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Reporting on Deliverable D1.3 – Codebook and data set of the experimental survey

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Reporting on Deliverable D1.3 – Codebook and data set of the experimental survey

Executive Summary and key conclusions for the next steps within the ActEU project

Summary of context: Why do we need a new public opinion survey to study political trust, legitimacy, and participation in times of societal polarization in Europe? Why do we need a more innovative and nuanced set of questions capturing political trust than the traditional item battery asking: "How much trust do you have in [political institution/actor]?" And how does the multi-level nature of European representative democracies impact citizens' political attitudes and behaviour? Our understanding of these and related questions is surprisingly scarce and sometimes even contradictory. The reasons for this are manyfold: They range from the lack of proper definition and conceptualisation of political trust and legitimacy to the operationalization and measurement of the concept. Moreover, the lack of highly relevant contextual factors such as the level of polity as well as the fields of policy has to be mentioned here.

Added value: The fact that we try to deal with all of the above-mentioned questions makes the ActEU project's approach so special and insightful. However, to do this, the ActEU researchers need a set of new data sources to tackle these questions appropriately within each of our deliverables, outreach activities, as well as scientific publications. We advance the field of research around political trust and legitimacy with regard to three main aspects: First of all, we conceptualize political trust and legitimacy more broadly than it is usually done combining the following different features: political attitudes, political behaviour as well as (feelings of) representation. Such a multifaceted perspective on political trust and legitimacy is highly insightful and will have the potential to add meaningful insights to this field of research. Second, we explicitly investigate not only one single level of polity (e.g., the national level or the EU level only), as it is usually done when dealing with political trust and legitimacy. Instead, we take into account four levels of governance within the EU multi-level system, namely the local, the regional, the national and the EU level. Third, we consider additionally the degree of societal polarization over three currently heated policy fields – immigration, climate change, and gender inequality. This allows us to get a better understanding on how societal polarization affects political trust and legitimacy.

Summary of Deliverable D1.3: For this pioneering conceptual framework, we need a new and more original empirical infrastructure based on an innovative combination of methods and newly collected quantitative and qualitative empirical data – the ActEU focus groups (as already described in Deliverable D1.1), the ActEU web scraping data (as described in Deliverable D1.2) and finally the ActEU survey – a public opinion survey in ten countries with different types of experimental features (this Deliverable D1.3). Deliverable 1.3 includes all relevant information on the ActEU survey, its conceptual background and the methodological design. In line with this, the data set, the codebook, the process of data collection, the master questionnaire as well as the translation procedure are described in the appropriate detail. Finally, the deliverable includes information on the internal pre-release of both the data set and the codebook.

Key conclusions: This task was not intended to produce empirical findings which can be used to derive specific policy recommendations for policymakers and civil society, but data. However, the task of designing and running the ActEU public opinion survey including experimental features is highly important for numerous tasks and deliverables following in the upcoming months and years. Together with Deliverable 2.1 (Report on the general dynamics of trust based on secondary data analysis), Deliverable 3.1 (Report on voting behaviour in Europe) and Deliverable 4.2 (Report on the patterns of objective representation across countries and across parties within countries) mapping political trust and legitimacy in Europe using publicly available data sources, we can finally contrast empirical insights from traditional data sources with more innovative ones. This will also initiate the second phase of the project which is dedicated to tangible outreach activities. More specifically, we seek to propose a toolbox of remedial actions with practical toolkits for policymakers as well as for civil society and the educational sector, in order to activate (young) citizens and to enhance political trust in European representative democracies. And for this, two different types of insights are relevant: insights from traditional data sources in addition to original data collection.

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1 Introduction

The ActEU project has six key objectives which enable all members of the ActEU consortium to effectively counteract current problems of legitimacy in European representative democracies:

(1) Providing an innovative conceptual framework as well as an original empirical infrastructure based on new quantitative and qualitative empirical data (focus groups, experimental surveys, web scraping) and an innovative combination thereof to study political trust, legitimacy and representation in polarizing times in the European multi-level system.

(2) Mapping and investigating the issue of legitimacy of European representative democracies via a triangular approach focusing on political attitudes, political behavior and political representation.

(3) Identifying a set of clear-cut factors to counteract the problem of decreasing political trust, legitimacy and representation in European democracies for immediate intervention and in the long term.

(4) Analysing the context sensitivity of solutions for engendering trustworthy institutions as well as a less divided society in Europe. We will do so in terms of both level of polity (local, regional, national, EU) and three of the most polarizing policy fields (migration, environment, gender inequality).

(5) Developing a toolbox of remedial actions including two toolkits for (1) European, national, regional and local policymakers, and (2) civil society and the educational sector to (re-)activate citizens and to enhance trust in and legitimacy of representative democracy. For the co-creation of the toolbox, we will systematically cooperate with and get input from civil society actors and political stakeholders as well as (young) citizens and the broader public.

(6) Communicating and disseminating ActEU findings across three different target groups (the younger generations of citizens, policymakers and stakeholders, and academics) in multifaceted and innovative ways (educational cartoons "Cartooning for democracy", podcasts, videos, blogs, policy briefs, reports, and others) and building up an ActEU Civil Society Network.

This deliverable seeks to tackle the first objective, providing an innovative conceptual framework as well as an original empirical infrastructure. But why is this even necessary? The subsequent section gives some clarity on this: Although there is a rich literature on political trust and legitimacy, some major questions are still unresolved. The popular assumption is that political trust has been declining across Europe in recent decades. This image is particularly obvious in the public debate in Europe as we can see in every day news reports (see *Figure 1*).

However, from a more scientific perspective it is rather unclear whether such a decline of trust, measured at the level of political attitudes, is a continuous and stable trend over time or whether we can rather see some trendless fluctuations which are in line with other (contextual) factors, such as for example crises or societal transformations.[1] The latter seems to be more likely because previous scholarship has unequivocally shown important differences in developments in attitudinal trust between countries.[2] In addition to this,

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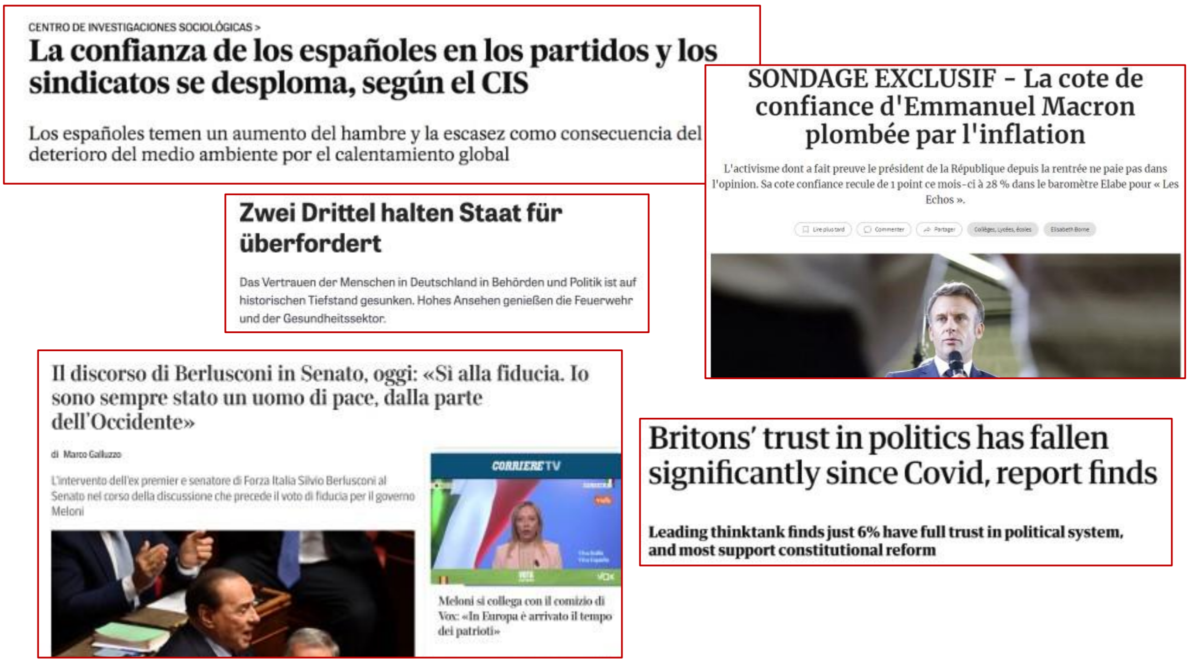
[1] Zmerli, S., and M. Hooghe (2011) *Political trust: Why context matters*. ECPR Press; van der Meer, Tom W.G. (2017) "Political Trust and the "Crisis of Democracy", https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.77.

[2] Norris, P. (2011) *Democratic Deficit—Critical Citizens Revisited*. Cambridge University Press.

political trust and legitimacy are also assumed to be not only linked to the level of mere attitudes, but shows itself also via quite a few other phenomena such as declining voter turnout, changing patterns of political participation, a radicalisation of voter attitudes and a lack of representation accompanied by the loss of importance of political parties. These different aspects can altogether be linked to current issues of political trust and legitimacy. Moreover, this more general perspective on political trust and legitimacy is linked to the overall diagnosis we predominantly investigate in the ActEU project that European representative democracy is undergoing a profound transformation that needs to be systematically analysed.

Figure 1 Public debate over trust: Examples from the news



CENTRO DE INVESTIGACIONES SOCIOLÓGICAS >

La confianza de los españoles en los partidos y los sindicatos se desploma, según el CIS

Los españoles temen un aumento del hambre y la escasez como consecuencia del deterioro del medio ambiente por el calentamiento global

SONDAGE EXCLUSIF – La cote de confiance d'Emmanuel Macron plombée par l'inflation

L'activisme dont a fait preuve le président de la République depuis la rentrée ne paie pas dans l'opinion. Sa cote confiance recule de 1 point ce mois-ci à 28 % dans le baromètre Elabe pour « Les Echos ».

Zwei Drittel halten Staat für überfordert

Das Vertrauen der Menschen in Deutschland in Behörden und Politik ist auf historischen Tiefstand gesunken. Hohes Ansehen genießen die Feuerwehr und der Gesundheitssektor.

Il discorso di Berlusconi in Senato, oggi: «Sì alla fiducia. Io sono sempre stato un uomo di pace, dalla parte dell'Occidente»

di Marco Galluzzo

L'intervento dell'ex premier e senatore di Forza Italia Silvio Berlusconi al Senato nel corso della discussione che precede il voto di fiducia per il governo Meloni

Meloni si collega con il comizio di Vox: «In Europa è arrivato il tempo dei patrioti»

Britons' trust in politics has fallen significantly since Covid, report finds

Leading thinktank finds just 6% have full trust in political system, and most support constitutional reform

Notes: Arbitrary examples of everyday news articles published in different European countries.

Against this backdrop, the aim of Deliverable D1.3 is twofold: First, we explain, why precisely we need such a new conceptual approach as well as a complementary original empirical infrastructure to study political trust (*Section 2.1*). Second, we elucidate the main ideas behind the broader methodological approach – i.e., the sequential design (*Section 2.2*). Subsequently we describe in appropriate detail one highly relevant component of this complementary original empirical infrastructure: the ActEU survey, its conceptual background and the methodological design (*Section 2.3*). Finally, the data source itself enters the picture: In *Section 3*, we give an overview on the translation procedure; *Section 4* is dedicated to the fieldwork phase and thus gives some more technical information on the process of data collection; in *Section 5,* we present the internally released data set as well as the codebook/ technical summary of the survey and the next steps to be taken. The latter means that we present our way towards the external release of a high-quality data set through numerous quality checks to make the ActEU data available to the scientific community as well as to a wider public. Finally, the appendix to this deliverable includes both the master and the country-specific questionnaires (*Appendix A*) as well as information on the internal pre-release of both the data set and the codebook/ technical summary of the survey (*Appendix B*).

2 From the theoretical concept to the design of the ActEU Survey

The general understanding of the concept of political trust and legitimacy in Europe is surprisingly scarce and sometimes even contradictory. The reasons for this are manyfold: the research literature mainly lacks a suitable definition and conceptualisation of trust and legitimacy that can be measured empirically via survey data. In the past, social scientists referred theoretically to the framework of political support when studying political trust and legitimacy, while more recently multidimensional conceptualisations have been used to study the phenomenon.[3] Conceptual unclarity together with a lack of appropriate distinction between the different layers of polity in Europe (local, regional, national, EU), but also a lack of systematic differentiation between different groups of society (e.g., old vs. young citizens; rich vs. poor; 'left behind' vs. 'well off') thus lead to the fact that our understanding of political trust and legitimacy in Europe is still underdeveloped. Therefore, when we want to produce reliable data-based statements about over-time developments on political trust and legitimacy, we mainly can observe "trendless fluctuations" instead of a clear-cut decline or increase over time.[4]

To sum up, we do not have good knowledge of political trust and legitimacy in Europa so far. As a consequence, we pursue the following set of different strategies to overcome this research gap: First of all, we conceptualize political trust and legitimacy more broadly than it is usually done, combining the following different features: political attitudes, political behaviour, as well as (feelings of) representation. Such a multifaceted perspective on political trust and legitimacy is highly insightful and will have the potential to add meaningful insights to this field of research. Second, we explicitly investigate not only one single level of polity (e.g., the national level or the EU level only), as it is usually done when dealing with political trust and legitimacy. Instead, we take into account four levels within the EU multi-level system of governance, namely the local, the regional, the national and the EU level. Third, we consider the degree of societal polarization over three currently heated policy fields –immigration, climate change, and gender inequality. This allows us to get a better understanding of how societal polarization affects political trust and legitimacy. And finally, we provide an innovative data source which is complementary to these conceptual considerations.[5]

The aim of *Section 2* of Deliverable D1.3 is to describe in a first step the ActEU's theoretical concept (*Section 2.1*) which is followed by the theory and implementation behind the ActEU's sequential design (*Section 2.2*) and the design of the ActEU survey questionnaire (*Section 2.3*).

