



SURVEY RESEARCH REPORT ★



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Disclaimer

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About the project

Project “Counter Euroscepticism with Your Vote” was designed to counter the rising Euroscepticism and distrust of national governance structures which demotivate people to participate in the voting process. The other goals of the project were to encourage voter turnout in EU parliamentary elections and promote & educate about active citizenship in project countries. The turnout in the European Parliament elections 2014 was 43% and in 2019 was 51%, however in many EU countries the turnout is still below 30%. Project includes 6 organizations and more than 277 participants. The countries involved are Slovenia, Croatia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Austria. They had the lowest voter turnout and rise of Euroscepticism.

During the project duration the activities were designed to achieve next project’s aims:

- To encourage EU citizens to make their voice count,
- Built the capacity of young people to participate actively in the democratic life of Europe,
- Counter Euroscepticism with EU dialogue and discussion on forward-looking initiatives for the future of Europe,
- Educate young people about EU values and history of EU.

Project partners implemented next activities:

Workshops events “Active EU” were organized in all partner countries, where working method were public presentations, open forum discussions, workshops or debates. The main idea of the national events was to promote active citizenship so that the participants can contribute and be engaged through debating (how to increase active citizenship; what are the obstacles; best practices from your community and the EU; how can people improve in active citizenship; presenting some of the key characteristics of active citizenship). The events presented a platform where participants will be educated about EU values (Human dignity; Freedom; Democracy; Equality; Rule of law; Human rights), important historical events in the EU (Europe Day; the day when your country joined the EU; The EU motto: “United in diversity”; EU treaties; historic steps of the EU) and achievements of the member states. Participants also had the opportunity to debate, where citizens will actively state their doubts and hopes on the EU and its future. An active involvement of the young (optional) was present in the project, as youngsters (optional) presented examples of good practice and outline the benefits of EU policies and main achievements. Awareness was raised in the local community about the importance of EU values and active citizenship will be fostered.

Transnational events

- **“My Vote”** big event in Slovakia where the main theme was the future of EU and the challenges of Euroscepticism, particularly in the partner countries. This event was focused on the on different types of Euroscepticism which are present in the partner countries and wider EU. The strategies to combat Euroscepticism and the reason for Euroscepticism increases. We will also address the future of EU and the challenges which are going to face the state of EU in the next decade. The EU is largely viewed as a cornerstone of European stability and prosperity. For much of the last decades, however, many EU countries have faced considerable economic difficulties. Despite an improved economic situation in the EU since 2017, economic pressures and societal changes have contributed to the rise of populist and anti-establishment political parties, at least some of which harbour anti-EU or “Eurosceptic” sentiments. Such trends have complicated the EU’s ability to deal with multiple internal and external challenges. Among the most prominent challenges are: COVID

19 pandemic challenges; Russia conflict; climate challenge challenges; democracy and rule-of-law concerns in some EU members; the departure of the United Kingdom from the EU (“Brexit”); migration and related societal integration concerns. Amid these difficult issues, some are questioning the future shape and character of the EU. Supporters of the EU worry that certain aspects of EU integration could be stopped or reversed. Others contend that the multiple crises could produce some beneficial reforms and ultimately transform the EU into a more effective, cohesive entity. One of the biggest challenges, which is facing the future of the EU, is certainly Euroscepticism. In the aftermath of a decade of crisis, the 2019 European Parliament elections confirmed the results of the 2014 elections as voters turned away from the traditional political families to vote for parties with a strong message on Europe, including Eurosceptic parties. It further evidenced the normalization of Euroscepticism, which has become a stable component of European politics

- **“EU Future”** big event in Austria, where the main theme was the state of European Parliament election. This event was focus on the participation in EU elections. On the positive developments in some EU states, but also on the negative ones in other. The last 2019 European elections had a relatively high turnout, which was driven by a surge in participation by young people, according to a Eurobarometer survey commissioned by the European Parliament. The results of the post-electoral Eurobarometer survey, one of the most comprehensive quantitative surveys of the last European elections publicly available, show that the turnout increase was powered mostly by the younger generation across the EU. Specifically, young citizens under 25 years (+14 percentage points) as well as the 25–39 year-olds (+12 percentage points) turned out in greater numbers than before. Overall turnout at European elections was 50.6% - the highest since 1994. 19 Member States registered increases in voter turnout since 2014, especially Poland, Romania, Spain, Austria, Hungary and Germany as well as Slovakia and Czech Republic, where turnout is traditionally very low. Meanwhile turnout is still very low in many countries especially in some of the project partner countries as Slovakia, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Croatia. Event theme and their speakers addressed the state of EU elections through the presentation of different studies, research, best practices, methodologies and practical implementation that made changes that increased voter turnout. After which a discussion will follow.
- **“Day of Democracy”** big event in Slovenia where the main theme was the state of Democracy in EU, particularly in the partner countries. Presented where many different measurements for the state of democracy in Europe and around the world as Democracy Index (compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit) and Global State of Democracy Indices (compiled by the International IDEA). Indexes show that democracy in Europe is declining and its needs revival. Indeed, the value, viability and future of democracy are more contested now than ever before in modern history, or at least since the 1930s. While the past four decades have seen a remarkable expansion of democracy throughout all regions of the world, recent years have been marked by declines in the fabric of both older and younger democracies. While the idea of democracy continues to mobilize people around the world, the practice of existing democracies has disappointed and disillusioned many citizens and democracy advocates. Speakers contributed to the main theme of the event by presenting best practices, research, analysis of positive/negative trends regarding the state of the democracy from their countries and spread their knowledge to all partner countries.



Survey analysis report

The survey analysis report was designed to address the attitudes of participants from Slovenia, Croatia, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary and Czech Republic. The survey was designed with the aims to analyse the findings of survey result about EU citizens attitudes regarding the EU, its future, Euroscepticism and EU elections. Responses were analysed based on the participants social demographic profile, which enabled us to get a deeper understanding of the specific attitudes of participants about the EU based on their socio demographic profile. At the end of the report, conclusions were presented to increase voter participation and promote a stronger union.

Introduction

During the project “Counter Euroscepticism with Your Vote” project partners created a survey research of the attitudes of participants from Slovenia, Croatia, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary and Czech Republic. The survey was designed with the aims to analyse the findings of survey result about EU citizens attitudes regarding the EU, it’s future, Euroscepticism and EU elections. The principle objectives of this research where:

- To provide a robust picture of the current rise of Euroscepticism and low voting turnout in EU elections,
- To identify current barriers to participation in EU elections,
- To identify the relationship between Euroscepticism and low voting turnout in EU elections,
- To determine recommendations that will inform future policy and communication,
- To provide a consolidated data analysis with research findings.

Project partners collected surveys from different participants in their communities / country. We created online survey and translated them in the native languages from partner countries. Together partners collected 621 responses: Slovenia 52, Austria 31, Czech Republic 51, Hungary 42, Croatia 104 and Slovakia 341.

The survey results were analysed with qualitative methods to research the connections of the respondents’ demographic data to their attitudes towards EU, it’s future, Euroscepticism and EU elections. The survey consisted of three parts: Personal information; Views about the EU, it’s Future and Euroscepticism; Views about the EU election. The first part about personal information included the gender, age, environment, country, occupational status and highest level of education of the participants. The second part views about the EU, it’s Future and Euroscepticism included questions about the level of trust in the European Union; level of general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union; remain to be part of the EU; level of consideration of EU citizens’ voices into the EU decision making process; level of your understanding of the EU legislative process; EU institutions are you well familiar with; community that is the most important for you benefited from the EU membership; level of accessibility of the information about how the European Union works; outlook on the future importance of the role or EU; what would best describe the ideal future for the European Union. The third part about the views about the EU election included questions about if the participants voted in the 2019 EU elections; when did they decide to vote; why did you vote for the political party you voted for; what was the main reasons why you decided to vote in the recent European Parliament elections; what are the issues which made you vote in the recent European Parliament elections; if you are someone who didn’t vote, when did you decide NOT to vote; what are the main reasons why you did NOT vote in the recent European Parliament elections.



Socio Demographic Profile

The survey responses were analysed based on the participants social demographic profile, which enabled us to get a deeper understanding of the specific attitudes of participants about the EU based on their socio demographic profile. In the table 1 are the results from the participant’s responses, their gender, age and residence.

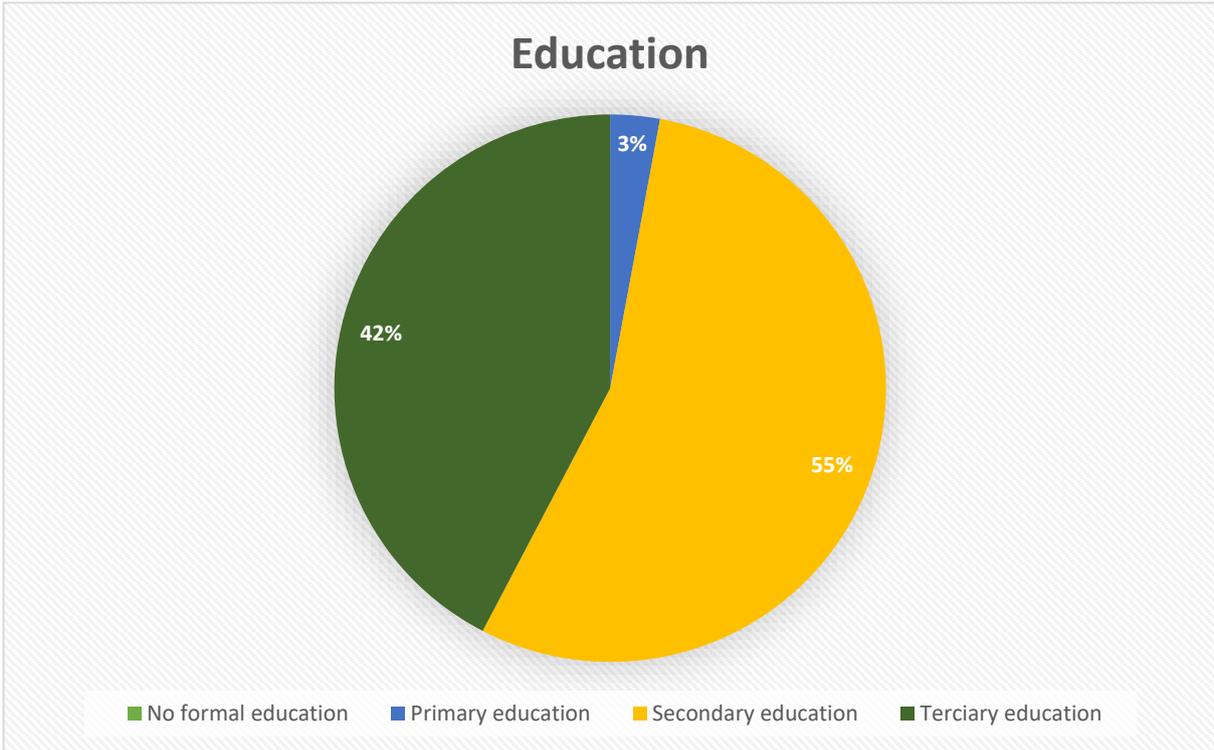
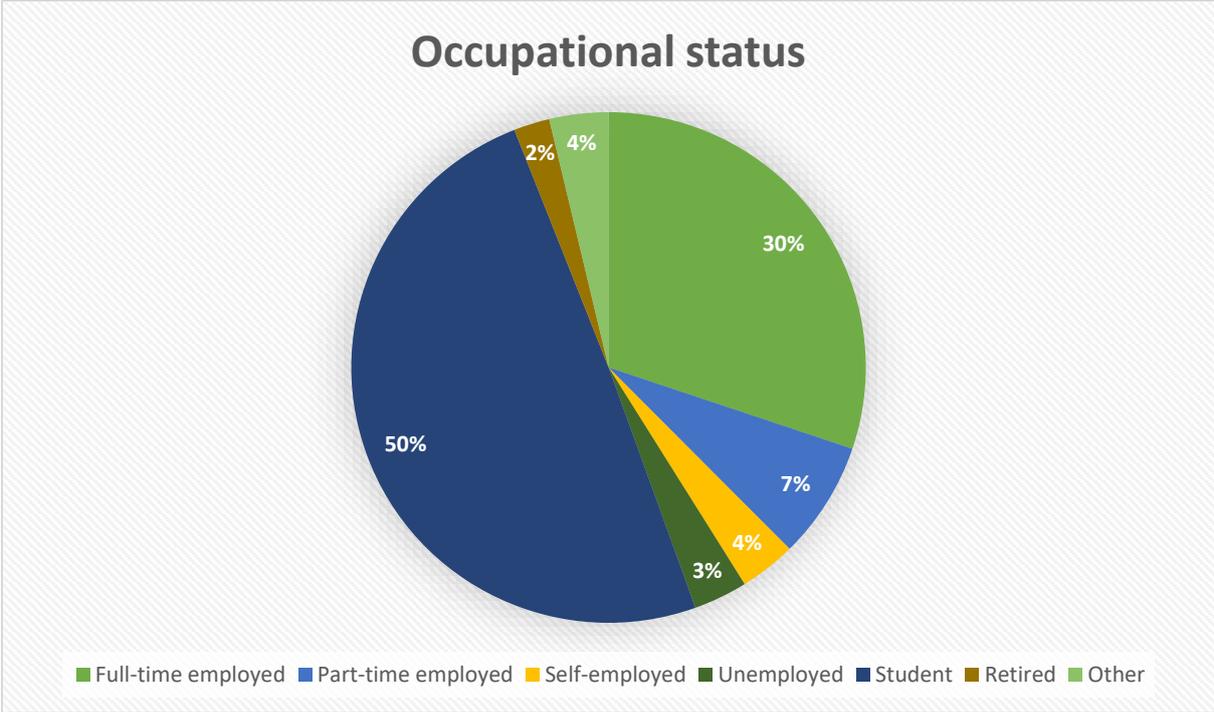
Basic Socio Demographic Profile	
Gender	
Male	28%
Female	72%
Age	
<18	3%
19-29	60%
30-44	22%
45-64	11%
65+	4%
Residence	
Urban	65%
Rural	35%

Table 1: Data from participants

From the results in the table 1 we can see that the majority of respondents’ where female in the age group of 19-29. The demographic of the participants show us that 85% of respondents’ where younger the 45. We were also interested in the residence of participants, the results show that the majority of respondents’ live in urban areas with 65% and rural areas with only 35%.

