EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT EUROBAROMETER

SPRING 2026 SURVEY

European Parliament

IMPRESSUM

The report has been drafted for the European Parliament by Verian Belgium.

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10 KEY TAKE-AWAYS

EU AS A SAFE HAVEN

In a troubled world, 75% of Europeans think that the EU is a place of stability – up 8 percentage points since October-November 2025 and the second highest proportion recorded in the past decade.

WORLD IS NOT HEADING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

A majority of Europeans are pessimistic about the future of the world (58% versus 38% for optimism). Pessimism has increased by 6 points since autumn 2025.

PEOPLE FEEL UNCERTAIN BUT DON'T LOSE HOPE

The most widespread emotion among Europeans is uncertainty (44%), closely followed by hope (43%), with confidence in third place (33%). Hope and confidence are more widespread among younger respondents.

SAFER IN THE EU

EU membership is seen as beneficial by 74% of Europeans, reaching an all-time high. The EU's contribution to protecting peace and strengthening security is seen as the main and growing benefit of membership (40%, +3 percentage points since spring 2025).

A CONFIDENT AND AMBITIOUS EU

Vast majorities of Europeans would like EU Member States to be more united in the current context and say the EU should promote the respect for international law by all countries (both 90%). In addition, 73% want it to have more means to face global challenges.

TOWARDS GEOPOLITICAL INDEPENDENCE

To strengthen its position in the word, citizens think the EU should focus on defence and security (39%) and energy independence (35%). The latter has gained 6 points since autumn 2025.

EUROPEANS ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR LIFE QUALITY

83% of Europeans are satisfied with their quality of life. However, this figure falls to 69% among those who have difficulty paying their bills from time to time and to just 40% among those who face such difficulties most of the time.

QUALITY OF LIFE: HEALTH & FINANCIAL SITUATION

Physical and mental health (51%), and the financial situation (49%) are considered the main components of a good quality of life. Further improvements in these areas would have the greatest impact, according to respondents.

COST OF LIVING REMAINS THE TOP PRIORITY

The survey results highlight the growing issue of inflation, rising prices, and the cost of living: almost half (47%) of Europeans want the European Parliament to address this as a priority. This concern has gained 6 points since autumn 2025, when it was already in first place.

STEADY SUPPORT FOR THE EU

Half (50%, +1 percentage point) of citizens have a positive image of the EU, 33% (-1 pp) a neutral image, and 17% (=) a negative one. When it comes to the European Parliament, 60% (+1 pp) want it to play a more important role.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

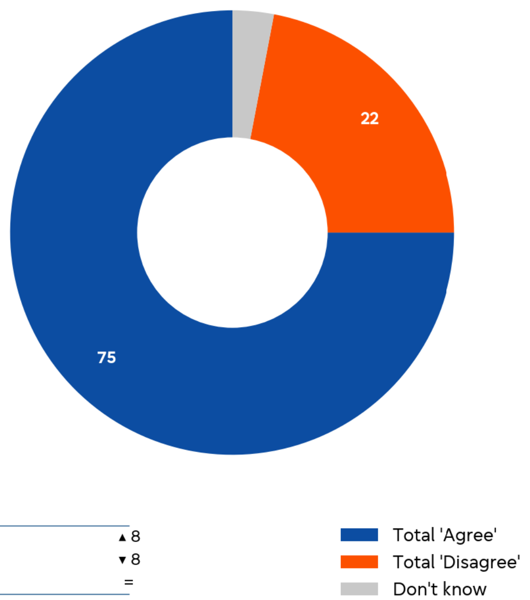
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Europeans regard the European Union as a place of stability in a troubled world. They value its peaceful, protective and cooperative nature, and recognise the quality of life it enables. However, economic concerns, particularly regarding the cost of living, have increased over recent years, and the overall mood of citizens fluctuates between uncertainty and hope. While many trends were already present in past surveys, some indicators reflect the immediate reactions of Europeans to recent disruptions in the global political and economic climate. These are some of the key findings of the Spring 2026 Eurobarometer survey, which was conducted among 26,421 EU citizens in all Member States in April and May 2026.

The European Union: a safe haven for citizens

'The European Union is a place of stability in a troubled world' – 75% of EU citizens agree with this statement, an increase of eight percentage points since autumn 2025. Such a sharp rise in an EU indicator in just six months is rare, but the responses to further survey questions show that the EU appears in a favourable light when compared with the wider world.

QASD **Please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with the following statement:** The European Union is a place of stability in a troubled world (EU27) (%)



Total 'Agree'	▲8
Total 'Disagree'	▼8
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Oct/Nov 2025)

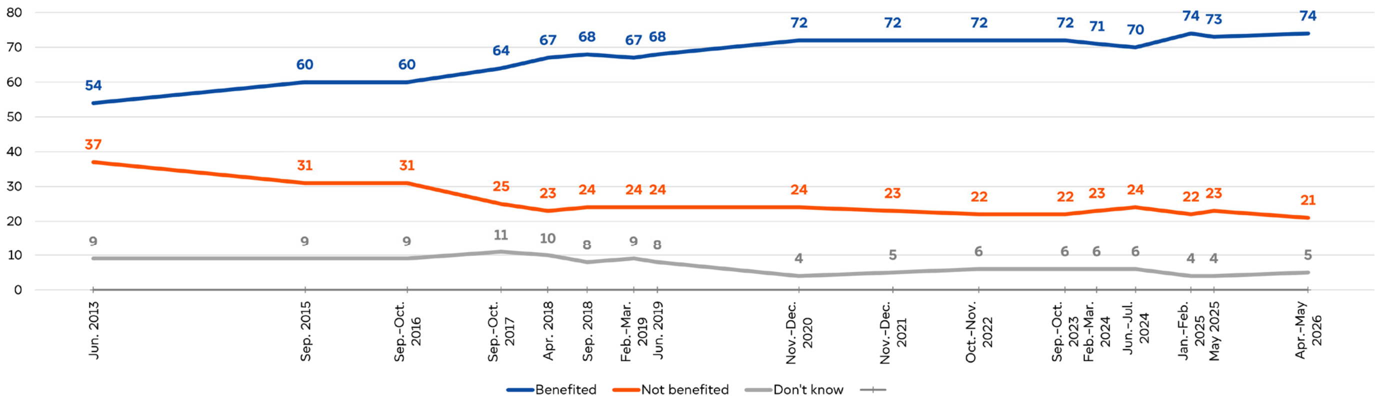
Apr/May 2026

When asked about their outlook on the future, Europeans reveal a clear contrast between how they feel about their personal situation, that of their country and the EU, and that of the world in general. 76% of respondents (no change since November 2025) are optimistic about their own future and that of their family, 58% (+1 percentage point) are optimistic about the future of their country, and 59% (+2 pp) are optimistic about the future of the EU. In sharp contrast, only 38% are optimistic about the future of the world – a six-point decrease.

Another survey question points in the same direction: 76% (-1 percentage point) of citizens say that that things are going in the right direction in their personal life, while 34% (-1 pp) say the same about their country and 39% (+1 pp) about the EU - stable results since autumn 2025. However, only 14% say that things are going in the right direction in the USA, which is an eight-point decrease. Conversely, 76% say that things are going in the wrong direction in the USA, a rise of 11 points and the largest change for any trend indicator in this survey.

The impact of recent geopolitical events is evident throughout the survey results, as several trend indicators show increased appreciation of the European Union's peaceful nature, protective role and cooperative approach. 74% (+1 percentage points) of respondents say their country has benefited from being a member of the EU, equalling the highest value recorded for this question in 2025 since it was first asked four decades ago. Citizens see the main benefits as the EU's contribution to protecting peace and strengthening security (40%, +3 pp), and the improved cooperation between their country and other EU Member States (34%, -2 pp).

QA4 **Taking everything into account, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the EU?** (% - EU)

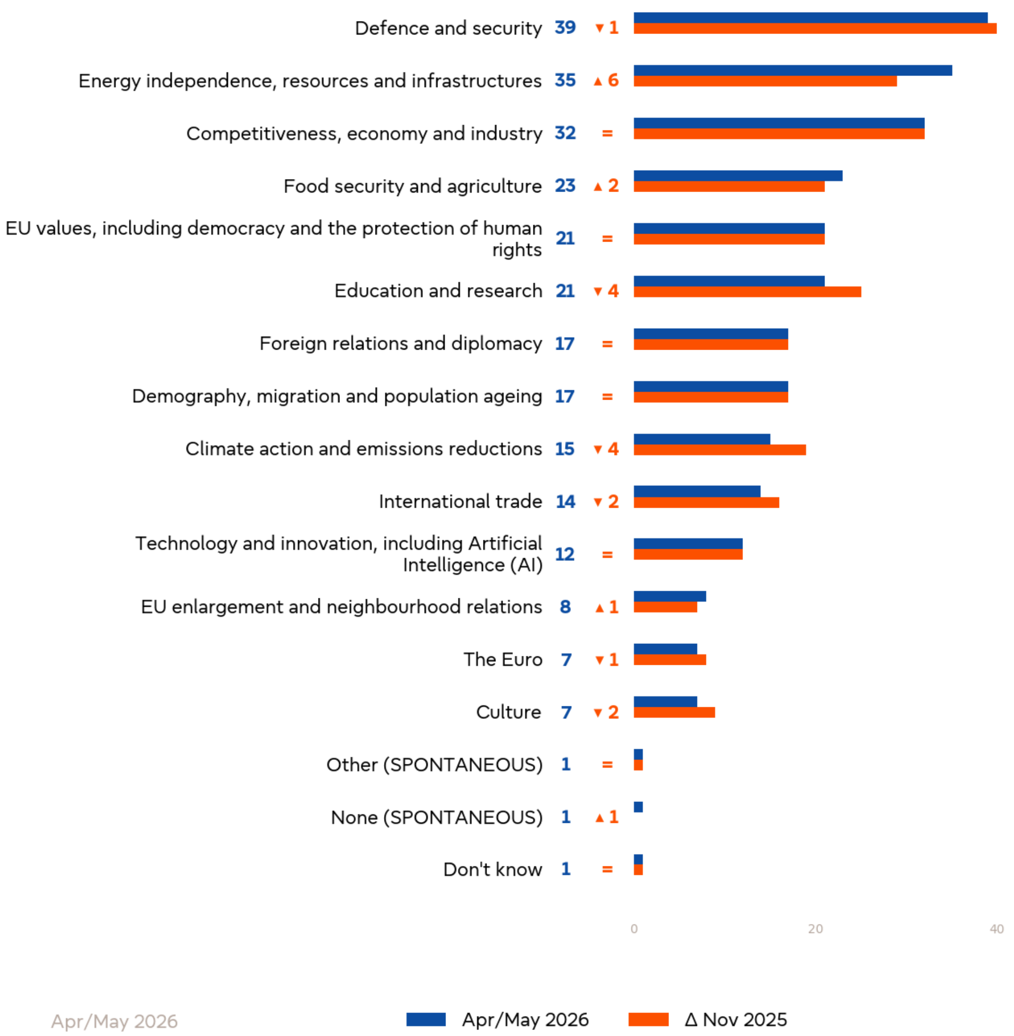


Source: Eurobarometer Surveys by the EP

Furthermore, 68% (+2 percentage points) of Europeans believe that the EU's role in protecting citizens against global crises and security risks should become more important. A large majority (90%, +1 pp) also say that EU Member States should be more united to face current global challenges and 73% (=) that the EU needs more means to achieve this, while 90% agree that the EU should promote the respect of international law by all countries.

To strengthen its position in the world, citizens say the EU should prioritise defence and security (39%, –1 percentage point), followed by energy independence, resources and infrastructure (35%, +6pp). Peace (51%, –1 pp) and democracy (32%, –3 pp) remain the core values that citizens want the European Parliament to defend as a matter of priority.

QA11ab **Thinking about the future, which of the following aspects should the EU focus on in order to strengthen its position in the world? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)



Apr/May 2026

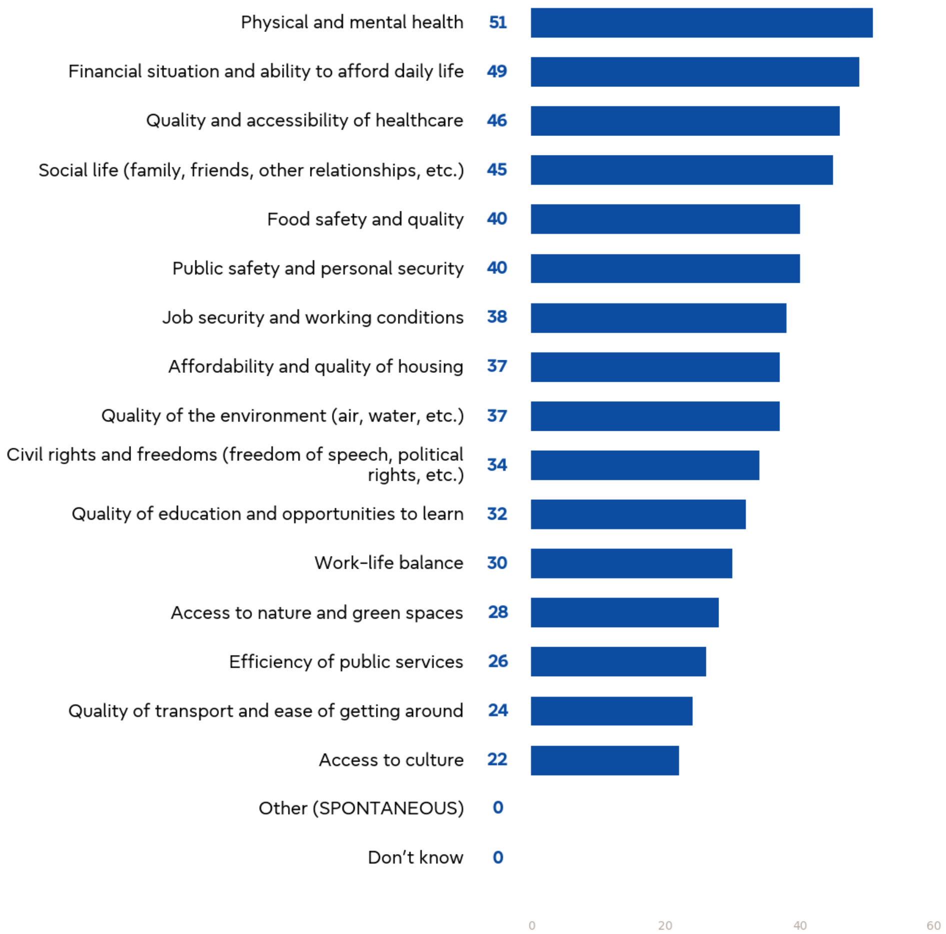
Living in Europe: good quality of life but fear of falling living standards

The Spring 2026 Eurobarometer focuses on how citizens perceive the quality of life in the EU. In general, this is seen in a positive light: 83% of respondents say they are satisfied with their quality of life, while 17% say they are not. The majority of EU citizens (62%) say that their quality of life (in terms of comfort and budget) has remained the same in the past 12 months, while 27% say that it has deteriorated and 11% that it has improved. Compared with other major world economies, the EU is widely regarded as a better place to live: 62% of Europeans say the quality of life in the EU is better than in the USA and 67% say it is better than in China.

To discover what quality of life means to Europeans, the interviewers asked respondents to rate the importance of various aspects of this concept. According to EU citizens, the main components of a good quality of life are 'physical and mental health' (51%), 'financial situation and ability to afford daily life' (49%), and 'quality and accessibility of healthcare' (46%). Other aspects include 'social life (family, friends, other relationships, etc.)' (45%), 'food safety and quality' and 'public safety and personal security' (both 40%).

However, when respondents are asked where changes could most benefit their quality of life, the order of the top three answers alters, and economic concerns move to the fore: changes in the area of 'financial situation and ability to afford daily life' (42%) would most improve Europeans' quality of life. The quality and accessibility of healthcare (37%) and physical and mental health (35%) follow in importance.

QA13 **People may have different views about 'quality of life'. For you, which of the following are most important for a good quality of life?** (EU27) (%)



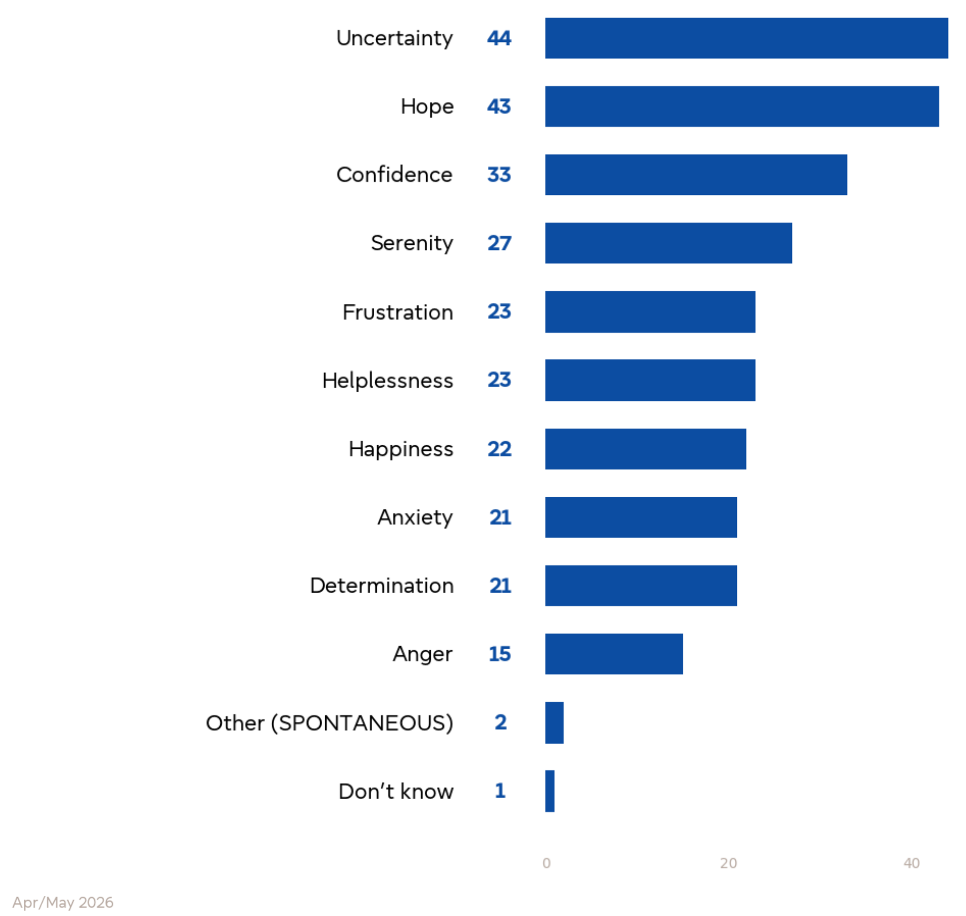
Apr/May 2026

Cost of living pressure

The view that economic issues need improvement aligns with Europeans' responses to the question asking which topics they want the European Parliament to focus on as a matter of priority. Citizens' main priority for the EP is 'inflation, rising prices and the cost of living' (47%, +6 percentage points since autumn 2025). This issue, which was already high on the agenda, has gained in importance and is now the leading topic by a twelve-point margin. It is followed by the 'economy and job creation' (35%, =) and 'EU defence and security' (34%, =). Citizens' expectations for their own standard of living are mixed: 50% (-4 pp) of Europeans expect it to stay the same over the next five years, 29% (+ 1 pp) expect it to decline, and 18% (+2 pp) expect it to improve.

Against this backdrop, respondents were asked what words best describe their current emotional state. The results reflect this ambiguous situation, with uncertainty (44%) and hope (43%) being the most frequently selected answers, followed by confidence (33%) and serenity (27%). Frustration and helplessness (both 23%) are closely followed by happiness (22%), and by anxiety and determination (both 21%), while anger (15%) is the least frequently selected answer.

QA6ab **What feelings best describe your current emotional state? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 4 ANSWERS) (%)



The EU and its parliament – a resilient democracy

The general indicators measuring approval of the EU and the EP have remained stable in the EP Spring 2026 Eurobarometer, with one notable exception: 59% of respondents now say that they are satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU, a five percentage point increase since November 2025, and equalling the highest level ever recorded, in 2022. The indicator for general EU approval is more or less unchanged - half of the respondents (50%, +1 pp) have a positive image of the EU, 33% (–1 pp) have a neutral image and 17% (=) have a negative image.

Awareness of the European Parliament has increased by two percentage points since it was last measured in September/October 2023: 66% of Europeans now say they have recently read, seen or heard something about the EP, while 34% (–2 pp) say they have not. The general image of the EP is unchanged since autumn 2025: 38% of respondents have a positive image of it, 41% a neutral image and 20% a negative image. Meanwhile 60% of citizens (+1 pp) would like the EP to play a more important role in the future.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The survey was carried out by Verian between 9 April and 4 May 2026 in all 27 EU Member States. 26421 interviews were conducted in total. EU results were weighted according to the size of the population in each country.

Eurobarometer surveys are administered face-to-face in people's homes or on their doorstep, in the national language. In all countries, CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) was used.

In Cyprus, Denmark, Malta, Finland and Sweden, some interviews were conducted via computer assisted video interview (CAVI). The interviewer administrates the questionnaire to the respondent remotely via video-conference, where both parts can see each other: the conditions of interviews are very similar to that of face-to-face.

Following the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), respondents were asked whether or not they would agree to be asked questions on issues that could be considered "sensitive".

The reader should be aware that in this report the evolution of one specific indicator is considered as stable overall when it varies by +/-2 percentage points or less. For more information, please refer to the table indicated on page 173 for the margin of error depending on the number of interviews.

Note: In this report, EU countries are referred to by their official abbreviation.
The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

Belgium	BE	Lithuania	LT
Bulgaria	BG	Luxembourg	LU
Czechia	CZ	Hungary	HU
Denmark	DK	Malta	MT
Germany	DE	The Netherlands	NL
Estonia	EE	Austria	AT
Ireland	IE	Poland	PL
Greece	EL	Portugal	PT
Spain	ES	Romania	RO
France	FR	Slovenia	SI
Croatia	HR	Slovakia	SK
Italy	IT	Finland	FI
Republic of Cyprus	CY *	Sweden	SE
Latvia	LV		

European Union – weighted average for the 27 Member States	EU27
BE, FR, IT, LU, DE, AT, ES, PT, IE, NL, FI, EL, EE, SI, CY, MT, SK, LV, LT, HR, BG	Euro area
CZ, DK, HU, PL, RO, SE	Non euro area

*Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 European Union Member States. However, the 'acquis communautaire' has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the 'CY' category and in the EU27 average.

CONTEXT

CONTEXT

The fieldwork for the European Parliament's Spring 2026 Eurobarometer survey was carried out by Verian between 9 April and 4 May in all 27 EU Member States. To correctly interpret the survey results, it is essential to take the political and societal context at the time of fieldwork into consideration. All national results for the questions asked in this survey – and hence also the European average results – must be seen in the light of the situation and public debate at the time of fieldwork.

The Middle East crisis and the conflict in Iran and Lebanon

On 28 February 2026, the United States and Israel launched a joint military operation against Iran, prompting Iran to respond with missile and drone attacks targeting Israel as well as United States and Western military bases across the Gulf, including in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The conflict had significant global repercussions, notably through the partial closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a key transit route through which around 20% of the world's oil and substantial volumes of liquefied natural gas pass. This contributed to a sharp increase in energy prices, with knock on effects for the European Union's energy supply and inflation rate.

Russia's war against Ukraine

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continued to shape the political and security environment in Europe throughout the fieldwork period. The European Union maintained its support for Ukraine through a combination of humanitarian, political, financial and military measures.

On 11 February 2026, the European Parliament approved an EU loan package to support Ukraine, following an agreement by EU leaders in late 2025 to provide €90 billion in financial support for the period 2026–2027, comprising €30 billion in macro financial assistance and €60 billion earmarked for defence and military equipment.[1] On 24 February 2026, marking four years since Russia's full scale invasion, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine.[2] In March 2026, the European Council extended individual restrictive measures against those undermining Ukraine's territorial integrity for a further six months and reaffirmed the EU's unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.[3] The European Council urged that the first payment to Ukraine be

[1] European Parliament approves EU €90 billion Ukraine support loan package, 11 February 2026, European Parliament

[2] UN General Assembly resolution on Ukraine, 24 February 2026, United Nations UN General Assembly resolution on Ukraine, 24 February 2026

[3] European Council conclusions on Ukraine, 19 March 2026, Consilium

disbursed by early April and called on partner countries to help close a remaining €30 billion funding gap.[4]

On 23 April 2026, the European Union formally adopted its 20th package of sanctions against Russia, targeting key sectors including energy, trade, financial services and the military industrial complex.[5] On the same date, the EU formally approved the €90 billion loan to Ukraine, described by EU institutions as essential to supporting Ukraine's budgetary stability and defence needs.[6] These decisions were confirmed in the context of the informal meeting of EU heads of state or government held in Cyprus on 23–24 April 2026, during which EU leaders reiterated their commitment to continued support for Ukraine. In this meeting, the EU leadership and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy issued a joint statement underlining Ukraine's reform progress and EU accession perspective.[7]

During the period preceding and overlapping with the fieldwork, transatlantic relations were characterised by some tensions alongside continued cooperation, particularly in the area of security and defence. Discussions within NATO focused on burden sharing, strategic priorities and the Alliance's role in responding to the evolving security environment. In this context, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte visited the United States in April 2026 for consultations with US leadership, reaffirming the importance of transatlantic coordination while also highlighting differing perspectives on certain geopolitical and defence issues.[8] These developments contributed to ongoing public debate within the European Union regarding the balance between NATO commitments and the strengthening of EU defence capabilities.

Economic context

During the fieldwork period, economic developments in the European Union remained closely linked to the geopolitical situation, particularly the conflict in the Middle East. In March 2026, the European Central Bank revised its macroeconomic projections, lowering its growth forecast for 2026 to 0.9% and raising its inflation projection to 2.6%, citing the impact of higher energy prices.[9] According to Eurostat data, the EU unemployment rate stood at 5.9% in February 2026, down from 6.0% one year earlier, while the euro area unemployment rate was 6.2%, compared with 6.3% in February 2025.

On 30 April 2026, the European Central Bank decided to keep interest rates unchanged, while emphasising heightened uncertainty and increased upside risks to inflation, largely

[4] Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine: 20th package of EU sanctions, 23 April 2026, Consilium European Council, 19 March 2026, Ukraine – Consilium
[5] ECB staff macroeconomic projections, March 2026, European Central Bank
[6] Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2026, Consilium
[7] Informal meeting of heads of state or government, 23-24 April 2026, European Council
[8] NATO Secretary General visits Washington to discuss transatlantic security
[9] Macroeconomic projections, March 2026, European Central Bank

driven by energy price developments linked to the Middle East conflict.[10] According to Eurostat, the euro area annual inflation is expected to be 3.2% in May 2026, up compared to 3.0% in April 2026.[11]

In this broader economic context, Bulgaria joined the euro area on 1 January 2026, increasing the number of euro area Member States to 21.

EU institutions and legislative context at EU level

Cyprus held the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first half of 2026, from 1 January to 30 June, under the motto "An Autonomous Union. Open to the World". The Presidency's programme focused on strengthening the EU's strategic autonomy, economic competitiveness, security and defence preparedness, migration management, social cohesion, and the negotiations on the EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2028–2034, alongside efforts to deepen the Single Market and enhance digital and energy resilience. [12]

At its meeting of 19 March 2026, the European Council adopted conclusions addressing a range of priorities, including Ukraine, the Middle East, competitiveness, the Single Market, security, defence and migration. EU leaders reaffirmed strong support for Ukraine, called for de escalation in the Middle East, and highlighted the importance of strengthening Europe's economic resilience and competitiveness. [13]

These discussions were further pursued during the informal meeting of EU heads of state or government held on 23–24 April 2026, at which exchanges focused in particular on the future Multiannual Financial Framework for 2028–2034, against the backdrop of increased defence, energy and broader geopolitical spending needs.[14] On 28 April 206, the European Parliament set out its position for negotiations with Member States on the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2028–2034, aiming for a focus on defence and competitiveness as new priorities, while cohesion and agriculture funding must be safeguarded. [15]

Elections

Several national elections held in the first months of 2026 contributed to shaping the political landscape in the European Union during the fieldwork period.

[10] Monetary policy decisions, April 2026, European Central Bank
[11] Inflation in the euro area, Eurostat
[12] Cyprus Presidency
[13] European Council, Main results, 19 March 2026
[14] Informal meeting of heads of state or government, 23-24 April 2026, European Council
[15] EU long-term budget: responding to citizens' expectations and major challenges, 28 April 2026, European Parliament

In Portugal, the second round of the presidential election was held on 8 February 2026, resulting in the election of António José Seguro, who obtained 66.83% of the vote, compared with 33.17% for André Ventura. Voter turnout reached 50%.[16] This was the first presidential runoff in Portugal in forty years.

In Slovenia, parliamentary elections held on 22 March 2026 resulted in the incumbent Prime Minister Robert Golob's Freedom Movement (Svoboda, Renew) obtaining 28.66% of the vote and 29 seats, narrowly ahead of the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS, EPP) led by Janez Janša, which secured 27.88% of the vote and 28 seats. Neither party achieved the 46 seats required for an absolute majority, and coalition negotiations were therefore initiated. Voter turnout stood at 70.25%.[17]

In Denmark, general elections held on 24 March 2026 led to Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen's Social Democrats (SD, S&D) obtaining 21.9% of the vote and 38 seats[18], down from 50 seats in the 2022 election. Neither the left leaning bloc, with 84 seats, nor the right leaning bloc, with 77 seats, secured the 90 seats required for a majority in the 179 seat Folketing. The centrist Moderates (Renew), holding 14 seats, was expected to play a decisive role in subsequent government formation talks.

In Hungary, parliamentary elections held on 12 April 2026 resulted in a landslide victory for the Tisza Party led by Péter Magyar (EPP), which secured 53.18% of the vote and 141 seats in the 199 seat National Assembly, thereby obtaining a two thirds constitutional majority. The incumbent Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Fidesz–KDNP alliance (Patriots) was defeated after 16 years in power, receiving 38.61% of the vote and 52 seats. Voter turnout reached a record 78.99%, the highest level recorded in Hungary since the democratic transition.[19]

In Bulgaria, snap parliamentary elections held on 19 April 2026 resulted in a decisive victory for the newly formed Progressive Bulgaria alliance led by Rumen Radev, which secured 44.59% of the vote and around 131 seats in the 240 seat National Assembly, thereby achieving an outright majority. The GERB–SDS alliance (EPP) led by Boyko Borisov and the PP–DB (Renew) followed at a considerable distance, obtaining 13.39% and 12.62% of the vote respectively.[20] Voter turnout stood at 50.7%, and the result marked the first single party majority in Bulgaria since 1997, bringing an end to a prolonged period of political instability.

In Italy, a constitutional referendum on judicial reform was held on 22 and 23 March 2026. Voters were asked to approve a constitutional law revising aspects of the organisation of the judiciary. The proposal was rejected, with 53.75% of voters voting against and 46.25% in favour.[21]

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[16] https://www.eleicoes.mai.gov.pt/presidenciais2026_2S/resultados/globais
[17] https://volitve.dvk-rs.si/dz2026/#/rezultati
[18] https://www.thedanishparliament.dk/news/2026/03/results-of-the-danish-general-election-2026
[19] https://vtr.valasztas.hu/ogy2026
[20] https://results.cik.bg/pe202604/rezultati/index.html
[21] https://elezioni.interno.gov.it/risultati/20260322/referendum/scrutini/italia/01081010140

1 CURRENT FEELINGS AND OUTLOOK ON THE FUTURE

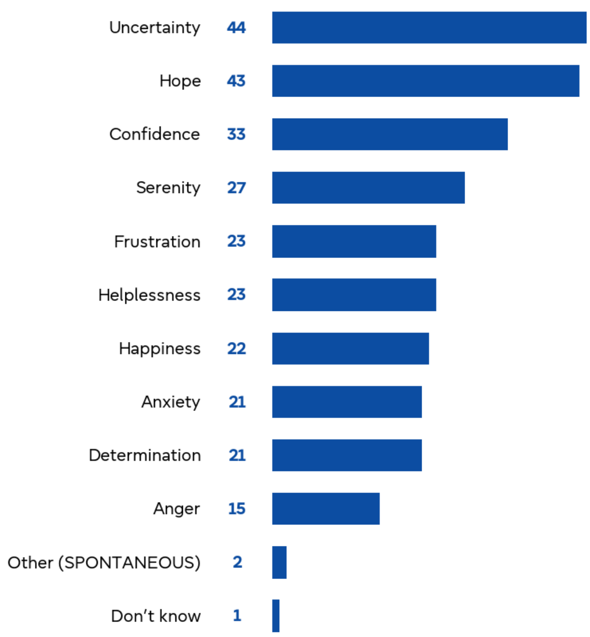
1. CURRENT FEELINGS AND OUTLOOK ON THE FUTURE

This chapter examines Europeans' perceptions of the current context alongside their outlook on the future, bringing together insights on their emotional state and expectations at personal, national, European and global levels. It begins by analysing the feelings that best describe Europeans' current emotional state, offering a contextual framework for understanding how citizens view future developments.

Emotional state

At EU level, Europeans' emotional state reflects a combination of both positive and negative feelings. **Uncertainty** emerges as the most frequently mentioned emotion (44%), closely followed by **hope** (43%), indicating that Europeans simultaneously experience doubt and expectation. A substantial share of respondents also express **confidence** (33%) and **serenity** (27%), suggesting that, despite prevailing uncertainties, a considerable proportion maintain a sense of stability and trust. At the same time, feelings such as **frustration** (23%), **helplessness** (23%), and **anxiety** (21%) are also widely reported, while **happiness** (22%) and **determination** (21%) point to the coexistence of resilience and more positive outlooks among Europeans. Overall, these results highlight a complex and mixed emotional landscape, in which positive and negative sentiments coexist.

QA6ab **What feelings best describe your current emotional state? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 4 ANSWERS) (%)



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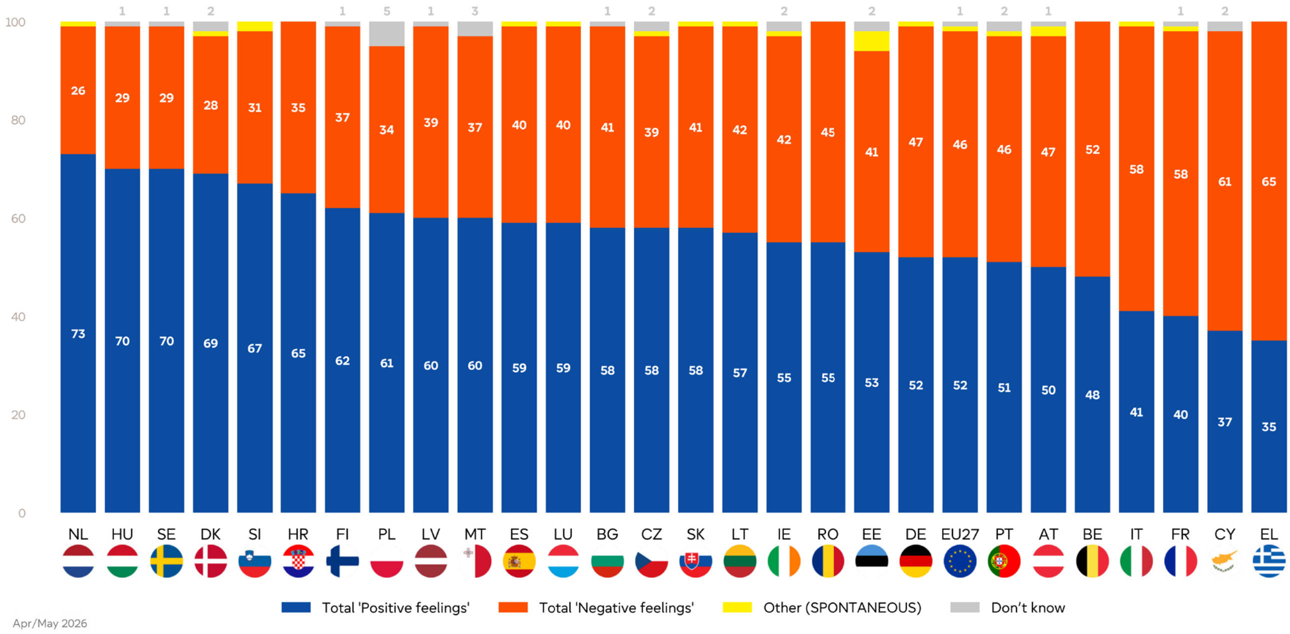
Across Member States, **uncertainty** is a leading emotion in eight countries, though its intensity varies considerably. The highest levels are observed in countries such as Greece (59%), Cyprus and Italy (both 56%), and France (53%), where more than half of respondents mention this feeling. **Hope** is the most frequent emotion across 17 Member States. It reaches particularly high levels in countries such as Hungary (57%), Denmark (55%), Finland and Croatia (both 51%), indicating a relatively strong presence of positive expectations in these countries. **Confidence** is notably higher in countries such as Denmark (47%), the Netherlands (46%), Luxembourg and Portugal (both 43%). **Serenity** also displays marked variation, with more than half of respondents selecting this emotion in Sweden (55%) and the Netherlands (51%).

QA6a **What feelings best describe your current emotional state? Firstly?** (%)



Taken together, these findings suggest that Europeans are navigating a context marked by both optimism and concern. This emotional backdrop is likely to shape how citizens perceive future developments and interpret ongoing challenges.

Europeans' emotional state varies across **socio-demographic groups**, although some patterns are more pronounced than others.

In terms of **gender**, differences are relatively limited, suggesting broadly similar emotional profiles among men and women. However, some variations can be observed. Women are slightly more likely than men to report hope (45% vs 42%), helplessness (25% vs 21%) as well as anxiety (24% vs 19%) and indicating somewhat higher levels of both anticipation and concern. By contrast, men are marginally more likely to mention serenity (29% vs 25%), and determination (22% vs 19%). Overall, these findings indicate that while gender differences exist, they remain moderate.

Clearer differences emerge when considering **age**. Younger respondents tend to display a more positive emotional profile, while negative feelings become more prevalent with age. Among those aged 15—24, hope (48% vs 41-44% among other age groups) and confidence (40% vs 29-36%) are particularly widespread, alongside relatively high levels of happiness (32% vs 17-26%) and determination (27% vs 17-24%), indicating a more optimistic baseline. At the same time, this group reports comparatively low levels of uncertainty (36% vs 48% of those aged 55 and over), frustration (17% vs 27% among those aged 40-54), helplessness (15% vs 27% of 55+), anxiety (15% vs 24% of 55+) and anger (6% vs 18% of those aged 40-54).

Differences according to **education level** are present but relatively moderate. Respondents with a higher level of education are more likely to express positive and forward-looking feelings such as confidence (37% vs 31—33%), serenity (31% vs 24-26%), happiness (25% vs 19-21%) and determination (24% vs 17-21%), compared with those with a lower level of education.

A particularly strong relationship emerges when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Those who report having difficulties paying their bills most of the time are markedly more likely to express negative emotions. In this group, uncertainty reaches 57% (compared to 41% of those who never have difficulties), while frustration (36% vs 21%), helplessness (29% vs 20%), anxiety (33% vs 18%), and anger (25% vs 13%) are also substantially higher than average.

Attitudinal factors show some of the strongest associations with emotional state. Respondents with a positive **image of the European Union** are significantly more likely to express positive emotions, including hope (53% vs 23% of those with negative view), confidence (43% vs 13%), serenity (32% vs 15%), and happiness (27% vs 11%). In contrast, among those with a negative image of the EU, negative emotions are far more prevalent: uncertainty reaches 58% vs 38%, while frustration (43% vs 17%), helplessness (35% vs 17%), anger (35% vs 9%) and anxiety (31% vs 16%) are all markedly higher than among those with a positive EU image.

QA6ab What feelings best describe your current emotional state? Firstly? And then? (MAX. 4 ANSWERS) (%)

	Uncertainty	Hope	Confidence	Serenity	Frustration	Helplessness
EU27	44	43	33	27	23	23
Gender						
Man	43	42	34	29	23	21
Woman	45	45	33	25	23	25
Age						
15-24	36	48	40	31	17	15
25-39	40	44	36	29	22	18
40-54	46	41	34	25	27	24
55+	48	43	29	26	24	27
Education level						
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	45	43	33	24	23	25
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	45	43	31	26	24	23
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	43	45	37	31	23	21
Socio-professional category						
Self-employed	44	40	34	28	24	20
Managers	41	46	38	30	21	20
Other white collars	42	46	36	28	22	20
Manual workers	44	41	33	27	24	24
House persons	43	43	33	23	23	25
Unemployed	49	43	28	21	29	25
Retired	49	43	28	26	24	28
Students	39	48	40	30	20	16
Difficulties paying bills						
Most of the time	57	31	22	15	36	29
From time to time	49	40	29	21	27	29
Almost never / Never	41	46	36	30	21	20
Subjective urbanisation						
Rural area or village	43	42	34	29	22	22
Small or middle sized town	45	44	32	26	22	24
Large town	45	44	34	26	27	23
Image of the EU						
Positive	38	53	43	32	17	17
Neutral	47	40	28	25	23	26
Negative	58	23	13	15	43	35
Satisfaction with quality of life						
Satisfied	41	46	37	30	20	20
Not satisfied	61	30	16	12	39	36

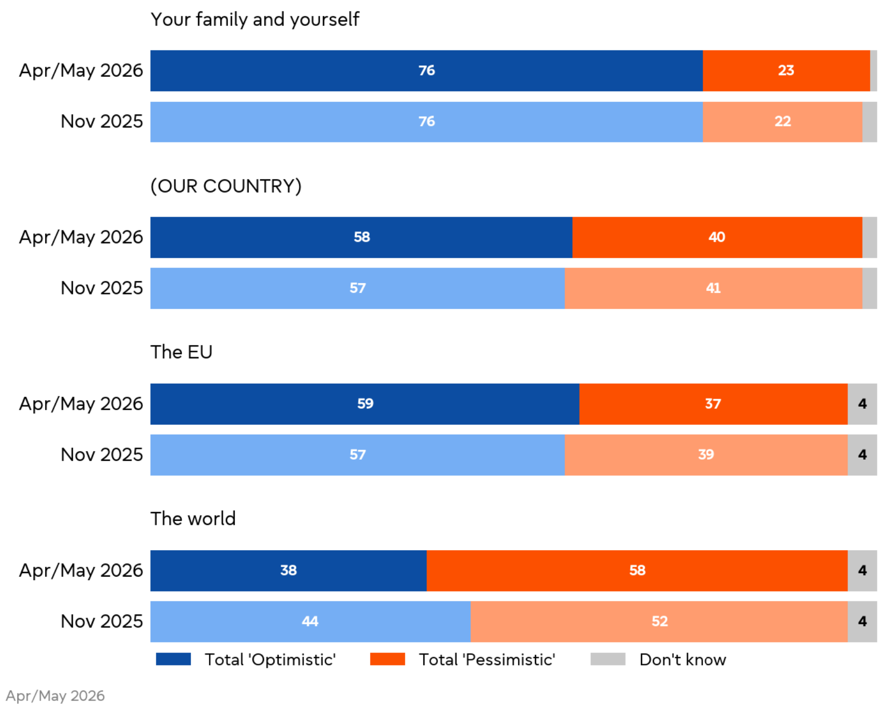
	Determination	Anxiety	Anger	Other (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	21	21	15	2	1
Gender					
Man	22	19	16	2	1
Woman	19	24	14	2	1
Age					
15-24	27	15	6	1	1
25-39	24	19	13	2	1
40-54	21	22	18	2	1
55+	17	24	17	2	1
Education level					
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	17	23	19	2	1
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	21	23	15	2	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	24	18	13	2	1
Socio-professional category					
Self-employed	26	23	16	2	1
Managers	26	16	14	3	0
Other white collars	23	21	13	2	1
Manual workers	21	22	17	1	1
House persons	17	24	18	2	1
Unemployed	19	26	17	1	0
Retired	14	26	17	2	1
Students	26	15	7	1	1
Difficulties paying bills					
Most of the time	14	33	25	1	1
From time to time	19	29	19	1	1
Almost never / Never	22	18	13	2	1
Subjective urbanisation					
Rural area or village	20	20	15	2	1
Small or middle sized town	21	23	15	2	1
Large town	21	21	14	2	1
Image of the EU					
Positive	25	16	9	2	0
Neutral	18	25	14	2	1
Negative	13	31	35	2	1
Satisfaction with quality of life					
Satisfied	22	18	13	2	1
Not satisfied	14	37	26	1	1

Outlook on the future

Against this background, the analysis then turns to Europeans' outlook on the future. Overall, **optimism remains strongest at the personal level** and weakens as respondents consider broader contexts, with confidence gradually giving way to more cautious perceptions when shifting from personal circumstances to national, European and ultimately global perspectives. This pattern reflects a clear contrast between relatively stable personal outlooks and more uncertain views of the international environment, a distinction that is likely to influence citizens' priorities, attitudes towards governance, and expectations regarding cooperation at different levels.

Across the European Union, optimism about the future continues to vary markedly depending on the level considered. Confidence is highest at the personal level, with **76%of respondents expressing optimism about their own and their family's future**, a proportion that remains unchanged compared to November 2025. Optimism is notably lower when respondents evaluate broader contexts. **Around six in ten Europeans are optimistic about the future of their country** (58%, +1 percentage point) and the **European Union** (59%, +2 pp), indicating a relative stability compared with the previous survey in November 2025. However, views become significantly more cautious when turning to the global level. **Only 38% of respondents report feeling optimistic about the future of the world**, marking a substantial decline of six percentage points since November 2025, while 58% express pessimism (+6 pp).

