



Risks That Matter

Results from the 2018 Risks that Matter
Cross-National Survey: Highlights from Ireland

The Economic and Social Research Institute
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The OECD Risks That Matter Survey

Focused on risk perceptions and opinions on social policy

- The goal: Listen and better understand what people want from social policy
 - Complements data from traditional survey and administrative sources
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Three main parts to the survey

- Risks, worries and concerns
 - Satisfaction and fairness in social policy
 - Social policy preferences
-

22 000 people aged 18 to 70 years old in 21 OECD countries

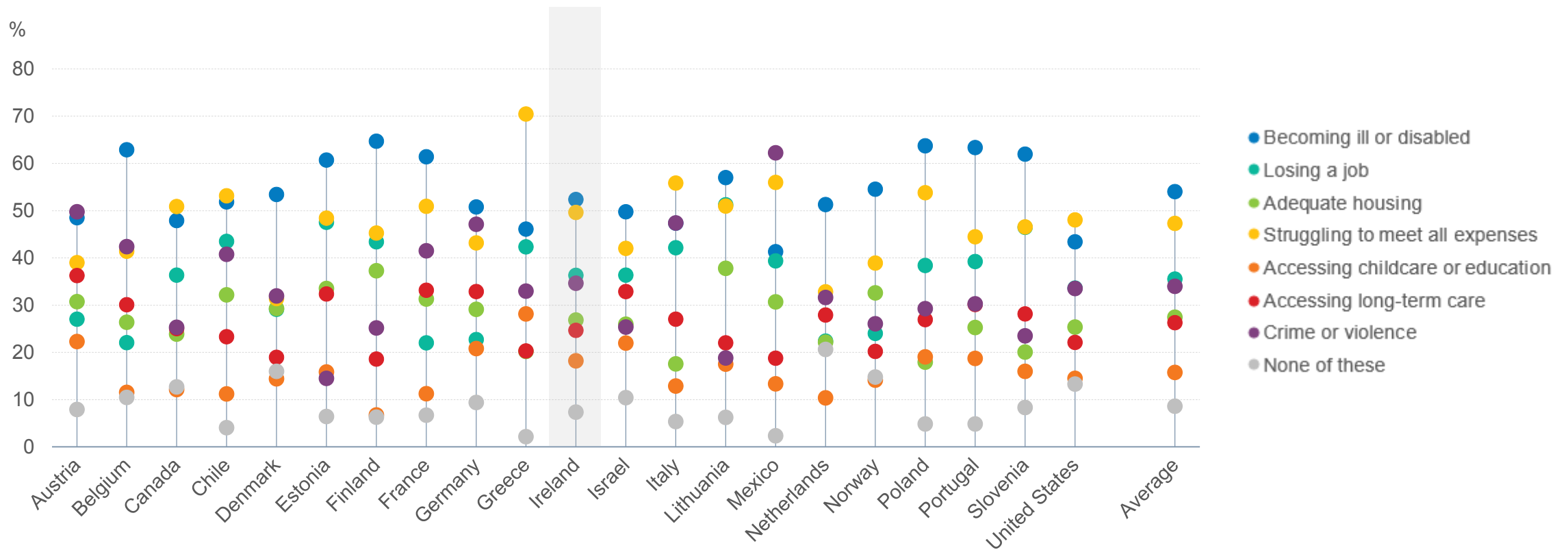
- Implemented online by Respondi Ltd to standing panels
- Representative by age, sex, education, income and employment status
- Countries had to agree to participate
- 15 minute survey conducted in national languages

What worries people in Ireland?



Illness and economic insecurity are viewed as top short-term risks

Percent of respondents identifying each risk as one of the top-three greatest short-term (over the next year or two) risks to themselves or their immediate family, 2018

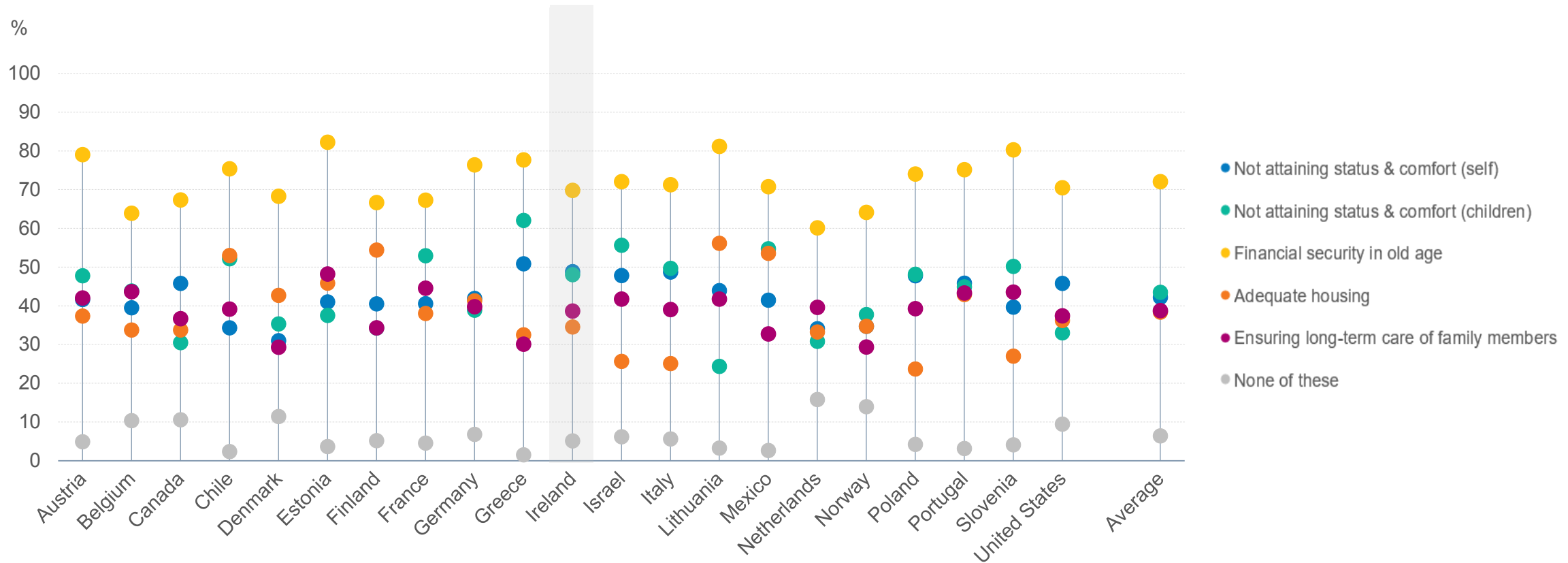


Notes: Respondents were asked to identify the three greatest risks to themselves or their immediate family from a list of seven risks. Respondents had the option of selecting zero, one, two, or three risks.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Ireland shares global anxiety about affording retirement

