



# The situation of young people in the European Union

EU Youth Report | 2024

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EU Youth Report | 2024

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# Abbreviations

## Statistical codes

: Data not available

⊗ Not participating in data collection

## Country codes

### EU European Union Member States <sup>(1)</sup>

BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czechia
DK	Denmark
DE	Germany
EE	Estonia
IE	Ireland
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
HR	Croatia
IT	Italy
CY	Cyprus
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden

### Non-EU Member States – Erasmus+ programme countries <sup>(2)</sup>

IS	Iceland
LI	Liechtenstein
MK	North Macedonia
NO	Norway
RS	Serbia
TR	Türkiye

## Other abbreviations

EU	European Union
pps	percentage points

<sup>(1)</sup> Alphabetical order according to country's name in national language.

<sup>(2)</sup> Alphabetical order according to codes.



# Introduction

The report outlines several interconnected aspects influencing the situation of young people in the European Union (EU), encompassing demographics, employment, education, social inclusion, political engagement, environmental activism, and health. These topics are not isolated but are intricately related, with many factors influencing others, creating a complex landscape for policy makers and stakeholders.

Young people in the EU continue to demonstrate interest in political and community participation. Over 70% report voting in elections, and many express trust in the EU and a positive perception of its role. Participation in organised activities, including volunteering, further reflects the commitment of young Europeans to societal engagement. These activities foster a sense of community and can provide opportunities to build social networks and skills, thereby indirectly combating social exclusion.

Young people are also increasingly vocal about environmental issues, particularly climate change, which they see as the most pressing global problem. The green transition offers both opportunities and challenges for young people. On the one hand, the transition to a greener economy creates new employment opportunities; on the other, it may impact young people in sectors that are less environmentally

sustainable. Young people believe that education has played a crucial role in equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed for environmental change, which is linked with broader issues like education.

The EU has seen a decline in the proportion of young people in its population over the past decade, and this trend is expected to continue. This demographic shift is closely linked with intergenerational fairness, as a shrinking youth population raises concerns about the sustainability of social systems. Fewer young people supporting a growing elderly population could lead to increased strain on public services, social security systems, and economic productivity.

In this context, youth unemployment is an important element. Approximately half of the EU's youth is active in the labour market, but 10% of young people are unemployed. Lower educational attainment and disabilities are significant contributors to higher unemployment rates. A worrying trend is the high proportion of youth classified as [NEET](#) (Not in Employment, Education, or Training), with over 1 in 10 young people in this category. These employment challenges not only affect the economic prospects of young people but also overlap with other social issues, such as social exclusion.

Social exclusion and poverty are significant challenges for young people in the EU, particularly those with lower education levels or with disabilities. Nearly a quarter of the youth population is at risk of poverty and social exclusion, with young people in work also vulnerable to poverty, especially those in precarious jobs. This situation is deeply intertwined with youth unemployment, as lack of access to stable employment opportunities exacerbates financial insecurity, which in turn limits access to education, housing, and healthcare.

Pressures of unemployment, lower education, and social exclusion can intensify the mental health challenges young people face, creating a circle that can worsen both individual well-being and societal outcomes. Almost half of young people reported emotional or psychosocial problems in the past year, with global events like the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical crises contributing to heightened stress levels. In the opinion of young people, the EU plays a critical role in supporting mental health initiatives, including access to diagnosis, treatment, and care.

Data highlight that 4 in 10 young people completed tertiary education in 2023. However, early leaving from education and training remains a concern, particularly among young men. Education is closely linked to digital skills, with those having higher formal education being more digitally connected and competent. The vast majority of young people think education equips them with the necessary digital skills to identify disinformation.

With 16% of young people having studied or trained in another Member State, mobility is an essential aspect of education and training. However, financial barriers remain a significant obstacle for many, limiting their ability to take advantage of these opportunities. Youth mobility enhances personal development,

broadens cultural understanding, and improves employability, particularly for those who learn new languages: 58% of young people think that learning another language enables them to work in another country.

[Youth work](#), a broad term covering a wide variety of activities of a social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political nature by, with and for young people, is highly beneficial for supporting young people in overcoming the challenges they encounter in life. Guaranteeing the quality of youth work activities and facilitating the digitalisation of youth work modalities are priorities pursued by the majority of European countries.

## Sources and scope

Relying on Eurostat data, Eurobarometer surveys and the Youth Wiki <sup>(3)</sup>, the report targets young people between 15 and 29 years of age. The analysis often distinguishes between subgroups aged 15 to 19, 20 to 24, and 25 to 29. In a few cases, data for different youth age cohorts are represented, either because of the specifications of survey data, or because the issue in question affects a particular age group. In addition, for some indicators, data for older age groups and the total population are also included.

The reference year of the report is 2023, for which all data were available at the time of drafting. For some indicators, data for 2024 are employed. As far as the availability of data allows, the report illustrates the main trends occurred since 2019.

The analysis covers the EU Member States, and the other Erasmus+ programme countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Türkiye). As the data collection of Eurobarometer surveys does not include the latter, they are excluded from the relevant graphs.

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<sup>(3)</sup> The Youth Wiki is the platform reporting on national policies in the youth field. To access the most recent developments, see its website: <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki>



# 1.

## Youth demography



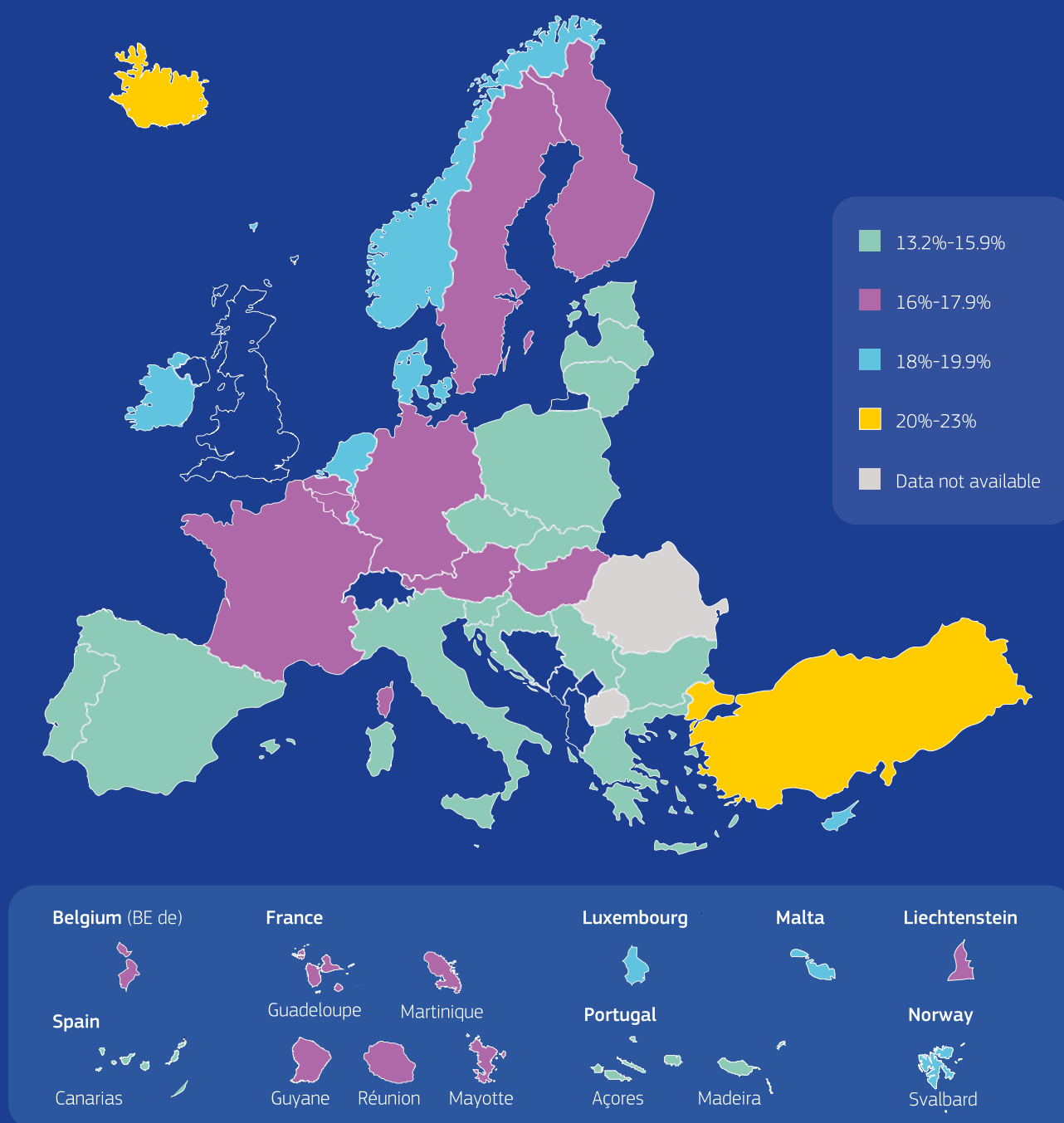


## 1.1. Young people in the total population

Some countries in the northern region of the EU report the highest shares of young people in the total population. On the other hand, the ratio is lowest in countries in the south and east.

**About 73 million young people aged 15–29 live in the EU.**

**Figure 1.1.** Ratio of young people (15–29) in the total population on 1 January, by country, 2023



Source: Eurostat – Ratio of children and young people in the total population on 1 January ([yth\\_demo\\_020](#)).

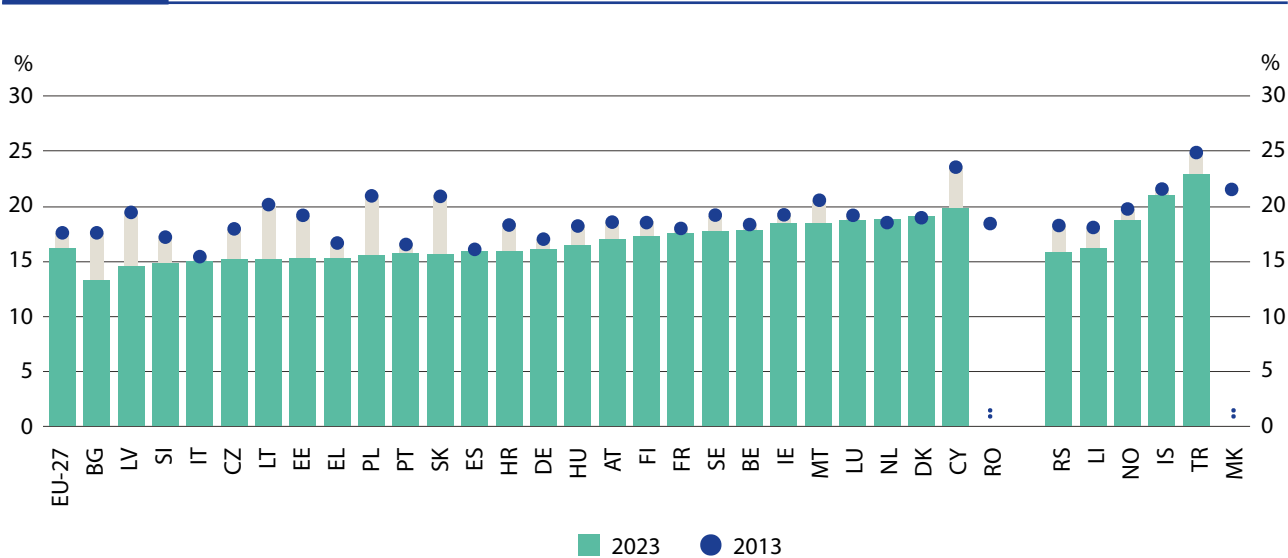
Notes: Data extracted on 1.3.2024.

# The youth population has slightly decreased over the past 10 years.

In the EU, the proportion of young people in the total population decreased from 17.6% in 2013 to 16.2% in 2023. In Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as well as in Bulgaria, Poland and Slovakia, the decrease has been more substantial (around 5%).



**Figure 1.2.** Ratio of young people (15–29) in the total population on 1 January, by country, 2013 and 2023

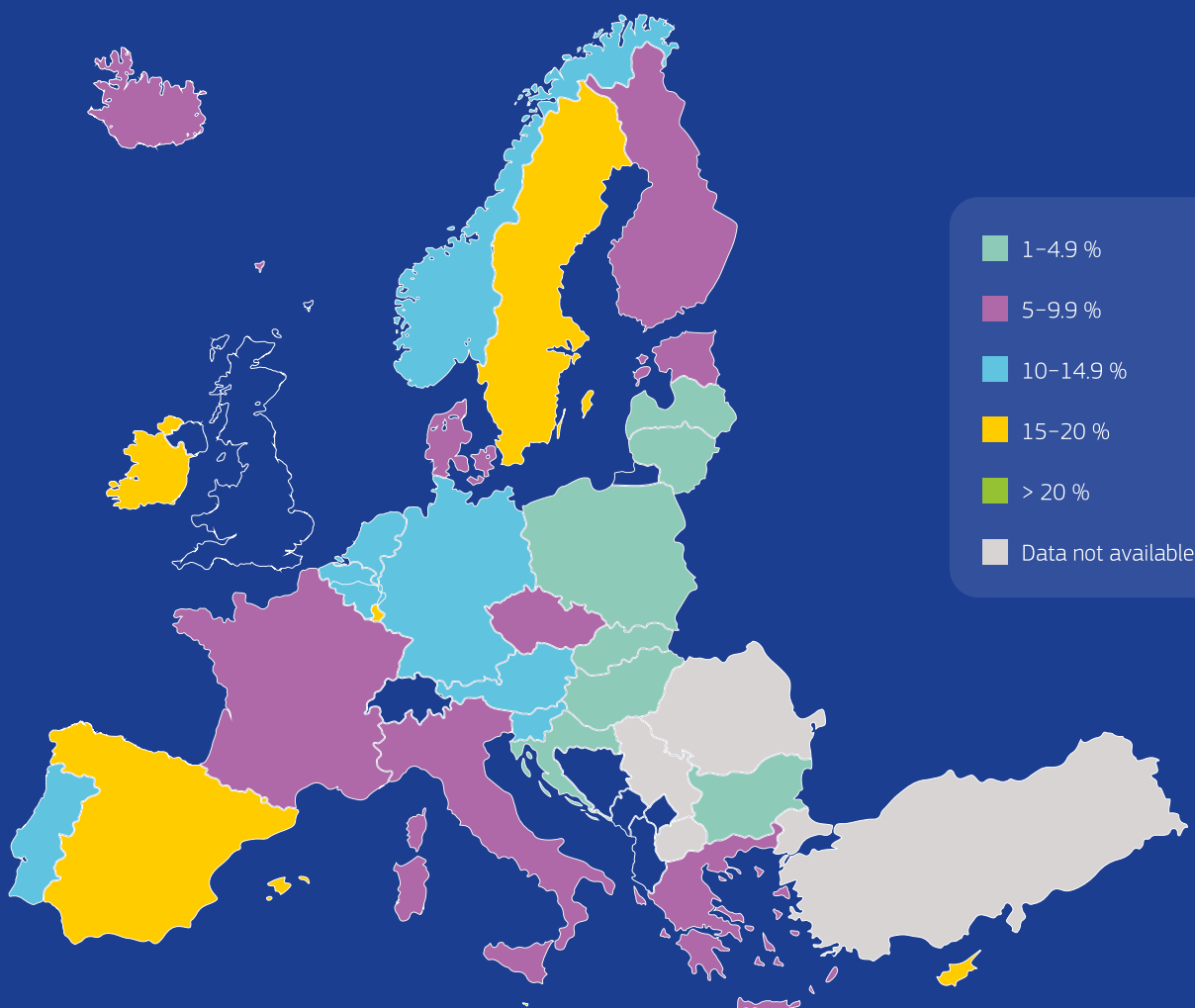


Source: Eurostat – Ratio of children and young people in the total population on 1 January ([youth\\_demo\\_020](#)).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending ratio of young people (15–29) in the total population in 2023. Data extracted on 1.3.2024.

Countries in the northern and central regions of the EU record high percentages of young people of non-EU origin – together with Ireland, Spain, Cyprus and Portugal. Malta reports the highest percentage (almost one young person in three). Conversely, countries in eastern areas present lower ratios of young people born outside the EU.

## More than 7 million young people of non- EU origin live in the EU.

**Figure 1.3.** Ratio of young people (15–29) born in a non-EU country in the total youth population, by country, 2023



Belgium (BE de)



France



Luxembourg



Malta



Liechtenstein



Spain



Guadeloupe



Martinique



Portugal



Norway



Canarias

Guyane

Réunion

Mayotte

Açores

Madeira

Svalbard

Source: own calculation based on Eurostat data: Child and youth population on 1 January by sex and age ([youth\\_demo\\_010](#)) and Youth population on 1 January by sex, age and country of birth ([youth\\_demo\\_060](#)).

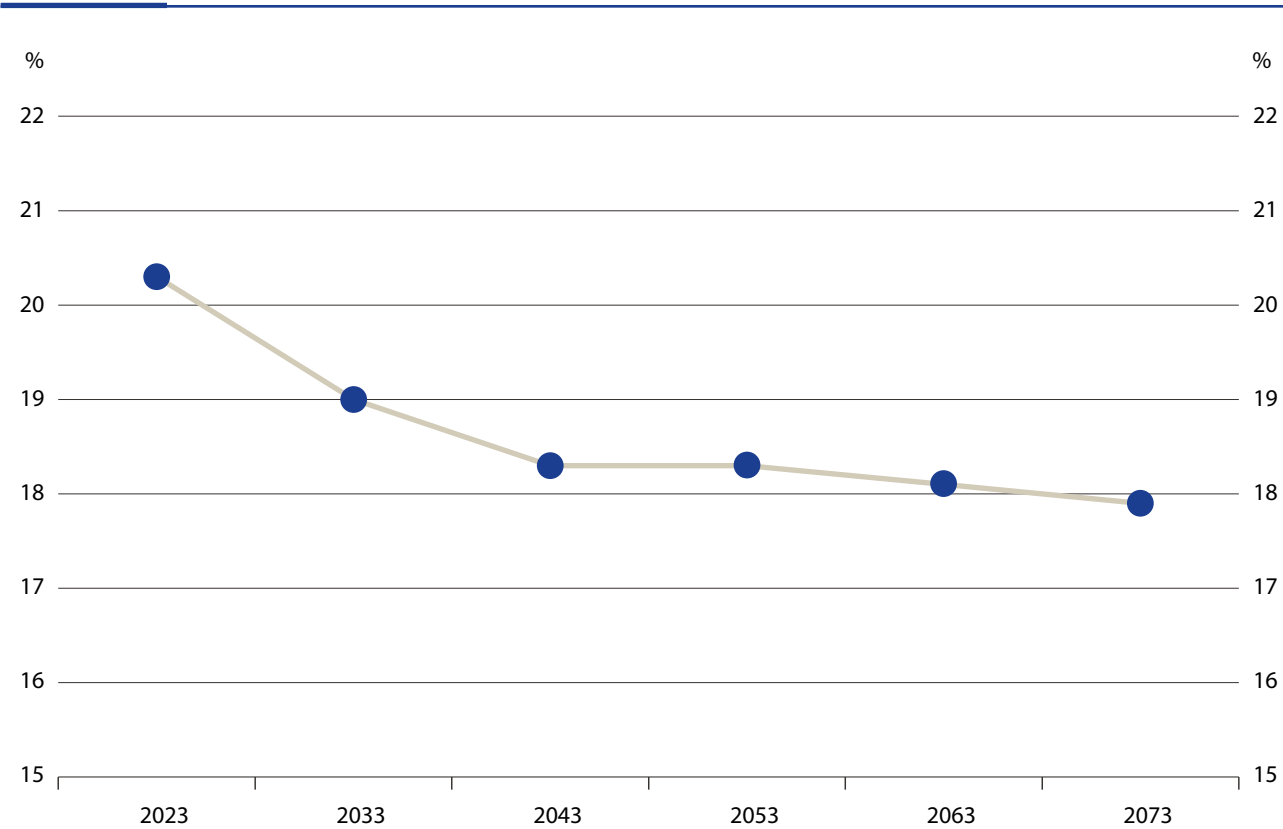
Notes: DE and IE, 2022 data. Data extracted on 22.4.2024.

# Youth population is projected to decline in the future.

The share of children and young people aged between 0 and 19 is projected to shrink from 20% in 2023 to 18% in 2073.



**Figure 1.4.** Projected proportion of children and young people (0-19) in the total population, EU average, 2023-2073

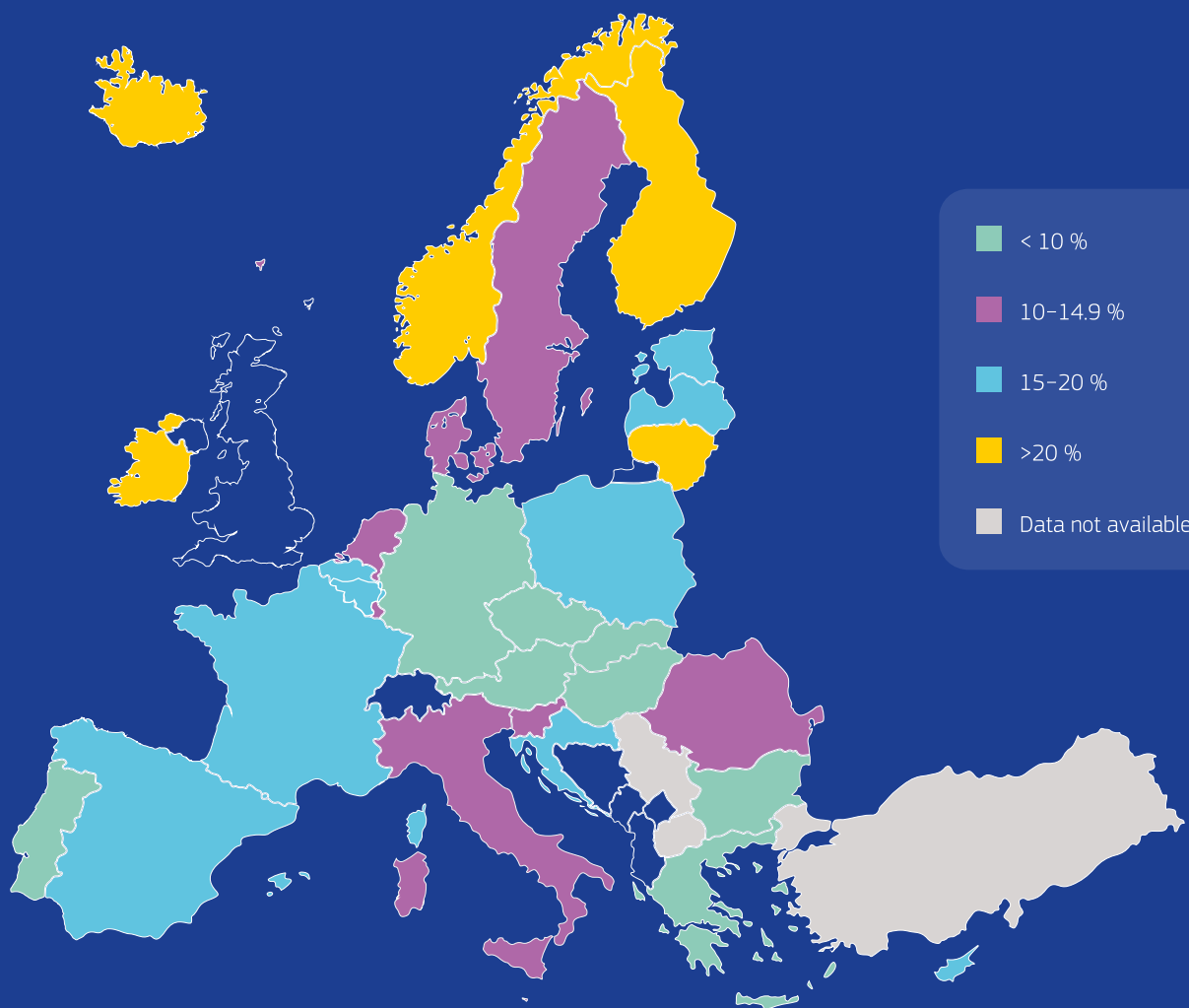


Source: Eurostat – Demographic balances and indicators by type of projection ([proj\\_23ndbi](#)).  
Notes: Data extracted on 7.2.2024.

The highest decreases in the share of children and young people are projected to happen in some countries in the north of Europe, in Ireland and in Lithuania. The proportion of young people is expected to decline the least in the central areas of the EU, as well as in Bulgaria, Greece and Portugal.

**In some countries, the ratio of children and young people is projected to decrease more than 20%.**

**Figure 1.5.** Projected decrease in the proportion of children and young people (0–19) in the total population, by country, 2023–2073



**Belgium** (BE de)



**France**



**Luxembourg**



**Malta**



**Liechtenstein**



**Spain**



Guadeloupe



Martinique



**Portugal**



**Norway**



Canarias

Guyane

Réunion

Mayotte

Açores

Madeira

Svalbard

Source: Eurostat (proj\_23ndbi).

Notes: Data extracted on 29.2.2024.

# 2.

## Participation

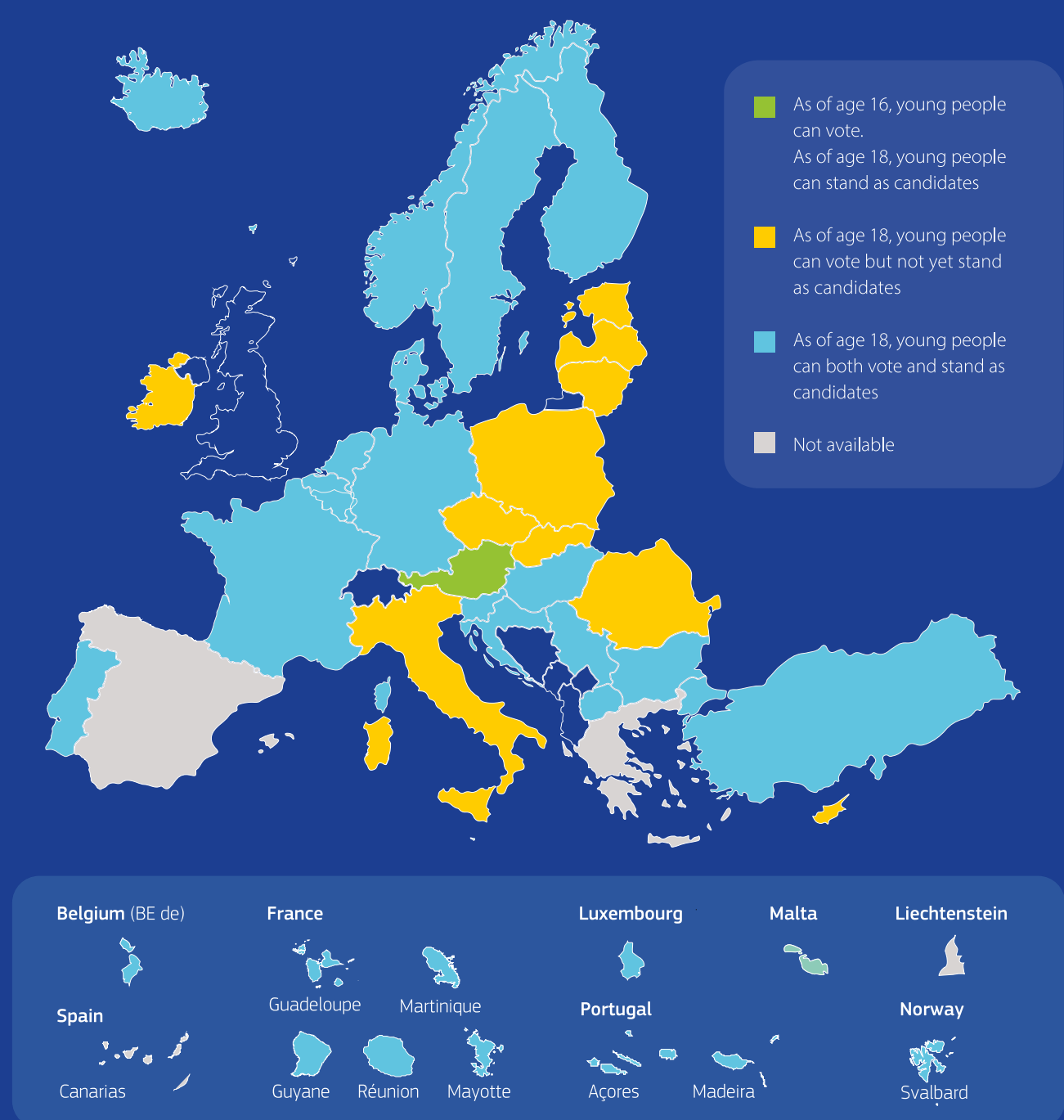


## 2.1. Young people's voting behaviour

The voting age in most European countries for national elections is 18. Malta and Austria stand out as the only countries where citizens can vote in national elections from the age of 16. The age required to stand as candidates varies across Europe, ranging from 18 to 25 years old.

**In two thirds of European countries, young people can stand as candidates in national elections at the age of 18.**

**Figure 2.1.** Age for voting and for standing as candidate in national elections, 2021

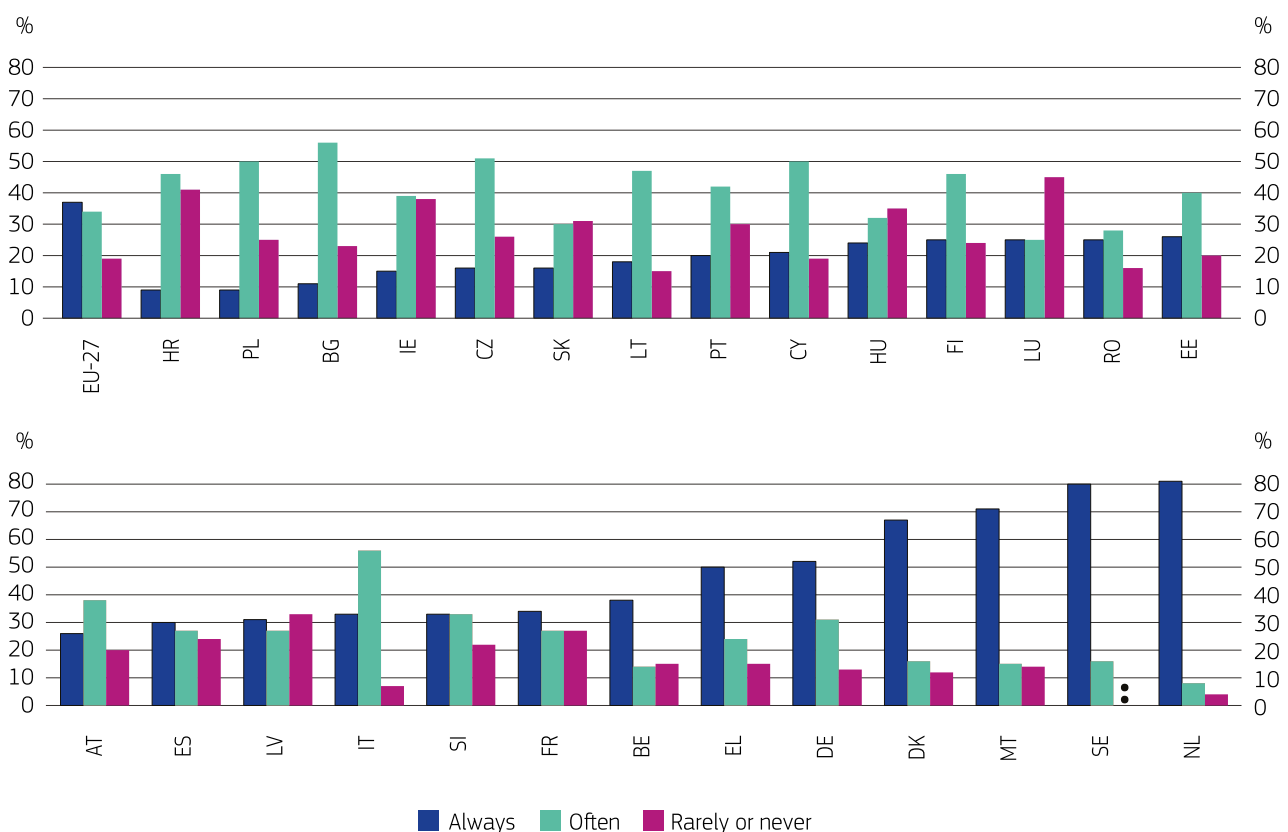


Source: Youth Wiki, Age for Voting and for Standing as a Candidate in National Elections (September 2021).

# Over 70% of young Europeans declare that they have voted in recent elections either always or often.

The Netherlands and Sweden have the highest proportion of young people who reported having 'always' voted in the recent years. On the other hand, Ireland, Croatia and Luxembourg are the countries with the highest proportion of young people reporting having voted rarely or never in recent years. Overall, in the EU Member States, the percentage of young people rarely or never voting is below 20%.

**Figure 2.2.** Voting behaviour of young people (15–24), by country, 2023



Source: [Eurobarometer European Parliament Spring 2023](#), VOLUME C. QA19. Let's now talk about your personal voting behaviour. Which of the following best describes your voting behaviour in recent years, whether at the local or regional, national or European level?

Notes: Base: Respondents aged 18 or more (except in Austria, aged 16 or more). Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–24) who have always voted in recent elections. Data extracted on 14.12.2023.



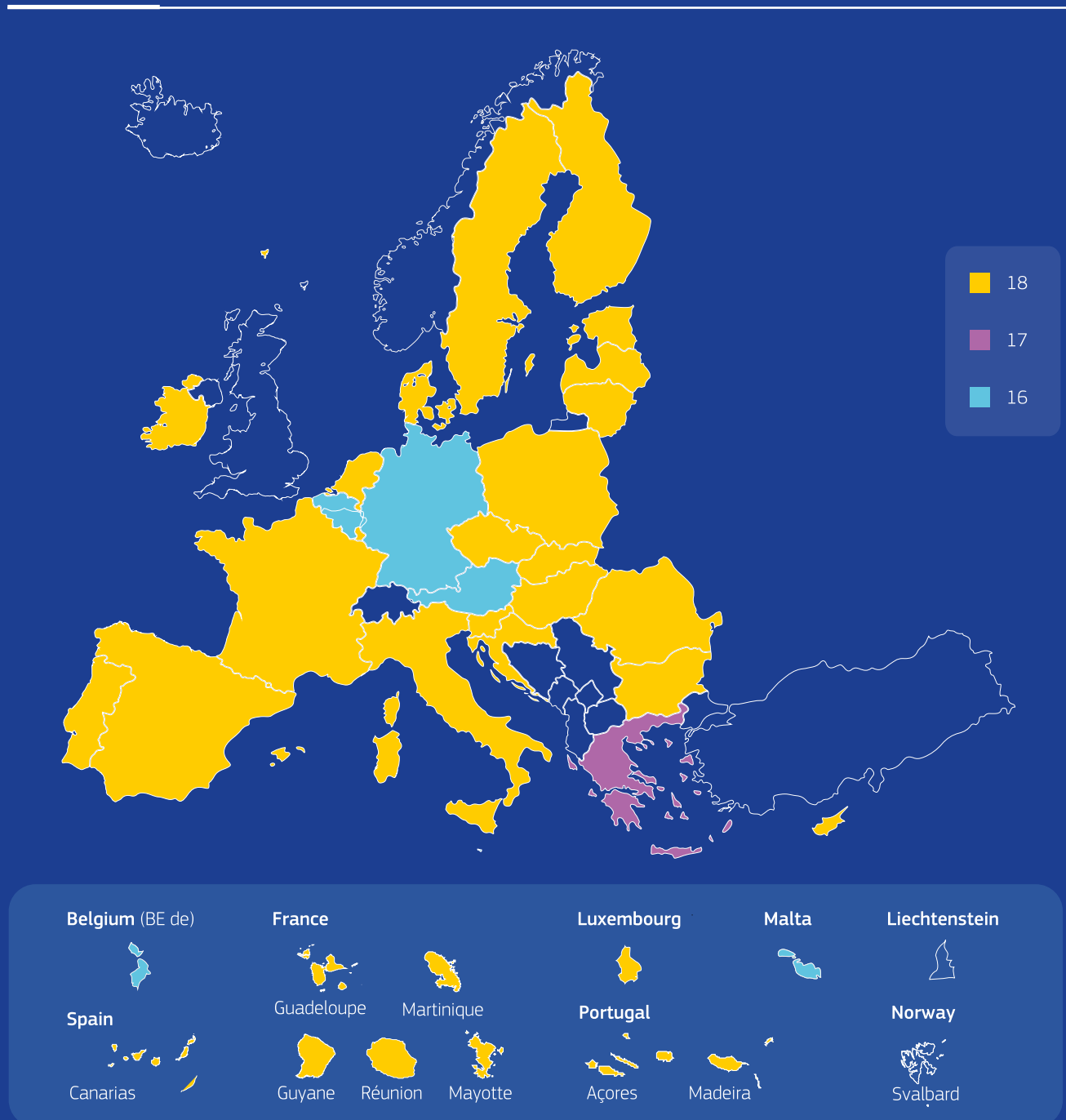


## 2.2. Young people and the European elections

In most Member States, young people can vote in European elections as from 18 years of age. However, there are a few exceptions. In Belgium, Germany, Malta and Austria, the voting age for European elections is 16, while Greece has set it at 17. In comparison to the 2019 European Parliament elections, two additional Member States, Belgium and Germany, have made it possible for 16-year-olds to vote.

**In five Member States, young people can vote in European elections below the age of 18.**

**Figure 2.3.** Age for voting in the European elections, 2023



**Source:** European Parliamentary Research Service, [Voting age for European elections](#), May 2023, updated in August 2023.

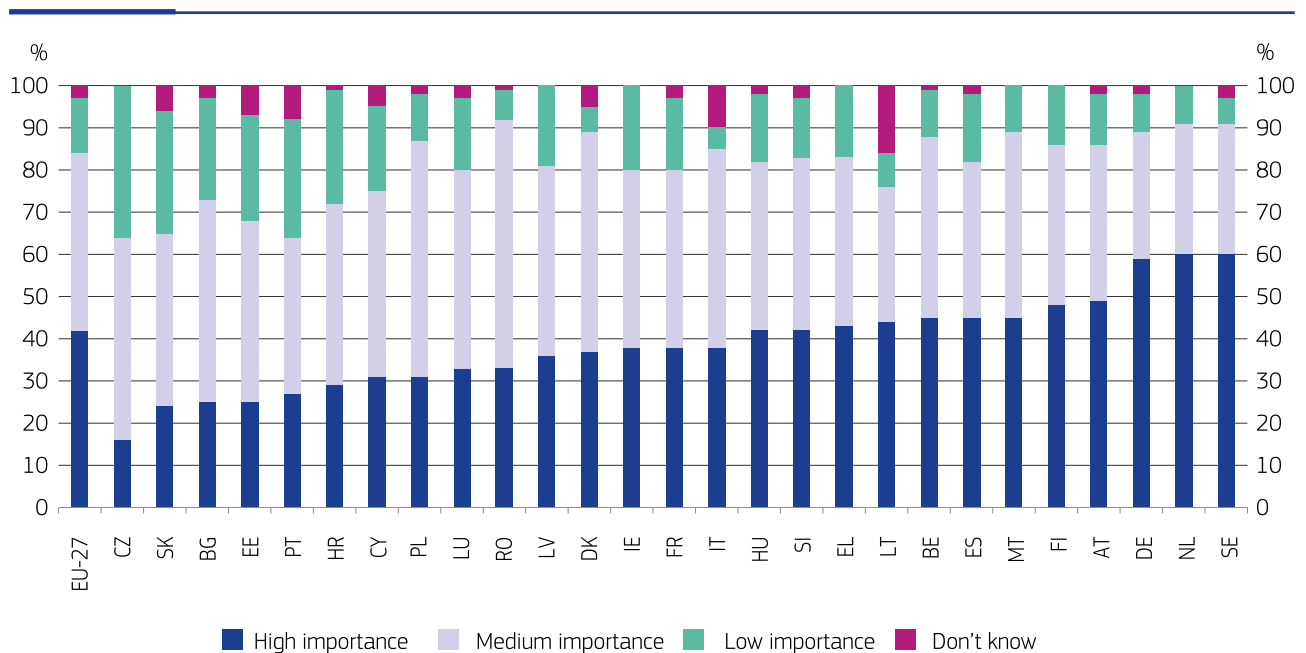
**Notes:** Data extracted on 14.12.2023

## In the EU, 2 in 5 young people aged 15–24 consider voting in European elections as highly important.



In 2023, among young people aged 15–24, 80% considered voting in the European elections to be either highly or moderately important, while less than 13% say it has low importance. Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden, which also report the highest participatory voting behaviour (as shown in Figure 2.2.), had the highest share (around 60%) of young people considering voting in the European elections of high importance. On the contrary, Czechia, Portugal and Slovakia had the highest proportion of young people who consider voting in the European elections to be of low importance.

**Figure 2.4.** Share of young people (15–24) who think it is important to vote in the European elections, by country, 2023



Source: [Eurobarometer European Parliament Spring 2023](#), VOLUME C. QA16a. Please tell how important or not it is for you personally to vote in the European elections.

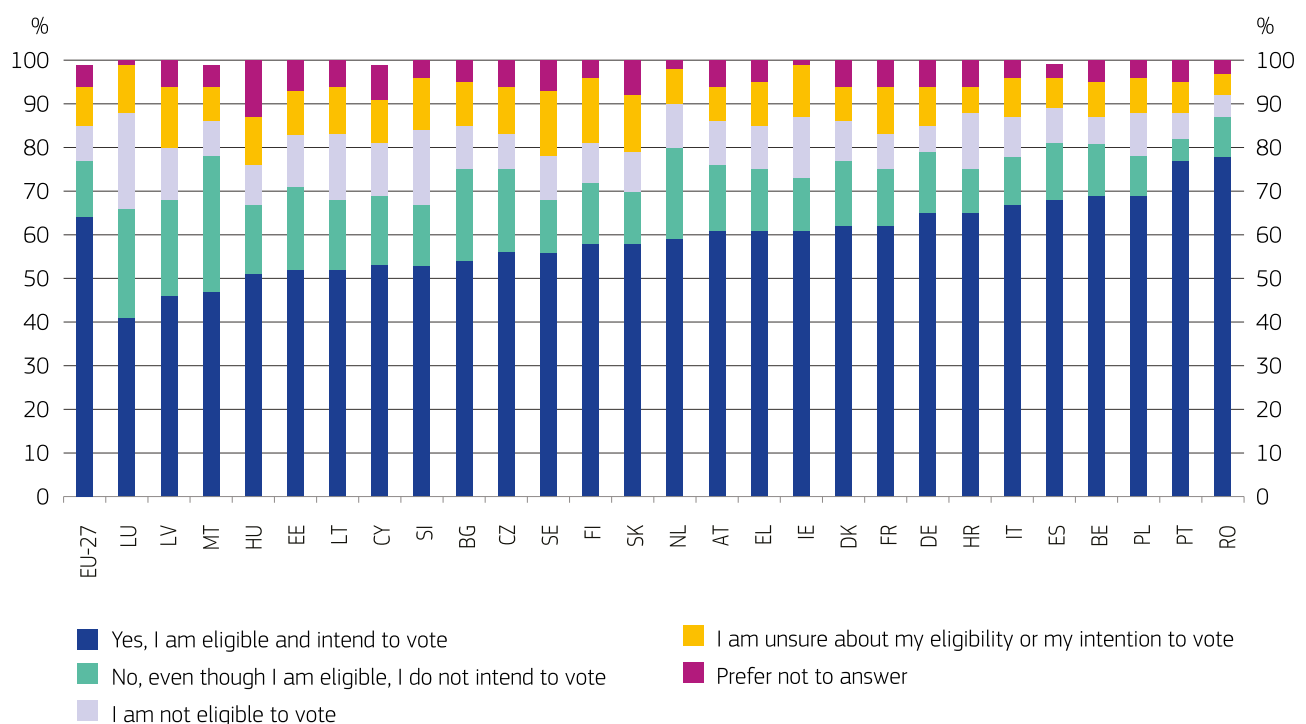
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–24) considering voting in European elections of 'high importance'. Data extracted on 14.12.2023.

