

UNDER A DOUBLE LOCKDOWN

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Mobile EU Citizens' Rights



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Under a Double Lockdown: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Mobile EU Citizens' Rights

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the EU and all EU citizens. The measures introduced by the Member States – lockdowns, quarantines and curfews – have had an unprecedented effect on freedom of movement in the EU.

The European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), with the support of EPIM, decided to conduct a **comprehensive research project** on the effects that the pandemic and related measures have had on this most cherished freedom in the EU. Our aim was to **focus on mobile EU citizens** – arguably the most ‘European’ Europeans – who live, work, study and love across borders and in member states other than those from which they originally hail. Through desktop research, policy analysis, investigation of the COVID-19-related enquiries of EU citizens to our Your Europe Advice service, a focus group and two original surveys opened on our ECAS crowdsourcing platform, we gathered **empirical evidence that fed into the study** presented here. Among these, perhaps the most valuable source of information were the direct, unmediated and dedicated voices of mobile EU citizens themselves as well as CSOs working around mobility issues in Europe. We asked the former to share their first-hand experiences during the pandemic and the latter to propose ways of moving forward beyond it. This **citizen-centric approach** underscores all our activities and is also the necessary building block of an accountable and democratic post-pandemic European Union.

The resulting study has the following structure: after an Introduction in Chapter One that contextualizes our research and provides the necessary methodological remarks, Chapter Two provides an account of how the most cherished EU freedom and right to move and reside freely was suspended from March 2020 onwards, offers an analysis of how the EU institutions managed the crisis and, lastly, sheds light on experiences and perceptions of mobile EU citizens about how these events and decisions shaped their lives in the months of the crisis. Drawing on all these findings, Chapter Three puts forth ECAS recommendations for restoring the freedom of movement and improving the status of mobile Europeans directed to the EU institutions, national decision-makers and the civil society.

Main findings

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the tension faced by Member States between the responsibility to uphold the right to freedom of movement and ensuring the health and safety of their citizens and residents. The response of European governments – unilateral re-introductions of border closures and internal border controls – remains a cause for concern of mobile EU citizens insofar as it represents a trend towards greater isolationism in the EU. On the other hand, the EU response was highly fragmented and inefficient at first. As the year progressed, the Union incrementally managed to consolidate and introduce a higher level of coordination. This trajectory towards more EU coordination and powers in the areas of health and freedom of movement has the undivided support of Europeans on the move.

The COVID-19 pandemic has both magnified the obstacles that mobile EU citizens have been facing in their host countries in recent years and given birth to certain novel concerns. Overall, our research clearly shows that mobile Europeans were **disproportionally affected by the pandemic** and found it particularly hard to follow the moving target of **divergent and constantly changing national rules**. Precarious mobile Europeans were hit the hardest, being more likely to experience **rising inequality, xenophobia and hate speech** during the first wave of the pandemic. Regarding the application and enjoyment of specific rights, EU citizens’ **access to healthcare**,

social benefits and the job market, in addition to their **travel, entry and residence rights and fundamental right to family life**, have all been put at grave risk as a result of the pandemic. Among the new emergent phenomena that the crisis has brought to the surface, the unintended consequences of **cross-border tele-working** are, perhaps, the most interesting. The proliferation of remote working practices has found both employees and employers unprepared in terms of their knowledge about the practical and legal repercussions of such work.

The compound effect of all these uncertainties and changes, hurdles and delays, led to what is our most worrisome finding – a **deterioration of mobile EU citizens' mental health** since the onset of the crisis reported in over 70% of cases. Everyone has had to endure the crisis, but the pressure placed on those exercising freedom of movement has been particularly high. Separated from both their host communities and their loved ones back home, mobile EU citizens have experienced what we call *'a double lockdown'*.

We did not only ask citizens to report on their predicaments. We invited them to assess the adequacy of both national and EU-level responses to the crisis. Whereas **criticism of national measures** abounded, mobile EU citizens were all unequivocal in demanding **more powers and more coordination at the EU level** so that the Union's response to future similar transnational crises and threats could be up to the task. In relation to the freedom of movement, an overwhelming majority of respondents was surprised to see that it could have collapsed so quickly and ask for a more resilient mobility regime in Europe.

Recommendations

The **EU Institutions should safeguard EU citizens' right against breaches** by ensuring a coordinated response in times of crises ; by acting decisively in cases of violation of freedom of movement and related EU rights and by making resources available for the training of public administrations on EU citizenship rights.

The **European Commission should issue a new Communication to the Member States** to provide up-to-date guidelines on the Freedom of Movement Directive 2004/38, aiming at overcoming the loopholes in the Directive which result in outcomes that are contrary to its very purpose and which can be at odds with EU citizens' fundamental rights.

The **EU and national decision-makers should restore in full and safeguard the freedom of movement** in the EU by extending 'a fully functioning Schengen area' to all EU member states, including Bulgaria, Romania, Ireland and Croatia, ensuring equal access to citizens' rights for all mobile Europeans, including those in vulnerable and precarious situations, and making freedom of movement resilient to unforeseen shocks by strengthening EU competences in relevant areas, such as health. Moreover, **national decision-makers should develop tailored approaches** to address the specific needs of mobile Europeans in **national/regional/local programmes** for awareness raising and their social and political integration in the host communities.

Civil society organisations should create synergies, build networks and coalitions among themselves to effectively exercise watchdog functions and campaign for upholding freedom of movement, EU citizen rights and building an EU resilient to any future threats. They should **embrace the digital transformation** of work and citizen participation as the new normal and build capacities to contribute to the development of the digital European public sphere. Lastly, they should **carry out informational campaigns and raise awareness among mobile Europeans** on their rights, supporting them in building a community of EU mobile citizens across borders.

I. Introduction

1. Context: The 2020 'perfect storm'

On January 7, 2020, Chinese officials identified a novel type of coronavirus which originated in Wuhan City in the Chinese Hubei Province (WHO). By January 2020, the new and highly infectious disease, named COVID-19, had already spread across different provinces in China, Japan, Thailand, and the Republic of Korea. In less than two months, by the beginning of March 2020, the virus had made its way into 114 countries and more than 4000 people had lost their lives. The so-called "COVID-19 crisis" has few modern precedents when it comes to global infection rates, hence it has become such an extraordinary challenge for governments to find the right response. Policy solutions that seemed unimaginable up until recently, such as the nationalisation of industries, nationwide emergency legislation and guaranteed minimum income, have either been enforced in most countries or have moved into the realm of possibility. One of the decisions that sparked the most heated debate, however, was the decision to put entire national populations under quarantine under so-called 'lock-down' measures. Since the Second World War, there has not been a comparable crisis that has brought daily life in nearly all countries around the world to a standstill. Almost all national governments introduced measures that ultimately limited personal freedoms with the goal of curbing further communal transmission of the virus and "flattening the curve", recognising that a steep increase in newly infected cases could overburden national health care systems.

The entire world seemed to come to a halt and nowhere was this more painfully evident than in the European Union, the world's most economically integrated region where freedom of movement has been the engine of gluing twenty-seven economies into a single multi-level polity. Against this background, the COVID-19 crisis posed an unprecedented challenge both to the single market and the economies of the European Union. In this context, the most evident consequence of the public health-related measures and one of the first 'victims' of the crisis was freedom of movement in the Union. In March 2020, almost all Member States introduced partial, or almost complete, closure of their internal and external borders. These measures restricted movements of both those entering and exiting countries of the European Union. The rapidly deteriorating health situation in the most heavily affected countries sowed panic throughout the Union, with instances of xenophobic discrimination towards citizens coming from those Member States coming to light. The pandemic had begun. That is when the European Union encountered the 'perfect storm' of internal pressures that defined the entire year: the COVID-19 crisis had joined the **Brexit crisis** and the **problems around the rule of law** threatening the adoption of its long-term budget (**Figure 1**). What follows is a comprehensive study of how we as citizens of the European Union, particularly those that embody the freedom of movement in the EU, have weathered the storm.



