

## **IMAGINE EUROPE**

### **Analysis of the Online Survey Results**

#### **GERMANY**

Interviews in Germany were conducted from 26-10-2018 to 20-02-2018. To be able to conduct interviews with all target groups we used a questionnaire that was translated into German. The answers given were then translated back into the original English version after the completion of the survey. Due to the German version used the tables under “1. Characteristics of respondents and sample” are labelled German. All labels are described within the corresponding text passages.

The questionnaires were distributed to respondents via mail and social networks and were directly self-filed by them.

#### **1. Characteristics of respondents and sample**

The German survey reached 711 people. Since respondents were more or less free to participate or not in the survey, the sample is based on volunteering rather on quota despite the initially set target sectors. What is more, we let the respondents decide on their own which group they self-identify with, which despite its theoretical appropriateness, further made it more difficult to collect accurate data on belonging or not to the target sectors. That is why the survey data shows a slightly unbalanced distribution of answers according to target sectors. 37,4% of the respondents chose Social as their target group, 25,1% chose Economy/Technology, 18,8% chose Education, 15,8% chose Youth and only 2,5% chose Migration (see Figure 1).

## Zu welcher Gruppe/Sektor würden Sie sich zählen?

688 Antworten

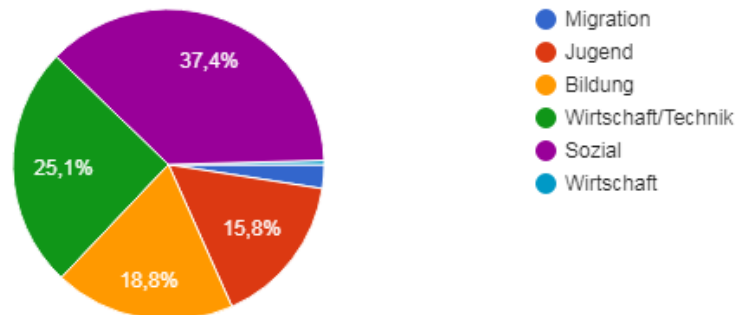


Figure 1, To which target sector do you belong?

This does not mean, that not more than 2,5% of the respondents actually belong to the target group migration. If you check the nationality respondents could chose, there are at least 6,9% who chose another nationality than German (93,1%). People with 18 different nationalities participated in the survey (see Figure 2). If you then take into account that according to the German Center for Political Education at least 22,5% of the German population has a migrant background, in Bremen the number is even higher: 30,5% (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2016). If you assume that the participants of the survey also show the normal distribution of the population of Bremen with a migrant background you can say, that at least 28,4% of the respondents fall into the category of migration.

## Welche Nationalität haben Sie?

700 Antworten

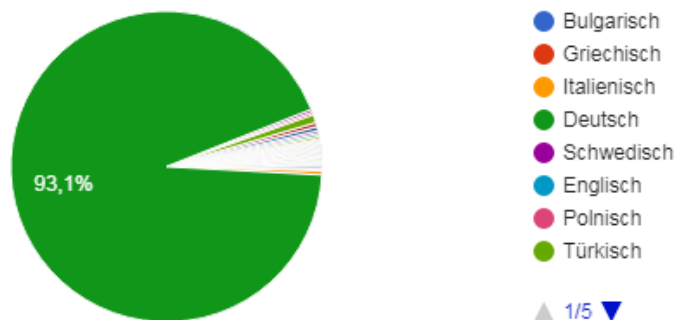


Figure 2, What is your nationality?

Regarding gender, in the sample there are more men (60,5%) than women (38,5%). There is a number of 1% who chose another gender (see Figure 3). This 1% is not taken into consideration for the analysis.

### Welches Geschlecht haben Sie?

699 Antworten

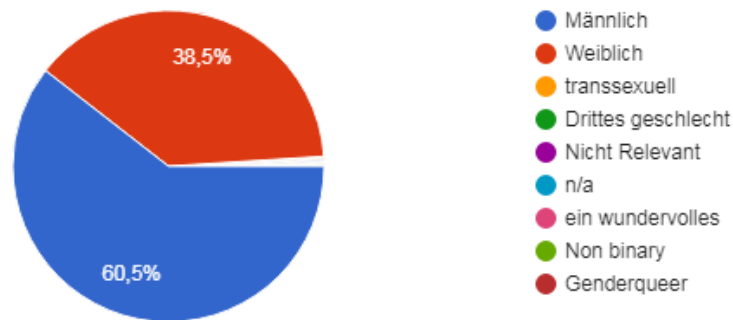


Figure 3, What is your Gender?

In terms of age, most of the respondents are between 45 and 60 years of age (33,2%) and between 18 and 30 years of age (29,4%). 20,0% are over 60 and 15,8% are between 30 and 45 years of age. 1,4% of the answers were given by people of under 18 years of age (see Figure 4).

### Wie alt sind Sie?

701 Antworten

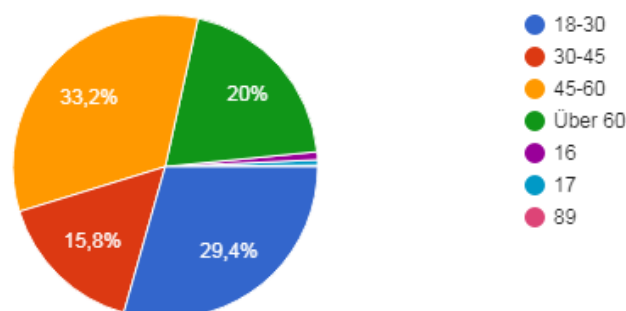


Figure 4, How old are you?

The majority of respondents is well educated. 8,5% have a Bachelor's and 8,1% have a Master's Degree, 36,9% have a high school or equivalent degree (Abitur and Fachoberschule). A number of 28,4% holds a degree from a secondary school grade (Realschule) and 12,1% has

a lower secondary school degree (Hauptschule) (see Figure 5). The remaining 6,1% of the respondents chose among the various vocational degrees existing within the German school system.

### Welchen Schulabschluss haben Sie?

694 Antworten

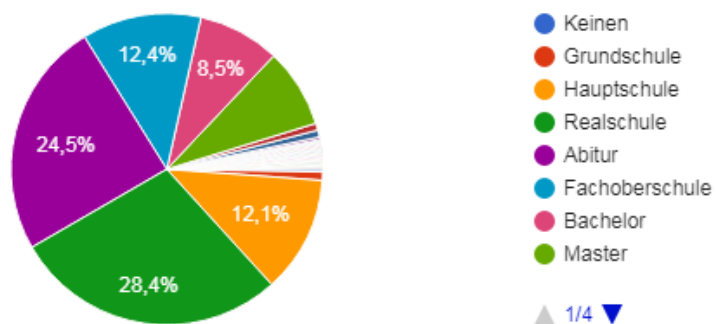


Figure 5, What is your educational degree?

Regarding employment status, most of the respondents are employed, 35,5% are full-time employed, 9,5% work part time, another 9,5% works self-employed. 19,5% is retired, 15,7% are students, 4,5% is unemployed (see Figure 6). The remaining 5,8% chose various wording for the above mentioned basic statuses.

### Welches Arbeitsverhältnis haben Sie?

687 Antworten

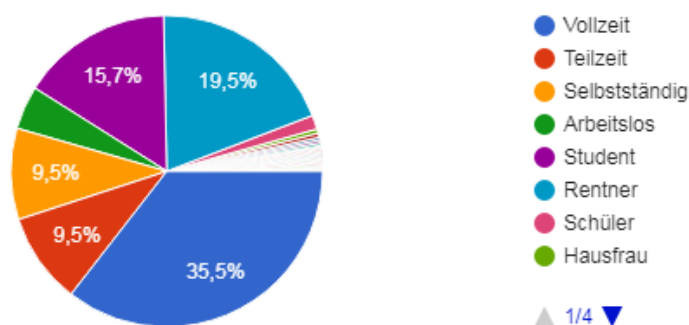


Figure 6, What is your employment status?

## 2. Overall attitude and opinions on main topics about the EU

Results show there is a large number of respondents who express positive attitude towards the EU and the EU membership of Germany as 32,7% share that EU belongs to their identity and 24,5% argue that they believe in the EU.

However we must yet here say that there is a majority of respondents who thinks that the EU is too bureaucratic (with 56,1% who fully agree and 23,9% who agree to this statement). Furthermore a large a significant number of participants states that the EU plays no role in their everyday life (25,6%).

The German survey also shows some alarming tendencies. There is for example a number of 21% of participants that thinks EU takes their identity or reduces it. In this section we will present opinions on the main topics of skepticism/believe in the EU.

Most of the respondents agree that EU does not belong to their identity – 26,8% fully disagree and 20,9% do not agree but at the same time 17,8% say that EU does belong to their identity and 14,9% fully agree that EU is part of their identity (Figure 7).

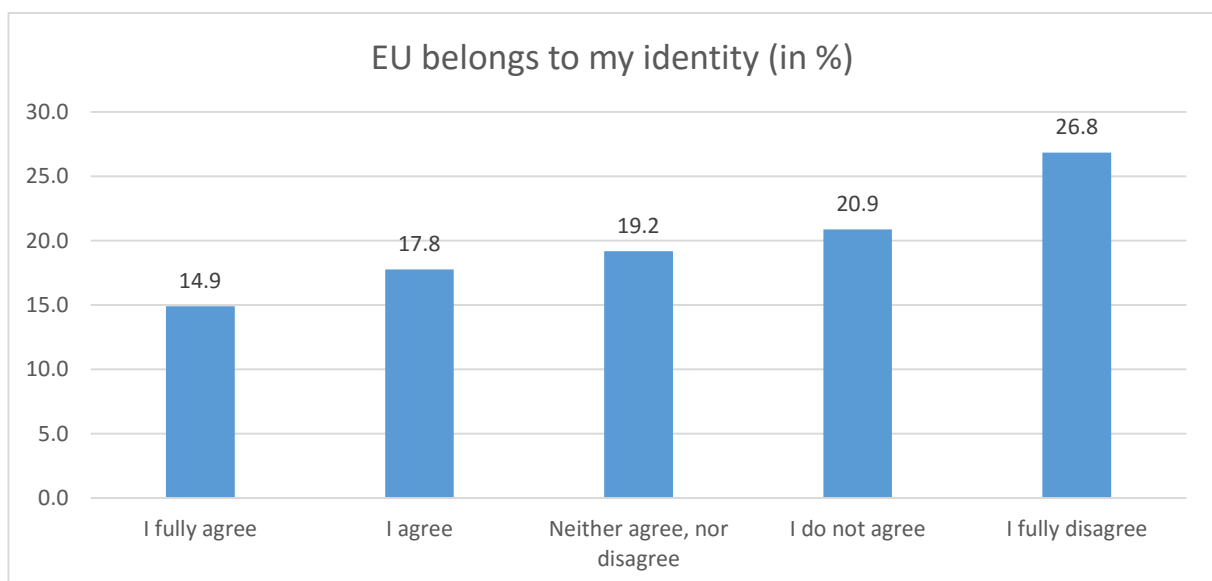


Figure 7

Regarding EU and identity, a large number of people state that the EU takes their identity or reduces it (21%), 25,6% agree more with the statement that EU plays no role in

their everyday life. But there are also 24,4% of participants, that believe in Europe. Almost a fifth says that EU should focus more on its cultures and regions (Figure 8).

