

# Spring 2019 Standard Eurobarometer: Europeans upbeat about the state of the European Union – best results in 5 years

A new Eurobarometer survey released today shows a strong increase in citizens' positive perception of the European Union across the board – from the economy to the state of democracy. These are the best results since the June 2014 Eurobarometer survey conducted before the Juncker Commission took office.

This latest Standard Eurobarometer survey was conducted after the European elections, between 7 June and 1 July 2019 in all 28 EU countries and five candidate countries. Amongst the main findings are a record-high support for the euro and climate change turning into the second top concern at EU level, after immigration.

## **1. Trust and optimism about the future at their highest since 2014**

**Trust in the EU is at its highest level since 2014 and remains higher than trust in national governments or parliaments.** Trust in the EU has increased in 20 Member States, with the highest scores in Lithuania (72%), Denmark (68%) and Estonia (60%). In addition, over half of the respondents “tend to trust” the EU in Luxembourg (59%), Finland (58%), Portugal (57%), Malta and Sweden (both 56%), Bulgaria and Hungary (both 55%), Ireland, Poland, the Netherlands and Cyprus (all 54%), Romania and Austria (both 52%) and Latvia and Belgium (both 51%).

Since the last Standard Eurobarometer survey in autumn 2018, **the proportion of respondents who have a positive image of the EU (45%) has increased in 23 EU Member States**, most strikingly in Cyprus (47%, +11), Hungary (52%, +9) Greece (33%, +8), Romania (60%, +8) and Portugal (60%, +7). A two-percentage point increase has been registered since autumn 2018 (+10 since spring 2014), reaching its highest level ever for the past 10 years. 37% (+1, compared to autumn 2018) of respondents have a neutral image of the EU, while less than a fifth have a negative image (17%, -3) – is the lowest score in 10 years.

**A majority of Europeans are optimistic about the future of the EU (61%, +3 percentage points)**, while only 34% (-3) are pessimistic. Optimism is highest in Ireland (85%), Denmark (79%), Lithuania (76%) and Poland (74%). At the other end of the scale, optimism is less pronounced in the United Kingdom (47% vs 46%) and in France (50% vs 45%).

**55% of Europeans say they are satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU**, the highest score since autumn 2004 (+5 percentage points since autumn 2018; +11 since spring 2014) while the number of those “not satisfied” has decreased by five percentage points, to 36%.

**A majority of Europeans agree that “their voice counts in the EU”.** The EU-28 average reaches 56% (+7 percentage points since autumn 2018; +11 since spring 2018; +14 since spring 2014), with the highest scores being observed in Sweden (86%), Denmark (81%) and Netherlands (76%).

## **2. Record high support for the euro**

**Support for the Economic and Monetary Union and for the euro reaches a new record high**, with more than three-quarters of respondents (76%, +1 percentage point; +9 since spring 2014) in the Euro area in favour of the EU's single currency. In the EU as a whole, support for the euro is stable at 62%.

**Positive opinions on the situation of the national economies prevail** (with 49% judging the situation as being good and 47% judging it as being bad). **The majority of respondents in 17 Member States** (16 in autumn 2018) **state that the national economic situation is good**. Luxembourg (94%), Denmark (91%) and the Netherlands (90%) are the countries with the highest scores. The lowest percentage of positive opinions is observed in Greece (7%), Croatia and Bulgaria (both 20%), Italy (22%), Spain (26%) and France (29%).

## **3. EU citizenship and free movement seen as main EU achievements**

**In all 28 Member States, more than half of respondents feel that they are citizens of the EU.** Across the EU as a whole, **73% feel this way** (+2 percentage points since autumn 2018), and at a national level the scores range from 93% in Luxembourg, 88% in Germany, 87% in Spain to 57% in both Greece and Italy and 52% in Bulgaria.

A large majority of EU citizens support **“the free movement of EU citizens who can live, work, study and do business anywhere in the EU”** (81%, -2 percentage points since autumn 2018), and **in every EU Member State more than two-thirds of respondents share this view**, from Lithuania (94%) to Italy and the UK (both 68%).

## **4. Top concerns at EU and national level: climate change and environment on the rise**

**Immigration remains the main concern at EU level**, with 34% of mentions, **despite a strong decrease** (-6 percentage points since autumn 2018). **Climate change**, which was ranked fifth in autumn 2018, is now **the second most important concern after a strong increase** (+6 since autumn 2018). Three concerns obtain identical scores: **the economic situation** (18%, unchanged), **the state of Member States' public finances** (18%, -1) and **terrorism** (18%, -2), followed by **the environment** – main concern for 13% of the respondents, registering a four-percentage point increase.

**Unemployment**, which is now in seventh position at EU level (12%), remains **the main concern at national level** (21%, -2 percentage points), together with **rising prices/inflation/cost of living** (21%, unchanged) and **health and social security** (21%, +1). **The environment, climate and energy issues** follow very closely after a strong increase (20%, +6). **Immigration**, with 17% of mentions

(-4 percentage points since autumn 2018, and -19 since autumn 2015), falls out of the top three concerns at national level for the first time since spring 2014. **The economic situation** is in sixth place (16%, +1).

## **Background**

The “Spring 2019 – Standard Eurobarometer” (EB 91) was conducted through face-to-face interviews between 7 June and 1 July 2019 across the 28 EU Member States and in the candidate countries<sup>[1]</sup>. 27,464 interviews were conducted in the EU28 Member States between 7 and 25 June 2019.

## **For More Information**

Standard Eurobarometer 91

<http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/standard/surveyky/2253>

<sup>[1]</sup> The 28 European Union (EU) Member States, five candidate countries (North Macedonia, Turkey, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania) and the Turkish Cypriot Community in the part of the country that is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus.