FLASH EUROBAROMETER 584

EU Challenges and priorities

EUROBAROMETER REPORT

June 2026

Flash Eurobarometer

EU Challenges and priorities

Survey conducted by Demoscopy at the request of Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM 'Public Opinion and Citizens Engagement' Unit)

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission. The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

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Document prepared by Pierre Dieumegard for Europokune- Europe Together- and Europe Democracy Esperanto.

The purpose of this "provisional" document is to enable more people in the European Union to become aware of documents produced by the European Union (and financed by their taxes).

If there are no translations, citizens are excluded from the debate.

This document "Eurobarometer" only existed in English, in a pdf-file. From the initial file, we created a odt-file, prepared by Libre Office software, for machine translation to other languages. The results are now available in all official languages.

It is desirable that the EU administration takes over the translation of important documents. "Important documents" are not only laws and regulations, but also the important information needed to make informed decisions together.

In order to discuss our common future together, and to enable reliable translations, the international language Esperanto would be very useful because of its simplicity, regularity and accuracy.

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Introduction

The European Union is navigating a period of significant political, economic and societal uncertainty. Security and defence issues, strategic autonomy, energy pressures, competitiveness, democratic resilience and disinformation have all become central to the public debate on the EU's future. This context is reflected in recent Eurobarometer evidence: 68% of Europeans agree that their country's security is threatened in the current international context, a perception shared across all Member States[1]. In this context, citizens' perceptions provide an important indication of how the EU's role, strengths and vulnerabilities are understood across Member States. A previous Flash Eurobarometer, published in September 2025, already explored citizens' views on the future of the European Union, including their level of optimism, their assessment of the EU's main strengths and challenges, and their expectations regarding key policy priorities. Its results highlighted the continued importance of these themes and confirmed the need to monitor how public opinion evolves in a rapidly changing environment.

The European Commission is therefore launching a new Flash Eurobarometer to update and deepen the evidence available on citizens' views of the challenges and priorities facing the European Union in 2026. The survey will measure how people across the EU27 perceive the main issues confronting the Union, which areas they believe should receive priority attention, and how they see the EU's broader direction in response to current and emerging pressures. It will also maintain a limited number of trend indicators from the previous wave, allowing changes over time to be assessed on selected core topics such as optimism about the EU's future, perceived strengths and challenges, policy priorities, democracy, economic confidence and security. In parallel, the questionnaire will address issues that are particularly relevant to the current agenda, including defence, strategic autonomy, the EU's position in the world, the energy crisis, innovation, simplification and disinformation. The results will provide timely and comparable evidence to support the Commission's strategic reflection and communication activities ahead of the State of the Union speech in September 2026.

On behalf of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM 'Public Opinion and Citizens Engagement' Unit), Demoscopy interviewed the general population aged 15 years and older across all 27 Members States of the European Union (EU).

Between the 19 and 24 June 2026, 25,904 interviews were conducted using a CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing) with around 1,000 interviews carried out in larger countries and 500 interviews in smaller countries (LU, CY, MT).

1 Flash Eurobarometer 574, The European Union in Defence and Space, European Commission, DG DEFIS, January 2026, [The European Union in Defence and Space - Eurobarometer survey]

Notes

- Survey data are weighted
- Survey results are subject to sampling tolerances meaning that not all apparent differences between countries or groups may be statistically significant.
- When respondents could select more than one answer, the sum of response percentages may exceed 100%.
- In this report, countries are referred to by their official abbreviation as indicated below

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

*Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 EU Member States. For practical reasons, interviews were only carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus

Key findings

Exposure and risks children face on social media

- 58% of Europeans came across content they were unsure was reliable in the past seven days, and 57% came across content they believed to be false or misleading. 42% believe they encountered content that may be part of a foreign attempt to influence their opinion, a share that rises to 55% in Estonia and 54% in Latvia, against 35% in the Netherlands and Belgium.
- When faced with suspect content, Europeans are almost evenly split between checking it against other sources (33%) and simply ignoring it (32%). Only 15% report it to the platform, 15% discuss it with friends or family, and 5% share it online.
- Europeans favour firmer, rule-based responses to misinformation: stronger sanctions against illegal content (44%) and stronger platform rules (40%) are the two most frequently chosen measures, ahead of education and media literacy (29%).
- Seven in ten Europeans are concerned about the risks children face online, from cyberbullying or harassment (71%) to online grooming or sexual exploitation (70%). A majority is concerned about every risk in every Member State.
- 63% of Europeans want binding EU-level rules restricting children's access to social media by age: 36% favour an outright ban below a certain age, and 27% favour delayed access. Support exceeds 50% in every Member State.

Perceptions of democracy and rule of law

- Freedom of speech (34%), free and fair elections (32%) and respect for the rule of law and fundamental rights (31%) are seen as the most important pillars of democracy in the EU.
- 51% of Europeans are satisfied with the respect for the rule of law in their own country, against 47% at EU level (matched by an equal 47% dissatisfied). National satisfaction ranges from 91% in Luxembourg to 29% in Bulgaria.
- No form of citizen action beyond elections is seen as effective by a majority: direct citizen participation (e.g. a European Citizens' Initiative) tops the list at 46%, while being a member of an association or NGO is seen as the least effective action (35%).

The energy crisis

- Developing more renewable energy capacity is the leading measure Europeans associate with the EU's transition away from fossil fuels, cited firstly by 35% and in total by 56%, well ahead of energy efficiency measures (40%) and nuclear solutions (32%).
- Faced with rising energy prices, Europeans mainly adjust their behaviour rather than invest in structural solutions: 31% reduced their overall electricity consumption and 27% monitored their energy use more closely, compared with just 16% investing in efficient appliances and 14% installing renewable solutions. 11% took no action at all.

Trade: diversification and EU-level cooperation

- 65% of Europeans agree the EU should strengthen its economic independence by diversifying its trade relations, and 62% think Member States achieve better outcomes by negotiating together at EU level. A majority backs both statements in every Member State.
- Trust in the EU is the strongest driver of support: agreement on EU-level trade cooperation stands at 72% among those who trust the EU, against 49% among those who do not.

Perceptions of the EU's top challenges and priorities

- The cost of living (39%) remains Europeans' foremost concern, ahead of the war in Ukraine (33%) and irregular migration (32%). Since September 2025, concern about the cost of living has risen (+10 percentage points) while concern about the war in Ukraine has eased (-14 percentage points).

- Asked what the EU should prioritise, Europeans place irregular migration (25%) and security and defence (24%) just ahead of climate change (21%) and the war in Ukraine (20%), in a far more tightly grouped ranking than for the EU's main challenges.

EU security and defence

- 52% of Europeans agree the security of their country is threatened, down 16 points since January 2026. Despite this decline, 68% agree the EU should strengthen its capacity to defend itself autonomously, a majority in every Member State.
- 56% of Europeans trust the EU to strengthen security and defence and better protect its citizens, up 4 points since January 2026, a smaller majority than support for the principle of autonomous EU defence.

1. Exposure and risks children face on social media

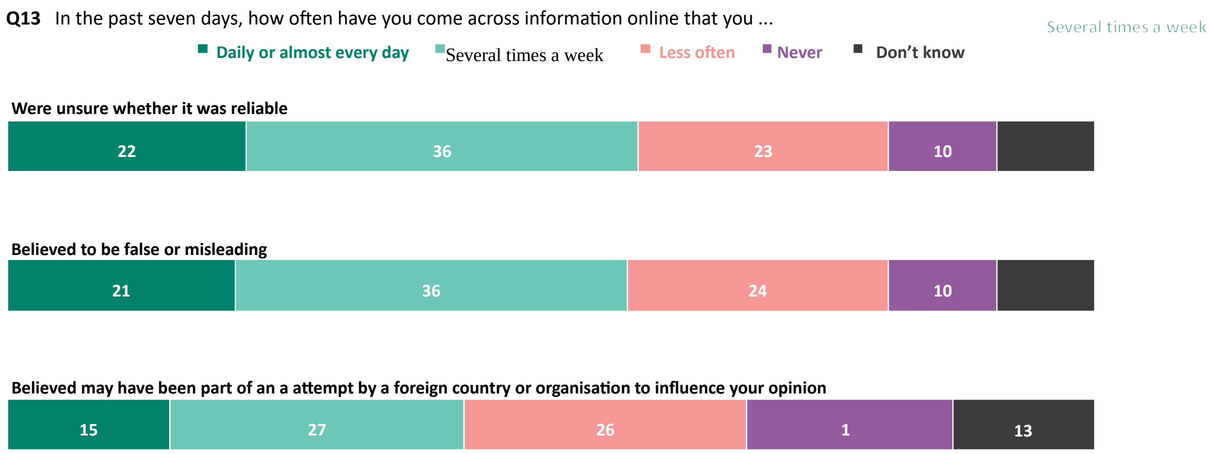
1.1 Exposure and responses to false and misleading information online

In practice, most Europeans come across content of doubtful reliability every week

In practice, exposure to online content of doubtful reliability is widespread. The question referred only to the past seven days, a short window, and yet more than one European in two (58%) had come across content they were unsure was reliable, including around one in five (22%) on a daily or almost daily basis. A similar share (57%) had come across content they believed to be false or misleading, again about one in five (21%) every day or almost every day. Perceived exposure to foreign interference is somewhat less widespread, but far from marginal: 42% had come across content they believed might be part of an attempt by a foreign country or organisation to influence their opinion. While this remains below the 50% mark, it is still a very significant proportion.

around 65% to 72%, and lowest in France (50%), Germany (52%), the Netherlands (53%) and Belgium (54%). The ranking is almost identical for content that respondents believed to be false or misleading.

Perceived exposure to foreign interference stands apart. Here a clear geographic pattern emerges, as the countries reporting the most frequent exposure are those on the EU's eastern flank, closest to Russia. At least once a week, 55% of respondents in Estonia, 54% in Latvia, 52% in Lithuania, 50% in Romania and 49% in Poland come across content they believe may be part of an attempt by a foreign country or organisation to influence opinion, compared with an EU27 average of 42%. Exposure is lowest in the Netherlands and Belgium (both 35%), France (37%) and Germany (38%). The gap is wider still regarding the opposite answer: around one in four respondents in Germany and the Netherlands say they never encounter such content, against



Doubt about information is general, but perceived foreign interference is highest on the eastern flank

The frequency of exposure varies across the EU, but the countries reporting the most frequent exposure tend to do so on all three items at once. Regular exposure, at least once a week, to content of doubtful reliability is highest in the Baltic States, Croatia, Greece and Romania, where it ranges from

roughly one in eight in the Baltic States. Several countries where general doubt about information is high, such as Croatia and Greece, nonetheless report much lower perceived exposure to foreign interference (45% and 44%), which suggests that broad scepticism about online content does not automatically translate into a sense of deliberate foreign manipulation.

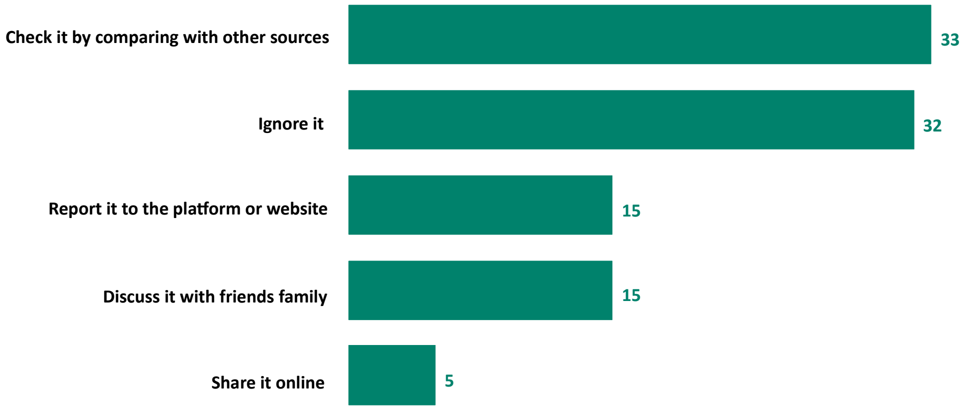
Frequent exposure is driven above all by social media use, and therefore by age

The way this exposure is distributed follows a fairly straightforward logic: the more a person uses social media to keep informed, the more likely they are to come across content they consider unreliable. Usage of social media for information is by far the strongest factor. Daily users report weekly exposure to content of doubtful reliability far more often than non-users (63% against 34%), and the gap is wider still for perceived foreign interference (48% against 17%, with 41% of non-users saying they never come across such content). An age effect is also present, although it is likely to be in part linked with social media use, since younger people are the heaviest users of these platforms. Respondents aged 15 to 24 are the most likely to report frequent exposure, at 71% for content of doubtful reliability and 53% for suspected foreign interference, compared with 51% and 32% respectively among those aged 55 and over. This is the mirror image of the pattern seen for concern about the risks facing children, where older respondents stood out. The other variables point in the same direction. Respondents who are not in professional activity, most of them retired, are among the least exposed (51% and 32%), while gender, education and area of residence make little difference.

Europeans are split between checking suspect content and simply ignoring it

When they come across information they think might be false or misleading, Europeans are divided between two very different reactions of almost equal weight. A third check the information by comparing it with other sources (33%), while almost as many simply ignore it (32%). Verification is therefore the most common response, but only by a narrow margin over disengagement. The other reactions are less frequent: 15% report the content to the platform or website, and the same share (15%) discuss it with friends or family. Very few respondents say they share it online (5%), which suggests that the active spread of content believed to be false remains limited.

Q14 When you come across information online that you think might be false or misleading, what do you usually do (Multiple answers possible



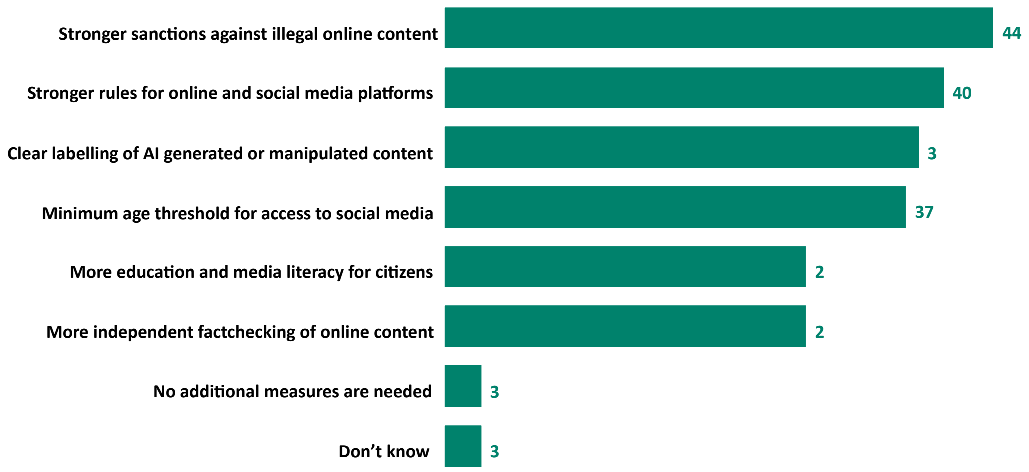
The balance between checking and ignoring varies widely across countries

While checking and ignoring are almost tied at EU level, the balance between the two differs markedly across Member States. The share who checks the information against other sources is fairly stable, but the share who simply ignore it ranges from around one in five to more than four in ten. Verification clearly prevails in Estonia (40% check against 22% ignore), as well as in Poland, Austria and Romania, whereas ignoring dominates in Denmark (41% ignore against 24% check), Croatia (44% ignore against 28% check), the Netherlands (42% ignore against 27%) and Ireland (40% ignore against 27% check). The propensity to report content to the platform also varies, from around 10% in Finland and Latvia to more than 20% in Portugal, Cyprus and Romania.

Europeans give priority to firmer, rule-based measures over softer ones

Asked which measures should be prioritised to reduce the negative impact of false or misleading information online, and able to choose up to two, Europeans give priority to firmer, rule-based measures. The four most frequently chosen are all regulatory in nature and cluster closely together: stronger sanctions against illegal online content (44%), stronger rules for online and social media platforms (40%), clear labelling of AI- generated or manipulated content (38%) and a minimum age threshold for access to social media (37%). Measures that rely on empowering citizens come lower: more education and media literacy, and more independent factchecking, are each chosen by 29%. Almost no one considers that no additional measures are needed (3%), which points to a near-universal demand for action.

Q15 Which of the following measures, if any, should be prioritised to reduce the negative impact of false or misleading informaton online ? *(Multiple answers possible, maximum 2)*



Regulatory measures lead in almost every Member State

The preference for regulatory measures is found across the European Union. Stronger sanctions against illegal online content and stronger rules for online and social media platforms are among the most frequently chosen measures in almost every Member State. Support for stronger sanctions is highest in Portugal (52%), France (50%), as well as Spain and Romania (both 49%), and lowest in Latvia (31%). The measures that rely on empowering citizens, namely more education and media literacy and more independent factchecking, rank lower in most countries. Everywhere, only a small minority consider that no additional measures are needed.

1.2 The risks children face online and their protection

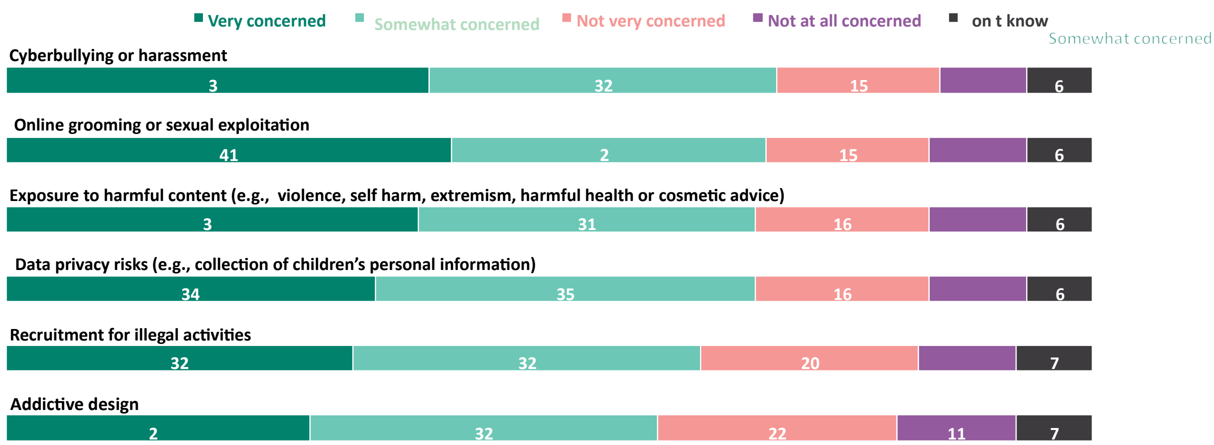
A broad and intense concern about the risks

children face online The results show that a very large share of Europeans are concerned about the various risks children can face on social media. For each of the risks tested, close to seven in ten respondents say they are concerned, and the levels measured are overall fairly close to one another. Concern is highest for cyberbullying or harassment (71%) and online grooming or sexual exploitation (70%), followed by exposure to harmful content such as violence, self-harm or extremism (69%) and data privacy risks (69%). It is somewhat lower, though still shared by a clear majority, for recruitment for illegal activities (64%) and the addictive design of platforms (60%). Just as notable is the intensity of this concern. The share of respondents who say they are 'very concerned', rather than merely 'somewhat concerned', is substantial. Almost four in ten Europeans are very concerned about online grooming or sexual exploitation (41%), cyberbullying or harassment (39%) and exposure to harmful content (38%). The proportion is somewhat lower for data privacy risks (34%), recruitment for illegal activities (32%) and addictive design (28%), but it remains high in absolute terms. It is worth underlining that this question was put to all Europeans, and not only to parents, which makes the breadth of concern all the more striking. Finally, only 6% to 7% of respondents answer 'don't know' for any given risk, showing that Europeans are readily able to position themselves on these issues.

A majority is concerned in every EU Member State

In every Member State, a majority of respondents are concerned about each of the risks tested. Even in the countries where concern is lowest, such as Belgium, Germany, France, Hungary and Austria, around six in ten respondents are concerned about each risk. No national public therefore stands out as broadly unconcerned, and the differences observed between countries are, above all, differences of degree. Concern is higher in a number of southern and eastern Member States, most of them smaller countries. For exposure to harmful content, the share of concerned respondents ranges from 63% in the Netherlands and 64% in Germany and Belgium to 0% in Ireland and 1% in Portugal, reaching close to 0% in Malta and Cyprus. A comparable spread is found for online grooming or sexual exploitation, from 64% in the Netherlands to more than 90% in Cyprus, and for cyberbullying or harassment, the most widely shared concern of all, which runs from 64% in Germany to 95% in Malta. Some countries stand out on specific risks: concern about recruitment for illegal activities, for example, reaches 72% in Romania and Slovakia, well above

Q11 How concerned are you about the following risks children face on social media



the EU27 average of 64%. Across the six risks, national levels of concern tend to go together: where respondents are more concerned about one risk, they are usually more concerned about the others as well. Portugal, Estonia, Ireland and Lithuania are above the EU27 average on all six risks, while France, Germany, Belgium and Hungary are below it on each of them. The clearest exception is addictive design, which shows the widest variation between countries, from 50% in France and 52% in Sweden to 90% in Malta. France and Sweden are markedly less concerned about this risk than about the others, while Slovenia is below the EU27 average on most risks but above it on addictive design. Concern about the more established online dangers, such as grooming or cyberbullying, thus appears more evenly shared across the Union than concern about the way platforms are designed to hold children's attention.

Age, far more than gender, drives concern, with the over-55s the most worried

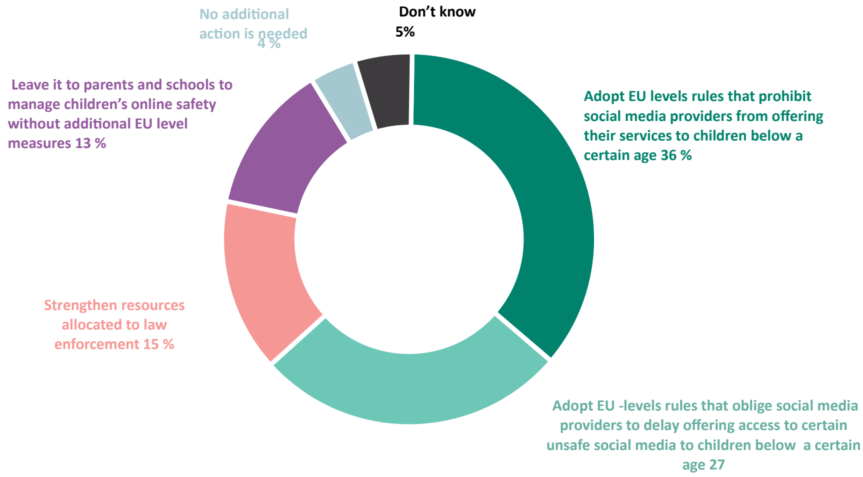
Concern about the risks children face online is slightly higher among women than among men, although the difference remains modest. Women are somewhat more concerned than men about online grooming or sexual exploitation (72% against 6 %) and about exposure to harmful content (70% against 6 %), with comparable gaps on the other risks. The most notable difference relates to age. Respondents aged 55 and over are significantly more concerned than younger ones, and this holds across every risk tested. For example, 75% of those aged 55 and over are concerned about exposure to harmful content, 76% about online grooming and about cyberbullying, and 75% about data privacy risks, compared with 62%, 64%, 65% and 62% respectively among those aged 25 to 39. The other age groups are fairly close to one another. It is notable that the 25 to 39 years-old are in fact the least concerned group, even though this age bracket is likely to include a high proportion of parents of young children. By occupation, respondents who are not in professional activity are the most concerned, at around 75% on most risks. This result is probably in part confounded with age, as this group is largely made up of older, retired people. The composition of the household points in the same direction. Respondents with no children under the age of 15 are more concerned (72% to 74% on most risks) than those living with three or more children (around 60%). Here again, the difference is at least partly linked to the age effect, since older respondents are less likely to have young children living at home.

A clear majority wants binding EU-level rules to protect children online

Asked which action the EU should take to strengthen the protection of children online, Europeans clearly favour binding rules at EU level. The two options that involve EU-wide rules are chosen by a combined 63% of respondents: 36% would have the EU adopt rules preventing social media providers from offering their services to children below a certain age, and a further 27% would require providers to delay children's access to certain unsafe platforms below a certain age. Far fewer respondents turn to other approaches: 15% would give priority to strengthening the resources allocated to law enforcement, and only 13% would leave the matter to parents and schools without additional EU-level measures.

Just 4% consider that no additional action is needed, and 5% did not give a view.

Q**12** The Digital Service Act (DSA) requires online platforms to protect children better from harms, which could result for example through cyberbullying, grooming, exposure to violent/extremist material, addictive design or so -called rabbit holes. In order to further strengthen the protection of children online, which one of the following actions do you think the EU should take



Support for EU rules is shared everywhere, with sharper differences on an outright ban

The preference for EU-level rules is shared by a majority in every Member State. Taken together, the two options that involve EU-wide rules are backed by at least a majority everywhere, from 54% in Austria to around 70% or more in several southern and eastern countries, such as Greece (74%), as well as Portugal and Romania (both 72%). Support for EU action to protect children online is therefore broadly consensual across the European Union. Differences are more marked, however, on the option of an outright prohibition, that is, EU rules preventing social media providers from offering their services to children below a certain age. This option ranges from 27% in Austria and 28% in Germany to 44% in Ireland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Bulgaria, and up to 49% in Greece. The contrast reflects a difference in the preferred instrument rather than in the overall level of support. In some countries opinion leans towards an outright ban, as in Greece (49%, against 25% for delayed access), Ireland (44% against 19%) and Bulgaria (44% against 23%). In others it favours a more graduated approach based on delaying access, as in Estonia (41% for delay against 30% for a ban) and Slovenia (39% against 30%).

Support for an outright ban grows with age and among those furthest from social media

Support for EU-level rules is stable across social groups, standing between around 56% and 69% in almost all of them, which confirms at the individual level the consensus already seen between countries. As with countries, the differences appear on the choice of instrument, and above all on support for an outright ban. This support rises steadily with age, from 29% among respondents aged 15 to 24 to 43% among those aged 55 and over. Older respondents are also less inclined to leave the matter to parents and schools (11%, against 18% of the youngest). The sharpest contrast, however, relates to the use of social media: non-users are the most supportive of an outright ban (46%) and the least likely to leave it to parents and schools (6%), whereas the more a person uses social media for information, the more they lean towards delayed access rather than prohibition. The presence of children reinforces the age pattern. Respondents with no children under the age of 15 are more supportive of an outright ban (39%) than those living with three or more children (29%), who lean somewhat more towards delayed access. Gender, education and area of residence, by contrast, make little difference.