Ahead of the 2024 European elections, in eight Member States the percentage of young people who intended to vote was above the EU average (64%), with peaks in Portugal and Romania (almost 80%). Conversely, the highest share of young people stating they did not intend to vote although eligible was recorded in Luxembourg and Malta (25% and 31%). In Latvia, Finland and Sweden, around 15% of young people did not know whether they were eligible to vote or whether they intended to vote.

**In the EU,  
approximately  
two thirds of young  
people intended to  
vote in the 2024  
EU elections.**



**Figure 2.5.** Voting intentions of young people (15–30) in the 2024 European elections, by country, 2024



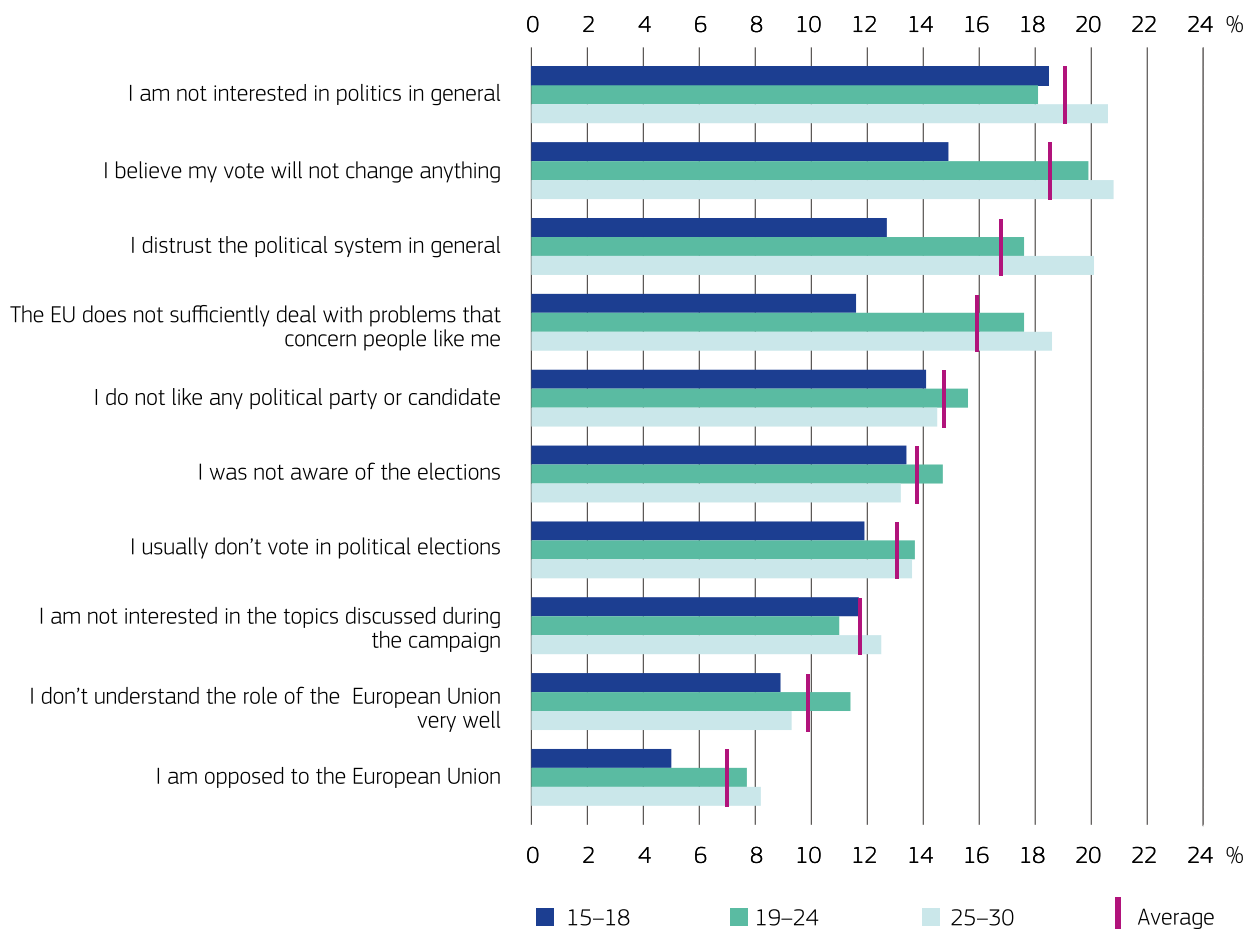
Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#), 2024, VOLUME A. Q13 Do you intend to vote in the upcoming European elections?

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–30) intending to vote in the 2024 European elections. Data extracted on 13.5.2024.

# In the EU, young people did not intend to vote in the 2024 European elections mostly because of a lack of interest in politics and the belief that their vote will not change anything.

Ahead of the 2024 European elections, among the reasons why young people (15–30) did not intend to vote, the first three related to a lack of interest in the political system in general, the disbelief that their vote really matters (both around 19%) and the distrust of the political system (around 17%). The second group of reasons was linked mainly to the relationship between young people and the EU. Among those with no intention to vote in elections, 16% did not believe the EU deals with young people’s problems or said that they did not like any political groups or candidate, while around 14% were not aware of the elections. 10% of young people declared they did not plan to vote because they did not understand the role of the EU, while 7% did not intend to take part in the elections because they are opposed to the EU.

**Figure 2.6.** Reasons not to vote in 2024 European elections, by age group, EU average, 2024



Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#), 2024, VOLUME B. Q14 What are your reasons for not planning to vote or being unsure about voting in the European elections? (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Data are ordered in decreasing order by share of young people (15–30) not intending to vote in the 2024 European elections. Data extracted on 13.5.2024.

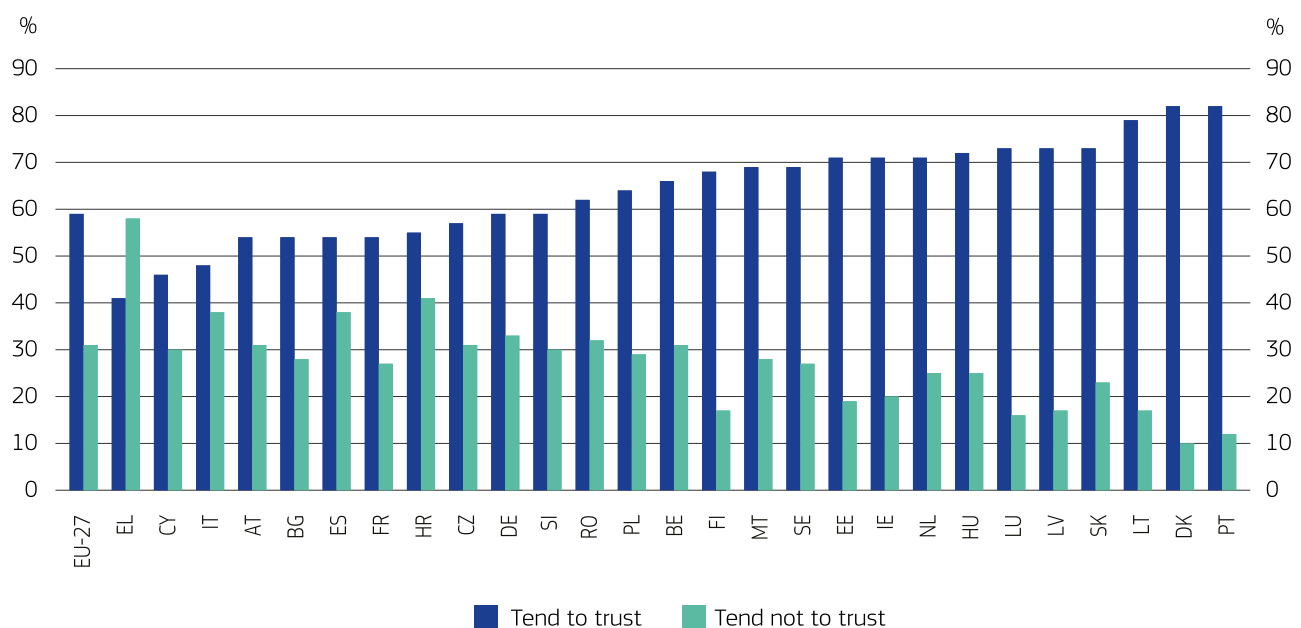
## 2.3. Opinion and trust in the EU

Across the EU, in 16 Member States more than 60% of young people trust the EU, with peaks in Denmark, Luxembourg and Portugal. In these three countries, approximately four out of five young people express trust in the EU. Conversely, in nine Member States the share of young people who do not trust the EU is above the EU average (30%), with a peak of almost 60% in Greece.

**Almost 60% of young Europeans aged 15–24 trust the EU.**



**Figure 2.7.** Share of young people (15–24) trusting or not the EU, by country, 2023



Source: [Standard Eurobarometer Spring 2023](#), VOLUME C. QA6.11. How much trust do you have in certain institutions? The European Union. For each of the following institutions, do you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it?

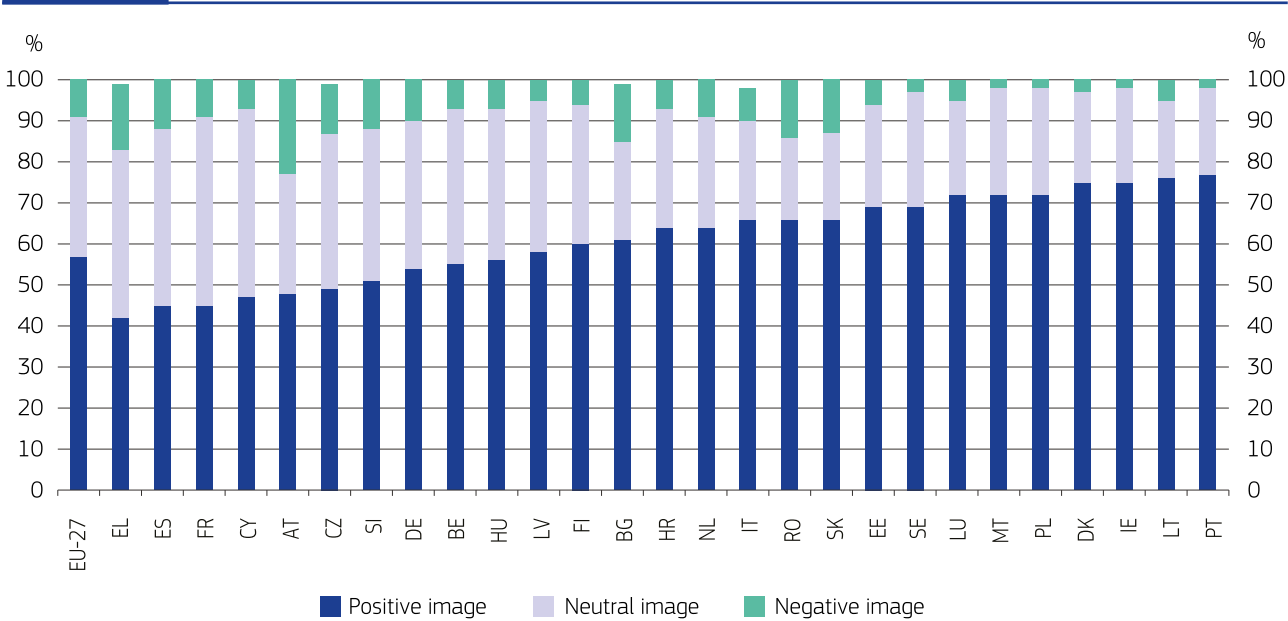
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–24) trusting the EU. Data extracted on 15.2.2024.

# Almost 60% of young Europeans aged 15–24 have a positive perception of the EU.

In seven Member States (Denmark, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland and Portugal), more than 70% of young people aged 15–24 have a positive view of the EU. Conversely, Austria has the highest proportion of young people aged 15–24 who hold a negative perception of the EU (around 20%). This is followed by Bulgaria, Greece and Romania, each with over 10%. At the EU level, around 30% of young people have a neutral image of the EU, with percentages well above that in Spain, France and Cyprus.



**Figure 2.8.** Share of young people (15–24) who think the EU has a positive, neutral or negative image, by country, 2023

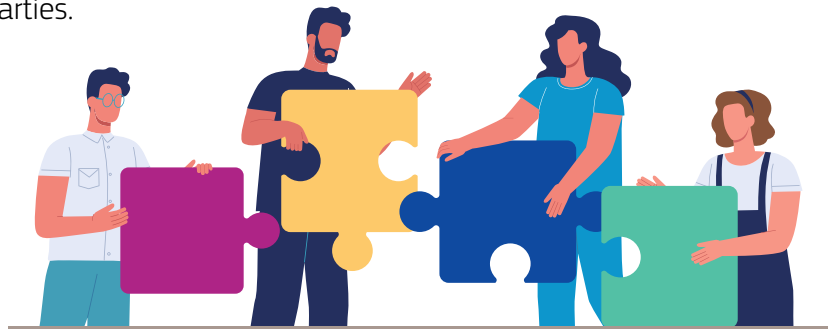


Source: [Standard Eurobarometer Spring 2023](#), VOLUME B. D78. In general, does the EU conjure up for you a positive or negative image?  
 Notes: Percentage points to 100%: don't know. Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–24) for whom the EU conjures up a positive image. Data extracted on 15.2.2024.

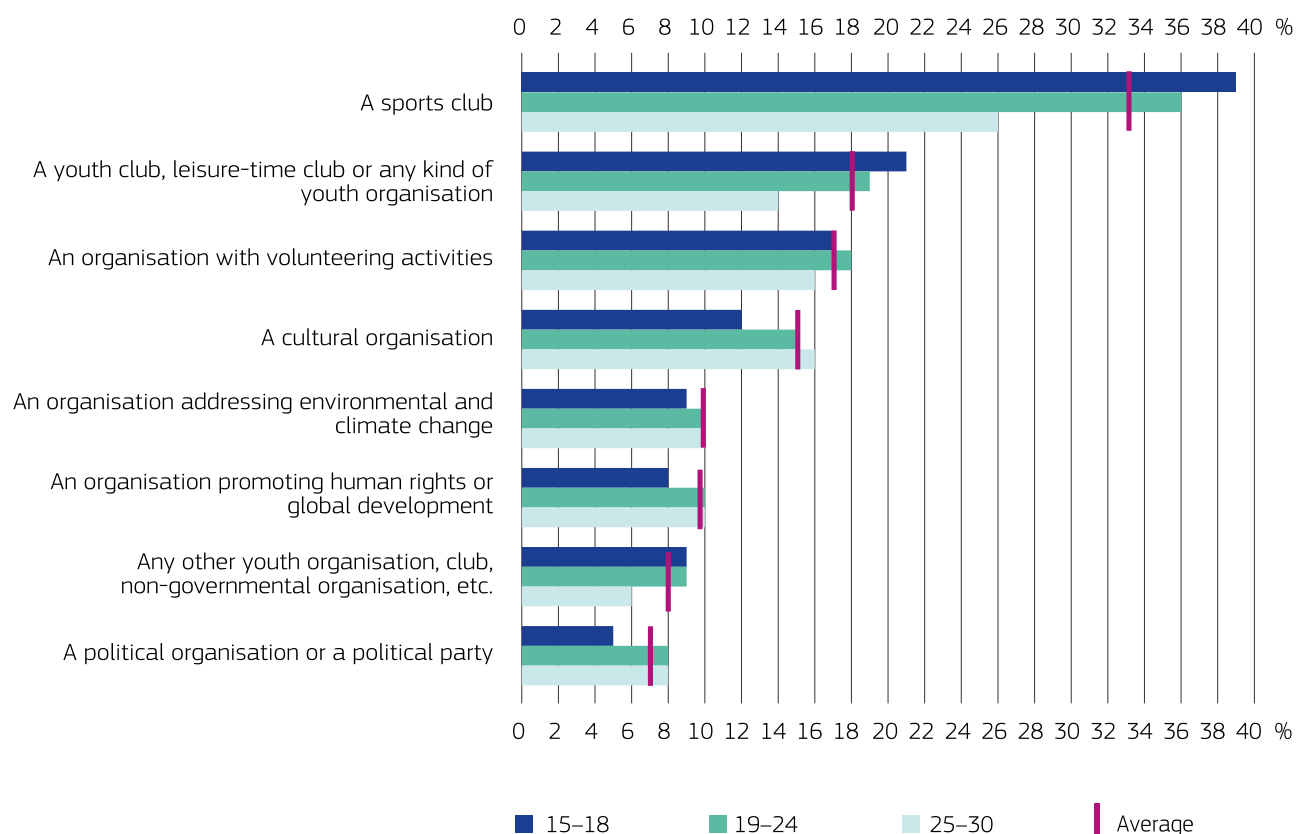
## 2.4. Participation in various activities

The most common form of participation is in sport, which concerns 33% of young people (15–30), although there is a big drop between the 15–18 and 25–30 age groups (13 pps). Astonishingly, only 1 in 10 young people participate in organisations dealing with environmental and climate change, and far less than 10% are active in political organisations or political parties.

**In 2024 one out of three young people (15–30) in the EU have participated in at least one organised activity.**



**Figure 2.9.** Share of young people participating in organised activities by type of activity, by age group, EU average, 2024



Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy, 2024](#), VOLUME B. Q2 In the last 12 months, have you participated in any activities of the following organisations? (Multiple answers possible).

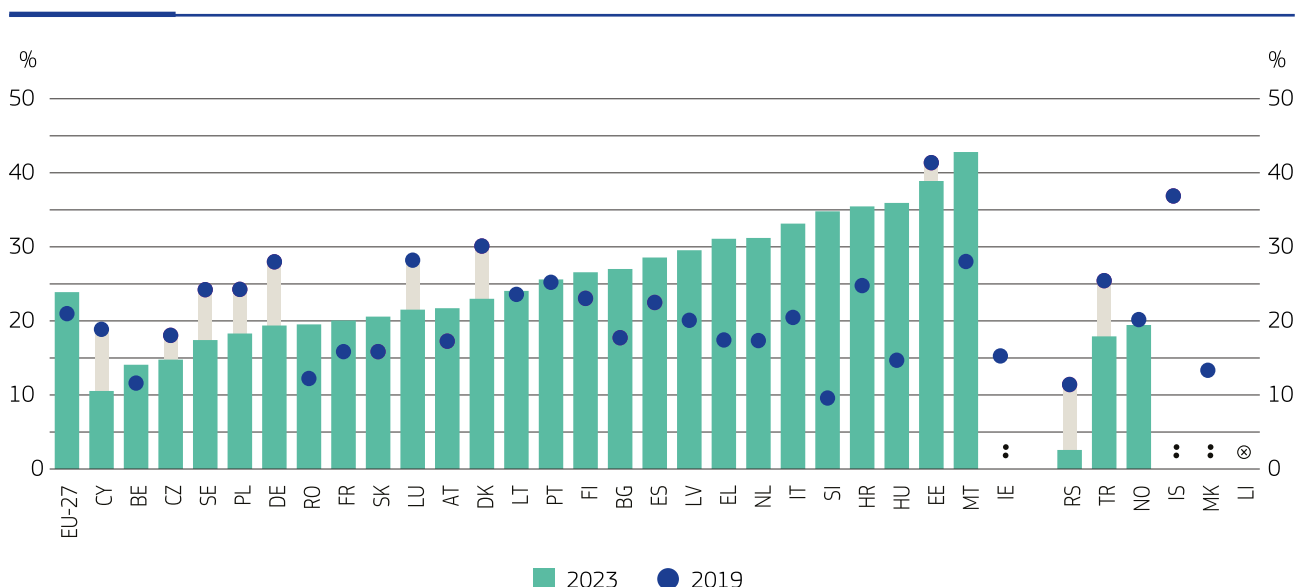
Notes: Data are ordered by decreasing share of young people (15–30) participating in organised activities. Data extracted on 13.5.2024.

## Almost one in four young people in the EU uses the internet for civic and political participation.

In 2023, the use of the internet for civic and political participation across the EU slightly increased compared with 2019. This increase is reflected in approximately two thirds of Member States with several countries, including Hungary, the Netherlands and Slovenia, showing overall increases between 14% and 25%. However, in countries such as Germany and Cyprus, the share of young people using the internet for civic and political participation decreased by more than 8 pps.



**Figure 2.10.** Share of young people (16–29) using internet for civic or political participation, by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat, Individuals – internet activities ([isoc\\_ci\\_ac\\_i](#)).

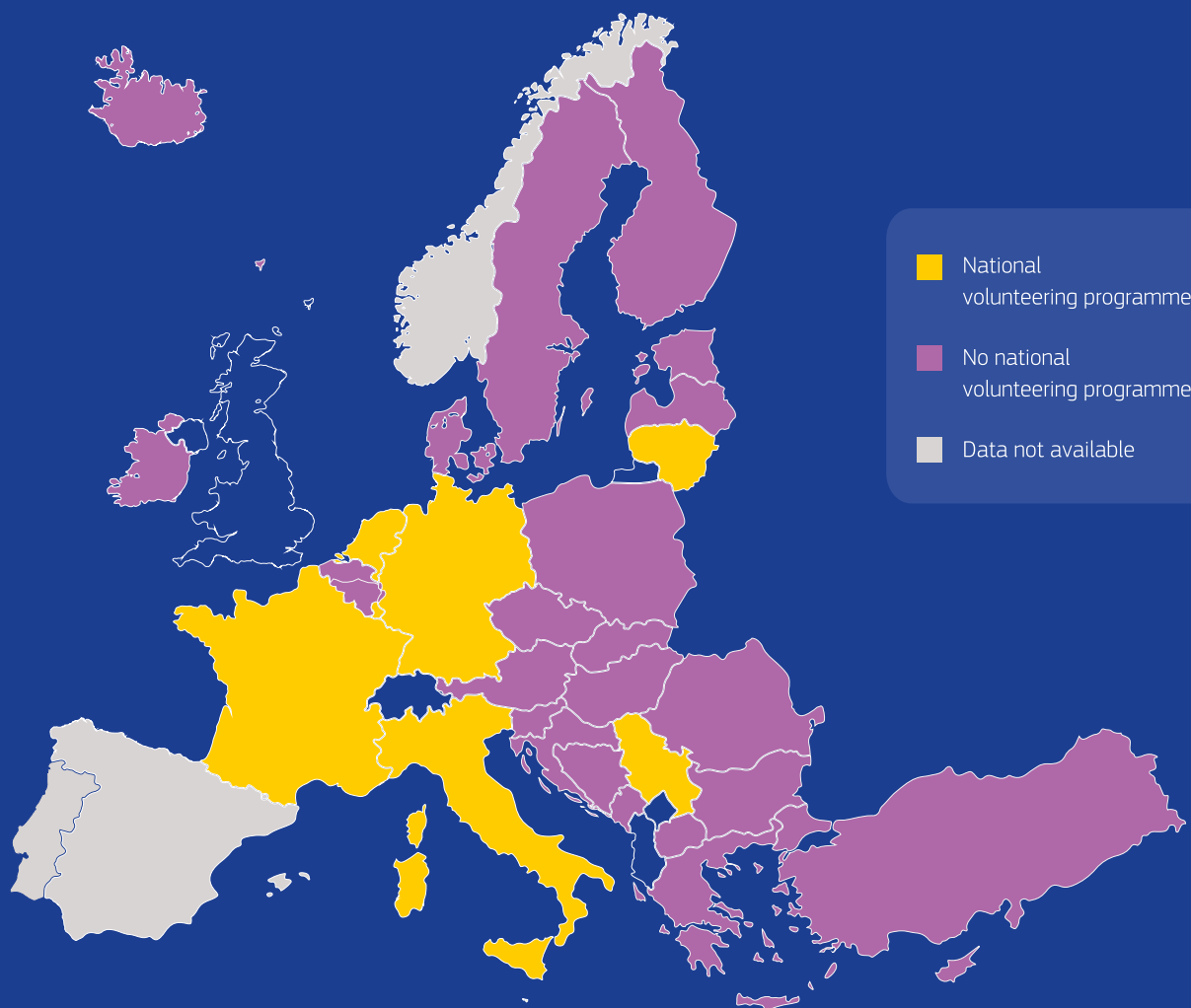
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (16–29) using the internet for civic or political participation in 2023. Data extracted on 26.2.2024.



Through the [EU youth strategy 2019–2027](#), Member States have committed to provide access for all young people to volunteering activities, while also guaranteeing the recognition and validation of skills acquired through volunteering. The national programmes are nationwide initiatives, organised, monitored and funded by national public authorities and offering concrete opportunities for young people to engage in voluntary projects. So far, few European countries have set up such programmes.

**Only one third of European countries have a national volunteering programme.**

**Figure 2.11.** National programmes for youth volunteering, 2022



Belgium (BE de)



France



Luxembourg



Malta



Liechtenstein



Spain



Guadeloupe



Martinique



Portugal



Norway



Canarias

Guyane

Réunion

Mayotte

Açores

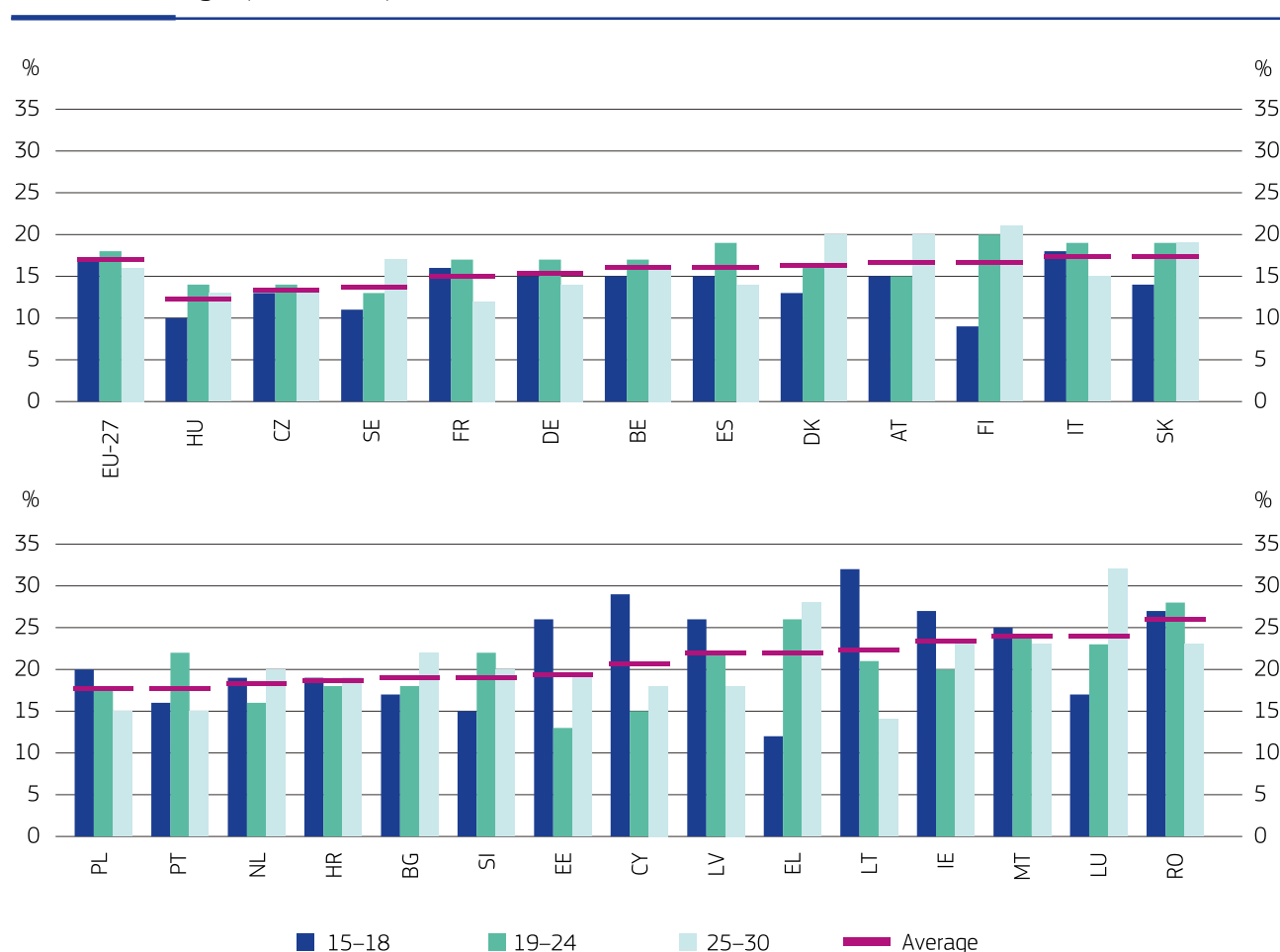
Madeira

Svalbard

# In 2024, in the EU, 17% of young people have participated in activities organised by volunteering organisations.

Luxembourg, Malta and Romania show the highest percentage of young people (15–30) who report that they have participated in activities organised by volunteering organisations (around 25%). By contrast, Czechia, Hungary and Sweden account for the lowest share of young people engaged in this type of activity (approximately 13%). In eight countries (Estonia, Ireland, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Polonia and Romania), the highest percentage of young people participating in volunteering activities is among the 15–18 age group (more than 20%), while among the countries with the highest engagement of young people aged 25–30, Greece and Luxembourg lead with the largest shares (around 30%).

**Figure 2.12.** Share of young people participating in activities organised by volunteering organisations, by age group and country, 2024



Source: Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy, 2024, VOLUME C. Q2 In the last 12 months, have you participated in any activities of the following organisations? (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–30) participating in activities organised by volunteering organisations. Data extracted on 13.5.2024.

# 3.

## Employment and entrepreneurship



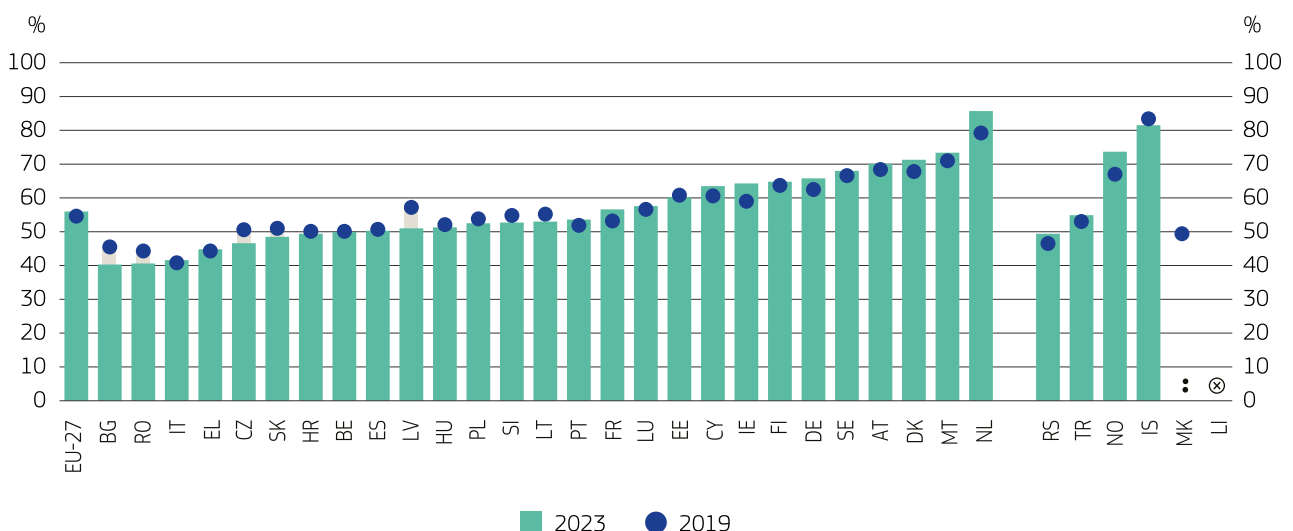
**About half of the EU youth population is active on the labour market.**

### 3.1. Employment and participation in the labour market

The highest shares of [active](#) young people (i.e. both the employed and the unemployed) are recorded in Denmark, Malta, the Netherlands and Austria (between 70% and 85%). In contrast, Bulgaria, Italy and Romania report the lowest (around 40%). On average, the rate has not substantially changed between 2019 and 2023, except in Bulgaria and Latvia, where it has diminished by about 6 pps, and in Ireland and the Netherlands, where it has increased by the same magnitude.



**Figure 3.1.** Rate of young people (15–29) participating in the labour market (activity rate), by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Employment and activity by sex and age ([lfsi\\_emp\\_a](#)).

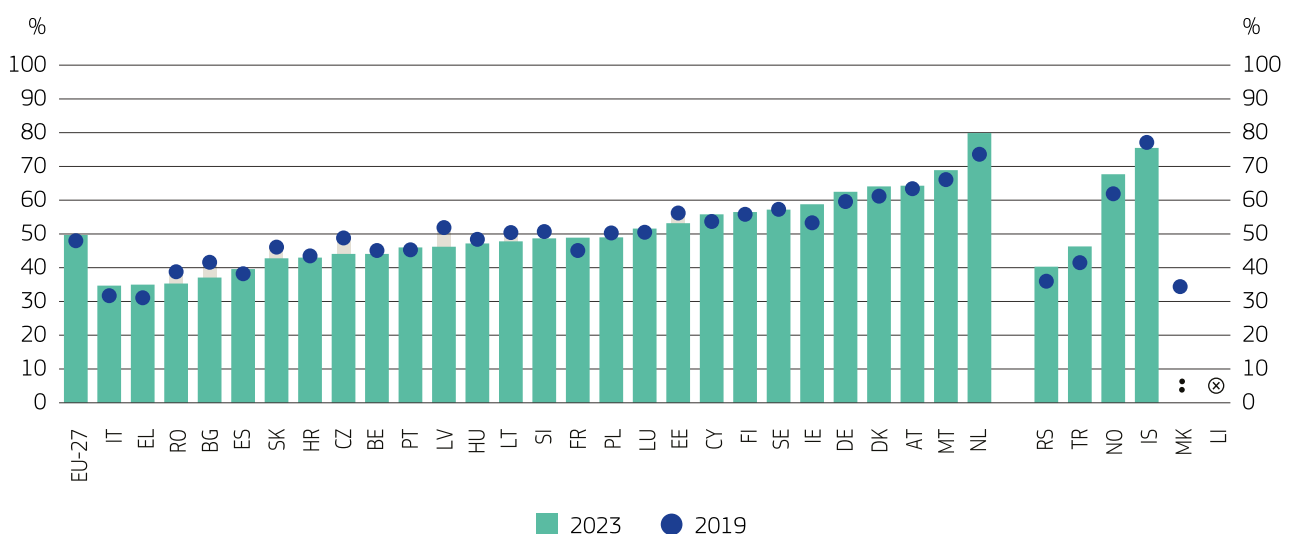
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people participating in the labour market (activity rate) in 2023. Data extracted on 28.6.2024.

Greece, Italy and Romania register the lowest shares of [employed](#) young people (around one third), while in the Netherlands the share is almost 80%. On average, the proportion of young employed people in the EU has slightly varied between 2019 and 2023 (1.7 pp), but Bulgaria, Czechia and Latvia saw a decrease of around 5 pps. On the other hand, the share has increased the most in Ireland and in the Netherlands (5 and 6 pps respectively).

**One in two young people in the EU are employed.**



**Figure 3.2.** Employment rate of young people (15–29), by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat: Employment and activity by sex and age ([lfsi\\_emp\\_a](#)).

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending level of employment rate in 2023. Data extracted on 28.6.2024.

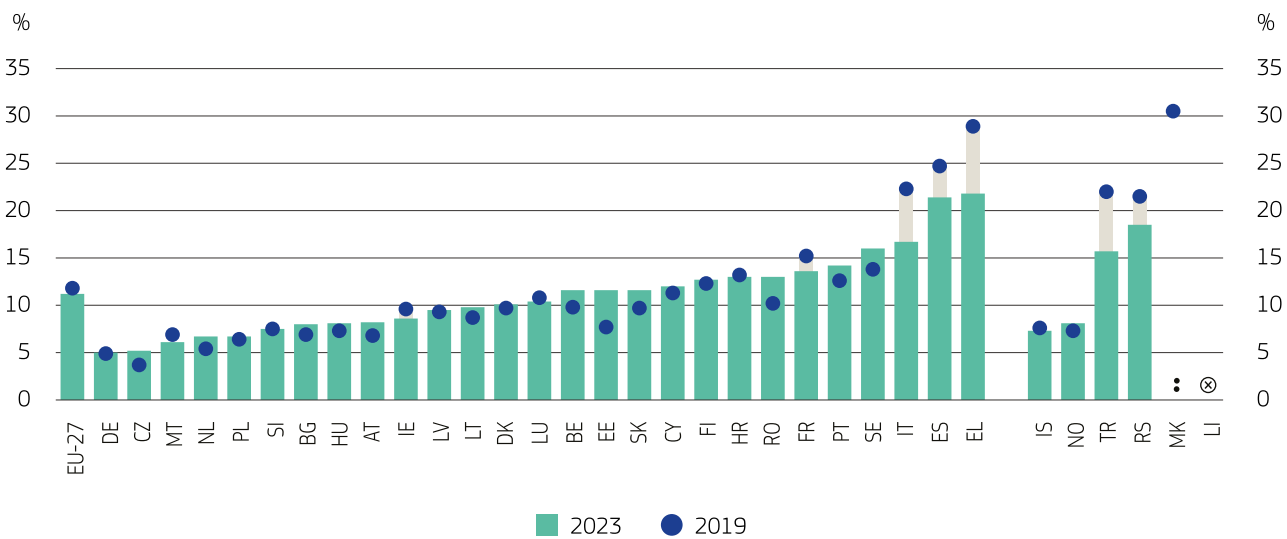
**In the EU, one in ten young people is unemployed.**

### 3.2. Unemployment

While in some countries (particularly Germany, Czechia, Malta, the Netherlands and Poland) the youth (15–29) [unemployment rate](#) is well below the EU average, in others (mainly in the southern region of the EU) it is considerably higher. In Greece and Spain, the unemployment rate is twice the EU average. However, these are also the countries where the biggest decline in the proportion of young unemployed since 2019 has occurred. On the other hand, in some countries, youth unemployment has increased, especially in Estonia and Romania. In most countries, no substantial variation took place between 2019 and 2023.



**Figure 3.3.** Unemployment rate of young people (15–29), by country, 2019 and 2023

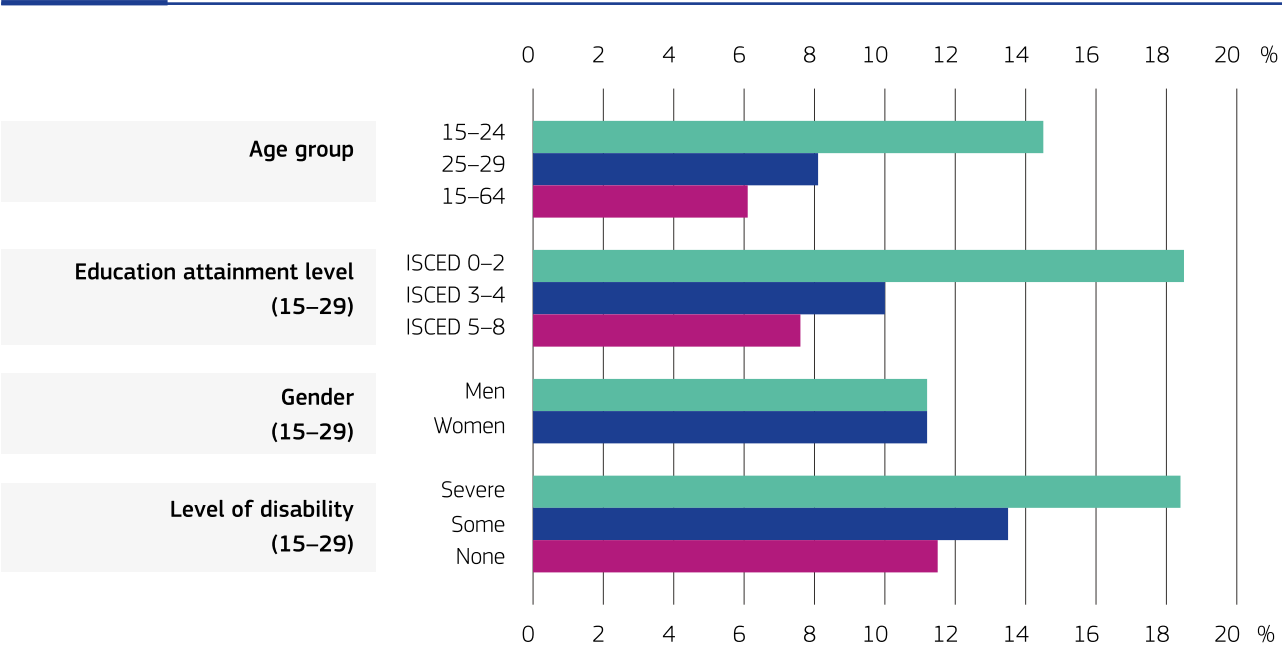


Source: Eurostat: Youth unemployment rate by sex, age and educational attainment level ([yuth\\_empl\\_090](#)).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending level of unemployment rate in 2023. Data extracted on 14.5.2024.

In the EU, on average, the unemployment rate of young people in the youngest age cohort (15–24) (15%) is almost twice as high as that of older ones (25–29) (8%), also in consideration of the fact that many are still in full-time education and training and therefore not taken into account as active population. Compared with the total [working age population](#) (15–64) (6%), young people face more difficulties in finding a job. Moreover, young people (15–29) with a lower level of educational attainment are also more likely to be unemployed than those with a higher level. The unemployment rate for young people with only a qualification level lower than upper secondary education ([International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 0–2](#)) (18%) is almost double that of those with upper or post-secondary qualifications ([ISCED 3–4](#)) (10%). The unemployment rate for young people with tertiary education level ([ISCED 5–8](#)) is the lowest (7.6%). While gender does not have an impact on the unemployment rate (young men and young women report the same rate), disability represents a notable barrier to employment: as many as 18% of young people affected by a severe disability are unemployed.

**Younger age, lower educational attainment and disability are associated with higher rates of youth unemployment.**

**Figure 3.4.** Unemployment rate of young people by age group (including population of working age 15–64), educational attainment, gender and level of disability, EU average, 2023



Source: Eurostat: Unemployment rates by age, sex and educational attainment level ([yuth\\_empl\\_090](#)). Unemployment rate by level of disability (activity limitation) ([lfsa\\_urgaeddl](#)).

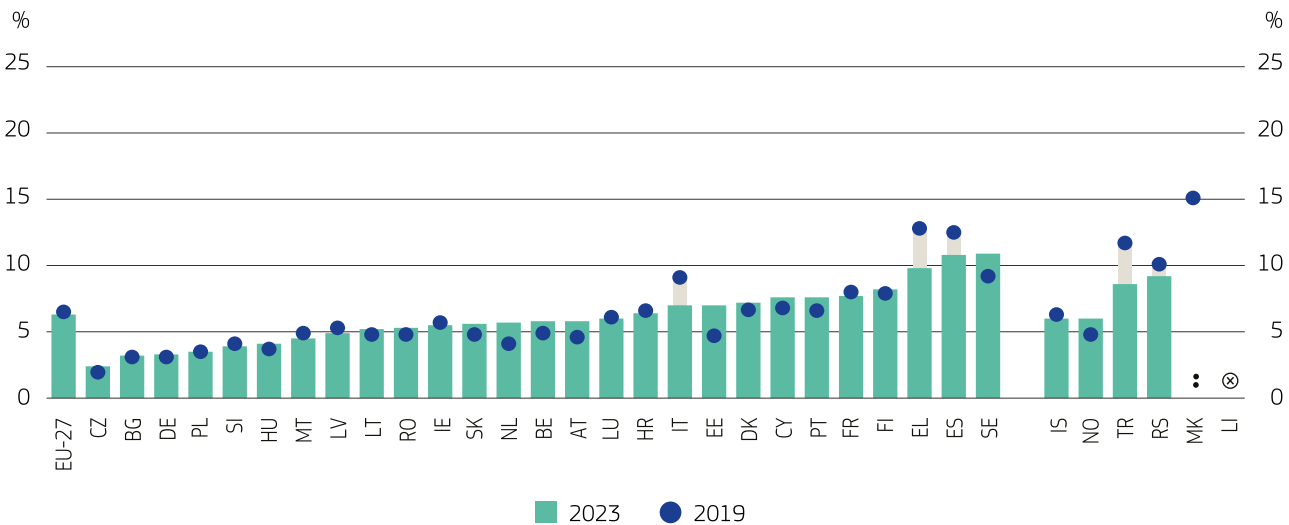
Notes: Data by education attainment level, gender and disability level refer to the age group 15–29. ISCED 0–2: Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education. ISCED 3–4: Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. ISCED 5–8: Tertiary education. Data for level of disability are from 2022. Data extracted on 27.6.2024.

