



THE EU CITIZENS' AGENDA

Europeans have
their say

Analysis report - Public consultation 2012
«EU citizens - your rights, your future»

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the analysis of the contributions submitted to the European Commission's [public consultation on EU Citizenship](#), open from 9 May to 27 September 2012. It describes the profile of respondents and sets out the main trends in responses with respect to the themes addressed in the online questionnaire. Its main objectives are to give feedback to citizens and organisations on the overall results of the public consultation and to inform the Commission's policy work on EU citizenship.

As an EU citizen, which you are if you are a national of an EU country, you have [specific rights](#) under EU law, including:

- the right to move and reside freely within the EU;
- the right not to be discriminated against on the grounds of your nationality;
- the right to vote and stand as a candidate in municipal and European Parliament elections wherever you live in the EU;
- the right to be assisted by another EU country's embassy or consulate outside the EU, if your own country is not represented, under the same conditions as a citizen of that country;
- the right to petition the European Parliament and complain to the European Ombudsman; and
- the right to organise or support, together with other EU citizens, a citizens' initiative to call for new EU legislation.

To make sure that you can enjoy these rights in your daily life, wherever you are in the EU, the Commission adopted a first [EU Citizenship Report in 2010](#) that set out 25 concrete actions to remove obstacles encountered by EU citizens, notably in cross border situations. Progress is [visible](#) but efforts can still be made to make sure that each and every citizen can draw the full benefits that EU citizenship offers. The Commission will adopt a second EU Citizenship Report in 2013 with further proposals to reinforce EU citizenship and citizens' rights.

To prepare its next EU Citizenship Report the Commission launched a wide-reaching online public consultation, asking citizens and organisations about their experiences on the ground and their ideas on how to overcome hurdles encountered by citizens when travelling, studying, working, living, shopping or taking part in elections in Europe, whether as voters or candidates. The public consultation also aimed to offer a European public space where citizens and their organisations could have their say on the development of EU citizenship and the EU in general. This necessary debate with citizens will be pursued throughout the [European Year of Citizens](#), which also marks the 20th birthday of EU citizenship, enshrined in the EU Treaties since 1993.

The main facts and figures about the public consultation are as follows:

Fact	Figure
Total number of respondents	11.598
Number of individual respondents	11.340
Number of organisations	258
Total replies via E-mail	115
Replies via E-mail from individuals	72
Replies via E-mail from organisations	43
Most extensively answered question	Q25
Most common nationality among respondents	Polish
Total length of replies (A4 pages)	2.000+

These numbers suggest that many citizens are aware of the significance of the EU and its policies in their daily lives and demonstrate their willingness to take an active part in the European public debate.

This analysis summarises the opinions and views of the respondents that took part in the exercise and does not represent the general opinion of EU citizens. In addition to the public consultation, the European Commission has also organised meetings, conferences and seminars and launched Eurobarometer surveys and studies to ensure that a broad range of actors were able to express their views on EU citizenship and inform the consultation process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The online public consultation was completed by 11 598 respondents. Some 98 % responded as individuals (11 340 respondents) while 2 % responded on behalf of an organisation or association (214 respondents). In addition, the European Commission received 115 contributions via a dedicated e-mail account, one third of these on behalf of organisations active in the field of EU citizenship.

The vast majority of the individual respondents were EU citizens residing in the EU (94 %). Together, they reflect a broad mix of EU nationalities, age and gender. More than one third of the respondents answering as individuals were less than 30 years old (35 %).

Moving within the EU

Nearly nine in 10 respondents had used their right to move freely in the EU (87 %) notably for tourism, work, online shopping, studies, healthcare and retirement.

Almost half of the respondents have already resided, or are currently residing, in another EU country (48 %).

Almost one in five of those who had used their right to free movement had experienced problems related to moving or residing in another Member State (17 %), often due to lengthy or unclear administrative procedures and/or lack of knowledge of EU rights among local staff.

The experience of having faced problems was even more common among respondents who had resided (or were residing) in another EU country: more than one in four of these respondents had experienced problems. Almost one in five indicated that they had encountered difficulties in administrative procedures when applying for residence documents (19 %) and/or that they had experienced discrimination on grounds of nationality (19 %).

The respondents expressed positive views about nationals from other EU countries coming to their own country: a majority associated this with cultural diversity (70 %), a different perspective (56 %), helping to create an EU identity (55 %) and fostering mutual understanding (54 %).

Citizens as individuals

A total of 2 % of the respondents had experienced problems related to child custody in another EU country, often due to the fact that the parents had different nationalities, which led to problems in determining what national rules applied. Another problem concerned the fact that some Member States do not recognise certain statuses, such as the legal status of same sex partners.

A majority of the respondents supported the idea of giving children and vulnerable adults protection (safeguards to ensure a fair trial) that must apply in all Member States (73 %).

A majority of the respondents considered that persons who have been victims of crime somewhere in the EU should have access to financial compensation for the harm suffered from the state or the offender (71 %) no matter where they live.

Citizens as consumers

Almost a quarter of the respondents experienced problems when trying to shop online from another Member State (24 %). Examples put forward by the respondents include the unwillingness of companies to ship to certain Member States and accept foreign bank cards, or difficulties in making use of warranties due to the costs involved.

One in 10 had experienced problems when opening a bank account in another Member State (13 %), as banks required documentation and safeguards that were difficult and sometimes even impossible to provide for newly arrived citizens.

Citizens as students and professionals

Almost one in three respondents had previously studied or was currently studying in another Member State (31 %). Some highlighted issues with the recognition of their periods of study abroad.

A significant proportion of the respondents had looked for a job in another EU country (40 %). Almost one in four (24 %) of these respondents indicated that they had experienced difficulties when trying to find work in the public sector in another EU country, sometimes because they did not have the nationality of the EU country in question or because they had not been living there long enough. Some respondents highlighted a lack of information and opaque procedures for recruitment.

Citizens as political actors

For most respondents, the most important way of expressing their opinions in EU affairs is through participation in the European Parliament elections in their own country (66 %).

Over half of the respondents considered that a political programme for improving the daily life of EU citizens or to strengthen the EU economy would motivate them to vote in the European elections (58 % and 52 % respectively). Almost half would feel motivated by a programme for overcoming social disparities in the EU and a programme to give the EU a stronger voice at international level (47 % and 46 % respectively). A majority thought they should be granted the right to vote in national elections in their country of residence (72 %).

Awareness of sources of information on EU rights

As for preferences on how to receive the information they need on EU rights, more than half of the respondents selected TV (52 %) and just under half selected social networking websites (49 %). Some 34 % favoured the idea of introducing an online discussion forum ('Europedia') for sharing experience and discussing EU rights with other people.

As for additional tools to help EU citizens take advantage of their EU rights and solve problems they might encounter, more than six in 10 respondents welcomed the idea of an online tool that would allow them to easily understand whether a problem can best be solved at local, national or European level (63 %). Half of the respondents favoured a strengthened national contact point that can help citizens when they arrive in a new EU country (50 %).

Defining EU citizenship and envisaging the future of the EU

A majority of the respondents associated EU citizenship with a sense of belonging to the EU (67 %). Many also made associations with common values and common history (51 %), additional rights (43 %) and participation in community/civic life (40 %).

On the more general question of the development of the EU, the main themes addressed included the advancement of political and economic integration, fostering the development of a Social Union with common social policies in place, the fight against discrimination and inequalities, as well as building a prosperous union.

Many of the organisations stressed the importance of EU citizenship and the need to increase awareness and enforcement of specific rights.

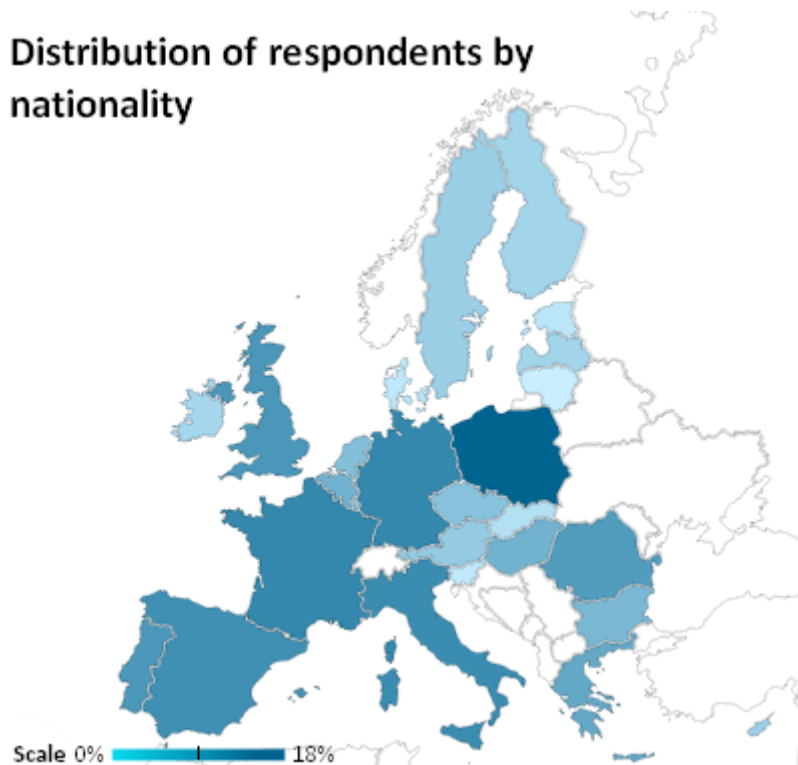
1 Profile of respondents

The online questionnaire was completed by 11 598 respondents. Some 98 % responded as individuals (11 340 respondents) while 2 % responded on behalf of an organisation or association (258 respondents). The Commission also received 115 contributions via a dedicated e-mail account, one third of these from organisations active in the field of EU citizenship.

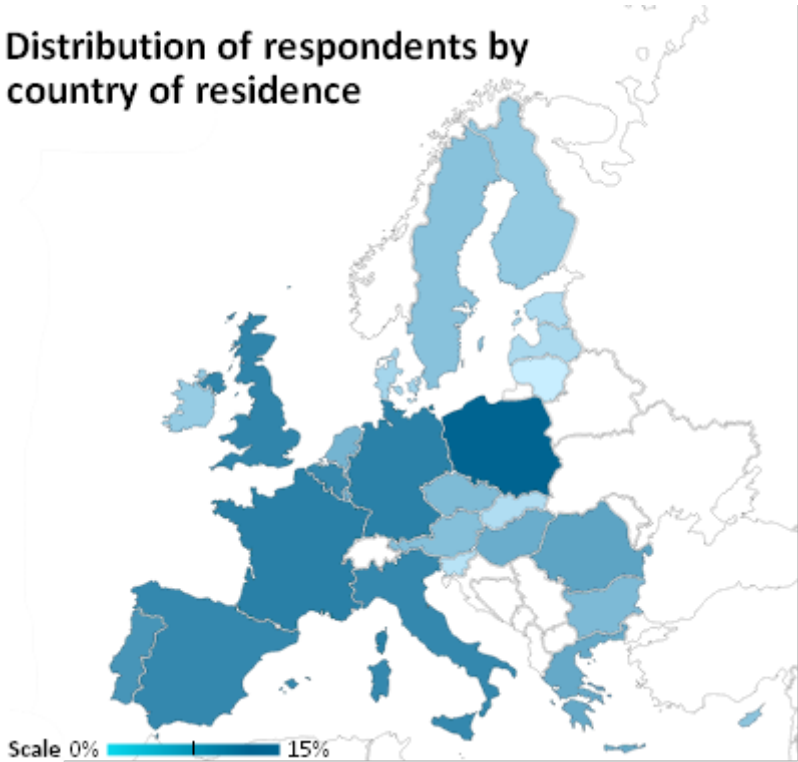
		%	Base
Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or as an individual?	Organisation	2%	258
	Individual	98%	11 340

Profile of individual respondents

All EU nationalities were represented and all official EU languages were used. The **most common nationality among the respondents was Polish** (18 %), followed by French, Italian and German (8 % respectively). The least common nationalities were Lithuanian (0.4 %) and Slovenian (0.5 %).



The statistics regarding country of residence were very similar. The **most common country of residence was Poland (15 %)**, followed by France and Germany (8 % respectively). The least common country of residence was Lithuania (0.3 %), followed by Slovenia (0.5 %) and Slovakia and Estonia (both 0.6 %).



The consultation also gathered interest from **EU citizens residing outside the EU (149)** and **non-EU citizens (154)** living either in the EU (93, most often in the United Kingdom, Belgium or Spain) or outside the EU (61). More than half of the respondents were men (61 %) while 35 % were women. A small minority (4 %) did not specify their gender.

Respondents of all ages participated. The majority of the respondents were aged between 18 and 65 (90 %), while only 5 % were aged under 18 or over 65 (1 % and 4 % respectively). A small minority (5 %) did not indicate their age. **Slightly more than one third of respondents were aged 18-30** and a similar proportion were aged 31-45 (34 % and 33 % respectively). Slightly less than a quarter of respondents were aged 46-65.

		%	Base
What is your gender?	Women	35%	4 020
	Men	61%	6 867
		% <td style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white;">Base</td>	Base
What is your age group?	Less than 18 years old	1%	155
	18-30 years old	34%	3 851
	31-45 years old	33%	3 726
	46-65 years old	23%	2 593
	Over 65 years old	4%	488

Profile of organisations

The public consultation also attracted interest from a **broad range of organisations**, including local, regional, national and international civil society organisations active in the field of EU citizenship. A total of 258 organisations completed the online questionnaire, and 43 organisations sent their contributions separately via the dedicated mailbox. Some organisations represent specific categories of EU citizens such as workers, students, youth or disabled persons. A number of organisations made joint contributions on behalf of their local or national member associations, voicing the concerns and ideas of a larger constituency.

