

PLENARY INSIGHTS

Public opinion at a glance

February 2023



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

- **One year of Russia's invasion and war of aggression against Ukraine:** Citizens remain steadfast in their support of Ukraine. Three in four approve of the EU's support to Ukraine as well as the specific measures including sanctions against Russia, according to the [EP's latest Eurobarometer survey](#). Hopes for cessation of hostilities in the near future are however low, according to [public opinion data on the war in Ukraine collected by POMU](#).

- **RePowerEU chapters in recovery and resilience plans:** Across the EU, about half of respondents (51%) report being aware of a Recovery Plan for their country to support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. "Health", "energy, environmental issues and climate change", and "employment and better working condition" are the three areas where EU citizens are expecting the most support under NextGenerationEU funds. Three-quarters of respondents evaluate the REPowerEU plan as a good thing (75%). The highest proportions sharing this view are observed in Romania (87%) and Portugal (91%), while the lowest ones are found in Slovakia (55%) and Czechia (58%). ([Eurobarometer survey on the EU recovery plan NextGenerationEU](#))

- **Adequate minimum income insuring active inclusion:** A large majority of EU citizens (89%) agree each EU Member State should have a minimum wage for workers, according to the [Standard Eurobarometer 97](#). Eight in ten believe that income differences are too great and that their national government should take measures to reduce income inequality in their country. Further 73% think that EU institutions should support national governments in this respect. ([Eurobarometer survey on Fairness, Inequality and Inter-Generational Mobility](#)) Citizens think the fight against poverty and social exclusion (37%) should be the main priority for the European Parliament to address, the [EP's latest Eurobarometer survey](#) finds.

- **Istanbul Convention: preventing and combating violence against women:** About three-quarters (77%) of women across the EU think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country. A clear majority (58%) of women think that a key measure to reduce violence against women is making it easier to report violence against women, including to the police. ([Eurobarometer survey on women in times of COVID-19](#))

- **Electoral rights of mobile Union citizens:** 47 % of citizens agree that their voice counts in the EU while 49% think it does not. 46% place high importance on voting in the European elections. Just over half of EU citizens (54%) say they are interested in the next European elections. ([EP's latest Eurobarometer survey](#))

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:

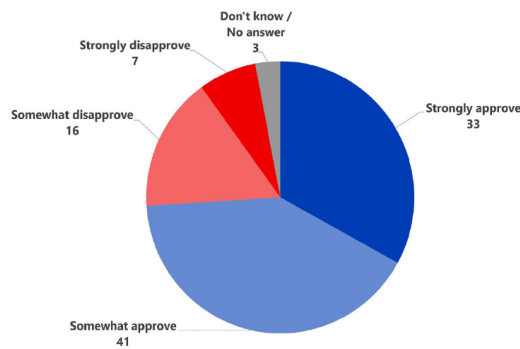
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One year of Russia's invasion and war of aggression against Ukraine

On Wednesday 15 February, MEPs will look back on the year since the start of Russia's assault on Ukraine and set out what the EU must do in support of Kyiv. A resolution will be put to the vote on Thursday.

Three in four EU citizens (74%) say they approve of the EU's support for Ukraine following Russia's invasion, and this includes 33% who 'strongly approve' and 41% that 'somewhat approve', according to the [EP's latest Eurobarometer survey](#). **In all countries more people approve than disapprove of the EU's support for Ukraine.** The proportion that approve of the EU's support is highest in Sweden (97%), Finland (95%), the Netherlands (93%), Denmark and Portugal (both 92%). Levels of disapproval are highest in south-eastern areas of Europe, such as in Greece (48%), Slovakia (46%), Bulgaria (44%) and Cyprus (42%).

QA13 Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the European Union's support for Ukraine following Russia's invasion of Ukraine? (% - EU27)

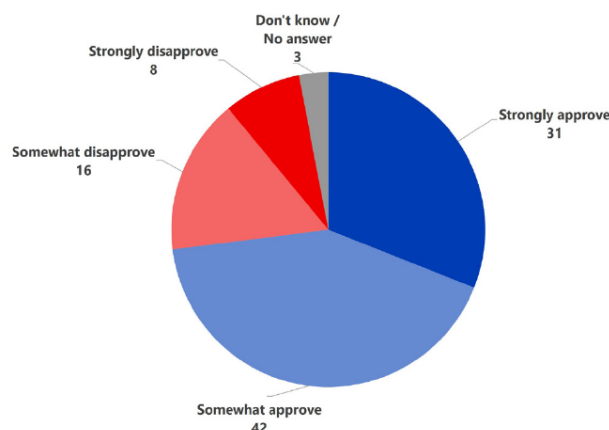


(Oct/Nov 2022)

For more detailed information: [EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#) (January 2023)

Around three in four EU citizens (73%) say they approve of the EU's action to support Ukraine, such as sanctions against Russian government or financial, military or humanitarian support.