# Youth unemployment ratio is half the unemployment rate as many young people are in full-time education.



A large proportion of young people are outside the labour market, such as those who are studying full-time and are not available for work. This situation is taken into consideration by the [unemployment ratio](#), which represents the share of unemployed young people within the total youth population. The ratio is well below the EU average (6%) in Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany and Poland. The highest levels of unemployment ratio exist in Greece, Spain and Sweden. While no variation in the EU average has occurred between 2019 and 2023, it has decreased in Greece, Spain and Italy, and increased in Estonia, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and Sweden.

**Figure 3.5.** Unemployment ratio of young people (15–29), by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat: Youth unemployment ratio by sex, age and NUTS 2 regions [yth\_empl\_140].  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending level of unemployment ratio in 2023. Data extracted on 28.8.2024.



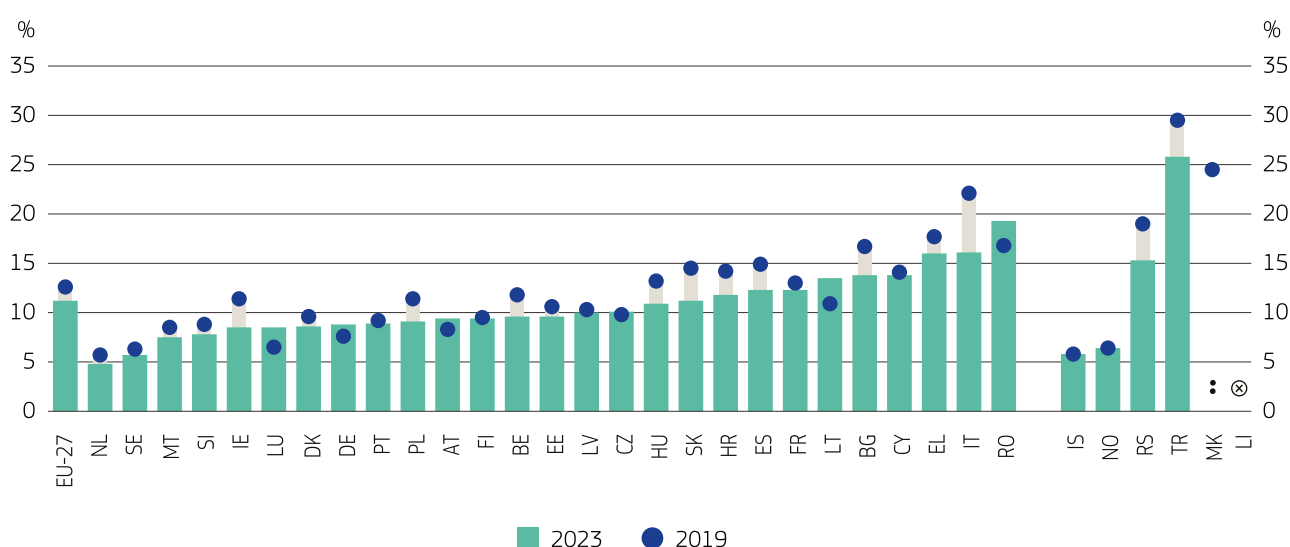
### 3.3. Young people not in employment, education or training

Among Member States, Romania (19%), Greece and Italy (around 16%) have the highest rate of [young people not in employment, education or training \(NEET\)](#) <sup>(4)</sup>. While, on average, the NEET rate did not vary substantially between 2019 and 2023, the rate decreased by around 3 pps in Bulgaria, Ireland, Spain and Slovakia and by 6 pps in Italy. Conversely, the rate increased in Lithuania, Luxembourg and Romania.

**In the EU, more than one in ten young people is not in employment, education or training.**



**Figure 3.6.** Share of young people (15–29) not in employment, education or training (NEET rate), by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat: Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and labour status (NEET rate) ([edat\\_lfse\\_20](#)).

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending level of NEET rate in 2023. Data extracted on 14.5.2024.

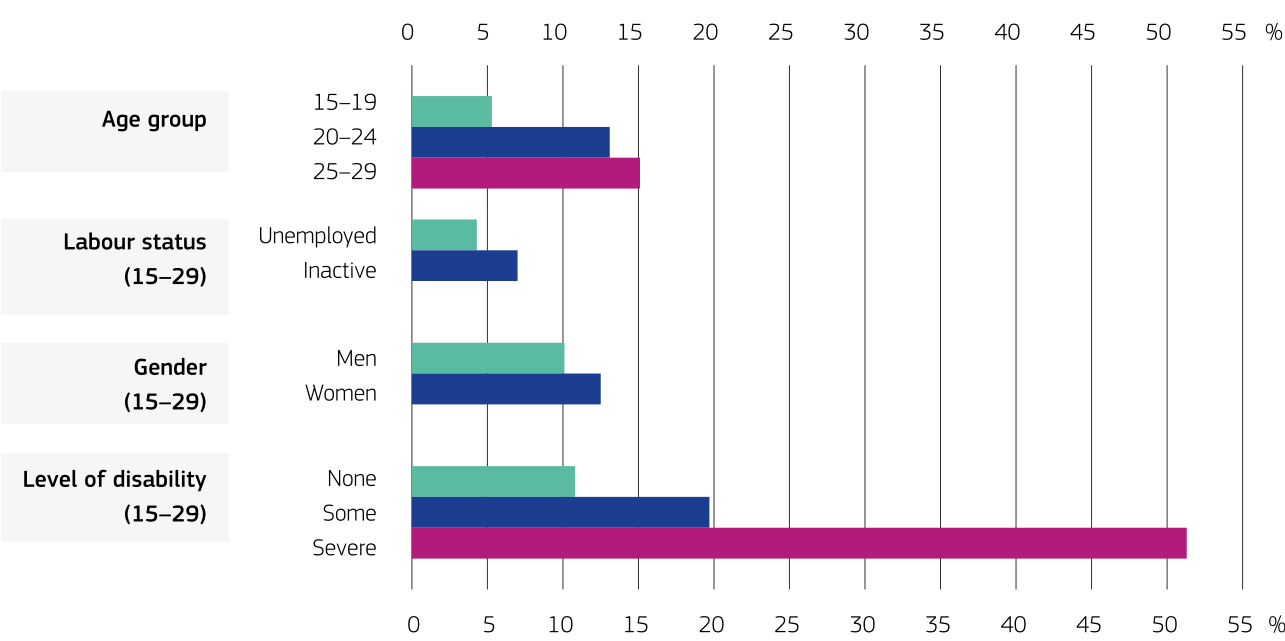
<sup>(4)</sup> The [Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights](#) has set the target of reducing the percentage of young NEET to 9% by 2030

# Age, status in the labour market, gender and level of disability affect the proportion of NEET.



The [NEET](#) rate increases with age. Young people aged 25–29 are three times more likely to be NEET compared with those aged 15–19 (respectively 15% and 5%). Labour status also has an impact. Within the general category of people not in employment, the rate of those that are inactive (not looking for a job) (7%) is almost twice as high as that of young unemployed people (looking for a job but not finding one) (4%). Young women (13%) tend to be NEET to a slightly higher degree than young men (10%). Notably, disability is strongly associated with being NEET: half of young people affected by a severe disability are not in employment, education or training.

**Figure 3.7.** Share of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET), by age group, labour status, gender and level of disability, EU average, 2023



Source: Eurostat: Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and labour status (NEET rate) ([edat\\_lfse\\_20](#)). Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and level of disability (activity limitation) ([edat\\_lfse\\_39](#)).  
 Notes: Data by labour status, gender and level of disability refer to the age group 15–29. Data for level of disability are from 2022. Data extracted on 28.6.2024.

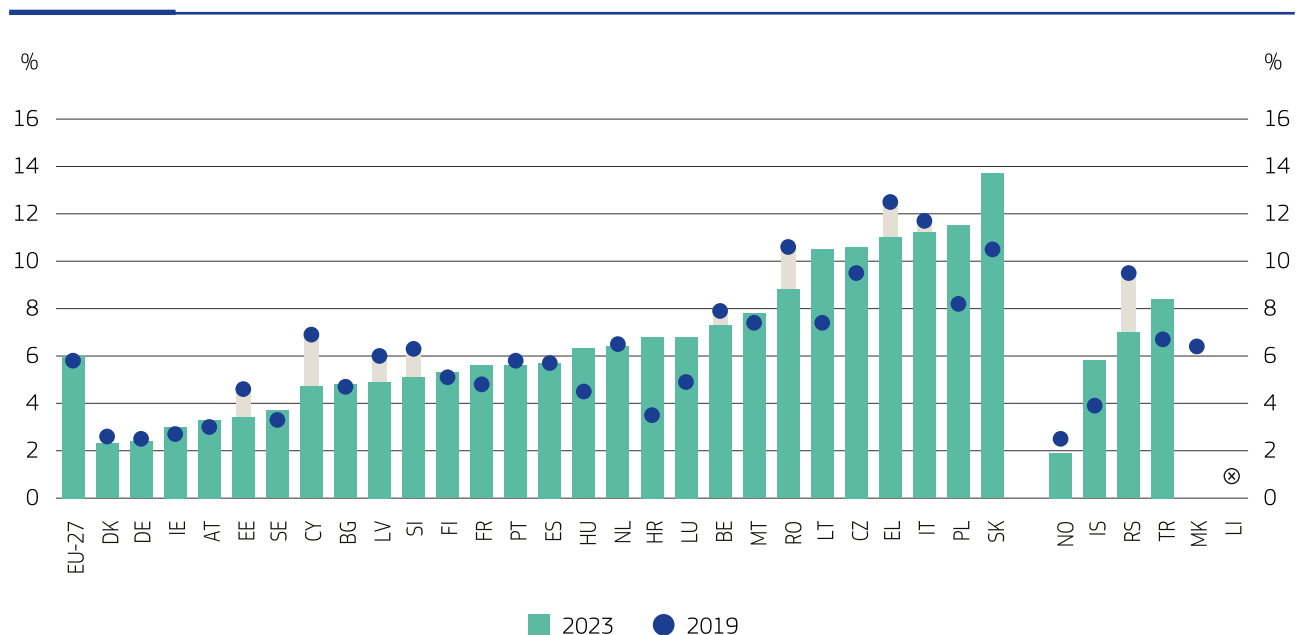
### 3.4. Entrepreneurship

In Czechia, Greece, Italy, Lithuania and Poland around 1 in 10 young people (15–29) are self-employed. The rate is the highest in Slovakia (14%). Conversely, the lowest proportions of self-employed are in Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Austria and Sweden (between 2% and 4%). Compared with 2019, on average, the rate has remained stable. Exceptions are Croatia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia, where the rate has increased by about 3 pps and, on the other side of the spectrum, Greece, Cyprus and Romania, where a decrease of about 2 pps has occurred.

**In the EU,  
6% of working  
young people are  
self-employed.**



**Figure 3.8.** Self-employment as a percentage of total employment for young people (15–29), by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat: Self-employment by sex, age and citizenship ([lfsa\\_esgan](#)).

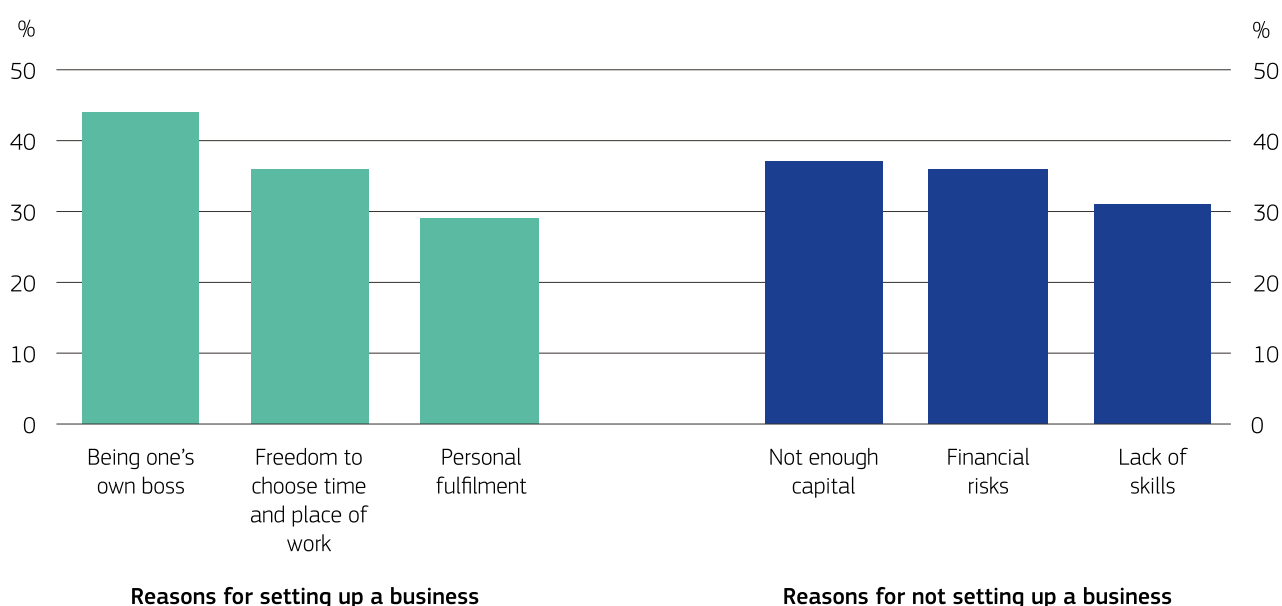
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending level of self-employment rate as a percentage of total employment in 2023. Data extracted on 14.5.2024.

## Perceived financial obstacles discourage young people from setting up a business.

Among the reasons driving young people to be self-employed, the top three pertain to their way of life rather than economic profitability: independence, flexible working conditions and the feeling of accomplishment are the most powerful drivers. On the other hand, financial concerns represent the most common reasons for not setting up a business. Feeling unprepared in terms of skills and competence is also a discouraging factor.



**Figure 3.9.** Top three reasons driving and stopping young people (15–30) to start a business, EU average, 2023



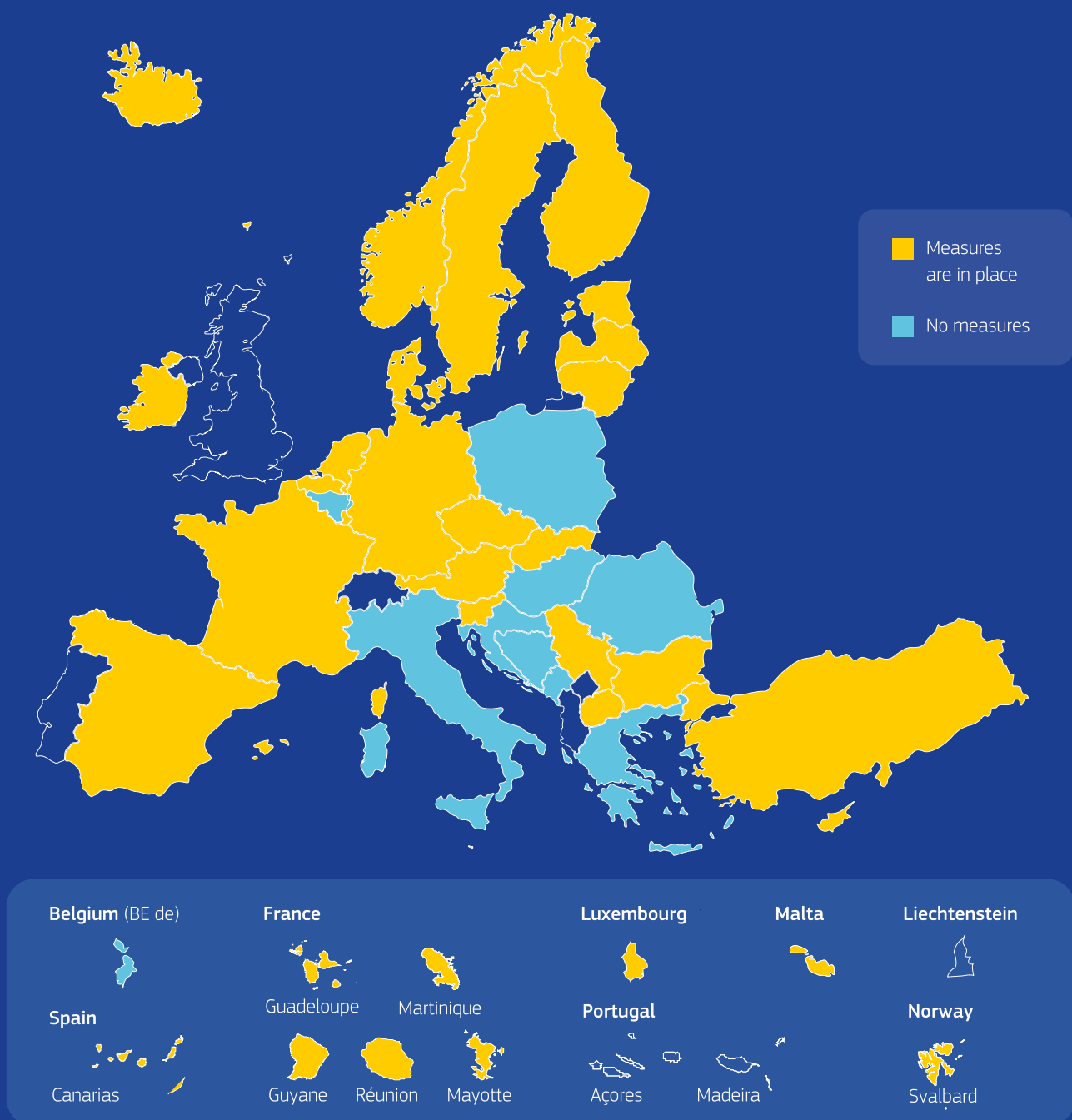
Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 513](#) – Social entrepreneurship and youth – 2023. Q8 Which of the following reasons do you think drive young people (15–30 years old) to start their own business? (Multiple answers possible). Q9 Which of the following reasons do you think stop young people (15–30 years old) from becoming entrepreneurs? (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Data extracted on 6.12.2023.

Member States have committed to increasing the opportunities for youth entrepreneurship as a way to boost employment. One of the core priorities is promoting the attainment of entrepreneurial skills both in and out of school. In about two thirds of Member States, measures supporting youth entrepreneurship exist. They tend to be more common in countries in the western and northern regions of Europe.

**The majority of European countries have established measures to strengthen young people's entrepreneurial competences through non-formal learning.**

**Figure 3.10. Measures furthering entrepreneurial skills through non-formal learning, 2023**



Source: Youth Wiki, [Development of entrepreneurship competences](#). Data collected in September 2023.

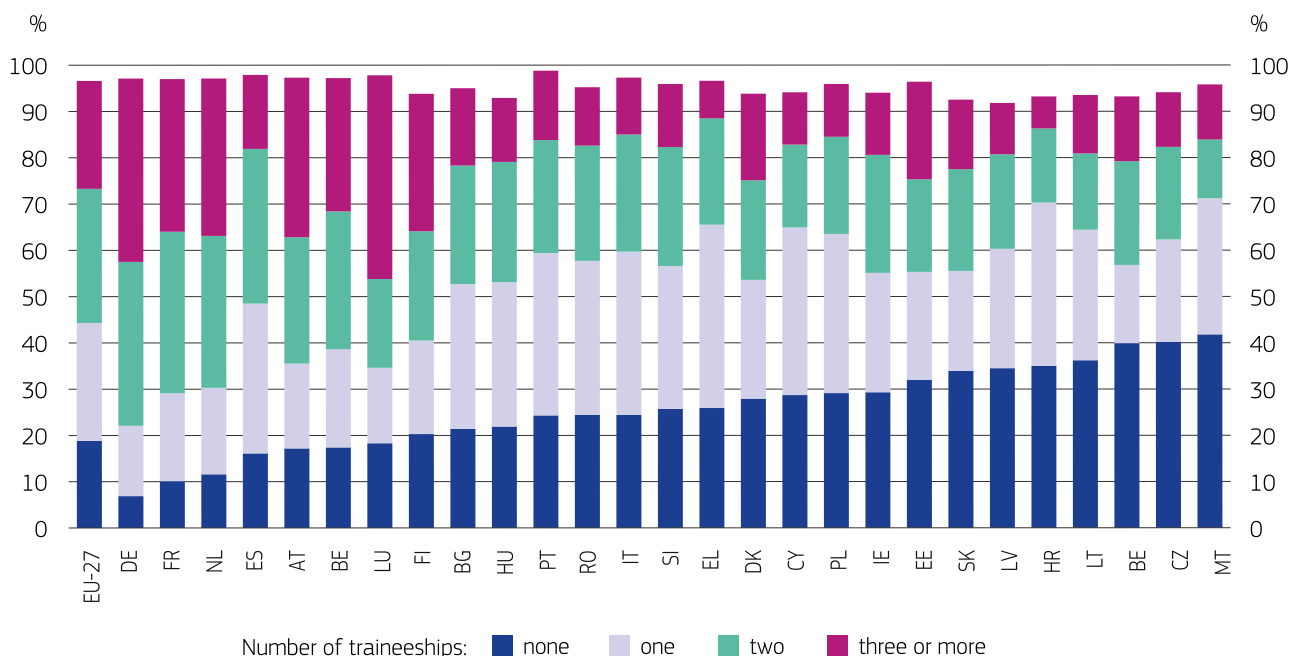
**Almost 80%  
of young people  
have been on  
at least one  
traineeship.**

### 3.5. Traineeships

Germany, Spain, France, Austria and the Netherlands are the countries with the highest percentages of young people aged between 18 and 35 who have done one or more traineeships (between 90% and 80%). On the other hand, the lowest shares are found in Croatia, Czechia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Sweden (less than 60%).



**Figure 3.11.** Share of young people (18–35) by number of traineeships done, by country, 2023



Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 523](#) – Integration of young people into the labour market with particular focus on traineeships – 2023. Q4 A traineeship is a short- or medium-term working experience spent in a business, public body or non-profit institution by students or young graduates. This excludes regular or student jobs. Overall, how many of such traineeships have you had so far?

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people who have not done any traineeship. Percentages to 100%: Don't know. Data extracted on 21.01.2025.

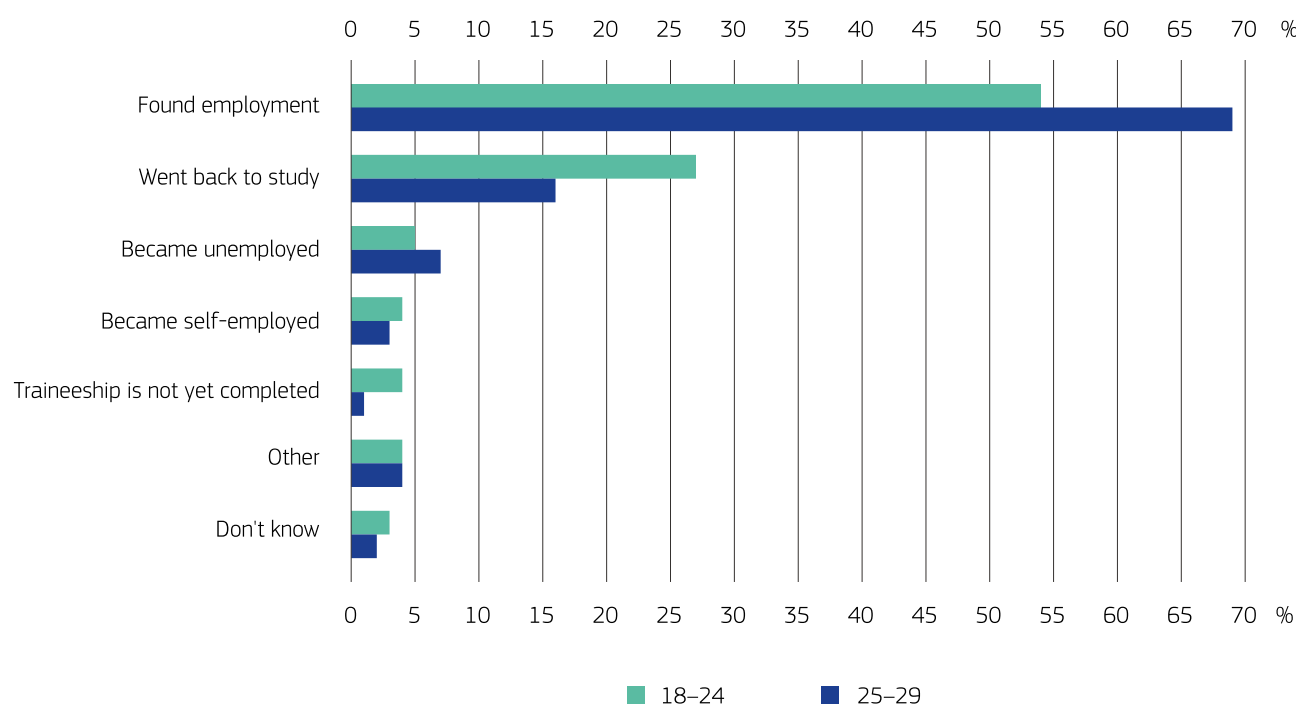
For indicators referring to quality traineeships, see [Flash Eurobarometer 523](#) – Integration of young people into the labour market with particular focus on traineeships.

More than 50% of young people aged between 18 and 24 report having found employment in the six months after their last traineeship. The percentage increases to almost 70% for young people aged 25-29. On the contrary, the share of young people who return to education after a traineeship is higher among 18–24-year-olds than among individuals aged 25-29. Between 5% and 7% of young people are unemployed after concluding their last traineeship.

## A majority of young people find employment in the 6 months after their last traineeship.



**Figure 3.12.** Share of young people (18–24 and 25–29) by their situation in the six months after their last traineeship, EU average, 2023



Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 523](#) – Integration of young people into the labour market with particular focus on traineeships – 2023. Q11 In the 6 months following your last traineeship, which of the following applied?

Notes: Data extracted on 24.01.2025.

# 4.

## Youth and mobility





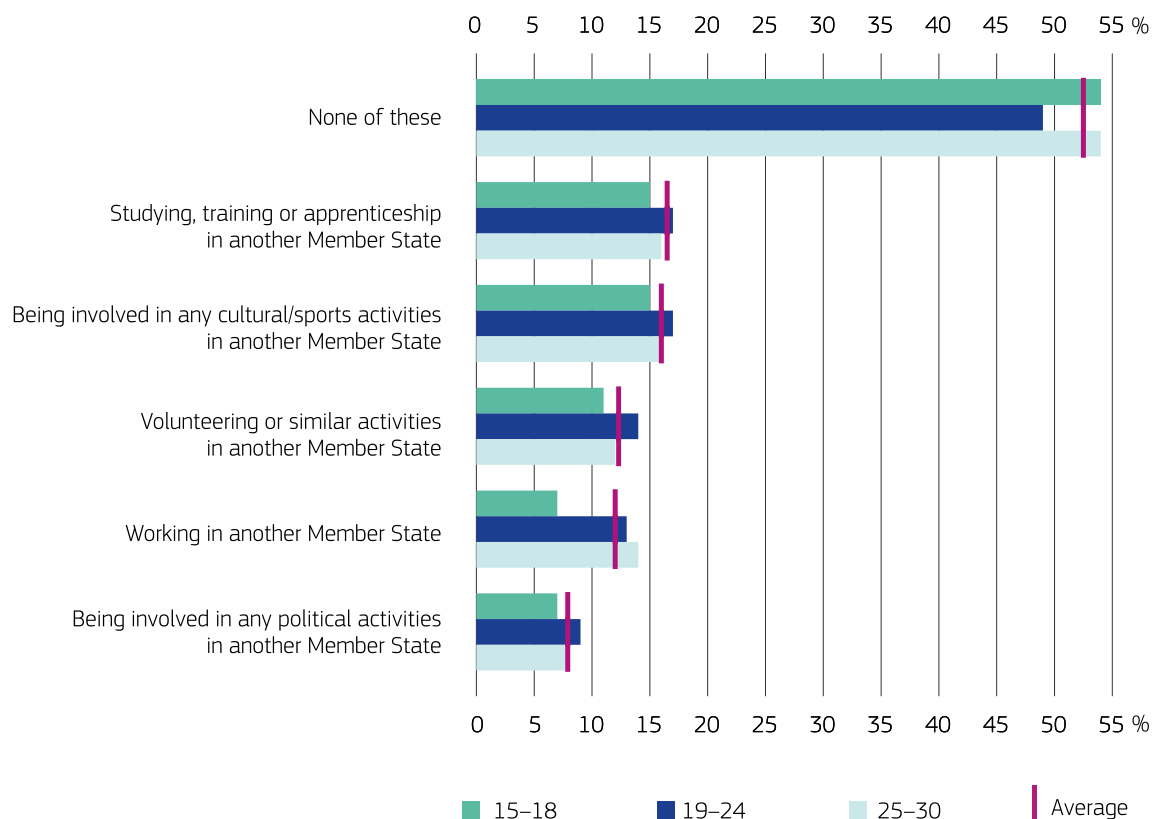
## 4.1. Mobility

Young people (15–30) tend to go to another Member State to participate in activities relating to studying, training and apprenticeship, or culture and sport (both around 16%). A smaller percentage report having worked or volunteered (both around 12%) in another Member State, while almost 1 in 10 young people (8%) have taken part in political activities abroad. However, 52% of young people declared not to have participated in any activities in another Member State.

**More than four in ten young people (43%) have participated in one or more activities in another Member State.**



**Figure 4.1.** Share of young people taking part in activities in another Member State, by age group, EU average, 2024



Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#), 2024. Volume B. Q7. Have you ever taken part in any of the following activities? (Multiple answers possible).

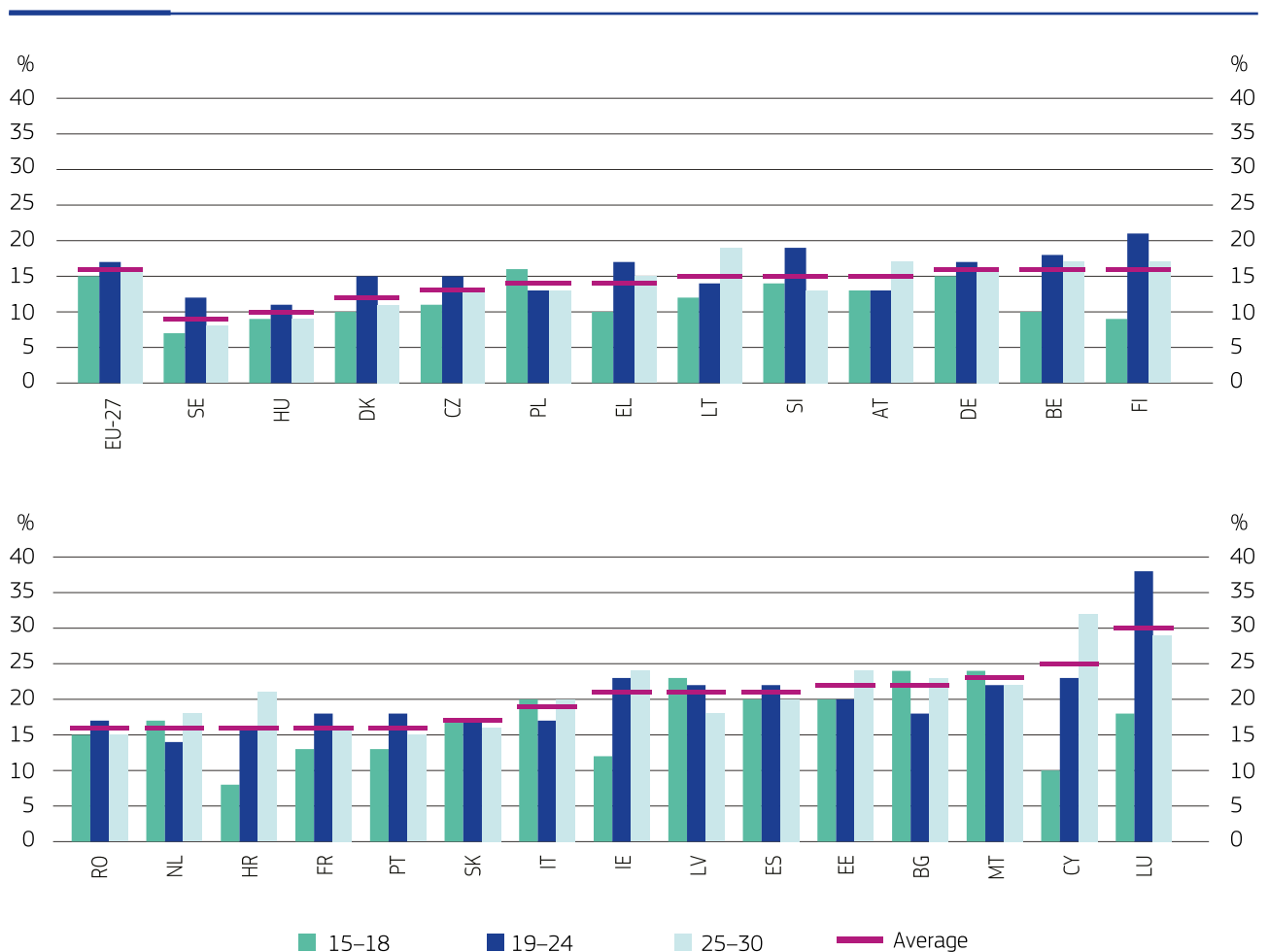
Notes: Data are ordered by decreasing share of young people (15–30) participating in activities in another Member State. Data extracted on 16.5.2024.

## In the EU, 16% of young people have studied, undergone training or completed an apprenticeship in another Member State.

Cyprus and Luxembourg have the highest percentage of young people (15–30) reporting having studied, undergone training, or completed an apprenticeship in another Member State (30% and 25%, respectively). In contrast, Hungary and Sweden have the lowest share of young people engaged in these activities (approximately 10%).



**Figure 4.2.** Share of young people who studied or underwent training or an apprenticeship in another Member State, by age group and by country, 2024



Source: Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy, 2024. Volume B. Q7. Have you ever taken part in any of the following activities? (Multiple answers possible).

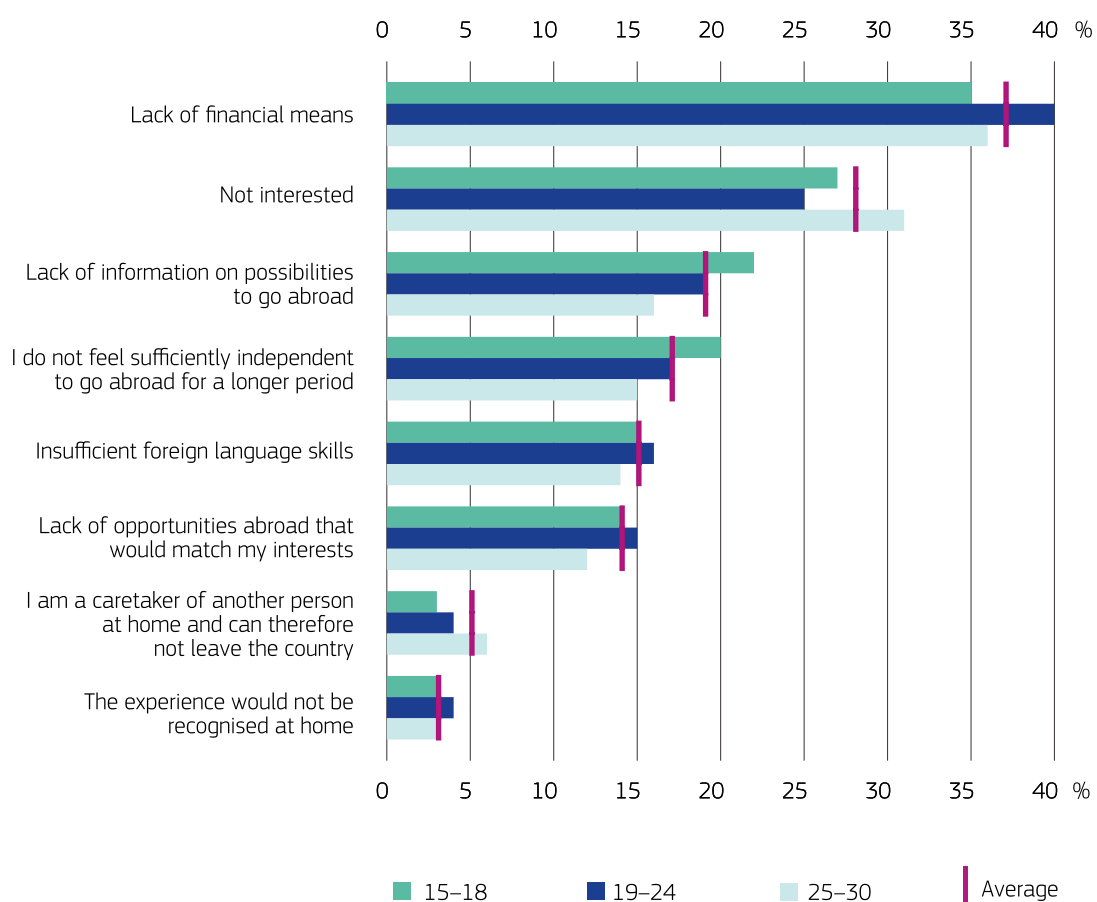
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–30) studying or undergoing training or an apprenticeship in another Member State. Data extracted on 16.5.2024.

More than one third of young people (15–30) do not engage in activities in another Member State because of financial constraints. Lack of interest is also a common reason (28%). Other reasons include insufficient information about opportunities to have an experience in another Member State and not feeling independent enough to spend an extended period abroad. Similar percentages of young people lack confidence in their language skills or believe that opportunities abroad do not match their interests.



**Lack of financial means is the main reason for not participating in activities in another Member State.**

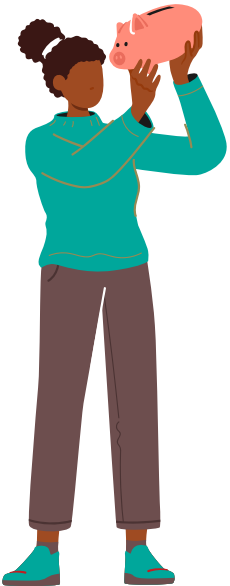
**Figure 4.3.** Reasons stopping young people from engaging in an experience in another Member State, by age group, EU average, 2024



Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#), 2024, Volume B, Q8. What stopped you from taking part in such activities? (Multiple answers possible).

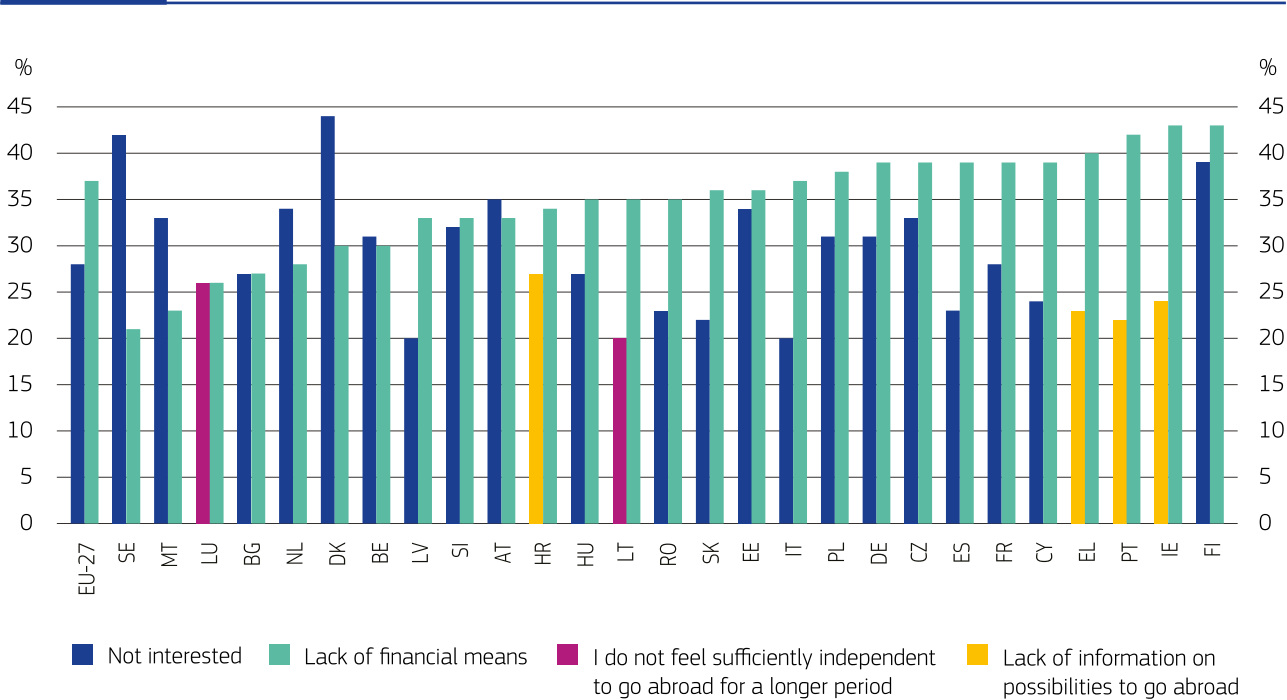
Notes: Data are ordered by decreasing share of young people (15–30) not participating in activities in another Member State. Data extracted on 16.5.2024.

**In about one third of Member States, around 40% of young people (15–30) do not have sufficient financial means to take part in an activity in another EU Member State.**



Lack of interest in such experiences was the second most-cited reason. In Denmark and Sweden, the share of young people who do not participate in experiences abroad because they are not interested is higher than 40%. However, six Member States (Greece, Ireland, Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal) report other principal reasons deterring young people from going abroad. In Greece, Ireland, Croatia and Portugal one of the main issues is a lack of information about opportunities to travel abroad, while in Lithuania and Luxembourg, young people do not feel independent enough to live abroad for an extended period.

**Figure 4.4.** Top two reasons stopping young people (15–30) from taking part in an activity in another Member State, by country, 2024

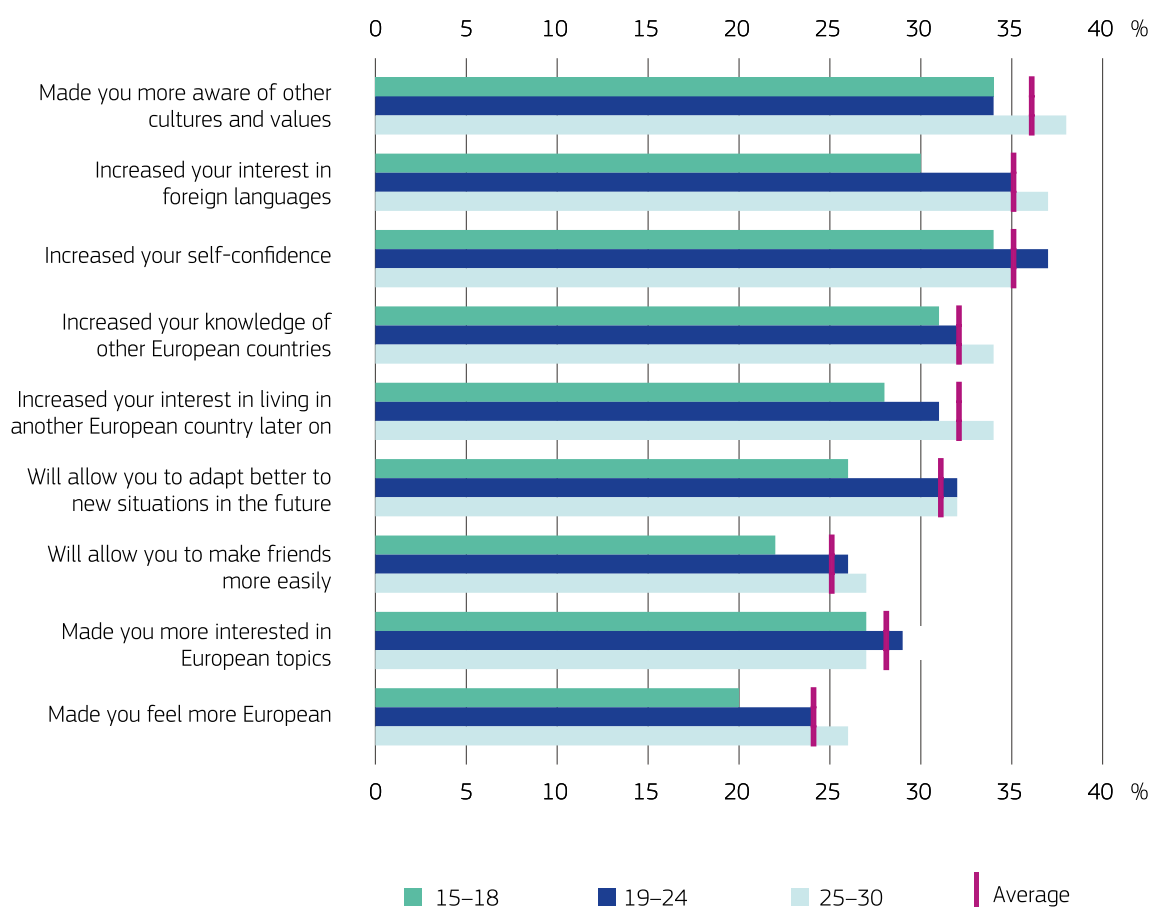


Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#), 2024. Volume C. Q8. What stopped you from taking part in such activities? (Multiple answers possible).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–30) not going abroad due to a lack of financial means. Data extracted on 16.5.2024.

