



Education and Culture DG



LOOKING BEHIND THE FIGURES

The main results of the Eurobarometer 2007 survey on youth



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FOREWORD

The Eurobarometer opinion poll on young people 2007 is a special one - it is the first one which reflects the answers of young people in all 27 Member States of the European Union.

I find it particularly interesting to note that in 2007 the European Union has become an equivalent for freedom of movement for 90% of the young people. This is a clear progress compared to the findings of the last Eurobarometer youth survey of 2001. I was also pleasantly surprised to read that an important majority of young people state their interest in politics and current affairs.

During the six years since that last youth Eurobarometer much has changed in youth policy cooperation at the European level. Further to the White Paper "A New Impetus for European Youth" of 2001 the Member States agreed on common objectives for four key areas of youth policies: participation, information and voluntary activities of young people as well as a better knowledge and a greater understanding of youth.

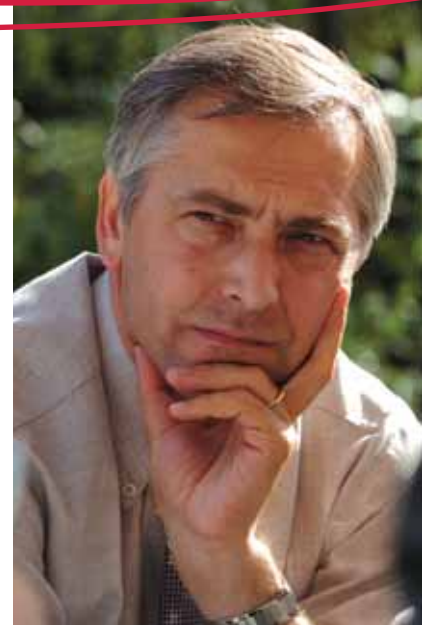
The Heads of State and Government inserted the European Youth Pact into the revised Lisbon agenda and thus introduced issues as youth employment, education and training, and reconciliation of working and private life among the primary goals of the European Union.

In the light of these political developments for Europe's youth, it is of prior importance to know what young people themselves think about the European Union, about their lives and their place in societies.

The European Commission wants to know and understand the young generation better. That is why we strive to communicate with young people and consult them in a permanent and structured dialogue. The aim is to ensure that those for whom policies are made are on board in the decision-making processes.

I personally found reading this Eurobarometer survey quite interesting and refreshing and I invite you all to discover our young people's views of their world in 2007.

Enjoy reading!



Ján Figel'

*Member of the European Commission
responsible for Education, Training,
Culture and Youth*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jan Figel'". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

TENDENCIES



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- Overall, young Europeans tend to share a positive image of the European Union (EU) and its future. Most of them associate the EU with the freedom to travel, study and work anywhere within the Union; they consider these advantages as the core elements of being an EU citizen. Young people in the new Member States are more likely to view the EU positively, e.g. as a means of improving Europe's economic situation, than their EU15 counterparts. Similarly, highly-educated young people are more optimistic about the EU's future.
- A majority of young Europeans say that they are interested or very interested in politics and current affairs at local, regional, national and EU level.
- 62% of young people eligible to vote say they have voted in an election or a referendum in the last three years. (Note: in some Member States, voting is compulsory).
- Young Europeans wish to be consulted before any public decision that concerns them is taken.
- In all Member States, a large number of young people believe that participating in debates with policymakers is the best way to ensure that their voices are heard. More than one third, nevertheless, considers that this can be achieved by joining a political party, a trade union or an NGO.
- For 38% of the young Europeans the most important difficulties in finding a job are the lack of job opportunities in their country. Slightly less than one in four thinks that the main problem is a lack of practical experience.
- Communication and teamwork skills, an apprenticeship or a training course, IT and computer abilities, and knowledge of a foreign language are the four main skills mentioned by young Europeans as the most useful qualities needed to find a good job.
- Language barriers are the main reason that young Europeans think that it might be difficult for them to find a job in another country.
- If faced with unemployment, one young European in three would accept a job not corresponding to his/her qualification, only if it met certain conditions, such as job stability and a good salary; one in ten would accept any job without such conditions.
- A majority of young Europeans mention financial reasons to explain why young persons live at their parents' home longer than they used to: they either cannot afford to move out or there is a lack of affordable housing.
- Slightly less than one in five young Europeans take part in voluntary activities; three out of four consider such activities as an incentive for their greater participation in society.
- The two most popular leisure activities among young Europeans are exercise (going for a walk, bike riding, sports etc.) and meeting friends (eating, dancing, having a drink, hanging out, etc.). A certain number of known tendencies are confirmed (e.g. women read more than men; men prefer to spend more time on sport or the Internet).
- Only one in five young Europeans is a member of an organisation, with sports associations being by far the most popular. Figures vary considerably between Member States, with significantly higher membership in organisations in northern than in southern Europe. Young people in the new Member States are much more unlikely to get organised than those in the EU15.