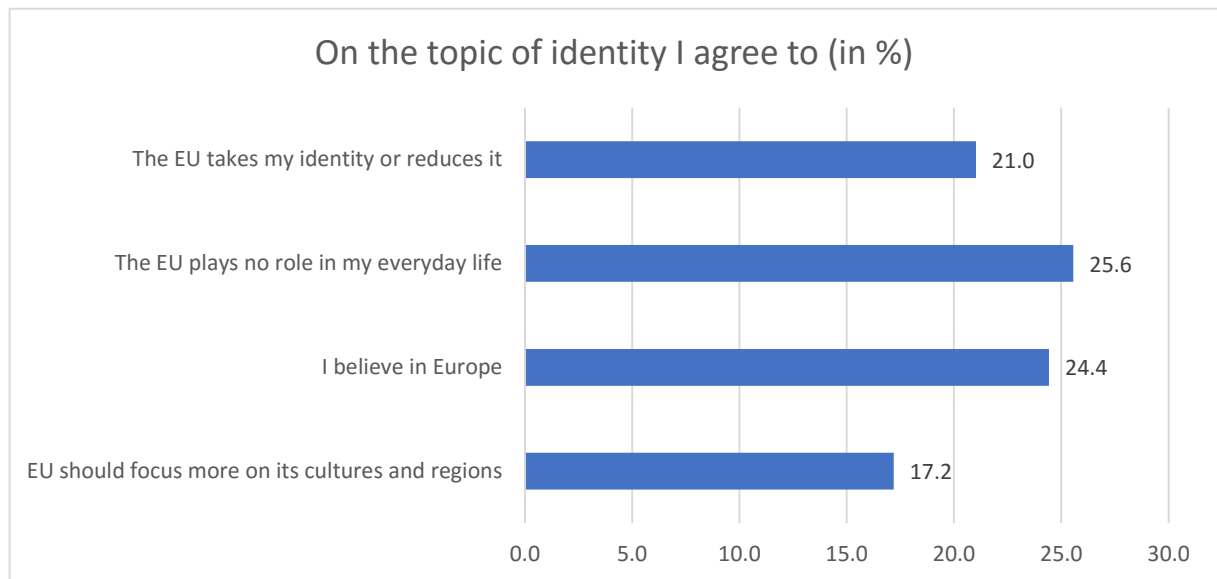


Figure 8

Most of the respondents associate the EU with positive concepts like “freedom to travel”, “peace”, “democracy”, “cultural diversity/integration”, “economic prosperity”, “etc. (Figure 9).

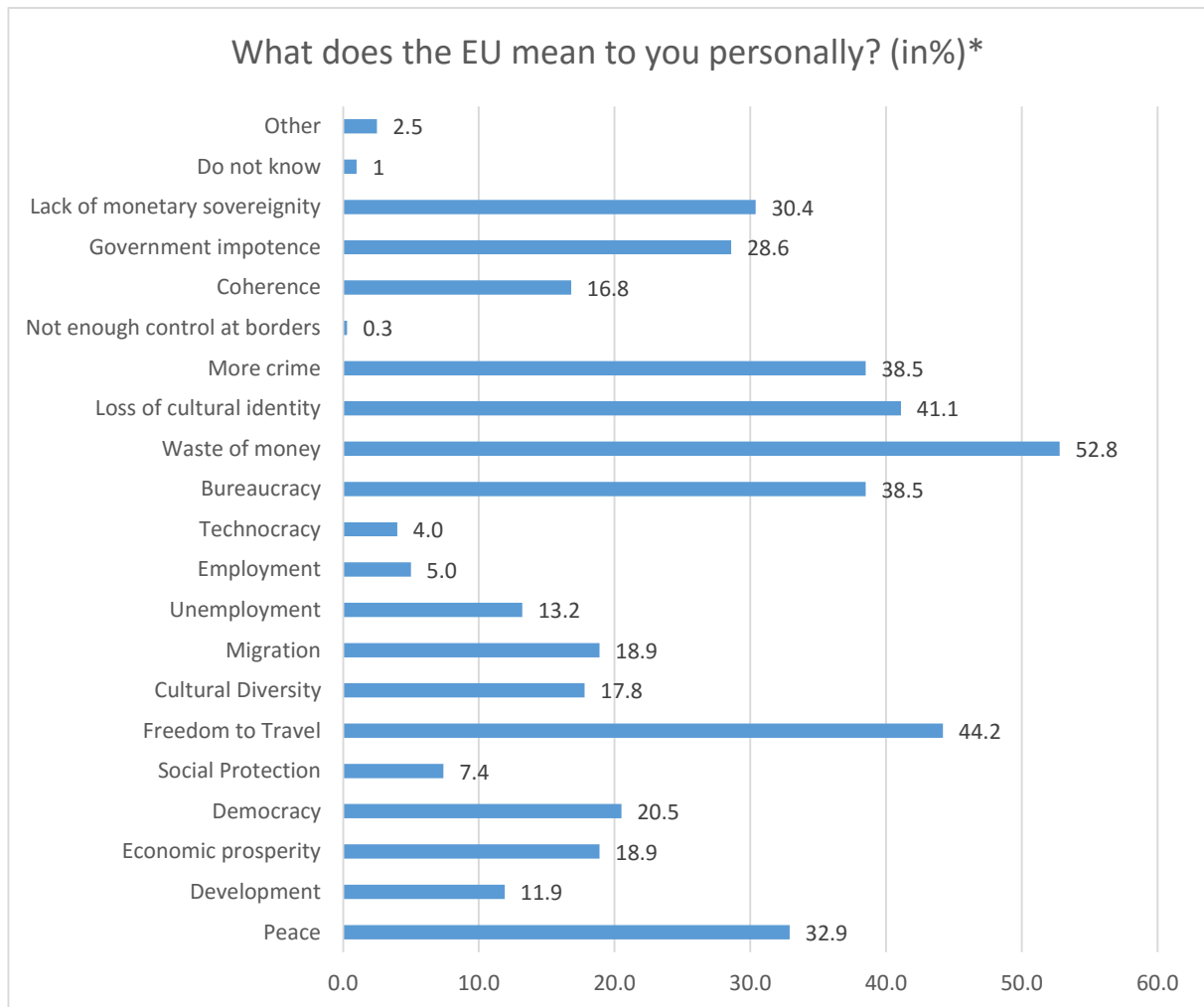


Figure 9, \*As % from number of respondents total. Sum is more than 100% as more than one answer is possible.

However, there are as well negative associations, some of them quite strong and we have to say that most of the free given answers, which are important because they require an already formed opinion, are as well almost all negative.

Regarding bureaucracy the largest number of respondents agree to a great extent that EU is too bureaucratic. There is as well a considerable number who do not have an opinion (Figure 10).

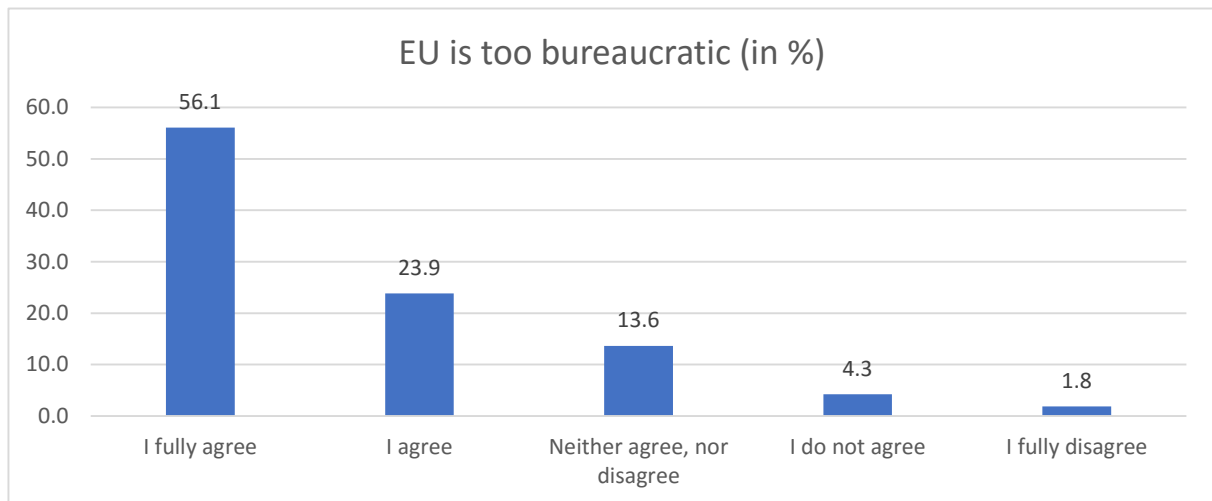


Figure 10

On the question of cost of EU there is a similar contribution of numbers. Over 50% of respondents fully agree that EU costs too much money, 4,3% do not agree and only 1,8% fully disagree. Here as well a considerable number who do not have an opinion can be found (13,6%) (Figure 11).

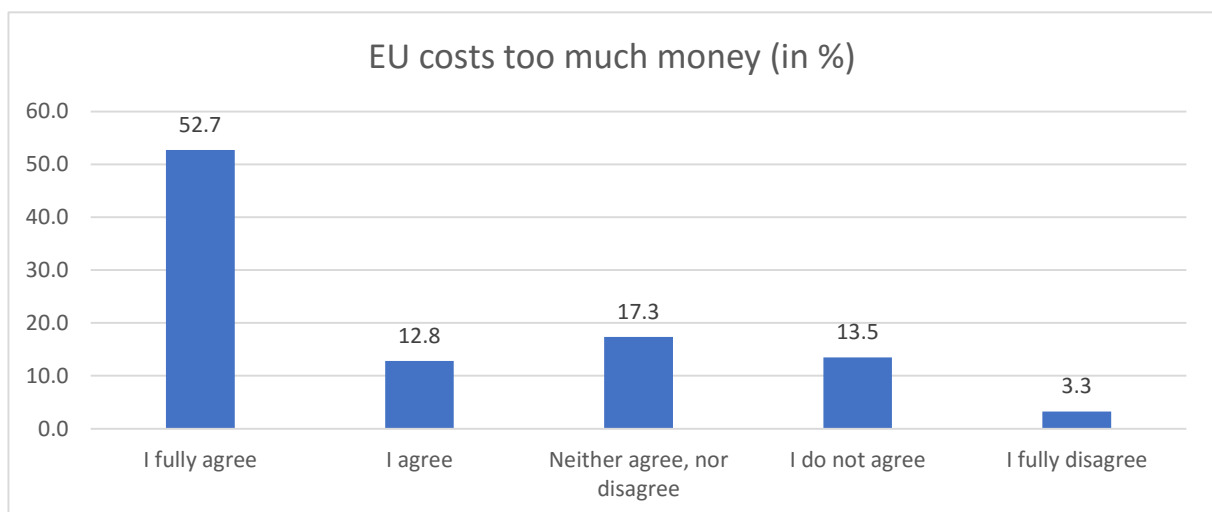
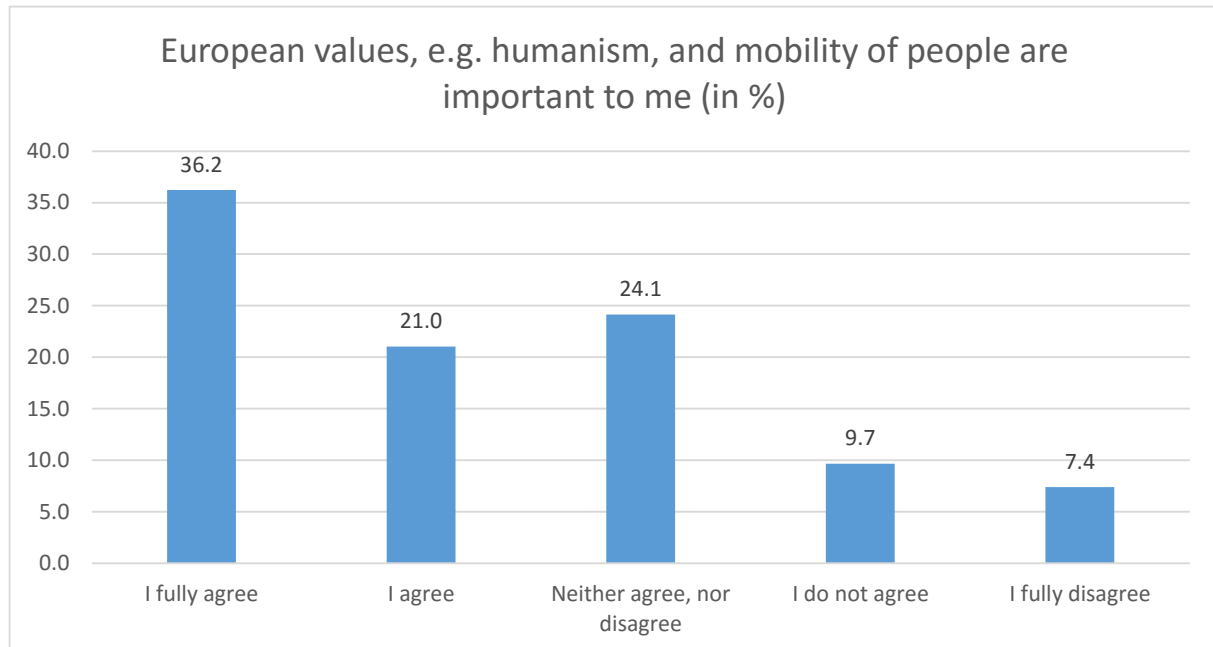


Figure 11

Regarding EU values, there is a very positive picture: opinions are strongly in favor of importance of EU values for the respondents. Only 17,1% do not agree (in lesser or stronger degree) that EU values are important for them whereas 36,2% agree fully and 21% agree that EU values are important (Figure 12). This is the topic with the largest displacement of the

graph to the positive part of the spectrum and with the largest number of “fully agree” answers, which indicates not only the universal commonality of EU values like humanism and freedom of travel, but also the importance of 6 intangible factors for the attitude towards the



EU. But: also for this question the number of those who have no opinion is quite high.

