DG COMM’s Public Opinion Monitoring Unit has assembled a range of recent surveys and polls from across the EU giving insight into how citizens see Russia’s war against Ukraine as well as its ripple effects. These polls were published from the 17 until the 28 of September 2022. Key findings are based on two multi-countries surveys as well as on surveys conducted in Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia and Poland. Polls from Ukraine and national news from Hungary are also presented.

Military conflict is still a significant concern for many countries, but its importance is decreasing: Poland and Germany have been the two most concerned countries about this issue since pollsters started investigating it in April this year. However, even in these countries, figures are down compared to last month. In Greece, a poll found that the war is now the third most important concern (9%), with the majority of people being more worried about high prices and the cost of living (56%) as well as unemployment (12%).

Inflation is now the top global concern: According to Ipsos’ “What worries the world” study comprising 29 EU and non-EU countries, 40% globally say that inflation is the biggest issue facing their country. 8 out of 10 Austrians say that they have noticed price increases in food and drugstores in the last six months. As a result, 83% of the population see their current lifestyle endangered by rising prices, see source. In Finland, pollsters found that more than half of respondents are bracing for rising interest and inflation rates with 36% of Finns thinking that those growing costs will make it difficult to cope with other housing necessities. According to a recent survey in Romania, approximately 64% of the population says that they have been affected by inflation, and 38% believe that their financial situation has deteriorated in the last year, double compared to 2019.

Europeans are especially worried about gas supply and energy prices: Every second gas customer in Austria (55%) is concerned about gas supply in the winter months and three quarters of Austrians expect a significant increase in heating costs, according to this poll. In the German state of Bavaria, 65% indicated that they fear for their energy security, see source. A recent survey conducted in Ireland found that an overwhelming majority of people (86%) are concerned that the cost-of-living crisis is harming the EU economy.

Feelings of anxiety and anger are increasing: In Bulgaria, people report experiencing increased anxiety regarding personal material well-being, with 61% believing that in the next year the situation in Bulgaria will worsen, see poll. According to another survey, the situation is similar in
Germany. 41% of respondents said that the term "anger" applies to their current emotional state, compared to 15% in May 2020.

**Nuclear energy and weapons are back in the public debate:** In France, 63% of people are afraid that Valdimir Putin will use nuclear weapons, while 75% of those questioned say they are in favour of nuclear power for civilian purposes, see [source](#). Meanwhile 63% of Germans indicate that they were very concerned about the risk of possible radioactive exposure from nuclear power plants after an accident, according to a recent [survey](#). In Poland, pollsters found that almost half of the population is afraid that Russia will use nuclear weapons.

**Support for Ukraine is still substantial but more mixed than in the past months:** In Poland, respondents' commitment to support Ukrainian families has fallen from 61% in March 2022 to 40% in September 2022, see [source](#). Meanwhile, 74% of Germans support the right to and the obligation for adult refugees to attend state-financed German courses, according to a recent [survey](#). Another study found that a large majority (65%) of the Irish are in favour of Ukraine joining the EU. Views on Ukraine are a bit more ambivalent in Italy with 51% in favour and 49% against supplying military support to Ukraine, see [source](#).

**Public Opinion on Russia is still significantly worse compared with previous years:** In Latvia, 20% of respondents said that they had a positive view of Russia compared to 48% in 2021, see [source](#). Even among European right-wing populists, favourable views of Russia and Putin have decreased sharply compared to 2020. A recent [study](#) found that positive ratings dropped by 15 points or more among supporters of most right-wing populist parties in Europe. However, condemnation of Russia is not unanimous. In an online [survey](#), 46% of Hungarian internet users expressed moderate support for Russia, while a further 31% said that they are strongly pro-Russian.

DG Communication's Public Opinion Monitoring Unit informs about relevant public opinion insights and analysis focussing on multi-country surveys as well as on survey conducted in individual Member States. We welcome all comments and input to our work. If you want to know more about what the Public Opinion Monitoring Unit can do for you in this time of crisis, please contact: Philipp M. Schulmeister, Head of Public Opinion Monitoring Unit philipp.schulmeister@ep.europa.eu or dgcomm-pom@europarl.europa.eu
What worries the world: inflation is the top global concern
IPSOS | 22 September 2022 | Source
Fieldwork: 26 August – 9 September 2022
NOTE: The study focuses on the following EU countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Poland as well as the following non-EU countries: Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Great Britain, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Thailand, and Turkey and the US.

