

# OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions – 2024 Results

Building Trust in a Complex Policy Environment

Report

10 July 2024



[Summary](#)   [Full report](#)   [Support materials](#)

Democratic governments today stand at a critical juncture, steering environmental and digital transitions while facing increased polarisation within their countries, heightened geopolitical tensions as well as the social consequences of economic developments. In this environment, building and maintaining trust in public institutions is a priority for many governments around the world.

The second OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions shows the levels and drivers of trust in public institutions across 30 OECD countries in 2023 and their evolution since 2021.

- Discover the [Country Notes](#)
- Read the [Press release](#)

## 39%

trust their national government

## 37%

are confident that their government balances the interests of current and future generations

## 41%

believe their government uses the best available evidence when taking a decision

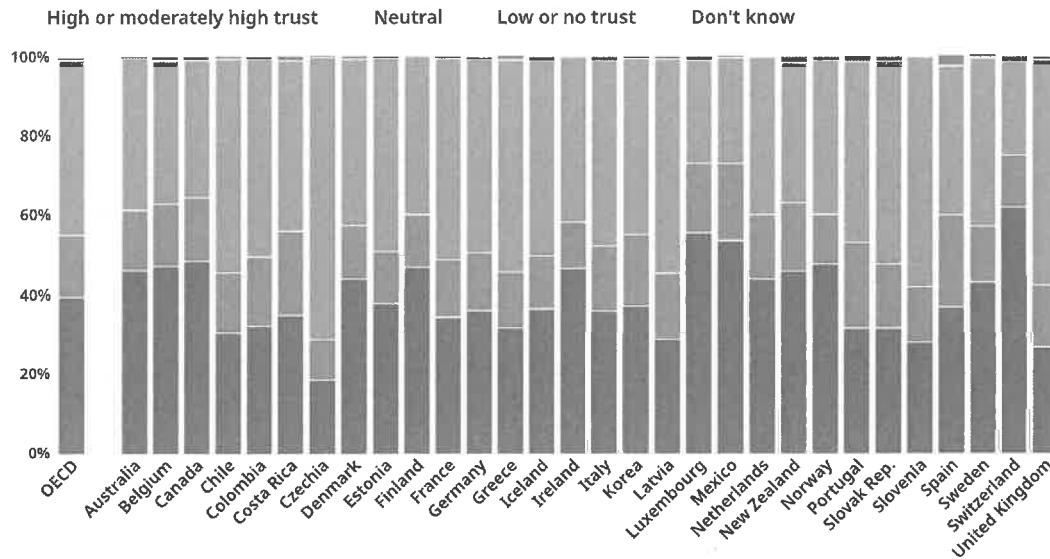
**Amid economic concerns, no or low trust in government outweighs trust**

In November 2023, a higher share of people (44%) across OECD countries had low or no trust in the national government than high or moderately high trust (39%). However, there are significant variations across countries and groups. Despite concerns about the cost of living and worries about the war in Europe and the Middle East, trust levels decreased only moderately since 2021; but with a larger drop of 5 percentage points for women and people with lower education.



