



## Taxing Wages - Germany

### 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**

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

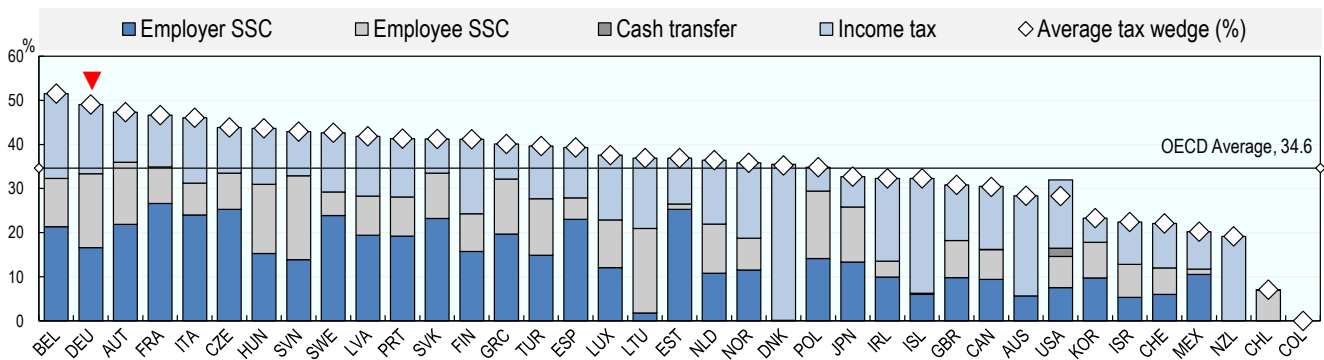
### Single worker

The tax wedge for the average single worker in Germany decreased by 0.3 percentage points from 49.3% in 2019 to 49.0% in 2020.

- » The OECD average tax wedge in 2020 was 34.6% (2019, 35.0%). In 2020, Germany had the 2nd highest tax wedge among the 37 OECD member countries, occupying the same position in 2019.

- » In Germany, income tax and employer social security contributions combine to account for 66% of the total tax wedge, compared with 76% of the total OECD average tax wedge.

Average tax wedge: average single worker, no children



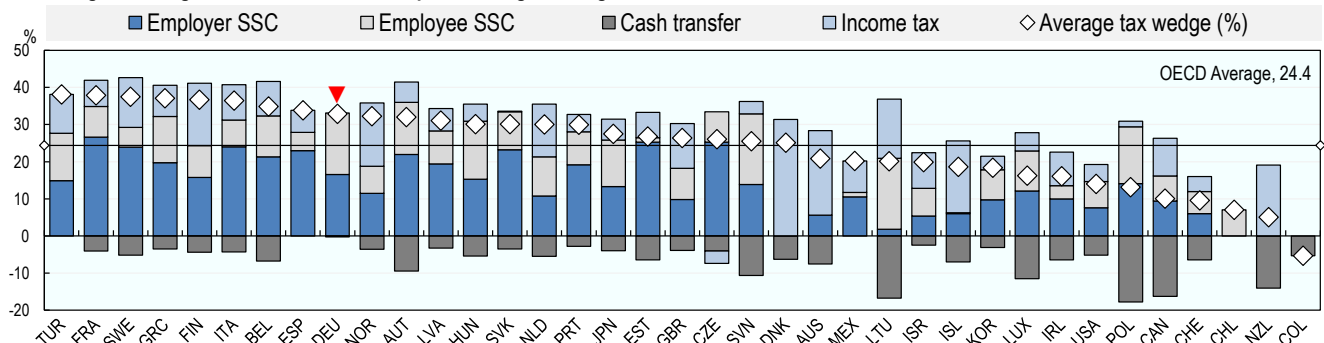
### One-earner married couple with two children

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.

- » Germany had the 9th highest tax wedge in the OECD for an average married worker with two children at 32.9% in 2020, which compares with the OECD average of 24.4%. The country occupied the 8th highest position in 2019.

- » Child related benefits and tax provisions tend to reduce the tax wedge for workers with children compared with the average single worker. In Germany in 2020, this reduction (16.1 percentage points) was greater than the OECD average (10.2 percentage points).