Among the most positive effects of having an experience in another Member State, young people report increases in awareness of other cultures (36%), interest in foreign languages (35%) or knowledge of other European countries (32%). Personal development was also reported as one of the most important outcomes of a period abroad: 35% of young people declared they increased their self-confidence and 31% that they will adapt better to new situations in the future. A smaller percentage of young people declared that an experience abroad made them more interested in European topics or made them feel more European.

**In the EU, knowledge about other cultures and languages, as well as personal development, are the main positive outcomes of an experience in another Member State.**

**Figure 4.5.** Positive outcomes of an experience in another Member State according to young people, by age group, EU average, 2024



Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#), 2024. Volume B. Q9. Do you agree or disagree that taking part in these activities ...? Select all that you agree with. (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Data are ordered by decreasing share of young people (15–30) having a positive perception of an experience in another Member State. Data extracted on 16.5.2024.

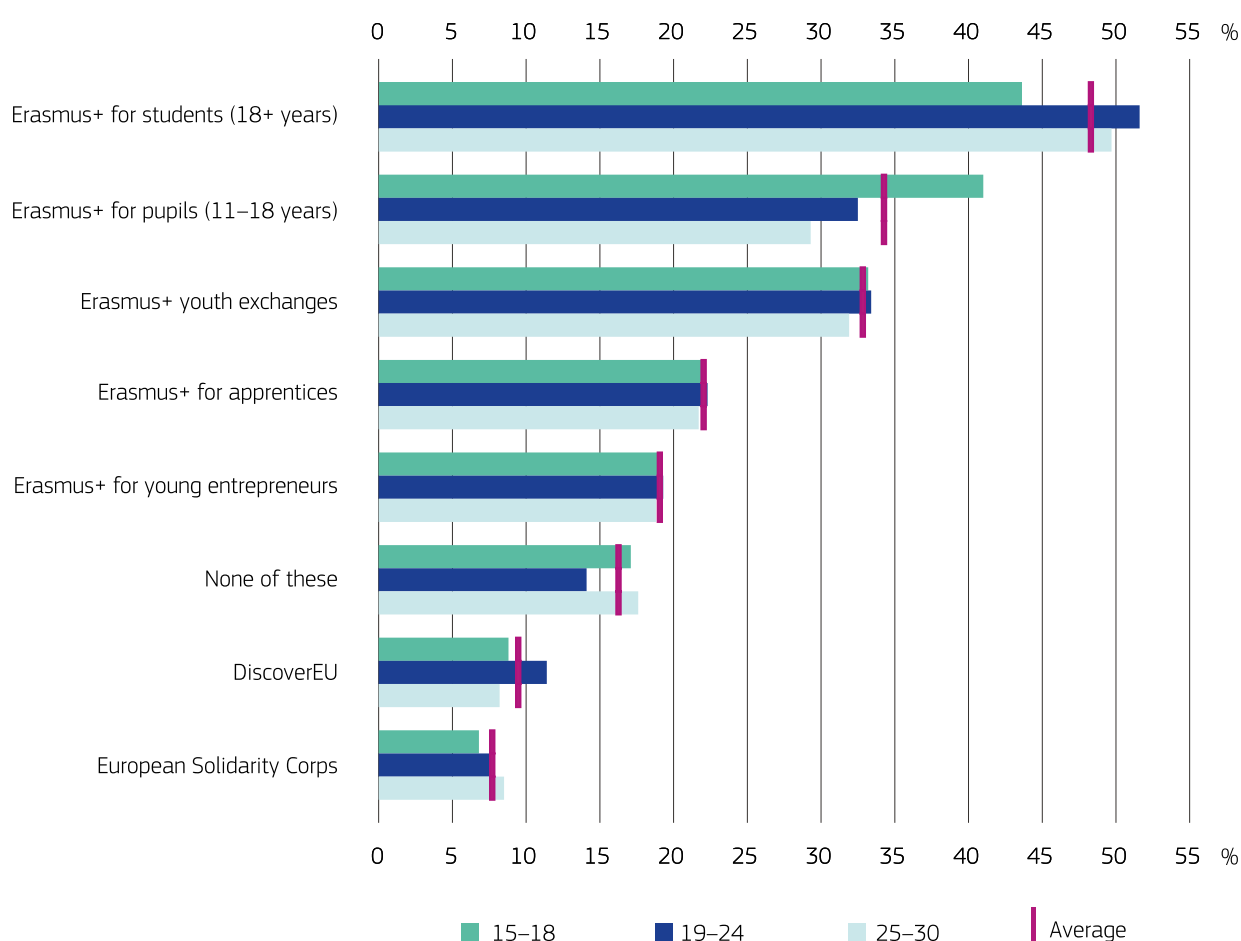
# Erasmus+ is the most well-known programme among young people in the EU.



## 4.2. Erasmus+ and mobility of learners

Asked about which EU-funded opportunities for young people to stay in another Member State young people (15–30) have heard of, almost 50% replied they know Erasmus+ for students over 18 years old, while the Erasmus+ for pupils and Erasmus+ youth exchanges are known by a smaller percentage (33%). 16% of young people declare they have never heard of any EU-funded opportunities to stay in another Member State. Less than 10% of young people have heard about Discover EU and 7% of them know the European Solidarity Corps programme <sup>(5)</sup>.

**Figure 4.6.** Share of young people aware of EU-funded opportunities to stay in another Member State, by age group, EU average, 2024



Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#), 2024. Volume B. Q10 Below are some EU-funded opportunities for young people to stay in another Member State. Which, if any, have you heard of? (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Data are ordered by decreasing share of young people (15–30) aware of EU-funded opportunities to stay in another Member State. Data extracted on 16.5.2024.

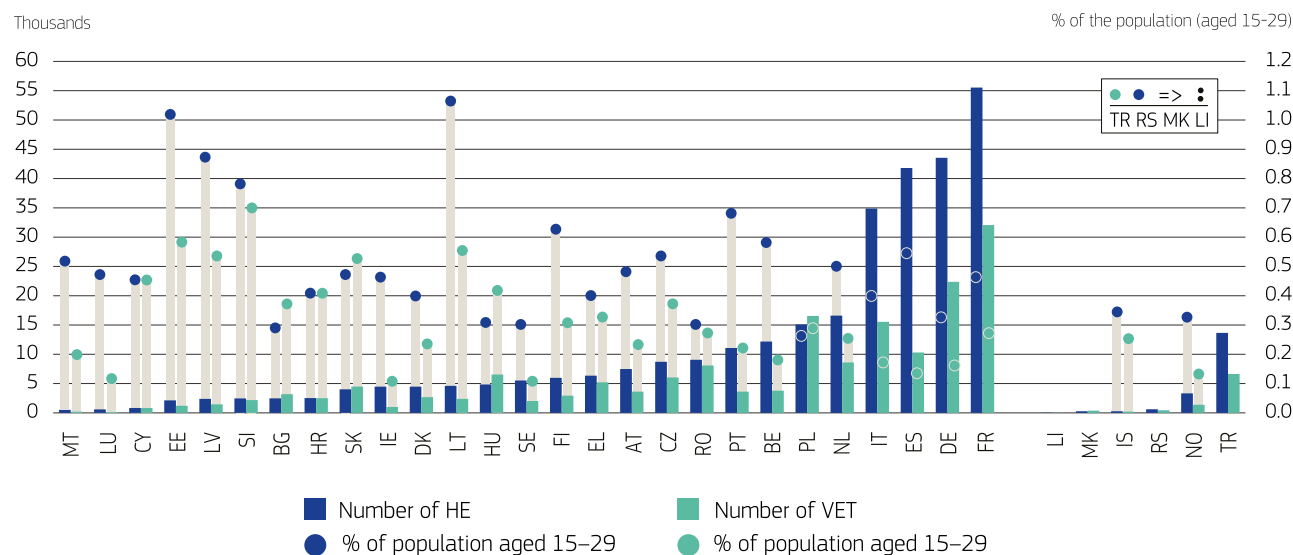
<sup>(5)</sup> The European Solidarity Corps programme is a stand-alone programme, independent from Erasmus+ in the current Multiannual financial framework.

In 2023, in the EU, the majority of countries reported the highest participation in the [Erasmus+](#) programme among students enrolled in [higher education \(HE\)](#), except for Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, where the number of mobilities in [vocational education and training \(VET\)](#) was larger. In absolute terms, Germany, Spain, France and Italy reported the highest numbers of HE learners participating in a learning mobility period.

When considering the percentage of the population aged 15–29, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia recorded the highest participation rates in Erasmus+ mobility actions for both HE and VET. Belgium, Portugal and Finland also reported significant mobility among young people in HE compared to countries with similar youth populations.

**In 2023, higher education learners represent the majority of participants who took part in the Erasmus+ learning mobility actions.**

**Figure 4.7.** Numbers of learners (15–29) who completed Erasmus+ learning mobility actions in HE and VET, by country, 2023



	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU
HE	12 174	2 473	8 721	4 475	43 548	2 125	4 468	6 354	41 809	55 541	2 524	34 884	832	2 392	4 605	585	4 845
VET	3 779	3 191	6 038	2 683	22 377	1 202	1 013	5 212	10 304	32 064	2 503	15 542	820	1 457	2 384	143	6 551
	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE		IS	NO	TR	MK	RS	LI
HE	517	16 604	7 480	15 102	11 076	9 068	2 457	4 015	5 983	5 519		278	3 321	13 650	277	615	36
VET	196	8 601	3 621	16 546	3 625	8 094	2 181	4 485	2 926	2 017		204	1 379	6 630	376	434	34

Source: Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps dashboard, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (data extracted on 17.6.2024) and Eurostat ([youth\\_demo\\_060](#)).

Notes: Countries in Figure 4.7 are ordered by decreasing number of learners (15–29) who completed an Erasmus+ mobility action in HE and VET starting in 2023. Data extracted on 17.6.2024. Please note that data covering 2023 are not final.

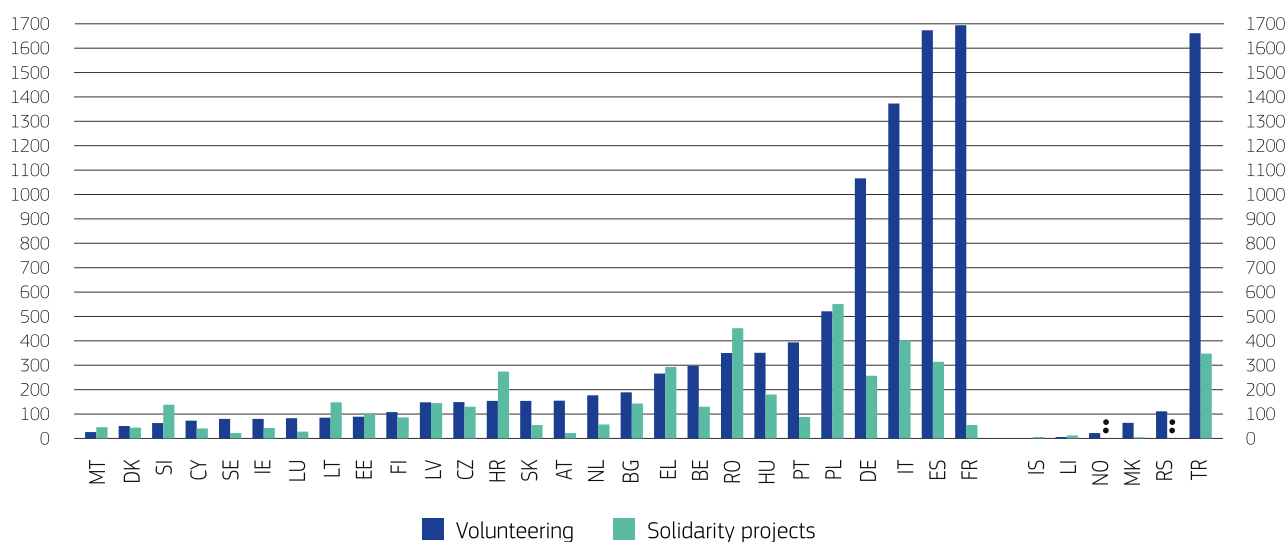
**In 2023, in the EU,  
11 715 young people  
participated in  
volunteering activities  
and 4 616 in solidarity  
projects within the  
European Solidarity  
Corps programme.**

### 4.3. European Solidarity Corps

In 2023, in the EU, the majority of young people participating in the [European Solidarity Corps](#) (the Corps) programme were involved in cross-border volunteering activities, with Germany, Spain, France and Italy reporting the highest number of participants. On the other hand, eight Member States (Estonia, Ireland, Croatia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania and Slovenia) reported a higher number of young people participating in solidarity projects within the Corps.



**Figure 4.8.** Numbers of young people (18–30) participating in the European Solidarity Corps programme, by country, 2023



	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU
Vol	297	189	149	51	1 066	89	80	266	1 673	1 694	154	1 373	73	148	85	83	351
Sol	130	143	130	44	257	100	43	293	314	55	274	403	41	145	148	28	180
	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE		IS	NO	TR	MK	RS	LI
Vol	26	177	155	521	394	350	63	154	108	80		2	22	1 661	64	111	6
Sol	46	57	22	551	88	452	138	55	86	22		6		348	5		12

Source: Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps dashboard, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.

Notes: Countries in Figure 4.8 are ordered by ascending number of young people (18–30) who participated in the European Solidarity Corps programme. Data extracted on 17.6.2024. Please note that data covering 2023 are not final.



# 5.

## Youth in the digital world



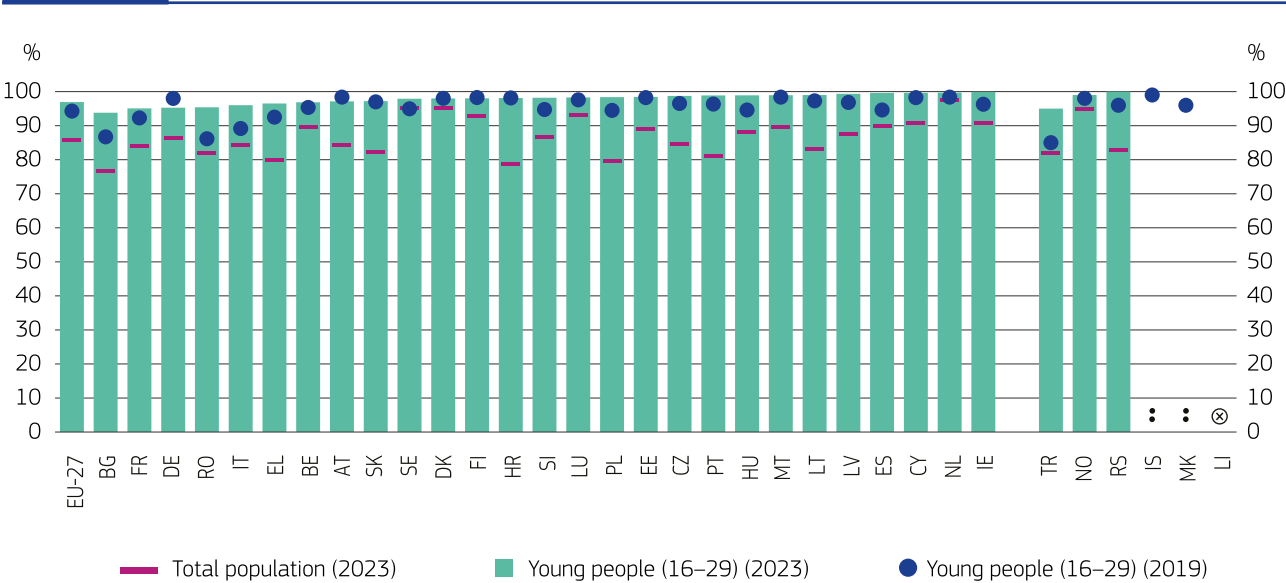
# Young people use the internet more than the general population.

## 5.1. Use of the internet and digital technologies

The share of young internet users is about 10 pps higher than that of the general population. This gap is particularly noticeable in Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal. While, on average, the share of young people using the internet daily has not varied since 2019, increases of about 10 pps have occurred in Bulgaria, Italy and Romania.



**Figure 5.1.** Share of young people (16–29) using the internet daily, compared to the total population, by country, 2019 and 2023



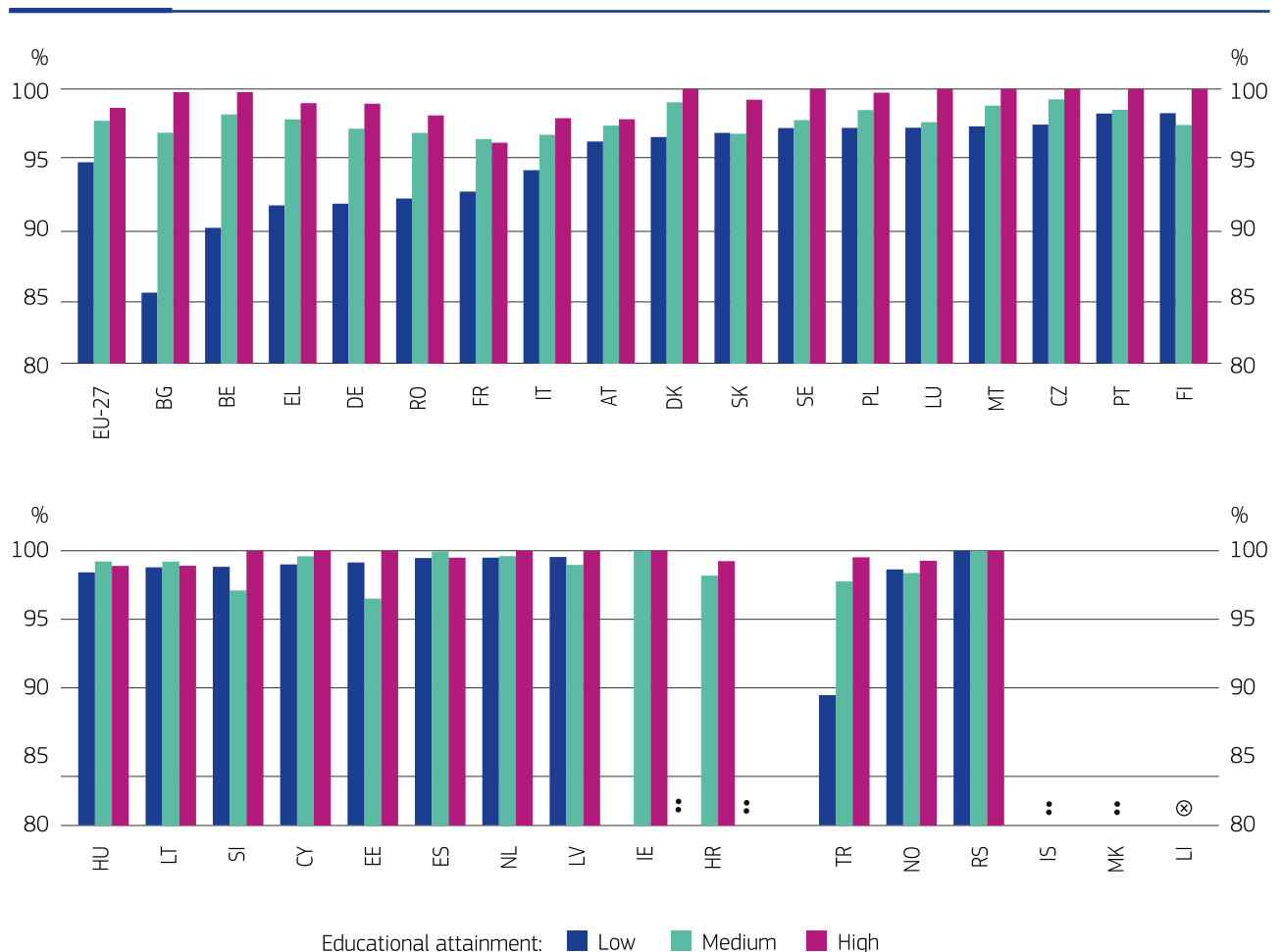
Source: Eurostat: Use of the internet (general) ([isoc\\_ci\\_ifp\\_fu](#)).  
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (16–29) who used the internet daily in 2023. Data extracted on 3.6.2024.

On average, the share of daily internet users is higher among highly educated young people than among those with a lower educational background. The most remarkable difference is in Bulgaria, where the share of internet users with a high level of education is 14 pps bigger than that of users with low educational attainment. Bulgaria is also the country in which the share of young people with low education who use the internet is the smallest. The gap of daily use of internet between high and low levels of educational attainment is the smallest in Spain, Latvia, Hungary and the Netherlands.

## The more educated, the more connected.



**Figure 5.2.** Share of young people (16–29) that use the internet daily, by educational attainment, by country, 2023



Source: Eurostat: use of the internet by educational attainment ([ISOC\\_CL\\_IFP\\_FU](#)).

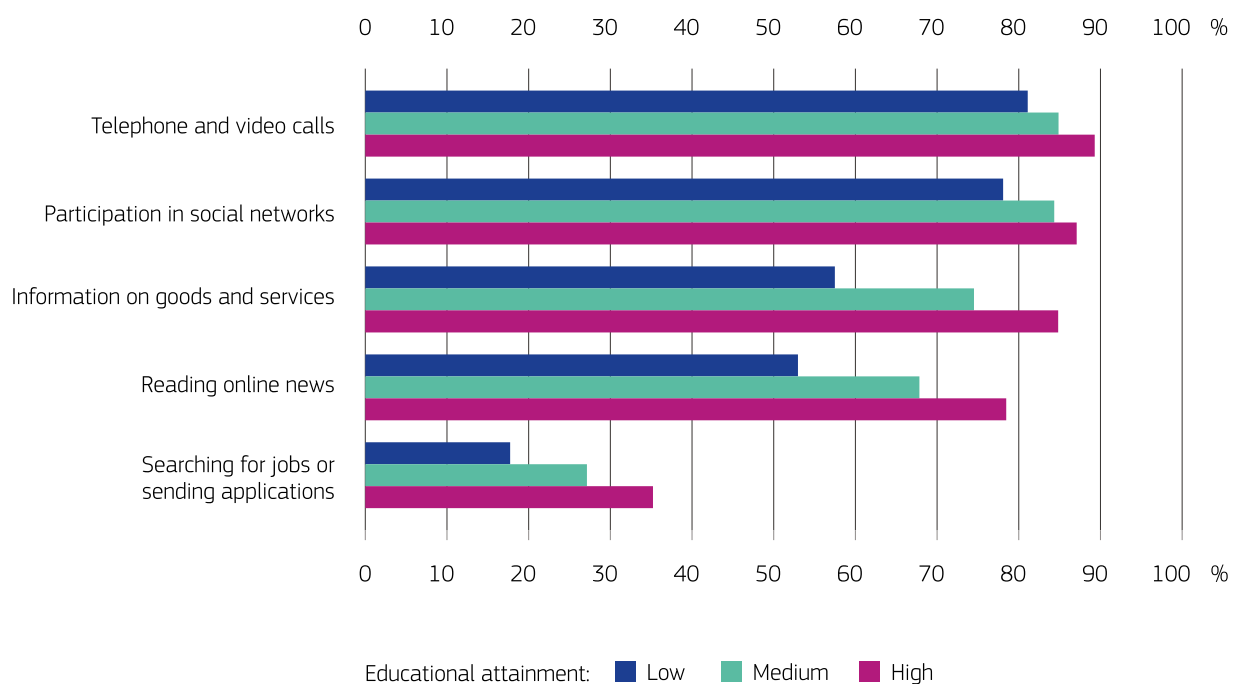
Notes: Low education: less than primary, primary and lower secondary education; medium education: upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education; high education: tertiary education. Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (16–29) with low educational level using the internet daily. Data extracted on 3.6.2024.

## Young people use the internet mainly for social interactions and communication.

Young people in the EU mostly use the internet for communicating (phone and video calling) and interacting (participation in social networks). In these domains, no remarkable variation exists across different levels of education. Other activities – collecting information on goods and services, reading online news and, notably, searching for a job – are less widespread. For these activities, gaps across different education attainments are more visible.



**Figure 5.3.** Share of young people (16–29) using the internet, by activity and by educational attainment, EU average, 2023

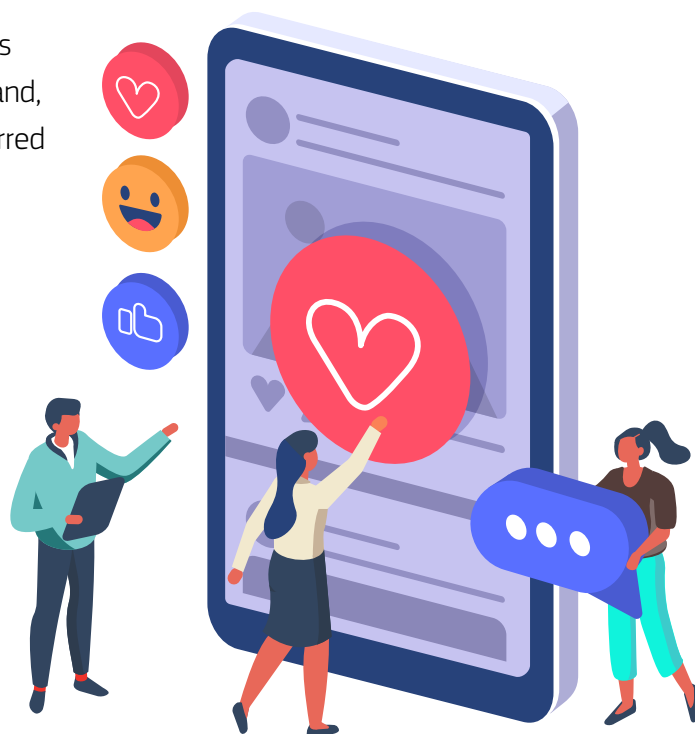


Source: Eurostat: Individuals – internet activities ([isoc\\_ci\\_ac\\_i](#)).

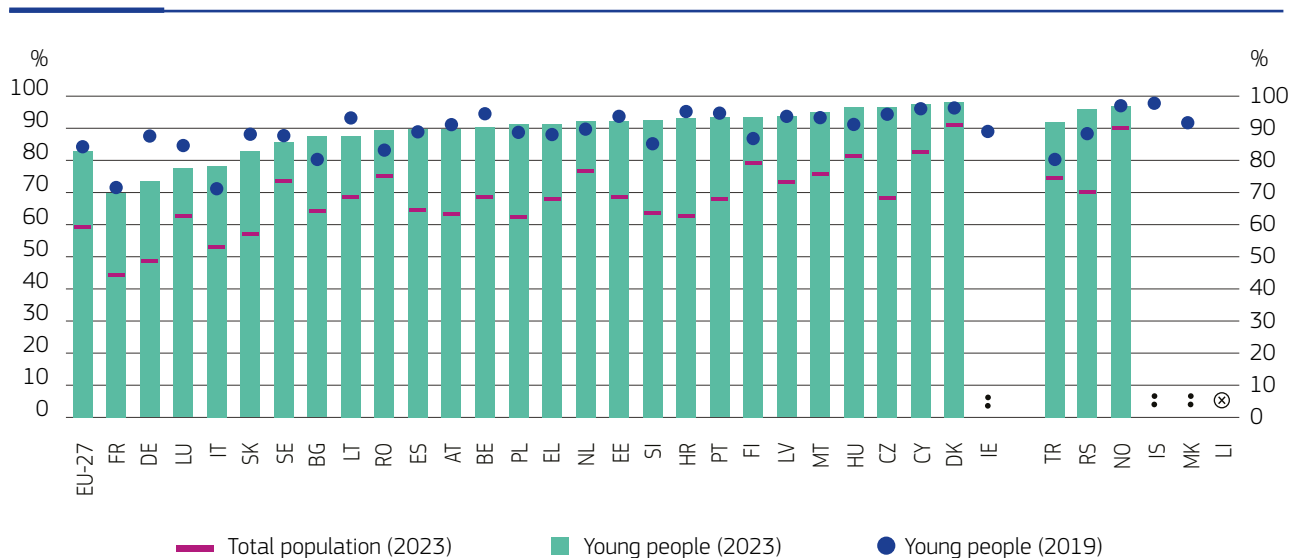
Notes: Activities are ordered by decreasing share of young people conducting them. Data extracted on 11.6.2024.

About 80% of young people use the internet to participate in social networks as opposed to about 60% of the total population. The gap between the two age groups is the widest in Czechia, Croatia, Poland and Slovenia. On average, the percentage has remained unchanged since 2019. However, in five countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Italy, Romania and Finland), the share of young people participating in social networks has increased by about 7 pps. On the other hand, a remarkable decrease (14 pps) has occurred in Germany.

## Young people participate in social media more than the general population.



**Figure 5.4.** Share of young people (16–29) using the internet to participate in social networks, compared to the total population, by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat: Individuals – internet activities ([isoc\\_ci\\_ac\\_i](#)).

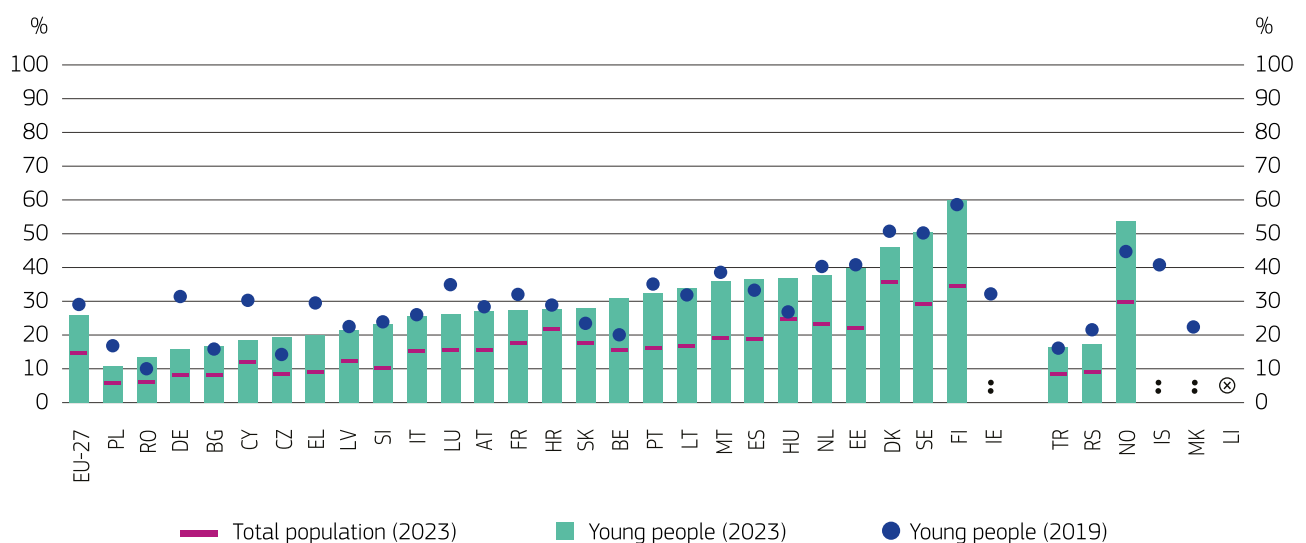
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people using the internet to participate in social network in 2023. Data extracted on 11.6.2024.

## In the EU, one in four young people uses the internet to search for and apply to a job.

In Nordic countries, about half of young people look for employment through the internet. A different situation is found in Poland and Romania, where the average is about half the EU one. Overall, no particular change has occurred since 2019, except in Germany where the share of young people searching for a job online has halved. Substantial decreases took place also in Greece and Cyprus. In contrast, Belgium and Hungary have seen increases of about 10 pps. Online job search and job applications are much less widespread in the total population, for which the share is almost half that for young people.



**Figure 5.5.** Share of young people (16–29) using the internet for job search or sending an application, compared to the total population, by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat: Individuals – internet activities ([isoc\\_ci\\_ac\\_i](#)).

Notes: Countries are ordered by increasing share of young people using the internet for job searches and to send applications in 2023. Data extracted on 11.6.2024.

## 5.2. Digital skills of young people

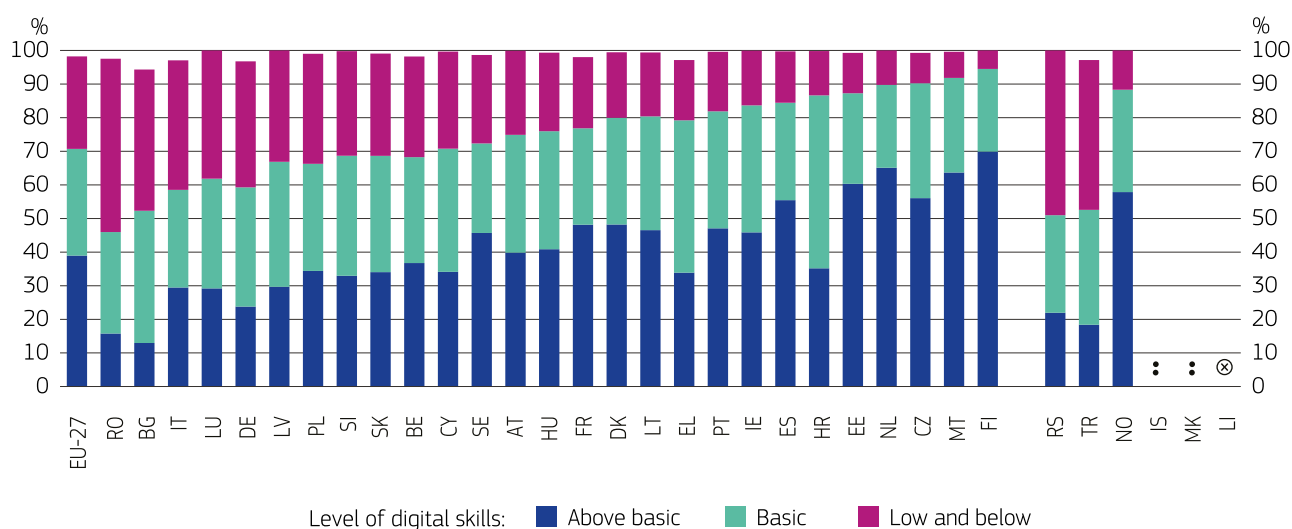
In 2023, 28% of individuals (16–29) had below basic digital skills. Although this level is lower than the EU average of 36% of the general population having below basic skills, it remains particularly high for the young population.

Bulgaria and Romania are the countries where the proportion of young people with low and below low level of digital skills is the highest, followed by Germany, Italy and Luxembourg. Czechia, Malta and Finland, on the other hand, show the lowest shares.

**More than one in four young people hold low digital skills.**



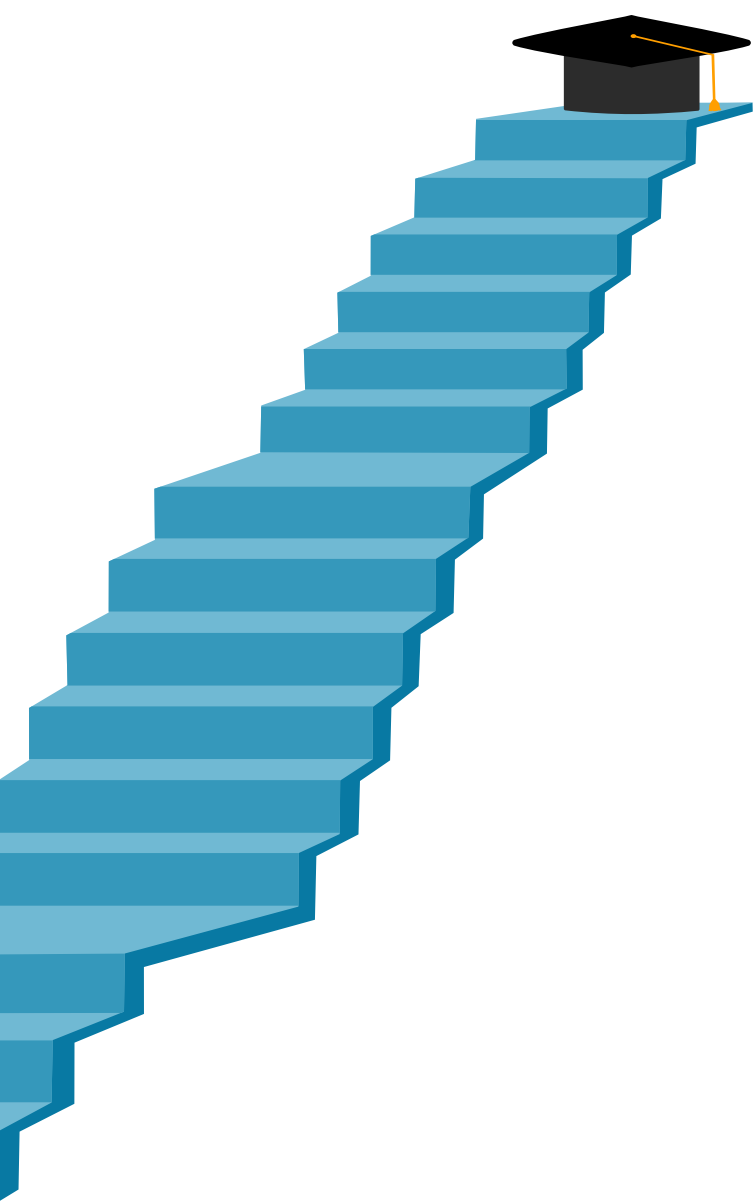
**Figure 5.6.** Young people's (16–29) level of digital skills, by country, 2023



Source: Eurostat: Individuals' level of digital skills ([ISOC\\_SK\\_DSKL\\_I21](#)).

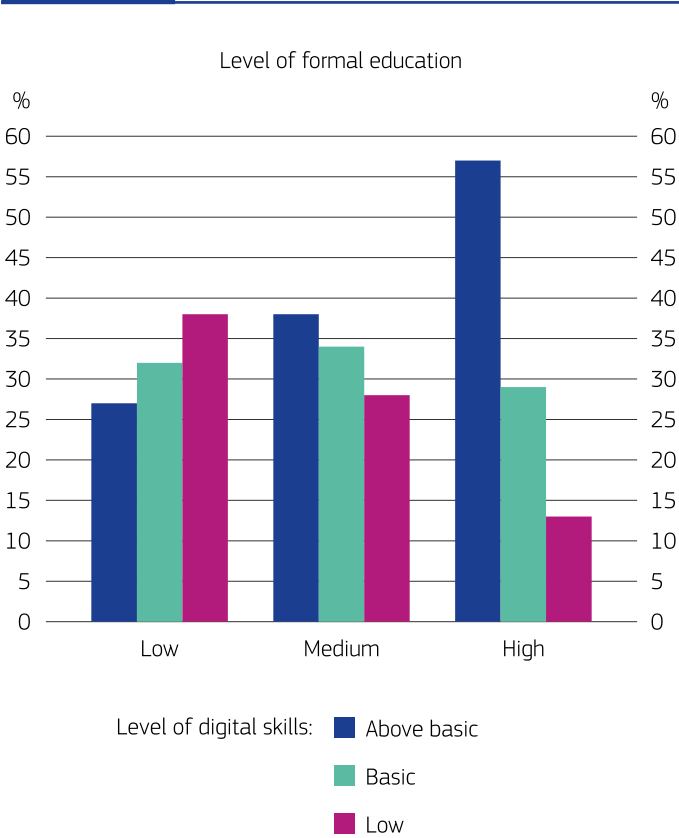
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people with low and below low digital skills. Percentage points to 100%: skills could not be assessed because the individual has not used the internet in the last 3 months. For information on the levels of digital skills, please refer to Eurostat [indicator metadata](#). Data extracted on 11.6.2024.

# The more educated, the higher the digital skills.



The level of formal education and that of digital skills are associated. Young people (16–29) with a low level of formal education tend to have low digital skills <sup>(6)</sup>. The proportion of young people with low formal education who have low digital skills (38%) is about three times as high as that for young people with high education (13%). Conversely, more than one in two young people with high education holds above basic digital skills.

**Figure 5.7.** Young people’s (16–29) level of digital skills by level of formal education, EU average, 2023



Source: Eurostat: Individuals’ level of digital skills ([isoc\\_sk\\_dskl\\_i21](#)).  
Notes: Low education: less than primary, primary and lower secondary education; medium education: upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education; high education: tertiary education. Data extracted on 4.7.2024.

<sup>(6)</sup> Young people with low-level of formal education have been identified as one of the priority target groups for digital skills policies given that they are significantly less skilled than their counterparts, i.e., young people in general ([JRC report](#) Centeno et al., 2022 Supporting policies addressing the digital skills gap – Identifying priority groups in the context of employment)

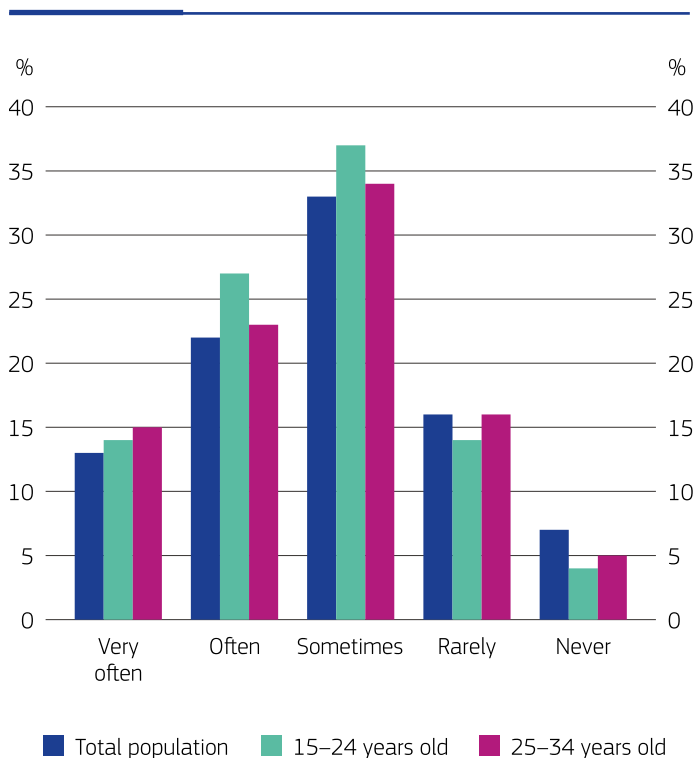


### 5.3. Disinformation and misinformation

Over one third of young people (15–24) report being exposed to disinformation and fake news sometimes. The share of those who report being exposed often is smaller but still high (27%). As much as 14% of young respondents believe to be subject to disinformation very often. Compared to individuals aged between 25 and 34 and to the total population, the youngest youth cohort (15–24) perceives to encounter disinformation and fake news to a larger extent.

