



# Flash Eurobarometer European Parliament Youth Survey

Report



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Flash Eurobarometer – Ipsos European Public Affairs



# Flash Eurobarometer

Report

## European Parliament Youth Survey

September 2021

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Directorate-General for Communication

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# Introduction

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The future of the European project depends on young people: their association with democratic values, their willingness to embrace European identity and their active engagement in the political process. Young people must not be excluded or feel alienated from politics, given their future will be determined by today's decisions. It is crucial to foster their participation in civic and democratic life at a local, national and European level to ensure the future prosperity of the EU – and of younger people themselves.

Promoting democratic participation in the Member States, as well as enhancing education opportunities and employment prospects, lies at the heart of EU youth policy. For instance, the Erasmus+ programme aims to “improve the skills level of young people, support their participation in democratic life and in the labour market, and promote active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and solidarity”<sup>1</sup>. The European Solidarity Corps, established in December 2016, enables young Europeans to engage in activities such as volunteering and employment in their own country and beyond. Meanwhile, programmes like Euroscola and the European Youth Event, encourage young people to express their ideas and engage in dialogue with policy makers. The aspirations of such programmes are emblematic of the broad-ranging and multifaceted nature of EU youth policies, which combine cultural and educational activities to help ensure the economic and political empowerment of young Europeans.

Existing research suggests that many young people are already interested and engaged both politically and civically. According to a 2019 Flash Eurobarometer<sup>2</sup> they are actively voting, willing to stay informed on current affairs, and ready to devote time to volunteering. Further, being the most educated and digitally savvy of all generations, and among the most motivated to tackle serious global issues such as climate change, they have the potential to have a significant impact on the system. Yet, the same study found that some youth were still alienated from politics or disinclined to take part in political activities due to lack of interest, time, awareness or a sense of purpose. Such disengagement of younger people has been identified as presenting a major challenge for some democracies.<sup>3</sup>

Engaging, connecting and empowering youth are the three pillars of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, a strategic framework adopted by the European Council in 2018. The communication highlights that “for young people to reap the full benefits of EU actions, these need to reflect their aspirations”<sup>4</sup>. An Ipsos report on the lives and choices of Generation Z highlights that younger generations are not necessarily less politically active than previous generations, but have slightly different values and concerns than their elders.<sup>5</sup> It is thus necessary to understand what interests and motivates them when it comes to politics, as well as any potential obstacles to the participation of a diverse range of young people. Such an understanding will be crucial in informing and enhancing the activities of political and civic institutions aimed at enabling young people to become active citizens in democracy and society.

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<sup>1</sup> European Parliament (2021) Youth. Fact Sheets on the European Union [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU\\_3.6.5.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU_3.6.5.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> European Commission (2019) Flash Eurobarometer 478. <https://www.kantarpublic.com/download/documents/155/Flash+Eurobarometer+-+Views+of+young+people.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Kitanova, M. (2018). Youth political participation in the EU: evidence from a cross-national analysis. *Journal of Youth Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2019.1636951>

<sup>4</sup> European Union (2018). EU Youth Strategy [https://europa.eu/youth/strategy\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/strategy_en)

<sup>5</sup> Ipsos MORI (2018). Ipsos Thinks: Beyond Binary: The lives and choices of Generation Z <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/ipsos-thinks-beyond-binary-lives-and-choices-generation-z>

Accordingly, the European Parliament, Directorate-General for Communication commissioned a new Flash Eurobarometer survey to gather young people's attitudes and behaviours in respect of politics, political engagement and the EU. Specifically, the survey covered the following topics:

- Young people's general level of interest in politics and the issues and values they feel should be prioritised
- The extent to which they participate in political and civic activities (including voting) and barriers to such participation
- Their understanding of, and attitudes towards, the European Union
- Their awareness of, and experiences of, the European Parliament's Youth Offer
- Their sources of information on political and social issues, and the perceived veracity of different sources.

Ipsos European Public Affairs interviewed a representative sample of young people aged 16-30, in each of the 27 Member States of the European Union. Between 18 June and 27 June 2021, 18 156 young people were surveyed via computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI), using Ipsos online panels and their partner network. A share of respondents in Luxembourg was recruited via social media networks. Survey data are weighted to known population proportions. The EU27 averages are weighted according to the size of the 16-30 year-old population of each EU Member State. A technical note on the methods applied to conduct the survey is appended as an annex to this report.

Notes:

- 1) Survey results are subject to sampling tolerances meaning that not all apparent differences between groups may be statistically significant. Thus, only differences that are statistically significant (at the 5% level) – i.e. where it can be reasonably certain that they are unlikely to have occurred by chance – are highlighted in the text.
- 2) Due to rounding, the percentages shown in the charts and tables do not always exactly add up to the totals mentioned in the text.
- 3) In this report, countries are referred to by their official abbreviation. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

BE		Belgium	LT		Lithuania
BG		Bulgaria	LU		Luxembourg
CZ		Czechia	HU		Hungary
DK		Denmark	MT		Malta
DE		Germany	NL		Netherlands
EE		Estonia	AT		Austria
IE		Ireland	PL		Poland
EL		Greece	PT		Portugal
ES		Spain	RO		Romania
FR		France	SI		Slovenia
HR		Croatia	SK		Slovakia
IT		Italy	FI		Finland
CY		Rep. of Cyprus*	SE		Sweden
LV		Latvia			

\* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 EU MS. However, the 'acquis communautaire' has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the 'CY' category.

# Key findings

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## 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%)**.

## Section 1. Importance of politics and priority issues

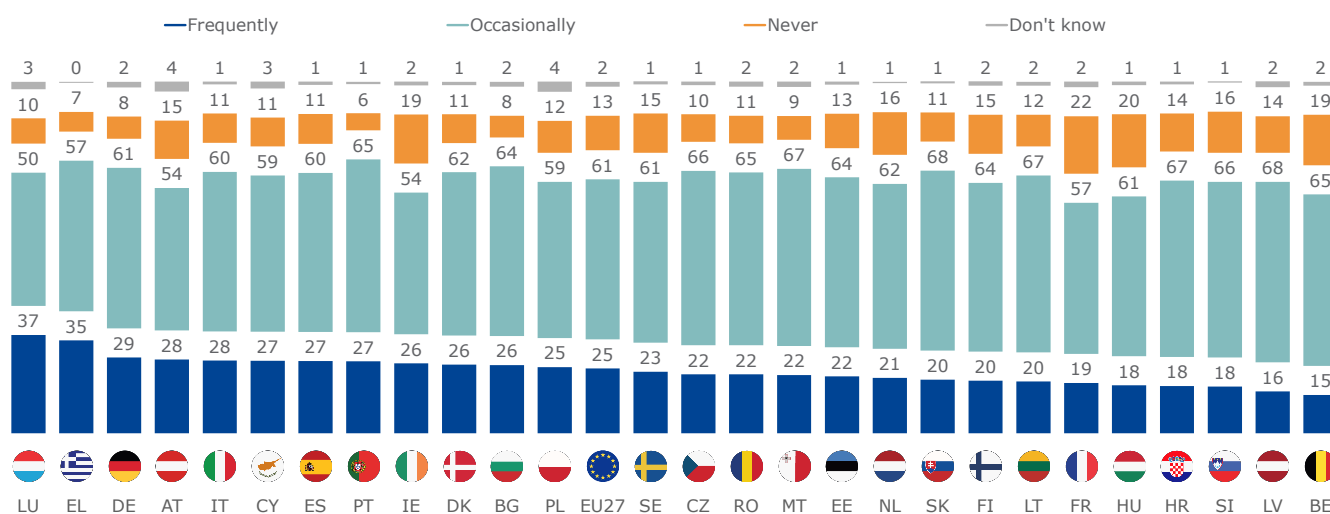
### 1.1. Discussing politics with others

Almost nine in ten respondents (85%) say they discuss politics when they get together with friends or relatives – with 25% saying they do so “frequently” and 61% saying they do so “occasionally”. Thirteen per cent say they “never” discuss politics with friends or relatives, and a further 2% don’t know how often they do this (if at all).

This distribution of responses is broadly reflected across most EU Member States. The most notable exceptions are in the cases of:

- Greece and Luxembourg, where the proportion of respondents saying they discuss politics with friends or relatives “frequently” rises to 35% and 37% respectively (while the proportion saying they do so “occasionally” or “never” is comparatively low).
- Belgium, France and Hungary, where slightly more respondents say they “never” discuss politics than say they do so “frequently” (Belgium - 19% versus 15%; France - 22% versus 19%; Hungary - 20% versus 18%)

Q2 When you get together with friends or relatives, how often, if at all do you discuss political and social issues...? (%)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

Socio-demographic analysis of the results reveals that the propensity to discuss politics “frequently” is higher among:

- males than females (27% versus 22%).
- respondents aged 20-30 than those aged 16-19 (26% of both 20-25 year olds and 26-30 year olds versus 20% of the youngest age group).
- those who completed their education at age 15 or younger, and those who did so at age 20 or older, compared to those who did so at aged 16-19 or who are still studying (32% and 28% versus 22% and 24% respectively). At the same time, analysis by parental educational reveals that respondents whose parents have a college or university education are more likely to say they discuss politics frequently than those whose parents have a secondary school or technical/vocational educational (27% versus 23% and 21% in the case of maternal education; and 29% versus 24% and 22% in the case of paternal education).<sup>6</sup>
- the self-employed compared with other occupational groups – Indeed, the self-employed are two times more likely than those not working to discuss politics frequently (38% versus 19%).
- respondents living in financially challenged households compared with those in better-off households (39% of those whose household does not have enough money for basic bills versus, for example, 26% of those whose household can afford everything it needs).
- No variation is evident depending on whether or not respondents belong to a minority group.

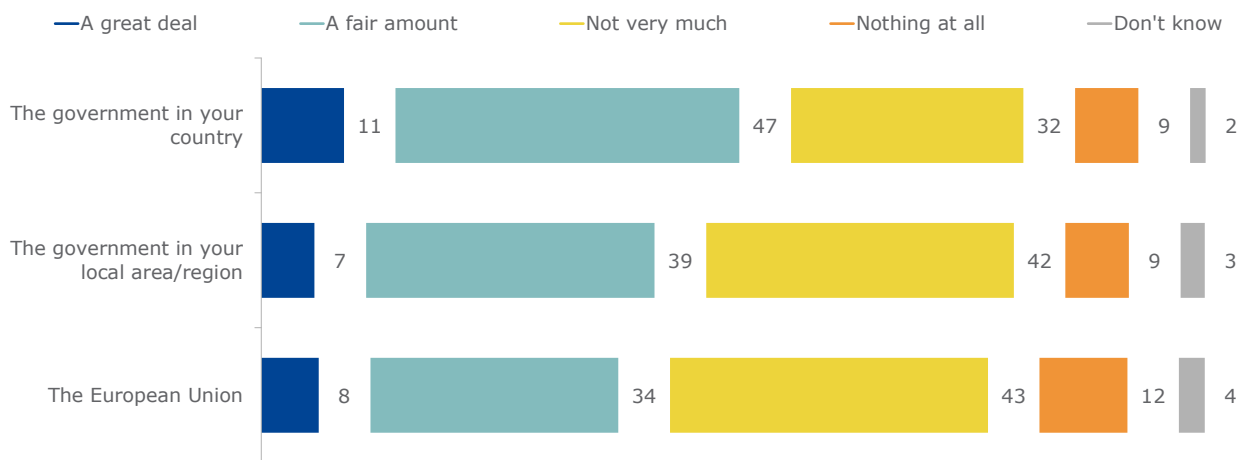
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<sup>6</sup> Few respondents reported that either their mother or father (or both) have no formal education/did not complete primary school (660 for maternal education and 415 for paternal education); due to this low number, they are excluded from the socio-demographic analysis.

## 1.2. Understanding of different levels of government

Almost three in five (58%) respondents say they understand “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about the national government of their country, while 40% say they understand little or nothing. Self-assessed understanding of *sub*-national government is somewhat lower: 47% say they understand a great deal or a fair amount about the government in their local area or region, while slightly more (50%) say they don’t understand much or anything at all. Understanding of the European Union (EU) is lower still – 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.

Q3 How much, if anything, do you feel you understand about...? (% - EU27)



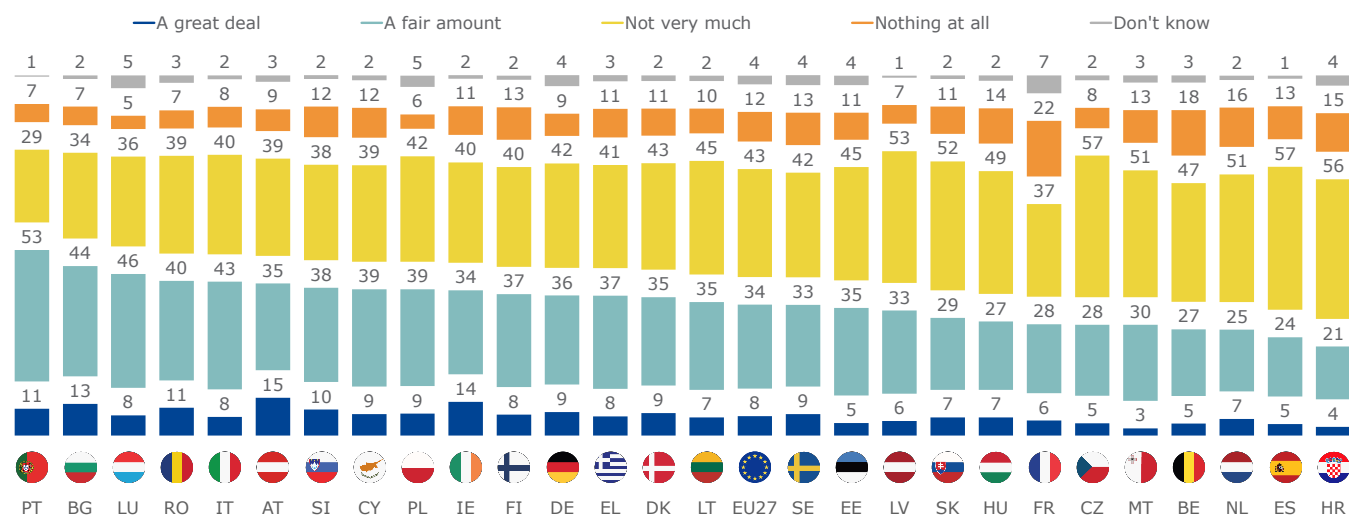
Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

**Self-assessed understanding of the EU** varies greatly by Member State. The lowest levels of understanding are found in:

- Croatia (where 25% say they understand a great deal or a fair amount about the EU, versus 71% who say they understand little or nothing)
- Spain (28% versus 70%)
- the Netherlands (31% versus 67%)
- Belgium (32% versus 66%)

Comparatively *high* levels of understanding of the EU are found in Portugal, where more than six in ten respondents (63%) say they understand a great deal or a fair amount about the EU, while less than four in ten (36%) say they understand little or nothing.

### Q3.3 How much, if anything, do you feel you understand about...? The European Union (%)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

Males are more likely than females to say they understand a great deal or a fair amount about the EU (47% versus 37%), and people aged 20 or over are more likely to do so than younger respondents (43% of 20-25 year olds and 43% of those aged 26 and over versus 39% of 16-19 year olds).

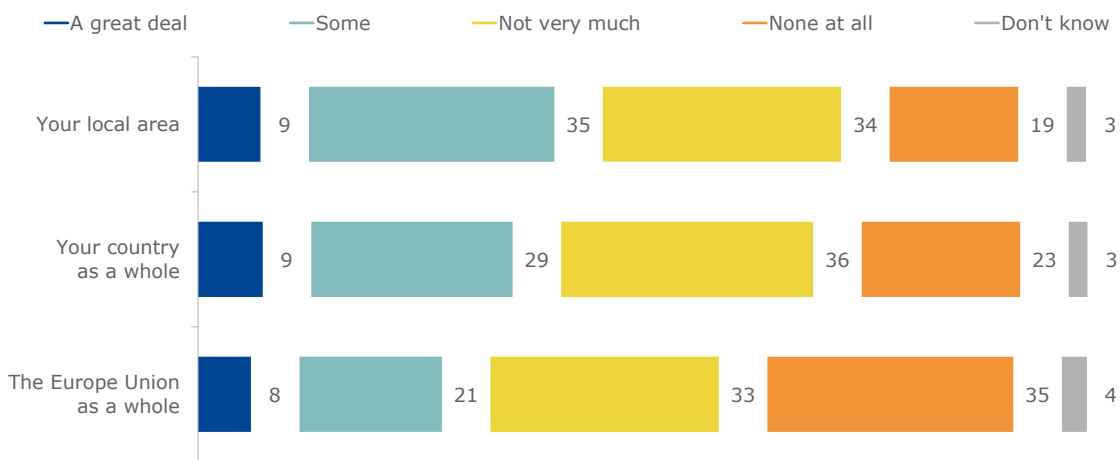
There is no clear relationship between understanding of the EU and respondent or maternal education. However, a relationship is apparent in the case of paternal education: 48% of respondents whose father has a college or university education say they understand a great deal or a fair amount about the EU, compared to 40% of those whose father is educated to primary school-level.

