

# Youth on the move

## Summary

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## Flash Eurobarometer 319a YOUTH PARTICIPATION

This survey was requested by Directorate-General Education and Culture and coordinated by Directorate-General Communication

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

Flash EB Series #319a

# Youth on the move

Survey conducted by The Gallup Organization,  
Hungary upon the request of  
Directorate-General Education and Culture



Coordinated by Directorate-General  
Communication

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**THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION**

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## Introduction

The primary objective of the Flash Eurobarometer survey “*Youth on the Move*” (N° 319a) was to study young EU citizens’ participation in society. In detail, the survey examined young people’s participation in:

- sports clubs, youth organisations, cultural organisations and non-governmental organisations
- political elections at the local, regional, national or EU level
- voluntary activities; particularly those aimed at changing respondents’ local community/ environment
- activities and projects fostering cooperation between young people from various countries.

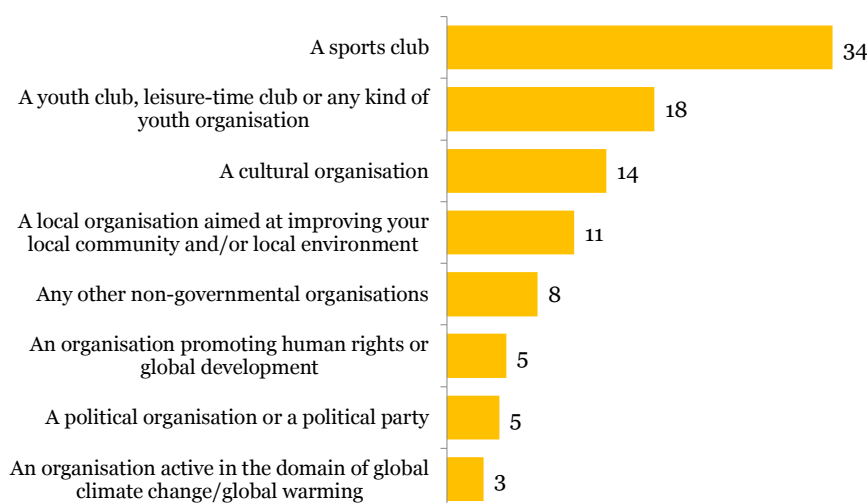
The survey obtained interviews – fixed-line, mobile phone – with nationally representative samples of young people (aged between 15 and 30) living in the 27 EU Member States. The target sample size in all countries was 1,000 interviews; in total, 27,029 interviews were conducted by Gallup’s network of fieldwork organisations from 31 January to 4 February 2011. Statistical results were weighted to correct for known demographic discrepancies.

## 1. Participation in activities of various organisations

Roughly a third (34%) of young people in the EU said they had been active in a sports club in the year prior to the survey. About half as many respondents (18%) had been involved in a youth club, leisure-time club or other type of youth organisation and roughly one in seven (14%) said they had participated in a cultural organisation's activities. Roughly a tenth of respondents had taken part in activities of a local organisation that aimed to improve their local community/environment (11%).

Less than 1 in 10 young people said they had been active in each of the other types of organisations listed in the survey: one promoting human rights or global development, or a political organisation/party (both 5%), one active in the domain of global climate change/global warming (3%). Slightly less than a tenth (8%) of respondents mentioned activities of another type of non-governmental organisation (NGO).

