

LMF1.6: Gender differences in employment outcomes

Definitions and methodology

This indicator presents data on gender differences in employment outcomes through four main measures:

- The *gender gap in the employment rate* (15-64 year olds), with the employment rate calculated as the number of people aged 15-64 years old in employment as a proportion of the corresponding population, and the gender gap calculated as the male rate minus the female rate. Definitions of employment follow [ILO guidelines](#).
- The *gender gap in the employment rate* (25-64 year olds) *by level of educational attainment*, with levels of educational attainment defined according to the standard ISCED 2011 classification (See [OECD \(2016\) OECD Education at a Glance 2016: OECD Indicators](#) for more details).
- Male and female *part-time employment rates*, calculated as the number of people in part-time employment as a proportion of total employment. Part-time employment is defined as people who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job (see comparability and data issues).
- The *female share of managers*, calculated as the proportion of persons employed as managers that are female. ‘Managers’ are defined as the employed who hold jobs classified in International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) 08 category one (“Managers”).

In addition to the data on gender differences in employment outcomes, this indicator also provides supplementary information on maternal employment in Box LMF1.6.A. Maternal employment is captured by one measure:

- *Employment rates for women (15-64 year olds) with at least one child (aged 0-14) by age of youngest child in the household*. Here, ‘children’ are generally defined as any children aged 0-14 inclusive who live in the same household and are reported as the child of the woman (including both biological children and step or adoptive children). Women with children who do not live in the same household are generally not included, nor are women with children aged 15 or older regardless of whether or not the child lives in the same household and/or is dependent on the woman. The age groups used for the youngest child are 0-2, 3-5 and 6-14 years of age. Definitions of employment again follow [ILO guidelines](#).

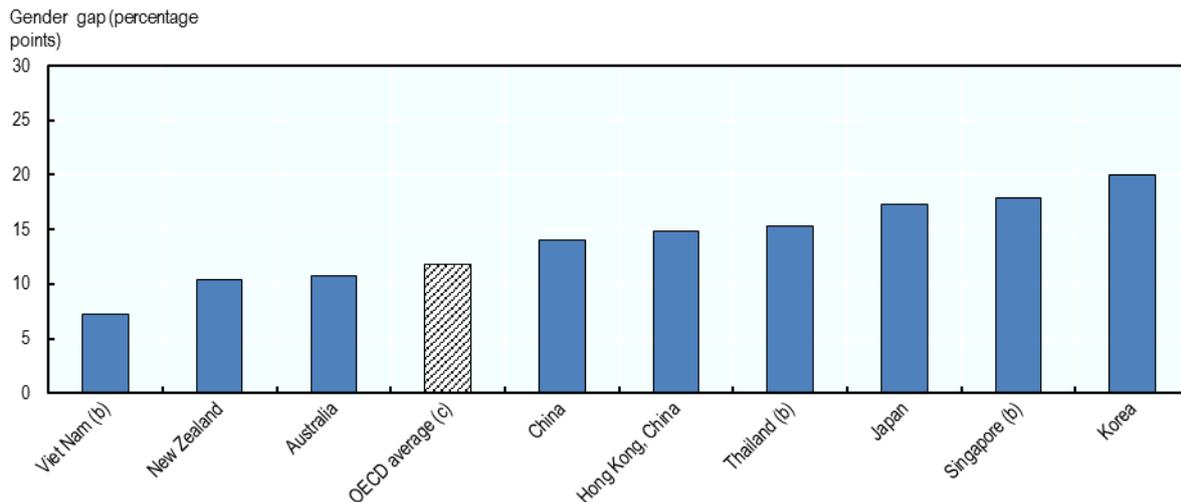
Key findings

Across Asia/Pacific countries as also across OECD countries, women are less likely to be found in employment than men (Chart LMF1.6.A). In all of the covered Asia/Pacific countries employment rates for men are higher than those for women, and in many the size of the gender gap is relatively large. Among the covered Asia/Pacific countries, the largest gender gaps are in Japan (17.2 percentage points), Singapore (17.9 p.p.) and Korea (20.0 p.p.) – gaps that in all cases are far larger than the average for OECD countries, for example

Other relevant indicators: LMF1.4 Employment profiles over the life-course; LMF2.1 Usual weekly working hours among men and women by broad hours groups

(11.8 p.p.). The smallest gender gaps are in Australia and New Zealand (10-11 p.p.), and especially in Viet Nam (7.2 p.p.).