INTRODUCTION

This Flash Eurobarometer survey was carried out at the request of the Youth: Policies Unit of the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture, and follows up a series of earlier surveys on young Europeans aged 15 to 24 in 1982, 1987, 1990, 1997 and 2001 as part of the Eurobarometer Special Surveys. The current Flash Eurobarometer is,

however, different from the earlier surveys in various ways. The current survey "Youth survey among people aged between 15-30 years of age, in the 27 Member States" covers more countries than the earlier surveys. The survey also involved telephone interviewing instead of face-to-face interviewing and the target age group was extended to young Europeans aged 15 to 30 years.

The survey was carried out between 30 January 2007 and 4 February 2007. Over 19 000 randomly selected young people aged between 15 and 30 years were interviewed in the 27 Member States of the EU.

The survey deals with the following aspects of young Europeans' life:

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Source of the survey: FLASH EB 202 – January 2007 – THE GALLUP ORGANISATION



BEING A CITIZEN OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

4 | **The possibility to study and the right to work in any country in the EU, access to healthcare anywhere in the EU and the freedom of movement – this is what EU citizenship means for young people.**

EU citizenship

EU citizenship – What does this mean? For a very large majority of young Europeans the ability to study and the right to work in any country in the EU, respectively, are the main elements of being a European citizen. 82% of young people also agree that EU citizenship means access to healthcare and social welfare anywhere in the EU and 77% mention the right to move permanently to any Member State.

For half of young Europeans, being a European citizen means the right of non-nationals to vote, or to be elected in local elections, in the Member State in which they reside.

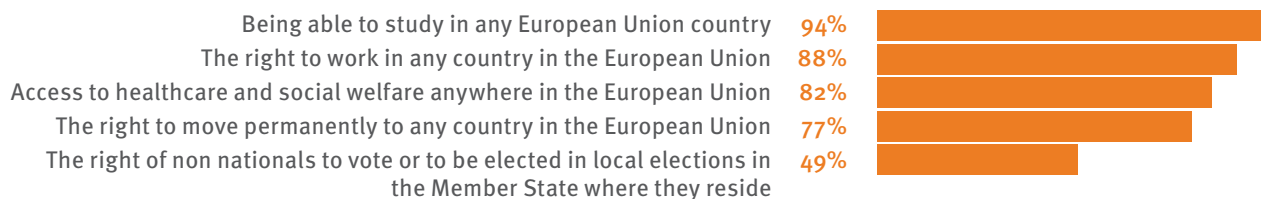
Individual Member State results show, however, large variations in young persons' views and understanding of the meaning of being a European citizen. In Luxembourg, 69% think that

European citizenship primarily means the right of non-nationals to vote or to be elected in local elections in the Member State in which they reside. In Hungary, however, only 24% of young people agree with that. Similarly, while 93% of young Slovaks mention that being a citizen of the EU denotes access to healthcare and social welfare anywhere in the EU, only 54% of young Estonians agree.

MEANING OF "BEING A CITIZEN OF THE EUROPEAN UNION"

Q7. Which of the following, do you think "being a citizen of the European Union" means?

Base: all respondents (% of "Mentioned")



MEANING AND FUTURE OF EUROPE

Young people support the EU, but are critical nonetheless.

A symbol of freedom of movement

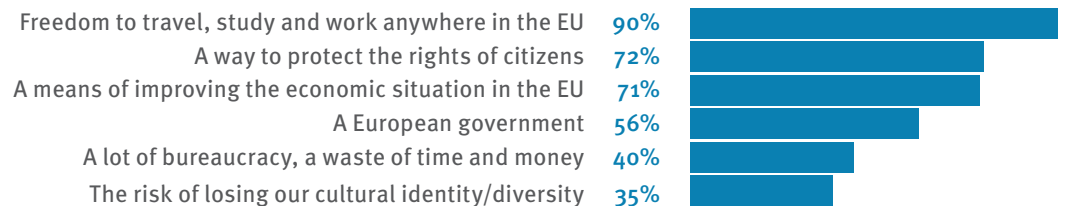
Compared to the results of the 2001 Eurobarometer survey for the 15 Member States (hereafter referred to as 2001-EU15), the idea of Europe as a symbol of freedom of movement has become commonplace for almost all young Europeans: 90% report that, for them personally, it represents the

freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the Union. A way to protect the rights of citizens comes in second place, and a means of improving the economic situation comes third. More than half of the young people feel that the EU is equivalent to a European government.

When asked about possible negative features of the Union, 40% of young Europeans state that it means an excess of bureaucracy and some waste of time and money. Just over one third considers the EU as a threat to cultural identity and diversity.

THE MEANING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Q1. I am going to read you a few statements on what the European Union means for people. Please tell me, for each of them, if the European Union means this to you personally or not?



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Highly-educated young people are more optimistic about the EU's future.

In 10 years' time Europe will continue to represent freedom of movement for almost all young Europeans.