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[3] Easton, D. (1975) "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support." *British Journal of Political Science*, *5*(4), 435-457; Dalton, R. J. (2004) *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices. The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies.* Oxford University Press; Norris, P. (Ed.). (1999). Critical Citizens. Global Support for Democratic Government. Oxford University Press.

[4] Norris, P. (2011) *Democratic Deficit—Critical Citizens Revisited.* Cambridge University Press, p. 114.

[5] These conceptual ideas and methodological considerations have been presented and refined according to the feedback in different formats to get as much feedback as possible before drafting the ActEU questionnaire: Political Science colloquium "Politics in Europe" at Saarland University, Saarbrücken (Germany) presented by Daniela Braun in 2023; Political Science colloquium at Mannheim Centre for European Social Research, Mannheim (Germany) presented by Daniela Braun in 2023; Talk at Fraunhofer ISI, Karlsruhe (Germany) presented by Alex Hartland in 2023; one entire seminar on political legitimacy in times of polarization taught by Daniela Braun in 2023/24 at Saarland University, Saarbrücken (Germany).

2.1 ActEU's theoretical concept

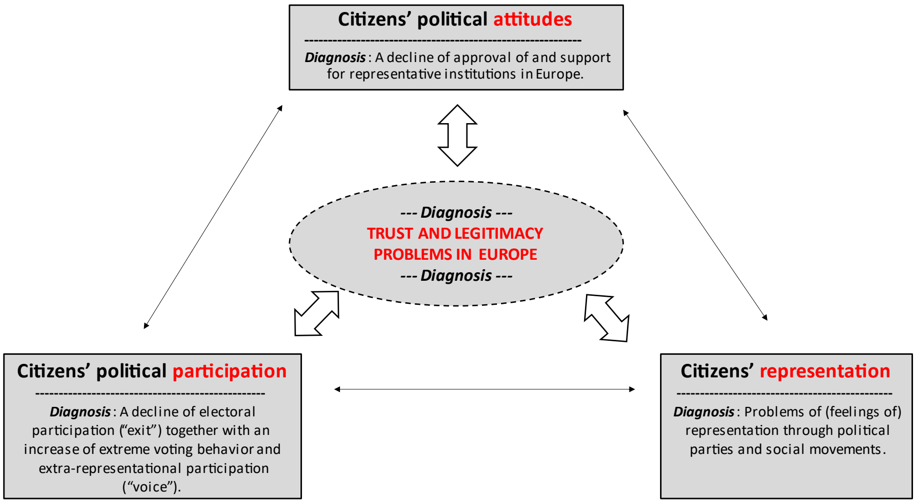
The theoretical ideas behind the general ActEU concept which will be part of each WP concern the ActEU conceptual triangle (*Section 2.1.1*) as well as two different types of contextual factors (*Section 2.1.2*). The first one of these latter contextual factors is a largely institutional one based in the multi-level structure of the EU multi-level system and labelled here as the polity levels. The second one of these contextual factors is more societal based in the current debates shaping European societies – this one is labelled here as policy polarization over the key political issues.

2.1.1 The ActEU conceptual triangle

To overcome the focus of conventional trust research on the attitudinal level, the ActEU project puts the spotlight on three major components of representative democracy. In our opinion such an approach will help to provide more stable and insightful findings on the current issues of representative democracy. But why is this necessary? It is uncontested that representative democracy in Europe is currently under pressure. This shows itself in low turnout in elections, a more diverse set of protest activities, and decreasing levels of political trust in the representative institutions of the state. However, as mentioned above, previous research mixes up different attitudinal, representational and behavioural components when analysing representative democracy under pressure. Moreover, the conceptual as well as empirical linkage between political attitudes and engagement is still underdeveloped. Therefore, the empirical findings on this broad phenomenon are still inconclusive. The following examples will help to better understand this critique: Citizens may display low levels of trust in their representative institutions, distrust their politicians or feel not well represented by them. But is this related to the way they engage with politics? Is for example distrust in politics related to voting in elections, joining demonstrations, or participating in #activism?

To deal with these questions appropriately, ActEU provides an innovative conceptual and empirical framework. As illustrated in *Figure 2*, the project draws on a triangle of citizens' political attitudes, their political participation and the representation of their policy preferences to map and investigate the decline of political trust and legitimacy in Europe respectively.

Figure 2 Innovative conceptual framework



Citizens' political attitudes

Diagnosis: A decline of approval of and support for representative institutions in Europe.

--- *Diagnosis* ---
TRUST AND LEGITIMACY PROBLEMS IN EUROPE
--- *Diagnosis* ---

Citizens' political participation

Diagnosis: A decline of electoral participation ("exit") together with an increase of extreme voting behavior and extra-representational participation ("voice").

Citizens' representation

Diagnosis: Problems of (feelings of) representation through political parties and social movements.

Source: ActEU

Figure 2 not only shows the main components of the triangle, but also highlights through which empirical phenomena the general diagnosis of issues of trust and legitimacy in Europe play out empirically in our current representative democracies in Europe. Problems of trust and legitimacy at the attitudinal level are mirrored through the weakening of citizens' approval of and support for the institutions of the state. However, the diagnosis would take a different shape in terms of participation and representation which are equally said to be in flux. In terms of participation, the diagnosis manifests itself by low levels of electoral participation (the "exit" option in representative democracies) or a stronger support for extreme political parties as well as increasing levels of extra-representational participation (the "voice" option in representative democracies).[6] In terms of representation, problems of trust and legitimacy, again, would take a different shape: Political parties, key actors of representative political systems, would be no longer able to represent the full range of citizens' preferences. At the same time, other political or societal actors could take over here and represent the citizenry. However, this seems to be rather not the case, as we would assume that European citizens at least feel less represented than in the past.

The ActEU conceptual triangle not only suggests that each of these components need to be considered appropriately when studying issues of trust and legitimacy in Europe, but that they are linked to each other. We assume that low levels of trust in institutions and actors of representative democracies are strongly interrelated with other observations which are linked to contemporary issues of legitimacy. Accordingly, the three components of this triangle – attitudes, participation and (feelings of) representation – stand in a complex relationship that cannot be reduced to a simple causal relation leading from attitudes to participation and, subsequently, to representation. Regularly, we can observe that attitudes and behaviour are only related to each other under very particular conditions. Often, representation leads to increased participation or to a change in political attitudes. At the same time, the modes of representation change as well and EU-wide civil society participation can lead to the emergence of novel forms of representation.[7] Hence, the three major components of the ActEU conceptual triangle should not be seen as fixed categories with clearly defined borders, but as evolving mutually constitutive domains.

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[6] Hirschman, A.O. (1970) *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

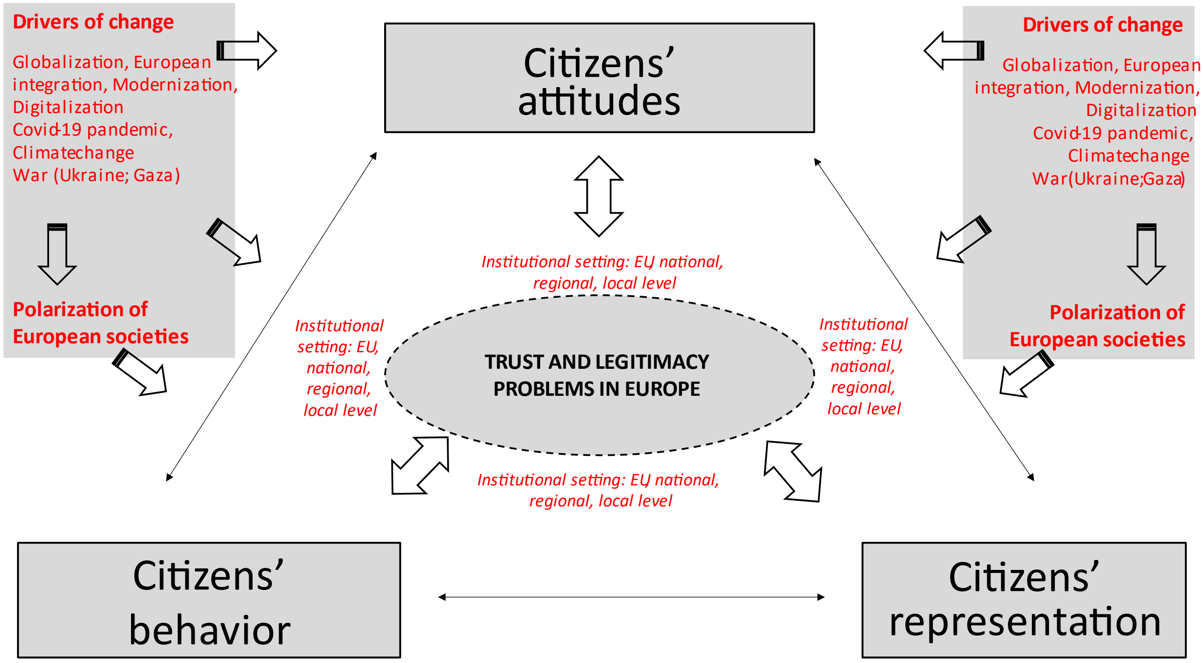
[7] Trenz, H.-J. (2009) "European civil society: Between participation, representation and discourse." *Policy and Society* 28(1): 35–46; Banducci, S.A., T. Donovan and J.A. Karp (2005) "Effects of Minority Representation on Political Attitudes and Participation" In: Segura, G.M. and S. Bowler (eds.), *Diversity in Democracy*, University of Virginia Press, 193-215; Braun, D. and S. Hutter (2016) "Political trust,

In providing and applying this triangle as an important conceptual background for the design of our survey, the findings of ActEU will provide a substantially more comprehensive picture of European democracy in flux and at the same time offer the possibility to link the previous reports of the European Commission[8] on the topic to the broader investigation of the phenomenon.

2.1.2 Contextual factors: Polity levels and policy polarization

Although we act on the assumption that the ActEU conceptual triangle in itself has the potential to provide a better idea of the problems of representative European democracy, we also know that not only micro-level components such as political attitudes and political behaviour play a role here. Accordingly, even if we conceptualize political trust and legitimacy in a broader way through the features described above, other factors are supposed to be relevant too and need to be considered appropriately, as shown in *Figure 3.*

Figure 3 The ActEU triangle including contextual factors


Drivers of change
Globalization, European integration, Modernization, Digitalization
Covid-19 pandemic, Climatechange
War (Ukraine; Gaza)
Polarization of European societies
Citizens' attitudes
Drivers of change
Globalization, European integration, Modernization, Digitalization
Covid-19 pandemic, Climatechange
War(Ukraine;Gaza)
Polarization of European societies
Institutional setting: EU, national, regional, local level
Institutional setting: EU, national, regional, local level
TRUST AND LEGITIMACY PROBLEMS IN EUROPE
Institutional setting: EU, national, regional, local level
Institutional setting: EU, national, regional, local level
Citizens' behavior
Citizens' representation

Source: ActEU

To take into account macro-level factors here seems to be at least as important: The context where individuals are embedded in matters and needs to be considered also conceptually. And the particular context where European citizens are embedded in has changed a lot over

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extra-representational participation and the openness of political systems." *International Political Science Review* 37(2): 151–165.

[8] European Commission (2017) *Trust at Risk: Implications for EU Policies and Institutions. Report of the Expert Group "Trust at Risk? Foresight on the Medium-Term Implications for European Research and Innovation Policies (TRUSTFORESIGHT)"* Directorate-General for Research & Innovation (Online available: https://espas.secure.europarl.europa.eu/orbis/document/trust-risk-implications-eu-policies-and-institutions).

time. On the one hand, since the founding of the European Union (EU), the political system as well as the societies in Europe have changed fundamentally as a result of far-reaching developments such as modernisation, globalisation and Europeanisation. In addition, the process of European Integration has been characterised for more than a decade by the multiple crisis phase that began with the global financial crisis in 2007/08. This was followed by the European debt crisis and the associated issues of solidarity, the (perceived) immigration crisis, Brexit and finally the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine. It can be assumed that such phases of crisis and transformation are accompanied by a polarisation of society. Examples of the current political conflicts over numerous issues in the cultural dimension of political competition include migration, climate change and the so-called gender issue. Moreover, the way in which the political system(s) in Europe are organized needs to be taken into account. Political systems in Europe can be characterized through their different political layers where politicians and institutions as well as the citizenry act and perform: in most EU member states, these different layers provide an institutional setting ranging from the local, over the regional and national, to the EU (intergovernmental and supranational) level. And all of this of course has implications – not least for political trust and legitimacy. In line with these considerations, *Figure 3* thus illustrates the full picture of our ActEU concept where we can see the context in its occurrence as drivers of change, but also two highly relevant contextual factors which in our opinion require special attention: levels of polity and policy polarization.

