

CENTRAL EUROPE

- ❖ YOUTH
- ❖ POLITICS
- ❖ DEMOCRACY

PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH IN HUNGARY, POLAND, AND SLOVAKIA



THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE
2018

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METHODOLOGY

This publication summarizes the findings of three public opinion surveys conducted in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia and subsequent focus group discussions in each country.

SURVEYS

SAMPLE DESIGN

Hungary – The sample is statistically representative of the Hungarian population aged 16-29 in terms of gender, education, and region.

Poland – The sample is statistically representative of the Polish population aged 16-29 in terms of age (in three groups 16-19, 20-24, 25-29), gender, education, province, and size of location.

Slovakia – The sample is statistically representative of the Slovak population aged 16-29 in terms of age groups (18-23, 24-29), gender, education, region, and size of location.

SAMPLE SIZE

Hungary – 500 respondents, age: 16-29, margin of error: $\pm 4\%$

Poland – 500 respondents, age: 16-29, margin of error: $\pm 4.5\%$

Slovakia – 508 respondents, age: 16-29, margin of error: $\pm 4\%$

FIELDWORK PERIOD

Hungary – December 15-20, 2017

Poland – December 7-20, 2017

Slovakia – December 1-10, 2017

TYPE OF SURVEY

Hungary – interviews carried out by telephone (CATI)

Poland – interviews carried out by telephone (CATI)

Slovakia – face-to-face interview (CAPI)

FOCUS GROUPS

NUMBER OF FOCUS GROUPS AND LOCATIONS

Hungary (6) – Budapest (2), Eger, Győr, Miskolc, Tata

Poland (5) – Warsaw (2), Białystok, Kielce, Skierniewice

Slovakia (4) – Bratislava (2), Banská Bystrica, Trenčín

SAMPLE SIZE

Hungary – 6-8 participants, age: 16-29

Poland – 6-8 participants, age: 18-29

Slovakia – 6-8 participants, age: 17-29

FIELDWORK PERIOD

Hungary – January 25-February 2, 2018

Poland – February 13-21, 2018

Slovakia – February 12-18, 2018

MAIN FINDINGS

SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY WIDESPREAD, BUT CONDITIONAL.

Young people in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia favor a democratic system of government, and prefer it to autocracy. However, their commitment to democratic values is conditional. They are willing to sacrifice some democratic principles in response to perceived threats to national security and economic opportunity.

YOUTH ARE DISSATISFIED WITH, DISENGAGED FROM POLITICS.

Young people in all three countries are dissatisfied with the political state of their countries. Focus group discussions reveal young people's disillusionment with their politicians as manifest in low levels of enthusiasm to engage in political affairs.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IS NOT ALL ABOUT ONLINE ENGAGEMENT.

While young people report turning to online sources for political information, they do not see the internet as the primary means for civic participation. Respondents in all three countries highlight voting as the preferred form of civic participation, followed by offline petitions.

ANTI-IMMIGRANT SENTIMENT IS STRONG, BUT NOT A TOP CONCERN.

In each country there is clear anti-immigrant sentiment but, when respondents are asked to rank their top concerns, immigration and terrorism are mentioned after healthcare, corruption, pensions, rising prices, and unemployment. Young Poles in particular see their society's relative ethnic homogeneity as contributing to Polish unity and national security.

EUROPEAN UNION SEEN AS A THREAT TO NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY FOR SOME...

Notable portions of young people in Hungary (44 percent), Poland (29 percent), and Slovakia (29 percent) see the European Union (EU) as a threat to national sovereignty.

...YET MOST PROFESS A STRONG EUROPEAN IDENTITY.

Young people in all three countries highly rank European identity following identification with their respective country -- in Hungary 39 percent, Poland 55 percent, and Slovakia 43 percent. In Poland, Europe is the second strongest part of respondents' personal identity, while, in Slovakia and Hungary, Europe is the third strongest following national and local identities.

LOW CONCERN ABOUT KREMLIN INFLUENCE.

Few respondents are concerned about the Russian invasion of Ukraine or perceive the Kremlin to be behind disinformation campaigns in Central Europe. Young Poles firmly condemn Kremlin actions in contrast to counterparts in Hungary and Slovakia.

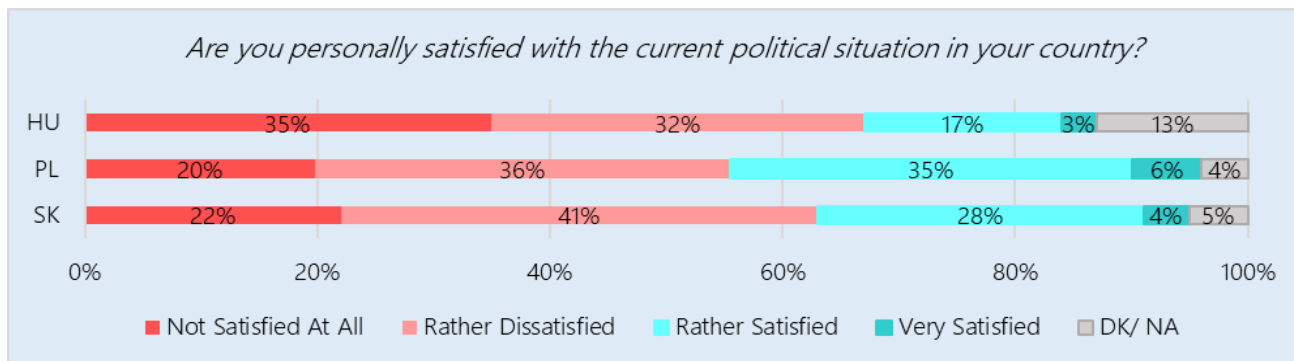
FACEBOOK IS LEADING SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

Young people in each of the three countries receive news about politics from Facebook. Other social networks do not rank highly. Online news outlets, television, and radio follow Facebook. Young people do not perceive a great deal of disinformation in media-based discourse. Most believe that they can discern disinformation.

COMPARATIVE FINDINGS

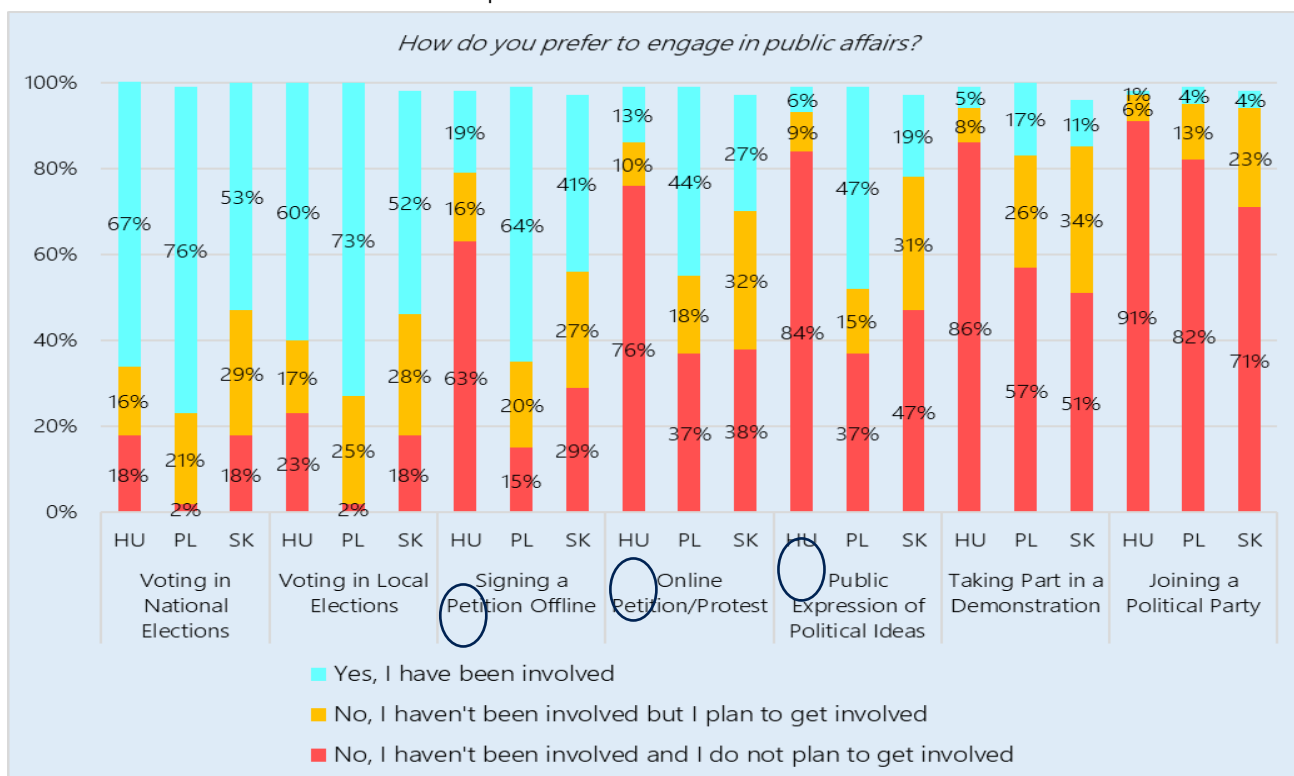
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Young people in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia are “rather” or “very” dissatisfied with their countries’ political situation. This opinion is most balanced in Poland, where nearly as many are somewhat dissatisfied as somewhat satisfied.¹



Young Hungarians are the least willing to be involved in any kind of political activity, while Polish young people express the strongest willingness to take part in public affairs. Voting is decisively the preferred form of participation in public and political affairs among respondents in each country. Although Slovaks report themselves to be least active in this regard, the majority have voted or plan to vote in national elections. In all three countries, slightly fewer respondents had or intend to vote in local elections.

As other surveys in all three countries typically show that citizens care more about local issues than national politics, this finding suggests that young people may diverge from their fellow citizens in their relative focus on national-level politics.

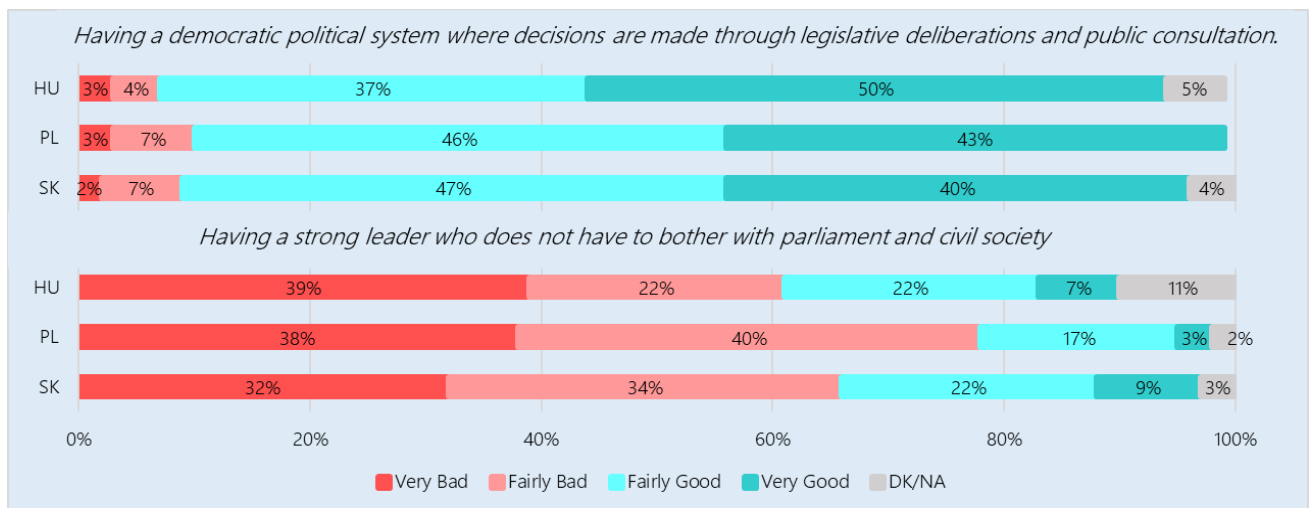


Young people prefer to get involved in politics offline rather than online. In all three countries, signing offline petitions is more popular than other forms of participation (with the exception of voting), and, in fact, more popular than signing online petitions. Hungarian respondents are significantly less willing to engage in public affairs, aside from voting, compared to their counterparts in Poland or Slovakia. Eight in 10 young Hungarians do not and would not sign petitions, publicly express their political views, or take part in a demonstration.

In every country, membership in a political party is the least-preferred form of participation, ranging from 71 percent of Slovaks, who are not involved in and do not plan to join a party, to 91 percent of Hungarians.

Despite apparent disengagement from civic life, young people do show interest in politics. Young Poles are most pronounced: 80 percent are interested in politics and public affairs, as compared to 45 percent in Hungary and 43 in Slovakia. Respondents' interest in politics but disinterest in many traditional forms of political and civic engagement emphasize the need for new modes of engagement and communication, such as participation in issue-based campaigns not necessarily led by political parties, can combat disengagement.

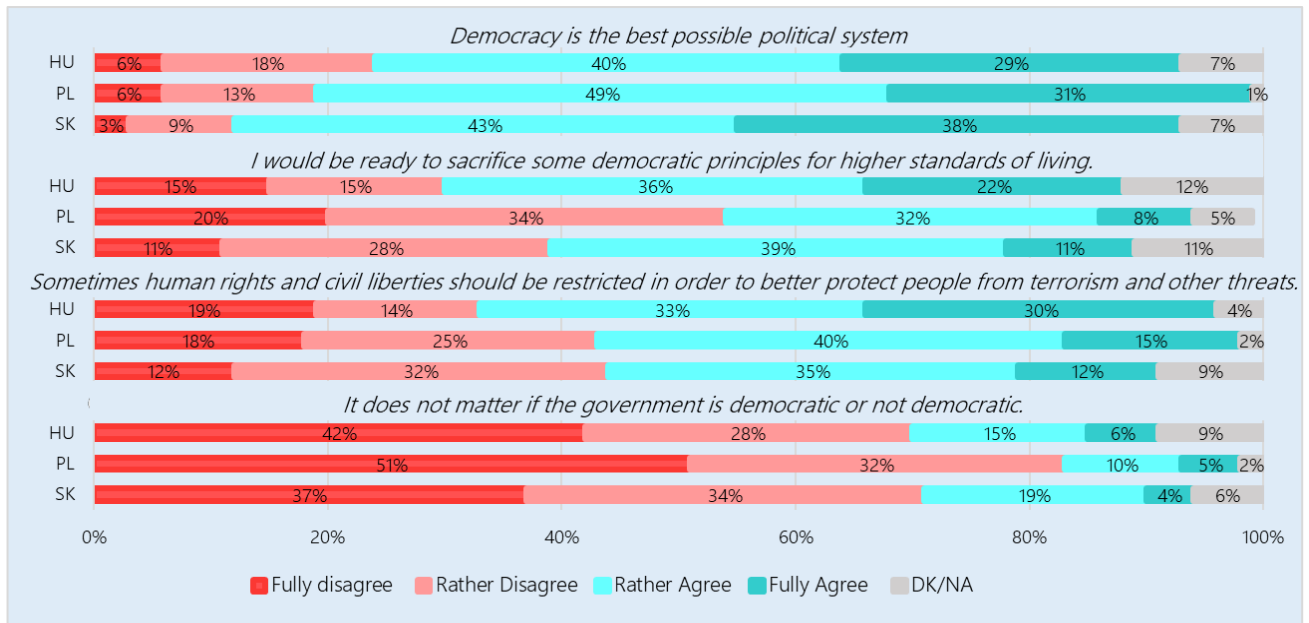
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VALUES



Overall support for democracy and democratic values is strong among young people in the three countries. Young people favor of a democratic political system where decisions are made through legislative deliberation and public consultation. Polish respondents most strongly reject authoritarian leadership.

