



DG Communication is continuously monitoring public opinion by conducting regular Eurobarometer surveys in all 27 EU Member States. This newsletter aims at providing general **public with the most recent Eurobarometer data on key topics of this week's plenary agenda.**

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, DG Communication has commissioned three consecutive surveys measuring European public opinion during this pandemic. The full results of the [last survey](#), conducted from 25 September until 7 October, were published last Friday.

The results provide **insights on citizens' recall of and satisfaction with the measures taken** by the EU and national governments to fight the virus. They shed light on the level of satisfaction of the Europeans with the solidarity between EU Member States, their support for more EU competences and their stance regarding the EU budget and the Rule of Law conditionality. The results also give insights on how limitations to individual freedoms are perceived as well as on **people's state of mind in the midst of the crisis.**

For the November plenary session, relevant survey data is available on:

- Preparation of the European Council meeting of 10-11 December 2020
- Stocktaking of European elections
- Foreign policy consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak
- Strengthening Media Freedom: Protection of Journalists in Europe, Hate Speech, Disinformation and the Role of Platforms
- Situation of Fundamental Rights in the European Union - Annual Report for the years 2018-2019

Parliament's surveys focus primarily on citizens' perception of the European Parliament and the EU as well as Europe's main policy challenges. In combination with the European Commission's Eurobarometer surveys, the results present a detailed and up-to-date **insight into citizens' opinions, expectations and perceptions.**

For more information on the topics covered in this edition, please contact:

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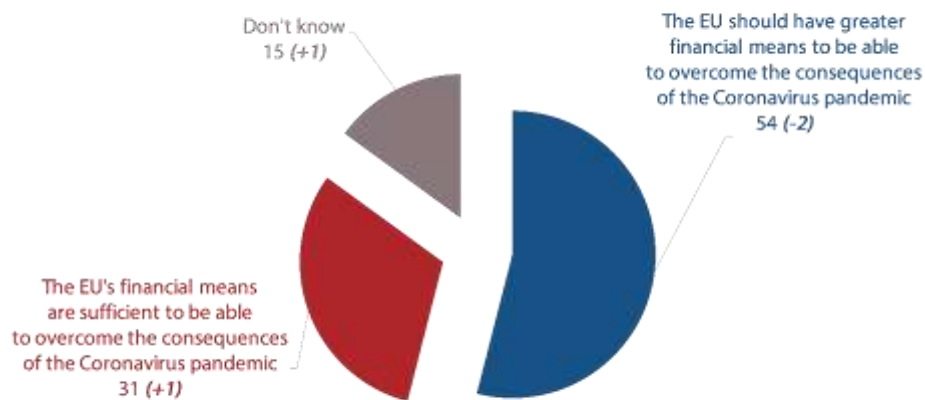
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@EP_Trends

Members will discuss [priorities for the 10-11 December European Council](#) on Wednesday morning. Response to the Covid19 pandemic including recovery, Trade, Climate change and Security are expected to feature on the summit's agenda.

According to the [Parliament's third special survey on European citizens' attitudes and opinions over the course of the Covid-18 pandemic, published last Friday](#), the majority of respondents in the EU27 (54%) think that the EU should have greater financial means to tackle the pandemic, with only three in ten (31%) saying that the EU's current financial means are sufficient. The remaining 15% do not express an opinion.

Q9 Which of the following statement is closest to your opinion?
(% - EU27)



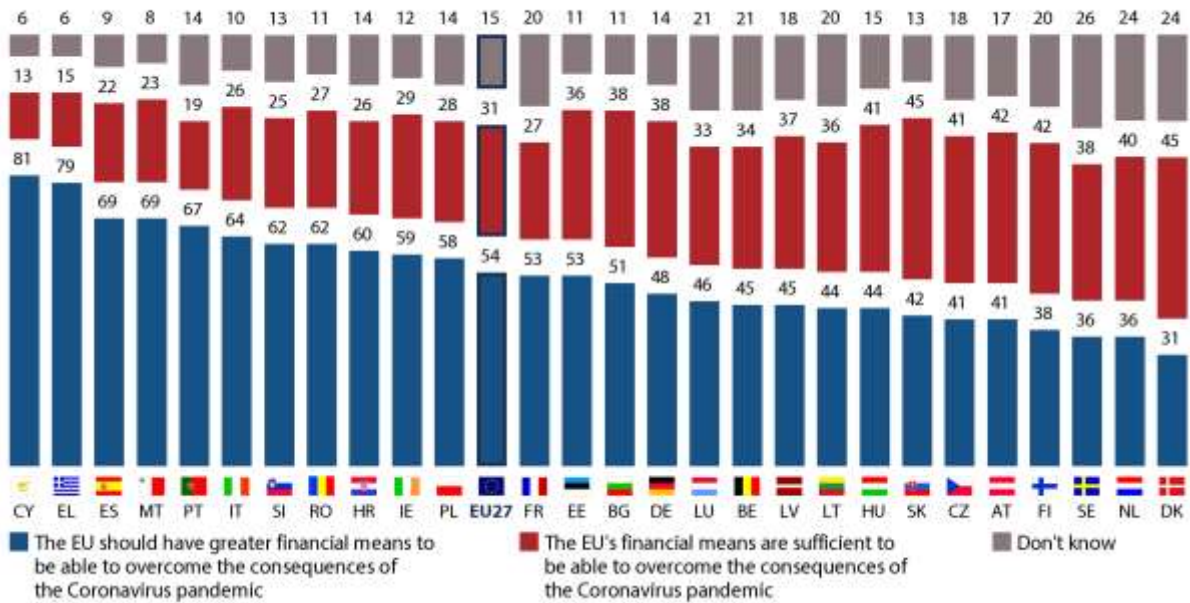
(Wave 3 (09-10/2020) - Wave 2 (06/2020))

For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

The findings vary considerably by country. In twenty countries, a majority of respondents agree that the EU should have greater financial means, led by Cyprus (81%), Greece (79%), Spain, Malta (both 69%) and Portugal (67%).

Public opinion is divided in Czechia (41% agree, 41% disagree), while a majority say that the EU's financial means are sufficient in Denmark, Slovakia (both 45%), Austria, Finland (both 42%), the Netherlands (40%) and Sweden (38%).

Q9 Which of the following statement is closest to your opinion?
(%)

