE1.3). Overall, countries have not been evidently constrained either by median household income growth or by income inequality rises in achieving improvements in life expectancy. Both HE1.2 and HE1.3 caution against application of a simple economic relationship between either disposable household income or inequality and the amount of years a person can expect to live.

Further reading

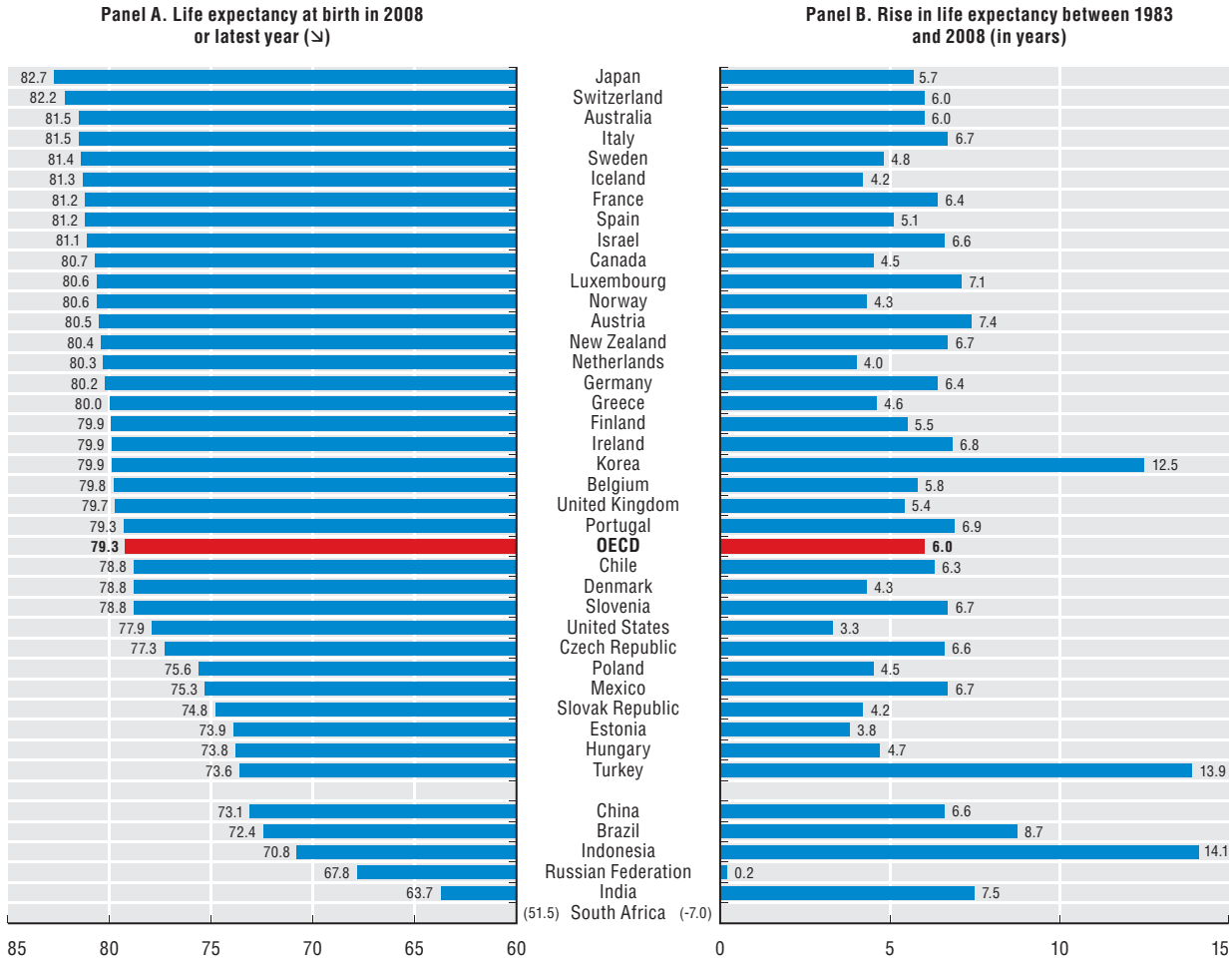
OECD (2009), *Health at a Glance 2010: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Figure note

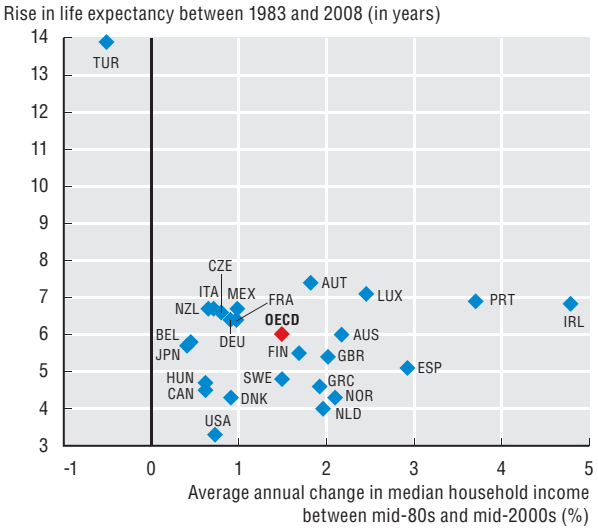
Figure HE1.1: 2009 for Chile, France, Mexico, the Netherlands and Sweden; 2007 for Belgium and Canada; and 1990 for Chile, 1989 for Estonia and 1987 for Slovenia instead of 1983.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

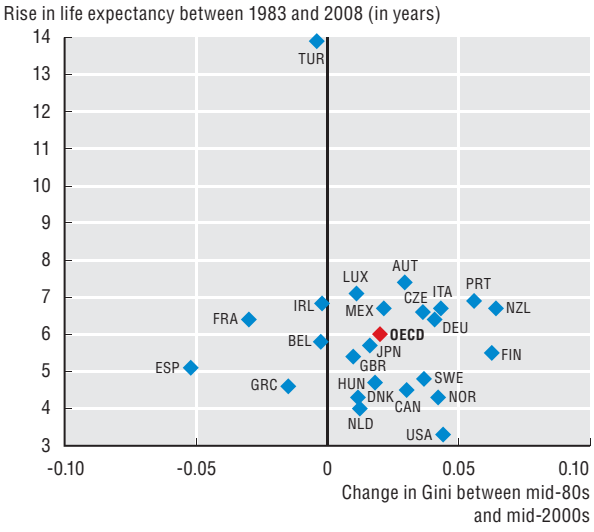
HE1.1. Life expectancy has increased remarkably in OECD countries



HE1.2. No relationship between rising life expectancy and income growth



HE1.3. No relationship between rising life expectancy and income inequality changes



Source: OECD (2010), *OECD Health Data 2010*, OECD Publishing, Paris (*www.oecd.org/health/healthdata*), and *OECD Income Distribution and Poverty Database* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*). For non-OECD countries: *United Nations Population Database*, *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision* (*http://esa.un.org/UNPP*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381969

2. Infant mortality

Definition and measurement

The infant mortality rate is the annual number of deaths of children under one year of age per 1 000 live births. Some international variation in infant mortality rates may be due to country variation in defining live children following birth. Most countries have no gestational age or weight limits for mortality registration. Minimal limits exist for Norway (to be counted as a death following a live birth, the gestational age must exceed 12 weeks) and in the Czech Republic, France, the Netherlands and Poland a minimum gestational age of 22 weeks and/or a weight threshold of 500 g is applied (EURO-PERISTAT Project 2008, Table 3.1, p. 40).

Household income and income inequality data are discussed in GE1 and EQ1.

The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality. Values range between 0 – perfect equality – and 1 – all income goes to one person.

One in 200 children born in the OECD died during infancy in 2008 on average (Panel A, HE2.1). Infant mortality rates in OECD countries in 2008 ranged from lows of 2.5 or fewer deaths per 1 000 live births in Luxembourg, Slovenia, Iceland and Sweden, to highs of 15 and 17 infant deaths in Mexico and Turkey respectively. Infant mortality rates were also relatively high in Chile, the United States and the Slovak Republic.

All OECD countries have achieved good progress in reducing infant mortality rates over the last 25 years (Panel B, HE2.1). The largest decline, by a considerable margin, was found in Turkey, followed by Mexico. High infant mortality countries, having greater scope for tried-and-true and low intervention cost reductions, have improved their positions by more than those with low infant mortality, who are approaching irreducible minima. Consequently there has been strong convergence in infant mortality rates across the OECD in the last 25 years. Those countries with very low rates may find it increasingly difficult to reduce rates further.

As with overall life expectancy, there was a little relationship between household income growth and infant mortality (HE2.2) and income inequality changes and infant mortality (HE2.3) over a long period. Overall, countries were not obviously constrained either by median household income growth or by income inequality rises in achieving improvements in life chances for their youngest citizens. The lack of a relationship is robust to excluding both Mexico and Turkey, outliers where falls in infant mortality were especially large and household income growth was low. Again, as with the analysis in HE1, this analysis cautions against application of a simple private income-based explanation, either in terms of averages or inequality, to long duration changes in infant death rates.

Further reading

EURO-PERISTAT Project (2008), *European Perinatal Health Report*, *www.europeristat.com/publications/european-perinatal-health-report.shtml*.

