



YOUNG EUROPE 2019

**What people aged
between 16 and 26 think**

CONTENTS

- 3 Editorial
- 4 **BECAUSE EUROPE IS ABOUT JOINING IN**
An article by Michael Prellberg
- 7 **STUDY DESIGN**
8,220 interviews in 11 countries
- 8 **RESULTS**
TUI Foundation Youth Study 2019
- 44 **YOUTH 2019: SO MUCH FOR LETHARGY!**
An article by Marcus Spittler, researcher at the Berlin Social Science Center (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung – WZB)
- 49 **METHODOLOGY**
Information about the online panel and random sample
- 50 **LEARNING TOGETHER**
The TUI Foundation's projects
- 51 The TUI Foundation
- 51 Imprint

EDITORIAL

DEAR READER,

A clear majority of young Europeans support their country's membership of the European Union (EU). In fact, more than one third would even support moves for "more" Europe and would like to see the EU member states grow closer together. These are two of the outcomes of Young Europe 2019, the TUI Foundation's latest study of youth opinion. Yet, while this pro-European affirmation is heartening, it does not represent *carte blanche*: instead, it should be seen as an incentive to engage more intensively with the young generation. Approval can grow to become genuine enthusiasm for the concept of Europe.

However, the TUI Foundation's Youth Study also makes clear that this approval is not uncritical. For instance, young people regard the European elections as "second class elections"; only 50 per cent of them consider the European elections to be "important". National parliamentary elections, on the other hand, are considered important by 73 per cent of young people. We can therefore see that 16 to 26-year-olds feel better represented by their national parliaments than by the European Parliament. In addition, just 17 per cent of those surveyed believe that politicians are actually interested in what young people have to say.

These figures demonstrate where Europe has ground to make up in the eyes of the young generation. Important issues for them include engaging in dialogue on equal terms, opportunities to participate beyond elections, and the feeling that their expectations are taken seriously.

The decisive question here is how to offer young people more opportunities to help shape the often abstract construct of Europe. They have experienced Europe and the EU from very different perspectives in recent years. All the more reason, then, to emphasise the importance of unification and embody a truly powerful idea of a shared future. There must be a genuinely pro-European approach once again; passionate discussions are needed about the cornerstones of a strong, modern Europe instead of the directives and piecemeal regulations of citizens' day-to-day lives that have come to dominate many public debates. One starting point could be to try harder to discuss the topics close to the hearts of young people at the European level, namely migration, environmentalism, and economic and financial policy.

By publishing its Youth Study, the TUI Foundation is giving young Europeans a voice. In this European election year, we have implemented further projects in pursuit of the Foundation's goals. We have put young people in contact with Europe and its institutions, afforded them room to reflect on "their" Europe, and promoted engagement with Europe. Every year, the results of the TUI Foundation's Youth Study provide vital impetus to scrutinise our own work, refocus our fields of action, and launch new projects. Europe – both an opportunity and a challenge – requires a shared commitment and further collaboration with parties, foundations, schools, universities, business, politics, sport and civil society. ●



**Thomas
Ellerbeck**

**Chairman of the
Board of Trustees of
the TUI Foundation**

BECAUSE EUROPE IS ABOUT JOINING IN

A great number of young men and women between the ages of 16 and 26 are taking to the streets for their future. Even more are getting involved online, as the “Young Europe 2019” study shows. Topics such as environmental policy, gender equality as well as migration and asylum are what move young people the most.

By Michael Prellberg

Europe: for a lot of people nothing more than background noise. What European politicians get up to in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg is undoubtedly important, but has very little to do with individual reality. Until a topic suddenly encroaches on our own lives. All at once, Europe is astoundingly real, very close by, extremely important and demands an individual position. When the European Union (EU) passes a copyright law against the avowed will of millions of young people, for example, they take to the streets and demonstrate. Suddenly, Europe is very personal.

In its “Young Europe 2019” study, the TUI Foundation wants to turn the spotlight on the topics that young people between the ages of 16 and 26 are concerned about as well as their lives, identity and political opinions. To this end, 8,220 young men and women from eleven European countries were surveyed. The market research institute YouGov carried out the survey on behalf of the TUI

Foundation in January and February 2019 – before hundreds of thousands of predominantly young people took to the streets across Europe to demonstrate for a free Internet or against climate change. And this is precisely what makes the study so meaningful, however strange this may appear at first glance, because the responses were not determined and distorted by highly-charged emotions.

“Free Internet” is a shooting star amongst the important topics now, while only a few weeks prior, digitalisation, cultural and leisure time policy were at the bottom of young Europeans’ personal agendas (p. 14). These were headed by migration and asylum, one of the three most important topics in the EU for one in two of those surveyed. The share in Germany was even 55 per cent, one of the highest scores throughout Europe. 28 per cent of young Europeans regard environmental policy as one of the most important topics, whereby the interest in northern European countries is much stronger than in Southern Europe. An economic

and financial policy that effectively fights unemployment is what young Greeks and Italians want in particular (p. 16). They see this struggle, along with social and healthcare policies, as more of a national task, whereas migration and asylum are matters to be dealt with on a European level.

Involvement online and on the streets

However, this does not mean that these problems can be passed up to “that lot in Brussels” and everyone else can sit back and relax. The TUI Foundation study also surveyed the involvement of young Europeans. And the results show, 38 per cent of them had been active both online and offline within the past twelve months to take a stance on migration and asylum. The figures were even higher for the topics of gender equality (40 per cent) and environmental policy and animal welfare (43 per cent) (p. 22).

Young Europeans’ activism has many facets: 21 per cent of young people supported a party in an election campaign. Almost the same number (22 per cent) took to the streets in demonstrations. This kind of political involvement is particularly relevant in Spain (43 per cent), Greece (37 per cent) and Italy (30 per cent). More than one in four have made a consumer choice based on their political or ethical convictions (p. 18).

42 per cent of those surveyed have signed an online petition, 31 per cent have shared at least one political article on social media. Forms of online participation that call for greater effort are much less important: only 20 per cent of those surveyed said that they had commented on political articles; 18 per cent have posted their own political articles on social media (p. 20). The most important social network remains Facebook, though Instagram is now being used more intensely in Germany and Spain. Most of the other social media – from WhatsApp or Pinterest through to

Tumblr – are only “also rans”, whereas YouTube has a growing number of users and is popular amongst young people between the ages of 16 and 20 in particular (p. 24). Although Twitter is not really relevant in many countries, the channel is used very often by young people in Spain and Great Britain – and even more frequently than Facebook by Germans.

Resistance to Brexit is growing

One reason why the Brits are very active on Twitter could be that it is almost impossible not to discuss politics in Great Britain at the moment. This is likely a consequence of the confusion surrounding Brexit at the time of the study. 55 per cent of young people in Britain said that they had a strong or very strong interest in politics. 60 per cent discussed political topics at least once a week – the highest figure throughout Europe (in Finland this is 27 per cent). The longer Brexit drags out, the stronger resistance is becoming amongst 16 to 26-year-olds. The number of Brexit opponents has risen over the past two years from 58 to 68 per cent, whereas the number of supporters has dropped to 22 per cent (p. 42). 60 per cent of Brits regard their country’s departure from Europe as a threat to their own lives.

And the British Parliament’s constant manoeuvring about leaving is also damaging democracy’s image. Two out of three young people in Britain complain that the political system is not working, 15 per cent are even calling for radical changes. At the same time, 62 per cent of young people in Great Britain regard democracy “as the best form of government”. This conflict can also be observed in other European states: a fundamental “Yes” is thwarted by a national “Yes, but”. This becomes clear if we take Greece as an example, where 73 per cent believe democracy to be the best form of government, but are very critical of their

national government. 56 per cent of young Greeks are not satisfied with the government's work and 53 per cent would welcome radical reforms.

Support for democracy as a type of government is conspicuously low in France (38 per cent), Italy and Poland (both 46 per cent). Last year's figure in France was six percentage points higher, presumably due to the latest political discussions about the reform policies of Macron's government.

The Scandinavians are particularly satisfied with their governments: young people in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden were included in the study in 2019 for the first time. Between 37 per cent (Sweden) and 60 per cent (Norway) are satisfied with the way democracy works in their country. Incidentally, the only other country that gets anywhere near the 40 per cent satisfaction mark is Germany (p. 34).

Hardly any young Europeans caught up in populism

Wherever a government is seen as being out of its depth or incompetent, certain politicians try their luck with populist arguments. "Young Europe 2019" tried to find out how receptive young people are to such arguments (p. 36). One initial résumé from the study: populism is losing its appeal in all countries. A second résumé: even people who are open-minded about populism by no means advocate any other kind of government. Whether populist or non-populist: the approval ratings for democracy as a form of government differ only minimally. However, what does differ is that young people with populist attitudes are twice as likely to endorse radical changes.

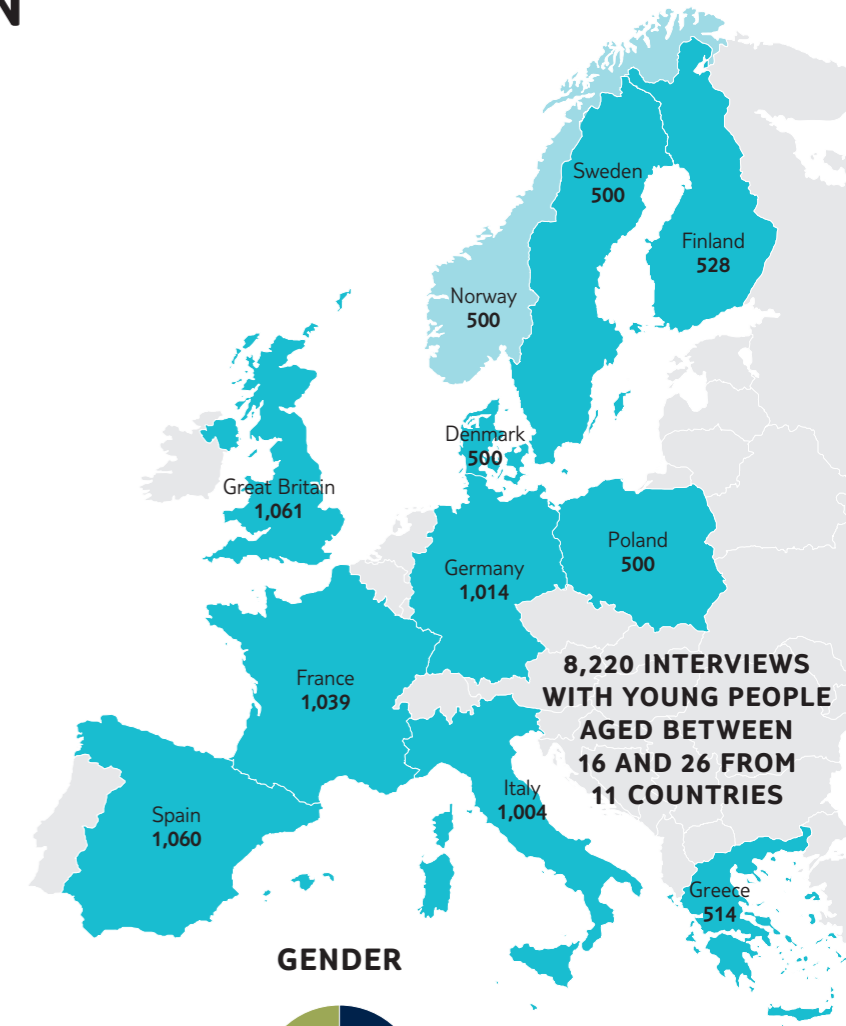
The first calls for change – irrespective of any political orientation – are initially directed at the national parliament. Even if two thirds of young people see themselves as at least "Europeans too" (p. 26), three out of four respondents personally

believe that national parliamentary elections are important, while only one in two of those surveyed felt the same way about elections for the European Parliament (p. 38). This figure actually falls when young people were asked if they believed that parliament acted in their interests. 30 per cent believe that their national parliament is aware of and takes their interests seriously – for the EU Parliament this only holds true for 20 per cent (p. 40).

