



DG Communication is continuously monitoring public opinion by conducting regular Eurobarometer surveys in all 28 EU Member States. **This newsletter aims at providing general public with the most recent Eurobarometer data on key topics of this week's plenary agenda.**

Although this service cannot be fully exhaustive, as not all items on the plenary agenda have been the subject of a recent Eurobarometer survey, we can offer fresh survey data on the following items of the plenary session:

- **Interim report on the MMF 2021-2027: Parliament's position with a view to an agreement**
- **'Future of Europe': Debate with the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel**
- **The rule of law in Romania**
- **Clean Energy package**
- **Rail passengers' rights and obligations**

Parliament's Eurobarometer surveys cover a wide range of issues. They focus primarily on the European citizens' knowledge of the European Parliament and their perceptions of the EU and its main policy challenges. Expectations in view of the European elections, of the European Parliament and the European integration in general also form part of the face-to-face interviews conducted with more than 27.000 respondents. Together with the Eurobarometer surveys conducted by the European Commission, **the data available allows for a detailed and up-to-date insight into citizens' opinions, expectations and perceptions.**

For more information on the topics covered in this edition, please contact:

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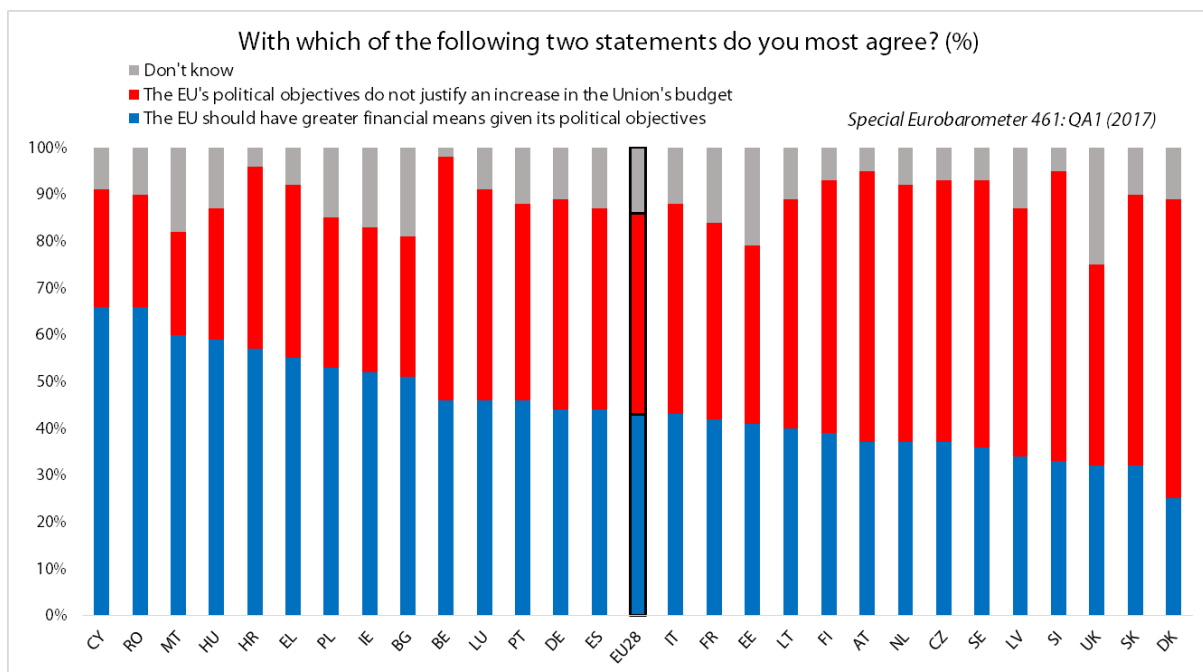
DG Communication

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Interim report on the MMF 2021-2027: Parliament's position with a view to an agreement

On Tuesday, Plenary will debate the [Interim report on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027](#). A resolution to be voted on Wednesday will provide Parliament's input on the negotiations for the European Union's Multiannual Financial Framework post 2020.

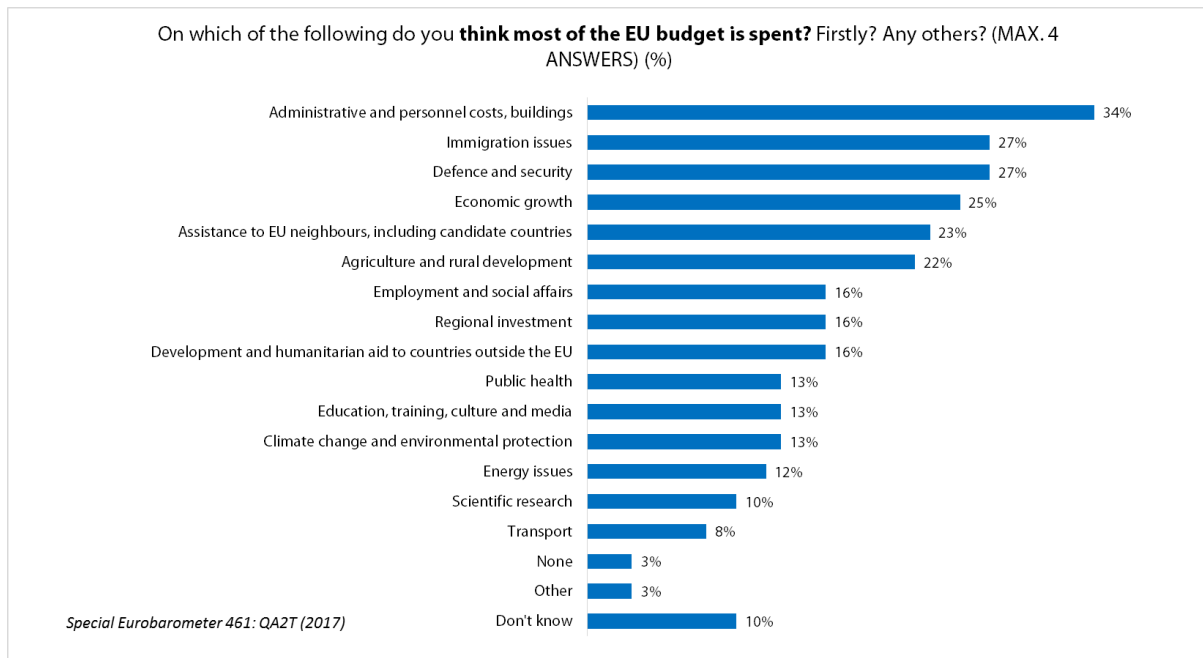
In the view of its citizens, how much money should the EU then have at its disposal? According to [a Special Eurobarometer survey on the EU budget from April 2017](#), public opinion is split on this crucial question: While over four in ten respondents (43%) think the EU should have greater financial means given its political objectives, the same proportion (43%) believe the EU's political objectives do not justify an increase in the Union's budget.



For more detailed information: [Special Eurobarometer on opinions about the EU budget \(April 2017\)](#)

In order to better analyse this first insight, we can take a look at where citizens think most of the money is spent now - and where they would want to see it spent instead.

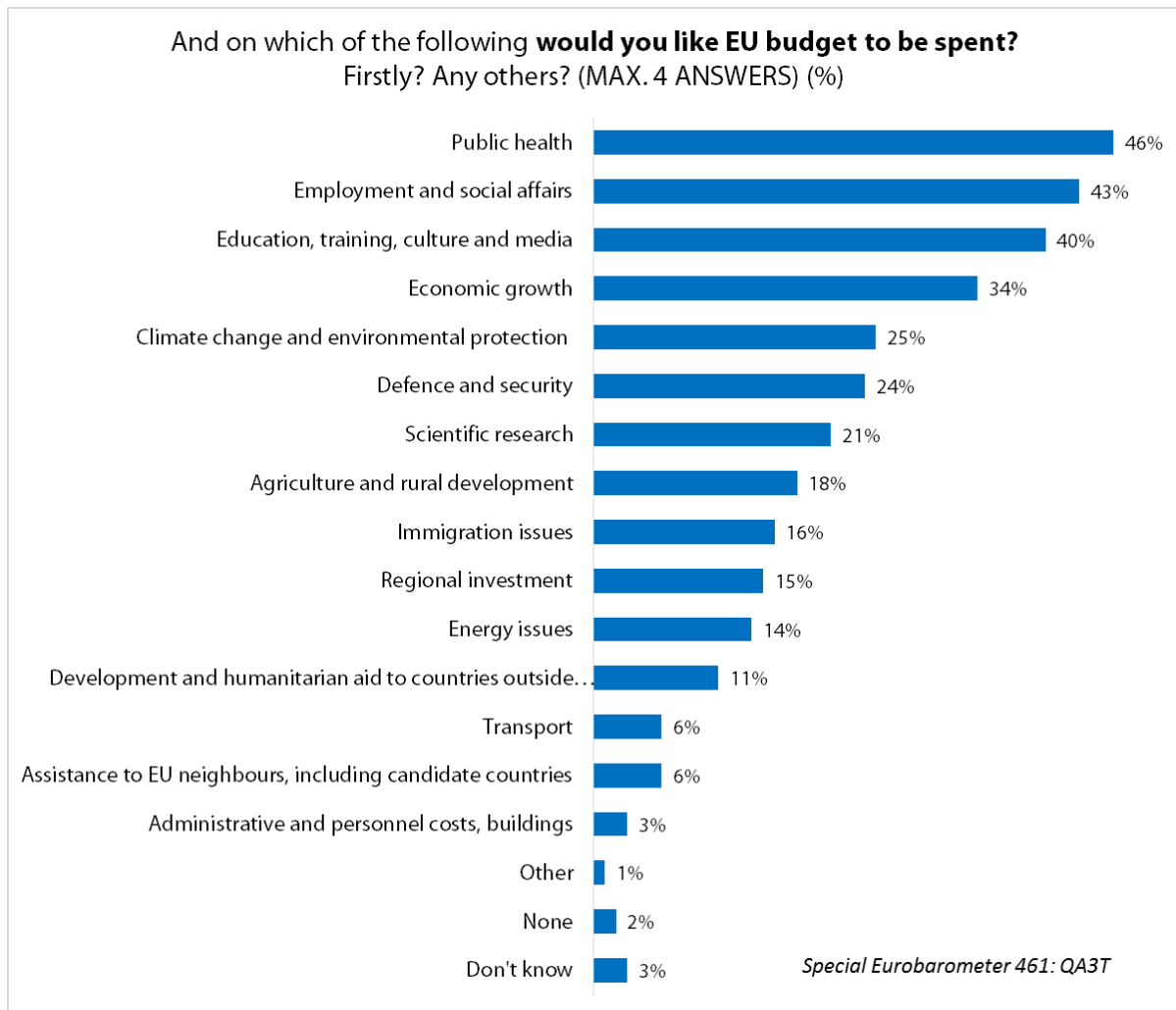
Asked about the areas where citizens believe the money goes, the largest part of respondents (34%) think the European Union spends its budget mostly on administrative and personnel costs. Next in line of perceived 'big receivers' are defence and security (27%), immigration issues (27%) or economic growth (25%).