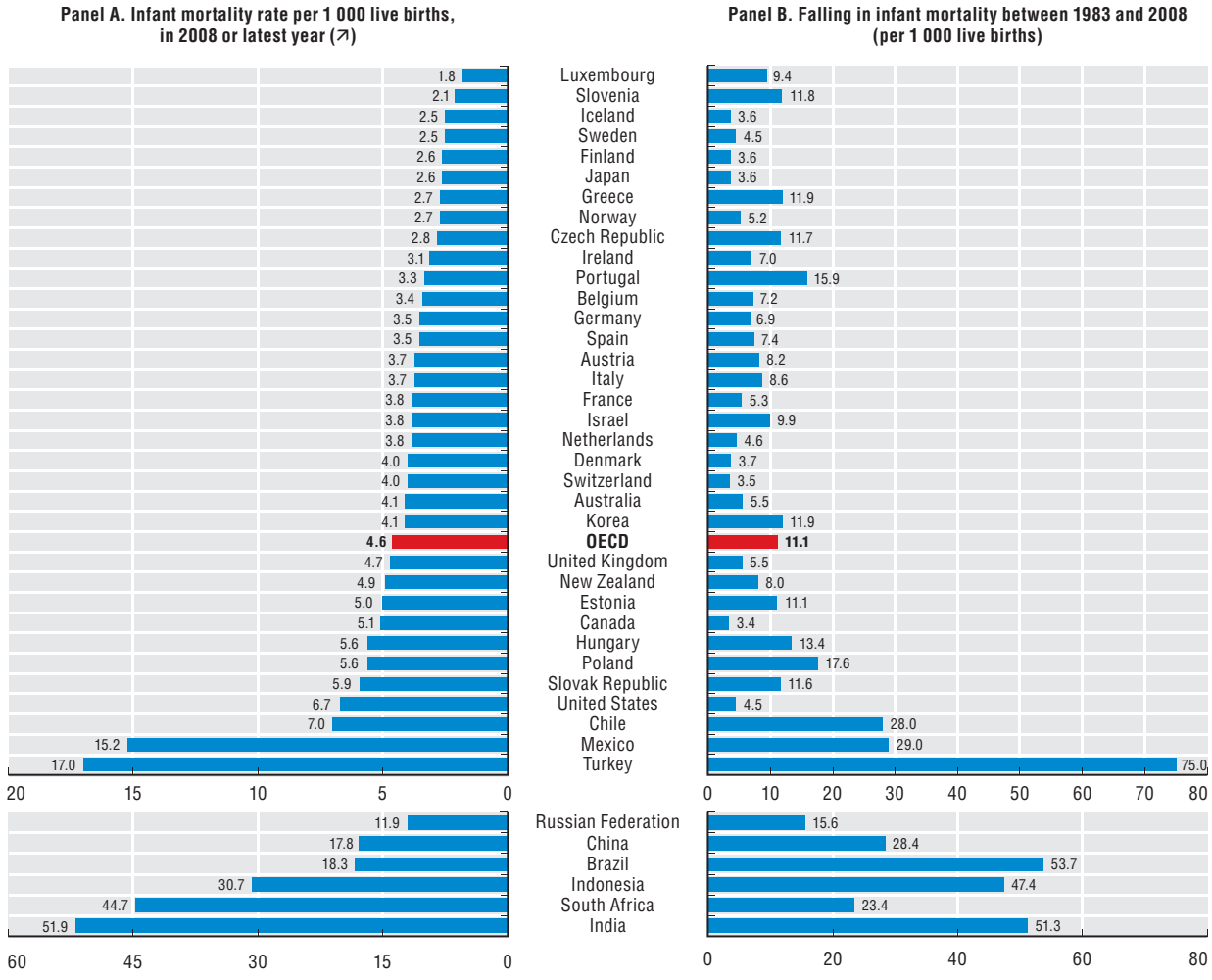
OECD (2009), *Health at a Glance 2010: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Figure note

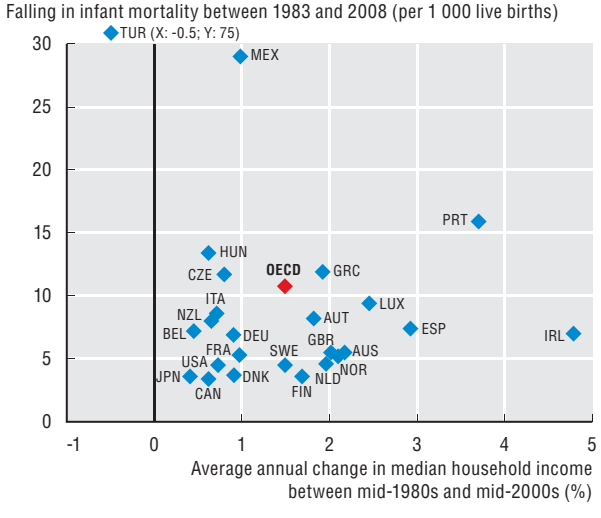
Figure HE2.1: 2007 for Chile and Ireland, 2006 for Korea and the United States; 1980 for Chile and 1984 for Korea instead of 1983; and 1980 instead of 1983 for all six non-OECD members.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

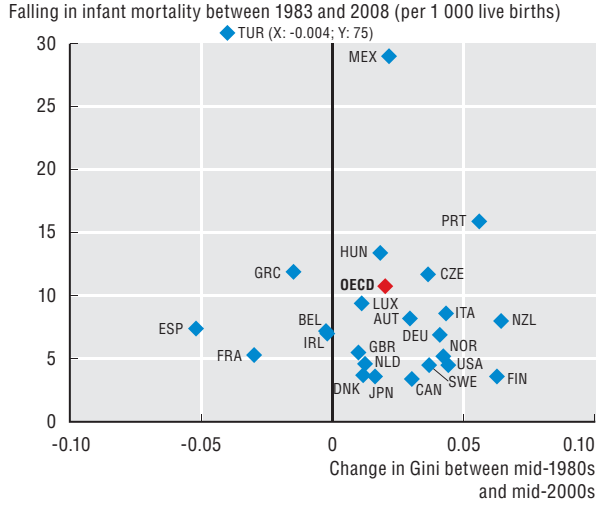
HE2.1. Infant mortality has declined in OECD countries



HE2.2. No relationship between falling infant mortality and income growth



HE2.3. No relationship between falling infant mortality and income inequality changes



Source: OECD (2010), *OECD Health Data 2010*, OECD Publishing, Paris (*www.oecd.org/health/healthdata*), and *OECD Income Distribution and Poverty Database* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*). For non-OECD countries: UNICEF, Childinfo.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381988

3. Positive and negative experiences

Definition and measurement

Data on positive and negative experiences are drawn from the *Gallup World Poll*. The Gallup World Poll is conducted in over 140 countries around the world based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over in the entire country, including rural areas. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error. Sample sizes vary between around 1 000 and 4 000, depending on the country. The "positive experience index" is a measure of respondents' experienced well-being on the day before the survey in terms of feeling well-rested, being treated with respect all day, smiling or laughing a lot, learning or doing something interesting, and experiencing enjoyment. The "negative experience index" is a measure of respondents' experienced well-being on the day before the survey in terms of physical pain, worry, sadness, stress and depression. Positive and negative experiences are likely to be less influenced by country-specific cultural factors than is life satisfaction. EQLS data comes from Anderson *et al.* (2009).

Measures of experiences like smiling and stress provide a broad, population-wide indicator of psychological well-being across the OECD. Positive experiences – like reported laughing – indicate positive psychological states and negative experiences – like reported depression – indicate largely the contrary (there is one question in the index on physical pain. The remainder are psychological variables).

Iceland had the highest rate of positive experience in the OECD in 2006-09 (Panel A, HE3.1). Mexicans, who often rank well on self-assessed subjective measures given their economic development, and Canadians also ranked high in positive experiences. Anglophone and Nordic countries also performed above average in terms of positive experiences. The bottom half of the OECD was dominated by continental western and central European countries. Japan and Korea also reported low positive experiences.

Denmark had the lowest rate of negative experiences, an experience was shared with its Nordic neighbours (Panel B, HE3.1). The Anglophone countries were at or above average. High rates of negative experiences were reported in Israel, Spain, Portugal and France. While countries with high positive experiences scores tended to have low negative experience scores, this relationship was weak. Canada, Chile and the United States were all countries sharing a combination of relatively high positive as well as high negative experiences. The reasons for this pattern are not clear. It could be that individuals in those countries reported more positive *and* negative experiences, or that those who reported either negative or positive experiences in those countries were more likely to report *more* of such experiences.

Two checks suggest the data is meaningful. Because the data asked people their previous day experiences, such aggregate data may simply provide fast changing perceptions experienced only on the day of the survey. Alternatively the sample sizes could be too small to provide any precision. There was a strong relationship between Positive Experiences and the 2007 *European Quality of Life Survey* positive mental health index (HE3.2). As these surveys were different samples, on different days, with different questions, the strong relationship at a country level provides reassurance of data validity. Countries where positive experiences were high one year also tended to be high in the next survey (HE3.3). Again, this strong relationship shows that the data are not just random sample error or fickle swings of day-to-day mood at a country level.

Further reading

Anderson, R., B. Mikuliç, G. Vermeylen, M. Lyly-Yrjanainen and V. Zigante (2009), *Second European Quality of Life Survey*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

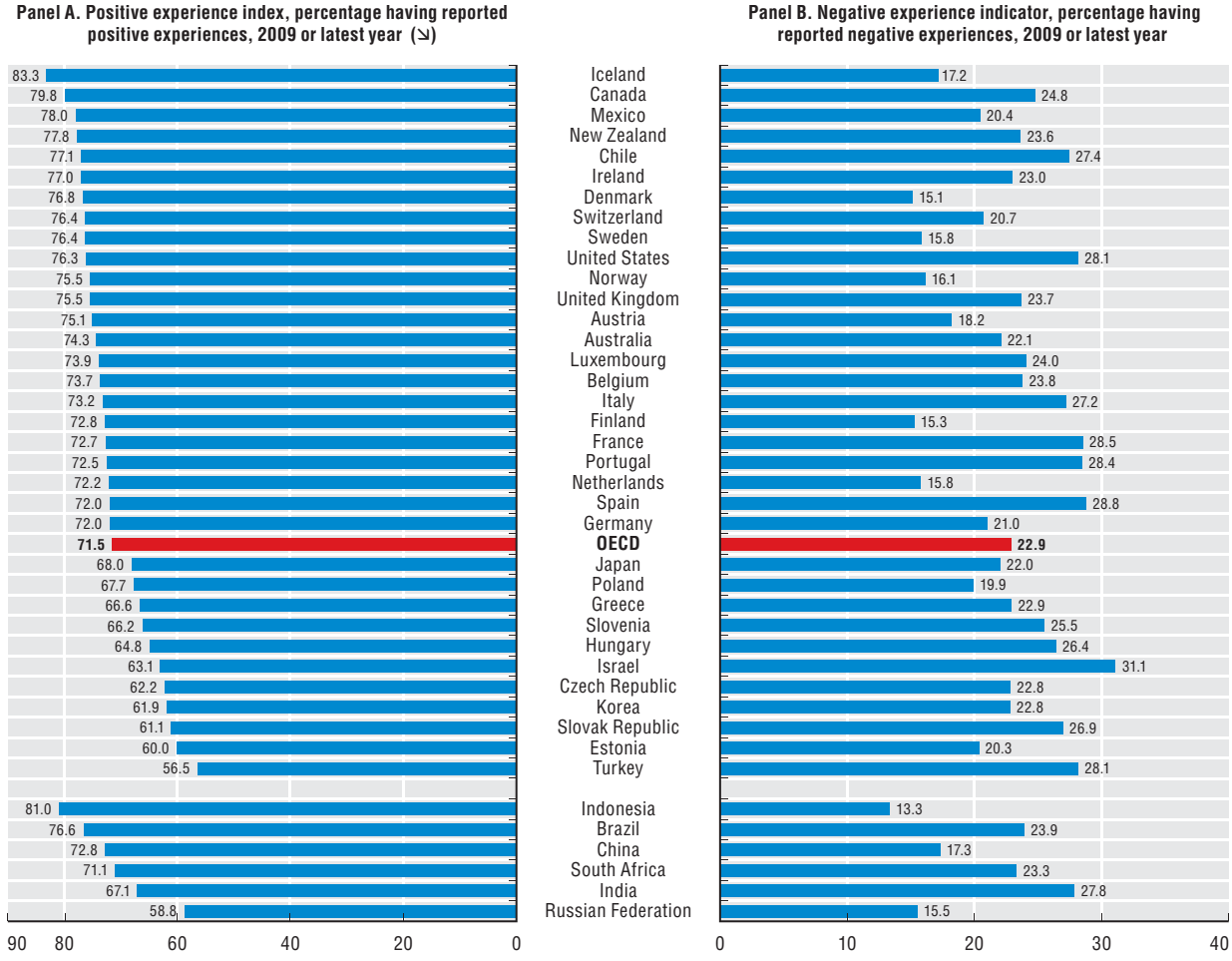
Figure notes

All data for HE3.1 from 2009 except the Slovak Republic and Switzerland 2006, the Czech Republic 2007 and Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Turkey, all 2008.