The Union's future

Almost all young people (92%) agree that in 10 years' time it will be easier to travel, study, work and live anywhere in Europe because of the EU's existence, while in 2001-EU15 half of the young people considered that the Union's main accomplishment in 10 years' time would be the single currency. A large majority of young Europeans state that in the next decade, the EU will bring more opportunities for people

like themselves to find work, more equality between men and women, less discrimination against foreigners and people from other cultures and ethnic groups, and a better quality of life for most people.

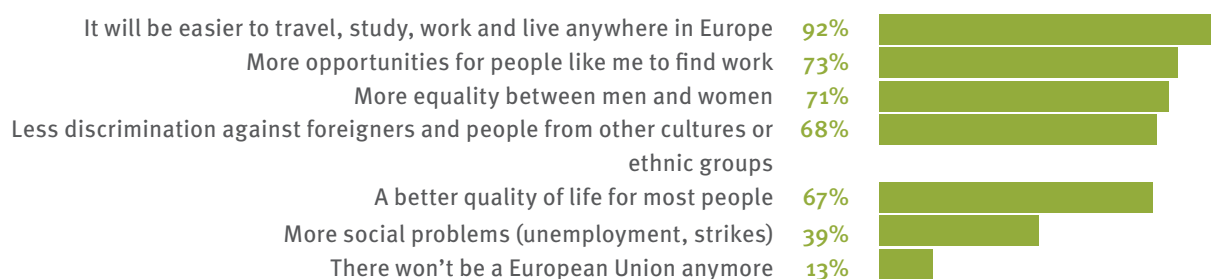
On the negative side, 39% of young people believe that the EU in 10 years' time will mean more social problems, such as unemployment and strikes.

Young people in the twelve new Member States appear more likely to positively evaluate the EU's future, while in the EU15 see its future in a more negative way.

Young Europeans who are still at school, more highly-educated and living in metropolitan or urban areas are more likely to agree with the positive view of the EU.

WHAT THE EUROPEAN UNION WILL BRING IN 10 YEARS' TIME

Q2. Would you agree or disagree with the following statements about what the European Union will bring in ten years' time?



LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND MEMBERSHIP IN ORGANISATIONS

The favourite activity of young Europeans is exercising and meeting friends.

Exercise first

What do young people in Europe do in their free time? Going for a walk, bike ride, doing sports etc. is their most regular activity. Meeting friends, going dancing, going out to eat or drink, which was the top priority in 2001-EU15, come next. One young European in four prefers reading a book. The use of Internet is less widespread in Europe of 27 Member States compared

to 2001-EU15, as slightly more than one in five young persons reports using the Internet or playing video games (one out of four in 2001-EU15). Less than one in ten young people names the following activities: going shopping, playing an instrument, working for money and participating in voluntary community work. Finally 19% of young people mention some other leisure activity than those proposed.

European young women read more than their male counterparts who tend to spend their time on sport and Internet.

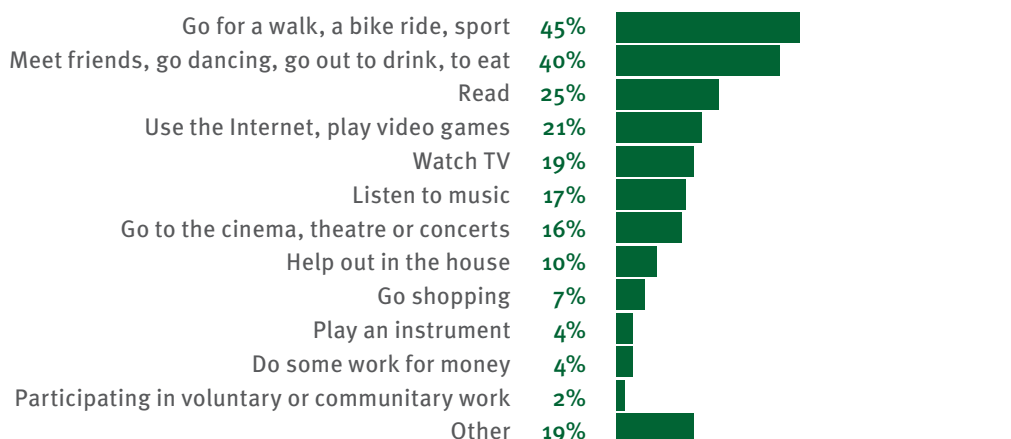
The higher-educated young persons are more likely to mention going for a walk, a bike ride or exercising, reading and going to the cinema, theatre or concerts. Young people at the lowest educational level category are more likely to mention watching television and helping out in the house.

ACTIVITIES DURING LEISURE TIME

Q3. What do you regularly do during your leisure time?

Base: all respondents (% of "Mentioned")

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Sports clubs are the most attractive organisations for young Europeans.

Clubs and associations are not very appealing

Organisations, associations and clubs are not very appealing for young people in the EU (only 22% of young Europeans are a member of an organisation). Membership of sports clubs was very popular in 1997 and 2001 and this

remains the case: in 2007, almost half of organised young persons are members of a sport club. Following far behind, come youth organisations, cultural associations, trade unions, religious organisations. Human

rights movements and consumer organisations have the fewest young participants. There is a clear division between the northern Member States, where young people are more often members of clubs and associations and southern Member States, where such membership is less extensive.

