

Canadians very satisfied with social protection overall , but concerned about access to healthcare

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.

Around the same proportion of respondents worry about their finances and overall well-being in Canada (73%) as across all participating countries (75%) (Fig 1). Inflation is likely a key contributing factor to this, with 94% worrying about inflation in Canada.

Worries about affording their own bills over the coming two years are more widespread among 18-29 year-olds (72%) than 50-64 year-olds (47%) (Fig 2). This age gap in economic worries is greater in Canada than in any other country participating in RTM 2022. At the same time, Canada stands out

with high proportions of people who are satisfied with their access to good quality and affordable public education (59%), public safety (58%), and employment services (51%). These proportions are well above cross-national averages (47%, 44%, and 38%, respectively).

However, on average across age groups, many Canadian respondents worry about access to good-quality health care (69%) (Fig 3).

While more respondents are satisfied with public health services in Canada (48%) than on average cross-nationally (43%), older adults tend to be less satisfied with the quality and affordability of public health services than younger adults.

Worries about access to health care might reflect the pressures experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, but looking back, 47% say that the government did enough to respond to COVID-19 – a rate slightly above the RTM average of 45%.

Fig. 2. Proportion who worry about not being able to pay expenses, by age group and country, 2022

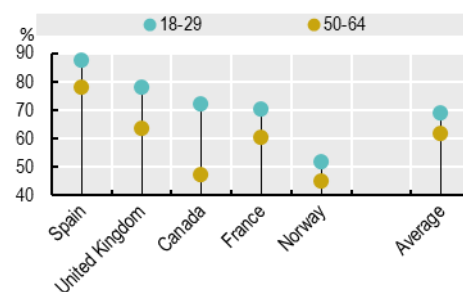


Fig. 3. Proportion who worry about accessing good-quality health care over the next two years, by country, 2022

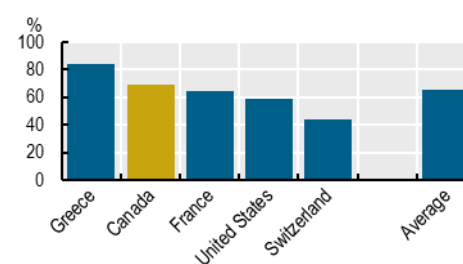
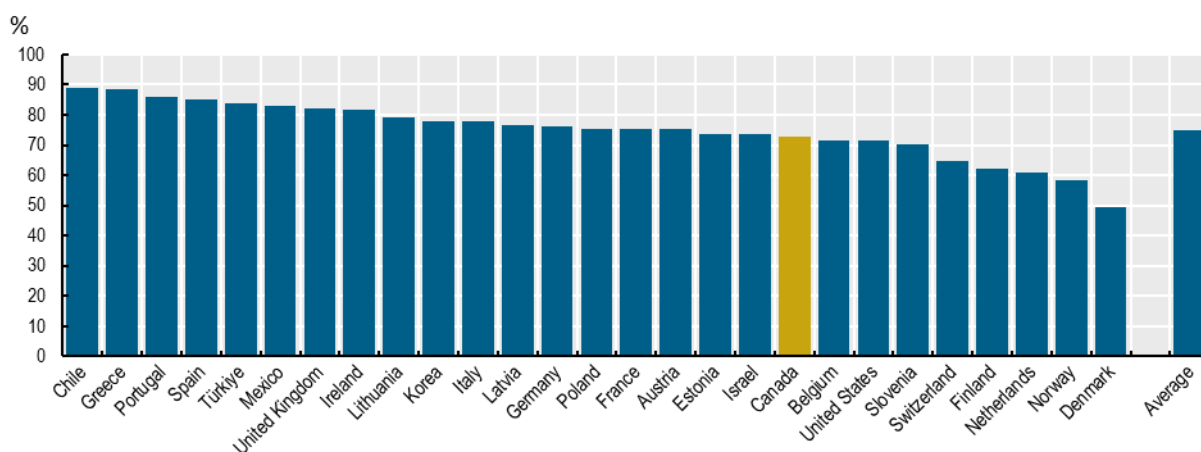


Fig. 1. Proportion who are concerned about their household’s finances and overall social and economic well-being, by country, 2022