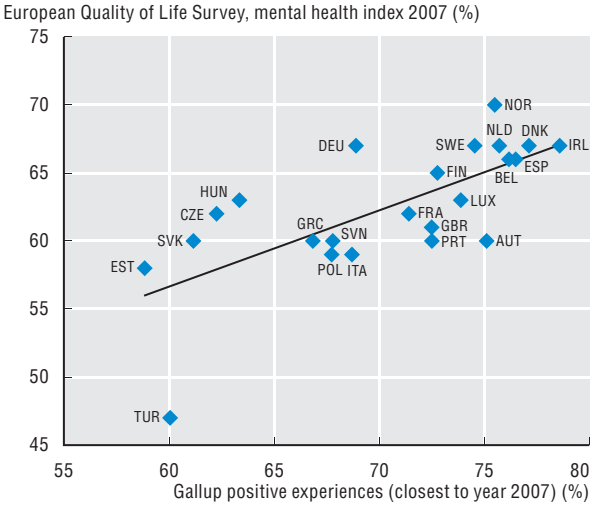
Gallup data for HE3.2 are from the closest year to 2007, if there is no 2007 data. If there was Gallup data in 2006 and 2008 and not 2007, the more recent (2008) data was used.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

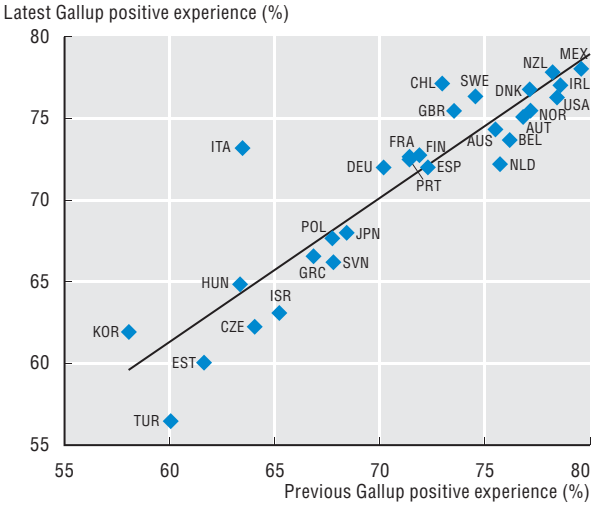
HE3.1. Highest levels of positive experience in Iceland, Canada and Mexico, highest levels of negative ones in Israel, Spain and France



HE3.2. Positive experiences correlate with positive mental health for 21 OECD-Europe countries



HE3.3. Countries with higher positive experience are similar the next survey



Source: Gallup World Poll (*www.gallup.com*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932382007

4. Water and air quality

Definition and measurement

Data come from the Gallup World Poll. The Gallup World Poll is conducted in over 140 countries around the world based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over in the entire country, including rural areas. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error. Sample sizes vary between around 1 000 and 4 000, depending on the country. The data reported are binary responses to the question "In the city or area where you live, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the quality of air/water?". Positive experience data is described in HE3 and infant mortality data in HE2.

Having access to a high quality local environment, measured here in terms of perceptions of air and water quality, is an important part of healthy living. Poor air and water quality can adversely influence both physical and psychological health. There is objective World Health Organisation data on water quality and sanitation, but in most cases OECD countries are at 100% on the quality measures, with little variation. Hence simple perceptions data are used here.

Most citizens across the OECD were satisfied with both their air (Panel A, HE4.1) and water quality (Panel B, HE4.1). The most satisfied countries were the Nordics (Sweden the exception). The least satisfied were in the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. The relationship between the two local environmental indicators was strongly positive. That is to say, countries where people were satisfied with their local water also tended to be satisfied with their local air.

Satisfaction with air quality was strongly correlated with the proportion of the population reporting complaints regarding other dimensions of the local environment in 21 European OECD countries. In addition to air and water problems, these complaints include noise, lack of green space, litter, and crime and vandalism (Anderson *et al.*, 2009). This relationship suggests air quality may be a reasonable indicator of the general local environment for OECD countries as a whole (relationships with water quality are weaker but still strong).

People in countries with a high satisfaction with water quality reported more positive experiences (HE4.2). A similar relationship holds with air quality. The existence of these relationships supports suggested links between perceived local environmental quality and positive psychological well-being.

Reinforcing this psychological link, satisfaction with water quality and infant mortality, a key objective critical health outcome, were also linked (HE4.3). Infant mortality rates were significantly higher in OECD countries where reported water quality was lower, possibly via linkages with diarrheal diseases. There is a similar but less strong relationship for local reported air quality. The significant relationship of infant mortality to water quality was robust to the exclusion of the new member countries (Chile, Estonia, Israel, and Slovenia) and the high infant mortality OECD countries (Turkey and Mexico).

Further reading

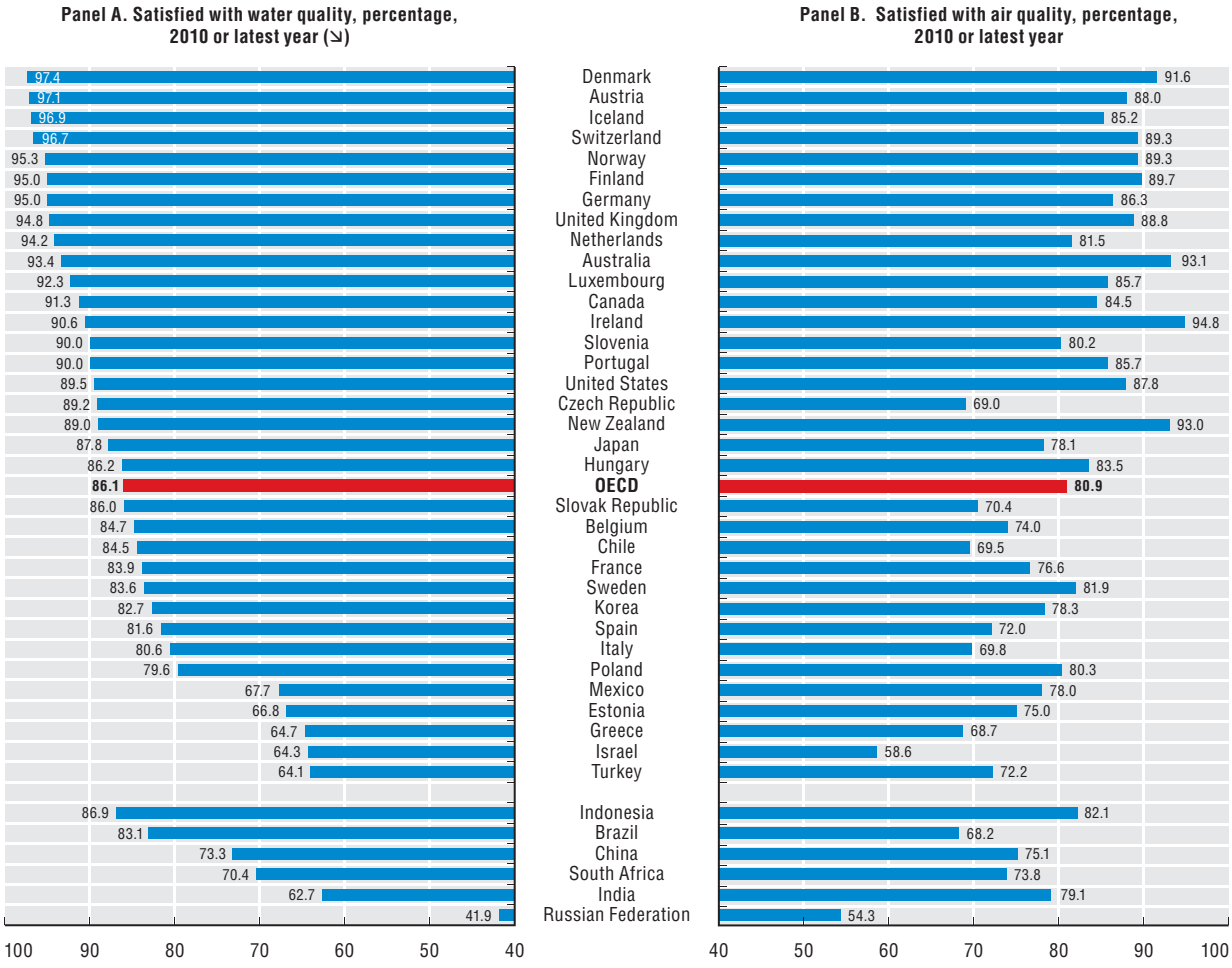
Anderson, R., B. Mikuliç, G. Vermeylen, M. Lyly-Yrjanainen and V. Zigante (2009), *Second European Quality of Life Survey, Overview*, Eurofound, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

Figure note

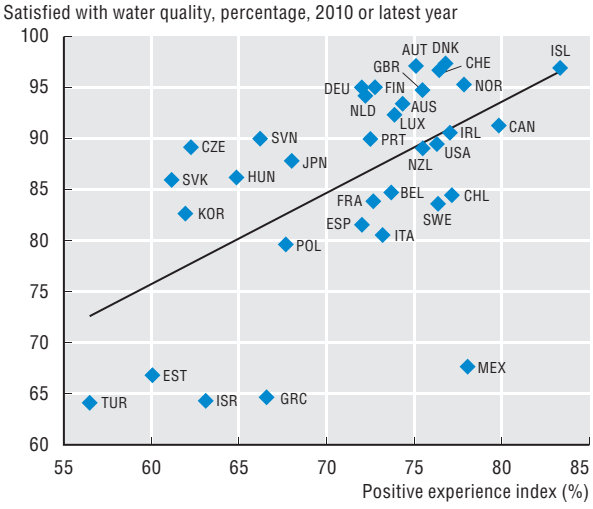
All data for HE4.1 for 2010, except Iceland and Norway, 2008, and Korea, Israel, Estonia and South Africa, 2009.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