MEMBERSHIP OF AN ORGANISATION

Q4. Are you a member of an organisation?

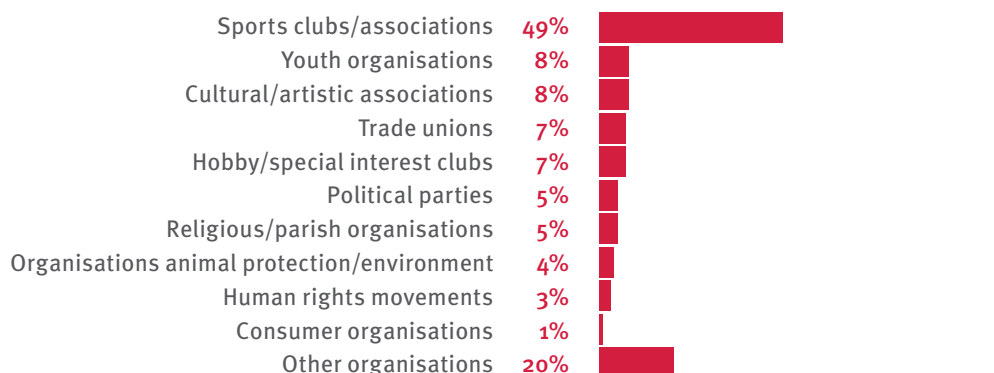
Base: all respondents (%)

No = 78%

Yes = 22%

Q5. Which type of organisations are you a member of?

Base: those who are a member of an organisation (% of "Mentioned")



PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY



Media play an important role in informing young people about their rights and responsibilities as European citizens.

Sources of information about rights and responsibilities as a citizen of the EU | 7

88% of young persons state that they received information about their rights and responsibilities as a European citizen through the media, while 72% of them got this information from schools and universities and 69% from parents and friends.

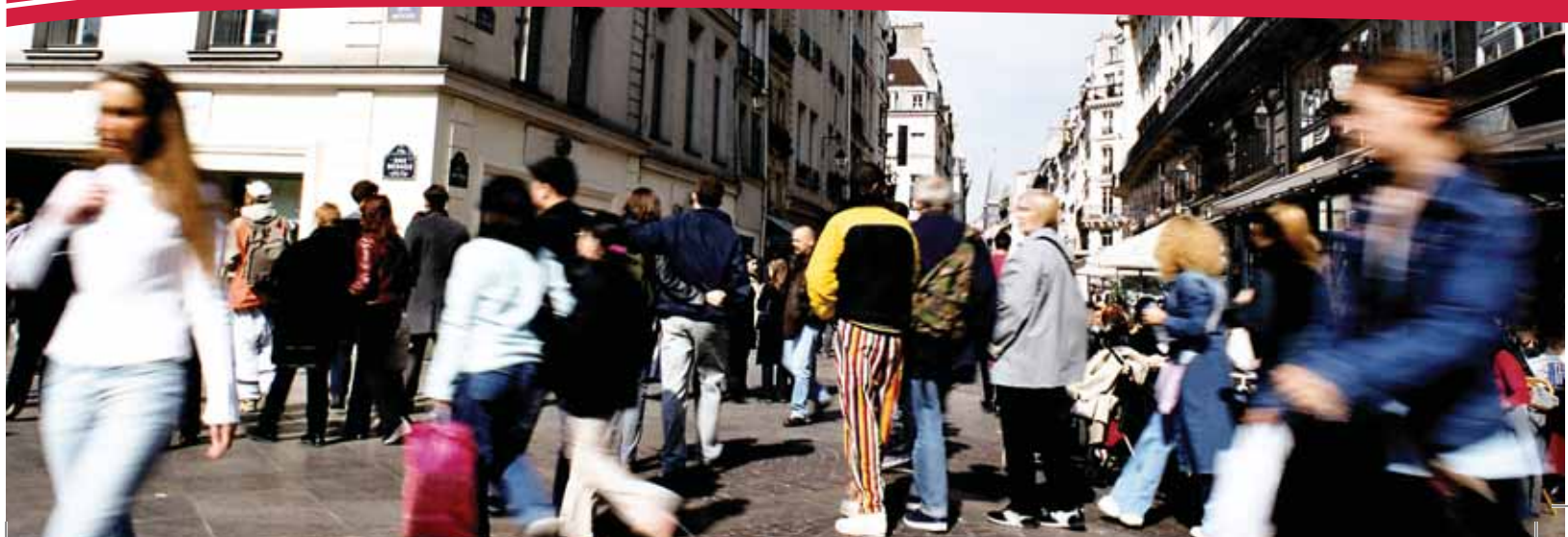
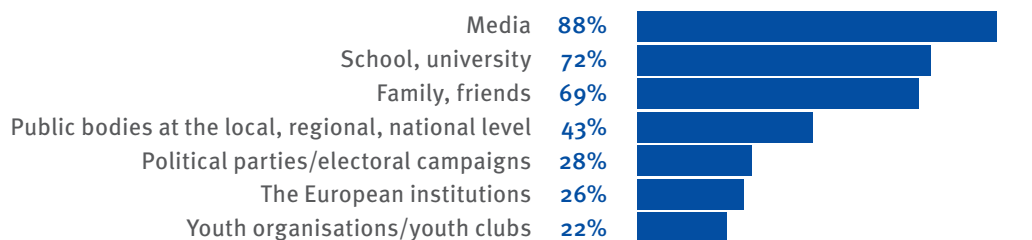
Other possible sources for learning about one's rights and responsibilities as a citizen in today's Europe are mentioned by less than half of the young Europeans: 43% mention public bodies at the local, regional and

