

Government at a Glance 2023

Country Notes

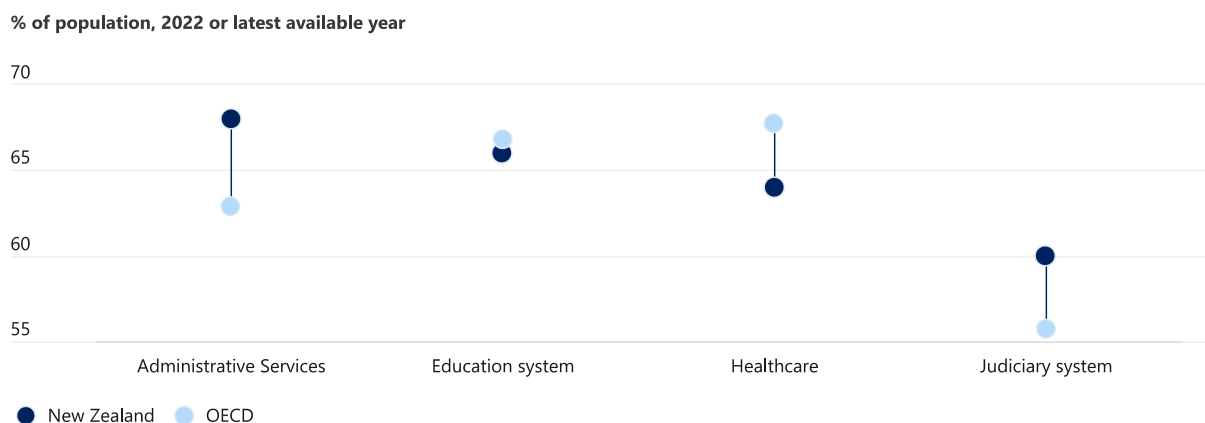
New Zealand

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.

A majority of New Zealanders are satisfied with public services. In 2022, around two-thirds of New Zealanders were satisfied with administrative services (68%), above the OECD average (63%). Most people are also satisfied with the education system (66%), and the health care (64%). While satisfaction with administrative services and education is above or in line with the OECD average, health care satisfaction is below the OECD average.

Figure 1. Satisfaction with public services, 2022

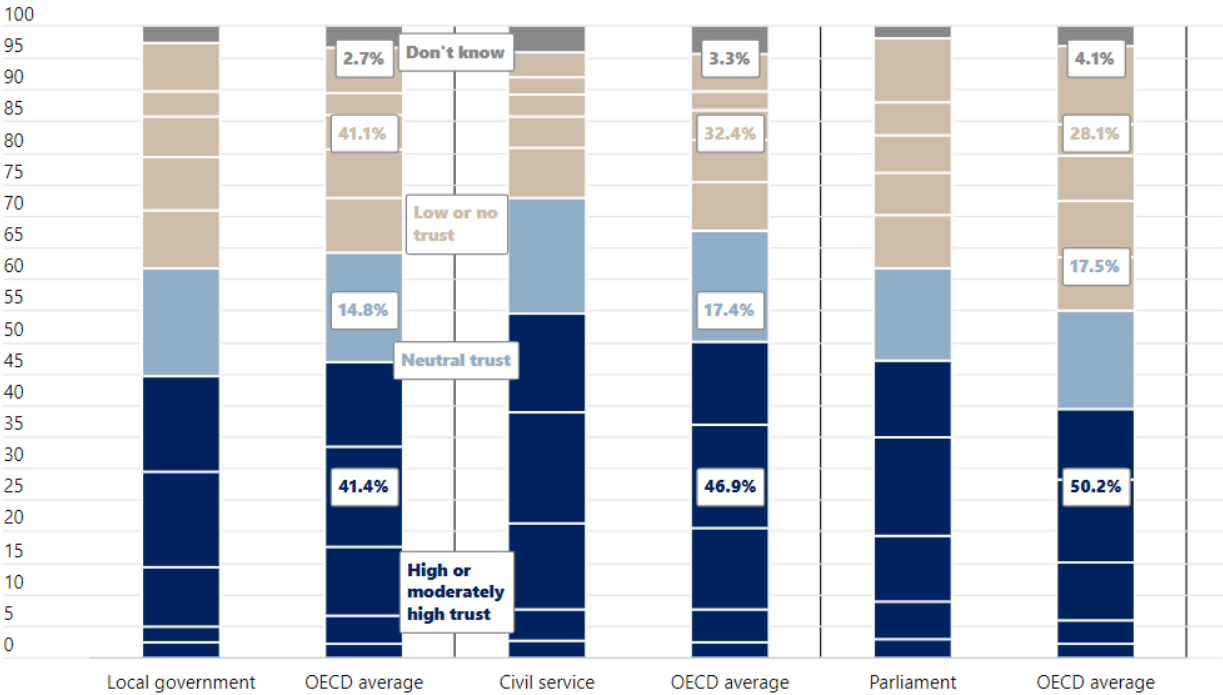


New Zealand performs above the OECD average in people's trust in the civil service and parliament.