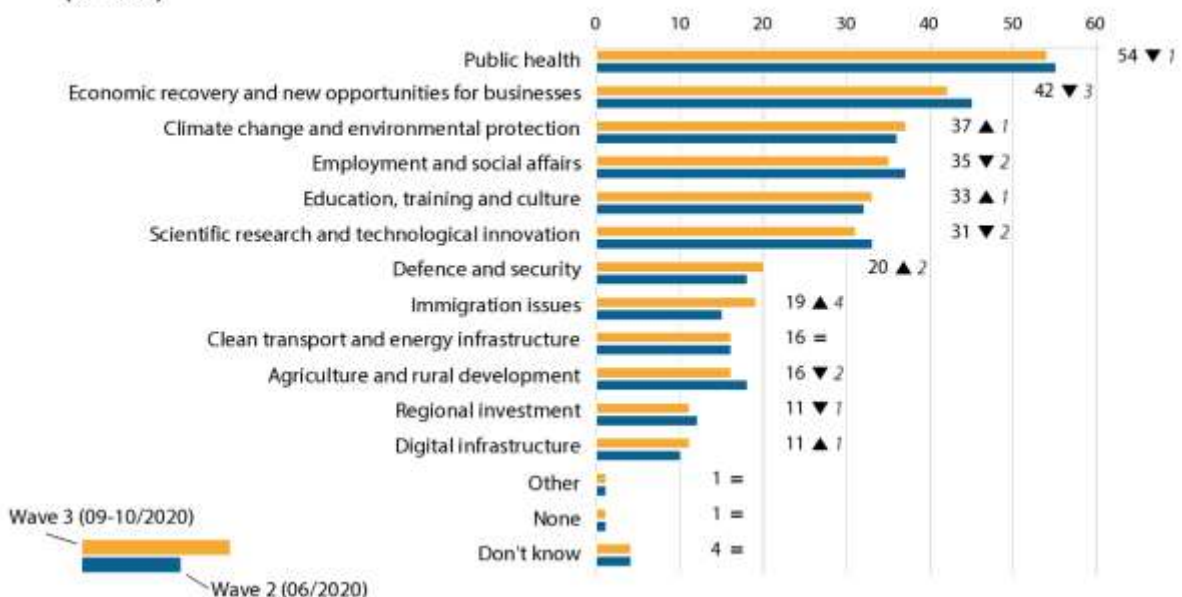


For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

Respondents were asked **how they thought the EU budget should be spent**, choosing up to four policy areas from a list of twelve. More than half (54%, -1 pp compared to wave 2) say that public health should be a priority, and this ranks highest ahead of economic recovery and new opportunities for businesses (42%, -3 pp), climate change and environmental protection (37%, +1 pp) and employment and social affairs (35%, -2 pp).

Around a third would like to see spending on education, training and culture (33%, +1 pp) or on scientific research and technological innovation (31%, -2 pp). The other policy areas are less likely to be seen as a priority: defence and security (20%, +2 pp), immigration issues (19%, +4 pp), clean transport and energy infrastructure (16%, =), agriculture and rural development (16%, -2 pp), regional investment (11%, -1 pp) and digital infrastructure (11%, +1 pp).

Q10 Given the current context, on which of the following would you like the EU budget to be spent? (MAX. 4 ANSWERS)
(% - EU27)



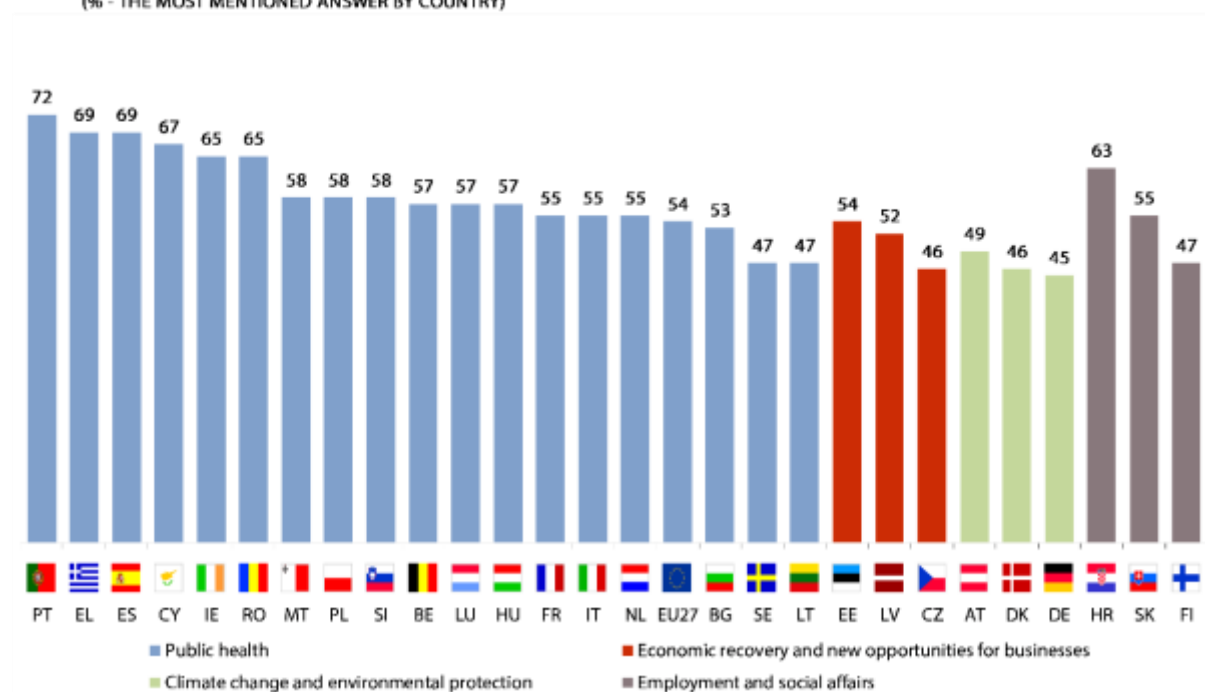
For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

Public health ranks highest as a spending priority for the EU in 18 of the 27 Member States, while in three countries (Estonia, Czechia and Latvia) economic recovery and new opportunities for businesses is seen as the most important area for spending. Employment and social affairs is the top priority in Slovakia, Croatia and Finland, while Austria, Denmark and Germany are the three countries where climate change and environmental protection rank highest.

Looking at the top three priorities in the various Member States, public health is one of the three top priorities in every country, while economic recovery and new opportunities for businesses is among the three highest priorities in 23 countries. Employment and social affairs features among the three main priorities in 14 countries, education, training and culture in 10, and climate change and environmental protection in eight countries.

In addition, scientific research and technological innovation is included in the top three priorities in Sweden, and immigration issues is one of three top priorities in Malta.

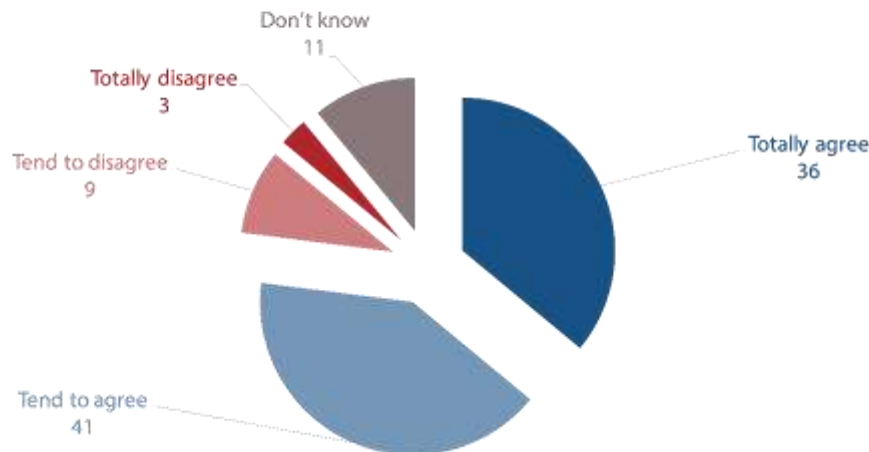
Q10 Given the current context, on which of the following would you like the EU budget to be spent? (MAX. 4 ANSWERS)
(% - THE MOST MENTIONED ANSWER BY COUNTRY)