Chart LMF1.6.A. **Gender gap in the employment rate, 2015 or latest available^a**
Gender difference (male minus female) in the employment rate, 15-64 year olds



a) Data for China refer to 2010, and for Thailand, Singapore and the OECD average to 2014 (or nearest/latest available).

b) Data for Singapore refer to the June of the given year, for Thailand to the third quarter of the given year, and for Viet Nam to the July of the given year. Data for Singapore refer to nationals currently resident in Singapore, only. Data for Thailand include seasonal workers who were currently not employed nor seeking work during the reference period.

c) The OECD average refers to the unweighted average across the 35 OECD member countries with available and comparable data. See OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.6 (<http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>) for more detail.

Sources: [Australia, China, Japan, Korea and New Zealand: OECD Employment Database](#); [Hong Kong, China, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam: ILO \(2016\), "ILOSTAT Database"](#), ILO Department of Statistics; [OECD average: OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.6](#)

Where available, data suggest that in most Asia/Pacific countries gender gaps in employment rates are smaller among men and women with high levels of educational attainment than among those with low education (Table LMF1.6.A). In Australia, for example, the gender gap among men and women with tertiary education is about 8 percentage points smaller than that among men and women who have not yet attained upper secondary education. In China, the difference is as big as 12 p.p. Korea is the exception – there, the relation runs in the opposite direction, with the smallest gender gap among men and women who have not completed upper secondary education and the largest among those with tertiary education.

In most Asia/Pacific countries, employed women are far more likely to work part-time than employed men (Chart LMF1.6.B). The proportion of employed women in part-time employment is higher than the proportion for men in all of the covered Asia/Pacific countries, with the gap in some countries (like New Zealand, Japan and Australia) greater than 20 percentage points. However, in a couple of countries the gender gap is only relatively small. In Hong Kong, for example, the share of employed women in part-time employment is only about 4 percentage points higher than the share of employed men in part-time employment. In Thailand, the gender gap is less than 1 percentage point.

Table LMF1.6.A. **Gender gaps in employment rates by educational attainment, 2015 or latest available^a**
 Male and female employment rates by level of education attained, 25-64 year olds

	Below upper secondary			Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary			Tertiary Education		
	Male	Female	Gender	Male	Female	Gender	Male	Female	Gender
			Gap			Gap			Gap
Australia	68.2	50.1	18.1	85.1	68.4	16.7	88.8	78.6	10.2
China	92.2	77.0	15.2	93.6	80.2	13.4	97.8	94.6	3.2
Hong Kong, China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Japan (b)	..	..	..	..	..	..	92.8	71.7	21.1
Korea	77.0	58.6	18.3	84.4	60.3	24.1	89.5	62.8	26.7
New Zealand	77.3	62.2	15.1	89.3	72.4	16.9	92.5	83.5	9.0
Singapore	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Thailand	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Viet Nam	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
OECD average (c)	65.7	46.0	19.7	81.1	66.9	14.2	88.5	79.5	9.0