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

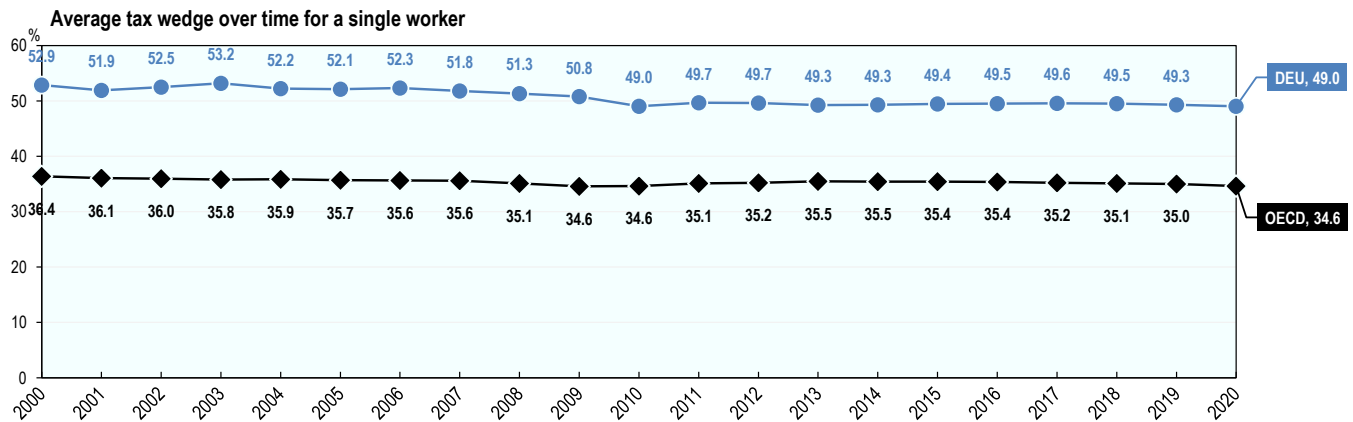




## Tax wedge trends between 2000 and 2020

» In Germany, the tax wedge for the average single worker decreased by 3.9 percentage points from 52.9% to 49.0% between 2000 and 2020. During the same period, the average tax wedge across the OECD decreased by 1.8 percentage points from 36.4% to 34.6%.

» Between 2009 and 2020, the tax wedge for the average single worker decreased by 1.8 percentage points in Germany. During this same period, the tax wedge for the average single worker across the OECD increase slowly to 35.5% in 2013 and 2015 before decreasing back to 34.6% in 2020.



## 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.

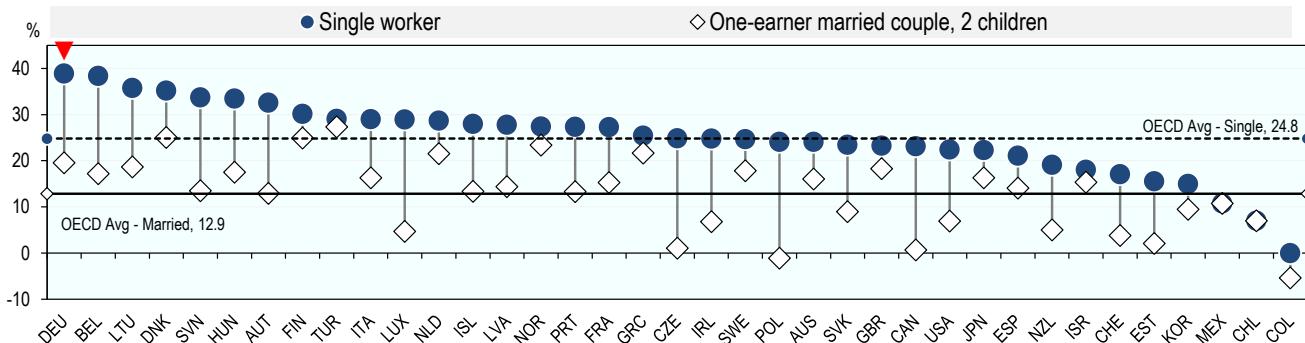
**EMPLOYEE NET AVERAGE TAX RATE**

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

» In Germany, the average single worker faced a net average tax rate of 38.9% in 2020, compared with the OECD average of 24.8%. In other words, in Germany the take-home pay of an average single worker, after tax and benefits, was 61.1% of their gross wage, compared with the OECD average of 75.2%.

» Taking into account child related benefits and tax provisions, the employee net average tax rate for an average married worker with two children in Germany was 19.6% in 2020, which is the 7th highest in the OECD, and compares with 12.9% for the OECD average. This means that an average married worker with two children in Germany had a take-home pay, after tax and family benefits, of 80.4% of their gross wage, compared to 87.1% 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