

# Western European MEP VI: Lier

**CULT** FACT SHEET: COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION

## INTRODUCTION

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The last years the EU has worked really hard to motivate youth to participate in politics and to tell us more about their opinions and preferences. But in all member states, the youth still experiences lots of barriers which prevent them from participating. This inactivity among the youth in society has led to a major underrepresentation of our generation.

## TOPIC

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The question of how the EU should act concerning the engagement of youth into politics.

### SUBQUESTIONS

1. What are the barriers preventing youth from actively participating in politics in the EU, and what should the EU do with them?
2. What role should social media and technology play in the EU's efforts to engage youth in politics?
3. Should the EU ensure that the voices, opinions and concerns of young people are represented and taken into account in political decision-making processes, and if so, how should they do that?
4. Should the EU promote civic education and political participation in schools and universities across member states, and if so, how?

## INFORMATION

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### EXISTING GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

1. **European Parliament and Youth Initiatives:** The European Parliament has various initiatives to raise awareness among young people about European politics, including school projects, simulations of parliamentary sessions, and youth conferences. (MEP for example)
2. **Erasmus+ Program:** This program provides opportunities for young people to engage in international exchanges, training, and volunteering, allowing them to broaden their horizons and develop intercultural competencies.  
<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-a/priorities-of-the-erasmus-programme/objectives-features#:~:text=The%20general%20objective%20of%20the,to%20driving%20innovation%2C%20and%20to>
3. **Youth Dialogue:** The EU regularly organizes dialogues with young people, providing them with the opportunity to share their views and concerns with policymakers. These dialogues promote direct engagement of young people in the decision-making process.  
[https://youth.europa.eu/strategy/euyouthdialogue\\_en#:~:text=The%20EU%20Youth%20Dialogue%20is,civil%20society%20actors%2C%20as%20appropriate](https://youth.europa.eu/strategy/euyouthdialogue_en#:~:text=The%20EU%20Youth%20Dialogue%20is,civil%20society%20actors%2C%20as%20appropriate). [https://youth.europa.eu/get-involved/eu-youth-dialogue/what-eu-youth-dialogue\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/get-involved/eu-youth-dialogue/what-eu-youth-dialogue_en)

### EXISTING REGULATIONS

1. The European Union official website; European Citizens' Initiative Forum (ECI Forum)  
<https://citizens-initiative-forum.europa.eu/en>
2. Resolution 33/22: Equal participation in political and public affairs (European Youth Forum submission)  
<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/EqualParticipation/DraftGuidelines/EuropeanYouthForum.pdf>
3. Fact sheet about youth participation, prepared by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Focal Point on Youth, UNDESA  
<https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf>
4. A study on young people's participation in European democratic processes, requested by the AFCO committee of the European Parliament  
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/745820/IPOL\\_STU\(2023\)745820\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/745820/IPOL_STU(2023)745820_EN.pdf)
5. Conference of the future of Europe  
<https://wayback.archive-it.org/12090/20230417172132/https://futureu.europa.eu/en>
6. The European Union, EU Youth Strategy. Here you can find relevant resolutions about our topic  
[https://youth.europa.eu/strategy/library\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/strategy/library_en)

7. The European Youth Portal, relevant sections to read are the "EU Youth Dialogue" and "Democratic participation".

[https://youth.europa.eu/home\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/home_en)

[https://youth.europa.eu/eu-youth-dialogue\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/eu-youth-dialogue_en)

[https://youth.europa.eu/get-involved/democratic-participation\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/get-involved/democratic-participation_en)

8. The Euroscola program:

<https://youth.europarl.europa.eu/more-information/euroscola.html>

9. The Erasmus+ Program:

The 2021-2027 program is highly relevant here, it focuses on social inclusion, the greentransformation and promoting young people's participation in the democratic life.

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/about-erasmus/what-is-erasmus>

## STATISTICS AND CHARTS

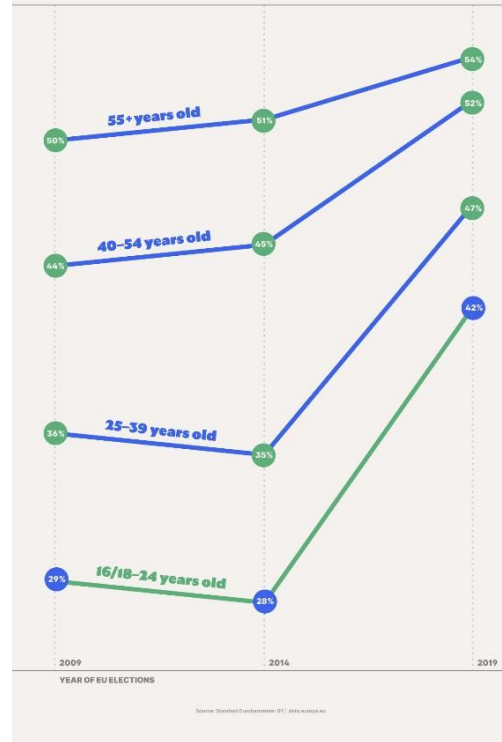
### EUROPEAN YOUTH: A DIVERSE LANDSCAPE

Which European countries have a larger group of people between the ages of 15 and 29? For 2023, Iceland tops the ranking with 20.9% of its population belonging to this age group.