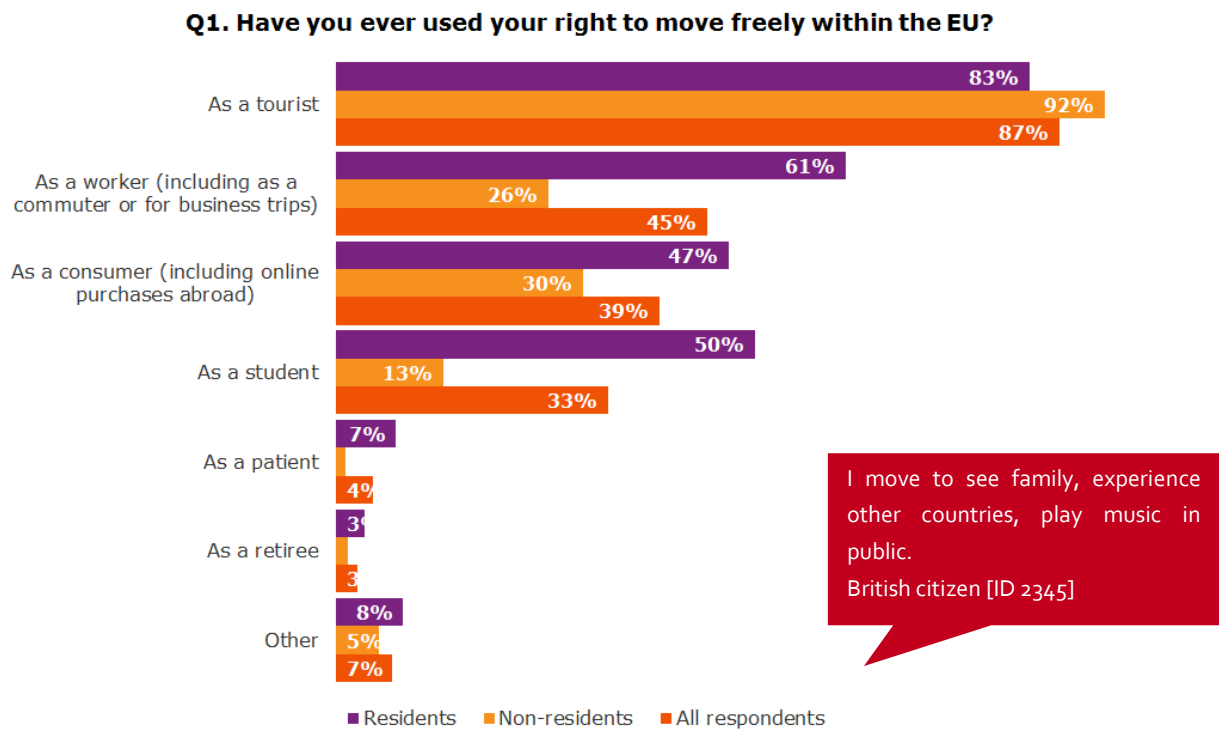
Profile of respondents who contributed via the dedicated mailbox

A total of 115 contributions were sent to the **dedicated mailbox**, which allowed citizens and organisations to voice their concerns and ideas without using the online questionnaire. Over 160 pages were sent to the European Commission. A total of 43 contributions were made by organisations and 82 by individuals. Some of the contributions were made by individual academics active in European Law, European Studies and similar disciplines. Certain contributions addressed specific subjects raised in the online questionnaire while others addressed more general issues and discussed the way forward for the Union.

2 EU citizenship – The right to free movement

2.1 Experience of moving within the EU (Q1)

Nearly nine in 10 respondents have used their right to move freely within the EU (87%). Most of those who travelled within the EU did so as tourists (87%) and/or workers (45%). More than one third of these respondents used their right to move freely as consumers (39%) and/or students (33%). Some also travelled in the EU as patients (4%) or retirees (3%).



The above graph shows that most respondents have used their right to move freely across an EU border for short-term purposes, notably for holidays. Other reasons given are as follows:

- Seeking a job abroad
- Commuting to a workplace in a nearby EU country
- Going on a business-trip or travelling as a natural part of their job
- Military service
- Family visits and love/relationships
- Study-related stays or conferences
- Shopping

*I have attended various seminars, conferences, meetings, study visits as a freelancer or a representative of non-governmental organisations.
Romanian citizen [ID12432]*

*I now live in Vienna but I used to lecture in Universities and in private and public institutions in Germany, Hungary, Slovakia .. I also travel to get to know other Member States better.
Spanish citizen [ID 9045]*

Clear patterns could be observed between the different age groups:

- A majority of younger respondents aged 18-30 and 31-45 use the right to move freely within the EU (91 % and 90 % respectively)
- Younger respondents (18-30) mostly give motives such as volunteering, working, studying, internships, etc.
- Older respondents aged 46-65 and over 65 travel within the EU less often than younger respondents (83 % and 80 % respectively)
- Older respondents are also more likely to travel for family or property-related reasons




























Q1. Have you ever used your right to move freely within the EU?

	Yes	No
Total	87%	13%
Age		
Less than 18 years old	78%	22%
18 - 30 years old	91%	9%
31 - 45 years old	90%	10%
46 - 65 years old	83%	17%
Over 65 years	80%	20%

Base: All respondents (11 598)

The high level of respondents who have used their right to move freely is reflected among **all EU nationalities**. Belgian, Danish and French respondents account for the highest levels. In contrast, almost a third of Austrian and Czech respondents said that they had never made use of their right to travel within the EU (32 %).

Q1. Have you ever used your right to move freely within the EU?

	Yes	No
All respondents	87%	13%
 BE	97%	3%
 BG	79%	21%
 CZ	68%	32%
 DK	97%	3%
 DE	71%	29%
 EE	88%	12%
 IE	92%	8%
 EL	93%	7%
 ES	96%	4%
 FR	97%	3%
 IT	94%	6%
 CY	96%	4%
 LV	92%	8%
 LT	91%	9%
 LU	82%	18%
 HU	83%	17%
 MT	89%	11%
 NL	93%	7%
 AT	68%	32%
 PL	89%	11%
 PT	94%	6%
 RO	89%	11%
 SI	96%	4%
 SK	91%	9%
 FI	90%	10%
 SE	88%	12%
 UK	77%	23%

Highest percentage per country	Lowest percentage per country
Highest percentage per item	Lowest percentage per item

Base: Respondents who used the right to move freely in the EU (10 143)

Respondents who had used their right to move freely were asked how often they travel across a border between two EU countries. **Half reported moving within the EU several times a year.** Less than one in five (19 %) only travel to another Member State once a year and an even smaller percentage do so rarely (14 %). A total of 3 % indicated they move from one EU country to another on a weekly basis and 1 % on a daily basis.

There are **wide variations between nationalities** when it comes to the frequency of travelling to another EU country. Luxembourgish respondents are much more likely to travel at least once a month than any other EU nationals (54 %). They are followed at some distance by Poles and Austrians (both 34 %) and Slovaks (30 %).

Q1b. How often do you travel across a border between two EU countries?

		Once a year or less often	Several times a year	At least once a month	No answer
	All respondents	32%	50%	14%	4%
	BE	11%	61%	25%	3%
	BG	47%	47%	3%	3%
	CZ	15%	68%	14%	3%
	DK	18%	57%	25%	0%
	DE	15%	58%	25%	2%
	EE	41%	50%	9%	0%
	IE	23%	54%	18%	5%
	EL	43%	48%	8%	1%
	ES	49%	41%	7%	3%
	FR	31%	50%	17%	2%
	IT	40%	48%	10%	2%
	CY	33%	59%	5%	3%
	LV	22%	59%	16%	3%
	LT	22%	56%	22%	0%
	LU	2%	42%	54%	2%
	HU	27%	39%	8%	26%
	MT	54%	40%	5%	1%
	NL	13%	50%	34%	3%
	AT	5%	60%	34%	1%
	PL	39%	49%	8%	4%
	PT	45%	48%	6%	1%
	RO	37%	52%	8%	3%
	SI	9%	63%	24%	4%
	SK	11%	56%	30%	3%
	FI	34%	51%	12%	3%
	SE	24%	54%	22%	0%
	UK	31%	52%	14%	3%

Highest percentage per country	<i>Lowest percentage per country</i>
Highest percentage per item	Lowest percentage per item

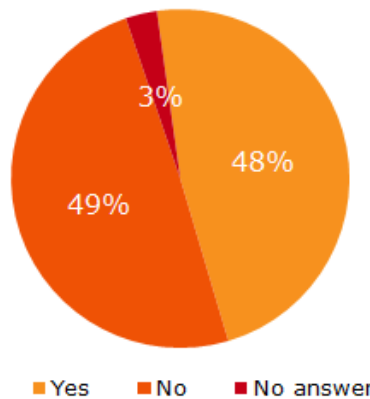
Base: Respondents who used the right to move freely in the EU (10 143)

2.2 Experience of living in another EU country (Q2)

Almost half of the respondents (48 %) indicated that they had resided in an EU country other than the one of which they are a national, while almost the same percentage had never done so (49 %).

Over a third (38%) of those who said they had resided in another EU country were actually living outside their country of origin when filing in the questionnaire.

Q2. Have you ever resided in an EU country other than the one of which you are a national?



I liked to move around and get the experience of working in different countries

Danish citizen [ID 4949]

First and foremost I feel European more than German. I feel an inner urge and curiosity to know about and understand our neighbours. I am in favour of a European passport and the United States of Europe. This would mean to have the same rights all over Europe.

German citizen [ID 5644]

Base: All respondents (11 598)

Q2. Have you ever resided in an EU country other than the one of which you are a national?

	Yes	No	No answer
Total	48%	49%	3%
Gender			
Men	44%	54%	2%
Women	55%	43%	2%
Age			
Less than 18 years old	15%	82%	3%
18 - 30 years old	54%	44%	2%
31 - 45 years old	51%	48%	1%
46 - 65 years old	38%	59%	3%
Over 65 years	48%	50%	2%

Among the respondents who had resided in another EU country, 55 % were women and 44 % men. The experience of having lived in another EU country was most common among respondents aged 18-45.

Base: All respondents (11 598)

The most common reasons for living abroad were as follows:

- **Work** (59 %)
- Study (51 %)
- Family reasons (20 %)
- Studying in another EU country was most often mentioned among women and the younger age group
- Work was most often mentioned by the older age groups

Studying elsewhere in the EU was more common among women (61 %) than men (44 %) and among young people (73 % for the 18-30 age group). Work was most often mentioned by those aged 31-45 and 46-65 (69 % and 64 % respectively).




























Desire to live in another country, experience alternative lifestyles, cultures and environments.
UK citizen [ID 976]

Most of the respondents who had resided in another EU country had done so for less than a year (39 %). One third of the respondents had done so for more than a year (33 %). Smaller proportions had lived outside their country for over five years (17 %) and over 10 years (14 %). There was almost no difference between man and women but clear differences related to age. Respondents below the age of 30 are more likely to have lived outside their country for less than a year, whereas respondents over 30 tend to have stayed abroad for longer periods.

Economic motives drove me to move, but there was also a genuine desire to experience other countries and the European ideals.
UK citizen [ID 5558]

One in three of all respondents had lived outside the country of which they are a national more than once (32 %). Answers across the EU countries are consistent when it comes to the number of times participants have lived outside their country. However, more French, Latvian and Slovak respondents say that they have lived in another Member State on more than one occasion (39 %, 34 % and 32 % respectively).

Q2c. Have you ever resided in an EU country other than the one of which you are a national?: Did you reside outside the EU country of which you are a national more than once?

	Yes	No	No answer
All respondents	32%	51%	17%
 BE	25%	36%	39%
 BG	25%	34%	41%
 CZ	25%	35%	40%
 DK	29%	30%	41%
 DE	24%	34%	42%
 EE	21%	48%	31%
 IE	27%	30%	43%
 EL	27%	29%	44%
 ES	21%	44%	35%
 FR	39%	16%	45%
 IT	21%	44%	35%
 CY	29%	32%	39%
 LV	34%	27%	39%
 LT	26%	35%	39%
 LU	19%	38%	43%
 HU	13%	41%	46%
 MT	13%	63%	24%
 NL	19%	45%	36%
 AT	26%	31%	43%
 PL	15%	51%	34%
 PT	17%	56%	27%
 RO	25%	35%	40%
 SI	21%	44%	35%
 SK	32%	31%	37%
 FI	23%	39%	38%
 SE	25%	38%	37%
 UK	25%	35%	40%
Highest percentage per country	<i>Lowest percentage per country</i>		
Highest percentage per item	Lowest percentage per item		

Base: All respondents (11 598)

2.3 Problems encountered while moving and residing within the EU (Q3)

Respondents who had used their right to move freely in the EU were asked if they had faced problems. Almost one in five respondents (17 %) said that they did.

Main problems reported were:

- Lengthy or unclear administrative procedures (62 %)
- Staff in local administrations unaware of their EU rights (47 %).
- Citizens themselves did not know enough about their EU rights (19 %)

Authorities are generally unaware of EU & associated national law, even years after they are implemented. Portuguese citizen [ID 4483]

In some municipalities, the process is very long to get the final document. The whole process is too long, and it should be shortened, especially for EU citizens. Italian citizen [ID 7421]

I am in the process of registering in another EU country where I am required to submit a birth certificate with a note of my marriage. Such a document is not issued in my country. Austrian citizen [ID 4321]

More problems were reported by respondents who had resided (or were currently residing) in another EU country: more than one in four had experienced problems (27 %).