Percent of respondents identifying each risk as one of the top three greatest long-term (beyond the next decade) risks to themselves or their immediate family, 2018



Notes: Respondents were asked to identify the three greatest risks to themselves or their immediate family from a list of five risks. Respondents had the option of selecting zero, one, two, or three risks.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Women are more concerned than men about economic security

- 54.9% of Irish women (versus 44.4% of men) list “struggling to meet all expenses (working, but income too low) as a top-three risk in the next year or two
- 29.9% of women (versus 23.9% of men) are worried about “securing or maintaining adequate housing” in the next year or two
- 73.5% of women (versus 66.1% of men) worry about being financially secure in old age

Gendered differences in concerns about caring for the elderly

- Unusual result compared to other countries:
44.1% of Irish men (versus 33.1% of women) worry about ensuring the long-term care of elderly or disabled family members

No other significant differences in risk categories

What's going wrong?



“Say what you will about 2018, I haven’t been kept awake by the same fear twice.”

People are living longer, wealthier and healthier lives than ever before.

OECD governments spend around 20% of GDP on social protection – equal to about \$8000 per capita per year!

Q Search **Bloomberg**

Economics

The World's Richest Countries Are Full of Anxious, Alienated People

By [William Horobin](#)
March 19, 2019, 11:49 AM GMT+1

▶ OECD survey shows clear dissatisfaction with social policies

 LIVE ON BLOOMBERG

Part of the problem lies in the **design of social protection systems.**

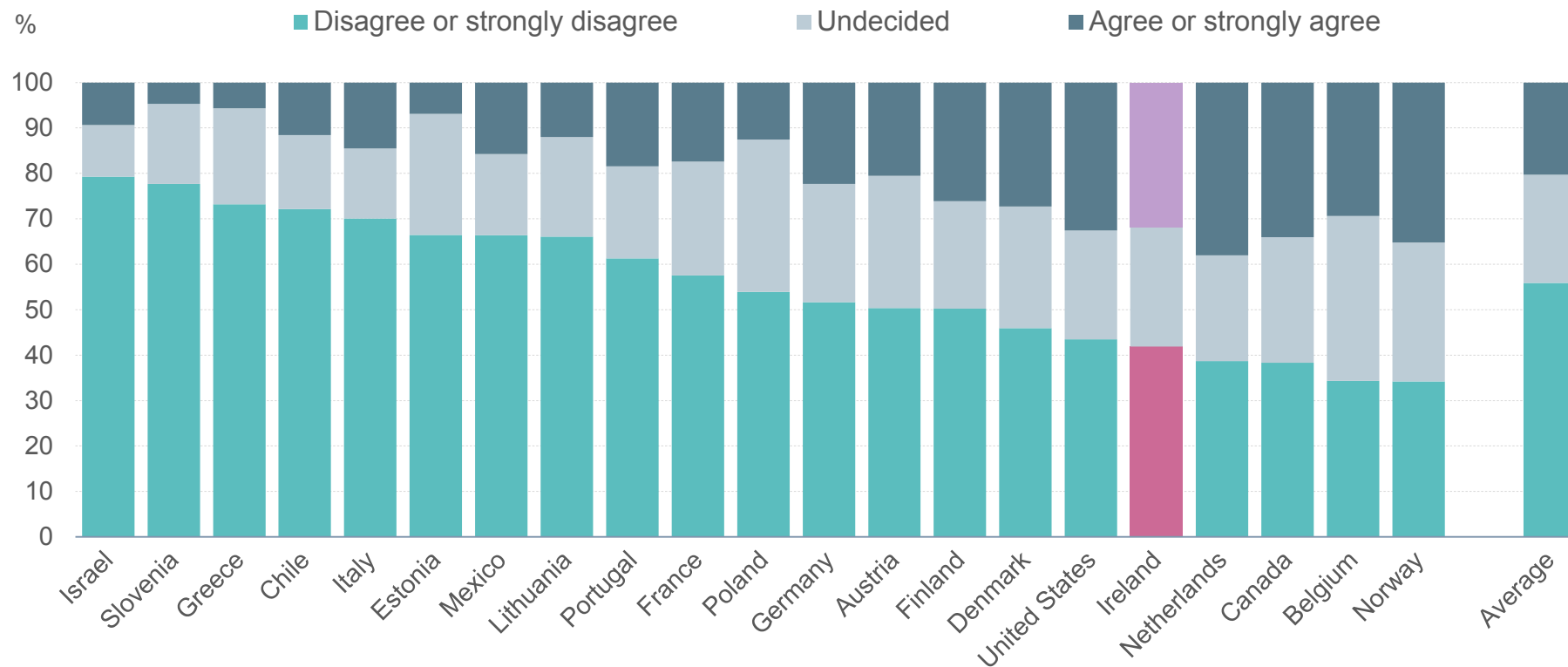
People are dissatisfied with existing social programmes and benefits.

Are people in Ireland satisfied with social programmes?



Most feel they would have trouble accessing public benefits if needed

Distribution of responses to the statement “I think I could easily receive public benefits if I needed them”, 2018