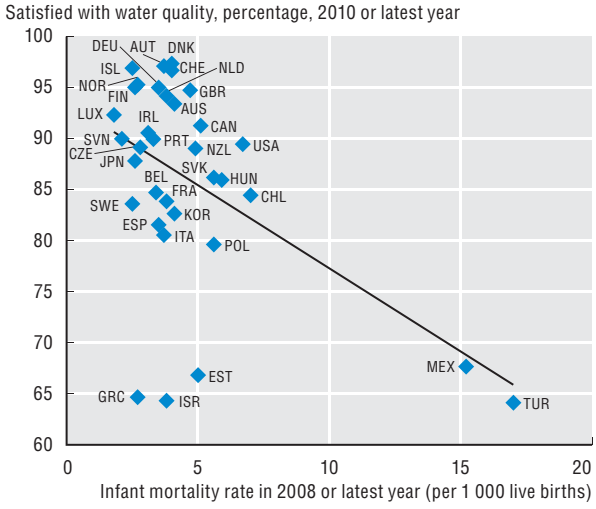
HE4.1. Nordic countries are the most satisfied with their water and air quality



HE4.2. Higher water satisfaction goes with higher positive experience



HE4.3. Countries with lower satisfaction with water quality have a higher infant mortality



Source: Gallup World Poll (*www.gallup.com*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932382026

5. Health spending

Definition and measurement

Total expenditure on health measures the final consumption of health goods and services plus capital investment in health care infrastructure. It includes both public and private spending on personal health care and collective health services (public health and prevention programmes and administration). Excluded are health-related expenditures such as training, research and environmental health. The data is presented as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP). To compare health care expenditures across time, it is deflated by a national price index and converted to US dollars using purchasing power parity (PPP) exchange rates.

Health spending varied considerably across OECD countries (Panel A, HE5.1). In 2008, the highest spending OECD country was the United States, devoting 16% of gross domestic product on health, or USD 7 285 per person. After the United States, but spending both absolutely and proportionally considerably less, came France and Switzerland. At the other end of the scale, Korea (USD 1 801 per person) and Mexico (USD 852 per person) spent well under 10% of their incomes on health.

Health spending has grown rapidly across the OECD in the last decade (Panel B, HE5.1). Between 1998 and 2008, average OECD health expenditure per capita grew annually by 4%. High growth countries for health spending included Korea, the Slovak Republic and Ireland, with the former two starting from a relatively low base. By way of contrast, Norway, Israel and Germany managed fairly modest growth in per capita health spending in the past decade.

Countries spending more on health had higher life expectancies in 2008 (HE5.2). While higher health spending per capita was generally associated with higher life expectancy at birth, this relationship is less pronounced amongst countries with higher health spending per capita. There may thus be diminishing returns to health spending on this measure. Given their levels of health spending, Japan stands out as having relatively high life expectancy and the United States has relatively low life expectancy.

Countries where health spending grew more rapidly in the 1998-2008 period had more rapid increases in life expectancy (HE5.3). The rise in life expectancy in Korea, Ireland and Slovenia was especially pronounced, given spending growth. On the other hand, given growth in per capita health spending, life expectancy gains have been less dramatic in the United States, Greece and in the Slovak Republic.

Further reading

OECD (2009), *Health at a Glance 2010: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

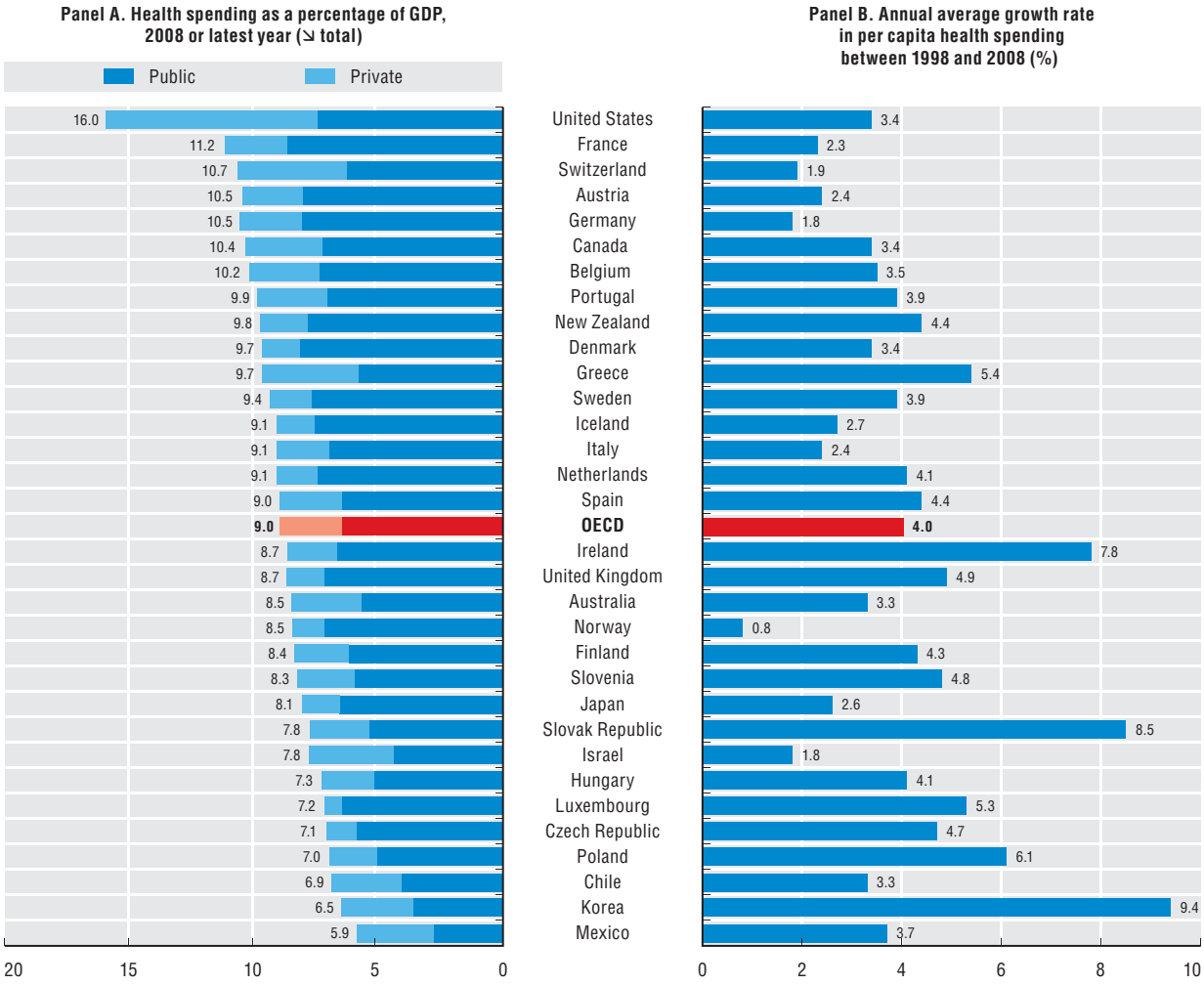
Figure note

Data in HE5.1 is 2007/08 for Australia; 2007 for Denmark, Greece and Japan; 2006 for Luxembourg and Portugal.

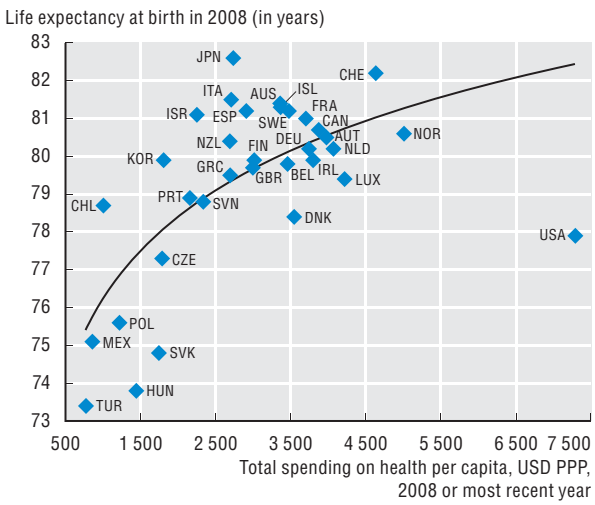
Current expenditure (exculding investment) rather than total expenditure for Belgium, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

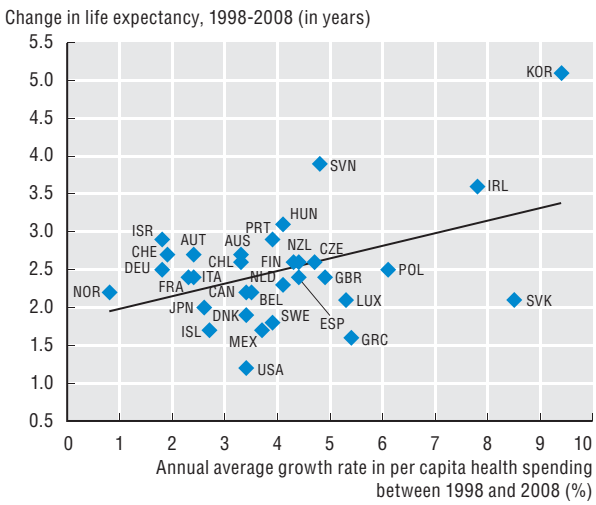
HE5.1. Total spending on health has increased significantly in the last decade



HE5.2. Countries with higher life expectancy spend more on per capita health care



HE5.3. Countries with higher health spending growth have bigger life expectancy gains



Source: OECD (2010), *OECD Health Data 2010*, OECD Publishing, Paris (*www.oecd.org/health/healthdata*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932382045

8. SOCIAL COHESION INDICATORS

1. Trust
2. Confidence in social institutions
3. Pro- and anti-social behaviour
4. Voting
5. Tolerance

1. Trust

Definition and measurement

Trust data is based on the question: "Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?". Data come from two different surveys: the *European Social Survey* (ESS) (2008 wave 4) for OECD-Europe and the *International Social Survey Programme* (ISSP) (2007 wave) for non-OECD Europe. For the ESS, interviewees answer using a 10-point scale with the lowest category being "You can't be too careful" and the highest "Most people can be trusted". The ISSP has four categories: "People can almost always be trusted", "People can usually be trusted", "You usually can't be too careful in dealing with people", and "You almost always can't be too careful in dealing with people". The trust measure aggregates the top five categories for the ESS and the top two categories for the ISSP to give a percentage of people expressing high levels of trust. When data for a country was available from different sources, ESS data was preferred over ISSP data, because of larger sample sizes and a more nuanced question. Weights provided by the surveys were applied. Data comparability across countries may be affected by sample sizes and variation in response rates. Further comparability issues arise because of differences in survey frames and questions. For assessing trends in trust, annual average changes were calculated using the 2002 ESS (wave 1), and the 1998 ISSP wave as starting points.