Figure 12

Most of the respondents – 51,1% express a strong wish to have more opportunities for democratic participation as from the rest only 9,8% do not agree they want more participation (Figure 13).

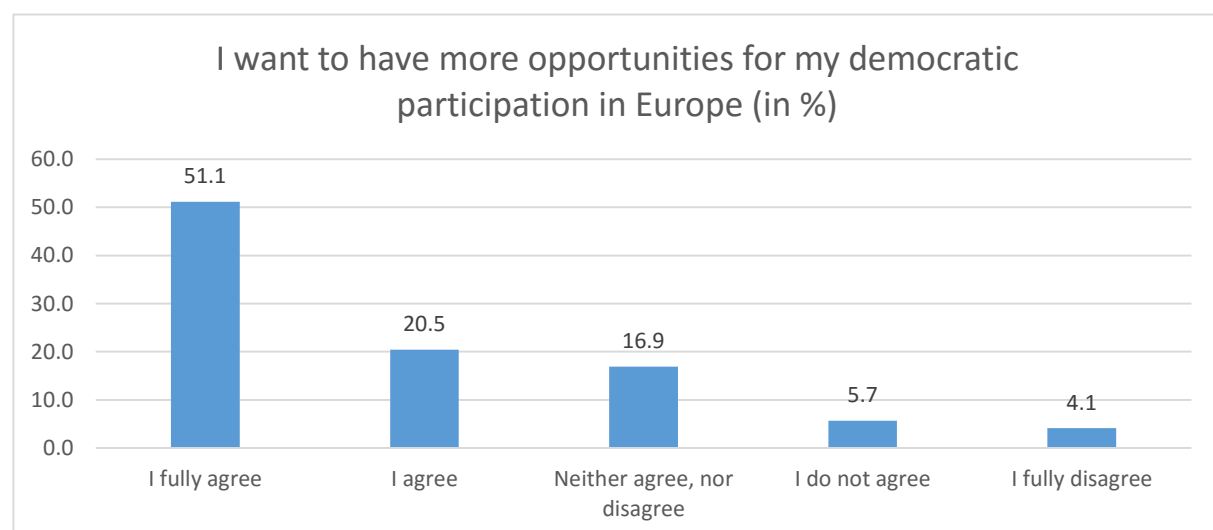


Figure 13

Regarding the topic of the most relevant EU policies 32,8% see corruption as a pressing issue that EU should care more about. One fourth of the respondents agrees that social questions should be more in the focus of EU policy. 18,0% are in favor of the idea that EU market should be less restricted. A remarkable number of 7,8% is of the opinion that the EU market is good for Germany. Only 3,0% think that more strict market rules could provide a solution to European problems (Figure 15). There is to mention that also on this topic there was a large number of free answers, and that most of them are not in line with the current EU policy.

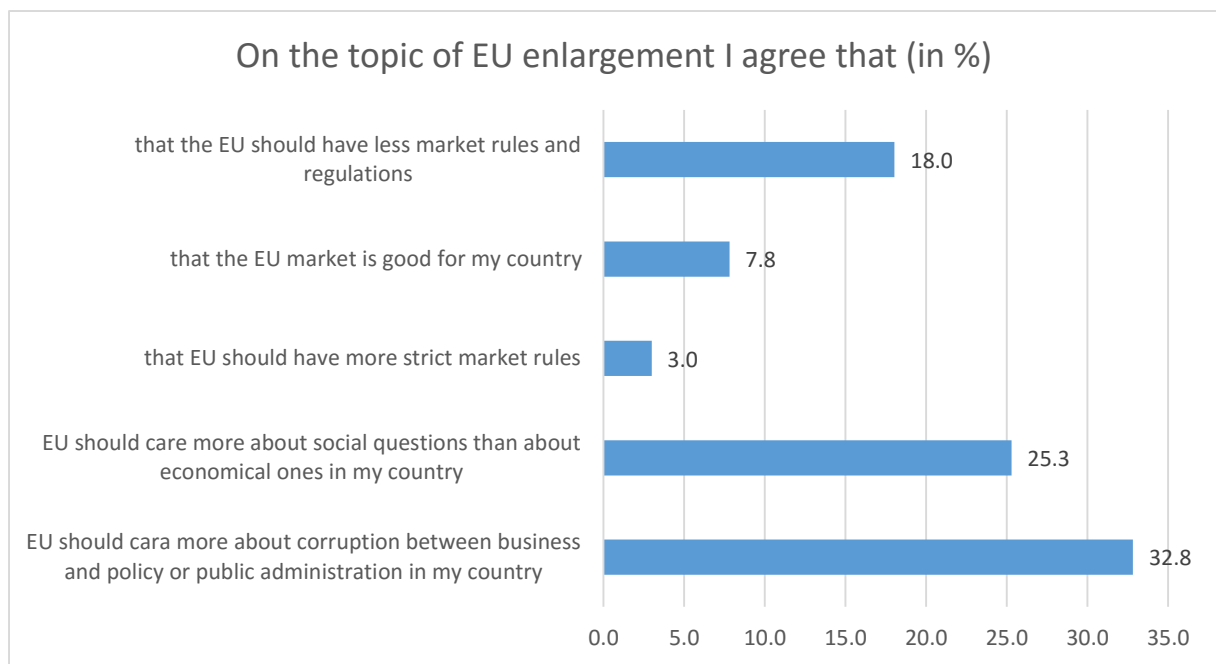


Figure 14

### 3. Detailed analysis on the main topics

The statistical analysis of the data showed there is a significant relation between the opinions of the respondents on most of the main topics (Table 1). Yet the correlation between most is small to medium since values of Cramer's V are between 0,1 and 0,3 (Cohen, 1988, p. 25 and 79).

The topics of Cost and Values are the topics with the strongest overall correlation, whereas the topics of Bureaucracy and Participation show the least. Interestingly the topic of Future shows no significant correlation to any other topic, whereas all other topics show correlations to each other.

We see medium to strong correlation between Size and Identity, Size and Values, Values and Participation, and we see strong correlation between Identity and Cost, Bureaucracy and Cost, Cost and Values, Values and Identity, and Size and Costs. Therefore the detailed analysis is going to focus on the last mentioned strong correlations.

Table 1: Cramer's V values where there is significant relation.							
	EU identity	Bureaucracy	Cost of EU	EU values	Participation	Size of EU	Future of EU
EU identity	*	0,265	0,469	0,347	0,187	0,275	-
Bureaucracy	0,265	*	0,352	0,244	0,140	0,261	-
Cost of EU	0,469	0,352	*	0,323	0,156	0,354	-
EU values	0,347	0,244	0,323	*	0,285	0,275	-
Participation	0,187	0,140	0,156	0,285	*	0,226	-
Size of EU	0,275	0,261	0,354	0,275	0,226	*	-
Future of EU	-	-	-	-	-	-	*
“-“ Means there is no significant relation							

## Identity issues

When we take a deeper look into the data on the topic of EU and identity we see clearly there is a relation between the attitude towards EU and whether or not respondents identify themselves as Europeans, which of course is to be expected. Respondents who are most prone to believing in EU are the ones most prone to identifying as European and respondents who say EU reduces their identity are the least prone to identifying as European (Figure 15).

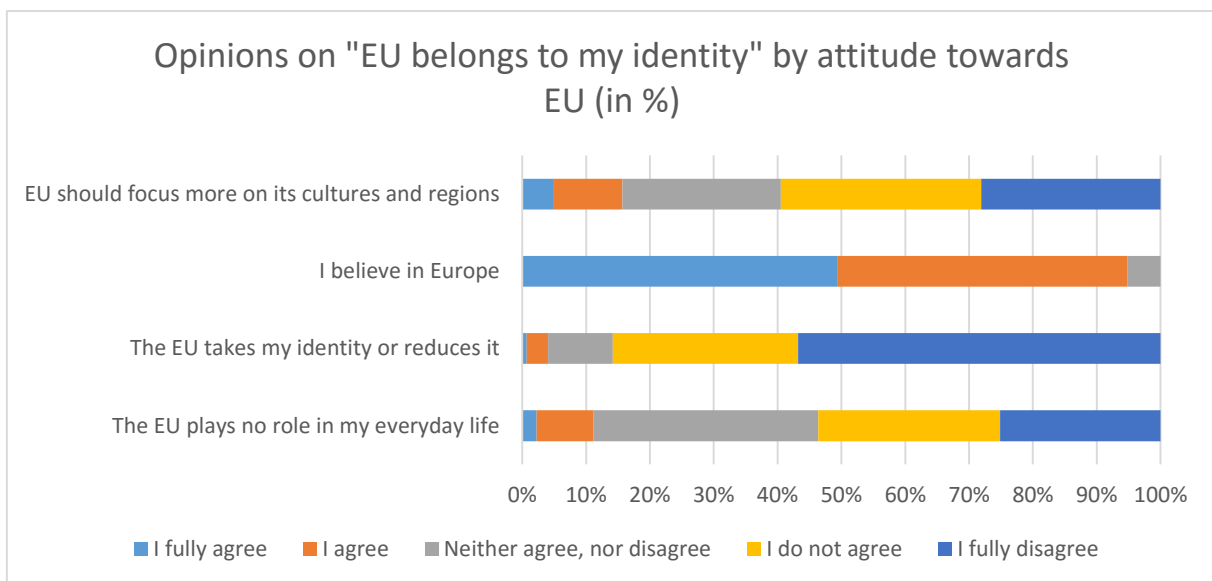


Figure 15

The relation between the educational level of the respondents and their self-identification as Europeans can be clearly seen. The higher the education, the more respondents are prone to agreeing EU is part of their identity (Figure 16).

