BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

Government at a Glance 2021 Country Fact Sheet

Sweden

Sweden has one of the largest public sectors among OECD countries. Government spending was 49.2% of GDP in 2019, the fifth highest in the OECD (Figure 2.22). The most important reason was spending on social protection, which was 19.0% of GDP, above the OECD average of 13.3% (Figure 2.25). 28.6% of Sweden's workforce is employed in general government, the second highest among OECD countries (Figure 3.1).

Chapter 2 – Public finance and economics

Figure 2.22. General government expenditures as a percentage of GDP, 2007, 2019 and 2020

Figure 2.25. General government expenditures by function as a percentage of GDP, 2019

Chapter 3 – Public employment

Figure 3.1. Employment in general government as a percentage of total employment, 2007 and 2019

Sweden is a leader on gender equality, but a late mover on digital government. Women occupy 55% of senior management positions in government, the second highest in the OECD (Figure 3.8), and 47% of seats in parliament, third in the OECD (Figure 3.10). However, Sweden was last in the OECD Digital government Index (Figure 10.1), lagging particularly in giving a central role to people's needs and convenience.

Chapter 3 – Public employment

Figure 3.8. Gender equality by positions in central governments, 2020

Figure 3.10. Gender equality in parliament and electoral gender quotas, 2012, 2017 and 2021

Chapter 10 – Digital government

Figure 10.1. OECD Digital Government Index, 2019

Sweden performs well on ensuring fundamental rights, but needs to work to improve trust in government. Sweden ranks fourth in the OECD for checks and controls on powers across different branches of government (Figures 13.10), and for respect for fundamental rights (Figure 13.11). However, public trust in government is 67%, lagging Nordic comparators (Figure 13.1).

Chapter 13 – Core government results

Figure 13.1. Confidence in national government in 2020 and its change since 2007

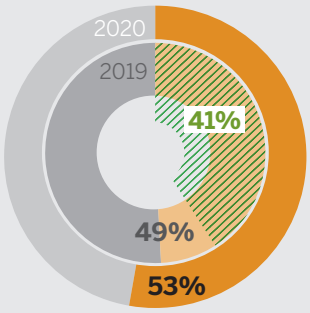
Figure 13.10. Limited government powers, 2020

Figure 13.11. Fundamental rights, 2020

Government resources

Sweden
OECD
Range of OECD country values
N. A. not available
Values have been rounded

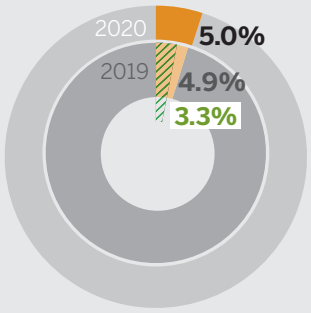
Government expenditures (2019, 2020) % of GDP



25% 41% 49% 56%

Source: OECD National Accounts

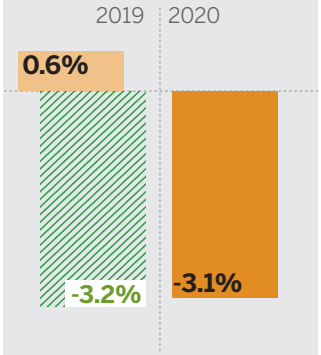
Government investment (2019, 2020) % of GDP