QA12 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** (EU27) (%)

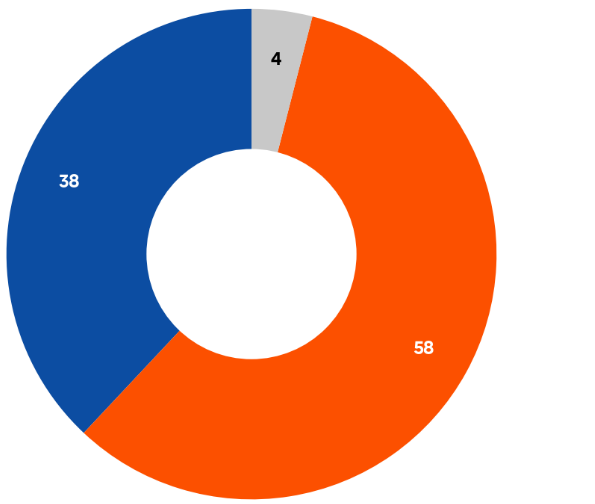


The persistence and strengthening of pessimism regarding the future of the world suggests that global uncertainties and challenges continue to weigh heavily on public sentiment. This deterioration at the global level contrasts with the relative stability observed for personal outlooks, as well as outlook on national and European levels. Such a pattern indicates that while Europeans retain confidence in their immediate circumstances and, to a certain extent, in national and European frameworks, they remain increasingly concerned about developments at the international level. These concerns are likely to shape broader perceptions, influencing how citizens prioritise issues and how they assess the role of institutions, including the European Union, in responding to global challenges.

Outlook on the future of the world

Public perceptions of the future of the world are characterised by a clear predominance of pessimism, reflecting the accumulation of global challenges currently facing citizens. Across the European Union, respondents express lower levels of optimism about the future of the world than any other level considered.

QA12.4 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...? –** The world (EU27) (%)



Total 'Optimistic'	▼6
Total 'Pessimistic'	▲6
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

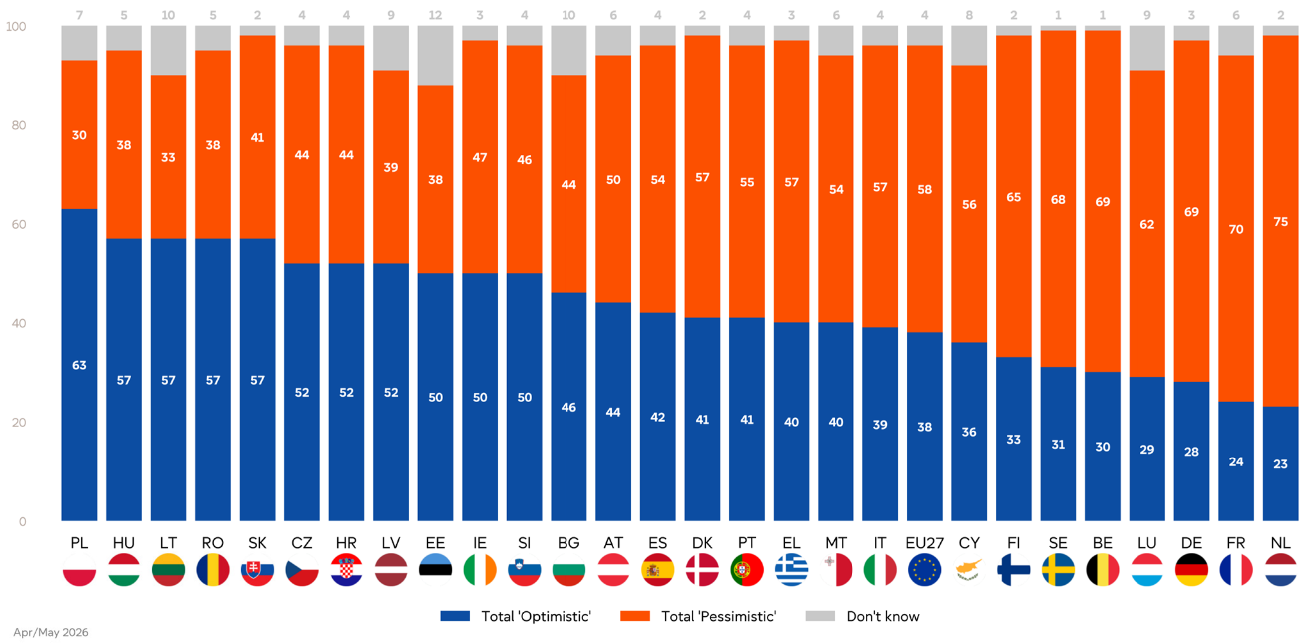
Apr/May 2026

At EU level, fewer than four in ten respondents (38%) say they feel optimistic about the future of the world, marking a noticeable decline of six percentage points compared with the previous survey. This optimism remains limited in intensity, with only a small proportion describing themselves as very optimistic (5%). In contrast, a substantial majority of Europeans (58%) report feeling pessimistic about the future of the world, an increase of six percentage points compared with November 2025, including a notable share who express strong pessimism (15%, + 4pp).

Across Member States, perceptions of the future of the world vary considerably, revealing substantial differences in levels of both optimism and pessimism. More broadly, at least half of respondents are optimistic in 11 Member States. The highest levels of optimism are observed in Poland (63%), followed by Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia and Romania (all 57%), where clear majorities of respondents express a positive outlook.

However, such optimism remains far from widespread. **At least half of the respondents are pessimistic in 15 Member States**. The highest levels of pessimism about the future of the world are recorded in the Netherlands (75%), France (70%), Germany and Belgium (both 69%). In these countries, pessimistic assessments clearly outweigh optimism, underlining the extent to which concerns about global developments are shaping public sentiment.

QA12.4 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...? –** The world (%)



Differences in optimism and pessimism regarding the future of the world are also apparent across **socio-demographic groups**, although the strength of these patterns varies by characteristic.

In terms of **gender**, there are no differences in perceptions. Men and women report identical levels of optimism (38% in both groups) and very similar levels of pessimism (58% among men and 57% among women).

Age is a more differentiating factor. Younger respondents tend to be more optimistic, while pessimism gradually increases with age. Among those aged 15–24, same shares express optimism and pessimism (48%). However, optimism declines among respondents aged 25–39 (38% vs 58% pessimistic) and those aged 40–54 (40% vs 56%). The most negative outlook is observed among respondents aged 55 and over, where only 34% feel optimistic and a clear majority (61%) report pessimism.

Differences according to **education level** are present but relatively moderate. Respondents with a medium level of education are the most optimistic (41%), while those with a low level of education report lower optimism (34%) and higher pessimism (60%). Among highly educated respondents, optimism stands at 38%, and pessimism at 59%, suggesting that while education is associated with some variation, a predominantly cautious outlook prevails across all educational groups.

A particularly strong relationship is observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Those experiencing financial difficulties most of the time are significantly more pessimistic: only 26% express optimism, while 70% report pessimism. This contrasts with respondents who almost never or never face such difficulties, among whom optimism rises to 39% and pessimism declines to 56%. Respondents facing occasional financial difficulties fall between these groups (37% optimistic vs 59% pessimistic). These findings highlight the strong link between economic vulnerability and negative expectations about global developments.

Finally, perceptions of the future of the world are also closely linked to respondents' **image of the European Union**. Respondents with a positive image of the European Union display balanced views, with 49% expressing optimism and 48% pessimism. In contrast, among respondents with a negative image of the EU, optimism drops sharply to 17%, while 79% report pessimism, indicating a highly negative outlook. Those with a neutral image fall between these groups (34% optimistic vs 60% pessimistic). This pattern highlights a strong association between attitudes toward the EU and perceptions of global prospects.

QA12.4 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** – The world (% – EU)

	Total 'Optimistic'	Total 'Pessimistic'	Don't know
EU27	38	58	4
Gender			
Man	38	58	4
Woman	38	57	5
Age			
15-24	48	48	4
25-39	38	58	4
40-54	40	56	4
55+	34	61	5
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	34	60	6
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	41	55	4
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	38	59	3
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	43	54	3
Managers	40	57	3
Other white collars	40	56	4
Manual workers	40	55	5
House persons	39	57	4
Unemployed	32	63	5
Retired	32	63	5
Students	46	51	3
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	26	70	4
From time to time	37	59	4
Almost never / Never	39	56	5
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	38	57	5
Small or middle sized town	36	60	4
Large town	42	55	3
Image of the EU			
Positive	49	48	3
Neutral	34	60	6
Negative	17	79	4
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	42	54	4
Not satisfied	22	73	5

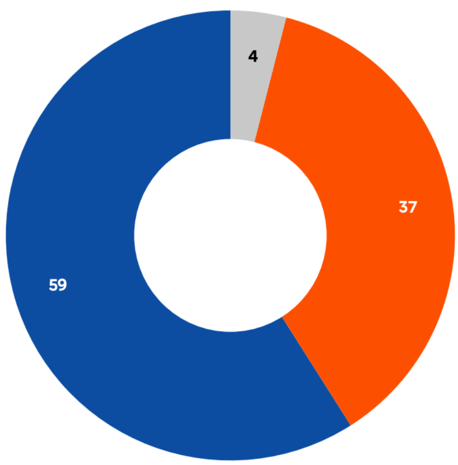
Outlook on the future of the European Union

Compared with their perceptions of global developments, **Europeans express a more positive outlook on the future of the European Union**.

At EU level, a clear majority of respondents (59%) say they are **optimistic about the future of the European Union**, representing a relative stability compared with the previous wave in November 2025. Within this group, most describe themselves as fairly optimistic (51%), while a smaller share report being very optimistic (8%). In contrast, 37% of Europeans express pessimism about the EU's future, including both fairly and very pessimistic views, while a small minority (4%) say they do not know.

Compared with November 2025, perceptions of the future of the European Union remain relatively stable. Optimism has increased by two percentage points (from 57% to 59%), while pessimism has declined by two points (from 39% to 37%). These limited variations indicate that views have not changed significantly over the period. Overall, this suggests that, despite a broader context marked by uncertainty, particularly regarding the future of the world, Europeans' confidence in the European Union remains stable, with no substantial shift in sentiment.

QA12.3 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** – The EU (EU27) (%)



Total 'Optimistic'	▲2
Total 'Pessimistic'	▼2
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

Total 'Optimistic'
Total 'Pessimistic'
Don't know

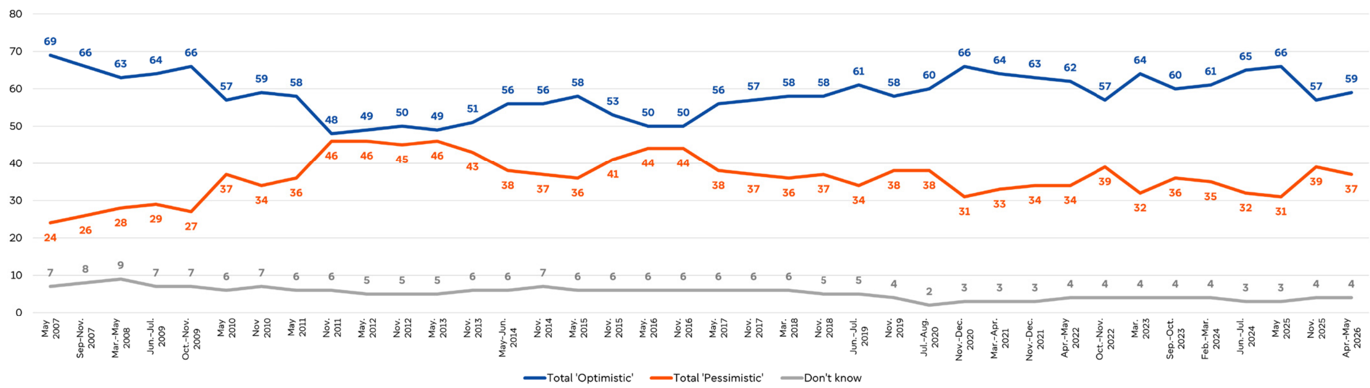
Apr/May 2026

Looking at the **longer-term trend from 2007 to 2026** places recent developments in optimism in a broader historical perspective. Following the decline observed between May 2025 and November 2025, the latest results indicate a relative stability in optimism, which now reaches 59% in April/May 2026. This level remains broadly consistent with those recorded in the period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, when optimism generally fluctuated at comparable levels between 2017 and 2019.

Long-term data also show that more pronounced pessimism has been observed in earlier periods. The highest levels occurred between 2011 and 2013, when up to 46% of respondents expressed negative views about the future of the European Union, reflecting a period of heightened economic and political uncertainty.

In this context, the recent evolutions are part of a broader pattern of cyclical fluctuations in public sentiment linked to external shocks, uncertainty, and public perceptions of EU action.

QA12.3 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** – The EU (% - EU)

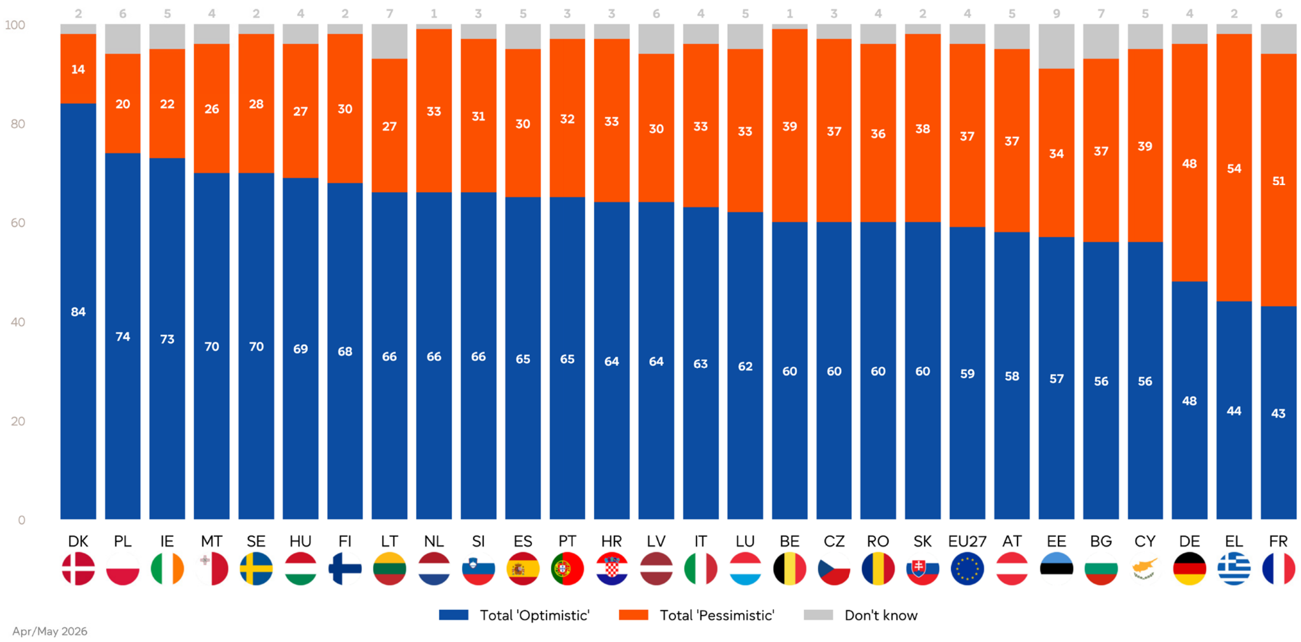


Optimism about the future of the European Union continues to vary across Member States, with substantial differences in the balance between positive and negative views. The highest levels of optimism are recorded in Denmark (84%), followed by Poland (74%), and Ireland (73%), where clear majorities of respondents express confidence in the EU's future.

However, this optimism is not universal. In several Member States, pessimistic views are more prominent. The lowest levels of optimism are observed in France (43% optimistic vs 51% pessimistic), Greece (44% vs 54%), and Germany (48% vs 48%), where optimism is either clearly outweighed by pessimism or stands at parity.

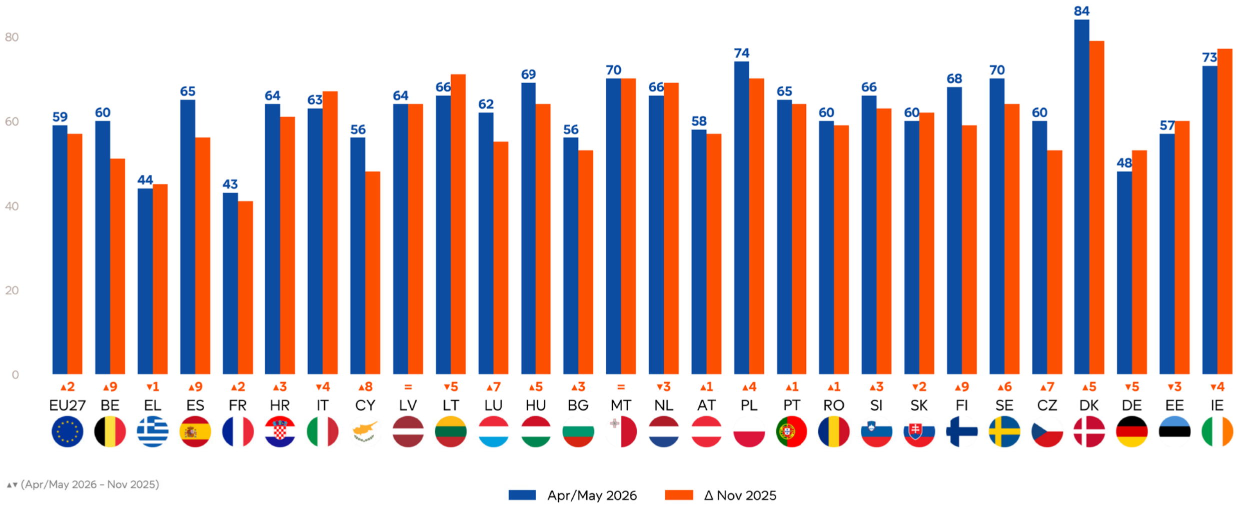
These patterns highlight significant national variations in public perceptions of the EU's prospects. While many Member States maintain relatively high levels of confidence, others display more divided or negative views, reflecting differing national contexts and experiences across the European Union.

QA12.3 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** – The EU (%)



Since November 2025, the most significant increases in optimism have been recorded in Belgium, Spain and Finland (+9 percentage points), Cyprus (+8 pp), Czechia and Luxembourg (+7 pp), indicating a marked shift towards more positive views in these countries. While declines are less prominent and recorded only in eight Member States, most notably in Lithuania and Germany (–5 pp).

QA12.3 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** – The EU – Total 'Optimistic' (%)



Differences in optimism and pessimism regarding the future of the European Union are apparent across **socio-demographic groups**, although the strength of these patterns varies by characteristic.

Differences by **gender** are minimal. Men and women display very similar levels of optimism (58% and 59% respectively) and pessimism (38% and 36%), indicating that gender does not play a significant role in shaping views on the EU's future.

Clearer variations are observed across **age** groups, with younger respondents expressing more positive views. Among those aged 15–24, seven in ten respondents (70%) are optimistic, while only 26% express pessimism, representing by far the most positive outlook. Optimism declines steadily with age, reaching 54% among those aged 55 and over, among whom pessimism is correspondingly higher (41%). This pattern suggests that confidence in the EU's future is stronger among younger generations, while older respondents adopt a more cautious stance.

Differences by **education level** are also evident. Optimism increases with educational attainment, from 49% among respondents with a low level of education to 60% among those with a medium level and 65% among the highly educated, while pessimism follows the opposite pattern. Respondents with lower levels of education are more likely to express pessimism (44%) and are also more likely to answer "don't know" (7%), indicating a less defined or more uncertain position.

A strong relationship is observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Those who report difficulties paying their bills most of the time are significantly less optimistic (40%) and more likely to express pessimism (55%). By comparison, respondents who almost never or never face such difficulties are much more positive (62% optimistic vs 34% pessimistic). Those experiencing occasional difficulties fall in between (52% vs 43%). This pattern underscores the significant impact of economic conditions on expectations of the EU's future.

Attitudinal variables display the strongest contrasts. Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are overwhelmingly optimistic, with 81% expressing optimism and only 17% pessimism, making them by far the most positive group. In contrast, among those with a negative image of the EU, only 13% express optimism, while 83% are pessimistic, indicating a highly negative outlook. Respondents with a neutral image fall between these groups (49% optimistic vs 45% pessimistic). This finding emphasises the fact that public sentiment towards the EU is a key determinant of expectations about its future.

QA12.3 Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...? – The EU (% – EU)

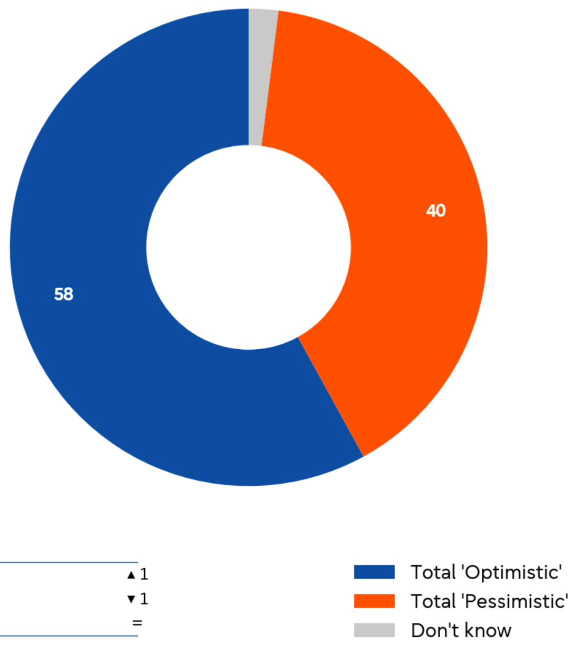
	Total 'Optimistic'	Total 'Pessimistic'	Don't know
EU27	59	37	4
Gender			
Man	58	38	4
Woman	59	36	5
Age			
15-24	70	26	4
25-39	61	36	3
40-54	59	38	3
55+	54	41	5
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	49	44	7
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	60	36	4
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	65	32	3
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	59	38	3
Managers	65	32	3
Other white collars	62	35	3
Manual workers	57	39	4
House persons	55	38	7
Unemployed	51	43	6
Retired	53	42	5
Students	69	27	4
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	40	55	5
From time to time	52	43	5
Almost never / Never	62	34	4
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	55	40	5
Small or middle sized town	58	38	4
Large town	64	33	3
Image of the EU			
Positive	81	17	2
Neutral	49	45	6
Negative	13	83	4
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	63	33	4
Not satisfied	34	61	5

Outlook on the future of the country

Perceptions of the future of one's own country are in the intermediate position between personal expectations and broader views of the European Union and the world. While optimism at the national level remains lower than at the personal level, it is nevertheless clearly stronger than perceptions of the future of the world, reflecting a more cautious but still relatively positive outlook.

At EU level, **a majority of respondents (58%) express optimism about the future of their country**, marking stability compared with the previous wave (+1 percentage point). Within this group, most describe themselves as fairly optimistic (49%, +1 pp), while a smaller share report being very optimistic (9%, unchanged). In contrast, 40% of Europeans express pessimism (-1 pp), while a very small proportion remain undecided (2%). These results confirm a pattern of moderate optimism tempered by continued concern.

QA12.2 Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...? – (OUR COUNTRY) (EU27) (%)



Total 'Optimistic'	▲1
Total 'Pessimistic'	▼1
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

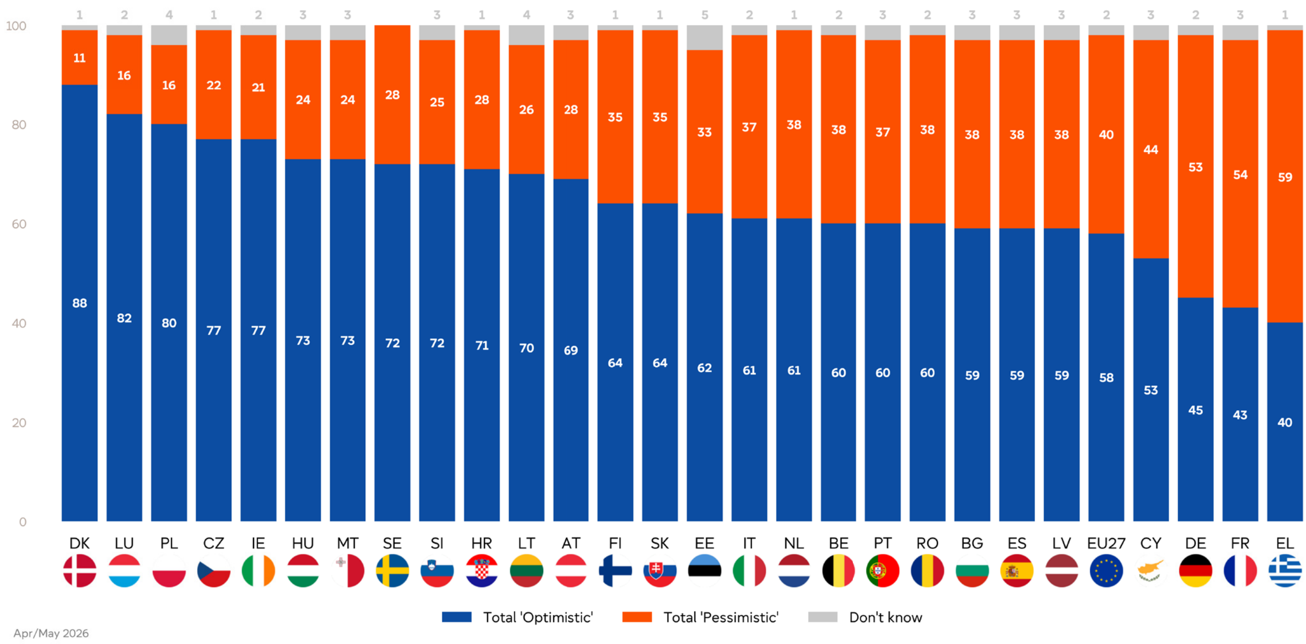
Apr/May 2026

Across Member States, perceptions of the future of one's own country vary widely, although optimism prevails in most cases. In 24 Member States, the positive outlook outweighs the negative one. The highest levels of optimism are observed in Denmark (88%), followed by Luxembourg (82%) and Poland (80%), where very large majorities of respondents express a positive outlook.

However, optimism is not universal. In a smaller group of countries, views are more divided or tend towards pessimism. The lowest levels of optimism are recorded in Greece (40% optimistic vs 59% pessimistic), France (43% vs 54%), and Germany (45% vs 53%), where pessimism clearly outweighs optimism.

These findings highlight significant national differences in how citizens assess their country's future. While many Member States display relatively strong confidence, others show more cautious or negative perceptions, reflecting varying national contexts and challenges across the European Union.

QA12.2 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** – (OUR COUNTRY) (%)



Perceptions of the future of one's own country vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although optimism remains the majority view in most categories.

Differences by **gender** are negligible. Men and women report almost identical levels of optimism (58% and 57% respectively) and equal levels of pessimism (40% in both groups), indicating that gender does not significantly influence views on national prospects.

More marked differences emerge across **age** groups. Younger respondents tend to adopt a more positive outlook, with 65% of those aged 15–24 expressing optimism, compared with 33% reporting pessimism. This contrasts with the oldest group, where optimism is lower (55% among those aged 55 and over) and pessimism higher (42%). Respondents aged 25–39 and 40–54 occupy an intermediate position, both with 58% optimism and 40% pessimism, suggesting a gradual shift towards more cautious views with increasing age.

Clear differences are also observed by **education level**. Respondents with a low level of education are less optimistic (51%) and more pessimistic (46%) than those with medium or high levels of education. Among respondents with medium and high levels of education, optimism rises to 60%, while pessimism declines to 38%, indicating a more positive outlook among more highly educated groups.

A strong relationship is evident when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Among those experiencing difficulties paying their bills most of the time, optimism drops to 34%, while 64% express pessimism, indicating a markedly negative outlook. In contrast, respondents who almost never or never face such difficulties are significantly more positive (62% optimistic vs 36% pessimistic). Those experiencing occasional difficulties fall in between (51% vs 46%). This highlights the close link between economic vulnerability and perceptions of national prospects.

Attitudinal variables show the strongest variations. Respondents with a positive **image of the European Union** are much more optimistic about their country's future (73% vs 25% pessimistic), while those with a negative image of the EU display a markedly more pessimistic outlook (25% optimistic vs 73% pessimistic). Respondents with a neutral image are more evenly divided (51% optimistic vs 46% pessimistic). This strong association suggests that attitudes towards the EU are closely intertwined with broader confidence in national trajectories.

QA12.2 Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...? – (OUR COUNTRY) (% – EU)

	Total 'Optimistic'	Total 'Pessimistic'	Don't know
EU27	58	40	2
Gender			
Man	58	40	2
Woman	57	40	3
Age			
15-24	65	33	2
25-39	58	40	2
40-54	58	40	2
55+	55	42	3
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	51	46	3
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	60	38	2
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	60	38	2
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	59	40	1
Managers	63	35	2
Other white collars	61	37	2
Manual workers	57	41	2
House persons	57	41	2
Unemployed	46	51	3
Retired	54	43	3
Students	65	33	2
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	34	64	2
From time to time	51	46	3
Almost never / Never	62	36	2
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	57	40	3
Small or middle sized town	57	41	2
Large town	60	38	2
Image of the EU			
Positive	73	25	2
Neutral	51	46	3
Negative	25	73	2
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	64	34	2
Not satisfied	32	66	2

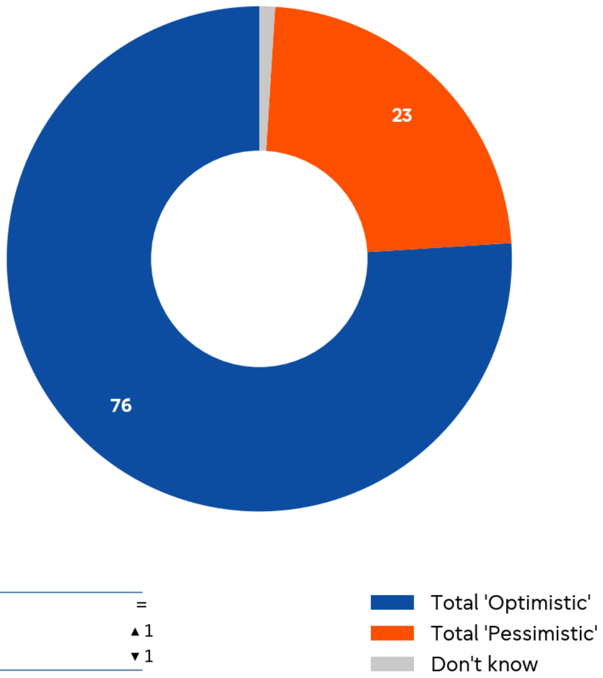
Outlook on one's own and family's future

Respondents remain most positive when considering their own and their family's future. These evaluations reflect a strong sense of personal confidence and perceived control over immediate life circumstances, contrasting with the more cautious expectations expressed when assessing broader national, European, and global developments. This gap between personal and wider outlooks highlights the importance of proximity in shaping perceptions of the future.

At EU level, respondents are **significantly more optimistic about their personal future than about any other sphere assessed**. Overall, 76% express optimism, including 59% who say they are fairly optimistic and 17% who describe themselves as very optimistic, while 23% report pessimism (+1 pp), and a very small proportion remain undecided (1%). This high level of personal confidence stands in clear contrast with attitudes towards broader contexts: optimism regarding the future of the country stands at 58%, the European Union at 59%, and the world at just 38%.

Taken together, these findings confirm a pronounced gradient of optimism, which declines progressively as the perspective shifts from the personal level to wider, more distant contexts.

QA12.1 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...? –** Your family and yourself (EU27) (%)



Total 'Optimistic'	=
Total 'Pessimistic'	▲1
Don't know	▼1

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

Apr/May 2026

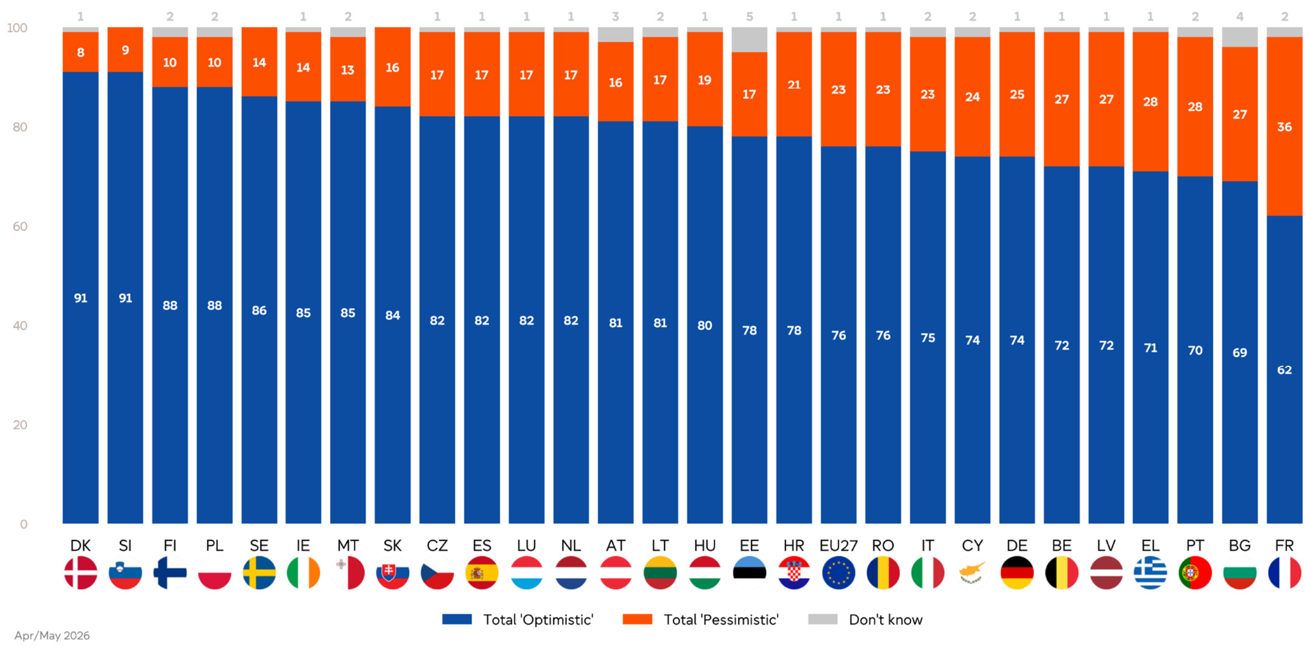
Across Member States, optimism about one's own and one's family's future remains widespread and relatively consistent. In all countries, a clear majority of respondents express a positive outlook, underlining the strong prevalence of personal optimism across the European Union. The highest levels of optimism are recorded in Denmark and Slovenia (91% each), followed by Finland and Poland (both 88%) and Sweden (86%), where close to nine in ten respondents report confidence in their personal and family prospects.

While some variations persist, the differences between countries are more limited than in the previous wave. In particular, France now displays levels of optimism that are more closely aligned with the EU average, with 62% of respondents expressing optimism and 36% pessimism (compared with 55% of optimism vs 43% pessimism in November 2025).

More generally, lower levels of optimism are also recorded in countries such as Bulgaria (69%), Portugal (70%), and Greece (71%), although in all cases a clear majority of respondents remain optimistic.

Overall, these findings confirm that optimism at the personal level is not only high but also relatively evenly distributed across Member States.

QA12.1 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** – Your family and yourself (%)



Perceptions of the future of one's own and one's family's future vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although optimism remains very high in almost all of them.

Differences by **gender** are limited. Men are slightly more likely than women to express optimism (77% compared with 75%), while levels of pessimism remain similar (22% and 23% respectively). These small differences indicate that gender plays only a minor role in shaping personal outlook.

Clearer variations emerge across **age** groups, with optimism highest among younger respondents. Among those aged 15–24, 84% express optimism, compared with 15% who report pessimism, representing the most positive outlook across all groups. Optimism gradually declines with age, reaching 78% among those aged 25–39 and 72% among respondents aged 55 and over, among whom pessimism is highest (26%). This pattern suggests that younger respondents tend to be more confident about their personal future, while older groups adopt a somewhat more cautious view.

Differences according to **education level** are also evident. Respondents with a low level of education are less likely to express optimism (69%) and more likely to report pessimism (29%) than those with medium and high levels of education. Among respondents with medium and high levels of education, optimism rises to 78% and 79% respectively, while pessimism decreases to around 20–21%, indicating a stronger sense of personal confidence among more highly educated groups.

A strong relationship is observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, optimism drops substantially to 50%, while 49% express pessimism, resulting in a nearly balanced outlook. By contrast, respondents who almost never or never face financial difficulties are markedly more optimistic, with 81% expressing optimism and only 18% pessimism. Those who experience occasional difficulties fall between these groups (69% optimistic vs 29% pessimistic). This again highlights the close link between economic conditions and personal confidence about the future.

Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are particularly optimistic about their personal future (87% optimistic vs 12% pessimistic), while those with a negative image of the EU display a more divided outlook (51% optimistic vs 46% pessimistic). Respondents with a neutral image fall between these groups (73% optimistic vs 25% pessimistic), highlighting the link between broader attitudes and personal expectations.

Overall, while optimism is consistently high across all socio-demographic groups, age, education, financial situation, and image of EU play a key role in shaping its intensity. In particular, economic vulnerability is associated with markedly lower levels of optimism, while more favourable conditions correspond with higher levels of confidence about the future.

QA12.1 **Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of ...?** – Your family and yourself (% – EU)

	Total 'Optimistic'	Total 'Pessimistic'	Don't know
EU27	76	23	1
Gender			
Man	77	22	1
Woman	75	23	2
Age			
15-24	84	15	1
25-39	78	21	1
40-54	77	22	1
55+	72	26	2
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	69	29	2
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	78	21	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	79	20	1
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	79	20	1
Managers	82	17	1
Other white collars	79	20	1
Manual workers	77	22	1
House persons	74	25	1
Unemployed	68	30	2
Retired	70	28	2
Students	83	16	1
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	50	49	1
From time to time	69	29	2
Almost never / Never	81	18	1
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	75	23	2
Small or middle sized town	75	24	1
Large town	80	19	1
Image of the EU			
Positive	87	12	1
Neutral	73	25	2
Negative	51	46	3
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	82	17	1
Not satisfied	48	50	2

2 FACING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

2. FACING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

This chapter examines Europeans' views on the role of the European Union in addressing global challenges, protecting its citizens, and strengthening its position on the world stage. A large majority of Europeans continue to regard the European Union as a place of stability in a troubled world, reinforcing its role as a source of reassurance in an uncertain global environment. It highlights a broadly shared expectation for a more prominent and assertive EU role, in a context marked by geopolitical instability, economic pressures, and evolving security risks.

Citizens also identify key priority areas for the EU's strategic focus, including defence and security, energy independence, and economic competitiveness. Overall, findings point to strong and consistent support for a more united, protective and strategically focused European Union. While broad agreement exists across countries and socio-demographic groups, variations persist in the relative importance attached to specific priorities and in the degree of support for strengthening the EU's capacities.

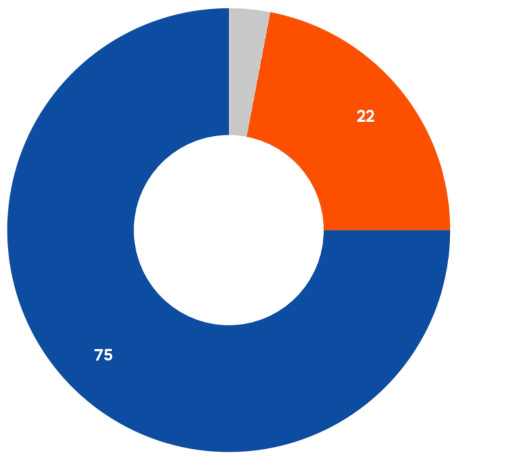
The EU as a place of stability

A large majority of Europeans agree that the European Union represents a place of stability in a troubled world. At EU level, three-quarters of respondents (75%) agree with the statement. In contrast, 22% of Europeans disagree, while a small minority remain undecided (3%).

Compared with the results obtained in October and November 2025, perceptions have improved markedly, with agreement increasing by eight percentage points and disagreement declining by the same margin. This represents a significant shift in public opinion, suggesting a strengthening perception of the European Union as a place of stability.

These results indicate that, in a context characterised by uncertainty at the global level, **the European Union is widely seen as providing a degree of stability and reassurance**. Although not universally shared, this perception is held by a clear majority of Europeans and reflects a comparatively positive evaluation of the EU's role in the current geopolitical environment.

QASD **Please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with the following statement** – The European Union is a place of stability in a troubled world (EU27) (%)



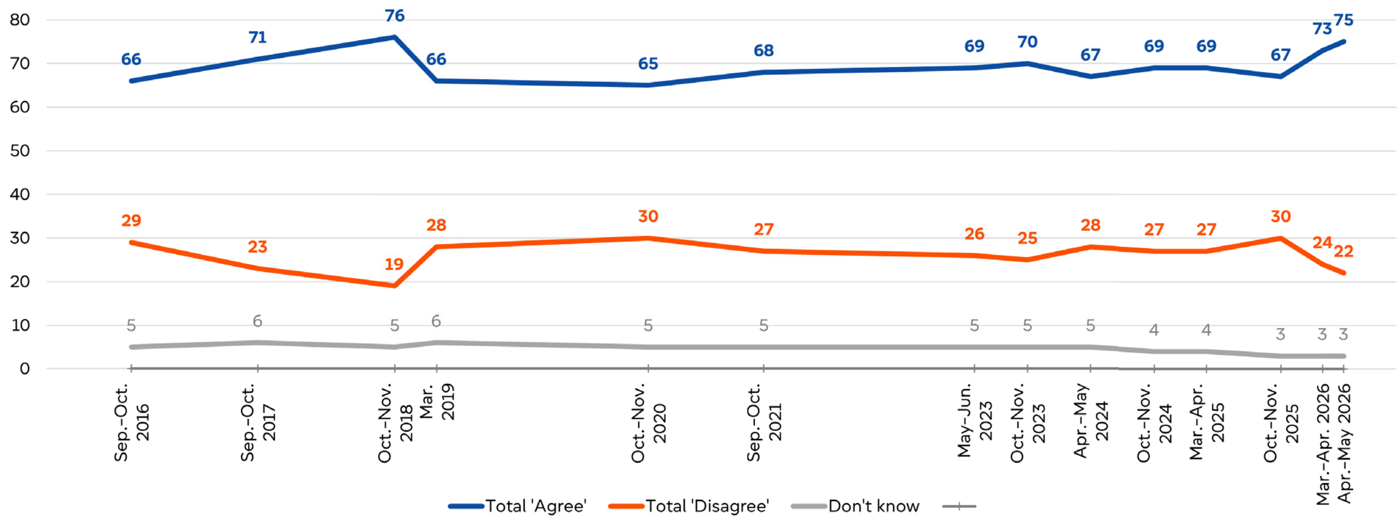
Total 'Agree'	▲8
Total 'Disagree'	▼8
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Oct/Nov 2025)

Apr/May 2026

Looking at the **longer-term trend from 2016 to 2026** places recent developments in perceptions of the European Union as a source of stability in a broader perspective. Following relatively stable results between 2019 and 2025, the latest waves indicate a marked increase in agreement, which now reaches 75% in April-May 2026. This represents a substantial rise compared with October-November 2025 (+8 pp points). This suggests a clear reinforcement of the view that the European Union represents a place of stability in a troubled world, in a context heavily influenced by geopolitical tensions.

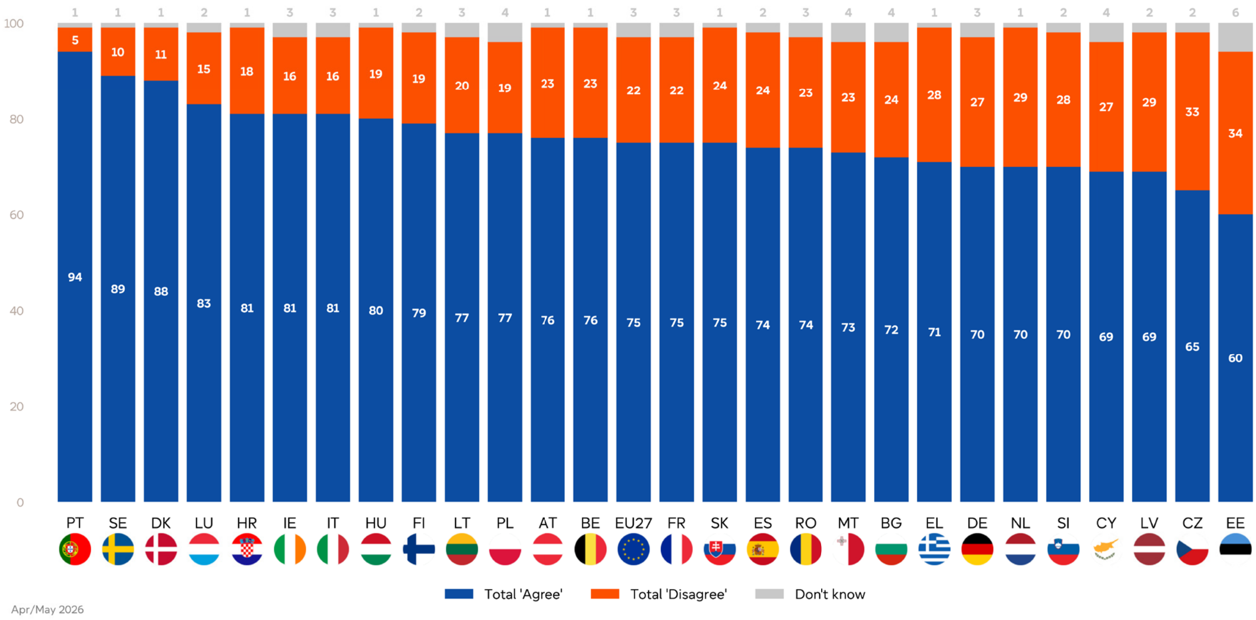
QASD **Please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with the following statement** – The European Union is a place of stability in a troubled world (% - EU)



Across Member States, a large majority of respondents agree that the European Union represents a place of stability in a troubled world, although the level of agreement varies across countries.