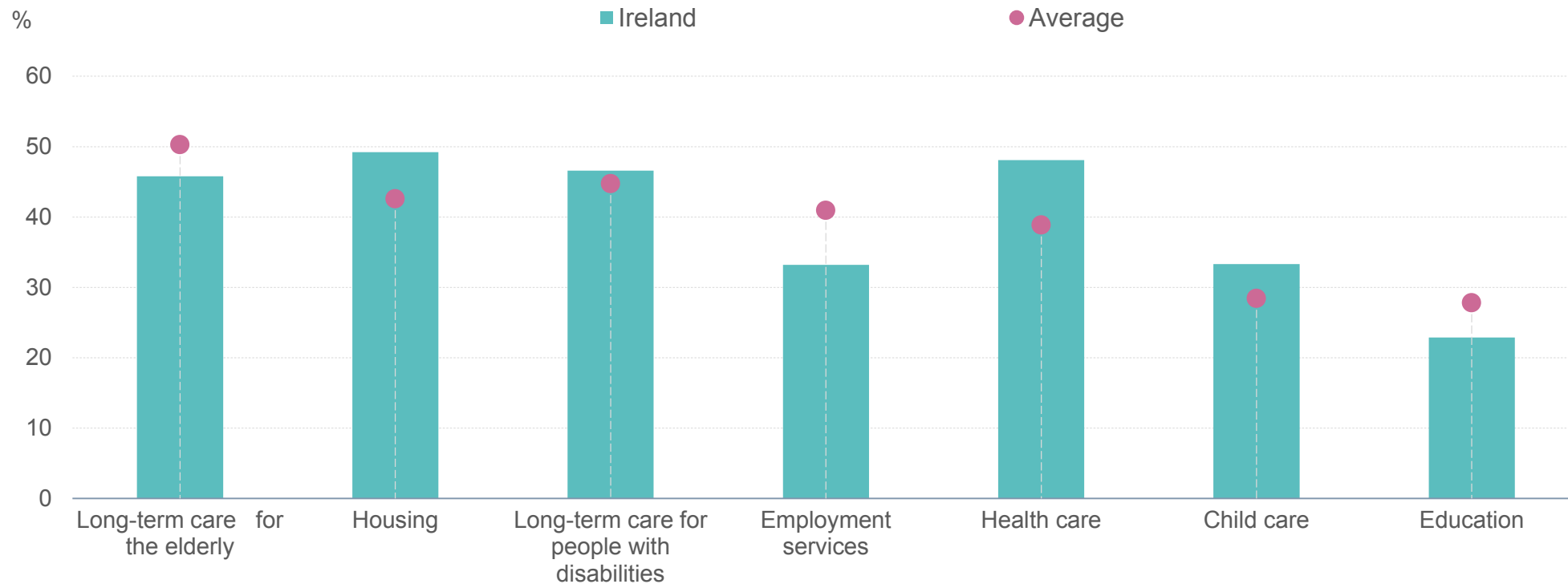


Note: Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement “I think I could easily receive public benefits if I needed them”. Possible response options were “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “undecided”, “agree” and “strongly agree”.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Nearly half of Irish people unhappy with access to healthcare, housing, long-term care

Percent that (strongly) disagree with the statement “I think that my family and I have access to good quality and affordable public services in the area of ...” by social policy area, 2018



Note: Respondents were asked about the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement "I think that my family and I have access to good quality and affordable public services in the area of ..." for different areas of social policy. Response options were "agree", "strongly agree", "disagree", "strongly disagree" and "undecided".

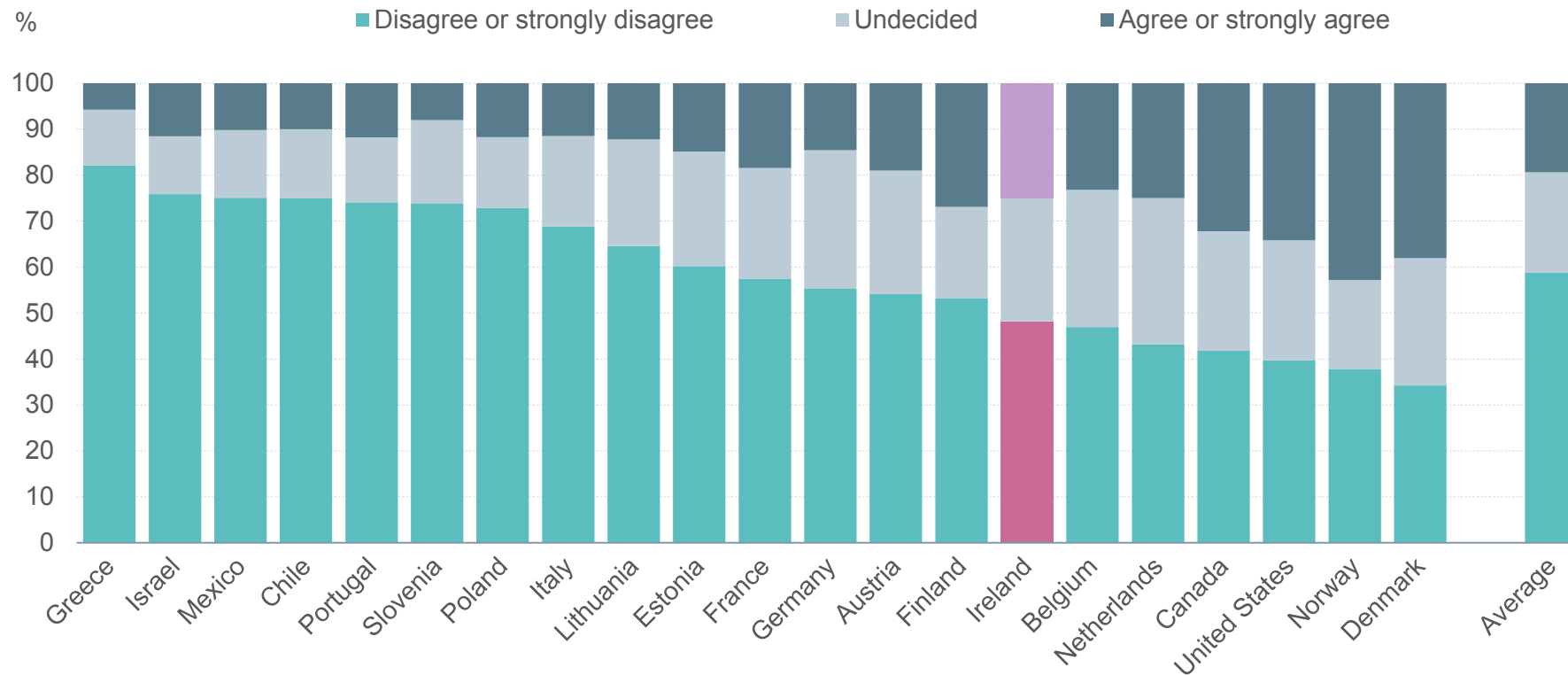
Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Are social programmes fair?