1.3% 3.3% 4.9% 6.3%

Source: OECD National Accounts

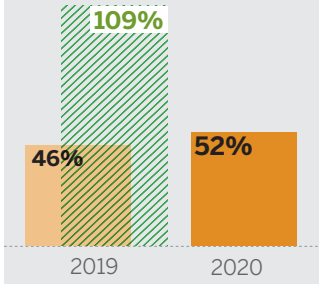
Fiscal balance (2019, 2020) % of GDP



-6.6% -3.2% 0.6% 6.6%

Source: OECD National Accounts

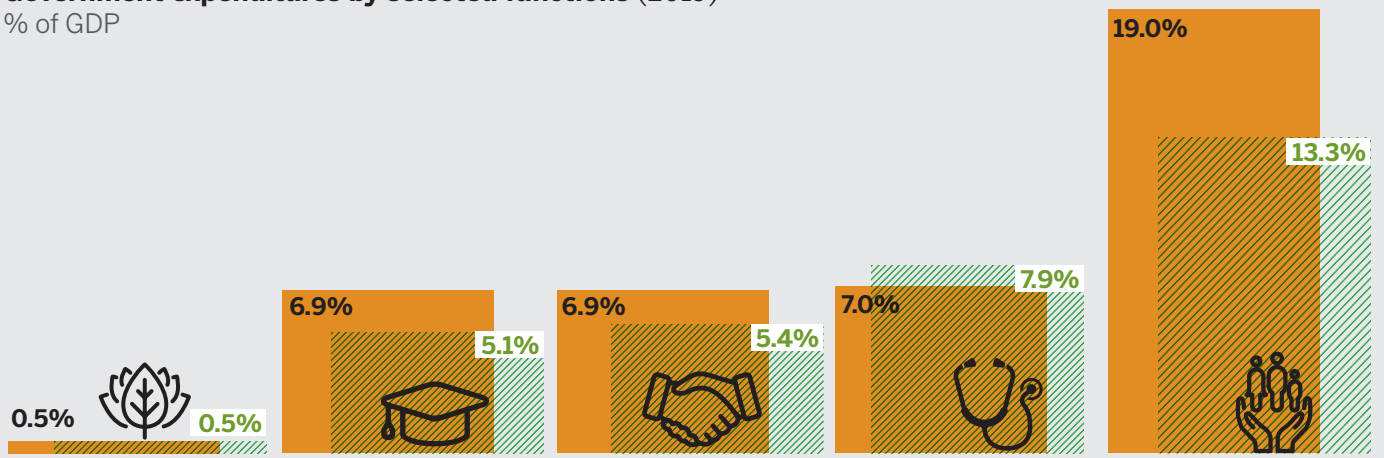
Government gross debt (SNA definition, 2019, 2020) % of GDP



13% 46% 109% 227%

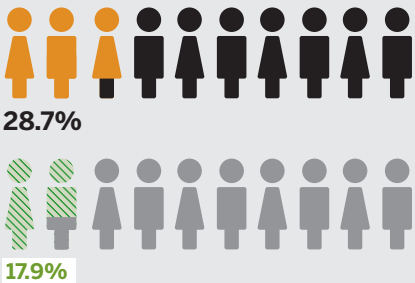
Source: OECD National Accounts

Government expenditures by selected functions (2019) % of GDP



Source: OECD National Accounts

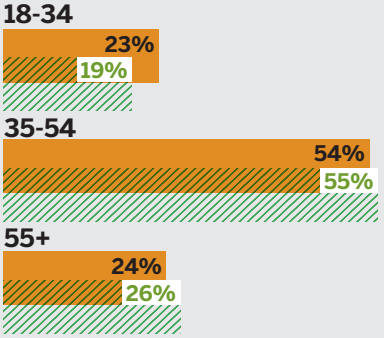
General government employment as a % of total employment (2019)



5.9% 17.9% 28.7% 30.7%

Source: OECD National Accounts

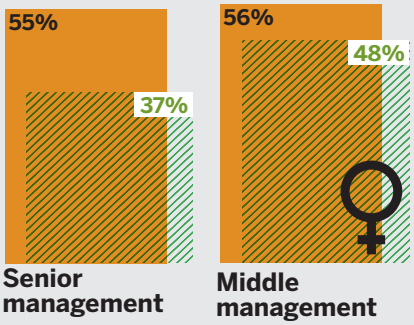
Central government workforce by age (2020)



2% 19% 23% 33%

Source: OECD Survey on the composition of the workforce in central/federal governments

Share of women in management positions in the central government (2020)



4% 37% 55% 56%

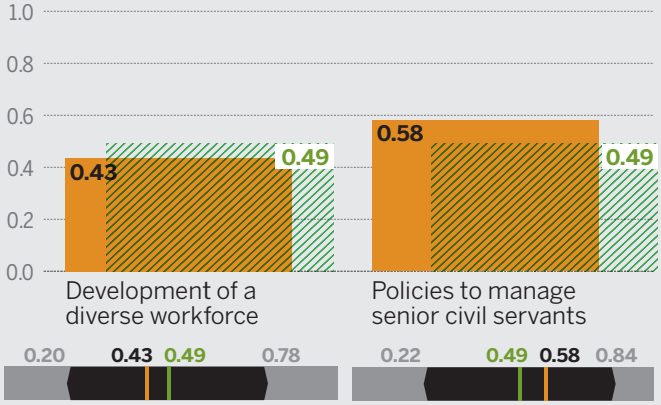
Source: OECD Survey on the composition of the workforce in central/federal governments

