



Joining Forces for Gender Equality

WHAT IS HOLDING US BACK?

Country note: Germany



Joining Forces for Gender Equality comprehensively analyses developments and policies for gender equality, including issues such as gender mainstreaming and budgeting, reforms to increase fathers' involvement in parental leave and childcare, pay transparency initiatives to tackle gender pay gaps, and systems to address gender-based violence. Increasingly, governments are paying attention to gender inequalities to more policy areas, including energy, the environment, foreign direct investment, nuclear energy, trade, and transport. Advancing gender equality is not just a moral imperative; it will strengthen future gender-equal economic growth and social cohesion.

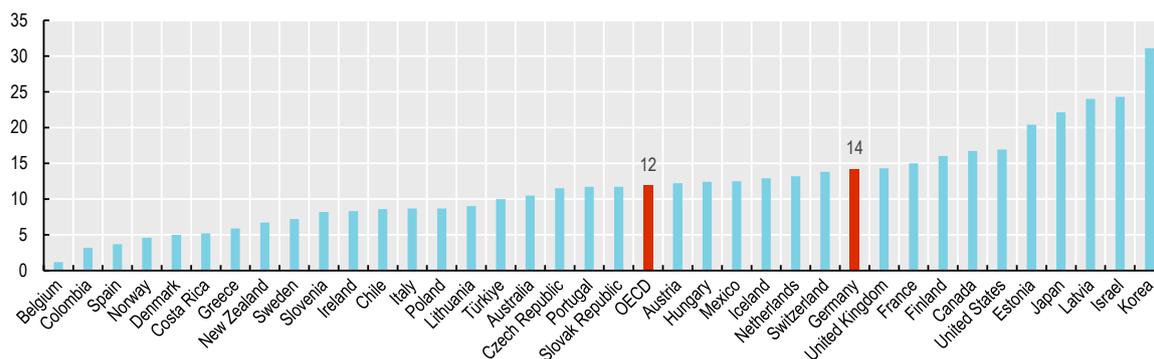
Gender equality in Germany

In terms of gender equality, Germany is a moderate performer relative to other OECD countries (see Table 1). For example, early in life, gender gaps in the school performance of young women and men are close to the OECD average. The gender gap in labour force participation is smaller than the OECD average, as is the share of women among managers. Although they make up more than half of public sector employment, German women are underrepresented in public leadership positions. Part-time employment is common among mothers (Chapter 13). In terms of self-employment, Germany is at OECD average.

The gender pay gap remains stubbornly persistent, stemming from longstanding structural inequalities, such as an unequal division of paid and unpaid work, women having the same skills but different jobs and responsibilities than men within companies, and occupational and sectoral segregation with an undervaluation of traditionally female-dominated jobs (Chapter 16). At about 14%, the gender pay gap for full-time earners in Germany is above the OECD average (Figure 1). This pay gap has decreased roughly at the same pace as in many other OECD countries. The introduction of new policy tools, such as regular pay gap reporting for private companies (Chapter 27), could help narrow the pay gap in future.

Figure 1. At 14%, the German gender wage gap remains above the OECD average

Difference between median earnings of men and women relative to median earnings of men, full-time earners percentages, 2021 or latest data available



Note: Data refer to 2021, or except for Belgium, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and Switzerland refer to 2020; for Ireland and Israel to 2019; and for Iceland, Slovenia, and Türkiye to 2018.

Source: OECD Gender wage gap indicator, available at <https://data.oecd.org/earnwage/gender-wage-gap.htm>. – [Figure 16.1].

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Table 1. Summary indicators of gender equality

	Education			Employment & Entrepreneurship			Governance		
	Gender gap in mean PISA reading scores (boys–girls)	Gender gap in mean PISA mathematics scores (boys–girls)	Share of women among masters' graduates (%)	Gender gap in the labour force participation rate (men–women) (p.p.)	Share of women among managerial employment (%)	Share of women among self-employed with employees (%)	Share of women among parliamentary representatives (%)	Share of women among public sector employment (%)	Share of women among central government senior management (%)
GERMANY	-26	7	54	8	29	25	35	56	33
OECD average	-29	6	58	11	34	25	34	58	37
Best female outcome	-52 (FIN)	-10 (ISL)	69 (ISL)	2 (LTU)	46 (LVA)	33 (NZL)	50 (MEX/NZL)	72 (SWE)	56 (LVA)
Worst female outcome	-10 (COL)	20 (COL)	35 (JPN)	40 (TUR)	13 (JPN)	12 (TUR)	10 (JPN)	25 (TUR)	4 (JPN)

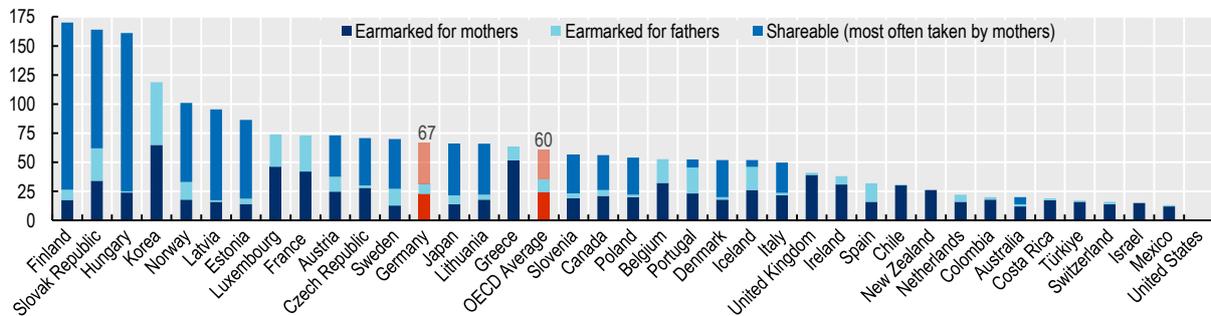
Note: Best and worst female outcomes are shown according to the size of women's share relative to the OECD average share or according to the size of the gap relative to the OECD average gap. Source: OECD Gender Data Portal, <https://www.oecd.org/gender/data/>.

Much of the gender difference in pay – as well as many other gender inequalities on the labour market and at home – emerge and widen once children arrive (Chapter 16). Mothers tend to take longer leaves of absence from work than fathers and sometimes only return to work part-time. This is particularly the case in Germany, where 36% of women work less than 30 hours per week (Chapter 13).

Participation rates in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) systems in Germany are just above OECD average (Chapter 24), and the capacity and quality of the ECEC-system could be further strengthened. Germany is one of the OECD countries that provides strong incentives for fathers to use (at least some) parental leave: Families receive two extra months if the father uses at least two months of leave (Figure 2). As a result, the use of parental leave by new fathers has increased from 21% in 2008 to 44% in 2019 (OECD Family Database). In addition, the introduction of 10-days of paternity leave is foreseen for 2024.

Figure 2. Germany incentivises fathers to take parental leave through bonus months

Duration of paid maternity-, paternity-, parental- and homecare leave entitlements, in weeks, April 2022



Note: Since April 2022, there have been reforms of parental leave systems in various countries, including Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Japan, the Netherlands and the Slovak Republic. In Japan, parents would have to take the “shareable” portion simultaneously (see Figure 23.1). Source: OECD Family Database, Indicator PF2.1, https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/PF2_1_Parental_leave_systems.pdf - [Figure 23.1]

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