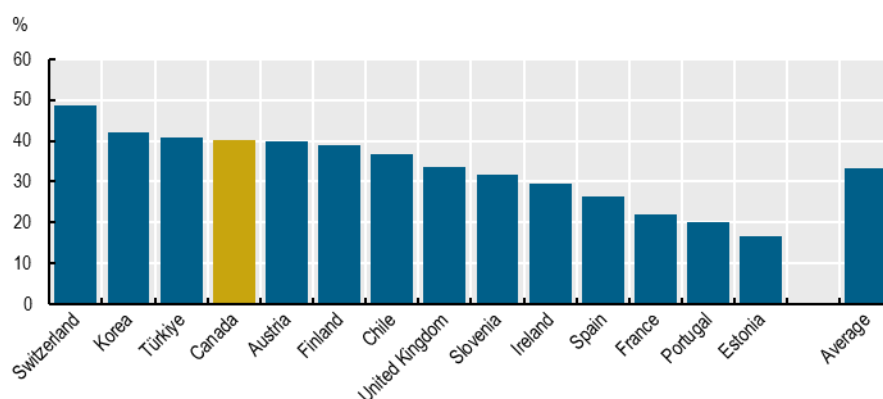
Notes: Average refers to the unweighted average of the 27 OECD countries for which data are available. Respondents were asked: “In general, thinking about the next year or two, how concerned are you about your household’s finances and overall social and economic well-being?”. They could choose between: “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 the report.

Source: OECD Risks that Matter Survey 2022, <http://oe.cd/rtm>.

Many respondents in Canada believe that the government would support them if they needed help. More respondents in Canada (40%) than on average across countries (33%) say that they are confident that government support would be enough to weather financial troubles (Fig 4). Overall, one-third (32%) think they receive a fair share of public benefits, compared to the cross-national average of 23%.

At the same time, relatively few (36%) say they could easily access benefits if needed, and among those who think they could not, 76% say they do not think the application process would be quick or simple. Canadians are also more likely than respondents across participating countries to report that they would rely on debt if they experienced financial trouble.

Fig. 4. Proportion who report being confident that government support would be enough if they experienced financial trouble, by country, 2022



Note: Average refers to the unweighted average of the 27 OECD countries for which data are available. Respondents were asked: "If you and your household were to experience financial trouble (such as not enough income or savings to pay the bills), how confident are you that: Cash benefits and services provided by government would sufficiently support you through the financial difficulties". Respondents could choose between: "Not at all confident"; "Not so confident"; "Somewhat confident"; "Very confident"; "Can't choose". Data present the share of respondents who report "somewhat confident" or "very confident". For full notes see report.

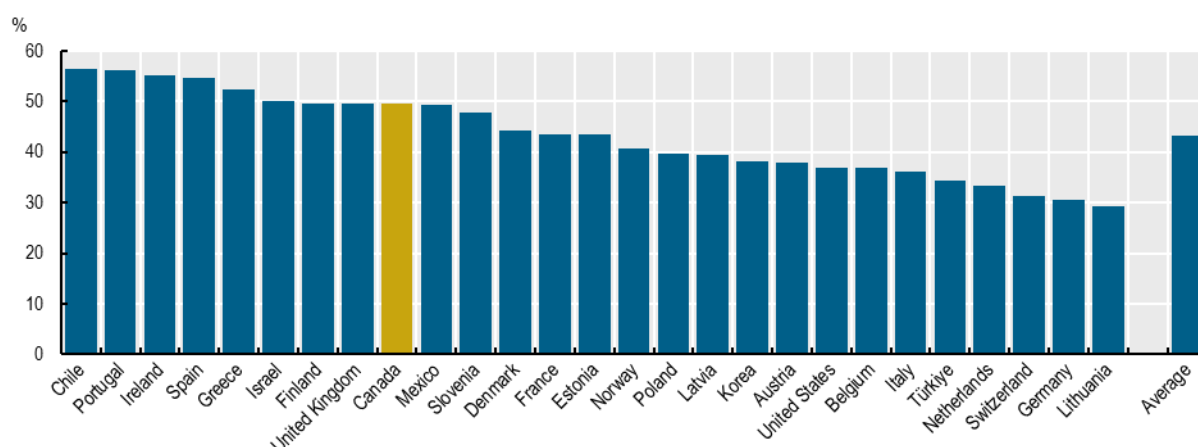
Source: OECD Risks that Matter Survey 2022, <http://oe.cd/rtm>.

Similar to the previous waves of RTM (<http://oe.cd/rtm>), Canadians call for greater investments in healthcare. 77% think that the government should spend more on healthcare, and around half

(49%) of Canadians say that they would be willing to spend 2% of their income on taxes if this meant that they would receive better provision and access to care (Fig 5). This is higher than the cross-national average (43%).

At the same time, 65% of Canadians think government should redistribute more income from the rich to the poor, compared with just 60% cross-nationally.

Fig. 5. Proportion who report that they would be willing to pay an additional 2% of their income in taxes/social contributions for better provision of and access to healthcare, by country, 2022



Notes: Average refers to the unweighted average of the 27 OECD countries for which data are available. Respondents were asked: "Would you be willing to pay an additional 2% of your income in taxes/social contributions to benefit from better provision of and access to: Health (e.g. public hospitals, subsidised health insurance, mental health services, etc.)". RTM data include respondents aged 18-64. For full notes see the 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.