

Survey requested by the European Parliament
Public Opinion Monitoring Unit
DG Communication

Fieldwork
17/08 - 25/08/2021
Fieldwork conducted by
Ipsos European Public Affairs

1

Background & Methodology



Introduction

Every year in September, the President of the European Commission delivers the **State of the European Union** address before the European Parliament, taking stock of the past year and presenting priorities for the year ahead. The President also sets out how the Commission will address the most pressing challenges the European Union is facing and ideas for shaping the future of the EU.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, will deliver her annual address on 15 September 2021. The speech will be followed by a plenary debate with the Members of the European Parliament.

In this context, the European Parliament's Directorate-General for Communication commissioned Ipsos European Public Affairs to conduct a Eurobarometer Flash survey, exploring European citizens' opinions on some of the key priorities for the EU today.

The **present report** summarises the findings of the survey – the full results for all questions are available in separate Excel tables here: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/en/be-heard/eurobarometer/soteu-flash-survey

For all further questions and additional information please contact

Public Opinion Monitoring Unit – DG Communication
European Parliament

DGCOMM-POM@ep.europa.eu

@EP_Trends



Technical note

Survey conducted for the European Parliament by Ipsos European Public Affairs

Methodology

- The survey was conducted via computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI), using Ipsos online panels and their partner network. A share of respondents in Malta and Luxembourg was recruited via social media networks.
- Fieldwork: 17 August 25 August 2021
- Target population: EU citizens, 15 years and over
- Coverage: EU27
- Number of interviews: 26,459
- Sample size per country: 500 in LU, CY, MT, 1000 in all other countries

Presentation of survey data

• Survey data were weighted to marginal age by gender, activity status and region population distributions using *rim* weighting. The EU27 averages are weighted according to the size of the 15+ population of each country.

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.



2

Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law



Rule of Law and EU funding

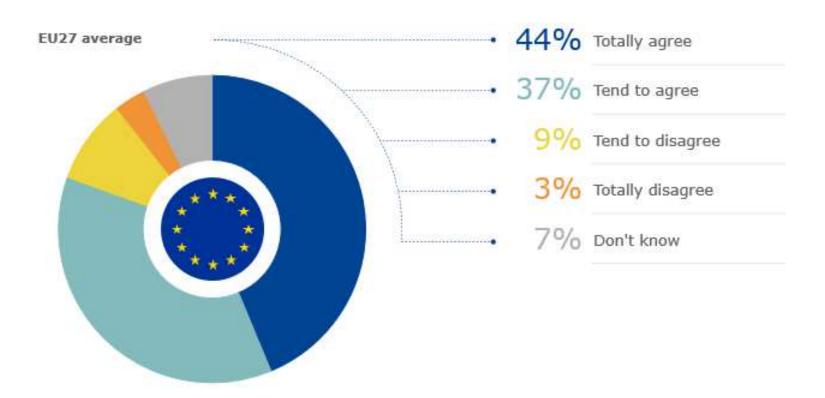
- The vast majority of respondents (81%) agree that the EU should only provide funds to Member States conditional upon their government's implementation of the rule of law and of democratic principles.
 - o More than seven in ten agree with this statement in each of the 27 EU Member States.
 - o Older respondents and respondents with more years of education are more likely to agree with the conditionality of EU funding.

- Similarly, a very large proportion of respondents (85%) consider it 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.
 - o Again, the share who consider this important is high across all EU Member States (above three quarters in each of country).
 - o The proportion who say this is important is higher among older and more educated respondents.

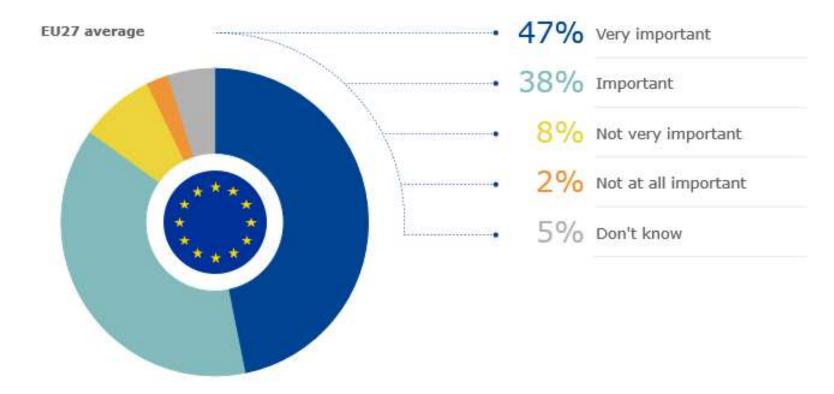


Rule of Law and EU funding (EU27)

Q3 [...] Do you agree or disagree 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?



Q4 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?



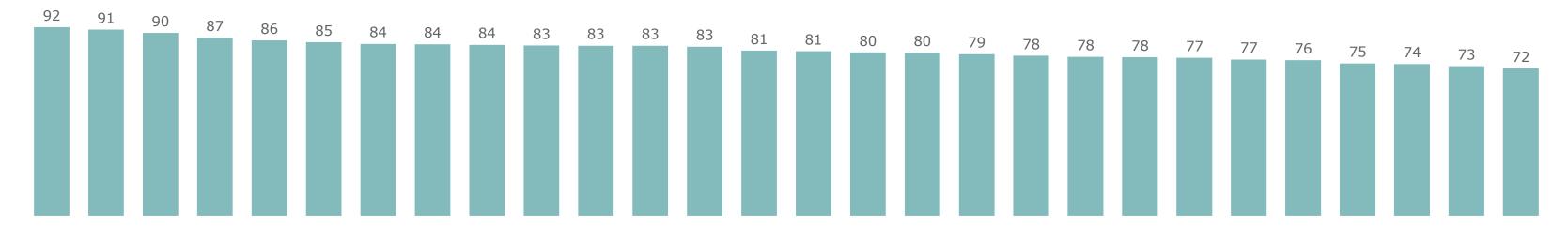


Q3/Q4

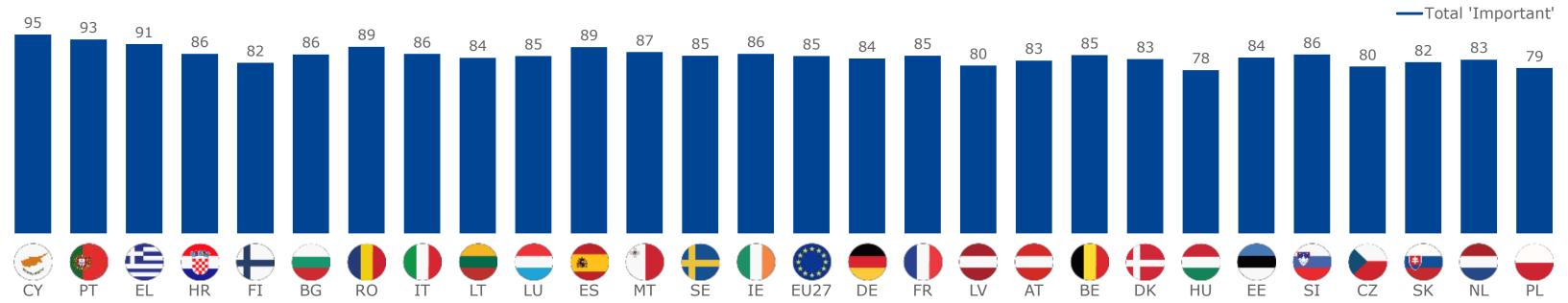
Rule of Law and EU funding (country results)

[...] Do you agree or disagree 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?

—Total 'Agree'



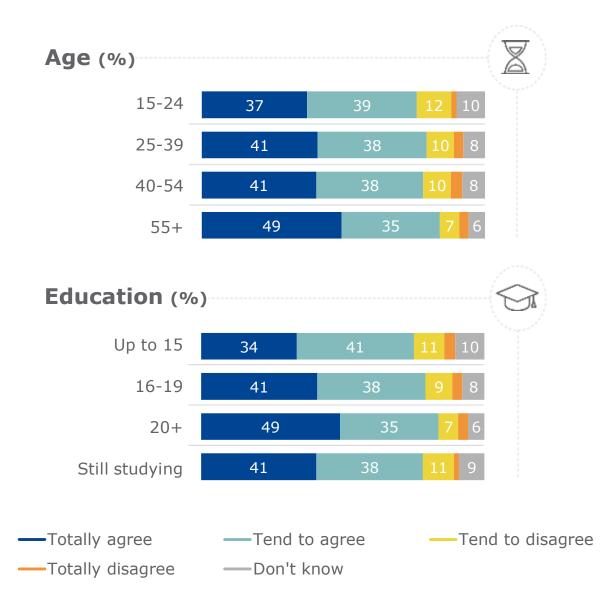
How important (or not) do you think it is that the EU puts the respect of its core values - such as democracy, human rights and the Rule of Law - as a priority in its relations with major international actors such as the USA, China, Russia or Turkey?



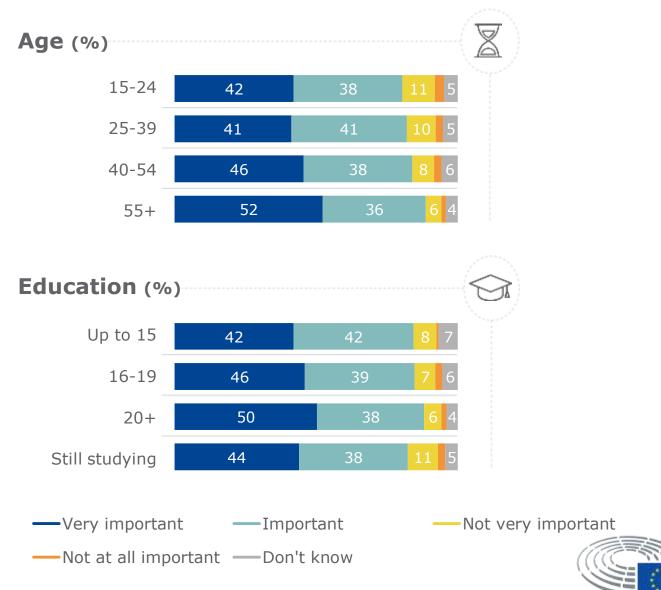


Rule of Law and EU funding (socio-demographics)

Q3 [...] Do you agree or disagree 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?



Q4 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?



European Parliament

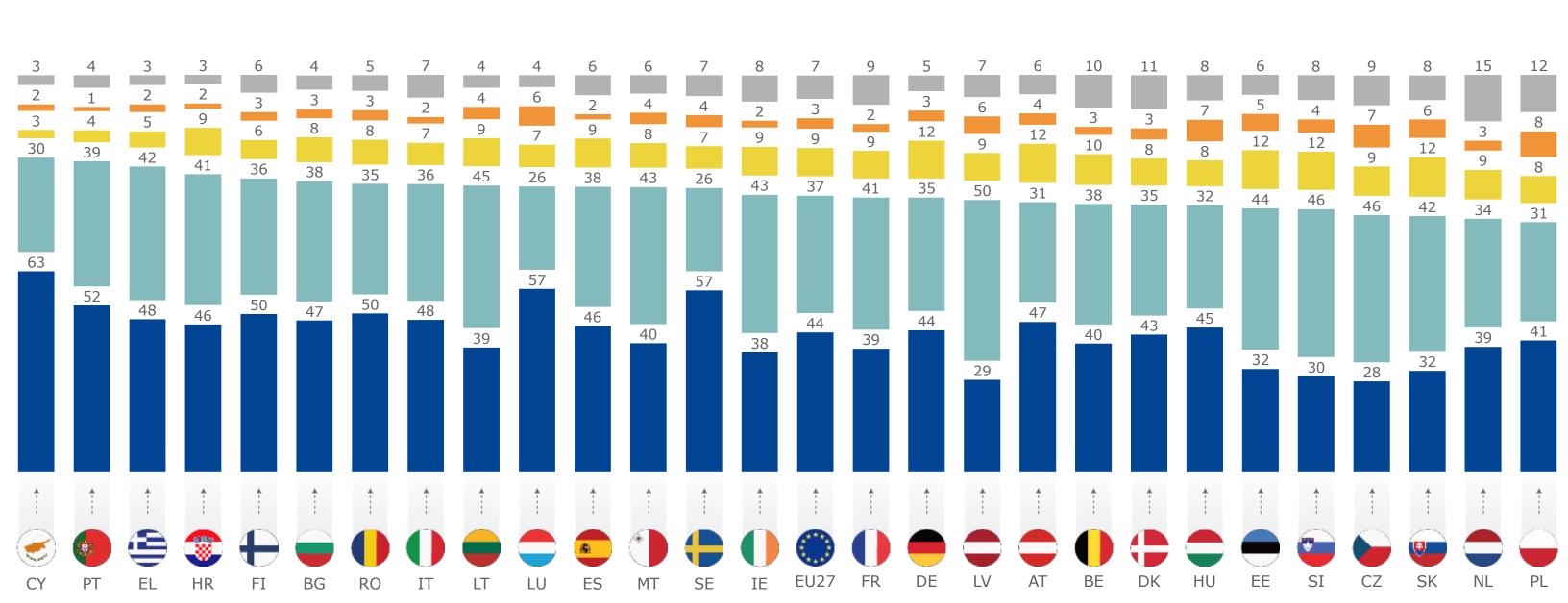
To be part of the European Union, Member States agree to share and respect common values including the Rule of Law (which include press freedom, independence of justice, fight against corruption, protection of individual rights, etc.). Do you agree or disagree that the EU should only provide funds to Member States conditional upon their government's implementation of the Rule of Law and of democratic principles?

Totally disagree

—Tend to disagree



—Don't know





—Tend to agree

Very important

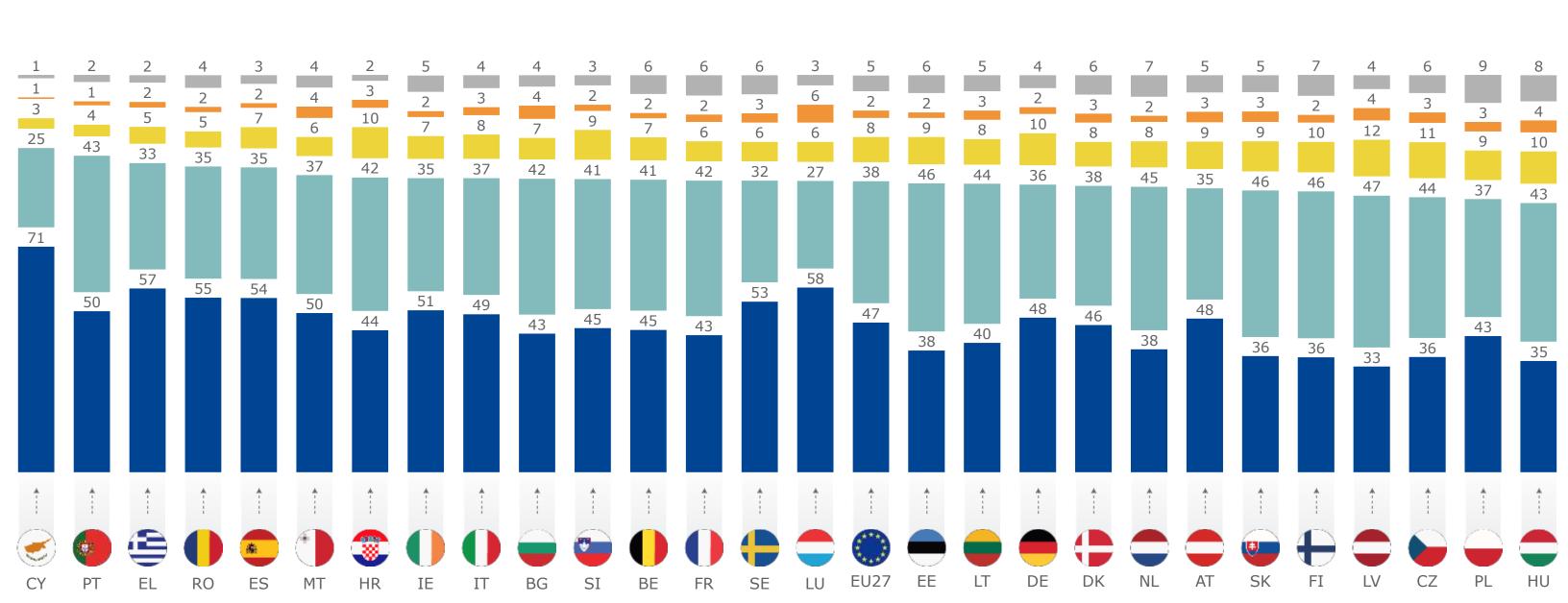
How important (or not) do you think it is that the EU puts the respect of its core values - such as democracy, human rights and the Rule of Law - as a priority in its relations with major international actors such as the USA, China, Russia or Turkey?