Level of polity: The EU multi-level system is a highly complex one and in particular from the perspective of the European citizenry not easy to understand. And here the complicated interrelatedness between supranational and intergovernmental institutions in the EU decision-making process is only one side of the story. What is certainly as complicated to understand is the fact that the political system consists of different layers, i.e., levels of polity.[9] A political actor can act at the local level of politics, i.e., in the city or municipality a person lives, at the regional level (this is mainly true in federal political systems such as Germany, Austria and Spain), or the national level of politics (where the national government of an EU member state is located). The latter is usually considered as the most obvious political arena and therefore also from the perspective of the citizenry the polity level which is assumed to be perceived as predominantly relevant. However, as a matter of fact, a political actor can also act at the EU level of governance, as part of the European Parliament for instance. For citizens the copresence of these different levels of polity are difficult to discern and even more complicated is the task to attribute responsibilities to each of these levels of polity. It should thus not come as a surprise that political trust and legitimacy also suffers or is at least affected by the EU multi-level system with its tasks and responsibilities spread across local, regional, national and European levels. Parties, for example, pursue different goals at the different levels of the multi-level system; political actors regularly use strategies of mutual blame to achieve their goals. The latter is likely to have a negative impact on citizens' trust in these political actors and institutions as well as on the legitimacy and accountability of the political system as a whole. This is why we explicitly acknowledge this multi-level structure in our ActEU conceptual framework (see *Figure 3*).

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[9] Golder, S.N., Lago, I., Blais, A., et al. (2017) *Multi-Level Electoral Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Braun, D. and Schmitt, H. (2020) "Different emphases, same positions? The election manifestos of political parties in the EU multilevel electoral system compared" *Party Politics* 26(5), 640–50.

Policy polarization: Moreover, more recently, we can observe increasing levels of polarisation in European societies – there is also increasing empirical evidence provided by scholarly research.[10] It is therefore not surprising that several conflictual political issues have become the focus of European politics over the past decade. Numerous events, transformations and crises have changed the political and social landscape in Europe in recent decades. While in earlier times political conflicts were mainly fought out on the left-right dimension of political competition, these conflicts have become more complex in recent decades and now range from left-libertarian to right-authoritarian alternatives.[11] This has led to a multitude of new cultural conflicts. Such conflicts have emerged not only in the so-called refugee crisis, but also in the transformative phase of the European integration process, which has even led to the formation of a new transnational divide between opponents and supporters of the European idea. Three conflicts require particular attention:

- So far, this new transnational divide has manifested itself in an intense public debate on European migration policy and the future path of European integration. At least since the so-called refugee crisis, scholars in most European countries have observed an increasing polarisation on immigration issues.
- Furthermore, a higher degree of polarisation can be observed in a number of public debates related to feminist and other emancipatory politics and gender equality. Some of the issues and demands that have been raised in the past by feminist movements and activists for gender equality and equal opportunities (e.g. the right to voluntary abortion, the right to in vitro fertilisation for same-sex couples, the ‘MeToo’ mobilisations against sexual harassment and sexual violence against women, the fight against gender-based violence, the demands for an end to the gender pay gap, etc.) have long been met with fierce resistance and counter-mobilisation from conservative and some religious sections of society. Recently, far-right and radical right-wing populist parties, which have a predominantly male clientele, have been flying the flag against so-called gender ideology, sometimes using extremely violent and aggressive language and practices.
- Finally, another pressing issue with the potential to divide societies concerns environmental policy. The existing literature on the environmental movement highlights how climate change activism over the past 15 years has been characterised by widespread disenchantment with multilateral global environmental governance, including through the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change treaty processes. For some time now, climate activists (e.g., Fridays for Future and Extinction Rebellion) have therefore been calling loudly for an adequate response to climate change.

Against the background of increasing social polarisation in the areas mentioned, we must assume that there will be further consequences for political legitimacy in Europe's representative democracies. For this reason, the problems of trust and legitimacy must not only be considered in isolation, but must also be linked to the issues of ‘social polarisation’. From our perspective, it is essential to explicitly address the consequences that such

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[10] Borbáth, E., Hutter, S. and Leininger, A. (2023) “Cleavage politics, polarisation and participation in Western Europe” *West European Politics* 46:4, S. 631-651.

[11] Kitschelt, H. (1994) *The Transformation of European Social Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Hooghe, L., Marks, G. and Wilson, C.J. (2002) “Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?” *Comparative Political Studies* 35:8, 965–89; Kriesi, H., Grande, E. Dolezal, M., Helbling, M., Hoeglinger, D., Hutter, S. and Wuest, B. (2012) *Political Conflict in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Teney, C., Lacewell, O. P. and de Wilde, P. (2014) “Winners and Losers of Globalization in Europe: Attitudes and Ideologies.” *European Political Science Review* 6:4, 575–95.

polarisation in the areas of migration, environmental and gender policy has for political trust and support for democracy.

We can summarize *Section 2.1* on the ActEU's theoretical concept as follows: Problems of political trust and legitimacy in Europe need to be studied from a broader perspective and take into account at least three different conceptual features: citizens' political attitudes, their political participation and the (felt) representation of their policy preferences. Moreover, at least two major contextual factors need to be considered if we want to study political trust and legitimacy appropriately: the levels of polity as well as the policy polarization. These important insights are taken into account in the novel data sources produced in WP 1 of the ActEU project.

2.2 The link between focus group discussions and the survey

The conceptual considerations described above were predominantly leading the design of the ActEU survey. In addition to this, we opted for a sequential design with qualitative focus group discussions in the first months of the project in for a subset of countries (Czechia, France, Germany, Greece) followed by the ActEU survey which is used then for quantitative approaches. From the perspective of the ActEU survey one major added value of the focus group discussions within ActEU is a methodological one. Relevant findings that have been analysed, prepared and published by the focus group work force (see Deliverable D1.1 – Report on Focus Group Discussions) under the responsibility of UDE (Kristina Weissenbach; Ruth Berkowitz) were utilized to prepare (some of) the items of the survey.

From our experience with previous survey-based empirical research, we know that in particular the survey question that is usually asked in the most established cross-country public opinion surveys (e.g., European Social Survey; Eurobarometer) in Europe is highly problematic. Political trust has been measured with different sets of items. Usually, these consist of Likert-type items with 4 or 5 response categories, although quasi-interval scales of 10 or 11 categories have become more popular over time. Political trust in such scales is usually measured through a battery of questions prompting respondents to rate their trust levels regarding a diverse range of institutions. This has primarily focused on items related to core state institutions such as parliament, government, courts, as well as civil services, police, and armed forces, and, on the other hand, specific political actors like heads of state or government, legislators, or other public officials. Depending on the survey under consideration, this question thus asks on different answer scales and lists of institutions in a unidimensional way the following question: "How much trust do you have in the parliament/the government/the legal system/the EU/other institutions?"

In our opinion, this survey question is by no means measuring the complex concept of political trust and legitimacy that has been described above. Therefore, one of our major aims when designing the ActEU survey was to use the insights from the focus group discussions to come up with better survey questions to measure this concept and differentiate between attitudes of trust, distrust, and mistrust. This mainly resulted into the "trust and legitimacy item battery" which will finally allow us to better study political trust and legitimacy. The final question wording of the "trust and legitimacy item battery" is as follows:

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Answer scale: 0: strongly disagree – 10: strongly agree. Don't know

Item battery:

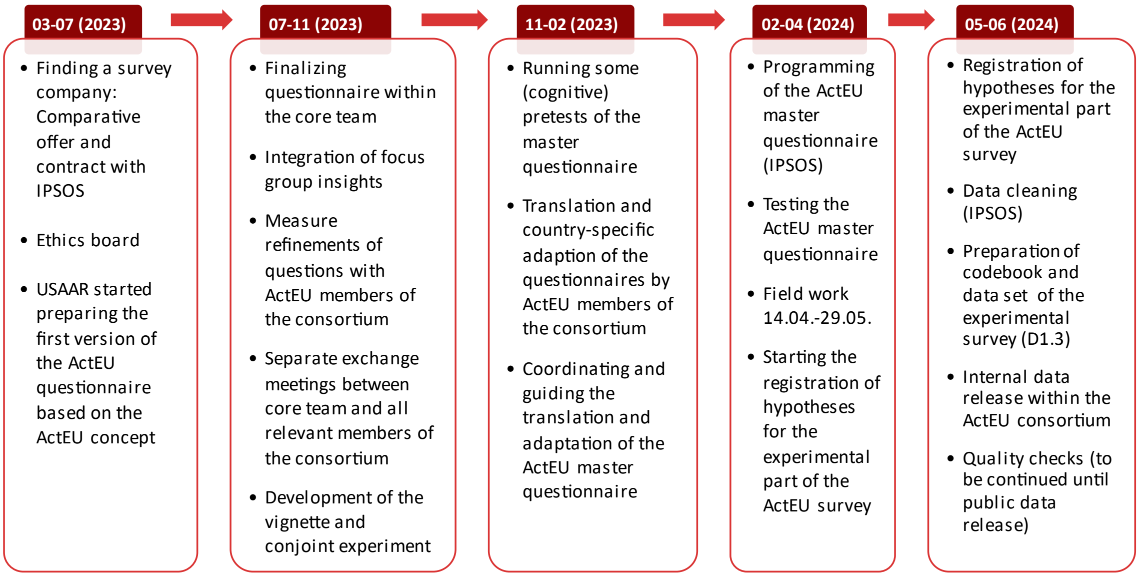
- MPs follow the rules.
- MPs distort the facts to make policies look good.
- MPs' work is open and transparent.
- MPs try to achieve good things.
- MPs want to do their best to serve the country.
- MPs understand the needs of my community.
- I am uncertain whether or not MPs care about people like me.
- I am unsure if MPs try to make things better or worse.
- I am not sure how effective MPs are.
- I am unsure whether to believe most MPs.
- MPs take too long to do anything.
- MPs make things worse.
- I can have an influence on politics.
- It doesn't matter who you vote for, politicians do whatever they want.
- I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country.

Accordingly, designing the ActEU survey is to an important degree inspired by insights from focus group discussions. The latter findings suggested that different types of feelings, emotions and evaluations of politicians (such as for example that political actors understand the needs of the citizenry or give the citizenry the feeling of working transparently) play a more important role than the simple and simplified questions of political trust. How exactly the insights of the focus group discussions have been used and reformulated into the above presented list of more innovative survey questions, will be described in future academic papers where we study the qualitative and the quantitative data source more explicitly.

2.3 The ActEU survey questionnaire design

As described above, before embarking on the actual design of the ActEU survey, we developed the underlying concepts to be measured. Once this step has been completed, we started designing the questionnaire. Figure 3 gives an overview of the entire timeline of the ActEU public opinion survey from its starting point in March 2023 until June 2024. Based on this timeline, the following section seeks to describe briefly the most relevant steps in more detail.

Figure 4 The timeline of the ActEU public opinion survey



03-07 (2023)
- Finding a survey company: Comparative offer and contract with IPSOS
- Ethics board
- USAAR started preparing the first version of the ActEU questionnaire based on the ActEU concept

07-11 (2023)
- Finalizing questionnaire within the core team
- Integration of focus group insights
- Measure refinements of questions with ActEU members of the consortium
- Separate exchange meetings between core team and all relevant members of the consortium
- Development of the vignette and conjoint experiment

11-02 (2023)
- Running some (cognitive) pretests of the master questionnaire
- Translation and country-specific adaption of the questionnaires by ActEU members of the consortium
- Coordinating and guiding the translation and adaptation of the ActEU master questionnaire

02-04 (2024)
- Programming of the ActEU master questionnaire (IPSOS)
- Testing the ActEU master questionnaire
- Field work 14.04.-29.05.
- Starting the registration of hypotheses for the experimental part of the ActEU survey

05-06 (2024)
- Registration of hypotheses for the experimental part of the ActEU survey
- Data cleaning (IPSOS)
- Preparation of codebook and data set of the experimental survey (D1.3)
- Internal data release within the ActEU consortium
- Quality checks (to be continued until public data release)

2.3.1 Steps before the design of the questionnaire

In the first months of the project, we were mainly refining the ActEU concept to make it ready for the operationalization of the survey items (*see Sections 2.1 and 2.2*). However, we not only worked conceptually, but also set up all relevant administrative steps to make a cross-country public opinion survey possible: First, to comply with USAAR internal guidelines, we prepared an open call for tender to recruit a survey agency to run the survey. We have received two proposals from different survey agencies and selected the one with the better fit to run the ActEU survey. Moreover, we applied with the USAAR ethics board, to get the approval to run the ActEU survey.

2.3.2 Questionnaire design of the master survey

The ActEU questionnaire was developed using a combination of established survey instruments and original survey items. For collecting sociodemographic variables or attitudinal questions that are not central to the ActEU project, we adopted well-tested operationalizations from ongoing survey projects like the *European Social Survey* or similar studies. In contrast, we designed several item batteries and two survey experiments ourselves. All newly developed survey items were pretested internally within the project and, in some cases, were also tested in smaller pilot studies for external validation. Such a pilot study was for instance carried out for the trust and legitimacy item battery.

The questionnaire is structured as follows: All respondents begin with the same welcome text, which outlines the topic of the questionnaire, addresses data privacy, and indicates the estimated duration of the survey. This is followed by questions on sociodemographic variables. The subsequent sections cover topics central to ActEU's research interests, including common questions on general political positions and detailed question batteries on migration, gender, and the environment – the three polarizing topics identified by ActEU. This section is followed by questions on media usage, which are crucial for linking survey data with ActEU's web scraping efforts. Afterward, respondents are asked about various forms of political participation. Following the political participation section, the questionnaire shifts focus to political trust, a core concept of the project. This section incorporates both well-established survey instruments and innovative item batteries developed based on insights from the ActEU focus groups. The questionnaire then addresses political representation and affective polarization, particularly concerning gender, age, and education.

