

PLENARY INSIGHTS

Public opinion at a glance

February 2025



Each plenary session, DG Communication's Public Opinion Monitoring Unit (POMU) provides Members with relevant [public opinion data](#) on key agenda topics.

- **Three years of Russia's war of aggression:** By standing against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU is defending European values – 74% of EU citizens agree with this statement. 73% say that Russia's invasion is a threat to their own country's security. ([EC Standard Eurobarometer – Autumn 2024](#))
- **Competitiveness Compass:** Reducing excessive dependencies and increasing security, decarbonisation and competitiveness, and closing the innovation gap – the [EC Standard Eurobarometer – Autumn 2024](#) shows that the core areas of the Competitiveness Compass are also central to the citizens' priorities for the EU in the next five years. Security tops the current list of medium-term priorities, with 33% of people putting it in their top three policy issues.
- **New trade era – multilateral cooperation or tariffs:** Around three in four European citizens agree that the EU is more effective to defend trade interests of its Member States around the world than individual Member States when they act on their own. 26% of citizens generally agree with the statement that the EU should raise tariffs on imported goods so as to protect EU industries and jobs, and an additional 31% think that the EU should increase import duties only if other countries raise their import duties on EU exports. On the other hand, 37% of Europeans are against raising import tariffs – either in general or if provoked. ([Eurobarometer survey on Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy](#))
- **EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement:** Close to one in four (23%) EU citizens agree trade agreements strengthen the EU's position in the world as an economic power, 22% think that they benefit businesses more than consumers and workers, while one in five (19%) believe they help to create jobs in the EU and bring more choice and lower prices for consumers and businesses. ([Eurobarometer survey on Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy](#)) Nearly nine in ten Europeans (88%) agree that agricultural imports of any origin should only enter the EU if their production has complied with the EU's environmental, animal welfare and labour standards. ([Eurobarometer survey on Europeans, Agriculture and the CAP](#))
- **NEW:** To support Members in their political and communication work, DG COMM has published a new edition of its [Socio-demographic trends in national public opinion](#). The 27 national briefings compare national results with EU average data and analyse the results from a gender and age perspective. The 11th edition covers the period 2007 until 2024 and takes a closer look at the image and role of the EP, EU membership and its benefits, satisfaction with democracy in the EU and in the respective country.

For more information on the topics covered in this edition, the methodology of our surveys or on additional services offered to Members by **DG COMM's Public Opinion Monitoring Unit**, please contact: dgcomm-pom@europarl.europa.eu

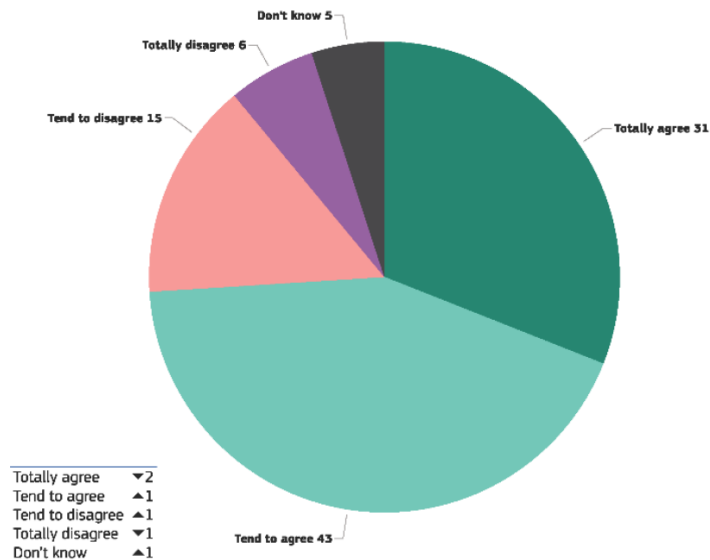
 @EP_Trends

Three years of Russia's war of aggression

On Tuesday 11 February, MEPs will assess the impact of Russia's war against Ukraine and discuss the unwavering EU support for the country. The results of the [EC Standard Eurobarometer - Autumn 2024](#) show that the overwhelming majority of Europeans see this support as a defence of European values.

People were asked whether they agree or disagree to the statement that the EU is defending European values by standing against Russia's invasion of Ukraine. 74% agree, including 31% who totally agree.