## Trust in national government

% of population with different levels of trust in national government, 2023



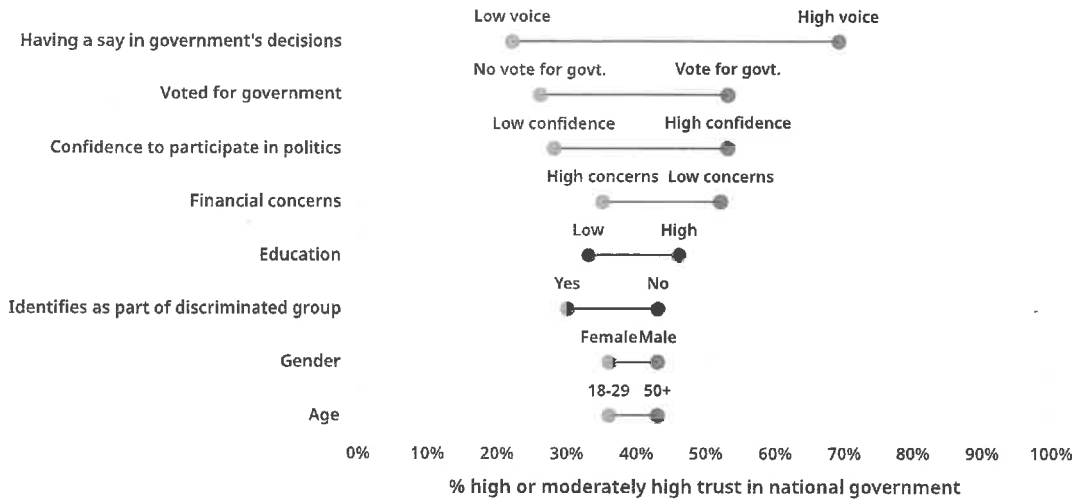
Source: OECD (2024), [OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions – 2024 Results \(Figure 1.2\)](#).

## Perceptions of having a say in government actions influence trust more than socio-economic and demographic characteristics do

People who feel financially insecure, those with low levels of education, women, younger people as well as those who report belonging to a group that is discriminated against report lower levels of trust in government. Nevertheless, the largest trust gaps are associated with individuals' sense of having a say in government actions, which is a key driver of trust. Indeed, 69% of those who feel they have a say in government actions trust national government, while only 22% do among those who feel they do not have a say.

