

# **Government at a Glance 2023**

## **Country Notes**

# France

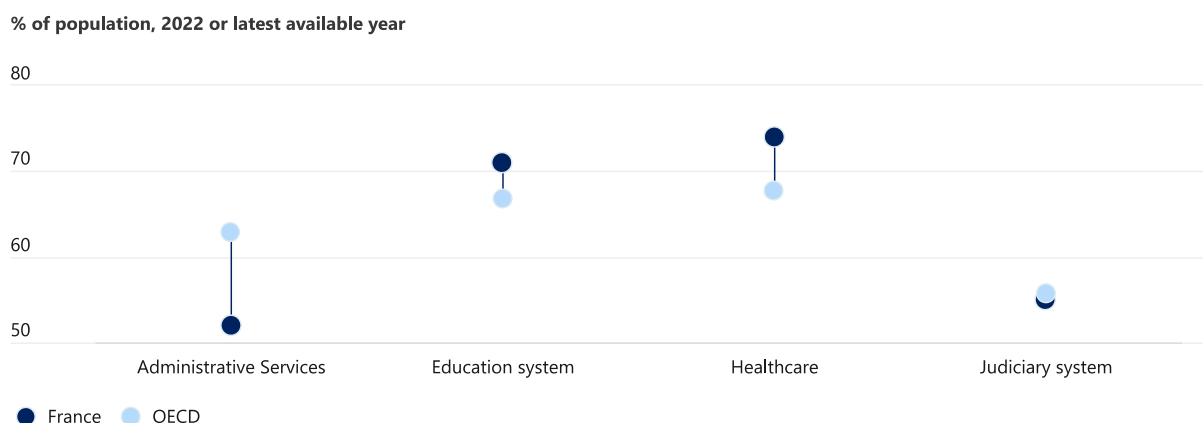
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## Trust and satisfaction with public services

Trust in public institutions and satisfaction with public services are important yardsticks of the quality of public governance. They reflect people's perceptions of government competence in designing and delivering policies and services, and expectations on the behaviour of public institutions and their representatives. Although high trust in public institutions is not a necessary outcome of democratic governance, trust and satisfaction with public services facilitate effective governance, as they correlate with high rates of compliance with policies, participation in public life and social cohesion.

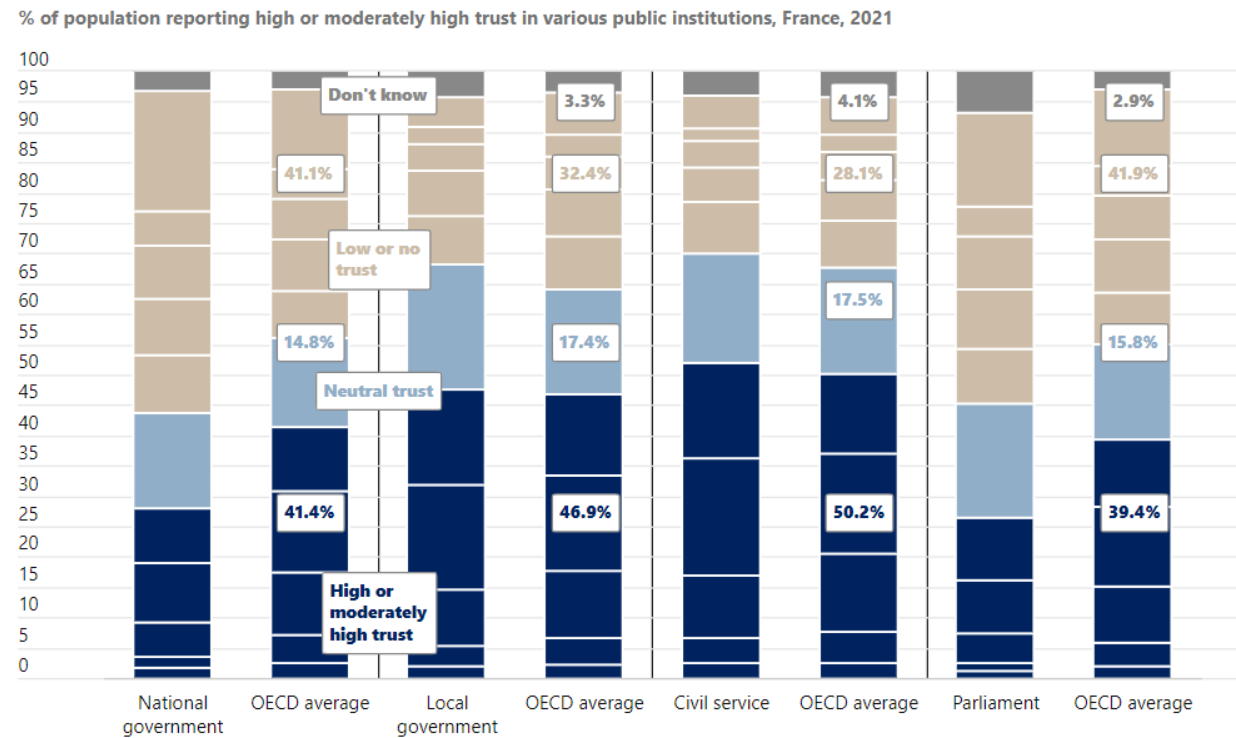
**France fares comparatively well on satisfaction with public services.** Approximately 74% are satisfied with the health care system and 71% with education, 6 and 4 percentage points higher, respectively, than the average values across OECD countries. However, the share of people satisfied with administrative services (52%) is 11 percentage points below the OECD average (63%).

