



Eurobarometer: Optimism about the future of the EU at its highest since 2009

Brussels, 10 September 2021

Attitudes towards the EU remain positive and broadly stable, according to the latest Standard Eurobarometer conducted in June-July 2021.

Optimism about the future of the EU has reached its highest level since 2009 and trust in the EU remains at its highest since 2008. Support for the euro remains stable at its highest since 2004. The survey also indicates a significant improvement in the perception of the state of national economies.

European citizens identify the economic situation as their top concern at EU level, followed by the environment and climate change and by immigration. Health is still the main issue at national level, slightly ahead of the economic situation of the country.

The majority of Europeans are satisfied with the measures taken by the EU and by national governments against the coronavirus pandemic and think that the "NextGenerationEU" recovery plan will be effective in responding to the economic effects of the pandemic. Nearly two-thirds trust the EU to make the right decisions in the future to respond to the pandemic.

1. Optimism about the future of the European Union

Optimism about the future of the EU has increased sharply since summer 2020, with two-thirds of respondents now holding a positive view (66%, +6 percentage points). This is the highest level since autumn 2009. Just over three in ten respondents are pessimistic about the EU's future (31%, -7) - the lowest level since 2009.

A clear majority is optimistic about the future of the EU in 26 Member States, while public opinion remains split in Greece. Optimism has increased in 22 countries since summer 2020, with very large increases in Malta (75%, +25), Italy (67%, +18) and Portugal (76%, +15). As a result of these changes, optimism is now the majority opinion in Italy (67%) and France (53%).

2. Image and trust in the EU

After a large increase between summer 2020 and winter 2020-2021, the positive image of the EU remains at a relatively high level (45%) and is the majority opinion in 20 EU Member States (neutral image 38%, negative image 16%). The highest results are observed in Ireland (70%) and Portugal (62%).

Almost half of all Europeans trust the European Union (49%). This remains the highest overall level registered since spring 2008. Trust in national governments has increased slightly (37%) while trust in national parliaments has remained stable at 35%.

3. Main concerns at EU and national level

The economic situation has regained first place as the most important issue facing the EU with 27% of mentions (-8 percentage points compared with winter 2020-2021). The environment and climate change has risen from fourth place to equal second place (25%, +5), shared with immigration (25%, +7), followed in equal fourth place by the state of Member States' public finances and by health (both 22%). Mentions of health have declined significantly since winter 2020-2021 (22%, -16), when it was in first position.

At national level, health remains the most important issue, although mentions have declined considerably since winter 2020-2021 (28%, -16). The economic situation is in second place, mentioned by just over one quarter of respondents (26%, -7).

4. The current economic situation and the Euro

Since winter 2020-2021, the proportion of respondents who think the situation of their national economy is "bad" has declined markedly (-11), although this remains the majority view (58%).

40% of EU citizens now hold the view that their national economic situation is "good", a significant increase (+11) after three consecutive surveys had showed a decline. However, this level of positive assessment remains below those measured in the period spring 2017 – autumn 2019.

Perceptions of the current situation of the national economy vary widely across Member States, ranging from 89% in Luxembourg who think it is good to 9% in Greece who think the same way.

Support for the euro in the euro area has remained stable since winter 2020-2021, at its highest point since 2004, at 79%. A high percentage of respondents across the EU overall, stable at the highest level ever recorded (70%), also share this view.

5. The coronavirus pandemic and public opinion in the EU

Satisfaction with the measures taken by the European Union to fight the coronavirus pandemic has increased significantly since winter 2020-2021, with more than half of EU citizens now satisfied (51%, +8). Dissatisfaction has declined (41%, -8), while 8% of citizens say they don't know (stable).

Citizens' satisfaction with the measures taken by their national government to fight the coronavirus pandemic has also risen markedly to become the majority view (53%, +10 since winter 2020-2021). 46% are dissatisfied (-10), while 1% (stable) say they don't know.

Almost two thirds of Europeans trust the EU to make the right decisions on the pandemic in the future (65%, +6 since winter 2020-2021). This is the majority view in every EU Member State.

A majority of Europeans think "NextGenerationEU", the EU's recovery plan, will be effective in responding to the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic (57%, +2 since winter 2020-2021).

Close to seven Europeans in ten said they had already been vaccinated at the time of fieldwork in June-July, or would like to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as a soon as possible (69%), and 9% said they would "like to do so some time in 2021".

Background

The "Spring 2021 – Standard Eurobarometer" (EB 95) was conducted through face-to-face and online interviews between 14 June and 12 July 2021 across the 27 EU Member States. Some questions were also asked in twelve other countries or territories^[1]. 26,544 interviews were conducted in the EU27 Member States.

For More Information

Standard Eurobarometer 95

<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2532>

<https://europa.eu/!377XHK>

IP/21/4610

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