QA14 Let's now think in more detail about the different actions taken by the European Union to support Ukraine since the start of the war, such as sanctions against the Russian government or financial, military or humanitarian support: do you approve or disapprove of these actions? (% - EU27)



(Oct/Nov 2022)

For more detailed information: [EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#) (January 2023)

There is variation in the levels of approval for the EU's actions to support Ukraine. In 24 countries, a majority of respondents approve of the EU's actions, with more than nine in ten approving in Sweden, Finland (both 96%), the Netherlands (93%), Denmark (92%) and Ireland (91%). **However, the majority disapprove of the EU's actions in Greece (51%) and Slovakia (49%), while in Cyprus there are equal proportions that approve and disapprove (both 48%).** Levels of disapproval are also relatively high in Bulgaria (45%), Hungary (41%) and Austria (40%). Once again, the lowest levels of approval for the EU's actions to support Ukraine are concentrated in south eastern areas of Europe.

In addition, DG COMM's Public Opinion Monitoring Unit is producing a rolling comprehensive overview on surveys and polls from across the EU and beyond on citizens' opinions towards Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the unprecedented array of sanctions taken by the EU and its international allies. The findings presented are based on either multi-countries surveys and/or surveys conducted in individual Member States. Recent findings suggest that hopes for cessation of hostilities in the close future are rather low. Full details [here](#).

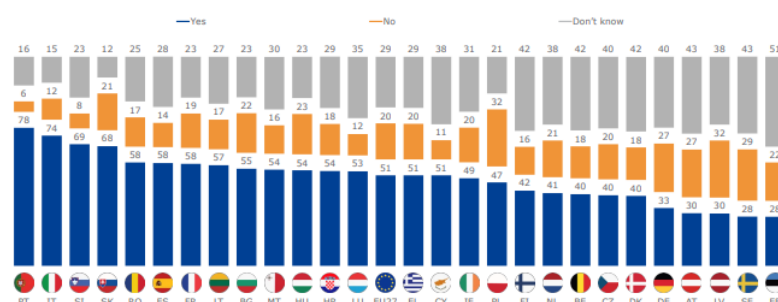
RePowerEU chapters in recovery and resilience plans

MEPs will discuss on Monday 13 February a deal reached with the Council, under which [REPowerEU energy measures will have to be included in revised national recovery plans](#). The aim is to support independence from Russian fossil fuels, accelerate the green transition, and tackle energy poverty. (vote on Tuesday)

Across the EU, **about half of respondents (51%) report being aware of a Recovery Plan for their country to support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic** and be better prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead. The other half of respondents is split among those who report not being aware of a Recovery Plan for their country (20%) and those answering that they 'don't know' if there is such a plan (29%). ([Eurobarometer survey on the EU recovery plan NextGenerationEU](#))

In 15 Member States, a majority of respondents report being aware of a Recovery Plan for their country to support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and be better prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead. **The highest awareness levels are observed in Slovakia (68%), Slovenia (69%), Italy (74%) and Portugal (78%).** In the Member States at the right-hand side of the chart below, on the other hand, not more than one in three respondents are aware of a National Recovery Plan. This applies to Germany (33%), Austria and Latvia (both 30%), Estonia and Sweden (both 28%).

Q1 As far as you are aware, is there a Recovery Plan for [COUNTRY] to support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and be better prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead? (% by country)

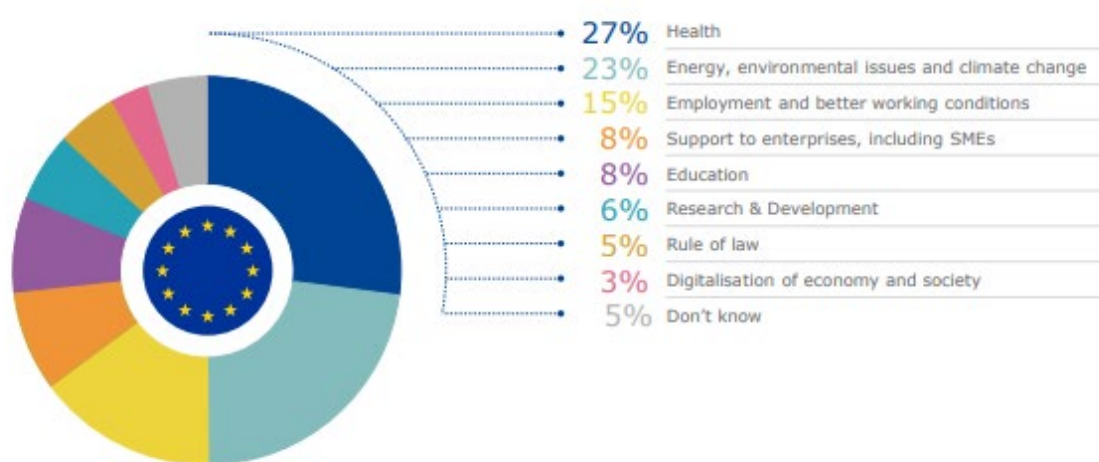


Base: all respondents (n=26 872)

For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on the EU recovery plan NextGenerationEU](#) (January 2023)

Respondents were explained that the EU Recovery Plan 'NextGenerationEU' supports Member States in different areas and were asked which area (out of a list of nine areas) should receive the most EU support. **Nearly three in ten respondents (27%) reply that 'health' should receive the most EU support, closely followed by 'energy, environmental issues and climate change' (selected by 23%). About one in seven respondents (15%) select 'employment and better working conditions' as the area that should receive the most EU support.** The remaining areas are each time selected by less than one in ten respondents: support to enterprises, including SMEs (8%), education (8%), research and development (6%), the rule of law (5%) and digitalisation of economy and society.

