



SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER 561

# Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in the EU in 2025

EUROBAROMETER **SUMMARY**  
JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2025



This survey has been requested by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST)  
and co-ordinated by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication  
(DG COMM 'Public Opinion & Citizens Engagement' Unit)

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission. The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

**Project title** Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in the EU in 2025 - Summary

**Language version** EN

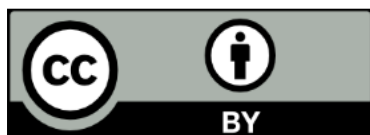
**Media/Volume** PDF Web

**Catalogue number** DS-01-25-110-EN-N

**ISBN** 978-92-68-28070-6

**DOI** 10.2838/4224975

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# Introduction



## Introduction

Corruption is generally recognised as the misuse of power entrusted to individuals for personal gain. This behaviour can intensify social inequalities, reduce trust in governmental institutions, and weaken effective governance and social justice. Additionally, corruption can negatively impact governmental objectives aimed at reducing the wealth gap and promoting environmental sustainability.

The EU Rule of Law Report, published annually since 2020, details the varied nature and extent of corruption across EU Member States, highlighting the differing levels of success in anti-corruption efforts throughout the EU. Supported by the anti-corruption experience-sharing programme launched by the Commission in 2015, and continued as thematic workshops under the EU Anti-Corruption Network since 2024,<sup>1</sup> these initiatives have encouraged national bodies to strengthen the enforcement of anti-corruption laws and policies.

The Commission's anti-corruption efforts are centred around the following main pillars:

- Mainstreaming anti-corruption provisions in EU horizontal and sectorial legislation and policy;
- Monitoring the efforts of EU Member States in preventing and fighting corruption;
- Supporting the implementation of anti-corruption measures at national level through funding, technical assistance, and experience-sharing;
- Improving the quantitative evidence base for anti-corruption policy;
- Promoting the fight against corruption globally.

This Eurobarometer survey is designed to explore the level of corruption perceived and experienced by EU citizens. It was first conducted in 2005<sup>2</sup>, and has been repeated in 2007<sup>3</sup>, 2009<sup>4</sup>, 2011<sup>5</sup>, 2013<sup>6</sup>, 2017<sup>7</sup>, 2019<sup>8</sup>, 2022<sup>9</sup>, 2023<sup>10</sup>, and 2024<sup>11</sup>.

This survey covers the following areas:

- General perceptions of corruption including acceptability, its perceived extent, and the perceived changes in incidence in recent years;
- Detailed attitudes to corruption in public institutions and business, and the effectiveness of government, the judicial system, and institutions in tackling corruption;
- Personal experience of bribery, and the incidence of corruption in contact with institutions;
- Corruption at the workplace;
- Whether corruption was reported, awareness of where to report corruption and the level of trust in various authorities to deal with it. Reasons for not reporting corruption are also considered.

The findings are described at the EU level, encompassing all 27 Member States, and are broken down by country and socio-demographic group. This year's results have been benchmarked against those from 2024 and, when pertinent, against data from prior surveys<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/democracy-eu-citizenship-anti-corruption/anti-corruption/eu-network-against-corruption\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/democracy-eu-citizenship-anti-corruption/anti-corruption/eu-network-against-corruption_en)

<sup>2</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/1490>

<sup>3</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/636>

<sup>4</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/814>

<sup>5</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/1010>

<sup>6</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/1076>

<sup>7</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2176>

<sup>8</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2247>

<sup>9</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2658>

<sup>10</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2968>

<sup>11</sup> <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/3217>

<sup>12</sup> As a reminder: in 2019, the United Kingdom was a member of the EU, so any reference to the EU average from that year or earlier includes data from the UK.

## Methodology

This survey was carried out by the Verian Group in the 27 EU Member States between the 9th of January and the 4th of February. Some 26,354 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed in their mother tongue. This survey was commissioned by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST).

The methodology used was that of the Standard Eurobarometer surveys carried out by the Directorate-General for Communication ("Public Opinion & Citizens Engagement" Unit)<sup>13</sup>. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, either physically in people's homes or through remote video interaction in the appropriate national language. Interviews with remote video interaction ("online face-to-face" or CAVI, Computer Assisted Video Interviewing), which were only conducted in Czechia, Denmark, Malta, and Finland. A technical note concerning the interviews conducted by the member institutes of the Verian network is annexed to this report.

Throughout the report, results are compared to Special Eurobarometer SP548 of 2024.

**We would like to thank the people across the European Union who have offered their time to take part in this survey.**

**Without their active participation, this study would not have been possible.**

Note: In this report, EU countries are referred to by their official abbreviations, as listed below:

Belgium	BE	Lithuania	LT
Bulgaria	BG	Luxembourg	LU
Czechia	CZ	Hungary	HU
Denmark	DK	Malta	MT
Germany	DE	The Netherlands	NL
Estonia	EE	Austria	AT
Ireland	IE	Poland	PL
Greece	EL	Portugal	PT
Spain	ES	Romania	RO
France	FR	Slovenia	SI
Croatia	HR	Slovakia	SK
Italy	IT	Finland	FI
Republic of Cyprus	CY *	Sweden	SE
Latvia	LV		
European Union – weighted average for the 27 Member States			EU27

\* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 European Union Member States. However, the *acquis communautaire* has been suspended in the part of the country not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the 'CY' category and in the EU27 average.

<sup>13</sup> The Eurobarometer methodological approaches:  
<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/about/eurobarometer>



# **Key findings**

**More than two thirds of Europeans (69%) still believe corruption is widespread in their country, a slight increase of one percentage point since 2024.**

- ♦ More than three-quarters (77%) agree that too-close links between business and politics lead to corruption, indicating a slight increase from the previous year's 75%. Around two-thirds (65%, +2 pp) believe that favouritism and corruption hinder business competition. 61% (+2 pp) believe corruption is part of the business culture in their country. Just over half (51%, unchanged) agree that the only way to succeed in business is to have political connections.
- ♦ More than half of Europeans (51%, -2 percentage points since 2024) believe that corruption is widespread among political parties, while 46% (-4 pp) say the same about politicians at local, regional, or national levels. Additionally, 38% (+1 pp) believe corruption is widespread among officials awarding public tenders, and 36% (unchanged) among those issuing building permits.
- ♦ Two-thirds of respondents (66%, +1 pp) agree that bribery or the use of connections is often the easiest way to obtain certain public services.

**At least three in ten EU citizens feel personally affected by corruption and believe that it has increased in recent years.**

- ♦ Three in ten respondents (30%, +3 percentage points compared to 2024) say they are personally affected by corruption in their daily lives. More than four in ten respondents (44%) think the level of corruption in their country has increased in the past three years.
- ♦ Those living in Member States which joined the EU in or after 2004 are more likely to say they are personally affected by corruption (41%) than those in Member States that joined before 2004 (26%). Similarly, respondents living outside the euro area are more likely to feel personally affected than those within it (35% vs. 27%).

**The majority of EU citizens continue to find corrupt practices unacceptable.**

- ♦ A majority of Europeans (64%, +3 percentage points since 2024) continue to view corruption as unacceptable, reversing the decline observed in the previous year.
- ♦ Just over seven in ten EU citizens (71%) consider it never acceptable to do a favour to receive something from public administration or public services.

- ♦ Around three in four respondents (74%) believe it is never acceptable to give gifts to public administration or public services.
- ♦ A majority of respondents (80%) find giving money to get something from the public administration or public service never acceptable.

**A decreasing minority believe the fight against corruption in their country is effective.**

- ♦ More than four in ten respondents (44%, +3 percentage points since 2024) think the level of corruption in their country has increased in the past three years, with 18% (+1 pp) saying it increased a lot and 26% (+2 pp) saying it increased a little. In contrast, 40% think the level has stayed the same.
- ♦ In eleven EU Member States, at least half of respondents think the level of corruption in their country has increased.
- ♦ A growing number of respondents are pessimistic about national efforts to combat corruption. A minority (39%, +4 pp since 2024) think measures against corruption are applied impartially and without ulterior motives, that there are enough successful prosecutions in their country to deter people from corrupt practices (36%, +4 pp), that their national government's efforts to combat corruption are effective (32%, +3 pp) or that there is sufficient transparency and supervision of the financing of political parties in their country (33%, +3 pp).
- ♦ In all but two Member States, a majority of respondents agree that high-level corruption cases are not pursued sufficiently in their country.

**The police are the most trusted body to deal with corruption across all Member States.**

Six in ten Europeans (61%) say they most trust the police to deal with a case of corruption. This represents an increase of one percentage point compared to 2024. The police rank well above the justice system (23%, unchanged), which is the only other institution mentioned by at least one in five respondents.

**More than half of EU citizens do not report corruption, if they experience or witness it.**

- ♦ Five per cent of Europeans report having experienced or witnessed a case of corruption in the last 12 months. This figure remains unchanged compared to 2024.
- ♦ Among those who had contact with various services, fewer than one in ten (8%, +1 pp) report that someone asked for or expected a gift, favour, or extra money in exchange for services.



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- ♦ Slightly fewer than one in ten respondents (9%) say they personally know someone who takes or has taken bribes.
- ♦ A majority of respondents (55%) say they would not know where to report a case of corruption if they were to experience or witness one, a figure that remains almost unchanged compared to 2024 (-1 pp). Slightly more than four in ten (44%) say they would know where to report it.
- ♦ Despite these experiences, only one in five respondents (20%, +2 pp) who have experienced and/or witnessed corruption say they reported it. In contrast, close to eight in ten (79%, -2 pp) say they did not report the case.

**The difficulty in proving corruption is the main reason for not reporting it.**

- ♦ In 24 EU Member States, the difficulty in proving anything is the most mentioned reason for not reporting corruption, although results differ widely across countries.
- ♦ Just over four in ten respondents (43%, unchanged since 2024) identify the difficulty in proving corruption cases (43%) as an important reason for not reporting. Around one in four (27%, -1 pp) believe that reporting would be pointless because those responsible would not be punished, while an equal share (27%, -1 pp) cite the lack of protection from retaliation.



# **I. General perceptions of corruption**

## 1. How widespread is corruption?

Nearly seven in ten Europeans believe corruption is widespread in their country.

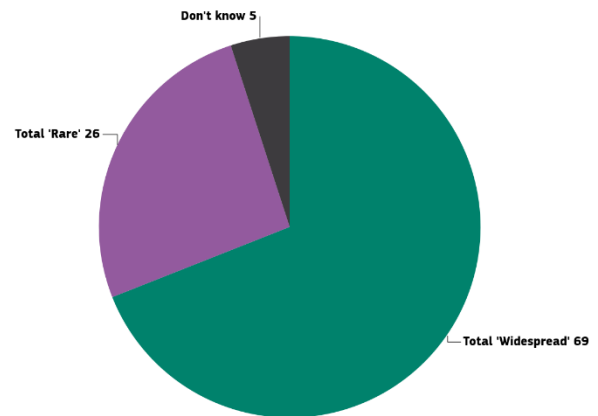
Respondents were asked to assess how widespread they believe corruption is in their country.<sup>14</sup>

At the EU level, close to seven in ten Europeans (69%, +1 pp) believe that corruption is widespread in their country<sup>15</sup>, with 23% (unchanged) considering it very widespread and 46% (+1 pp) viewing it as fairly widespread. In opposition, around one-fourth of respondents (26%, -1 pp) perceive corruption as rare, with 22% (unchanged) stating it is fairly rare and 4% (-1 pp) believing it is very rare. 5% (unchanged) of respondents answered that they "Don't know".

At the national level, Greece stands out with 97% considering corruption to be widespread, followed by Croatia (92%) and Portugal (91%). On the other hand, Finland (21%) and Denmark (28%) have the lowest total percentages of respondents perceiving corruption as widespread.

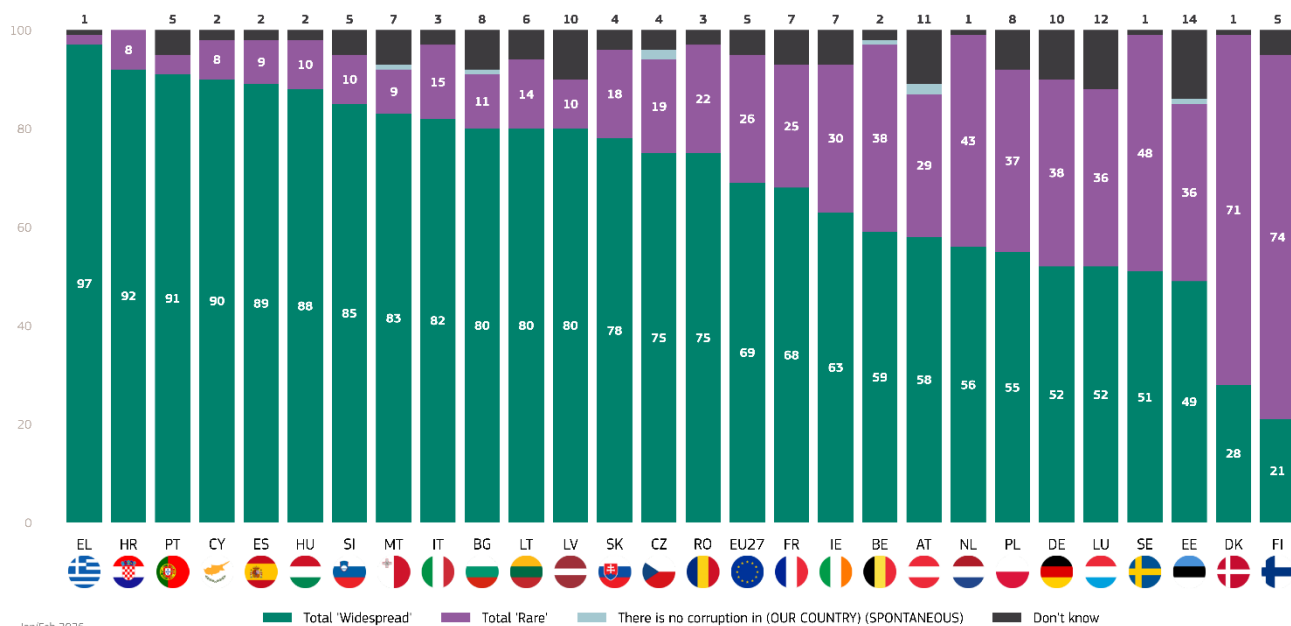
Overall, more than half of respondents in 24 EU Member States believe that corruption is widespread in their country. In two Member States a majority of respondents perceive corruption as rare: Denmark (71% vs 28% widespread) and Finland (74% vs 21% widespread).

QD5: How widespread do you think the problem of corruption is in (OUR COUNTRY)? (EU27) (%)



Total 'Widespread' ▲ 1  
 Total 'Rare' ▼ 1  
 There is no corruption in (OUR COUNTRY) (SPONTANEOUS) =  
 Don't know =  
 ▲▼ (Jan/Feb 2025 - Feb/Mar 2024)  
 Jan/Feb 2025

QD5: How widespread do you think the problem of corruption is in (OUR COUNTRY)? (%)



<sup>14</sup> QD5. How widespread do you think the problem of corruption is in (OUR COUNTRY)?

<sup>15</sup> Before answering whether corruption is widespread in their country, respondents were given a definition of corruption: "From now on, when we

mention corruption, we mean it in a broad sense, including offering, giving, requesting and accepting bribes or kickbacks, valuable gifts or important favours, as well as any abuse of power for private gain". They were also requested to base their answers on their own experience.



## 2. Level of corruption in daily life

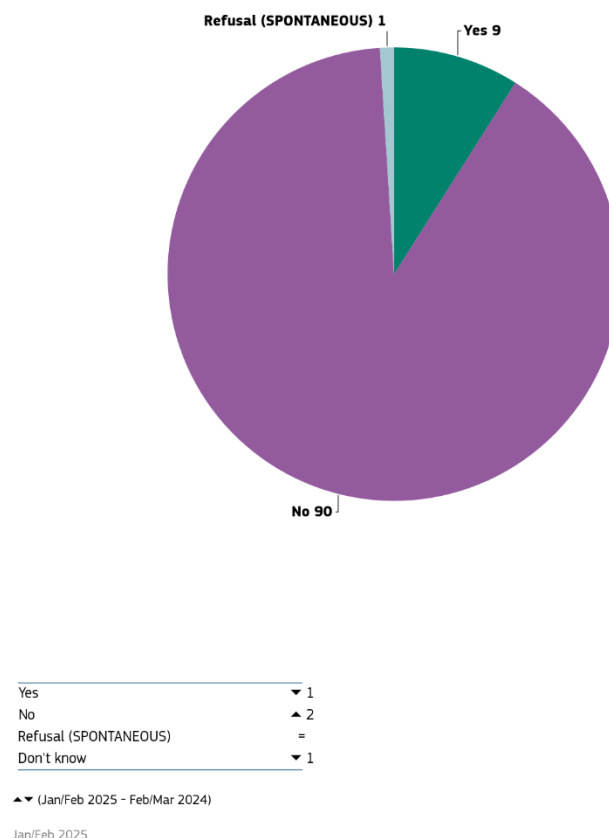
### A large majority of Europeans do not know anyone who takes or has taken bribes.

Respondents were asked whether they personally know someone who takes or has taken bribes.<sup>16</sup>

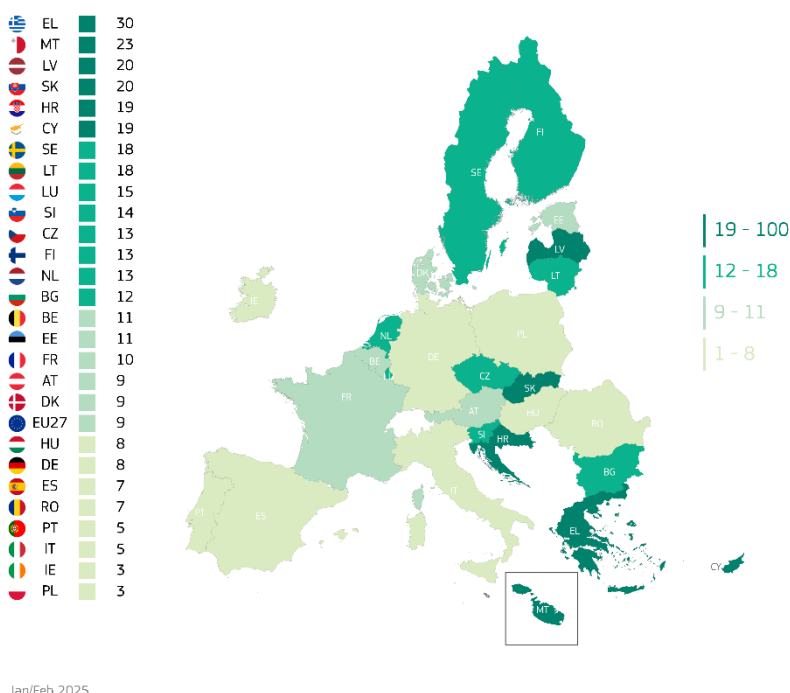
At the EU level, around one in ten respondents (9%, -1 pp) report knowing someone who takes or has taken bribes. A large majority of 90% (+2 pp) report not knowing anyone, while the percentage of respondents who refused to answer remained unchanged at 1%.

At the country level, the analysis of the survey results provides a more granular view of the responses. While in each EU Member State at least seven in ten respondents report not knowing anyone, countries with the highest shares of respondents answering "Yes" are Greece (30%), Malta (23%), Latvia and Slovakia (both 20%). Conversely, countries with the highest percentage scores for not knowing anyone who has taken bribes include Ireland (96%), Poland (96%), Italy (95%), Portugal (94%), and Spain (92%), while Greece (70%) and Malta (74%) as well as Slovakia, Lithuania and Croatia (each 78%) have the lowest shares in that category.

QD8: Do you personally know anyone who takes or has taken bribes? (EU27) (%)



QD8: Do you personally know anyone who takes or has taken bribes? - Yes (EU27) (%)



<sup>16</sup> QD8. Do you personally know anyone who takes or has taken bribes?

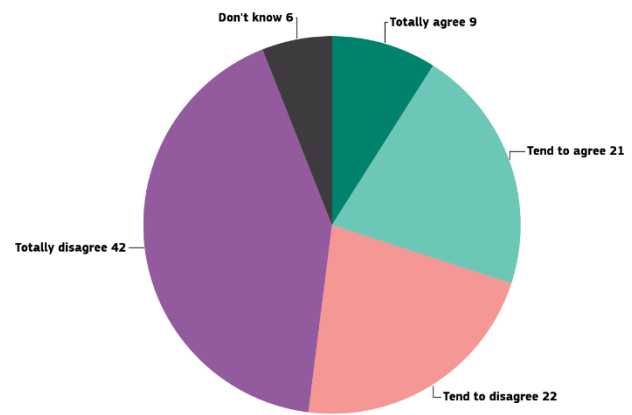


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Further, respondents were asked whether they feel personally affected by corruption in their daily lives.<sup>17</sup> Three in ten (30%, + 3 pp) respondent say that they are personally affected, including 9% (+1 pp) who totally agree and 21% (+2 pp) who tend to agree. However, a majority of 64% (-2 pp) report not feeling affected, including 22% (+1 pp) who tend to disagree and 42% (-3 pp) who totally disagree. 6% say that they "Don't know".

