

WINTER 2025 | EB 103.1

DG COMM | PUBLIC OPINION MONITORING UNIT

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT EUROBAROMETER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WINTER SURVEY 2025 | PARLEMETER



10 KEY TAKE-AWAYS

1



HISTORIC APPROVAL

More than ever, people appreciate what they get from Europe: 74% think that their country benefits from EU membership - the best result ever recorded since this question was first asked in 1983.

2



MORE UNITY

89% believe that more unity is crucial to tackle global challenges. Consensus is high with 75% or more citizens agreeing with this in every Member State.

3



POWERFUL PARLIAMENT

62% of citizens would like to see the European Parliament take on a more prominent role. This figure has risen by six points in the past year, reaching its peak since 2020.

4



IMPROVED IMAGE

The European Union's image is positive for more people (50%). That's an increase of two points in comparison to spring 2024 and five points more than in autumn 2023.

5



PROTECTING PEOPLE

66% want the EU's role in protecting citizens from global crises and security risks to become more important, while 50% recognise that this protective role has already grown in recent years.



STRENGTHENED SECURITY

Defence and security is the main area on which the EU should focus in order to strengthen its position in the world, according to citizens (36%). The new runner-up is competitiveness, economy and industry (32%), which has gained five points in the past year.



ERODING EXPECTATIONS

33% expect their standard of living to decrease over the next five years. That's seven points more than right after the recent European elections (26%) and goes back to the level of spring 2024 (32%).



PRESSING PRIORITIES

43% urge the European Parliament to prioritise tackling inflation, rising prices and the cost of living. The EU's defence and security and the fight against poverty and social exclusion are next on the list (both at 31%).



CHANGING BENEFITS

The main reason why people think that EU membership is beneficial has changed: protecting peace and strengthening security has gained three points since the summer and is now in first place with 35%. The previous top reason, improved cooperation between EU countries, loses two points and is now in second place (34%).



VALUING PEACE

Political priorities change, values are stable: peace (45%), democracy (32%) and human rights (22%) remain the top three values that people want the European Parliament to defend, just as they were a year ago.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

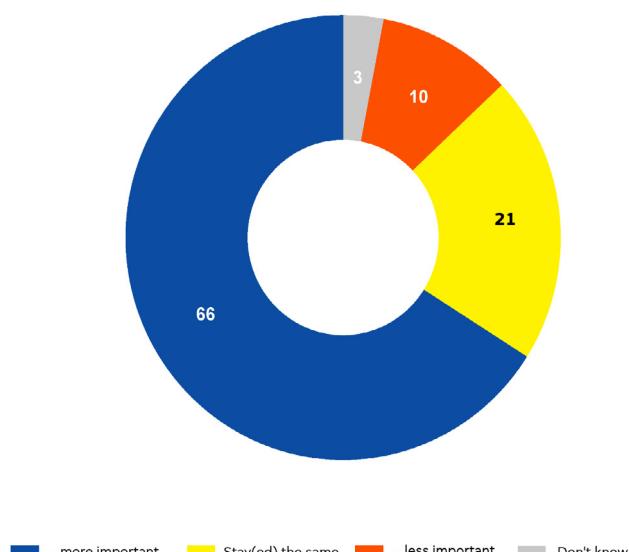
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results of the European Parliament's latest survey show that Europeans have high expectations from the EU in its role to protect them against global challenges and security risks. The Winter 2025 Eurobarometer survey took place between 9 January and 4 February 2025 in all EU Member States, at a time when major events were taking place internationally and in the EU, and half a year after the 2024 European elections, which resulted in a new configuration of the European Parliament. Large majorities are looking for an EU that protects them by focusing on security, defence, the economy and through more unity and means to achieve these goals. Citizens are also increasingly aware of the benefits that come with EU membership and see a more important role for the European Parliament. The impacts of inflation and rising cost of living are a major concern, with significant shares of EU citizens expecting their living standards to decrease in the coming years. Coupled with security issues, these concerns can explain why European citizens' are pessimistic regarding the way things are going in their country and in the EU.

Europeans want the EU's role to protect them against global crises and security risks to become more important, with more unity between Member States and more means for the EU

