



**THE YOUTH EDITION**

**IPSOS**

# **EUROPEAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

**DIGEST | DECEMBER 2022**





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# INTRODUCTORY EDITORIAL



## Welcome to the first edition of the Ipsos European Public Affairs (EPA) digest

The Ipsos EPA team is privileged to be involved in some of the most important and interesting social research studies taking place in Europe (and beyond). We wanted to find a way of sharing some of the many learnings emerging from these studies – both substantive and methodological – to help ensure they have maximum reach and utility among decision makers, scholars and everyday curious minds alike, hence this digest.

In this first edition we celebrate 2022 as the European Year of Youth with a series of articles and publications focusing on young people. Conventional wisdom often tells us that this group is increasingly disengaged from political issues and processes but [in our lead article](#) we present evidence from several recent studies conducted across the EU that points to a more nuanced – and, indeed, optimistic – picture.

Ipsos is regularly called upon to provide an unfiltered in-depth understanding of young people's attitudes and behaviours to inform policy, strategy and communications. But how best to do this in a way that ensures accurate, usable insights?

[In our second article](#) we consider the value of online communities in this regard. Drawing on real case studies covering a range of policy/topic areas, we describe the key features of such communities as a research tool and the value they can deliver, especially when it comes to understanding younger generations.

Also in this edition we present some of our most recent publications with a youth theme: Our work for the EUIPO looking at [young people's attitudes and behaviours in relation to intellectual property](#) (itself conducted partly using online communities), and our [Youth and Democracy study](#) for the European Commission Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, which explored young people's participation in civic life and expectations of the EU. Finally, we provide our pick of the most interesting [news, resources and events](#) from across Ipsos to help inform your work – from podcasts and webinars to the [foresight series](#) *What the Future?*, a must-read for anyone interested in future trends.

I hope you enjoy reading this inaugural edition of our digest as much as we enjoyed putting it together. We would love your feedback, including any suggestions for future content, so please do get in touch. In the meantime, if you'd like to find out more about how Ipsos as a company is investing in young people, our website provides information on [our approach to fostering new talent](#), and on the [Ipsos Foundation](#) – a global outreach programme to support and implement educational programmes for underprivileged children and adolescents around the World. I would like to thank you for your interest in our work and wish you a very happy holiday season and a prosperous new year!

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# TURNING OUT OR TUNING OUT? POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AMONG YOUNG EUROPEANS

Political engagement among today's younger Europeans is often considered to be very low. This perception is typically based on conventional notions of political engagement, like voting or party membership. However, other evidence suggests that, in reality, young people – including both millennials and Generation Z – are changing the way they express their values and engage with political and societal actors, thereby redefining the spectrum of political participation. Ipsos' own research conducted over the last couple of years confirms that young people in the EU have not completely withdrawn from conventional forms of participation and are also using a broader range of actions to make their voices heard and bring about lasting change.

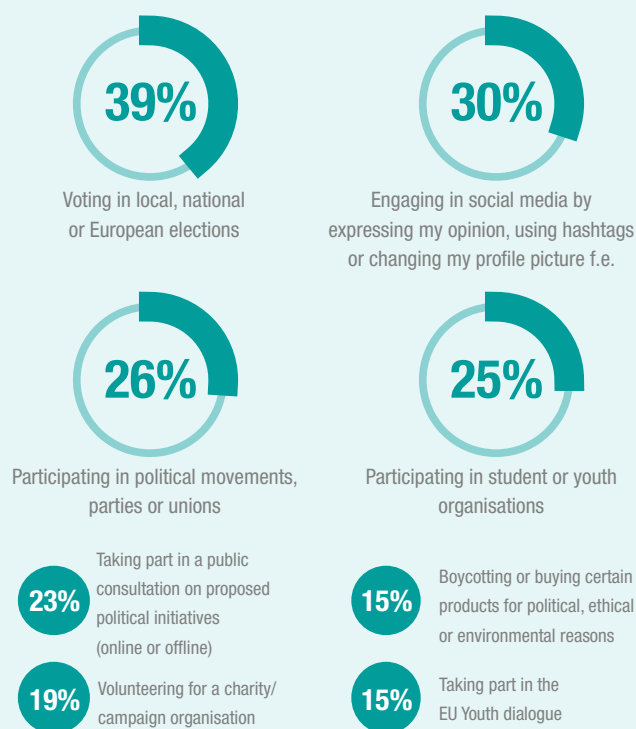
## CONVENTIONAL AND NON-CONVENTIONAL FORMS OF POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AMONG YOUNG EUROPEANS

Recent elections in Europe have shown that younger voters are less likely than their elders to cast their vote. In France, [voting turnout at the second round of the 2022 presidential election](#) was estimated at 59% among 18-24 year olds and 62% among 25-35 year olds compared to 85% among those aged 70 or older. A similar trend was observed in the [2022 Italian elections](#), with close to 58% of voters aged 18 to 34 casting their ballot compared to 65% of those aged 50-64 and 62% of those aged 65 or older. EU-wide data [collected by Ipsos in 2021 at the request of the European Parliament](#) drew a similar picture: fewer than half (46%) of the 18-30 years old surveyed said they had voted in the last local, national or European election.