66 % reported that lengthy or unclear administrative procedures was a problem and 49 % found that staff in local administrations were unaware of their EU rights.

Almost one in five of respondents that resided (or had resided) in another EU country had encountered difficulties in administrative procedures when applying for residence documents (19 %), often due to unclear information about what information to provide or burdensome requirements (e.g. translation of documents).

Information provided by the country of residence and the country of nationality is often ambiguous and it is difficult to judge who is right; when it comes to pension, social security, tax issues etc. it is highly complex and hardly possible to understand without professional support. Austrian citizen [ID 3085]

To move my social security rights, fortunately I was aware of the EU legislation and used SOLVIT, and the people involved managed to solve my problem. Portuguese citizen [ID 4740]

Q3. Have you ever faced problems while moving and residing within the European Union:Q3a. Were the problems due to one of the following reasons?



Base: Respondents who faced problems while moving or residing in another EU country (1 773)

Organisations active in the field of citizenship reported that common problems faced by citizens who sought their assistance were discrimination from public authorities and lack of respect for the rights of their third-country national family members. Regular and lengthy delays were reported for obtaining residence documents.

One organisation referred to a situation where a Romanian client who sought its assistance had been refused a housing benefit from the Member State in which she was residing, as the local authority claimed that she was not a citizen of the Union. When the organisation informed the local authority that Romania was in the EU and that the client was entitled to the benefit, it was granted to her.

Some organisations also pointed to insufficient assistance to European citizens in their host EU country when seeking to live there.

Other examples of **problems encountered** were as follows:

- Achieving a new civil status (marriage, divorce, registering new born) was hindered by complicated bureaucratic procedures including costly translations which were vastly different to the procedures used by other EU countries
- Having their name (or the name of their children) recognised
- Being asked for documents that are not issued in the EU country of origin
- Difficulties with the recognition of diplomas
- Obscure protocols and lack of information about the possible solutions or sources of information

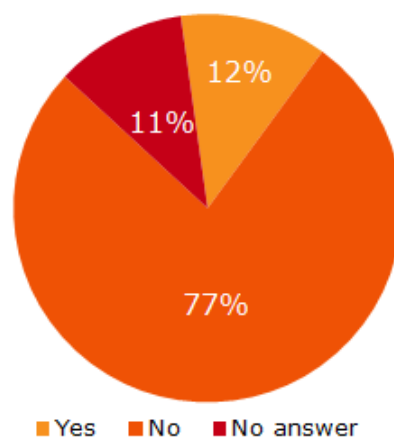
Concrete proposals put forward were as follows:

- Encouraging unified formats for issuing European documents in any of the official languages between the Member States
- Facilitating recognition and registration of civil status
- A common EU identity card
- Better assistance to citizens in city of arrival
- Training for staff in local administrations
- Online tool to exchange best practices with fellow citizens
- Better information as to whom to address/complain to when a problem arises

2.4 Experience of discrimination on grounds of nationality in another EU country (Q4)

Respondents who used their right to move and reside freely in the EU were asked if they had experienced discrimination because of their nationality. Only a small minority reported they had (12 %), while more than three-quarters (77 %) said they had not.

Q4. Have you been discriminated against in an EU country other than the one of which you are a national because of your nationality (for example, scholarships, double taxation, etc.)?



It is unfair not to have access to certain employment benefits enjoyed by nationals of the country of residence.
Polish citizen [ID 2016]

Base: Respondents who had used the right to move freely in the EU (10 143)

Only a small minority of respondents moving for short periods say they have suffered discrimination on the grounds of nationality (5 %) while almost **one in five of those who had resided in another EU country reported that they had been discriminated** against on these grounds (19 %).

I was denied scholarship during the study, because my parents were not taxpayers in the respective country.
Bulgarian citizen ID 6061

Double taxation is a reality, particularly for individuals living abroad.
Organisation [ID 002]

While on ERASMUS, housing was allocated according to nationality. [...] Also a lot of the administrative information concerning the organization (room changes, procedures etc.) was only made available to national students at University.

German citizen [ID 5192]

The qualitative analysis reveals that problems are often linked to double taxation, differentiation between home and foreign students when placing people in accommodation, unequal access to funding and scholarships for locals and foreigners.

Sometimes, EU citizens from other EU countries were told that because they were not nationals of the Member State, they were not entitled to benefits, no matter how long they had stayed in that Member State and no matter what they were doing there.
Organisation [ID 001]

I cannot access scholarship because I am not a national, in my country I cannot apply for scholarships (only some) because I am not studying in my country or because the difference between the tuition fee covered by the scholarship and the tuition fee in reality is too high due to the differences in the academic systems.
German citizen [ID 2575]

2.5 The impact of free movement of EU citizens (Q5)



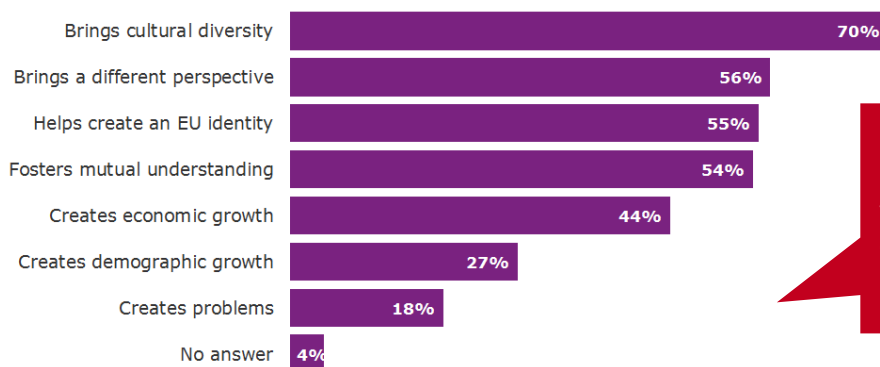
New people with possibly different opportunities and ideas about how to make better conditions for living.
Slovakian citizen [ID 10994]

Diversity is the basis of the EU. If you don't allow diversity the EU won't grow, because our EU identity depends on our freedom to be different from one another.

Portuguese citizen [ID 12389]

Respondents were generally positive regarding the impact of EU citizens moving to their home countries. Many associated this with cultural diversity (70 %), a different perspective (56 %), helping to create an EU identity (55 %), fostering mutual understanding (54 %) and creating economic growth (44 %). This was followed at some distance by demographic growth (27 %). Less than one in five said that it created problems (18 %).

Q5. Do you think that nationals of other EU countries moving to your home country:



Freedom of movement is an intrinsic part of the EU. It is a very good way to create a common EU identity.

Romanian citizen [ID 2785]

Base: All respondents (11 598)

It's not all rosy obviously - there will be difficulties arising from the free movements of nationals - sharing of limited resources; worse access to social/health services; language barriers etc.

Maltese citizen [ID 7489]

Mobility of EU citizens can bring to the labour market experience, knowledge and abilities that can help businesses to achieve more.

Cypriot citizen [ID 12363]

There were no significant variations related to gender or age.

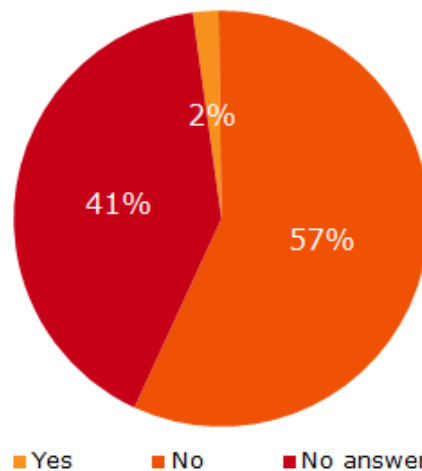
Respondents who considered that EU newcomers help create an EU identity offered a number of examples such as the creation of a basic **understanding** between different cultures. Some suggested that the mobility of EU citizens helps to **resolve inequalities** in the labour forces between Member States, and brings **new skills** and **new investment** opportunities. Among those who expressed concerns, sharing limited resources such as education and healthcare were among the main problems highlighted.

3 EU citizenship – Citizens as private individuals

3.1 Problems with child custody in another EU country (Q14)

A total of 2 % of the respondents reported that they had experienced problems related to child custody in another EU country. A majority had never faced such problems (58 %). A significant minority gave no answer (41 %).

Q14. Have you ever had problems with child custody in another EU country?



Currently a huge issue in my personal life where German, Dutch and Spanish laws conflict and it's not clear who can and will decide on custody.
Dutch citizen [ID 3161]

Base: All respondents (11 598)

The open responses suggest that the existence of different child custody regulations across the EU may lead to **complex situations** that are difficult to resolve. Examples include situations where parents have different nationalities or relationships with statuses that are not recognised in other EU countries, such as the legal status of same sex partners.

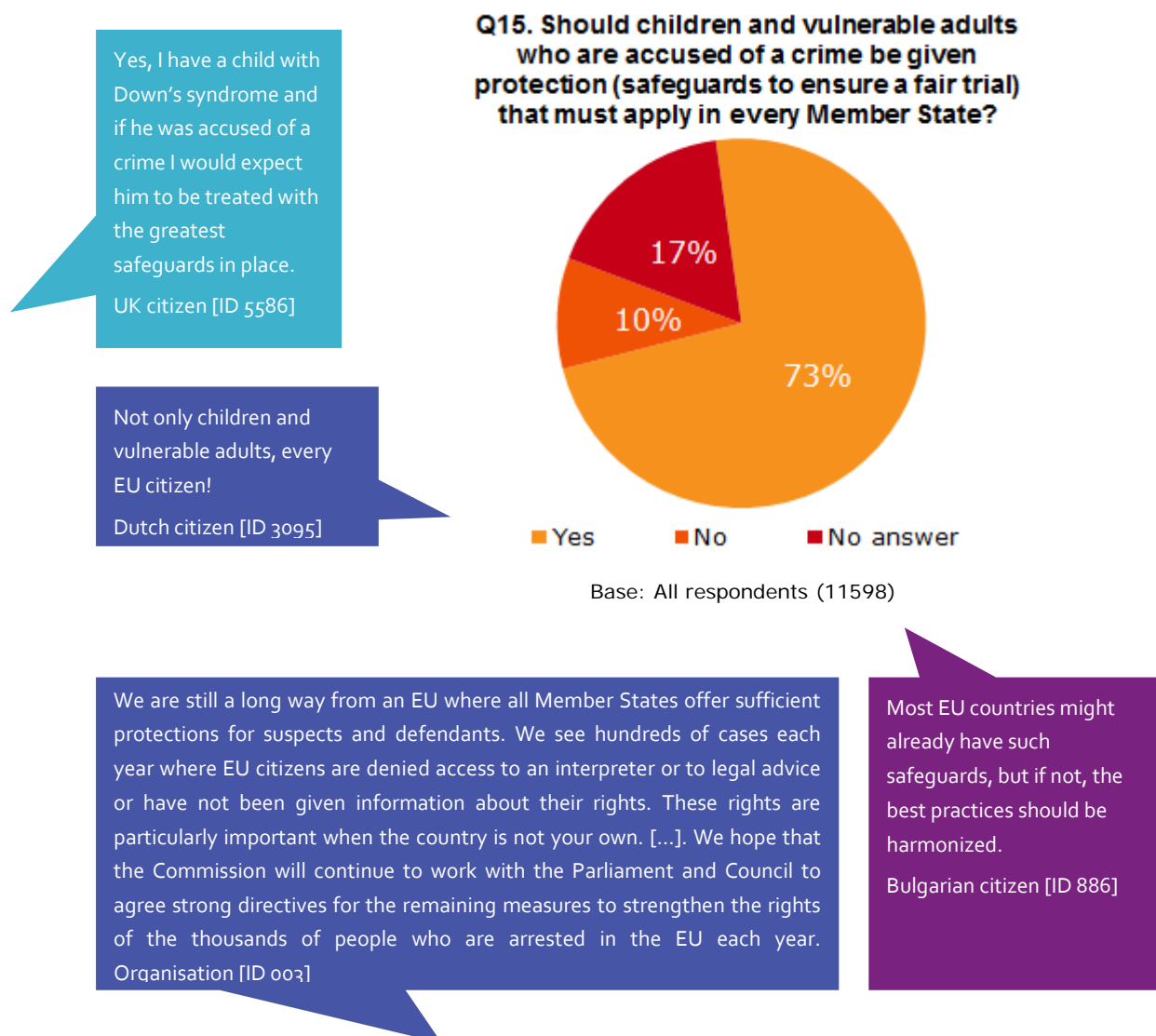
We have a son and birth registration in our host country was simple, but registration in our home countries is a mess. They won't accept forms older than 3 months... they should explain to us, how can we achieve after the birth to travel to Spain and Czech Republic with a newborn child and perform all the formalities and get the papers signed by the authorities in a 3-month time period... this is absurd!
Spanish citizen [ID 7234]

In the case of international couples it is very difficult to come to an agreement due to distance, linguistic difficulties, who enforces the agreement, etc.
French citizen [ID 7047]

I'm divorced and I have three marvellous kids, but there is no common rule for shared custody. It is terrible. Also in this case we need urgently a European regulation to harmonize this matter between the citizens of the different European countries and to establish the shared custody of children as the general rule. Italian citizen [ID 7494]

3.2 Fair trial of citizens accused of a crime in the EU (Q15)

All respondents were asked whether **children and vulnerable adults who are accused of a crime should be given protection** (safeguards to ensure a fair trial) that must apply in every Member State. A majority of respondents supported this idea, while 10 % expressed a negative opinion.