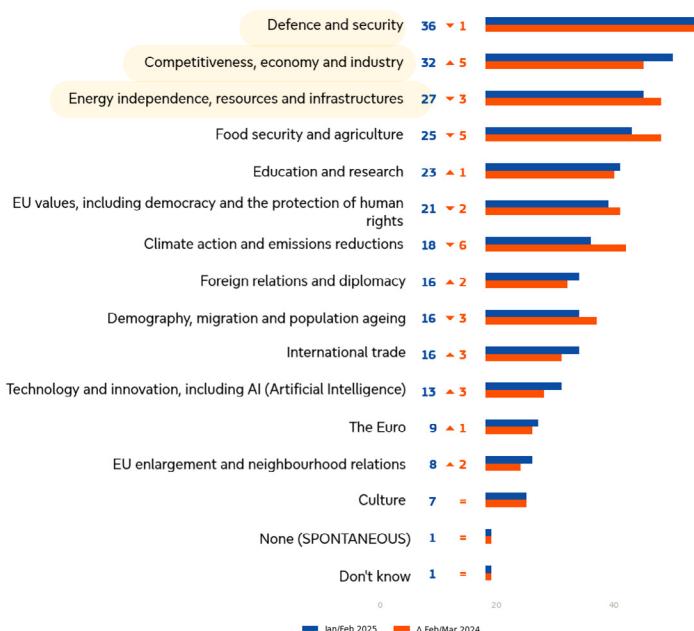
Two thirds of Europeans (66%) say the EU's future role should become more important to protect citizens against global crises and security risks, a proportion that is even higher among young citizens (70%) and the main answer regardless of respondents' attitudes towards the EU. At the national level, results range from 87% in Sweden to 47% in Romania and 44% in Poland, the only two countries where proportions are lower than 50%. A large majority in most Member States – over 70% in at least half of them – say the EU's role to protect its citizens should become more important in the future. Here, Czechia and Poland are the only countries where more than three in ten respondents say the EU's role in this context should stay the same (31% and 38%, respectively). Romania is the only country where the proportion for the item 'less important' (26%) is higher than the item 'stay the same' (24%).

QA12.2 Would you say that – In the future, the role of the European Union to protect European citizens against global crises and security risks should become... (%)



To reinforce its position in the world, citizens say that the EU should focus on 'defence and security' (36%, -1 pp compared to February–March 2024) and 'competitiveness, economy and industry' (32%, +5 pp). These two areas are followed by 'energy independence, resources and infrastructures' (27%, -3 pp), 'food security and agriculture' (25%, -5 pp) and 'education and research' (23%, +1 pp).

QA11ab Thinking about the future, which of the following aspects should the EU focus on in order to reinforce its position in the world? Firstly? And then? (MAX 3 ANSWERS) (EU27) (%)



Overwhelming majorities of Europeans think that 'EU Member States should be more united to face current global challenges' (89%), with results ranging from 98% in Malta and 97% in Denmark and Luxembourg, to 78% in Czechia and 75% in Romania. Three-quarters (76%) of Europeans believe that 'European Union needs more means to face current global challenges'. This question's results vary more widely across countries, from 92% in Finland, 91% in Cyprus and Malta, to 63% in Czechia and Slovakia and 61% in Slovenia. At the socio-demographic level, these views – and especially the one on means – are higher among younger citizens.

QA13 To what extent do you agree or not with each of the following statements? (%)

EU Member States should be more united to face current global challenges



The European Union needs more means to face current global challenges

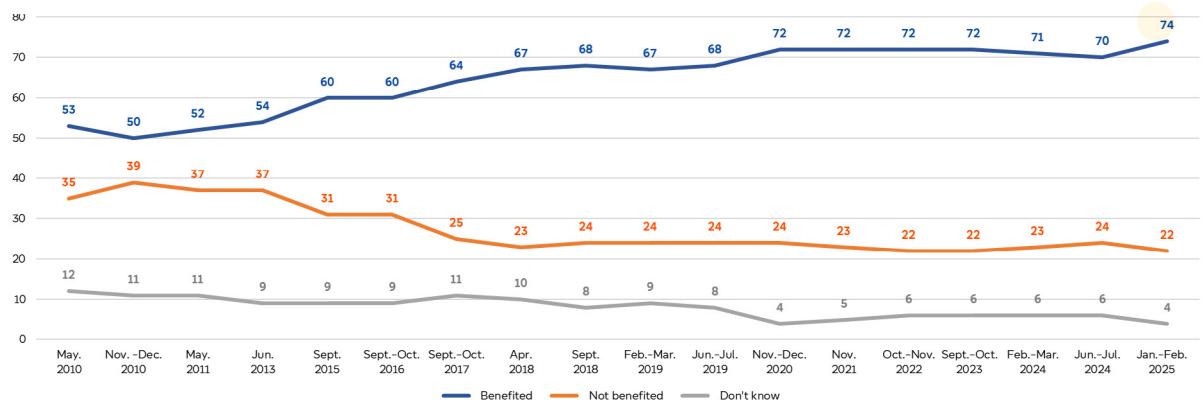


■ Total 'Agree' ■ Total 'Disagree' ■ Don't know

More EU citizens than ever before say that the impact of EU membership is positive, with the shift in reasons due to protecting peace and strengthening security

As seen in previous surveys, more than seven in ten European citizens say that EU actions have an impact on their daily life (72%, no change compared to June-July 2024). This impact is regarded as a positive one: 74% (+4 pp) of people say that their country has benefited from being a member of the EU. This is the highest result ever recorded in a Eurobarometer survey for this question since it was first asked in 1983. Young citizens (aged 15 to 24) are particularly convinced of the beneficial nature of EU membership (82%, +11 pp).