The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality. Values range between 0 – perfect equality – and 1 – all income goes to one person.

Trust reflects people's perception of others' reliability. Trust may affect economic and social development by facilitating market exchange, enabling better functioning of public institutions and increasing capacity for collective action (Morrone *et al.*, 2009).

The share of people expressing high levels of trust varied greatly across countries (Panel A, CO1.1). In OECD countries almost 60% of the interviewees expressed high level of interpersonal trust. In Chile, fewer than 15% of the interviewees expressed trust in others and in Mexico and Turkey less than 30% were trusting, compared to more than 80% in Nordic countries.

Recent levels of trust have increased modestly on average (Panel B, CO1.1). In Japan, the level of trust increased on average by 3 percentage points per year over a nine year period. Solid annual increases were also posted in the Slovak Republic, New Zealand and Israel. Of the six countries that experienced a decline in trust, most changes were fairly minor, with the exception of Portugal.

High country trust was strongly associated with high household income levels (CO1.2). The relationship was strong. United States had lower than expected trust given its income level and eastern European countries had higher degrees of trust than expected on the basis of their household income. Trust may promote gainful economic activity, or trust may be a luxury affordable only by richer countries.

Higher levels of trust were strongly associated with lower levels of income inequality (CO1.3). In countries with high inequality, people trust less than in the more egalitarian Nordic countries. The reasons for the association are unclear. Income inequality may make it more difficult for people in different strata to share a sense of common purpose and to trust each other (Morrone *et al.*, 2009). Or low levels of trust may impede positive social bonds developing, which in turn contributes to high inequality.

Further reading

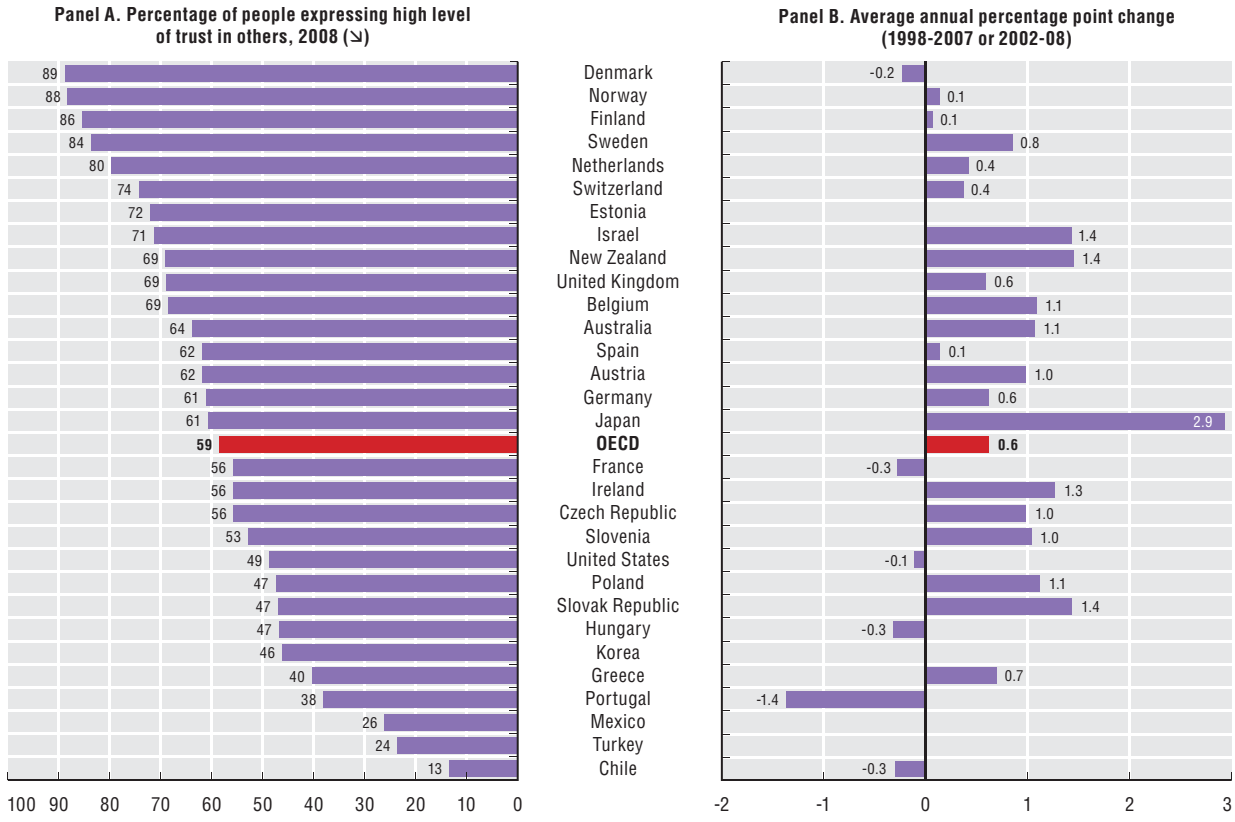
Morrone, A., N. Tontoranelli and G. Ranuzzi (2009), "How Good is Trust? Measuring Trust and its Role for the Progress of Societies", *OECD Statistics Working Paper*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Figure note

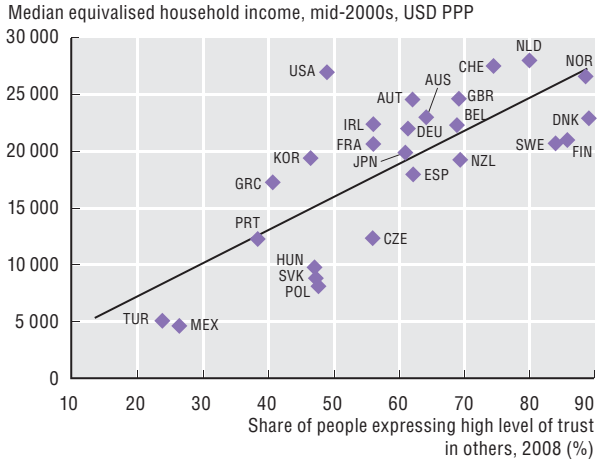
Figure CO1.1, Panel A: 2007 for New Zealand, Mexico, Australia, Austria, Japan, Korea, Ireland, the United States and Chile. Figure CO1.1, Panel B: Change refers to 1998/2007: the Slovak Republic, Switzerland, New Zealand, Australia, Austria, Japan, Ireland, the United States and Chile; 2002/08 for the other countries.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

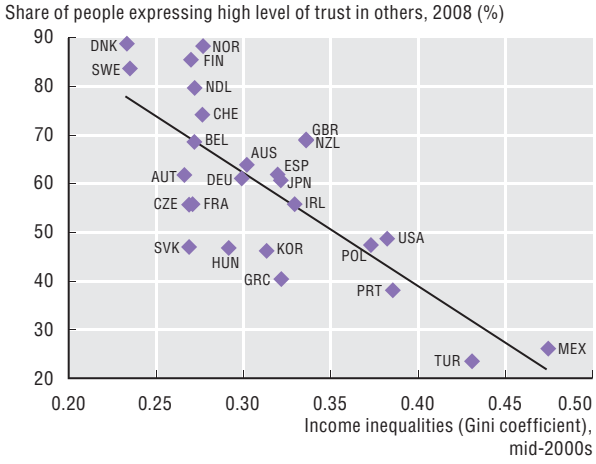
CO1.1. Nordic countries have the highest levels of trust and Mexico, Turkey and Chile the lowest



CO1.2. Richer countries trust more



CO1.3. Trust is higher when income is more equally distributed



Source: ESS (European Social Survey); ISSP (International Social Survey Programme); OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932382064

2. Confidence in social institutions

Definition and measurement

Data on confidence in social institutions comes from the Gallup World Poll. The Gallup World Poll is conducted in over 140 countries around the world based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over in the entire country, including rural areas. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error. Sample sizes vary between around 1 000 and 4 000, depending on the country. Data on institutional confidence is a composite indicator on corruption and a composite indicator on national institutions, created by Gallup. The corruption index is based on a binary question of whether corruption is widespread in business and government and the confidence in national institutions index is based on questions regarding confidence in the military, the judiciary and the national government. The Gallup corruption index correlated strongly and inversely with the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, based on experts' rankings for the OECD countries, providing evidence of validity.

A cohesive society is one where citizens have confidence in national-level institutions and believe that social and economic institutions are not prey to corruption. Confidence and corruption issues are dimensions relating strongly to societal trust.

Low perceived corruption was a feature of Denmark, Finland and Sweden in 2010 (Panel A, CO2.1). Iceland was a Nordic outlier, being somewhat above average for corruption. Anglophone countries had average or better perceived corruption, with the exception of the United States. Higher than average rates of perceived corruption was found in the Mediterranean and Southern Europe – Greece, Israel, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Turkey. Many eastern European countries, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Poland, were also all above average for perceived corruption.

High confidence in national institutions was also a feature of the Nordic countries (Panel B, CO2.1). Mexico, Hungary and Korea were at the other end of the scale, with low confidence in their national institutions. As anticipated, the relationship between perceived corruption and confidence in national institutions was negative. The correlation was high – about –0.83. In Belgium, Estonia, Korea and Mexico, perceived corruption was relatively low, given the level of confidence in national institutions. On the other hand, Israel has high perceived corruption for its average level of confidence in national institutions.

Lower corruption was found in higher income countries (CO2.2). The income-corruption relationship was quite strong. Notable outliers include Greece, and the United States, who had considerably higher corruption than anticipated on the basis of their income, and Denmark, Finland, Sweden and New Zealand had considerably lower corruption than anticipated on the basis of their income.