Understanding of the EU is also somewhat higher among respondents who identify as belonging to a minority group than among those who do not (40% versus 48%), and among those who speak one or multiple EU languages than among those who do not (43% who speak more than one language and 40% who speak one language versus 31% who speak none).

### 1.3. Influence over decision-making

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 60% for decisions laws and policies affecting their country as a whole, and to 70% for decisions laws and policies affecting the EU as a whole.

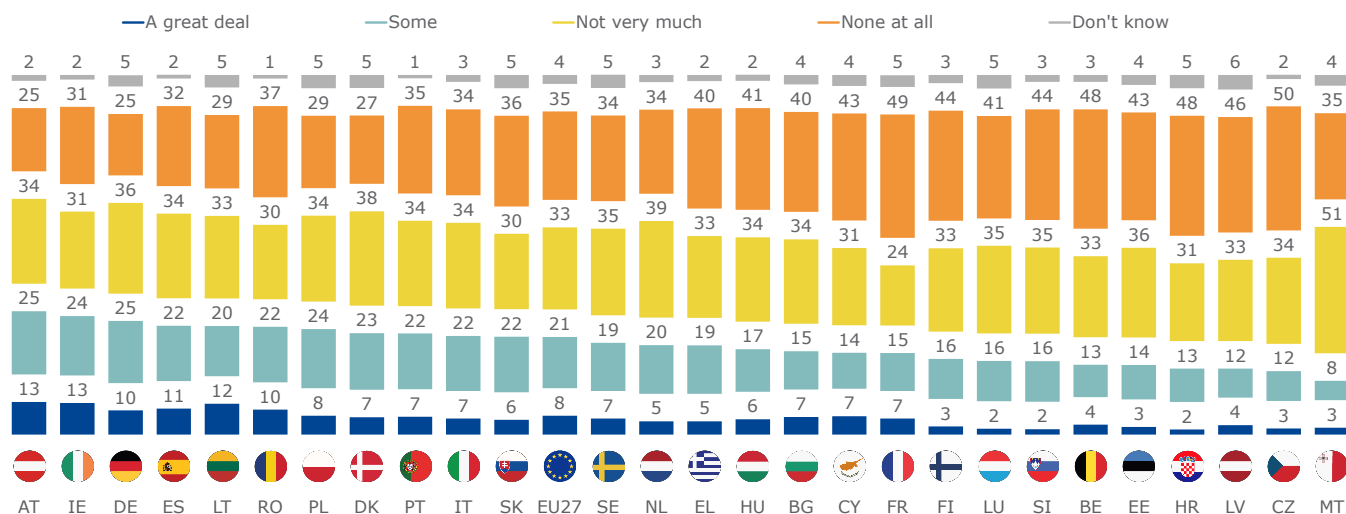
**Q4** How much of a say do you feel you can have over important decisions, laws and policies affecting...? (% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

The proportion of respondents who feel they lack influence over decision-making, laws and policies affecting the EU as a whole rises to three-quarters or more in Malta (85%), Czechia (84%), Belgium (80%), Croatia (79%), Estonia (79%), Slovenia (79%), Latvia (79%), Finland (77%), Luxembourg (76%) and Hungary (75%). The figure is at its lowest (but still a majority) in Austria (59%), Germany (61%), Ireland (62%), Lithuania (63%) and Poland (63%).

**Q4.3** How much of a say do you feel you can have over important decisions, laws and policies affecting...?  
The European Union as a whole (%)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

Females are more likely than males to feel they lack influence over laws, decision-making and policies affecting the EU (72% versus 67%). There is no clear pattern by age but more higher than lower educated respondents feel they lack influence (72% of those who completed education at age 20 or older compared to 56% of those who did so at age 15 or younger). Similarly, the higher the level of parental education, the more likely respondents are to feel they lack influence (73% of those whose mother is educated to college or university level, compared to 61% of those whose mother has a primary school-level education).

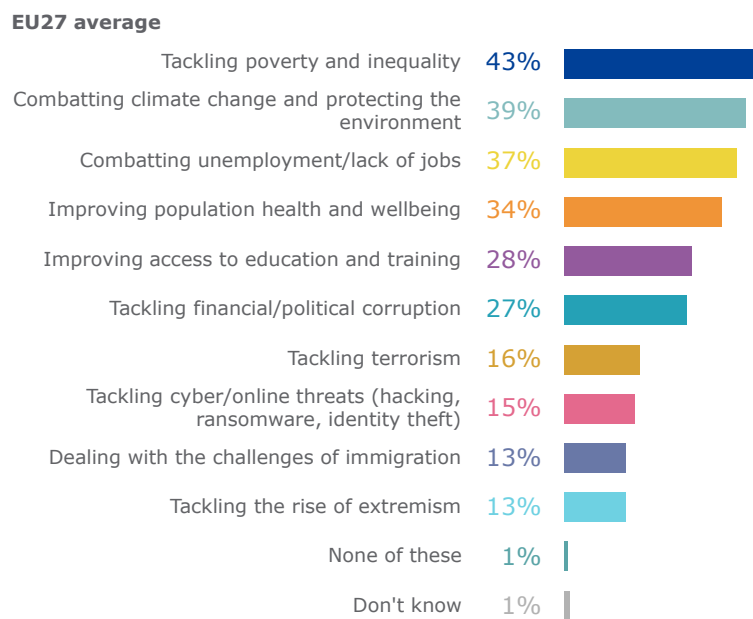
The feeling of lacking influence over decision-making, laws and policies affecting the EU also increases with household financial security. For example, around three-quarters (74%) of respondents living in households that can afford everything they need feel they lack influence, compared to 53% of those living in the most financially challenged households.

Respondents who do not identify as belonging to a minority group are more likely than those who do to feel they lack influence over decision-making, policies and laws affecting the EU (75% versus 60%), and respondents who speak more than one EU language are more likely to do so than those who speak none or only one EU language (73% versus 64% in each case).

## 1.4. Priority issues

The 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%). More than a third would also like to see priority given to improving population health and wellbeing, and more than a quarter to improving access to education and training (28%) and tackling corruption (27%). Tackling cyber or online threats, dealing with the challenges of immigration, and tackling the rise of extremism, emerge as lower order issues (mentioned by 15%, 13% and 13% respectively).

**Q5** In your opinion, which three of the following issues should be given priority? (% - EU27)































Base: all respondents (n=18 156)



The perceived importance of different issues varies significantly by Member State:

- **Poverty and inequality** emerges as the top (or top equal) issue in 12 Member States. The proportion mentioning it is highest in Portugal (56%), Luxembourg (52%), Cyprus (51%) and Bulgaria (50%), where at least half of respondents say it should be prioritised.
- **Combatting climate change and protecting the environment** is the top issue in five countries: Denmark (53%), France (45%), Slovakia (45%), Czechia (41%) and the Netherlands (40%). It is mentioned notably less frequently in Cyprus (24%), Latvia (25%), Romania (25%), Croatia (25%) and Bulgaria (27%).
- **Combatting unemployment or a lack of jobs** is the top issue in three Member States: Italy (53%), Croatia (52%) and Slovenia (47%), and top equal in Sweden (38%).
- **Improving population health and wellbeing** is the top issue in Estonia (52%), Latvia (48%) and Poland (48%), and top equal in Hungary (47%), Finland (44%) and Sweden (38%).
- **Tackling financial and political corruption** is the top issue in Cyprus (53%) and Malta (53%). It is also among the top three issues in four other countries: Croatia (48%), Bulgaria (46%), Romania (42%) and Slovenia (39%).
- **Improving access to education and training** is the top issue in just one Member State, Romania, where just under half of respondents (49%) mention it.
- Finally, though a lower order issue at the EU-level, **dealing with the challenges of immigration** is mentioned by more than two in five (42%) respondents in Malta.

Q5 In your opinion, which three of the following issues should be given priority? (%)

	Tackling poverty and inequality	Combating climate change/protectin	Combating unemployment/lack of jobs	Improving population health and	Improving access to education and training	Tackling financial/political corruption	Tackling terrorism	Tackling cyber/online threats	Dealing with the challenges of immigration	Tackling the rise of extremism
EU27 	43	39	37	34	28	27	16	15	13	13
BE 	45	44	29	31	23	27	17	15	19	21
BG 	50	27	43	46	27	46	12	11	10	4
CZ 	28	41	33	32	29	30	21	23	22	12
DK 	36	53	23	36	24	23	16	18	21	18
DE 	43	41	27	25	31	18	19	18	15	21
EE 	50	39	36	52	31	22	13	16	13	14
IE 	46	36	41	36	25	27	13	19	14	10
EL 	48	30	45	38	28	36	14	11	18	4
ES 	47	36	46	37	36	33	7	11	10	13
FR 	44	45	35	30	25	17	27	15	14	17
HR 	48	25	52	40	30	48	12	10	6	5
IT 	44	44	53	29	19	28	9	11	14	7
CY 	51	24	41	49	20	53	5	12	16	6
LV 	46	25	44	48	34	30	10	18	9	6
LT 	42	33	34	35	36	32	14	21	12	8
LU 	52	46	33	34	26	27	10	11	13	30
HU 	47	31	37	47	32	40	13	11	10	8
MT 	37	49	21	35	31	53	3	7	42	9
NL 	39	40	25	32	28	22	20	22	17	15
AT 	38	36	34	26	20	25	22	16	16	15
PL 	37	39	38	48	25	34	16	21	7	9
PT 	56	35	44	49	21	40	14	9	5	12
RO 	38	25	39	47	49	42	7	10	5	6
SI 	46	39	47	33	17	39	12	13	15	10
SK 	39	45	41	37	23	36	11	15	9	13
FI 	44	36	37	44	29	16	18	17	23	11
SE 	36	37	38	38	17	17	23	19	26	16

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

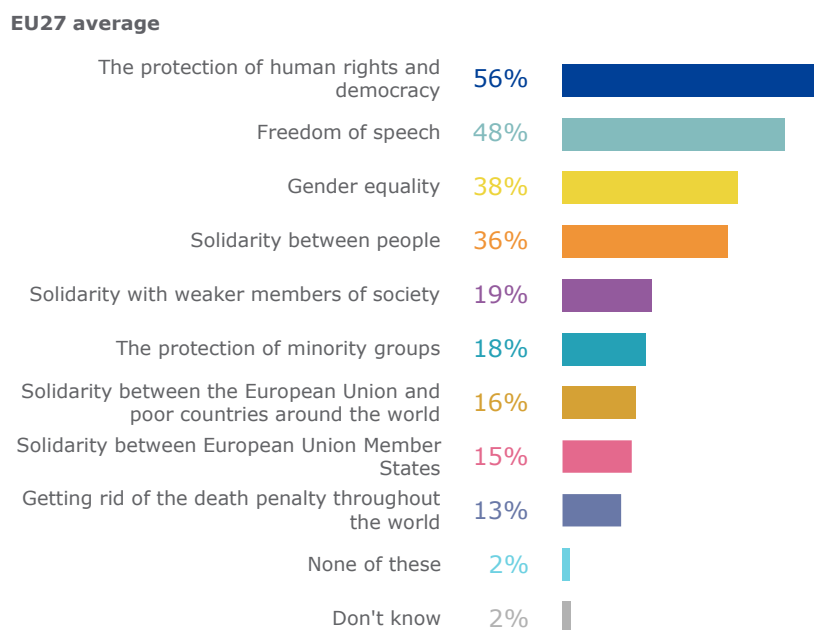
In terms of socio-demographic differences:

- **Tackling poverty and inequality** is more commonly mentioned by females than by males (48% versus 38%) and by respondents who are not working than by other occupational groups (49% of those not working versus 41% of employees and 37% of both the self-employed and manual workers). Notably, however, there is no clear correlation between mention of the issue and the self-assessed financial situation of respondents' household.
- **Combatting climate change and protecting the environment** is mentioned by more females than males (43% versus 36%), by more respondents aged 16-19 than by older groups (42% versus for example, 37% of those over 25), and by more respondents whose parents have a college or university education than by those whose parents have a lower level of education (for example, 45% of those whose mother has college or university education compared to 32% of those whose mother has a primary school-level education).
- **Combatting unemployment or a lack of jobs** is more commonly mentioned by females than by males (39% versus 36%), by respondents aged 26 or older than by younger age group (40% versus, for example, 35% of 16-19 year olds), and by those not working than by other occupational groups (40% versus, for example, 32% of the self-employed).
- **Improving population health and wellbeing** is mentioned by more females than males (38% versus 31%), and by older than younger respondents (for example, 36% of those aged 26 and over versus 32% of those aged 16-19).
- **Improving access to education and training** is more commonly mentioned by females than by males (30% versus 26%); and by people who are still studying than by those who have completed their education (31% versus, for example, 21% of those who completed their education by age 15).
- **Tackling financial and political corruption** is more often mentioned by males than by females (29% versus 24%), by respondents aged 26 or older than by younger groups (31% versus, for example, 21% of those aged 16-19), and by employees than by other occupational groups (29% versus, for example 26% of the self-employed).

## 1.5. Priority values

In addition to being asked about priority issues, respondents were presented with a list of values and asked which of these they regard as most important. **The protection of human rights and democracy** emerges as the top-ranking value, with a majority of respondents selecting it (56%), followed by **freedom of speech**, which is selected by approaching half (48%). The next highest ranking values are **gender equality** and **solidarity between people** respectively, with each of these selected by more than a third of respondents (38% and 36% respectively). Comparatively lower order values are getting rid of the death penalty throughout the world (13%), solidarity between EU Member States (15%) and solidarity between the EU and poor countries around the world (16%).

**Q6** And in your opinion, which three of the following values are most important? (% - EU27)































Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

**The protection of human rights and democracy is the top-ranking value in 22 Member States**, with the proportion mentioning it rarely falling below the 50% mark. Indeed, around two-third of respondents or more in five States - Slovakia (70%), Malta (69%), Bulgaria (64%), Cyprus (64%) and Poland (64%) - mention this value.

**Freedom of speech is the top-ranking value in four Member States**, selected by 58% in Slovenia, 55% in Lithuania, 52% in France and 51% in the Netherlands. In most other Member States, it is the second highest-ranking value. The exceptions are Ireland (41%) and Spain (45%), where **gender equality** emerges as the second highest ranking value (mentioned by 42% and 54% respectively).

Freedom of speech and the protection of human rights and democracy are ranked top equal in Czechia (by 64% of respondents).

**Q6** And in your opinion, which three of the following values are most important? (%)

	The protection of human rights and democracy	Freedom of speech	Gender equality	Solidarity between people	Solidarity with weaker members of society	The protection of minority groups	Solidarity between the EU and poor countries around the world	Solidarity between EU Member States	Getting rid of the death penalty throughout the world
EU27 	56	48	38	36	19	18	16	15	13
BE 	53	48	34	42	20	23	15	14	12
BG 	64	59	27	50	24	10	17	12	7
CZ 	64	64	32	42	13	10	8	15	9
DK 	53	48	42	35	22	17	16	14	10
DE 	52	37	33	31	22	21	19	15	18
EE 	62	55	35	46	23	17	13	14	7
IE 	53	41	42	25	19	26	24	16	14
EL 	60	53	40	43	23	19	16	12	9
ES 	59	45	54	36	21	20	17	13	7
FR 	47	52	41	43	19	15	16	15	12
HR 	63	55	26	47	23	9	17	15	10
IT 	59	46	42	33	17	19	13	14	14
CY 	64	50	37	47	23	20	14	15	7
LV 	58	56	33	35	16	13	14	22	11
LT 	45	55	33	41	24	13	15	24	12
LU 	63	56	37	37	24	25	5	19	6
HU 	62	53	37	36	19	15	13	15	11
MT 	69	49	36	33	24	26	23	21	11
NL 	50	51	27	32	21	29	14	14	12
AT 	50	36	30	28	22	20	22	16	19
PL 	64	60	34	33	16	16	11	18	12
PT 	60	58	53	30	23	19	23	13	9
RO 	61	47	27	47	15	12	21	25	11
SI 	57	58	35	46	22	12	13	18	10
SK 	70	54	33	44	17	10	11	18	11
FI 	55	53	42	21	20	20	20	14	15
SE 	58	51	47	27	16	14	13	11	16

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

### Looking at socio-demographic differences:

- Females are more likely than males to place importance on the protection of human rights and democracy (60% versus 52%), gender equality (48% versus 29%), solidarity between people (38% versus 34%) and the protection of minority groups (19% versus 17%).
- Conversely, males are more likely to place importance on freedom of speech (49% versus 47%), solidarity with weaker members of society (21% versus 18%), solidarity between EU Member States (19% versus 11%), and solidarity between EU Member States and poor countries around the world (18% versus 14%).
- The youngest group (16-19 year olds) are more likely than older groups to mention freedom of speech (51% versus 48% of those aged 26 and over), gender equality (43% versus 34%), the protection of minority groups (20% versus 16%) and getting rid of the death penalty (14% versus 11%). Meanwhile, those aged 26 and over are more likely than the youngest group to mention the protection of human rights and democracy (58% versus 53%), solidarity between people (39% versus 34%) and solidarity with weaker members of society (22% versus 16%).
- Respondents who are not working are more likely than other occupational groups to mention the protection of human rights and democracy (61% versus, for example, 43% of manual workers), freedom of speech (51% versus 41%) and gender equality (44% versus 29%).

