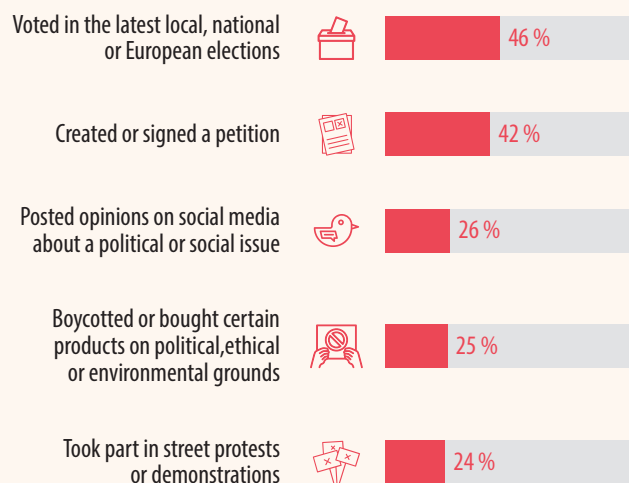


YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE EU: DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE EU

Today's political decisions have a strong impact on the future of young people. It is therefore crucial to foster their active participation in social and democratic life. Importantly, young people belong to the most educated and digitally savvy of all generations, and are determined to tackle pressing global issues such as climate change. Consequently, they have the potential to leave a significant imprint on the political system.

A 2021 Eurobarometer youth survey found that nearly half of those polled had voted in the latest local, national or European elections and over 40 % had launched or signed a petition. Around a quarter had engaged in other, more direct forms of action, including boycotting or

Forms of political and civic engagement

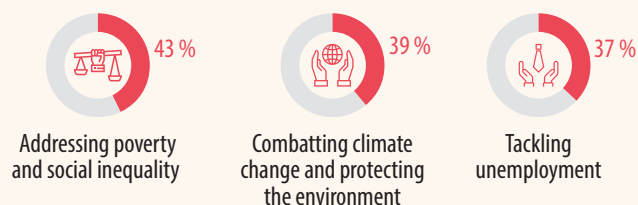


buying certain products on political, ethical or environmental grounds and taking part in street protests or demonstrations. A similar proportion had participated in online activities, including by posting their opinions about political or social issues on social media.

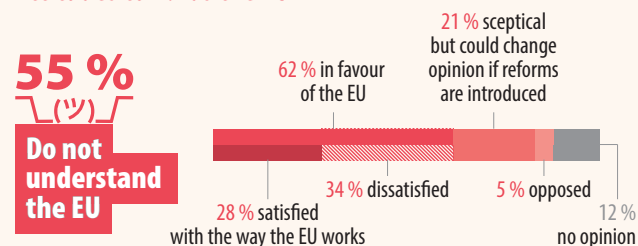
The respondents to the survey identified tackling poverty and social inequality; combatting climate change and protecting the environment; and dealing with unemployment as today's top three most pressing issues.

Although a majority (55 %) of respondents declared they did not understand much or anything about the EU, around three in five (62 %) were generally in favour of the EU – though this includes 34 % of youth who were dissatisfied and 28 % who were satisfied with the way the EU works at present. A further 21 % of those polled were rather sceptical of the EU but could change their opinion if radical reform were introduced, while 5 % were opposed to the general idea of the EU.

Top 3 most pressing issues



Attitudes towards the EU



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Importantly, while nearly half of all participants (45 %) declared their image of the EU had remained stable over the previous year, 17 % said it had improved and 31 % that it had worsened.

Image of the EU



Source: Youth survey, European Parliament, 2021.