Figure 1: The 'perfect storm' of EU crises in 2020

2. Objectives and methodology of the study

The freedom to move, work, live and love across borders in Member States other than one's country of origin is repeatedly hailed as the biggest achievement of European integration. Around two thirds of EU citizens agree that the Schengen Area is one of the main achievements of the EU.ⁱ Additionally, approximately around the time of the outbreak of the pandemic, an overwhelming majority of EU citizens found that freedom of movement in the EU brings overall benefits to the economy of their respective countries.ⁱⁱ And yet, this enthusiasm has faced its most formidable reality check ever since the Spring of 2020.

This study aims to:

- a) provide an account of how the most cherished EU freedom and right fell prey to the pandemic;
- b) offer an analysis of how the EU institutions managed the crisis;
- c) provide insight into the experiences and perceptions of mobile EU citizens about how these events and decisions shaped their lives in the months of the crisis; and
- d) formulate recommendations on the role of civil society in the restoration of freedom of movement and on European citizens' rights to the *status quo ante*.

The study and the related research were conducted by the **European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)** from the beginning of Summer 2020 until the end of the year. Due to its thirty years of track record in empowering EU citizens and its leading position at the intersection of European civil society and the EU, ECAS was in a unique position to facilitate a state-of-the-art mobile EU citizen-centric reflection on the effects of the pandemic. The study was carried out with the support of the **European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM)**. EPIM is a collaborative funding initiative of twenty-five grant-making foundations that aim to strengthen the role of civil society in building inclusive communities and in developing humane and sustainable responses to migration and mobility in Europe.

The idea for the study was born at the very beginning of the pandemic when, in a matter of weeks, freedom of movement began to collapse under the pressure of unilateral border closings. This left mobile Europeans stranded, not only from their host communities but also from their friends and families in their countries of origin. Since then, ECAS has been working diligently to gather all the relevant information on the impact of the pandemic and related measures on mobility in the Union, focusing in particular on the resulting impact on mobile Europeans. The following data collection methods were used:

- **Desktop research.** Since March 2020 we have been compiling and classifying media reports, policy developments, mobile Europeans' testimonials, academic research undertaken by think tanks in order to identify elements relevant for our research objectives. This corpus of data also included relevant surveys conducted by other organisations. Some of these surveys tangentially overlapped with our efforts, targeting EU citizens as a whole or certain segment of mobile populations in the EU. For example, to name just a few, The European Parliament issued reports during several rounds of its surveys on European citizens' views on the coronavirus crisis and their attitudes towards the European Union;ⁱⁱⁱ Eurofound's research on the far-reaching socioeconomic implications of the pandemic across Europe on living and working conditions^{iv} was centered around their e-survey, conducted in two rounds – in April and in July 2020; the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) published the most representative mobility-related research report on the impact of the pandemic on the mobility of some 22,000 surveyed international students and trainees in Europe.^v

- **Analysis of *Your Europe Advice*^{vi} COVID-19-related cases.** The *Your Europe Advice* service (henceforth YEA) operated by ECAS on behalf of the European Commission and its network of legal experts have answered a steady flow of citizens' enquiries with regards to citizens' rights during the COVID-19 pandemic. Numerous enquiries received were relating to freedom of movement, social security rights, the right to work in another country and consumer rights etc. These cases, which have been anonymised with due concern for the privacy of citizens concerned, represent a valuable source of information whilst providing insight into the uncertainties and potential violations of mobility and other EU citizenship rights.
- **ECAS surveys.** The findings of this research study are primarily based on data collected through two surveys – one for mobile EU citizens and one targeting civil society organisations with mission and activities relating to freedom of movement in the EU.^{vii} Both surveys were conducted through the **ECAS crowdsourcing platform**, where citizens are encouraged to speak up on issues directly affecting them. In order to reach our target pool of respondents, we resorted to advertising the surveys on Facebook and Twitter while, additionally, two databases of like-minded organisations that could help us reach mobile Europeans were also created – one with NGOs and another with associations of expats. The surveys were open for entries from the end of July until mid-December 2020, thus gathering opinions and perceptions across the first and second waves of the pandemic. This marks yet another difference with respect to most comparative COVID-19 surveys that were, by and large active, only during the first wave. (See **Figure 2** for the visual identity of the crowdsourcing platform for these two surveys).^{viii}



Figure 2: The cover of the two surveys on the ECAS crowdsourcing platform

- **Focus group.** A dedicated ECAS event was designed by the authors of the study to deliberately serve as a focus group and gather additional evidence from a group of relevant stakeholders in the area of EU mobile citizens' rights. Namely, during the 18th European Week of Regions and Cities in October, we sought to reflect upon, recognise, and react to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mobile Europeans and freedom of movement together with experts from selected EU institutions and civil society organisations. The findings of the discussion are reflected in this study.

The study is structured as follows: following the Introduction in this chapter, the key findings are presented in **Chapter Two** below, followed by ECAS recommendations to EU, national and CSO stakeholders respectively in **Chapter Three**. Finally, detailed empirical findings from the two ECAS surveys are to be found in **Annexes One and Two**.

II. Main Findings

In this chapter, the main findings of the study will be presented. In **Section 1**, we will look at the impact of the pandemic on *freedom of movement* in the EU^{ix} in general, tracing the impact of its suspension chronologically. In **Section 2**, the timeline of the COVID-19 response of key EU institutions will be reconstructed. This will be followed by the analysis of the impact on mobile EU citizens and their rights in **Section 3**.



The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on freedom of movement in the EU

United we stand – divided we fall?

Although under Article 28 of the Schengen Border Code, Member States may under certain circumstances and under strict conditions temporarily reintroduce border controls, such measures must be limited in time and involve the notification of the European Commission. In reality, however, many of the travel restrictions were undertaken unilaterally by Member States without effective coordination with the European Commission. For instance, of the twenty-one Schengen countries that had reintroduced borders by 21 March 2020, only 11 had previously notified the European Commission.^x Furthermore, the European Commission noted that, when implementing measures, the Member States must not discriminate between national and resident EU-citizens. By the same token, it emphasized that the EU Member States must not deny entry to third-country nationals residing in their territory.^{xi}

In practice, however, various hurdles emerged with regard to the implementation of the measures. For example, only Hungarian citizens and EEA nationals holding permanent resident cards were permitted entry to Hungary in March 2020. The police could grant exceptions provided that, first of all, the person concerned undertook a medical examination that did not indicate any suspicion of COVID-19 infection and, secondly, the person was listed in the registry of the epidemiological authority.^{xii} Similarly, ECAS' YEA experienced a surge in individual COVID-19-related enquiries, with the total number of issues raised relating to COVID-19 quickly reaching almost 25% during the first two months of the pandemic. According to the enquiries, mobile EU citizens experienced problems pertaining to their residence rights, family reunification with non-EU family members etc.

