

Many worry about finances amidst inflation, and count on government to help

The OECD's cross-national Risks that Matter (RTM) survey examines people's perceptions of social and economic risks and how well they feel their government reacts to their concerns. RTM polled representative samples of 27,000 18- to 64-year-olds in 27 OECD countries to better understand what citizens want and need from social protection.

Almost 80% of respondents in Germany worry about their household's finances and overall well-being over the next two years (Fig. 1), up from less than 60% in 2020. This is one of the largest increases among RTM countries. Correspondingly, inflation and cost of living are the most frequently cited concerns in Germany (Fig. 2).

Worries about national security are also common, likely as a result of Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, with more than 80% of respondents in Germany reporting that they are somewhat or very worried about this (Fig. 2).

Looking back, German respondents are only moderately satisfied with the

government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. 38% of respondents think the government did enough, compared to a cross-national average of 45%.

When facing financial difficulties, 40% of Germans are confident that government support would be sufficient, relative to an average of 33% across countries. At the same time, almost 60% feel they can rely on friends or family to help out.

In line with earlier RTM waves, Germans would prioritise old-age pensions when it comes to improving public services via higher tax or social contributions (Fig. 3). Additionally, nearly 70% of Germans state that the rich should pay more in tax to support the poor, compared to 60% on average cross-nationally. Overall, when thinking about ensuring their economic security, one-quarter of Germans say that the government should keep doing what it is doing, and 62% want government to do more (relative to 74% cross-nationally).

Fig. 2. Proportion of respondents who report being somewhat or very concerned about "inflation and cost of living" and "national security", by country, 2022

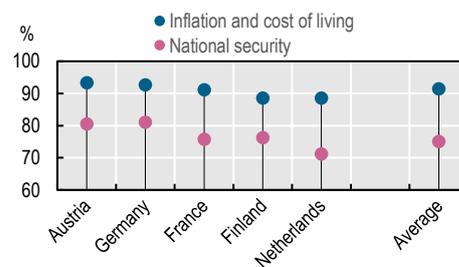


Fig. 3. Proportion who would be willing to pay an additional 2% in taxes/social contributions for better provision of and access to selected policy areas, by country, 2022

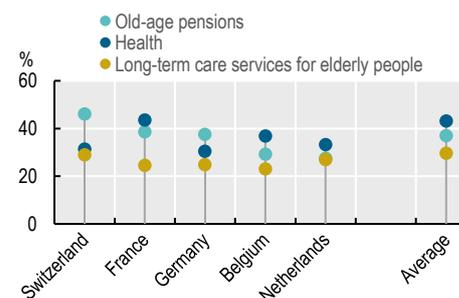
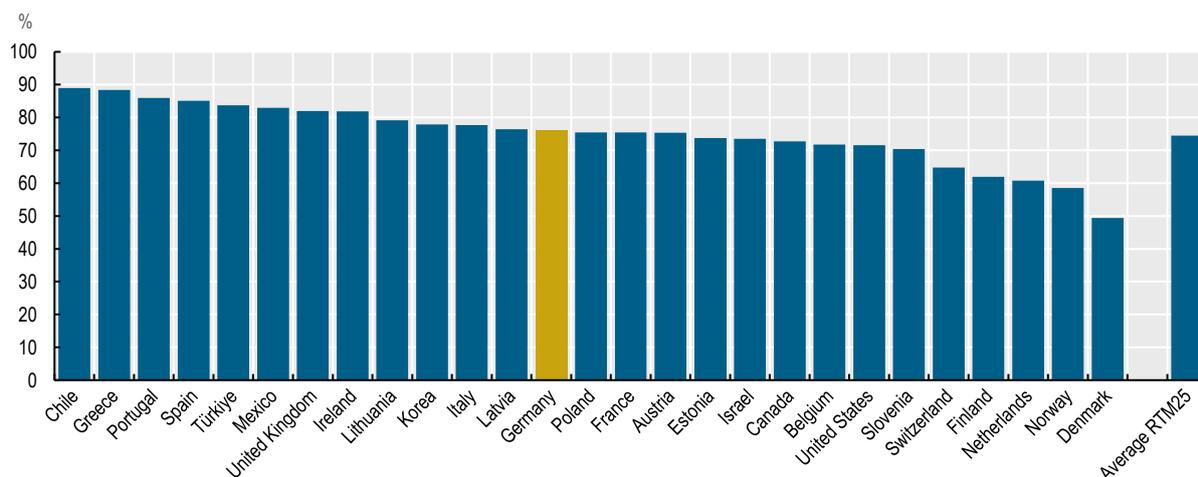


Fig. 1. Proportion who are concerned about their household's finances and overall social and economic well-being, by country, 2022



Notes: Average refers to the unweighted average of the 27 OECD countries for which data are available. Respondents were asked: "In general, thinking about the next year or two, how concerned are you about your household's finances and overall social and economic well-being?". They could choose between: "Not at all concerned"; "Not so concerned"; "Somewhat concerned"; "Very concerned"; "Can't choose". Data present the share of respondents who report "somewhat concerned" or "very concerned." For full notes see report.

Source: OECD Risks that Matter Survey 2022, <http://oe.cd/rtm>.

The **OECD Risks That Matter** survey is a cross-national survey examining people's social and economic concerns, how well they think government responds to their needs and expectations, and what policies they would like to see in the future. The survey was conducted for the first time in 2018, to support the OECD Social Policy Ministerial, and subsequently in 2020. The 2022 survey, conducted in October-December 2022, draws on nationally representative samples in Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, the United Kingdom and the United States.