**Young people are aware of being exposed to disinformation and fake news at least a few times over the previous week.**

**Figure 5.8.** Young people's perception of their exposure to disinformation and fake news, by time frequency and by age group, compared to the total population, EU average, 2023



Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 522 – Democracy](#), Q6 How often do you think that you have been personally exposed to disinformation and fake news over the past 7 days?

Notes: Data extracted on 3.7.2024.

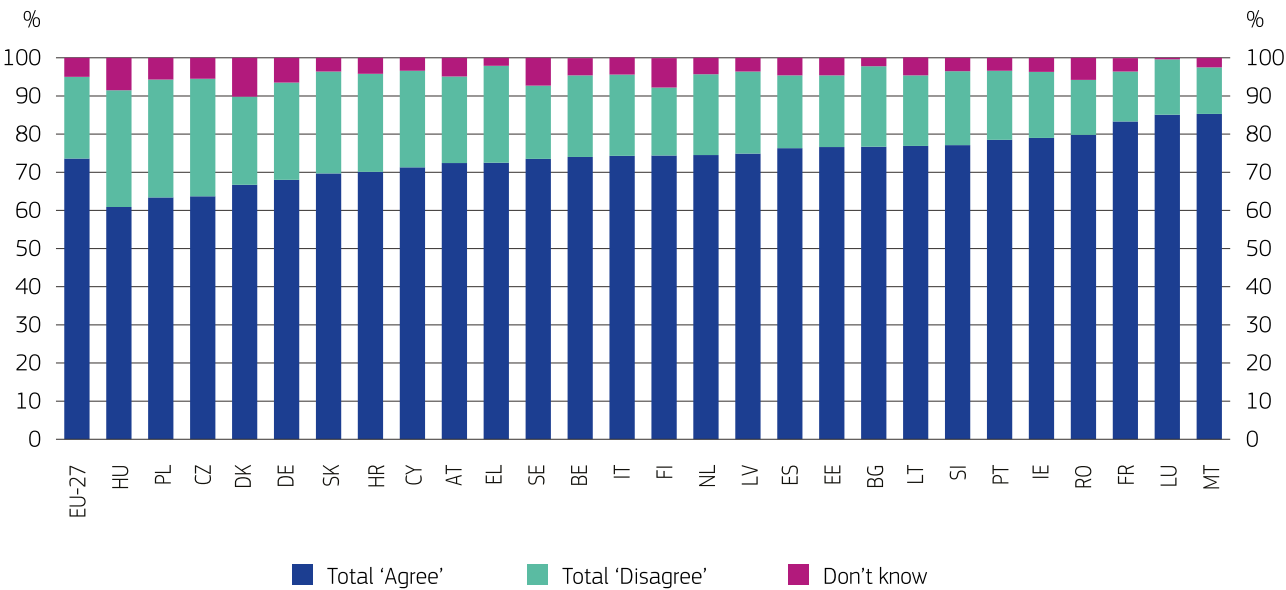


# The vast majority of young people think education equips them with the necessary digital skills to identify disinformation.

In France, Luxembourg, Malta and Romania the share of young people who think that education has provided them with the necessary digital skills to identify disinformation is well above the EU average. Czechia, Hungary and Poland report the lowest proportions.



**Figure 5.9.** Share of young people (15–30) who think that their education has equipped them with the necessary level of digital skills to identify disinformation, by country, 2024



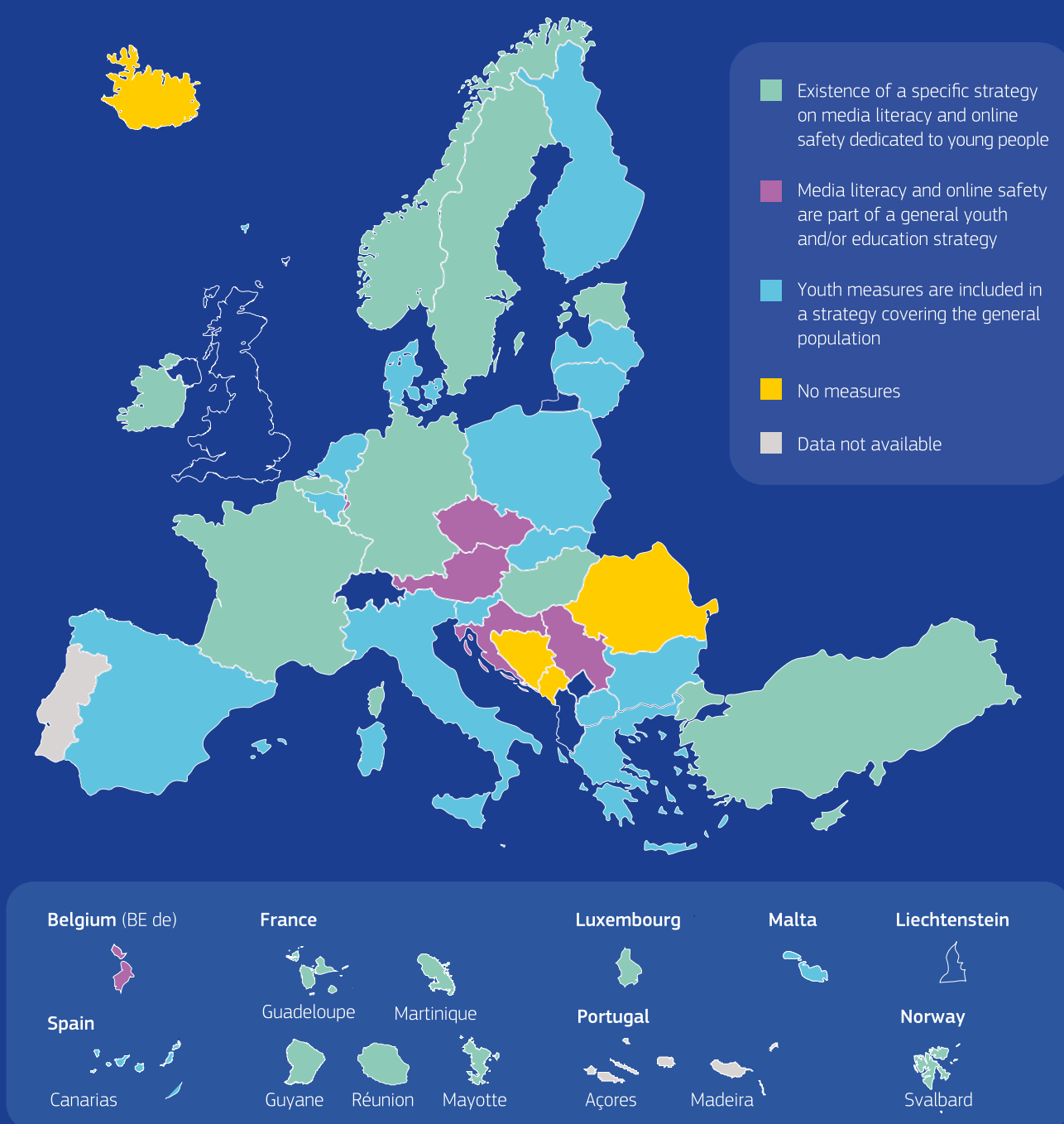
Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 545: Youth and democracy](#). Q18: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? My education has equipped me with the necessary digital skills to identify disinformation.

Notes: Countries are ordered by increasing share of young people agreeing with the statement. Data extracted on 12.6.2024.

Fifteen of the countries covered by [Youth Wiki](#) data collection have introduced youth-specific measures on media literacy and online safety in general strategies targeting the entire population. In 11 countries, media strategies that specifically target young people are in place. The remaining five countries tackle media literacy and online safety in national youth or education strategies.

**Almost all countries have introduced measures to support young people's media literacy and online safety.**

**Figure 5.10. National strategies on media literacy and online safety, 2023**



Source: [Youth Wiki](#), [Media literacy and safe use of new media](#). Data collected in September 2023.



**In half of the countries, young people are directly consulted on policies on children's digital activities.**

## **5.4. Youth participation in digital policy**

Countries have varying levels of young people's involvement in policy-making on the topic of children's digital activities. Sixteen countries report that young people are listened to directly, for example through hearings, consultations and specific surveys. Five countries indicate that young people are actively involved through specially designed structures. In four countries, young people's opinions are considered indirectly through, for instance, available data from surveys. Three further countries state that consultations with young people take place within larger national structures, for example within the education system, but may not be specifically focused on digital policy topics (survey response 'other'). Only in one country are young people not consulted, either directly or indirectly in the development of policies on the digital environment.





# 6.

## Youth and the green transition



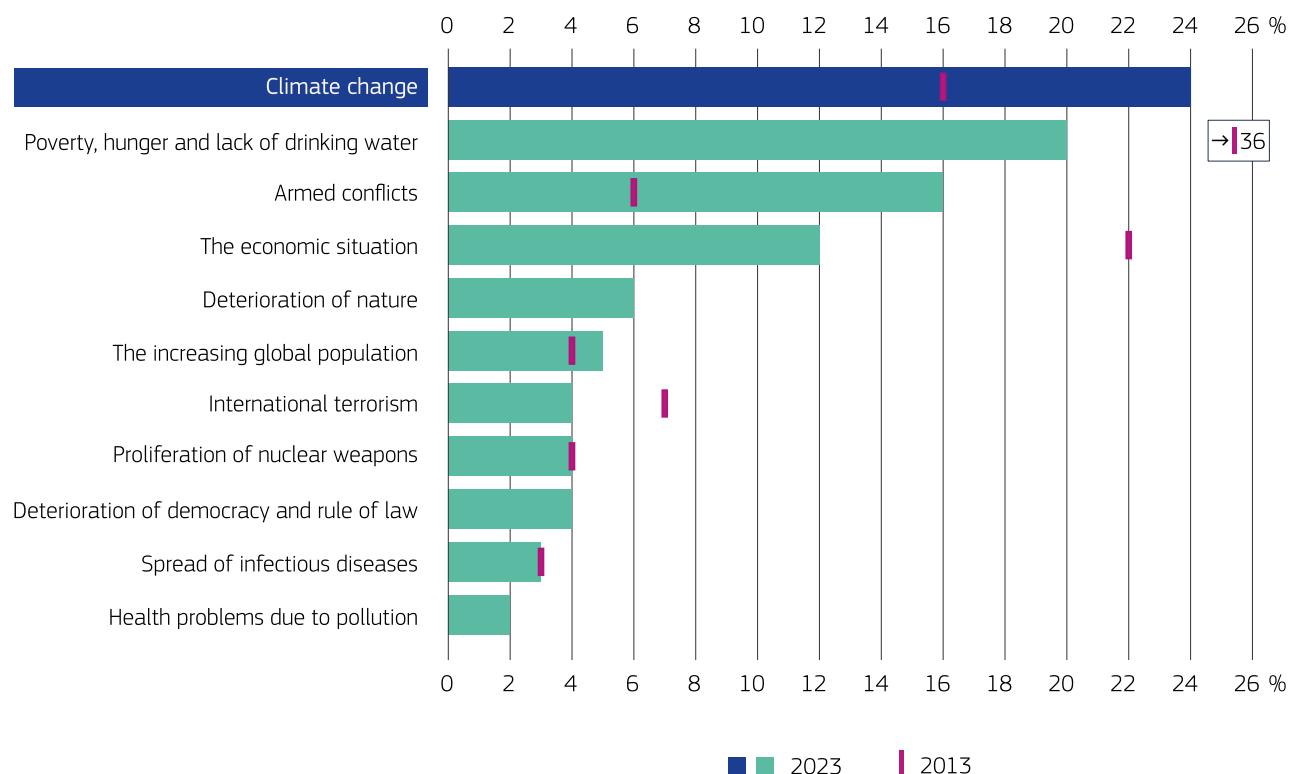
## 6.1. What do young people think of climate change?

In 2023, in the EU, almost one in four young individuals aged 15–24 considered [climate change](#) their top concern: it is the issue that most young people indicate as a priority (24%) among those proposed in the survey. The increase was of 50% since 2013.

**Young people rank climate change as the most serious problem facing the world.**



**Figure 6.1.** Single most serious problem the world is facing according to young people (15–24), 2013 and 2023



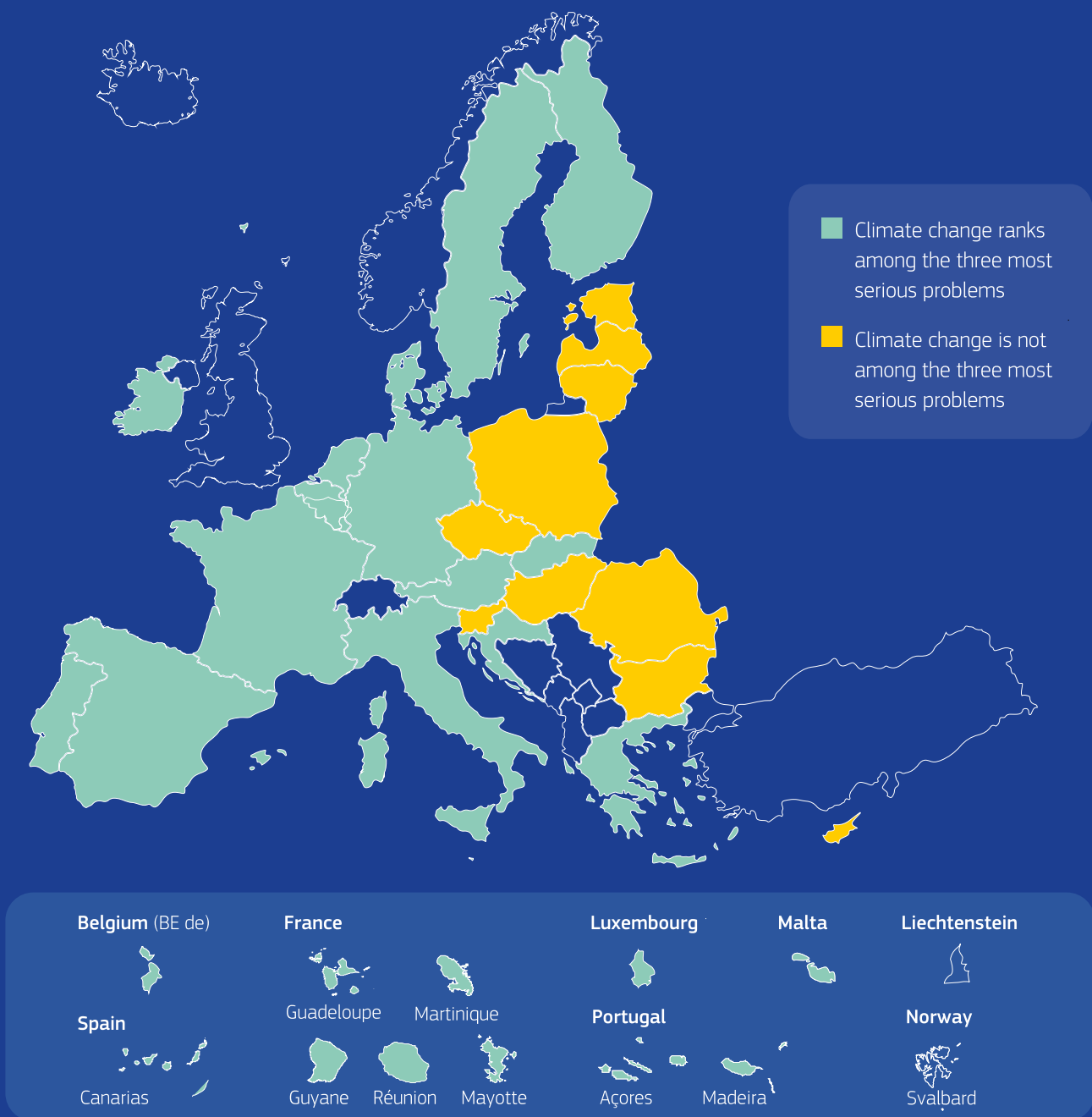
Source: [Special Eurobarometer 80.2: Climate change](#), 2013 and [Special Eurobarometer SP538: Climate change](#), 2023. QA.1a/QC1a. Which of the following do you consider to be the single most serious problem facing the world as a whole? (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Data for 2013 not available for 'deterioration of nature', 'deterioration of democracy and the rule of law' and 'health problems due to pollution'. Data extracted on 13.12.2023.

# Young people in most Member States think climate change is among the top challenges facing the world.

Climate change is considered among the top three most critical issues in about two thirds of Member States. This applies to countries in the northern, central and western regions of the EU. Young people in several countries of the Baltic and eastern European regions do not consider climate change as one of the three top priorities.

**Figure 6.2.** Climate change as one of the three most serious problems the world is facing according to young people (15–24), by country, 2023



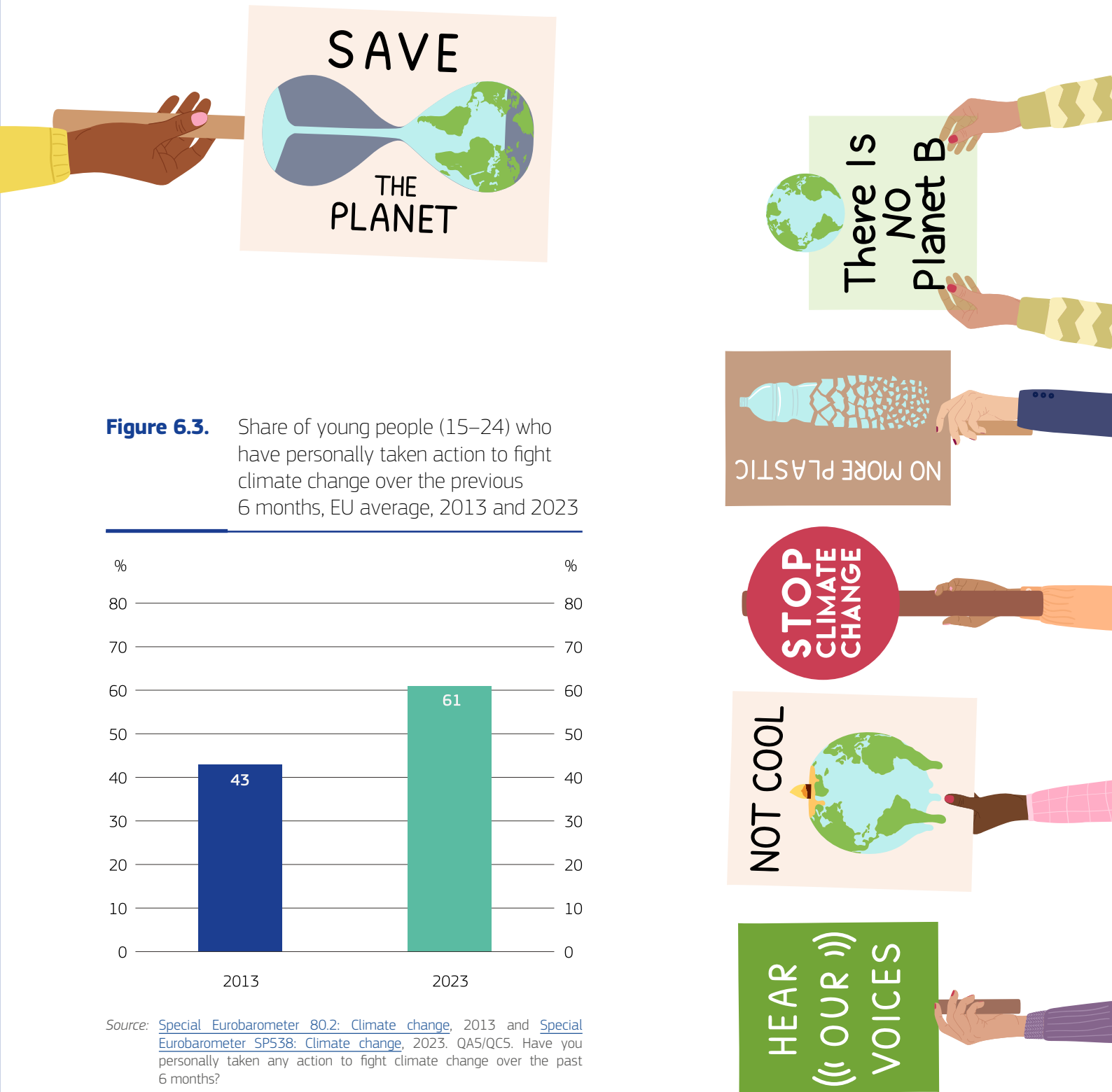
Source: [Special Eurobarometer SP538: Climate change, 2023. QC1a. Which of the following do you consider to be the single most serious problem facing the world as a whole? \(Multiple answers possible\).](#)

Notes: Data extracted on 16.2.2024.



In 2023, almost two thirds of young people aged 15–24 reported having taken action personally to fight climate change. This represents an increase of almost 50% since 2013.

Young people are increasingly getting involved in actions against climate change.

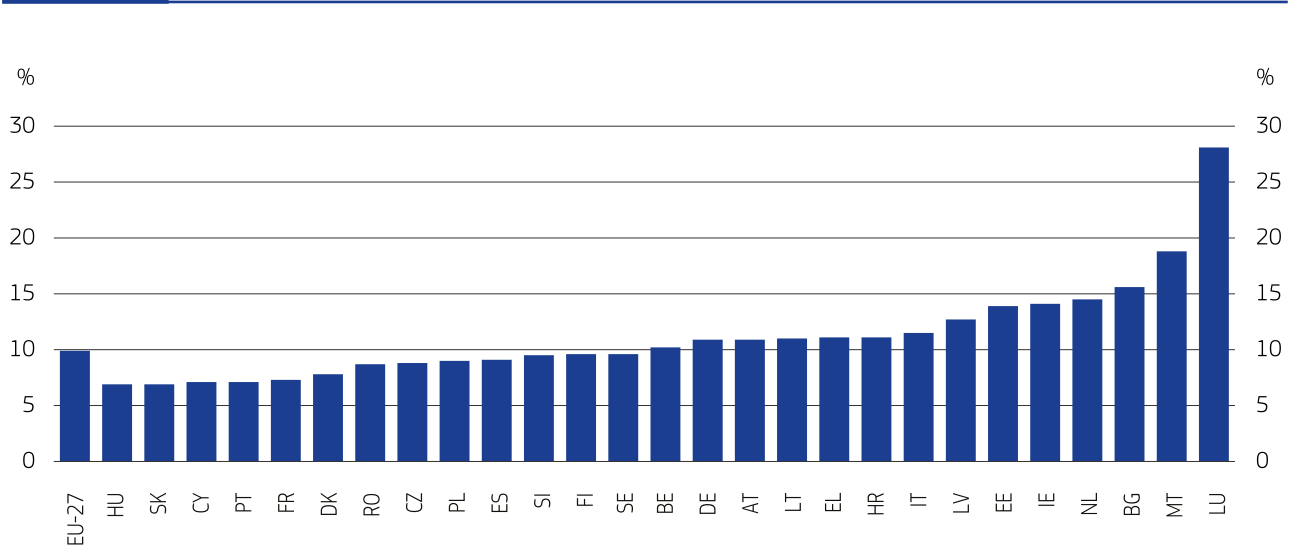


# In the EU, one in ten young people has participated in organised activities on environmental issues.

The highest shares of participation are in Luxembourg (where more than one quarter of young people have taken part), Bulgaria, Estonia, Ireland, Malta and the Netherlands. Conversely, participation in organisations active in the field of climate change and environmental issues is the lowest in France, Hungary, Cyprus, Portugal and Slovakia.



**Figure 6.4.** Share of young people (15–29) who have participated in an organisation active in the domain of climate change / environmental issues, by country, 2024



Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 545 – Youth and democracy](#), 2024. Q2: In the last 12 months, have you participated in any activities of the following organisations? Select all that apply. (Multiple answers possible).

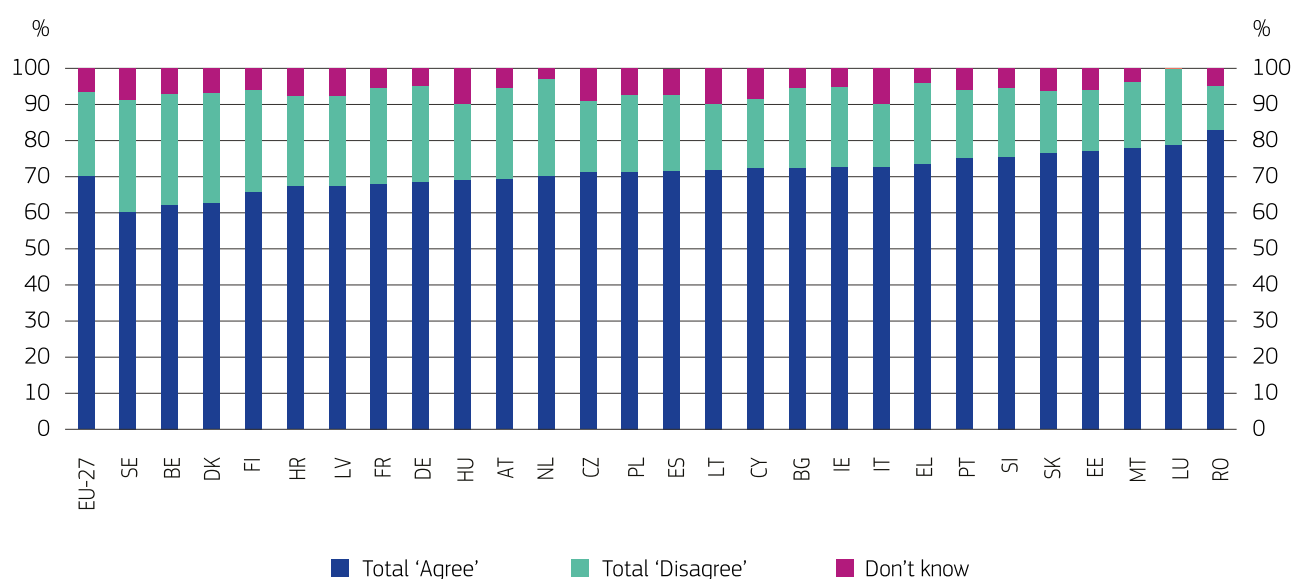
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people who have participated in an organisation active in the domain of climate change/ environmental issues. Data extracted on 30.5.2024.

In Estonia, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, and, particularly, Romania, the share of young people for whom environmental issues play a role in deciding which party to vote for is well above the EU average. In contrast, in Scandinavian countries young people tend to consider parties' environmental policies to a lesser degree.

**More than two thirds of young people consider parties' environmental policies before voting.**



**Figure 6.5.** Share of young people (15–29) who would consider a party's environmental policy before deciding how to vote, by country, 2024



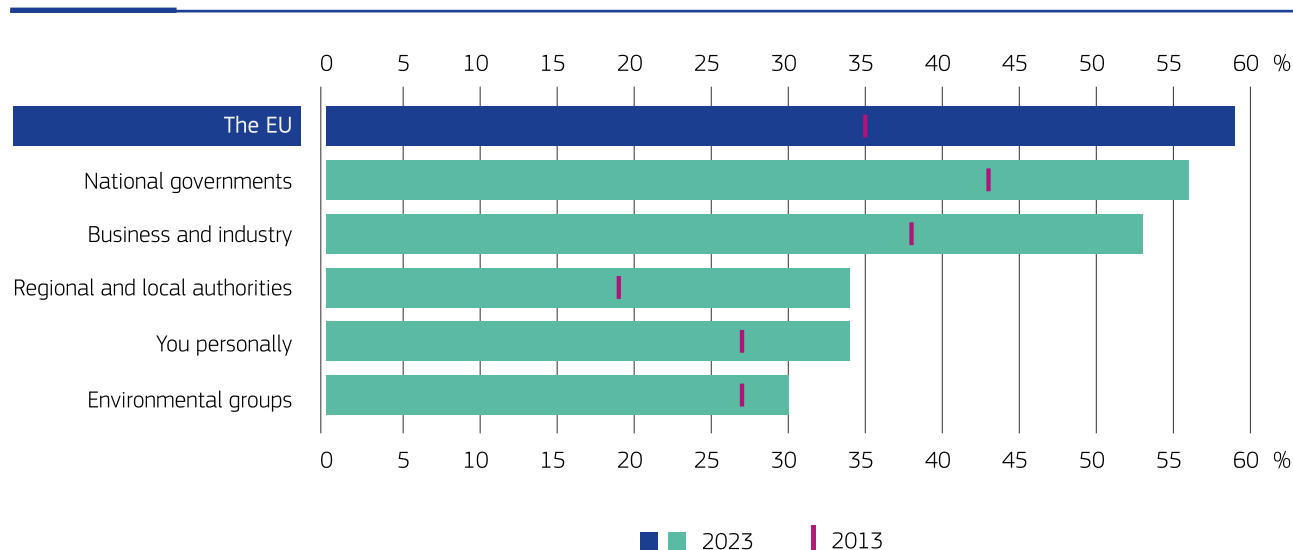
Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 545 – Youth and democracy](#), 2024. Q15\_4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I would consider a party's environmental policy before deciding how to vote.

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people who would consider a party's environmental policy before deciding how to vote. Data extracted on 30.5.2024.

## Almost two thirds of young people look to the European Union to tackle climate change.

Overall, in the EU, young people (15–24) consider the European Union the top actor responsible for tackling climate change. Since 2013, their proportion has increased substantially. In addition to the EU, national governments and the business and industry sectors are top ranked, while local and regional authorities are less prominent.

**Figure 6.6.** Responsible actors for tackling climate change according to young people (15–24), 2013 and 2023



Source: [Special Eurobarometer 80.2: Climate change](#), 2013 and [Special Eurobarometer SP538: Climate change](#), 2023. QA3/QC3. In your opinion, who within the EU is responsible for tackling climate change? (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Data extracted on 22.1.2024.

In the majority of Member States, young people indicate the EU as the top actor bearing responsibility for tackling climate change. This applies mainly to most countries in the northern, southern and western regions. Conversely, young people in several countries in central EU and Cyprus indicate business and industry and, to a lesser extent, national governments as actors in charge of addressing climate change.

**In most western Member States, the EU stands as the most responsible actor to tackle climate change.**



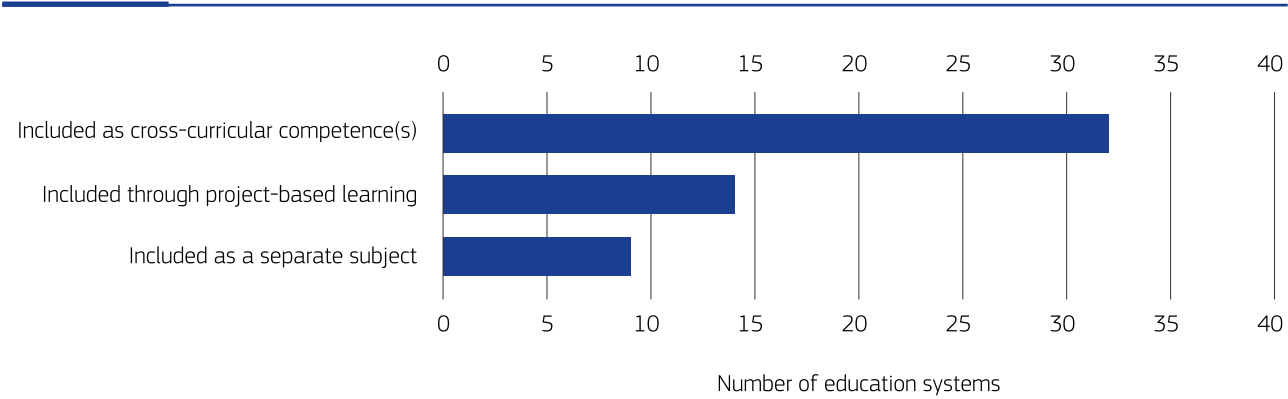
All European education systems include sustainability in their curriculum.

6.2. Skills for the green transition

Education for sustainability ‘aims at improving students’ knowledge of sustainability concepts and problems and furthering their motivation to act for sustainability – in one’s own life, in their communities, and as global citizens’. All European education systems cover sustainability in their curricula, either as a cross-curricular competence, through project-based learning or as a separate subject.



**Figure 6.8.** Number of education systems including sustainability in their curriculum (ISCED 1, 24 and 34), 2022/2023



Source: European Commission: European Education and Culture Executive Agency, [Learning for sustainability in Europe – Building competences and supporting teachers and schools](#) – Eurydice report, Publications Office of the European Union, 2024

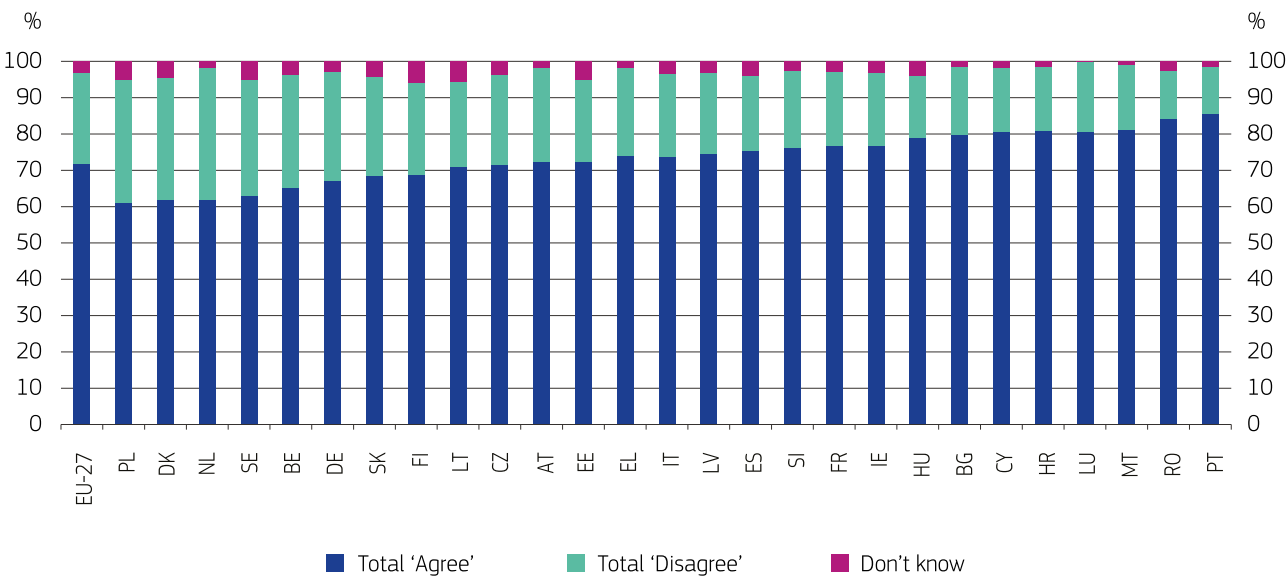
Notes: The graph covers all EU Member States plus Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Türkiye. ISCED 1: Primary education; ISCED 24: general lower secondary education; ISCED 34: general upper secondary education.

Portugal and Romania are the Member States with the highest shares. On the other hand, in Denmark, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden, the percentages are about 10 pps lower than the EU average.

**For more than two thirds of young people, education and training have been essential to learn to take care of the environment.**



**Figure 6.9.** Share of young people (15–29) who have learned to take care of the environment during education and training, by country, 2024



Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 545 – Youth and democracy](#), 2024. Q15\_1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I have learned to take care of the environment during my education and training.

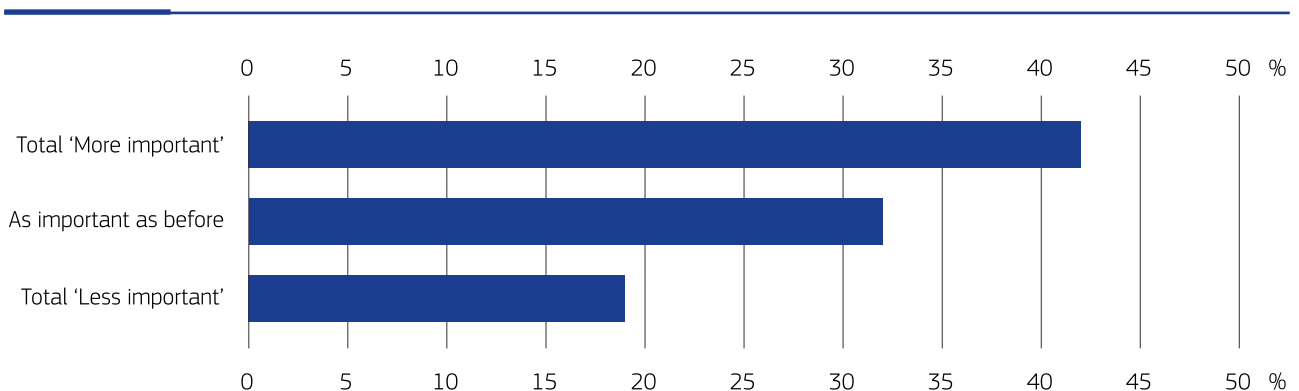
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people who have learned to take care of the environment during education and training. Data extracted on 30.5.2024.

## Small and medium-sized enterprises need more skills for the green transition.

[Skills for the green transition](#) are needed to live in, develop and support a society which aims to reduce the negative impact of human activity on the environment. In 2023, 42% of entrepreneurs in the EU considered that holding these skills was becoming more important for their small and medium-sized enterprises.



**Figure 6.10.** Extent to which green skills are becoming important for small and medium-sized enterprises, 2023



Source: [Flash Eurobarometer 529: European Year of Skills: Skills shortages, recruitment and retention strategies in small and medium-sized enterprises, 2023. Q1\\_3](#) To what extent are the following skills becoming more or less important for your company? 'Green skills' (e.g. skills required for greening business activities).

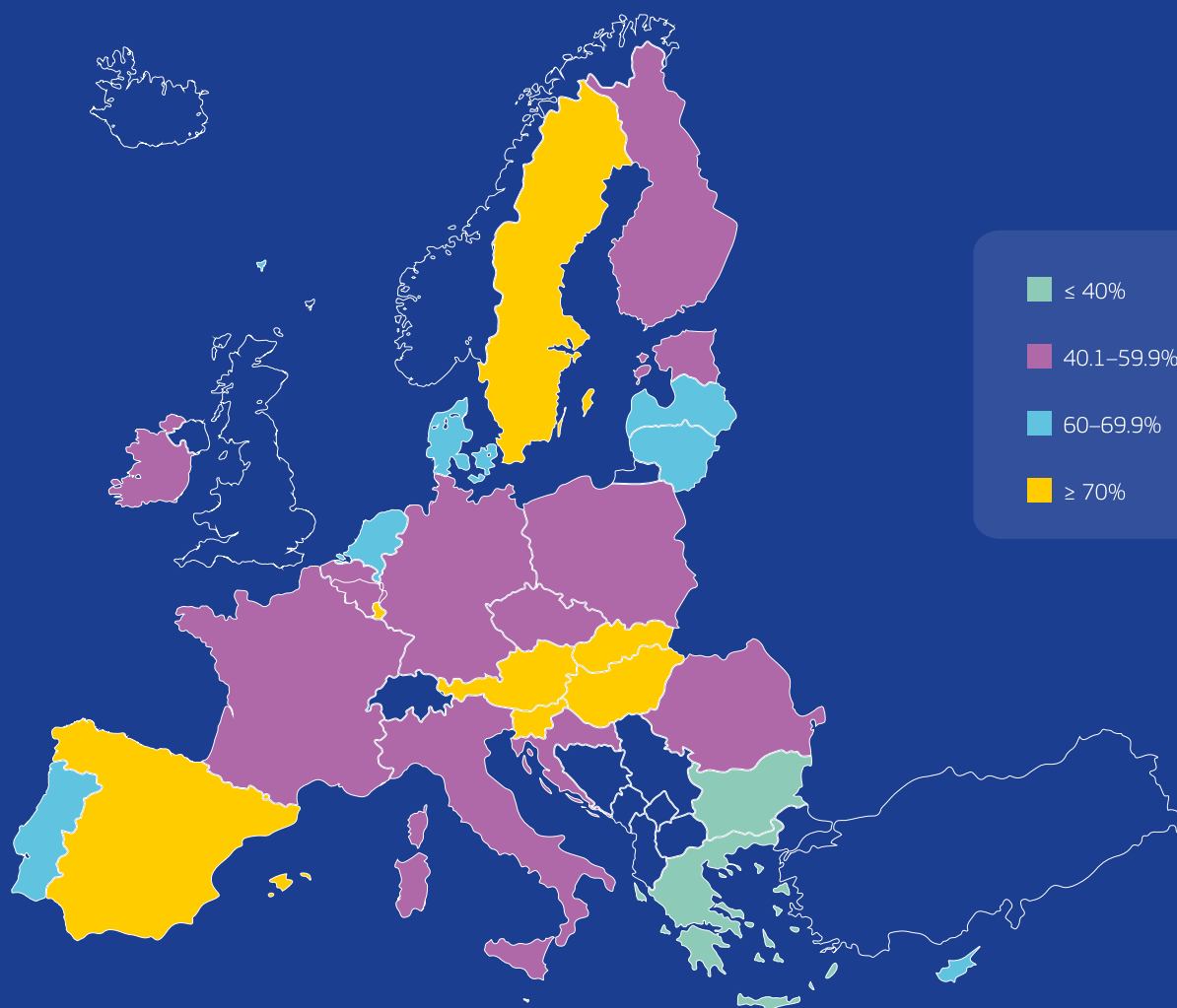
Notes: Data extracted on 14.12.2023.



In the majority of Member States (mainly central and western), around 50% of young people consider they hold appropriate skills for contributing to the green transition. This share is higher in some countries in the Nordic, Baltic and central areas of the EU and in Spain, Malta and Portugal. Conversely, in Bulgaria and Greece, only one third of young people believe in their ability to contribute.

**Only about half of young people feel prepared to contribute to the green transition.**

**Figure 6.11.** Share of young people (15–24) who think that their current skills allow them to contribute to the green transition, by country, 2023



Belgium (BE de)



France



Luxembourg



Malta



Liechtenstein



Spain



Guadeloupe



Martinique



Portugal



Norway



Canarias

Guyane

Réunion

Mayotte

Açores

Madeira

Svalbard

Source: Eurobarometer 97.4 Fairness perceptions of the green transition, 2023. QA10.5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the role of work and jobs in the green transition? 'Your current skills allow you to contribute to the green transition'.

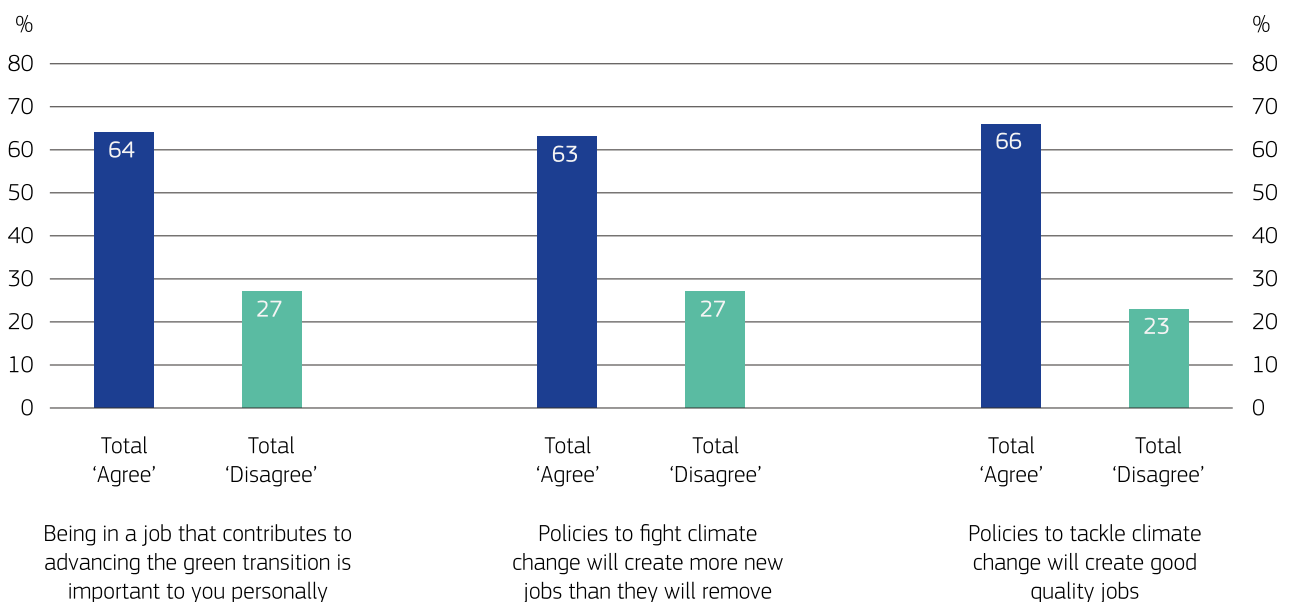
Notes: Data extracted on 16.2.2024.