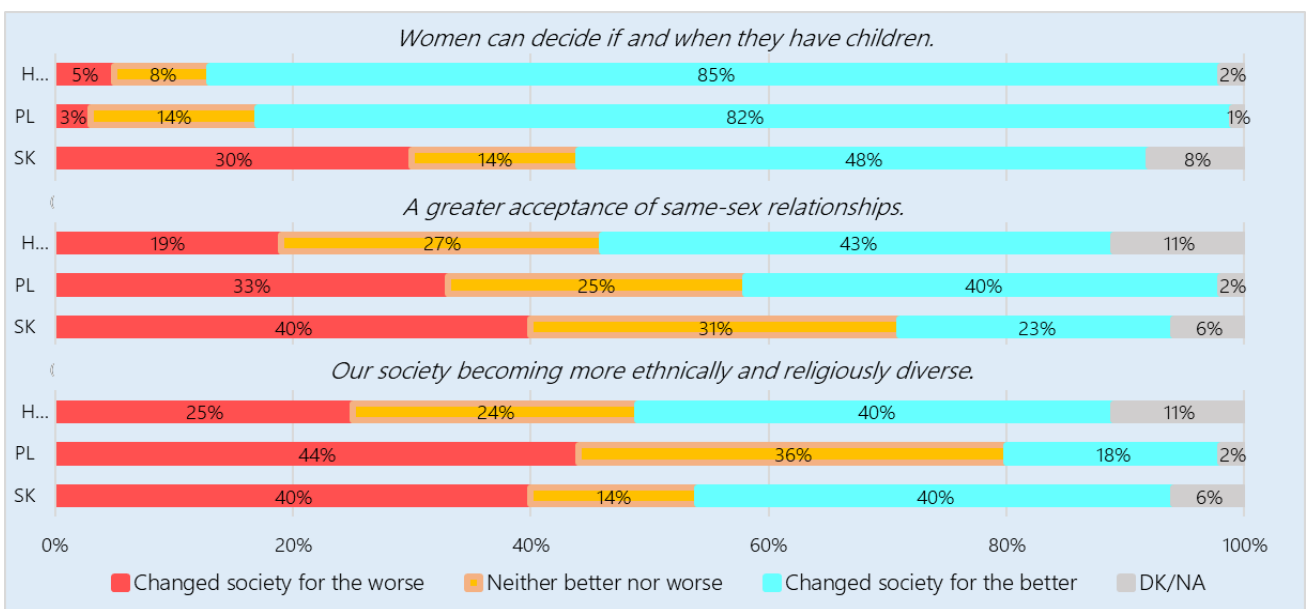
In Hungary and Slovakia, under one-third of respondents consider a strong leader who disregards institutions like parliament and civil society as positive.

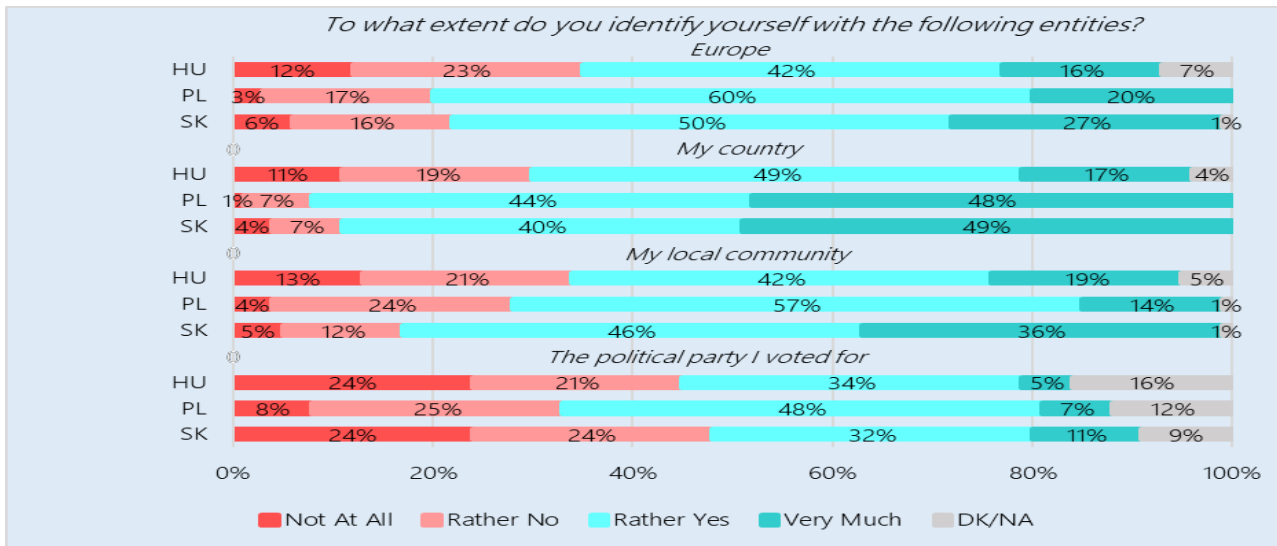
On questions about whether or not it matters to have a democratic political system, the majority of respondents says that it does matter, and an overwhelming majority believes that democracy is the best possible political system. Yet when national security or social welfare is seen to be at risk, young people’s commitment toward democracy wavers across the three countries. Polish respondents by a thin majority want to uphold democratic liberties even when confronted with lower standards of living, but at similar levels are prepared to restrict human rights and civil liberties to protect national security. Roughly six out of 10 Hungarians would consider sacrificing democratic principles and civic



liberties for higher standards of living and in order to protect national security. Slovak youth lie inbetween Polish and Hungarian counterparts.

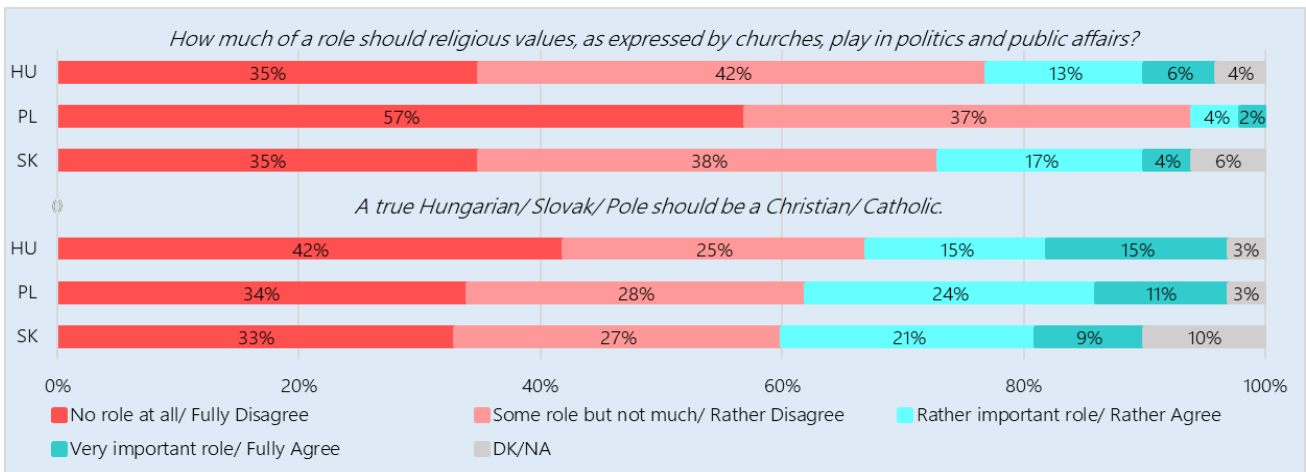
As relates to other social values, opinions are mixed. In all three countries, women deciding whether and when to have children is seen to be an advancement, albeit decidedly less so for young Slovaks. Slovak youth are overall less inclined to see social change—gender equality, same-sex relationships, and ethnic and religious diversity—as positive. Hungarian respondents are the most positive about these changes. Polish respondents reveal mixed feelings.





PERSONAL IDENTITY

The research indicates that young people’s sense of identity is layered, covering European, national, and local affiliations. Respondents most directly identify with their own country, particularly in Poland and Slovakia. Young people in each country (at approximately 75 percent) express pride in their national history. Identifying with their country is not necessarily linked to strong nationalist sentiment. Most young people understand their national, local, and European identities as complementary, not conflicting. Focus group discussions reveal that young people stress their national identity first and foremost—only through this national lens do they see themselves as European. For example, one respondent in Hungary declared: *“I am as much Hungarian as European.”* Focus group participants tend to associate their espousal of European identity with personal benefits, such as improved educational and employment opportunities.



Young people’s strong sense of national identity is not necessarily expressed through religious affiliation. The countries’ predominant Christian faiths are not considered by poll respondents as an

essential element of national identity or political life. Hungarian and Slovak respondents identify with religion less than almost any other political or social institution. In Slovakia, the only other entity that respondents identify with less are political parties. In Hungary, 67 percent disagree that a true Hungarian must be Christian. Young people in Slovakia and Hungary similarly believe religion should play little to no role in politics. In Poland, where religiosity is more pronounced, 62 percent nevertheless do not believe that Catholicism is an inherent part of Polish identity, and more respondents (94 percent) in Poland than in the other countries see little to no role for religion in politics², with Polish respondents believing that church and state should be completely separate. At the same time, personal identification with religion in Poland is nearly as high as identification with Europe.

POLICY ISSUES

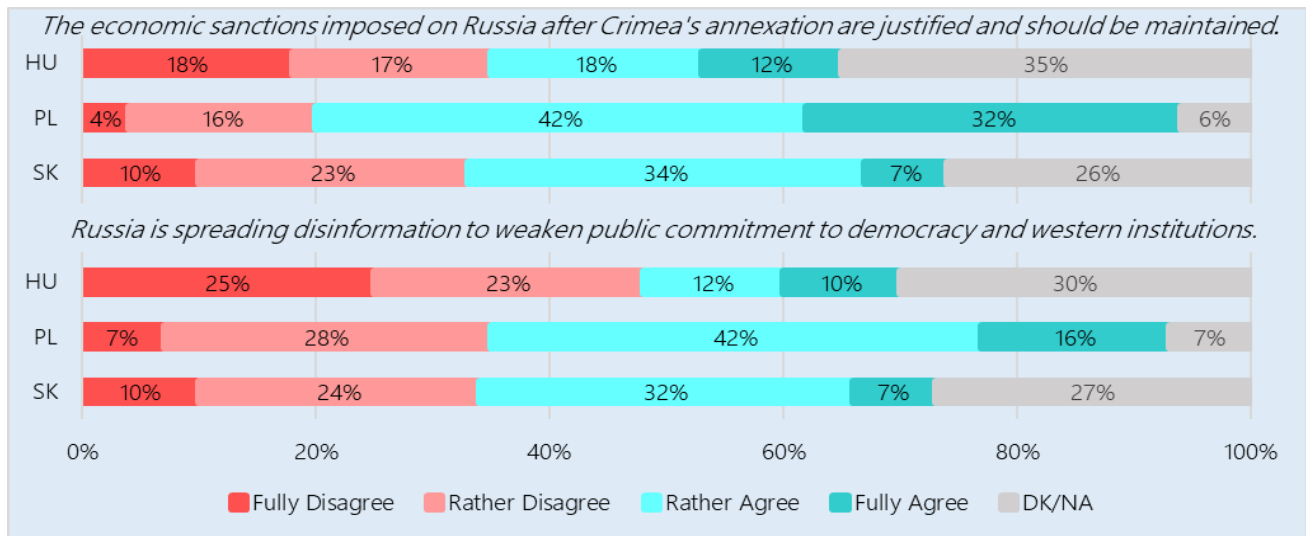
Young people are most concerned about issues related to social services and welfare, and less worried about migration or the rule of law. Slovak and Hungarian respondents name as their priority issues healthcare, corruption, unemployment, and a rising cost of living. Most of these issues are among the top concerns in Poland as well. However, Polish respondents are markedly less concerned about unemployment, corruption, and immigration.

Although immigration and terrorism register as concerns in all three countries, they fall well below concerns over economic opportunity and government services. Slovaks register a considerably higher level of concern for terrorism and immigration as compared to their Hungarian and Polish counterparts, but corruption is their top concern. Among presented options, young respondents in each country worry least about gender inequality, threats to national culture, and Kremlin military actions and political influence.

