Pension Markets in Focus 2025

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Foreword

Pension Markets in Focus provides detailed and comparable statistics on asset-backed pensions around the world. This publication aims to help policymakers, regulators and other stakeholders to evaluate the design and operation of asset-backed pension systems, and to support policy discussions through international comparisons. *Pension Markets in Focus* is published annually. A preliminary version is published in June based on initial data on selected variables, and the final version in the last quarter of the year based on the latest data on a more comprehensive set of variables.

Pension Markets in Focus 2025 explores the drivers behind the growth in assets earmarked for retirement in 2024. It first looks at the extent of the growth in assets in 2024, by jurisdiction, type of plan and provider. It then looks at the investment performance of asset-backed pension plans in 2024. It finally assesses the cash flows these plans face, in particular the contributions they receive and the benefits they pay to retirees.

Data used to prepare this report were collected from pension authorities and other bodies within the framework of the OECD's Global Pension Statistics project conducted under the aegis of the OECD Working Party on Insurance and Pensions. The OECD's partnership with the International Organisation of Pension Supervisors (IOPS) and the World Bank expands the geographical coverage of the report beyond the OECD area. The OECD is grateful to the IOPS and the World Bank who helped with the data collection, and to pension authorities and other reporting bodies for providing data and comments.

This report has been developed by the Capital Markets and Financial Institutions Division of the OECD Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs. It was prepared by Romain Despalins, under the supervision of Pablo Antolin, Head of the Insurance and Pensions Unit, and Serdar Çelik, Head of Division. Sally Day-Hanotiaux and Stéphanie Payet from the Division provided input.

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Executive summary

This edition of *Pension Markets in Focus* examines developments in asset-backed pensions in 2024 and discusses the factors behind the record level in pension assets achieved that year.

Assets earmarked for retirement reached a new record level in 2024

After a drop in 2022, pension assets grew in 2023 and continued growing in 2024, with a 7.1% average growth in OECD Member countries. Assets reached a record level of USD 69.8 trillion at end-2024 in OECD Member countries, and USD 2.9 trillion in non-OECD jurisdictions. This record level reflects a widespread increase in assets under management of pension providers in all OECD and most non-OECD jurisdictions, and in most public pension reserve funds. Assets grew in all types of plans. However, the importance of occupational defined benefit (DB) plans diminished as they only grew by 4% compared with 11.4% in occupational defined contribution plans and 9.3% in personal plans. Assets in occupational DB plans accounted for 31.9% of pension plan assets at end-2024, compared to 33.2% at end-2023 and 39.7% at end-2014. Consolidation in some countries has led to an increase in the average size of the assets that pension providers manage.

Positive investment gains in 2024 explain the growth in pension assets

Asset growth in 2024 primarily reflects positive nominal investment rates of return. The average nominal investment rate of return was 9.1% for pension providers in OECD Member countries, 11.7% for those in non-OECD jurisdictions, and 8.5% for public pension reserve funds. Returns were generally above their longer-term average. Asset-backed pension plans with the highest equity exposure generally witnessed some of the strongest investment gains in 2024, driven by positive developments in global equity markets. Pension providers and public pension reserve funds had larger equity holdings at end-2024 than a year before, resulting from the increasing value of equities in their portfolios or an active reallocation of assets towards equities.

Positive cash flows from contributions over benefit payments also contributed to the growth in assets

Pension providers generally benefitted from a positive cash flow of contributions over benefit payments in 2024, which further supported the growth in assets in 2024. Contributions to asset-backed pension plans continued to grow in 2024, and so did benefit payments, as asset-backed pension systems matured and more people were entitled to pension benefits.

1 Pension assets grew to a record level in 2024

This chapter looks at the evolution of assets earmarked for retirement in 2024, looking at different jurisdictions and type of plans, and the average amount of assets under management of pension providers.

The capacity of asset-backed pensions to finance retirement benefits depends on the amount of assets accumulated during working life. A growing amount of assets provides a larger capital to pay benefits at retirement. At the same time, it also represents a potential source of investment that can support the real economy. Even pay-as-you-go public pension systems have been building up reserves in ring-fenced funds as an additional source to finance benefits on top of current contributions, to address demographic changes and other challenges that may affect the sustainability or operations of public pension schemes.

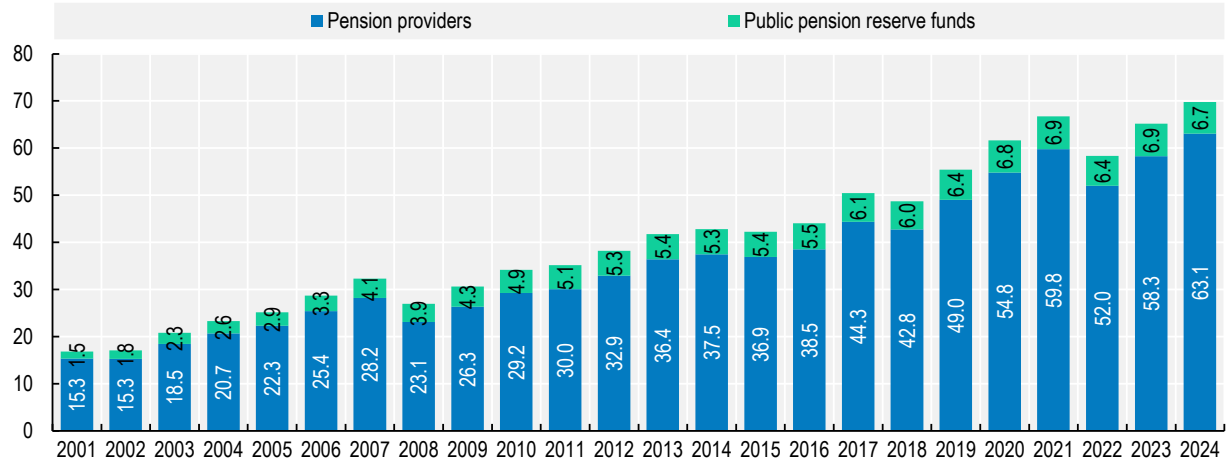
This chapter looks at the growth in assets in 2024 and its evolution over time. It does so by looking at the growth of assets across jurisdictions, the different types of plans, and the average amount of assets under management of pension providers. Pension providers include pension funds and any other financial institutions providing and managing occupational and personal pension plans, whether they are private or public.[1] Occupational plans are those that employers set up for their employees (OECD, 2005[1]). They can be defined benefit (DB) if employers provide some benefit guarantees (e.g. a regular income, an investment rate of return), and otherwise defined contribution (DC). Personal pension plans are those that individuals can access directly through a financial institution and in which they can select some aspects of the plan (e.g. the investment strategy). Public pension reserve funds also accumulate assets to finance retirement as they hold reserves from the pay-as-you-go public pension system.

1.1. Assets earmarked for retirement grew to a record level, reflecting widespread growth across jurisdictions

Assets earmarked for retirement grew to a record level in 2024. After experiencing a drop in 2022, assets in the OECD grew by 11.6% in 2023, and 7.1% in 2024. Assets totalled USD 69.8 trillion at end-2024, including USD 63.1 trillion managed by pension providers and USD 6.7 trillion in public pension reserve funds. This exceeds the previous record of 2021 of USD 66.7 trillion (Figure 1.1). While assets under management of pension providers have increased since 2001 (despite falls in 2008, 2018 and 2022), those in public pension reserve funds have remained relatively stable since 2017 (between USD 6 and USD 7 trillion) and were slightly lower at the end of 2024 than at the end of 2023.

Figure 1.1. Assets earmarked for retirement in the OECD, 2001-2024

In USD trillion



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

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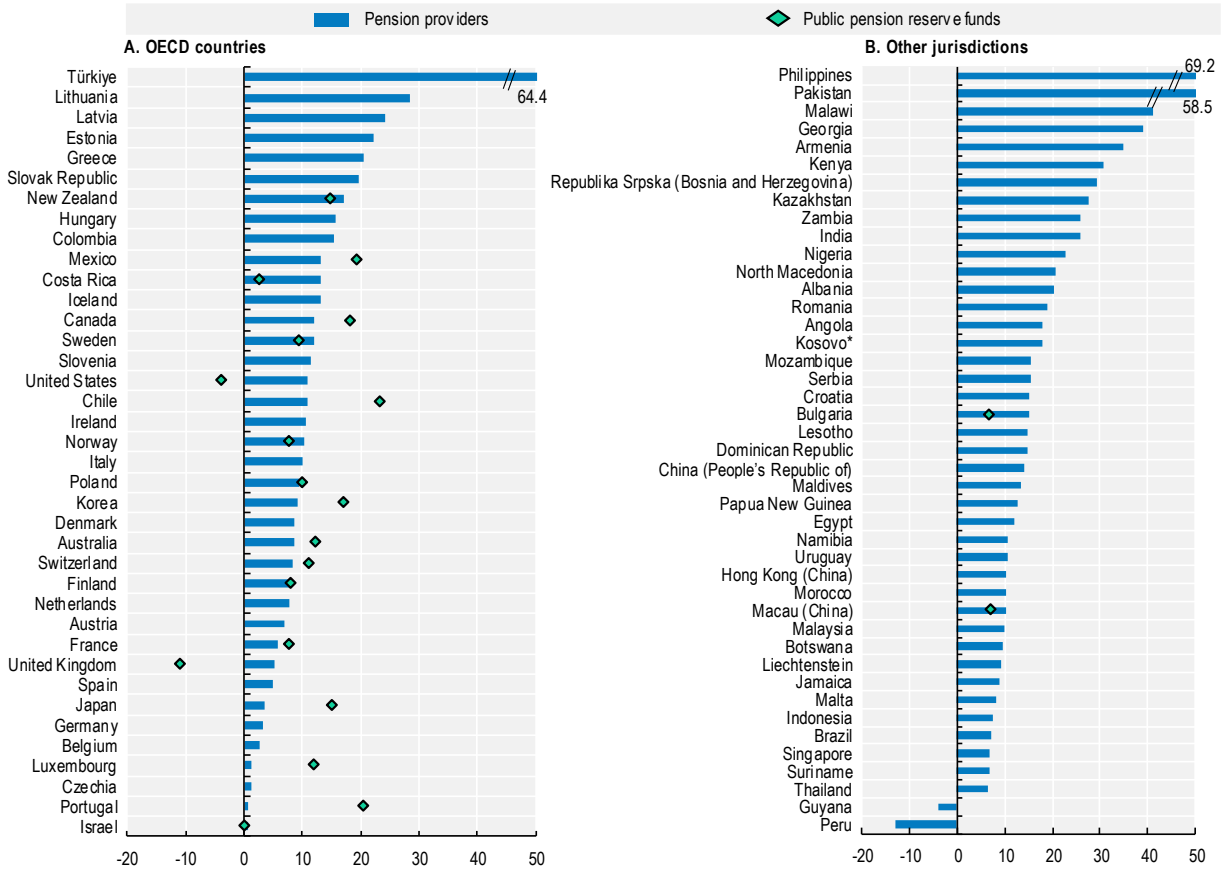
This overall growth in assets under management of pension providers reflects a widespread trend in nearly all reporting jurisdictions in 2024. Assets grew the fastest in the Republic of Türkiye (hereafter, Türkiye), the Baltics and Greece, among OECD countries, with asset growth exceeding 20% in nominal terms in local currency (Figure 1.2). Nearly a third of reporting non-OECD jurisdictions also recorded a growth rate in assets above 20% in 2024. Growth was more moderate elsewhere but still significant in some countries such as Canada (12.1%) or the United States (10.9%). Guyana and Peru are the only two reporting countries where assets under management of pension providers declined in 2024. The reserves of public pension reserve funds also increased in 2024, except in the United Kingdom (-11%) and the United States (-3.9%).

Figure 1.2. Nominal growth rate of pension assets in local currency in 2024

In per cent



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

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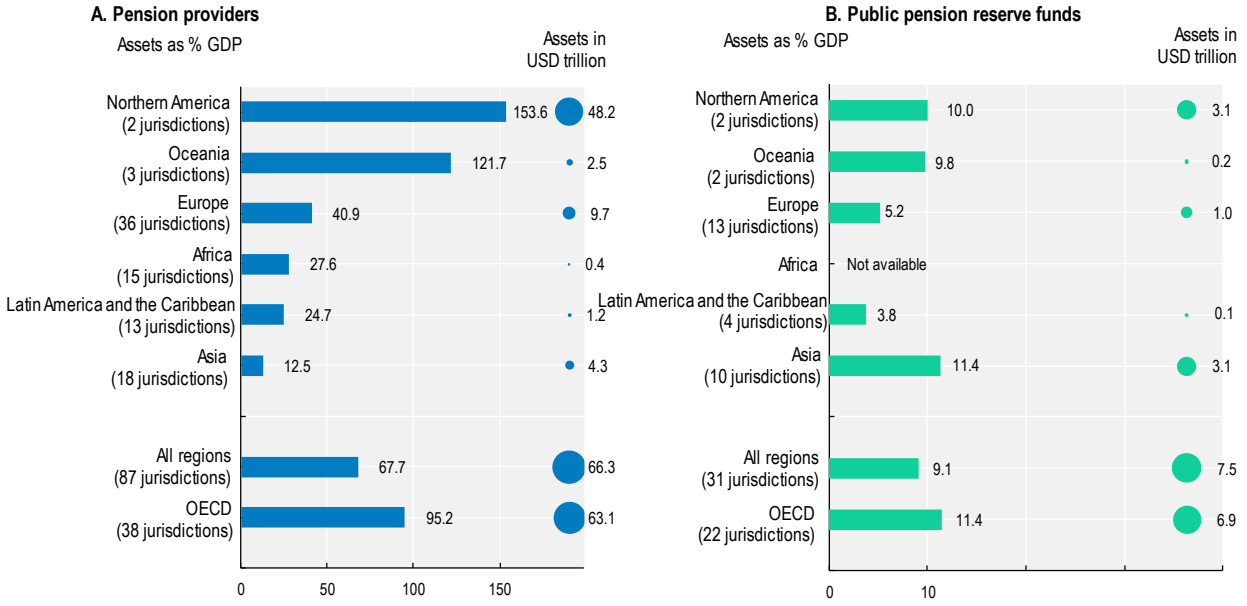
The amount of pension assets still varied widely across regions at end-2024. North America recorded USD 48.2 trillion in assets under management of pension providers, which represents over 70% of the total assets accumulated globally in 87 jurisdictions (Figure 1.3, Panel A). Europe had the second largest pool of assets (USD 9.7 trillion). Pension providers in Asia managed assets worth USD 4.3 trillion or 12.5% of

the combined GDP of the reporting Asian jurisdictions, the lowest amount across all regions. However, Asia is one of the regions accumulating the largest reserves to support public pension systems, at USD 3.1 trillion or 11.4% of GDP in 10 jurisdictions (Figure 1.3, Panel B). Africa is the region with the lowest amount of assets managed by pension providers in USD terms.

