

## Austrians are relatively confident in social protection and call for greater progressive taxation

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 a representative sample of 27,000 18- to 64-year-olds in 27 OECD countries to better understand what citizens want and need from social policy – a particularly relevant concern in a context of historically high costs of living.

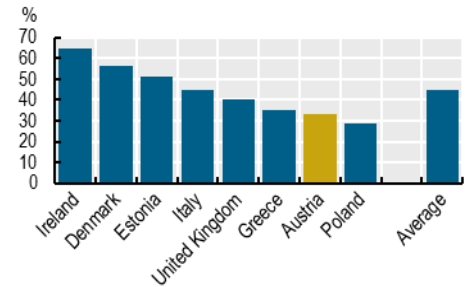
Three-in-four respondents (75%) worry about their finances and overall socioeconomic well-being in Austria, around the average across participating countries (Fig. 1). This rate increased strongly since 2020, when only 50% of respondents worried about finances. Out of all short-term risks, Austrians tend to be most worried about affording their bills (62%), up from 44% in 2020.

Austrians are relatively happy with public services. Satisfaction with public safety in Austria is higher (57%) than across OECD countries on average (44%). Austrians are also relatively satisfied with their education system (55%, compared to 47% cross-nationally). However, few Austrians think their government handled the COVID-19 crisis well (33%, compared to the RTM cross-country average of 45% (Fig. 2)

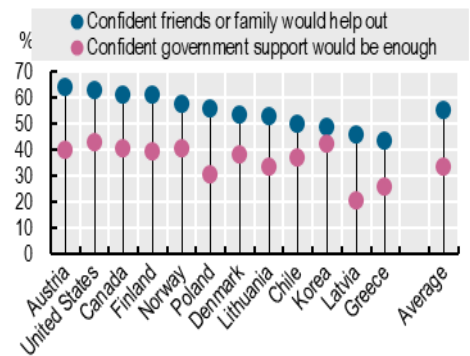
Although confidence in public income support in case of financial trouble is relatively high (40% in Austria, compared to 33% cross-nationally), Austrians are also more likely to say they would rely on family or friends in case of financial trouble (64% compared to 55%) (Fig. 3). Moreover, 49% of Austrians are sceptical that they could easily access social benefits if they needed them – a rate close to the average of 46% cross-nationally. Many of those who are sceptical of benefit access (77%) fear a complicated application process for benefits or services. This is the most common concern about accessing benefits cross-nationally, as well. When asked which areas of social service provision would be worth spending an additional 2% of the respondents' income in taxes and/or social contributions, Austrians' top priorities are health and old-age pensions – which are also ranked first among RTM countries on average.

When thinking about other ways of funding social protection, nearly seven out of ten Austrians (67%) say that the rich should be taxed more to support the poor (Fig. 4). This is above the OECD RTM average of 60%. 71% of 50-64-year-olds support more redistribution, compared to 64% of 18-29-year-olds.

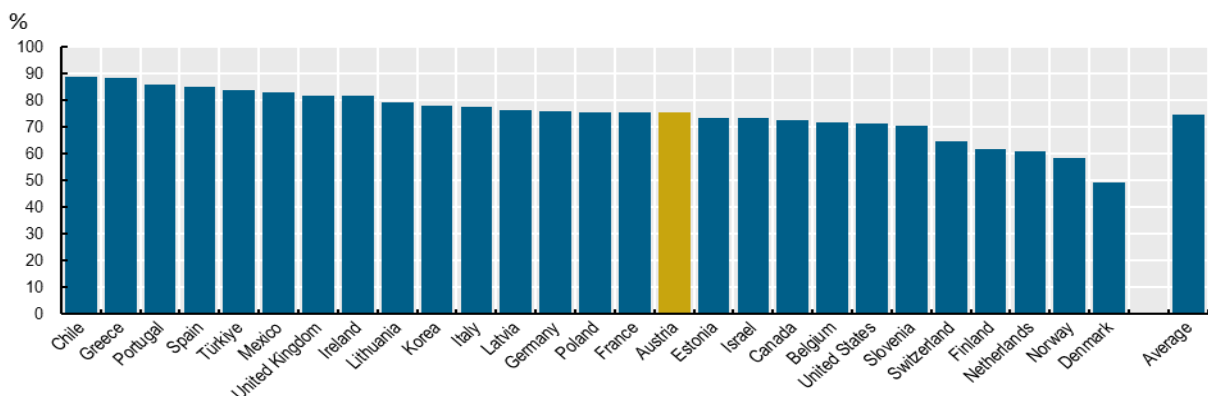
**Fig. 2. Proportion who thinks that their government did enough to handle the COVID-19 pandemic overall, by country, 2022**



**Fig. 3. Proportion who reports that they would receive adequate support from each category in case of financial trouble, by country, 2022**