For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

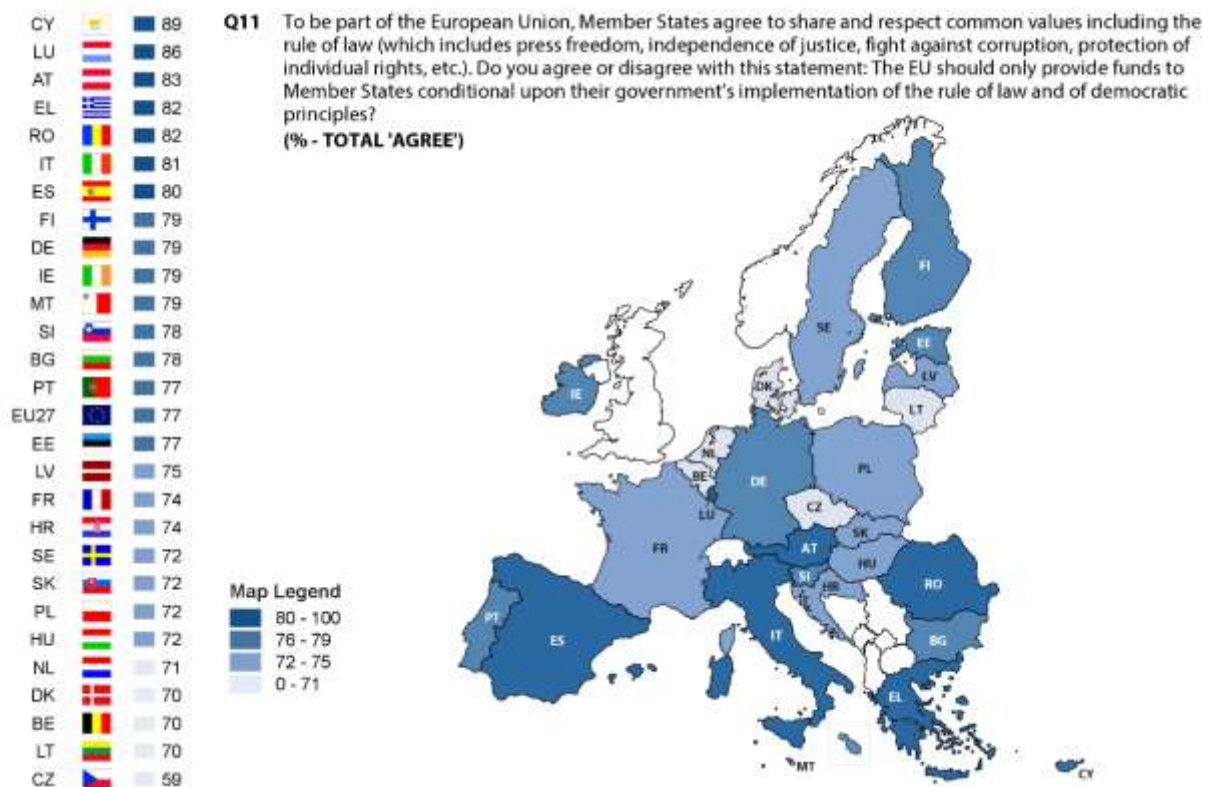
Moreover, around three-quarters of respondents (77%) agree that the EU should only provide **funds to Member States conditional upon their government's implementation of the rule of law and of democratic principles**. This includes more than a third (36%) who 'totally agree' with the statement. A minority (12%) disagree, including 3% who 'totally disagree', while 11% do not know.

Q11 To be part of the European Union, Member States agree to share and respect common values including the rule of law (which includes press freedom, independence of justice, fight against corruption, protection of individual rights, etc.). Do you agree or disagree with this statement: The EU should only provide funds to Member States conditional upon their government's implementation of the rule of law and of democratic principles?
(% - EU27)



For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

In all countries except Czechia, at least seven in ten respondents agree that the EU should only provide funds to Member States conditional upon their government's implementation of the rule of law and of democratic principles. Agreement is highest in Cyprus (89%), Luxembourg (86%), Austria (83%), Greece, Romania (both 82%) and Italy (81%), and is lowest in Czechia (59%), Belgium, Denmark and Lithuania (all 70%).



For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

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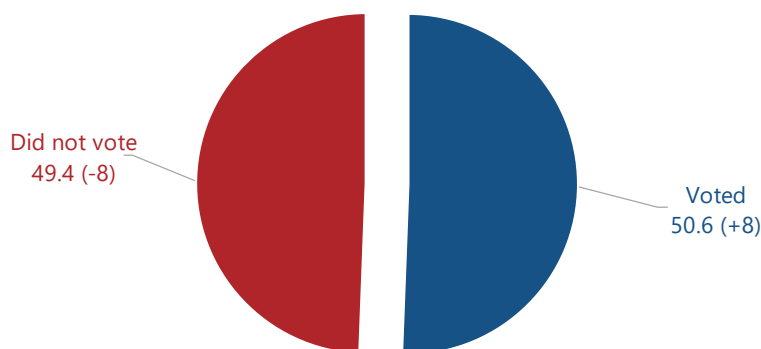
Stocktaking of European elections

The last [Elections to the European Parliament](#) were held across the European Union between 23 and 26 May 2019. On Tuesday morning, Members will assess and draw lessons from these Elections which, in many aspects, were so exceptional that many political experts started wondering whether European Elections had not entered in a new dimension (Vote Wednesday).

Indeed, according to [the Parliament Post Electoral survey \(June 2019\)](#), for the first time since 1994, more than half of Europeans voted in the recent European Parliament elections (50.6%). This is a substantial increase on the 2014 turnout (42.6%), and the highest participation for over 20 years.

Among other factors the increased turnout was driven by a rise in young people voting and is linked both with an increasingly pro-European sentiment and a greater sense of involvement and empowerment among Europeans.

QG1 European Parliament elections were held on the (INSERT CORRECT DATE ACCORDING TO COUNTRY). For one reason or another, some people in (OUR COUNTRY) did not vote in these elections. Did you yourself vote in the recent European Parliament elections? (% - EU)



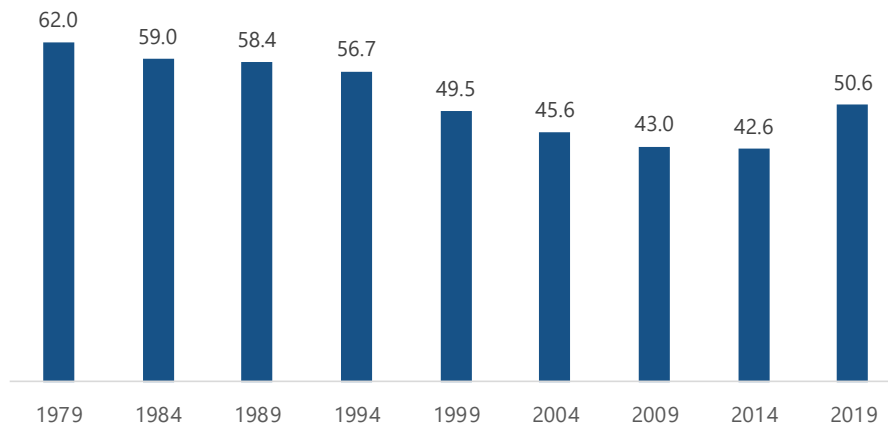
(June 2019 - June 2014)

Base: respondents of voting age, 98% of the sample

For more detailed information: [Special Post-Election Eurobarometer: Have European Elections entered a new dimension \(June 2019\)](#)

This increase reverses a trend of declining turnouts since the very first EP elections in 1979.

Figure 1 Evolution of voter turnout for the European election. 1979-2019.
(% - EU)



There has been an increased turnout in 19 EU countries when comparing the 2014 and 2019 European Parliament elections. The largest increases are seen in Poland (46%, +22 percentage points (pp)), Romania (51%, +19 pp), Spain (61%, +17 pp), Austria (60%, +15 pp), Hungary (43%, +14 pp) and Germany (61%, +13 pp). There have also been increases in countries with the lowest turnout, such as Slovakia (23%, +10 pp) and Czechia (29%, +11 pp).

The turnout in Finland has stayed the same (41%), while there has been a fall in turnout in eight countries, although none by more than 3 percentage points.

Despite the increases in turnout, there is still considerable variation when looking at the turnout in individual Member States, ranging from 88% in Belgium to 23% in Slovakia. It is important to bear in mind that voting is compulsory in five countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Cyprus, and Greece.

