



European Committee  
of the Regions

# REFLECTING on Europe

**FINAL  
REPORT**  
FOR THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

How Europe is perceived  
by people in regions and cities





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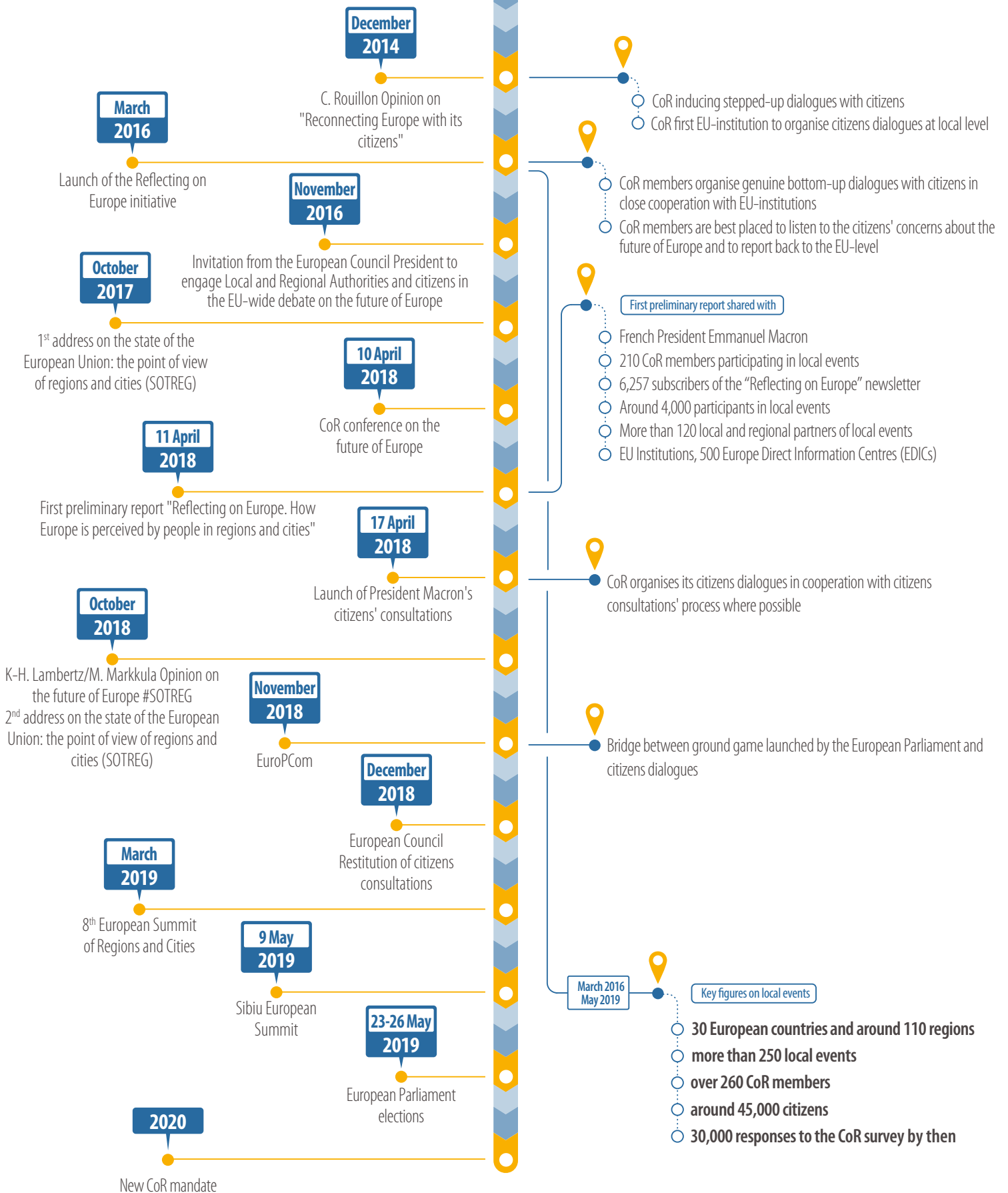
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# EU for citizens

## Citizens' Dialogues and Future of Europe

### PROCESS

### IMPACT



## Foreword

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Support for the European Union has waned in recent years with many people feeling that it is too distant, too bureaucratic and too slow in responding to new challenges. Though the majority of people still support the ethos of the European Union, there is an unacceptable level of frustration. Restoring trust in the European project means strengthening how it delivers and how it communicates, showing that the EU does listen and is ready to change.

On request from the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, over the past two years our Committee – the voice of local and regional authorities in the EU – launched its “Reflecting on Europe” initiative to reconnect citizens. Our members listened to over 40,000 citizens in 110 regions and 156 cities and municipalities asking them what they want in our shared future.

Citizens argue that the EU must be more responsive to their local and regional needs, increase engagement and offer a new way to listen to their concerns. Though citizens feel a certain degree of disconnect with the EU decision-making process, there is still broad support with citizens recognising that the EU does offer many benefits such as the freedom to travel. But Europe needs more jobs, more inclusiveness, more solidarity and more welfare for all.

The conclusion that can be drawn from this process, which will be formally shared with the other EU institutions, is that without the support of our regions and cities, the future of Europe is at risk. The EU is there first and foremost improve lives but will become further unhinged unless it takes a new direction so its policies are felt on every street. It needs to bridge the gap ensuring decision-making is created together with local and regional government, so it delivers on its promises of economic, social and territorial cohesion.

Europe needs to be more vocal about its achievements, demonstrating that European cohesion and integration is the best path for a better future but this can only be achieved through cooperation, compromise and a permanent dialogue with citizens. We need a new Europe that actively listens to citizens and works together with every city, region, town and village – this is the only way for the EU to emerge stronger and more inclusive.



*President  
Karl-Heinz Lambertz*



*First Vice President  
Markku Markkula*



## Executive summary

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### “Reflecting on Europe” – a listening exercise

Since 2016, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) has been listening to over 40,000 citizens in 110 regions and 156 cities and municipalities in 30 European countries. This exercise branded “Reflecting on Europe” was given a strong boost in November 2016, when the President of the European Council asked the CoR to engage citizens in a debate on the future of Europe. This is the final report on the results which is submitted to the European Council along with the formal Opinion of the CoR.

At the heart of the exercise, there have been active members of the CoR, who initiated dialogues with citizens in town halls, regional parliaments, local councils, schools and universities. By their very nature, these dialogues were usually not held in capital cities and they were not meant to talk “to” people but with them instead. By October 2018, 176 CoR members have been engaged in around 180 local dialogues involving about 20,000 participants.

In parallel, the CoR also asked citizens to have their say on Europe and to share their views and concerns via an online survey and a mobile app, which was made available in the 24 official languages of the EU since autumn 2017. So far, over 22,000 people took part in this unique exercise, which delivers some interesting insights into the way people want to see the EU developing.

Results of the exercise are presented in this report, which covers the period from March 2016 to October 2018. Final conclusions fed into the related CoR opinion adopted on 9 October 2018. In view of the 8th Summit of Regions and Cities which will be organised by the CoR in Bucharest on 14-15 March 2019 and the meeting of the EU leaders in Sibiu on 9 May, the CoR will continue its citizens’ dialogues and support locally the awareness campaign for the elections of the European Parliament in May 2019 and the other EU institutions. Despite differences in the age, gender and geographical origin of respondents, the final results can be summarised as follows:

### → All politics is local

- Democratic accountability is a recurring theme when it comes to discussing the European Union in local fora.
- The local level is the right place to start engaging citizens in the shaping of the European Union, especially on issues closer to the daily concerns of people.
- More direct channels of dialogues between the European Union and its citizens are needed.

### → Trust is the key

- People perceive the European Union as too distant, too bureaucratic and too slow in responding to new challenges.
- People trust their local and regional politicians more than they trust the European Union or national politicians.
- The European Union must work to offer solutions to problems at a more regional level.

### → Europe still generates strong feelings

- People are still enthusiastic about Europe but at the same time they feel disconnected from the way decisions are taken at the European Union level. This is a feeling that does not only concern their perception of the European Union but politics in general.
- Compared to the EU, "Europe" still has a positive image for most people, in particular when it comes to the values and benefits that the young generation associates with it.
- The notion of unity and a common European identity is particularly cultivated by the younger generations.

### → An alarming signal

- Lack of knowledge about what the European Union means and does emerge from local debates across Europe.
- Understanding the role of the European Union requires improving information flow and people's engagement.

- Educating and communicating with citizens in an open and transparent manner should be a priority.

### → Sense of frustration

- People share concerns about migration, corruption, employment, security and the rule of law.
- The European Union is expected to step up its efforts in addressing challenges that go beyond the national borders.
- An innovative approach is needed to deal with issues ranging from digitisation to climate change.

### → A strong call for more solidarity

- There is a strong call for greater solidarity across Europe.
- Responsibility and risk sharing are crucial in the face of the migration crisis, the financial crisis, and reducing inequalities between regions and countries.
- Cohesion policy can help deliver better living and working conditions for all people regardless of their place of origin.

### → Europe making a difference

- Freedom of movement, mobility, infrastructure, investments and education are considered to be the main benefits stemming from the European Union's membership.
- Perceptions of the European added value vary across countries.
- People ask for a more active Europe in the area of migration, education, environment, employment and security.

### → The way forward

- Opening up regional and local channels of dialogue is the key to bridging the gap between the European Union and its citizens.
- Every European citizen should be given an opportunity to co-create Europe's future.
- All politics is local - and this is the direction for the European Union to become stronger and more inclusive.

## All politics is local

*Local is real, national is not close enough, Europe is fading away. There is no direct link with the EU because of the lack of a local perspective*

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### Is Europe fading away?

Overshadowed by the day-to-day activities, even national politics can seem remote from people's everyday concerns. How much more so then does the EU tend to fade into obscurity from the point of view of its average citizen? Personal experiences rooted in a local environment will always dictate our perception of more general issues. CoR local events over the last two years have given a sense of the gulf felt between what is happening in people's daily lives and what is happening 'over there' in the EU. This gulf becomes even deeper in some rural constituencies, where people can feel very far removed from 'the bureaucrats in Brussels' making decisions.

### Obscure in the abstract: the EU must be manifested at the local level to be real

The lack of a direct link between representatives of the EU and European citizens is keenly felt. Democratic accountability is a recurring theme when it comes to discussing the EU in local fora.

Calls for increased inclusivity and simplicity also come up again and again in these conversations. Dialogue itself is highly prized and leads to the questions of how to improve citizen participation in the shaping of the EU, and how to open up more channels of dialogue: this is where the demand is. What can the EU do to show people its relevance to their everyday lives and provide satisfactory routes for engagement, especially around issues which can be influenced at EU level?





### Local events



- We need to improve citizens' participation and democratic accountability. **Dubrovnik, Croatia, 28/10/2016**
- Relations between European citizens and the European Union have become worryingly distorted. Faced with various crises, it is necessary to improve the democratic accountability and functioning of the EU. **Paris, France, 04/04/2016**
- The EU should communicate with its rural population. **Ochey, France 12/10/2017**
- Citizens need "more Europe" within a "different European system", not a weak and less invasive EU on the citizens' life. Why is the EU not able to develop a real political union? **Marcellina, Italy, 11/11/2017**
- Europe is not Brussels. Europe is made by the citizens. EU needs permanent dialogues with citizens, mainly with those who do not believe in the EU. **Molenbeek, Brussels, Belgium, 01/07/2018**



### Online survey/app

- Helping and improving the quality of democracy **(Budapest, Hungary, Male, 16 years old)**
- De-democratisation and elitism. **(Södertälje, Sweden, Female, 70 years old)**
- Lack of democracy in some Member States. Lack of protection of European cultural diversity. Overpowered and centralised states. **(Barcelona, Spain, Male, 29 years old)**



### Social media debates

- No I don't like the E.U. in the digital age with low international trading tariffs it's little more than a protectionists club for big business (to the detriment of the little guy) and poorly thought out socialist social policy for the rest of Europe that Brits in particular are sick of paying for. It's simply not relevant to the modern world unless you sit on top of the globalist heap and don't mind crapping all over the democracy and self-determination of nation states whilst at the same time robbing them of their identity. Hope this helps and I also hope I've ruffled feathers... they need it! **(UK)**
- I wanted to fill out a questionnaire, but I was stuck on the second question. Option: the biggest problem of the EU is corruption and the dullness of the EU Parliament I have found! **(SL)**
- With Europe – yes. With the bureaucratic union of the euro-officials – never! **(PL)**

## How to increase citizens' participation and sense of ownership

Could locally elected representatives be given a greater say in Brussels? What about having more citizens' debates at local level? Could the CoR facilitate a permanent channel of dialogue with young people? These are all areas that will have to be explored in order to allow the EU to evolve.

Unless citizens of every Member State are given a strong voice, the EU risks being brought down because it is perceived as being too far removed from the interests of its constituents. The greatest hope for the future of the EU is to engage citizens at the local level, and this is where the challenge lies.

The future of the EU belongs to everybody, especially the younger generations. It is essential to mobilise interest and energy in the communal project, and find mechanisms to tap into this energy, for the EU to respond to and meet the core needs of each European citizen. The local level is the right place to start.

**What are the main concerns that you want to share with representatives of EU institutions?**

korupcia Ilmastonmuutos corruptia  
Ανεργία migration Brexit korrupció Solidarität  
desemprego sécurité veiligheid razvoj  
immigrazzjoni armoede chômage κορυντζια  
immigration Økonomi Korupcija bezpečnost  
Disoccupazione pagulased Flüchtlinge  
nevienlīdzība terrorism Neenakost desempleo

Online survey – EU word cloud

Ευρώπη ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΚΗ  
μεταναστευτικό μελλον είναι  
ανεργίας, ασφάλεια μέλλον  
είναι, οικονομική  
Ανεργία κρίση  
μεταξύ ΑΝΕΡΓΙΑ Έλλειψη  
Ελλάδα περιβάλλον  
χώρες πολιτική

Online survey – word cloud Greece

## Trust is the key

*People doubt that politics and politicians can bring concrete solutions to their problems and this fuels mistrust*

### Lack of concrete solutions fuels general mistrust in politicians

People look to their elected leaders to protect and improve their quality of life. They expect solutions delivered to a complex range of problems, and they are questioning the capacity of the political class to deliver these solutions.

