

Each plenary session, DG Communication's Public Opinion Monitoring Unit provides Members with relevant public opinion data on key topics on the agenda:

- **Presentation of the programme of the French Presidency:** European citizens have a clear idea of the issues they want the European Parliament to focus on: Actions against climate change lead the field for 43% of respondents, followed by measures to fight poverty and social exclusion (32%), the support for the economy and the creation of new jobs as well as the fight against terrorism and organised crime (both 31%). Six out of ten respondents are also convinced that the 'NextGenerationEU' projects will help their country to overcome the economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. ([EP Flash Eurobarometer on the State of the European Union](#))

- **Digital Services Act:** A brand-new [Eurobarometer survey on "Digital rights and principles"](#) reveals that European citizens see a range of challenges connected to the increasing role of digital tools and the internet in our society: More than half of European citizens are worried about cyber-attacks and cybercrime, as well as about the safety and well-being of children.

- **Empowering European Youth - post-pandemic employment and social recovery:** Fighting poverty and social inequality is the biggest priority for 43% of young people in the European Union, according to the [European Parliament's Youth Survey](#). Respondents aged between 16 and 30 years also want the EU to focus on combatting climate change and protecting the environment (39%), followed by combatting unemployment or the lack of jobs (37%). At the same time, a majority of respondents feel they don't have much, or any, say over important decisions, laws and policies affecting them. This feeling increases the more distant the sphere of governance under consideration: 53% feel they don't have much, or any, say over decisions, laws and policies affecting their local area, rising to 70% for matters affecting the EU as a whole. The [Youth in Europe 2021 report](#) employs data collected throughout different opinion surveys, providing a portrait of European youth today.

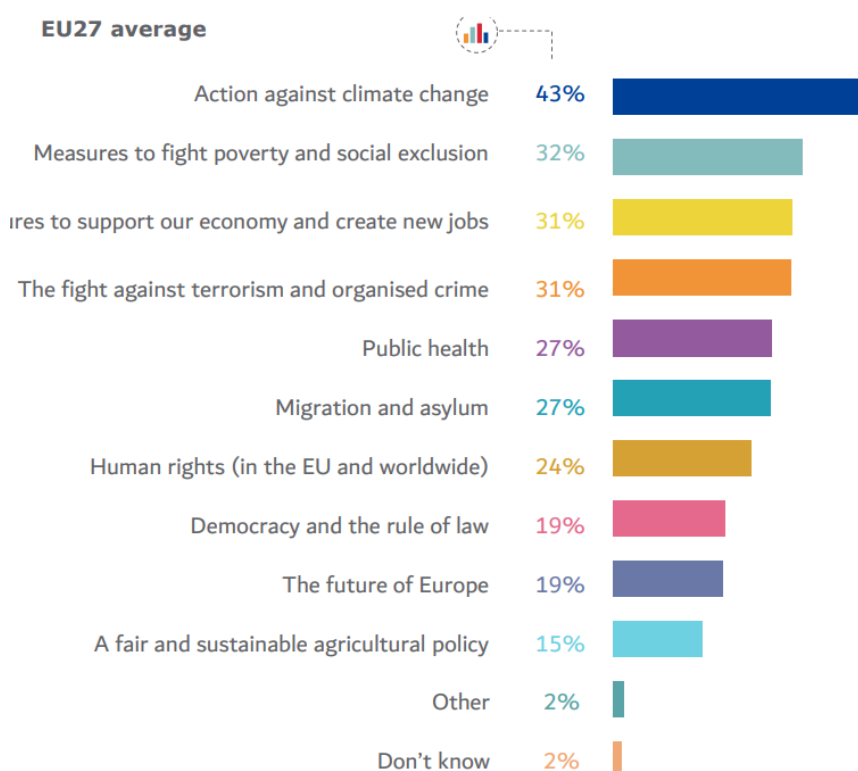
For more information on the topics covered in this edition, the methodology of our surveys or on additional services offered to Members by DG COMM's Public Opinion Monitoring Unit, please contact:

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## Presentation of the programme of the French Presidency

On Wednesday 19 January, MEPs will discuss with French President Emmanuel Macron the political strategy and aims of France's six-month Presidency of the Council of the EU, which has been put under the motto of "Recovery, Strength and a Sense of Belonging".