Q6a The EU Recovery Plan 'NextGenerationEU' supports Member States in different areas. In your view, which area should receive the most EU support? (% EU27)



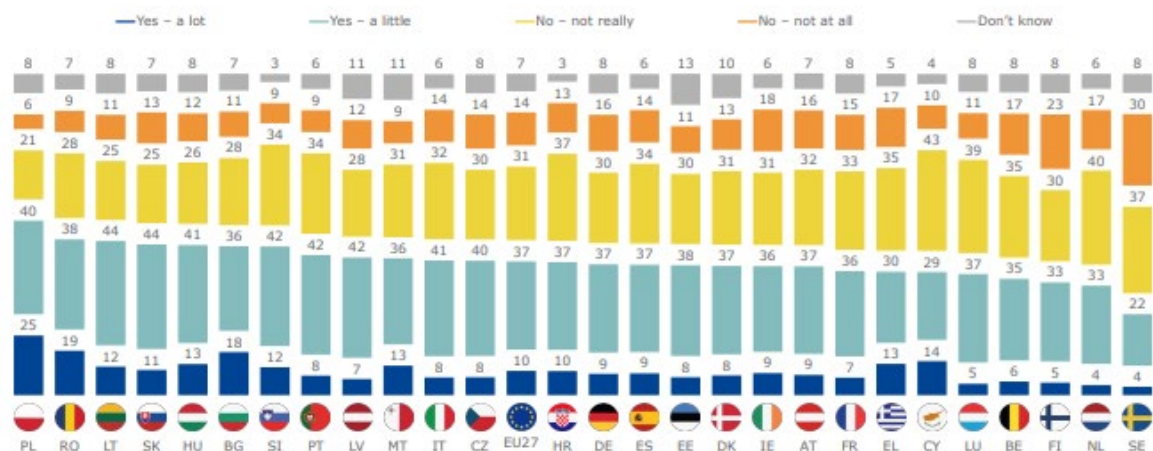
Base: all respondents (n=26 872)

For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on the EU recovery plan NextGenerationEU](#) (January 2023)

Respondents across the EU are divided in their expectations about the impact of NextGenerationEU on the energy crisis. **Close to half of respondents expect NextGenerationEU to contribute to resolving the current energy crisis (10% 'yes – a lot' and 37% 'yes - a little'), while the other half of respondents do not expect this (14% 'no – not at all' and 31% 'no – not really') or 'don't know' what to expect (7%).**

Respondents in Poland are overall the most likely to think that NextGenerationEU will contribute to resolving the current energy crisis: 65% expect this either 'a lot' or 'a little'. Respondents in Sweden, on the contrary, are the least likely to think this (25% 'yes' responses); in this country, 67% of respondents do 'not really' or 'not at all' think that NextGenerationEU will contribute to resolving the current energy crisis.

Q8_5 Do you think that the EU Recovery Plan 'NextGenerationEU' in [COUNTRY]...
Will contribute to resolving the current energy crisis (% by country)

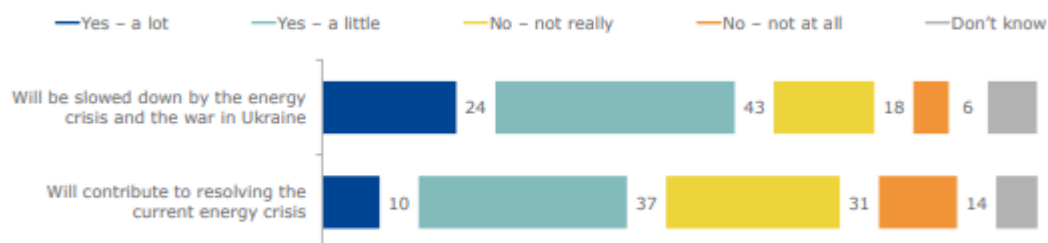


Base: all respondents (n=26 872)

For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on the EU recovery plan NextGenerationEU](#) (January 2023)

Over six in ten respondents think that the energy crisis and the war in Ukraine will slow down the EU Recovery Plan 'NextGenerationEU' (24% 'yes - a lot' and 43% 'yes - a little'), compared to less than a quarter who do not expect this (6% 'no - not at all' and 18% 'no - not really'). Close to one in ten respondents (9%) select the 'don't know' response.