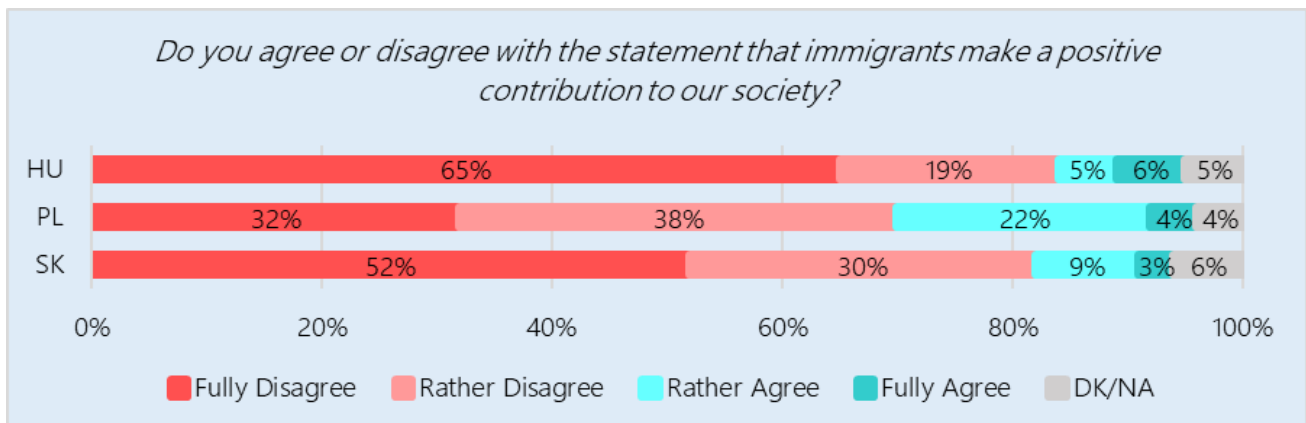
Respondent percentage rating issues as serious			
	HU	PL	SK
Healthcare	90	81	90
Unemployment	84	49	83
Rising prices/cost of living	86	78	93
Corruption	82	65	94
Immigration	76	56	81
Pensions	68	78	80
Education	68	58	75
Democratic decline and rising authoritarianism	65	59	65
Terrorism	58	45	84
Kremlin military buildup/aggression toward neighbors	56	63	55

Positions on European issues are mixed. A notable portion of young people in each country, perceive the EU as a threat to national sovereignty. In Hungary, where this narrative is most often repeated, including at the highest levels of government, 41 percent of young Hungarians believe that EU membership is a threat to the country's sovereignty. Polish and Slovak peers are more resistant to this idea, but nearly one-third do perceive this threat.

Polish respondents strongly believe that sanctions against Moscow for its annexation of Crimea are justified and should be maintained, as compared to Slovaks or Hungarians who show higher rates of disagreement and uncertainty. Hungarians and Slovaks are also uncertain as to whether or not there is Kremlin-organized or inspired disinformation in their countries. Poles most strongly perceive disinformation. In Slovakia, respondents are divided between uncertainty, agreement, and disagreement as to the existence of disinformation. In Hungary, a majority (58 percent) does not perceive disinformation.



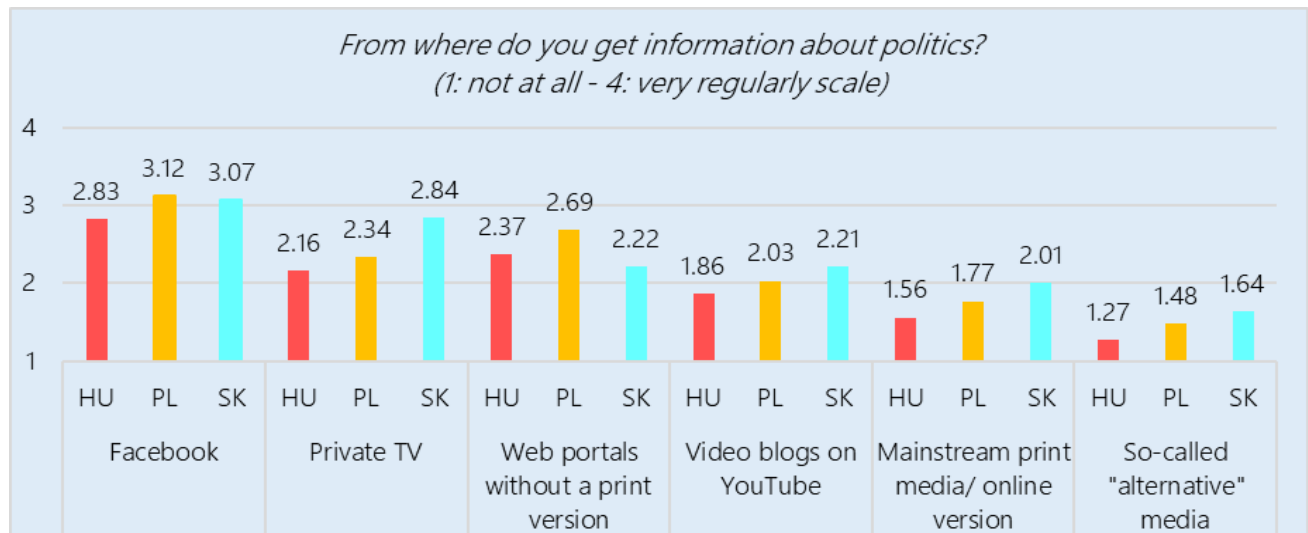
Anti-immigrant sentiment is high in all three countries, as this has been a dominant narrative during the multi-year migrant crisis. The strongest anti-immigrant sentiments are visible among Hungarians who fully disagree on the positive contributions of migrants in their country by twice as much as Polish respondents.



When comparing the strong anti-immigrant sentiment in Hungary (84 percent) and Slovakia (82 percent) with relatively high support for the positive societal impact of ethnic and religious diversity in those countries, 40 percent in both, it should be noted that immigration and diversity are perceived differently. The strong anti-immigrant sentiment corresponds with the immigration crisis narrative widely discussed in the three countries.

INFORMATION SOURCES

Young people obtain their political news from a wide range of sources, and those sources are generally consistent across all three countries. Facebook ranks as the most frequent source of political information in each country. Private television channels, radio and online news portals are among the most popular sources of information. Mainstream print media, video blogs, and Twitter are the least preferred sources. Alternative sources, including those tied to disinformation, are least referenced. In focus groups, young people note that they use Facebook as a first source of information, which they then verify through other online outlets. Many saw this as a way to compare diverse opinions. Given reputed use by Facebook of algorithms to feed political information to users, this verification process may not provide a plurality of viewpoints to young citizens.



ANALYSIS

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND POLICY ISSUES

The research finds that young people's interest in politics correlates with political participation. The highest level of interest in political affairs is recorded among youth age 24 to 29, and this age group is the most politically engaged or willing to engage in the future. Though most in the demographic of 16 to 19 have not yet voted, more than 70 percent plan to vote in general elections, highlighting an interest in politics and potential to be politically engaged. These two groups provide new and differing opportunities for political participation, each requiring distinct outreach strategies and messaging to increase their engagement. For example, 16 to 19 year olds are the largest demographic without a declared political affiliation, which provides a large field from which to attract support, if outreach is specifically targeted toward their interests. The research also finds that young people in all three countries prefer less demanding forms of political engagement, such as voting and signing online and offline petitions, highlighting a preference for less time-consuming means of engagement. This would require the development of innovative approaches for sustainable political involvement to match how young people want to be engaged in politics.

Young people are also more likely to take action on issues that have a direct impact on their lives or values. Focus groups make this clear as respondents recount their political involvement when quality of life issues that more directly affect their day-to-day – such as high school exam regulations, internet access, and pub closing times – are in question. There is a divergence in priority issues where youth in urban areas have a higher level of interest in the quality of government and democracy than those outside of cities, who are more concerned with socio-economic issues. Direct impact issues are most likely to motivate young people to be politically involved. Although youth do not highly consider taking part in demonstrations, they are willing to do so when protests concern high priority issues for them – such as internet taxation in Hungary, reproductive rights in Poland, and government corruption in Slovakia. As young citizens show little interest at present in party politics, direct outreach on youth priority issues can increase their political engagement through issue advocacy.

PERSONAL IDENTITY

Young people in the three surveyed countries most strongly identify with their respective country, while European identity is second strongest in Poland the third strongest in Hungary and Slovakia. Local community ranks second among young Hungarians and Slovaks, while Poles perceive their local community as the third layer of their identity. This perception among Poland's youth is directly inverse to older Poles who feel the strongest tie to their local community (51 percent) and weakest to Europe (4 percent).³ Most young people understand their national, local, and European identities as complementary, not conflicting. Although many feel they are second-tier EU citizens, not privy to the same standards as their western neighbors and original members of the EU. This could prompt for dialogue and outreach that places EU-specific topics in the context of broader European identity.

DEMOCRACY ON PAPER VIS-À-VIS DEMOCRACY IN PRACTICE

Young people surveyed in this study believe in democracy as the ideal system of governance. However, they express grievances over how democracy functions in reality, ranging from dissatisfaction with political parties and political representation to repudiation of what they perceive

to be entrenched government corruption. One young Polish focus group offered a commonly expressed lament: Poland is *"an apparent democracy (...) we cannot say we don't have democracy, because somehow we do have our rights and freedoms, but on the other hand every day the law is being broken, as well as citizens' rights."* A young Hungarian characterized the country's political system as *"pseudo-democratic. On paper it is...It is not."*

Young people link their misgivings about democratic politics with their views on political parties, in terms of having a meaningfully pluralistic system and in finding authentic representation in government. Young people do not believe that political parties represent their priorities. Fragmentation of the political opposition is a political condition particularly apparent to young citizens, who see opposition parties as not offering them a political alternative to support. As young people perceive political parties to be less effective in representing their interests, they are interested in direct forms of democratic engagement, such as supporting individual candidates rather than parties.

The research suggests that political parties should engage youth constituents through new and direct forms of dialogue, and prioritize topics of youth interest, including but not limited to anti-corruption initiatives. The research also suggests that political parties would do well to design new methods of candidate recruitment and training, in order to promote new leaders who can engage disaffected young adults, and to create pathways for younger people to become politically active through parties.

COUNTRY REPORTS

HUNGARY

Young people’s political disinterest and disengagement is growing. Disinterest is at its highest since 2000, with only one in 10 young people claiming to be interested in political topics.⁴ This could be due, in part, to low levels of public political dialogue, society-wide mistrust of institutions, and little discussion of public affairs in the education system. To avoid jeopardizing funding and operations, schools avoid sensitive subjects completely, limiting discussions of political issues, democracy, human rights, and minority rights as young people move through the education system. In general, students are not taught patterns of thinking and logical frameworks that would enable them to question generalizations and help them to understand the nuances of given problems.⁵

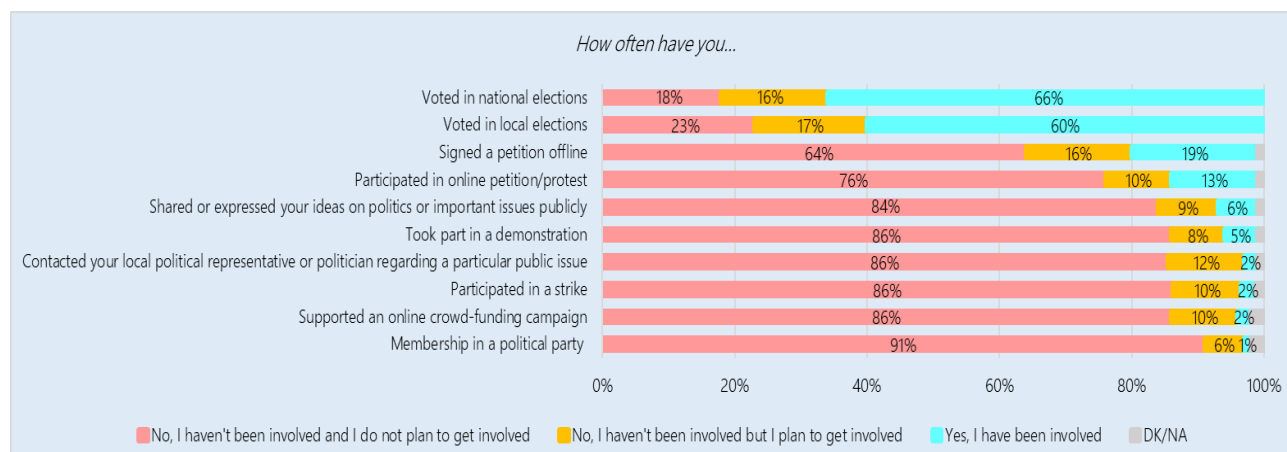
“I think our generation doesn’t really care. Sure, we go and vote, but we don’t really think we can change the situation in our country.”

Despite such dampers on political discourse, there have been signs of engagement. In January 2018, thousands of students marched to demand education reform and stronger youth representation, as well as to critique government actions in these areas. This protest, and others related to threats to close the Central European University and internet taxation point to the potential for a new generation of active young citizens willing to step up for democracy.

Survey data was collected before April 2018 parliamentary elections, whose campaign was dominated by a strong and polarizing anti-immigrant narrative, which could have shifted opinions on some of the topics discussed below.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Dissatisfaction with politics and the ruling government is traditionally high among young people in Hungary and remains so. This is due, in part, to longstanding distrust of politicians and political parties, alienating Hungarian youth from politics.⁶ Two-thirds of Hungarian respondents express their dissatisfaction with the Hungarian political situation and only one in five tends to be satisfied. Respondents supporting Fidesz are the most likely to be satisfied with the current political situation (31 percent). Hungary’s young people believe that the opposition does not provide a viable alternative political force to the current government as it is viewed as fragmented and not responsive to citizen priorities.



Young people in Hungary exhibit a low level of interest in politics. According to the survey, this pattern has not changed significantly compared to previous studies.^{7,8} The majority (53 percent) of Hungarian respondents tend to have

"A lot of us are not interested in politics because...we don't believe that we can make any difference with our vote."

no or only minimal interest in politics. Casting a ballot is the most frequent form of political participation among those surveyed, while political party membership is the least common. Offline petitions and online protests are also popular. In focus group discussion, there is debate over the utility of action—even voting. Overall, those with more education are more willing to be active, as are supporters of opposition parties, other than supporters of Jobbik. Focus groups confirm this low level of action even among those interested in politics.

"That [proposed tax on the internet] was a huge, sick thing. Everywhere else, [internet access] is a basic thing. The world doesn't work without [the internet] and putting a tax on it is so stupid. I almost went out to protest. It mobilized me because it was a tangible issue I could relate to."