national level, 28% select political parties and electoral campaigns, 26% mention European institutions and 22% youth organisations and clubs.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A CITIZEN OF THE EU

Q8. From which of the following sources did you learn about your rights and responsibilities as a citizen in today's Europe?

Base: all respondents (% of "Mentioned")



PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY

No decision about young people without young people: The large majority of young Europeans wish to be consulted before any public decision that concerns them is taken.

Young Europeans are keen on more programmes encouraging voluntary work. 74% of them think that such programmes are a good measure for increasing their participation in society.

Active participation - Means of participating

Young Europeans place particular emphasis on being consulted before any public decision that concerns them is taken. Slightly less than one in five young person reports being currently engaged in voluntary activities, the importance of which they recognise - slightly less than three

out of four think that a good measure for improving the participation of young people in society would be increasing the availability of programmes that encourage voluntary work. Finally, 70% of young Europeans think that the introduction of a compulsory educational programme about

citizenship at schools would help for a greater participation of young people in society.

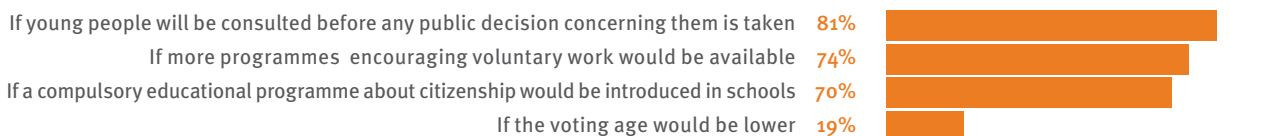
Lowering the voting age as a measure to increase active participation in society is mentioned by less than one in five young people.

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INCREASING ACTIVITY AS A CITIZEN IN SOCIETY

Q9. Which of the following would help you to be more active as a citizen in the society?

Base: all respondents (% of "Mentioned")



Participating in debates with policymakers is the most significant political action to ensure that their voices are heard, according to a large number of young Europeans.

Young people's voices heard

In all Member States, a substantial number of young persons believe that participating in debates with policymakers is the most important political action to ensure that one's voice is heard, much more than to take part in a demonstration or to sign a petition. Nevertheless more than one third believe in some kind of more

permanent engagement in participative democracy - joining a political party (16%), a trade union (11%) or an NGO (11%).

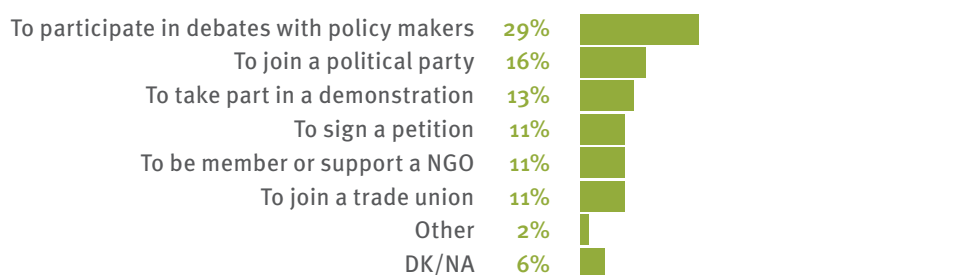
Demonstrating as a way to ensure that one's voice is heard is mentioned more often by young people in southern European countries and Germany,