To conclude, the questionnaire includes two survey experiments: first, a vignette experiment exploring political participation by examining different forms and initiating actors; and second, a conjoint experiment focusing on various politician profiles. This structured approach ensures comprehensive data collection on key topics relevant to ActEU's research interests, facilitating a thorough analysis of political attitudes and behaviors within the European context.

2.3.3 Involved partners and countries: Survey task force and additional partners

The questionnaire was developed by a core team of scientists from the ActEU project. This survey task force was led by Ann-Kathrin Reinl (USAAR), Daniela Braun (USAAR), and Alexander Hartland (USAAR), and complemented by Henrik Serup Christensen (AAU) and Laura Morales (CISC). The survey task force discussed in several online meetings in depth the structure of the questionnaire as well as the wording of each question newly developed for ActEU. Additionally, members of the individual work packages designed variables that are central to addressing their specific research questions themselves. In these cases, survey task force members held individual meetings with other ActEU consortium members to discuss and refine their created survey items. *Table 1* gives an overview of these latter questions and the involvement of other ActEU consortium members. This overview shows that almost the entire ActEU consortium was involved in one or various steps to be taken from the design of the survey to the start of the fieldwork period (drafting questions for the questionnaire, translation of the questionnaires, checking the online survey).

Table 1 Survey design in the ActEU consortium

Concepts	Survey questions	ActEU consortium members
Political participation	Traditional forms of participation	ActEU survey taskforce: AAU/ CSIC/ USAAR
	Social media activities	UCL
	Mobilization (Vignette experiment)	USAAR
Political trust	Trust and legitimacy item battery	UDE/ USAAR
	Trust (Conjoint experiment)	AAU/ CSIC
Political representation	Representation in parliament	PLUS
	Symbolic representation	CSIC/ PLUS
	Emotions towards parliament	PLUS/ CSIC
Political polarization	Affective issue polarization: Environment I & II	USAAR
	Affective issue polarization: Gender I & II	USAAR
	Affective issue polarization: Immigration I & II	USAAR
Migration	Citizenship I - IV	CSIC
	Place of birth	CSIC

	Citizenship mother & father	CSIC
	Time living in a country	CSIC
	Group identity	CSIC
	Attitudes towards migration I - III	CSIC
Gender	Attitudes towards gender I & II	PLUS
Environment	Attitudes towards environment	UNITN/ USAAR

The final version of the master questionnaire that has been sent in December 2023 to all relevant members of the ActEU consortium for the translation of the survey can be found in *Appendix A* to this document. Since smaller changes (e.g., in the wording of some items or scales) have been introduced right before as well as during the fieldwork of the ActEU survey, we might detect some smaller inconsistencies during the next months when working internally (i.e., within the group of members of the ActEU consortium) with the data set. This procedure will guarantee in turn high quality for the final – the public – release of the data in spring 2025.

3 Translation of the ActEU survey

This section will give an overview on the translation procedure and translation guidelines to show the way from the master questionnaire to a questionnaire in the following ten different country-specific versions: Czech, Danish, Finish, French, German (Germany), German (Austria), Greek, Italian, Polish, Spanish.

3.1 Translation procedure

The translation stage was critical to ensure that the collected data was consistent across countries. Special attention was also paid to country-specific terminology and its correct translation in the country questionnaire. The priority was to ensure cultural equivalence. This ensured that the data collected was valid and comparable across countries. Before sending the translated master questionnaires to the survey agency for a final review, the following steps were taken:

- Summary of timeline for translation:
    - 20.12.2023: USAAR has sent out the English master questionnaire as well as some general guidelines for translation to all involved partners
    - 20.12.2023 – 26.01.2024: Country teams translate the questionnaire into their respective languages
    - Deadline – 26.01.2024: Submission of final version of the country-specific questionnaire as well as the excel file including country-specific information
    - 29.01.-02.02.2024: finalization of all questionnaires including quality checks by USAAR team (based on a check list) to be sent out in the next step to IPSOS
    - 12.02.-16.02. review translations (by all country teams)
    - February/ March 2024:
        - Implementation and link check for all country teams (by all country teams)
        - Finally, before the start of the fieldwork, linguists from the translation team also checked the survey in each language after programming. Last revisions have been introduced in consultation with the national country teams of the ActEU consortium.

3.2 Translation guidelines

Table 2 displays the involved national country teams of the ActEU consortium in the translation and adaptation of the master questionnaire to the different countries and languages.

Table 2 Translation of the ActEU survey

Language/ Country	Main responsibility	Additional support
France	CSIC + ICL	
Spain	CSIC + ICL	
Italy	ICL	UNITN
Germany	USAAR	UDE
Austria	USAAR	PLUS
Czech Republic	IIR	
Poland	SWPS	
Denmark	AAU	
Finland	AAU	
Greece	AUTH	PLUS

The country teams in charge of the translation received together with the master questionnaire the following specific guidelines to guarantee high quality as well as cross-country comparability.

- General rule: We use in this questionnaire both newly developed questions and experiments as well as already established items.
  - For the newly developed questions and experiments please do the translations yourselves.
  - For the existing items, please use the already tested translations which are publicly available from each of the sources (e.g., from the European Social Survey; e.g., "Current employment" – [Source: ESS 2020]).
  - Important note to reduce workload: There is no need to translate the subheadings, names of individual items, programming notes.
  - For country-specific deviations in question wording, the country-specific excel file needs to be used.
- Rule for use of existing items:
  - For apparently existing items, check carefully, that the question as well as the existing answers fully correspond in their meaning and are complete, as there may be some that look similar but do not match to 100 percent. In cases like that you need to adapt the translation in order for it to match our survey items.
  - Please pay particular attention to the wording in Q4 (Income Group). The Excel file includes wording related to cards, which would be used in a face-to-face interview. As our survey will be fielded online, this wording should be removed from the question. In case it helps, the English wording for this question is as follows: "What is your household's total monthly income, after tax and compulsory deductions, from all sources? If you don't know the exact figure, please give an estimate."
  - Be careful about the answers: Although you may find an existing translation of the question item, our choice of answers may differ (e.g., answers to question 5a.). Always check the answer possibilities.
  - In some cases, there might be questions/ answers that do not exist exactly in the ESS or EVS files but can be combined from parts of different questions/ answers in those files (e.g., question item number 20). If you get your

    translation out of the combination of different questions/ answers, be careful not to get distracted from the original ActEU survey items.
  - It may happen, that the ESS-corresponding items are not available yet, although indicated otherwise. In that case you need to translate the item.
- Final remarks: Make sure to check the consistency of the following:
  - use of capitalization in the choice of answers is consistent,
  - use of punctuation,
  - use gendered language throughout the survey (it is important to use the most appropriate form of gendered language; for the German case we decided to go for example for “Bürgerinnen und Bürger” instead of “Bürger*innen” as a gendered translation for citizens),
  - check the numbering within the survey document,
  - check carefully that names of institutions, references to habits, norms and country specifics are in line with the actual reality in your country,
  - finalize your country-specific questionnaire with a revision by a native-speaker,
  - In order for the participants not to stumble and get distracted by odd formulations, make sure that the items published in the survey are easy to understand, light in reading and worded in a way that goes along with a native speaker’s perceptions.
  - Final quality checks should be done in the following way:
    - read it critically and with a distance of some days after you finished the translation,
    - have it test-read by a person that has not been involved in the translation process until then. Ideally, you would foresee another partner of the consortium or your team for this task (for Germany, for example, we had the following translation strategy to guarantee a high-quality translation: 1) Translation by team members; 2) First “internal” review of the translation by other team members; 3) Second “external” review by other partners of the consortium (UDE team).

4 Survey fieldwork and technical details of the ActEU survey

Survey fieldwork has been conducted by Ipsos using *Computer Assisted Online Interviews* via the Ipsos Online Access Panel, included participants in ten countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain). In line with the conceptual considerations, described at length above, the research aimed to gain insights into political attitudes, behaviour, and representation in Europe, specifically focusing on determining European citizens’ trust during times of crises and polarization.

To guarantee the highest quality of the ActEU survey, in particular before, but also during fieldwork, the survey agency and USAAR were in intense exchange and dealt with all relevant questions (major decisions have been taken together with the ActEU survey task force). While the survey was in the field or in preparation for fieldwork, different groups of ActEU members of the consortium pre-registered the experimental parts survey, namely the vignette experiment, the conjoint experiment as well as the trust & legitimacy item battery. In the following, the most important technical details of the ActEU survey are listed (for a more detailed overview, please see *Appendix B*):

- Sampling
  - Sample Size: Total of 13,000 interviews, 1,300 interviews per country

  - The target population was all residents of Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain aged 18 to 75 years with access to the internet.
  - The sample was drawn from the Ipsos Online Panels by quota selection according to the characteristics of age, gender, region, and education
- Fieldwork
  - Speeding and straight-lining detection was included
  - Average length of the survey: Median: 23 min
  - After the soft launch of the survey, it appeared that the actual questionnaire length exceeded the estimated questionnaire length. Therefore, the field had to be paused between 16th of April and 30th of April 2024 to agree on cutbacks from the questionnaire. In line with this, nine questions were deleted completely and in four questions, separate items were deleted (see respective comments in *Appendix A*).
  - Fieldwork period 15.04.2024 – 29.05.2024
- Weighing
  - Since losses in samples do not spread evenly across all population strata, the structure of the unweighted sample regularly and systematically deviates from the population structure as obtained by official data (source: Eurostat).
  - By weighting the structure of the unweighted sample, it was adjusted to the official data. The variables gender, age, region, and education were used to calculate the weighting factors.

5 Internal release of the data and codebook and next steps

5.1 Internal release of data and codebook/technical survey

After USAAR has received the data from the survey agency IPSOS, we made it immediately available to all members of the ActEU consortium. The ActEU data set (Stata data file), the codebook/technical report as well as the additionally relevant information on the data set (overview of variables in all languages; overview on open answers; weighting report) can be accessed via the password-protected Sciebo platform by all members of the ActEU consortium:

Sciebo: https://uni-duisburg-essen.sciebo.de/s/KvZA3Mbhg5yIKeY

Password: JfgT79Sae

Note: The link and password will be removed in the publication of the report.

The ActEU survey data and the additional information mentioned above is in a first step internally released within the ActEU consortium to allow all researchers to run a number of cross-country as well as country-specific quality checks of the data. This is a very important step to guarantee the high quality of the ActEU survey data which will be made available to the public. The codebook/technical summary of the ActEU survey will be attached to this deliverable in *Appendix B*.

5.2 Data quality checks

Following the data collection by IPSOS Germany, the data underwent several quality checks by the survey institute to identify errors, ensuring its readiness for analysis. Upon receiving the final dataset, including all translated questionnaires and weighting variables, we conducted further quality assessments. These quality checks adhere to best practice guidelines in survey methodology. Here are the steps we specifically took to assess the quality of our collected survey data:

- We tested whether the same number of respondents was interviewed per country. This was indeed the case.
- We assessed whether the agreed quotas were met for all countries. If not, we verified the weighting variables provided by the survey institute.
- We systematically evaluated each survey item for instances of missing data. In cases where the frequency of missing responses was notably elevated, we will engage in internal discussions to explore potential rationales behind the observed trends. In certain cases, there were fewer responses to sensitive questions (such as inquiries about income), or to specific questions regarding different political levels.
- We conducted tests on all filter questions in the questionnaire to ensure that the intended groups were surveyed through the respective activated filters. Our testing confirmed that all filters had been correctly implemented.

5.3 The way towards the external release (GESIS Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences)

The USAAR team will work on a final version of both the ActEU data set and the codebook to be published in spring 2025. The data can then be used by all interested researchers without any restrictions. Hence, in accordance with the Open Science practices and the so-called FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Re-usable) principles, we will make both our questionnaires and codebooks as well as the collected data available to the general public only a few months after data collection (after cleaning the data and preparing the materials for archiving). This will be done in cooperation with GESIS Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. We are planning to hand over our data for archiving to the GESIS Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences in fall 2024. There, our data will undergo another round of error checking and will be published alongside a codebook and all translated questionnaires. We plan to release the data with a six-month embargo. During this period, project members will have the opportunity to conduct analyses before making them freely accessible to all interested parties.

Appendix A: English master questionnaire for the ActEU survey

This version of the English master questionnaire for the ActEU survey is a slightly updated version that has been sent out to all involved members of the ActEU consortium for translation in December 2023. Between December 2023 and the start of fieldwork the questionnaire has been slightly adapted; the translation teams where informed about these changes. Moreover, as mentioned above, after the soft launch of the survey, it appeared that the actual questionnaire length exceeded the estimated questionnaire length. Therefore, nine questions were deleted completely and in four questions, separate items were deleted. Since the internal release of the ActEU data set includes responses to these questions, these questions are also kept, but highlighted, in the English master questionnaire.

Welcome text

This survey is part of the Horizon Europe-funded research project *ActEU*, in which we aim to learn about the views of the public on democratic institutions and political actors in Europe. No prior knowledge is required to participate in the survey.

Participation in the survey is voluntary. By participating, you agree that your data will be analysed and published for scientific purposes. Research purposes include, for example, the use in scientific publications and lectures as well as the unrestricted provision of the data to other researchers. Your answers will be processed and stored anonymously. The protection of your anonymity is of utmost importance, which means that your answers can never be traced back to you as a person.

If you accept this, please click on “next” to start the survey. Please be aware that you are free to stop at any later moment.

It will take you about 15 minutes to answer the questions.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions about the content of the survey *(DE-PA-acteu@ipsos.com)*.