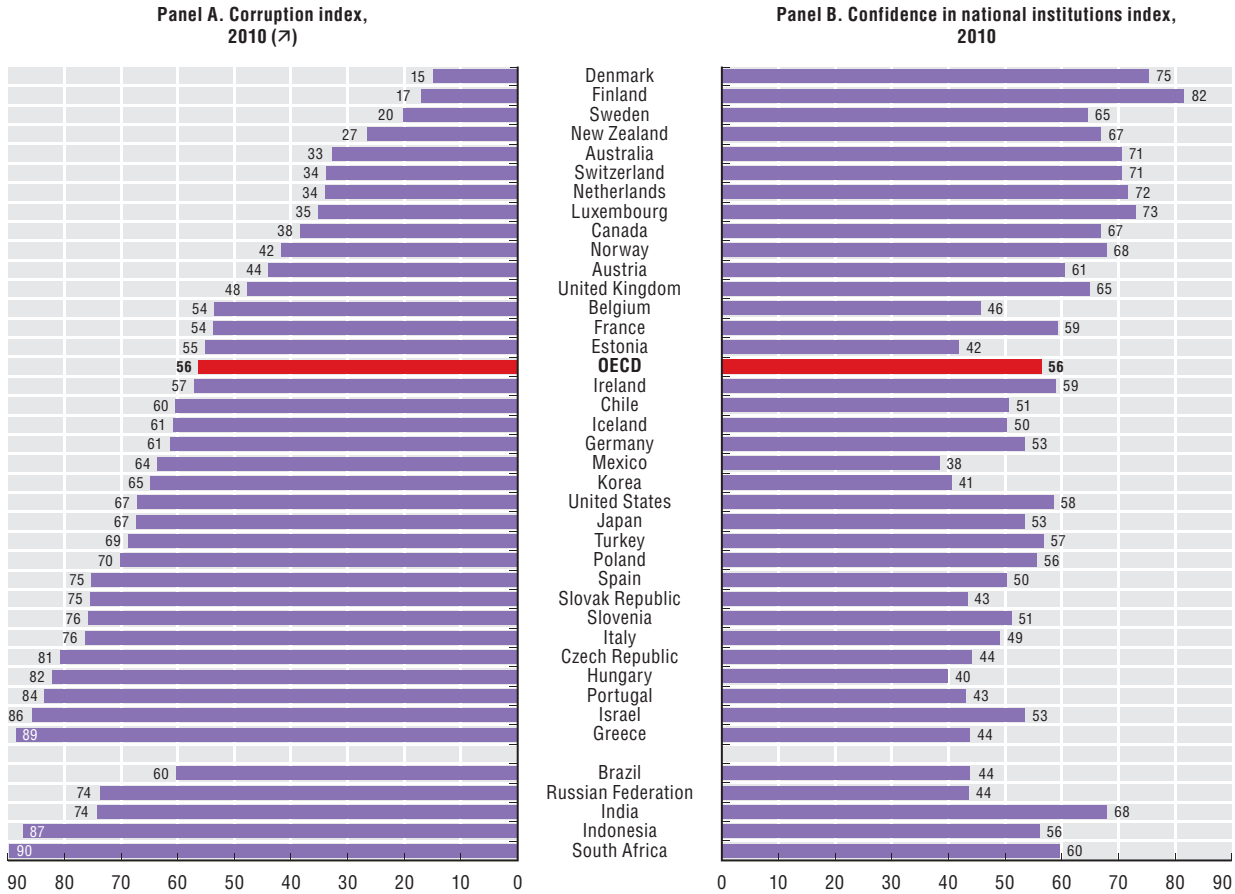
Again, confidence in national institutions was higher in higher income countries (CO2.3). As with corruption, this relationship was quite strong. Finland, Denmark and Turkey have much higher confidence than anticipated on the basis of their income, whilst Korea and Belgium have much lower confidence than warranted by their income. In both cases, it is plausible that that causality runs in both directions: high income is both a cause and a consequence of high confidence and low corruption.

Figure note

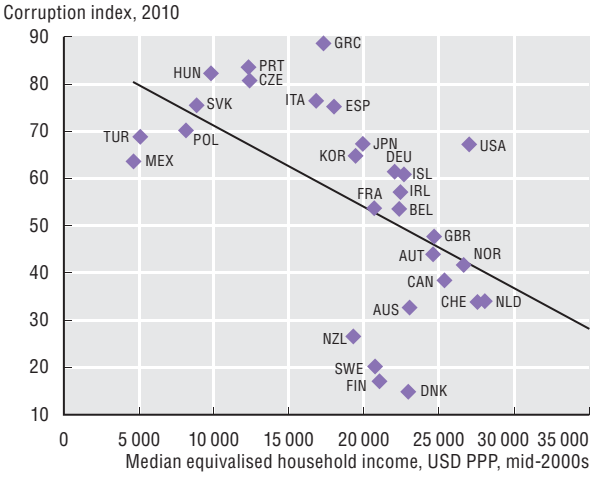
Figure CO2.1: 2006: Switzerland; 2008: Finland, Iceland, Norway; 2009: Estonia, Hungary, Israel and South Africa.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

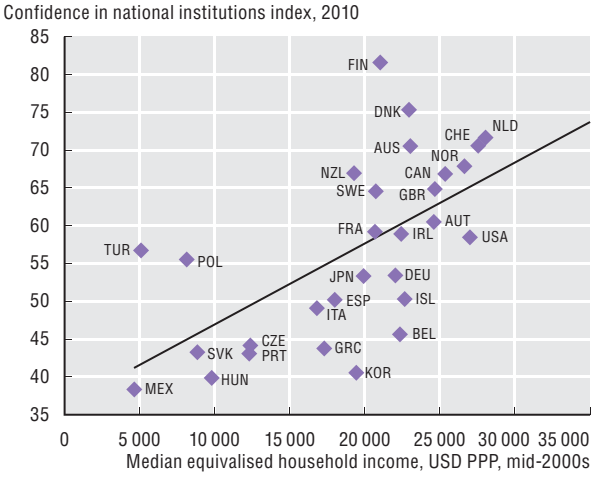
CO2.1. Nordic countries perceive low levels of corruption and are confident in their social institutions



CO2.2. Corruption is lower in higher income countries



CO2.3. Confidence in national institutions is higher in higher income countries



Source: Gallup World Poll (*www.gallup.com*); OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932382083

3. Pro- and anti-social behaviour

Definition and measurement

Data on pro- and anti-social behaviour are drawn from the Gallup World Poll. The Gallup World Poll is conducted in over 140 countries around the world based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over in the entire country, including rural areas. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error. Sample sizes vary between around 1 000 and 4 000, depending on the country. Pro-social behaviour averages country responses to three questions about whether the respondent has volunteered time, donated money to a charity and helped a stranger in the last month. Anti-social behaviour averages responses to questions on whether the respondent has had money or property stolen in the last year and been assaulted.

The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality. Values range between 0 – perfect equality – and 1 – all income goes to one person.

Pro-social behaviour is behaviour which contributes to the positive functioning of society, whereas anti-social behaviour is the contrary.

High levels of pro-social behaviour were found in five Anglophone countries, all of which were in the top six of the OECD (Panel A, CO3.1). The Nordic countries, which feature at the top of many social indicators in this publication, were unusually ordinary performers in terms of pro-social behaviour. Mediterranean and eastern European countries typically had low levels of pro-social behaviour.

Chile and Mexico, amongst OECD countries, stood out as having high levels of anti-social behaviour (Panel B, CO3.1). Low levels of anti-social behaviour were found in an eclectic mix of countries – Israel, Japan, Korea and Poland. Again, the Nordics were generally modest performers, with Denmark, Norway and Sweden having levels of anti-social behaviour at or above the OECD average.

There was no tendency for countries which had high levels of pro-social behaviour to have low levels of anti-social behaviour or *vice versa*. For example, Poland was a good performer with low rates of anti-social behaviour. However, it was also in the bottom third of the OECD on pro-social behaviour. New Zealand was a good performer on pro-social behaviour, but was also above the OECD average with anti-social behaviour.

Higher income countries had more pro-social behaviour (CO3.2). This income-pro-social relationship was quite strong. The Anglophones had more pro-social behaviour than expected on the basis of their income, as did Mexico. Greece and Japan had much lower pro-social behaviour than would be expected given their incomes.

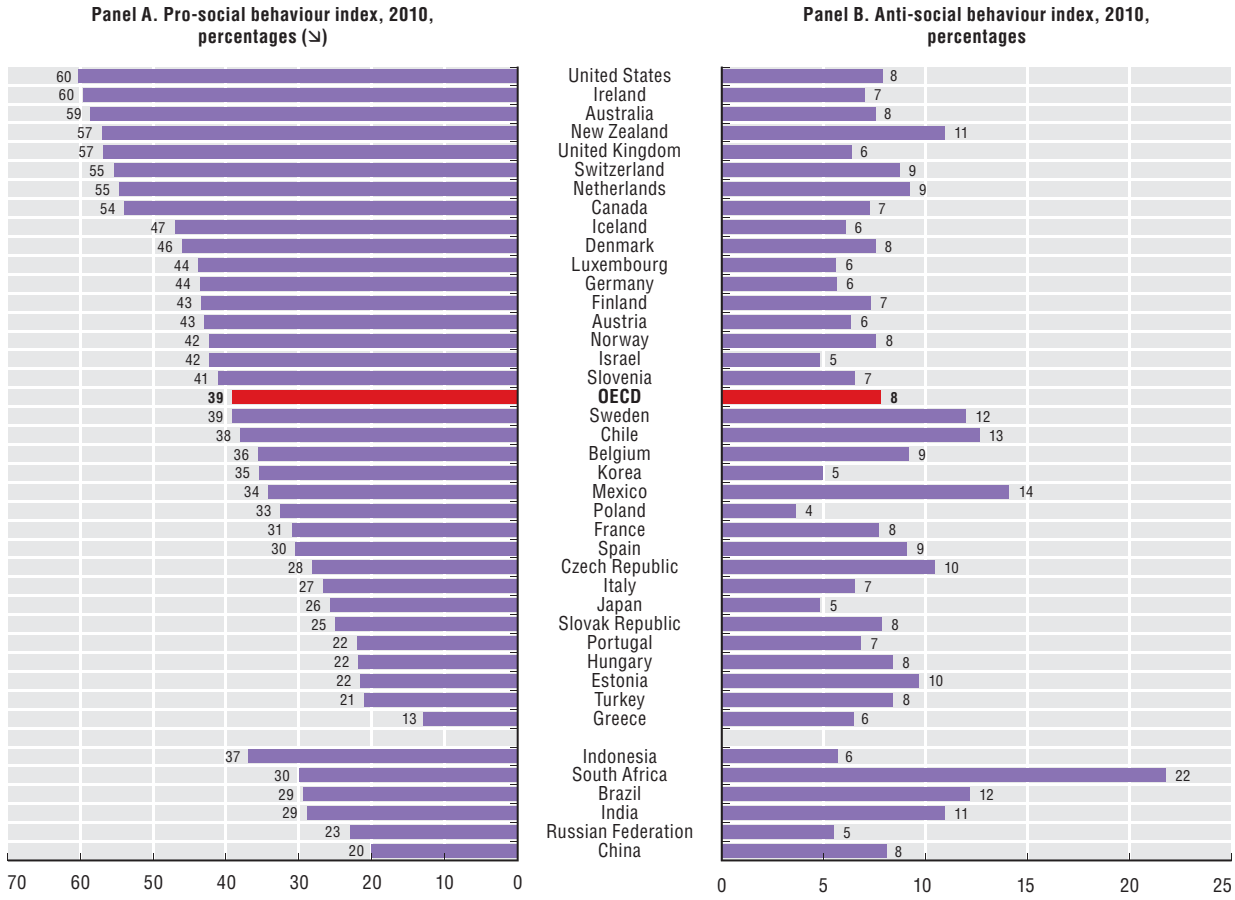
On the other hand, there was only a weak positive relationship between income inequality and anti-social behavior (CO3.3). The weak observed relationship was driven entirely by Mexico, a country with the highest level of anti-social behaviour in the OECD, combined with the highest rate of income inequality. Sweden and the Czech Republic stand out as relatively equal societies, at least in terms of income, with high reported anti-social behaviour.

