

OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions - 2024 Results

Belgium

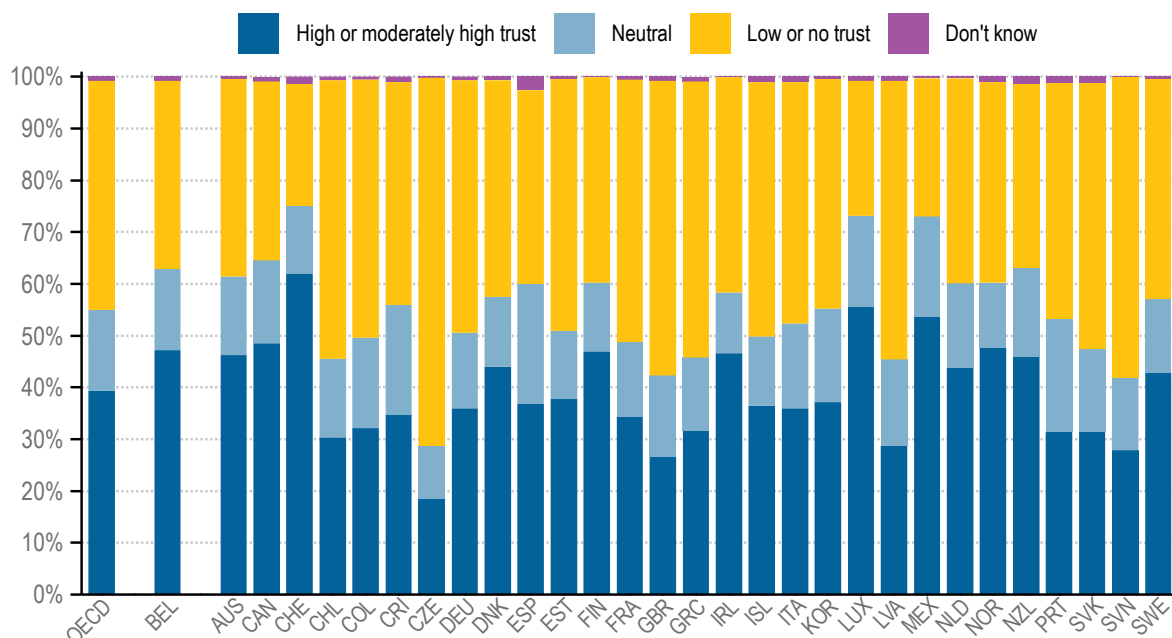
The OECD Trust Survey explores people's perceptions of different public institutions in their country and the degree to which they trust their government. These perceptions range from day-to-day interactions with public institutions to decision making on complex policy issues. Initiated in 2021, the Trust Survey was carried out in 30 OECD countries in October and November 2023, with results representative of their respective adult populations.

Trust in public institutions

- In 2023, 47% of Belgians reported high or moderately high trust in the federal government, above the OECD average of 39%.
- This number represents an increase by 15 percentage points since 2021, the highest increase among the eighteen OECD countries with available data.