There is a wide variation between countries of those who say they are personally affected by corruption: While at least six in ten respondents feel personally affected in Greece (66%), Portugal (64%), Croatia (61%), Cyprus and Romania (both 60%), fewer than one in ten respondents feels affected in Denmark (4%), France (8%) and Finland (9%). When considering only the answer option 'Totally agree', the countries with the highest percentages are Greece (28%), Croatia (28%), and Malta (27%). In contrast, Denmark (1%) and Finland (1%) have the lowest scores for this answer option.

QD15a.4: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? - You are personally affected by corruption in your daily life (EU27) (%)

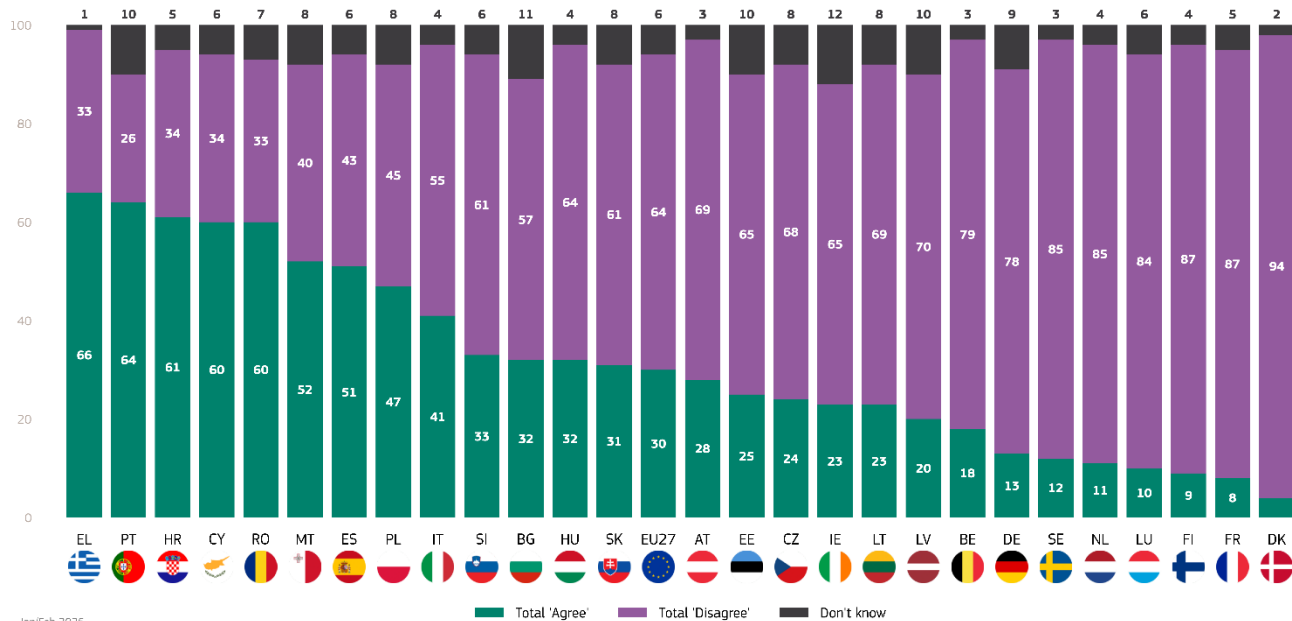


Totally agree	▲ 1
Tend to agree	▲ 2
Tend to disagree	▲ 1
Totally disagree	▼ 3
Don't know	▼ 1

▲▼ (Jan/Feb 2025 - Feb/Mar 2024)

Jan/Feb 2025

QD15a.4: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? - You are personally affected by corruption in your daily life (%)



Jan/Feb 2025

<sup>17</sup> QD15a.4. Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? You are personally affected by corruption in your daily life

### 3. Acceptability of corruption

Most respondents across the European Union find corrupt practices like doing favours, giving gifts, or giving money to public administration increasingly unacceptable, with a notable decrease in acceptability since 2024.

This section presents an analysis of the extent to which respondents across the European Union find it acceptable to engage in corrupt practices, such as giving money, gifts, or doing favours when they want something from a public administration or a public service.

When it comes to **doing a favour**<sup>18</sup> to receive something from public administration or public services, just over seven in ten Europeans (71%, +6 pp) consider it never acceptable, whereas 28% (-5 pp) find it acceptable. Among the latter, 23% consider this practice sometimes acceptable (-2 pp), and 5% (-3 pp) believe it is always acceptable.

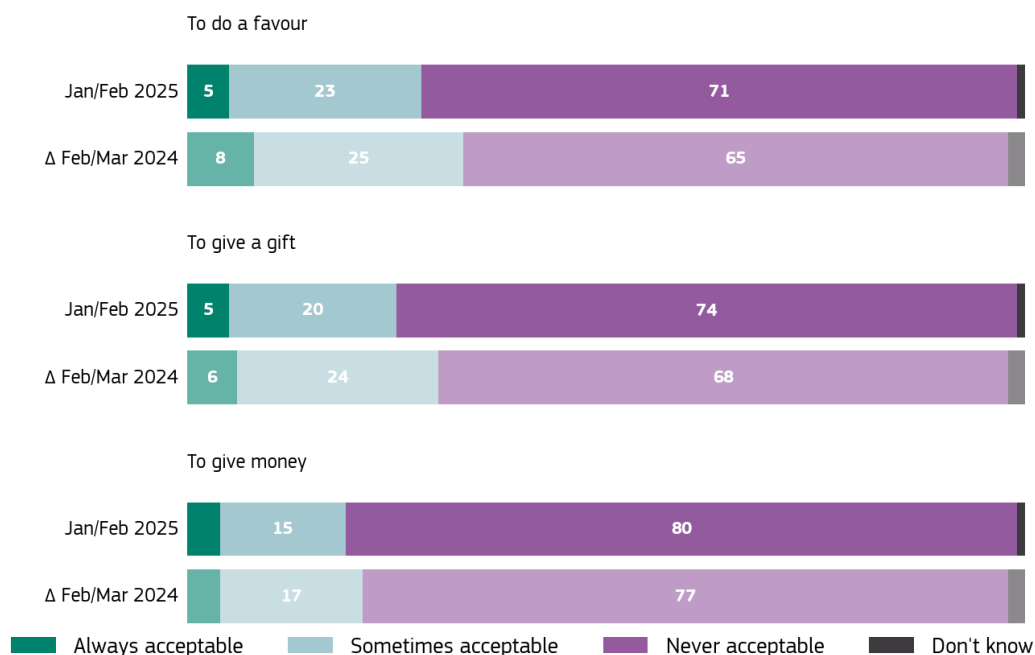
Regarding the acceptability of **giving gifts** to public administration or public services, the EU level data shows that a majority of around three in four respondents (74%, +6 pp) find it never acceptable. On the other hand, one quarter of respondents (-5 pp) believe it is acceptable to give a gift. Of these, 5% (-1 pp) think it is always acceptable and 20% (-4 pp) consider it acceptable sometimes.

Regarding **giving money** to get something from the public administration or public service, a majority of respondents find this practice never acceptable (80%, +3 pp). Conversely, 15% (-2 pp) consider it sometimes acceptable, and 4% (unchanged) find it always acceptable. Overall, around one in five respondents (19%, -2 pp) find giving money acceptable (either always or sometimes).

Following an increase in the acceptability of doing a favour, giving a gift or giving money to obtain something from the public administration or public service between 2023 and 2024, these levels have now decreased for all three practices.

The results for these three bribery practices are analysed at country level below.

QD4: Talking more generally, if you wanted to get something from the public administration or a public service, to what extent do you think it is acceptable to do any of the following? (%)



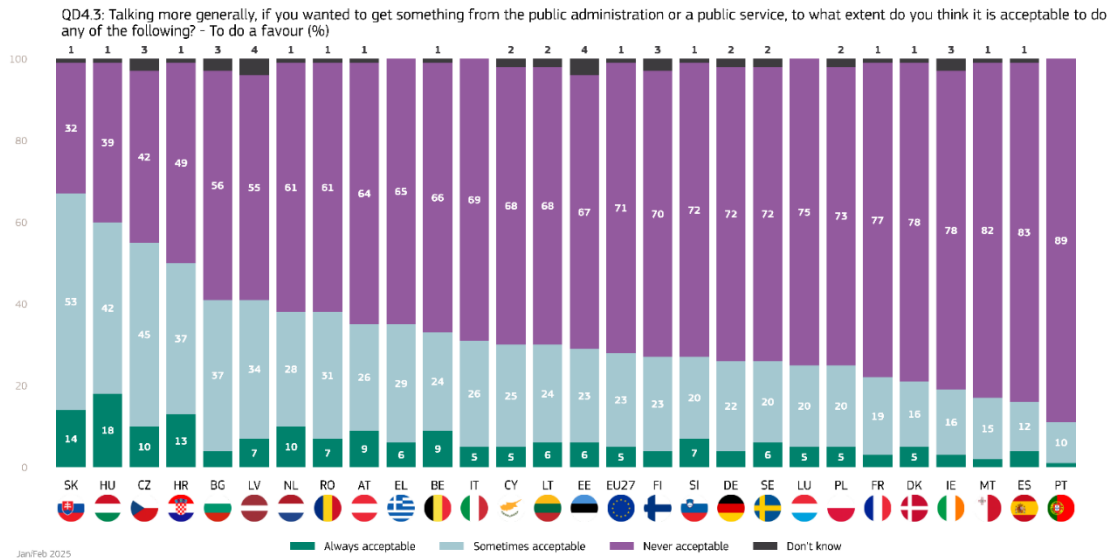
<sup>18</sup> QD4 Talking more generally, if you wanted to get something from the public administration or a public service, to what extent do you think it is

acceptable to do any of the following? 1. To give money 2. To give a gift 3. To do a favour

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### Doing a favour

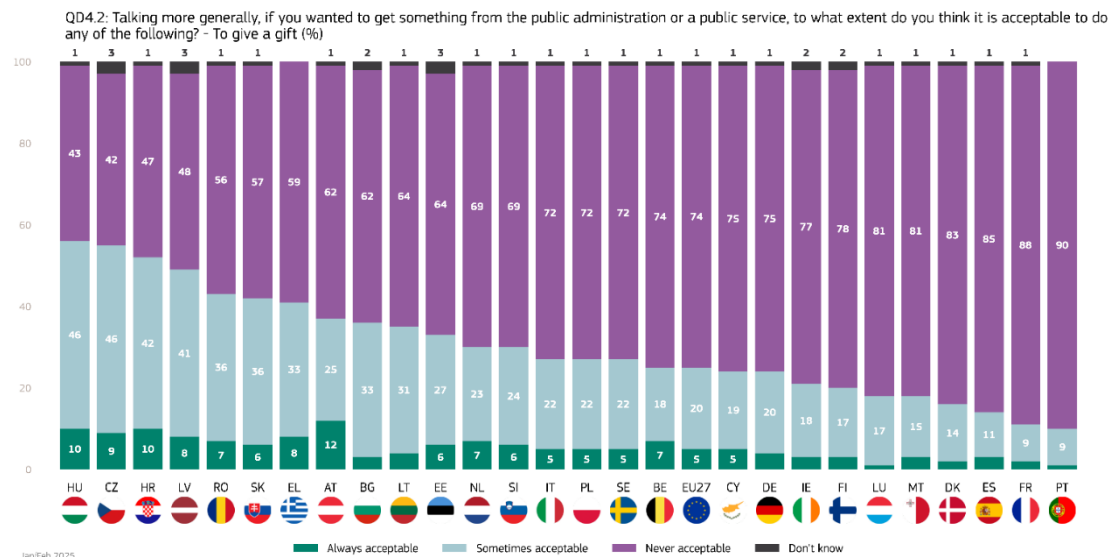
At least six in ten respondents in Slovakia (67%) and Hungary (60%) and at least half in Czechia (55%) and Croatia (50%) believe it is acceptable to do a favour in exchange for a service from the public administration or public service. In the other 23 Member States, a minority consider this behaviour acceptable, with Portugal (11%), Spain (16%), and Malta (17%) showing the lowest acceptability for such practices.



### Giving a gift

In three EU Member States, more than half of respondents think it is acceptable to give a gift to get something from the public administration or public service: Hungary (56%), Czechia (55%), and Croatia (52%).

In Austria (12%), Croatia and Hungary (both 10%), at least one in ten respondents think this behaviour is always acceptable. Respondents are least likely to find this behaviour acceptable in Portugal (10%), France (11%) and Spain (14%).

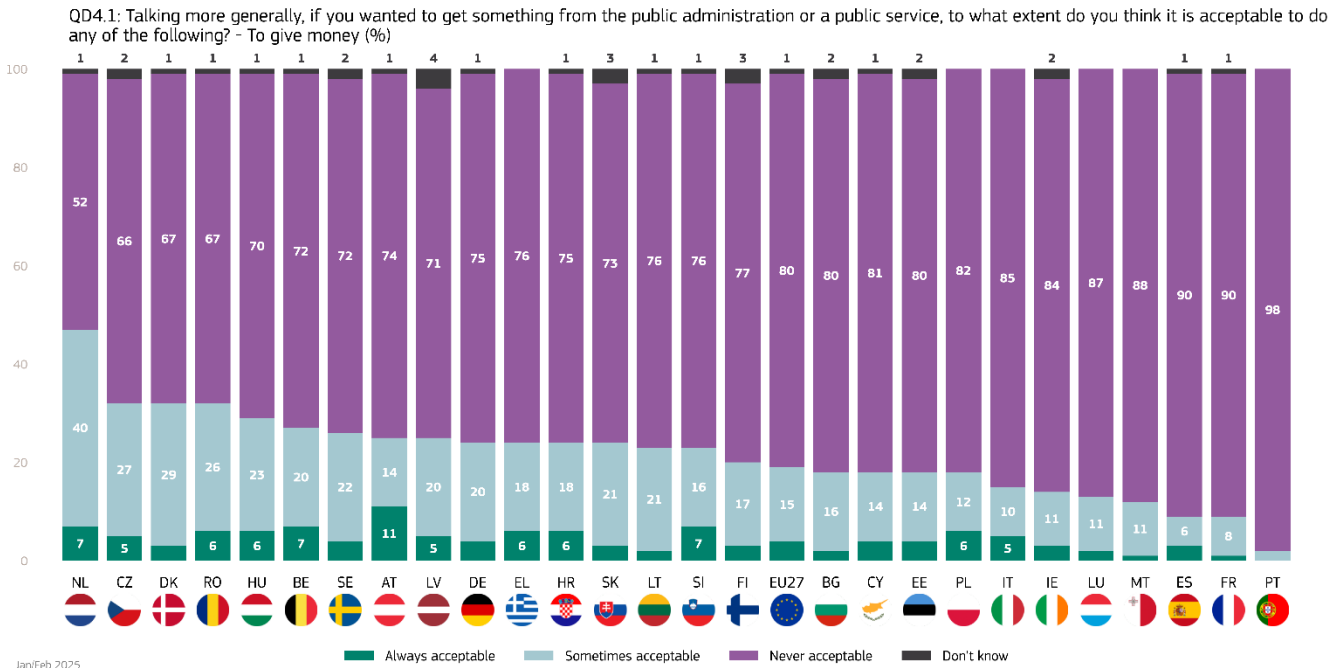


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### Giving money

Across the EU, more than one in three respondents in four countries think it is acceptable to give money if they want something from the public administration or public service: the Netherlands (47%) as well as Czechia, Romania and Denmark (32% each).

In three countries, the proportion of respondents finding giving money to get something from the public administration or public service acceptable is particularly low. Fewer than one in ten respondents in Portugal (2%), Spain and France (both 9%) find this practice acceptable. In contrast, the highest shares that think giving money is always acceptable are observed in Austria (11%) and the Netherlands, Belgium and Slovenia (all at 7%).





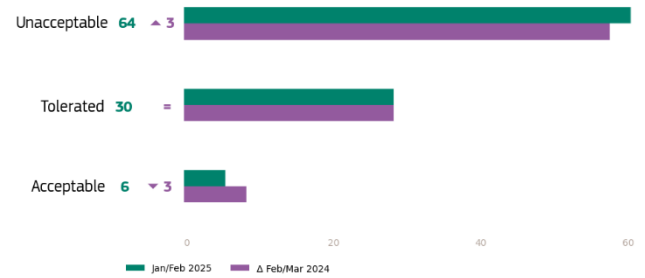
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### Overall acceptability

Based on the answer to each of the three questions above, a "tolerance index to corruption" is calculated<sup>19</sup>, categorising respondents according to whether they regard corruption as 'acceptable', 'tolerated' or 'unacceptable'.

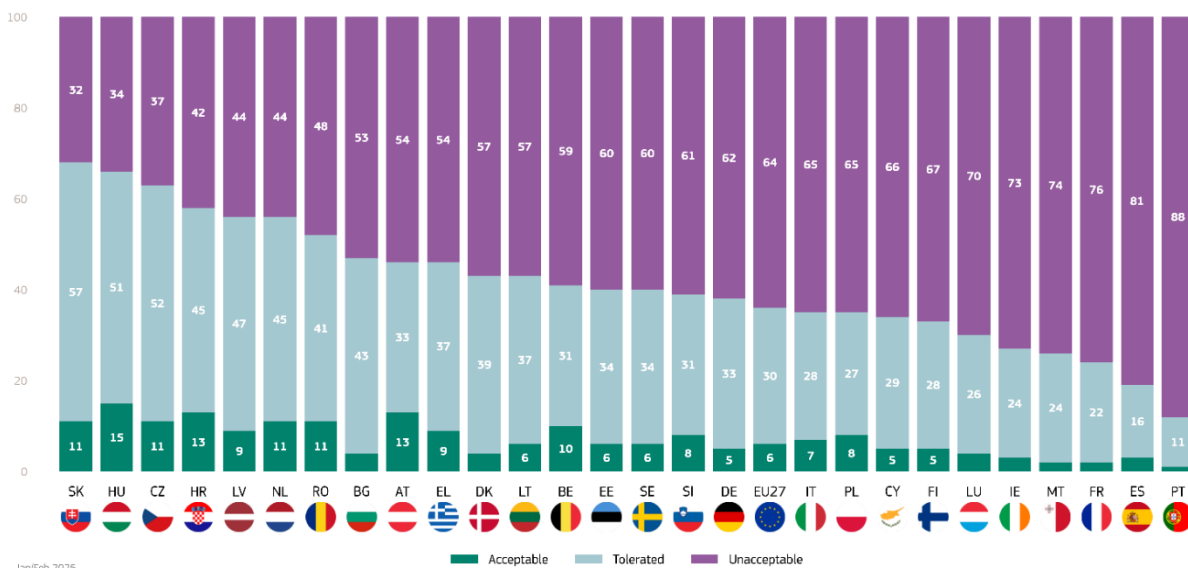
At the EU level, more than six in ten (64%, +3 pp) find corruption unacceptable. In 20 EU Member States, at least half of respondents share this view, with the highest proportions observed in Portugal (88%), Spain (81%), and France (76%), where more than three in four respondents hold this opinion. The unacceptance shares are lowest in Slovakia (32%), Hungary (34%), and Croatia (42%).

QD4T: Tolerance index to corruption (%)



Across the European Union, fewer than one in ten respondents (6%, -3 pp) find corruption acceptable, while three in ten respondents consider it tolerated (30%, unchanged).

QD4T: Tolerance index to corruption (%)



<sup>19</sup> The index is calculated based on the answers given to QD4.1,2 and 3. Points are attributed depending on the answers to those three questions: "never acceptable" (0 points), "sometimes acceptable" (1 point) and "always acceptable" (2 points). Respondents who received 0 points in total

are classified in the index as answering "unacceptable", while those who scored 1 to 3 points are classified as "tolerated" and those who scored 4 to 6 points are classified as "acceptable".

## 4. How widespread is corruption in different areas of society

More than half of Europeans believe corruption is widespread among political parties.