Q8 Do you think that the EU Recovery Plan 'NextGenerationEU' in [COUNTRY]... (% EU27)

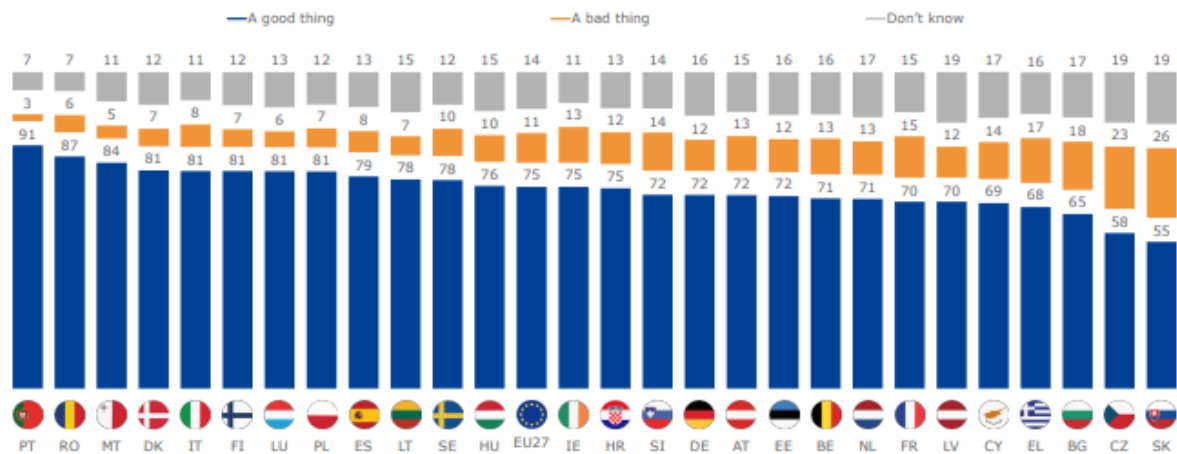


Base: all respondents (n=26 872)

For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on the EU recovery plan NextGenerationEU](#) (January 2023)

The European Commission presented its REPowerEU plan to help Member States achieve more energy independence from Russia in May. **Three-quarters of respondents evaluate the REPowerEU plan as a good thing (75%), compared to about one in ten (11%) who think it is a bad thing.** One in seven respondents (14%) do not have an opinion about the REPowerEU plan. In all Member States, a majority of respondents evaluate the REPowerEU plan to help Member States achieve more energy independence from Russia as a good thing. The highest proportions sharing this view are observed in Romania (87%) and Portugal (91%), while the lowest ones are found in Slovakia (55%) and Czechia (58%)

Q9 The European Commission presented in May its REPowerEU plan to help Member States achieve more energy independence from Russia. Do you consider this to be a good or a bad thing? (% by country)



Base: all respondents (n=26 872)

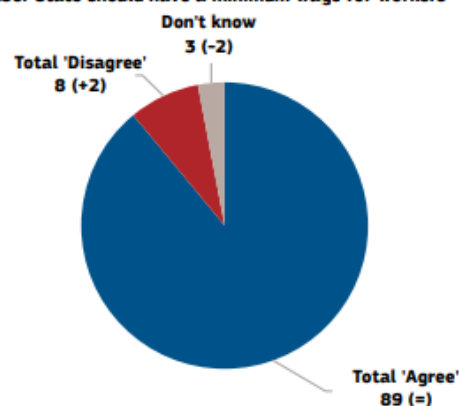
For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on the EU recovery plan NextGenerationEU](#) (January 2023)

Adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion

On Wednesday 15 February MEPs will debate an [adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion](#).

A large majority of respondents (89%, stable since winter 2021- 2022) agree each EU Member State should have a minimum wage for workers, with 52% totally agreeing (-5 percentage points) and 37% (+5 pp) tending to agree. 18 Fewer than one in ten disagrees (8%, +2 pp) while 3% (-2 pp) are unable to answer. ([Standard Eurobarometer 97](#))

QB6.4 For each of the following statements, do you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.
Each EU Member State should have a minimum wage for workers
(% - EU27)

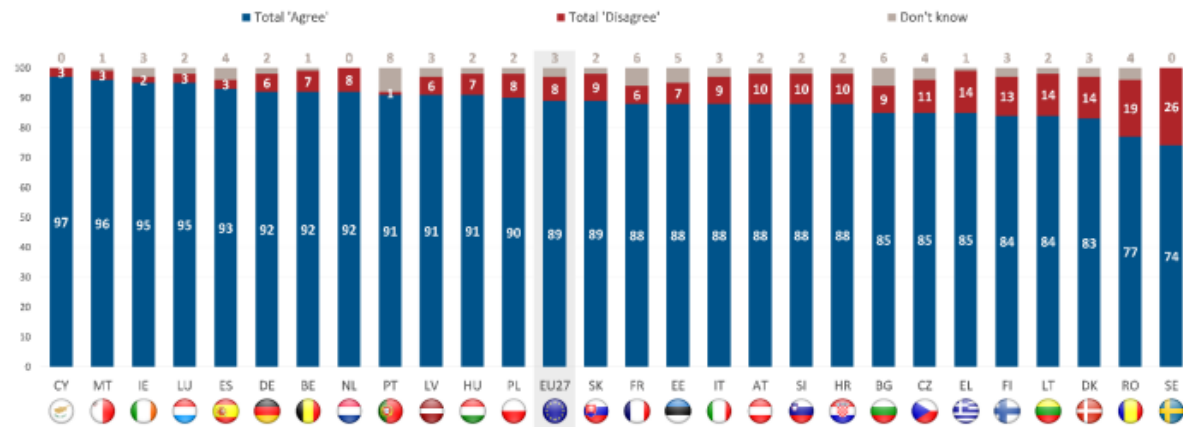


(Jun. / Jul. 2022 - Jan. / Feb. 2022)