### Participation in activities of various organisations



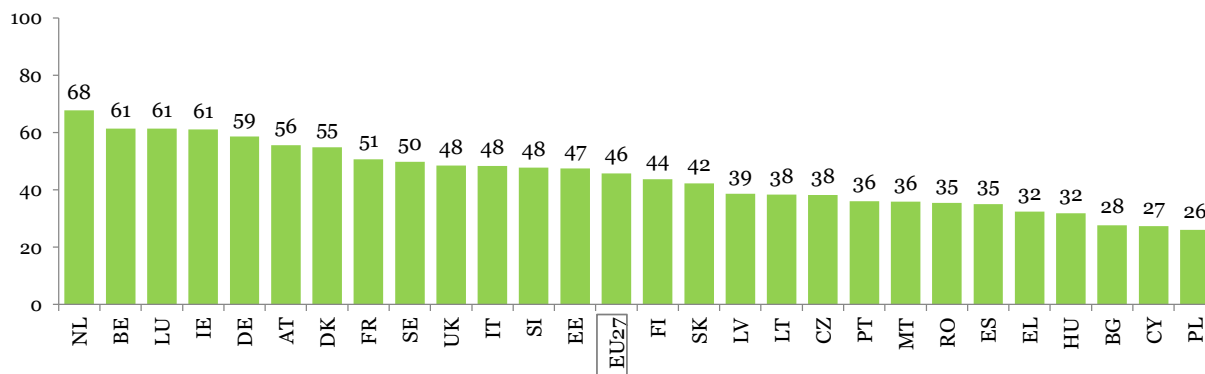
**Q1. Have you in the past year participated in any activities of the following organisations?**

Base: all respondents, % of 'Yes' answers shown, EU27

Of the eight types of organisations listed in the survey, three could be identified as the ones that young people were the most likely to have participated in: (1) sports clubs, (2) youth organisations or leisure-time clubs and (3) cultural organisations.

The proportion of respondents who reported that, in the past year, they had been active in at least one of the three above-mentioned organisations ranged from less than 3 in 10 in Poland (26%), Cyprus (27%) and Bulgaria (28%) to roughly two-thirds in the Netherlands (68%). Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg and Belgium were close to the Netherlands with 59%-61% of young people who had participated in an activity of a sports club, youth organisation or cultural organisation in the year prior to the survey.

### Proportion that had been active in a sports club, youth club or cultural organisation

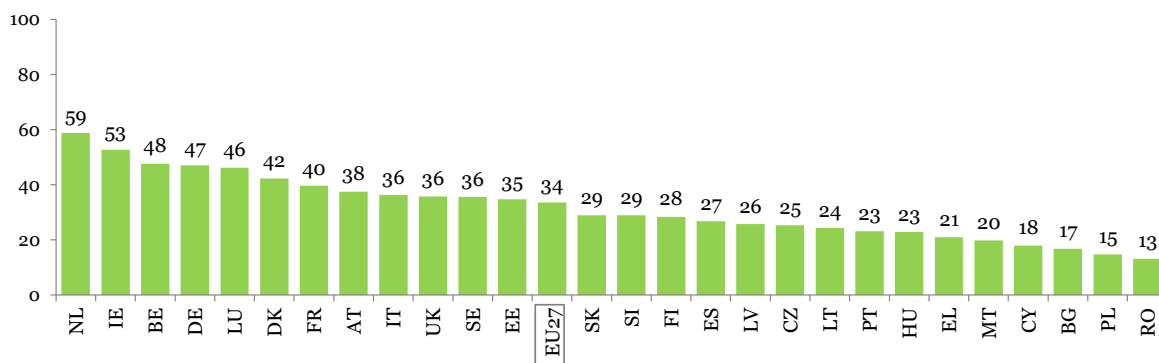


Q1. Have you in the past year participated in any activities of the following organisations?  
Base: all respondents, % by country

In all Member States, except Romania, participation in a **sports club** was mentioned by the largest group of respondents. Young people in the Netherlands were the most likely to have participated in at least one activity of a sports club in the year prior to the survey (59%); they were followed by young adults in Ireland (53%), Belgium (48%), Germany (47%) and Luxembourg (46%).

Participation in activities of various organisations:

#### A sports club

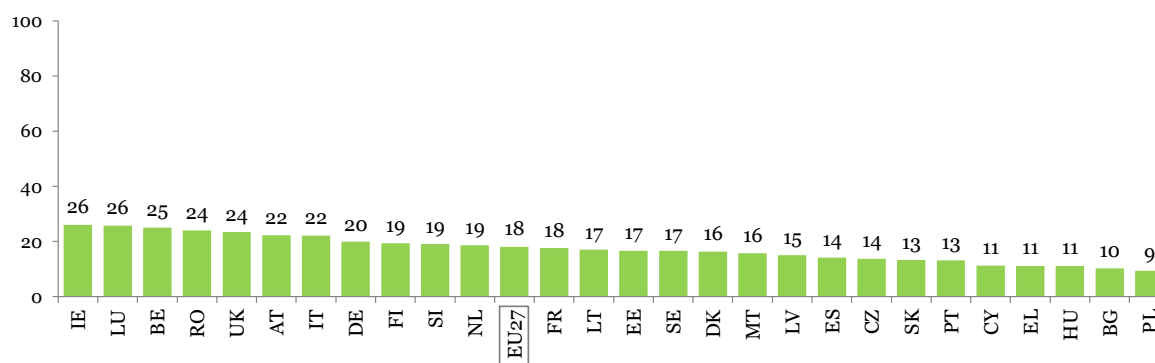


Q1. Have you in the past year participated in any activities of the following organisations?  
Base: all respondents, % by country

In Romania, 13% of interviewees said that they had taken part in a sports club’s activities in the past 12 months; similar figures were observed in Poland (15%), Bulgaria (17%) and Cyprus (18%). In fact, for each of the types of organisation listed in the survey, respondents in the three last-named countries were among the last likely to say that they had participated in such an organisation. Romania, however, had one of the largest proportions of young people who had participated in the activities organised **by a youth club or leisure-time club** (24%); other countries where roughly a quarter of young people had attended a meeting of a youth organisation in the past year were the UK (24%), Belgium (25%), Ireland and Luxembourg (both 26%).

Participation in activities of various organisations:

### A youth club, leisure-time club or any kind of youth organisation



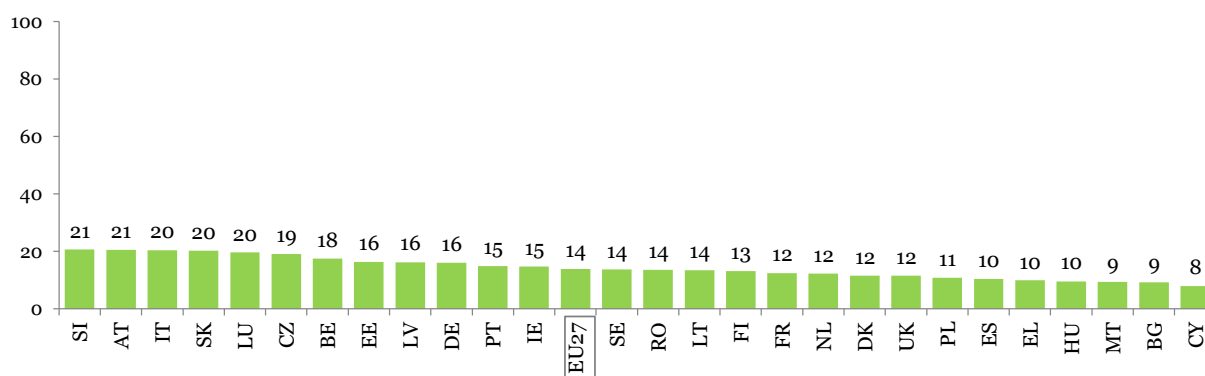
Q1. Have you in the past year participated in any activities of the following organisations?

Base: all respondents, % by country

In 21 of the 27 Member States, participating in the activities of a **cultural organisation** also appeared in the top three of most-frequently mentioned activities; for example, this was mentioned by roughly a fifth of young adults in the Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Italy, Austria and Slovenia (19%-21%).

Participation in activities of various organisation:

### A cultural organisation



Q1. Have you in the past year participated in any activities of the following organisations?

Base: all respondents, % by country

Across all socio-demographic groups, **sports clubs** were the most-frequently mentioned type of organisation. Young people involved in a sports clubs' activities were more likely to be men (39% vs. 28% of women), 15-19 year-olds (44% vs. 28% of 25-30 year-olds) and still in education, especially those studying at a secondary school (47% vs. 34%-36% in vocational or post-secondary education). Similar patterns were seen when looking at the participation rates in **youth organisations**.