Four in ten (40%) globally say inflation is one of the biggest issues affecting their country, double the level of worry at the beginning of the year. It is the top global worry for the sixth month in a row. Fear about inflation is followed by poverty & social inequality (31%), financial or political corruption (26%), unemployment (26%), and crime & violence (26%). Climate change remains the top seventh global concern with 18% of respondents indicating it as a worry (+1pp).

On average globally, the public’s perception of the economic situation in their country remains unchanged from last month, with 33% describing it as “good” and 67% describing it as bad. The largest month-on-month increases in the “good” economy score among European countries is Hungary (+7pp). Meanwhile, the Netherlands has seen the largest decrease from last month, down 7pp. They are followed by Great Britain (-6pp) and Spain (-5pp). Although Germany remains in the top half of the table with 45% describing its current economy as good, this is its lowest score recorded since June 2010.
Military conflict between nations is the 14th biggest concern globally, with one in 12 choosing it as one of the biggest concerns affecting their country. This is the same score as last month. Poland and Germany have been the two most worried countries about this issue since it was added in April this year. Poland remains the most concerned country in September, but its figure is down 6pp compared to August's score and is down 11pp on April. In Germany, September's level of concern is down 2pp to 25%. This is much lower than in May when over four in ten (41%) chose military conflict as worry and it was the country's top concern.
Among European right-wing populists, favourable views of Russia and Putin decrease

Europeans who support right-wing populist parties have historically been more likely than other Europeans to express a positive view of Russia and its president, Vladimir Putin. While that is generally still the case today, favourable opinions of Russia and Putin have declined sharply among Europe’s populists following Russia’s military invasion of Ukraine. Overall, positive ratings of Russia dropped by 15 points or more among supporters of most right-wing populist parties in Europe between 2020 and 2022. The decline in favourable views of Russia and Putin has been especially pronounced among populists in Italy. Favorable opinions of Russia have declined by 49 percentage points among supporters of Lega and Forza Italia since 2020 – the biggest decrease of any measured in Pew Research’ analysis.

In France, a majority of National Rally supporters (55%) held a favourable view of Russia in 2020, but just about a fifth (21%) do so now – a drop of 34 points. In Hungary and Germany, supporters of Fidesz and Alternative for Germany (AfD) also have become less positive toward Russia, with favourability dropping 15 points in both countries.

The negative shift in European populist views of Russia extends to ratings of the Russian president. The trend is again particularly pronounced in Italy, where supporters of right-wing populist parties Lega and Forza Italia saw the largest recorded loss of confidence in Putin (-52 and -41 points, respectively). In Sweden, where the right-wing Sweden Democrats just became a controlling party in the government, 9% of Sweden Democrats supporters offer a positive rating of the Russian leader in 2022. This represents a 21-point decrease in confidence from 2021. Double-digit drops in confidence occurred among supporters of 13 of the 14 right-wing parties tracked in the survey.
While favourable views of Russia and Putin have decreased sharply among supporters of right-wing populist parties in Europe, these parties’ supporters continue to be more likely than other Europeans to see Russia and Putin in a positive light. In Greece, those with a favourable opinion of the right-wing populist party Greek Solution are 34 percentage points more likely than those with an unfavourable view of the party to have a positive view of Russia (53% vs. 19%).

Right-wing populist supporters are, in many cases, again more likely than those who do not support these parties to have confidence in Putin. Here, too, supporters of the Greek Solution party stand out: 55% say they have confidence in Putin, compared with 18% of those who do not support Greek Solution. Double-digit differences are also present in Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For three right-wing populist parties included in the survey – Lega in Italy, Vox in Spain and Law and Justice (PiS) in Poland – supporters do not differ meaningfully from non-supporters in their current views of Russia and Putin. On balance, Poland stands out from the rest of Europe for its overwhelmingly critical opinions of Russia and its leader.
Every second gas customer in Austria (55%) is worried about gas supply in the winter months. **Three quarters of Austrians expect a significant increase in heating costs.** Along with the issue of security of supply, the population has also become increasingly aware of heating costs in recent months: despite the energy cost voucher and climate bonus, **about three quarters of the population fear that there will be a significant increase in heating costs** in the coming winter. Especially those who are already concerned about the reliable supply of heat fear that there will be very large price increases for heating in the coming heating season (94%).