Figure 1.3. Assets earmarked for retirement in different regions at end-2024



Note: The charts show the overall amount of assets managed by pension providers (Panel A) and public pension reserve funds (Panel B) in jurisdictions with data available for this report. The charts specify how many jurisdictions data cover in brackets next to the name of each region.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics.

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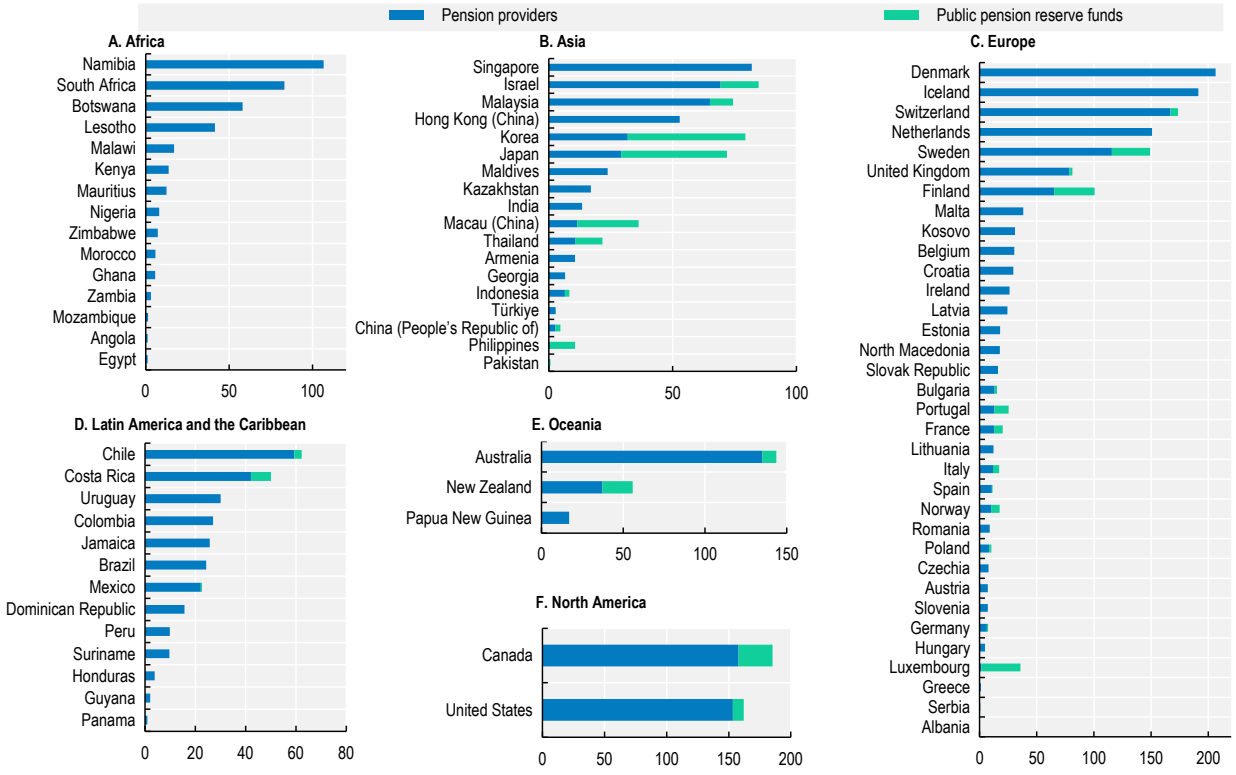
The size of pension assets also varies widely within regions. These differences are especially visible in Africa where assets under management of pension providers range from 1% of GDP in Egypt to over 100% in Namibia; in Asia (from less than 1% in Pakistan to 82% in Singapore);[2] and in Europe (from less than 1% in Albania to 206% in Denmark) (Figure 1.4). In some jurisdictions, the assets accumulated in public pension reserve funds exceed those managed by pension providers, such as in Japan, Korea, Macau (China) and the Philippines.

Figure 1.4. Assets earmarked for retirement in different regions, by jurisdiction, at end-2024

As a percentage of GDP



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

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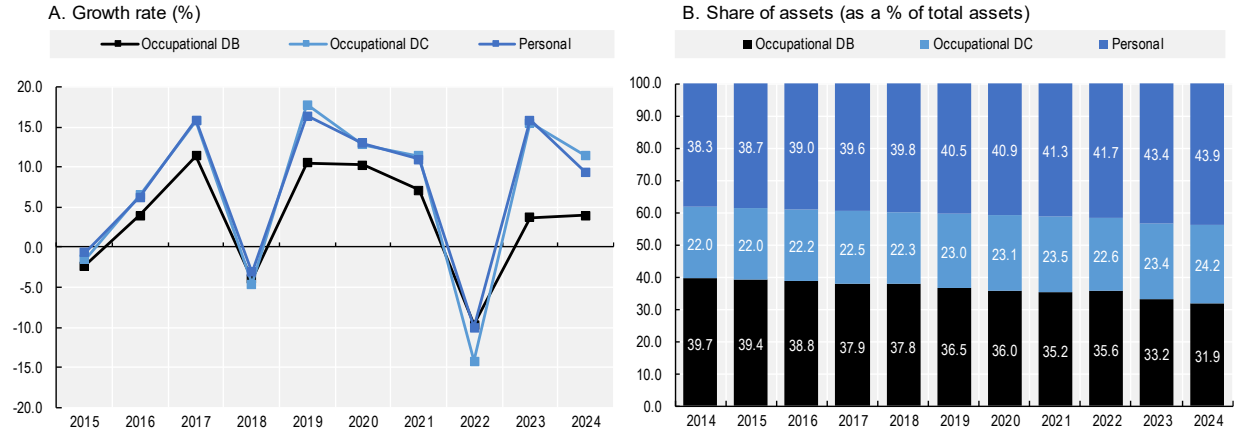
1.2. All pension plans recorded an increase in assets in 2024, but the importance of defined benefit plans continued to decline

All pension plans recorded an increase in assets in 2024. Pension assets increased in both occupational plans, those that employers set up for their employees, and personal plans, where individuals select the pension providers themselves. However, the increase in assets in 2024 was lower in occupational DB plans, where plan sponsors, usually employers, guarantee future benefits to employees, than in occupational DC plans where there is no such guarantee from the employer (Figure 1.5).[3] Assets in DB plans have been growing at a slower pace than other plans for years, and amounted to just below a third (31.9%) of all pension assets at end-2024, compared to 39.7% ten years before.

Figure 1.5. Growth rate and proportion of assets in occupational defined benefit, occupational defined contribution and personal plans in 44 jurisdictions, 2014-2024



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics, Statistics Canada; DREES (France); DNB (Netherlands); PREVIC (Brazil for occupational plans); RBA (Kenya).

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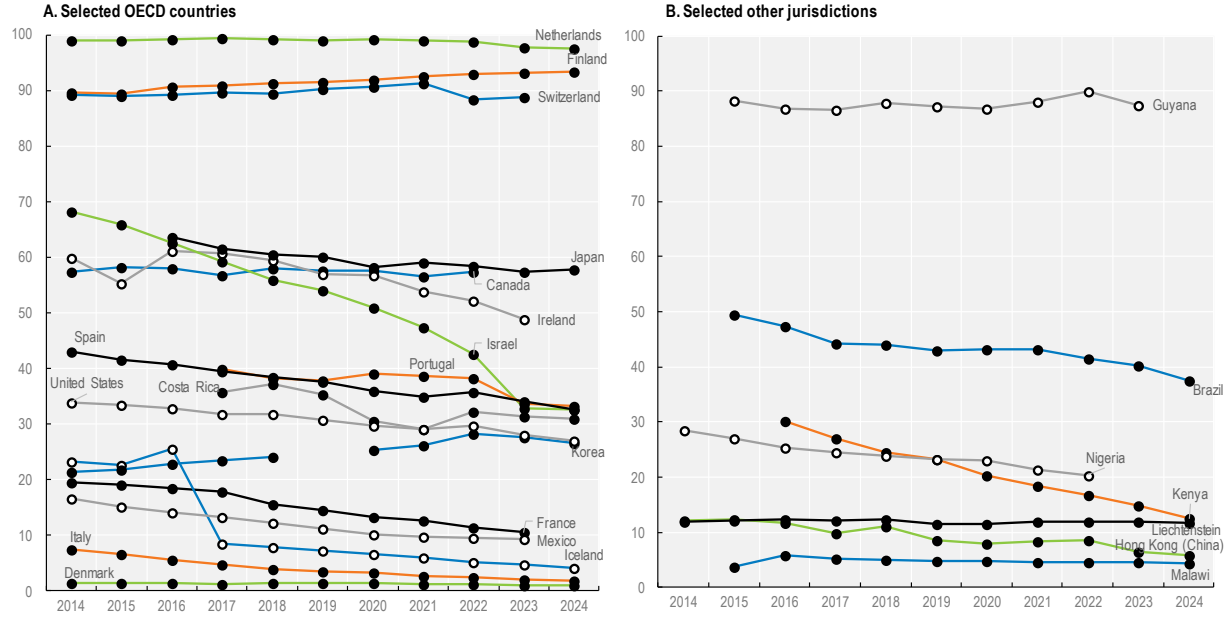
Many jurisdictions have witnessed a decline in the weight of occupational DB plans. Over the last decade, the share of assets in DB plans has been shrinking the fastest in Iceland, Israel and Kenya (Figure 1.6). This move away from DB plans is ongoing even in countries that used to have a significant share of assets in DB plans (e.g. Ireland, the United States). The proportion of assets in DB plans has declined with the growing prevalence of DC plans. In the United Kingdom, DC plans have grown in size since the introduction of automatic enrolment in 2012, unlike private sector DB plans (Pensions Policy Institute, 2024[2]). New types of plans are also emerging, such as in the United Kingdom, where the first collective defined contribution (CDC) scheme opened in 2024 (DWP, 2025[3]). The proportion of assets in DB plans remains high and stable in only a few countries: Canada (57.4% at end-2022), and Finland (93.4%), the Netherlands (97.5%) and Switzerland (88.8%) (at end-2023). In Canada, the shift from DB to DC plans has been concentrated largely in the private sector. Canadian public sector pension plans, which hold the largest amount of occupational pension assets, remain mostly DB (Tamburro, 2023[4]). While the share of assets in DB plans is still relatively high in the Netherlands, the Future Pensions Act (in force from 1 July 2023) overhauled the system and requires existing plans to transition into new DC plans by 2028.

Figure 1.6. Share of assets in defined benefit plans in selected jurisdictions, 2014-2024

As a percentage of total assets managed by pension providers



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics.

StatLink https://stat.link/yu7ier

The growth in assets in DB plans has helped to improve the solvency of DB pensions plans, together with the rise in interest rates. The funding ratio of the DB plans (the ratio of assets over liabilities) rose again in 2024 in most jurisdictions, reaching new highs in the United Kingdom and the United States (Table 1.1). Assets of DB plans exceeded the level of liabilities at end-2024 in most reporting jurisdictions except Iceland (25.9%), the United States (74.5%) and Hong Kong (China) (95.9%). The funding levels vary across DB plans, such as in the United States where corporate pension plans have higher funding ratios than public pension plans. The 100 largest corporate pension plans in the United States held surpluses at end-2024 with a funding ratio above 100% (Milliman, 2025[5]).

Table 1.1. Funding ratio of defined benefit plans in selected jurisdictions

In per cent

	2004	2009	2014	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Selected OECD countries									
Finland	..	..	127.3	124.7	129.4	137.2	125.3	126.6	130.0
Germany	108.5	107.1	119.7	129.9	132.9	132.0	116.0	118.2	119.5
Iceland	..	65.3	57.8	32.0	32.5	32.6	27.6	25.9	25.9
Ireland	..	..	..	110.7	111.0	122.2	128.5	131.2	..
Luxembourg	99.5	100.2	102.3	101.0	101.3	101.1	104.4	100.2	100.2
Mexico	..	87.4	76.7	62.0	60.2	66.7	65.7	64.6	..
Netherlands	116.8	109.5	113.2	105.0	101.3	115.4	116.1	115.0	116.4
Norway	114.2	116.3	112.1	114.5	114.8	114.6	115.4	115.5	115.3
Switzerland	103.5	102.0	109.8	110.0	112.3	117.3	106.0	109.2	113.7
United Kingdom	..	79.6	96.7	99.2	94.9	102.8	113.1	120.1	123.1
United States	67.1	56.4	57.7	61.3	65.4	69.4	67.9	70.8	74.5
Selected non-OECD jurisdictions									
Hong Kong (China)	104.5	103.9	113.6	99.8	101.0	112.2	105.6	87.5	95.9
Indonesia	..	..	102.1	96.5	97.0	96.6	..	96.1	..
Liechtenstein	..	100.8	114.5	114.1	117.9	122.5	107.6	110.7	116.8

Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

StatLink https://stat.link/qp4ex6

Sponsors of DB plans, or the governing body of the funds, may have seized the opportunity of higher funding ratio to lock-in solvency gains and transfer risks to insurers. Sponsors may have several ways of transferring risks to insurers, such as through buy-ins, buy-outs or longevity swaps (Box 1.1). The demand for pension risk transfers has been increasing over the last few years in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States (Morningstar DBRS, 2025[6]). In Canada, the number of deals and amounts of premiums for buy-ins and buy-outs increased and reached a record in 2024 (TELUS Health, 2025[7]). In the United Kingdom, private sector DB and hybrid plans exhibited higher insurance policies assets in 2024 (ONS, 2025[8]), indicating more buy-ins and longevity swap contracts between pension schemes and insurance companies. The United States saw a 14% increase in premiums for pension risk transfer in 2024, with more premiums paid for buy-outs (USD 48.1 billion) than for buy-ins (USD 3.7 billion) (LIMRA, 2025[9]).