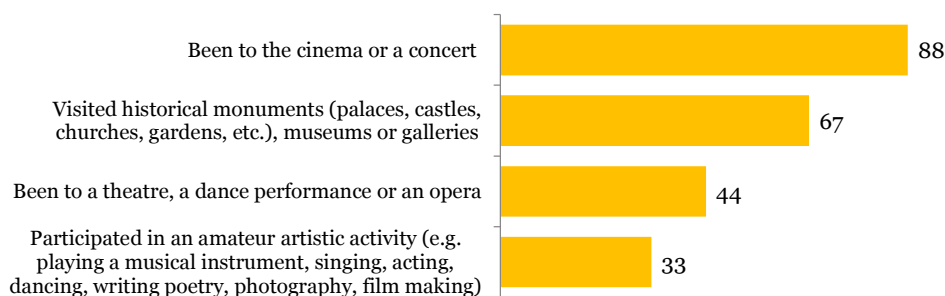
Comparing respondents with different levels of education, large differences were seen in the proportions that had been involved in **cultural organisations**. Among those who had completed their education, 6% of respondents who had left school without completing their lower secondary education mentioned that they had been active in a cultural organisation, compared to 16% among those that had a higher education qualification.

## 2. Participation in cultural activities

A vast majority (88%) of young people in the EU said that they had been to the cinema or a concert in the year prior to the survey. Two-thirds (67%) of respondents answered that they had visited a museum, gallery or historical monument (such as a castle or church), while more than 4 in 10 (44%) said they had seen a dance performance or been to the theatre or opera in that time frame.

Of the cultural activities listed, the surveyed young people were the least likely to have participated in an amateur artistic activity (e.g. having played a musical instrument, sung or acted or wrote poetry) – this type of cultural activity was mentioned by a third of respondents.

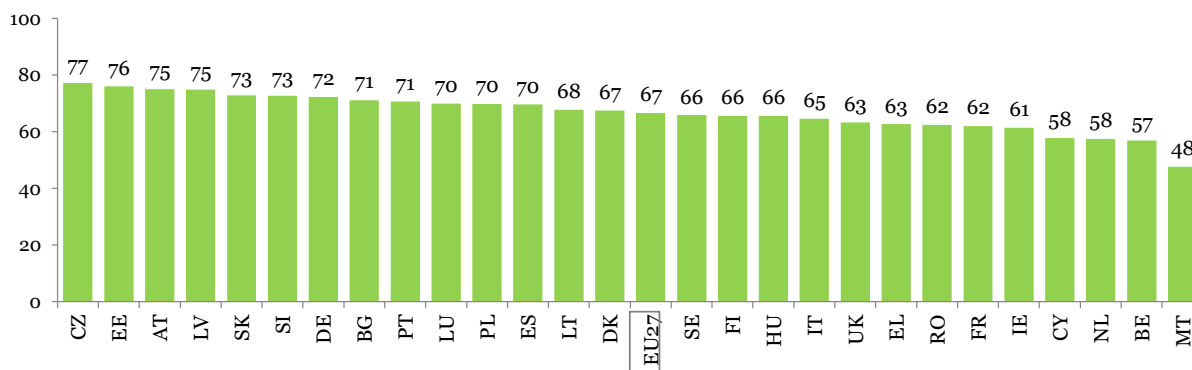
### Participation in cultural and arts activities



**Q2. Have you participated in any of the following cultural activities in the past year?**  
Base: all respondents, % of 'Yes' answers shown, EU27

Going to the cinema or attending a concert was the most-frequently mentioned cultural activity across all Member States; while the second largest proportion of respondents answered that they had visited a **historical monument, museum or gallery** in the past 12 months. Young people in Latvia, Austria, Estonia and the Czech Republic were the most likely to have visited museum, gallery or historical monument (75%-77%). Malta was the only country where less than half (48%) of respondents had participated in this type of cultural activities in the year prior to the survey.

### Participation in cultural and arts activities: Visiting a historical monument, museum or gallery



**Q2. Have you participated in any of the following cultural activities in the past year?**  
Base: all respondents, % of 'Yes' answers shown by country

The largest differences in participation rates for cultural activities were found when comparing respondents with the lowest level of educational attainment and those with the highest level. For example, while 38% of respondents who had left school before completing lower secondary education had visited a museum, gallery or historical monument in the past 12 months, this proportion was twice as high among those that had achieved a higher education qualification (76%).