QD3.3. Please tell to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: -By standing against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU is defending European values (EU27) (%)

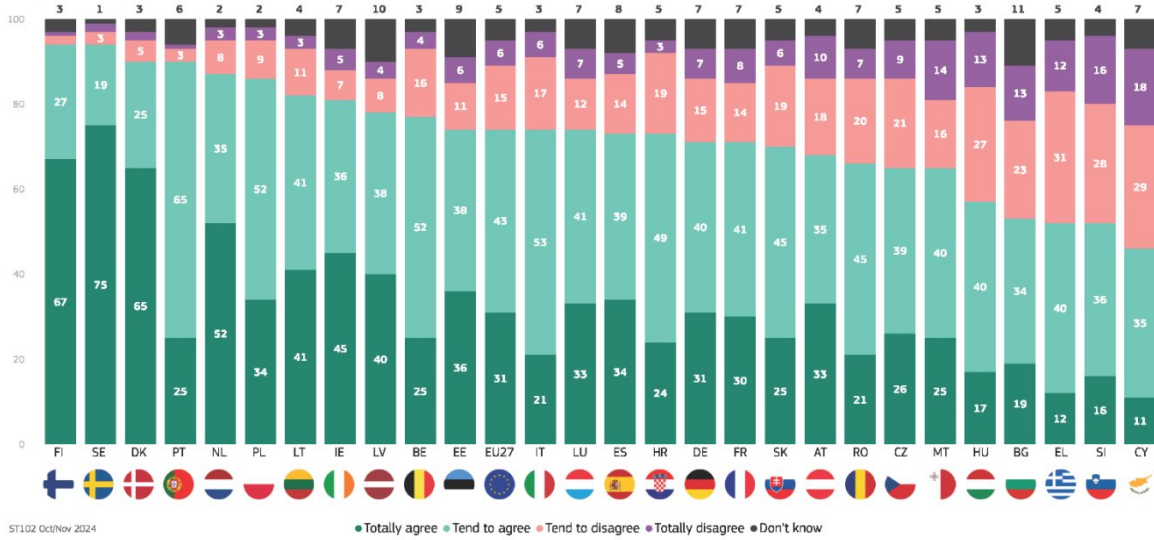


▲▼ (ST102 Oct/Nov 2024 - ST101 Apr/May 2024)

For more detailed information: [EC Standard Eurobarometer - Autumn 2024](#) (November 2024)

Agreement is strongest in Finland (94%), Sweden (94%) and Denmark (90%), while Cyprus is the only Member State where more people disagree than agree (47% vs. 46%). Levels of agreement are also relatively low in Greece and Slovenia (both 52%) and Bulgaria (53%).

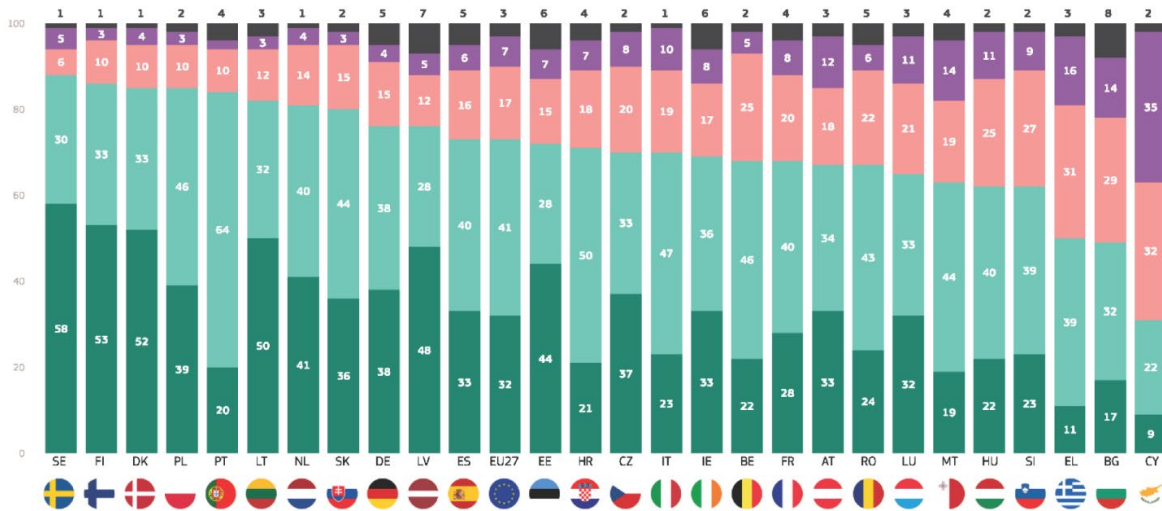
QD3.3. Please tell to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:--By standing against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU is defending European values (%)



For more detailed information: [EC Standard Eurobarometer - Autumn 2024](#) (November 2024)

Most of Europeans see the invasion of Ukraine as an issue that also affects the security of their own country: 73% in the EU say that Russia's invasion is a threat to the security of their own country. This view is strongest in countries bordering the Baltic Sea, with Sweden (88%), Finland (86%), Denmark (85%) and Poland (85%) topping the list. In Cyprus, only 31% of the people associate the invasion with the security of their own country.