**European citizens have a clear idea of the issues they want the European Parliament to focus on: 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%), according to findings of the [EP Flash Eurobarometer on the State of the European Union](#).**



For more detailed information: [EP Flash Eurobarometer on the State of the European Union \(September 2021\)](#)

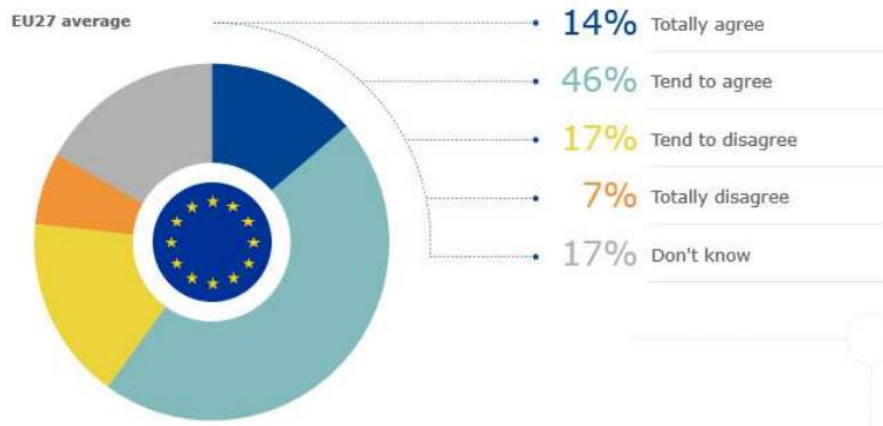
**Action against climate change ranks first in 15 of the 27 EU countries.** In most other countries (9 of the 27 EU countries) the interlinked 'measures to fight poverty and social exclusion' and 'measures to support the economy and create new jobs' are in first place. **Action against climate change 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.

**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.**

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. 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.

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



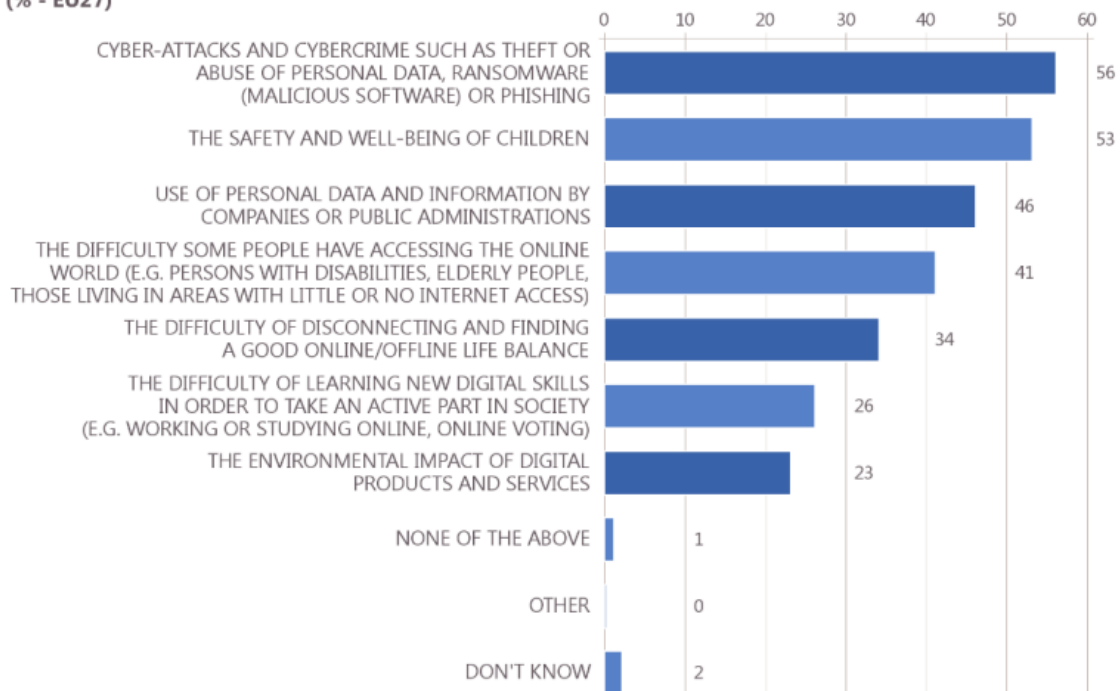
For more detailed information: [EP Flash Eurobarometer on the State of the European Union \(September 2021\)](#)

## Digital Services Act

On Wednesday 19 January, Parliament will vote on its negotiating position for the [Digital Services Act](#). This legislative proposal aims to create a safer digital space in which users' rights are protected, including through rules to tackle illegal products, services or content online. It would also enhance the accountability and transparency of algorithms, and deal with content moderation. The vote on the negotiating position is scheduled for Thursday.

