

**Change and
Continuity
in Turbulent
Times**

Atlas of European Values

Loek Halman
Tim Reeskens
Inge Sieben
Marga van Zundert

Colophon

Atlas of European Values: Change and Continuity in Turbulent Times
European Values Series, volume 1
Loek Halman, Tim Reeskens, Inge Sieben and Marga van Zundert

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"Trustworthy institutions are key to high-trust societies"



Preface

How attitudes converge and diverge, evolving over time.



The European Union is a community of values. It is a peace project, which emerged from the tragedy of war and was founded on the respect for human dignity, human rights, freedom, democracy, equality, and the rule of law. These are the fundamental values that open societies share and must defend. Societies in which we understand and see one another – all individuals – as equals, deserving of dignity. We are free to think and feel and be who we like. And we are free to change and speak our minds, because the world changes, and so do we. Europe is of course larger than the EU. But the *Atlas of European Values* shares the same fundamental belief as the European project: that we are united in diversity.

The *Atlas* has been recording Europe's diversity since the 1980s, before the fall

of the Berlin Wall. It is a treasure trove of information from across the entire continent, collected every nine years for scientific and educational purposes. It documents what Europeans find important in life, the major societal issues, and how attitudes converge and diverge, evolving over time. Issues such as identity, welfare, migration, sustainability, solidarity and democracy. And for the first time, with this third edition, the *Atlas* is open access, available to all.

In Europe's recent history, education has been the vaccine against violence. Education is more than the knowledge of facts; it is the knowledge of values. And that is why the *Atlas* is so precious. This new edition poses pressing questions, like what is the basis of trust and solidarity in democratic and diverse societies.

Questions that European leaders are called to answer every day – for instance, as we built our Union's unprecedented recovery plan, NextGenerationEU. Readers of the *Atlas* can position themselves in a diversity of opinions, and learn what explanations there might be for one's own standpoints, or for the viewpoints of others. Each chapter presents maps and graphs, as well as interviews with academics and leaders, who present insights into the data.

The *Atlas* will surely inspire you. And I hope, as Dr. Seuss put it so well, "the more that you read, the more things you will know; the more that you learn, the more places you'll go." The European project, after all, is a journey, where we learn from one another and grow.

Dr. Ursula von der Leyen
President of the
European Commission
Europe Day, 09/05/2022

Modern European history in a nutshell

1981 - European Values Study wave 1

1982: Digital age

The first computers for home use, the personal computer, were brought onto the market in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1982, the personal computer was named Machine of the Year by Time magazine. It is regarded as the start of the information or digital age. Before the millennium, information and communication technology (ICT) had revolutionised the way people communicate and work. News and information is available almost anywhere and anytime through the world wide web and social media, which are accessible through an ever-growing variety of 'screens'. ICT also boosted globalisation; global connectivity has made everyone into a next-door neighbour.

1991 - European Values Study wave 2

1990s: Multiculturalism

Significant numbers of inhabitants from former colonies and guest workers from Morocco and Turkey have travelled to Western Europe since the 1950s. In the 1990s, the number of asylum seekers to Europe rose considerably, too. The resulting changing demographic make-up led to the phrase 'multiculturalism', referring to the appreciation and acceptance of multiple cultures within one country. However, multiculturalism also caused uneasiness and discontent among part of the original population. Migration became a hot topic in political and public debates, and new populist parties emerged that openly pursue an anti-migration policy and often also an anti-Islam agenda.



1980

1985

1990

1995

1989: Die Wende

9 November 1989, 10.45 hrs, was a historic moment for Europe. Since World War II, the continent had been divided into a communist, Eastern part and a democratic, capitalist, Western part. On 9 November 1989, the Berlin Wall, the symbol of this division, 'fell'; after nearly fifty years, Berliner citizens could again travel freely from East to West. The Berlin Wall was a solid, concrete barrier covered with barbed wire and guarded 24/7 by armed soldiers to prevent anyone escaping communist-ruled Europe. It was constructed by the German Democratic Republic in 1961 to isolate West-Berlin, an enclave of West-Germany, from the surrounding GDR.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall became the symbol of the fall of European communism and the end of the Soviet Union, but the revolt against Soviet rule in Eastern Europe actually started in Poland. In April 1989, the Polish trade union "Solidarność" (Solidarity), known for its opposition to communism and strikes for human rights, was again legalised and allowed to participate in parliamentary elections in June. This was only possible because the Soviet Union was loosening the strict reins on its satellite states in the 1980s under the reform-minded Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Poland experienced a political earthquake. The victory of union leader, electrician, and human-rights activist Lech Walesa surpassed all predictions. After these Polish elections, protests against communism began to spread to Hungary, East-Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania. By the end of 1989, the governments in all these countries had left office. Unlike in the other countries, the revolution in Romania was not brought about peacefully; the protests against the Romanian, Stalinist ruler Nicolae Ceaușescu cost 1,104 lives. In the following years, the other Soviet satellite states also abandoned communism, with the only exception of Belarus, where former communist leader Alexander Lukashenko retained power, and still rules the 'last dictatorial regime' in Europe.

1991: Yugoslav Wars

Between 1991 and 1999, Europe again experienced a disastrous war. In 1991, the former communist-led Yugoslavia fell apart when Slovenia and Croatia desired greater autonomy within the Yugoslav confederation, while Serbia wanted to strengthen federal authority. Slovenia and Croatia declared independence in June, resulting in a ten-day war in Slovenia. It results in the Yugoslav army leaving Slovenia, but supporting rebel Serb forces in Croatia, leading to the Croatian and Bosnian war of independence.

The wars in former Yugoslavia were complex, and characterised by bitter ethnic conflicts and severe war crimes. In 1995, the Dayton Agreement was signed in Paris, ending the war in Croatia and Bosnia. In Kosovo, then an autonomous province of Serbia, however, growing Albanian nationalism and separatism led to tensions between Serbs and Albanians, resulting in the Kosovo war (1998-1999). In 1999, NATO bombings ended the war to protect Kosovar Albanians, amidst a massive displacement of population in Kosovo estimated to be close to one million people. The Republic of Kosovo declared independence in 2008. In total, at least 130,000 people lost their lives in former Yugoslavia during the wars. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (1993-2017) dealt with war crimes and crimes against humanity that took place during the conflicts in the Balkans.

1995: Ageing continent

Since the mid-1990s, fewer children are born in Europe than people are dying. The ageing population is, in principle, a happy story about societal progress and medical development, but at the same time it challenges society's structure, especially the size of the work force. Today, one fifth of the Europeans is over 65; in 2050 that may be one-third. The median age in the European Union in 2050 is projected to be near to fifty years, whereas it was just over 35 in 1990. In 2020, Italy had the highest median age in Europe: 47.5 years.