Moreover, the initial national responses to the coronavirus outbreaks also included unilateral temporary emergency measures that limited, suspended or violated the rights of citizens, including their basic constitutional rights. Worrying instances such as the Hungarian state of emergency,^{xiii} the announced derogation from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) by Bulgaria, Romania, Estonia and Latvia,^{xiv} as well as the alleged attempts of countries like Slovenia to capture the state apparatus using the COVID-19 crisis as a window of opportunity^{xv} emerged. Moreover, this proliferation of unilateral measures tethering on the edges of Member States' constitutionality was also indicative of the 'fend for yourself' mentality among national political elites. This inward-looking reflex led not only to the suspension of some of the European citizenship flagship rights, but also its underlying spirit of solidarity and mutual understanding among fellow Europeans. Or, as one of the most renown academic voices on Europe stated in a recent volume on the consequences of the pandemic:

"The leaders of these states were giving expression to a broad sentiment in their respective societies. One did not see even the semblance of the kind of solidarity which one associates with the citizenry of a polity, a segment of which have fallen on hard times. It was a discourse about the Dutch and Spaniards, of the Danes and the Italians – not a European discourse among fellow citizens. And even among those who supported this or that aid package, a dominant reason was utilitarian and enlightened self-interest, a far cry from citizen solidarity."^{xvi}

This fragmented and often uncoordinated way of dealing with the pandemic during its first wave revealed that the Member States of the European Union were unprepared to respond to a crisis of this magnitude with a unified approach. The travel restrictions stayed in place in the following weeks and, on 8 May 2020, the European Commission invited the Member States to extend restrictions to third countries until at least 15 June 2020.^{xvii} With regard to the internal borders of the EU, efforts then started to unfold leading to the partial restoration of freedom of movement within the Union. On 13 May 2020, the European Commission published a Communication asking the Member States for a phased and coordinated approach for restoring freedom of movement and lifting internal border controls.^{xviii} Although several of the Member States followed the Commissions' recommendations and lifted their unilateral travel restrictions in May, the situation remained largely complex and uncoordinated.^{xix} The border checks, restrictions, and conditions of entry remained different all across the EU. For example, self-isolation and test requirements varied significantly from one Member State to another, which continues to be the case at the time of writing the study. Some countries required negative COVID-19 test results upon entry, creating additional complexity and hurdles for citizens, whereas other countries ceased to test asymptomatic citizens due to a lack of testing capacity.^{xx}

This persistent and prevailing uncertainty was mirrored both in the responses to our survey for mobile EU citizens and in their enquiries to YEA. In the case of the former, open-ended answers to why national measures were unsatisfactory and what could have been done differently motivated by far the most reactions by the respondents. In the case of the latter, YEA enquiries seeking advice about potentially discriminatory and wrong application of Directive 2004/38/EC by national authorities resulted in a sharp increase of 'interesting' cases handled by the YEA service during the second quarter of 2020 (April-June) – 15.5% compared to 8% in the first

i.e. pre-pandemic quarter of the year.^{xxi} Against such a background, the next section provides an analysis of the EU response to the pandemic and the perception of citizens to said response.

The EU response

Through the proverbial eye of a needle

When lockdowns began to sweep across Europe, some believed that this crisis would renew public faith in government institutions and, in particular, highlight the need for European cooperation. Some even went so far as to speculate that this could lead to a European ‘Hamiltonian’ moment, a reference to the US founding father who initiated the mutualisation of state debt following the Revolutionary War which solidified the unity of the new Union.^{xxii} However, in the wake of the pandemic outbreak and as a reaction to the initial response of EU institutions, the predominant perception among citizens, the media and most national politicians was that the response of the EU to the crisis was confusing and insufficient. Conducted in the last week of April and the first week of May, a survey of 11,000 people in 9 Member States found that many Europeans, on average 46%, believed that the EU had not lived up to its responsibilities in its coronavirus response. In some countries, this dissatisfaction was particularly acute. 63% of Italians and 61% of French people polled disagreed that the EU fulfilled its duties.^{xxiii} The European response has unveiled one of many discrepancies in the EU regarding the *géométrie variable* of how competences are unevenly distributed between Brussels on one hand and Member States on the other. Even though public health permeates throughout EU policies – from food safety to public security, and from consumer protection to wildlife – the Union found itself unable to address the COVID-19 crisis heads on at first. Saving lives directly, which strikes to the core of health competence, is still a national prerogative. Once the overall supply of essential medical goods on the continent was drawn extremely thin and new borders rendered them unreachable to those who needed them the most, it became obvious that the cacophony of unilateral national measures equated to a typical collective action problem - i.e. a situation in which individually rational actions result in collectively sub-optimal outcomes. The Union therefore sought to fill the void by calling for a *European Health Union* that would make it possible to address cross-border health threats in the future both during and beyond the ongoing health crisis.

“Europe has done more together than ever before. When Member States closed borders, we created green lanes for goods. When more than 600,000 European citizens were stranded all over the world, the EU brought them home. When some countries introduced export bans for critical medical goods, we stopped that and ensured that critical medical supply could go where it was needed. We worked with European industry to increase the production of masks, gloves, tests and ventilators. Our Civil Protection Mechanism ensured that doctors from Romania could treat patients in Italy or that Latvia could send masks to its Baltic neighbours. And we achieved this without having full competences. For me, it is crystal clear – we need to build a stronger European Health Union” Ursula von der Leyen, 2020 State of the Union address, 17 September 2020.



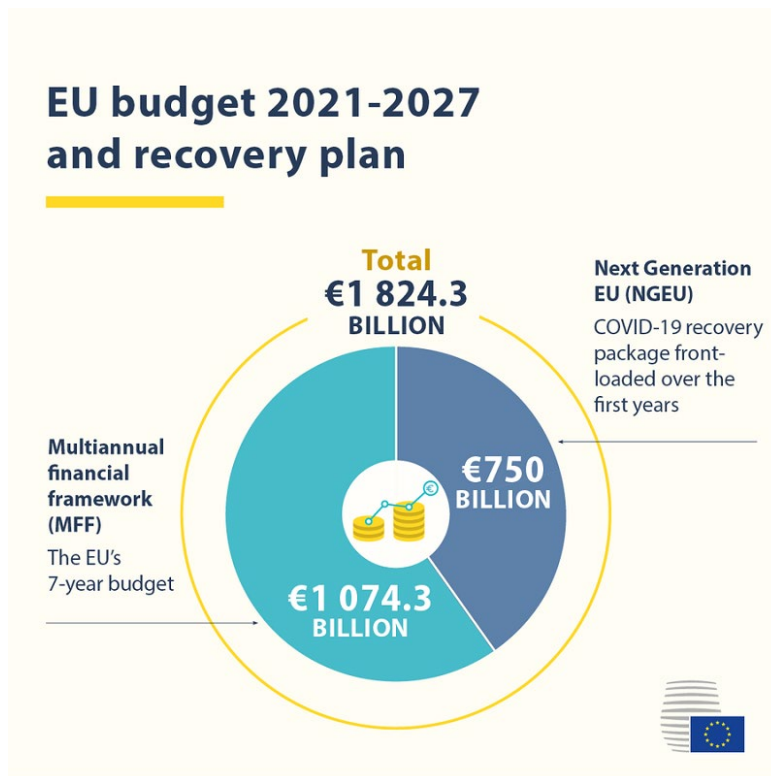
The first step towards this enhanced ability of the Union to proactively act in the area of health was the adoption of the *EU4Health programme*^{xxiv} for the period 2021-2027 following difficult negotiations. The shifts of fate regarding this initiative during 2020 are emblematic of the nerve-racking ups and downs in the adoption of the Union’s long-term budget - i.e. the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027. In the negotiations, the