QD3.2. Please tell to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:--Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a threat to the security of (OUR COUNTRY) (%)



For more detailed information: [EC Standard Eurobarometer - Autumn 2024](#) (November 2024)

Competitiveness Compass

On 29 January 2025, the European Commission has presented its Competitiveness Compass. Its content builds on the recommendations of Mario Draghi’s report on the future of European competitiveness and translates them into actions. It identifies three core areas: reducing excessive dependencies and increasing security, decarbonisation and competitiveness, and closing the innovation gap. The new concept will be debated in the EP on Wednesday 12 February.

The results of the [EC Standard Eurobarometer – Autumn 2024](#) show that two of the core areas are high on citizens’ priority lists. People were asked in which area the EU should take measures in the next five years (three answers possible). Security and defence came first, with 33% of respondents selecting this issue followed by migration (29%). The economy (competitiveness, public debt) and climate and environment share third place at 28%. However, research and innovation, the third core area of the Competitiveness Compass, was only 10th on the list with 14%.

QB6ab. In your opinion, in which of the following areas should the EU take measures in the medium term, i.e. in the next five years? Firstly? And then? (EU27) (%)

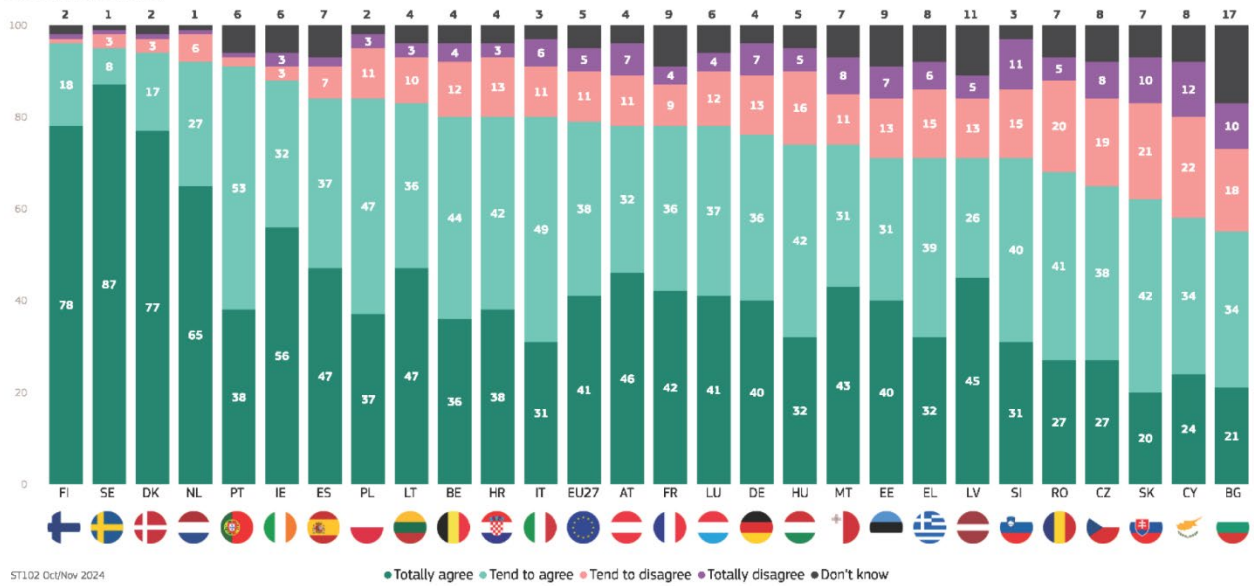


ST102 Oct/Nov 2024

For more detailed information: [EC Standard Eurobarometer – Autumn 2024](#) (November 2024)

The issue of reducing excessive dependencies is also something that people are aware of. In all 27 EU Member States, a majority of respondents agree that the EU should reduce its dependency on Russian sources of energy as soon as possible. Support is highest in Finland (96%), Sweden (95%), Denmark (94%), the Netherlands (92%) and Portugal (91%), and lowest in Bulgaria (55%), Cyprus (58%) and Slovakia (62%).