Does low youth turnout in national elections imply that young people have completely turned their back on conventional forms of political engagement? Our data suggests not. For example, our aforementioned work for the European Parliament found that young people still consider voting an important marker of good citizenship – giving it a mean 'Importance' score of 7.7 out of 10 (compared with, for example, a score of 6.0 for being active in voluntary groups

and youth organisations). Similarly, our just-published Youth and Democracy survey for the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture indicates that young people still consider voting as the most effective action for making their voices heard by decision makers, slightly ahead of engagement on social media. In addition, although [party membership has been declining in Europe over the last few decades among all age groups](#), over a quarter of young people in the EU say that participating in political movements, parties or unions are effective ways for their cohort to make their voices heard. In sum, our data reveals a more nuanced picture than the narrative of youth disengagement might suggest: while today's young people appear not to use conventional forms of political engagement as much as previous generations, they do not necessarily question the legitimacy or efficacy of voting or parties as institutions.

### In your opinion what are the most effective actions for making young people's voice heard by decision makers?



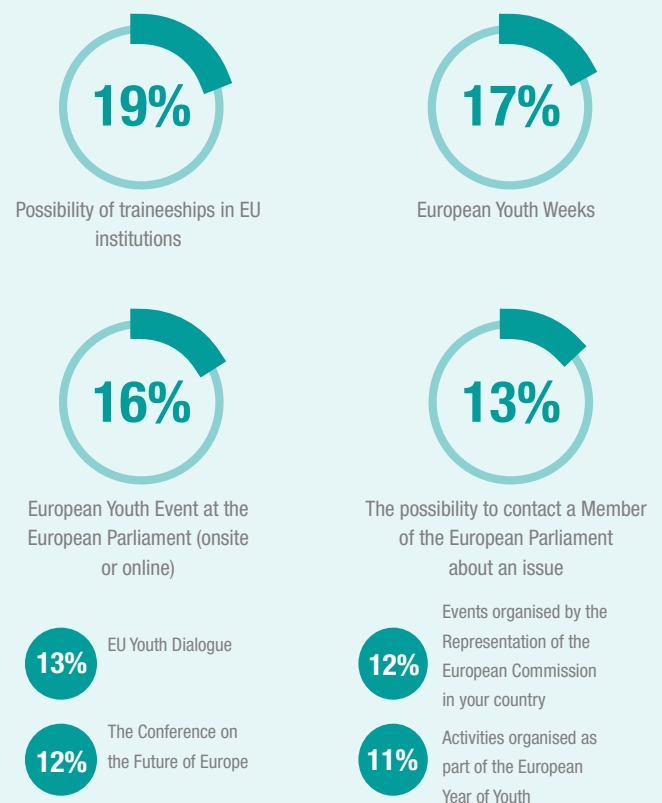
[Q1, Flash Eurobarometer 502 - Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth, n = 26 178]



The decline in conventional forms of engagement could reflect dissatisfaction among younger cohorts with the current political offer and a related desire to express their values and issue priorities in alternative ways. The rise of social movements such as Friday for Future and the recent awareness raising attacks on artworks in Florence, London, Potsdam and The Hague by climate protestors provide testimony of this development. This diversification of political participation also comes through strongly in Ipsos' data, with young people reporting using a large range of participatory means, often opting for more protest-oriented and direct forms of engagement, such as signing a petition, boycotting a product, taking part in a public protest, or posting a political opinion on social media. Direct protest actions like the boycotting of certain products or petitioning seem to be used more often by young people aged 25 to 30 years old while respondents younger than 25 years old are more likely to turn to online activism, including using hashtags or changing their profile picture to show support for a political or social issue.

