

## Employment

Employment is a key factor in self-sufficiency. **On average, seven-out-of-ten working-age adults in the OECD area are employed** (Figure 5.1). In Iceland and Switzerland, more than eight out of ten are employed, compared with five out of ten in Greece and Turkey. Employment levels are generally above OECD average in Nordic and Anglophone countries, and they are below OECD average in Mediterranean, South American and non-Member countries, except in China.

**In every country, men are more likely in paid employment than women.** The gender employment gap is smallest (under 5 percentage points) in several European Nordic countries, Latvia and Lithuania. The gap is largest in Mexico and Turkey (over 30 percentage points) and still relatively high in Chile and Korea (around 20 percentage points).

**Labour market conditions generally continue to improve after the strong impact of the global economic crisis of 2008-09.** In 2017, the OECD average employment rate was almost 2 percentage points above its pre-crisis level in 2007. Employment levels increased particularly in Hungary and Poland (around 10 percentage points within 10 years), but they are still below pre-crisis levels in countries strongly hit by the crisis (Greece, Ireland and Spain).

The incidence of non-standard forms of employment is not a marginal issue. **In 2017, 16% of all workers were self-employed across the OECD on average, and a further 13% of all dependent employees had a temporary employment contract** (Figure 5.2). Self-employment is the most prevalent form of non-standard work in Greece and Turkey. Temporary employment also represents more than 25% of dependent employment in Chile, Poland and Spain. Non-standard work can be a “stepping stone” to more stable employment, but many non-standard workers are worse off in many aspects of job quality, such as earnings, job security, social protection or access to training.

Digitalisation is reducing demand for routine and manual tasks while increasing demand for low- and high-skilled tasks and for problem-solving and interpersonal skills. **Recent results from the OECD’s Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) reveal that 14% of jobs have a high risk of automation on average in the OECD** (Figure 5.3). Risks vary across countries, ranging from 34% in Slovak Republic to 6% in Norway. A further 32% of jobs have a low risk of complete automation but an important share of automatable tasks. These jobs will not be substituted entirely, but a large share of their tasks may, radically transforming how these jobs are carried out.

### 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 and measurement (cont.)

definition during a survey reference week. The basic indicator for employment is the proportion of the population aged 15-64 who are employed.

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. To be included in the group of temporary employees are: i) persons with a seasonal job; ii) persons engaged by an employment agency or business and hired out to a third party for carrying out a “work mission”; and iii) persons with specific training contracts (including apprentices, trainees, research assistants, probationary period of a contract, etc.).

Self-employment jobs are those jobs where the remuneration is directly dependent upon the profits (or the potential for profits) derived from the goods or services produced (where own consumption is considered to be part of the profits). Self-employment jobs include employers, own-account workers, members of producer cooperatives and contributing family workers.

National definitions broadly conform to this generic definition, but may vary depending on national circumstances. For more information, see [www.oecd.org/employment/database](http://www.oecd.org/employment/database).

Jobs are at high risk of automation if the likelihood of their job being automated is at least 70%. Jobs at risk of significant change are those with the likelihood of their job being automated estimated at 50-70%.

### Further reading

OECD (2018), *OECD Employment Outlook 2018*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/empl\\_outlook-2018-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/empl_outlook-2018-en).

OECD (2018), *The Future of Social Protection: What works for non-standard workers?*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [www.oecd.org/employment/future-of-work](http://www.oecd.org/employment/future-of-work).

OECD (2018), “Putting faces to the jobs at risk of automation”, Policy Brief on the Future of Work, OECD Publishing, Paris, [www.oecd.org/employment/future-of-work](http://www.oecd.org/employment/future-of-work).

### Figure notes

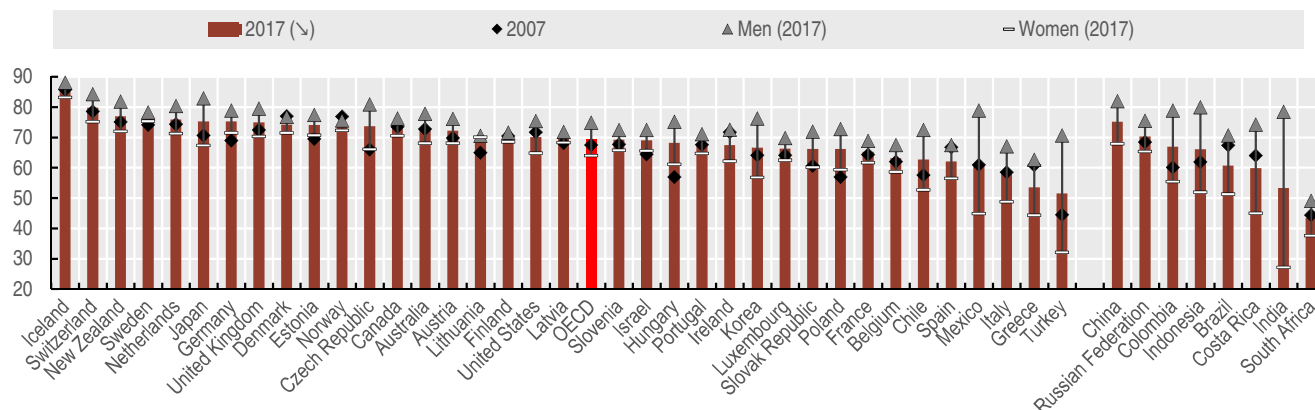
Figure 5.1: data refers to 2010 for China, 2012 for India.