Figure 1. Trust in national/federal government, 2023

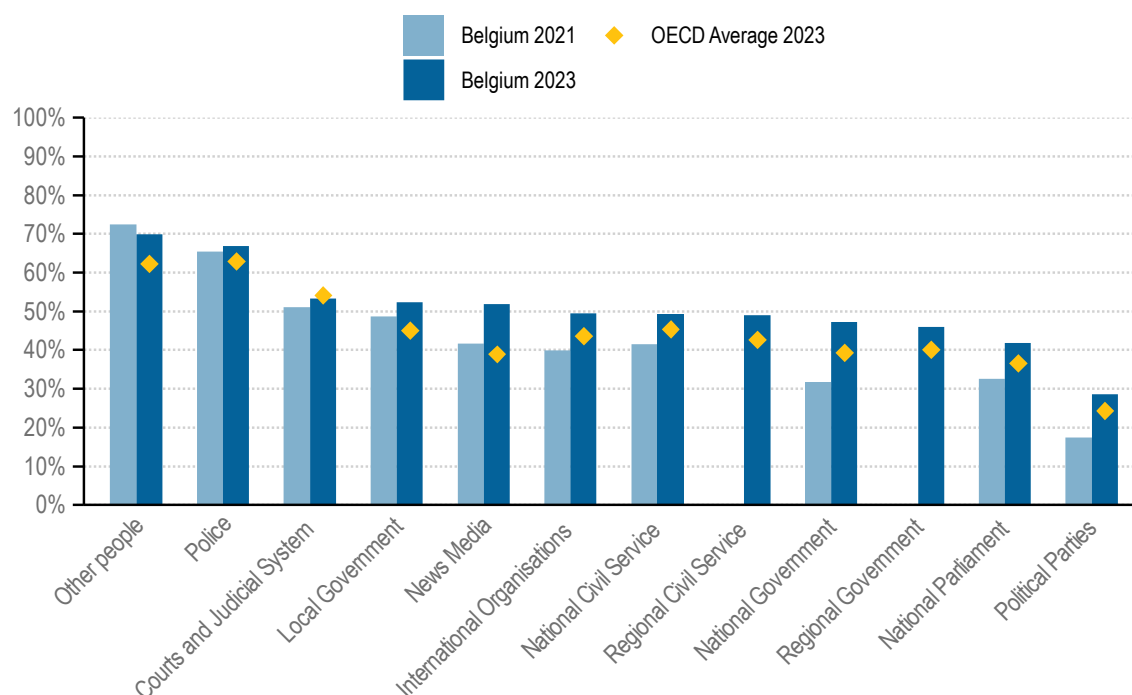
Share of population who indicate different levels of trust in their national government (on a 0-10 scale), 2023



Note: 'High or moderately high' corresponds to the aggregation of response options 6-10 to the question "On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all and 10 is completely, how much do you trust the national/central/federal government?"; neutral to option 5 and "low or no" to response options 0-4.

- As in most OECD countries, Belgians place more trust in other people (70%) and the police (67%) than in the federal government. Around half of the population reports high or moderately high trust in courts and the judicial system (53%), news media (52%), local government (52%) and the federal civil service (49%). Although above OECD averages, political parties (29%) and the federal parliament (42%) are the least trusted institutions in Belgium.

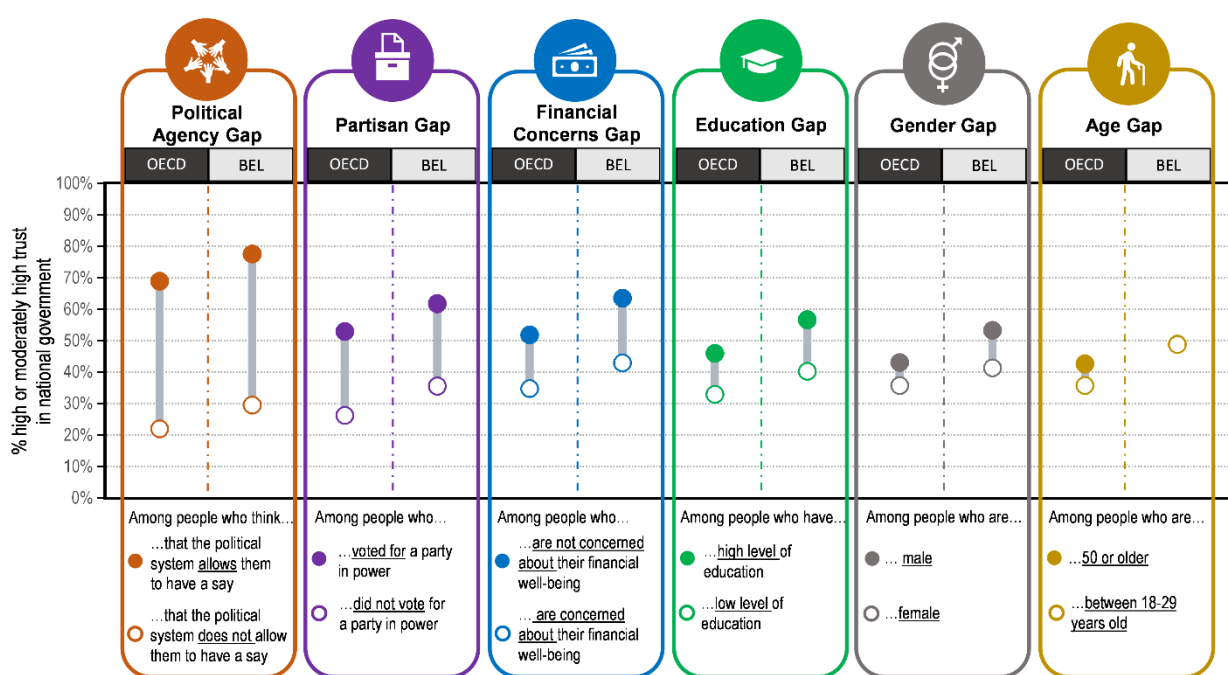
Figure 2. Share of population with high or moderately high trust in different public institutions, other people and media, 2021 and 2023