Q61 European Parliament elections were held on the (INSERT CORRECT DATE ACCORDING TO COUNTRY). For one reason or another, some people in (OUR COUNTRY) did not vote in these elections. Did you yourself vote in the recent European Parliament elections?
(% - Voted)



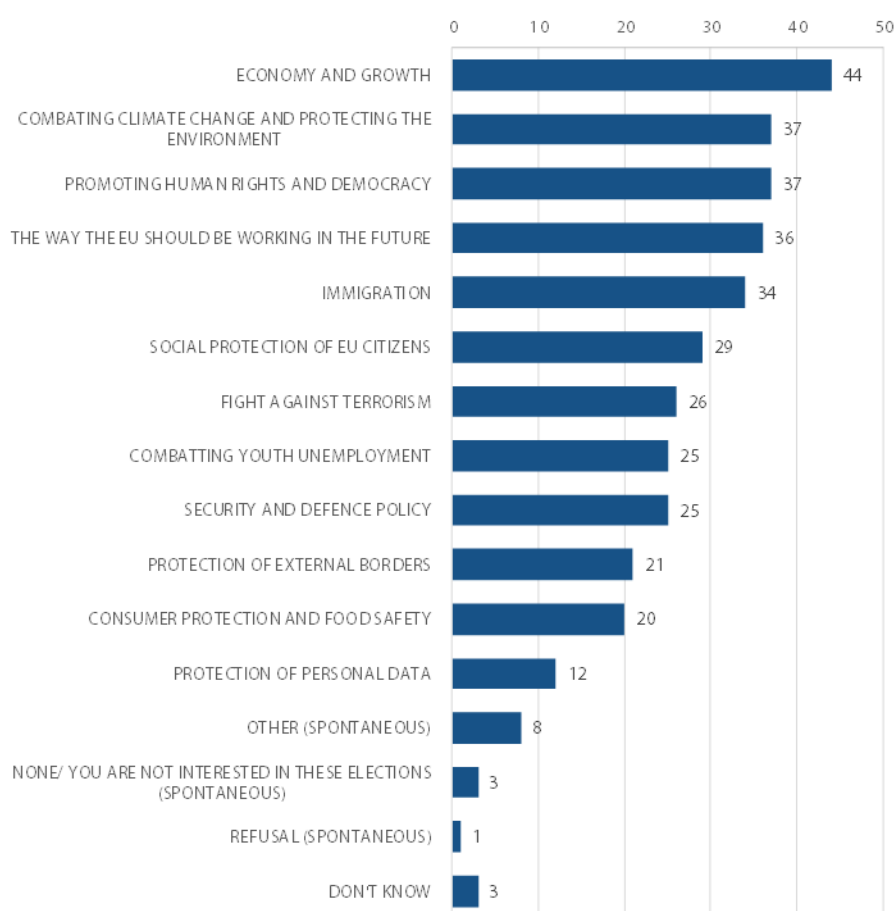
Base: respondents of voting age, 98% of the sample

For more detailed information: [Special Post-Election Eurobarometer: Have European Elections entered a new dimension \(June 2019\)](#)

Furthermore, respondents who voted in the EE 2019 were asked what the issues were that made them vote¹. Five issues are mentioned by at least a third of respondents: economy and growth (44%), combating climate change and protecting the environment (37%), promoting human rights and democracy (37%), the way the EU should be working in the future (36%) and immigration (34%).

At least a quarter of respondents mentioned a number of issues: social protection of EU citizens (29%), the fight against terrorism (26%), combatting youth unemployment (25%) and security and defence policy (25%). Also mentioned are the protection of external borders (21%), consumer protection and food safety (20%) and protection of personal data (12%).

QG7T What are the issues which made you vote in the recent European Parliament elections? Firstly? And then?
(% - EU)



Base: respondents who declared they voted in the EE19, 51% of the sample

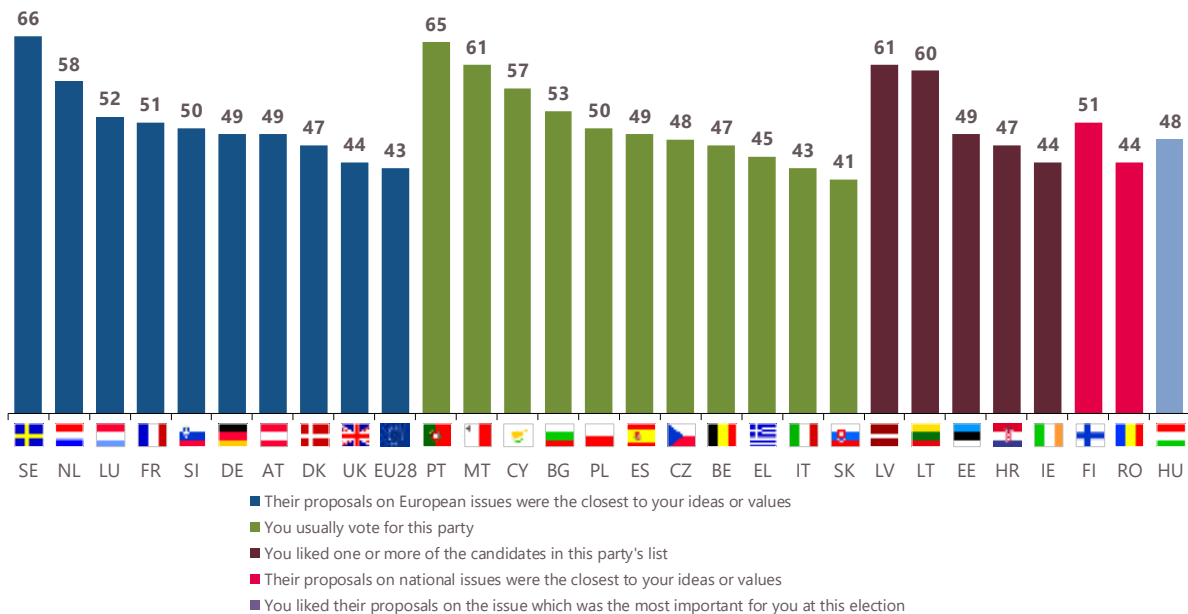
For more detailed information: [Special Post-Election Eurobarometer: Have European Elections entered a new dimension \(June 2019\)](#)

In 11 Member States, the most frequent reason for voting for a particular party was that the respondent always votes for this party. In nine countries, the main reason was **that the party's**

¹ Respondents were able to give up to six answers in this question from a list of 12 issues.

proposals on European issues were the closest to their own ideas or values. There are five countries where the most common answer was that respondents liked one or more of the candidates in the chosen party's list. In two countries (Finland and Romania), the most common reason for choosing a party was that the proposals on national issues matched respondents' own. In Hungary, the main reason was that respondents liked the party's proposals on issues that were most important to them.