Figure note

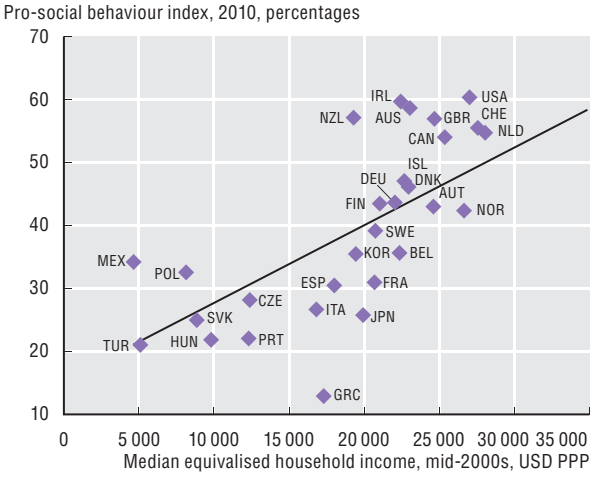
Figure CO3.1: 2006: Switzerland; 2008: Iceland and Norway; 2009: Estonia, Israel and South Africa.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

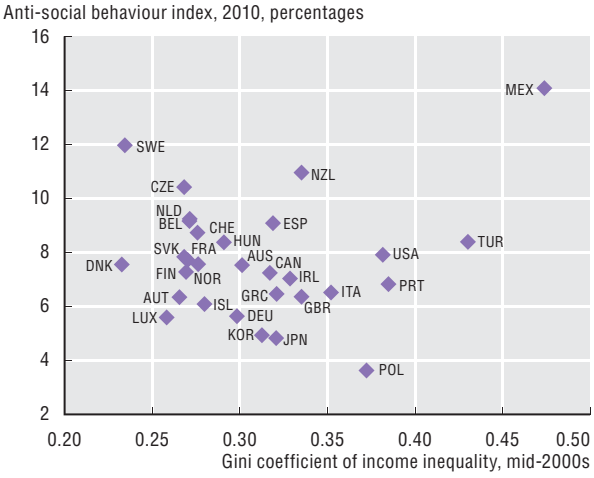
CO3.1. Anglophone countries show the highest levels of pro-social behaviour



CO3.2. Higher income countries have more pro-social behaviour



CO3.3. A weak positive relationship between income inequality and anti-social behaviour



Source: Gallup World Poll (*www.gallup.com*); OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932382102

4. Voting

Definition and measurement

Voting in national parliamentary elections is one indicator of people's participation in their community's national life. The indicator used here to measure the participation of individuals to the electoral process is the "voter turnout", *i.e.* the number of individuals that cast a ballot during an election as a share of the population of voting age – generally the population aged 18 or more – as available from administrative records of member countries. Different types of elections occur in different countries and for different geographical jurisdictions. For some countries, it should be noted, turnout for presidential elections and regional elections may be higher than for national parliamentary elections, perhaps because those elected through these ballots are constitutionally more important for how those countries are run. Equally, relatively frequent elections may reduce turnout. Data about voter turnout are extracted from the international database organised by the Institute for Democratic and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). This section also presents data on the turnout of voters by selected socio-demographic characteristics. These data, based on surveys of individuals undertaken after major elections, are based on the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), an international research program that collects comparable data on elections. Estimates of the total voter turn-out from these surveys may differ from those based on administrative data, shown in CO4.1. Highly educated people are defined as those who have attended university and low levels as those who have not completed secondary school.

A high voter turnout is a sign that a country's political system enjoys a strong degree of participation. While low voter turnout might reflect satisfaction in the country's management, it also implies that the political system reflects the will of a limited number of citizens.

Voter turnout rates in most recent parliamentary elections varied hugely across OECD countries (Panel A, CO4.1). Over nine in every ten people turned out to vote in Australia, compared to less than one in every two in Korea. The legal imperative to vote in some countries does not appear to explain much of the observed cross-country variation. Parliamentary voting is a legal obligation in Australia, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Mexico, parts of Switzerland and Turkey. Many of these countries also recorded low rates of voter turnout.

Voter turnout has generally declined in most OECD countries in the last generation (Panel B, CO4.2). Very large falls in voter turnout in the last generation were recorded in the Czech and Slovak Republics, Korea and the United States. Only four OECD countries have bucked the general trend towards lower voting turnout: Australia, Luxembourg, Mexico and Spain.

More educated people are more likely to vote than less educated people (CO4.2). However, the average OECD figure hides considerable variation. The voting gap between the highly and less well-educated populations is very large in the United States, Hungary and Poland. However, in a minority of countries, including Korea, Ireland and Chile, less educated people are somewhat more likely to vote than better educated people.

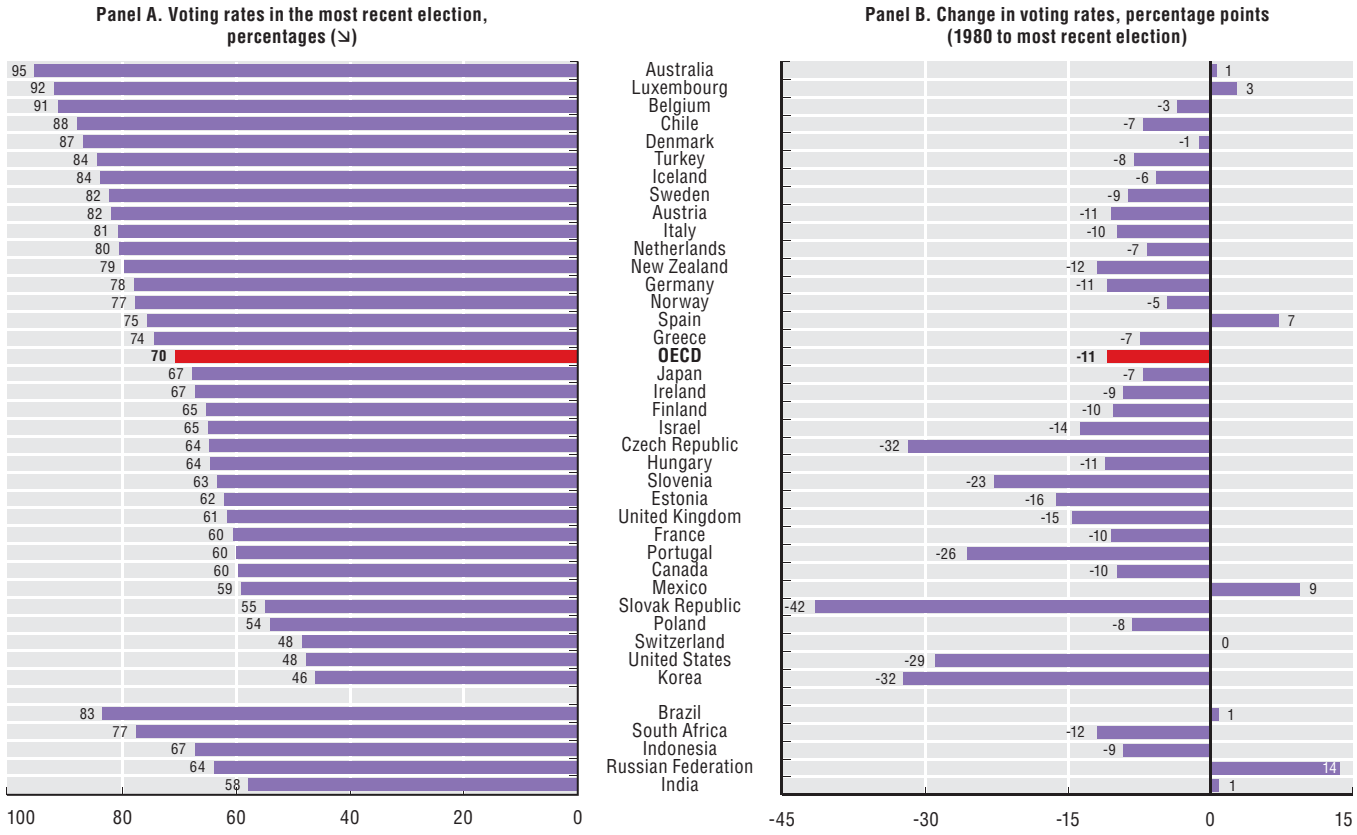
Older people are much more likely to vote than younger people (CO4.3). Especially large differences are found in Korea, Japan and the United Kingdom. Unusually, in Italy, Belgium and Australia there is a small tendency for the young to vote more than the old. The higher participation of elderly people in national elections, as well as the growing share of older people as population ageing takes place, may also influence the political process, increasing the risk of electoral sanctions for governments introducing cuts to social programmes that disproportionately benefit the elderly.

Figure note

Figure CO4.2: Low education refers to category 1-4 in CSES, from none to incomplete secondary and high education refers to category 7-8, university level.