There are no differences in respondents' value prioritisation depending on whether or not they belong to a minority group.

## Section 2. Political and civic engagement

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### 2.1. Perceived importance of political and civic engagement

To establish respondents' general orientation towards political and civic engagement, they were presented with a list of actions and asked how important they think each is as a marker of good citizenship. Importance was measured via a 10-point scale, with 0 indicating "extremely unimportant" and 10 indicating "extremely important".

**The top scoring action was forming one's own opinions.** This receives a mean score<sup>7</sup> of 8.1, which is slightly higher than the mean score for reporting a crime (8.0). The action of **expressing one's opinions on political or social issue receives a lower mean score**, however, of 6.6.

**Voting in elections receives a mean score of 7.7**, which is similar to the score for "Always obey the law" (7.8). Being "active in voluntary groups, community groups or youth groups" receives a lower score, of 6.0, and "Join a political party", receives a lower score still, of just 4.3.





























Forming one's own opinions, reporting a crime and obeying the law feature among the top three responses in most Member States. **Voting in elections features among the top three responses in 10 Member States:** Poland (where it ranks 1<sup>st</sup>, with a mean score of 8.1), Sweden (1<sup>st</sup>, 8.0), Portugal (2<sup>nd</sup> equal, 8.7), Luxembourg (2<sup>nd</sup> 8.2), Lithuania (2<sup>nd</sup> equal, 8.1), Germany (2<sup>nd</sup>, 7.6), Slovenia (2<sup>nd</sup> equal, 7.6), the Netherlands (2<sup>nd</sup>, 7.4), Denmark (3<sup>rd</sup>, 7.6) and Austria (3<sup>rd</sup> equal, 7.2). In Belgium by contrast the means score for voting is comparatively low, at 6.9.

In terms of other notable findings at the Member State level, Estonia, Denmark and Sweden stand out as having comparatively low mean scores for expressing one's opinion on political and social issues (5.3, 5.4 and 5.6 respectively); and being active in voluntary groups, community groups or youth organisations (4.8, 4.8 and 4.9 respectively). Estonia and Malta stand out as having comparatively low scores for joining a political party (3.1 and 3.4 respectively).

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<sup>7</sup> The mean score is the average score (out of 10) given by respondents for each of the actions.

Q1 In your opinion, which three of the following issues should be given priority? (mean score)

	Form their own opinions	Report a crime	Always obey the law	Vote in elections	Support those who are worse off	Express their opinion on political or social issues	Be active in voluntary groups, community groups or youth organisations	Join a political party to get politically active
EU27 	<b>8.1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4.3</b>
BE 	7.9	7.6	7.2	6.9	7	6.3	5.7	4.2
BG 	8.8	8.6	8.6	8.5	8.3	7.1	6.9	4.2
CZ 	8.1	8.1	8	7.5	6.6	6.1	5.4	3.8
DK 	7.5	7.7	7.7	7.6	7	5.4	4.8	3.6
DE 	8	7.5	7.2	7.6	7.2	6.4	5.4	4.4
EE 	7.3	8.3	7.7	7.3	6.5	5.3	4.8	3.1
IE 	7.6	7.8	7.8	7.5	7.1	6.3	6.3	4.8
EL 	8.3	8.5	8.1	7.7	7.9	7.4	7.2	4.6
ES 	8.4	8.4	8.1	7.8	8.1	6.4	6.8	4.2
FR 	8	8.3	7.7	7.2	7.1	6.3	5.8	4.3
HR 	8.3	8.4	7.8	7.7	7.6	6.3	6.4	3.8
IT 	8.5	8.5	8.6	8.1	7.8	7.3	6.8	5.1
CY 	8.8	8.5	8.1	7.2	7.4	6.8	7.1	3.8
LV 	7.9	8.2	7.6	7.1	7.3	6.2	5.6	4.1
LT 	8.1	8.4	7.9	8.1	6.9	6.6	6.3	4.8
LU 	8.6	7.4	7.3	8.2	7.6	7.3	5.2	3.8
HU 	7.6	8	7.9	7	6.9	5.7	5.1	3.9
MT 	8.8	8.3	8.8	7	7.7	6.5	6	3.4
NL 	7.7	7.2	7.1	7.4	6.8	6.4	5.6	4.4
AT 	8	7.6	7.2	7.2	7.3	6	5.5	4.2
PL 	7.7	7.5	7.5	8.1	7.2	7.1	6	3.7
PT 	8.7	8.9	8.7	8.7	8.4	7.1	6.9	4.6
RO 	8.6	9.1	8.7	8.5	8.4	7.7	7.3	4.7
SI 	8.5	7.6	7.4	7.6	7.3	6.7	6	3.6
SK 	8.3	8.2	8.1	7.7	7.7	6.3	5.8	3.8
FI 	7.7	8.2	7.9	7.4	7.5	6.2	5.2	4.3
SE 	7.6	7.9	7.7	8	7.1	5.6	4.9	4.3

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)



**Socio-demographic differences in the results are for the most part very minor.** Voting in elections receives a slightly higher mean score among:

- females than males (7.8 versus 7.5)
- respondents age 26-30 than among younger groups (7.8 versus 7.6 among both 16-19 year olds and 20-25 year olds)
- those with a higher level of education than those with a lower level of education (7.9 among those who completed education at age 20 or older versus 7.1 among those who did so at age 15 or younger); and those whose parents have a higher level of education (for example, 8.0 among those whose mother has a college or university education versus 7.4 among those whose mother has a primary school-level education).
- those living in households that are financial better-off than those in financially challenged households (for example, 8.1 among those living in households than can afford everything they need versus 7.2 among those living in households that are struggling to pay their bills).
- those living in large towns or cities than those in rural areas (7.9 versus 7.5).

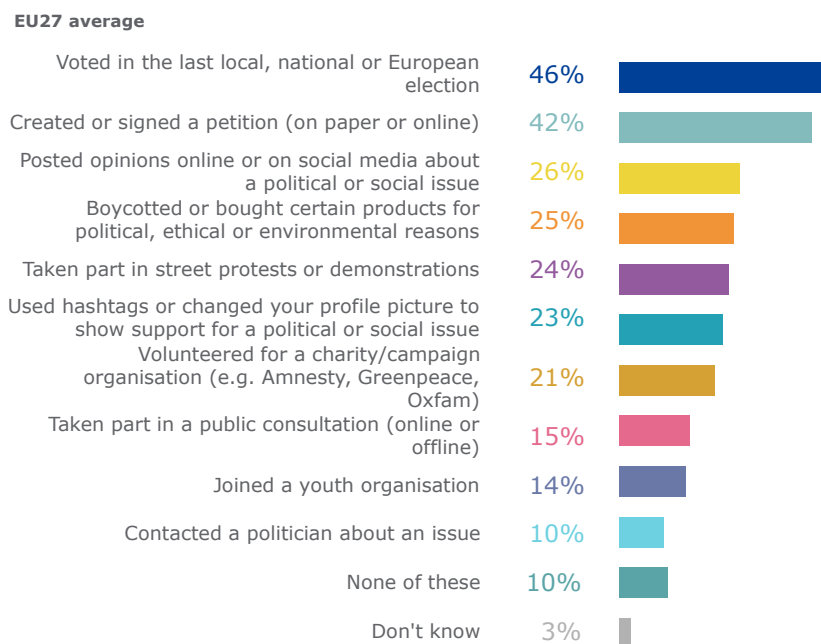
“Join a political party” receives a slightly higher mean importance score among: males than females (4.5 versus 4.2); the least educated respondents compared with the most educated (5.2 among those who completed education at age 15 or younger versus 4.2 among those who did so at age 20 or older); and respondents living in households than are struggling to pay their bills than those in better-off households (5.5 versus, for example, 3.9 among those living in households that can afford everything they need).

“Be active in voluntary groups, community groups or youth groups” receives a slightly higher mean importance score among respondents age 16-25 than among older respondents (6.1 among 16-19 year olds and 6.0 among 20-25 year olds versus 5.9 among 26-30 year olds).

## 2.2. Participation in political and civic activities

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 (hereafter 'boycotting') (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%), and using hashtags or changing their profile picture to show support for such an issue (23%). This is more than twice the number who have ever contacted a politician about an issue (10%).

Q7 Have you ever done any of the following? (% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)





























**Voting in local, national or European elections** is the most common activity in 17 EU Member States, with the proportion mentioning it especially high in Malta (68%), Portugal (63%) Estonia (60%), Croatia (58%), Greece (57%), Bulgaria (57%), Spain (56%), Luxembourg (56%) and Romania (56%). Voting is also the joint highest-ranking activity in Austria (38%) and Slovenia (54%), alongside creating or signing a petition. At the other end of the spectrum by comparison, just 29% of respondents in Ireland say they voted in the last local, national or European election.

**Creating or signing a petition** is the highest-ranking activity in eight Member States: Luxembourg (70%), Slovakia (58%), Czechia (49%), Denmark (48%), Finland (47%), Ireland (44%), France (43%) and Lithuania (41%). It is comparatively less common in Sweden (32%), Latvia (31%), Greece (30%) and Cyprus (28%).

Other notable findings at the Member State level are:

- the relatively high number of respondents in Luxembourg and Spain who have taken part in street protests or demonstrations (41% and 39% respectively), and the low number who have done so in Malta (7%), Estonia (9%), Latvia (10%), Lithuania (11%) and the Netherlands (12%).
- the relatively high numbers in Malta, Ireland, Cyprus and Romania who have joined a youth organisation (34%, 23% 22% and 22% respectively).
- the relatively high numbers in Malta and Ireland who have volunteered for a charity or campaign organisation (34% and 30% respectively).

Q7 Have you ever done any of the following? (%)

	Voted in the last local, national or European election	Created or signed a petition (paper/online)	Posted online/on social media about an issue	Boycotted/buycotted products	Taken part in street protests or demonstrations	Used hashtags/changed profile picture	Volunteered for a charity/campaign organisation	Taken part in a public consultation (online or offline)	Joined a youth organisation	Contacted a politician about an issue
EU27 	46	42	26	25	24	23	21	15	14	10
BE 	46	43	27	27	16	20	25	12	17	9
BG 	57	44	33	17	26	16	25	16	21	12
CZ 	40	49	20	26	16	17	16	14	9	8
DK 	44	48	24	28	19	17	23	10	13	11
DE 	39	37	20	29	21	24	17	17	14	11
EE 	60	51	18	21	9	19	18	22	20	10
IE 	29	44	32	28	22	30	30	13	23	19
EL 	57	30	36	24	29	20	28	10	11	12
ES 	56	49	39	21	39	24	23	29	14	10
FR 	39	43	21	31	23	24	20	12	11	8
HR 	58	48	24	23	17	17	23	15	18	10
IT 	50	35	31	21	28	22	23	12	17	9
CY 	52	28	34	24	25	24	29	10	22	16
LV 	41	31	21	17	10	14	12	17	19	9
LT 	40	41	20	19	11	15	8	13	19	11
LU 	56	70	42	55	41	33	17	27	20	15
HU 	43	39	20	22	13	16	18	18	12	10
MT 	68	60	29	28	7	12	34	10	34	22
NL 	45	44	20	24	12	18	24	11	12	9
AT 	38	38	20	25	21	22	13	20	15	10
PL 	49	40	30	18	25	27	23	12	14	8
PT 	63	56	35	19	20	24	25	15	18	8
RO 	56	54	23	13	29	20	24	17	22	10
SI 	54	54	26	23	21	15	17	10	20	8
SK 	54	58	22	17	16	15	14	8	12	9
FI 	43	47	26	34	14	24	17	13	9	8
SE 	44	32	30	41	21	26	15	15	17	13

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

In terms of socio-demographic variation, some gender differences are evident. Females are more likely than males to have voted (50% versus 43%), volunteered (22% versus 20%), boycotted or buycotted products (27% versus 23%),

taken part in protests or demonstrations (25% versus 22%), created or signed a petition (49% versus 35%), posted opinions online (27% versus 25%), or used hashtags or changed their profile picture (25% versus 20%). Males are more likely than females to have contacted a politician about an issue (11% versus 8%), joined a youth organisation (15% versus 14%) or taken part in a public consultation (17% versus 14%).

Age-based differences are also apparent to a degree. The youngest age group (16-19 year olds) are less likely than older groups to have boycotted or boycotted products (21% versus 25% of 20-25 year olds and 28% of 26-30 years olds.) They are also less likely to have created or signed a petition (38% versus 42% and 44%) or to have taken part in a public consultation (13% versus 15% and 17%). At the same time, people in the 16-19 and 20-25 age groups are more likely than those aged 26-30 to have joined a youth organisation (16% and 15% versus 13% respectively) or to have used hashtags or changed their profile picture (24% for both younger age categories versus 20%).

Alongside these differences, voting is more common among people who completed their education at age 20 or over than among those who did so at a younger age (59% versus, for example, 30% of those who completed their education at age 15 or earlier). The same pattern is evident in the case of boycotting or boycotting products (28% versus 20%), taking part in street protests or demonstrations (26% versus 17%) and creating or signing a petition (46% versus 24%).

Parental education, and more especially *maternal* education, is also a significant predictor of engagement in some activities. Generally, the higher the level of maternal education the more likely respondents are to have:

- boycotted or boycotted products (29% of those whose mother has a college or university education, compared to 21% of those whose mother has a primary school-level education)
- taken part in protests or demonstrations (28% versus 21%)
- created or signed a petition (48% versus 34%)
- posted opinions online or on social media (29% versus 25%)

The financial situation of respondents' households is a similarly significant factor to an extent: More respondents from better-off households than from poorer households have voted (for example, 55% of those living in households that can afford everything they need, compared to 30% of those living in households than do not have enough money to pay bills). Those from better-off households are also more likely to have boycotted or boycotted products (29% versus 22%) or created or signed a petition (48% versus 28%).

## 2.3. Barriers to participation

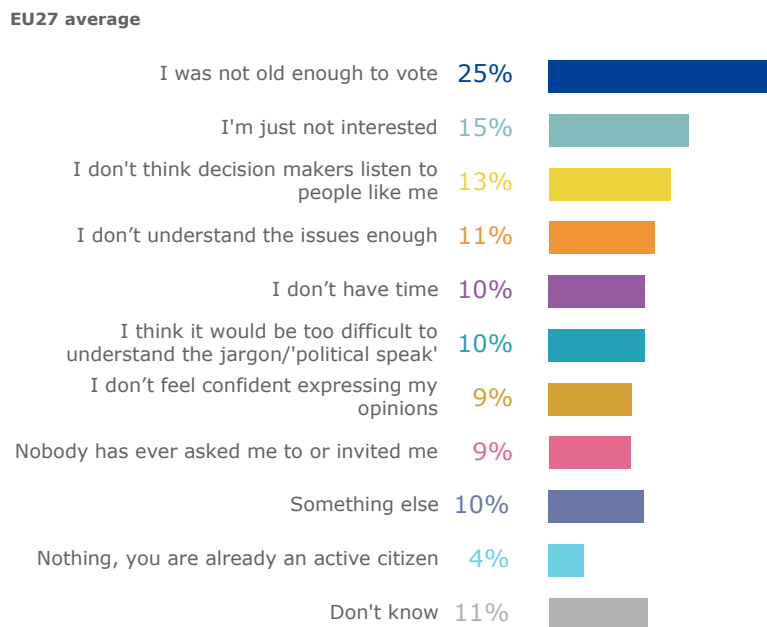
Respondents who have never voted, volunteered or posted opinions online or on social media were asked what, if anything, had prevented them from engaging in these activities<sup>8</sup>. Most respondents identified at least one barrier. While the top barriers varied by activity, **a lack of interest** is a recurring theme, along with **a lack of understanding of the issues** and, in the case of voting and posting opinions online, **a belief that decision makers “don’t listen to people like me.”**

### Voting in elections

The most commonly identified barriers to voting in elections (apart from not being eligible to vote) are respectively: 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%).