2. Perceptions of democracy and rule of law

2.1 Identification of the pillars of democracy

When it comes to identifying pillars of democracy in the EU, freedom of speech comes first

Close to a third of Europeans identify freedom of speech (34%) as the most important element of a democratic society, followed by free and fair elections (32%) and respect for the rule of law and protection of fundamental rights (31%).

While fundamental democratic freedoms are by far the top concern for citizens, the fight against corruption and the independence of institutions also feature prominently: fighting corruption (28%), independence of justice system (26%), transparency and accountability of political leaders (26%).

These elements are well ahead of issues relating to democratic pluralism and civic space: participation of citizens in public debate and decision-making (22%), as well as freedom and independence of the media (21%).

The rights of minorities (14%) and political opposition (11%) are cited far less frequently.

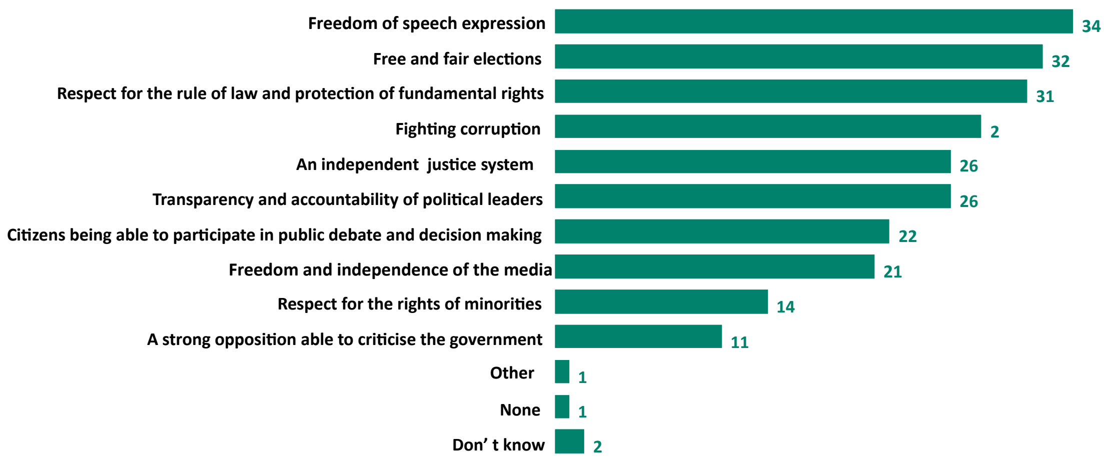
Views of what matters most in a democracy vary across the EU Member States

While freedom of speech is the most cited element at EU level, its prominence varies across the European Union: it tends to prevail in the North west, for example in the Netherlands (45%), Denmark (44%) and Sweden (41%). Free and fair elections is the most cited by Latvia (43%), Romania (42%) and Lithuania (41%).

On the other hand, corruption weighs more heavily in the south and east: in Bulgaria 50% of respondents consider that fighting corruption is the most important element of a democracy, which is far beyond the EU's average (28%). Similarly high shares are found in Portugal (46%), Croatia (44%) and Greece (42%).

Respect for the rights of minorities and to have a strong opposition to criticise the government are quite low in every Member State, not exceeding 22% (Luxembourg, for minority rights) and 21% (Malta, for opposition), respectively.

Q3 In your opinion, which of the following are the most important elements of a democratic society



Q3 In your opinion, which of the following are the most important elements of a democratic society?

Base: EU27 (%)

	EU27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
Freedom of speech / expression	**34**	38	22	33	44	38	33	32	32	24	36	31	36	29	27	26	32	29	29	45	37	34	25	30	28	30	36	41
Free and fair elections	**32**	33	35	37	36	38	38	37	20	26	26	31	23	21	43	41	28	36	32	43	35	39	28	42	30	32	41	41
Respect for the rule of law and protection of fundamental rights	**31**	26	28	32	32	31	32	28	35	35	29	32	36	33	29	19	35	33	37	23	31	25	36	34	39	36	33	29
Fighting corruption	**28**	20	50	27	20	17	23	21	42	41	26	44	30	41	31	38	20	31	18	15	24	22	46	40	36	35	20	22
An independent justice system	**26**	27	38	25	27	25	24	26	37	31	21	39	22	24	20	20	23	34	26	28	30	34	23	26	28	27	31	21
Transparency and accountability of political leaders	**26**	25	25	25	22	19	28	31	32	35	29	28	29	38	22	35	31	28	32	21	20	22	37	24	26	22	21	20
Freedom and independence of the media	**21**	17	18	24	21	21	26	19	18	19	18	20	22	19	21	26	25	20	25	24	21	31	16	15	27	21	22	26
Citizens being able to participate in public debate and decision-making	**22**	21	29	19	22	23	29	24	24	20	25	26	22	23	21	25	30	16	24	21	20	20	20	18	27	20	23	24
Respect for the rights of minorities	**14**	14	5	6	12	14	13	16	10	11	17	8	19	17	10	6	22	11	19	11	11	12	15	9	9	10	12	11
A strong opposition able to criticise the government	**11**	14	9	8	11	15	15	16	13	10	11	11	8	17	14	12	19	8	21	14	9	11	8	10	8	9	11	10

Socio-demographic data reveal a marked generational divide in how European citizens conceive of democracy

Respondents aged 55 and over show a stronger attachment to the institutional pillars of the rule of law: they are more likely to cite free and fair elections (38% compared to 26% among 15-24 years-old), respect and fundamental rights (38% compared to 24%), an independent justice system (33% compared to 18%), and fighting corruption (30% compared to 21%).

Conversely, younger generations favour a more participatory and inclusive conception of democracy, placing greater importance on respect for the rights of minorities (20% among 15-24 years old, compared to just 11% among those aged 55 and over), and on citizens' ability to participate in public debate (24% compared to 21%).

This same attachment to institutional integrity is also found among citizens who are more critical of the EU's current functioning: those who are dissatisfied with the respect of the rule of law in the EU are more likely to rank fighting corruption (31% compared to 25% among those who are satisfied).

2.2 Mixed satisfaction with the rule of law on the national and EU level

Europeans are divided on the respect for the rule of law, particularly at EU level

A slim majority of Europeans are satisfied with the respect for the rule of law in their own country (51%, including 17% who are very satisfied and 34% who are rather satisfied), compared to 44% who are dissatisfied (27% rather dissatisfied and 17% very dissatisfied).

Opinions are more evenly split when it comes to the EU level: 47% of Europeans are satisfied with the respect for the rule of law in the EU (11% very satisfied, 36% rather satisfied), against an equal share of 47% who are dissatisfied (28% rather dissatisfied, 19% very dissatisfied), suggesting that citizens are somewhat more critical of the rule of law at EU level than within their own country.

These five countries stand out for their particularly high share of citizens who are "very satisfied" (respectively 54%, 46%, 37%, 43% and 32%), a level not reached anywhere else in the EU, where this share does not exceed 21% (Austria, Lithuania).

At the other end of the spectrum, Bulgaria (29% satisfied overall: 12% very satisfied, 17% rather satisfied, vs. 66% dissatisfied), Croatia (32% satisfied: 8% very satisfied, 24% rather satisfied, vs. 63% dissatisfied) and Greece (35% satisfied: 13% very satisfied, 22% rather satisfied, vs. 62% dissatisfied) report the lowest levels of trust in the rule of law within their own country.

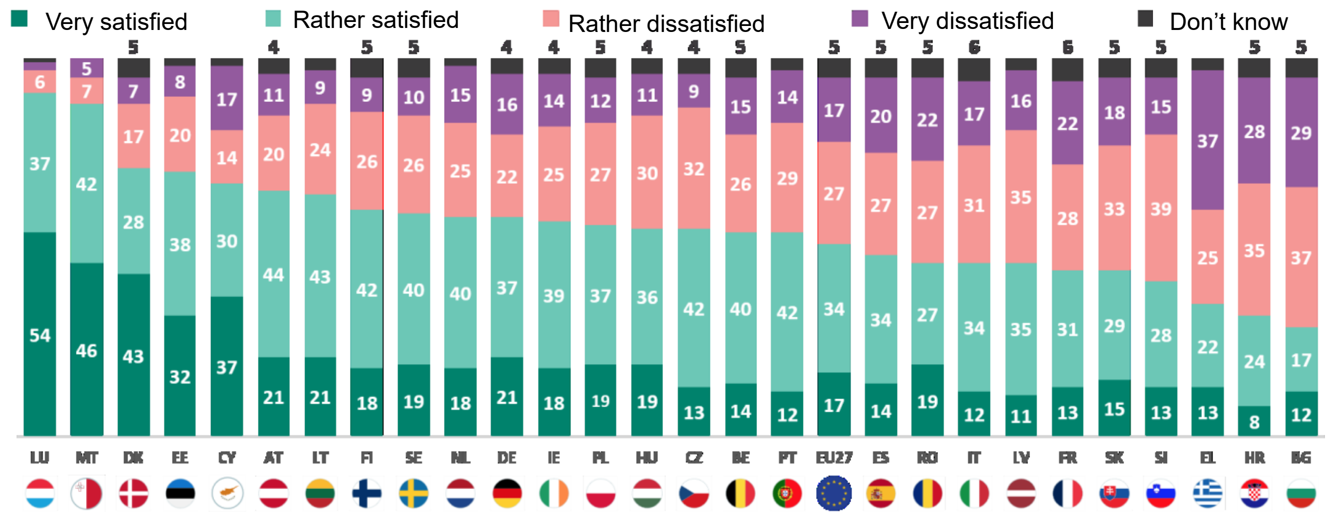
Q4 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the respect for the rule of law in

Respect for the rule of law deeply divides Member States

European citizens are strongly divided when it comes to their perception of the rule of law in their own country. Smaller Member States stand out with particularly positive views: Luxembourg (91% satisfied overall: 54% very satisfied, 37% rather satisfied), Malta (88%: 46% very satisfied, 42% rather satisfied) and Cyprus (67%: 37% very satisfied, 30% rather satisfied) all report high levels of trust in their national rule of law. Denmark (71% satisfied: 43% very satisfied, 28% rather satisfied) and Estonia (70%: 32% very satisfied, 38% rather satisfied) also show a notably positive perception.

Overall, total satisfaction ranges from 1% in Luxembourg to 2 % in Bulgaria, illustrating just how differently the rule of law is experienced from one Member State to another.

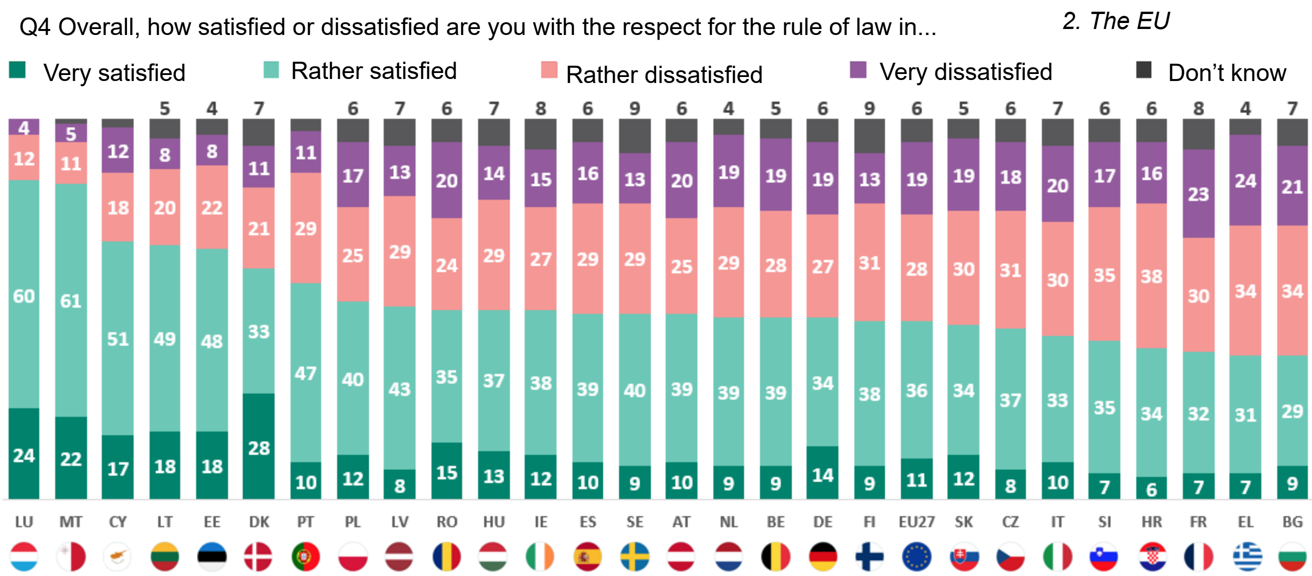
Q4 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the respect for the rule of law in... *'(OUR COUNTRY)'*



National and EU-level satisfaction with the rule of law tend to converge

Satisfaction with the respect for the rule of law at EU level broadly mirrors the national picture, though with a notable convergence effect. Luxembourg (84%) and Malta (83%) remain by far the most satisfied, followed by Cyprus (68%), Lithuania (67%) and Estonia (66%), while Croatia (40%), France (39%), Greece and Bulgaria (38% each) report the lowest levels of satisfaction, with Greece (24%) and Bulgaria (21%) also recording the highest shares of citizens who are "very dissatisfied".