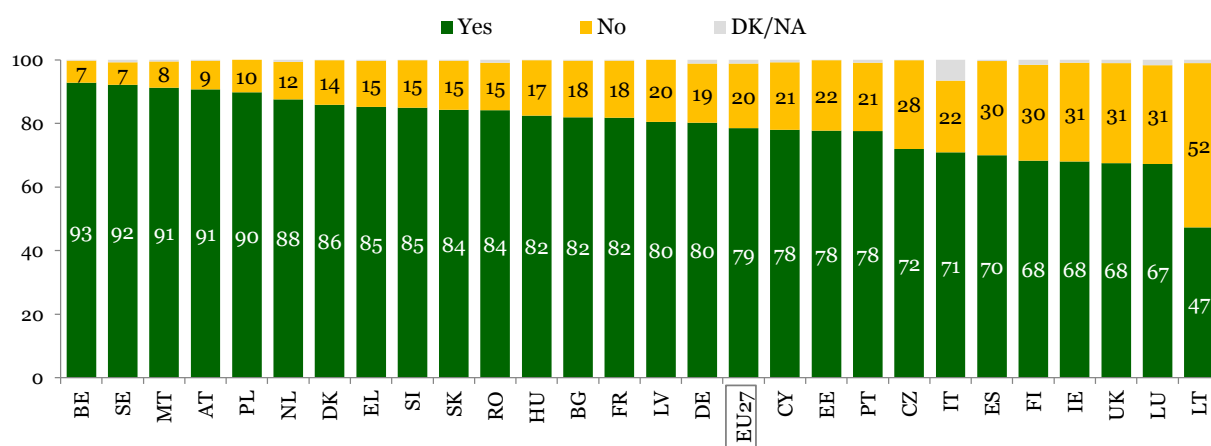


### 3. Participation in political elections

Among young people in the EU who were old enough to vote, roughly 8 in 10 (79%) said that they had voted in a political election at the local, regional, national or EU level in the past three years; a fifth of respondents said they had not voted in an election in that time frame.

Across all EU Member States (the exception being Lithuania), a majority of young adults – who were old enough to vote – said they had participated in an election at the local, regional, national or EU level in the three years prior to the survey; the proportion of “voters” ranged from 67% in Luxembourg to 93% in Belgium (where voting is compulsory). Poland, Austria, Malta and Sweden had results close to those of Belgium; in these countries, 90%-92% of eligible young people had voted in an election.

#### Participation in elections at the local, regional, national or EU level



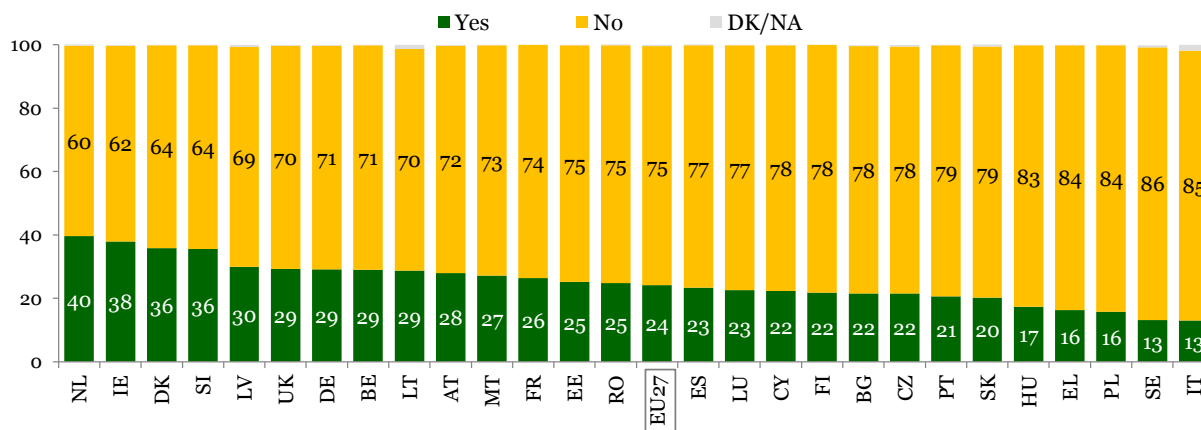
**Q3. During the last 3 years, did you vote in any political election at the local, regional, national or EU level? If you were, at that time, not eligible to vote, please say so.**  
Base: respondents who were old enough to vote, % by country

Educational attainment was positively related to political participation: while half of young adults who had left the educational system before completing their lower secondary education said they had voted in an election in the past three years, this proportion was 88% among those with a higher education qualification.