Few notable socio-demographic differences are evident in the results, though people aged 20 and over are three times more likely than 16-19 year olds to think politicians don’t listen to people like them (17% of 20-25 year olds and 18% of 26-30 year old compared to 6% of the youngest age group).

**Q8.1** What, if anything, has prevented you from doing this...?  
**You said you have not voted in the last local, national or European election**  
(% - EU27)



Base: respondents who did not vote in the last local, national or European election (n= 1 929)

<sup>8</sup> Each respondent was asked about one of the activities only.

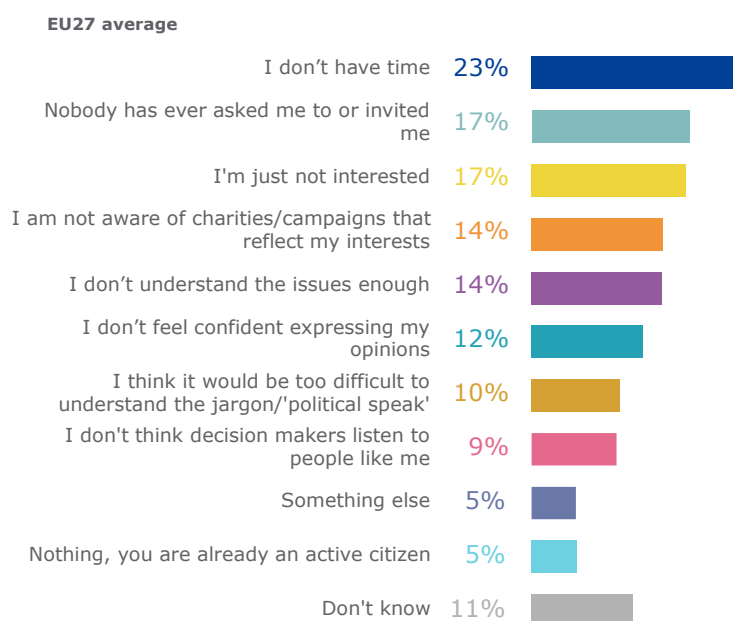
## Volunteering

A lack of time is the most commonly identified barrier to volunteering (mentioned by 23%), followed by never having been asked to volunteer (17%) and, as in the case of voting, a lack of interest (17%). A lack of understanding and awareness also emerge as issues: 14% of respondents say they don't understand the issues enough and an equal proportion say they are not aware of charities or campaigns that reflect their interests.

Males were more likely than females to mention a lack of interest as a reason for not volunteering (19% versus 14%)

**Q8.2** What, if anything, has prevented you from doing this...?

**You said you have not volunteered for a charity/campaign organisation (e.g. Amnesty, Greenpeace, Oxfam) (% - EU27)**



Base: respondents who did not volunteer for a charity/campaign organisation (n= 1 944)

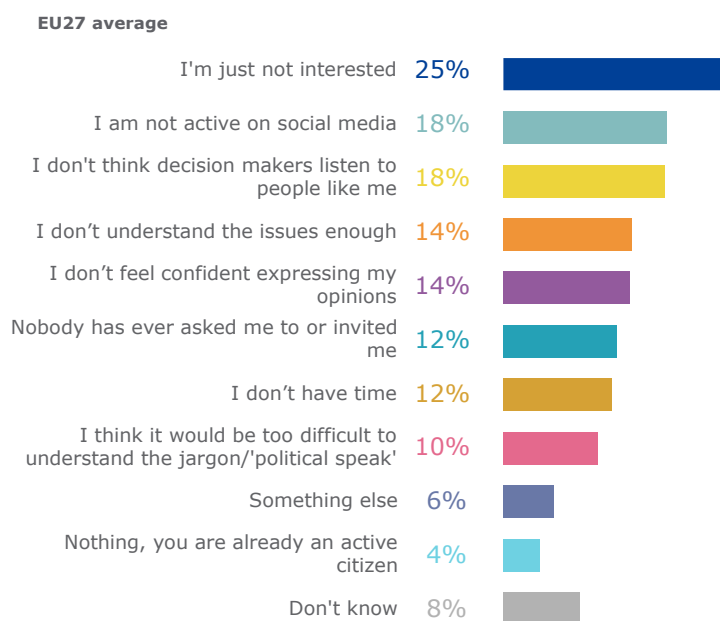
## Posting opinions online or on social media

A lack of interest is the most commonly mentioned reason for not posting opinions about political or social issues online, with a quarter (25%) of respondents mentioning this. The next most commonly mentioned reasons are simply not being active on social media and the belief that decision makers “don’t listen to people like me”, both of which are mentioned by 18%. Once again, a lack of understanding of the issues also emerges as a factor (14%), along with a lack of confidence in expressing one’s opinions (14%).

In addition to these factors, a relatively high proportion of males say that nobody has ever asked them to participate (14% versus 10% of females) and that they think it would be too difficult to understand the jargon or ‘political speak’ (13% versus 7%).

Respondents from more financially challenged households are more likely than those from financially secure households to mention a lack of confidence in expressing their opinions (for example, 18% of those living in households that are struggling to pay their bills compared to 12% of those living in households that can afford everything they need).

**Q8.3** What, if anything, has prevented you from doing this...?  
**You said you have not posted opinions online or on social media about a political or social issue (% - EU27)**



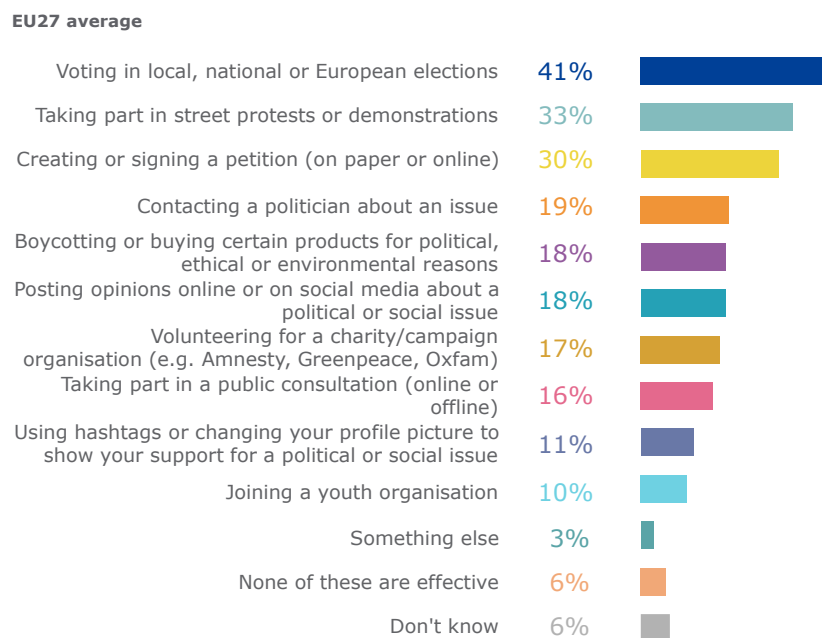
Base: respondents who did not post opinions online or on social media about a political or social issue (n= 1 938)



## 2.4. Perceived efficacy of different activities

The perceived most effective actions for making one's voice heard reflect, to an extent, the actions in which respondents have most commonly engaged. Thus **voting is the top response**, mentioned by 41%, followed by **taking part in protests and demonstrations** (33%), and **creating or signing a petition** (30%). Some divergence is also apparent between the two sets of results, however – in particular, the proportion of respondents who regard contacting a politician as effective (19%) is almost two times higher than the proportion who have done this (10%). Conversely, the proportion who regard online actions as effective is *lower* than the proportion who have done these things (18% versus 26% in respect of posting opinions online, and 11% versus 23% in respect of using hashtags or changing a profile picture).





























**Q9** In your opinion what are the three most effective actions for making one's voice heard by decision-makers? (% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n= 18 156)

**Voting is the perceived most effective action in all but one EU Member State** (Belgium), though the proportion mentioning it varies widely, from 31% in Austria to 62% in Portugal. In Ireland and Spain, voting comes out top equal alongside taking part in street protests and demonstrations (mentioned by 36% in Ireland and 45% in Spain). In Slovakia voting is top equal with creating or signing a petition (40%). In Belgium, creating or signing petitions is the top response, meanwhile, albeit this activity is mentioned by only 1% more respondent than mention voting (34% and 33% respectively).

**Q9** In your opinion what are the three most effective actions for making one's voice heard by decision-makers? (%)

	Voting in elections	Taking part in street protests/demonstrations	Creating/signing a petition	Contacting a politician about an issue	Boycotting/buycotting products	Posting opinions on social media	Volunteering for a charity/organisation	Taking part in a public consultation	Using hashtags/changing profile picture	Joining a youth organisation
EU27 	41	33	30	19	18	18	17	16	11	10
BE 	33	32	34	23	22	17	15	14	10	10
BG 	48	32	30	24	12	19	17	18	10	17
CZ 	47	24	37	29	11	21	14	27	8	4
DK 	38	28	33	21	18	17	16	14	12	16
DE 	35	27	27	21	21	17	18	15	15	8
EE 	51	30	38	26	17	14	16	27	6	9
IE 	36	36	22	28	24	23	19	17	18	10
EL 	43	39	25	18	18	22	24	24	8	11
ES 	45	45	27	19	15	19	15	15	7	10
FR 	36	31	26	16	24	18	17	12	12	8
HR 	41	38	37	22	17	20	16	16	10	14
IT 	46	36	28	15	17	15	21	13	10	12
CY 	40	35	18	21	17	14	18	19	6	22
LV 	35	33	33	21	13	23	14	27	10	7
LT 	44	27	32	27	18	20	14	21	8	14
LU 	43	41	40	30	21	14	11	14	8	8
HU 	42	38	37	16	13	22	15	26	9	9
MT 	52	38	42	24	16	24	16	21	8	6
NL 	44	25	34	18	19	18	17	12	12	12
AT 	31	25	27	20	17	17	17	20	16	9
PL 	43	40	35	19	15	21	15	18	13	12
PT 	62	47	42	18	15	19	19	9	9	10
RO 	49	35	35	18	10	23	17	20	11	13
SI 	52	28	39	21	15	12	13	17	9	12
SK 	40	26	40	26	11	18	14	24	11	8
FI 	44	22	42	25	18	22	16	17	13	7
SE 	40	24	25	23	25	21	15	14	12	15

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

Voting is perceived as effective by more females than males (45% versus 38%), and by more respondents aged 20 and over than by younger groups (for example 44% of those aged 26-30 versus 39% of 16-19 year olds) – though this age-based variation may, to some extent, reflect respondents' eligibility to vote. The perceived efficacy of voting also increases with education: it is seen as effective by 23% of respondents who left education at age 15 or earlier, by 37% of those who did so between the ages of 16 and 19, and by 45% of those who did so later or who are still studying. A corresponding correlation is observed in relation to *parental* education – for example, whereas a third (33%) of those whose mother has a primary school education regard voting as effective, this rises to almost half (47%) of those whose mother is educated to college or university level.

A linear relationship can also be seen between the perceived efficacy of voting and the financial situation of respondents' households: 29% of those living in households that struggle to pay their bills regard voting as effective, rising to 51% among those living in households that can afford everything they need.

Participating in protests and demonstrations, and creating or signing petitions are similarly seen as effective by:

- more females than males (36% versus 30% in the case of protests/demonstrations, and 34% versus 26% in the case of petitions).
- more highly education respondents than those with lower levels of education (for example, 19% of those who completed education at age 15 or younger regard petitions as effective compared to 31% of those who completed education at age 20 or older, or who are still studying).
- more respondents living in financially better-off households than in households experiencing financial challenges (for example, 38% of those living in households that can afford everything they need regard protests and demonstrations as effective, compared to 25% of those living in households that struggle to pay their bills).

Fewer notable socio-demographic differences are evident for the other forms of political and civic participation under consideration.

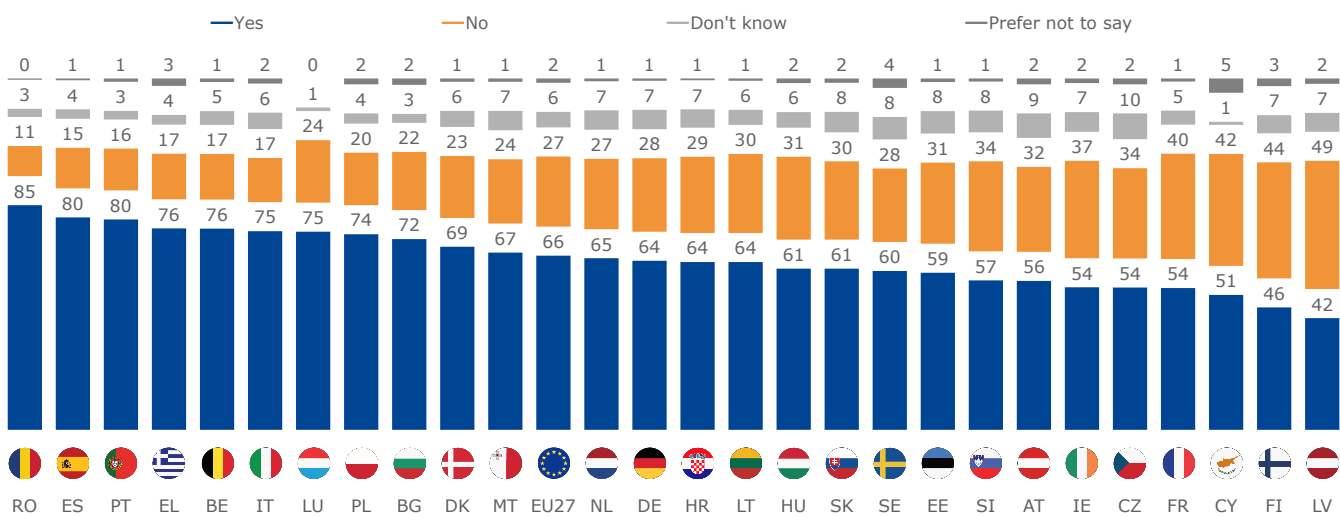
## 2.5. Voting in European elections

Two-thirds (66%) of respondents who were eligible to vote in the last (2019) European election say they did so. Twenty-seven per cent say they did not, 6% don't know and a further 2% prefer not to say.

The proportion saying they voted varies considerably by Member State, from 42% in Latvia, to around double this number in Romania (85%), Spain (80%) and Portugal (80%). That said, in most (23) Member States the figure is higher than the actual turnout for the electorate as a whole. The difference is particularly pronounced in Portugal (where 80% of young people say they voted versus an actual total turnout of 31%) and Slovakia (61% versus 23%). In four other Member States, the proportion of young people who say they voted is around two times higher than the actual total turnout figure: Bulgaria (72% versus 33%), Croatia (64% versus 30%), Slovenia (57% versus 29%) and Czechia (54% versus 29%).

In four other Member States, by contrast, the proportion of young people who say they voted is slightly lower than the actual total turnout figure: Belgium (76% versus 88%), Luxembourg (75% versus 84%), Malta (67% versus 73%), and Austria (56% versus 60%).

Q10 Did you vote in the last European Elections in May 2019? (%)



Base: those who were eligible to vote in May 2019 (n= 14 952)

At the socio-demographic level, the proportion having voted in 2019 increases with:

- age (from 57% of 16-19 year olds, to 69% of 26-30 year olds).
- education (from 58% of those who completed education at age 15 or younger to 72% of those who did so at age 20 or older); and parental education (for example, from 66% of those whose mother has a primary school education, to 72% of those whose mother has a college or university level education).
- the financial security of the household (from 61% of those living in households that are struggling to pay their bills, to 72% of those living in households that can afford everything they need).

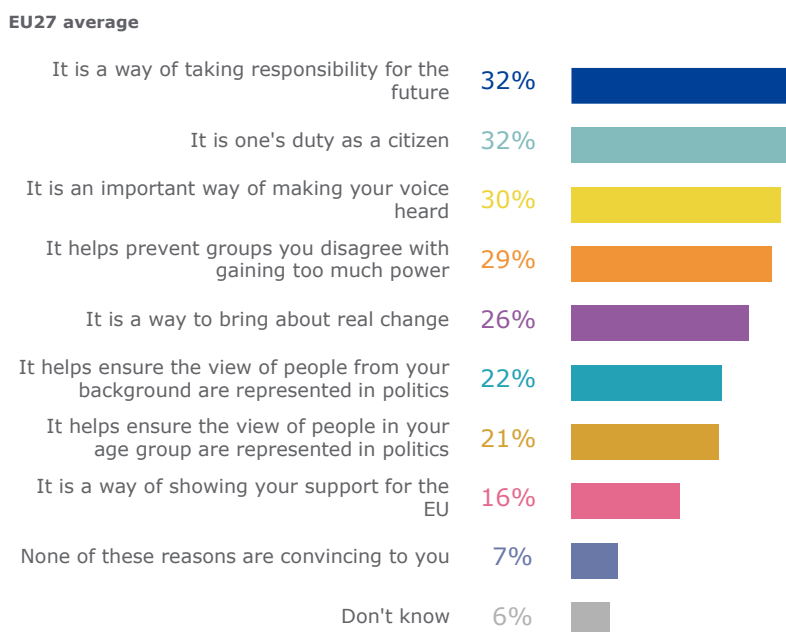
The figure is also higher among those who do not self-identify as belonging to a minority group than among those who do (68% versus 63%), and among respondents who speak one or more than one EU language than among those who do not (62% and 69% versus 50% respectively).