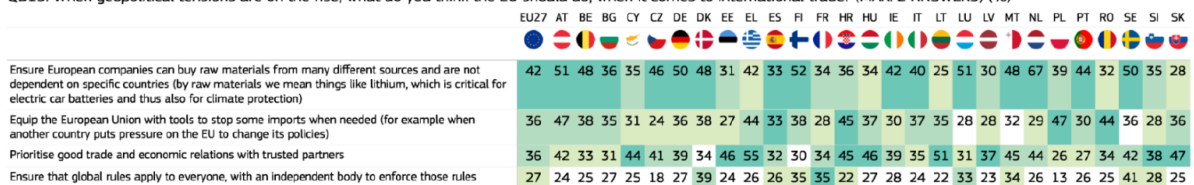
QD3.B. Please tell to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:--The EU should reduce its dependency on Russian sources of energy as soon as possible (%)



For more detailed information: [EC Standard Eurobarometer - Autumn 2024](#) (November 2024)

More generally, in the Eurobarometer survey [Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy](#), people were asked: "When geopolitical tensions are on the rise, what should the EU do when it comes to international trade?" Respondents were asked to select two out of four possible priorities of trade policy. The most given answer was that the EU should ensure that European companies can buy raw materials (e.g. lithium) from many different sources and are not dependent on specific countries. 42% chose this answer, making it the most selected policy in the EU and the top answer in 15 Member States. One country that stands out is the Netherlands, where 67% of respondents identified avoiding dependency as the key issue for trade policy.

QB15. When geopolitical tensions are on the rise, what do you think the EU should do, when it comes to international trade? (MAX. 2 ANSWERS) (%)



1st Most Frequently Mentioned Item
 2nd Most Frequently Mentioned Item
 3rd Most Frequently Mentioned Item

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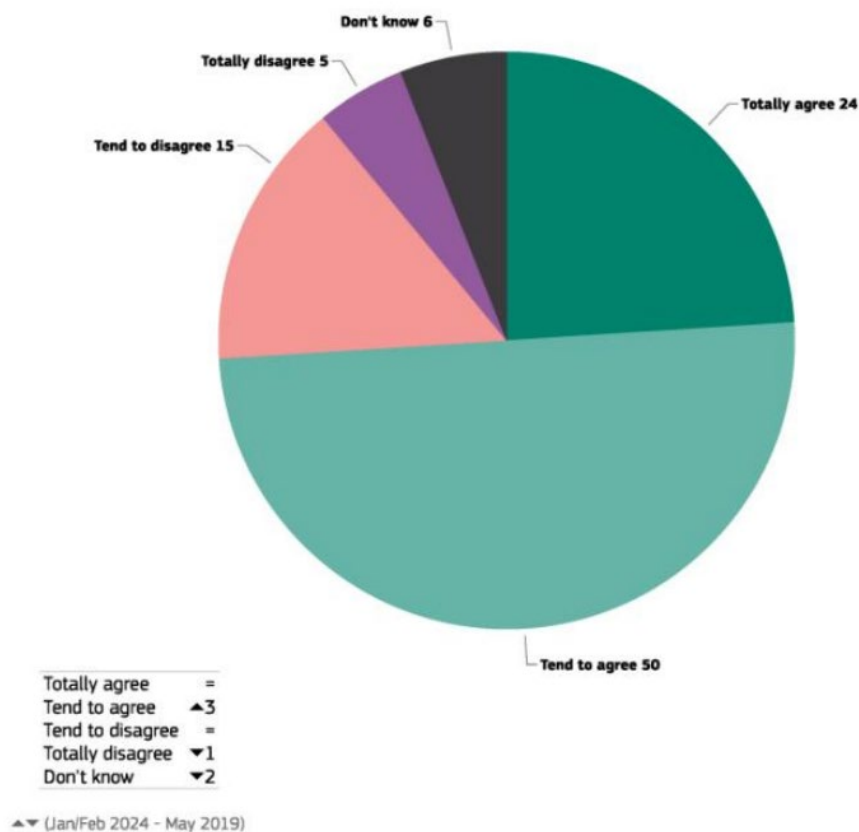
For more detailed information: [Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy](#) (June 2024)

New trade era - multilateral cooperation or tariffs

On Tuesday 11 February, MEPs and representatives from the Commission and the Polish Council Presidency will assess the current state of EU-US trade relations, multilateralism, and the EU's potential responses if the US imposes tariffs on European products.