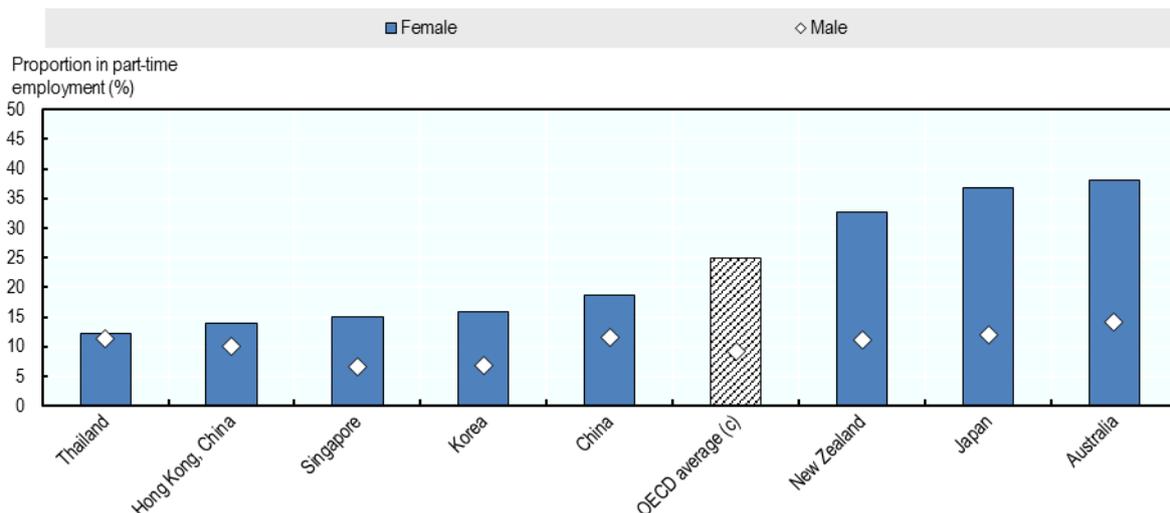
a) For China, data refer to 2010.

b) For Japan, data on tertiary education include upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary programmes (less than 5% of the adults are under this group).

c) The OECD average refers to the unweighted average across the OECD member countries. See OECD Education at a Glance 2016 (<http://www.oecd.org/education/eag.htm>) for more detail.

Sources: [Australia, Korean, Japan, New Zealand and the OECD average: OECD Education at a Glance 2016](#); China: Chinese Women's Social Status Survey, 2010

Chart LMF1.6.B. **Proportion of employed in part-time employment^a, by sex, 2015 or latest available^b**
 All ages



a) Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment. 'Part-time' here refers to persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. For Hong Kong, Japan and Korea, part-time employment is based on actual rather than usual weekly working hours. For Australia, Japan, Korea and New Zealand the jobs covered are all jobs. For China, data refer to persons who usually work less than 35 hours in their main job.

b) Data for China refer to 2010, and for the OECD average to 2014 (or nearest/latest available).

c) The OECD average refers to the unweighted average across 35 OECD member countries. See OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.6 (<http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>) for more detail.

Sources: [Australia, Japan, Korea and New Zealand: OECD Employment Database](#); [China: Population Census 2010](#); [Hong Kong, China: Women and Men in Hong Kong - Key Statistics](#); [OECD average: OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.6](#); [Singapore: Ministry of Manpower, Labour Force in Singapore](#); Thailand: Labor Force Survey