**Financial difficulties ahead**

Only 20% of Austrians assess the current economic situation in the country as "very good" or "good". When asked about their own financial situation, respondents are somewhat more positive: 29% would describe it as "good" or "very good", but just as many would describe it as "bad" or "very bad". In view of the tense economic situation and the uncertainty regarding the further development of the Ukraine conflict and the energy supply, the expectations for the next 6 months are also pessimistic for a majority: **56% expect a weaker economic situation in the spring**, and around **38% also fear a deterioration of their personal financial situation over the winter.** It is interesting to note that there is a discrepancy between the expressed personal difficulties and the country as a whole, possibly driven by negative reports on the state of the economy in the media.

Another major **reason for this pessimism is the inflation trend.** According to the latest estimate by Statistics Austria, prices have recently risen more sharply than at any time in the last 50 years. The current results of our study confirm that this development is also perceived in everyday life: In all major areas of consumption, the respondents almost exclusively report increased prices. **8 out of 10 respondents have noticed price increases** in food and drugstores in the last six months, but the increases were perceived as particularly high in fuel prices (72%), electricity prices (64%) and
heating costs (58%). As a result, **83% of the population see their current lifestyle endangered by rising prices.**

Almost two-thirds of Austrians attribute the price increases of the last months to higher energy prices, the war in Ukraine (58%) and the continuing effects of the Corona pandemic (40%). Some also attribute the situation to retailers and producers trying to increase profits (30%), while **25% see the interest rate policy of the European Central Bank at fault.**

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**Anxiety and fear increase**

Mediana | 24 September 2022 | [Source](#)
Fieldwork: 16-22 September 2022

In Bulgaria, people experience increased anxiety regarding personal material well-being, with **61% believing that in the next year the situation in Bulgaria will worsen.** Nearly 40% think that their families will have to save on heating and food in the coming months. **12% of those asked are afraid of the possibility of falling into extreme poverty.** At the same time, fears of war in the immediate future have grown, with the number of people who believe there is a high risk of war in the near future increasing by 9% in just three weeks.
Nearly half of homeowners trying to save energy amid rising costs
Kantar TNS | 22 September 2022 | Source
Fieldwork: End of August 2022

According to a survey by financial services giant Nordea, 48% of Finns living in owner-occupied homes said they had already started regulating their energy consumption due to rising costs. More than a third of respondents said they were concerned that rising interest rates will make it difficult to deal with other housing costs.

More than half of respondents said they were bracing for rising interest and inflation rates. 36% of Finns think that those growing costs will make it difficult to cope with other housing expenses. However, a majority (59%) said they did not think a rise in interest rates will affect their own housing expenditures, while around 70% said they had already prepared for interest rate hikes with, for example, interest rate caps or savings.

75% of French people say they are in favour of nuclear power
IFOP | 17 September 2022 | Source (internal translation)
Fieldwork: 8 –9 September 2022

75% of those questioned say they are in favour of nuclear power. This view is the majority regardless of age group or political party. Divisions remain but are narrowing: 84% of those over 65 defend this energy, compared to only 69% among those under 35; 88% support it on the right of the political spectrum against 66% on the left. The war in Ukraine and its ripple effects have put the debate on France’s energy independence back on the table but also its repercussions on the cost of electricity, and therefore on purchasing power.

