

## 4. GENERAL CONTEXT INDICATORS

### 4. Family

#### **Definition and measurement**

Data on family structure are drawn from the Gallup World Poll. The Gallup World Poll is conducted in over 140 countries around the world based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over in the entire country, including rural areas. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error. Sample sizes vary between around 1 000 and 4 000, depending on the country. The categories are self-assessed by the respondent.

**Adult partnership patterns, such as marriage or cohabitation, give a broad indication of family structure.** Traditional forms of partnership, such as marriage, and non-traditional forms, such as cohabitation, can be considered. Family structure has implications for child well-being, including the chances of a child being poor.

**Marriage was the most common form of partnership across the OECD for the period 2006-09.** On average more than half of adults aged 15 or over were married (Table GE4.1). Marriage was particularly common in Japan and Turkey where about two thirds of peoples were married. The proportion of adults married was low, under 45%, in France, and particularly low in Chile and Estonia where fewer than 40% of adults were married.

**Cohabitation with a domestic partner was high among countries with low marriage rates** (Table GE4.1). In Estonia, Iceland, Finland and Sweden about one in five adults cohabited with a domestic partner. Cohabitation was also higher than average elsewhere in the Nordic area. Cohabitation was uncommon in Greece, Israel, Japan, Korea and Turkey, where 0% of adults reported cohabiting.

**The proportion of people divorced or separated and not re-partnered was low among the OECD countries.** On

average only 4% of adults were divorced and only one per cent was separated and in both cases not re-partnered (Table GE4.1). The prevalence of divorced people varied from a low of around 0 to 1% in Chile, Italy, Korea and Turkey, to a high of 9% in the Czech Republic and Estonia. Significant separation rates were only reported in Chile and Mexico.

**An average of 6% of all adults were widows (or widowers)** (Table GE4.1). The proportion varied from a low of 3% in Iceland, Korea and Turkey, to a high of 10% in France and Hungary. In general, the proportion of widows was higher in countries where there is a larger difference between the life expectancy of men and women.

**Most children – three quarters on average – lived with married parents** (GE4.2). Across the OECD, 15% of children lived with one parent, 11% lived with cohabiting parents, and only one per cent lived without parents. The proportion of children in lone-parent families was particularly high in the United States, where more than one in four children lived with just one parent. Fewer than one in ten children were in lone-parent families in Greece, Luxembourg and Spain.

#### **Further reading**

OECD (2010a), *OECD Family Database*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database).

#### **Figure notes**

Data in GE4.1 refers to 2006 for the Slovak Republic and Switzerland; 2007 for the Czech Republic; 2008 for Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Turkey; 2009 for all other countries. *Source:* Gallup World Poll, 2010.

In GE4.2, data were 2005 for Canada Japan, Switzerland and the United States; 2006 for Australia and New Zealand. For Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Switzerland cohabiting and married parents are grouped together. OECD average does not include Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Switzerland because figures for two parents cohabiting/married are not available separately. Children were defined as under 15 years old in Canada and New Zealand, and under 18 for all other countries.

Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

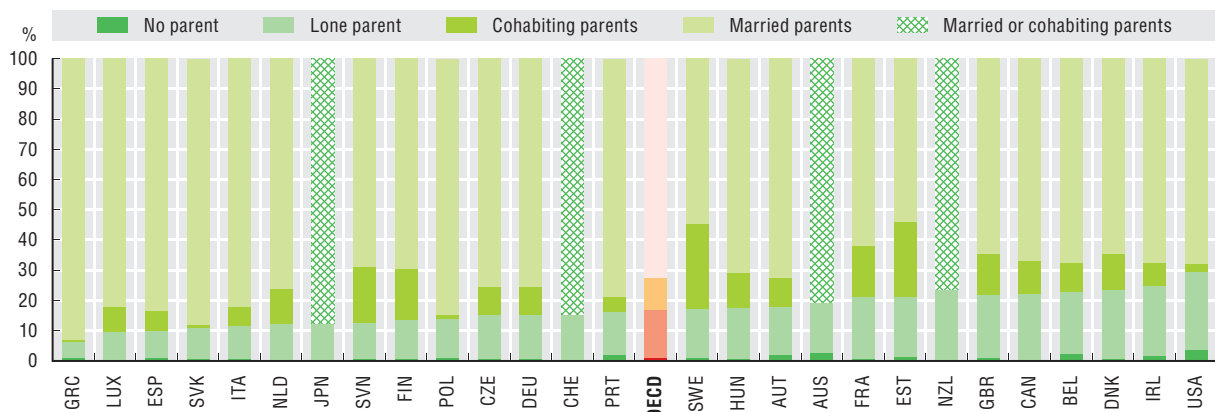
**GE4.1. Marriage is the most common form of partnership across the OECD**

Proportion of respondents aged 15 and over by relationship status, 2010, percentages

	Married	Domestic partner	Single/never been married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
Australia	58	7	24	4	4	3
Austria	53	10	24	6	6	1
Belgium	55	12	19	8	4	0
Canada	53	10	23	6	5	2
Chile	39	8	39	6	1	6
Czech Republic	55	4	25	6	9	1
Denmark	52	12	21	7	5	1
Estonia	39	20	21	9	9	2
Finland	53	18	16	5	7	0
France	42	11	29	10	5	1
Germany	55	7	22	9	5	2
Greece	64	0	27	6	3	1
Hungary	49	10	22	10	6	1
Iceland	49	20	23	3	3	2
Ireland	54	4	31	4	2	3
Israel	62	0	29	4	5	1
Italy	58	2	27	7	1	2
Japan	67	0	25	5	2	0
Korea	57	0	39	3	1	1
Luxembourg	58	5	26	5	4	1
Mexico	49	7	33	5	2	4
Netherlands	57	10	23	6	3	0
New Zealand	49	9	30	5	4	2
Norway	52	14	24	4	6	1
Poland	57	1	29	9	3	0
Portugal	58	4	24	7	4	1
Slovak Republic	53	2	30	9	5	0
Slovenia	52	8	28	9	3	0
Spain	55	5	30	6	2	2
Sweden	48	20	21	1	5	1
Switzerland	54	2	29	6	7	1
Turkey	66	0	29	3	1	1
United Kingdom	49	7	28	7	6	3
United States	59	2	26	5	6	2
<b>OECD</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
Brazil	48	9	30	5	2	4
China	79	0	16	4	1	0
India	70	0	23	5	0	0
Indonesia	67	0	24	8	0	0
Russian Federation	53	3	21	12	9	2
South Africa	27	1	59	10	1	2

**GE4.2. Most children live with two parents**

Proportion of children aged less than 18 by relationship status of parents, 2008



Source: Gallup World Poll 2010 (GE4.1), EU-SILC 2008 (European Union Survey on Income and Living Conditions, Eurostat) and national statistical offices for non European countries (GE4.2).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932381741>



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