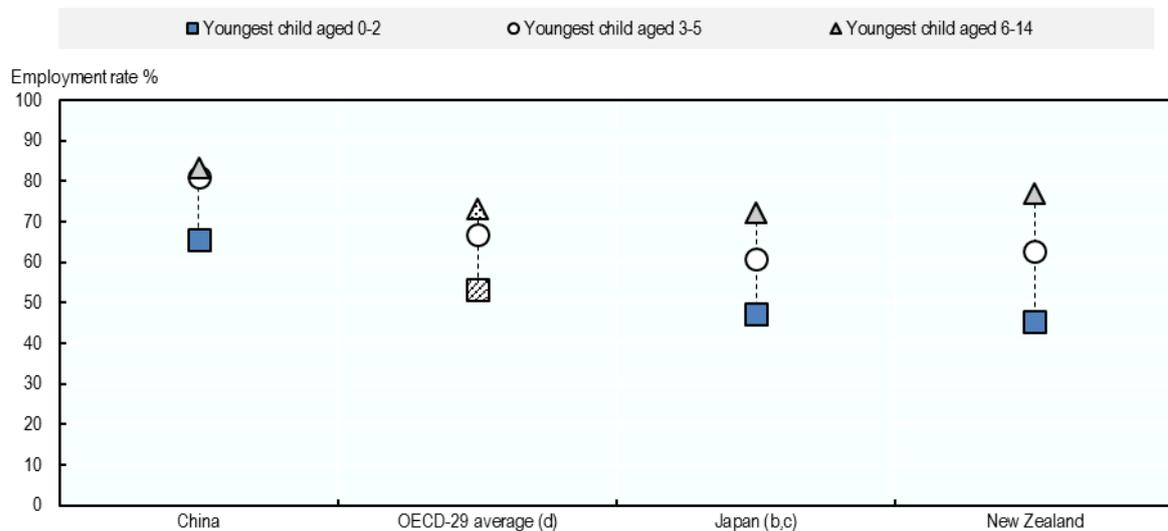
Box LMF1.6.A: Employment rates for mothers

Parenthood often has very different effects of the labour market behaviours of men and women. Across countries, women tend to take on the lion's share of the extra unpaid work that comes with children and parenthood, and women's careers are often disproportionately hampered by childbearing and childrearing in ways that men's careers are not. While not the only factor at play, the differential effects of parenthood on men and women's patterns of employment and labour market behaviours are some of the major drivers behind the gender differences in employment outcomes seen throughout this indicator.

Comparable data and information on maternal employment are relatively scarce for Asia/Pacific countries, but those data that do exist point to considerable differences in maternal employment rates across countries (Box Chart LMF1.6.E). In China, for example, employment rates for mothers are very high even when children are very young: in 2010, almost two-thirds (65.7%) of mothers in China with a youngest child aged 0-2 were in employment, much higher than the average for OECD countries (53.2%). Employment rates among mothers are generally much lower in both Japan and New Zealand, especially among those with very young children. In Japan, just under half (47.4%) of mothers with a youngest child age 0-2 are in employment, with this increasing to 60.8% once the youngest child reaches 3-5 and 72.2% once they are aged 6-14. The pattern in New Zealand is similar, albeit with rates starting off very slightly lower (45.3% among mothers with a youngest child aged 0-2) and ending up a little higher (76.9%, for those with a youngest child aged 6-14).

Box Chart LMF1.6.E. Maternal employment rates by age of youngest child, 2014 or latest available year^a

Employment rates (%) for women (15-64 years old^b) with children (aged 0-14) by age of the youngest child



a) For China, refer to 2010

b) For Japan, all ages

c) For Japan, data refer to the employment status of the mother in households with a mother and a youngest child in the given age group, rather than to mothers themselves.