—Not at all important

—Not very important



---Don't know





—Important

3

NextGenerationEU: The way out of the crisis



NextGenerationEU: the way out of the crisis (I)

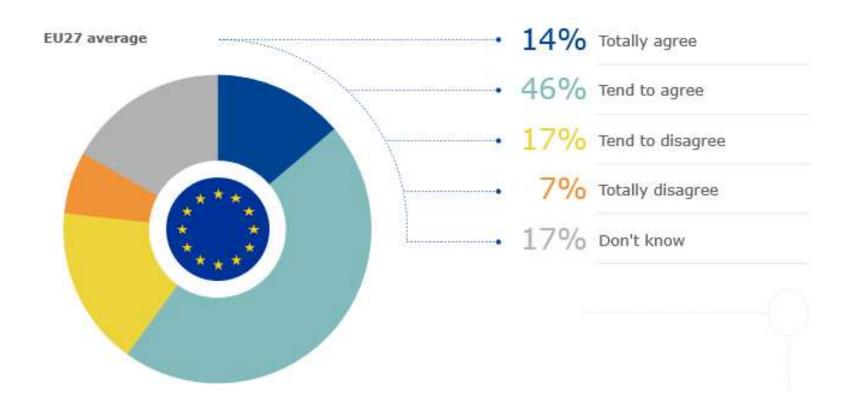
- Overall, 60% of respondents agree that the 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help their country to overcome the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.
 - o This figure ranges from a low of 49% in Sweden, 51% in the Netherlands and 52% in Germany, to a high of 75% in Portugal, 76% in Cyprus and 78% in Malta.
 - o Respondents with a higher level of education are more likely to agree with the statement 63% of those who completed their education aged 20 or older do so, compared to 54%-57% of those in the two less educated groups.
- A similar proportion (59%) think that the 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help their country to be better prepared for future challenges.
 - o In line with the results for the question above, respondents in Malta (80%), Cyprus (78%) and Portugal (75%) are most likely to agree with this statement, while those in Sweden (48%), Germany and the Netherlands (both 49%) are the least likely to do so.
 - o Respondents with more than 20 years of education are more likely to agree with the statement 61% do so, compared to 53%-57% of those in the two less educated groups.

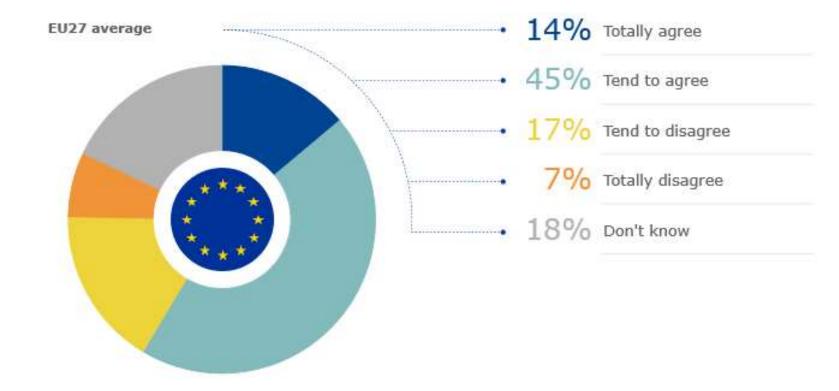


NextGenerationEU is a €800 billion EU recovery instrument to help repair the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. All Member States are requested to submit their national recovery and resilience plans to access funds under this new facility.

The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help (OUR COUNTRY) to overcome the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic

The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help (OUR COUNTRY) to be better prepared for future challenges

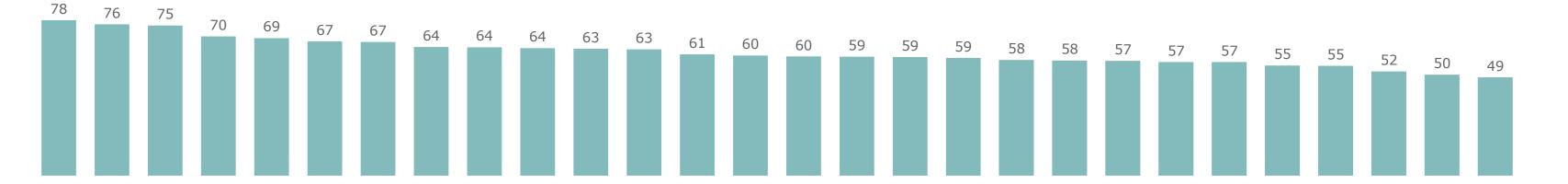






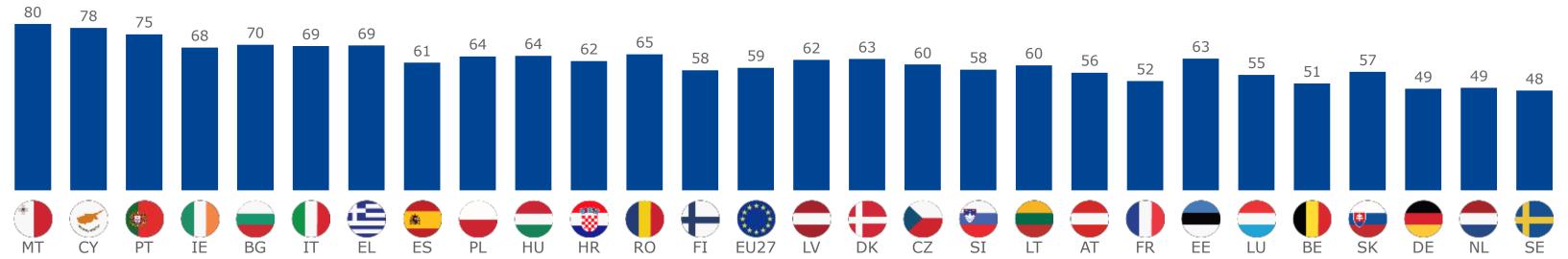
The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help (OUR COUNTRY) to overcome the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic

—Total 'Agree'



The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help (OUR COUNTRY) to be better prepared for future challenges

—Total 'Agree'

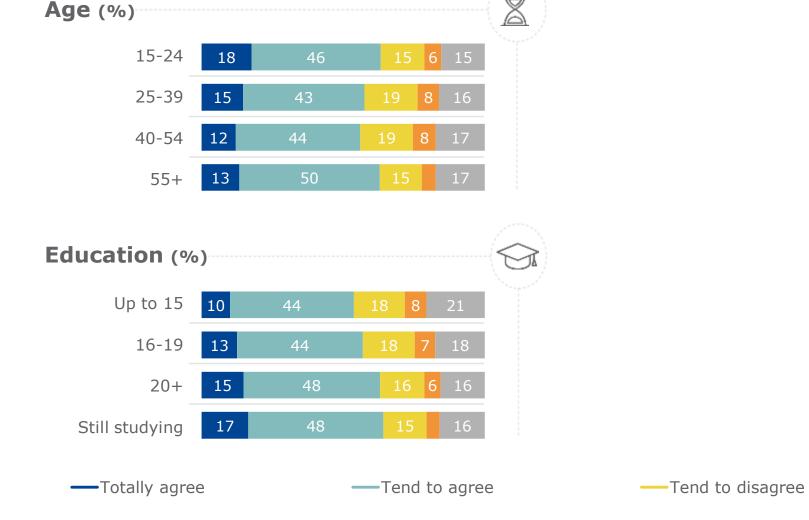


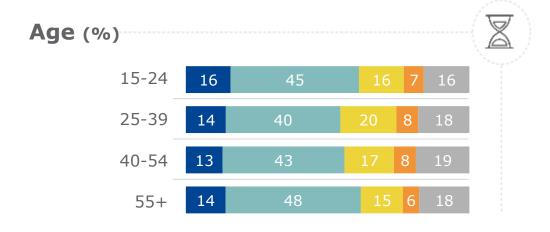


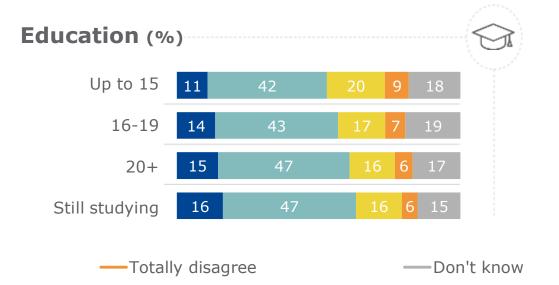
NextGenerationEU is a €800 billion EU recovery instrument to help repair the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. All Member States are requested to submit their national recovery and resilience plans to access funds under this new facility.

The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help (OUR COUNTRY) to overcome the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic

The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help (OUR COUNTRY) to be better prepared for future challenges









Q8_1

Totally agree

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

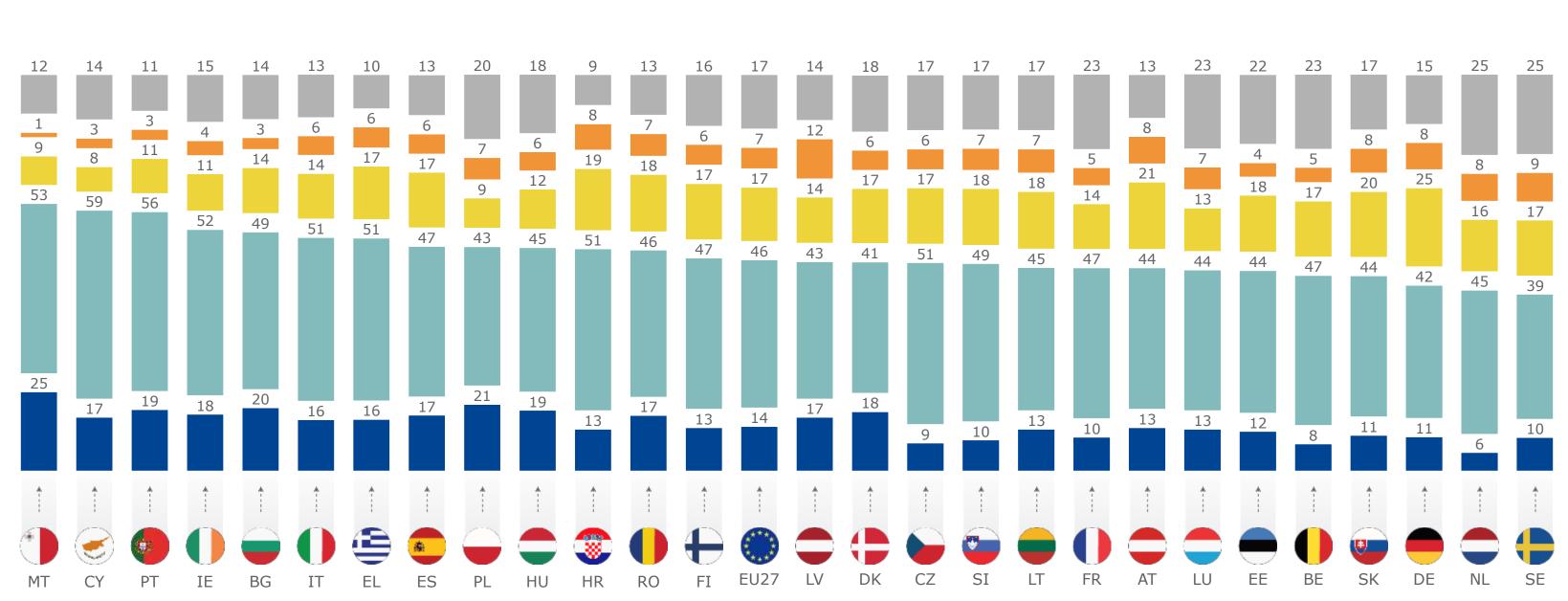
The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help (OUR COUNTRY) to overcome the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic

—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree



—Don't know





—Tend to agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help (OUR COUNTRY) to be better prepared for future challenges

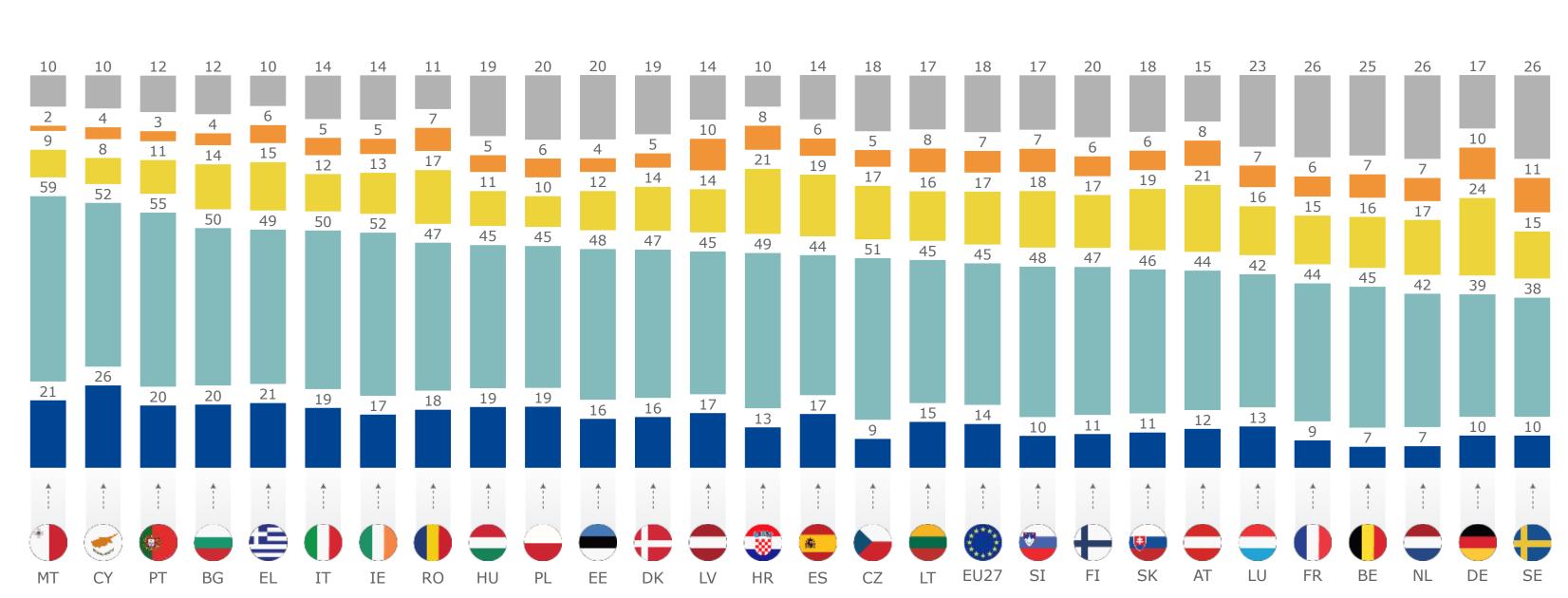
—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree

—Tend to agree



—Don't know





NextGenerationEU: the way out of the crisis (II)

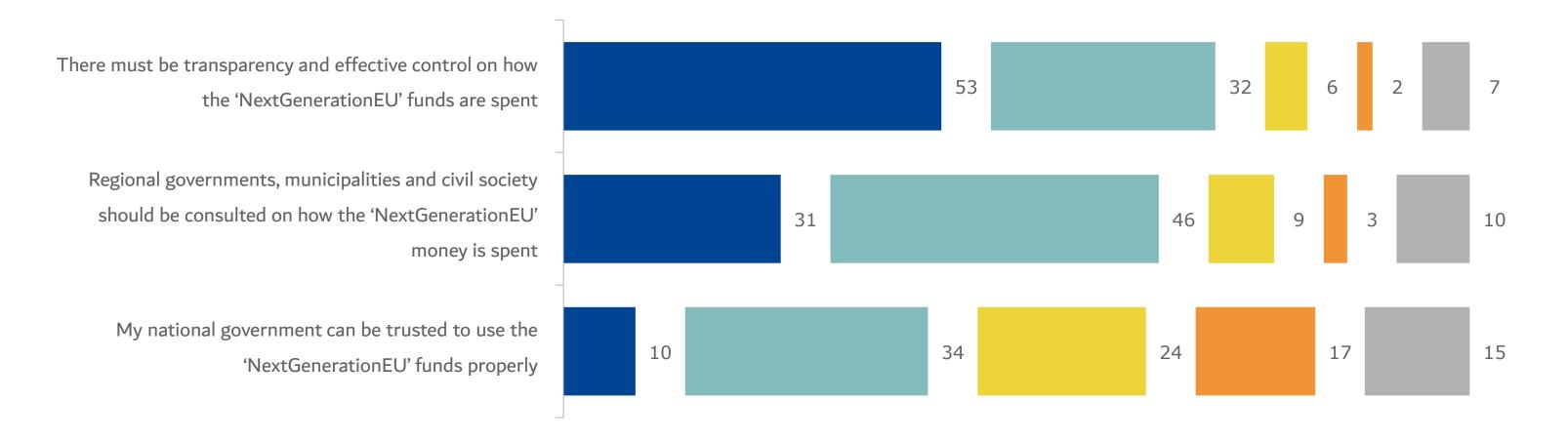
- A minority of respondents (44%) consider that their **national government can be trusted** to use the NextGenerationEU funds properly.
 - o Trust in the government's use of the NextGenerationEU funds is lowest in Slovenia (23%) and Slovakia (26%), and highest in Luxembourg (74%) and Denmark (70%).
- Majorities agree that there must be **transparency and effective control** on how the NextGenerationEU funds are spent (85%) and that **regional governments, municipalities and civil society should be consulted** on how the NextGenerationEU money is spent (77%).







NextGenerationEU is a €800 billion EU recovery instrument to help repair the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. All Member States are requested to submit their national recovery and resilience plans to access funds under this new facility.