For more detailed information: [Standard Eurobarometer 97](#) (September 2022)

In every Member State more than seven in ten agree each EU Member State should have a minimum wage for workers (unchanged since spring 2021), and at least four in ten in every Member State totally agrees with this idea. Agreement is almost universal in Cyprus (97%), Malta (95%), as well as Ireland and Luxembourg (both 95%), and is also widespread in Sweden (74%), Romania (77%) and Denmark (83%)

Q86.4 For each of the following statements, do you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree.
(% - Each EU Member State should have a minimum wage for workers)



For more detailed information: [Standard Eurobarometer 97](#) (September 2022)

The socio-demographic analysis shows consistently high levels of agreement across all demographic groups, with the highest amongst the self-employed (91%) and those with a positive image of the EU (93%), and the lowest levels amongst house persons (84%) and those with a negative image of the EU (82%).

Throughout the EU, a majority of respondents tend to agree with the three statements asked in the [Eurobarometer survey on Fairness, Inequality and Inter-Generational Mobility](#) concerning income differences within their country. The questions aimed to measure respondents' opinions regarding the extent of income differences, whether their national government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels, and whether the EU institutions should support national governments in Member States to reduce such income differences. **About eight in ten respondents (81%) agree or strongly agree that currently, in their country, the differences in people's incomes are too great.** An analysis of the individual levels of agreement shows that in the current survey 39% "strongly agree" with the statement, representing a six percentage point decrease since December 2017. The share of respondents who "agree" with the statement has increased slightly and stands 42% in May/June 2022. The proportion of respondents who "neither agree nor disagree" has increased from 8% in December 2017 to 12% in May/June 2022. Meanwhile, the over proportion who disagree has decreased by one percentage point, from 6% in December 2017 to 5% in May/June 2022.

When it comes to the statement "the (nationality) government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels", 78% of respondents agree, with 37% saying they "strongly agree". Since December 2017, the share who "strongly agree" has dropped by seven percentage points, whilst the proportion who "agree" increased slightly from 38% to 41%. The proportion who "neither agree nor disagree" with this statement has increased by four percentage points to stand at 13% in May/June 2022. In the current survey, a new item has been added, in order to measure **attitudes to EU support for national governments to reduce differences in income levels within a country. Overall, almost three-quarters (73%) are in favour**, with 32% saying that they "strongly agree".

QC4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
(% - EU27)

Nowadays in (OUR COUNTRY) differences in people's incomes are too great



May/Jun. 2022



Dec. 2017

The (NATIONALITY) government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels



May/Jun. 2022



Dec. 2017

The EU institutions should support the (NATIONALITY) government to reduce differences in income



May/Jun. 2022

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

Base 2022: All respondents (N= 26,395)

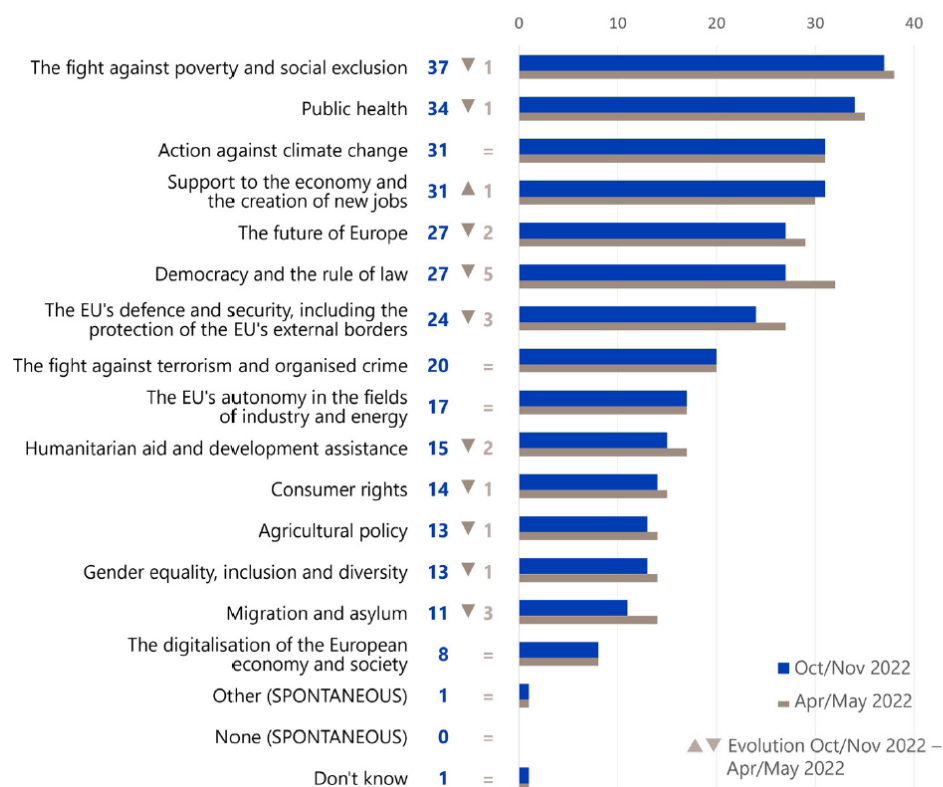
Base 2017: All respondents (N= 26,693)

For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on Fairness, Inequality and Inter-Generational Mobility](#) (February 2023)

Looking at policy priorities for the EP, citizens think the **fight against poverty and social exclusion** (37%, -1 percentage point since April-May 2022) **should be the main priority for the European Parliament** to address, followed by **public health** (34%, -1 pp), **action against climate change** (31%, no change) and **support to the economy and the creation of new jobs** (31%, +1 pp). ([EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#)) At least one in five think a priority should be democracy and the rule of law (27%, -5 pp), the future of Europe (27%, -2 pp), the EU's defence and security, including the protection of EU's external borders (24%, -3 pp) and the fight against terrorism and organised crime (20%, no change).