63% of French people are afraid that Valdimir Putin will use nuclear weapons
CSA Institute | 22 September 2022 | Source (internal translation)
Fieldwork: 21-22 September 2022

After new threats made by Vladimir Putin, 63% of French people are afraid that the Russian president will use nuclear weapons in the war in Ukraine, according to a survey by the CSA Institute for CNEWS. Women seem more worried (70%) than men (56%) and the under 35s are generally as worried (62%) as the over 50s (68%).
Majority in Favour of integrating Ukrainians through education
Ifo Center | 22 September 2022 | Source (internal translation)
Fieldwork: 25 May – 9 June

A clear majority of Germans believe that Ukrainian refugees should be integrated immediately through educational measures. To this end, **74% of citizens support the right to and the obligation for adult refugees to attend state-financed German courses**, while 66% are in favour of granting work permits to refugee teachers. For refugee children, a clear majority is in favour of rapid integration into existing school classes: 65% are in favour of this for primary schools, 61% for secondary schools. **66% are in favour of more state-funded school staff to look after Ukrainian schoolchildren.** When it comes to compulsory kindergarten for refugee children, however, German opinion is split: 47% are in favour, 37% against. The data can be compared with a representative survey from 2016, when many Syrian refugees came to Germany. There are clear differences in the assessment of the educational level of the arriving refugees. Currently, half of the respondents rate the level of education as high, whereas in 2016 it was less than a quarter. **A slight majority of 52% currently believe that the refugees help to reduce the shortage of skilled workers in Germany; in 2016 it was only one third.**

Fear about energy security in Bavaria
GMS | 21 September 2022 | Source (internal translation)
Fieldwork: 14-20 September

Two thirds (65%) of Bavarians fear for their energy security. In contrast, 30% of respondents believe that the federal government will succeed in maintaining security of supply through the increased use of other energies and the replacement of natural gas.

9% of Germans believe conspiracy theories about the war in Ukraine
Kantar | 22 September 2022 | Source (internal translation)
Fieldwork: April - May 2022

Just under one in ten employed people in Germany (9%) agree with conspiracy narratives about Russia’s invasion of Ukraine like “the war against Ukraine is artificially dramatized the same way the pandemic was” or “the war against Ukraine serves as a pretext to distract from the pandemic” **17% support statements rejecting refugees from Ukraine**, with overlap between the two groups being considerable. Meanwhile **74% of Germans reject conspiracy thinking about the war** and 12% expressed ambivalence agreeing just to some but not all statements referring to conspiracy myths. 44% of respondents disagreed with negative statements about Ukrainian refugees, while 30% expressed ambivalence. A significant proportion of those who now share conspiracy thinking about the Ukraine war were ready at the beginning of the pandemic to believe conspiratorial interpretations about the virus. This underlines how interchangeable and adaptable the content of the alleged conspiracy theories is.
Germans worried about radioactive contamination
GIM | 22 September 2022 | Source (internal translation)
Fieldwork: 6 April – 5 May 2022

In a recent survey commissioned by the BfS (Federal Office for Radiation Protection), **63% of respondents said they were very concerned about the risk of possible radioactive exposure from nuclear power plants** after an accident. According to BfS President Inge Paulini, the office received many questions in the first weeks of the Ukraine war about what protective measures would have to be taken in Germany in the event of an incident in Ukraine. The study found that only two out of ten of those questioned knew how they should behave in the event of a possible accident at a nuclear power plant.

Feelings of insecurity and anger are growing in Germany
Civey | 24 September 2022 | Source (internal translation)
Fieldwork: 16-23 September 2022

According to a recent survey commissioned by SPIEGEL, **Germans' moods are increasingly characterised by anger, hopelessness and a feelings of powerlessness**, while positive emotions are in decline. 41% answered in the affirmative to the question of whether the term "anger" applies to their current emotional state. By way of comparison: in May 2020, this figure was still at 15%, in May of this year it was below 30%.

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**Quelle:** Civey-Umfrage für den SPIEGEL; Befragungszeitraum: je sieben Tage, jüngster Befragungszeitraum vom 16. bis 23. September 2022; Stichprobengröße: 2446 bis 2545 Befragte in Deutschland; die statistische Ungenaugigkeit der Umfrage liegt bei 2.6 bis zu 3.6 Prozentpunkten.
Similarly, 42% said "insecurity" applied to their emotional state, 33% cited "loss of control/powerlessness" and 26% "hopelessness/fear". Positive terms in contrast were mentioned less frequently. Only 23% mentioned "confidence", 17% felt "gratitude", 7% listed "joy", and "security" was experienced by just 5%. These values are all lower than they were a year ago.