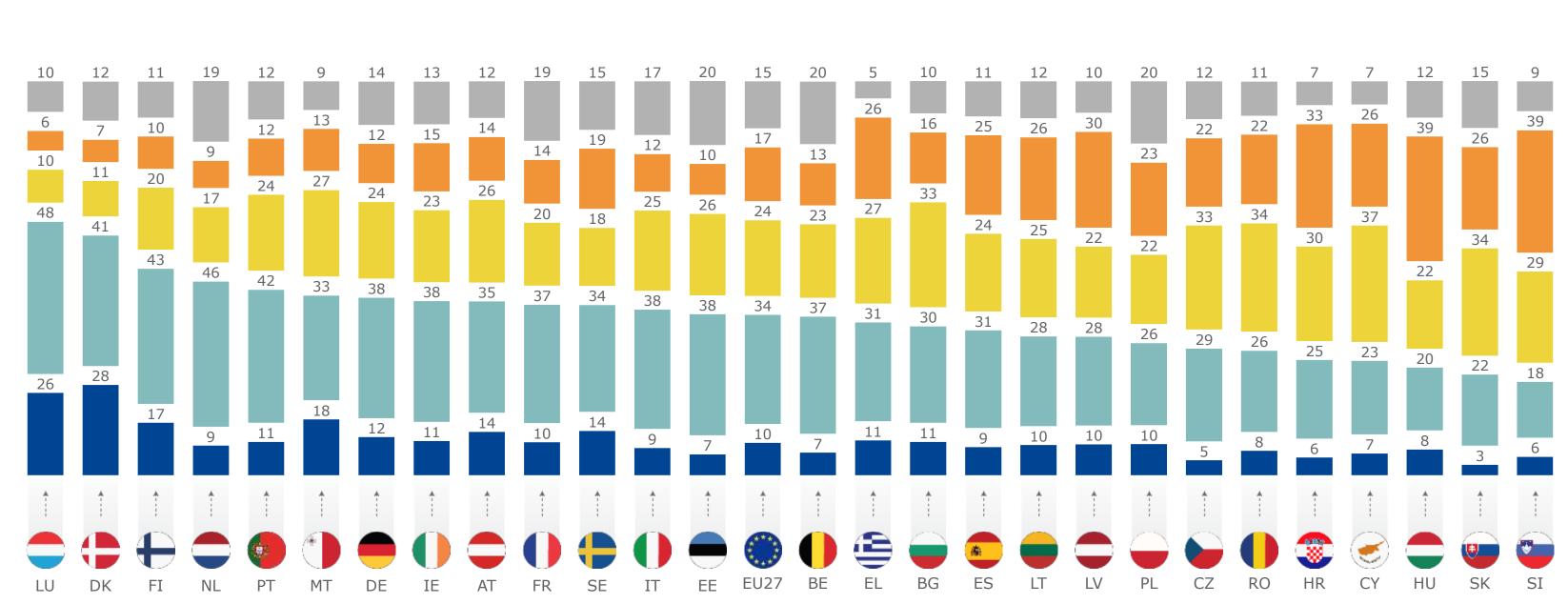


To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? My national government can be trusted to use the 'NextGenerationEU' funds properly

—Tend to agree



—Don't know



—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree

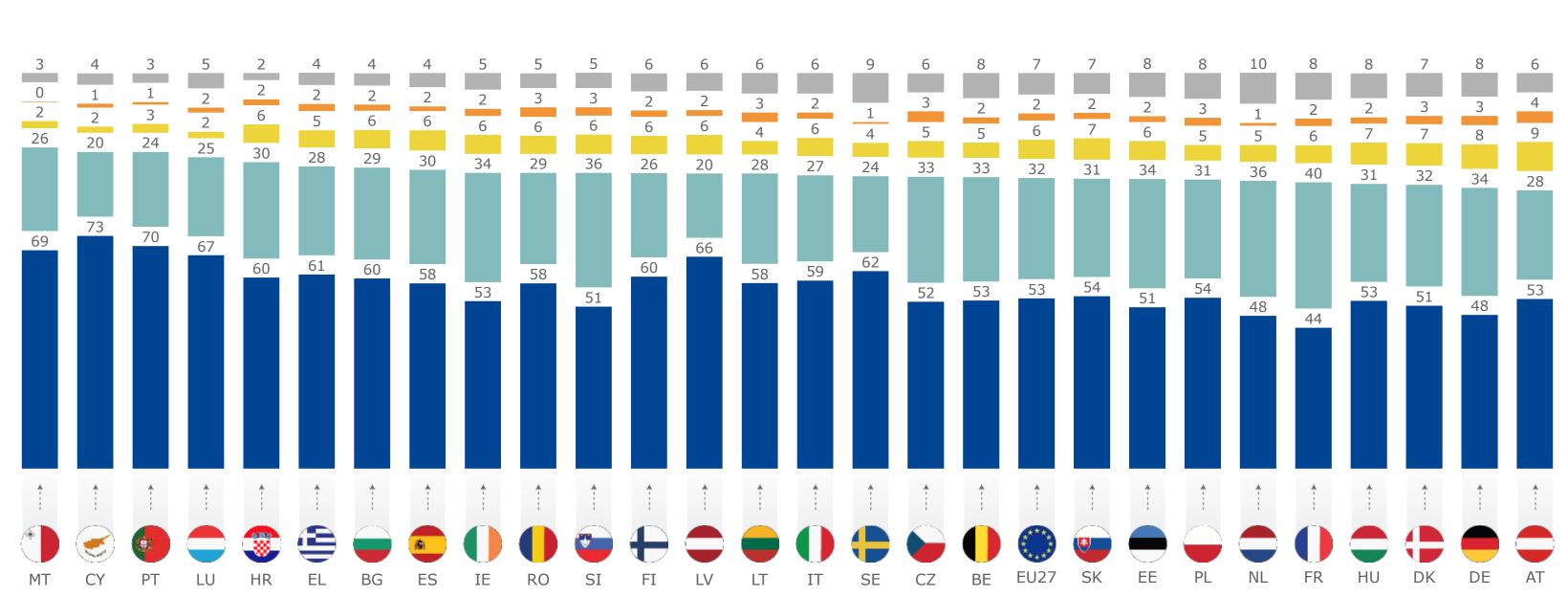


To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? There must be transparency and effective control on how the 'NextGenerationEU' funds are spent

—Tend to agree



—Don't know



—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree



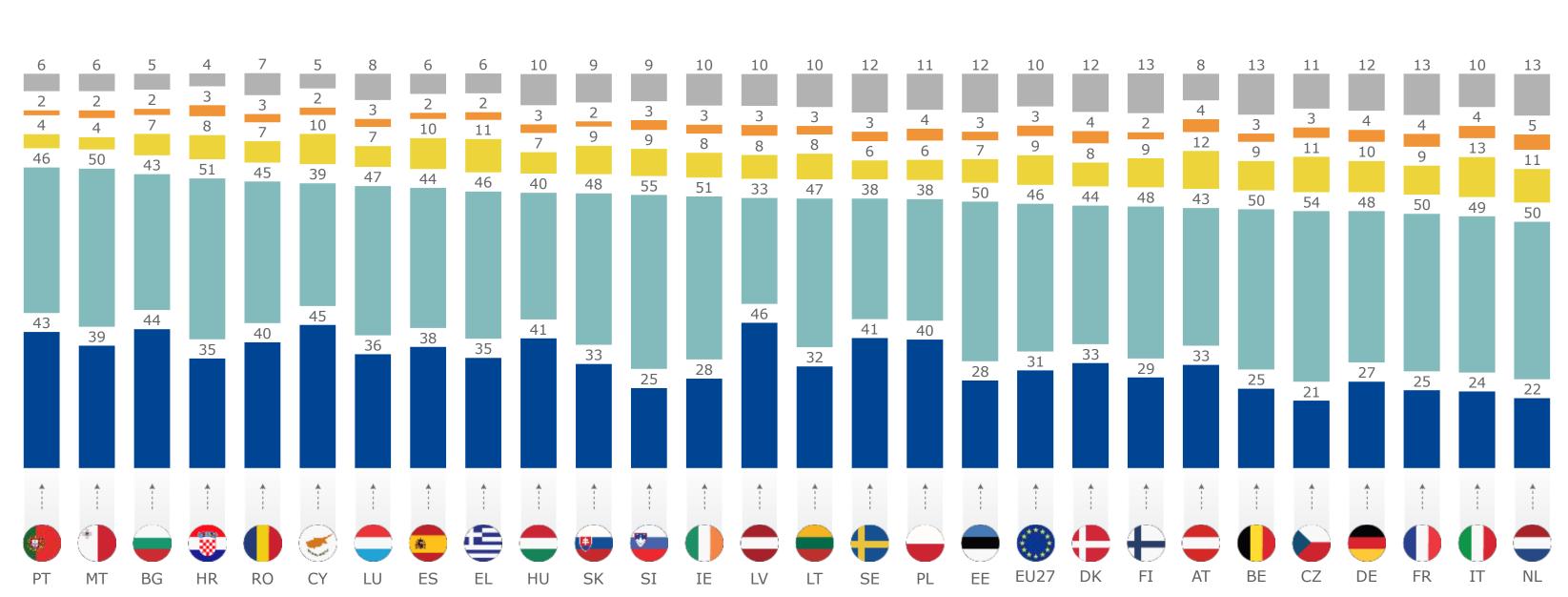
To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Regional governments, municipalities and civil society should be consulted on how the 'NextGenerationEU' money is spent

—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree



—Don't know





—Tend to agree

NextGenerationEU: the way out of the crisis (III)

- About the same share of respondents agree (35%) or disagree (36%) that the NextGenerationEU projects will have a positive impact on their **personal or professional situation**. The remainder (29%) don't know.
 - o About half of respondents expect a positive impact for themselves in Malta (53%), Bulgaria, Romania and Cyprus (all 50%); this is about twice as many as in Sweden (24%) and Belgium (25%).



Q8_2

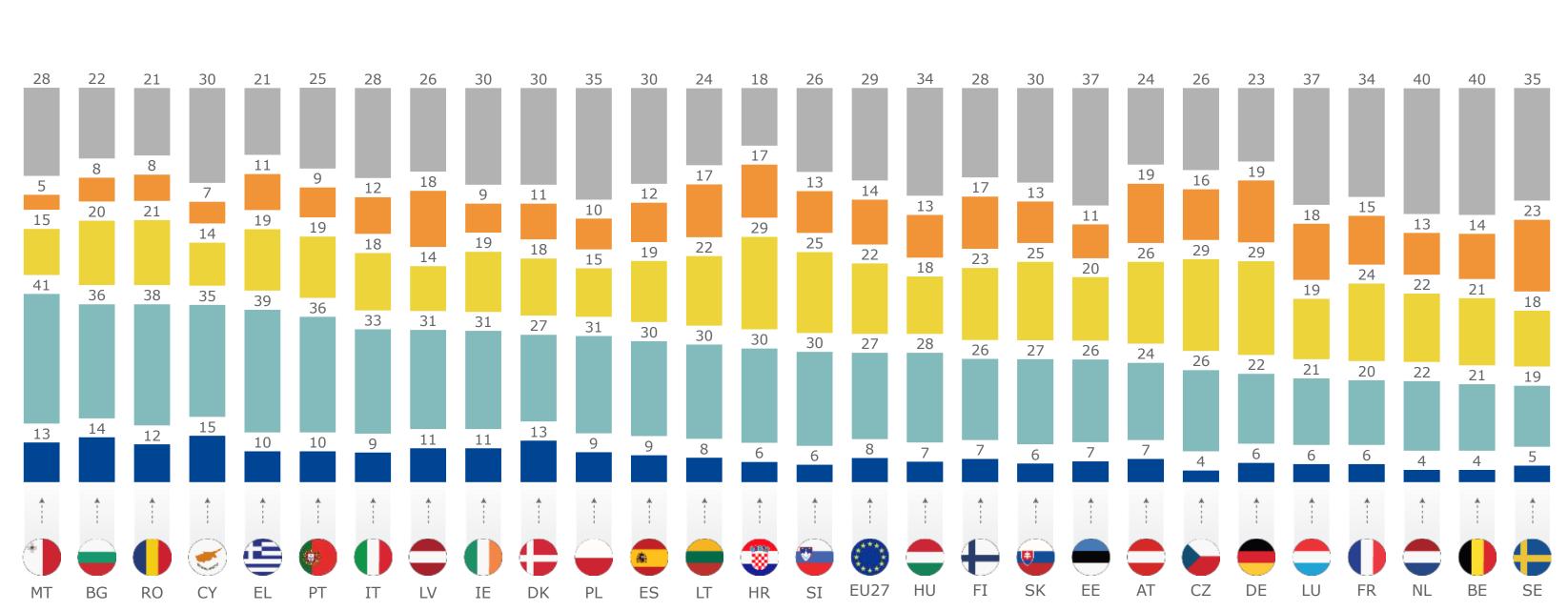
Totally agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? The 'NextGenerationEU' projects will have a positive impact on my personal or professional situation

—Tend to agree



—Don't know



—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree



4

Priority issues



Priority issues

- Topics that EU citizens would **prefer to see prioritised by the European Parliament** are action against climate change (43%), followed by measures to fight poverty and social exclusion (32%), measures to support the economy and create new jobs, and the fight against terrorism and organised crime (both 31%).
- A fair and sustainable agricultural policy (15%), democracy and the rule of the law (19%) and the future of Europe (19%) are less likely to be considered priority issues for the European Parliament to address.
- Action against climate change ranks first in 15 of the 27 EU countries. In most other countries (9 of the 27 EU countries) the interlinked 'measures to fight poverty and social exclusion' and 'measures to support the economy and create new jobs' are in first place.
- Action against climate change is relatively likely to be viewed as a priority issue by younger respondents and by those with a higher level of education. Younger respondents also frequently consider the question of human rights (in the EU and worldwide) as a priority. Respondents who are 55 years old or older are more likely than younger respondents to see migration and asylum as a priority.



EU27 average Action against climate change 43% Measures to fight poverty and social exclusion 32% Measures to support our economy and create new jobs 31% The fight against terrorism and organised crime 31% Public health 27% Migration and asylum 27% Human rights (in the EU and worldwide) 24% Democracy and the rule of law 19% The future of Europe 19% A fair and sustainable agricultural policy 15% Other Don't know



	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
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Action against climate change	43	44	28	29	47	48	27	42	35	43	45	39	48	39	19	27	50	42	64	43	45	38	50	36	40	40	38	47
Measures to fight poverty and social exclusion	32	37	47	18	24	29	32	29	41	38	29	52	33	50	41	45	41	40	27	30	29	25	46	39	39	36	36	27
The fight against terrorism and organised crime	31	32	26	44	41	34	30	29	20	24	40	24	23	21	20	23	28	20	30	38	32	26	25	27	23	24	39	51
Measures to support our economy and create new jobs	31	29	43	24	21	19	35	32	50	43	28	47	41	43	44	33	24	22	16	15	23	26	43	42	29	27	30	21
Public health	27	30	40	25	18	18	33	36	31	35	25	24	29	25	32	27	21	37	24	27	19	32	28	37	31	35	16	18
Migration and asylum	27	33	21	39	31	33	25	25	34	24	30	16	30	23	17	28	25	20	43	29	39	12	14	9	20	20	31	34
Human rights (in the EU and worldwide)	24	18	17	20	25	27	23	34	21	24	19	26	21	31	24	24	26	23	21	25	24	28	28	26	27	24	26	28
Democracy and the rule of law	19	13	22	19	19	24	19	9	19	14	12	20	12	25	18	23	18	38	27	20	19	37	11	21	26	23	19	18
The future of Europe	19	18	18	35	23	23	28	19	15	15	15	17	15	8	24	23	21	24	18	18	22	26	17	17	23	22	21	15
A fair and sustainable agricultural policy	15	14	10	18	14	15	22	14	7	14	18	16	16	4	20	9	15	7	9	21	15	12	14	19	11	23	17	13
Other	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	0	1	1	5	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	3
Don't know	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	2



Most frequently selected priority



5

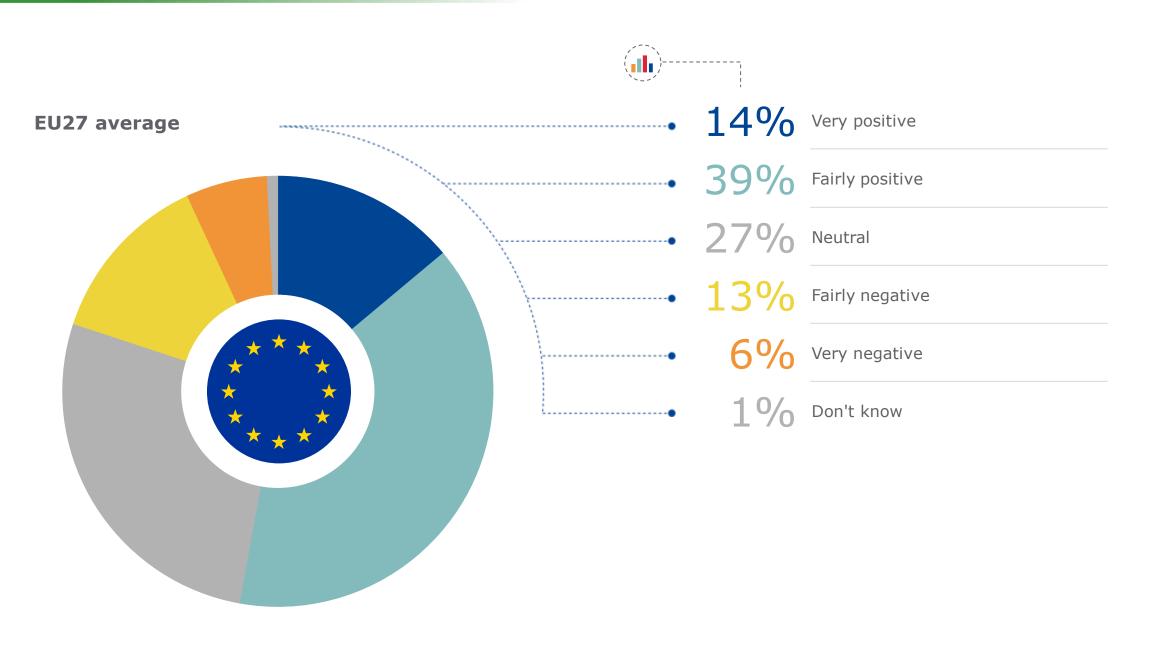
Image of the EU

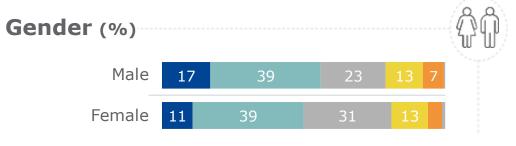


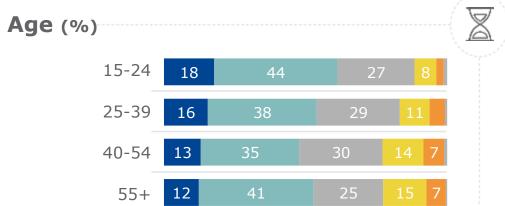
Image of the EU (I)

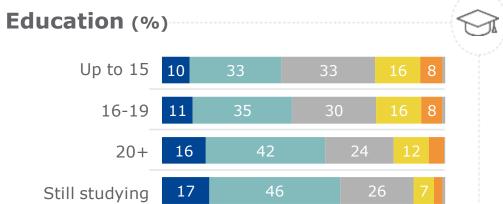
- Fifty-three per cent of respondents have a positive image of the EU, while 27% have a neutral image and 19% a negative image.
 - o The proportion who have a positive image ranges from a low of 39% in Belgium and 41% in both Austria and Czechia, to a high of 82% in Portugal.
 - O Younger respondents relatively often have a positive image of the EU. The same applies to those with a higher level of education or who are still studying. The proportion of respondents with a very positive image of the EU is higher among male respondents than among female respondents.
- Close to half (49%) of respondents say their image of the EU has remained stable over the last year, while about a third (34%) say it got worse and 15% say it improved.
 - The highest proportion of those whose image of the EU has improved can be observed in Italy and Portugal (both 25%). For those whose image of the EU has worsened, the highest proportions are observed in Luxembourg (51%) and Austria (49%).
 - o Younger respondents and respondents with a higher level of education are more likely than average to say their image of the EU has improved in the last year. This proportion is also relatively high among male respondents.













