# Government at a Glance 2023
Country Notes

Hungary

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.

Satisfaction with public services in Hungary is below the OECD average. An estimated 44% of Hungarians are satisfied with the healthcare system, 24 percentage points below the average across OECD countries (68%). Hungary (47%) is also below the OECD average on satisfaction with the education system (67%).

Figure 1. Satisfaction with public services, 2022

% of population, 2022 or latest available year


● Hungary   ● OECD
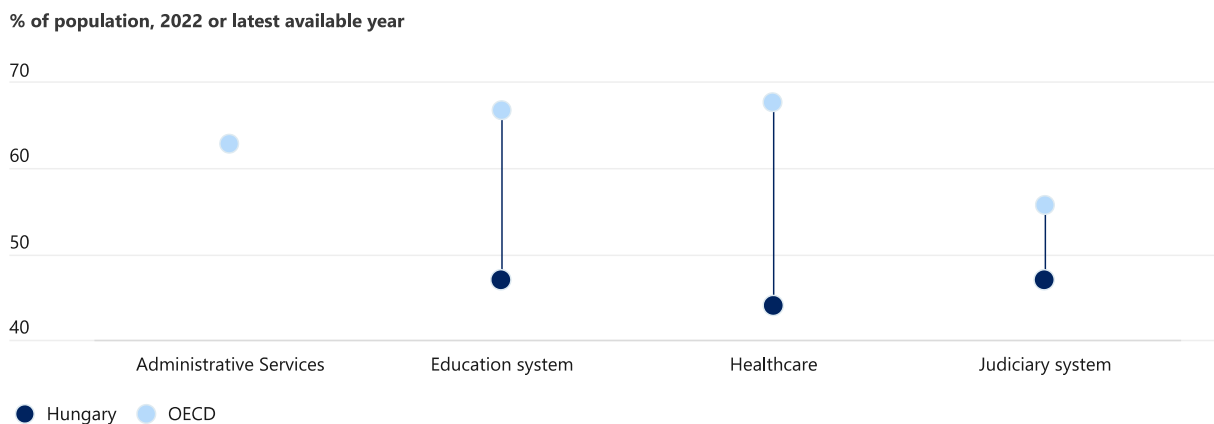
What resources public institutions use and how they are managed

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.

The fiscal deficit in Hungary was reduced from -7.1% of GDP in 2021 to -6.2% in 2022. The deficit is slightly lower than the average across OECD countries at -7.5% in 2021 but higher in 2022 than the OECD

average (-3.5). Public debt also decreased from 88.6% of GDP in 2021 to 76.6% in 2022. The level of debt is moderate in comparison to the OECD average of 120.8% in 2021.

Figure 2. General government fiscal balance as a percentage of GDP
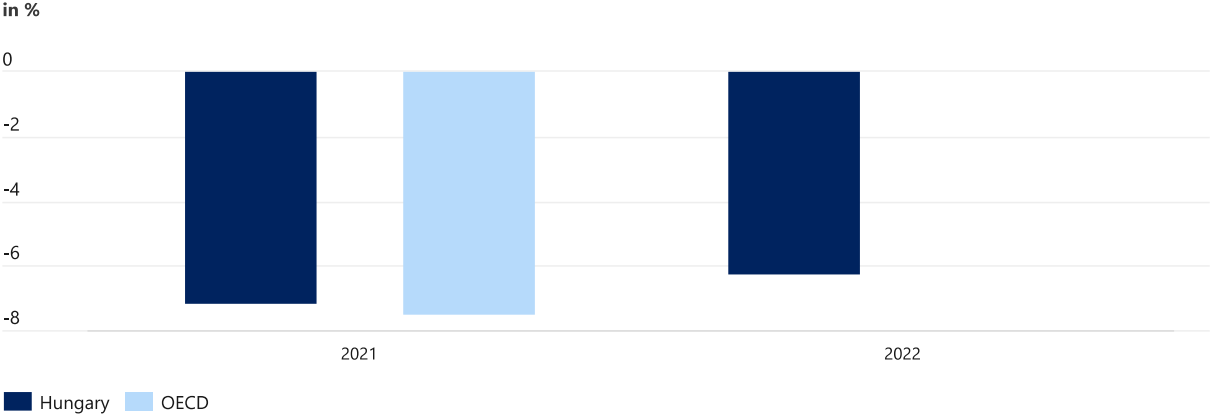
Public investment can enhance productivity and economic growth and help implement long-term policies, such as green energy infrastructure to support action on climate change. In turn, governments procure large amounts of goods, services and works to help them implement policies and deliver public services.

