



# Flash Eurobarometer 435

## Report

# Perceived independence of the national justice systems in the EU among the general public

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Survey requested by the European Commission,  
Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers  
and co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication

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The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

Flash Eurobarometer 435 – TNS Political & Social



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(DG COMM "Strategy, Corporate Communication Actions and Eurobarometer" Unit)

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## INTRODUCTION

This Flash Eurobarometer survey was carried out at the request of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers by the TNS Political & Social network in the 28 Member States of the European Union between 24 and 25 February 2016.

The survey was designed to explore the perceptions of judicial independence across the EU Member States in particular:

- how respondents rate the justice system in their country in terms of the independence of courts and judges;
- the reasons why respondents rate the independence of the justice system the way they do.

The objective of this survey is to collect survey data on the independence of courts and judges in EU Member States in order to feed the EU Justice Scoreboard which provides an overview of the quality, independence and efficiency of EU Member States' justice systems.

Some 26,555 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed via telephone (mobile and fixed line) in their mother tongue on behalf of the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers. The methodology used is that of Eurobarometer surveys as carried out by the Directorate-General for Communication ("Strategy, Corporate Communication Actions and Eurobarometer" Unit)<sup>1</sup>. A technical note on the manner in which interviews were conducted by the Institutes within the TNS Political & Social network is annexed to this report. Also included are the interview methods and confidence intervals<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/PublicOpinion/>

<sup>2</sup> The results tables are included in the annex. It should be noted that the total of the percentages in the tables of this report may exceed 100% when the respondent was able to give several answers to the question.

**Note:** In this report, countries are referred to by their official abbreviation. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

Belgium	BE	Lithuania	LT
Bulgaria	BG	Luxembourg	LU
Czech Republic	CZ	Hungary	HU
Denmark	DK	Malta	MT
Germany	DE	The Netherlands	NL
Estonia	EE	Austria	AT
Ireland	IE	Poland	PL
Greece	EL	Portugal	PT
Spain	ES	Romania	RO
France	FR	Slovenia	SI
Croatia	HR	Slovakia	SK
Italy	IT	Finland	FI
Republic of Cyprus	CY *	Sweden	SE
Latvia	LV	United Kingdom	UK
European Union – weighted average for the 28 Member States			EU28

\* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 28 European Union Member States. However, the ‘acquis communautaire’ has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the ‘CY’ category and in the EU28 average.

*We wish to thank the people throughout the European Union  
who have given their time to take part in this survey.*

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

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Perceived independence of the national justice system among the general public**

- A majority of respondents rate the independence of courts and judges in their country highly. 52% of respondents describe it as good, while just over a third say that the justice system in their country is bad in terms of the independence of courts and judges (36%).

### **Main reasons explaining perceptions of the independence of the national justice system**

- The status and position of judges guaranteeing their independence is the usual reason for rating the independence of the justice system as good (74%), followed by the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians (62%) or from economic or other specific interests (60%).
- Most of the respondents who have a poor opinion of the independence of the justice system in their country say that this is because of the interference or pressure from government and politicians (72%), followed by the interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests (62%) and the status and position of judges which does not sufficiently guarantee their independence (56%).

## I. PERCEIVED INDEPENDENCE OF COURTS AND JUDGES AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The first chapter of the report examines the way respondents perceive the independence of the justice system in their own country in general. They were asked how they would rate the justice system in their country in terms of the independence of courts and judges.

### - Over half of respondents rate the independence of courts and judges in their country as good -

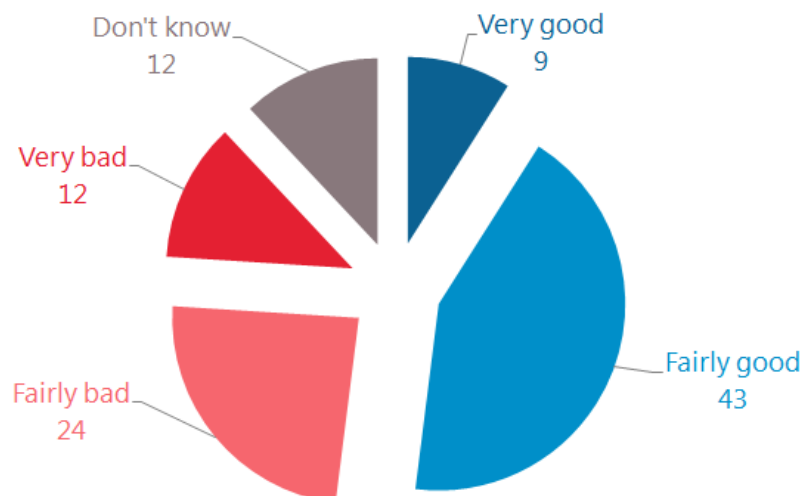
Over half of respondents rate the justice system in their country highly in terms of the independence of courts and judges (52%). Almost a tenth of respondents describe it as **very good** (9%) and more than four in ten respondents rate it as **fairly good** (43%).

Just over a third of respondents say that the justice system is bad in their country in terms of the independence of courts and judges (36%). Just under a quarter rate it as **fairly bad** (24%), while just over one in ten respondents say it is **very bad** (12%).

Just over one in ten respondents **do not know** how to rate the independence of courts and judges in their country (12%).

**Q1** From what you know, how would you rate the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY) in terms of the independence of courts and judges? Would you say it is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad?

(% - EU)

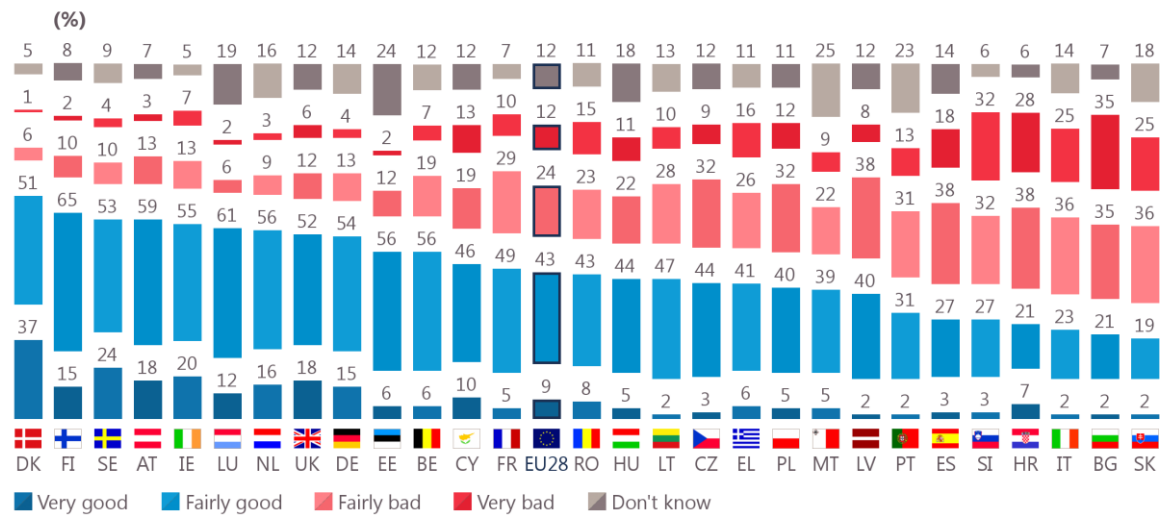




At national level, over seven in ten respondents in Denmark (88%), Finland (80%), and Sweden and Austria (both 77%) say the justice system is **good** in terms of the independence of courts and judges, while the lowest proportion giving this answer were found in Slovakia (21%), Bulgaria (23%) and Italy (25%).

Respondents in Denmark (37%) and in Sweden (24%) are most likely to rate their justice system as being **very good**.

**Q1** From what you know, how would you rate the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY) in terms of the independence of courts and judges? Would you say it is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad?



Conversely, seven in ten respondents in Bulgaria (70%) say that the justice system in their country is **bad** in terms of the independence of courts and judges, as do around two-thirds of respondents in Croatia (66%) and Slovenia (64%). At the other end of the scale, this answer is least likely to be given in Denmark (7%), Luxembourg (8%), and the Netherlands and Finland (both 12%).