Public governance practices

Sweden
OECD
Range of OECD country values
N. A. not available
Values have been rounded

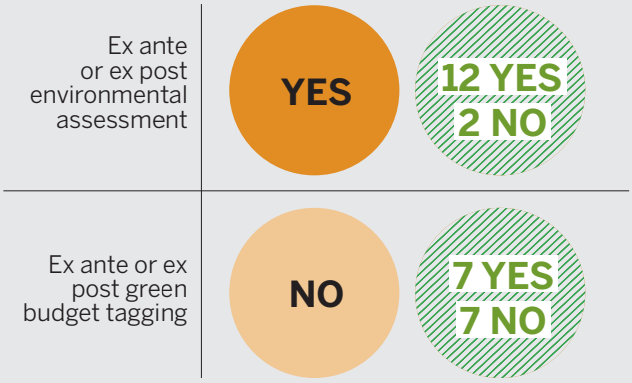
Composite indices of public service leadership and capability (2020)

From 0 (worst) to 1 (best)



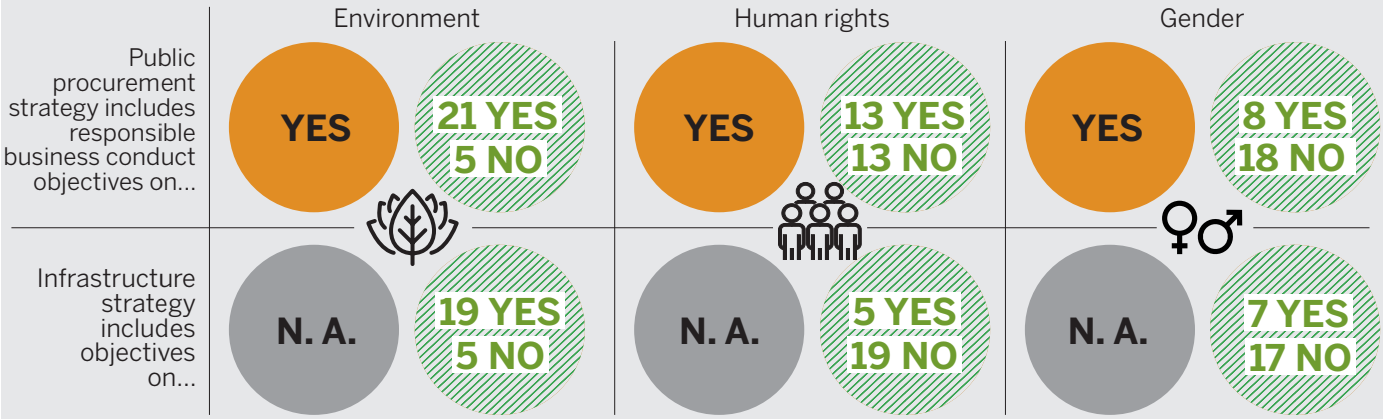
Source: OECD Survey on the composition of the workforce in central/federal governments and OECD Survey on public service leadership and capability

Green budgeting tools (2021)



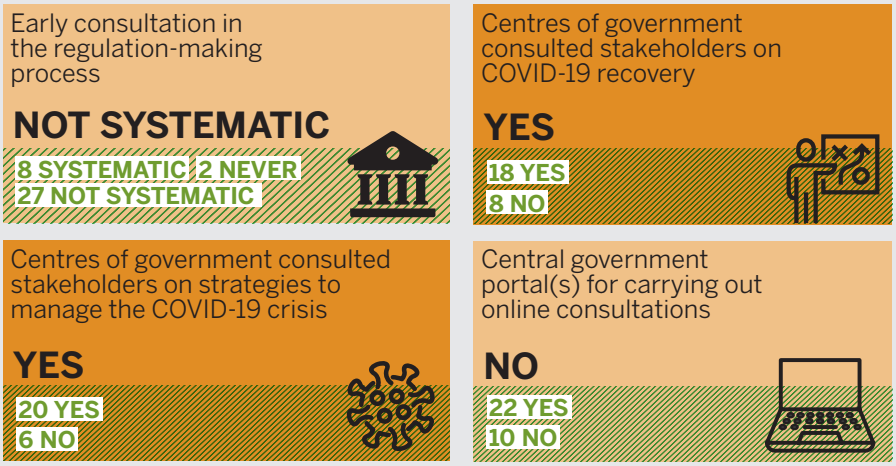
Source: OECD and European Commission – Joint survey on emerging green budgeting practices