1999 - European Values Study wave 3

2008 - European Values Study wave 4

2017 - European Values Study wave 5

2004: EU expands eastwards

In 2004, eight Eastern European states joined the European Union: Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. It was the largest single expansion of the Union, both in terms of territory, number of states and population. Overnight, the EU counted 74 million more inhabitants, and included a large part of Eastern Europe. In 2007, Bulgaria and Romania also joined, and in 2013 Croatia. The European Union now contains many of the former Soviet Union satellite states. As many also joined NATO, the expansion creates tensions with Russia.

2008/2009: Great Recession

In the late 2000s, the world witnessed a significant decline in economic activity, leading to a severe global economic recession in 2008. It is considered by many economists to be the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, and resulted in the collapse of large financial institutions, the bailout of banks by national governments, and downturns in stock markets around the world. The crisis was triggered by a liquidity shortfall in the United States banking system due to the collapse of the US housing bubble, which peaked in 2007. In Europe, economies of Southern countries such as Greece, Italy and Portugal suffered the most, resulting in the European Debt Crisis (2009-2012). The Union implemented a series of financial support measures in return for increased austerity measures after some fierce debates and negotiations between Northern and Southern members.

2020: Brexit

In 2016, citizens in the United Kingdom could vote to leave or to remain in the European Union. A small majority (51.89 percent) voted 'leave'. This resulted in the first ever withdrawal of a country from the Union in 2020. The UK left after 47 years of membership to the deep regret of Scotland and parts of Wales and Northern Ireland where 'remainers' had the majority. Studies indicate that the British leave voters are attached to tradition and were motivated by anti-migration, anti-establishment and anti-globalisation feelings, strongly fuelled by populist and nationalist movements.

2005

2010

2015

2020

2015: Refugee crisis

From the 1990s onwards, the number of asylum seekers in Europe increased steadily. The Balkan Wars caused millions to flee. Globalisation and the opening of East-European borders made a journey to Europe for refugees from Africa, the Middle-East or Asia easier. The largest inflow of asylum seekers occurred in 2015, instigated by the war in Syria. A million Syrians fled to Europe, mainly by crossing the Mediterranean in unsteady boats. Especially Germany and Sweden welcomed many refugees with in their 'slip stream' also refugees and migrants from other areas. German chancellor Angela Merkel spoke her famous words, "Wir schaffen das". When the influx continued, the European Union closed its borders and made agreements with Turkey and countries in Northern Africa to restrict further migration. Europe became a 'fortress' with high barb-wired fences and special armed forces to guard the borders.

2015: Paris Climate Accords

At the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference near Paris, France, 196 countries agreed to fight the dangerous consequences of climate change such as droughts, floods, sea level rise and crop failures by reducing the emission of greenhouse gases. The aim is to keep the rise in mean global temperature below two degrees Celsius (above pre-industrial levels), and preferably limit the increase to one and a half degrees, which is believed to avert the severest consequences. To reach the Paris goals, emissions need to be cut by roughly half in 2030 and reach net-zero in 2050. Each country agreed to set national reduction targets.