Those rating the justice system in their country poorly in terms of the independence of courts and judges are predominantly to be found among respondents in Bulgaria (35%), Slovenia (32%), Croatia (28%), Slovakia and Italy (both 25%) where at least a quarter of respondents rate the independence of courts and judges as **very bad**.

**Socio-demographic analysis** does not reveal any notable differences between genders.

The youngest respondents - those aged between 15 and 24 - are the most likely to say that, in terms of the independence of courts and judges, the justice system in their country is **good** (64%), while those aged 55 or over are the least likely to do so (47%). In contrast, respondents aged 40 to 54 and respondents aged 55 or over are the most likely to rate the independence of courts and judges as **bad** in their country (both 38%).

Respondents who remained longest in education are more likely than respondents who left school aged 15 or younger to rate the independence of courts and judges in their country as **good** (58% vs. 36%). Conversely, respondents who left school aged 15 or younger are more likely than those with the highest level of education to say that the independence of courts and judges in their country is bad (44% vs. 33%).

Employees are the most likely to say that the independence of courts and judges in their country is **good** (59%), while manual workers are the least likely to agree (50%). Self-employed people and manual workers are the most likely to rate the independence of courts and judges in their country as **bad** (both 39%).

Respondents who have been involved in a dispute which has gone to court are the most likely to say that the independence of courts and judges of the justice system is bad in their country (44% vs. 35% of those who have not been involved in a court dispute).

**Q1** From what you know, how would you rate the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY) in terms of the independence of courts and judges? Would you say it is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad?  
(% - EU)

	Total 'Good'	Total 'Bad'	Don't know
EU28	52	36	12
<b>Age</b>			
15-24	64	25	11
25-39	54	36	10
40-54	53	38	9
55 +	47	38	15
<b>Education (End of)</b>			
15-	36	44	20
16-19	50	38	12
20+	58	33	9
Still studying	65	25	10
<b>Respondent occupation scale</b>			
Self-employed	54	39	7
Employee	59	32	9
Manual workers	50	39	11
Not working	47	38	15
<b>Involved in dispute which went to court</b>			
Yes	51	44	5
No	53	35	12

## II. MAIN REASONS AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC FOR THE PERCEIVED INDEPENDENCE OF THE NATIONAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

The second chapter takes a more detailed look at the reasons why respondents rate the independence of courts and judges of the justice system the way they do. They were asked how far the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges, interference or pressure from government and politicians, and interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests explained their good or bad rating of the independence of the justice system in their country.

### 1 Positive assessments

#### **- Nearly three-quarters of respondents give the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges as a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as good -**

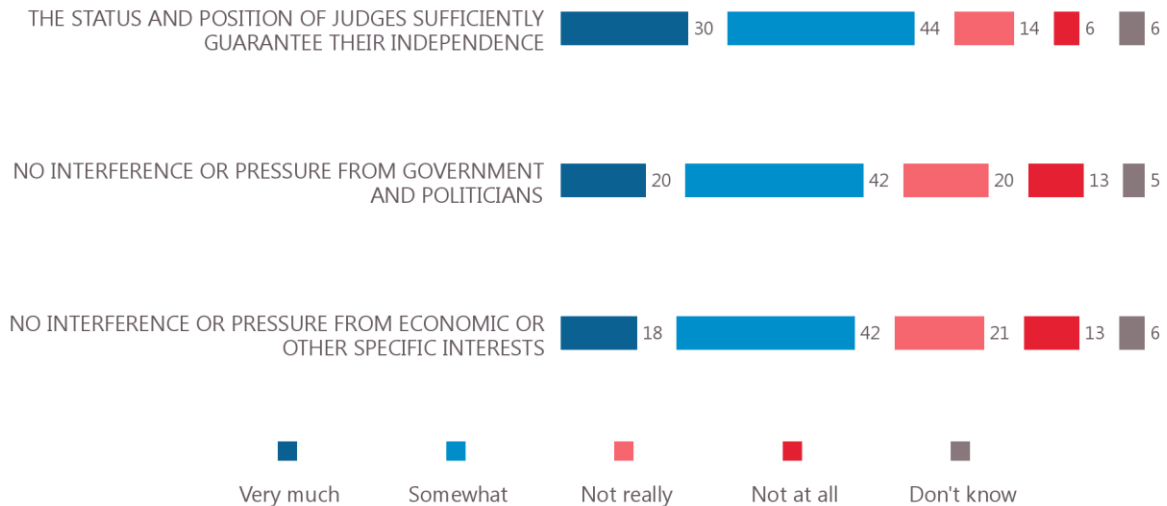
Only the respondents perceiving the independence of the justice system in their own country as being 'very good' or 'fairly good' were asked the questions on how far the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges, the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians, or the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests explained their good rating of the national justice system.

Nearly three-quarters of respondents say that **the status and position of judges, which sufficiently guarantee their independence**, explain why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good (74%). Three in ten respondents say this influenced them **very much** (30%), and over four in ten say it explains their rating **somewhat** (44%).

More than six in ten respondents say that **the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians** is a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as good (62%). One in five respondents says this influenced them **very much** (20%), while over four in ten say this explains their rating **somewhat** (42%).

Six in ten respondents say that **the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** explains why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good (60%). Almost one in five respondents say that this **very much** explains why they rated this aspect as good (18%), while more than four in ten say that it **somewhat** explains it (42%).

**Q2b** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY): (% - EU)

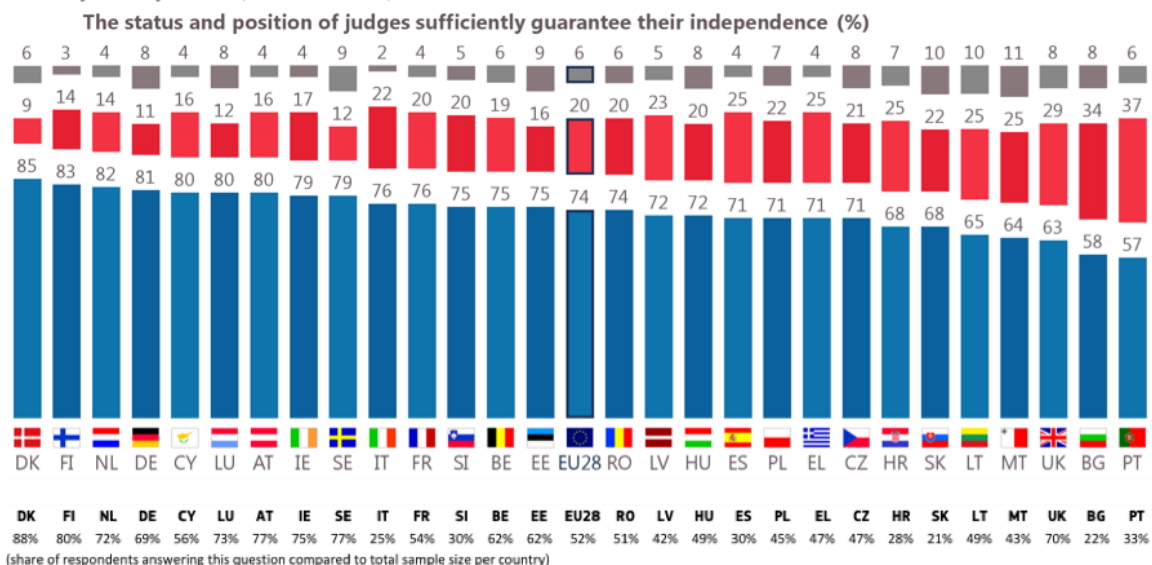


Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as good (n=13.880)

At national level, more than eight in ten respondents in Denmark (85%), Finland (83%) and the Netherlands (82%) say that **the status and position of judges, which sufficiently guarantee their independence**, are a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as good. At the other end of the scale, over half of respondents in Portugal (57%) and Bulgaria (58%) and over six in ten in the United Kingdom (63%) say the same.

Meanwhile, over a third of respondents in Portugal (37%), Bulgaria (34%) and just under three in ten in the United Kingdom (29%) say that the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges **does not explain** why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good.