Comparing these results with satisfaction at national level reveals a converging pattern:

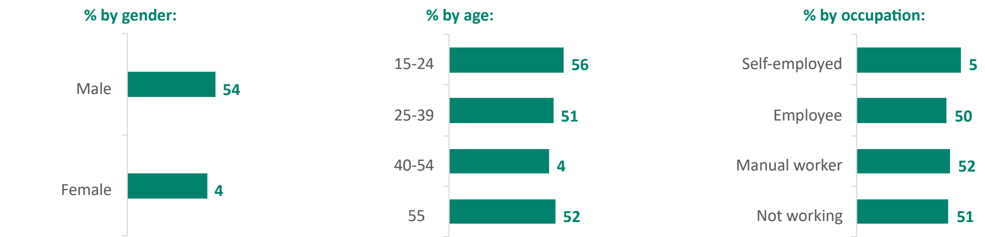


countries that are most satisfied with the rule of law in their own country tend to be somewhat less satisfied with it at EU level (Luxembourg: 91% nationally vs. 84% for the EU; Malta: 88% vs. 83%; Denmark: 71% vs. 61%), whereas countries that are most critical of their own national rule of law appear comparatively more satisfied with the EU s (Bulgaria: 29% nationally vs. 38% for the EU; Croatia: 32% vs. 40%; Greece: 35% vs. 38%), suggesting that the EU is perceived, in these countries, as a somewhat more reassuring reference.

A contrast with the pattern observed regarding the perceived importance of the rule of law in their country

Satisfaction with the respect for the rule of law also varies by socio-demographic profile. Men (54%) report slightly higher satisfaction than women (vs.49%). Age shows a non-linear, U- shaped pattern: satisfaction is highest among 15- 24 years old (56%), declines steadily to its lowest point among 40-54 years old (49%), before rising again among those aged 55 and over (52%). This contrasts with the pattern observed regarding the perceived importance of the rule of law (Q3), where older respondents were the most likely to see it as a core democratic principle. Self- employed respondents stand out as the most satisfied occupational group (58%), ahead of employees (50%), manual workers (52%) and those not working (51%).

Q 4 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the respect for the rule of law in **(OUR COUNTRY) Total Satisfiied**



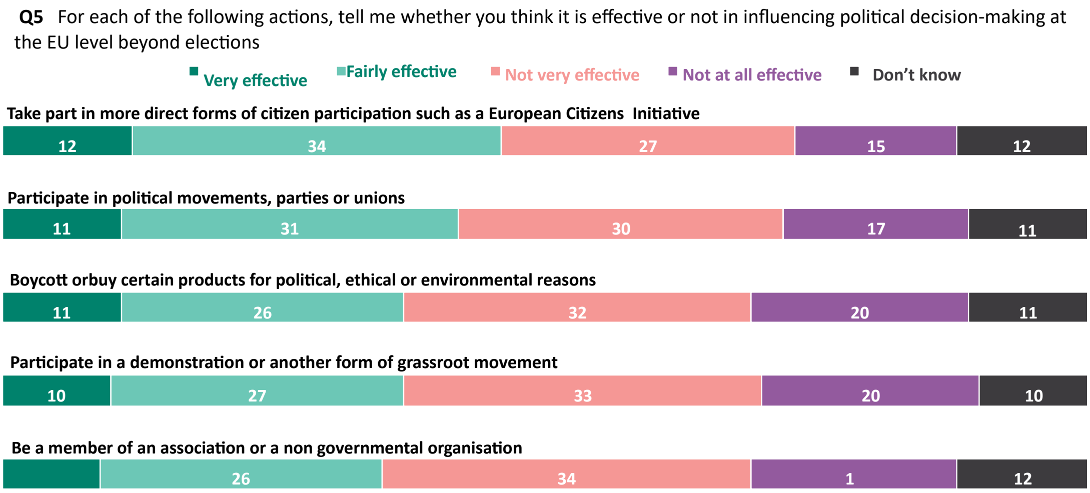
2.3 Scepticism over citizen action to influence EU decision-making

Europeans rank citizens' initiatives and collective action as the most effective ways to influence the EU, beyond voting

Taking part in more direct forms of citizen participation, such as a European Citizens Initiative, is seen as the most effective action (46% total effective: 12% very effective, 34% fairly effective), followed by participating in political movements, parties or unions (42% total effective: 11% very effective, 31% fairly effective). Even so, close to half of Europeans consider these two actions not effective (42% and 47% respectively).

Boycotting or buying certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons and participating in a demonstration or another form of grassroots movement are seen as effective by a similar share of respondents (37% total effective for both), while being a member of an association or a non-governmental organisation is regarded as the least effective action (35% total effective: 9% very effective, 26% fairly effective), and the one most often seen as not effective at all (53% total not effective, including 19% "not at all effective").

Overall, more collective forms of engagement, citizens' initiatives, political movements, parties and unions are perceived as more effective than individual or consumer-based actions, such as boycotting or associative involvement.



Confidence in citizen action varies widely across Member States

Looking at country-level results, Malta, Luxembourg and Cyprus consistently stand out as the Member States most confident in the effectiveness of citizen action, across all five forms of engagement tested, often by a wide margin over the EU27 average. For instance, 84% of Maltese and 81% of Luxembourgish respondents consider being a member of an association or NGO effective, compared to just 35% at EU level. This mirrors the pattern observed for satisfaction with the rule of law, where the same three countries also ranked highest, pointing to a broader climate of institutional and civic confidence in these Member States. At the other end of the spectrum, France ranks at or near the bottom for most forms of engagement tested, including political movements, parties or unions (32%, the lowest share in the EU) and participation in demonstrations or grassroots movements (29%, second-lowest).

Younger people are keener to think taking part in more direct forms of citizen participation such as a European Citizens' Initiative is effective in influencing the EU in political decision-making

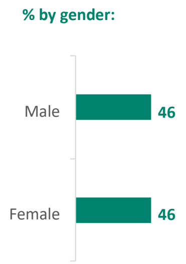
Gender does not appear to influence perceptions: men and women are equally likely to consider direct forms of citizen participation, such as a European Citizens' Initiative, effective in influencing EU decision-making (46% each).

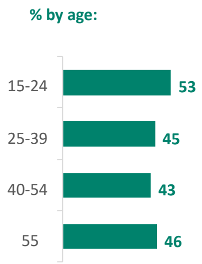
Age shows a less linear pattern: 15-24 years old are the most likely to consider this form of participation effective (53%), compared to 45% among 25-39 years old, 43% among 40-54 years old, and 46% among those aged 55 and over, meaning the youngest age group stands out, while the other three age groups are relatively close to one another.

Occupation reveals a wider gap: self-employed respondents are the most likely to see citizen participation as effective (52%), ahead of employees and those not working (46% each), while manual workers are the least convinced (40%).

Q5 For each of the following actions, tell me whether you think it is effective or not in influencing political decision-making at the EU level beyond elections

Take part in more direct forms of citizen participation such as a European Citizens Initiative Total effective





3. The energy crisis

3.1 Renewable energy, the leading measure to move away from fossil fuels

Developing renewable energy stands out as the leading measure to move away from fossil fuels, mentioned by more than one European in two

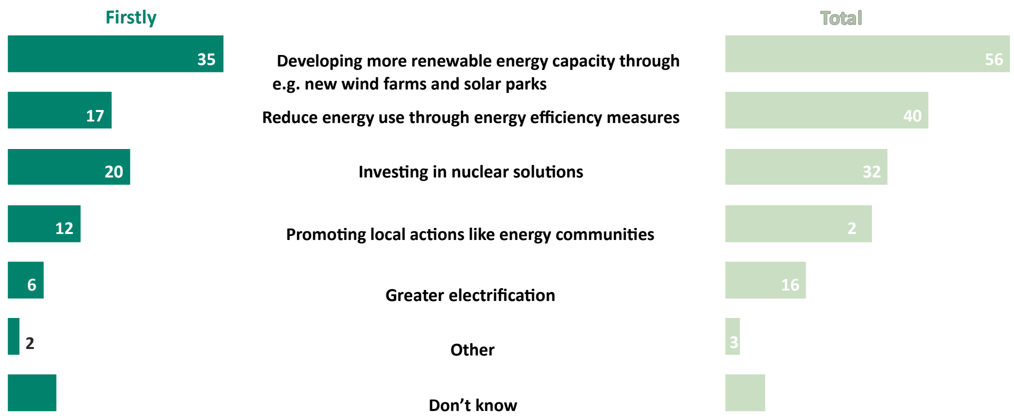
What comes first when Europeans think about what can help the EU transition away from fossil fuels is developing more renewable energy capacity, through new wind farms and solar parks, for example (35%). It's also the element most cited overall (56%), confirming renewables as the clear leading lever in people's minds.

Reducing energy use through energy efficiency measures (40% in total) and investing in nuclear solutions (32%) follow as the next most cited options, each seen by around a third to two in five Europeans as part of the answer. Promoting local actions such as energy communities (29%) is also mentioned by close to three in ten respondents, suggesting a real appetite for more decentralised, community-driven approaches alongside large-scale solutions. Greater electrification, by contrast, is mentioned far less often(16%), suggesting it is seen as a less immediate or less well-understood lever for moving away from fossil fuels.

Renewables dominate especially in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Europe

Looking at the country-level results, the drivers of the fossil fuel transition often reflect each country's own energy landscape. Support for nuclear solutions as a first response is highest in Poland (30%, vs. 20% for the EU27), Bulgaria and Sweden (25% each), and Slovakia (24%), countries that already operate or are actively developing nuclear capacity, while it is lowest in Cyprus and Malta (10%), as well as Hungary and Ireland (11%), none of which have a nuclear programme. France stands out as an exception: despite its long-standing reliance on nuclear power, 20% of French respondents cite it firstly (the same as the EU27 average) and instead lead the EU on energy efficiency measures (22%, alongside Luxembourg at 23%) rather than on renewables, which they mention less than most other countries (30%). Renewable energy capacity, by contrast, dominates in southern and south-eastern Europe, with Croatia, Malta, Cyprus, Hungary and Spain all citing it firstly at 44- 46%, well above the EU27 average of 35%, likely reflecting a stronger perceived solar potential. Local, community-based actions also gain significant ground between the first and second mention almost everywhere (from 12% to 22% at EU27 level), most notably in Malta (13% to 29%) and Cyprus (14% to 28%), pointing to these solutions being seen as a valuable complement rather than a top priority. Finally, "don't know" answers are more frequent in the Nordic and Baltic countries, Finland and Sweden (12%), Bulgaria, Czechia and Denmark

Q9 In you view, what can help the EU to transition away from fossil fuels ?



(all 10%), compared with Malta (1%), Luxembourg (2%) or Spain and Ireland (both 5%).

Gender and education shape attitudes towards nuclear energy more than towards renewables

A clear gender gap also emerges around nuclear energy, cited by 35% of men in total compared with 29% of women, while views on renewables are broadly similar across genders.

Education levels shape attitudes towards nuclear more than towards renewables: support for nuclear solutions rises from 24% among those with the lowest level of education to 36% among the most highly educated, a 12-point gap, while renewables vary only slightly (52% to 59%); respondents with lower education levels are also markedly more likely to answer "don't know" (11%, vs. 5% among the highly educated).

3.2 Rising energy prices: cutting consumption rather than structural change

Faced with rising energy prices, Europeans mainly cut their consumption rather than invest in structural solutions

31% of Europeans say they reduced their overall electricity consumption in response to the rise in energy prices following the beginning of the war in Iran. The second most common action is monitoring their energy consumption more closely (27%), followed by reducing heating or cooling use (26%). Adjusting energy use to benefit from lower prices or off-peak hours (20%) and changing transport habits (19%) also feature among the most widely reported actions, showing that Europeans are adjusting their behaviour across several areas beyond just heating and electricity.

By contrast, more structural and often costlier or longer-term solutions are cited far less often: investing in energy-efficient appliances (16%), comparing or switching energy supplier or contract (14%), installing renewable energy solutions such as solar panels (14%), and improving home insulation (13%) all lag well behind the behavioural adjustments mentioned above. Digital tools to manage energy use (9%) and joining an energy community (5%) are mentioned even less often, confirming that day- to-day behavioural changes remain by far the preferred response to rising prices, ahead of any investment-based solution.

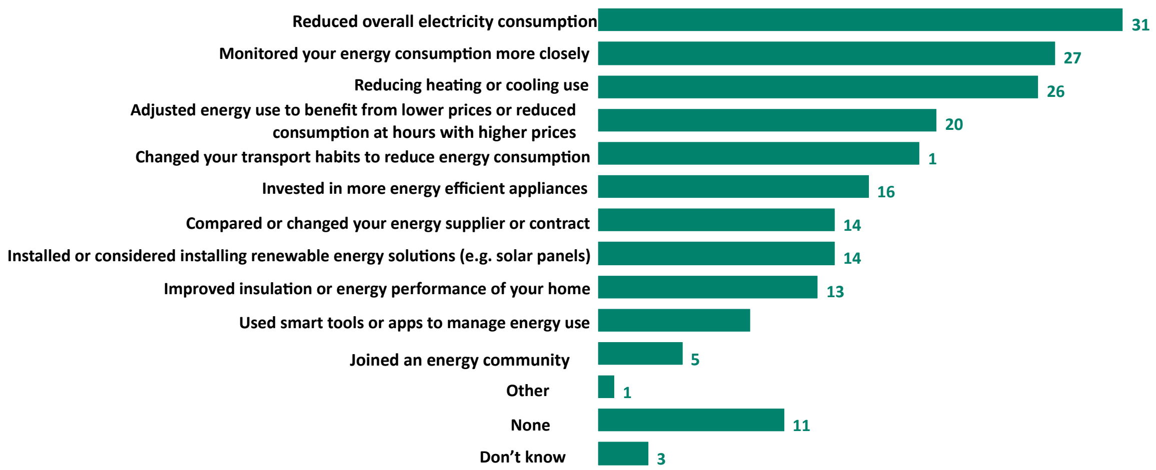
Notably, while 11% of Europeans say they made no changes at all to their energy consumption habits, only 3% say they don't know, suggesting that most Europeans have a fairly clear sense of whether, and how, they have adjusted their behaviour.