2020s: Turbulent times

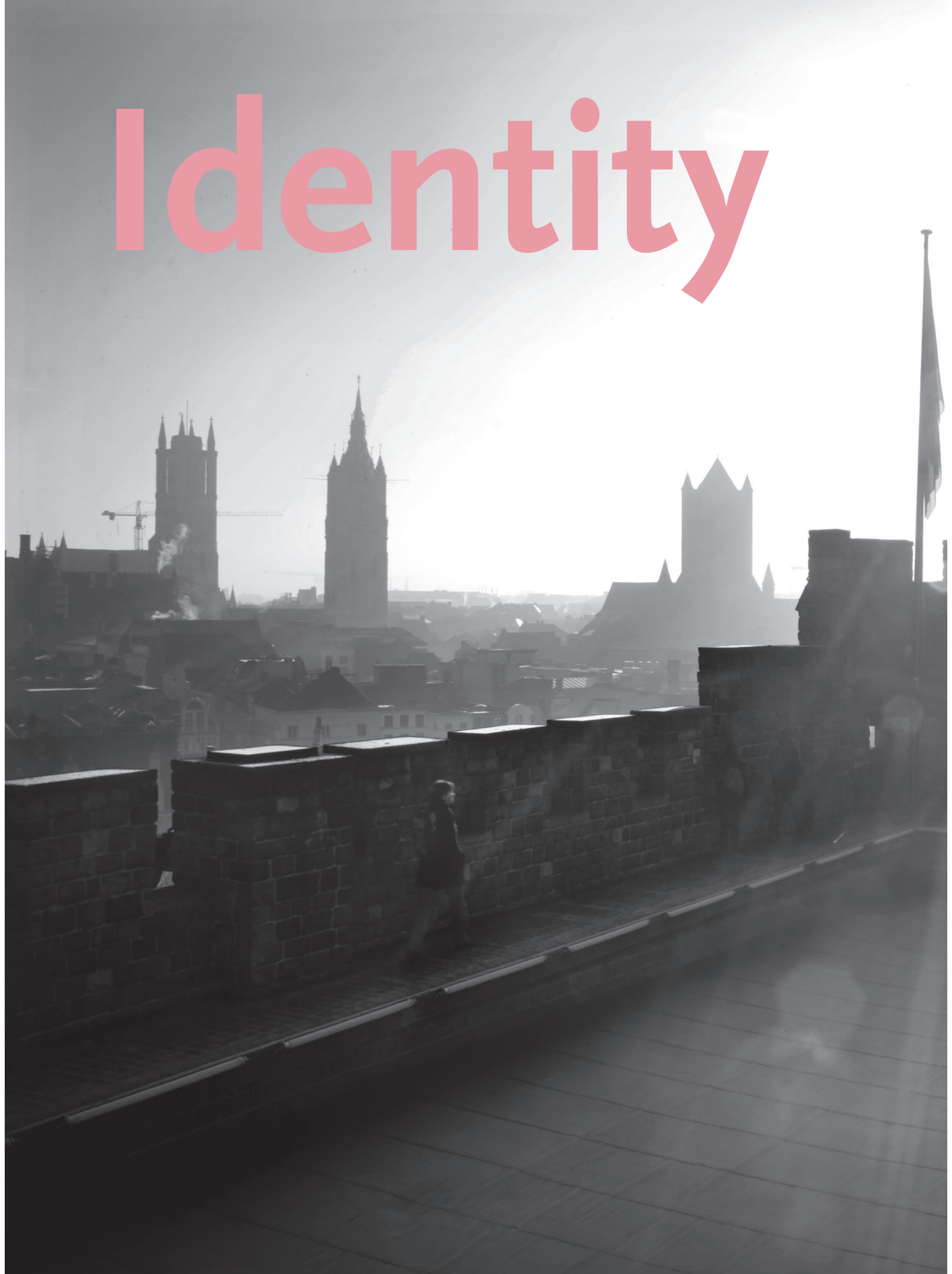
COVID-19 pandemic

On 24 January 2020, the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Europe was reported in Bordeaux, France. The coronavirus spread across the continent; in March 2020, every country had one or more confirmed cases and deaths. Italy soon experienced a major outbreak, becoming the first country worldwide to introduce a national lockdown. On 13 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Europe the epicentre of the pandemic. Borders closed and health policies and crisis measures were implemented by governments at the national level. But the European Union too, soon initiated a support package with funding for companies for development of treatments and vaccines, and financing for employment as well as for direct and indirect healthcare costs related to the pandemic.

Russian invasion of Ukraine

On February 24th 2022, just before the publication of this Atlas, the Russian army invaded Ukraine. An act that shocked and surprised whole of Europe and has been widely condemned internationally. The invasion has triggered Europe's largest refugee crisis since WWII.

Identity





National pride, European doubts

SENSE OF BELONGING

The European continent has quite diffuse geographical limits, especially at the eastern, Asian part. Belarus and Ukraine are generally regarded as being part of Europe. And from a geographical point of view, Turkey, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, but perhaps also Greenland may be considered European. How many people actually consider themselves to be European? At least the just over 400 million people currently living in the 27 countries of the European Union are *expected* to do so. Yet, according to the EVS studies one may meet more Norwegians who feel European than Italians, while Italy has been in the Union for over sixty years and Norway never has. European identity is a complex issue.



IN OR OUT

In the late 1970s, social psychologist Henri Tajfel (1919-1982) introduced the term social identity: a person's sense of who he or she is, is based on group membership(s). Humans have an inbuilt tendency to define themselves as part of a group or groups. It's an important source of self-esteem, pride and belonging. There are numerous social groups: a social class, a professional group, a tennis club, all citizens of a town, religions, ethnicity, gender, etcetera.

Human desire to belong to a group inevitably results in thinking in terms of 'us' and 'them'. There is no in-group ('us') without an out-group ('them'). And after putting ourselves in an in-group, we tend to exaggerate the differences with the out-group as well as the similarities within the in-group. The larger these are, the stronger the warm feeling of belonging. The uglier the picture of the 'other', the higher the self-appreciation of the in-group.

Group formation and subsequent stereotyping can occur at every level in society, warned Tajfel. From the more innocent slogans on banners of rivalling soccer teams, to harmful bullying of 'out-siders' in school class rooms, to xenophobia, racism and hate crimes, and even genocides.

EUROPEAN UNIFICATION

The European Union itself has never defined geographical limits; instead it defines itself as “an area of freedom, security and justice without internal borders”, as is written in the Preamble of the Treaty on European Union. If not defined by geography, perhaps history may provide clues on European identity? The continent is often referred to as ‘the old world’. Its history includes the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, the rise of Christianity, the Enlightenment period, Humanism and Industrialisation. However, these transitions have not influenced all inhabitants, and not all in similar ways. In the Middle Ages, Europe's 80 million inhabitants were scattered across 200 states, would-be states, fiefdoms and state-like organizations. And only forty years ago, Western and Eastern Europe were worlds apart, divided by an ‘iron curtain’ during fifty years of communism in the Eastern part. Christianity may have been the major religion in Europe for two thousand years, between the years 700 - 1000 the entire Iberian peninsula was part of the Muslim world. And in the sixteenth century the Ottoman Empire stretched all the way to Athens (Greece), Budapest (Hungary) and Chişinău (Moldavia). The history of a Balkan country like Bulgaria is in many aspects very different from that of a Scandinavian country like Sweden or a Southern country like Portugal. Yet, they are all seen as European while the inhabitants may have quite different ideas of what ‘being European’ means.

No-more-war

Europe is the proud mother of some of the greater assets of human heritage: liberty, democracy and Humanism, and it's the birthplace of great names in science, arts and politics. But the continent also has many dark periods to answer for: the crusades, witch hunts, colonialism, the mafia, and most notably the horrific holocaust. Only eighty years ago, just after the Second World War, Europe was the opposite of a glorious continent, it lay in total ruins.

That resulted in a strong post-war sentiment of no-more-war and to the establishment of the predecessor of the European Union, the European Steel and Coal Community, in 1951. “We are carrying out a great experiment, the fulfilment of the same recurrent dream that for ten centuries has revisited the peoples of Europe: creating between them an organisation putting an end to war and guaranteeing eternal peace,” are famous words of the founding father of the Union, Robert Schumann.

The community grew fast and became a major economic success. Common interests in trade indeed stimulated peace and cooperation. Economy, however, became so central in the European unification process that critics say economic prosperity became a goal rather than a means to ‘glue’ countries together by human values.

Moreover, an important part of Europe could not join the European Union after the Second World War. Eastern Europe became part of the communistic Soviet Union. Only after the fall of the ‘iron curtain’ in 1989, could the Baltic countries and Eastern European countries such as Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria become part of the European Union. In 2004, a record number of ten countries joined the EU, including seven former Soviet states, extending the EU eastwards.

Struggles

However, increased European integration and expansion eastwards is viewed as a threat by Russia. Just before finalising this Atlas, Russia has invaded Ukraine, which shocked Europe and may shake up political constellations, international relations, but also European values for years to come.

Unification has brought economic prosperity, peace and stability. Union legislation must guarantee human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality for all citizens, and respect of human rights. Yet, the European flag or its hymn