Focus group participants cite signing petitions for such causes as high school exam regulations, internet access, and pub closing times. Nearly all participants recall the 2014 protests against a proposed tax on the internet, although only two took part.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VALUES

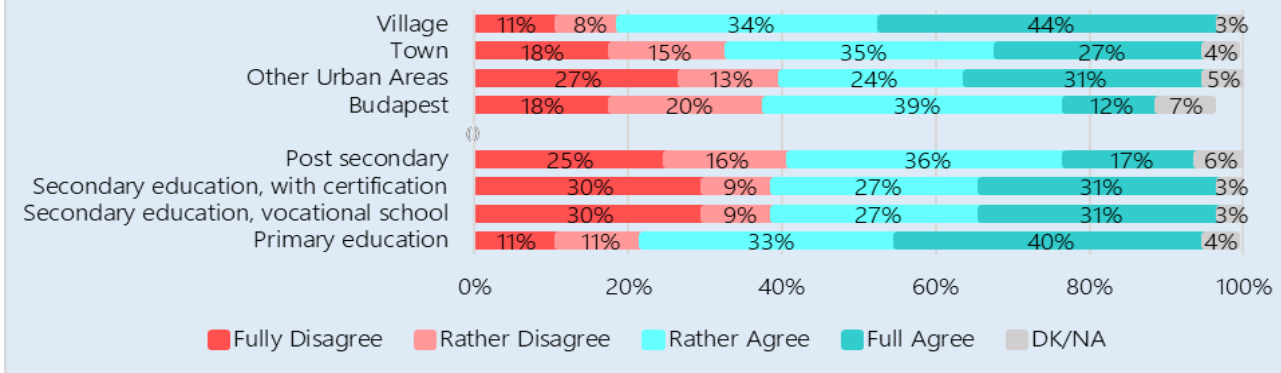
Young respondents show a high commitment to democracy, though this is tempered by economic and security concerns. The overwhelming majority of Hungarian respondents (87 percent) see a democratic political system as good or very good. For the absolute majority, it matters that the government is democratic—an opinion most strongly held by Jobbik supporters. Twenty-nine percent believe that having a strong leader would be good for Hungary. Those who are less educated or would vote for Fidesz are more likely to support the strong leader solution, while those from Budapest and with a higher level of education most strongly support democracy as a political system. Nine out of 10 respondents with university degrees agree that democracy is the best possible political system.

Focus group participants' idea of what democracy means vary. More detailed responses correlate positively with age and level of education, but few are able to articulate concepts related to fundamental freedoms, such as free speech and free and fair elections. Opinions vary as to whether or not Hungary is a democratic country, but most agree that Hungary's democracy is imperfect.

Survey results show that in Hungary, more than in Poland or Slovakia, young people are willing to restrict democratic principles and human rights for increased security or a higher standard of living (around 60 percent). This may not be an imminent concern as half of the young people in Hungary claimed to live comfortably, according to 2016 Eurobarometer results. Although, slightly more felt excluded from economic and social life due to the economic crisis.⁹

"I would say [the political system] is pseudo-democratic."

Sometimes human rights and civil liberties should be restricted in order to better protect people from terrorism and other threats.



When pressed in focus groups, defining what those rights and liberties could be is difficult, and once defined, most usually agree that giving up rights is only acceptable in cases of national emergency—war, epidemics, or natural disaster—and only temporarily. Some maintain that restrictions should never happen. As relates to preserving national security, those with less education, those in rural areas, and Fidesz supporters are most likely to support the restriction of human rights and civil liberties. Conversely, those who most staunchly defend rights under any circumstance are those who support center-left opposition parties, have higher levels of education, and live in urban areas.

“There are too many promises followed by less execution and results.”

Most are embittered by democracy’s seeming inability to deliver results, and by the disconnect between politicians and citizens. Many claim frustration that politics is not about their generation, and that there is no discussion of topics central to young people. They, like older citizens, are frustrated with the gap between promises and results. Those with higher education are particularly frustrated with what they see as a simplification of politics and a prevalence by politicians to appeal to emotion or instinct rather than citizen-oriented policy solutions.

“There is a populist regime here. It gives simple answers and solutions that are easy to understand. That’s all. It makes you stupid. Populist politics try to appeal to emotions rather than logic..”

Participants whose families are in middle or higher income brackets also note that Hungarians are not “democracy-ready,” and are more inclined to follow instruction than think critically. This perception is common among the educated and left-leaning participants. Young respondents believe that older Hungarians are the most inclined toward the follower mentality.

“We are easily manipulated. We love having somebody who tells us what to do.”

Respondents’ support for social policies seen to align with European Union integration is slightly mixed. Young Hungarians support issues related to gender equality, though men perceive more equality than women when it relates to balance of work and household duties. Though not quite as highly supported as gender equality, societal change related to same-sex relationships and ethnic and religious diversity receives support from two in five young Hungarians. Approximately one quarter, predominantly men, perceive these changes as negative.

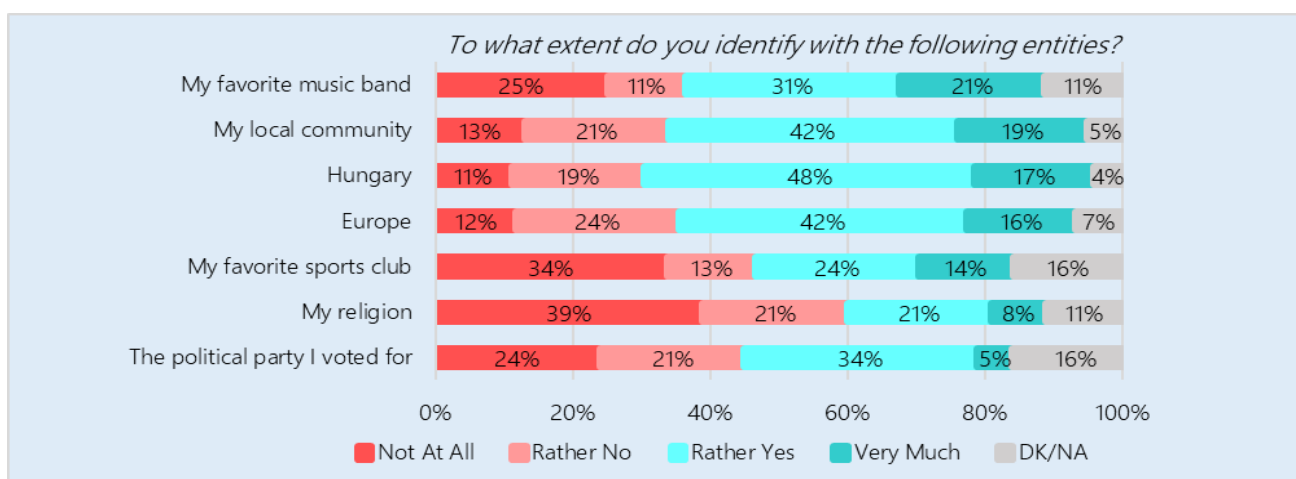
PERSONAL IDENTITY

There is a relatively strong identification among Hungarians surveyed with their country, their local community, and Europe. Two-thirds identify themselves with Hungary while three out of 10 do not. Identification with Europe is slightly weaker than with Hungary, with women and those with a higher level of education more likely to identify with Europe than men and those with a lower level of education.

"I consider myself a human first, and I'm as much Hungarian as I'm European."

Young Hungarians are proud of their national history; however, to be Christian is not considered a requirement for being a true Hungarian. Almost three out of every four believe that Hungarians have pride in their history, while 30 percent agree that a true Hungarian should be a Christian. Fidesz supporters are slightly more likely to agree that a true Hungarian should be Christian.

According to the European Social Survey of 2014 to 2016, 67 percent of young adults in Hungary (age 16-29) identified as having no religion, ranking the country's youth as the sixth least religious in Europe.¹⁰



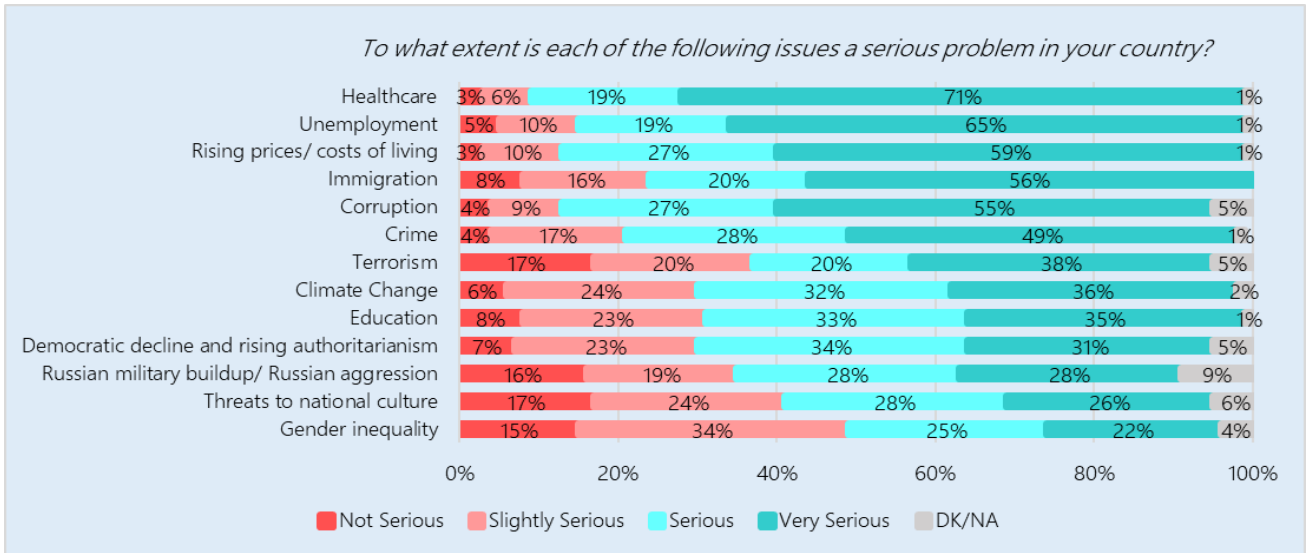
POLICY ISSUES

Although survey respondents show little interest in politics, they express clear positions on the most pressing problems of the country. Healthcare, unemployment, and rising costs of living are considered the three most serious problems. More than 60 percent see the situation of healthcare and unemployment as a very serious problem in Hungary, while scores for inflation and corruption are also high. This trend is echoed across all focus groups nearly unanimously. The perceived seriousness of unemployment and inflation does not follow actual macroeconomic trends, but focus group participants tend to point to inequality within Hungary, or as compared to foreign countries, as the source of their discontent. Corruption is an outside concern in focus groups,

"Healthcare and education are not good at all in Hungary. The standard of living isn't very good and neither is work. Looking at foreign countries and people living there, I see them happier and more relaxed than Hungarians."

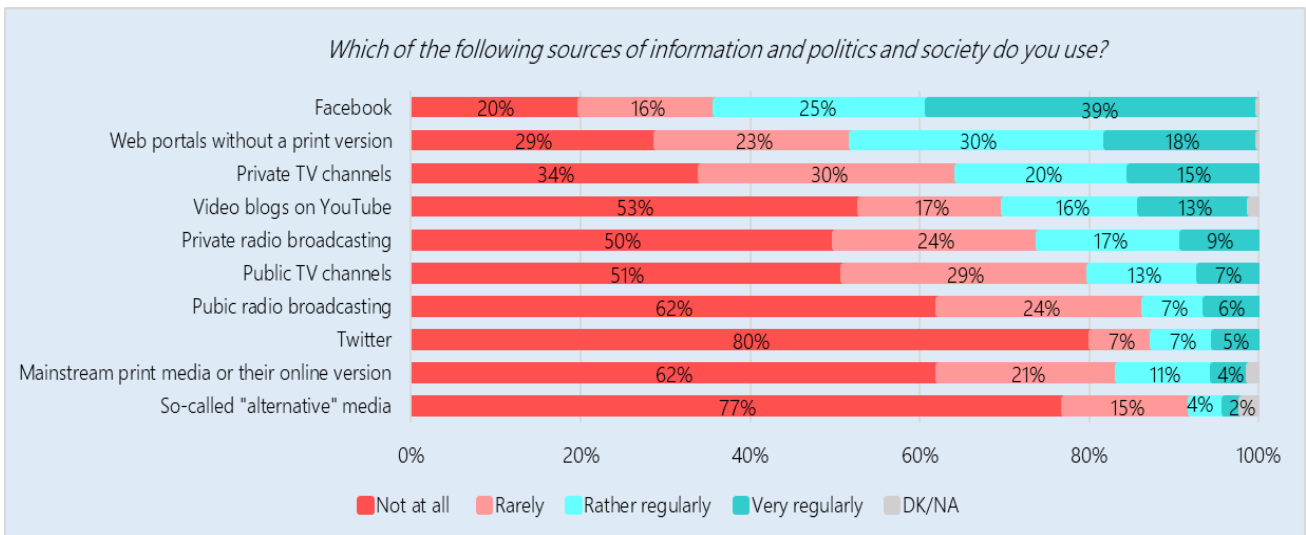
"(Corruption) is when friends (of the government) buy everything and there is no competition. Everything becomes more expensive and then everything gets stolen... this is a hotbed of corruption."

particularly for participants whose families are in middle or higher income brackets and live in Budapest, where participants had more education than those from other parts of the country.



In terms of foreign affairs, concerns among surveyed youth track with national narratives. Few are concerned with Russian aggression or military buildup, and few believe there are Kremlin-backed disinformation campaigns in Hungary. Around one-third are not sure whether there are disinformation campaigns, while large majorities are concerned about immigration and the threat of the EU to Hungarian sovereignty, despite otherwise positive perceptions toward EU membership. Three-quarters are concerned about immigration, and even more believe that immigrants do not offer a positive contribution to Hungarian society. This paints an unsurprising, but complex picture of young people’s perceptions of the EU—a potentially threatening entity, but one with which they nonetheless identify. This is affirmed in focus groups, where respondents clearly consider themselves European and think of this as a strong part of their identity. Most do not offer much by way of detailed explanation, citing general affinity for Europe and feeling that it is “natural” from them to be part of Europe.

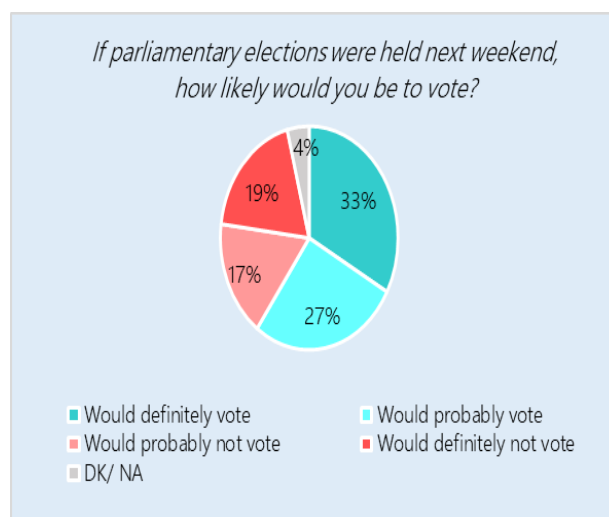
INFORMATION SOURCES



Young people’s primary source of news about public affairs is the internet. Facebook is the leading source (64 percent) with online news sources without print versions trailing behind (48 percent). Even on Facebook, few focus group participants indicate they directly follow political figures or news outlets, and few share news items. Focus group participants note that they tend to watch television for news only in passing or if their family is already doing so. The media landscape in Hungary is heavily controlled by actors with close ties to the government and objectivity is questionable.¹¹ Few outlets buck this trend.¹² Most focus group participants believe that at least a portion of the media is under government control. Some believe they are “propaganda-proof” and experienced in evaluating the trustworthiness of news items, noting that the elderly are more vulnerable to being misled. Nonetheless, most do not perceive the issue of false news stories as a political one, but rather as an issue related to the internet in general.