Very positive

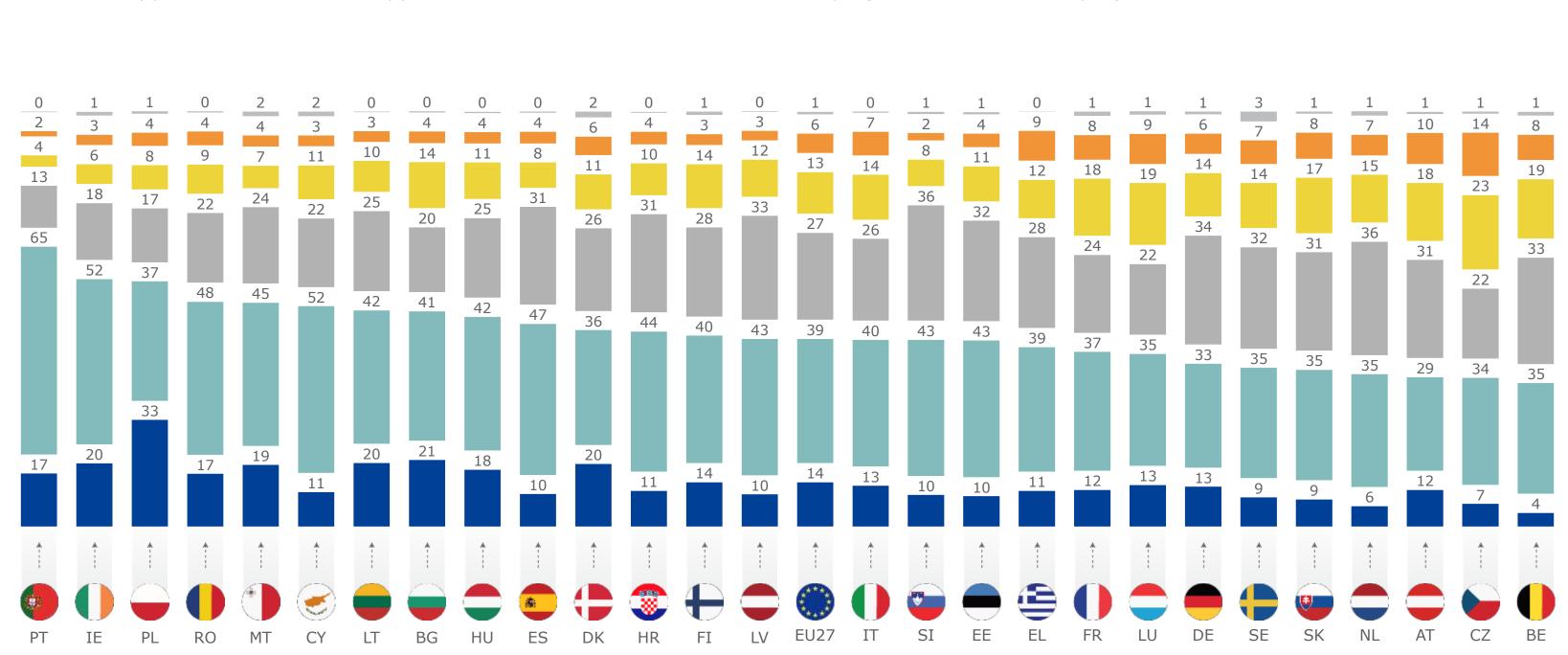
---Neutral

—Fairly negative



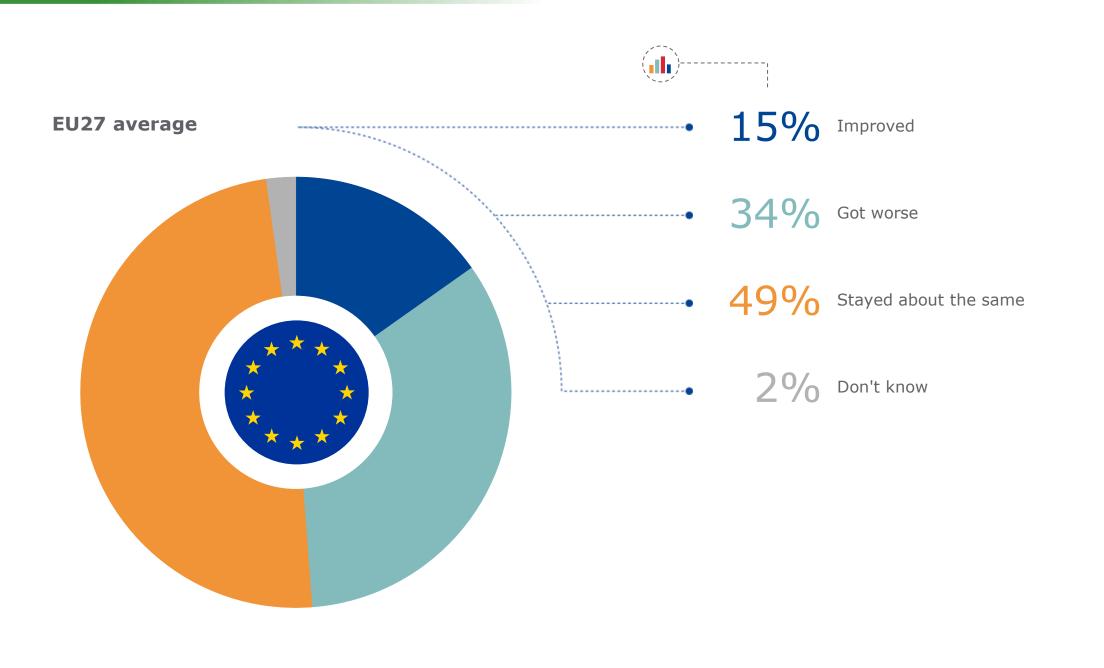
---Don't know

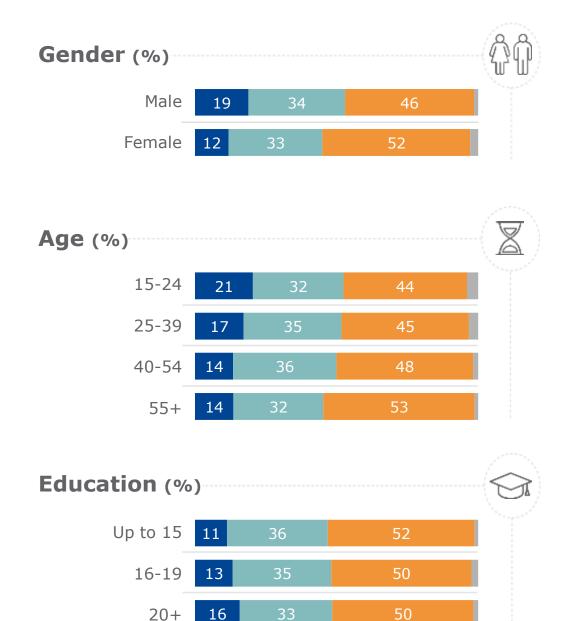
Very negative





—Fairly positive







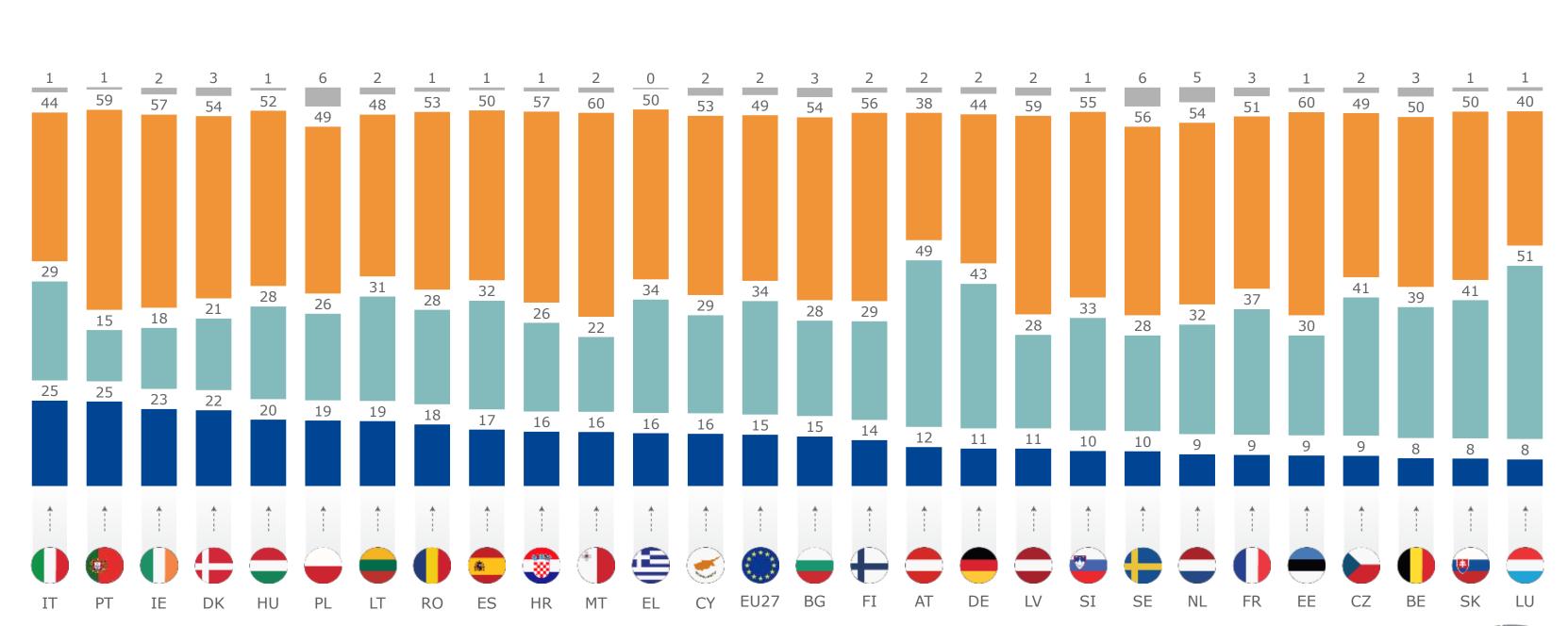
Still studying

Improved

—Stayed about the same



—Don't know

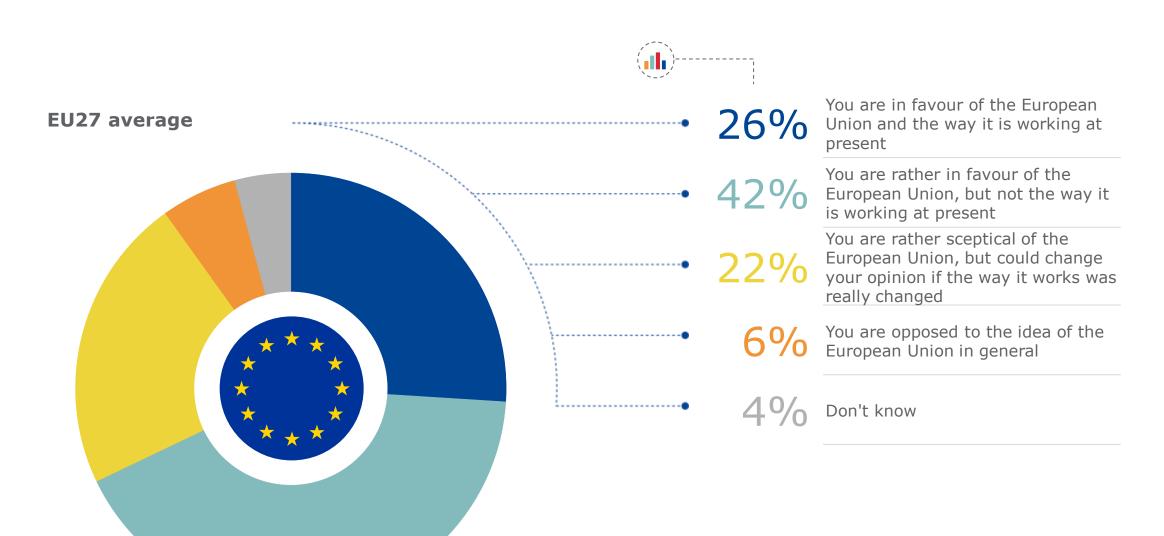


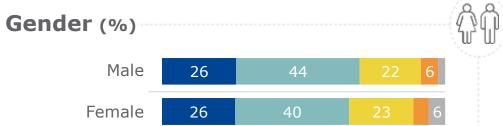
-Got worse

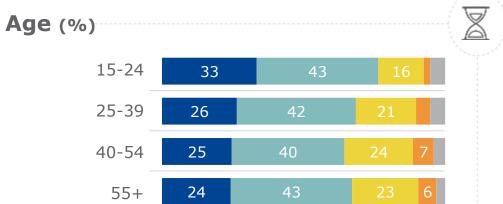
Image of the EU (II)

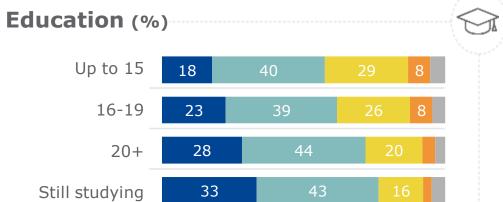
- Around seven in ten respondents (68%) are generally in favour of the EU.
 - o Though this includes 42% who are dissatisfied with the way the EU is working at present, compared to 26% who are satisfied with its working.
 - o A further 22% are rather sceptical of the EU but could change their opinion if radical reform is introduced, while 6% are opposed to the general idea of the EU.
- In all Member States, at least half of respondents are generally in favour of the EU.
 - o Nonetheless, less than half of respondents in all countries are both in favour of the EU AND satisfied with the way the EU is working at present; this figure ranges from 17% in Austria and Belgium to 47% in Ireland, Poland and Portugal.
 - o 'EU enthusiast' (being in favour of the EU and the way it is working) are relatively prevalent among the young and those still in education (33% compared to 24%-26% among older age groups).







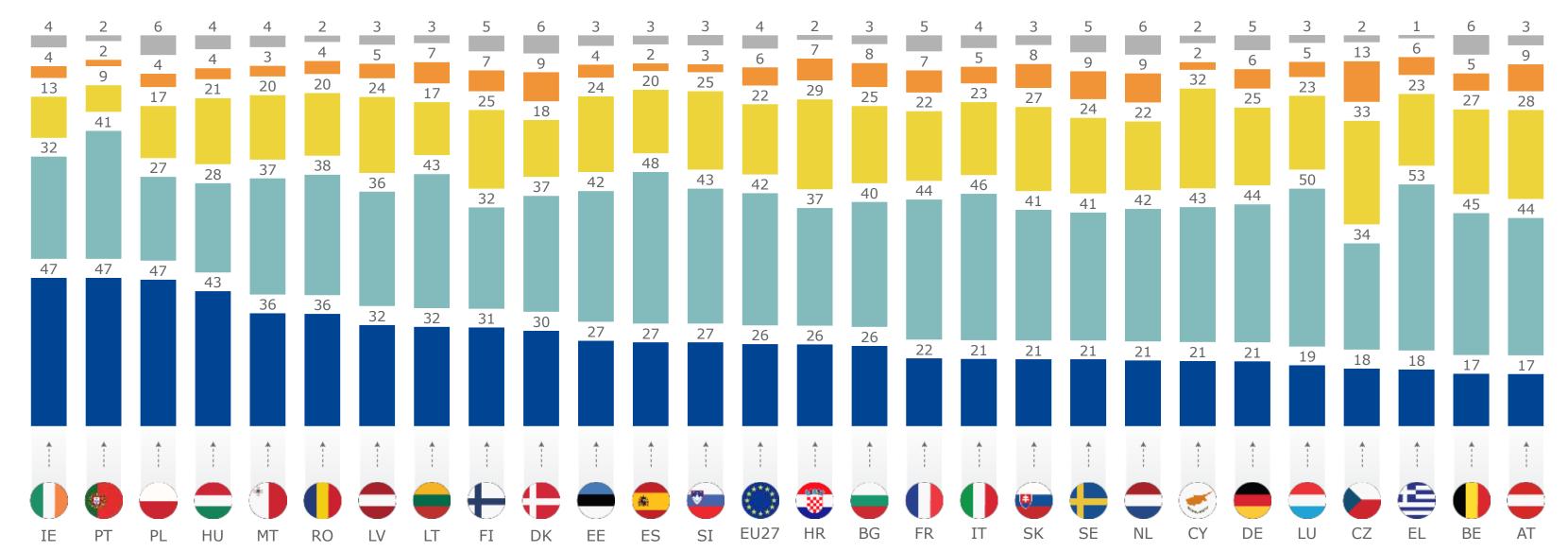








- —You are in favour of the European Union and the way it is working at present
- —You are rather in favour of the European Union, but not the way it is working at present
- —You are rather sceptical of the European Union, but could change my opinion if the way it works was really changed
- —You are opposed to the idea of the European Union in general
- —Don't know





6

Are things going in the right direction?