A majority of New Zealanders (55%) indicated high or moderately high trust in the civil service, 5 percentage points higher than the OECD average (50%). Almost half indicated high or moderately high trust in the parliament (47%), 8 percentage points higher than the OECD average. Conversely, at 45% trust in the local government is slightly lower than the OECD average (47%).

Figure 2. Trust in public institutions, 2021

% of population reporting high or moderately high trust in various public institutions, New Zealand, 2021



Achieving results with good governance practices

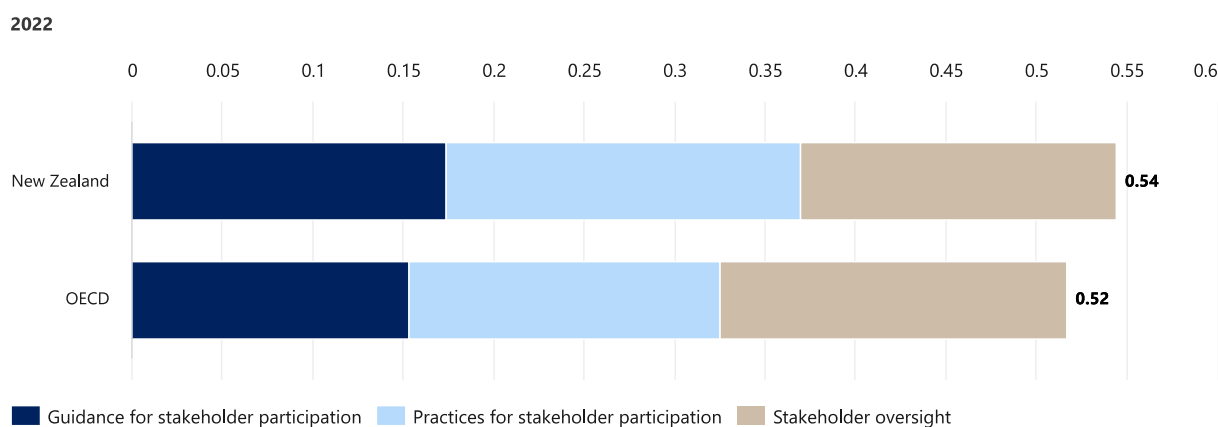
In an age of multiple crises, governments need to adopt more advanced practices to build trust in public institutions and enhance democratic resilience. Actions include building on democratic strengths, such as enhancing citizen and stakeholder engagement in decision making; reinforcing key competences 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.

New Zealand achieves a score of 0.54 in the IGI on stakeholder participation, which slightly surpasses the OECD average (0.52). The highest score for New Zealand is in stakeholder participation practices, at 0.20, higher than the OECD average (0.17).