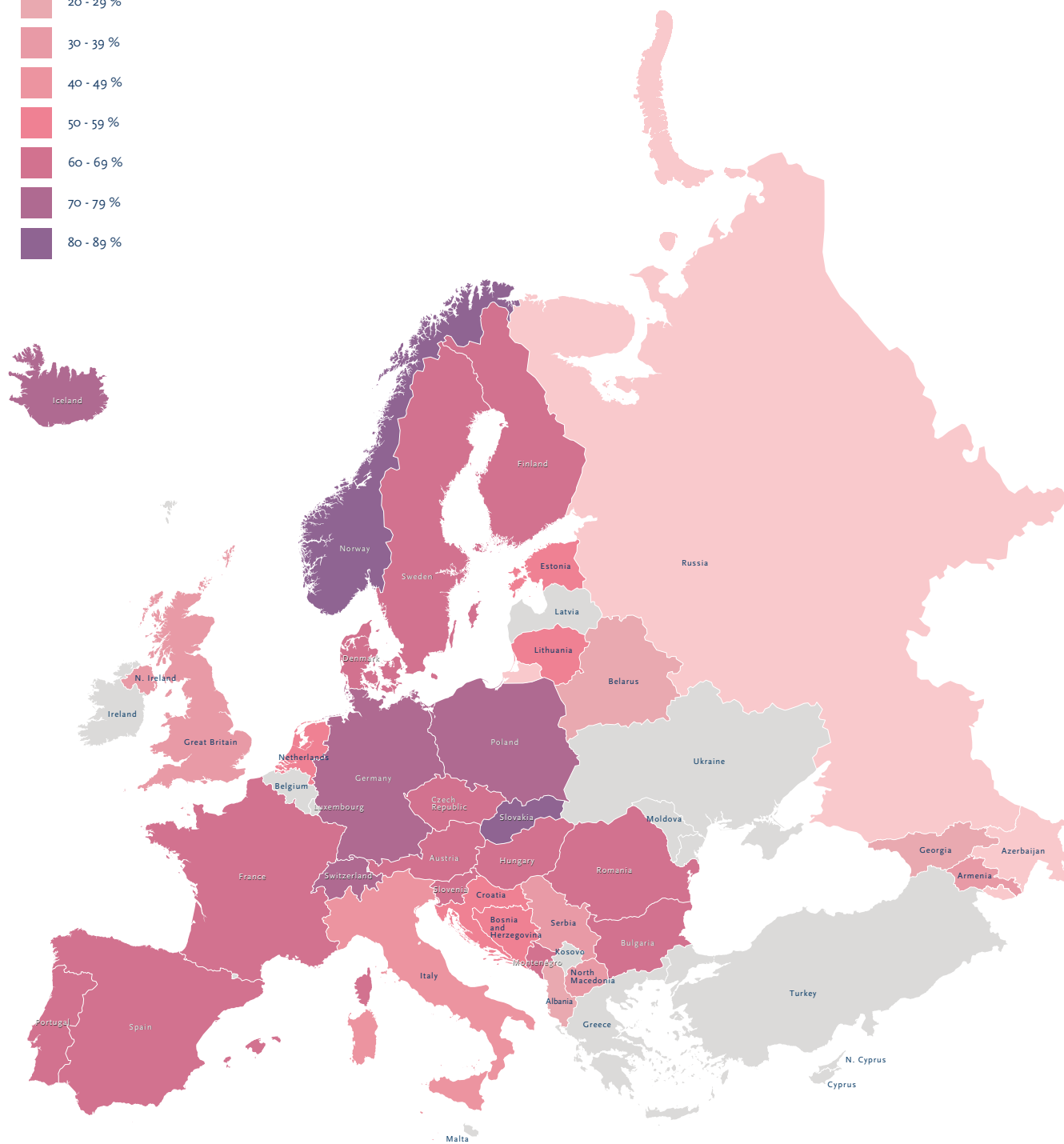
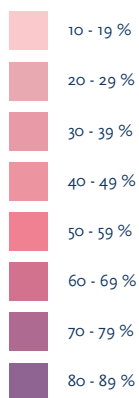
Beethoven's ‘Ode to joy’ are not (yet) symbols that makes people's heart beat faster. Europeans generally harbour warm feelings for their own country. The Union is often seen as beneficial, though bureaucratic. Feeling European is a rational, not an emotional connection. In the past decades, even the rational bond has been under stress. The benefits of the Union are no longer evident to everybody. The worldwide financial crisis around 2008 put a strain on solidarity in the Union, and the European ‘refugee crisis’ led to hot debates between European countries about asylum rights and redistribution of refugees between member states. Yet, the largest shock for the European Union occurred in 2016 when the British people voted ‘leave’ in the Brexit-referendum. For the first time in its history, a country decided to leave the Union.

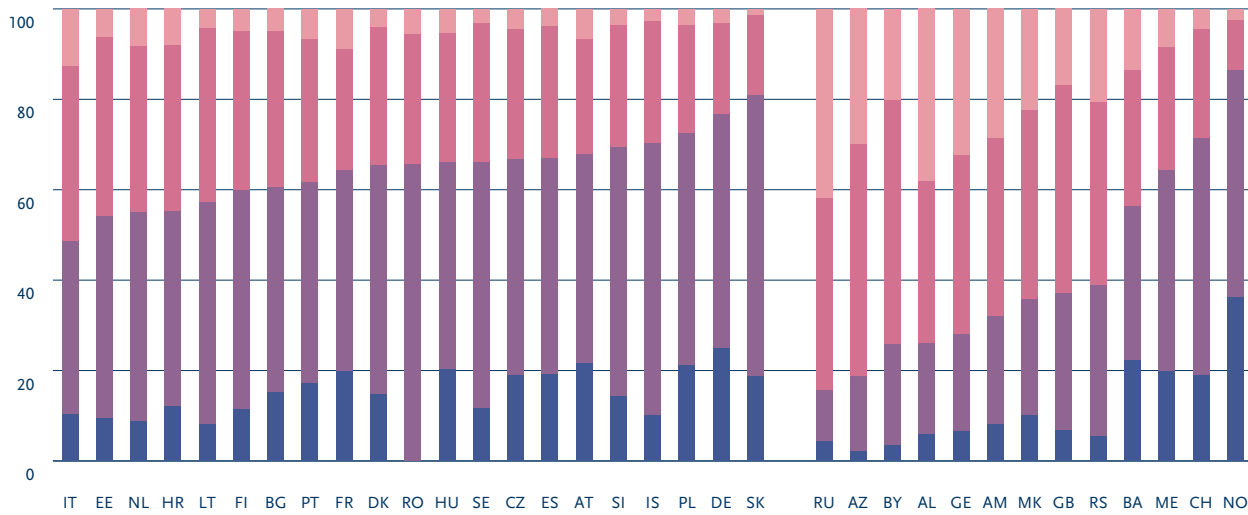
A recent, serious struggle in the unification process are clashes of elected nationalistic-populistic rulers in Europe with the unions core values. Poland and Hungary have introduced national laws that go against European legislation on freedom of the press, the independent justice system and equal rights for LGBTQI+ persons.

Animosities and divisions within Europe have grown over recent years, between East and West on democracy and the rule of law, and between North and South on economic solidarity. Yet, Europeans live in rather stable, peaceful, free and relatively wealthy societies. Life expectancy is high: 83.7 years for women and 78.2 years for men born in 2021. Education and job opportunities are generally good and a large majority feels happy and in control of life. European countries are found in many Top 10's on well-being and welfare. From that perspective, the European Union still consistently follows the trajectory of its founders.