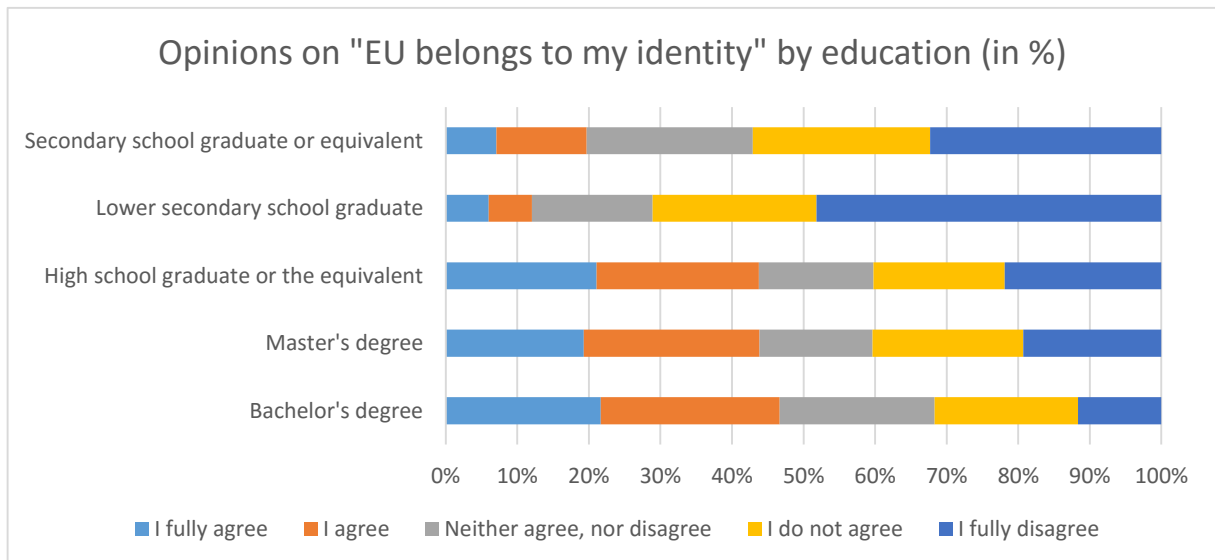


Figure 16

Regarding the sector, those belonging to the youth sphere are most prone to self-identifying as citizen of EU whereas those belonging to the social and migrant sector are least prone to agreeing EU belongs to their identity (Figure 17).

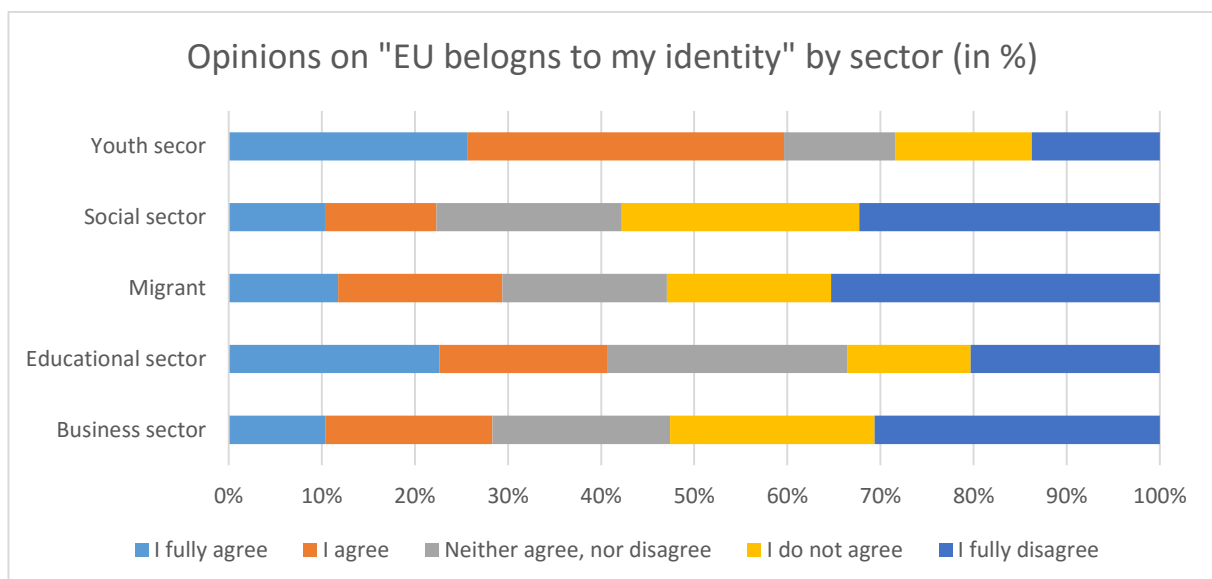


Figure 17

When we look at the relation between identity and employment status we can state that retired people and those who are unemployed show the least affection with EU. Students show by far the most (Figure 18).

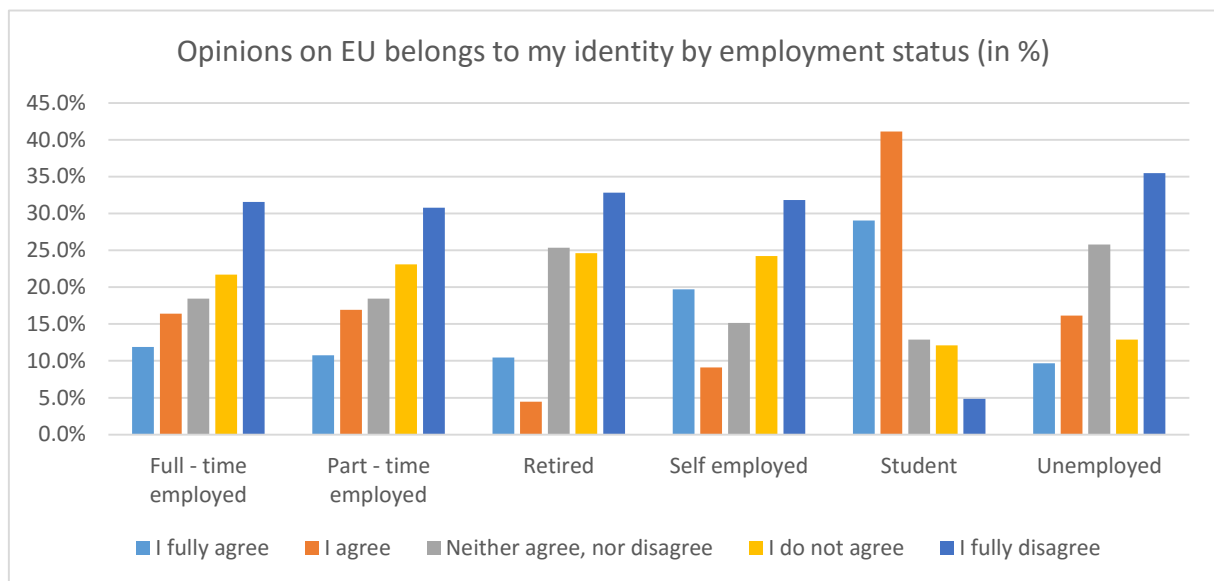


Figure 18

## Bureaucracy

As already mentioned great majority of respondents tends to agree that EU is too bureaucratic. There is no meaningful difference in the expressed opinion by gender and the most noticeable difference by educational level is that people with lesser degree of education express a stronger opinion that EU is too bureaucratic. With age growing, respondents are more prone to agree that EU is too bureaucratic. It is only among young people (18-30) that do not think that EU is too bureaucratic (Figure 19).

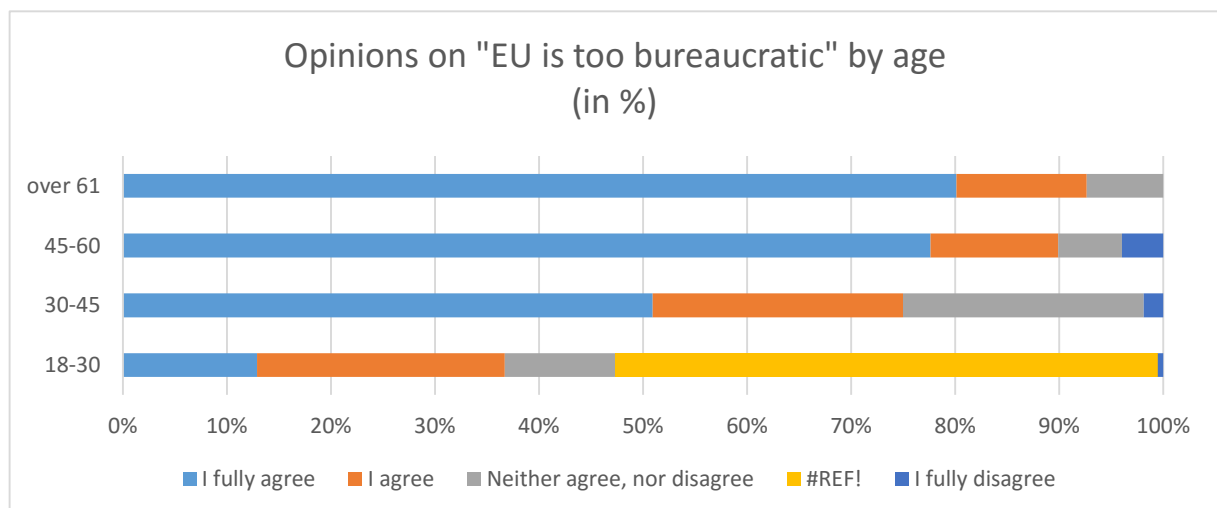


Figure 19

Differences by sector are not as clear, yet we can see that in the youth sector people least agree with the statement of EU being too bureaucratic. In the business sector the opinion is quite strong (Figure 20).

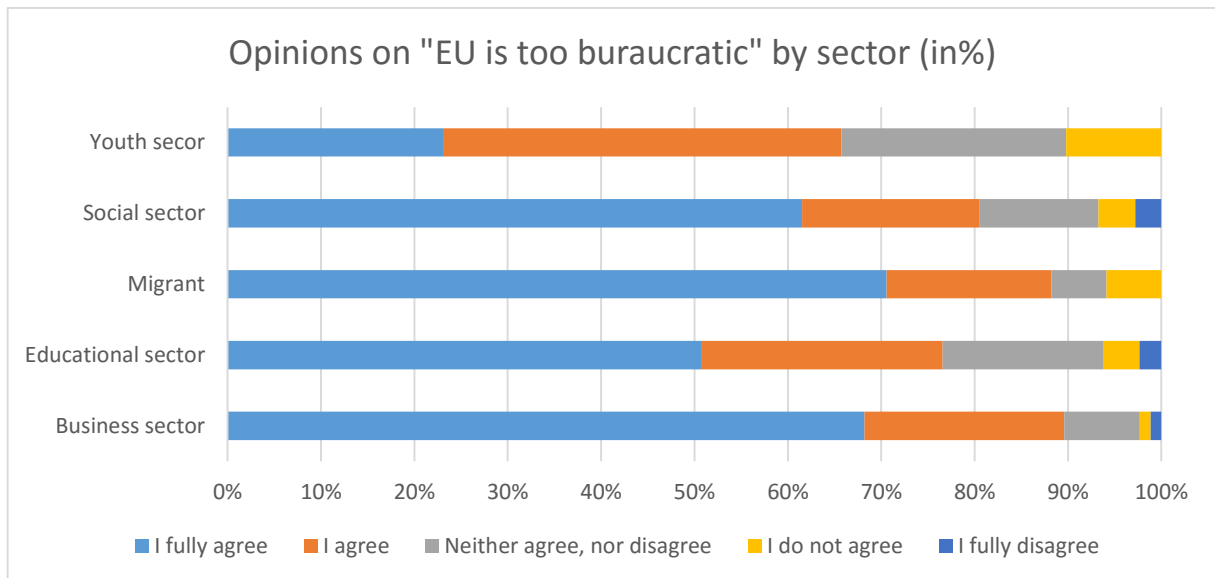


Figure 20

Respondents would most of all admit they base their opinion on the state of bureaucracy of the EU on social media, followed by their personal experience (Figure 21), but still the news and friends, family and colleagues are often regarded as trustworthy source of information on the matter as well.