NB: This chart gives the accumulated results per item mentioned as first answer and as one the three following items.

For more detailed information: [Special Eurobarometer on opinions about the EU budget \(April 2017\)](#)

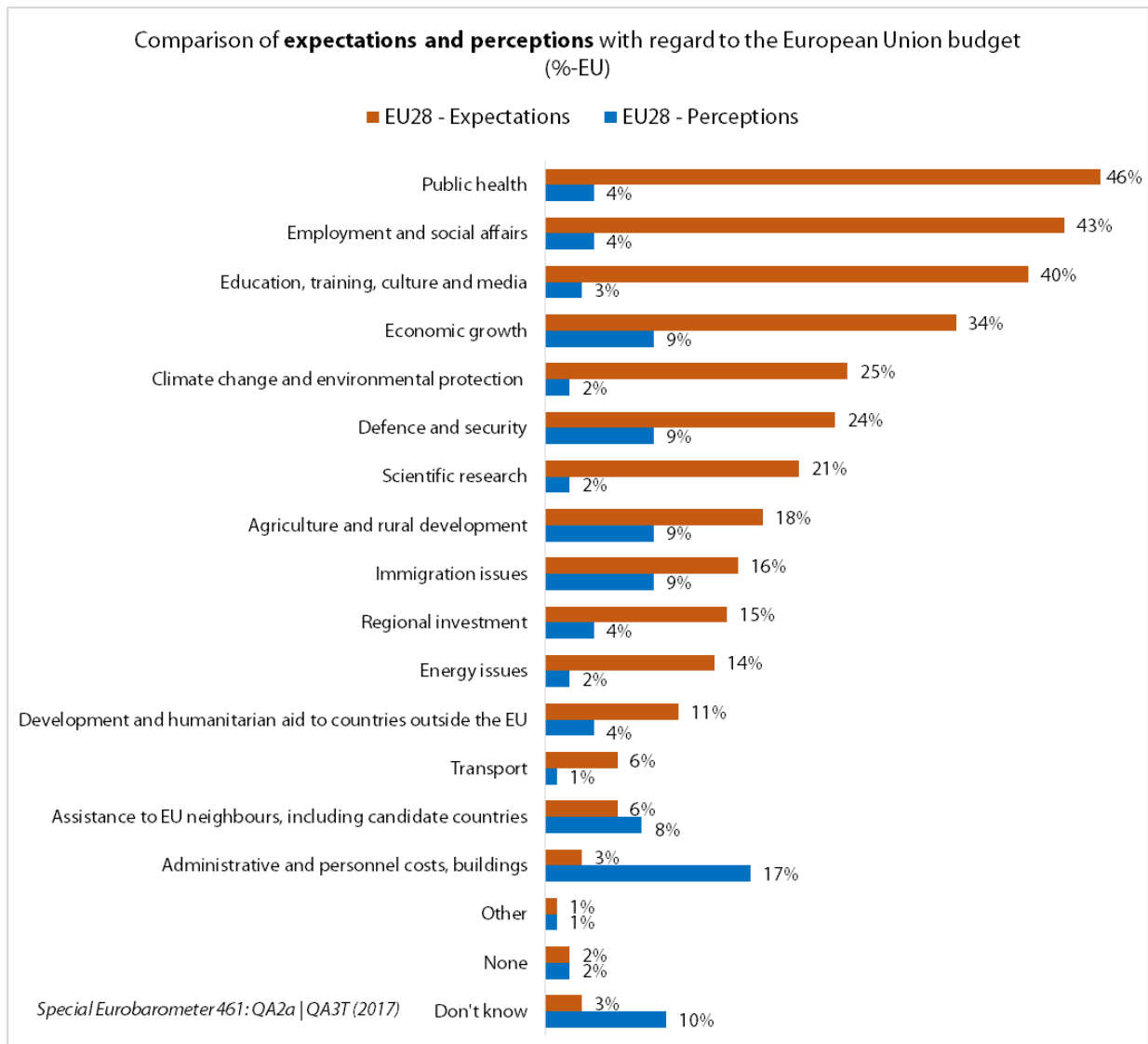
Now, let's add to this perception citizens' expectations, i.e. the answers on the question where they would like to see EU budget being spent. Here, the most common answer is public health (46%), while at least four in ten also mention employment and social affairs (43%) or education, training, culture and media (40%). Just over a third (34%) would like EU budget to be spent on economic growth, while around one quarter mentions climate change and environmental protection (25%), defence and security (24%) or scientific research (21%).



NB: This chart gives the accumulated results per item mentioned as first answer and as one the three following items.

For more detailed information: [Special Eurobarometer on opinions about the EU budget \(April 2017\)](#)

A significant disconnection between respondents' perceptions of where the EU budget is spent, and their preferences for where it should be spent becomes clearly visible: While respondents want to see EU budget being spent on public health, employment and social affairs or education, training, culture and media (all at least 40%), no more than 16% think these are areas where EU budget is actually spent. On the other hand, citizens are most likely to think EU budget is spent on administrative and personnel costs (34%) or on assistance to EU neighbours, including candidate countries (23%), but no more than 6% say these are areas where they want EU budget to be spent.



NB: This chart compares only results for items mentioned as 'firstly'.

For more detailed information: [Special Eurobarometer on opinions about the EU budget \(April 2017\)](#)

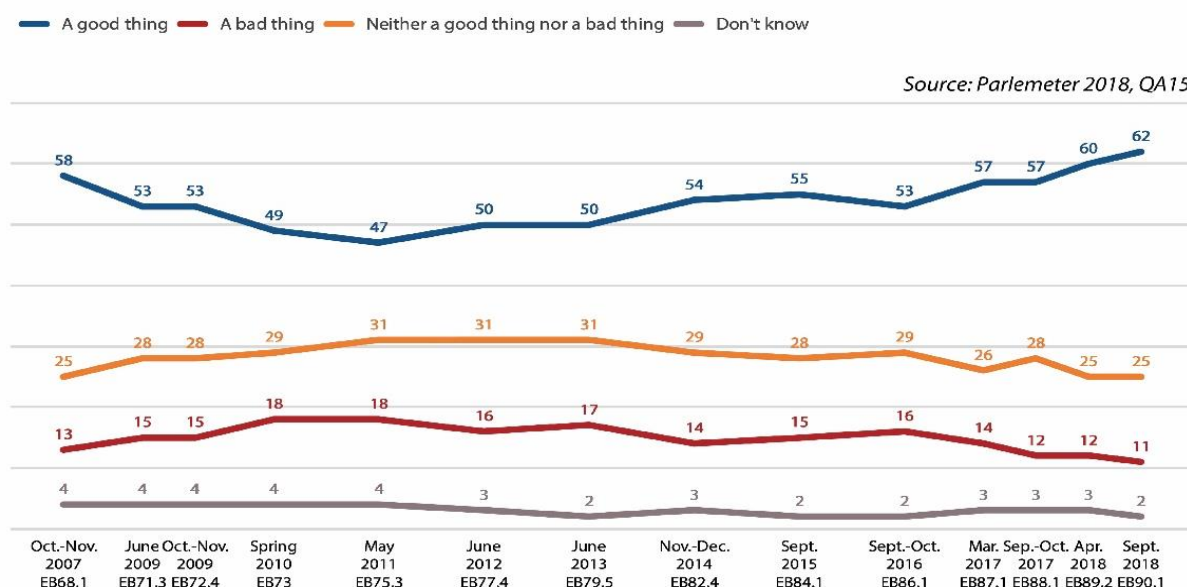
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Debate with the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, on the Future of Europe