From around Europe a palpable sense of distrust is emanating. Distrust in their elected representatives is a clear theme emerging from citizens' feedback — arising from discontent. What is driving this discontent? A frustration with the lack of solutions for everyday problems is behind much of it. Whereas in times of economic prosperity and social security there was more trust in political powers, the current mistrust is fuelled by the handling – seen as inadequate – of the economic crisis and increased migratory flow.

#### Local events

- There is a need for the EU to support the bottom-up approach to provide solutions, starting from the needs of territories.  
**Milan, Italy, 05/12/2017**
- There is lack of public consultation by the Romanian government regarding regionalisation and around the need of citizens' involvement!  
**Bucharest, Romania, 07/09/2017**
- The positive image of European rights is being hidden by European bureaucracy.  
**Gijon, Spain, 21/09/2016**
- We need to bring the EU closer to its citizens, notably young people.  
**Thessaloniki, Greece, 20/06/2017**





### Online survey/app

- Young people are losing faith and trust in politics. Especially with uncommunicative regional institutions or even the government itself. (Madrid, Spain, Male, 23 years old)
- The fear and the mistrust among EU citizens and towards institutions is growing (Brussels, Belgium, Female, 42 years old)
- Stop letting anti-democratic national governments (Spain, Poland, Hungary) attack citizen rights (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, Male, 51 years old)
- Again, be closer to the citizens, more present, not merely a distant voice through national government and heavy bureaucracy (Rheinbach, Germany, Female, 30 years old)



### Social media debates

- EU citizen! Small-minded nationalism endangers peace and prosperity. Regrettably, living standards are not equally good everywhere. That has to be worked on. Issues such as environmental protection, climate protection, animal welfare, consumer protection...cannot be solved nationally. (DE)
- It is high time for the European Parliament to have an audit, because the greed is still a lot higher than the regional parliaments. Pay to work there is a utopian expression. (BE)

### In which fields should the EU not interfere?

**Sécurité** Μεταναστευτικο **migrantų** **Migráció**  
**Migranti** **aucun** **migrantov** **religia** **taxation**  
**Образование** **Migratsioon** **Nationella** **politika**  
**seguridad** **Soberania** **nacionalna** **Tradizioni**  
**cultuur** **suverenita** **migratie** **Maahanmuutto**  
**politica** **Privatsphäre** **Imigrācijas** **θρησκεία**

Online survey – EU word cloud

## National level is considered as the least reliable form of governance

Trust in national politicians is at low ebb — only a fifth of respondents to the survey cited national government as being the most reliable level of government. Greater confidence is inspired by local and regional representatives, and even the EU level of decision-making is seen as more trustworthy than the national one. While a combined 43% of those surveyed put most faith in regional and city governments, 36% rely most on EU-level government, and 21% on national government. However, a knock-on effect of a general lack of faith in politics at home is of course an engrained scepticism towards the EU project in general. If we can't hold politicians accountable at a national level, goes the thinking, then what hope is there for putting trust in this nebulous entity 'over there'. Decision-making at a local level is seen as greatly more effective in general.



### Local events

- We call for a strong role of regional and local authorities to reduce the distance between EU- local levels. We need to create a permanent channel of dialogues – as an open EU convention with territories and citizens to bring the EU back to the ground. **Milan, Italy, 15/12/2017**
- Convince national politicians to stop treating the EU as the whipping boy for everything that is wrong. One office in the capital city is not enough to connect with the people of the EU. **Cork, Ireland, 19/11/2016**



### Online survey/app

- My life is better because the EU is involved in the field of justice and forces the Romanian government to make real steps forward!  
(**Bucharest, Romania, Male, 44 years old**)
- National institutions often use the EU as an image of the enemy, against which they can gain political benefits. (**Budapest, Hungary, Male, 38 years old**)



### Social media debates

- Either the European governments commit to defend the Europeans and their interests or in a few years the English Brexits will become the normal because of the disenchantment of Europeans seeing that only the richest countries are advancing. (**ES**)
- Many people do not realise that millions of people's daily livelihoods, jobs, health care and children's fair education are at risk due to insufficient, inefficient governance, while the people in power are using the billions of public funds and EU subsidies for their own purposes. (**HU**)

## Whipping boy

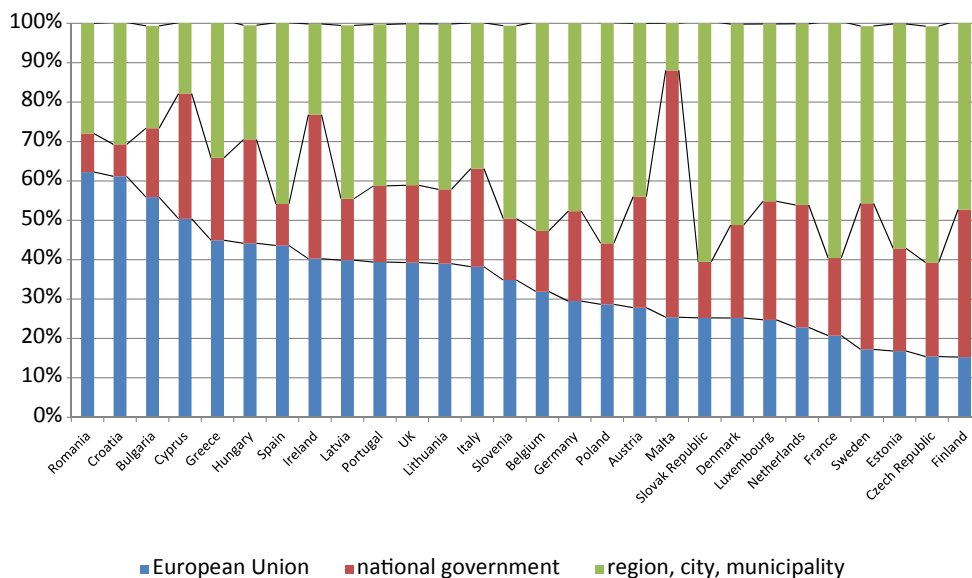
Attitudes towards the EU do of course vary greatly from one country to another. In thirteen of the twenty-eight Member States, the EU was in fact cited as the level of governance most relied on: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Spain and the UK (these tended to be the countries that have benefitted most from cohesion funding in recent years). A tendency identified at meetings in several different countries is that of national politicians scapegoating the EU, and passing on the blame for unpopular decisions. While this may be expedient in the short term, it contributes to the public's mistrust of politicians overall, undermining democratic foundations. There is a sense that citizens feel politicians should stop passing the buck and work harder to build connections with the EU.

## Appetite for connection

The EU should make itself better known to its constituents by establishing greater presence on the ground and forging more links at local levels. A bottom-up approach is seen as an appropriate response to lingering distrust, including from some national politicians. The EU must work to show it is offering solutions to problems at a more regional level — unemployment foremost, and struggle against perceptions that it is remote and cut off from the everyday needs of its citizens.

As articulated in several CoR local events as Milan (IT), Maia (PT), Heves (HU) and Athens (EL), there is a need to create 'a permanent channel of dialogue' between the EU, its territories and citizens.

## Most reliable level of government, by country





### Local events

- Please find a solution to the brain drain and create more Europe in Gabrovo, allowing the younger generation to invest in Bulgaria. **Gabrovo, Bulgaria, 03/10/2016**
- We should create a European culture in difficult areas of the country where Europe is so far away from the daily life of citizens. For young people, the daily usefulness of Europe is not always clear. A positive narrative on Europe against populism and anti-European politics is needed. **Bolzano, Italy, 17/03/2017**
- Let's talk about what are the problems or why, young people and citizens turn away from Europe. Debating about the EU in an open and direct way with citizens and representatives of EU institutions is possible even in rural areas! Let's better promote EU-funded projects and initiatives of your region to enable EU representatives to go back with real stories. **Vire, France, 02/06/2016**
- It is vital to maintain the dialogue with citizens on European issues. **Heves, Hungary, 04/10/2016**
- We need less bureaucracy, and a more transparent and simpler EU, more inclusive and democratic. We need more citizens' debates at the local level. **Maia, Portugal, 28/06/2017**
- The CoR should facilitate a permanent channel of dialogue with young people. **Athens, Greece, 19/06/2017**



### Online survey/app

- The EU should do more to improve our daily life by eliminating unemployment. **(Pratola Peligna, Italy, Female, 18 years old)**
- Daily life can be only improved by local/national government. **(San Giovanni Valdarno, Italy, Female, 52 years old)**
- EU should start to solve real problems, not only talking about them. **(Prague, Czech Republic, Female, 44 years old)**



### Social media debates

- ..... she becomes a stranger to us. .... less freedom. ...., no right to choose. ... Europe is deaf to everything! We don't want any more! **(FR)**
- We support Europe, but the EU needs to change. More Cohesion, more social justice and strong decentralisation. It is absurd for officials from the EC who have not been elected by the citizens and citizens to rule!!! **(EN)**

## Europe still generates strong feelings

### Europe – how to be?

The idea of Europe is still one that produces strong emotions. This emerged as the one common factor across all the local debates, whose participants had a lot to say about the future of Europe. While a small proportion expressed themselves in negative terms, the majority of participants, in particular young people and students, were very much in favour of the concept of a European-level project continuing. They brought to the table many positive aspects that they associate with the EU and the potential opportunities it offers.

#### Local events

- More social Europe! In order to fight against populism and nationalism, we have first to reinforce a common European identity via Erasmus – and a common sense of European community, via an unique education system in Europe.  
*Seville, Spain, 13/09/2017*



### What is Europe?

According to the survey results, over half of respondents overall consider that the EU's main contribution to their region or city is of an economic nature. Equally, when it came to saying where the EU should do more, 'economic stability' was the top answer.

Europe however also stands for **exchange and mobility**. 'Free movement' was chosen as the most appreciated benefit in ten of the twenty-eight countries: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. Travel – whether as a tourist or a student or a worker – spending money, or earning money, has never been easier, and this fact is also seen as integral to the European project.

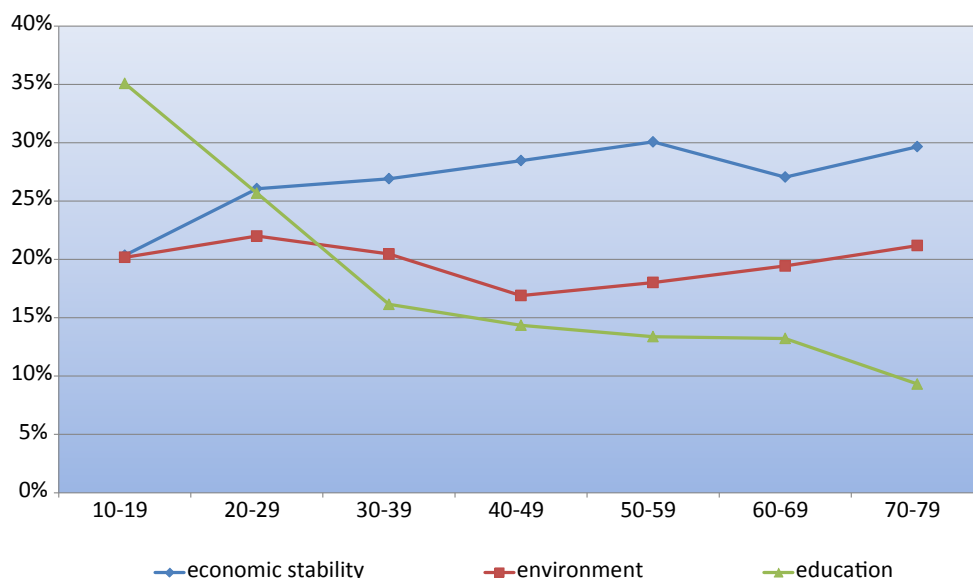


It is remarkable that ‘free movement’ is the most often cited *regional/municipal* benefit. Individual answers show mainly that people are conscious of the benefits of their own free movement. But they also strongly suggest that many people are conscious of the benefits brought by **free movement of people** to their own countries.



**Education and environmental protection** were two other key areas in which the EU is seen to have a much-appreciated influence. These priorities alter strikingly with age.

Fields where the EU should do more to improve daily life, by age (selected fields)



## A European identity?

This feeling of unity is cultivated in particular by the younger generations who define themselves as European and they are more likely to make use of the free movements opportunities offered by the EU. Indeed, they presented many passionate defences of this aspect of the EU. They see their rights to travel and education abroad within Europe as integral to their identity – they feel themselves as part of a wider European family: a sense of common cultural identity to promote through increased tourism and more mobile workforces.

A concern to avoid EU interference in national culture is progressively higher in older age groups. There were strongly articulated comments against what is seen as the imposition of migrants by the EU, and national governments, in survey submissions from countries such as Hungary, Estonia, Lithuania and Slovenia. The notion of a common European identity can of course be consolidated by a perceived threat to its existence from an external source, and as such it is a double-edged sword.

### Local events

- We are all Europeans! There is one way – the European way! Open your mind and learn more about Europe by active participation in European programmes. All equal, all different. Europe, our home!  
**Municipality of Nea Propontida, Greece, 14/10/2016**
- There is no single way of being European. Time has come to tell Europe our story, so that, together, we might find new solutions for the challenges we face. **Cluj Napoca, Romania, 13/06/2017**
- Being a European activist is part of my DNA, just like fighting for the values of the Republic, defending freedom and striving to reduce inequality. **Coulaines, France, 28/05/2018**



### Online survey/app

- Erasmus exchanges recall many students to my city, which enjoys the benefit from them culturally and economically. **(Bologna, Italy, Male, 25 years old)**
- Brexit! I want to remain in the EU so please keep the door open – 15 million Brits did vote to stay, and this number will only go up as more young people (overwhelming pro-remain) become eligible voters. **(United Kingdom)**
- Cultural traditions, specific national and regional features do not contradict European principles. **(Sliven, Bulgaria, Male, 60 years old)**





### Social media debates

- I support, although not so unreservedly, because I believe in reunification, not in division. (BG)
- How am I supposed to support someone who wants happy chickens, makes cucumbers and all kinds of other things, when people have nothing to put on the table? Those who sell us at double prices goods second and third quality. Why? Give me a logical answer and I will support them. (BG)

### In which fields does the EU bring concrete benefits to the life of your city or region?



Online survey – EU word cloud



Online survey - word cloud Germany – France



Online survey - word cloud Italy – Spain

## An alarming signal

### *People don't know what Europe is and what Europe is doing*

#### Most people don't know enough about the EU

One clear thread emerging from the debates is a sense of misunderstanding of what EU does and how it operates. A lack of knowledge was the refrain in the discussions across Europe, accompanied by a heartfelt plea to remedy this situation.