Feeling European

The percentage of people consider themselves European.





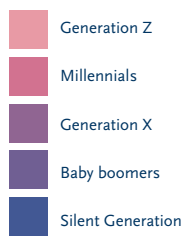
European unity

EU and non-EU countries ranked according to people's feeling of closeness to Europe.



... by generation

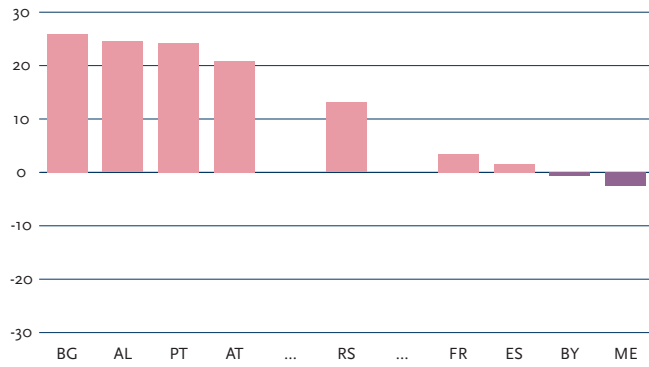
EU and non-EU countries ranked according to people's feeling of closeness to Europe.



Feeling European

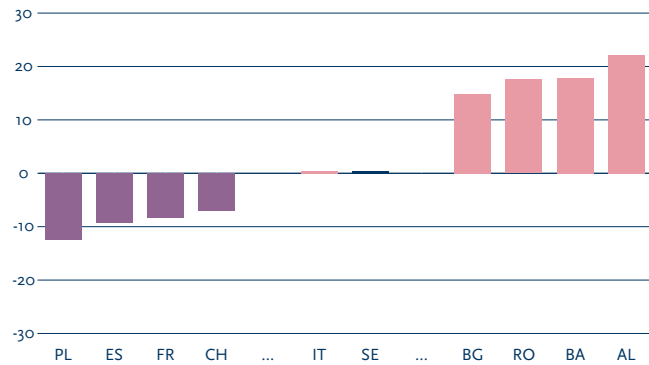
... by education

The education gap in feeling European: the difference in feeling European (in percentage points) between the higher and lower educated people in a country. Generally speaking, higher educated Europeans feel more closely connected to their continent. In Bulgaria, this education gap is the largest. Montenegro and Belarus are the exceptions. Here, lower educated people indicate feeling closer to Europe. Serbia is closest to the European average.



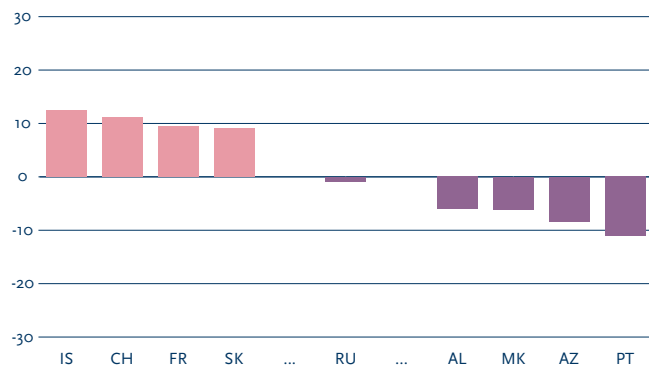
... by religiosity

The religion gap in feeling European: the difference in percentage points in feeling European between non-religious people and religious people. In many countries, such as Sweden and Italy, being religious hardly influences 'feeling European.' In Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, non-religious people tend to have a warmer feeling towards Europe. In Poland and Spain, the opposite is true.



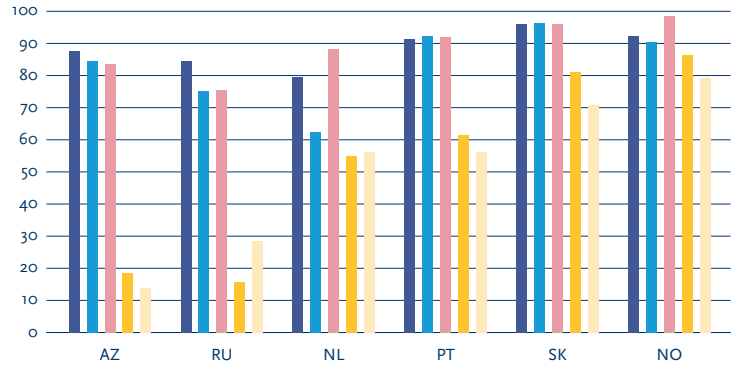
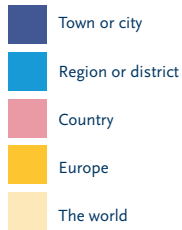
... by gender

The gender gap in feeling European: the difference (in percentage points) in feeling European between men and women. On average, European women do not feel more or less European than men. However, in Iceland and Switzerland, women have slightly warmer feelings towards Europe; in Portugal and Azerbaijan, men do.



Sense of belonging

The sense of belonging in six European countries. The closeness to town, region and country is high in all countries. Connectedness with Europe or the world as a whole varies considerably.



BOTH GLOBAL AND LOCAL

'Think globally, act locally' is an already cliché slogan in international business. The mantra is based on a Japanese global marketing strategy from the 1980s, which says that global products and services have more success when they are adapted to local cultures. Famous examples include McDonald's strategy to add a local touch to its universal fast food menus. In India, you may order a McSpicy Paneer and in Italy customers can buy a cheesy, tomato-ey Panzerotti.

The Japanese marketing strategy inspired the British sociologist Roland Robertson to introduce the term 'glocalisation', a linguistic hybrid of globalisation and localisation, in 1992. The term encompasses the simultaneously growing