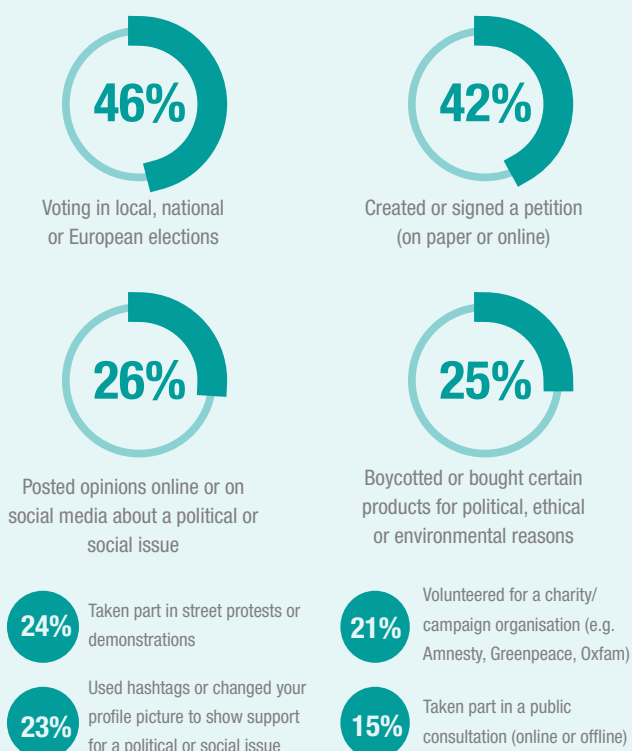
Equally though, the decline in conventional forms of engagement may also reflect low awareness of the range of engagement mechanisms on offer. We have found, for example, that fewer than one in five young Europeans have heard of specific initiatives offered by the EU to get young people involved in European politics, such as traineeships in the EU institutions or participation in the European Youth Event at the European Parliament or in European Youth Weeks.

### The European Union offers various initiatives to get young people more involved in European politics. Which, if any, have you heard of? [MULTIPLE ANSWERS]



[Q11, Flash Eurobarometer 502 - Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth, n = 26 178]

### Have you ever done any of the following?

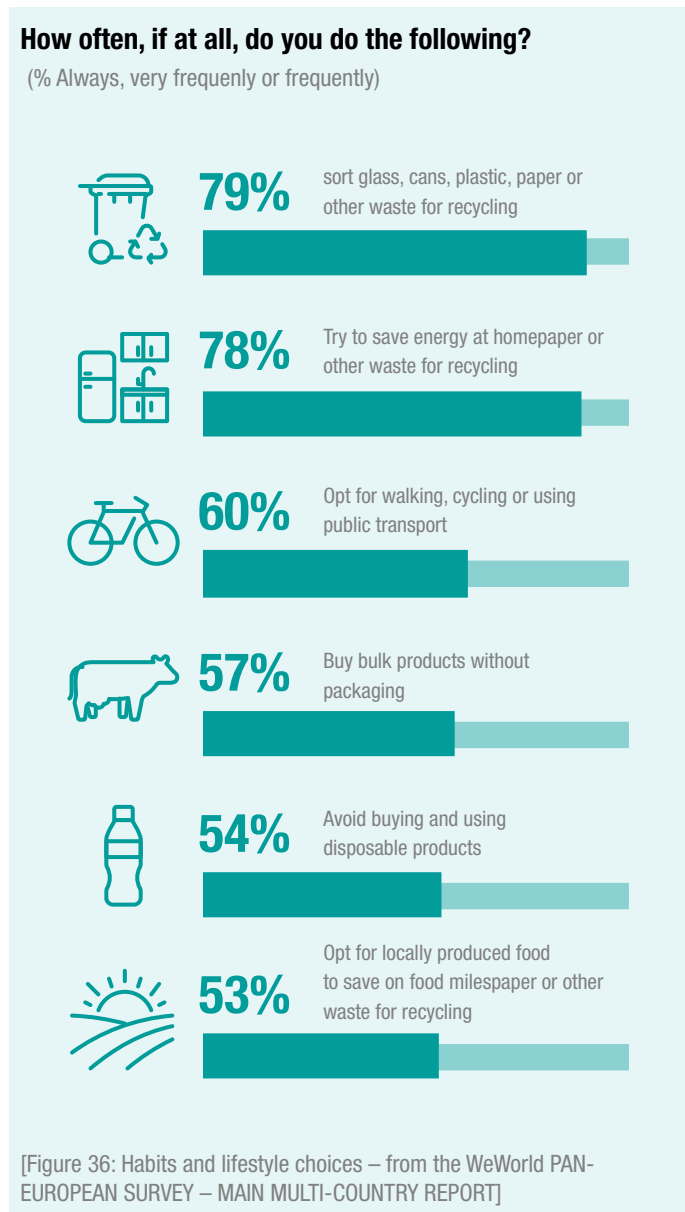


[Q7, European Parliament Youth Survey, n=18 156]

