

Poles concerned about social mobility, 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 OECD countries in 2018 in an effort to understand better what citizens want and need from social policy.

People in Poland are most worried, in the short run, about becoming ill or disabled. 64% of Poles list illness or disability as one of their top-three risks in the next couple of years. The second most common short-term worry is making ends meet (54%).*

When looking beyond the next decade, 74% of Poles identify financial security in old age as one of their top-three risks. This is the most common result across countries (Fig. 1).

Poles are also concerned about social mobility, with nearly half (48%) reporting that they worry their children will not do as well in life as they have done. A similar share worry that they themselves will not do as well as their parents did.* This is an especially strong concern among young people: 69% of 18- to 29-year-old Poles list not doing as well as their parents (vis-a-vis

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

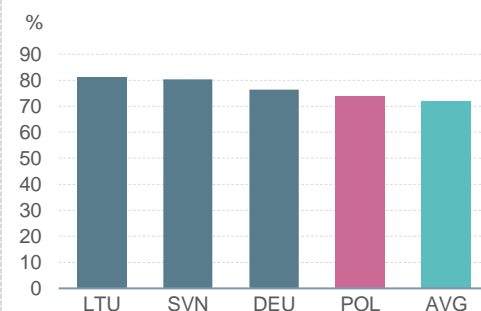
income, job security, etc.) or as well as they envision for themselves as a top-three long-term risk (Fig. 2). This is the highest share for this age group across all the surveyed countries.

At the same time, many Poles feel disconnected from social programmes. 54% of Poles believe they would have trouble accessing public benefits easily if they needed them – a fairly large share of the population, but nevertheless lower than the cross-country average (56%).

When asked about their satisfaction with a range of public services, Poles are most pleased with education. 50% feel that they have access to good-quality and affordable education (and 30% disagree). However, a majority of Poles feel that they do not have access to good-quality and affordable public services in the areas of long-term care for the elderly, long-term care for people with disabilities, housing, and especially healthcare, where 71% of Poles feel they cannot access good-quality and affordable care.

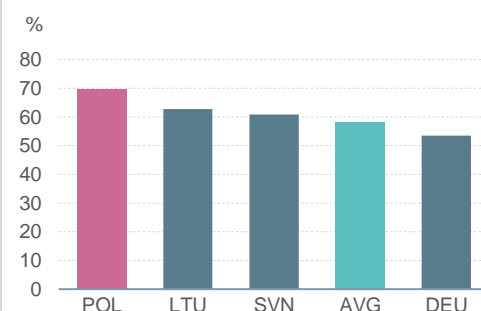
Given these concerns, it is perhaps unsurprising that many Poles want government to help them more. Nearly three-quarters of Poles want the government to do more to ensure their economic and social security (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1. As in most countries, many Poles are concerned about financial security in old age



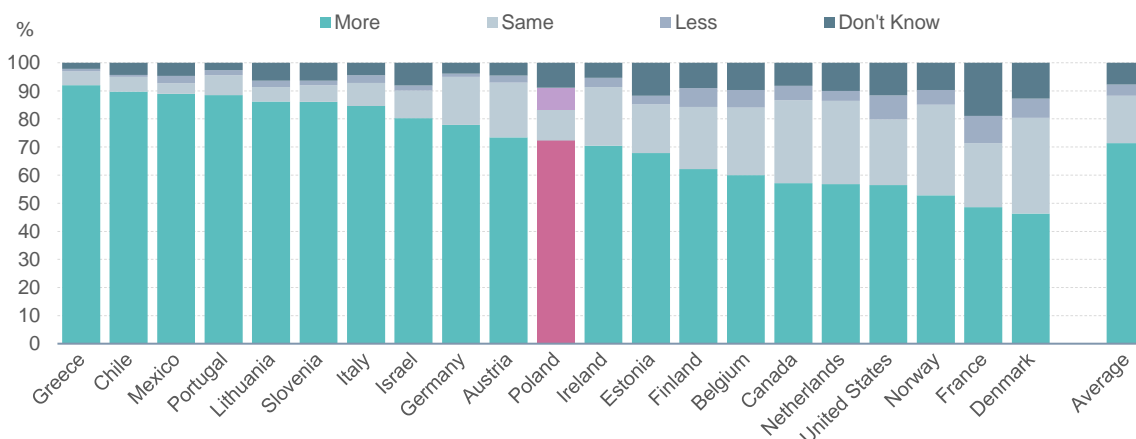
Note: Percent listing "Being financially secure in old-age" as one of the top-three greatest long-term risks to themselves or their immediate family.

Fig. 2. Many young people in Poland worry about their future prospects



Note: Percent of 18- to 29-year-olds listing the risk that "I will not attain the level of status and comfort that my parents had / that I envision for myself" as one of the top-three greatest long-term risks to themselves or their immediate family

Fig. 3. Almost three out of four Poles 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.

Contacts: Monika Queisser (monika.queisser@oecd.org); Valerie Frey (valerie.frey@oecd.org); Chris Clarke (chris.clarke@oecd.org)
Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.