## Young people have a positive opinion of the impact that the green transition will have on the economy.

The majority of young people believe that the green transition will stimulate the economy and the labour market. For more than 60%, contributing to the green transition through their profession is important. A similar percentage believes that policies addressing climate change will increase labour demand. About 66% also think that new quality jobs will be created.



**Figure 6.12.** Young people's (15–24) opinions about the role of work and jobs in the green transition, 2023



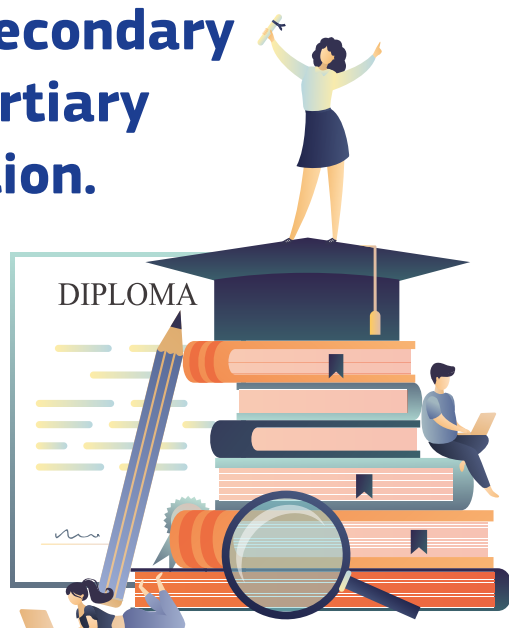
Source: [Eurobarometer 97.4 Fairness perceptions of the green transition](#), 2023. QA10.2 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the role of work and jobs in the green transition? Being in a job that contributes to advancing the green transition is important to you personally'; QA10.3 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the role of work and jobs in the green transition? Policies to fight climate change will create more new jobs than they will remove'; QA10.4 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the role of work and jobs in the green transition? Policies to tackle climate change will create good quality jobs (in terms of earnings, job security and quality of the working environment)'.

Notes: Data extracted on 14.12.2024.

# Education and learning



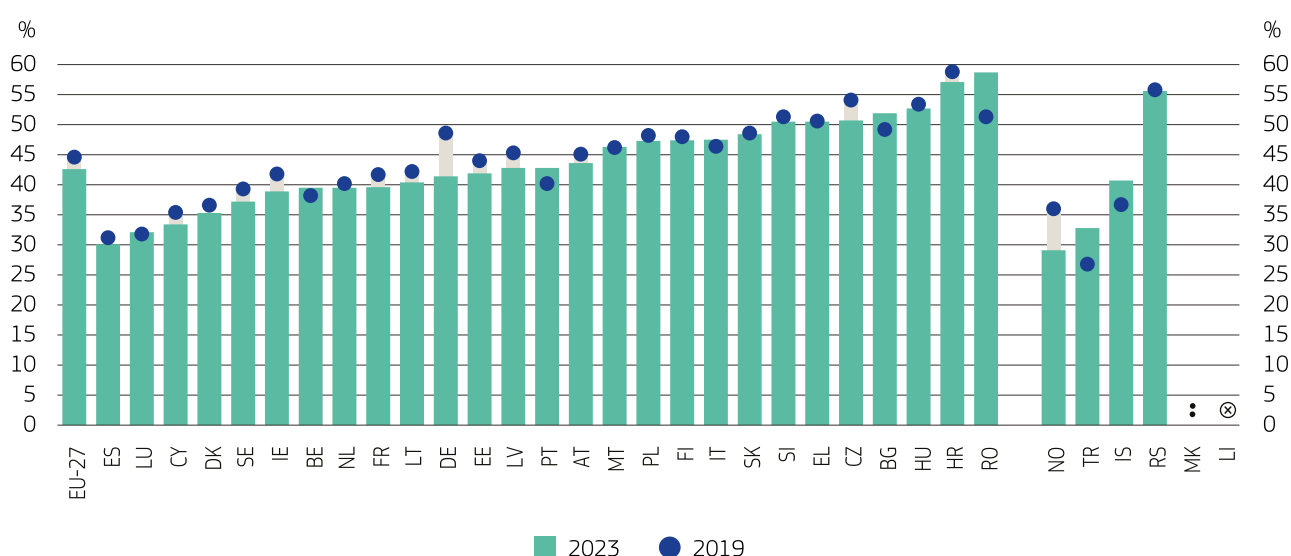
**In the EU, in 2023, about four in ten young people completed upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.**



## 7.1. Formal education attainment

In seven Member States (Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia), more than 50% of young people (15–34) completed [upper secondary](#) and [post-secondary non-tertiary education](#) in 2023. Conversely Spain, Cyprus and Luxembourg account for the lowest completion rate, with a percentage below 35%. While Romania recorded the highest increase in the percentage of young people who completed upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education compared to 2019 (7.4 pps), Germany recorded the most significant decreases (7.2 pps).

**Figure 7.1.** Share of young people (15–34) completing upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4), by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat, Young people by educational attainment level, sex and age ([edat\\_ifs\\_9914](#)).

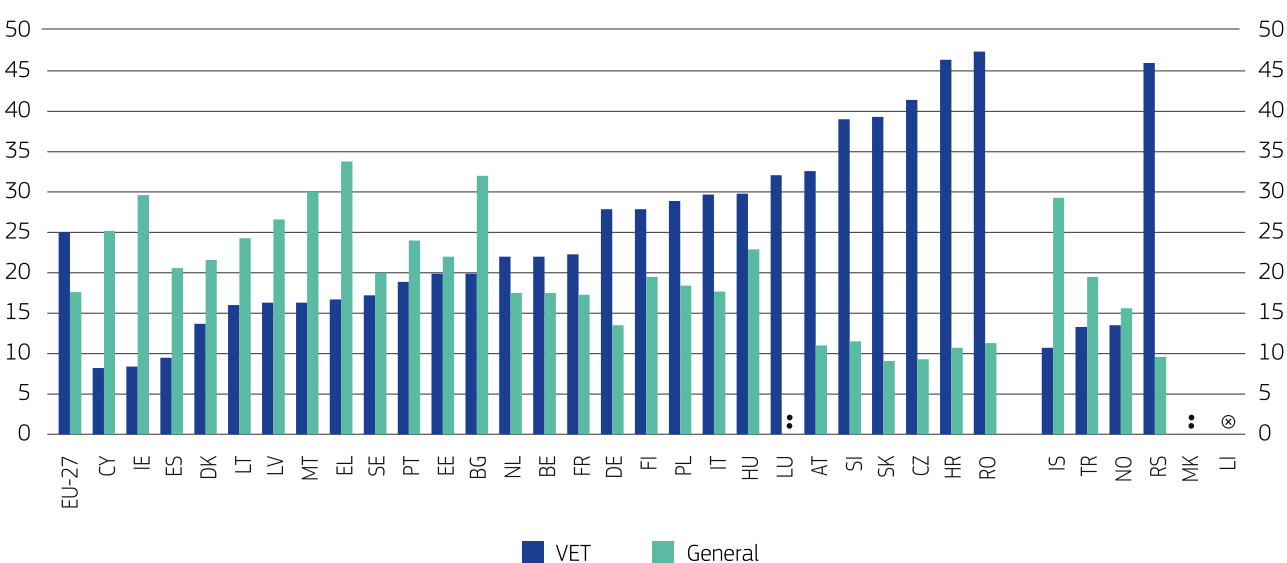
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending percentage of young people (15–34) completing upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education in 2023. Data extracted on 24.1.2025. Level 3 and 4 refer to the [UNESCO ISCED classification](#).

In five Member States (Czechia, Croatia, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia), at least 39% of young people (15–34) completed [vocational](#) upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (VET) in 2023. Conversely, Czechia, Croatia and Romania also recorded the lowest completion rates in the [general](#) pathway, with percentages at or below 10%. Meanwhile, in Bulgaria, Ireland, Greece, and Malta, more than 29% of young people completed general upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. In contrast, Cyprus, Ireland, and Spain had the lowest shares of young people completing the VET pathway, with rates below 10%.

**In the EU, in 2023, one in four young people (15–34) completed vocational upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (VET), while nearly one in five completed the general pathway.**



**Figure 7.2.** Share of young people (15–34) completing upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4), by type of education and country, 2023



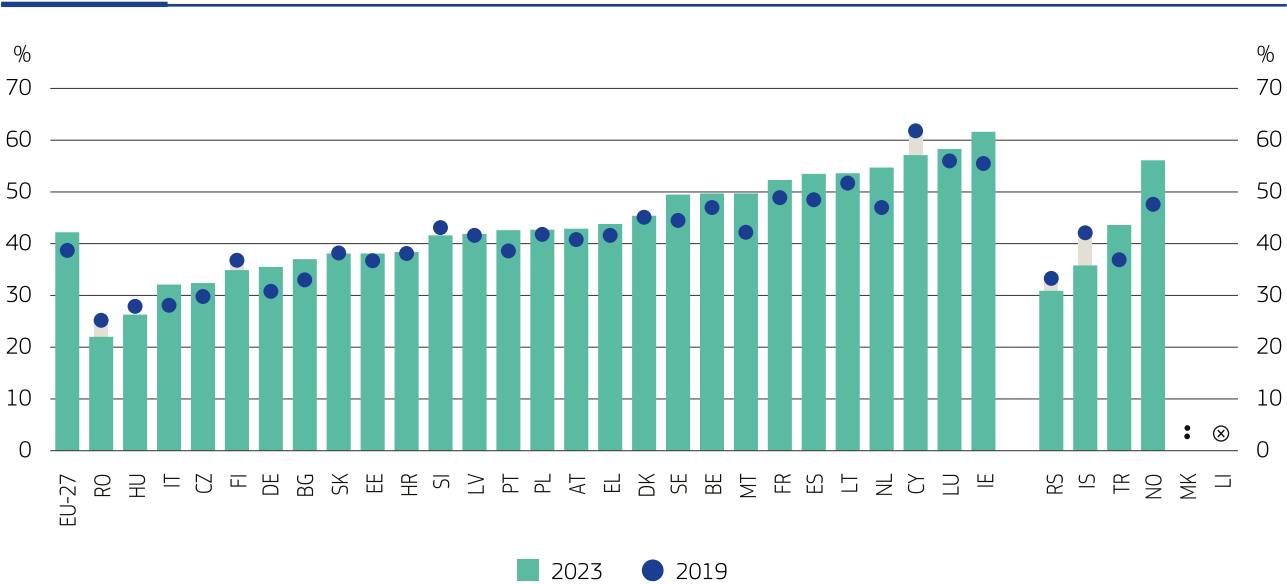
Source: Eurostat, Young people by educational attainment level, sex and age ([edat\\_lfs\\_9914](#)).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending percentage of young people (15–34) completing vocational upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education in 2023. Data extracted on 24.1.2025. Level 3 and 4 refer to the [UNESCO ISCED classification](#).

# In 2023, in the EU, four in ten young people (25–29) completed tertiary education.

In seven Member States (Ireland, Spain, France, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) more than half of young people (25–29) completed [tertiary education](#) in 2023. On the other hand, Hungary and Romania reported the lowest share (26% and 22% respectively). Although the EU average of young people who attained tertiary education has not varied substantially between 2019 and 2023, Ireland, Malta and the Netherlands recorded the highest increases (6, 7.5 and 7.7 pps respectively), while Cyprus saw the highest decrease (4.7 pps).



**Figure 7.3.** Share of young people (25–29) completing tertiary education (levels 5–8), by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat, Young people by educational attainment level, sex and age ([yth\\_demo\\_040](#)).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending percentage of young people (25–29) completing tertiary education in 2023. Data extracted on 11.7.2024. Levels 5-8 refer to the [UNESCO ISCED classification](#).

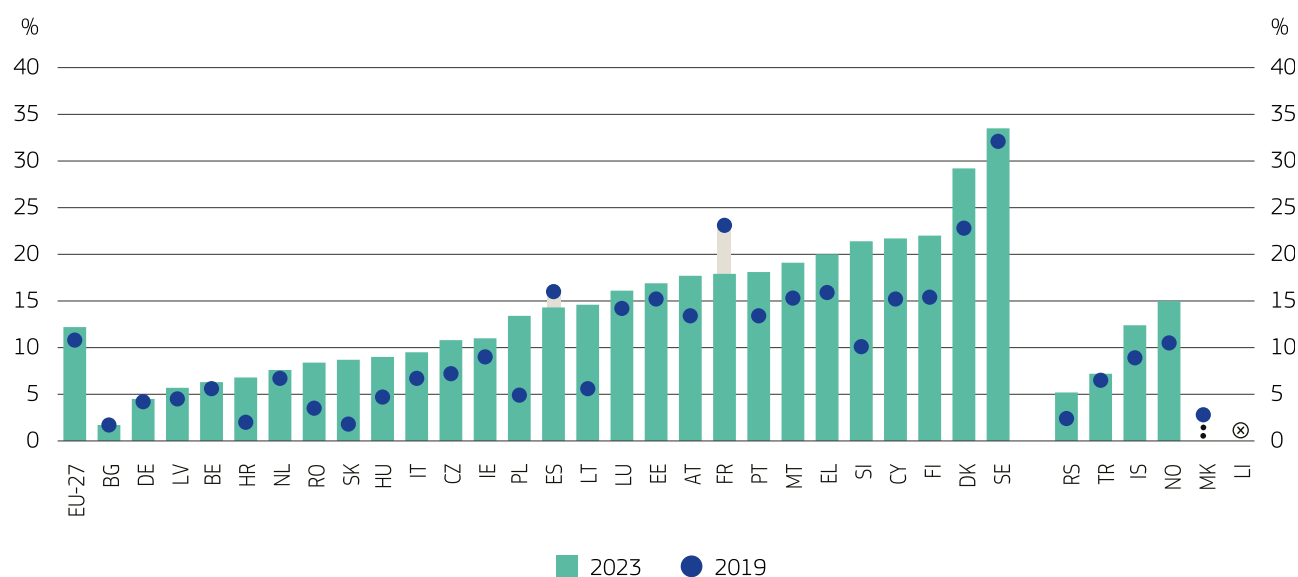
## 7.2. Non-formal education and training

In 2023, participation of young people (15–29) in [non-formal education and training](#) during the last 4 weeks varied substantially among countries. Denmark and Sweden had the highest participation rates (29.2 and 33.5% respectively), while Bulgaria and Germany had the lowest (1.7% and 4.5% respectively). Compared with 2019, Lithuania and Slovenia saw the highest increases (9 and 11.3 pps respectively), while the most significant decrease occurred in France (5.2 pps).

**In 2023, on average, only 12% of young people (15–29) in the EU participated in non-formal learning.**



**Figure 7.4.** Share of young people (15–29) participating in non-formal education and training in the last 4 weeks, by country, 2019 and 2023



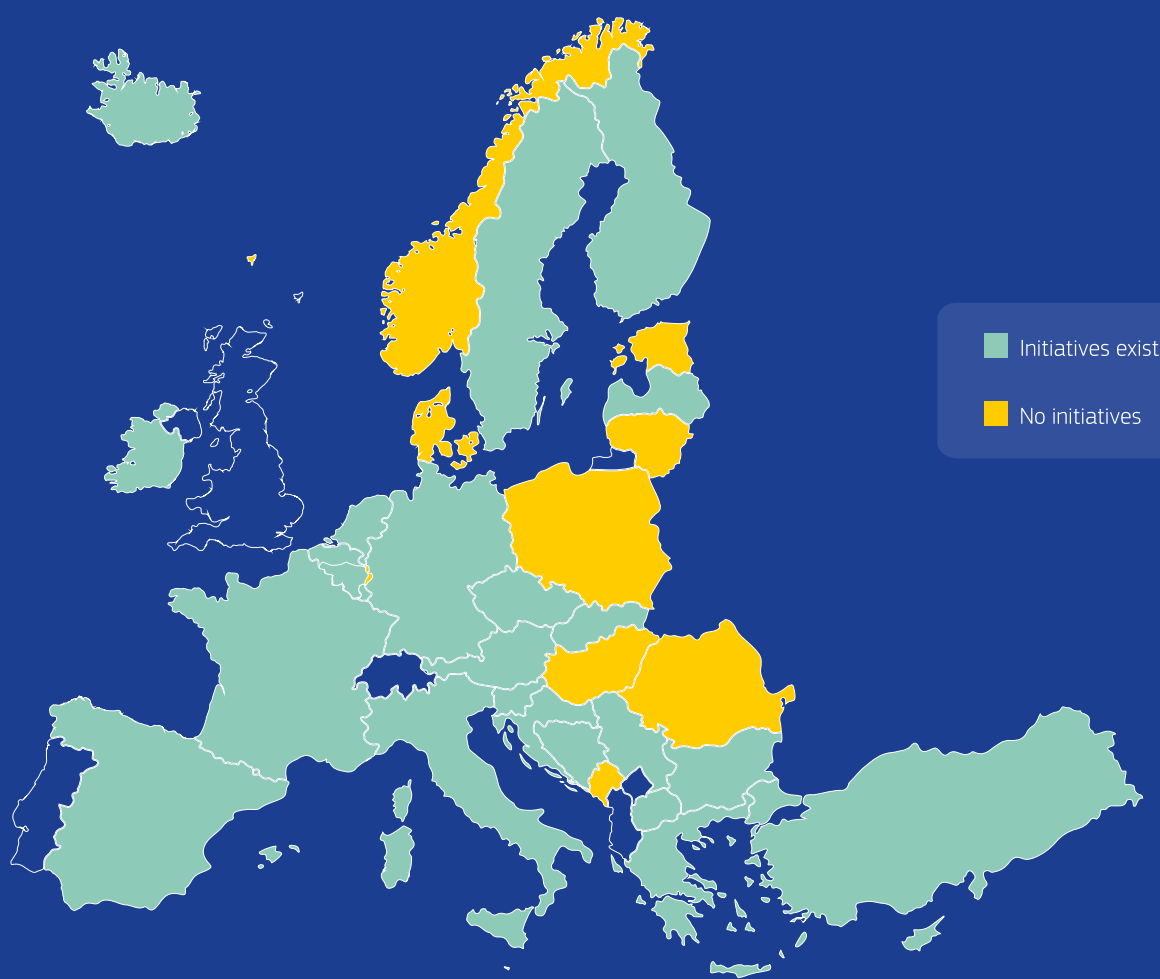
Source: Eurostat, Participation rate in non-formal education and training (last 4 weeks) by sex and age ([yth\\_educ\\_060](#)).

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending level of participation in non-formal learning and training in 2023. Data extracted on 27.5.2024.

**Most Member States are committed to supporting young people's innovation skills through education and non-formal learning.**

In the EU, national authorities support the creativity, innovative capacity and talent of young people by allocating grants for developing innovative projects, creating networks of public and private stakeholders and promoting innovation contests and awards.

**Figure 7.5.** Initiatives fostering innovation skills through non-formal learning, 2023



## Canarias

Guadeloupe Martinique



Réunion



Union of Comoros Mayotte



Açores Madeira

Açores



Madeira



Svalbard



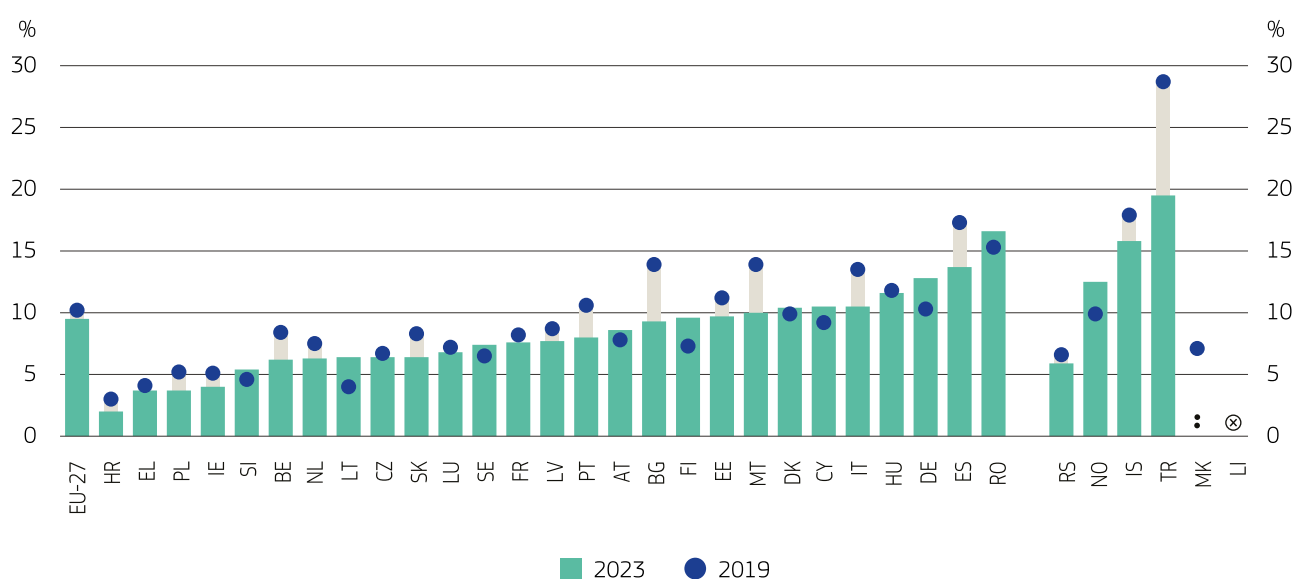
### 7.3. Early leaving from education and training

The EU set an [EU-level target](#) stating that by 2030 the share of [early leavers from education and training \(ELET\)](#) should be less than 9%. The majority of Member States have so far met this target and four Member States (Greece, Ireland, Croatia and Poland) have an ELET share below 5%. In eight Member States, the percentage of ELET is still higher than 10%, with the highest rates in Romania (16.6%) and Spain (13.7%). Compared to 2019, Bulgaria, Spain and Malta had the most substantial decreases (4.6, 3.6 and 3.9 pps respectively).

**In 2023, the EU average of early leaving from education and training was 9.5%.**



**Figure 7.6.** Share of early leavers (18–24) from education and training, by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat, Early leavers from education and training by sex and labour status ([EDAT\\_LFSE\\_14](#)).

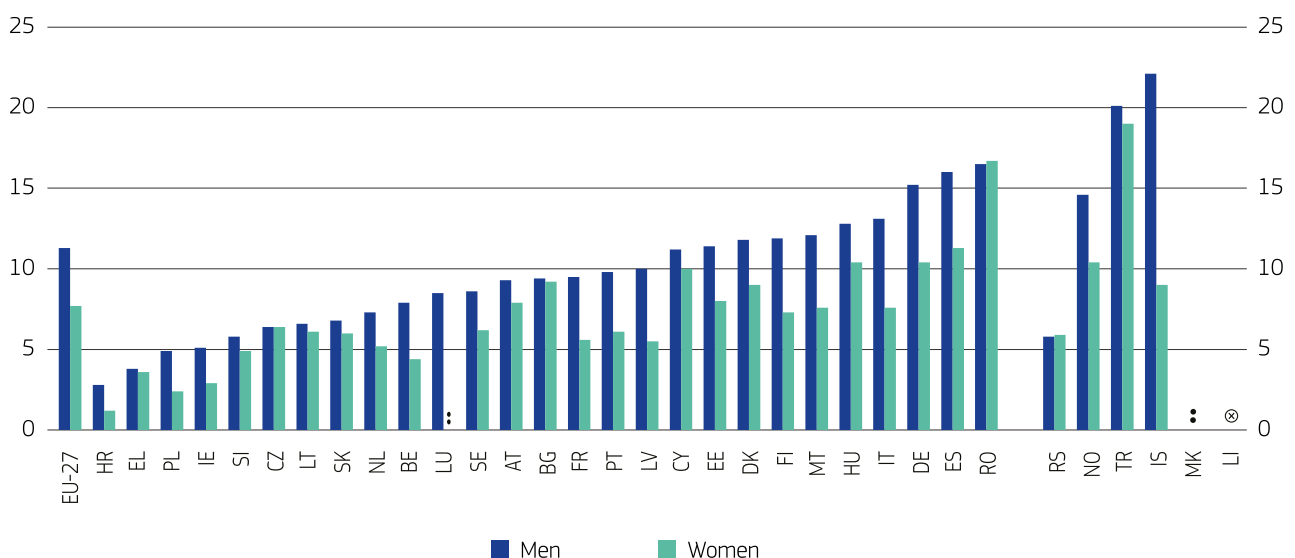
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending percentage of early leavers from education and training in 2023. Data extracted on 27.5.2024.

## In the EU, young men leave education and training earlier than young women.

In the EU, in 2023, the percentage of young men leaving education and training early was higher than for young women (3.6 pps). The highest differences are in Italy (5.5 pps) and Germany (4.8 pps). Only in Romania is the proportion reversed, with more young women leaving education and training early compared to young men (0.2 pps).



**Figure 7.7.** Share of early leavers (18–24) from education and training by gender and country, 2023



Source: Eurostat, Early leavers from education and training by sex and labour status ([EDAT\\_LFSE\\_14](#)).

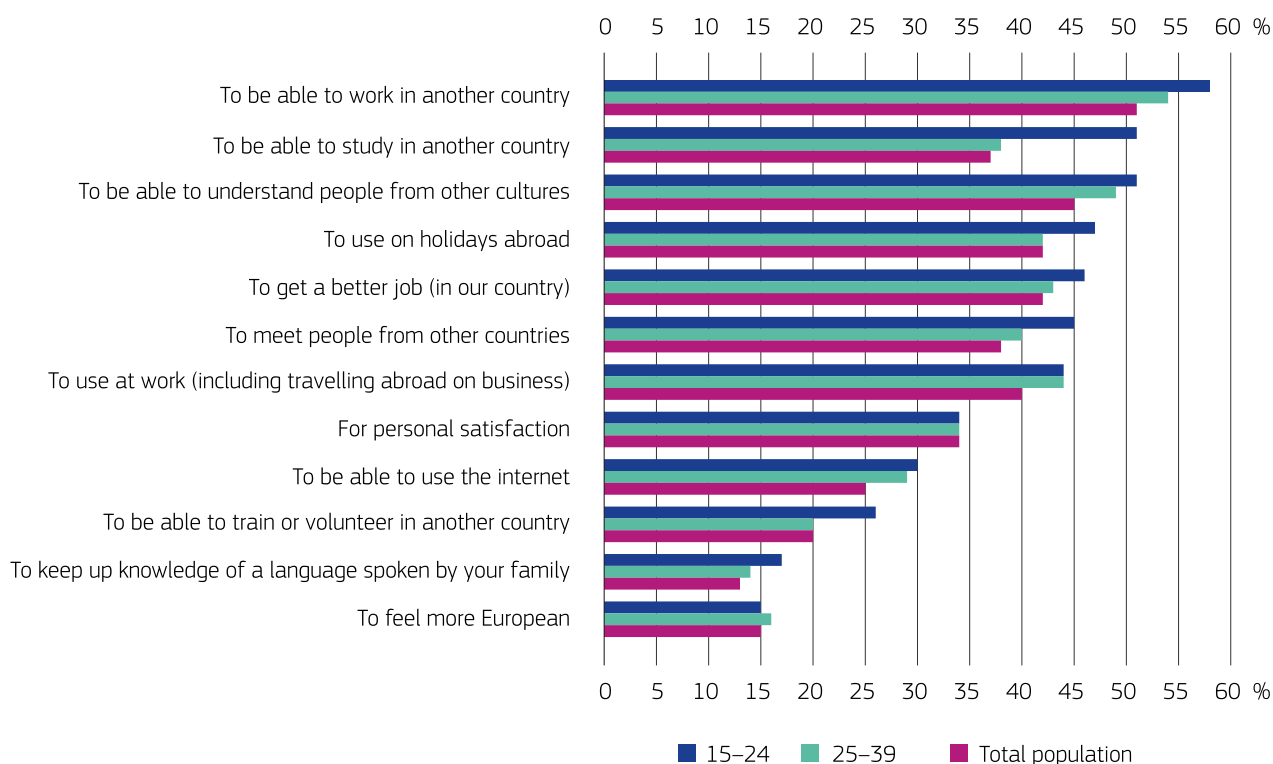
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of men leaving education and learning early in 2023. Data extracted on 27.5.2024.

## 7.4. Language skills

Asked about key advantages of learning a new language, more than half of young people (58%) selected working in another country as their first option, while a slightly lower percentage (51%) thinks that learning a new language would help them study in another country and understand people from other cultures (51%). Almost one in two young people mentions as key advantages of learning a new language the possibility of using it on holidays abroad (47%), getting a better job in their country (46%), meeting people from other countries (45%) and using it at work (44%). Smaller proportions reported maintaining knowledge of a language spoken within the family (17%) and feeling more European (15%) as main advantages of learning a new language.

**58% of young people (15–24) think that learning another language enables them to work in another country.**

**Figure 7.8.** Main advantages of learning a new language according to young people (15–24), compared to the age group 25–39 and total population, EU average, 2023



Source: [Special Eurobarometer on Europeans and their Languages](#), 2023. Volume B. QB2. In your opinion, what are the main advantages of learning a new language? (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Data are ordered by key advantages of learning a new language according to young people (15–24). Data extracted on 9.7.2024.

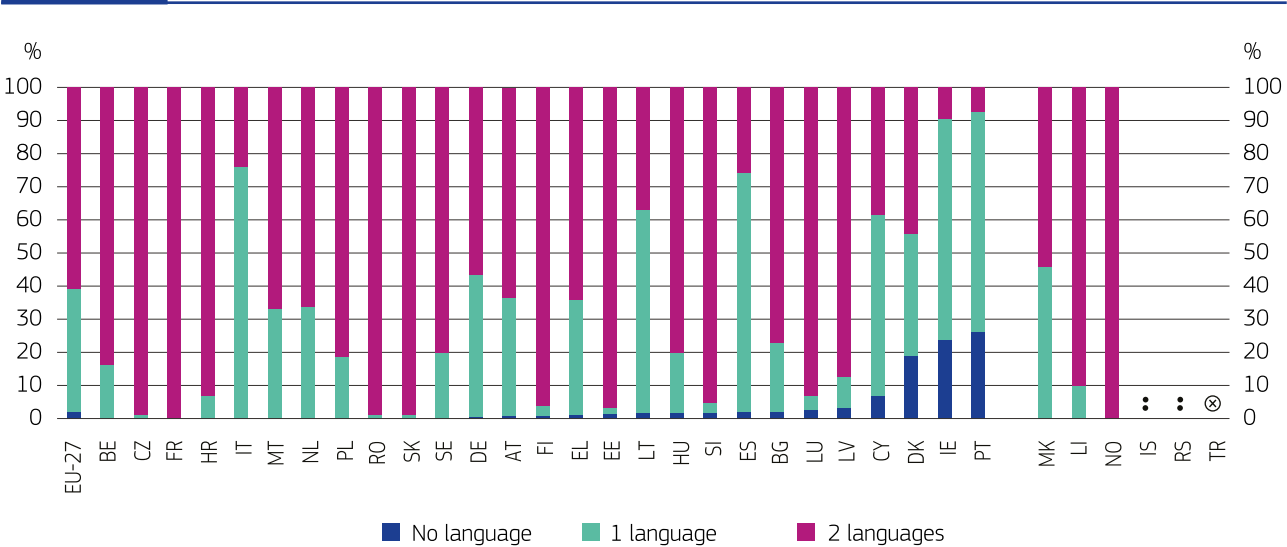
## **In the EU, students in upper secondary vocational education are less likely to learn foreign languages than general upper secondary students.**

At the EU level, more than half of learners enrolled in general upper secondary education study two or more foreign languages (around 61%), and only 2% of learners do not study any foreign language. Ireland and Portugal have the highest percentages of learners not studying any foreign language, at around 24% and 26% respectively. In vocational upper secondary education (VET), the percentage of students studying two or more foreign languages is lower, at around 34%, while the share of learners who do not study any foreign language is higher, at 17%. The highest percentages of students not learning a foreign language in VET are in Denmark (almost 90%), Germany and Spain (around 60% and 57% respectively). The most studied foreign language in upper secondary education in Europe is English, followed by German and French <sup>(7)</sup>.



<sup>(7)</sup> European Commission, European Education and Culture Executive Agency, [Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe 2023](#), Publications Office of the European Union, 2023, pp. 86–87.

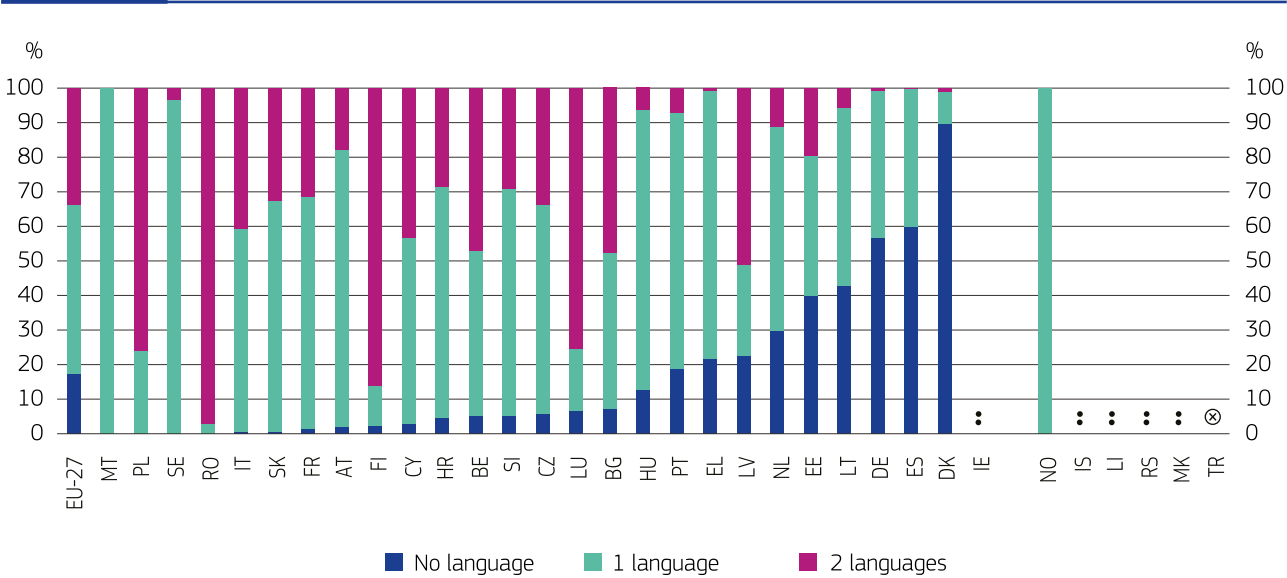
**Figure 7.9.** Share of students learning foreign languages in general upper secondary education, by country, 2022



Source: Eurostat, Pupils by education level, age and number of modern foreign languages studied – absolute numbers and percentage of pupils by number of languages studied ([educ\\_uoe\\_lang02](#)).

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of learners studying no language in general upper secondary education in 2022. Data extracted on 8.4.2024.

**Figure 7.10.** Share of students learning foreign languages in vocational upper secondary education, by country, 2022



Source: Eurostat, Pupils by education level, age and number of modern foreign languages studied – absolute numbers and percentage of pupils by number of languages studied ([educ\\_uoe\\_lang02](#)).

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of learners studying no language in vocational upper secondary education in 2022. Data extracted on 8.4.2024.

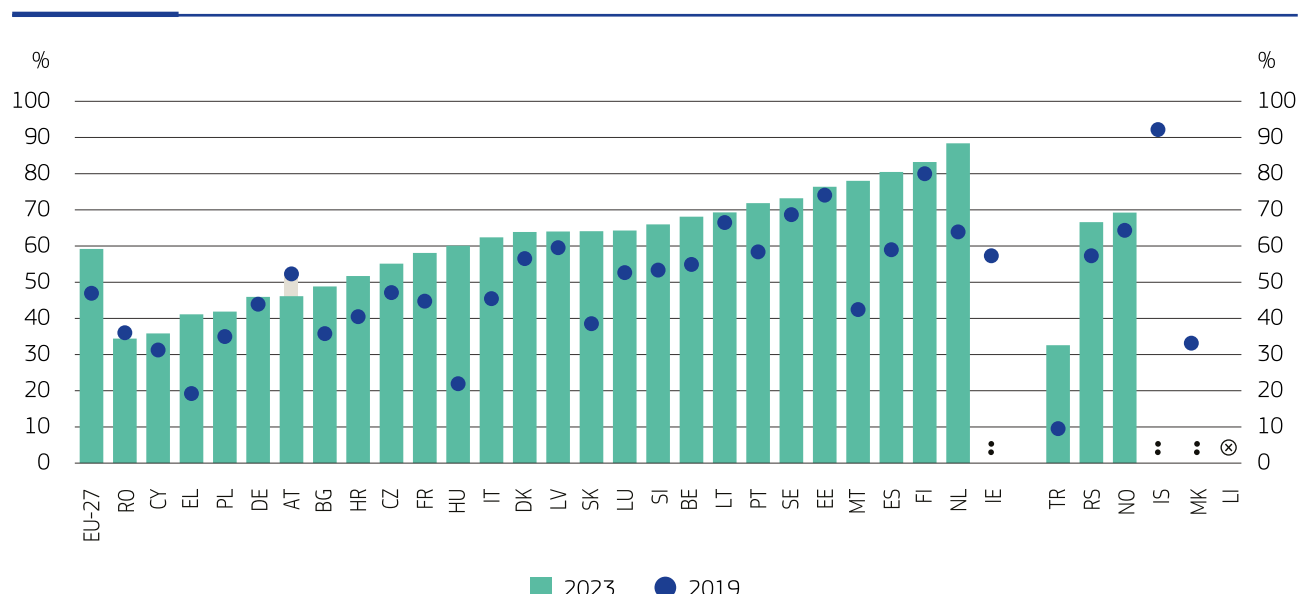
## An increasing number of young people (16–24) across almost all Member States are involved in e-learning.

### 7.5. e-learning

In 2023, the percentage of young people participating in [e-learning](#) has increased by 12 pps in comparison to 2019. In the EU, the Netherlands accounts for the highest participation rate (88%), followed by Spain and Finland, where the share is above 80%. While Hungary, Malta and Slovakia recorded the highest increases in participation in e-learning activities compared to 2019 (38, 36 and 26 pps respectively), Austria and Romania are the only Member States which recorded a decrease (6 and 2 pps respectively).



**Figure 7.11.** Share of young people (16–24) using the internet for learning activities, by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat, Individuals internet activities ([isoc\\_ci\\_ac\\_i](#)).

Notes: e-learning is operationalised as conducting any of the learning activities covered by the Eurostat ICT survey: to take an online course, use online learning material and communicate with instructors or students using educational websites/portals.

Countries are ordered by ascending level of participation in e-learning in 2023. Data extracted on 16.1.2024.

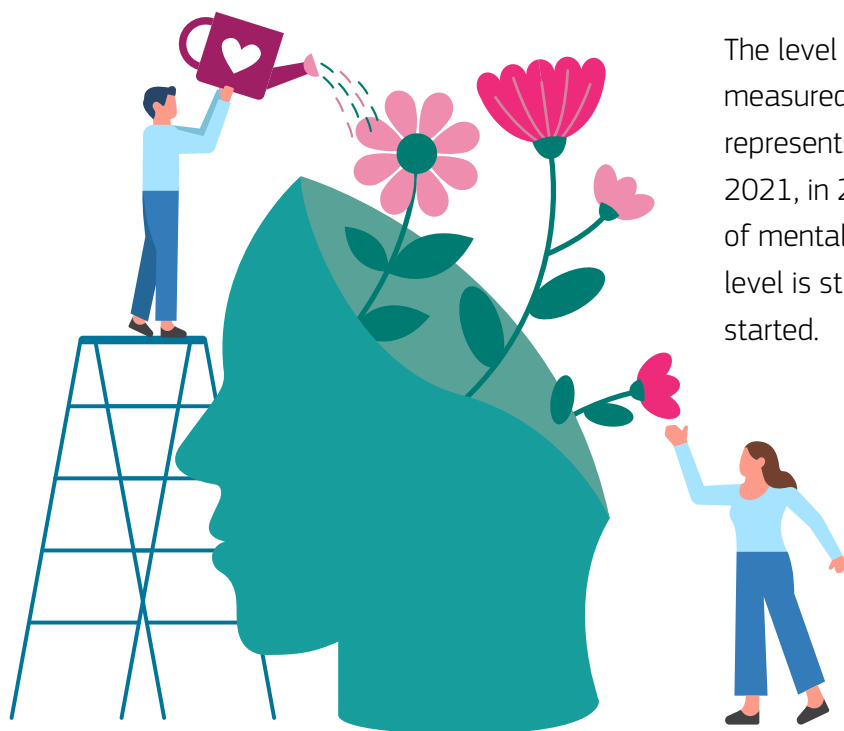
# 8.

## Health and well-being



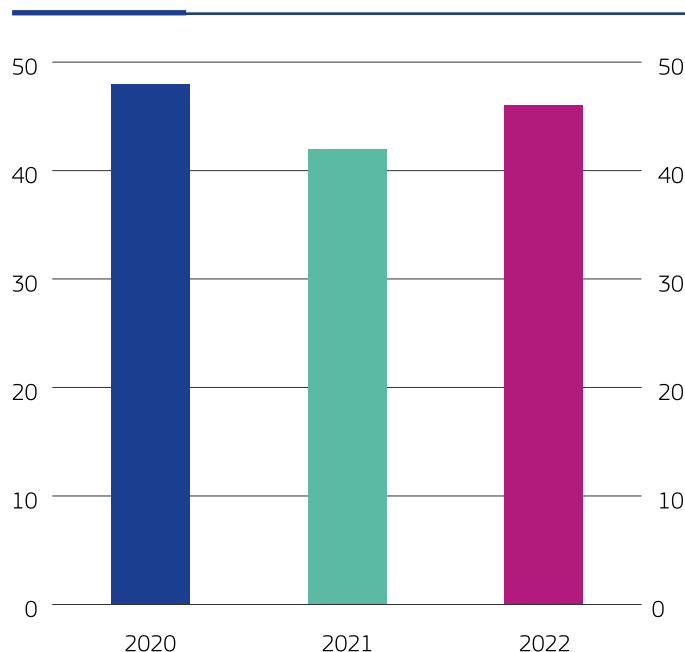
## 8.1. Mental health

The level of mental well-being of young people is measured on a scale of 0–100, where a higher value represents better mental well-being. Compared with 2021, in 2022 there was a slight increase in the level of mental well-being of young people. However, the level is still below that of 2020, when the pandemic started.



**Young people's mental well-being in the EU is increasing but still lower than in pre-COVID-19 years.**

**Figure 8.1.** Young people's (18–29) level of mental well-being, spring 2020, spring 2021 and spring 2022, EU average



Source: Eurofound, [Fifth round of the Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey: Living in a new era of uncertainty. Mental well-being by age category.](#)

Notes: Based on the WHO-5 mental well-being index. Measured on a scale of 0–100, where a higher value represents better mental well-being. Data extracted on 30.5.2024.