[Programming note: Respondents are not allowed to skip questions]

Socio-demographics

First, we would like to ask you some questions about where you live and about yourself to better understand who responds to this survey.

1. Region

   In which region do you live? [*Programming note: drop-down menu listing the relevant NUTS 1/2 regions; separate excel file*]

2. Age

   How old are you? ____________

   Prefer not to say

3. Education *[Source: ESS 2020; separate excel file]*

   What is the highest level of education you have successfully completed?

   Prefer not to say

4. Income group *[Source: ESS 2020; CRONOS; separate excel file]*

   Prefer not to say

5. Current employment *[Source: ESS 2020]*

   Which of these descriptions applies to what you have been doing for the last 7 days? Select all that apply.

   1. in paid work (or away temporarily) (employee, self-employed, working for your family business)
   2. in education (not paid for by employer) even if on vacation
   3. unemployed and actively looking for a job
   4. unemployed, wanting a job but not actively looking for a job
   5. permanently sick or disabled
   6. retired
   7. in community or military service
   8. doing housework, looking after children or other persons
   9. other
   10. Prefer not to say

   [Source for 5a to 5g: they are adapted, for shorter administration, from ESS questions that follow on from the Current Employment question 5 above]

   [Programming note: ask 5a if not in paid work currently: values 2 – 10 in Q5)

   5a. Have you ever been in paid work in the past?

   1. No
   2. Yes, at some point in the last 2 years
   3. Yes, more than 2 years ago but within the last 5 years
   4. Yes, more than 5 years ago

5. Prefer not to say

[Programming note: Ask 5b only if currently unemployed: answers 3 and 4 in Q5] 5b. How long have you been unemployed?

1. For less than 6 months
2. Between 6 months and a year
3. Between one year and two years
4. For more than two years
5. Prefer not to say

[Programming note: Ask 5c if in paid work or retired currently – answers 1 and 6 in Q5 – or in paid work in the past – answers 2-4 in Q5a]

5c. In your main job (are/were) you… *[Source: ESS all rounds, with small modifications to combine with sector, also included in ESS]*

1. An employee in the private sector
2. An employee in the public sector
3. Self-employed
4. Working for your own family's business
5. Prefer not to say

[Programming note: Ask 5d if in paid work or retired currently – answers 1 and 6 in Q5 – or in paid work in the past – answers 2-4 in Q5a]

5d. What (is/was) the name or title of your main job and what kind of work (do/did) you do most of the time? *[Source: ESS 2020, F33 & F34 combined]*

(Type in)_________________

Prefer not to say

[Programming note: Ask 5e if in paid work or retired currently – answers 1 and 6 in Q5 – or in paid work in the past – answers 2-4 in Q5a AND employee or in family business – answers 1, 2 & 4 in 5c]

5e. (Do/Did) you have a work contract of… *[Source: ESS rounds 4-10]*

1. Unlimited duration
2. Limited duration
3. You (have/had) no contract
4. Prefer not to say

[Programming note: Ask 5f if in paid work or retired currently – answers 1 and 6 in Q5 – or in paid work in the past – answers 2-4 in Q5a]

5f. (Do/Did) you work…

1. Part-time because I preferred a part-time job
2. Part-time because I had no other choice
3. Full-time because I preferred a full-time job
4. Full-time because I had no other choice

5. Prefer not to say

[Programming note: Ask 5g to all except if permanently sick/disabled or retired – answers 5 & 6 in Q5]

5g. In your view, to what extent is (your job / the job you would be looking for) exposed to international competition, globalization or the international economic situation?

1. Very exposed
2. Quite exposed
3. Somewhat exposed
4. Not at all exposed
5. I am not planning to be in paid work
6. Prefer not to say

[Programming note: Ask 5h to all except if permanently sick/disabled or retired – answers 5 & 6 in Q5]

5h. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? *[Source: Paul Marx survey with YouGov 2014]*

I will be unemployed at some point in the three years to come.

1. Agree strongly
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Prefer not to say

6. Make ends meet *[Source: ESS 2020, modified to reflect the loss of income question by Raul Gomez, Luis Ramiro, Yann Le Lann, Giuseppe Cugnata & Jaime Aja; Economic and Work Insecurity and Vote for Radical Parties Survey 2019]*

Which of these descriptions comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays?

1. Living comfortably on present income and not worried about my income in the next 3 years
2. Living comfortably on present income but concerned about suffering a loss income at some point in the next 3 years
3. Coping on present income and not worried about my income in the next 3 years
4. Coping on present income but concerned about suffering a loss income at some point in the next 3 years
5. Finding it difficult on present income
6. Finding it very difficult on present income
7. Prefer not to say

7. Care Question *[Source: ISSP 2022 - Family and Changing Gender Roles V - O 31]*

Do you provide help or care to family member(s) who may or may not be living in your household, on a daily basis?

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
Child(ren) below school age			
Child(ren) of school age, up to 18 years			
Elderly person(s)			
Long term sick/disabled person(s)			
Other person(s)			

8. Place of residence *[Source: ESS 2020 with our additions of number of inhabitants following Eurostat criteria]*

Which phrase best describes the area where you live?

1. A big city (more than 100,000)
2. Suburbs or outskirts of a big city
3. A town (50,000-100,000)
4. A small city (less than 50,000)
5. A country village
6. A farm or home in the countryside
7. Prefer not to say

9. Gender I *[Source: Team Salzburg]*

Are you...?

1. A woman
2. A man
3. Non-binary
4. Other --> Please specify
5. Prefer not to say

10. Gender II *[Source: Team Salzburg]*

And what was the sex assigned to you at birth?

1. Woman
2. Man
3. Prefer not to say

11. Citizenship I *[Source: Localmultidem surveys] [Programming note: filter question]*

Are you a citizen of [country]?

1. Yes *[Programming note: go to 12]*
2. No *[Programming note: go to 12a]*
3. Prefer not to say *[Programming note: go to 13]*

12. Citizenship II *[Source: Localmultidem surveys] [Programming note: filter question]*

Do you hold other citizenships/passports?

1. Yes *[Programming note: go to 12a]*
2. No *[Programming note: go to 12b]*
3. Prefer not to say *[Programming note: go to 12b]*

12a. Citizenship III *[Source: Localmultidem surveys] [Programming note: filter question]*

Which citizenships/passports do you hold?

Country list coded with ISO 3166-1 & 3166-3 (for the case of countries that no longer exist but where respondents may have been born, e.g., Yugoslavia, USSR, etc.)

Prefer not to say

12b. Citizenship III *[Source: Localmultidem surveys] [Programming note: filter question]*

Were you a citizen of [country] since birth or did you obtain citizenship later in life?

1. I have been a [country] citizen since birth
2. I obtained [country] citizenship later in life
3. Prefer not to say

13. Place of birth, parents *[Source: Localmultidem surveys] [Programming note: filter question]*

Were both of your parents citizens of [country] since birth?

1. Yes
2. No, neither were citizens of [country] since birth [*Programming note: go to 13a, then 13b]*
3. No, my mother was not a citizen of [country] since birth *[Programming note: go to 13a, then 14]*
4. No, my father was not a citizen of [country] since birth *[Programming note: go to 13b, then 14]*
5. Prefer not to say *[Programming note: go to 14]*

13a. Citizenship, mother *[Source: Localmultidem surveys] [Programming note: filter question]*

What was the citizenship/passport since birth of your mother?

Response = Country list coded with ISO 3166-1 & 3166-3 (for the case of countries that no longer exist but where respondents may have been born, e.g., Yugoslavia, USSR, etc.)

Prefer not to say

13b. Citizenship, father *[Source: Localmultidem surveys] [Programming note: filter question]*

What was the citizenship/passport since birth of your father?

Response: Country list coded with ISO 3166-1 & 3166-3 (for the case of countries that no longer exist but where respondents may have been born, e.g., Yugoslavia, USSR, etc.)

Prefer not to say

14. Time living in a country *[Source: Localmultidem surveys]*

For how many years have you lived in [country]?

1. All my life
2. (drop down menu) _ _ years
3. Less than 1 year

Prefer not to say

15. Group identity *[Source: FRA surveys with modifications] [Programming note: randomize item order of first seven categories; create a box where the respondents can select the respective items]*

Do you consider yourself to be part of any of the following? (Read all options and select all that apply)

A minority based on skin colour	
A linguistic minority	
A religious minority	
People with disabilities or impairments	
People of migrant descent	
LGBTI+	
The economically disadvantaged in society	
Other minority group [Open text space for "Which?"]	
None of the above	
Prefer not to say	

Transition to substantive questions

Now we will ask you about your views about politics and public life.

16. Left-right self-placement *[Source: European Social Survey 2020]*

In politics people sometimes talk of "left" and "right". Where would you place yourself on this scale?

Answer scale: 0: Left – 10: Right. Don't know

17. GAL-TAN *[Source: European Social Survey 2020 + Stolle & Micheletti on Political Consumerism] [Programming note: randomize item order]*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Answer scale: 0: strongly disagree – 10: strongly agree. Don't know

1. The government should increase taxes on fossil fuels, such as oil, gas and coal to reduce climate change.

2. Gay male and lesbian couples should have the same rights to adopt children as straight couples.

3. Obedience and respect for authority are the most important values children should learn.

18. Migration I *[Source: ESS questions, most rounds, including ESS10 = imbgeco]*

Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries?

Answer scale: 0: Bad for economy – 10: Good for economy. Don't know

19. Migration II *[Source: ESS questions, most rounds, including ESS10 =imbwbcnt]*

Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?

Answer scale: 0: Worse place to live – 10: Better place to live. Don't know

20. Migration III *[Source: ESS questions, most rounds, including ESS10 =imdfetn]*

To what extent do you think [country] should allow people of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people to come and live here?

1. Allow many to come and live here
2. Allow some
3. Allow a few
4. Allow none

Don't know

21. Gender *[Source: Team Salzburg from ESS module on Support for Gender Equality Policies with small adaptations] [Programming note: randomize item order]*

Do you think that each of the following measures has gone too far or not far enough in your country?

Answer scale: 0: Gone too far – 10: Not far enough. Don't know

1. Measures that ensure equal pay for men and women
2. Measures against sexual harassment in the workplace
3. Measures to ensure parity between men and women in politics
4. Measures that target gender-based violence
5. Measures that target the distribution of household chores and childcare (e.g. paternal leave)
6. Measures that ensure access to the voluntary interruption of pregnancy

22. Environment *[Source: Team Saarland] [Programming note: randomize item order]*

Opinions on climate change and environmental protection differ widely. Please tell us how much you personally agree or disagree with the following statements.

Answer scale: 0: strongly disagree – 10: strongly agree. Don't know

1. Claims that human activities are changing the climate are exaggerated.
2. I would be willing to decrease my personal level of consumption to actively fight climate change.
3. Climate protection measures need to be implemented, regardless of cost.
4. There are other, more pressing issues in [country] than environmental protection.
5. Climate change is just an excuse for politicians to further restrict our freedom.

23. European integration *[Source: European Social Survey 2020]*

Now thinking about the European Union, some say European unification should go further. Others say it has already gone too far. What number in this scale best describes your position?

Answer scale: 0: Unification has already gone too far – 10: Unification should go further. Don't know

24. European integration, policy fields *[Source: Survey taskforce]*

And now thinking about European unification in different policy fields. Some say that European unification should go further in some policy fields. Others say it has already gone too far. What number in this scale best describes your position regarding the following three policy fields?

Answer scale: 0: Unification has already gone too far – 10: Unification should go further. Don't know

1. Border control and the management of immigration
2. Climate change mitigation
3. Equality between men and women

25. Identity questions *[Source: European Social Survey 2020 + Team Saarland] [Translation note: use the appropriate term for the local level in your country).*

How emotionally attached do you feel to….

Answer scale: 0: not at all emotionally attached – 10: very emotionally attached. Don't know

1. the city/municipality you currently live in?
2. [NUTS region selected in Q1]?
3. [country]?
4. Europe?

26. Interpersonal trust *[Source: BES 2014-2024]*

Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

Answer scale: 0: you can't be too careful – 10: most people can be trusted. Don't know

27. Media usage

a. On a typical day, about how much time do you spend on each of these activities…? Please give your answer in hours and minutes. If no time spent, enter 00 00. _ _(hours) _ _ (minutes). Don't know *[Source: ESS 2020]*

   i. …watching, reading or listening to news about politics and current affairs?

   ii. …using the internet on a computer, tablet, smartphone or other device, whether for work or personal use?

   iii. …using social media on a computer, tablet, smartphone or other device, whether for work or personal use?

b. What are the **two** media you use most often to inform yourself about politics? Don't know *[Source: Survey taskforce]*

[Programming note: randomize item order of items 1-7; respondents can select max. 2]

1. The radio
2. Podcasts
3. Television
4. Printed press or newspapers
5. Online press or news sites
6. Public social networks (X (Twitter), Facebook, etc.)
7. Private social networks (WhatsApp, Messenger, etc.
8. None

28. Political interest *[Source: ESS 2020]*

How interested would you say you are in politics – are you…

Answer scale: 4: not at all interested; 3: hardly interested; 2: quite interested; 1: very interested. Don't know

Political participation

29. Associational membership question

[Source: ESS 2002, round 1, which is a reduced version of the CID questionnaire led by van Deth, Montero & Westholm. Further reduced by the ActEU survey taskforce]

For each of the following types of voluntary organisations, please select which, if any, of these things apply to you now or in the last 12 months. Select all that applies for each row.