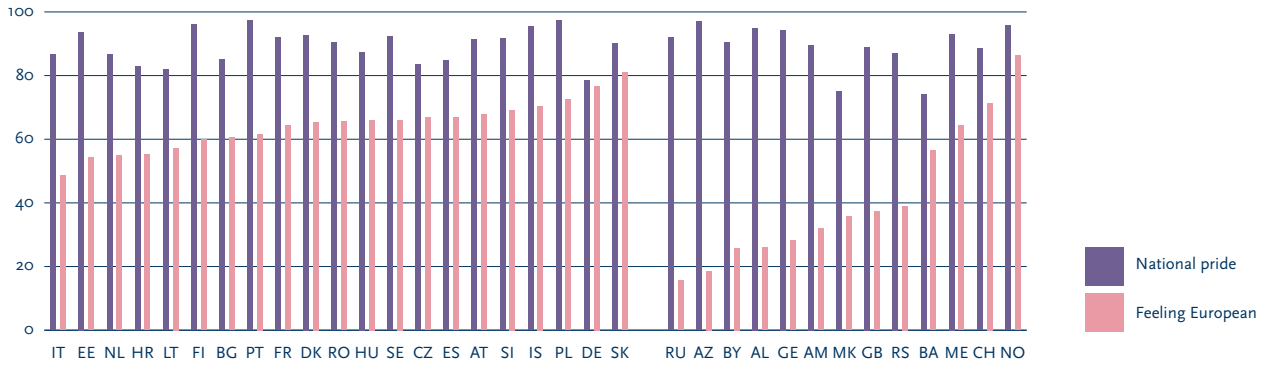
importance of global trends next to more appreciation of local and regional culture. Glocalisation is often seen as a kind of countermovement, a social movement opposed to the increasing flow across borders of labour, capital, goods and services which may lead to cultural homogenisation ('McDonaldization'). Glocalisation also includes resistance and rebellious defence against globalisation through growing support and interest of people in local history, traditions or authentic cultures. McDonalds had to close its doors in Beijings Forbidden City after local protests, and a city like Venice doesn't allow fast food chains to overtake its city centre. Furthermore, glocalisation also includes the 'recall' and revival of manufacturing businesses in Europe because of shortages due to

logistic problems encountered during the COVID-19-pandemic, but also because of geopolitical differences or fear of spying.

Reappraisal of local politics is an important aspect of glocalisation. Although more and more laws are made at a higher level of government, local rules and policies influence people's daily lives and welfare to a large extent. Cities and towns can make a difference in quality of life by introducing bike lanes, healthy school meals, fighting corruption and criminality, or tackling heat islets. This is reflected in the World Mayor contest: a global vote for the best local leader.

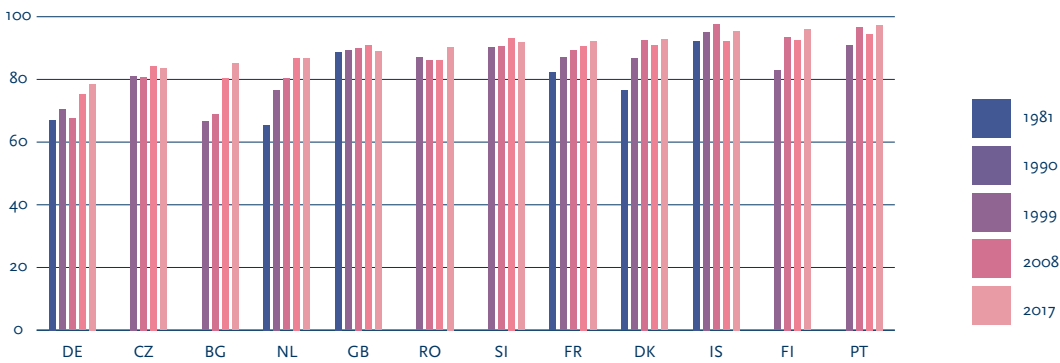
National pride and feeling European

The percentage of people who say they are (very) proud to be a citizen of their country versus the percentage of people who feel European. The EU and non-EU countries are grouped separately.



National pride over the years

The percentage of people who are (very) proud to be a citizen of their country from 1981 to 2017.



Most nationalistic

- Old
- Lower level of education
- Religious
- Living in a smaller city or village
- Healthy
- Georgia



Least nationalistic

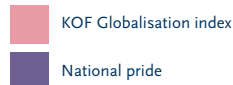
- Young
- Higher level of education
- Non-religious
- Living in a big city
- Poor health
- Bosnia and Herzegovina*



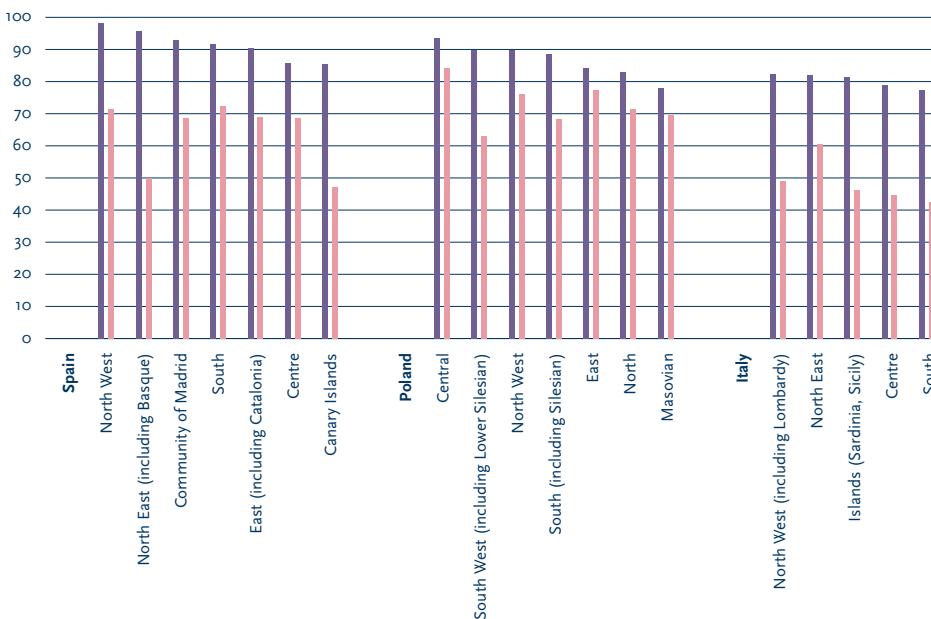
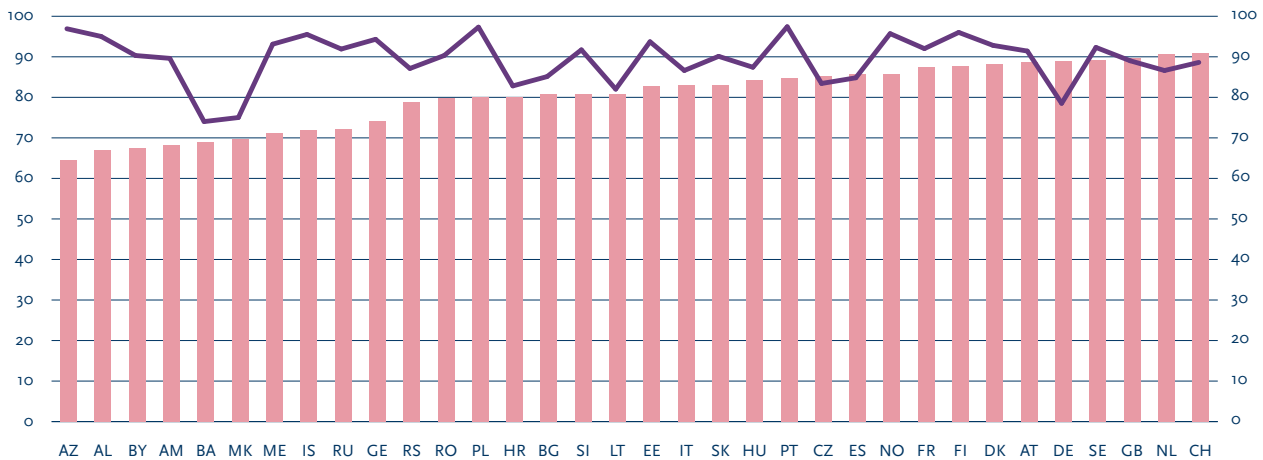
*Bosnia and Herzegovina has large Serbian and Croatian minorities. Nationalistic feelings in the country often concern the neighbouring countries rather than Bosnia and Herzegovina itself.