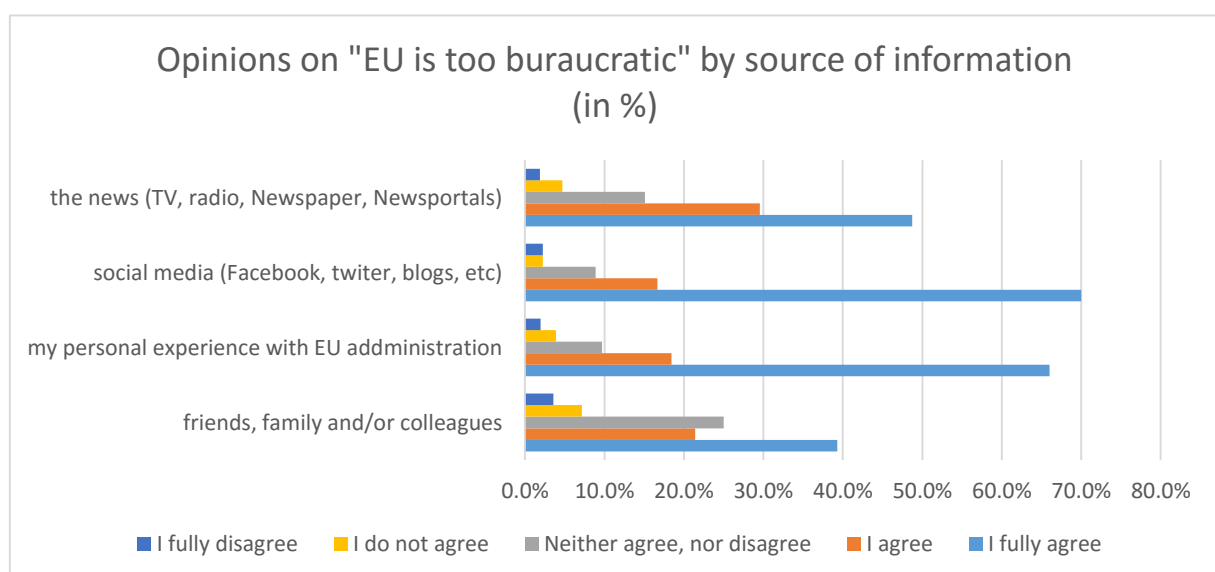


Figure 21

As visible from the graph below people who agree EU is too bureaucratic can be found mostly among retired people (over 70%) and full-time employed people. Only among students a significant number of respondents thinks that the EU is not too bureaucratic (Figure 22).

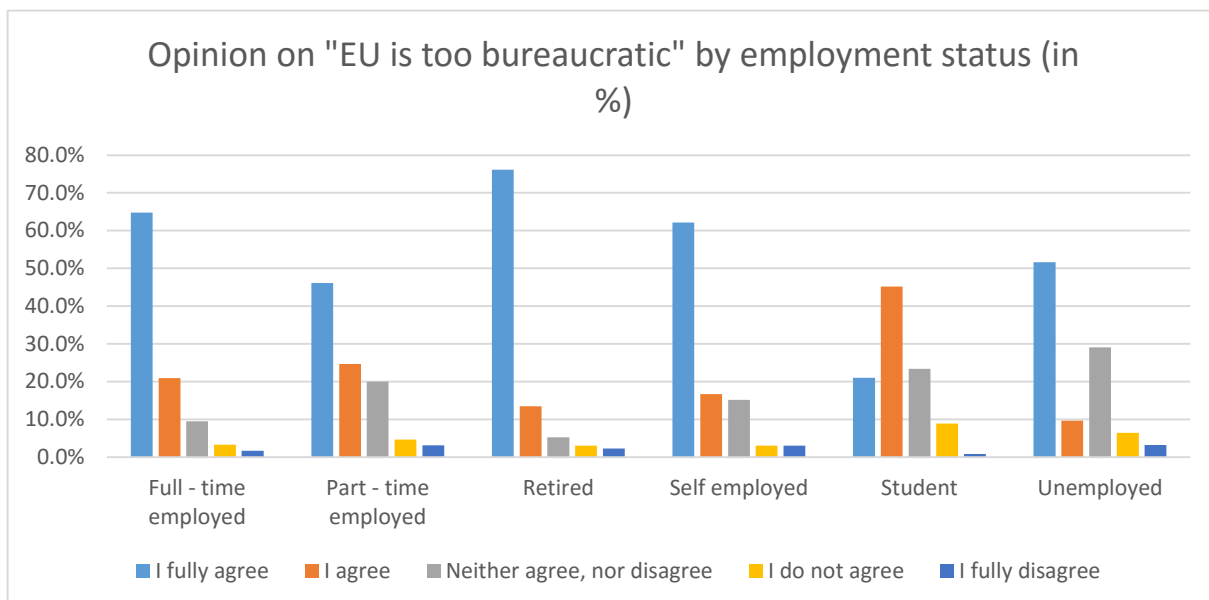


Figure 22

## Cost of EU

Overall the most popular opinion on the cost of EU is that it costs too much. That is why when comparing opinions on the money cost of EU according to the sector of the specific respondent, the distribution is youth sector stands out. Unlike in the other sectors where the prevailing answer is “fully agree”, in the youth sector most respondents have answered neutral or against the opinion that EU costs too much money (Figure 23).

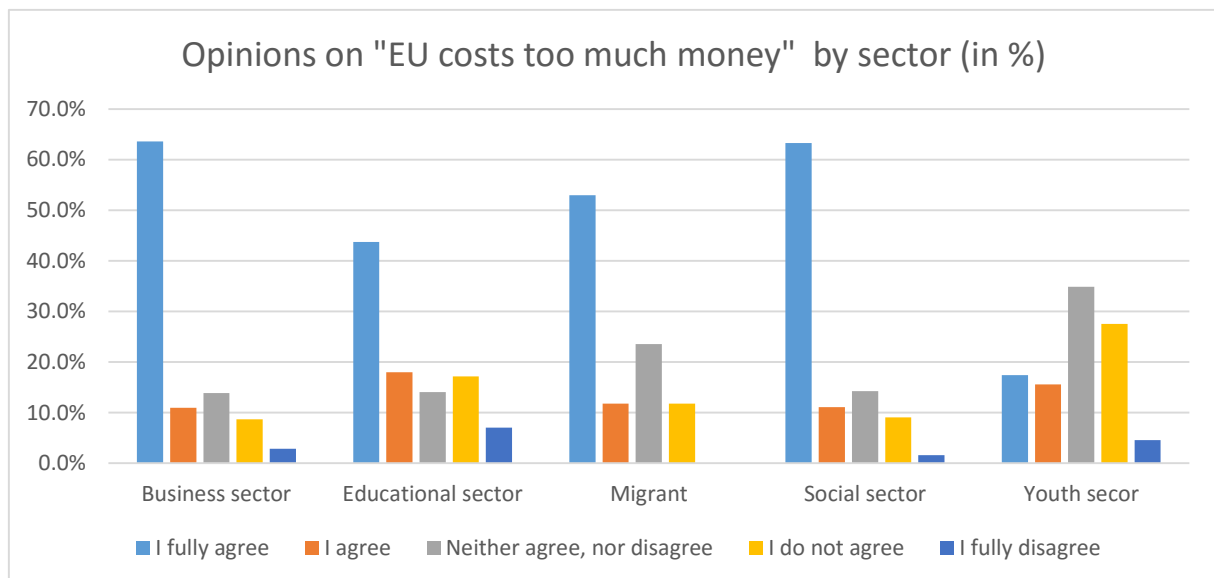


Figure 23

The distribution by age supports this found showing clearly that with ageing people are more prone to agreeing EU costs too much (Figure 24).

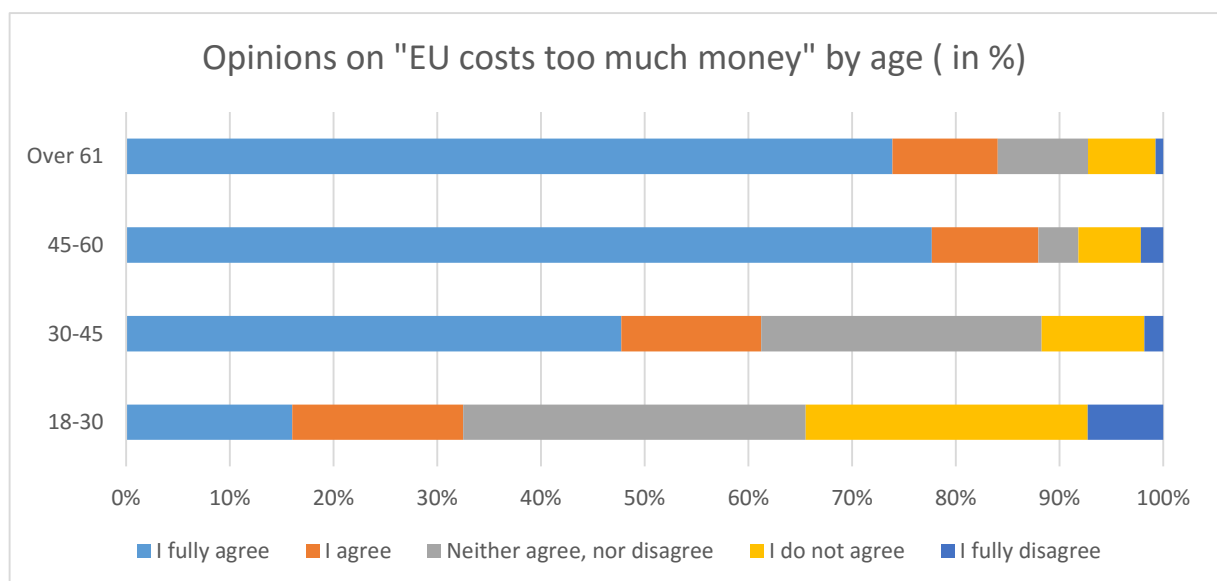


Figure 24

313 of the respondents say they are aware of what was financed or co-financed by EU in Germany – compared to 111 who say they don't know if EU financed or co-financed anything in the country (Figure 25).

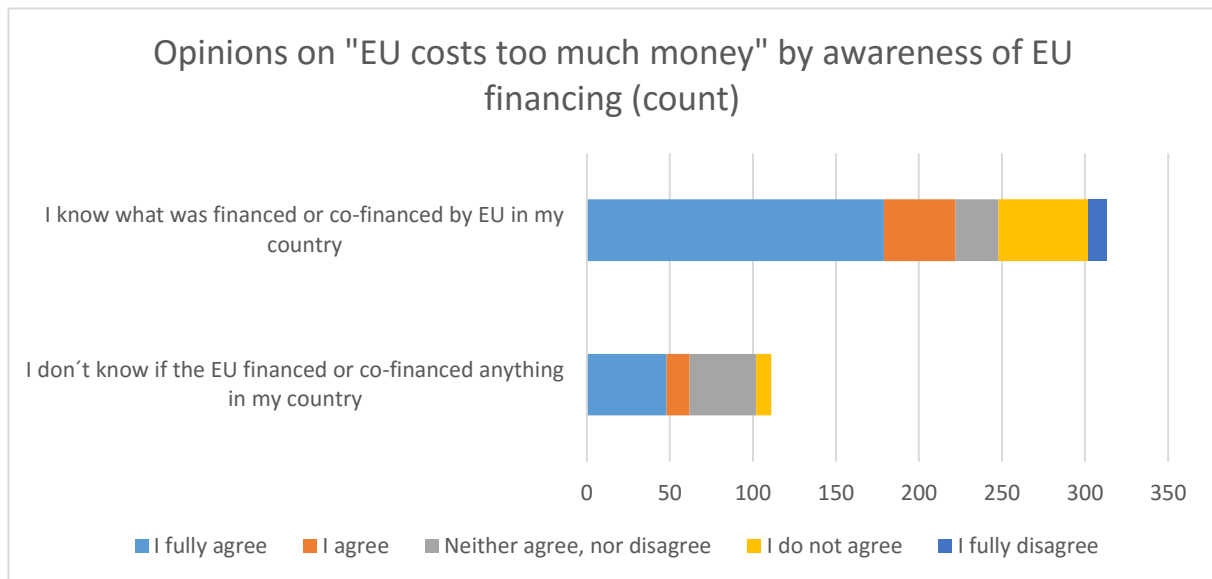


Figure 25

It is noteworthy that among of the respondents who know what EU has financed more people have disagreed with the statement that EU costs too much whereas a large proportion of those who do not know have given a neutral answer to the statement. Although knowledge of what EU has financed or co-financed may not play a role for people that consider EU costs too much money, it is in fact awareness that makes the difference between people with no defined opinion on the matter and those who disagree EU costs too much.