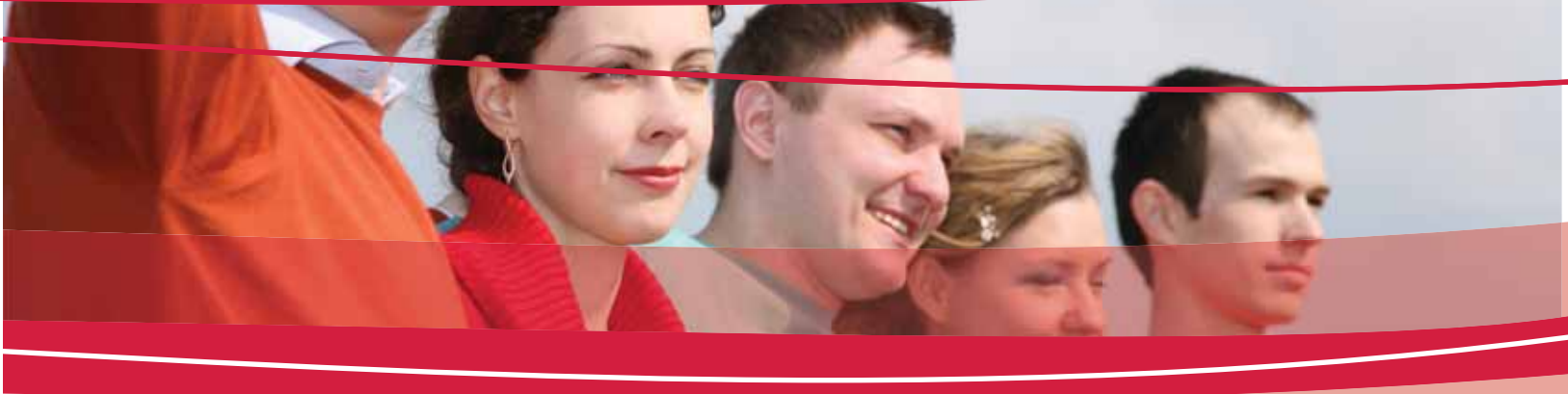
while signing a petition appears to be a preferred action in most central European Member States and some of the 12 new Member States. Young people in the Scandinavian countries, the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands are more likely to mention membership in a trade union.

POLITICAL ACTIONS TO ENSURE THAT ONE'S VOICE IS HEARD BY POLICY MAKERS

Q10. Which of the following political actions do you think is the MOST important to ensure that your voice is heard by the policy makers?

Base: all respondents (%)





Young people in today's Europe claim that they are interested in politics and current affairs at local, regional, national and EU level, but are also actively involved in political life. | 9

Interest in politics

A majority of young Europeans say that they are very interested or interested in politics and current affairs: 82% of them are interested in politics in their own country, 73% claim to be interested in politics at a city or regional level and 66% say they are interested in politics and current affairs in the EU.

Young Greeks have the highest level of interest in politics and current affairs on all three levels while young people in Romania, Belgium and the Czech Republic have the lowest level of interest in politics in general.

Older and highly-educated young persons and those who live in a metropolitan area are the most interested in politics at all levels.

Participation in an election or a referendum in the last three years

Asked if they had voted in an election or referendum in the last three years, 62% of young Europeans state that they did vote in an election or referendum. Only 13% of young people say that they did not vote, while less than one in four was not yet eligible to vote.

The largest percentages of young persons who did not vote in an election or a referendum in the past three years is found in Latvia, the UK and Portugal, and the smallest percentages in Belgium, where voting is compulsory, followed by Sweden and Italy.

Active involvement in political life

More than one in four young people signed a petition during the last year and almost the same number presented his or her view in an online discussion forum. One in five young Europeans took part in a public demonstration.

The highest level of overall political involvement among young persons was recorded in Denmark, Finland and Sweden and the lowest in Latvia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary and Malta.

Young men tend to be more politically active. This is especially the case for presenting one's view in an online forum or for taking part in a public demonstration. Young Europeans living in a metropolitan area are the most likely to be involved in political life, followed by young urban people, while those from rural areas are the least likely to be involved.

Young people overwhelmingly express their wish to have civic education at school.

EMPLOYMENT AND AUTONOMY

For young people in Europe the four most useful qualities needed to find a good job are:

- Communication and teamwork skills
- An Apprenticeship or a training course
- IT, computer and communication technology abilities
- Knowledge of a foreign language

Transition towards employment

What are the most useful skills needed for finding a good job? Communication and teamwork skills,

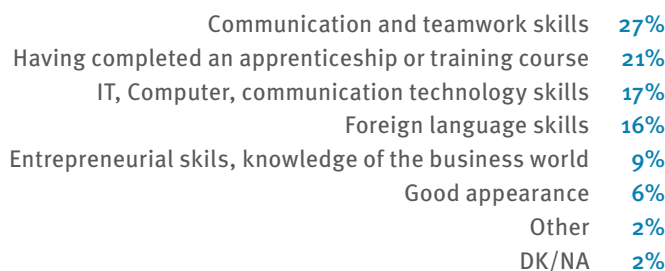
an apprenticeship or a training course, IT, computer and communication technology abilities and foreign language knowledge are the most mentioned by young Europeans.

Few young persons think that entrepreneurial skills or knowledge of the business world and a good appearance are useful in finding a good job.

USEFUL QUALITIES IN FINDING A GOOD JOB – MOST USEFUL QUALITY

Q17. Which of the following qualities do you think is the most useful for you in finding a good job?

Base: all respondents (%)



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The most important difficulty in finding a job for 38% of young Europeans is the lack of jobs in their country.

Difficulties in finding a job

What are the main difficulties in finding a job for young persons in today's Europe? 38% of them mention that the most important reason is a lack of job opportunities in their country.

Slightly less than one in four think that the main problem is a lack of practical experience, 12% blame lack of training opportunities and 11% mention that they have poor careers advice at school.