Are things going in the right direction?

- About half of respondents think things are going in the *wrong* direction in their country (48%), while slightly fewer think this about the EU (37%). A minority of respondents feel that, in general, things are going in the *right* direction in their own country (21%) or in the EU (24%).
- Respondents are more likely to consider that in general things are going in the right direction for **them personally** 36% think so, versus 21% who think things are deteriorating for themselves.

Overall, respondents from **Portugal and Ireland are the most positive** about how things are going for their country, the EU and themselves. Respondents in **Belgium and Sweden** are most negative about how things are going in their own country and the EU.

- Compared to female respondents, male respondents are on average more positive about the way things are going in their country (19% vs 25%), in the EU (22% vs 27%), and for them personally (33% vs 38%).
- Younger respondents and respondents with a higher level of education are relatively likely to say that things are going in the right direction for them personally.



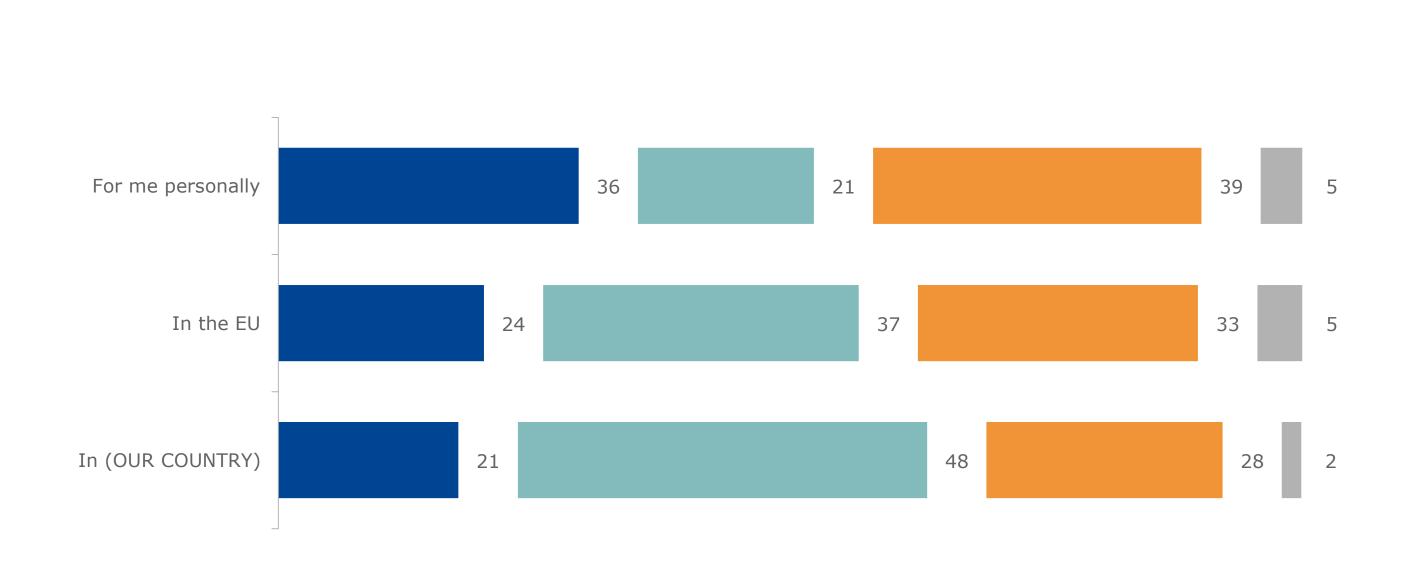
---Right direction

—Neither one, nor the other

—Wrong direction



—Don't know





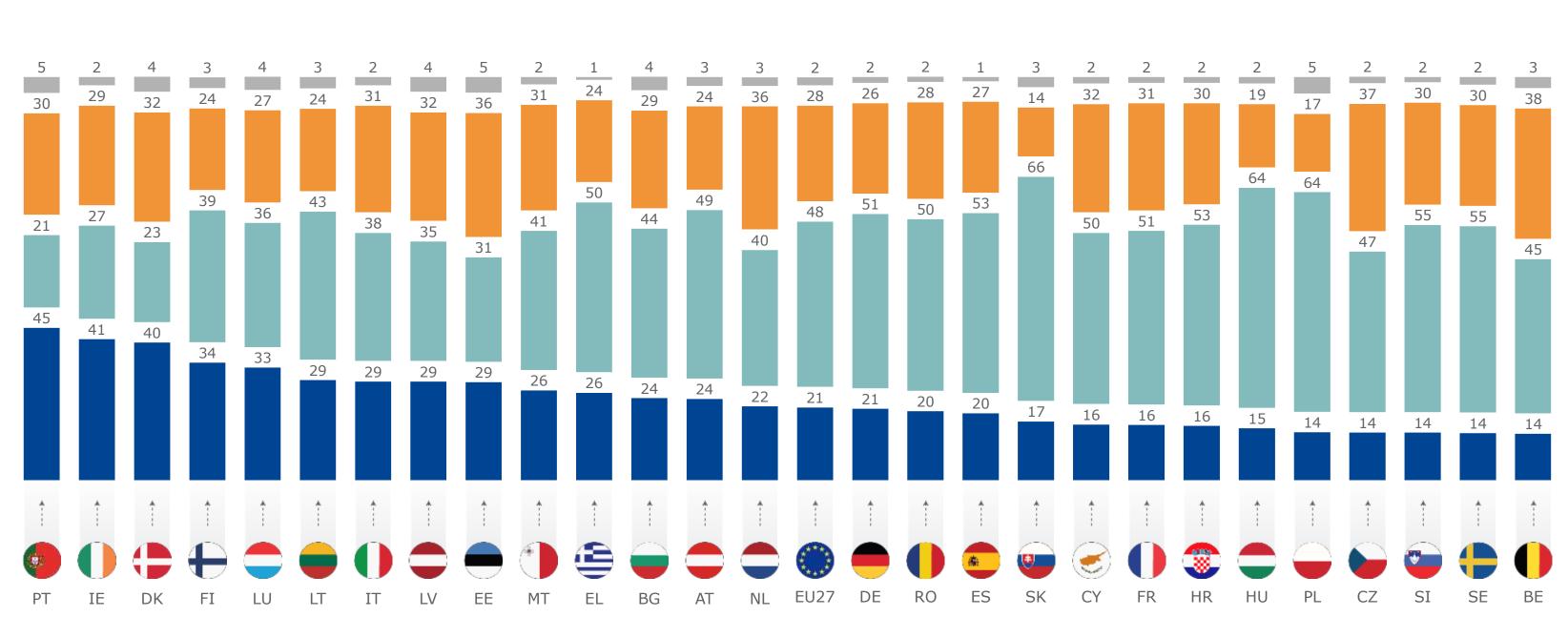
--- Right direction

At the present time, would you say that, in general, things are going in the right direction or in the wrong direction, ...? in (OUR COUNTRY)

—Wrong direction



—Don't know



—Neither one, nor the other



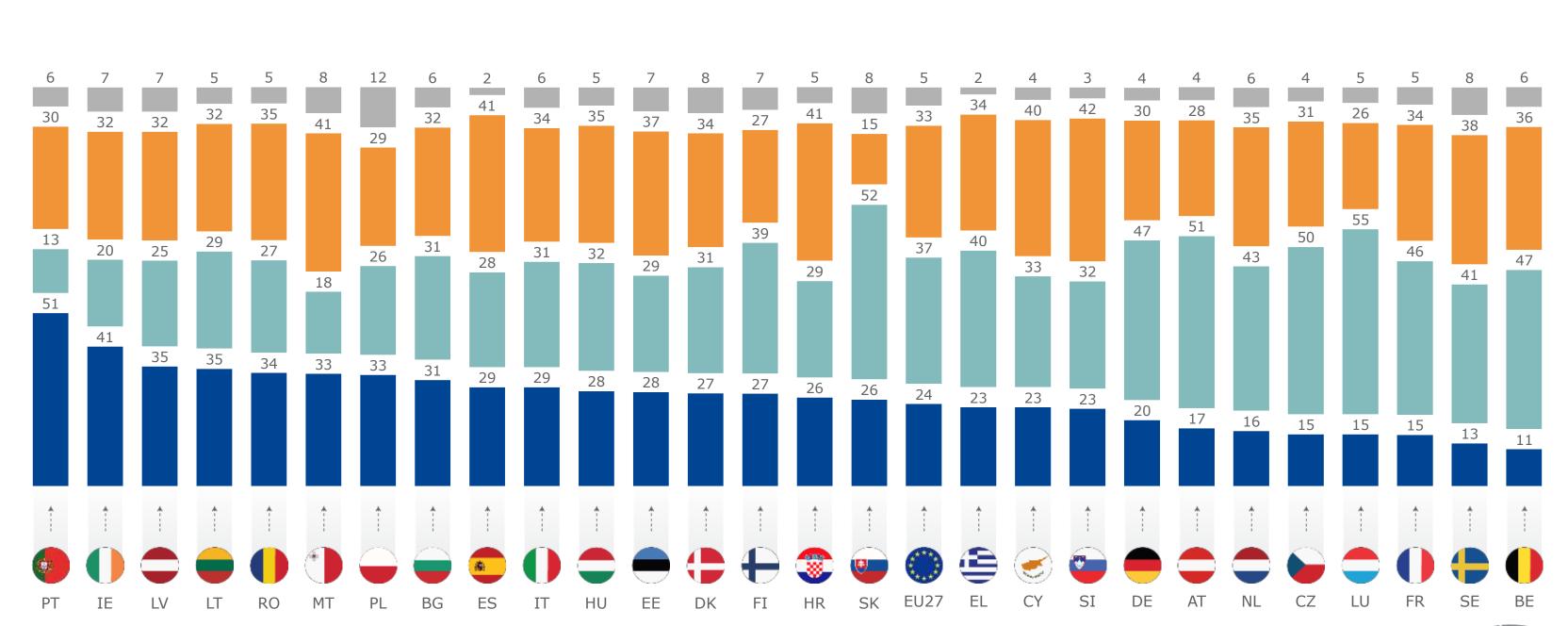
--- Right direction

At the present time, would you say that, in general, things are going in the right direction or in the wrong direction, ...? in the EU

—Wrong direction



—Don't know



—Neither one, nor the other



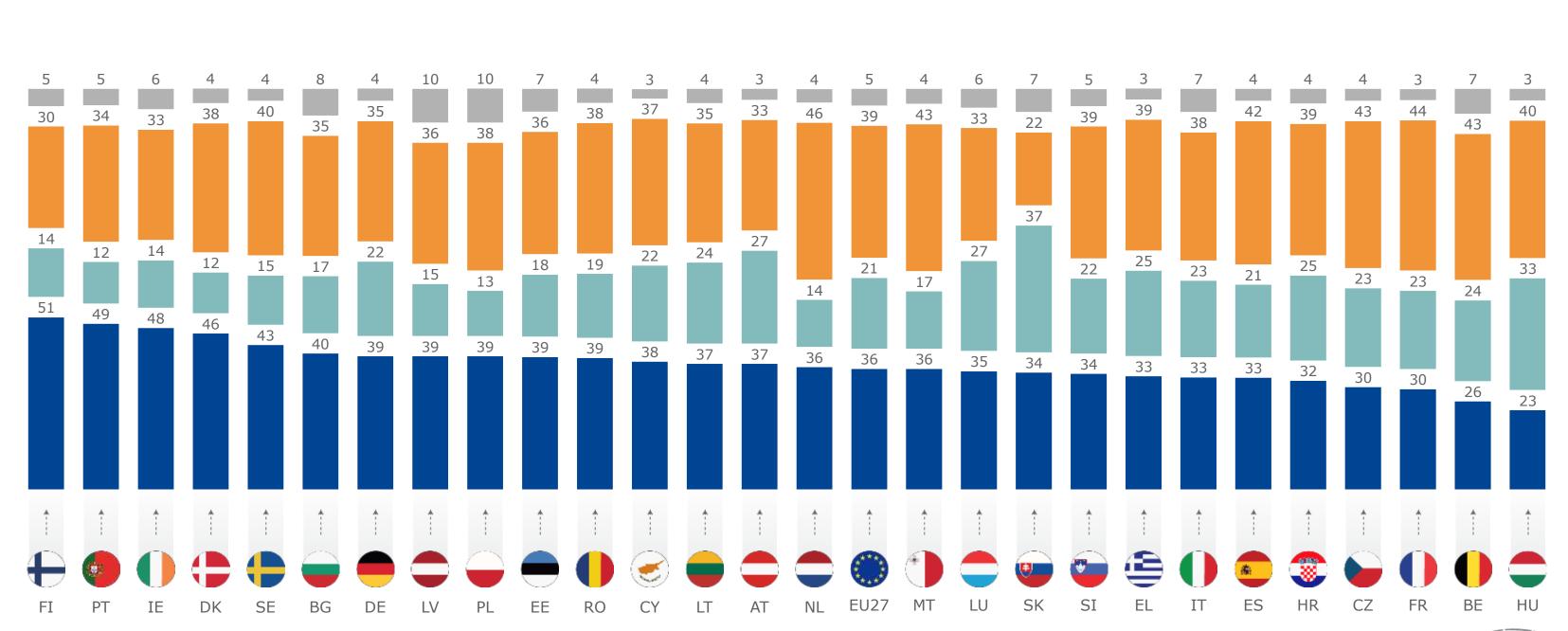
--- Right direction

At the present time, would you say that, in general, things are going in the right direction or in the wrong direction, ...? for me personally

—Wrong direction



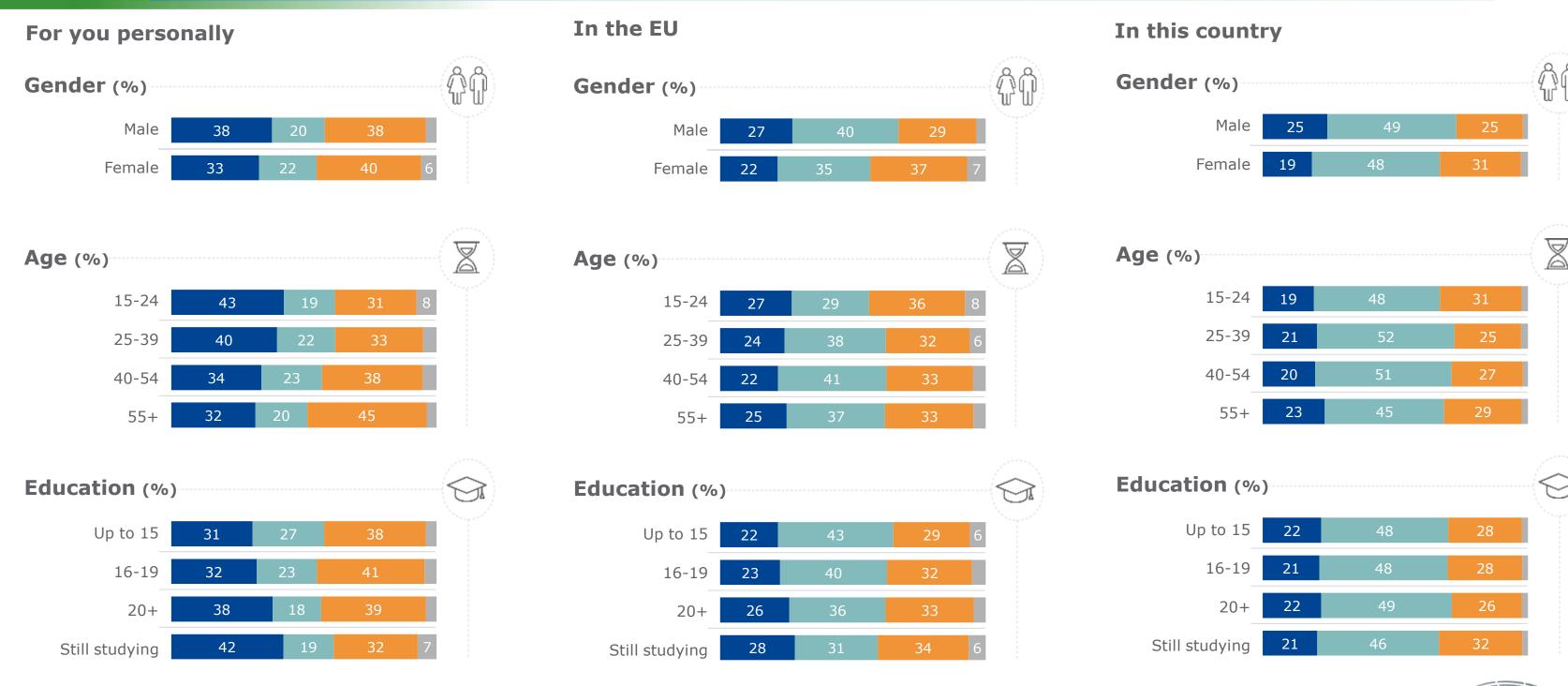
—Don't know



—Neither one, nor the other



At the present time, would you say that, in general, things are going in the right direction or in the wrong direction, ...? in (OUR COUNTRY)