**Q2b.3** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

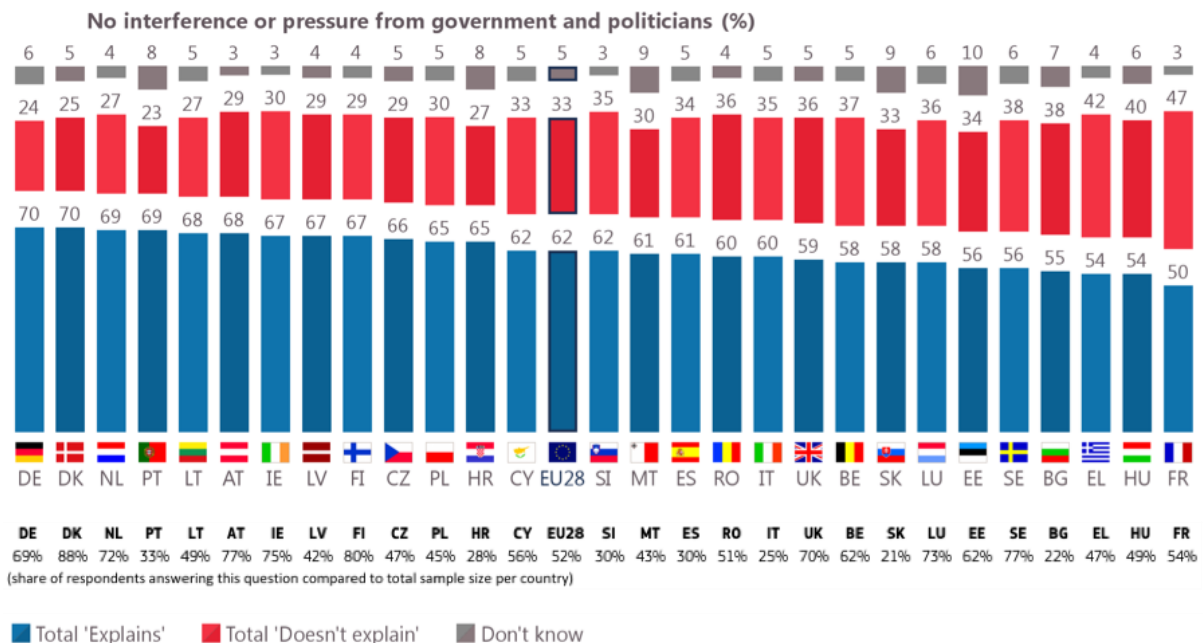


Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as good (n=13.880)

Seven in ten respondents in Denmark and Germany (both 70%), and almost as many in the Netherlands and Portugal (both 69%) give **the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians** as a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as good. At the other extreme, half or more of respondents in France (50%), Greece and Hungary (both 54%) give this answer.

Meanwhile, nearly half of respondents in France (47%) say that the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians **does not explain** why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good. Four in ten people or more in Greece (42%) and Hungary (40%) also give this answer.

**Q2b.1** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

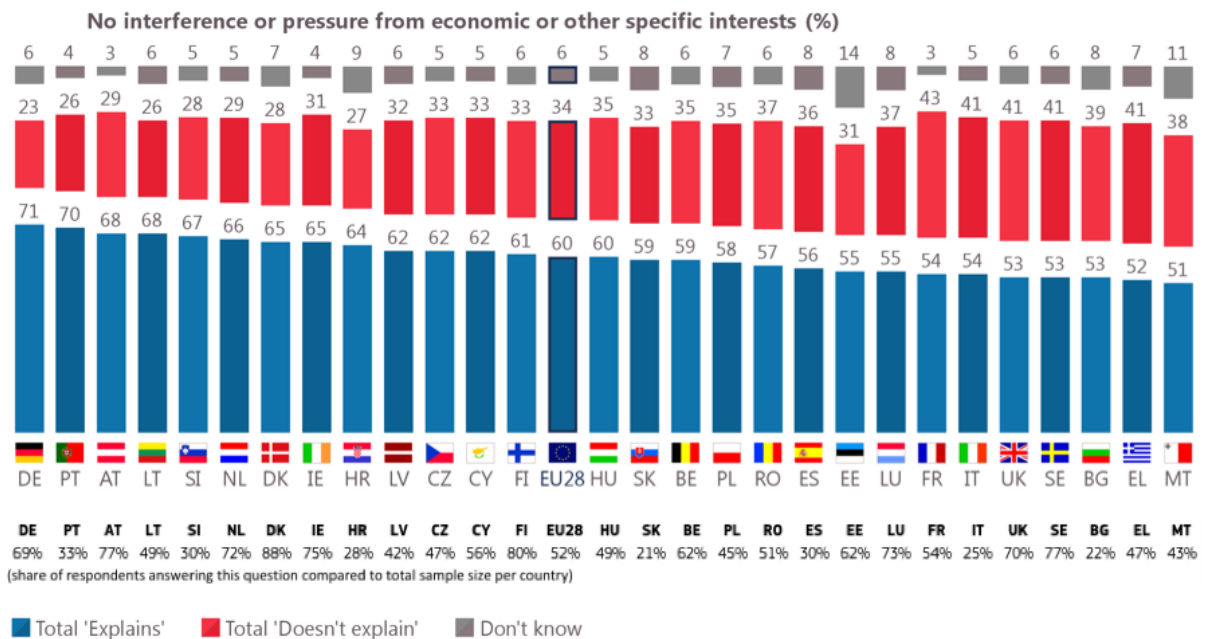


Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as good (n=13,880)

Around seven in ten respondents in Germany (71%), Portugal (70%) and Lithuania and Austria (both 68%) say that **the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** explains why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good. At the other end of the scale, the results are still above half in Malta (51%), Greece (52%) and Sweden, Bulgaria and the United Kingdom (all 53%).

Individuals in France (43%), Sweden, Italy, the United Kingdom and Greece (all 41%) are the most likely to say that the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests **does not explain** why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good.

**Q2b.2** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

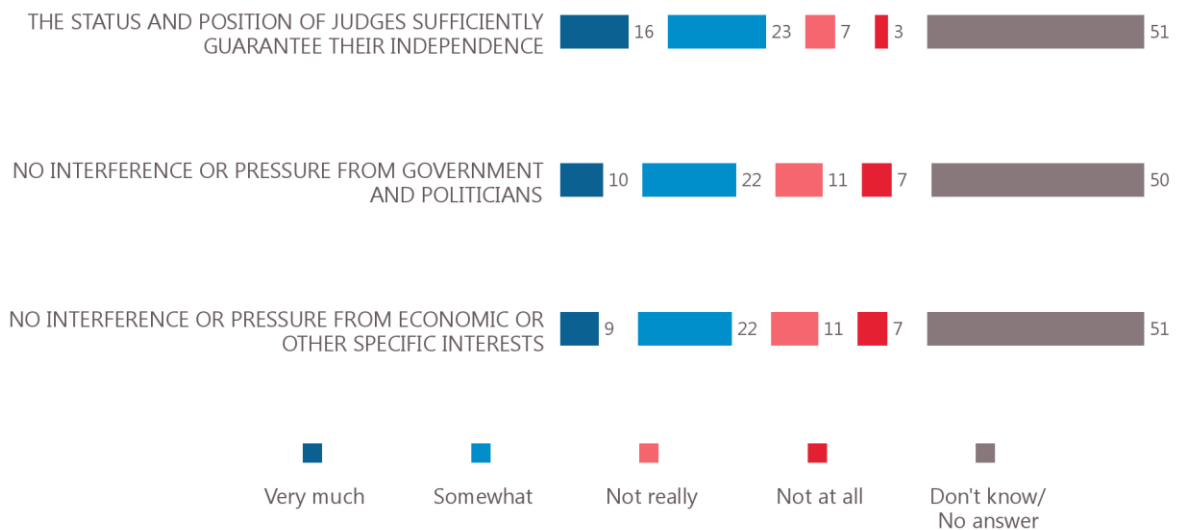


Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as good (n=13.880)

To fine-tune the analysis, the data below were recalculated **based on the full sample** i.e. all respondents who took part in this survey. These results are described below.