QG4T Why did you vote for this party in these European Parliament elections? Firstly? And then?
(% - THE MOST MENTIONED ANSWER BY COUNTRY)



Base: respondents who declared they voted in the EE19, 51% of the sample

For more detailed information: [Special Post-Election Eurobarometer: Have European Elections entered a new dimension \(June 2019\)](#)

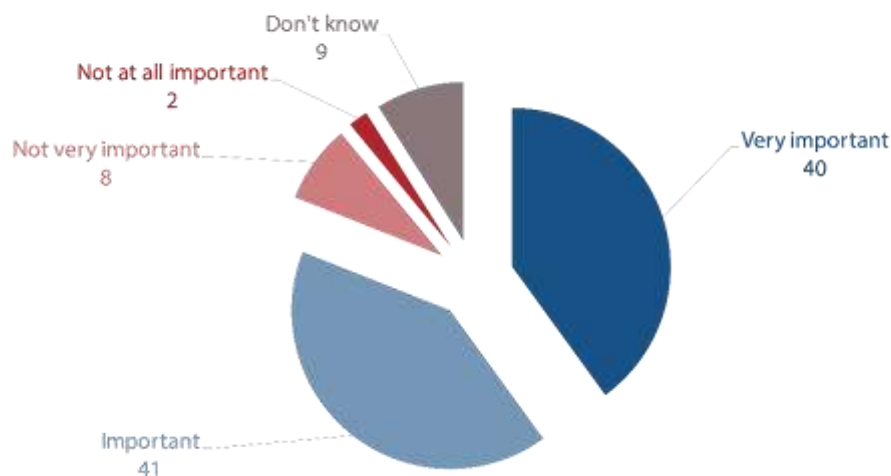
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Foreign policy consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak

The COVID-19 crisis has had economic, social, political and geopolitical consequences that will inevitably affect [key aspects of EU foreign policy](#). It has also accentuated the debate about the future of multilateralism, a primary concern of EU foreign policy. The form of the post-coronavirus world will be the subject of debate among Members on Monday afternoon (Vote Tuesday).

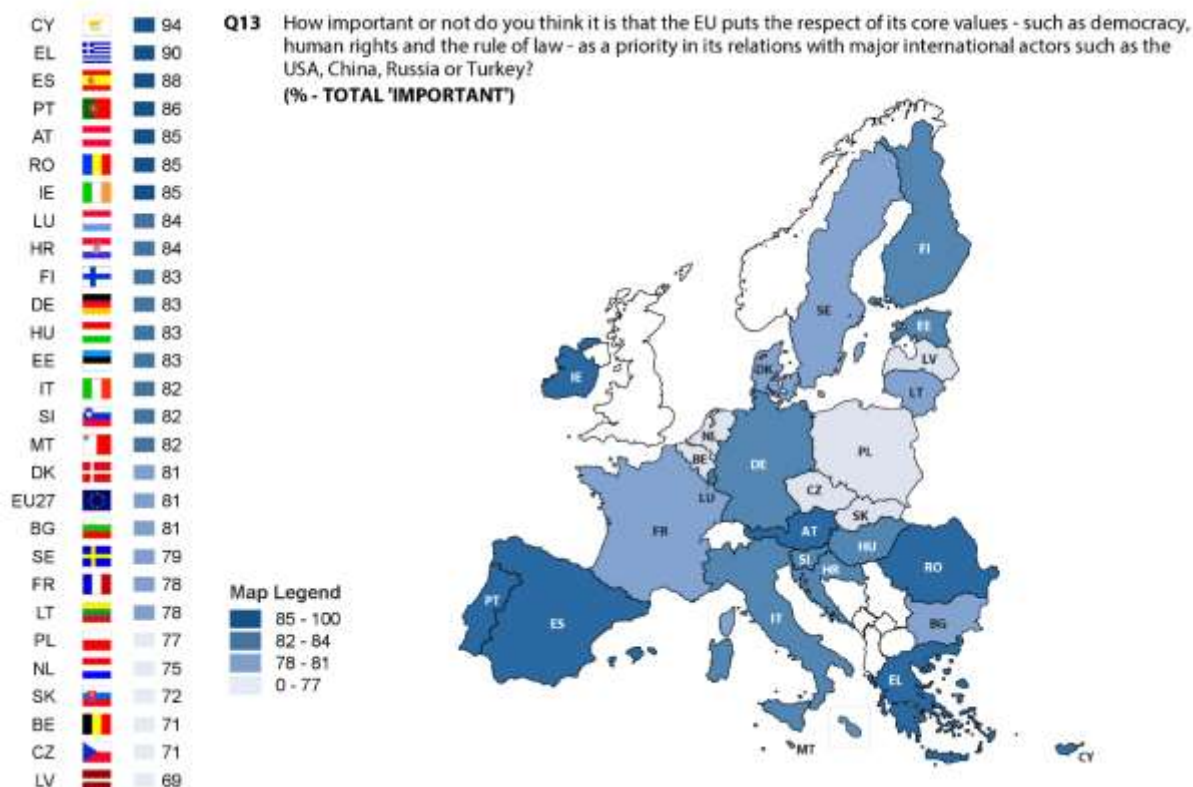
According to the [Parliament's survey, published last week](#), a large majority of respondents (81%) think it is important that the EU puts the respect of its core values - such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law - as a priority in its relations with major international actors such as the USA, China, Russia or Turkey. This includes four in ten (40%) who think it is 'very important' to do this. By contrast, one in ten respondents (10%) think this is not important – either 'not very important' (8%) or 'not at all important' (2%), while 9% do not know.

Q13 How important or not do you think it is that the EU puts the respect of its core values - such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law - as a priority in its relations with major international actors such as the USA, China, Russia or Turkey?
(% - EU27)



For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

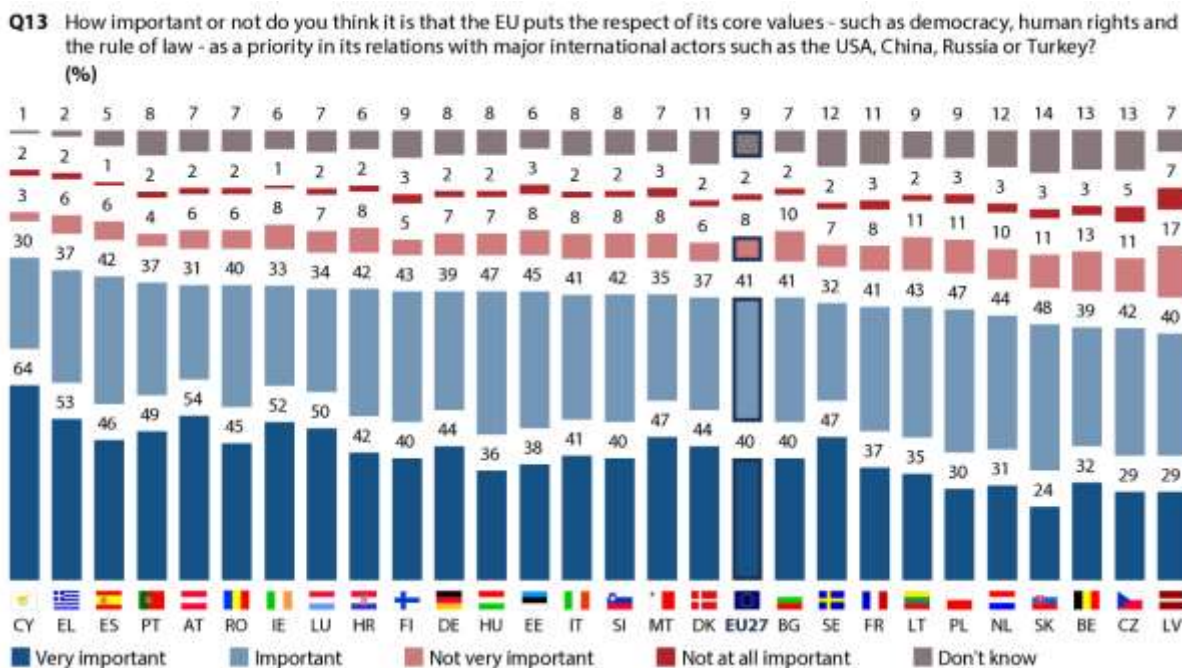
In every country, more than two-thirds of respondents think it is important that the EU puts the respect of its core values as a priority in its relations with major international actors. The proportion is highest in Cyprus (94%), Greece (90%), Spain (88%) and Portugal (86%), while respondents are least likely to say it is important in Latvia (69%), Belgium, Czechia (both 71%) and Slovakia (72%).