The Eurobarometer survey [Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy](#) examines the role of the EU in trade policy. Around three in four (74%) European citizens agree that the EU is more effective in defending the trade interests of its Member States in the world than individual Member States when they act on their own.

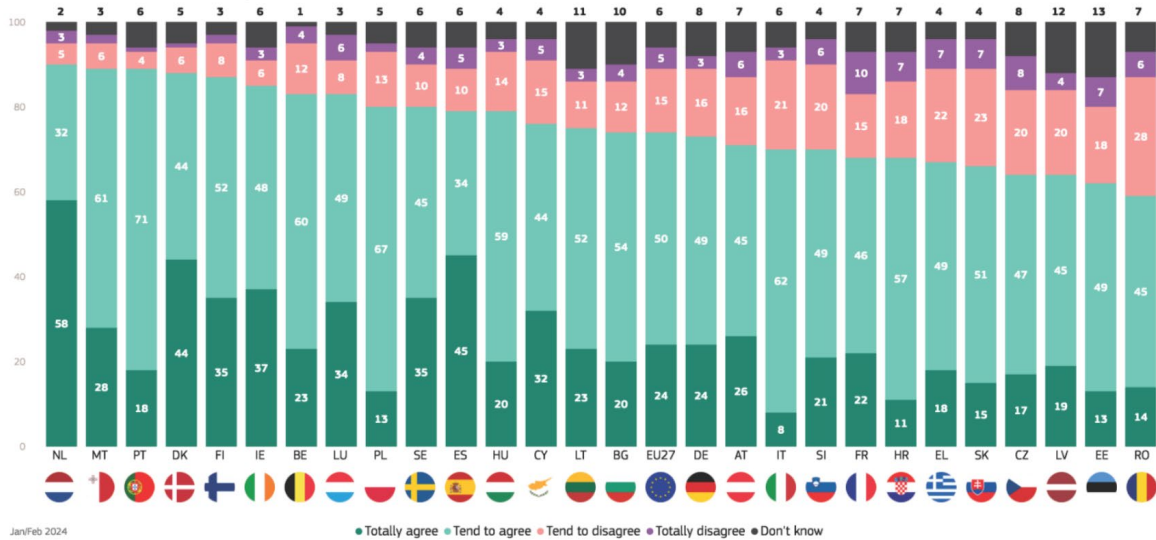
QB6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: the EU is more effective in defending the trade interests of its Member States in the world than Member States are when they act on their own. (EU27) (%)



For more detailed information: [Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy](#) (June 2024)

While a majority of respondents in each Member State agree with an EU coordinated approach to international trade, there is a wide variation in the level of support - ranging from 90% in the Netherlands and 89% in Portugal and Malta, down to 59% in Romania and 62% in Estonia.

QB6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: the EU is more effective in defending the trade interests of its Member States in the world than Member States are when they act on their own. (%)



For more detailed information: [Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy \(June 2024\)](#)

People in each Member State were asked: "Some countries have increased duties on imported goods to try to protect their national industries. Which of the following statements do you agree with most?" It turns out that 26% are generally in favour of import duties and agree most with the statement that the EU should increase duties on imported goods so as to protect EU industries and jobs. A further 31% of the respondents think that that the EU should increase import duties only if other countries increase their import duties on EU exports. This adds up to a (hypothetical) 57% majority in favour of increasing import duties in case of increased US tariffs. On the other hand, 37% of Europeans are against raising import tariffs – either in general or even if provoked.

QB9. Some countries have increased duties on imported goods to try to protect their national industries. Which of the following statements do you agree with most? (EU27) (%)