Just under four in ten respondents say that **the status and position of judges sufficiently guaranteeing their independence** explain why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good (39%). Nearly a third of respondents consider that **the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians** (32%) and **the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** (31%) explains their good rating of the independence of the justice system.

**Q2b** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):  
(% - EU)



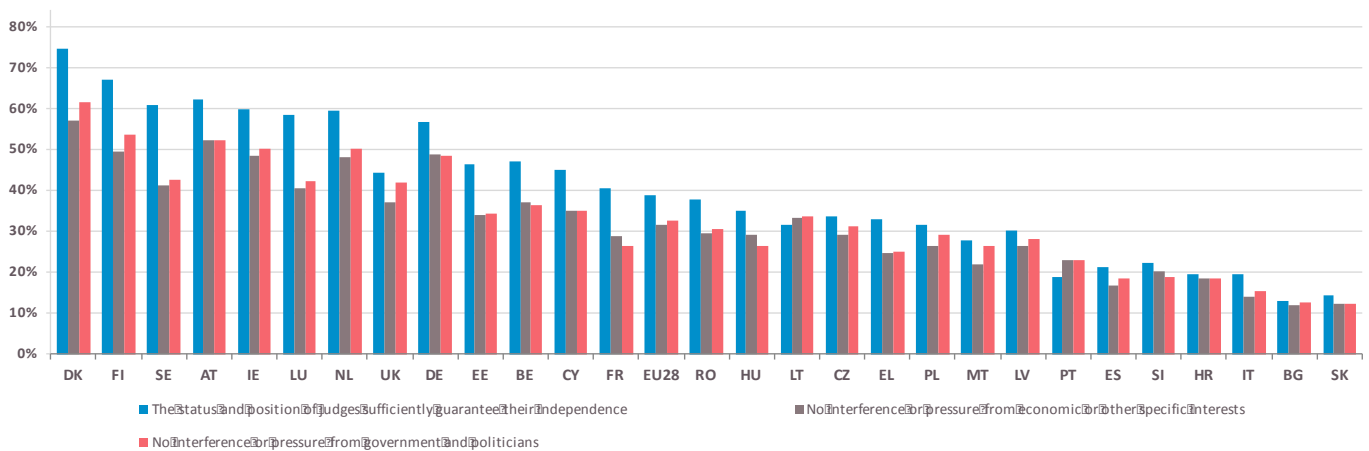
Base: all respondents

Looking at the results recalculated on the basis of the full sample at national level, they show that over seven in ten respondents in Denmark (74%) and over six in ten in Finland (67%) and Austria (62%) consider **the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges** as a reason explaining the good rating of the independence of the justice system in their country. At the other end of the scale, less than one in five respondents in Bulgaria (13%), Slovakia (14%) and Italy, Portugal and Croatia (all 19%) hold this view.

At least six in ten respondents in Denmark (62%) give **the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians** as a reason for the good rating of the independence of the justice system in their country. Just over half in Finland (54%) and Austria (52%) also give this answer. By contrast, less than one in six people in Slovakia, Bulgaria (both 12%) and Italy (15%) state the same.

Respondents in Denmark (57%), Austria (52%) and Finland (50%) are the most likely to say that **the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** explains why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good. At the other end of the scale, respondents in Bulgaria (11%), Slovakia (12%) and Italy (14%) are the least likely to say so.

Q2bT Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY): (TOTAL EXPLAINS)



Base: all respondents

The order of the countries presented in the chart above corresponds to the order in the chart for Q1



A review of the socio-demographic data shows that:

Men are more likely to say that **the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians** is a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as good (65%, compared with 59% of women). Men are also more likely than women to say that **the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges** explain why they rate the independence of the justice system as good (77% vs. 72%).

Respondents aged 40 to 54 are the most likely to give **the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians** as a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as good (65% compared with 59-63% of respondents in the other age groups). Respondents aged 40 to 54 are also the most likely to explain their good rating in terms of **the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** (64% compared with 54-62%), and **the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges** (76% vs. 71-74%).





Respondents who have been longest in education are more likely than respondents who left school aged 15 or younger to say that **the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians** (64% vs. 52%), **the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** (65% vs. 53%) and **the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges** (80% vs. 67%) explain why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good.

Self-employed people are the most likely to say that **the absence of interference or pressure from government and politicians** explains why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as good (69%), while manual workers are the least likely to give this answer (63%). Employees are the most likely to give **the guarantees provided by the status and position of judges** (77% compared with 72% of manual workers) as a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as good.

Respondents who have not been involved in any court dispute (60%) are more likely than those who have had this experience (55%) to say that **the absence of interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** is a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as good. There are no noticeable differences for the other reasons at stake.

**Q2b** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

**Total 'Explains' (% - EU)**

	The status and position of judges sufficiently guarantee their independence	No interference or pressure from government and politicians	No interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests
EU28	74	62	60
 <b>Sex</b>			
Male	77	65	61
Female	72	59	59
 <b>Age</b>			
15-24	71	61	54
25-39	74	63	62
40-54	76	65	64
55 +	74	59	58
 <b>Education (End of)</b>			
15-	67	52	53
16-19	71	62	58
20+	80	64	65
Still studying	70	62	53
 <b>Respondent occupation scale</b>			
Self-employed	76	69	62
Employee	77	66	64
Manual workers	72	63	61
Not working	72	57	55
<b>Involved in dispute which went to court</b>			
Yes	71	60	55
No	75	62	60

Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as good (n=13.880)

## 2 Negative assessments

### - Nearly three-quarters of respondents say that interference or pressure from government and politicians explains why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as bad -

Only the respondents perceiving the independence of the justice system in their own country as being ‘fairly bad’ or ‘very bad’ were asked about how far the status and position of judges which does not sufficiently guarantee their independence, the interference or pressure from government and politicians, or the interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests explained their bad rating of the independence of the national justice system.

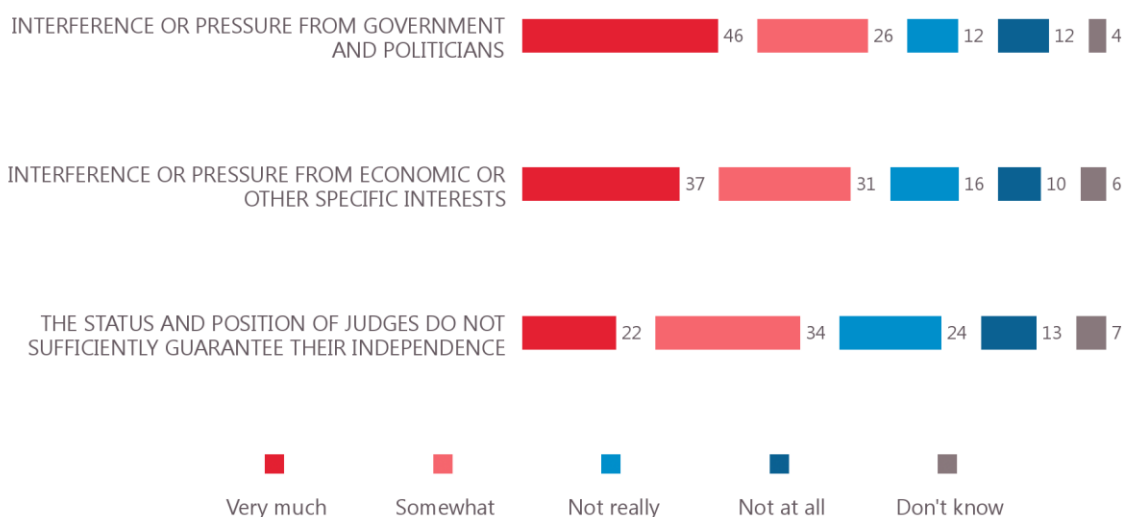
Turning to respondents rating the justice system in their country poorly in terms of the independence of courts and judges reveals the following:

At least seven in ten respondents say that **interference or pressure from government and politicians** explains why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as bad (72%). Nearly half the respondents say that this aspect influenced them **very much** (46%), while just over a quarter say it explains their rating **somewhat** (26%).