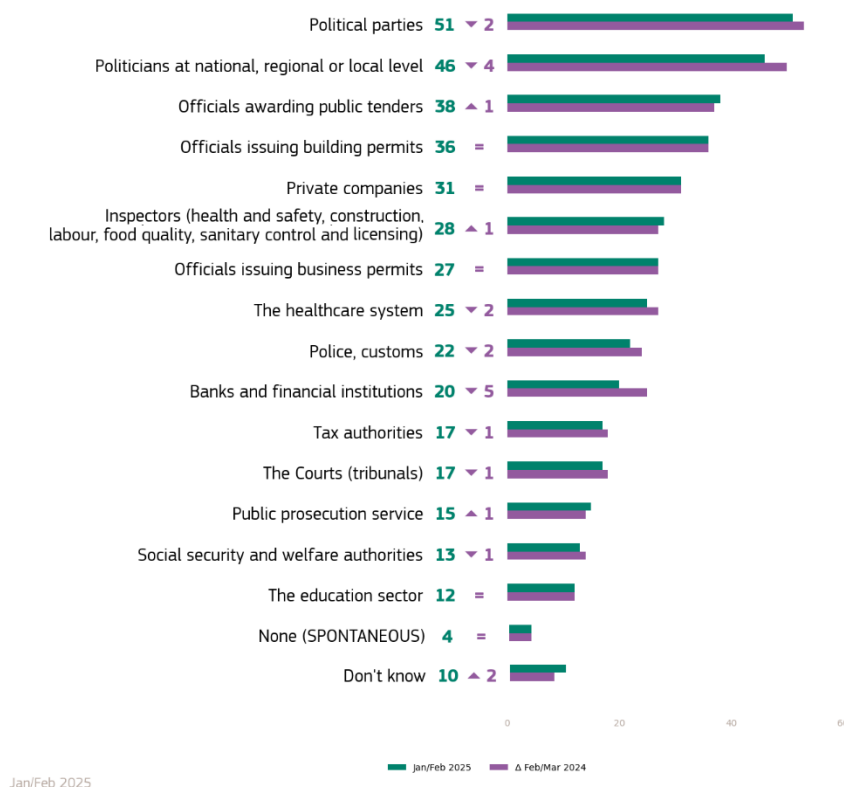
Respondents were asked whether they think that the giving and taking of bribes and the abuse of power for personal gain are widespread in certain sectors and institutions in their country.<sup>20</sup>

More than half of Europeans (51%, -2 pp) believe that corruption is widespread among **political parties**, while slightly less than half (46%, -4 pp) consider these behaviours widespread among **politicians**. More than one in three think that the giving and taking of bribes and the abuse of power are widespread among **officials awarding public tenders** (38%, +1 pp), **officials issuing building permits** (36%, unchanged) as well as **private companies** (31%, unchanged).

Just over a quarter of respondents say giving and taking bribes and the abuse of power are widespread among **inspectors** (health and safety, construction, labour, food quality, sanitary control and licensing) (28%, +1 pp) and **officials issuing business permits** (27%, unchanged). While one quarter of respondents say these behaviours are widespread in the **healthcare system** (25%, -2 pp), slightly less share this view for **police, customs** (22%, -2 pp).

One in five think this way about **banks and financial institutions** (20%, -5 pp), 17% mention **the courts (tribunals)** (-1 pp), **tax authorities** (17%, -1 pp), the **public prosecution service** (15%, +1 pp), **social security and welfare authorities** (13%, -1 pp) and **the education sector** (12%, unchanged).

QD7: In (OUR COUNTRY), do you think that the giving and taking of bribes and the abuse of power for personal gain are widespread among any of the following? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (EU27) (%)



<sup>20</sup> QD7. In (OUR COUNTRY), do you think that the giving and taking of bribes and the abuse of power for personal gain are widespread among any of the following? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

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### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

The national analysis reveals that in 12 EU Member States, respondents identify **political parties** as the primary perpetrators of the giving and taking of bribes and the abuse of power for personal gain. The highest proportions are recorded in Spain (79%), Greece (69%) and Cyprus (67%). Conversely, this view is least common in Poland (28%), Sweden (29%) and Finland (30%).

**Politicians at national, regional or local level** are the most mentioned in Slovenia (59%), Croatia (53%) and Finland (39%) and ranks first together with political parties in Estonia (37%) and Austria (48%).

**The healthcare system** ranks first in five countries, namely Greece (89%), Lithuania (62%), Slovakia (55%), Romania (44%) and Poland (36%). In contrast, less than one in ten respondents in Sweden (8%) and Finland (4%) believe that corruption is widespread in the healthcare system.

**Officials awarding public tenders** rank first in Italy (57%), Czechia (49%) and Latvia (47%). They are also mentioned by at half of the respondents in five countries, most notably by 67% in Greece.

In Sweden (51%) and Denmark (41%), **private companies** are the most frequently mentioned item.

**Officials issuing building permits** are the most mentioned item in the Netherlands (50%) and are additionally mentioned by more than half of respondents in four Member States.

Bulgaria (50%) is the only country in which **police, customs** ranks first. However, this item is also mentioned by more than half in Greece (55%) and Cyprus (51%). Respondents in Finland (4%), Sweden and Denmark (both 7%) are least likely to hold this view.

None of the remaining eight institutions rank first in any EU Member State. Notable figures regarding these institutions include:

- In Greece, 61% of respondents believe that corruption is widespread among **officials issuing business permits**.
- In 12 countries, at least one third of respondents say that there is widespread corruption among **inspectors**, most notably in Greece (65%).
- In nine countries, at least one in four respondents say that corruption is widespread in **banks and financial institutions**. This share is highest in Portugal (47%).
- Respondents are most likely to mention **the courts** in Cyprus (42%), Bulgaria, Greece and Slovakia (each 41%), while they are least likely to do so in Finland (1%).
- **Tax authorities** are mentioned by fewer than one in five respondents in 15 countries, most notably in Finland (1%) and Sweden (3%). This item is mentioned most frequently in Greece (59%).
- The **public prosecution service** is mentioned by fewer than two in five respondents in all 27 Member States, ranging from 36% in Bulgaria to 2% in Finland.
- **Social security and welfare authorities** are mentioned by fewer than one in five respondents in 21 countries. Nearly half (48%) provide this answer in Greece.
- Across all EU Member States, responses vary regarding the mention of the education sector, with proportions ranging from 30% in Greece to 2% in Finland.

QD7. In (OUR COUNTRY), do you think that the giving and taking of bribes and the abuse of power for personal gain are widespread among any of the following? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)

	EU27	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK
Political parties	51	48	43	38	67	45	44	31	37	69	79	30	65	52	55	41	51	50	52	46	60	43	28	64	37	29	57	42
Politicians at national, regional or local level	46	48	41	38	41	45	36	29	37	70	66	39	52	53	53	36	48	46	41	37	56	45	25	63	37	43	59	45
Officials awarding public tenders	38	31	31	43	44	49	28	16	28	67	33	25	41	51	46	32	57	41	34	47	50	43	22	46	27	40	51	28
Officials issuing building permits	36	32	32	34	48	31	30	25	27	64	34	19	32	47	37	33	55	41	34	45	58	50	17	51	28	32	41	24
Private companies	31	29	25	14	31	23	37	41	19	34	31	26	37	22	33	25	28	23	43	23	35	44	13	45	16	51	30	26
Inspectors (health and safety, construction, labour, food quality, sanitary control and licensing)	28	25	25	36	38	21	25	25	20	65	21	11	23	44	33	17	39	42	18	33	41	31	16	45	28	24	35	35
Officials issuing business permits	27	23	19	35	45	16	24	8	19	61	30	10	20	43	34	28	44	27	17	32	47	34	11	35	24	25	31	14
The healthcare system	25	24	10	42	56	36	14	5	17	89	14	4	16	46	40	16	36	62	11	38	30	19	36	43	44	8	40	55
Police, customs	22	16	26	50	51	19	8	7	11	55	24	4	26	43	23	20	23	29	18	36	41	29	17	44	35	7	27	42
Banks and financial institutions	20	23	17	9	37	7	18	19	11	32	27	3	21	22	19	25	25	12	25	13	26	24	7	47	15	22	25	15
Tax authorities	17	12	18	28	35	10	8	6	7	59	19	1	14	32	24	11	23	16	11	22	33	18	9	42	22	3	23	26
The Courts (tribunals)	17	13	14	41	42	24	7	3	10	41	24	1	15	40	19	15	21	31	9	22	35	12	11	33	29	6	33	41
Public prosecution service	15	12	11	36	24	15	5	3	6	30	21	2	19	30	17	11	14	27	7	18	31	16	11	29	16	5	24	29
Social security and welfare authorities	13	17	7	18	25	8	8	8	11	48	13	2	8	27	15	11	23	19	9	15	38	16	5	38	15	9	19	17
The education sector	12	14	4	16	22	10	7	4	9	30	12	2	6	22	12	10	24	16	8	17	24	9	7	28	22	11	15	26
Don't know	10	12	9	9	14	12	13	6	24	1	6	15	12	5	9	19	7	10	14	17	12	3	15	11	10	4	9	11

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item  
2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item  
3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

## 5. Level of corruption over the last three years

More than four in ten respondents believe corruption has increased in their country over the past three years.

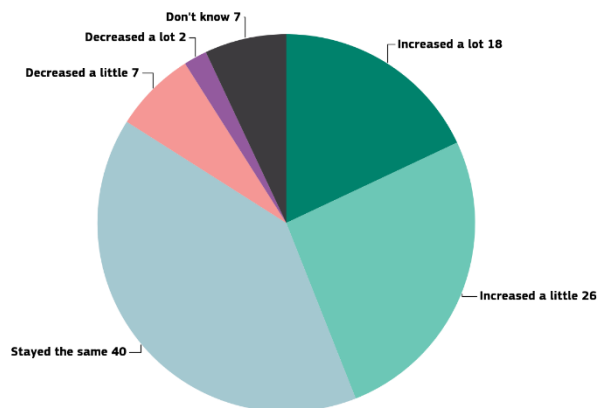
More than four in ten respondents (44%, +3 percentage points since 2024) think the level of corruption in their country has increased in the past three years<sup>21</sup>, with 18% (+1 pp) saying it increased a lot and 26% (+2 pp) answering it increased a little.

Conversely, the percentage of respondents who feel that corruption has stayed the same decreased from 43% to 40%. Just under one in ten respondents 9% (unchanged) believe it has decreased, including 7% (unchanged) who believe that corruption has decreased a little and 2% (unchanged) who think it has decreased a lot. The percentage of respondents who answered 'Don't know' remained unchanged at 7%.

In 11 EU Member States at least half of respondents think the level of corruption in their country has increased in the past three years. This view is most commonly held in Cyprus (73%), Croatia (72%) and Malta (62%).

In four countries at least half of the respondents think the level of corruption in their country has stayed the same: Poland, Finland (both 58%), Denmark (53%) and Slovakia (50%).

QD6: In the past three years, would you say that the level of corruption in (OUR COUNTRY) has...? (EU27) (%)



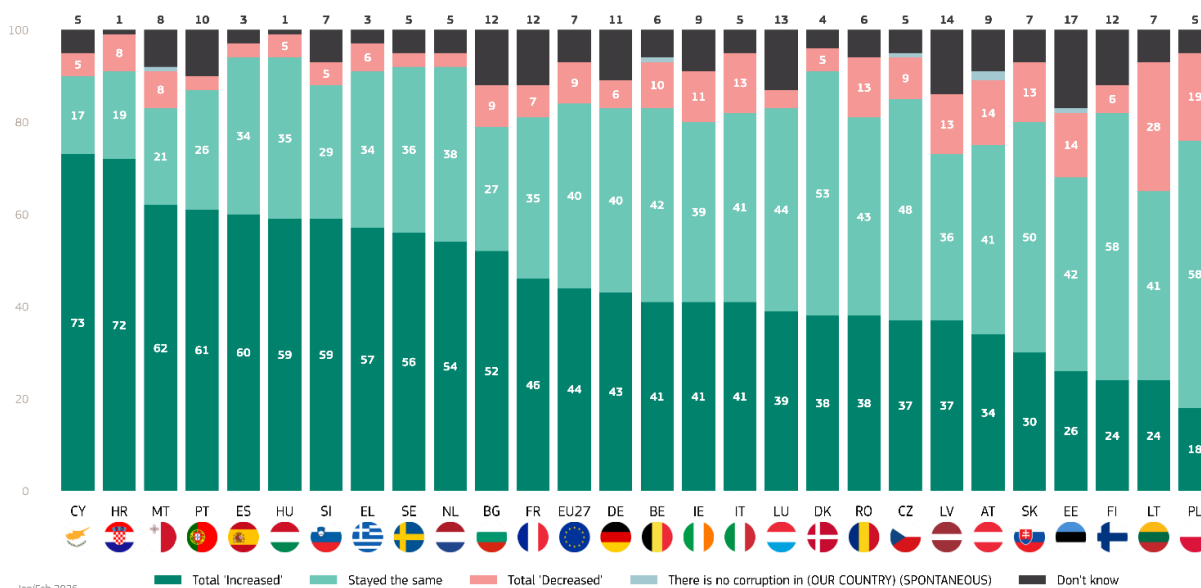
Increased a lot ▲ 1  
Increased a little ▲ 2  
Stayed the same ▼ 3  
Decreased a little =  
Decreased a lot =  
There is no corruption in (OUR COUNTRY) (SPONTANEOUS) =  
Don't know =

▲▼ (Jan/Feb 2025 - Feb/Mar 2024)

Jan/Feb 2025

In one EU Member State, Lithuania, more than one in four respondents (28%) think that corruption has decreased in the past three years.

QD6: In the past three years, would you say that the level of corruption in (OUR COUNTRY) has...? (%)



<sup>21</sup> QD6. In the past three years, would you say that the level of corruption in (OUR COUNTRY) has...?





## **II. Attitudes to corruption in detail**

## 1. Corruption in public institutions

Most respondents agree that **too close business-politics links lead to corruption, while high-level corruption is not pursued sufficiently.**

Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with statements about corruption in their country's public institutions.<sup>22</sup>

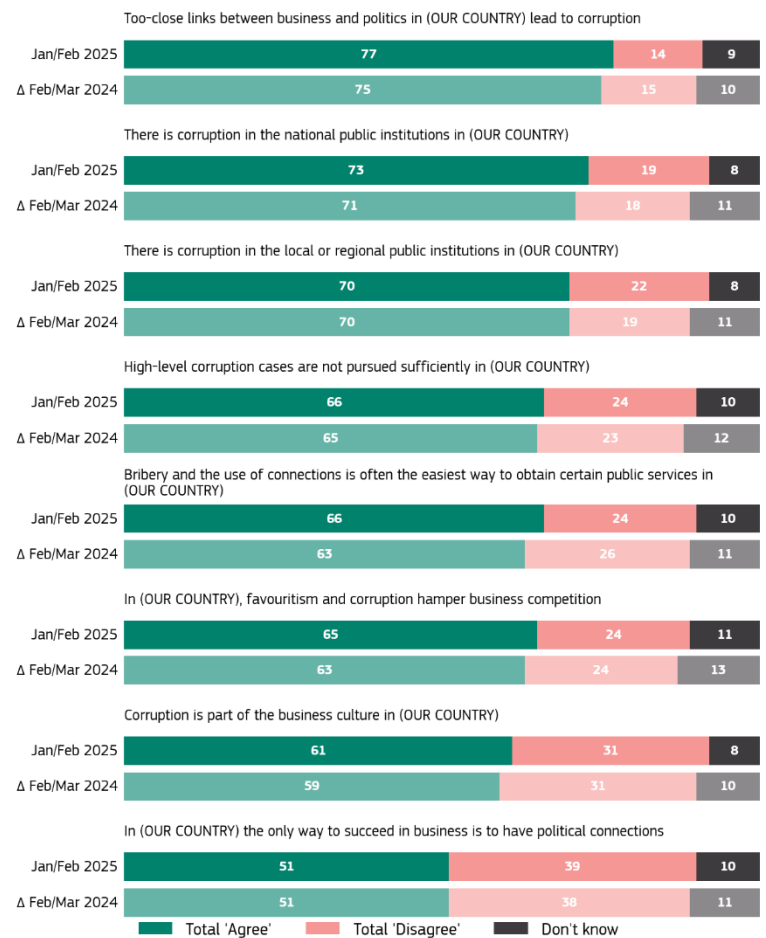
On the EU level, more than three-quarters of respondents (77%, +2 pp) agree that **too-close links between business and politics lead to corruption**, while a minority of 14% (-1 pp) disagree.

Regarding **national public institutions**, close to three quarters (73%, +2 pp) agree that there is corruption, including 27% (-1 pp) who totally agree with the statement. In 2025, 19% of respondents disagree (+1 pp). Seven in ten respondents (unchanged since 2024) agree that there is corruption in the **local or regional public institutions** in their country, including 23% (-1 pp) who totally agree. On the other hand, 22% of respondents in the EU disagree (+3 pp) of which 4% totally disagree (unchanged).

Furthermore, on the EU level, around two thirds of respondents (66%, +1 pp) agree that **high-level corruption cases are not pursued sufficiently in their country, bribery and the use of connections is often the easiest way to obtain certain public services** (66%, +3 pp) and that **favouritism and corruption hamper business competition in their country** (65%, +2 pp).

The belief that **corruption is part of the business culture** (61%, +2 pp) and **the only way to succeed in business is to have political connections** (51%, unchanged) are also widespread.

QD15a: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? (%)



<sup>22</sup> QD15a Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?

1. There is corruption in the local or regional public institutions in (OUR COUNTRY)  
2. There is corruption in the national public institutions in (OUR COUNTRY)  
3. Corruption is part of the business culture in (OUR COUNTRY)  
6. High-level corruption cases are not pursued sufficiently in (OUR COUNTRY)

8. Too-close links between business and politics in (OUR COUNTRY) lead to corruption  
9. Bribery and the use of connections is often the easiest way to obtain certain public services in (OUR COUNTRY)  
11. In (OUR COUNTRY) the only way to succeed in business is to have political connections  
12. In (OUR COUNTRY), favouritism and corruption hamper business competition

## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

A minority of respondents agree with the four statements related to the fight against corruption.<sup>23</sup>

Just under four in ten respondents (39%, +4 pp) agree that in their country **measures against corruption are applied impartially and without ulterior motives**. Close to half (47%, -2 pp) disagree while 14% (-2 pp) say they “don’t know”.

Furthermore, 36% (+4 pp) say **there are enough successful prosecutions in their country to deter people from corrupt practices**, while more than half (52%, -2 pp) disagree.

One third of respondents (+3 pp) agree that **there is sufficient transparency and supervision of the financing of political parties in their country**, while a majority of 57% (-1 pp) disagree with the statement.

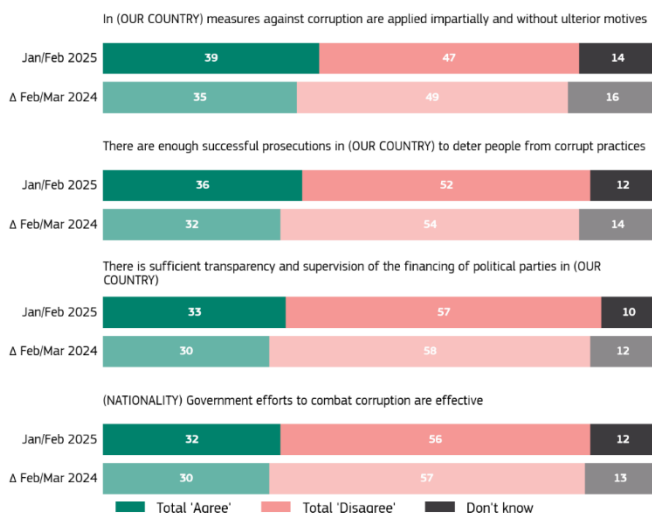
Close to a third of respondents (32%, +2 pp) think that the **national government’s efforts to combat corruption are effective**. One third of respondents agree that **there is sufficient transparency and supervision of the financing of political parties in their country** (+3 pp), while an absolute majority of 57% (-1 pp) disagree with the statement.

Regarding efforts to combat corruption, 48% of Europeans agree that **there is political will to tackle corruption**, while 42% disagree. Lastly, close to four in ten respondents (38%) agree that in their country, **national anti-corruption strategies are effectively implemented**, while a majority disagree (48%) and 14% say they “don’t know”.

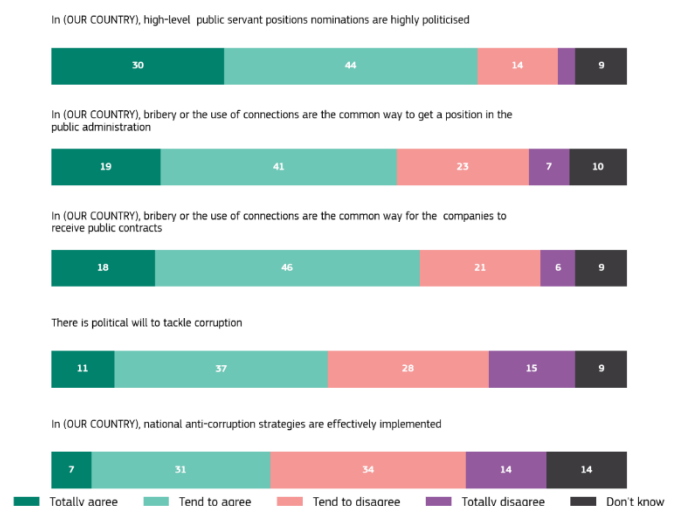
Furthermore, on the EU level, close to three in four respondents (74%) agree that in their country, **high-level public servant positions nominations are highly politicised**,<sup>24</sup> with 17% in disagreement.

Regarding corruption, 64% of respondents agree that **bribery or the use of connections are the common way for the companies to receive public contracts**. Similarly, six in ten respondents agree that **bribery or the use of connections are the common way to get a position in the public administration**, including close to one in five (19%) who totally agree.

QD15a: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? (%)



QD15b: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? (%)



<sup>23</sup> QD15a Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?