Greece and France cut consumption the most, while Malta and Luxembourg invest the most in structural solutions

Looking at the country-level results, Greece and France stand out for the intensity of their behavioural response, ranking among the top countries on several measures at once: Greece leads on reducing electricity consumption (43%, vs. 31% for the EU27), reducing heating or cooling use (36% vs. 26 for the EU27), and switching energy supplier (20% vs. 14% for the EU27), while France also ranks among the top three on reducing electricity consumption (36% vs. 31% for the EU27), reducing heating or cooling use (34 vs. 26% for the EU27%), and changing transport habits (27% vs. 19% for the EU27), suggesting these two countries have made the broadest overall effort to cut their energy use.

Malta tops the list for smart tools or apps (27%), home insulation (25%), energy-efficient appliances (24%), and joining an energy community (14%), with Luxembourg consistently ranking second or third on

Q10 Which, if any, of the following actions have you taken in response to the increase in energy prices following the beginning of the war in Iran (end of February 2026) in order to reduce your energy use more actively You have



the same items (28% for installing renewable solutions, 22% for smart tools, 13% for energy communities), a pattern likely linked to these being smaller, wealthier countries where higher-cost investments are more accessible.

At the other end of the spectrum, Finland records by far the highest share of respondents who took no action at all (25%, vs. 11% for the EU27), combined with some of the lowest scores across almost all behavioural levers (13% for reducing heating or cooling use, 9% for energy-efficient appliances, 2% for energy communities), possibly reflecting already-regulated or comparatively low energy prices, or an already energy-efficient housing stock. Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia show a broadly similar profile, with a high share of "None" responses (18-20%). Slovenia and Croatia stand out specifically on adjusting energy use to benefit from off-peak hours, cited by 38% and 31% of respondents respectively, well above the EU27 average of 20%, pointing to potentially more developed or attractive time-of-use pricing schemes in these two countries.

Finally, Romania and Bulgaria combine strong engagement in monitoring consumption (36% and 24%) and investing in efficient appliances or insulation (20-23%) with a notably low propensity to switch energy supplier (5% in both countries), which may reflect a less competitive or less accessible energy market.

Age is a driver of engagement in reducing energy use

Socio-demographic breakdowns reveal a clear generational pattern in how Europeans have responded to rising energy prices: older respondents (55+) are markedly more likely to have reduced their electricity consumption (38%, vs. 23-24% among those under 40) and to monitor their energy use more closely (32%, vs. 22%), while younger respondents stand out for their greater use of smart tools or apps (13% among 15-24 years old, vs. 7% among the 55+) and for joining an energy community (7% vs. 2%).

4. Perception of trade policy and economic sovereignty

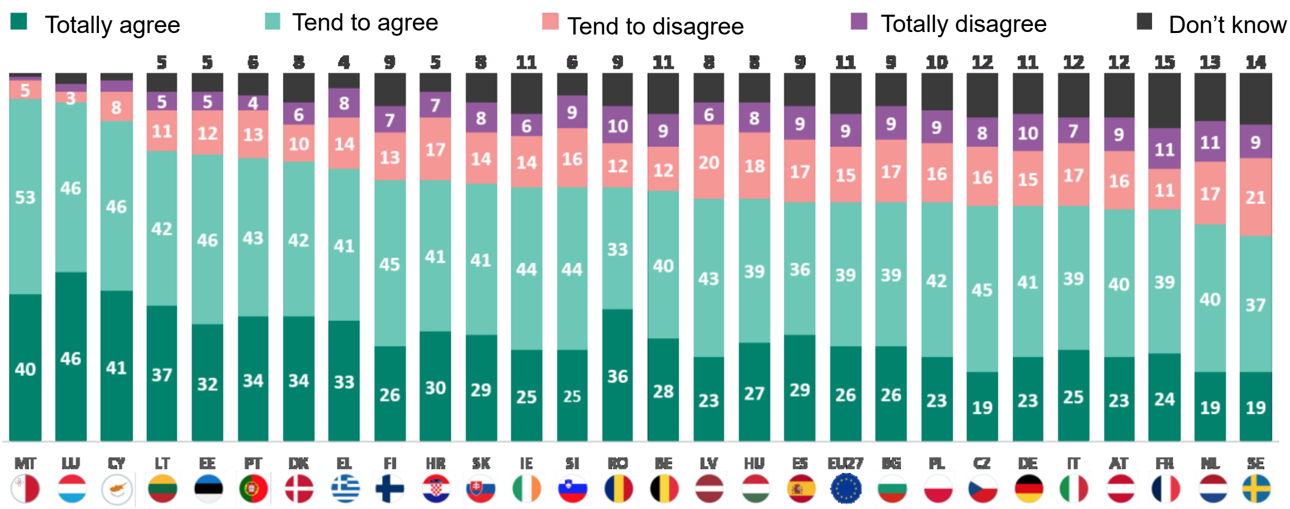
4.1 Cooperation in trade negotiations

Two thirds of Europeans believe the EU should diversify its trade and that Member States negotiate better together

65% of Europeans agree that the EU should strengthen its economic independence by diversifying its trade relations, including 26% who totally agree and 39% who tend to agree. Only 24% disagree (9% totally disagree, 15% tend to disagree), while 11% are unable to say whether this would be beneficial or not.

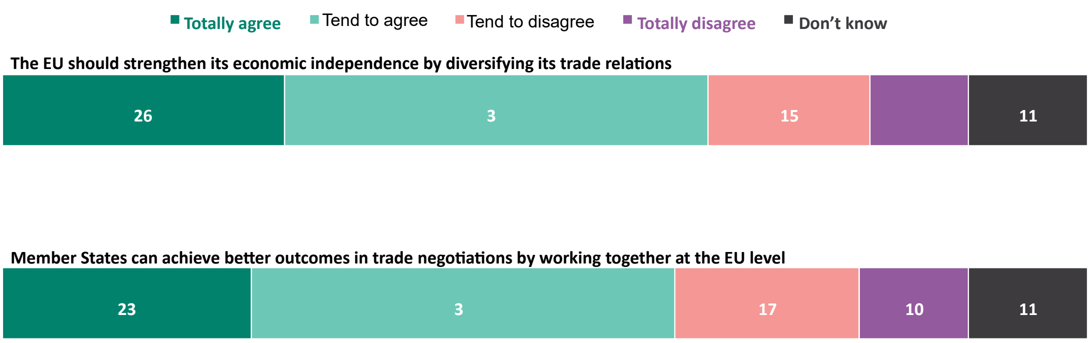
Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The EU should strengthen its economic independence by diversifying its trade relations



A very similar pattern emerges around EU level cooperation on trade negotiations: 62% of Europeans think Member States can achieve better outcomes by working together at the EU level (23% totally agree, 39% tend to agree). 27% disagree (10% totally, 17% tend to), and, once again, 11% have no clear opinion on the statement.

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements ?



The level of support is remarkably consistent across both statements: 65% vs. 62%, a gap of just 3 points and the share of "don't know" answers is identical (11%), pointing to a coherent view among Europeans that a more autonomous and a more coordinated EU trade approach go hand in hand rather than being seen as competing options. The one notable nuance is that the share of respondents who "totally agree" is somewhat higher for trade diversification (26%) than for Member State cooperation (23%), suggesting that economic independence generates slightly stronger, more decisive support than institutional coordination, even though both ideas command a very similar overall level of agreement.

4.2 Diversification of trade relations

Support by a majority in all 27 Member States, backing for the EU's trade diversification is stronger in small open economies ad somewhat more moderate in the larger economies

A majority agrees with this statement in every Member State, ranging from 56% in Sweden to 93% in Malta. Support is generally higher in smaller economies: Malta (93%), Luxembourg (92%) and Cyprus (87%) top the ranking, followed by Lithuania (79%) and Estonia (78%). By contrast, the Netherlands (59%) and Sweden (56%) record the lowest levels of agreement, still a majority, but noticeably closer to an even split. Larger economies sit close to, or just below, the EU27 average (65%): Poland and Spain match it exactly (65%), while Germany and Italy stand at 64% and France at 63%. This suggests that while the idea of trade diversification is broadly shared across the EU, it resonates somewhat less strongly, though still very solidly, in bigger, more self-sufficient economies than in smaller and more trade-dependent ones.

Support for EU-level cooperation in trade negotiations is highest in the smallest Member States, and lowest in France

A majority agrees with this statement in every Member State, though the level of support varies more widely than for trade diversification, ranging from 54% in France to 92% in Malta and Cyprus. Malta and Cyprus (92% each) and Luxembourg (90%) stand well above the rest of the EU, followed by Portugal (77%) and Estonia (76%), broadly the same group of smaller economies that also lead on trade diversification. Larger economies again cluster close to, or below, the EU27 average (62%): Germany and Spain match it exactly (62%), Italy stands slightly below (61%), and France records the lowest level of agreement in the entire EU (54%), the only Member State where support falls below the 60% mark by a clear margin. Poland (59%) and Czechia (59%) also rank among the more reserved countries on this statement. Overall, the pattern closely mirrors the one observed for trade diversification, with smaller, more trade- dependent economies showing the strongest appetite for EU-level coordination, and larger Member States, France in particular, expressing comparatively more reserved, though still majority, support.

Comparing the two statements, support for trade diversification (65% on average) is generally slightly higher than for EU-level cooperation on trade negotiations (62%), but France shows by far the widest gap between the two (63% vs. 54%, a 9-point difference), making it the only country below 60% regarding cooperation. Denmark and Poland show a similar, milder pattern, while Cyprus, Sweden and Latvia move in the opposite direction, agreeing slightly more with EU-level cooperation than with diversification alone. In most other Member States, the two statements receive almost identical levels of support, suggesting the two ideas are generally seen as complementary rather than competing.

Age and education are the most consistent socio-demographic factors behind support for a more united and diversified EU trade policy

Age is the variable most clearly linked to views on these two statements. Respondents aged 55 and over are more supportive than younger age groups of both EU-level cooperation in trade negotiations (68%, compared with 57% among 25-39 years-old) and trade diversification (71%, compared with 59% among 25-39 years-old), a 11 to 12-point gap between the most reserved and the most supportive age groups. Education level plays a similarly clear role for EU-level cooperation, rising from 56% among those with low level of education to 66% among high level education, though this gradient is far less pronounced for trade diversification (65% to 69%, without a clear pattern). Support for EU- level cooperation is virtually identical between men and women (62% each), while men are somewhat more likely than women to back trade diversification (67% vs. 64%). Geographic differences are modest but consistent, with rural residents somewhat less supportive than city dwellers, particularly for trade diversification (60% vs. 66%).

5. Perceptions of the top EU challenges

5.1 Europeans' perceptions of the EU's main challenges

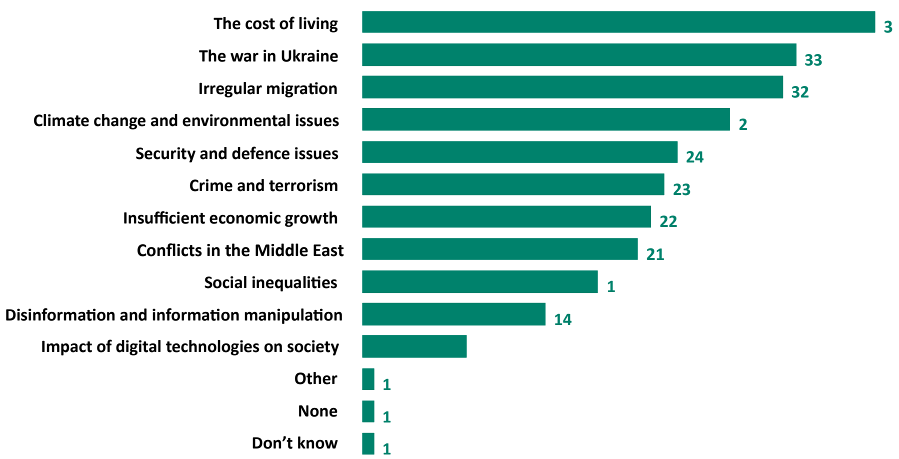
Cost of living remains Europeans' foremost concern, while geopolitical issues continue to dominate the public agenda

The cost of living remains the challenge most frequently identified by Europeans as one of the main issues currently facing the European Union (39%). While economic concerns are strong, they are now closely accompanied by geopolitical and security-related issues. Around one third of respondents mention the war in Ukraine (33%) and irregular migration (32%).

A second group of concerns gathers between one fifth and one quarter of Europeans. Climate change and environmental issues (28%), security and defence (24%), crime and terrorism (23%), insufficient economic growth (22%) and conflicts in the Middle East (21%) all receive relatively similar levels of support, suggesting that Europeans perceive the EU as facing multiple simultaneous challenges rather than being dominated by a single issue. Social inequalities (18%), disinformation and information manipulation (14%) and the impact of digital technologies on society (8%) are mentioned less frequently, but they still point to a broader set of societal and informational concerns. This relatively balanced distribution beyond the leading issues illustrates the complexity of the policy environment currently facing the European Union.