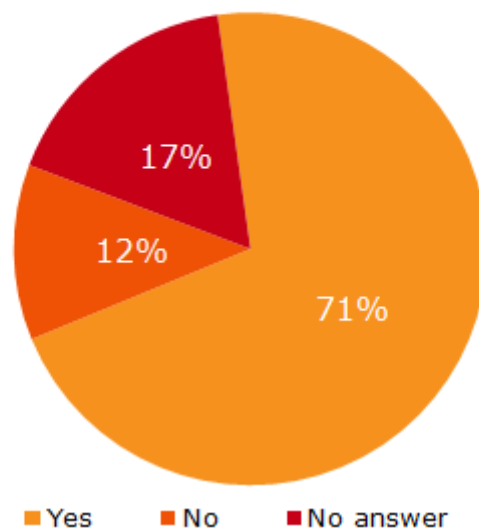
There was no significant variation in opinion related to gender, age or nationality.

Most respondents who did not consider that children and vulnerable adults should have special protection argued that all individuals should be treated equally and that rights and protection should be available to all and not just to a certain group. Some respondents emphasised that states should be sovereign in deciding on this matter.

3.3 Financial compensation to victims of crime in the EU (Q16)

A large majority of the respondents (71 %) considered that if they were victim of a crime in the EU, they should have **access to financial compensation for any harm suffered from the state or the offender**. A small percentage did not support this idea (12 %).

Q16. If you have been/were the victim of a crime somewhere in the EU, do you think you should have access to financial compensation for the harm suffered from the state or the offender, no matter where you live?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

Yes, all victims should be compensated for damage suffered regardless of where and who carried out the crime.

Portuguese citizen [ID 1344]

Compensation for victims is important, particularly when the offender has not been caught (often the only way to achieve any sense of justice). It may also incentivize countries to have more effective enforcement and prevention policies.

UK citizen [ID 2734]

Compensation should be given by a country where the crime happened (nationality of offender is irrelevant).




























Polish citizen [ID 3012]

People should make their own insurance provisions for the 'normal' type of offences whether at home or in another EU country.

UK citizen [ID 7036]

The Austrian, Portuguese and Maltese respondents were most likely to support access to financial compensation where a citizen has been the victim of a crime somewhere in the EU (85 %, 83 % and 83 % respectively). The British, Estonian and French nationals less often gave their support (63 %, 64 % and 64 % respectively).

Q16. If you have been/were the victim of a crime somewhere in the EU, do you think you should have access to financial compensation for the harm suffered from the state or the offender, no matter where you live?

		Yes	No	No answer
All respondents		70%	12%	18%
	BE	73%	13%	14%
	BG	80%	10%	10%
	CZ	74%	14%	12%
	DK	69%	17%	14%
	DE	78%	10%	12%
	EE	64%	22%	14%
	IE	74%	15%	11%
	EL	74%	10%	16%
	ES	78%	8%	14%
	FR	64%	13%	23%
	IT	66%	8%	26%
	CY	79%	7%	14%
	LV	67%	15%	18%
	LT	80%	13%	7%
	LU	78%	14%	8%
	HU	71%	17%	12%
	MT	83%	2%	15%
	NL	68%	20%	12%
	AT	85%	6%	9%
	PL	67%	13%	20%
	PT	83%	8%	9%
	RO	72%	15%	13%
	SI	80%	9%	11%
	SK	78%	10%	12%
	FI	69%	10%	21%
	SE	79%	10%	11%
	UK	63%	21%	16%

Highest percentage per country	<i>Lowest percentage per country</i>
Highest percentage per item	Lowest percentage per item

Base: All respondents (11 598)

There was no variation in opinion related to gender or age.

Most respondents highlighted the importance of **equal treatment of victims** in every Member State but did not discuss exactly how this should be implemented.

I think that all EU citizens must be treated equally in every EU member country.
Greek citizen [ID 1802]

The rule of law should be equally applied to all EU citizens, no matter your nationality or where you are.
Spanish citizen [ID 6719]

Although many respondents agree that there should be a form of compensation for victims, opinions however diverged as to whether or not this should be the responsibility of the state. For some respondents, compensation from the state could be a way of encouraging them to ensure that crime is properly addressed. Others argued that compensation should come from the offender or, for minor offences, from personal insurance.

I was the victim, but believe that compensation should be paid by the offender, the state where the criminal comes from has no responsibility for his actions.
Romanian citizen [ID 1122]

4 EU citizenship – Citizens as consumers

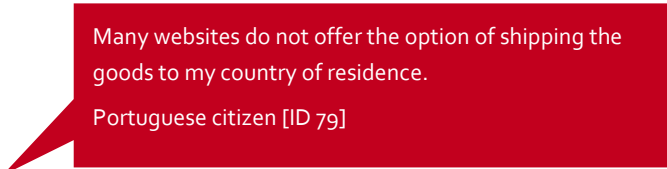
4.1 Problems encountered when buying online in another EU country (Q11)

Almost one in four respondents (24 %) reported problems when buying online in another EU country.

Almost one in three (29 %) respondents aged between 31 and 45 say that they have encountered problems when buying online from another EU country, compared to 24 % of those aged 18-30.

Respondents who had resided in another EU country were more likely to have encountered problems (31 %) than respondents who never resided in another EU country (18 %).

The main problem highlighted among all respondents was shipping to other EU countries, which is either unavailable or too expensive.

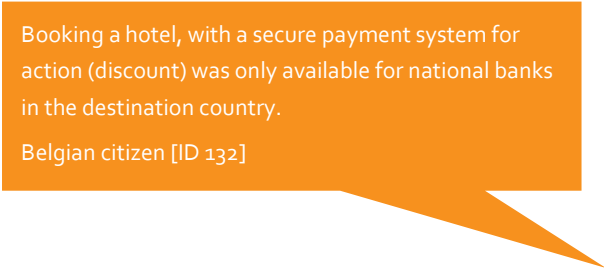


Many websites do not offer the option of shipping the goods to my country of residence.

Portuguese citizen [ID 79]

Another common problem was the acceptance of **foreign bank or credit cards**. Some respondents also reported **web pages** that required introducing a phone number or a postal address that followed the national system, thus making it impossible for citizens residing outside that country to fill in the necessary information.

The differences in Member States' **taxation systems** can cause problems for respondents shopping in other states, especially in a business context. Respondents also worry about the **warranty on goods** when shopping online – being entitled to a warranty is not the same as actually being able to make use of it. Some respondents had experienced unreasonable costs related to making use of a warranty, which discouraged them from doing so.



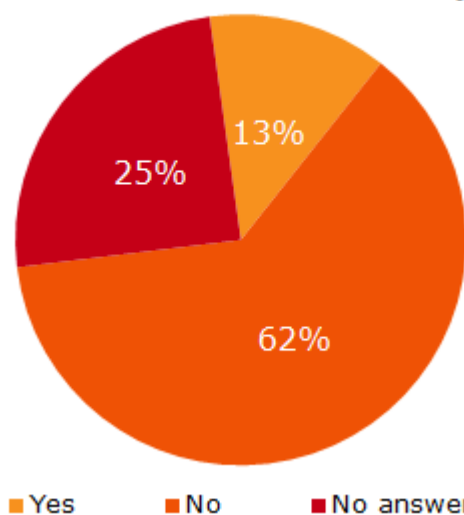
Booking a hotel, with a secure payment system for action (discount) was only available for national banks in the destination country.

Belgian citizen [ID 132]

4.2 Problems encountered when opening a bank account in another EU country (Q12)

More than one in 10 of all respondents reported having had problems when opening a bank account in another EU country (13%). A majority never had this problem.

Q12. Have you ever had problems opening a bank account in another EU country?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

The experience of having faced problems was more common among respondents who had resided in another EU country (more than one in five – 22%). There was no significant variation in opinion related to gender or age.

Only one bank allowed me to open a bank account; others ask me for longer terms residence.

Portuguese citizen [ID 1127]

Respondents indicated that certain banks required potential customers to reside in the country for a certain period of time period and/or have a credit history. The requirement to reside in the country was considered to be particularly problematic among respondents who needed a bank account to buy or manage property abroad and who therefore did not have any interest in registering to become permanent residents in these countries.

As a student the administrative procedure was nearly impossible to fulfill.

German citizen [ID 1523]

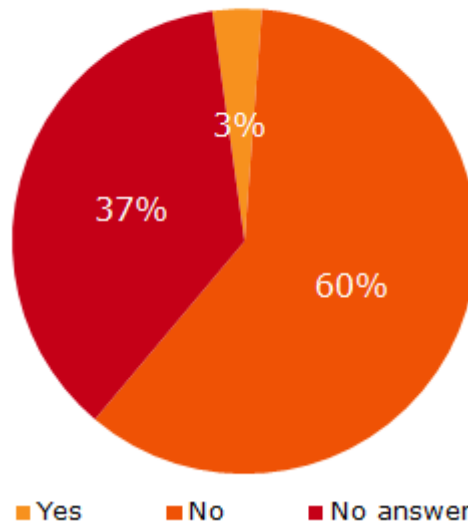
When you have job it is okay, when you don't it's a bit more problematic. It shouldn't be, any citizen should have the right to a bank account.

Greek citizen [ID 898]

4.3 Problems encountered when buying property in another EU country (Q13)

All respondents were asked if they had problems when buying property in another EU country. The majority of respondents had not encountered problems when trying to buy property in another EU country (60 %) and a significant number of participants gave no answer (37 %); a small minority of all respondents confirmed that they had faced obstacles buying a property (3 %).

Q13. Have you ever had problems buying property in another EU country?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

There was no significant variation in opinion related to age or gender or the experience of having resided abroad. As already mentioned in chapter 2.1, older respondents aged 46-65 or over 65 were more likely to move within the EU for family or property-related reasons than respondents falling in the other age categories. These respondents were correspondingly more likely to face difficulties when buying property (5 % and 6 % respectively compared to the average of 3 %).

A number of respondents described having been discriminated against on grounds of nationality when trying to buy property in another EU country, notably in the Mediterranean and Eastern European countries.

Other recurrent problems were:

- the difficulty to obtain a mortgage in the EU country where the property is located when not working and residing there. Banks often refused to recognise income and other benefits paid in another Member State
- problems obtaining a mortgage in their own country to buy property in another EU country
- lengthy procedures, unclear requirements and communication problems due to different languages

It is a problem not being familiar with the local country's procedures and finding information on it. [...]. Notaries in some countries, not in others, types of fees, taxes, mysterious forms to sign, etc.
Swedish citizen [ID 7923]

Banks do not recognize the history of income from other countries, do not accept property in other countries as surety, do not give loans to purchase real estate in other countries.
Polish citizen [ID 3522]

Concrete proposals put forward were as follows:

- Better information and protection for online-consumers
- Improved delivery services throughout the EU when buying online from another EU country
- Making it easier to obtain redress, such as by raising threshold for the European Small Claims Procedure
- The possibility to use any EU bank or credit card for online shopping in the EU

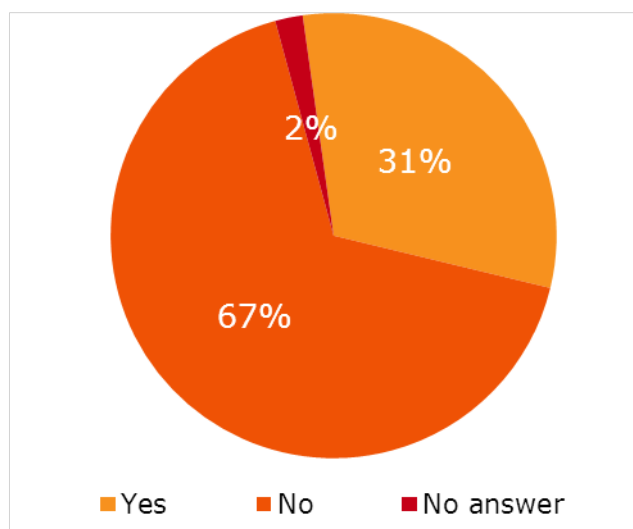
5 EU citizenship – Citizens as students and professionals

5.1 Studying in another EU country

5.1.1 Experience of studying in another EU country (Q6)

Almost one in three respondents had previously studied in another EU country or were currently doing so (31 %).

Q6. Have you studied or are you currently studying in another EU country?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

Among the respondents who said they had studied or were studying in another EU country, 40 % were women while 25 % were men. **Almost half of the young respondents (aged 18-30) mentioned experience of study abroad.**

Base: All respondents (11 598)

Q6. Have you studied or are you currently studying in another EU country?

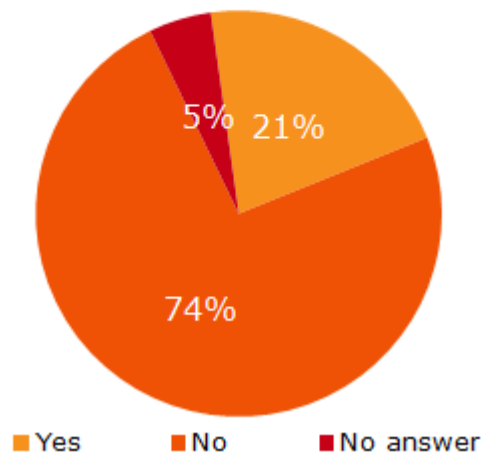
	Yes	No	No answer
Total	31%	67%	2%
Gender			
Men	25%	73%	2%
Women	40%	58%	2%
Age			
Less than 18 years old	10%	86%	4%
18 - 30 years old	44%	55%	1%
31 - 45 years old	32%	67%	1%
46 - 65 years old	16%	82%	2%
Over 65 years	15%	83%	2%

Document processing period as an Erasmus student took a lot of effort, both at home and the host university. All the information was processed much slower than normal.
Dutch citizen [ID 94]

Difficulties in establishing proper communication between the two universities (Rome and Stockholm) resulting in minimal financial support and difficulties in aligning my study plan

Around **one in five** current or former students reported difficulties in having their period of study **recognised** in another EU country (21%). The main problems reported were **red tape** (e.g. translation of official documents) and **short deadlines** for submitting relevant information.

