

Diversity and inclusion in the public service

Increased diversity and inclusion in the public service workforce has emerged as a priority for governments across the OECD in recent years. A more diverse workforce can enhance people's trust, strengthen democracy and bring public sector innovation, as different perspectives and skill sets contribute to designing solutions to policy challenges (Nolan-Flecha, 2019). Effective diversity and inclusion strategies require a foundation of merit-based employment policies, open recruitment systems and robust legal protection from discrimination. Building on this, many countries go further by identifying gaps in workforce representation to develop policies to attract and recruit employees from under-represented groups.

The pilot composite index presented in Figure 6.5 captures three dimensions: the diversity of the workforce, the availability of data for measuring and tracking diversity in public sector workforces, and the use of tools to attract and recruit diverse employees at all levels. Canada, Israel, New Zealand and the United Kingdom are the top four countries when all three elements are combined, while France, Greece, Hungary and Ireland are among the higher-scoring countries in the diversity component. Collecting diversity data can be challenging given data protection limitations in many OECD countries but Australia, Austria and Colombia score highly for collecting and centralising standardised records of disaggregated workforce data by age, gender, disabilities or educational level. Korea, the Netherlands and Switzerland are among the countries making the most use of tools such as dedicated coaching or internship programmes, or recognising bias training for managers and panel members, to actively engage with under-represented groups, encourage them to apply to the civil service and address biases in recruitment processes.

Table 6.6 details the use of targets and policies for specific under-represented groups. Targets are the strongest mechanism as they set specific measurable objectives. They are used by 24 out of 33 OECD countries (73%) for people with disabilities in the whole public service, while 14 (42%) have targets for gender balance in their whole public service, and an additional 7 OECD countries (21%) only target gender balance at the senior levels of the public administration. These targets are gaining momentum: only 37% of OECD countries had hiring targets for people with disabilities in 2016, and 29% for women (OECD, 2017). When it comes to other under-represented groups, such as people from disadvantaged or migrant backgrounds and ethnic minorities, countries tend to prefer policies over targets. France, Hungary, Korea and New Zealand are the countries making the most use of targets to address diversity in their public workforce.

Methodology and definitions

Data were collected through the 2020 Public Service Leadership and Capability survey and the 2020 OECD Survey on the Composition of the Workforce

in Central/Federal Governments. Most respondents were senior officials in central government HRM departments, and the data refer to HRM practices in central government. The survey was completed by all OECD countries except Chile and Iceland, one OECD accession country (Costa Rica), and Brazil and Romania. For this survey, public servants are defined as all government employees who work in the public service, who may be employed through various contractual mechanisms (e.g. civil servant statutes, collective agreements or labour law contracts), on indeterminate or fixed-term employment contracts, but not normally including employees in the wider public sector who are usually regulated under alternative employment frameworks (e.g. most doctors, teachers, police, the military, the judiciary or elected officials).

The pilot index is made up of the following dimensions: 1) the diversity of the workforce; 2) the availability and use of data to track diversity and inclusion; and 3) the use of tools to develop a diverse and inclusive workforce. Each dimension is built from answers to several related questions. The index ranges from 0 (low level of effort to develop a diverse central government workforce) to 1 (high level of effort). Further details are available in Annex E. The variables comprising the index and their relative importance are based on expert judgements. They are presented with the purpose of constructing a pilot index, and consequently may evolve in the future. Missing data for countries were estimated by mean replacement.