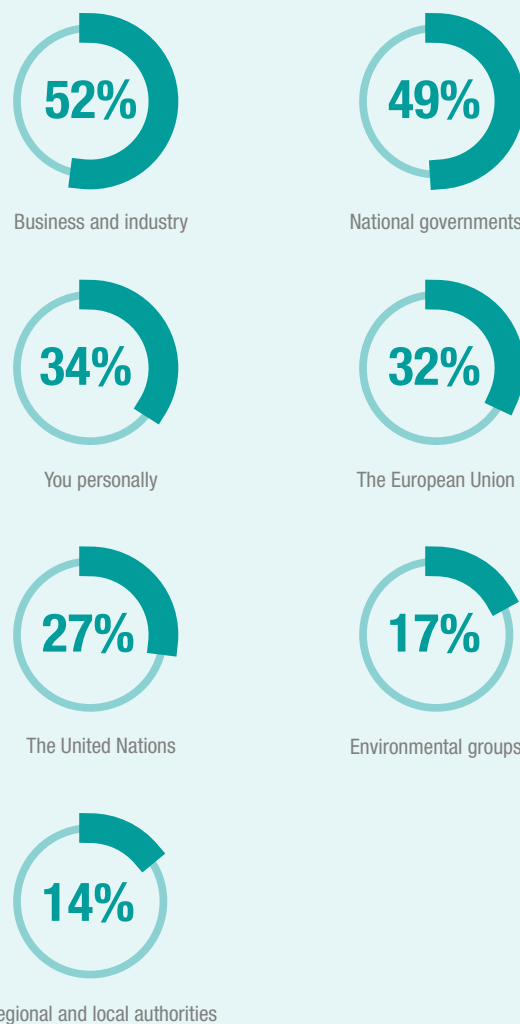
## THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL: PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE PRIVATE SPHERE

Young people's political engagement increasingly also appears to extend beyond the traditional public sphere and into their daily habits and behaviours. A [2021 Pan-European Survey](#) undertaken by Ipsos on behalf of WeWorld, found that young Europeans were worried about the environment and embracing environmental-friendly habits, with more than half reporting opting for walking, cycling, or using public transport instead of using a car or a motorbike; avoiding buying and using disposable products; and opting for locally produced food to save on food miles. In line with this, a [recently-published Ipsos global segmentation study](#) reveals that those who are more likely to compromise their lifestyle for the environment ('activists') are skewed to being slightly younger.

Our [data](#) further suggest that young Europeans have significant expectations of businesses and industries when it comes to protecting the environment, with over half contending that these groups were mainly responsible for tackling climate change. In this context, it is plausible that the Great Resignation movement that followed the COVID-19 pandemic, together with the phenomena of 'quiet-quitting', signal younger generations' desire to ignite change in the labour market and push companies to foster more ethical and sustainable business practices.



### Who is mainly responsible for tackling climate change?



[Figure 15: Perceived responsibility for tackling climate - from the WeWorld PAN-EUROPEAN SURVEY – MAIN MULTI-COUNTRY REPORT]



In sum, while young people have long been considered politically disengaged, there is evidence suggesting that Millennials and Gen Zers are increasingly using diverse forms of political participation and more non-conventional forms of engagement. Although they might not cast their vote in national elections in the numbers their elders do, or engage to the same extent with party politics, they are by no means disinterested in, or alienated from, 'politics with a small p'.

In this regard, the different Ipsos studies confirm that the challenge for European politicians and party leaders may not be getting young people enthused about important issues of the day and keen to make a difference. Rather, the task appears to lie in finding ways of tapping into the cohort's oftentimes deeply held values, beliefs and priorities in ways that will reignite their engagement with mainstream civic and electoral processes. As a first step, raising awareness of existing formal engagement mechanisms available to young people in the EU would appear key. In addition to this, and given young people's enthusiasm for online engagement, policy makers may need to consider promoting more online forms of conventional representative and participatory processes, including online voting.