Hungary spends more than the OECD average on public procurement, 16.4% of GDP in 2021, compared to 12.9% on average across the OECD countries. Hungary has the highest rate of public investment of all OECD countries. In 2021, Hungary invested 6.6% of GDP, a share almost twice the size of the OECD average (3.4%).

Figure 3. Government procurement spending as a share of GDP
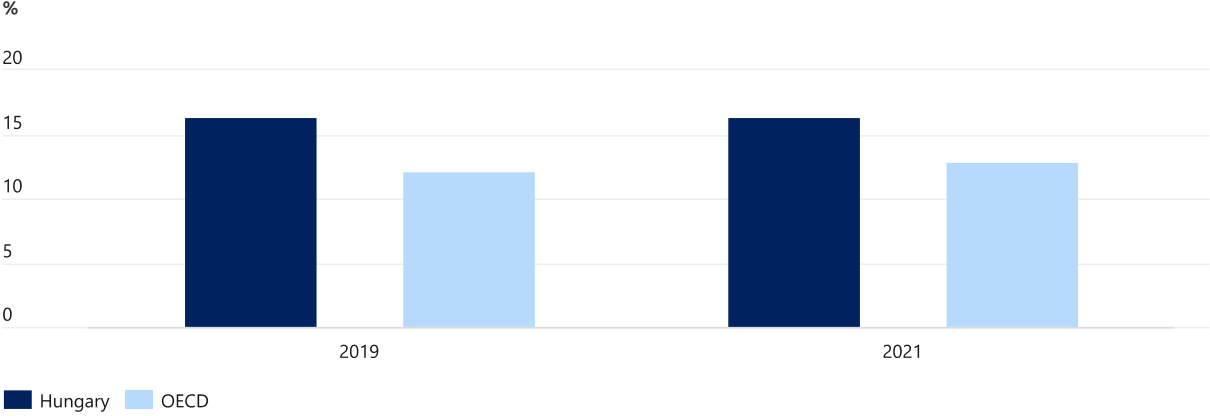
The size of public employment varies significantly among OECD countries, ranging from around 10% to just above 30%.

Public employment amounts to 19.6% of total employment in Hungary. This number is slightly higher than the OECD average (18.6%).

Figure 4. Public employment as a percentage of total employment, 2021
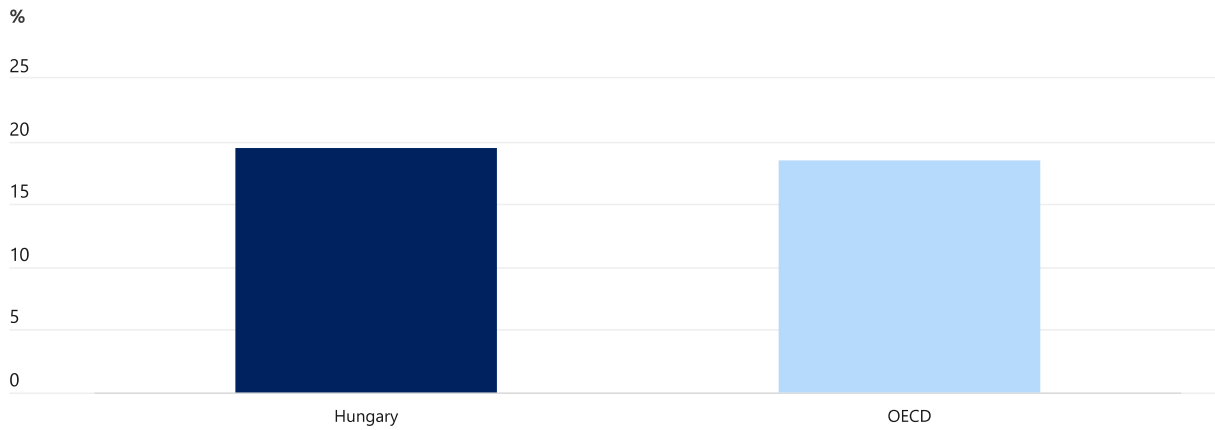
Governments use different mechanisms to harness and develop the capacity of their workforce. For example, internal mobility in public administrations helps to pool human resources across government and attract and retain civil servants.