Occupational status from the participants showed that 50% of participants where students and 41% head some type of employment, 3% where unemployed and 2% where retired. Below are also presented the results of the educational level of participants, the majority head reached secondary education level with 55%, tertiary level was reached by 42% and primary level by 3%.

Survey results were in the next chapters analysed based on the social demographic profile of respondents. We analysed the data based on the country, age and residence. During the analyse we also use the responses based on voting participation and the question regarding staying and leaving EU to analyse the responses.



Views about the EU, it's Future and Euroscepticism

The survey report focused on the view of EU citizens about the EU, its future and Euroscepticism. The European Union is a unique partnership in which member states have pooled sovereignty in certain policy areas and harmonized laws on a wide range of economic and political issues. The EU is the latest stage in a process of European integration begun after World War II, initially by six Western European countries, to promote peace, security, and economic development. The EU currently consists of 27 (as of 2021) member states, including most of the formerly communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Congressional Research Service, 2018).

The EU is largely viewed as a cornerstone of European stability and prosperity. For much of the last decade, however, many EU countries have faced considerable economic difficulties. Despite an improved economic situation in the EU since 2017, economic pressures and societal changes have contributed to the rise of populist and anti-establishment political parties, at least some of which harbour anti-EU or “euroskeptic” sentiments. Such trends have complicated the EU’s ability to deal with multiple internal and external challenges. Among the most prominent challenges were and some still are (Congressional Research Service, 2018; Fabbri, 2020):

- Euro crisis
- the departure of the United Kingdom from the EU (“Brexit”);
- democracy and rule-of-law concerns;
- migration and related societal integration concerns;
- COVID-19
- a resurgent Russia

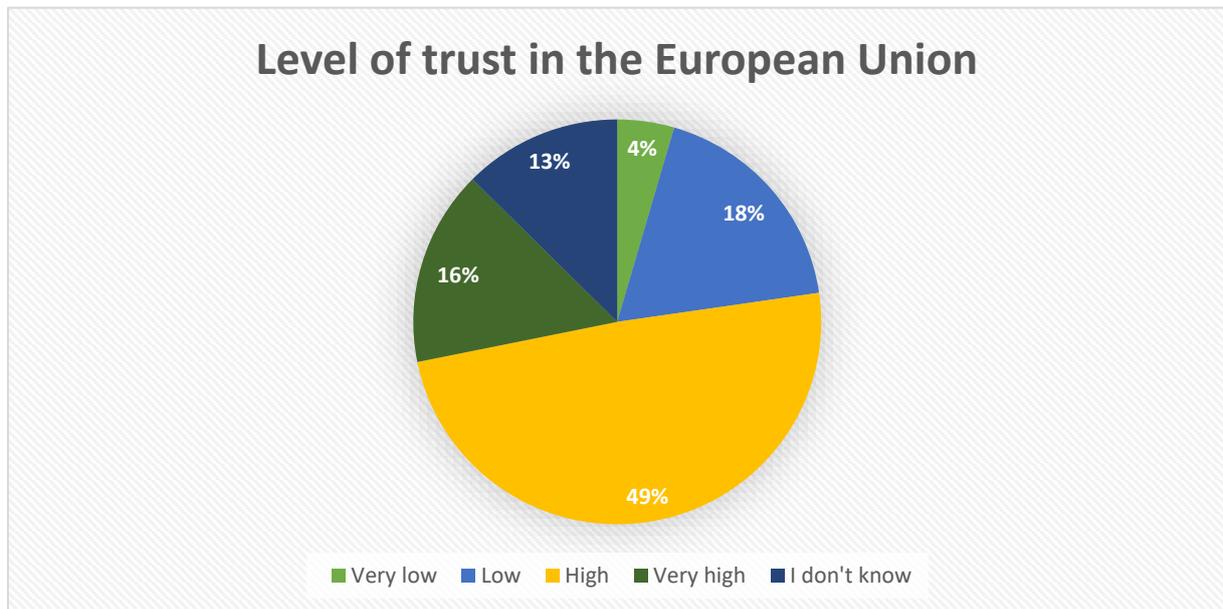
The EU has been in a prolonged period of trouble in which it has faced multiple and simultaneous crises. This has led scholars to label the past several years as a ‘decade of crisis’ (Schimmelfennig, 2018) or as the ‘age of crisis’ (Dinan, 2017). The EU’s scope of intervention and legitimacy are increasingly challenged, and Brexit has triggered new existential debates on the purposes and forms of European integration. The increased politicization of EU issues has opened up a space for Eurosceptic actors to mobilize domestic audiences against the EU even more (Zeitlin, 2019). It is against this specific background that the 2019 European Parliament (EP) elections took place. Unsurprisingly, given the context, voters turned away from traditional political families and voted for parties with a strong message on Europe. These elections illustrated the increasing relevance of the ‘integration–demarcation’ divide at the expense of a normalization of the left–right cleavage, as Liberals, Green parties and Eurosceptic actors – especially the radical right – were particularly successful. Euroscepticism has almost become a widespread feature of European party systems, ‘making it a near universal staple component of European politics (Brack, 2020).

Over the last decade, political parties opposed to EU integration have almost doubled their votes. The general opinion of the EU has also deteriorated, revealing a growing number of people who distrust the Union. The results of the report “The geography of EU discontent” show that economic and industrial decline are driving the anti-EU vote. Areas with lower employment rates or with a less-educated workforce are also more likely to vote anti-EU. Once these factors have been taken into account, many of the purported causes of the geography of discontent either matter much less than expected or their impact varies depending on the strength of opposition to the European project (Dijkstra L., Poelman H. & Rodríguez-Pose A., 2020).

To address the next challenges of Euroscepticism we designed the survey to capture different view of participants about the EU that can give us a deeper understanding of the reasons for Euroscepticism. We were interested in the:

- level of trust in the European Union;
- level of general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union;
- remaining a part of the EU;
- level of consideration of EU citizens’ voices into the EU decision making process;
- level of your understanding of the EU legislative process;
- EU institutions are you well familiar with;
- benefits from the EU membership;
- level of accessibility of the information about how the European Union works;
- outlook on the future importance of the role or EU;
- what would best describe the ideal future for the European Union.

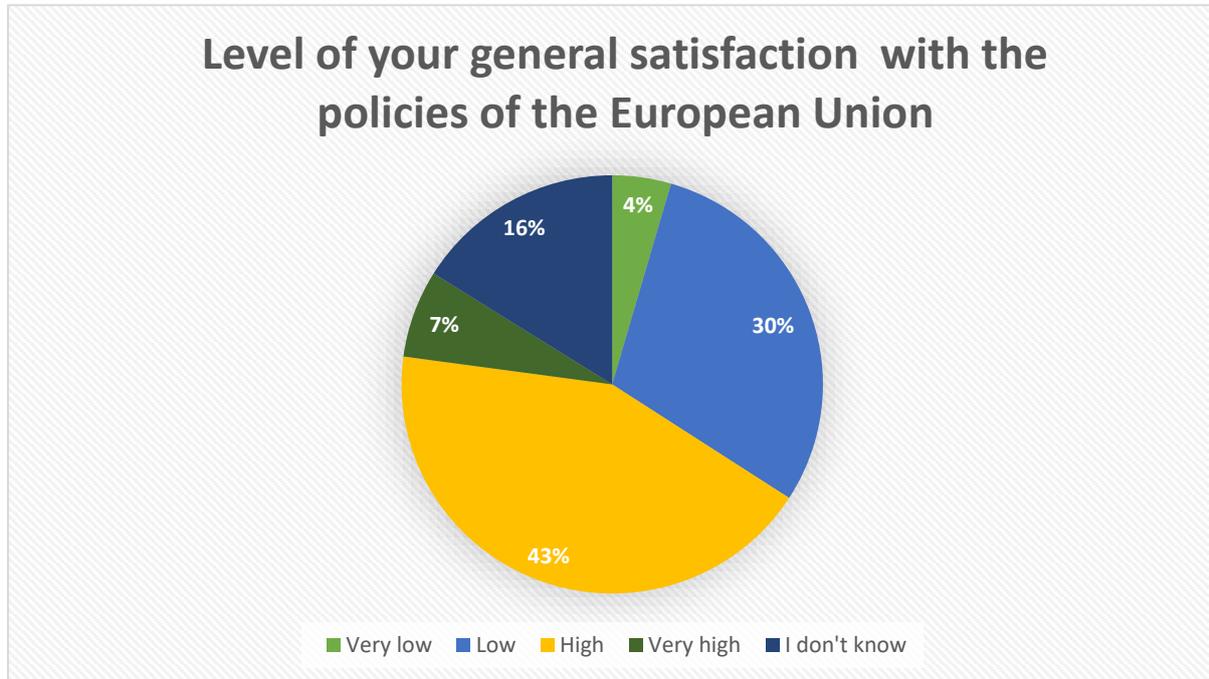
Trust in EU is a very important indicator of participants’ attitudes toward the EU. Below are the results regarding the level of trust in the European Union, the results indicate that 65% have high or very high trust in the EU and only 22% head low trust. In the table 2 are presented the national results of the responses. High level of trust were between 42% in Croatia and 58% in Austria, very high level were between 7% in Hungary and 36% in Austria, low trust were between 3% in Austria and 29% in Hungary and the very low trust were between 2% in Czech Republic and 10% in Hungary. Together the low or very low trust in the EU was the largest in Hungary with 39% and the largest high or very high level of trust was present in 94% in Austria.



Level of trust in the European Union per country						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Very low	3%	4%	10%	2%	5%	3%
Low	21%	13%	29%	6%	20%	3%
High	42%	58%	45%	55%	49%	58%
Very high	14%	18%	7%	31%	12%	36%
I don't know	20%	7%	10%	6%	14%	0%

Table 2: Data from participants

The second question about the views of citizens of the EU was “What is the level of your general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union?”. The results indicate that 50% of respondents’ have a high or very high satisfaction with the policies of the EU, 34% low or very low and 16% don’t know. In the table 3 are presented the national results of survey responses. The lowest level of satisfaction with EU policies was present in Hungary with 52% (low or very low) and highest in 79% in Austria (high or very high).



Level of your general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Very low	1%	5%	7%	2%	6%	3%
Low	21%	15%	45%	22%	35%	12%
High	47%	58%	38%	61%	36%	61%
Very high	8%	11%	2%	6%	5%	18%
I don't know	23%	11%	7%	10%	18%	6%

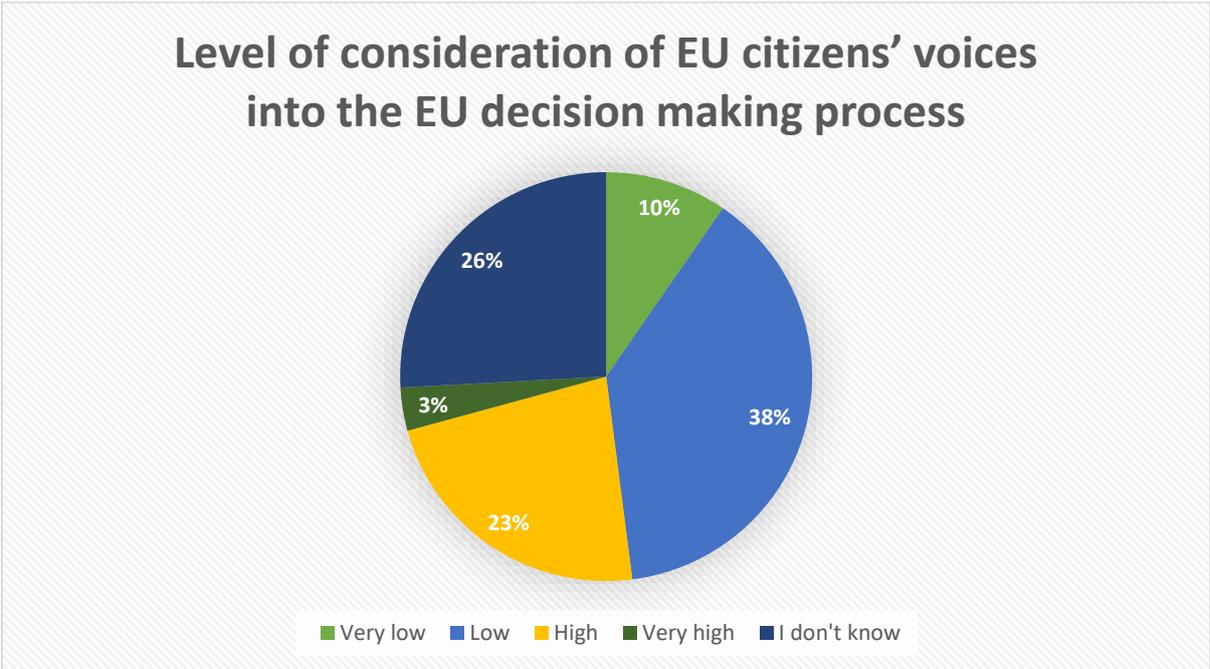
Table 3: Data from participants

The questions regarding trust and satisfaction in EU policies are of greater importance for the future of the EU, especially in the developing in recent years. On 24 June 2016, citizens of United Kingdom and the rest of the world woke up to the news that Britain had voted by a slim majority to leave the EU. This came as a huge surprise as, although many polls had predicted a tight outcome in the vote, the overwhelming expectation was that Britain would remain in the EU. It showed that support from most UK parties – albeit often distinctly lukewarm or ambivalent – for the remain option and the benefits of remaining in the EU trumpeted by a multitude of experts were not enough to win the referendum. The outcome has been described in many ways, from the will of the people to a flawed result based on misinformation, but its consequences will profoundly shape the future of the UK and the rest of the EU. Furthermore, public opinion in the UK around the time of the referendum was not the most anti-EU. In 2016, in seven Member States, more people tended not trust the EU than in the UK. This led to heightened speculation about other referenda on leaving the EU. However, the Brexit vote was not the first sign of growing disenchantment with the EU. The share of votes for parties opposed to EU integration, has steadily increased over the last 15 years. The vote for parties (strongly)