Globalisation and national pride

The percentage of people who say they are (very) proud to be a citizen of their country versus the degree of globalisation according to the KOF Globalisation index.

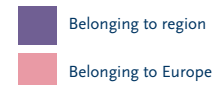


Source: KOF Swiss Economic Institute



Feeling European and regional pride

The sense of belonging to Europe and to one's region within Spain, Poland and Italy.



INDEPENDENCE WITHIN THE UNION

Within Europe and within the European Union there are regions that strive for more independence, with varying urgency. Among these are Flanders and Wallonia ('splitting' of Belgium), Scotland (UK), Basque country (France, Spain), Bavaria (Germany), Silesia (Poland), Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina (partition).

A recent, well-known example is the Spanish autonomous region of Catalonia. In 2017, the Catalans organised a referendum on becoming an independent state, a republic. The referendum was

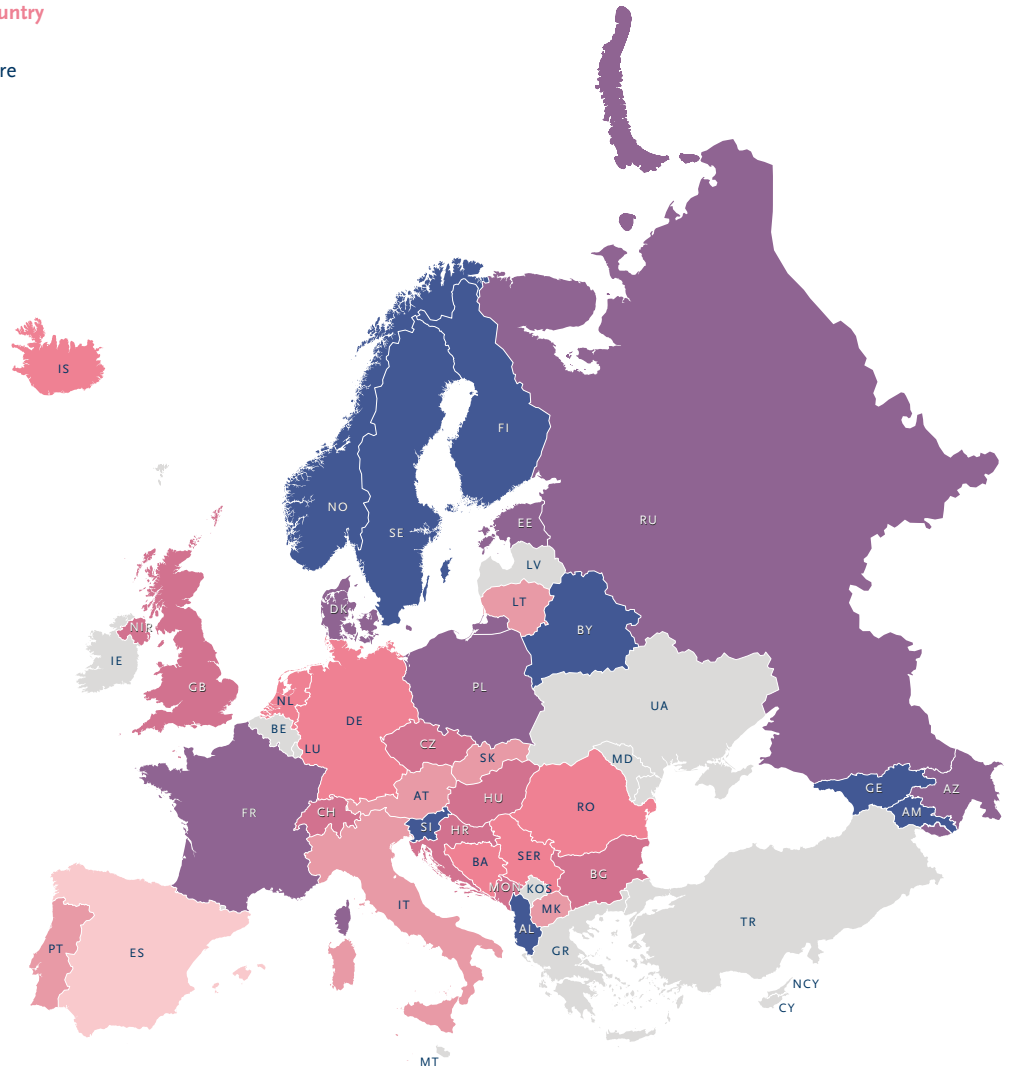
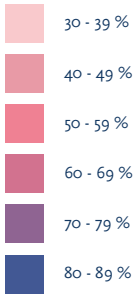
declared unconstitutional by the Spanish Constitutional Court. Riots followed on the voting day when Spanish police forces hindered the voting and closed voting stations.

It has been put forward that the European Union may act as an alternative to the nation state for regions striving for autonomy. An example could be Scotland. 62 percent of the Scots voted against Britain leaving the EU in the Brexit referendum of 2017 (turnout: 67 percent). In a 'letter to Europe' on Brexit day (January 31, 2020) Scotland's first minister

Nicola Sturgeon clearly formulated her regrets and future perspective. "The UK's exit from the EU may be marked with celebrations by some in other parts of the UK, but I am writing to you today – a very symbolic day - to send a strong message of solidarity, and of hope, to our European friends and neighbours. Scotland very much hopes to resume our membership of the European Union in the future, as an equal member." However, a higher appreciation of the Union in regions striving to more autonomy is not evident from the European Values studies.