Figure 5.2: no data on self-employment for Estonia, Iceland, Luxembourg and the Russian Federation; no data on temporary employment for Brazil, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand and the United States.

Figure 5.3: data for Belgium correspond to Flanders and data for the United Kingdom to England and Northern Ireland. OECD refers to a weighted average.

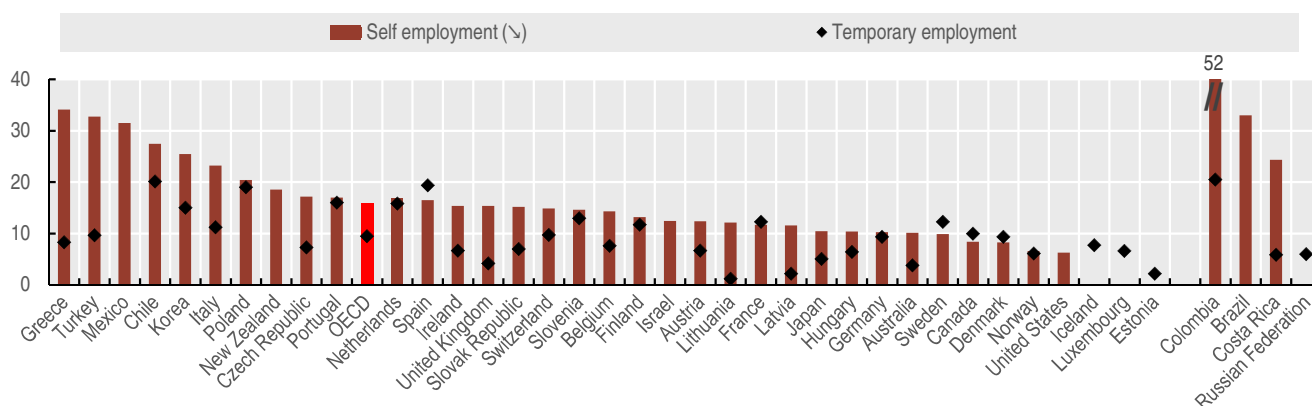
## 5.1. Employment rates are generally above pre-crisis levels

Employment rate, percentage of the working-age population (aged 15-64), by gender, 2007 and 2017

Source: OECD Employment Database, [www.oecd.org/employment/database](http://www.oecd.org/employment/database).StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933938743>

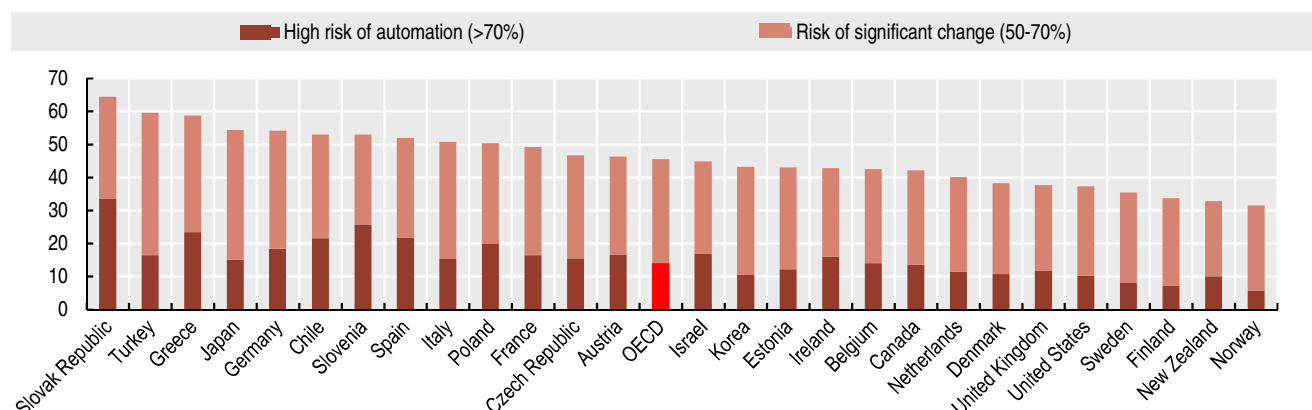
## 5.2. The share of non-standard workers is high in some countries

Self-employed workers as a percentage of all workers, and workers in temporary employment as a percentage of dependent employees, 2017 or nearest year available

Source: OECD Employment Database, [www.oecd.org/employment/database](http://www.oecd.org/employment/database).StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933938762>

## 5.3. One-third to two-thirds of jobs are at risk of automation or significant change

Percentage of jobs at risk by degree of risk of automation



Source: OECD calculations based on the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) (2012); and Nedelkoska, L. and G. Quintini (2018), "Automation, Skill Use and Training", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Paper No. 202.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933938781>



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