# High or moderately high trust in national government by population group

% of population, 2023

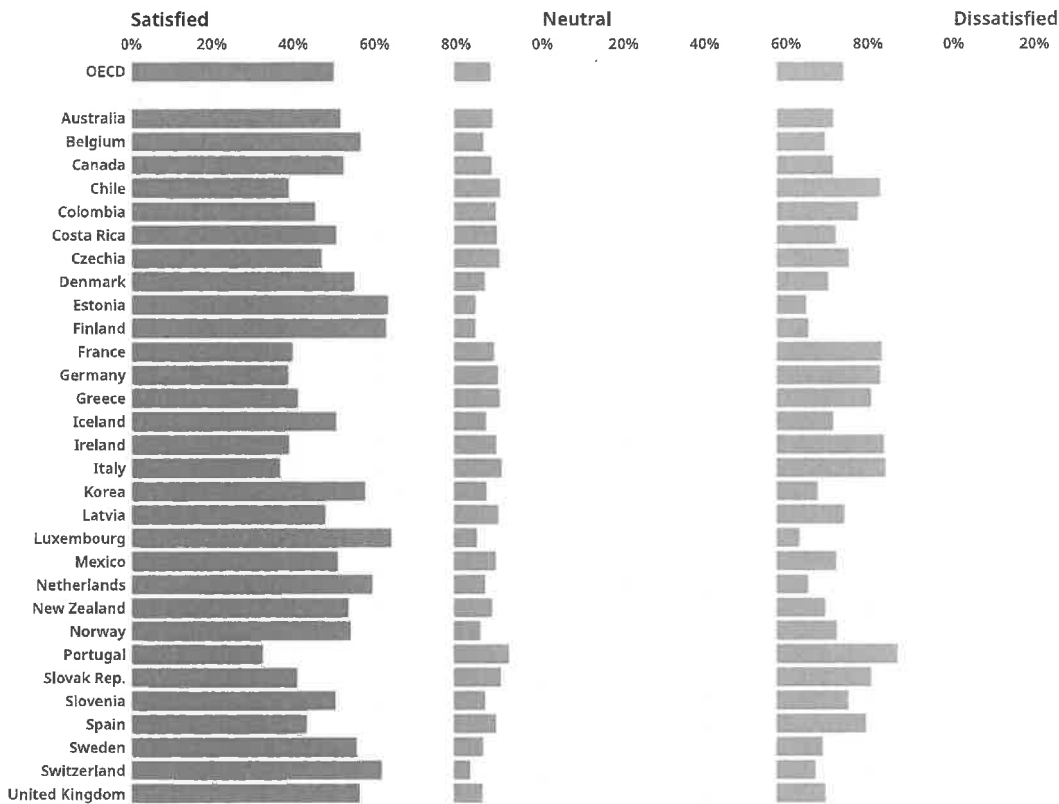


## Satisfaction with day to day interactions with public institutions currently helps maintain trust

Satisfaction with the provision of key public services, such as health, education and administrative services, remains relatively high. Although satisfaction with the healthcare and education systems declined over the past two years and warrants further monitoring. A majority trusts that public agencies would use their personal data only for legitimate purposes and would treat fairly their application for a service or a benefit. These day-to-day interactions with public institutions remain key drivers of trust in the civil service and local government.

## Satisfaction with administrative services

% of recent users reporting levels of satisfaction with administrative services, 2023



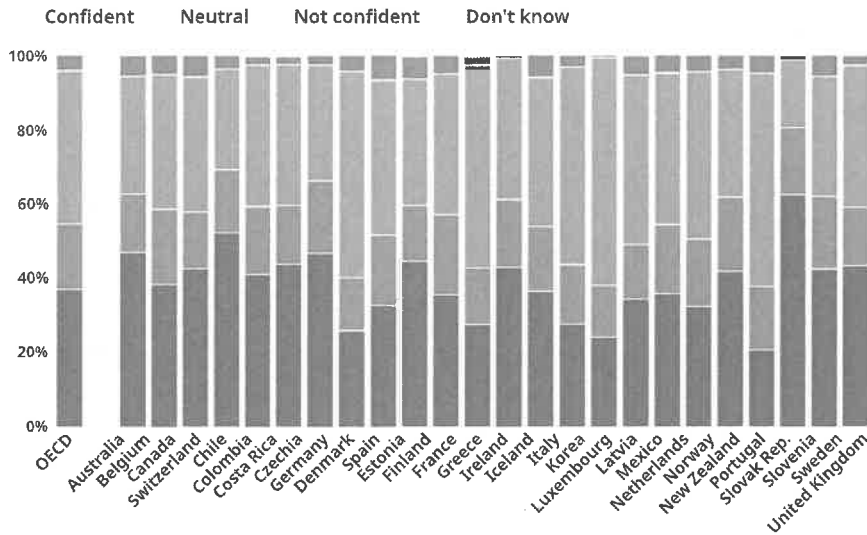
Source: OECD (2024), [OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions – 2024 Results](#) (Figure 3.4).

## Concerns about how governments tackle complex policy issues are driving trust levels down

Overall, there is more scepticism in the government's ability to tackle complex policy issues, with trade-offs across different groups in society, than about the ability to provide public services. Only around 40% believe that the government balances the interests of different generations, will regulate artificial intelligence appropriately or reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These results are at least partly attributable to the lack of confidence in institutions and officials working in the public interest, being accountable to each other and the population, and allowing people to influence decision making.

# Confidence in the national government to balance the interests of current and future generations

% of population, 2023



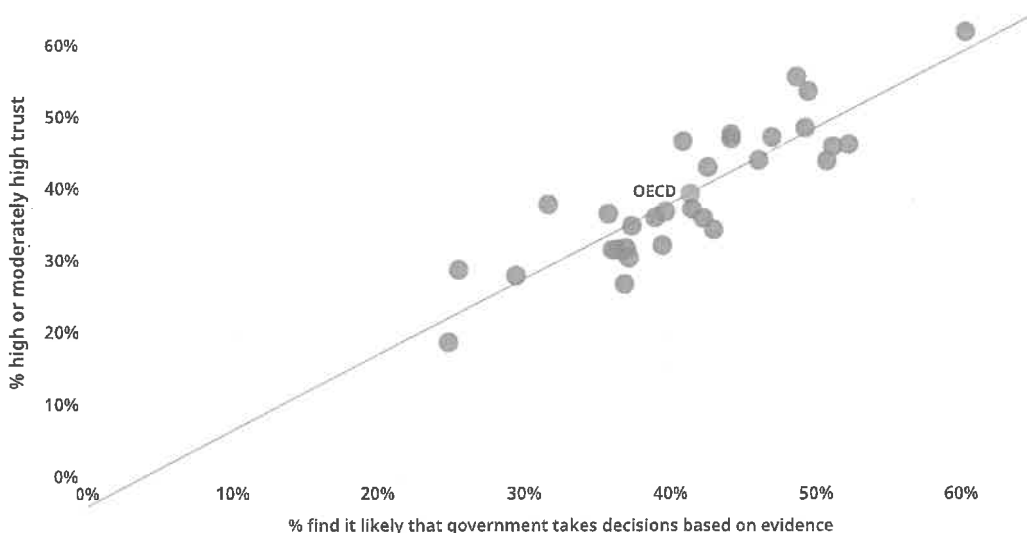
Source: OECD (2024), *OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions – 2024 Results (Figure 4.5)*.

