

CEE Savings Study: How much money do people squirrel away for a rainy day?

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Germans are the savings' champions with EUR 180 saved each month, followed by the Austrians (EUR 168) and the Britons (EUR 160). In CEE, the Czechs and Slovaks (EUR 90) are the tireless savers. Hungarians and Ukrainians manage to save only EUR 40-50 monthly.

Austrians and Germans rely on savings books, building savings and insurance products; Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians additionally count on pension insurance, whereas Ukrainians like quicker access to their money.

For future: three quarters of Slovaks, Austrians, Czechs and Ukrainians expect to save at least as much as now; Hungarians are the most pessimistic about their future savings

The savings behaviour across Central and Eastern Europe is rather inconsistent. One in two Austrians, Czechs and Slovaks are used to putting money aside regularly, while Hungarians and Ukrainians are only now starting to acquire this habit. Whereas the Britons are twice as committed to spending as they are to saving, it is mostly the Slovaks and Hungarians who think twice about spending every penny (85% of the cases and 82% respectively). Germans, traditional savings' champions, get not too much impressed by the current economic environment saving mostly for their old age.

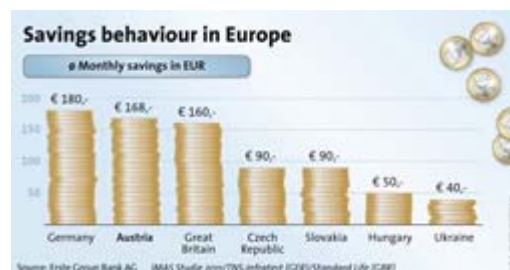
Germans are the savings' champions with EUR 180 put aside each month, followed by the Austrians with EUR 168 and the Britons with EUR 160. In CEE, the Czechs and Slovaks are the tireless savers with EUR 90. Hungarians and Ukrainians only manage to save EUR 50 resp. 40 per month.

In nominal terms, the amount saved per month in Austria is at an all time high (EUR 168), but it has been stagnating at this level since last year, showing there is not much room for an increase.

By comparison, UK citizens save about EUR 160 every month. They are twice as committed to spending as they are to saving, using double the amount they save up for credit card payments (EUR 365 per month). The trend goes towards savings however, as the Britons are saving 12% more each month compared to last year. The overall number of people without any savings is falling by a third and one in four (12.4 million) of those who do not yet save plan to start in the next three to six months.

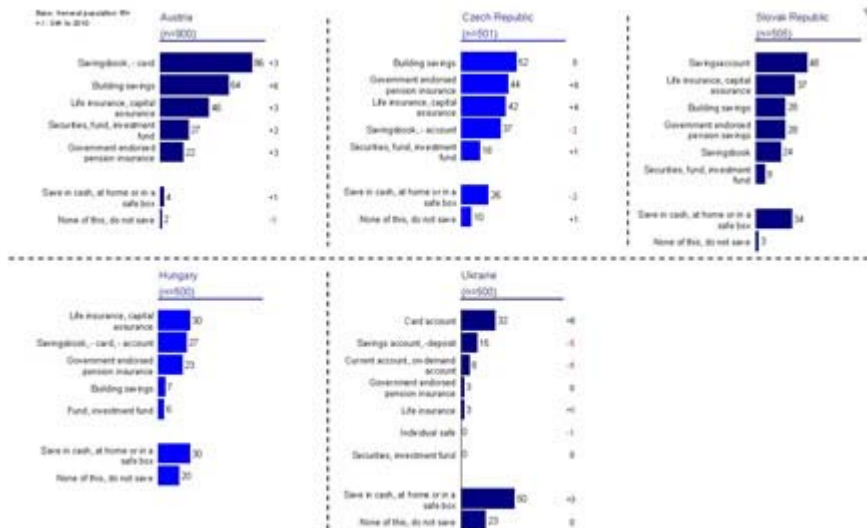
The Germans are savers by tradition, saving EUR 180 each month or 11.3% of their disposable income in 2010 compared to 10.8% in 2006, thus reaching the pre-Lehman-crisis levels. They tend not to get impressed too much by the economic circumstances: neither the financial markets turbulences nor the deep recession in Germany influenced their savings sustainably. The improved economic development in 2010 triggered higher available income for the Germans who in return primarily saved more for the old age. This is expected to drop only insignificantly to 11.2% in 2011 and 2012.

Within the CEE region, Czechs and Slovaks are the diligent savers putting aside EUR 90 every month, most of them being rather satisfied with this level. At the other extreme, Hungarians only manage to save EUR 50 per month and Ukrainians approx. EUR 40. Hungary and Ukraine record the most increase in saving appetite, as half of the interviewees said that saving is more important now than some years ago.



Germany: TNS-Infratest survey „Savings behaviour of the Germans“ conducted by the Bundesverband der Deutschen Volksbanken und Raiffeisenbanken. UK: “UK savings survey” from Standard Life Rest: IMAS study „2011 Savings Research in Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Ukraine“ conducted by Erste Group Bank AG.

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Usage of savings products

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Austrians and Germans remain faithful to the savings books, building savings and insurance products; Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians additionally on pension insurance. Ukrainians like quicker access to their money.

„The savings book is still exceptionally popular in Austria, with almost every Austrian reporting to have one (86% of those surveyed). Every other Czech has a building society savings scheme, while in Austria this is even more popular (64%)”, explains Martin Škopek, board member at Erste Group responsible for retail. „Slovaks on the other hand prefer the savings account, with almost half of the interviewees reporting to have one. Again, savings products are not yet as popular in Hungary and Ukraine, showing that putting money aside is only now gaining ground in these countries”. Hungarians mostly rely on life insurance and capital assurance products (30%), and equally on savings books, cards and accounts (27%). Ukrainians prefer to have quicker access to their savings, and therefore mostly opt for the card (32%), with only 15% reporting to have a savings account or deposit. Hungary and Ukraine also have the highest percentage of people who did not opt for any kind of savings products (roughly one in five interviewees).

Three quarters of Slovaks, Austrians, Czechs and Ukrainians expect to save at least as much in the future; Hungarians the most pessimistic about their future savings

„Most people in Central and Eastern Europe put money aside as a financial back up and for emergency situations, while roughly one in two Austrians, Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians also save for old age”, explains Škopek. In terms of saving for purchases, the differences between countries are more evident: roughly three quarters of Slovaks, Czechs and Austrians save for small and large acquisitions and house renovations, while the proportion is much smaller in Hungary and Ukraine (40% and 49% respectively). Half of Austrians and again three quarters of Czechs and Slovaks save up so that they can afford something later on, while this is the case for only a quarter of the respondents in Hungary and Ukraine.

“Central and Eastern Europeans are overall rather optimistic about their future savings: about three quarters of people surveyed in Austria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Ukraine envisage saving in the future at least as much at present. By comparison, Hungarians are the most pessimistic, with 43% of respondents expecting to save less over the next five years”, concludes Škopek.

[Presentation \[pdf; 333.0 KB\]](#)