5. There are enough successful prosecutions in (OUR COUNTRY) to deter people from corrupt practices  
7. (NATIONALITY) Government efforts to combat corruption are effective  
10. There is sufficient transparency and supervision of the financing of political parties in (OUR COUNTRY)  
13. In (OUR COUNTRY) measures against corruption are applied impartially and without ulterior motives

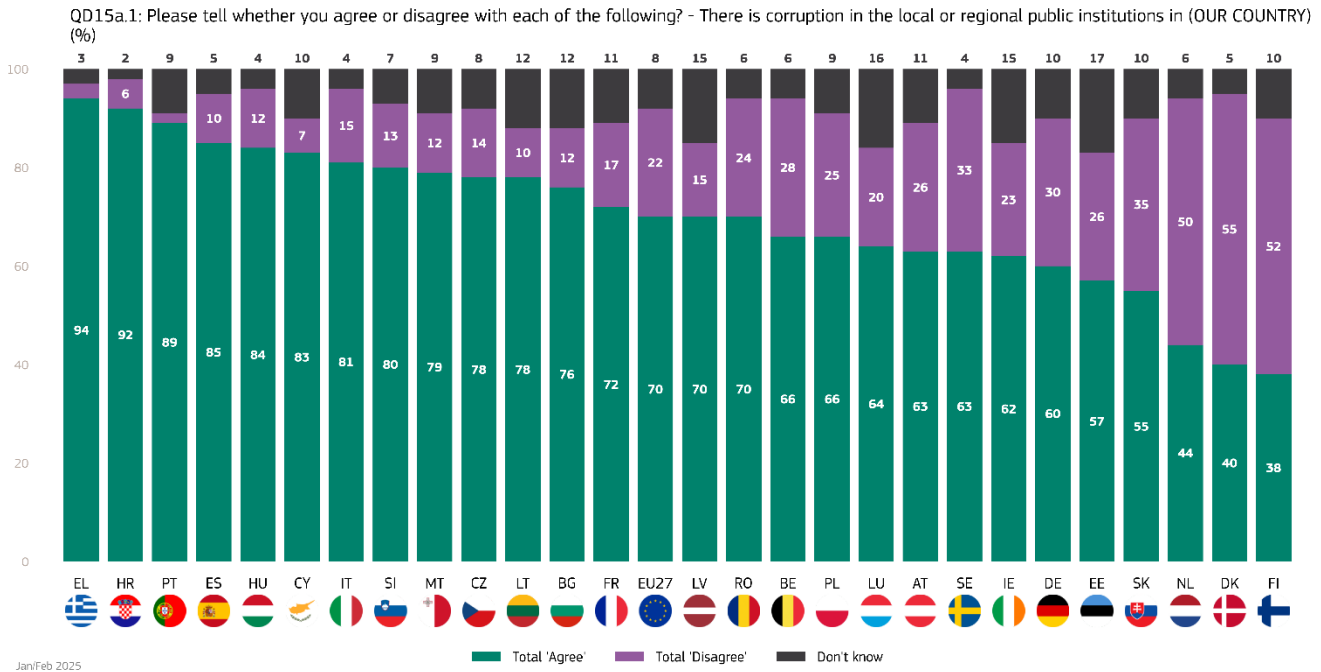
<sup>24</sup> QD15b Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?

1. In (OUR COUNTRY), bribery or the use of connections are the common way for the companies to receive public contracts  
2. In (OUR COUNTRY), bribery or the use of connections are the common way to get a position in the public administration  
3. In (OUR COUNTRY), high-level public servant positions nominations are highly politicised  
4. In (OUR COUNTRY), national anti-corruption strategies are effectively implemented  
5. There is political will to tackle corruption

## Special Eurobarometer 561 Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

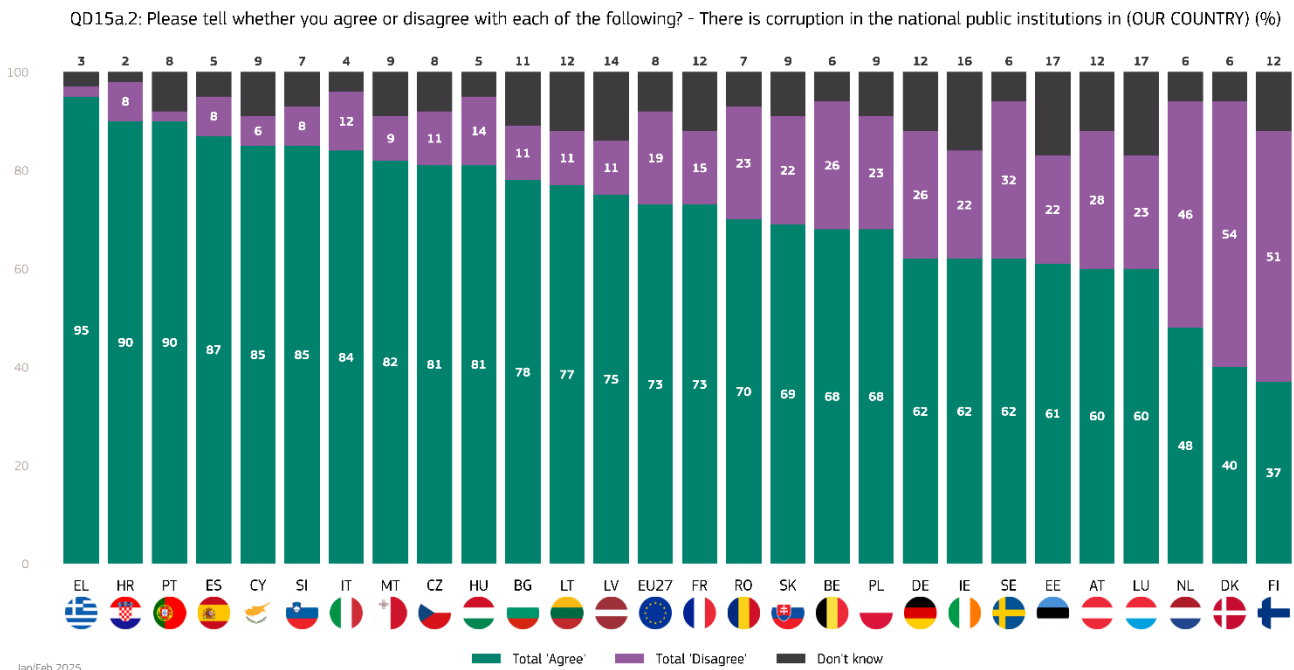
### Corruption in local or regional level public institutions

In all EU Member States except Finland (38%), Denmark (40%) and the Netherlands (44%), at least half of the respondents agree that there is corruption in the local or regional public institutions in their country. This share is highest in Greece (94%), Croatia (92%) and Portugal (89%).



### Corruption in national level public institutions

In 24 EU Member States, at least half of respondents agree that there is corruption in the national public institutions in their country, most notably in Greece (95%), Croatia and Portugal (both 90%). Overall, there are 13 countries where at least three-quarters of respondents agree.

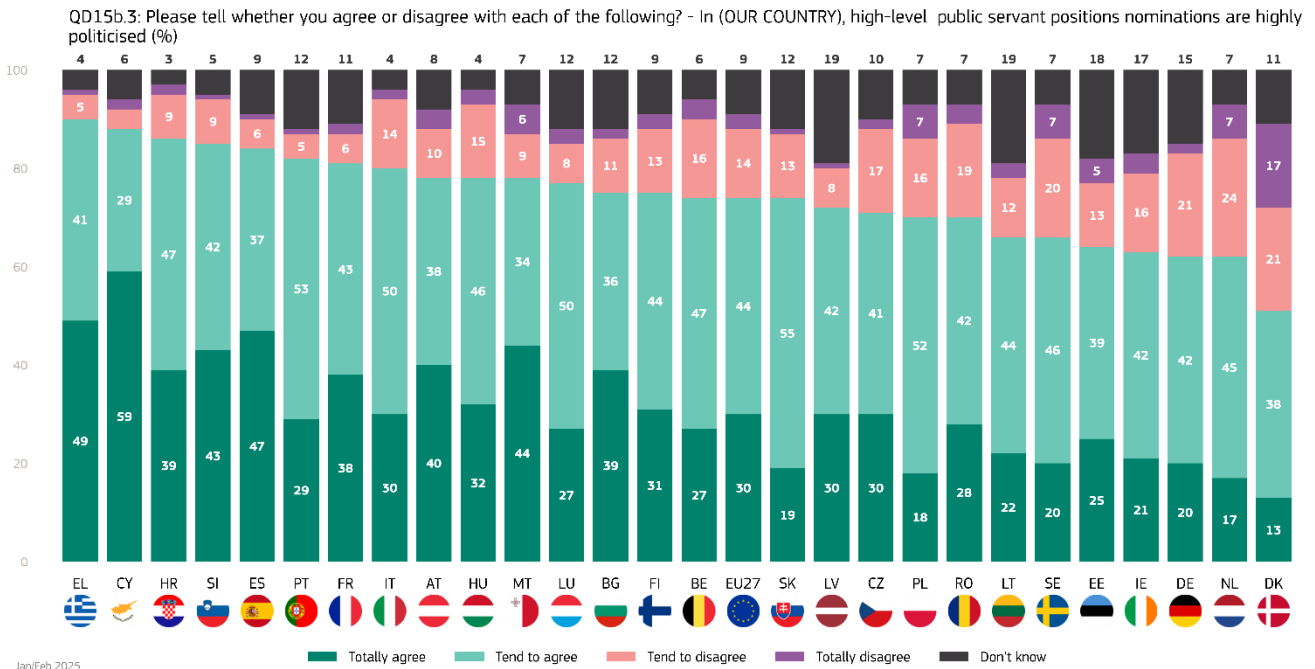


## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

#### Politicisation of high-level public servant position nominations

In all 27 EU Member States, more every second respondent agrees that, in their country, high-level public servant positions nominations are highly politicised. Agreement is most widespread in Greece (90%), Cyprus (88%) and Croatia (86%), while respondents are least likely to agree in Denmark (51%), the Netherlands and Germany (62%). It is noteworthy that in Cyprus, close to six in ten respondents (59%) and in Greece around half (49%) totally agree with the statement.





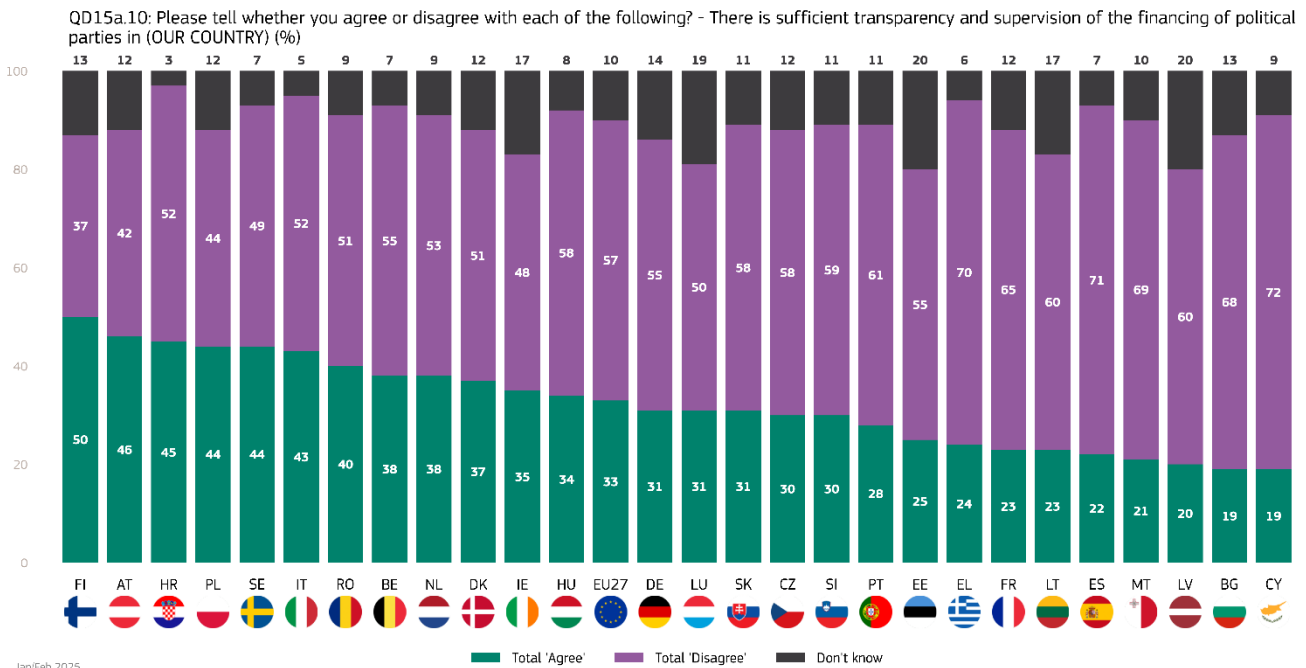
## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

#### Transparency and supervision of the financing of political parties

In 22 EU Member States, at least half of the respondents disagree that there is sufficient transparency and supervision of the financing of political parties in their country, most notably in Cyprus (72%), Spain (71%) and Greece (70%).

In two countries a majority agree with the statement: Finland (50% 'agree' vs 37% 'disagree') and Austria (46% 'agree' vs 37% 'disagree'). Views are evenly split in Poland (44% vs 44%).



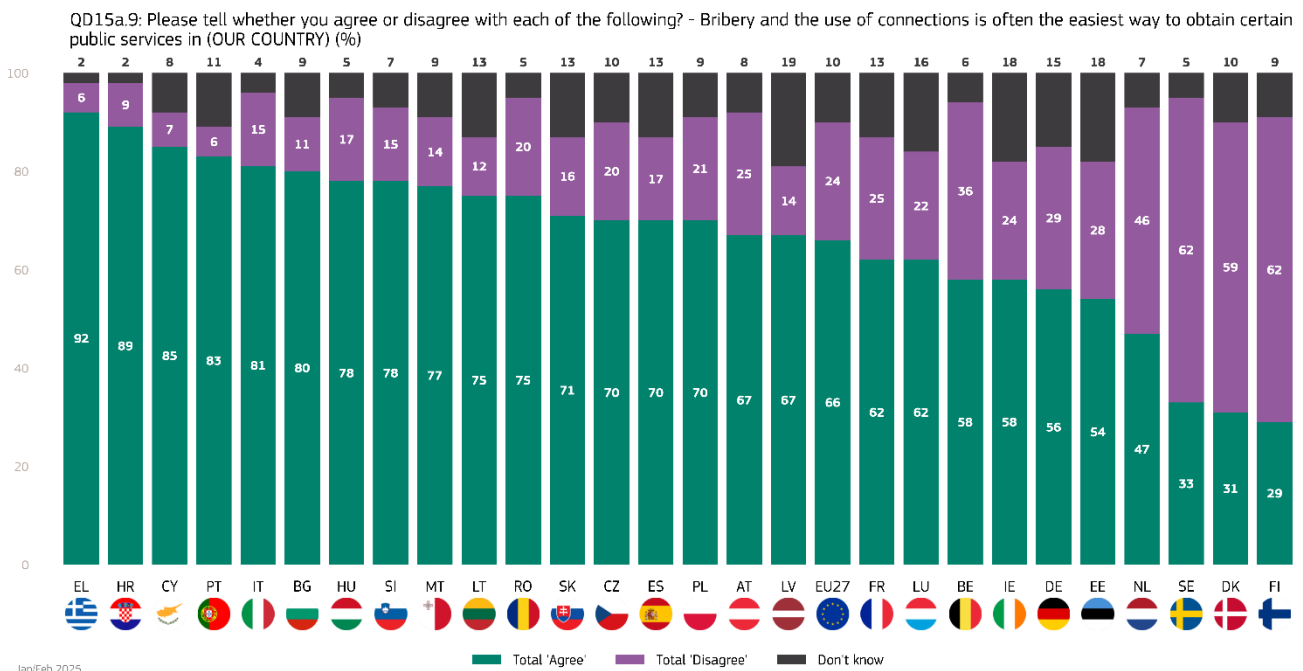
## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

#### Bribery and the use of connections

In 23 EU Member States, at least every second respondent thinks that bribery and the use of connections is often the easiest way to obtain certain public services in their country. More than eight in ten hold this view in Greece (92%), Croatia (89%), Cyprus (85%), Portugal (83%) and Italy (81%). It is noteworthy that in Cyprus, 53% of respondents totally agree with this statement.

The four countries, in which a minority agree with this statement, are the Netherlands (47%), Sweden (33%), Denmark (31%) and Finland (29%).



## 2. Corruption in business

**More than six in ten agree that corruption is part of business culture in their country and that it hampers business competition.**

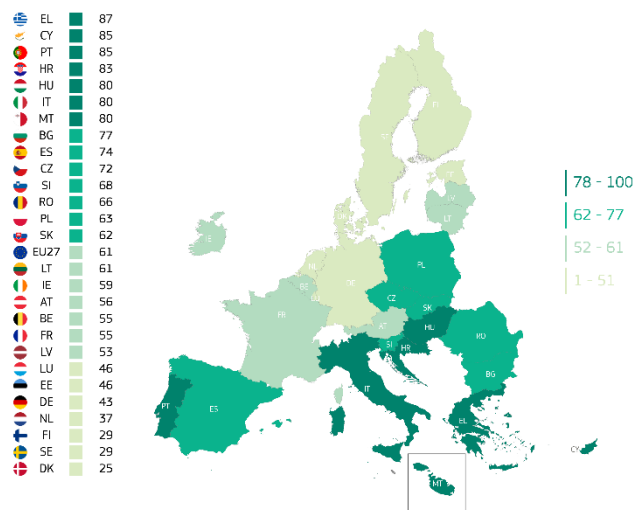
The perception of corruption in business is a concern among respondents from the European Union. Respondents were asked whether or not they agree that corruption is part of the business culture in their country.<sup>25</sup> Just over six in ten Europeans agree with this statement (61%, + 2 pp). This includes 20% (-1 pp) who totally agree.

In 19 EU Member States, more than every second respondent agrees that corruption is part of the business culture in their country, with the highest proportions in Greece at 87%, Portugal at 85%, Cyprus at 85% and Croatia at 83%.

The map below illustrates geographic differences: respondents in southern and some areas of eastern Europe are more likely to agree that corruption is part of the business culture in their country. Respondents in northern Europe are generally less likely to agree.

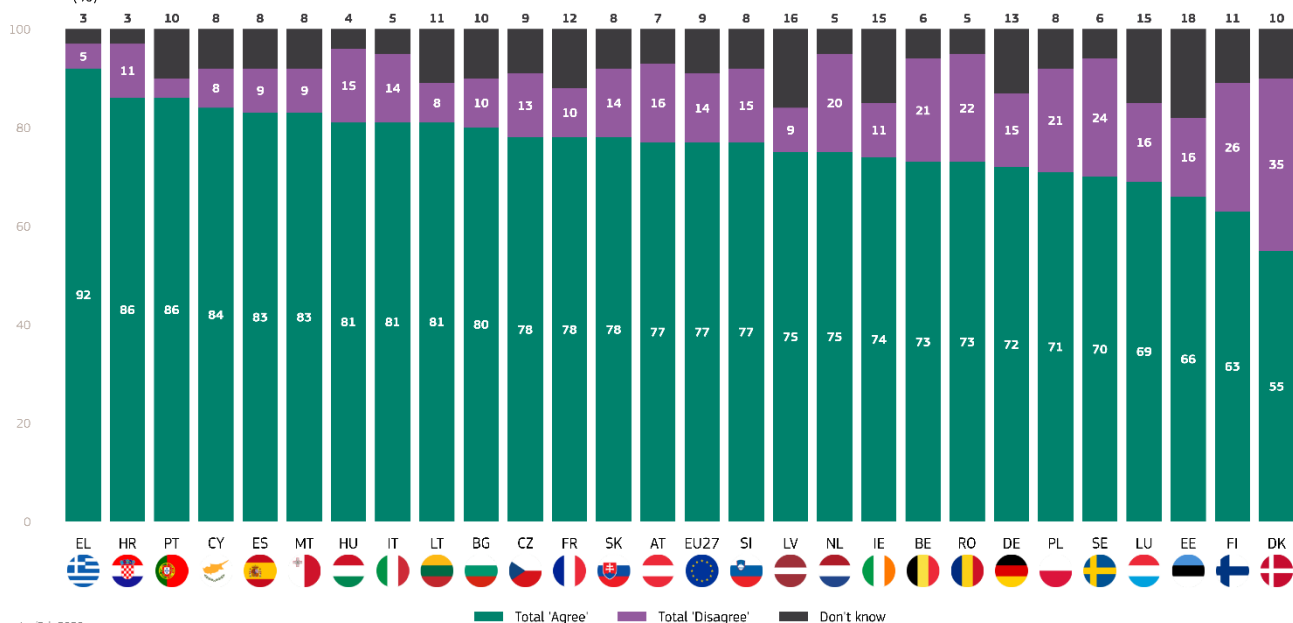
Furthermore, in every EU Member State, more than half of respondents agree that too-close links between business and politics in their country lead to corruption.<sup>26</sup> More than nine in ten (92%) in Greece hold this view, followed by Croatia and Portugal (86%). The only country in which fewer than six in ten agree is Denmark (55%).