Q6a. Have you studied or are you currently studying in another EU country? a) Have you had difficulties in having your period of study recognised?



Base: Respondents who have studied in another EU country (3 546)

Two Erasmus semesters in England as a student of English: I was only allowed to attend introductory lectures there which were not recognized back home.
German citizen [ID 695]

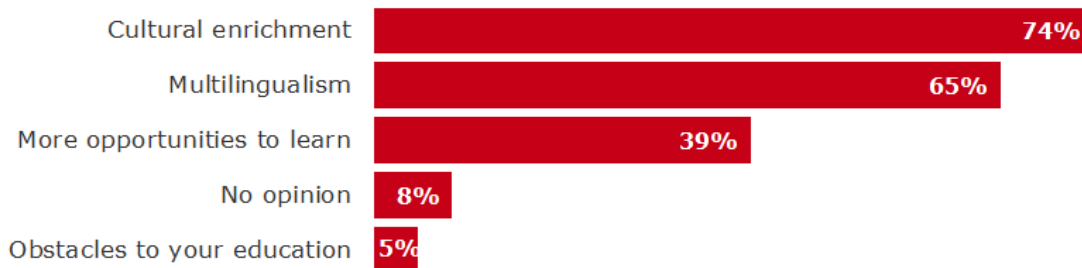
Deadlines for communicating my credits to my home university did not fit with the amount of time it took to process my grades in the host country.
German citizen [ID 1518]

5.1.2 The impact of student mobility (Q7)

When asked about the impact of students from other EU countries coming to their country, **cultural enrichment** was the most frequently selected answer (74%), followed at some distance by multilingualism (65%) and more opportunities to learn (39%). Some **5% of participants said that students from other EU countries are a source of obstacles** to their education (they notably quoted the need to share existing resources with a largert number of students) and less than one in 10 had no opinion (8%).

They let us experience a part of their culture outside their own country, while they in turn experience a new culture.
Swedish citizen [ID 1845]

Q7. Do you think that students from other EU countries who come and study in your home country bring:



Base: All respondents (11 598)

There were no significant variations related to gender or age. Some respondents argued that there were many benefits of being exposed to different points of view. Some considered exchanges to be an important and inspirational part of education offering a positive experience and new skills (languages, openness, multiculturalism) to both guest and host students.

I would never have taken up so many different interests had it not been for the Belgian, Slovakian, Spanish and Italian students that I became close friends with.
UK citizen [ID 637]

I learned a few words of German with a group of students of the Erasmus program as I have not learned the language in school. This makes an exchange rewarding.
French citizen [ID 9929]

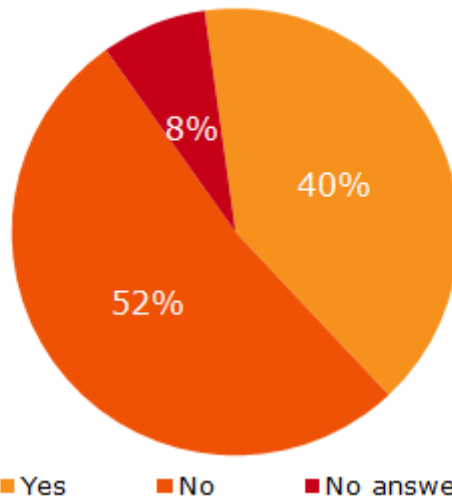
When we only have one perspective on history, geography, or world events, we lack the more complete knowledge that someone from abroad can provide.
Irish citizen [ID 3960]

5.2 Working in another EU country

5.2.1 Experience of looking for a job in another EU country (Q10)

Almost half of the respondents had looked for a job in another EU country (40 %).

Q10. Have you ever looked for a job in another EU country?

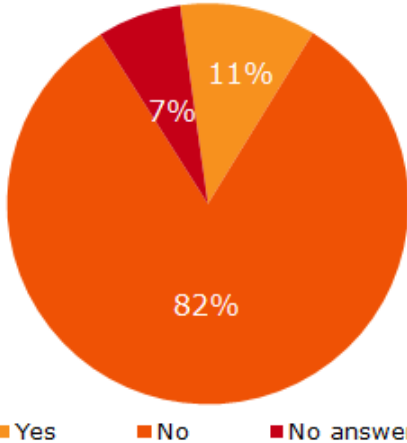


Base: All respondents (11 598)

Younger respondents (aged 18-30 or 31-45) were more likely to have looked for a job in another Member State (both 47 %) than respondents aged 46-65 and those over 65 (29 % and 20 % respectively).

Slightly more than one in 10 of these respondents had received unemployment benefits from their home country (11 %). However the large majority of those who had looked for a job in another EU country had not received this kind of benefit (82 %).

Q10a. Did you receive unemployment benefits from your home country?



Base: Respondents who had looked for a job in another EU country (4 704)

There was no significant variation related to gender, age or nationality.

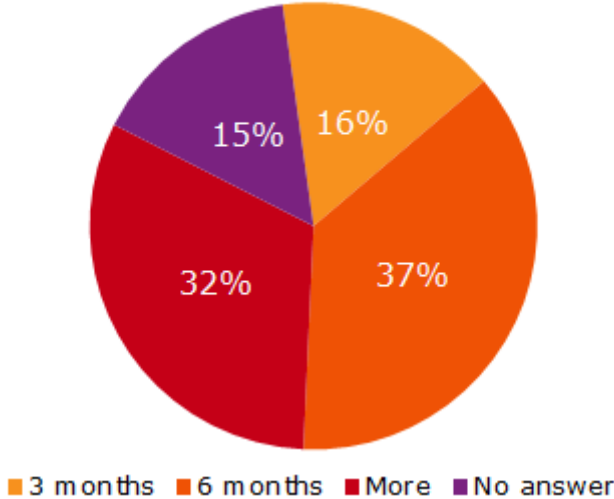
Some respondents considered it unjust to have paid taxes in one EU country and be cut off from welfare benefits such as unemployment benefits solely due to moving to another EU country.

I received unemployment benefits in France but it stopped as I was searching for a job in Scotland. I had no support either here or abroad, like a non-citizen. Very hard times.
French citizen [ID 9930]

I was unemployed in my home country. I decided to move to another EU country because I had the economic support of the unemployment benefits. Unfortunately, these benefits were only available for three months if staying outside my home country but I was lucky and found a job in that time. Spanish citizen [ID 7625]

Respondents who had looked for a job in another EU country were also asked about their opinion on the right period of time for receiving unemployment benefits from their own country. Nearly seven respondents out of 10 considered that they should be receiving such benefits for **six months or more**; slightly more than one third of the respondents thought citizens should receive unemployment benefits for six months (37 %) and a similar proportion thought this period should be over six months (32 %). A small minority considered that the time period should be three months (16 %).

Q10b. In your view, what would be the right period of time for receiving unemployment benefits from your home country?



Base: Respondents who had looked for a job in another EU country (4 966)

There are also some differences between the different age groups. Respondents aged 31-45 and 46-65 are the most likely to think that the right period for receiving benefits is six months or more (73 % and 70 %).

Q10b. In your view, what would be the right period of time for receiving unemployment benefits from your home country?

	3 months	6 months	More	No answer
Total	16%	37%	32%	15%
Gender				
Men	18%	35%	33%	14%
Women	14%	41%	28%	17%
Age				
Less than 18 years old	31%	31%	23%	15%
18 - 30 years old	20%	44%	22%	14%
31 - 45 years old	14%	35%	38%	13%
46 - 65 years old	14%	29%	41%	16%
Over 65 years	11%	36%	26%	27%

Base: Respondents who looked for a job in another EU country (4 966)

5.2.2 Obstacles to working in another country (Q8)

More than a third of the respondents reported that **administrative difficulties** were likely to prevent them from looking for a job in another EU country (36 %).

Other factors underlined:

- uncertainty about how **taxes** would be calculated in the other EU country and in their home country and what effect this would have on their economic situation
- the language barrier
- concerns about differences in pay and the risks of getting a lower paid job back home if they work abroad for a while
- access to social security
- giving up family/friends and their local network

Concrete proposals put forward by both individual respondents and organisations:

- A common information-registers and/or a personal card containing information that would allow for paperwork to be cut out when looking for work in another EU country
- Longer period for receiving unemployment benefits when looking for a job in another country
- Clearer and more reliable information on tax rules applicable to their situation and mechanisms that would allow for more exchange of information between EU countries

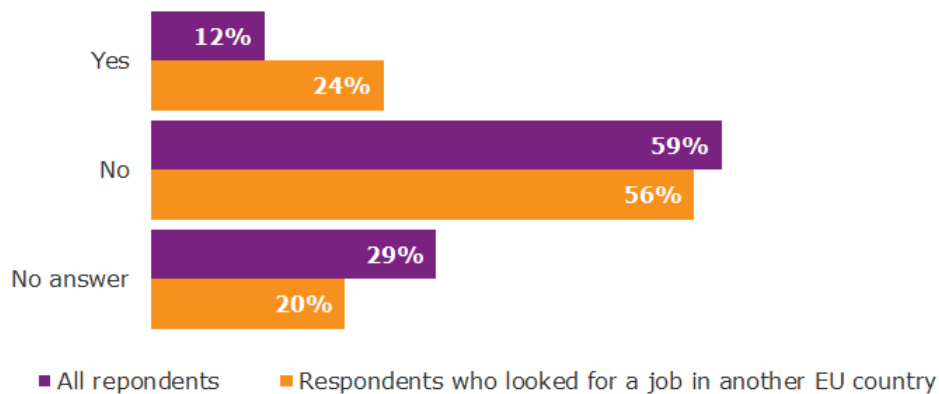
Investment required to attend interviews, coordinate the job search with finding accommodation and schools, children adapting to a new language, etc.
Spanish citizen [ID 12564]

Having a handicapped child, I am not sure about healthcare and educational opportunities.
Dutch citizen [ID 12392]

5.2.3 Difficulties when trying to work in the public sector in another EU country (Q9)

A total of 12 % of all respondents said they had encountered **difficulties when trying to work in the public sector** in an EU country other than their home country. Among those who had looked for a job in another EU country (40 % of all respondents), the percentage was even higher; almost one in four of these respondents indicated that they had encountered difficulties (24 %).

Q9. Have you ever experienced difficulties when trying to work in the public sector in an EU country other than the one of which you are a national?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

There was no significant variation in opinion related to gender, age or nationality.

Respondents reported **various problems** when applying for jobs in the public sector in other Member States:

- Overt preference of the public agencies for their own nationals
- National rules requiring Member State nationality
- A long period of residence for certain functions
- Lack of available information about the possibility to work in the public sector
- Obscure rules and/or exams that privilege national candidates

Jobs in the French administration are through competitive exams which have a heavy cultural bias which favours nationals and does not necessarily reflect the capacity to do the job.

UK citizen [ID 515]

In order to be considered for any role in the criminal sector (the field of my studies) in certain Member States, I need to have been a resident in the country for three years regardless of my EU citizen status.

Greek citizen [ID 2134]

There are different regulations even for EU citizens in at least some sectors.

Greek citizen [ID 898]

6 EU citizenship – Citizens as political actors

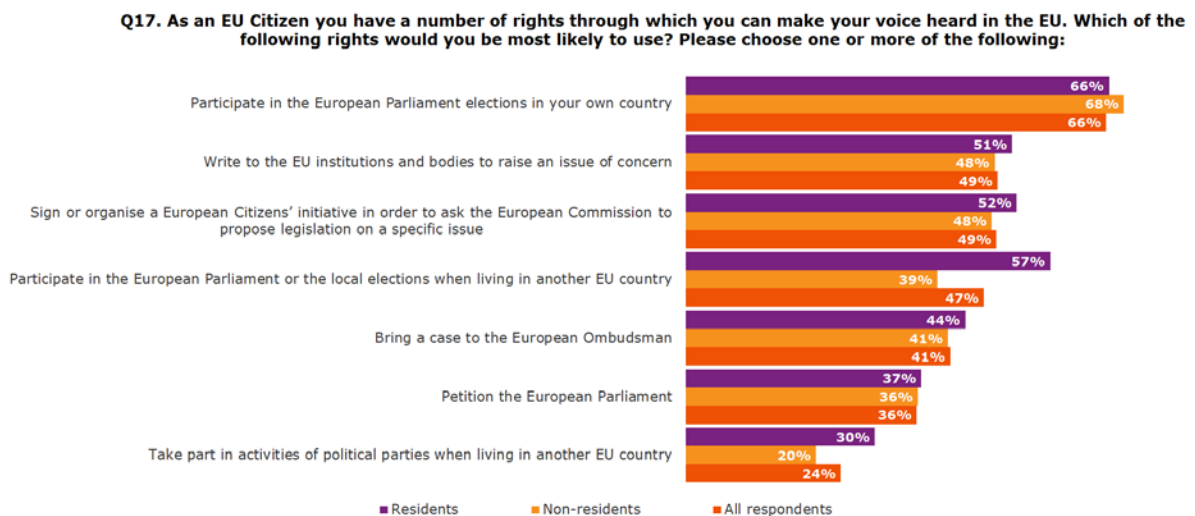
6.1 Making one's voice heard in the EU (Q17)

Citizens would most often use one of the following ways to make their voice heard in the EU:

- Participate in **European Parliament elections** in one's own country of residence (66 %)
- Sign or organize a **European Citizens' Initiative** in order to ask the European Commission to propose legislation on a specific issue (49 %)
- **Write to the EU institutions** and bodies to raise an issue of concern (49 %)
- Participate in the European parliament or local elections when living in another EU country (47 %).