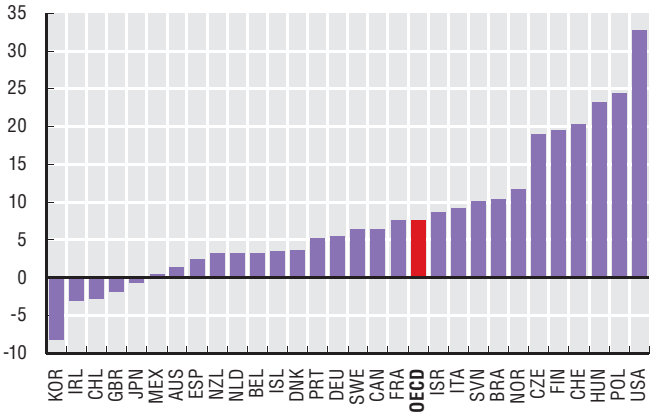
Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

CO4.1. Voting rates are generally falling



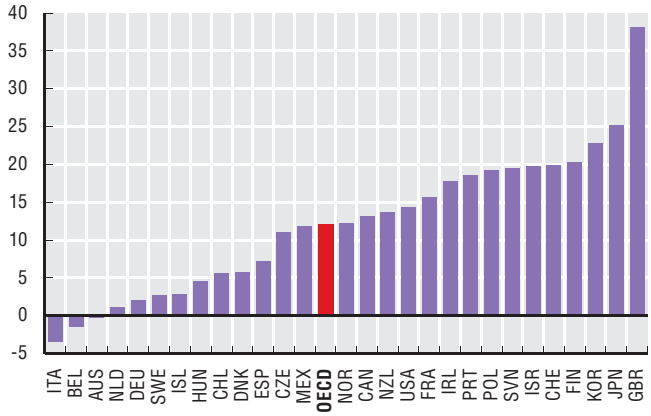
CO4.2. More educated people are more likely to vote

Percentage point difference in voting rates between high and low educated people



CO4.3. Older poeple are more likely to vote

Percentage point difference in voting rates between those 55+ years old and those 16-35 years old



Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) (*www.idea.int*), Module 2 and 3 of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) (*www.cses.org*).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932382121

5. Tolerance

Definition and measurement

Data on tolerance is drawn from the Gallup World Poll. The Gallup World Poll is conducted in over 140 countries around the world based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over in the entire country, including rural areas. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error. Sample sizes vary between around 1 000 and 4 000, depending on the country. The tolerance index is the ratio of the people who respond yes to the question of whether the city or area where they live a good place or not a good place to live for ethnic minorities, migrants, or gay or lesbian people to all people contacted.

The degree of community acceptance of minority groups is a measurable dimension of social cohesion. Acceptance of three such groups is considered here: ethnic minorities, migrants and gay and lesbian people.

Canada was the most tolerant country regarding average community acceptance of the minority groups (Panel A, CO5.1). Australia, New Zealand and the United States tended to be relatively tolerant as well. The Nordic countries were dispersed throughout the top half of the OECD. The less tolerant end of CO5.1 was dominated by southern and eastern European countries and the OECD Asian members.

There is little or no evidence that the onset of the crisis in late 2008 has presaged a fall in tolerance of minority groups (Panel B, CO5.1). On average, there was little change, with significant rises in tolerance in Slovenia, Austria and France offset by some large falls in tolerance in Italy, Turkey and Mexico.

In terms of groups, tolerance of ethnic minorities was the highest for almost all countries and lowest for gays and lesbians, with tolerance of migrants in between (CO5.2). There were very few exceptions to this strong ranking pattern by country. Exceptions included the Netherlands, Spain and Belgium, where higher numbers saw their communities as being more tolerant gay and lesbian people than ethnic minorities and migrants. Inclusive countries tended to be tolerant along all three dimensions. The country correlations of the three tolerance measures all exceed 0.83.

Country income was strongly and positively related to perceptions of community tolerance (CO5.3). By way of contrast, there was no relationship found between tolerance and income inequality. A further notable feature of the data is that "Don't know" responses on tolerance were often very high relative to other Gallup questions. Higher non-response rates were also a feature of lower tolerance countries, suggesting that this is a more sensitive question where tolerance is harder to find.

Figure notes

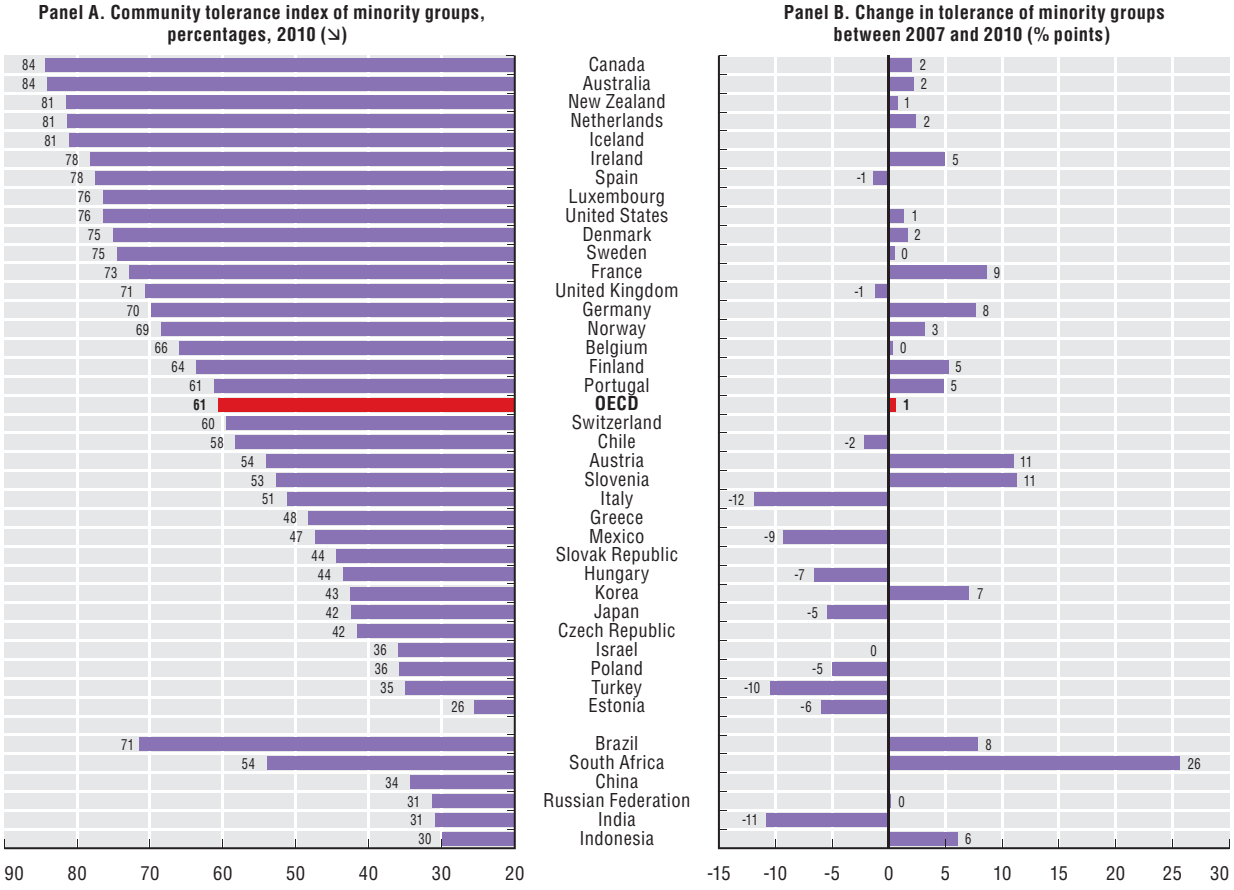
Figure CO5.1: 2006 for Switzerland, 2008 for Iceland and Norway, 2009 for Estonia, Israel and South Africa. Change refers to 2005/10 for Canada, 2006/08 for Norway, 2006/09 for Estonia and South Africa, 2006/10 for France, Ireland, New Zealand, Finland, Portugal, Chile, Austria, Slovenia, Korea, the Russian Federation and Indonesia.

Figure CO5.2: 2006 for Switzerland, 2008 for Iceland and Norway, 2009 for Estonia, Israel and South Africa.

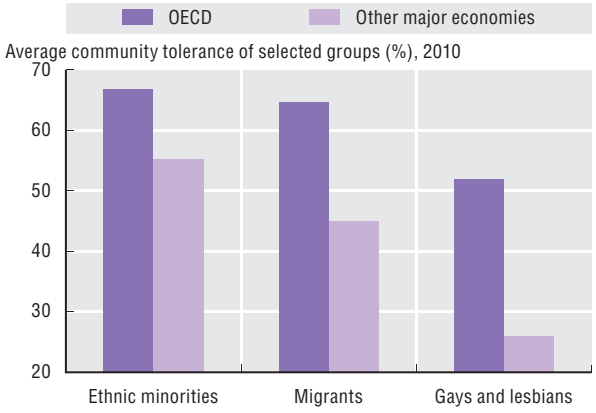
Figure CO5.3: Community tolerance of minority groups: 2006 for Switzerland, 2008 for Iceland and Norway.

Information on data for Israel: *http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

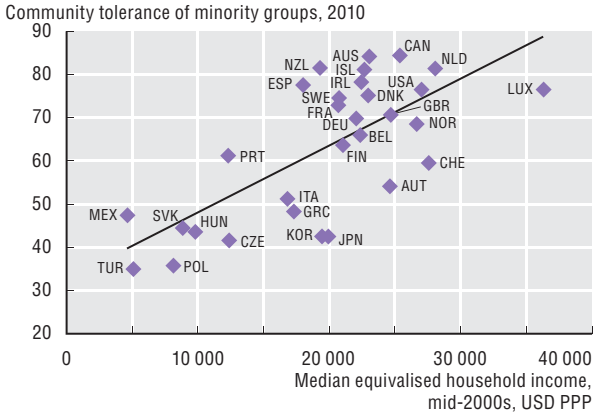
CO5.1. Tolerance of minorities is highest in Anglophone and Northern European countries



CO5.2. Tolerance is highest for ethnic minorities and lowest for gays and lesbians across the OECD



CO5.3. Richer countries have more tolerant communities



Source: Gallup World Poll (*www.gallup.com*), OECD (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries* (*www.oecd.org/els/social/inequality*).

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(81 2011 04 1 P) ISBN 978-92-64-09852-7 – No. 57985 2011

Society at a Glance 2011

OECD SOCIAL INDICATORS

This sixth edition of *Society at a Glance* updates some indicators, introduces several new ones, and features a special chapter on unpaid work. It includes data on the four newest OECD members: Chile, Estonia, Israel and Slovenia. Where available, data on Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Russia and South Africa are also included.

Chapter 1. Cooking and Caring, Building and Repairing: Unpaid Work around the World

Chapter 2. Interpreting OECD Social Indicators

Chapter 3. *Society at a Glance*: An Overview

Chapter 4. General Context Indicators
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- Migration
- Family
- Old age support rate

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- Education spending

Chapter 6. Equity Indicators
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Chapter 7. Health Indicators
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- Positive and negative experiences
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- Health spending

Chapter 8. Social Cohesion Indicators
- Trust
- Confidence in social institutions
- Pro- and anti-social behaviour
- Voting
- Tolerance

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Please cite this publication as:

OECD (2011), *Society at a Glance 2011: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD Publishing.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/soc_glance-2011-en

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ISBN 978-92-64-09852-7
81 2011 04 1 P

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