Higher interest rates may have also made pension risk transfer deals more attractive to plan sponsors. Insurers may be able to offer more favourable prices due to higher interest rates (Morningstar DBRS, 2025[6]).

Buy-outs also appear to be gaining popularity in the Netherlands amid the transformation of occupational pension system. Some pension funds chose to transfer their portfolios to life insurers through buy-outs in 2024 instead of transitioning to DC schemes by 2028 (OECD, 2025[10]).

Box 1.1. Derisking options for sponsors of defined benefit plans

Sponsors of defined benefit plans face several risks. These risks include investment risk (which is the risk that investments provide lower returns than expected), longevity risk (which is the risk that members live longer than expected and payments have to be made for longer than planned) and interest rate risk (which is the risk that changes in interest rates increase the value of liabilities).

Plan sponsors can transfer some or all the risks to a third-party (e.g. insurer). This process is also called pension risk transfer. Plan sponsors may be able to choose among different options depending on the market:

- Buy-in: this is a contract with an insurer who agrees to pay an income to cover the benefits of plan members, in exchange for a premium. The contract may only cover a subset of members. The contract is held in the plan's assets.
- Buy-out: this is a contract with an insurer fully transferring risks. The plan winds up and the insurer becomes fully responsible for paying benefits to plan members.
- Longevity swap (also known as longevity insurance): this is an insurance policy protecting against the risk that members live longer than expected (longevity risk). It is an asset of the pension plan. It is similar to a buy-in but the policy only covers longevity risk.

Buy-ins and buy-outs are also known as bulk annuities or bulk purchase annuities.

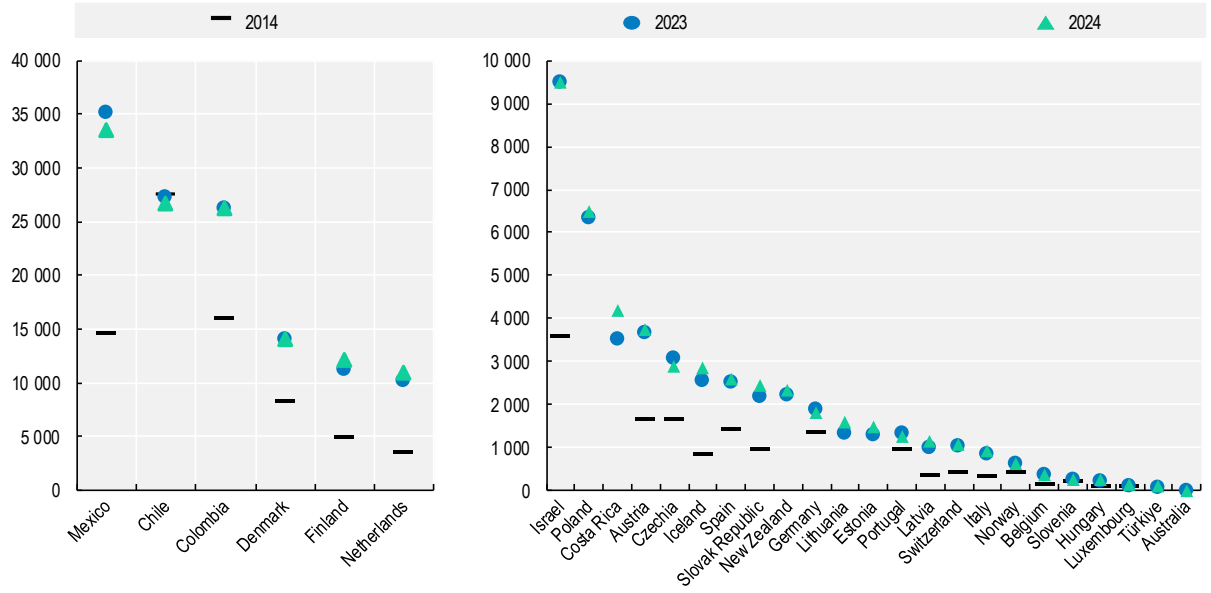
Source: (Alight[11]), What is pension risk transfer? Ask Alight, https://www.alight.com/library/what-is-pension-risk-transfer; (The Pensions Regulator, 2025[12]), New models and options in defined benefit pensions schemes, https://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/document-library/scheme-management-detailed-guidance/funding-and-investment-detailed-guidance/new-models-and-options-in-defined-benefit-pensions-schemes

1.3. The average amount of assets under management of pension providers has grown over the last decade

The average amount of assets that the average pension provider manages has grown in most reporting jurisdictions over the last decade, although it remained relatively steady in US dollar in 2024 compared to 2023. The average amount of assets managed by pension fund administrators in Chile grew between 2023 and 2024 and over the last decade in local currency, but remained relatively stable when expressed in US dollar (Figure 1.7) due to the evolution of the exchange rate between Chile's peso and the US dollar. In Mexico, the average amount of assets per administrator grew in 2024 in local currency but declined in US dollar due to the depreciation of the Mexican peso against the US dollar. Pension providers manage the largest average amounts in Latin America (e.g. Chile, Mexico), where the overall amount of assets for retirement is relatively large for a small number of providers (up to ten). By contrast, the average amount of assets per provider remains low or declined where asset-backed pension plans have not yet fully taken up (e.g. Türkiye) or where the number of providers is large (e.g. in Australia with hundreds of thousands of small managed superannuation funds).

Figure 1.7. Amount of assets per pension provider in selected OECD countries

In USD million



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

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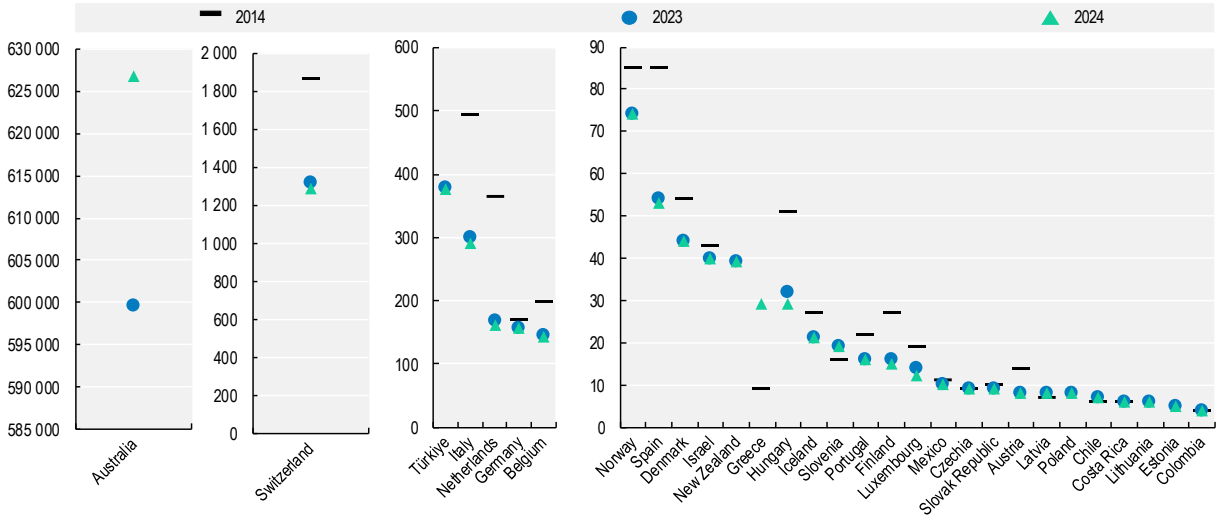
Some countries have seen a reduction in the number of pension providers managing the growing amount of assets. This could be due to the consolidation of the sector through closures or mergers of institutions. Consolidation is underway in many European countries (Figure 1.8), which may be due to the search for pooling resources to comply with regulatory requirements (IORP II), for efficiency gains, or for a more professional management of assets. For example, Belgium's pension supervisor (FSMA) noted two waves of consolidation of pension funds in 2008 and 2018, and attributed them to two European regulations (IORP I and IORP II) (FSMA, 2025[13]). In Ireland, the number of DB schemes keeps declining while DC schemes consolidate into (large) master trusts (Pensions Europe, 2024[14]). In the United Kingdom, the consolidation of the sector has seen many employers moving from single-employer trusts to master trusts and the number of master trusts reducing (Pensions Policy Institute, 2024[2]).

Figure 1.8. Number of pension providers in selected OECD countries, 2014, 2023 and 2024

In unit



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

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The consolidation of the pension sector is not a global trend, and some countries saw the number of pension providers remain stable or grow. This was the case in countries with relatively few providers (e.g. in Latin America). Markets with a small number of pension providers and potentially high concentration may have room for additional market entry. Chile was considering introducing a new public institution to foster competition while developing its pension reform. Although less concentrated, other markets also saw the number of pension providers increase, such as in Australia. Although consolidation is under way in some parts of the sector, most funds are small self-managed super funds (SMSFs), and their number keeps growing. The growth of SMSFs may reflect a preference for the flexibility and control that these funds may provide over larger super funds.[4] The average amount of assets per pension provider has also increased in Australia and in Latin America (in local currency) over the last decade, despite relatively stable or increasing number of pension providers, showing that pension assets grew faster than the number of providers.

2 Positive investment gains in 2024 explain the growth in pension assets

This chapter looks at the investment performance of pension providers and public pension reserve funds in 2024. It explores the factors behind it and examines the evolution of the asset allocation of pension providers and public pension reserve funds.

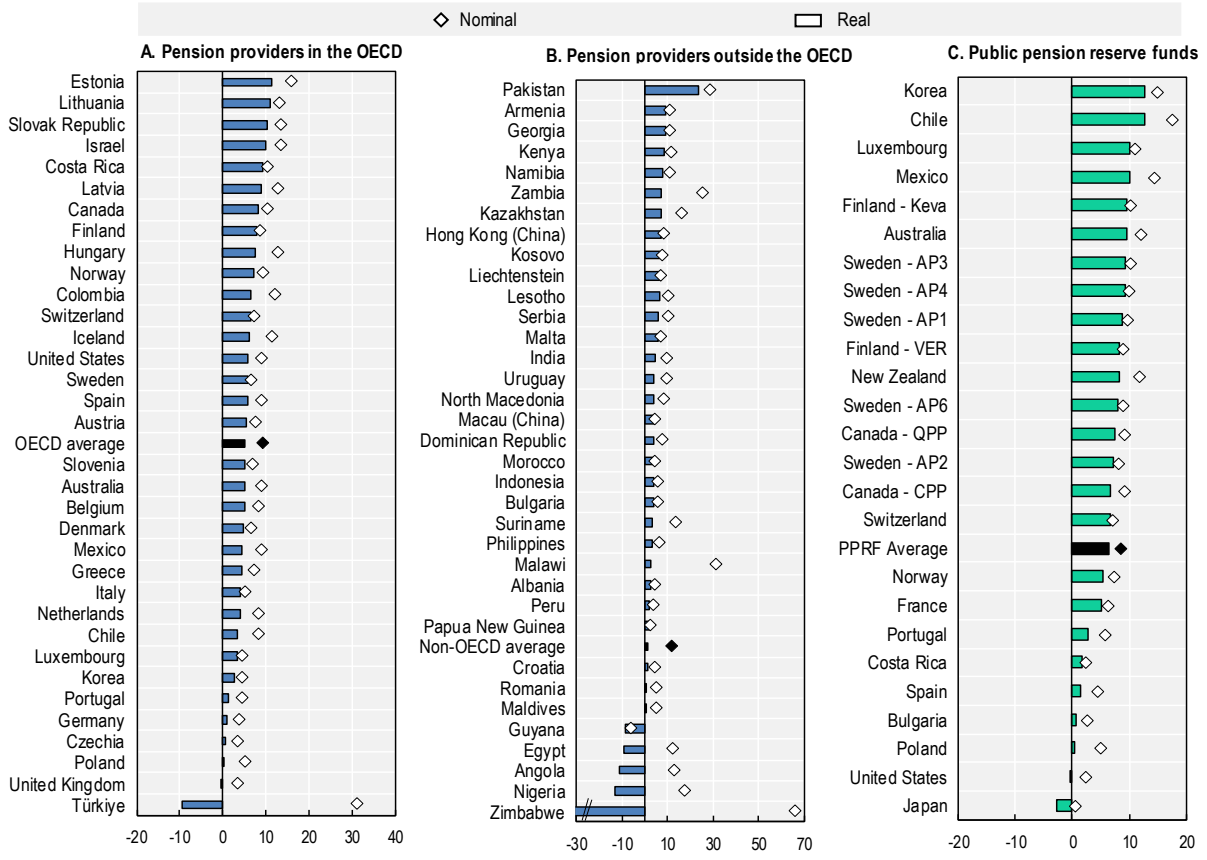
The growth in assets in 2024 was primarily the result of the investment gains that pension providers and public pension reserve funds achieved. First, this chapter shows that asset-backed pension plans achieved positive investment rates of return in nearly all the reporting jurisdictions. Second, it shows that plans with the highest equity exposure were the ones with the strongest investment gains in 2024. And third, it shows that the share of assets invested in equities has been increasing since the 2008 financial crisis. It also examines other shifts in the asset allocation of pension providers and public pension reserve funds.

2.1. Asset-backed pension plans recorded positive investment rates of return in nearly all jurisdictions in 2024

Asset-backed pension plans recorded positive investment rates of return in 2024, contributing to the growth in assets to a record level. For the second year in a row, pension providers and public pension reserve funds recorded widespread investment gains, with positive nominal investment rates of return in nearly all jurisdictions (Figure 2.1). Pension providers achieved an average nominal return of 9.1% in the OECD and 11.7% in non-OECD jurisdictions. Public pension reserve funds recorded an 8.5% nominal return on average.

