

### 11. Employment of women in central government

Many OECD member countries have established policies aimed at increasing female participation in the government workforce, especially at managerial levels, to increase equity, diversity and the size of the labour pool.

The data show a persistent increase in women's participation in central government employment between 1995 and 2005. While women represent between 40% and 50% of the total labour force in most OECD member countries, female participation in the central government workforce varies much more across countries, from 70% in Poland to just over 10% in Turkey. In most countries for which data are available, women are better represented in the central government workforce than in the general labour force. However, women are relatively underrepresented in the central government workforce in Switzerland, Germany, Japan and Turkey, where they make up less than one-third of all workers. This may be a result of the responsibilities of central government in these countries, which can affect the type of positions available. For example, in Germany, a large number of central government employees work in defence or police positions with a traditionally low share of female employees. In comparison, women represent 52% of the government workforce in Germany when employment at the sub-central level is also considered.

Women are less represented at more senior levels than they are in the general central government workforce. Here again, the situation differs across countries. Whereas over a third of all senior employees in Greece, New Zealand, Mexico and Portugal are women, women represent less than 5% of senior managers in Korea and Japan. In comparison, women are usually more strongly represented at lower levels or in administrative posts. In 10 of the 15 countries for which data are available, women are over-represented in administrative positions when compared to the general central government workforce.

#### Methodology and definitions

Data refer to 2005 and were collected through the 2006 OECD Strategic Human Resource Management in Government Survey. Respondents to the survey were predominately senior officials in central government personnel departments. Australia, Austria, Canada, Greece and Spain subsequently provided 2005 data which were initially missing from their survey responses. Countries missing from the figures include those that did not respond fully to the survey questions.

The data concern the core civil service in central government. Definitions of the civil service, as well as sectors covered at the central level of government, differ across countries and should be considered when making comparisons. The definitions of "senior positions" and "administrative tasks" were left to the interpretation of countries when responding to the survey, and are thus indicative of broad trends. The labour force comprises all persons who fulfil the requirements for inclusion among the employed or the unemployed.

#### Further reading

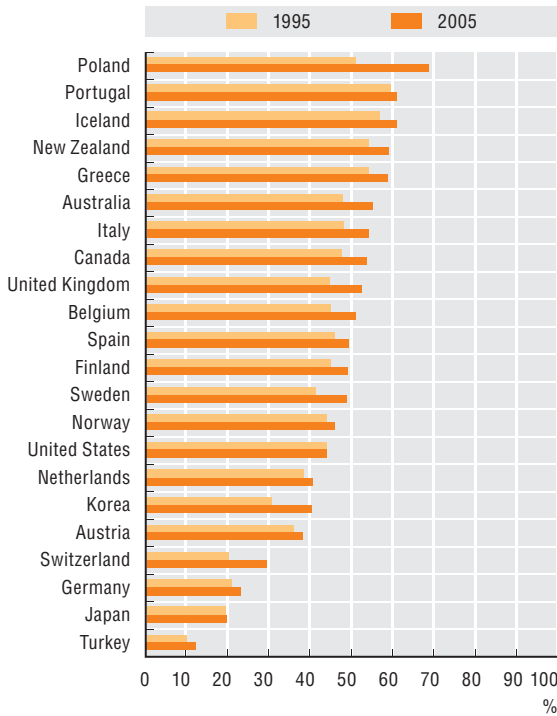
OECD (2008), *The State of the Public Service*, OECD, Paris.