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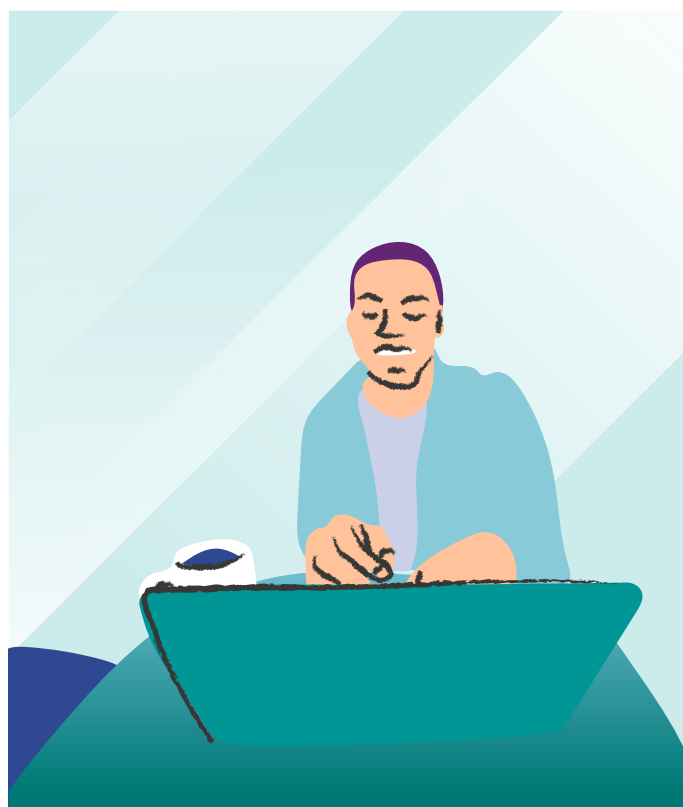
# MEETING YOUNG PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE: ONLINE COMMUNITIES AS RESEARCH TOOLS



In recent years, the boundaries between quantitative and qualitative research have become increasingly blurred, with multi-method research approaches gaining growing momentum as effective means of diving into consumers' and citizens' attitudes and behaviours. At the same time, [research is also increasingly being conducted online](#) – a trend that reflects the broader digital transformation in society (according to Eurostat, above 80% of households in all EU Member States [had internet access as of 2021](#)) and one that has only been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, during which digital solutions were sometimes the only data collection tool available to researchers.

This digital revolution in research has perhaps been especially marked in the qualitative field, with forms of **digital ethnography**<sup>1</sup> becoming increasingly popular vis-à-vis more traditional, face-to-face or phone methodologies. Digital ethnography involves using digital devices – whether mobile phones, tablets or PCs – as channels for qualitative research. The approach has the key benefit of being more participant-led compared to offline research methodologies, as participants are generally able to choose what, when and how to contribute, giving them a degree of control over the data collection process. Relatedly, the approach can provide for a more accurate understanding of some attitudes, behaviours and experiences due to the potential it offers for in-the-moment, spontaneous data collection (for example, while the participant is using a particular service, or engaging in some other activity). Of course, digital ethnography also very much mirrors the way people – and especially younger people – typically communicate more generally these days. Indeed, we know from our own research-on-research that young people increasingly prefer to take part in research online rather than face-to-face, reflecting their broader propensity to live 'digital' lives. From a practical point of view, digital ethnography also provides for the engagement of people from a variety of locations simultaneously (including both urban and rural areas), as well as those with mobility issues who may be unable to attend an in-person research forum.

**Online communities** are a popular form of digital ethnography<sup>2</sup> and one that has wide-ranging application. Much like any other social media community (e.g., a closed Facebook group), an online community is created to bring people together for a specific purpose (in this case research). Any single community may involve between 10 and 500+ participants and may span over one week or several years. As in the case of more traditional qualitative methods, a community is structured around a series of tasks, facilitated by a trained community manager. Various tools are available within community platforms to ensure the tasks are engaging for participants and generate valid, insightful data. As shown in the summary visual overleaf, these range from basic live chat and other discussion-based functions, to video-based 'self-ethnography' and co-creation tools (for example, to generate new ideas for services or communications).



<sup>1</sup>An ethnography, from the Greek word *ethnos* (folk, nation, people) and *grapho* (I write), literally means a description of people. As a research approach, it involves the researchers directly immersing themselves in the lives and day-to-day experiences of the research subjects (for example, via observation) in order to really understand that lived experience.

<sup>2</sup>Another increasingly popular form of digital ethnography involves using apps to engage subjects in research. Various forms of engagement are possible within the apps such as diaries, video/blogs, photo-based observation, group discussions/co-creations sessions etc.



