

## Reader's guide

**I**n order to accurately interpret the data included in *Government at a Glance 2019*, readers need to be familiar with the following methodological considerations that cut across a number of indicators.

Starting with Chapter 2, individual indicators are presented in a standard format on two pages. The first page contains text that explains the relevance of the topic and highlights some of the major differences observed across OECD countries. This is followed by a “Methodology and definitions” section, which describes the data sources and provides important information necessary to interpret the data. Closing the first page is a “Further reading” section, which lists useful background literature providing context to the data displayed. The second page showcases the data. Figures show current levels and, where possible, trends over time. A glossary of the main definitions of the publication can be found in the final chapter of the book.

### Calendar year/fiscal year in National Accounts data

Unless specified, data from the OECD National Accounts are based on calendar years.

Data for Australia and New Zealand refer to fiscal years: 1 July of the year indicated to 30 June for Australia and 1 April of the year indicated to 31 March for New Zealand. For Japan, data regarding sub-sectors of general government and expenditures by Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG) refer to fiscal year.

The data based on the *System of National Accounts (SNA)* were extracted from the *OECD National Accounts Statistics (database)* and the *Eurostat Government Finance Statistics (database)* on 24 June 2019.

### Country coverage

*Government at a Glance 2019* includes data for all 36 OECD countries based on available information. The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Some additional non-member countries, such as Colombia, Costa Rica, and the Russian Federation\* (accession countries to the OECD) as well as other major economies (i.e. Brazil, People's Republic of China, India, Indonesia and South Africa) also supplied data for some indicators. Data for these non-member countries are presented separately at the end of tables and figures.

\*With regard to the Russian Federation, on 12 March 2014 the OECD Council “postponed activities related to the OECD accession process for the Russian Federation for the time being”. For more information, see <http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/statement-by-the-oecd-regarding-the-status-of-the-accession-process-with-russia-and-co-operation-with-ukraine.htm>

## Country Abbreviations

<b>OECD countries</b>			
Australia	AUS	New Zealand	NZL
Austria	AUT	Norway	NOR
Belgium	BEL	Poland	POL
Canada	CAN	Portugal	PRT
Chile	CHL	Slovak Republic	SVK
Czech Republic	CZE	Slovenia	SVN
Denmark	DNK	Spain	ESP
Estonia	EST	Sweden	SWE
Finland	FIN	Switzerland	CHE
France	FRA	Turkey	TUR
Germany	DEU	United Kingdom	GBR
Greece	GRC	United States	USA
Hungary	HUN		
Iceland	ISL	<b>OECD accession countries*</b>	
Ireland	IRL	Colombia	COL
Israel	ISR	Costa Rica	CRI
Italy	ITA	Russian Federation (hereafter "Russia")	RUS
Japan	JPN		
Korea	KOR	<b>Other major economies</b>	
Latvia	LVA	Brazil (participant to the OECD Public Governance Committee)	BRA
Lithuania	LTU	People's Republic of China (hereafter "China")	CHN
Luxembourg	LUX	India	IND
Mexico	MEX	Indonesia	IDN
Netherlands	NLD	South Africa (participant to the OECD Public Governance Committee)	ZAF

\* Note: With regard to the Russian Federation, see Note 1 above.

## OECD averages and totals

### Averages

In figures, the OECD average is presented as unweighted, arithmetic mean or weighted average of the OECD countries for which data are available. It does not include data for non-member countries. In the notes, OECD countries for whom data are not available are listed.

If a figure depicts information for one or more years, the OECD average includes all OECD countries with available data. For instance, an OECD average for 2007 published in this edition includes all current OECD countries with available information for that year, even if at that time they were not members of the OECD.

In the case of *National Accounts* data, OECD averages refer to the weighted average, unless otherwise indicated. Moreover, OECD averages are calculated through 2017 as not all OECD countries (mainly OECD non-European countries) have data available for 2018.

### Totals

OECD totals are most commonly found in tables and represent the sum of data in the corresponding column for the OECD countries for which data are available. Totals do not include data for non-member countries. In the notes, OECD countries for whom data are not available are listed.

