



Government at a Glance 2021 Country Fact Sheet



Japan

Japan had the highest public debt among OECD countries in 2019. COVID is worsening debt levels.

General government gross debt in Japan was 226% of GDP, above the average of 109% of GDP among OECD countries (Figure 2.8). The structural balance deteriorated from -3.7% of GDP in 2019 to -8.1% of GDP in 2020. This was the third largest structural deficit among OECD countries, after the United States and Israel (Figure 2.5).

Chapter 2 – Public finance and economics

 [Figure 2.5. General government structural balance as a percentage of potential GDP, 2007, 2019 and 2020](#)

 [Figure 2.8. General government gross debt as a percentage of GDP, 2007, 2019 and 2020](#)

Japan lags behind on gender parity in public administration and politics.

In 2020, women held only 4.2% of senior management positions in central government in Japan, the lowest value among OECD countries (Figure 3.9). Women held only 10% of the seats in the lower house of parliament and in central governments' ministerial positions in 2021. These percentages averaged 31.6% and 34%, respectively, in OECD countries (Figures 3.10 and 3.11).

Chapter 3 – Public employment

 [Figure 3.9. Gender equality in senior management positions in central governments, 2015 and 2020](#)

 [Figure 3.10. Gender equality in parliament and electoral gender quotas, 2012, 2017 and 2021](#)

 [Figure 3.11. Gender equality in ministerial positions, 2012, 2017 and 2021](#)

Japan performs very well on quality of public services, but less so on responsiveness and access.

Japan ranks best in the OECD on 30-day mortality following stroke hospitalization and health care coverage (Figure 14.23); it ranks among the top countries for most indicators of quality of health, education and justice (Scorecard 3). However, it ranks at the bottom for private expenditures on education and availability of educational material (Figures 11.7 and 11.16).

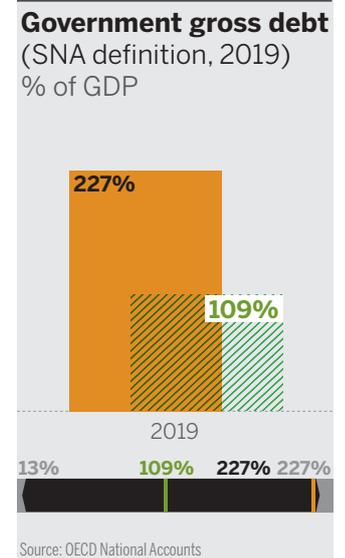
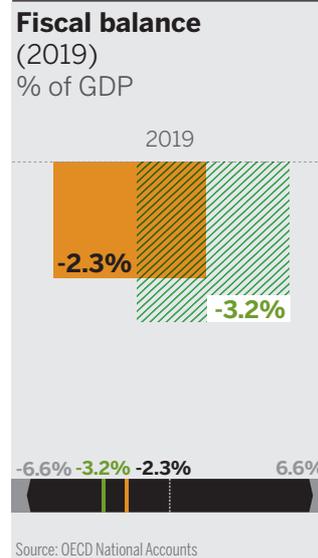
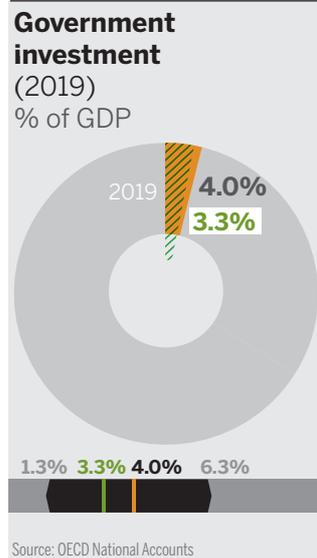
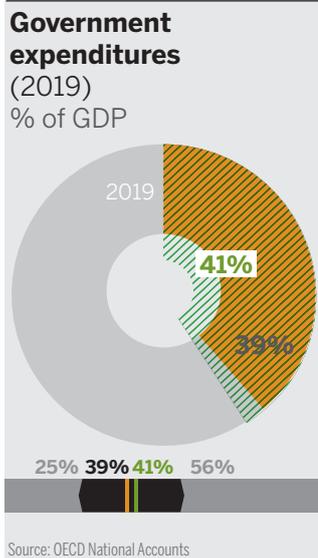
Chapter 14 – Serving citizens

