

Finanzielle Praktiken von Erwachsenen in angespannten ökonomischen Situationen



Geldmuseum der Deutschen Bundesbank in Frankfurt, Foto: Klaus Buddeberg

Jahrestagung der Sektion
Erwachsenenbildung der DGfE

Spielräume

Universität Koblenz
15. bis 17. September 2025

Agenda

- 1 Einleitung**
Themenfeld Finanzielle Bildung
- 2 Befunde zu finanzieller Bildung**
Gender, Migration
- 3 Methodisches Vorgehen**
PIAAC → Skill use variablen
- 4 Ergebnisse und Diskussion**
How do adults with low-income care for their budgets?

1

Themenfeld finanzielle Bildung



What do we mean when we talk about basic skills?

- PIAAC (OECD, 2024)
 - Reading Skills, Numeracy Skills,
 - ICT-Skills (PS-TRE, Adaptive Problem Solving)
- LEO 2018 (Germany) (Buddeberg et al., 2020)
 - Reading and writing Skills (assessed)
 - **Financial**, digital, health and political literacy (self-reported)
- **Financial** Literacy (OECD, & INFE., 2020; Klapper, L., et al., 2015).
- European Commission (2018) LifeComp – Media, **Financial**, Environmental, and Health Literacies
(<https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC120911>)

Strategies for Financial Literacy



https://finance.ec.europa.eu/consumer-finance-and-payments/financial-literacy_en



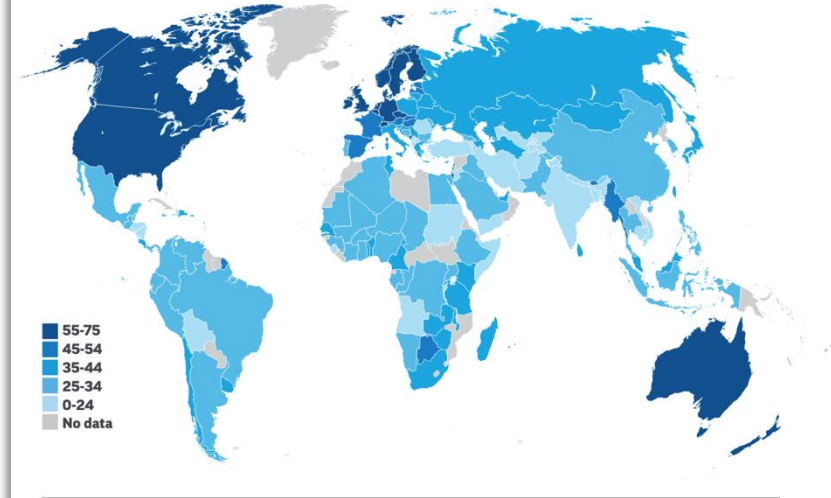
<https://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/Content/DE/Pressemitteilungen/Finanzpolitik/2023/12/2023-12-06-meilensteine-der-initiative-finanzielle-bildung.html>

Critically commented by Höhne (2024) for being too focused on financial education and ignoring wider economic conditions.

2

Prior research: What do we know about financial literacy?

MAP 1: GLOBAL VARIATIONS IN FINANCIAL LITERACY
[% OF ADULTS WHO ARE FINANCIALLY LITERATE]

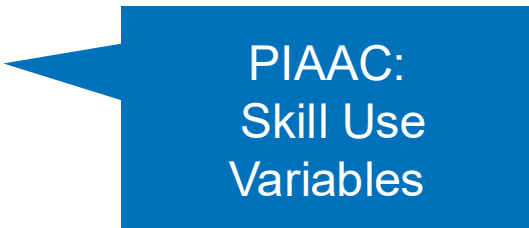


Source: S&P Global FinLit Survey.

Klapper, L., Lusardi, A., & van Oudheusden, P. (2015). *Financial Literacy around the World* (Standard & Poor's Ratings Services Global Financial Literacy Survey). <https://gflec.org/initiatives/sp-global-finlit-survey/>