Comparison with the previous Flash Eurobarometer conducted in September 2025 points to a noticeable evolution in public concerns. The cost of living has become more prominent (+10 points), while concerns relating to the war in Ukraine have eased considerably (14 points). Irregular migration also declines slightly (-6 points), although it remains among the three most frequently cited challenges. Perception of conflicts in the Middle East (+3 points), social inequalities (+1 point) and the impact of digital technologies (+1 point) have gained a bit more visibility.

Q1 Which of the following do you think are the current main challenges the EU is facing ? (Multiple answers possible, maximum 3)



In most countries, the cost of living remains a central issue, but it competes with other priorities depending on each country's economic situation, geographical position and exposure to security or migration pressures.

The cost of living is particularly salient in Ireland (70%), far above the EU average, as well as in Greece (57%) and Croatia (52%). It is also mentioned by relatively high proportions of respondents in Cyprus (46%), Malta (45%) and Romania (44%). In these countries, economic pressure appears to dominate citizens' perception of the challenges currently facing the European Union.

By contrast, the cost of living is cited much less frequently in Lithuania (24%), Czechia (25%) and Poland (28%). This may suggest that economic concerns are overshadowed by other issues, especially the war in Ukraine and, more broadly, security-related concerns. The war in Ukraine is mentioned most frequently in Lithuania (54%) and Latvia (48%), followed by Hungary (46%), as well as Finland and Czechia (both 45%). These are countries where geographical proximity to Russia or Belarus, or stronger historical and security links to the conflict, likely makes the war a more immediate concern. In several of these countries, the prominence of the war in Ukraine also goes hand in hand with higher concern about security and defence: this is especially the case in Lithuania (47%), Finland (38%) and Poland (37%). The results therefore suggest a clear trade-off in the hierarchy of concerns: in Member States more directly exposed to the geopolitical consequences of the war, security issues tend to take precedence over economic or environmental concerns.

In Member States where the war in Ukraine is less salient, other concerns tend to move higher in the hierarchy. This is particularly visible in parts of Southern Europe. In Greece, only 18% identify the war in Ukraine as one of the EU's main challenges, while the cost of living (57%) and irregular migration (45%) are both cited by much larger shares of respondents. Spain shows a similar pattern: concern about the war in Ukraine remains below the EU average (26%), whereas irregular migration is the most frequently mentioned challenge (46%) and climate change also stands at a relatively high level (31%). These examples show that national priorities do not simply reflect a single European agenda, but rather different combinations of economic, geopolitical, environmental and migration- related concerns.

This contrast is also visible in the place given to climate change and environmental issues. The issue remains relatively prominent in countries such as Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Italy (35% each), as well as Spain (31%), and the Netherlands and Sweden (both 30%). However, it is much less frequently mentioned in Latvia (11%) and Lithuania (14%), where the war in Ukraine is among the top concerns, and in Romania (16%), where the cost of living and disinformation stand out more clearly. In other words, environmental concerns remain part of the European agenda, but they appear less central in countries where citizens give greater priority to security or more immediate economic pressures.

Overall, country results show that Europeans broadly identify the same set of challenges, but not in the same order. The EU faces a shared set of challenges, but citizens' perceptions of their relative importance remain strongly filtered by national circumstances.

Q1 Which of the following do you think are the current main challenges the EU is facing? [Multiple answers possibfe, maximum 3]

	EU 27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
The cost of living	39	43	41	25	32	35	46	70	57	42	40	52	43	46	41	24	41	35	45	36	43	28	41	44	43	36	37	30
The war in Ukraine	33	30	37	45	44	35	41	27	18	26	30	33	28	24	48	54	22	46	32	37	27	40	35	41	30	37	45	38
Irregular migration	32	23	25	40	26	28	25	36	45	46	31	34	34	41	30	31	25	26	35	33	29	34	37	15	39	32	16	22
Climate change and environmental issues	28	27	18	21	35	25	21	31	22	31	35	23	35	22	11	14	35	31	22	30	29	20	29	16	25	19	25	30
Security and defence issues	24	23	18	22	31	24	33	15	20	19	23	26	21	31	31	47	32	19	28	26	18	37	24	27	21	23	38	30
Crime and terrorism	23	21	23	22	20	25	18	23	21	25	26	23	22	20	11	10	23	24	18	22	24	21	18	13	18	18	24	40
Insufficient economic growth	22	25	25	20	11	24	26	10	32	17	20	26	29	21	26	16	17	26	25	11	23	13	22	26	24	28	23	16
Conflicts in the Middle East	21	23	25	20	29	19	14	22	21	24	22	18	24	21	16	22	17	16	15	28	15	19	26	18	23	16	17	20
Social inequalities	18	22	23	13	15	21	24	9	18	17	18	16	18	17	20	17	21	20	17	15	24	14	18	16	14	24	19	17
Disinformation and information manipulation	14	10	21	19	10	11	19	13	14	18	12	17	10	14	22	19	17	8	12	11	11	22	11	26	19	17	12	13
Impact of digital technologies on society	8	9	7	8	11	8	11	9	4	7	9	12	9	13	6	7	17	7	17	10	9	9	8	9	14	13	7	8

Socio-demographic differences remain relatively limited, although age consistently shapes perceptions of the EU's main challenges

Compared with the differences observed across Member States, socio-demographic variations remain relatively modest. Across most groups, Europeans identify broadly the same hierarchy of challenges, with the cost of living, the war in Ukraine and irregular migration consistently emerging among the issues mentioned most frequently. This suggests that the main challenges facing the European Union are widely shared across the population, regardless of gender, educational background or place of residence.

Age nevertheless emerges as the socio-demographic characteristic that most consistently differentiates perceptions. Older respondents tend to place greater emphasis on geopolitical and security-related issues. Those aged 55 and over are considerably more likely than younger Europeans to identify the war in Ukraine as one of the EU's main challenges (42%, compared with 25% among both respondents aged 15-24 and 25-39). They are also more likely to mention irregular migration (38% vs.. 22% among 15-24 years-old), security and defence (28% vs. 20%) and conflicts in the Middle East (24% versus 18%).

Younger Europeans place greater emphasis on societal challenges. Respondents aged 15-24 are more likely to mention social inequalities (24%, compared with 16% among those aged 55 and over) and the impact of digital technologies on society (11%, vs. 6% among the oldest respondents). Climate change also remains slightly more prominent among older working- age adults and seniors (32% among those aged 55 and over, compared with 24% among respondents aged 25-39), suggesting that environmental concerns now extend well beyond younger generations.

The cost of living stands out for the remarkable consistency of concern it generates across the population. Around four in ten respondents mention it regardless of gender, occupation, household composition or frequency of social media use, with only limited variation across age groups (ranging from 36% among those aged 55 and over to 43% among respondents aged 40-54). This broad consensus reinforces its position as the dominant challenge currently facing the European Union.

Notably, respondents who trust the EU to strengthen security and defence are more likely to identify the war in Ukraine, climate change and security and defence as ma or challenges. Conversely, those who do not trust the EU place greater emphasis on the cost of living and irregular migration. This suggests that trust in the EU's role in security and defence is associated with different perceptions of the challenges facing the European Union.

5.2 Priorities Europeans expect from the EU

Irregular migration and security and defence top the priorities Europeans expect the EU to address, in a tightly grouped ranking

When asked which areas the EU should address as a priority, Europeans give the highest priority to irregular migration (25%) and security and defence (24%). Climate change and environment (21%) and the war in Ukraine (20%) follow closely behind, confirming that the leading priorities expected from the EU combine internal pressures, external security concerns and long term environmental challenges.

Compared with the previous question on the main challenges facing the EU, the ranking is more tightly grouped. No single issue clearly dominates the list of priorities. This suggests that Europeans do not expect the EU to focus on one main area alone, but rather to act simultaneously on several major policy fronts.

A second group of priorities relates to economic and social issues. Economy and public finances and jobs, social equality and skills are both mentioned by 18% of respondents, while democracy, human rights and the rule of law follow at 15% and energy at 14%. These results show that economic and social concerns remain important, even if they are less prominent than in the previous question on challenges. Other areas are mentioned by smaller shares of Europeans: agriculture and food security as well as conflicts in the Middle East are both cited by 11%, followed by industry and competitiveness as well as education and training (both 9%), public health (8%), the impact of digital technologies on society (6%), trade (4%) and research and innovation (2%). Overall, the results point to a broad but prioritised agenda, where immediate geopolitical and migration issues stand slightly ahead of economic, institutional and sectoral priorities.

Q2 Which of the following areas do you think the EU should address as a priority ?

National priorities broadly mirror the main challenges identified in each country, but with some differences in emphasis

Irregular migration is the most frequently cited EU priority in Spain (3 %), Cyprus (34%) and Greece (33%), and also reaches high levels in Czechia and Ireland (both 32%), the Netherlands (31%) and Portugal (30%). This reflects the strong salience of migration in several southern Member States, where the issue was already identified as one of the main challenges facing the EU.

Security and defence, together with the war in Ukraine, is particularly prominent in countries located on the Union's eastern and northern flank. Security and defence is cited most frequently in Lithuania (40%), Finland (38%) and Poland (37%), followed by Denmark and Estonia (both 33%) and Sweden (32%). The war in Ukraine is also especially salient in Lithuania (40%), as well as Denmark, Latvia and Finland (all 31%) and Estonia and Sweden (both 28%). As in the previous question, this pattern suggests that geographical proximity to Russia or Belarus, and greater exposure to the geopolitical consequences of the war, makes security-related issues more immediate.

The link with the previous question is less direct for economic concerns, as the list of EU priorities does not include the cost of living as such.

Instead, economic expectations are expressed through areas such as economy and public finances or jobs, social equality and skills. Greece stands out in this respect, with economy and public finances mentioned by 32% of respondents, while this priority also reaches relatively high levels in Cyprus (29%). Jobs, social equality and skills are more frequently cited in Slovakia (26%), Latvia (25%), Bulgaria (24%) and Italy (23%). This suggests that, in countries where economic concerns are particularly visible, expectations towards the EU are not concentrated in a single item but spread across several economic and social policy areas.

Climate change and environment follow another pattern. It is cited most frequently in France (27%), Italy (26%) and Denmark (25%), and also reaches relatively high levels in Malta and Sweden (both 24%), as well as Ireland and Portugal (both 23%). These results broadly echo the previous question: climate change and environment is much less frequently mentioned in Latvia (7%), Lithuania and Romania (both 10%) and Slovakia (11%). As for the perception of the EU's main challenges, environmental priorities appear less central in countries where security concerns, the war in Ukraine or more immediate economic pressures occupy more space. Overall, the country results show a strong continuity between the challenges Europeans identify and the areas they want the EU to address.

Age structures expectations towards EU action more clearly than other socio-demographic variables.

Older respondents are more likely to prioritise security-related issues. Among those aged 55 and over, irregular migration is mentioned by 31%, security and defence by 29% and the war in Ukraine by 27%. By contrast, among respondents aged 15-24, these figures are lower, at 16%, 18% and 13% respectively. This mirrors the previous question, where older respondents were also more likely to identify the war in Ukraine, irregular migration and security and defence as major challenges facing the EU. Younger Europeans, by contrast, give relatively more weight to social and institutional priorities. Respondents aged 15-24 are more likely than those aged 55 and over to mention jobs, social equality and skills (23% vs. 14%), economy and public finances (21% vs. 16%), education and training (15% vs. 6%) and democracy, human rights and the rule of law (19% vs. 15%).

Climate change and environment do not follow a simple generational pattern. It is mentioned by 21% of those aged 15-24, falls to 15% among respondents aged 25-39, and rises to 25% among those aged 55 and over. This confirms that environmental concerns are not limited to younger generations, and that they remain part of the EU priority agenda across age groups, although with varying intensity.

Attitudinal differences are more visible. Respondents who trust the EU to strengthen security and defence are more likely than those who do not trust the EU to prioritise security and defence (26% vs. 22%), the war in Ukraine (23% vs. 16%) and climate change and environment (23% vs. 17%). Conversely, those who do not trust the EU to strengthen security and defence are considerably more likely to prioritise irregular migration (33% vs. 20%). These results suggest that broader attitudes towards the EU are associated with different expectations of what the European Union should prioritise, even when the overall hierarchy of concerns remains relatively stable.

6. EU's security and defence

6.1 Perceived national security threat and support for EU defence autonomy

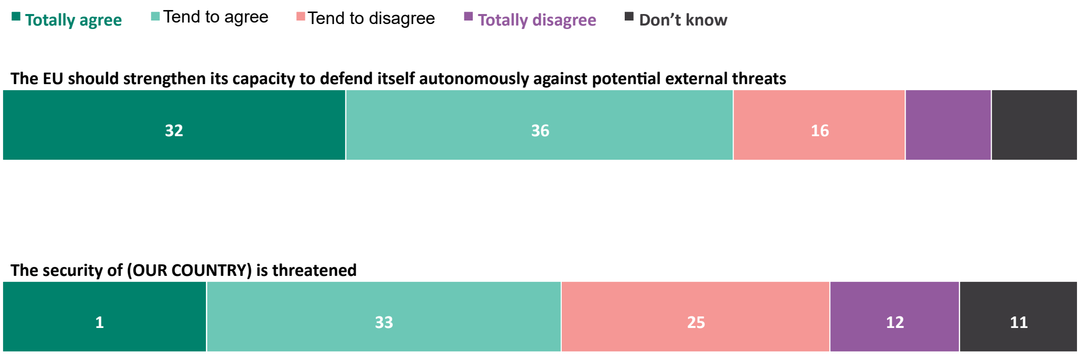
Europeans feel less directly threatened than at the beginning of 2026, but still strongly support a more autonomous European defence

Given the current international context, a slim majority of Europeans agree that the security of their country is threatened (52%), including 19% who totally agree and 33% who tend to agree. However, this sense of insecurity has declined sharply compared with January 2026, falling by 16 percentage points.