opposed to EU integration grew from 10% to 18% between 2000 and 2018 (The geography of EU discontent). The same upward trend remains if we include the parties somewhat opposed to EU integration. This is not the result of more votes in the UK going to anti-EU parties (although they did). The share of the vote against EU integration increased by almost the same in the EU without the UK figures. Parties (strongly) opposed to European integration tend to advocate leaving the EU and parties that are somewhat opposed to European integration want the EU to change substantially but they do not necessarily advocate leaving the Union or turning it into a loose coalition of sovereign states. The increase in the vote for parties opposed to EU integration is, in part, a reflection of changing public opinion. There are big differences in EU countries regarding the trust in the EU and further Integration. In Greece, the level of distrust is the highest in the EU. As a result, two thirds of the Greek population tend not to trust the EU, the highest share among EU Member States. In Greece, this opinion is also reflected in the high share of votes for parties against EU integration, although this is not always the case. Denmark, for example, has one of the lowest levels of distrust but one of the highest shares of votes for parties (strongly) opposed to EU integration. In Spain, the opposite is the case: it has the fifth highest distrust of the Union but no significant party as yet against EU integration (Dijkstra L., Poelman H. & Rodríguez-Pose A., 2020).

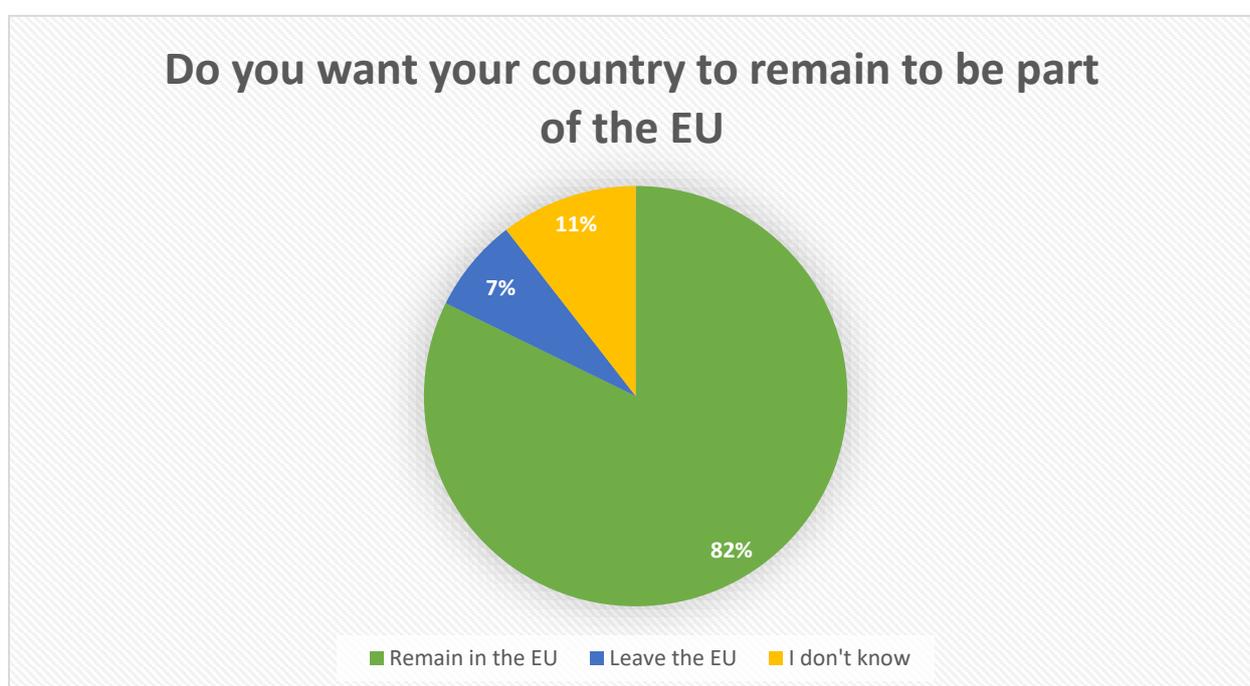
We were also interested in the perception of EU citizens what is the level of consideration of EU citizens’ voices into the EU decision making process. Survey results indicate that the majority thinks that their voices are not considered in the EU decision making process, only 26% think that their voices are considered (high or very high level), 48% think that their consideration is low (low or very low level) and 26% don’t know. In the table 4 are presented the national results. The level of consideration of EU citizens voices in the EU decision making process was the lowest in Hungary with 22% (very low level) and highest in Slovenia with 36% (very high level). The results also indicate that the low consideration (low or very low) was the highest in Hungary 72% and lowest in Croatia 25%, the highest consideration (high or very high) was the highest in Czech Republic 43%, we also gathered many responses were respondents indicated they didn’t now if citizens voices are considered, the highest levels were in Croatia 41%, Austria 30% and Slovakia 27%.



Level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Very low	3%	7%	22%	6%	11%	12%
Low	22%	36%	50%	37%	43%	36%
High	29%	36%	28%	39%	16%	12%
Very high	5%	4%	0%	4%	2%	9%
I don't know	41%	16%	0%	14%	27%	30%

Table 4: Data from participants

We asked participants' "Do you want your country to remain to be part of the EU?". One of the core questions regarding the future of EU and the perception of respondents from the project partner countries regarding their future in EU. The results indicate that only 7% of the respondents' want to leave the EU, 82% want to remain a part of the EU and 11% didn't know. In the table 5 are presented the national results which indicate that the lowest level of respondents' that want to remain in EU was in Croatia 68% and the highest level of respondents' that want to leave the EU was in Slovakia 9%.

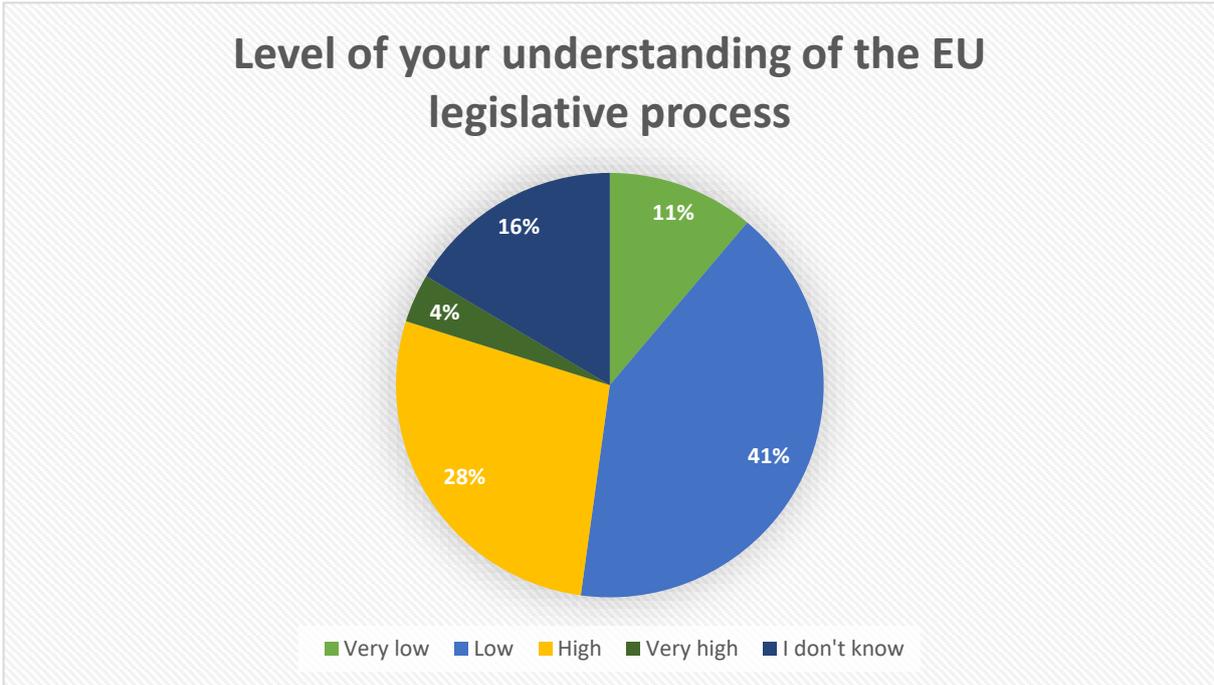


Do you want your country to remain to be part of the EU?						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Remain in the EU	68%	87%	83%	90%	83%	97%
Leave the EU	7%	4%	5%	8%	9%	0%
I don't know	25%	9%	12%	2%	8%	3%

Table 5: Data from participants

One of the very important aspects of the survey analyse was to analyse the level of understanding of the EU legislative process and knowledge of EU institutions. Understanding the EU legislative process, implementation of policies and initiatives is one of the cornerstones to build trust in the EU.

The results from respondents' indicate that many have low understanding of the legislative process of the EU. 11% of respondents' have very low understanding, 41% low, 28% high and only 4% very high. Aggregated only 32% of respondents' have a high understanding and 52% have low understanding of the EU legislative process.



Level of your understanding of the EU legislative process						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Very low	6%	4%	14%	31%	10%	12%
Low	38%	42%	48%	24%	45%	30%
High	26%	40%	26%	27%	27%	24%
Very high	6%	4%	7%	8%	1%	12%
I don't know	24%	11%	5%	10%	17%	21%

Table 6: Data from participants

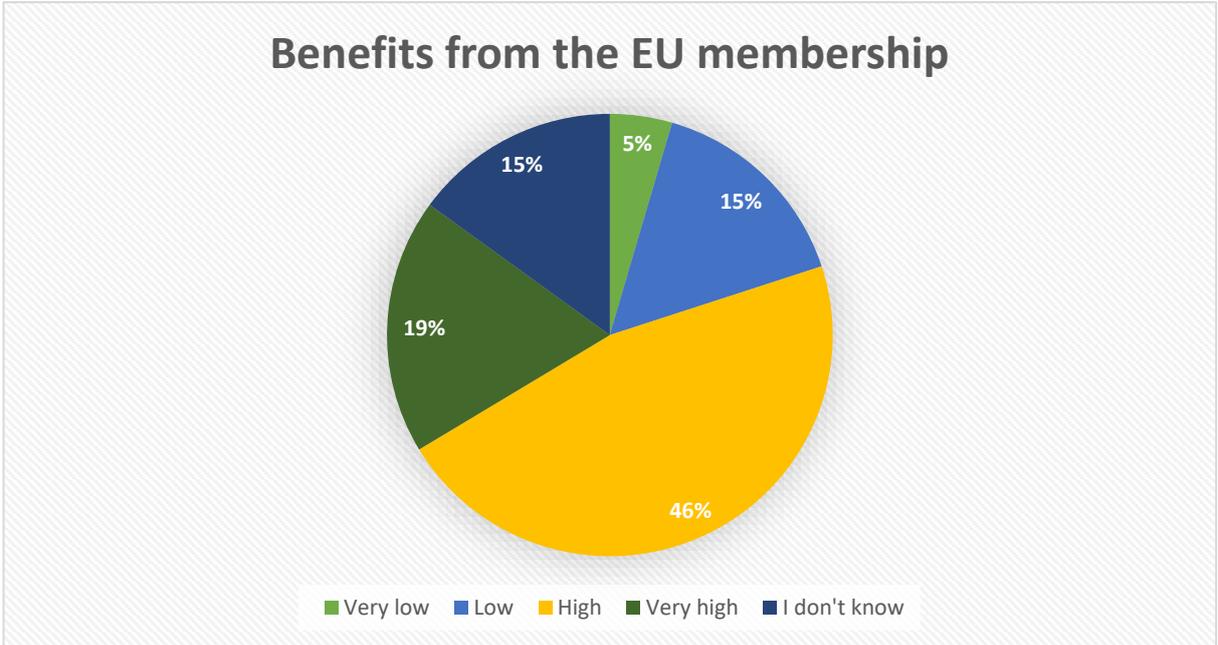
Understanding of legislative process and the workings of EU is crucial for further integration and increasing the level of trust of citizens in the EU. The importance of knowledge was analysed in many studies, that showed that citizens from democracies with high ranking show a higher understanding of legislative procedures.