The highest levels of agreement are observed in Portugal (94%), followed by Sweden (89%) and Denmark (88%), where nearly nine in ten respondents endorse the statement. Agreement is less pronounced in a smaller number of Member States. The lowest levels are recorded in Estonia (60% agreement vs 34% disagreement), followed by Czechia (65% vs 33%), Latvia and Cyprus (both 69% vs 27-29%).

QASD **Please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with the following statement** – The European Union is a place of stability in a troubled world (%)

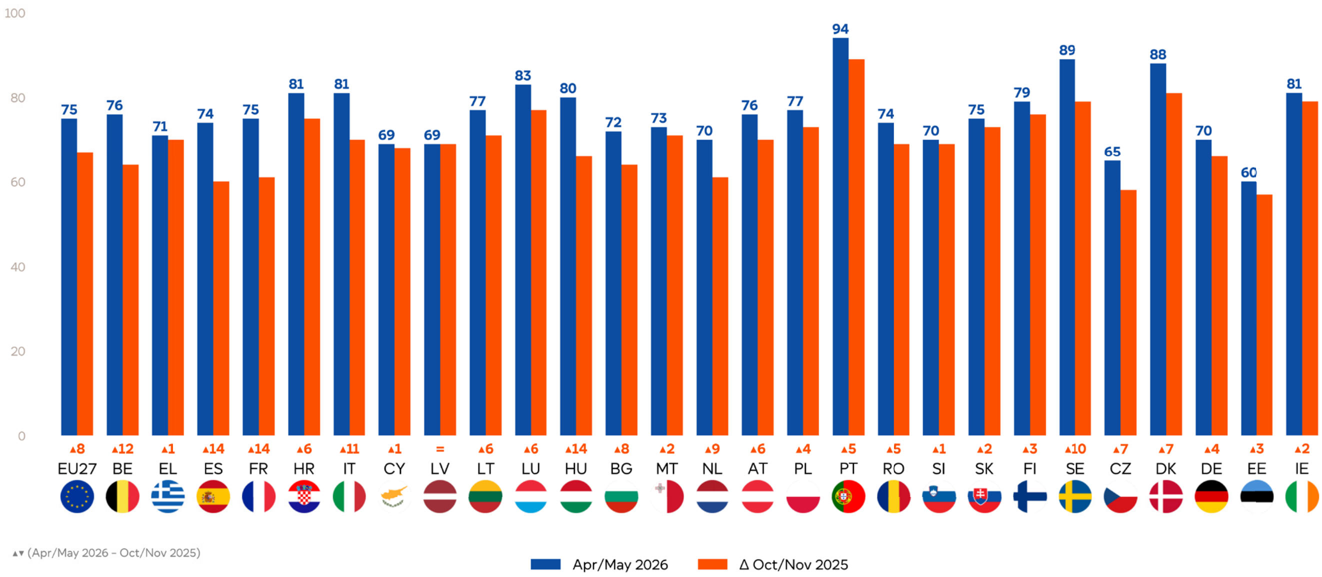


Changes between Autumn 2025 and Spring 2026 show a broad improvement in the perception of the European Union as a place of stability, although the extent of this evolution varies across Member States. The most substantial increases in agreement are observed in Spain, France and Hungary (+14 percentage points) and Belgium (+12 pp), pointing to a reinforcement of positive perceptions across different parts of the European Union.

Overall, these developments indicate that the increase observed at EU level is driven by a widespread and often substantial rise in agreement across many Member States, rather than by isolated national shifts. The consistency of this upward movement further reinforces the interpretation of a significant strengthening in the perception of the European Union as a place of stability in the current context.

QASD

Please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with the following statement – The European Union is a place of stability in a troubled world – Total 'Agree' (%)



Perceptions of the European Union as a place of stability in a troubled world vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although agreement remains clearly predominant in all categories.

Differences by **gender** are minimal. Men and women display almost identical levels of agreement (75% and 76% respectively) and similar levels of disagreement (23% and 21%), indicating that gender does not significantly influence perceptions of the EU as a place of stability.

More pronounced differences are observed across **age** groups, with younger respondents expressing stronger agreement. Among those aged 15–24, 81% agree that the EU is a place of stability, compared with 16% who disagree, representing the highest level of agreement across age groups. Agreement declines progressively with age, reaching 73% among those aged 55 and over, among whom disagreement is correspondingly higher (24%). This pattern suggests that younger Europeans are more likely to perceive the EU as a place of stability.

There are also differences according to the **education level**. Agreement increases with educational attainment, from 69% among respondents with a low level of education to 81% among the highly educated, while disagreement decreases from 26% to 18% respectively. This indicates that more highly educated respondents are more likely to view the EU as providing stability.

A clear relationship is observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who have difficulties paying their bills most of the time, agreement drops to 63%, while 33% disagree. In contrast, among those who almost never or never experience financial difficulties, 78% agree and only 20% disagree, with those facing occasional difficulties falling in between (73% vs 25%). This highlights the link between economic conditions and perceptions of the EU as a place of stability.

Attitudinal factors show the strongest contrasts. Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** overwhelmingly agree (91% vs 8% disagree), whereas those with a negative image of the EU are far more divided, with only 39% agreeing and 59% disagreeing. Respondents with a neutral image fall between these extremes (69% vs 26%). This highlights a strong association between general perceptions of the EU and views on its role as a place of stability.

QASD **Please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with the following statement** – The European Union is a place of stability in a troubled world (% – EU)

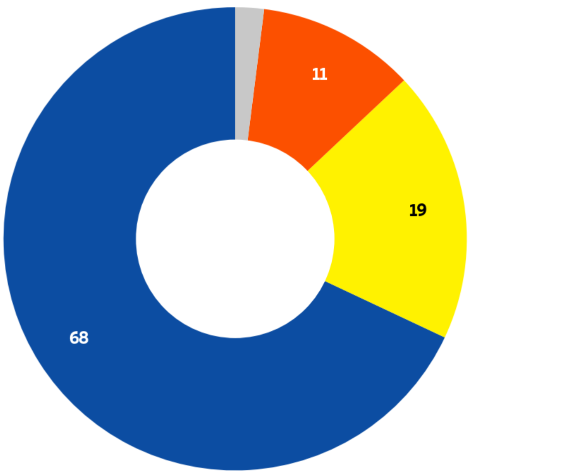
	Total 'Agree'	Total 'Disagree'	Don't know
EU27	75	22	3
Gender			
Man	75	23	2
Woman	76	21	3
Age			
15-24	81	16	3
25-39	77	21	2
40-54	74	24	2
55+	73	24	3
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	69	26	5
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	76	22	2
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	81	18	1
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	74	25	1
Managers	81	18	1
Other white collars	79	19	2
Manual workers	74	24	2
House persons	73	24	3
Unemployed	70	27	3
Retired	72	25	3
Students	83	14	3
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	63	33	4
From time to time	73	25	2
Almost never / Never	78	20	2
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	71	26	3
Small or middle sized town	76	22	2
Large town	80	18	2
Image of the EU			
Positive	91	8	1
Neutral	69	26	5
Negative	39	59	2
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	79	19	2
Not satisfied	62	34	4

Role of the EU to protect EU citizens

In a context characterised by heightened international tensions, geopolitical uncertainty, and evolving security risks, expectations regarding the European Union's role in protecting its citizens have become increasingly salient. Against this backdrop, respondents were asked whether they consider that the role of the European Union in protecting European citizens against global crises and security risks should become more important, remain the same, or become less important in the future.

A clear majority of Europeans consider that the role of the European Union in protecting citizens against global crises and security risks should become more important in the future. More than two thirds of respondents (68%) express this view, marking a relative stability compared with the previous wave (+2 percentage points). Around one fifth (19%) say that this role should stay the same (-3 pp), while just over one in ten (11%) believe it should become less important (+1 pp). These results point to consistently strong expectations regarding the EU's protective role, with only limited changes since November 2025.

QA9 **Would you say that – In the future, the role of the European Union to protect European citizens against global crises and security risks should...** (EU27) (%)

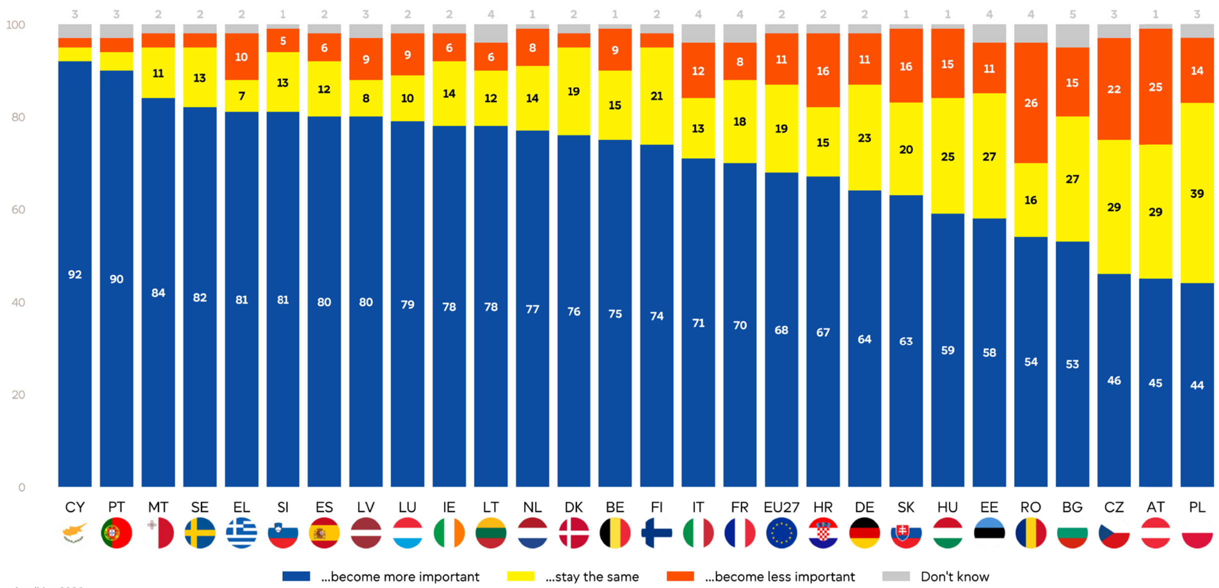


...become more important	▲ 2
...stay the same	▼ 3
...become less important	▲ 1
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

Apr/May 2026

QA9 **Would you say that – In the future, the role of the European Union to protect European citizens against global crises and security risks should...** (%)

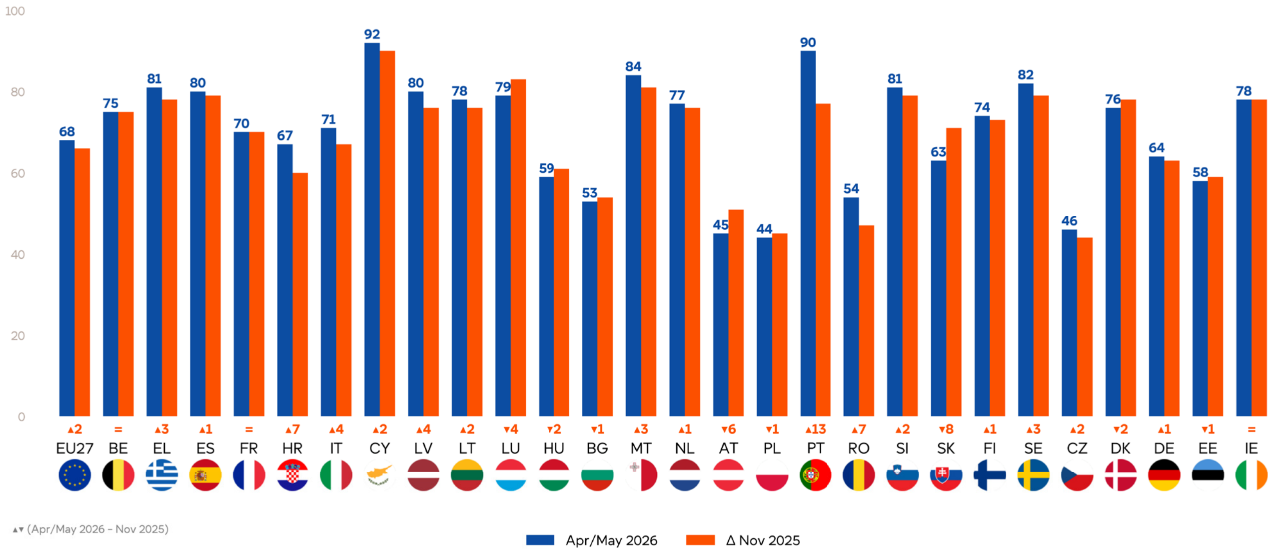


Apr/May 2026

In 24 Member States, a clear majority of respondents consider that the role of the European Union in protecting European citizens against global crises and security risks should become more important in the future. The highest levels are recorded in Cyprus (92%) and Portugal (90%), followed by Malta (84%), where very large majorities of respondents support strengthening the EU's protective role. At the other end of the scale, the lowest levels are recorded in Poland (44%), Austria (45%), and Czechia (46%). In these countries, while support for a stronger EU role is comparatively lower, it nonetheless remains the most frequently expressed view.

In most countries, the share of respondents who believe that the role of the European Union to protect European citizens should become more important in the future has only slightly changed since November 2025. The Member State where this proportion has increased significantly is Portugal (90%, +13 percentage points), followed by Croatia (67%, +7pp) and Romania (54%, +7pp). Conversely, significant decreases are observed in Slovakia (63%, -8 pp) and Austria (45%, –6 pp).

QA9 **Would you say that – In the future, the role of the European Union to protect European citizens against global crises and security risks should... –** become more important (%)



Expectations regarding the future role of the European Union in protecting citizens against global crises and security risks vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although a clear majority in almost all categories considers that this role should become more important.

Differences by **gender** are negligible. Men and women are equally likely to say that the EU's role should become more important (68% in both groups), while similar shares consider that it should remain the same (18–19%) or become less important (12% among men and 10% among women). This indicates that gender does not play a significant role in shaping expectations regarding the EU's protective function.

More variation is observed across **age** groups, although patterns remain relatively consistent. Younger respondents are slightly more likely to support a stronger role, with 71% of those aged 15–24 saying it should become more important, compared with 66% among those aged 55 and over. At the same time, older respondents are somewhat more likely to favour maintaining or reducing the role, with 12% of those aged 40 and over saying it should become less important, compared with 8–9% among younger groups. Overall, while differences are moderate, younger respondents tend to be slightly more supportive of strengthening the EU's role.

Differences by **education level** are more pronounced. Support for a stronger EU role increases with educational attainment, from 63% among respondents with a low level of education to 75% among those with a high level of education. At the same time, the share of respondents who believe the role should become less important declines from 12% to 7%. This suggests that more highly educated respondents are more inclined to support an enhanced EU role in this area.

No clear relationship is observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, 68% say the EU's role should become more important, while 69% of the respondents who almost never or never face financial difficulties are in favour of strengthening the EU's role.

Among respondents with a positive **image of the EU**, 79% say that its role should become more important, while only 5% believe it should become less important. In contrast, among those with a negative image of the EU, support drops to 48%, and nearly one-third (29%) consider that its role should become less important. Respondents with a neutral image fall between these groups (61% vs 11%). This highlights a strong association between general perceptions of the EU and expectations regarding its role to protect citizens.

QA9 **Would you say that – In the future, the role of the European Union to protect European citizens against global crises and security risks should...** (% – EU)

	...become more important	...stay the same	...become less important	Don't know
EU27	68	19	11	2
Gender				
Man	68	18	12	2
Woman	68	19	10	3
Age				
15-24	71	18	8	3
25-39	70	19	9	2
40-54	67	19	12	2
55+	66	19	12	3
Education level				
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	63	21	12	4
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	66	20	12	2
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	75	16	7	2
Socio-professional category				
Self-employed	70	15	14	1
Managers	72	18	8	2
Other white collars	66	21	11	2
Manual workers	66	20	12	2
House persons	67	19	11	3
Unemployed	71	16	9	4
Retired	65	20	11	4
Students	73	17	7	3
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	68	14	13	5
From time to time	64	18	15	3
Almost never / Never	69	20	9	2
Subjective urbanisation				
Rural area or village	66	19	12	3
Small or middle sized town	67	19	11	3
Large town	70	19	9	2
Image of the EU				
Positive	79	15	5	1
Neutral	61	24	11	4
Negative	48	18	29	5
Satisfaction with quality of life				
Satisfied	69	19	10	2
Not satisfied	60	18	17	5

Ways to face global challenges

The European Union is facing challenges that go beyond national and European borders. In this context, respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with a series of statements relating to the need for greater unity among Member States, enhanced capacity for the European Union to effectively address current global challenges, and promotion of the respect for international law by all countries.

At EU level, there is very strong agreement across all three statements, indicating a broadly shared view that closer cooperation and strengthened capacities at EU level are necessary to address current global challenges.

An overwhelming majority of respondents agree that **EU Member States should be more united to face current global challenges** (90%, +1 percentage point), while only a small minority express disagreement (8%, –1 pp). This finding highlights a consensus among Europeans on the need for greater unity.

Similarly, the same share agree that **the European Union should promote respect for international law by all countries** (90%), with just 7% expressing disagreement. This level of agreement points to strong support for a more assertive EU role in upholding international norms and values.

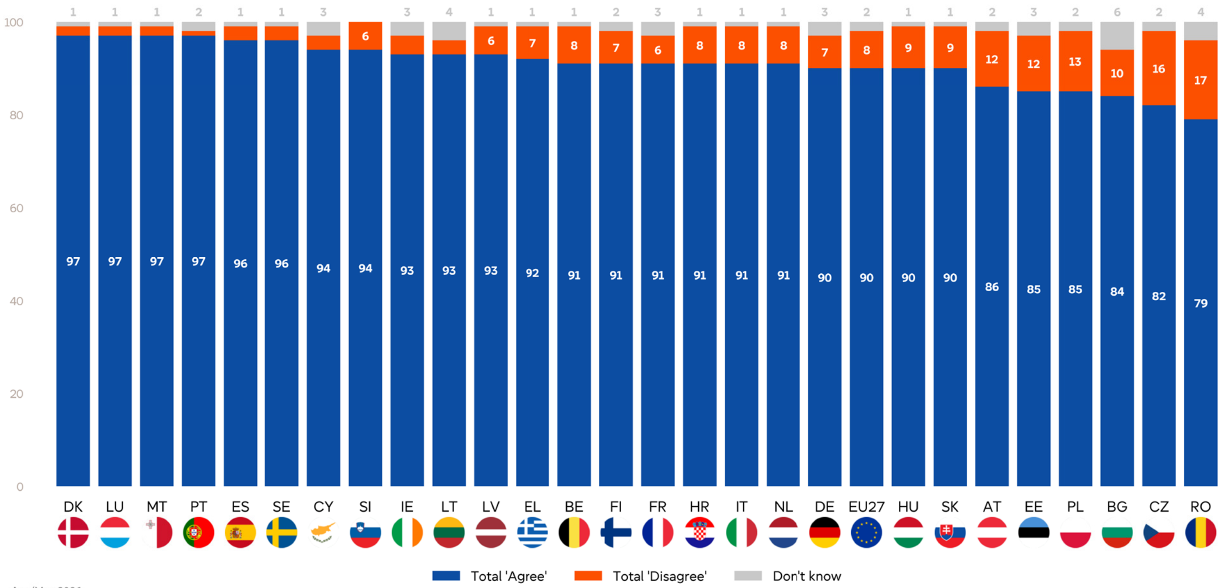
Support is somewhat lower, although still substantial, when it comes to the EU's internal capacity: 73% (unchanged) of respondents agree that **the European Union needs more means to face current global challenges**, while 21% disagree (–1 pp).

QA10 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (EU27) (%)

Across Member States, there is very strong and widespread agreement that **EU Member States should be more united to face current global challenges** with support exceeding 80% in 26 countries.

The highest levels of agreement are observed in Denmark, Luxembourg, Malta and Portugal (all at 97%). In contrast, agreement is somewhat lower though still clearly dominant in a smaller number of countries. The lowest levels are observed in Romania (79%), followed by Czechia (82%) and Bulgaria (84%).

QA10.1 **To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**
– EU Member States should be more united to face current global challenges (%)

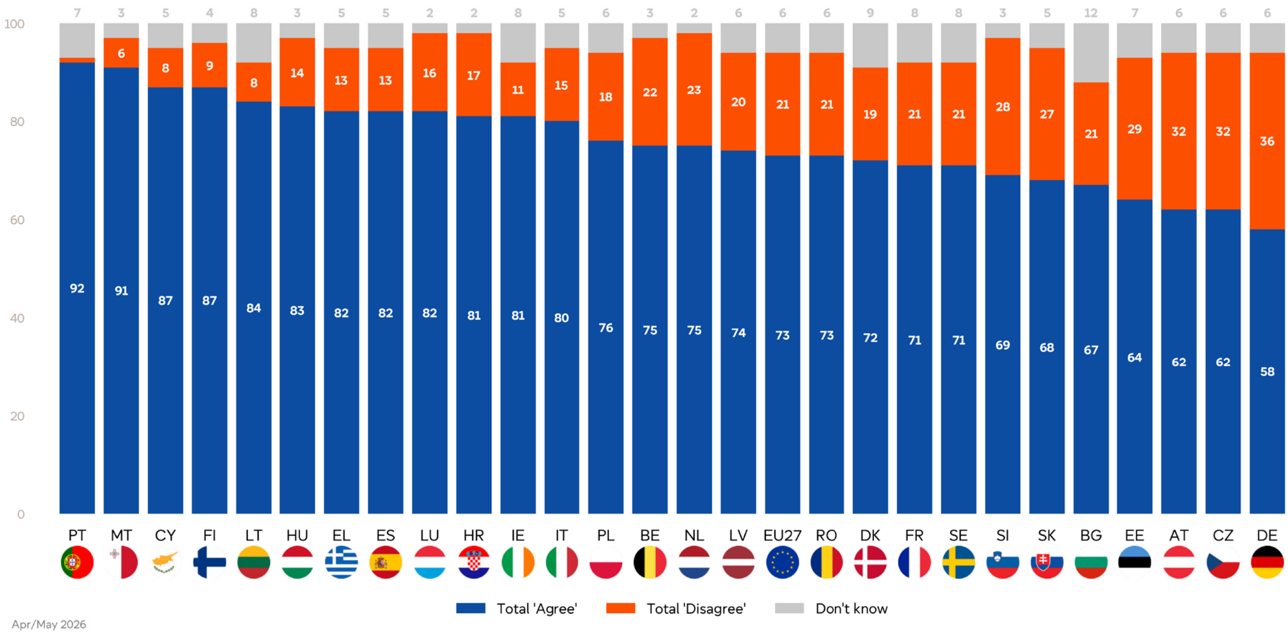


Apr/May 2026

Across Member States, a majority of respondents agree that **the European Union needs more means to face current global challenges**, although levels of agreement vary more markedly than for the previous item.

The highest levels of agreement are recorded in Portugal (92%), Malta (91%), followed by Cyprus and Finland (both 87%), where large majorities of respondents support strengthening the EU's capacity. At the other end of the scale, support is lower, though still represents the largest share of responses, in Germany (58%), followed by Czechia and Austria (both 62%), and Estonia (64%).

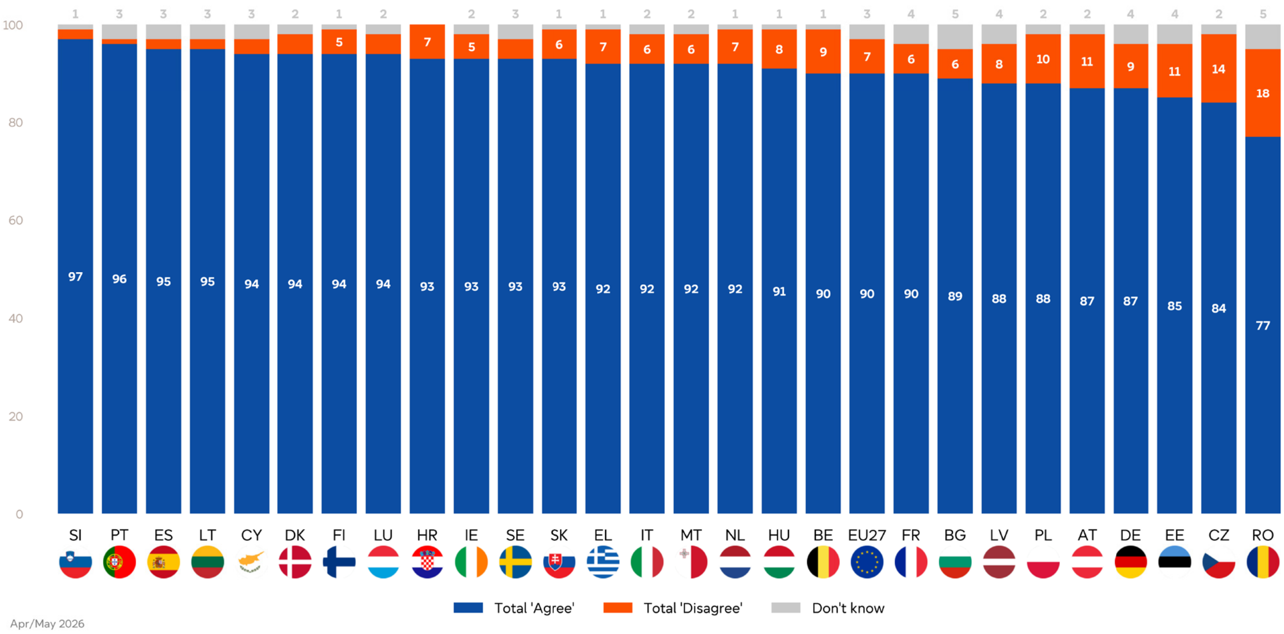
QA10.2 **To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**
– The European Union needs more means to face current global challenges (%)



Across Member States, there is very strong and consistent agreement that **the European Union should promote respect for international law by all countries**, with support exceeding 80% in 26 countries.

The highest levels of agreement are recorded in Slovenia (97%), followed by Portugal (96%), and Spain and Lithuania (both 95%), where support for this statement is nearly universal. At the other end of the scale, while agreement remains clearly predominant, levels are comparatively lower in Romania (77%), followed by Czechia (84%), and Germany (85%).

QA10.3 **To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**
– The European Union should promote the respect of international law by all countries (%)



Perceptions of the need for greater unity, stronger means, and a more active role for the European Union in promoting international law vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although high levels of agreement are observed across all three statements.

Differences by **gender** are limited across all items. Men and women express similarly high levels of agreement that Member States should be more united (89% and 91%) and that the EU should promote respect for international law (90% and 91%). For the statement on the EU needing more means, support is slightly higher among women (74% vs 71%), while men are somewhat more likely to express disagreement (24% vs 19%). Overall, gender plays only a minor role in shaping these views.

More variation emerges across **age** groups. Younger respondents are consistently more supportive across all three dimensions. Among those aged 15–39, 92% agree that Member States should be more united, and the same proportion that the EU should promote respect for international law, while 77–79% support providing the EU with more means. By contrast, agreement decreases slightly among older respondents, particularly for the question on resources, where agreement falls to 69% among those aged 55 and over, with higher levels of disagreement (24%). This indicates that while unity and core principles command near-universal support across all ages, views are more divided regarding the strengthening of EU capacities.

Differences according to **education level** appear especially for the question on resources. Agreement that Member States should be more united and that the EU should promote international law remains very high across all education groups, ranging from 88% to 93% and 86% to 93% respectively. However, support for the idea that the EU needs more means rises significantly with educational attainment, from 68% among those with a low level of education to 75% among medium and highly educated respondents, while disagreement declines accordingly. This suggests that more highly educated respondents are more supportive of strengthening the EU's operational capacity.

A different pattern emerges with respect to **financial situation**. While differences in agreement with providing the EU with more means to face challenges and that the EU should promote international law remains are limited across all groups (71–74% and 87–91% respectively), agreement that Member States should be more united is lower among those who face financial difficulties most of the time (83%, compared with 92% among those who almost never or never experience difficulties).

Attitudinal factors display the strongest contrasts across all three items. Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** show overwhelmingly high levels of agreement, reaching 97% for unity, 96% for promoting international law, and 84% for increasing means. In contrast, among those with a negative image of the EU, agreement remains high for unity (73%) and international law (77%) but drops significantly for the question of means (48%), where disagreement rises sharply (45%). This highlights that while broad principles such as unity and international law command wide support regardless of attitudes, more concrete measures such as increasing EU resources are more closely linked to overall perceptions of the European Union.

QA10.1 **To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**
– EU Member States should be more united to face current global challenges
(% – EU)

	Total 'Agree'	Total 'Disagree'	Don't know
EU27	90	8	2
Gender			
Man	89	9	2
Woman	91	6	3
Age			
15-24	92	7	1
25-39	92	7	1
40-54	90	8	2
55+	89	8	3
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	88	8	4
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	90	9	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	93	6	1
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	88	11	1
Managers	92	6	2
Other white collars	91	7	2
Manual workers	90	8	2
House persons	88	8	4
Unemployed	92	6	2
Retired	89	8	3
Students	93	6	1
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	83	14	3
From time to time	87	11	2
Almost never / Never	92	6	2
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	89	8	3
Small or middle sized town	90	8	2
Large town	92	6	2
Image of the EU			
Positive	97	3	0
Neutral	90	8	2
Negative	73	22	5
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	92	6	2
Not satisfied	84	13	3

QA10.2 **To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**
– The European Union needs more means to face current global challenges
(% – EU)

	Total 'Agree'	Total 'Disagree'	Don't know
EU27	73	21	6
Gender			
Man	71	24	5
Woman	74	19	7
Age			
15-24	79	14	7
25-39	77	18	5
40-54	74	22	4
55+	69	24	7
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	68	24	8
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	75	21	4
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	75	20	5
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	72	24	4
Managers	76	20	4
Other white collars	74	22	4
Manual workers	75	21	4
House persons	75	16	9
Unemployed	73	20	7
Retired	67	25	8
Students	78	13	9
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	71	22	7
From time to time	72	22	6
Almost never / Never	74	20	6
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	71	22	7
Small or middle sized town	72	22	6
Large town	76	19	5
Image of the EU			
Positive	84	12	4
Neutral	69	24	7
Negative	48	45	7
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	75	20	5
Not satisfied	65	27	8

QA10.3 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

– The European Union should promote the respect of international law by all countries (% – EU)

	Total 'Agree'	Total 'Disagree'	Don't know
EU27	90	7	3
Gender			
Man	90	8	2
Woman	91	6	3
Age			
15-24	92	6	2
25-39	92	6	2
40-54	90	8	2
55+	89	7	4
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	86	8	6
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	90	8	2
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	93	5	2
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	90	8	2
Managers	92	6	2
Other white collars	91	7	2
Manual workers	89	8	3
House persons	86	9	5
Unemployed	92	5	3
Retired	89	7	4
Students	93	5	2
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	87	9	4
From time to time	87	10	3
Almost never / Never	91	6	3
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	88	8	4
Small or middle sized town	90	7	3
Large town	93	5	2
Image of the EU			
Positive	96	3	1
Neutral	89	7	4
Negative	77	17	6
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	91	6	3
Not satisfied	84	12	4

Areas the EU should focus on to strengthen its position in the world

Looking ahead, respondents were asked to identify the areas in which the European Union should prioritise its efforts in order to strengthen its position on the global stage. In a context shaped by ongoing geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainty, technological transformation and long-term societal challenges, this question provides valuable insight into citizens' expectations regarding the European Union's future strategic direction.

When asked to identify the key priorities, Europeans most frequently point to **defence and security** (39%), making it the leading issue at EU level. Compared with November 2025, this share is stable (–1 percentage point), indicating that views on this issue have remained stable over time. These results confirm that defence and security remain firmly established as the primary area of focus for strengthening the EU's global position.

The second most frequently mentioned priority is **energy independence, resources and infrastructures** (35%), which has seen a notable increase (+6 pp) compared with November 2025. This strong rise highlights growing concern about energy security and strategic autonomy in the current context. Then, **competitiveness, economy and industry** is cited by 32% of respondents, remaining stable since the previous survey and indicating a continued emphasis on strengthening the EU's economic base.

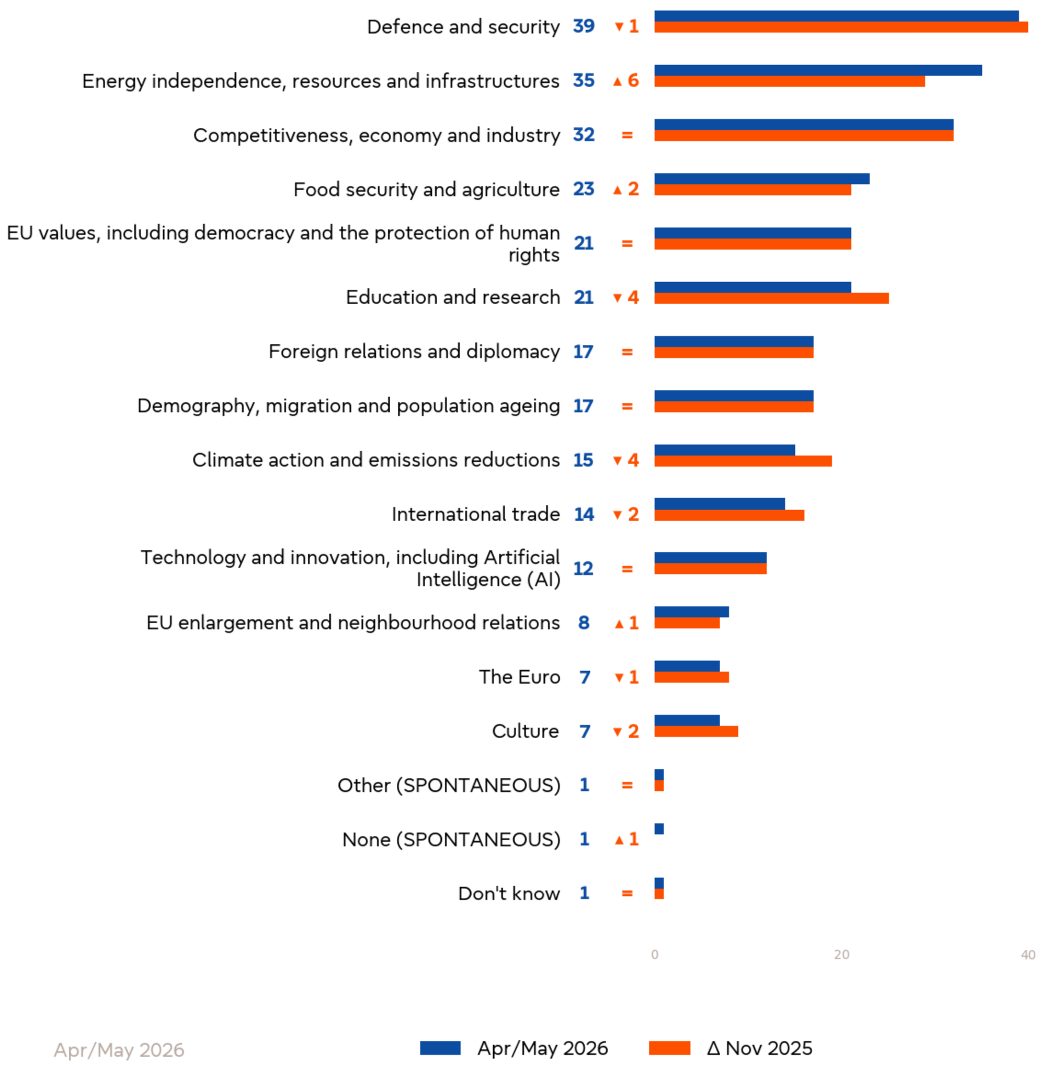
A second group of priorities is mentioned by around a quarter of respondents. **Food security and agriculture** (23%) registers a relative stability (+2 pp), reflecting sustained attention. **EU values, including democracy and the protection of human rights** (21%), remains unchanged, confirming its continued importance. **Education and research** (21%), however, records a decline (–4 pp), suggesting a relative shift in priorities away from longer-term structural investment.

At a lower level, around one in six respondents mention **foreign relations and diplomacy** (17%) and **demography, migration and population ageing** (17%), both unchanged since the previous wave. **Climate action and emissions reduction** (15%) has declined by 4 pp, indicating reduced salience compared to other issues, while **international trade** (14%) is relatively stable (–2 pp).

Other areas are mentioned less frequently, including **technology and innovation, including Artificial Intelligence (AI)** (12%, unchanged), **EU enlargement and neighbourhood relations** (8%, +1 pp), as well as the **euro** (7%, –1 pp) and **culture** (7%, –2 pp).

Overall, these findings indicate that while defence and security continue to dominate, energy independence has gained significant prominence, while economic competitiveness remains a stable priority. At the same time, some longer-term or structural issues, such as education and climate action, show a relative decline, suggesting a shift in public priorities towards more immediate and strategic concerns in a complex global environment.

QA11ab **Thinking about the future, which of the following aspects should the EU focus on in order to strengthen its position in the world? Firstly? And then?**
(MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)

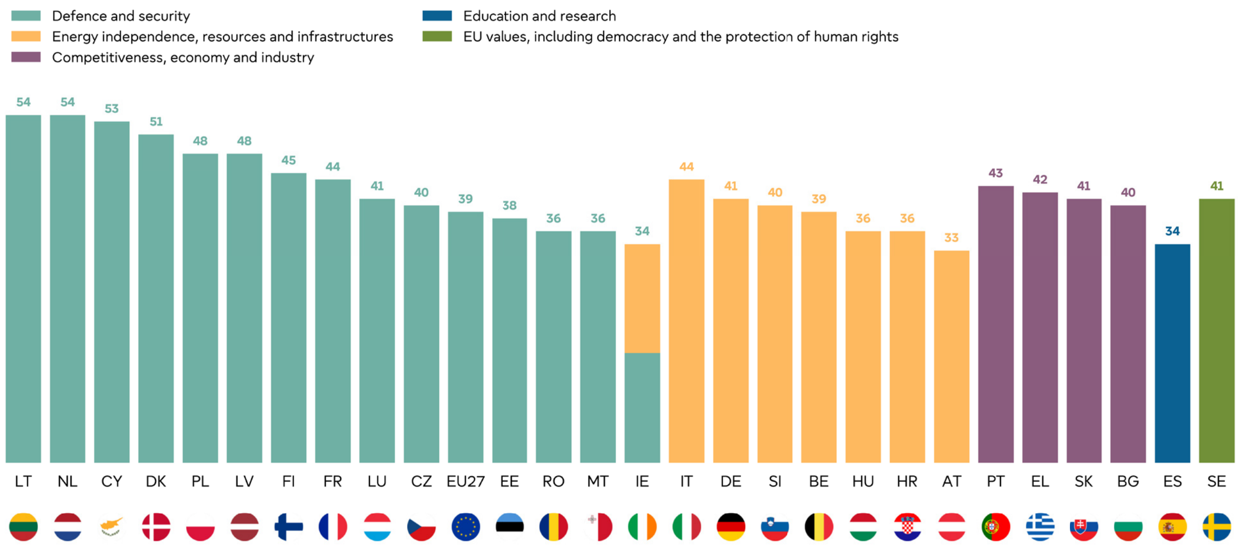


At the national level, **defence and security** emerges as the leading priority in 14 Member States, reflecting widespread concern about geopolitical stability and the protection of European interests. Moreover, this issue is mentioned by at least three in ten respondents in 24 Member States, underlining its broad relevance across the European Union. The highest shares of respondents selecting defence and security among their top priorities are observed in Lithuania and the Netherlands (54%), followed by Cyprus (53%) and Denmark (51%), where more than half of respondents highlight this issue.

Energy independence, resources and infrastructures is the leading priority in eight Member States, marking a notable expansion compared with the previous wave, when it was ranked first in only three countries. The highest shares are observed in Italy (44%), the Netherlands (42%), and Germany (41%).

Furthermore, in Ireland, energy independence reaches a level equal to that of defence and security (34%), indicating a shared prominence of these two priorities in shaping citizens' expectations.

QA11ab **Thinking about the future, which of the following aspects should the EU focus on in order to strengthen its position in the world? Firstly? And then?**
(MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)



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Competitiveness, economy and industry ranks as the leading priority in four Member States: Portugal, Greece, Slovakia and Bulgaria, with the highest shares recorded in Portugal (43%) and Greece (42%).

Education and research remains the first priority in Spain, where 34% of respondents identify it among the most important areas for strengthening the EU's global position. While **EU values, including democracy and the protection of human rights** remains as the most frequently mentioned aspect in Sweden (41%).

QA11ab **Thinking about the future, which of the following aspects should the EU focus on in order to strengthen its position in the world? Firstly? And then?**
(MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)

	EU27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
Defence and security	39	38	29	40	51	38	38	34	37	31	44	29	35	53	48	54	41	34	36	54	32	48	38	36	30	28	45	35
Energy independence, resources and infrastructures	35	39	36	39	40	41	35	34	32	25	29	36	44	30	33	32	38	36	25	42	33	35	33	26	40	40	35	36
Competitiveness, economy and industry	32	25	40	35	26	37	32	26	42	31	34	34	34	23	37	31	31	32	25	18	28	25	43	27	39	41	37	27
Food security and agriculture	23	21	28	23	17	17	21	30	27	22	21	35	22	13	13	14	20	32	18	22	30	35	28	26	37	37	26	25
EU values, including democracy and the protection of human rights	21	23	23	16	28	24	14	22	17	26	14	20	14	22	13	15	22	24	22	28	30	16	25	18	22	20	25	41
Education and research	21	21	12	18	17	19	19	21	25	34	27	14	18	41	19	15	26	13	25	16	18	9	25	23	11	19	24	26
Foreign relations and diplomacy	17	16	22	20	19	17	24	12	23	14	16	15	23	16	21	27	27	18	17	15	21	16	6	19	20	20	19	19
Demography, migration and population ageing	17	13	30	12	7	15	16	15	28	20	15	33	16	24	24	20	11	18	18	12	21	18	22	18	11	17	9	10
Climate action and emissions reductions	15	20	9	8	23	16	6	16	12	10	17	15	18	6	3	6	12	17	20	19	16	12	11	11	10	7	17	33
International trade	14	17	13	17	17	17	14	19	15	12	11	16	16	10	14	10	10	15	12	14	17	14	9	13	12	16	12	12
Technology and innovation, including Artificial Intelligence (AI)	12	14	12	12	18	12	16	14	11	9	10	12	14	10	10	12	17	11	19	20	12	11	10	9	12	10	15	16
EU enlargement and neighbourhood relations	8	7	7	8	8	9	10	6	6	9	5	9	10	6	11	20	6	10	7	3	9	9	5	12	7	5	4	4
The Euro	7	10	7	5	2	7	8	11	7	7	9	8	6	8	7	2	7	12	9	7	12	3	10	10	13	9	3	3
Culture	7	8	7	6	4	4	11	6	9	11	9	7	9	11	8	5	6	8	15	6	6	5	10	9	4	5	4	3

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item
2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item
3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

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Differences in priorities for strengthening the European Union's global position are observed across several **socio-demographic groups**.

Variations by **gender** remain relatively limited, although some differences can be noted. Men are slightly more likely than women to prioritise competitiveness, economy and industry (35% vs 30%) as well as technology and innovation, including artificial intelligence (14% vs 10%). By contrast, women are somewhat more likely to emphasise EU values, including democracy and the protection of human rights (23% vs 18%) and education and research (23% vs 20%).

More pronounced differences appear across **age** groups. The importance attached to defence and security increases with age, rising from 33% among respondents aged 15–24 to 41% among those aged 55 and over. A similar pattern is observed for food security and agriculture, which increases from 17% to 26% across the same age groups. Conversely, younger respondents place greater emphasis on longer-term and innovation-driven priorities. Education and research is mentioned by 31% of those aged 15–24, compared with 19% of those aged 55 and over, while technology and innovation declines from 19% to 9%, and culture from 11% to 6%. Finally, respondents aged 40–54 are relatively more likely to prioritise competitiveness, economy and industry (34% vs 29% among the youngest group), while energy independence, resources and infrastructures is more frequently cited among those aged 25 and over (36% vs 28%), reflecting stronger concerns related to economic stability, security of supply, and strategic autonomy among older and economically active populations.