Many Irish people feel they do not get their fair share from the government

Distribution of responses to the statement “I feel that I receive a fair share of public benefits, given the taxes and social contributions I pay”, 2018

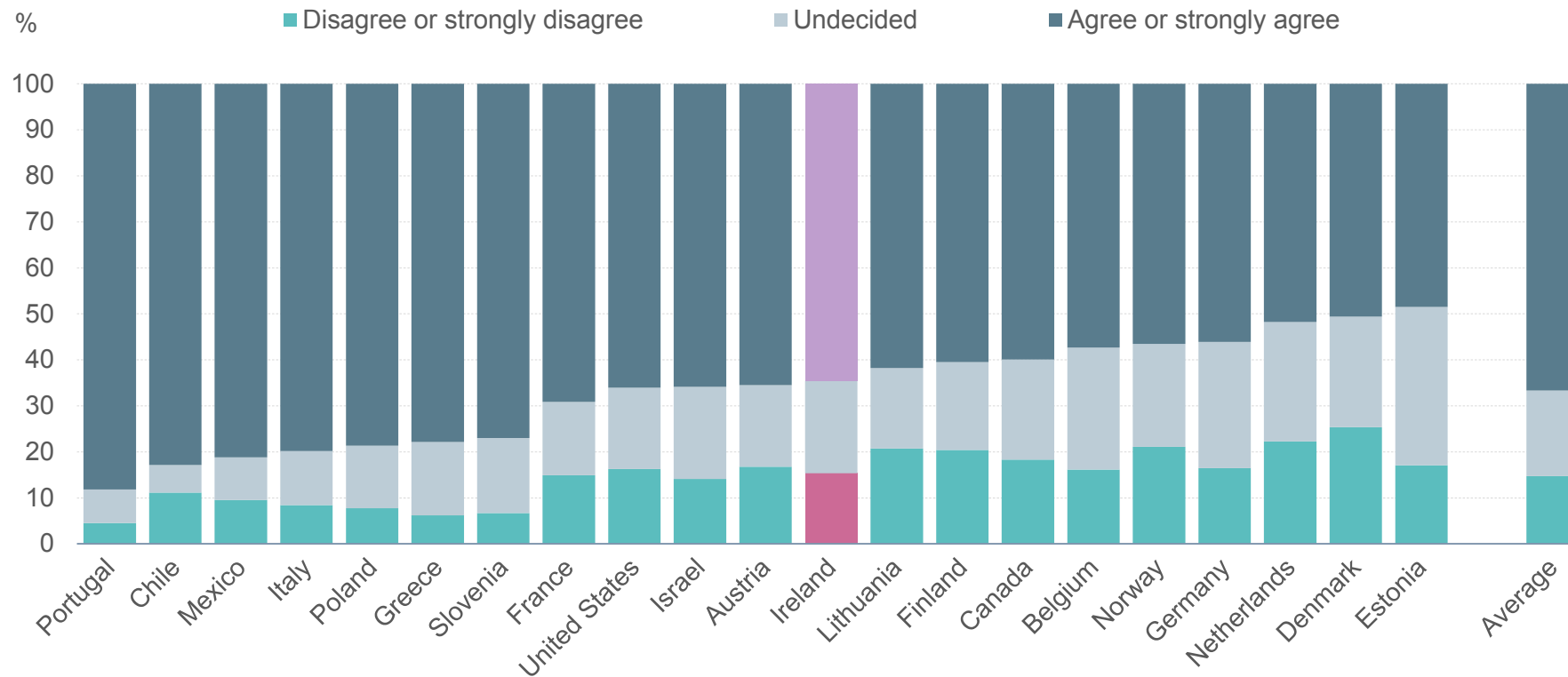


Note: Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement “I feel that I receive a fair share of public benefits, given the taxes and social contributions I pay”. Possible response options were “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “undecided”, “agree” and “strongly agree”.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Majority of Irish people say many people get public benefits without deserving them

Distribution of responses to the statement “Many people receive public benefits without deserving them”, 2018



Note: Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement “Many people receive public benefits without deserving them”. Possible response options were “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “undecided”, “agree” and “strongly agree”.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

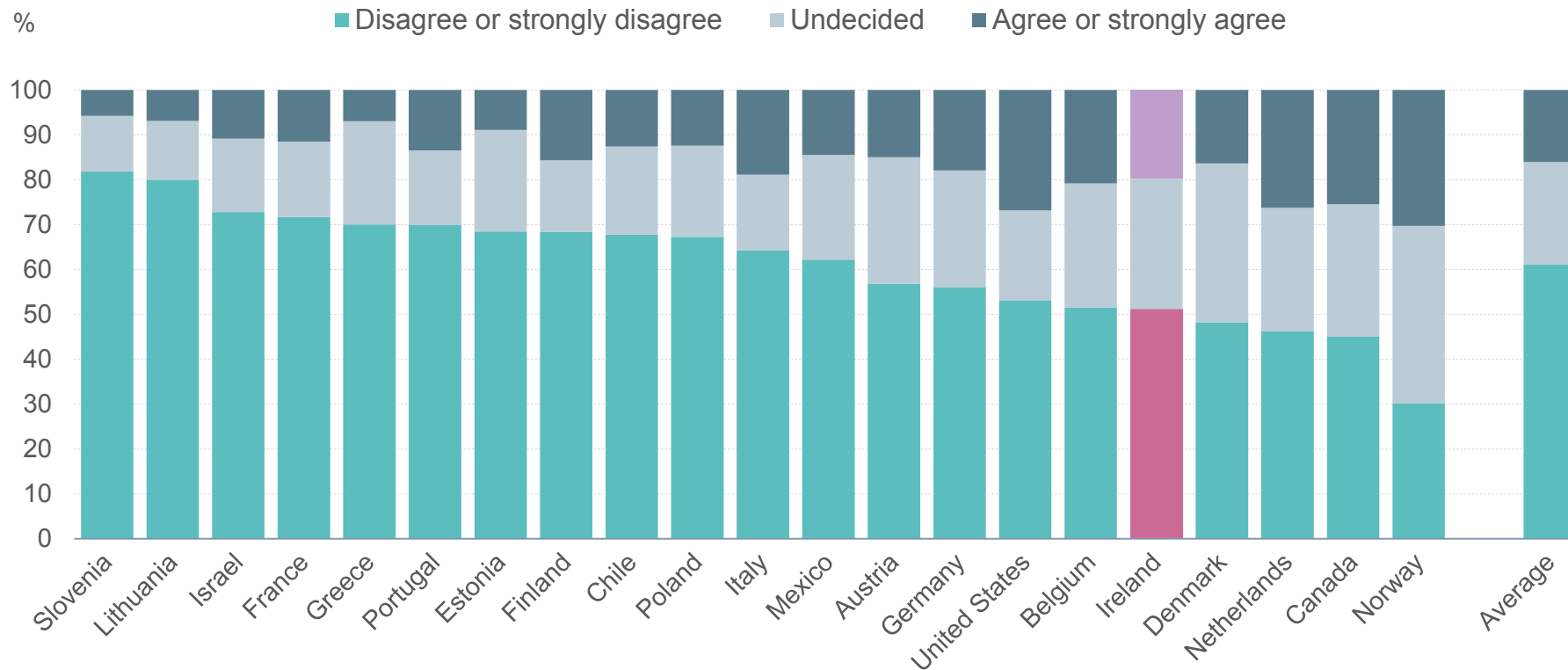
Large gap between “haves” and “have nots” in perceptions of fairness in benefits