**The war in Ukraine is concern number three in Greece**
MRB | 22 September 2022 | [Source](#) (internal translation)
Fieldwork: 19 – 21 September 2022

Greens’ main concern are the high prices/cost of living (56% said this issue is the biggest problem they face), while unemployment coming second (12%). The war in Ukraine (9%), Greek-Turkish affairs (8%) and crime (5%) follow with smaller percentages, while only 3% assess wiretapping as the main issue that concerns them.
Hungarians consider energy sanctions dangerous for Europe
Nezopont | 21 September 2022 | Source
Fieldwork: Mid-September 2022

An article published in MTI (a state-owned Hungarian newspaper) cites results from a recent survey by the Nezopont Institute, which finds that **66% of Hungarians believe sanctions generally hurt Europe more than Russia** and that they are also against the energy market sanctions. 22% disagreed with this statement. Some 62% indicate that it would be a mistake to extend the sanctions to gas imports, 58% disagree with the oil embargo, while 27% support it. Between 12 and 15% say they had no opinion on the issue of sanctions.

Almost half of Hungarian internet users may be moderately pro-Russian
Kantar International | 23 September 2022 | Source
Fieldwork: 28 June – 7 July 2022

In an online survey commissioned by Prague-based Free Press Eastern Europe, **46% of Hungarian internet expressed moderate support for Russia**, while a further third (31%) are strongly pro-Russian. The survey presented seven pro-Russian or pro-Ukrainian narratives to the respondents who were then – based on their answers – categorised as pro-Ukrainian, moderately pro-Russian, strongly pro-Russian or completely pro-Russian. However, respondents who answered ‘don’t know’ to more than 3 out of 7 questions were not included in the grouping. **A very high proportion (between 20% and 31%) of respondents were unable or unwilling to express an opinion on some questions**, so the conclusion may be somewhat skewed.

Those who support the Ukrainian position are more likely to have a higher education and live in bigger cities, while the proportion of men in the fully pro-Russian group is above average, and the proportion of those living in villages is higher while the proportion of those living in bigger urban centres is lower. **The adoption of the pro-Russian narrative is accompanied by a decrease in the proportion of those who (also) use English language news sources** and an increase in the proportion of people who have access to Russian-language sources.
The opinions of the pro-Russian and the pro-Ukrainian respondents also differ widely on the specific consequences of the war. Those who accept the pro-Russian narrative are not in favour of severing economic ties with Russia and providing military and financial aid to Ukraine, and are considerably less supportive of Hungary's active involvement in Ukraine's post-war reconstruction.

Ireland and the EU
SWG | 21 September 2022 | Source
Fieldwork: 04-10 August 2022

An overwhelming majority of people in Ireland (86%) are concerned that the cost-of-living crisis is harming the EU economy. This concern is common to all age groups as well as to women and men at more or less same level (4 pp. difference).

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine nears its seventh month, 65% of Irish people are in favour of Ukraine joining the EU, with a higher support from the youth (19-24 years) and older people (65+ years). The support is also higher among men (68%) compared to women (63%).
62% of respondents are agreeing that the EU should continue to allow more countries to join as member states. Support to this option is higher between young people (18-24 years) and man (69%) rather than women (55%) with 14 percentage points difference.

Mixed feelings about the war in Ukraine
SWG | 21 September 2022 | Source
Fieldwork: 14-16 September 2022

The opinion of the Italians has not changed much compared to past months: **59% want the conflict to stop and would like negotiations**, so that the two countries can agree on the territory’s distribution. **17% are convinced that the war should go on at least until Ukrainians have regained their lost territories.** 5% are in favour of the war continuing until Putin has conquered the whole Donbass.
Regarding military support to Ukraine, respondents are divided with 51% in favour and 49% against. 10% of Italians who favour the Ukrainian president would like to give him even more support, while 33% think that sending more weapons does not help but is a hindrance for peace.

There are also many doubts about sanctions on Russia: 57% are convinced that sanctions weaken Russia very little. 35% do not want to revoke them because "it would be unfair". 41% said they should not be removed because doing so would do little to lower the prices of gas and raw materials.
**LATVIA**

Survey: Latvian public sees Russia in more negative light than in 2021  
SKDS | 20 September 2022 | [Source](#)  
Fieldwork: July 2022

**Just 20% of Latvians said that they have a positive view of Russia.** Another 15% of respondents did not indicate their views. By comparison, Russia was seen in a positive light by 48% and negatively by 37%, while 14% were ambivalent in 2021.