Figure 2.1. Investment rates of return of asset-backed pension plans, Dec 2023 - Dec 2024

In per cent



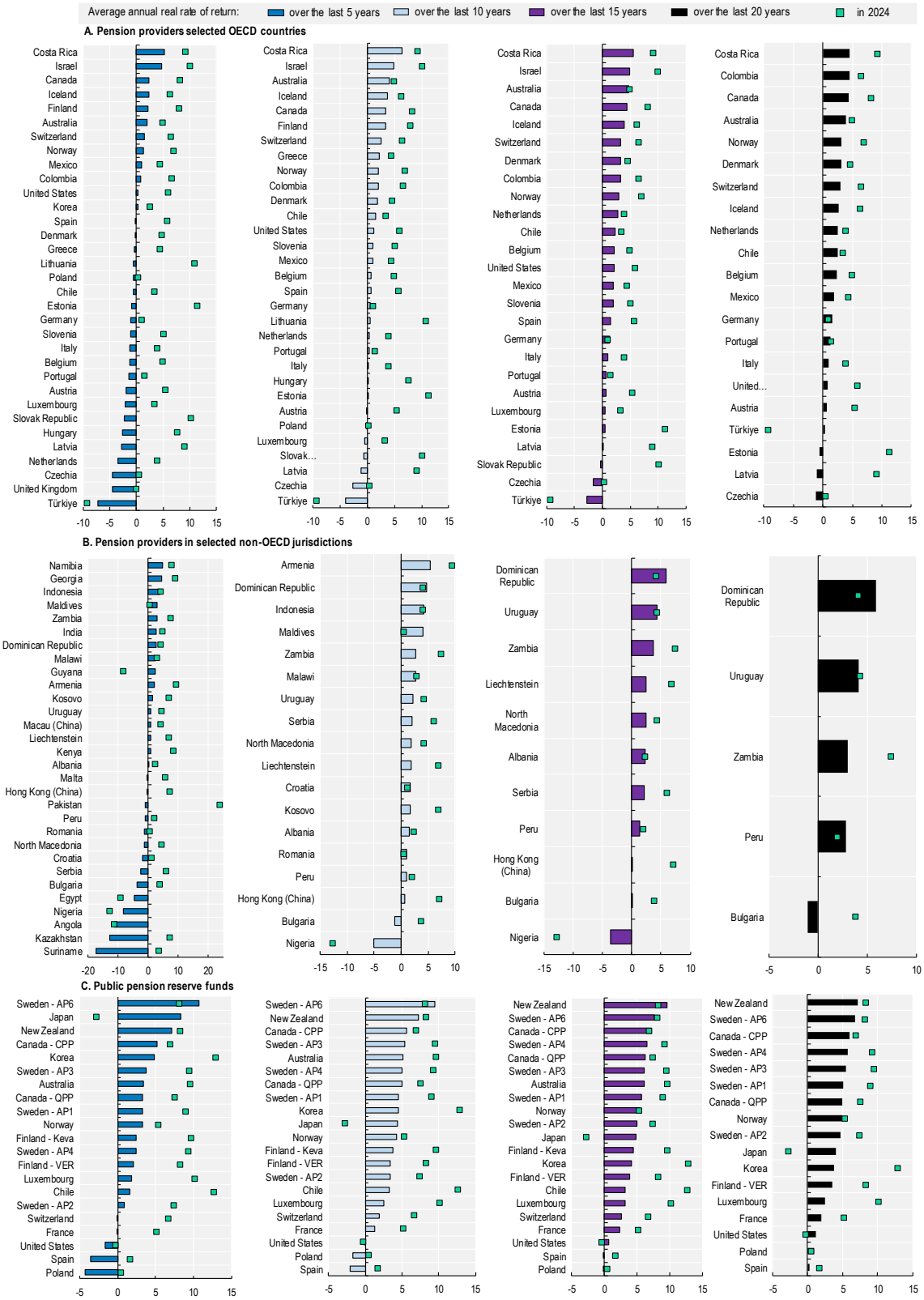
Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

StatLink https://stat.link/w58ckg

Nominal investment rates of return exceeded inflation rates in most jurisdictions. The returns of pension providers and public pension reserve funds were positive in real terms on average, although the average in non-OECD jurisdictions (1.2%) was lower than in the OECD (5%) given higher inflation rates. Pension providers in Estonia, Israel, Lithuania and the Slovak Republic (among OECD countries) and Pakistan (among other jurisdictions) recorded the strongest investment performance in real terms, with real rates of return over 10%. Pension providers failed to achieve positive real investment returns in only 7 out of 69 reporting jurisdictions, despite positive nominal investment rates of return which did not match high inflation rates (e.g. Angola, Nigeria, Türkiye, Zimbabwe).

Returns in 2024 were generally above the longer-term average annual investment rates. Real returns exceeded the average annual returns over the last 5, 10, 15 and 20 years in most jurisdictions (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2. Average annual real investment rates of return in 2024 and over the longer term (%)



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

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The relatively large investment gains in 2024 contributed to mitigate the losses incurred in 2022, although they were not high enough to offset them completely over the short-term. Real gains in 2024 were insufficient to offset the losses over the last five years in most OECD countries (21 out of 33 reporting) and several non-OECD jurisdictions (14 out of 30 reporting), given the large downfall in 2022.

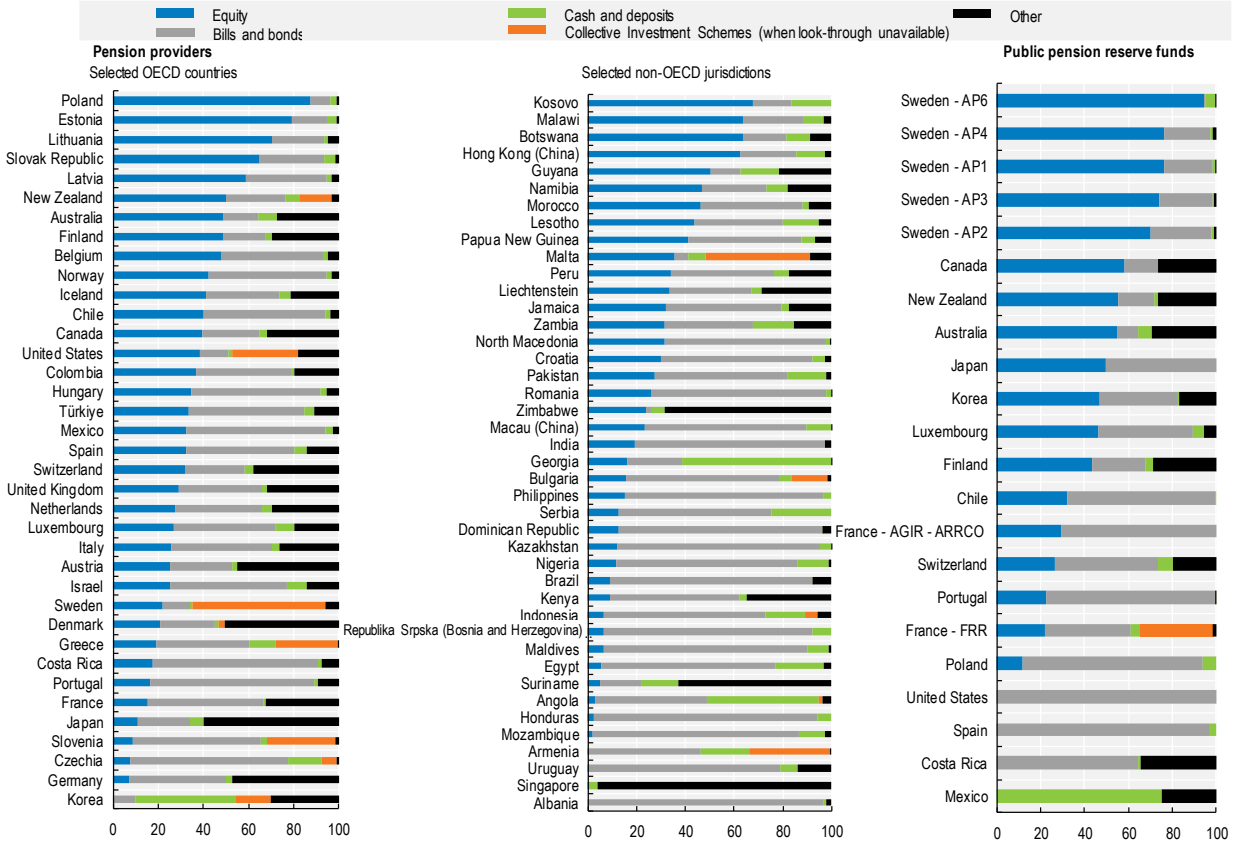
Real returns were positive in most jurisdictions over the longer term (the last 10, 15 and 20 years), despite several years with poor or negative investment performance, such as in 2008, 2011, 2018 and 2022. The highest long-term investment performance was recorded in some Latin American countries (Costa Rica, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay), Canada and Australia with an average real rate of return close to or above 4% over a 20-year period. Pension providers also achieved a relatively high performance in Israel over the last 15 years (at 4.9% on average). A few jurisdictions recorded long-term real returns close to 0 (Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia) despite achieving some of the top performances in 2024 for some of them (Estonia, Latvia).

2.2. Asset-backed pension plans with the highest equity exposure achieved some of the strongest investment gains in 2024

Asset-backed pension plans with the highest equity exposure achieved some of the strongest investment gains in 2024. Pension providers and public pension funds invest differently (Figure 2.3). While pension providers and public pension reserve funds tend to invest mostly in bonds, some have a larger exposure to equities (e.g. pension providers in the Baltics, Poland, the Slovak Republic among OECD countries; Botswana, Hong Kong (China), Malawi among other jurisdictions). This larger exposure to equities may either be due to members or providers' preference for risks (e.g. Hong Kong (China)), investment regulations (e.g. Poland) or the design of the system requiring or encouraging investments in equities (e.g. through the introduction of life cycle funds such as in Lithuania). Jurisdictions where pension providers and public pension reserve funds had the highest equity exposure in 2024 were generally also those witnessing some of the strongest returns in 2024 (e.g. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic among OECD countries; Hong Kong (China) among other jurisdictions).

Figure 2.3. Allocation of assets earmarked for retirement in selected asset classes and investment vehicles, at end-2024

As a percentage of total investment



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

StatLink https://stat.link/g3r29m

Within jurisdictions, pension providers with higher exposure to equities generally performed better than other providers in 2024. This was the case for instance in Chile, Colombia, Hong Kong (China) and Latvia, where the difference in the investment rate of return between the riskiest and the most conservative funds was close to 10 percentage points or more.[5]

Equity investments generally benefitted from positive developments in stock markets in 2024. Global equities delivered positive returns, driven by economic growth exceeding expectations and further boosted by the performance of major listed technology companies in the United States. The MSCI World Index grew by close to 20% in 2024.[6] The value of equity indices increased on most OECD stock markets, with some of the strongest performances achieved in several of the largest markets (e.g. 23.8% for the S&P 500 in the United States, 19.2% for the Nikkei-225 in Japan, 18.8% for the DAX in Germany). Stock markets in a few countries underperformed compared to other OECD countries, including Poland, which explains the lowest performance of its pension funds despite a high proportion of assets in equities.

Pension providers and public pension reserve funds have achieved more mixed results on their bond holdings in 2024. Despite the easing of inflationary pressures and the recent decline in short-term policy

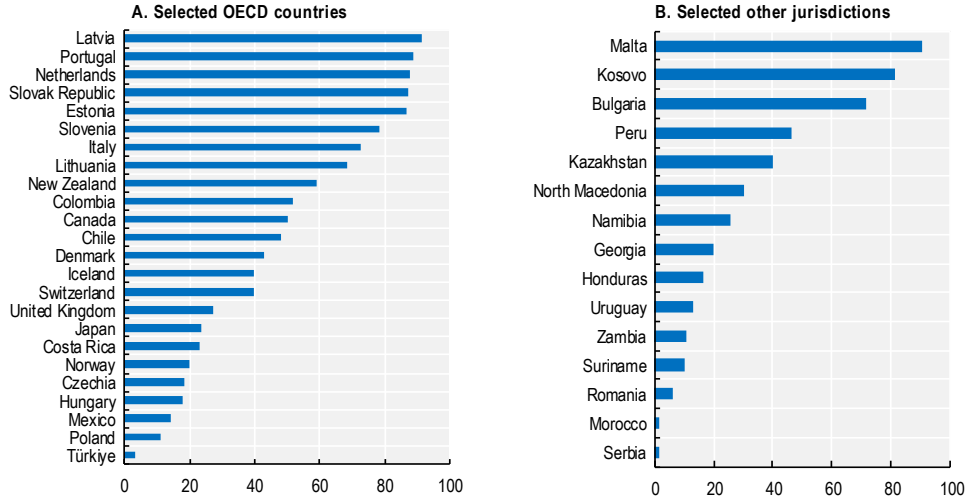
rates, the average yields to maturity of government bonds remained largely stable, with government bond yields of different maturities evolving differently around the world in 2024 (OECD, 2025[15]). Short-term yields generally fell, whereas long-term yields declined less or, in some cases, increased amid heightened macro-financial uncertainty, resilient output growth and increased budget deficits. A decline in short-term yields leads to an increase in prices of short-dated bonds and therefore gains on those that are in the investment portfolios of pension providers and public pension reserve funds. Yet, long-dated (high duration) government bonds' prices declined in some OECD countries such as the United States, Japan and in Europe, leading to losses on those bonds (OECD, 2025[15]; 2025[16]).

Likewise, pension providers and public pension reserve funds have achieved contrasting results on other financial instruments (such as real estate). Australia noted that some funds incurred losses in unlisted property. Finland also reported that pension providers achieved a 0.9% return on alternative investments and 0% on real estate investments in real terms. This contrasts with other funds, such as public pension reserve funds in Sweden that achieved stronger returns on alternative assets (e.g. 8.9% return on real assets for AP2 (2025[17])).