This lack of knowledge is fertile ground for misinformation. 'Fake news' can thrive where there is room for doubt. The EU is suffering from public perception that tends to focus only on headline stories, often negative. What is missing is an awareness of all that the EU means and does, especially in relation to each Member State and the daily lives of individuals including the opportunities stemming from EU membership.

#### Local events

- The EU is perceived as far from citizens, while no efforts are made to improve information which risks generating fake news. **Ouistreham, France, 21/09/2017**
- Knowledge of existing funding opportunities for ICT projects is key, alongside a broader knowledge of EU policy in this field and the relevant actors. **Valence, Spain, 23/06/2016**
- The knowledge about the EU is vague, especially when it comes to understanding which issues can be addressed at city, regional and country levels and which issues can be solved at EU level. **Gdynia, Poland, 02/06/2017**



#### Online survey/app

- There is a lack of knowledge of EU institutions roles. **(Luxembourg, Luxembourg, Male, 28 years old)**
- Promote knowledge of the Committee of Regions. It's vital that people know what it does. **(Glasgow, United Kingdom, Male, 25 years old)**
- Most of the people don't know the EU. It's necessary to get people's democratic support thanks to local governments. **(Palermo, Italy, Female, 27 years old)**



## Shining a light

This is where communication has to play a key role in helping EU citizens understand and support the EU's actions on their behalf. For the EU to become more than just a distant 'institution' it needs to reach out and ensure more involvement. One first step would be to acknowledge the perceived lack of progress, leading to a rethinking of communication, both in terms of method and substance.



### Local events

- Work with civic and local groups to improve communication with citizens. Use social media platforms to run awareness campaigns! Educate young people on the role of the EU and do wider promotion of youth-relevant schemes, e.g. European Youth Parliament! **Cork, Ireland, 19/11/2016**
- We need to improve citizens' knowledge and gain a better understanding of how Brexit and the EU legislative, political and socio-economic developments affect daily lives. **Huddinge, Sweden, 16/10/2017**
- We need a roadmap to renew our Union, to make it simpler and reform the institutions and decision-making process. **Caen, France, 22/05/2018**



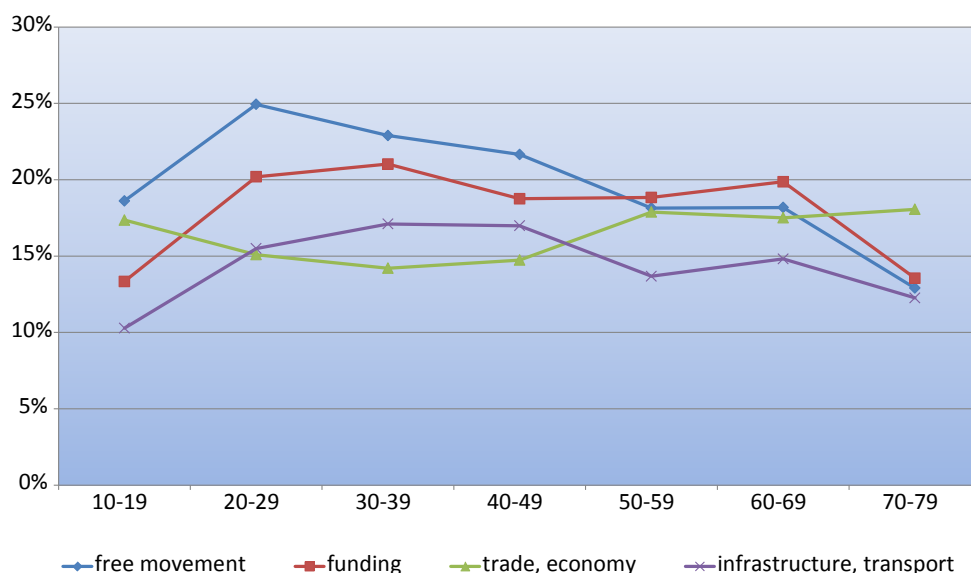
### Online survey/app

- Improve awareness of citizens about the EU and its policies, trying to fight disinformation, populism and regain trust. **(Agrigento, Italy, Female, 26 years old)**
- Until the EU shares the benefits of the EU with Europeans, European identity will not grow. At the moment it's just an institution. **(Passignano sul Trasimeno, Italy, Male, 33 years old)**
- Help with the youth employment; we do not have any certainty about our future. **(Bratislava, Slovak Republic, Female, 21 years old)**
- Need to make people better understand the work of the EU in a tangible way (regain trust). Reflect on the benefits and the cost of non-EU. **(Madrid, Spain, Female, 34 years old)**

## Education

A good place to start is certainly with the younger generation. As shown in the local debates and in the survey's results, the under-40s are the most enthusiastic generation in terms of attitude and feelings towards the EU, and they set great store on freedom of movement and the educational opportunities brought by the EU. It is older generations meanwhile who have a more acute sense of the founding rationale behind the EU, and they should be engaged in dialogue with the younger generation to communicate the stability and peace between countries fostered by the European project.

### Main benefits of EU, by age (selected benefits)



### Local events

- I believe in Europe and in its opportunities in the area of education and mobility. **Breitenwang, Austria, 08/05/2017**
- Education plays a crucial role in preparing young people to play an active part in a society and successfully participate in the changing labour market. There is a need for civic education and improving information about employment opportunities. **Gdynia, Poland, 02/06/2017**



## Strength in transparency

The EU's openness needs to be made more of an asset, especially in the age of instant information – its survival depends on developing the ability to engage with people. Without pride of ownership, populism has more room to prevail. The EU's achievements should be promoted, but at the same time people's fears should be addressed honestly. Complete transparency will be necessary. Information flow is also crucial. How can people be expected to stand behind the EU if they do not have a certain basic level of knowledge about its functions and activities? There is no room for an 'us vs them' mentality; the EU will only thrive with the full support of all its citizens.



### Local events

- What EU policy is missing is cases of bad practice – it is important to show not only successes but also where predictions were made but did not work in practice. **Liberec, Czech Republic, 13/09/2016**



### Online survey/app

- They need to communicate the benefits of the EU better at local and regional levels. (Athens, Greece, Female, 30 years old)
- Lack of the information on the benefits of the EU cohesion funds for the local communities. (Split, Croatia, Male, 32 years old)

In which fields should the EU do more to improve your daily life, and how?

wsparcie środowisko  
 rozwój demokracji kraju  
 Polsce zdrowia Prawa  
 poprawa obszarze ochrona  
 pracy środowiska  
 wszystkich Polityka  
 Infrastruktura integracja

Online survey - word cloud Poland

## Sense of frustration

***People are frustrated with the current project of Europe. Europe is not doing enough, or is doing too little: in any case it is not doing the right thing***

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### Where is Europe headed?

While there is no lack of support for a European project, questions linger as to whether the EU is living up to its ambitions, and meeting the challenges of a European reality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Feedback suggests that there is a growing frustration about the direction being taken by the EU. For many, it is perceived as out of touch with their everyday concerns, and distant from their real needs.

### Why can't the EU do more for me?

Reactions to the EU are by necessity country-specific, but shared concerns such as migration flow resonate. For some, the EU has become synonymous with complexity and bureaucracy. Involvement with applications for EU funding prompted comments from some quarters about the lack of information on how to access them. Many felt greater that accessibility to funding programmes should be prioritised, and that more collaboration should be facilitated between public and private bodies.

### Room for improvement

Where Europe is encountering challenges that go beyond the scope of national borders, this is where the EU should be stepping up its efforts to develop and support common efforts. Areas that were cited repeatedly included the regulation of migration flow, economic stability, education, environment and security. Overall, according to the local debates and survey results, migration emerged as the area of greatest concern, both in terms of posing a problem, and of the treatment of migrants in EU countries. It is important that the EU responds in a coherent and cogent manner to such a widely-shared concern; failure to provide solutions can even lead to the EU being identified as the source of a problem.



The lack of employment prospects in regions is also a wide issue, in particular among young people. This is often linked to the brain drain effect and the need to create new opportunities for growth and investment for the new generations in their territories. Respondents in thirteen countries say unemployment can be best tackled at regional and local level. Besides, 40% of respondents from Greece made a strong call for the EU to tackle unemployment.

In response to the question ‘What are your main concerns?’, 24% of respondents answered ‘migration’, making it the single biggest issue. This is the number one issue among survey participants in half of the EU countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the UK.

### Local events

- Why does the EU not support Italy in the management of migration flows with a stronger programme? **Marcellina, Italy, 11/11/2017**
- The EU’s management of the refugee crisis has been inefficient, but regions and cities have played a positive role. **Gijon, Spain, 21/09/2016**
- The brain drain from Romania, unemployment and policies to boost attractiveness of the region for the youth as well as mobility are the main concerns. **Cluj Napoca, Romania, 13/06/2017**
- The different capacity for adaptation to climate change will in the medium term become a source of inequality. **Murcia, Spain, 27/07/2017**
- The EU should develop policies 1) to support Member States managing migration flows; 2) to promote the development of enterprises’ networks in order to boost their access to European funds; 3) support the access of young people to job markets, especially in the digital sector; 4) finalise cross-border healthcare programmes. **Montecatini, Italy, 23/11/2107**
- Transport in Prešov has been in a very poor condition for many years but no solutions have been found so far. **Prešov, Slovakia, 19/04/2018**





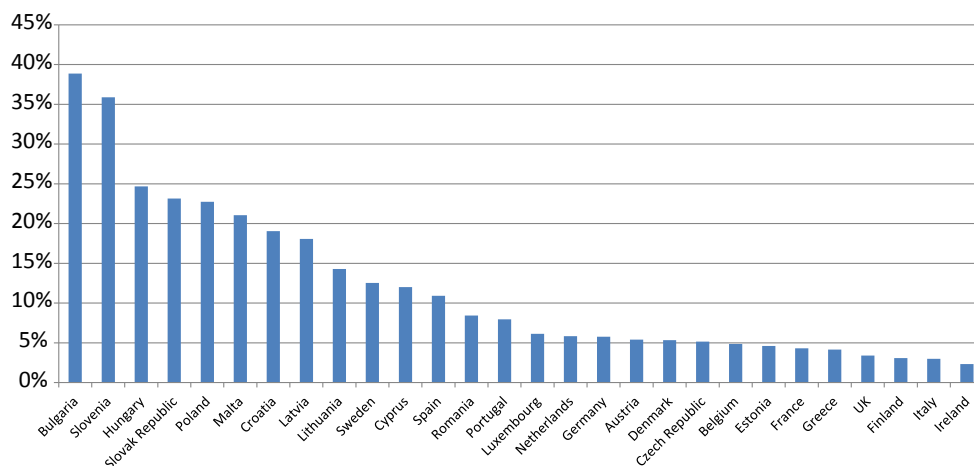
### Online survey/app

- Benefits? There are none. As a small business owner (SME) all I receive from the EU is red tape and more bureaucracy. (Copenhagen, Denmark, Female, 32 years old)
- Less bureaucracy, enhance the European spirit by allowing more collaboration with European institutions outside the strictly EU structure. (Athens, Greece, Female, 54 years old)
- Growth of bureaucracy is main concern about the future of EU. (Vilnius, Lithuania, Female, 38 years old)
- Migration and management of refugees (or rather the terrible treatment of refugees). (Malmö, Sweden, Female, 29 years old)

## Countering corruption

Significant dissatisfaction was voiced in a minority of countries about corruption and the rule of law. In nine countries, more than one in seven of our participants chose this as a main concern in general (Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovak Republic and Slovenia). Among those taking part in dialogues and online, it is fair to say that in these countries there are concerns about the way EU funding is managed, and greater EU oversight of its expenditure would be welcomed.

Concern about corruption and the rule of law, by country



## The future is digital

The EU’s potential role in helping citizens to prepare for the digitisation of everyday life was a recurrent theme from the local events. An innovative approach is needed to not only embrace the digital economy, but also address global challenges ranging from climate change and energy efficiency to defense and security. This is another example of an issue that transcends national borders and calls for a joined-up approach across Europe. Will the EU be able to rise to the challenge of supporting the installation of wifi across the continent? Both from those intervening in local events and from survey respondents, it seems that the people are throwing down the gauntlet to the EU!

What are the main concerns that you want to share with representatives of EU institutions?



Online survey - word cloud Italy – Poland



Online survey - word cloud France – Romania



## A strong call for more solidarity

### *Reducing inequalities between poorer and richer regions*

#### Standing strong together

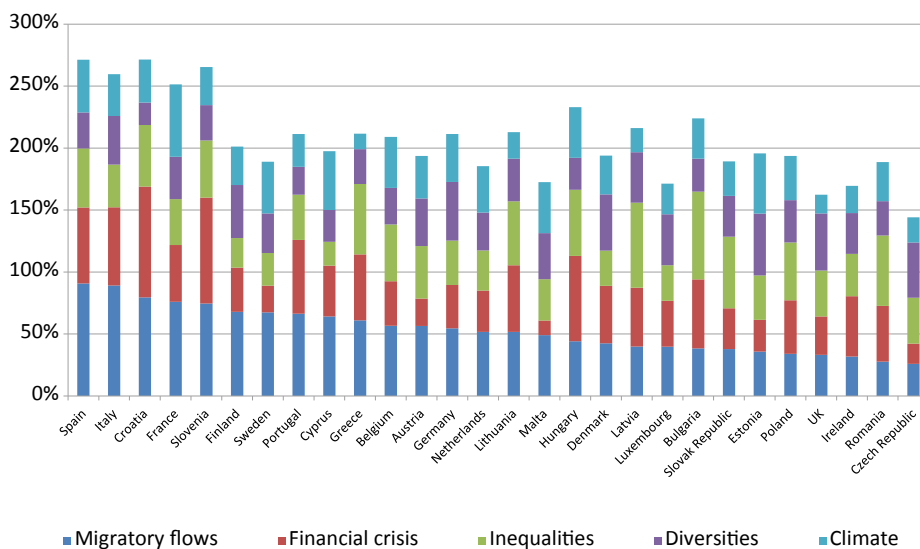
One message communicated clearly via the local debates and the online survey/app was the recognition that there is still progress to be made in reducing disparities between different regions of the EU. This was accompanied by calls for the EU to have an enhanced role in this respect.