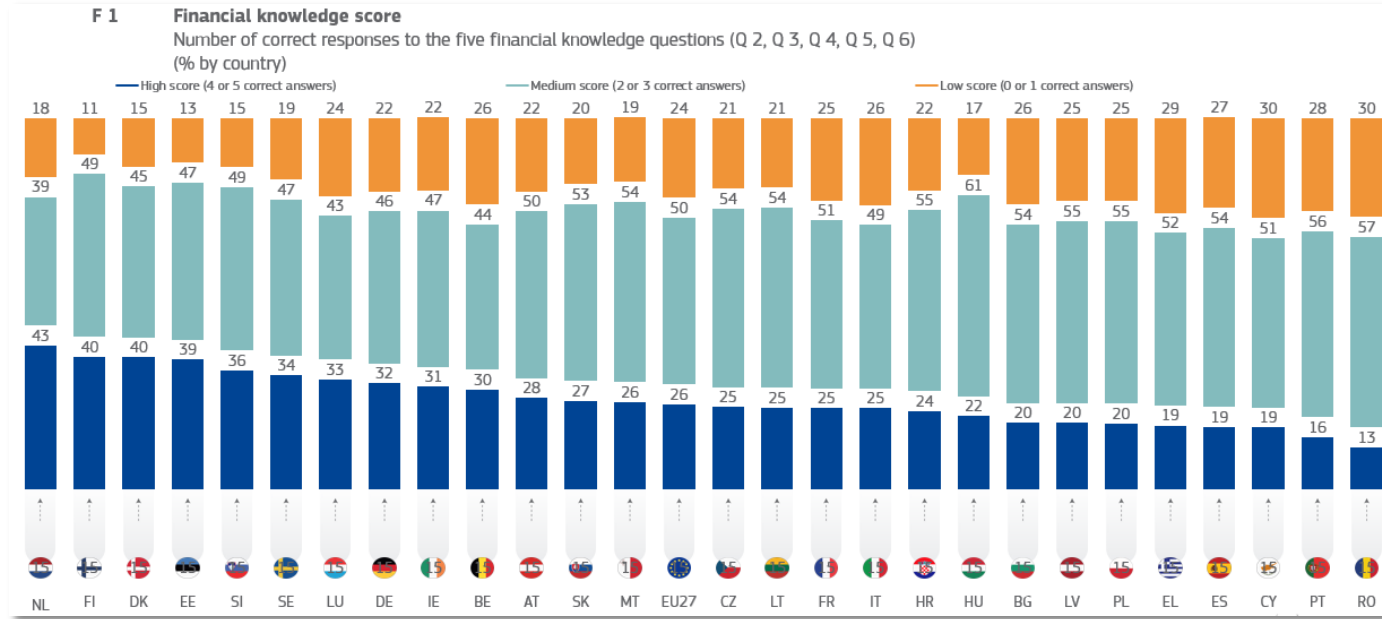
What is financial literacy?

- Much research, few definitions (Beckker, 2020)
- Just skills? “Knowledge and skills needed to make important financial decisions” (European Commission: https://finance.ec.europa.eu/consumer-finance-and-payments/financial-literacy_en)
- Or more dimensions? Understanding and **use** (Huston, 2010)
- Or even three components? (OECD/INFE, 2020)
 - Financial skills,
 - financial attitudes,
 - **financial behavior**



PIAAC:
Skill Use
Variables

Financial knowledge reported by Eurobarometer



“Big Three”

Questions on

- inflation
- compound interest
- investment risk

<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2953>

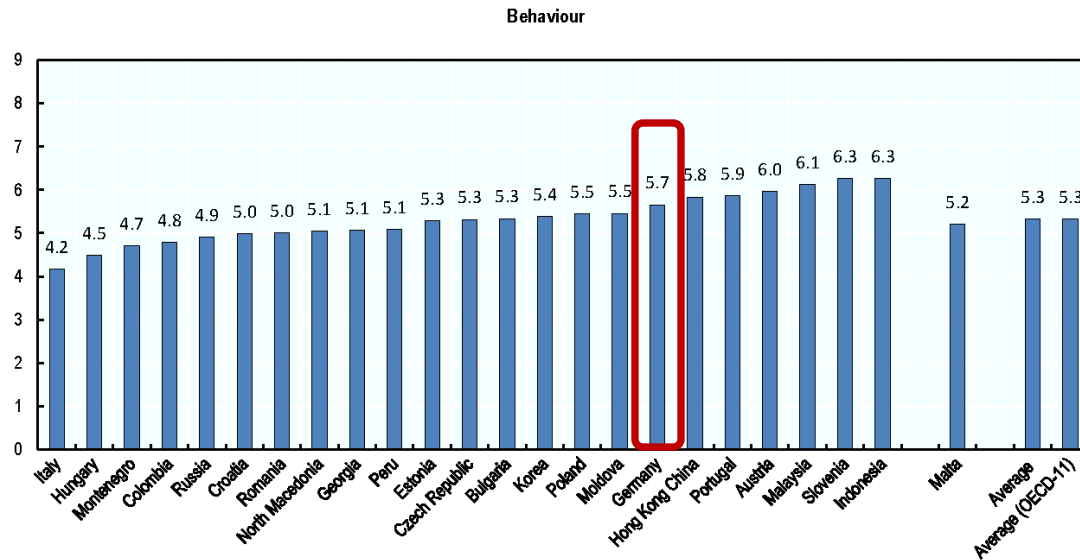
International Survey of Adult Financial Literacy

OECD/INFE 2020 International Survey of Adult Financial Literacy



Figure 6. Financial behaviour

Financial behaviour score calculated from a number of statements related to budgeting, shopping around for products, saving money, carefully controlling expenditure and avoiding indebtedness. Maximum possible score is 9.



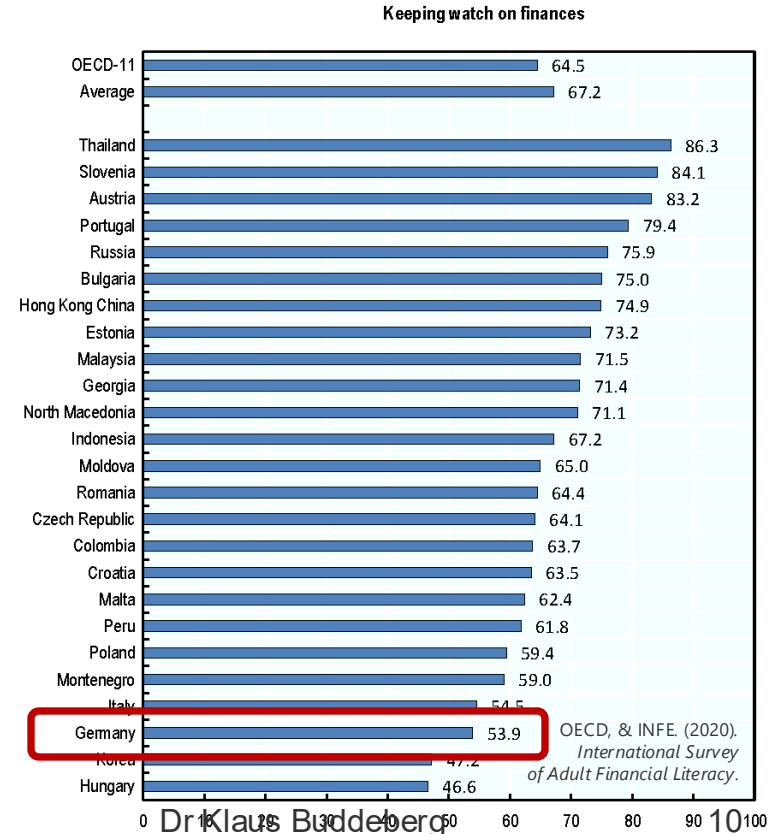
OECD, & INFE. (2020).
International Survey
of Adult Financial Literacy.

International Survey of Adult Financial Literacy

- Germany has a relatively high average of financial literacy but...
- ...many adults do not regularly keep watch over their finances

Figure 13. Keeping watch over finances

Percentage of respondents who suggested they keep a keen watch over their finances.



How do adults with low-income care for their budgets?

- Many adults in Germany do not regularly keep watch over their finances.
 - Can we assume that economically vulnerable groups are even less strict in controlling their budgets?
 - Are they therefore responsible for their situations (blaming the victim)?
 - **Based on PIAAC Cycle 1 we could reject this assumption** (Grotlüschen et al., 2019).



Grotlüschen, A., Buddeberg, K., Redmer, A., Ansen, H., & Dannath, J. (2019). Vulnerable Subgroups and Numeracy Practices: How Poverty, Debt, and Unemployment Relate to Everyday Numeracy Practices. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 69(4), 251–270.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713619841132>

Research Questions

1. Zeitvergleich: Trifft das für Deutschland auch für Cycle 2 zu?
2. Ländervergleich: Trifft das auch auf Österreich und die Schweiz zu?
3. Welches Gewicht haben Gender und Migration?
ODER: welches sind die entscheidenden Faktoren für häufiges Kalkulieren?



3

Methodisches Vorgehen: Sekundäranalyse von PIAAC-Daten



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OECD Skills Studies

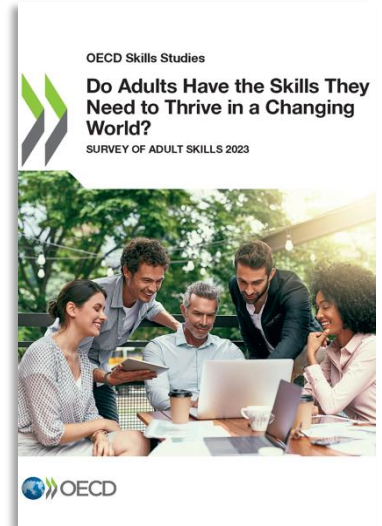
**Do Adults Have the Skills They
Need to Thrive in a Changing
World?**

SURVEY OF ADULT SKILLS 2023



How can the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) inform us about financial literacy?

- PIAAC has no assessment (testing) of financial literacy but reports about numeracy and **financial practices**
- **Why practices?**
 - Literacy as Social Practice, New Literacy Studies
(Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Yasukawa et al., 2018)
 - Financial behaviour as one component of financial literacy
(de Beckker, 2020)
 - Practice Engagement Theory: Practices do not equal skills but are closely related (Reder, 1994, 2017)



Welche Practices liegen im Datensatz vor?

- Tabelle mit Home und Work
- Hier nur Home (weil Employment im Mittelpunkt steht)
- Welche kommen in betracht?
 - Read fin. Statements
 - Calculate
 - information



How can the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) inform us about financial literacy?