European Parliament fought hard to ensure sufficient resources for the EU4Health programme. Initially endowed by the Commission with a budget of 9.4 billion euro, the programme was drastically reduced in July by the Heads of State and Government of the EU to only 1.7 billion euro. Thanks to the unrelenting determination from the European Parliament, the programme will have a final budget of 5.1 billion euro to promote and implement European health policies. All in all, the EU4Health programme takes a very comprehensive approach to health, with the ambition both to reduce health inequalities in and between Member States, while also creating a stronger foundation for cross border cooperation in the field of health to the benefit of all Europeans. In addition to a true rulemaking powerhouse in the area of health, the EU institutions led by the European Commission set about working on at least three more areas which are directly relevant for the lives of mobile EU citizens: travel and transport, employment and society, and finances and the economy. **Figure 3** below provides the timelines for these three areas respectively. The COVID-19 crisis shows how much Europeans have come to rely on free movement and have become dependent upon it for economic and personal reasons. Because travelling across borders is an essential feature of the lives of mobile EU citizens, we should briefly explain the timeline in the first column therein.

While the European Commission was under severe PR attack from all corners of the continent in the first quarter of 2020, it was quietly using the Civil Protection Mechanism to bring home tens of thousands EU citizens from abroad.^{xxv} In March 2020, the Commission started to consolidate its reaction by temporarily closing its external borders^{xxvi} and adopting dedicated guidelines concerning the exercise of free movement of workers^{xxvii} that have been updated regularly ever since. Later on, in the wake of the first wave and in preparation for the Summer of 2020, the Commission aimed to coordinate the actions of Member States and presented a common approach in May to restore freedom of movement and tourism. The most visible result of these efforts was the launch of ‘Re-open EU’ – a website containing essential information in all EU languages regarding safe travel and tourism.^{xxviii} However, the success of these coordination efforts was dubious with some Member States acting in coordination and others doing so unilaterally, which left many mobile Europeans feeling confused while trying to get to grips with constantly changing rules. A significant improvement in trying to control the situation followed in October with the adoption of the Council Recommendation on a coordinated approach to the restriction of free movement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.^{xxix}

Finally, after a year filled with great uncertainty and a deficit of trust from both citizens and Member States’ governments in the Union, an unlikely success was achieved at the very last moment regarding all three elements of the ‘perfect storm’. In December, the Union managed to negotiate a trade agreement with the UK^{xxx} and broker a historic budget deal for 2021-2027^{xxxi} - the largest investment plan in the history of the Union. In total, up to €1.8 trillion will be spent by 2027 to boost the bloc’s economy in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and, at the same time, to make European economies more sustainable and digital, partly thanks to the novel €750 billion recovery fund called *Next Generation EU* conjured to address the consequences of the pandemic. (see **Figure 2**).

Figure 2: EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027



In conclusion, with the initial lack of coordination identified as the key EU shortcoming, an overwhelming majority of mobile Europeans in our survey call for the EU to play a stronger role in handling the COVID-19 crisis and for the EU to have more powers in the area of health.

“We need more coordination at the European level. Healthcare should at least be included among shared competences”.

Male respondent, Citizen of Italy, resident in Belgium.

“The EU should have ensured a more coordinated approach when Member States started to close the borders and introduce restrictions”.

Female respondent, citizen of Poland, resident in Germany

“Freedom of movement is at the core of the functioning of the single market in its economic dimension and as the most cherished right of the EU citizens. There is every reason therefore that it should be the EU to lead the process of consolidating and guarding it in a crises situation through uniform, clear and predictable measures instead of leaving the Member States to dismantle it via unilateral diverse and often out of proportion restrictions”.

Male respondent, Citizen of Croatia, resident in Belgium.



Figure 3: Timeline of EU's Covid-19 Response

EU mobile citizens' lives during the pandemic

Living under a double lockdown



There is no doubt that the COVID-19 measures introduced across the European Union have been strenuous in one way or another for all citizens in EU Member States. Even more so, the COVID-19 crisis has impacted some categories of the population more severely than others. For example, it has disproportionately impacted women and young people. For instance, the pandemic impacted women more in terms of reduced working hours and young women were more likely to lose their jobs than men while being more likely to take a bigger burden of care obligations.^{xxxii} Similarly, according to the cited European Parliament survey, there are also significant differences to be found in terms of employment status and social class. Self-employed respondents (57%), those who are unemployed and seeking work (56%) and those working part-time (46%) are most likely to say that COVID-19 has already impacted their personal income, along with manual workers – both semi or unskilled manual workers (46%) and skilled manual workers (44%).^{xxxiii} Mobile EU citizens, an estimated group of over 17 million Europeans are also a very specific and often overlooked category. Commonly lumped together with other foreign residents by national administration, they are not only subject to a different rules regime but also have specific needs and demands. It is, therefore, worth applying the same sensitive lens to their unique experiences of the pandemic. We will first draw some general conclusions from our research before analyzing some of the most impacted mobile EU citizens' rights.

Mobile Europeans were disproportionately affected by the pandemic, finding themselves in a *double lockdown*, especially at the beginning of the crisis. Whereas most citizens in the EU could overcome quarantine in the company of their families, mobile EU citizens often reside in a different Member State and are therefore separated from their closest ones, additionally aggravating the effects of social distancing and lockdowns. This is what we call a *double lockdown*. This key finding is unequivocally supported by our research: a large majority of our respondents – more than 70% – perceived the COVID-19 pandemic as more challenging for them than for EU citizens residing in their countries of origin. Furthermore, citizens residing in a different Member State, be they workers, students or job-seekers, were all strongly encouraged to stay where they happen to be in order to avoid the danger of spreading the virus further across borders and faced more severe isolation than those whom the virus has found in their primary community. This meant that citizens living away from their country of origin often faced even more severe isolation than those confronting the virus at home. However, while an Austrian living in France, for example, could return to her country of origin based on her Austrian nationality, dual-national non-married couples were often separated for months^{xxxiv} before some (but not all) Member States introduced exemptions from travel bans and excessive entry requirements for cross-border couples.^{xxxv} This change only took place after (mostly-mobile) EU citizens called on Member States and the European Union to permit their EU and non-EU loved ones to join them after three months of separation. The call has been taken to social media with the hashtag #loveisnottourism.

Mobile Europeans found it particularly hard to follow the moving target of diverging and constantly changing rules. The ubiquitous uncertainty caused by the changing landscape of unilateral national rules seems to have been amplified in the case of mobile Europeans. With the element of transnationality being such a defining feature of their lives, their living situation often involved having to understand diverging rules in at least two different Member States. Our research shows that the living situation of 45.8% of mobile EU citizen respondents was significantly affected by lockdown-related measures. Among these, the most frequent situations were (a) being stranded in a member state other than one's member state of residence (26.9%) and (b) living alone as a result of the lockdown (18.3%). Moreover, they were particularly disadvantaged because, more often than not, the rules were not available in languages they knew well, were not applied correctly by national administrations which were, in turn, unevenly familiar with norms governing the rights of resident non-citizens in general and EU citizens in particular, etc.