Overall, 80% of those surveyed replied that there needs to be more solidarity within the EU. This shows that the depth of feeling expressed on the subject is backed up by strength in numbers.

The five areas in which they said they would like to see more EU solidarity were ranked as follows:

- Handling migratory flows 61 %
- Responding to the financial crisis 49 %
- Reducing inequalities 43 %
- Accepting diversities 35 %
- Managing climate change 34 %

#### Issues needing more solidarity between EU countries, by country



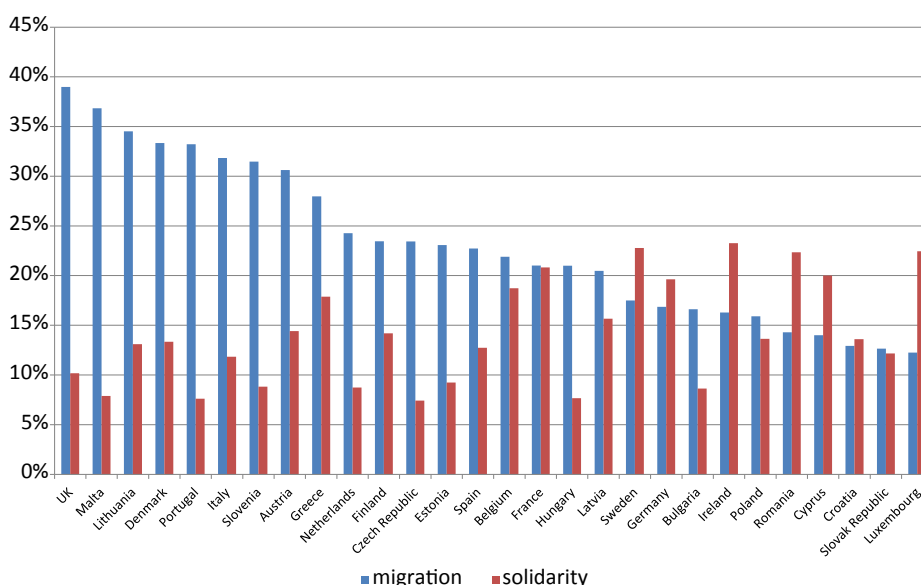
Bars' values are exceeding 100% because respondents could select more than one answer.

## Solidarity in the face of crisis

The two areas where participants expressed the need for more solidarity between EU countries were: migration and refugees crisis and the financial crisis. There were many discussions around responsibility and risk sharing. The conclusions were to the effect that the EU should develop stronger policies to support Member States managing migration flows.

Overall, in line with opinion polls, the survey results showed migration to be the leading concern, at 24%, and a topic that evoked strong reactions. ‘Solidarity’ itself was ranked fourth as a named concern, with 15% of the overall votes.

### Concern about migration and solidarity, by country



Variations between participants’ perceptions from different countries are quite pronounced, however: ‘migration and refugees crisis’ is the highest ranked issue in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the UK. The issue was also highly ranked among those we met in regions and cities in Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Poland and Sweden.

Across all age groups, a strong appetite was noted for European solidarity in response to migratory flows, especially among the under-30s.

## Reduce inequalities between regions

The call to reduce inequalities between regions emphasizes the need for a reinforced cohesion policy. This is the policy that directs funding towards regions whose inhabitants are at a disadvantage relative to wealthier regions. It aims to boost competitiveness, create jobs and stimulate economic growth. Listening

to those in regions and cities, there is a case for the level of this funding to be increased, and also for the efficacy of the expenditure to be reviewed to ensure that it is making the difference envisaged. We also know from opinion polls that people remain unaware of the existence of Cohesion-funded projects in their local area. Citizens should be better informed about the outcomes and objectives of Cohesion Policy and this needs to be built into the design of future Cohesion Policy for the period after 2020. In relation to regional support, it was also suggested that the economic development of sparsely populated regions requires a combination of wider regional collaboration and local initiatives to support local communities.

### Local events

- We need cooperation and solidarity among all European countries regarding the refugee crisis. **Breitenwang, Austria, 08/05/2017**
- How will the subsidiarity principle fit in the future cohesion policy? We need cities to be flexible in the management of ESI funds. **Zaragoza, Spain, 09/11/2017**
- The EU should take measures to integrate migrants and tackle the refugee crisis. **Gdynia, Poland, 02/06/2017**
- We need to harmonise the high costs of cross-border travel and the right to be treated equally in Germany as in Belgium at hospitals. **Saint-Vith, Belgium, 15/11/2017**
- Solidarity does not work one way! Now we have to go further: we want sanctions against those countries who are freed from their duty of solidarity. **Carcassonne, France, 20/04/2018**
- There is a strong need for a better de-centralisation of Cohesion Policy governance at the national level. Local authorities are not involved in the definition of programmes enough. There are concerns about the future of Cohesion Policy. **Athens, Greece, 1/03/2018**
- The post-2020 future will be characterised by a possible reduction of EU Structural and Investment funds, since Cohesion Policy will have to face other European priorities. For this reason we have to demonstrate a good implementation of funds and communication strategies in all types of forums are needed. **Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 14/12/2017**
- EU cohesion policy makes the EU perceptible at local level. Holding together is what the EU should be about. **Bremen, Germany, 17/04/2018**





### Online survey/app

- EU Cohesion Policy – working together to improve economic growth in EU and standard of living. **(Aalborg, Denmark, Female, 50 years old)**
- Better cohesion, less disparities and more joined forces among EU members **(Cantabria, Spain, Male, 42 years old)**
- We need more solidarity among all Member States in integrating migrants and in economic policies **(Montecatini Terme, Italy, Female, 29 years old)**
- One Europe for the citizens that tackles the inequalities between regions and invests in their future. **(Perama, Greece, Male, 43 years old)**
- Inequalities between countries and regions. **(Seville, Spain, Female, 45 years old)**
- Ensure better cohesion between countries via more solidarity and burden-sharing while maintaining local specificities and diversity. **(Brussels, Belgium, Female, 27 years old)**
- Cohesion Policy should go a step ahead and joint development should be supported. **(Thessaloniki, Greece, Female, 32 years old)**
- I would like to see greater sensitivity and solidarity between the rulers over the neediest (people and citizens). **(Castro Daire, Portugal, Male, 50 years old)**
- Deal with income inequality. Mandate to give money (some at least) directly to citizens to spend and clear debt when the next recession comes. Do not ever allow European citizens to be treated the way Greek citizens were by European institutions. **(Ireland)**



### Social media debates

- Fintan Convery: Like everything is this world, it could be improved upon, But frankly, it's brilliant! Not one war between member states in this continent that used to tear itself up regularly - including two mega-wars that affected the whole world to various degrees. Huge financial support from richer countries for developing countries - like what we received for decades here in Ireland. Nothing's perfect but its a blessing, and, needs to be kept (IE)

## Europe making a difference

### *The perception of benefits and of European added value*

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#### What's in it for us?

The demand from citizens is for Europe to meet their real needs and improve their daily lives. When it comes to acknowledgment and appreciation of the EU's benefits, the opinions from local events echoed the survey results. EU benefits are appreciated, especially in the areas of investment and infrastructure, freedom of movement, and education and training. Building on enthusiasm for the EU's benefits by raising awareness of their efforts is key. Particular areas that resonate are those of:

- EU funding, trade and infrastructure;
- freedom of movement;
- education and training (even though the EU has a relatively limited role in this area).

#### Europe on the move

A generation of young Europeans define themselves in terms of mobility. Eager for education and training, they recognise and avail themselves of opportunities delivered through EU programmes such as Erasmus.

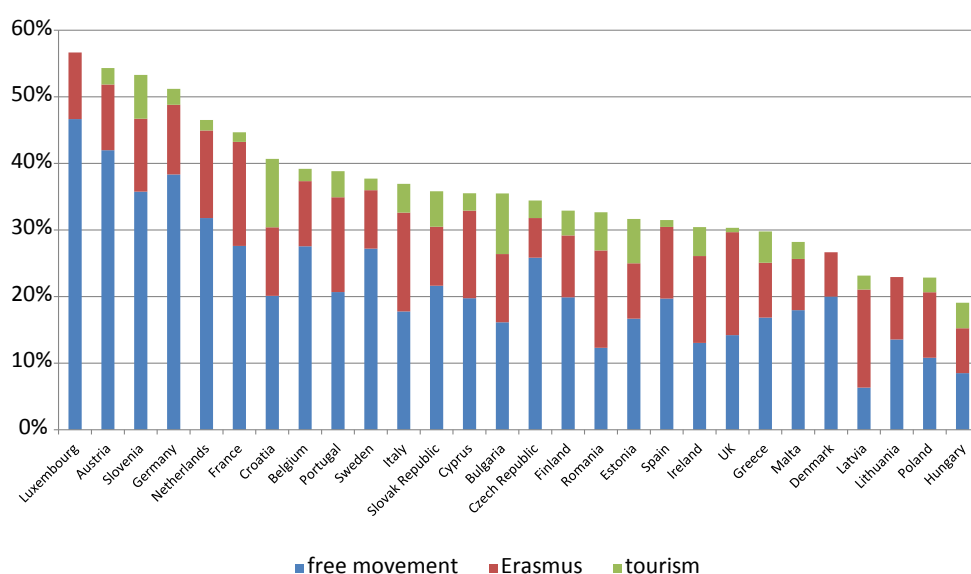
Free movement is an especially popular benefit in the age group 20-49, but enthusiasm tails off among older age groups. 50-69 year-olds most often cite funding, and 70-79 year-olds most often cite trade and economy.

- **Oportunitatile oferite de catre programul Erasmus+ reprezinta o parte importanta in dezvoltarea mea personala dar si a colegilor mei.**  
The opportunities offered by the Erasmus + programme are an important part of my personal development but also of my colleagues.
- **Apertura al mundo, mayores posibilidades para movilización, Erasmus, mercado más grande...**  
Openness to the world, greater possibilities for mobilisation, Erasmus, larger market ...



Young people travel to work in other European countries without having to worry about work permits and this also contributes to developing their European identity. At the same time they suffer from the lack of opportunities in their cities of origin and as a consequence they call for solutions to the brain drain. They also travel for leisure without border restrictions, partaking in broader European culture. The tourism enhanced by such freedom of movement is extremely important to many local economies, as is the lack of trade barriers.

### Free movement, Erasmus and tourism as main benefits, by country



### Fringe benefits

It is interesting that there is general appreciation for what are considered the “fringe benefits” rather than the ‘big sellers’ at EU level. These fringe benefits include: education and mobility opportunities, social and unemployment initiatives, support for SMEs, concrete actions for innovation, and climate change policies. In particular in countries such as Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovak Republic and Spain, regions are seen as best placed to tackle unemployment. These countries also include – surprisingly – Malta.

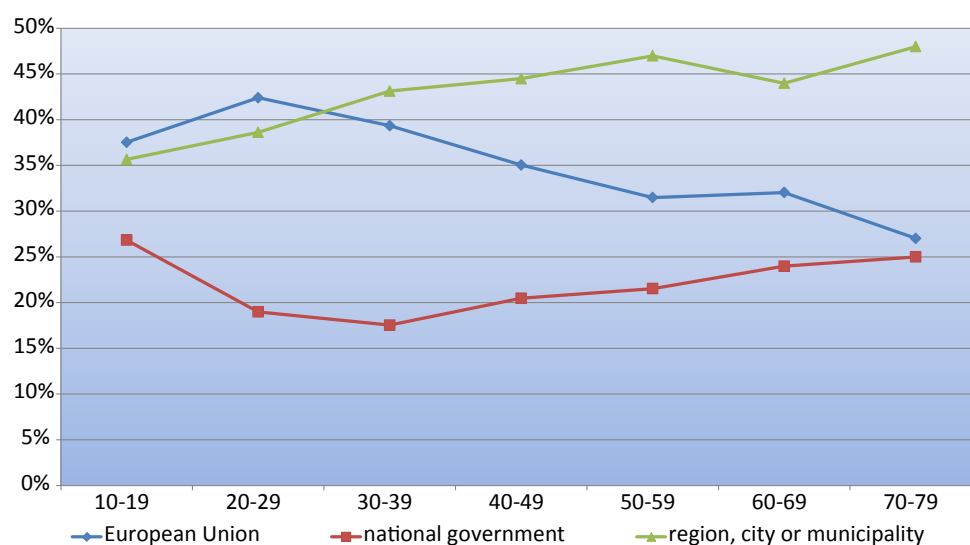
Environment is another area in which the EU’s positive influence seems to have been felt judging from the reactions in person and online.

Results also showed that the EU is rated as the best level of governance to deal with the environment, which was ranked fourth (with 27 %) of the problems listed across all countries. This result endorses the effectiveness of EU initiatives and legislation on this front.

## Redefinition of EU priorities

If we take all the replies to the survey together, the under-30s age group considers the EU to be the most reliable level of government – above national, regional and local. In addition, respondents older than 30 years old tend to rely more on their regional and local governments. From this indicator we can expect to see levels of confidence in the EU building over the next two decades. It is certain that the younger generation will influence the shape of the EU to come.

### Most reliable level of government, by age group



The under-30s are currently more willing to show solidarity in response to migratory flow than their elders, and have a keen awareness of the importance of the protection of privacy, for example.