This decline does not translate into weaker support for EU-level defence capacity. On the contrary, more than two thirds of Europeans agree that the EU should strengthen its capacity to defend itself autonomously against potential external threats (6 %), including 32% who totally agree. This suggests that support for a stronger European defence is not only a reaction to an immediate feeling of national insecurity but also reflects a broader expectation that the EU should be able to protect itself in a more uncertain international environment.

The contrast between the two results is important. While fewer Europeans now feel that their own country is directly threatened, a large majority still support strengthening the EU's autonomous defence capacity. This echoes the priorities identified in the previous section, where security and defence ranked among the top areas that Europeans expect the EU to address.

Q7 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements ?



The sense of threat remains uneven across Member States, while support for autonomous EU defence is broadly shared

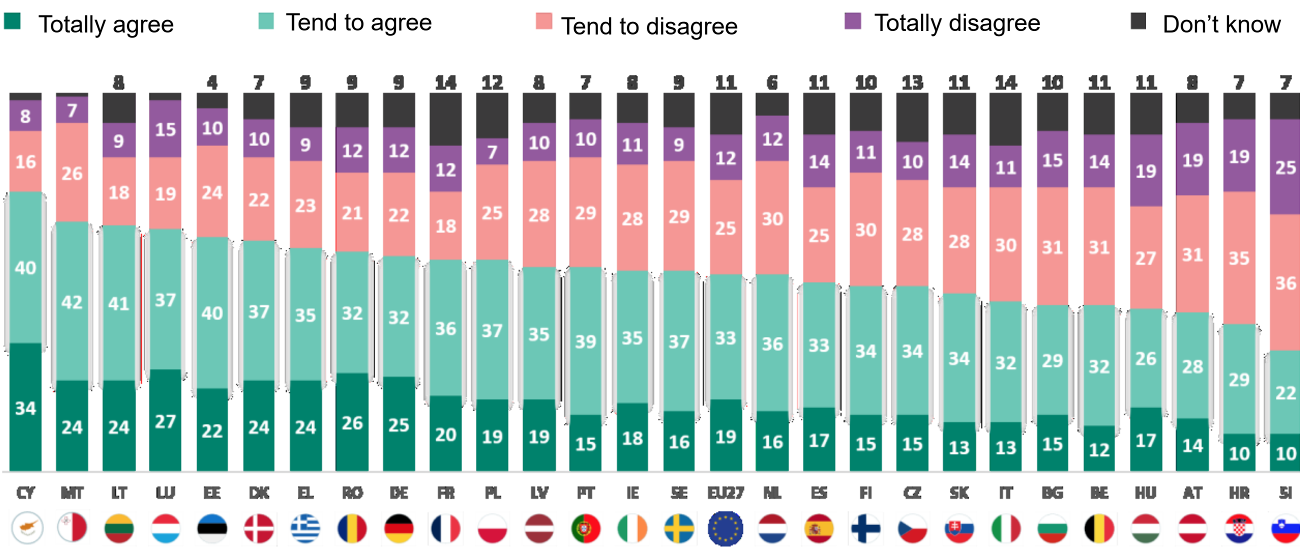
Country-level results show that the perception of national security threats varies substantially across the EU. The highest levels of agreement that the security of one's country is threatened are observed in Cyprus (74%), followed by Malta (66%), Lithuania (65%), Luxembourg (64%), Estonia (62%) and Denmark (61%). Relatively high levels are also recorded in Greece (59%), Romania (58%), Germany (57%), as well as France and Poland (both 56%). By contrast, the perception of threat is considerably lower in Slovenia (32%), Croatia (39%), Austria (42%), Hungary (43%), Belgium and Bulgaria (both 44%), Italy (45%) and Slovakia (47%). In these countries, fewer than half of respondents agree that their country's security is threatened.

The decline in the sense of threat compared with January 2026 is visible in most Member States. In several countries, the decrease is particularly pronounced, notably in the Netherlands (-25 points), France (-24 points), Belgium (-21 points), Italy (-19 points), as well as Germany and Sweden (both -18 points). This suggests that the sharp decline observed at EU level is not driven by a small number of countries but reflects a broader easing of perceived insecurity across the European Union. However, the decline is not uniform: the feeling of threat remains almost stable in Cyprus (-1 point) and even increases in Luxembourg (9 points) and Malta (6 points), confirming that national contexts continue to shape security perceptions.

Support for the EU strengthening its autonomous defence capacity is much more homogeneous. A majority agrees with this statement in every Member State, ranging from 62% in Italy to 92% in Malta. The highest levels are observed in Malta (92%), Luxembourg (91%) and Cyprus (88%), followed by Denmark (80%), Estonia (79%), Portugal (78%) and Lithuania (77%). Even in the countries where support is lowest, it remains clearly majority-based, such as Italy (62%), Poland (65%), Austria and Slovenia (both 66%) and Bulgaria and Sweden (both 67%). This shows that, while Europeans differ in how directly threatened they feel, support for strengthening the EU's defence capacity is a shared position across the European Union.

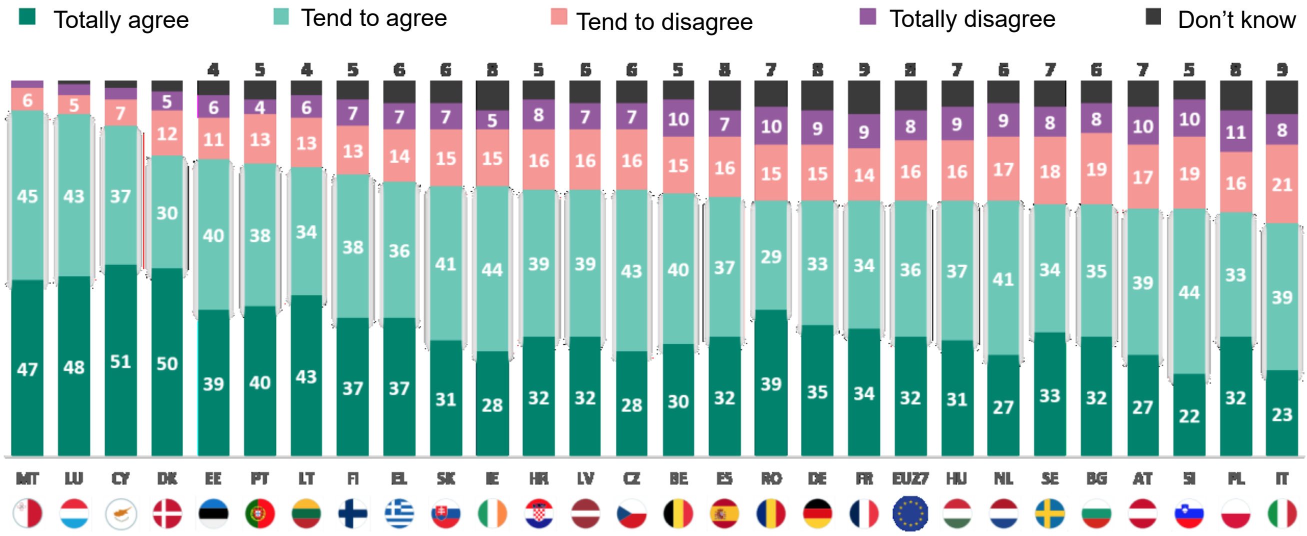
Q7 Given the current international context, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The security of (OUR COUNTRY) is threatened



Q7 Given the current international context, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The EU should strengthen its capacity to defend itself autonomously against potential external threats



Socio-demographic differences are limited for perceived threat, but more visible for support for autonomous EU defence Socio-demographic differences in the perception that one's country is threatened remain relatively limited. Unlike the previous questions on the EU's main challenges and priorities, age does not strongly structure responses. Agreement that national security is threatened stands at 54% among those aged 15-24 and 25-39, 50% among those aged 40-54 and 53% among those aged 55 and over. This suggests that, when citizens are asked directly about the security of their own country, the sense of threat is relatively broadly shared across generations. Gender differences are also modest, although women (54%) are slightly more likely than men (51%) to agree that their country's security is threatened.

Support for strengthening the EU's autonomous defence capacity shows more distinct socio-demographic patterns. It is higher among respondents aged 55 and over (74%) than among those aged 15-24 (63%), 25-39 (62%) and 40-54 (65%). This partly echoes the previous findings showing that older respondents tend to give greater weight to geopolitical and security- related issues.

The strongest differences are attitudinal. Respondents who trust the EU to strengthen security and defence are much more likely to support an autonomous EU defence capacity than those who do not trust the EU in this area (75% vs. 59%). A similar gap is observed between those satisfied and dissatisfied with the respect for the rule of law in the EU (77% vs. 61%). These results suggest that support for autonomous EU defence is closely linked to broader confidence in the EU's ability to act effectively. However, even among more sceptical groups, support remains majority-based, confirming that strengthening the EU's defence capacity is a broadly shared expectation across the European population.

6.2 Trust in the EU to strengthen security and defence

A majority of Europeans trust the EU to strengthen security and defence, though confidence is more moderate than support for autonomous EU defence

A majority of Europeans trust the European Union to strengthen security and defence in Europe and be er protect its citizens (56%), including 12% who completely trust it and 44% who tend to trust it. Compared with January 2026, trust in the EU to strengthen security and defence has increased by four percentage points while the proportion who do not trust it at all has declined. The results therefore point to a modest but clear improvement in confidence in the EU's ability to act in the field of security and defence.

This result should be read alongside the previous question. While more than two thirds of Europeans agree that the EU should strengthen its capacity to defend itself autonomously against potential external threats, a smaller majority trust the EU to strengthen security and defence in practice. This gap suggests that support for the principle of a stronger European defence is broader than confidence in the EU's ability to deliver it. Nevertheless, the fact that trust is held by a majority, and has increased since January 2026, confirms that the EU is seen by many citizens as a relevant actor in the security and defence field.

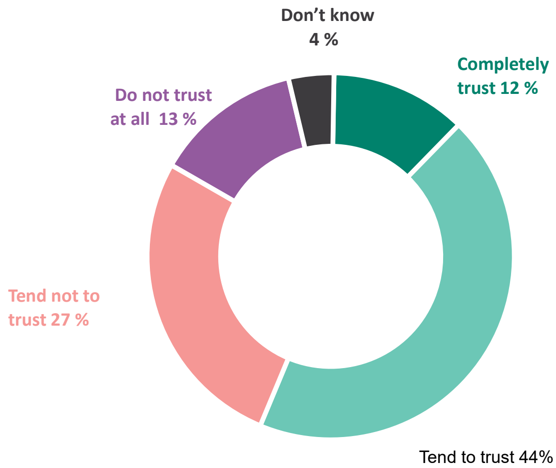
Trust in the EU on security and defence is highest in Malta and Luxembourg, and lower in several of the largest Member States

Trust in the EU to strengthen security and defence varies considerably across Member States. It reaches its highest levels in Malta (91%) and Luxembourg (88%), followed by Cyprus (76%), Portugal, Denmark and Lithuania (all 75%) and Estonia (72%). In these countries, trust in the EU's capacity to protect citizens is substantially above the EU average.

At the other end of the scale, trust is lowest in Greece and Czechia (both 47%). It is also relatively low in Germany and Italy (both 50%), Slovakia and Bulgaria (both 52%), as well as France and Austria (both 53%). This confirms that, although trust is held by a majority or close to a majority in almost all Member States, confidence in the EU's role in security and defence is more limited in several large Member States, particularly Germany, Italy and France.