For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

In five EU Member States, at least half of respondents think it is 'very important' that the EU puts the respect of its core values as a priority in its relations with major international actors: Cyprus (64%), Austria (54%), Greece (53%), Ireland (52%) and Luxembourg (50%).

Respondents are most likely to say this issue is not important in Latvia (24%), Belgium and Czechia (both 16%).



For more detailed information: [Public opinion in the EU in times of coronavirus crisis 3 \(October 2020\)](#)

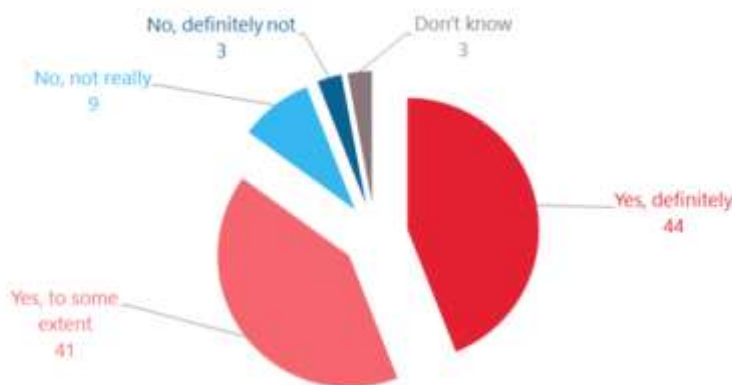
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Strengthening Media Freedom: Protection of Journalists in Europe, Hate Speech, Disinformation and the role Platforms

[Media freedom and pluralism](#) are pillars of modern democracy and represent crucial elements of open and free democratic debate. However, the spread of news that intentionally misleads readers **has become an increasing problem for the functioning of our democracies, affecting people's understanding of reality.** This key issue will be debated in Plenary on Tuesday morning (Vote Wednesday)

According to a [Flash Eurobarometer Survey on Fake news and Disinformation online from February 2018](#), a large majority of respondents see the existence of fake news as a problem in their country, at least to some extent (85%). This includes 44% who think it is 'definitely' a problem and 41% who see it as a problem 'to some extent'. Only a minority of respondents do not see fake news as a problem in their country – either 'not really' (9%) or 'definitely not' (3%).

Q4.1 In your opinion, is the existence of news or information that misrepresent reality or is even false a problem ...
In (OUR COUNTRY) (% - EU)

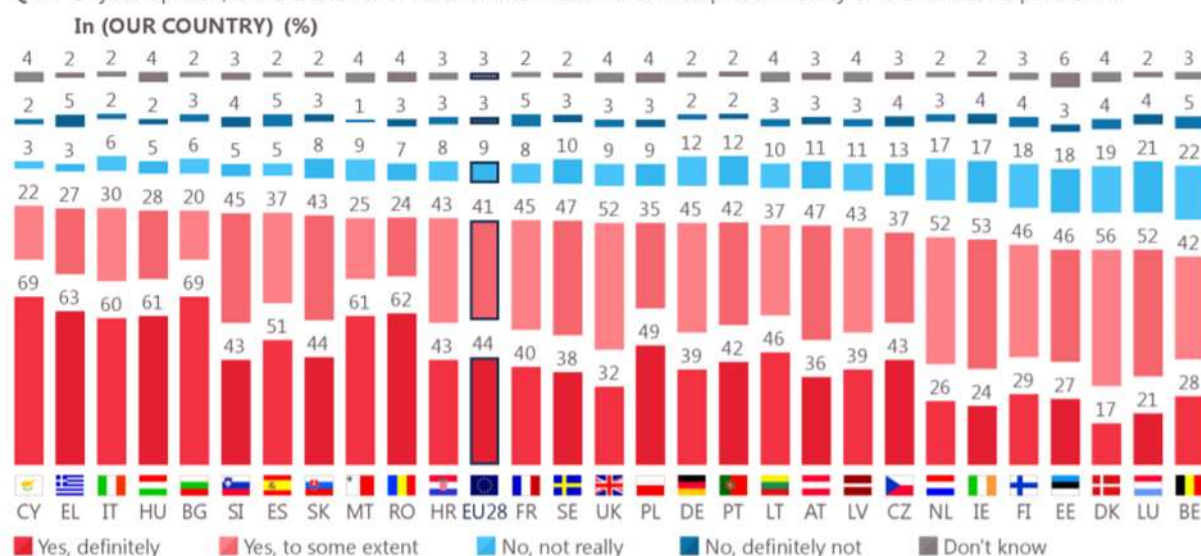


Base: All Respondents (N=26,576)

For more detailed information: [Flash EB on Fake news and disinformation online \(February 2018\)](#)

In every country, at least seven in ten respondents say that it is a problem, either 'definitely' or 'to some extent'. The proportion is highest in Cyprus (91%), Greece and Italy (both 90%), while respondents are least likely to see it as a problem in Belgium (70%), Luxembourg, Denmark and Estonia (all 73%)

Q4.1 In your opinion, is the existence of news or information that misrepresent reality or is even false a problem ...



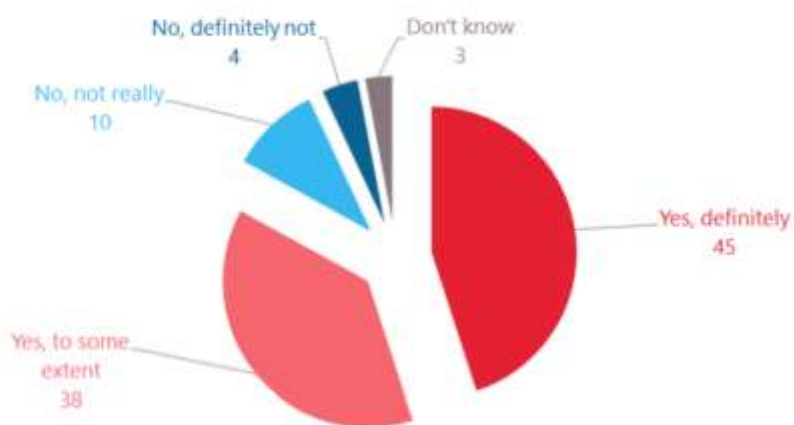
Base: All Respondents (N=26,576)

For more detailed information: [Flash EB on Fake news and disinformation online \(February 2018\)](#)

When asked about the impact on fake news on democracy in general, 45% of respondents say that it is **definitely a problem**, while 38% see it as a problem 'to some extent'. Only a small minority of respondents do not see fake news as a problem for democracy in general – either 'not really' (10%) or 'definitely not' (4%).

Q4.2 In your opinion, is the existence of news or information that misrepresent reality or is even false a problem ...