In December 2021 the European Commission had published a dedicated [Eurobarometer survey on "Digital rights and principles"](#). Results indicate that citizens are **concerned about a range of challenges connected to the increasing role of digital tools and the internet in our society**. For example, more than half of the respondents to this Eurobarometer survey worry about **cyber-attacks and cybercrime**, as well as about the **safety and well-being of children**.

**QB3** What worries you most about the increased role of digital tools and the internet in our society? (MAX. 4 ANSWERS)  
(% - EU27)



For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer on Digital rights and principles \(December 2021\)](#)

Across the EU, **cyber-attacks and cybercrime such as theft or abuse of personal data, ransomware (malicious software) or phishing** are the top most frequently indicated by respondents. More than half (56%) of the respondents indicate this.

The **safety and well-being of children** is indicated almost as frequently (53%), followed by the **use of personal data and information by companies or public administrations** (46%), and the **difficulty some people have accessing the online world** (e.g. persons with disabilities, elderly people, those living in areas with little or no internet access) (41%).

Over one in three (34%) indicate the **difficulty of disconnecting and finding a good online/offline life balance**, with over one in four (26%) indicating worrying about the **difficulty of learning new digital skills** in order to take an active part in society (e.g. working or studying online, online voting). Around one in five (23%) worry about the **environmental impact of digital products and services**.

**A national analysis shows some interesting differences among EU Member States.** The most likely to indicate worrying about **cyber-attacks and cybercrime** such as theft or abuse of personal data, ransomware (malicious software) or phishing are **respondents in Sweden (82%), the Netherlands and Finland (79% both), and Ireland and Denmark (70% both)**. In ten countries, less than half think this way. Least likely to do so are respondents in Romania (38%), Croatia (41%), and Cyprus (44%). **In 21 EU Member States, more than half indicate being worried about the safety and well-being of children, most notably in Cyprus and Ireland (71% both), Croatia (65%), and Greece and Luxemburg (63% both)**. Least likely to indicate this are respondents in Poland and Romania (both 38%), the Netherlands and Finland (both 47%), and Bulgaria (49%). The respondents that are most likely **to worry about the use of personal data and information by companies or public administrations** are from **Greece (64%), the Netherlands (63%), and Ireland (58%)**, with respondents least likely to indicate this in Romania (33%), Latvia (35%), and Hungary and Slovakia (both 37%).

Furthermore, **a large number of respondents (39%) is not aware that rights such as the freedom of expression, privacy, or non-discrimination should also be respected online.**

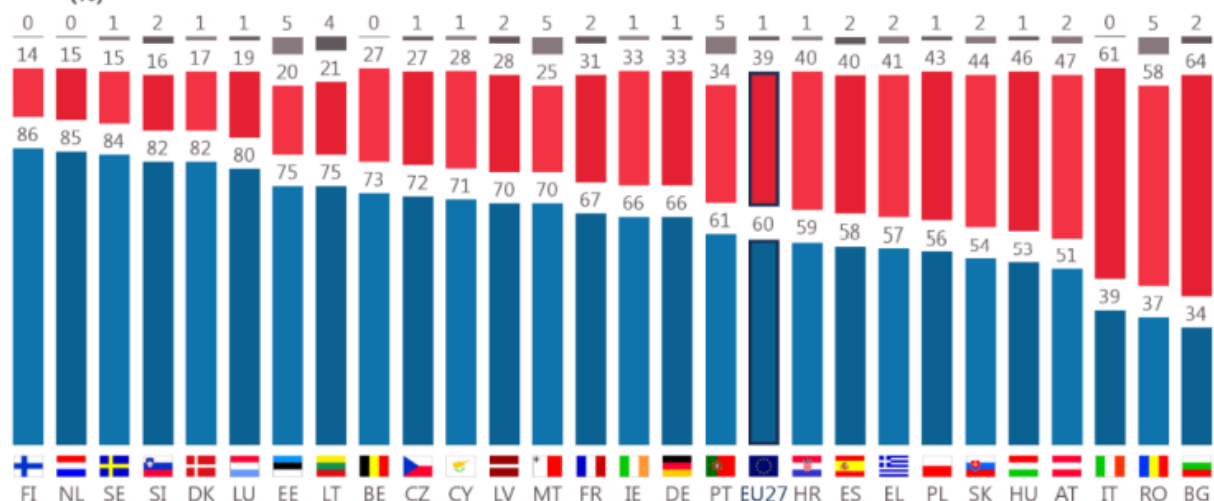
When asked whether, before being interviewed, respondents had been aware that the rights that apply offline (such as the freedom of expression, privacy, or non-discrimination) should also be respected online, respondents provided the following answers:

- Over a third (39%) indicate being unaware that the rights that apply offline should also be respected online.
- Close to two thirds (60%) of respondents indicate being aware of this.