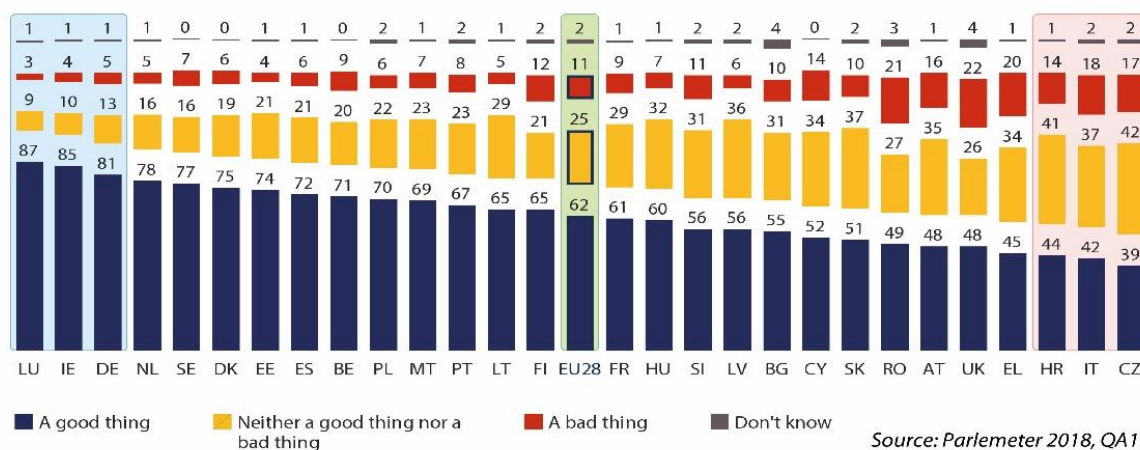
Parliament's series of [debates on the future of Europe continues](#), the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel will be the fourteenth European Union leader to debate the Future of Europe with MEPs on Tuesday afternoon. According to the [latest European Parliament Eurobarometer survey: 'Taking up the challenge'](#), published last September, the share of respondents believing that their country's membership in the EU is a good thing reaches its highest value since 1992 (62%, +2 since April 2018).

On a national basis, EU membership is increasingly perceived as positive in 18 EU countries, reaching or exceeding the 75% threshold in Luxembourg (87%), Ireland (85%) Germany (81%), Netherlands (78%), Sweden (77%) and Denmark (75%). Support for EU membership decreases in seven countries, mainly in Romania by 10 points to 49%, with a negative view increasing by 7 points to 21%.

Q Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)'s membership of the EU is...? (% - EU)



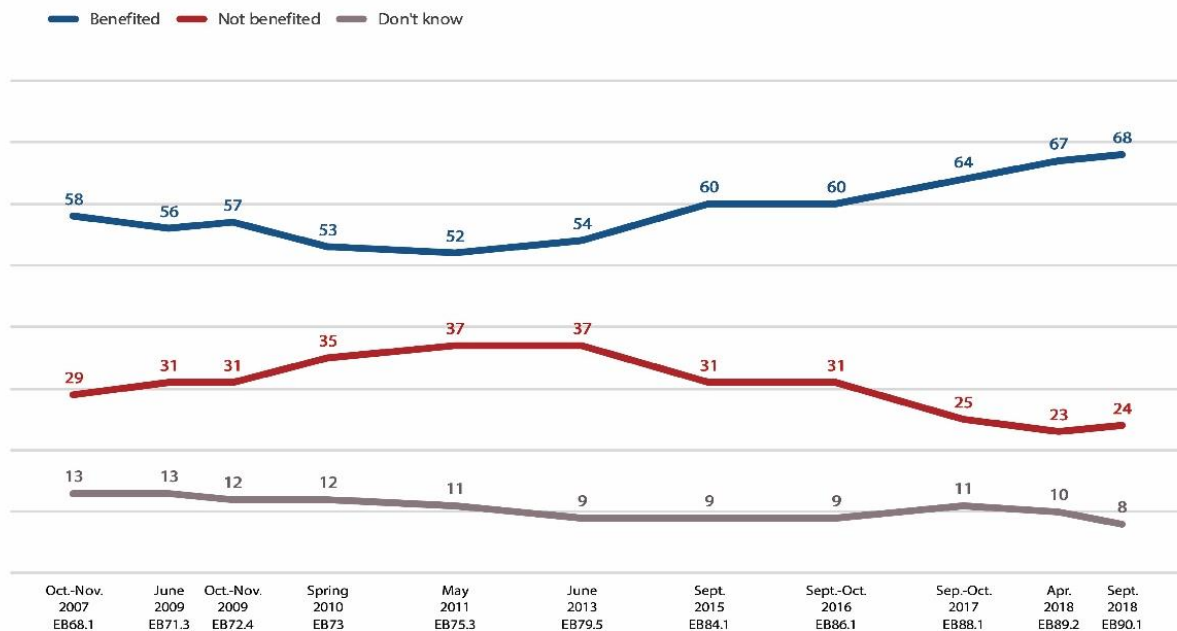
Q Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)'s membership of the EU is...? (%)



For more detailed information: [Parlemeter 2018: Taking up the challenge \(September 2018\)](#)

Moreover 68% (+1pp since April 2018) of EU respondents believe that their country has on balance benefited from being a member of the EU, bringing this indicator to its highest level overall level since 1983.

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

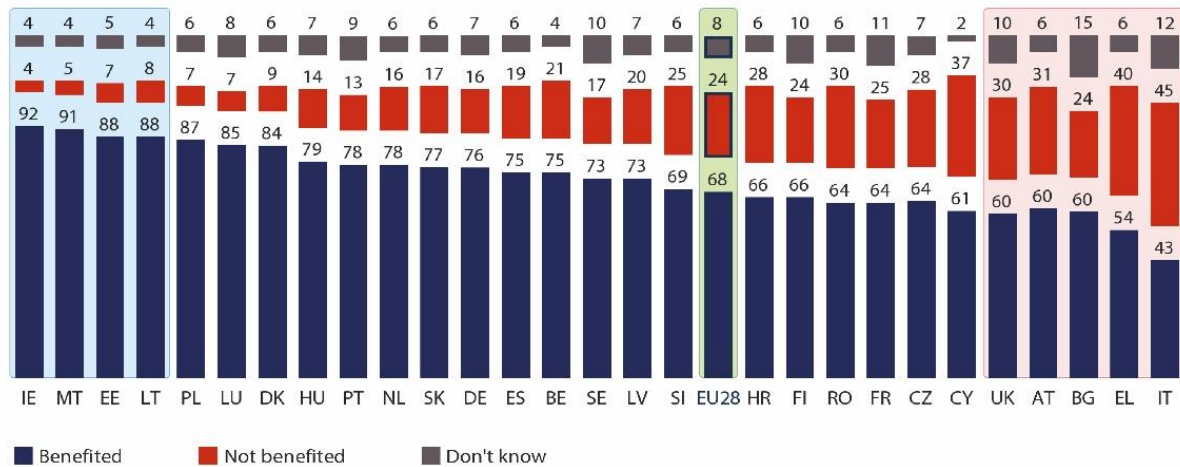


Source: Parlemeter 2018, QA16

For more detailed information: [Parlemeter 2018 : Taking up the challenge \(September 2018\)](#)

In all 27 other EU countries, a majority considers that their country has benefited from its EU membership, ranking from a maximum of 92% in Ireland to 54% in Greece - still well above an absolute majority.