QA6ab

Which of the following topics would you like to see addressed in priority by the European Parliament? Firstly? And then? (Max. 4 answers) (% - EU27)



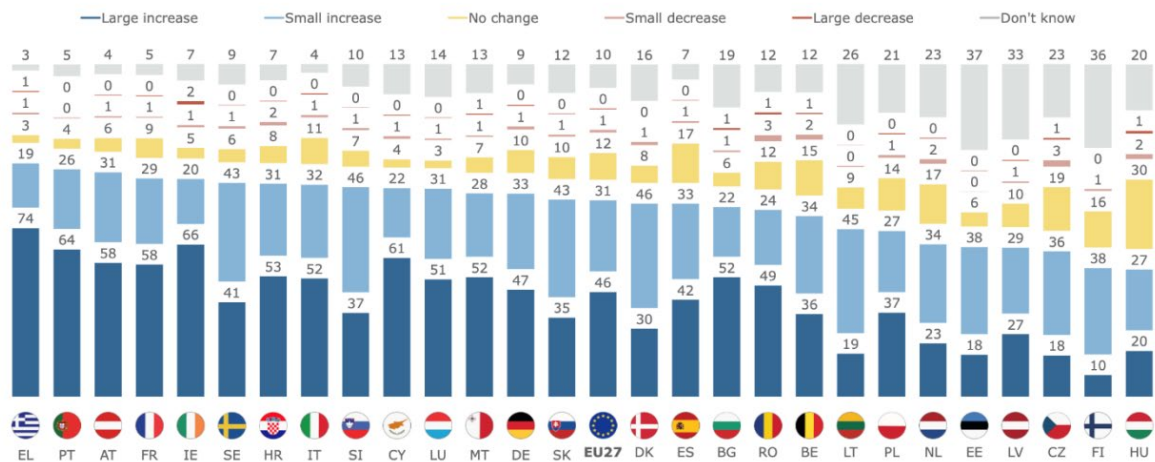
For more detailed information: [EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#) (January 2023)

Istanbul Convention: preventing and combating violence against women

Parliament will debate on Tuesday 14 February a [resolution, calling on the EU to ratify the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women](#). Six years after the EU signed the Convention, it has still not ratified it, due to the refusal of a few Member States. (vote on Wednesday)

About three-quarters (77%) of women across the EU think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country: 46% think there has been a 'large increase' and 31% that there has been a 'small increase' in violence against women. Few of them think that the pandemic has led to a decrease in physical and emotional violence against women: 1% think it led to a 'small decrease' and less than 1% to a 'large decrease'. 12% of women think there has been no change in violence and 10% 'don't know' whether there was a change or not. ([Eurobarometer survey on women in times of COVID-19](#))

Q6 Do you think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase or decrease in physical and emotional violence against women in (COUNTRY)? (% by country)

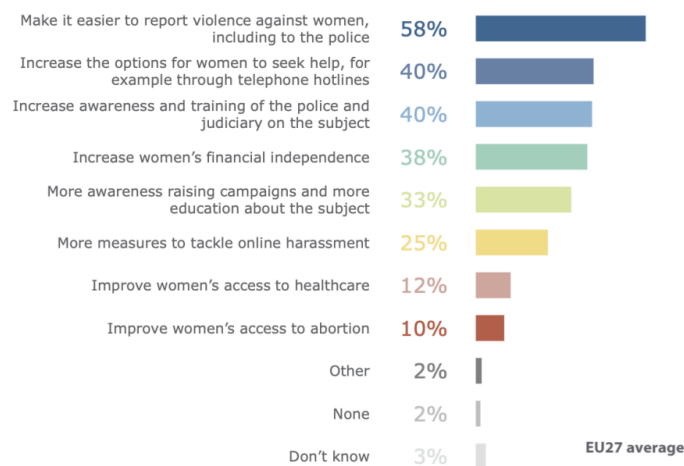


Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on women in times of COVID-19](#) (March 2022)

Women participating in the survey were presented with a list of ten measures that could be taken to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in their country – from making it easier to report violence against women to improving access to abortion. **A clear majority (58%) of women surveyed think that a key measure to reduce violence against women is making it easier to report violence against women, including to the police.** Increasing options for women to seek help, for example through telephone hotlines, and increasing awareness and training of the police and judiciary on the subject are each mentioned by 40% of respondents. A similar proportion (38%) find that increasing women's financial independence is a key measure to address violence against women. One third of respondents (33%) think it is important to have more awareness raising campaigns and more education about the subject. A quarter reply that more measures to tackle online harassment is a key measure to reduce violence against women (25%). Finally, about one in ten respondents (12%) mention improving women's access to healthcare and a similar share (10%) select improving women's access to abortion.