**Figure 1. Satisfaction with public services, 2022**



**Just over one-quarter of French indicated high or moderately high trust in their national government (28%), below the average value across OECD countries (41%).** However, a majority of French people indicated high or moderately high trust in the civil service (52%) and almost half of them had high or moderately high trust in local government (48%). In cross-country comparison, France ranks above OECD average on trust in these two institutions. Only 26% of French indicate high or moderately high trust in the parliament.

**Figure 2. Trust in public institutions, 2021**



## Achieving results with good governance practices

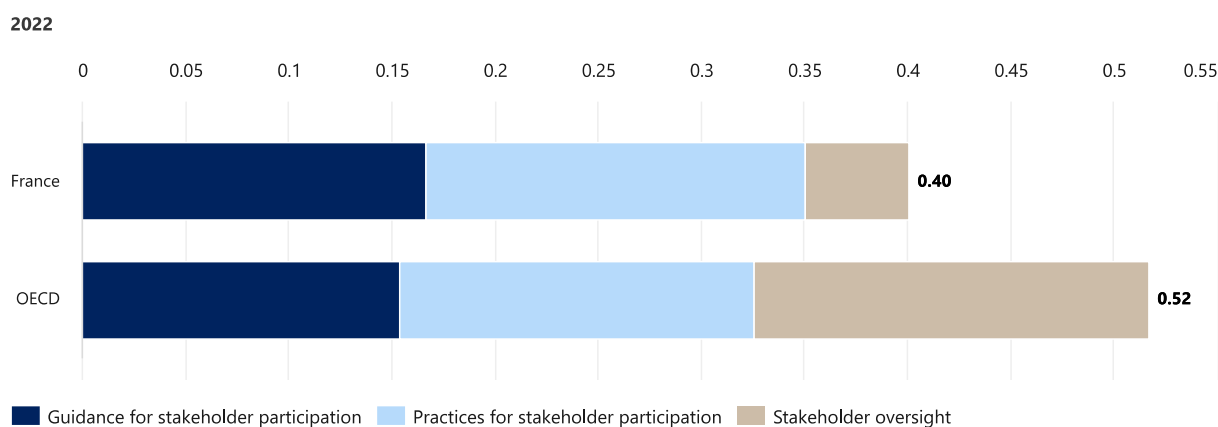
In an age of multiple crises, governments need to adopt more advanced practices to build trust in public institutions and enhance democratic resilience. Actions include building on democratic strengths, such as enhancing citizen and stakeholder engagement in decision making; reinforcing key competences to handle crises, such as budgeting and public financial management processes to address the green and digital transitions; and protecting against threats to democratic values, such as maintaining effective public integrity rules and promoting ethical use of artificial intelligence.

Citizen and stakeholder engagement in decision making helps to improve the design, implementation, and public acceptance of policies, infrastructure and services. The OECD Infrastructure Governance Index (IGI) on stakeholder participation provides an overview of countries' performance in developing national guidance for stakeholder engagement, promoting their effective participation, and ensuring stakeholder oversight over infrastructure projects.

**France scores 0.40 in the IGI on stakeholder participation, which is below the OECD average (0.52).** France scores close to the OECD average values in stakeholder participation guidance (0.17) and stakeholder participation practices (0.18). However, it scores 0.05, out of a maximum value of 0.33, in stakeholder oversight of infrastructure projects, significantly below the OECD average (0.19).