Education level is also associated with several differences in priorities. Respondents with a higher level of education are somewhat more likely to mention long-term and strategic areas, such as energy independence, resources and infrastructures (38% vs 33% among those with a low level of education), EU values, including democracy and the protection of human rights (25% vs 17%), foreign relations and diplomacy (20% vs 14%), and technology and innovation, including artificial intelligence (16% vs 8%), and climate action (18% vs 13%). By contrast, respondents with a lower level of education are more likely to prioritise food security and agriculture (26% vs 19% among highly educated respondents), indicating a stronger focus on more immediate and tangible concerns.

Financial situation appears to have a limited influence on the priorities mentioned by respondents. Differences are generally modest across most areas, with one notable exception. Respondents who almost never or never experience difficulties paying their bills are more likely to identify defence and security as a priority (40%, compared with 34% among those who face difficulties most of the time).

Respondents' **image of the European Union** is also linked to their priorities. Those with a positive view of the EU are slightly more likely to emphasise energy independence, resources and infrastructures (37% vs 34% among those with a negative image), EU values, including democracy and the protection of human rights (23% vs 15%), climate action and emissions reduction (18% vs 9%), and technology and innovation, including artificial intelligence (14% vs 8%). By contrast, respondents with a negative image of the EU place relatively greater emphasis on food security and agriculture (27% vs 22%).

QA11ab Thinking about the future, which of the following aspects should the EU focus on in order to strengthen its position in the world? Firstly? And then?
(MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (% – EU)

	Defence and security	Energy independence, resources and infrastructures	Competitiveness, economy and industry	Food security and agriculture	Education and research	EU values, including democracy and the protection of human rights	Demography, migration and population ageing	Foreign relations and diplomacy	Climate action and emissions reductions
EU27	39	35	32	23	21	21	17	17	15
Gender									
Man	40	36	35	22	20	18	16	18	14
Woman	38	34	30	25	23	23	18	17	16
Age									
15-24	33	28	29	17	31	19	14	18	18
25-39	38	36	33	22	22	22	17	17	14
40-54	39	36	34	23	20	20	16	20	14
55+	41	36	32	26	19	21	17	17	15
Education level									
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	39	33	33	26	21	17	17	14	13
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	40	35	32	24	20	20	18	18	14
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	37	38	32	19	23	25	15	20	18
Socio-professional category									
Self-employed	37	37	33	26	21	18	17	16	13
Managers	39	39	35	18	22	23	15	20	15
Other white collars	38	39	35	23	19	19	17	18	16
Manual workers	40	35	34	24	19	20	16	17	13
House persons	37	30	29	28	26	21	20	15	13
Unemployed	40	29	32	21	21	23	16	16	15
Retired	42	35	30	27	19	21	18	16	16
Students	30	31	27	15	33	21	14	20	19
Difficulties paying bills									
Most of the time	34	34	33	26	23	21	18	15	12
From time to time	38	33	34	24	21	18	19	18	13
Almost never / Never	40	36	31	23	21	22	16	18	16
Subjective urbanisation									
Rural area or village	40	32	30	26	22	20	17	16	13
Small or middle sized town	39	39	34	23	20	19	15	18	15
Large town	37	35	32	20	22	25	18	17	17
Image of the EU									
Positive	38	37	32	22	21	23	17	19	18
Neutral	41	34	32	24	22	20	16	16	13
Negative	38	34	35	27	20	15	18	16	9
Satisfaction with quality of life									
Satisfied	39	35	32	23	22	21	16	18	16
Not satisfied	38	36	35	27	19	19	20	16	12

	International trade	Technology and innovation, including Artificial Intelligence (AI)	EU enlargement and neighbourhood relations	The Euro	Culture	Other (SPONTANEOUS)	None (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	14	12	8	7	7	1	1	1
Gender								
Man	16	14	8	8	7	1	1	1
Woman	13	10	8	7	8	1	0	2
Age								
15-24	17	19	9	8	11	0	1	0
25-39	15	13	9	7	8	0	0	1
40-54	15	13	8	7	7	1	1	1
55+	13	9	7	7	6	1	1	2
Education level								
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	15	8	7	9	7	1	1	3
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	15	11	9	7	7	1	0	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	12	16	8	6	7	1	0	0
Socio-professional category								
Self-employed	15	14	8	9	8	0	1	1
Managers	15	17	8	6	6	1	0	0
Other white collars	16	13	7	7	8	1	0	1
Manual workers	15	11	9	7	7	0	0	1
House persons	15	6	10	10	7	2	0	2
Unemployed	14	11	6	8	10	1	1	2
Retired	12	7	7	7	6	1	1	2
Students	15	19	10	7	10	0	0	0
Difficulties paying bills								
Most of the time	12	8	7	9	10	2	0	2
From time to time	15	12	8	9	9	1	1	1
Almost never / Never	14	13	8	6	6	1	1	1
Subjective urbanisation								
Rural area or village	15	11	7	8	7	1	1	2
Small or middle sized town	14	12	8	7	7	0	0	1
Large town	13	13	9	7	8	1	0	1
Image of the EU								
Positive	13	14	9	7	7	1	0	0
Neutral	16	11	8	7	8	1	0	2
Negative	14	8	5	8	8	1	2	2
Satisfaction with quality of life								
Satisfied	14	13	8	7	7	1	0	1
Not satisfied	14	8	7	8	8	1	1	2

3 QUALITY OF LIFE

3. QUALITY OF LIFE

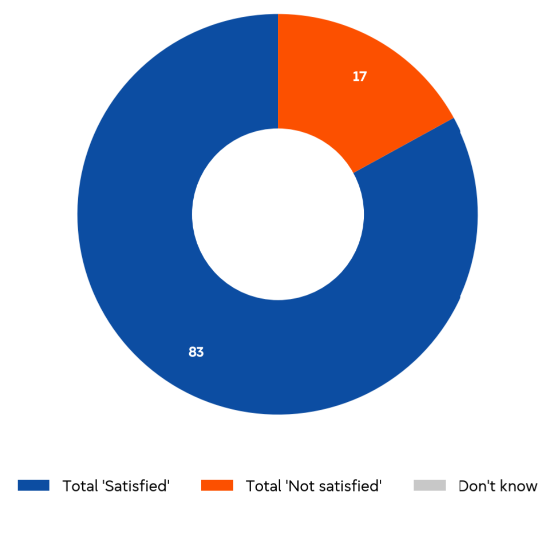
This chapter examines Europeans' perceptions of their quality of life, combining assessments of current satisfaction, recent changes, and future expectations with a deeper exploration of the factors that shape well-being. It first looks at overall satisfaction with quality of life, before analysing how respondents perceive its evolution over the past year and their expectations regarding the future development of their standard of living. The chapter then turns to a more detailed examination of what underpins these perceptions, exploring both the key components that Europeans associate with a good quality of life and the areas in which changes would most improve it. Finally, it places these views in a broader international context, by comparing perceptions of quality of life in the European Union with those in other major global actors.

Taken together, these findings provide a comprehensive picture of how Europeans evaluate their living conditions, highlighting both the main drivers of well-being and the areas where improvements are most needed, while also situating these perceptions within a global comparative perspective.

Satisfaction with quality of life

At EU level, **a very large majority of Europeans express satisfaction with their quality of life**. Overall, 83% of respondents say they are satisfied, while 17% report being not satisfied, and only a negligible share are unable to provide an opinion. This strong predominance of positive evaluations indicates that most Europeans perceive their personal living conditions favourably.

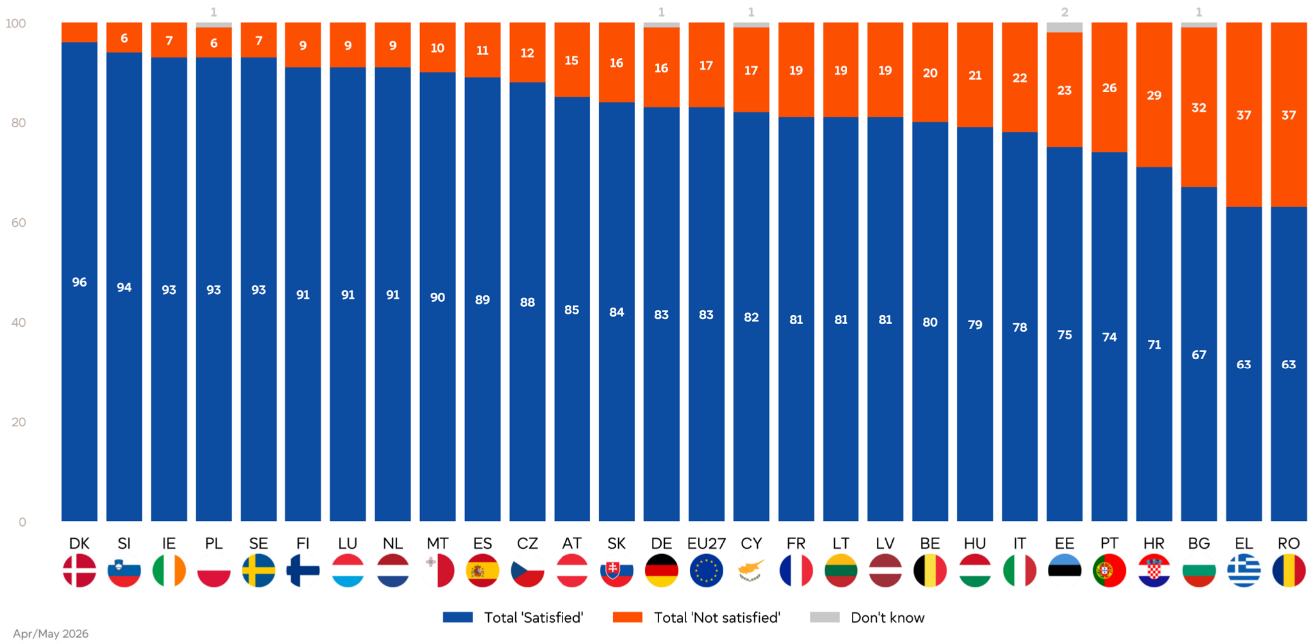
D70b **On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with your quality of life?** (%)



Across Member States, satisfaction with quality of life is high in all countries, although the level of satisfaction varies considerably. The highest levels of satisfaction are observed in Denmark (96%), followed by Slovenia (94%), and Ireland, Poland and Sweden (all 93%), where very large majorities of respondents report being satisfied with their quality of life. At the other end of the scale, satisfaction remains the majority view but at noticeably lower levels. The lowest shares are observed in Greece and Romania (63% each), followed by Bulgaria (67%) where dissatisfaction is correspondingly more widespread, reaching up to 37% in Greece and Romania.

Overall, these findings point to consistently high satisfaction levels across all Member States, with no country reporting less than a clear majority of satisfied respondents. However, the variation observed underlines some differences in perceived quality of life between countries, reflecting diverse social and economic contexts across the European Union.

D70b **On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with your quality of life?** (%)



Satisfaction with quality of life varies across **socio-demographic groups**, although positive evaluations clearly predominate in all categories.

Differences by **gender** are limited. Men are slightly more likely than women to report being satisfied (84% vs 82%). These differences remain small, indicating that gender plays only a minor role in shaping perceptions of quality of life.

More pronounced variations are observed across **age** groups, with younger respondents displaying higher levels of satisfaction. Among those aged 15–24, 92% report being satisfied with their quality of life, compared with 80% among those aged 55 and over, the lowest level across age groups. Dissatisfaction increases steadily with age, rising from 8% among the youngest respondents to 20% among the oldest, suggesting a gradual decline in perceived quality of life over the life course.

Differences according to **education level** are particularly marked. Satisfaction increases significantly with educational attainment, from 74% among respondents with a low level of education to 83% among those with a medium level, and 91% among the highly educated. Conversely, dissatisfaction is substantially higher among less educated respondents (26% vs 9% among the highly educated), highlighting strong inequalities in perceived quality of life linked to education.

A particularly strong relationship is evident when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, satisfaction drops sharply to 40%, while a majority (59%) report dissatisfaction. By contrast, among respondents who almost never or never face such difficulties, 92% are satisfied and only 8% dissatisfied, with those experiencing occasional difficulties falling in between (69% vs 31%). This highlights the very strong link between economic security and perceived quality of life.

Attitudinal variables show clear contrasts. Respondents with a positive **image of the European Union** report higher levels of satisfaction (89%), compared with 68% among those with a negative image, where dissatisfaction rises to 32%.

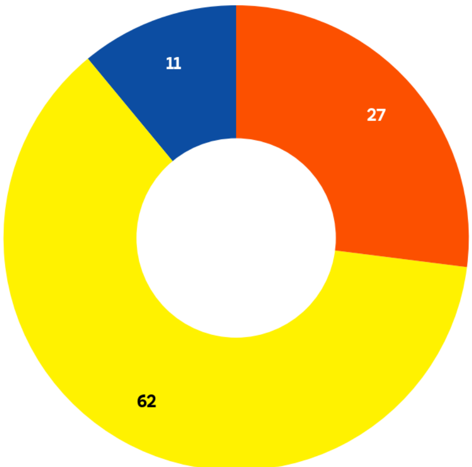
D70b **On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with your quality of life?** (% – EU)

	Total 'Satisfied'	Total 'Not satisfied'	Don't know
EU27	83	17	0
Gender			
Man	84	16	0
Woman	82	18	0
Age			
15-24	92	8	0
25-39	84	16	0
40-54	83	17	0
55+	80	20	0
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	74	26	0
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	83	17	0
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	91	9	0
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	87	13	0
Managers	93	7	0
Other white collars	87	13	0
Manual workers	80	20	0
House persons	73	27	0
Unemployed	57	42	1
Retired	79	21	0
Students	92	7	1
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	40	59	1
From time to time	69	31	0
Almost never / Never	92	8	0
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	83	17	0
Small or middle sized town	84	16	0
Large town	82	18	0
Image of the EU			
Positive	89	11	0
Neutral	79	20	1
Negative	68	32	0

Evolution of quality of life

At EU level, perceptions of changes in quality of life over the past 12 months are predominantly characterised by stability, although a substantial share of respondents report a deterioration. Overall, **62% of Europeans say that their quality of life has stayed the same**, indicating that for a majority, living conditions have remained broadly stable. At the same time, more than one quarter of respondents (27%) report that their quality of life has deteriorated, while only a relatively small proportion (11%) say that it has improved. The balance of responses therefore remains clearly negative, with those reporting a deterioration outnumbering those perceiving an improvement. Compared with the previous wave in October/November 2025, these results remain relatively stable overall.

QA16 **Which statement comes closest to your view? Within the last 12 months your quality of life (comfort or budget-wise) has...** (EU27) (%)



Improved	▼1
Stayed the same	▼2
Deteriorated	▲3
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Oct/Nov 2025)

Improved
Stayed the same
Deteriorated
Don't know

Apr/May 2026

Across Member States, perceptions of how quality of life has evolved over the past 12 months vary, although **in all countries the most common view remains that it has stayed the same.**

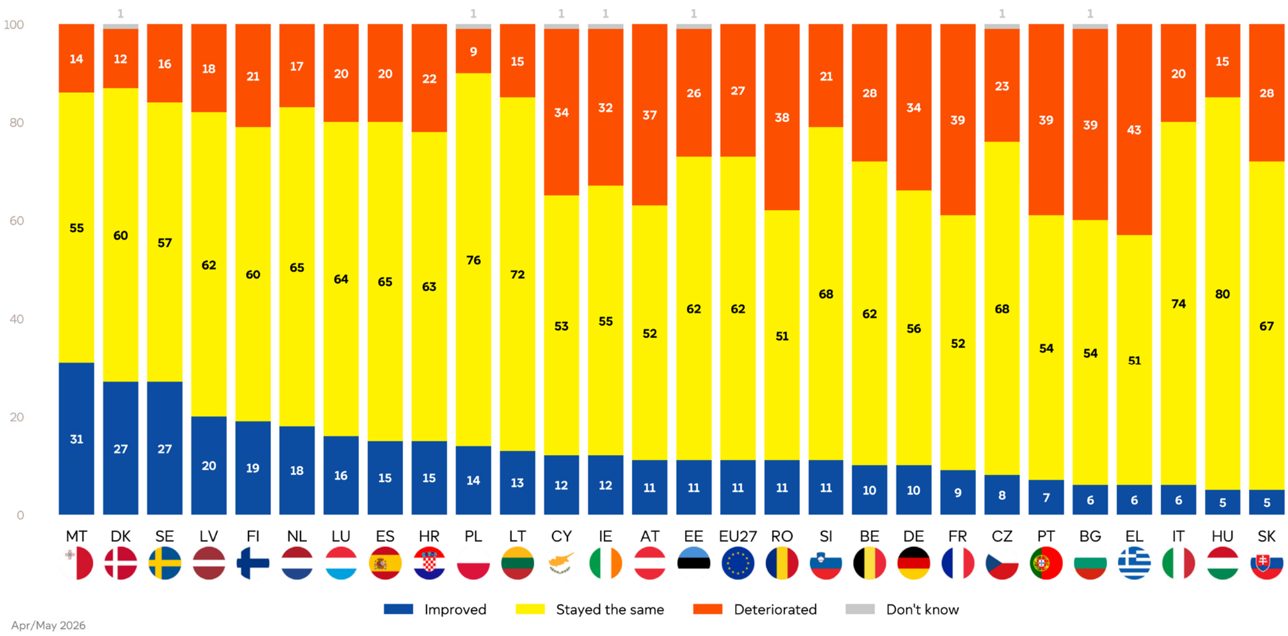
The highest shares of respondents reporting that their quality of life has improved are observed in Malta (31%), followed by Denmark and Sweden (both 27%), and Latvia (20%), indicating more positive developments in these countries. By contrast, the lowest levels of perceived improvement are recorded in Hungary and Slovakia (both 5%) as well as Italy, Greece and Bulgaria (all 6%), suggesting that improvements are much less widely felt in these contexts.

In most Member States, a clear majority report that their quality of life has remained stable, with particularly high shares in Hungary (80%), Poland (76%), and Italy (74%).

At the same time, a substantial proportion of respondents report a deterioration in their quality of life, with marked differences across countries. The highest levels are observed in Greece (43%), followed by France, Portugal and Bulgaria (all 39%), as well as Romania (38%), pointing to a widespread perception of declining living conditions in these countries.

Overall, these findings highlight a diverse picture across the European Union: while stability remains the dominant perception in most Member States, the balance between improvement and deterioration varies significantly.

QA16 **Which statement comes closest to your view? Within the last 12 months your quality of life (comfort or budget-wise) has...** (%)

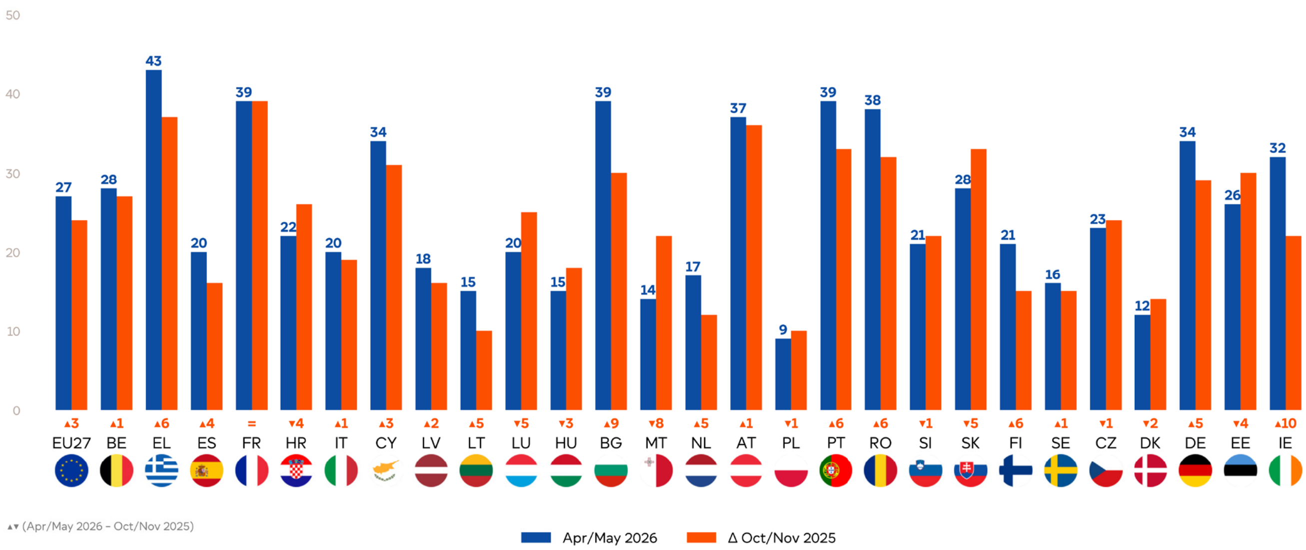


Changes between Autumn 2025 and Spring 2026 reveal a deterioration in perceived quality of life in a number of Member States, although the extent vary across countries.

The most notable increases in the share of respondents reporting a deterioration are observed in Ireland (+10 percentage points) and Bulgaria (+9 pp), followed by Greece, Portugal, Romania and Finland (all +6 pp). These developments point to a clear worsening of perceptions in several Member States. However, while in most of these countries deterioration was already relatively widespread, Finland stands out as an exception, as the increase occurs from a comparatively low initial level.

Conversely, some Member States show relative stability or an improvement in perceptions. The share of respondents reporting a deterioration has declined in Malta (–8 pp) and Luxembourg (–5 pp), indicating a more positive evolution in these countries.

QA16 **Which statement comes closest to your view? Within the last 12 months your quality of life (comfort or budget-wise) has...** - Deteriorated (%)



Perceptions of how quality of life has evolved over the past 12 months vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although stability remains the most frequently reported assessment in all categories.

Differences by **gender** are limited. Men are slightly more likely than women to report an improvement (12% vs 10%), while women are slightly more likely to say that their quality of life has deteriorated (28% vs 26%). The share reporting that their situation has stayed the same is identical (62%), indicating broadly similar experiences between men and women.

More marked differences emerge across **age** groups. Younger respondents report more positive developments, with 18% of those aged 15–24 stating that their quality of life has improved, compared with only 7% among those aged 55 and over. At the same time, the share reporting deterioration rises with age, from 17% among the youngest group to 29% among those aged 40 and over.

Differences are also evident by **education level**. Respondents with a higher level of education are more likely to report improvements (15% vs 7%) and less likely to report deterioration (23% vs 34%) than those with a low level of education. Those with a medium level of education are more likely to report stability (64% vs 59% of those with low education). These findings highlight a clear association between educational attainment and perceptions of change in quality of life.

A particularly strong relationship is observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, 64% report a deterioration in their quality of life, while only 7% report an improvement. In contrast, among those who almost never or never face such difficulties, the share reporting deterioration drops to 20%, while 13% report improvements and 67% stability. Respondents who experience difficulties from time to time occupy an intermediate position (38% deteriorated vs 7% improved).This underlines the strong link between economic vulnerability and perceptions of declining living conditions.

Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are more likely to report improvements (14%) and less likely to report deterioration (20%) compared with those with a negative image, among whom only 7% report improvements and nearly half (48%) report deterioration. Moreover, 66% of those with positive image report stability compared to 44% of those who hold a negative image of EU.

Finally, **satisfaction with quality of life** is strongly associated with the perceptions of how quality of life has evolved over the past 12 months. Among respondents who are satisfied with quality of life, only 21% perceived it has deteriorated, while this negative view clearly dominates among those who are not satisfied (55%).

QA16 Which statement comes closest to your view? Within the last 12 months your quality of life (comfort or budget-wise) has... (% - EU)

	Improved	Stayed the same	Deteriorated	Don't know
EU27	11	62	27	0
Gender				
Man	12	62	26	0
Woman	10	62	28	0
Age				
15-24	18	64	17	1
25-39	16	57	27	0
40-54	11	60	29	0
55+	7	64	29	0
Education level				
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	7	59	34	0
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	11	64	25	0
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	15	62	23	0
Socio-professional category				
Self-employed	11	62	27	0
Managers	17	61	22	0
Other white collars	12	62	26	0
Manual workers	13	59	28	0
House persons	7	61	32	0
Unemployed	9	51	39	1
Retired	6	64	30	0
Students	16	65	18	1
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	7	29	64	0
From time to time	7	55	38	0
Almost never / Never	13	67	20	0
Subjective urbanisation				
Rural area or village	11	61	28	0
Small or middle sized town	10	63	27	0
Large town	13	61	26	0
Image of the EU				
Positive	14	66	20	0
Neutral	8	64	28	0
Negative	7	44	48	1
Satisfaction with quality of life				
Satisfied	13	66	21	0
Not satisfied	4	41	55	0

Evolution of the standard of living

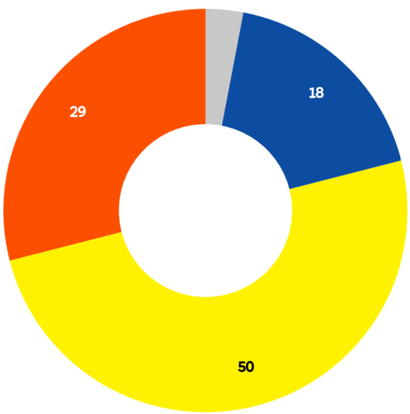
Looking ahead, respondents were asked to assess how they expect their personal standard of living to evolve over the next five years. In a context shaped by economic uncertainty, rising living costs and longer-term structural challenges, this question provides insight into Europeans' expectations about their future material well-being.

At EU level, expectations regarding future living standards are predominantly characterised by stability, although a substantial share of respondents anticipate a deterioration. **Overall, half of Europeans (50%) expect their standard of living to remain unchanged over the next five years**, making this the most common response. This suggests that for many respondents, future prospects are perceived as relatively stable, albeit without significant improvement.

At the same time, nearly three in ten respondents (29%) believe that their standard of living will decrease, indicating a considerable level of concern about future economic conditions. By contrast, fewer than two in ten (18%) expect their situation to improve, pointing to more limited optimism regarding personal economic prospects.

Overall, these findings suggest that while stability remains the dominant expectation, a significant proportion of Europeans foresee a worsening of their living conditions, and comparatively few anticipate improvement. This pattern reflects a cautious and somewhat pessimistic outlook on future personal economic prospects across the European Union.

SD27 **When you think about the way your personal standard of living will evolve over the next five years, which of the following statements best describes your expectations?** (EU27) (%)



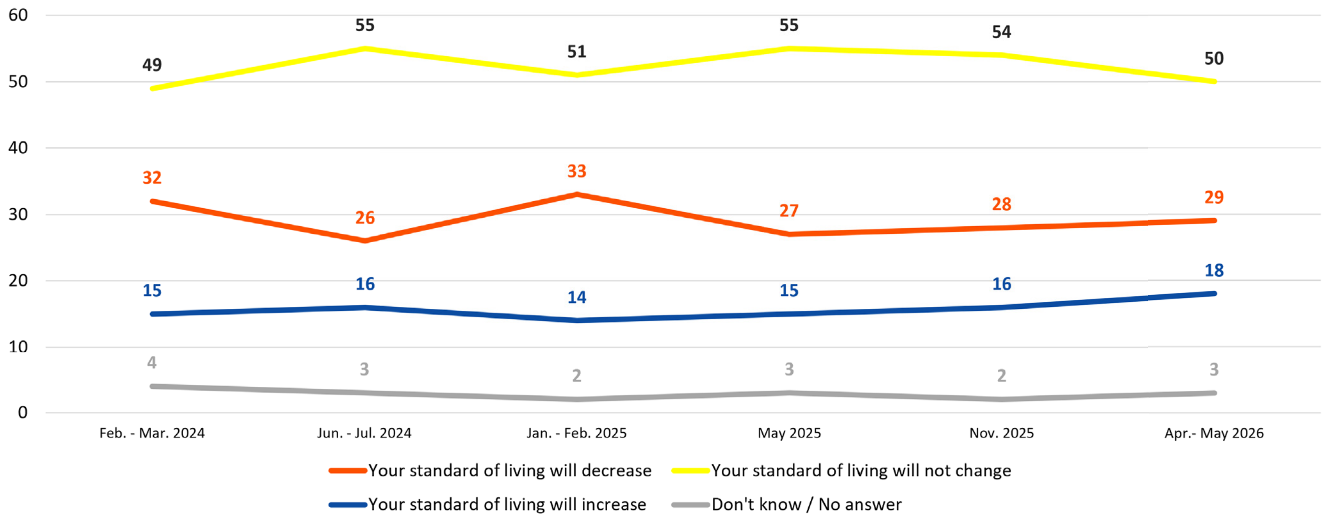
Your standard of living will decrease	▲1
Your standard of living will not change	▼4
Your standard of living will increase	▲2
Don't know / No answer	▲1

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

Apr/May 2026

Since November 2025, the evolution is mainly a slight decline in the share of respondents expecting their situation to remain unchanged, while the proportion anticipating a decrease or an increase have both continued to slightly rise.

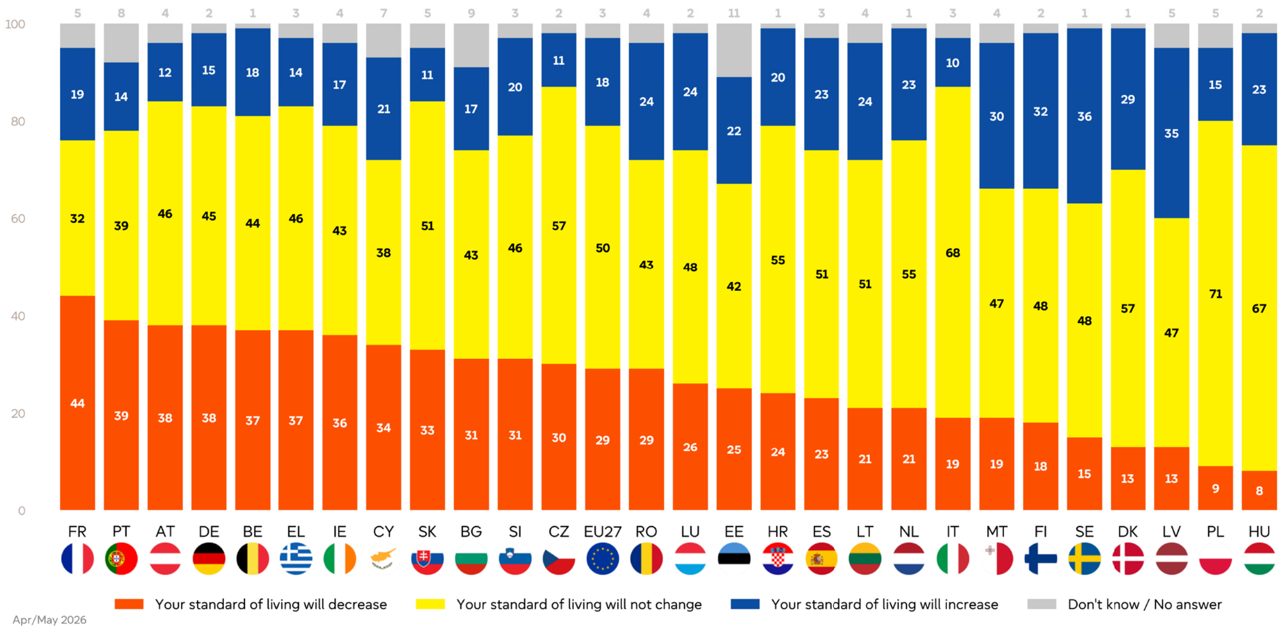
SD27 **When you think about the way your personal standard of living will evolve over the next five years, which of the following statements best describes your expectations?** (% – EU)



Across Member States, expectations regarding the future evolution of personal living standards vary substantially, although **in most countries the most common view remains that living standards will stay the same.**

A majority of respondents in most Member States expect their standard of living to remain unchanged, with particularly high shares in Poland (71%), Italy (68%), and Hungary (67%). The highest shares of respondents expecting their standard of living to increase are observed in Sweden (36%), Latvia (35%), and Finland (32%), indicating relatively stronger optimism in these countries.

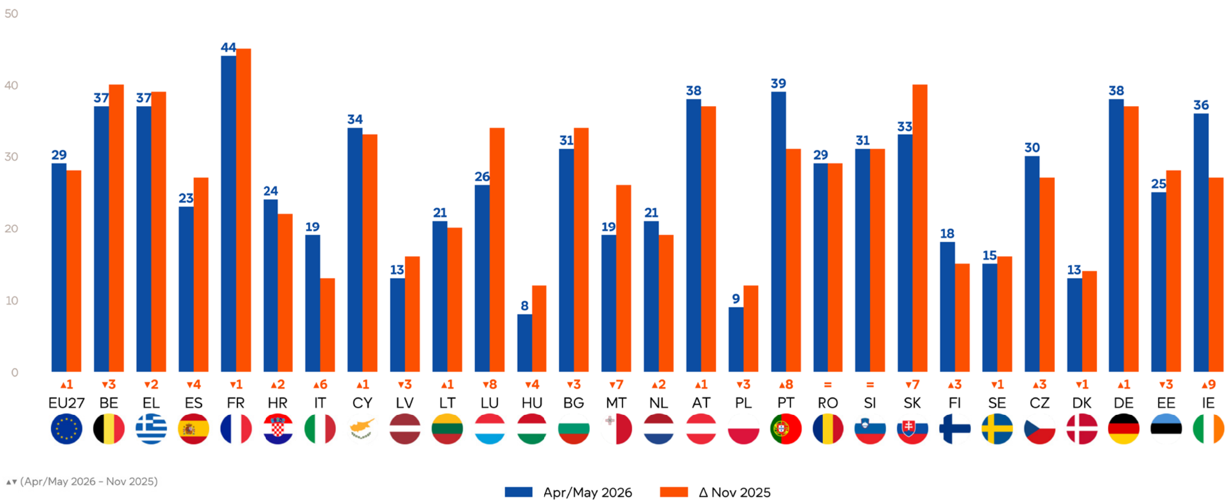
SD27 **When you think about the way your personal standard of living will evolve over the next five years, which of the following statements best describes your expectations?** (%)



At the same time, expectations of a decline in living standards are relatively widespread in several Member States. The highest shares are recorded in France (44%), followed by Portugal (39%), Austria and Germany (both 38%), indicating a more pessimistic outlook in these countries.

Since November 2025, the largest increases in the share of respondents expecting their standard of living to decrease are observed in Ireland (+9 percentage points), Portugal (+8 pp), and Italy (+6 pp). By contrast, the largest decreases are observed in Luxembourg (–8 pp), followed by Malta and Slovakia (both –7 pp).

SD27 **When you think about the way your personal standard of living will evolve over the next five years, which of the following statements best describes your expectations?** – Your standard of living will decrease (%)



Perceptions of how personal living standards are expected to evolve over the next five years vary across **socio-demographic groups**, although in almost all groups the most common view remains that living standards will stay the same.

Differences by **gender** are relatively limited. Men are slightly less likely than women to expect a deterioration (27% vs 31%) and more likely to anticipate an improvement (19% vs 16%), while similar shares in both groups expect no change (around 50–51%). This suggests that women display a somewhat more cautious outlook than men.

More pronounced differences emerge across **age** groups. Younger respondents are considerably more optimistic, with 38% of those aged 15–24 expecting their standard of living to increase, compared with only 7% among those aged 55 and over. Conversely, expectations of a decline rise steadily with age, from 17% among the youngest respondents to 34% among those aged 55 and over. At the same time, older respondents are more likely to expect stability (56% among those aged 55+), indicating a shift towards more cautious and less optimistic outlooks with age.

Differences by **education level** are also evident. Respondents with a low level of education are the most pessimistic, with 36% expecting a decline and only 11% anticipating an improvement. By contrast, those with a high level of education are more optimistic: 24% expect an increase, while only 26% anticipate a decline. Respondents with a medium level of education fall between these groups and more likely to expect stability (54%). These results point to a clear association between educational attainment and confidence in future living standards.

A particularly strong relationship is observed for respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who have difficulties paying their bills most of the time, a majority (55%) expect their standard of living to decrease, while only 14% anticipate an improvement. This contrasts sharply with respondents who almost never or never face such difficulties, among whom 24% expect a decline and 18% expect an improvement, while a majority (55%) foresee stability. This highlights a very strong link between financial vulnerability and pessimistic expectations about future living standards.

Among respondents with a positive **image of the EU**, expectations are more favourable, with 21% expecting improvement and 22% expecting decline, compared with 49% of those with a negative image of the EU who expect a deterioration, and only 13% expecting improvement. Finally, satisfaction with quality of life is strongly associated with the expectations regarding the evolution of the standard of living. Among respondents who are satisfied with quality of life, only 24% expect a decline, while pessimism clearly dominates among those who are not satisfied (49%).

SD27 When you think about the way your personal standard of living will evolve over the next five years, which of the following statements best describes your expectations? (% – EU)

	Your standard of living will decrease	Your standard of living will not change	Your standard of living will increase	Don't know / No answer
EU27	29	50	18	3
Gender				
Man	27	51	19	3
Woman	31	50	16	3
Age				
15-24	17	41	38	4
25-39	24	45	28	3
40-54	30	51	16	3
55+	34	56	7	3
Education level				
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	36	49	11	4
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	26	54	17	3
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	26	47	24	3
Socio-professional category				
Self-employed	25	51	22	2
Managers	25	49	24	2
Other white collars	29	52	16	3
Manual workers	29	51	18	2
House persons	30	57	10	3
Unemployed	31	36	26	7
Retired	36	56	5	3
Students	18	39	40	3
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	55	27	14	4
From time to time	35	45	17	3
Almost never / Never	24	55	18	3
Subjective urbanisation				
Rural area or village	29	51	16	4
Small or middle sized town	29	52	16	3
Large town	27	48	22	3
Image of the EU				
Positive	22	55	21	2
Neutral	29	53	14	4
Negative	49	34	13	4
Satisfaction with quality of life				
Satisfied	24	54	19	3
Not satisfied	49	35	12	4

Components of quality of life

Building on the analysis of how Europeans perceive the evolution of their quality of life over the past 12 months and their expectations for the future, this section explores what citizens themselves consider to be the key components of a good quality of life. This new question provides a complementary perspective by identifying the aspects that Europeans prioritise when evaluating their well-being. By linking these priorities to earlier findings on perceived changes and future expectations, it offers valuable insight into the factors that shape citizens' overall assessment of their living conditions.

At EU level, Europeans most frequently associate a good quality of life with **health and financial security**, alongside a broader set of social and structural factors.

The most commonly cited component is **physical and mental health** (51%), highlighting its central importance for well-being across the European Union. This is closely followed by **financial situation and the ability to afford daily life** (49%), underlining the key role of economic stability. **Quality and accessibility of healthcare** (46%) is mentioned by nearly half of respondents, reinforcing the strong emphasis placed on health-related factors.

Social aspects also rank highly. **Social life, including family, friends and relationships** (45%), is identified as an essential component of quality of life, reflecting the importance of personal connections. In addition, four in ten respondents mention **food safety and quality** (40%) and **public safety and personal security** (40%), indicating that both basic needs and a sense of safety are important considerations.

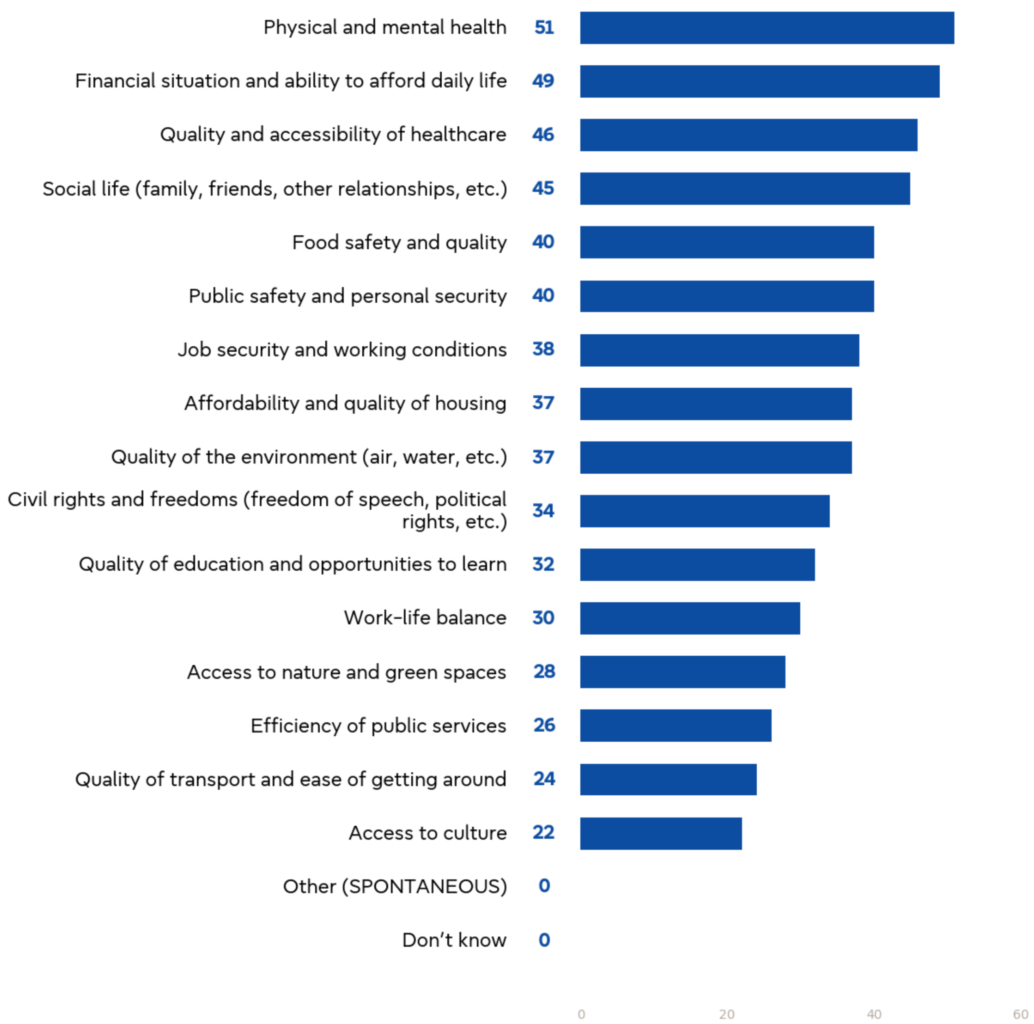
Economic and material conditions also feature prominently. **Job security and working conditions** (38%), as well as **affordability and quality of housing** (37%), are highlighted by substantial shares of respondents. A similar proportion emphasise the **quality of the environment** (37%), pointing to the importance of environmental factors in shaping well-being.

A group of factors is mentioned by around one third of respondents. These include **civil rights and freedoms** (34%), **quality of education and opportunities to learn** (32%), and **work–life balance** (30%), indicating the importance attributed not only to material conditions but also to broader societal and personal dimensions.

Other aspects are cited less frequently but remain relevant. Around one quarter of respondents mention access to **nature and green spaces** (28%), the **efficiency of public services** (26%) and the **quality of transport and ease of mobility** (24%), while smaller shares point to **access to culture** (22%).

Overall, these results suggest that Europeans view quality of life as a multidimensional concept, combining health, economic security, safety, social relationships, and broader societal conditions. While health and financial factors are the most prominent, a wide range of elements contribute to citizens' overall perceptions of well-being.

QA13 **People may have different views about 'quality of life'. For you, which of the following are most important for a good quality of life?** (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)



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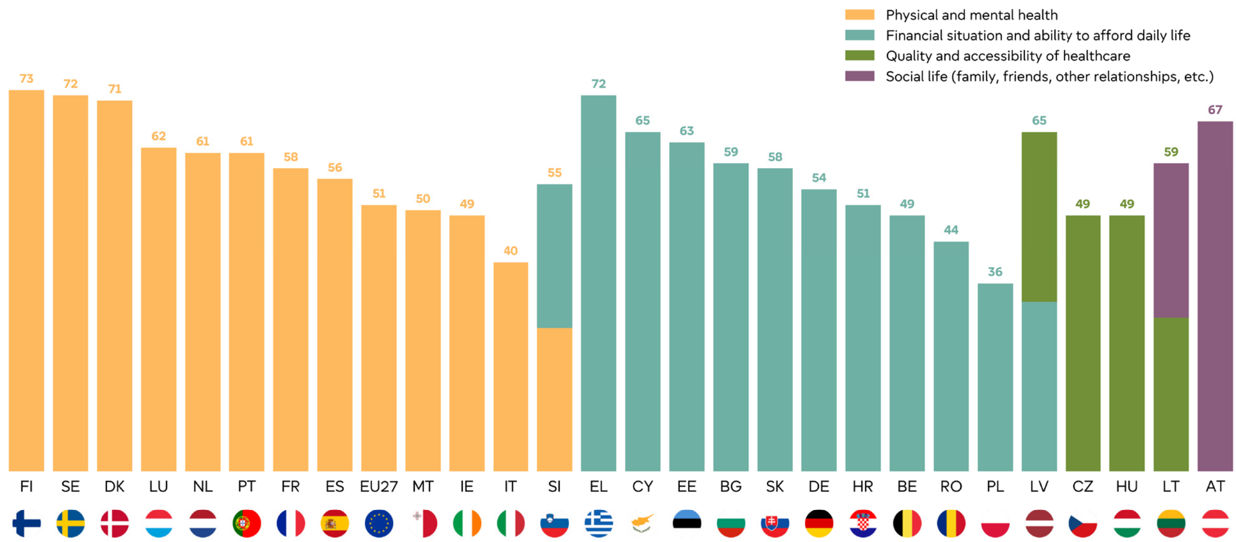
At the national level, **physical and mental health** is the most frequently mentioned component in 12 Member States. Across the EU as a whole, at least 40% of respondents cite physical and mental health in 25 Member States, reflecting widespread emphasis on health in shaping quality of life. The highest shares are observed in Finland (73%), Sweden (72%), and Denmark (71%).