POTENTIAL TO MOBILIZE

Despite the overall disinterest in politics and civic action, there is potential for greater engagement among the young people of Hungary. Survey results show that young people in urban areas, older than 19, with more education, and supporters of opposition parties are most likely to engage. Actors interested in preserving and advancing Hungary’s democracy must capitalize upon this willingness. An approach to increasing youth engagement in Hungary cannot target only those who are most active, but must also be tailored to reach multiple demographics—such as those more vulnerable to disinformation or less certain of the benefits of democracy.

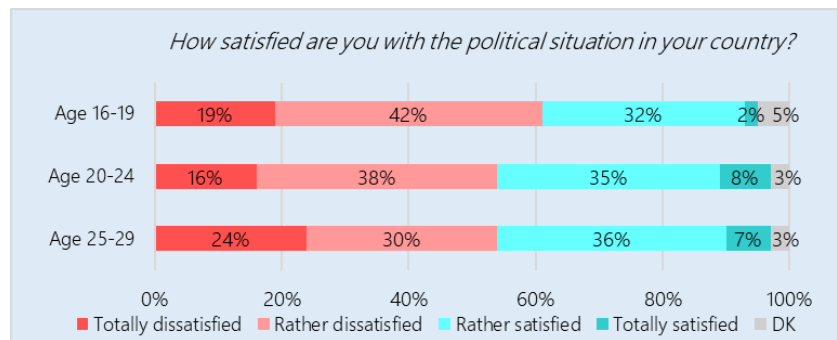


POLAND

Young Poles, like their older counterparts, have a low level of trust in democratic institutions. Poland's youth emphasize that they are discouraged from participating in politics due to unjustified quarrels and disputes between politicians that deal mainly with "substitute issues" instead of solving important societal problems.¹³ This has manifested at the ballot box. From 2011 to the present, young voters tend to opt for anti-establishment candidates. They also tend to participate in non-partisan movements, such as the 2012 protests against an international treaty regarding intellectual property rights or the "Black Protests" against increased restrictions on reproductive rights.¹⁴ Despite such participation, respondents often state that effective governments are more important than democratic governments.¹⁵

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

A narrow majority of young Poles are dissatisfied with the political situation in their country (56 percent), marking them as more optimistic than their peers in Hungary and Slovakia. Younger Poles (aged 16 to 19) are more dissatisfied than those aged 20-29. Those with higher levels of

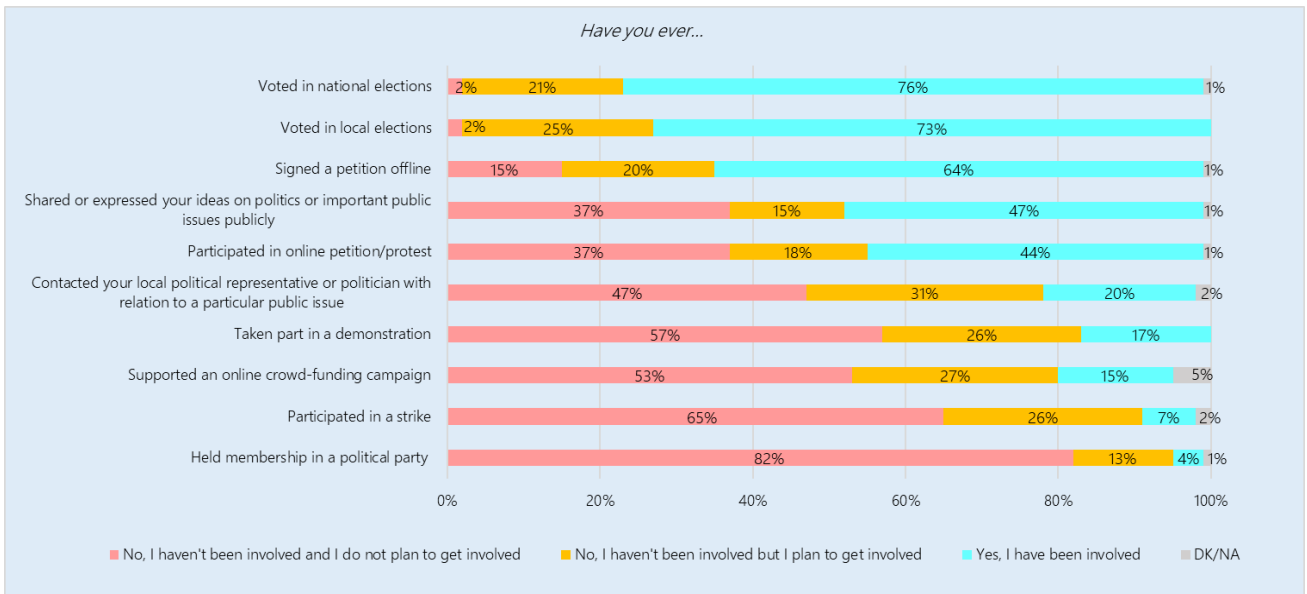


education hold stronger opinions regarding their satisfaction with the political situation, responding that they are either completely satisfied or completely dissatisfied at the highest rates. Focus group discussions reaffirmed the mixed opinions on the state of political affairs in Poland. Those in Warsaw, in particular, describe public life as manipulated, confused, divided, and with eroding truth and rights. Others are more optimistic.

Despite young Poles' preference for consuming information online, as explored in later sections, they indicate a preference for taking civic action offline, especially in the forms of petitions or voting. Poland's youth prefer to engage in public life through elections; more than 95 percent have voted or would vote in elections at the national or local level. However, recent turnout among all Polish citizens was below 50 percent, with young Poles the least likely to participate, indicating higher intention to vote than reflected in actual voter turnout on election day.¹⁶ In focus groups, some also express interest in in-person demonstrations, particularly noting the independence march organized by right wing movements on Polish National Day (November 11), followed by the 2016 strikes against proposed legislation that would have increased restrictions on reproductive rights.¹⁷ While focus group participants overwhelmingly stress voting as their first choice for civic participation, many mention volunteerism through public fundraisers or local advocacy as ways they have participated in public life in the past. This suggests a growing engagement in local or charitable-social issues.

"If it's the people who hold the power, then we should have more influence. I know that it would be very expensive, but I would prefer there be more referendums in our country and that we could actually make more decisions."

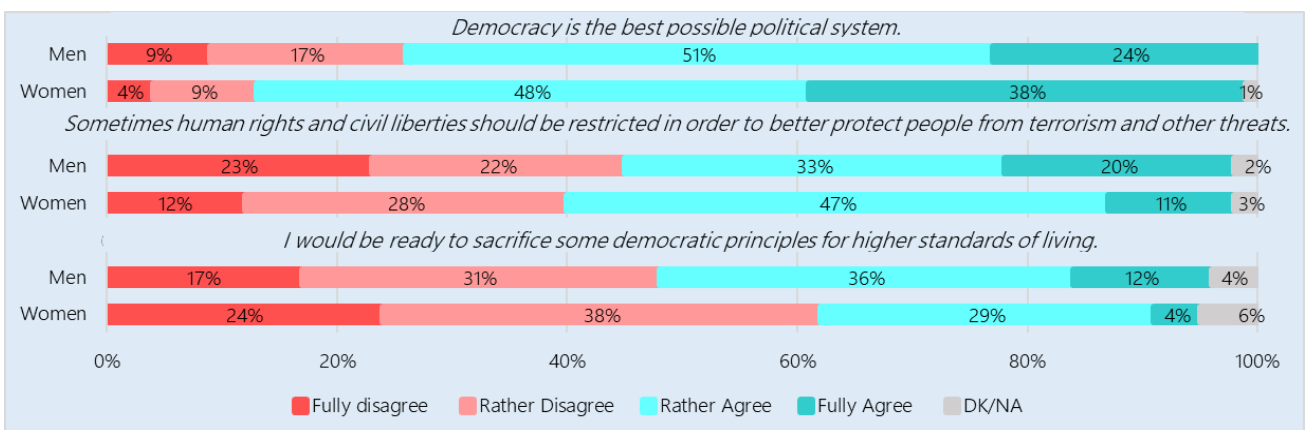
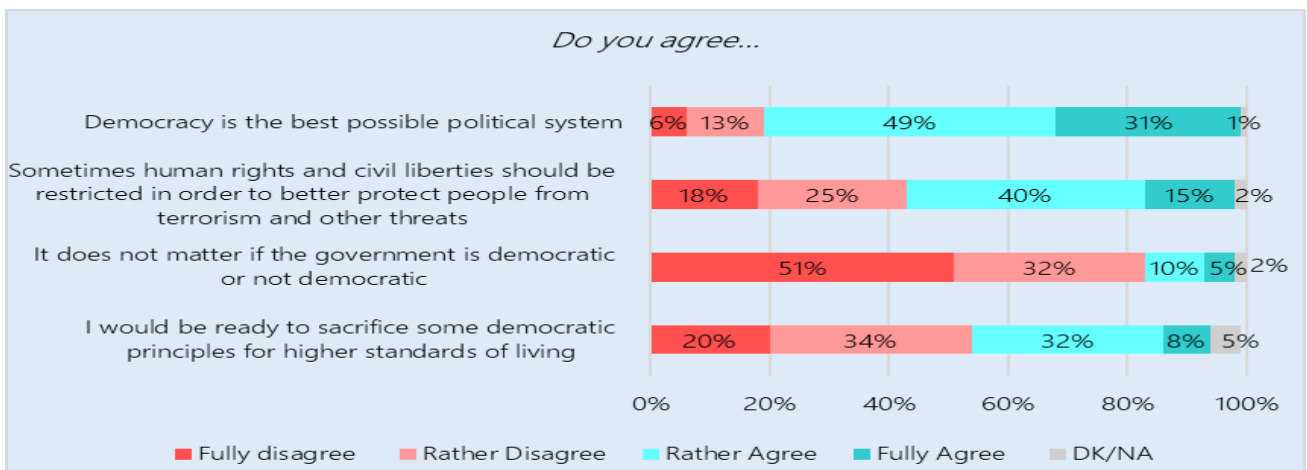
"It's okay; Things are getting better for me. There were times when it was worse. We are going somewhat in the right direction. It depends on how you look at it."



Few respondents are interested in joining a political party: 82 percent do not consider this an option. Despite an overall preference for offline participation, near-majorities indicate they have or would share political opinions publically or sign online petitions. These findings indicate that young poles largely prefer less demanding and time consuming means of political participation.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VALUES

Young Poles overwhelmingly see democracy as the comparatively best political system for their country (80 percent), with the strongest support from those aged 16 to 19. Most believe it matters



whether their government is democratic (84 percent). Young women are slightly more likely than young men to oppose the alternative: a strong leader with centralized control.

In focus group discussions, it is clear that young Poles associate democracy with freedom of speech, justice, equal rights, separation of powers, and free elections. Most also note that in a democracy, a country is self-governing. Some consider this to mean that politicians should exclusively represent citizens' interest; others relate sovereignty to imposing the will of the majority on society as a whole, given that the majority elects the representatives that comprise the government.

"There is definitely a high level of manipulation these days. In a way, dictatorship..."

Nonetheless, young people's relationship with democracy and its meaning is complex. A majority (55 percent) would forsake some democratic principles for security and 40 percent would do so in exchange for a higher standard of living. Young men are significantly more likely to support such sacrifices for increased economic welfare, while young women are slightly more likely to support these sacrifices if for increased national security. In focus group discussions, some declare themselves opposed to democracy, which they perceive as being politicians *that "blindly follow the crowd"* or a *"government of those who are stupid."* Several also see strong leadership as being compatible with democratic governance, particularly if *"he was strong and honest, so that he would really drag crowds behind him,"* and if that leader *"is there for the people, not for his own interests."*

When asked if Poland needs more or less democracy, focus group participants offer a mixed response. There is a sizeable and vocal group of participants who prefer more democracy, while others point out challenges within the existing democratic system.

For young Poles, issues related to gender equality are the most positive changes in European societies in the recent years, but increasing ethnic and religious diversity is seen as a negative change.

In focus group discussions, most are satisfied with the current policy toward immigration and prefer a homogenous society. Many believe that as a result, Poland is one of Europe's safest countries, having had no terrorist attacks. Nonetheless, there is widespread anxiety about terrorism, and even a fear of those with darker skin, particularly among those aged 16 to 19. There is also a distinction between "good" and "bad" immigrants. Ukrainians are often offered as examples of "good foreigners" who are working and contributing to society. Many admit to being less afraid of foreigners they see working (for example, delivering food).

"...when I walk alone at night in Warsaw and a group of people of Arab descent is coming, I feel anxiety despite the fact that I have no prejudices, but I'm still afraid because of everything we hear happening in Europe."

"As for the marriages of two women or men, I don't see anything bad in it. It's easier on them. However, these couples adopting children would be harmful to the children themselves."