QD15a.3: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?: Corruption is part of the business culture in (OUR COUNTRY) – Total 'Agree' (EU27) (%)



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QD15a.8: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?: Too-close links between business and politics in (OUR COUNTRY) lead to corruption (%)



Jan/Feb 2025

<sup>25</sup> QD15a.3. Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?: Corruption is part of the business culture in (OUR COUNTRY)

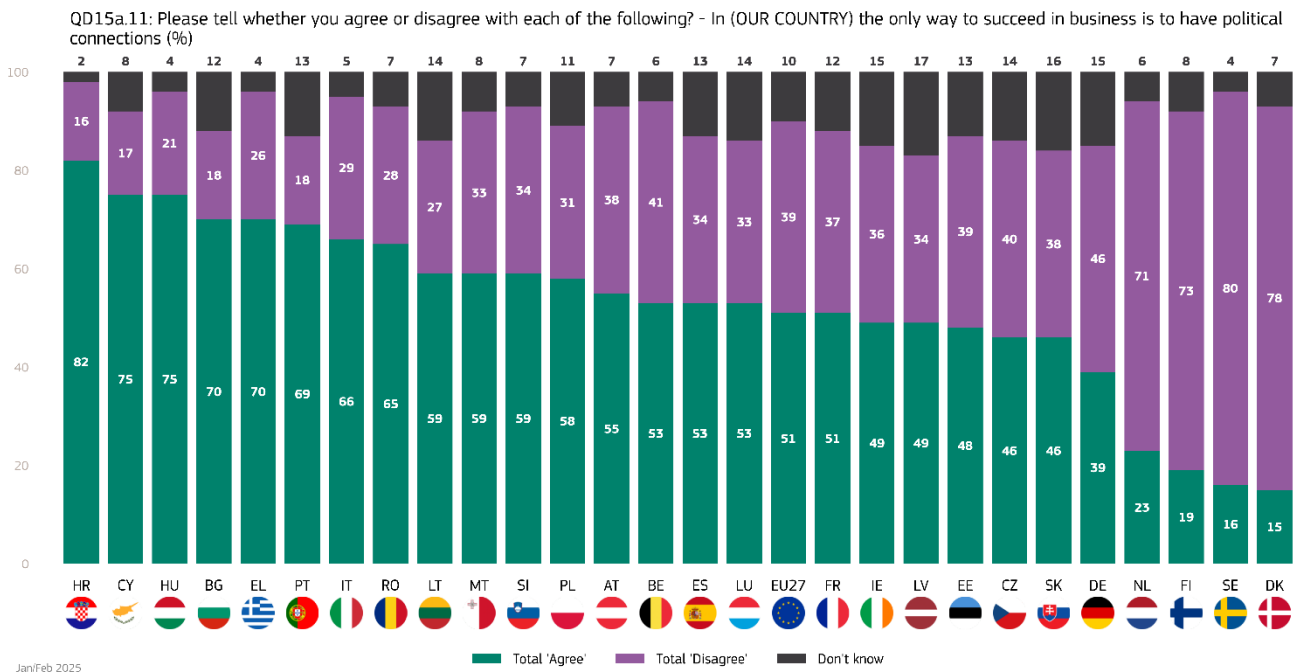
<sup>26</sup> QD15a.8. Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?: Too-close links between business and politics in (OUR COUNTRY) lead to corruption

## Special Eurobarometer 561 Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

Moreover, when asked whether the only way to succeed in business in their country is to have political connections<sup>27</sup>, around half of respondents (51%, unchanged since 2024) agree that this is the case, including 15% (-1 pp) who totally agree.

In 16 EU Member States, at least half of respondents agree that the only way to succeed in business in their country is to have political connections. At least seven in ten share this opinion in Croatia (82%), Cyprus and Hungary (both 75%) as well as Bulgaria and Greece (both 70%).

In three countries, fewer than one in five respondents agree with the statement, namely in Denmark (15%), Sweden (16%) and Finland (19%).

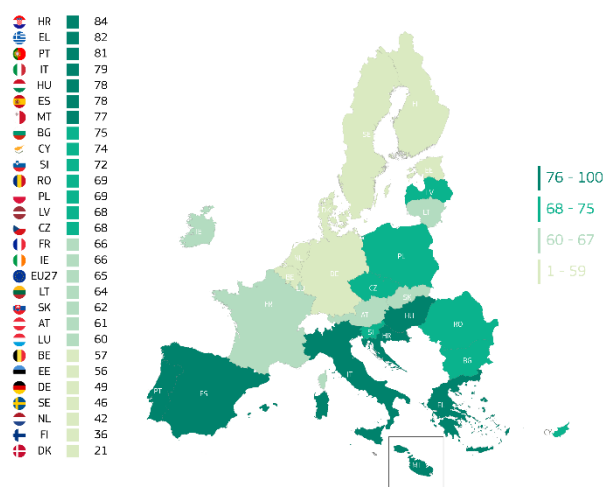


Additionally, respondents are asked whether they agree or disagree that, in their country, favouritism and corruption hamper business competition.<sup>28</sup> Close to two in three respondents (65%, +2 pp) agree, including 21% (-1 pp) who totally agree, while 24% (unchanged) disagree with the statement.

In 22 countries, more than half think that in their country favouritism and corruption hamper business competition. In Croatia (84%), Greece (82%) and Portugal (81%) this is the case for more than eight in ten respondents. Respondents are least likely to hold this view in Denmark (21%), Finland (36%) and the Netherlands (42%).

The map shows that the perception that favouritism and corruption hamper business competition is more widespread in southern Europe than in northern Europe.

QD15a.12: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?: In (OUR COUNTRY), favouritism and corruption hamper business competition - Total 'Agree' (EU27) (%)



<sup>27</sup> QD15a.11. Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? In (OUR COUNTRY) the only way to succeed in business is to have political connections

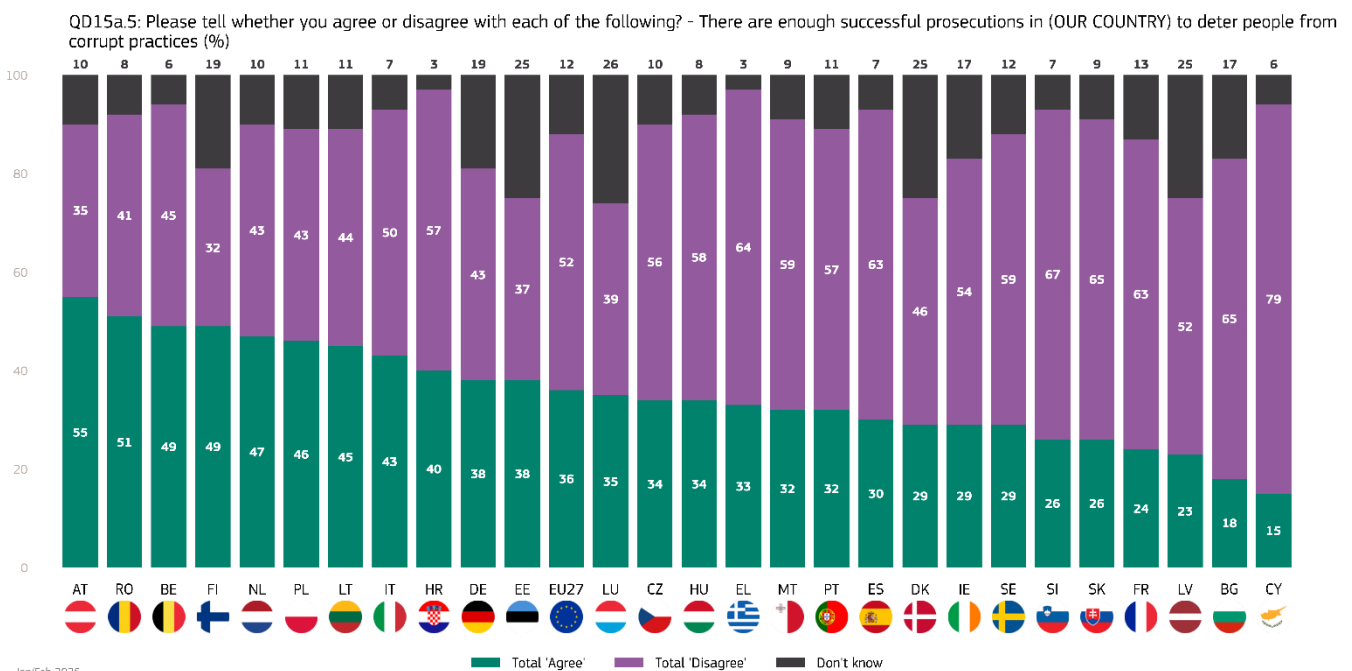
<sup>28</sup> QD15a.12. Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? In (OUR COUNTRY), favouritism and corruption hamper business competition

### 3. Dealing with corruption

Europeans remain pessimistic about their country's efforts to effectively combat corruption.

The perception of corruption and the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures are issues among respondents from the European Union. Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that there are enough successful prosecutions in their country to deter people from corrupt practices. Just over one third of respondents (36%, +4 pp) agree with this statement, including 9% (+2 pp) who totally agree. More than half of respondents (52%, -2 pp) disagree with the statement, including 19% (-4 pp) who totally disagree.

While fewer than half of respondents in 25 EU Member States agree that there are enough successful prosecutions in their country to deter people from corrupt practices, more than half agree in Austria (55%) and Romania (51%). Respondents are least likely to agree in Cyprus (15%), Bulgaria (18%) and Latvia (23%).



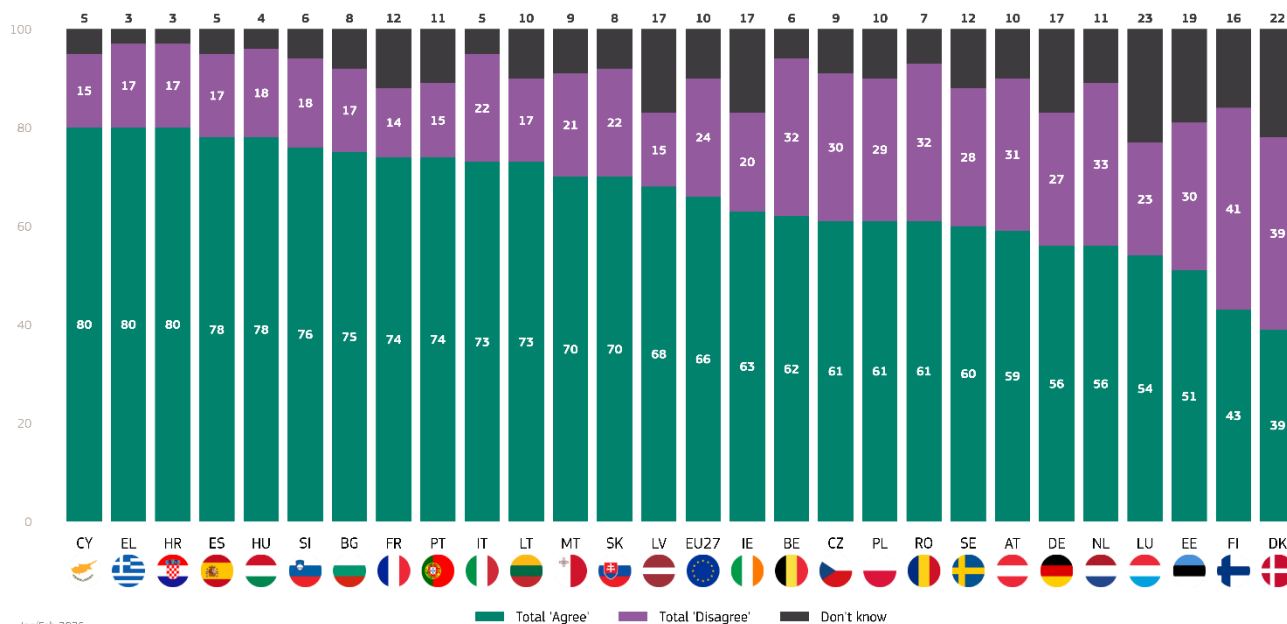


## Special Eurobarometer 561 Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

Two-thirds of respondents (66%, +1 pp) agree that high-level corruption cases are not pursued sufficiently in their country, including nearly three in ten respondents who totally agree (28%, -2 pp). On the other hand, 24% (+1 pp) disagree with the statement.

In most EU Member States, more than half of the population believes that high-level corruption cases are not adequately pursued in their country. However, Denmark (39%) and Finland (43%) are the only exceptions to this trend, where less than half of the population shares this view. In six countries, the share of respondents agreeing with the statement that high-level corruption cases are not adequately pursued in their country, are notably high. More than three-quarters of respondents agree, with Greece, Croatia, and Cyprus each having 80% of respondents in agreement.

QD15a.6: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following? - High-level corruption cases are not pursued sufficiently in (OUR COUNTRY) (%)

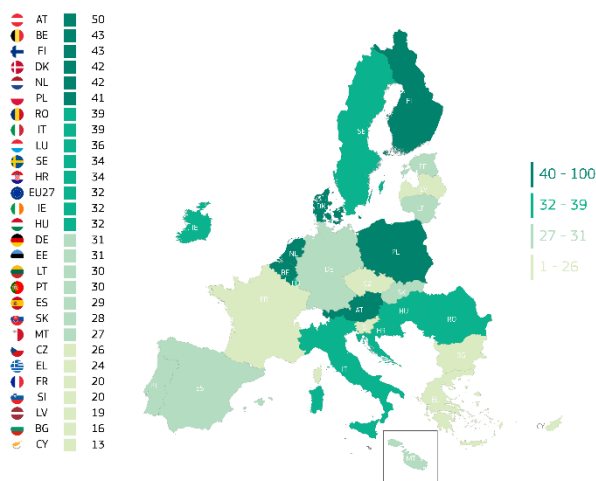


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There are three EU Member States where more respondents agree than disagree that their government's efforts to combat corruption are effective, namely Austria (50% 'agree' vs 37% 'disagree'), Finland (43% vs 37%) and Denmark (42% vs 36%).

In 19 Member States, at every second respondent disagrees, most notably in Cyprus (81%) and Greece (73%) as well as Bulgaria and Slovenia (both 72%).

QD15a.7: Please tell whether you agree or disagree with each of the following?: (NATIONALITY) Government efforts to combat corruption are effective - Total 'Agree' (EU27) (%)



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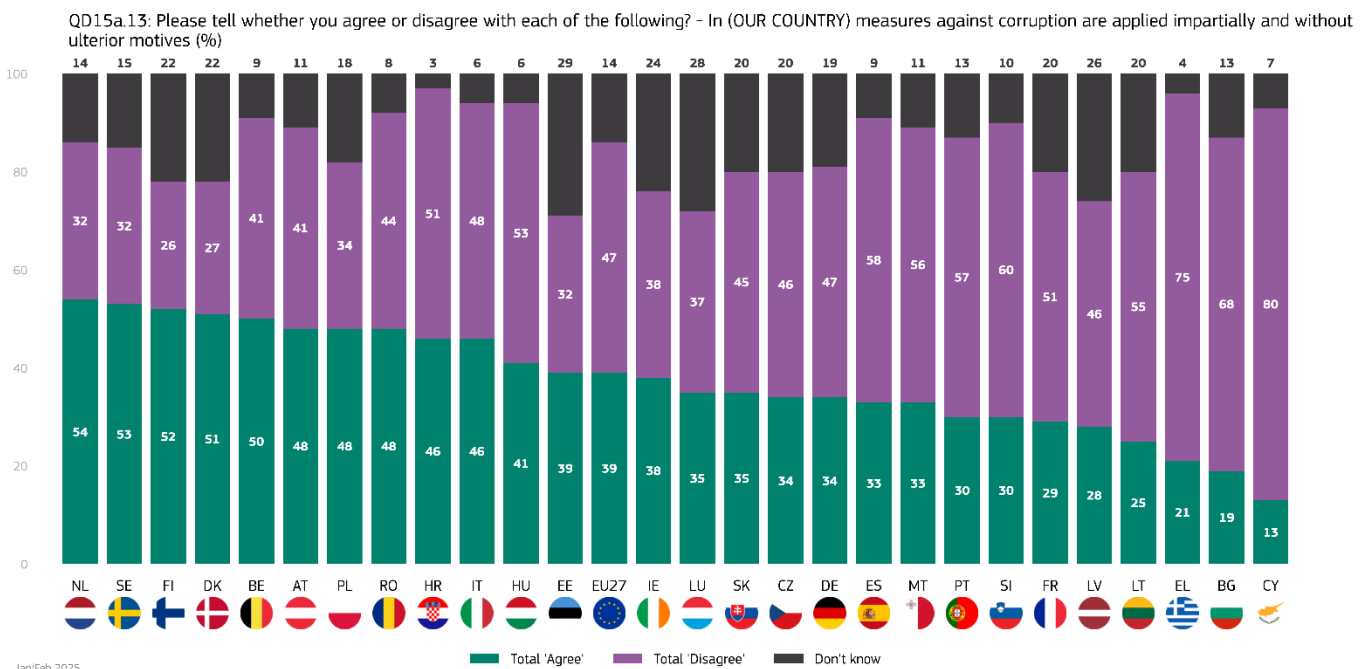
## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

When asked whether they agree that measures against corruption are applied impartially and without ulterior motives in their countries, 39% (+4 pp) of respondents across the EU agree, while 47% (-2 pp) disagree with this statement.

It is worth noting that in 10 countries, at least one in five respondents say they “don’t know”, most notably in Estonia (29%), Luxembourg (28%) and Latvia (26%).

Among the Member States of the European Union, there are five countries in which at every second respondent agrees: the Netherlands (54%), Sweden (53%), Finland (52%), Denmark (51%) and Belgium (50%). Respondents are most likely to disagree that measures against corruption are applied impartially and without ulterior motives in Cyprus (80%), Greece (75%) and Bulgaria (68%).





### **III. Experience of bribery**

## 1. Personal experience of bribery

### A small minority of Europeans report having experienced and/or witnessed a case of corruption.

At the EU level, 5% of respondents report having experienced and/or witnessed corruption in the last 12 months<sup>29</sup>, which remains unchanged from the previous survey in 2024. Specifically, 2% (unchanged) of respondents report having **experienced corruption**, while 3% (unchanged) report having **witnessed corruption**.

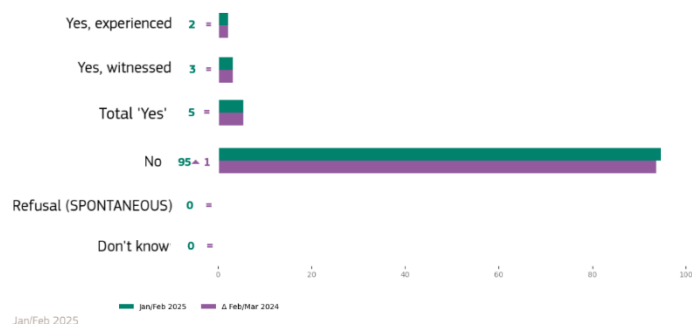
The long-term trend analysis shows that the proportion of respondents who have neither witnessed nor experienced any case of corruption has remained at a similar level since 2017.

The majority of respondents (95%) report not experiencing or witnessing any corruption, an increase of one percentage point from the previous survey.

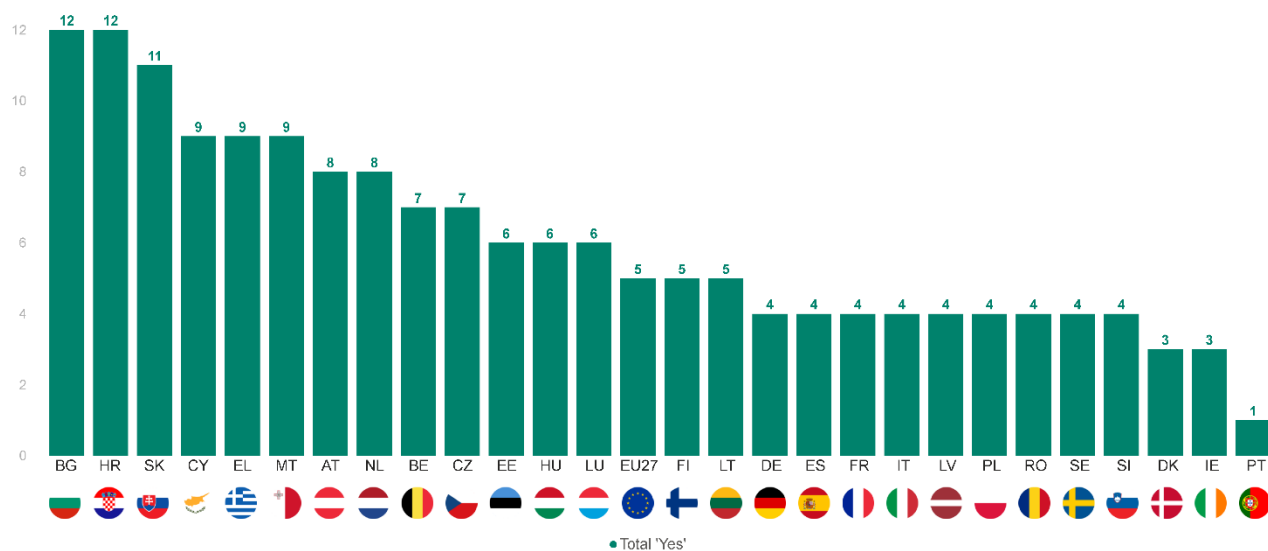
In three countries at least one in ten have witnessed and/or experienced a case of corruption in the last 12 months: Bulgaria, Croatia (both 12%) and Slovakia (11%). Respondents are least likely to report having witnessed or experienced a case of corruption in Portugal (1%), Ireland and Denmark (both 3%).