—Wrong direction

-Right direction

—Neither one, nor the other

---Don't know

7

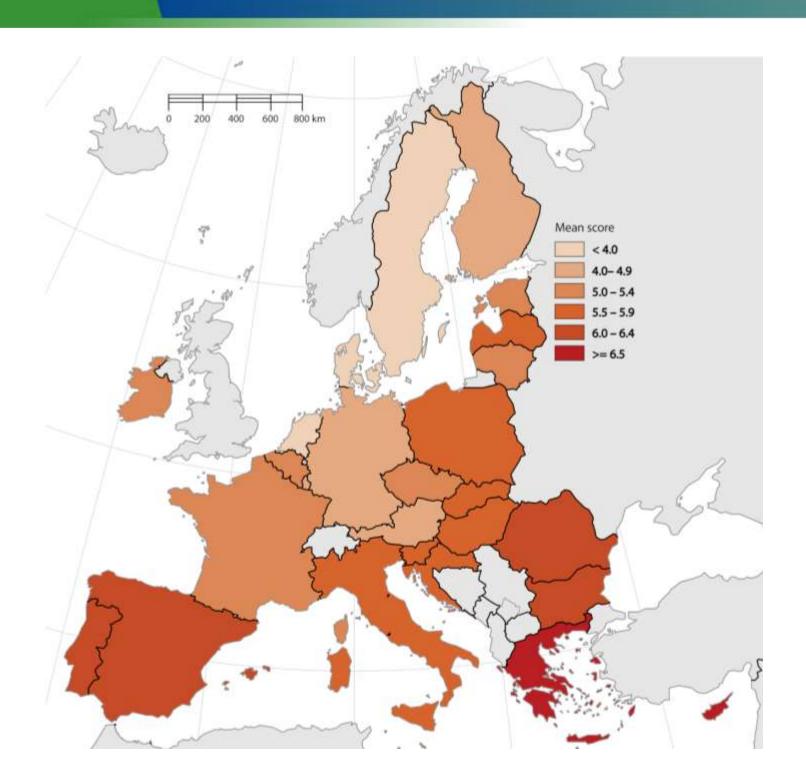
Perceived impact of the COVID crisis



Perceived impact of the COVID crisis

- Respondents were asked to rate their concern about the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the financial situation of their household, using a 10-point scale, with 0 indicating 'not concerned at all' and 10 indicating 'extremely concerned'.
- Across countries, the mean score for this question is 5.3.
 - o Respondents in Sweden (3.7), Denmark and the Netherlands (both 3.8) are the least worried about the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on their household's financial situation. Respondents in Greece (7.0) and Cyprus (6.8) are most likely to be concerned.
 - o The proportion who are concerned about the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on their financial situation is higher among self-employed individuals (6.0), but is lower among respondents who are 55 years or older (4.9).









8

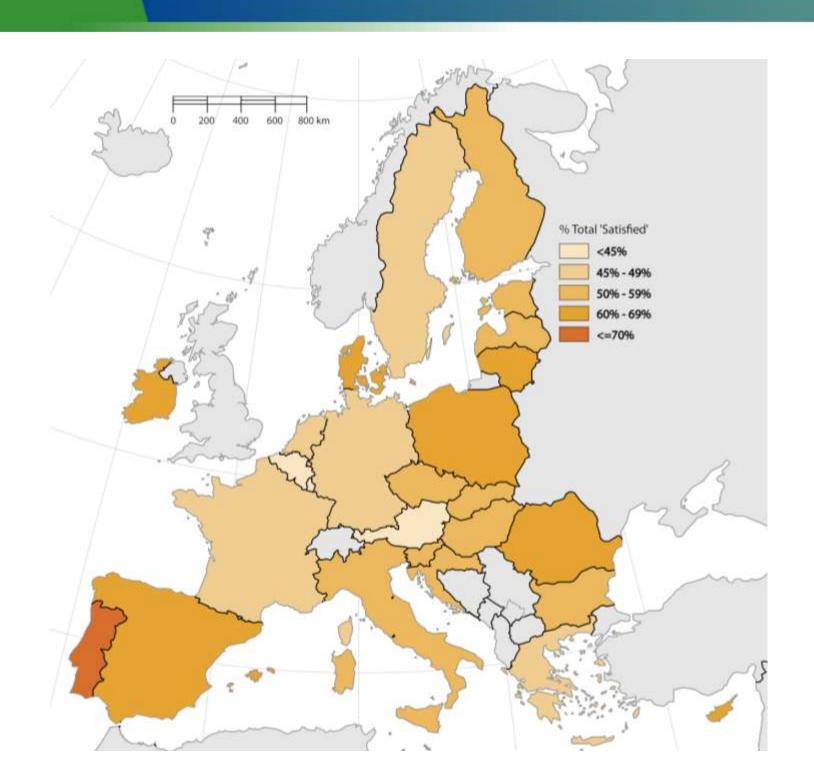
The EU's response to the Coronavirus pandemic

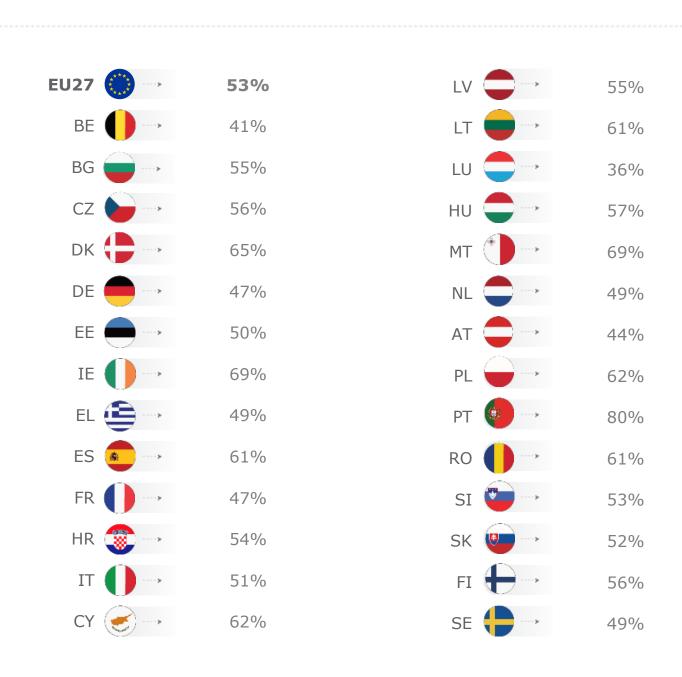


EU's response to the coronavirus pandemic (I)

- Slightly more than half of respondents (53%) are satisfied with the solidarity between EU Member States in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, whereas 40% are not satisfied.
 - o Respondents in Portugal (81%), Ireland and Malta (both 69%) show the highest rates of satisfaction. Those in Luxembourg (36%), Belgium (41%) and Austria (44%) are least likely to be satisfied with the solidarity between EU Member States in fighting the pandemic.
- Respondents are about equally satisfied with the way their national government (50%) and the EU (49%) have handled the COVID-19 vaccination strategy.
 - o Respondents in Malta (84%), Denmark and Portugal (both 82%) are most likely to be satisfied with the way their **national government** has handled the vaccination strategy. Respondents in Slovakia (24%) and Slovenia (31%) show the lowest rates of satisfaction with their government's handling of the vaccination strategy.
 - o As regards the **EU's handling of the COVID-19 vaccination strategy**, satisfaction rates are highest in Portugal (84%) and lowest in Germany (37%), Luxembourg (38%), Belgium and Slovakia (both 40%).









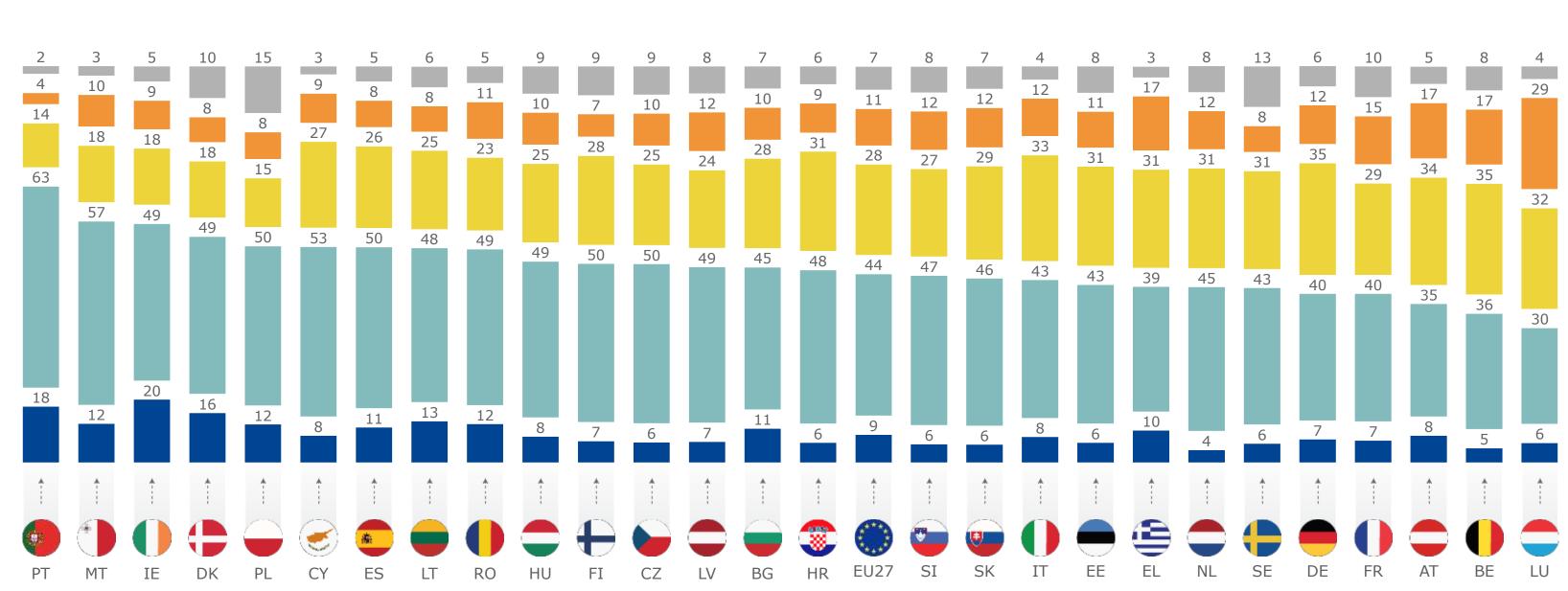
Very satisfied

—Rather not satisfied

Not at all satisfied



—Don't know

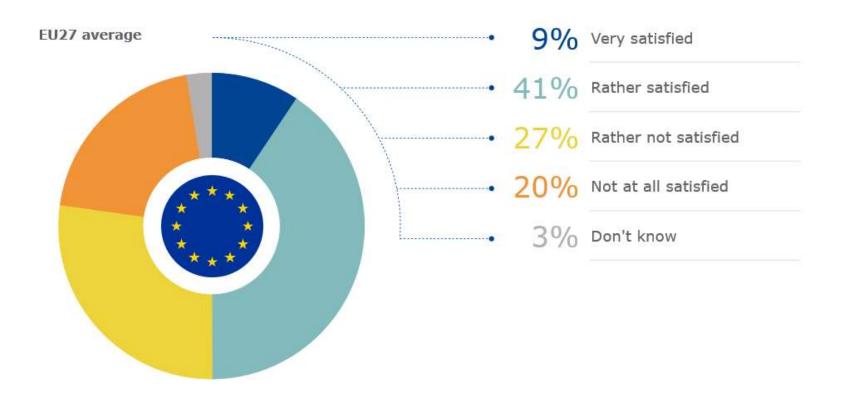




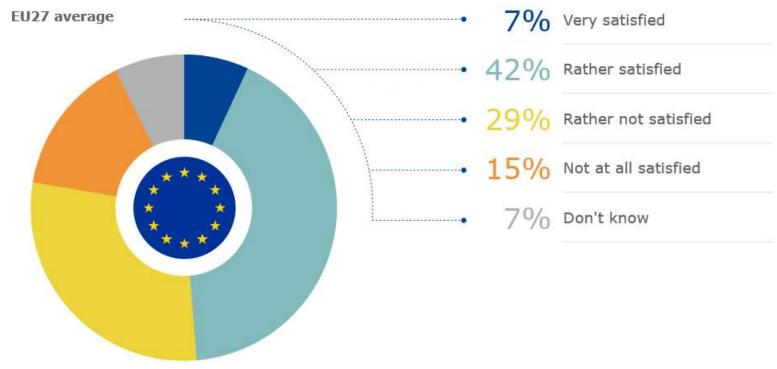
—Rather satisfied



Satisfaction with the way the national government has handled the COVID-19 vaccination strategy



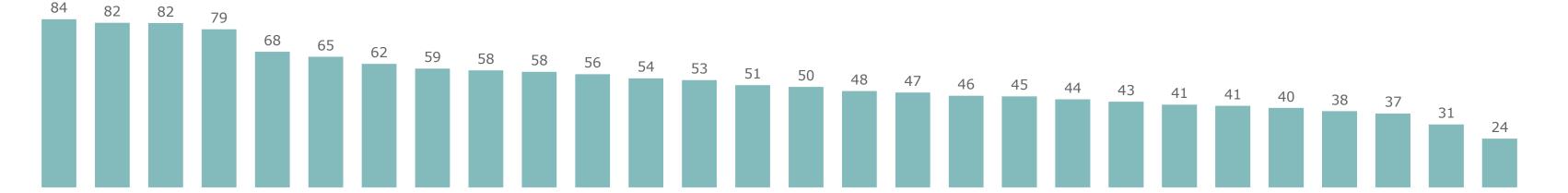
Satisfaction with the way the European Union has handled the COVID-19 vaccination strategy





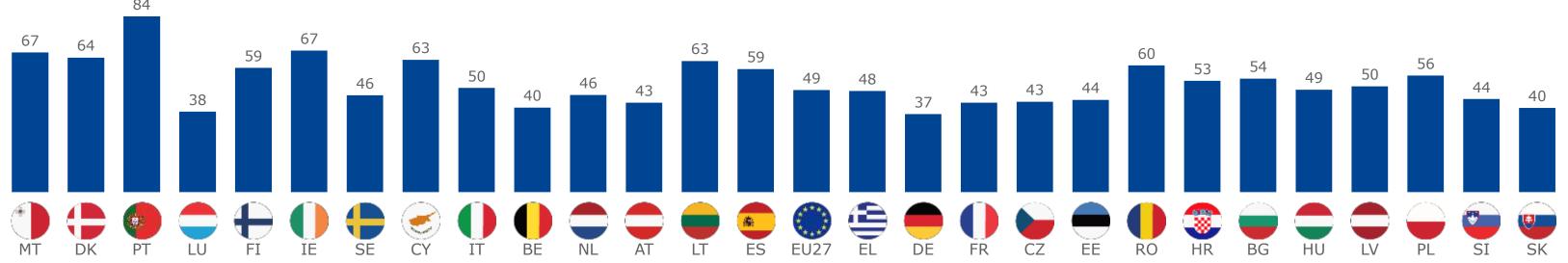
The (NATIONALITY) government

—Total 'Satisfied'



The European Union

—Total 'Satisfied'





Q6_1

Very satisfied

Thinking about the way the following institutions have handled the COVID-19 vaccination strategy, would you say you are... The (NATIONALITY) government