Nearly seven in ten respondents say that **interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** explains why they rated the independence of the justice system in their country as bad (68%). Less than four in ten respondents say that this factor influenced them **very much** (37%), while just over three in ten say it **somewhat** explains their rating (31%).

Nearly six in ten respondents say that that **the status and position of judges, which does not sufficiently guarantee their independence**, explain why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as bad (56%). Just over one in five respondents say that this is **very much** a reason for their poor rating (22%), while just over a third say that it explains it **somewhat** (34%).

**Q2a** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):  
(% - EU)

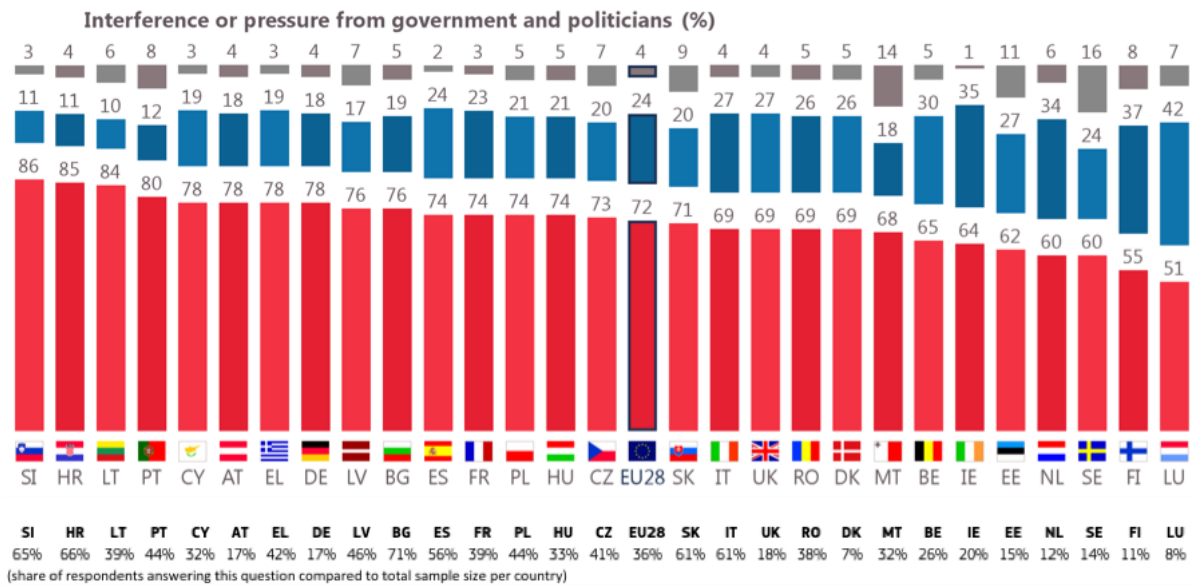


Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as bad (n=9.485)

At national level, more than eight in ten people in Slovenia (86%), Croatia (85%) and Lithuania (84%) **give interference or pressure from government and politicians** as a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as bad. At the other extreme, over half of respondents in Luxembourg (51%) and Finland (55%) and six in ten people in Sweden and the Netherlands (both 60%) do so.

Respondents in Luxembourg (42%), Finland (37%) and Ireland (35%) are the most likely to say that interference or pressure from government and politicians is **not** a reason for their poor rating of the independence of the justice system in their country.

**Q2a.1** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):



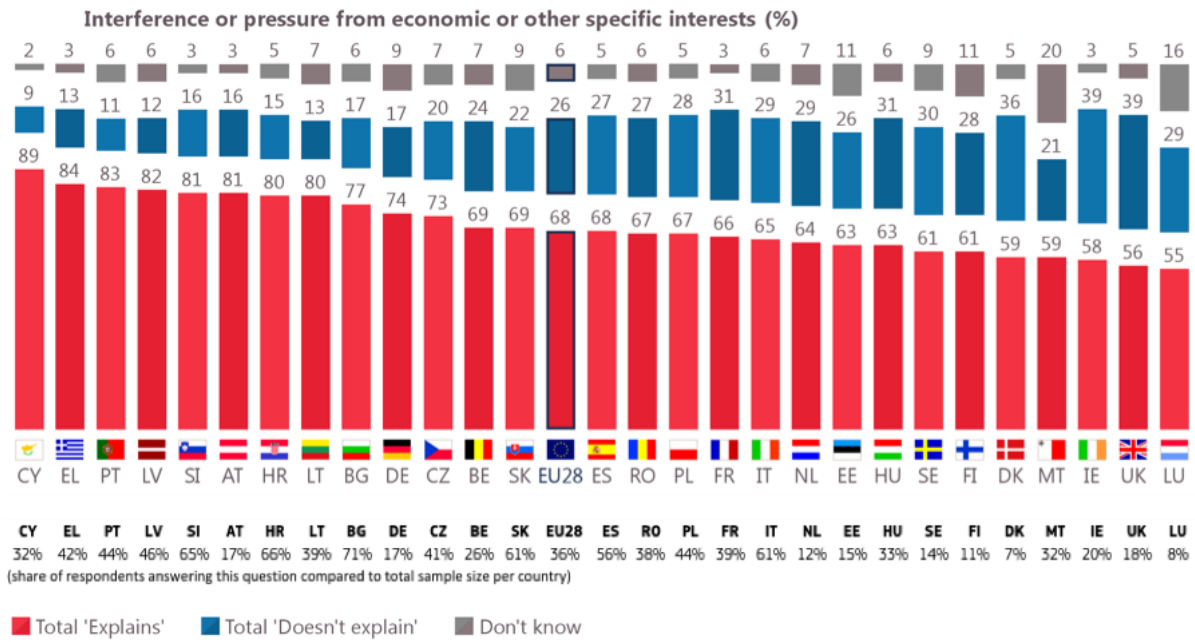
■ Total 'Explains' ■ Total 'Doesn't explain' ■ Don't know

Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as bad (n=9.485)

More than eight in ten respondents in Cyprus (89%), Greece (84%) and Portugal (83%) say that **interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** explain why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as bad.

Nearly four in ten respondents in the United Kingdom and Ireland (both 39%) and Denmark (36%) say that interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests **do not explain** their poor rating of the independence of the justice system in their country.

**Q2a.2** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

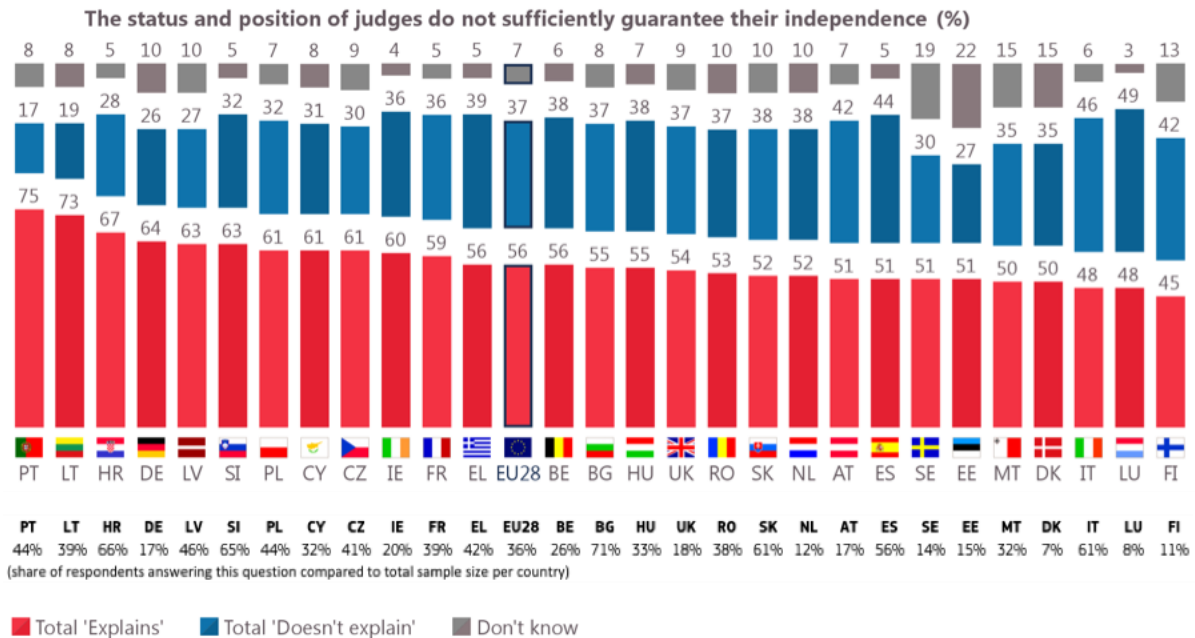


Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as bad (n=9,485)

Three-quarters of respondents in Portugal (75%), over seven in ten in Lithuania (73%) and around two-thirds in Croatia (67%) give **the status and position of judges, which do not sufficiently guarantee their independence**, as a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as bad. Less than half of people in Finland (45%) and Luxembourg and Italy (both 48%) say the same.