Looking at the distribution according to the employment status this found could be supported by the fact that among unemployed people (who tend to be the ones most uninformed about EU) the percentage of neutral answers is the highest (29%) (Figure 26).

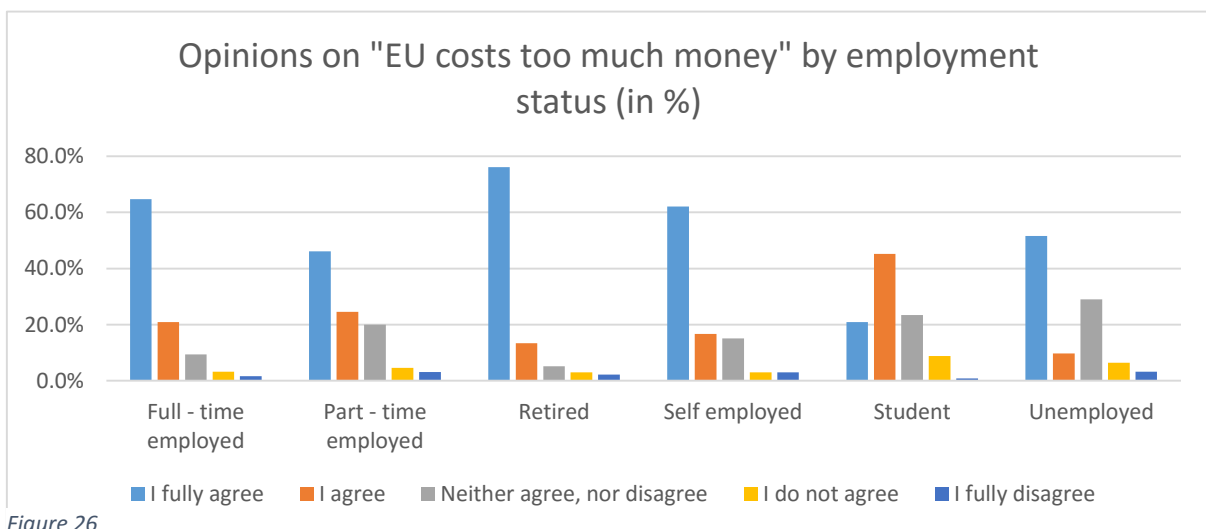


Figure 26

## Freedom of mobility, migration and refugees (Values)

As opinions on the importance of EU values are highly positive there is no clear difference in the distribution by gender or by educational level. Regarding age there are clear indicators that a relation exists as with age people seem more prone to agreeing EU values are not that important for them (Figure 27).

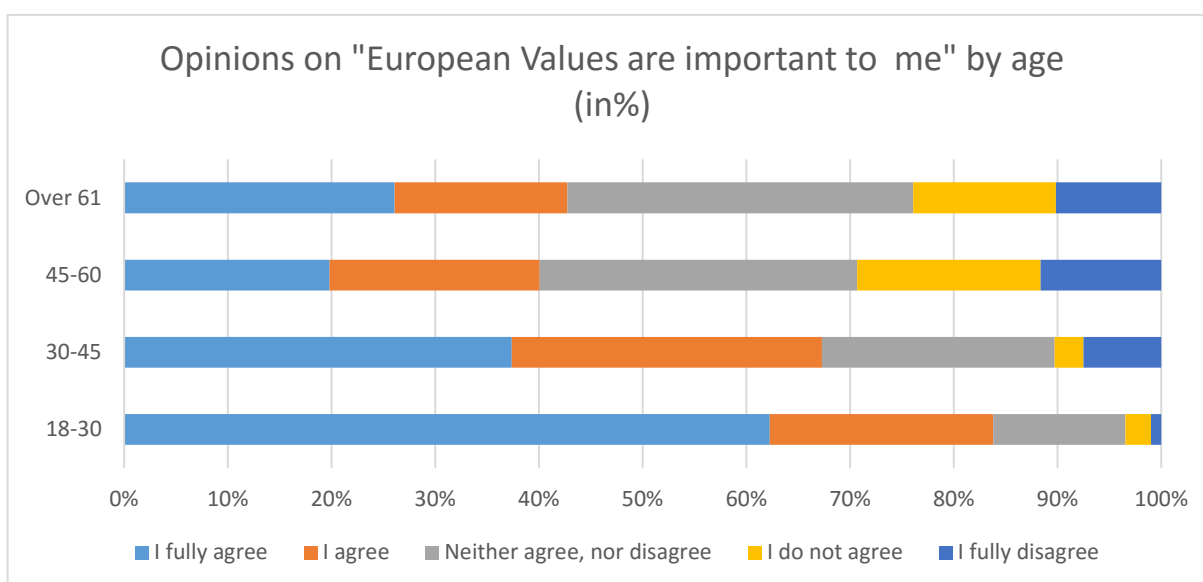


Figure 27

Regarding sector, young people, as can be expected in connection with the findings made so far, are most prone to agreeing EU values are important with 80% of them admitting EU values are important (Figure 28). The two groups at least likely to agree EU values are important are the social sector and the business sector.

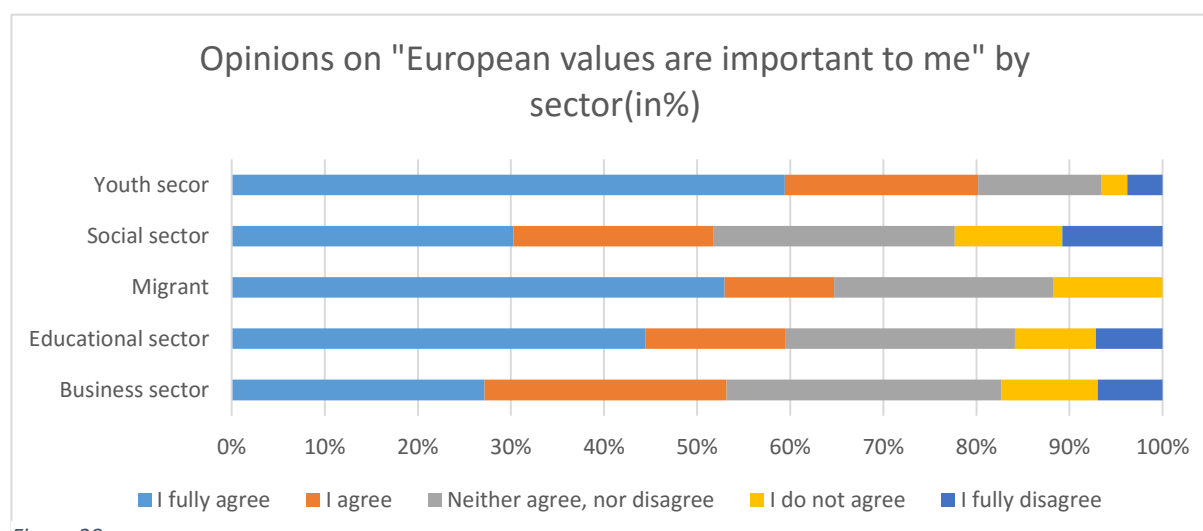


Figure 28

When looking further into the distribution of the opinions on the importance of European values by different options respondents agreed on in connection to freedom of mobility we see that, as expected, respondents who enjoy the possibility to travel in EU are the ones most prone to agreeing to EU values (Figure 29). Least prone to agreeing that EU values are important for them are the respondents who consider that too many young people are leaving the country and those that consider refugees should stay out of the EU.

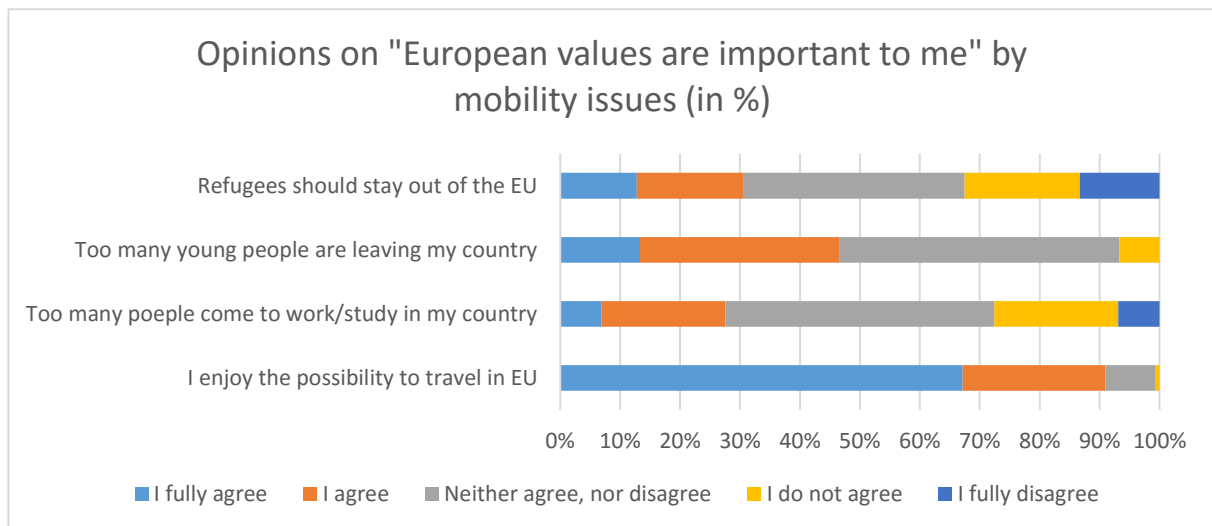


Figure 29

It is interesting to see the distribution of the opinions on EU values in dependence of the opinions on how Germany would handle the topics of refugees and migration without the EU (Figure 30). As the graphic shows in comparison to the total of respondents, opinions in the group that considers the country would handle the topic better without the EU are even more positive towards the importance of EU values which seems to be quite contradictory. On the opposite, in the group that considers Germany would do better with the EU, opinions are relatively balanced.