—Rather not satisfied

Not at all satisfied



---Don't know

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—Rather satisfied

Q6_2

Very satisfied

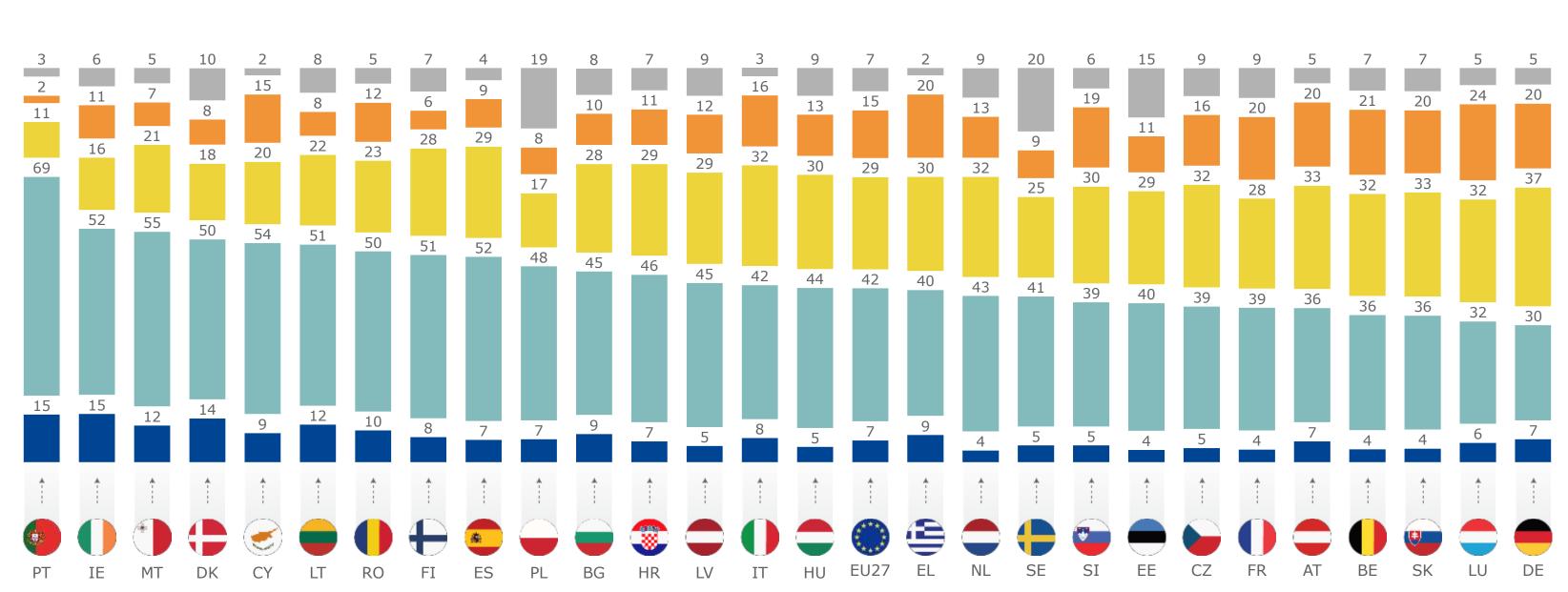
Thinking about the way the following institutions have handled the COVID-19 vaccination strategy, would you say you are... the European Union

—Rather not satisfied



—Don't know

—Not at all satisfied



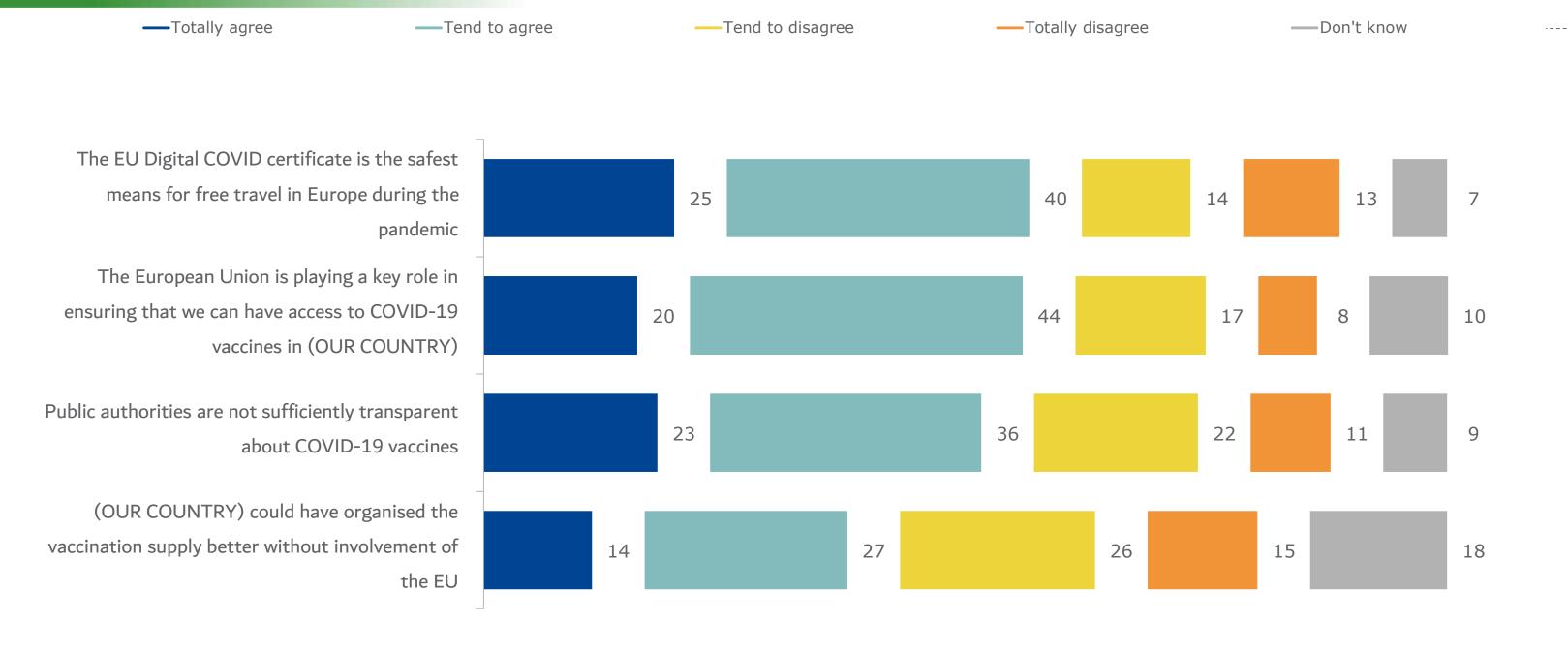
—Rather satisfied

EU's response to the coronavirus pandemic (II)

- A majority of respondents (65%) agree that the EU is playing a key role in ensuring access to COVID-19 vaccines.
 - o This proportion ranges from 49% in Czechia, 53% in Slovakia and 54% in Germany, to 78% in both Ireland and Malta, 83% in Cyprus and 89% in Portugal.
- Germany (58%), Croatia (51%) and France (51%) are the only countries in which most respondents think that their country could have organised the vaccination supply better without involvement of the EU (on average, across countries, 41% believe this).
- A majority of respondents (59%) agree that **public authorities are not sufficiently transparent** about COVID-19 vaccines.
 - o This concern is highest in Croatia (73%), followed by Cyprus, Romania and Slovenia (all 68%).
- About two thirds (65%) of respondents agree that the **EU Digital COVID certificate** is the safest means for free travel in Europe during the pandemic.
 - o This opinion is shared by between 49% of respondents in Slovenia and 75% of respondents in Portugal and Malta.



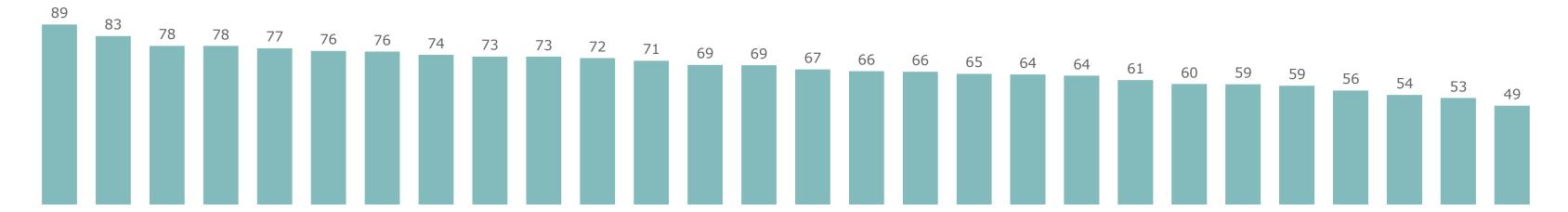






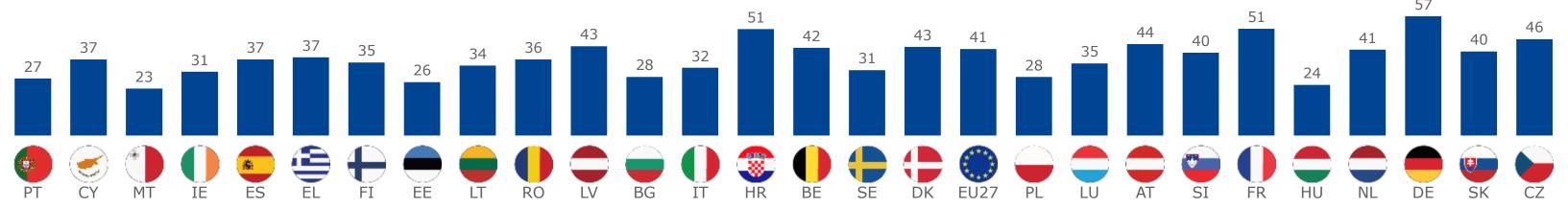
The European Union is playing a key role in ensuring that we can have access to COVID-19 vaccines in (OUR COUNTRY)

—Total 'Agree'



(OUR COUNTRY) could have organised the vaccination supply better without involvement of the EU

—Total 'Agree'





Q7_1

Totally agree

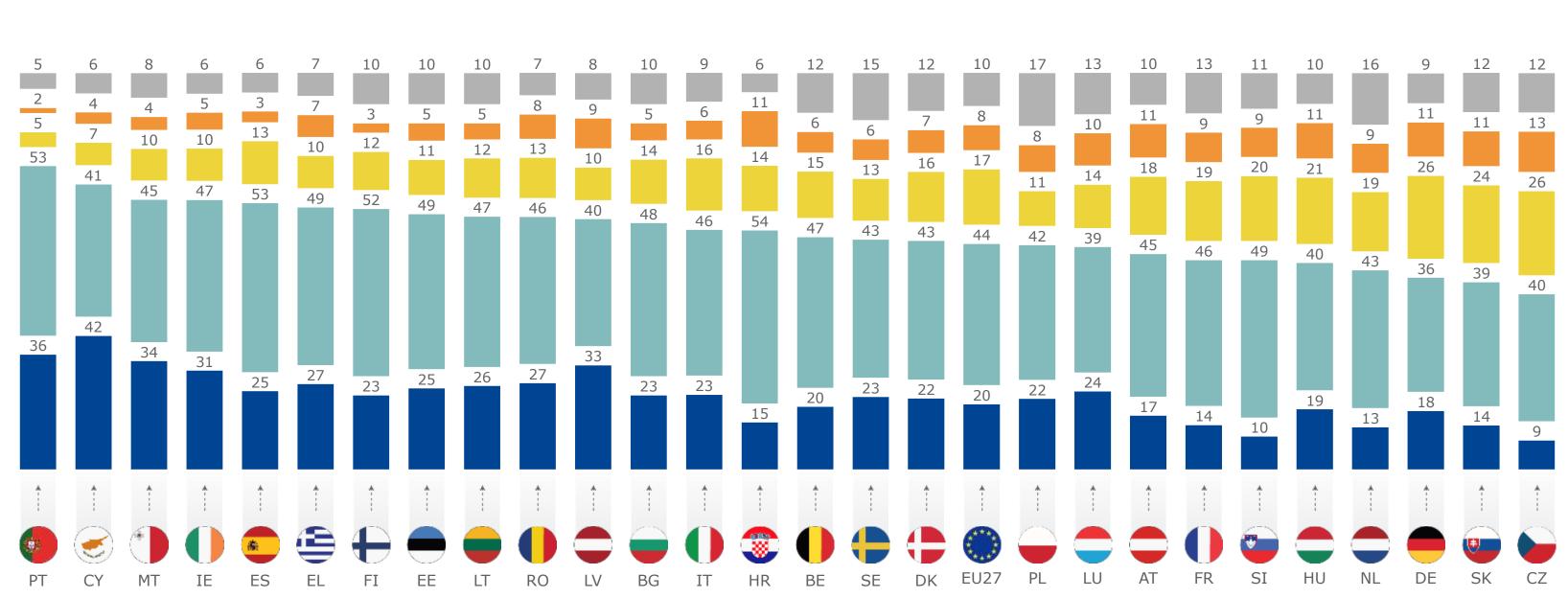
To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? The European Union is playing a key role in ensuring that we can have access to COVID-19 vaccines in (OUR COUNTRY)

—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree



—Don't know





—Tend to agree

Totally agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (OUR COUNTRY) could have organised the vaccination supply better without involvement of the EU

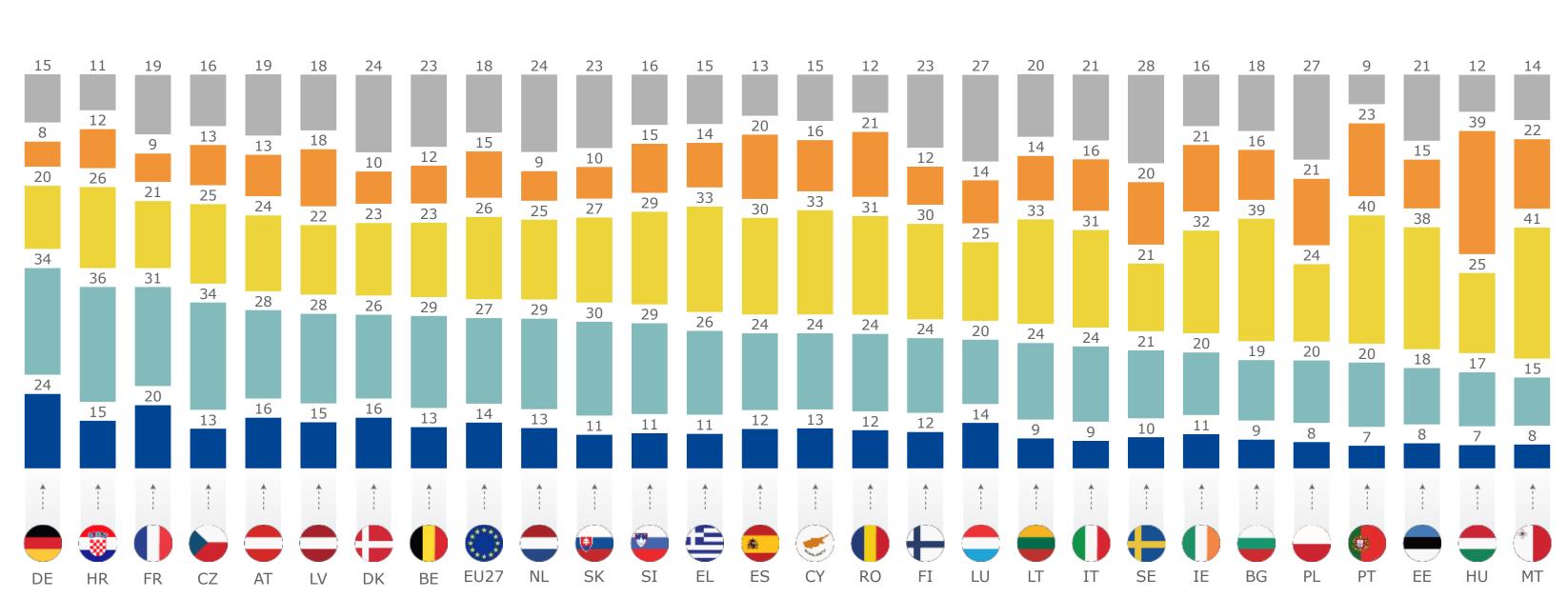
—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree

—Tend to agree



—Don't know





Q7_4

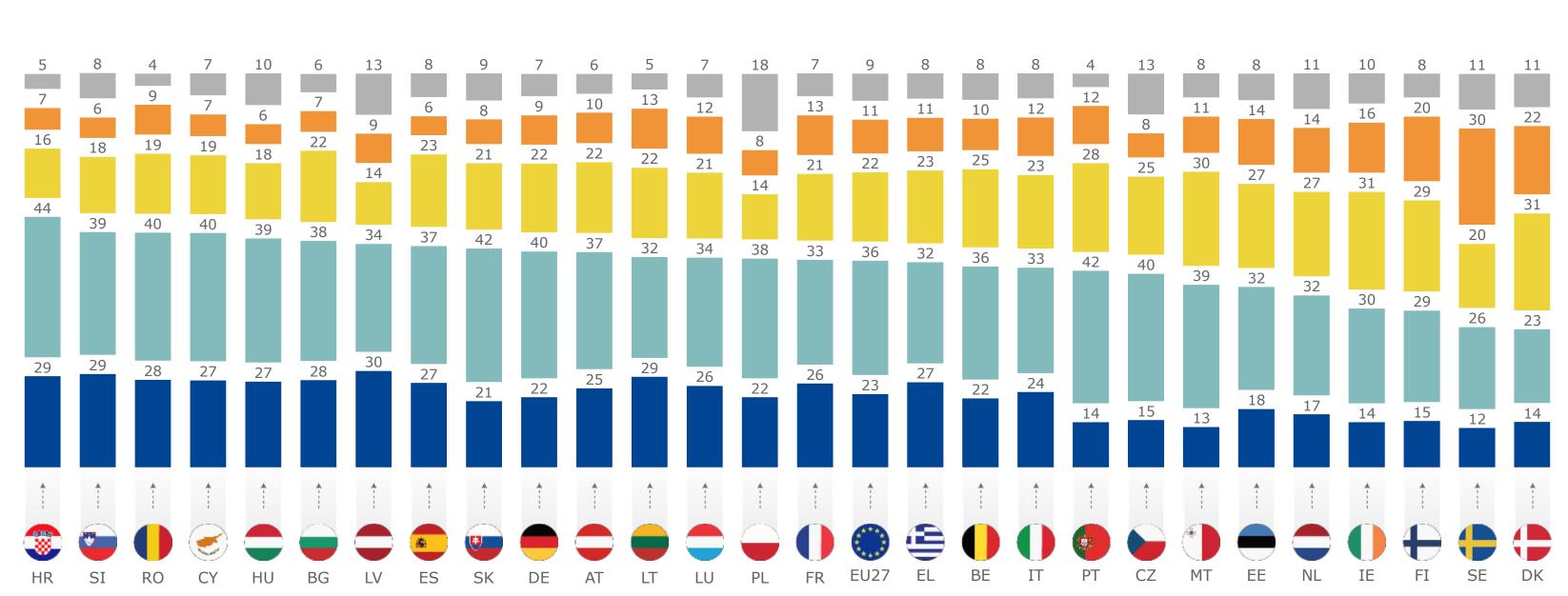
Totally agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Public authorities are not sufficiently transparent about COVID-19 vaccines