 [Figure 14.7. Share of private expenditures on education after transfers as a share of total spending on education, 2017](#)

 [Figure 14.16. Indexes of shortage of education staff and education material, 2018](#)

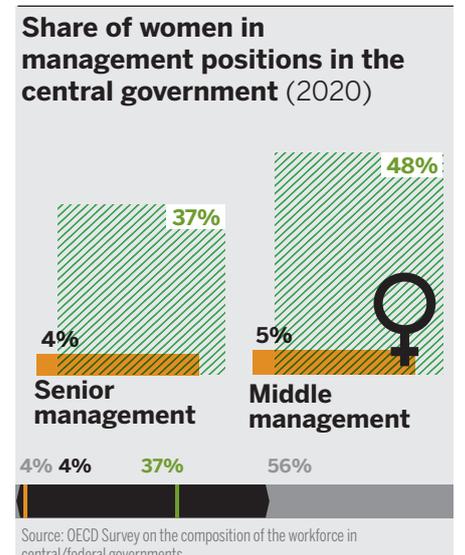
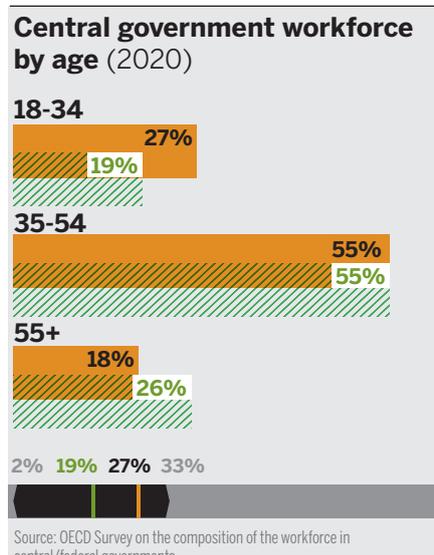
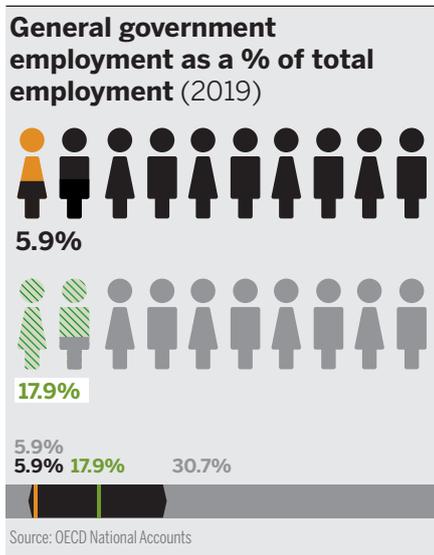
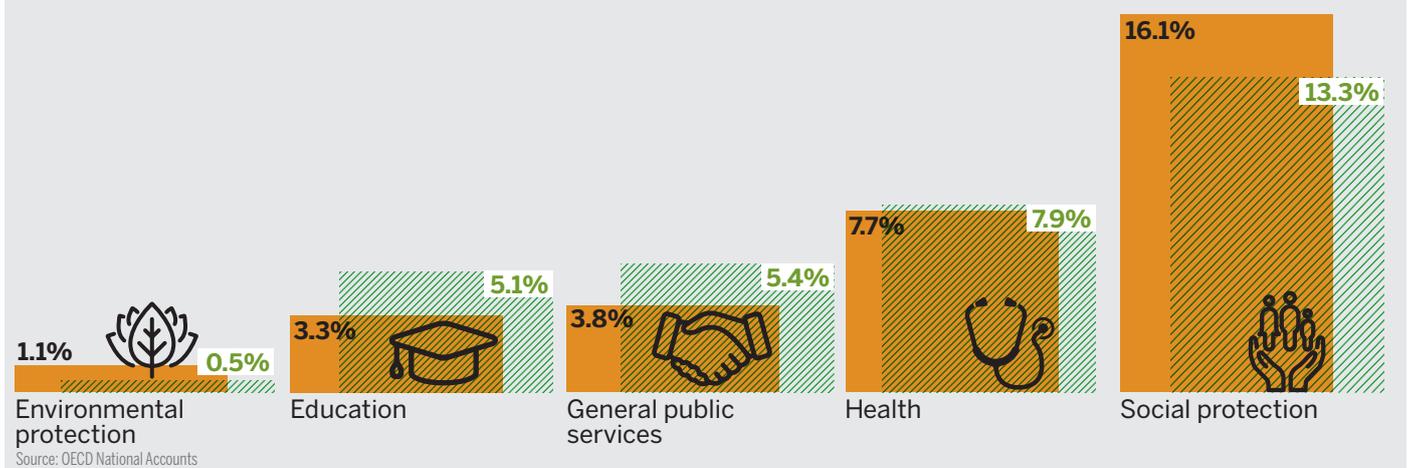
 [Figure 14.23. Thirty-day mortality after admission to hospital for ischaemic stroke based on unlinked data, 2007 and 2017](#)