Which brings us full circle to the controversial EU copyright laws and the path from the demo to a polling booth. Millions of young people could make sure that they are better represented in future by voting in the European Parliament elections. In this way they prove that Europe is not just background noise but offers innumerable occasions to get involved in everyday life. ●

STUDY DESIGN

To gain a better understanding of the lives, attitudes and (sometimes multi-faceted) identities of young people in Europe, the TUI Foundation has carried out the study "Young Europe" in collaboration with YouGov since 2017. The online survey was held in eleven countries for the first time this year: young people from Germany, France, Greece, Great Britain, Italy, Poland and Spain (as in 2017 and 2018) as well as Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden were surveyed. The participants were recruited via online access panels. Between 21 January and 12 February 2019, a total of 8,220 young people aged 16 to 26 took part in the Youth Study. They were selected on the basis of representative quotas in terms of their age, gender and educational background in the respective countries (basis for representative quotas: EUROSTAT). Before the results were analysed, they were also weighted by age, gender and educational background in order to compensate for slight variances. Results recorded across all countries were also weighted so that each country's results were collated with equal weighting. ●



GENDER



AGE



Notes on the following graphics
The total of proportions indicated (in per cent) may deviate from 100 due to rounding of figures. Where the term "Europeans" is used in the following graphics, this relates to the 8,220 respondents to this survey.

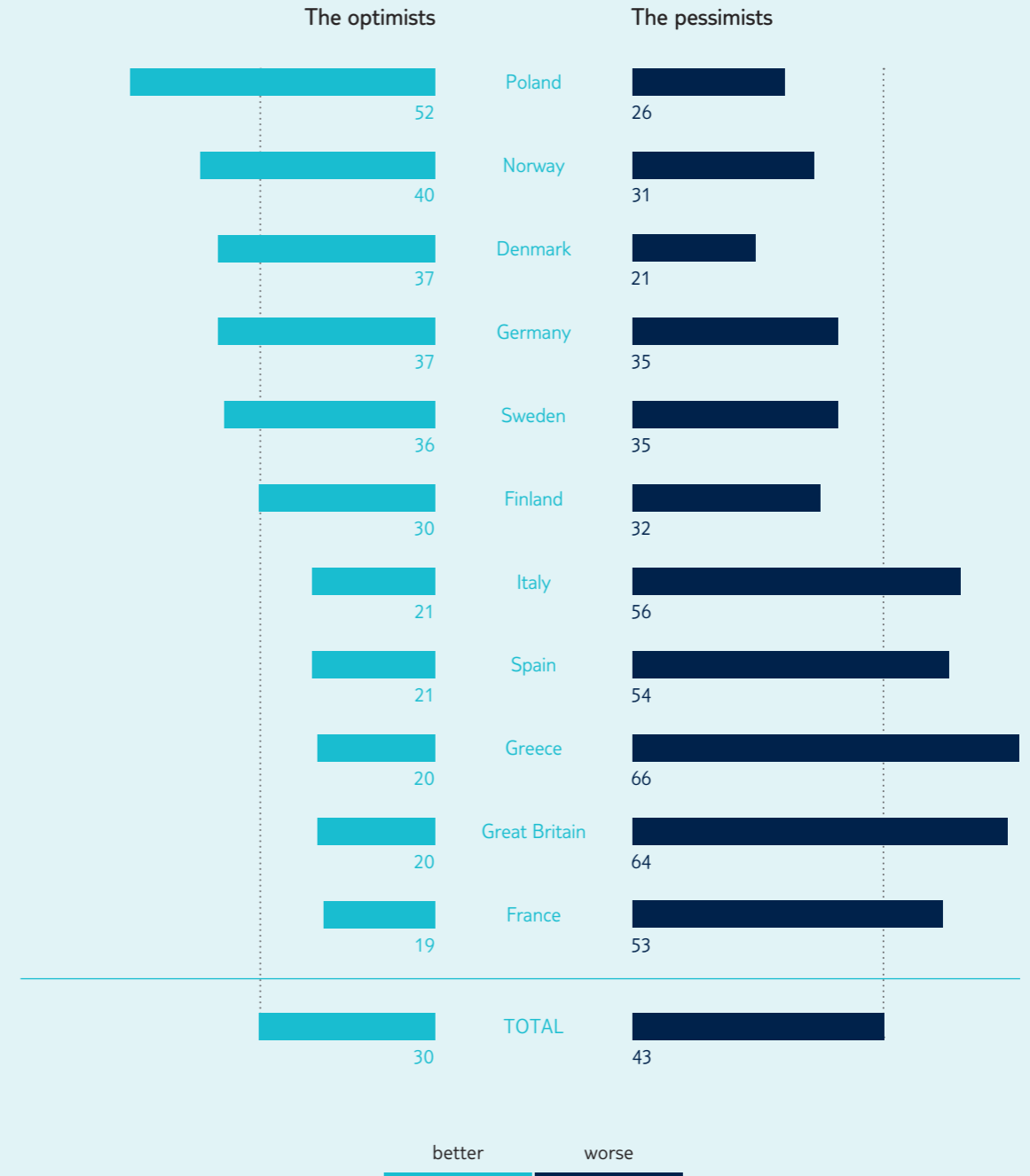
FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

Many young people fear that they will be worse off than their parents.

Young people in Southern Europe believe that their standard of living will worsen. However, in Norway, Denmark, Germany and Sweden they are more confident. Polish young people are very optimistic, whereas the Greeks are quite pessimistic, as are young people in Britain.

All of the figures on pages 8 to 43 are percentages.

When you think about your parents' generation:
Do you think your own generation will be better or worse off in terms of income and quality of life?
(Not shown here are the response categories "It will remain the same" and "I don't know/no response".)



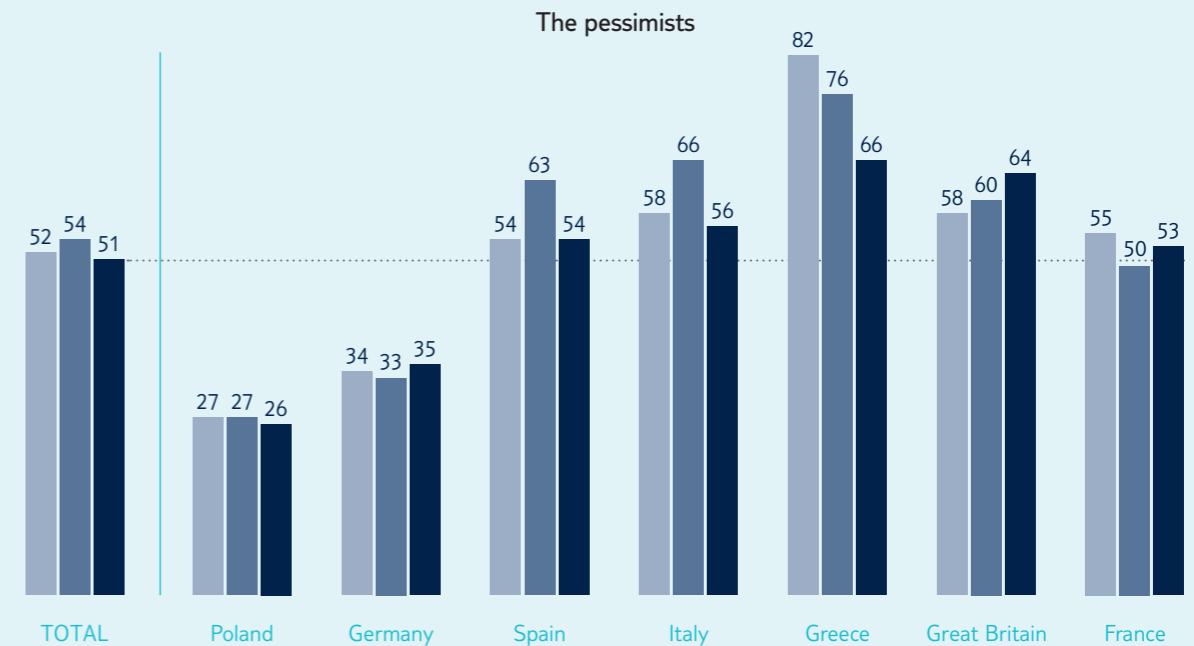
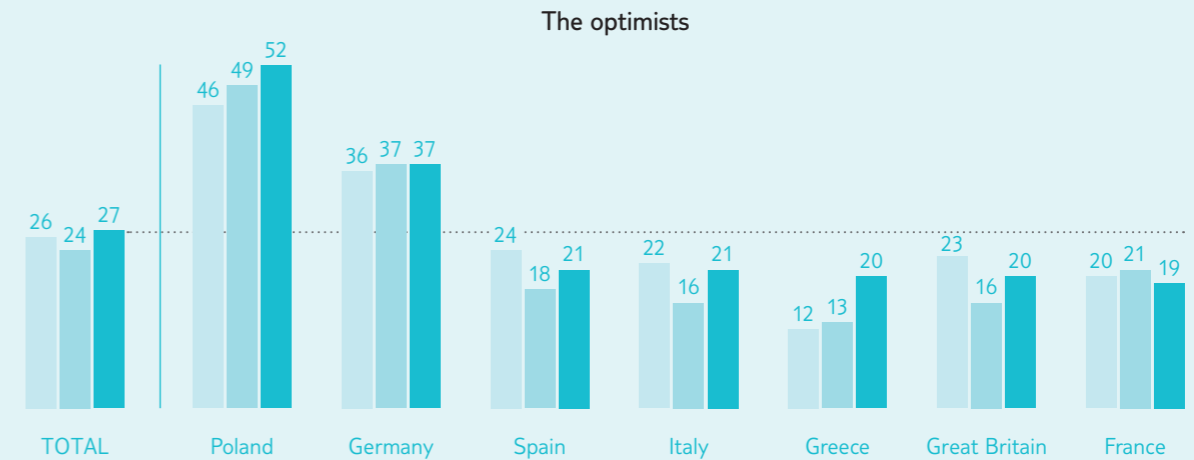
better worse

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS (THE TRENDS)

Are Great Britain and Greece the beginning and end of Europe's "bottoming out"?

Two thirds of young people in Greece still expect to be worse off than their parents. However, this share has been falling since 2017. There is an opposite trend in Great Britain. Young Britons are becoming increasingly sceptical the closer Brexit is getting.

When you think about your parents' generation:
Do you think your own generation will be better or worse off in terms of income and quality of life?
(Not shown here are the response categories "It will remain the same" and "I don't know/no response".)