Latvian’s attitude towards the European Union has become more negative over the last year. Nonetheless, it is still significantly more positive than their view of the United States and Russia - **66% of those surveyed this year viewed the EU positively, compared to 71% a year ago** while negative attitudes are 23% compared to 18% a year ago.

**POLAND**

Almost half of Poles are afraid that Russia will use nuclear weapons  
IBRIS | 26 September | [Source](#) (internal translation)  
Fieldwork: Unknown

Almost 50% of Poles are afraid that Russia will use nuclear weapons during the war with Ukraine. That fear is not shared by 29% of respondents and the remaining 24% do not have an opinion on the issue.
Active support for Ukrainian refugees is decreasing  
IPSOS | 23 September | Source (internal translation) 
Fieldwork: 6-8 September

**40% of respondents said that they are personally helping Ukrainian refugees** and 32% indicated that someone in the family continues to support refugees. 41% have a close friend or acquaintance who supports Ukrainians. Numbers are significantly lower than in March 2022.

Inflation is attributed to the government, the NBP and Russia  
IPSOS | 22 September | Source (internal translation) 
Fieldwork: 6-8 September

Despite thinking that Putin’s energy blackmail plays an important role in driving inflation, **Poles see the government and the NBP as the main culprits**. Only PiS voters believe Putin is the person most responsible for inflation. Below is a graphic showing the different answers Poles gave in response to the question “What, in your opinion, is the main source of high inflation in Poland?”.

Answer options:
- Russia’s policy, including the war in Ukraine
- Policy of M. Morawiecki’s government and of A. Glapinski’s National Bank of Poland
- Policy of previous governments of D. Tusk and E. Kopacz
- Policy of the European Union
- Don’t know
In a survey carried out for OKO.press, **79% of the respondents said that they believe that Poland will face a serious economic crisis in the near future.** More than half of the respondents are sure of this. There are few optimists: only 14% do not agree with the opinion about the impending crisis, and just 4% strongly disagree. Almost no one was undecided.

The age profile provides interesting differences. **Most people who expect a crisis are in the younger age groups.** Most pessimists are among 20-year-olds (93%) but the differences between 20-, 30- and 40-year-olds are statistically insignificant. Older age groups have a slightly different view. Pessimists still dominate, but they are less certain of the downturn. 36% of people aged 60+ are convinced that a serious crisis is impending, while another 26% chose the "rather yes" option. **31% of voters in their 60s do not expect a serious crisis.**
UNHCR’s intentions survey which covers 43 countries across Europe and beyond found that the majority of Ukrainian refugees’ hopes to return to their country of origin one day. However, given the overall uncertainty about the near-term future, 43% have not yet made their mind about returning in the next three months and only 13% of refugee respondents across all countries report plans to do so over the next three months. 79% of those not planning to return or who are undecided about their return in the next three months are planning to stay in their current host country, with only 4% planning to move to another country.

The main impediment to return reported by refugees is the safety and security situation in their places of origin, along with concerns about lack of access to basic services and adequate living conditions. 88% of those refugees who report no intention to return or who are undecided on whether or not to return in the next three months indicate safety and security concerns in places of origin as the main impediment, and 31% are also concerned about the lack of work or livelihoods opportunities. 49% of respondents planning to return within the next three months report reasons related to their desire to go back to their home country and reunite with family members, and around 32% want to go back to their usual cultural environment. About 11% want their children to be enrolled in the Ukrainian education system back home, while 15% report the need to access employment or livelihood opportunities and 8% report the fact that their savings had been depleted.
Hungary wants to poll citizens on support for EU's sanctions on Russia
Euronews | 23 September 2022 | Source

Prime Minister Viktor Orban announced that Hungary’s government will ask its people about sanctions imposed on Russia in response to the war in Ukraine. The poll, which the government calls a “national consultation”, is an informal survey available to every adult in Hungary which can be returned by mail or filled out online.

Such surveys, issued several times by the governments of Prime Minister Viktor Orban since he came to power in 2010, have been criticised by pollsters and opposition parties for containing biased and leading questions, and for having no binding legal relevance.