QA4 Taking everything into account, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the EU? (% - EU)



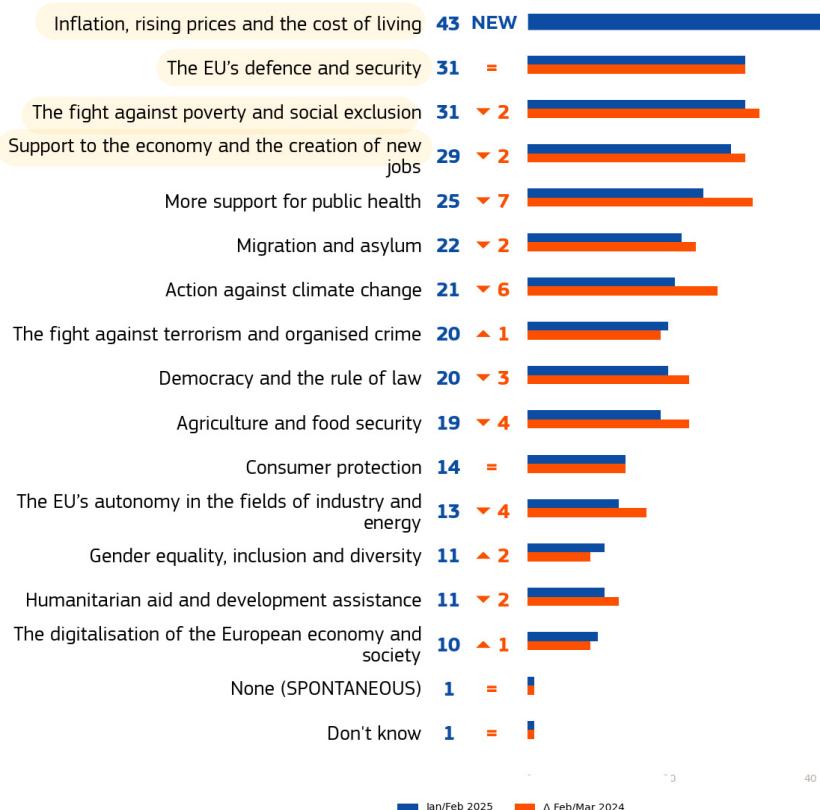
However, the main reasons Member States benefit from their membership have changed: 'the EU contributes to protecting peace and strengthening security' (35%, +3 pp since June-July 2024) comes first and 'membership of the EU improves cooperation' between European countries (34%, -2 pp) comes second. In addition, respondents say 'the EU contributes to economic growth' in their country (28%, no change) and that it 'brings people new work opportunities' (26%, +2 pp).

Economic and security issues and defending peace and democracy are citizens' key priorities

Economic and security issues are also at the forefront when it comes to the topics the European Parliament should prioritise. Four in ten Europeans mention 'inflation, rising prices and the cost of living' (43%, new item), followed by the 'the EU's defence and security' (31%, no change compared to February-March 2024), 'the fight against poverty and social exclusion' (31%, -2 pp) and 'support to the economy and the creation of new jobs' (29%, -2 pp). 'Inflation, rising prices and the cost of living' is a main priority across all age groups, whereas younger Europeans are much more likely to mention 'action against climate change' than older respondents are, and less likely to mention 'defence and security'.

QA8ab

Which of the following topics would you like to see addressed in priority by the European Parliament? Firstly? And then? (MAX 4 ANSWERS) (EU27) (%)



The need to prioritise the cost of living is clear, with the economic situation being a main concern for an increasing number of Europeans. Indeed, 33% expect their standard of living to decrease in the next five years, seven points more than in June–July 2024. This is notably the case for 53% of French respondents (+8 pp) and 47% of Germans (+15 pp). Still, a majority of Europeans do not expect their standard of living to change (51%, -4 pp), with a stable proportion since the last survey saying it will increase (14%, -2 pp). The socio-demographic analysis shows that older Europeans, those who live in rural areas or small to medium towns, as well as those who already have economic difficulties are those who are most likely to expect a decrease in their standard of living.