Figure 3. Index on stakeholder participation in infrastructure decision making

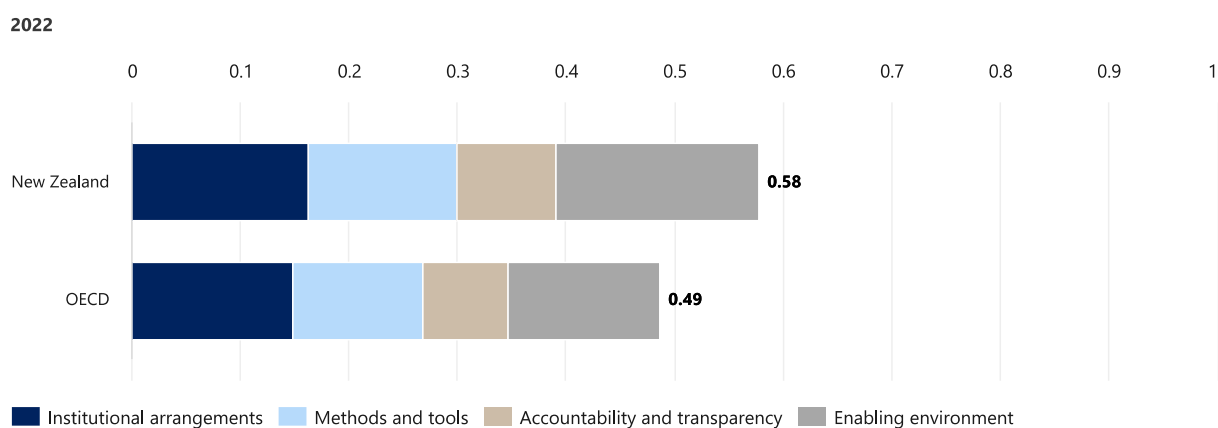
From 0 (lowest) to 1 (highest), 2022



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.

New Zealand is a strong performer in green budgeting, ranking higher than the average among OECD countries. New Zealand scores 0.58 on the OECD Green Budgeting Index, compared to 0.49 on average across OECD countries (1 being the maximum possible score, signifying full application of green budgeting). New Zealand fares comparatively well in all four dimensions of the index, although there is room for improvement in accountability and transparency, where the score is 0.09 (with 0.25 being the maximum score).

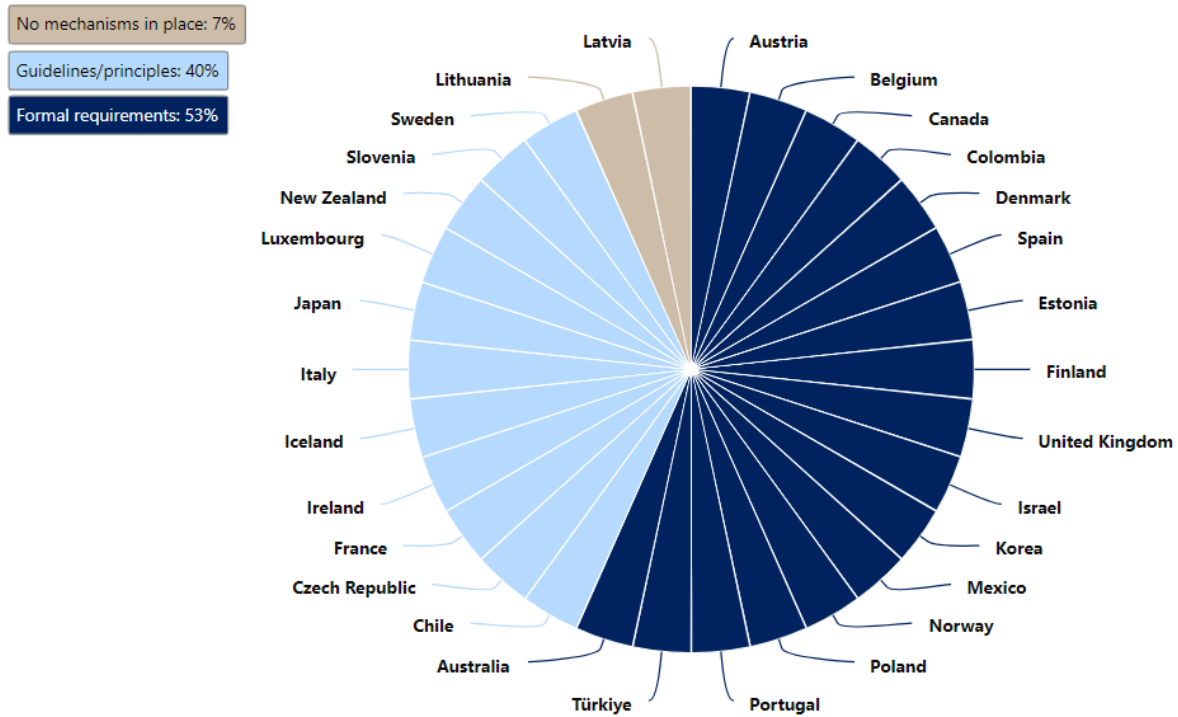
Figure 4. OECD Green Budgeting Index, 2022



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.

New Zealand has no regulations to ban contributions from private or public enterprises or foreign states to political parties and campaigns. Similarly, receipt of anonymous donations does not need to be registered or reported at or below NZD \$1500. Anonymous donations are not permitted above this limit.