In 2018, International IDEA, formulated a Global Agenda for the Renewal of Representation. The agenda reflects these organizations’ collective view on the best response to address the underlying drivers of populism and focuses on a number of action points to improve the quality, transparency and functioning of democratic institutions as well as their economic and social outcomes. One of the main points of the agenda was the investment in civic education and digital media literacy. Governments and democracy assistance providers should invest in civic education to promote democratic values, equipping citizens of all ages with the skills required to engage with information in a critical manner while remaining respectful of differences. Civil society or civic educators should provide the public with opportunities for direct exposure to real-life participation, emphasize the value of community service and increase digital media literacy. Governments and democracy assistance providers should collaborate with the media to ensure that civic education is effective and reaches a broad audience. Political parties and parliaments should invest in the skills of their own staff and members to ensure that political institutions use new communication channels, such as social media, in a way that strengthens and enriches democratic practice. Academic researchers should expand our



understanding of how new channels of communication affect democratic practice (International IDEA, 2019)

Participants were also asked to what extent did their community benefited from the EU. Respondents indicated that 65% benefited from the EU and 20% indicated that they didn't benefited. In the table 7 are presented the national results, they indicate that the highest level of benefits was presented in Croatia and the lowest in Slovenia 4%, the highest level of very low benefits was present in Hungary with 7% and lowest in Croatia with 2%. The aggregate results per countries show us that the highest level of low benefits (low or very low level) was present in Hungary with 38% and lowest in Austria with 9%. The highest level of high benefits (high or very high level) was present in Croatia with 78% and lowest in Hungary with 55%.

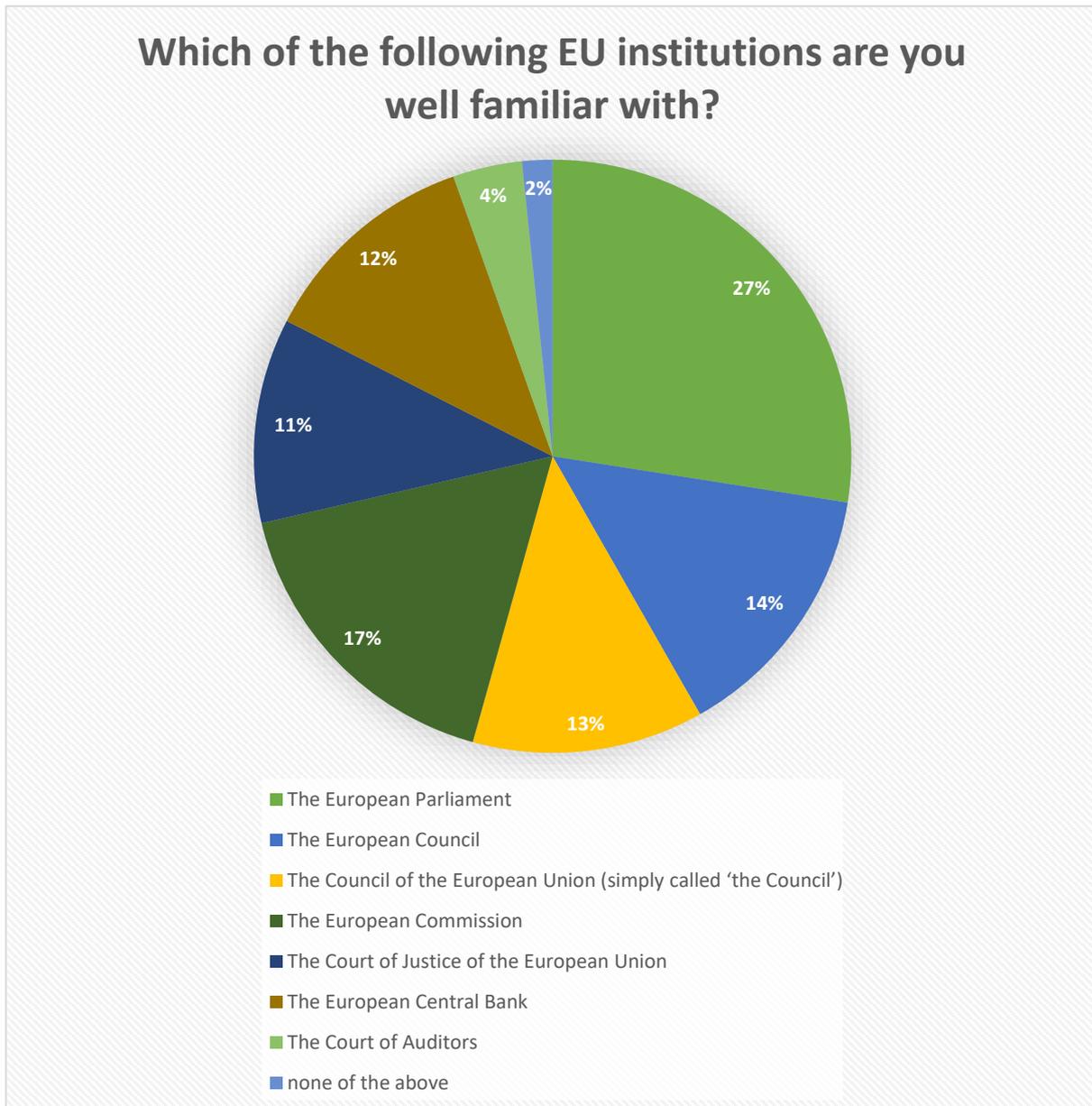


Benefits from the EU membership						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Very low	2%	4%	7%	4%	5%	3%
Low	17%	11%	31%	18%	15%	6%
High	50%	58%	36%	41%	47%	36%
Very high	28%	4%	19%	27%	15%	33%
I don't know	4%	24%	7%	10%	18%	21%

Table 7: Data from participants

One very important topic of the survey was the knowledge of EU institutions. We asked participants "Which of the following EU institutions are you well familiar with?", the most frequent responses where 27% European Parliament, 14% European Council, 13% Council of the European Union, 17% European Commission, 11% Court of Justice of the European Union, 12% European Central Bank, 4% Court of Auditors and only 2% didn't know any institution. We analysed from the responses also, how many of the listed institutions are respondents' familiar with only 36% of respondents' where familiar with more than 3 EU institutions and 19% of respondents' where only familiar with one EU institutions. The results are in line with many other studies that indicate a lack of understanding of working of the

EU institutions. In the table 9 are presented national results they indicate that the European Parliament is the most familiar EU institution with 32% in Slovakia till 21% in Croatia, the second very familiar institution is European Commission with 23% in Austria till 14% in Slovakia, all other EU institutions where less familiar to our respondents' with approximately 10%. Only the Court of Auditors was not even familiar to 10% of respondents' and the participants that were not familiar with none of the listed institutions was the highest in Hungary with 10% and Slovenia with 6%.



Number of Institutions you are familiar with							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
%	19%	21%	19%	11%	11%	7%	7%

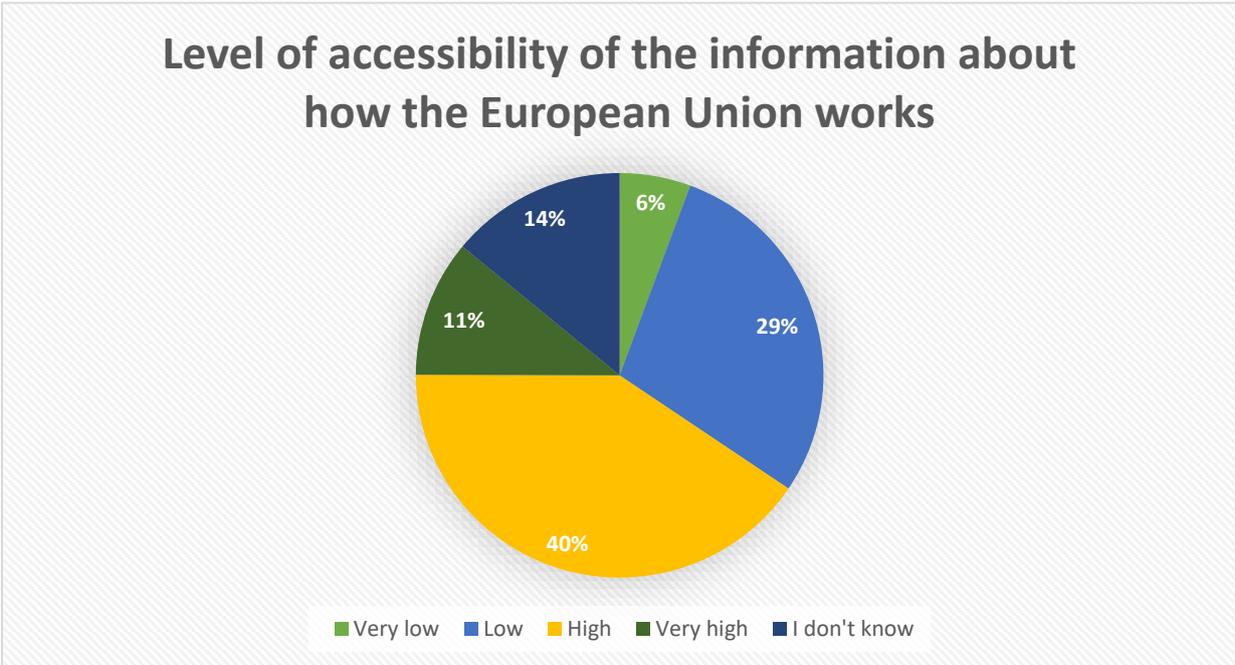
Table 8: Data from participants



Which of the following EU institutions are you well familiar with?						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
The European Parliament	21%	27%	26%	30%	32%	22%
The European Council	16%	13%	13%	14%	14%	15%
The Council of the European Union (simply called 'the Council')	11%	10%	9%	14%	14%	14%
The European Commission	19%	20%	20%	19%	14%	23%
The Court of Justice of the European Union	12%	11%	10%	8%	12%	11%
The European Central Bank	12%	10%	8%	11%	13%	9%
The Court of Auditors	8%	3%	5%	3%	1%	7%
none of the above	2%	6%	10%	1%	0%	0%

Table 9: Data from participants

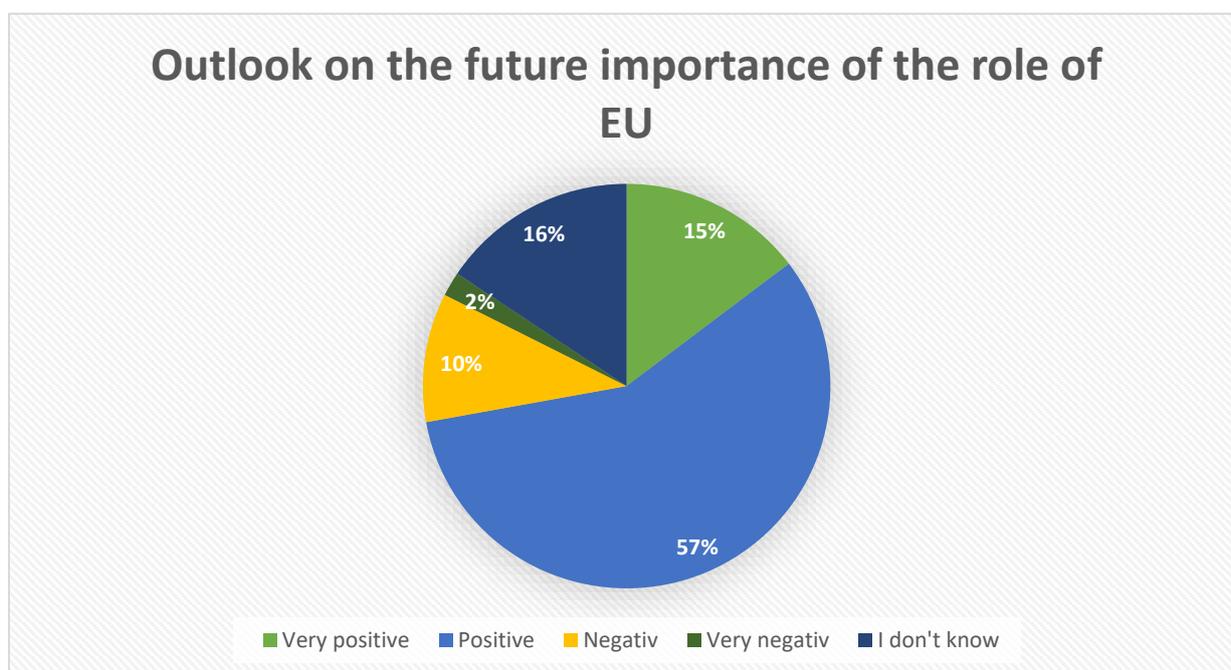
Understanding how the EU works is a very important topic, there are many different studies that analysed the connection between lack of knowledge about the EU and Euroscepticism. The results from this survey analyse show that there are many EU citizens who don't understand the EU legislative process and are not familiar with EU institutions. Because of these correlations we asked participants what they think about accessibility of the information about how the European Union works. The results show that 6% think that the level of accessibility of information is very low and 29% as low. Results indicate that more than a third of respondents perceive that there is a low level of accessibility of information about the EU and only 51% of respondents' perceive that the level is high (high or very high level). In the table 10 are presented the national results they indicate that the very high level of accessibility of information was the highest in Austria with 21% and the lowest in Slovenia with 4%, the very low level was the highest in Czech Republic with 14% and lowest in Hungary with 0%. However, the aggregate results show us that the low level (low or very low) of accessibility was the highest in Czech Republic with 49% and lowest in Slovenia with 15%. The high level (high or very high) of accessibility was the highest in Slovenia with 73% and the lowest in 43% in Czech Republic.