## Motivating factors

All respondents were presented with a list of possible reasons for voting in European elections and asked which, if any, of these they found most convincing. None of the reasons were selected by a majority of respondents; rather, a spread of opinion was evident.

Around a third of respondents selected reasons relating to **duty** ("It is one's duty as a citizen", 32%) or to **individual responsibility or empowerment** ("It is a way of taking responsibility for the future", 32%; "It is an important way of making your voice heard, 30%). A similar proportion were convinced that voting helps to reduce the **power** of "groups you disagree with" (29%). Somewhat fewer respondents selected reasons relating to **group representation** ("It helps ensure people from your background are represented in politics", 22%; "It helps ensure the views of people in your age group are represented", 21%). Fewer still selected "It is a way of showing your **support for the EU**".

**Q11** Below are some reasons people have given for voting in European elections. Which three of these reasons, if any, do you think are most convincing? (% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)





























"*It is one's duty to vote*" is the most commonly selected reason in 10 EU Member States: Portugal (56%), Italy (43%), Lithuania (42%), France (41%), Romania (41%), Greece (40%), Croatia (39%), Malta (37%), Belgium (34%) and Latvia (32%). In Belgium and Greece these results may in part reflect the fact that voting is compulsory in these countries (as it is in Luxembourg and Cyprus).

In most other Member States, reasons relating to individual responsibility and empowerment come out top:

- "*It is a way of taking responsibility for the future*" is the top response in Bulgaria (42%), Denmark (40%), Poland (39%), Germany (36%), Hungary (36%), Slovakia (36%), Czechia (28%), Ireland (35%), Slovenia (34%) and Austria (30%).
- "*It is an important way of making your voice heard*" is the top response in Sweden (37%), the Netherlands (35%), Finland (34%), Estonia (34%) and Spain (33%).

Luxembourg, Czechia and Cyprus are the only Member States where other reasons for voting rank more highly. In Luxembourg and Czechia, the top reason is that voting "*helps prevent groups you disagree with getting too much power*" (selected by 49% and 32% respectively). This reason also emerges top equal in Germany (36%) alongside "*It is a way of taking responsibility for the future*". In Cyprus the top reason is that voting is "*a way to bring about real change*" (34%).

**Q11** Below are some reasons people have given for voting in European elections. Which three of these reasons, if any, do you think are most convincing? (%)

	Taking responsibility for the future	It is one's duty as a citizen	Important way of making your voice heard	Prevent groups you disagree with gaining too much power	It is a way to bring about real change	Ensure the view of people from your background are	Ensure the view of people in your age group are represented	It is a way of showing your support for the EU
EU27 	32	32	30	29	26	22	21	16
BE 	26	34	33	33	19	22	22	10
BG 	42	27	38	26	35	26	22	10
CZ 	28	26	25	32	26	25	22	16
DK 	40	32	31	25	16	24	23	24
DE 	36	20	18	36	26	24	27	18
EE 	28	25	34	30	15	33	27	19
IE 	35	24	32	20	30	24	30	19
EL 	27	40	38	25	27	25	26	13
ES 	29	32	33	32	31	22	25	14
FR 	21	41	32	30	15	18	18	15
HR 	34	39	25	26	25	22	20	15
IT 	34	43	36	20	26	21	18	15
CY 	31	33	33	25	34	15	18	14
LV 	31	32	26	23	24	23	25	20
LT 	31	42	31	22	22	25	21	16
LU 	26	28	21	49	28	19	21	17
HU 	36	28	30	30	24	25	19	19
MT 	31	37	35	28	22	25	28	11
NL 	34	20	35	28	19	26	23	14
AT 	30	19	20	26	27	23	23	18
PL 	39	35	35	28	37	17	17	15
PT 	40	56	42	24	25	19	18	18
RO 	36	41	26	27	40	20	19	18
SI 	34	33	27	25	26	26	17	19
SK 	36	21	34	27	24	32	22	19
FI 	33	24	34	24	26	27	25	14
SE 	35	25	37	24	23	18	17	19

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

At the socio-demographic level, key predictors of attitudes to voting in EU elections are sex, age, education (respondent and, to a lesser extent, parental) and households' financial situation:

- Females are somewhat more likely than males to be convinced that voting is: a way to bring about real change (28% versus 23%), a way of making one's voice heard (33% versus 28%), a way of taking responsibility for the future (35% versus 29%), and a way of preventing those you disagree with gaining too much power (31% versus 27%).
- Respondents aged 16-19 are more likely than older groups to think voting is a way to bring about real change (29% versus 26% of 20-25 year olds and 23% of 26-30 year olds). Meanwhile, the 26-30 age group is more convinced than younger respondents that voting is one's duty (35% versus 31% of 20-25 year olds and 30% of 16-19 year olds).
- Respondents from more financially secure households are more likely than those from financially challenges ones to see voting as a duty, as a way of making one's voice heard, as a way of taking responsibility for the future, and of preventing those you disagree with gaining too much power, (For example, 38% of those living in households that can afford everything they need see voting as a duty, compared to 22% of respondents living in households that struggle to pay bills).
- The view of voting as a duty and as a preventative measure also increases with respondents' level of education. For example, 17% of those who left education at age 15 or younger see voting as a duty, compared to 37% of those who left education at age 20 or older (and 34% of those who are still studying). A similar correlation is evident between the perception of voting as a duty and *maternal* education: 28% of respondents whose mother has a primary school education see voting as a duty compared to 38% of those whose mother is college or university educated.



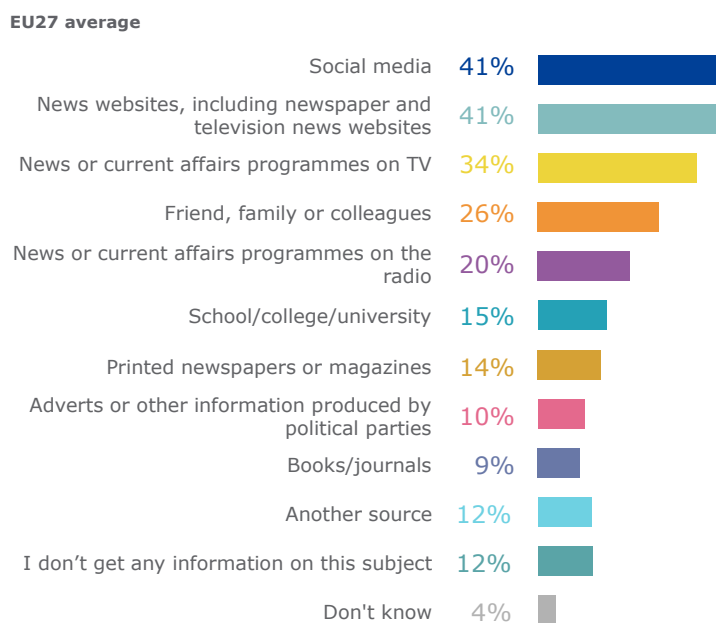
## Section 3. Information on political and social issues

### 3.1. Main sources of 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%. These are followed by TV news or current affairs programmes, mentioned by around a third (34%).

Around a quarter (26%) of respondents obtain information from friends, family or colleagues, while 15% do so from school, university or college. Comparatively smaller proportions obtain information from political party communications (10%), or from books or journals (9%). Twelve per cent of respondents say they do not get any information on political and social issues.

**Q15a** From which of these sources do you get most of your information on political and social issues? (% - EU27)































Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

**Social media, news websites and television programmes, and friends, family or colleagues are among the most mentioned sources of information in all but two Member States** (Cyprus and Luxembourg). Further differences in usage of the sources include the following:

- Social media is the top (or top equal) source of information in 18 Member States, with mention of it rising to 50% or higher in Bulgaria (50%), Croatia (51%), Poland (51%), Latvia (54%), Greece (55%), Luxembourg (56%), Cyprus (65%) and Malta (70%).
- News websites are the top-ranking source in nine Member States: Czechia (60%) and Estonia (60%), Slovenia (50%), Portugal (49%), Finland (48%), Italy (44%), the Netherlands (43%), Denmark (42%) and Belgium (40%). They are also top equal (with social media) in Luxembourg (56%), Romania (45%) and Poland (51%).
- Television news or current affairs programmes are mentioned by more than 40% of respondents in Czechia (41%), Bulgaria (43%), Slovakia (44%) and Portugal (45%). This source is also among the top two responses in Italy (39%), Belgium (38%), the Netherlands (38%) and Sweden (37%).
- Friends, family and colleges are consistently mentioned by at least of 20% of respondents across the EU27, with the figure rising to 37% in Estonia and to 42% in Malta.
- Other notable findings at the Member State level are:
  - the relatively high proportion of respondents in Denmark (25%) and Greece (22%) who mention school, college or university are among their top sources of information (25% and 22% respectively).
  - The relatively high mention of communications from political parties in Bulgaria, Hungary and Portugal (16% in each case).

**Q15a** From which of these sources do you get most of your information on political and social issues? (%)

	Social media	News websites (newspaper/TV news websites)	News or current affairs programmes on	Friend, family or colleagues	News or current affairs programmes on	School/college/university	Printed newspapers or magazines	Adverts or other information produced by	Books/journals	Another source
EU27 	41	41	34	26	20	15	14	10	9	12
BE 	37	40	38	25	20	18	18	9	7	14
BG 	50	45	43	27	21	9	7	16	6	9
CZ 	49	60	41	20	11	17	11	7	5	13
DK 	41	42	37	31	21	25	9	8	8	16
DE 	36	33	32	27	24	16	16	12	11	13
EE 	54	60	40	37	24	12	11	5	5	10
IE 	43	40	32	26	20	17	14	11	10	14
EL 	55	42	26	31	13	22	12	13	8	17
ES 	46	44	38	28	19	14	14	9	12	11
FR 	35	33	31	26	18	14	17	11	8	11
HR 	51	45	34	29	15	14	17	11	5	10
IT 	38	44	39	21	18	16	16	7	11	12
CY 	65	40	23	33	29	12	10	11	7	9
LV 	54	35	36	29	20	12	5	11	6	10
LT 	49	46	38	28	25	11	9	12	6	11
LU 	56	56	26	29	27	17	28	8	18	11
HU 	47	40	21	29	14	11	12	16	8	10
MT 	70	52	37	42	17	5	1	12	9	4
NL 	32	43	38	25	24	18	8	8	5	13
AT 	35	34	25	25	21	15	21	12	12	11
PL 	51	51	31	28	20	11	6	7	9	9
PT 	43	49	45	34	21	14	21	16	7	9
RO 	45	45	37	26	23	14	9	13	6	11
SI 	47	50	37	25	20	16	12	9	7	12
SK 	49	46	44	30	19	15	10	8	7	11
FI 	45	48	39	24	21	16	12	10	9	12
SE 	46	35	37	26	22	18	14	9	10	11

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

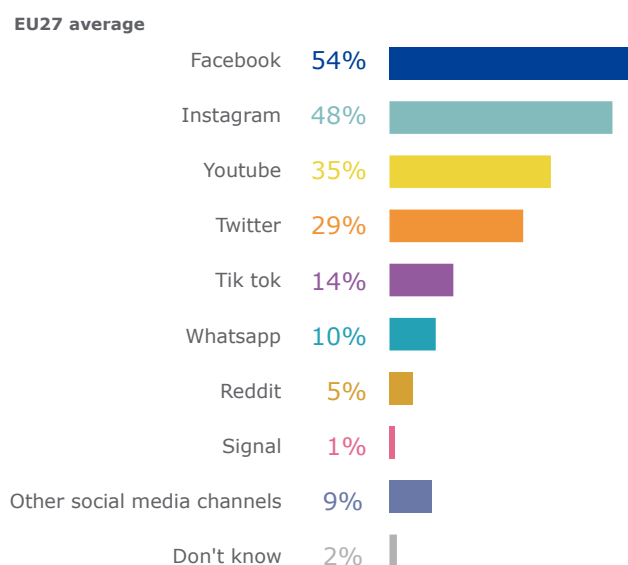
There are a number of differences in respondents' main sources of information along socio-demographic lines, and especially in terms of gender, age, education, financial security of their household, and language skills:

- Female respondents are more likely than males to obtain their information from social media (44% versus 38%), TV programmes (38% versus 31%) as well as from friends, family and colleagues (29% versus 23%), while male respondents are more likely to do so from printed newspapers (15% versus 13%), books or journals (10% versus 8%), and information produced by political parties (12% versus 8%).
- The youngest group of respondents (16-19 years old) are more likely than older groups to obtain their information from social media (45% versus 37% of 26-30 year olds), friends, family or colleagues (31% versus 24%) and school, college or university (25% versus 8%). At the same time, twice as many respondents in the youngest age group than in the oldest group say they don't get *any* information on political and social issues (19% versus 8%). Respondents aged 26-30 are more likely than the youngest group to obtain information from news or current affairs programmes on TV (38% versus 31%) or radio (22% versus 17%), or from printed newspapers (16% versus 10%) or news websites (46% versus 35%).
- Mention of all of the information sources tends to increase with education (for instance, 33% of those who completed their education at age 15 or younger mention news websites, compared to 47% of those who did so at age 20 or older). That said, it is notable that respondents who are still studying report using social media significantly more often than even the most educated group (45% versus 39%).
- Compared with respondents living in the most financially challenged households, more respondents living in the most affluent households report obtaining information from television news and current affairs programmes (40% versus 29%), social media (45% versus 32%), and news websites (46% versus 28%). More respondents from the most financially challenged households report obtaining information from books (13% versus 9%) and political advertisements (17% versus 7%).
- Mention of the various sources of information also tends to increase with the number of languages respondents speak. The increase is particularly marked in the case of news websites: 22% of those who speak no EU languages mention this source, compared to 33% who speak one language and 46% who speak more than one.

## Usage of social media channels

Respondents who reported obtaining most of their information on political and social issues from social media were asked which specific social media channels they tend to rely on. **The most commonly mentioned channels are Facebook (54%) and Instagram (48%), followed by YouTube (35%) and Twitter (29%)** respectively. Other social media channels, including Tik Tok (14%) and WhatsApp (10%) are mentioned comparatively less often.





























**Q15b** And from which social media channels do you get most of your information on political and social issues? (% - EU27)



Base: Respondents who obtain information on political and social issues from social media (n=7 987)

**Facebook is the most popular channel in the majority of EU Member States**, though mention of it varies greatly, from 46% in Finland to 94% in Malta. Facebook is surpassed as a source of political and social news only in Germany and Spain. In Germany, Instagram is almost twice as popular (64% versus 34%) and in Spain Twitter emerges as the top source by a similarly wide margin (65% versus 27%).