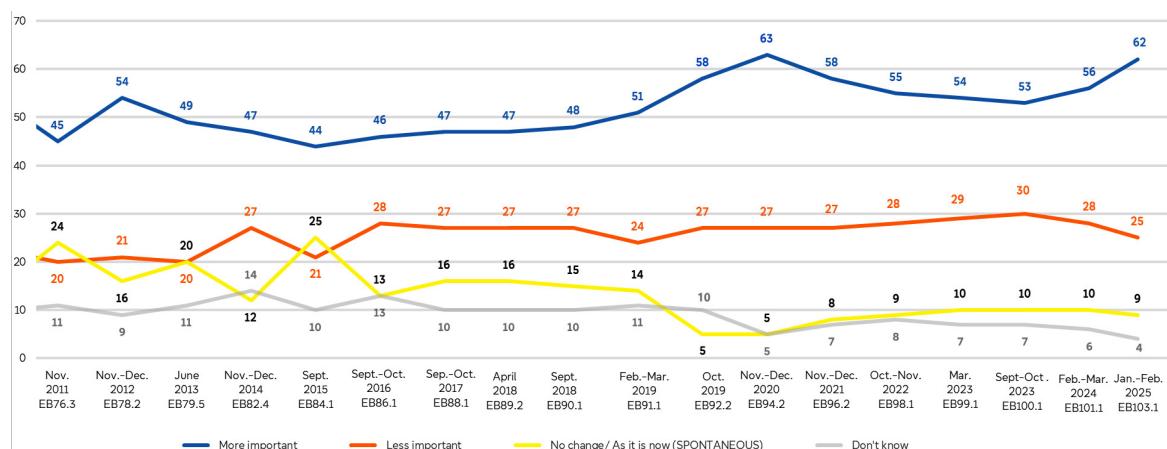
Looking at the values Europeans would like the European Parliament to defend as a matter of priority, 'peace' (45%, -2 pp since February–March 2024) and 'democracy' (32%, -1 pp) come first. They are followed by 'the protection of human rights in the EU and worldwide' (22%, -2 pp), 'freedom of speech and thought' (21%, no change), 'the rule of law' (21%, +1 pp) and 'solidarity between EU Member States and between its regions' (19%, no change).

Increased shares of citizens want the European Parliament to play a more important role, its image remaining positive

A few months into the legislative term, over six in ten (62%) citizens would like the European Parliament to play a more important role, a six-point increase compared to February–March 2024, while a quarter (25%, -3 pp) would see a less important role and one in ten (9%, -1 pp) no need for change. Younger Europeans are the most likely to say they would like the European Parliament to have a more important role. At the country level, there is wide variation, with the results for a ‘more important’ role ranging from 94% in Cyprus to 34% in Czechia. The positive images of the EU and the EP have remained stable and at high levels, at 50% (+2 pp compared to June–July 2024) and 41% (-1 pp) respectively, with results much higher among youth.

QA2

Would you personally like to see the European Parliament play a more important or less important role? (% - EU)



The current context, however, has an effect on how citizens perceive how things are going in their country and in the EU: 61% (+4 pp compared to June–July 2024) say that things are going in the wrong direction in their country and 51% (+2 pp) in the EU. The latter’s results have increased significantly in a number of countries, such as in Belgium (55%, +11 pp) say that things are going in the wrong direction in the EU) or the Netherlands (55%, +11 pp).

Europeans are eager to learn more about the European Union and the European Parliament, especially the impact of legislation on their city, region and country

Finally, the survey explores which type of information on the European Union and the European Parliament citizens would like to have more of, as well as the media they mostly use to access news. Europeans would like to know more about what the EU has concretely done or changed in their city, region or country (41%), as well as the concrete impact of EU legislation on their country (40%) and what the European Parliament wants the EU budget to be spent on (40%). More than three in ten are also interested in the concrete impact of EU legislation on their personal life or situation (35%), what the European Parliament is deciding on new European laws (35%), the activities of MEPs (34%) and what the European Parliament is doing to check on the European Commission and hold it accountable (31%).

Television remains the most used medium to access news (72%), followed by online press and news platforms (41%), social media (36%) and the radio (36%). Social media are the preferred mean to access news by citizens aged 15 to 24 (66%).

Conducted in the early 2025, this Winter Eurobarometer survey shows that Europeans have high expectations from the EU in its role to protect them against global challenges and security risks. Large majorities are looking for an EU that protects them by focussing on security, defence, and the economy. There is wide agreement among EU citizens that EU Member States should be more united to face current global challenges and that the European Union needs more means to deal with the challenges ahead. Citizens are also increasingly aware of the benefits that come with EU membership and see a more important role for the European Parliament. The impacts of inflation and rising cost of living are a major concern, with significant shares of EU citizens expecting their living standards to decrease in the coming years.

The survey, carried out by Verian research agency between 9 January and 4 February 2025 in all 27 EU Member States, was conducted face-to-face, with video interviews (CAVI) used additionally in Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Malta, Netherlands, and Sweden. 26.354 interviews were conducted in total and EU results are weighted according to the size of the population in each country.

For more information on the full survey, scan the [QR-code](#):



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