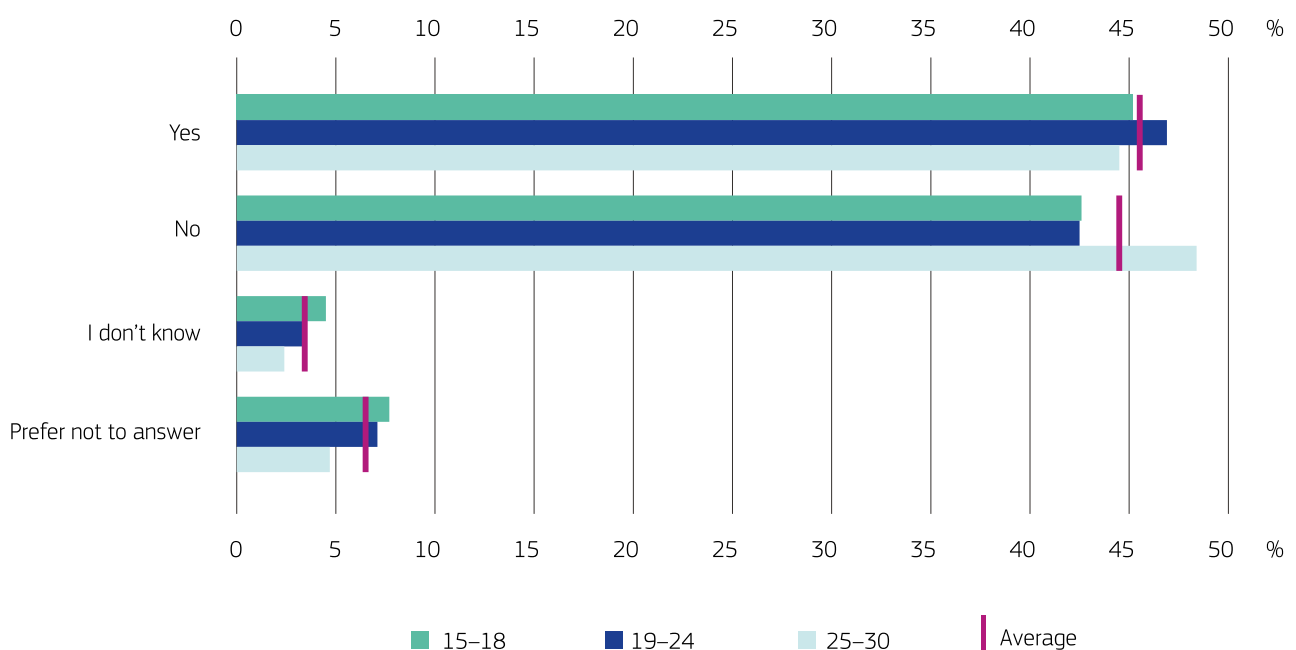


In 2024, in the EU, almost 50% of young people (15–30) declared that they have experienced emotional or psychosocial problems (such as feeling depressed or feeling anxious) in the past 12 months. Conversely, around 45% reported not having experienced emotional or psychosocial problems in the last 12 months, although the figures change among the different age groups: 48% of those aged 25–30 declared they have not experienced any problems, compared with 43% of those aged 15–18 and 19–24.

**In 2024, almost 1 in 2 young people experienced emotional or psychosocial problems in the previous 12 months.**



**Figure 8.2.** Share of young people who experienced emotional or psychosocial problems in the last 12 months, by age group, EU average, 2024



Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#), Volume B, Q17. In the last 12 months, have you had any emotional or psychosocial problems (such as feeling depressed or feeling anxious)?

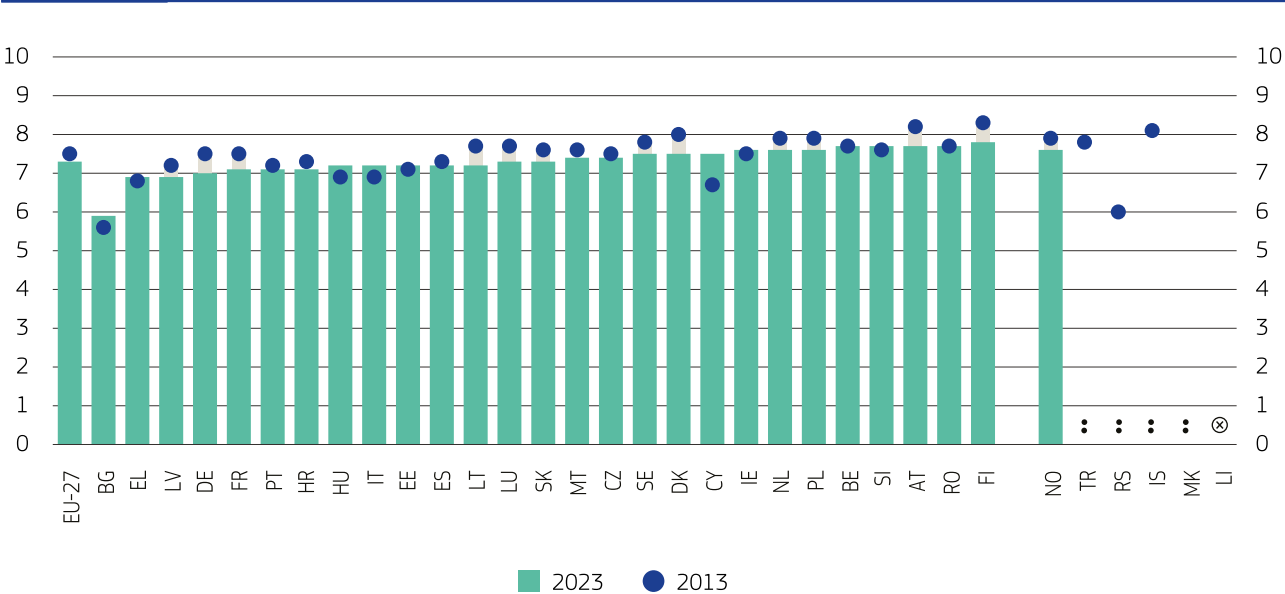
Notes: Data extracted on 11.6.2024.

# Over the past decade, the level of life satisfaction among young people remained the same.

In 2023, in about half of the Member States the level of life satisfaction among young people (16–29) was higher than the EU average. Compared to 2013, in 17 countries a decrease in the level of life satisfaction was noticed, with the highest shares reported in Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Austria and Finland (0.5 pps). Conversely, the level of life satisfaction increased considerably in Cyprus (0.8 pps), Bulgaria, Italy and Hungary (0.3 pps).



**Figure 8.3.** Young people’s (16–29) level of life satisfaction, by country, 2013 and 2023

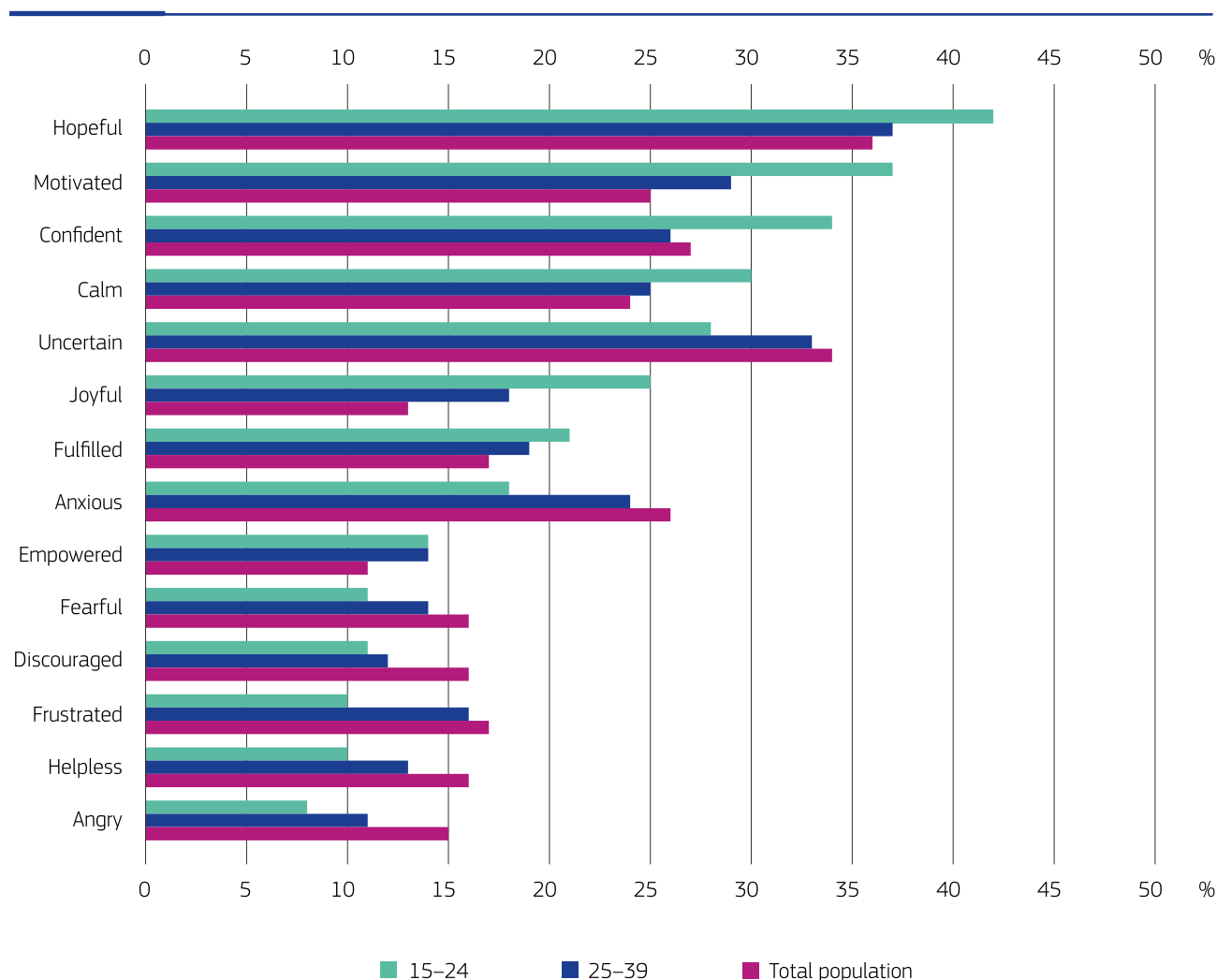


Source: Eurostat, Overall life satisfaction by sex, age and educational attainment ([ilc\\_pw01\\_custom\\_11601674](#)).  
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending level of life satisfaction rate (rating 0–10).  
Data extracted on 3.9.2024.

Asked about how they would best describe their current emotional status when thinking about the life they lead, most young people (15–24) reported positive feelings as the top four answers: hopeful (42%), motivated (37%), confident (34%) and calm (30%). On the negative side, around one in three young people says they feel uncertain, although the share is lower than the ones of the 24–39 age group and the total population. Joyful and fulfilled are also emotions selected by one in five and one in four young people respectively, while less than 20% reported feeling anxious about their life.

**In the EU, the majority of young people (15–24) express positive feelings toward their current emotional status.**

**Figure 8.4.** Current emotional status of young people (15–24), compared to the age group 25–39 and total population, EU average, 2023



Source: [Eurobarometer European Parliament Spring 2023](#), VOLUME B. QA10ab. When thinking about the life you lead, how would you best describe your current emotional status? Firstly? And then? (Multiple answers possible).

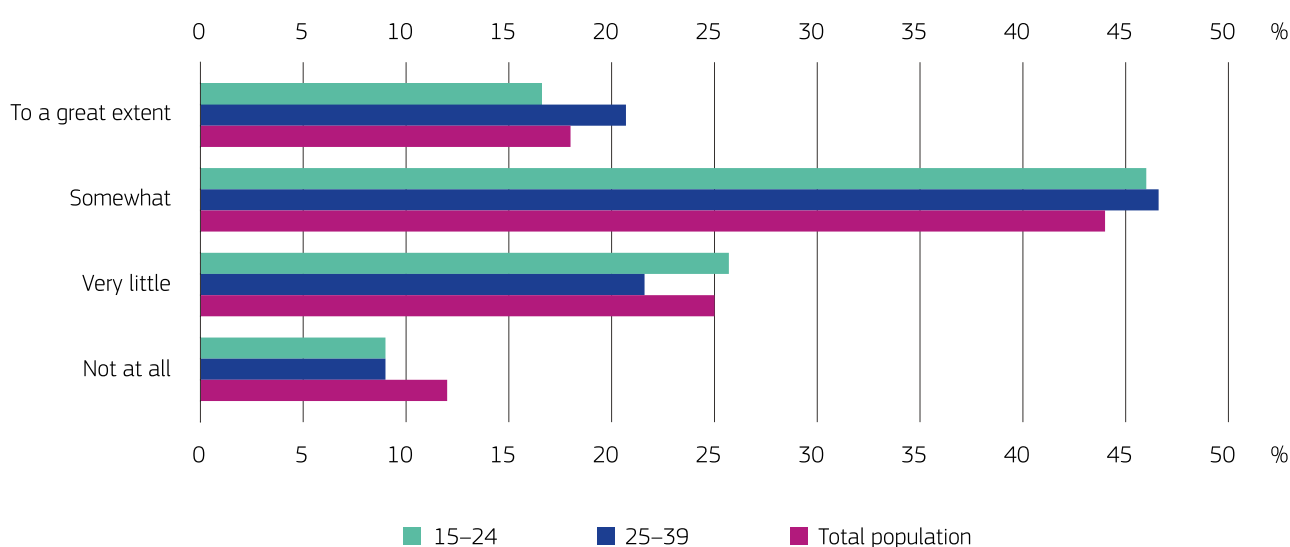
Notes: Data are ordered by decreasing share of young people's (15–24) emotional status. Data extracted on 29.5.2024.

**In 2023, around two thirds of young people (15–24) believed that recent world events had directly influenced their mental health.**

Recent world events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine or the climate and energy crises, have significantly influenced young people's mental health. The share of young people who declared that these events influenced them directly is 65% (including 'to a great extent' and 'somewhat'). Conversely, the share of those who reported only 'very little' or 'not at all' is lower at 35%.



**Figure 8.5.** Share of young people (15–24) whose mental health has been influenced by recent world events, compared to the age group 25–39 and total population, EU average, 2023



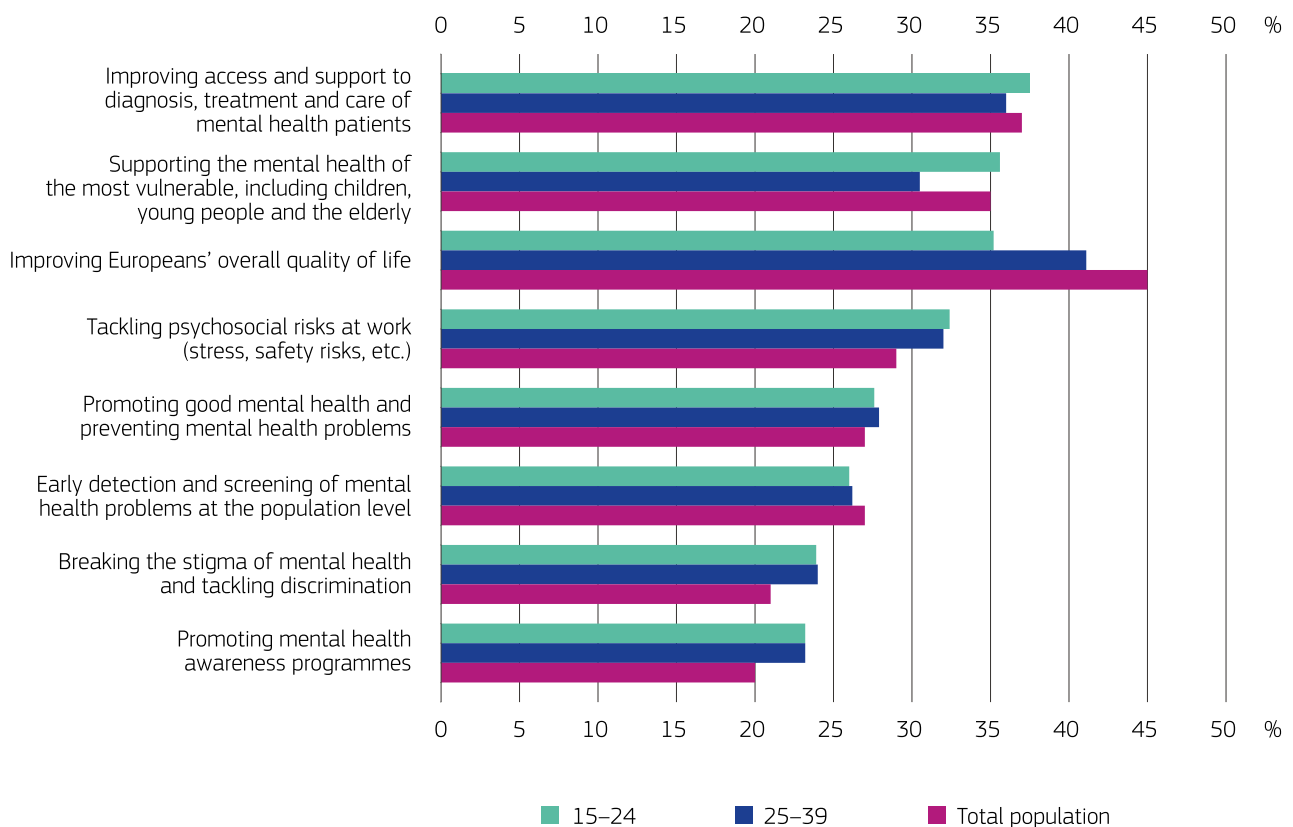
Source: [Flash Eurobarometer on Mental Health](#). Q2. To what extent have the recent world events (the COVID-19 pandemic, Russian aggression against Ukraine, climate crisis, unemployment, food and energy costs rising) influenced your mental health?

Notes: Data extracted on 29.5.2024.

More than one third of young people (15–24) think that the four key areas where the EU can contribute the most to improve mental health are: improving access and support to diagnosis, treatment and care of mental health patients; supporting the mental health of the most vulnerable; improving Europeans’ overall quality of life; and tackling psychosocial risks at work. Around 4 in 10 young people believe that the EU could promote good mental health, along with early detection and screening of mental health problems. A slightly lower percentage of young people thinks that the EU could contribute to breaking the stigma of mental health or promoting mental health awareness programmes.

## Access and support to diagnosis, treatment and care of mental health patients are the main areas where the EU can contribute the most.

**Figure 8.6.** Areas where the EU can contribute the most to improve the mental health of European citizens according to young people (15–24), compared to the age group 25–39 and total population, EU average, 2023



Source: [Flash Eurobarometer on Mental Health](#). Q5. In your opinion, in which areas can the European Union contribute the most to improve the mental health of European citizens? (Please choose three answers) (Multiple answers possible).

Notes: Data are ordered by areas where the EU can contribute the most to improve the mental health of European citizens according to young people (15–24). Data extracted on 29.5.2024.

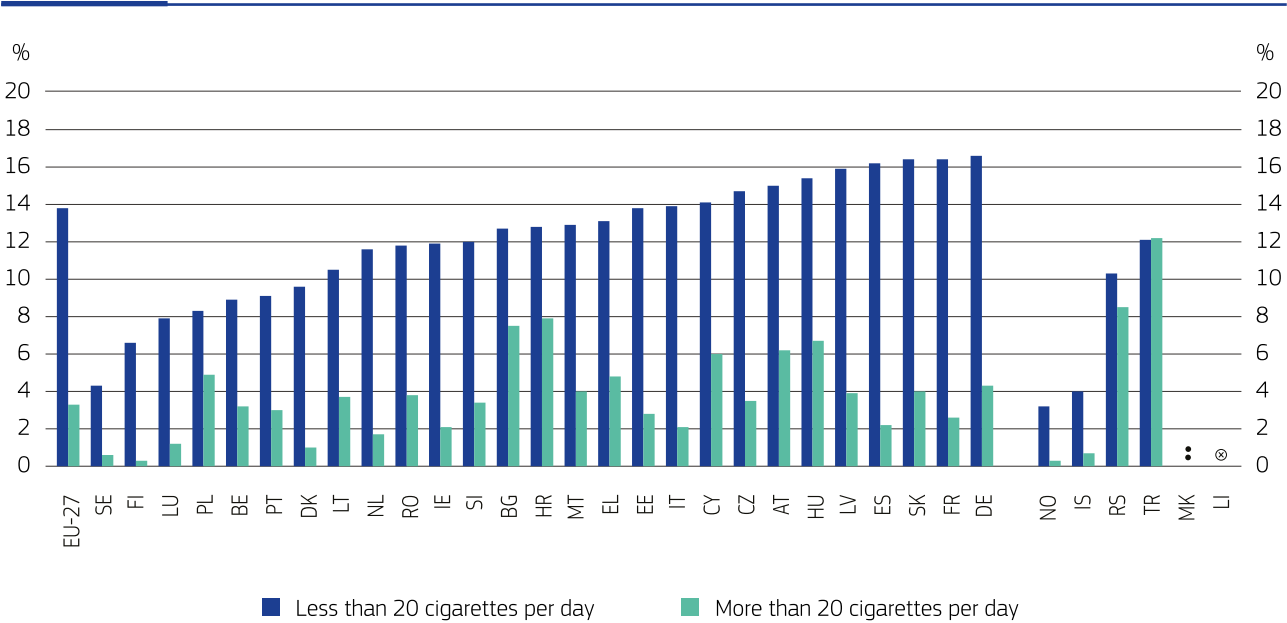
In the EU,  
around 1 in 6  
young people  
smokes.

8.2. Health determinants

In the EU, on average, nearly 15% of young people smoke less than 20 cigarettes a day, whereas around 5% smoke more than 20 cigarettes a day. The highest shares of young people smoking more than 20 cigarettes a day are seen in Bulgaria, Croatia and Hungary. Conversely, the lowest numbers are found in Luxembourg, Finland and Sweden.



Figure 8.7. Share of young people (15–29) smoking, by country, 2019



Source: Eurostat, Daily smokers of cigarettes by sex, age and educational attainment level ([hlth\\_ehis\\_sk3e](#)).

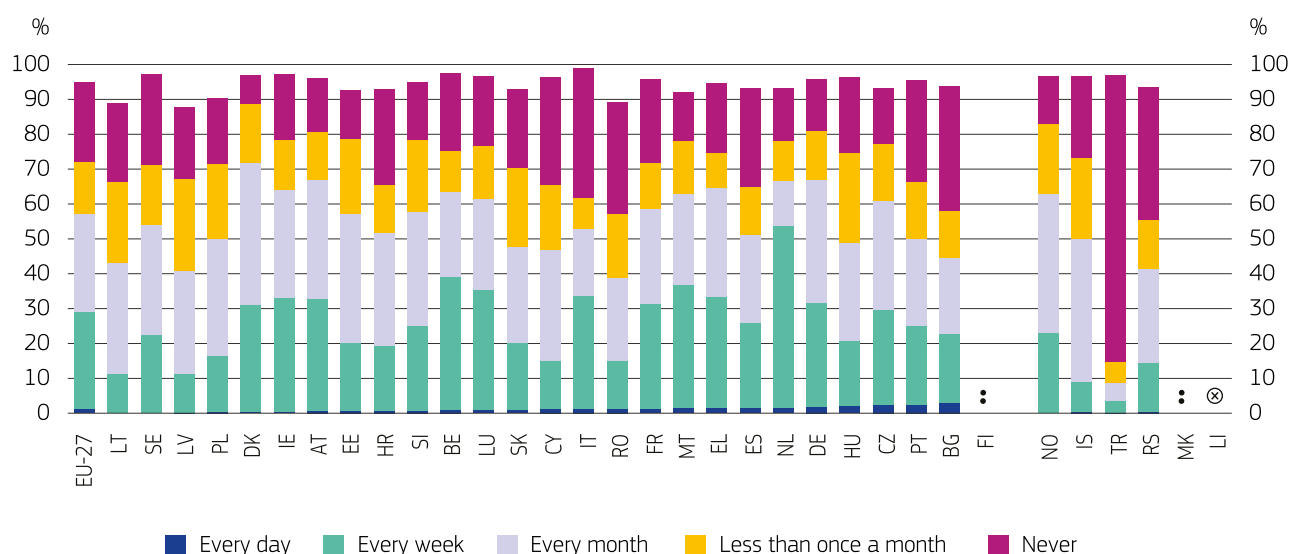
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people smoking less than 20 cigarettes per day. Data extracted on 30.5.2024.

In the EU, nearly 3 in 10 young people (15–29) consume alcohol weekly. The highest rate is observed in the Netherlands, where approximately half of the young population drinks alcohol every week. In contrast, the lowest frequencies of weekly alcohol consumption among young people are in Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania. Furthermore, about 2 in 10 young Europeans never consume alcohol. Within the EU, the highest proportion of young people who never drink alcohol is found in Italy, followed by Bulgaria and Romania.

**A share of only around 1% of young Europeans consume alcohol every day.**



**Figure 8.8.** Frequency of alcohol consumption by young people (15–29), by country, 2019



Source: Eurostat, Frequency of alcohol consumption by sex, age and educational attainment level ([hlth\\_ehis\\_alie](#)).

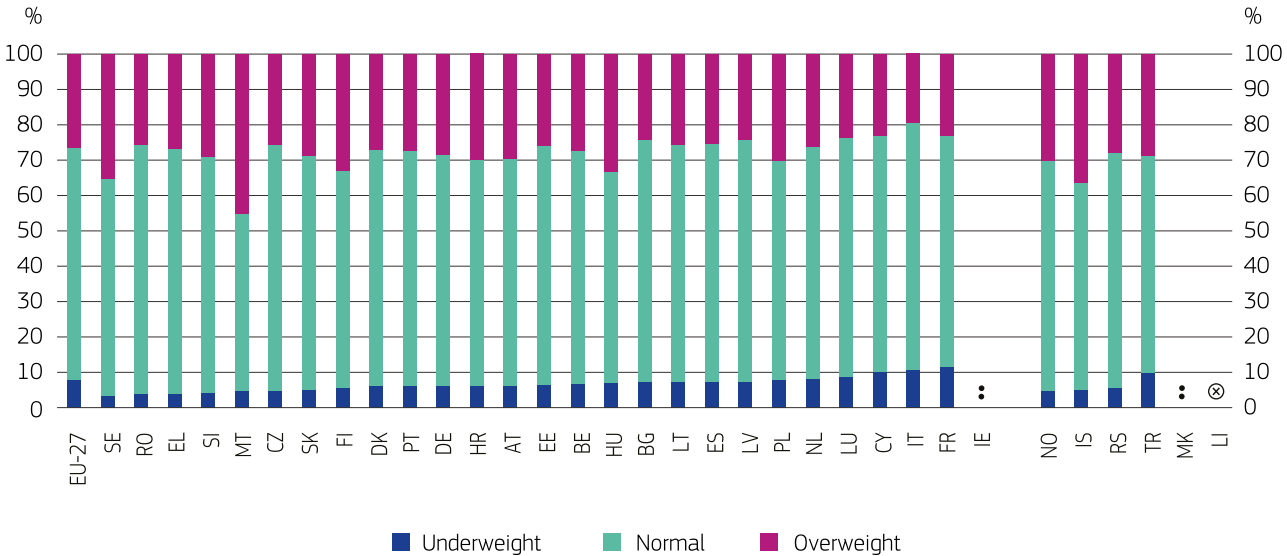
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–29) consuming alcohol every day. Percentage points to 100%: 'not in the last 12 months'. Data extracted on 30.5.2024.

# In the EU, 1 in 4 young people are overweight.

In all Member States, more than half of young people (15-29) have a normal [body mass index \(BMI\)](#), with the highest shares reported in Czechia, Italy and Romania. Conversely, on average, more than 25% of young people in the EU are overweight, with the highest shares found in Malta (45%), Hungary and Finland (both around 33%). Moreover, approximately 8% of young people are underweight, with the greatest proportions observed in France, Italy and Cyprus.



**Figure 8.9.** BMI among young people (15–29), by country, 2019



Source: Eurostat, Body mass index (BMI) by sex, age and educational attainment level ([hlth\\_ehis\\_bm1e](#)).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people with underweight body mass index. Data extracted on 30.5.2024.



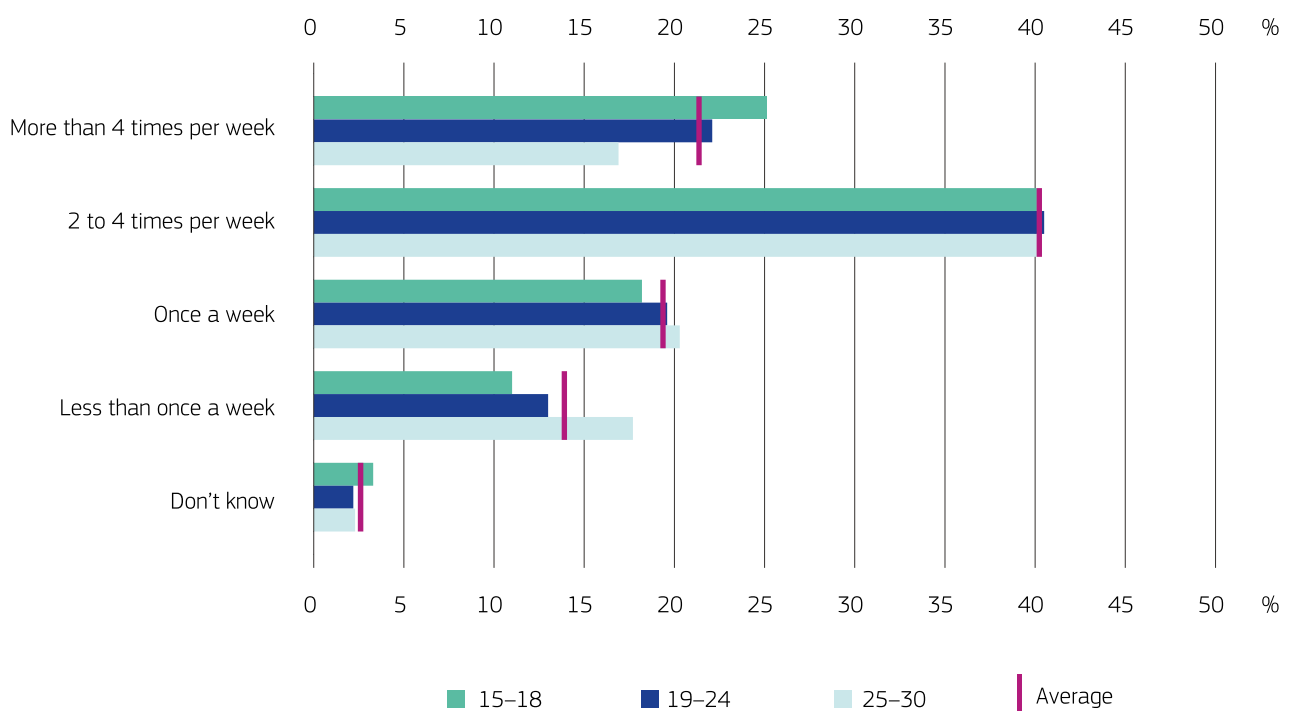
### 8.3. Physical activity

About 40% of young people (15–30) report that they exercise two to four times per week. Approximately 1 in 5 engages in sports more than four times a week, although there is a drop between the 15–18 and 25–30 age groups (8 pps). A similar trend is observed among those who practice sports once a week, around 20%, while one in seven young people declares they practice sport less than once a week.

**In 2024, in the EU, more than 80% of young people (15–30) report exercising at least once a week.**



**Figure 8.10.** Frequency of physical activity among young people, by age group, EU average, 2024



Source: [Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy](#). Volume B. Q16. How often do you exercise or play sport? By 'exercise' we mean any form of physical activity which you do in a sport context or sport-related setting, such as swimming, training in a fitness centre or a sport club, running in the park.

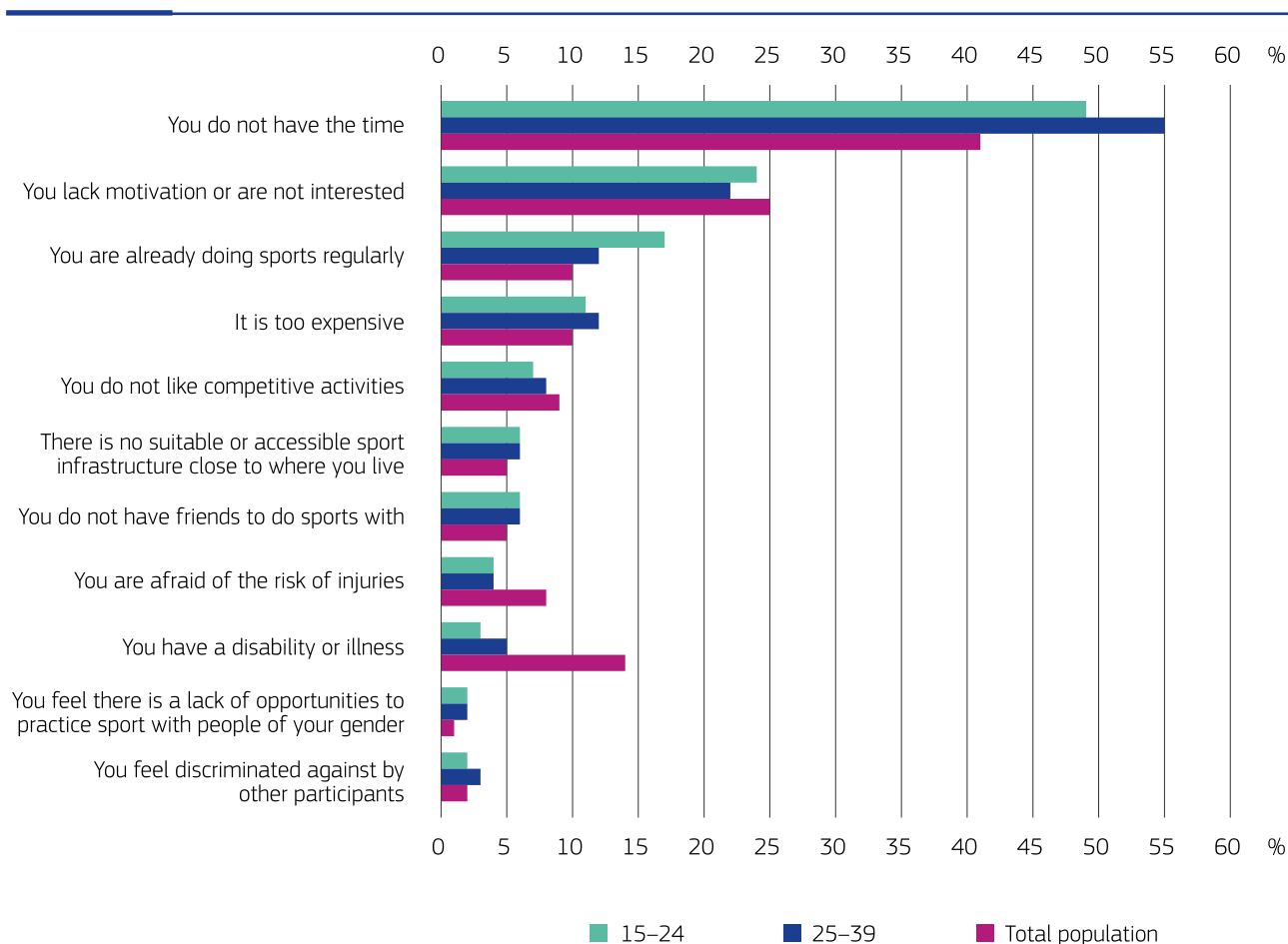
Notes: Data are ordered by decreasing frequency of physical activity. Data extracted on 11.6.2024.

## Lack of time is the top reason that stops young people from practising sport.



While about 50% of young people (15–24) mentioned lack of time as the main reason for not practising sports, and 25% mentioned lack of motivation or interest, only a very small proportion does not engage in physical activities due to a disability or illness, lack of opportunities for people of their gender or discrimination. Moreover, the reasons for not practising sports tend to lean more towards personal factors (lack of time, motivation, dislike of these activities) compared with those relating to the external context (cost, lack of infrastructure, discrimination).

**Figure 8.11.** Reasons stopping young people (15–24) from doing sport, compared to the age group 25–39 and total population, EU average, 2022



Source: [Special Eurobarometer 525 – Sport](#), Volume B, QB14. What are the main reasons currently preventing you from practising sport more regularly? (Multiple answers possible).

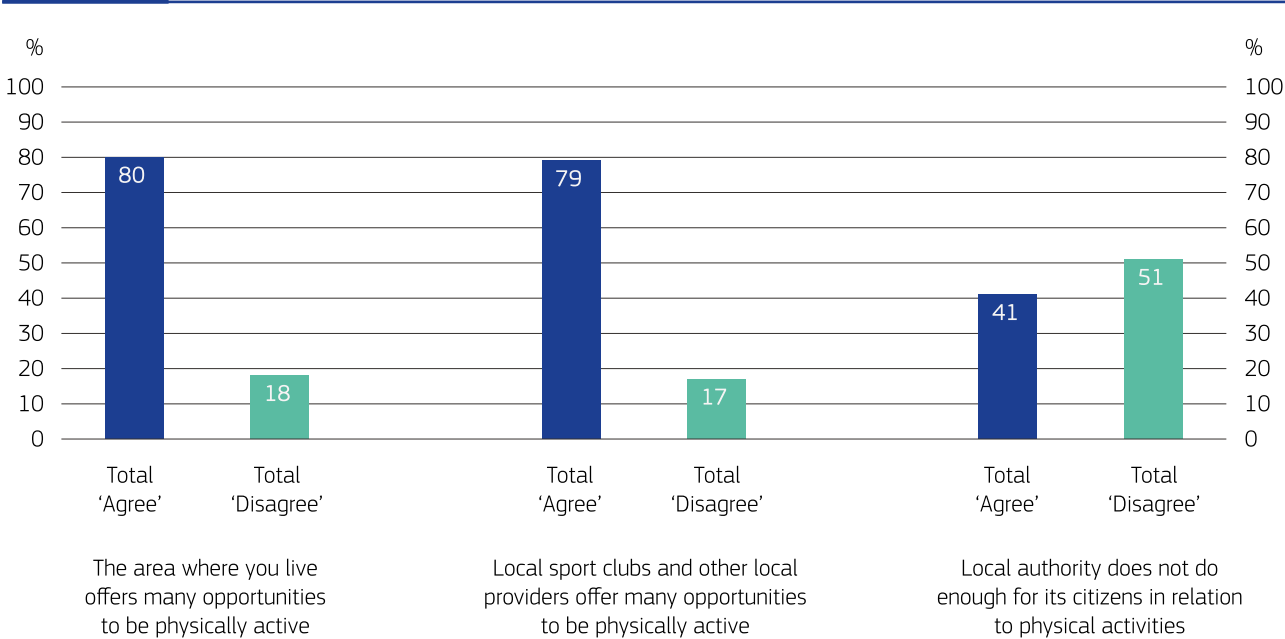
Notes: Data are ordered by decreasing share of young people (15–24) not practicing sport. Data extracted on 3.6.2024.

Around 8 in 10 young people (15–24) in the EU believe that both the area where they live and the local sport clubs offer them many opportunities to be physically active. Conversely, only around half of them believe that their local authority does enough for its citizens in relation to physical activities.

**Most young people believe that the area where they live provides them with many opportunities to be physically active.**



**Figure 8.12.** Young people’s (15–24) opinion about the role of local stakeholders in creating opportunities to be physically active, EU average, 2022



Source: [Special Eurobarometer 525 – Sport](#), Volume B, QB13.1, QB13.2, QB13.3.

Notes: Data extracted on 3.6.2024.

# 9.

## Social inclusion



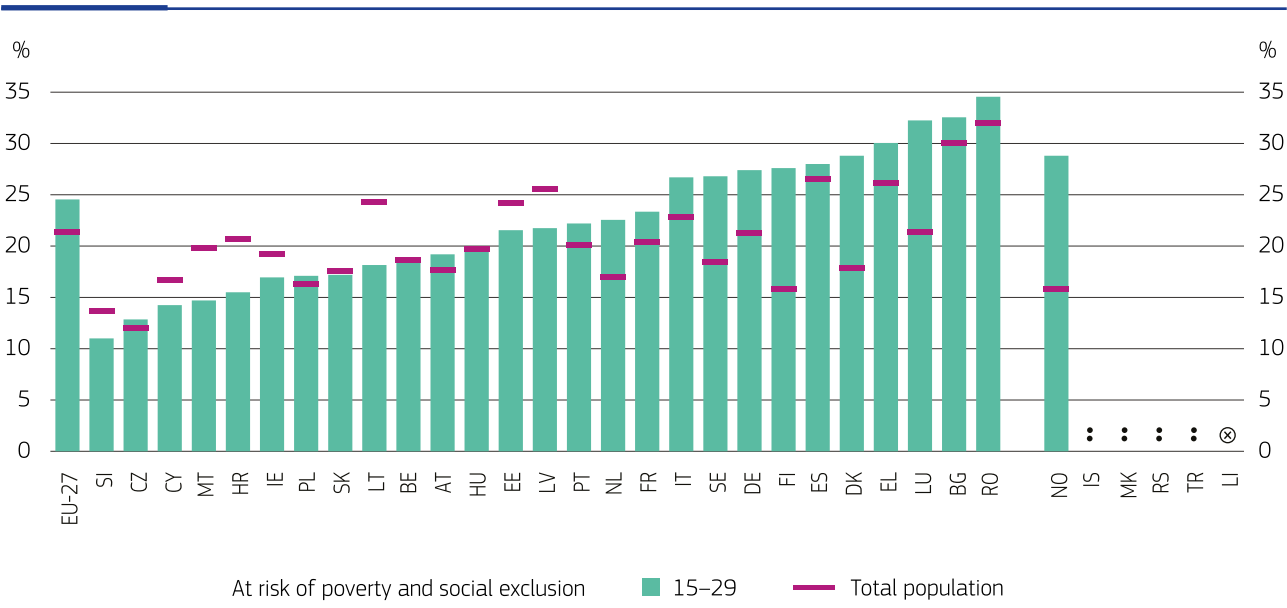
# 9.1. The risk of poverty and social exclusion, low work intensity and deprivation

While in Czechia and Slovenia only about 1 out of 10 young people (15–29) is at risk of poverty and social exclusion, in Bulgaria, Greece, Luxembourg and Romania, 1 out of 3 falls in this category. Moreover, in a majority of Member States (and particularly in the Nordic countries and in Luxembourg), young people are more likely to be at risk of poverty and social exclusion compared with the total population. On the other hand, in Croatia, Lithuania and Malta, the difference between the proportion of the total population and that of young people is the largest.

In the EU, almost one quarter of young people are at risk of poverty and social exclusion.



**Figure 9.1.** Rate of young people (15–29) at risk of poverty and social exclusion compared to the total population, by country, 2023



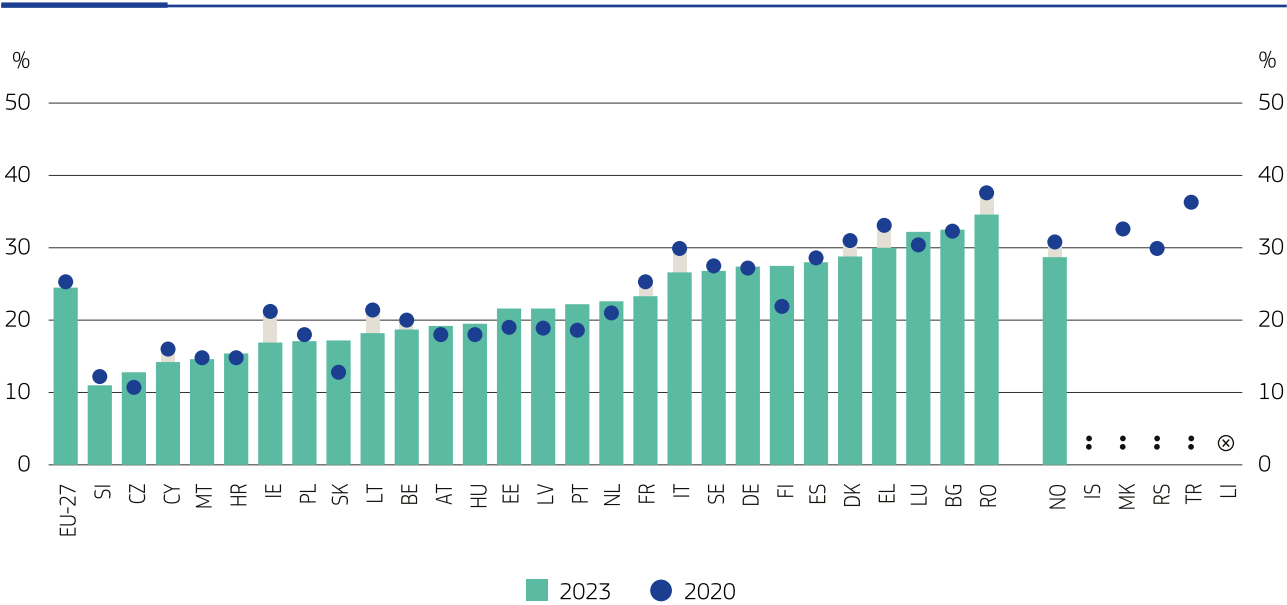
Source: Eurostat: Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age and sex ([ilc\\_peps01n](#)).  
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending rate of young people (15–29) at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Data extracted on 21.6.2024.