**There are significant differences between Member States and socio-graphic profiles when it comes to awareness of these rights.** Only in six EU Member States more than three in four respondents are aware that their 'offline rights' should also be respected online, most notably in Finland (86%), the Netherlands (85%), and Sweden (84%).

**However, more than half of the respondents said they were not aware that rights that apply offline should be respected online, mostly in Bulgaria (64%), Italy (61%), and Romania (58%).** In seven other EU Member States, more than 40% of respondents were not aware. These countries are Austria (47%), Hungary (46%), Slovakia (44%), Poland (43%), Spain and Croatia (40% both).

**QB4** Before this interview, were you aware that the rights that apply offline should also be respected online? (%)



For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer on Digital rights and principles \(December 2021\)](#)

**A socio-demographic analysis** shows that a significantly better awareness of their online rights with younger and better societal groups:

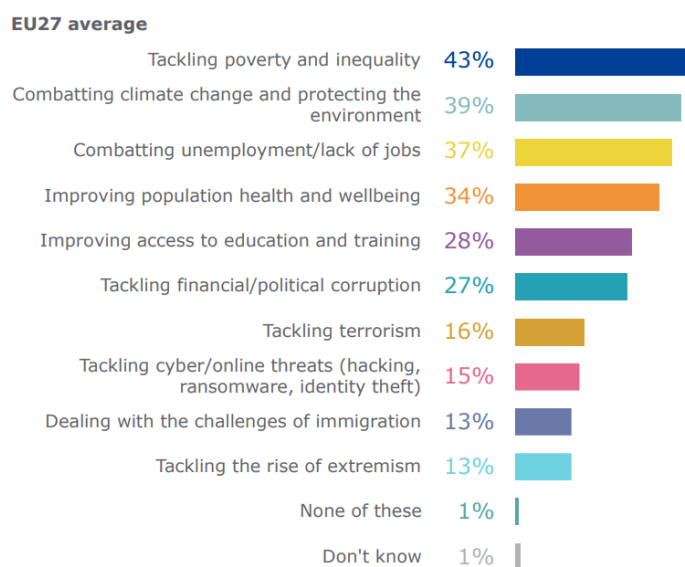
- Seven out of ten citizens (70%) aged between 15 and 39 years are likely to be aware that rights that apply offline should also be respected online, compared to 65% of those aged 40-54 and only 48% of citizens older than 55 years.
- Three quarters (74%) of respondents with higher education are aware that offline rights also apply online. This proportion falls to 56% among those who went to school until the age of 16-19- and further down to less than a third (30%) among those who went to school until the age of 15.
- Managers are most likely (76%) to be aware of these rights, followed by students (72%), the self-employed (70%), other white collar workers (67%), manual workers and the unemployed (both 59%), and those who are retired (46%).
- Social class seems to play a considerable role on awareness: Those who consider themselves as belonging to the upper middle class are most likely (79%) to be aware that the rights that apply offline should also be respected online, followed by 73% of those belonging to the upper class, 63% of the middle class, 57% of the lower middle class, and close to half (47%) of the working class.

## Empowering European Youth: post-pandemic employment and social recovery

On Thursday 20 January, MEPs will debate and vote on how to empower European Youth, with a special focus on post-pandemic employment and social recovery.

**Political issues** that **young people** (between 16 and 30 years) would most like to see prioritised are **tackling poverty and social inequality** (43%); followed by **combatting climate change and protecting the environment** (39%); and **combatting unemployment or a lack of jobs** (37%) the [European Parliament Youth Survey](#) finds. More than a third would also like to see priority given to improving **population health and wellbeing**, and more than a quarter to improving **access to education and training** (28%) and **tackling corruption** (27%). Tackling cyber or online threats, dealing with the challenges of immigration, and tackling the rise of extremism, emerge as lower order issues (mentioned by 15%, 13% and 13% respectively).

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



Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer European Parliament Youth Survey \(September 2021\)](#)

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

**Poverty and inequality emerges as the top (or top equal) issue in 12 Member States.** The proportion mentioning it is highest in Portugal (56%), Luxembourg (52%), Cyprus (51%) and Bulgaria (50%), where at least half of respondents say it should be prioritised.

