

### Women in senior administrative positions in central government

Despite the growing share of women employed in central governments (see also Figure 6.3), women remain under-represented in senior administrative or leadership positions. The gender imbalance found in senior levels of central government limits the role of women in the decision-making process, adversely impacting the fairness of public policies and laws. One key illustration of this is gender representation in the legal system, which is vital for upholding equal rights and eliminating gender-based discrimination in judicial rulings.

On average, in OECD member countries women occupy over 50% of central government jobs, but only 29% of top management positions in the 18 countries for which data are available. The extent to which women hold senior-level positions in central government administrations varies considerably among member countries. In Poland, almost 50% of top management jobs are filled by women, whereas this figure is more than halved in countries such as Belgium and Switzerland. The largest gaps between the share of women in central government and their presence in top senior positions can be found in Austria, Belgium and Italy.

A similar trend can be found in many justice systems of the OECD member countries. In 2010, just under half of professional judges in member countries with available data were women, but only 29% of seats for first and second instance court presidents were filled by women in the same year. Women are also relatively less represented on supreme courts (28% of justices). Women were presidents of supreme courts in only five member countries with available data (the Czech Republic, Ireland, Greece, Finland and Sweden).

In an effort to improve these imbalances, some countries implement active policy responses in order to ensure equal employment opportunities exist for women. These include the use of diversity or gender quotas, equal pay rules/guidelines, leadership training and mentoring programmes, as well as work-life balance schemes like flexible working hours. Some countries such as the United Kingdom and Canada have established special judicial commissions working to increase gender diversity in the pool of available candidates for judicial selection.

#### Methodology and definitions

Data on number of women in top management positions and central government were obtained from the 2011 OECD Survey on Gender in Public Employment. Responses were collected from government officials responsible for central/federal HRM and employment policies.

Data on the number of women professional judges and women as presidents of courts were collected from the Council of Europe's Commission for European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ). Unless otherwise noted, the latter refer to first and second instance courts. Data concerning women supreme court justices were derived from the *European Commission Database on Women in Decision Making*. The definition of supreme court adopted by the European Commission refers to the highest judicial body in each country in the domain of civil and penal jurisdiction. In some countries, however, the supreme court may also have administrative and/or constitutional jurisdiction. Justices include presidents of supreme courts.

#### Further reading

CEPEJ (2012), *Evaluation of European Judicial Systems – 2012 edition (2010 data)*, CEPEJ Studies No. 18, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg.

OECD (2012), *Closing the Gender Gap: Act Now*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264179370-en>.

#### Figure notes

6.6: Data on share of women in central government positions unavailable for Portugal and Finland. Data for Luxembourg, Slovenia and Sweden are for 2011 rather than 2010. Data for France are for 2009 rather than 2010. Data for Estonia, Japan and Spain are for full-time employees only. Data for the Netherlands are in full-time equivalent.

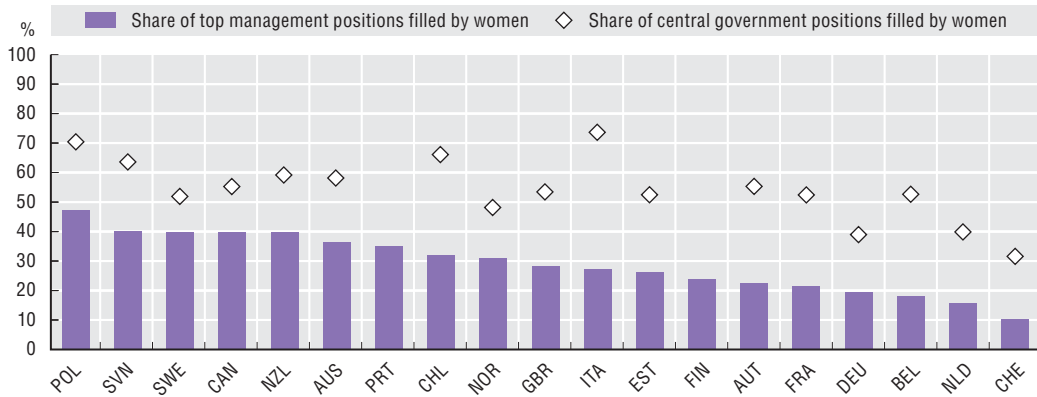
6.7: Data on share of court presidents for Iceland, Ireland, Switzerland and Turkey refer to first instance courts only. Data for Spain refer to second instance courts only.

