

TRUST AND SAFETY

Trust and safety in a society reflects the extent to which people feel that their freedom of movement and their property are protected. A high level of personal trust and safety can promote openness and transparency in society, social interaction and cohesion.

People in general **feel safe** walking alone at night: over 70% of people in the Asia/Pacific region and OECD countries would agree (Figure 7.7). However, there is a gender gap as in all countries women are less likely to report feeling safe walking alone at night. The gender gap accounts for less than 5 percentage points in Armenia, the Philippines and Singapore, while Australian and New Zealand women are much less likely (by around 30 percentage points) than men to report they safe walking home at night. On average the difference is about 16 percentage points in OECD countries and 12 percentage points in the Asia/Pacific region.

Almost 95% of Singaporeans feel comfortable being on the street at night, and this is close to 90% in Hong Kong, China. By contrast, less than half of the population in Cambodia and Kyrgyzstan feel safe walking home at night. Trends in the safety sentiment differ across countries: over the 2006/08 to 2015/17 period the number of Kazakhs reporting they felt safe on the street at night increased by 17 percentage points, while the sense of safety declined most significantly among inhabitants of Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines (Figure 7.7, right scale).

The **crime rate** has increased in the Asia/Pacific region (Figure 7.8): on average the reported crime rates in countries for which data are available have increased by 17 percentage points since 2005. However, this masks considerable variation in country experiences; reported crime rates declined significantly in Japan and Singapore since 2005 whereas they increased most in Armenia, the Maldives and Mongolia.

Confidence in law enforcement is relatively high overall (Figure 7.9). Over 70% of the population in the Asia/Pacific region and OECD countries trust the police. This proportion is highest at over 85% of respondents in Bhutan, New Zealand and Singapore. Less than 60% of respondents in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia trust their police, but this is nowhere as low as in Pakistan where only half of the respondents have faith in the police.

Figure Note

Figure 7.8. “See the section on “Data and measurement” for a description of definition and measurement issues that affect the international comparability of data. Measurement issues also affect the comparability of observations on Armenia and Singapore over time. Instead of 2005 the index year refers to 2007 for Maldives and Sri Lanka, 2008 for Australia and Macau-China, 2010 for Thailand. Latest year available refers to 2014 for Azerbaijan, and Japan, 2013 for Hong Kong-China, Maldives, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and India, and 2011 for Tajikistan.