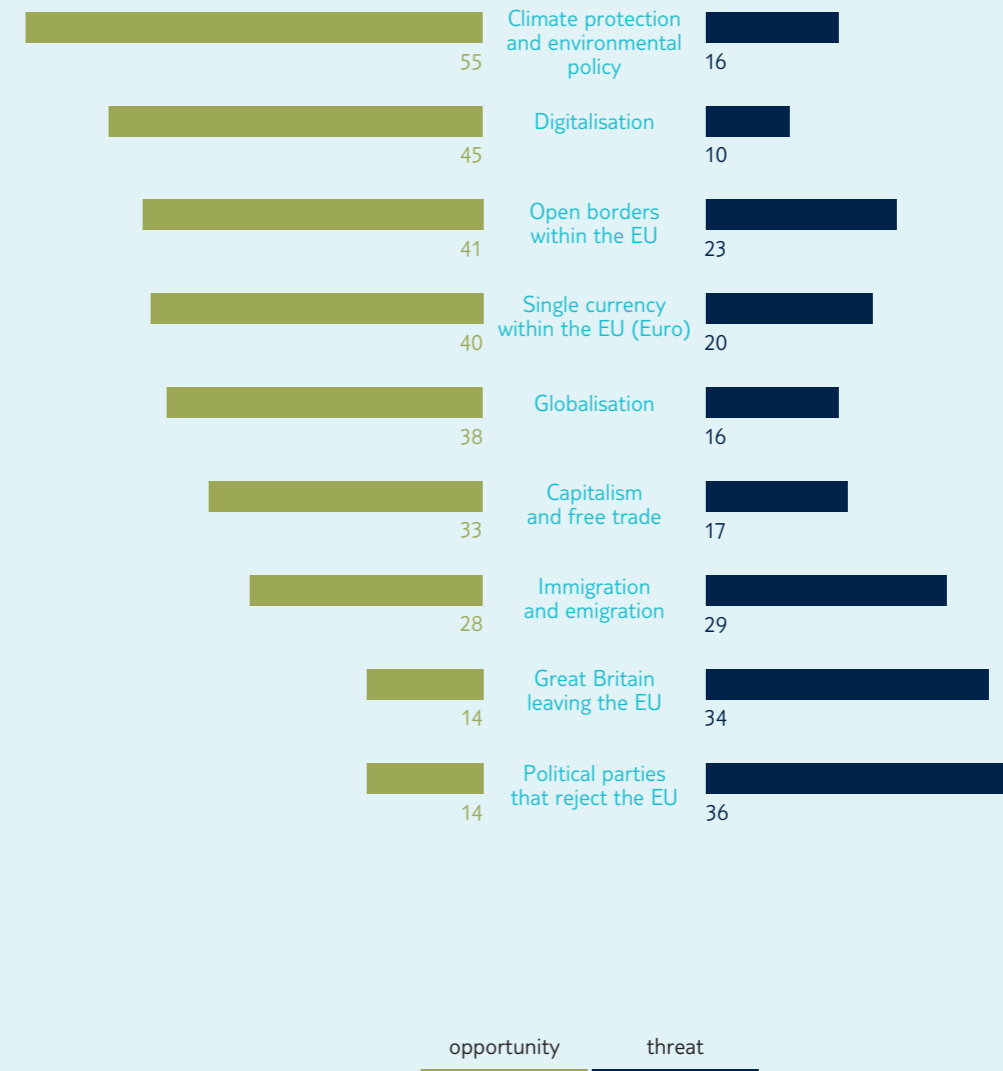


POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?

Climate protection and environmental policy are seen as opportunities by many young people.

Most young Europeans have a positive view of digitalisation and globalisation. But they are divided on the topic of immigration and emigration: one in three young people regard these as either an opportunity or a threat.

Do you view the following phenomenon as a threat to or an opportunity for your own life? (Not shown here are the response categories "Neither" and "I don't know/no response".)



POLITICAL CHALLENGES

Half of all young people rate migration and asylum amongst the three most important problems for the EU.

Young Europeans believe environmental policy and animal welfare to be the second most important topic. Significant differences can be seen here between EU countries. Economic and financial policy is also very relevant for young people, particularly in countries with a history of crises or an uncertain future.

What are the most important current political problems in the EU in your opinion?
Please select the single most important problem first and then the second and third most important problem.
(The three most important problems are shown here.)

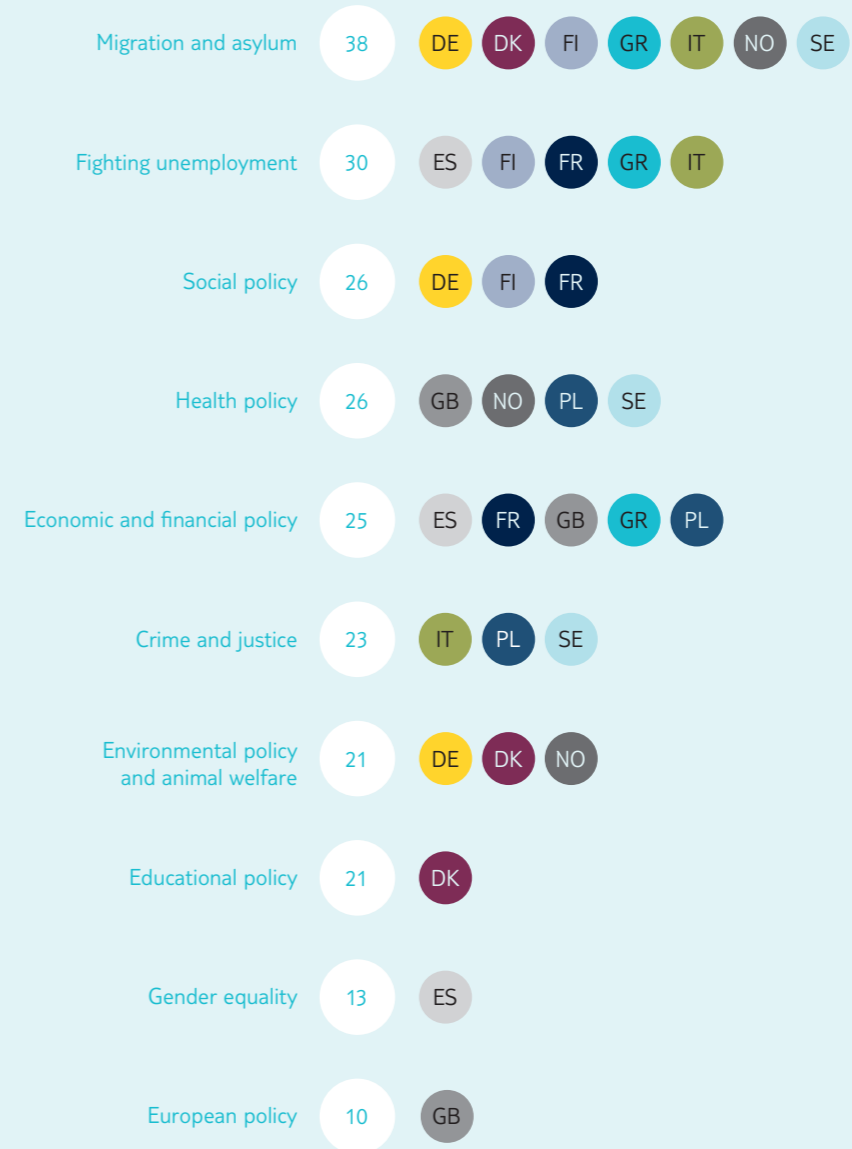


POLITICAL CHALLENGES

Unemployment is the main worry in Southern Europe.

Migration and asylum are still seen as the most pressing problems on a national level by most young Europeans, though there are some very clear differences between countries. They are regarded as very important in Germany and Scandinavian countries.

What are the most important current political problems in your country in your opinion? Please first select the single most important problem and then the second and third most important problem.
(The overall results for all countries are shown as a percentage in the white circles.)



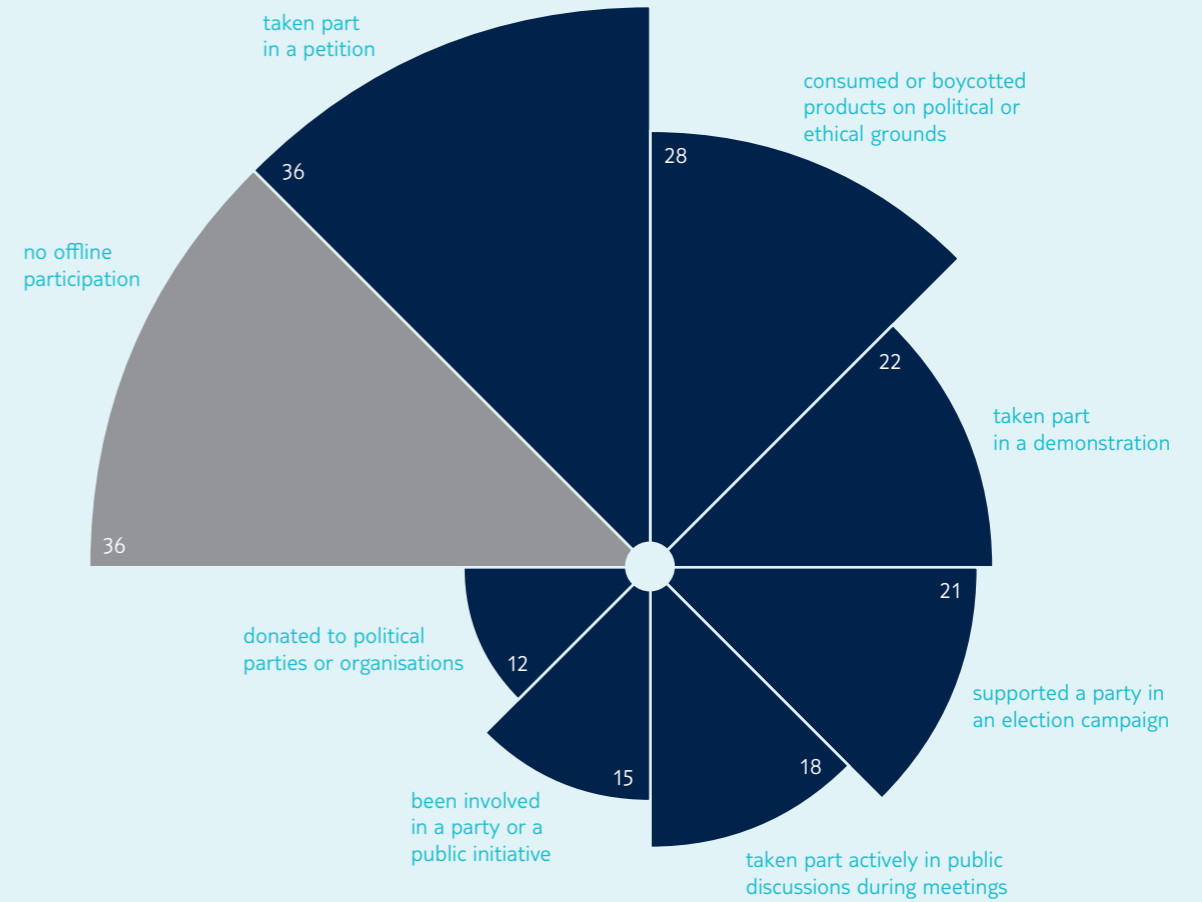
DE – Germany; DK – Denmark; ES – Spain; FI – Finland; FR – France; GB – Great Britain; GR – Greece; IT – Italy; NO – Norway; PL – Poland; SE – Sweden

POLITICAL COMMITMENT

Taking part in a petition is the most common type of political involvement "offline".

Over a third of respondents signed a petition last year; in Great Britain the figure was even two-thirds. Consumer decisions based on political or ethical conviction ranks second on the list of active involvement. One in five has taken part in a demonstration. This kind of involvement is very popular in Spain, Greece and Italy.