**Q15b** And from which social media channels do you get most of your information on political and social issues?  
(%)

	Facebook	Instagram	YouTube	Twitter	TikTok	WhatsApp	Reddit	Signal	Other social media channels
EU27 	54	48	35	29	14	10	5	1	9
BE 	63	39	26	24	13	4	5	1	8
BG 	85	29	42	10	6	1	6	1	14
CZ 	69	52	34	19	5	3	4	0	9
DK 	80	37	23	16	8	4	10	4	6
DE 	34	62	42	21	23	20	6	2	10
EE 	78	34	31	18	11	2	10	1	16
IE 	41	45	40	34	23	7	11	2	10
EL 	65	51	46	24	9	2	10	1	18
ES 	27	47	22	65	10	16	2	0	6
FR 	44	49	30	41	14	6	4	1	7
HR 	76	32	28	13	8	6	10	1	11
IT 	52	54	30	29	9	12	4	1	6
CY 	83	39	26	22	12	4	0	5	29
LV 	68	32	33	20	16	7	6	1	20
LT 	84	29	41	13	10	0	8	1	16
LU 	44	56	52	20	19	2	12	2	20
HU 	85	33	45	8	10	2	5	0	12
MT 	94	42	17	20	14	8	2	2	7
NL 	48	57	33	16	13	15	5	2	8
AT 	49	53	29	15	23	20	9	3	12
PL 	76	33	44	26	13	3	4	2	12
PT 	60	63	24	43	11	13	6	0	4
RO 	85	34	53	8	12	12	6	1	8
SI 	73	33	28	21	11	1	9	2	14
SK 	77	46	31	10	5	1	4	0	9
FI 	46	47	35	28	23	12	10	2	12
SE 	57	62	36	22	23	2	7	1	9

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

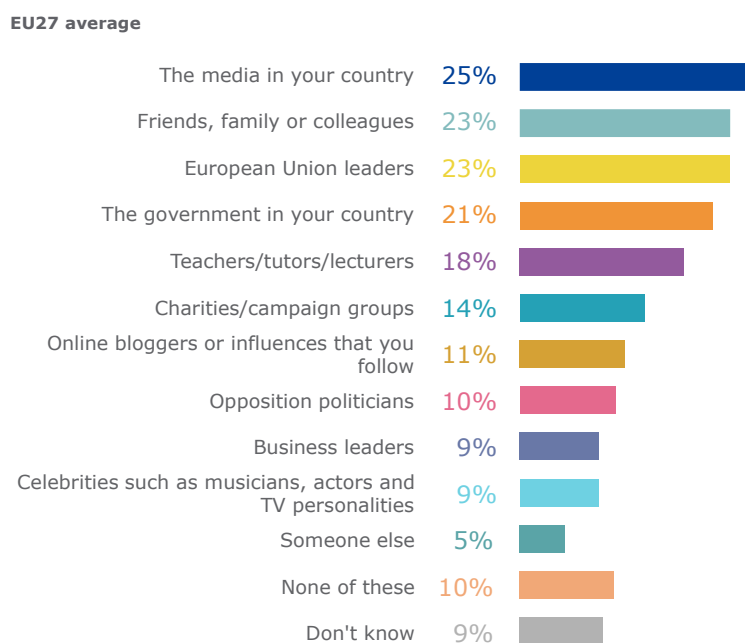
In terms of socio-demographic differences:

- Male respondents are more likely than females to obtain information from WhatsApp (13% versus 8%), Reddit (8% versus 2%), Twitter (31% versus 27%), and YouTube (44% versus 27%). Females, in turn, are more likely to obtain information from Instagram (53% versus 43%).
- Mention of Facebook increase with age, from 37% among 16-19 years old to 69% among 26-30 years old. Conversely, the youngest respondents are almost two times more likely than their elders to mention Instagram (64% versus, for example, 34% of 26-30 year olds) and Tik Tok (25% versus 7%).
- Respondents who left education at age 15 or earlier are more likely than those who did so later to mention WhatsApp (21% versus, for example, 12% of those who left school at age 20 or older), Reddit (13% versus 5%), and Tik Tok (27% versus 8%).

### 3.2. Trust in information sources

Respondents were asked what sources they would most trust to provide them with information about issues facing Europe. No single source was mentioned by a majority of respondents, but the top-ranking sources, each mentioned by around a quarter, were **national media (25%), friends, family or colleagues (23%), EU leaders (23%) and national government (21%)**.

**Q16** Which of the following, if any, would you trust to give you information about issues facing Europe? (% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)





























Eighteen percent of respondents would trust information provided by teachers, tutors and lectures, while 14% would trust information provided by charities and campaign groups. Smaller proportions would trust information from other sources, including online bloggers (11%), opposition politicians (10%), business leaders (9%) or celebrities (9%). Ten percent of respondents (10%) say they would not trust *any* of the sources under consideration.

**The rank ordering of the different sources of information varies significantly across the Member States:**

- EU leaders are the most trusted source in eight Member States: Portugal (37%), Hungary (33%), Lithuania (33%), Latvia (33%), Malta (32%), Romania (32%), Czechia (27%), Slovakia (27%). They also emerge as a top equal response in Estonia (31%) and Spain (26%).
- National media is the top response in seven Member States – Finland (37%), Luxembourg (33%), Italy (32%), Belgium (29%), Germany (28%), Cyprus (26%) and France (24%) – and top equal with EU leaders in Estonia.
- Friends, family and colleagues are the most trusted source in six Member States: Slovenia (28%), Bulgaria (26%), Poland (26%), Croatia (25%) and Greece (22%) – and top equal with EU leaders in Spain.
- National government is mentioned more than any other sources in Sweden (34%), Denmark (34%), Ireland (32%), the Netherlands (31%) and Austria (22%).



**Q16** Which of the following, if any, would you trust to give you information about issues facing Europe? (%)

	The media in your country	Friends, family or colleagues	European Union leaders	The government in your country	Teachers/tutors /lecturers	Charities/campaign groups	Online bloggers or influencers that you follow	Opposition politicians	Business leaders	Celebrities (musicians, actors, TV)
EU27 	25	23	23	21	18	14	11	10	9	9
BE 	29	26	21	24	23	11	8	12	7	6
BG 	20	26	22	17	19	15	14	7	13	14
CZ 	21	25	27	12	17	11	7	12	6	5
DK 	32	23	30	34	22	14	8	12	11	10
DE 	28	26	19	23	14	13	14	14	11	10
EE 	31	15	31	30	19	10	6	9	11	6
IE 	26	27	28	32	22	18	13	10	12	11
EL 	18	22	21	13	18	14	11	10	10	10
ES 	24	26	26	22	24	12	11	8	8	8
FR 	24	22	18	20	17	13	10	11	6	8
HR 	17	25	24	14	16	14	10	7	10	9
IT 	32	14	25	22	17	11	10	6	5	7
CY 	26	21	16	9	11	12	2	7	8	5
LV 	22	20	33	15	15	12	13	9	11	9
LT 	19	14	33	23	18	14	18	11	14	9
LU 	33	27	22	25	26	17	11	12	8	7
HU 	19	23	33	18	18	19	15	14	8	10
MT 	19	23	32	19	16	12	12	9	7	4
NL 	28	25	24	31	17	11	12	13	8	8
AT 	21	21	18	22	15	11	11	13	11	8
PL 	18	26	18	9	16	21	12	11	10	10
PT 	35	23	37	35	24	22	8	11	10	6
RO 	21	23	32	16	22	15	17	10	13	7
SI 	18	28	26	14	21	15	8	7	6	5
SK 	21	22	27	13	18	12	10	7	9	7
FI 	37	16	19	29	16	10	16	12	9	16
SE 	22	23	27	34	17	17	10	9	9	10

Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

The perceived trustworthiness of different information sources varies along socio-demographic lines, and especially by gender, age, education and language skills:

- Males are more likely than females to trust information about European issues provided by oppositional politicians (12% versus 9%), business leaders (11% versus 7%), and online influencers (13% versus 10%).
- The youngest group (16-19 years old) are more likely than older groups to trust information from friends, family or colleagues (26% versus, for example, 21% of 26-30 year olds). The oldest group, in turn, is more likely to trust national media (27% versus 24% of 16-19 year olds).
- Respondents who stopped studying at age of 15 or younger are more likely than more educated groups to trust information provided by celebrities (13% versus, for example, 8% of those who completed education at age 20 or older) and online influencers (21% versus 11%).
- Levels of trust in information provided by national media, national government and EU leaders increase with financial security of the household. Around one third of respondents from the most affluent households trust their country's media (33%), government (29%) and EU leaders (29%), compared to roughly one fifth of respondents from households that are struggling to pay their bills (23%, 19% and 16% respectively).

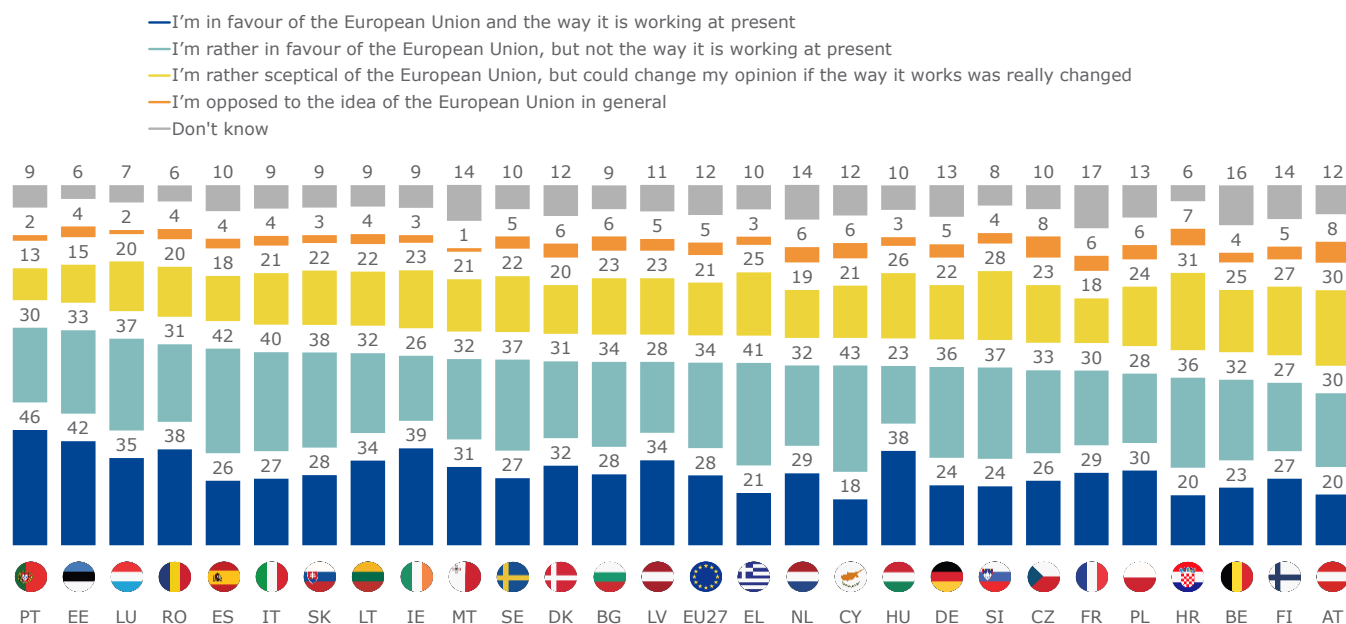
## Section 4. Attitudes towards the EU

### Support for the EU Project

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. Twelve per cent of respondents don't know what they think of the EU.

In all Member States, at least half of respondents are generally in favour of the EU. That said, the proportion of this group who are satisfied with the way the EU is working at present never reaches more than 46% (and, indeed, falls to 20% or lower in some countries), while the proportion who are dissatisfied ranges from 23% (in Hungary) to at least 40% (in Cyprus, Spain, Greece and Italy). At the same time, the proportion who are rather sceptical towards the EU ranges from 13% (in Portugal), to 31% (in Croatia). The proportion opposed to the EU is consistently below the 10% mark.

**Q12** Which of the following statements regarding the European Union is closest to your opinion? (%)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

The proportions of respondent saying they favour the EU but not the way it is working at present, or they are "rather sceptical of the EU" are slightly higher among males than females (23% versus 19% and 6% versus 4% respectively) - though this may in part reflect the fact that females are two times more likely than males to say they don't know what they think of the EU (16% versus 8%).

The proportion of respondents who are in favour of the EU and the way it is working increases with respondents' level of education (from 21% among those who completed education at age 15 or younger, to 28% among those who did so at age 20 or older). The proportion who are sceptical of the EU meanwhile *decreases* with education (9% of those who completed education at age 15 or younger compared to 5% of those who did so at age 20 or older).

The proportion of respondents who are in favour of the EU and the way it is working also increases with *parental* education: whereas 22% of those whose mother was educated to primary school-level fall into this group, the figure reaches 34% among those whose mother has a college or university education.

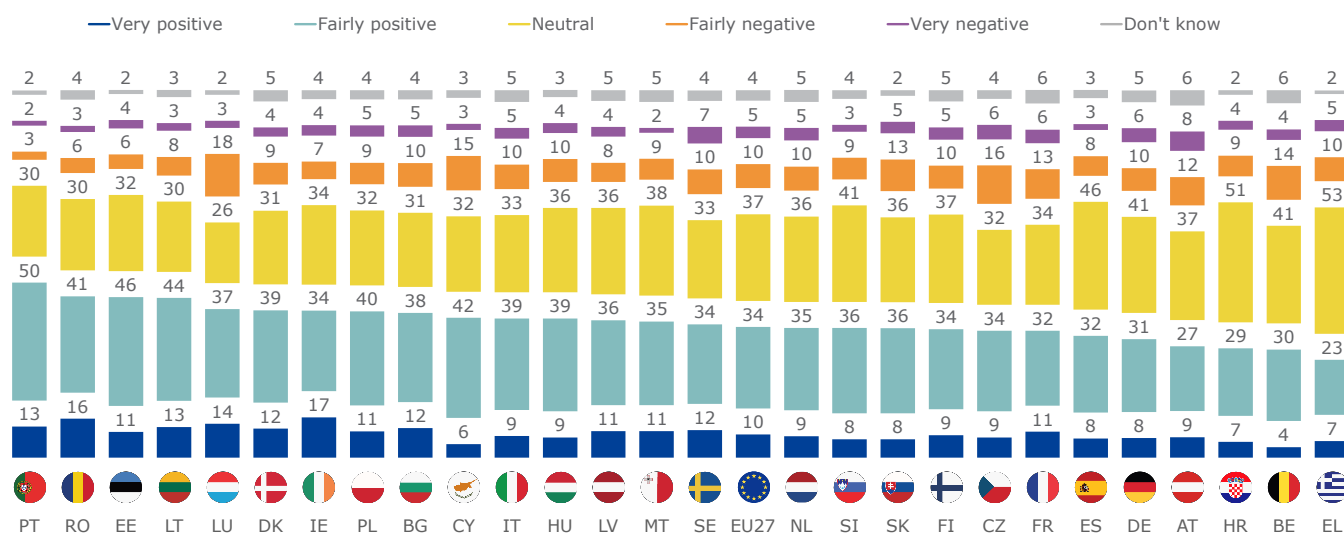
## Image of the EU

Forty-four per cent of all respondents have a positive image of the EU, while 37% have a neutral image and 15% a negative image. A further 4% don't know what image they have of the EU.

At the Member State level, the EU is viewed most positively in: Portugal (where 63% have a very or fairly positive image), Estonia (57%), Romania (57%), Lithuania (56%), Denmark (51%), Ireland (51%), Luxembourg (52%) Poland (51%) and Bulgaria (50%). Positivity towards the EU is notably lower in Greece (30%), Belgium (35%), Croatia (35%), Austria (36%) and Germany (39%).

The most explicitly *negative* image of the EU is found in Czechia (where 22% are fairly or very negative), Luxembourg (21%) and Austria (20%).

**Q13** In general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of the European Union? (%)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

In terms of socio-demographic variation, the most pronounced differences are apparent by education and household financial situation. Reflecting other results reported above, respondents who completed their education at age 20 or older are more likely to hold a positive image of the EU than those with a lower level of education (47% versus, for

example, 37% of those who completed their education at age 15 or younger). Additionally, respondents whose parents have a college or university education hold a more positive image than those whose parents have a lower level of education (for example, 52% of those whose mother has a college or university education, compared to 44% of those whose mother is educated to primary school level).

Respondents living in financially better-off households are more likely to hold a positive image of the EU than those in less secure household (53% of those living in households that can afford everything they need, compared to 42% of those living in household that are struggling to pay their bills).

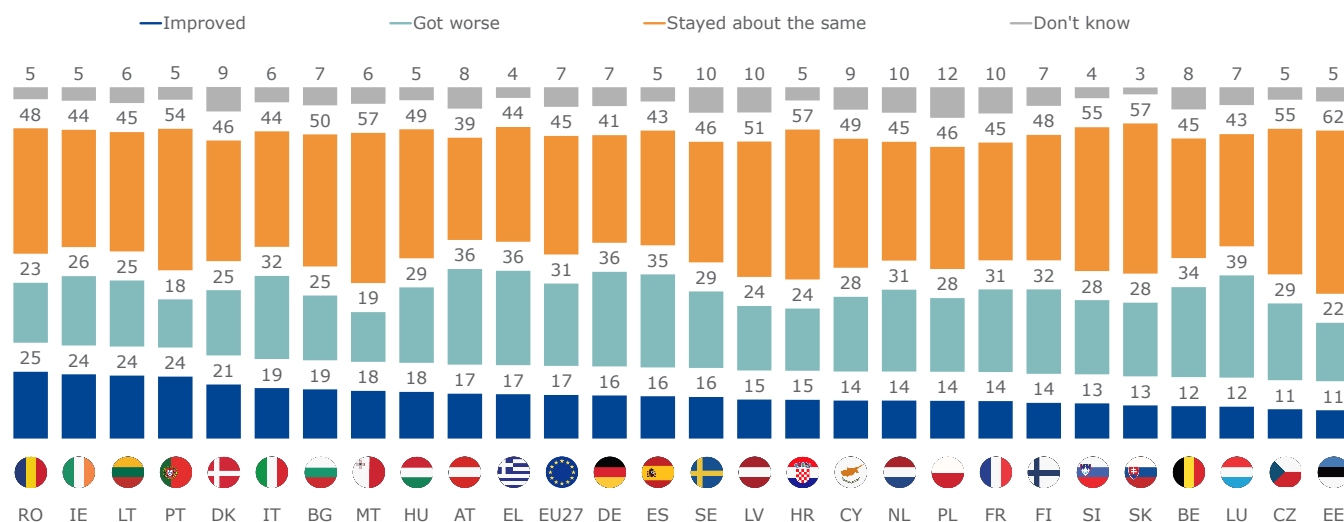
There is also some variation by area type, with respondents in large towns and cities more likely to have a positive image of the EU than those in other types of area (48% versus, for example 43% in rural areas).

