

## Taxing Wages - Japan

### Tax on labour income

The **tax wedge** is a measure of the tax on labour income, which includes the tax paid by both the employee and the employer.

#### TAX WEDGE ON LABOUR INCOME

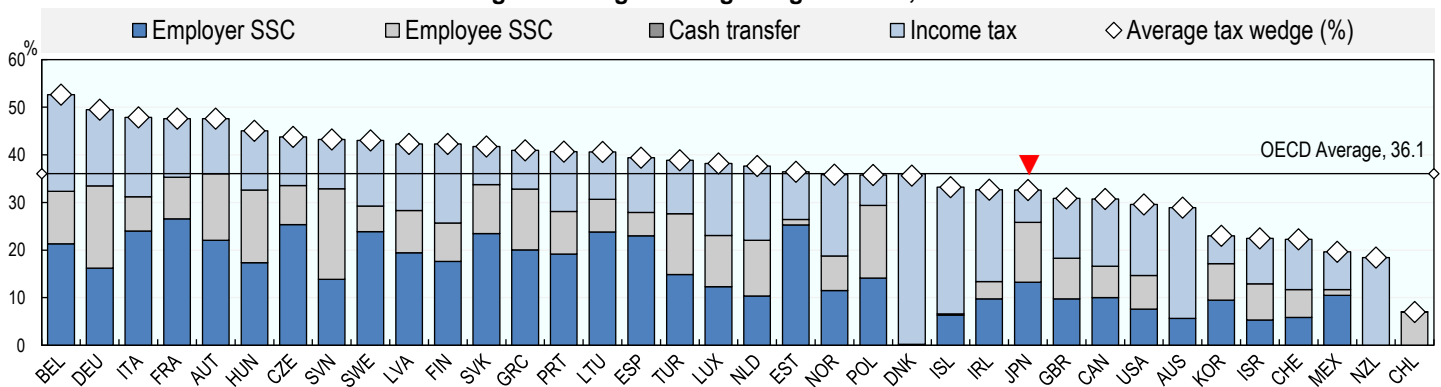
$$\frac{((\text{Personal income tax} + \text{employee and employer social security contributions (SSCs)}) - \text{Family Benefits})}{(\text{Total labour costs (gross wages} + \text{employer SSCs)})}$$

### Single worker

The tax wedge for the average single worker in Japan increased by 0.1 percentage points from 32.5 in 2017 to 32.6 in 2018. The

- » OECD average tax wedge in 2018 was 36.1 (2017, 36.2). In 2018 Japan had the 26th lowest tax wedge among the 36 OECD member countries, occupying the same position in 2017.
- » In Japan, income tax and employer social security contributions combine to account for 62% of the total tax wedge, compared with 77% of the total OECD average tax wedge.

#### Average tax wedge: average single worker, no children

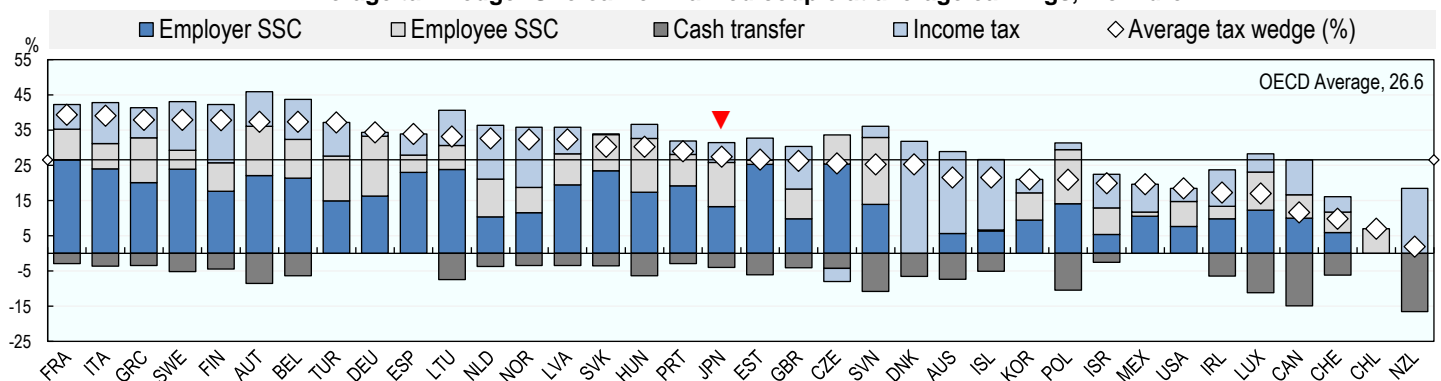


### One-earner married couple with two children

The tax wedge for a worker with children may be lower than for a worker on the same income without children, since most OECD countries provide benefits to families with children through cash transfers and preferential tax provisions.

- » Japan had the 18th highest tax wedge in the OECD for an average married worker with two children at 27.4% in 2018, which compares with the OECD average of 26.6%. The country occupied the 19th highest position in 2017.
- » Child related benefits and tax provisions tend to reduce the tax wedge for workers with children compared with the average single worker. In Japan in 2018, this reduction (5.2 percentage points) was less than the OECD average (9.5 percentage points).