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

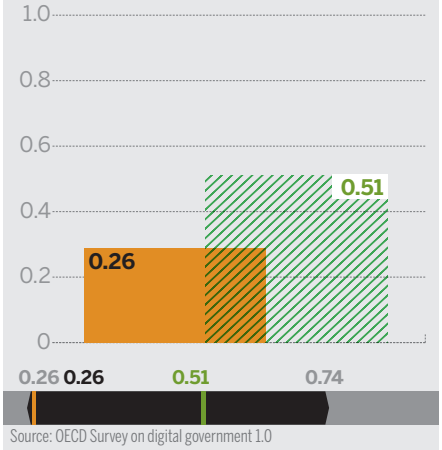
Citizen and stakeholder participation (2020 or 2021)



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

Sweden

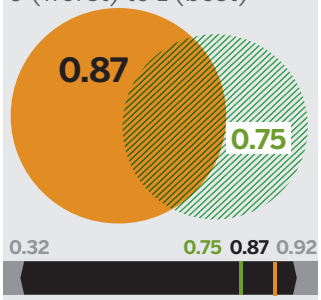
OECD

Range of OECD country values

N. A. not available
Values have been rounded

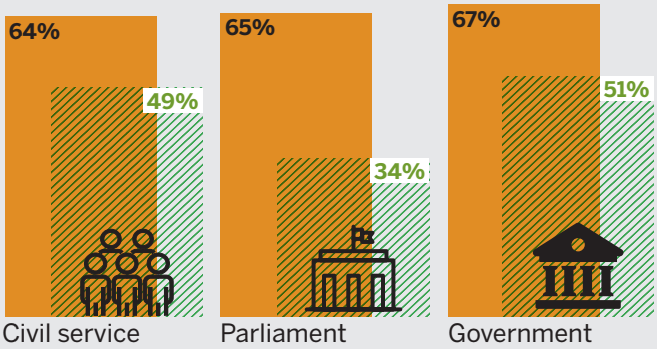
Government provides information on law enforcement, due process and respect of human rights (2020)

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



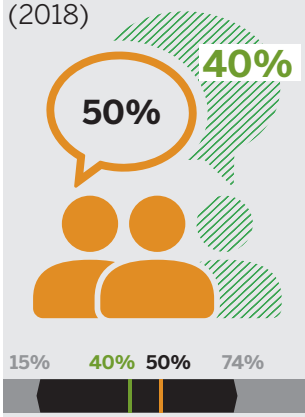
Source: World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index 2020

Citizens who express trust in public institutions (2020)



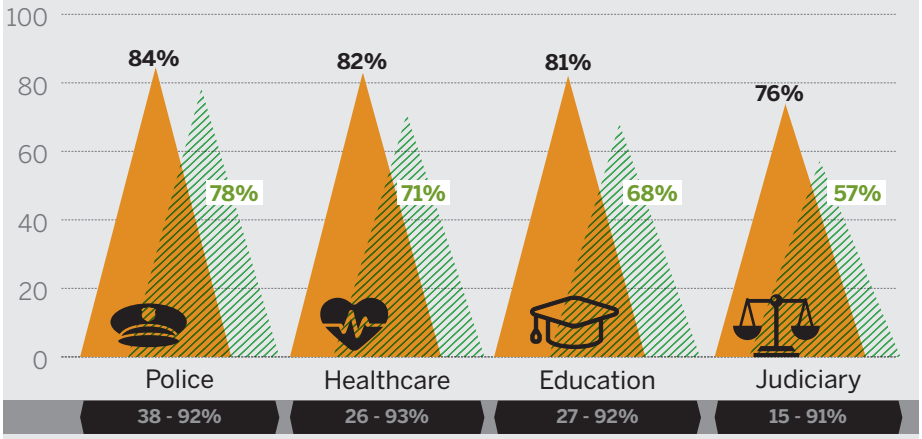
Source: Gallup World Poll, World Values Survey and European Values Study.

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

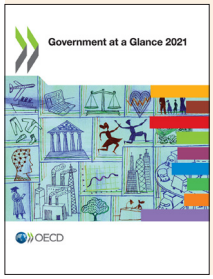
Figure notes

- 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. The range of country values refers to year 2019.
- 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/govataglance.htm