Level of accessibility of the information about how the European Union works						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Very low	1%	4%	0%	14%	7%	6%
Low	15%	11%	33%	35%	35%	33%
High	42%	69%	40%	27%	39%	27%
Very high	15%	4%	7%	16%	9%	21%
I don't know	28%	13%	19%	8%	10%	12%

Table 10: Data from participants

The 15. Survey question was “What is your outlook on the future importance of the role of EU? “. The question captures the participants outlook on the EU future, 72% described it as positive and only 12% as negative. In the table 11 are presented the national results which indicate that the positive (positive or very positive) outlook was the highest in Slovenia with 87% and the lowest in Croatia with 66%. The negative (negative or very negative) outlook was highest in Czech Republic with 18% and lowest in Austria with 3%.

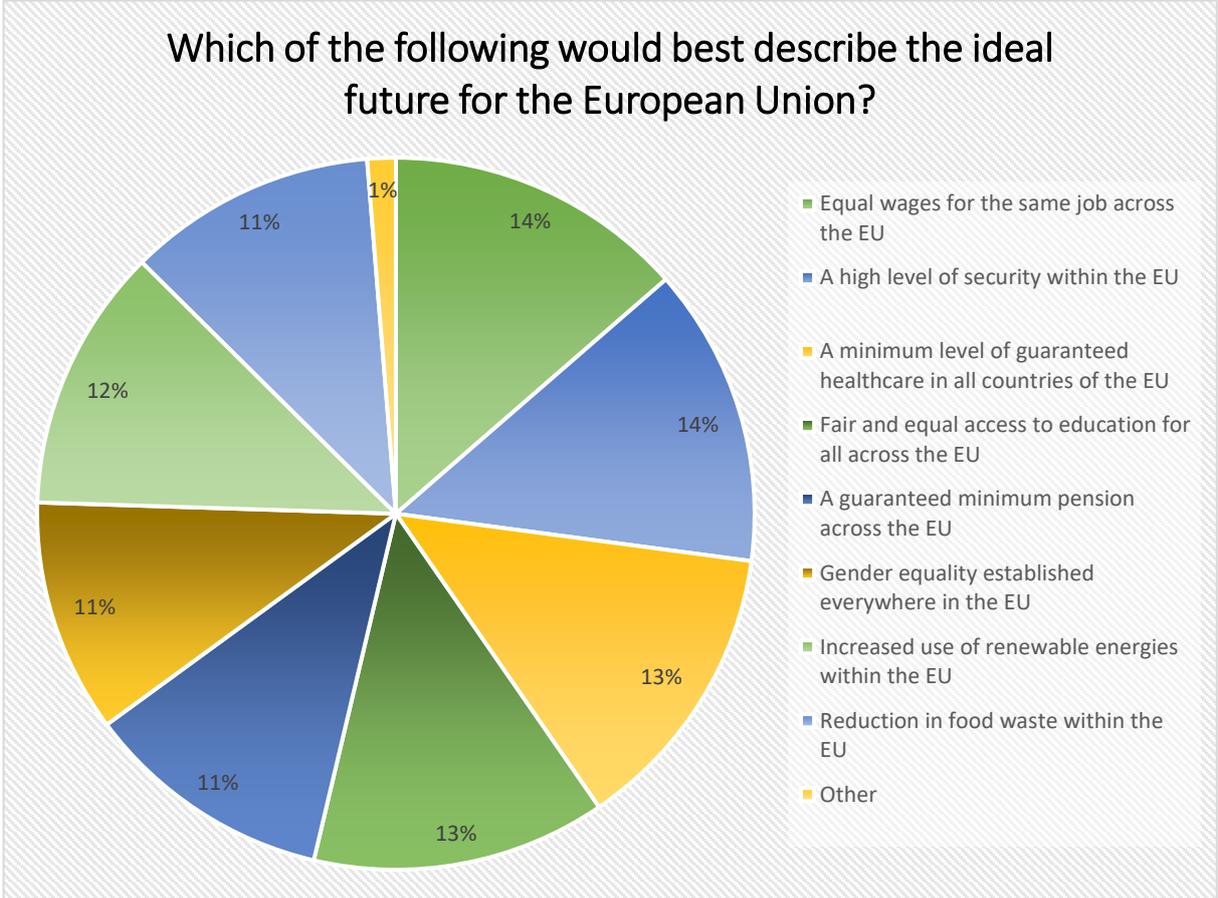


Outlook on the future importance of the role of EU						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Very positive	9%	11%	10%	14%	18%	12%
Positive	57%	76%	62%	65%	52%	67%
Negative	7%	9%	14%	16%	11%	3%
Very negative	1%	0%	5%	2%	2%	0%
I don't know	26%	4%	10%	4%	17%	18%

Table 11: Data from participants



After gathering the data about the level of trust in the EU and the outlook for the future, we asked participants what would for them be the ideal future for the EU. The results were very diverse and equally distributed between the options. They indicate a very different outlook of EU citizens about the ideal future of the EU, all the options received more than 10% and not more than 14%.



Views about the EU election

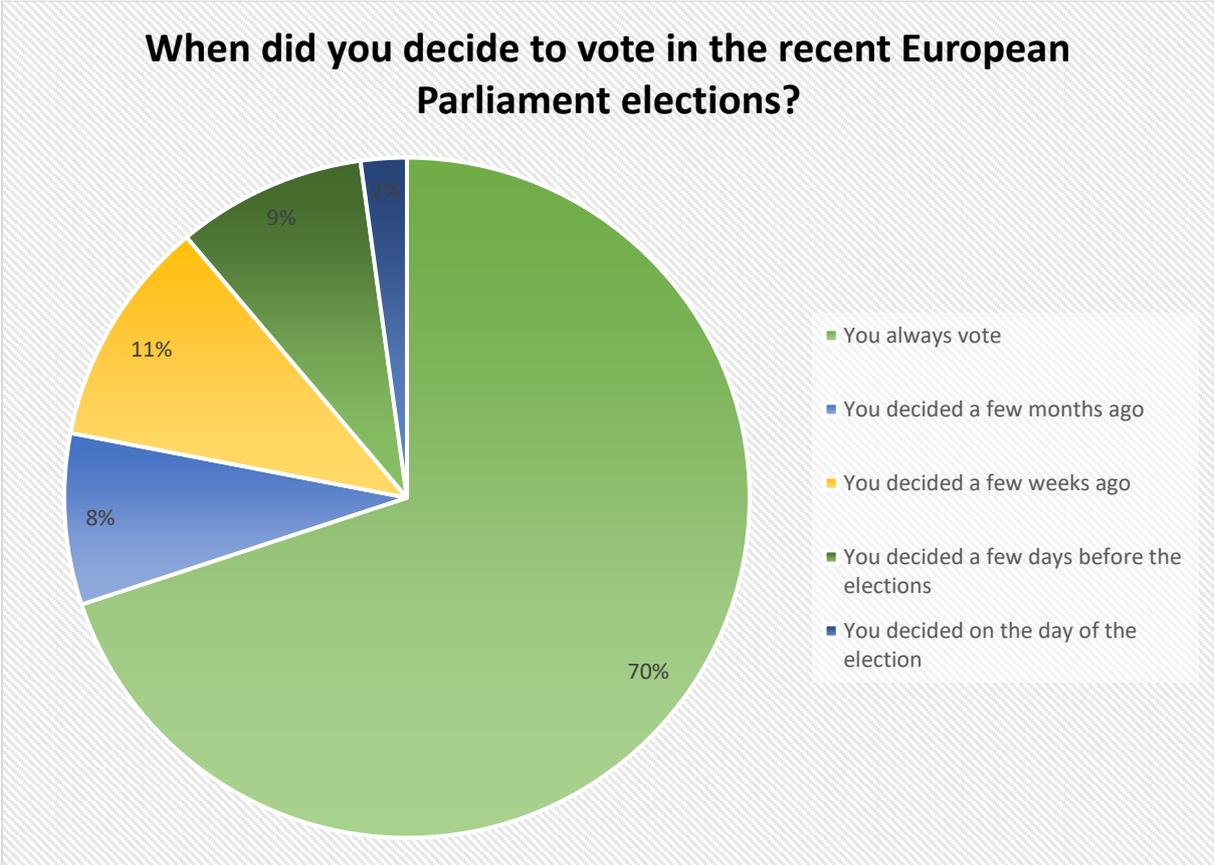
The third part of the survey included the questions about the EU citizens views about the EU elections. Questions that participants were asked included:

- when did you decide to vote in the recent European Parliament elections?
- what are the main reasons why you decided to vote in the recent European Parliament elections?
- what are the issues which made you vote in the recent European Parliament elections?
- if you are someone who didn't vote, when did you decide NOT to vote in the recent European Parliament elections?
- what are the main reasons why you did NOT vote in the recent European Parliament elections?

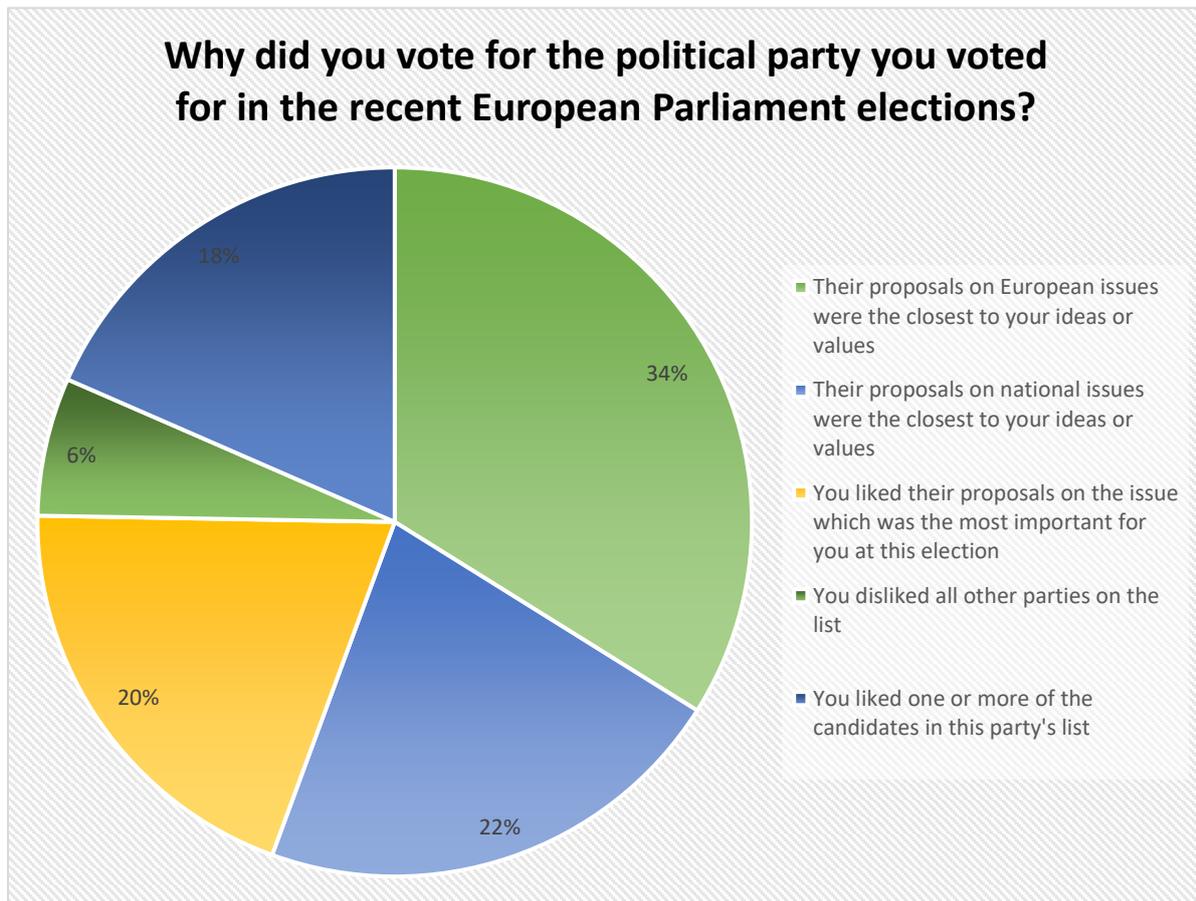
The EU elections in 2019 saw a significant increase in voter turnout, however there are still big differences between EU countries. The much higher turnout in many countries is shown to be stemming from the greater participation among younger people. Also, a sense of civic duty has become more ingrained in Europeans when they think about European Parliament elections, while increasingly favourable views of the EU have also impacted on voter turnout. The overall turnout at the recent European Parliament elections was 50.6%. This is the highest turnout since the 1994 elections and is a striking increase from 2014 (when the turnout was 42.6%). The overall increase in turnout is mirrored in 19 Member States, with large increases since 2014 in Poland, Romania, Spain, Austria, Hungary and Germany, as well as substantial increases in countries with the lowest turnout, such as Slovakia and Czechia. Turnout fell in eight countries, but by no more than 3 percentage points. Despite the increase in turnout, large differences remain between individual Member States, ranging from 88% in Belgium to 23% in Slovakia. It is important to bear in mind that voting is compulsory in five countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Cyprus, and Greece. Although the turnout in 2019 was higher among all groups of the population, the increase was led by the younger generation, with large increases among people aged under 25 (+14 pp) and aged 25–39 (+12 pp). The cross-section of voters in 2019 appears to be more highly educated than in 2014, while the declared level of political interest has increased among both voters and abstainers. This insight offers a promising starting point for further increasing turnout in future years (Eurobarometer, 2019).