Young people from the EU15 Member States are more likely than those in the 12 new Member States to say that the main reason for being unable to find a job would be a general societal problem (e.g. a lack of job opportunities or insufficient training opportunities in their country) while young people in the new Member States are more likely to select a reason related to them personally (e.g. they do not have enough practical experience).

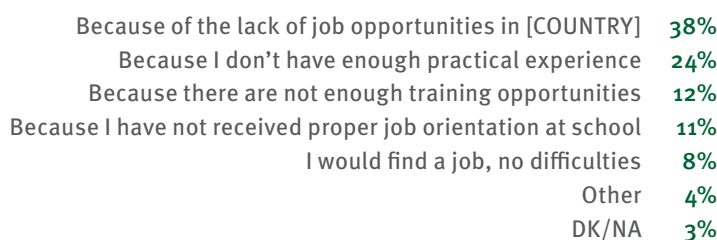
Support in finding a job

According to 30% of young Europeans, employment agencies are best suited to offer the best support in helping them to find a job, 26% think that schools and universities offer the best support, and 23% state that companies are the most helpful in any job search.

DIFFICULTIES IN FINDING A JOB – MOST IMPORTANT DIFFICULTY

Q12. If you would be looking for a job, which is the MOST important reason why you would not be able to find one?

Base: all respondents (%)



EMPLOYMENT AND AUTONOMY



Language barriers are the main reason that young Europeans think that it might be difficult for them to find a job in another country.

Finding a job abroad | 11

Language difficulties is considered the most significant reason that makes young Europeans believe that it might be difficult for them to find a job in another country. All other reasons follow far behind. Only young people in Malta think that the main difficulty in finding a job abroad is that they could not afford it.

If faced with unemployment, one young European in three would accept a job not corresponding to his/her qualification, but only if it met certain conditions, such as job stability and a good salary.

Unemployment

Confronted with unemployment, young Europeans are not very willing to make concessions: 33% of them would accept any job, if it met certain conditions, such as job stability and a good salary; only one in ten would accept any job without such conditions. 31% would try to find an apprenticeship or training course and 14% would try to set up their own company. However, the lower their education level, the more willingly they would accept any kind of job without setting conditions. Young Swedes are the least demanding (21% would accept any job without conditions) while young Latvians are the most demanding (17% would keep looking for a job appropriate for them).



EMPLOYMENT AND AUTONOMY

Lack of means to live on their own is the number one cause in restricting young Europeans from leaving the nest.

Growing autonomous - Becoming an adult

Why do young people tend to live with their parents longer than they used to?

The number one reason is financial: 44% believe that this happens because they cannot afford to move out, and 28% because of lack of affordable housing. 16% give a more self-centred

reason, agreeing with the statement that young people today prefer to prolong a comfortable situation with fewer responsibilities.

Few young Europeans think that getting married later or having to support their parents financially are the main

reasons for leaving their parents home later than before.

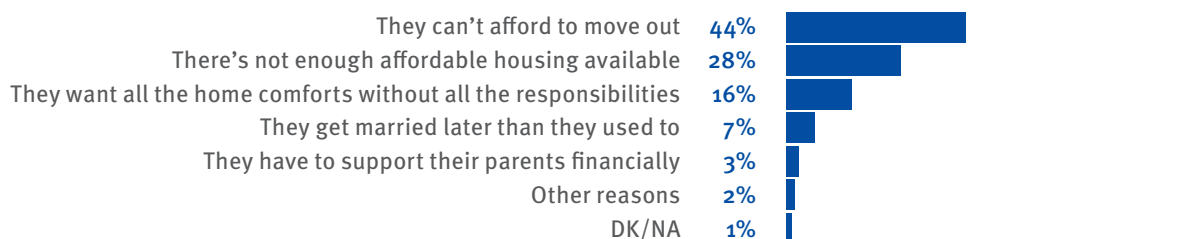
A lack of financial resources is given as the primary reason in 16 out of 27 Member States. In 10 other countries, the shortage of affordable housing is selected as the most significant cause.

REASONS FOR LIVING LONGER AT THEIR PARENTS' HOMES

Q14. What do you think is the MAIN reason that young adults live in their parents' homes longer than they used to?

Base: all respondents (%)

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Young Europeans in 2007 no longer rely primarily on the family for their financial needs. The main source of income in 2007 for 43% of them is regular work.

Achieving financial autonomy

Slightly more than four out of ten young people say that their main source of income is a regular job (which does not necessarily imply employment).

In most Member States the second most significant income source is relatives or a partner, with the exception of Denmark, Finland and Sweden, where the second most

mentioned income source is a training allowance or an educational grant, and the Netherlands, where casual work is the second most significant.

In Italy, Bulgaria, Greece and Hungary, relatives or a partner are still the main providers of financial resources for young persons while regular work comes in the second place.