- Practices in PIAAC: Reading and writing practices, ICT-practices and numeracy practices, practices of dealing with financial issues
- Data: Public Use Files of participating countries in PIAAC cycle 2, Public Use File Germany (Cycle 1)
- Calculations carried out with R/R-Studio, Package Rrepest
- Bivariate analysis, multivariate analysis planned for ongoing year

How can the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) inform us about financial literacy?

- G2_Q03a: **In everyday life, how often do you usually undertake calculations, such as calculating prices, costs or quantities?**
 - never (1), less than once a month (2), at least once a month (3), at least once a week (4), every day (5)
- Gender
- Migration (born in country)
- Employment status (employed, unemployed, out of the labor force)

4

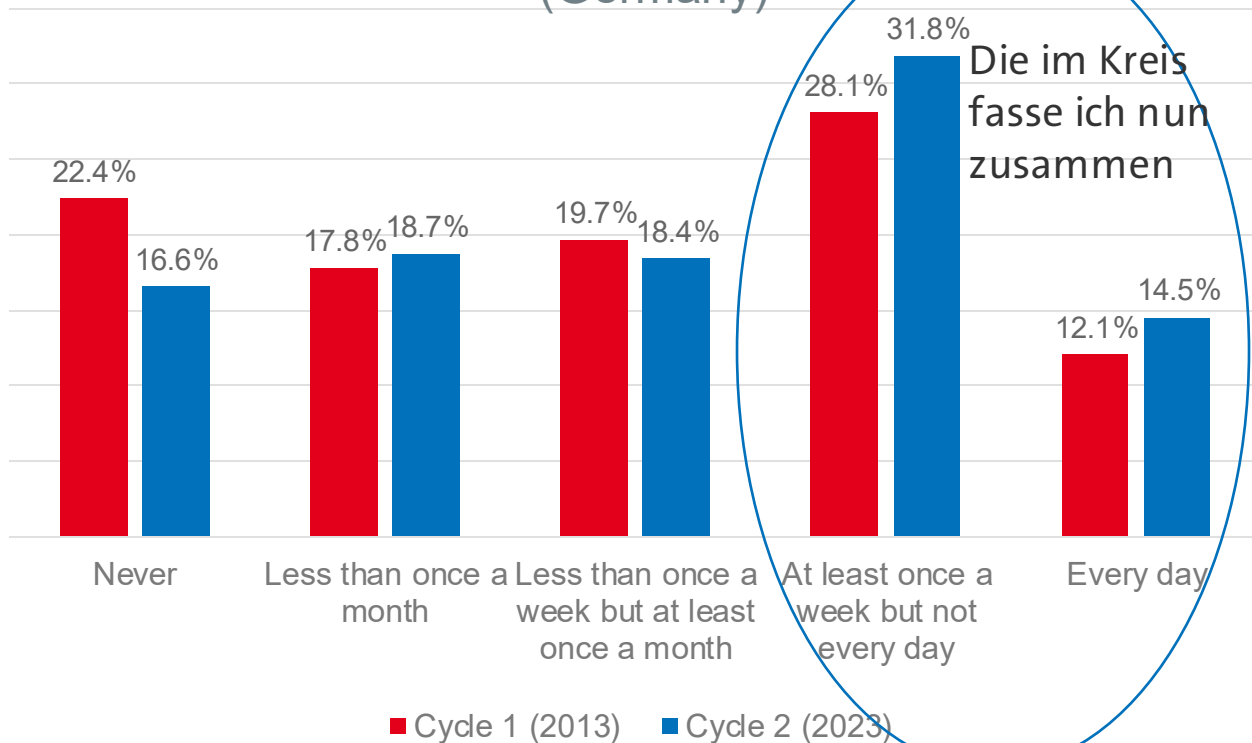
Findings and discussion: How do adults with low-income care for their budgets?



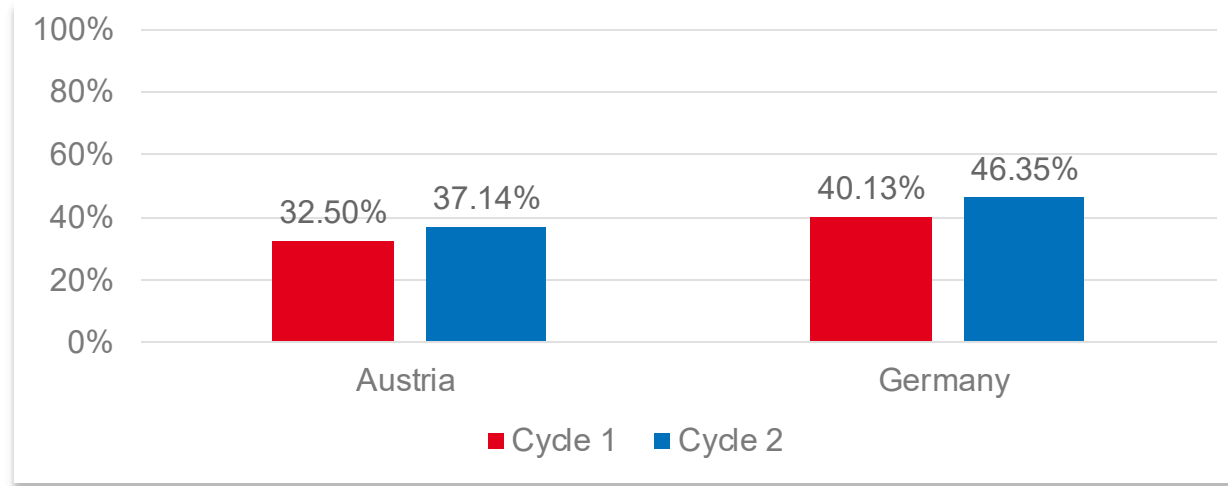
Money Museum of Deutsche Bundesbank in Frankfurt, photos: Klaus Buddeberg