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

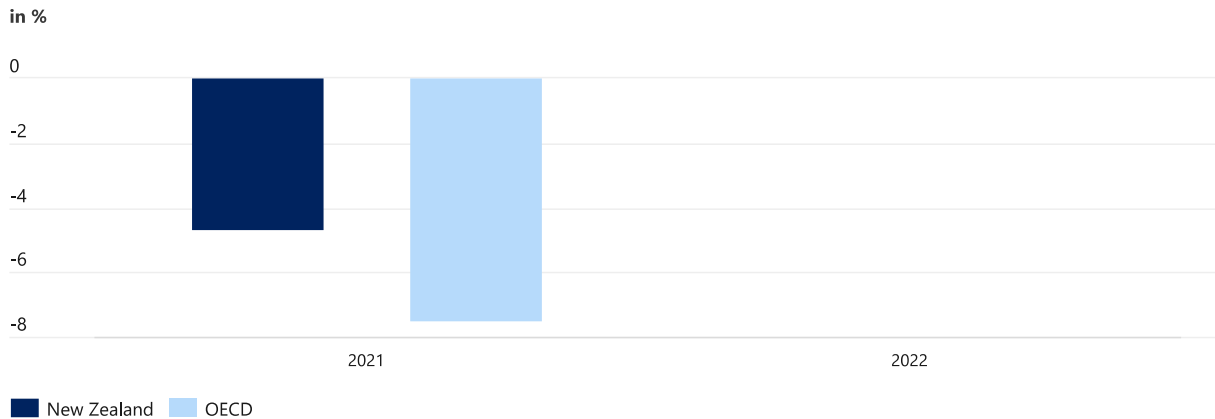


What resources public institutions use and how they are managed

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.

New Zealand had a fiscal deficit of -4.7% of GDP in 2021, below the average across OECD countries (-7.5%). In addition, New Zealand also has a comparatively low debt rate. In 2021, the debt was 53.3% of GDP, compared to 120.8% on average across the OECD. The debt rate marginally increased to 56.7% in 2022.

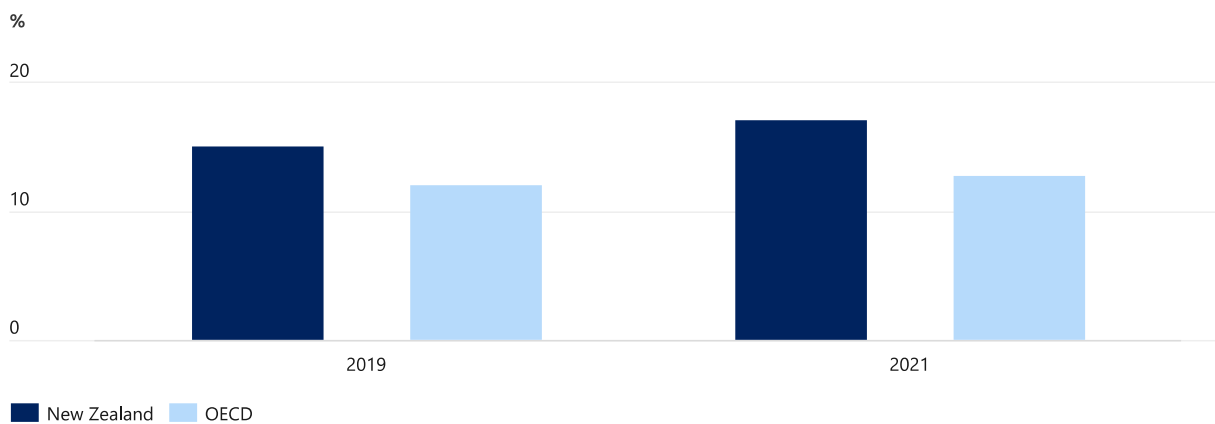
Figure 7. General government fiscal balance as a percentage of GDP



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.

New Zealand spent 17.2% of GDP on public procurement in 2021, which is higher than the OECD average of 12.9%. In addition, New Zealand’s public investment is higher than most OECD countries. In 2021, it invested 4.8% of GDP, compared to the average across OECD countries at 3.4%.