Young Poles are polarized when it came to same-sex relationships. Two-fifths believe more tolerance of such relationships has changed society for the better while one-third believe the opposite. In addition to a rural-urban divide, younger respondents are significantly more open to same-sex relationships than the older youth surveyed. Most in focus groups believe that gender and sexual orientation equality are firmly secured, and that no

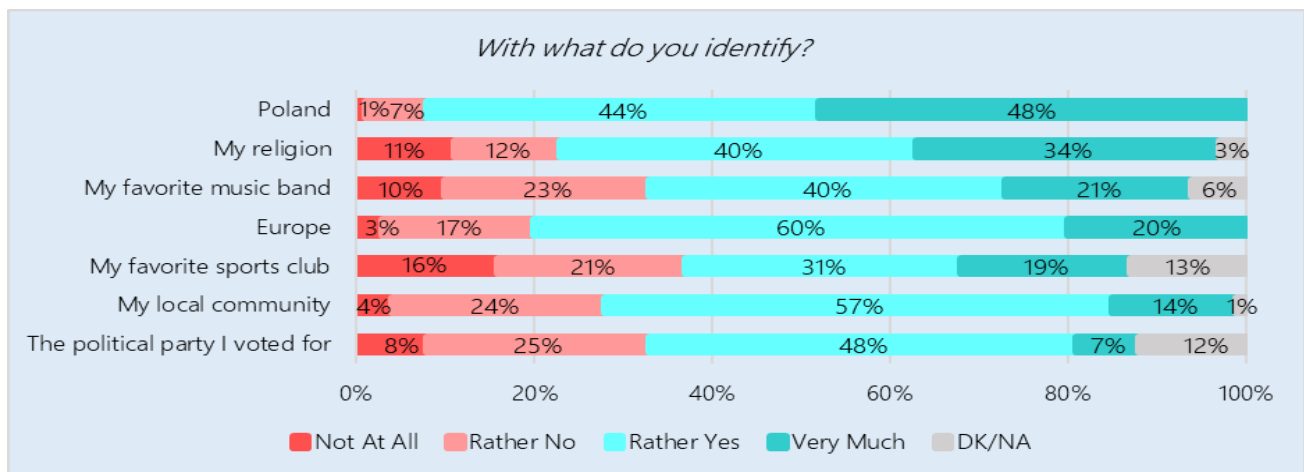
"In my opinion, [LGBTQ] people in Western countries don't strive to have the same rights, but rather more rights than other couples."

further change is needed in that regard. Many express opposition to allowing same-sex couples to adopt, and share the view that same-sex rights are over-protected in Western Europe. Only one participant observes that there is poor education on this matter in Poland. Young men are much more likely to feel negatively about same-sex relationships and ethnic and religious diversity than young women.

Despite support for ethnic homogeneity, 57 percent do not believe religious values should play a role in politics, although this is less true for those from rural areas or with vocational education. The outsized role of the Catholic Church in public life is frequently discussed in focus groups.

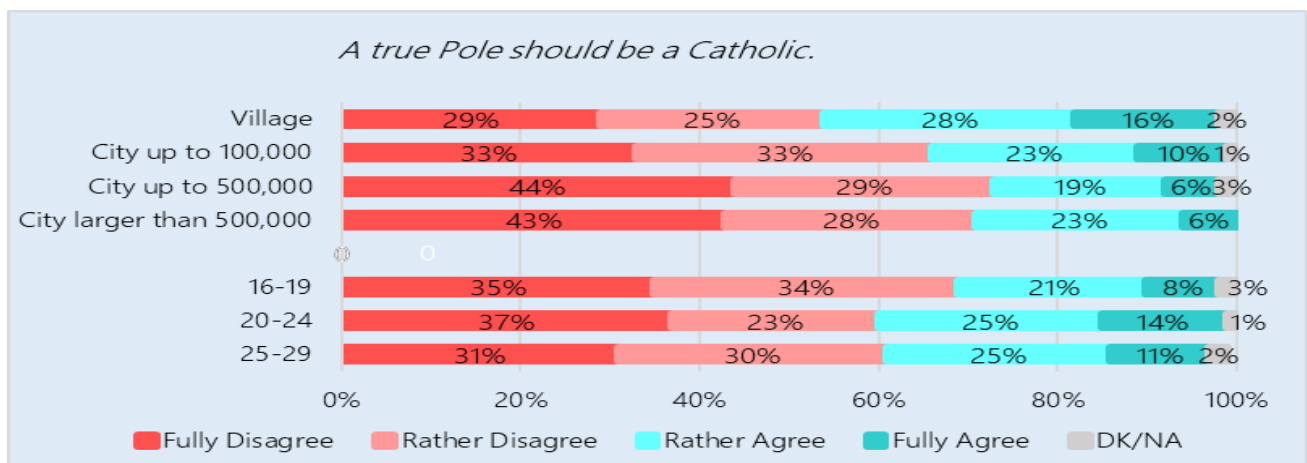
"In my opinion, we see too much church involvement in politics. This should be completely separated in the 21st century. There shouldn't be any connections because it causes women's rights to be restricted."

PERSONAL IDENTITY



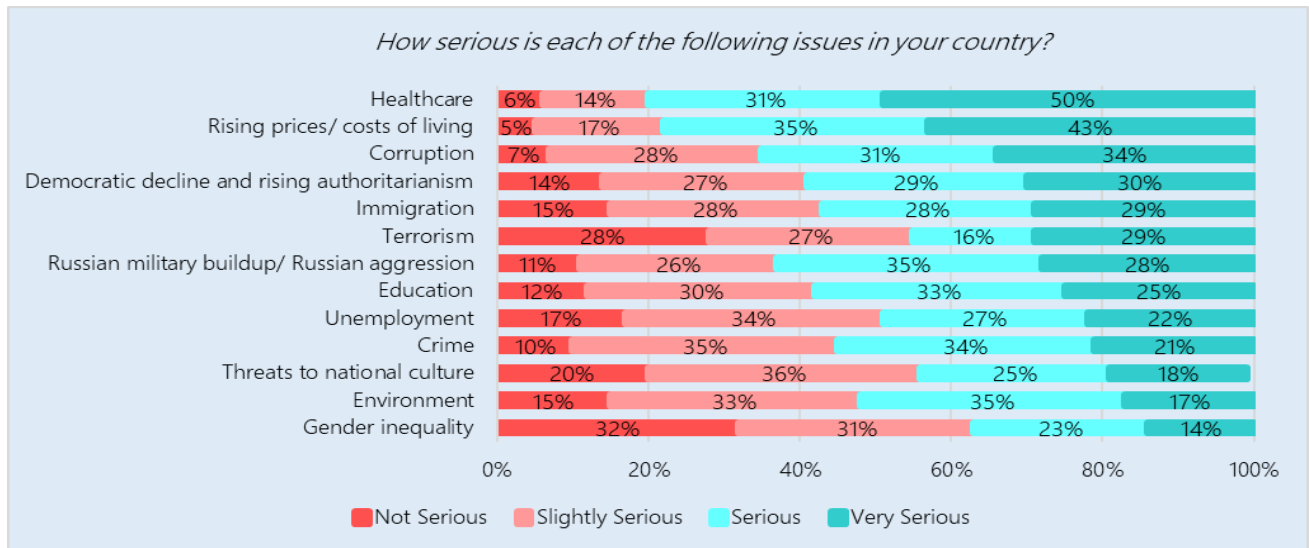
Polish (92 percent) and European (80 percent) identities are the most prevalent among young Poles, closely followed by religious (74 percent) and local community affiliations (71 percent). They identify most strongly with their nation, Europe, and their religion at higher rates than the Polish population as a whole. This increases with respondents' age, but such support is inversely proportional to city size. However, young people identify less with their local communities than the general population.

"The fact that we are ethnically uniform is not a defect. It is the greatest asset that we can use, because there is strength in unity."

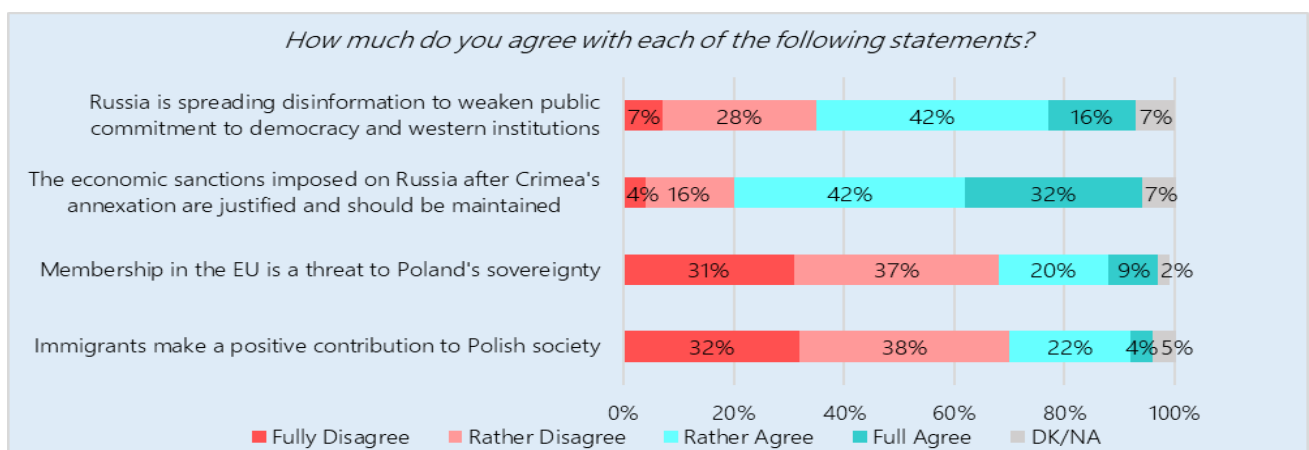


Less than one-third of young Poles surveyed associate national identity with Catholicism. This varies from 68 percent to 80 percent within the age groups considered in the survey, with those aged 16 to 19 the least supportive of the idea that a true Pole should be Catholic. This pattern holds true in focus groups where opinions on the relation between Polish identity and Catholicism are diverse despite a large number of participants underscoring their personal religious attachment.

POLICY ISSUES



The majority of young Poles (80 percent) are interested in politics and public affairs. Interest increases with age and level of education. When asked about issues of importance, youth are most concerned about economic and social welfare, followed by corruption and the Kremlin's aggressive foreign policy, then the decline of democracy in their country. More than half of respondents see immigration as an important problem, as well.



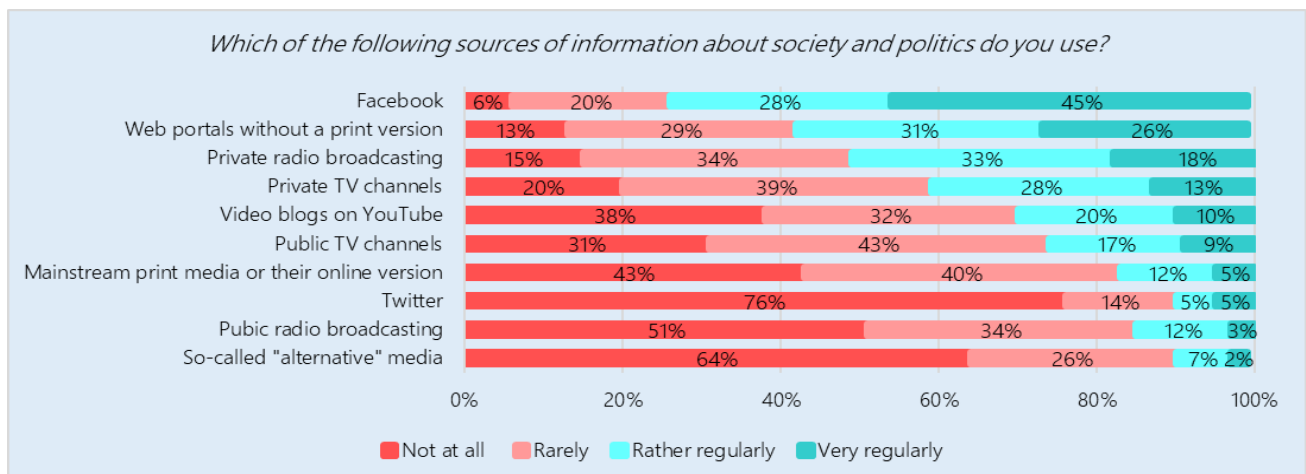
Young people in focus group discussions offer several more areas of concern, such as taxes that hinder entrepreneurship, emigration of Poles, housing costs, a mismatch between the education system and the labor market, education reform, the healthcare system, reproductive rights in connection with the role of the church in public life, and the international standing of Poland. Regarding the latter, young Poles are concerned about government activities that spoil the international reputation of the country. One participant claims that the Polish government is too

influenced by foreign actors, and that it does not express its opinion in the international arena firmly enough.

Young Poles generally align with Western positions on European geopolitical matters, with the exception of immigration. 68 percent do not believe EU membership threatens Polish sovereignty. Poles aged 16 to 19 are the least likely to see EU membership as a threat to Poland’s sovereignty, and young women are less likely than young men to see membership as a threat. Three in four support economic sanctions on Russia and 58 percent believe that Russia is spreading disinformation in the country. A longstanding Polish skepticism of Russia may be behind some of these views. Those with lower a level of education are more likely to think EU membership could threaten sovereignty or to oppose sanctions against Russia.

As pertains to immigration, 70 percent of young people do not believe that immigrants contribute positively to Polish society. Young women, those with higher education, and those from larger cities are somewhat (around 10 percent) less likely to have this negative outlook—but they represent a small minority.

INFORMATION SOURCES



Nearly three-quarters of young Poles use Facebook as a regular source for information on public affairs topics, while online portals are the next-most referenced (57 percent). Focus group participants offer that they use Facebook as their primary source, and as a way to compare politicians’ views on issues. Other online mediums, such as blogs and Twitter, are rarely consulted. Heavy use of internet sources could make Polish youth vulnerable to online disinformation campaigns. In focus groups, some claim *“the Internet is the most objective source of information,”* while only very few of them admit, *“on the internet you also have to look for [information] wisely.”* To check information they receive or view on Facebook, young Poles cite cross-referencing other online sources or asking their parents. Some note that they attempt to check legislative documents to form an opinion about statements regarding the legislative process.

“The media are the main relay between politics and the people. They have a major impact on what choices we make. For most people, whether they vote for one party or another is based on what they hear in the media.”

“You can’t get anything out of television or newspapers these days. I watch TV, but I know it’s biased either way. I don’t base my opinion on it and I don’t believe in it.”

Traditional media consumption, particularly for radio and print newspapers, is low among young people, but focus group participants recognize the important role of traditional media in forming political opinions. Focus group participants express strong distrust in traditional media's objectivity; those in rural areas are an exception. More rural respondents report watching public television or listening to private radio regularly.

The youngest focus group participants appear to have more trust in some foreign media outlets—BBC, CNN, and Fox News. Older participants say that foreign media might be worse than Polish media. Most believe that domestic media influences international perceptions of Poland.