### Local events

- The EU's wifi for all, support for SMEs, young entrepreneurs and women empowerment. **Valletta, Malta, 02/02/2017**
- The European Union can provide opportunities for smart specialisation. These will lead to new skills and knowledge, innovation, employment and, ultimately, a better quality of life. **Heraklion, Greece, 04/11/2016**
- It is virtually impossible to find a place in Tuscany that has not benefitted from EU cohesion policy. **Florence, Italy, 11/05/2018**



### Online survey/app

- For me personally it has benefited my education as my school's lab was built with EU funding. **(Szolnok, Hungary, Female, 17 years old)**
- Employment, mobility, better future. **(Naples, Italy, Female, 25 years old)**
- Better mobility, better security, better environment, better education. **(Liège, Belgium, Male, 46 years old)**
- Environment, education, food and agriculture, mobility, freedom of movement, culture, media and languages **(Berlin, Germany, Female, age N/A)**
- Unemployment, young people, SMEs, encouraging 'learning by doing', mentorships, grants **(Helsinki, Finland, Male, 39 years old)**
- The EU should interfere to improve daily life in transportation, unemployment and opportunities for young people. **(Târgu Mureş, Romania, Female, 41 years old)**



### Social media debates

- I am in favour of a united Europe with equal rights and duties and border control in a fight against banditry, terrorism, arms and drugs. A Europe with equal benefits and wages. **(PT)**

# 8

## The way forward

### *Some food for thought*

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#### Where we are

The feedback from the local events and the online survey/app has been illuminating and provoking. A general fatigue and unease with politics at a national level translates into a wider distrust, discrediting the EU by association. On the other hand, EU intervention is welcomed in some countries more than in others, and it is felt that national politicians can be too quick to lay the blame at Europe's door. This is the case for example in relation to environment policy among our participants in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Malta, the Netherlands and the UK. Others, for example in Croatia, Ireland, Poland, Slovak Republic and Spain, see a stronger role for the EU in education. And among our participants in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Hungary and Slovenia; there was appetite for the EU to intervene on rule of law issues. More generally, the EU can seem remote from citizens' everyday lives, and by making connections at a local and regional level, it can better demonstrate the benefits, and take on board constructive input – opening up regional/local channels of dialogue.

There is still a clear enthusiasm for the European project and solidarity between countries is perceived as a need. There is appreciation of the advantages stemming from EU membership, which is expressed particularly by the younger generation, whose priorities are education, employment and mobility.

#### Conflicting demands?

In order for the EU to be able to confront and take action at a unified level on global challenges such as migratory flow and adaptation to climate change, it needs a firm mandate from the citizens of all its Member States. This can be best achieved at grassroots level. The challenge of ensuring the well-being of all citizens is the primary one.

Against this background, among our contacts through events and online, regions and cities are best placed as the level of politics citizens rely on most with 43% of replies, followed by the EU (36%). This goes hand in hand with opinion poll data which show the regional and local level of government is the most trusted in the EU. Across the board, unemployment is cited as the greatest problem by our participants in most countries, and across all age groups, particularly in the range 30-49.

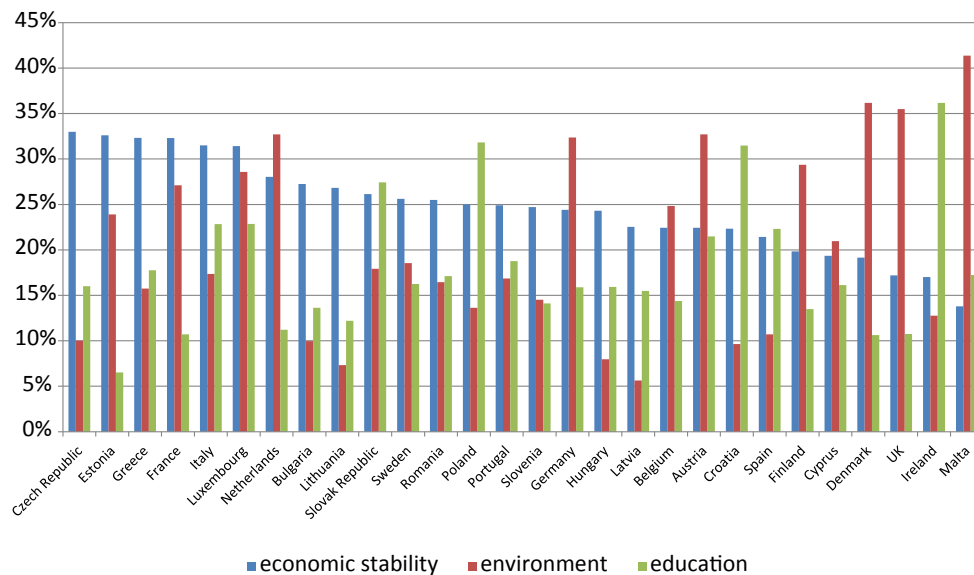
## A green touch

Our survey asked respondents in which fields they thought the EU should do more to improve their daily lives.

Overall, after economic stability (27%), environment (19%) and education (18%) were rated as the two next most important areas. But there are eight countries in which our participants put environment top of the list of issues.

This is an example of an area in which the EU has proved effective, and can play to its strengths by living up to public expectations and offering local support.

Fields where the EU should do more to improve daily life, by country (selected fields)



European issues and national issues are seen by people through the prism of what happens in their region, city or local area. In this context, regions and cities can play a concrete role to meet their needs, find solutions to their concerns and facilitate the channel of communication and democratic participation with the European institutions.

All politics is local – and this is the new direction in the EU.

## Looking ahead

“Reflecting on Europe” is a conversation between the European Committee of the Regions’ members and real people in regions, cities and local areas across the EU. The conversation takes place in ‘townhall’ meetings and citizens dialogues. It takes place both in the meeting room and online, via a survey and feedback mechanism which is also available as an app. And the conversation continues in the social media and subsequent interactions. We do not pretend this is a scientific process, with random samples and population-weighted averages. We do not pretend this is a mass-movement, with local activists and a one-size fits all agenda. It has been deliberately carried out as a human process, bringing trusted local and regional elected politicians together with EU citizens.

In the post-Brexit, post-Trump world, the European Union finds itself at a crossroads. We face stark choices for the future and this report on our modest and human process brings them into sharp focus:

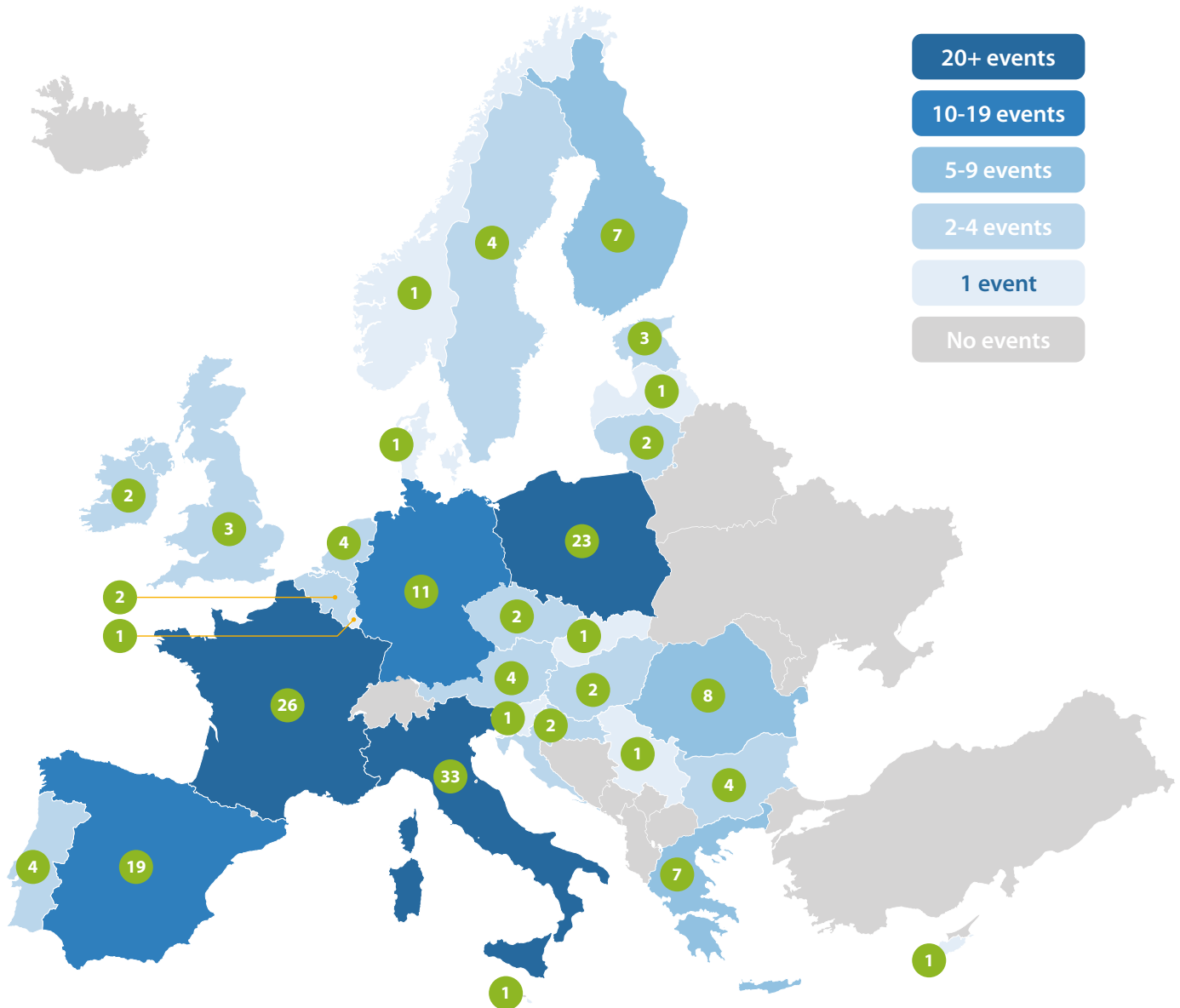
- **do we want a future of Europe based on distance or proximity?** Will the EU simply continue to be built top-down from Brussels or is it time to build an EU of regions and cities from the ground? An EU of regions and cities is not built ‘against’ Member states, it is built for Europeans.
- **do we want a Europe based on confusion or on clarity?** Will the EU simply continue as a blame game between national governments and Brussels or is it time for clear roles and open communication from politicians at regional and local level?
- **do we want a more technocratic EU or a more political EU?** Will the EU simply continue as a numbers game based on lobby groups and responses to policy consultations or is there still space for leadership from EU politicians elected closest to the people?

By the time of the formal adoption of the Opinion on 9 October 2018, we completed around 180 citizens’ dialogues. This is a potentially significant contribution to the overall effort of the EU Institutions in the run up to the Summit of the 27 EU Leaders in Sibiu on 9 May 2019; and ultimately, the stark choices for the future of Europe will be made by voters themselves in the European elections later that month.

# Annexes

## Local events map & #eulocal hashtag usage

Local events held since mid-March 2016 until September 2018



Social media

more than

5 400

social media posts using #Eulocal

over

10 000

likes, shares and comments with posts using #Eulocal

Media Impact

around

1000

mentions of "citizens' dialogue" in the press across Europe

# CoR Members in action

## Rebuilding trust in the EU



Karl-Heinz Lambertz - Bremen, Germany, 17.04.2018



André Viola - Carcassonne, France, 20.04.2018



Andres Jaadla - Rakvere, Estonia, 24.05.2018



Babette Winter, Kata Tüttö - Erfurt, Germany, 17.06.2017



Christophe Rouillon - Coullaines, France, 28.05.2018



Heinz Lehmann - Leipzig, Germany, 20.04.2018



Tanya Hristova - Gabrovo, Bulgaria, 3.10.2016



Markku Markkula - Thessaloniki, Greece, 20.06.2017



Here is a snapshot of some of the CoR Members who organised local events since March 2016. Find out more about the 176 Members in action by visiting our interactive map on the web page [www.cor.europa.eu/future.eu](http://www.cor.europa.eu/future.eu)



*Mikel Irujo Amezaga, Kieran McCarthy - Pamplona, Spain, 09.05.2017*



*Sirpa Hertell - Pori, Finland, 17.07.2018*



*Dimitrios Kalogeropoulos - Athens, Greece, 1.03.2018*



*Enrico Rossi - Florence, Italy, 11.05.2018*



*Georgios Kaminis - Athens, Greece, 19.06.2017*



*Juan Espadas Cejas - Seville, Spain, 13.09.2017*



*Marco Dus - Vittorio Veneto, Italy, 09.05.2018*



*Herwig van Staa - Innsbruck, Austria, 09.05.2017*

## Local debates

Citizens sharing their views





Maastricht, The Netherlands, 02.07.2017



Bacau, Romania, 18.04.2018



Saint-Omer, France, 04.05.2018



Görlitz, Germany, 23.05.2017



Murcia, Spain, 14.11.2016



Coulaines, France, 28.05.2018



Harghita, Romania, 19.04.2018



Presov, Slovakia, 19.04.2018

# Online Survey & Mobile App

## Have your say on Europe!

[www.cor.europa.eu/debate.go](http://www.cor.europa.eu/debate.go)

The **online survey/mobile App** is the main feedback gathering mechanism of the campaign on the Future of Europe. Launched in February 2016, the survey has been successfully used in EU Members States, in the context of local events, with **more than 22 000 collected replies** so far.

It is also available as **mobile app for all devices and in all EU languages**. The collected feedback fed into the CoR opinion of 9 October 2018 on "Reflecting on Europe: the voice of regional and local authorities to rebuild trust in the European Union".

Find out how your views will be part of the dialogue on the future of Europe!

**Download the *Have your say on Europe* App**


**Access real-time results and discover our local events**  
all over Europe via [www.cor.europa.eu/future.eu](http://www.cor.europa.eu/future.eu)

Have your say on Europe

 Google Play (Android)



Have your say on Europe

 App Store (Apple iOS)



## Catalogue of questions

### 1. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE MAIN PROBLEMS OF YOUR CITY OR REGION? (PICK ONE OR TWO)

- Security and terrorism
- Jobs and unemployment
- Opportunities for young people
- Environment
- Integration of migrants
- Mobility and public transport

### 2. DO YOU THINK THAT ... CAN BE BETTER TACKLED BY

- your city or municipality?
- your region?
- the national government?
- the European Union?