In all EU Member States, more than eight in ten respondents say they have not witnessed or experienced a case of corruption in the last 12 months. Respondents are most likely to say they have neither witnessed nor experienced a case of corruption in Portugal (98%) and Denmark (97%).

QD12a: In the last 12 months have you experienced or witnessed any case of corruption? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (EU27) (%)



QD12a. In the last 12 months have you experienced or witnessed any case of corruption? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)



<sup>29</sup> QD12a. In the last 12 months have you experienced or witnessed any case of corruption? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

## 2. Experiencing bribery at work

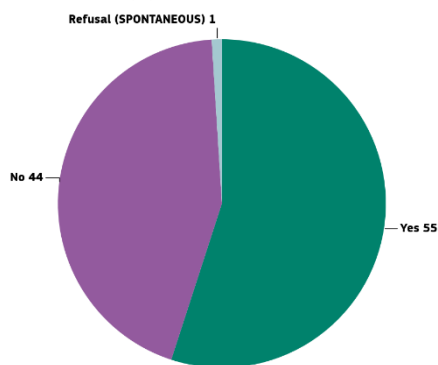
Witnessing corruption occurred almost equally in work-related and non-work-related contexts.

Respondents that indicated that they experienced or witnessed a case of corruption in the last 12 months, were then asked whether this occurred in the context of their or someone else's work.<sup>30,31</sup>

Among those who have *experienced* a case of corruption in the last 12 months, 56% of respondents across the EU Member States indicate that this experience was work-related, while 44% say that it occurred outside of the work context.

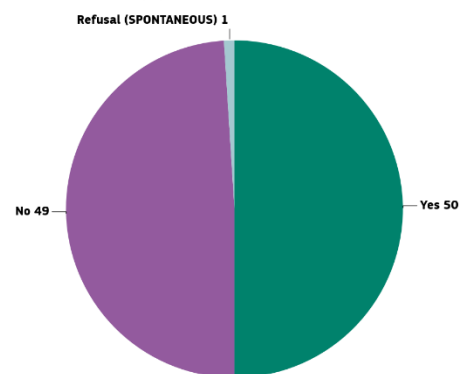
Among respondents who indicated having *witnessed* a case of corruption in the last 12 months, almost equal proportions indicate that this case was work-related (50%) and outside of the work context (49%).

QD12b: You said that you experienced a case of corruption: Was this (experience) in the context of your or someone else's work? (%)



Jan/Feb 2025

QD12c: You said that you witnessed a case of corruption: Was this (witnessing) in the context of your or someone else's work? (%)



Jan/Feb 2025

<sup>30</sup> QD12b. You said that you experienced a case of corruption: Was this (experience) in the context of your or someone else's work?

<sup>31</sup> It must be mentioned that the majority of respondents from this survey (95%) have not been exposed to this question since they did not experience nor witness any case of corruption in the last 12 months.

Therefore, national samples are very small. For instance, in Ireland, only 11 respondents experience any case of corruption and therefore are exposed to the questions presented in this section. Results must be interpreted carefully, particularly for the national results below.

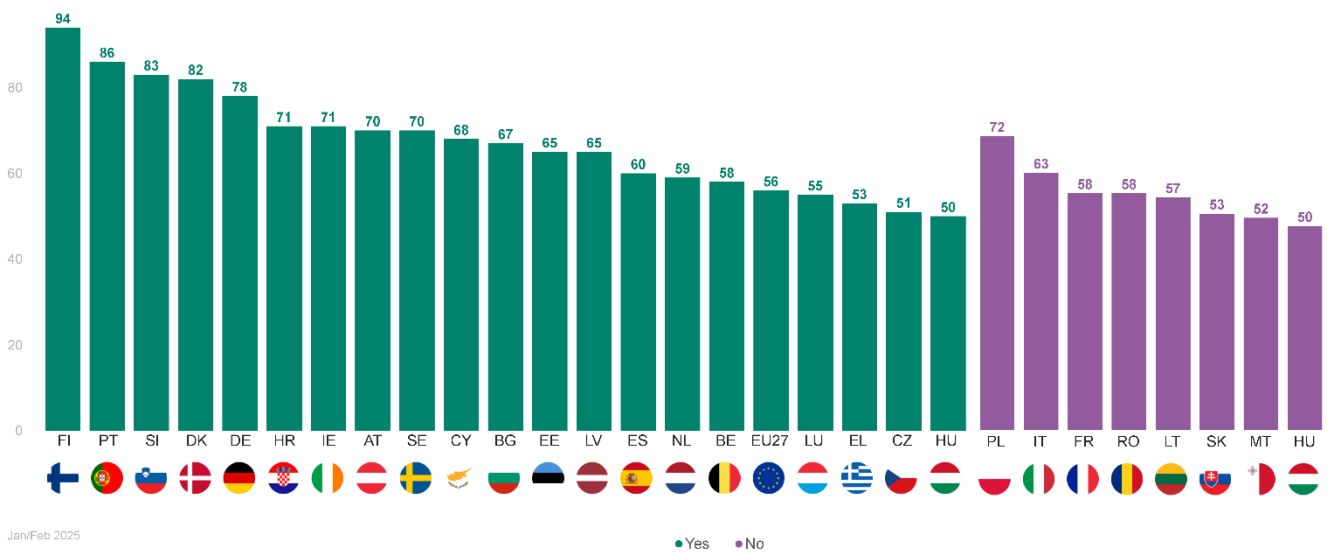


## Special Eurobarometer 561 Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

Among those who report having *experienced* a case of corruption in the last 12 months, respondents in Finland (94%), Portugal (86%) and Slovenia (83%) are most likely to have experienced this case in the context of their or someone else's work. On the other hand, among those who experienced a case of corruption, respondents are most likely to have experienced this case in a non-work-related context in Poland (72%) and Italy (63%) as well as France and Romania (both 58%).

Overall, a majority of respondents in 19 Member States indicate that the case of corruption that they experienced was in the context of their or someone else's work, while a majority in seven Member States say that the experienced case of corruption was not in a work-related context.

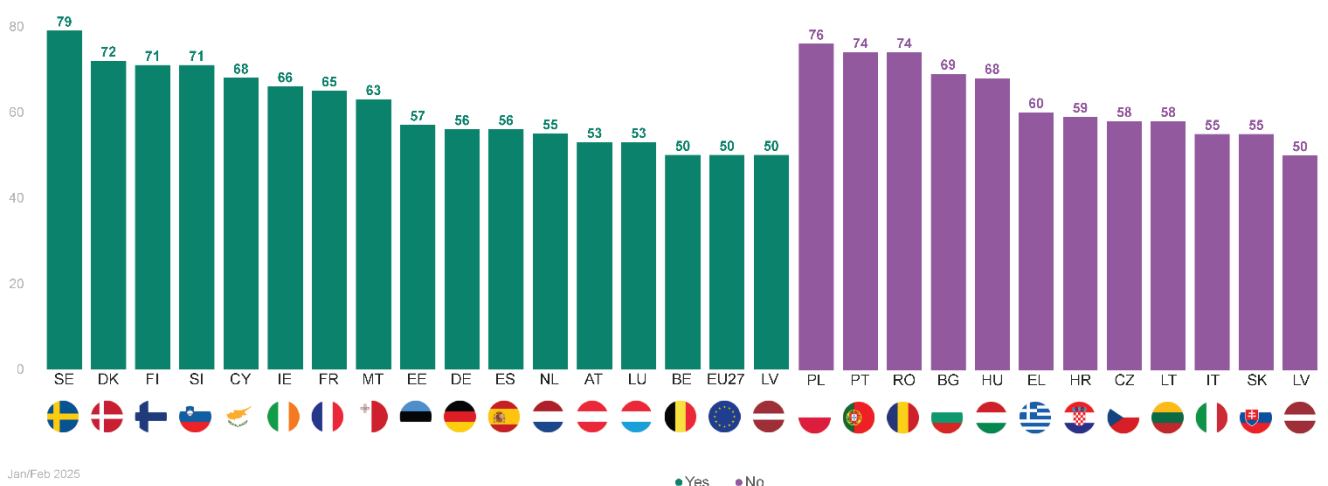
QD12b. You said that you experienced a case of corruption: Was this (experience) in the context of your or someone else's work? (%)



Among those respondents who *witnessed* a case of corruption in the last 12 months, 50% indicate that this case was work-related. The highest scores are observed in Sweden (79%), Denmark (72%), Slovenia and Finland (both 71%). Conversely, 49% of respondents across the EU report that their witnessing is not work-related, with the highest scores in Poland (76%), Portugal and Romania (both 74%).

Overall, a majority of respondents in 15 Member States indicate that the case of corruption that they witnessed was work-related, while a majority in 11 Member States indicate that this was outside of the work context.

QD12c. You said that you witnessed a case of corruption Was this (witnessing) in the context of your or someone else's work? (%)



### 3. Contact with institutions and incidence of bribery

Europeans are most likely to have been in contact with the healthcare system in the last 12 months.

Respondents were asked about their contact with 15 different public or private institutions in their country over the last 12 months.<sup>32</sup>

The **healthcare system** (60%, +2 pp since 2024) is the most frequently mentioned institution across the EU Member States and the only institution mentioned by at least half of respondents.

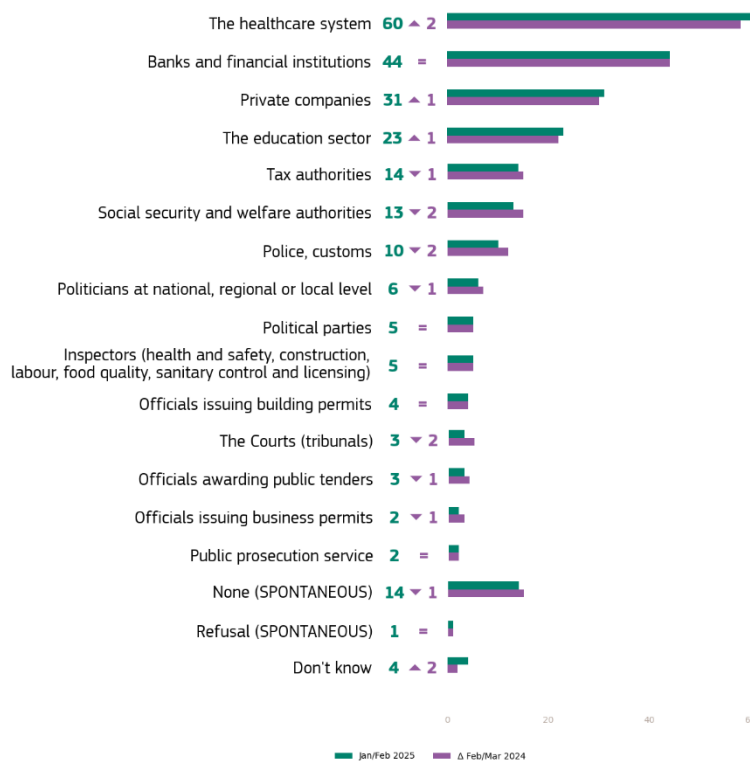
More than four in ten (44%, unchanged) have had contact with **banks and financial institutions**, while around three in ten (31%, +1 pp) mention **private companies** and 23% (+1 pp) mention **the education sector**. All other institutions are mentioned by fewer than one in five respondents.

At least one in ten respondents have been in contact with **tax authorities** (14%, -1 pp), **social security and welfare authorities** (13%, -2 pp) and **police, customs** (10%, -2 pp).

Fewer than one in ten have been in contact with the remaining eight institutions: **politicians** (6%, -1 pp), **political parties** (5%, unchanged), **inspectors** (5%, unchanged), **officials issuing building permits** (4%, unchanged), **the courts (tribunals)** (3%, -2 pp), **officials awarding public tenders** (3%, -1 pp), **officials issuing business permits** (2%, -1 pp) and the **public prosecution service** (2%, unchanged).

Nearly one in five respondents (18%, +1 pp) spontaneously say that they haven't been in contact with any of these institutions or answer "don't know".

QD9a: Over the last 12 months, have you had any contact with any of the following in (OUR COUNTRY)? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (EU27) (%)



Jan/Feb 2025

<sup>32</sup> QD9a. Over the last 12 months, have you had any contact with any of the following in (OUR COUNTRY)? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

In all EU Member States except Greece, **the healthcare system** is the most mentioned institution and in 26 Member States at least half of respondents have had contact with it in the last 12 months. Proportions range from 84% in Sweden, 78% in Portugal and 77% in Denmark to 42% in Romania and 51% in both Slovenia and Italy.

In Greece, respondents are most likely to have had contact with **banks and financial institutions** (68%), followed closely by the healthcare system (67%). In 25 EU Member States, banks and financial institutions are the second-most mentioned institution and is the third-most mentioned in Romania. Apart from Greece, respondents are most likely to have been in contact with banks and financial institutions in Sweden (73%), Denmark (68%) and Finland (66%). Respondents are least likely to mention this institution in Romania (13%), Latvia (27%) and Lithuania (29%).

In 19 Member States, **private companies** rank third. This item is most frequently mentioned by respondents in Sweden (62%), Greece (59%) and Finland (55%). Respondents in Bulgaria and Romania (both 10%) and Croatia (16%) are least likely to mention private companies.

**The education sector** is the third most mentioned item in eight countries and second in Romania (16%). Overall, respondents in Luxembourg and Sweden (37%) as well as Slovakia (31%) are most likely to mention this, while they are least likely in Croatia and Romania (both 16%) as well as in Czechia (17%).

**Police and customs** ranks third in Croatia (21%) and is mentioned by more than one in four in Sweden (33%) and Finland (26%).

All remaining items do not rank among the top three most frequently mentioned items in any of the EU Member States. For these items, noteworthy results are the following:

- **Tax authorities** are mentioned by more than three in ten in five countries: the Netherlands (47%), Finland (43%), Sweden (41%), Denmark (35%) and Greece (31%).
- In three countries, at least one in five respondents mention **social security and welfare authorities**, namely Luxembourg (29%), France (26%) and Portugal (20%).
- More than one in ten respondents have been in contact with **politicians** in eight countries. Proportions range from 18% in Sweden to 2% in Portugal.
- One in twenty respondents or fewer have been in contact with **political parties** in 14 Member States, while respondents are most likely to have been in contact with political parties in the Netherlands (15%).
- In 25 Member States, fewer than one in ten indicate that they have been in contact with **inspectors** in the last 12 months.
- In Poland, 16% of respondents report having been in contact with **officials awarding public tenders**.

All other items (public prosecution service and officials issuing business permits) were mentioned by fewer than one in ten in every Member State.

QD9a. Over the last 12 months, have you had any contact with any of the following in (OUR COUNTRY)? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)

	EU27	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK
The healthcare system	60	63	52	56	68	64	53	77	55	67	61	75	69	55	66	54	51	70	65	72	55	66	63	78	42	84	51	74
Banks and financial institutions	44	59	40	30	52	41	46	68	36	68	48	66	49	38	37	51	34	29	53	27	44	52	34	53	13	73	42	55
Private companies	31	48	23	10	20	22	35	47	33	59	34	55	33	16	24	32	21	23	32	19	26	50	18	41	10	62	19	31
The education sector	23	29	25	18	27	17	19	23	25	21	26	28	25	16	21	27	18	19	37	25	25	32	20	25	16	37	20	31
Tax authorities	14	15	14	17	8	6	21	35	13	31	3	43	12	11	15	18	5	13	18	16	18	47	4	13	12	41	6	16
Social security and welfare authorities	13	18	11	7	9	14	11	14	14	18	16	13	26	10	7	11	4	12	29	15	11	19	7	20	2	18	7	17
Police, customs	10	14	18	13	11	10	9	12	16	13	12	26	9	21	5	10	4	14	20	12	13	19	7	5	10	33	8	20
Politicians at national, regional or local level	6	12	12	3	4	4	7	12	8	3	4	11	8	7	2	12	3	4	11	3	9	17	2	2	4	18	4	9
Political parties	5	10	13	2	8	2	7	7	6	2	4	5	4	6	2	13	3	3	8	3	10	15	2	2	3	12	2	6
Inspectors (health and safety, construction, labour, food quality, sanitary control and licensing)	5	7	8	4	3	3	6	8	8	4	3	9	3	5	2	4	4	3	5	5	7	8	3	3	3	12	4	12
Officials issuing building permits	4	5	5	2	4	3	4	6	6	2	3	9	2	7	4	2	4	1	6	2	8	9	2	2	2	9	5	7
The Courts (tribunals)	3	6	8	3	6	3	4	7	3	5	2	4	3	7	1	2	2	1	4	3	9	6	1	4	3	7	6	6
Officials awarding public tenders	3	6	6	1	1	3	4	2	3	1	4	6	2	5	2	2	2	1	4	3	5	7	2	1	1	16	4	3
Public prosecution service	2	4	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	0	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	4	5	1	2	2	4	1	3
Officials issuing business permits	2	3	5	4	2	2	2	1	4	2	2	3	1	6	2	1	2	2	4	1	6	5	3	2	1	3	3	3
Don't know	4	1	1	3	5	8	5	1	7	0	1	1	3	8	2	6	5	4	4	2	8	0	7	2	7	0	2	3

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item  
2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item  
3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

A small minority of Europeans say that someone in their country has asked/expected them to give a gift, favour or extra money for his/her services in the past 12 months.<sup>33</sup>

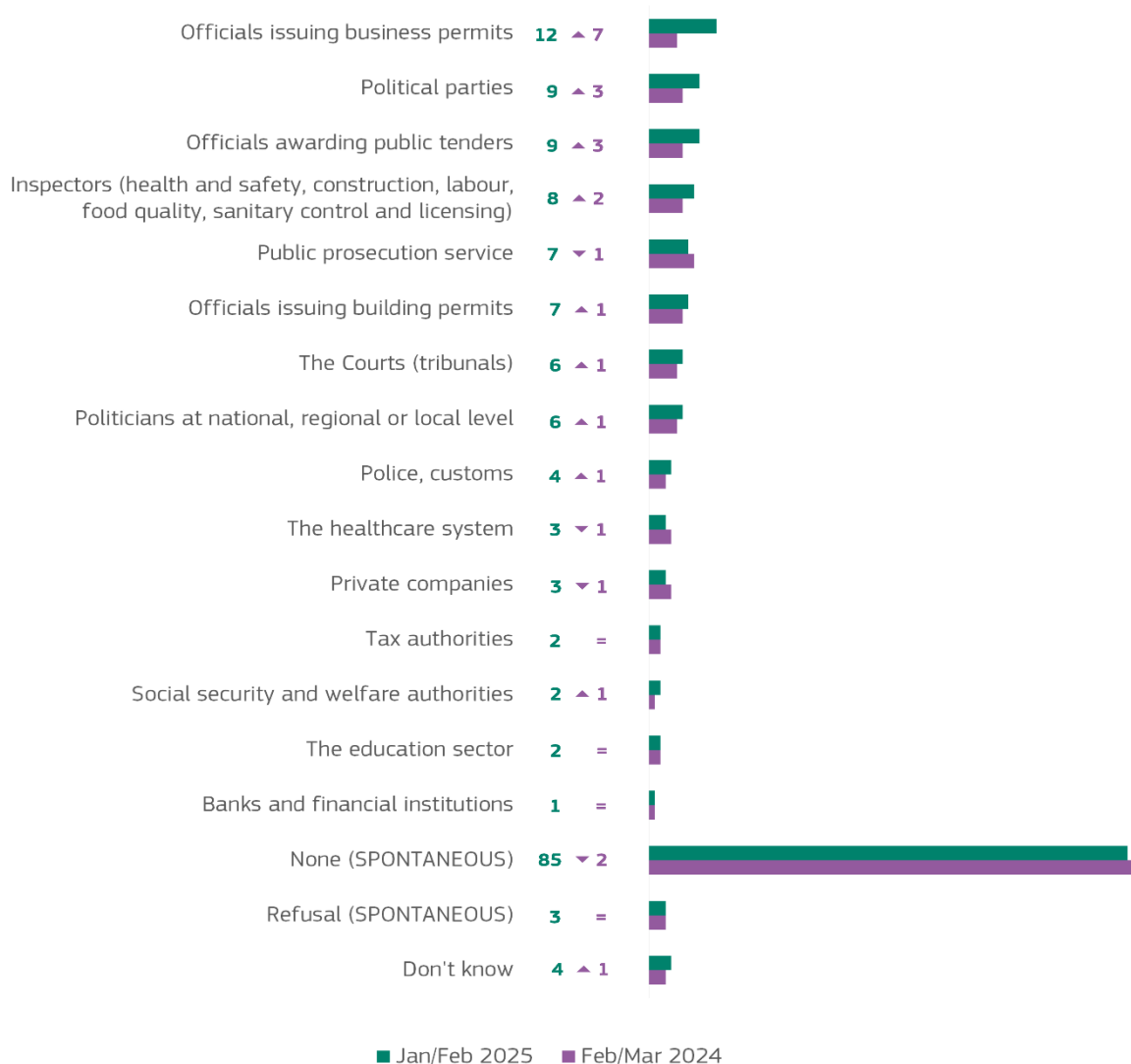
Among those that have had contact with any of the institutions mentioned above in the past 12 months, 8% of respondents (+1 pp) report that someone in their country has asked them or expected them to give a gift, favour or extra money for his or her services.