Precarious mobile Europeans were more likely to experience rising inequality, xenophobic discrimination and hate speech during the pandemic. We often have an idea of mobile EU citizens as the well-off winners of European integration – successful and relatively rich white-collar workers abroad. However, this population is more stratified and diverse than that. The living conditions of many transnational Europeans is precarious. This population also encompasses students, low-and-unskilled migrants, traditional communities of travelers such as the Roma, homeless people etc. It was among these citizens in particular that the renationalisation evoked by the pandemic also brought instances of widening intolerance and inequality. Some Italians in the EU were victims of xenophobic fears during March merely because Italy was the first Member State to be hit by the virus. An example of this can be found in an enquiry submitted to YEA by an Italian student in Spain, in which an apartment owner in Madrid during the beginning of the pandemic demanded that she be tested for COVID-19 in a private clinic, despite the fact that she did not have any symptoms and a test would cost approximately €1000, and informed her that she would face expulsion from the premises if she failed to provide a negative test. Furthermore, the Roma and the homeless are also exposed to growing intolerance, but also susceptible to more insidious mid-to-long-term repercussions of the pandemic in terms of rising inequality. Some of the problems faced concern access to education requiring digital/remote access, vilification of hate speech against non-stationary populations, difficulties in observing lockdown and hygiene rules etc.^{xxxvi} Slovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria have introduced excessive or even militarized measures aimed at Romani neighborhoods.^{xxxvii} Lastly, the homeless living in another Member State add even more challenges to this list, with the most paradoxical being that by revolving public health advice around the notion of “Stay[ing] home”, EU Member States involuntarily highlighted the flaws of both their COVID-19 prevention and homelessness policies.^{xxxviii}

Travel/Entry rights

As the findings of our survey show, the lack of coordination between the EU Member States has caused a variety of problems in the daily lives of mobile EU citizens. Similarly, many YEA examples illustrate that mobile EU citizens have experienced a variety of problems pertaining to mobility or family reunification^{xxix}, such as:

- **Hungary:** A Slovak citizen living in Hungary, but not officially registered there, was refused entry.
- **Slovakia:** A Slovak pensioner living in the Netherlands wished to return to Slovakia to be close to her family during the COVID-19 crisis but, without proof of permanent residence there, was not allowed to enter the country.
- **Czech Republic:** An Italian citizen living in the Czech Republic had not applied for a residence card there as he was advised that it was not necessary for EU nationals. He had to fly to Brazil for a family emergency. He understood that upon return he could prove his residency by presenting his lease and university card. However, the rules changed during his absence and a residence card was required to enter the country.
- **Denmark:** A Portuguese citizen complained about the restrictions on entry imposed by the Danish government. She was in a relationship with a Danish citizen and they bought tickets to see their family in Denmark. However, her entry was refused.
- **Finland:** A Spanish citizen engaged to a Finnish citizen was denied entry to Finland even though the couple was expecting a child.
- **Spain:** An Australian couple in Spain queried the course of action to be taken in the event of expiry of their 90-day short-stay in the Schengen area as a result of restrictions on travel out of Member States. This is not covered by the Commission Guidelines of 16 March 2020. The Commission's DG HOME has recommended that affected third-country nationals apply for a temporary residence permit to ensure they are not considered overstayers.

Residence

The COVID-19 crisis has generated a number of new challenges for EU citizens exercising their free movement rights. Administrations were closed during the first lockdown, therefore in the Summer, when lockdowns ended across Europe, administrations were overwhelmed. The result was that it was difficult for some EU citizens to comply with their residency registration obligations and this is reflected in both our survey and YEA enquiries.

Almost **44%** of the survey respondents reported that, due to the COVID-19 crisis, they experienced problems with the regulation of their residence permit status or with the regulation of their national registry number.

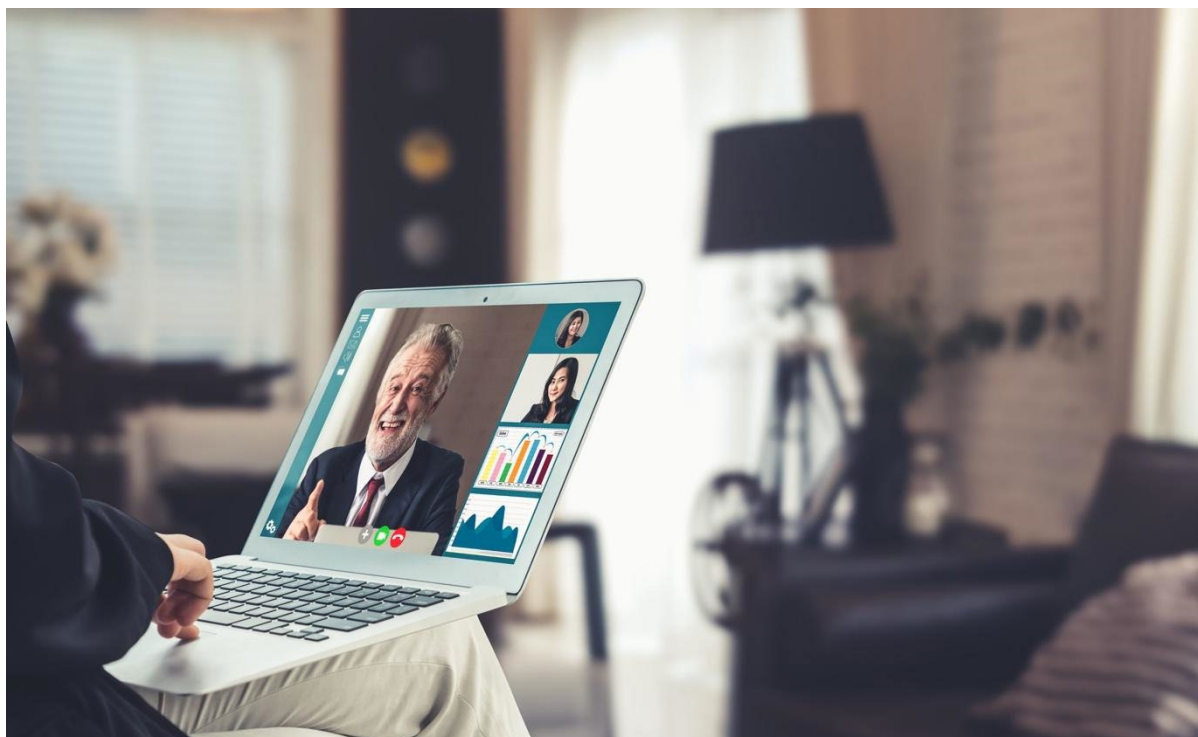
Professional life

In addition to posing unprecedented challenges to the freedom of movement of EU citizens, the COVID-19 crisis caused large disruptions to the working lives of millions of Europeans. Workers all across the Union have experienced temporary or permanent job losses, limited or increased working time, income reductions or modified working conditions^{xl}. Many companies had to close or reduce their working capacities, thus leading to income losses, poverty or unemployment.^{xli}

Furthermore, millions of workers across the EU had to start teleworking or working remotely, which revealed stark differences among Member States, sectors and occupations in terms of its prevalence. According to Eurofound^{xlii}, 40% of those currently working in the EU started to telework full-time as a consequence of the pandemic. In addition, while some work sectors, such as ICT and knowledge-intensive sectors have been more prepared for teleworking, this has not been the case for all sectors and occupations. In many EU Member States,

more than half of the workers who began teleworking had no prior experience with working from home^{xliii}. Also, cross-border workers, who reside in one Member State but work in another, have experienced additional challenges in their working lives. The toll of the pandemic on employment loss revealed unequal treatment of citizens and non-citizens in some Member States. As our research findings show in more detail below, the working lives of an overwhelming majority of mobile EU citizens were affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

- **E.g. Malta:** A benefit in the form of COVID-19 €100 vouchers to be used in Maltese establishments was granted only to Maltese citizens on the electoral register. The government subsequently revised its position, extending the benefit to all persons on the Identity Malta database. However, the Maltese position remains discriminatory in relation to subsequent COVID-19 payments.