### 3. WHAT LEVEL OF POLITICS DO YOU THINK YOU CAN RELY ON MOST?

- your city or municipality
- your region
- the national government
- the European Union

### 4. DO YOU THINK THERE IS ENOUGH SOLIDARITY BETWEEN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES?

- Yes
- No

#### 4.1 If no, how should European countries show more solidarity? (pick one or two)

- By reducing inequalities between richer and poorer countries and regions
- By facing together the consequences of migratory flows and the refugee crisis
- By jointly tackling the negative impact of the economic and financial crisis
- By defining a common approach to climate change and environmental challenges
- By showing greater acceptance of the diversities that exist among the different countries

### 5. IN WHICH FIELDS DOES THE EU BRING CONCRETE BENEFITS TO THE LIFE OF YOUR CITY OR REGION? (140 CHARACTERS)

### 6. IN WHICH FIELDS SHOULD THE EU NOT INTERFERE? (140 CHARACTERS)

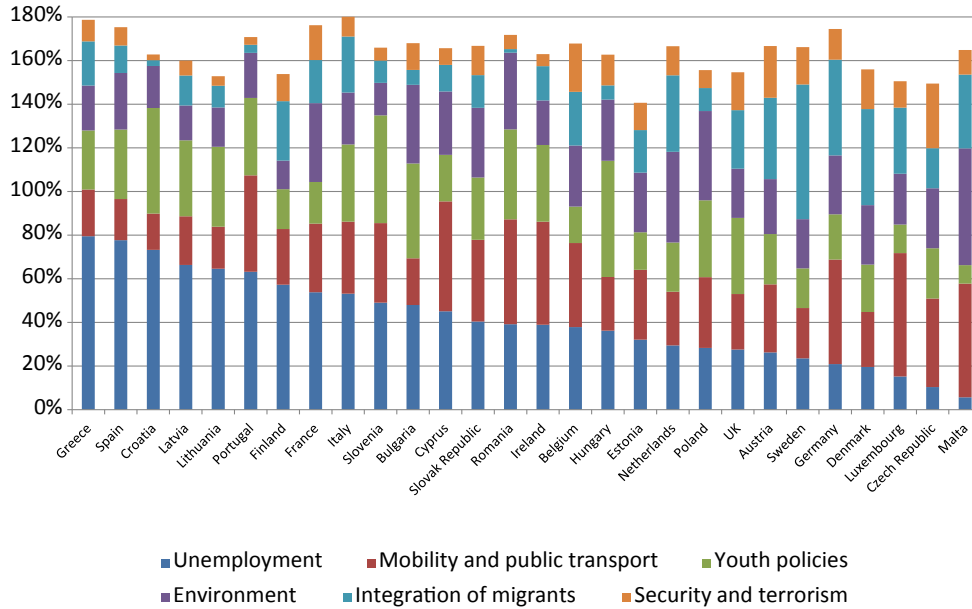
### 7. IN WHICH FIELDS SHOULD THE EU DO MORE TO IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE, AND HOW? (140 CHARACTERS)

### 8. WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONCERNS THAT YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF EU INSTITUTIONS? (140 CHARACTERS)

# Main findings of the survey

**Graph 1**

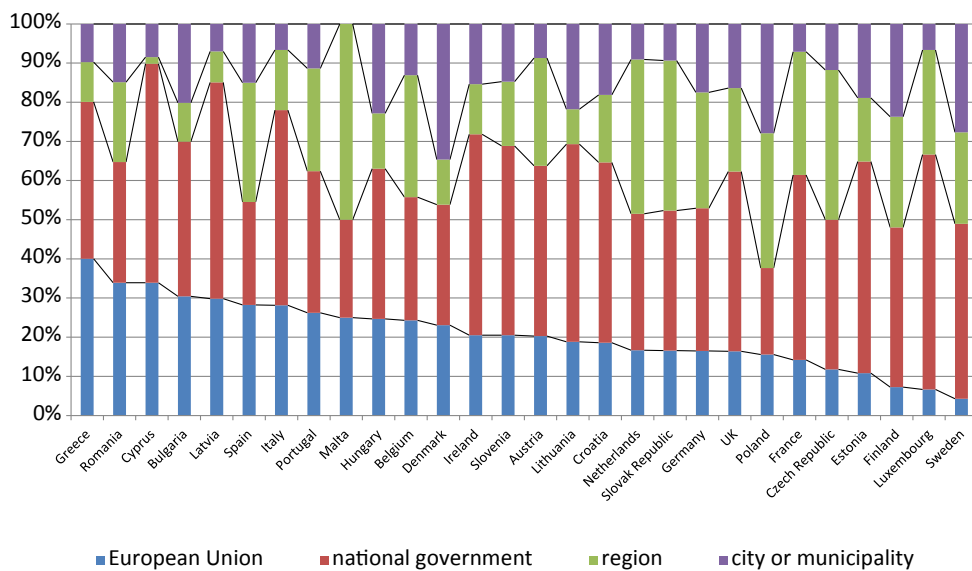
**Two main problems facing regions and cities, by country**



Bars' values are exceeding 100% because respondents could select more than one answer.

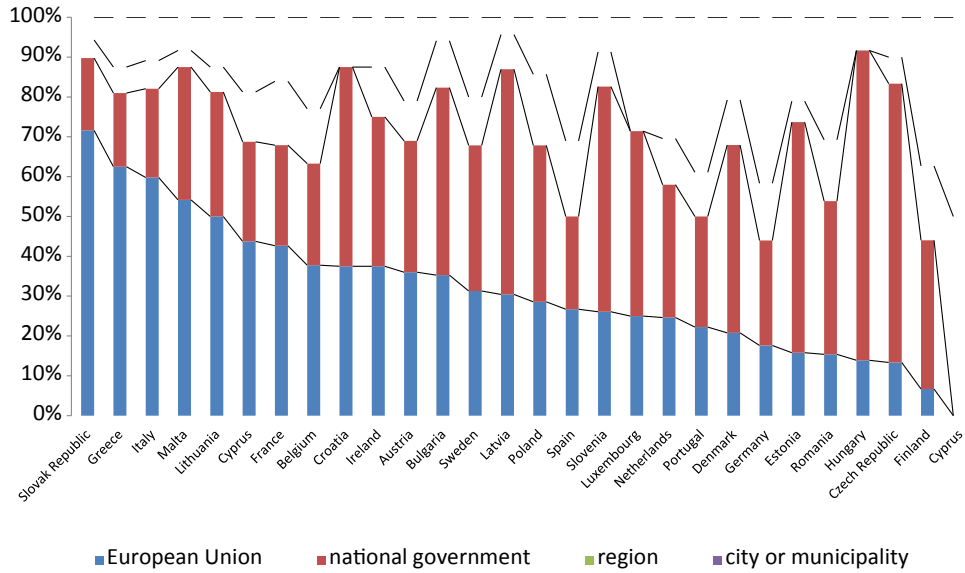
**Graph 2**

**Best level of government to tackle unemployment, by country**



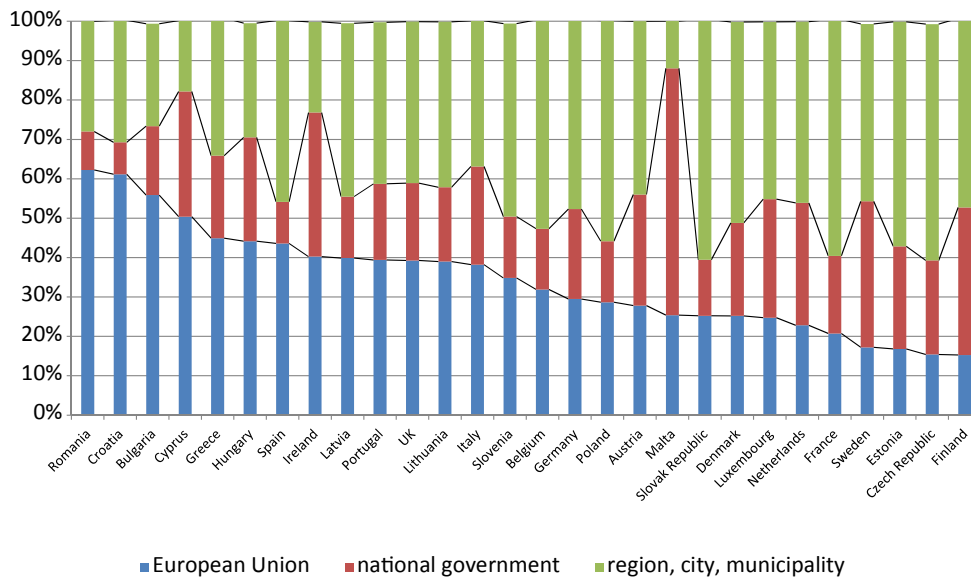
**Graph 3**

**Best level of government to tackle integration of migrants, by country**



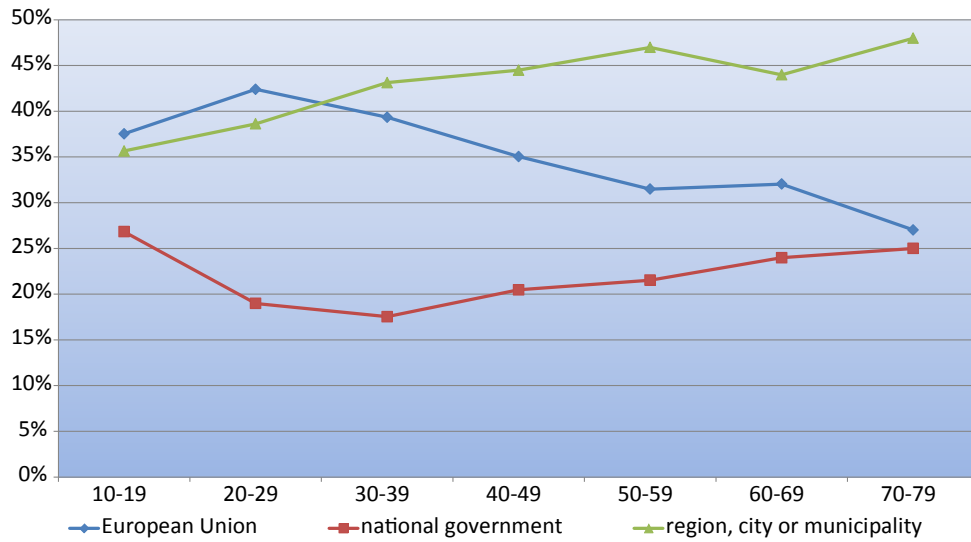
**Graph 4**

**Most reliable level of government, by country**



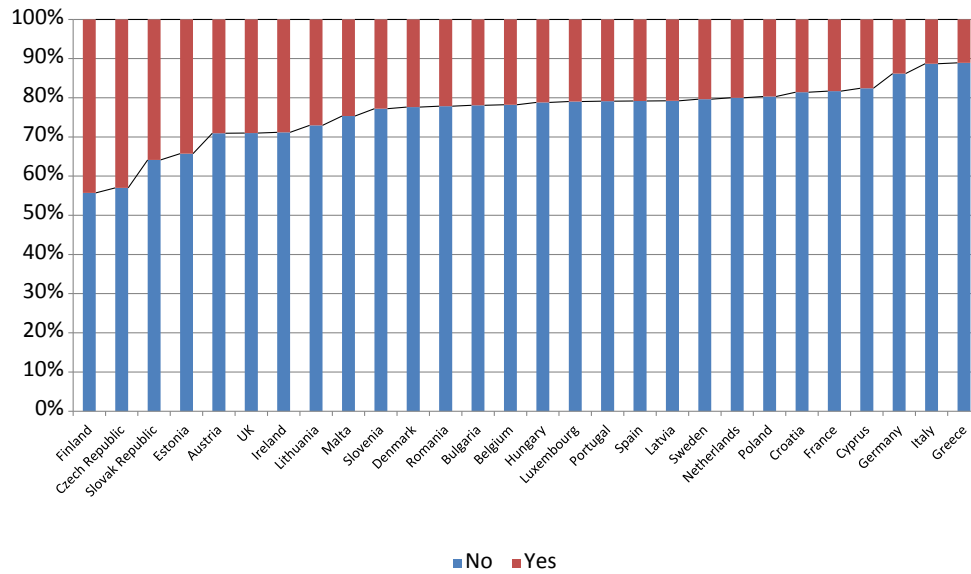
**Graph 5**

**Most reliable level of government, by age group**



**Graph 6**

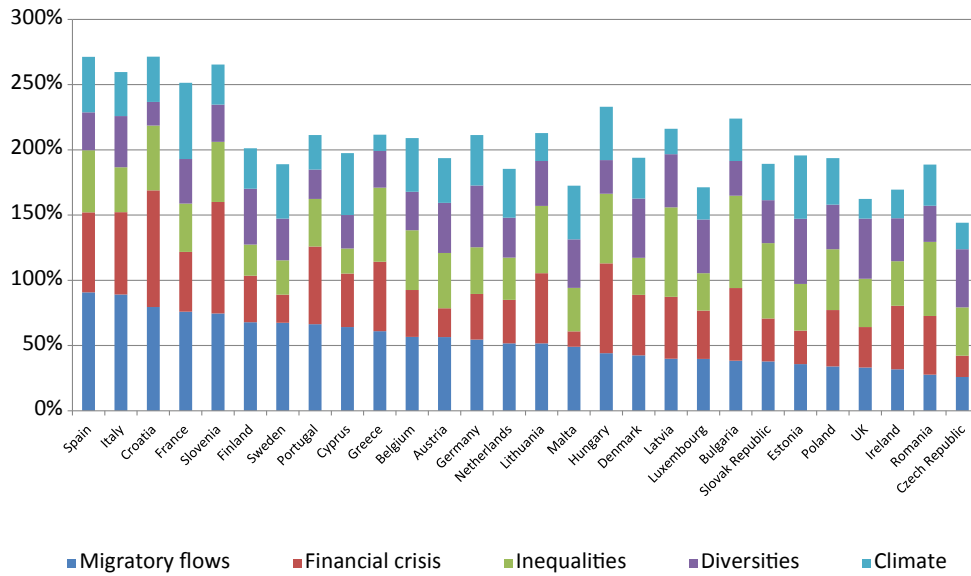
**Is there enough solidarity between EU countries, by country**





**Graph 7**

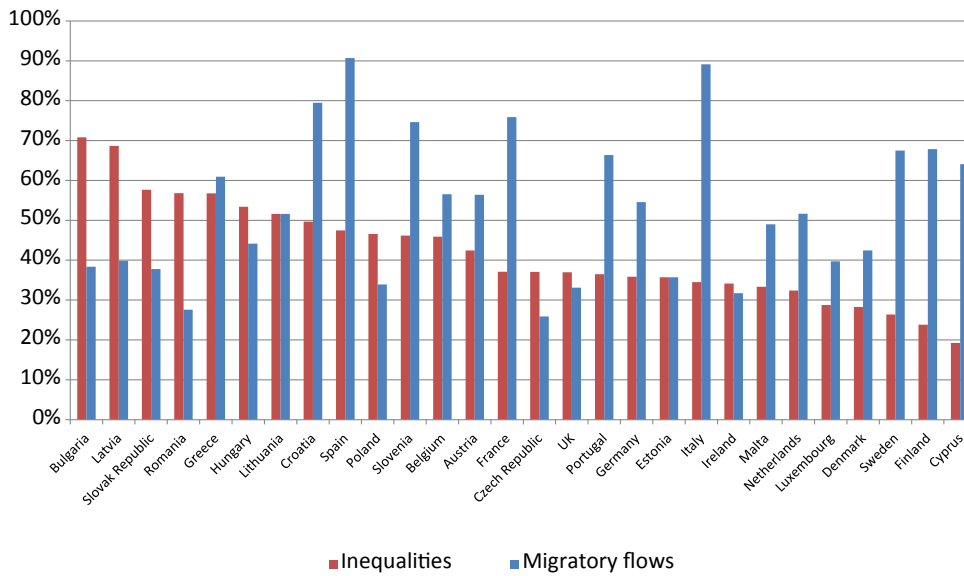
**Issues needing more solidarity between EU countries, by country**



Bars' values are exceeding 100% because respondents could select more than one answer.