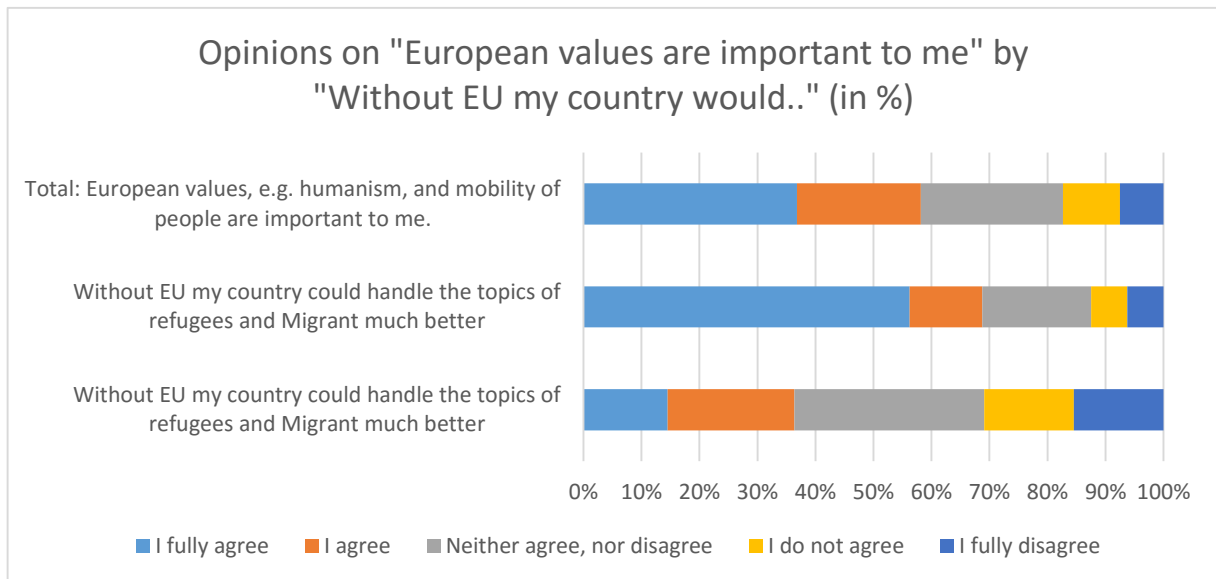


Figure 30

## Democratic representation

As we have said most respondents agree they would like to have more possibilities for democratic participation. There are no meaningful differences in relation to educational level or employment status.

Interestingly in this point there is also no real difference in the distribution regarding age (as is in all other topics) (Figure 31).

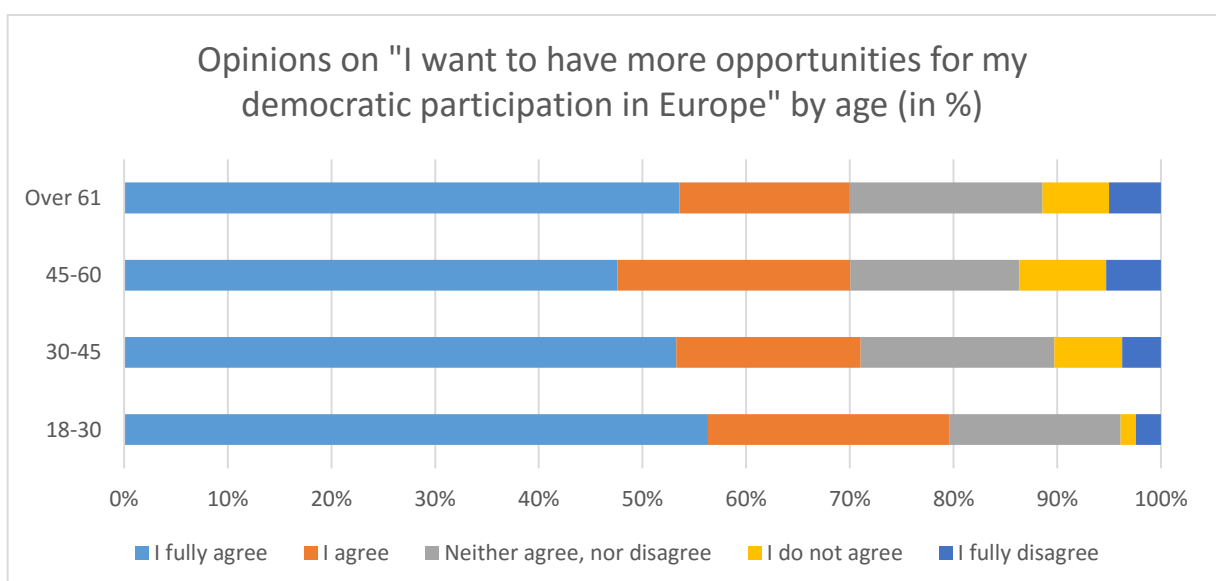


Figure 31

It is interesting that when looking into more details the distribution of the opinions on the question about democratic participation in the groups, formed by the desired means for participation we see that the respondents who would like to participate via better parties come first followed by those who want to achieve it by their own. There is also an interesting finding in the group those who think participation is useless as here the highest number of people with no opinion can be found (Figure 32).

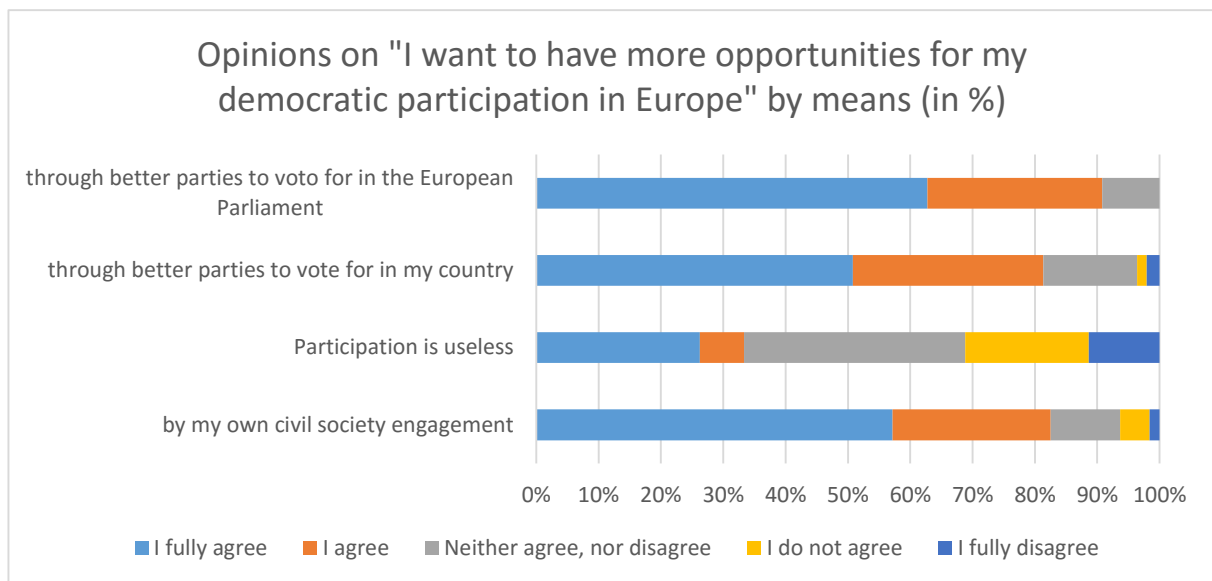


Figure 32

## Size of EU

Regarding the size of EU a relatively high number of people fully agrees to the fact that EU is too big (over 40%), 20,7% do not have opinion and 15,5%/ 7% disagree EU has grown too big (Figure 33). This finding comes a little surprisingly. It might have to do with the fact that Germany was one of the EU founders and that people feel uncomfortable with the tasks and challenges EU has to face since its last extensions.

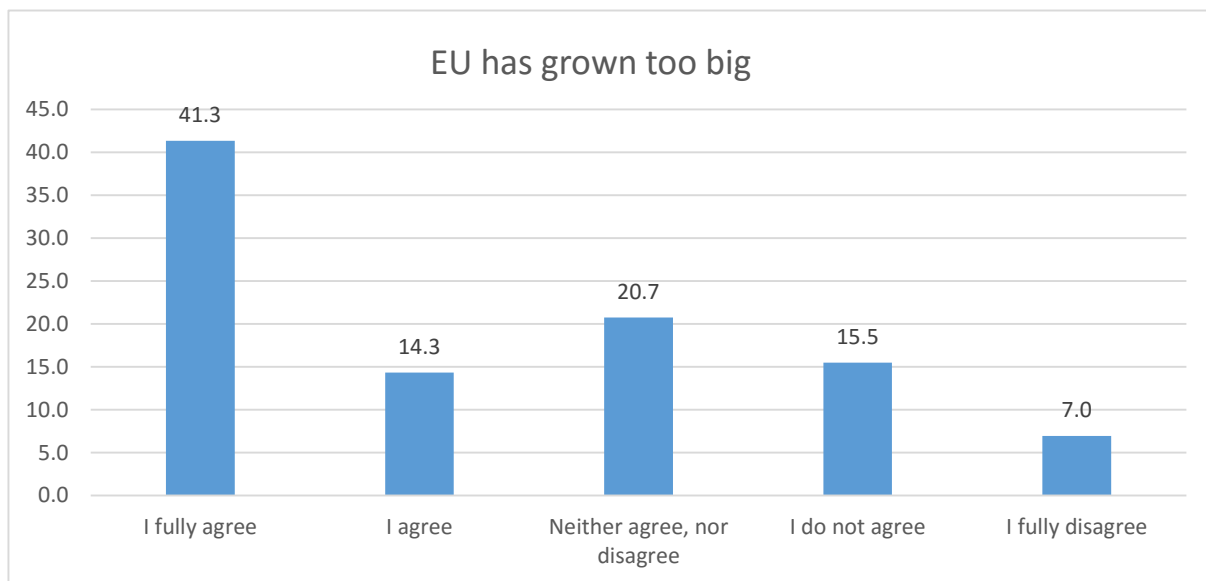


Figure 33

As in other topics respondents from the business and the social sector are most critical and are most prone to agreeing EU has grown too big. Also here only among the youth sector a majority of respondents does not agree that EU has grown too big (Figure 34).

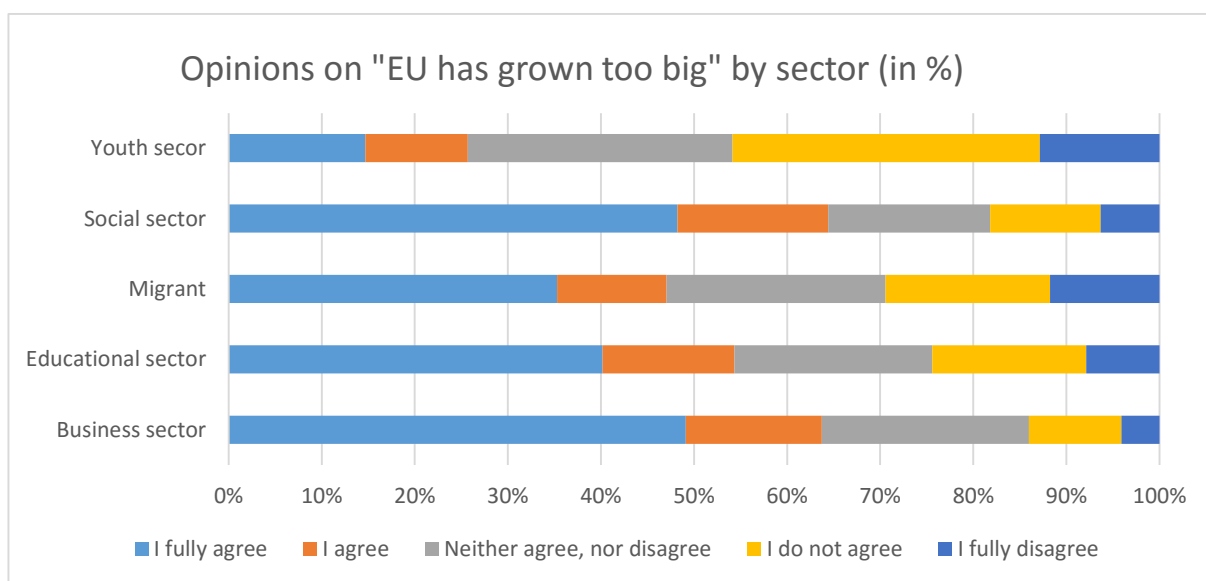


Figure 34

Compared to the other categories there are no significant differences in the distribution of opinions on the size of EU according to gender or according to employment status, though we have to point that also here the retired respondents are the ones who agree most that EU is too big (Figure 35).