**Combatting climate change and protecting the environment is the top issue in five countries:** Denmark (53%), France (45%), Slovakia (45%), Czechia (41%) and the Netherlands (40%). It is mentioned notably less frequently in Cyprus (24%), Latvia (25%), Romania (25%), Croatia (25%) and Bulgaria (27%).

**Combatting unemployment or a lack of jobs is the top issue in three Member States:** Italy (53%), Croatia (52%) and Slovenia (47%), and top equal in Sweden (38%). Improving population health and wellbeing is the top issue in Estonia (52%), Latvia (48%) and Poland (48%), and top equal in Hungary (47%), Finland (44%) and Sweden (38%).



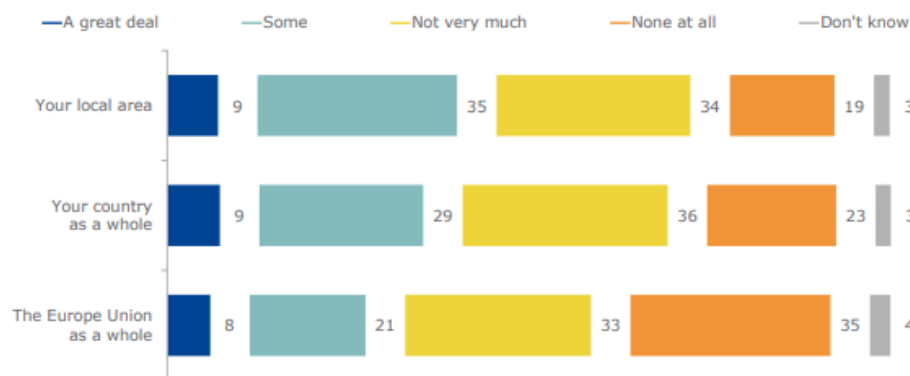
**Tackling financial and political corruption is the top issue in Cyprus (53%) and Malta (53%).** It is also among the top three issues in four other countries: Croatia (48%), Bulgaria (46%), Romania (42%) and Slovenia (39%).

**Improving access to education and training is the top issue in just one Member State, Romania,** where just under half of respondents (49%) mention it.

Finally, though a lower order issue at the EU-level, **dealing with the challenges of immigration is mentioned by more than two in five (42%) respondents in Malta.**

**A majority of respondents also feel they don't have much, or any, say over important decisions, laws and policies affecting them. This feeling increases the more distant the sphere of governance under consideration:** 53% feel they don't have much, or any, say over decisions, laws and policies affecting their local area, rising to 70% for matters affecting the EU as a whole.

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

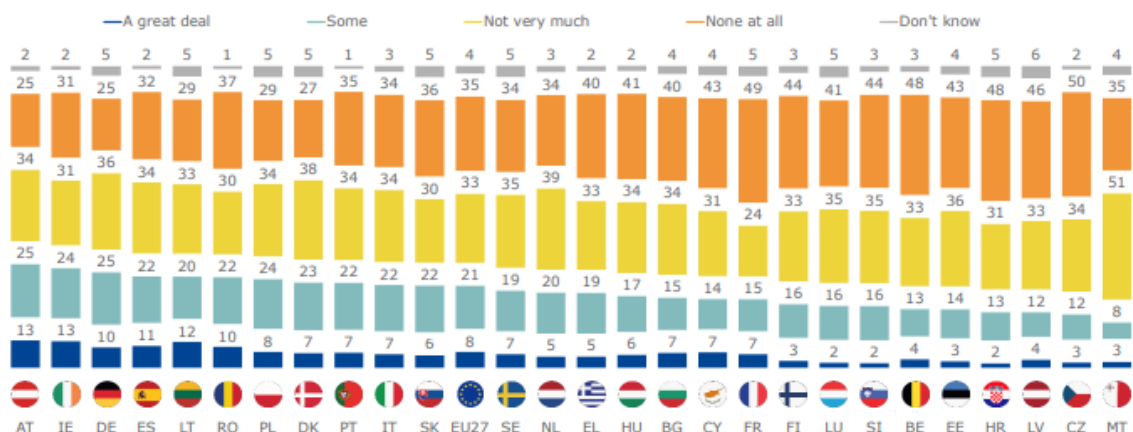


Base: all respondents (n=18 156)

For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer European Parliament Youth Survey \(September 2021\)](#)

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

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



For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer European Parliament Youth Survey \(September 2021\)](#)