- 57% of high-income Irish respondents say they are not getting their fair share (60% cross-nationally)
- 40% of low-income respondents say they are not getting their fair share (57% cross-nationally)

Less variation across subgroups when asking about “undeserving” recipients

Driving dissatisfaction: Many feel government ignores them

Distribution of responses to the statement “I feel the government incorporates the views of people like me when designing or reforming public benefits”, 2018

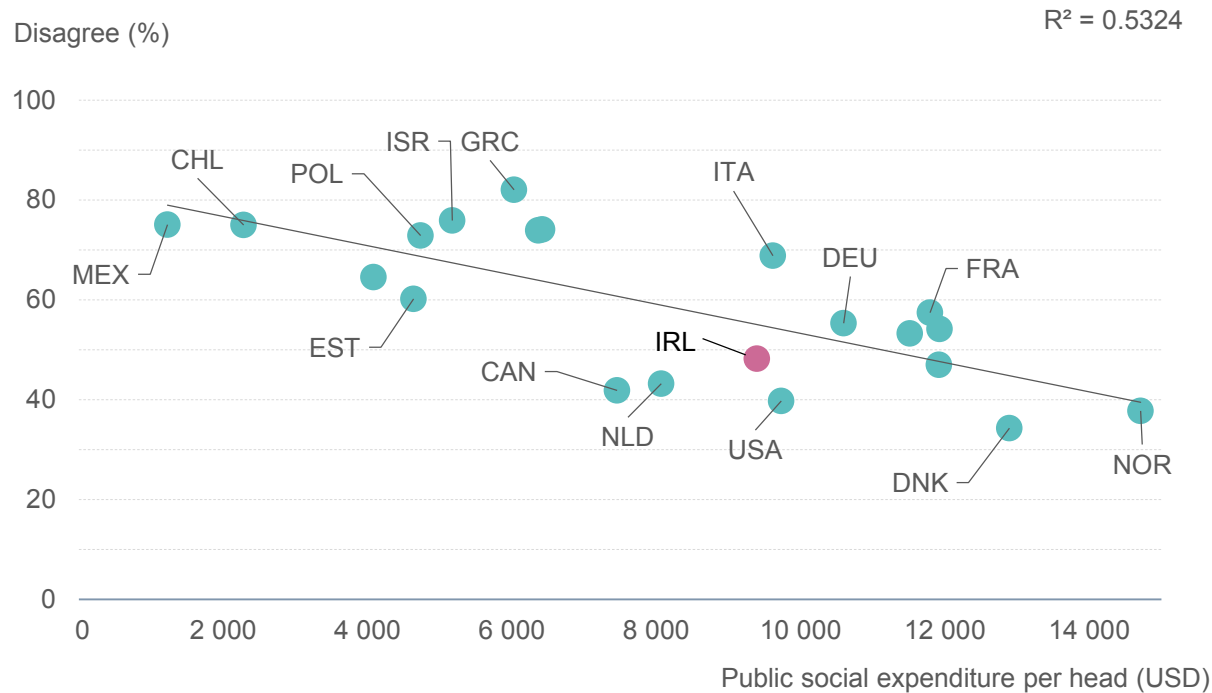


Note: Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement “I feel the government incorporates the views of people like me when designing or reforming public benefits”. Possible response options were “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “undecided”, “agree” and “strongly agree”.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Higher feelings of dissatisfaction and unfairness in poorer countries that spend less on social policies

Total public social expenditure per head (USD 2010 PPP) and percentage that (strongly) **disagree** with “I feel that I receive a fair share of public benefits, given the taxes and social contributions I pay”



Notes: Respondents were asked about the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement “I feel that I receive a fair share of public benefits, given the taxes and social contributions I pay”. Data on GDP per capita refer to 2017. Data on total public social expenditure per head refer to 2015, except for Poland (2014), Mexico (2016), and Chile and Israel (2017).

Source: OECD estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018), the OECD Social Expenditure Database (<http://www.oecd.org/social/expenditure.htm>), and the OECD Productivity Database (http://dotstat.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=PDB_LV)

What do people want?

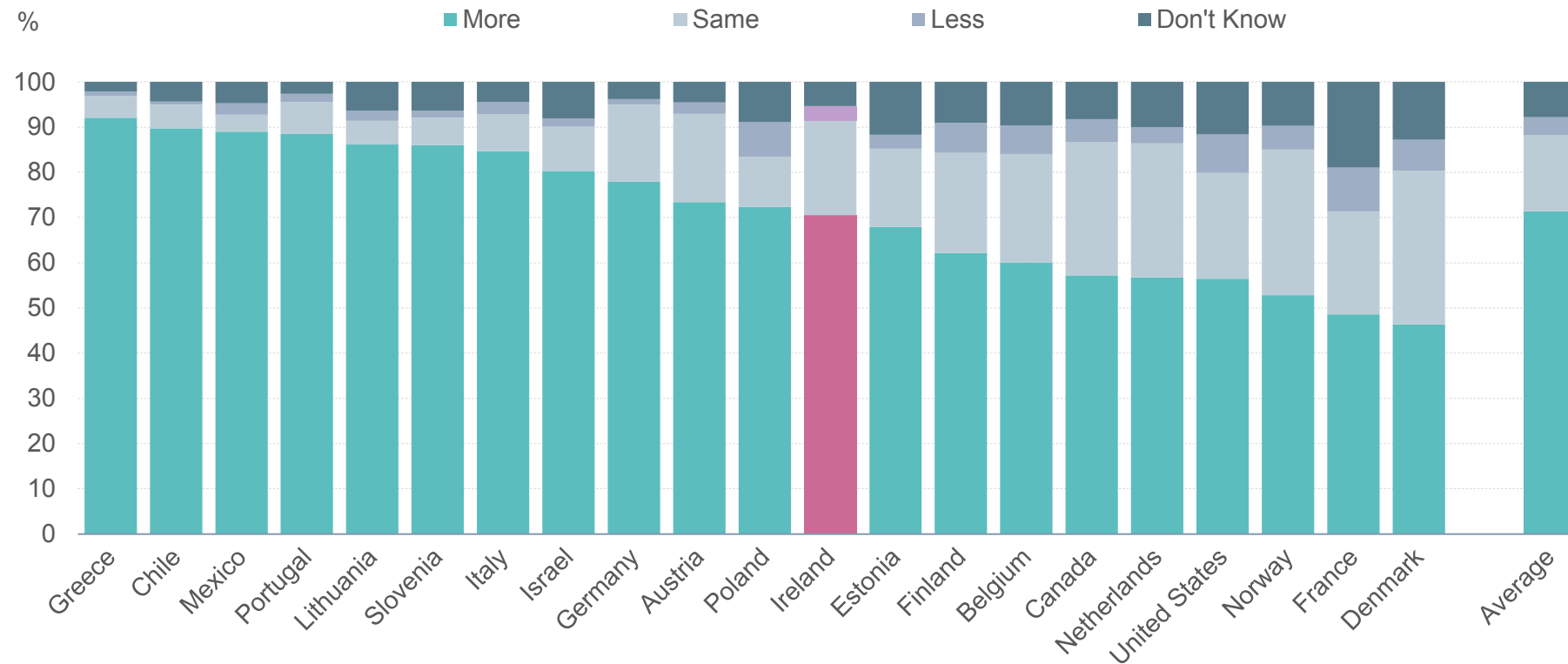
Fixing the system



"I can't sleep. I think I'll get up and solve all my problems."