Government resources



Government expenditures by selected functions (2019)

% of GDP



Public governance practices



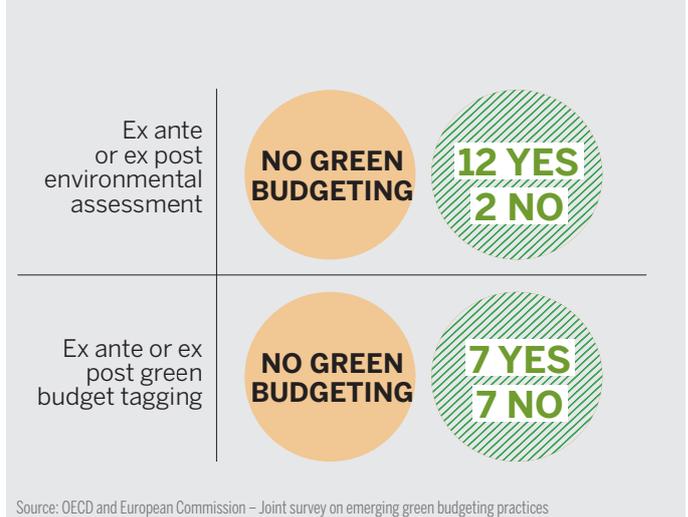
Composite indices of public service leadership and capability (2020)

From 0 (worst) to 1 (best)



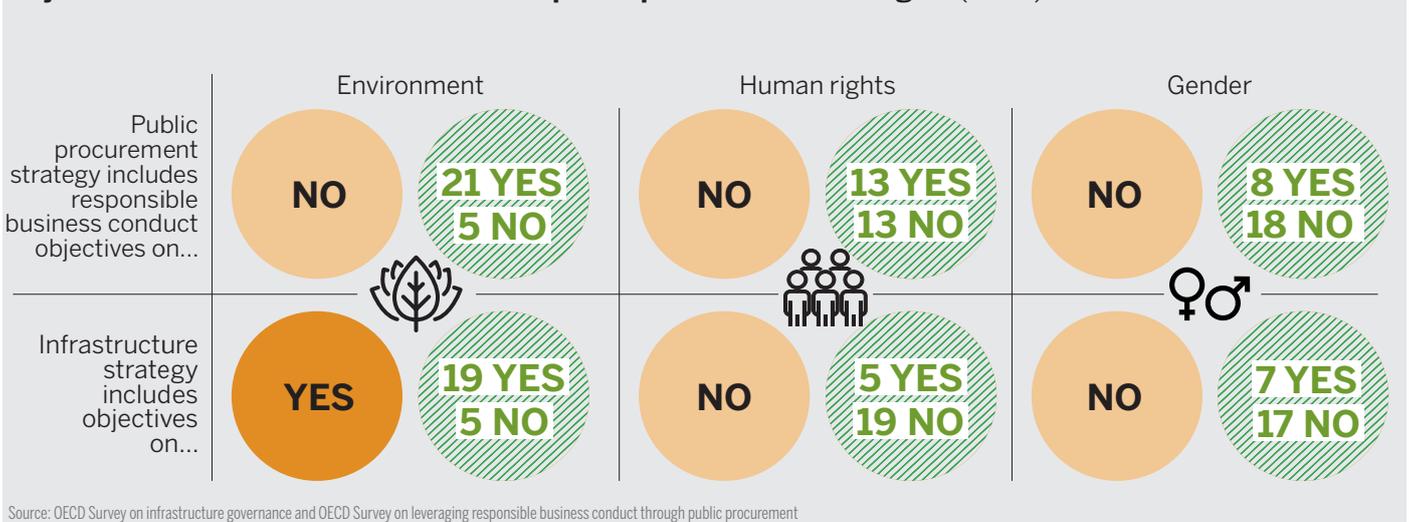
Source: OECD Survey on the composition of the workforce in central/federal governments and OECD Survey on public service leadership and capability