**Figure 3. Index on stakeholder participation in infrastructure decision making**

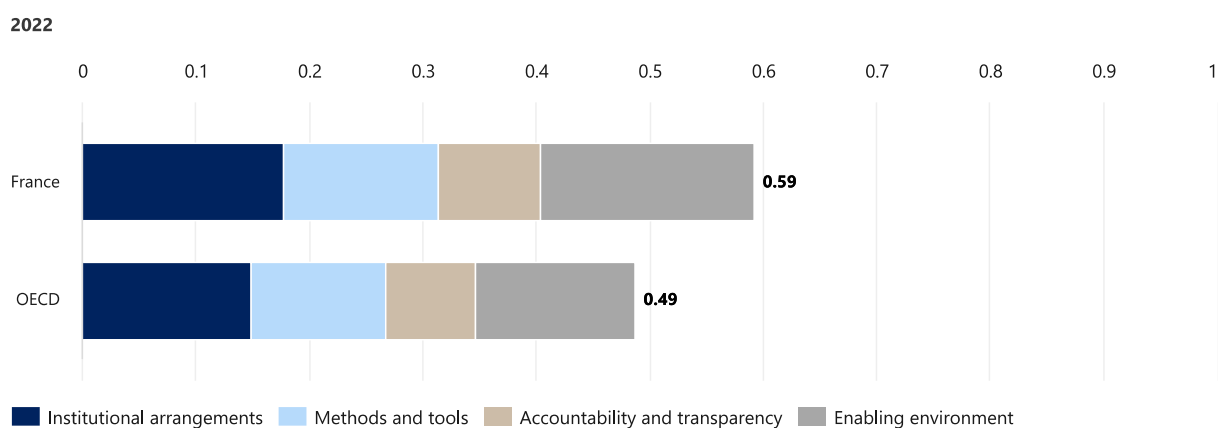
From 0 (lowest) to 1 (highest), 2022



Budgeting management processes, such as green budgeting, can help address the climate crisis and achieve environmental goals. While there has been a rapid increase in the number of countries implementing green budgeting mechanisms, these could be used more effectively. Green budgeting mechanisms include institutional arrangements to assess the environmental impacts of budgetary and fiscal policies, methods for evaluating their consistency, mechanisms to enhance transparency and accountability, and an enabling budgetary governance framework.

**France performs above the average across OECD countries in green budgeting.** It scores 0.59 on the OECD Green Budgeting Index, compared to 0.49 on average in the OECD (1 is the maximum possible score, meaning full application of green budgeting). France fares well in institutional arrangements, scoring 0.18 (out of a maximum value of 0.25), and in enabling environment, scoring 0.19. However, there is room for improvement in methods and tools, where France scores 0.14, and in accountability and transparency, where France scores 0.09.