Note: 'High or moderately high' corresponds to the aggregation of response options 6-10 to the question "On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all and 10 is completely, how much do you trust [institution]?"; neutral to option 5 and "low or no" to response options 0-4. In Belgium, the question about trust in the local government referred to trust in local authorities (provinces, arrondissements, municipalities), the question about the national government, civil service and parliament referred to the federal government, civil service and parliament, respectively.

- Belgians who feel that the current political system does not let people like them have a say tend to trust the federal government 48 percentage points less than those who feel they have political voice. This trust gap is almost equal to the average 47 percentage points gap across OECD countries.
- Men in Belgium on average are more likely to have high or moderately high trust in the federal government (53%) than women do (41%), above the average gender trust gap of 7 percentage points across OECD countries.
- The Belgian trust gap between the old and young age is below the OECD average, while the trust gaps between those with and without financial concerns and those with lower and higher educational attainment are above the OECD average.

Figure 3. Share of population with high or moderately high trust in the national/federal government by population group, 2023



Note: 'High or moderately high' corresponds to the aggregation of response options 6-10 to the question "On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all and 10 is completely, how much do you trust the national/central/federal government?"; neutral to option 5 and "low or no" to response options 0-4. The share with high or moderately high trust in government among people who are aged over 50 is identical to the share among people who are aged 18 to 29 years old, and therefore does not appear in the figure.

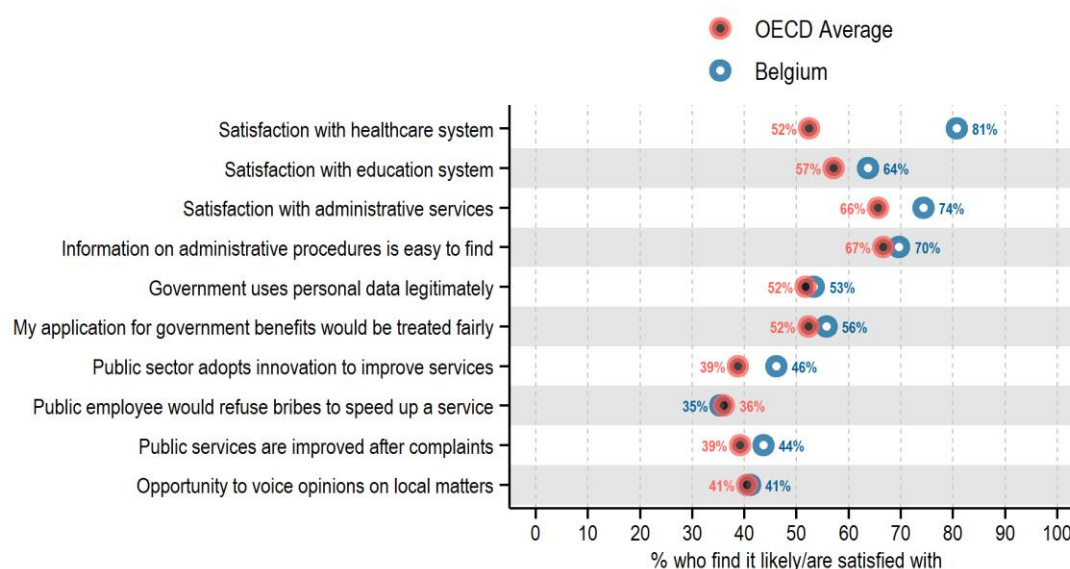
Perceptions of the public governance drivers of trust

Perceptions of day-to-day interactions with public institutions

- For most of the considered measures, Belgians' satisfaction with day-to-day interactions with public institutions is above the OECD average.
- A large majority of Belgians (81%) with recent experience with the healthcare system are satisfied with it, compared to 52% on average across the OECD. Moreover, 74% are satisfied with the administrative services they used, an important driver of trust in the civil service, compared to a 66% OECD average.
- People in Belgium find it more likely than the OECD average that the public sector adopts innovation to improve services: 46% of people in Belgium find this likely, compared to the OECD average of 39%.
- Perceptions of integrity of public employees are low in most countries: Only 35% of Belgians expect that public employees would refuse bribes to speed up service access, slightly lower than the OECD average of 36%.