	I am / was a member	I participated in activities	I donated money	I did voluntary work	I have not been involved in any form	Don't know
A sports club or a club for out-door or recreation activities						
An organisation for cultural, arts, music or hobby activities						
A trade union						
A business, professional or farmers' organisation						
An organisation for minorities, migrants or refugees						
An organisation for peace, humanitarian aid, human rights or charitable activities						
An organisation for conservation, environmental protection or animal rights						
A religious organisation (beyond attending religious services)						
A political party						

An organisation for science, education or teachers and parents						
A women's and/or feminist organisation						
Any other voluntary organisation --> Which? *[Programming note: open question]*						

30. Forms of participation, traditional forms

[Source: ESS 2002, with adjustments by ActEU survey taskforce] *[Programming note: the column on online engagement should only show up if they say Yes to any of the items. Alternatively, if it's simpler for programming, the subset of items with a yes can appear on the next screen with the question on online engagement.]*

[Translation Note: Make sure the wording is clear, it is not only about participating in these activities directly, but also about organising, commenting, promoting, discussing these activities online "in any way"]

There are different ways of trying to improve things in [country] or help prevent things from going wrong. During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following?

	Have you done any of the following?			Did you use online platforms or social media in any way for this activity?		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
Contacted a politician, government or local government official						
Worn or displayed a campaign badge/sticker						
Attended electoral or political debates, rallies, meetings or other political campaign events						

Signed a petition						
Taken part in a public demonstration						
Participated in a strike						
Boycotted certain products						
Deliberately bought certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons						
Participated in unauthorised protest activities						

31. Social media activities *[Source: Team Lille]*

[Programming note: randomize item order of first eight rows. We display the question below in tabular form but the easiest visual implementation is probably to have one screen per social media (the item rows in the table below) and two vertical sliders for each social media with the labels on the right. This will avoid respondents having to scroll down.]

How often, if at all, do you post or comment about politics on any of these social media, and how often do you share or react to posts about politics in the same social media?

	Post or comment on the social media platform					Share or react to posts on the social media platform				
	Yes, often	Yes, sometimes	Never, but I have an account	Never, I don't have an account	Don't know	Yes, often	Yes, sometimes	Never, but I have an account	Never, I don't have an account	Don't know
Facebook										
X (Twitter)										
WhatsApp channels/ Messenger channels/Telegram										
YouTube										
Instagram										

Snapchat										
TikTok										
Twitch										
Other: ___										

32. **Voting/ Party preferences** *[Source: European Election Study 2019] [Translation note: Maximum of 10 parties. These parties need to be represented in the national parliament. More than 10 parties allowed if a party has a least two seats in the national parliament; separate excel file]*

We have a number of parties in [country], each of which would like to get your vote. How probable is it that you will ever vote for the following parties?

Answer scale: 0: not at all probable - 10: very probable. Don't know

Party 1

Party 2

Party 3

Party 4

Party 5

Party 6

Party 7

Party 8

Party 9

Party 10

Other:____

33. **Participating in various elections** *[Source: EVS 2017]*

When elections take place, do you vote always, usually or never? Please indicate separately for each of the following levels.

Answer scale: Always; usually; never; not eligible to vote; Don't know.

1. Local level
2. Regional/state level *[Translation note: where applicable – for programming after country expert determination]*
3. National/federal level
4. Some countries: Presidential elections
5. European Parliament level

Political Trust

34. **Satisfaction political system** *[Source: EVS 2017, with change to 0-10 scale]*

    How satisfied are you with how the political system is functioning in your country these days?

    Answer scale: 0: not satisfied at all – 10: completely satisfied. Don't know

35. **Importance democracy** *[Source: EVS 2017, with change to 0-10 scale; also ESS 2020]*

    How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?

    Answer scale: 0: not at all important - 10: absolutely important. Don't know

36. **Democracy rating** *[Source: EVS 2017, with change to 0-10 scale]*

    And how democratically is this country being governed today?

    Answer scale: 0: not at all democratic – 10: completely democratic. Don't know

37. **Trust and legitimacy items from focus groups** *[Source: USAAR] [Programming notes: A) randomize item order of first twelve items (this means the current items 1-12), B) use split samples in the case of the first twelve items for the information in brackets: i.e. ¼ of the respondents will see the item for local level, ¼ of the respondents will see the item for regional level, ¼ of the respondents will see the item for national level, ¼ of the respondents will see the item for EU level; in countries where only local or regional level applies the split sample will follow the rule 1/3 – 1/3 – 1/3] [Translation note: drop regional level if it does not apply to your country]*

    Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

    Answer scale: 0: strongly disagree – 10: strongly agree. Don't know

    1. *[Local / Regional / National / European]* MPs follow the rules. *[translation note: include name of local / regional / national parliament. Country experts need to decide where it makes sense to ask for the regional level]*
    2. *[Local / Regional / National / European MPs]* distort the facts to make policies look good.
    3. *[Local / Regional / National / European MPs']* work is open and transparent.
    4. *[Local / Regional / National / European MPs]* try to achieve good things.
    5. *[Local / Regional / National / European MPs]* want to do their best to serve the country.
    6. *[Local / Regional / National / European MPs]* understand the needs of my community.
    7. I am uncertain whether or not *[local / regional / national / European MPs]* care about people like me.
    8. I am unsure if *[local / regional / national / European MPs]* try to make things better or worse.
    9. I am not sure how effective *[local / regional / national / European MPs]* are.
    10. I am unsure whether to believe most *[local / regional / national / European MPs].*
    11. *[Local / Regional / National / European MPs]* take too long to do anything.
    12. *[Local / Regional / National / European MPs]* make things worse.

13. I can have an influence on politics.
14. It doesn't matter who you vote for, politicians do whatever they want.
15. I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country.

38. Traditional trust question *[Source: Survey taskforce] [Programming note: randomize item order][Translation note: Country experts need to decide where it makes sense to ask for the local/regional level; Adaptation of names to the standard national designation]*

How much do you trust the following institutions and actors?

Answer scale: 0: no trust at all – 10: fully trust. Don't know

1. Your municipality's parliament *[translation note: name of local parliament]*
2. Your region's parliament *[translation note: name of regional parliament]*
3. Your country's parliament *[translation note: name of national parliament]*
4. Your country's government
5. Regional level politicians
6. National level politicians
7. EU politicians
8. Political parties currently in government (national level)
9. Political parties currently in opposition (national level)
10. The European Parliament
11. The European Commission

Representation

39. Representation in parliament *[Source: Team Salzburg]*

[Translation note: Country experts need to decide where it makes sense to ask for the regional level]

We are now showing you some statements about legislators and parliaments. For each of those statements, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with them.

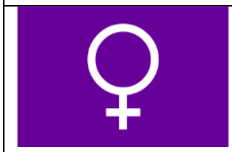
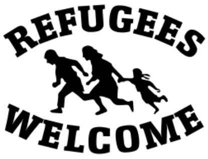
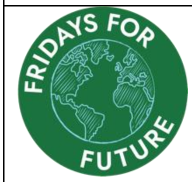
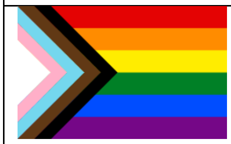
Answer scale: vertical Slider "thermometer" with Strongly Disagree 0-10 Strongly Agree; Don't know

1. [Regional legislators] bring what is important for me to the political agenda
2. [Regional legislators] look like me
3. The [Regional parliament] produces policies that benefit people like me (check finally selected trust items for any repetition)
4. [National legislators] bring what is important for me to the political agenda
5. [National legislators] look like me
6. The [National parliament] produces policies that benefit people like me
7. [European Parliament legislators] bring what is important for me to the political agenda
8. [European Parliament legislators] look like me
9. The [European Parliament] produces policies that benefit people like me

40. **Symbolic representation** *[Source: New Salzburg/WP4 Sciences Po team] [Translation note: Please provide translated flag images for "refugees welcome" and "Fridays for future" extracted from Creative Commons sources]*

Below, we present you with four flags. Please use the slider to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the local and national parliaments displaying these flags on their façades to show their support with each of these causes.

Answer scale: slider between 0: completely disagree – 10: completely agree. Don't know

Flag	Local council / assembly	National parliament	I don't recognise this flag
			
			
			
			

41. **Emotions towards parliaments** *[Source: New Salzburg/WP4 Sciences Po team] [Translation note: Country experts need to decide where it makes sense to ask for the regional level]*

When listening or reading on the news about recent debates in your regional parliament, how does it make you feel?

When listening or reading on the news about recent debates in the national parliament, how does it make you feel?

When listening or reading on the news about recent debates in the European parliament, how does it make you feel?

[Programming note: 1 question plus 8 adjectives per screen. On each screen, 6 vertical slider scales from top= Extremely + adjective to bottom = Not at all + adjective. Values are 0-100 and continuous; Add "Don't know" option.]

Adjectives = Hopeful, proud, worried, scared, angry, upset, confident, satisfied.

Polarizing issues

42. Most important issue *[Source: BES 2014-2024; adapted to 3 issues]*

As far as you're concerned, what are the three most important issues facing [country] at the present time?

1st most important issue: _____________ (open response)

2nd most important issue: _____________ (open response)

3rd most important issue: _____________ (open response)

Don't know

43. Affective issue polarization: Environment [*Source: Ann-Kathrin, Andres Reiljan, Survey taskforce]*

Issues related to climate change invoke divergent feelings among people. On the one hand, there are those who believe that climate change is driven by human actions. On the other hand, there are also people who deny that climate change is driven by human actions. Into which group would you place yourself?

1. People who believe that climate change is driven by human actions
2. People who deny that climate change is driven by human actions
3. Neither

Don't know

44. Affective issue polarization: Environment II [*Source: Ann-Kathrin, Andres Reiljan, Survey taskforce]*

What are your feelings towards these groups of people? (-5 very negative – +5 very positive; Don't know)

People who believe that climate change is driven by human actions

People who deny that climate change is driven by human actions

45. Affective issue polarization: Gender [*Source: Ann-Kathrin, Andres Reiljan, Survey taskforce]*

Issues related to equality between men and women invoke divergent feelings among people. On the one hand, there are those who defend feminist ideals of equality between men and women. On the other hand, there are also people who oppose feminist ideals of equality between men and women. Into which group would you place yourself?

a. People defending feminist ideals

b. People opposing feminist ideals

c. Neither

Don't know

46. Affective issue polarization: Gender II [*Source: Ann-Kathrin, Andres Reiljan, Survey taskforce]*

What are your feelings towards these groups of people? (-5 very negative – +5 very positive; Don't know)

People defending feminist ideals

People opposing feminist ideals

47. Affective issue polarization: Immigration [*Source: Ann-Kathrin, Andres Reiljan, Survey taskforce]*

Issues related to immigrants coming to this country in search for jobs invoke divergent feelings among people. On the one hand, there are those who are in favour of allowing into this country immigrants who look for work. On the other hand, there are also people who are against allowing into this country immigrants who look for work. Into which group would you place yourself?

a. People in favour of allowing immigrants who look for work
b. People against allowing immigrants who look for work
c. Neither

Don't know

48. Affective issue polarization: Migration II [*Source: Ann-Kathrin, Andres Reiljan, Survey taskforce]*

What are your feelings towards these groups of people? (-5 very negative – +5 very positive; Don't know)

People in favour of allowing immigrants who look for work

People against allowing immigrants who look for work

Experiments

[Programming note: randomize the order of the vignette and conjoint experiments]

49. Vignette *[Source: Survey taskforce]*

[Programming note: The information in the brackets represents the respective treatments, which are randomly assigned to the respondents]

Political decision-makers often need to take controversial decisions where some groups in society disagree with their intentions. Imagine a situation where the parliament is considering a new measure concerning the policy on [*climate change / equality between men and women / the management of immigration*] that you disagree with.

In reaction to that, [*a group of ordinary citizens / the opposition / a celebrity*] is organising [*an online petition / a campaign to email MPs / a peaceful demonstration / an occupation of the parliament building*] to show their dissatisfaction with the proposal.

Please indicate how likely it is that you would join this action?

Answer scale: 0-100 vertical slider scale: 0: extremely unlikely – 100: extremely likely

How acceptable do you think this action would be?

Answer scale: 0-100 vertical slider scale: 0: completely unacceptable - 100 completely acceptable

How likely do you think it is that decision-makers would listen to the concerns raised by the activists?

Answer scale: 0-100 vertical slider scale: 0: extremely unlikely – 100: extremely likely

50. Conjoint *[Source: Survey taskforce]*

[Programming note: Respondents complete three tasks here: first, they indicate which of the two candidates they prefer over the other; next, they indicate how much they like each of the politicians on a 0-100 scale. This process is repeated three times, resulting in a total of six politician profiles being evaluated by each respondent. To avoid any ordering biases, the order of dimensions is randomized over respondents, but for single respondents remain constant across all three iterations of the experiment.]

[Translation note: Yasmin Said and Omar Aslan remain the same in all countries; Please change Christine Müller and Günther Schmidt to the two MOST COMMON FIRST NAMES + MOST COMMON SURNAMES in your country, one for a woman and another for a man.]

There are many different reasons why people like or dislike politicians. In the following, we present you with several comparisons of elected politicians. These politicians have different personal characteristics and advocate for varying political goals. For each of these comparisons, we would like to know what you think of them. Please take a close look at the descriptions of the two politicians before evaluating them in the next step.