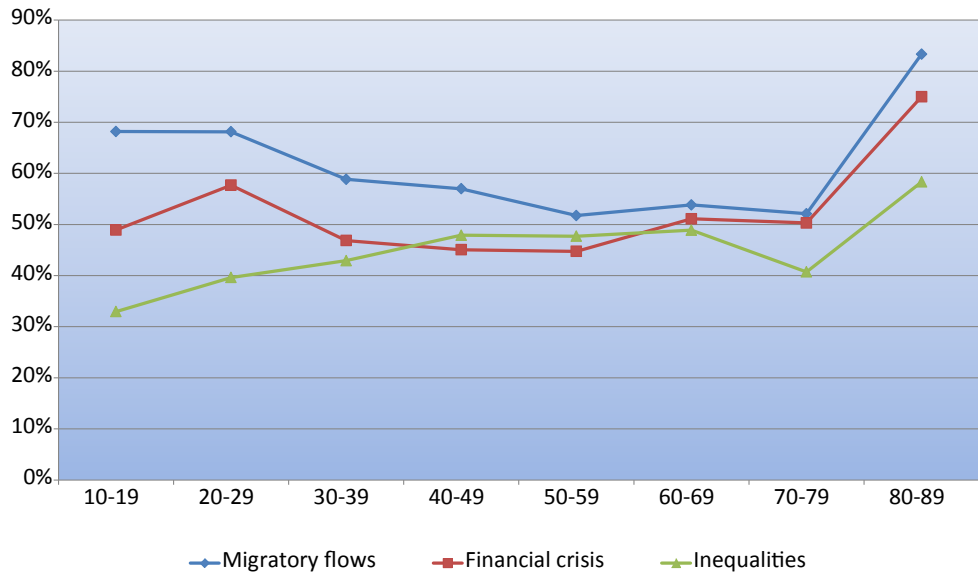
**Graph 8**

**Regional inequalities vs migration as issues needing more EU solidarity, by country**



**Graph 9**

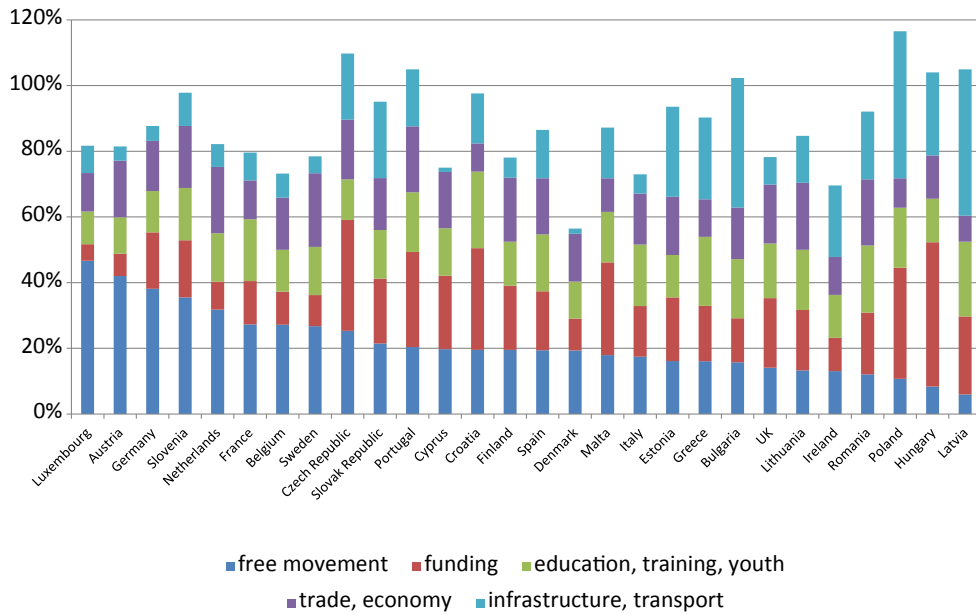
**Issues needing more solidarity between EU countries, by age group**



Respondents could pick more than one issue.

**Graph 10**

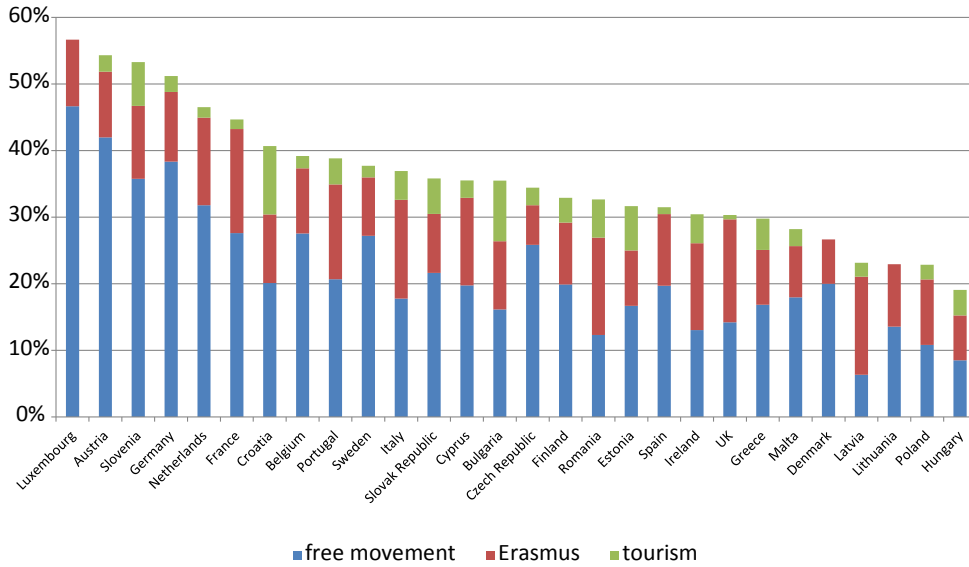
**Main benefits of EU, by country (selected benefits)**



Bars' values are exceeding 100% because respondents could select more than one answer.

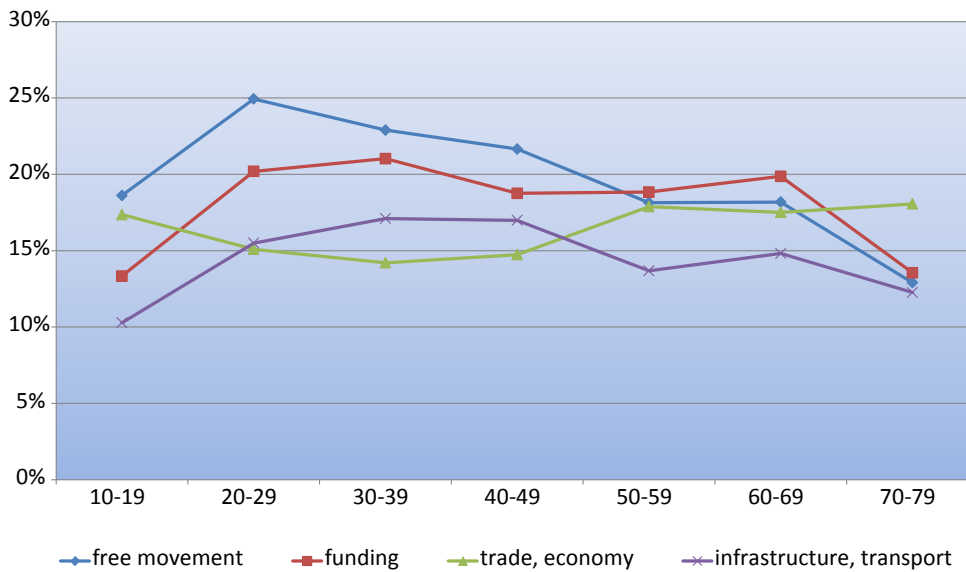
**Graph 11**

**Free movement, Erasmus and tourism as main benefits, by country**



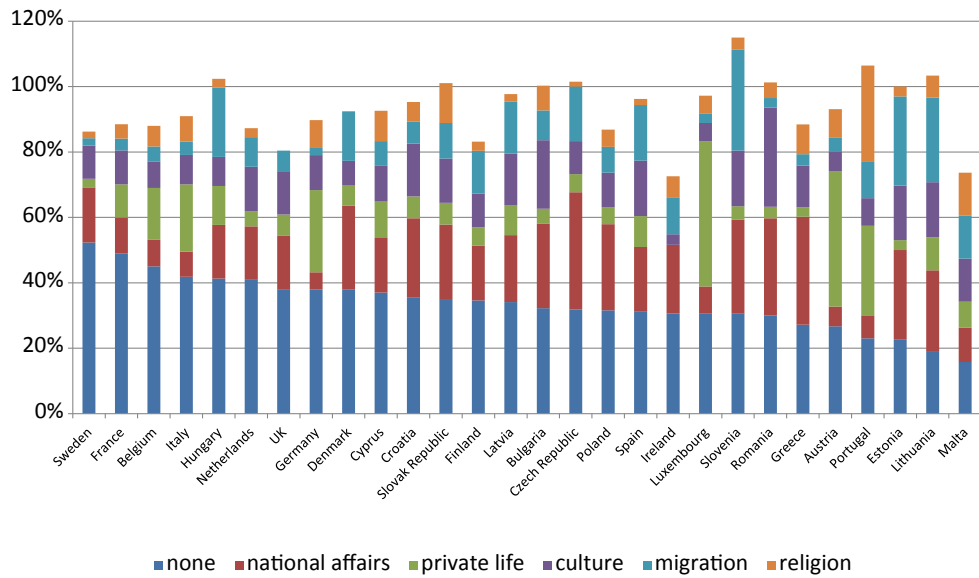
**Graph 12**

**Main benefits of EU, by age (selected benefits)**



**Graph 13**

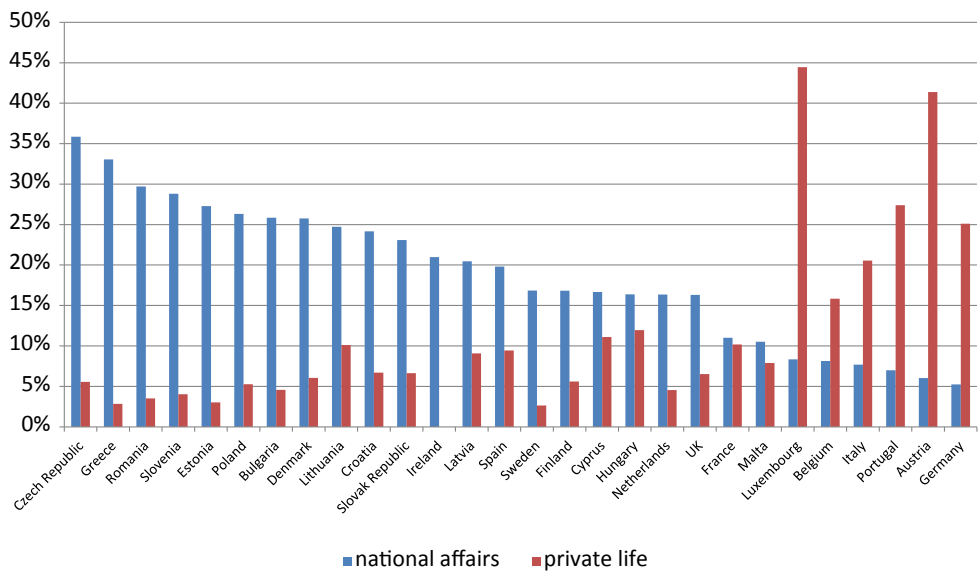
**Fields in which the EU should not interfere, by country**



Bars' values are exceeding 100% because respondents could select more than one answer.

