

## Germans worry about pensions, want government to do more

The OECD's new cross-national survey, *Risks That Matter*, examines people's perceptions of social and economic risks and their views on how well government reacts to their concerns.

The survey polled a representative sample of 22 000 adults in 21 countries in April 2018 in an effort to understand better what citizens want and need from social policy.

**Germans are most worried, in the short run, about becoming ill or disabled.** This is the top concern in most other surveyed countries, too. 51% of Germans list illness or disability as a top-three risk in the next couple of years. The next most frequently cited worries were crime or violence (47%) and struggling to make ends meet (43%).\*

**When looking beyond the next decade, pensions are by far the most common concern for Germans.** 76% of people in Germany list "financial security in old age" as a top-three risk.

In the face of these concerns, people have little confidence in government and in their ability to access public support. **About half (52%) of Germans feel that they would not be able to access public benefits easily if they needed them.**

**Most Germans feel they have weak**

\*Values exceed 100% because respondents could select up to three answers.

**influence over public policy.** Only 18% agree or strongly agree with the statement "The government incorporates the views of people like me when designing/reforming public benefits."

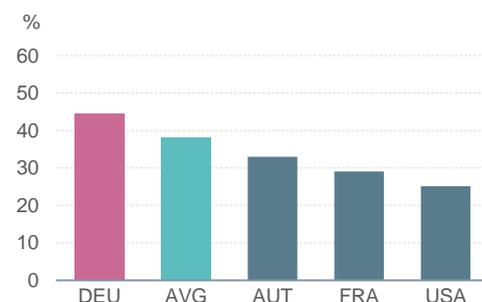
**Most people in Germany want more support from their government. Nearly four out of five people (78%) say government should do more to ensure their economic and social security (Fig. 3).**

**Reflecting German concerns about old-age security, the area with strongest support for greater expenditure is pensions.** 45% of Germans say they would be willing to contribute an extra 2% of their income in taxes and contributions to improve the provision of pensions (Fig. 1). This is higher than the cross-country average of 38%.

30% of Germans say they would contribute more in tax for better long-term care for the elderly, and 31% say they would pay more for better health care.

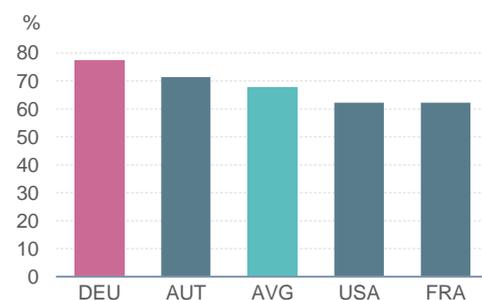
There is also strong support for anti-poverty policies. **77% of Germans say that the government should tax the rich more than it currently does in order to support the poor** – one of the highest levels of support for progressive redistribution across countries (Fig. 2).

**Fig. 1. Many Germans would be prepared to pay more in taxes for better pensions**



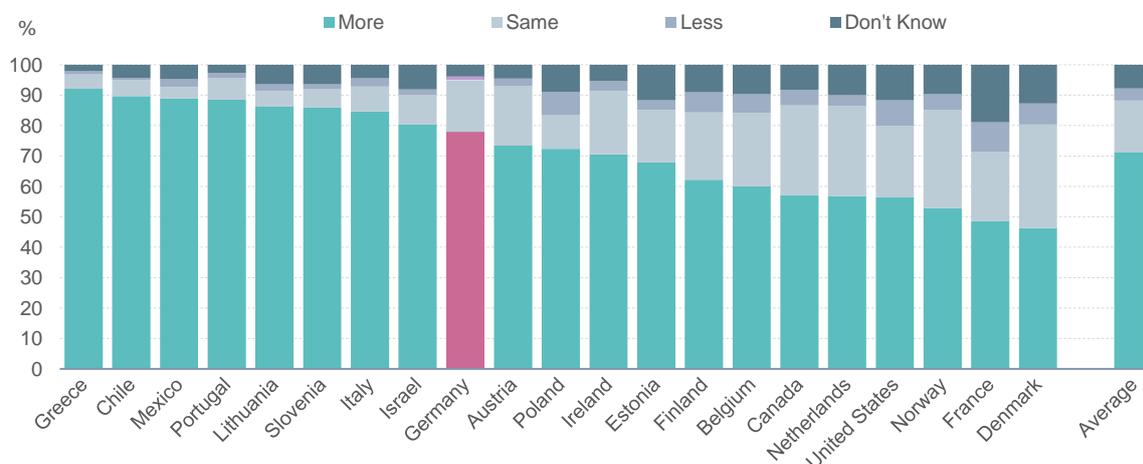
Note: Percent saying they would be "be willing to pay an additional 2% of your income in taxes/social contributions to benefit from better provision of and access to pensions."

**Fig. 2. Large numbers of Germans back increasing taxes for the rich to support the poor**



Note: Percent responding yes (or definitely yes) to the question "Should the government tax the rich more than they currently do in order to support the poor?"

**Fig. 3. More than three-quarters of Germans want government to do more to safeguard their economic and social security**



Note: Distribution of responses to the question "Do you think the government should be doing less, more, or the same to ensure your economic and social security?"  
Source: OECD (2019), *Main Findings from the 2018 OECD Risks that Matter Survey*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

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Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.