Green budgeting tools (2021)



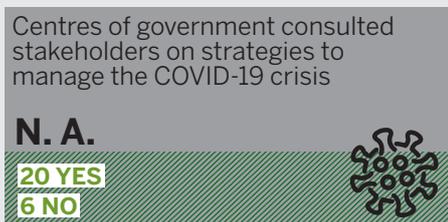
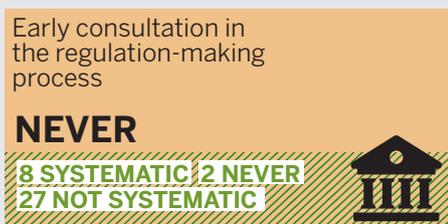
Source: OECD and European Commission – Joint survey on emerging green budgeting practices

Objectives included in infrastructure and public procurement strategies (2020)



Source: OECD Survey on infrastructure governance and OECD Survey on leveraging responsible business conduct through public procurement

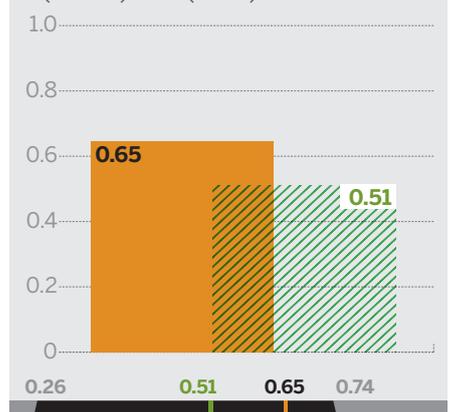
Citizen and stakeholder participation (2020 or 2021)



Source: OECD Survey on centres of government's role in managing the COVID-19 crisis, OECD open government Survey and OECD indicators of regulatory policy and governance (IREG) Survey

Digital government index (2019)

Composite index from 0 (worst) to 1 (best)

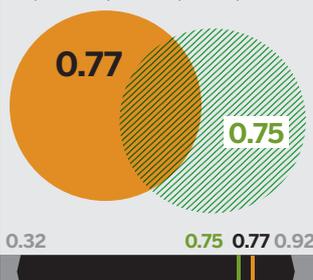


Source: OECD Survey on digital government 1.0

Government results

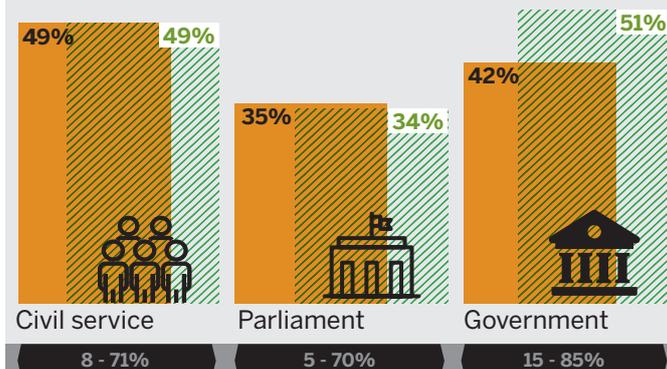
Government provides information on law enforcement, due process and respect of human rights (2020)

Composite index from 0 (worst) to 1 (best)



Source: World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index 2020

Citizens who express trust in public institutions (2020)



Source: Gallup World Poll, World Values Survey and European Values Study.