In everyday life,
how often do
you usually
undertake
calculations,
such as
calculating
prices, costs or
quantities?

Change in frequency of calculating costs and
budgets from **PIAAC Cycle 1** to **PIAAC Cycle 2**
(Germany)

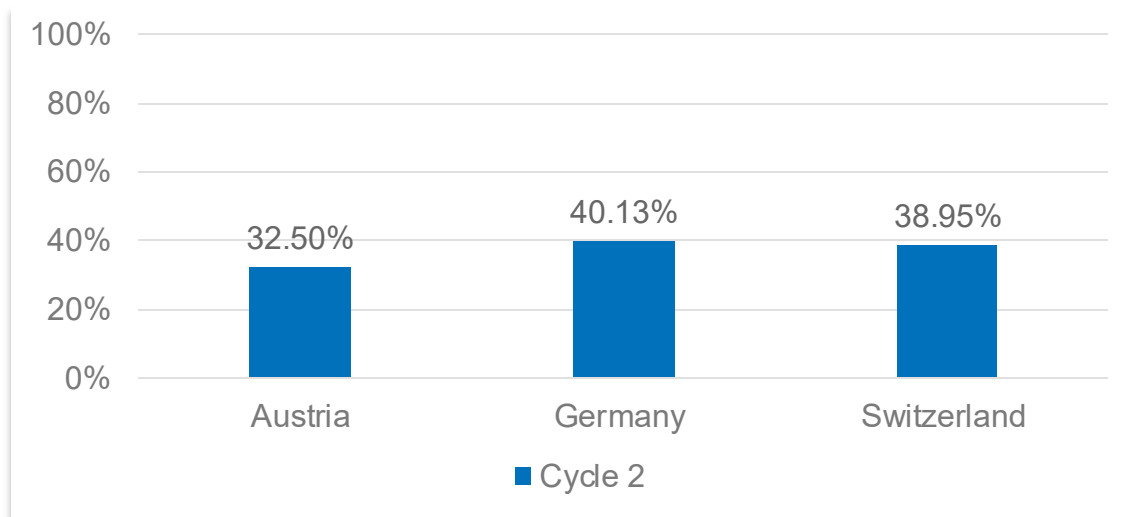


Proportions of adults who undertake calculations about costs and budgets at least once a week or every day in **PIAAC Cycle 1** and **PIAAC Cycle 2**



Own calculations using the Public Use File Germany of PIAAC Cycle 2:
<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/piaac-2nd-cycle-database.html>

Proportions of adults who undertake calculations about costs and budgets at least once a week or every day in **PIAAC Cycle 2**