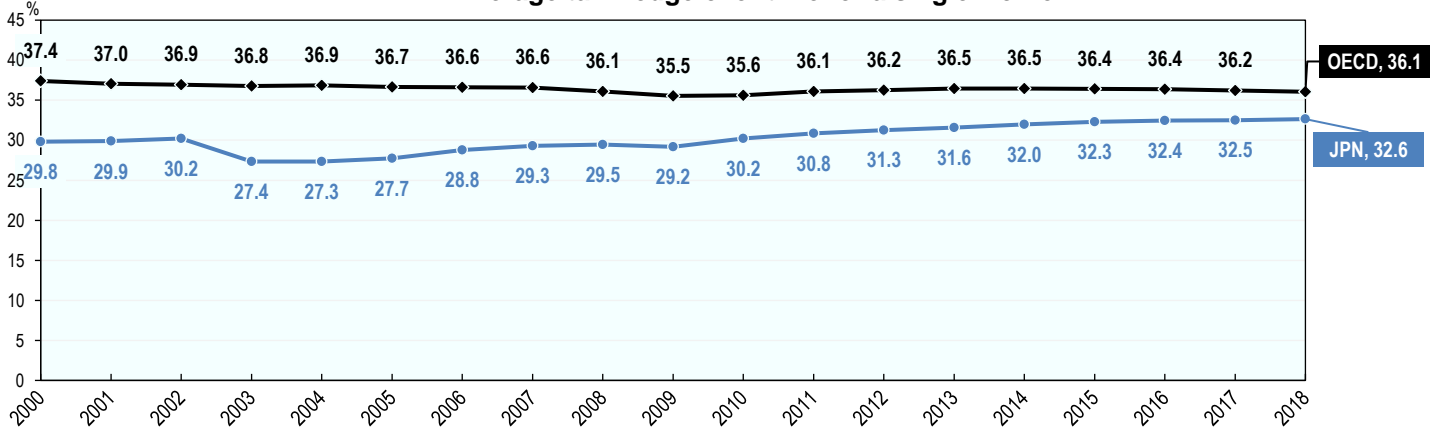
#### Average tax wedge: One-earner married couple at average earnings, 2 children



## Tax wedge trends between 2000 and 2018

- » In Japan, the tax wedge for the average single worker increased by 2.8 percentage points from 29.8% to 32.6% between 2000 and 2018. During the same period, the average tax wedge across the OECD decreased by 1.3 percentage points from 37.4% to 36.1%.
- » Since 2009, the tax wedge for the average single worker increased by 3.4 percentage points in Japan. During this same period, the tax wedge for the average single worker across the OECD increased by 0.6 percentage points.

Average tax wedge over time for a single worker



## Employee tax on labour income

The employee net average tax rate is a measure of the net tax on labour income paid directly by the employee.

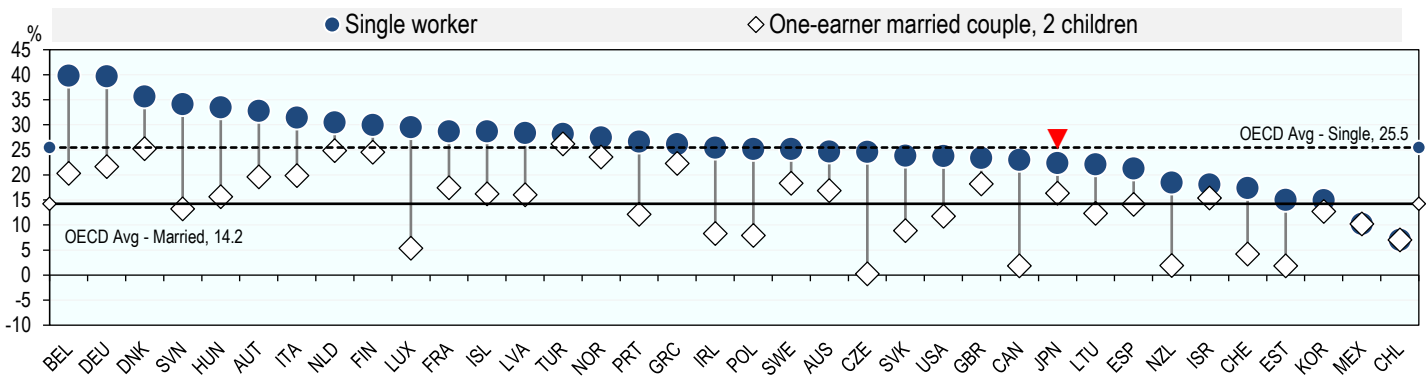
### EMPLOYEE NET AVERAGE TAX RATE

$$\frac{(\text{Employee personal income tax and employee social security contributions}) - \text{Family Benefits}}{\text{Gross wages}}$$

- » In Japan, the average single worker faced a net average tax rate of 22.3% in 2018, compared with the OECD average of 25.5%. In other words, in Japan the take-home pay of an average single worker, after tax and benefits, was 77.7% of their gross wage, compared with the OECD average of 74.5%.

- » Taking into account child related benefits and tax provisions, the employee net average tax rate for an average married worker with two children in Japan was reduced to 16.3% in 2018, which is the 15th highest in the OECD, and compares with 14.2% for the OECD average. This means that an average married worker with two children in Japan had a take-home pay, after tax and family benefits, of 83.7% of their gross wage compared to 85.8% for the OECD average.

Employee net average tax rate



## Contacts

### David Bradbury

Centre for Tax Policy and Administration  
Head, Tax Policy and Statistics Division  
David.Bradbury@oecd.org

### Michelle Harding

Centre for Tax Policy and Administration  
Head, Tax Data & Statistical Analysis Unit  
Michelle.Harding@oecd.org

### Dominique Paturot

Centre for Tax Policy and Administration  
Statistician/Analyst  
Dominique.Paturot@oecd.org