

Polling Europe presents the results of their latest pan-European survey.

Brussels - May 14th, 2024 - Summary of the main results of a Pan – European survey conducted by Polling Europe and presented at the Press Club Brussels Europe (Brussels) on the 14th of May.

Polling Europe is a brand new research firm established as of today by OpinionWay and SWG, two leading market and social research entities from France and Italy. The company presented its first survey today at the Press Club Brussels Europe.

- **These European elections are crucial for European citizens.**

The results gathered in the survey underline the utter importance of the upcoming European elections: **more than half of the individuals interviewed deem these elections as more important than usual.** These elections are also happening at a crucial historical moment in which **European citizens are sharply divided on the attitude towards the European Commission:** 49% express confidence towards the outgoing commission, while 51% think the opposite. The importance of these elections is emphasized by the priorities that the EU should face in the next years: **the most relevant issue for voters appears to be the common EU defence, a priority for 41% of Europeans,** while 31% consider it crucial to reach agreements on the common management of immigration.

- **The defence investments are the priority.**

In this regard, European citizens' opinion is straightforward and **3 out of 4 citizens think that the European Union should increase investments in defence,** and 43% think that such action should be pursued strongly. The need to raise defence expenditure is particularly strong in Eastern and Northern Europe. The scenario in which the United States were to reduce military support for Europe does not strengthen the agreement in regard to an increase in military expenditure.

The strong support for the increase in military expenditure comes with a prevailing opinion (57%) that the EU should boost the production of ammunitions, and (61%) that at least part of the EU budget money should be allocated to the defence industry.

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- **European fears and policy divergence amidst global geopolitical challenges.**

The widespread fear is that the Russo-Ukraine war may escalate into a global conflict (80%). This fear is fueled by a complicated geopolitical situation, by which Europeans see the UK (64%), the US (61%), and Japan (56%) as friendly countries, but perceive Russia, Iran, China and, partially, Saudi Arabia as unfriendly countries. Another common fear is that Russia may end up attacking a NATO member (76%). 1 out of 4 European citizens is worried about having a war in his own country.

Consequently, 66% of the interviewees would agree to implement more economic sanctions to Russia, and 51% agree with keeping on sending weapons to the Ukraine army. On the other hand, more committing options such as sending logistic support or boots on the ground raise a much lower agreement (32% and 19% respectively). The different kinds of support to Ukraine are backed more strongly by EPP and Renew Europe parties' voters, while Identity and Democracy parties' voters tend to disagree with all of them.

Whilst on the defence topic, European citizens display a rather solid common ground, on other topics, there is a strong divide. When it comes to green policies, 40% of the citizens would rather opt for more strict emission reduction policies, whereas another 42% would tend towards more industrial-friendly policies.

Methodology: the survey has been carried out by conducting over 5,000 interviews on a representative sample of the European Union's 18+ population.

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