

CO4.1: Participation in and membership of groups and organisations for young adults

Definitions and methodology

This indicator presents information on young adult's participation in and membership of groups and organisations through two main measures:

- *Proportion (%) of young people (15- to 29-year-olds) who are members (active or inactive) of organisations, by type of group*
- *Proportion of young people (15- to 29-year-olds) affiliated to a church or religious organisation or a trade union, by type of affiliation*

In both cases data are taken from the World Values Survey (WVS) Wave 6 (2010-2014), which asked respondents whether they belonged to groups or organisations of a particular type and whether they considered themselves to be an “active” or “passive” member of these groups. The WVS categorises groups and organisations into different categories: groups based on religious affiliation; sports and recreational organisation; art, music or educational organisations; trade unions, political parties; humanitarian or charitable organisations; environmental organisations; and other types of organisations, including advocacy groups with specific causes.

Key findings

There are considerable differences across the covered Asia/Pacific countries in the groups and organisations to which young people belong (Table CO4.1.A). Churches and religious organisations and sports and recreational organisations are generally the most popular types of groups or organisations for young people, but not in all of the covered countries. In Australia, Korea, New Zealand and Singapore, around 30-45% of young people aged 15-29 report that they are a member (either active or inactive) of a church or religious organisation, but this is only 12% in Japan and 4% in China. Similarly, in Japan, Korea, Singapore and Thailand about 20-30% of young people aged 15-29 report that they are a member of a sports or recreational organisation. In Australia and New Zealand this rises to as high as 50-60%, but in China only about 9% of young people report that they are a member of a sports or recreational organisation. Membership of most other types of group or organisation is generally uncommon, except on particular occasions. For example, in Australia and in New Zealand, 32% and 37% of young people respectively report that they are a member of humanitarian or charitable organisation, but in all over covered countries this is fairly uncommon.

Not all young people who are members of groups or organisations actively participate in the organisation. Table CO4.1.B shows the proportion of young people who are members of churches or religious organisations and of trade unions by whether they are an active or a passive member of the group. Across the covered Asia/Pacific countries, *active* participation in both types of organisation tends to be much less frequent than general membership. In Australia, for example, only about 37% of those young people who report they are a member of a church or religious organisation and 43% of those young people who report they are a member of a trade union also report that they are actually active members of the groups. In

Other relevant indicators: CO3.1 Educational attainment by gender; CO4.2 Participation rates of first-time voters

China, where general membership of both types of organisation is already uncommon, active membership is extremely rare – only 1% of young people aged 15-29 in China report they are active members of churches or religious organisations and of trade unions.

Table CO4.1.A. Proportion (%) of young people (15- to 29-year-olds) who are members (active or inactive) of organisations by type of group, around 2012
 Men and women age 15 to 29

	Year	Church or religious organisation	Sports and recreational organisation	Art, music or educational organisation	Trade unions	Political party	Humanitarian or Charitable organisation	Environmental organisation	Other groups
Australia	2012	41	52	31	22	10	32	15	10
China	2012	4	9	7	7	7	2	2	1
Indonesia		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Japan	2012	12	22	12	10	5	3	3	11
Korea	2010	44	29	25	8	6	11	9	23
New Zealand	2011	45	58	40	19	16	37	20	30
Singapore	2012	41	25	19	12	8	12	9	9
Thailand	2013	29	26	21	13	11	17	16	12
Viet Nam		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Sources: [World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-2014](#)

Table CO4.1.B. Proportion of young people (15- to 29-year-olds) affiliated to a church or religious organisation or a trade union, by type of affiliation, around 2012
 Men and women age 15 to 29

	Year	Affiliation to church or religious organisation			Trade union membership		
		Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive
Australia	2012	41	15	26	22	9	12
China	2012	4	1	4	7	1	6
Indonesia		..	..	..	..	..	..
Japan	2012	12	4	8	10	2	9
Korea	2010	44	24	20	8	2	6
New Zealand	2011	45	19	26	19	9	10
Singapore	2012	41	25	17	12	3	9
Thailand	2013	29	15	14	13	4	8
Viet Nam		..	..	..	..	..	..

Sources: [World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-2014](#)

Comparability and data issues

All the data used in the indicator are taken from the World Values Survey (WVS) Wave 6 (2010-2014). The World Values Survey (WVS) is a worldwide network of representative national surveys carried out in almost 100 countries covering almost 90 percent of the world's population. A common questionnaire is used across countries. Six waves of surveys have been released from 1981 to 2014, with the latest (Wave 6) carried out over the 2010/2014 period. Sample sizes do vary somewhat across the covered Asia/Pacific

countries, from around 850 in New Zealand, and 1200 in Korea and Thailand, to approximately 2000 in Singapore, 2300 in China and close to 2500 in Japan. For more detail on the methods used by the World Values Survey, see the documentation [available here](#) on the WVS website.

Sources and further reading: OECD (2019), *Society at a Glance 2019: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/soc_glance-2019-en; World Values Survey, <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>;