For those investing abroad, investment gains depended on both the performance of foreign assets and the exchange rates between the domestic currency and the currency in which these assets were issued. Pension providers in Europe (e.g. the Baltics, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia) invest the most abroad (Figure 2.4). They tend to invest in Europe, which limits the investment gains or losses due to exchange rates, especially when pension providers from a country in the euro area invest in another country of the euro area. For example, Latvia invested mostly abroad, explaining why Latvian pension providers performed well despite the low performance of local capital markets. In Korea, the largest public pension reserve fund (i.e. the National Pension Fund) recorded strong investment returns despite the negative performance of equities in the local stock market thanks to increased diversification and the performance of global equity markets. Pension providers in some Latin American countries also invested close to 50% of assets abroad at end-2024 (52% for Colombia, 48% for Chile, 46% for Peru). In Chile, the depreciation of the Chilean peso against the main foreign currencies contributed to the positive return of pension funds on foreign instruments.

Figure 2.4. Foreign investments of pension providers at end-2024

As a percentage of total investment



Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics.

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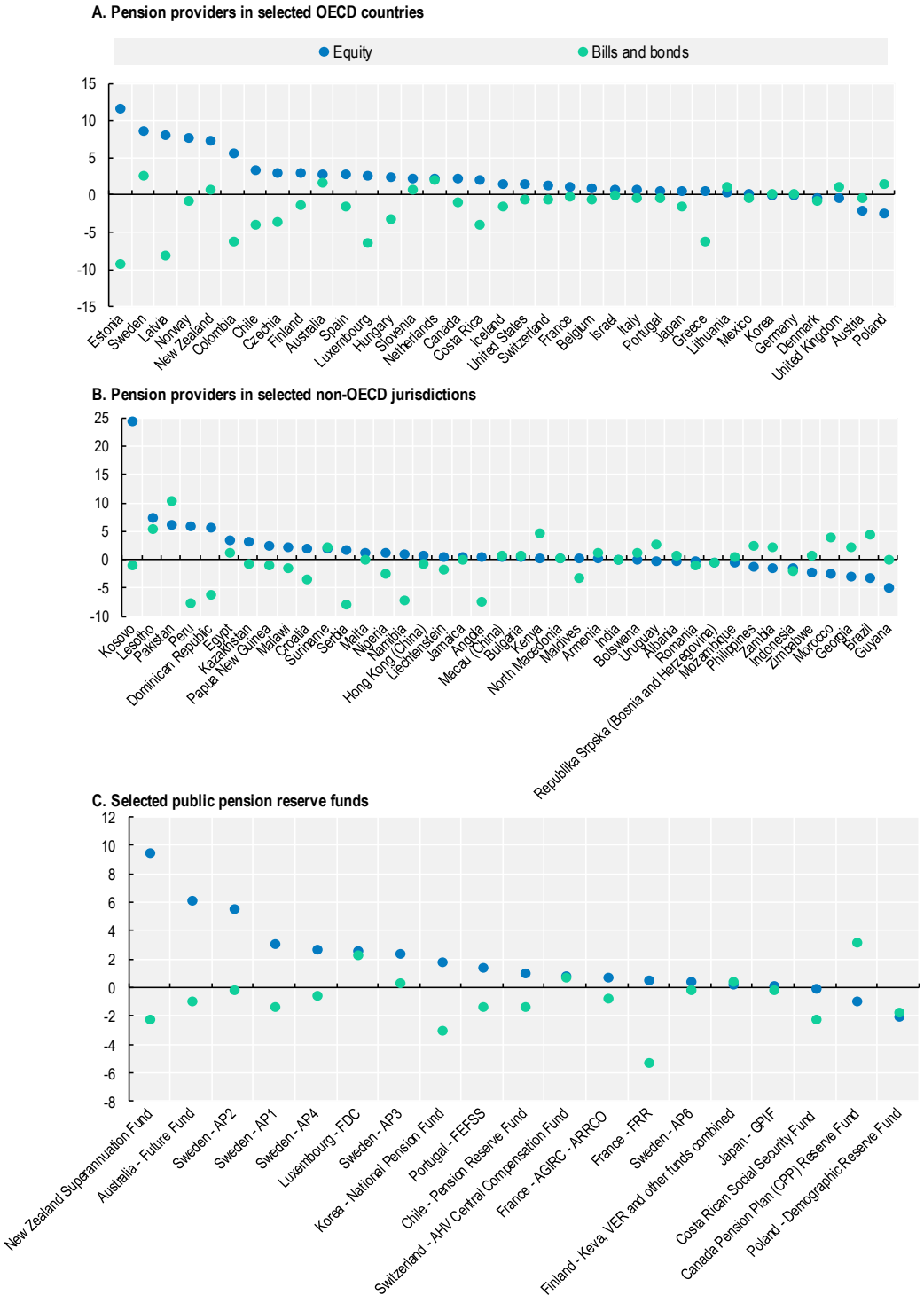
2.3. The share of pension assets invested in equities increased in 2024

Pension providers and public pension reserve funds increased their equity holdings in 2024. The proportion of pension assets in equities increased in most jurisdictions (Figure 2.5). Some of the largest increases were reported in the public pension reserve funds of Australia and New Zealand and among pension providers in Colombia, the Czech Republic (Czechia), Estonia, Latvia, Norway and Sweden. This may be due to the increasing value of equities in their portfolios, an active reallocation of assets towards equities, or both. While the increasing value of equity instruments contributed to the increased proportion of assets in equities in portfolios, pension providers and public pension reserve funds can rebalance their portfolio if they want to keep a certain proportion of assets invested in a given instrument. In Colombia, pension asset managers sought to increase their equity holdings and reduce their holdings of local and foreign fixed income instruments. In Czechia, where individuals can select the asset allocation, the increased allocation to equities may reflect people's higher willingness to bear investment risk to get higher returns. Latvia also saw plan members moving their savings to high-risk plans, as well as an increase in members selecting active plans allowing up to 100% in equities. In the Slovak Republic, the transfer of member assets from bond funds to index funds, initiated during 2023, continued in 2024, leading to a surge in equity exposure.

Figure 2.5. Change in asset allocation between 2023 and 2024

In percentage points



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and websites of public pension reserve funds.

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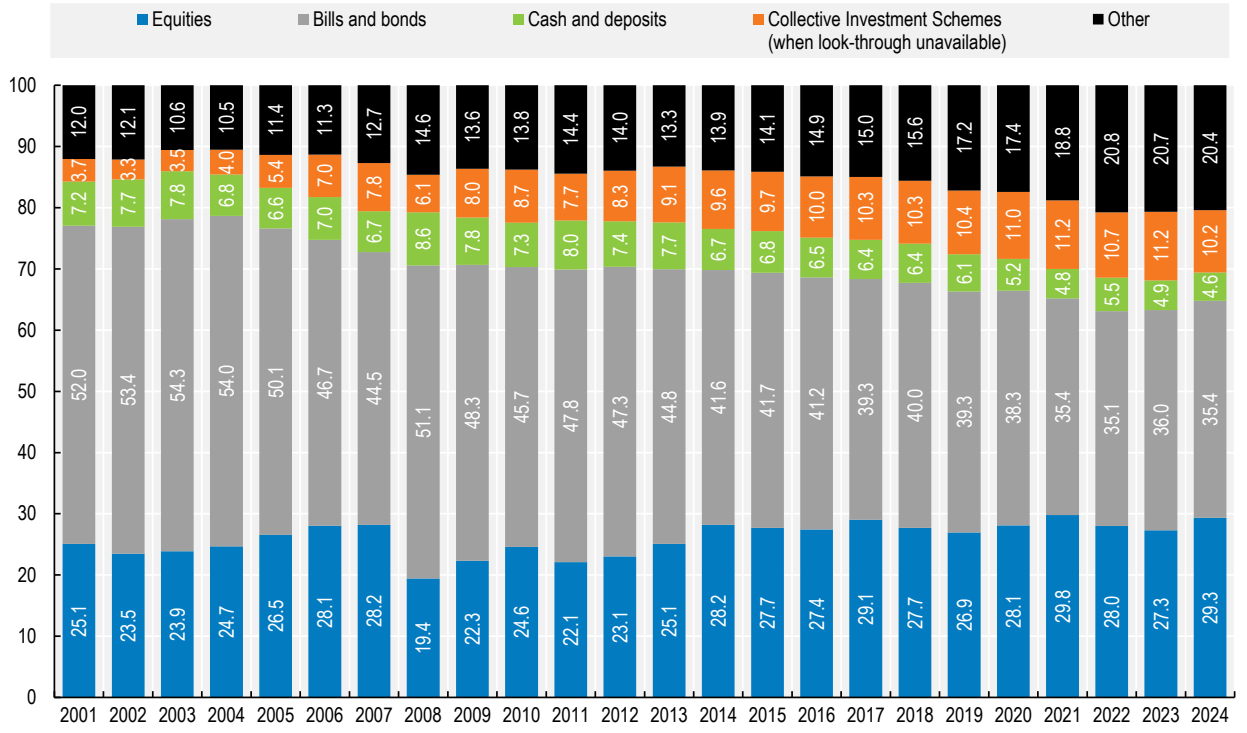
The increase in equity investments is not a new phenomenon. In 14 selected jurisdictions, while equities accounted for 19.4% of investments of pension providers at end-2008, the share had increased to 29.3% at end-2024 (Figure 2.6). Some jurisdictions have encouraged further risk taking by making default investment strategies (for defined contribution plans) less conservative. For example, Croatia and New Zealand changed their default investment strategy to a less conservative one in 2019 and 2021 respectively. In India, the pension regulator launched a new investment option under the National Pension System (NPS) in October 2024 – the Balanced Life Cycle Fund (BLC) – providing higher equity exposure with a different glide path and tapering to members seeking higher returns.

Figure 2.6. Average asset allocation of pension providers in selected asset classes and investment vehicles in a selection of 14 jurisdictions, 2001-2024

As a percentage of total investment



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics.

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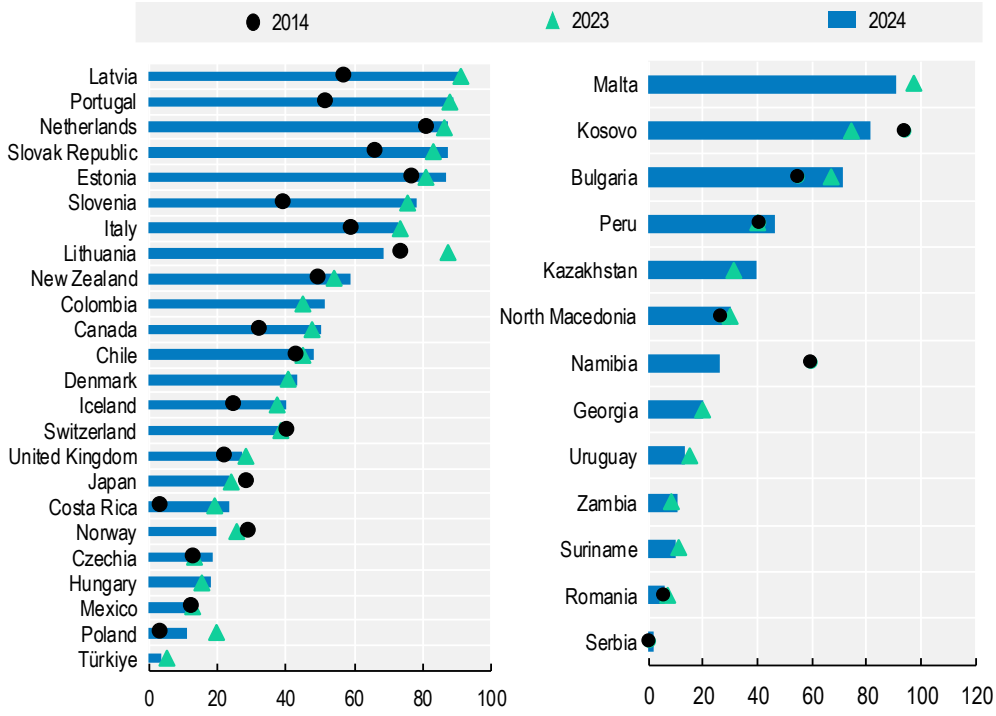
Pension providers have also generally increased their foreign investments over the last decade. Pension providers increased their share of assets invested abroad in 21 out of 27 reporting jurisdictions between 2014 and 2024, with some increasing it by more than 30 percentage points (Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia) (Figure 2.7). Foreign investments continued to increase in 2024 (relative to 2023) in a number of jurisdictions (e.g. in several Latin American countries) but also slightly reversed in some others (by 0.9 percentage point in Romania, 1 in Italy, 1.6 in the United Kingdom, 8.6 in Poland). Several reasons may drive pension providers to invest abroad, such as the search for higher returns, the pursuit of broader

geographical diversification, or the lack of investment opportunities domestically. However, they may face some barriers such as investment regulations, which may limit the proportion of assets that can be invested abroad and where they can be invested. There have also been calls for pension providers to invest more domestically to support the local economy and help deepen the local capital markets.

Figure 2.7. Foreign investments of pension providers, 2014, 2023 and 2024

As a percentage of total investment



Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics.

StatLink https://stat.link/fy0pwd

3 Positive cash flows from contributions over benefit payments also contributed to the growth in assets

This chapter examines the cash flows of pension providers and public pension reserve funds. It then explores how the contributions to and benefit payments from these entities have changed.