# THE IPSOS COMMUNITY PLATFORM TOOLKIT

 <b>Photo Selector</b> Allows respondents to select from provided images to illustrate their feelings and ideas about a specified topic.	 <b>Engaging Surveys</b> Better, more engaging user experience helping to boost participation and overall satisfaction.
 <b>Embedded Frameworks</b> Deeper understanding, in a turnkey fashion.	 <b>Spotlight Blog</b> Engages respondents with brand-driven content and enables deeper-dive exercises.
 <b>Ranking</b> Allows respondents to compare a set of items to each other in some form of order.	 <b>Blogs and Diaries</b> Private exercises for consumption diaries or in-depth explorations.
 <b>Self-ethnography</b> Video exploration for observational, in-the-moment learnings.	 <b>Quick Polls</b> Collect a quick, aggregate read on a specific question.
 <b>Contests</b> Vote, rate and rank both consumer-generated and client-supplied content.	 <b>Interactive Discussions</b> Share via text, images, videos and attachments.
 <b>Idea Exchange</b> Enables participants to brainstorm to vet new ideas and identify unmet needs.	 <b>Video Management</b> Quick and intuitive video management tool offering Big Sofa integration.
 <b>Live Chats</b> Chat in real-time in an intimate setting with the ability to show images and video	 <b>Sorting</b> Allows respondents to group stimuli into separate coherent groups.
 <b>Co-Creation</b> Work together with your consumers to create new forms of interactions, services, products or ads	 <b>Marker Tool</b> Allows members to mark areas of an image or text and provide comments with heat map output for analysis.

Online communities can be an effective tool for engaging a variety of different audiences in research, not least young people. There are a variety of reasons for this:



**Communities are deliberately designed to be interactive and organic**, with participants encouraged to engage with each other, not just with the researcher. In this way, participants shape the community and the research itself, resulting in richer findings. Such peer-to-peer cocreation is especially valuable when researching the views of young people in order to really understand their priorities, attitudes and experiences, without being biased by any a priori


assumptions. A range of exercises and projective techniques can be used to facilitate such participant-led, peer-to-peer insight generation. For example, in a recent Ipsos community that aimed to disentangle how generational differences played into different comedic sensibilities used in brands advertisements, we asked young people to submit a funny meme that they felt an affinity with and that they felt encapsulated a shared experience or feeling. They were then probed on the reason they selected the meme. In another task they were asked to share top-of-mind examples of comedic brand advertisements they had enjoyed and explain why. These and other tasks in the community enabled the researchers to dive deeper into generational differences underlying the comedy types with which people connected the most (e.g. light humour vs. dark humour, political vs. non-political, etc.). Other types of participant-led tasks possible in online communities include video diary tasks, quick polls, and marker tools (allowing participants to mark areas of a picture or text and provide comments with heat map output for analysis), among others. (See p.9 for more information on this project)




As digital natives, [younger people often have a lower attention span than older generations](#) when it comes to engaging with visual communications and stimuli. **Tasks in online communities are specifically designed to be short as well as fun and engaging** – which is especially beneficial in the case of studies with a longitudinal element, where it may be necessary to keep participants engaged over a series of days, weeks or even months. [Ipsos US' Gen Z syndicated community \('Club Z'\)](#), a longitudinal panel comprising 200+ teens, leverages a wide range of quantitative and qualitative tools to maintain participants' active engagement – for instance, survey-based exercises in which traditional scales and response options are given a fun and visual twist (see examples below); discussion boards incorporating familiar cultural/visual references for Gen Z; and tailored brand receptivity questions in which the participants are given the chance to describe, in their own terms (including via text and audio-visual input), what they want to hear from brands, when and why.

## EXAMPLES OF VISUAL SCALES AND RESPONSES USED IN IPSOS US' 'CLUB Z' PANEL COMMUNITY

Incorporating emojis and symbols teens are familiar with from texting:  
Using the emojis below, how does this product make you feel?  
Please select one




 Extremely unlikely


2

3

4

 Extremely likely

Lean into visual ratings instead of the traditional excellent to poor scale:





**Within the context of a single community, both group-based and private individual tasks can be incorporated.** This feature can be useful to help combat young people's often higher receptivity to peer pressure and conformity with peer norms, as well as for studies where the research topic or question is very sensitive. An example of the latter is our [recent study for the European Union Intellectual Property Office \(EUIPO\)](#) on young people's attitudes and behaviours in relation to counterfeits and illegal online content. Most of the research tasks in this community were partially hidden (i.e. participants could only see others' answers once they had posted their own). For tasks focusing on particularly delicate topics (such as personal experiences of buying fake goods or downloading illegal content), participants' contributions were kept entirely private, with only the moderator being able to view these.



**Another, more generic benefit of online communities is that participants and discussions can be stratified, so that multiple discussions threads can take place simultaneously** (for example, among different sub-groups).

