

#### Preferences for social policy

Unsurprisingly, given levels of dissatisfaction with government services, most people say they want more support from their government. **Across all but two countries, a majority of respondents say they would like the government to do more to ensure their economic and social security**, as opposed to the same or less (Figure 3.6). Even in Denmark and France – where people are most satisfied with social policies – more than 45% of respondents believe that government should do more. In Chile, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Portugal, and Slovenia, this share rises to 80% or more.

Priorities for specific supports differ and vary across social groups, but increased investment in pensions and health care are often top priorities. On average across the 21 surveyed countries, 54% of respondents pick a better pension and 48% list improved health care as one of the three top supports they would “need most from the government” to make them and their family feel more economically secure (OECD, 2019).

**People are willing to pay for better pensions and health care.** In 19 of the 21 surveyed countries, respondents are more likely to agree than disagree that government should increase spending on pensions, even if it means taxes will rise and some other programmes need to be cut, and an average of almost 40% say they would be willing to pay an extra 2% of their own income in taxes for better health care and pensions (Figure 3.7). Respondents in Ireland are the most likely to say they would pay more in taxes for better health care (51% say this), followed by Portugal (49%), Greece and Chile (both 48%).

There is less support for expansion in other policy areas, but nevertheless, roughly one-quarter of respondents say they would be willing to pay more in taxes for better housing, education and long-term care services (OECD, 2019).

Across countries, respondents in less wealthy countries are more likely than others to prioritise labour market supports, like job-seeking services or funds to start a business. Respondents in richer countries more often say better housing supports are one of the things they need most from government (ibid).

**People in countries with relatively high levels of income inequality are more likely to prioritise education supports** than people in more egalitarian countries (Figure 3.8), perhaps to help ensure equality of opportunity. In highly

unequal countries like Greece and Chile, for example, more than four in ten respondents list education as one of their most-needed policies – and a similar share endorse paying more in taxes to get it.

#### Definition and measurement

The following figures present results from the 2018 OECD *Risks that Matter* survey (see Chapter 2 for more information about the survey). For Figure 3.6, respondents were asked whether they thought the government should be doing less, more, or the same as they are currently doing to ensure their economic and social security. They could also choose “don’t know” as a response option.

For Figure 3.7, respondents were asked to indicate whether they would be willing to pay an additional 2% of their income in taxes/social contributions to benefit from better provision of and access to the various different public services and benefits. They could choose as many as they liked, or none at all.

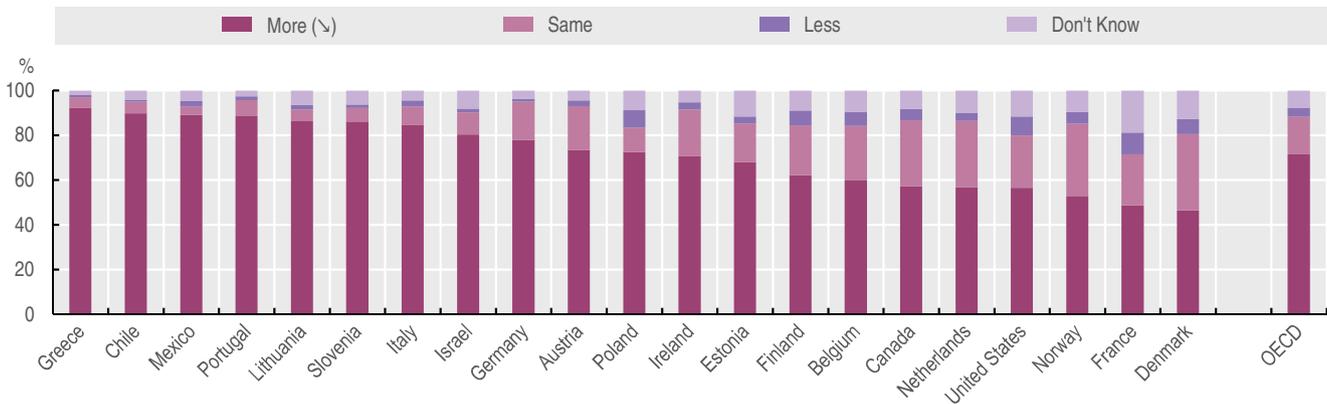
For Figure 3.8, Panel A, respondents were asked what supports they would need most from government to make them and their family feel more economically secure. They could choose from a list of nine supports, and had the option of selecting zero, one, two, or three supports. In Panel B: respondents were asked to indicate whether they would be willing to pay an additional 2% of their income in taxes/social contributions to benefit from better provision of and access to the various different public services and benefits. They could choose as many as they liked, or none at all. Data on the Gini coefficient refer to 2015, except for Mexico (2014), income are based on disposable income (after taxes and transfers) from the OECD *Income Distribution database*.