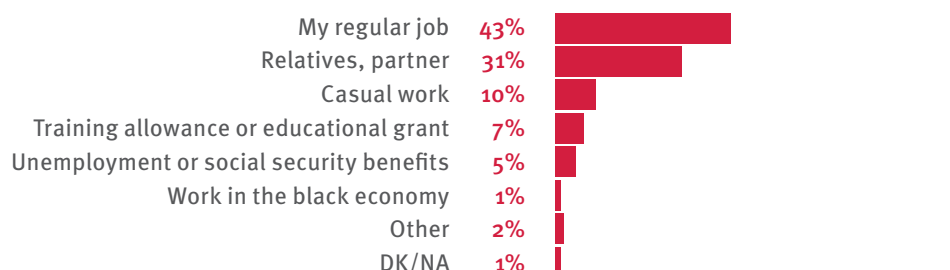
Women are more likely than men to mention that relatives or a partner provide most of their income, and men are more likely to say that they obtain the largest part of their financial resources through a regular job.

The highly-educated mention more often a regular job as the main source of their income, while less-educated tend to refer to relatives or a partner, and unemployment or social security benefits as their main income streams.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Q18. Where do you get MOST of your money from?

Base: all respondents (%)



European Commission

Looking behind the figures: The main results of the Eurobarometer 2007 survey on youth

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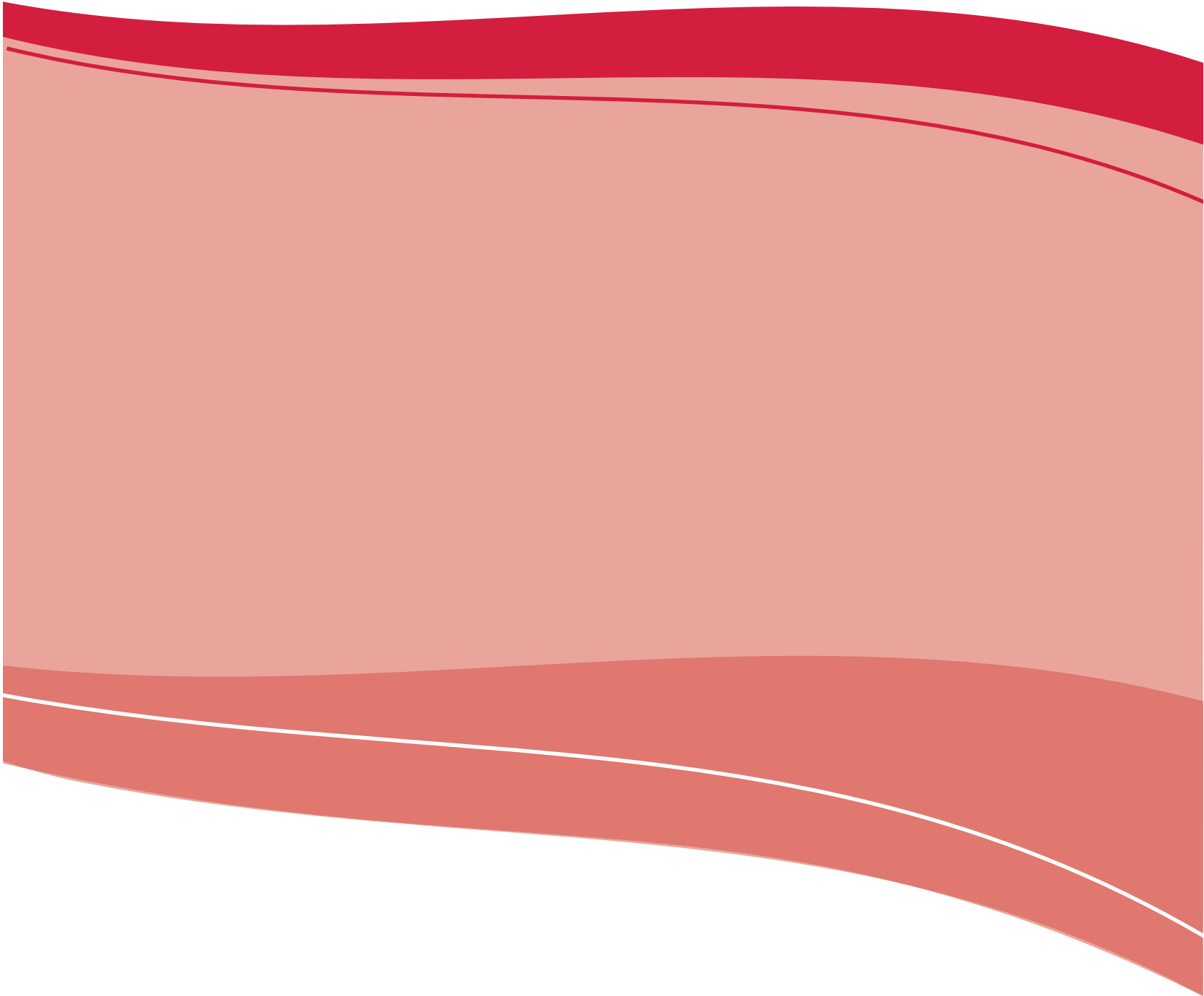
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