Q8 In your view, what are the key measures that should be taken, if any, to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in (COUNTRY)? (Multiple answers allowed) (% EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

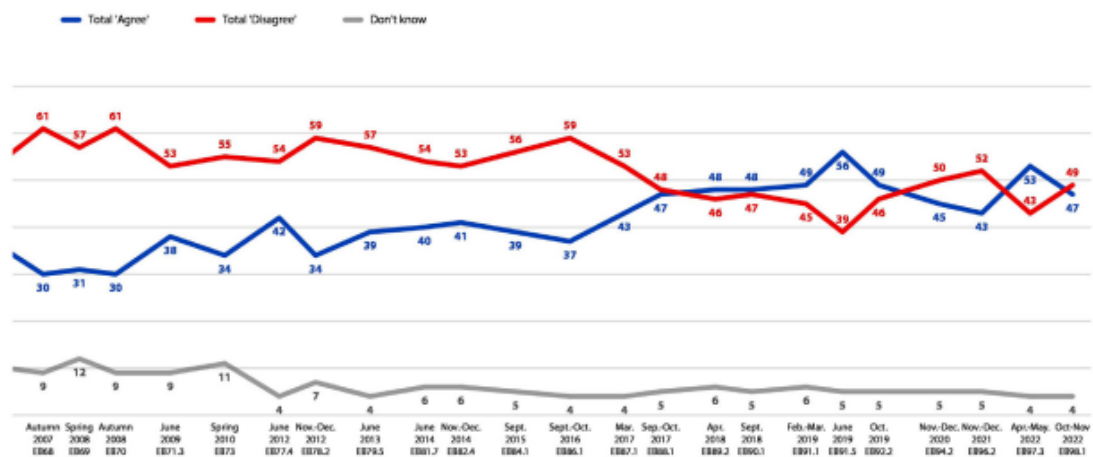
For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on women in times of COVID-19](#) (March 2022)

Electoral rights of mobile EU citizens

On Monday 13 February, MEPs will discuss [electoral rights of mobile Union citizens in both European Parliament](#) as well as in [municipal elections](#).

47 % of citizens agree that their voice counts in the EU. This represents a decrease since April-May 2022 of -6 percentage points with results returning to the levels seen during 2020 and 2021, following a positive shift (+10 pp) between November-December 2021 and April-May 2022. The proportion that disagrees has increased since April-May 2022 and is now at 49% (+6 pp) according to the [EP's latest Eurobarometer survey](#).

D72.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? My voice counts in the EU (% - EU)



For more detailed information: [EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#) (January 2023)

In 12 Member States a majority of respondents agree their voice counts in the EU, with the highest levels seen in Sweden (80%), Denmark (78%), Malta (71%) and the Netherlands (68%). In the remaining 15 countries a majority disagrees, with the highest levels of disagreement seen in Estonia (79%), Cyprus (74%) and Greece (73%). The proportion that agrees that their voice counts in the EU has increased in just three Member States: Sweden (80%, +6 percentage points), the Netherlands (68%, +6 pp) and Malta (71%, +3 pp). Agreement has declined in 16 Member States, with decreases of at least 10 percentage points in Spain (38%, -11 pp), France (41%, -11 pp) and Cyprus (23%, -10 pp). Agreement has remained stable in the other eight countries.

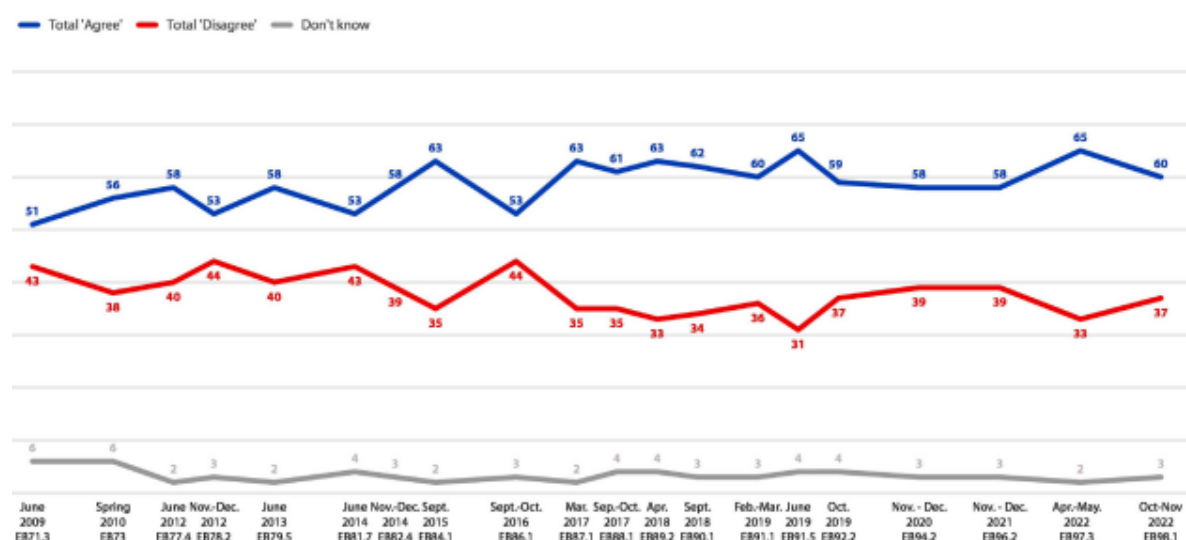
D72.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? My voice counts in the EU (% - Total 'Agree')



For more detailed information: [EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#) (January 2023)

Echoing the decrease seen at EU level, the proportion who agree that their voice counts in their country has fallen by five percentage points to 60%. The proportion who disagrees has increased by four points to 37%.