1. Name *[Christine Müller / Günther Schmidt / Yasmin Said / Omar Aslan]* *[Programming note: The name always on the 1st row, randomise only other rows]*
2. Political leaning [*leftist / centrist / rightist*]
3. Is currently an active politician at the *[local / national / EU]* level
4. Has recently been in the news *[to present a political proposal / for lying in a press conference / for abusing powers to favour family members / for taking bribes]*
5. Seeks policy solutions by *[bridging opposing ideological camps / standing up for the own ideological camp / responding to the majority of public opinion]*
6. Wants to *[maintain current measures to combat climate change/ accelerate measures to combat climate change even if they are costly/ slow down measures to combat climate change because they are too costly]*

1. Which of these two politicians do you prefer?
2. Please rate how much you like each of the two politicians. Answer scale: 0: do not like at all – 100: like very much
3. How well do you think each of these politicians represents you? Answer scale: 0: doesn’t represent me at all – 100: represents me very well

---

[Debriefing: Next screen: Thank you for your participation in this survey. We would like to inform you that the last two set of questions where you were asked to rate your views about a mobilization against a policy proposal, and where you were asked to compare different politicians are both fictional scenarios and do not relate to any current political developments]

Appendix B: Codebook/Technical description

IPSOS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

THE SOCIAL RESEARCH AND CORPORATE REPUTATION SPECIALISTS

ACT-EU 2024

Technical Report 12th June 2024

Internal Project Reference 22-094292-01

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Table 1: Overview of country abbreviations

Country	Abbreviation
Austria	AT
Czech Republic	CZ
Denmark	DK
Finland	FI
France	FR
Germany	DE
Greece	GR
Italy	IT
Poland	PL
Spain	ES

1. Objective of the study

Ipsos conducted a representative survey to analyze political attitudes, behavior, and representation in Europe. The survey, conducted online using Computer Assisted Online Interviews (CAWI) via the Ipsos Online Access Panel, included participants aged 18 to 75 in Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain. The research aimed to gain insights into political attitudes, behavior, and representation in Europe, specifically focusing on determining European citizens' trust during times of crises and polarization.

2. Research Design

2.1 Summary of the research design

The following table gives an overview of the most important methodological aspects of the study. The chapters that follow will cover each aspect in more detail.

Table 2: Overview of research design

A multi-country survey in 10 countries	
Method	Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI)
Target Population	Resident population aged 18 to 75 in Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain
Quota	Quota selection according to age, gender, region, and education in all countries
Sample Size	• Total of 13,000 interviews • 1,300 interviews per country
Questionnaire	Delivered in German, Czech, Danish, Finnish, French, Greek, Italian, Polish, and Spanish. Average length (median): 23 min
Fieldwork period	15.04.2024 – 29.05.2024

2.2 Target population

The target population was all residents of Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain aged 18 to 75 years with access to the internet.

3. Sampling

3.1 Sampling strategy

The study was conducted with **Computer Assisted Web Interviews (CAWI)**. CAWI refers to the survey implementation online, with administration being done via a web browser or mobile application. For the CAWI mode, the target audience is limited to people who have registered in an online access panel, who are residents in one of the Member States, and who have access to online services on a digital input device at the time of the survey.

Access to respondents for CAWI mode takes place through established online access panels. Panels are pools of registered respondents who are willing to participate in market and opinion research. To be registered, respondents will have to be in the country in whose panel they are signing up. Also, their language skills must be sufficient to answer the registration questions and surveys in the local language. Panelists are self-recruited to online access panels through a variety of channels. The recruitment process is open to all. In Europe, 38 % of the volume is recruited through social media, 26% through self-recruitment and referral, and 36 % through affiliate networks and media agencies. Panelists are only added to the panel if they meet specific quality checks such as unique email identification, unique contact detail detection, duplicate device detection, fraud check, country Geo-IP validation, and a few more.[1]

The use of online access panels for CAWI is an accepted research methodology, used by public-sector research institutions and private-sector organizations with solid results. The use of online access panels comes with several advantages:

- It is cost-efficient. Especially in comparison to CATI and Face-to-Face (F2F)-surveys, online access panels offer access to a high number of respondents at relatively low costs. Reasons for this are that CATI and F2F surveys come with high personal expenses (for interviewers but also the supervising and fieldwork coordination team), costs for shipping material expenses, and sometimes even higher incentives (especially for F2F). Both modes also go along with higher costs for technical equipment or technical infrastructure (such as telephone costs and laptops/tablets for the interviewing team).

- The sample procedure is very similar across countries. For CATI and F2F the sampling strategy depends on national circumstances and national sampling frames. Online access panels however use the same sampling approach for all countries (random sampling based on national representative quotas).

- The fieldwork period is shorter than for other modes. Especially CATI and F2F surveys go along with rather long fieldwork periods. Both modes are faced with many unsuccessful contact attempts and a lot of interviews are realized based on appointments.

- Because online surveys tend to be based on quota samples, the final sample is generally more balanced in terms of socio-demographic characteristics than in the case of probability samples.

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[1] More details on the recruitment process and the quality measures can be found in: Ipsos Answers to ESOMAR Questions for Users and Buyers of Online Samples March 2022 (p.10f.), under: Ipsos Answers Esomar’s Questions to help online research buyers | Ipsos

3.2 Sampling size

Overall, a total of 13,000 interviews were conducted, with 1,300 interviews per country.

3.3 Feedback

Participants who had questions about the content of the survey could ask them by contacting the e-mail address DE-PA-acteu@ipsos.com, which was set up for the study. However, there were no follow-up questions.

3.4 Data limitations

When analyzing and evaluating data, one must be aware of the data limitations of the respective method. In the case of CAWI surveys, it is first of all the limited target group: Online surveys only reach people that have internet access. Furthermore, the target group is limited to people who have registered in advance in an online access panel and most of them regularly participate in surveys. Beyond that, online surveys usually suffer from an education bias (by mainly reaching medium or highly-educated respondents). This is why quotas were used to ensure a representative sample. After fieldwork, weights were calculated in the dataset to compensate for any deviations from the quotas.

Another limitation that exists is caused by language issues. As the survey was offered in the official language of the country, participation could only be done by respondents with enough skills in that language.

3.4 Sampling quotas

The sample was drawn from the Ipsos Online Panels by quota selection according to the characteristics of age, gender, region, and education.

The following tables summarize the quotas we reached compared to the actual distribution of the target population. There is one table for each country. The data for the target population was derived from Eurostat 2022. For all countries, education statistics refer to the population 18-74, as there is only limited data available at Eurostat. Possible deviations from 100 percent are due to rounding errors. All deviations between net and gross sample were corrected through weighting (with a total weighting efficiency of 90.9 %). Due to a small sample size of people with low education, the categories for low and medium education were combined for the countries Poland, Italy, and Greece. For Greece, due to a small number of respondents aged 60 to 75, the oldest age groups "50 to 59" and "60 to 75" were combined into one category: "50 to 75"."

Table 3: Comparison between target population and net sample – Austria

Austria (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)

	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	49.9	45.2
Female	50.1	54.9
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	19.1	22.8
30-39	18.6	21.3
40-49	17.7	19.0
50-59	21.0	19.6
60-75	23.6	17.3
Region (NUTS 2)		
Base	100	100
Steiermark	14.0	14.0
Salzburg	6.3	4.6
Burgenland	3.3	3.2
Oberösterreich	16.6	13.8
Kärnten	6.3	6.5
Niederösterreich	18.7	20.5
Wien	21.9	25.3
Voralberg	4.4	4.8
Tirol	8.5	7.3
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-2 (low)	16.5	11.3
ISCED 3-4 (medium)	51.1	61.9
ISCED 5-8 (high)	32.4	26.9

Table 4: Comparison between target population and net sample – Czech Republic

Czech Republic (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	50.1	53.7
Female	49.9	46.3

Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	16.1	18.3
30-39	18.1	19.1
40-49	22.4	22.9
50-59	17.7	19.2
60-75	25.7	20.6
Region (NUTS 2)		
Base	100	100
Praha	12.2	13.2
Strední Cechy	13.0	12.7
Jihozápad	11.6	9.6
Severozápad	10.4	9.9
Severovýchod	14.2	14.3
Jihovýchod	16.0	16.3
Strední Morava	11.4	11.8
Moravskoslezsko	11.3	12.2
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-2 (low)	8.6	4.5
ISCED 3-4 (medium)	68.7	71.3
ISCED 5-8 (high)	22.7	24.2

Table 5: Comparison between target population and net sample – Denmark

Denmark (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	50.1	50.0
Female	49.9	50.0
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	21.8	20.0
30-39	16.9	16.5
40-49	17.4	17.7

50-59	19.1	19.8
60-75	24.8	26.0
Region (NUTS 2)		
Base	100	100
Nordjylland	10.0	9.7
Midtjylland	22.8	23.6
Syddanmark	20.7	21.7
Hovedstaden	32.3	30.2
Sjælland	14.2	14.7
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-2 (low)	22.1	12.3
ISCED 3-4 (medium)	41.8	42.6
ISCED 5-8 (high)	36.1	45.2

Table 6: Comparison between target population and net sample – Finland

Finland (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	50.3	49.3
Female	49.7	50.7
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	19.3	20.9
30-39	18.1	18.8
40-49	16.9	15.6
50-59	17.6	18.4
60-75	28.1	26.4
Region (NUTS 2)		
Base	100	100

Pohjois-ja Itä-Suomi	29.5	23.1
Länsi-Suomi	32.1	23.4
Helsinki-Uusimaa	41.0	32.2
Etelä-Suomi	26.9	21.4
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-2 (low)	15.9	10.7
ISCED 3-4 (medium)	47.4	50.5
ISCED 5-8 (high)	36.7	38.8

Table 7: Comparison between target population and net sample – France

France (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	48.7	47.1
Female	51.3	52.9
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	19.6	19.8
30-39	17.4	15.6
40-49	18.0	18.6
50-59	18.7	19.3
60-75	26.2	26.7
Region (NUTS 1)		
Base	100	100
Île de France	19.1	19.7
Centre - Val de Loire	3.9	4.0
Bourgogne - Franche-Comté	4.3	3.9
Normandie	5.1	5.2
Hauts-de-France	9.2	9.2
Grand Est	8.6	8.5
Pays-de-la-Loire	5.9	5.6
Bretagne	5.2	5.0
Nouvelle-Aquitaine	9.4	8.7
Occitanie	9.3	9.6

Auvergne - Rhône-Alpes	12.4	12.8
Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	7.8	7.9
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-2 (low)	19.8	17.6
ISCED 3-4 (medium)	43.5	44.4
ISCED 5-8 (high)	36.7	38.0

Table 8: Comparison between target population and net sample – Germany

Germany (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	50.1	49.5
Female	49.9	50.5
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	18.1	18.0
30-39	17.9	17.3
40-49	16.5	16.6
50-59	21.5	21.7
60-75	25.9	26.4
Region (NUTS 1)		
Base	100	100
Saarland	1.2	1.2
Baden-Württemberg	13.4	13.5
Bayern	16.0	16.1
Berlin	4.5	4.5
Brandenburg	3.0	3.0
Bremen	0.8	0.5
Hamburg	2.3	2.2
Hessen	7.6	7.6
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	1.9	2.0
Niedersachsen	9.6	9.6
Nordrhein-Westfalen	21.5	21.5
Rheinland-Pfalz	5.0	5.0

Sachsen	4.7	4.7
Sachsen-Anhalt	2.6	2.5
Schleswig-Holstein	3.5	3.5
Thüringen	2.5	2.6
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-2 (low)	19.4	18.6
ISCED 3-4 (medium)	51.5	52.0
ISCED 5-8 (high)	29.1	29.4

Table 9: Comparison between target population and net sample – Greece

Greece (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	49.4	49.9
Female	50.6	50.2
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	16.5	21.7
30-39	16.3	21.7
40-49	20.9	28.5
50-75	46.3	28.1
Region (NUTS 2)		
Base	100	100
Thessalia	6.4	6.4
Dytiki Ellada	6.2	6.2
Kriti	5.8	5.9
Voreio Aigaio	1.8	1.8
Notio Aigaio	3.1	2.7
Dytiki Makedonia	2.4	2.4
Sterea Ellada	4.8	4.8
Ipeiros	3.0	3.1
Attiki	37.1	37.5
Ionia Nisia	1.9	1.6
Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki	5.3	5.4
Peloponnisos	5.1	5.1

Kentriki Makedonia	17.1	17.3
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-4 (low/medium)	69.6	57.7
ISCED 5-8 (high)	30.4	42.3

Table 10: Comparison between target population and net sample – Italy

Italy (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	49.6	48.7
Female	50.4	51.3
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	16.3	16.1
30-39	15.3	15.3
40-49	19.6	19.6
50-59	22.0	22.1
60-75	26.8	27.0
Region (NUTS 2)		
Base	100	100
Piemonte	7.2	8.0
Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste	0.2	0.2
Lombardia	16.8	17.0
Trentino alto adige	1.8	1.5
Veneto	8.2	7.0
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	2.0	1.7
Liguria	2.5	2.7
Emilia-Romagna	7.4	6.6
Toscana	6.1	5.7
Umbria	1.4	0.7
Marche	2.5	2.7
Lazio	9.7	10.3
Abruzzo	2.2	1.6
Molise	0.5	0.6

Campania	9.6	10.1
Puglia	6.7	7.5
Basilicata	0.9	1.0
Calabria	3.2	2.9
Sicilia	8.2	9.2
Sardegna	2.8	3.1
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-4 (low/medium)	82.5	66.2
ISCED 5-8 (high)	17.5	33.8