Japan

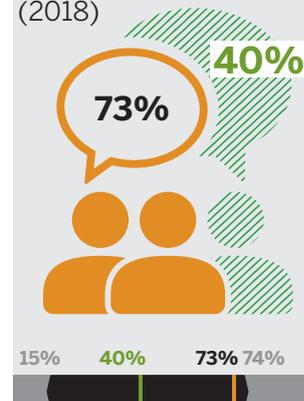
OECD

Range of OECD country values

N. A. not available

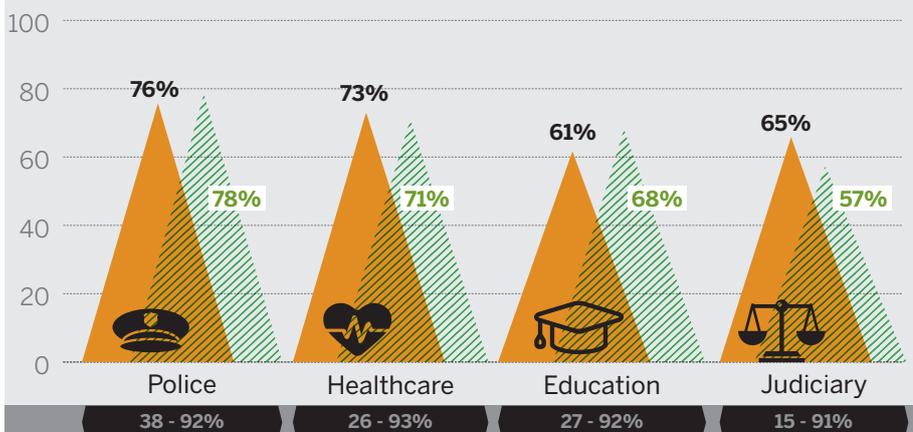
Values have been rounded

Citizens who believe they have a say in what government does (2018)



Source: OECD calculations based on rounds 8 and 9 of the ESS and the 2017-2020 round of the World Values Survey

Citizens who express satisfaction with public services (2020)



Source: Gallup World Poll

Income inequality before taxes and post taxes and transfers (GINI index, 2018)



Source: OECD Income Distribution Database

Figure notes

- Data on Public finance and economics, which are based on the System of National Accounts (SNA), were extracted on 11 May 2021 and data on General government employment were extracted on 12 April 2021. Data on Government expenditures, investment, fiscal balance and expenditures by selected functions refer to year 2018 and data on General government employment refer to year 2017.
- Fiscal balance as reported in SNA framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.
- Government gross debt is reported according to the SNA definition, which differs from the definition applied under the Maastricht Treaty. It is defined as all liabilities that require payment or payments of interest or principal by the debtor to the creditor at a date or dates in the future. All debt instruments are liabilities, but some liabilities such as shares, equity and financial derivatives are not debt.
- The range of country values for the central government workforce by age refers to the 18-34 group.
- Data on trust in the civil service and parliament are 2018 for most countries.
- The range of country values for share of women in management positions in the central government refers to senior management.
- Citizens who express satisfaction with public services: for the judiciary and the police, the data reflect the proportion of citizens who express having confidence in the institution.
- The range of country values for income inequality before taxes and post taxes and transfers refers to GINI after taxes and transfers for the working age population.

Government at a Glance 2021

Published every two years, **Government at a Glance** provides reliable, internationally comparable indicators on government activities and their results in OECD countries.

The 2021 edition includes input indicators on public finance and employment; while processes include data on institutions, budgeting practices and procedures, human resources management, regulatory governance, public procurement, the governance of infrastructure, public sector integrity, open government and digital government. Outcomes cover core government results (e.g. trust, political efficacy, inequality reduction) and indicators on access, responsiveness, quality and citizen satisfaction for the education, health and justice sectors. Governance indicators are especially useful for monitoring and benchmarking governments' progress in their public sector reforms.



Each indicator in the publication is presented in a user-friendly format, consisting of graphs and/or charts illustrating variations across countries and over time, brief descriptive analyses highlighting the major findings conveyed by the data, and a methodological section on the definition of the indicator and any limitations in data comparability.

The Excel spreadsheets used to create the tables and figures in Government at a Glance 2021 are available via the StatLinks provided throughout the publication: <https://doi.org/10.1787/1c258f55-en>

For more information on the data (including full methodology and figure notes) and to consult all other Country Fact Sheets: www.oecd.org/gov/govtaglance.htm