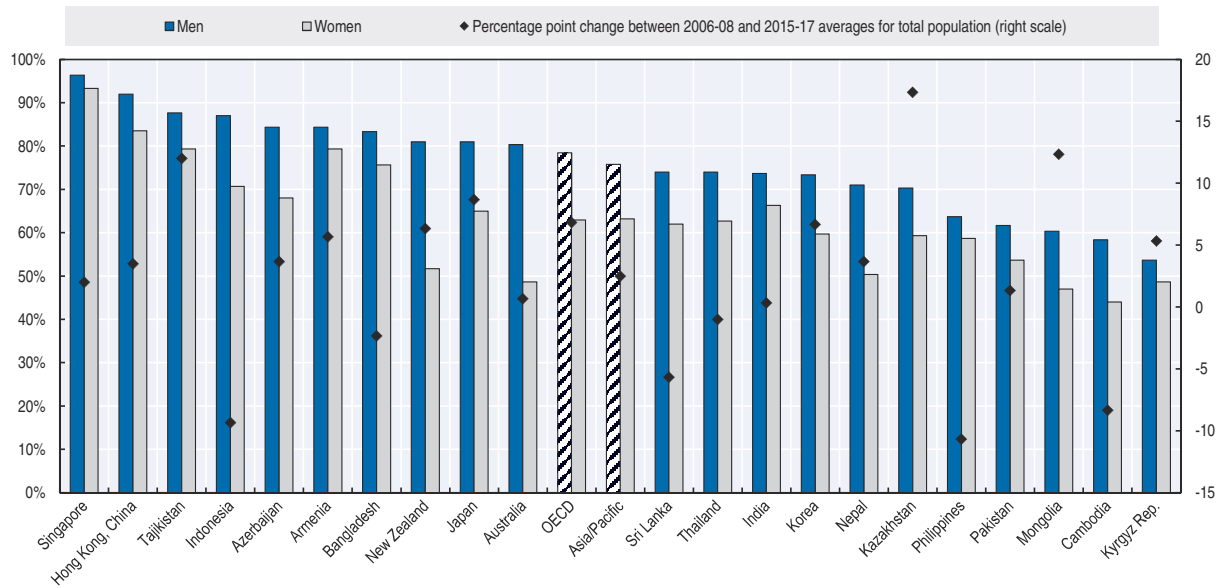
Data and measurement

Data on trust in local police and safety comes from the Gallup World Poll undertaken in more than 150 countries as based on a common questionnaire, translated into the predominant languages of each country. In general, samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and over. While this ensures a high degree of comparability across countries, results may be affected by sampling and non-sampling error, and variation in response rates. Hence, results should be interpreted with care. These probability surveys are valid within a statistical margin of error, also called a 95% confidence interval. This means that if the survey is conducted 100 times using the exact same procedures, the margin of error would include the “true value” in 95 out of 100 surveys. Sample sizes vary across countries from 1 000 to 4 000, and as the surveys use a clustered sample design the margin of error varies by question. The margin of error declines with increasing sample size: with a sample size of 1 000, the margin of error at a 95% confidence interval is $0.98/\sqrt{\text{sample size}}$ or 3%, with a sample size of 4 000, this is 1.5%. To minimise the effect of annual fluctuations in responses related to small sample sizes, results are averaged over a three-year period, or two-year period in case of missing data. If only one observation in a three-year period is available this finding is not reported.

Indicators on trust and safety are based on the following questions: “Do you feel safe walking alone at night or in the city or area where you live? In the city or area where you live, do you have confidence in the local police force, or not?”

Data on crime rates are taken from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNDOC) Database. UNODC collects administrative data on crime and the operation of criminal justice systems in order to make policy-relevant information and analysis available in a timely manner (www.unodc.org/). The index (2005 = 100) concerns data on the total number of persons brought into formal contact with the police and/or criminal justice system, all crimes taken together. “Formal contact” with the police and/or criminal justice system may include persons suspected, arrested or cautioned. Cross-national comparisons should be interpreted with care because of the differences that exist between the legal definitions of offences in countries or the different methods of counting and recording offences.

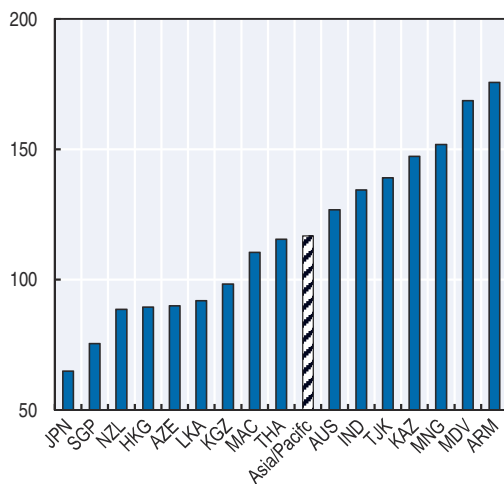
Figure 7.7. Women feel less secure walking alone at night than men
Share of people responding they feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live, 2015-17



Source: Gallup World Poll (www.gallup.com) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNDOC) (www.unodc.org/).
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933900971>

Figure 7.8. Trend in crime over the last decade varies across countries

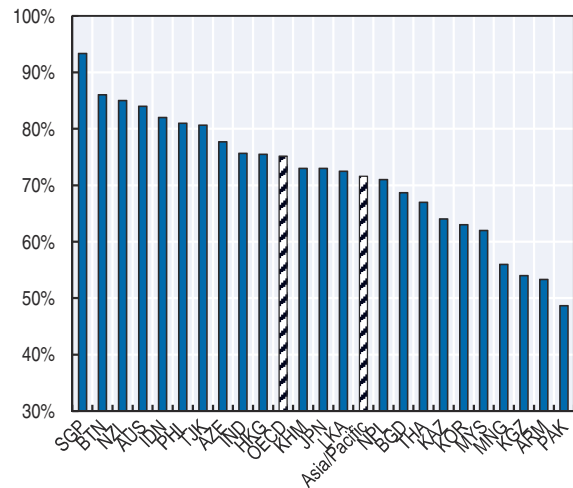
Total persons brought into formal contact with the police and/or criminal justice system in 2015 or last year available, all crimes, index 100 in 2005



Source: Gallup World Poll (www.gallup.com) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNDOC) (www.unodc.org/).
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933900990>

Figure 7.9. Confidence in the local police remains high

Share of people responding they have high confidence in the local police, 2015-17 averages (%)



Source: Gallup World Poll (www.gallup.com) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNDOC) (www.unodc.org/).
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933901009>



From:
Society at a Glance: Asia/Pacific 2019

Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/soc_aag-2019-en

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2019), "Trust and safety", in *Society at a Glance: Asia/Pacific 2019*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/f7e14512-en>

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