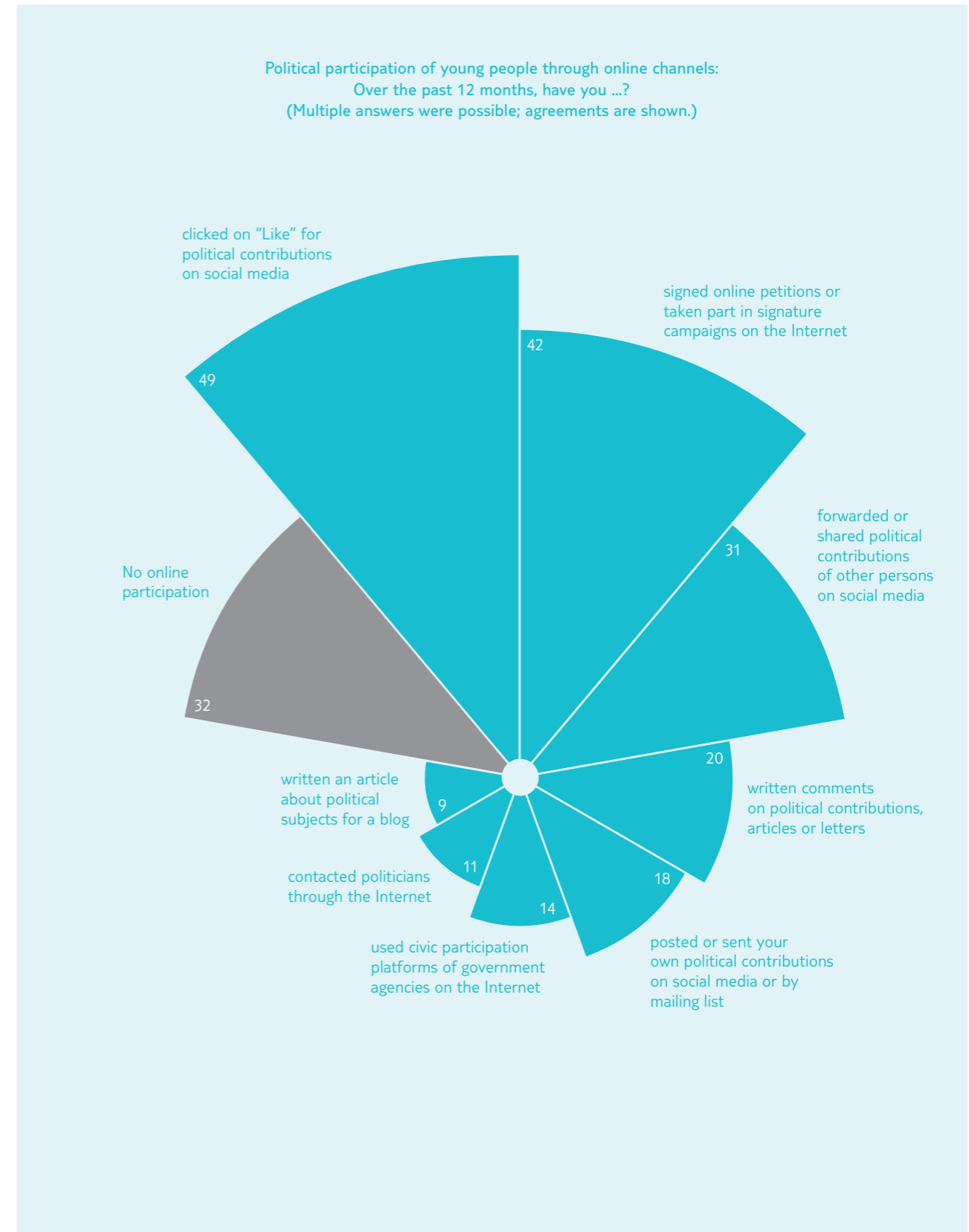
Political participation of young people offline:
Over the past 12 months, have you ...?
(Multiple answers were possible; agreements are shown.)



POLITICAL COMMITMENT

Two thirds of the respondents got involved "online".

One of the most important kinds of online political commitment are "clicks" in social networks, online petitions and sharing political posts. Forms of participation that call for greater involvement – for example contacting a politician directly – play only a minor role.

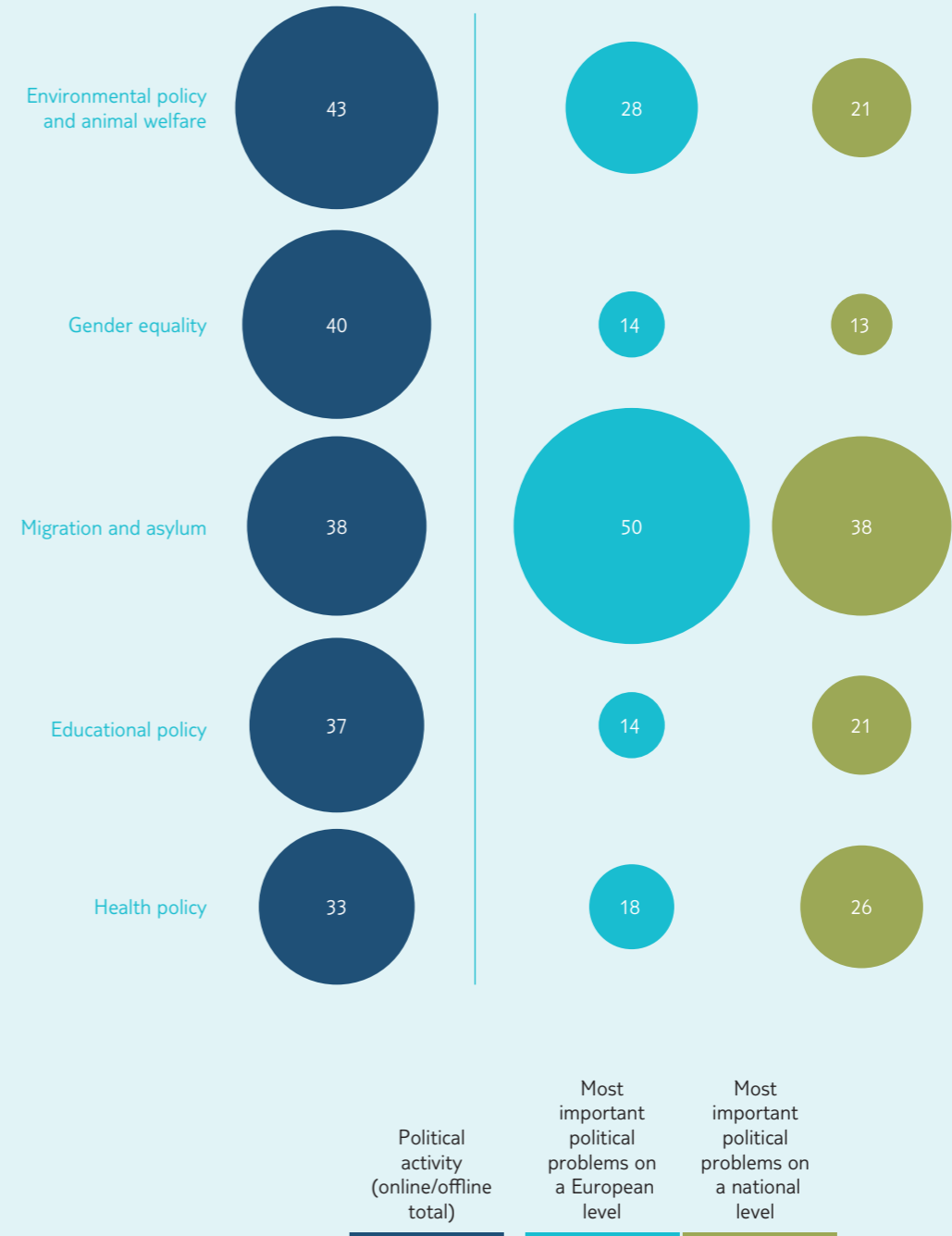


POLITICAL COMMITMENT

It is not always the most important political problems that incite young people to get involved.

When it comes to concrete political action, young people are particularly active on environmental policy and animal welfare as well as gender equality matters – even though these are not amongst the most important political challenges.

Were you politically active in any of the following subject areas over the past 12 months?
(The five fields in which young people were active most frequently are shown in dark blue.)

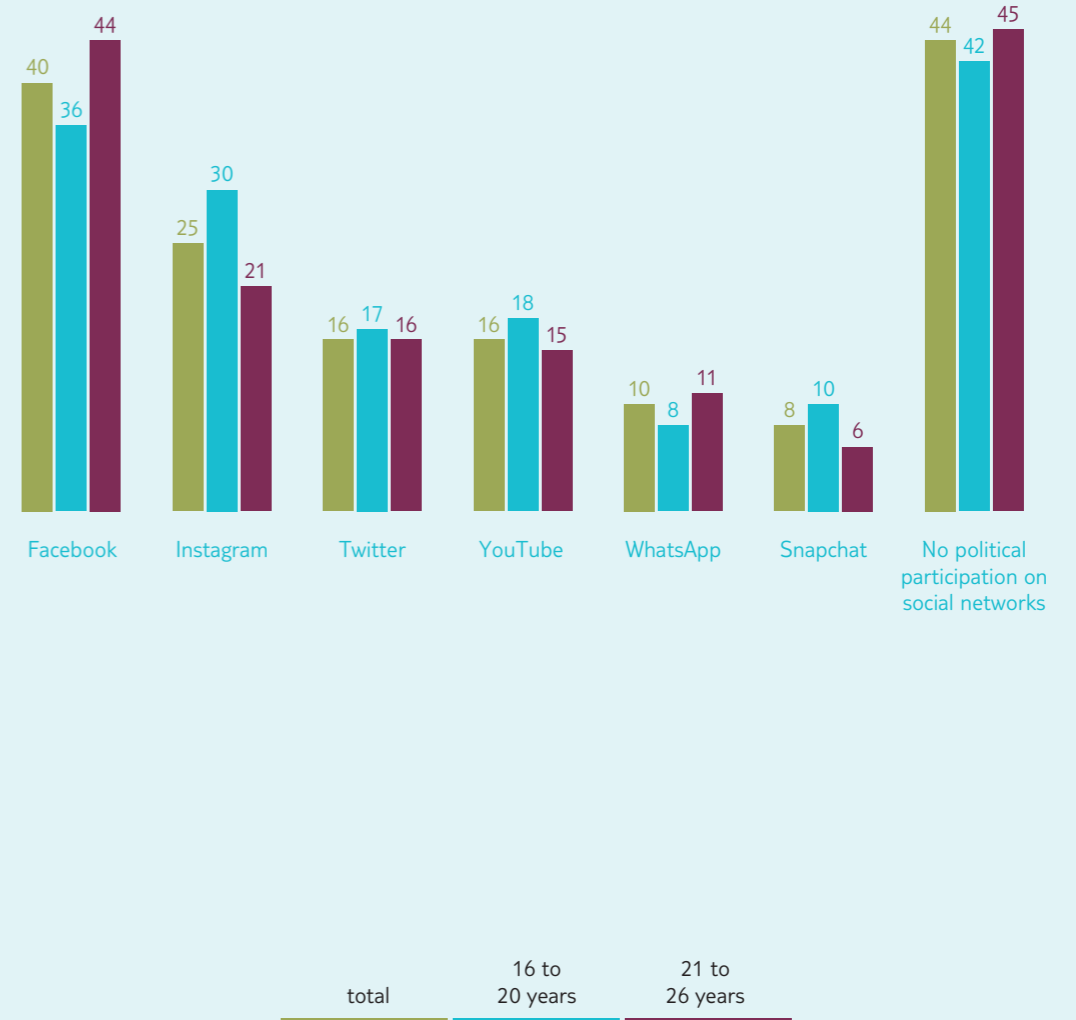


USE OF MEDIA

Facebook is the most important medium for political posts.

More than half of young people in Europe use social networks for political purposes. The most important social medium for the reception and publication of political posts is Facebook. Instagram is becoming increasingly important as a platform amongst younger users.