6.8: Data for Australia, Canada, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Switzerland, and Ukraine refer to 2010. Data for Chile, Norway and Israel refer to 2011. Data for the United States and Japan refer to 2013.

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

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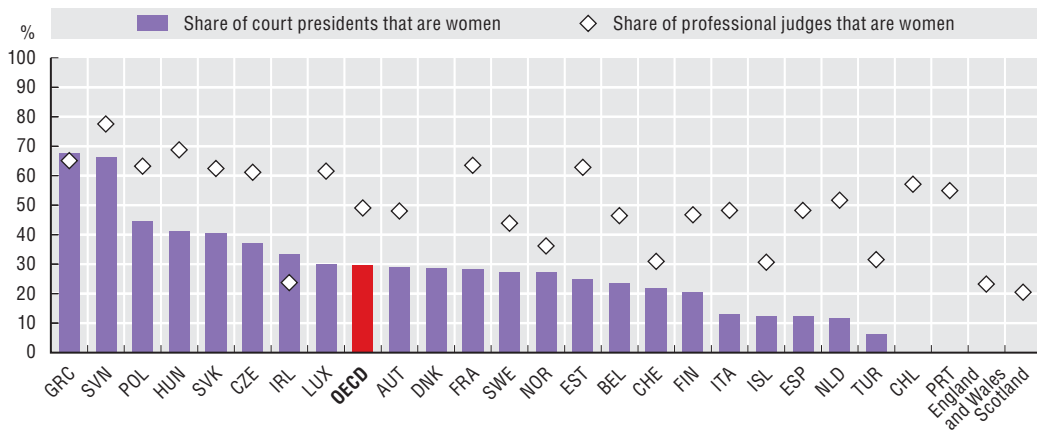
6.6. Women in top management positions compared to their share in central government (2010)



Source: 2011 OECD Survey on Gender in Public Employment.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932942640>

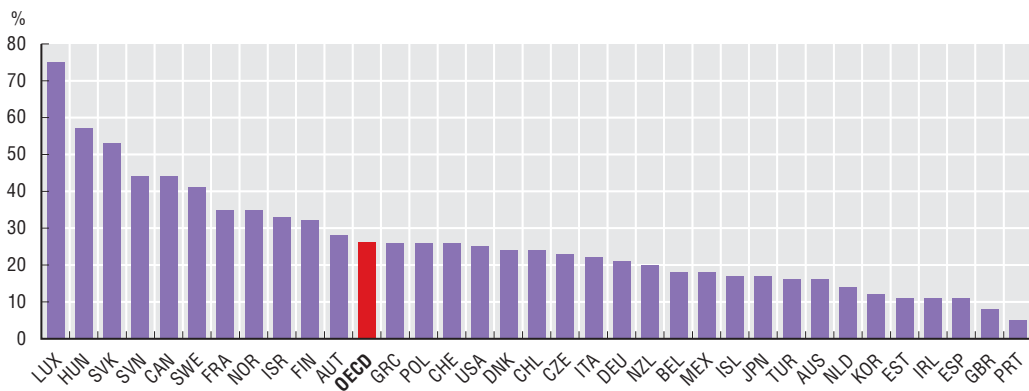
6.7. Women as court presidents compared to their share of professional judges (2010)



Source: CEPEJ (2012), Evaluation of European Judicial Systems – 2012 edition (2010 data), CEPEJ Studies No. 18, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg. Data for Chile provided by national authorities.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932942659>

6.8. Share of women supreme court justices (2012 or latest available year)



Source: EU countries, European Commission Database on Women in Decision-Making. Non-EU countries: 2011 OECD Survey on Women in Public Leadership.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932942678>



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