Less than half the respondents in Luxembourg (49%), Italy (46%) and Spain (44%) say that the status and position of judges, which do not sufficiently guarantee their independence, **do not explain** their poor rating of the independence of the justice system in their country.

**Q2a.3** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):



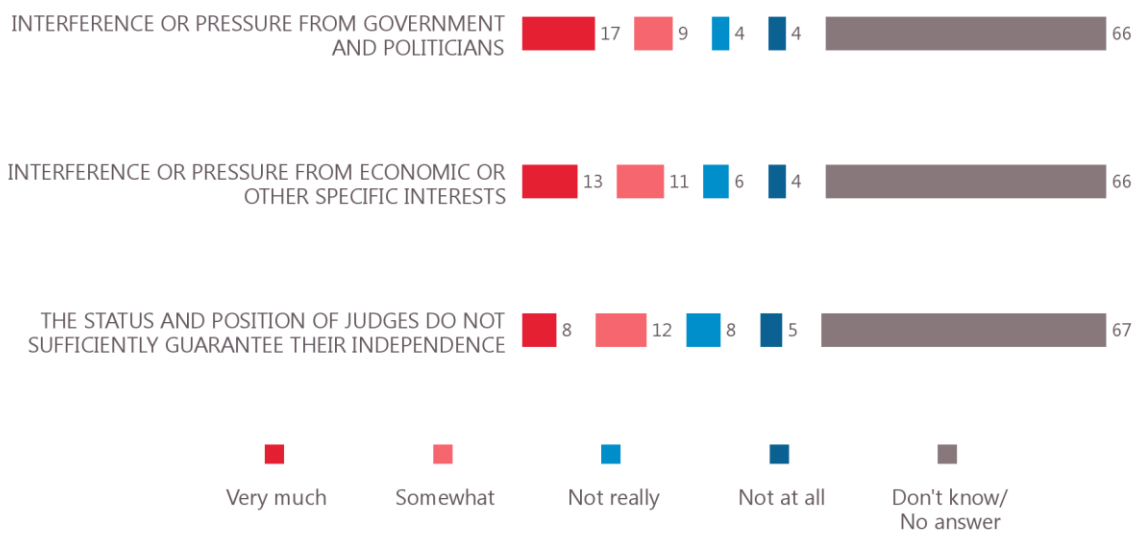
Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as bad (n=9.485)

In order to fine-tune the analysis, the data below were recalculated **on the basis of the full sample** i.e. all respondents who participated in this survey. These results are described below.

Around a quarter of respondents say that **interference or pressure from government and politicians** (26%), **interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** (24%) and **the status and position of judges which do not sufficiently guarantee their independence** (20%) explains why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as bad.

**Q2a** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

(% - EU)



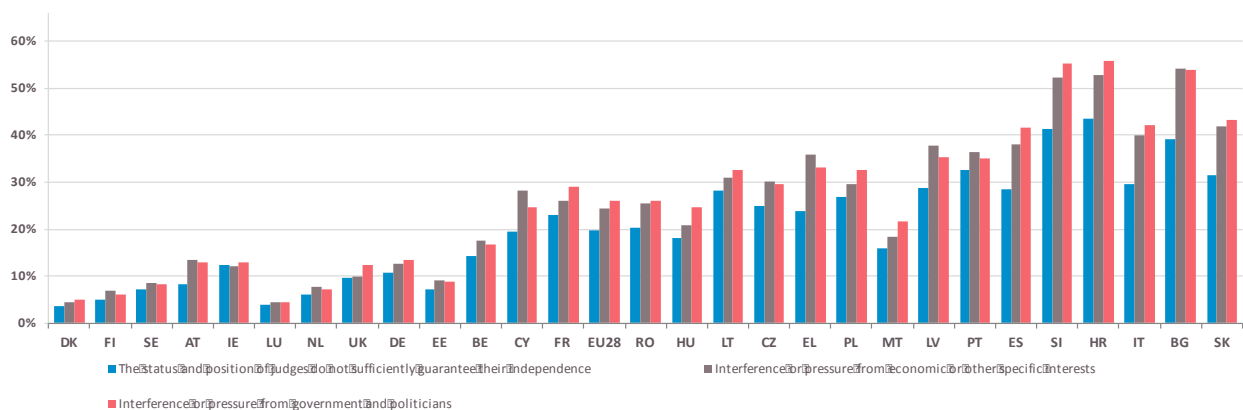
Base: all respondents

Looking at the results recalculated on the basis of the full sample at national level, shows that the highest proportions of those who consider the **interference or pressure from government and politicians** as a reason for the bad rating of the independence of the justice system in their country are found in Croatia (56%), Slovenia (55%) and Bulgaria (54%). At the other extreme, less than one in ten people in Luxembourg (4%), Denmark (5%) and Finland (6%) hold the same view.

Over half of the respondents in Bulgaria (54%), Croatia (53%) and Slovenia (52%) say that **interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** explains their bad rating of the independence of the justice system in their country. By contrast, this answer is given the least by respondents in Denmark (4%), Luxembourg (5%) and Finland (7%).

Respondents in Croatia (44%), Slovenia (41%) and Bulgaria (39%) are also the most likely to say that **the status and position of judges, which do not sufficiently guarantee their independence**, explain their bad rating of the justice system. At the other extreme, once again, respondents in Luxembourg, Denmark (both 4%) and Finland (5%) are the least likely to say so.

Q2aT Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY): (TOTAL EXPLAINS)



Base: all respondents

The order of the countries presented in the chart above corresponds to the order in chart for Q1



The socio-demographic data does not reveal any notable differences between genders.

Respondents aged 15-24 are the most likely to say that **interference or pressure from government and politicians** (83% compared with 67% of respondents aged 55 or over), **interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** (74% vs. 63%), and **the status and position of judges, which do not sufficiently guarantee their independence**, (61% vs. 50%) explain why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as bad.





Respondents with the highest level of education are more likely than those who left school at age 15 or earlier to say that **interference or pressure from government and politicians** (79% vs. 58%), **interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** (73% vs. 54%) and **the status and position of judges which do not sufficiently guarantee their independence** (61% vs. 43%) are reasons for the poor rating of the independence of the justice system in their country.

Employees are the most likely to give **interference or pressure from government and politicians** (80% compared with 68% of manual workers), **interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests** (75% vs. 66%) and **the status and position of judges, which do not sufficiently guarantee their independence**, (62% vs. 57%) as explanations for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as bad.

Respondents who have been involved in a dispute that has gone to court are more likely than those who have not done so to say that **the status and position of judges, which do not sufficiently guarantee their independence**, (60% vs. 55%) explain why they rate the independence of the justice system in their country as bad. However, respondents who have not had this experience are more likely than those who have been involved in a court dispute to give **interference or pressure from government and politicians** (74% vs. 65%) as a reason for rating the independence of the justice system in their country as bad. There are no noticeable differences when looking at the respondents who have and have not been involved in a dispute, which went to court concerning the **interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests**.