## 4. Participation in voluntary activities

Roughly a quarter (24%) of young adults in the EU said that they had been involved in an organised voluntary activity in the year prior to the survey; 75% had not participated in this type of voluntary activity. At the individual country level, the highest proportions of young people who had participated in an organised voluntary activity in the past 12 months were observed in Slovenia, Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands (36%-40%).

### Participation in organised voluntary activities



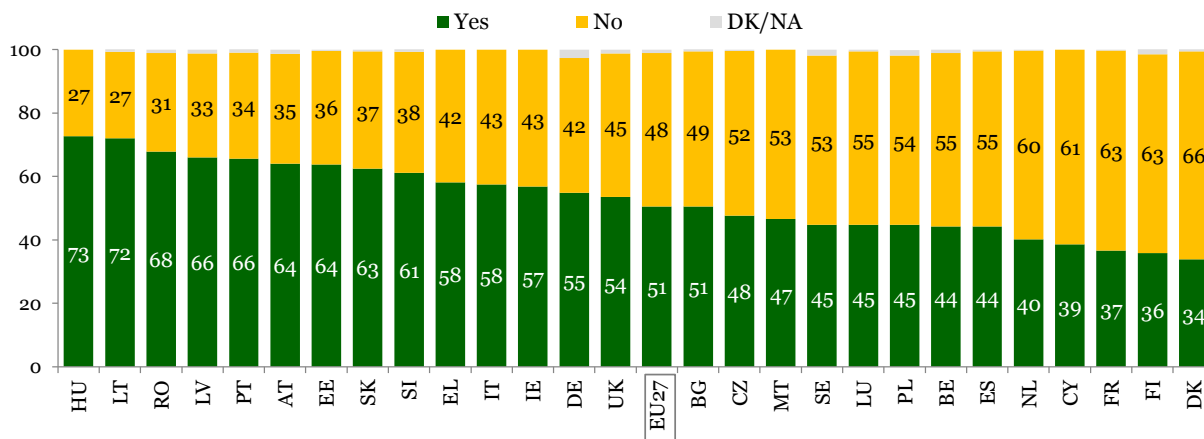
Q4. Have you been involved in any organised voluntary activities in the past year?  
Base: all respondents, % by country

Among respondents still in education, students in vocational training were less likely than their counterparts to have participated in an organised voluntary activity in the past year (23% vs. 27%-30% across other educational categories). Among respondents who had completed their education, those who had obtained higher levels of education were more likely to have been involved in voluntary activities (26% of those with a higher education qualification vs. 17% of respondents who had left school before completing secondary education).

### Voluntary actions aimed at changing one's local community

At the EU level, about half (51%) of young adults – who had been involved in an organised voluntary activity in the past 12 months – said that this activity had been aimed at changing something in their local community/environment. Respondents in Lithuania and Hungary were the most likely to answer that this activity had been aimed at changing something in their local community (72%-73%). In 12 other EU Member States, a majority of respondents answered in the same way (from 51% in Bulgaria to 68% in Romania).