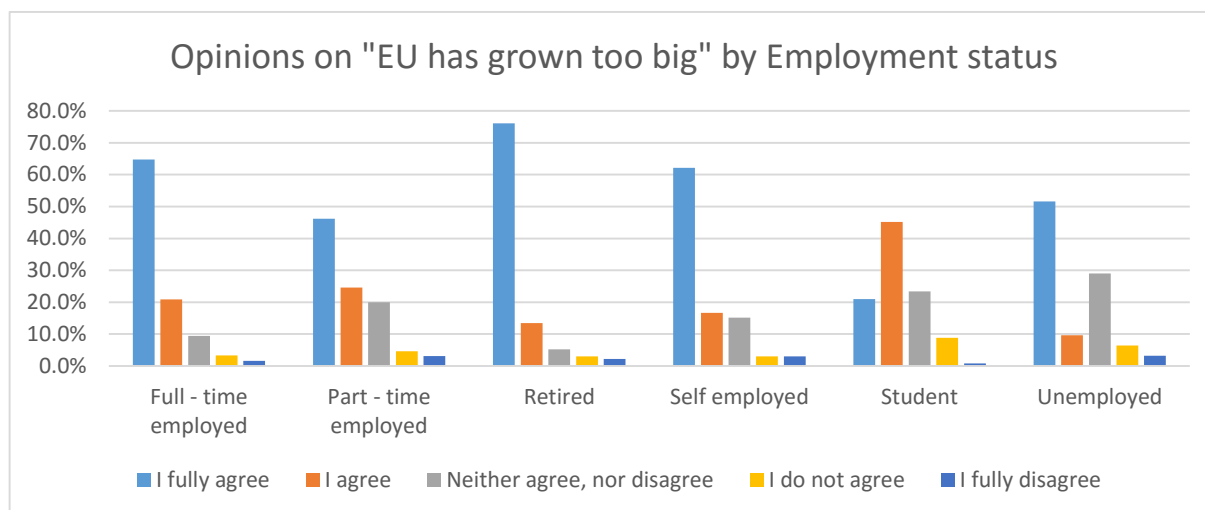


Figure 35

Regarding age, there is an interesting tendency that with aging respondents tend to give less neutral answers meaning groups with higher age tend to agree more at the same time (Figure 36). The neutral opinion is the most common one in age group "18-29" together with "I do not agree".

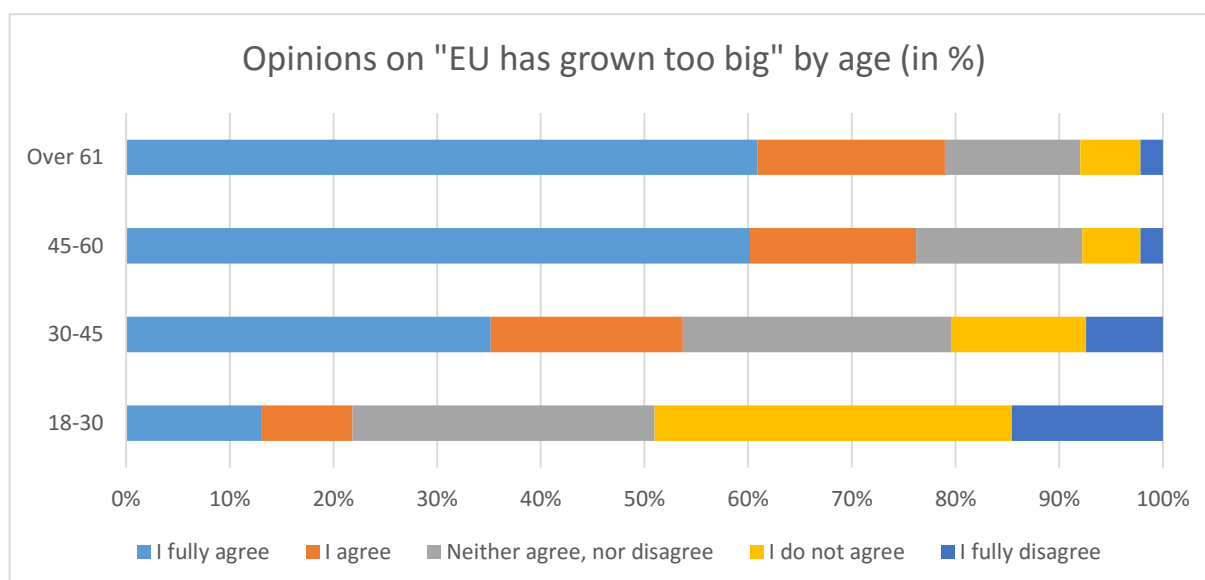


Figure 36

Regarding education, we see there is a tendency that with the higher level of education completed respondents are less prone to agreeing and more prone to disagreeing EU has grown too big (Figure 37).

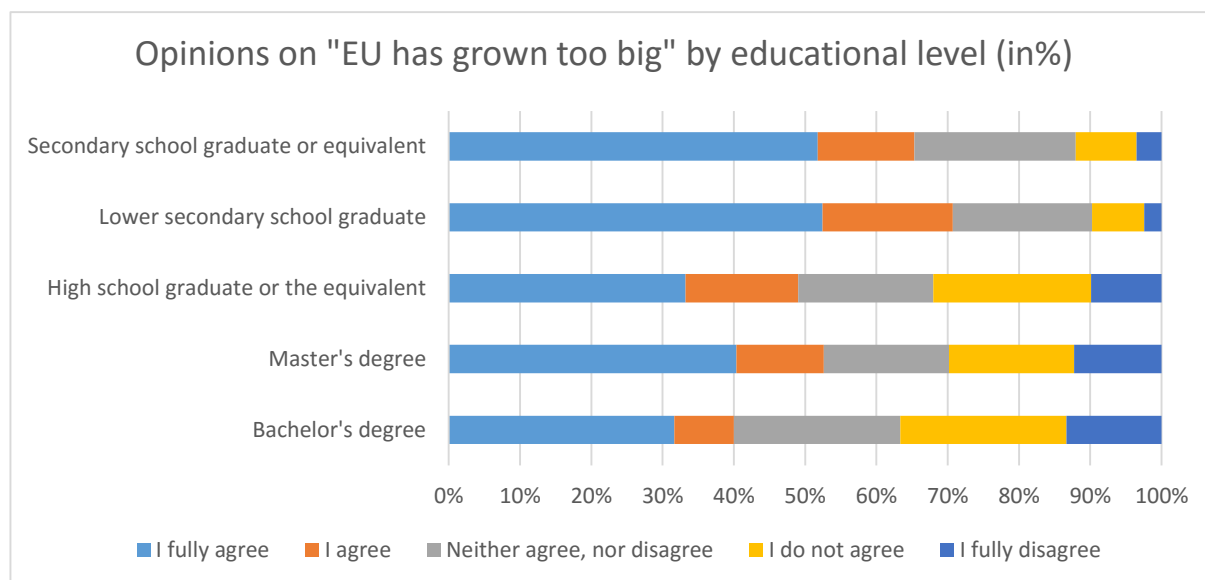


Figure 37

As expected there is a relation between the opinions on the size of EU and the desired future enlargement of the Union. There is a large number of respondents that has a negative attitude towards a larger EU. Concerning the current size there is a great number that seems to be undecided (Figure 38).

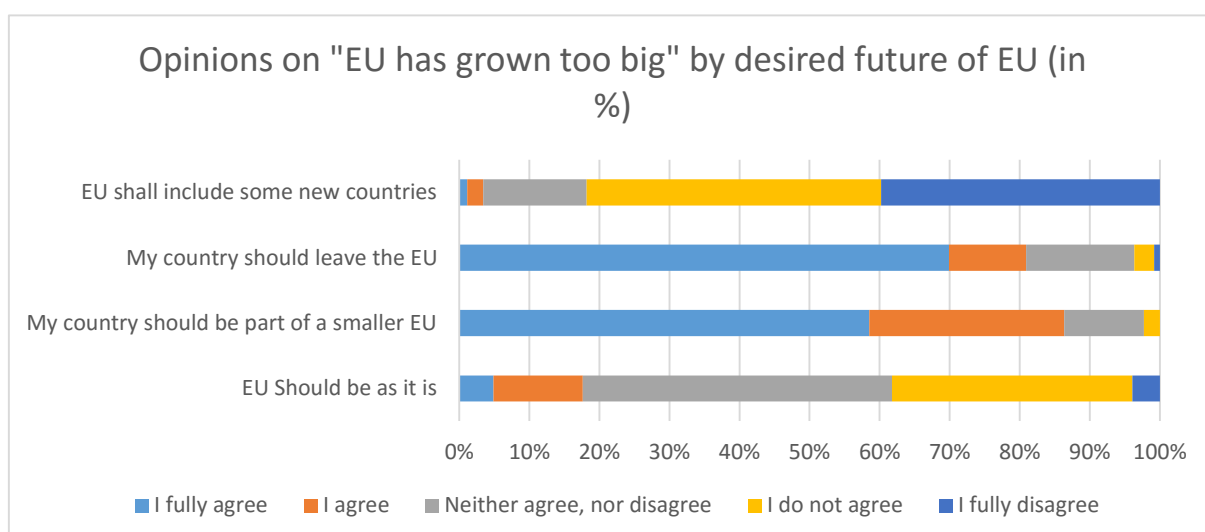


Figure 38

#### 4. EU Sceptic vs. EU believer

Finally, we did a comparison between the profiles of two groups of respondents that we called “EU believer” – respondents who said they believe in EU, and “EU sceptic” – respondents who said Germany should leave the EU. To make the profiles we used the mode (most frequent answer) for each topic for those two groups. As the table (Table 2) below shows EU sceptics and EU believers differ in all main topics as well as most demographic characteristics.

Table 2: Profile (modes in topics) of EU sceptic and EU believer		
EU Believer		EU Sceptic
Disagrees EU has grown too big	Bureaucracy	Fully agrees EU has grown to big
Disagrees EU costs too much money	Cost of EU	Fully agrees EU costs too much money
Fully agrees EU values are important	EU Values	Neutral
Enjoys possibility to travel in EU	Freedom of Mobility	Neutral
Agrees on wanting more opportunities for democratic participation	Participation	Agrees on wanting more opportunities for democratic participation
Does not agree EU has grown too big	Size of EU	Fully agrees EU has grown too big
Agrees EU identity is important	EU Identity	Fully disagrees EU identity is important
Education, Youth	Sector	Migration, Social
Higher educational degree	Education	Lower educational degree
18-29	Age	45-60 or older
Student, Self-employed	Employment status	Retired or full time employed

#### 5. Conclusions and recommendations

Results show there is a large number of respondents who express positive attitude towards the EU and the EU membership of Germany. Many respondents associate EU with positive labels and concepts and state that EU belongs to their identity. Most of the participants agree European values are important for them and there is a large number of respondents who say they believe in EU.

However, not everything is positive as most respondents believe EU is too bureaucratic and that it costs too much. There is an alarmingly high number of respondents who think that Germany should leave the EU. There is as well a noteworthy number of respondents who consider democratic participation is useless and express a negative attitude towards EU in terms of identity and future.

The analysis showed there is significant correlation between the opinions in almost all of the main topics as we must mention here the correlation between EU identity and EU values as it is with the highest value. Age is an important factor for the distribution of opinions on most topics as well as education and the employment status. Differences according to the sector can be found but are not as strong as with the other indicators.

As the sample is not representative we cannot extrapolate results to the whole of the German population, so our conclusions are valid only for the sample of respondents. However, there are valuable findings that rise questions and draw attention for future research. Most importantly one can state that young people are full of hope and confidence in the EU. They are idealistic and positive. This should help to develop effective strategies against Euroscepticism.

## **6. Literature:**

Cohen, J. (1988) *Statistical power and analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.), Hillsdale, N.J., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2016) *Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund*, [http://www.bpb.de/wissen/NY3SWU,0,0,Bev%F6lkerung\\_mit\\_Migrationshintergrund\\_I.html](http://www.bpb.de/wissen/NY3SWU,0,0,Bev%F6lkerung_mit_Migrationshintergrund_I.html)