Figure 4. Perceptions of day-to-day interactions between the population and public institutions

Share of population who are satisfied with public services or find a positive action in the respective situation likely, OECD and Belgium, 2023



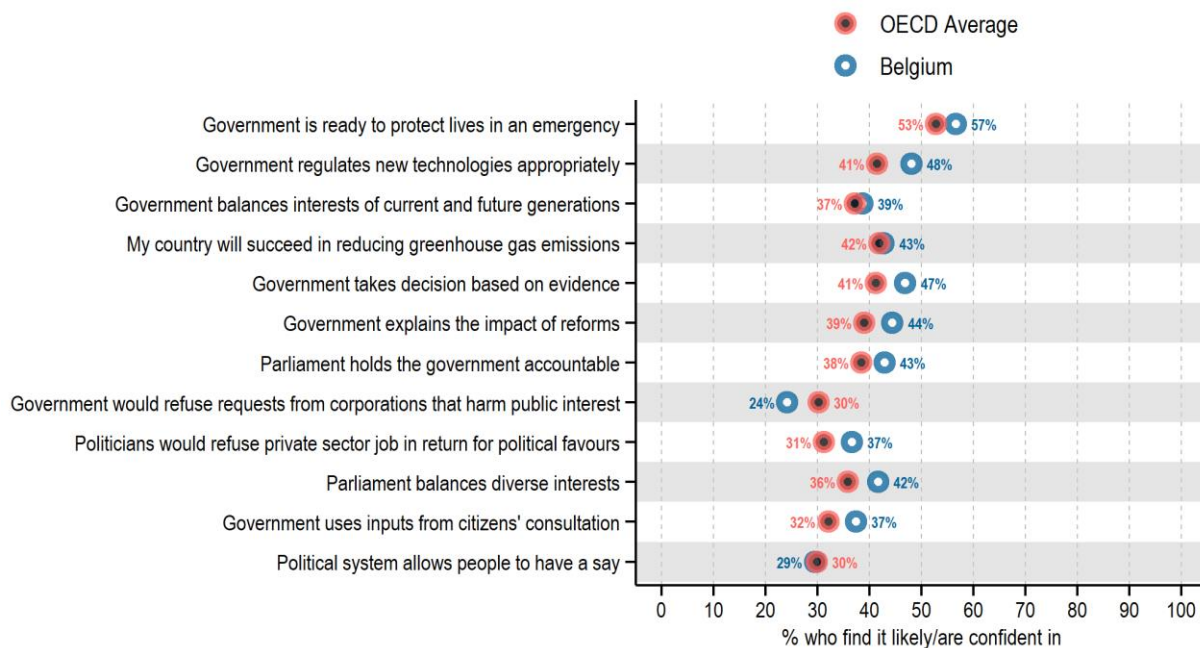
Note: The figure presents the unweighted OECD averages and values for Belgium of the share of respondents who choose a response of 6-10 on the 0-10 scale for the above questions. Satisfaction with public services is restricted to recent service users.

Perceptions of decision making on complex policy issues

- Belgium performs better than the OECD average in almost all measures of decision-making on complex policy issues. However, generally, in Belgium and across the OECD, a lower share of people in Belgium have positive perceptions regarding complex decision-making than regarding day-to-day interactions with public institutions.
- A majority of Belgians (57%) find it likely that government is ready to protect lives in an emergency, compared to 53% on average across OECD countries.
- Almost a half of Belgians (48%) expect that government regulates new technologies appropriately, a share that is 7 percentage points higher than the average across OECD countries (41%).
- Perceptions of government integrity are low in most countries: Only 24% of people in Belgium find it likely that government would refuse requests from corporations that could harm public interest, below the average across OECD countries (30%).
- A minority of Belgians (29%) believe that the political system allows people like them to have a say in what government does, an important driver of trust in the national government, compared to 30% across OECD countries, on average.

Figure 5. Perceptions of government decision-making on complex policy issues

Share of population who are confident in or find a positive action in the respective situation likely, OECD and Belgium, 2023



Note: The figure presents the unweighted OECD averages and values for Belgium of the share of respondents who choose a response of 6-10 on the 0-10 scale for the above questions.

For more information see [oe.cd/trust](https://www.oecd.org/trust)

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