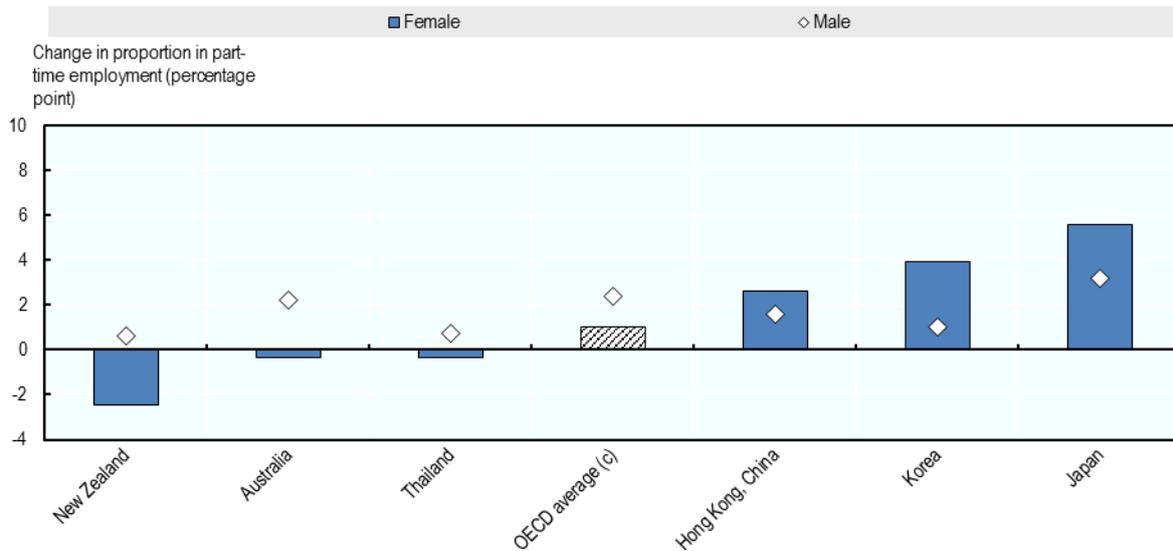
d) The OECD-29 average refers to the unweighted average across the 29 OECD member countries with available and comparable data, and excludes Japan. See OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.2 (<http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>) for more detail.

Sources: China: Chinese Women's Social Status Survey, 2010; Japan: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions; New Zealand and OECD-29 average: OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.2

Trends in the proportion of employed women working part-time are mixed across Asia/Pacific countries (Chart LMF1.6.C). In Hong Kong, Japan and Korea, part-time work has become more common among employed women over the past decade or so, with the share in part-time work increasing by at least 2.5 percentage points in each since 2004.

However, in Australia and Thailand the proportion of employed women in part-time work has remained largely static, while in New Zealand it has fallen by almost 2.5 percentage points over the same period. For men, part-time work has become more common across all covered Asia/Pacific countries. In Japan, the share of employed men in part-time employment has increased by over 3 percentage points since 2004.

Chart LMF1.6.C. Change in the proportion of employed in part-time employment^a, by sex, 2004-2015 or latest available^b
 All ages



a) Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment. 'Part-time' here refers to persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. For Hong Kong, Japan and Korea, part-time employment is based on actual rather than usual weekly working hours. For Australia, Japan, Korea and New Zealand the jobs covered are all jobs. For China, data refer to persons who usually work less than 35 hours in their main job.

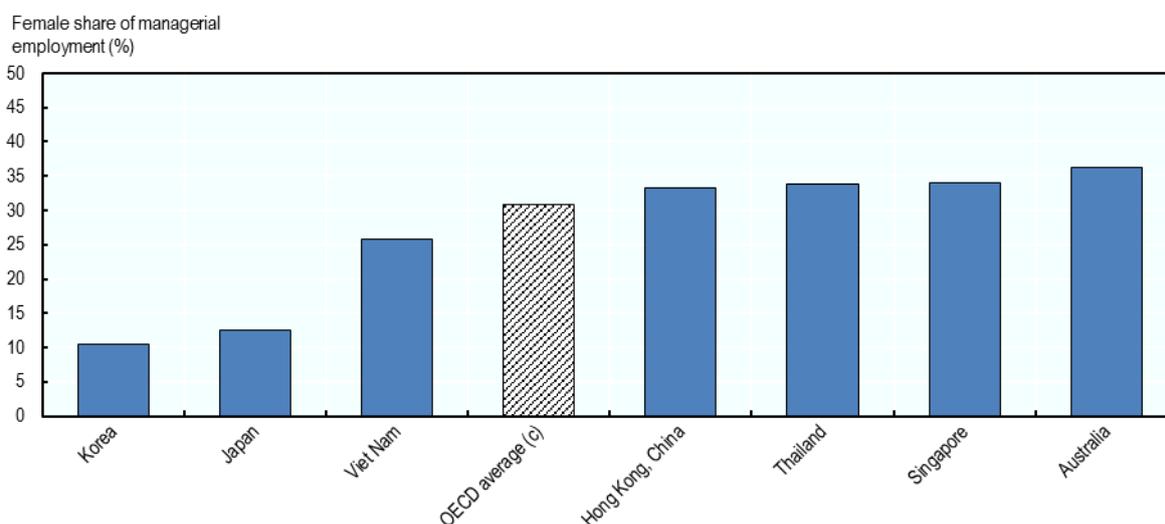
b) Data for the OECD average to 2014 (or nearest/latest available).