# In the EU, the share of young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion remained approximately the same as in 2020.

While on average there has been no change since 2020, the share of young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion has decreased in about half of Member States. In particular, Ireland recorded a decrease of about 4 pps, followed by Greece, Italy, Lithuania and Romania with around 3 pps. On the other hand, around one third of Member States registered an increase, especially Portugal, Slovakia and Finland (between 3 and 5 pps).



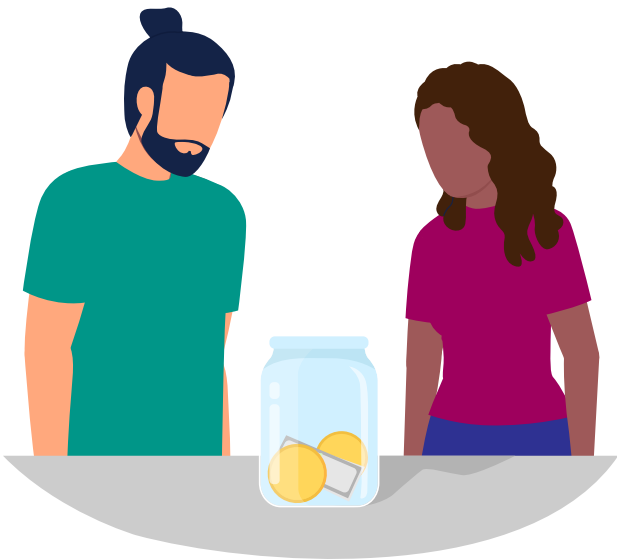
**Figure 9.2.** Rate of young people (15–29) at risk of poverty and social exclusion, by country, 2020 and 2023



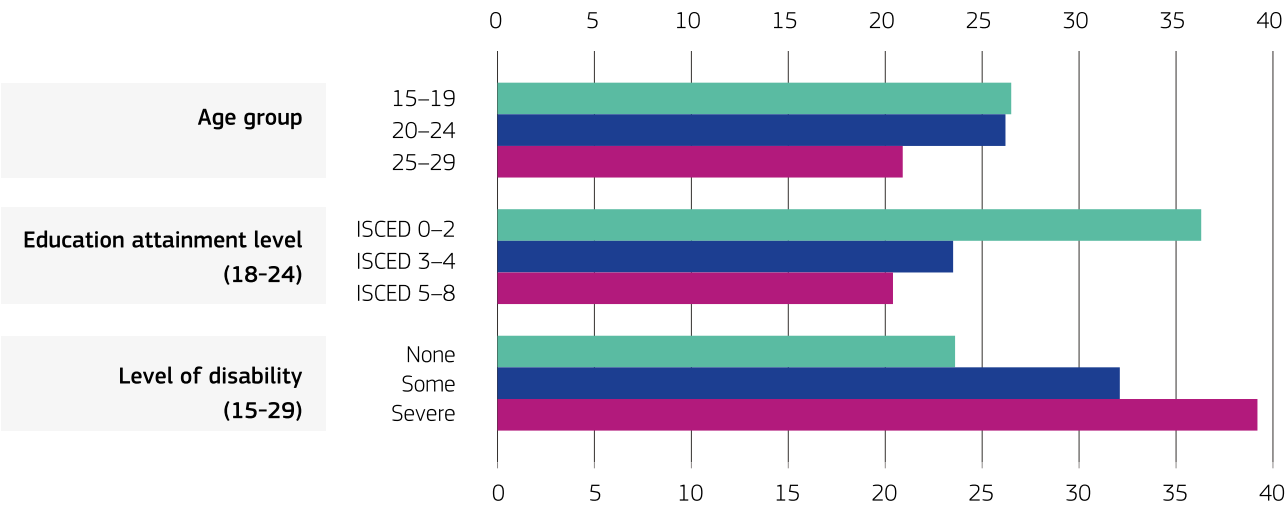
Source: Eurostat: Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age and sex ([ilc\\_peps01n](#)).  
Notes: The year 2020 is selected because of a break in series in 2019. Countries are ordered by ascending rate of young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion in 2023. Data extracted on 18.9.2024.

The share of young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion decreases with age: while 27% of young people aged 15–19 are at risk, 21% of young people in the age group 25–29 are in the same situation. Similarly, the higher the level of education attainment, the lower the risk of poverty and social exclusion. A substantial difference of 16 pps exists between the share of young people (18–24) with low attainment and that of young people in the same age group with a high one. Disability also influences the risk of poverty and social exclusion: young people with a severe disability are at a much higher risk (39%) compared with young people without a disability (24%).

**Younger age, lower education and disability increase the risk of poverty and social exclusion.**



**Figure 9.3.** Share of young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by age group, education attainment and level of disability, EU average, 2023



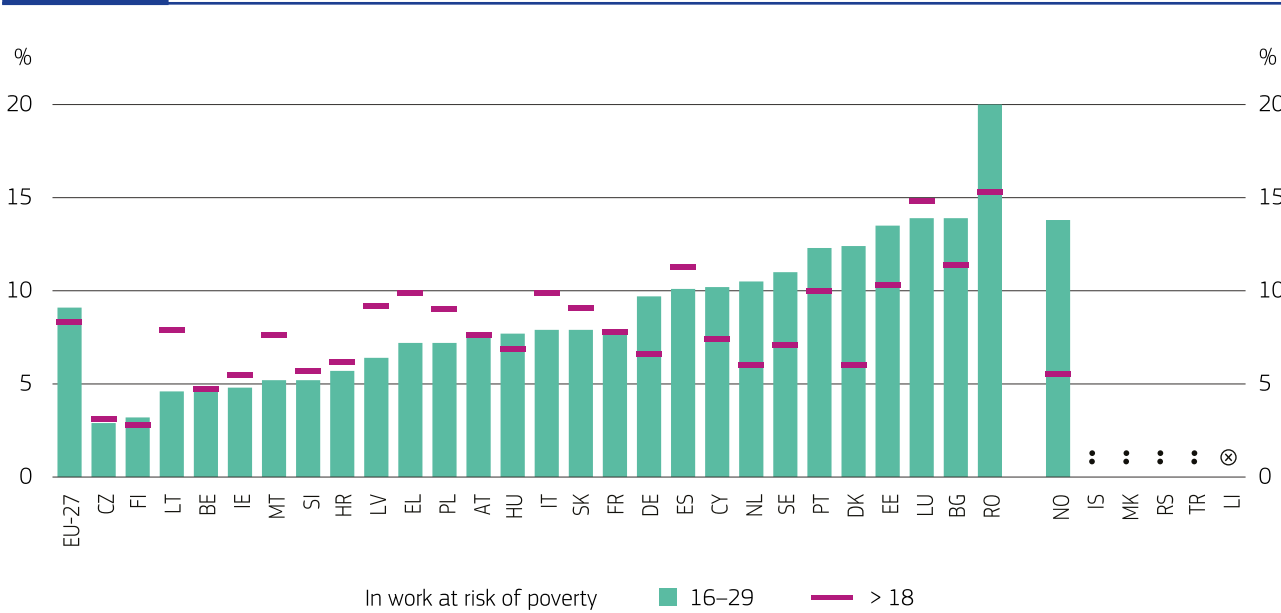
Source: Eurostat: Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age and sex ([ilc\\_peps01n](#)); Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by educational attainment level ([ilc\\_peps04n](#)); Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by level of disability (activity limitation), sex and age ([hlth\\_dpe010](#)).  
 Notes: Data by education attainment level refers to the age group 18–24. Data by level of disability refers to the age group 15–29; data have low reliability. ISCED 0–2: Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education. ISCED 3–4: Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. ISCED 5–8: Tertiary education. Data extracted on 8.7.2024.

# Almost 1 in 10 young people aged 16–29 is at risk of poverty while working.



Some countries in the northern and in the southern regions of the EU, in addition to Bulgaria and Romania, report the highest rates of in-work-at-risk-of-poverty for young people aged 16-29. In these countries, the difference between the share of young people and that of individuals older than 18 is also remarkably large. The lowest rates of young people living in poverty while working are recorded in Belgium, Czechia, Ireland, Lithuania and Finland. Countries with lower rates tend to show a proportion of people over 18 years suffering from in-work-at-risk-of-poverty equal to or higher than that of young people.

**Figure 9.4.** Rate of in-work-at-risk-of-poverty, by age group and by country, 2023



Source: Eurostat: In work at risk of poverty rate by age and sex ([ilc\\_jw01](#)).  
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending in-work-at-risk-of-poverty rate for young people (16–29). Data extracted on 21.6.2024.

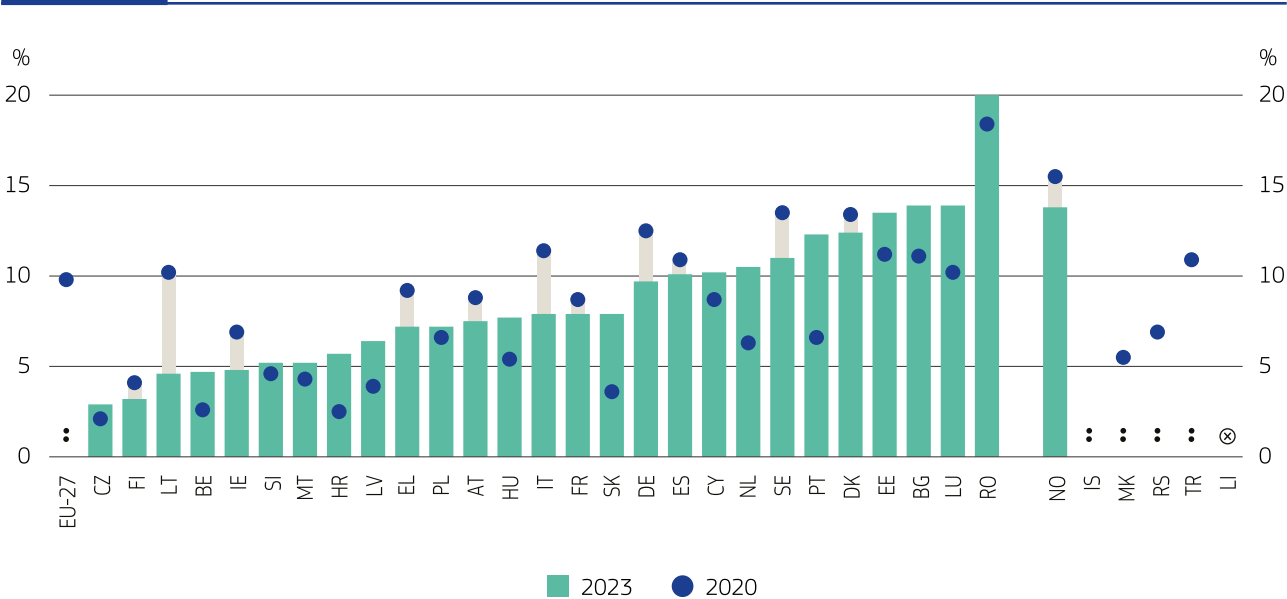


The positive trend is particularly notable in Lithuania (6 pps). Germany, Ireland, Greece, Italy and Sweden have also seen a decrease comprised between 2 and 3 pp. Conversely, in around one third of the Member States, the percentage of young people at risk of poverty while employed has increased compared with 2020. This negative trend is particularly notable in Croatia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovakia.

**In about one third of Member States, the share of young people at risk of poverty while working has decreased between 2020 and 2023.**



**Figure 9.5.** Rate of in-work-at-risk-of-poverty for young people (16–29), by country, 2020 and 2023



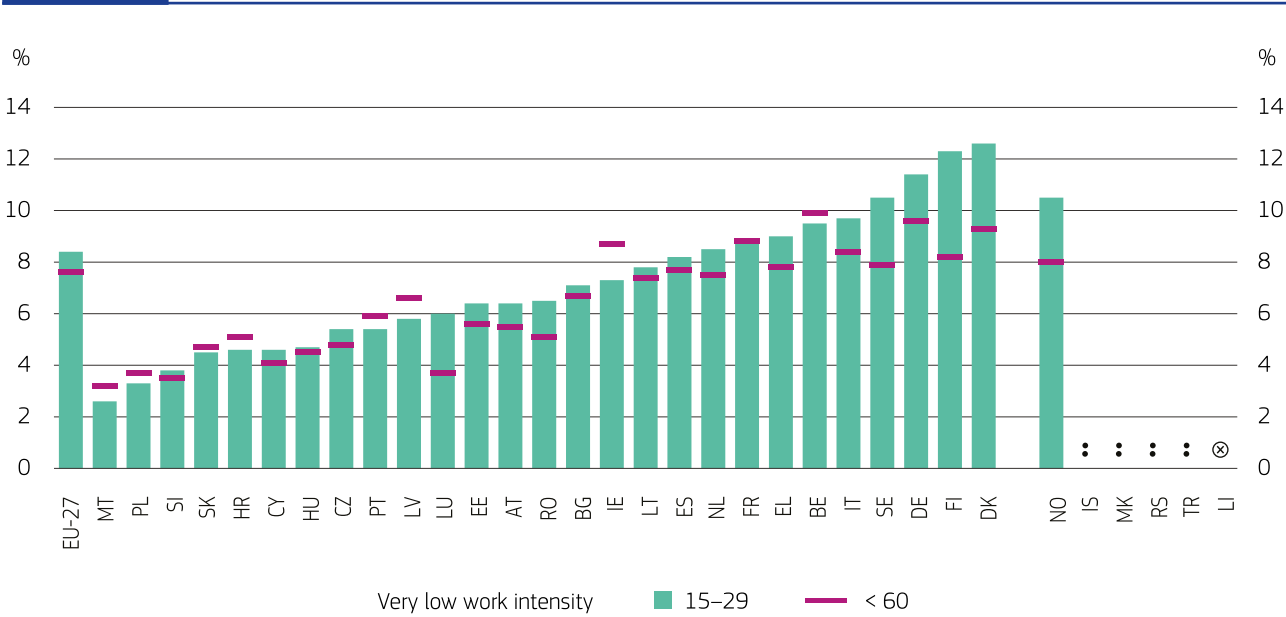
Source: Eurostat: In-work at-risk-of-poverty rate by age and sex – EU-SILC survey ([ilc\\_iw01](#)).  
 Notes: The year 2020 is selected because of a break in series in 2019. Countries are ordered by ascending rate of in-work-at-risk-of-poverty for young people (16–29) in 2023. Data extracted on 18.9.2024.

# In the EU, about 8% of young people live in households with very low work intensity.

The highest rates of young people (15–29) living in households with very low work intensity are found in Nordic countries and in Belgium, Greece and Italy. In these countries, the rate is notably higher than that of the general population. Conversely, several countries in the eastern region of the EU, together with Cyprus and Malta, present the lowest shares of young people living in households with very low work intensity. In these countries, the difference with the general population is generally smaller than in others.



**Figure 9.6.** Share of people living in households with very low work intensity, by age group and by country, 2023



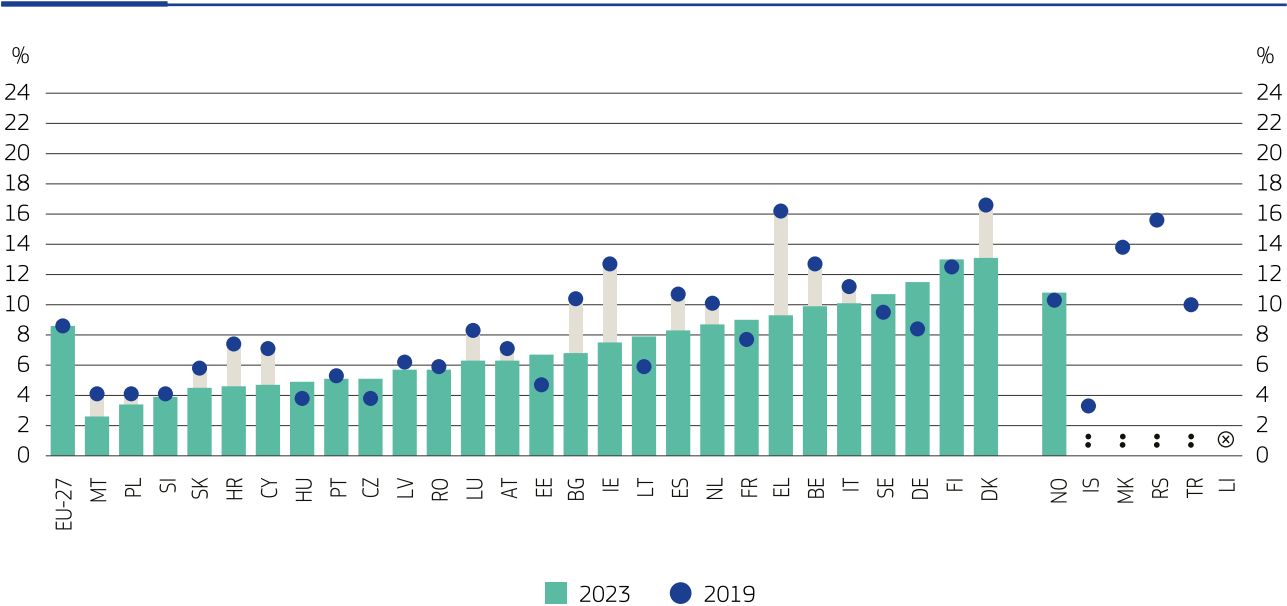
Source: Eurostat: Persons living in households with very low work intensity by age and sex (population aged 0 to 60 years) ([ilc\\_lvh11](#)).  
Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (15–29) living in households with very low work intensity. Data extracted on 24.6.2024.

While at the EU level the share of young people living in households with very low work intensity has not changed between 2019 and 2023, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Croatia and Cyprus have recorded considerable decreases. On the other hand, in Estonia, Lithuania and particularly in Germany, the share of young people living in such households has increased compared with 2019.

**In about half of Member States, the share of young people living in households with very low work intensity has decreased.**



**Figure 9.7.** Share of young people (16–29) living in households with very low work intensity, by country, 2019 and 2023



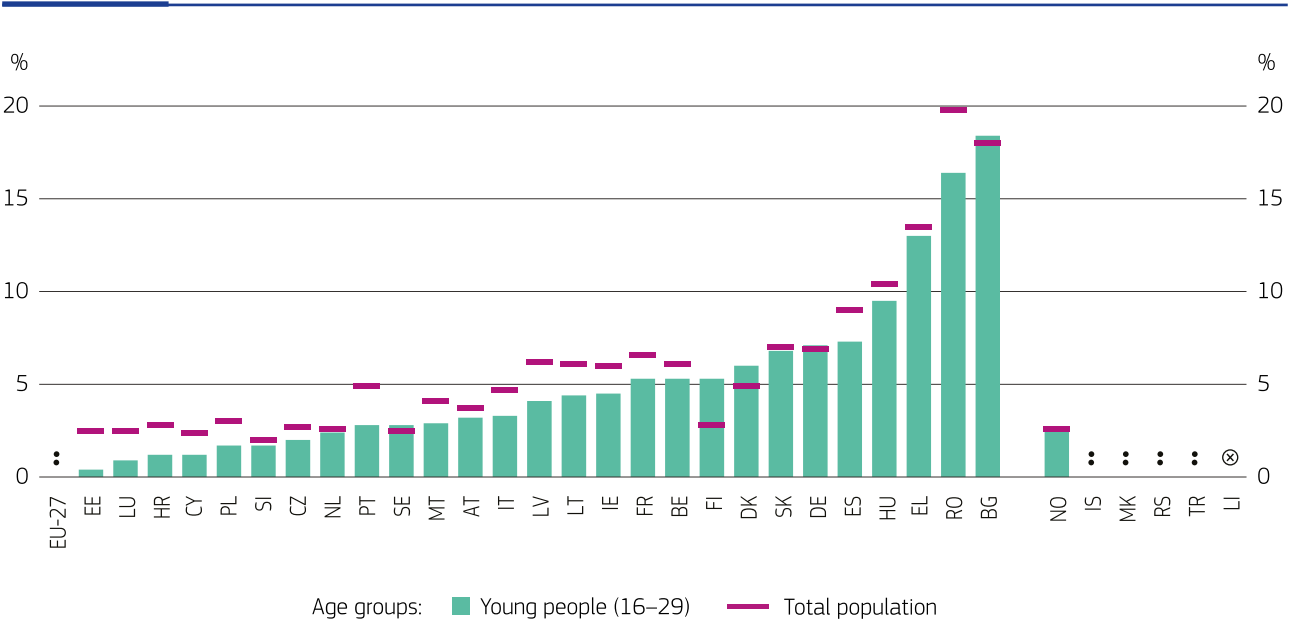
Source: Eurostat: Persons living in households with very low work intensity by age and sex (population aged 0–60) ([ilc\\_lvh11](#)).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (16–29) living in households with very low work intensity in 2023. Data extracted on 24.6.2024.

# Young people are exposed to severe material and social deprivation less than the total population.

The highest rates of young people aged 16–29 who live in severe material and social deprivation are in Bulgaria and Romania, where respectively 1 in 5 and 1 in 4 young people are in such condition. Greece also reports a high rate (almost 14%). On the other hand, in Estonia and Luxembourg the rate is below 1%. For the majority of Member States, the rate for the total population is similar to or above that for young people, except in Finland where young people are more exposed to severe material and social deprivation.



**Figure 9.8.** Severe material and social deprivation rate, by age group and by country, compared to the total population, 2023



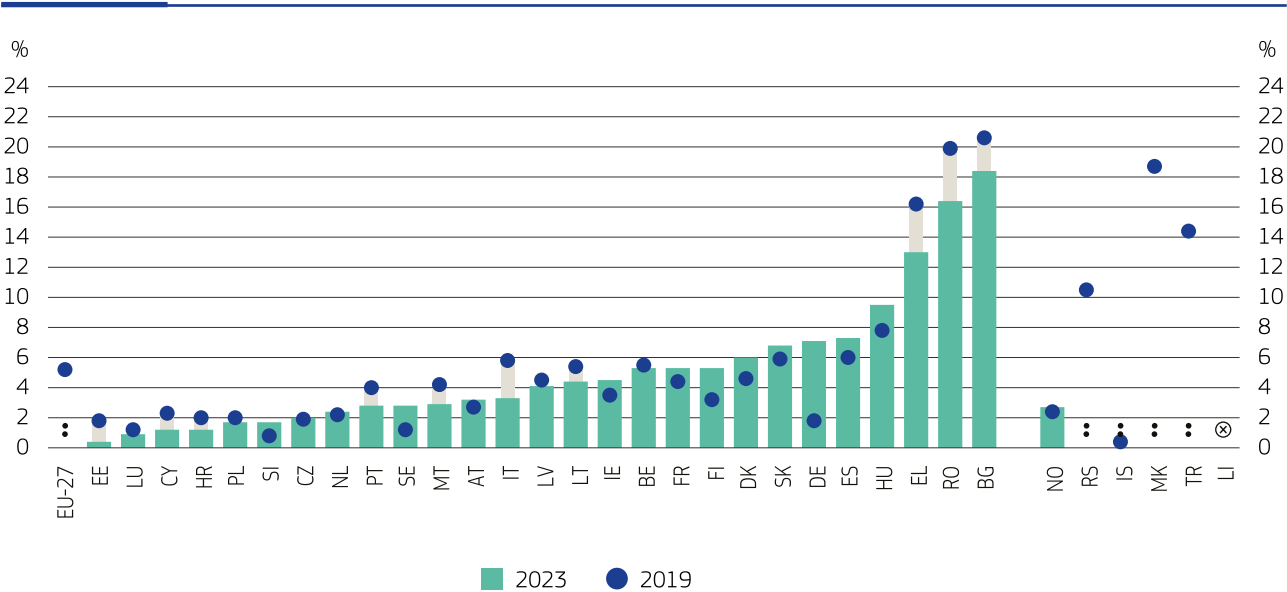
Source: Eurostat: Severe material and social deprivation rate ([ilc\\_mdspd11](#)).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending rate of severe material and social deprivation for young people (16–29). Data extracted on 24.6.2024.

While in most Member States the share of young people (16–29) experiencing severe material and social deprivation has remained approximately the same, important decreases were observed in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania. In a few countries, the rate has increased, especially in Germany where the surge has been of about 5 pps.

**Between 2019 and 2023, the share of young people living in severe material and social deprivation has remained stable in most Member States.**



**Figure 9.9.** Share of young people (16–29) living in severe material and social deprivation, by country, 2019 and 2023



Source: Eurostat: Severe material and social deprivation rate ([ilc\\_md11](#)).  
 Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending share of young people (16–29) affected by severe material and social deprivation in 2023. Data extracted on 24.6.2024.

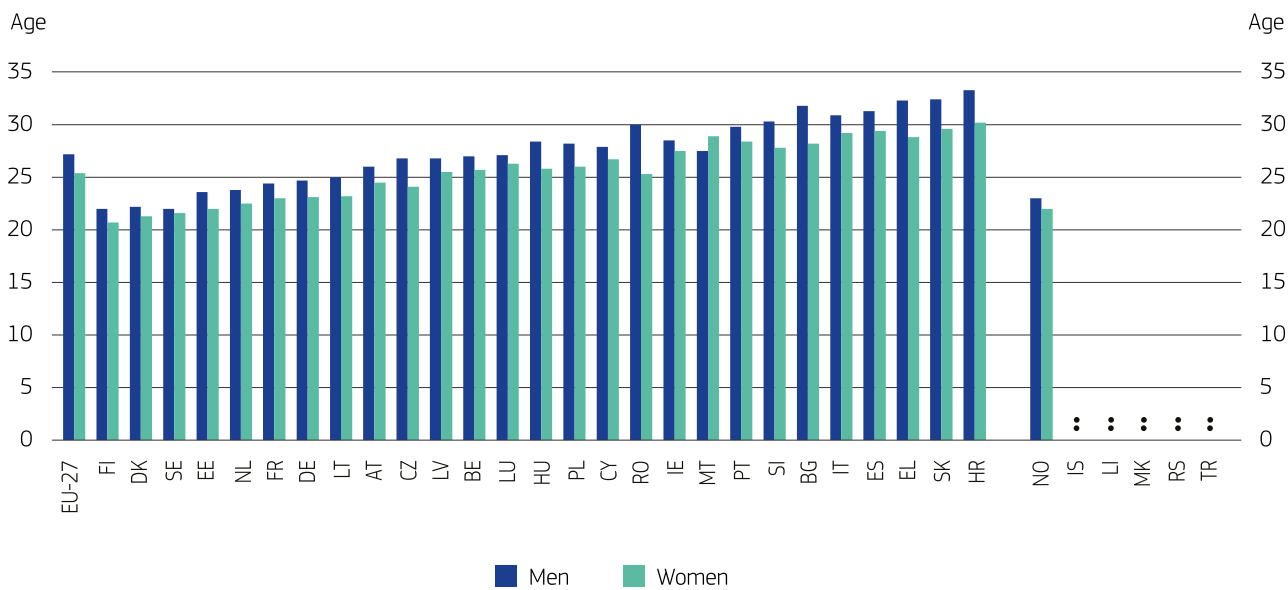
On average,  
in the EU,  
young people  
leave the  
parental  
home at 26.

9.2. Age of leaving the  
parental home

The age of leaving the parental home tends to be higher in countries in the southern region of the EU. Some eastern Member States also report ages higher than the EU average. Conversely, young people in Nordic countries leave the parental home in their early twenties. Young women leave the parental home around 2 years earlier than young men. The biggest gaps between men and women are in Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia and Romania, where the difference is between 3 and 5 years.



**Figure 9.10.** Estimated average age of young people leaving the parental home, by gender and by country, 2023



Source: Eurostat: [youth\\_demo\\_030](#).

Notes: Countries are ordered by ascending average age of young people leaving the parental home (total of men and women). Data extracted on 26.4.2024.

# 10.

## Youth work





Youth work is a broad term covering a wide variety of activities of a social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political nature by, with and for young people, in groups or individually. Youth work is delivered by paid and volunteer youth workers and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes focused on young people and on voluntary participation. Youth work is quintessentially a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people's active participation and inclusion in their communities and in decision-making <sup>(8)</sup>.

**Almost all countries have quality assurance systems in youth work.**

### **10.1. How do countries assure the quality of youth work?**

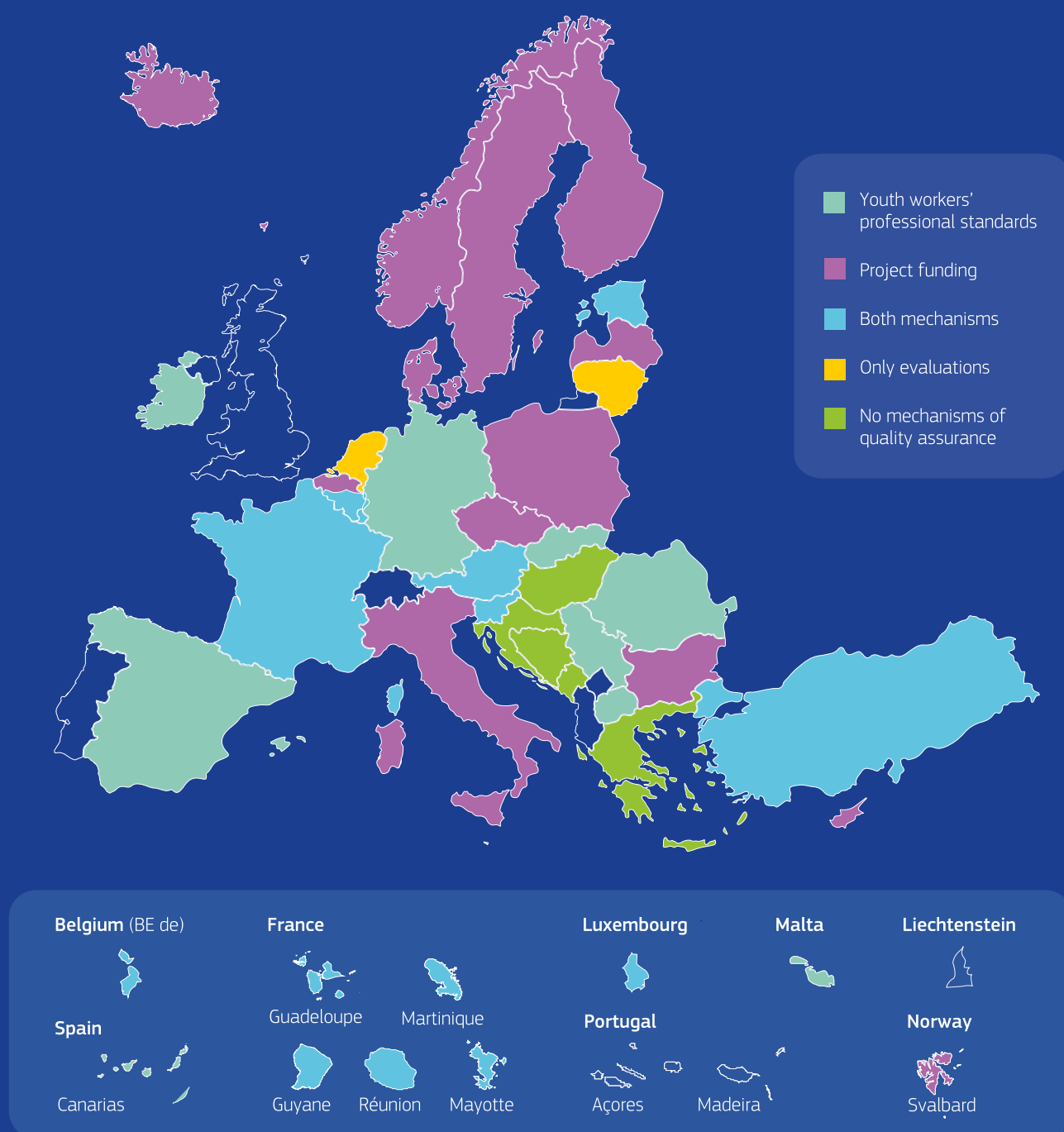
Eight countries base their system of youth work quality assurance on youth workers' professional standards. Youth workers need specific skills and qualifications to run youth work activities. Twelve countries assure the quality of youth work through project funding. In this case, public authorities set specific quality criteria that youth work projects must meet in order to receive funding. Only projects that fulfil those criteria are eligible for financial support. In eight countries, the two mechanisms coexist. A third method of quality assurance consists in reviewing youth work activities through the evaluation of (non-compulsory) recommendations and guidelines. While this method is widespread, in Lithuania and the Netherlands it is the only one. In five countries (all in the Balkan region), there is no quality assurance system.

<sup>(8)</sup> [Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda – \(2020/C 415/01\)](#)





**Figure 10.1.** Mechanisms of quality assurance in youth work, 2023



## The majority of countries support the digitalisation of youth work.

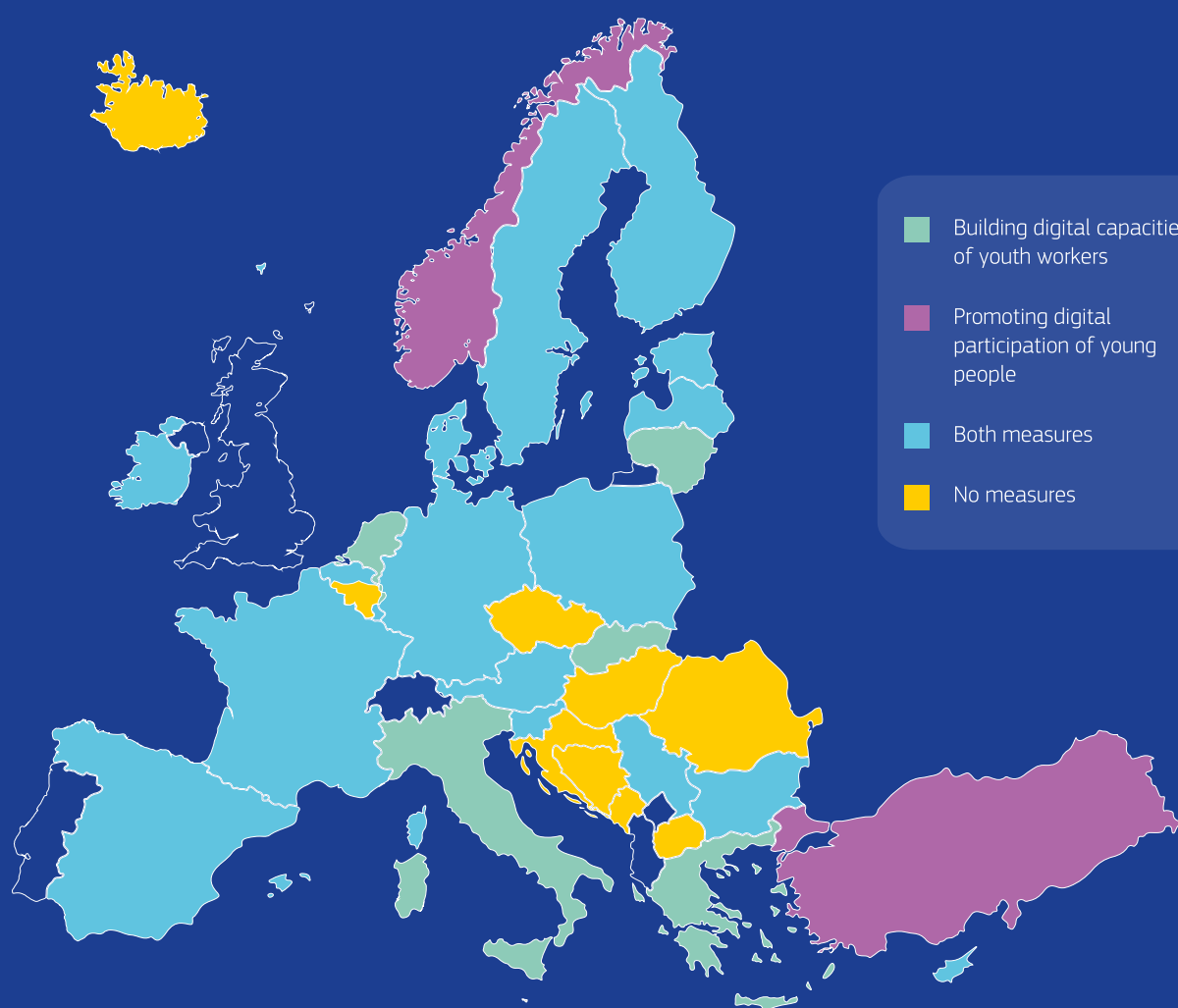
### 10.2. Digitalisation of youth work

Countries foster the digitalisation of youth work according to two main approaches. One approach is to promote youth workers' digital skills. The second focuses on young people, easing their digital participation using web platforms and social media. The majority of countries (18) implement both kinds of measures. In nine countries (mainly in the Balkan region and in some central European countries), no measures fostering the digitalisation of youth work exist.





**Figure 10.2.** Fostering the use of digital technologies in youth work, 2023



Belgium (BE de)



France



Luxembourg



Malta



Liechtenstein



Spain



Guadeloupe



Martinique



Portugal



Norway



Canarias

Guyane

Réunion

Mayotte

Açores

Madeira

Svalbard

Source: Youth Wiki, [Fostering the application of digital technologies to youth work](#) (September 2023).

# Glossary

## Activity rate

Activity rate is the percentage of active persons in relation to the comparable total population. The economically active population comprises employed and unemployed persons.

## Body mass index (BMI)

The body mass index (BMI) is a measure of a person's weight relative to height that correlates fairly well with body fat. The BMI is accepted as the most useful indicator of obesity in adults when only weight and height data are available.

## Cross-curricular competence

A competence that is acquired across various academic subjects. Under this approach, rather than (or in addition to) being explicitly mentioned as part of particular subjects, a competence is understood to be transversal and therefore acquired across all subjects and curriculum activities.

## Digital skills

The digital skills indicator is a composite indicator which is based on selected activities relating to internet or software use performed by individuals aged 16–74 in five specific areas (information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety and problem-solving). It is assumed that individuals having performed certain activities have the corresponding skills. Therefore, the indicators can be considered as proxies of individuals' digital skills.

## Early leaving from education and training (ELET)

An early leaver from education and training, previously named early school leaver, refers to a person aged 18 to 24 who has completed (at most) lower secondary education and is not involved in further education or training.

## e-learning

e-learning, or electronic learning, also referred to as web-based learning, encompasses a broad range of knowledge transferred through digital technologies, sometimes as a complement to traditional education channels.

## Employment rate

The employment rate is the percentage of employed persons in relation to the comparable total population. For the overall employment rate, the comparison is made with the population of working age; but employment rates can also be calculated for a particular age group and/or gender in a specific geographical area.

## International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011)

**Less than primary education (ISCED-A level 0).** A broad level of educational attainment covering no participation in education, some participation in early childhood education and/or some participation in primary education.

**Primary education (ISCED level 1).** Primary education provides learning and educational activities typically designed to provide students with fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics (i.e. literacy and numeracy) and establish a solid foundation for learning and understanding core areas of knowledge and personal development, preparing for lower secondary education. It focuses on learning at a basic level of complexity with little, if any, specialisation.

**Lower secondary education (ISCED level 2).** Programmes at ISCED level 2, or lower secondary education, are typically designed to build on the learning outcomes from ISCED level 1. Usually, the educational aim is to lay the foundation for lifelong learning and human development upon which education systems may then expand further educational opportunities. Programmes at this level are usually organised around a more subject-oriented curriculum, introducing theoretical concepts across a broad range of subjects.

**Upper secondary education (ISCED level 3).** Programmes at ISCED level 3, or upper secondary education, are typically designed to complete secondary education in preparation for tertiary education or provide skills relevant to employment, or both. Programmes at this level offer students more varied, specialised and in-depth instruction than programmes at lower secondary education (ISCED level 2). They are more differentiated, with an increased range of options and streams available.

**Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED level 4).** Post-secondary non-tertiary education provides learning experiences building on secondary education, preparing for labour market entry and tertiary education. It typically targets students who have completed upper secondary education (ISCED level 3), but who want to increase their opportunities either to enter the labour market or progress to tertiary education. Programmes are often not significantly more advanced than those at upper secondary education, as they typically serve to broaden – rather than deepen – knowledge, skills and competencies. It therefore aims at learning below the high level of complexity characteristic of tertiary education.

**Tertiary education (ISCED levels 5 to 8).** Tertiary education builds on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialised fields of education. It aims at learning at a high level of complexity and specialisation. Tertiary education includes what is commonly understood as academic education but also includes advanced vocational or professional education.

### **In-work at-risk-of-poverty rate**

The in-work at-risk-of-poverty rate refers to the percentage of persons in the total population who declared to be at work (employed or self-employed) and who are at risk of poverty (i.e. with an equivalised disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income (after social transfers)).

### **Non-formal education and training**

Education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned by an education provider. The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative and/or complement to formal education within the process of the lifelong learning of individuals. It is often provided to guarantee the right of access to education for all. It caters to people of all ages but does not necessarily apply a continuous pathway structure; it may be short in duration and/or low-intensity, and is typically provided in the form of short courses, workshops or seminars. Non-formal education mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognised as formal or equivalent to formal qualifications by the relevant national or sub-national education authorities or to no qualifications at all. Non-formal education can cover programmes contributing to adult and youth literacy and education for out-of-school children, along with programmes on life skills, work skills and social or cultural development.

### **Persons living in households with very low work intensity**

Persons aged 0–64, living in households where the adults (aged 18–64) worked less than or equal to 20% of their total work potential during the past year. Students aged 18–24, people who are retired or who receive any pension (except survivor's pension) and people aged 60–64 who are inactive and living in a household where the main income is pensions are excluded.

### **Project-based learning**

Project-based learning is a teaching method that allows students to learn concepts and skills by working together on real-world projects.

## Risk of poverty and social exclusion

‘At risk of poverty or social exclusion’ corresponds to the sum of persons who are either at [risk of poverty](#), [severely materially and socially deprived](#) or [living in a household with a very low work intensity](#).

## Severe material deprivation

The severe material deprivation rate is defined as the enforced inability to pay for at least four of the following items: to pay their rent, mortgage or utility bills; to keep their home adequately warm; to face unexpected expenses; to eat meat or proteins regularly; to go on holiday; a television set; a washing machine; a car; a telephone.

## Unemployment rate

The unemployment rate is the number of people unemployed as a percentage of the labour force. An unemployed person is defined by Eurostat, according to the guidelines of the International Labour Organization, as: someone aged 15–74; not employed during the reference week according to the definition of employment; currently available for work, i.e. available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the 2 weeks following the reference week; actively seeking work, i.e. had either carried out activities in the 4-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment or found a job to start within a period of at most 3 months from the end of the reference week.

## Unemployment ratio

The unemployment ratio represents the proportion of unemployed within the total population of the same age, including people outside the labour force.

## Vocational education and training (VET)

Vocational education and training (VET), sometimes simply called vocational training, is the training in skills and teaching of knowledge related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation in which the student or employee wishes to participate. Vocational education may be undertaken at an educational institution, as part of secondary or tertiary education, or may be part of initial training during employment, for example as an apprentice, or as a combination of formal education and workplace learning.

## Working age population

The working age population is the share of 15–64-year-olds in the total population.

## Young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET)

The indicator ‘young people neither in employment nor in education and training’ (NEET) corresponds to the percentage of the population of a given age group and sex that is not employed and not involved in further education or training.

### Youth work

Youth work is a broad term covering a wide variety of activities of a social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political nature by, with and for young people, in groups or individually. Youth work is delivered by paid and volunteer youth workers and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes focused on young people and on voluntary participation. Youth work is quintessentially a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people’s active participation and inclusion in their communities and in decision-making <sup>(9)</sup>.

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<sup>(9)</sup> [Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda – \(2020/C 415/01\)](#)



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