Table 11: Comparison between target population and net sample – Poland

Poland (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	48.9	48.9
Female	51.1	51.1
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	17.3	16.3
30-39	20.6	21.9
40-49	20.3	20.5
50-59	15.9	15.8
60-75	25.9	25.5
Region (NUTS 2)		
Base	100	100
Dolnoslaskie	7.7	7.5
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	5.4	5.6
Lubelskie	5.5	5.2
Lubuskie	2.7	2.6
Lódzkie	6.4	6.5
Malopolskie	8.8	8.9
Mazowiecki	14.1	13.7
Opolskie	2.5	2.5
Podkarpackie	5.5	5.8

Podlaskie	3.0	3.0
Pomorskie	6.1	6.0
Slaskie	11.8	12.6
Swietokrzyskie	3.2	3.0
Warminsko-Mazurskie	3.7	3.8
Wielkopolskie	9.2	9.4
Zachodniopomorskie	4.5	4.1
Education		
Base		
ISCED 0-4 (low/medium)	71.7	60.9
ISCED 5-8 (high)	28.3	39.2

Table 12: Comparison between target population and net sample – Spain

Spain (Source: Eurostat 2022; 18-74)		
	Target	Net
	%	%
Gender		
Base	100	100
Male	49.6	44.2
Female	50.4	55.8
Age		
Base	100	100
18-29	16.9	15.1
30-39	16.6	19.8
40-49	22.1	26.0
50-59	20.7	22.1
60-75	23.7	17.0
Region (NUTS 2)		
Base	100	100
Galicia	5.7	6.1
Principado de Asturias	2.2	2.4
Cantabria	1.2	1.2
País Vasco	4.5	4.6
Comunidad Foral de Navarra	1.4	1.0
La Rioja	0.7	0.4
Aragón	2.7	2.9
Comunidad de Madrid	14.4	15.6

Castilla y León	5.0	5.3
Castilla-la Mancha	4.3	4.6
Extremadura	2.2	2.5
Cataluña	16.0	15.9
Comunitat Valenciana	10.7	11.8
Illes Balears	2.7	1.2
Andalucía	18.1	18.8
Región de Murcia	3.2	2.4
Canarias	5.0	3.3
Education		
Base	100	100
ISCED 0-2 (low)	38.7	22.3
ISCED 3-4 (medium)	25.0	33.1
ISCED 5-8 (high)	36.3	44.7

4. Fieldwork

Fieldwork for the online interviews took place between 15.04.2024 and 29.05.2024. A total of 13,000 complete interviews were achieved.

4.1 Online Access Panel

Ipsos Interactive Services (IIS), the specialist for international online surveys within Ipsos, was in charge of programming the questionnaire and monitoring the Ipsos Online Panels. The long experience of Ipsos Interactive Services enables Ipsos to elaborate a user-friendly and intuitive survey link. The approximately 600 experts in programming and random sampling working for this service are also used to adapt the link to the expectations or special requests of clients. The program was based on the English version of the questionnaire and was tested by the Ipsos Public Affairs team as well as the client. Moreover, the Conjoint was programmed and tested by the Ipsos Marketing Science team.

4.2 Questionnaire

The English questionnaire and all translations in German, Czech, Danish, Finnish, French, Greek, Italian, Polish and Spanish were provided by the client. Ipsos helped to finalize it by checking the questionnaire for completeness and incorporating plausibility checks. Furthermore, native speakers from Ipsos' in-house global translation team reviewed the translated questionnaires for all languages. The translation stage was critical to ensure that the collected data was consistent across countries. Linguists from the translation team also checked the survey in each language after programming.

Special attention was also paid to country-specific terminology and its correct translation in the country questionnaire. The priority was to ensure cultural equivalence. This ensured that the data collected was valid and comparable across countries.

Table 13: Overview of languages

Country	Language
Austria	German
Czech Republic	Czech
Denmark	Danish
Finland	Finnish
France	French
Germany	German
Greece	Greek
Italy	Italian
Poland	Polish
Spain	Spanish

4.3 Participation incentives

Incentives that panelists receive for participating in surveys depend on the country, the duration of the survey, and the complexity of the survey. In addition to sweepstakes, Ipsos uses a point system to provide incentives to panelists. Point systems are recognized as the industry-leading approach to conducting online market research, as they are considered a neutral system that does not introduce any bias in terms of participation from certain groups of people. From time to time, we push our incentive policy by holding additional prize draws or offering other incentives.

Incentive points are awarded according to questionnaire length. Panelists who do not meet the participation criteria for a survey (e.g., if they are screened out after the screening questions) receive a small number of points for their willingness to participate. The accumulated points can be exchanged by panelists for a range of rewards on a website set up specifically for this purpose.

In addition to rewards for survey participation, our panelists also benefit from the following:

- Real-time points awarded for survey participation (when a survey is completed by a panelist, the points awarded are immediately visible in the points account).
- Monthly newsletters with articles on various topics, survey results, panel news, sweepstakes winners, panelist tips, FAQs, etc.

- An individual website that allows panelists to check their scores in real-time, browse rewards and redeem rewards, participate in surveys available to that panelist, update their contact information, learn more about the panel, and read our newsletter.
- Access to member services (via email and phone).
- Social media such as Facebook and Twitter allow our panelists to communicate with each other and with us. We communicate with our followers at least every two weeks with status updates, articles, lightning polls, contests, and more.
- Loyalty Program: Panelists receive bonus points each time they complete a certain number of surveys. Surveys are counted once a month, and different bonus points are awarded depending on the number of completed surveys - more completed surveys earn more points.
- Quarterly Sweepstakes: When panelists participate in a sweepstakes survey, they receive a ticket for the quarterly drawing. Currently, certain types of projects are included in this category.

In addition, we work with a variety of sampling partners and incentives vary from partner to partner. Cash rewards, gifts, points, winning games, and in some cases no incentives at all are used. Each partner has its methodology for increasing the range of incentives depending on the length or complexity of the survey.

4.4 Quality measures and length of interviews

Standard Quality Measures

To ensure that respondents are real, unique, fresh, and engaged, Ipsos uses several quality measures. Upon registering for the panel, prospective panelists must pass several quality measures such as a double opt-in approach, geographical validation, anonymous proxy server recognition, captcha codes, and duplicate detection (digital fingerprint technology). This way Ipsos ensures that respondents are real and unique. Once registered, respondents have to adhere to strict panel rules that prevent them from being surveyed too often and being over-surveyed on specific topics and product categories. This is done to ensure that respondents are fresh. While taking part in surveys, Ipsos has several processes in place to reduce or eliminate undesired in-survey behaviors such as random responding, inconsistent responding, overuse of nonresponse items such as “don’t know” or too rapid survey completion.

To guarantee respondents are engaged (i.e. they complete surveys seriously), each respondent’s survey-taking behavior is evaluated in real-time, through standard self-adjusting algorithms. The worst offenders are automatically removed from the data deliverables; they are not counted against quotas.

Speeding detection: To identify someone who displays inattentive survey-taking behavior through completing a survey too quickly, we measure not only the time spent in the survey overall but also the number of answers provided. This allows us to calculate the completion speed for each respondent as the number of answers provided per minute.

A speeder is someone who completes the survey 2+ times quicker than the median speed for the survey. We identify and remove speeders from live surveys, in real time. The process is fully automated and standardized across all IIS surveys, from all regions and all sample sources. On our panel, we deactivate panelist accounts that record speeding across multiple surveys.

Straight-lining detection: To identify someone who displays inattentive survey-taking behavior by providing identical answers across multiple questions within and across multiple grids, we measure straight-lining response patterns.

A *straight-liner* is someone who provides a straight-line response pattern; across one or more grids and has completed the survey 2+ times quicker than the median speed registered for the survey, or regardless of their survey completion speed if the grid has opposite statements that encourage the respondent to use a range of scale points across the grid.

As with the speeders detection, the straight-lining module runs on live surveys in real time, in a fully automated and standardized way. Both speeding and straightlining algorithms are self-adjusting. They do not use fixed pre-defined benchmarks; the threshold levels are derived in real-time based on previous respondents' behaviors within the survey. We deactivate the panelist account that records straight-lining across multiple surveys.

4.5 Survey completes

In total, 26,792 respondents accessed the survey link. 13,000 respondents completed the survey successfully and are counted as completes. 7,838 people were screened out due to full quotas. 673 respondents were not counted as completes due to other reasons (such as speeding or straightlining, errors on the link etc.). 5,281 respondents did not finish the survey and are counted as dropouts. An overview is given in table 14.

Table 14: Overview link access

Link access	Number
Completes	13,000
Quotafull	7,838
Errors, Fraudulents etc.	673
Dropouts	5,281

Most dropouts appeared during the conjoint module (n = 1,171) and at the beginning of the survey when the welcome text was displayed (n = 584).

4.6 Challenges

During fieldwork, we faced the following challenge: The actual questionnaire length exceeded the estimated questionnaire length. Therefore, the field had to be paused after the softlaunch between 16th of April and 30th of April to discuss cutbacks from the questionnaire with the client. The client agreed on changes in 13 questions: Nine questions were deleted completely and in four questions, separate items were deleted.

5. Data Processing

5.1 Weighting

Since losses in samples do not spread evenly across all population strata, the structure of the unweighted sample regularly and systematically deviates from the population structure as obtained by official data.

By weighting the structure of the unweighted sample, it was adjusted to the official data. The variables gender, age, region, and education were used to calculate the weighting factors. These factors are included in the dataset. Ipsos uses the iterative “Rim weight” (also known as IPF, iterative proportional fitting) procedure.

The previously set quotas were used as weighting targets. An overall weighting efficiency of 90.9 % was achieved.

5.2 Deliverables

After the end of the fieldwork and the processing of the data, Ipsos provided the client with a completely cleaned and labeled Stata dataset.

5.3 Anonymization and Data Protection

Respondents’ data protection was very important. To guarantee their anonymity, personal data and survey data were never stored together. Furthermore, we made sure that it was not possible to identify individuals based on survey results and the datafiles did not contain any personal information nor any information that was stored in the panel. They only included answers that respondents were willing to give within this survey.

In general, Ipsos operates internally under the corporate data protection and privacy policy which is built based on the GDPR/EU Regulation 2016/679, applicable in all 90 Ipsos countries and effective since May 25th, 2018: https://www.ipsos.com/en/privacy-data-protection. Moreover, Ipsos appointed a Global Chief Privacy Officer (CPO), responsible for overseeing privacy compliance across the whole Ipsos Group. Ipsos nominated Data Protection Officers (DPOs) in most of its countries where offices/branches were established (including in the non-

EU regions), responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Ipsos privacy program locally. In Germany, the Ipsos data protection officer can be contacted at the following e-mail address: dpo.germany@ipsos.com.

As mentioned above, address and survey data are strictly separated. No personal data is delivered to clients, nor does the project management have the possibility to combine personal data with any survey results. We do not deliver any personal data that enables us or the client to identify the person. That also means we do not deliver socio-demographic information that is stored in our panel (profiling information) but is not explicitly given in that survey. Respondents can choose from which data they would like to share within the context of every survey.

About ActEU

How can we conceptualize and empirically measure political trust and legitimacy beyond the usual survey question “How much trust do you have in the parliament?”? Does the multi-level nature of European representative democracies require an identical level of citizen support at the regional, national and EU levels? How does social polarization on key policy issues of our times – immigration, climate change, and gender inequality– challenge the political trust in, and legitimacy of, democratic political systems? And what can policymakers and civil society do to master these challenges? ActEU aims at finding answers to these questions pursuing two overarching goals: In phase 1, we map and investigate persistent problems of declining trust, legitimacy and representation in Europe with a particular attention to the polarization of societies and the EU’s multi-level structures. Providing an innovative conceptual framework on political attitudes, behavior and representation across Europe, we establish an original empirical infrastructure based on an innovative combination of methods and newly collected quantitative and qualitative empirical data (focus groups, experimental surveys, web scraping). In phase 2, these results will flow directly into the creation of a toolbox of remedial actions to enhance political trust in and legitimacy of European representative democracies. In cooperation with a newly created Civil Society Network, Youth Democracy Labs across 13 European cities and in exchange with political cartoonists “Cartooning for democracy”, we will develop context-sensitive solutions for all polity levels and some of the most polarizing policy areas, and craft tailor-made toolkits for both policymakers and civil society and the educational sector. Finally, we deploy a differentiated dissemination strategy to maximize ActEU’s scientific, policy and societal impact in activating European citizens’ trust and working towards a new era of representative democracy.

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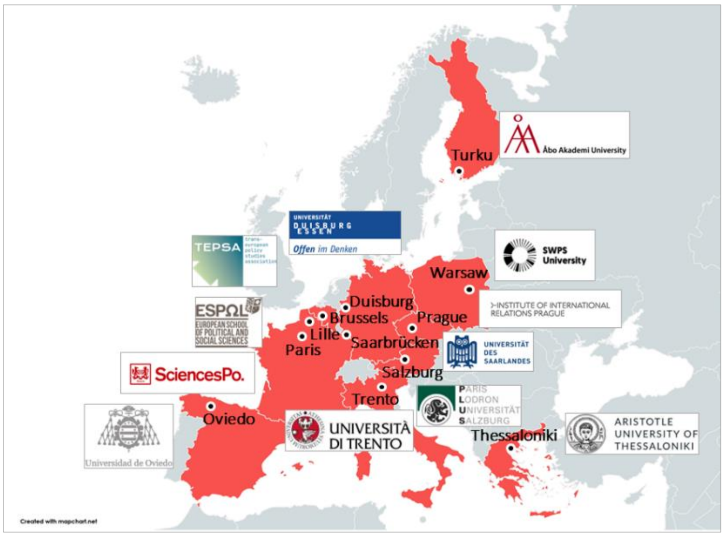
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