Financial worries grow but confidence in public services remains high

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 27 000 18-64 year-olds in 27 OECD countries to better understand what citizens want and need from social policy – particularly in the face of the cost-of-living crisis.

Swiss respondents are more concerned about their financial situation and social and economic well-being in 2022 (65%) (Fig. 1) than in 2020 (59%). Yet the 2022 figure remains well below the cross-country average (75%).

Average levels of financial worries hide large differences by income. While on average 28% of Swiss respondents worry about affording all essential items, i.e. food, housing, home energy costs and rising costs of paying off/down debt, substantially more respondents in the poorest (41%) than in the richest quintile (16%) report this. Yet, only slightly more Swiss respondents (62%) than average (60%) want more redistribution.

Swiss respondents are satisfied with public services in many areas. Over half of respondents report that they have access to good-quality and affordable services in public safety (60%), education (58%) and health (53%). Consequently, perceived risks are relatively low: for example, Swiss respondents are the least concerned about accessing good-quality healthcare (44%) (Fig. 2).

Swiss respondents also report one of the highest satisfaction levels with COVID-19-related policies. 56% of Swiss respondents think that their government did enough to handle the pandemic compared to a cross-country average of 45%.

However, satisfaction with public services is substantially lower for family support (37%) and housing (34%). These figures place respondents in Switzerland just above the cross-country averages of 34% and 30%, respectively.

Compared to other countries, Swiss respondents see little need for additional government spending across most policy areas. However, old-age pensions stand out: 46% report being willing to pay 2% more in taxes in return for better provision of these (Fig. 3). This is the third-highest level among participating countries.

Fig. 2. Proportion who worries about accessing good-quality healthcare over the next two years, by country, 2022

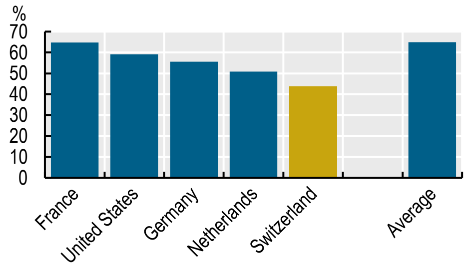


Fig. 3. Proportion who would be willing to pay an additional 2% in taxes/social contributions for better provision of and access to selected policy areas, by country, 2022

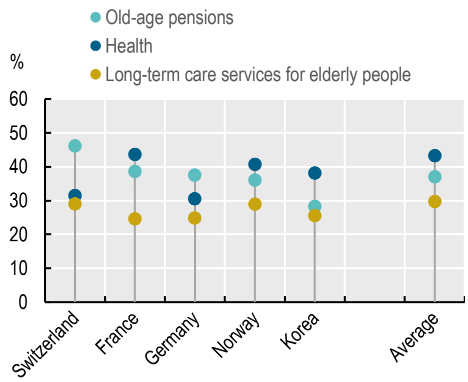
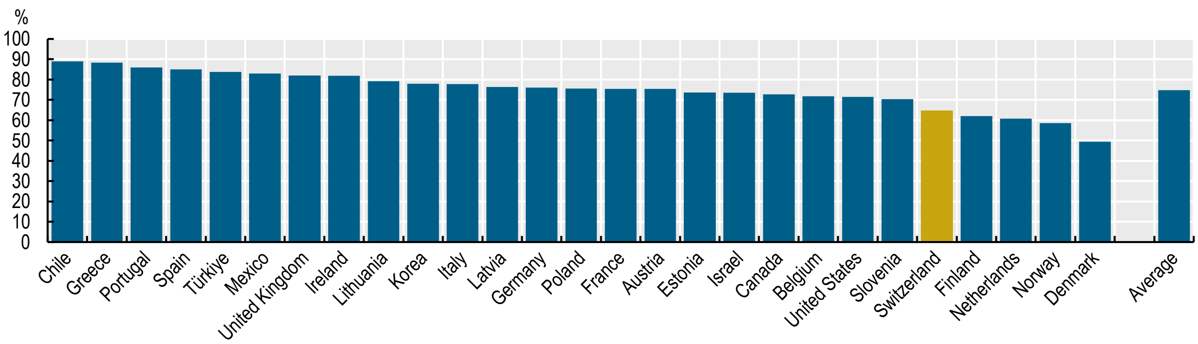


Fig. 1. Proportion who worries about their household's finances and overall social and economic well-being, by country, 2022



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.