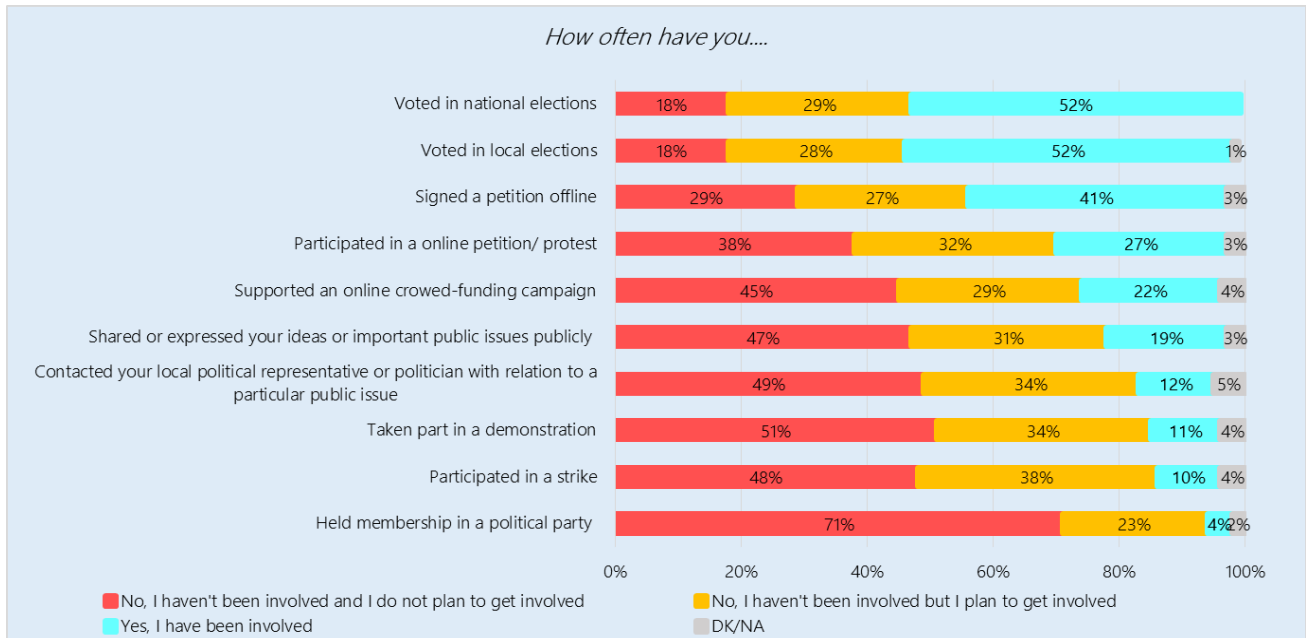
POTENTIAL TO MOBILIZE

This research demonstrates that young Poles do care about, and are concerned for the state of, their democracy. However, what that democracy should look like and how young people see their contribution to it is not always clearly defined. Survey results reflect the trend of the most recent electoral cycles: when young people vote, they vote differently than the rest of the population. They tend to prefer newer or anti-establishment political actors, although not exclusively. Overall, they have little interest in joining political parties, even the ones for which they vote. Despite the popularity of Facebook and online news outlets as sources of information, young Poles prefer to take action offline. Civic engagement must therefore be both on and offline for young people. Online to provide information through their preferred outlets, such as Facebook and online news portals, and offline for when it is time to take action. Given young people's top concerns—healthcare, the cost of living, and pensions—proposing meaningful change to impact the socioeconomic situation offers one pathway for engaging Poland's youth.

SLOVAKIA

Research in Slovakia was completed prior to the largescale protests that began in February 2018 in response to the death of a journalist and his fiancée—the largest protests since the Velvet Revolution in 1989. More than 120,000 people took to the streets in Slovakia in protests organized primarily by young people, whose engagement in public affairs had been waning. This massive civic mobilization reflects several research findings, including how young people view corruption. It should be noted that the protests might have shifted opinions on several of the subjects discussed below.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION



Dissatisfaction with the current political situation is widespread for young people in Slovakia (63 percent), and a majority are not interested in politics (57 percent). Dissatisfaction grows with age and education, as does interest in politics. Among those with elementary school education, 49 percent are dissatisfied compared to 73 percent of those with a university degree. Young women are slightly less interested in politics than young men. When asked to describe the current political situation in focus groups, young Slovaks overwhelmingly use negative phrases, such as chaos, extremism, corruption, nepotism, malfunction, arrogance, and unprofessionalism. In the two focus groups conducted in Bratislava, the emphasis is on political issues. Outside of Bratislava, discussion centers on social justice, low salaries, and foreign workers. Young people are principally concerned with social and economic wellbeing, healthcare, education, unemployment, and access to housing. They also raise concerns about corruption and poor political administration. Young people are sensitive to injustice and perceived inequality—often citing that others are more privileged, including foreigners and minorities, than young Slovaks.

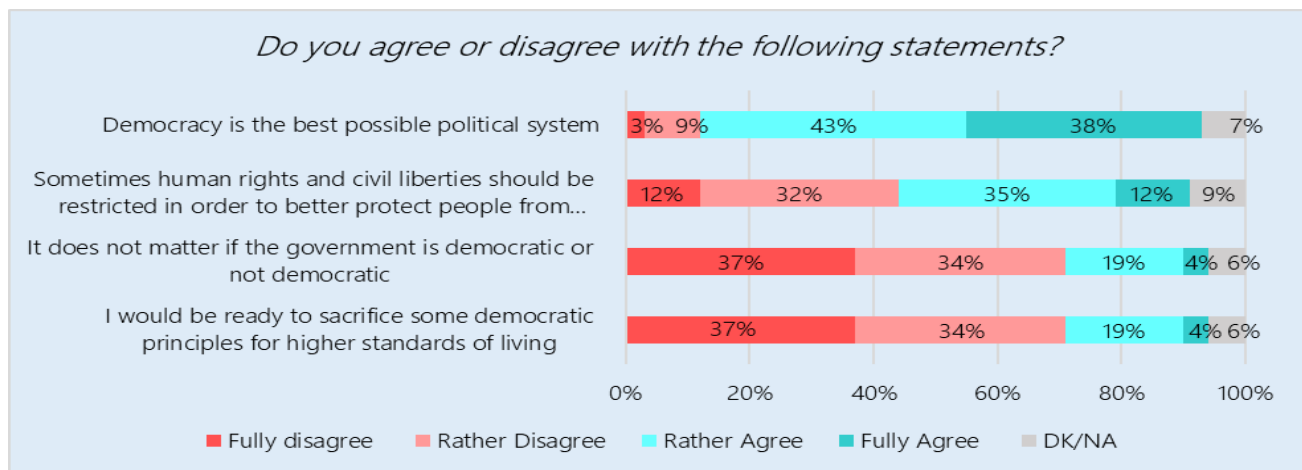
Young people do not report high levels of political engagement through traditional means, other than through voting, and most often indicate future consideration of engagement. Voting is the most widespread form of political participation; more than 50 percent had voted,

"I don't vote, even though it's our civic duty. I don't support a single political party. The parties should give citizens an incentive to vote. None of these political parties motivate me enough to vote."

with another 30 percent planning to vote in the future. For many, voting forms a core democratic right, and serves as a way to enact change—if not through policy, then through preventing worse political options from gaining office. In focus groups, the few who do not vote cite a feeling that their vote would change nothing, or that political options are indistinguishable.

Signing an offline petition is the next most common form of political engagement, preferred to striking and demonstrating. The low interest in demonstrations generally, yet high participation in the February 2018 protests suggests that young people are willing to engage in public forms of political action when the issue is of high priority to them. The least preferred form of engagement in politics is through membership in a political party, either now or in the future.

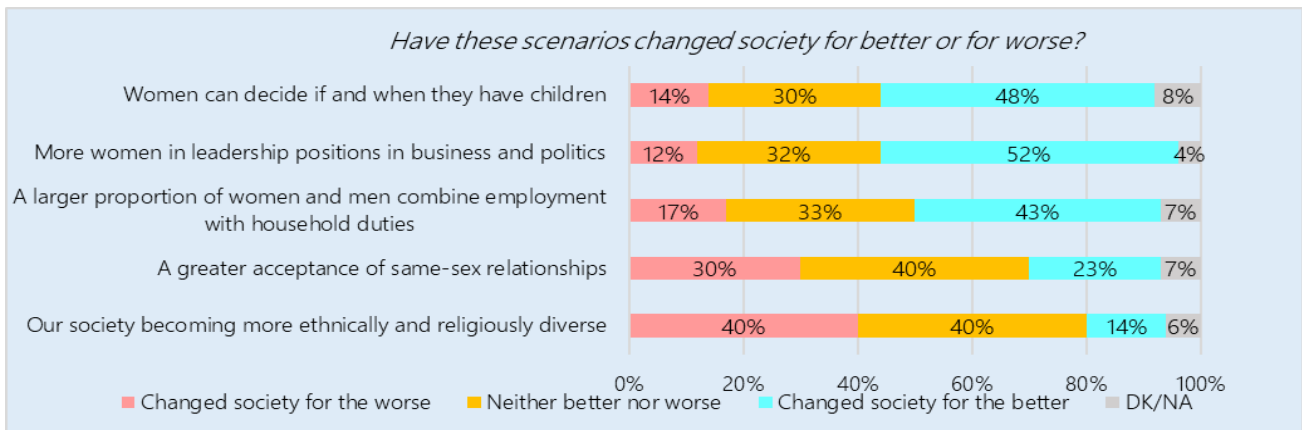
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VALUES



Among Slovak young people, there is a consensus that democracy is the ideal model. Eighty-one percent believe that democracy is the best possible political system, and about as many believe it matters that the government is democratic. These views are shared across age, geography, and education. Only one third would be open to undemocratic forms of government. The high levels of dissatisfaction with the current political situation and concern about corruption suggest that there may be a perceived difference between the ideal model of democracy and what the existing political system in Slovakia delivers in practice.

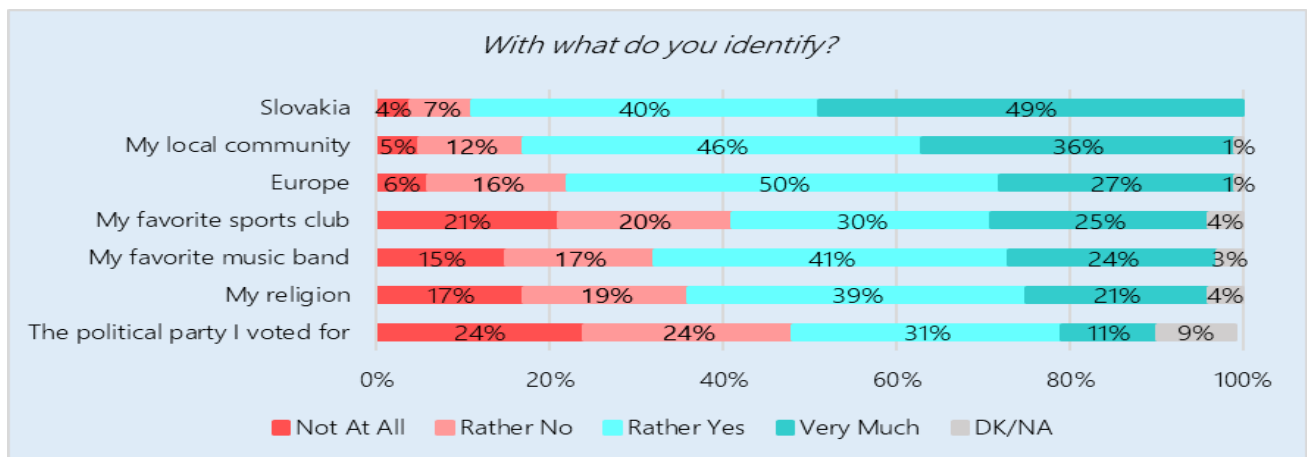
Despite the apparent commitment to a democratic system, opinions diverge as to whether human rights and civil liberties should be potentially restricted to protect against terrorism and other hypothetical threats to national security: 47 percent would support such a move, while 42 percent would not. Similarly, about half of respondents, especially those with a lower level of education, would be willing to sacrifice some democratic principles for a higher standard of living.

As relates to social values advanced through the European integration process, respondents are receptive to changes related to increased gender equality, while increasing social diversity in terms of ethnic identity, religious affinity, and sexual orientation are seen as neutral or negative changes in society. There is wide variance across demographic groups. Young women feel more positively about changes related to gender equality than young men; those with vocational education perceive same-sex relationships and ethnic and religious diversity as making society worse.



The majority of Slovakia’s young people do not believe religion should play a large role in public life, or that a true Slovak should be Catholic, views held most dominantly among those with higher education or living in urban areas.

PERSONAL IDENTITY

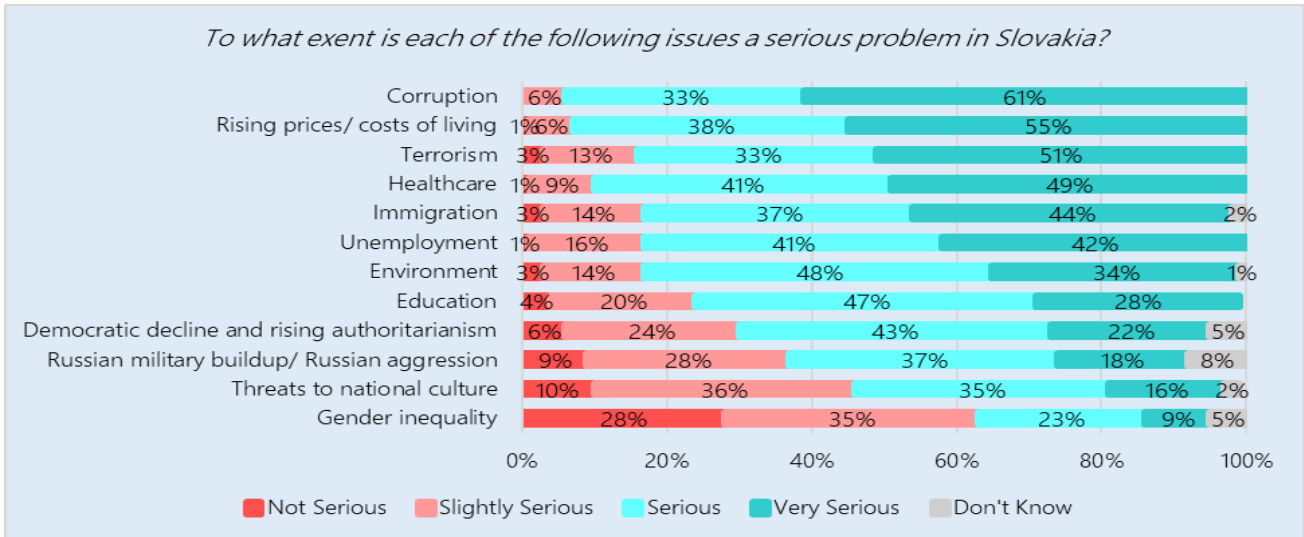


A majority of young Slovaks identify with their country (89 percent), their local community (82 percent), as well as Europe (77 percent). Identifying with the country does not have a nationalistic or religious undertone, as explored in focus groups. Most young people understand their national, local, and European layers of their identity as complementary, not conflicting. Although some in focus group discussions note that their national identity is stronger than their European identity—surveys reveal that 74 percent are proud of Slovak history—they do not view these identities as clashing with one another.