Other ways to express opinions in EU affairs include the following:

- Bring a case to the European Ombudsman (41 %)
- Petition the European Parliament (36 %)
- Take part in party political activities when living in another EU country (24 %)



Base: All respondents (11 598)

As shown in the chart, citizens residing or having resided in another EU country (residents) were more likely to say they would use their right to participate in European Parliament or local elections in another EU country than people who have never lived abroad (non-residents) (57 % vs. 47 % respectively).

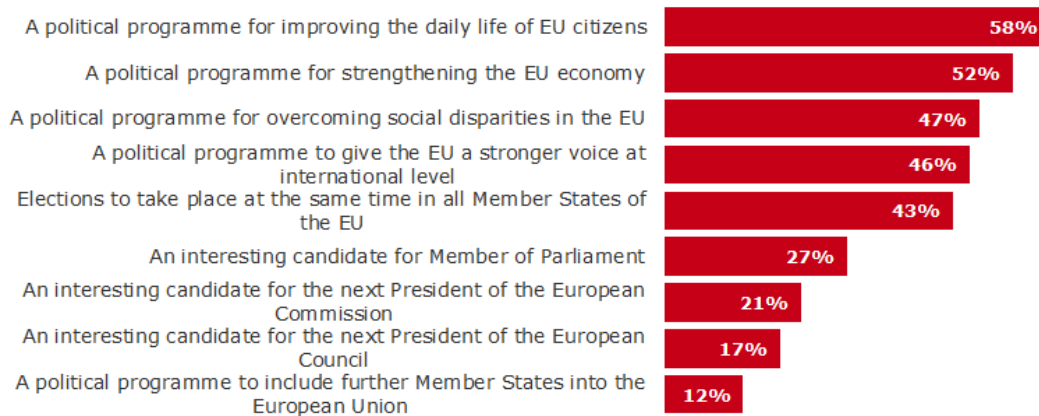
6.2 Voting in European Parliament elections (Q18)

Respondents were asked to choose from a list of statements describing possible motives for voting in the European parliamentary elections. Over half of all respondents said that a political **programme for improving the daily life of EU citizens or to strengthen the EU economy** would motivate them to vote in the European elections (58 % and 52 % respectively). Almost half of the respondents would feel motivated by a programme aimed at overcoming social disparities in the EU and a programme to give the EU a stronger voice at international level (47 % and 46 % respectively).

Greater consistency between political parties. In EU parliamentary elections, it would be better if we had 'transnational political parties' standing across borders. This would help encourage European citizenship during EU parliamentary elections.
UK citizen [ID 374]

One in four mentioned they would feel motivated if an interesting candidate was running either as Member of the Parliament or as President of the European Commission.

Q18. Which of the following would motivate you most to vote in the European Parliament elections? Please choose one or more of the following:






























Base: All respondents (11 598)

I want to vote for European parties, not on the national lists and national parties as happens now; I want the MEPs to deal with real European issues and not just import their national views and quarrels to the EU forum...
Polish citizen [ID 550]

A political programme for the European Union to become a true federal state, with federal powers over the powers of the individual states in key subjects – foreign policy, welfare, education.
Italian citizen [ID 5211]

There were no significant variations related to gender or age but there were variations in terms of nationalities as shown in the table below:

Q18. Which of the following would motivate you most to vote in the European Parliament elections? Please choose one or more of the following:

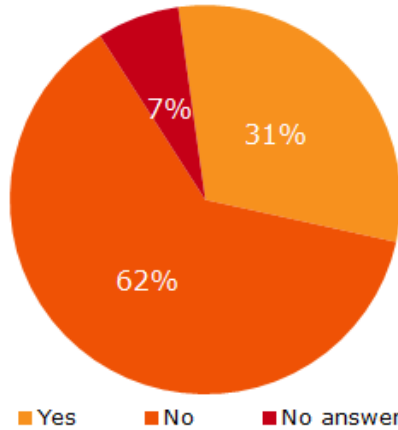
	A political programme for improving the daily life of EU citizens	A political programme for strengthening the EU economy	A political programme for overcoming social disparities in the EU	A political programme to give the EU a stronger voice at international level	Elections to take place at the same time in all Member States of the EU	An interesting candidate for Member of Parliament	An interesting candidate for the next President of the European Commission	An interesting candidate for the next President of the European Council	A political programme to include further Member States into the European Union	Other
All respondents	58%	52%	47%	46%	43%	27%	21%	17%	12%	11%
 BE	61%	49%	47%	53%	37%	28%	25%	20%	9%	10%
 BG	63%	63%	50%	47%	44%	18%	10%	9%	13%	5%
 CZ	34%	25%	19%	26%	24%	26%	15%	12%	7%	16%
 DK	45%	43%	24%	47%	38%	29%	12%	14%	9%	17%
 DE	50%	42%	47%	47%	53%	34%	26%	20%	9%	13%
 EE	58%	56%	42%	42%	34%	23%	13%	11%	5%	6%
 IE	64%	51%	43%	43%	46%	37%	29%	24%	13%	16%
 EL	76%	67%	65%	56%	51%	29%	30%	26%	11%	7%
 ES	66%	55%	63%	48%	54%	26%	31%	27%	12%	12%
 FR	56%	50%	53%	53%	53%	28%	30%	25%	10%	12%
 IT	64%	58%	56%	60%	40%	23%	21%	17%	14%	7%
 CY	78%	73%	46%	57%	40%	36%	29%	27%	10%	6%
 LV	57%	54%	39%	34%	41%	34%	18%	18%	8%	3%
 LT	64%	62%	42%	47%	42%	29%	16%	11%	13%	9%
 LU	57%	50%	39%	46%	44%	35%	28%	22%	7%	12%
 HU	52%	37%	32%	23%	17%	8%	8%	5%	9%	9%
 MT	66%	58%	49%	50%	40%	44%	26%	23%	27%	7%
 NL	50%	43%	35%	42%	32%	20%	13%	11%	9%	21%
 AT	59%	48%	59%	49%	57%	47%	36%	28%	17%	10%
 PL	56%	57%	41%	46%	46%	29%	14%	12%	13%	7%
 PT	68%	66%	68%	49%	48%	22%	18%	14%	7%	6%
 RO	67%	70%	50%	55%	40%	31%	19%	18%	20%	7%
 SI	70%	52%	41%	27%	45%	25%	25%	20%	7%	9%
 SK	65%	58%	42%	38%	34%	35%	18%	17%	14%	4%
 FI	47%	42%	42%	40%	47%	44%	16%	14%	8%	14%
 SE	52%	34%	34%	34%	29%	29%	13%	9%	14%	16%
 UK	44%	38%	33%	30%	35%	26%	16%	14%	12%	31%

Highest percentage per country					Lowest percentage per country					
Highest percentage per item					Lowest percentage per item					

6.3 Voting rights and political participation (Q19)

More than six in 10 respondents (62 %) said that they did not consider it justified to lose their right to vote in national elections in their home country because they reside in another EU country. However, a significant minority agreed that this could be justified under certain circumstances (31 %).

Q19a. If you would reside in another EU country, would you consider it justified to lose your right to vote in national elections in the country of which you are a national ?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

Men and respondents who never resided in another EU country (non-residents) were more likely to consider it justified to lose the right to vote in national elections in their own country when residing in another EU country. **Respondents residing outside the EU** were less likely than the average to support the idea of losing their right to vote in the country of which they are a national (27 % vs. 31 % respectively).

Q19a. If you would reside in another EU country, would you consider it justified to lose your right to vote in national elections in the country of which you are a national ?

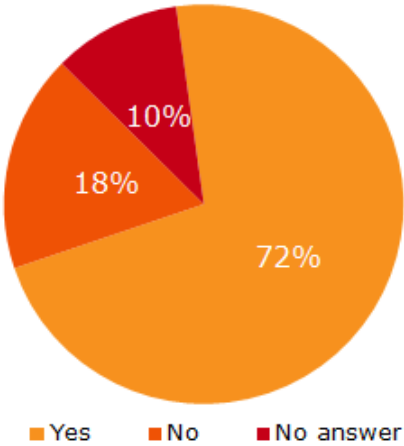
	Yes	No	No answer
Total	31%	62%	7%
Gender			
Men	35%	59%	6%
Women	25%	69%	6%

Base: All respondents (11 598)

Some argued that taking away the right to vote in national elections for citizens who reside in other EU countries (disenfranchisement) was unjustified as these citizens were still affected by many decisions taken in their countries of origin. One organisation gave examples such as legislation on taxation, pensions and social security. The organisation also argued that disenfranchisement rules were sometimes built on the assumption that citizens lose contact with developments in their country of origin when they live abroad and that this idea was outdated now that communication possibilities have developed so much and moving is no longer synonymous with uprooting.

Alternatively respondents were also asked if they considered it justified to **acquire the right to vote in national elections in their country of residence**. More than one third of the respondents considered this to be justified (72 %).

Q19b. If you would reside in another EU country, would you consider it justified to acquire the right to vote in national elections in your country of residence?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

There was no significant variation in opinion related to gender, age or the experience of having resided abroad.

It is only justified if you gain the right to vote in the new country of residence – and it depends on the period of residence. If it is not longer than one year, I would not consider it justified to lose the right to vote.
German citizen [ID 1676]

There was **more support for acquiring the right to vote in the country of residence (72 %)** than for keeping the right to vote in the country where one is a national (62 %). An absolute majority of those who considered it justified to lose the right to vote in national elections in the country of which they are a

Voting is tied to citizenship in modern democracy. It doesn't matter where you decide to live. If your country gives you citizenship, they can't take away your right to vote without taking away your citizenship.
UK citizen [ID 422]

national also indicated that the acquisition of this right in the country of residence within the EU would be justified (87%). Conversely, a considerable proportion of those who feel it would not be justified to lose the right to vote in the home country also feel it would not be justified to acquire the right to vote in the national election of the country of residence (23 %).

Q19a. If you would reside in another EU country, would you consider it justified to lose your right to vote in national elections in the country of which you are a national?

	Yes	No
Q19b If you would reside in another EU country would you consider it justified to acquire the right to vote in national elections in your country of residence?	87%	71%
	9%	23%
	4%	6%

Base: All respondents (11 598)

The main arguments given for acquiring the right to vote in the EU country of residence are as follows:

- Full inclusion in new society
- Non-discrimination among EU citizens
- The will to fully participate in the democratic life of the host country as national politics have an impact on their daily lives

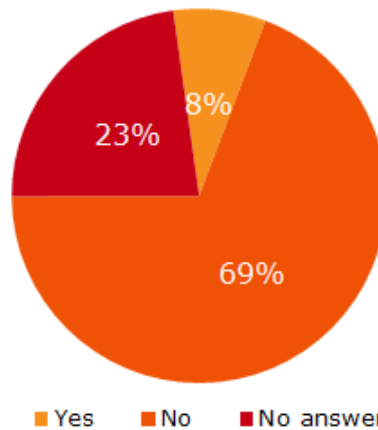
Many participants also argued that there should be no taxation without political representation.

Taxation and representation are key. If you pay taxes in one country then you must have the right to vote for that country's parliament. If you pay taxes in two countries then two votes.
UK citizen [ID 1059]

6.4 Discrimination on grounds of nationality when exercising political rights (Q20)

Only a small minority of the respondents had experienced practical disadvantages because of their nationality when exercising their political rights as an EU citizen. A majority had never had such experiences (69 %) and slightly less than one in four gave no answer (23 %).

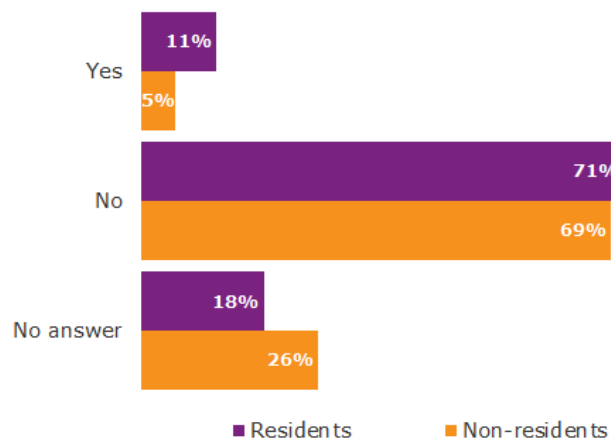
Q20. Have you ever had practical disadvantages because of your nationality when exercising your political rights as an EU citizen (to vote or stand as a candidate in elections, participate in activities of political parties, write to the EU institutions or the European Ombudsman, etc.)?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

There were no significant variations in opinion related to gender or age. However respondents who resided or had resided (residents) in other EU countries more often faced disadvantages because of their nationality when exercising political rights (11 % vs. 5 % respectively).

Q20. Have you ever had practical disadvantages because of your nationality when exercising your political rights as an EU citizen (to vote or stand as a candidate in elections, participate in activities of political parties, write to the EU institutions or the European Ombudsman, etc.)?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

The most common problems were:

- losing voting rights in country of origin, while not obtaining voting rights in the new country of residence
- lengthy procedures for obtaining documents necessary to vote
- lack of awareness of staff in local administrations
- difficulties in participating in local elections due to lack of information except in the local language
- lack of information about the right to participate in European Parliament elections while residing in another Member State
- EU citizens residing outside the EU also mentioned that it was difficult for them to take part in European Parliament elections because the technical modalities enabling them to exercise their right have not been put into place by their Member State

Living in an EU country and not having voting rights in the regional or federal elections has a large impact on our lives.
Polish citizen [ID 6199]

I have a postal vote and it often doesn't arrive to me in time for me to fill it out and send it back again before the deadline.