- **E.g. Finland/Sweden:** A Finnish citizen with an employer based in Sweden teleworked from Finland because of COVID-19. He asked the Swedish National Agency for Social Insurance (Försäkringskassan) and the Finnish institution (Kela) to advise him on which national social security system was competent for him. Neither agency responded. As a consequence, the citizen has been unable to claim social benefits in either country.

This last example shows that, a result of the unprecedented situation that resulted from the crisis, it is difficult for EU citizens to find information and to understand **which country is competent in the context of newly emergent widespread practice of remote work across borders**. Employers and employees alike should take care when arranging teleworking across borders as this may have serious consequences in terms of which Member State's social security and employment laws will apply. According to YEA experts, “substantial teleworking” occurs if the employer's registered office or place of business is different to the place where the employee lives, and the employee's (home) teleworking constitutes a 'substantial' portion of their work activities. In these circumstances, the teleworker will be subject to the social security law of the Member State in which they are resident and not that of the Member State where the registered office or place of business is located (Article 13(1)(a), Regulation (EC) No. 883/2004). Employers must be conscious of this issue. If an employer permits an employee to spend 25% or more of their time working from home, social security contributions will be due in

the employee's home Member State, and not in the Member State where the employer is based. If these contributions are not paid when they are due, the employer may be liable to fines, interest and penalty surcharges.



Mental health

The compound adverse effect of all of the above on the professional and personal lives of mobile Europeans was the toll on their mental health and well-being. ***As the findings of our survey show, a vast majority of the respondents reported deterioration of their mental health since the onset of the crisis.*** Our results echo the findings of other studies across the globe on the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on mental health and wellbeing. For instance, a large review^{xliv} of 36 studies across the world concluded that one in three people have suffered from stress, anxiety, or depression over the course of the pandemic.^{xlv}

The effects of COVID-19 on the quality of democracy and European integration

The COVID-19 crisis has fostered democratic backsliding in many parts of the world. According to the Freedom House Report *"Democracy under Lockdown – The Impact of COVID-19 on Global Freedom"*, the condition of democracy and human rights has deteriorated in 80 countries since the beginning of the pandemic. The COVID-19 crisis has provided a cover for governments to meddle in the work of the press, disrupt elections, and weaken their accountability with regards to protecting human rights.^{xlvi} The report goes further in explaining that experts surveyed in the project have identified four central democracy-related problems during the pandemic: lack of government transparency and information on the coronavirus, corruption, lack of protection for vulnerable populations, and government abuses of power.^{xlvii} In the EU, as stated earlier, challenges to democracy and the rule of law as a result of the pandemic were particularly prevalent in the East. That is why, in our empirical research, we decided to cross-analyze how mobile EU citizens responded to the question regarding the quality of democracy with their Member State of origin. When we compare the answers between

the citizens of the “Old” and the “New” Member States we find a substantial difference between the answers of the two groups. A much larger proportion of citizens of “New” Member States (38,3%) answered that the COVID-19 measures impacted the quality of democracy to a “large extent”, whereas only 13,7% did so from “Old” Member States.

The role of civil society organisations during and after the COVID-19 crisis

We need to start moving forward together again!

One of the foremost academic authorities in European studies, professor Kalypso Nicolaidis from the University of Oxford, analyzed the changes in public discourse surrounding the pandemic in a recent edited volume chapter about the consequences of the pandemic on democratic life.^{xlvi} She found that two basic discourses could be expressed using the metaphor of theatre, whereby the COVID-19 crisis was both framed and received either as a “theatre of war” or a “theatre of care”. The first was mostly used by the political elites trying to contain the spread of the virus. The second was used by the European Union and civil society, shedding light and consideration on the existing societal vulnerabilities exposed by the crisis.

In order to further explore the ‘caring’ role of CSOs in tackling the crisis and restoring freedom of movement, ECAS not only conducted empirical research based on citizens’ perceptions but also surveyed the views of mobility-centered CSOs. Our intention was not to duplicate pre-existing efforts by creating yet another generalist survey for CSOs in the pandemic^{xli} or to provide another space where a wide plethora of various CSO resources for handling the crisis could be gathered.¹ Instead, we investigated (a) what CSOs that specifically work around mobility in Europe realised during the pandemic about their needs for successful work; and (b) what lessons can be learnt for the future of organised civic work on freedom of movement and mobility in Europe.

Firstly, according to our results, the prevalent need of CSOs dealing with mobility in the EU is funding (please see **Annex 2** for detailed information). With many ongoing streams of funding uncertain in these challenging times, and the fate of many ongoing projects yet to be determined, the majority of organisations ranked this as the most pressing challenge. Interestingly enough, with training on fundraising ranking the lowest among offered answers, it becomes evident that the scarcity of funding offers is what they identify as the point of weakness and not their own ability to attract new funding. It is followed by the realization that the new ‘normal’ brought about by the pandemic will, in descending order of importance, require:

- a) **Developing new services** – CSOs need to address the changes such as the digitalization of work and increasing hurdles to cross-border cooperation by providing an innovated catalogue of services for their beneficiaries that corresponds to their altered needs during and after the pandemic. The bulk of the adaptation seems to revolve around switching to the online provision of services.

Brussels-based European CSO: “We have shifted nearly all events (1 large conference with 500+ attendees, 1 mid-sized event, at least 10 smaller events and discussion rounds) that would have been planned in-person to now take place online. We are prepared to continue doing mid-sized and smaller events online, however large conferences will only be able to take place online maximum 1x a year as we learned they require a lot of time and preparation. Meetings that usually take place in Brussels and other parts of Europe have also successfully shifted online and we are prepared to continue with this.”

Regional/local CSO: “We have readjusted our work and moved to an online environment most of our activities. It is still important for us to be able to meet face-to-face with our beneficiaries but we are also prepared for the second and the third wave.”

- b) **Organisational capacity-building** – CSOs recognise that all the changes they are undergoing require fresh approaches to organising their daily work, HR and time-and-risk-management.
- c) **Technical assistance** – not all organisations are equally well prepared for the digital shift. Around 17% of respondents report the need for technical assistance, either in the form of hardware or skills for mastering the craft of effective telework during the pandemic.

Secondly, the most important lesson for their future work was the transition to their presence online (more than quarter of respondents) which is likely to remain a feature of their work even when the situation normalizes. Two very important additional lessons were:

- a) The need for synergies with other organisations, and
- b) The need to recalibrate and enhance outreach to constituencies.

Is civic activism changing as the result of the pandemic and how?

“Yes. It has become more digital and "closer" to citizens than ever before, yet paradoxically more (physically) distant than ever before”;

“Yes - in my field of transparency I see more collaboration, because we suddenly have more similar issues across multiple countries - as noted above, interactions with policy makers is facilitated, and in a way has become more informal”;

“Yes absolutely. We have had to find more creative ways to communicate and campaign. But with the increase understanding of online support tools, civic activism can become even more transnational.”

Last but not least, **all** surveyed organisations are **in favor of synergies, coordinated efforts and campaigns to rebuild the cardinal freedom of movement and EU citizens’ rights**. Transnational collaborative and innovative efforts to restore mobility in the European Union is a key priority. Their message: We need to start moving forward together again!