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



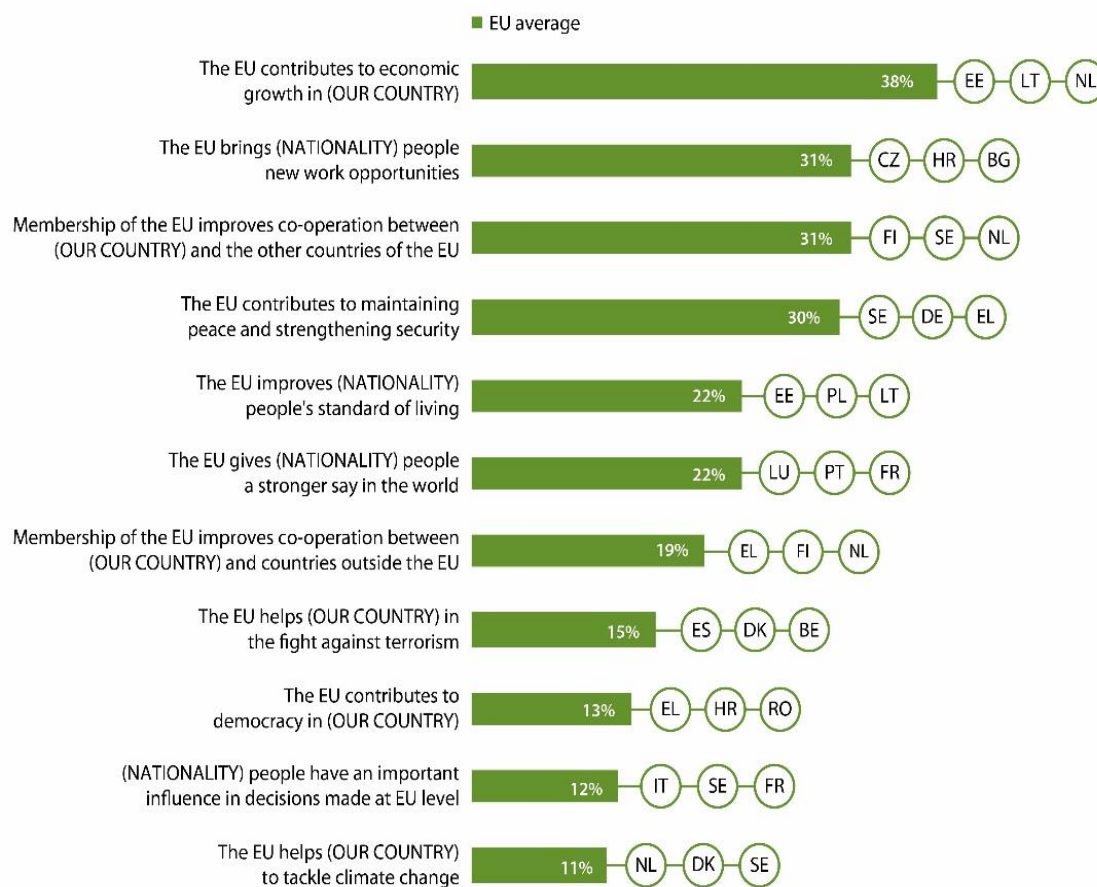
Source: Eurobarometer 2018 QA16

For more detailed information: [Parlemeter 2018: Taking up the challenge \(September 2018\)](#)

Among those who believe that EU membership has been beneficial, the most often expressed reason is that 'the EU contributes to economic growth in their country' with a support of 38% (+2 pp compared to September 2017). At least one respondent in two in the Netherlands (57%, +1), Estonia and Lithuania (both at 51%, respectively +2 and +9 percentage points since 2017) named this argument first.

The two following arguments equally record 31% on average, namely 'membership of the EU improves co-operation between our country and the other countries of the EU' and 'the EU brings (NATIONALITY) people new work opportunities', followed with 30% of replies on average by 'the EU contributes to maintaining peace and strengthening security'.

Q Which of the following are the main reasons for thinking that (OUR COUNTRY) has benefited from being a member of the EU? (Max. 3 answers)



Source: Parlemeter 2018, QA17

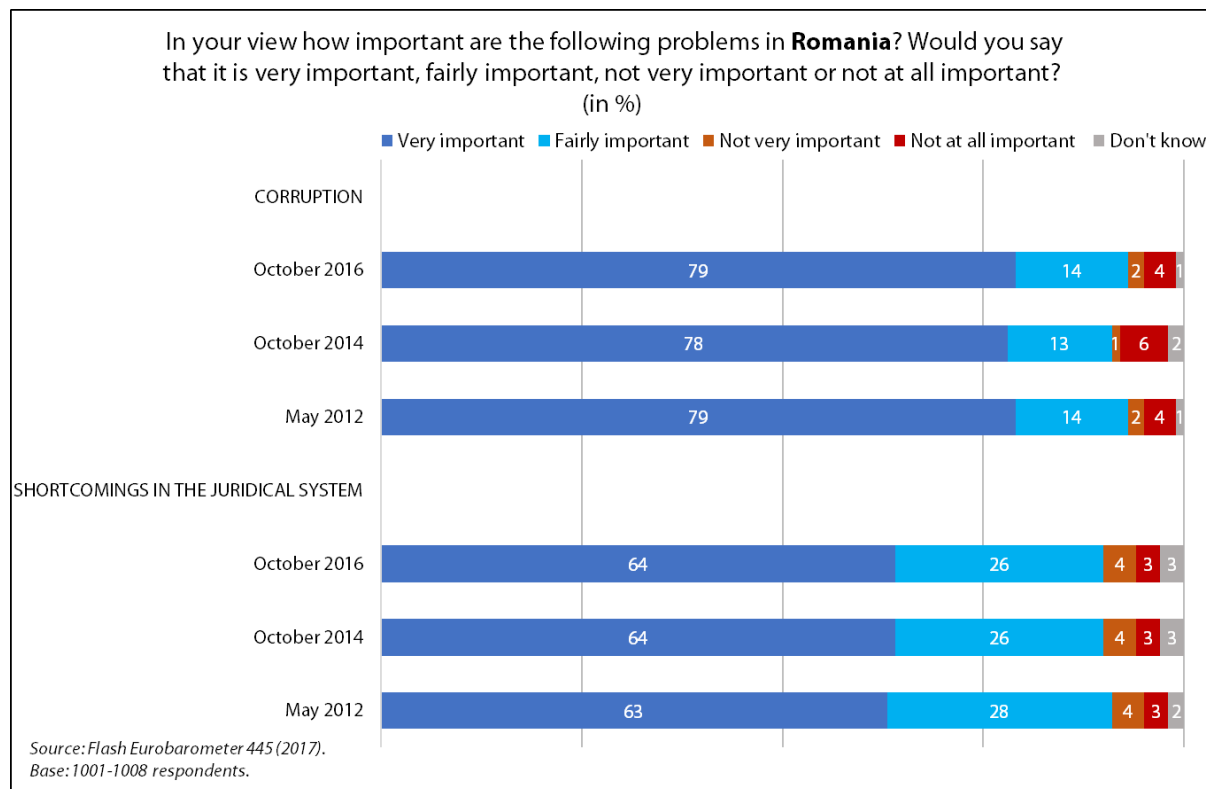
For more detailed information: [Parlemeter 2018: Taking up the challenge \(September 2018\)](#)

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The rule of law in Romania

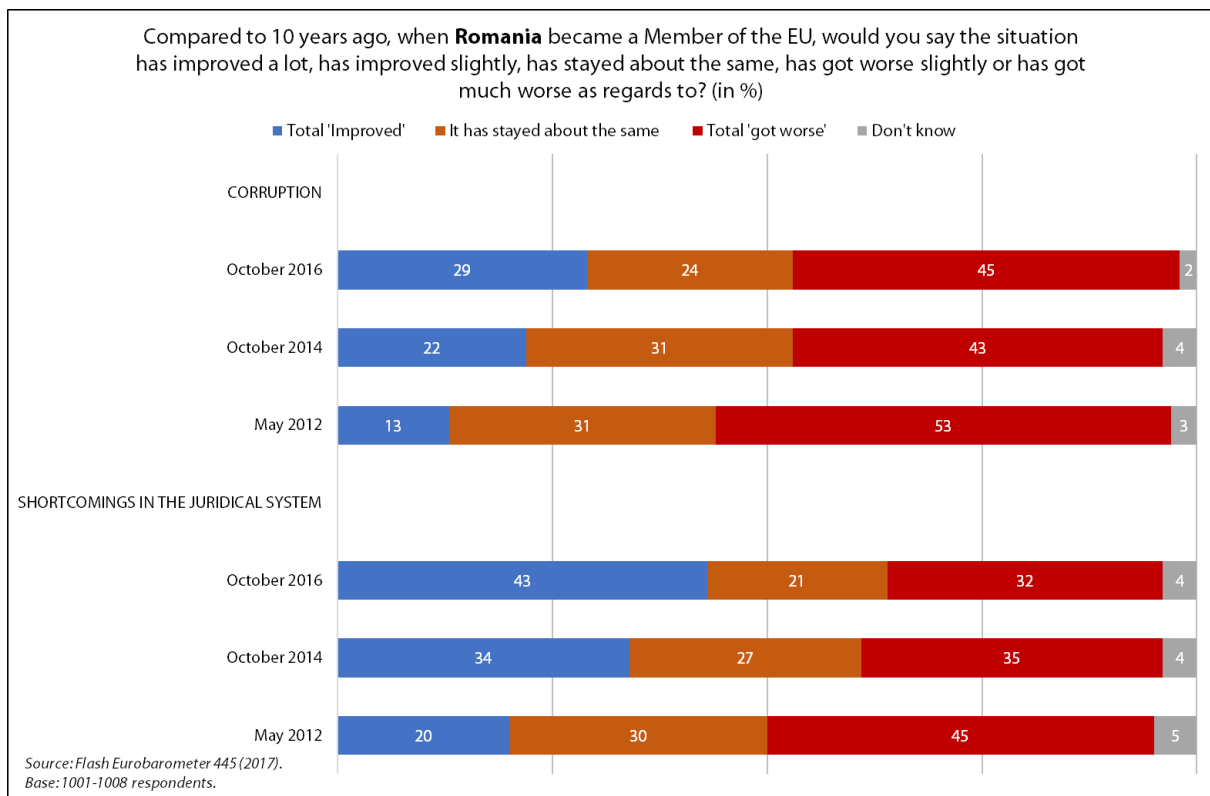
The European Union has proclaimed the Rule of Law principle and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms to be binding on all its Member States. On Wednesday, the European Parliament will vote [a resolution on the rule of law in Romania](#) as it has done previously this year for other Member States as well.

