

Norwegians are relatively satisfied with the provision of social protection

The OECD's cross-national Risks that Matter survey examines people's perceptions of social and economic risks and how well they feel their government reacts to their concerns. The survey polled a representative sample of 25000 people aged 18 to 64 years old in 25 OECD countries to understand better what citizens want and need from social policy – particularly in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

When asked about their perceived social and economic risks, Norwegians are generally less worried than respondents in most countries in the sample. The risk of becoming ill or disabled is the most commonly-cited short-term concern in Norway, held by 45% of Norwegians (Fig. 2) – a perhaps unsurprising result during the pandemic. Staying healthy is also the top worry in the long run, i.e. beyond the next decade.

Just over half of the Norwegian respondents are worried about financial insecurity in old age. While this is still a sizeable share of the population, Norwegians seem much less worried about financial security than respondents in other OECD countries. Worries about financial security in old age are lowest throughout northern Europe, with rates below 60% in Denmark (48.3%), Finland (57%), and Norway (55.3%).

When looking at specific issue areas,

Norwegians are most satisfied with their access to a good-quality educational system. There is also a general sense that respondents feel they are getting their "fair share" of social benefits: only one in five Norwegians feel that they do *not* get their fair share, given the taxes and social contributions they pay. This compares favourably to the OECD average of 42%.

All governments in the OECD face challenges ensuring social benefit access. While 35% of Norwegians say that they feel they could easily receive public benefits if they needed them (compared to 23% cross-nationally), 30% of Norwegians say they could *not* easily access benefits if needed. Among those Norwegians who feel they could not access benefits, 74% say that they think the application process would be difficult, lengthy or time-consuming.

On average across countries, 68% of respondents want their government to do more to ensure their economic and social security. This includes a majority of respondents in all but two countries—Denmark and Norway. In these countries, very large shares are satisfied with what government is *currently* doing. 45% of Norwegians want government to do more, and 42% want government to continue what it is doing now to ensure economic and social security.

Percent identifying whether they agree or disagree with the statement "I feel that I receive a fair share of public benefits, given the taxes and social contributions I pay"

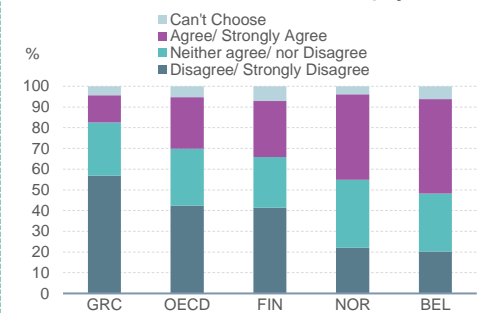


Fig. 2. Percent identifying 'becoming ill or disabled' as the top short-term risk to themselves or their family

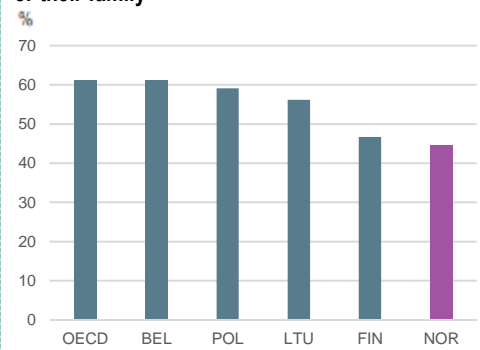
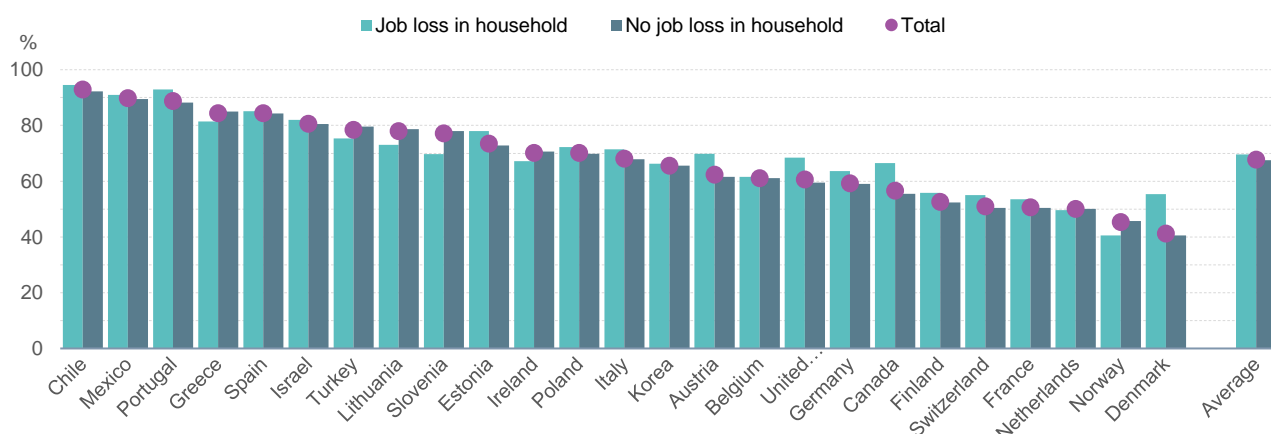


Fig. 3. Generally satisfied with current levels of social protection, Norwegians are among the least likely to say government should do more



Percent of respondents responding "more" or "much more" when asked "Do you think the government should be doing less, about the same, or more to ensure your economic and social security and well-being?", by reported experience of job loss in the household since the start of the pandemic, 2020

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter 2020 survey, <https://www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm>

The OECD Risks that Matter (RTM) 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. The 2020 survey, conducted in September-October 2020, draws on nationally-representative samples in Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States.