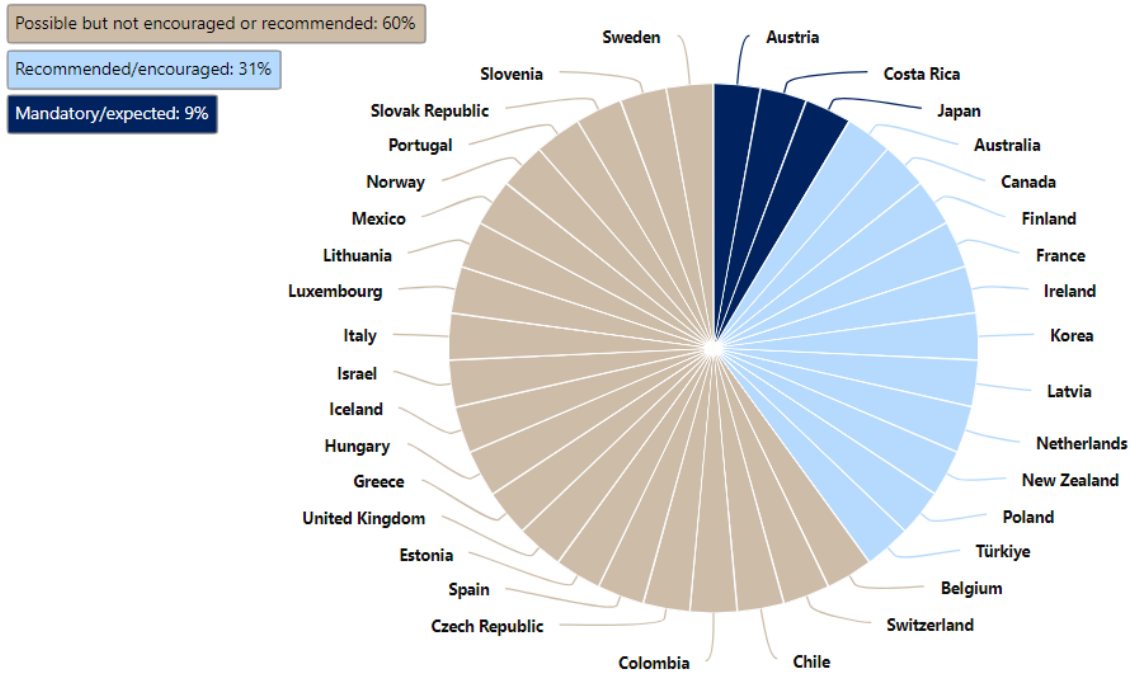
Figure 8. Government procurement spending as a share of GDP



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 New Zealand, internal mobility of civil servants is encouraged or recommended. Similarly, internal mobility is also encouraged or recommended for senior-level civil servants. New Zealand has implemented the practice of developing learning plans for most or all employees in the public sector.

Figure 9. Mobility of civil servants across public administrations in central government, 2022

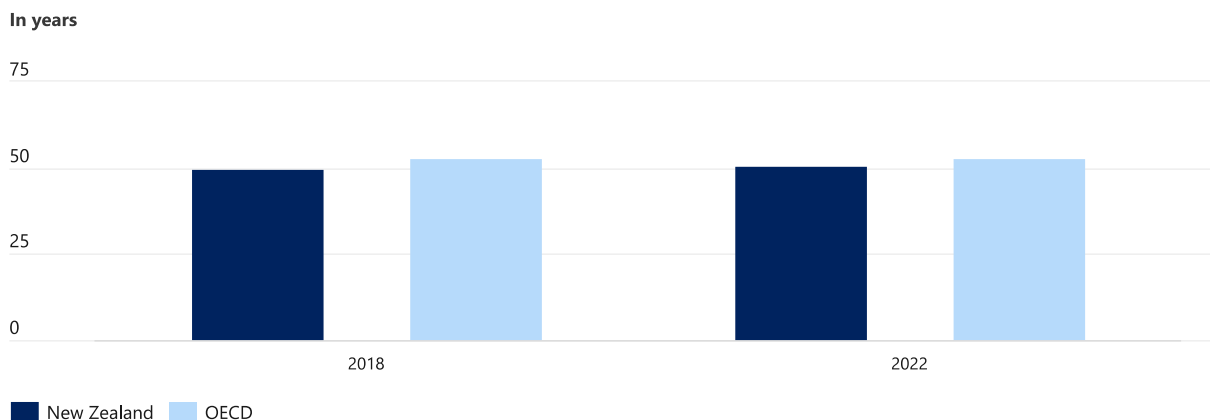


Equal representation of women and men in the public sector is a key indicator of progress towards gender equality, diversity and better representation. **New Zealand has almost achieved gender parity in ministerial positions (45% women) and surpasses the OECD average (36%).**

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.

The average age of cabinet members in New Zealand is 51 years, 2 years younger than the OECD average (53 years).

Figure 10. Average age of cabinet members, 2018 and 2022



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