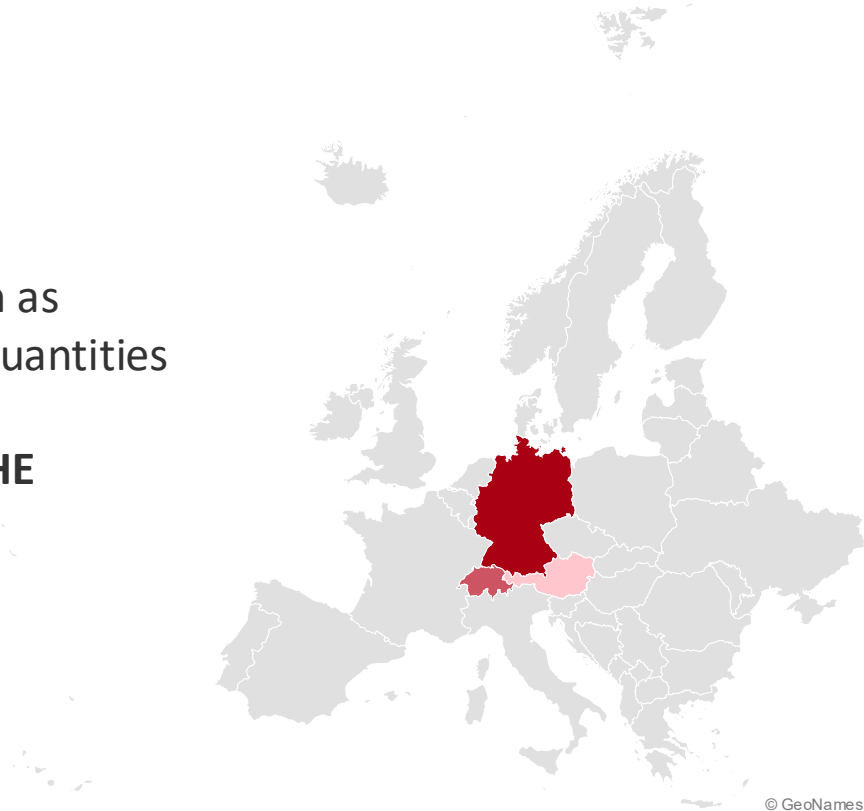


Own calculations using the Public Use File Germany of PIAAC Cycle 2:
<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/piaac-2nd-cycle-database.html>

Regional differences in European countries

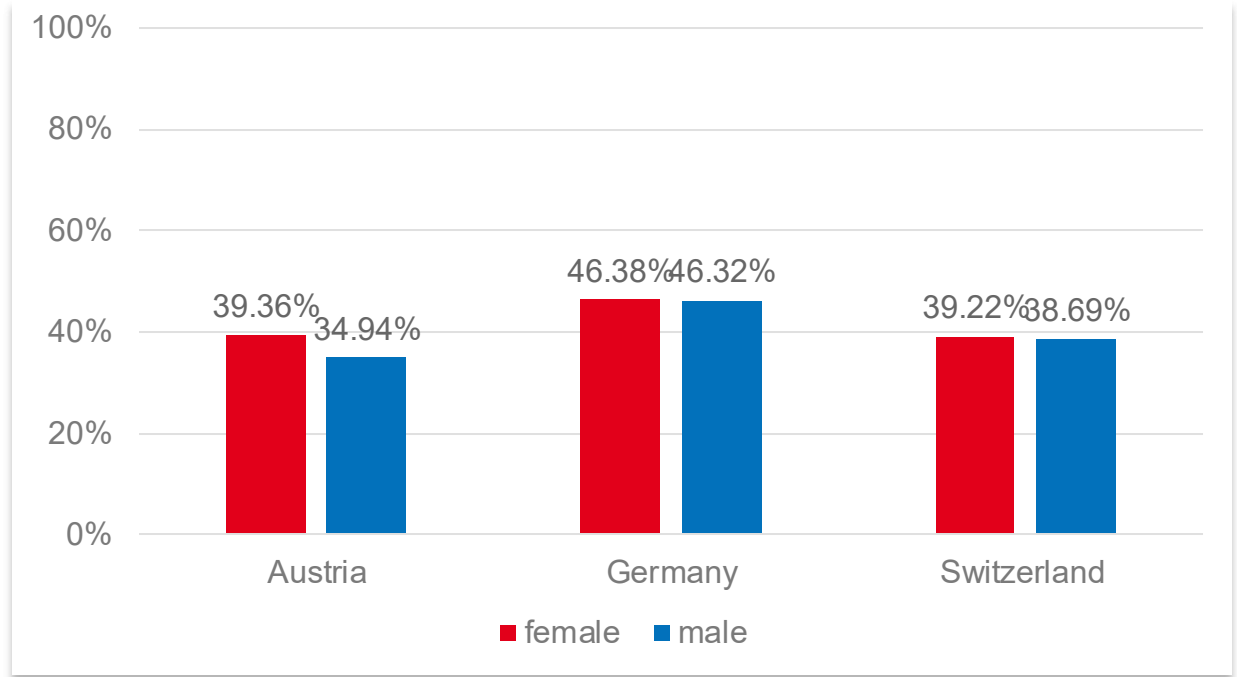
PIAAC Cycle 2:

Proportions of adults who undertake calculations, such as calculating prices, costs or quantities **every day** → **UMSETZEN in MINDESTENS 1x PRO WOCHE**



PIAAC Cycle 2:
Proportions of adults
who undertake
calculations, such as
calculating prices,
costs or quantities
**at least once a week
or every day**