The responses were also analysed based on the decision to vote in previous EU elections, 41% of the respondents didn't vote and 59% voted in the last EU elections, which is much higher than the result in the last EU elections in the partner countries. The majority 70% of respondents indicated that they always vote and the other 30% decided before the election a few weeks, months and days before the election. Respondents can be divided into two broad groups: those who always vote; and those who were not always sure whether to vote (at all). As we see below, a large proportion of voters are in the first group, but there are notable findings for the second, less 'stable' group.



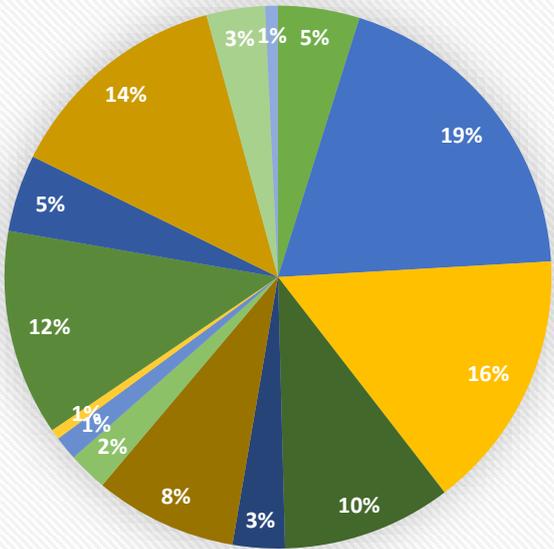
Next question was “Why did you vote for the political party you voted for in the recent European Parliament elections?”, the purpose of the question was to analyse the responses based on their motivation to vote. The majority of respondents’ 34% voted because of the proposals on the European issues were the closes to their ideas or values, 22% voted because of the national issues, 20% voted because of issues that were most important at this election, 18% voted because they like their candidates and 6% dislike all other parties.



One important aspect of the respondents’ view about the EU is also the main reason that made them vote in the last EU elections. This aspect presents the influence of EU citizens to influence politics. The results indicated: 19% that this is their duty, 16% that their in favour of EU, 12% that their always vote, 14% you feel European or citizen of the EU, only 5% voted to express disapproval or disapproval with the EU or disapproval with the national government and other reasons. In the table 12 are also the national results. They indicate many similarities between counties, in all countries was the answer “this is your duty as a citizen” chosen by 13% in Czech Republic to 29% in Hungary, in all other countries this answer was chosen by 19% of respondents’. The answer “you are in favour of the EU” was chosen by 9% in Hungary to 23% in Slovenia. The answer “you always vote” was chosen by 10% from Croatia to 19% in Hungary. It’s positive that percentage of participants who voted to express disagreement was only 5% in Croatia to 0 in below 1% in Austria. The percentage of participants who voted to express disapproval with the EU was even lower. The percentage of respondents who choose the answer “you feel European or citizen of the EU” was 12% in Croatia to 17% in Austria.



What are the main reasons why you decided to vote



- To influence the choice of the president of the European Commission
- This is your duty as citizen
- You are in favour of the EU
- You can make things change in voting in the European Parliament elections
- To express your disagreement
- To support the political party you feel close to
- To support the national Government
- To express disapproval of the national Government
- To express disapproval of the EU
- You always vote
- You are very interested in European affairs
- You feel European or citizen of the EU
- The information you received during the campaign convinced you to vote
- Other

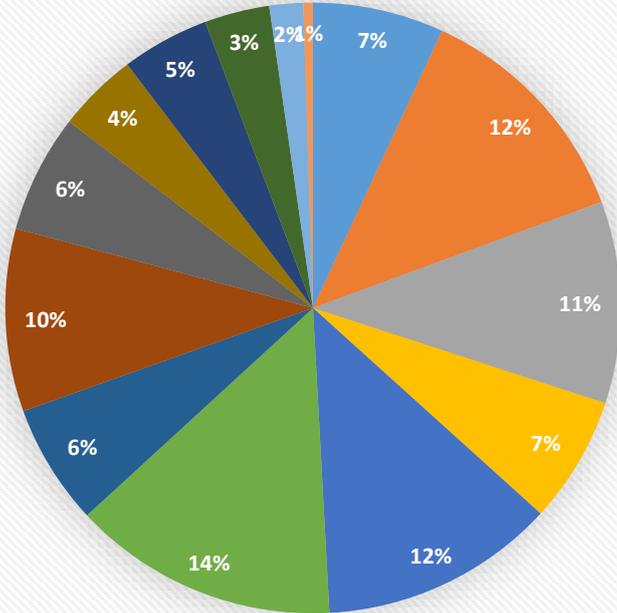
What are the main reasons why you decided to vote						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
To influence the choice of the president of the European Commission	4%	6%	2%	3%	6%	2%
This is your duty as citizen	18%	19%	29%	13%	20%	19%
You are in favour of the EU	14%	23%	9%	21%	14%	21%
You can make things change in voting in the European Parliament elections	8%	0%	0%	7%	12%	14%
To express your disagreement	5%	4%	3%	0%	3%	0%
To support the political party you feel close to	3%	6%	7%	9%	10%	3%
To support the national Government	2%	0%	9%	3%	2%	1%
To express disapproval of the national Government	4%	2%	3%	1%	1%	0%
To express disapproval of the EU	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
You always vote	10%	17%	19%	11%	12%	13%
You are very interested in European affairs	5%	6%	2%	10%	3%	9%
You feel European or citizen of the EU	12%	15%	14%	16%	13%	17%
The information you received during the campaign convinced you to vote	10%	2%	0%	2%	3%	0%
Other	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%	0%

Table 12: Data from participants

We analysed the responses also based on the issues which made EU citizens vote. The most important issues of the respondents' were: 12% economy and growth, 11% social protection of EU citizens, 12% combating climate change and protecting environment, 14% promoting human rights and democracy, 10% the way EU should be working in the future, all other option received less than 10%. In the table 13 are presented the national results. The results indicate many similarities but also differences between countries. The bigger differences are present regarding "immigration", it was chosen by below 10% of respondents' in Slovenia (3%), Croatia (5%), Czech Republic (4%) and Slovakia (7%), and above 10% in Austria (12%) and Hungary (15%). The other bigger difference was "Social protection of EU citizens", in Czech Republic and Hungary only 6% choose this option, however in the other countries the percentages were much higher 10% in Slovakia, 12% in Croatia, 16% in Slovenia and 18% in Austria. The bigger familiarity in national answers was in the option "Economy and growth", the national results were in the range of 11% - 17%, "Combating climate change and protecting the environment" was chosen in the range of 9% - 14%, "Promoting human rights and democracy" was chosen in the range of 9% - 17%. The answer "The way the EU should be working in the future" was chosen by 6% to 13%.



What are the issues which made you vote in the recent European Parliament elections?

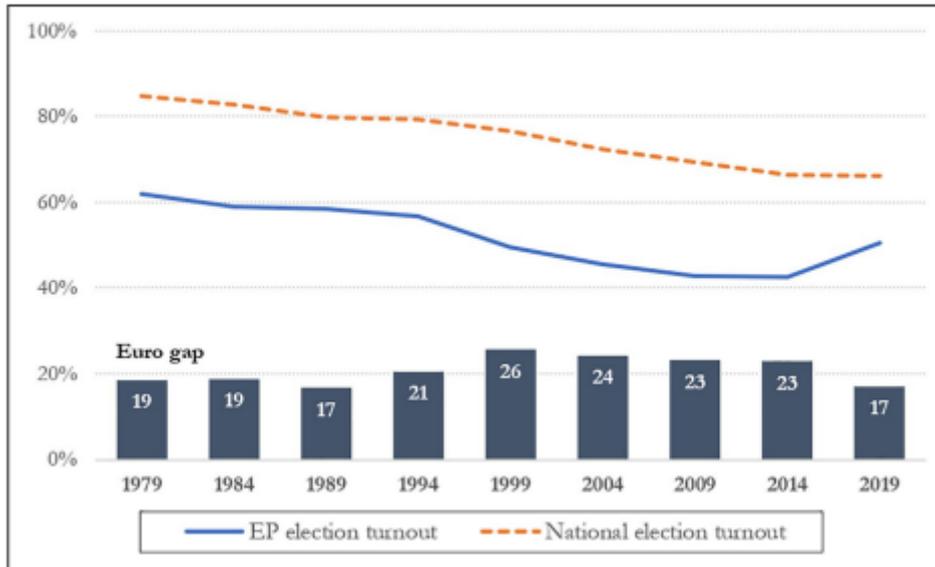


- Immigration
- Economy and growth
- Social protection of EU citizens
- Consumer protection and food safety
- Combating climate change and protecting the environment
- Promoting human rights and democracy
- Fight against terrorism
- The way the EU should be working in the future
- Combatting youth unemployment
- Security and defence policy
- Protection of external borders
- Protection of personal data
- Other
- None/ You are not interested in these elections

What are the issues which made you vote in the recent European Parliament elections						
	Croatia	Slovenia	Hungary	Czechia	Slovakia	Austria
Immigration	5%	3%	15%	4%	7%	12%
Economy and growth	14%	17%	15%	14%	11%	11%
Social protection of EU citizens	12%	16%	6%	6%	10%	18%
Consumer protection and food safety	11%	6%	4%	4%	6%	3%
Combating climate change and protecting the environment	9%	14%	8%	14%	13%	11%
Promoting human rights and democracy	9%	14%	13%	17%	15%	15%
Fight against terrorism	7%	3%	10%	6%	7%	2%
The way the EU should be working in the future	6%	10%	8%	13%	10%	12%
Combatting youth unemployment	10%	6%	0%	4%	6%	3%
Security and defence policy	5%	3%	3%	5%	4%	3%
Protection of external borders	6%	3%	11%	6%	4%	3%
Protection of personal data	6%	3%	0%	5%	3%	0%
Other	0%	0%	4%	0%	2%	8%
None/ You are not interested in these elections	0%	0%	3%	4%	0%	0%

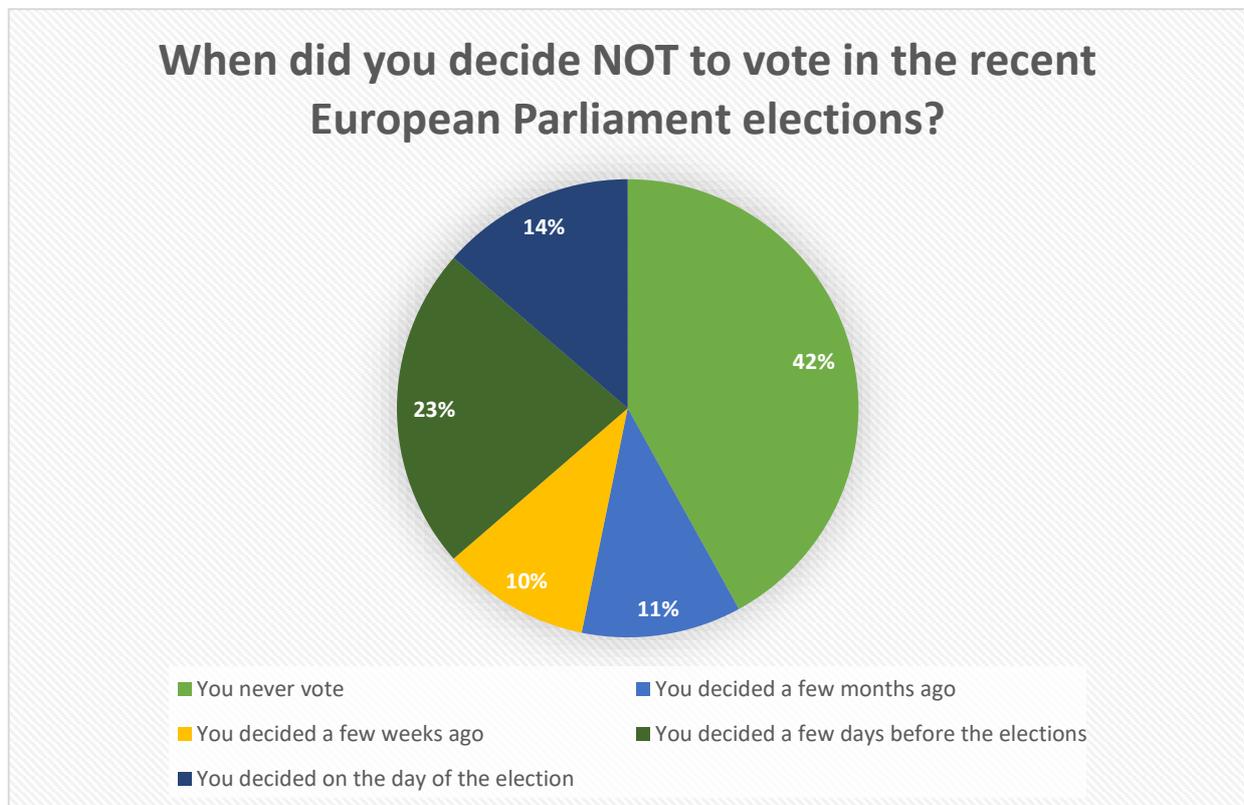
Table 13: Data from participants

The European Parliament election in 2019 surprised many observers and analysts. For the first time since 1979, overall voter turnout increased compared to the previous election, yielding the highest rate (50.66%) in the past 25 years. Even more strikingly, 20 out of 27 EU member states experienced a rise in turnout compared to 2014 – an overall increase of around eight percentage points. While the European Parliament itself called the increase in turnout ‘a symbol of the democratic EU’s good health’, some scholars described this dramatic boost in electoral participation as ‘an indication of strength for the legitimacy of the EU’. However, it must be noted that the turnout difference between national and European parliamentary elections – sometimes called the ‘Euro gap’ (Rose, 2004) – is still considerable. The persistent discrepancy between the two political levels is often seen as problematic for the EU’s legitimacy. After all, ‘the legitimacy of democracy in general and the outcomes of elections, in particular, are undermined when many citizens do not vote’ (Lutz and Marsh, 2007). In the face of such grave implications, we should ask why a substantial number of citizens consistently participate in elections on the national but not on the European level. A central assumption is that a certain group of people change their behaviour between national and European elections: ‘EU-only abstainers’. While they go to the polls in national elections, they decide to abstain in EP elections, thereby creating the ‘Euro gap’ on the aggregate level. In doing so, they are at the focal point of the debate between two approaches commonly used to explain EP election behaviour. On one hand, the ‘second-order elections’ (SOE) model postulates that these people stay at home during EP elections because they perceive these contests as less important and subordinate to national first-order elections (FOE; Reif and Schmitt, 1980). On the other hand, the ‘Europe matters’ (EM) model suggests that voters regard EP elections as having an independent ‘sui generis’ character and make their electoral behaviour dependent on their preferences towards European integration (Hix and Marsh, 2007). From this perspective, ‘EU-only abstention’ can be understood as a form of Eurosceptic electoral behaviour, that is, an expression of Eurosceptic attitudes (Schäfer, 2021).