UK citizen [ID 6877]

As a British national resident in Germany, I have neither the right to vote in the United Kingdom national general elections nor the right to vote in Germany's national general elections (due to non-German nationality). Therefore, I have no means to vote at all at a national level.

UK citizen [ID 6800]

European expatriates continue to be strongly attached to their countries of origin and the Union's policies increasingly determine their lives in their host countries. Citizenship ties must be guaranteed. No citizen of the Union should be deprived of his or her right to vote in the national elections of their country due to their place of residence. All possible means should be provided, such as postal or electronic voting, to safeguard what is a fundamental right.

Organisation [ID 096]

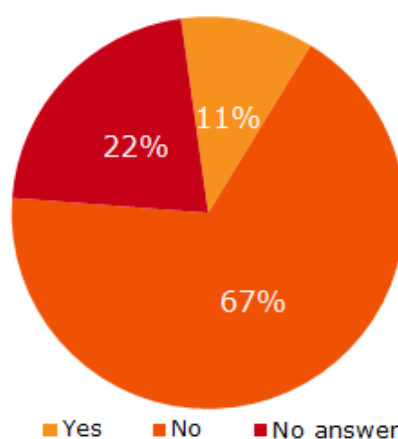
Concrete solutions:

- Removing existing national rules that take away citizens' right to vote in their country of origin when they reside abroad
- Granting EU citizens the right to vote in regional and national elections in their EU country of residence after a certain time, including via reciprocity arrangements between Member States
- Providing more and better information about electoral rights
- Developing e-voting

7 Discrimination on grounds of nationality when exercising your rights as an EU citizen (Q21)

Respondents were also asked about any other obstacles they may have encountered that were not covered by previous questions. Slightly more than one in 10 of the respondents had encountered additional problems, which they then described (11 %).

Q21. Have you ever encountered obstacles because of your nationality when exercising your rights as an EU citizen in areas not covered by previous questions?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

Similarly to question 3 (point 2.3), a majority of respondents considered that the main problem was that **local authorities did not know enough about EU regulations**, which led to difficulties in having official documents recognised and problems with social benefits such as pensions.

Better education of administrative staff in local government who do not understand EU rights on this issue.
UK citizen [ID 6269]

Some respondents also highlight problems encountered by workers from the newest Member States, especially when seeking to work in another EU country.

The officials responsible for administering housing and benefits for Union citizens from other Member States are often unfamiliar with EU law and simply refuse applications for support, even from those entitled, because these Union citizens are foreigners.

Organisation [ID 005]

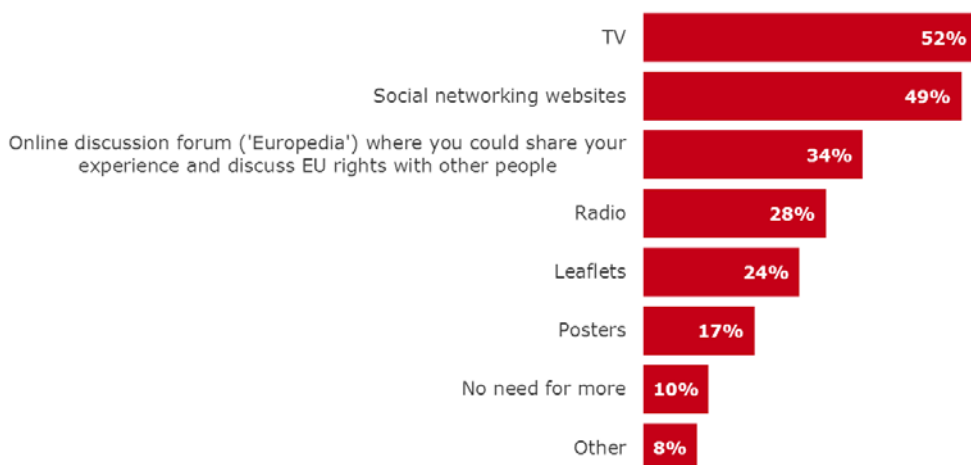
8 Awareness of sources of information on EU rights and assistance to EU citizens

8.1 Information about EU rights (Q22)

In order to strengthen EU citizens' awareness of their rights, the European Commission runs a website ('Your Europe') that provides EU citizens with information about these rights and about national rules and procedures so that citizens can benefit from them.

When asked to identify other preferred ways of receiving the information they need, TV was the option most selected by the respondents (52 %), together with social network websites (49 %). In third place, respondents mention an online discussion forum ('Europedia') for sharing experiences and discussing EU rights with other people (34 %). A significant minority mention radio and leaflets (28 % and 24 % respectively) and less than one fifth would prefer the use of posters (17 %). One in 10 respondents said that they did not need more information (10 %).

Q22. The European Commission runs a website which contains information about your rights and on national rules and procedures which will help you benefit from your rights at national level ('Your Europe'). How else would you like to get the information you need about your rights as an EU citizen?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

Open talk on TV with EU representatives, journalists and citizens asking questions live, by phone and online.

Greek citizen [ID 2128]

The press should cover more information about these rights for all the EU citizens, including frequent updates about the work done at the European Union level.

Spanish citizen [ID 6720]

The introduction of European Citizens' Advice Bureaux in medium and large-sized European cities would be beneficial and would bring the European administrative and legal system closer to citizens.

Romanian citizen [ID 9048]

Respondents in 13 Member States of the EU were most likely to answer 'TV', ranging from 42 % in Luxembourg to 64 % in Malta. Social networking websites was also the first option in 13 Member States, ranging from 34 % in the United Kingdom to 68 % in Greece. In Poland, an equal proportion of respondents answered TV and social networking websites (51 % in both cases).

It is also worth underlining that more than half of the respondents in Greece and Cyprus would like to get information about their rights in the EU from online discussion forums (51 % in each country).

22. The European Commission runs a website which contains information about your rights and on national rules and procedures which will help you benefit from your rights at national level (Your Europe). How else would you like to get the information you need about your rights as an EU citizen?

	TV	Social networking websites	Radio	Online discussion forum (...)	Leaflets	Posters	Other	No need for more
All respondents	52%	49%	28%	34%	24%	17%	8%	10%
BE	47%	39%	28%	28%	31%	12%	10%	16%
BG	50%	53%	20%	41%	23%	14%	4%	11%
CZ	45%	43%	22%	29%	12%	9%	5%	15%
DK	50%	41%	24%	26%	29%	16%	12%	16%
DE	52%	43%	31%	28%	30%	19%	9%	11%
EE	42%	52%	22%	28%	25%	20%	5%	22%
IE	56%	59%	39%	41%	29%	19%	15%	0%
EL	59%	68%	29%	51%	31%	20%	5%	0%
ES	57%	62%	33%	35%	22%	12%	9%	6%
FR	53%	38%	39%	26%	30%	20%	9%	0%
IT	61%	49%	33%	33%	31%	19%	9%	5%
CY	65%	67%	27%	51%	41%	25%	9%	0%
LV	39%	65%	25%	27%	22%	19%	5%	8%
LT	44%	60%	29%	40%	20%	18%	9%	24%
LU	42%	30%	25%	21%	35%	12%	13%	16%
HU	56%	44%	29%	26%	18%	16%	7%	7%
MT	64%	59%	31%	33%	37%	28%	11%	2%
NL	46%	38%	15%	30%	20%	12%	14%	20%
AT	55%	50%	35%	30%	29%	17%	7%	10%
PL	51%	51%	27%	41%	18%	17%	5%	10%
PT	59%	62%	29%	37%	20%	16%	6%	6%
RO	61%	57%	32%	48%	25%	23%	11%	5%
SI	50%	63%	34%	29%	23%	23%	0%	11%
SK	62%	48%	42%	39%	22%	21%	10%	13%
FI	47%	55%	19%	26%	29%	18%	9%	14%
SE	48%	51%	19%	27%	18%	12%	9%	0%
UK	33%	34%	17%	24%	19%	17%	14%	24%
Highest percentage per country					<i>Lowest percentage per country</i>			
Highest percentage per item					Lowest percentage per item			

Base: All respondents (11 598)

Respondents aged 18-30 are more likely to mention social networking sites than TV. Indeed, six out of 10 respondents aged 18-30 mentioned 'social networking sites' (60 % vs. 56 % saying TV). All the other age categories are more likely to mention TV.

Suggestions:

Several suggestions made by respondents already exist, such as a television channel that aims to cover news from a pan-European perspective ('Euronews'), local EU representations in the Member States (European Commission Delegations) and an EU helpdesk ('Europe Direct') that has both a central information service and local information services in each EU country.

Other suggestions made by respondents included:

- a European newspaper that focuses on the EU
- more opportunities to learn about the EU in schools
- info-points in universities
- customised newsletters on EU topics
- applications for smartphones ('apps') that help citizens to keep track of EU issues

An EU newspaper would be great.
Austrian citizen [ID 2393]

Educational programmes at school from a very young age, dedicated TV programmes even on regional media, written (local) press.
French citizen [ID 10649]

8.2 Enforcement of EU rights (Q23)

Participants in the online consultation were asked what would help them take advantage of their EU rights. More than six in 10 would like there to be an **online tool** that would allow them to easily understand at what level (EU, national or local) their problem would best be resolved (63 %). Half of the respondents said they would prefer a **strengthened national contact point** that can give citizens legal advice on EU rights.

Q23. The European Commission has set up a number of advice and assistance centres to help solve problems you might encounter (SOLVIT, Europe Direct Contact Centres linked to Your Europe Advice). What else could help you take advantage of your EU rights?



Base: All respondents (11 598)

Many respondents said that the tools listed in the question (SOLVIT, Europe Direct Contact Centres, Your Europe Advice) are new to them. The lack of feedback after submitting questions or complaints to these bodies was also mentioned. A number of respondents indicated feeling lost when facing a problem related to EU law and not knowing if they should go to their local administration, national government or complain to the EU institutions.

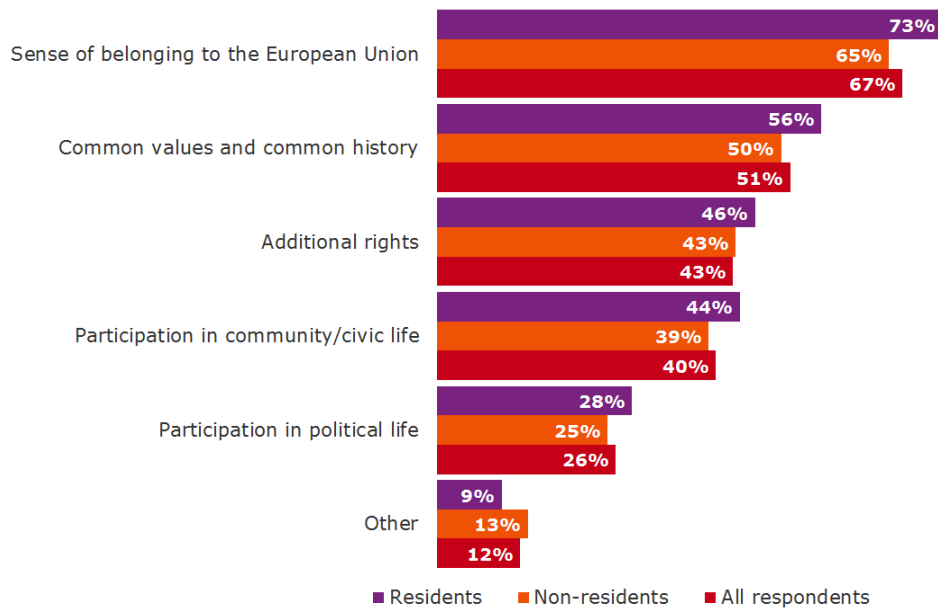
An easily accessible online chat room.
German citizen [ID 22761]

An online tool containing decision trees showing possible courses of action, allowing you to select the best one for your purpose or an EU-wide tax tool calculator for employed or self-employed people per Member State.
UK citizen [ID 5268]

Concrete proposals are consistent with those put forward in question 3:

- National contact points or a place where citizens can get assistance
- Chat functions (exchange of ideas and best practice with peers) about the EU
- Raising awareness about EU citizenship rights among officials working at the local level
- Providing more support to organisations that help EU citizens to have their rights respected

Q24. What does EU citizenship mean to you? Would you associate it with (one or more of the following)



Base: All respondents (11 598)




























There were no significant variations in opinion related to gender, age or the experience of having resided in another EU country.

There were, however, some variations related to nationality. Associating EU citizenship with a sense of belonging to the EU was more common than average among Greek (79 %), Romanian (78 %), French (77 %) and German (77 %) respondents. In contrast, Czech respondents were the least likely to make this association (39 %).

Furthermore, associating EU citizenship with common values and common history was more common among French, Austrian, Romanian (all 64 %), Spanish (63 %) and German (62 %) respondents than average. In contrast, Swedish respondents were the least likely to make this association (31 %).

As already mentioned, additional rights was the third most frequently given answer (43 %). Interestingly, however, Maltesians would be more likely to associate it with EU Membership (71 %). The same is true for Cypriots (69 %), Lithuanians (67 %), Finns (56 %) and Estonians (56 %).

