



Funding the Future





Why do we have dire public services in the UK? Could it...

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When you're asked why the UK has dire public services one entirely appropriate answer could be that we're simply not willing to pay for them. [This is from the OECD](#), yesterday:

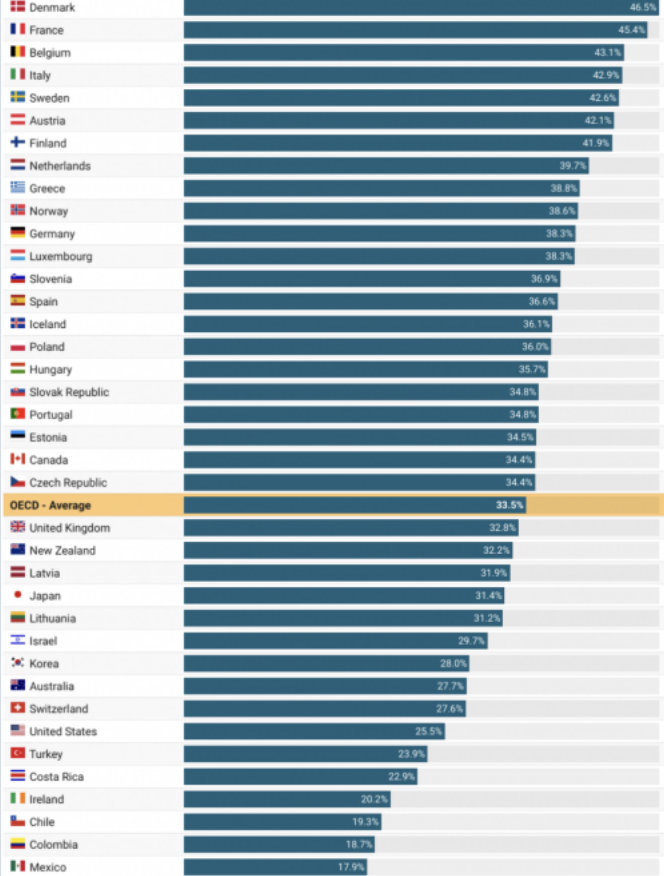
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NEW [OUT NOW] Revenue Statistics 2021: discover the latest data on tax revenues in OECD countries.

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Levels of tax revenues vary greatly across the OECD
Total tax revenues as % of GDP (preliminary data for 2020*)



Country	Tax revenues as % of GDP
Denmark	46.5%
France	45.4%
Belgium	43.1%
Italy	42.9%
Sweden	42.6%
Austria	42.1%
Finland	41.9%
Netherlands	39.7%
Greece	38.8%
Norway	38.6%
Germany	38.2%
Luxembourg	38.3%
Slovenia	36.9%
Spain	36.6%
Iceland	36.1%
Poland	36.0%
Hungary	35.7%
Slovak Republic	34.8%
Portugal	34.6%
Estonia	34.5%
Canada	34.4%
Czech Republic	34.4%
OECD - Average	33.5%
United Kingdom	32.8%
New Zealand	32.2%
Latvia	31.9%
Japan	31.4%
Lithuania	31.2%
Israel	29.7%
Korea	28.0%
Australia	27.7%
Switzerland	27.6%
United States	25.5%
Turkey	23.9%
Costa Rica	22.9%
Ireland	20.2%
Chile	19.3%
Colombia	18.7%
Mexico	17.9%

Data for Australia and Japan refer to 2019 as preliminary data for 2020 are not yet available in these countries
Source: OECD (2021) Revenue Statistics 2021 - Created with Datawrapper

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And yes, of course I am aware that tax does not directly fund public services, but in any economy where inflation is to be kept under control there will usually be some correlation between the level of public spending and taxation, albeit with money creation playing its part.

In that case, however it is looked at we cannot hope to enjoy the level of public services that we expect because we simply aren't willing to pay enough to balance the economy around that level of provision.

At some time over the next decade this will have to change, or we will fail to tackle the crises we face. The big problem is working out the narrative that persuades people to accept that this is necessary.