The country pattern only partly overlaps with the sense of national threat described in the previous section. In ithuania and Estonia, high levels of trust in the EU go together with a strong perception of security risks, suggesting that countries more exposed to the geopolitical consequences of the war in Ukraine may also place greater confidence in EU level defence action. However, this is not systematic. Some countries with relatively high

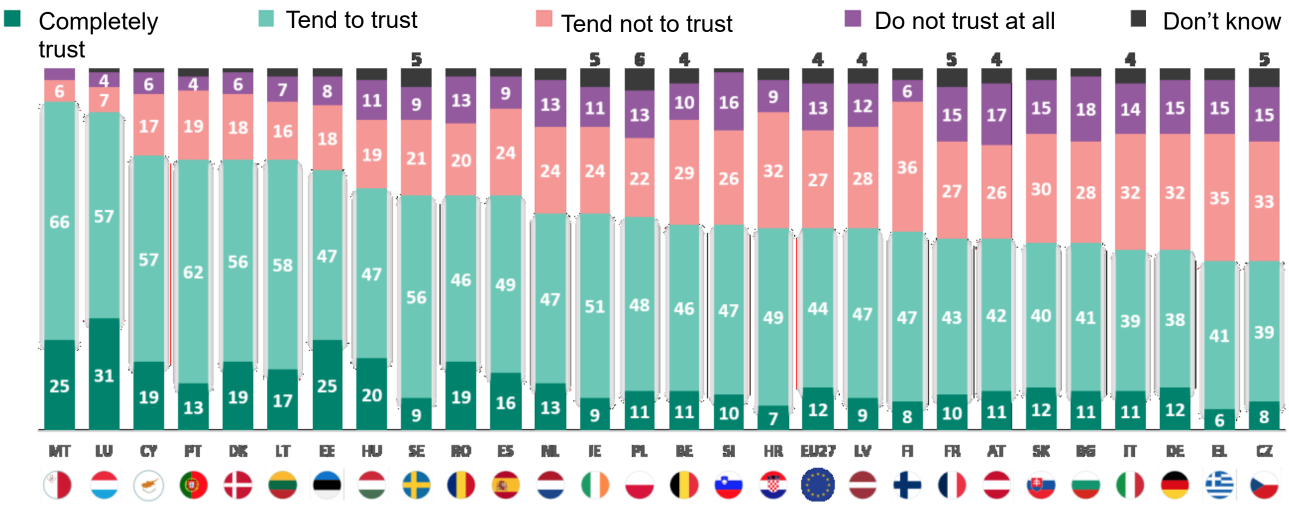
Q8 To what extent do you trust the European Union to strengthen security and defence in Europe and better protect its citizens ?



perceived threat, such as France or Germany, show more moderate levels of trust in the EU in this area. This indicates that trust in the EU's security and defence role is not shaped only by exposure to external threats, but also by broader national attitudes towards the EU's capacity to act effectively.

Compared with January 2026, trust has increased in most Member States, although to varying degrees. The strongest rises are observed in Malta (24 points), France (13 points), Luxembourg (12 points), Austria (10 points) and Slovenia (9 points). Trust has also increased noticeably in Bulgaria and Hungary (both 8 points), Denmark and Greece (both 7 points) and Belgium (6 points). The overall increase in trust is widespread, but uneven across the European Union.

Q8 To what extend do you trust the European Union to strengthen security and defence in Europe and better protect its citizens?



Trust in the EU on security and defence is stronger among younger respondents and those with broader confidence in the EU

Age is one of the clearest divides. Trust in the EU to strengthen security and defence is highest among respondents aged 15-24 (65%) and remains above the EU average (56%) among those aged 25-39 (59%). It is lower among respondents aged 40-54 (53%) and those aged 55 and over (55%).

This age pattern is notable because older respondents are generally more likely to identify security-related issues as challenges or priorities for the EU. Younger respondents appear less likely to feel directly concerned by security threats, but more likely to trust the EU to act in this field. This suggests a distinction between the perception of threat, which tends to be stronger among older respondents, and confidence in EU action, which is stronger among younger Europeans.

Gender differences are limited, although men (58%) are slightly more likely than women (55%) to trust the EU in this area. Trust is also higher among respondents with tertiary education (61%) than among those with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education (54%) or lower levels of education (55%).

The strongest differences are attitudinal. Respondents who are satisfied with the respect for the rule of law in the EU (79%) are far more likely to trust the EU to strengthen security and defence than those who are dissatisfied (36%). This confirms that trust in the EU's role in security and defence is closely linked to broader confidence in the European Union's functioning.

Trust in the EU on defence is markedly stronger among those under the age of 25 (65%)

Q8 To what extend do you trust the European Union to strengthen security and defence in Europe and better protect its citizens ?

7. Technical specifications

Between the 19 and 24 June 2026, Demoscopy carried out this Flash Eurobarometer 584 at the request of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM 'Public Opinion and Citizens Engagement' Unit). It is a survey coordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM 'Public Opinion and Citizens Engagement' Unit).

This Flash Eurobarometer covers the general population aged 15 years and older, across all 27 EU Member States. This target population corresponds to the Public at large as defined in the Flash Eurobarometer framework contract. In total, 25,904 interviews were completed via Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI).

The sampling design follows the standard specifications of the framework contract, with 1,000 interviews in larger Member States and 500 interviews in smaller Member States (LU, CY, MT).

Number of interviews per country

EU	EU	25904	LV	Latvia	1010
BE	Belgium	1039	LT	Lithuania	1005
BG	Bulgaria	1007	LU	Luxembourg	506
CZ	Czechia	1016	HU	Hungary	1030
DK	Denmark	1015	MT	Malta	512
DE	Germany	1008	NL	Netherlands	1024
EE	Estonia	1005	AT	Austria	1017
IE	Republic of Ireland	1036	PL	Poland	1024
EL	Greece	1008	PT	Portugal	1005
ES	Spain	1005	RO	Romania	1014
FR	France	1005	SI	Slovenia	1016
HR	Croatia	1031	SK	Slovakia	1003
IT	Italy	1009	FI	Finland	1024
CY	Cyprus	521	SE	Sweden	1009

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.

(table from another Eurobarometer report)

Statistical Margins due to the sampling process

(at the 95% level of confidence)

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

	5 %	10 %	15 %	20 %	25 %	30 %	35 %	40 %	45 %	50 %	
	95 %	90 %	85 %	80 %	75 %	70 %	65 %	60 %	55 %	50 %	
N=50	6,0	8,3	9,9	11,1	12,0	12,7	13,2	13,6	13,8	13,9	N=50
N=500	1,9	2,6	3,1	3,5	3,8	4,0	4,2	4,3	4,4	4,4	N=500
N=1000	**1,4**	**1,9**	**2,2**	**2,5**	**2,7**	**2,8**	**3,0**	**3,0**	**3,1**	**3,1**	**N=1000**
N=1500	1,1	1,5	1,8	2,0	2,2	2,3	2,4	2,5	2,5	2,5	N=1500
N=2000	1,0	1,3	1,6	1,8	1,9	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,2	2,2	N=2000

8. Questionnaire

Interview mode: Online (CAWI)

Target population: Public at large, 15+

Coverage: 27 EU Member States

Fieldwork dates: 19 to 24 June 2026

Sample size: 25904 interviews (approximately 1000 in larger countries and 500 in smaller countries)

Socio-demographic questions covered : age, gender, education, occupation, region, urbanisation, household composition and financial difficulties.

The EU: strengths, challenges and priorities

Q1 : Which of the following do you think are the current main challenges the EU is facing? Please select up to three answers.

(RANDOMISE 1-11 – MAX. 3 ANSWERS)

Social inequalities 1

Insufficient economic growth 2

The cost of living 3

The war in Ukraine 4

Conflicts in the Middle East (M) 5

Climate change and environmental issues 6

Irregular migration 7

Crime and terrorism 8

Impact of digital technologies on society 9

Disinformation and information manipulation 10

Security and defence issues 11

Other 12

None 13

Don’t know 998

Q2 Which of the following areas do you think the EU should address as a priority? Please select up to three answers.

(RANDOMISE 1-17 – MAX 3 ANSWERS)

Irregular migration 1

The war in Ukraine 2

Security and defence 3

Economy and public finances 4

Industry and competitiveness 5

Agriculture and food security 6

Climate change and environment 7
Education and training 8
Jobs, social equality and skills 9
Energy 10
Trade 11
Research and innovation 12
Public health 13
Impact of digital technologies on society (N) 14
Democracy, human rights and the rule of law 15
Conflicts in the Middle East (N) 16
Other 17
None 18
Don't know 998

Democracy and rule of law in the EU

Q3 In your opinion, which of the following are the most important elements of a democratic society?
(RANDOMISE 1-10 – MAX 3 ANSWERS)
Free and fair elections 1
Freedom of speech / expression 2
Freedom and independence of the media 3
Respect for the rule of law and protection of fundamental rights 4
An independent justice system 5
Citizens being able to participate in public debate and decision-making 6
Transparency and accountability of political leaders 7
Respect for the rights of minorities 8
Fighting corruption 9
A strong opposition able to criticise the government 10
Other 11
None of these 12
Don't know 13

Q4 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the respect for the rule of law in...
(ONE ANSWER ONLY)

		Very satisfied	Rather satisfied	Rather dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
1	(OUR COUNTRY)	1	2	3	4	998
2	The EU	1	2	3	4	998

Q5 For each of the following actions, tell me whether you think it is effective or not in influencing political decision making at the EU level beyond elections?
(RANDOMISE – ONE ANSWER PER LINE)

		Very effective	Fairly effective	Not very effective	Not at all effective	Don't know
1	Be a member of an association or a non governmental organisation	1	2	3	4	998
2	Take part in a European Citizens' Initiative (a request signed by at least one million citizens across at least seven Member States inviting the European Commission to propose new laws in areas where the Commission has powers to act) or a European Citizens' Panel (a randomly selected citizens' assembly at EU level working together on policy recommendations)					
3	Participate in political movements parties or unions					
4	Boycott or buy certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons					
5	Participate in a demonstration or a protest					

Independence and trade

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(ROTATE – ONE ANSWER PER LINE)

		Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	Don't know
1	Member States can achieve better outcomes in trade negotiations by working together at the EU level	1	2	3	4	998
2	The EU should strengthen its economic independence by diversifying its trade relations	1	2	3	4	998

Defence, including the future Security Strategy

Q 7 Given the current international context, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(ROTATE – ONE ANSWER PER LINE)

		Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	Don't know
1	The security of (OUR COUNTRY) is threatened	1	2	3	4	998
2	The EU should strengthen its capacity to defend itself autonomously against potential external threats (N)	1	2	3	4	998

Q8 To what extent do you trust the European Union to strengthen security and defence in Europe and be er protect its citizens?

(ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Completely trust	1
Tend to trust	2
Tend not to trust	3
Do not trust at all	4
Don't know	4

Energy crisis

Q9 In your view, what can help the EU to transition away from fossil fuels?

(FIRSTLY IS EXCLUSIVE – AND THEN -MULTIPLE -RANDOMISE)

Greater electrification	1
Reducing energy use through energy efficiency measures	2
Promoting local actions like energy communities	3
Developing more renewable energy capacity through e.g. new wind farms and solar parks	4
Investing in nuclear solutions	5
Other	6
Don't know	998

1. Firstly?

2. And then?

Q10 Which, if any, of the following actions have you taken in response to the increase in energy prices following the beginning of the war in Iran (end of February 2026) in order to reduce your energy consumption and manage your energy use more actively? You have ...

(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE – NONE AND DK ARE EXCLUSIVE -RANDOMISE)

Reduced heating or cooling use	1
Reduced overall electricity consumption	2
Improved insulation or energy performance of your home	3
Invested in more energy-efficient appliances	4
Monitored your energy consumption more closely	5
Compared or changed your energy supplier or contract	6
Used smart tools or apps to manage energy use	7
Adjusted energy use to benefit from lower prices or reduced consumption at hours with higher prices (e.g., in the morning, evening)	8
Installed or considered installing renewable energy solutions (e.g. solar panels)	9
Joined an energy community	10
Changed your transport habits to reduce energy consumption	11
Other	12
None	13
Don't know	998

Social media

Q11 How concerned are you about the following risks children face on social media?

(ONE ANSWER ONLY - RANDOMISE)

		Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not very concerned	Not at all concerned	Don't know
1	Exposure to harmful content (e.g., violence, self-harm, extremism, harmful health or cosmetic advice)	1	2	3	4	998
2	Online grooming or sexual exploitation	1	2	3	4	998
3	Cyberbullying or harassment	1	2	3	4	998
4	Addictive design	1	2	3	4	998
5	Data privacy risks (e.g., collection of children's personal information)	1	2	3	4	998
6	Recruitment for illegal activities	1	2	3	4	998

Q12 The Digital Services Act (DSA) requires online platforms to protect children better from harm, which could result for example through cyberbullying, grooming, exposure to violent extremist material, addictive design or so called rabbit holes. In order to further strengthen the protection of children online, which one of the following actions do you think the EU should take?

(ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Adopt EU-level rules that prohibit social media providers from offering their services to children below a certain age	1
Adopt EU-level rules that oblige social media providers to delay offering access to certain unsafe social media to children below a certain age	2
Strengthen resources allocated to law enforcement	3
Leave it to parents and schools to manage children's online safety without additional EU-level measures	4
No additional action is needed	5
Don't know	998

QUESTIONS ON DISINFORMATION

Q13 In the past seven days, how often have you come across information online that you…

(ONE ANSWER PER LINE)

		Daily or almost every day	Several times a week	Less often	Never	Don't know
1	Were unsure whether it was reliable	1	2	3	4	998
2	Believed to be false or misleading	1	2	3	4	998
3	Believed may have been part of an attempt by a foreign country or organisation to influence your opinion	1	2	3	4	998

ASK ALL

Q14 When you come across information online that you think might be false or misleading, what do you usually do?

(MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE – RANDOMISE 1-5)

Ignore it	1
Check it by comparing with other sources	2
Report it to the platform or website	3
Discuss it with friends/family	4
Share it online	5
Don't know	998

ASK ALL

Q15 Which of the following measures, if any, should be prioritised to reduce the negative impact of false or misleading information online?

(MAX. 2 ANSWERS – NONE AND DK ARE EXCLUSIVE – RANDOMISE 1-6)

Stronger rules for online and social media platforms	1
More education and media literacy for citizens	2
More independent fact-checking of online content	3
Stronger sanctions against illegal online content and activities	4
Clear labelling of AI-generated or manipulated content	5
Minimum age threshold for access to social media	6
No additional measures are needed	7
Don't know	998

ASK ALL

DX1 How often do you use social media platforms to get information about current affairs or political issues?

(ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Several times a day	1
Once a day	2
Several times a week	3
Less often	4
Never	5
Don't know	998