Financial situation and the ability to afford daily life is the leading component in twelve Member States, most notably in Greece (72%), followed by Cyprus and Latvia (both 65%), and Estonia (63%), pointing to a strong focus on economic security in these countries. In Slovenia, physical and mental health and financial situation are equally the most frequently mentioned priorities (55%), indicating a balanced importance attached to both health and economic conditions.

In four Member States, **quality and accessibility of healthcare** ranks as the most important component. The highest shares are observed in Sweden (69%), Greece (68%), and in Latvia where this component together with financial situation are equally the most frequently cited (65%).

Finally, **social life (family, friends and relationships)** stands out as the top priority in Austria (67%), while in Lithuania it's equally shared with quality and accessibility of healthcare (59%).

QA13 **People may have different views about 'quality of life'. For you, which of the following are most important for a good quality of life?** (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)



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QA13 **People may have different views about 'quality of life'. For you, which of the following are most important for a good quality of life?** (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)

	EU27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
Physical and mental health	51	44	47	45	71	53	56	49	66	56	58	41	40	62	61	58	62	40	50	61	62	33	61	39	55	50	73	72
Financial situation and ability to afford daily life	49	49	59	48	59	54	63	48	72	47	51	51	38	65	65	55	52	46	39	58	65	36	48	44	55	58	63	60
Quality and accessibility of healthcare	46	44	45	49	61	43	52	42	68	49	51	40	35	49	65	59	49	49	36	55	58	31	50	37	53	55	62	69
Social life (family, friends, other relationships, etc.)	45	41	46	36	68	53	51	40	58	43	54	42	37	51	47	59	52	29	41	55	67	18	40	33	46	48	66	70
Food safety and quality	40	35	44	41	43	35	41	36	64	34	49	46	37	49	40	47	42	38	31	39	59	30	43	37	51	48	44	40
Public safety and personal security	40	29	38	40	47	43	44	36	59	38	38	35	38	49	51	49	37	34	30	41	56	31	40	33	45	45	55	53
Job security and working conditions	38	32	36	37	42	34	42	38	60	47	43	39	38	51	38	39	43	34	31	30	51	28	43	36	38	47	29	39
Affordability and quality of housing	37	36	21	44	36	36	39	46	58	43	44	30	23	61	37	37	52	37	32	43	54	21	40	31	33	48	43	36
Quality of the environment (air, water, etc.)	37	35	34	35	51	36	42	32	56	28	47	31	37	46	35	38	39	32	37	41	60	19	34	29	52	45	50	54
Civil rights and freedoms (freedom of speech, political rights, etc.)	34	27	28	31	53	40	33	27	50	32	33	32	31	43	36	33	33	28	30	43	52	16	26	28	38	41	42	65
Quality of education and opportunities to learn	32	32	25	30	44	28	37	31	55	39	34	25	28	52	40	35	42	27	35	40	43	13	33	30	36	40	39	43
Work-life balance	30	33	27	32	52	17	34	38	47	36	36	32	33	46	40	43	38	33	37	35	29	17	42	27	31	39	37	47
Access to nature and green spaces	28	21	22	28	49	29	36	31	46	24	28	24	26	38	29	31	31	25	32	33	56	16	26	24	43	34	42	51
Efficiency of public services	26	17	23	19	34	19	32	30	53	34	30	23	30	37	28	35	21	27	25	17	37	13	29	26	33	32	31	26
Quality of transport and ease of getting around	24	18	22	26	29	24	30	27	48	24	25	26	24	34	32	33	28	21	26	21	41	15	24	26	26	33	20	26
Access to culture	22	19	18	18	22	21	32	20	37	23	27	13	21	35	26	26	23	19	16	20	32	7	21	21	21	26	23	38

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item
2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item
3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

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Perceptions of what constitutes a good quality of life vary across **socio-demographic groups**, although several key dimensions, particularly health, financial security, and healthcare, are consistently prioritised.

Differences by **gender** are relatively limited, although some variations can be observed. Women are slightly more likely than men to prioritise financial situation (51% vs 48%), quality and accessibility of healthcare (48% vs 44%), as well as food safety and quality (41% vs 38%). Overall, gender differences remain moderate.

More pronounced differences are observed across **age** groups, reflecting varying life priorities. Younger respondents place greater emphasis on social life (46-48% among those aged 15–39 vs 44% among those aged 55+), job security (45% among those aged 25-39 vs 32%), affordability and quality of housing (41% among those aged 25-39 vs 33%), education and opportunities to learn (36-38% vs 28%), access to culture (24-25% vs 20%), and work–life balance (40% among those aged 25-39 vs 28%). By contrast, older respondents are more likely to prioritise physical and mental health (53% among those aged 55+ vs 48% among the youngest), financial situation (51% vs 43%), and accessibility of healthcare (50% vs 38%), reflecting a stronger focus on health and financial aspects.

Differences by **education level** also reveal clear patterns. Respondents with a higher level of education are more likely to emphasise a wider range of dimensions, including social life (49% vs 44% among those with a low level), quality of the environment (43% vs 34%), civil rights and freedoms (42% vs 29%), education (39% vs 26%), work–life balance (37% vs 24%), and access to nature and green spaces (32% vs 25%). For the rest of components there is no significant differences based on the education level.

A strong relationship is observed with respondents' **financial situation**. Those experiencing difficulties paying their bills most of the time are more likely to prioritise health (55% vs 51% of those who do not face difficulties), financial situation (55% vs 49%), job security (43% vs 37%), while also placing relatively high importance on affordability and quality of housing (46% vs 35%) and efficiency of public services (31% vs 25%). In contrast, respondents who almost never or never face financial difficulties are more likely to mention aspects such as public safety (40% vs 37%) and environmental quality (38% vs 33%), indicating a shift towards less immediate concerns when economic pressures are lower.

Finally, there are slight differences when comparing those who are **satisfied with their quality of life** and those who are not. Respondents who are not satisfied with their quality of life are somewhat more likely to mention their financial situation as an important component (54% vs 49% for those who are satisfied). Conversely, respondents satisfied with their quality of life are more likely to mention social life (46% vs 42% for those who are not satisfied), civil rights (35% vs 31%), education (33% vs 26%), and access to nature (29% vs 25%).

QA13 **People may have different views about 'quality of life'. For you, which of the following are most important for a good quality of life?** (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (% - EU)

	Physical and mental health	Financial situation and ability to afford daily life	Quality and accessibility of healthcare	Social life (family, friends, other relationships, etc.)	Public safety and personal security	Food safety and quality	Job security and working conditions
EU27	51	49	46	45	40	40	38
Gender							
Man	51	48	44	45	39	38	39
Woman	52	51	48	46	40	41	38
Age							
15-24	48	43	38	46	36	36	37
25-39	51	50	44	48	41	41	45
40-54	50	50	44	45	40	39	44
55+	53	51	50	44	40	40	32
Education level							
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	52	50	46	44	39	40	36
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	48	49	44	44	40	40	39
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	55	50	48	49	41	39	39
Socio-professional category							
Self-employed	46	50	43	44	39	38	39
Managers	54	51	45	50	43	39	41
Other white collars	50	50	44	47	40	42	45
Manual workers	49	50	45	44	39	38	47
House persons	53	53	47	44	37	43	39
Unemployed	56	53	46	47	38	43	49
Retired	54	50	51	43	41	42	26
Students	49	43	37	48	37	35	35
Difficulties paying bills							
Most of the time	55	55	48	46	37	42	43
From time to time	49	49	45	43	40	40	40
Almost never / Never	51	49	46	46	40	39	37
Subjective urbanisation							
Rural area or village	50	48	45	44	39	39	37
Small or middle sized town	51	50	45	45	40	39	37
Large town	53	51	48	47	42	42	42
Image of the EU							
Positive	49	48	46	46	40	40	38
Neutral	52	49	45	45	39	39	39
Negative	53	54	48	46	43	41	40
Satisfaction with quality of life							
Satisfied	51	49	45	46	40	39	38
Not satisfied	53	54	48	42	39	42	40

	Affordability and quality of housing	Quality of the environment (air, water, etc.)	Civil rights and freedoms (freedom of speech, political rights, etc.)	Quality of education and opportunities to learn	Work-life balance	Access to nature and green spaces	Efficiency of public services	Quality of transport and ease of getting around	Access to culture
EU27	37	37	34	32	30	28	26	24	22
Gender									
Man	36	36	35	32	31	28	27	24	21
Woman	37	38	34	32	30	29	25	24	22
Age									
15-24	38	36	36	38	31	27	22	25	24
25-39	41	39	38	36	40	29	25	25	25
40-54	38	37	34	34	36	29	26	25	22
55+	33	37	32	26	22	27	28	24	20
Education level									
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	36	34	29	26	24	25	26	25	18
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	36	35	33	30	30	28	26	24	21
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	38	43	42	39	37	32	27	24	27
Socio-professional category									
Self-employed	35	37	36	33	35	27	28	25	23
Managers	38	41	39	39	39	31	27	23	26
Other white collars	40	39	35	33	39	30	27	26	23
Manual workers	39	34	32	30	35	29	24	24	20
House persons	35	36	32	30	25	26	27	27	19
Unemployed	46	36	36	32	32	26	27	25	24
Retired	32	37	32	25	17	27	28	23	19
Students	36	38	38	42	31	29	23	26	25
Difficulties paying bills									
Most of the time	46	33	34	30	30	27	31	27	23
From time to time	38	35	32	30	32	28	28	27	22
Almost never / Never	35	38	35	32	30	29	25	23	22
Subjective urbanisation									
Rural area or village	34	34	32	30	30	26	25	23	19
Small or middle sized town	35	37	34	30	29	28	26	24	22
Large town	42	40	38	36	34	32	28	27	25
Image of the EU									
Positive	36	39	37	35	32	30	26	24	24
Neutral	36	36	30	29	29	27	26	24	20
Negative	39	35	34	28	29	27	28	25	21
Satisfaction with quality of life									
Satisfied	36	38	35	33	31	29	26	24	22
Not satisfied	39	35	31	26	28	25	27	25	20

Improving quality of life

Building on the previous section, which explored the key components that Europeans associate with a good quality of life, this chapter examines where respondents believe changes would most improve their quality of life. While the earlier analysis identifies what people value most, this question provides insight into where unmet needs or pressures are most strongly felt. Together, these perspectives offer a more complete understanding of both the foundations of well-being and the areas where improvements are most needed.

At EU level, the results indicate that **economic and health-related factors are seen as the areas where change would most improve quality of life**, confirming the importance of these dimensions identified in the previous section.

The most frequently cited area is **financial situation and the ability to afford daily life** (42%), clearly ranking first. This highlights the central role of economic conditions in shaping perceived well-being and suggests that financial pressures remain a key concern for a large share of Europeans.

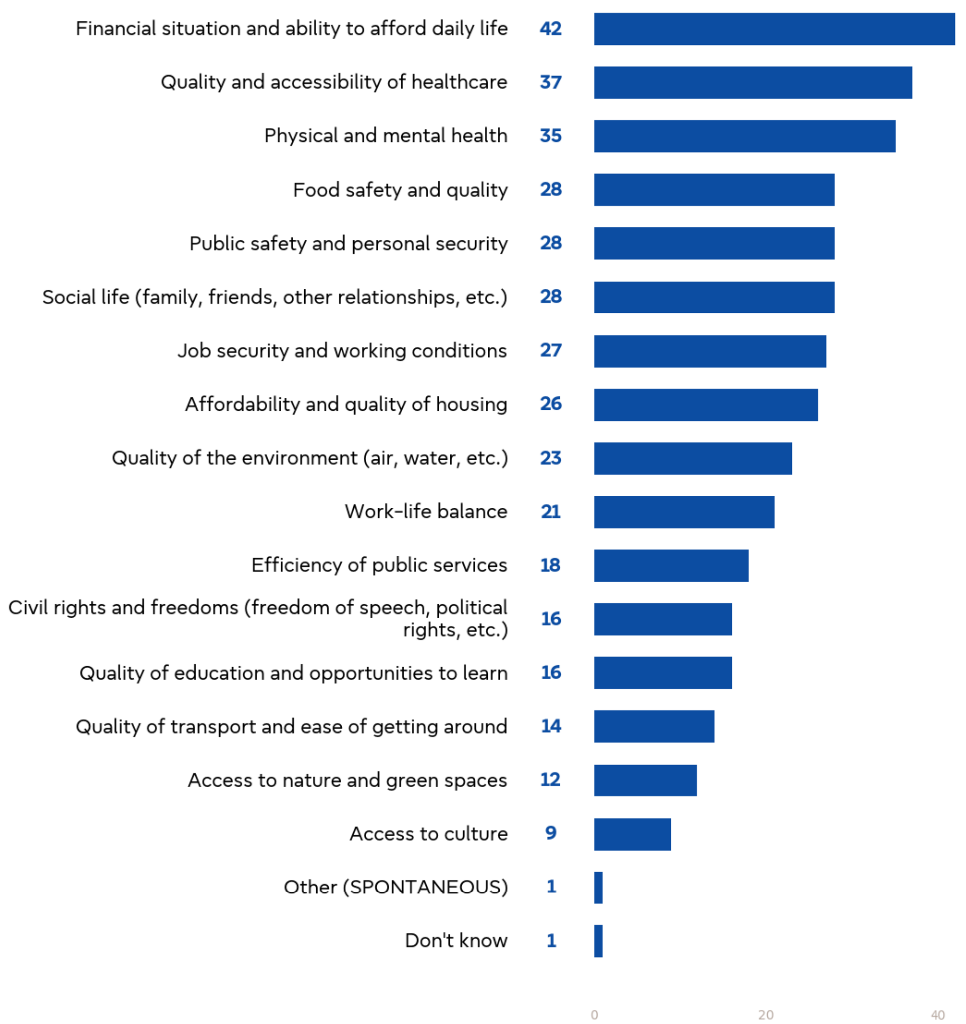
This is followed by **quality and accessibility of healthcare** (37%) and **physical and mental health** (35%), both mentioned by more than one third of respondents. Taken together, these findings underline the importance not only of individual health but also of access to effective healthcare systems as key drivers of quality of life.

A second group of factors is cited by around one quarter to one third of respondents. These include **food safety and quality** (28%), **public safety and personal security** (28%), and **social life** (28%), indicating that basic needs, safety, and social relationships remain important areas where improvements are perceived as beneficial. Similarly, **job security and working conditions** (27%) and **affordability and quality of housing** (26%) are frequently mentioned, pointing to continued concerns related to employment and housing conditions.

Other aspects are considered less frequently but still relevant. Around one fifth of respondents mention **quality of the environmen**t (23%) and **work–life balance** (21%), while smaller shares cite **efficiency of public services** (18%), **civil rights and freedoms** (16%), and **quality of education and opportunities to learn** (16%). More specific aspects, such as **transport** (14%), **access to nature** (12%), and **access to culture** (9%), are mentioned by comparatively fewer respondents.

Overall, these findings show that Europeans identify a combination of economic security, health, and essential living conditions as the areas where improvements would have the greatest impact on their quality of life. While these priorities largely mirror the components highlighted in the previous question, they also emphasise where gaps between expectations and reality are most strongly perceived, particularly in relation to financial conditions and access to healthcare.

QA14ab **In which of the following areas could changes most improve your quality of life? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 5 ANSWERS) (%)



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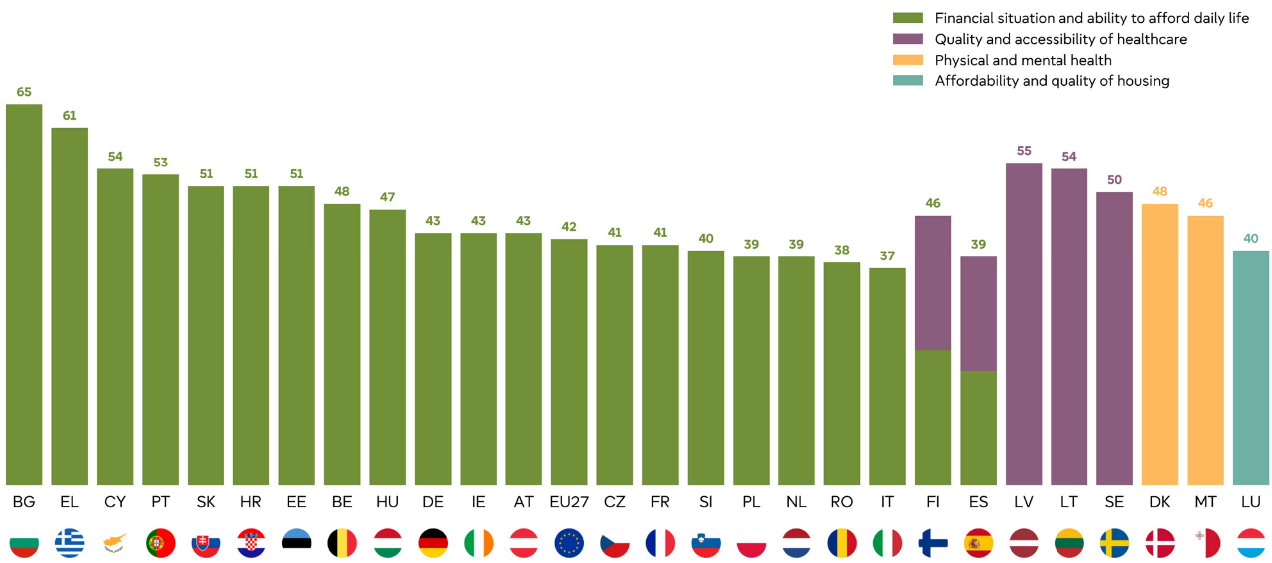
At the national level, **financial situation and the ability to afford daily life** emerges as the most frequently mentioned area in 21 Member States, highlighting the central importance of economic conditions in driving improvements in quality of life. The highest shares are observed in Bulgaria (65%), followed by Greece (61%), as well as Cyprus and Latvia (both 54%). Across the EU as a whole, financial situation is mentioned by at least a third of respondents in all Member States, confirming its widespread relevance. In Finland and Spain, financial situation is mentioned at the same level as quality and accessibility of healthcare, indicating a shared priority between economic conditions and healthcare provision.

Quality and accessibility of healthcare ranks as the leading priority in five countries. It is most frequently cited in Latvia (55%), Lithuania (54%), and Portugal (51%), underlining the importance attributed to healthcare systems in these countries.

In two countries, **physical and mental health** emerges as the main priority: in Denmark (48%) and Malta (46%), while affordability and quality of housing ranks first in Luxembourg (40%), reflecting specific national pressures related to housing.

Overall, these findings point to a clear predominance of financial concerns across Member States, while health-related factors, particularly healthcare access, emerge as equally important in several countries. This distribution highlights both common challenges across the European Union and differences shaped by national contexts.

QA14ab **In which of the following areas could changes most improve your quality of life? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 5 ANSWERS) (%)



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QA14ab In which of the following areas could changes most improve your quality of life? Firstly? And then? (MAX. 5 ANSWERS) (%)

	EU27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
Financial situation and ability to afford daily life	42	48	65	41	37	43	51	43	61	39	41	51	37	54	54	44	36	47	37	39	43	39	53	38	40	51	46	38
Quality and accessibility of healthcare	37	32	41	39	36	37	39	31	49	39	36	37	31	31	55	54	22	45	28	35	33	34	51	29	39	46	46	50
Physical and mental health	35	31	38	33	48	33	34	40	40	38	35	32	35	41	39	44	39	34	46	38	36	28	37	27	39	32	40	42
Food safety and quality	28	27	43	34	23	24	20	25	37	20	33	36	31	28	18	27	24	33	16	22	37	31	28	28	35	37	15	15
Public safety and personal security	28	23	29	26	23	33	25	22	28	24	21	20	35	36	28	28	22	25	19	26	31	30	28	23	25	24	26	26
Social life (family, friends, other relationships, etc.)	28	24	38	19	37	34	31	29	27	25	28	36	28	23	22	39	29	22	34	24	36	14	30	22	22	31	32	34
Job security and working conditions	27	27	31	26	18	24	29	27	37	31	27	34	30	29	15	18	27	28	20	17	24	23	38	33	23	32	16	13
Affordability and quality of housing	26	29	9	37	16	29	24	38	25	29	30	24	14	43	18	17	40	32	27	35	27	24	24	17	20	28	31	22
Quality of the environment (air, water, etc.)	23	23	23	19	31	24	18	20	24	12	27	22	31	19	11	10	23	24	30	28	31	15	13	17	28	19	17	25
Work-life balance	21	24	22	19	31	12	20	29	22	24	21	24	25	21	25	26	29	25	31	22	16	18	35	20	21	25	24	30
Efficiency of public services	18	16	13	12	15	12	14	24	25	25	19	15	24	14	15	10	14	20	13	15	12	13	30	16	18	14	20	17
Civil rights and freedoms (freedom of speech, political rights, etc.)	16	13	15	11	15	19	11	10	14	13	12	25	21	14	9	11	12	16	16	17	20	15	9	19	16	18	10	20
Quality of education and opportunities to learn	16	18	14	11	12	16	17	16	24	21	13	13	16	31	17	15	19	18	23	14	19	9	17	23	12	18	11	11
Quality of transport and ease of getting around	14	17	13	15	14	17	10	17	17	11	13	18	15	11	8	11	10	13	26	17	18	12	12	17	9	14	8	15
Access to nature and green spaces	12	13	9	13	19	12	11	14	13	9	10	15	16	10	4	5	13	15	21	14	23	13	9	12	17	11	12	18
Access to culture	9	10	6	6	7	7	12	7	7	8	11	7	10	7	7	4	6	10	8	7	10	8	7	10	4	8	7	13

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item
2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item
3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

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Perceptions of the areas in which changes would most improve quality of life vary across **socio-demographic groups**.

Differences by **gender** are limited, but some variations can be observed. Women are slightly more likely than men to prioritise quality and accessibility of healthcare (40% vs 34%). For the rest of the components, variation is only marginal.

More pronounced differences emerge across **age** groups, reflecting distinct life-stage concerns. Younger respondents place greater emphasis on job security and working conditions (30% among those aged 15–24 vs 17% among those aged 55+), affordability and quality of housing (35% vs 20%), education and opportunities to learn (29% vs 10%), and access to culture (14% vs 7%). By contrast, older respondents are more likely to prioritise quality and accessibility of healthcare (46% among those aged 55+ vs 20% among those aged 15–24), physical and mental health (40% vs 30%), public safety (31% vs 24%), food safety and quality (31% vs 21%), environment quality (26% vs 21%), and efficiency of public services (21% vs 14%) indicating a stronger focus on safety and health-related concerns. Financial situation is more pronounced among those aged 25-54 (44% vs 37% among the youngest group).

Differences by **education level** show less contrasts. Respondents with a low level of education are more likely to prioritise quality and accessibility of healthcare (41% vs 35%), physical and mental health (38% vs 35%), and social life (30% vs 26%), pointing to a stronger emphasis on essential needs. In contrast, those with a higher level of education are relatively more likely to cite work–life balance (27% vs 14%), quality of environment (26% vs 21%), and civil rights and freedoms (18% vs 12%), reflecting a broader and more long-term perspective on quality of life improvements.

A particularly strong relationship is observed with respondents' **financial situation**. Among those experiencing difficulties paying their bills most of the time, a majority cite financial situation (57% vs 39% among those who do not face difficulties) as the main area where change would improve their quality of life. This group also places greater emphasis on housing (36% vs 24%) and job security (31% vs 25%), while those in more secure situations are relatively more likely to mention broader elements such as social life (28% vs 24%), food safety (29% vs 24%), and environmental quality (24% vs 17%). This highlights the central role of economic vulnerability in shaping perceived priorities.

Finally, there are differences when comparing those who are **satisfied with their quality of life** and those who are not. Respondents who are not satisfied with their quality of life are more likely to mention the financial situation (52% vs 40% among those who are satisfied), healthcare (42% vs 36%), health (38% vs 34%), job security (30% vs 26%), and housing (30% vs 25%).

QA14ab In which of the following areas could changes most improve your quality of life? Firstly? And then? (MAX. 5 ANSWERS) (% - EU)

	Financial situation and ability to afford daily life	Quality and accessibility of healthcare	Physical and mental health	Social life (family, friends, other relationships, etc.)	Public safety and personal security	Food safety and quality	Job security and working conditions	Affordability and quality of housing	Quality of the environment (air, water, etc.)
EU27	42	37	35	28	28	28	27	26	23
Gender									
Man	42	34	34	27	28	28	28	26	23
Woman	42	40	36	28	28	28	25	25	23
Age									
15-24	37	20	30	28	24	21	30	35	21
25-39	44	31	31	27	26	26	35	32	19
40-54	44	36	32	27	26	28	34	25	21
55+	42	46	40	28	31	31	17	20	26
Education level									
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	43	41	38	30	27	29	24	26	21
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	43	36	33	27	29	29	29	26	22
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	40	35	35	26	27	26	26	25	26
Socio-professional category									
Self-employed	42	37	32	27	25	27	29	22	23
Managers	40	32	32	26	29	27	32	24	26
Other white collars	44	36	31	28	27	26	33	29	22
Manual workers	44	36	31	28	27	28	35	29	17
House persons	45	41	32	26	28	30	22	22	20
Unemployed	47	32	38	27	25	22	40	39	15
Retired	41	48	44	28	31	33	11	19	28
Students	37	19	30	28	24	23	28	31	23
Difficulties paying bills									
Most of the time	57	38	34	28	24	24	31	36	17
From time to time	48	35	34	27	28	27	31	28	20
Almost never / Never	39	38	35	28	28	29	25	24	24
Subjective urbanisation									
Rural area or village	41	38	35	27	26	29	28	22	20
Small or middle sized town	42	38	34	28	28	28	26	25	24
Large town	43	35	36	27	29	27	27	30	24
Image of the EU									
Positive	40	36	34	28	27	28	26	25	25
Neutral	43	37	36	28	28	28	28	26	21
Negative	46	39	35	26	30	29	26	28	20
Satisfaction with quality of life									
Satisfied	40	36	34	28	28	28	26	25	24
Not satisfied	52	42	38	27	27	29	30	30	18

	Work-life balance	Efficiency of public services	Civil rights and freedoms (freedom of speech, political rights, etc.)	Quality of education and opportunities to learn	Quality of transport and ease of getting around	Access to nature and green spaces	Access to culture	Other (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	21	18	16	16	14	12	9	1	1
Gender									
Man	21	18	17	16	14	13	9	1	1
Woman	21	18	15	16	15	12	8	1	1
Age									
15-24	21	14	18	29	17	13	14	1	1
25-39	31	15	16	18	13	12	9	1	1
40-54	27	18	16	17	14	13	7	1	1
55+	11	21	15	10	14	12	7	2	2
Education level									
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	14	18	12	14	16	11	7	1	2
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	21	17	17	16	13	12	9	1	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	27	19	18	17	14	14	10	2	1
Socio-professional category									
Self-employed	27	19	17	15	13	14	10	2	1
Managers	32	19	17	18	13	14	9	2	1
Other white collars	28	16	17	16	15	13	8	1	1
Manual workers	25	16	15	16	13	11	7	0	1
House persons	17	24	13	16	18	9	7	1	1
Unemployed	23	14	16	14	13	12	7	1	2
Retired	7	21	16	9	14	12	7	2	2
Students	20	14	18	33	18	15	15	0	1
Difficulties paying bills									
Most of the time	24	17	12	15	17	9	6	1	0
From time to time	22	18	17	16	15	12	9	0	1
Almost never / Never	20	18	16	16	14	13	8	2	1
Subjective urbanisation									
Rural area or village	21	19	15	16	14	11	8	1	2
Small or middle sized town	19	18	16	15	13	13	8	1	1
Large town	23	17	17	17	16	14	10	1	1
Image of the EU									
Positive	23	18	17	17	15	14	10	1	1
Neutral	19	17	14	15	13	12	8	1	1
Negative	19	18	16	14	14	10	7	2	2
Satisfaction with quality of life									
Satisfied	21	17	16	16	14	13	9	1	1
Not satisfied	20	20	14	13	16	10	7	0	1

Quality of life in the EU and in other countries

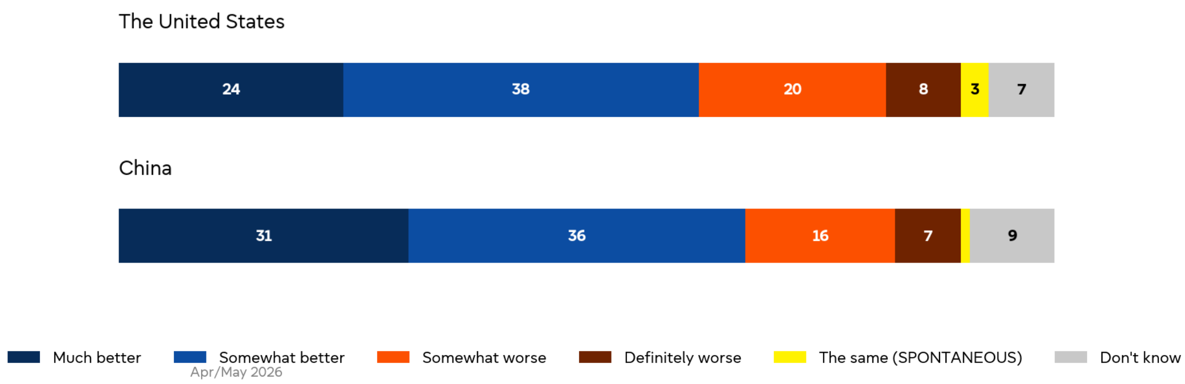
Building on the previous sections on quality of life within the European Union, including its evolution, key components, and areas for improvement, this section places perceptions in a broader international context. It explores how Europeans assess the quality of life in the European Union compared with that in major global actors. This comparison provides insight into how citizens position the EU globally and how they evaluate its quality of life relative to other global systems.

At EU level, a majority of Europeans tend to view the quality of life in the European Union as better than in both the United States and China. When compared with the United States, a clear majority of respondents consider that the quality of life in the EU is better. In total, 62% of Europeans say that quality of life in the EU is better than in the United States, including 24% who say it is much better and 38% who say it is somewhat better. By contrast, 28% consider that quality of life in the EU is worse, including 20% who say somewhat worse and 8% who say definitely worse. A small proportion consider it to be the same (3%) or are unable to give an opinion (7%).

The gap is even more pronounced in comparison with China. More than two thirds of respondents (67%) consider that the quality of life in the EU is better, including 31% who say much better and 36% somewhat better. By contrast, only 23% believe it is worse, including 16% somewhat worse and 7% definitely worse, while 9% do not know.

Overall, these findings indicate that Europeans hold a positive view of the EU's quality of life in a global comparison, particularly when compared with China. While perceptions are somewhat more balanced when comparing the EU with the United States, a clear majority still considers the EU to offer better living conditions, reinforcing the EU's positioning as a relatively favourable environment in terms of quality of life.

QA15 **In general, would you say that the quality of life in the EU is currently better or worse than in each of these countries?** (EU27) (%)

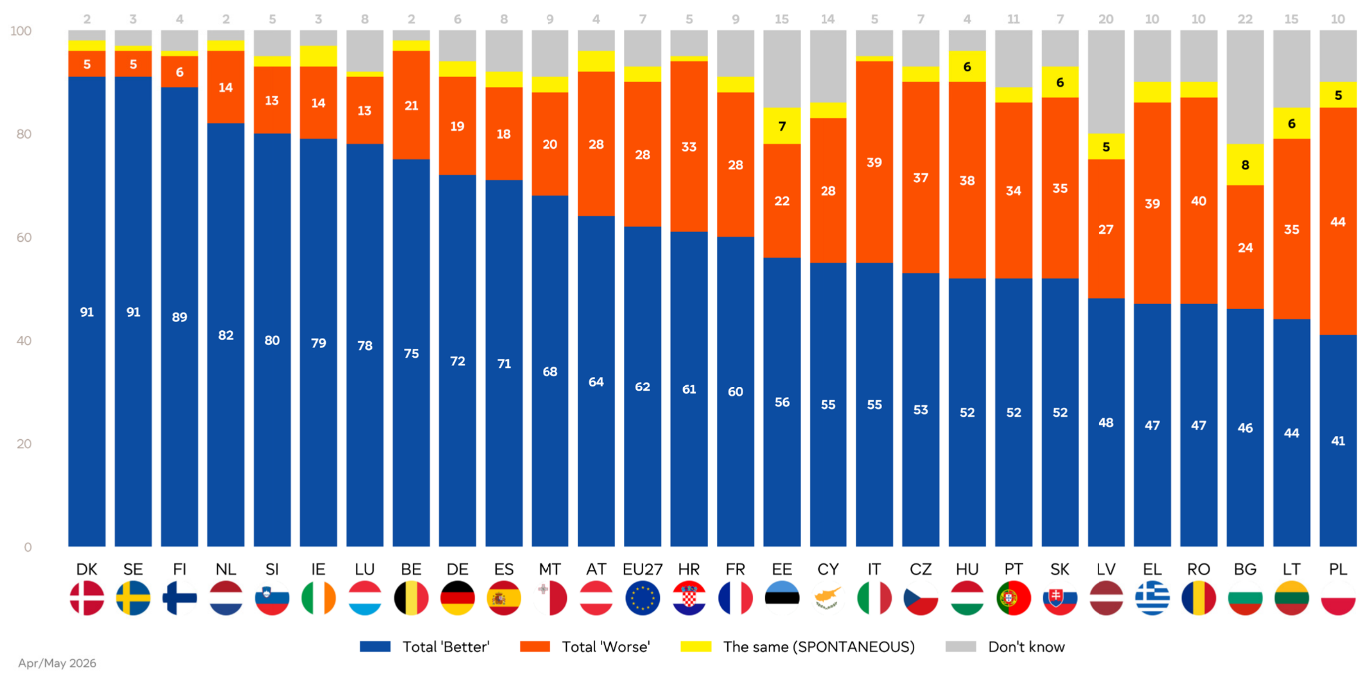


Across all Member States but one, a majority of respondents consider that the quality of life in the European Union is better than in the United States, although the strength of this perception varies considerably between countries.

The highest shares of respondents who say that quality of life in the EU is better are observed in Denmark and Sweden (both 91%), Finland (89%), followed by the Netherlands (82%). At the other end of the distribution, the lowest shares of respondents considering the EU to offer a better quality of life are observed in Poland (41%), followed by Lithuania (44%), Bulgaria (46%), and Romania (47%). In these countries, perceptions are more divided, and a substantial proportion of respondents consider the United States to offer better living conditions.

Looking at negative assessments, the highest shares of respondents who say that quality of life in the EU is worse than in the United States are recorded in Poland (44%), Romania (40%), Greece and Italy (both 39%), indicating more critical views in these countries. Poland is the only Member State where a relative majority say that quality of life is worse in the EU compared to the US.

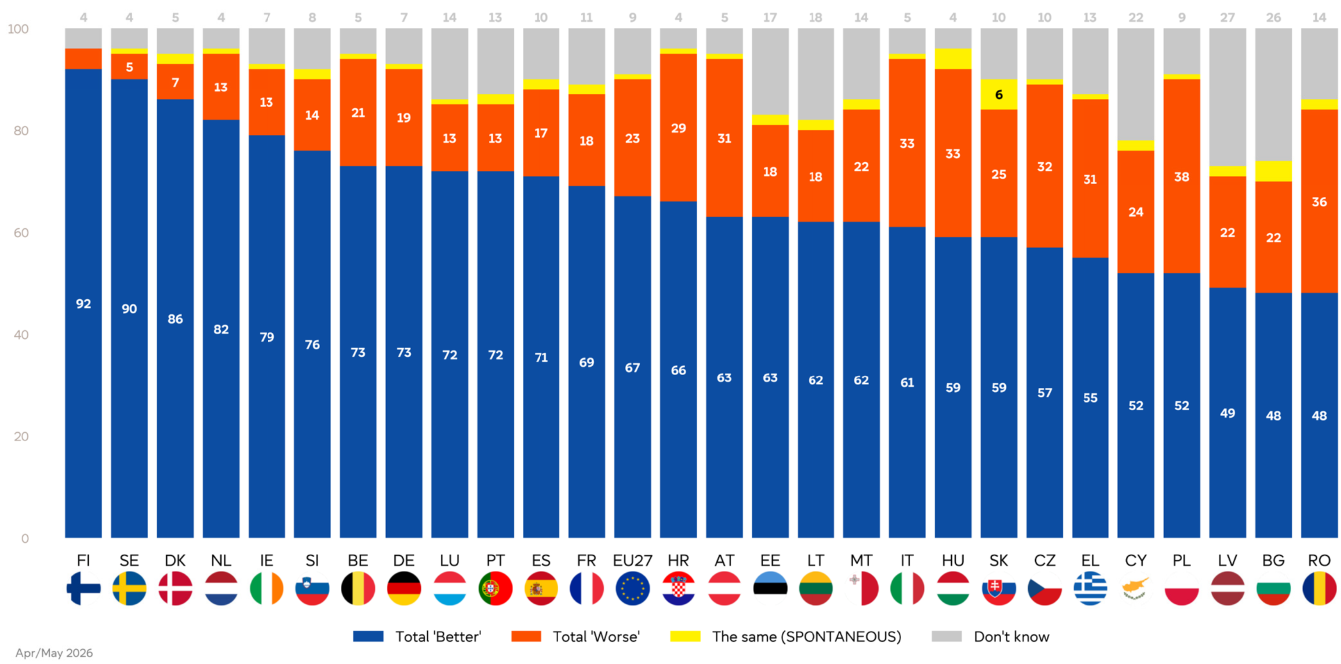
QA15.1 **In general, would you say that the quality of life in the EU is currently better or worse than in each of these countries? –** The United States (%)



In all Member States, at least a relative majority of respondents consider that the quality of life in the European Union is better than in China, with this view being particularly strong and widespread, though varying in intensity across countries.

The highest shares of respondents who believe that quality of life in the EU is better than in China are recorded in Finland (92%), followed by Sweden (90%), Denmark (86%), as well as the Netherlands (82%). At the other end of the scale, the lowest shares are recorded in Bulgaria and Romania (both 48%), Latvia (49%), Poland and Cyprus (both 52%) where the proportion of respondents who consider the EU to offer a better quality of life is lower, and opinions are more divided. Looking at negative assessments, the highest shares of respondents who say that quality of life in the EU is worse than in China are observed in Poland (38%), Romania (36%), Hungary and Italy (both 33%), as well as in Czechia (32%).

QA15.2 **In general, would you say that the quality of life in the EU is currently better or worse than in each of these countries?** – China (%)



Perceptions of how **the quality of life in the European Union compares with that in the United States** show limited variation across **socio-demographic groups**, with a majority in every category considering that the EU offers a better quality of life. However, within attitudinal groups differences are clearer.

Differences by **gender** are negligible. Men and women report identical shares considering the EU to offer a better quality of life than US (62% in both groups), while levels of negative assessments are also very similar (29% among men and 27% among women).

Differences remain relatively moderate also across **age** groups. Younger respondents are slightly more positive, with 64% of those aged 15–24 saying that the EU offers a better quality of life, compared with 62% among those aged 40 and over.

Differences are more pronounced by **education level**. Respondents with a high level of education are significantly more likely to consider the EU to offer a better quality of life (71%) compared with those with a medium level (61%) and especially those with a low level of education (56%). Conversely, negative views are more prevalent among less educated respondents (29–30% vs 22% among the highly educated), while uncertainty is also higher in this group (12% vs 4%). This highlights a clear relationship between educational attainment and positive perceptions of the EU in comparison with the United States.

A strong relationship is observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who almost never or never have difficulties paying their bills, 65% consider the EU to offer a better quality of life than US, compared with 55% among those experiencing difficulties, who are also more likely to express negative views (34–35% vs 25%). This pattern indicates that financial vulnerability is associated with a more critical assessment.

Attitudinal factors show the strongest contrasts. Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are much more likely to consider the EU to offer a better quality of life (71% vs 22% worse), whereas this share drops to 57% among those with a neutral image and to 49% among those with a negative image, where 39% consider the EU to offer a worse quality of life.

A similarly marked pattern is observed with **satisfaction with quality of life**. Among satisfied respondents, 65% consider the EU to offer a better quality of life, compared with only 50% among those who are not satisfied, who are also more likely to report that the EU performs worse (37%).

Similarly, perceptions of how the **quality of life in the European Union compares with that in China** doesn't show much variation across **socio-demographic groups** as in attitudinal groups, with clear majorities in all categories considering that the EU offers better living conditions.

Differences by **gender** are minimal. Men and women display almost identical views, with 67% of men and 66% of women considering that the EU offers a better quality of life than China. Negative assessments are similarly close (24% vs 23%), while women are slightly more likely to report uncertainty (10% vs 7%).

Across **age** groups, variations are also relatively limited. The share considering the EU to offer a better quality of life ranges narrowly between 66% and 68% across all age categories. Differences by education level are more pronounced. Respondents with a high level of education are clearly the most positive, with 75% considering the EU to offer a better quality of life, compared with 62% among those with a low level of education. Conversely, negative views are more prevalent among less educated respondents (23–27% vs 18% among the highly educated), while uncertainty is also higher (13% vs 6%). This highlights a strong relationship between educational attainment and more favourable perceptions of the EU in a global comparison.

A clear relationship is also observed with respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who almost never or never have difficulties paying their bills, 70% consider the EU to offer a better quality of life, compared with 59–60% among those experiencing financial difficulties, who are also more likely to express negative views (29–30% vs 20%). This indicates that financial vulnerability is associated with a more critical outlook.

Attitudinal factors show the strongest contrasts. Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are much more likely to say that quality of life in the EU is better (75% vs 18% worse), compared with 56% among those with a negative image, where negative assessments rise to 32%.

A similarly pronounced pattern is observed for **satisfaction with quality of life**. Among respondents who are satisfied, 70% consider the EU to offer a better quality of life, compared with 56% among those who are not satisfied, who are also more likely to express negative views (30%).

QA15.1 **In general, would you say that the quality of life in the EU is currently better or worse than in each of these countries?** – The United States (% – EU)

	Total 'Better'	Total 'Worse'	The same (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	62	28	3	7
Gender				
Man	62	29	3	6
Woman	62	27	3	8
Age				
15-24	64	28	3	5
25-39	63	28	3	6
40-54	62	29	3	6
55+	62	26	3	9
Education level				
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	56	29	3	12
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	61	30	3	6
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	71	22	3	4
Socio-professional category				
Self-employed	60	30	5	5
Managers	70	24	3	3
Other white collars	63	27	3	7
Manual workers	58	32	3	7
House persons	56	32	3	9
Unemployed	64	24	2	10
Retired	61	26	3	10
Students	68	25	2	5
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	55	34	2	9
From time to time	55	35	2	8
Almost never / Never	65	25	3	7
Subjective urbanisation				
Rural area or village	60	29	3	8
Small or middle sized town	63	27	3	7
Large town	66	26	2	6
Image of the EU				
Positive	71	22	2	5
Neutral	57	30	4	9
Negative	49	39	3	9
Satisfaction with quality of life				
Satisfied	65	25	3	7
Not satisfied	50	37	3	10

QA15.2 **In general, would you say that the quality of life in the EU is currently better or worse than in each of these countries?** – China (% – EU)

	Total 'Better'	Total 'Worse'	The same (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	67	23	1	9
Gender				
Man	67	24	2	7
Woman	66	23	1	10
Age				
15-24	68	24	2	6
25-39	66	25	2	7
40-54	67	24	1	8
55+	67	21	1	11
Education level				
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	62	23	2	13
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	64	27	1	8
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	75	18	1	6
Socio-professional category				
Self-employed	68	24	2	6
Managers	76	18	1	5
Other white collars	66	25	2	7
Manual workers	63	26	2	9
House persons	57	30	2	11
Unemployed	66	18	2	14
Retired	67	20	1	12
Students	70	23	1	6
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	59	29	1	11
From time to time	60	30	1	9
Almost never / Never	70	20	2	8
Subjective urbanisation				
Rural area or village	64	24	2	10
Small or middle sized town	68	22	1	9
Large town	69	23	1	7
Image of the EU				
Positive	75	18	1	6
Neutral	62	25	2	11
Negative	56	32	2	10
Satisfaction with quality of life				
Satisfied	70	21	1	8
Not satisfied	56	30	1	13

4 CITIZENS' PRIORITIES FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

4. CITIZENS’ PRIORITIES FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

This chapter examines Europeans’ expectations towards the European Parliament by exploring three dimensions: the policy areas citizens want the Parliament to prioritise, the values they believe the Parliament should uphold, and their level of satisfaction with democracy at both national and EU levels.

Overall, the findings show that economic concerns are at the core of citizens’ expectations, with cost-of-living pressures and employment-related issues shaping policy priorities. Beyond these material considerations, Europeans express strong expectations that the European Parliament should act as a guardian of fundamental values, notably peace and democracy. Finally, although a majority of citizens report being satisfied with the functioning of democracy, levels of satisfaction vary significantly across Member States, pointing to uneven perceptions of democratic performance.

Citizens’ priorities for the European Parliament

Respondents were asked which policy areas they would like the European Parliament to prioritise. This question captures citizens’ expectations regarding the Parliament’s legislative and political agenda, reflecting both the issues they consider most pressing in their daily lives and those shaping the European Union’s medium and long term direction.

At EU level, **inflation, rising prices and the cost of living** remains the most frequently mentioned issue, with 47% of respondents including it among their top priorities. This share has increased by 6 percentage points since November 2025, the most notable change in the current wave, indicating that pressures on purchasing power and household budgets have intensified, reinforcing its position as the leading concern across the European Union.