—Tend to agree



—Don't know



—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree



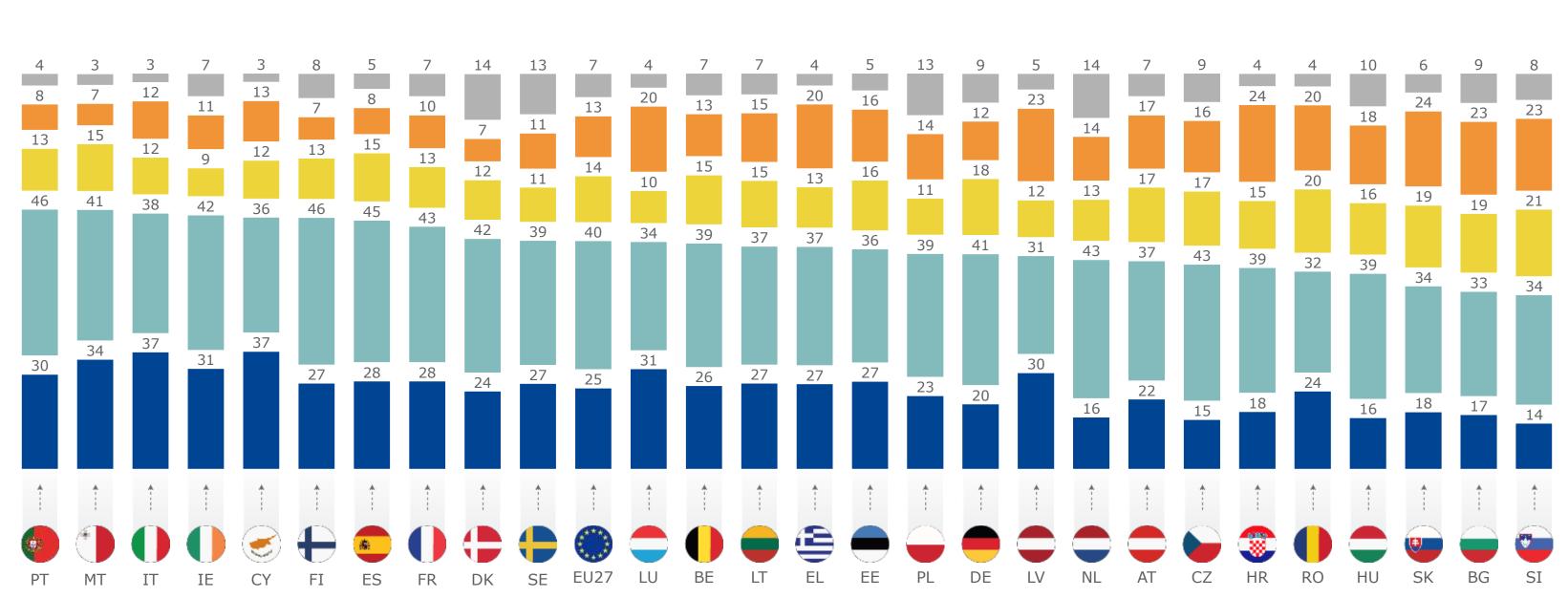
Totally agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? The EU Digital COVID certificate is the safest means for free travel in Europe during the pandemic

—Tend to agree



---Don't know



—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree



9

General attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination

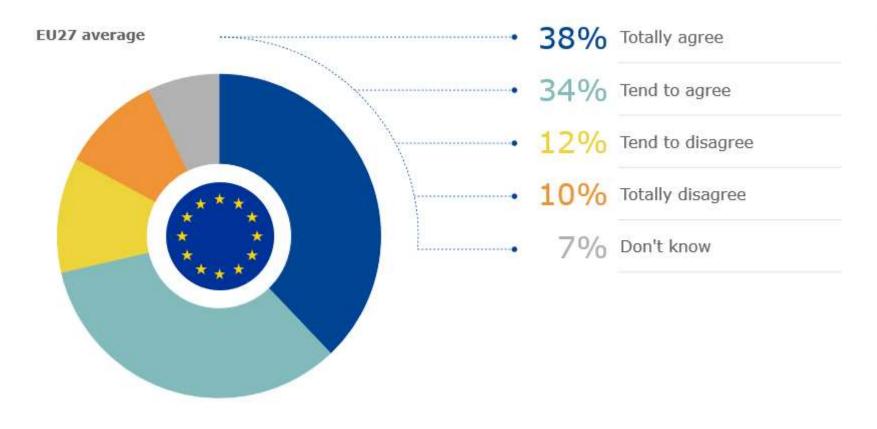


General attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination

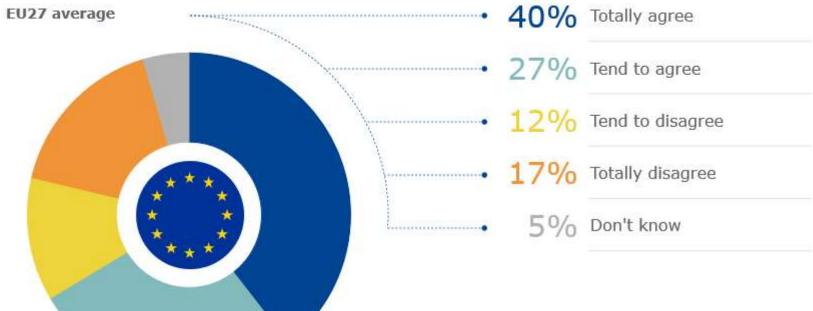
- A majority of respondents (71%) agree that all in all, benefits of COVID-19 vaccines outweigh potential risks.
 - o However, only slightly more than half of respondents in Bulgaria (51%) and Slovenia (53%) agree that the benefits of COVID-19 vaccines outweigh potential risks.
 - o The proportion agreeing with this statement is particularly high among respondents who are 55 years old and over (79%).
- About two thirds of respondents (66%) agree that everyone should get vaccinated and that it is a civic duty.
 - o This figure varies between 39% in Bulgaria and 86% in Portugal. Other countries where eight in ten or more agree are Malta, Spain (both 81%) and Sweden (80%).
 - o Older respondents and respondents with a lower level of education are more likely to agree that everyone should get vaccinated.



All in all, benefits of COVID-19 vaccines outweigh possible risks

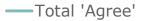


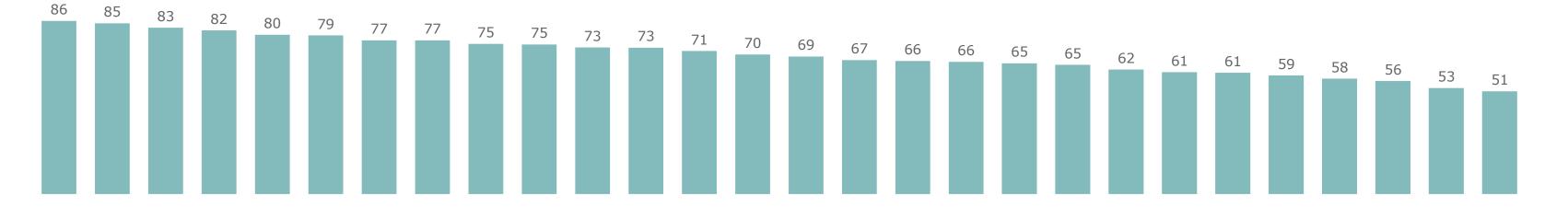
Everyone should get vaccinated against COVID-19, it is a civic duty





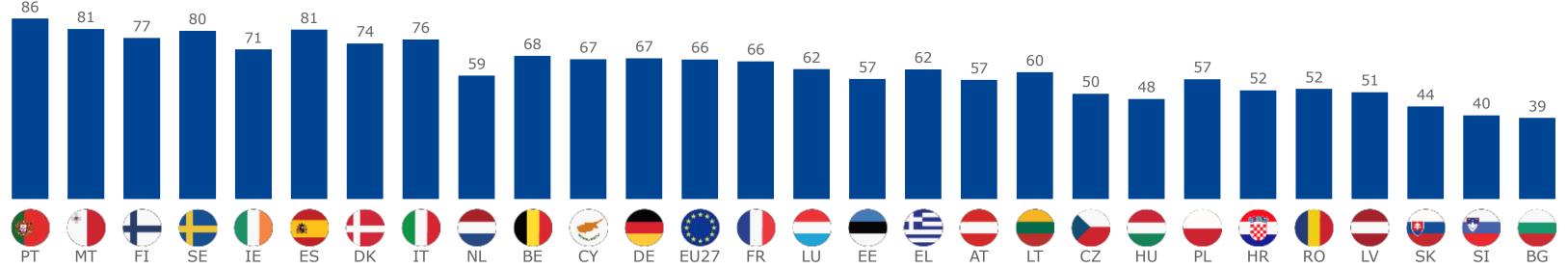






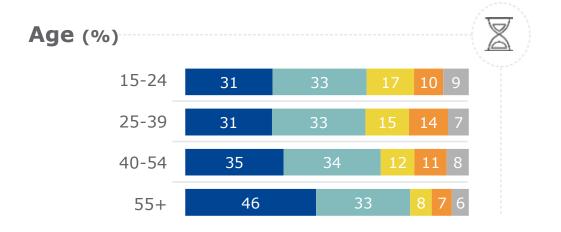
Everyone should get vaccinated against COVID-19, it is a civic duty

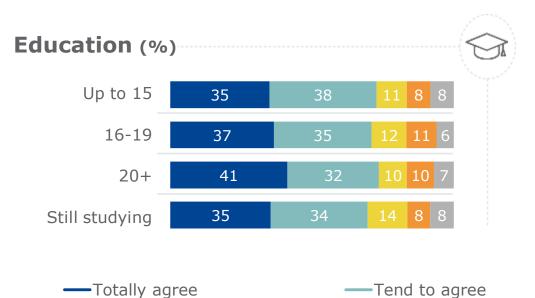
—Total 'Agree'



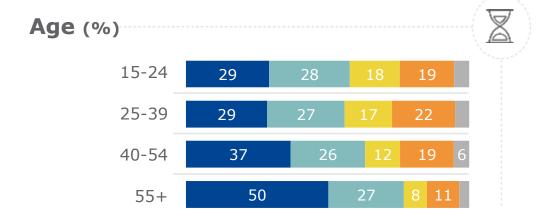


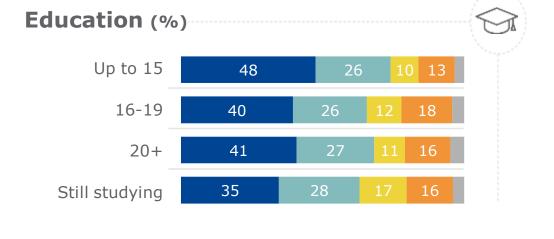
All in all, benefits of COVID-19 vaccines outweigh possible risks





Everyone should get vaccinated against COVID-19, it is a civic duty





—Totally disagree —Don't know



—Tend to disagree

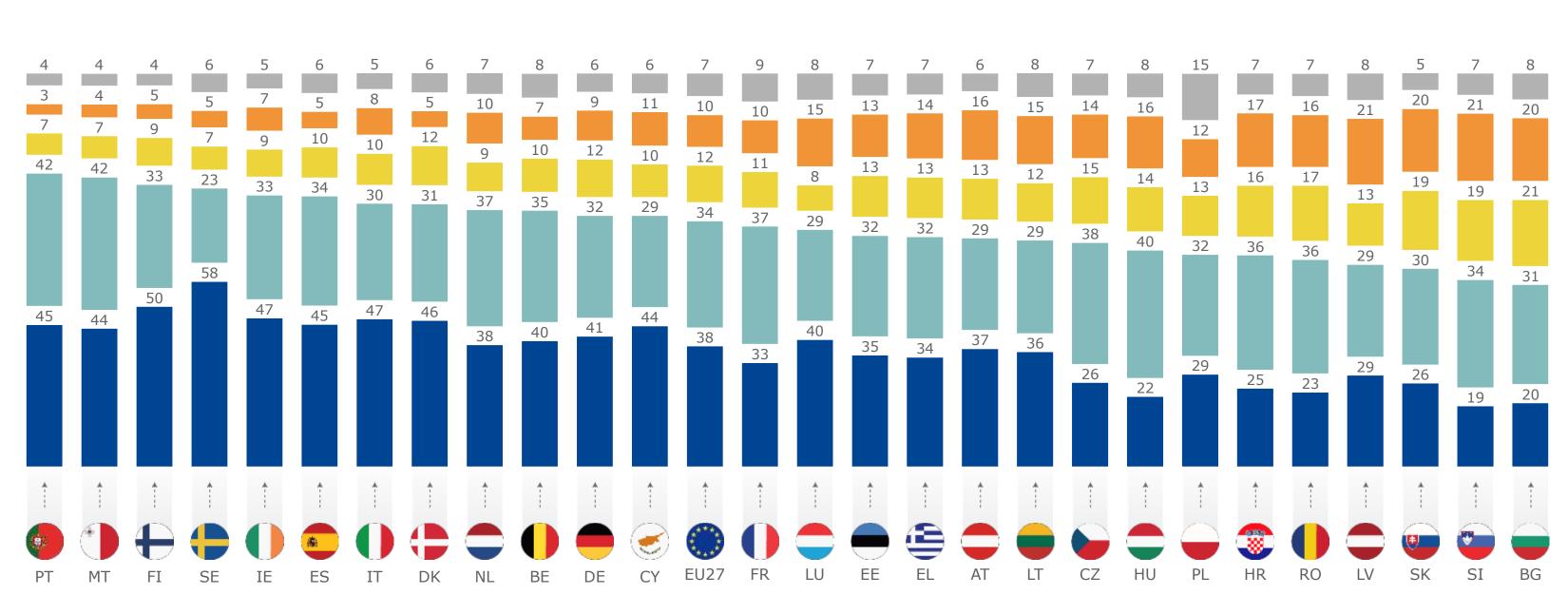
—Totally agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? All in all, benefits of COVID-19 vaccines outweigh possible risks

—Tend to agree



—Don't know



—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree



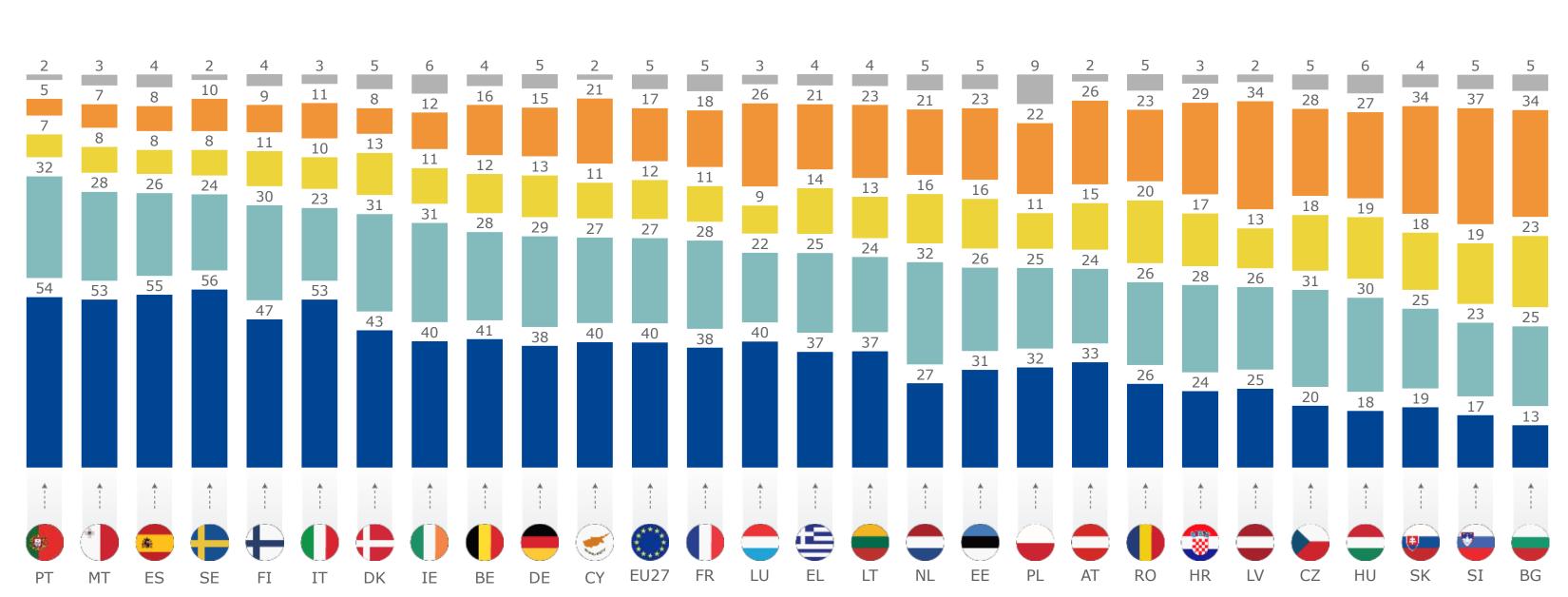
Totally agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Everyone should get vaccinated against COVID-19, it is a civic duty

—Tend to agree



—Don't know



—Tend to disagree

—Totally disagree