On what social media have you posted, shared or "Liked" political contributions?
Please select all the social media where you have done this.

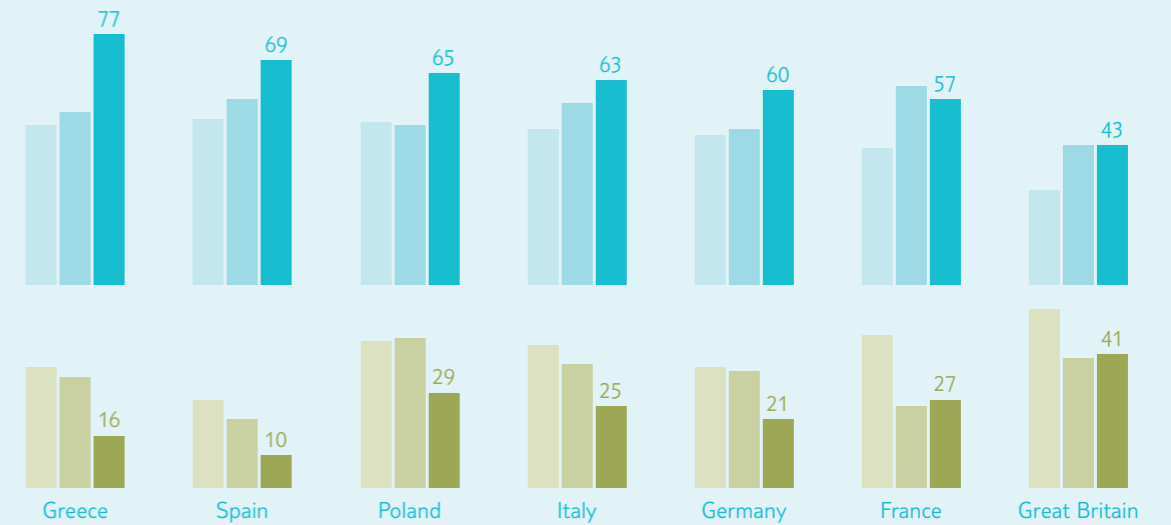


EUROPEAN IDENTITY

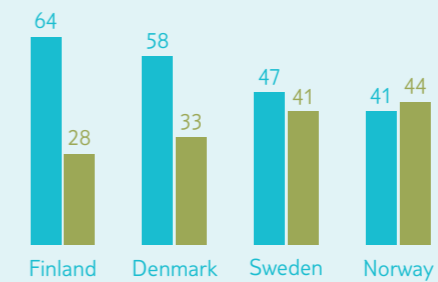
The share of young people who see themselves as Europeans is growing steadily.

The trend of increasingly regarding oneself as European is continuing in southern European countries. In Greece and Spain in particular, there has been a sharp rise in the number of young people who see themselves as “Europeans”. Only a few regard themselves as purely citizens of their country.

How would you be most likely to describe yourself?
(Not shown here are the response categories “Only as a European”, “Other” and “I don’t know/no response”.)



Included for the first time this year:



Hybrid identity

First as a citizen of my country, then as a European; first as a European of my country, then as a citizen my country

Single national identity

only a citizen my country



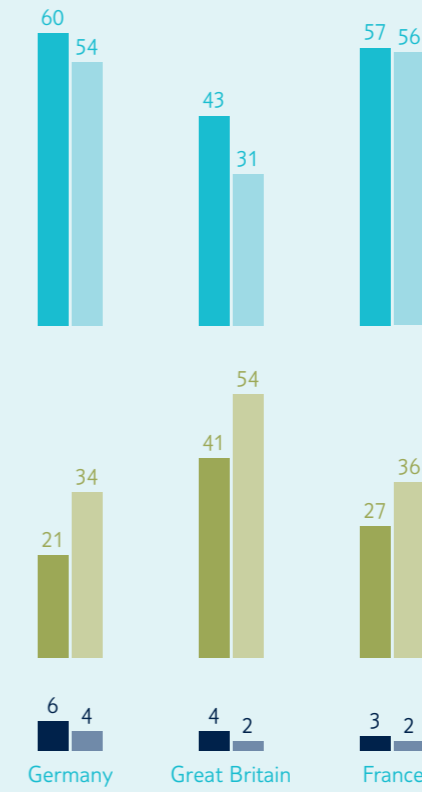
EUROPEAN IDENTITY

A European identity is more pronounced amongst young people.

It becomes very clear that young people between the ages of 16 and 26 in Great Britain are much more likely to see themselves as Europeans than the country's overall population. The situation is similar in Germany.

The results for the overall population were collected during the YouGov Eurotracks between 15 and 25 February 2019 and are representative for the population over the age of 18 in Germany, Great Britain and France. The sample size is at least 1,000 respondents in each country.

How would you be most likely to describe yourself?
(Not shown here are the response categories "Other" and "I don't know/no response".)



Hybrid identity
First of all as a citizen of my country, then as a European; first of all as a European, then as a citizen of my country

Single national identity
Only a citizen of my country

Only as a European

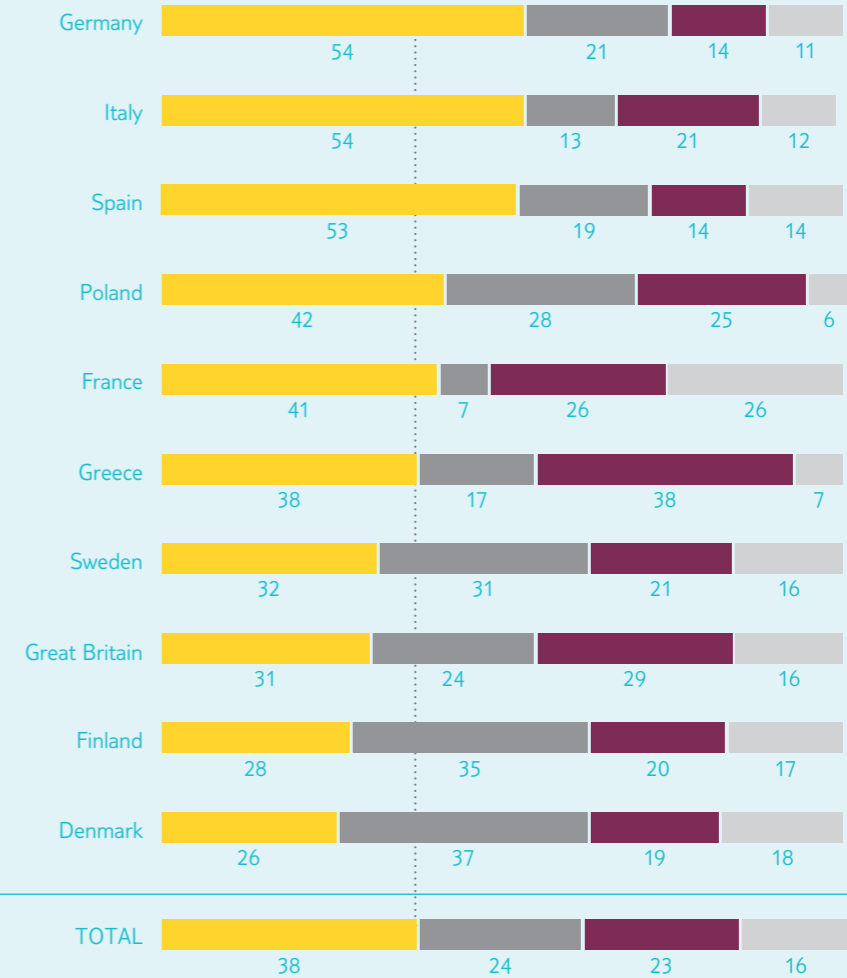
16-26 years
Total population over 18 years

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EU COUNTRIES

Most young people would like to see a closer connection between the EU countries.

Whereas the majority of young people in Scandinavian countries believe that current relations between the EU member countries are just right, the opinions in Greece and Great Britain are divided: in these countries, there are just as many young people who think the connections should be closer as there are who believe there should be fewer ties.

When you think about the relations between the EU and its member states:
Which of the following statements do you most agree with?



The connection between the EU countries should become closer, and member states should assign more responsibilities to the EU.

The current relationship between the EU and its member states is just right.

The connection between the EU countries should become less, and the EU should return some of its responsibilities to the member states.

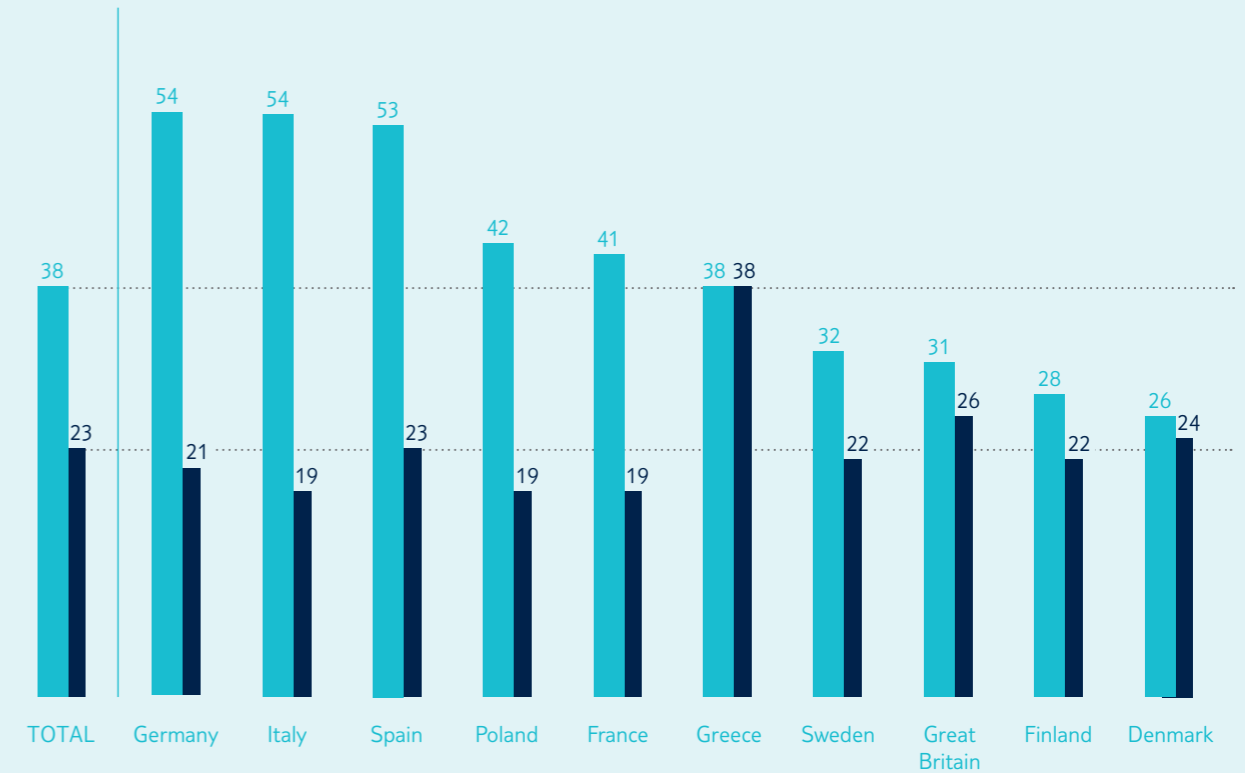
I don't know/ no response.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EU COUNTRIES

Not many young people believe that the solidarity between countries in the EU will become stronger in the future.

When young people were asked to imagine what relations would be like between EU countries in five years' time, they were by and large sceptical. Although a large number of young people would like to see relations become closer, the majority are convinced that things will not change, or that the sense of solidarity could even weaken.