### Participation in organised voluntary activities: Voluntary actions aimed at changing respondents' local communities



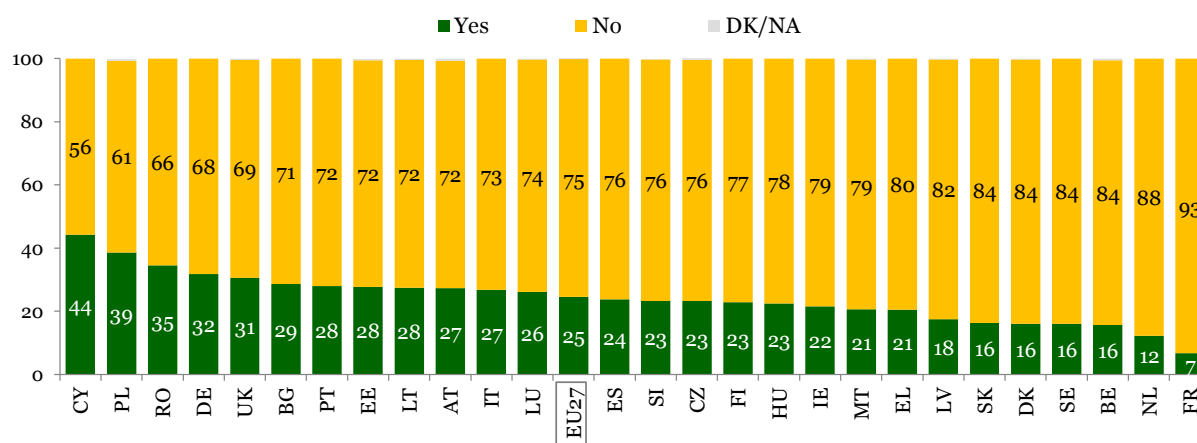
Q5. Was the voluntary action aimed at changing something in your local community?  
Base: respondents who have been involved in any organised voluntary activities, % by country

### Formal recognition of participation in voluntary activities

A quarter of young adults in the EU – who had been involved in an organised voluntary activity in the past 12 months – had received some kind of formal recognition (e.g. a certificate or diploma) for their participation.

The individual country results showed that, among respondents who had participated in an organised voluntary activity in the past year, those in Cyprus (44%) were the most likely to have received formal acknowledgment of their participation. Poland and Romania were the closest to Cyprus with more than a third of respondents who had received a certificate or diploma for their participation in a voluntary activity (39% and 35%, respectively).

#### Participation in organised voluntary activities: Receiving a certificate or diploma for voluntary activities



#### Q6. Did you receive a certificate, diploma or other formal recognition for your participation in these voluntary activities?

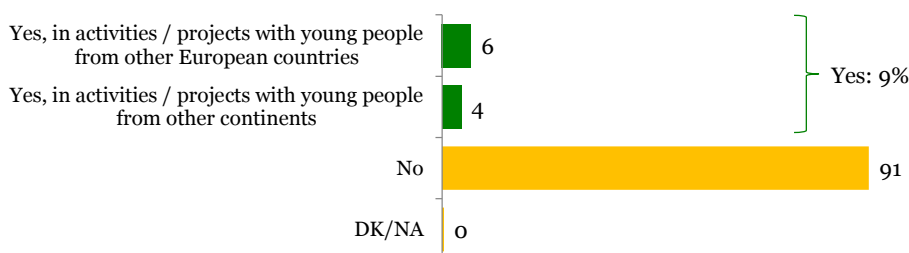
Base: respondents who have been involved in any organised voluntary activities, % by country

The younger the respondents were, the more likely they were to have received a formal recognition for their voluntary activities: while 34% of 15-19 year-olds – who had participated in an organised voluntary activity in the past 12 months – said that they had received a certificate or diploma for their participation in this activity, this proportion dropped to 16% for 25-30 year-olds.

## 5. Participation in international youth projects

About a tenth (9%) of young adults in the EU said that, in the year prior to the survey, they had participated in activities or projects aiming at fostering cooperation with young people from other countries; more precisely, 6% had taken part in activities or projects with young people from other European countries, while 4% mentioned activities with young people from other continents.