A large majority of 85% (-2 pp) report that they have **not been asked for a gift, favour, or extra money**. A small proportion of respondents spontaneously refused to answer (3%, unchanged) and 3% (+1 pp) say they "don't know".

When examining specific institutions<sup>34</sup>, 12% (+7 pp) of respondents in the EU who said they had contact with **officials issuing business permits** report having been asked for a gift, favour, or extra money for their services in the past 12 months.

For **political parties** and **officials awarding public tenders** 9% of respondents report having been affected by corruption (both +3 pp). This is the case for 8% of respondents for **Inspectors** (+2 pp) as well as 7% for **public prosecution services** (-1 pp) and **officials issuing building permits** (+1 pp). Lastly, 6% mention **politicians** (+1 pp) and **the courts** (+1 pp). All other institutions are mentioned by fewer than one in twenty.

QD9b. Thinking about these contacts in the past 12 months has anyone in (OUR COUNTRY) asked you or expected you to give a gift, favour, or extra money for his or her services?(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)



<sup>33</sup> QD9b. Thinking about these contacts in the past 12 months has anyone in (OUR COUNTRY) asked you or expected you to give a gift, favour, or extra money for his or her services? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

<sup>34</sup> Due the small sub-sample sizes per country, results have to be interpreted carefully.

## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

Respondents are most likely to have been affected by corruption in their interactions with these institutions in the last 12 months in Belgium (19%), Bulgaria (18%) and Austria (17%) as well as Croatia and Poland (both 14%). The highest shares of respondents who have not had such an experience in the last 12 months are in Denmark (96%), Sweden and Finland (both 95%) as well as France (94%).

QD9b. Thinking about these contacts in the past 12 months has anyone in (OUR COUNTRY) asked you or expected you to give a gift, favour, or extra money for his or her services? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)

	EU27	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK
Officials issuing business permits	12	29	6	26	0	18	13	0	8	6	0	3	7	14	8	40	5	0	0	0	0	2	50	5	25	0	3	3
Political parties	9	10	27	22	18	22	8	0	3	0	0	0	10	8	6	2	6	7	2	6	0	6	23	5	22	0	24	1
Officials awarding public tenders	9	23	10	36	33	30	7	13	6	15	3	2	12	23	5	5	14	0	5	3	0	1	35	0	0	1	13	6
Inspectors (health and safety, construction, labour, food quality, sanitary control and licensing)	8	14	12	14	0	13	7	7	1	2	0	5	3	19	31	0	12	21	4	0	3	1	28	4	12	3	2	4
Total 'Affected by corruption'	8	17	19	18	6	10	9	3	5	9	1	2	2	14	8	5	11	12	3	5	3	7	14	2	9	2	5	9
Public prosecution service	7	20	3	20	0	21	12	0	0	0	0	0	5	20	13	0	29	0	0	0	0	9	17	4	4	0	0	0
Officials issuing building permits	7	16	9	23	5	13	4	5	2	12	0	1	9	9	17	18	14	27	7	21	8	5	24	0	0	0	6	4
The Courts (tribunals)	6	11	9	19	8	6	5	0	3	2	0	0	3	9	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	3	14	17	7	3	2	3
Politicians at national, regional or local level	6	6	24	14	0	4	9	3	3	17	5	2	4	7	11	0	9	3	1	8	4	2	6	0	2	1	6	4
Police, customs	4	18	8	14	7	6	6	2	1	2	2	0	2	3	6	1	5	2	3	0	0	1	5	4	4	1	7	6
The healthcare system	3	4	6	11	4	5	3	1	2	10	0	1	1	8	5	3	4	9	0	5	0	1	5	1	7	0	2	6
Private companies	3	4	8	2	4	4	5	3	2	0	1	1	1	6	7	2	9	2	2	2	4	3	4	1	1	2	4	1
Tax authorities	2	3	7	3	5	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	4	0	0	6	1	0	1	2	3	5	0	4	0	2	1
Social security and welfare authorities	2	1	5	19	2	2	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	5	2	3	10	2	0	2	0	2	8	0	8	0	1	8
The education sector	2	7	5	8	5	4	5	0	1	1	0	0	1	3	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	3	0	4	0	0	1
Banks and financial institutions	1	1	5	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	0
Don't know	4	2	10	7	12	10	5	1	16	2	3	2	3	14	4	5	3	5	4	10	2	5	6	3	8	2	4	4

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item  
 2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item  
 3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

Jan/Feb 2025





## **IV. Reporting corruption**

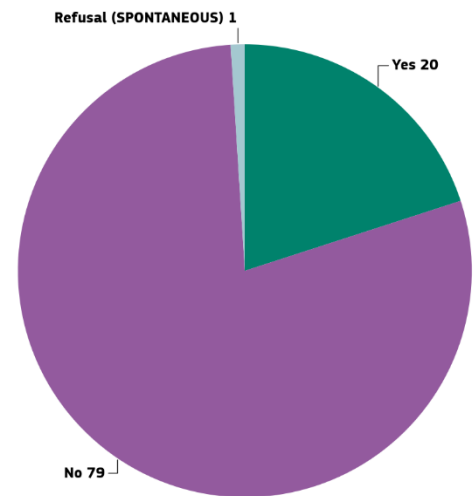
## 1. Reporting of corruption

A large majority of close to eight in ten of those who experienced and/or witnessed corruption did not report it.

Among the respondents who have experienced and/or witnessed any case of corruption in the last 12 months, one in five (20%, +2 pp since 2024) say they reported the case to someone. However, the majority of respondents (79%, -2 pp) did not.<sup>35</sup>

In all countries, close to eight in ten respondents or more say they did not report the case (79%), with proportions ranging from 99% in Greece, 94% in Latvia and 93% in Slovakia to 58% in the Netherlands and 64% in Estonia and Sweden. In four countries, at least a third did report the corruption case, namely in the Netherlands (41%) and Sweden (36%) in the Netherlands and 64% in Estonia and Sweden. In four countries, at least a third did report the corruption case, namely in the Netherlands (41%) and Sweden (36%) as well as Belgium and Estonia (both 34%).

QD13: Did you report it to anyone or not? (EU27) (%)

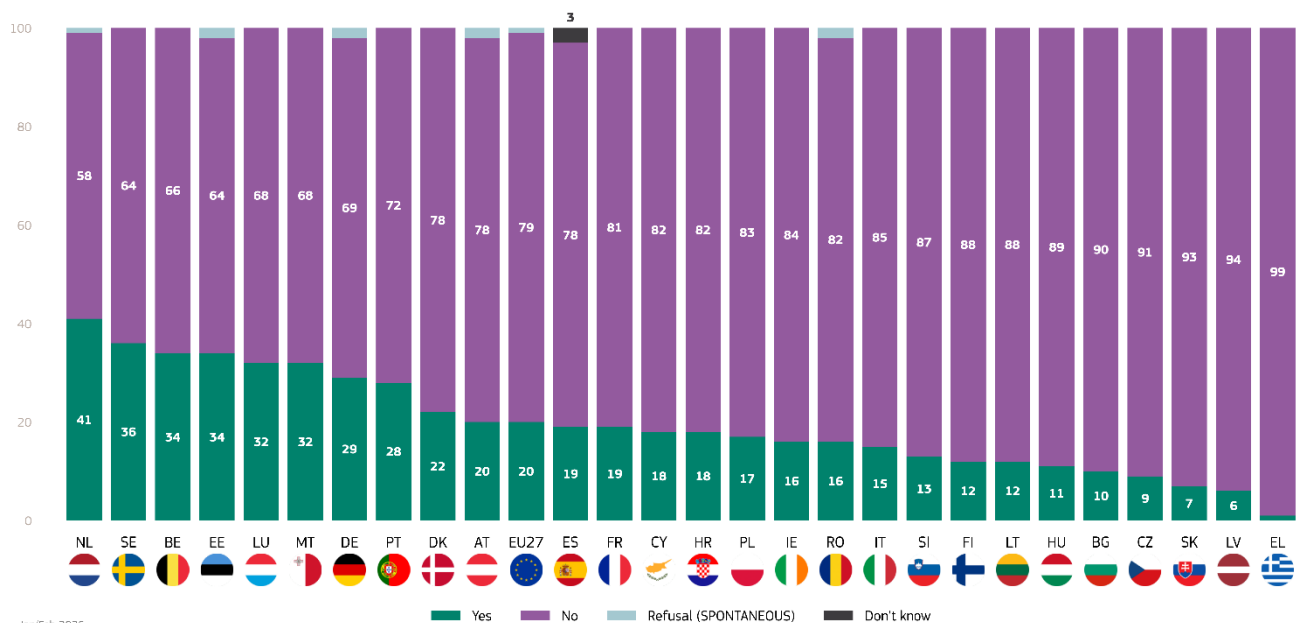


Yes	▲ 2
No	▼ 2
Refusal (SPONTANEOUS)	=
Don't know	=

▲▼ (Jan/Feb 2025 - Feb/Mar 2024)

Jan/Feb 2025

QD13: Did you report it to anyone or not? (%)



<sup>35</sup> QD13: Did you report it to anyone or not?

## 2. Awareness of where to report corruption

More than half are not aware of where to report a case of corruption if they were to experience or witness one.

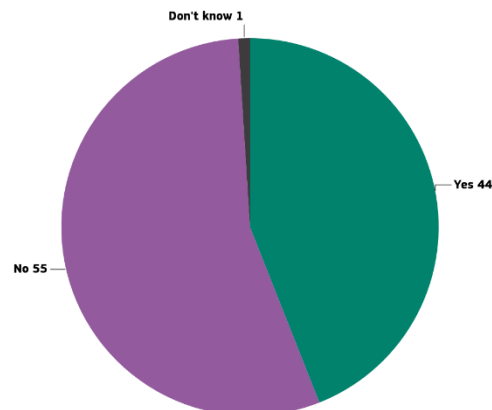
All respondents were asked whether they knew where to report a case of corruption, if they were to experience or witness one.<sup>36</sup>

At the EU level, 44% of respondents indicate that they would know where to report a case of corruption, showing a slight increase from the previous survey in 2024 (up from 43%, +1 pp). Conversely, 55% (-1 pp) of respondents indicate that they would not know where to report corruption.

In 13 EU Member States, at least half of respondents indicate that they would know where to report a case of corruption, most notably in Greece and Malta (both 60%) as well as Cyprus (59%).

In the remaining 14 countries, at least half of the respondents are not aware of where to report corruption. Poland and Hungary have the highest percentages of respondents unaware of where to report corruption, both at 67%, followed by Romania at 63%.

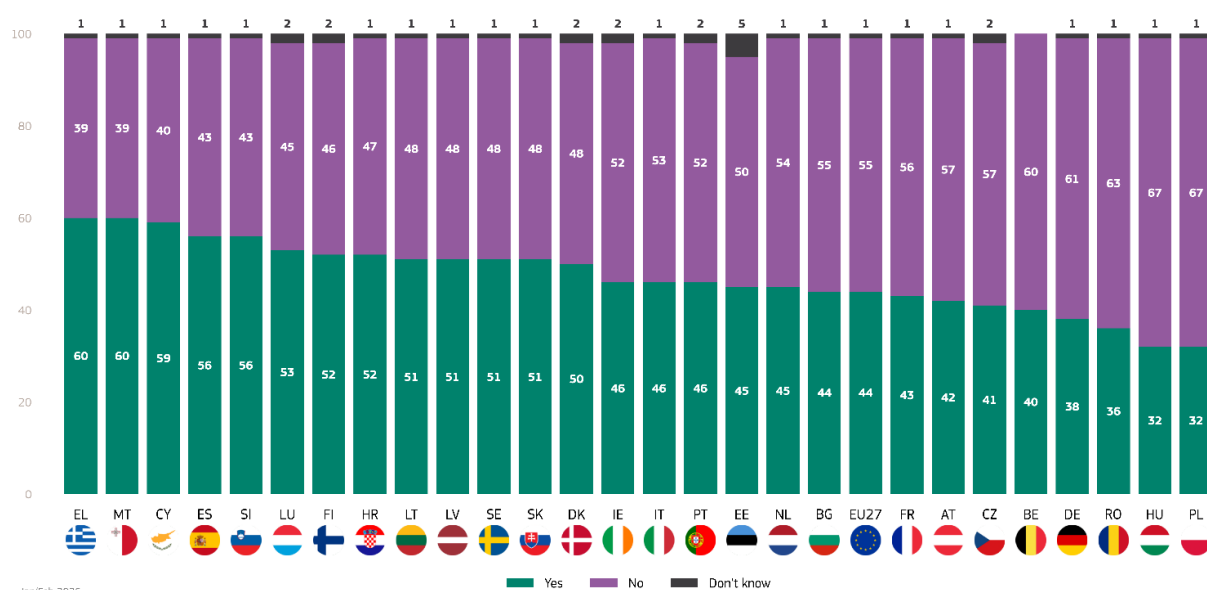
QD10: If you were to experience or witness a case of corruption, would you know where to report it to? (EU27) (%)



Yes ▲ 1  
No ▼ 1  
Don't know =

▲▼ (Jan/Feb 2025 - Feb/Mar 2024)  
Jan/Feb 2025

QD10: If you were to experience or witness a case of corruption, would you know where to report it to? (%)



<sup>36</sup> QD10. If you were to experience or witness a case of corruption, would you know where to report it to?

### 3. Reasons for not reporting corruption

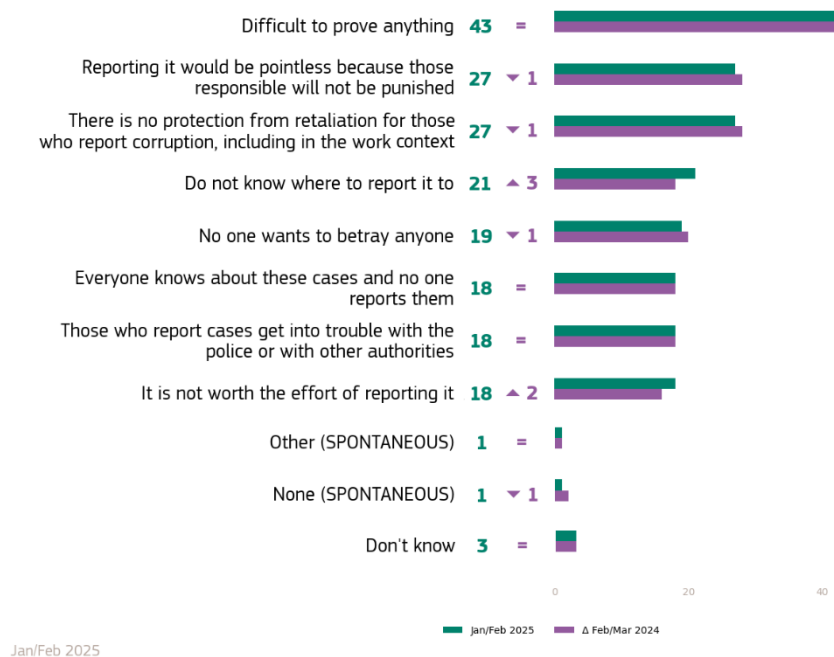
Difficulty in proving anything is the main reason Europeans think people do not report corruption.

Respondents were given a list of eight reasons why people may decide not to report a case of corruption and were asked to choose up to three reasons which they find deem most important.<sup>37</sup>

The three most frequently cited reasons revolve around doubt about the value of reporting and the fear of retaliation. More than four in ten respondents (43%, unchanged since 2024) believe that one reason is the **difficulty in proving anything** in corruption cases. Close to three in ten (27%, -1 pp) cite that **reporting corruption would be pointless because those responsible would not be punished** and that **there is no protection from retaliation for those who report corruption, including in the work context** (27%, -1 pp).

Around one in five respondents select each of the remaining reasons: **no one wants to betray anyone** (19%, -1 pp), **everyone knows about these cases and no one reports them** (18%, unchanged), **those who report cases get into trouble with the police or with other authorities** (18%, unchanged) and **it is not worth the effort of reporting it** (18%, +2 pp).

QD14: Below are some possible reasons why people may decide not to report a case of corruption. Please tell those which you think are the most important? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS) (EU27) (%)



<sup>37</sup> QD14. Below are some possible reasons why people may decide not to report a case of corruption. Please tell those which you think are the most important? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)

## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

In all but three EU Member States (Cyprus, Malta and Portugal), the **difficulty to prove anything** is the most frequently mentioned reason why people may choose not to report corruption. This reason is most frequently mentioned by respondents in Denmark (59%), Luxembourg (58%) and Sweden (55%) and least frequently mentioned in Romania (29%), Malta (30%) and Cyprus (33%).

**Reporting it would be pointless because those responsible will not be punished** ranks first in Portugal (41%) and comes in second or third place in 20 Member States. Apart from Portugal, respondents are most likely to mention this item in Greece (43%) and Cyprus (41%).

**There is no protection from retaliation for those who report corruption, including in the work context** is the most frequently mentioned item in Cyprus (46%) and in Malta (40%) and the second- or third-most important item in 15 Member States. Apart from Cyprus and Malta, respondents chose this reason most frequently in the Netherlands (43%) as well as Luxembourg and Lithuania (33%).

The five remaining reasons do not rank first in any of the EU Member States. Notable observations for these reasons include:

- **Do not know where to report it** is mentioned by around three in ten respondents in Sweden (34%), France (31%), Denmark (29%) and Finland (28%).
- **No one wants to betray anyone** is mentioned by more than one in four respondents in Austria and Denmark (both 27%) and Poland (26%).
- While being mentioned by 18% of Europeans, **those who report cases get into trouble with the police or with other authorities** is mentioned by more at least three in ten respondents in Cyprus (37%), Malta (35%), Lithuania (34%) and Bulgaria (30%).
- The proportion of people citing that **everyone knows about these cases and no one reports them** ranges from 37% in Greece to 12% in Finland and the Netherlands.
- **It is not worth the effort of reporting it** ranks second in Ireland (26%) and third in Austria (30%), Slovenia (26%) and Finland (25%).

## 4. Level of trust in authorities

The police are the only institution trusted by more than half to deal with complaints about a case of corruption.

Respondents were also asked, who they would trust most to handle a corruption complaint.<sup>38</sup>

Overall, the **police** is the most trusted authority across the EU, with 61% (+1 percentage point since 2024) of respondents indicating their trust in the police in such a case. This is the only answer mentioned by more than half.

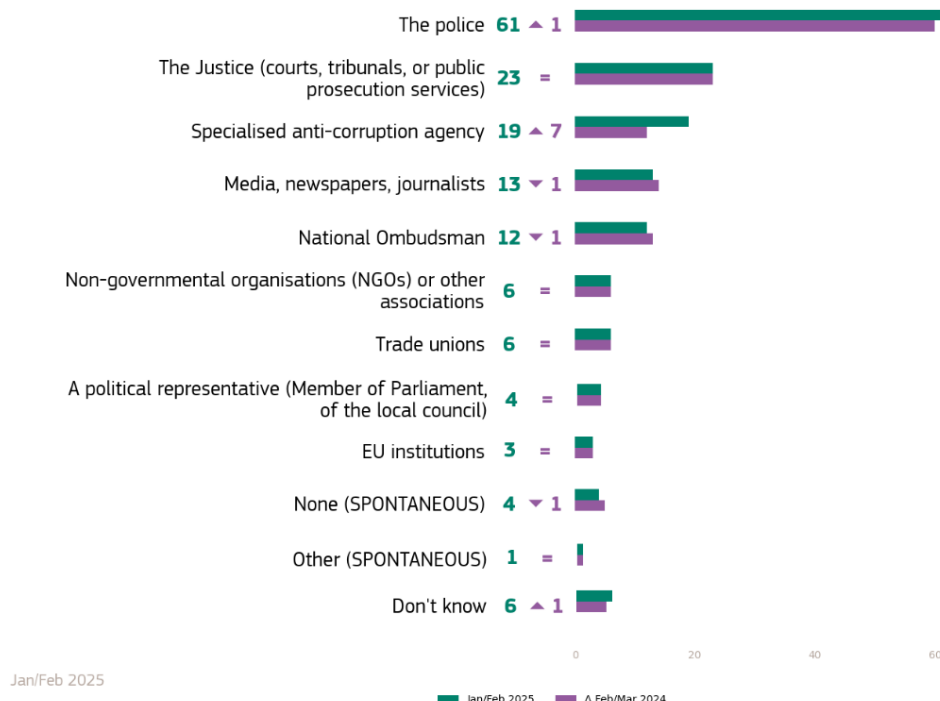
Around one quarter (23%, unchanged) trust the **justice system**, including courts, tribunals, and public prosecution services, whereas **specialised anti-corruption agencies** are trusted by 19% of respondents across the European Union, an increase of 7 percentage points since 2024.

Around one in ten (13%, -1 pp) respondents mention the **media, including newspapers and journalists**, while the **national ombudsman** is trusted by 12% of respondents across the EU (-1 pp).