When you think about the relations between the EU and its member states:
Which of the following statements do you most agree with?
And when you think about the EU in five years:
What, according to you, will be the condition of the EU by then?



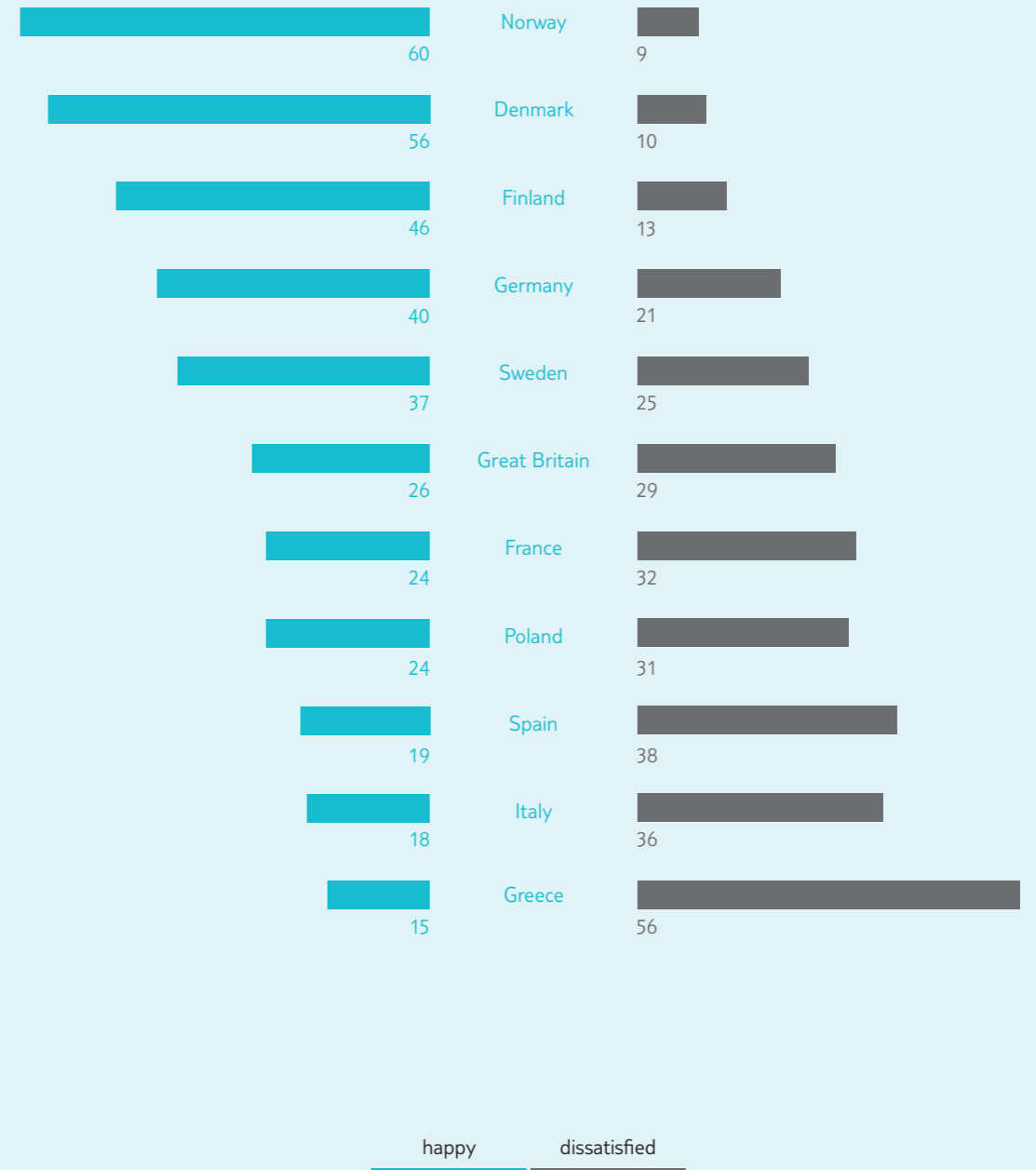
Today	In five years
The connection between the EU countries should become closer, and member states should assign more responsibilities to the EU.	The connection between the EU countries will be closer, and member states will have assigned more responsibilities to the EU.

DEMOCRACY

Scandinavians in particular are very happy with their democracy.

Young people in Germany are also more satisfied with the democratic system than the European average. In Spain, Italy and Greece, on the other hand, they are very dissatisfied. In Great Britain, the happy (26 per cent) and dissatisfied (29 per cent) votes are roughly on par.

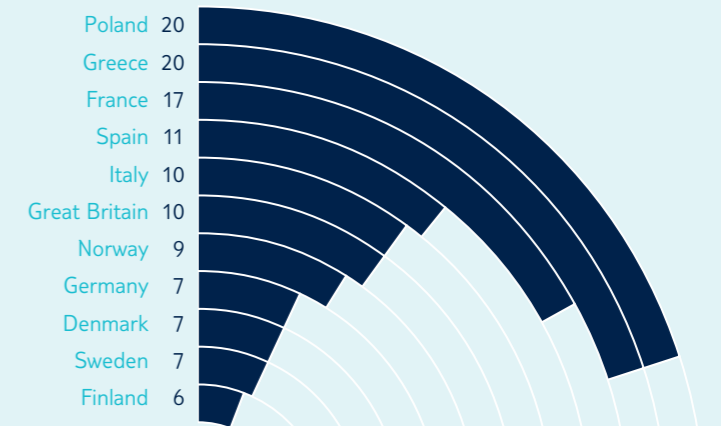
How happy or dissatisfied are you – all in all – with the democracy in your country?
(Not shown here are the middle category and possible response "Don't know/prefer not to say".)



POPULISM

Populist trends are most pronounced in Poland, Greece and France.

These “populist attitudes” were assessed through twelve questions across three dimensions: “anti-elitism”, “belief in unrestricted popular sovereignty” and the “notion of a homogeneous will of the people”.



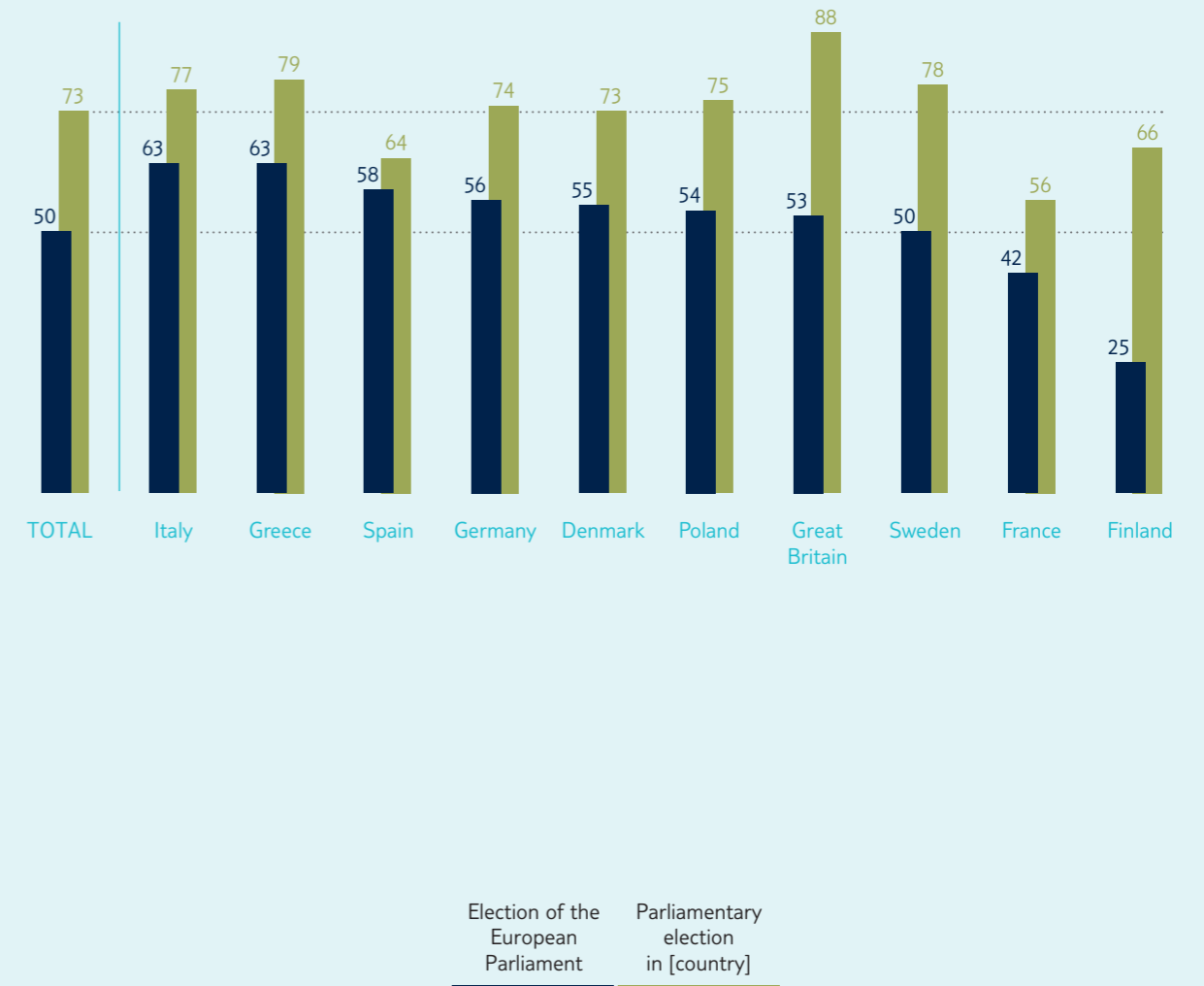
Populist attitudes

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

National elections appear to be more important than those of the European Parliament.

On average, half of the respondents rated elections for the European Parliament as important, whereas the elections to the national parliament is important for around three quarters of young people. The discrepancy between European and national relevance is very pronounced in Finland (41 percentage points), and very low in Spain (6 percentage points).

How important are the election of the European Parliament and the parliamentary election in your country for you personally?
(The response category "Important" is shown here.)