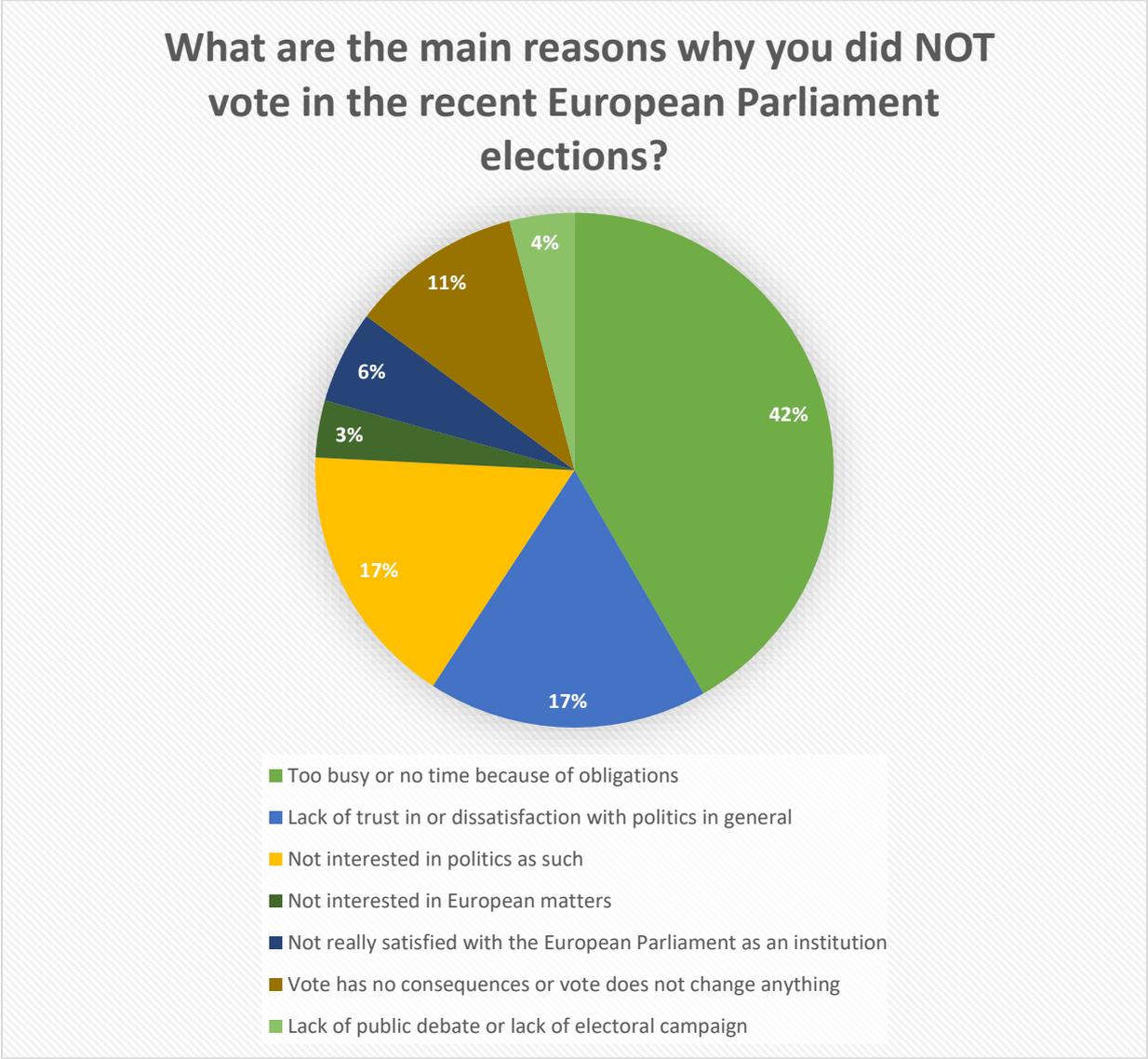
Source: Schäfer, 2021

We were also interested in the data from the responses that didn't vote. We analysed what where the main reason that participant's didn't participate in the last EU elections and when did they decide not to vote. We asked participants "When did you decide NOT to vote in the recent European Parliament elections?". The big majority of respondents' 42% never vote, 23% decided a few days before the election, 14% decided on the election day, 11%decided a few months ago and 10% decided a few weeks ago. The results indicate that there is a lot of people that are still not interested in the electoral process of the EU, almost half of the people who didn't vote never vote.





Between those who didn't vote we were also interested in the main reason why they didn't vote. We asked participants "What are the main reasons why you did NOT vote in the recent European Parliament elections?". The majority of respondents' 42% didn't vote because they were too busy or had no time, 17% lack trust in politics, 17% have no interests in politics, 11% voting has no meaning, 6% not satisfied with EU, 4% lack of debates and 3% not interested in EU matters.



Difference between older and younger citizens

The data that we collected from respondents' was analysed based on different socio demographic parameters. In the table 14 and 15 are presented the responses on the survey questions based on the participants age. We aggregated the data on three age groups: below 30, between 30 and 45 and above 45.

What is your level of trust in the European Union			
age	<30	30-45	>45
Very low	5%	1%	6%
Low	17%	18%	22%
High	50%	53%	39%
Very high	15%	16%	20%
I don't know	13%	12%	13%
What is the level of your general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union			
age	<30	30-45	>45
Very low	5%	1%	6%
Low	29%	28%	33%
High	41%	53%	37%
Very high	6%	7%	11%
I don't know	19%	11%	13%
Do you want your country to remain to be part of the EU?			
	<30	30-45	>45
Remain in the EU	82%	87%	75%
Leave the EU	9%	4%	6%
I don't know	9%	9%	19%
Level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process			
	<30	30-45	>45
Very low	10%	10%	9%
Low	40%	35%	37%
High	20%	31%	23%
Very high	4%	1%	3%
I don't know	26%	23%	28%
What is the level of your understanding of the EU legislative process?			
	<30	30-45	>45
Very low	13%	10%	5%
Low	42%	39%	39%
High	23%	34%	38%
Very high	4%	4%	2%
I don't know	18%	13%	16%

Table 14: Data from participants

The level of trust in the EU was much lower in the responses of participants whose age is above 45. The high or very high level of trust in the EU is 65% (participants age < 30), 69% (participants age 30 – 45) and only 59% (participants age > 45). The general satisfaction in the EU policies was also different by age groups, participants age below 30 and those above 45 head high or very high level of satisfaction with 47% and 48%, however the participants age 30 – 45 head 60%. Here we can see the difference in trust in EU and policy satisfaction. Where older citizens don't have the same trust in the EU as younger



voters, and we see that the highest satisfaction with EU policies is present in the working age group. Next very important difference is in the question to remain a part of the EU. Older voters above 45 wanted to remain a part of the EU with 75% and other age group where between 82% - 87%. However the percentages' to leave were almost the same between all ages group in the range 4% - 9%, the difference in the responses arises, because there are 10% more voters above 45 that didn't now what to answer. The responses to the question "Level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process" were very similar, the only difference was that respondents' in the second age group 30-45 thought that their voices are taken more in account, 5% higher to other age groups. Next important difference was present in the question "What is the level of your understanding of the EU legislative process?", the lowest understand head the youngest age group with 27% (high or very high level), next was the age group 30 – 45 with 38% and the oldest age group head the greatest understanding with 40%.

Benefits from the EU membership			
age	<30	30-45	>45
Very low	6%	2%	3%
Low	14%	16%	20%
High	45%	48%	50%
Very high	18%	19%	19%
I don't know	17%	15%	8%
What is the level of accessibility of the information about how the EU works?			
Age	<30	30-45	>45
Very low	7%	4%	4%
Low	32%	20%	26%
High	37%	49%	45%
Very high	11%	14%	6%
I don't know	13%	13%	19%
What is your outlook on the future importance of the role or EU?			
Age	<30	30-45	>45
Very positive	13%	16%	16%
Positive	57%	61%	55%
Negative	12%	10%	4%
Very negative	2%	0%	6%
I don't know	16%	13%	19%

Table 15: Data from participants

The benefits of the EU were very similar by all age groups with smaller differences below 5%. The level of accessibility of information about how the EU was the highest (high or very high) in the second age group with 63% and the lowest in the youngest age group < 30 with only 48%. The outlook on the future of the EU is very similar between age groups.

Difference between rural and urban citizens

The data that we collected from respondents' was also analysed based on the residence of the participants, we compared the responses from the urban and rural participants. There are many studies that are focused on the difference between rural and urban voters. Rural votes are often represented as left behind, that they didn't receive as much benefits from the EU membership as more urban citizens. The results in the table 16 and 17 show the differences between urban and rural participants in our survey research. Our data set didn't show many differences' between the rural and urban respondents. The questions: trust in the EU; satisfaction with the policies of the EU; remaining a part of the EU; consideration of citizens' voices into the EU decision making process; understanding of the EU legislative process; benefits from the EU membership; outlook on the future importance of the role of EU, were all very similar with below 5% differences. A smaller difference was shown in the accessibility of information about the EU, 5% more rural citizens described the accessibility as low.

What is your level of trust in the European Union		
age	Rural	Urban
Very low	4%	5%
Low	19%	18%
High	49%	49%
Very high	14%	16%
I don't know	14%	12%
What is the level of your general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union		
age	Rural	Urban
Very low	4%	4%
Low	30%	30%
High	46%	42%
Very high	5%	7%
I don't know	15%	17%
Do you want your country to remain to be part of the EU?		
	Rural	Urban
Remain in the EU	84%	82%
Leave the EU	5%	8%
I don't know	11%	10%
Level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process		
	Rural	Urban
Very low	8%	11%
Low	42%	36%
High	23%	23%
Very high	4%	3%
I don't know	23%	27%
What is the level of your understanding of the EU legislative process?		
	Rural	Urban
Very low	13%	10%
Low	41%	41%
High	26%	29%
Very high	4%	3%
I don't know	16%	17%

Table 16: Data from participants

Benefits from the EU membership		
age	Rural	Urban
Very low	3%	5%
Low	16%	15%
High	47%	46%
Very high	18%	19%
I don't know	16%	15%
What is the level of accessibility of the information about how the EU works?		
Age	Rural	Urban
Very low	5%	6%
Low	32%	27%
High	39%	42%
Very high	9%	12%
I don't know	15%	13%
What is your outlook on the future importance of the role or EU?		
Age	Rural	Urban
Very positive	14%	15%
Positive	60%	56%
Negative	10%	11%
Very negative	2%	2%
I don't know	14%	16%

Table 17: Data from participants

Difference between citizens who voted and didn't voted in the last EU elections

The survey results were analysed based on many different indicators. In this section, we will present the results that were analysed based on the decision to vote in the last EU elections, we compared the responses from the participants who voted to those who didn't vote. The results show us some interesting differences between these two groups. Participants who didn't vote in the last EU election had a lower level of trust in the EU (high or very high level) with 63% compared to 73% to those who voted in the last EU elections. Those who voted also expressed a higher level of satisfaction with EU policies with 56% compared to only 40% by the respondents' who didn't voted. The percentage of those who want to leave was very similar with 6% and 10%, however there was a difference in those who want to remain in the EU, the differences between those two in 15%. Those who voted want to remain in the EU with 88% compared to 73% with those who didn't voted.