## Change over time

**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 proportion who say their image has improved ranges from 11% (in Czechia and Estonia) to 25% (in Romania). Thus, there are no Member States where a majority of respondents say their image of the EU has either improved or got worse.

**Q14** Over the last year, would you say that this image you have of the European Union has improved, got worse or stayed about the same? (%)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

More males than females say their image of the EU has improved (21% versus 12%) or worsened (33% versus 29%), while more females say their image has remained stable (50% versus 41%).

Respondents aged 26-30 are more likely than younger groups to say their image of the EU has worsened (34% versus, for example, 27% of 16-19 year olds), though this may partly reflect the fact that the youngest group are more like to give a 'Don't know response.

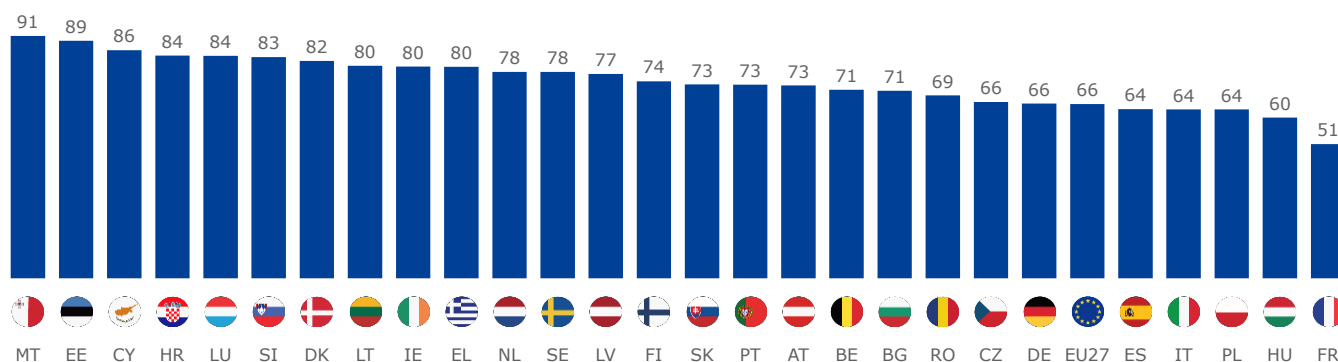
Respondents living in financially challenged households are also among those most likely to say their image of the EU has worsened (41% of those living in households that are struggling to pay their bills versus 26% of those living in households that can afford everything they need). Respondents in the most financially *secure* households are among those most likely to say their image of the EU has stayed the same (51% compared to 31% of those living in households that are struggling to pay their bills).

## 4.1. Language abilities

Asked which European languages they can speak well enough to maintain a conversation, **the majority of respondents mention more than one language (64%), while 33% mention one** and 3% say they can't speak any of the languages to this level.

In each Member State, over a half of respondents say they speak English fluently enough to have a conversation, with the figure rising to 91% in Malta, 89% in Estonia, and 86% in Cyprus.

**SD5** Which of these languages do you speak well enough in order to be able to have a conversation? (% "English")



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

Luxembourg emerges as the most multilingual member state: A majority of respondents there speak German (76%), French (88%) and English (84%), around a quarter (22%) speak Portuguese and 12% speak Spanish.

It is relatively common for respondents to speak the languages of neighbouring countries – for example:

- 48% of Slovenian respondents speak Croatian
- 42% of respondents from Malta speak Italian
- 23% of Finnish respondents speak Swedish and

- Czech is spoken by 74% of respondents in Slovakia, while 22% of respondents from Czechia can speak Slovak.

Among the least multilingual countries are Cyprus, Lithuania and Latvia where only English and the national languages are relatively common (for instance, in Latvia 85% and 77% of respondents speak Latvian and English, followed by German spoken only by 7% of respondents with other languages having fewer speakers if any).

**Language skills tend to be better among respondents who are younger, have higher levels of education or who are still studying:**

- The youngest respondents are more likely to speak English than the oldest group (68% for 16-19 years old and 62% for 26-30 years old). The youngest group also has higher knowledge of French than the older groups (25% versus 21% for the oldest group).
- Knowledge of English improves with education: 48% of those who left the educational system at age of 15 or younger speak English, rising to 67% of those who completed their education at age 20 or older, and 72% of those still studying. Likewise, the ability to speak French and Spanish is more common among respondents with higher levels of education and those who are still studying (for example, 26% of those who completed education at age 20 or older can speak French, compared to 13% of those who did so at age 15 or younger).

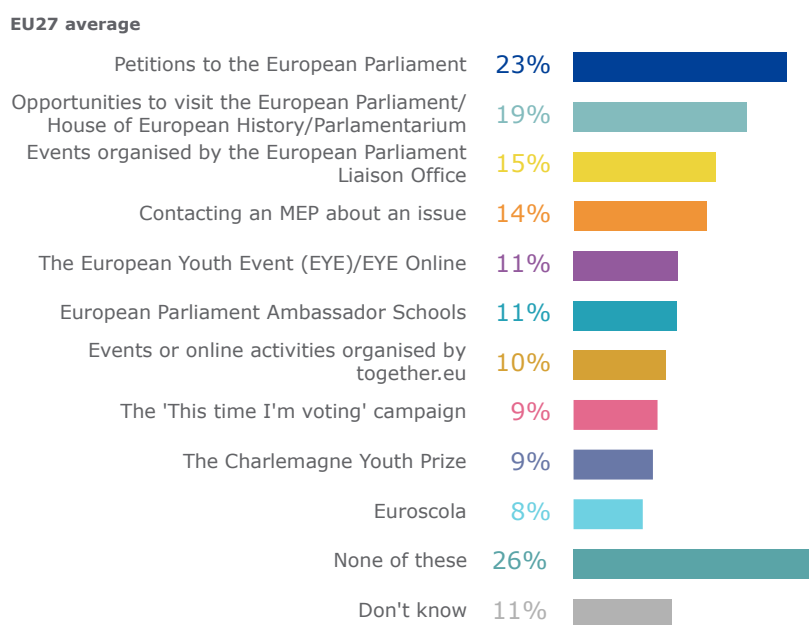
## Section 5. The European Parliament youth offer

### 5.1. Awareness of the European Parliament youth offer

Respondents were presented with a list of ways in which they can get engaged with the work of the European Parliament, and asked which of these, if any, they have heard of.

**Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents have heard of at least one of the activities.** Twenty-three per cent have heard of petitions to the European Parliament and 19% have heard of opportunities to visit the European Parliament, House of European History or the Parliamentarium. A similar proportion have heard of events organised by the European Parliament Liaison Office (15%) and the possibility of contacting an MEP about an issue (14%). Lesser known activities are Euroscola, the Charlemagne Youth Prize and the 'This time I'm voting' campaign, each of which are mentioned by fewer than one in ten respondents.

**Q17** Below are some ways citizens can get involved in the work of the European Union. Which, if any, have you heard of? (% - EU27)

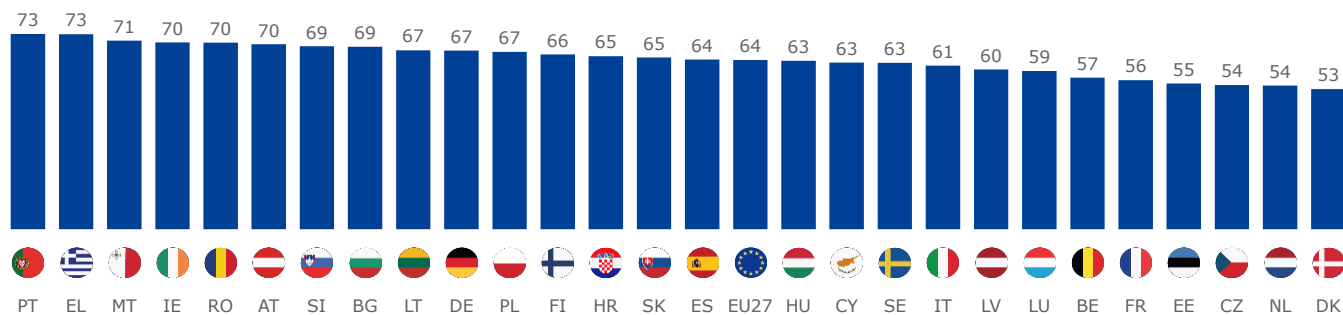


Base: all respondents (n=18 156)



The proportion of respondents who have heard of at least one of the activities is above the 50% mark in all Member States. It is highest in Greece (73%), Portugal (73%), Malta (71%), Ireland (70%), Austria (70%) and Romania (70%); and lowest in Denmark (53%), Czechia (54%), the Netherlands (54%) and Estonia (55%).

**Q17** Below are some ways citizens can get involved in the work of the European Union. Which, if any, have you heard of?  
 (% having heard of at least one of the activities)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

More males than females have heard of at least one of the activities (67% versus 60%), and more respondents age below 26 than above this age have done so (65% of 16-19 year olds and 67% of 20-25 year olds versus 59% of those aged 26-30).

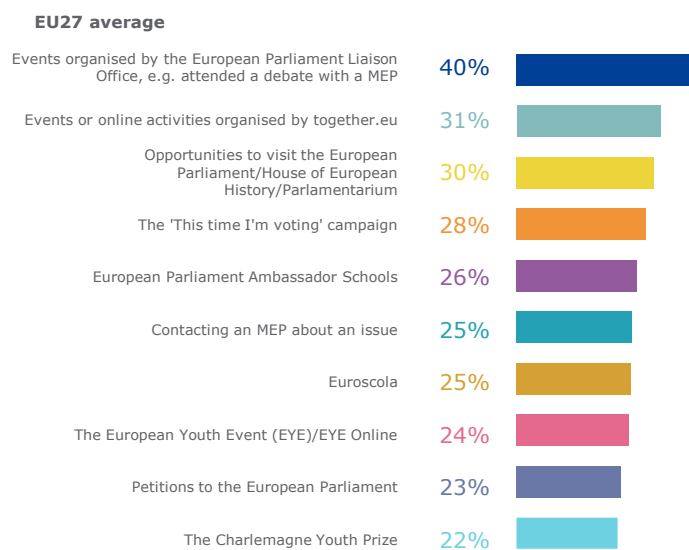
Awareness is also higher among respondents who identify as belonging to a minority group than among those who do not (77% versus 59%), and among those who speak one or more EU language than among those who do not speak any (65% of those who speak one language and 63% of those who speak more than one, compared to 55% of those who do not).

## 5.2. Engagement with the European Parliament youth offer

### Incidence of engagement

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), events organised by together.eu (31%) and visits to the European Parliament, the House of European History or the Parliamentarium (30%).

Q18 And which, if any, of these have you actively taken part in? (% - EU27)



Base: Respondents who have heard of these activities (n=1 365 to 4 256)

Males are more likely than females to have participated in *any* of the activities they are aware of (49% versus 36%). The difference is especially marked for events organised by the European Parliament Liaison Office (45% versus 33%) and EYE/EYE online (29% versus 19%).

Participation is also higher among:

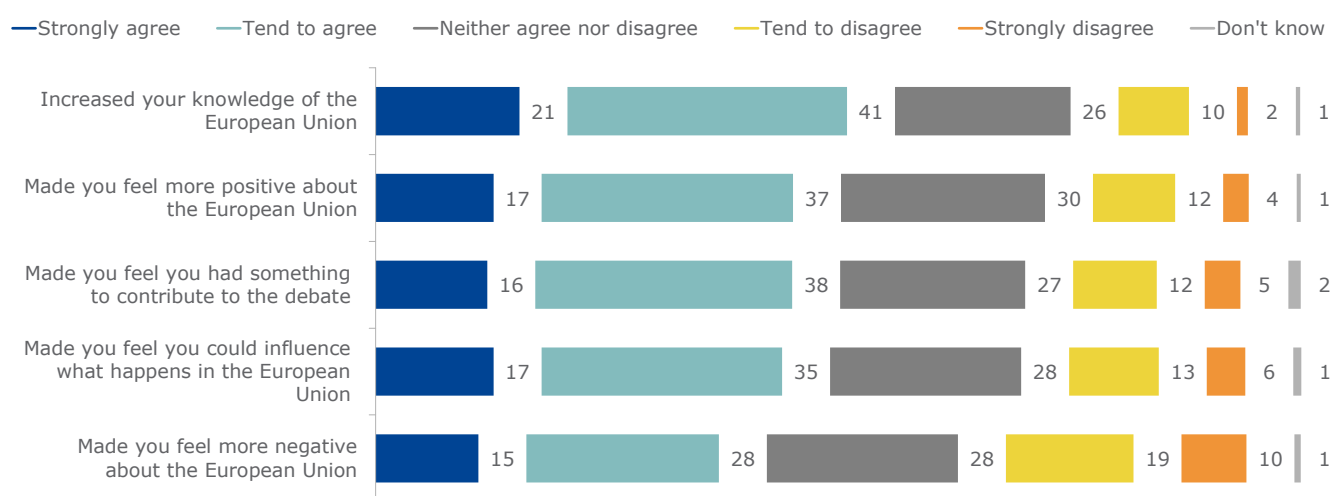
- respondents aged 20-25 than among other age groups (46% have participated in any of the activities versus 38% of those aged 16-19 and 42% of those aged 26-30).
- self-employed respondents (61% versus, for example, compared to 45% of employees).
- those who identify as belonging to a minority group than among those who do not (59% versus 35%).

There is limited variation by EU Tribes: 43% of both EU Enthusiasts and Moderates have taken part in at least one of the activities they are aware of, compared to 48% of Ambivalents and 40% of Sceptics.

## Impact of engagement

Respondents who had engaged in any of the activities, were asked how the experience had impacted on them. On the whole, the results are positive: Approaching two-thirds 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%)**. At the same time, 43% also say participating made them feel more *negative* about the EU.

**Q20** Do you agree or disagree that taking part in these activities...? (% - EU27)



Base: Respondents who have taken part in at least one activity (n=4 973)

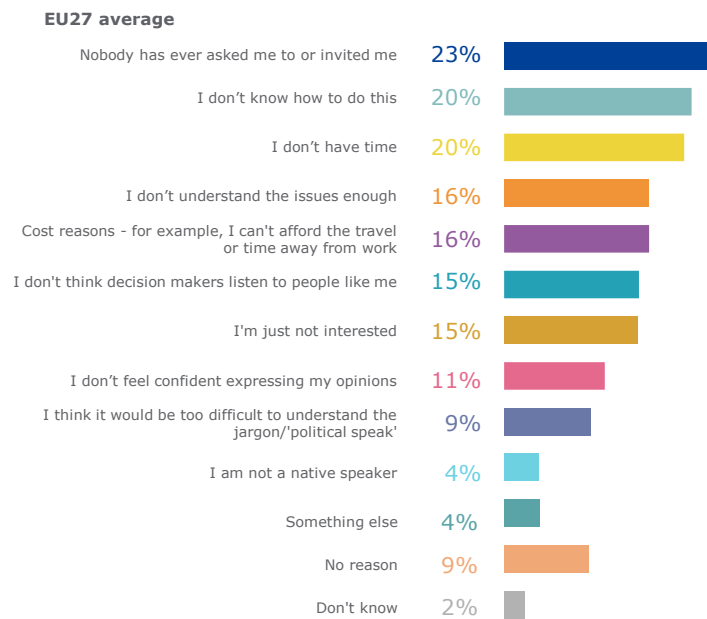
Respondents aged 26-30 are more likely than younger groups to agree that participating increased their knowledge of the EU (65% versus, for example, 60% of 16-19 year olds), made them feel more positive about the EU (57% versus 52%) and made them feel they could influence what happens (56% versus 51%). However, the oldest group is also more likely to agree that the experience made them feel more *negative* about the EU (47% versus 40%).