**Figure 4. OECD Green Budgeting Index, 2022**

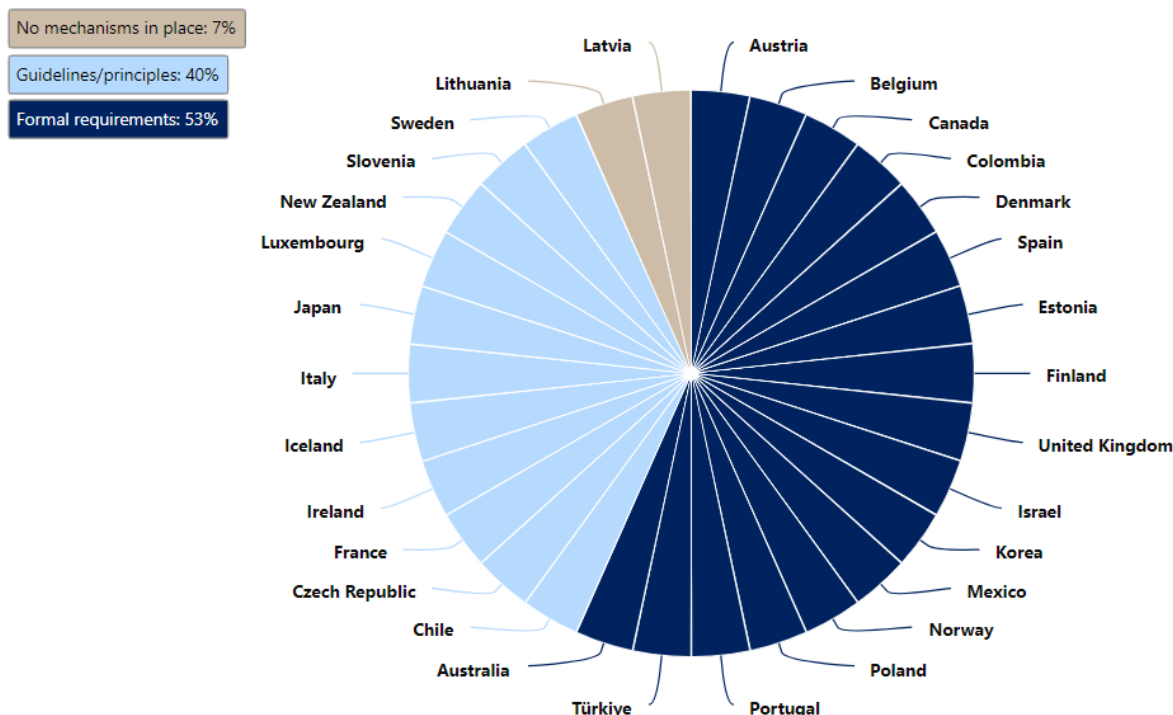


Financial contributions allow individuals and entities to support political candidates and parties. However, political finance needs to be adequately regulated to reduce risks of undue influence and policy capture.

**In France, publicly owned enterprises and foreign states or enterprises are not allowed to finance political campaigns and parties.** Additionally, anonymous donations to political parties or candidates need to be registered or reported.



**Figure 6. Mechanisms used to ensure the ethical use of artificial intelligence in government, 2022**

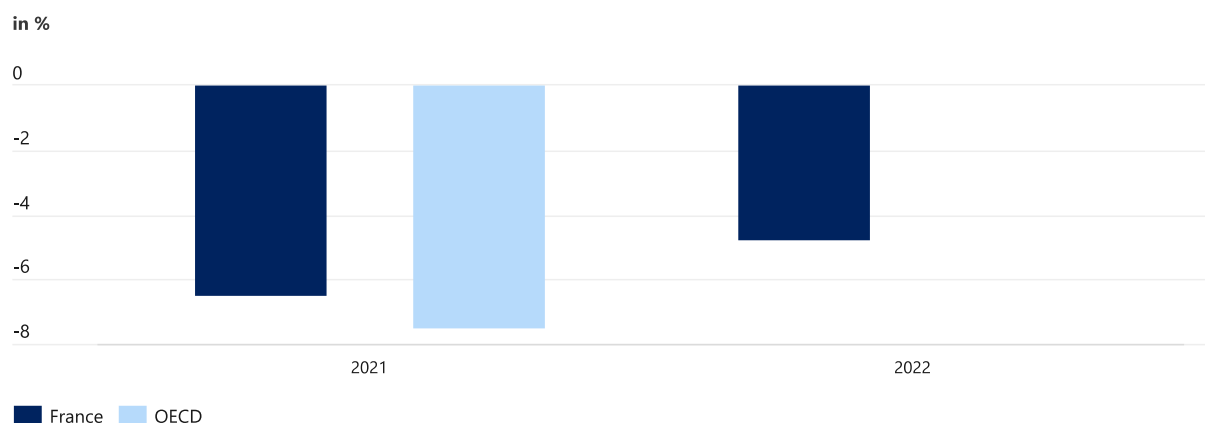


## What resources public institutions use and how they are managed

After stark deterioration due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which required emergency measures and direct support mechanisms to business and people, public finances show positive signs, but the recovery remains fragile. The fiscal balance is the difference between a government's revenues and its expenditures in a year. When the government spends more than it collects, it has a fiscal deficit. When it spends less, it has a fiscal surplus.

**In 2021, France had a fiscal deficit of -6.5% of GDP, slightly below the average across OECD countries (-7.5%).** The deficit was reduced to -4.7% in 2022, a significant reduction but still far from fiscal equilibrium. France's public debt in 2021 was 138.1% of GDP, which was above the OECD average of 120.8%. In 2022, the public debt was reduced to 117%.