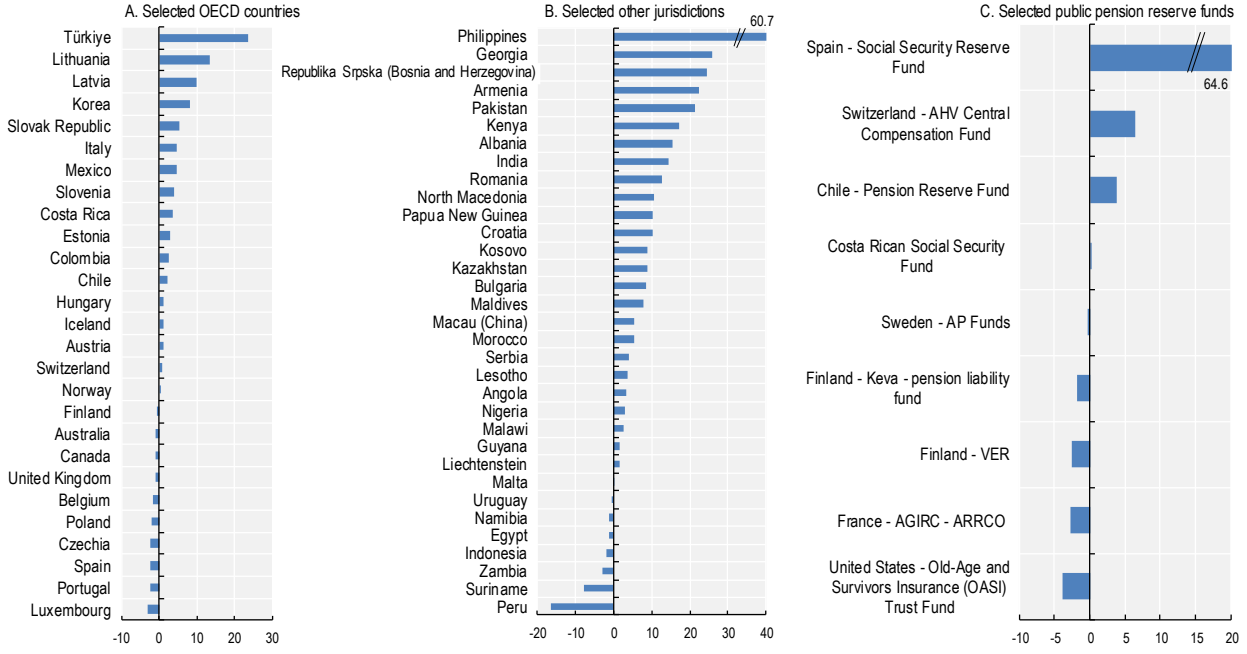
The net flows of contributions and benefit payments can also explain the growth in assets earmarked for retirement. Beyond investment income, contributions to pension providers and public pension providers are the main source to finance future retirement income. At the same time, pension providers may make payments to plan members, and public pension reserve funds to public pension schemes. The difference between contributions (inflows) and payments (outflows) can contribute to the growth or decline in pension assets. This chapter looks at whether pension providers and public pension reserve funds benefitted from a positive cash flow of contributions over benefit payments in 2024 and how contributions and benefit payments have evolved during this period.

3.1. Pension providers benefitted from a positive cash flow of contributions over benefit payments

Pension providers generally benefitted from positive cash flows in 2024, which further supported asset growth that year. Pension providers received contributions in excess of benefit payments and other expenditure in most jurisdictions, especially among non-OECD jurisdictions (26 out of 33) (Figure 3.1).[7] This positive cash flow was the strongest relative to the amount of assets at end-2023 in Georgia, the Philippines and Türkiye, where the asset-backed pension system is still relatively recent and the total amount of assets of pension providers still relatively low compared to other jurisdictions (below 10% of GDP). Among OECD countries, Latvia, Lithuania and Korea also recorded relatively strong positive cash flows in 2024.

Figure 3.1. Excess of contributions over benefits and other expenditure in 2024

As a percentage of total investment at end-2023



Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics.

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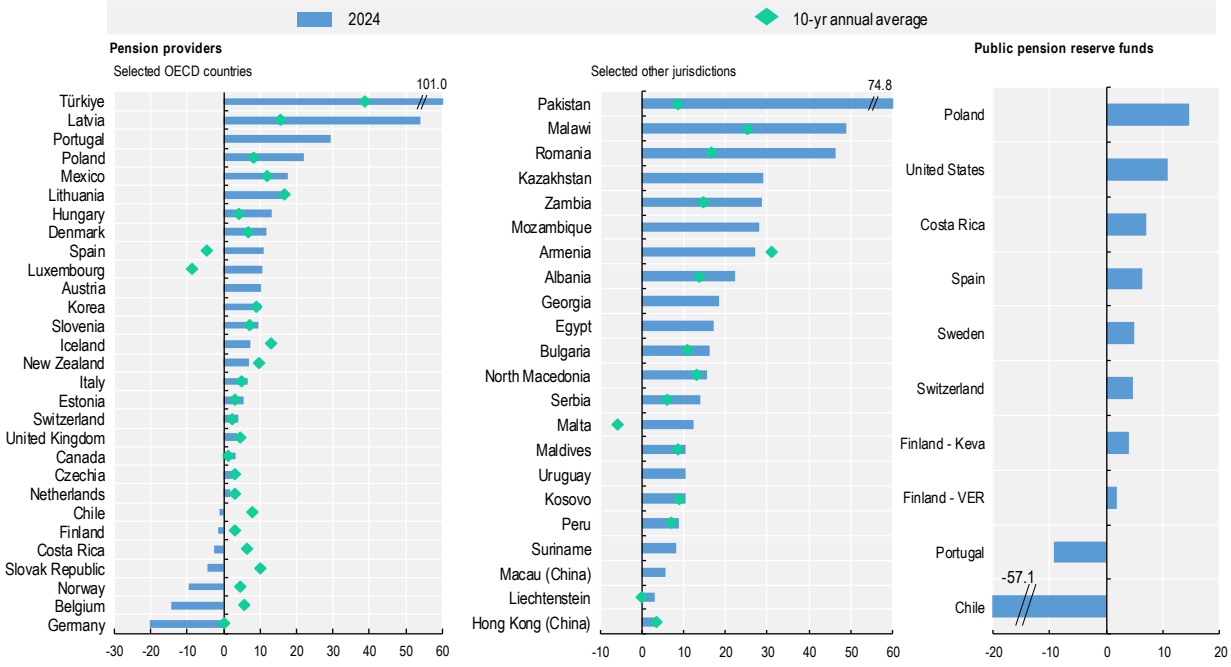
Negative cash flows reduced asset growth in most cases. Pension providers faced negative cash flows in some of the largest OECD pension markets (e.g. Australia, Canada) and several European countries (e.g. Belgium, Czechia, the United Kingdom). Yet, pension assets grew in these countries, thanks to the relatively strong investment performance in 2024. Peru is one of the few exceptions where the investment performance (3.7% nominal) was insufficient to offset the outflows from the plans, as the Peruvian Congress approved new early withdrawals. Peru had the most negative cash flows among all reporting jurisdictions (-16.4% of assets at end-2023). Some public pension reserve funds also faced negative cash flows (e.g. Sweden, the United States) as reserves were used.

3.2. Contributions continued to grow in 2024

Contributions paid to pension providers continued to grow in 2024. Annual contributions to pension plans have been growing on average over the last decade in most jurisdictions, with only a few exceptions (Luxembourg, Spain, Malta (Figure 3.2)). The trend reversed in Spain in 2024 with contributions increasing by over 10%. Contributions grew in many jurisdictions in 2024, with the strongest growth in Pakistan and Türkiye due to high inflation rates, and in Latvia, Malawi and Romania, where asset-backed pension systems are mandatory. Yet, several European and Latin American countries saw a decline in contributions paid to pension plans in 2024 compared to 2023.

Figure 3.2. Nominal growth rate of contributions paid to pension providers, 2024 and geometric annual average over the last 10 years

In percent



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

StatLink https://stat.link/z893cm

The increase in the number of people participating in a pension plan drives the growth in contributions. The proportion of the working-age population participating in a pension plan has been growing and this trend continued in 2024 (Table 3.1). The proportion of working-age people participating in a pension plan

increased the most in Armenia, Georgia, the Slovak Republic and Uruguay, where participation is either mandatory or encouraged through automatic enrolment. The increase in participation rates is more limited in countries where asset-backed pension plans are already widely rolled out, such as Sweden, although Sweden saw an expansion of collective bargained pensions. By contrast, among OECD countries, participation rates declined in Czechia, Estonia (second pillar), Luxembourg and Mexico, and among other jurisdictions, in Egypt, Hong Kong (China) (ORSO schemes),[8] and the Maldives (slight decline), for example. The reasons for the decline differ across jurisdictions. For example, in Luxembourg, the decline in the number of members of pension funds results from the transfer of members of two occupational pension funds (IORPs) in liquidation to insurance vehicles. In Mexico, the number of individual accounts managed by pension fund administrators (AFORES) declined in 2024 because of the transfer of over 2 million accounts to the newly created Welfare Pension Fund to supplement members' pensions,[9] and because of the exclusion of zero-balance accounts from the total of accounts.[10] In Hong Kong (China), the fall in participation in ORSO schemes can be attributable to the structural changes under which more employers have chosen to offer Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) schemes. In a few cases, the number of members increased at a slower pace than the working-age population (e.g. Colombia). Despite widespread growth in membership, participation remains low in some jurisdictions, such as in Albania, or some types of plans, despite greater public awareness about asset-backed pensions.

Table 3.1. Participation rates in asset-backed pension plans in 2014, 2023 and 2024

As a percentage of the working-age population

Mandatory / Quasi-mandatory

	2014	2023	2024
Armenia	6.9	40.7	44.4
Bulgaria	72.8	98.0	99.9
Chile	79.2	86.6	87.6
Colombia	39.5	52.0	51.9
Costa Rica	75.4	88.4	91.2
Dominican Republic	52.3	64.3	65.8
Estonia	77.2	67.3	66.7
Georgia	..	55.3	60.1
Iceland	86.6	83.3	81.2
Latvia	96.5	100.0	100.0
Malawi	2.2	5.0	5.3
Maldives	38.0	46.0	45.7
Mexico	59.6	84.9	77.8
North Macedonia	28.3	49.6	52.3
Norway	54.6	72.4	73.8
Peru	29.7	41.2	42.9
Philippines	..	8.0	9.2
Romania	54.3	66.4	67.6
Sweden	92.2	98.4	99.4
Uruguay	61.8	71.6	75.2

Auto-enrolment

	2014	2023	2024
Lithuania	66.2	75.8	76.0
New Zealand	68.0	85.4	86.0
Poland	..	16.7	18.8
Slovak Republic	36.1	50.6	55.3
Türkiye	6.2	12.8	13.3
United Kingdom	38.0	51.0	52.0

Voluntary occupational

	2014	2023	2024
Albania	0.3	1.2	1.4
Austria	13.4	15.6	16.0
Bulgaria	0.1	0.2	0.2
China (People's Republic of)	2.3	3.2	3.3
Egypt	7.5	7.0	6.4
Hong Kong (China)	7.2	6.0	5.9
Ireland	..	61.2	60.3
Italy	7.6	13.3	13.9
Japan	45.3	52.1	54.2
Latvia	0.9	0.9	1.0
Luxembourg	6.2	4.4	4.1
Malta	..	0.3	0.3
Morocco	..	..	3.1
North Macedonia	1.1	1.3	1.4
Portugal	3.6	5.3	5.6
Suriname	2.1	1.8	1.9
Zambia	1.1	1.1	1.2

Voluntary personal

	2014	2023	2024
Albania	0.1	0.9	1.1
Austria	28.0	14.1	13.2
Brazil	10.0	12.2	12.2
Bulgaria	12.7	15.7	15.6
Costa Rica	4.5	5.5	5.8
Czechia	..	52.3	52.2
Georgia	..	0.6	0.6
Hungary	18.7	18.4	18.4
Iceland	45.5	49.5	50.2
Ireland	..	20.4	21.4
Italy	9.9	15.5	16.0
Japan	13.3	17.9	18.1
Latvia	15.0	27.4	29.7
Lithuania	2.7	6.3	8.8
Malta	..	11.5	14.4
North Macedonia	0.5	1.3	1.5
Norway	27.5	24.1	23.9
Pakistan	0.0	0.1	0.1
Poland	66.1	62.5	61.7
Romania	3.4	5.8	6.8
Slovak Republic	19.0	27.0	29.2
Türkiye	..	13.7	15.0
United Kingdom	5.0	6.0	6.0

Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

StatLink https://stat.link/bls43x

Positive labour market developments supported the increase in membership as well as contributions to pension plans. Employment rates continued to improve in most OECD countries in 2024 (OECD, 2025[18]). People may access certain plans only through work. Higher employment rates therefore support the number of members having access to and participating in workplace pension plans, as was the case for instance in 2024 in Australia. By contrast, declining employment rates can negatively affect participation in pension plans. While the unemployment rate globally is historically low, there are large regional and country variations, with high unemployment rates in some countries (e.g. in South Africa) (ILO, 2025[19]), which could be a barrier to participation in workplace pension plans. Informality may also be a barrier to increased participation of the population in a pension plan in some countries (e.g. Zambia).

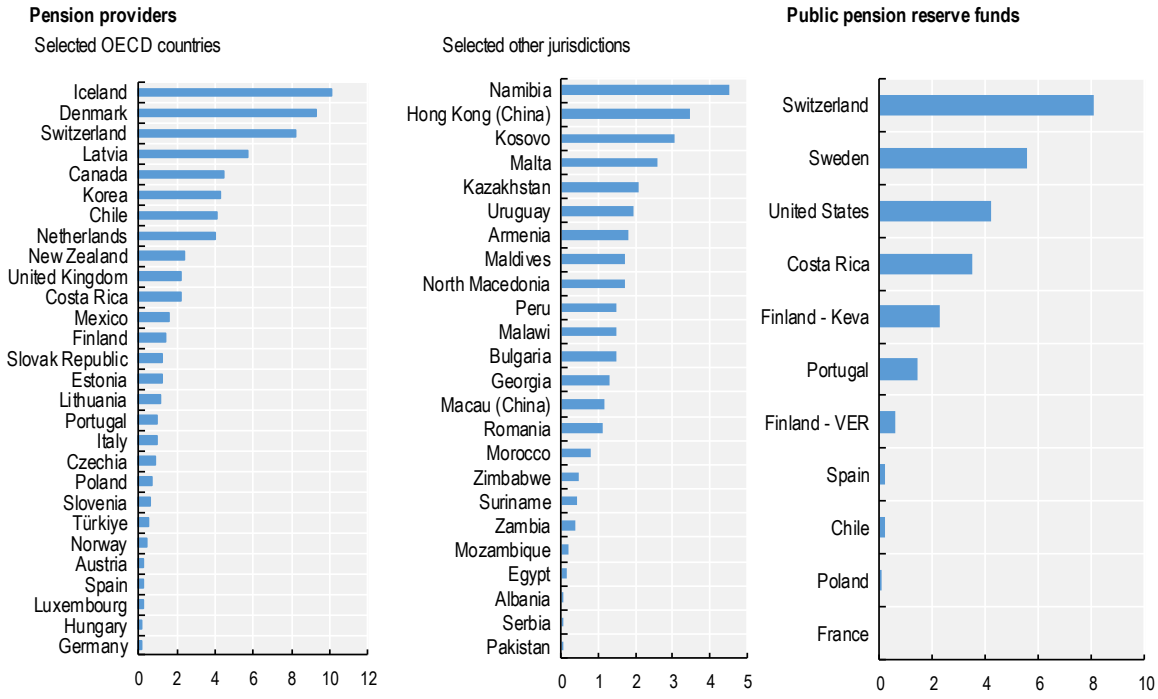
Increases in wages may have also contributed to the overall increase in contributions to asset-backed pension plans. Contributions to occupational pension plans may be levied on salary. Real wages are growing in nearly all OECD countries (OECD, 2025[18]). In Sweden, wage growth supported the growth of contributions to pension plans. In Australia, both labour growth and nominal wage growth boosted employer contributions. In Bulgaria, the average wage increased by 14%, leading to a larger volume of contributions to pension funds. Higher take-home pay may also give people more opportunity to save, including for retirement in voluntary plans.

