



Flash Eurobarometer European Parliament Youth Survey

Key findings



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Key findings

Importance of politics and priority issue

- **Almost nine in ten respondents (85%) discuss politics when they get together with friends or relatives** – with 25% doing so “frequently” and 61% doing so “occasionally”.
- **A majority (55%) of respondents say they don’t understand much or anything about the EU**, while 42% say they understand a great deal or a fair amount.
- **A majority of respondents feel they don’t have much, or any, say over important decisions, laws and policies affecting them.** This feeling increases the more distant the sphere of governance under consideration: 53% feel they don’t have much, or any, say over decisions, laws and policies affecting their local area, rising to 70% for matters affecting the EU as a whole.
- Political issues that respondents would most like to see prioritised are **tackling poverty and social inequality** (43%); followed by **combatting climate change and protecting the environment** (39%); and **combatting unemployment or a lack of jobs** (37%).

Political and civic engagement

- **Almost nine in ten (87%) respondents have engaged in at least one political or civic activity.** Almost half (46%) have voted in the last local, national or European election, and 42% have created or signed a petition. Around a quarter have engaged in other, more direct forms of action, including boycotting or buying certain products on political, ethical or environmental grounds (25%); and taking part in street protests or demonstrations (24%). A similar proportion have engaged in online activities, including posting opinions on social media about a political or social issue (26%).
- The perceived most effective actions for making one’s voice heard reflect, to an extent, the actions in which respondents have most commonly engaged: **Voting is the top response**, mentioned by 41%, followed by **taking part in protests and demonstrations** (33%), and **creating or signing a petition** (30%).
- Respondents who have never voted were asked what, if anything, had prevented them from doing so. Most identified at least one barrier, with the most common (apart from not being eligible to vote) being: **a basic lack of interest** (15%), **a belief that decision makers “don’t listen to people like me”** (13%) and **a lack of understanding of the issues** at stake (11%).
- **Two-thirds (66%) of respondents who were eligible to vote in the last (2019) European election say they did so.**

Information on political and social issues

- **Respondents’ top sources of information on political and social issues are social media and news websites**, each of which are mentioned by 41%.
- The specific social media channels respondents tend to rely on are Facebook (54%) and Instagram (48%), followed by YouTube (35%) and Twitter (29%) respectively.

- The most trusted sources for information about issues facing Europe are, respectively, national media (25%), friends, family or colleagues (23%), EU leaders (23%) and national government (21%).

Attitudes towards the EU

- **Around three in five (62%) respondents are generally in favour of the EU** – though this includes 34% who are dissatisfied with the way the EU is working at present, and a slightly lower proportion (28%) who are satisfied. **A further 21% of respondents are rather sceptical of the EU** but could change their opinion if radical reform is introduced, while **5% are opposed to the general idea of the EU**.
- **Approaching half (45%) of respondents say their image of the EU has remained stable over the last year, while approaching a third (31%) say it has got worse** and 17% say it has improved. Seven per cent are unsure. The proportion who say their image of the EU has worsened ranges from a low of 18% (in Portugal) to a high of 39% (in Luxembourg).

The European Parliament youth offer

- Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents have heard of at least one way in which they can get engaged with the work of the European Parliament.
- **Between around one and two in five respondents have actively participated in engagement activities they have heard of.** The highest rates of participation emerge for events organised by the European Parliament Liaison Office (40% of respondents who have heard of these have participated in them).
- Approaching two-thirds of those who have actively participated agree that **participation increased their knowledge of the EU** (62%), and just over half agree that it made them feel: **more positive about the EU** (54%), that they have **something to contribute to debate** (54%), and that **they can influence what happens in the EU** (52%).