In [a recent study Ipsos conducted for the BBC on the topic of media portrayals](#) and stereotypes of diversity and minorities, participants (and the discussions) were split based on ethnicity, region, disability, social class, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. This approach provided participants with a safe online environment in which to talk openly about the issues in question, whilst enabling the researchers to deep-dive into the various groups' experiences, culture, relationships, and community, so as to really shed a light on how best to create more nuanced media portrayals of diversity.

As with more traditional qualitative and ethnographic research methods, the data emerging from online communities is analysed in a controlled and thorough way, both at the aggregate level and by any key sub-groups of interest (e.g. different socio-demographic segments, as in the BBC example mentioned above), so that key themes and insights relevant to the scope of the study are brought out. These themes and insights are then presented in a bespoke report, ideally structured around the original research objectives and/or questions to ensure these are directly addressed. In this way, the data collected via online communities can provide institutions and organisations with rich insights to inform their work, including in-depth and visually-based case studies or illustrations (for example, incorporating photos or videos). In the context of mixed-methods research studies, the data from communities can also be used to validate and/or triangulate the findings from other research approaches (e.g. surveys or secondary data analysis), providing for a rounded understanding of opinions or behaviours in relation to the study topic that can directly inform action planning.

Overall, our experience is that when tailored appropriately, online communities become a powerful means of conducting research among young people without sacrificing depth, quality or intimacy, allowing institutions and organisations to proactively involve young people's voices in decision-making.

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# YOUNG PEOPLE AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

## YOUNG EUROPEANS ARE BUYING MORE FAKE PRODUCTS AND CONTINUING TO ACCESS PIRATED ONLINE CONTENT – THOUGH THE LATTER BEHAVIOUR IS DECLINING.

Young European citizens engage with intellectual property (IP) every day. As digital natives, they encounter IP online, and through their choices and habits they encounter it in the physical world. One of the keys to changing their attitudes and behaviours is to first understand what drives them when deciding where to source online digital content or physical goods, when they are faced with the alternatives of respecting or ignoring the associated IP rights.

As a result, European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) has so far released three IP Youth Scoreboard surveys, which focus on young people aged 15-24 across the EU. The latest (2022) scoreboard was complemented by qualitative online communities among a selection of the survey respondents to provide richer insights into young people's perceptions and attitudes at a time when online commerce and digital consumption have been increasing significantly, thereby affecting consumer behaviours.



Among the key findings were that:

**37%** of young people had bought one or several fake products intentionally in the last 12 months

**21%** had intentionally used illegal sources of digital content in the last 12 months – but 60% said they preferred to access digital content from legal sources, a significantly higher proportion than in 2019 (50%)



Price and availability remain the main factors for buying counterfeits and for digital piracy



A third of young consumers find it difficult to distinguish legal digital content from pirated content or increasingly do not care.



***This new analysis should provide a valuable actionable tool to help stakeholders, policy makers as well as educators and civil society organisations shape awareness raising initiatives to support the informed choices of our young citizen and consumers.***

**Christian Archambeau**  
Executive Director of the EUIPO



**Read more**

<https://euipo.europa.eu/ohimportal/en/web/observatory/ip-youth-scoreboard#2022>

### Contact the Author



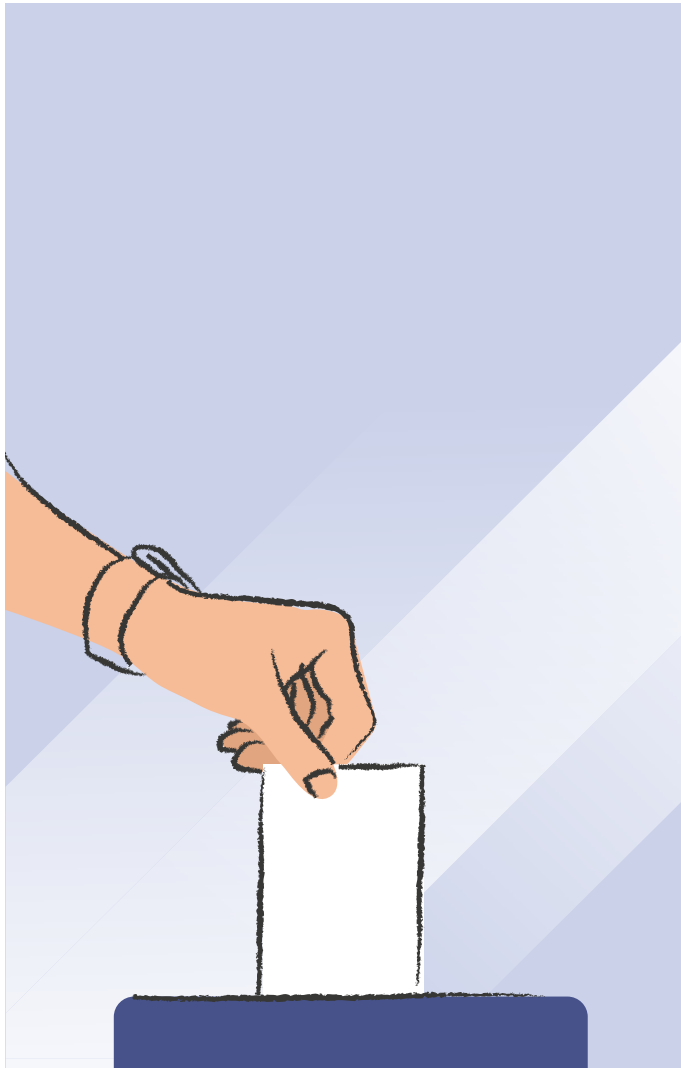
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# YOUTH AND DEMOCRACY