D72.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? My voice counts in (OUR COUNTRY) (% - EU)

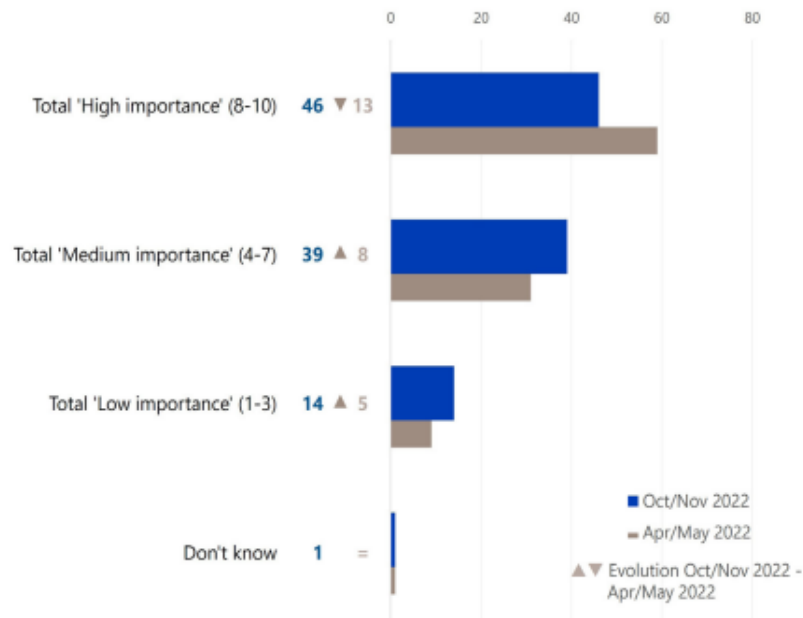


For more detailed information: [EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#) (January 2023)

The importance of voting in the European elections has decreased since April-May 2022, with less than half of citizens (46%) now placing high importance on voting (-13 percentage points). Around four in ten (39%, +8 pp) say voting in these elections is of medium importance, while 14% (+5 pp) say it is of low importance to them. An analysis of the longer-term trends shows that the current figures are in line with results prior to the last European Parliament elections. At an equivalent timeframe (around 18 months before the elections), 42% placed high importance on voting in September-October 2017, rising to 49% in April 2018 (a year before the last elections). This

indicates that the current result (46% with high importance) is consistent with previous results, and that the figure for April-May 2022 (59%) was unusually high.

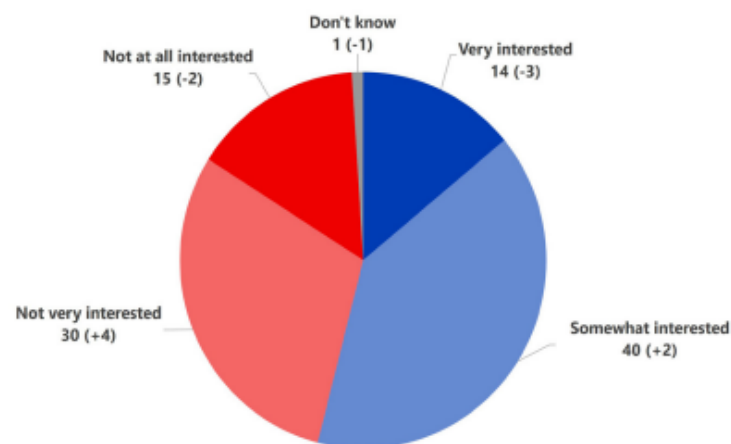
QA22a Please tell how important or not it is for you personally to vote in the European elections? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, when 1 means that voting is something that has no importance at all for you, and 10 means that voting is something you consider essential or a key duty for you as a citizen. The remaining numbers indicate something in between these two positions. (% - EU27)



For more detailed information: [EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#) (January 2023)

Just over half of EU citizens (54%) say they are interested in the next European elections, to be held in May 2024. This includes 14% who say they are 'very interested' and 40% who are 'somewhat interested'. More than four in ten (45%) say they are not very or not at all interested. These findings are very similar to those observed in autumn 2017 (EB88.1), at an equivalent time before the last European elections in 2019.

QA21 The next European elections will be held in May 2024. How interested or not would you say you are in these elections? (% - EU27)



(Oct/Nov 2022 - Sep/Oct 2017)

For more detailed information: [EP Autumn 2022 Eurobarometer survey](#) (January 2023)