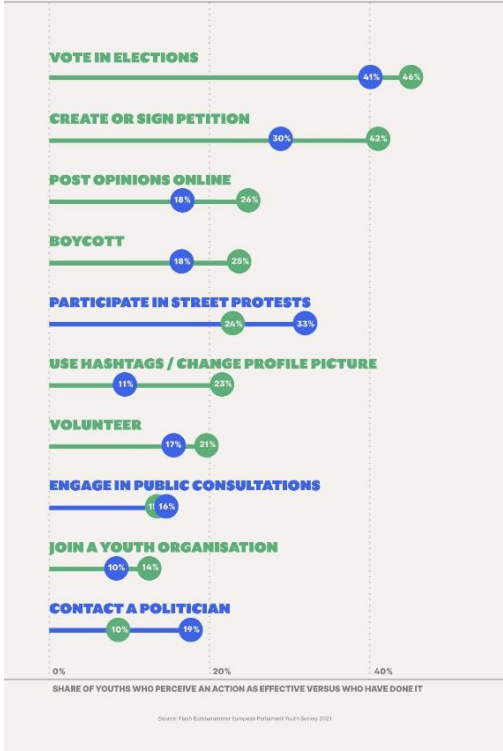
## MORE AND MORE YOUNG PEOPLE VOTE IN EU ELECTIONS

Voting-age youths under 25 are the fastest growing demographic when it comes to participating in EU elections. The share of voters in this age group has grown by 13 percentage points in the last 10 years.



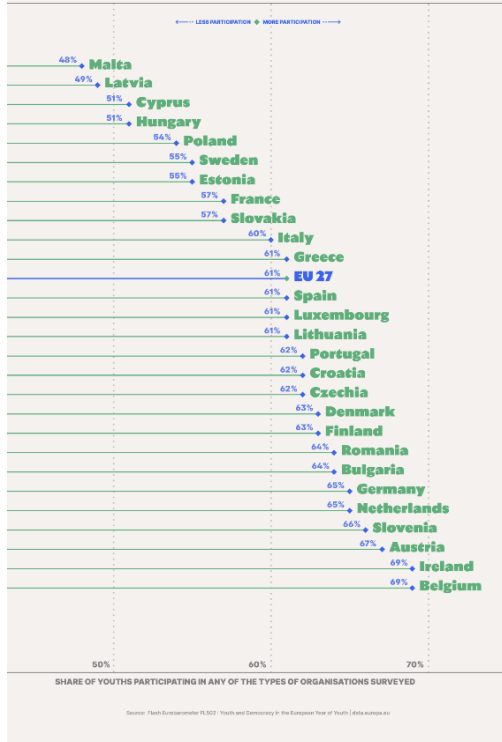
## THE GAP BETWEEN 'PERCEPTIONS' AND ACTIONS

There is a gap between what young people perceive to be effective and their actions. For example, 35% believe in street protests, but only 24% have done it. On the other hand, 42% have created or signed petitions, but just 30% perceive it as effective.