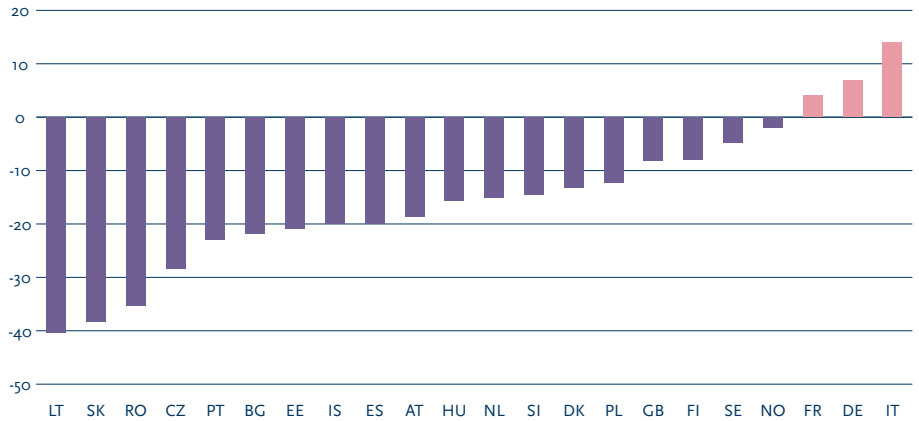
Willingness to fight for one's country

The percentage of people who are willing to fight for their country.



... over the years

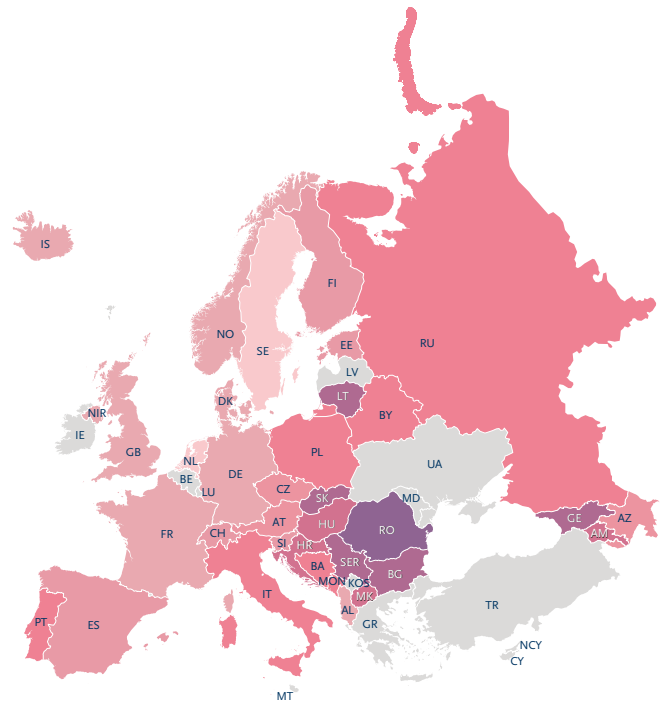
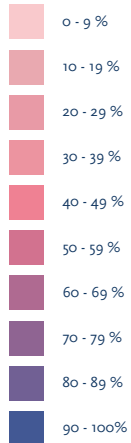
The rise or fall (in percentage points) in the willingness to fight for one's country since 1990. In most countries, the citizens' willingness to fight decreased, but not in France, Germany and Italy.



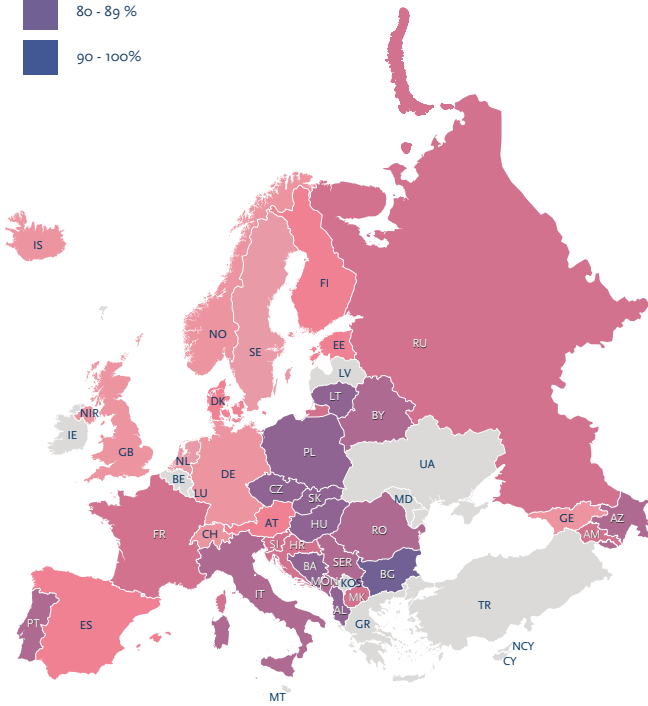
Searching for the 'true' European

A 'true European' ...

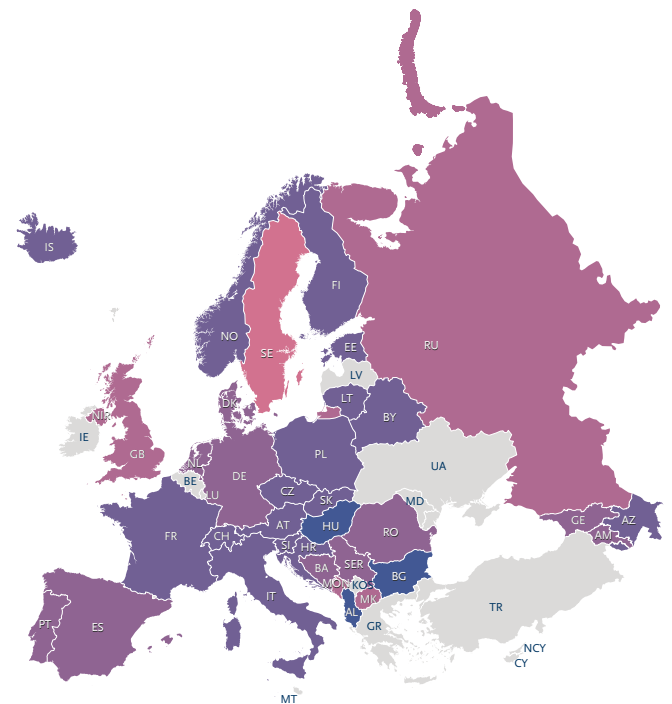
The percentage of people who feel that being Christian, having European ancestors or adapting to European culture is (very) important for being considered European.



... is Christian



... has European ancestors



... embraces European culture