In a [Flash Eurobarometer survey on the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Romania from October 2016](#), respondents in Romania were asked to assess how important the problems of corruption and shortcomings in the judicial system were in their country? The answer was clear: A large majority of respondents in Romania thought that corruption and judicial shortcomings were important problems.



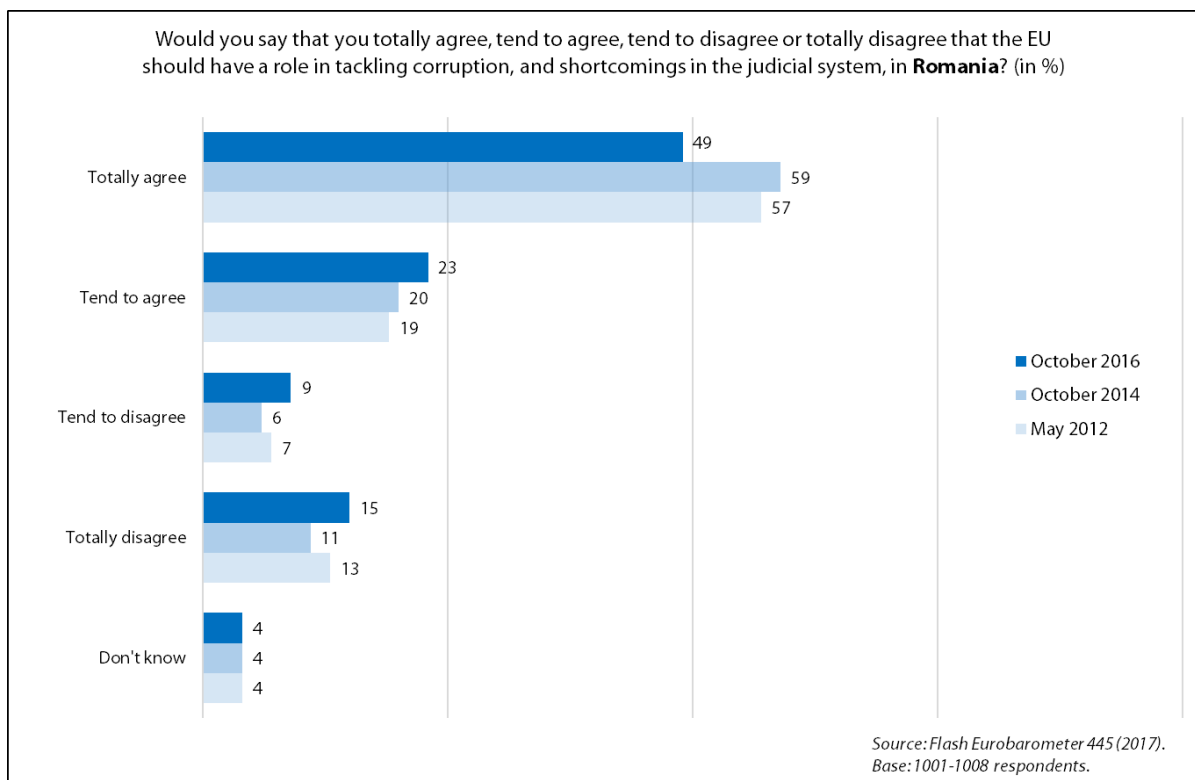
For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer on the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Bulgaria and Romania- Third wave \(October 2016\)](#)

And while more respondents in Romania believe (compared to 2012) that the situation regarding corruption and judicial shortcomings had improved since EU accession, a relative majority still believes that the situation got worse over time.



For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer on the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Bulgaria and Romania- Third wave \(October 2016\)](#)

72% of respondents said that the EU should have a role in tackling corruption and shortcomings in the judicial system, while 24% disagreed with this view.



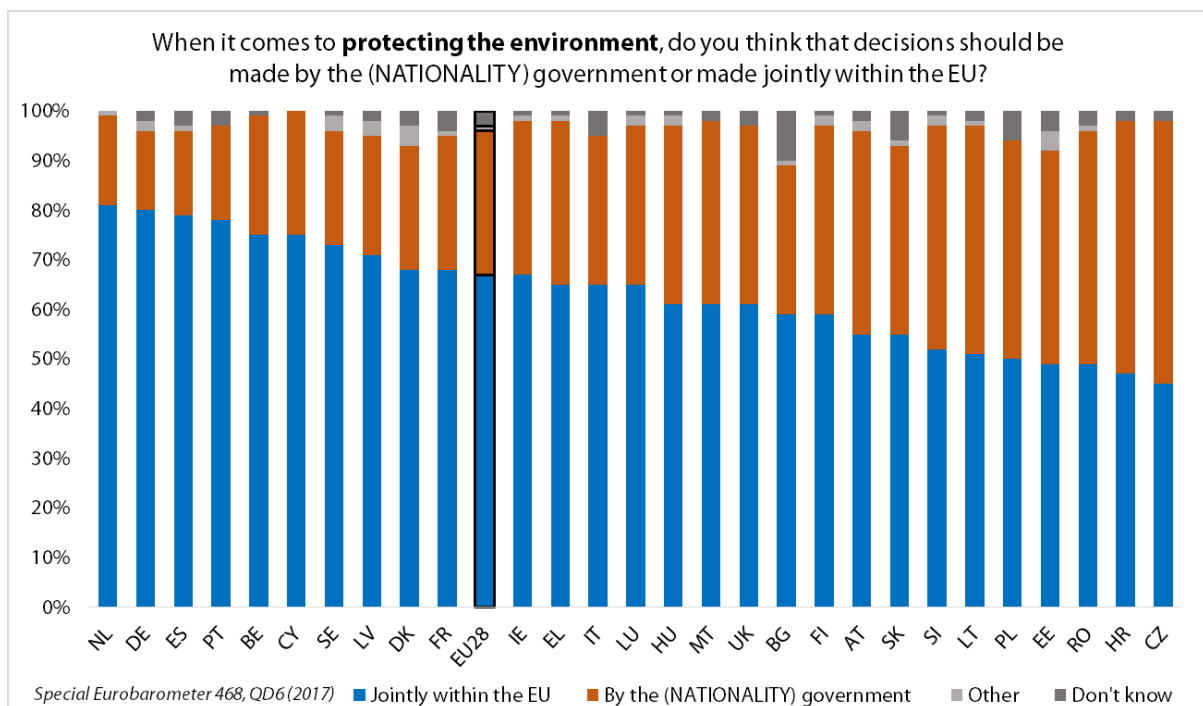
For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer on the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Bulgaria and Romania- Third wave \(October 2016\)](#)

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Clean Energy package

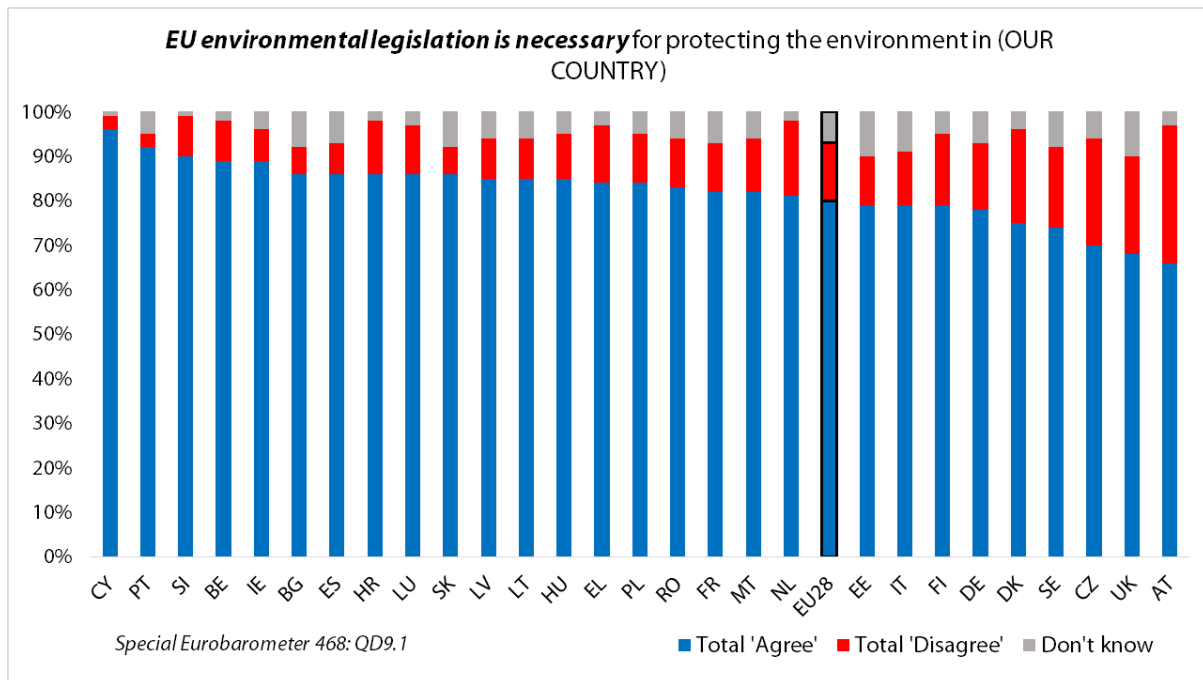
Aimed at enabling the European Union to deliver on its Paris Agreement commitments, Plenary will discuss on Monday a [new package of measures with the goal of providing the stable legislative framework needed to facilitate the clean energy transition](#) – and thereby taking a significant step towards the creation of the Energy Union (Vote on Tuesday).