The **economy and job creation** ranks second, cited by 35% of respondents. This share is unchanged since November 2025 suggesting that expectations of EU action to support economic activity and employment persist. Taken together, these two items confirm that economic concerns clearly dominate citizens’ priorities at EU level.

EU defence and security follows closely, mentioned by 34% of respondents, with levels unchanged compared with the previous wave. In the context of ongoing geopolitical tensions and security challenges, its sustained prominence highlights the continued importance attached to the EU’s role in ensuring stability and protection.

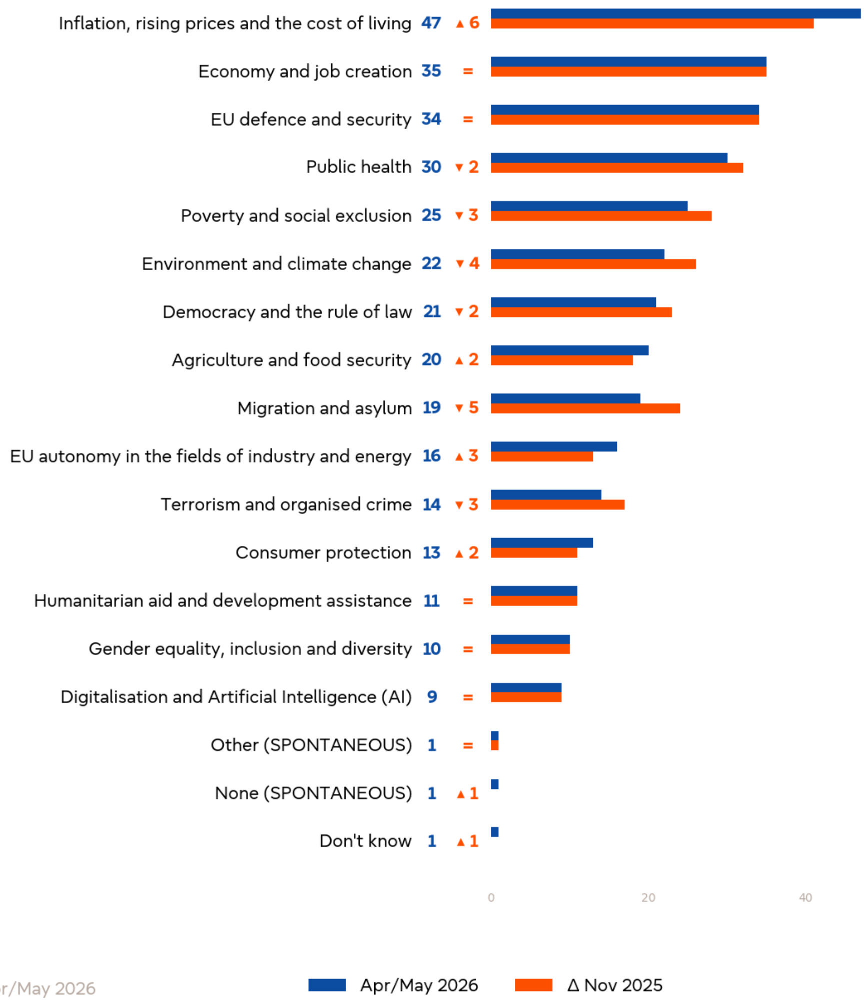
Public health is also mentioned by three in ten respondents (30%, - 2pp), followed by **poverty and social exclusion** (25%, -3 pp). Both areas remain significant and stable concerns among citizens, particularly in light of ongoing economic pressures.

By contrast, some issues show a decrease in salience. The **environment and climate change** (22%, –4 pp) and **migration and asylum** (19%, –5 pp) both decline noticeably, suggesting that attention has shifted away from these topics in the current context.

Democracy and the rule of law (21%, −2 pp) and **agriculture and food security** (20%, +2 pp) stay relatively stable with around one fifth of respondents.

Then, **EU autonomy in industry and energy** (16%, +3 pp), **terrorism and organised crime** (14%, −3 pp), **consumer protection** (13%, +2 pp), **humanitarian aid** (11%, unchanged), **gender equality** (10%, unchanged), and **digitalisation and artificial intelligence**[22] (9%, unchanged) are mentioned by smaller shares of respondents.

QA7ab **Which of the following topics would you like to see addressed in priority by the European Parliament? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 4 ANSWERS) (%)



[22] This item was modified compared to the previous wave of Autumn 2025, it was "Digitalisation of the European economy and society".

At the national level, **inflation, rising prices and the cost of living** is the most frequently mentioned priority in 17 Member States. Across the EU as a whole, at least 40% of respondents cite inflation as a priority in 23 Member States, reflecting widespread concern across the EU about pressures on household budgets. The highest shares are observed in Portugal (65%), Bulgaria (63%), and Croatia (61%).

EU defence and security is the most frequently mentioned priority in six Member States, led by Denmark (57%), the Netherlands (54%), Lithuania and Finland (both 48%), showing the salience of common defence and security issues in these countries.

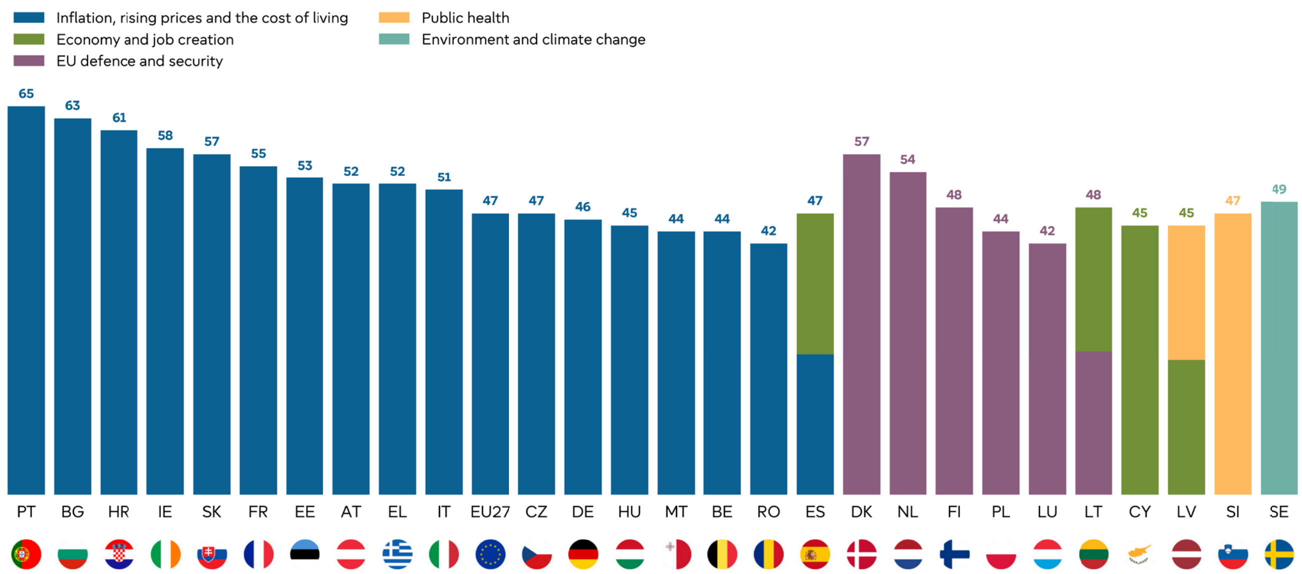
Economy and job creation emerges as the leading priority in Cyprus (45%). In Lithuania (48%), it shares the top position with EU defence and security, in Spain (47%) it shares the first position with inflation, while in Latvia (45%) it is equally cited alongside public health. It is also mentioned by at least half of the respondents in Greece (51%) and Bulgaria (50%).

Public health is also the leading priority in Slovenia (47%), and is particularly important in Portugal (62%), followed by Ireland, Spain and Latvia (45%).

Environment and climate change is the first topic in Sweden (49%) and is also very frequently mentioned in Denmark (45%).

Poverty and social exclusion does not come first in any country but is still an important issue in Portugal (46%) and Greece (45%).

QA7ab **Which of the following topics would you like to see addressed in priority by the European Parliament? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 4 ANSWERS) (%)



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Overall, these results highlight a strong convergence around cost-of-living concerns across Member States, combined with notable national differences in secondary priorities, reflecting varying economic conditions, geopolitical contexts, and policy concerns across the European Union.

QA7ab **Which of the following topics would you like to see addressed in priority by the European Parliament? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 4 ANSWERS) (%)

	EU27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
Inflation, rising prices and the cost of living	47	44	63	47	26	46	53	58	52	47	55	61	51	43	44	44	41	45	44	39	52	41	65	42	41	57	27	18
Economy and job creation	35	26	50	28	25	33	45	34	51	47	22	45	39	45	45	48	30	43	30	13	40	31	47	41	39	45	42	28
EU defence and security	34	34	24	42	57	43	45	22	23	22	27	25	31	37	43	48	42	30	24	54	32	44	21	31	25	34	48	38
Public health	30	24	31	22	20	15	28	45	49	45	36	29	32	37	45	38	24	37	37	17	21	32	62	25	47	30	10	21
Poverty and social exclusion	25	31	40	17	16	23	18	23	45	22	33	39	19	31	27	36	38	27	24	23	28	13	46	26	25	26	32	28
Environment and climate change	22	25	9	14	45	27	8	18	15	14	27	13	22	10	7	7	22	22	26	33	23	12	11	11	20	14	30	49
Democracy and the rule of law	21	20	21	16	27	31	12	12	26	18	12	17	18	24	13	9	21	27	22	27	26	16	11	19	16	22	34	43
Agriculture and food security	20	18	22	23	17	15	28	21	21	17	21	35	19	12	14	17	17	30	14	17	27	25	13	28	40	35	31	27
Migration and asylum	19	26	5	25	20	30	9	32	16	19	17	10	13	32	10	18	13	20	22	37	21	12	8	7	14	9	16	21
EU autonomy in the fields of industry and energy	16	20	14	35	25	14	24	9	15	10	14	14	22	7	13	16	21	13	9	20	20	11	22	20	12	18	12	12
Terrorism and organised crime	14	19	8	12	21	17	8	12	9	7	17	12	18	14	5	4	14	10	12	17	16	13	10	8	11	7	14	25
Consumer protection	13	14	22	9	10	9	7	12	22	11	17	16	19	17	10	7	15	9	19	8	17	11	6	12	11	14	7	5
Humanitarian aid and development assistance	11	10	10	5	10	8	7	9	19	13	13	11	15	17	7	5	10	8	9	10	9	9	9	14	6	6	6	13
Gender equality, inclusion and diversity	10	9	5	7	9	7	6	7	8	11	12	13	13	3	5	4	8	10	18	9	15	10	9	12	7	7	14	28
Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence (AI)	9	8	10	11	20	10	12	9	7	7	7	8	12	3	5	6	11	11	15	17	14	8	7	9	7	11	11	8

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item
2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item
3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

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Differences in citizens' priorities for the European Parliament are observed across several **socio-demographic groups**, showing that lived experiences, personal circumstances, and attitudes shape expectations of EU-level action.

Differences by **gender** are relatively limited. Women are slightly more likely to emphasise inflation, rising prices and the cost of living (49% vs 46%), public health (33% vs 27%) and poverty and social exclusion (27% vs 23%), suggesting a somewhat stronger focus on social and health-related issues. By contrast, men are marginally more likely to prioritise EU defence and security (36% vs 32%), migration (21% vs 18%), economy and job creation (36% vs 33%), and EU autonomy in industry and energy (18% vs 14%), reflecting a slightly greater emphasis on economic performance and security.

More pronounced differences emerge across **age** groups. Younger respondents (aged 15–24) place relatively greater emphasis on environment and climate change (28% vs 20-22% among older age groups), humanitarian aid (15% vs 9-13%), gender equality (16% vs 8% among 55+) and digitalisation and artificial intelligence (15% vs 7% among 55+), while being less likely to prioritise EU defence and security (28% vs 38% among 55+) or public health (26% vs 33% among 55+), indicating a stronger focus on defence and health among older respondents.

Differences by **education level** reveal distinct patterns. Respondents with a low level of education are more likely to prioritise inflation and cost of living (53% vs 43% among those with high education), public health (35% vs 24%), and poverty and social exclusion (28% vs 23%), pointing to a stronger focus on immediate economic and social pressures. In contrast, those with a high level of education are more likely to cite EU defence and security (37% vs 31%), environment and climate change (30% vs 15%), and EU autonomy in industry and energy (21% vs 11%).

A very strong relationship is observed with respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, inflation and cost of living rises to 58%, compared with 45% among those who almost never or never experience difficulties. This group is also more likely to prioritise poverty and social exclusion (40% vs 22%) and public health (38% vs 29%), highlighting the direct influence of economic vulnerability on policy priorities. By contrast, respondents in more secure financial situations distribute their priorities more evenly, with relatively higher emphasis on EU defence and security (37% vs 22%), environmental issues (24% vs 14%), and democracy and rule of law (23% vs 16%).

Attitudinal factors show strong contrasts. Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are more likely to prioritise EU defence and security (37% vs 28% among those with a negative view), environment and climate change (28% vs 12%), democracy and rule of law (25% vs 15%), and EU autonomy in industry and energy (19% vs 13%). In contrast, those with a negative image place significantly greater emphasis on inflation and cost of living (53% vs 44%), poverty and social exclusion (28% vs 23%), migration (27% vs 17%), terrorism (19% vs 12%) indicating a stronger focus on immediate economic concerns and security.

A similar pattern is observed for **satisfaction with quality of life**, with dissatisfied respondents more likely to prioritise cost-of-living issues (56%) than those who are satisfied (46%) as well as poverty and social exclusion (36% vs 23%). Satisfied respondents are more likely to select EU defence and security (36% vs 27%), environment and climate change (23% vs 15%), and democracy and rule of law (22% vs 17%).

QA7ab Which of the following topics would you like to see addressed in priority by the European Parliament? Firstly? And then? (MAX. 4 ANSWERS) (% - EU)

	Inflation, rising prices and the cost of living	Economy and job creation	EU defence and security	Public health	Poverty and social exclusion	Environment and climate change	Democracy and the rule of law	Agriculture and food security	Migration and asylum
EU27	47	35	34	30	25	22	21	20	19
Gender									
Man	46	36	36	27	23	21	21	20	21
Woman	49	33	32	33	27	23	21	20	18
Age									
15-24	44	34	28	26	26	28	19	16	18
25-39	49	36	31	27	25	22	22	18	19
40-54	49	38	33	30	25	21	20	20	21
55+	47	32	38	33	25	20	22	23	19
Education level									
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	53	33	31	35	28	15	18	21	20
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	47	37	34	31	25	20	20	20	19
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	43	33	37	24	23	30	25	19	20
Socio-professional category									
Self-employed	49	39	36	29	22	18	19	20	16
Managers	47	35	37	22	21	28	27	20	21
Other white collars	50	33	34	28	22	23	22	20	21
Manual workers	48	38	32	31	27	17	20	21	20
House persons	52	37	27	40	27	19	16	25	14
Unemployed	47	37	28	33	39	20	16	17	18
Retired	47	30	38	35	25	20	21	23	19
Students	42	33	28	23	28	31	21	13	19
Difficulties paying bills									
Most of the time	58	36	22	38	40	14	16	19	18
From time to time	50	36	29	32	31	16	17	21	18
Almost never / Never	45	34	37	29	22	24	23	20	20
Subjective urbanisation									
Rural area or village	48	34	35	31	24	19	20	24	18
Small or middle sized town	48	34	36	30	25	22	19	20	19
Large town	46	35	31	29	29	25	26	17	20
Image of the EU									
Positive	44	35	37	28	23	28	25	20	17
Neutral	50	35	32	33	27	18	18	20	19
Negative	53	34	28	29	28	12	15	22	27
Satisfaction with quality of life									
Satisfied	46	34	36	29	23	23	22	20	19
Not satisfied	56	35	27	33	36	15	17	22	20

	EU autonomy in the fields of industry and energy	Terrorism and organised crime	Consumer protection	Humanitarian aid and development assistance	Gender equality, inclusion and diversity	Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence (AI)	Other (SPONTANEOUS)	None (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	16	14	13	11	10	9	1	1	1
Gender									
Man	18	14	14	10	9	11	1	1	1
Woman	14	15	12	12	12	8	1	0	1
Age									
15-24	14	13	10	15	16	15	1	0	1
25-39	17	14	12	13	14	12	0	0	0
40-54	17	14	14	9	10	9	1	1	1
55+	15	16	14	10	8	7	1	1	1
Education level									
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	11	16	14	10	9	6	1	1	1
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	15	15	14	11	11	9	1	1	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	21	13	11	12	11	13	2	1	0
Socio-professional category									
Self-employed	22	15	13	12	9	12	1	1	0
Managers	21	12	10	10	11	14	2	1	0
Other white collars	19	15	14	10	10	11	1	0	1
Manual workers	14	15	14	11	11	7	0	1	0
House persons	11	15	14	11	13	5	1	0	1
Unemployed	12	11	15	9	14	8	1	1	1
Retired	14	16	13	10	7	6	2	1	1
Students	15	13	10	17	16	16	1	0	1
Difficulties paying bills									
Most of the time	14	14	11	13	11	6	1	1	1
From time to time	15	16	15	13	11	9	0	0	1
Almost never / Never	16	14	12	10	10	10	1	1	1
Subjective urbanisation									
Rural area or village	15	13	13	9	10	9	1	1	1
Small or middle sized town	16	17	12	12	10	9	1	1	1
Large town	16	13	13	12	11	11	1	0	1
Image of the EU									
Positive	19	12	11	13	13	12	1	0	0
Neutral	13	16	14	10	9	7	1	0	1
Negative	13	19	15	8	7	6	1	3	1
Satisfaction with quality of life									
Satisfied	16	14	12	11	11	10	1	1	1
Not satisfied	14	15	16	10	9	6	1	1	1

Values the European Parliament should defend in priority

Citizens' expectations regarding the values that the European Parliament should defend provide important insight into how Europeans perceive the European Union's core mission and democratic foundations. Beyond concrete policy priorities, these views highlight the fundamental principles that citizens believe should guide the Parliament's work and shape the future direction of the European Union.

At EU level, **peace** clearly stands out as the most important value that Europeans believe the European Parliament should defend, cited by just over half of respondents (51%, –1 percentage point), remaining the cornerstone of citizens' expectations regarding the EU's core mission. **Democracy** ranks as the second most frequently mentioned value, selected by 32% of respondents, and remains relatively stable since November 2025 (-3 pp).

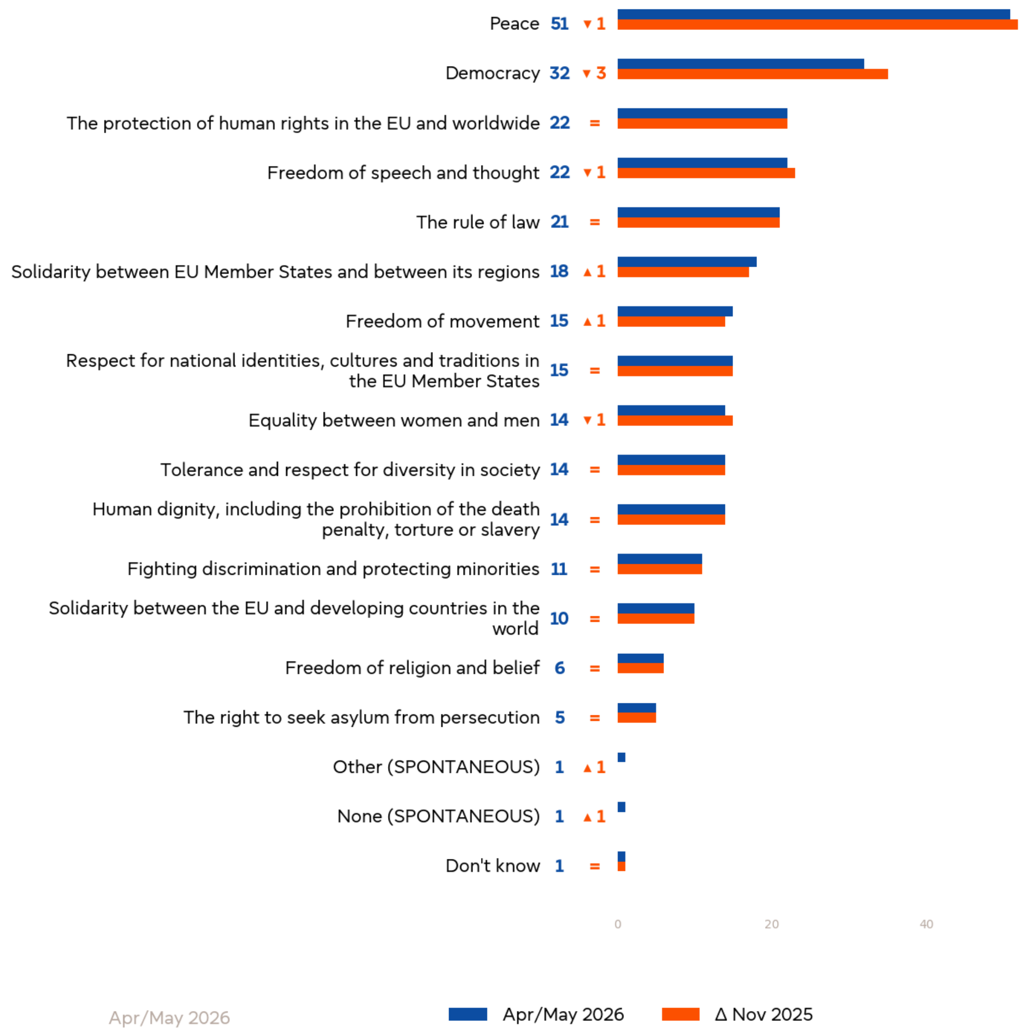
Peace and democracy are followed by the **protection of human rights in the EU and worldwide** (22%, unchanged), **freedom of speech and thought** (22%, –1 pp), and the **rule of law** (21%, unchanged). Together, these results highlight the continued importance attached to the EU's role in safeguarding core democratic and legal principles.

Other values are mentioned by smaller but still significant shares of respondents. **Solidarity between Member States** (18%, +1 pp) and **freedom of movement** (15%, +1 pp) reflect expectations related to European integration.

Further down the ranking, values such as **respect for national identities** (15%, unchanged), **equality between women and men** (14%, –1 pp), **tolerance and respect for diversity** (14%, unchanged), **human dignity** (14%, unchanged), and **fighting discrimination** (11%, unchanged) remain relevant, although they are mentioned by smaller proportions. International solidarity is reflected in the share of respondents who cite **solidarity with developing countries** (10%, unchanged), while **freedom of religion** (6%, unchanged) and the **right to seek asylum** (5%, unchanged) are less frequently mentioned.

Overall, these findings indicate that Europeans' expectations are strongly centred on peace and democratic principles, complemented by a broad set of fundamental rights and values. The overall pattern remains stable, confirming that citizens expect the European Parliament to act as a guardian of core values in a context marked by global uncertainty and geopolitical challenges.

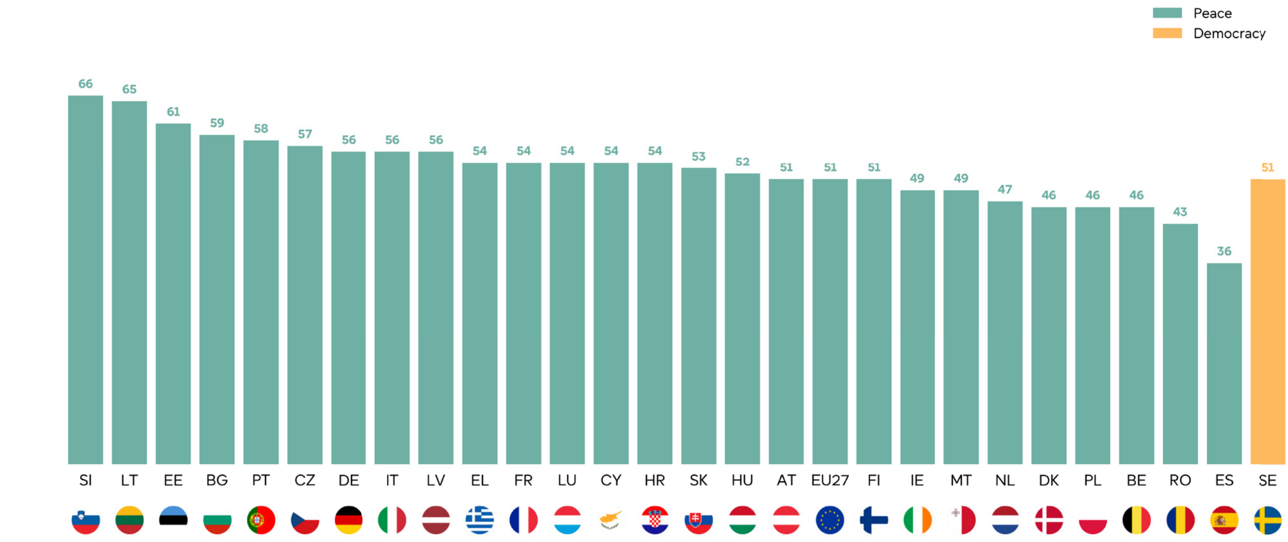
QA8ab **In your opinion, which of the following values should the European Parliament defend as a matter of priority? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)



At national level, **peace is the most frequently mentioned priority in 26 countries**, confirming its broad resonance across the European Union. It is most frequently cited in Slovenia (66%), Lithuania (65%), and Estonia (61%).

Only in Sweden does democracy emerge as the most frequent value (51%), however, peace remains the second most mentioned value. Democracy also stands out as an important priority across the European Union. It ranks among the three most frequently mentioned values in 20 Member States, confirming its broad relevance even where it is not the most frequent value.

QA8ab In your opinion, which of the following values should the European Parliament defend as a matter of priority? Firstly? And then? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)



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QA8ab In your opinion, which of the following values should the European Parliament defend as a matter of priority? Firstly? And then? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)

	EU27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
Peace	51	46	59	57	46	56	61	49	54	36	54	54	56	54	56	65	54	52	49	47	51	46	58	43	66	53	51	39
Democracy	32	32	22	24	44	47	17	28	30	28	28	16	30	32	23	18	35	35	26	34	29	18	32	25	22	22	40	51
The protection of human rights in the EU and worldwide	22	23	20	22	29	20	20	24	25	24	19	20	19	29	30	27	24	23	22	27	27	16	30	22	25	26	24	39
Freedom of speech and thought	22	21	14	27	27	26	22	22	14	18	23	21	21	22	28	28	23	18	16	24	30	15	11	22	21	21	21	36
The rule of law	21	18	26	14	24	27	18	22	36	21	16	22	16	37	22	12	17	20	32	28	21	18	15	19	22	26	33	23
Solidarity between EU Member States and between its regions	18	19	19	18	18	16	12	16	25	17	15	25	24	17	14	17	16	15	14	17	17	23	17	19	17	24	12	12
Freedom of movement	15	12	31	23	11	10	26	22	8	12	11	24	20	9	15	22	17	21	14	8	12	28	7	22	16	21	14	10
Respect for national identities, cultures and traditions in the EU Member States	15	14	27	20	19	9	27	11	16	17	15	18	15	13	17	16	16	18	15	14	18	18	22	19	15	20	11	9
Equality between women and men	14	23	5	11	12	10	8	17	9	20	20	10	14	9	8	8	14	10	14	17	19	9	16	10	10	8	13	15
Tolerance and respect for diversity in society	14	14	15	9	14	13	11	10	11	18	16	16	13	4	8	14	15	12	17	18	15	11	10	11	20	13	15	17
Human dignity, including the prohibition of the death penalty, torture or slavery	14	16	12	11	15	13	10	13	23	15	14	19	16	22	8	8	12	12	8	14	13	14	14	10	14	18	18	19
Fighting discrimination and protecting minorities	11	12	7	6	7	9	8	9	14	10	14	10	13	8	7	7	13	12	13	10	13	9	13	9	7	8	12	10
Solidarity between the EU and developing countries in the world	10	11	7	8	8	7	5	10	19	11	10	14	12	12	6	9	12	13	9	7	9	14	10	12	13	7	5	5
Freedom of religion and belief	6	6	6	2	5	3	12	8	6	5	6	10	6	8	4	3	7	6	14	6	8	8	3	13	5	7	5	4
The right to seek asylum from persecution	5	4	4	3	3	5	4	7	5	5	4	4	8	2	3	2	1	10	6	3	6	8	3	7	3	3	1	4

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item
2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item
3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

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Perceptions of which values the European Parliament should defend as a priority vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although peace and democracy consistently emerge as the leading priorities across all categories.

Differences by **gender** are relatively limited, though some variations can be observed. Women are more likely than men to prioritise peace (53% vs 49%) and the protection of human rights (24% vs 20%), as well as equality between women and men (17% vs 11%), indicating a somewhat stronger emphasis on social and normative values. Men, by contrast, are slightly more likely to highlight the rule of law (24% vs 18%) and freedom of movement (17% vs 14%), although overall patterns remain broadly similar.

Some differences are observed across **age** groups. Younger respondents (aged 15—24) place relatively greater emphasis on freedom of speech (24% vs 21-22% among older respondents) and equality between women and men (18% vs 13-15%), as well as tolerance and respect for diversity (17% vs 13-15%). By contrast, older respondents, particularly those aged 55 and over, are more likely to prioritise peace (55% vs 47% among the youngest), democracy (34% vs 27%) and the rule of law (22% vs 15%), reflecting a stronger focus on peace and institutional values.

Differences by **education level** are also evident. Respondents with a low level of education are more likely to prioritise peace (57%), compared with 45% among those with a high level of education, indicating a stronger emphasis on peace among less educated groups. In contrast, respondents with a high level of education are more likely to prioritise protection of human rights (26% vs 19%), the rule of law (23% vs 19%), and respect of national identities (16% vs 12%).

A clear relationship is also observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Respondents who almost never or never face financial difficulties are more likely to prioritise democracy (34% vs 28%), the rule of law (22% vs 17%), and freedom of movement (15% vs 11%) suggesting that more financially secure groups place relatively greater emphasis on institutional and normative values.

Finally, respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are more likely to prioritise democracy (34% vs 29%), human rights (25% vs 17%), solidarity between EU Member States (20% vs 15%), and respect of diversity (16% vs 11%), whereas those with a negative image of the EU place relatively greater emphasis on peace (53% vs 48%) and freedom of speech (25% vs 21%).

QA8ab **In your opinion, which of the following values should the European Parliament defend as a matter of priority? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (% – EU)

	Peace	Democracy	The protection of human rights in the EU and worldwide	Freedom of speech and thought	The rule of law	Solidarity between EU Member States and between its regions	Freedom of movement	Respect for national identities, cultures and traditions in the EU Member States	Equality between women and men
EU27	51	32	22	22	21	18	15	15	14
Gender									
Man	49	32	20	23	24	19	17	16	11
Woman	53	32	24	21	18	18	14	14	17
Age									
15-24	47	27	23	24	15	18	16	14	18
25-39	48	29	25	22	21	17	17	14	15
40-54	49	32	21	21	21	21	16	15	14
55+	55	34	21	21	22	17	13	15	13
Education level									
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	57	32	19	20	19	16	13	12	16
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	51	30	21	23	20	19	17	16	14
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	45	34	26	21	23	19	14	16	12
Socio-professional category									
Self-employed	49	31	22	23	23	16	18	17	12
Managers	49	35	25	20	24	20	15	15	12
Other white collars	48	35	21	23	22	20	17	16	13
Manual workers	50	29	21	21	20	19	16	15	15
House persons	53	29	22	19	16	19	14	13	17
Unemployed	52	30	23	22	18	13	13	16	15
Retired	55	33	20	21	22	18	13	15	13
Students	47	29	27	25	15	16	15	13	18
Difficulties paying bills									
Most of the time	52	28	21	20	17	17	11	16	15
From time to time	51	29	20	21	18	20	16	16	15
Almost never / Never	51	34	23	22	22	18	15	14	14
Subjective urbanisation									
Rural area or village	52	31	22	22	20	17	16	15	14
Small or middle sized town	52	32	21	22	20	19	15	14	14
Large town	48	33	24	21	23	18	13	15	14
Image of the EU									
Positive	48	34	25	21	22	20	15	15	14
Neutral	54	31	21	21	19	18	15	14	15
Negative	53	29	17	25	20	15	14	17	13
Satisfaction with quality of life									
Satisfied	50	32	22	22	21	18	15	14	14
Not satisfied	54	31	20	19	19	19	13	16	14

	Tolerance and respect for diversity in society	Human dignity, including the prohibition of the death penalty, torture or slavery	Fighting discrimination and protecting minorities	Solidarity between the EU and developing countries in the world	Freedom of religion and belief	The right to seek asylum from persecution	Other (SPONTANEOUS)	None (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	14	14	11	10	6	5	1	1	1
Gender									
Man	13	14	10	10	6	5	1	1	1
Woman	15	15	11	10	6	6	1	1	1
Age									
15-24	17	16	13	10	6	5	0	0	1
25-39	15	14	13	11	5	6	0	1	1
40-54	13	13	10	10	6	6	1	1	1
55+	13	14	9	9	6	5	1	1	1
Education level									
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	13	15	11	9	6	5	1	1	2
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	13	13	11	11	6	5	0	1	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	16	15	11	10	5	6	1	1	1
Socio-professional category									
Self-employed	15	16	9	10	5	5	0	1	0
Managers	16	14	10	10	4	6	1	1	0
Other white collars	13	12	11	10	5	7	1	0	1
Manual workers	14	13	12	11	6	6	0	1	1
House persons	14	12	9	11	8	7	1	1	1
Unemployed	12	17	15	6	8	6	0	1	3
Retired	13	15	9	9	7	4	1	1	1
Students	16	17	14	11	5	5	0	0	1
Difficulties paying bills									
Most of the time	13	17	12	10	8	5	1	1	1
From time to time	14	14	12	10	6	7	0	1	1
Almost never / Never	14	14	10	10	5	5	1	1	1
Subjective urbanisation									
Rural area or village	13	14	9	9	7	4	1	1	1
Small or middle sized town	14	14	11	11	5	5	0	1	1
Large town	15	14	12	10	6	7	0	0	1
Image of the EU									
Positive	16	15	11	11	5	6	0	0	0
Neutral	13	14	11	9	6	5	1	0	1
Negative	11	13	9	8	6	4	1	3	2
Satisfaction with quality of life									
Satisfied	14	14	10	10	6	5	0	1	1
Not satisfied	13	15	12	10	7	5	1	1	1

Satisfaction with democracy

The emphasis placed on democracy as a core value for the European Parliament also raises important questions about how Europeans perceive the functioning of democratic systems in practice. In this context, the following section examines levels of satisfaction with democracy at both national and European levels.

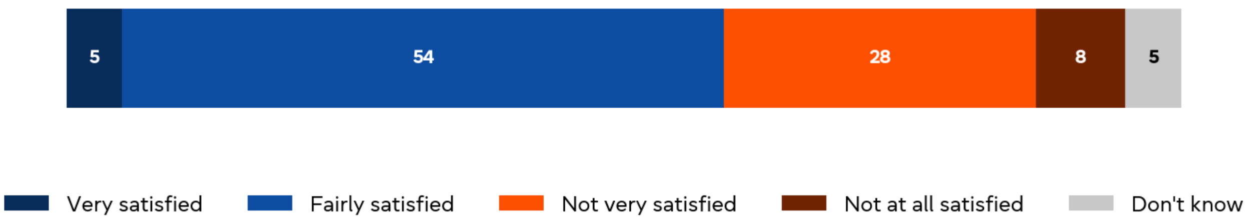
At EU level, **a majority of Europeans express satisfaction with the functioning of democracy, both in their own country and in the European Union**, although perceptions remain somewhat more positive at national level.

Overall, 62% of respondents are satisfied with the way democracy works in their country, compared with 59% who are satisfied at EU level. In both cases, satisfaction is primarily driven by moderate evaluations, with fairly satisfied respondents accounting for 54% in each context, while fewer respondents report being very satisfied (8% at national level and 5% at EU level).

At the same time, levels of dissatisfaction are identical for national and EU democracy (36%), showing that more than one third of Europeans express critical views in both contexts. This suggests that concerns about democratic functioning are present both domestically and at EU level.

SD18a **On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (OUR COUNTRY)?** (EU27) (%)

SD18b **On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU?** (EU27) (%)



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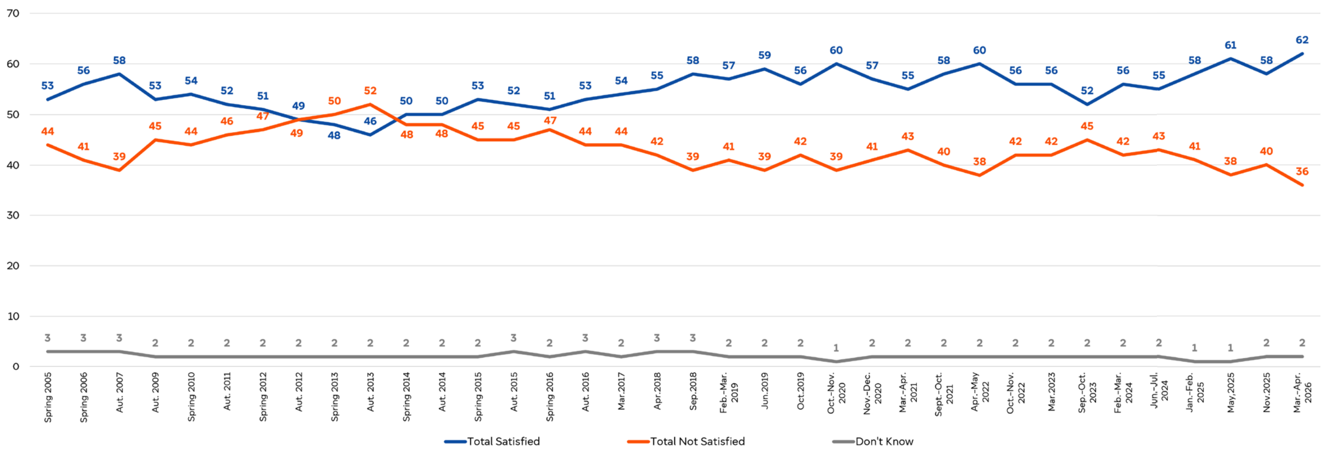
Compared with the previous survey in November 2025, satisfaction with democracy has increased. Satisfaction with national democracy has risen by 4 percentage points, while satisfaction with the way democracy works in the EU has increased by 5 percentage points.

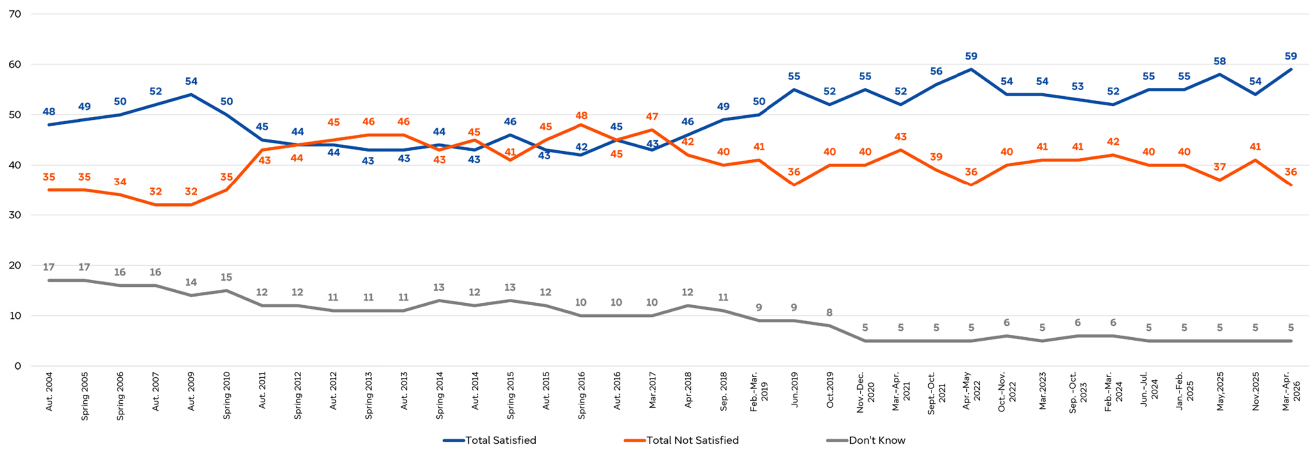
Since 2014, at least half of respondents in the EU have consistently expressed satisfaction with the way democracy works in their country. This long-term stability highlights a sustained baseline of satisfaction with national democratic institutions. Moreover, the current level of satisfaction is the highest ever recorded since 2005, at 62%.

SD18a **On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (OUR COUNTRY)?**

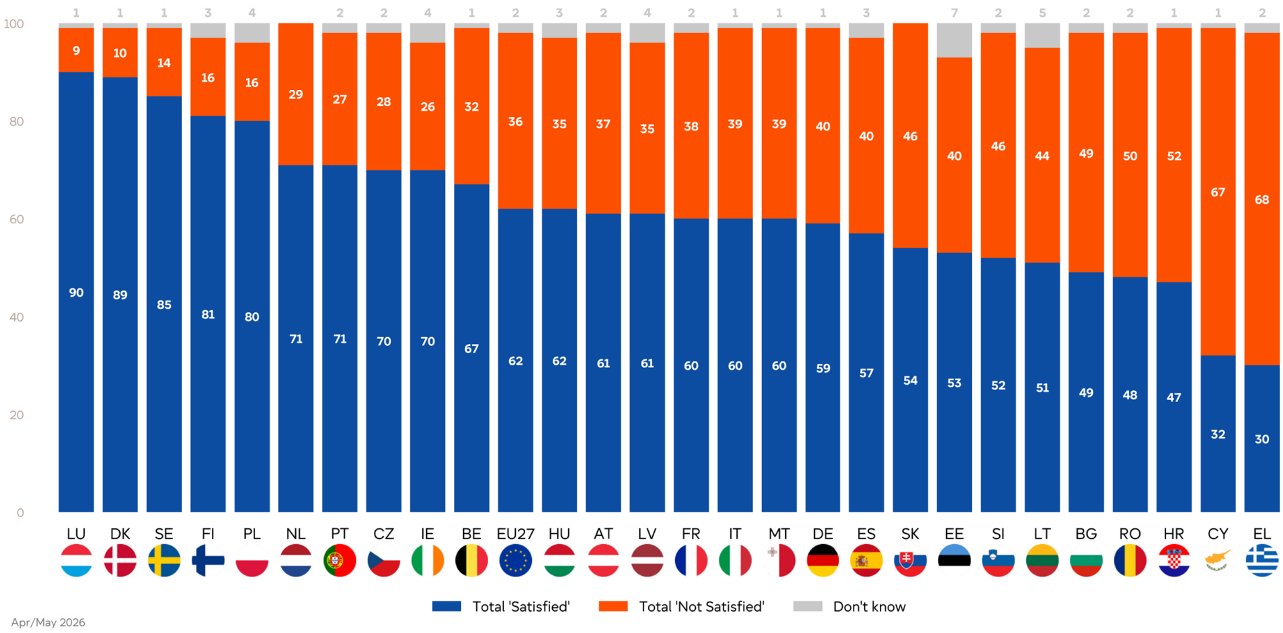


Regarding the European Union level, since 2019, at least half of respondents have consistently reported being satisfied with EU-level democracy. This indicates that, while short-term fluctuations occur, **a relatively stable majority of Europeans maintain confidence in the functioning of democratic processes within the EU**. Moreover, the current level of satisfaction equals the highest ever recorded since 2004, at 59%.

SD18b On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU?



SD18a On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (OUR COUNTRY)? (%)

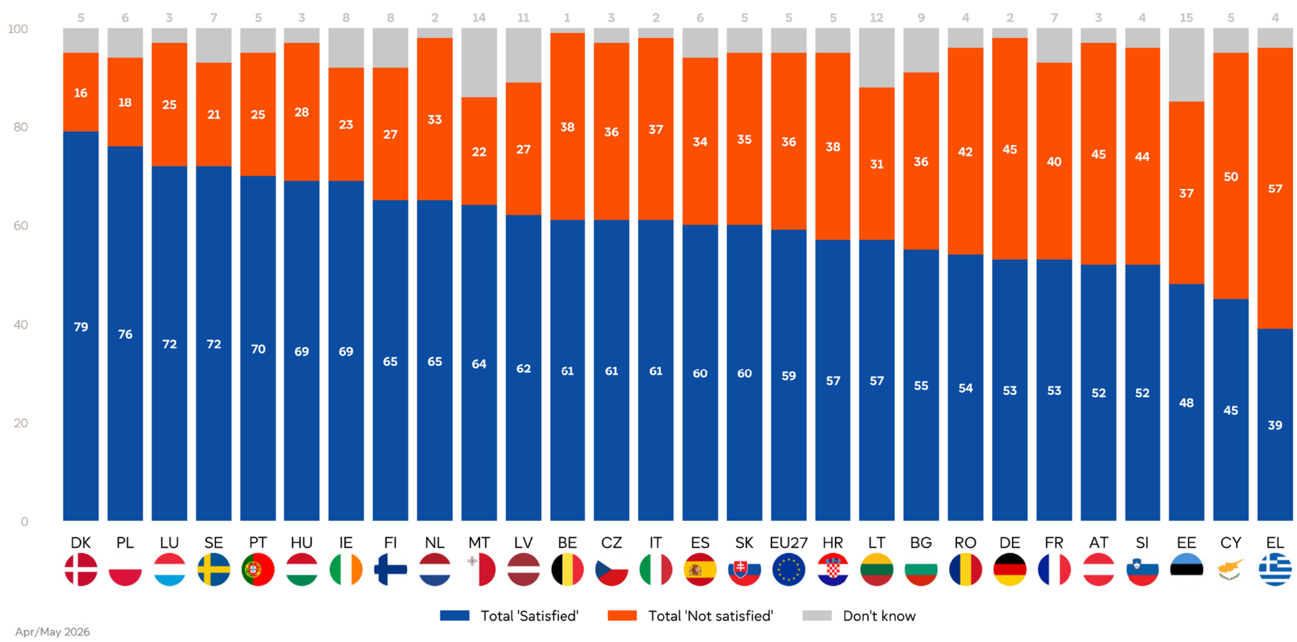


At the national level, satisfaction with the way democracy works in their country varies substantially across Member States. At least half of the respondents report being satisfied in 22 Member States, indicating that a majority of citizens in most countries express confidence in the functioning of their national democratic systems. The highest levels of satisfaction are observed in Luxembourg (90%), Denmark (89%), and Sweden (85%). By contrast, satisfaction is considerably lower in a small number of Member States. The lowest level is recorded in Greece, where only 30% of respondents say they are satisfied with the way democracy works in their country, followed by Cyprus (32%).