What is your level of trust in the European Union		
age	Voted	Didn't vote
Very low	3%	6%
Low	15%	23%
High	52%	45%
Very high	21%	8%
I don't know	9%	18%
What is the level of your general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union		
age	Voted	Didn't vote
Very low	3%	7%
Low	28%	32%
High	47%	37%
Very high	9%	3%
I don't know	13%	21%
Do you want your country to remain to be part of the EU?		
	Voted	Didn't vote
Remain in the EU	88%	73%
Leave the EU	6%	10%
I don't know	6%	17%
Level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process		
	Voted	Didn't vote
Very low	10%	9%
Low	34%	44%
High	28%	16%
Very high	5%	1%
I don't know	23%	30%
What is the level of your understanding of the EU legislative process?		
	Voted	Didn't vote
Very low	7%	17%
Low	37%	47%
High	36%	16%
Very high	5%	2%
I don't know	15%	18%

Table 18: Data from participants

This is explained by the 11% increase in those who didn't know the answer about the remaining of their country in the EU. Big difference was also present in the level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process, those who didn't voted expressed the level as high (or very high) with only 17% compared to 33% to those who voted. Also the understanding of the EU legislative process is much lower with those who didn't voted, they expressed it as high (or very high) with only 18% compared to 41% to those who voted. There is also a smaller difference in the aspect of the benefits that the EU provides, the benefits were expressed as high or very high by 67% of those who voted and 62% who didn't voted. The level of accessibility of the information about how the EU works is very similar between both groups, both expressed it as very low or low with 34% and 35%. The bigger difference is in those who didn't know what the level is, 19% of those who didn't voted and 10% of those who voted. Outlook on the future importance of the role or EU was also very similar by both groups. Both expressed the outlook as negative or very negative below 14% and as positive or very positive above 65%.

Benefits from the EU membership		
age	Voted	Didn't vote
Very low	4%	6%
Low	13%	19%
High	44%	50%
Very high	23%	12%
I don't know	16%	13%
What is the level of accessibility of the information about how the EU works?		
Age	Voted	Didn't vote
Very low	5%	6%
Low	29%	29%
High	44%	36%
Very high	12%	10%
I don't know	10%	19%
What is your outlook on the future importance of the role or EU?		
Age	Voted	Didn't vote
Very positive	19%	9%
Positive	58%	56%
Negative	9%	12%
Very negative	2%	2%
I don't know	12%	21%

Table 19: Data from participants



Differences between citizens who want their country to remain in the EU and those who do not

One of the very important responses came from the participants in our survey research who responded that they want to leave the EU. We collected their respondents’ and analysed them based on the decision that their country should leave the EU and compared them to the responses from the participants who want to remain a part of the EU. The responses between these two groups were very different, the results are represented in the table 20 and 21. The level of trust in the EU was high (high or very high) at only 7% for the respondents’ who want to leave EU and at 77% for those who want to stay. The level of general satisfaction with the policies of the EU was high (high or very high) also at only 7% for the respondents’ who want to leave EU and at 60% for those who want to stay. The level of consideration of EU citizens’ voices into the EU decision making process was also much lower for those who want to leave the EU at only 2%, compared to 31% to those who want to remain in the EU. One similarity between booth groups was that they booth indicated that they understand the EU legislative process with similar levels.

What is your level of trust in the European Union		
age	Remain in the EU	Leave the EU
Very low	1%	42%
Low	11%	49%
High	58%	5%
Very high	19%	2%
I don't know	11%	2%
What is the level of your general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union		
age	Remain in the EU	Leave the EU
Very low	1%	35%
Low	24%	53%
High	52%	5%
Very high	8%	2%
I don't know	15%	7%
Level of consideration of EU citizens’ voices into the EU decision making process		
age	Remain in the EU	Leave the EU
Very low	7%	36%
Low	37%	49%
High	27%	2%
Very high	4%	0%
I don't know	25%	13%
What is the level of your understanding of the EU legislative process?		
age	Remain in the EU	Leave the EU
Very low	11%	7%
Low	41%	46%
High	30%	27%
Very high	4%	2%
I don't know	14%	18%

Table 20: Data from participants



There were also big differences between the outlooks on the benefits from the EU membership, only 13% of EU leavers think that there is a high (or very high) benefits, compared to 72% to those who want to remain a part of the EU. The level of accessibility of the information about how the EU works was also very low at 33% for those who want to leave, compared to 57% to those who want to stay in the EU. This difference can be interpreted that there is a big difference in the knowledge of the working of EU that can influence the decision to leave the EU. The outlook on the future importance of the role or EU was positive at only 5% for EU leavers, compared to 85% for those who want to remain a part of the EU.

Benefits from the EU membership		
age	Remain in the EU	Leave the EU
Very low	2%	29%
Low	10%	53%
High	50%	13%
Very high	22%	0%
I don't know	16%	5%
What is the level of accessibility of the information about how the EU works?		
Age	Remain in the EU	Leave the EU
Very low	4%	20%
Low	28%	40%
High	44%	31%
Very high	13%	2%
I don't know	11%	7%
What is your outlook on the future importance of the role or EU?		
Age	Remain in the EU	Leave the EU
Very positive	18%	0%
Positive	67%	5%
Negative	4%	64%
Very negative	0%	24%
I don't know	11%	7%

Table 21: Data from participants

Conclusion

The survey research report which was created in the scope of the project “Counter Euroscepticism with Your Vote” analysed the attitudes of participants from Slovenia, Croatia, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary and Czech Republic. The survey was designed with the aims to analyse the findings of survey result about EU citizens attitudes regarding the EU, its future, Euroscepticism and EU elections. Responses were analysed based on the participants social demographic profile, which enabled us to get a deeper understanding of the specific attitudes of participants about the EU based on their socio demographic profile. Survey results indicate many differences between social demographic profile. The participants views about the EU, its Future and Euroscepticism indicated that: there almost 22% of participants’ that don’t trust the EU. 34% are not satisfied with the EU policies and almost the half of respondents 48% think that there is a low level of consideration of EU citizens’ voices into the EU decision making process. It’s positive that only 7% of respondents’ want that their country leaves the EU. One very important part of the survey was to analyse the level of understanding of the EU legislative process, here 52% of respondents’ indicated that their level is low and the knowledge of EU institutions was also low, only 27% were familiar with the European parliaments and 17% with European Commission. Participants indicated that there is still a low level of accessibility of the information about how the European Union works, almost 35% indicated that there is a low level of accessibility. The outlook on the future of EU was positive by the majority of respondents’, only 12% head a negative outlook. The results indicate a lack of knowledge of the EU citizens in regard to how the EU works and EU institutions.

Participants views about the EU election indicated that 70% of respondents’ always vote and the decision to vote is also motivated by many different reasons with the majority perceiving it as a duty or they are in favour of the EU. Those who didn’t vote in the last EU elections indicated that they never vote with 42%, were the most popular answer with 42% was that they were too busy.

The resurvey research analysed the data also based on different socio demographic indicators, were we also included the differences between those who voted in the last EU elections and those who didn’t vote. Included were also the comparisons of the respondents’ who are in favour of the EU and want that their country remains in the EU and those who want that their country leaves the EU.

The data that we collected from respondents’ was analysed based participants age were we aggregated the data on three age groups: below 30, between 30 and 45 and above 45. The results showed that the level of trust in the EU was much lower in the responses of participants whose age is above 45. The general satisfaction in the EU policies was also different by age groups, participants age below 30 and those above 45 head high or very high level of satisfaction with 47% and 48%, however the participants age 30 – 45 head 60%. Here we can see the difference in trust in EU and policy satisfaction. Next very important difference is in the question to remain a part of the EU. Older voters above 45 wanted to remain a part of the EU with 75% and other age group where between 82% - 87%. Next important difference between age groups was their perception of their level of understanding of the EU legislative process, the lowest understand head the youngest age group with 27% (high or very high level), next was the age group 30 – 45 with 38% and the oldest age group head the greatest understanding with 40%. The level of accessibility of information about how the EU was the highest (high or very high) in the second age group with 63% and the lowest in the youngest age group < 30 with only 48%. The conclusion of the differences in age groups show us that there is still low understanding of the EU in all age groups, were we should give special focus on the older and the youngest citizens, because older citizens have a lower level of trust in the EU and the satisfaction in the

EU policies. Younger citizens indicated the lowest level of accessibility of information about how the EU works.

Survey results were analysed based on the participants decision to vote in the last EU elections in 2019, we compared the responses from the participants who voted to those who did not vote. The results show us some interesting differences between these two groups. Participants who didn't vote in the last EU election head a more then 10% lower level of trust in the EU and satisfaction with EU policies. Big difference was also present in the level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process, those who didn't voted expressed the level as high (or very high) with only 17% compared to 33% to those who voted. The understanding of the EU legislative process was much lower with those who did not vote, they expressed it as high (or very high) with only 18% compared to 41% to those who voted. The results indicate that there is big lack of understanding of how the EU works in the group that did not vote and the general level of accessibility of information about the EU is also very low at only 35%.

One of the very important responses came from the participants who responded that they want to leave the EU. We collected their respondents' and analysed them based on the decision that their country should leave the EU and compared them to the responses from the participants who want to remain a part of the EU. The responses between these two groups were very different; the results are represented in the table 20 and 21. Those who want their country to leave the EU head very low: level of trust in the EU at only 7%; level of general satisfaction with the policies of the EU was at only 7%; level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process was at only 2%; outlooks on the benefits from the EU membership with only 13%. One similarity between booth groups was that they booth indicated that they understand the EU legislative process with similar levels. The level of accessibility of the information about how the EU works was also very low at 33% for those who want to leave compared to 57% to those who want to stay in the EU. This difference can be interpreted that there is a big difference in the knowledge of the working of EU that can influence the decision to leave the EU.

Combined results of the survey report indicate that there is still a big lack of information about how the EU process works, which is the reason for lover trust in the EU, satisfaction with the policies of the EU and outlooks on the benefits from the EU membership. All of this reasons lead to lover voter turnout or increase the voter turnout for those who want to leave the EU.

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APPENDIX: Survey questionnaire

Personal information

1. Gender

Male
Female
Other

2. Age

< 18
19-29
30-44
45-64
65+

3. In which type of environment do you live in?

Rural
Urban

4. What is your country of residence?

Choose
Croatia
Slovenia
Hungary
Czech Republic
Slovakia
Austria

5. What is your occupational status?

Full-time employed
Part-time employed
Self-employed
Unemployed
Student
Retired
Other

6. What is your highest level of education?

No formal education
Primary education
Secondary education
Tertiary education

Views about the EU, its Future and Euroscepticism

7. What is your level of trust in the European Union?

1. Very low
2. Low
3. High
4. Very high
5. I don't know

8. What is the level of your general satisfaction with the policies of the European Union?

1. Very low
2. Low
3. High
4. Very high
5. I don't know

9. Do you want your country to remain to be part of the EU?

- Remain in the EU
- Leave the EU
- I don't know

10. What is the level of consideration of EU citizens' voices into the EU decision making process?

1. Very low
2. Low
3. High
4. Very high
5. I don't know

11. What is the level of your understanding of the EU legislative process?

1. Very low
2. Low
3. High
4. Very high
5. I don't know

12. Which of the following EU institutions are you well familiar with? (multiple answers)

- The European Parliament
- The European Council
- The Council of the European Union (simply called 'the Council')
- The European Commission
- The Court of Justice of the European Union
- The European Central Bank
- The Court of Auditors

13. To what extent has the community that is the most important for you benefited from the EU membership?

1. Very Low
2. Low
3. Medium
4. High
5. Very high

14. What is the level of accessibility of the information about how the European Union works?

1. Very low
2. Low
3. High
4. Very high
5. I don't know

15. What is your outlook on the future importance of the role of EU?

1. Very positive
2. Positive
3. Negative
4. Very negative
5. I don't know

16. Which of the following would best describe the ideal future for the European Union? (multiple answers)

- Equal wages for the same job across the EU
- A high level of security within the EU
- A minimum level of guaranteed healthcare in all countries of the EU
- Fair and equal access to education for all across the EU
- A guaranteed minimum pension across the EU
- Gender equality established everywhere in the EU
- Increased use of renewable energies within the EU
- Reduction in food waste within the EU
- Other

Views about the EU election

17. The recent European Parliament elections were held in the year 2019. Did you yourself vote in the recent European Parliament elections?

- Voted
- Did not vote

18. When did you decide to vote in the recent European Parliament elections?

- You always vote
- You decided a few months ago
- You decided a few weeks ago

You decided a few days before the elections
You decided on the day of the election

19. Why did you vote for the political party you voted for in the recent European Parliament elections? (multiple answers)

Their proposals on European issues were the closest to your ideas or values
Their proposals on national issues were the closest to your ideas or values
You liked their proposals on the issue which was the most important for you at this election
You disliked all other parties on the list
You liked one or more of the candidates in this party's list

20. What are the main reasons why you decided to vote in the recent European Parliament elections? (multiple answers)

To influence the choice of the president of the European Commission
This is your duty as citizen
You are in favour of the EU
You can make things change in voting in the European Parliament elections
To express your disagreement
To support the political party you feel close to
To support the national Government
To express disapproval of the national Government
To express disapproval of the EU
You always vote
You are very interested in European affairs
You feel European or citizen of the EU
The information you received during the campaign convinced you to vote
Other

21. What are the issues which made you vote in the recent European Parliament elections? (multiple answers)

Immigration
Economy and growth
Social protection of EU citizens
Consumer protection and food safety
Combating climate change and protecting the environment
Promoting human rights and democracy
Fight against terrorism
The way the EU should be working in the future
Combatting youth unemployment
Security and defence policy
Protection of external borders
Protection of personal data
Other
None/ You are not interested in these elections

22. If you are someone who didn't vote, when did you decide NOT to vote in the recent European Parliament elections?

You never vote
You decided a few months ago
You decided a few weeks ago
You decided a few days before the elections
You decided on the day of the election

23. What are the main reasons why you did NOT vote in the recent European Parliament elections?

Too busy or no time because of obligations

Lack of trust in or dissatisfaction with politics in general

Not interested in politics as such

Not interested in European matters

Not really satisfied with the European Parliament as an institution

Vote has no consequences or vote does not change anything

Lack of public debate or lack of electoral campaign