According to a special [Eurobarometer on Attitudes of European citizens towards the Environment from October 2017](#), 67% of Europeans think that environmental decisions should be taken jointly within the EU, 29% believe that national governments should take such decisions individually.



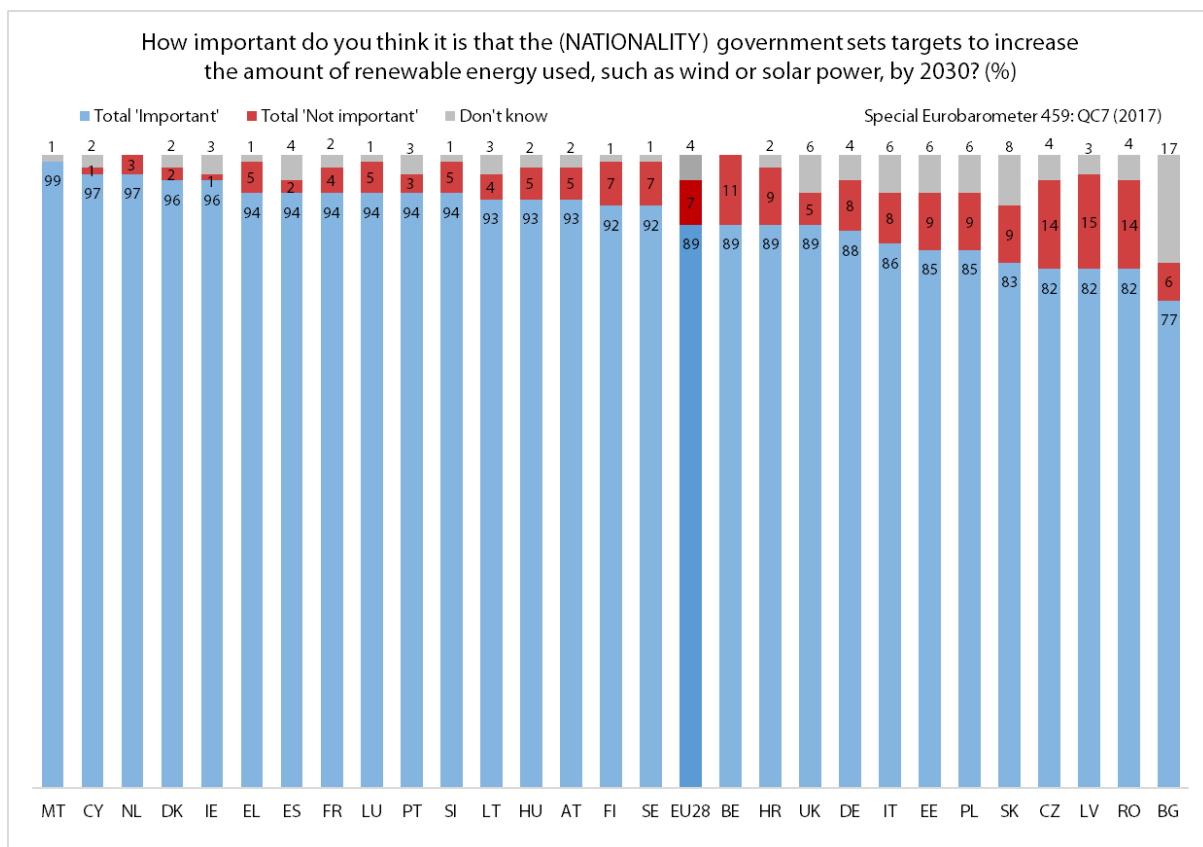
For more detailed information: [Special Eurobarometer on Attitudes of European citizens towards the environment \(Oct. 2017\)](#)

Moreover, a large majority of Europeans agree that European Union environmental legislation is necessary for protecting the environment in their country.



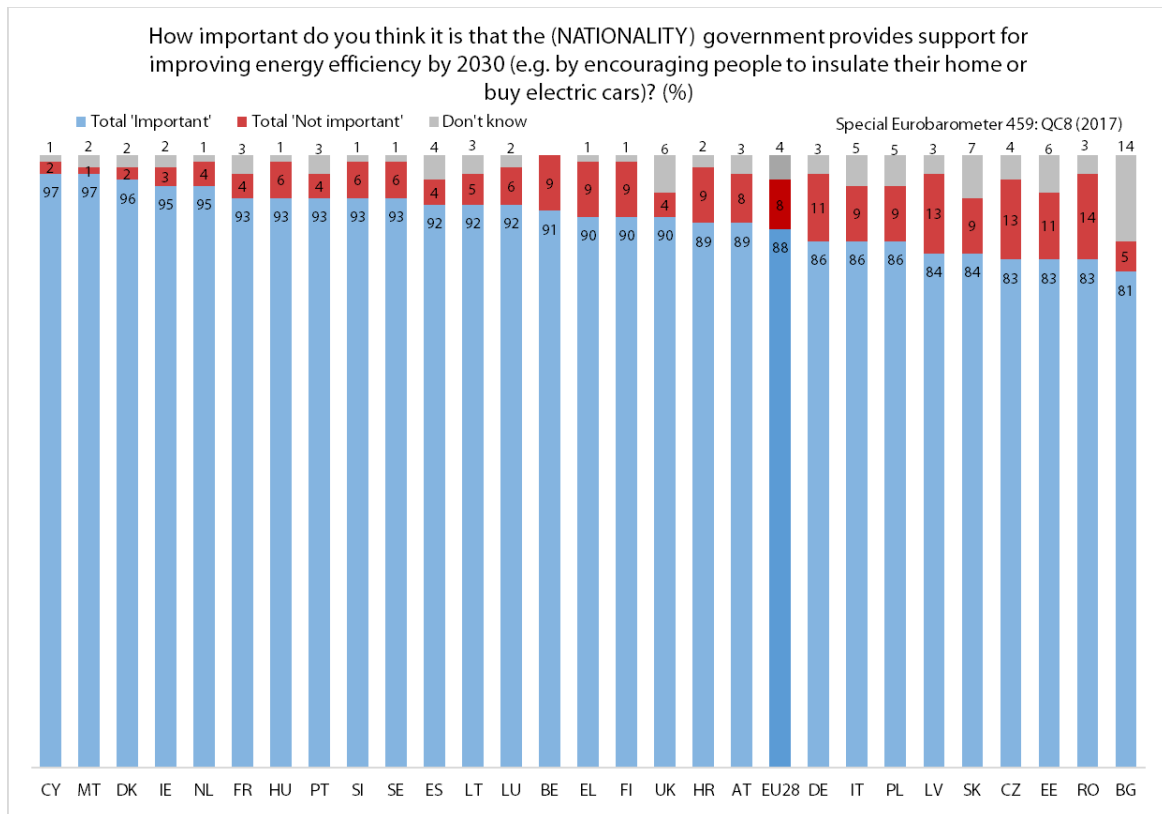
For more detailed information: [Special Eurobarometer on Attitudes of European citizens towards the environment \(Oct. 2017\)](#)

Moreover, in a special [Eurobarometer on Climate change from September 2017](#), around nine in ten respondents say it is important for national government to set targets to increase renewable energy use by 2030. In all Member States, a majority of respondents say that it is important for their national government to set targets to increase the amount of renewable energy used by 2030.



For more detailed information: [Special Eurobarometer on Climate change \(March 2017\)](#)

And finally, almost nine in ten respondents think it is important for their national government to support improved energy efficiency by 2030.