#### Further reading

OECD (2019), *Risks that Matter: Main Findings from the 2018 OECD Risks that Matter Survey*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm](http://www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm).

### 3.6. In all but two countries, most people think their government should do more to ensure their economic and social security

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?", 2018

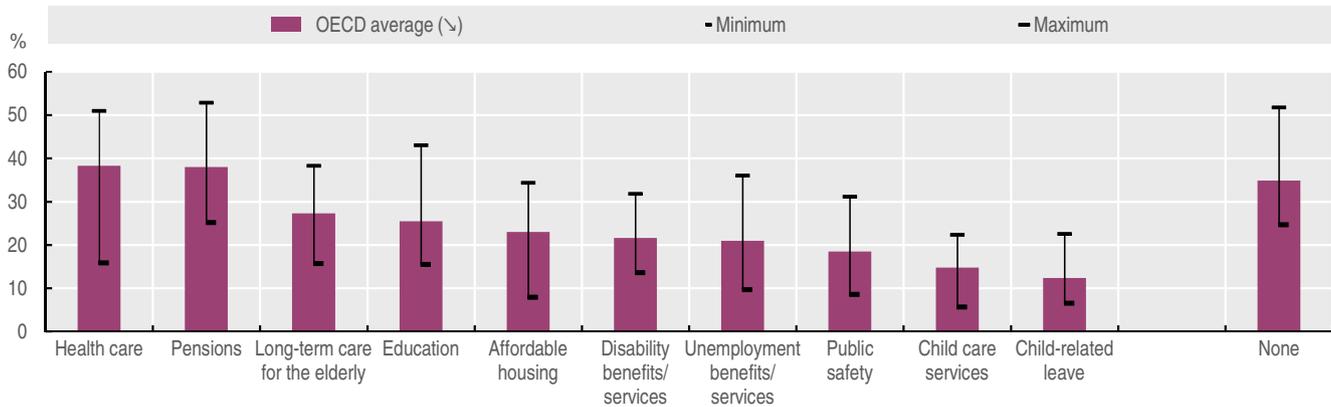


Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the 2018 OECD Risks That Matter survey, [www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm](http://www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933938401>

### 3.7. Almost 40% are willing to pay more in taxes for better pensions and health care

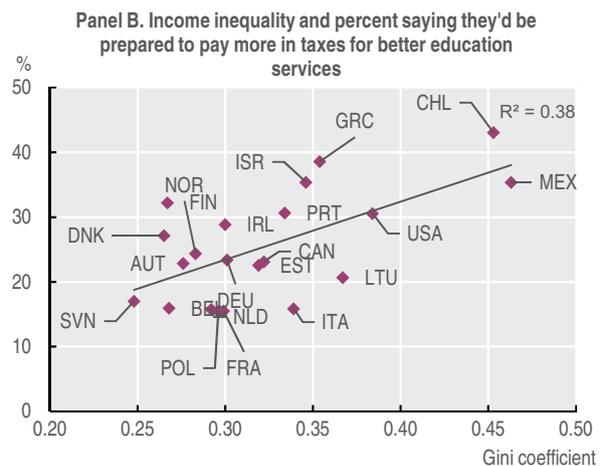
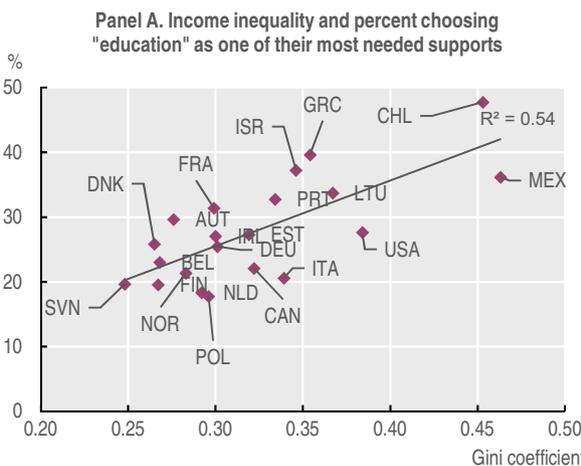
Percentage of respondents indicating they would be willing to pay an additional 2% of their income in taxes/social contributions to benefit from better provision of and access to different public services and benefits, unweighted cross-country average, 2018



Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the 2018 OECD Risks That Matter survey, [www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm](http://www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933938420>

### 3.8. Better public education is one of the top priorities for respondents in more unequal countries



Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the 2018 OECD Risks That Matter survey [www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm](http://www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm) and the OECD Income Distribution Database (<http://oe.cd/idd>).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933938439>



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