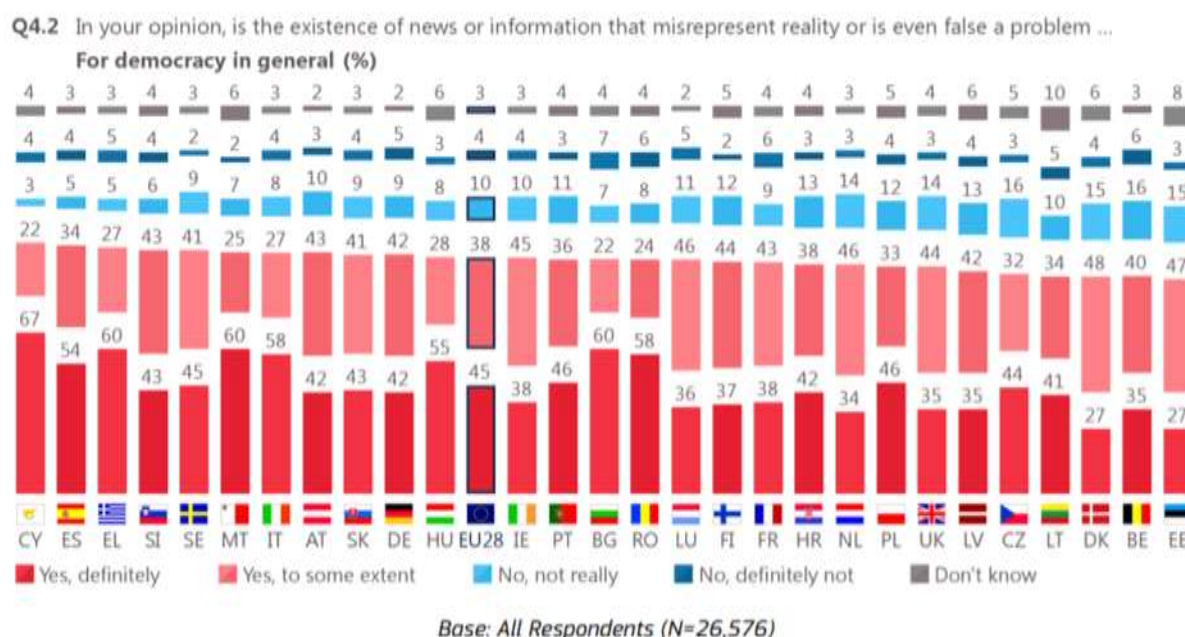
For democracy in general (% - EU)



Base: All Respondents (N=26,576)

For more detailed information: [Flash EB on Fake news and disinformation online \(February 2018\)](#)

Views on the impact of fake news on democracy in general are consistent across Member States. The proportion that thinks it is a problem (at least to some extent) ranges from 89% in Cyprus to 74% in Estonia.



For more detailed information: [Flash EB on Fake news and disinformation online \(February 2018\)](#)

Respondents were asked which institutions and media actors should act to stop the spread of fake news. A list of seven options was read out to respondents, and they were asked to choose a maximum of three.

Respondents are most likely to say that journalists should act to stop the spread of fake news (45%), while 36% say that press and broadcasting management have this responsibility. National authorities (39%) are mentioned more frequently than EU institutions (21%) or non-governmental organisations (15%). A third (32%) think that citizens themselves should act to stop the spread of fake news, while a quarter (26%) think that online social networks should have this responsibility.

Q5 News or information that misrepresent reality or that are even false are called "fake news". Which of the following institutions and media actors should act to stop the spread of "fake news"? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)
(% - EU)



Base: All Respondents (N=26,576)

For more detailed information: [Flash EB on Fake news and disinformation online \(February 2018\)](#)

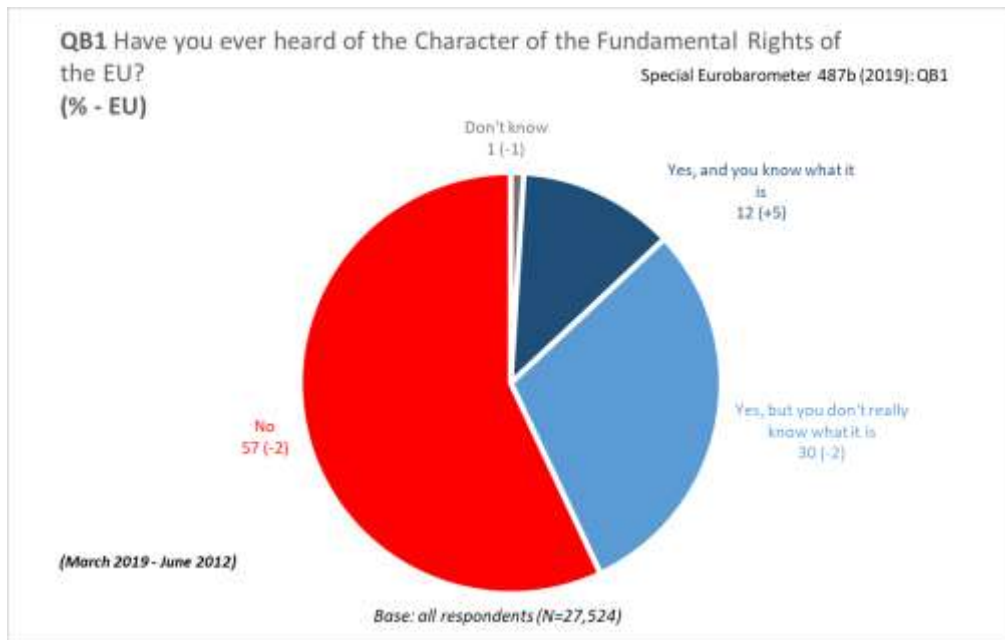
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Situation of Fundamental Rights in the European Union: Annual Report for the years 2018-2019

Safeguarding fundamental rights is a stated ambition of the European Union and a commitment which is part and parcel of the European integration process. For decades, the development of Europe as a political entity has gone hand in hand with improvements to the legal and judicial safeguards which enable EU citizens to assert their rights. On Tuesday morning Members will assess [the situation of Fundamental Rights in the European Union for the years 2018-2019](#) (Vote Wednesday).

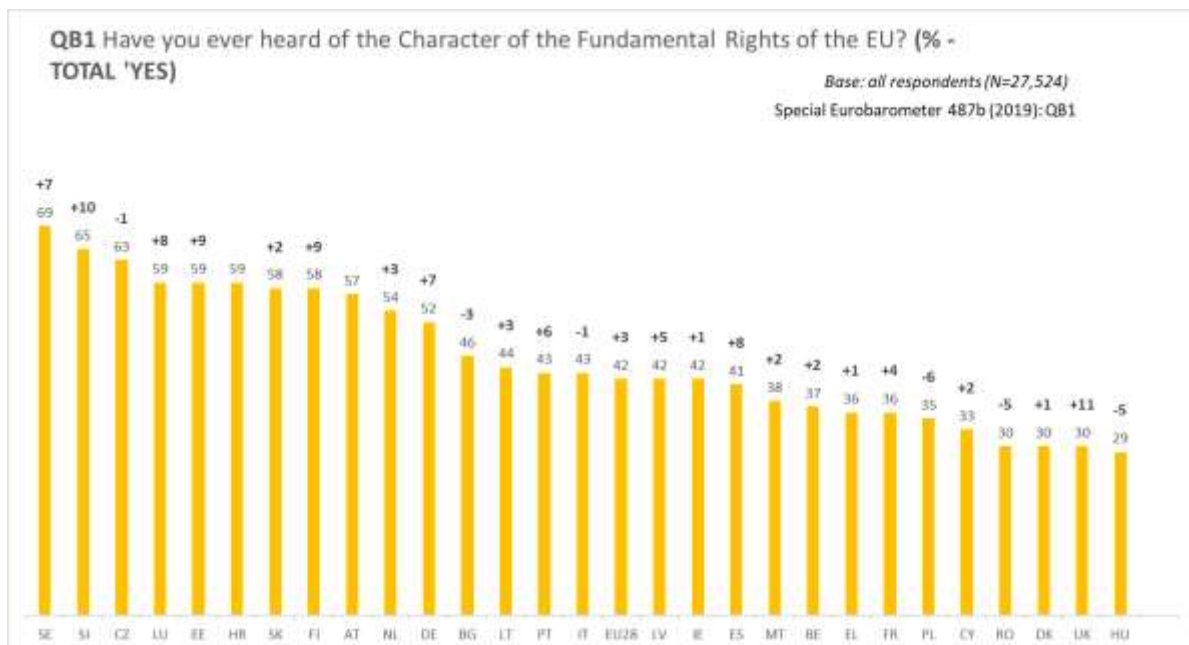
According to a [special Eurobarometer on the awareness of the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the EU from March 2019](#), only 42% of respondents are aware of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Just over one in ten (12%) knows about its content, while 30% have heard of it but don't really know what it is. The majority - 57% - have not heard of it.