III. Recommendations

1. To the EU institutions

1.1. Safeguard EU citizens' right against breaches by:

Ensuring a coordinated response to emergency challenges in times of crises ;

Ongoing monitoring of the practical implementation of freedom of movement and related EU rights and take decisive actions in case of violations (e.g. infringement procedures) ;

Making available resources for the training of public administrations on EU citizenship rights so that the uneven and irregular application of law in times of crises is brought to a minimum.

1.2. Issue a new Communication of the European Commission to the Member States to provide up-to-date guidelines on the Freedom of Movement Directive 2004/38, aiming at:

- Overcoming the loopholes in the Directive which result in outcomes which are contrary to its very purpose and which can be at odds with EU citizens' fundamental rights, in particular the right to health care and the right to a family life (enshrined in Article 7 and 35 of the Charter on Fundamental Rights of the EU);
- Reinforcing and further developing the guidance that has already been provided in the Commission's 2009 Communication but has not been consistently followed;
- Reflecting all the CJEU judgments that affect citizens' free movement rights since 2009, which have not been codified in new legislation.

1.3. Restore in full and safeguard freedom of movement in the EU by:

- **Extending** 'a fully functioning Schengen area' to all EU member states, including Bulgaria, Romania, Ireland and Croatia, which are now left behind;
- **Ensuring** equal access to all rights it entails of all mobile Europeans, including those in vulnerable and precarious situation;
- **Making the fundamental principle of freedom of movement in the EU resilient** to any and all future unforeseen shocks by strengthening EU competences in relevant areas, such as health.

2. To national decision-makers

2.1. Restore freedom of movement in the EU in full by dismantling the barriers introduced in light of the COVID-19 pandemic without delay, as soon as the health situation permits.

2.2. Refrain from any unilateral action that would disproportionately affect mobile EU citizens and **undermine support for a coordinated EU approach.**

2.3. Develop and implement tailored approaches to address the specific needs of mobile Europeans in national/regional/local programmes for awareness raising and their social and political integration in the host communities.

3. To civil society

3.1. Create synergies, build networks and coalitions among civil society organisations to effectively exercise watchdog functions and campaign for upholding freedom of movement and EU citizen rights, while building an EU resilient to any future threats.

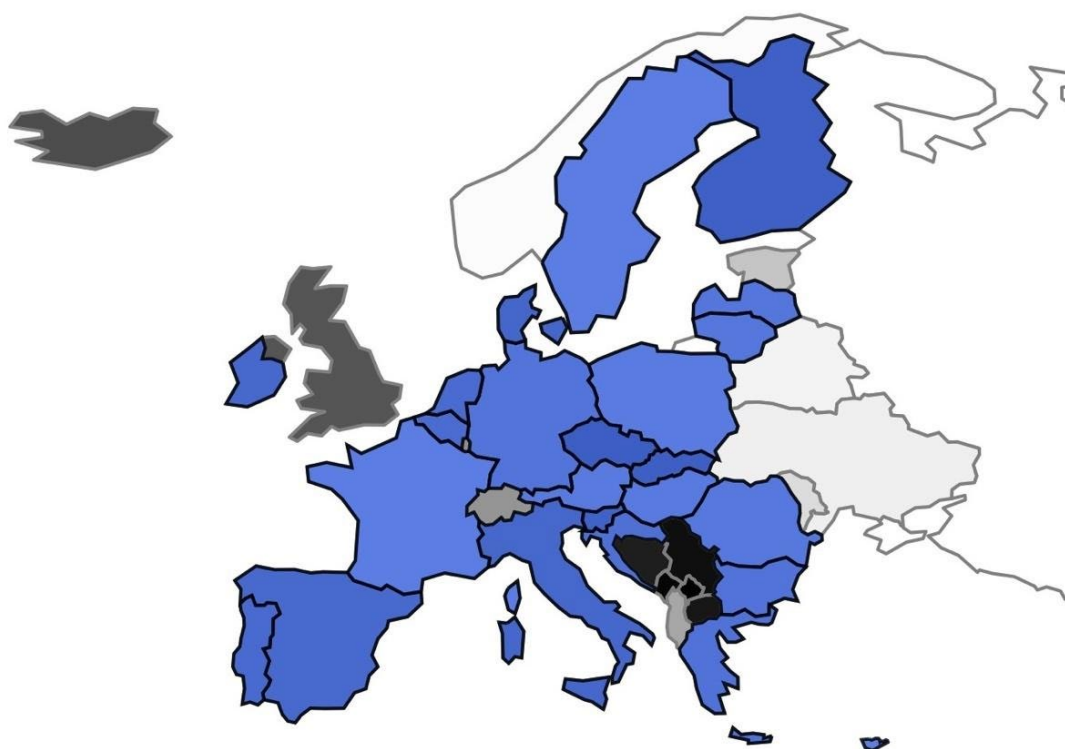
3.2. Embrace the digital transformation of work and citizen participation as the new normal and build capacities to contribute to the development of the digital European public sphere.

3.3. Carry out informational campaigns and raise awareness among mobile Europeans on their rights, supporting them in building a community of EU mobile citizens across borders.

Annexes

Annex I: The Impact of the COVID-19 crisis on mobile EU citizens

In the following, we present our findings from our first survey that assesses the implications of the COVID-19 crisis on the lives of mobile EU citizens. In the first part, we present the socio-demographic characteristics of our respondents.