## Use and communication of evidence in policy-making matter strongly for trust

In today's complex information environment, with the rise of disinformation and polarising content, how information is created, shared and consumed is closely tied with trust. Data shows evidence based decision making is a very important driver of trust today. Governments can earn public trust by better communicating the data and evidence that supports reforms. However, just 41% believe the government uses the best available evidence in decision making, and only 39% think that communication about policy reforms is adequate.

## Trust in national government and use of evidence in decision-making

% of population who trust national government and % who think government uses best available evidence, 2023



Source: OECD (2024), *OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions – 2024 Results (Figure 5.13)*.

## What can governments do?

## Engage better with citizens

Policies and mechanisms to promote the effectiveness and inclusivity of public engagement could be key to boosting “skills for democracy” and enhancing trust in government. Governments need to support spaces and capacities for civic and political engagement, while establishing clear expectations on the role of deliberative and direct democracy.

## Strengthen capacity to address complex policy challenges in the public interest and transparently

Governments must continue to improve their reliability and preparedness for future crises, including those with global implications; ensure to address questions of intra-national and inter-generational fairness; strengthen checks and balances in the political system and government integrity standards.

## Support a healthy information ecosystem and invest in evidence-based communication

Governments should communicate more actively about the evidence that inform their decisions, ensure the data are openly verifiable, and explain how policy reforms affect the public; these actions would have today large gains for trust in the national government. Promoting a healthy, diverse, and independent media environment and strengthening media literacy in society will be key to reinforce democracy.

## Continue to invest in reliable, responsive and fair public services

While a majority expresses satisfaction with services, improving the speed and ease of administrative service delivery as well their responsiveness to public feedback or ideas from public employees would contribute to trust, especially in civil servants. Fair treatment from public employees and legitimate use of personal data also hold potential for increased trust.

## Country Notes

<a href="#">A - C</a>	<a href="#">D - I</a>	<a href="#">J - M</a>	<a href="#">N - R</a>	<a href="#">S - T</a>	<a href="#">U - Z</a>
 Australia >	 Chile >	 Czechia >			
 Belgium >	 Colombia >				
 Canada >	 Costa Rica >				

## Country notes data

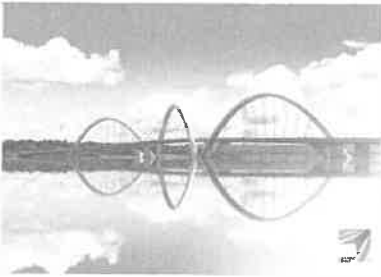
- [Figure 1. Trust in national government | Download](#)
- [Figure 2. Trust in different public institutions, other people and media | Download](#)
- [Figure 3. Trust in national government, by population groups | Download](#)
- [Figure 4. Day-to-day interactions with public institutions | Download](#)
- [Figure 5. Government decision-making on complex policy issues | Download](#)

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Report

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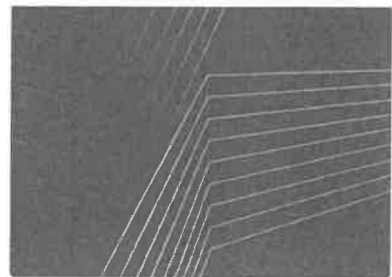
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