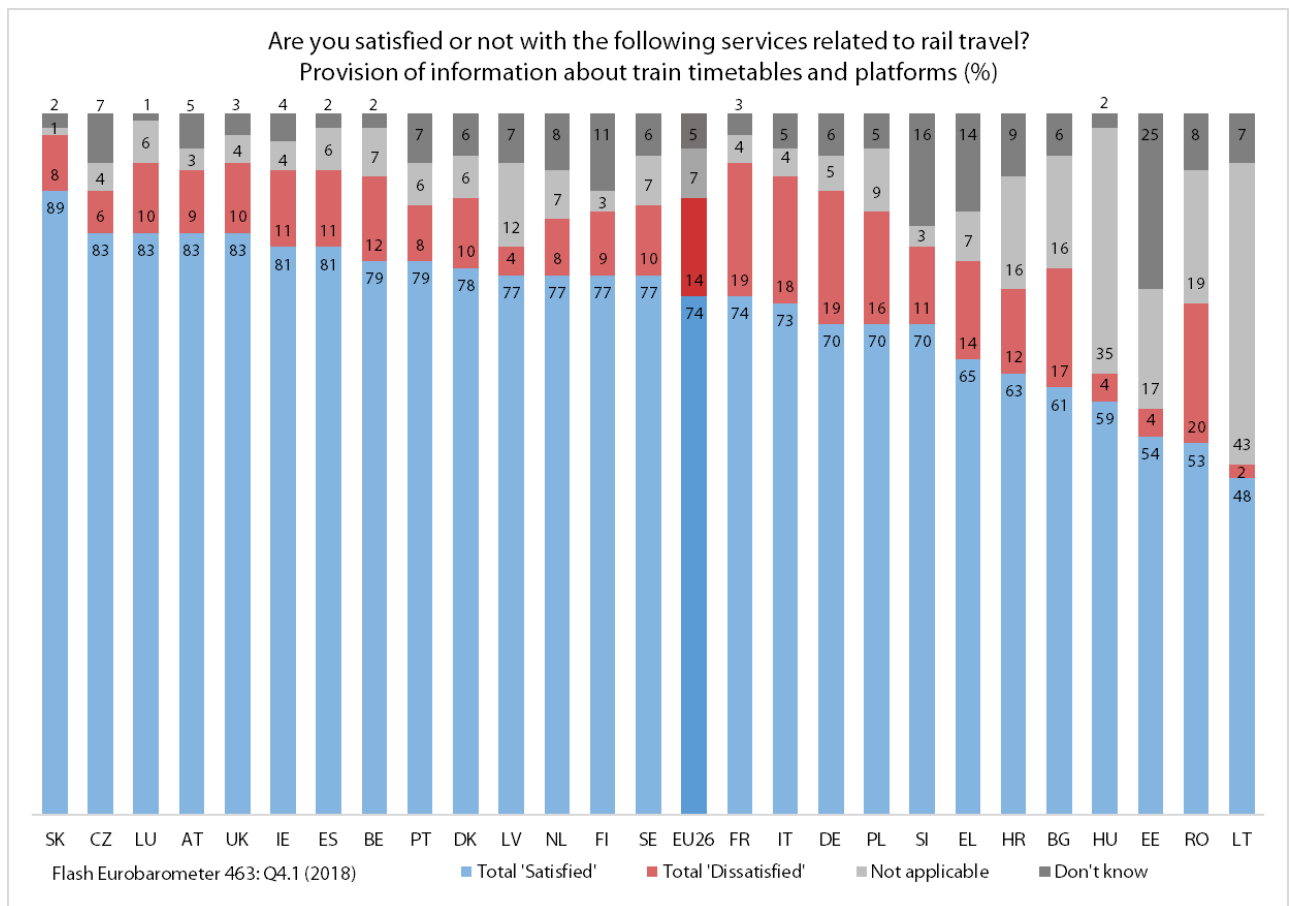
For more detailed information: [Special Eurobarometer on Climate change \(March 2017\)](#)

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Rail passengers' rights and obligations

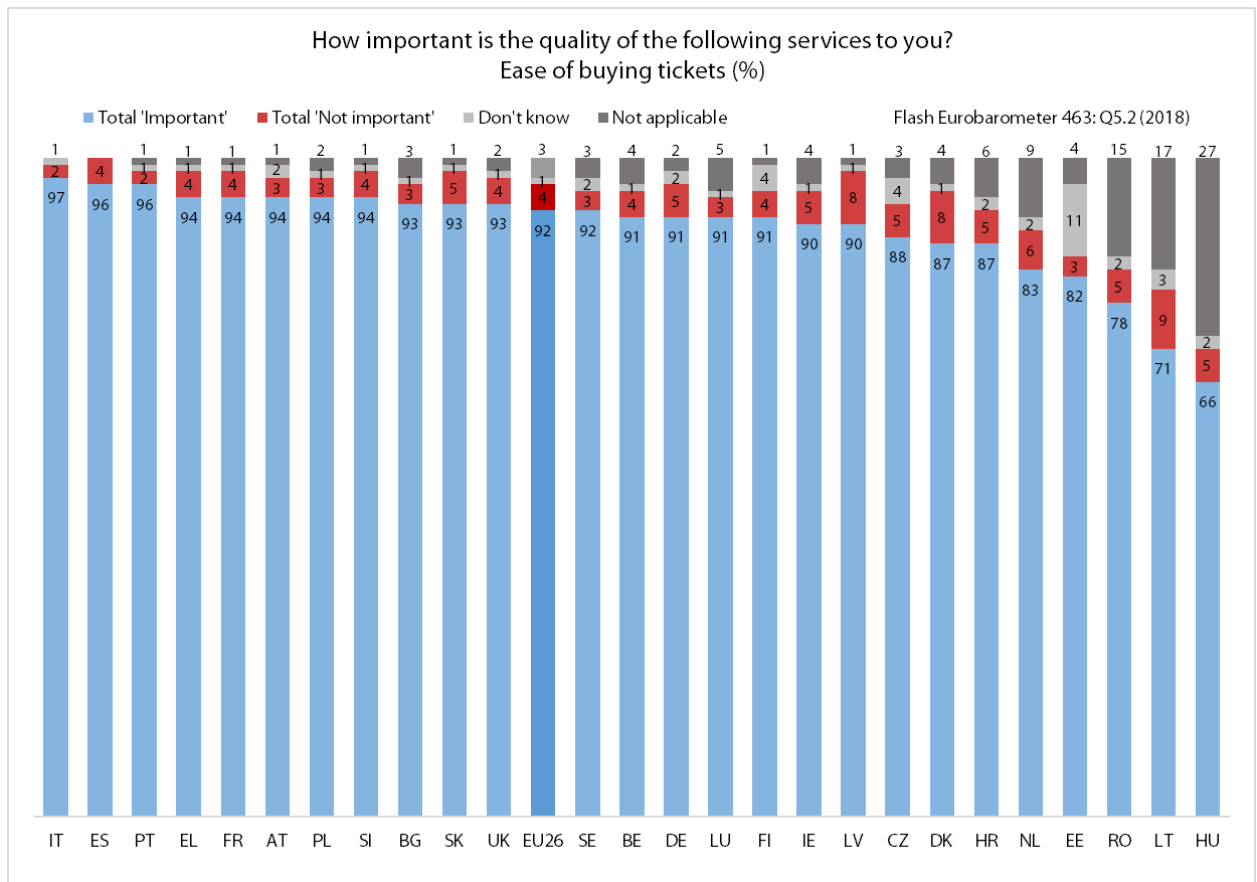
Since December 2009, [European legislation for Rail Passenger Rights](#) lays the foundation for helping passengers understand and exercise their rights when travelling by rail in the EU. Since then, the single market for passenger rail transport is in development. On Wednesday afternoon, Plenary will update EU rules on rail passenger rights in order to better protect users in the event of delays, cancellations or discrimination (Vote on Thursday).

Are Europeans satisfied with all the aspects of rail transport such as infrastructures or accessibility? According to a [Flash Eurobarometer on European's satisfaction with passenger rail services from February 2018](#), almost three quarters of respondents (74%) are satisfied with the provision of information about train timetables and platforms, with 26% saying they are very satisfied. Just over one in ten (14%) are dissatisfied although just 4% are very dissatisfied.



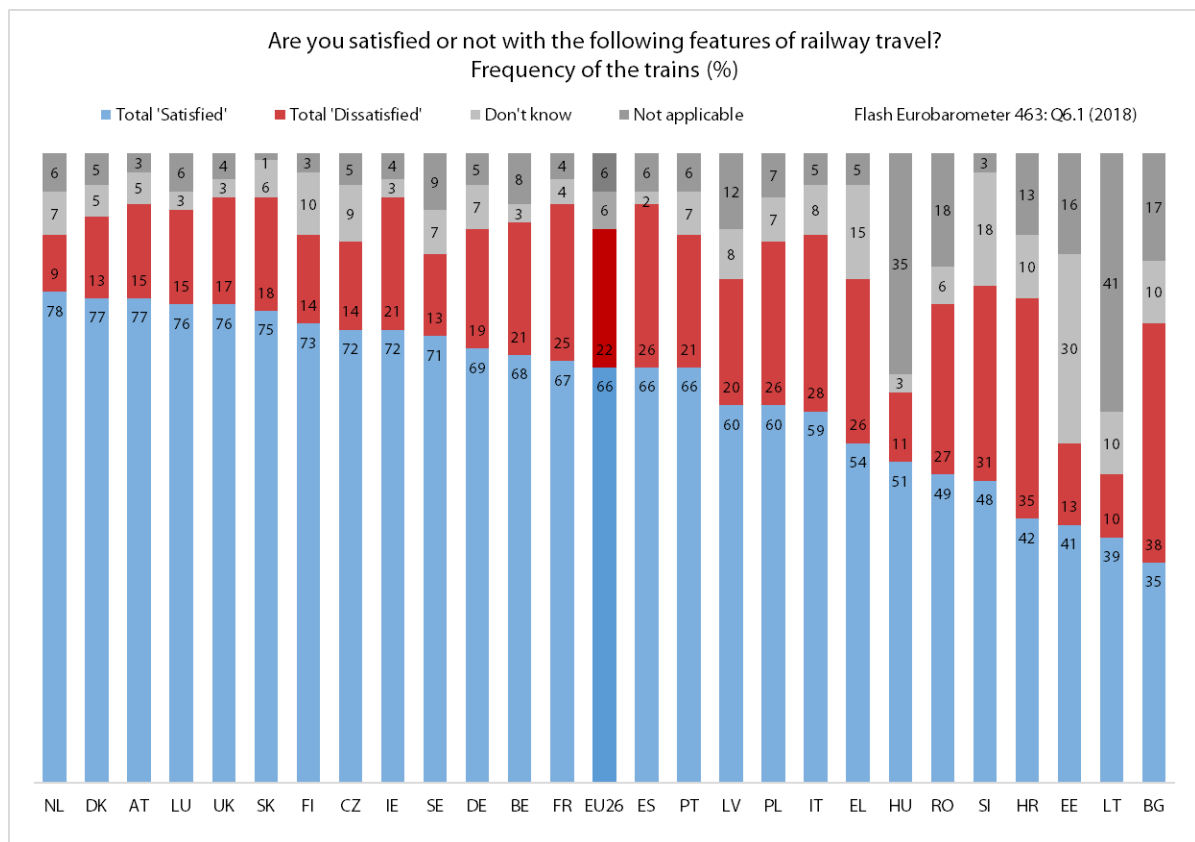
For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer on Europeans' satisfaction with passenger rail services \(Jan-Feb 2018\)](#)