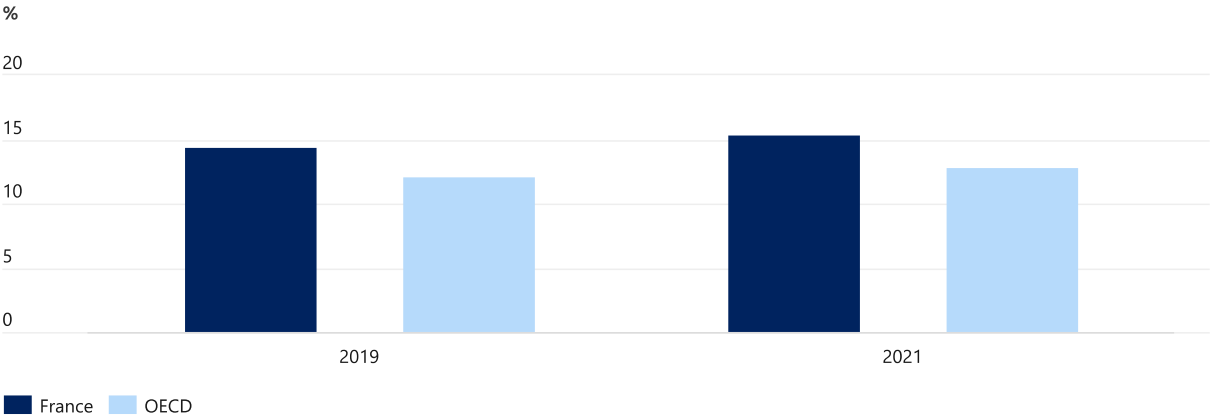
**Figure 7. General government fiscal balance as a percentage of GDP**



Public investment can enhance productivity and economic growth and help implement long-term policies, such as green energy infrastructure to support action on climate change. In turn, governments procure large amounts of goods, services and works to help them implement policies and deliver public services.

**France spent 15.4% of its GDP on procurement in 2021, which is above the average across OECD countries (12.9%).** France’s investment spendings are close to the OECD average. In 2021, it invested 3.7% of GDP, compared to 3.4% on average across OECD countries. No major changes took place in 2022 (3.9%).

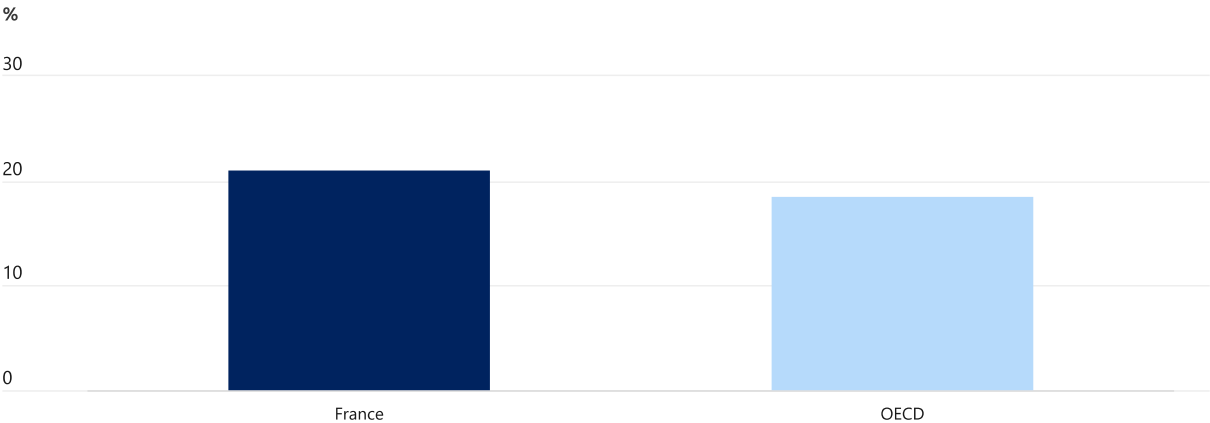
**Figure 8. Government procurement spending as a share of GDP**



The size of public employment varies significantly among OECD countries, ranging from around 10% to just above 30%.

**France has a slightly higher rate of public employment than the OECD average.** The size of public employment as share of total employment in France was 21.1% in 2021, compared to 18.6% on across OECD countries.