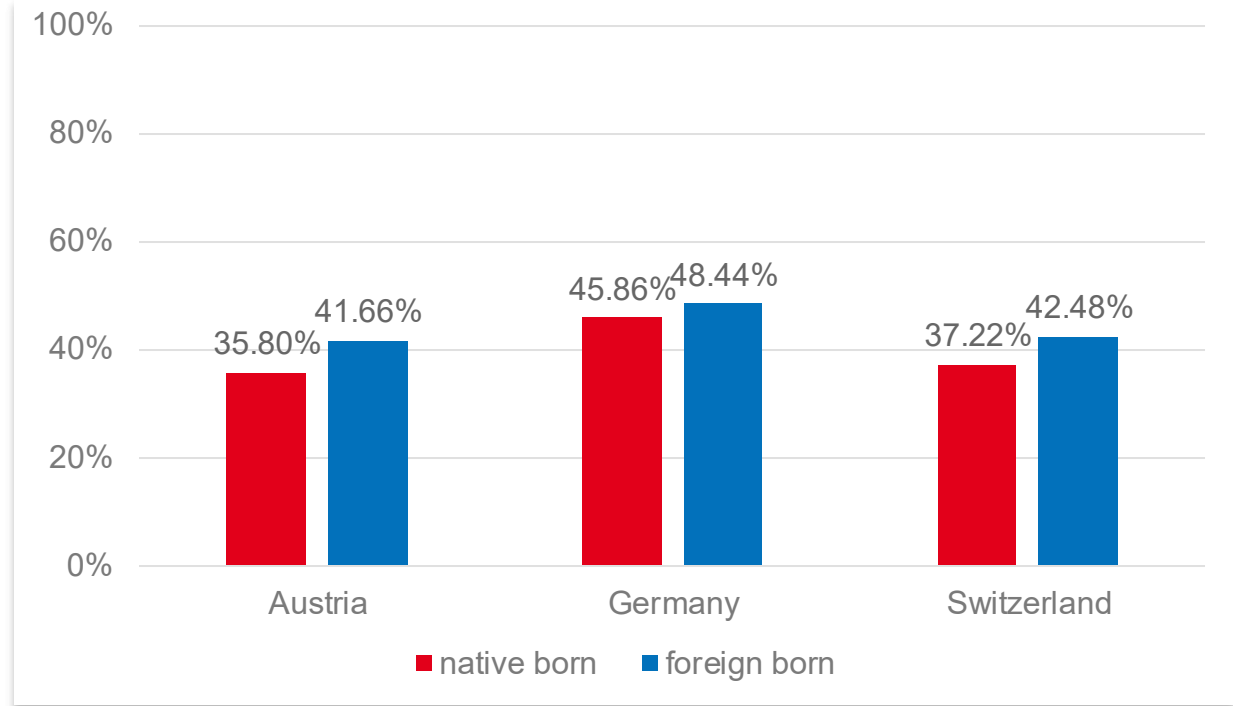
by gender



Own calculations using the Public Use File Germany of PIAAC Cycle 2:
<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/piaac-2nd-cycle-database.html>

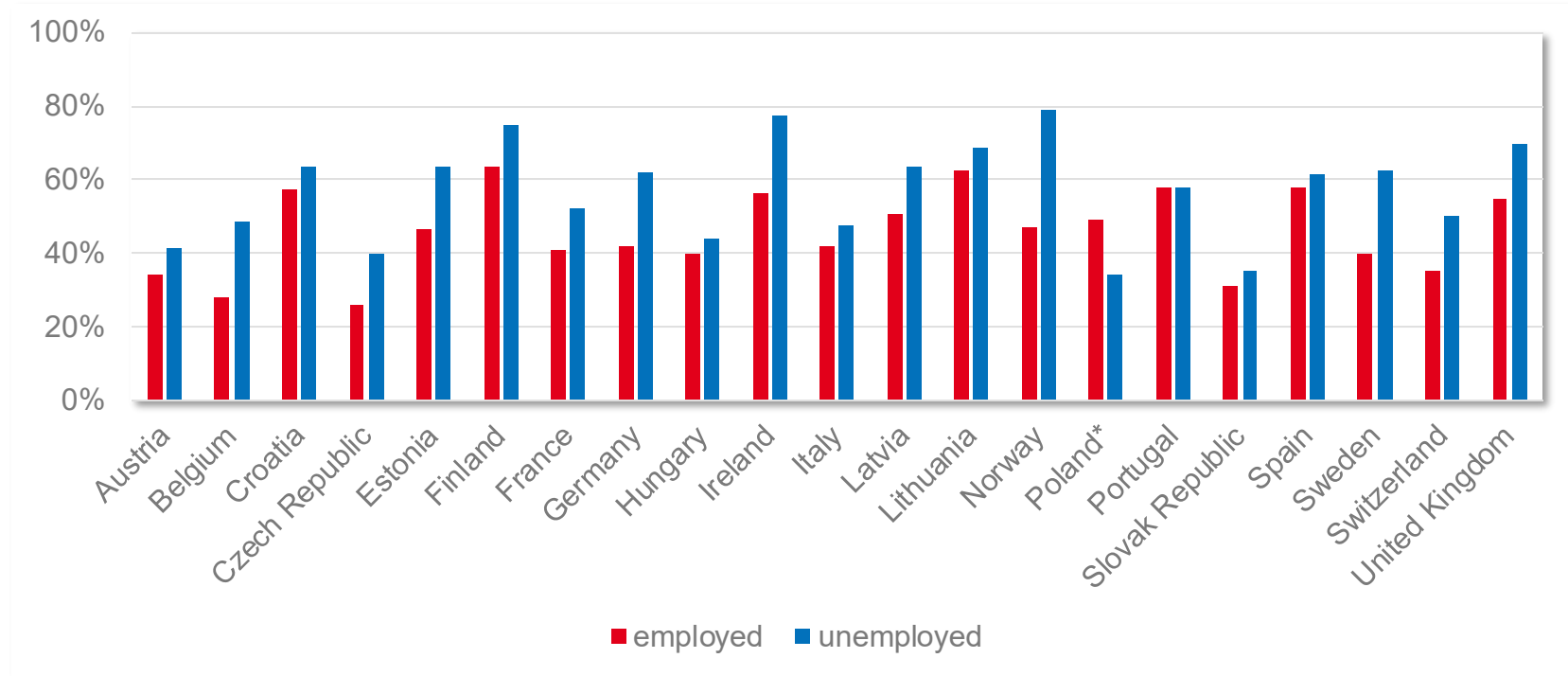
PIAAC Cycle 2:
Proportions of adults
who undertake
calculations, such as
calculating prices,
costs or quantities **at
least once a week or
every day**