Most people want more support from government

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

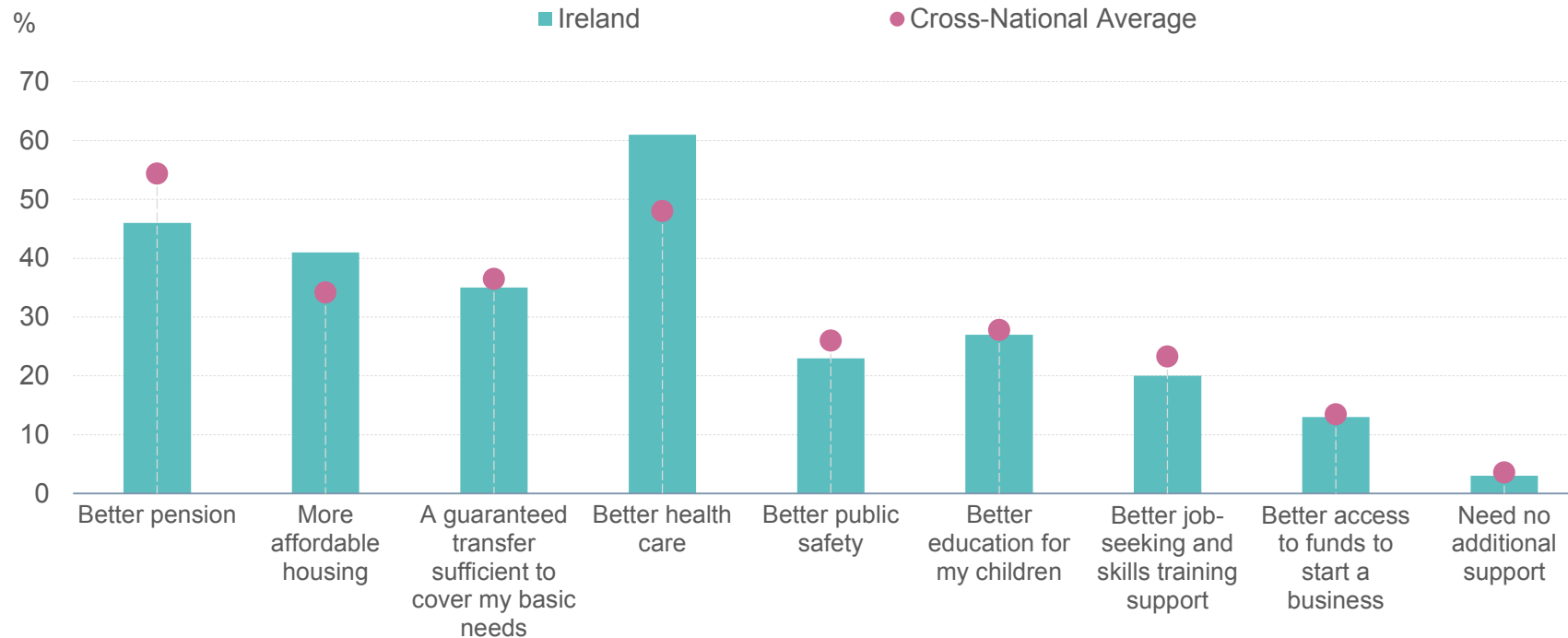


Note: Respondents were asked whether they thought the government should be doing less, more, or the same as they are currently doing to ensure their economic and social security. They could also choose “don't know” as a response option. Countries are ranked by the percentage of respondents choosing “more”.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Policy priorities in Ireland: Healthcare, pensions and housing

Percentage of respondents identifying each support as one of the top-three supports they'd need most from government to make them and their family feel more economically secure, 2018