Jan/Feb 2024

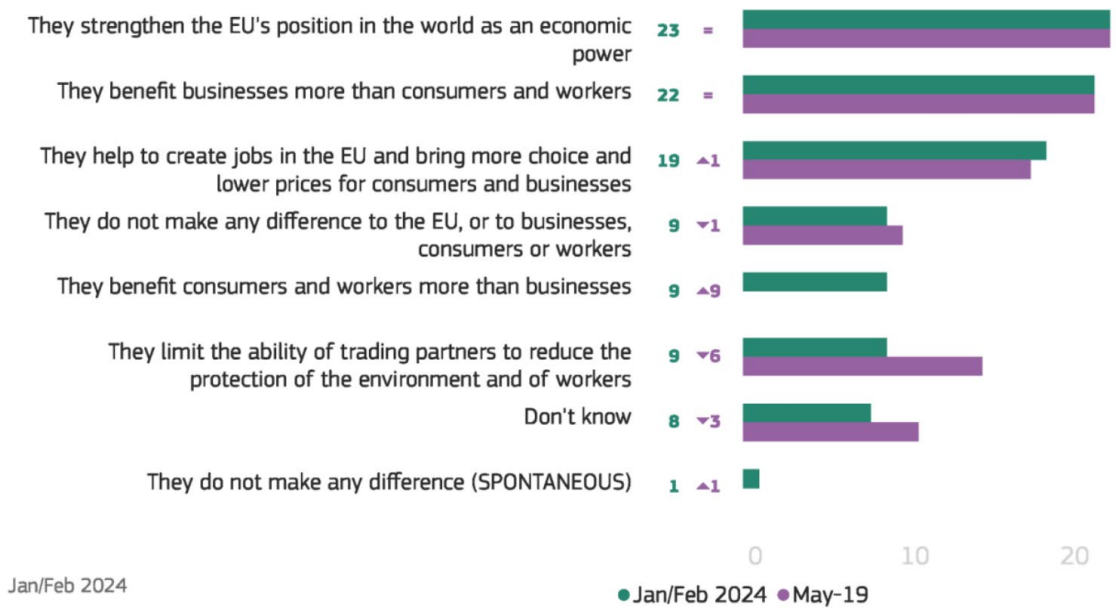
For more detailed information: [Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy \(June 2024\)](#)

EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement

On Thursday 13 February, MEPs will review with the Commission the recently concluded EU-Mercosur free trade deal, amidst the new geopolitical context of increasing unilateralism, and concerns over European agriculture. Parliament must give its consent before the agreement can enter into force.

Respondents to Eurobarometer survey [Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy](#) were asked about their view on the signed trade agreements between the EU and other countries, with the examples of Canada, Japan and Mexico. Opinions were divided: close to one in four (23%) agree these trade agreements strengthen the EU's position in the world as an economic power. Just over one in five (22%) think that they benefit businesses more than consumers and workers, while one in five (19%) believe they help to create jobs in the EU and bring more choice and lower prices for consumers and businesses.

QB11. The EU has signed trade agreements with countries including Canada, Japan and Mexico. Which of the following statements about the EU's trade agreements do you agree with most? (EU27) (%)



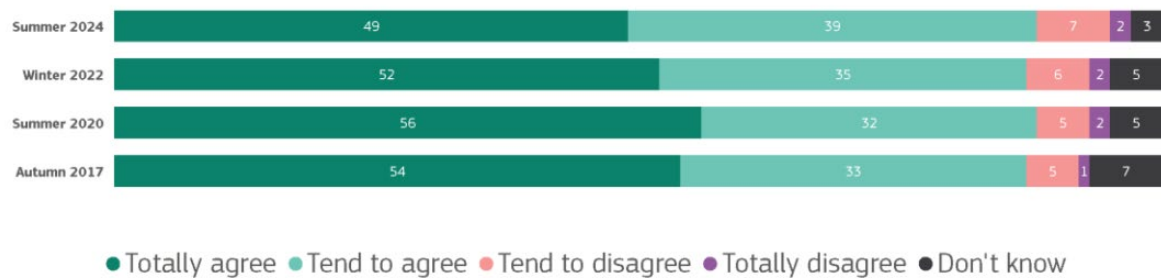
For more detailed information: [Europeans' attitudes on trade and EU trade policy \(June 2024\)](#)

Close to nine in ten respondents (88%) to the [Eurobarometer survey on Europeans, Agriculture and the CAP](#) agree that agricultural imports of any origin should only enter the EU if their production complies with the EU’s environmental, animal welfare and labour standards, with nearly half (49%) in total agreement with this statement. By contrast, around one in ten (9%) disagree, while 3% say they don’t know.

QB16. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the European Union’s trade barriers to imports of agricultural products? (%)

EU27

Agricultural imports of any origin should only enter the EU if their production has complied with the EU’s environmental, animal welfare and labour standards



For more detailed information: [Eurobarometer survey on Europeans, Agriculture and the CAP](#) (January 2025)