**Q2a** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

**Total 'Explains' (% - EU)**

	Interference or pressure from government and politicians	Interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests	The status and position of judges do not sufficiently guarantee their independence
EU28	72	68	56
 <b>Sex</b>			
Male	74	70	55
Female	71	66	56
 <b>Age</b>			
15-24	83	74	61
25-39	77	72	60
40-54	73	72	58
55 +	67	63	50
 <b>Education (End of)</b>			
15-	58	54	43
16-19	71	68	55
20+	79	73	61
Still studying	84	77	61
 <b>Respondent occupation scale</b>			
Self-employed	76	71	59
Employee	80	75	62
Manual workers	68	66	57
Not working	68	63	51
<b>Involved in dispute which went to court</b>			
Yes	65	69	60
No	74	68	55

Base: those rating the independence of their national justice system as bad (n=9.485)

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between the 24th and the 25th of February 2016, TNS Political & Social, a consortium created between TNS political & social, TNS UK and TNS opinion, carried out the FLASH EUROBAROMETER 435 survey on request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers. It is a general public survey co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication, "Strategy, Corporate Communication Actions and Eurobarometer" Unit.

The FLASH EUROBAROMETER 435 survey covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, resident in each of the 28 Member States and aged 15 years and over.

All interviews were carried using the TNS e-Call centre (our centralised CATI system). In every country the respondents were called both on fixed lines and mobile phones. The basic sample design applied in all states is multi-stage random (probability). In each household, the respondent was drawn at random following the "last birthday rule".

TNS has developed its own RDD sample generation capabilities based on using contact telephone numbers from responders to random probability or random location face-to-face surveys, such as Eurobarometer, as seed numbers. The approach works because the seed number identifies a working block of telephone numbers and reduces the volume of numbers generated that will be ineffective. The seed numbers are stratified by NUTS2 region and urbanisation to approximate a geographically representative sample. From each seed number the required sample of numbers are generated by randomly replacing the last two digits. The sample is then screened against business databases in order to exclude as many of these numbers as possible before going into field. This approach is consistent across all countries.

	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	DATES FIELDWORK		POPULATION 15+	PROPORTION EU28
BE	Belgium	TNS Dimarso	1.007	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	9.693.779	2,25%
BG	Bulgaria	TNS BBSS	1.001	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	6.537.535	1,52%
CZ	Czech Rep.	TNS Aisa	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	9.238.431	2,14%
DK	Denmark	TNS Gallup DK	1.007	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	4.838.729	1,12%
DE	Germany	TNS Deutschland	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	70.160.634	16,26%
EE	Estonia	TNS Emor	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	1.160.064	0,27%
IE	Ireland	IMS Millward Brown	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	3.592.162	0,83%
EL	Greece	TNS ICAP	1.002	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	9.937.810	2,30%
ES	Spain	TNS Spain	1.001	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	39.445.245	9,14%
FR	France	TNS Sofres	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	54.097.255	12,54%
HR	Croatia	Hendal	1.001	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	3.796.476	0,88%
IT	Italy	TNS Italia	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	52.334.536	12,13%
CY	Rep. of Cyprus	CYMAR	503	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	741.308	0,17%
LV	Latvia	TNS Latvia	1.002	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	1.707.082	0,40%
LT	Lithuania	TNS LT	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	2.513.384	0,58%
LU	Luxembourg	TNS Dimarso	504	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	457.127	0,11%
HU	Hungary	TNS Hoffmann Kft	1.003	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	8.781.161	2,04%
MT	Malta	MISCO	515	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	364.171	0,08%
NL	The Netherlands	TNS NIPO	1.002	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	13.979.215	3,24%
AT	Austria	TNS Austria	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	7.554.711	1,75%
PL	Poland	TNS Polska	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	33.444.171	7,75%
PT	Portugal	TNS Portugal	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	8.480.126	1,97%
RO	Romania	TNS CSOP	1.002	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	16.852.701	3,91%
SI	Slovenia	RM PLUS	1.001	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	1.760.032	0,41%
SK	Slovakia	TNS Slovakia	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	4.586.024	1,06%
FI	Finland	TNS Gallup Oy	1.003	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	4.747.810	1,10%
SE	Sweden	TNS SIFO	1.000	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	7.998.763	1,85%
UK	United Kingdom	TNS UK	1.001	24/02/2016	25/02/2016	52.651.777	12,20%
	TOTAL EU28		26.555	24/02/16	25/02/16	431.452.219	100%

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

Statistical Margins due to the sampling process

(at the 95% level of confidence)

*various sample sizes are in rows*

*various observed results are in columns*

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

## QUESTIONNAIRE

**Q1 From what you know, how would you rate the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY) in terms of the independence of courts and judges? Would you say it is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad?**

*(READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)*

Very good	1
Fairly good	2
Fairly bad	3
Very bad	4
DK/NA (DO NOT READ OUT)	5

*NEW based on FL385 Q5*

**ASK Q2a IF 'FAIRLY BAD' (CODE 3) OR 'VERY BAD' (CODE 4) IN Q1 – OTHERS GO TO Q2b**

**Q2a Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):**

*(READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)*

		Very much	Somewhat	Not really	Not at all	DK/NA (DO NOT READ OUT)
1	Interference or pressure from government and politicians	1	2	3	4	5
2	Interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests	1	2	3	4	5
3	The status and position of judges do not sufficiently guarantee their independence	1	2	3	4	5

*NEW*

**ASK Q2b IF 'VERY GOOD' (CODE 1) OR 'FAIRLY GOOD' (CODE 2) IN Q1**

**Q2b Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):**




























*(READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)*

		Very much	Somewhat	Not really	Not at all	DK/NA (DO NOT READ OUT)
1	No interference or pressure from government and politicians	1	2	3	4	5
2	No interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests	1	2	3	4	5
3	The status and position of judges sufficiently guarantee their independence	1	2	3	4	5

NEW

**Q1** From what you know, how would you rate the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY) in terms of the independence of courts and judges? Would you say it is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad?

(%)




























		Very good	Fairly good	Fairly bad	Very bad	Don't know	Total 'Good'	Total 'Bad'
EU28		9	43	24	12	12	52	36
BE		6	56	19	7	12	62	26
BG		2	21	35	35	7	23	70
CZ		3	44	32	9	12	47	41
DK		37	51	6	1	5	88	7
DE		15	54	13	4	14	69	17
EE		6	56	12	2	24	62	14
IE		20	55	13	7	5	75	20
EL		6	41	26	16	11	47	42
ES		3	27	38	18	14	30	56
FR		5	49	29	10	7	54	39
HR		7	21	38	28	6	28	66
IT		2	23	36	25	14	25	61
CY		10	46	19	13	12	56	32
LV		2	40	38	8	12	42	46
LT		2	47	28	10	13	49	38
LU		12	61	6	2	19	73	8
HU		5	44	22	11	18	49	33
MT		5	39	22	9	25	44	31
NL		16	56	9	3	16	72	12
AT		18	59	13	3	7	77	16
PL		5	40	32	12	11	45	44
PT		2	31	31	13	23	33	44
RO		8	43	23	15	11	51	38
SI		3	27	32	32	6	30	64
SK		2	19	36	25	18	21	61
FI		15	65	10	2	8	80	12
SE		24	53	10	4	9	77	14
UK		18	52	12	6	12	70	18



**Q2a.1** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

**Interference or pressure from government and politicians (%)**






























(IF 'FAIRLY BAD' OR 'VERY BAD' IN Q1)

		Very much	Somewhat	Not really	Not at all	Don't know	Total 'Explains'	Total 'Doesn't explain'
EU28		46	26	12	12	4	72	24
BE		37	28	16	14	5	65	30
BG		44	32	9	10	5	76	19
CZ		37	36	14	6	7	73	20
DK		24	45	13	13	5	69	26
DE		46	32	7	11	4	78	18
EE		32	30	18	9	11	62	27
IE		31	33	19	16	1	64	35
EL		42	36	9	10	3	78	19
ES		63	11	10	14	2	74	24
FR		47	27	10	13	3	74	23
HR		61	24	5	6	4	85	11
IT		40	29	14	13	4	69	27
CY		56	22	7	12	3	78	19
LV		46	30	9	8	7	76	17
LT		53	31	6	4	6	84	10
LU		25	26	26	16	7	51	42
HU		43	31	12	9	5	74	21
MT		39	29	7	11	14	68	18
NL		35	25	22	12	6	60	34
AT		52	26	8	10	4	78	18
PL		42	32	13	8	5	74	21
PT		60	20	3	9	8	80	12
RO		47	22	10	16	5	69	26
SI		58	28	5	6	3	86	11
SK		49	22	11	9	9	71	20
FI		18	37	23	14	8	55	37
SE		26	34	13	11	16	60	24
UK		42	27	18	9	4	69	27