Respondents living in the most financially challenged households are more likely than those living in better-off households to agree that participating made them feel able to influence what happens in the EU (68% versus, for example, 58% of those in the most financially secure households). However, they are also almost two times more likely than those living in the most secure households to say that participating made them feel more negative about the EU (62% versus 34% respectively).

## Barriers to engagement

Respondents who have *not* participated in activities of which they are aware were asked about their reasons for this. The most commonly mentioned reasons are that they have **never been asked to participate (23%)**, that they **don't know how to get involved (20%)** and **a lack of time (20%)**. Once again, a lack of understanding of the issues also emerges as a relatively common theme (16%), as do cost considerations (16%), followed by a lack of interest (15%) and a belief that decision makers don't "listen to people like me" (15%).

**Q19** For what reasons, if any, have you not taken part in these activities? (% - EU27)



Base: Respondents who have taken part in any activities (n=6 056)

There are only a few socio-demographic differences in the results:

- More females than males say that they don't know how to get involved (22% versus 18%) and that they don't understand the issues (19% versus 12%).
- More respondents aged 20 and over than aged 16-19 say that decision makers don't listen to people like them (16% of both 20-25 year olds and 26-30 year olds, compared to 10% of those aged 16-19).
- Slightly more respondent living in the most financially challenged households than in more secure households say that it would be too difficult to understand the jargon or 'political speak' (14% versus, for example, 6% of those living in households that can afford everything they need). They are also more likely to mention reasons of cost (20% versus 11%).

## Section 6. Segmentation analysis

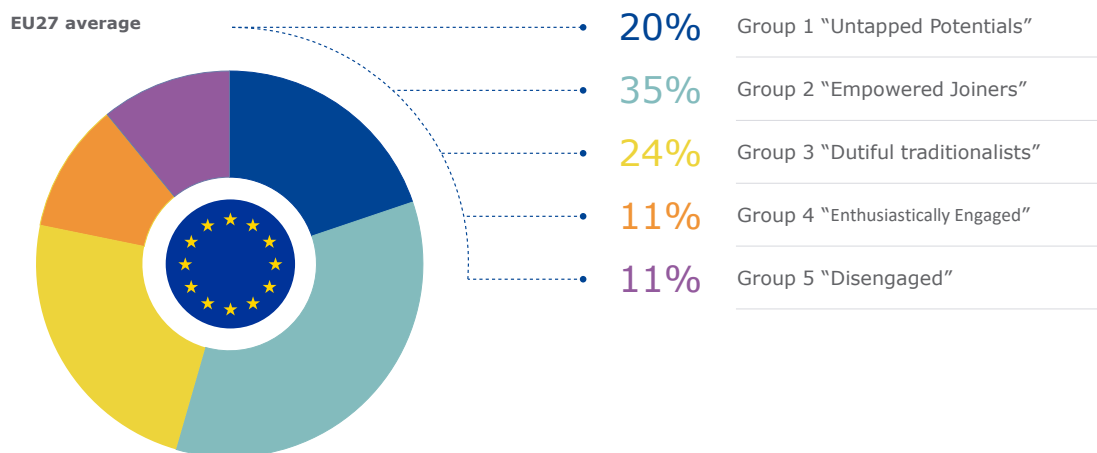
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Exploring young people's attitudes and behaviours towards political engagement through segmentation analysis helps to provide a more nuanced picture of where they stand on these matters and, more specifically, of how they group (segment) according to particular viewpoints and tendencies. An analysis was conducted that explored underlying patterns in relation to seven key dimensions covered in the survey: level of interest in, and understanding of, politics/government; self-assessed ability to influence decision-making (at the local, national and EU level); the perceived importance of political and civic engagement; levels of political and civic engagement; voting in the last EU election; and attitudes towards voting in EU elections.

Five distinct groups or segments emerged from the analysis, with the members of each group as like each other, and as different from the members of the other groups, as possible in terms of their responses on the seven dimensions:

- **Group 1: 'Untapped Potentials'** (20%) – This group frequently discusses politics with friends or relatives and has a high (self-assessed) level of understanding of local, national and EU government. At the same time, it feels strongly that it lacks influence over decision-making, and displays only moderate levels of political and civic engagement compared to other segments.
- **Group 2: 'Empowered Joiners'** (35%) – This group feel they have a lot of say over decision-making, think joining political parties is important and display a relatively high propensity to actively volunteer or join youth organisations. They display a lower propensity to vote, however.
- **Group 3: 'Dutiful Traditionalists'** (24%) – Think voting in elections is an important marker of good citizenship and actively vote themselves. They also show a relatively high propensity to create or sign petitions but a much lower propensity to engage in associations or in online discussions or campaigns.
- **Group 4: 'Enthusiastically Engaged'** (11%) – This group frequently discusses politics with friends or relatives, and has a high (self-assessed) level of understanding of government. It is the most politically and civically active of the groups, but along with the Empowered Joiners, is among the least likely to have voted in the last election.
- **Group 5: 'Disengaged'** (11%) – This group has a comparatively low level of interest in politics and a limited understanding of government at the local, national or EU level. It also displays very low levels of political or civic participation, including when it comes to voting.

## Profiles of political engagement (% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

Examining each of the groups in turn more closely reveals a number of interesting and relevant characteristics in the context of efforts to engage young people in the work of the European Parliament and broaden their levels of political and civic engagement more generally.

### Group 1: 'Untapped Potentials'

This group, which makes up 20% of the sample, frequently discusses politics with friends or relatives and has a high (self-assessed) level of understanding of government at the local, national and (to a lesser extent) EU level. At the same time, it is defined by its feeling of disempowerment: More than nine in ten feel they have little or no say over decision-making laws and policies at the local or national or EU level (94%, 96% and 92% respectively). The group displays an above average propensity to vote, but otherwise shows moderate levels of political engagement. In common with the Dutiful Traditionalists, it has low awareness of the European Parliament's youth offer. The group has no defining characteristics in socio-demographic terms.

The Untapped Potentials group has the 'raw ingredients' to be more politically and civically engaged (in terms of its knowledge and understanding, as well as its existing levels of engagement) but its feelings of disempowerment may be preventing it from becoming so. Efforts to communicate with this group therefore need to **highlight ways in which citizens have influenced the course of decision-making on important issues in the past**, the mechanisms through which they have done so – and the EU's commitment to public engagement as a means of empowering the public. The main channels of information through which the group can be reached are television news and news websites, along with social media – particularly Facebook and Youtube.

## Group 2: 'Empowered Joiners'

The Empowered Joiners constitute 35% of the youth (aged 16-30) population across the EU. They are characterised by their strong belief that they have a lot of say over decision-making, laws and policies at all levels of government – local, national and EU – and also by the importance they attach to joining associations, including political parties, charities, campaign organisations and youth organisations – which stands in contrast to their low propensity to vote compared to other segments (just 38% say they voted in their last local, national or European election).

The group's low level of voting does not appear to be a function of alienation from the mainstream political process: Aside from its enthusiasm for joining political parties, it is also among the segments most likely to be aware of, and to have engaged in, aspects of the European Parliament's youth offer. Further, the group displays a higher than average propensity to place importance on solidarity between EU Member State and between Member States and poor countries around the World.

The group is not particularly distinct in socio-demographic terms though, compared with the other segments, it does contain a higher than average proportion of people who identify as LGBTQ or as having a disability.

Given the Empowered Joiners' clear enthusiasm for having a say in decision-making, and for getting together with like-minded others in order to bring about change, there is an opportunity to try to **persuade them of the importance of voting** in these respects, and to highlight ways in which they can engage with the EU institutions more generally, in parallel with their activism in the civic sphere. The group obtains most of their information on political issues online, including via social media (Facebook and Instagram are especially favoured) and news websites. Any campaigns targeted at them should reflect these preferences.

## Group 3: 'Dutiful Traditionalists'

The Dutiful Traditionalists are the second largest group, comprising 24% of respondents. They display a significantly higher propensity than other segments to regard voting in elections as a duty and, accordingly, to have voted in their last local, national or European election (64%), including the 2019 EU election (67%). They also show a notably higher propensity than the other segments to have created or signed petitions. At the same time, they have a lower propensity to place importance on joining a political party, or to engage in associations such as charities, campaign groups or youth organisations, or in online activities like posting opinions online or on social media, or using hashtags or changing their profile picture to show their support for a political or social issue.

The Dutiful Traditionalists are predominantly female (55% versus 44% male) and the most highly educated of the segments (36% completed education at age 20 or older), as well as the group most likely to speak more than one EU language (74%). They are also the most 'Europhile' of the segments: Almost a third (31%) are in favour of the EU and the way it is working at present, and they display a higher propensity to trust EU leaders as a source of information than some of the other segments. At the same time, they show low awareness of (and thus participation in) the European Parliament's youth offer.

Based on this combination of characteristics, the Dutiful Traditionalists appear to be an **obvious group for the European Parliament Youth Outreach Unit to target in its efforts to raise awareness of its youth offer**. Playing to their sense of civic duty and their enthusiasm for the EU Project may prove effective strategies in this regard. As in the case of the Untapped Potentials, information provided on television news, news websites and via social media has the highest likelihood of reaching this group. Facebook and Instagram are their preferred social media channels.

## Group 4: 'Enthusiastically Engaged'

This group includes just over one ten (11%) respondents. Like the Untapped Potentials, members of the group frequently discuss politics with friends or relatives, and have a high (self-assessed) level of understanding of government. Unlike the Untapped Potentials, however, they think they have a lot of influence over decision-making, laws and policies at the local level – though somewhat less so at the national or EU level. What really distinguishes the group though is their political and civic engagement profile: they are the most active of all of the segments, including in terms of using hashtags or changing their profile picture to support a cause (30%), volunteering (28%), joining youth organisations (21%), participating in consultations (20%) and contacting politicians (16%). At the same time, like the Empowered Joiners, they display a relatively low propensity to have voted in the last election (42%) – and, of all the segments, they are the least likely to think voting is an effective way of making one's voice heard (38%). Notably, the group is also around two times more likely than average to account for not voting with reference to a lack of confidence (18%), concern about not being able to understand jargon or 'political speak' (20%) and having never been asked to vote (16%). Still, along with Empowered Joiners, the group shows relatively high awareness of, and rates of participation in, the European Parliament's youth offer.

The Enthusiastically Engaged group is disproportionately male (57% versus 43% female). It also contains a higher than average proportion of respondents who identify as LGBTQ (15%) or as belonging to an ethnic or religious minority (12%).

As in the case of the Empowered Joiners, the Enthusiastically Engaged would benefit from **messaging that emphasises the value of voting** – particularly at the national and EU level where it feels it has less of a say at present. In terms of the specific content of such messaging, the group is much less convinced than the Dutiful Traditionalists by arguments relating to duty. Rather, notions of individual empowerment – especially in terms of taking responsibility for the future – appear to hold more resonance for them. In terms of messaging channels, the Enthusiastically Engaged rely heavily on social media and news websites, though they also display a higher than average propensity to consume information produced by political parties (16% versus 10% of the sample as a whole).


## Group 5: 'Disengaged' (11%)

This group is equal in size to the Enthusiastically Engaged but, as its name implies, it has a dramatically different attitudinal and behavioural profile. It displays a much lower level of interest in politics than the other segments (33% "never" discuss politics with friends or family), as well as a lower level of understanding of government at the local, national or EU level. It also displays very low levels of political or civic participation, including when it comes to voting – just 17% of the group say they voted in the last local, national or European election; around a quarter of whom (22%) say they are "just not interested" in voting. Further, the group displays very low consumption of information on political and social issues and very low levels of trust in sources of such information. It is perhaps for this reason that they are also the least aware of the European Parliament's youth offer.

In socio-demographic terms, the Disengaged group are the least educated of the segments (26% left education at age 19 or younger), and the least likely to speak more than one EU language (44%). They are predominantly composed of young people who are sceptical (29%), or in favour of the EU but not the way it is working at present (26%).

**It is questionable whether members of the Disengaged would ever be receptive to communications from the European Parliament** – and, arguably, their very limited exposure to political information would only serve as a further barrier in this regard. If efforts *are* to be made to appeal to the group, then these should be aimed at the sub-

































set who are in favour of the EU but not the way it is working at present. Among these young people there may be a sufficient degree of goodwill towards the European Project to provide a basis on which to build.

## Technical specifications

Between 17 and 27 June 2021, Ipsos European Public affairs carried out the European Parliament Youth Survey at the request of the European Parliament, Directorate-General for Communication, Youth Outreach Unit and Public Opinion Monitoring Unit. This Flash Eurobarometer covers the population of EU citizens, residents in one of the 27 Member States of the EU and between 16 and 30 years of age.

	Number of interviews	Fieldwork dates	Population 16-30 (absolute number)	Population 16-30 (as % of EU27 population)
EU27 	18 156	18.06.2021-27.06.2021	74 661 772	100%
BE 	548	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	2 076 662	2.78%
BG 	513	18.06.2021-23.06.2021	1 035 348	1.39%
CZ 	520	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	1 653 410	2.21%
DK 	535	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	1 134 424	1.52%
DE 	1,548	18.06.2021-27.06.2021	13 974 549	18.72%
EE 	513	18.06.2021-24.06.2021	214 802	0.29%
IE 	568	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	915 072	1.23%
EL 	547	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	1 684 021	2.26%
ES 	1 519	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	7 338 445	9.83%
FR 	1 512	18.06.2021-23.06.2021	11 655 238	15.61%
HR 	527	18.06.2021-24.06.2021	685 406	0.92%
IT 	1 498	18.06.2021-26.06.2021	9 029 980	12.09%
CY 	107	18.06.2021-23.06.2021	194 153	0.26%
LV 	538	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	297 715	0.40%
LT 	535	18.06.2021-26.06.2021	482 245	0.65%
LU 	106	18.06.2021-22.06.2021	122 754	0.16%
HU 	553	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	1 688 515	2.26%
MT 	103	18.06.2021-27.06.2021	106 877	0.14%
NL 	578	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	3 308 198	4.43%
AT 	528	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	1 592 679	2.13%
PL 	1 496	18.06.2021-23.06.2021	6 502 689	8.71%
PT 	564	18.06.2021-24.06.2021	1 649 273	2.21%
RO 	532	18.06.2021-26.06.2021	3 148 470	4.22%
SI 	528	18.06.2021-26.06.2021	317 126	0.42%
SK 	528	18.06.2021-23.06.2021	947 358	1.27%
FI 	548	18.06.2021-25.06.2021	977 141	1.31%
SE 	564	18.06.2021-24.06.2021	1 929 222	2.58%

All interviews were carried via **Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI)**, using Ipsos online panels and their partner network. Respondents were selected from online access panels, groups of pre-recruited individuals who have agreed to take part in research. A share of respondents in Luxembourg was recruited via social media networks.

**Sampling quota** were set based on age (16-18 year-olds, 29-24 year-olds, 25-30 year-olds), gender and geographic region (NUTS<sub>1</sub>, NUTS<sub>2</sub> or NUTS<sub>3</sub>, depending on the size of the country and the number of NUTS regions).

When using quota sampling, a response rate cannot be calculated meaningfully for the lack of a definite gross sample because the underlying assumption with this type of sampling is that all units fulfilling the criteria of a given quota are interchangeable. Moreover, as is common practice across all major panel providers, Ipsos uses a survey router<sup>9</sup>; this implies that there is no gross sample that can be determined. ESOMAR guidelines recognise that the use of routers makes calculation of response (and refusal) rates difficult, if not impossible.

## Margin of error

Survey results are subject to sampling tolerances. The “margin of error” quantifies uncertainty about (or confidence in) a survey result. As a general rule, the more interviews conducted (sample size), the smaller the margin of error. A sample of 500 will produce a margin of error of not more than 4.4 percentage points, and a sample of 1 000 will produce a margin of error of not more than 3.1 percentage points.

### Statistical margins due to sampling tolerances (at the 95% level of confidence)

various sample sizes are in rows various observed results are in columns

	5%	10%	25%	50%	75%	90%	95%
n=50	±6.0	±8.3	±12.0	±13.9	±12.0	±8.3	±6.0
n=100	±4.3	±5.9	±8.5	±9.8	±8.5	±5.9	±4.3
n=200	±3.0	±4.2	±6.0	±6.9	±6.0	±4.2	±3.0
n=500	±1.9	±2.6	±3.8	±4.4	±3.8	±2.6	±1.9
n=1000	±1.4	±1.9	±2.7	±3.1	±2.7	±1.9	±1.4
n=1500	±1.1	±1.5	±2.2	±2.5	±2.2	±1.5	±1.1
n=2000	±1.0	±1.3	±1.9	±2.2	±1.9	±1.3	±1.0

<sup>9</sup> A survey router is a software system that allocates willing respondents to surveys for which they are likely to qualify. Respondents are directed to the router as a result of a general invitation from the router itself or after not qualifying for another survey in which they had been directly invited to participate.