by country of birth



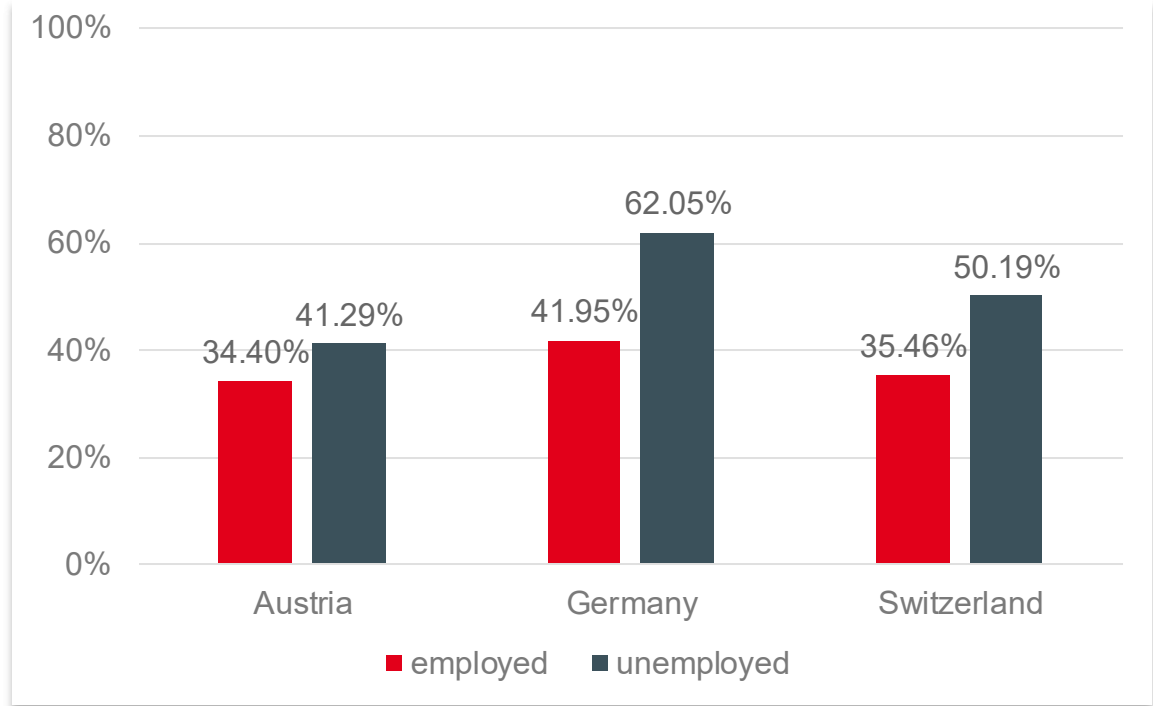
Own calculations using the Public Use File Germany of PIAAC Cycle 2:
<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/piaac-2nd-cycle-database.html>

Daily calculating by employment at least once a week.



PIAAC Cycle 2:
Proportions of adults
who undertake
calculations, such as
calculating prices,
costs or quantities **at
least once a week or
every day**

by employment



Own calculations using the Public Use File Germany of PIAAC Cycle 2:
<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/piaac-2nd-cycle-database.html>

Research Questions

1. Does this also apply to Germany when using the PIAAC Cycle 2 data? ✓
2. Does the same apply to other European countries? ✓



What do we learn from these findings?

- Adults in difficult economic situations are not responsible for their circumstances simply because they fail to keep track of their finances.
- “Generating very low income is not necessarily a result of too little numeracy or financial literacy. It could also be seen as the result of (very) low income, personal crises and personal upheavals, or the complexity of liberalized consumer markets” (Großluschen et al, 2019, p. 263-264).
- Programmes and training measures that are limited to teaching skills only (as is implied by the financial education strategy in Germany, for example) do not take into account factors that lead to unemployment and the risk of poverty.
- Programmes and training measures should therefore offer not only financial education, but also economic education.
- When teaching financial literacy, you can build on the fact that many potential participants are well practised in making everyday rough calculations.

Thank you very much for your attention!

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Research Project:
Everyday financial practices of Adults



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15.09.2025

Dr. Klaus Buddeberg <https://uhh.de/ew-finbi>

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