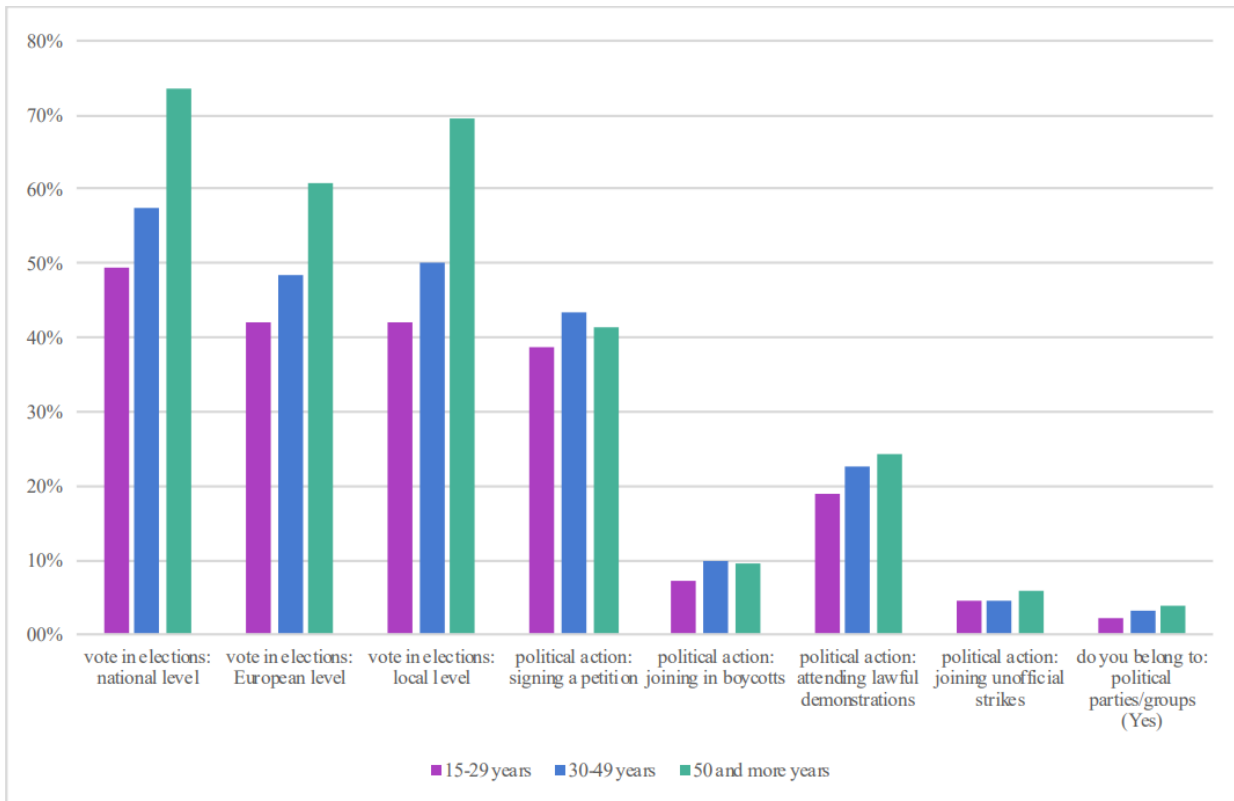


## ENGAGED YOUTH, BUT NOT EVERYWHERE

The majority of young people in the EU have participated in the activities of youth organisations. There are stark differences between countries. For example, 52% of youths in Malta haven't been involved in any organisations, against 31% in Belgium.



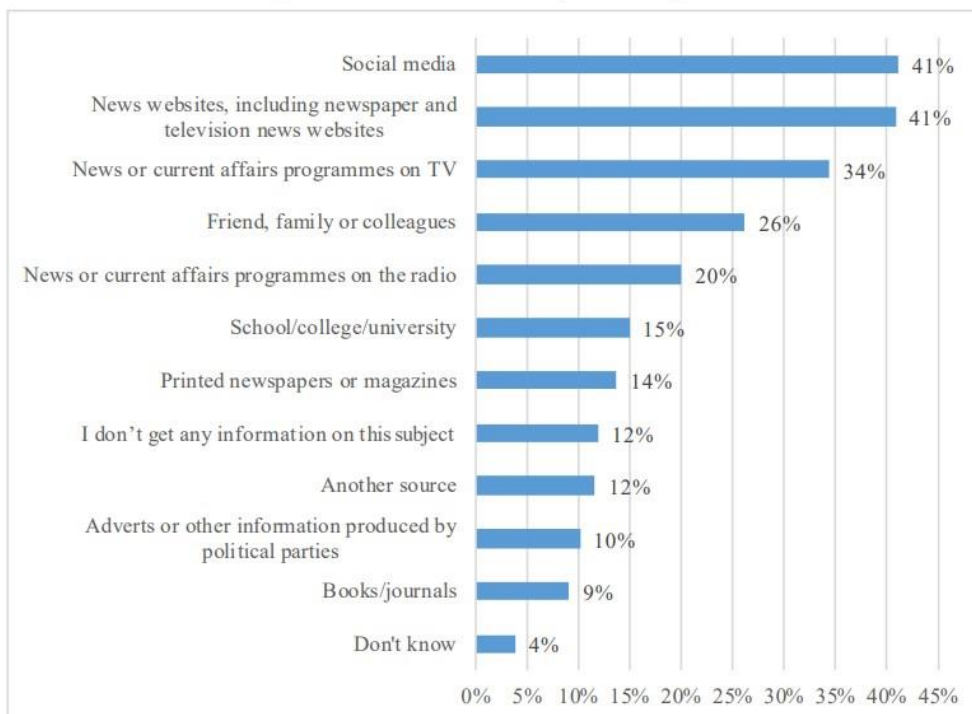
<https://data.europa.eu/en/publications/datastories/understanding-youth-engagement-europe-through-open-data>