## Online supplements

For several indicators, additional tables and figures presenting country-specific data or annexes with complementary information on the indicator methodology can be found online. When available, these are noted in the “Methodology and definitions” section of the indicator. *Government at a Glance 2019* also offers access to StatLinks, a service that allows readers to download the featured data’s corresponding Excel files. StatLinks is found at the bottom right-hand corner of the tables or figures and can be typed into a web browser or, in an electronic version of the publication, clicked on directly.

In addition, the following supplementary materials are available online at <https://www.oecd.org/gov/govata glance.htm>:

- country fact sheets that present key data by country compared with the OECD average;
- the *Government at a Glance* statistical database, which includes regularly updated data for a selection of quantitative indicators via OECD.Stat and the publication of qualitative data for the surveys collected by the Public Governance Directorate of the OECD via a dedicated web platform;
- country contextual notes that present contextual information describing some key features of the political and administrative structures for each member country.

## Per capita indicators

Some indicators (e.g. expenditures, revenues and government debt) are shown on a per capita (e.g. per person) basis. The underlying population estimates are based on the System of National Accounts notion of residency. They include persons who are resident in a country for one year or more, regardless of their citizenship, and also include foreign diplomatic personnel and defence personnel together with their families, students studying and patients seeking treatment abroad, even if they stay abroad for more than one year. The one-year rule means that usual residents who live abroad for less than one year are included in the population, while foreign visitors (for example, tourists) who are in the country for less than one year are excluded. An important point to note in this context is that individuals may feature as employees of one country (contributing to the gross domestic product [GDP] of that country via production), but residents of another (with their wages and salaries reflected in the gross national income of their resident country).

## Purchasing power parities

Purchasing power parities (PPPs) are the rates of currency conversion that equalise the purchasing power of different countries by eliminating differences in price levels between countries. When converted by means of PPPs, expenditures across countries are in effect expressed at the same set of prices, meaning that an equivalent bundle of goods and services will have the same cost in both countries, enabling comparisons across countries that reflect only the differences in the volume of goods and services purchased.

PPPs for current and historical series are produced and updated by the OECD with a specific procedure. PPPs for a given year T are published in five steps:

1. At T+2 months: first PPP estimates, for GDP only
2. At T+6 months: second PPP estimates, based on detailed extrapolations, for GDP, households’ actual individual consumption (AIC) and individual household consumption (IHC)
3. At T+12 months: third PPP estimates, incorporating all price and expenditure data for year T

4. At T+24 months: fourth PPP estimates, incorporating updated expenditure estimates
5. At T+36 months: final PPP estimates for year T

Historical PPP data until 2012 may be revised in December each year in order to incorporate revisions in National Accounts' deflators. In December 2016, historical PPP data until 2012 were exceptionally revised for all European countries.

Additional information is also available at [www.oecd.org/std/prices-ppp](http://www.oecd.org/std/prices-ppp)

## Composite indicators

This publication includes several descriptive composite indices in narrowly defined areas related to gender budgeting, regulatory governance and open government data. These composite indexes are a practical way of summarising discrete, qualitative information. The composites presented in this publication were created in accordance with the steps identified in the *Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators* (Nardo, et al., 2008).

Details about the methodology used to construct the composite indicators are available in Annex E. While the composite indicators were developed in co-operation with OECD countries and are based on theory and/or best practices, the variables included in the indexes and their relative weights are based on expert judgments and, as a result, may change over time.

## Signs and acronyms

Sign/acronym	Meaning
..	Missing values
x	Not applicable (unless otherwise stated)
ADR	Alternative dispute resolutions
CBA	Central budget authority
COFOG	Classification of the functions of government
CIO	Chief information officer
CPA	Central public administration
GDP	Gross domestic product
GFS	Government Financial Statistics
GFSM	Government Finance Statistics Manual
HR	Human resources
HRM	Human resources management
ICT	Information and communication technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IODC	International Open Data Charter
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
IT	Information technology
OCSC	Office of the Civil Service Commission
OGD	Open government data
PBO	Parliamentary budget offices
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
p.p.	Percentage points
PPPs	Purchasing power parities / private-public partnerships
PR	Proportional representation
PRP	Performance-related pay
R&D	Research and development
SCS	Senior civil servants
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDRs	Special drawing rights
SHRM	Strategic human resources management
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SNA	System of National Accounts
VAT	Value-added tax
WEO	World Economic Outlook
WJP	World Justice Project



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