Hungary is among the OECD countries where internal mobility of civil servants is possible, although not encouraged nor expected. Similarly, internal mobility for senior-level civil servants is also possible, although it is not encouraged or expected. Hungary has the practice of developing individual learning plans for all or most public employees.

Figure 5. Mobility of civil servants across public administrations in central government, 2022
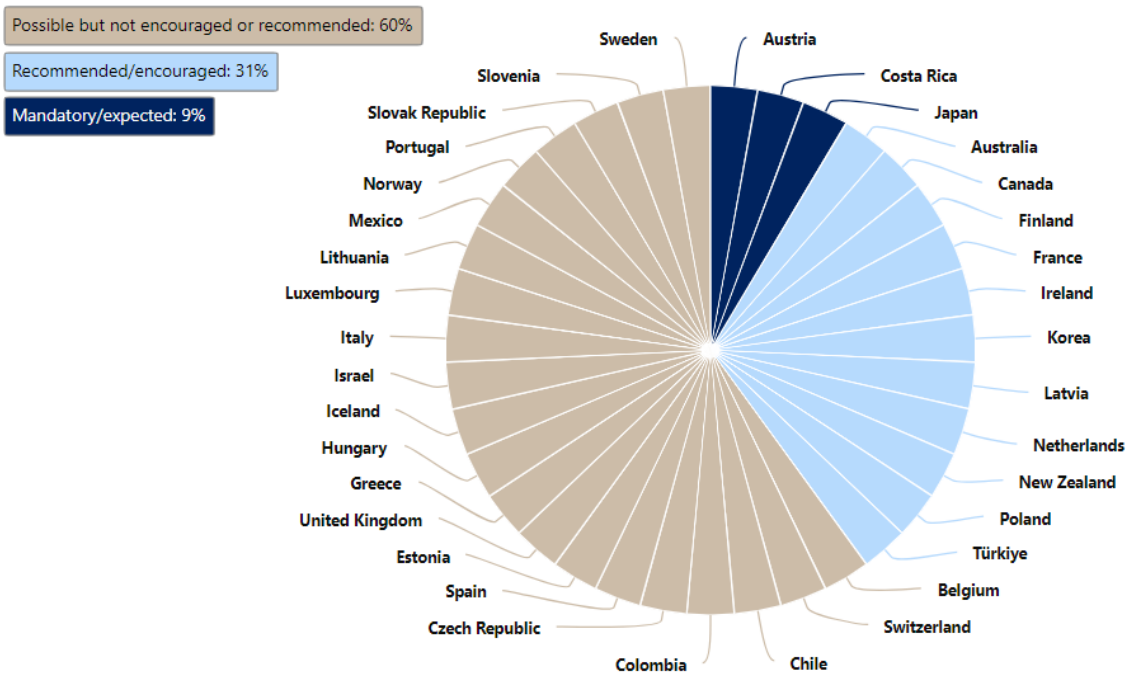
Equal representation of women and men in the public sector is a key indicator of progress towards gender equality, diversity and better representation. In 2020, a majority of employees in the public sector in OECD countries were women (58.9%), with large differences among countries. However, women are often under-represented in managerial positions.