Pension policies can also affect participation or contributions to pension plans. Some countries have raised their contribution rates in 2024 (e.g. Australia, Mexico, Romania). In Australia, the contribution rate of employers to superannuation increased by 0.5 percentage point to 11.5%, as a part of the rise to 12% by July 2025. The contribution rates to the second pension pillar in Romania increased by 1 percentage point to 4.5% in 2024. In Mexico, mandatory contributions to individual accounts have been gradually increasing from 6.5% of salary in 2021 to reach 15% by 2030. In Estonia, people could apply in 2024 to increase their contribution rate to the second pension pillar from 2% to either 4% or 6%, but this change is effective from January 2025. Some other policy measures include authorisations for parents to set up or contribute to a pension plan for their children (e.g. NPS Vatsalya in India). Kazakhstan also introduced mandatory enrolment for children.[11] By contrast, the Slovak Republic reduced the contribution rate to the second pension pillar in 2024, which probably explains the decline in contributions that year.

The level of contributions to pension plans varies widely across jurisdictions. Figure 3.3 shows that Iceland has the largest amount of contributions paid to asset-backed pension plans relative to the size of its economy (10.1%). By contrast, contributions represent less than 0.1% of GDP in voluntary pension funds in Pakistan. These differences across countries are due to the differences in participation rates and contribution rates.

Figure 3.3. Contributions paid to asset-backed pension plans, 2024

As a percentage of GDP



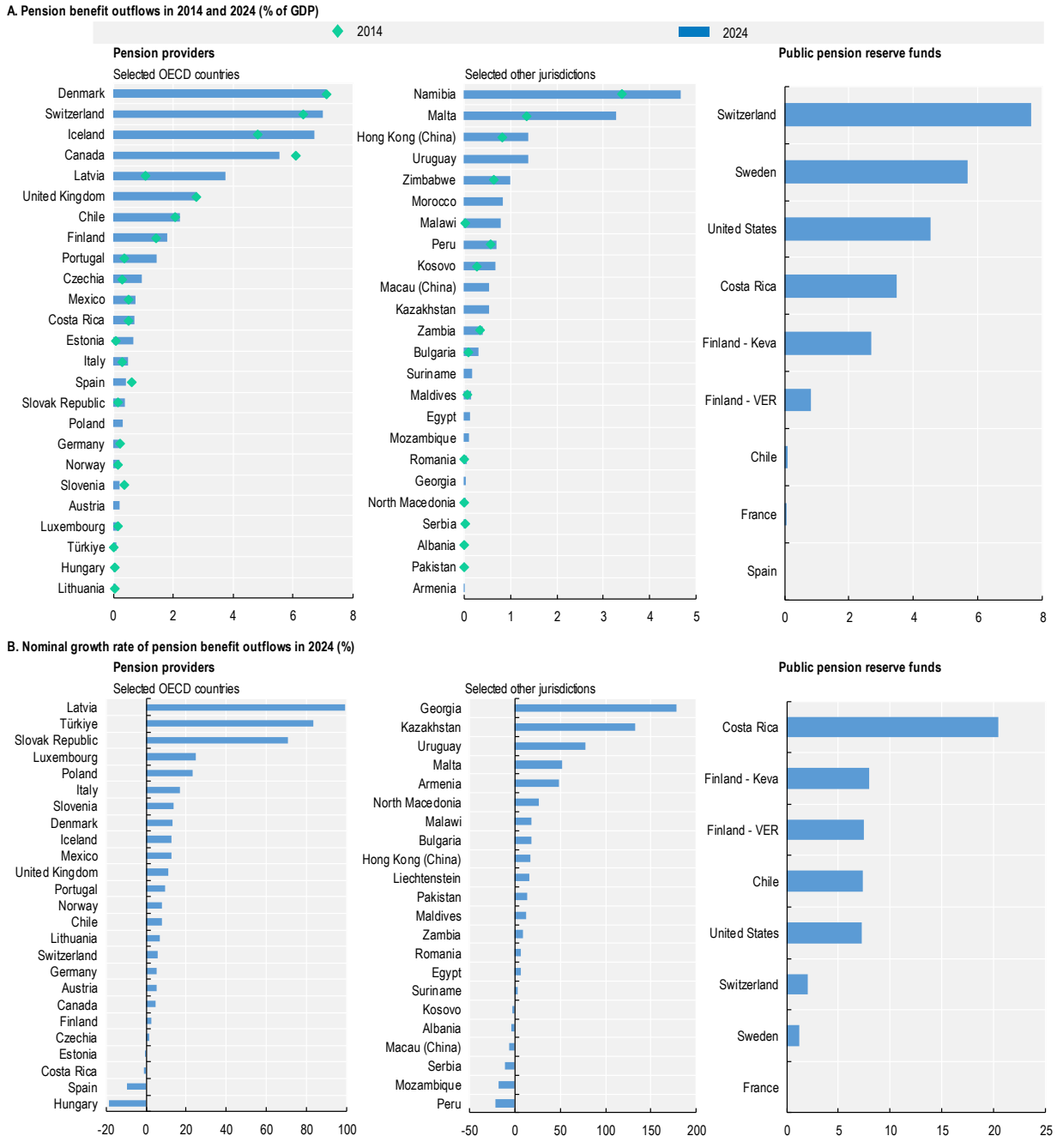
Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

StatLink https://stat.link/ogavcx

3.3 Benefit payments also grew in 2024

Pension benefits also continued to grow in most jurisdictions in 2024. Payments have been rising for years, showing that asset-backed pension systems support benefit payments at old-age (either paying larger amounts and/or for a larger number of people). These payments represented a higher proportion of GDP at end-2024 than at end-2014, with some of the largest increases recorded in Latvia, Iceland, Portugal, and Switzerland, among OECD countries (Figure 3.4, Panel A). In Canada, payments increased between 2014 and 2024 but not as fast as GDP, probably as the amount paid by asset-backed pension plans was already relatively high in 2014. In a number of countries, payments remain relatively small as a percentage of GDP, such as Lithuania and Türkiye. The growth rate of payments was especially large in 2024 in Latvia, the Slovak Republic and Türkiye, among OECD countries, and Georgia and Kazakhstan among other jurisdictions (Figure 3.4, Panel B). Systems where payments have started recently may show higher growth rates of benefits (e.g. Georgia, Türkiye) given the lower volume and starting base, than countries where payments were already larger. Payments decreased in 2024 in a few countries, dropping by around 10% or more in Mozambique, Serbia, Spain and Peru.

Figure 3.4. Benefit payments



Note: For more details, please see the methodological notes in Annex B.
Source: OECD Global Pension Statistics and other sources.

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The increase in benefit payments results from more people being entitled to benefit payments from asset-backed pension plans. As the number of people accumulating savings increases, the number of people entitled to benefit payments is expected to rise as well with a time lag. Many jurisdictions note an increase in the number of people receiving benefits from their plans. The number of beneficiaries increased by 4.3% in Australia, 4.8% in Austria, 2.6% in Germany, and at higher rates in Chile (9.9%), Colombia (11.7%) and

Costa Rica (39.3%). Switzerland also noted an increase in the number of beneficiaries. The number of people claiming benefits from asset-backed pension plans can change depending on the evolution of conditions to get benefits, including in the pay-as-you-go system as experienced in the Slovak Republic in 2024. The Slovak Republic increased public old-age pensions by 14.5% on 1 January 2024 and further by 5.22% from 1 July 2024, which led to a surge in the number of early retirement applications to benefit from this indexation. The number of beneficiaries is still low in some jurisdictions (e.g. 616 for the second pillar in North Macedonia) and will likely further increase as people currently in the accumulation phase reach retirement and use their pots.

The increase in benefit payments also reflects larger average payments per entitled individual. Costa Rica noted a higher average pension, attributing it to the maturing of the pension system as people may retire with larger pension pots.[12] Higher inflation in recent years may have also played a role depending on the extent to which benefits may be indexed to inflation. The Netherlands reported that some pension funds granted some benefit indexation to their members, although the overall indexation was reportedly lower than in 2023.

Most payments from asset-backed pension plans are one-off payments in many jurisdictions, limiting the extent to which members get protection against longevity risk from their asset-backed pension plans at retirement. People may have the choice between different pay-out options depending on the country (e.g. annuity, programmed withdrawal, lump sum, a combination). The options available may be based on certain criteria, such as age, number of contributing years, or size of the pension pot. For example, Austria set a threshold for lump sum payments by pension companies, which is reviewed every year.[13] In many countries, a lump sum is the main form of benefit payments (e.g. Belgium, Czechia, Italy). Low balances may account for this type of payouts in some cases, when there may be little incentives for people to take an annuity or the industry to offer this type of product, as in Czechia (OECD, 2020[20]). Switzerland reported that the proportion of people choosing a lump sum instead of an annuity is increasing. The provision of longevity risk protection by asset-backed pension plans may be limited unless individuals purchase an annuity on their own.

Early withdrawals and transfers of money out of a plan represent another type of outflow from pension plans, which can slow down asset accumulation. Early withdrawals and transfers represent an outflow, or leakage, for the asset-backed pension system as a whole, unless the amount withdrawn or transferred is put back into another pension arrangement. Individuals directly receive money from pension providers when they withdraw their assets before retirement, and this money is unlikely to return to the asset-backed pension system. Most countries allowing early access to savings usually set conditions. Transfers may happen when individuals change fund, change job and roll over the assets, or when funds wind up - on their initiative or urged by national authorities - or purchase buy-out contracts. There is a leakage if assets are paid to individuals and do not return to the system before retirement.

In Latvia, many people withdrew their savings form the third pillar (private pension funds) in 2024 in order to avoid higher personal income tax on capital gains that increased from 20% to 25.5% on 1 January 2025.

Some countries changed conditions to access savings in 2024. Hungary allowed people to access savings in individual accounts for housing purposes from 2025. Türkiye also issued a regulation on partial withdrawals in the individual pension system in September 2023, effective from 1 July 2024, allowing members to withdraw up to 50% of their savings without terminating their contracts in cases of marriage, home purchase, education, and natural disasters. Peru allowed a seventh wave of early withdrawals in 2024. The seven waves of withdrawals led to an overall out flow of PEN 115.2 billion between 2020 and 2024 to more than 7 million members.

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Annex A. Statistical annex

Table A A.1. Additional statistical tables

StatLink https://stat.link/s2c3zk

Table A A.2. Overview of asset-backed pension systems

StatLink https://stat.link/mghry9

Annex B. Methodological notes

Pension authorities and other bodies provided the primary source material for this report, as part of the OECD/IOPS/ World Bank Global Pension Statistics (GPS) exercise. Data come from official administrative sources and are revised on an ongoing basis so as to better reflect the most recent figures for every past year. Some divergences may exist between national reporting standards and the compilation method of certain data for the GPS exercise. For this reason, data providers are regularly requested to provide methodological information relevant for developing a thorough understanding of their submission under the GPS framework. The general methodological notes below provide some explanations in this respect.

General notes

- Conventional signs: ".." means not available. "|" means methodological break in series.
- This report is mainly based on the answers of pension authorities and other bodies to an annual data request. Some statistics for some jurisdictions come from publicly available reports, databases or websites of other national or international organisations: Japan (Bank of Japan) and Switzerland (Federal Social Insurance Office's publication *Statistique des assurances sociales suisses* for personal plans) among OECD countries; and Argentina (International Association of Pension Fund Supervisors (AIOS)), Bolivia (AIOS), China (Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS)), Croatia (website of the Croatian Financial Services Supervisory Agency (HANFA) before 2014), the Dominican Republic (AIOS before 2014), El Salvador (AIOS), India (annual reports of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation for Employees' Provident Fund, Employees' Pension Scheme and Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme), Panama (AIOS) and Uruguay (AIOS before 2016) among non-OECD jurisdictions.
- Data on stock variables refer to the end of the year while data on flow variables are provided over the whole year in the report. The reference period is the calendar year, except for: Australia where the reference period is the financial year ending in June; India where the reference period ends in March of the following year for Employees' Provident Fund, Employees' Pension Scheme and Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme; and New Zealand (until 2014). Data for New Zealand up to 2013 are based on a 31 March balance date for most of the schemes.
- Slovenia adopted the euro in 2007, the Slovak Republic in 2009, Estonia in 2011, Latvia in 2014, Lithuania in 2015 and Croatia in 2023. The whole time series (in millions of national currency) are expressed in millions of euros for these countries (even before their adoption of the euro).
- This report uses four main additional reference series: exchange rates to convert values in US dollars, GDP, the variation of the consumer price index (CPI) and population:
  - This report uses end-of-period exchange rates for all variables valued at the end of the year, and period-average rates for variables representing a flow over the year. These rates mainly come from the OECD Annual Purchasing Power Parities and Exchange Rates and the IMF Exchange rates databases.
  - GDP values come from the OECD Annual and Quarterly National Accounts databases for OECD countries; and from the IMF World Economic Outlook released in April 2025 for all the other jurisdictions except Gibraltar (Abstract of Statistics 2015 of the Statistics Office of

Gibraltar), Isle of Man (the National Income webpage of the Official Isle of Man Government website) and Liechtenstein (UN National Accounts Main Aggregates Database).