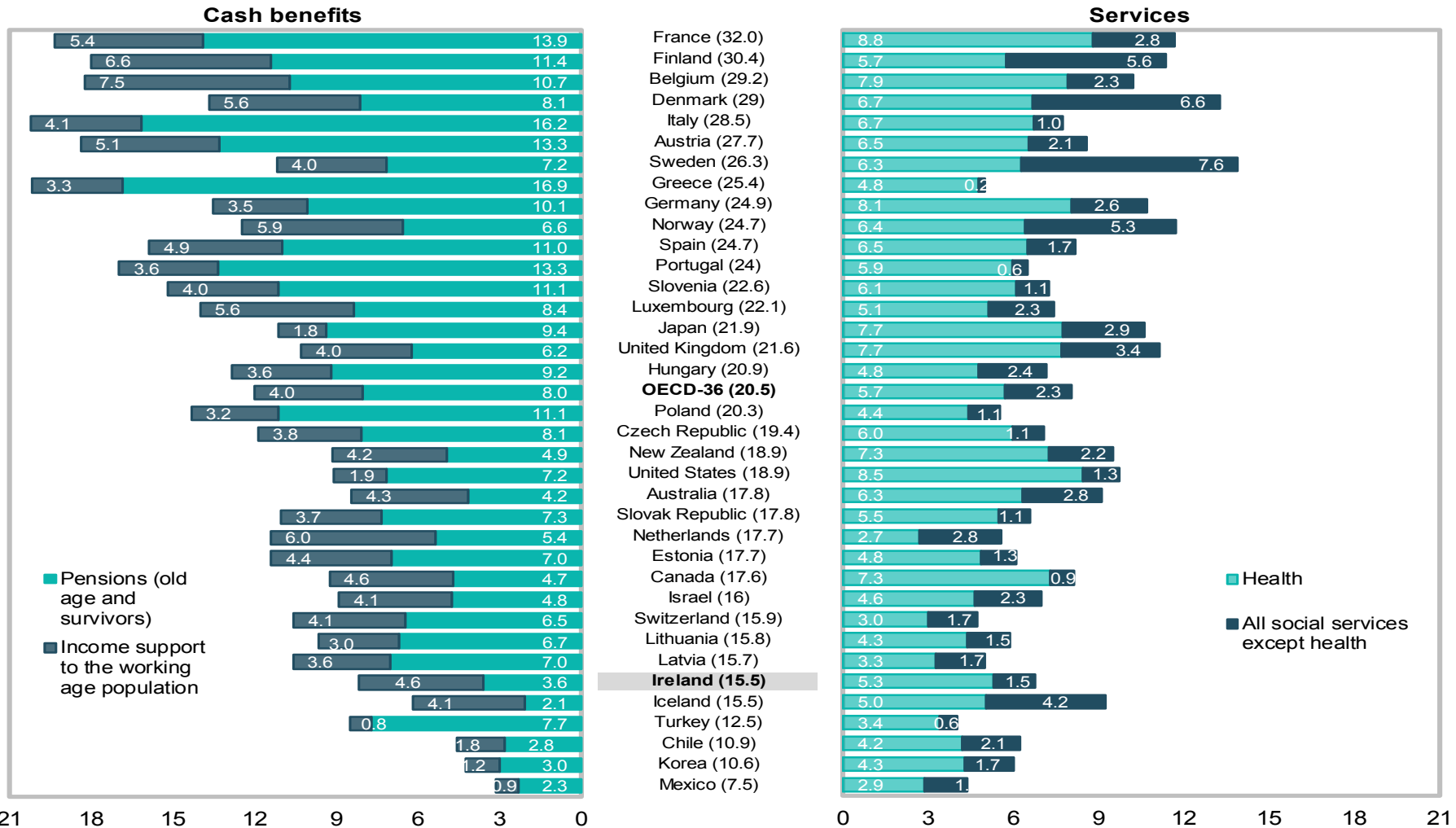


Note: Respondents were asked what supports they'd need most from government to make them and their family feel more economically secure. They could choose from a list of nine supports, and had the option of selecting zero, one, two, or three supports.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Perceptions reflect reality: Ireland spends less on healthcare and pensions than most

Public social expenditure by broad social policy area, in percentage of GDP, in 2015/17 or latest year available



Source: OECD Social Expenditure Database (SOCX), 2018

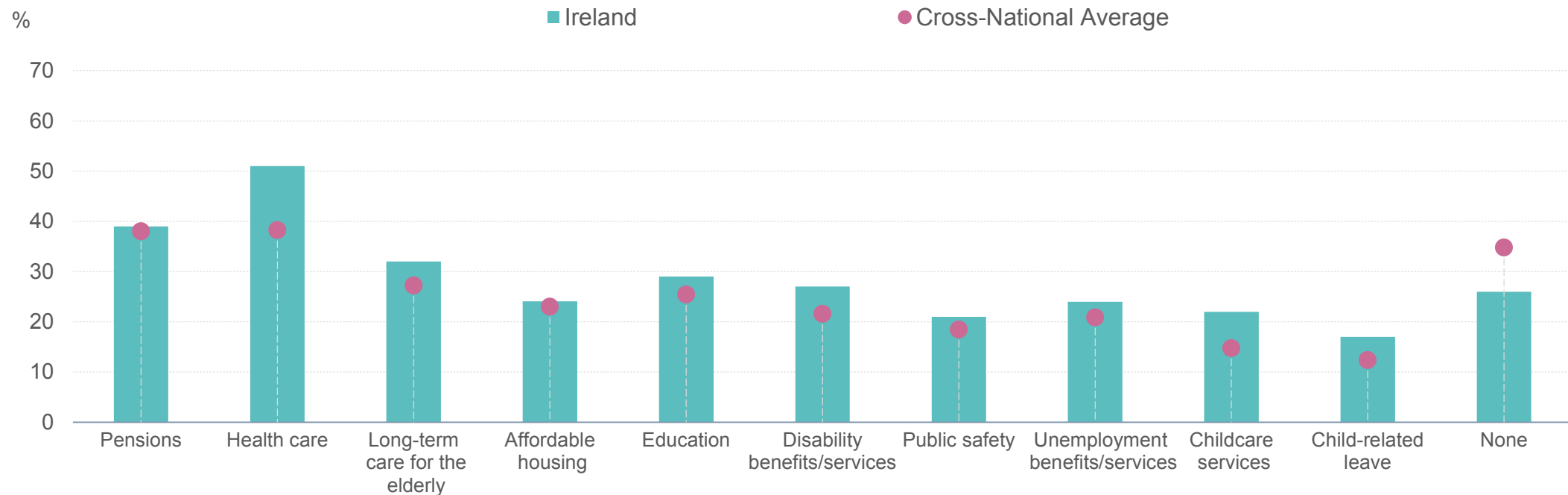
What tax and benefit trade-offs are people in Ireland willing to make?

- 52% of people in Ireland say government should make housing more affordable, even if it means taxes will rise (versus 38% cross-nationally)
- 45% say government should increase spending on pensions (43% cross-nationally)
- 43% say government should make childcare more affordable (36% cross-nationally)
- 43% say government should increase spending on education and training (39% cross-nationally)

... even if it means taxes will rise and some other programmes may need to be cut