Perceptions of how democracy works at the European Union level also vary across Member States, although satisfaction is relatively widespread. At least half of respondents report being satisfied with the functioning of democracy in the EU in 24 Member States, indicating majority approval in most countries. The highest levels of satisfaction are recorded in Denmark (79%), Poland (76%), Luxembourg and Sweden (both 72%). Conversely, satisfaction with EU democracy is lower in some Member States, namely in Greece (39%), followed by Cyprus (45%).

These findings point to a clear relationship between citizens' satisfaction with democracy at national and EU levels. In countries where satisfaction with national democracy is high, respondents tend to report higher satisfaction with the way democracy works in the European Union as well. Conversely, in countries where national democracy is viewed less positively, perceptions of EU-level democratic functioning are also generally more critical.

SD18b **On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU?** (%)



These findings point to a clear relationship between citizens' satisfaction with democracy at national and EU levels. In countries where satisfaction with national democracy is high, respondents tend to report higher satisfaction with the way democracy works in the European Union as well. Conversely, in countries where national democracy is viewed less positively, perceptions of EU-level democratic functioning are also generally more critical. Satisfaction with the way democracy works shows broadly consistent patterns across **socio-demographic groups** at both national and EU levels.

Differences by **gender** are minimal in both contexts. Men and women report almost identical levels of satisfaction at national level (62% for both), and similarly close levels at EU level (59% among men and 60% among women).

Clearer differences appear across **age** groups, where a consistent pattern is observed for both national and EU democracy. Younger respondents (15–24) are the most satisfied (69% nationally and 70% at EU level), while satisfaction declines steadily with age, reaching 59% nationally and 54% at EU level among those aged 55 and over. Conversely, dissatisfaction increases with age in both cases, indicating that older respondents are consistently more critical of democratic functioning, particularly at EU level.

Differences by **education level** are particularly pronounced and follow a similar pattern for both levels of governance. Satisfaction increases strongly with educational attainment, from 51% (national) and 47% (EU) among respondents with a low level of education, to 71% and 68% respectively among the highly educated. At the same time, dissatisfaction is highest among the least educated (46% at both levels), highlighting a strong and consistent relationship between education and confidence in democratic systems.

A particularly strong and consistent pattern emerges in relation to **financial situation**. Among respondents who have difficulties paying their bills most of the time, satisfaction is significantly lower (36% at national level and 37% at EU level), while dissatisfaction reaches 62% and 56% respectively. By contrast, among those who almost never or never experience such difficulties, satisfaction rises to 68% nationally and 63% at EU level. This underscores a very strong link between economic hardship and dissatisfaction with democracy, regardless of the level considered.

Among respondents with a positive **image of the EU**, satisfaction is very high (78% at both levels), whereas it drops sharply among those with a negative image of the EU (29% nationally and 20% at EU level), with dissatisfaction reaching 69% and 76% respectively. This highlights a very strong association between overall attitudes towards the EU and perceptions of democratic functioning, especially at EU level.

Overall, these findings indicate a **strong alignment between satisfaction with democracy at national and European levels**. Across countries, socio-demographic groups, and attitudinal profiles, respondents who express higher satisfaction with democracy in their country also tend to report higher satisfaction with the way democracy works in the European Union.

SD18a **On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (OUR COUNTRY)?** (% – EU)

	Total 'Satisfied'	Total 'Not Satisfied'	Don't know
EU27	62	36	2
Gender			
Man	62	37	1
Woman	62	36	2
Age			
15-24	69	28	3
25-39	64	34	2
40-54	62	36	2
55+	59	39	2
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	51	46	3
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	63	36	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	71	28	1
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	60	39	1
Managers	73	26	1
Other white collars	64	35	1
Manual workers	58	40	2
House persons	54	42	4
Unemployed	52	46	2
Retired	58	40	2
Students	72	25	3
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	36	62	2
From time to time	52	46	2
Almost never / Never	68	30	2
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	58	40	2
Small or middle sized town	62	36	2
Large town	67	32	1
Image of the EU			
Positive	78	21	1
Neutral	56	42	2
Negative	29	69	2
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	68	30	2
Not satisfied	66	32	2

SD18b On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU? (% – EU)

	Total 'Satisfied'	Total 'Not satisfied'	Don't know
EU27	59	36	5
Gender			
Man	59	38	3
Woman	60	34	6
Age			
15-24	70	23	7
25-39	62	34	4
40-54	60	37	3
55+	54	41	5
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	47	46	7
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	61	35	4
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	68	29	3
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	58	39	3
Managers	68	30	2
Other white collars	63	34	3
Manual workers	57	39	4
House persons	53	38	9
Unemployed	50	44	6
Retired	54	40	6
Students	72	22	6
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	37	56	7
From time to time	52	44	4
Almost never / Never	63	32	5
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	55	40	5
Small or middle sized town	59	36	5
Large town	64	33	3
Image of the EU			
Positive	78	19	3
Neutral	51	42	7
Negative	20	76	4
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	65	30	5
Not satisfied	64	31	5

5 CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE EU AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

5. CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE EU AND THE EP

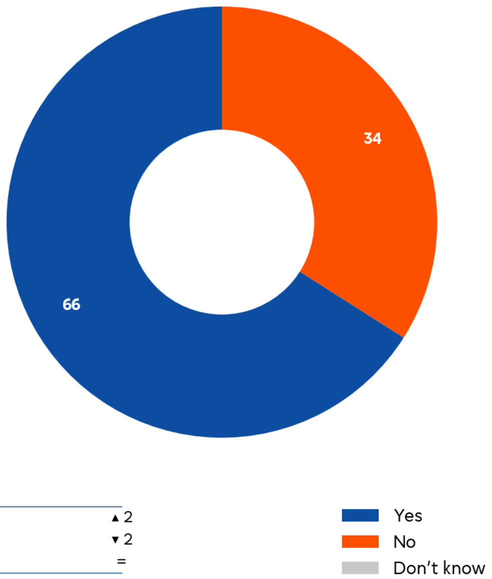
This chapter examines citizens' attitudes towards the European Union and the European Parliament, covering levels of awareness of the Parliament, its public image and perceived role, as well as broader views of the European Union, including support for EU membership and perceptions of its main benefits. It therefore provides a comprehensive overview of how Europeans assess both the institutions and the added value of the European project.

Awareness of the European Parliament

To assess the visibility and outreach of the European Parliament, respondents were asked whether they had recently seen, read, or heard any information about the institution across different media channels. This question provides a measure of public awareness and exposure to the European Parliament, offering insight into how present the institution is in citizens' everyday information environment.

At EU level, **a clear majority of Europeans report having recently encountered information about the European Parliament**, indicating a relatively high level of public visibility. Overall, 66% of respondents say they have recently seen, read, or heard something about the European Parliament, while 34% say they have not.

QA1 **Have you recently read in the press, seen on the Internet or on television or heard on the radio something about the European Parliament?** (EU27) (%)



Yes	▴2
No	▾2
Don't know	=

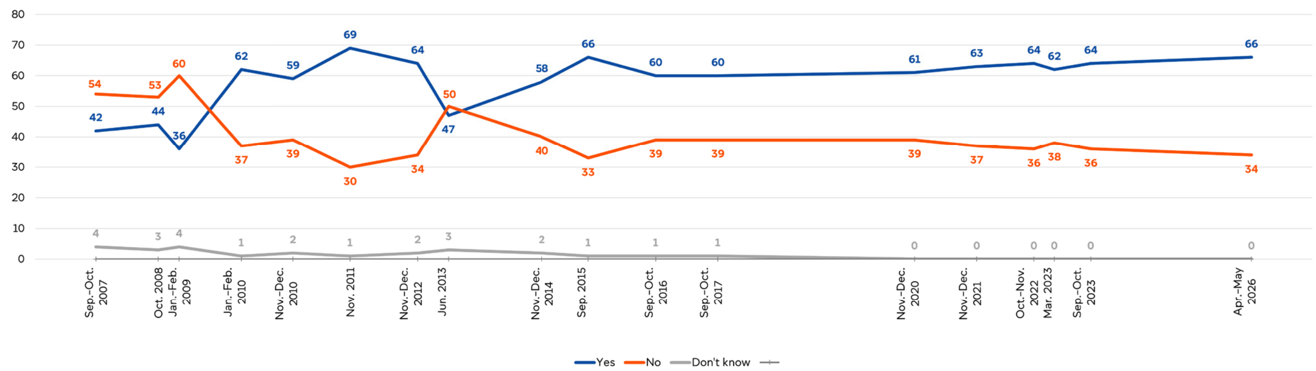
▴▾ (Apr/May 2026 - Sep/Oct 2023)

Apr/May 2026

Looking at the **longer-term trend**, awareness of the European Parliament has increased overall, despite some fluctuations. Since 2014, a majority of Europeans consistently report having recently read, seen, or heard something about the European Parliament.

The latest result, 66% in April–May 2026, marks a slight increase compared with September-October 2023 (+2 percentage points) and places awareness at its highest level since 2015. At the same time, the share of respondents who say they have not recently encountered information about the Parliament is 34%, the lowest share since 2015.

QA1 **Have you recently read in the press, seen on the Internet or on television or heard on the radio something about the European Parliament?** (% - EU)

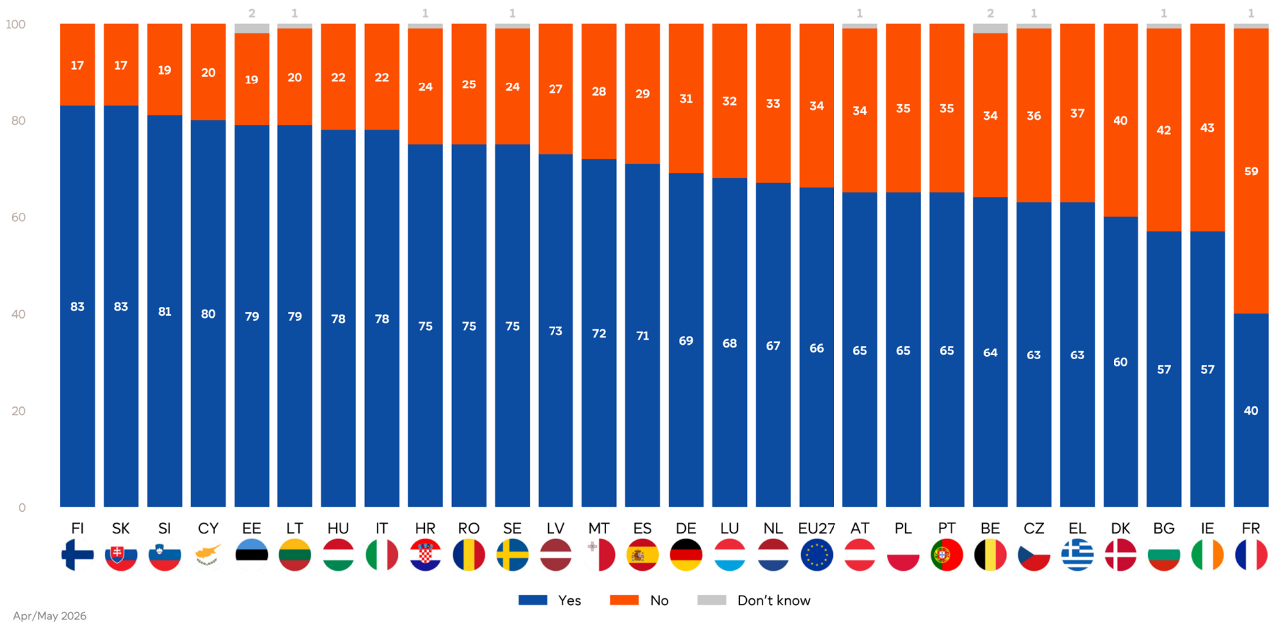


Across Member States, levels of exposure to information about the European Parliament does vary, although in a large majority of countries, most respondents report having recently seen, read or heard something about it. The highest levels of awareness are observed in Finland and Slovakia (both 83%), followed by Slovenia (81%) and Cyprus (80%), as well as Estonia and Lithuania (both 79%).

At the other end of the scale, awareness is lower, though still representing a majority in Bulgaria and Ireland (both 57%), Denmark (60%), followed by Greece and Czechia (both 63%). France stands out as the only Member State where a minority report recent exposure, with 40% answering "yes" compared with 59% who say they have not. This makes France a clear outlier, marking a reversal of the general pattern observed across the European Union.

Overall, these findings highlight a broadly high level of visibility of the European Parliament across Member States, but with variation in intensity, pointing to differences in media attention, engagement, or information reach across national contexts.

QA1 **Have you recently read in the press, seen on the Internet or on television or heard on the radio something about the European Parliament?** (%)



Changes between September-October 2023 and April-May 2026 indicate a moderate increase in exposure to information about the European Parliament at EU level, although trends vary considerably across Member States. The most notable increases in exposure are observed in Italy (+13 pp) and Romania (+10 pp), followed by Cyprus, Hungary and Slovenia (all +9 pp), as well as Belgium (+8 pp) and Greece and Finland (both +7 pp). Conversely, the largest decreases are observed in the Netherlands (–15 pp), Luxembourg (–12 pp), and Portugal (–8 pp).

Overall, these developments suggest that the slight increase at EU level is driven by strong gains in several Member States, which offset declines elsewhere. While visibility of the European Parliament has improved in many countries, the heterogeneity of trends highlights uneven developments in information exposure across the European Union.

QA1 Have you recently read in the press, seen on the Internet or on television or heard on the radio something about the European Parliament? (%)

		EU27	IT	RO	CY	HU	SI	BE	EL	FI	ES	IE	CZ	BG	AT	HR	LT	LV	EE	SK	FR	MT	DK	DE	PL	SE	PT	LU	NL
Yes	Apr/May 2026	66	78	75	80	78	81	64	63	83	71	57	63	57	65	75	79	73	79	83	40	72	60	69	65	75	65	68	67
	Δ Sep/Oct 2023	▲2	▲13	▲10	▲9	▲9	▲9	▲8	▲7	▲7	▲5	▲5	▲4	▲3	▲2	▲2	▲1	▲1	=	=	▼1	▼1	▼2	▼4	▼4	▼4	▼8	▼12	▼15
No	Apr/May 2026	34	22	25	20	22	19	34	37	17	29	43	36	42	34	24	20	27	19	17	59	28	40	31	35	24	35	32	33
	Δ Sep/Oct 2023	▼2	▼13	▼10	▼9	▼9	▼9	▼10	▼7	▼7	▼5	▼5	▼5	▼3	▼2	▼3	▼1	▼1	▼1	=	▲1	▲1	▲2	▲4	▲4	▲3	▲8	▲12	▲15
Don't know	Apr/May 2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Δ Sep/Oct 2023	=	=	=	=	=	=	▲2	=	=	=	=	▲1	=	=	▲1	=	=	▲1	=	=	=	=	=	=	▲1	=	=	=

Apr/May 2026

Exposure to information about the European Parliament also varies across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups.**

Differences by **gender** are moderate. Men are more likely than women to report recent exposure (69% vs 63%), while women are correspondingly more likely to say they have not been exposed (36% vs 31%). This suggests slightly lower engagement or reach among women.

More pronounced differences emerge across **age** groups. Younger respondents (15–24) are the least likely to report exposure (58%), with higher shares saying they have not encountered information (42%). Exposure increases among older groups, reaching 68% among those aged 40–54 and 67% among those aged 55+, indicating that awareness of the European Parliament tends to increase with age.

Differences by **education level** are particularly marked. Respondents with a high level of education are the most likely to report exposure (73%), compared with 54% among those with a low level of education. This highlights a strong link between educational attainment and awareness, with less educated respondents significantly less likely to have encountered information about the Parliament.

A clear relationship is observed with respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who almost never or never have difficulties paying their bills, 68% report exposure, compared with 54% among those facing financial difficulties most of the time.

Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are much more likely to report exposure (72%) compared with those with a neutral image (58%), indicating a close link between awareness and positive perceptions of the EU. Interestingly, respondents with a negative image report relatively high exposure (64%), suggesting that reported higher awareness does not necessarily translate into more favourable views.

QA1 Have you recently read in the press, seen on the Internet or on television or heard on the radio something about the European Parliament? (% - EU)

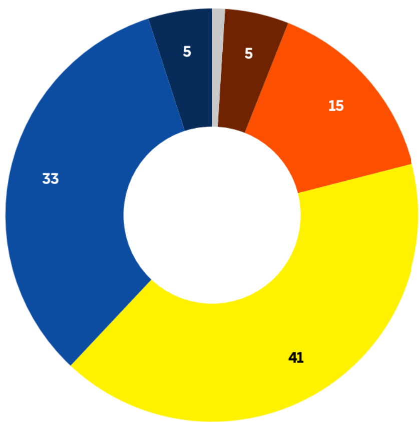
	Yes	No	Don't know
EU27	66	34	0
Gender			
Man	69	31	0
Woman	63	36	1
Age			
15-24	58	42	0
25-39	66	34	0
40-54	68	31	1
55+	67	33	0
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	54	46	0
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	69	31	0
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	73	27	0
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	72	27	1
Managers	74	25	1
Other white collars	69	31	0
Manual workers	63	37	0
House persons	59	41	0
Unemployed	56	44	0
Retired	66	33	1
Students	60	40	0
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	54	45	1
From time to time	63	36	1
Almost never / Never	68	32	0
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	64	36	0
Small or middle sized town	65	35	0
Large town	70	29	1
Image of the EU			
Positive	72	28	0
Neutral	58	41	1
Negative	64	36	0
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	67	33	0
Not satisfied	61	39	0

Image of the European Parliament

Overall, 38% of respondents express a positive image of the European Parliament, including 33% who say they have a fairly positive view and 5% a very positive view. At the same time, 41% of Europeans hold a neutral opinion, making it the most frequently chosen response. This suggests that a large share of the population adopts a moderate or undecided stance, rather than a strongly defined view.

By contrast, 20% of respondents express a negative image, including 15% who are fairly negative and 5% who are very negative. This indicates that negative perceptions remain clearly in the minority.

QA2 **In general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of the European Parliament?** (EU27) (%)



Very positive	▲1
Fairly positive	▼1
Neutral	=
Fairly negative	=
Very negative	=
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

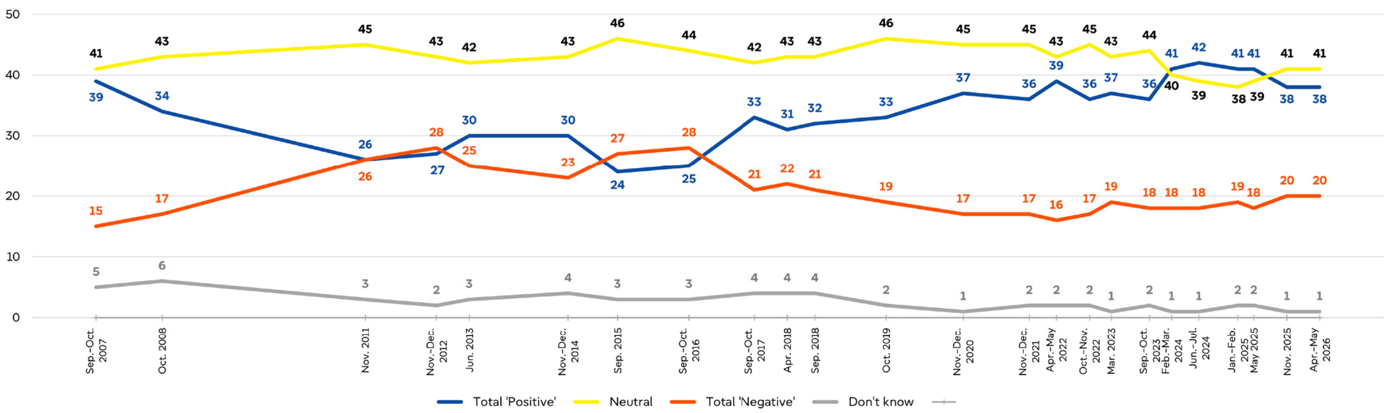
Apr/May 2026

Compared with the previous wave in November 2025, changes are limited. The share of respondents expressing a very positive view has changed only marginally (+1 percentage point), as well as the proportion holding a fairly positive view (–1 pp). Neutral and negative perceptions remain unchanged, pointing to a high level of stability in overall attitudes.

Taken together, these findings highlight a balanced but moderately favourable image of the European Parliament, characterised by a large neutral segment and a clear predominance of positive over negative views.

Over the longer term, **positive views of the European Parliament have consistently exceeded negative ones since 2017**. Although a slight decline has been observed since May 2025, the current share of positive perceptions remains relatively high, especially compared with the period between 2011 and 2016, when the Parliament's image was viewed more negatively. This long-term trend suggests a generally stable and favourable perception of the European Parliament in recent years.

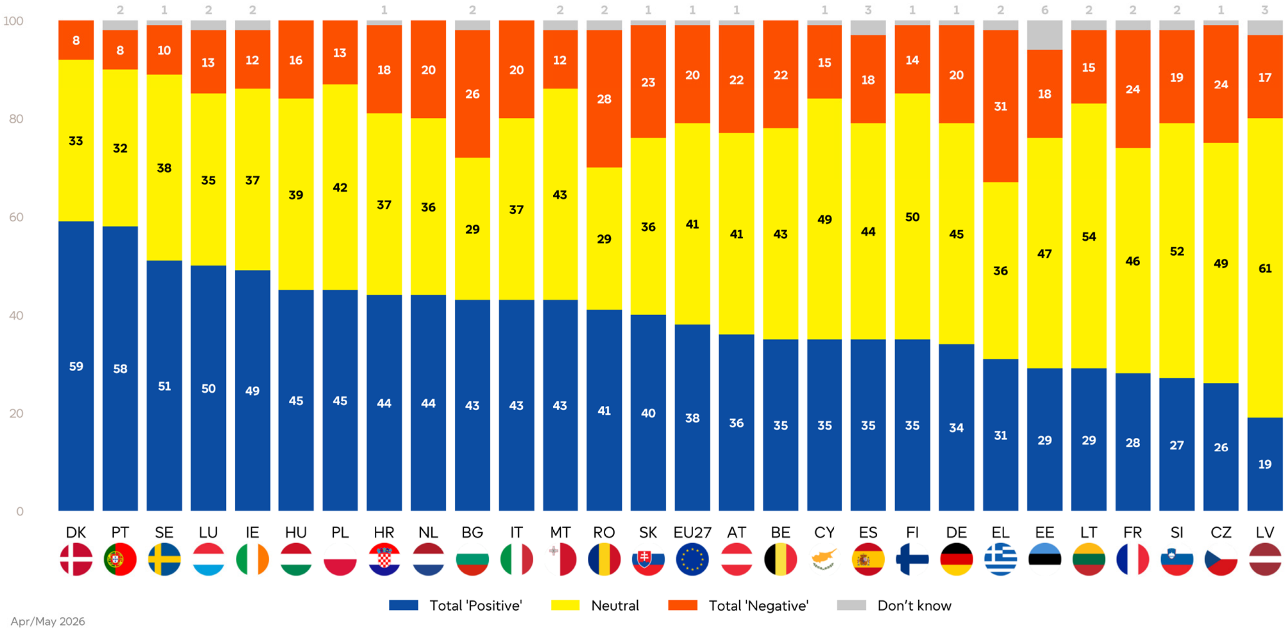
QA2 In general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of the European Parliament? (% - EU)



Views of the European Parliament vary across Member States. At the national level, at least half of respondents report a positive image of the European Parliament in four Member States, and it is the most frequent view in 13 Member States. Moreover, in 26 Member States the positive image of the European Parliament outweighs the negative image. The highest shares are observed in Denmark (59%), Portugal (58%), and Sweden (51%). Conversely, the lowest levels of positive perceptions are found in Latvia (19%), Czechia (26%), and Slovenia (27%).

Negative views are most pronounced in Greece (31%), Romania (28%) and Bulgaria (26%). Greece is the only Member State where negative views of the European Parliament are equal to positive ones.

QA2 **In general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of the European Parliament?** (%)



Perceptions of the European Parliament's image vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although in all categories positive views outweigh negative ones, and a large share of respondents remains neutral.

Differences by **gender** are limited. Men and women report identical levels of positive perception (38% in both groups). However, women are more likely to hold a neutral view (44% vs 39%), while men are slightly more likely to express a negative opinion (22% vs 17%).

More pronounced variations are observed across **age** groups. Younger respondents (15–24) are the most positive (42%) and the least negative (11%), while older respondents (55+) are less positive (35%) and more likely to express negative views (23%). Neutral opinions remain high across all age groups (around 40–45%), indicating a broadly moderate stance, but perceptions tend to become slightly more critical with age.

Differences by **education level** are particularly marked. Respondents with a high level of education are significantly more likely to express a positive image (47%), compared with 28% among those with a low level. Conversely, negative views are more prevalent among the least educated (24% vs 16% among the highly educated), while neutrality is also higher in this group (45%). This points to a strong link between education and favourable perceptions of the European Parliament.

A strong relationship is observed when considering respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, only 27% express a positive image, while 32% report a negative one, representing the most critical profile. By contrast, among those who almost never or never face financial difficulties, positive views rise to 41%, and negative views fall to 17%. This highlights a clear link between economic well-being and perceptions of the European Parliament.

Among respondents with a positive **image of the EU**, 68% also express a positive image of the European Parliament, compared with only 10% among those with a neutral image and 2% among those with a negative image, where negative views dominate (78%). This indicates a very strong alignment between overall attitudes towards the EU and perceptions of the Parliament.

Differences by **subjective urbanisation** are moderate but consistent. Respondents living in large towns are more likely to report a positive image (43%) than those in small or medium-sized towns (37%) and rural areas (34%), where negative views are also more frequent (23% vs 16% among those from large towns). This suggests somewhat more favourable perceptions in more urban environments.

Overall, younger, more educated, economically secure, and pro-EU respondents are more likely to have a positive image of the European Parliament, whereas older, less educated, more vulnerable, and more critical groups are more likely to be negative.

QA2 In general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of the European Parliament? (% – EU)

	Total 'Positive'	Neutral	Total 'Negative'	Don't know
EU27	38	41	20	1
Gender				
Man	38	39	22	1
Woman	38	44	17	1
Age				
15-24	42	45	11	2
25-39	40	43	16	1
40-54	38	40	21	1
55+	35	41	23	1
Education level				
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	28	45	24	3
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	37	42	20	1
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	47	36	16	1
Socio-professional category				
Self-employed	39	36	24	1
Managers	47	36	16	1
Other white collars	43	38	18	1
Manual workers	32	47	20	1
House persons	33	46	19	2
Unemployed	28	51	19	2
Retired	34	39	25	2
Students	45	43	10	2
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	27	38	32	3
From time to time	32	43	24	1
Almost never / Never	41	41	17	1
Subjective urbanisation				
Rural area or village	34	42	23	1
Small or middle sized town	37	42	20	1
Large town	43	40	16	1
Image of the EU				
Positive	68	27	4	1
Neutral	10	76	12	2
Negative	2	19	78	1
Satisfaction with quality of life				
Satisfied	41	41	17	1
Not satisfied	22	42	34	2

Role of the European Parliament

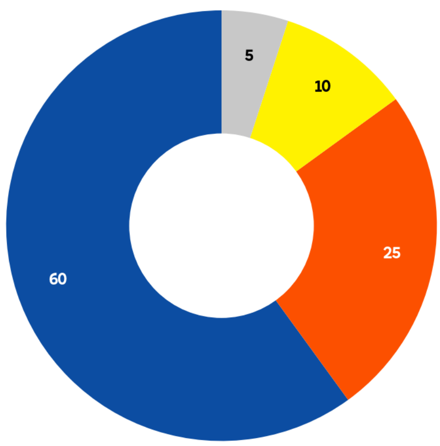
Beyond general perceptions of the European Parliament, it is also important to understand how citizens view its role. Respondents were therefore asked whether they would personally like to see the European Parliament play a more important or less important role. At EU level, **a clear majority of Europeans support a stronger role for the European Parliament,** indicating broad expectations for an enhanced position within the European Union's institutional framework.

Overall, six in ten respondents (60%) say they would like the European Parliament to play a more important role. This represents relative stability compared with the previous wave in November 2025 (+1 percentage point), confirming that support for strengthening the Parliament's role remains strong and stable across the European Union.

By contrast, one quarter of respondents (25%, -1 pp) would prefer the European Parliament to play a less important role, suggesting that while a significant minority holds more critical or cautious views, support for reducing the Parliament's role remains clearly secondary to calls for its strengthening. A smaller share of respondents (10%) spontaneously state that they would prefer no change, and 5% do not express an opinion.

Overall, these findings highlight a clear preference among Europeans for expanding the role of the European Parliament.

QA3 **Would you personally like to see the European Parliament play a more important or less important role?** (EU27) (%)



More important	▲1
Less important	▼1
No change / As it is now (SPONTANEOUS)	=
Don't know	=

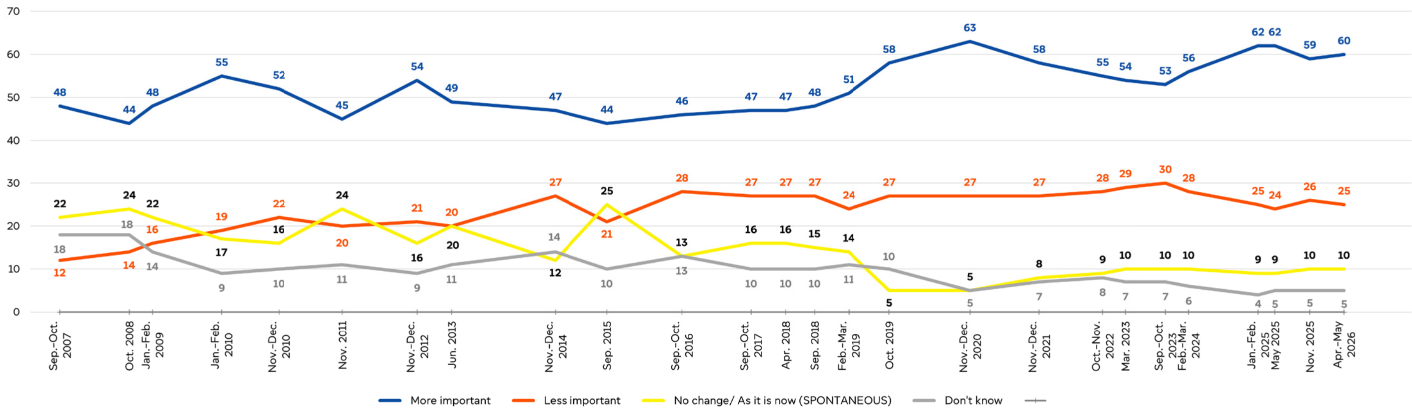
▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

Apr/May 2026

- More important
- Less important
- No change / As it is now (SPONTANEOUS)
- Don't know

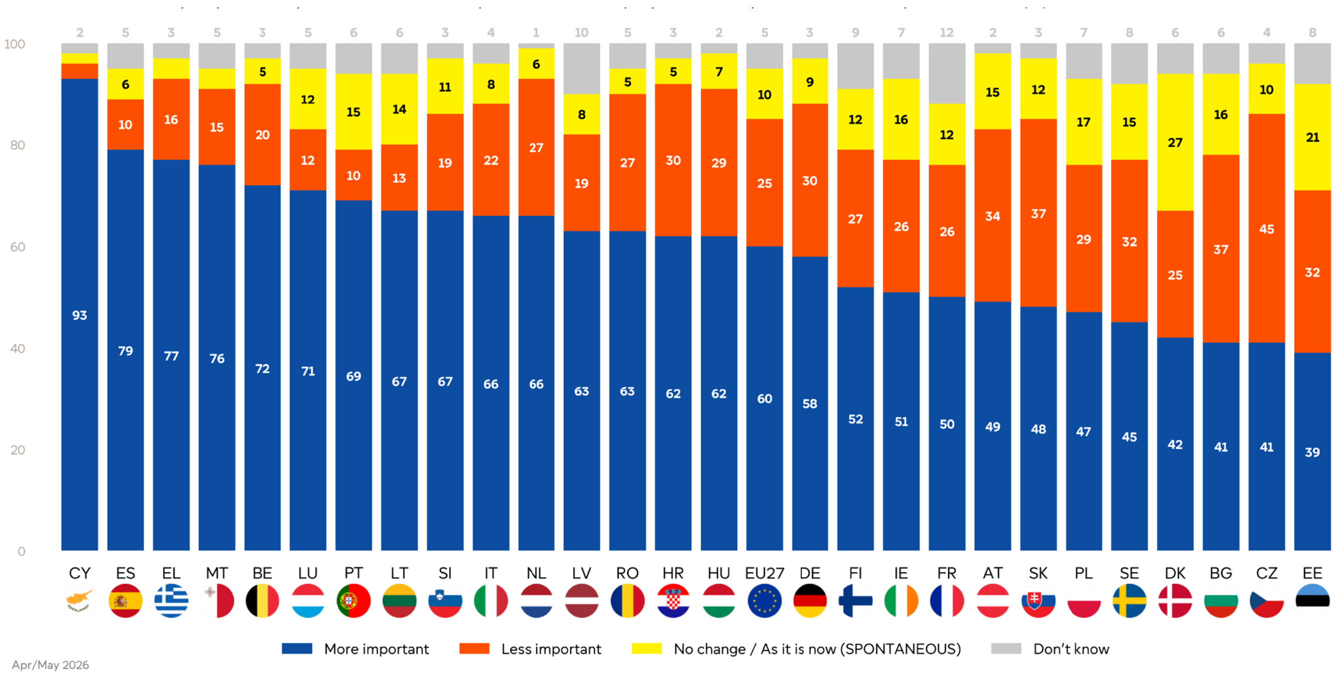
Over the longer term, support for a stronger role for the European Parliament has consistently remained clearly higher than support for a weaker role. The current public support for a stronger role is one of the highest recorded since the question was first asked in 2007. This indicates that a clear majority of Europeans continue to see the European Parliament as an institution that should have greater influence in EU decision-making.

QA3 **Would you personally like to see the European Parliament play a more important or less important role?** (% - EU)



At the national level, at least half of the respondents in 19 Member States express a desire for the European Parliament to play a stronger role. Support is highest in Cyprus (93%), followed by Spain (79%), and Greece (77%). Conversely, the lowest levels of support are observed in Estonia (39%), Czechia and Bulgaria (both 41%), and Denmark (42%). Czechia is the only Member State where the share of respondents wanting the European Parliament to play a less important role (45%) exceeds those who want it to play a more important role (41%).

QA3 Would you personally like to see the European Parliament play a more important or less important role? (%)



Preferences regarding the role of the European Parliament vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although a clear majority in all categories support a more important role.

Differences by **gender** are limited. Men and women show similar levels of support for strengthening the Parliament's role (59% and 60% respectively). However, men are slightly more likely to favour a less important role (28% vs 22%), while women are slightly more likely to opt for no change (11% vs 9%) and to express uncertainty (7% vs 4%).

More pronounced differences appear across **age** groups. Younger respondents (15–24) are the most supportive of a stronger role (66%) and the least likely to favour a reduced role (15%). By contrast, support decreases with age, falling to 56% among those aged 55+, while the share favouring a less important role increases to 28%. This indicates that younger Europeans are more inclined to support a stronger European Parliament, whereas older groups are more divided.

Differences by **education level** are also clear. Support for a more important role increases with educational attainment, from 54% among those with a low level of education to 66% among the highly educated. Conversely, the preference for a less important role is highest among less educated respondents (27%) and lowest among the highly educated (19%), pointing to a strong link between education and support for strengthening the Parliament.

A strong relationship is observed with respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, support for a stronger role drops to 52%, while the share favouring a less important role rises to 30%. In contrast, among those who almost never or never face such difficulties, support is higher (60%) and opposition lower (24%). This indicates that economic vulnerability is associated with more critical views of expanding the Parliament's role.

Among respondents with a positive **image of the EU**, 78% support a more important role for the European Parliament, while only 8% favour a less important role. In contrast, among those with a negative image of the EU, support drops sharply to 28%, while a majority (64%) would prefer the Parliament to play a less important role.

Differences by **subjective urbanisation** are moderate but consistent. Respondents in large towns (64%) are more likely to support a stronger role than those in small or medium-sized towns (59%) and rural areas (56%), where support is lower and preference for a reduced role slightly higher. This suggests somewhat stronger support in more urban environments.

Overall, while majorities across all groups favour strengthening the role of the European Parliament, the level of support varies. In particular, younger, more educated, economically secure, and pro-EU respondents are most supportive, whereas older, more vulnerable, less educated, and more critical groups are more cautious or divided.

QA3 **Would you personally like to see the European Parliament play a more important or less important role?** (% – EU)

	More important	Less important	No change / As it is now (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	60	25	10	5
Gender				
Man	59	28	9	4
Woman	60	22	11	7
Age				
15-24	66	15	11	8
25-39	64	22	9	5
40-54	59	27	10	4
55+	56	28	11	5
Education level				
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	54	27	10	9
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	59	27	10	4
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	66	19	10	5
Socio-professional category				
Self-employed	57	28	12	3
Managers	65	21	11	3
Other white collars	63	25	9	3
Manual workers	58	27	9	6
House persons	60	21	11	8
Unemployed	60	23	9	8
Retired	54	29	11	6
Students	69	14	10	7
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	52	30	9	9
From time to time	59	26	9	6
Almost never / Never	60	24	11	5
Subjective urbanisation				
Rural area or village	56	27	11	6
Small or middle sized town	59	25	10	6
Large town	64	22	10	4
Image of the EU				
Positive	78	8	10	4
Neutral	48	30	14	8
Negative	28	64	4	4
Satisfaction with quality of life				
Satisfied	62	23	10	5
Not satisfied	49	36	8	7

Image of the European Union

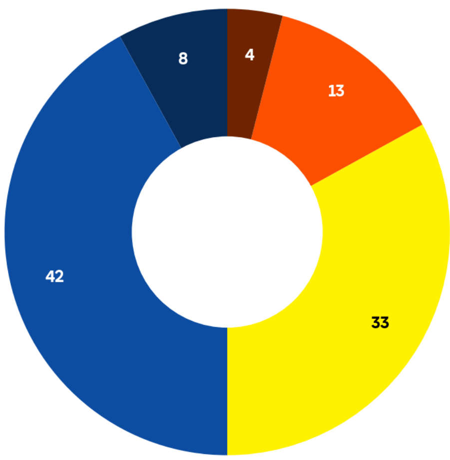
In addition to assessing the image of the European Parliament, this section examines how citizens perceive the European Union more broadly. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they hold a positive or negative image of the EU. **Overall, 50% of Europeans express a positive image of the EU**, including 42% who say they have a fairly positive view and 8% a very positive one. This makes positive sentiment the most frequent overall assessment and indicates a broadly favourable perception of the European Union.

At the same time, 33% of respondents hold a neutral opinion, suggesting that a substantial share of Europeans remain undecided or moderately positioned, rather than expressing strong views.

By contrast, 17% of respondents express a negative image of the EU, including 13% fairly negative and 4% very negative views. This shows that negative perceptions are clearly in the minority.

Compared with the previous wave in November 2025, all categories of answers have remained unchanged, pointing to a high degree of stability in overall attitudes.

D78 **In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?** (EU27) (%)



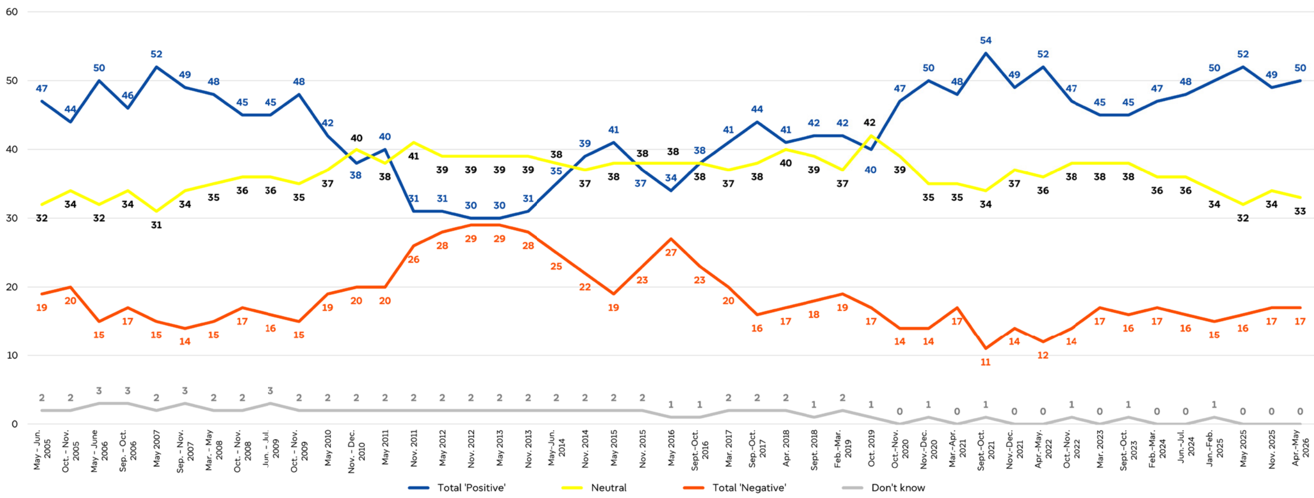
Very positive	=
Fairly positive	▲1
Neutral	▼1
Fairly negative	=
Very negative	=
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Apr/May 2026 - Nov 2025)

Apr/May 2026

As with the two previous indicators, the long-term trend points to a more positive picture. Since at least 2005, **the share of respondents holding a positive image of the European Union has consistently exceeded that of negative views**. Moreover, positive perceptions have been the most frequent response, surpassing also neutral opinions, consistently since 2020. Current level remains stable and high compared with the period between 2011 and 2014 when public opinion of the EU was less favourable.

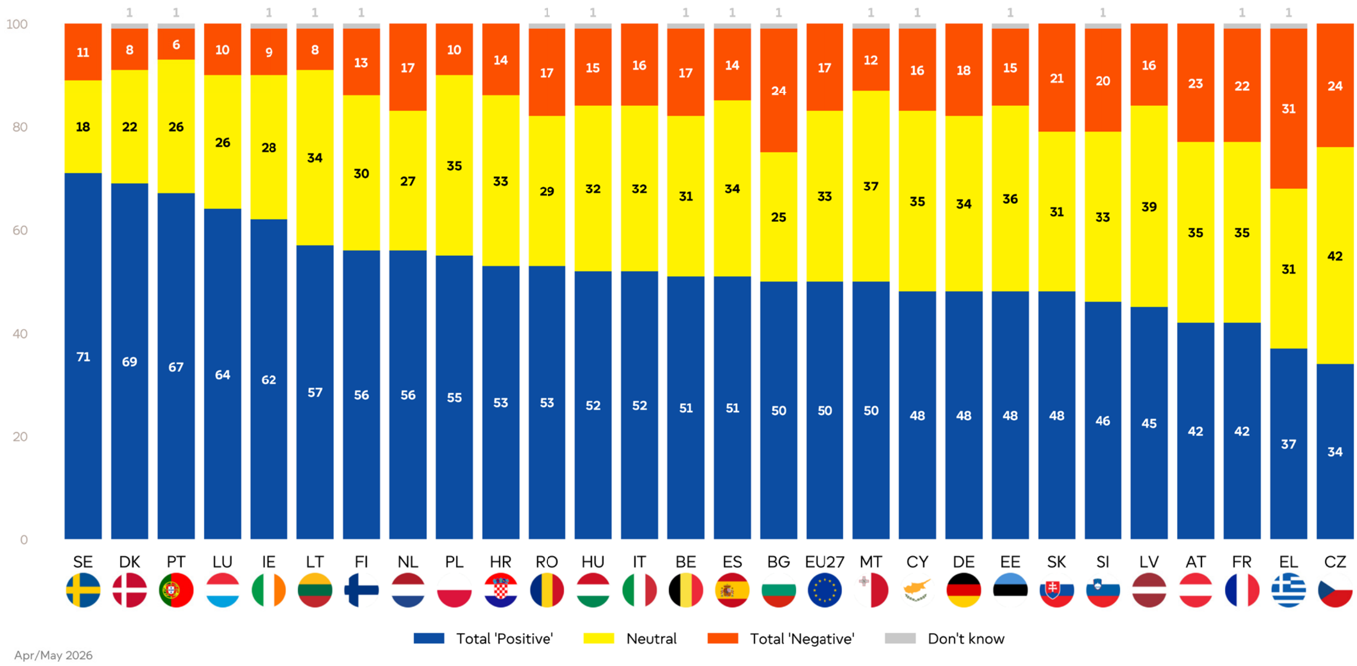
D78 **In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?** (% - EU)



At the national level, at least half of respondents report a positive image of the European Union in 17 Member States, and **positive image of the EU is the most frequent view in 26 Member States**. The highest shares of positive perceptions are observed in Sweden (71%), Denmark (69%), and Portugal (67%).