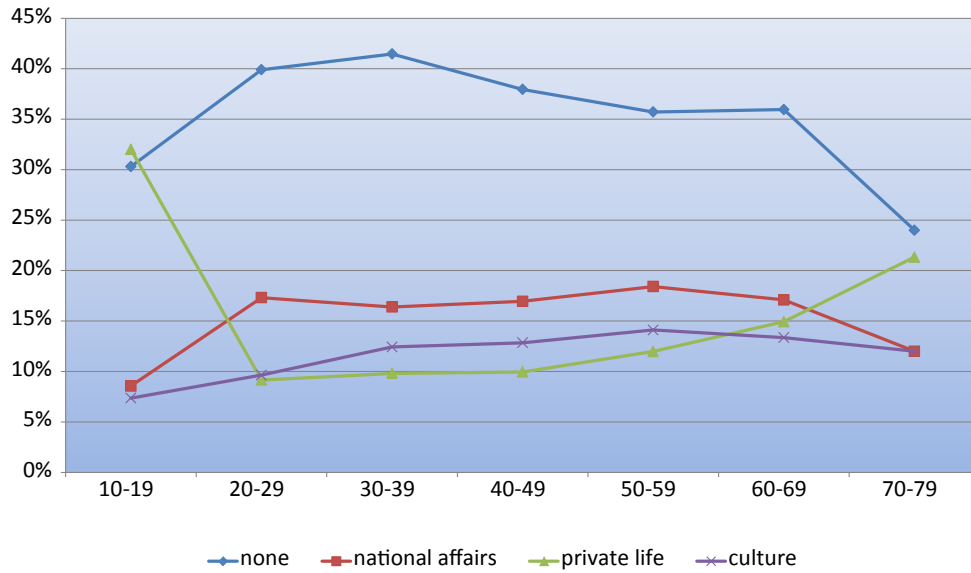
**Graph 14**

**Concern about EU interference in national affairs and private life, by country**



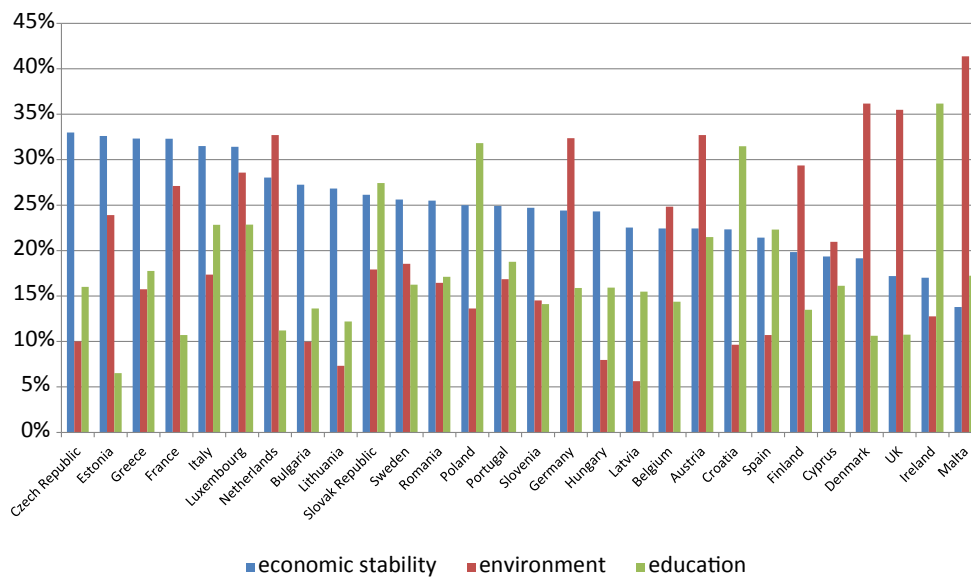
**Graph 15**

**Fields in which the EU should not interfere, by age**



**Graph 16**

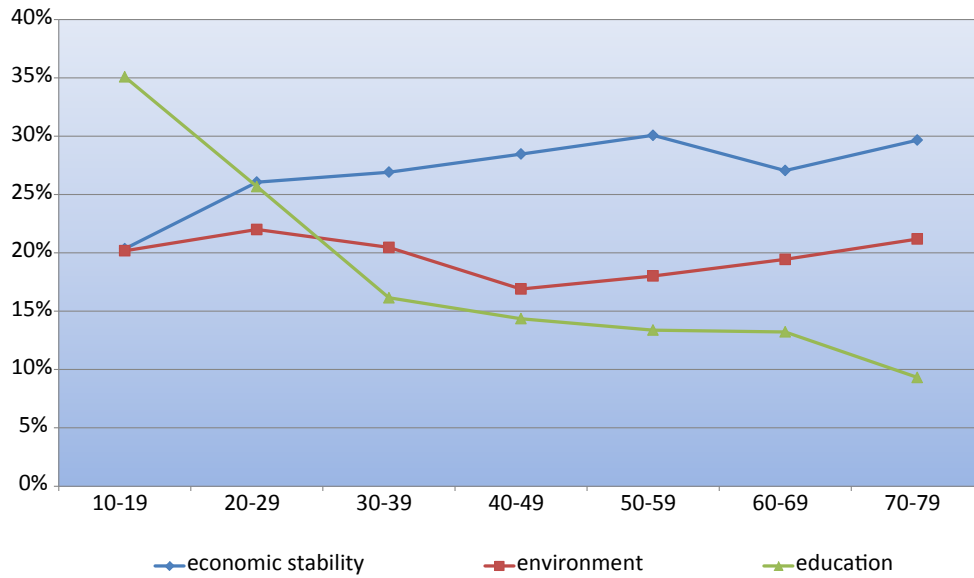
**Fields where the EU should do more to improve daily life, by country (selected fields)**



Respondents could propose more than one field.

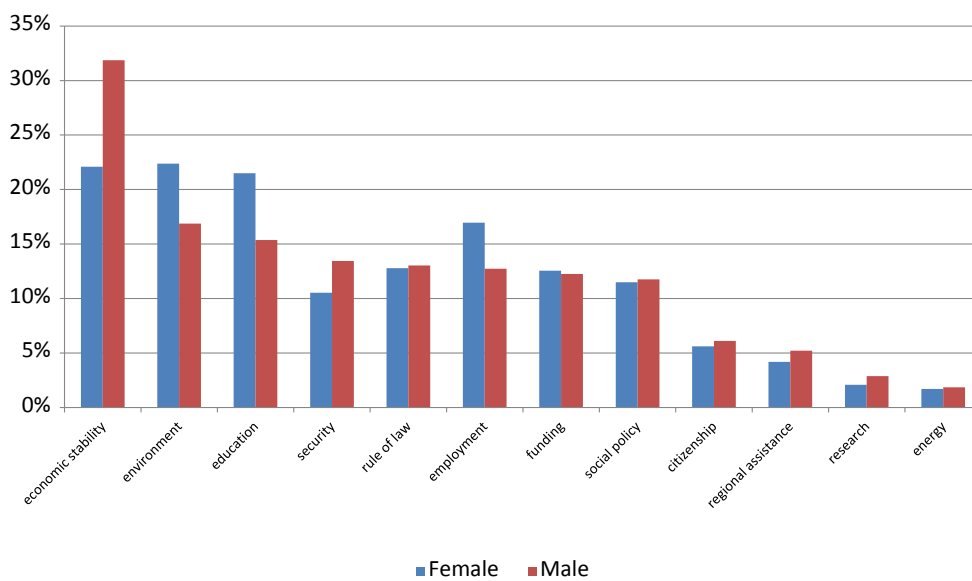
**Graph 17**

**Fields where the EU should do more to improve daily life, by age (selected fields)**



**Graph 18**

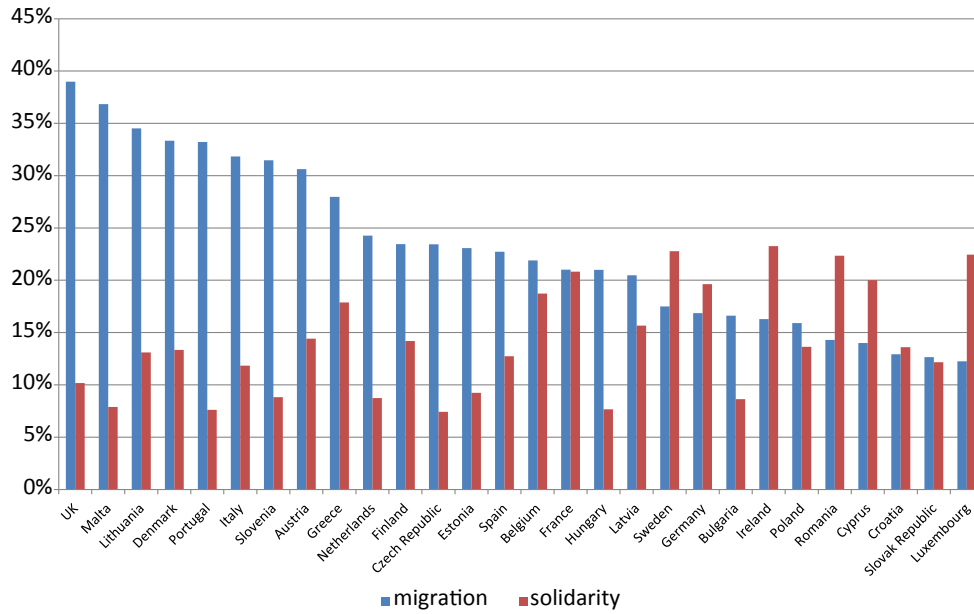
**Fields where the EU should do more to improve daily life, by sex**



*Respondents could propose more than one field.*

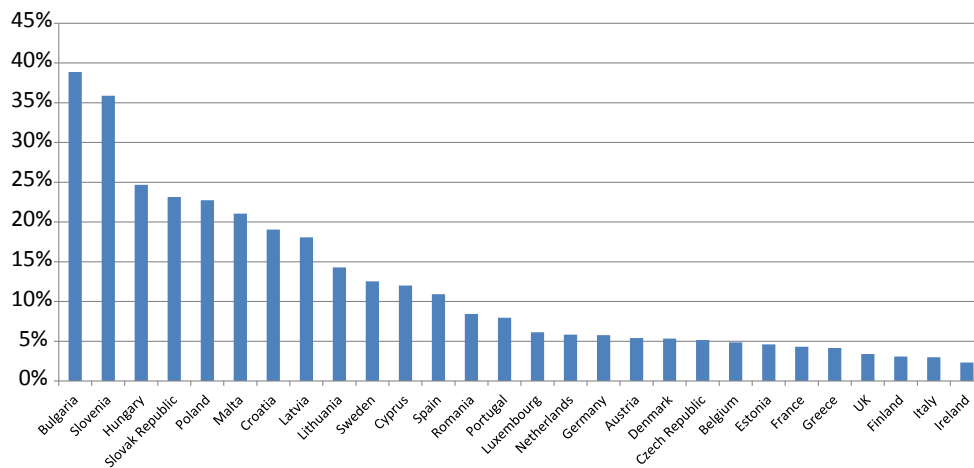
**Graph 19**

**Concern about migration and solidarity, by country**



**Graph 20**

**Concern about corruption and the rule of law, by country**



## EU word clouds based on open-ended survey responses

### Word cloud 1

What are the main concerns that you want to share with representatives of EU institutions?

korupcia Ilmastonmuutos corruptia  
Ανεργία migration Brexit korrupció Solidarität  
desemprego sécurité veiligheid razvoj  
immigrazzjoni armoede chômage корупция  
immigration Økonomi Korupcija bezpečnost  
Disoccupazione pagulased Flüchtlinge  
nevienlīdzība terrorism Neenakost desempleo

### Word cloud 2

In which fields should the EU not interfere?

Sécurité Μεταναστευτικο migrantų Migráció  
Migranti aucun migrantov religia taxation  
Образование Migratsioon Nationella politika  
seguridad Soberania nacionalna Tradizioni  
cultuur suverenita migratie privée migranter  
politica Privatsphäre Imigrācijas θρησκεία



### Word cloud 3

In which fields should the EU do more to improve your daily life, and how?



### Word cloud 4

In which fields does the EU bring concrete benefits to the life of your city or region?



## Selection of national word clouds based on open-ended survey responses

### Greece

What are the main concerns that you want to share with representatives of EU institutions?



### Belgium FR

In which fields should the EU do more to improve your daily life, and how?



### Belgium NL

In which fields should the EU do more to improve your daily life, and how?



France

In which fields does the EU bring concrete benefits to the life of your city or region?

liberté développement  
circulation monnaie  
AUCUN projets domaine  
Mobilité Culture entre  
Erasmus libre politique  
fonds Financement échanges  
Agriculture protection

Germany

In which fields does the EU bring concrete benefits to the life of your city or region?

durch Vorteile  
Grenzen offene Handel  
Euro Keine Freiheit  
Frieden Austausch  
Reisen Reisefreiheit  
Projekte Währung nicht  
Förderung Europa

Italy

In which fields does the EU bring concrete benefits to the life of your city or region?

circolazione sviluppo  
Progetti lavoro  
della ambito fondi  
Politiche delle  
mobilità nessuno  
libera Ambiente diritti  
Economico europei paesi

### Spain

In which fields does the EU bring concrete benefits to the life of your city or region?

Derechos políticas  
ámbito fondos Medio  
SEGURIDAD desarrollo  
empleo ambiente movilidad  
libre Infraestructuras

### Poland

In which fields should the EU do more to improve your daily life, and how?

wsparcie środowisko  
rozwój demokracji kraju  
Polsce zdrowia Prawa  
poprawa obszarze ochrona  
pracy środowiska  
wszystkich Polityka  
Infrastruktura integracja

### France

What are the main concerns that you want to share with representatives of EU institutions?

commune faire fiscale  
sécurité Européenne  
travail migrants manque  
social environnement  
politique chômage  
défense citoyens contre  
sociale démocratie crise

Italy

What are the main concerns that you want to share with representatives of EU institutions?

politiche migranti  
crisi sicurezza  
immigrazione politica  
giovani Lavoro paesi  
Disoccupazione futuro  
della delle stati

Romania

What are the main concerns that you want to share with representatives of EU institutions?

Fonduri mediului statele  
Mediul coruptiei educatie  
dezvoltare lupta pentru  
europene mediu  
sociale politica munca  
toate Romania intre  
coruptia lipsa nivel membre  
politici Dezvoltarea Europa

Poland

What are the main concerns that you want to share with representatives of EU institutions?

prawa Polska ludzi  
Polsce kraju Obawy  
imigrantów obawa  
rozpad państw  
sprawy Europy polityka  
terrorizm przed  
populizm terrorystyczne








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