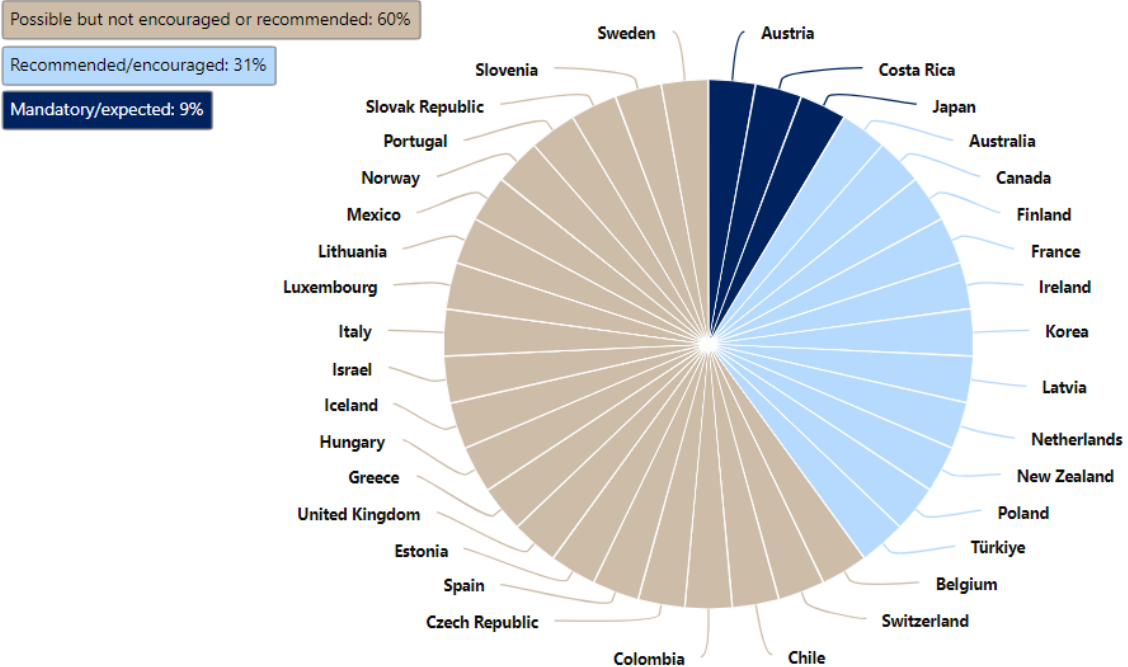
**Figure 9. Public employment as a percentage of total employment, 2021**



Governments use different mechanisms to harness and develop the capacity of their workforce. For example, internal mobility in public administrations helps to pool human resources across government and attract and retain civil servants.

In France, internal mobility of civil servants is recommended and encouraged. Similarly, internal mobility for senior-level civil servants is also recommended and encouraged. France has the practice of developing individual learning plans for all or most public employees.

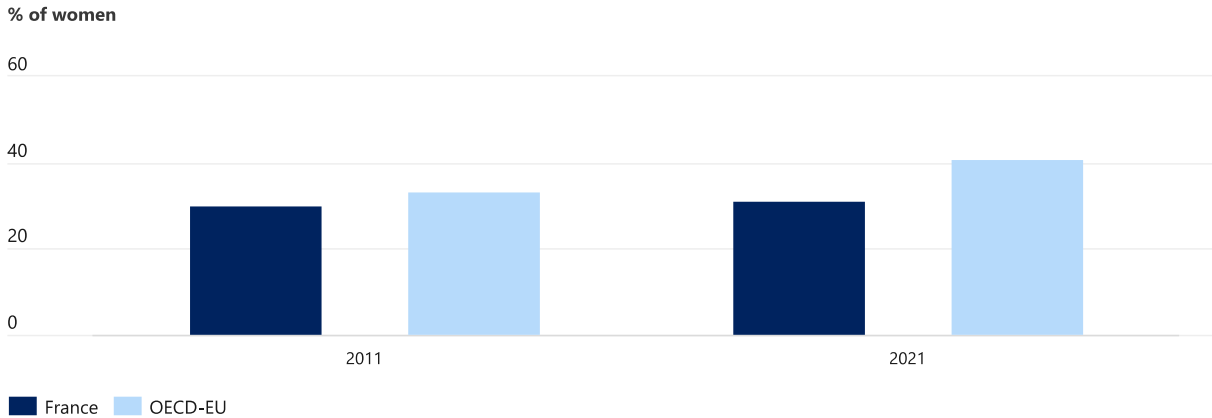
Figure 10. Mobility of civil servants across public administrations in central government, 2022



Equal representation of women and men in the public sector is a key indicator of progress towards gender equality, diversity and better representation. In 2020, a majority of employees in the public sector in OECD countries were women (58.9%), with large differences among countries. However, women are often under-represented in managerial positions.