There has been a slight increase in overall awareness since 2012 (+3 percentage points), with the proportion of those who know what the Charter is having increased by five points over the past seven years.



For more information: [Special Eurobarometer on awareness of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU \(March 2019\)](#)

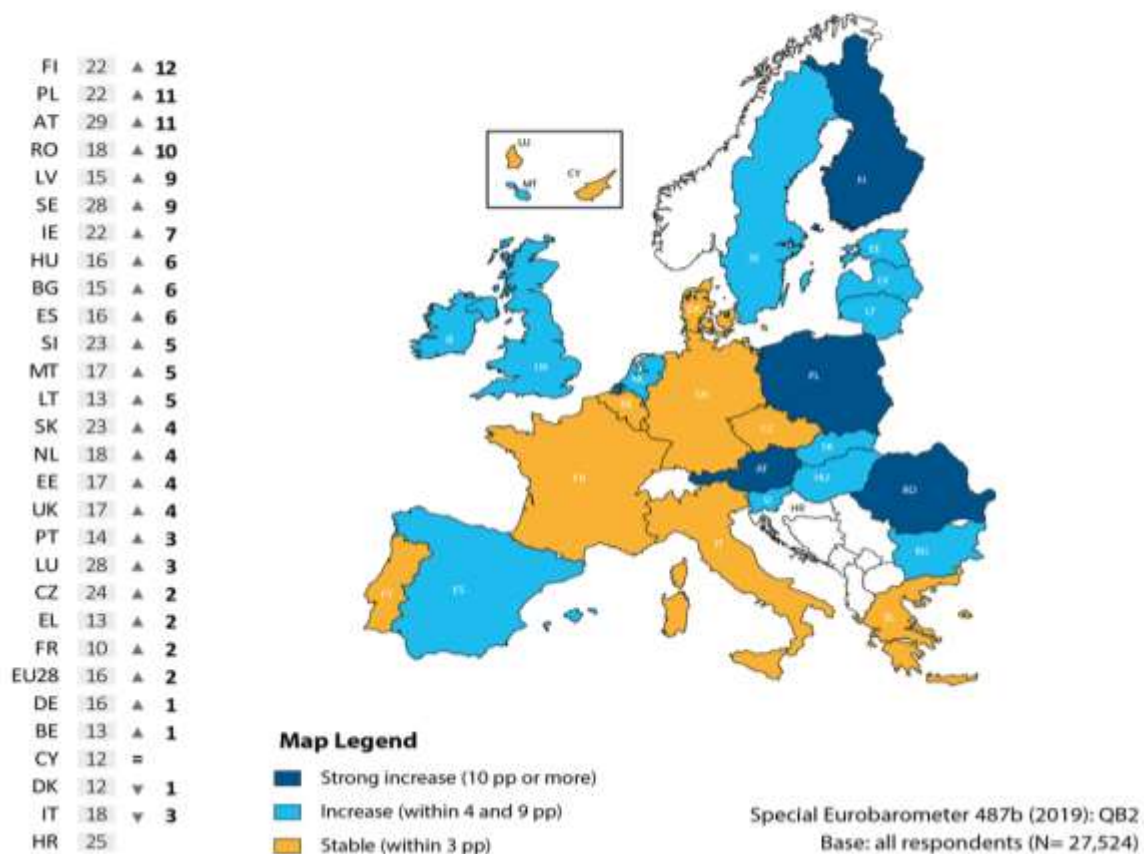
In 20 countries, respondents are now more likely to say they have heard of the Charter than they were in 2012, with the largest increases observed in the United Kingdom (+11 pp), Slovenia (+10 pp), and Estonia and Finland (both +9 pp). The largest decreases are observed amongst those in Poland (-6 pp), Romania and Hungary (both -5 pp).



For more information: [Special Eurobarometer on awareness of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU \(March 2019\)](#)

Respondents are now more likely to say they feel informed about the Charter than in 2011, with the largest increases observed in Finland (+12pp), Poland and Austria (both +11pp) and Romania (+10 pp).

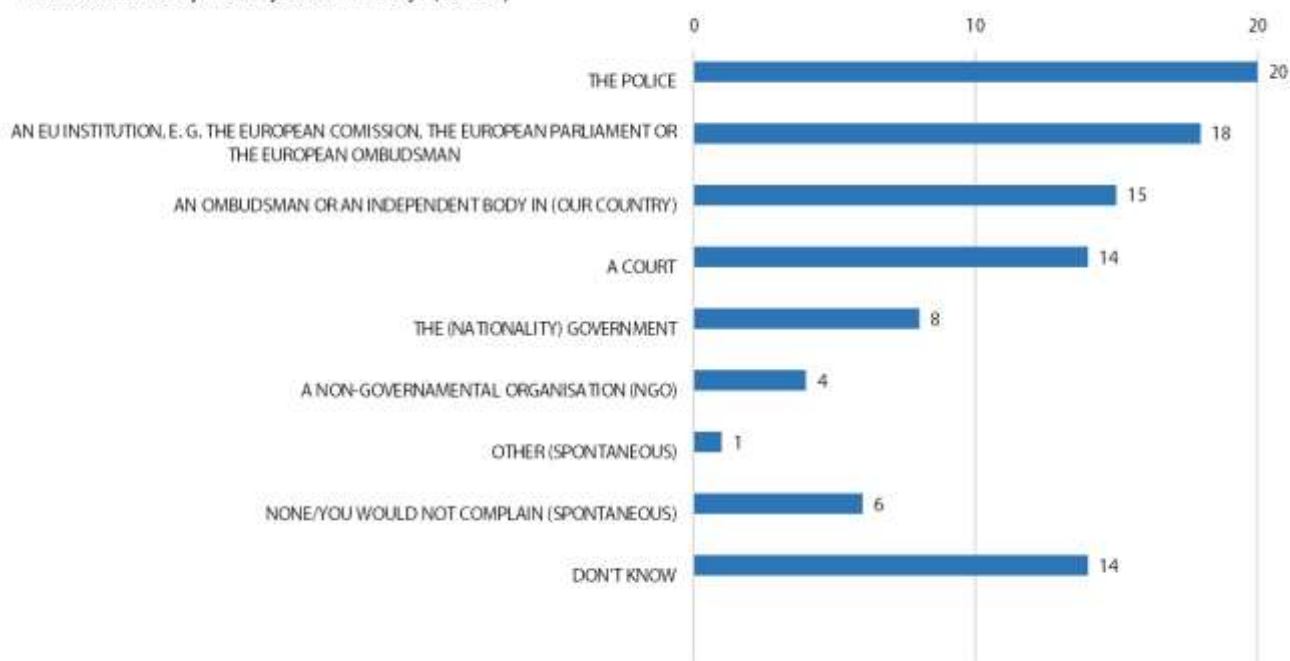
QB2 How informed do you feel you are about the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the EU?
(% - TOTAL INFORMED)



For more information : [Special Eurobarometer on awareness of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU \(March 2019\)](#)

Respondents were also asked who they would turn first to if they felt their Charter rights were being violated. Respondents are most likely to turn to the police first (20%), closely followed by an EU institution (18%). More than one in ten also mention an ombudsman or independent body in their country (15%) or a court (14%). Almost one in ten (8%) would turn to their national government, while 4% would turn to an NGO. Just over one in twenty (6%) spontaneously say they would not complain, while 14% say they **don't know where they would turn**.

QB5a Imagine that you feel your rights enshrined in the Charter are being violated, and you want to complain about it, To which institution or body would you turn? Firstly? (% - EU)



Special Eurobarometer 487b (2019): QB5a

For more detailed information : [Special Eurobarometer on awareness of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU \(March 2019\)](#)