Hungary is far from achieving gender equality in senior management positions in the public administration. In 2021, only 18.7% of senior managers were women, a decrease of 7.3 percentage points since 2011 and significantly below the OECD-EU average (40.8%). There is also significant room to improve women representation in ministerial positions as in 2023 only 9% of ministers are women, compared to an average of 36% across the OECD.

Figure 6. Gender equality in senior management positions in national administration, 2021

% of women

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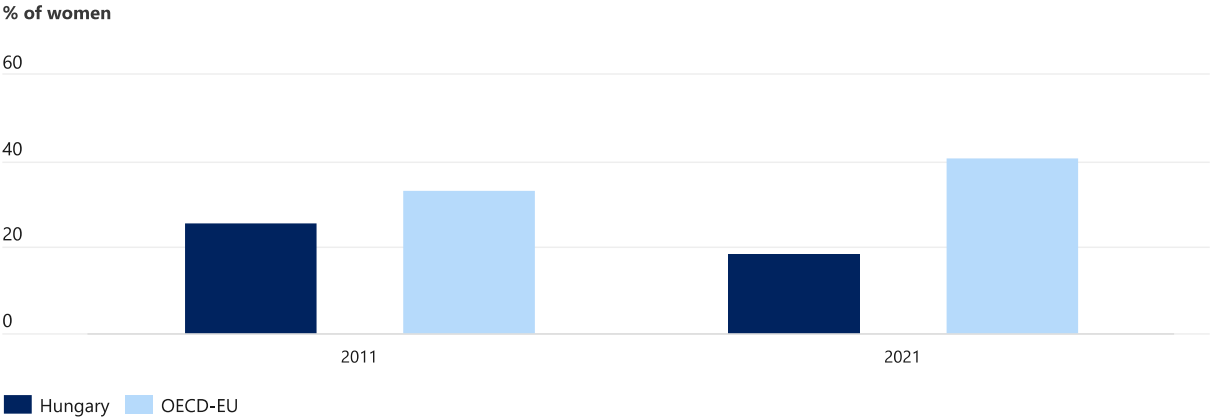
Young people are under-represented in public and political life across the OECD, with the risk that their voice and interests are not sufficiently taken in consideration in policymaking.

In Hungary, the average age of cabinet members – 54 years – is slightly above the OECD average (53 years).

Figure 7. Average age of cabinet members, 2018 and 2022

In years

■ Hungary ■ OECD
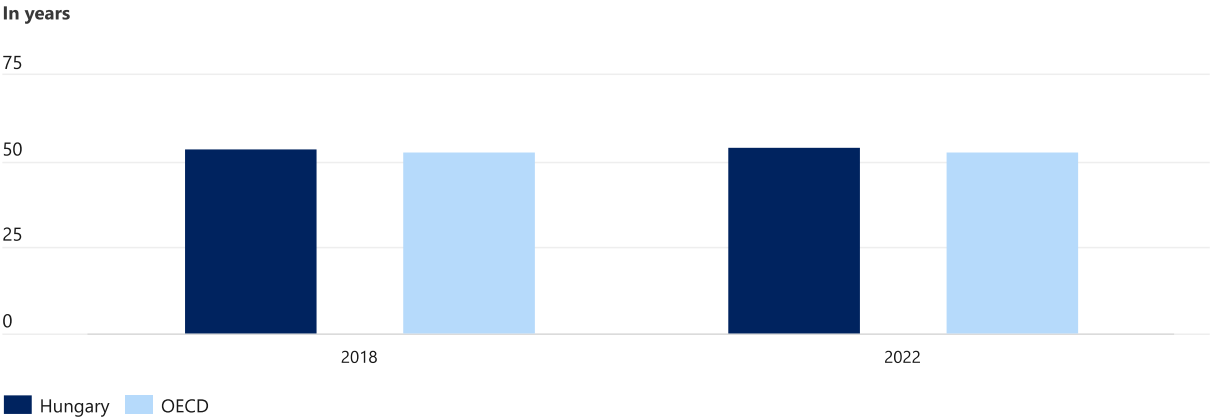
About the report

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 for satisfaction in administrative services are not available for Hungary.

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