Q24. What does EU citizenship mean to you? Would you associate it with (one or more of the following):

	Sense of belonging to the European Union	Common values and common history	Additional rights	Participation in community/civic life	Participation in political life	Other
All respondents	67%	51%	43%	40%	26%	12%
 BE	71%	50%	31%	34%	27%	11%
 BG	71%	55%	50%	49%	22%	7%
 CZ	39%	41%	33%	18%	15%	24%
 DK	60%	38%	48%	28%	26%	12%
 DE	77%	62%	44%	42%	35%	9%
 EE	63%	36%	56%	31%	23%	9%
 IE	69%	45%	48%	31%	20%	17%
 EL	79%	55%	46%	50%	34%	5%
 ES	65%	63%	46%	35%	24%	12%
 FR	77%	64%	31%	43%	38%	9%
 IT	73%	47%	46%	46%	29%	6%
 CY	78%	47%	69%	38%	25%	5%
 LV	71%	34%	49%	30%	21%	14%
 LT	71%	40%	67%	40%	27%	9%
 LU	59%	52%	36%	24%	24%	15%
 HU	56%	46%	29%	32%	14%	8%
 MT	73%	43%	71%	26%	19%	19%
 NL	53%	40%	36%	26%	16%	30%
 AT	74%	64%	48%	49%	40%	10%
 PL	68%	49%	51%	42%	22%	11%
 PT	73%	51%	35%	55%	26%	6%
 RO	78%	64%	47%	57%	23%	8%
 SI	57%	54%	52%	50%	16%	7%
 SK	66%	49%	51%	34%	23%	8%
 FI	54%	44%	56%	28%	21%	16%
 SE	58%	31%	40%	34%	21%	21%
 UK	47%	38%	34%	28%	21%	34%

Highest percentage per country

Highest percentage per item

Lowest percentage per country

Lowest percentage per item

Base: All respondents (11 598)

Common values, common rights.
Belgian citizen [ID 9864]

The opportunity to have an influence at the international level, and to lead by example in climate policy. Multiculturalism and the opportunity to learn several languages and exchange opinions.

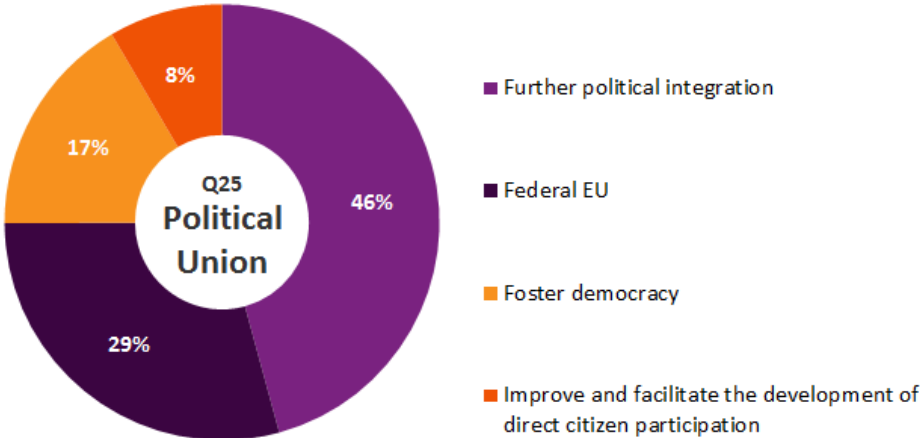
Finnish citizen [ID 10868]

It's about freedom, freedom to move wherever you want, or wherever you need. All the different rights and mechanisms it includes serve this general purpose of ensuring your freedom.
Spanish citizen [ID 4691]

The views put forward by the respondents who have been grouped under the heading 'Political Union' regarded further **political integration** (46 %), a Federal Union (29 %), fostering democracy (17 %) and the improvement and facilitation of the development of direct citizen participation (8 %).

We actively support, together with other civil society organisations, the new instrument of the European Citizens' Initiative to bring fresh ideas to European politics, to realize the European democratic process...
 Organisation [ID 9208]

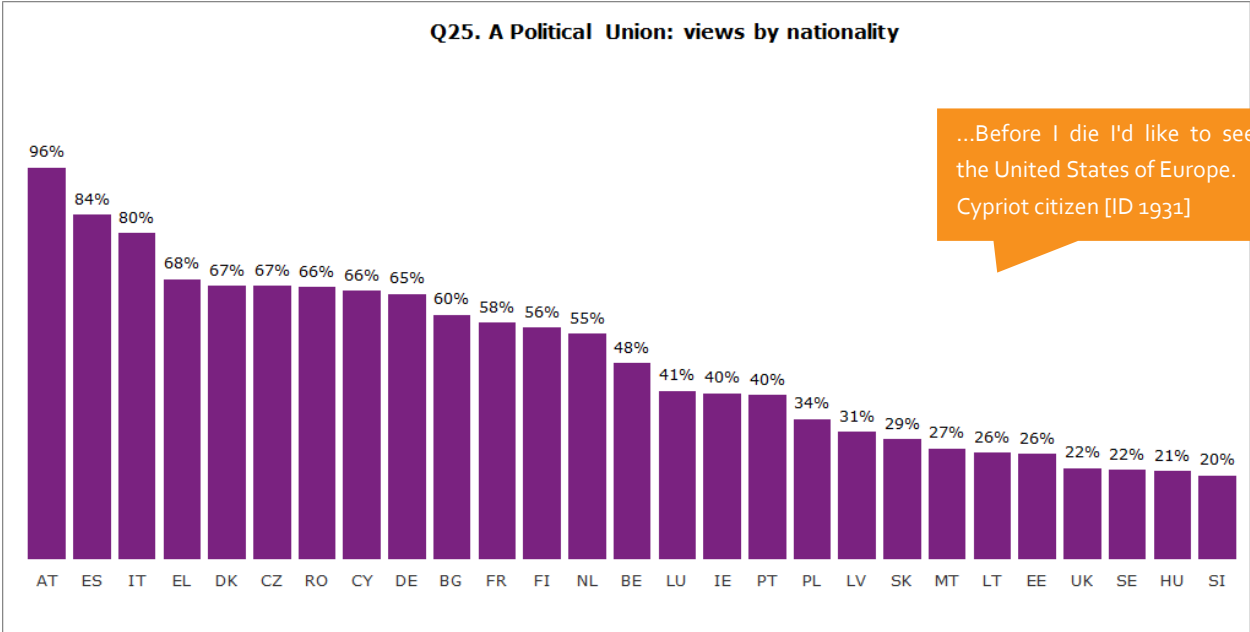
Q25. Distribution of 'Political Union' subtopics:



EU citizenship should become the real fundamental status of nationals of the Member States...
 Polish citizen [ID 12371]

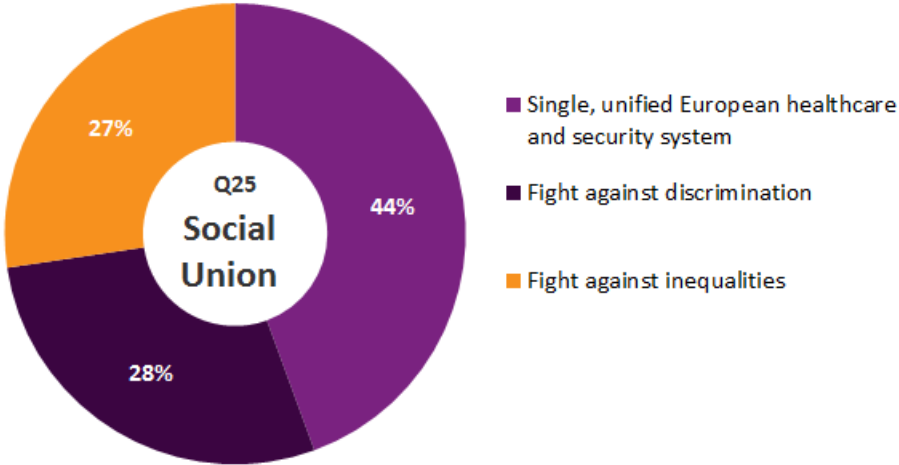
A more democratic EU and the European Commission directly elected. Fiscal integration and political support. Greater mobility of social rights and the promotion of labour mobility. Less "red tape" in all subjects, fewer restrictions. An on-going battle against organized crime, through the harmonization of penal policies and the organizational strengthening of existing institutions (Eurojust, Europol, Frontex, CEPOL).
 Belgian citizen [ID 1621]

There was quite some variation related to nationality among those who considered that a Political Union was the way forward. The respondents who were most likely to write about further political integration were Austrian (96 %), Spanish (84 %) and Italian (80 %). The least calls for a Political Union came from the UK and Sweden (22 %), Hungary (21%) and Slovenia (20 %).



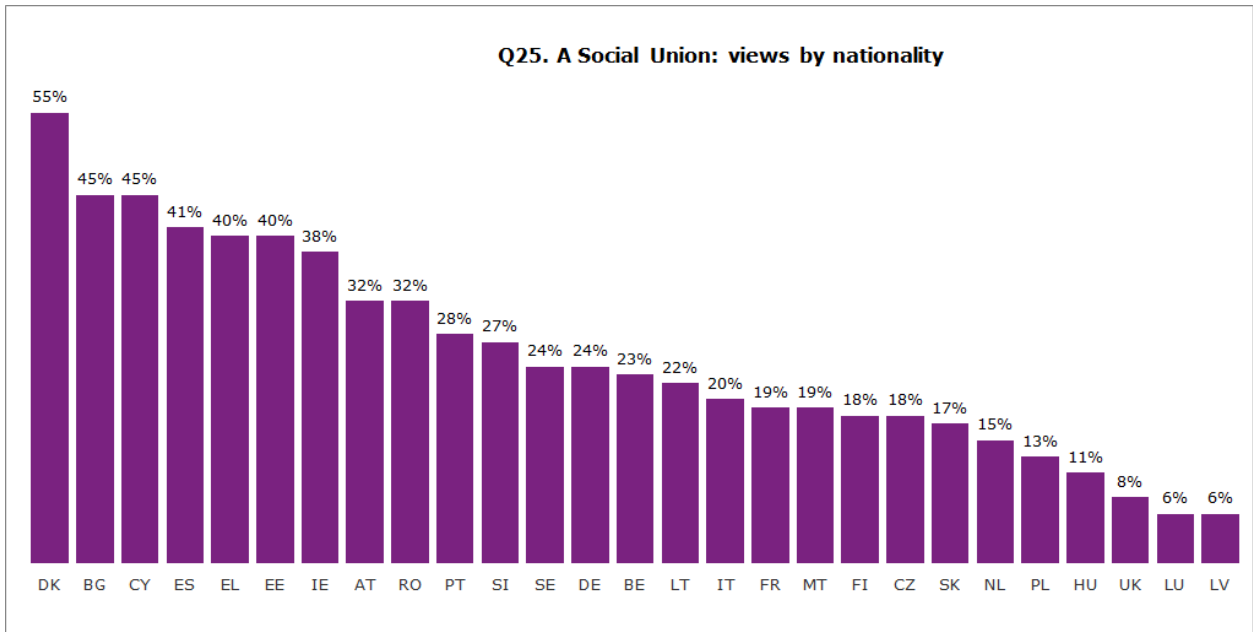
Citizens' suggestions on a 'Social Union' included calls for a **unified European healthcare, social and security system** (44 %), the fight against discrimination and/or the fight against inequalities (28 % and 27 % respectively).

Q25. Distribution of 'Social Union' subtopics:



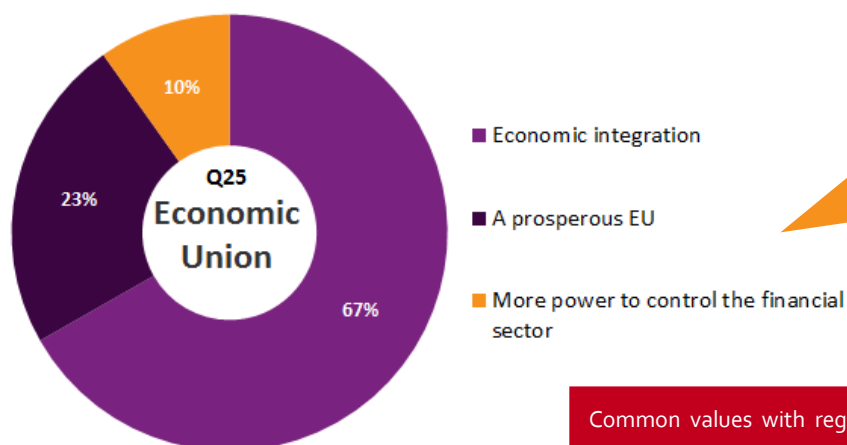
In 2020 I would like to live in a EU which is more harmonised in terms of administrative procedures and more consistent especially in providing healthcare services and recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications.
Bulgarian citizen [ID 2312]

Support for a Social Union was particularly strong in replies from Danes (55 %), Bulgarians and Cypriots (each 45 %), and particularly weak in replies from nationals of the UK (8%), Luxembourg and Latvia (each 6 %).



An absolute majority of participants who wrote about a stronger Economic Union asked for **economic integration** (67 %), creating a Single Financial and Economic Union with a transfer of sovereignty to the European level. Some focussed on a strong, stable **Financial Union** that would base its practices on **sustainable development policies, democratic values** and working towards the **welfare of its citizens** (23 %) while one in 10 would like to see more power delegated to the EU to **control the financial sector** (10 %).

Q25. Distribution of 'Stronger, more integrated Economic Union' subtopics:



There's an urgent need to take actions and define a serious and committed policy for economic growth.
Portuguese citizen [ID 1605]

Common values with regard to justice. Free trade between countries, but limiting globalization to protect the environment. Products should not have to travel around the world during manufacture. This is damaging in so many ways.
UK citizen [ID 885]

Support for a stronger, more integrated Economic Union is particularly strong in replies from citizens of Cyprus (61%), Latvia (46%), Lithuania (37%) and Denmark (36%), and the weakest amongst participants from the UK and Sweden (each 13%), Hungary (12%) and Estonia (less than 11%).