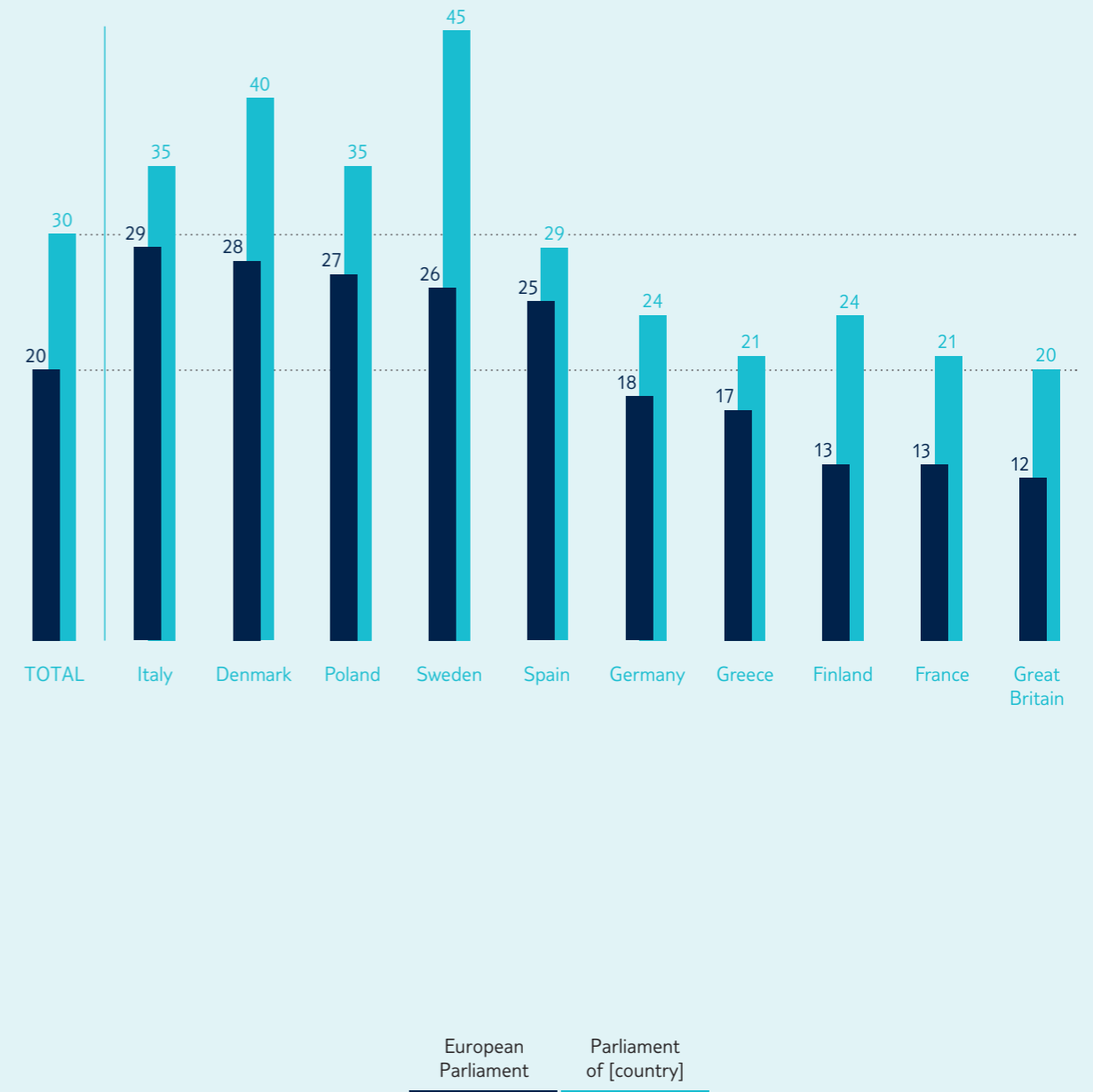


EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

Young people are of the opinion that their interests are taken more seriously on a national level than on a European level.

The discrepancy between the perceived representation in the European and national parliaments is very pronounced in Scandinavian countries (Sweden: 19 percentage points, Denmark: 12 percentage points, Finland: 11 percentage points).

When you think about the European Parliament and the parliament of [country]:
To what extent do you feel that you and your interests are represented?
(The response category "High" is shown here.)

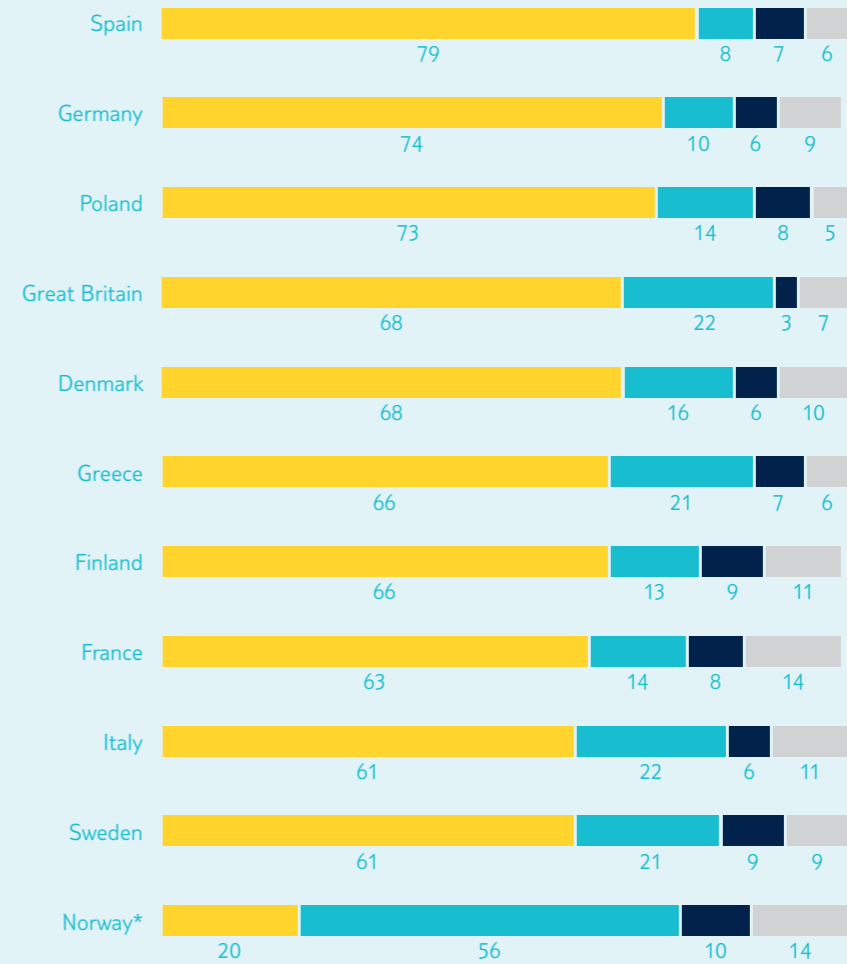


EU MEMBERSHIP

There is a clear majority for membership of the EU.

Generally speaking, most of the respondents are in favour of EU membership. The support for remaining in the EU is greatest in Spain, Germany and Poland, and at its lowest in France, Italy and Sweden. Young Norwegians would reject joining the EU.

If a referendum was held tomorrow about the EU membership of your country/
 *If a referendum was held tomorrow about the EU membership of Norway:
 How would you vote?



[Country] should stay in the EU/
 *Norway should join the EU.

[Country] should leave the EU/
 *Norway should not join the EU.

I would not vote.

I don't know/ no response.

YOUTH 2019: SO MUCH FOR LETHARGY!

Young people of today are taking to the streets to save the climate and are demonstrating for an uncensored Internet. The protests show that young Europeans are concerned about their future. Anyone who takes them seriously will get them to the polls.

By Marcus Spittler

Listening to the commentators reporting on the EU copyright reform on 26 March 2019, you could not help but get the impression that Europe was once again experiencing a classic generation gap. The Internet activist Sascha Lobo, for example, expressed his concern in the German news show "Tagesschau" that there was an entire digital generation that felt left out in the cold by politicians. He even feared that young people could develop antipathies against the EU. So, what had happened? That was the day on which the European Parliament in Strasbourg had agreed to the controversial reform of the copyright law, and thus the much-debated Article 17 (formerly Article 13) – the very same Article that its critics suspected of allowing the introduction of upload

filters and thus threatening the online freedom of expression. The vote had been preceded by numerous demonstrations by mainly young people. In Munich alone, the police counted 40,000 people who took to the streets to protest against the reform.¹ The demonstrators chanted "Wir sind keine Bots!" (We are not Bots), a message to those older MEPs who had not taken the young people seriously beforehand, had questioned the authenticity of online criticism, and who speculated that this was due to some kind of manipulation by Google, Facebook and co. Irrespective of how one stands personally on reform, it is obvious that this is a topic that apparently pits the younger generation – the "mobile pioneers" and "digital natives" – irreconcilably against an older generation that

reacts to its demands with resistance and a lack of understanding.

What makes this particularly sad is the fact that the young adults, whose lives and opinions were also investigated in this year's Youth Study, are between the ages of 16 and 26, a phase in life that is crucial for political socialisation. The sociologist Karl Mannheim called this phase the "politically impressionable years"² in his classic theory of generations, because the opinions and values acquired during this period remain stable in the long-term over one's lifespan. It is as if these years form the glasses through which one sees the world. After

The phase in life between 16 and 26 is crucial for political socialisation.

analysing long-term data, the political scientist Maria Grasso found that most of the patterns of political behaviour we see today – particularly in election turnouts – can be traced back to generational and not simply age-related effects. She also discovered that the generation in Great Britain that was politically socialised during Margaret Thatcher's term of office are still much more conservative in terms of their attitudes towards the redistribution of wealth and the fight against crime than the overall population.³ But this does not mean by implication that every new birth cohort automatically goes on to form a very different generation. A large part of management literature that has something to say about generations X, Y and Z is likely exaggerated.⁴ Nevertheless, a generational

change is one of the biggest factors in explaining social change. Anyone wanting to learn more about the future development of our society and democracy should take a look at the values and opinions of young adults.

It is a no-win situation

The "Millennial" generation have certainly come in for some stick: descriptions include lethargic, egocentric and with little interest in politics. Time Magazine called them "The Me Me Me Generation".⁵ But they have proven that the opposite is true, at the very latest since 2018: it is not just digital politics; numerous school pupils have taken to Europe's streets each week, led by Greta Thunberg from Sweden, under the motto "Fridays for Future" to protest about climate protection, despite some hefty criticism from the older generation. It seems that for some of the young adults, no matter what they say or do, they cannot win. There have been a number of different youth protests, but not all are as big as these. In France, young people organised the "Nuit debout" (rise up at night) demonstrations in 2016 against proposed labour reforms that later spread from Madrid to Glasgow. Another one is the pro-European movement "Pulse of Europe".

The Youth Study of the TUI Foundation also revealed that an overwhelming number of young people are interested and participate actively in political topics: 36 per cent of all respondents from the eleven European countries surveyed said that they had signed an offline petition in the past twelve months. 22 per cent had protested on the streets. More than a quarter claim to have boycotted or consumed certain products for political

² Mannheim, K. (1928). "The Problem of Generations". In: *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, pp. 276–320. London: Routledge.

³ Grasso, M./Farrall, S./Gray, E./Hay, C./Jennings, W. (2019). "Thatcher's Children, Blair's Babies, Political Socialization and Trickle-down Value Change: An Age, Period and Cohort Analysis". In: *British Journal of Political Science*, 49(1), pp. 17–36.

⁴ cf. Schröder, M. (2018). "Der Generationenmythos" (The generation myth). In: *KZfSS Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 70(3), pp. 469–94.

⁵ time.com/247/millennials-the-me-me-me-generation/

¹ www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/demo-muenchen-urheberrecht-1.4380419.

or ethical reasons. The participation is slightly higher online: 31 per cent had forwarded political posts to their friends and followers. 11 per cent contacted politicians directly online, a very popular practice in Great Britain. What is interesting here is that there is very little difference between the online and offline topics addressed by young people. Although some young people only get involved by digital or analogue means, the vast majority of young adults surveyed here do not deal with topics either purely online or offline. It is reasonable to assume that there are different reasons for choosing the various types of participation. In 2009, Sarah Harrison and Michael Bruter from the London School of Economics investigated the motivation of young party members and discovered a

An overwhelming number of young people are interested and participate actively in political topics.

number of subgroups, from the smaller group of professionals, to the majority of ideologically motivated members.⁶ The data collected in the Youth Study of the TUI Foundation also contributes to further research because it allows a glimpse of the motivation behind online and offline participation over the course of this year. What it already reveals is that young people are more likely to participate in ways that are faster, easier and require no great effort. As such, they are no different than adults.