Source:

European Values Study, Wave 7 (2020)

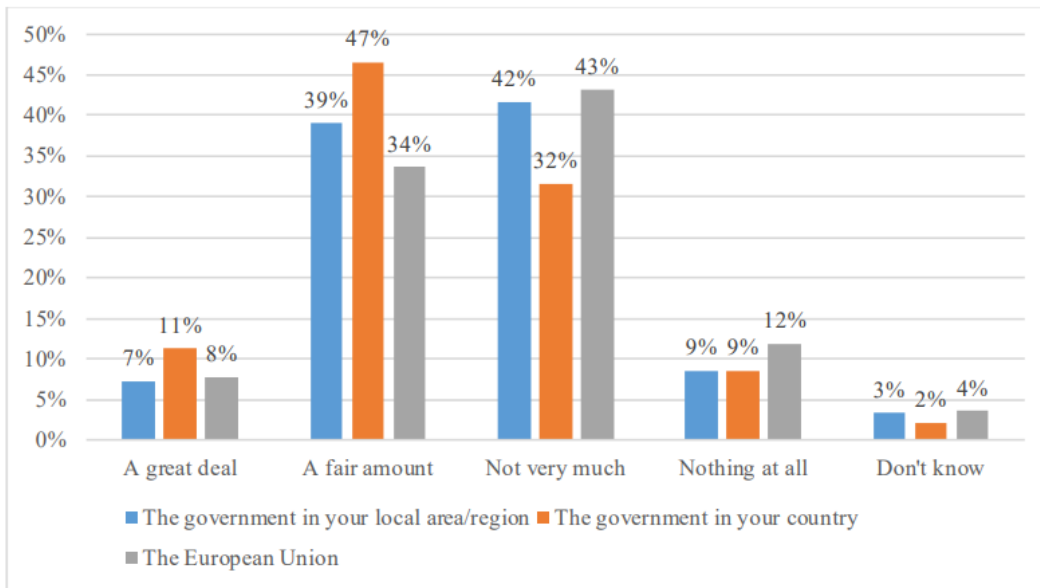
Figure 5: From which of these sources do you get most information about political and social issues? Please select up to three answers. (in percentages - EU27)



Source:

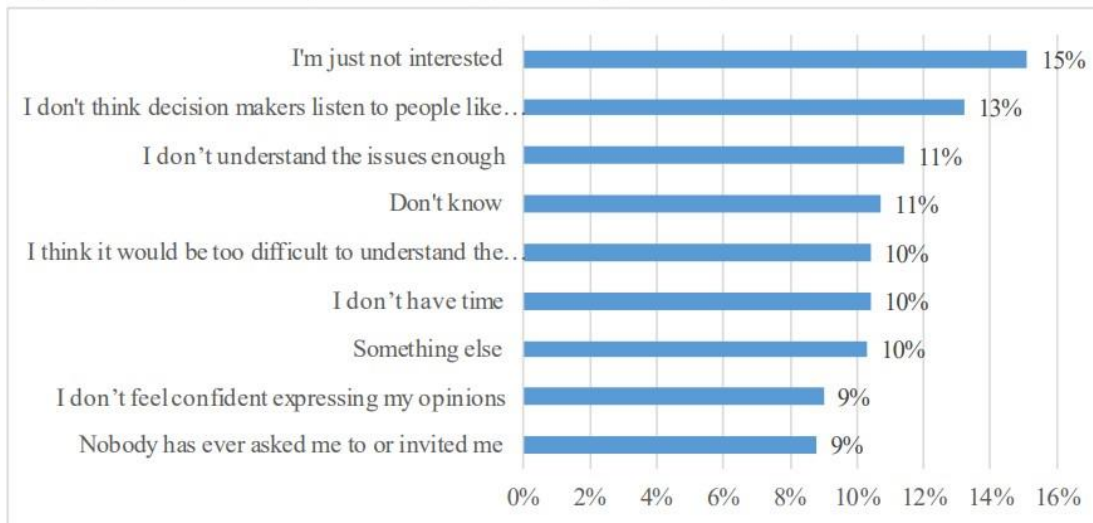
European Parliament Youth Survey (2021)

Figure 6: How much, if anything, do you feel you understand about...? (in percentages - EU27)



Source: European Parliament Youth Survey (2021)

Figure 10: You said you have not voted in the last local, national or European election. What, if anything, has prevented you from doing this? (in percentages - EU27)



Source:

European Parliament Youth Survey (2021)

## COMMITTEE PRESIDENTS

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