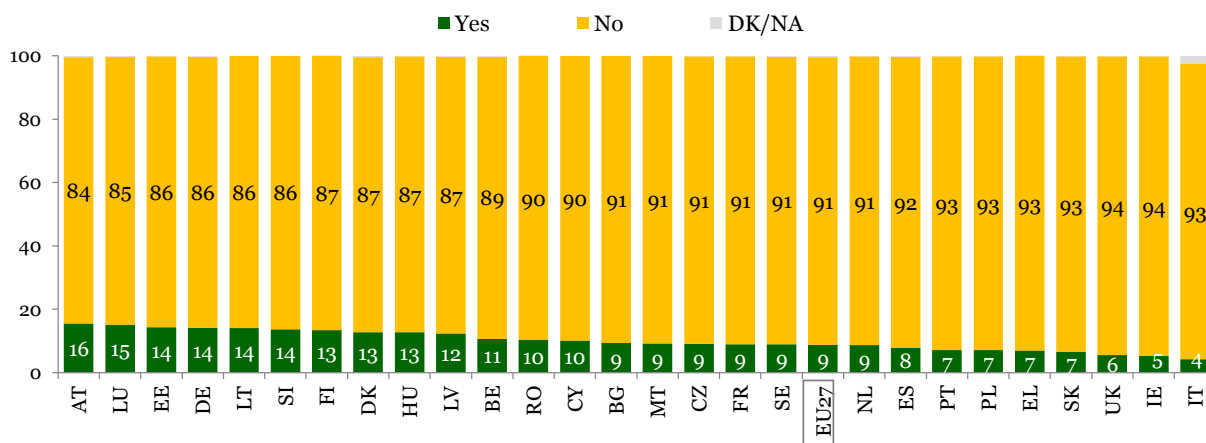
### Participation in activities or projects aimed at fostering cooperation with youth from other countries



Q7. Have you participated in any activities or projects during the past year aimed at fostering cooperation with youth from other countries?  
Base: all respondents, % of 'mentions' shown, EU27

Across all countries, a minority of young people said they had been involved in activities or projects aiming at fostering cooperation with young people from other countries; the proportion of respondents who had participated in this type of activity in the year prior to the survey ranged from 4% in Italy to 16% in Austria.

### Participation in activities or projects aimed at fostering cooperation with young people from other countries



Q7. Have you participated in any activities or projects during the past year aimed at fostering cooperation with youth from other countries?  
Base: all respondents, % by country

While 14% of 15-19 year-olds said they had participated in activities or projects aiming at fostering cooperation with young people from other countries, in the year prior to the survey, this proportion was 8% for 20-24 year-olds and 6% for 25-30 year-olds. Similarly, those still in education – especially those currently in secondary level education – were more likely than those who had completed their education to have participated in an international youth project in the past 12 months.

Among those who had completed their education, respondents with the highest level of education were somewhat more likely to have participated in an international youth project in the past 12 months (8% of respondents with a higher education qualification, compared to 2% of those who had left school without completing lower secondary education).

## 6. Summary of variations in participation rates – by young people’s socio-demographic characteristics

This last chapter summarises young people’s participation rates in various social, cultural and political activities in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics, such as their educational attainment and their work situation.

The younger the respondents were, the more likely they were to have been active in various organisations, to have participated in cultural and arts activities, to have taken part in an organised voluntary activity and to have been involved in activities or projects aiming at fostering cooperation with young people from other countries. For example, 57% of 15-19 year-olds had participated in an activity of a sports club, youth organisation or cultural organisation in the year prior to the survey; this proportion decreased to 45% for 20-24 year-olds and 39% for 25-30 year-olds.

Similarly, respondents still in education – and especially those in secondary levels of education – were more likely than those who had completed their education to have participated in organisational activities, cultural activities, voluntary work and international youth projects. For example, students in vocational training were less likely than their counterparts to have taken part in an organised voluntary activity in the past year (23% vs. 27%-30% across other educational categories).

Among respondents who had completed their education, those who had obtained higher levels of education were more likely to have participated in organisational, cultural, voluntary and international activities. For example, for all cultural activities listed in the survey, the largest differences in participation rates were found when comparing respondents with the lowest level of educational attainment and those with the highest level. Furthermore, educational attainment was also positively related to political participation: while 50% of those who had left the educational system before completing their lower secondary education had voted in an election in the past three years, this proportion was 88% among those with a higher education qualification.

Finally, looking at respondents’ work situation, two groups were worthy of particular attention: non-working respondents (no longer in education) and young people who had a part-time job alongside their studies. While the latter appeared to be the “most active” group, the former were each time among the least likely to have participated in various activities. For example, while just 6% of respondents with a disability and 8% of the unemployed had been involved in a cultural organisation, this proportion increased to 19% for respondents who had a part-time job alongside their studies.