The topics young people are most involved in are environmental policy and animal welfare in

almost every country, followed by a commitment to greater gender equality. Differences only appear between countries when we reach third place: educational policy is relevant in Southern Europe and France, while young people in Great Britain are more concerned about European politics under the impact of the pending Brexit. Whereas young people regard climate protection as by and large an opportunity, they emulate the rift that runs through society as a whole when it comes to migration and asylum. Young people in economically stronger countries – Scandinavia and Germany – in particular claim to be concerned about the topic of immigration, though it is unclear whether they are in favour of or against it. A different statement may provide a clue: around 30 per cent regard immigration as either a chance or a threat to their own lives. Young people in Poland (45 per cent) and Finland (40 per cent) feel particularly threatened. A minority of only 23 per cent in the eleven countries feel threatened by the open borders within the EU. What we have to remember here is that this generation was politically socialised after the global crisis on the financial markets, heard the news of terrorist attacks in Paris and Berlin and observed the rise of right-wing populist parties. The young people clearly believe the EU was responsible for the problem and expect a solution from these quarters too.

Will this mobilisation last until the European elections?

Whether the present high mobilisation of young people will last until the European elections at the end of May remains to be seen. Because in the

past, the turnout amongst young people was usually much lower than that of the overall population, a trend that has only strengthened over the past years. Even so, around 60 per cent of the respondents in the Youth Study said that it is at least “likely” that they will vote in the 2019 European elections. However, with an anonymised online survey such as this one, the figure tends to be higher because some young people respond what they believe is socially acceptable. The Youth Study also shows that 17 per cent of the Swedish youth did not even know if they were eligible to vote at the time of the survey in February. And just like older people, young adults regard the European elections as less important than national elections (50 per cent compared to 73 per cent).

There are several reasons for the low turnout. On the one hand, the transition from adolescence to adulthood has been delayed (not always voluntarily). In times of high youth unemployment in particular, young people tend to postpone making

European elections are regarded as being less important than national elections.

plans for life. The standards of citizens have also fallen and elections are no longer regarded as a duty. But above all, the traditional, conventional forms of participation appear to be less attractive to the young and political parties and the democratic system less responsive. According to the Youth Study, around 45 per cent of respondents believe they have a good to very good understand-

ing of important political questions. They thereby display a high internal self-efficacy. Their external self-efficacy, on the other hand, is a great deal lower: only 17 per cent believe that politicians are actually interested in what ordinary people think.

No feeling of representation

Political parties will have to take greater care to integrate young people into the parties if they want more of them to vote in elections and not just address specific topics. The 16 to 26-year-old segment of the population in the study account for just over ten per cent of the total population. But they enjoy hardly any political representation. The two youngest members of the German Parliament are 26 years old, the youngest member of the European Parliament is a 30-year-old Bulgarian, and the average age is 56. This comes as no great surprise if one remembers that in a third of EU countries, candidates have to be at least 21 to run for election. In Italy and Greece you have to wait until you are 25 before you have a right to be elected to an office. And young adults themselves are not always progressive: “quite manly” is how Angela Merkel admonished the 100 per cent male quota in the executive committee of the “Young Union” (the joint youth organisation of the two conservative German political parties).

And yet, the young generation by all means has some powerful voices: in Germany we only need to look at the author and member of the CDU party Diana Kinnert, the feminist Sophie Passmann or the geriatric nurse and member of the SPD party Alexander Jorde. All of them are commenting on society’s big issues, but it will probably be a long,

⁶ Bruter, M./Harrison, S. (2009). „Tomorrow’s Leaders?: Understanding the Involvement of Young Party Members in Six European Democracies“. In: Comparative Political Studies, 42(10), p. 1259–1290.

hard journey before they are allowed to take a seat in the German Parliament. The young journalist Madeleine Hofmann, who has written a book with the unashamed demand “Macht Platz!” (Move Over!) in its title, has been wondering out loud about introducing a youth quota.

Lowering the voting age to 16 would seem to be at least long overdue considering the demographic changes. In the upcoming European elections, only Austria and Malta allow 16-year-olds to vote. In Germany they are only allowed to vote in local and state elections in nine federal states. This leads to situations like that in 2017 in Schleswig-Holstein: although thousands of young people were able to vote in the state elections in May, they were not admitted to the parliamentary elections that September. Nor are there many academic reasons why the voting age should not be lowered. On the contrary, the few empirical studies on this show a better participation of young adults in the political process.⁷ In fact, lowering the voting age to 16 would give us the opportunity to accompany young people in their first elections in schools and during training so that they get into the habit of voting.

Outlook

How can we get young adults more involved in the political system? The political parties certainly have an important role to play here if they wish to act as “transmission belts” between society and politics in the future. They have to create modern

Marcus Spittler

Researcher in the Department of Democracy and Democratisation at the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB)

structures that make it easier for young people to join and get involved. Young adults are particularly interested in those political parties that offer them a kind of change or a vision of the future: 67 per cent believe that (radical) changes are needed to set the political system right. This wish for change is one of the reasons why young people sometimes express an interest in populist political parties. A fossil fuel phase-out by 2038 and free Wi-Fi in Bavarian buses by the year 2050 is just not enough of a utopia. And the parties naturally have to prove that they are the relevant protagonists in society and that they take young people’s ideas seriously.

After all, if one considers the latest climate protests, there is still lots of room for improvement. If we can quote the words of the not-so-old Chairman of the FPD, Christian Lindner, in the BILD newspaper: “Climate protection is for the pros.”⁸ Other voices warn against the political instrumentation of youth. Paradoxically enough, the generation whose majority did not vote for Brexit, Donald Trump or other right-wing populist parties are now accused of having been politically ensnared. Instead, we should regard the youth protests as a conservative movement; after all, young people are now striking for things that should be taken for granted: a united Europe, climate protection and a free Internet. ●

METHODOLOGY

Where were the participants in the study recruited?

- All of the participants were recruited from online panels.
- In Germany, France and Great Britain, the participants were recruited exclusively from the YouGov panel. In Denmark, Finland, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Spain, the participants were recruited partly from the YouGov panel and partly from the panel of a long-term partner. In Greece and Poland, participants were recruited with the help of a long-term partner panel.

What is an online panel?

- People can register with the YouGov panel by providing their email address and further personal information. They are then regularly invited to take part in online surveys by email.
- In principle, anyone can register with the YouGov panel. Target groups and samples are recruited from the members of the panel.
- YouGov has different ways of acquiring members for its panel (for example PR work, search platforms, email campaigns, coregistration or recommendations). In addition, YouGov specifically addresses persons from sections of the population that are under-represented on the panel.
- Panel members authenticate themselves by email and double opt-in. Furthermore, the panel’s quality is guaranteed on the basis of technical measures and the response behaviour.

How was the random sample recruited?

- Quota samples were recruited in this study. People are recruited for the random sample on the basis of a representative quota plan. The quota plan is drawn up on the basis of official statistics (basis for the representative recruitment: EUROSTAT).
- For the 2019 study, the random samples were recruited representatively in each country according to age, gender and education.
- An invitation was sent to the participants by email. A fully automated and random-based method (turbosampling) that takes into account an individual participation behaviour was employed to select the participants from the panel.

⁷ Cf. Wagner, M./Johann, D./Kritzing, S. (2012). “Voting at 16: Turnout and the quality of vote choice”.

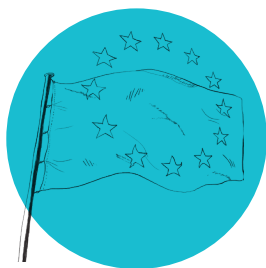
In: Electoral Studies 31(2), pp. 372–383.

⁸ www.bild.de/bild-plus/politik/inland/politik-inland/christian-lindner-klimaschutz-ist-was-fuer-profis-und-nicht-fuer-kinder-60573006

LEARNING TOGETHER

“Europe. Living and Understanding.” This is the guiding message of the TUI Foundation. Our work focuses on education programmes for school pupils and young adults.

We are Europe!

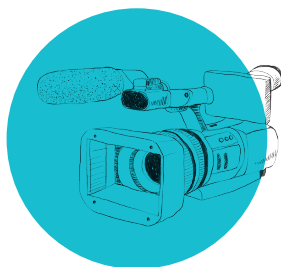


Does the EU influence my life? Barely. Or, at least, that is the majority view of young people aged between 16 and 20 with little or no access to political education. In order to engage this target group in educational work on European public policy issues, the TUI Foundation and IKAB training institute have created a pilot project called “Europa sind wir!” (“We are Europe!”) – working closely with youth welfare agencies and local community representatives. The project will give young people the opportunity and support to formulate concepts of “their” Europe, and then implement them. The model project, which was carried out in a total of six youth centres in Darmstadt, Dresden and Cologne, was launched in October 2018. The young people presented their results, for example theatre performances, dances or films, in March 2019.

Young Europe

How do young people see Europe? What hopes, dreams, wishes, but also doubts and fears do they associate with Europe’s future? Together with the iRights.Lab Think Tank, the TUI Foundation organised a competition that called upon young people between the ages of 16 and 26 to express their ideas. There were no limits to their creativity: participants could send in a video, a photo, a statement or an essay. The five best entries won a three-day trip to Brussels. The submissions and workshops involving discussions between young people and experts led to the “Charta of Young Europe”, which summarised the wishes and expectations of the young Europeans, and a graphic novel that captured the visions pictorially in a story. young-eu.com

Europe Live!



Young people today are growing up in a Europe of peaceful neighbours. The advantages – being able to travel freely, or the shared currency – are self-evident, but the European Union itself is often seen as a bureaucratic monster, extending its tentacles. To counteract this scepticism, the TUI Foundation initiated the “Europe Live!” event series. It gives pupils in the 9th and 10th grade in German schools the opportunity to engage with politicians and discuss divisive issues of European policy. The message is that the European project is a participative endeavour, not merely an abstract construct. The next round of discussions is scheduled for autumn 2019.

Understanding Europe

Europe is perceived as being a distant entity. How and why the various institutions of the European Union are intertwined is difficult to explain. “Understanding Europe” has set itself the task of doing so. The Schwarzkopf Foundation offers EU crash courses in schools in 15 countries. In collaboration with the TUI Foundation, the project has been implemented in Hamburg, the Netherlands and Spain. The crash courses will reach over 10,000 pupils by August 2019.

THE TUI FOUNDATION

With the “Young Europe 2019” international study, the TUI Foundation takes a look at the relationship between young people and democracy in Europe for the third time. It represents a further step towards a new rapprochement.

The TUI Foundation supports and realises projects around the topic of “Young Europe” with the aim of reinforcing the concept of Europe. For this reason, it continues to invest in long-term regional, national and international projects with a focus on education, training and individual and professional development. Headquartered in Hanover, the independent and autonomous foundation is committed to serving the common good.

You can find further information on the Foundation’s work and projects at: www.tui-stiftung.de

The latest Youth Study as well as the results from 2017 and 2018 can be found here: www.tuistiftung.de/unsereprojekte

IMPRINT

Published by TUI Foundation, Karl-Wiechert-Allee 4, 30625 Hanover, Germany, www.tui-stiftung.de **Managing Director** Elke Hlawatschek **Press Officer** Christian Rapp **Publisher** TEMPUS CORPORATE GmbH – Ein Unternehmen des ZEIT Verlags **Berlin Office** Alt-Moabit 94, 10559 Berlin, Germany **Hamburg Office** Helmut-Schmidt-Haus, Buceriusstrasse, Eingang Speersort 1, 20095 Hamburg, Germany **Managing Directors** Jan Hawerkamp, Dr. Mark Schiffhauer **Project and Editorial Management** Jasmin Hollatz **Design** Susanne Kluge **Proofreading** Lisa Wicklund **Production** Dirk Woschei, DIE ZEIT **Reprographics** twentyfour seven **Printing** Bruns Druckwelt GmbH & Co. KG, Minden