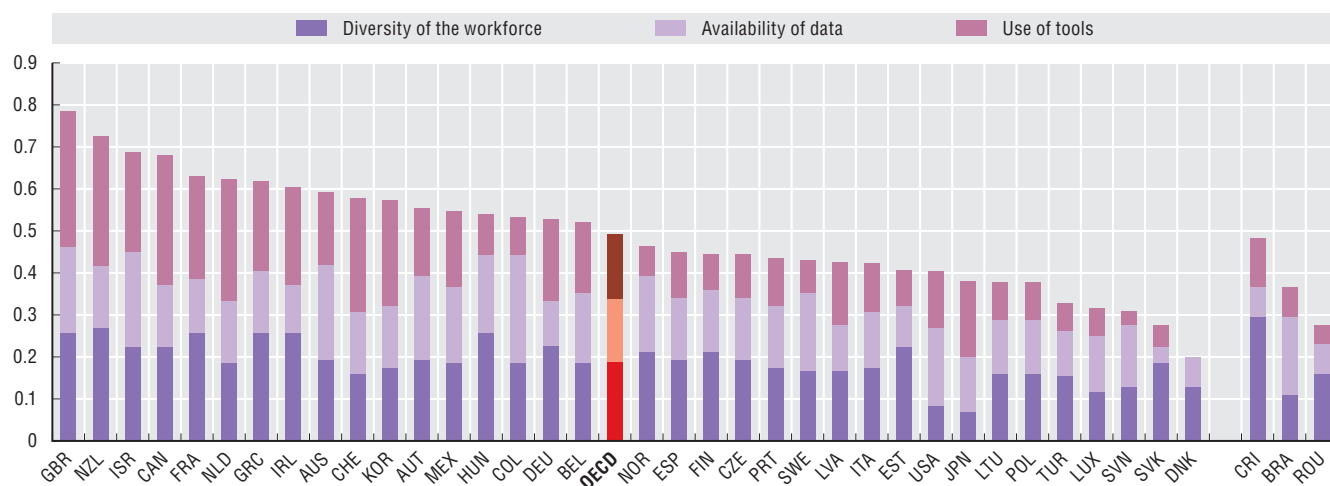
Further reading

- Nolan-Flecha, N. (2019), "Next generation diversity and inclusion policies in the public service: Ensuring public services reflect the societies they serve", *OECD Working Papers on Public Governance*, No. 34, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/51691451-en>.
- OECD (2019), *Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability*, OECD, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/%20en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0445>.
- OECD (2017), *Government at a Glance 2017*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2017-en.

Figure notes

- Data for Chile and Iceland are not available. Gender data for senior level public servants used in the indicator only refer to D1 for Austria, and D2 for Australia (see Annex D for more details on this classification).
- 6.6: Denmark and Sweden are not included because of the lack of common processes in the central administration.

6.5. Pilot index: Development of a diverse central government workforce, 2020



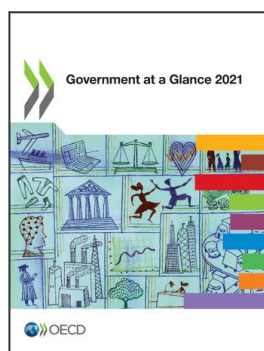
Source: OECD (2020), Public Service Leadership and Capability Survey; OECD (2020), Survey on the Composition of the Workforce in Central/Federal Governments.
 StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934258021>

6.6. Use of policies and specific targets to improve gender balance and the representation of under-represented groups in central government, 2020

	Women	People from disadvantaged social backgrounds	Ethnic minorities	Indigenous peoples	People with disabilities	People with migrant background	Young professionals	LGBTI	Veterans
Australia	■	○	□	■	■	□	□	□	○
Austria	■	○	○	○	■	○	○	○	○
Belgium	◆	■	○	○	■	○	○	○	○
Canada	■	○	■	■	■	○	□	○	□
Colombia	◆	□	□	□	■	○	■	○	○
Czech Republic	■	□	□	○	■	○	○	○	○
Estonia	□	□	□	○	■	○	□	□	○
Finland	■	□	□	□	□	□	○	○	○
France	■	■	○	○	■	■	■	■	■
Germany	■	○	□	○	■	□	□	□	○
Greece	□	□	□	□	◆	□	□	□	□
Hungary	■	■	■	○	■	○	■	○	○
Ireland	◆	□	■	■	■	□	○	□	○
Israel	■	○	■	○	■	□	○	○	○
Italy	□	○	○	○	■	○	○	○	○
Japan	■	○	○	○	■	○	○	○	○
Korea	■	■	○	○	■	■	■	○	■
Latvia	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Lithuania	○	○	○	○	■	○	○	○	○
Luxembourg	○	○	○	○	■	○	○	○	○
Mexico	◆	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	○
Netherlands	◆	○	□	○	■	□	□	□	○
New Zealand	■	○	■	■	■	■	○	□	○
Norway	□	○	□	○	■	□	○	□	○
Poland	○	○	○	○	■	○	■	○	○
Portugal	◆	○	○	○	□	○	○	○	○
Slovak Republic	○	○	○	○	□	○	○	○	○
Slovenia	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Spain	◆	○	○	○	■	○	○	○	○
Switzerland	■	□	□	○	■	□	■	□	○
Turkey	○	■	○	○	■	○	○	○	■
United Kingdom	■	■	■	○	■	○	○	○	■
United States	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	■
OECD Total									
■ Yes, targets for whole central/federal administration	14	6	6	4	24	3	6	1	5
◆ Yes, but the targets are only for senior level public servants	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
□ No specific targets, but policies in place	4	8	11	4	5	10	7	10	2
○ No policies or targets in place	8	19	16	25	3	20	20	22	26
Brazil	○	○	■	○	■	○	○	○	○
Costa Rica	■	■	■	■	■	■	○	■	■
Romania	○	○	○	○	■	○	○	○	○

Source: OECD (2020) Survey on the Composition of the Workforce in Central/Federal Governments.

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934258040>



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