c) The OECD average refers to the unweighted average across 35 OECD member countries. See OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.6 (<http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>) for more detail.

Sources: [Australia, Japan, Korea and New Zealand: OECD Employment Database](#); [Hong Kong, China: Women and Men in Hong Kong - Key Statistics](#); [OECD average: OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.6](#); Thailand: Labor Force Survey

In Asia/Pacific countries as also in OECD countries, women remain under-represented in top positions and continue to make up less than half of all individuals employed as managers (Chart LMF1.6.D). This is particularly the case in Japan and Korea, where women find it especially difficult to reach managerial positions – in these two countries, women make up little more than 10% of managers. Several of the other covered Asia/Pacific countries perform slightly better. In Hong Kong, Singapore, and Thailand, for example, women make up around 33-34% of managers, just higher than the average for OECD countries (30.9%). In Australia, the female share of managers is just over 36%.

Chart LMF1.6.D. **Female share of managerial employment, 2015 or latest available^a**
 Proportion of persons employed as managers^b that are female



a) Data for Australia, Thailand and the OECD average refer to 2014.

b) Percentage of the employed that hold jobs classified in International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) 08 category one (as managers) that are female.

c) The OECD average refers to the unweighted average across the 33 OECD member countries with available and comparable data. See OECD Family Database Indicator LMF1.6 (<http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>) for more detail.

Sources: [All countries: ILO \(2016\), "ILOSTAT Database", ILO Department of Statistics](#)

Comparability and data issues

Most of the data used in this indicator are taken from or are based on information from national labour force surveys or household surveys or, in the case of China, the national population census. Organisations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) set out and define numerous [standards and guidelines](#) that should be followed by countries when conducting labour force surveys and producing labour statistics, which should help reduce comparability issues. Still, a few issues should be noted:

- For Charts LMF1.6.B and LMF1.6.C, part-time employment rates are based on a harmonised definition of 'part-time employment' whereby all workers whose usual weekly working hours in their main job are less than 30 are considered to work 'part-time'. However, for Hong Kong, Japan and Korea the data used are *actual* hours worked, for Australia, Japan, Korea and New Zealand the jobs covered are *all* jobs, and for China the part-time hours threshold is 35 hours per week. Relative to other countries, these differences may lead to an underestimation of the numbers working part-time in Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand, and an overestimation in China.
- For Box Chart LMF1.6.E, data on maternal employment rates by age of youngest child refer to rates for mothers aged 15-64 with children aged 0-14, only. However, for Japan, data refer to mothers of all ages without restriction. To the extent that there are any mothers of children aged 0-14 that are younger than 15 or older than 64 in the sample, and to the extent that these mothers are less likely to be in employment than mothers aged 15-64, this difference may

Family Database in the Asia-Pacific Region,
<http://oecdkorea.org/user/nd8662.do?View&boardNo=00002453>
OECD and OECD KOREA Policy Centre

lead to an underestimation of the maternal employment rate in Japan relative to other countries.

Sources and further reading: International Labour Organization (2016), *Women at Work: Trends 2016*, http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/Publications/WCMS_457317/lang--en/index.htm, International Labour Organization (2017), *Standards and guidelines on labour statistics*, <http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/lang--en/index.htm>