- Consumer price indices are from the OECD Key short-term economic indicators database or from the IMF Consumer Price Index database except for Gibraltar (Abstract of Statistics 2015 of the Statistics Office of Gibraltar), Macau (China) in 2024 (IMF World Economic Outlook of April 2025), Papua New Guinea (World Bank Consumer Price Index database) and Zimbabwe (IMF World Economic Outlook of April 2025).
- Data on population are from the OECD Working-age Population database and World Bank World Development Indicators.

Specific notes

Figure 1.1:

The chart shows the amount of assets at the end of each year, from end-2001 to end-2024, based on annual data. The total amount of assets at the end of a given year is calculated based on all the OECD countries and funds for which a value is available. The number of countries and funds that the totals include may therefore vary over the years. Totals are expressed in current prices.

Figure 1.2:

The assets in Argentina's Sustainability Guarantee Fund (FGS) grew by 91.9% in 2024 (not shown for readability purposes).

Figure 1.4:

Data refer to the end of 2023 for pension providers in Ghana, Mauritius, Panama and South Africa; and for public pension reserve funds in Germany, Italy, the People's Republic of China (hereafter 'China'), Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. Data refer to the end of 2024 in all the other cases. Reserve funds in Italy are private entities with legal personality having the primary task of running mandatory, first-pillar pension schemes, each for a certain category of self-employed workers. Despite their private status, these funds are included among public pension reserve funds in this Figure as they share some similarities with them.

Figure 1.5:

The charts show the nominal growth rates of assets (expressed in USD) (Panel A) and the share of total assets (Panel B) in occupational defined benefit (DB), occupational defined contribution (DC) and personal plans respectively, aggregated over 44 OECD and other jurisdictions: among OECD countries, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Switzerland, the United States; among other jurisdictions, Albania, Armenia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Guyana, Hong Kong (China), Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Nigeria, Peru, Romania and Uruguay.

Figure 1.6:

Data for the Netherlands cover only occupational pension funds.

Table 1.1:

The funding ratio is calculated as the ratio of total investment and net technical provisions for DB plans managed by pension funds using values reported by national authorities in the OECD questionnaire. All liabilities of DB plans (instead of just technical provisions) are considered for Ireland and the United States. Data for Finland refer to DB plans in pension funds only. Data for Luxembourg refer to DB traditional plans

under the supervision of the financial regulatory authority. Data for the Netherlands and Switzerland include all types of pension funds. Data for the United Kingdom come from the Purple Book published by the Pension Protection Fund and show the ratio of assets and liabilities valued on an s179 basis (instead of net technical provisions). Liabilities for Hong Kong (China) refer to the amount of aggregated past service liability in DB ORSO schemes. DB ORSO schemes must conduct an actuarial review once every three years and submit the actuarial certificates to the Registrar of ORSO schemes. If a scheme is found to be insolvent, actuarial reviews must be conducted annually. Following the actuarial review, the Registrar of ORSO schemes will require that the relevant scheme's assets be sufficient to meet its aggregate vested liability within three years from the date of the review. Data for Indonesia cover DB employer pension funds only.

Figure 1.7:

Data for Costa Rica refer to the mandatory supplementary pension scheme (ROP) only. Data for Latvia refer to the managers of state pension plans only. Data for Lithuania refer to the second pension pillar only. Data for Mexico refer to AFORES only. Data for Norway refer to pension funds only. Data for Poland refer to open pension funds only. Data for Spain refer to pension fund management companies only. Data for Switzerland refer to pension funds only. Data for Türkiye refer to personal plans only.

Figure 1.8:

Data for Costa Rica refer to the managers of the mandatory supplementary pension scheme (ROP) only. Data for Latvia refer to the managers of state pension plans only. Data for Lithuania refer to the second pension pillar only. Data for Mexico refer to AFORES only. Data for Norway refer to pension funds only. Data for Poland refer to open pension funds only. Data for Spain refer to pension fund management companies only. Data for Switzerland refer to pension funds only. Data for Türkiye refer to personal plans only.

Figure 2.1:

The charts are based on the annual investment rates of return reported in the statistical annex of the report. Please refer to the notes of this statistical annex for more country or fund-specific notes. Data on public pension reserve funds (PPRF) cover: the Future Fund for Australia, the State Fund for Guaranteeing the Stability of the State Pension System (SFGSSPS) for Bulgaria, Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Reserve Fund and the Reserve of the Quebec Pension Plan (QPP) for Canada, the Pension Reserve Fund for Chile, the Social Security Fund for Costa Rica, Keva's pension liability fund and the State Pension Fund (VER) for Finland, the Fonds de Réserves pour les Retraites (FRR) for France, the Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF) for Japan, the National Pension Fund for Korea, the Fonds de Compensation for Luxembourg, the Labour Fund for Mexico, the New Zealand Superannuation Fund for New Zealand, the Government Pension Fund Norway (GPFN) for Norway, the Demographic Reserve Fund for Poland, the Social Security Financial Stabilisation Fund (FEFSS) for Portugal, the Social Security Reserve Fund for Spain, AP1-AP4 and AP6 for Sweden, the AHV Central Compensation Fund for Switzerland, the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund for the United States. The annual returns are calculated over the period December 2023-December 2024 except for pension providers in Australia (June 2023-June 2024); and Canada's CPP (March 2024-March 2025), Japan's GPIF (March 2024-March 2025), New Zealand Superannuation Fund (June 2023-June 2024).

Figure 2.2:

Panel B: The annual returns for Zimbabwe are not shown for readability purposes: -78.9% in 2024, -66.2% on average over the last 5 years, -48.7% over the last 10 years and -34.7% over the last 15 years. Panel C: Data on public pension reserve funds cover: the Future Fund for Australia, Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Reserve Fund and the Reserve of the Quebec Pension Plan for Canada, the Pension Reserve Fund for Chile, Keva's pension liability fund and the State Pension Fund (VER) for Finland, Fonds de Réserves pour les Retraites (FRR) for France, the Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF) for Japan, the National

Pension Fund for Japan, the Fonds de Compensation (FDC) for Luxembourg, New Zealand Superannuation Fund for New Zealand, the Government Pension Fund Norway (GPFN) for Norway, the Demographic Reserve Fund for Poland, the Social Security Reserve Fund for Spain, AP1-AP4 and AP6 for Sweden, the AHV Central Compensation Fund for Switzerland and the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund for the United States.

Figure 2.3:

The "Other" category includes loans, land and buildings, unallocated insurance contracts, hedge funds, private equity funds, structured products, other mutual funds (i.e. not invested in equities, bills and bonds or cash and deposits) and other investments. Negative values (due to derivatives) have been excluded from the calculations of the allocation of pension assets. The Global Pension Statistics exercise gathers information on investments of pension plan assets in collective investment schemes (CIS) and the look-through of these investments in equities, bills and bonds, cash and deposits, and other. Data on asset allocation in this Figure include both direct investments in equities, bills and bonds, and cash and deposits, and indirect investments through CIS when the look-through of CIS investments is available. In such case, the Figure shows the overall exposure of pension plan assets in the selected asset classes. When the look-through is not available, the Figure only shows the direct investments of pension plan assets in equities, bills and bonds, cash and deposits and other assets, and investments in collective investment schemes are shown in a separate category. Data on public pension reserve funds cover: the Future Fund for Australia, Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Reserve Fund for Canada, the Pension Reserve Fund for Chile, the Social Security Fund for Costa Rica, Keva VER and other funds combined for Finland, AGIRC-ARRCO and Fonds de Réserves pour les Retraites (FRR) for France, the Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF) for Japan, the National Pension Fund for Korea, the Fonds de Compensation (FDC) for Luxembourg, the Labour Fund for Mexico, New Zealand Superannuation Fund for New Zealand, the Demographic Reserve Fund for Poland, the Social Security Financial Stabilisation Fund (FEFSS) for Portugal, the Social Security Reserve Fund for Spain, AP1-AP4 and AP6 for Sweden, AHV Central Compensation Fund for Switzerland and the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund for the United States.

Figure 2.5:

There was no change in the asset allocation of the United States' Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund. There was a reduction of cash and deposits held by Spain's Social Security Reserve Fund and an increase in bond holdings.

Figure 2.6:

The average allocations of pension plan assets have been calculated over 14 jurisdictions: Austria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia (from 2003 onwards), Sweden and the United States among OECD countries; and Bulgaria, Hong Kong (China) (from 2002 onwards) and Peru among other jurisdictions. The whole time series of the asset allocation in each of these 14 jurisdictions are available in the statistical annex of this publication. The asset allocation of pension plans in 2019 in Korea is an OECD estimate based on the data available for the year before and after the missing year.

Figure 3.2:

Data on pension providers refer to pension funds only for Belgium and Canada, and to personal plans only for Mexico. Data for Latvia include inflows from switches between plans. Data on public pension reserve funds cover: the Pension Reserve Fund for Chile, the Social Security Fund for Costa Rica, the Keva's pension liability fund and the State Pension Fund (VER) for Finland, the Demographic Reserve Fund for Poland, the Social Security Financial Stabilisation Fund (FEFSS) for Portugal, the Social Security Reserve Fund for Spain, AP1-AP4 and AP6 for Sweden, the AHV Central Compensation Fund for Switzerland and

the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund for the United States. The 10-year annual average growth rate of inflows is not available for public pension reserve funds.

Table 3.1:

Data refer to 2015 instead of 2014 for the United Kingdom (automatic enrolment plans) and Zambia. Data refer to 2016 instead of 2014 for Costa Rica, Egypt, Iceland, Japan, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic, Suriname and Uruguay, Data refer to 2017 instead of 2014 for Romania and Türkiye. Data refer to 2018 instead of 2014 for the Dominican Republic and the United Kingdom (voluntary personal plans). See Table A.13. in Annex A for more country-specific notes.

Figure 3.3:

Data for Latvia include inflows from switches between plans. OECD estimate for pension providers in the United Kingdom based on contributions over the first three quarters of 2024. Data on public pension reserve funds cover: the Pension Reserve Fund for Chile, the Social Security Fund for Costa Rica, Keva's pension liability fund and the State Pension Fund (VER) for Finland, Fonds de Réserves pour les Retraites (FRR) for France, the Demographic Reserve Fund for Poland, the Social Security Financial Stabilisation Fund (FEFSS) for Portugal, the Social Security Reserve Fund for Spain, AP1-AP4 and AP6 for Sweden, AHV Central Compensation Fund for Switzerland, the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund for the United States.

Figure 3.4:

Pension providers: Data for Latvia include outflows from switches between plans. Panel A: Data for Portugal cover closed and open pension funds and personal retirement saving funds (established as pension funds or as collective investment schemes managed by investment companies), and for 2024 only data also cover personal plans offered by life insurance companies. Panel B: Data refer to pension funds only for Canada and Hungary, and to pension funds and other financing vehicles for Portugal.

Data on public pension reserve funds cover: the Pension Reserve Fund for Chile, the Social Security Fund for Costa Rica, Keva's pension liability fund and the State Pension Fund (VER) for Finland, Fonds de Réserves pour les Retraites (FRR) for France, the Social Security Reserve Fund for Spain, AP1-AP4 and AP6 for Sweden, the AHV Central Compensation Fund for Switzerland, the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund for the United States.

Notes

[1] Pension providers are pension funds, pension fund management companies, insurance companies, or other financial institutions. They may provide asset management services for the contributions they receive, as stipulated in a contract, or manage funds pooling all the assets for retirement.

[2] The amount of assets in Singapore covers all the accounts of the Central Provident Fund (CPF), with some earmarked for other purposes than retirement (e.g. the Medisave account).

[3] The pension provider may provide some sort of guarantees (e.g. a minimum investment rate of return).

[4] SMSFs eye bumper year as big super lurches from crisis to crisis - Stockhead

[5] Chile reported a 13.9% nominal return for the riskiest fund in 2024 compared to 4.8% for the least risky, Colombia a 16.6% nominal return for high risk funds compared to 5.5% for programmed retirement funds, Hong Kong (China) a 15.3% return for equity funds compared to 3.7% for MPF conservative funds, and Latvia a 22% return for high-risk investment plans compared to 6% for low-risk plans in the second pension pillar.

[6] MSCI World Index

[7] Other expenditure includes administrative costs for operating the plan for example.

[8] Close to 100% of the total employed population in Hong Kong (China) is covered under the MPF System and/or other retirement protection schemes, among which ORSO schemes are one of the segments.

[9] The Welfare Pension Fund was created in 2024 to ensure that workers reaching 65 receive a supplement when their pension is lower than a certain amount

[10] As of September 2024, accounts meeting the following conditions are no longer counted as accounts managed by AFORES: a) AFORES have stopped operating them; b) all sub-accounts have a zero balance for a minimum of six consecutive two-month period; c) the accounts have not received any contributions since their opening. However, these accounts will be counted again if members start making contributions.

[11] Kazakhstan launched the “National Fund for Children” programme on 1 January 2024. Under this programme, 50% of the annual investment income of the National Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan is allocated to special savings accounts for children until they reach the age of 18. They can use these funds in the future to purchase housing or finance education. The Unified Accumulative Pension Fund (UAPF) is responsible for maintaining records of these savings. If members do not use the allocated funds from the

National Fund within 10 years, the unused amount will be transferred as voluntary pension contributions to their accounts in the UAPF.

[12] Publicaciones del sector - Supen

[13] Disclosure - FMA Österreich

Pension Markets in Focus 2025

This edition of Pension Markets in Focus provides detailed and comparable statistics on asset-backed pension systems around the world, with data up to end-2024. It builds upon preliminary data released in June 2025 and explores developments in 2024, in particular the drivers behind the record level of pension assets accumulated at end-2024.

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