People in Ireland are (relatively) willing to pay for the benefits they receive

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, 2018

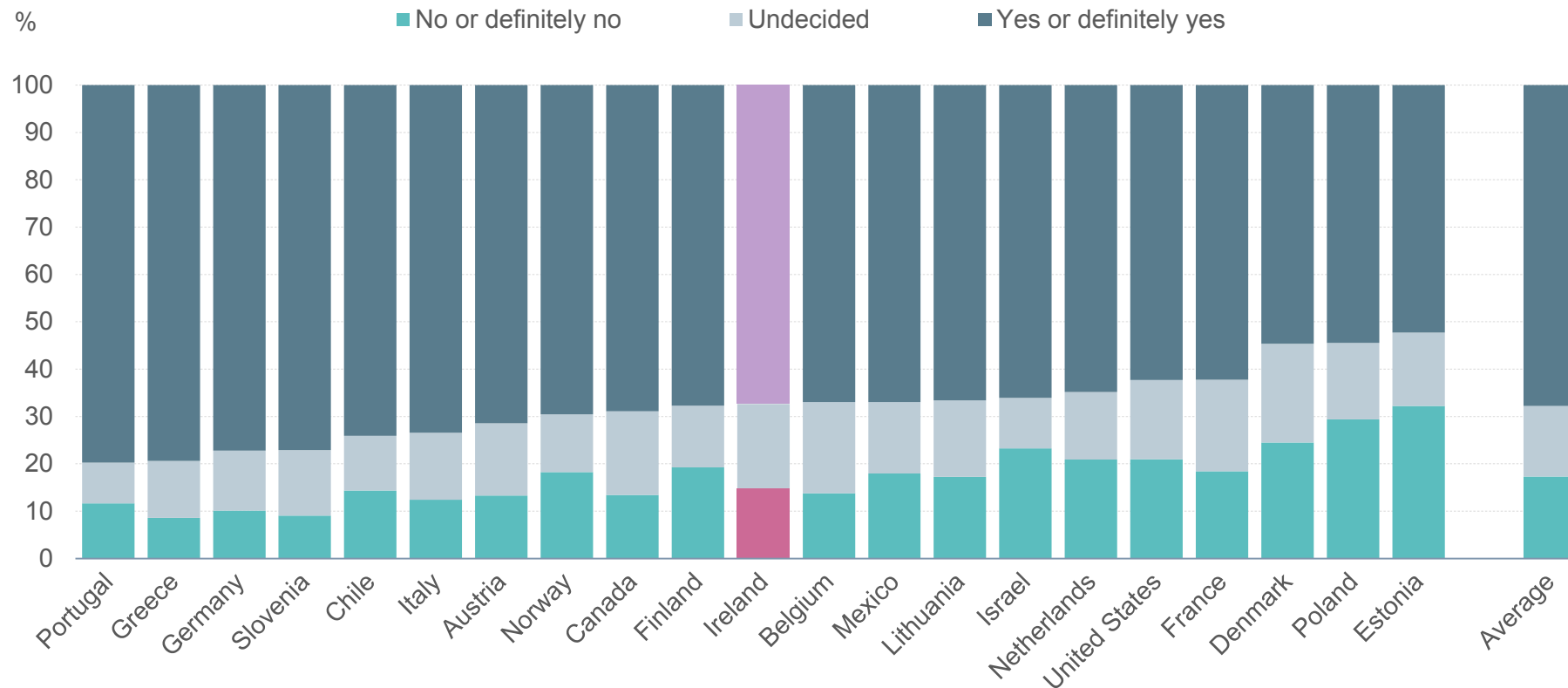


Note: Respondents were asked to indicate whether they would be willing to pay an additional 2% of their income in taxes/social contributions to benefit from better provision of and access to the various different public services and benefits. They could choose as many as they liked, or none at all.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Irish people feel ‘the rich’ should pay more in taxes to support the poor

Distribution of responses to the question “Should the government tax the rich more than they currently do in order to support the poor?”, 2018

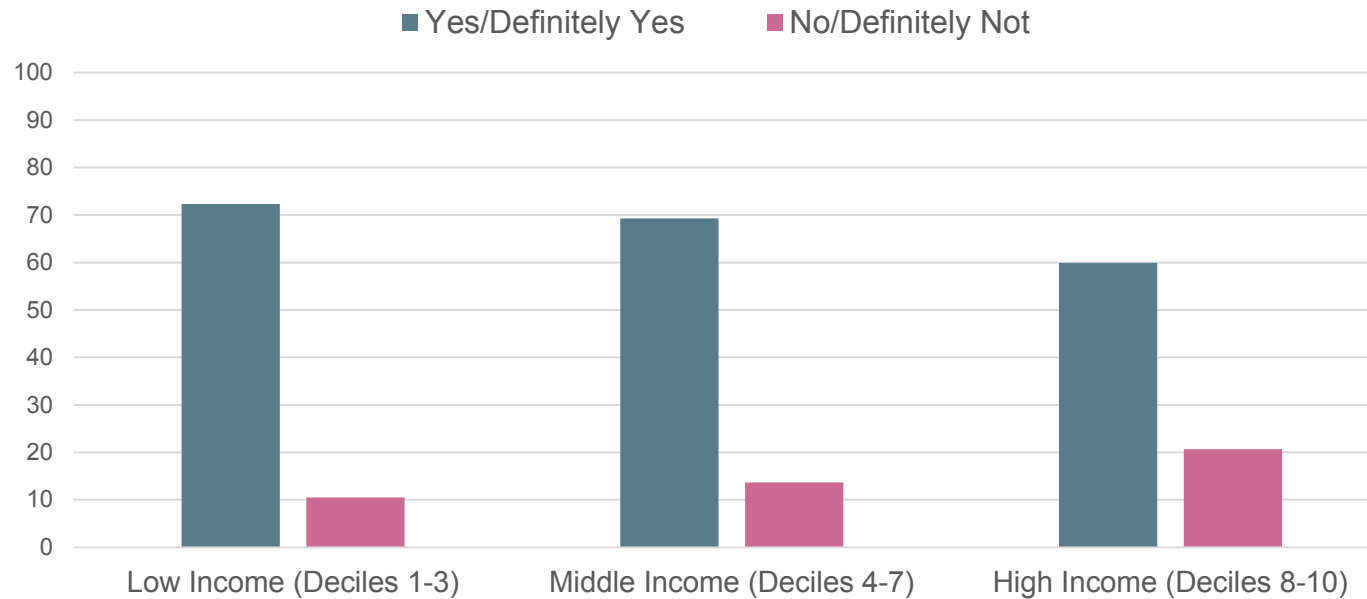


Note: Respondents were asked the question “Should the government tax the rich more than they currently do in order to support the poor”. Possible response options were “definitely not”, “no”, “undecided”, “yes” and “definitely yes”. ‘The rich’ was left undefined.

Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on the OECD Risks That Matter survey (2018).

Who wants to “soak the rich”?

Distribution of responses to the question “Should the government tax the rich more than they currently do in order to support the poor?”, sorted by income, Ireland, 2018



Note: Respondents were asked the question “Should the government tax the rich more than they currently do in order to support the poor”. Possible response options were “definitely not”, “no”, “undecided”, “yes” and “definitely yes”. ‘The rich’ was left undefined. Answers sorted by (self-reported) income decile of respondent.

Improving Risks that Matter for the next round

Timeline for 2020 survey wave

Summer/Autumn 2019	Questionnaire revision
Autumn 2019	New round of procurement, country enrolment and fundraising
Q1/Q2 2020	Survey out in the field

How can we improve Risks that Matter in 2020?

- Trade-offs between random dial phone calls versus lower cost online surveying?
- Service provider suggestions?
- Feedback on questionnaire? (Available at <http://www.oecd.org/social/risks-that-matter.htm>)
- We're happy to collaborate – please get in touch.
- Other comments and questions welcome!

Thank you for your interest and comments!



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