"I feel more Slovak than European. Even though we live in the heart of Europe, Western Europe thinks of us as the "tail of Europe", the Eastern Bloc. They overlook us while we pretend to be more European."

Some, particularly outside of Bratislava, do note a feeling of being a second-class citizen in Europe by the older EU member states.

POLICY ISSUES



Corruption is the top concern for young people in Slovakia, with 94 percent citing it as a problem or serious problem in their country. This level of concern holds true across age and educational markers, a prelude to protests in the late winter of 2018. This is higher than the population as a whole, but in line with the overall high level of concern with corruption among Slovaks.¹⁸ Corruption is not the only concern, Slovakia's youth also identified healthcare, cost of living, terrorism, unemployment, the environment, and immigration as areas of high concern. Those with vocational training, in particular, emphasize the rising cost of living. Respondents are less concerned about gender equality, threats to national culture, democratic decline, and Russian aggression.

"Corruption incentivizes young people to live abroad, so there is no one left here. They are forced to leave because there is no money where they live here. There's a lack of transparency."

Young Slovaks offer a mixed response to Western positions on European geopolitical issues, except on immigration concerns. A majority does not see EU membership as a threat to national sovereignty, which aligns with their perceptions of Slovak-European identity. Focus group discussions reveal a slightly more nuanced perspective, underscoring that

"There are positive and negative sides. Recently, there has been a big debate about immigration in Slovakia, but as we are EU members, there are quotas that oblige us to accept these immigrants..."

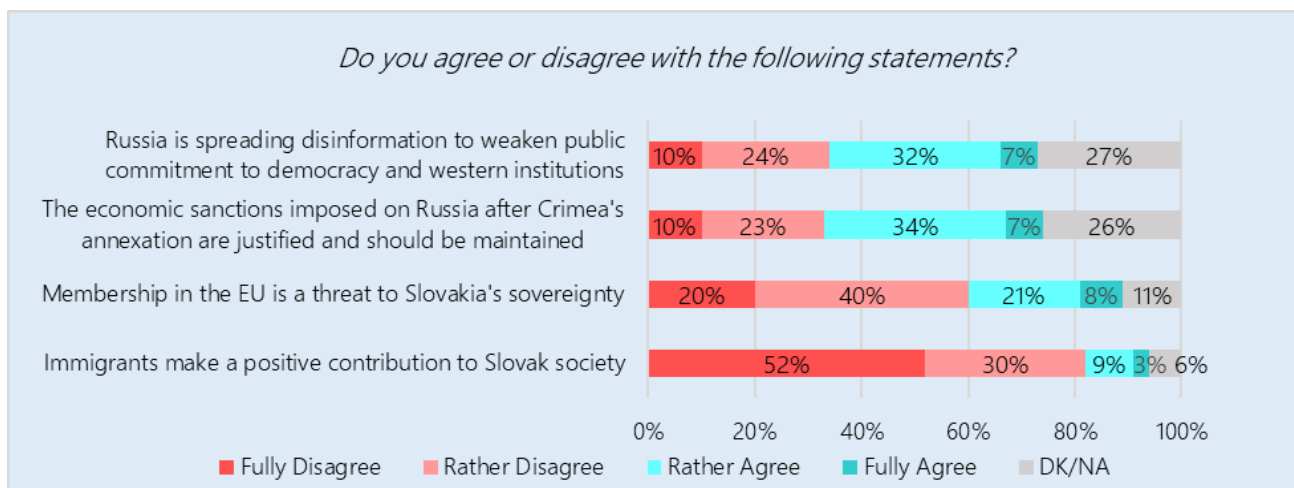
membership in the EU comes with distinct benefits, but also has drawbacks, including with regard to imposed immigration requirements. The survey confirmed prevalent anti-immigration views: 82 percent believe immigrants do not make a positive contribution to their society.

Narrow majorities believe sanctions against Russia are justified, and that Russia is spreading disinformation in Slovakia. However, around a quarter have no opinion on either issue, a finding supported by focus group discussion. Few have a clear view on either issue, often presenting vague or second-hand information with factual errors. Those who do

"Russia is a factor, but that is exaggerated. In other countries similar things may happen. The Russians are not the only ones who are armed, but they are less transparent about it."

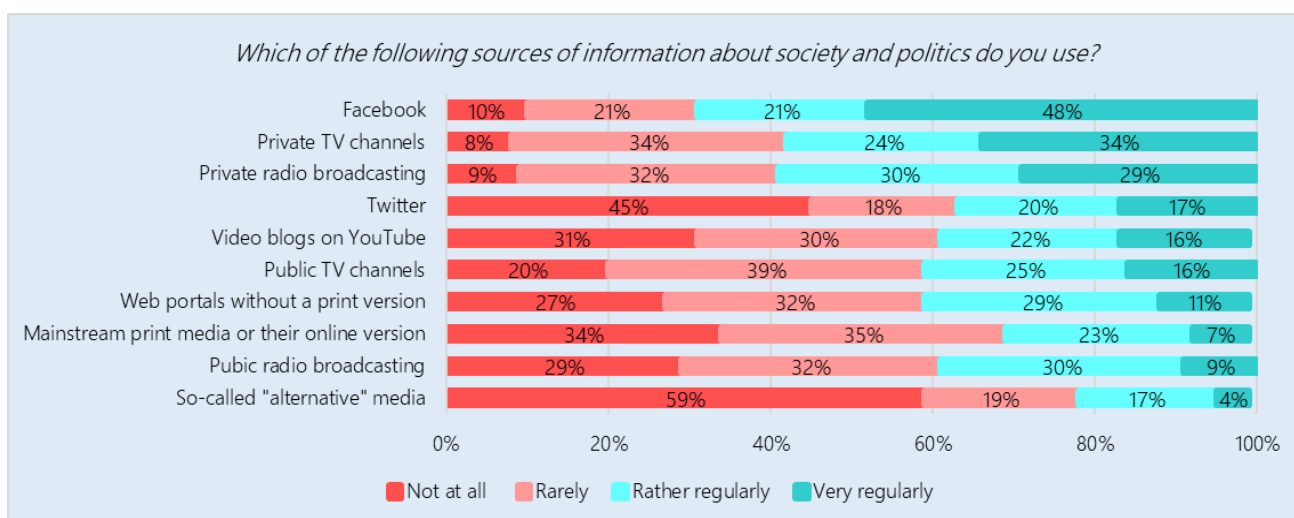
have a clear view saw Russia as an important, but not threatening, country. Participants do not see Russia and related issues as relevant to young Slovaks, with some noting that the Russian "factor" is

perhaps exaggerated. In addition, anti-American resentment, critique of NATO, and the “dream” of neutrality come up in focus group discussions.



INFORMATION SOURCES

As is true for their peers in Hungary and Poland, young Slovaks are most likely to use Facebook to get information about society and politics: 69 percent report using it regularly. Private television and radio channels are the next most consulted, although political news does not tend to dominate those outlets. Traditional public television and radio broadcasts are unpopular. In focus group discussions, Facebook remains dominant, but many view it as a tool and aggregator of other sources, rather than a primary source. Several, especially those most interested in politics, state they examine multiple sources to compare news and seek objectivity. A similar subset also prefer primary sources—statements by politicians or live televised debates—through which they can examine body language, suggesting a capacity to evaluate a variety of sources.



POTENTIAL TO MOBILIZE

The most active young people surveyed are those with a university education, living in urban areas, with an existing interest in politics, and at the older age range of those surveyed—24 to 29. The

people in the most politically passive group are generally younger, with a lower level of education, and living in rural areas. Those young people with some interest in politics and engagement, but low levels of activity, tend to be between 16 and 19 years old with ambitions to obtain higher education. This age group does not have enough opportunity to actively engage, often thinking in terms of "I have not been involved yet, but I plan to." In this age range, 24 percent report an interest in politics, in contrast to 71 percent planning to vote in general elections, indicating a need for precise targeting and careful messaging to increase their engagement.

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The National Democratic Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. Since its founding in 1983, NDI has worked with local partners in 132 countries and territories, bringing together individuals and groups to share ideas, knowledge, experiences and expertise. Partners receive broad exposure to best practices in international democratic development that can be adapted to the needs of their own countries. NDI's multinational approach reinforces the message that while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies. For more information about NDI, please visit www.ndi.org.

The National Democratic Institute thanks its research partners in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia for their important contributions to this research project and to this report.

Political Capital is a policy research, analysis and consulting institute founded in 2001 in Budapest, Hungary. Political Capital focuses on issues such as democratic institutions and related challenges, political risks, radicalism and extremism, electoral systems, international migration and policies, international relations (especially between Europe and Russia), the diplomatic ties of the Visegrad countries, and relations between EU member states.

Institute for Public Affairs (Poland) is a leading Polish think tank and an independent center for policy research and analysis, established in 1995 to contribute to informed public debate on key Polish, European and global policy issues. The Institute's main areas of study include European policy, social policy, civil society, migration and development policy as well as law and democratic institutions.

Institute of Public Affairs (Slovakia) is an independent public policy research institute founded in 1997. The Institute's research programme is conducted by a core staff of resident scholars and policy analysts, augmented by non-resident policy experts from a wide range of Slovak institutions. IVO's mission includes analysis of social, political, economic, foreign policy, legal, and cultural issues of public interest; research on public policies and their consequences, publication of findings, and to make practical recommendations for improved government policy.



ENDNOTES

- ¹ Jacek Kucharczyk, Agnieszka Lada, and Schöler Gabriele, "'Exit, Voice or Loyalty?' Young People on Europe and Democracy" (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2017), https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/user_upload/EZ_Exit_voice_or_loyalty_2017_ENG.pdf; Foundation for European Progressive Studies, "The Millennial Dialogue Report," 2014, <https://www.millennialdialogue.com/media/1062/millennial-dialogue-hungary-report-v3.pdf>; Tibor Kadlót, "The Political Values of the Millennial Generation in the Central and Eastern European Region" (Policy Solutions and FEPS, 2016), https://www.policysolutions.hu/userfiles/elemzes/244/millennial_dialogue_hungary_and_cee.pdf; Katarína Klingová and Daniel Milo, "GLOBSEC Youth Trends: How Young Central Europeans View the World," 2017, <https://www.globsec.org/publications/globsec-youth-trends-young-central-europeans-view-world/>; "Flash Eurobarometer 455 - European Youth"; Joint European research project supported by the European Commission, "MYPLACE: Memory, Youth, Political Legacy And Civic Engagement."
- ² In Poland this question was phrased as "Catholic" rather than "Christian" given the traditional connection between Roman Catholicism and Polish identity.
- ³ K. Kowalczyk (2015), Polacy o swoim przywiązaniu do miejsca zamieszkania i kraju, Social Opinion Research Center (CBOS) survey communicate no. 165/November 2015, p. 2.
- ⁴ Béla Bauer et al., "Magyar Ifjúság Kutatás, 2016," 2017, http://www.ujnemzedek.hu/sites/default/files/magyar_ifjusag_2016_a4_web.pdf. (conducted among 15-29 year olds)
- ⁵ Bulcsú Hunyadi and Veszna Wessenauer, "Hatalompolitikai Célok Mentén Zajlik 2010 Óta a Közoktatás Szervezése" (Political Capital, 2016), http://politicalcapital.hu/konyvtar.php?article_read=1&article_id=268.
- ⁶ Kucharczyk, Lada, and Gabriele, "'Exit, Voice or Loyalty?' Young People on Europe and Democracy."
- ⁷ Béla Bauer, et al., *Magyar Ifjúság Kutatás, 2016*, Új nemzedék Központ, 2016. http://www.ujnemzedek.hu/sites/default/files/magyar_ifjusag_2016_a4_web.pdf Last access: 03/12/2017
- ⁸ The Foundation for European Progressive Studies and Center for American Progress, *The Millennial Dialogue Report - Hungary*, 2016. <https://www.millennialdialogue.com/media/1062/millennial-dialogue-hungary-report-v3.pdf> Last access: 03/12/2017
- ⁹ Nancy Jacques, "European Youth in 2016 - Special Eurobarometer of the European Parliament," May 2016, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2016/eye2016/eb85_1_eye_2016_analytical_overview_en.pdf. (conducted among 16-30-year olds)
- ¹⁰ European Social Survey 2014-2016.
- ¹¹ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2018/hungary>
- ¹² Mérték Media Monitor, Soft Censorship in Hungary in 2016: When Propaganda Rules Public Discourse, 2016. Available: <http://mertek.eu/en/2017/06/01/soft-censorship-hungary-2016-propaganda-rules-public-discourse/>
- ¹³ D. Batorski, M. Drabek, M. Gałązka, J. Zbieranek (eds., 2012), *Wyborca 2.0. Młode pokolenie wobec procedur demokratycznych [Voter 2.0. The young generation and democratic procedures]*, Warsaw, <http://www.isp.org.pl/publikacje,1,559.html>, p. 11-14 and 18-22.
- ¹⁴ P. Marczewski (2014), *Kajet zażaleń polskiej demokracji [Notebook of complaints on Polish democracy]*, in: „Słodko-gorzki smak wolności. Młodzi intelektualiści o 25 latach przemian w Polsce” [„A bittersweet taste of freedom. Young intellectuals about 25 years of transformation in Poland”], (ed.) M. Król, ISP, Warsaw, p. 98 - 99.
- ¹⁵ M. Dudkiewicz, A. Fuksiewicz, J. Kucharczyk, A. Łada (2013), *Parlament Europejski. Społeczne zaufanie i (nie)wiedza [European Parliament. Social trust and (un)knowledge]*, Warsaw, <http://www.isp.org.pl/publikacje,25,610.html>.
- ¹⁶ The general turnout in the parliamentary elections in 2015 has reached almost 51% (see: <http://parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl/Frekwencja/0/4>) and experts point out that electoral turnout is much

smaller in the group of the youngest voters (even though it grows systematically) – see: Michalak, Bartłomiej (2014), *Czy młodzi Polacy głosują w wyborach do Parlamentu Europejskiego?*, https://repozytorium.umk.pl/bitstream/handle/item/2618/Czy_mlodzi_glosuja.pdf?sequence=1.

¹⁷ BBC, Black Monday: Polish women strike against abortion ban, 2016. Available: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37540139>

¹⁸ According to the Special Eurobarometer No. 470 (October 2017) focused on corruption 85% inhabitants of Slovakia think that corruption is widespread in their country, the EU average is 68%. Moreover almost half of Slovaks think that in the past three years corruption has increased. (Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2176>