Moreover, the easiness of buying tickets, the availability of through-tickets and the availability multi-mode tickets is very important to a large majority of respondents.



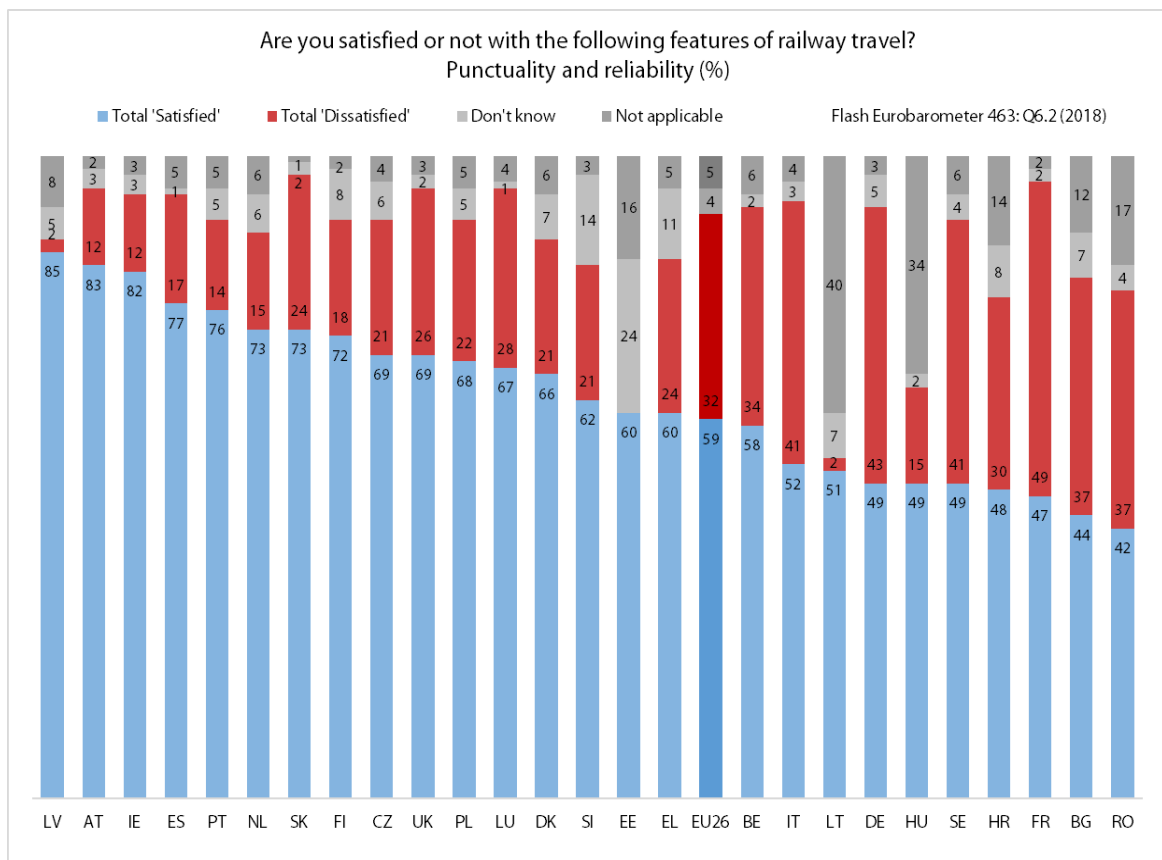
More info: [Flash Eurobarometer on Europeans' satisfaction with passenger rail services \(Jan-Feb 2018\)](#)

Two thirds of respondents (66%) are satisfied with the frequency of trains, with 48% saying they are rather satisfied. More than one in five (22%) are dissatisfied, with 6% very dissatisfied. Just over one in twenty say this does not apply, while 6% say they don't know.



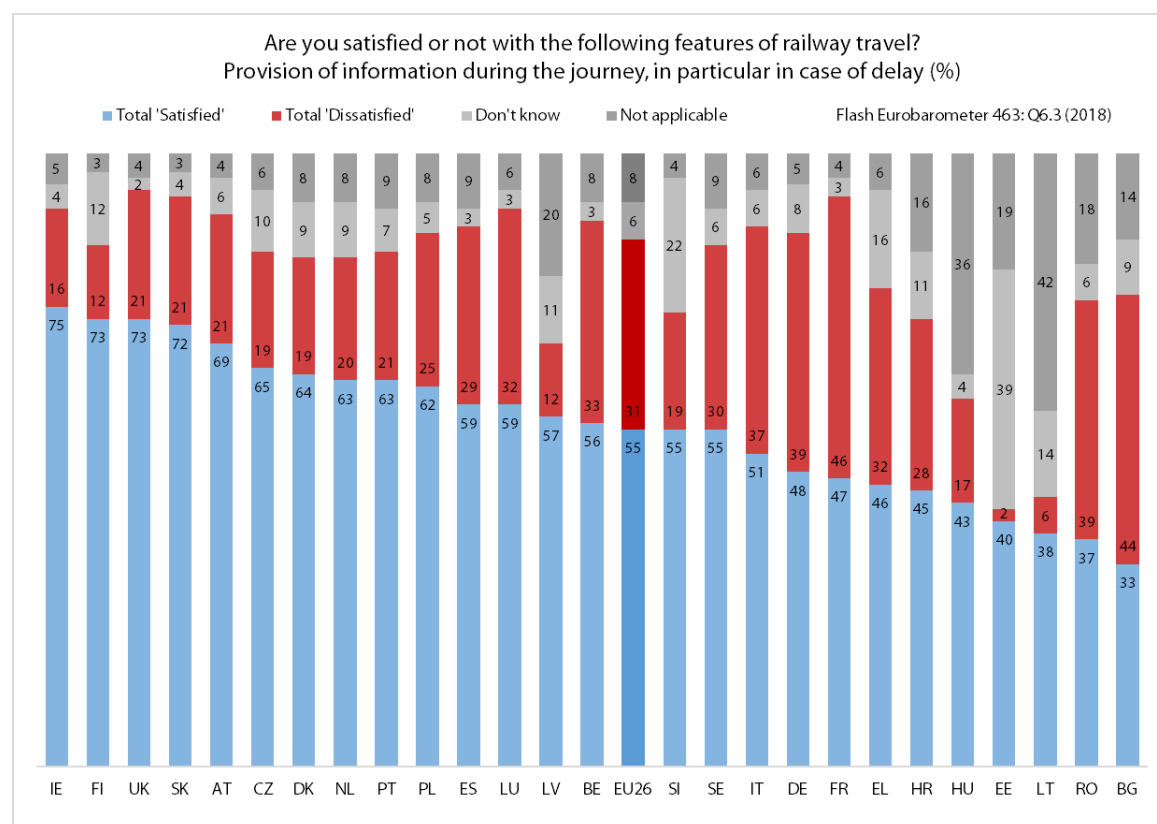
For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer on Europeans' satisfaction with passenger rail services \(Jan-Feb 2018\)](#)

Almost six in ten are satisfied with the punctuality and reliability of railway travel (59%), with 16% saying they are very satisfied. Almost one third (32%) are dissatisfied, with 10% very dissatisfied. One in twenty (5%) say this is not applicable, while 4% don't know.



For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer on Europeans' satisfaction with passenger rail services \(Jan-Feb 2018\)](#)

Finally, more than half of the respondents (55%) are satisfied with the provision of information during a train journey, particularly in the case of delays, with 17% saying they are very satisfied. Almost one third (31%) are dissatisfied, with 9% very dissatisfied.



For more detailed information: [Flash Eurobarometer on Europeans' satisfaction with passenger rail services \(Jan-Feb 2018\)](#)