#### Notes

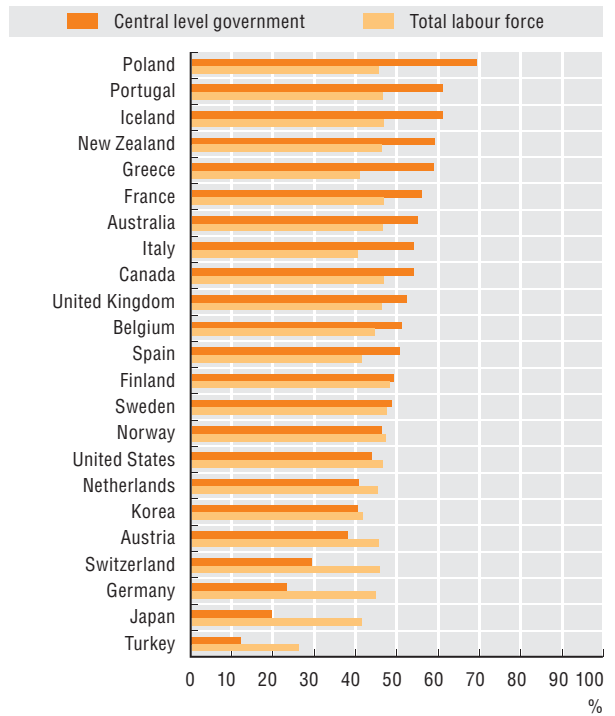
- 11.1: Data are not available for the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mexico and the Slovak Republic. Data for Greece are for 1996 and 2005. Data for the Netherlands are for 2000 and 2005. Data for Poland are for 1995 and 2004.
- 11.2: Data are not available for the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mexico and the Slovak Republic. Data for Poland and France are for 2004.
- 11.3: Data are not available for the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, Luxembourg, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Turkey. Data for Italy are for 2003. Data for Ireland are for 2001. Data for Austria are for 2006. Data for Spain refer to the number of women in "alto cargo" positions (not including ministers and state secretaries) as well as career officials at levels 28-30.
- 11.4: Data are not available for the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Hungary, Iceland, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States. Data for Italy are for 2003. Data for Ireland are for 2001. Data for Canada refer to employees in the Administrative Services occupational group in the Core Public Administration.

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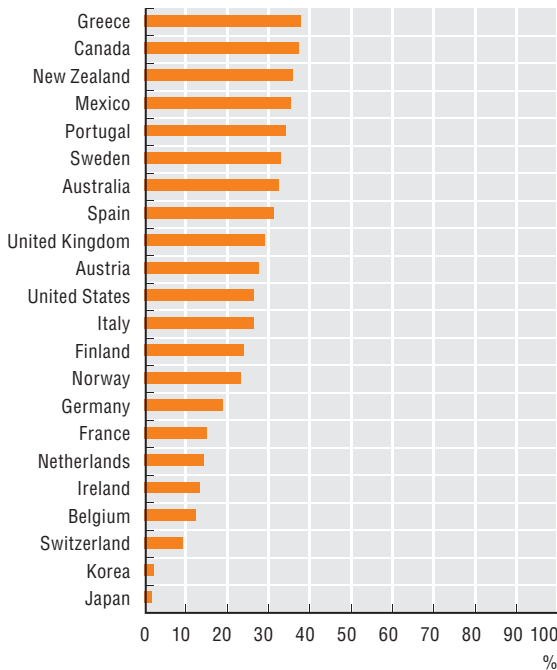
11.1 Percentage of central government employees who are female (1995 and 2005)



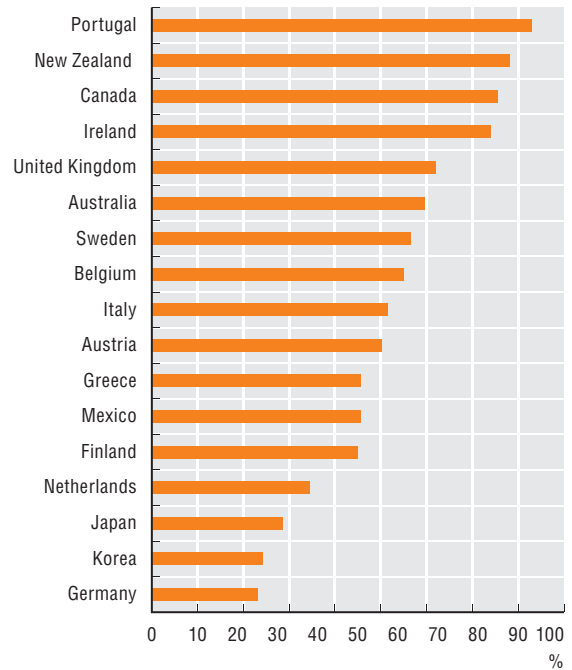
11.2 Percentage of employees who are female in the central government compared to total labour force (2005)



11.3 Percentage of senior positions in central government filled by women (2005)



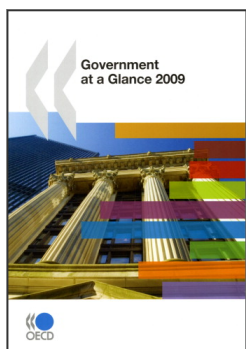
11.4 Percentage of central government administrative positions filled by women (2005)



Source: OECD Strategic Human Resource Management in Government Survey (2006). OECD Labour Force Survey (2006).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/723642841533>

A corrigendum has been issued for this page. See: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/59/28/44251675.pdf>



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