The remaining institutions are all trusted by fewer than one in ten respondents: **Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or other association** (6%, unchanged), **trade unions** (6%, unchanged), **a political representative (Member of Parliament, of the local council)** (4%, unchanged) and **EU institutions** (3%, unchanged).

Lastly, 4% (-1 pp) say they trust none of the options given, while 6% (+1 pp) say they don't know.

QD11: And if you wanted to complain about this case of corruption, who would you trust most to deal with it? (EU27) (%)



<sup>38</sup> QD11. And if you wanted to complain about this case of corruption, who would you trust most to deal with it?



## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Citizens' attitudes towards corruption in 2025

In all EU Member States except Croatia, respondents are most likely to say they would trust **the police** most if they wanted to complain about a case of corruption. The highest proportions are seen in Finland (78%), Denmark (76%) and Luxembourg (72%). In 21 Member States of the European Union, at least half of the respondents trust the police to deal with their complaint, whereas respondents are least likely to express such trust in Bulgaria (38%), Hungary (39%) and Malta (41%).

The **justice system** is the second- or third-most trusted institution in 17 countries, most notably in Sweden (58%), which is the only country where more than half of respondents cite this institution.

**Specialised anti-corruption agencies**<sup>39</sup> are the most frequently mentioned item in Croatia (45%), and rank second or third in 12 countries, most notably in Romania (32%). Accordingly, this item ranks in the top three most frequently mentioned items in all countries in which this item was proposed.

In 13 countries, the **media, including newspapers and journalists**, rank second or third, with respondents most likely to mention this in Slovakia and Denmark (both 26%) and Sweden (25%).

The **national ombudsman** ranks second or third in 11 Member States, with the largest shares observed in the Netherlands (41%).

**Trade Unions** rank third in Luxembourg (13%) and are most frequently mentioned in Sweden (19%).

All remaining items (non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or other associations, a political representative (Member of Parliament, of the local council, EU Institutions) do not rank among the top three most frequently mentioned items in any Member State.

QD11. And if you wanted to complain about this case of corruption, who would you trust most to deal with it? (%)

	EU27	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK
The police	61	55	56	38	57	66	69	76	63	62	63	78	59	44	39	57	66	52	72	45	41	62	56	54	43	66	51	62
The Justice (courts, tribunals, or public prosecution services)	23	27	23	7	13	6	24	40	21	34	34	29	25	11	21	9	14	5	28	8	15	38	13	15	10	58	8	12
Specialised anti-corruption agency	19	28	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	20	45	0	0	20	30	0	31	30	0	9	24	32	0	26	0
Media, newspapers, journalists	13	23	22	23	23	14	10	26	16	11	9	10	13	21	16	12	11	18	12	16	21	20	8	10	10	25	14	26
National Ombudsman	12	16	16	12	20	11	16	18	11	22	6	15	7	8	13	27	7	1	9	10	25	41	8	5	7	30	16	25
Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or other associations	6	16	7	6	8	5	5	6	5	4	1	6	8	6	15	8	4	3	7	4	16	8	4	2	9	7	7	9
Trade Unions	6	11	12	2	2	4	4	15	6	3	3	11	8	4	5	4	5	2	13	3	5	12	2	1	3	19	3	3
A political representative (Member of Parliament, of the local council)	4	12	5	2	7	2	4	5	4	2	1	3	2	4	6	4	2	0	4	2	8	9	4	2	8	4	0	4
EU Institutions	3	6	3	4	7	1	2	5	4	4	2	6	1	8	10	2	2	2	4	6	11	5	2	1	3	7	4	8
Other (SPONTANEOUS)	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0
Don't know	6	5	5	10	3	11	5	2	7	2	5	4	6	3	8	8	6	4	2	7	5	2	7	12	6	1	3	6

1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item

2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

Jan/Feb 2025

<sup>39</sup> It is important to note that this item was only proposed to respondents in Austria, Bulgaria, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia)



# Conclusion

The findings from the latest survey show that roughly seven in ten Europeans believe that **corruption is widespread in their country**, a slight increase compared to 2024. Since last year, the perception of widespread corruption has increased in twelve EU Member States, with the largest rises observed in Luxembourg and Ireland, and decreased in thirteen, most notably in Malta and Slovenia. Perceptions vary across the EU, with nearly all respondents in Greece believing corruption is widespread, while only about two in ten say the same in Finland.

**Europeans largely perceive corruption to be widespread in political and administrative institutions.** More than half believe that giving and taking bribes and the abuse of power for personal gain are widespread among political parties, and nearly as many say the same about politicians at all levels. While these figures have slightly declined since 2024, they remain the most frequently mentioned groups in most Member States. Around four out of ten respondents also point to officials awarding public tenders, and about one in three mention those issuing building or business permits. Although slightly lower compared to 2024, a significant number still believe bribery and personal connections remain prevalent methods for accessing public services.

Corruption is also seen to affect public services, though less often than political institutions. About one in four mention healthcare, and one in five law enforcement. Fewer point to social welfare and education, but around one in ten still believe corruption exists in these sectors.

While corruption is perceived as widespread in many political and administrative institutions, it is less frequently associated with frontline services. These sectors, which involve direct service delivery to citizens, contrast with areas such as political parties, regional administration, public procurement, and construction, where systemic corruption is seen as more entrenched. Overall, perceptions of corruption in healthcare remain limited, though they vary across Member States.

**Around three in ten Europeans feel personally affected by corruption** in their daily lives, a slight increase compared to 2024. This perception varies widely across the EU, with majorities in several southern and eastern Member States, and far fewer respondents in northern and western Europe.

**The results show a clear co-occurrence between the perception of widespread corruption and the feeling of being personally affected by it.** In countries where corruption is seen as more prevalent, respondents are also

more likely to report that it impacts their daily lives, suggesting that perception may often reflect concrete, everyday concerns.

**Around six in ten Europeans say that giving money, gifts, or favours to obtain something from public services is never acceptable**, while about one in three still consider at least one of these practices acceptable in some situations, though this share has declined across all three practices since 2024. A majority of respondents in 20 Member States reject these practices, with the highest shares in Portugal, Spain and France. In contrast, the highest shares of tolerance are found in Slovakia, Hungary and Czechia.

Around one in three respondents think it is acceptable to do a favour or give a gift to obtain something from a public administration or public service, while about one in five say the same about giving money. Although a majority continue to reject these practices, **the 2025 results mark a reversal of last year's increase in acceptability**, with modest declines observed across all three.

**Attitudes toward corruption differ depending on personal exposure.** Respondents who have experienced or witnessed corruption are less likely to find it unacceptable, with fewer than half rejecting such practices. Among those with no direct exposure, nearly two-thirds say corruption is never acceptable.

Only **a minority of Europeans consider their country's efforts to combat corruption to be effective**, with just under one in three respondents holding this view. Many believe that corruption has worsened in recent years, a perception particularly widespread in countries such as Portugal, Slovenia, Croatia, and Malta.

**Europeans remain sceptical about the effectiveness of national anti-corruption efforts.** Fewer than four in ten believe that measures are applied impartially or that prosecutions deter corrupt practices. Only around one in three consider their government's efforts effective, with little change since 2024. A majority also doubt the transparency of political financing and believe **that high-level corruption cases are not adequately pursued**. These views are reinforced by widespread agreement that bribery and personal connections are common paths to public contracts and positions, highlighting persistent concerns about fairness and accountability in public life.

**Corruption is widely perceived as a barrier to fair business practices and is also deeply embedded in**



**business culture.** Many Europeans believe that favouritism and political connections distort competition, with around six in ten agreeing that corruption is embedded in business culture. Just over half also think that political ties are crucial for business success within the EU.

**The police remain the most trusted institution for handling corruption complaints, with six out of ten respondents expressing confidence in their role.** This figure remains well above that of the justice system, which is trusted by just under a quarter of respondents. Trust in specialised anti-corruption agencies has increased since 2024, though they remain less frequently cited overall

**More than half of those surveyed say they would not know where to report a case of corruption,** though awareness has slightly improved since 2024. Just over four in ten say they would know where to report it, yet only one in five of those who encountered corruption actually did so. In the remaining 14 countries, at least half of respondents are not aware of where to report corruption. Awareness is particularly low in Poland, Hungary and Romania, where fewer than four in ten know where to turn.

**The difficulty in proving corruption** remains the most common reason people believe cases go unreported, cited by more than four in ten respondents. In nearly all Member States, it ranks as the most frequently mentioned barrier. Close to three in ten say reporting would be pointless because those responsible would not be punished, or that there is no protection from retaliation. Other reasons include fear of consequences, social pressure, and the belief that reporting is not worth the effort. These findings highlight persistent barriers to reporting.

Reluctance to report corruption remains widespread across the EU, with nearly eight in ten respondents saying they did not report their experience. Reporting is particularly rare in countries such as Greece, Latvia and Slovakia, where fewer than one in ten came forward. In contrast, at least one in three reported the case in the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium and Estonia, suggesting stronger trust in reporting mechanisms or a greater sense of civic responsibility.

**Although many Europeans perceive corruption as widespread, direct encounters remain relatively uncommon.** One in twenty respondents say they experienced or witnessed a case of corruption incidents in the past year. Slightly more, around one in twelve, report being asked or expected to give a gift, favour or extra payment for public services. Most of these incidents occurred in a work-related context.

While a majority of every socio-demographic group believe corruption is widespread, clear divides emerge across age, education and economic status. **The share rises to around seven in ten or more among older respondents, those with less formal education and individuals facing financial hardships.** Among those with direct or indirect exposure to corruption, such as having experienced or witnessed it, or know someone who takes bribes, nearly nine in ten share this view. These patterns underline how personal context and lived experience shape perceptions of corruption across the EU.

While men and women share broadly similar views on corruption, key differences remain. Men are more likely to perceive corruption as widespread, to know someone who has taken bribes, and to believe political connections are essential for business success. Women are more likely to say they don't know where to report corruption and show slightly lower trust in institutions. Yet both genders express nearly equal views on the unacceptability of corruption, experiences of bribery, and reporting behaviour, reflecting largely aligned attitudes overall.

As in the previous years, national, regional, and socio-demographic differences continue to shape how Europeans perceive corruption. While overall perceptions remain stable, most continue to view corruption as widespread, particularly in political and administrative institutions. A clear majority reject sustained corrupt practices, though tolerance persists in some contexts. These findings point to a continued gap between public expectations and the limited effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts, reinforcing the need for more visible, credible and coordinated action to strengthen enforcement, improve accountability and rebuild trust.

## Technical Specifications

Between 9 January and 4 February 2025, Verian Belgium carried out the wave 103.1 of the Eurobarometer survey, on request of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, "Public Opinion & Citizens Engagement" Unit.

The Wave 103.1 covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, resident in each of the 27 Member States and aged 15 years and over.

The basic sample design applied in all countries is a stratified multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each country, the sample frame is first stratified by NUTS regions and within each region by a measure of urbanity (DEGURBA). The number of sample points selected in each strata reflects the stratum population 15+. At the second stage sampling points were drawn with probability proportional to their 0+ population size from within each stratum. The samples thus represent the whole territory of the countries surveyed according to the EUROSTAT NUTS II (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective nationalities in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas<sup>40</sup>.

In each of the selected sampling points, a starting coordinate was drawn at random and a reverse geo-coding tool used to identify the closest address to the coordinate. This address was the starting address for the random walk. Further addresses (every Nth address) were selected by standard "random route" procedures, from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn, at random. The approach to the random selection was conditional on the household size. By way of example for households with two 15+ members the script was used to select either the informant (person responding to the screener questionnaire) or the other eligible member in the household. For households with three 15+ members the script was used to select either the informant (1/3 of the time) or the two other eligible members in the household (2/3 of the time). Where the two other members were selected, the interviewer was then told to either ask for the youngest or oldest. The script would randomly assign the selection to youngest or oldest with equal probability. This process continues for four 15+ household members – randomly asking for the youngest, 2<sup>nd</sup> youngest and oldest. For households with five 15+ members we revert to the last birthday rule.

If no contact was made with anyone in the household, or if the respondent selected was not available (busy), the interviewer revisited the same household up to three additional times (four contact attempts in total). Interviewers never indicate that the survey is conducted on behalf of the European Commission beforehand; they may give this information once the survey is completed, upon request.

The recruitment phase was slightly different in the Netherlands, Finland, and Sweden. In the two latter countries, a sample of addresses within each sampling point were selected from the address or population register (in Finland, selection is not done in all sample points, but in some where response rates are expected to improve). The selection of addresses was done in a random manner. Households were then contacted by telephone and recruited to take part in the survey. In the Netherlands, a dual frame RDD sample (mobile and landline numbers) are used as there is no comprehensive population register with telephone numbers available. The selection of numbers on both frames is done in a random manner with each number getting an equal probability of selection. Unlike Sweden and Finland, the sample is un-clustered.

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<sup>40</sup> Urban Rural classification based on DEGURBA  
(<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/degree-of-urbanisation/background>)

## Special Eurobarometer 561 Technical Specifications

	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N°	FIELDWORK		POPULATION	PROPORTION
			INTERVIEWS	DATES		15+	EU27
BE	Belgium	MCM Belgium	1,006	10/01/2025	27/01/2025	9,801,547	2.6%
BG	Bulgaria	Kantar TNS BBSS	1,044	10/01/2025	29/01/2025	5,533,938	1.4%
CZ	Czechia	STEM/MARK	1,007	09/01/2025	27/01/2025	9,075,934	2.4%
DK	Denmark	Mantle Denmark (Verian)	1,003	09/01/2025	02/03/2025	4,984,048	1.3%
DE	Germany	Mantle Germany (Verian)	1,504	10/01/2025	28/01/2025	72,405,020	19.0%
EE	Estonia	Norstat Eesti	1,004	09/01/2025	28/01/2025	1,141,759	0.3%
IE	Ireland	B and A Research	1,007	09/01/2025	31/01/2025	4,250,998	1.1%
EL	Greece	Kantar Greece	1,011	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	9,019,518	2.4%
ES	Spain	Mantle Spain (Verian)	1,000	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	41,533,486	10.9%
FR	France	MCM France	1,006	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	56,365,353	14.8%
HR	Croatia	Hendal	1,011	11/01/2025	28/01/2025	3,301,831	0.9%
IT	Italy	Testpoint Italia	1,024	09/01/2025	21/01/2025	51,632,657	13.5%
CY	Rep. of Cyprus	CYMAR Market Research	502	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	772,320	0.2%
LV	Latvia	Kantar TNS Latvia	1,005	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	1,582,326	0.4%
LT	Lithuania	Norstat LT	1,004	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	2,429,823	0.6%
LU	Luxembourg	ILRES	503	09/01/2025	30/01/2025	555,900	0.1%
HU	Hungary	Kantar Hoffmann	1,011	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	8,205,783	2.1%
MT	Malta	MISCO International	503	09/01/2025	02/04/2025	473,015	0.1%
NL	Netherlands	MCM Netherlands	1,016	10/01/2025	30/01/2025	15,081,342	4.0%
AT	Austria	Das Österreichische Gallup Ins.	1,007	09/01/2025	28/01/2025	7,788,036	2.0%
PL	Poland	Research Collective	1,017	10/01/2025	28/01/2025	31,079,533	8.1%
PT	Portugal	Intercampus SA	1,040	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	9,113,419	2.4%
RO	Romania	CSOP SRL	1,031	10/01/2025	28/01/2025	15,981,575	4.2%
SI	Slovenia	Mediana DOO	1,005	09/01/2025	27/01/2025	1,799,078	0.5%
SK	Slovakia	MNFORCE	1,002	09/01/2025	24/01/2025	4,554,569	1.2%
FI	Finland	Taloustutkimus Oy	1,008	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	4,722,540	1.2%
SE	Sweden	Mantle Sweden (Verian)	1,073	09/01/2025	29/01/2025	8,541,497	2.2%
TOTAL EU27			26,354	09/01/2025	02/04/2025	381,726,845	100%

\* It should be noted that the total percentage shown in this table may exceed 100% due to rounding.



## Special Eurobarometer 561 Technical Specifications

### Interviewing mode per country

Interviews were conducted through face-to-face interviews, either physically in people's homes or through remote video interaction in the appropriate national language. Interviews with remote video interaction ("online face-to-face" or CAVI, Computer Assisted Video Interviewing, were conducted only in Czechia, Denmark, Malta, Netherlands, Finland and Sweden).

	COUNTRIES	N° OF CAPI INTERVIEWS	N° OF CAVI INTERVIEWS	TOTAL N° INTERVIEWS
BE	Belgium	1,006		1,006
BG	Bulgaria	1,044		1,044
CZ	Czechia	990	17	1,007
DK	Denmark	692	311	1,003
DE	Germany	1,504		1,504
EE	Estonia	1,004		1,004
IE	Ireland	1,007		1,007
EL	Greece	1,011		1,011
ES	Spain	1,000		1,000
FR	France	1,006		1,006
HR	Croatia	1,011		1,011
IT	Italy	1,024		1,024
CY	Rep. Of Cyprus	502		502
LV	Latvia	1,005		1,005
LT	Lithuania	1,004		1,004
LU	Luxembourg	503		503
HU	Hungary	1,011		1,011
MT	Malta	326	177	503
NL	Netherlands	799	217	1,016
AT	Austria	1,007		1,007
PL	Poland	1,017		1,017
PT	Portugal	1,040		1,040
RO	Romania	1,031		1,031
SI	Slovenia	1,005		1,005
SK	Slovakia	1,002		1,002
FI	Finland	734	274	1,008
SE	Sweden	855	218	1,073
	TOTAL EU27	25,140	1,214	26,354

CAPI : Computer-Assisted Personal interviewing

CAVI : Computer-Assisted Video interviewing

## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Technical Specifications

#### Response rates

For each country a comparison between the responding sample and the universe (i.e. the overall population in the country) is carried out. Weights are used to match the responding sample to the universe on gender by age, region and degree of urbanisation. For European estimates (i.e. EU average), an adjustment is made to the individual country weights, weighting them up or down to reflect their 15+ population as a proportion of the EU 15+ population.

The response rates are calculated by dividing the total number of complete interviews with the number of all the addresses visited, apart from ones that are not eligible but including those where eligibility is unknown. For wave 103.1 of the EUROBAROMETER survey, the response rates for the EU27 countries, calculated by Verian Belgium, are:

	COUNTRIES	CAP RESPONSE RATES
BE	Belgium	52.8%
BG	Bulgaria	43.8%
CZ	Czechia	59.1%
DK	Denmark	49.3%
DE	Germany	36.0%
EE	Estonia	52.6%
IE	Ireland	43.0%
EL	Greece	31.1%
ES	Spain	37.6%
FR	France	43.3%
HR	Croatia	43.2%
IT	Italy	31.3%
CY	Rep. Of Cyprus	69.8%
LV	Latvia	29.8%
LT	Lithuania	42.7%
LU	Luxembourg	27.3%
HU	Hungary	56.3%
MT	Malta	79.1%
NL	Netherlands	79.6%
AT	Austria	44.0%
PL	Poland	49.0%
PT	Portugal	47.0%
RO	Romania	47.5%
SI	Slovenia	38.8%
SK	Slovakia	53.3%
FI	Finland	32.9%
SE	Sweden	77.6%

CAP : Computer-Assisted Personal interviewing

## Special Eurobarometer 561

### Technical Specifications

#### Margins of error

Readers are reminded that survey results are estimations, the accuracy of which, everything being equal, rests upon the sample size and upon the observed percentage. With samples of about 1,000 interviews, the real percentages vary within the following confidence limits:

Statistical Margins due to the sampling process  
(at the 95% level of confidence)

*various sample sizes are in rows*

*various observed results are in columns*

	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	
	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	
N=50	6,0	8,3	9,9	11,1	12,0	12,7	13,2	13,6	13,8	13,9	N=50
N=500	1,9	2,6	3,1	3,5	3,8	4,0	4,2	4,3	4,4	4,4	N=500
<b>N=1000</b>	<b>1,4</b>	<b>1,9</b>	<b>2,2</b>	<b>2,5</b>	<b>2,7</b>	<b>2,8</b>	<b>3,0</b>	<b>3,0</b>	<b>3,1</b>	<b>3,1</b>	<b>N=1000</b>
N=1500	1,1	1,5	1,8	2,0	2,2	2,3	2,4	2,5	2,5	2,5	N=1500
N=2000	1,0	1,3	1,6	1,8	1,9	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,2	2,2	N=2000
N=3000	0,8	1,1	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,6	1,7	1,8	1,8	1,8	N=3000
N=4000	0,7	0,9	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	N=4000
N=5000	0,6	0,8	1,0	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,3	1,4	1,4	1,4	N=5000
N=6000	0,6	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,3	1,3	N=6000
N=7000	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,2	1,2	N=7000
N=7500	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	N=7500
N=8000	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	N=8000
N=9000	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	N=9000
N=10000	0,4	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	N=10000
N=11000	0,4	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	N=11000
N=12000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	N=12000
N=13000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	N=13000
N=14000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	N=14000
N=15000	0,3	0,5	0,6	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	N=15000
	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	
	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	



Publications Office  
of the European Union

ISBN [978-92-68-28070-6]