**Q2a.2** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

**Interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests (%)**




























(IF 'FAIRLY BAD' OR 'VERY BAD' IN Q1)

		Very much	Somewhat	Not really	Not at all	Don't know	Total 'Explains'	Total 'Doesn't explain'
EU28		37	31	16	10	6	68	26
BE		33	36	15	9	7	69	24
BG		49	28	7	10	6	77	17
CZ		39	34	15	5	7	73	20
DK		19	40	26	10	5	59	36
DE		41	33	9	8	9	74	17
EE		27	36	17	9	11	63	26
IE		28	30	24	15	3	58	39
EL		43	41	7	6	3	84	13
ES		46	22	18	9	5	68	27
FR		35	31	18	13	3	66	31
HR		42	38	9	6	5	80	15
IT		34	31	19	10	6	65	29
CY		59	30	4	5	2	89	9
LV		49	33	9	3	6	82	12
LT		45	35	7	6	7	80	13
LU		22	33	14	15	16	55	29
HU		28	35	19	12	6	63	31
MT		30	29	11	10	20	59	21
NL		32	32	17	12	7	64	29
AT		41	40	7	9	3	81	16
PL		25	42	19	9	5	67	28
PT		59	24	5	6	6	83	11
RO		37	30	9	18	6	67	27
SI		45	36	6	10	3	81	16
SK		37	32	13	9	9	69	22
FI		17	44	17	11	11	61	28
SE		22	39	17	13	9	61	30
UK		29	27	28	11	5	56	39

**Q2a.3** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

**The status and position of judges do not sufficiently guarantee their independence (%)**




























(IF 'FAIRLY BAD' OR 'VERY BAD' IN Q1)

		Very much	Somewhat	Not really	Not at all	Don't know	Total 'Explains'	Total 'Doesn't explain'
EU28		22	34	24	13	7	56	37
BE		17	39	25	13	6	56	38
BG		22	33	16	21	8	55	37
CZ		22	39	18	12	9	61	30
DK		11	39	26	9	15	50	35
DE		20	44	20	6	10	64	26
EE		25	26	18	9	22	51	27
IE		20	40	20	16	4	60	36
EL		19	37	20	19	5	56	39
ES		26	25	26	18	5	51	44
FR		26	33	25	11	5	59	36
HR		27	40	16	12	5	67	28
IT		18	30	31	15	6	48	46
CY		22	39	8	23	8	61	31
LV		29	34	19	8	10	63	27
LT		27	46	12	7	8	73	19
LU		25	23	30	19	3	48	49
HU		22	33	27	11	7	55	38
MT		19	31	19	16	15	50	35
NL		18	34	23	15	10	52	38
AT		19	32	22	20	7	51	42
PL		18	43	25	7	7	61	32
PT		41	34	6	11	8	75	17
RO		22	31	18	19	10	53	37
SI		24	39	14	18	5	63	32
SK		23	29	21	17	10	52	38
FI		10	35	26	16	13	45	42
SE		7	44	16	14	19	51	30
UK		19	35	23	14	9	54	37

**Q2b.1** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

**No interference or pressure from government and politicians (%)**




























(IF 'VERY GOOD' OR 'FAIRLY GOOD' IN Q1)

		Very much	Somewhat	Not really	Not at all	Don't know	Total 'Explains'	Total 'Doesn't explain'
EU28		20	42	20	13	5	62	33
BE		14	44	24	13	5	58	37
BG		13	42	21	17	7	55	38
CZ		16	50	18	11	5	66	29
DK		23	47	15	10	5	70	25
DE		19	51	13	11	6	70	24
EE		18	38	19	15	10	56	34
IE		24	43	17	13	3	67	30
EL		15	39	25	17	4	54	42
ES		25	36	18	16	5	61	34
FR		16	34	32	15	3	50	47
HR		24	41	14	13	8	65	27
IT		15	45	27	8	5	60	35
CY		22	40	15	18	5	62	33
LV		22	45	17	12	4	67	29
LT		17	51	15	12	5	68	27
LU		15	43	19	17	6	58	36
HU		11	43	24	16	6	54	40
MT		22	39	18	12	9	61	30
NL		27	42	19	8	4	69	27
AT		22	46	17	12	3	68	29
PL		26	39	22	8	5	65	30
PT		26	43	7	16	8	69	23
RO		20	40	18	18	4	60	36
SI		20	42	20	15	3	62	35
SK		18	40	14	19	9	58	33
FI		19	48	18	11	4	67	29
SE		22	34	16	22	6	56	38
UK		21	38	19	17	5	59	36

**Q2b.2** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

**No interference or pressure from economic or other specific interests (%)**




























(IF 'VERY GOOD' OR 'FAIRLY GOOD' IN Q1)

		Very much	Somewhat	Not really	Not at all	Don't know	Total 'Explains'	Total 'Doesn't explain'
EU28		18	42	21	13	6	60	34
BE		12	47	20	15	6	59	35
BG		11	42	21	18	8	53	39
CZ		12	50	22	11	5	62	33
DK		30	35	15	13	7	65	28
DE		22	49	13	10	6	71	23
EE		14	41	18	13	14	55	31
IE		26	39	20	11	4	65	31
EL		10	42	27	14	7	52	41
ES		16	40	20	16	8	56	36
FR		17	37	32	11	3	54	43
HR		15	49	16	11	9	64	27
IT		14	40	31	10	5	54	41
CY		22	40	17	16	5	62	33
LV		16	46	23	9	6	62	32
LT		16	52	12	14	6	68	26
LU		14	41	22	15	8	55	37
HU		8	52	21	14	5	60	35
MT		11	40	21	17	11	51	38
NL		24	42	17	12	5	66	29
AT		22	46	18	11	3	68	29
PL		14	44	25	10	7	58	35
PT		18	52	9	17	4	70	26
RO		16	41	18	19	6	57	37
SI		12	55	12	16	5	67	28
SK		14	45	17	16	8	59	33
FI		17	44	22	11	6	61	33
SE		22	31	17	24	6	53	41
UK		20	33	22	19	6	53	41

**Q2b.3** Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (OUR COUNTRY):

**The status and position of judges sufficiently guarantee their independence (%)**

(IF 'VERY GOOD' OR 'FAIRLY GOOD' IN Q1)

		Very much	Somewhat	Not really	Not at all	Don't know	Total 'Explains'	Total 'Doesn't explain'
EU28		30	44	14	6	6	74	20
BE		25	50	13	6	6	75	19
BG		10	48	22	12	8	58	34
CZ		27	44	18	3	8	71	21
DK		38	47	6	3	6	85	9
DE		43	38	8	3	8	81	11
EE		32	43	9	7	9	75	16
IE		35	44	13	4	4	79	17
EL		15	56	20	5	4	71	25
ES		33	38	13	12	4	71	25
FR		24	52	15	5	4	76	20
HR		13	55	18	7	7	68	25
IT		21	55	18	4	2	76	22
CY		32	48	11	5	4	80	16
LV		28	44	16	7	5	72	23
LT		15	50	14	11	10	65	25
LU		27	53	8	4	8	80	12
HU		29	43	18	2	8	72	20
MT		30	34	19	6	11	64	25
NL		34	48	10	4	4	82	14
AT		44	36	11	5	4	80	16
PL		24	47	21	1	7	71	22
PT		17	40	12	25	6	57	37
RO		27	47	13	7	6	74	20
SI		21	54	13	7	5	75	20
SK		20	48	16	6	10	68	22
FI		31	52	10	4	3	83	14
SE		34	45	8	4	9	79	12
UK		24	39	19	10	8	63	29