## IN THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF YOUTH

### WHILE PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH ORGANISATIONS IS ON THE RISE, YOUNG EUROPEANS STILL SEE VOTING AND SOCIAL MEDIA USE AS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS OF MAKING THEIR VOICES HEARD

To mark the 'European Year of Youth', the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture commissioned us to conduct a Flash Eurobarometer survey targeting young people aged 15-30. The survey looked at respondents' expectations for the Year of Youth, their views on the most effective actions for making their voices heard by decision-makers, as well as what they expected of the European Union.



#### Among the key findings were that::



The perceived most efficacious actions for making young people's voices heard were respectively:

- voting in national or European elections
- social media expression
- participating in political movements
- participating in student/youth organisations

### 58%

of respondents had participated in one or more youth organisation – ranging from sports clubs to volunteering organisations – in the last 12 months



Respondents' main expectations of the EU were to preserve peace and security (37%), increase job opportunities (33%), and fight poverty and inequality (32%).

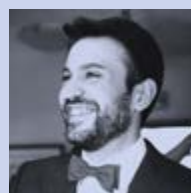


Fewer than one in five were aware of specific initiatives to get young people more involved in European politics.

[Read more](#)

<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2282>

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# NEWS & EVENTS



## COP27



Ipsos is proud to continue to drive debate around the fight against climate change. We provide insight into citizens', and businesses' fears and expectations about sustainability around the world through our studies, reports, and surveys. In the run up to COP27, we produced [Global views on Sustainability](#), a 34-country survey of over 22,500 respondents looking at citizen support for policies to help tackle climate change.

Hot on the heels of this analysis, our new study [Environmental Sustainability: Who Cares?](#) presents a global segmentation of citizens based on their level of concern and engagement with the environment. It also advises governments and businesses on how to reach out to each segment and influence more positive behavioural change.



## PODCAST

The Ipsos Views podcast provides a deep-dive into some of our most exciting and innovative white papers. The authors discuss their ideas in more detail, offer unique insights and reveal new elements of that thinking. Recent episodes have covered themes such as the perils of making predictions in uncertain times; the science of behaviour change; and the rise of ESG. These podcasts form an important part of our thought leadership programme, and you can find the whole series [here on our website](#). Enjoy them on the move, while you work, or whenever you can. And **please subscribe** to stay up to date on new releases!



Spotify



Apple



Anchor



Google



## FORESIGHT

Our monthly [What the Future](#) publication is a must-read for anyone interested in future trends. It offers a powerful framework and set of techniques for understanding the world's trends and drivers, envisioning alternative futures, and establishing priorities. Produced by the Ipsos Trends & Foresight Lab, WTF delves into a different topic each month, drawing on exclusive data and expert insights. The latest edition looks at how work and life will blend in a more flexible future. For more information visit [our website](#).



## WEBINAR

The [Ipsos KEYS webinar series](#) combines our latest cutting-edge global research with new perspectives based on real-life experiences to help you better understand today's world while also preparing you for the future. Recent episodes have included [Talking about Generations](#), which looked at different generations' impact on the societal and consumer landscape, and [The Sustainability Imperative](#), which considered such questions as: how to shape a future that is planet-positive? how to support a fairer society where everyone can thrive? And how can businesses create sustainable futures, both for themselves and the communities they serve?



Don't miss the next episode – [The Year in Review](#) – on 15 December, which will consider what we have learned from the past turbulent twelve months and how we can stay prepared and resilient during the period ahead.

# THE YOUTH EDITION

## EUROPEAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Digest | December 2022