Conversely, the lowest levels of positive perceptions are found in Czechia (34%), Greece (37%), and France (42%). Czechia is the only Member States where positive is not the most frequent response: the relative majority of respondents hold a neutral view. Negative perceptions are never the most frequent response in any Member State.Perceptions of the

D78 **In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?** (%)



European Union's image vary somewhat across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although in almost all categories positive views remain more widespread than negative ones, and a substantial share of respondents express neutral opinions.

Differences by **gender** are very limited. Men and women report almost identical levels of positive perception (50% and 51% respectively). Women are slightly more likely to hold a neutral view (34% vs 31%), while men are somewhat more likely to express a negative opinion (19% vs 15%), indicating marginally more critical views among men.

Clearer differences emerge across **age** groups. Younger respondents are the most positive, with 57% of those aged 15–24 expressing a positive image, compared with 45% among those aged 55 and over. At the same time, negative perceptions increase with age, from 8% among the youngest group to 20% among the oldest. Neutral responses remain relatively stable across all age groups (around 31–35%), suggesting that while younger respondents are more favourable, older respondents are more likely to adopt a critical stance.

Differences by **education level** are particularly pronounced. Positive perceptions rise significantly with educational attainment, from 40% among respondents with a low level of education to 49% among those with a medium level, and 61% among the highly educated. Conversely, negative views are more prevalent among the least educated (21% vs 13% among the highly educated), while neutrality is also higher (38% vs 26%). This highlights a strong relationship between education and favourable perceptions of the EU.

A strong relationship is observed with respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, only 37% express a positive image, while 30% report a negative one. By contrast, among those who almost never or never face such difficulties, 54% hold a positive view and only 14% a negative one. This demonstrates a clear link between economic well-being and perceptions of the EU.

Differences by **subjective urbanisation** are moderate but consistent. Respondents living in large towns (57%) are more likely to express a positive image than those in small or medium-sized towns (50%) and rural areas (45%), where negative views are also more frequent. This suggests somewhat more favourable perceptions in urban settings.

Overall, these findings indicate that while the **image of the European Union** is generally positive across all groups, younger, educated and more advantaged respondents are more likely to hold favourable views, while more vulnerable groups tend to be more neutral or critical.

D78 In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image? (% - EU)

	Total 'Positive'	Neutral	Total 'Negative'	Don't know
EU27	50	33	17	0
Gender				
Man	50	31	19	0
Woman	51	34	15	0
Age				
15-24	57	35	8	0
25-39	56	31	13	0
40-54	50	31	19	0
55+	45	34	20	1
Education level				
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	40	38	21	1
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	49	34	17	0
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	61	26	13	0
Socio-professional category				
Self-employed	52	28	20	0
Managers	61	27	12	0
Other white collars	55	29	16	0
Manual workers	46	36	18	0
House persons	47	36	16	1
Unemployed	41	39	19	1
Retired	44	34	21	1
Students	61	33	6	0
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	37	31	30	2
From time to time	43	36	21	0
Almost never / Never	54	32	14	0
Subjective urbanisation				
Rural area or village	45	34	20	1
Small or middle sized town	50	34	16	0
Large town	57	30	13	0
Satisfaction with quality of life				
Satisfied	54	32	14	0
Not satisfied	31	37	31	1

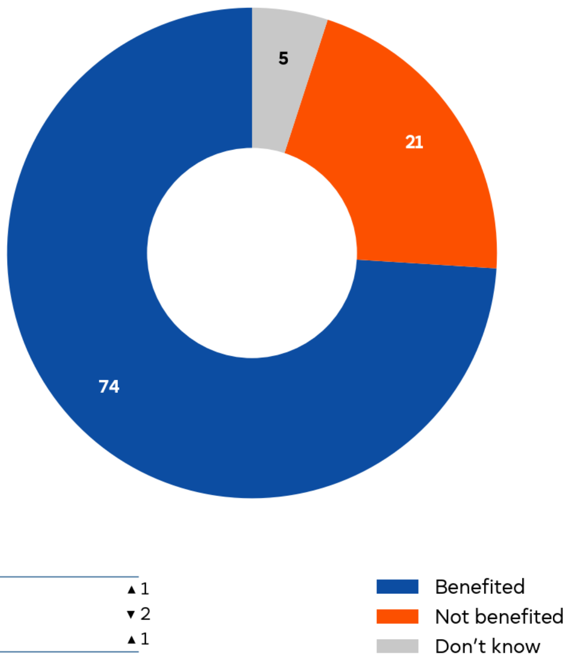
European Union membership

This section explores how citizens view their country's membership in the European Union. At EU level, a large majority of Europeans consider that their country has benefited from being a member of the European Union, confirming a broadly positive assessment of EU membership.

Overall, approximately three quarters of respondents (74%, +1 percentage point) say that their country has benefited, representing the most frequent response by a wide margin. This indicates a strong and widespread perception of the advantages of EU membership across the European Union.

By contrast, around one fifth of respondents (21%, -2 pp) believe that their country has not benefited. A small proportion of respondents (5%, +1 pp) say they do not know.

QA4 **Taking everything into account, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the EU?** EU27) (%)



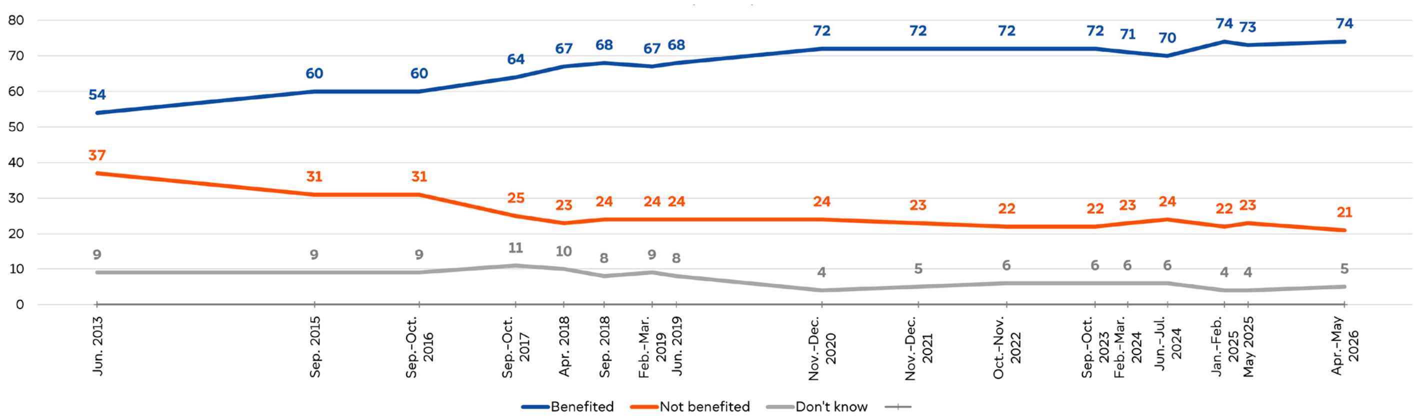
Benefited	▴1
Not benefited	▾2
Don't know	▴1

▴▾ (Apr/May 2026 - May 2025)

Apr/May 2026

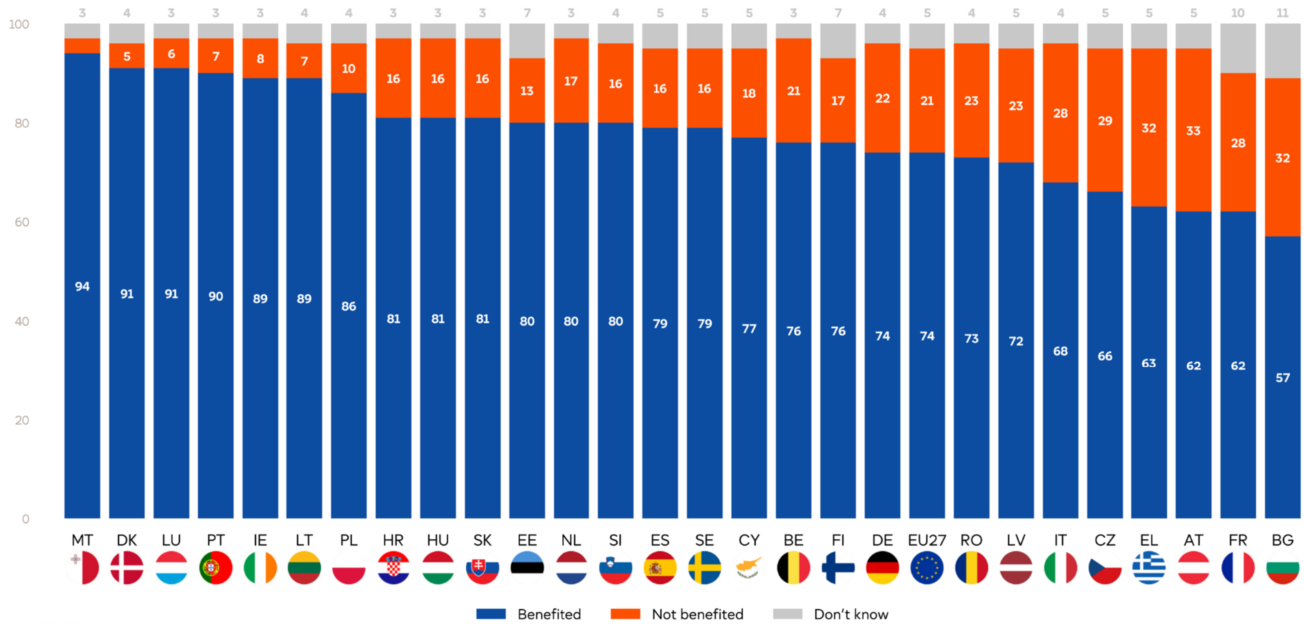
Over the longer term, a **majority of respondents have consistently reported they perceive EU membership as beneficial for their country**. Between 2015 and 2020, there was a trend toward increasingly favourable views, reflecting growing support for EU membership across the European Union. Since 2020, this trend has stabilised, with more than seven in ten respondents consistently considering EU membership beneficial and has reached its peak of 74% in winter 2025 and in the current survey. Overall, this long-term pattern underscores the enduring and broadly stable positive perception of EU membership among European citizens.

QA4 **Taking everything into account, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the EU?** (% - EU)



A clear majority of respondents consider that their country has benefited from EU membership in all Member States, although the strength of this perception varies significantly across countries. Support is strongest in Malta (94%), Denmark and Luxembourg (both 91%), and Portugal (90%). Conversely, the lowest levels of positive perception are observed in Bulgaria (57%), France and Austria (both 62%), and Greece (63%). The highest share of negative perceptions is observed in Austria (33%).

QA4 Taking everything into account, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the EU? (%)



Apr/May 2026

Perceptions of whether countries have benefited from EU membership vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although a clear majority in almost all categories considers that their country has benefited.

Differences by **gender** are minimal. Men and women report very similar levels of positive assessment (73% and 74% respectively), although men are slightly more likely to say that their country has not benefited (23% vs 20%).

More pronounced differences emerge across **age** groups. Younger respondents (15–24) are by far the most positive, with 84% believing that their country has benefited, and only 11% expressing the opposite view. By contrast, support declines steadily with age, reaching 68% among respondents aged 55 and over, while the share expressing negative views rises to 26%. This suggests that younger Europeans are significantly more favourable towards EU membership, while older groups are more divided.

Differences by **education level** are also marked. Positive perceptions increase with educational attainment, from 63% among those with a low level of education to 82% among the highly educated. Conversely, the proportion of respondents who believe their country has not benefited is almost twice as high among the least educated (29% vs 15% among the highly educated). This highlights a strong relationship between education and positive attitudes towards EU membership.

A particularly strong relationship is observed with respondents' **financial situation**. Among those who experience difficulties paying their bills most of the time, only 57% consider that their country has benefited, while 35% believe it has not. In contrast, among those who almost never or never face such difficulties, 78% express a positive view, and only 18% a negative one. This points to a clear link between economic vulnerability and more critical perceptions of EU membership.

Among respondents with a positive **image of the EU**, an overwhelming 95% believe their country has benefited, while only 4% disagree. By contrast, among those with a negative image of the EU, only 27% consider that their country has benefited, while a majority (68%) believe it has not.

Differences by **subjective urbanisation** are moderate but consistent. Respondents living in large towns (80%) are more likely to say their country has benefited than those in rural areas (70%), where negative views are slightly more widespread (24% vs 16%). This indicates somewhat stronger support for EU membership in more urban environments.

QA4 Taking everything into account, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the EU? (% – EU)

	Benefited	Not benefited	Don't know
EU27	74	21	5
Gender			
Man	73	23	4
Woman	74	20	6
Age			
15-24	84	11	5
25-39	78	17	5
40-54	73	23	4
55+	68	26	6
Education level			
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	63	29	8
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	75	21	4
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	82	15	3
Socio-professional category			
Self-employed	73	23	4
Managers	80	16	4
Other white collars	79	18	3
Manual workers	71	24	5
House persons	69	23	8
Unemployed	66	25	9
Retired	66	27	7
Students	87	9	4
Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	57	35	8
From time to time	67	27	6
Almost never / Never	78	18	4
Subjective urbanisation			
Rural area or village	70	24	6
Small or middle sized town	72	23	5
Large town	80	16	4
Image of the EU			
Positive	95	4	1
Neutral	66	24	10
Negative	27	68	5
Satisfaction with quality of life			
Satisfied	77	18	5
Not satisfied	55	38	7

Main benefits of EU membership

Beyond understanding whether citizens perceive their country as having benefited from EU membership, it is also important to identify what they see as the main reasons behind these benefits. Respondents were therefore asked to indicate the key factors that explain why people believe their country has benefited from being part of the European Union. This question provides deeper insight into the specific added value of EU membership as perceived by citizens.

At EU level, **peace and security** clearly emerge as the most frequently cited reason why countries are seen as benefiting from EU membership. Overall, **40% of respondents mention the EU's contribution to protecting peace and strengthening security**, making it the leading factor by a clear margin. This also represents relative stability (+3 percentage points) compared with May 2025, highlighting the importance of security considerations in the current geopolitical context.

The second most frequently cited reason is **improved cooperation between Member States**, mentioned by 34% of respondents, also representing a relative stability (–2 pp). This indicates that cooperation remains a core perceived benefit.

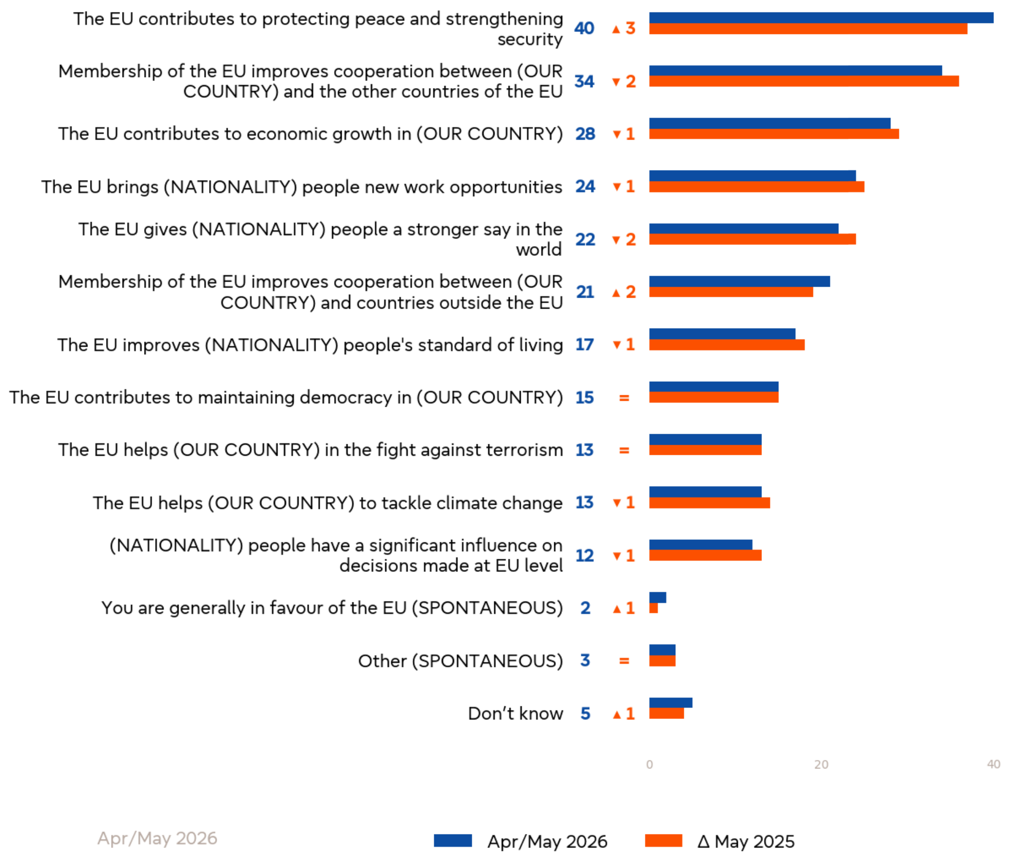
Economic factors continue to play an important role. The **EU's contribution to economic growth** is cited by 28% of respondents (–1 pp), while new work opportunities are mentioned by 24% (–1 pp). These findings confirm that economic advantages remain central to the perceived benefits of EU membership.

A similar share of respondents (22%, –2 pp) highlight the **EU's role in giving citizens a stronger voice in the world**, pointing to the importance of the EU's global influence. In addition, 21% mention **improved cooperation with countries outside the EU** (+2 pp), reflecting the perceived value of external relations.

Other benefits are mentioned by smaller proportions of respondents. These include **improvements in living standards** (17%, –1 pp) and the **EU's contribution to maintaining democracy** (15%, unchanged). Issues such as the **fight against terrorism** (13%, unchanged) and **tackling climate change** (13%, –1 pp) are also cited, though by more limited shares. Finally, **people having a significant influence on decisions made at EU level** is selected by 12% of citizens (-1 pp).

Overall, these findings indicate that Europeans perceive the benefits of EU membership as multidimensional, combining security, cooperation, and economic advantages. While security-related aspects remained stable, economic and institutional benefits continue to form a core part of citizens' evaluations, illustrating a broad understanding of the EU's added value.

QA5ab **Regardless of whether you think (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited or not from being a member of the EU, which of the following are the main reasons why people think (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited from being a member of the EU? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)



Across Member States, a wide range of reasons are cited to explain why countries are perceived to have benefited from EU membership, although **security, cooperation and economic factors consistently emerge as the most important dimensions**. At the same time, clear differences appear in the primary emphasis placed on these benefits across countries.

The **EU's contribution to protecting peace and strengthening security** is the most frequently cited reason in eight Member States. It is most frequently mentioned in Sweden (55%), the Netherlands (53%), and Germany (50%). In Czechia, it is the first reason mentioned equally shared with employment opportunities (38%).

In eight Member States, the main perceived benefit relates to **employment opportunities**. The share of respondents citing new work opportunities is particularly high in Slovakia and Bulgaria (both 49%), followed by Croatia (46%) and Hungary (41%), indicating that labour market benefits and economic opportunities are key drivers of positive perceptions in these countries.

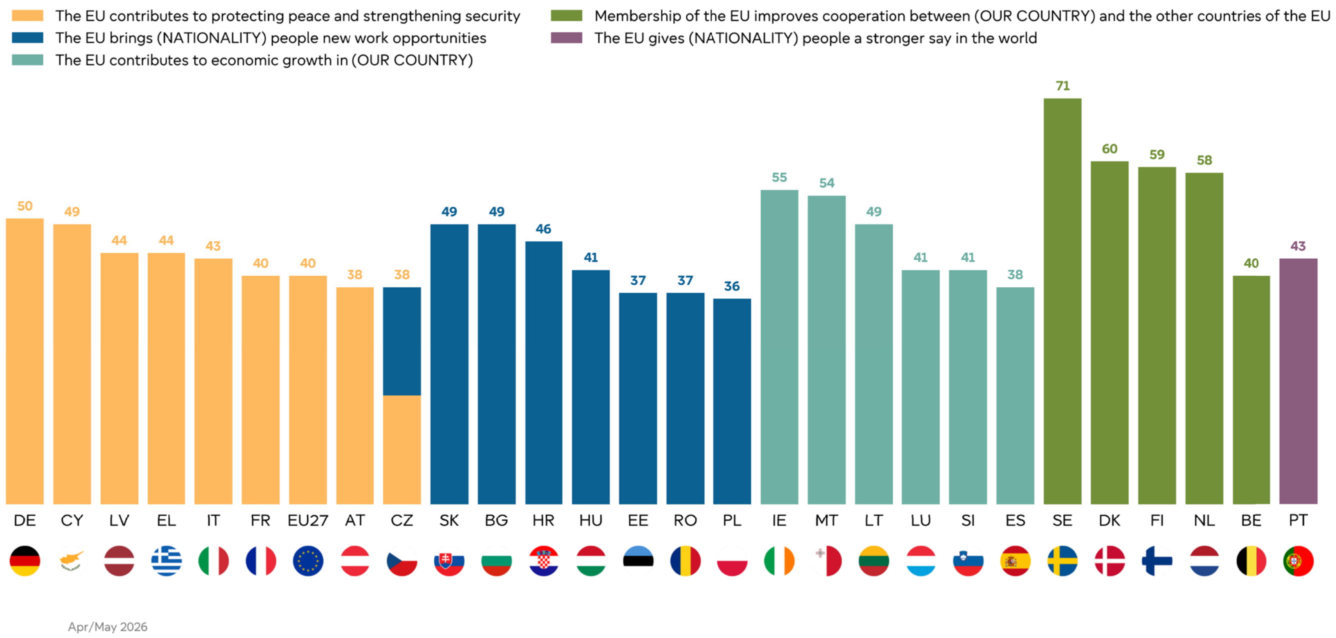
Similarly, the **EU's contribution to economic growth** emerges as the leading factor in six countries, notably in Ireland (55%), Malta (54%), followed by Lithuania (49%). These findings highlight the importance of economic development and prosperity as perceived benefits of EU membership.

Another major dimension concerns **cooperation between Member States**, which stands out as the most frequently mentioned reason in five Member States, most notably in Sweden (71%), followed by Denmark (60%), Finland (59%), and the Netherlands (58%). In these countries, enhanced cooperation within the EU is clearly seen as the primary benefit, pointing to a stronger emphasis on integration and collective action.

Finally, in Portugal (43%), the most frequently cited benefit is that **EU membership gives the country a stronger voice in the world**, highlighting an external or geopolitical dimension of EU membership benefits.

Overall, these results underline the multidimensional nature of perceived EU benefits, while also revealing clear national differences in emphasis. While security concerns dominate in some Member States, others prioritise economic performance, employment opportunities, or cooperation, reflecting the influence of national contexts, economic structures, and geopolitical perspectives on how EU membership is evaluated.

QA5ab **Regardless of whether you think (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited or not from being a member of the EU, which of the following are the main reasons why people think (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited from being a member of the EU? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)



QA5ab Regardless of whether you think (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited or not from being a member of the EU, which of the following are the main reasons why people think (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited from being a member of the EU? Firstly? And then? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (%)

	EU27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
The EU contributes to protecting peace and strengthening security	40	38	29	38	47	50	35	17	44	30	40	39	43	49	44	37	36	27	21	53	38	33	24	28	34	31	44	55
Membership of the EU improves cooperation between (OUR COUNTRY) and the other countries of the EU	34	40	27	25	60	44	27	22	30	29	27	24	33	31	29	18	35	26	27	58	27	23	23	23	36	32	59	71
The EU contributes to economic growth in (OUR COUNTRY)	28	31	20	23	33	25	26	55	30	38	19	29	22	34	29	49	41	37	54	46	33	30	40	25	41	34	21	30
The EU brings (NATIONALITY) people new work opportunities	24	19	49	38	12	16	37	40	19	27	12	46	22	37	29	40	29	41	39	9	30	36	31	37	34	49	28	24
The EU gives (NATIONALITY) people a stronger say in the world	22	25	19	21	35	18	20	26	26	17	24	26	32	23	11	16	30	19	24	11	25	19	43	19	13	21	20	16
Membership of the EU improves cooperation between (OUR COUNTRY) and countries outside the EU	21	24	14	15	28	25	16	13	22	20	17	18	21	9	15	9	18	15	16	31	20	18	12	20	19	15	32	23
The EU improves (NATIONALITY) people's standard of living	17	15	20	20	9	12	24	40	24	23	10	30	12	21	27	37	18	26	24	10	20	27	26	25	24	23	10	6
The EU contributes to maintaining democracy in (OUR COUNTRY)	15	15	18	17	8	17	11	9	19	15	13	17	14	22	13	15	18	24	21	9	20	14	15	19	13	21	11	6
The EU helps (OUR COUNTRY) in the fight against terrorism	13	17	10	14	12	12	8	7	12	9	18	14	15	9	5	4	6	11	9	15	17	12	8	14	7	8	6	12
The EU helps (OUR COUNTRY) to tackle climate change	13	12	7	12	14	12	7	12	17	10	13	13	17	8	3	4	6	15	11	18	20	11	7	14	8	10	12	20
(NATIONALITY) people have a significant influence on decisions made at EU level	12	12	10	10	10	10	8	8	16	12	13	12	16	8	5	7	10	14	14	6	14	14	11	13	8	9	6	11
You are generally in favour of the EU (SPONTANEOUS)	2	1	1	1	1	3	3	1	0	1	3	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	0
Other (SPONTANEOUS)	3	2	4	1	2	4	6	1	4	5	5	1	3	1	6	3	2	2	1	1	3	1	2	4	6	3	2	1
Don't know	5	2	11	5	1	4	7	3	3	6	12	2	4	6	7	6	2	3	2	2	2	4	5	5	3	2	4	0

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item
2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item
3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

Apr/May 2026

Perceptions of the main reasons why countries are seen as benefiting from EU membership vary across **socio-demographic and attitudinal groups**, although security, cooperation, and economic factors remain central across all categories.

Differences by **gender** are limited. Men and women report very similar priorities overall; however, men are slightly more likely to emphasise economic growth (30% vs 26%).

Variation is limited also across **age** groups. Respondents aged 25–39 are slightly more likely to cite peace and security (41% vs 38% among those aged 15-24 and 40-54) and cooperation (36% vs 33% among the oldest group), while younger respondents (15–24) place relatively greater emphasis on economic growth (30% vs 27%), cooperation outside the EU (23% vs 19%) and improvement of standard of living (21% vs 15%).

Differences by **education level** are more visible. Respondents with a high level of education are significantly more likely to cite peace and security (42% vs 38% among the least educated), cooperation within the EU (41% vs 30%), economic growth (34% vs 22%) as well as improvement of standard of living by EU (18% vs 14%). By contrast, those with a low level of education are twice as likely to mention EU helping to fight against terrorism (16% vs 9%).

There is some variation observed with regard to **financial situation**. Respondents who are more financially secure are more likely to highlight peace and security (41% vs 34% among those who have difficulties paying their bills most of the time), cooperation within the EU (36% vs 28%), economic growth (30% vs 21%), work opportunities (24% vs 18%), and improvement of standard of living (17% vs 14%), indicating a more economically oriented interpretation of EU benefits.

Respondents with a positive **image of the EU** are significantly more likely to associate EU membership with almost all listed benefits than respondents with a negative view. For example, 45% select peace and security compared with 27% of those who hold negative view of EU.

Differences by **subjective urbanisation** are relatively limited, although some variation can be noted. Respondents in large towns are somewhat more likely to cite cooperation within the EU (38% vs 30% among those in rural areas) and improvement of standard of living (21% vs 17%).

QA5ab **Regardless of whether you think (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited or not from being a member of the EU, which of the following are the main reasons why people think (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited from being a member of the EU? Firstly? And then?** (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (% - EU)

	The EU contributes to protecting peace and strengthening security	Membership of the EU improves cooperation between (OUR COUNTRY) and the other countries of the EU	The EU contributes to economic growth in (OUR COUNTRY)	The EU brings (NATIONALITY) people new work opportunities	The EU gives (NATIONALITY) people a stronger say in the world	Membership of the EU improves cooperation between (OUR COUNTRY) and countries outside the EU	The EU improves (NATIONALITY) people's standard of living
EU27	40	34	28	24	22	21	17
Gender							
Man	39	34	30	24	22	21	18
Woman	40	34	26	23	22	21	16
Age							
15-24	38	34	30	24	23	23	21
25-39	41	36	30	25	22	21	18
40-54	38	35	29	25	23	21	17
55+	40	33	27	22	21	19	15
Education level							
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	38	30	22	20	23	19	14
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	39	32	29	27	21	21	18
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	42	41	34	22	22	22	18
Socio-professional category							
Self-employed	37	35	30	24	23	19	17
Managers	43	40	34	24	21	22	18
Other white collars	37	36	31	26	26	22	17
Manual workers	38	33	27	25	21	21	18
House persons	35	30	24	21	23	22	14
Unemployed	42	33	24	22	17	22	15
Retired	41	31	26	21	21	18	15
Students	39	36	30	24	24	23	20
Difficulties paying bills							
Most of the time	34	28	21	18	21	20	14
From time to time	37	30	26	25	22	21	17
Almost never / Never	41	36	30	24	22	21	17
Subjective urbanisation							
Rural area or village	38	30	30	25	21	21	17
Small or middle sized town	42	35	26	22	24	19	15
Large town	38	38	30	24	20	22	21
Image of the EU							
Positive	45	38	35	26	24	21	21
Neutral	38	32	25	22	22	21	15
Negative	27	27	16	20	15	17	10
Satisfaction with quality of life							
Satisfied	40	35	30	24	22	21	18
Not satisfied	36	29	21	22	21	20	14

	The EU contributes to maintaining democracy in (OUR COUNTRY)	The EU helps (OUR COUNTRY) in the fight against terrorism	The EU helps (OUR COUNTRY) to tackle climate change	(NATIONALITY) people have a significant influence on decisions made at EU level	You are generally in favour of the EU (SPONTANEOUS)	Other (SPONTANEOUS)	Don't know
EU27	15	13	13	12	2	3	5
Gender							
Man	14	12	13	12	2	4	5
Woman	16	14	13	12	1	3	6
Age							
15-24	17	11	14	13	1	1	3
25-39	16	11	14	12	1	3	4
40-54	15	13	13	13	1	3	5
55+	15	14	12	11	2	4	7
Education level							
Low level of education (ISCED 0-2)	14	16	12	12	2	5	9
Medium level of education (ISCED 3-4)	16	14	14	12	1	3	4
High level of education (ISCED 5-8)	15	9	13	13	1	2	4
Socio-professional category							
Self-employed	12	12	15	14	2	4	4
Managers	14	10	12	13	2	3	3
Other white collars	17	12	14	13	1	2	4
Manual workers	15	15	14	12	2	3	4
House persons	17	17	11	15	2	4	9
Unemployed	16	14	11	9	2	4	8
Retired	14	14	11	10	2	5	8
Students	17	9	15	13	0	2	2
Difficulties paying bills							
Most of the time	13	17	13	12	1	6	11
From time to time	17	15	14	12	1	3	5
Almost never / Never	15	12	13	12	2	3	5
Subjective urbanisation							
Rural area or village	14	13	12	12	1	4	6
Small or middle sized town	14	13	13	12	2	3	6
Large town	17	13	15	13	1	2	3
Image of the EU							
Positive	17	12	13	14	1	1	1
Neutral	15	14	14	12	2	4	6
Negative	10	14	11	7	3	11	16
Satisfaction with quality of life							
Satisfied	15	12	13	12	2	3	4
Not satisfied	15	16	13	10	1	6	9

CONCLUSION

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The Spring 2026 Eurobarometer highlights a European public navigating a context marked by geopolitical uncertainty, economic pressures, and gradual shifts in expectations about the future. Citizens continue to express strong optimism at the personal level, while confidence declines when considering broader contexts, with particularly cautious and increasingly pessimistic views regarding the future of the world. At the same time, Europeans' emotional state reflects a complex balance of hope and uncertainty, suggesting a population that remains resilient but attentive to ongoing challenges.

Concerns related to economic conditions remain central across the survey. Inflation, rising prices and the cost of living continue to dominate citizens' priorities, reinforcing their position as the most pressing issues for the European Parliament to address. In parallel, security-related concerns continue to play a key role in shaping perceptions. The EU is widely seen as a place of stability in a troubled world, and large majorities support a stronger EU role in protecting citizens against global crises and security risks. Citizens also strongly endorse greater unity among Member States and a more active EU role on the international stage, with defence, security and energy independence standing out as key priorities for strengthening the EU's global position.

Perceptions of quality of life remain broadly positive but nuanced. A large majority of Europeans report being satisfied with their quality of life, and most indicate that their situation has remained stable. However, a substantial minority report a deterioration, and expectations regarding future living standards are marked by caution, with stability prevailing but a growing share anticipating a decline. Health, financial security and access to healthcare emerge as the most important components of quality of life, as well as the areas where improvements would have the greatest impact.

At the same time, Europeans continue to strongly value fundamental principles, with peace remaining the most important value they expect the European Parliament to defend, followed by democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Satisfaction with democracy, both at national and EU level, remains above the majority threshold.

Attitudes towards the European Union and its institutions remain clearly positive overall. A majority of citizens hold a favourable image of the EU and the perception that EU membership is beneficial is particularly strong, with around three quarters of Europeans considering that their country has benefited from membership. Citizens also express a clear preference for a stronger role for the European Parliament, reflecting expectations for more visible and effective EU action.

Overall, the Spring 2026 Eurobarometer portrays a European Union facing multiple and interconnected challenges, in which citizens remain broadly supportive but increasingly attentive to economic and global risks. In this context, Europeans continue to expect the EU to play a protective, stabilising and more proactive role, both internally and on the global stage.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

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Between 9 April and 4 May 2026, Verian Belgium carried out the wave 105.3 of the Eurobarometer survey, on request of the European Parliament, Directorate-General for Communication, "Eurobarometer and Surveys" Unit. Wave 105.3 covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, resident in each of the 27 Member States and aged 15 years and over.

The basic sample design applied in all countries is a stratified multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each country, the sample frame is first stratified by NUTS regions and within each region by a measure of urbanity (DEGURBA). The number of sample points selected in each strata reflects the stratum population 15+. At the second stage, sampling points were drawn with probability proportional to their 0+ population size from within each stratum. The samples thus represent the whole territory of the countries surveyed according to the EUROSTAT NUTS II (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective nationalities in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas.

In each of the selected sampling points, a starting coordinate was drawn at random and a reverse geo-coding tool used to identify the closest address to the coordinate. This address was the starting address for the random walk. Further addresses (every Nth address) were selected by standard "random route" procedures, from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn at random. The approach to the random selection was conditional on the household size. By way of example, for households with two 15+ members the script was used to select either the informant (person responding to the screener questionnaire) or the other eligible member in the household. For households with three 15+ members the script was used to select either the informant (1/3 of the time) or the two other eligible members in the household (2/3 of the time). Where the two other members were selected, the interviewer was then told to either ask for the youngest or oldest. The script would randomly assign the selection to youngest or oldest with equal probability. This process continues for four 15+ household members – randomly asking for the youngest, 2nd youngest and oldest. For households with five 15+ members we revert to the last birthday rule.

If no contact was made with anyone in the household, or if the respondent selected was not available (busy), the interviewer revisited the same household up to three additional times (four contact attempts in total). Interviewers never indicate that the survey is conducted on behalf of the European Parliament beforehand; they may give this information once the survey is completed upon request.

The recruitment phase was slightly different in the Netherlands, Finland, and Sweden. In the two latter countries, a sample of addresses within each sampling point were selected from the address or population register (in Finland, selection is not done in all sample points, but in some where response rates are expected to improve). The selection of addresses was done in a random manner. Households were then contacted by telephone and recruited to take part in the survey. In the Netherlands, a dual frame RDD sample (mobile and landline numbers) are used as there is no comprehensive population register with telephone numbers available. The selection of numbers on both frames is done in a random manner with each number getting an equal probability of selection. Unlike Sweden and Finland, the sample is un-clustered.

	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	FIELDWORK DATES		POPULATION 15+	PROPORTION EU27
BE	Belgium	MCM Belgium	1.021	09/04/2026	27/04/2026	9.892.796	2.6%
BG	Bulgaria	Kantar TNS BBSS	1.014	09/04/2026	03/05/2026	5.534.456	1.4%
CZ	Czechia	STEM/MARK	1.049	09/04/2026	23/04/2026	9.172.797	2.4%
DK	Denmark	Mantle Denmark (Verian)	1.007	09/04/2026	04/05/2026	5.022.981	1.3%
DE	Germany	Mantle Germany (Verian)	1.507	09/04/2026	29/04/2026	71.818.299	18.7%
EE	Estonia	B&B Research OÜ	1.006	09/04/2026	28/04/2026	1.154.359	0.3%
IE	Ireland	B and A Research	1.010	09/04/2026	29/04/2026	4.338.938	1.1%
EL	Greece	Kantar Greece	1.007	14/04/2026	04/05/2026	9.041.201	2.4%
ES	Spain	Mantle Spain (Verian)	1.006	09/04/2026	29/04/2026	42.189.318	11.0%
FR	France	MCM France	1.016	09/04/2026	28/04/2026	56.855.864	14.8%
HR	Croatia	Hendal	1.007	10/04/2026	29/04/2026	3.319.752	0.9%
IT	Italy	Testpoint Italia	1.029	09/04/2026	27/04/2026	51.784.963	13.5%
CY	Rep. of Cyprus	CYMAR Market Research	504	14/04/2026	03/05/2026	818.909	0.2%
LV	Latvia	Kantar TNS Latvia	1.005	09/04/2026	29/04/2026	1.579.066	0.4%
LT	Lithuania	Norstat LT	1.017	09/04/2026	28/04/2026	2.467.008	0.6%
LU	Luxembourg	ILRES	508	09/04/2026	27/04/2026	566.303	0.1%
HU	Hungary	Kantar Hoffmann	1.020	14/04/2026	01/05/2026	8.199.448	2.1%
MT	Malta	MISCO International	505	09/04/2026	03/05/2026	493.961	0.1%
NL	Netherlands	MCM Netherlands	1.023	09/04/2026	27/04/2026	15.228.902	4.0%
AT	Austria	Das Österreichische Gallup Ins.	1.003	09/04/2026	28/04/2026	7.842.929	2.0%
PL	Poland	Research Collective	1.020	10/04/2026	27/04/2026	31.082.980	8.1%
PT	Portugal	Intercampus SA	1.031	09/04/2026	29/04/2026	9.275.958	2.4%
RO	Romania	CSOP SRL	1.045	09/04/2026	29/04/2026	16.034.437	4.2%
SI	Slovenia	Mediana DOO	1.007	09/04/2026	26/04/2026	1.811.104	0.5%
SK	Slovakia	MNFORCE	1.001	09/04/2026	24/04/2026	4.557.290	1.2%
FI	Finland	Taloustutkimus Oy	1.016	09/04/2026	29/04/2026	4.771.619	1.2%
SE	Sweden	Mantle Sweden (Verian)	1.037	09/04/2026	29/04/2026	8.748.126	2.3%
		TOTAL EU27	26.421	09/04/2026	04/05/2026	383.603.764	100%

* It should be noted that the total percentage shown in this table may exceed 100% due to rounding.

Interviewing mode per country

Interviews were conducted through face-to-face interviews, either physically in people's homes or through remote video interaction in the appropriate national language. Interviews with remote video interaction ("online face-to-face" or CAVI, Computer Assisted Video Interviewing, were conducted only in Republic of Cyprus, Denmark, Malta, Finland and Sweden).

	COUNTRIES	N° OF CAPI INTERVIEWS	N° OF CAVI INTERVIEWS	TOTAL N° INTERVIEWS
BE	Belgium	1.021		1.021
BG	Bulgaria	1.014		1.014
CZ	Czechia	1.049		1.049
DK	Denmark	686	321	1.007
DE	Germany	1.507		1.507
EE	Estonia	1.006		1.006
IE	Ireland	1.010		1.010
EL	Greece	1.007		1.007
ES	Spain	1.006		1.006
FR	France	1.016		1.016
HR	Croatia	1.007		1.007
IT	Italy	1.029		1.029
CY	Rep. Of Cyprus	420	84	504
LV	Latvia	1.005		1.005
LT	Lithuania	1.017		1.017
LU	Luxembourg	508		508
HU	Hungary	1.020		1.020
MT	Malta	351	154	505
NL	Netherlands	1.023		1.023
AT	Austria	1.003		1.003
PL	Poland	1.020		1.020
PT	Portugal	1.031		1.031
RO	Romania	1.045		1.045
SI	Slovenia	1.007		1.007
SK	Slovakia	1.001		1.001
FI	Finland	717	299	1.016
SE	Sweden	742	295	1.037
	TOTAL EU27	25.268	1.153	26.421

CAPI : Computer-Assisted Personal interviewing
CAVI : Computer-Assisted Video interviewing

Response rates

For each country a comparison between the responding sample and the universe (i.e. the overall population in the country) is carried out. Weights are used to match the responding sample to the universe on gender by age, region and degree of urbanisation. For European estimates (i.e. EU average), an adjustment is made to the individual country weights, weighting them up or down to reflect their 15+ population as a proportion of the EU 15+ population.

The response rates are calculated by dividing the total number of complete interviews with the number of all the addresses visited, apart from ones that are not eligible but including those where eligibility is unknown. For wave 105.3 of the Eurobarometer survey, the response rates for the EU27 countries, calculated by Verian Belgium, are:

	COUNTRIES	CAPI RESPONSE RATES
BE	Belgium	58.8%
BG	Bulgaria	42.9%
CZ	Czechia	60.8%
DK	Denmark	56.2%
DE	Germany	32.6%
EE	Estonia	63.4%
IE	Ireland	59.0%
EL	Greece	37.9%
ES	Spain	36.8%
FR	France	38.6%
HR	Croatia	49.6%
IT	Italy	31.7%
CY	Rep. Of Cyprus	80.8%
LV	Latvia	65.7%
LT	Lithuania	43.9%
LU	Luxembourg	30.4%
HU	Hungary	60.5%
MT	Malta	82.2%
NL	Netherlands	94.5%
AT	Austria	46.5%
PL	Poland	50.2%
PT	Portugal	47.0%
RO	Romania	47.8%
SI	Slovenia	53.5%
SK	Slovakia	53.2%
FI	Finland	22.0%
SE	Sweden	83.0%

CAPI : Computer-Assisted Personal interviewing

Margins of error

Readers are reminded that survey results are estimations, the accuracy of which, everything being equal, rests upon the sample size and upon the observed percentage. With samples of about 1,000 interviews, the real percentages vary within the following confidence limits:

Statistical Margins due to the sampling process
(at the 95% level of confidence)

various sample sizes are in rows *various observed results are in columns*

	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	
	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	
N=50	6,0	8,3	9,9	11,1	12,0	12,7	13,2	13,6	13,8	13,9	N=50
N=500	1,9	2,6	3,1	3,5	3,8	4,0	4,2	4,3	4,4	4,4	N=500
N=1000	**1,4**	**1,9**	**2,2**	**2,5**	**2,7**	**2,8**	**3,0**	**3,0**	**3,1**	**3,1**	**N=1000**
N=1500	1,1	1,5	1,8	2,0	2,2	2,3	2,4	2,5	2,5	2,5	N=1500
N=2000	1,0	1,3	1,6	1,8	1,9	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,2	2,2	N=2000
N=3000	0,8	1,1	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,6	1,7	1,8	1,8	1,8	N=3000
N=4000	0,7	0,9	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	N=4000
N=5000	0,6	0,8	1,0	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,3	1,4	1,4	1,4	N=5000
N=6000	0,6	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,3	1,3	N=6000
N=7000	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,2	1,2	N=7000
N=7500	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	N=7500
N=8000	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	N=8000
N=9000	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	N=9000
N=10000	0,4	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	N=10000
N=11000	0,4	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	N=11000
N=12000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	N=12000
N=13000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	N=13000
N=14000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	N=14000
N=15000	0,3	0,5	0,6	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	N=15000
	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	
	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	

Europeans regard the European Union as a place of stability in a troubled world, according to the Spring 2026 Eurobarometer. They value its peaceful, protective and cooperative nature, and recognise the quality of life it enables. However, economic concerns, particularly regarding the cost of living, have increased over recent years, and the overall mood of citizens fluctuates between uncertainty and hope. The Eurobarometer shows many trends already present in past surveys. However, some indicators reflect the immediate reactions of Europeans to recent disruptions in the global political and economic climate.

The survey, carried out by Verian research agency between 9 April and 4 May 2026 in all 27 EU Member States, was conducted face-to-face, with video interviews (CAVI) used additionally in Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Malta, and Sweden. 26,421 interviews were conducted in total and EU results weighted according to the size of the population in each country.

For more information on the full survey, scan the QR-code:

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