France is slightly below the OECD average for gender equality in senior management in the national administration. With 31.1% women in senior management positions in national administration, France is below the OECD-EU average (40.8%). Moreover, France has not achieved gender parity in ministerial positions (35%). The result aligns with the OECD average (36%).

Figure 11. Gender equality in senior management positions in national administration, 2021

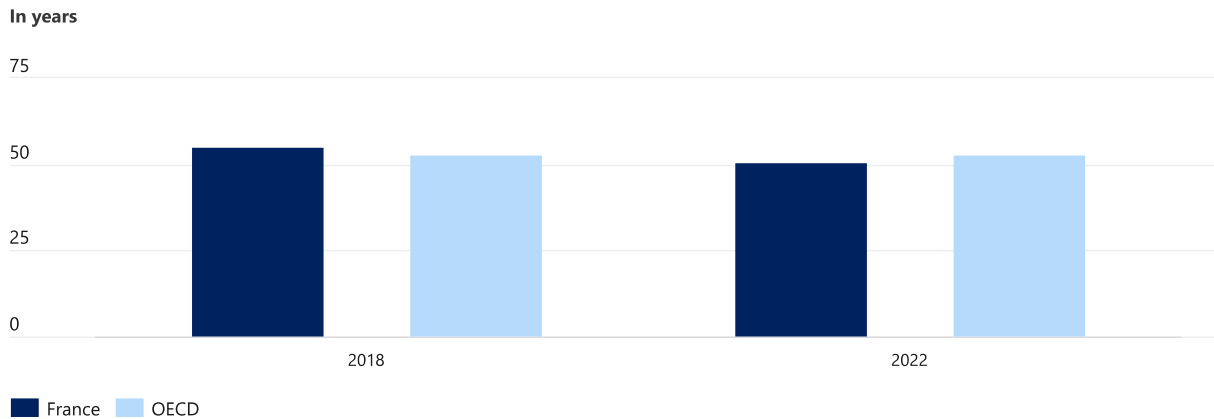




Young people are under-represented in public and political life across the OECD, with the risk that their voice and interests are not sufficiently taken in consideration in policymaking.

**In France, the average age of cabinet members in 2022 is 51 years, 4 years lower than it was in 2018 and 2 years below the OECD average of 53 years.**

**Figure 12. Average age of cabinet members, 2018 and 2022**



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### **About the report**

Government at a Glance presents the most up-to-date internationally comparable data on how public administrations function and perform in OECD countries, accession countries, and other major economies. Country factsheets highlight key indicators against the OECD average. Data included in the factsheets are derived from the new Government at a Glance data portal, which allows for a more user-friendly and interactive way of comparing countries with each other and the OECD average. The factsheets do not provide a comprehensive picture of public governance performance, but rather a snapshot of key indicators in the three sections of the publication: a) trust and satisfaction with public services; b) achieving results with good governance practices and c) what resources public institutions use and how they are managed.

### **Figure notes**

People who express satisfaction with public services: for the judiciary and the courts the data reflect the proportion of citizens who express having confidence in the institution. Data on satisfaction with administrative services come from the OECD 2021 Survey on the Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions. Data on satisfaction with the education and health systems and confidence in the judiciary are from the Gallup World Poll.

Data on public finance and economics are derived from the System of National Accounts (SNA) and were extracted on 5 May 2023.

Fiscal balance as reported in SNA framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.

Government gross debt is reported according to the SNA definition, which differs from the definition applied under the Maastricht Treaty. It is defined as all liabilities that require payment or payments of interest or principal by the debtor to the creditor at a date or dates in the future. All debt instruments are liabilities, but some liabilities such as shares, equity and financial derivatives are not debt.

Public employment refers to employment in the general government as defined in the System of National Accounts (SNA). Data on employment in general government were extracted on 17 April 2023.

Data on employment in general government for Iceland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Türkiye and the United States are from the International Labour Organization (ILO), ILOSTAT.

Data show women as a share of cabinet members who head ministries as of 1 January 2023 (excluding ministers without portfolios).

The data on age of cabinet members reflects the situation as of 20 December 2022.

OECD average refers to the unweighted average with the exception of public finance indicators.

For more information see

[www.oecd.org/governance/government-at-a-glance.htm](http://www.oecd.org/governance/government-at-a-glance.htm)