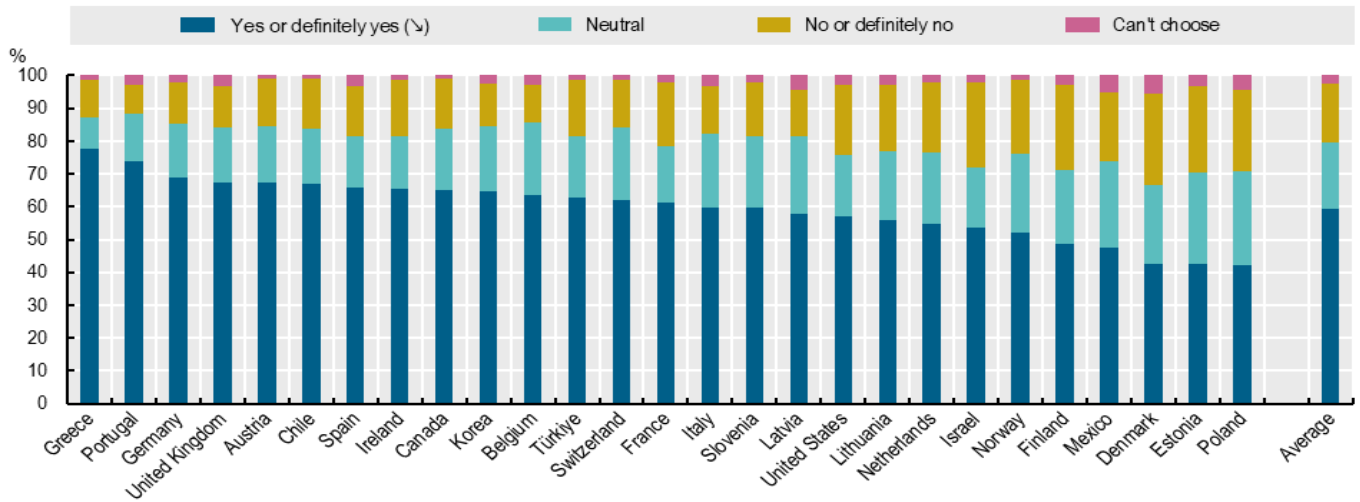
**Fig. 1. Proportion who are concerned about their household's finances and overall social and economic well-being, by country, 2022**



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>.

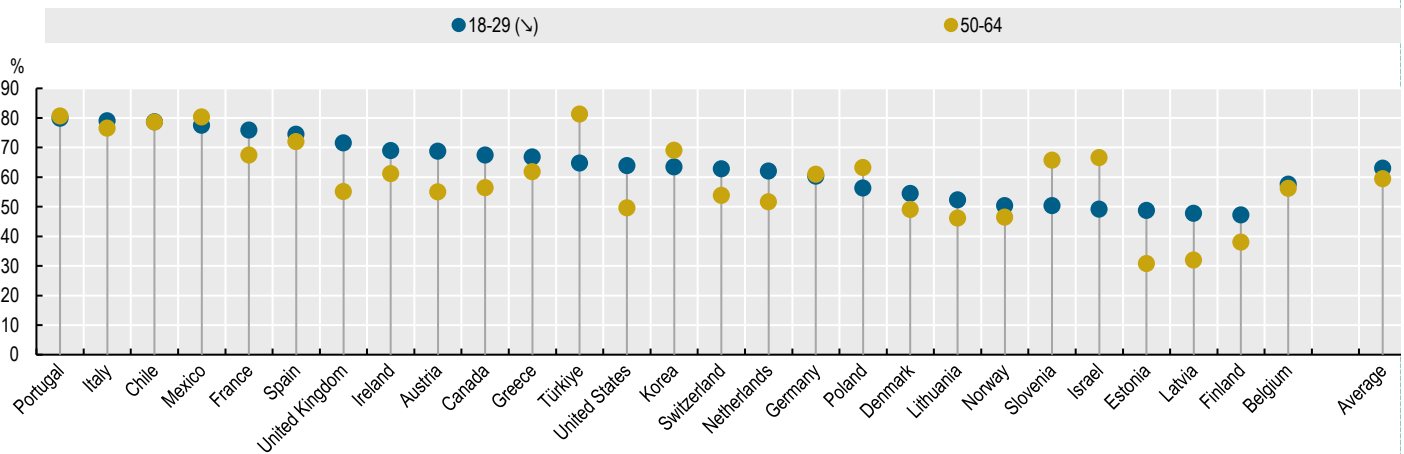
**Fig. 4. Proportion of respondents reporting whether or not they think government should tax the rich more than they currently do in order to support the poor, by country, 2022**



Notes: Average refers to the unweighted average of the 27 OECD countries for which data are available. Respondents were asked: “Should the government tax the rich more than they currently do in order to support the poor?”. Respondents could choose between: “Definitely no”; “No”; “Neutral”; “Yes”; “Definitely yes”; “Can’t choose”. Data present share of respondents choosing “definitely no” or “no”, and “definitely yes” or “yes”, respectively. For full notes see the main report.

The 2022 survey wave represents the first time RTM asked respondents about their concerns around the climate crisis. Climate change emerges as a high priority issue across countries, with 59% of respondents, on average cross-nationally, calling for government to prioritise climate change. Austrians show relatively high concern about this issue, particularly among younger respondents (Fig. 5). 69% of young (age 18-29) Austrians think government should prioritise dealing with climate change, compared to 63% of youths cross-nationally. Support for dealing with climate change is slightly lower among older respondents, but nevertheless a majority of middle-age (61%) and older (55%) Austrians call for greater government prioritisation of climate change.

**Fig. 5. Proportion of respondents who think that their government should prioritise “dealing with climate change” more or much more in the coming year, given global challenges today, by age group and country, 2022**



Note: Average refers to the unweighted average of the 27 OECD countries for which data are available. Respondents were asked: “Thinking about global challenges today, to what degree should your government prioritise the following in the coming year: Dealing with climate change. Respondents could choose between: “Prioritise much less”; “Prioritise less”; “Prioritise as it does now”; “Prioritise more”; “Prioritise much more”; “Can’t choose”. Data presents the share of respondents who chose “prioritise more” or “prioritise much more”. For full notes see the main report. Source: OECD RTM 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