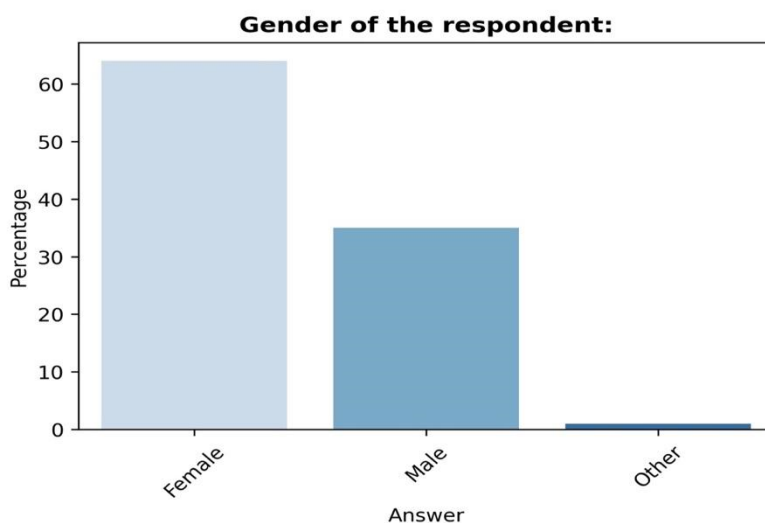


Country of Respondents' Citizenship

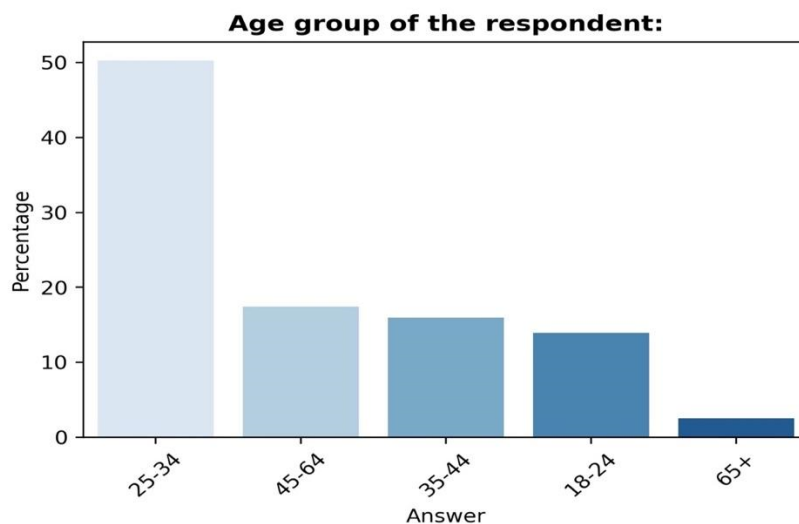


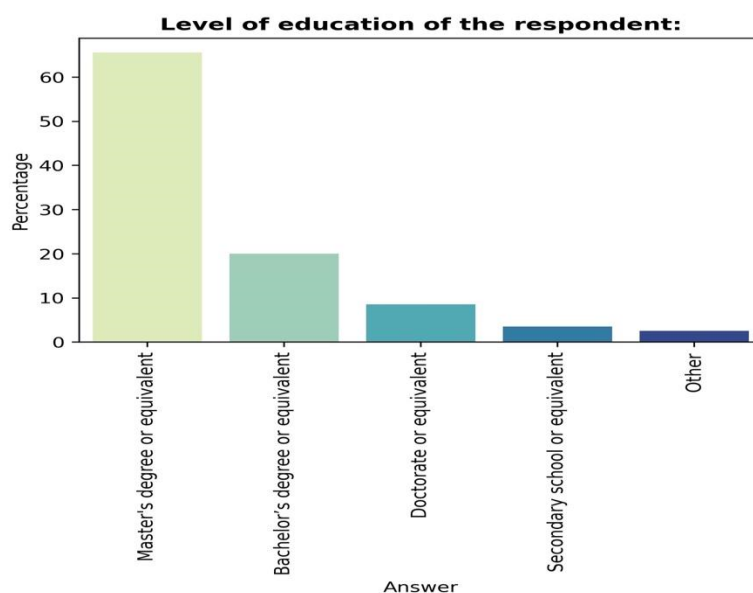
Country of Respondents' Residence

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

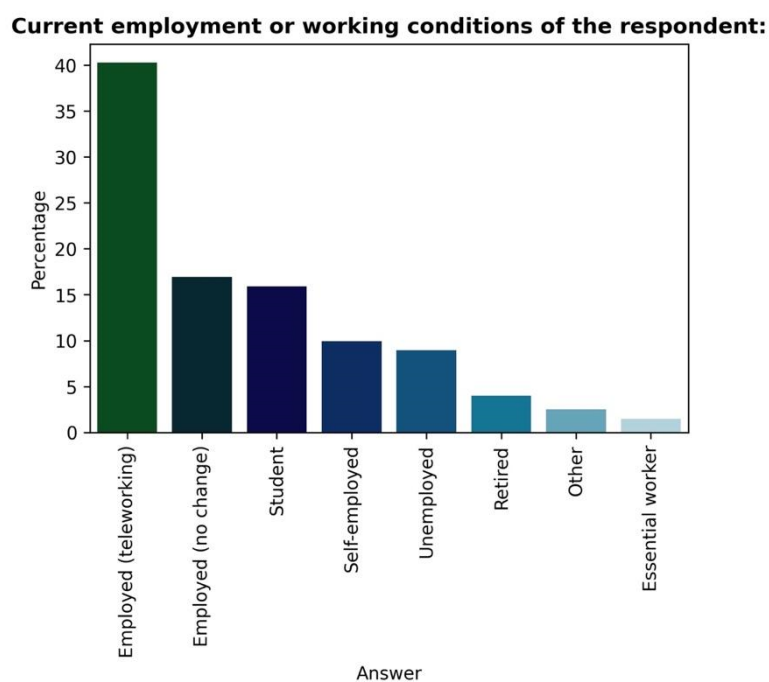


As shown in the graph above, the largest proportion (64%) of our respondents identify as “female”, 34% as “male” and only one respondent identified themselves as “other”. With regards to age, 50,2% of the respondents belong to the 25-34 age group, 17,4% to the 45-64 age group, 15,9% to the 35-44 age group, 13,9% to the age bracket of 18-24 and 2,4% are 65 or above. The educational level of our respondents is the following: 65,5% have a Master’s degree or equivalent, 20% have a Bachelor’s degree or equivalent, 8,5% have a Doctorate and 3,5% completed a secondary school.





Lastly, the breakdown of the current employment status of our survey respondents is the following: 40,2% reported being employment (had to start teleworking), 16,9% are employed (experienced no change in working conditions), 15,9% are students, 9,9% are self-employed, 8,9% are unemployed, 3,9% are retired, 1,5% are essential workers and 2,5% belong to the “other” category.

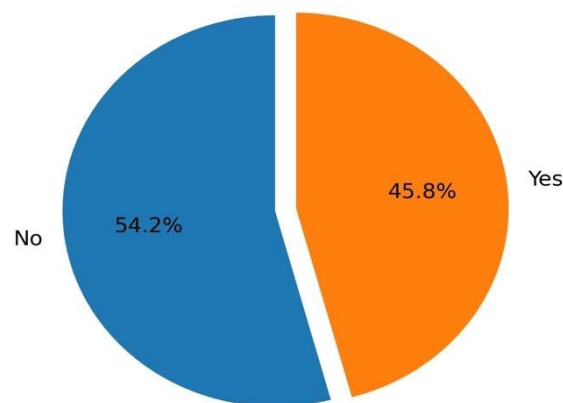


Theme One: How did mobile EU citizens deal with the pandemic?

Our findings show that while the crisis did not alter the living situation of more than half of our respondents (54,2%), a significant part of the respondents whose living situation was impacted by the pandemic have experienced various challenges, such as being stranded in a different country than their country of residence or having to live alone, which would have not happened under normal circumstances.

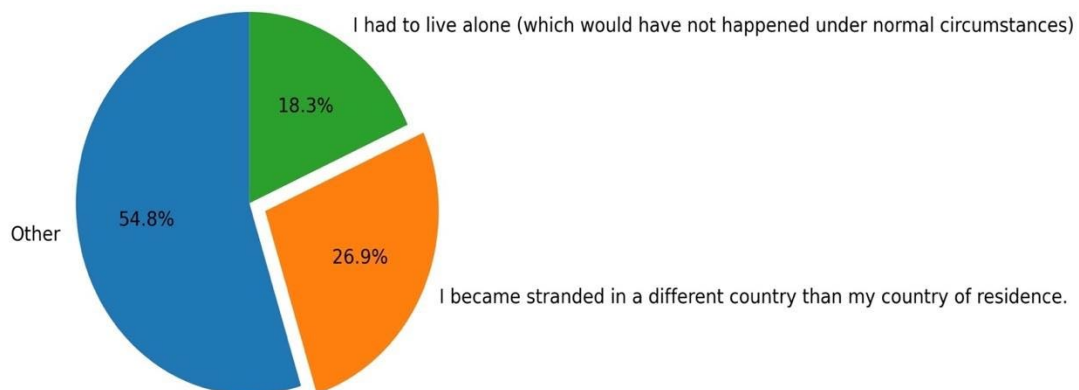
Did the COVID-19 measures affect the living situation of mobile EU citizens?

The Covid-19 crisis affected my living situation:

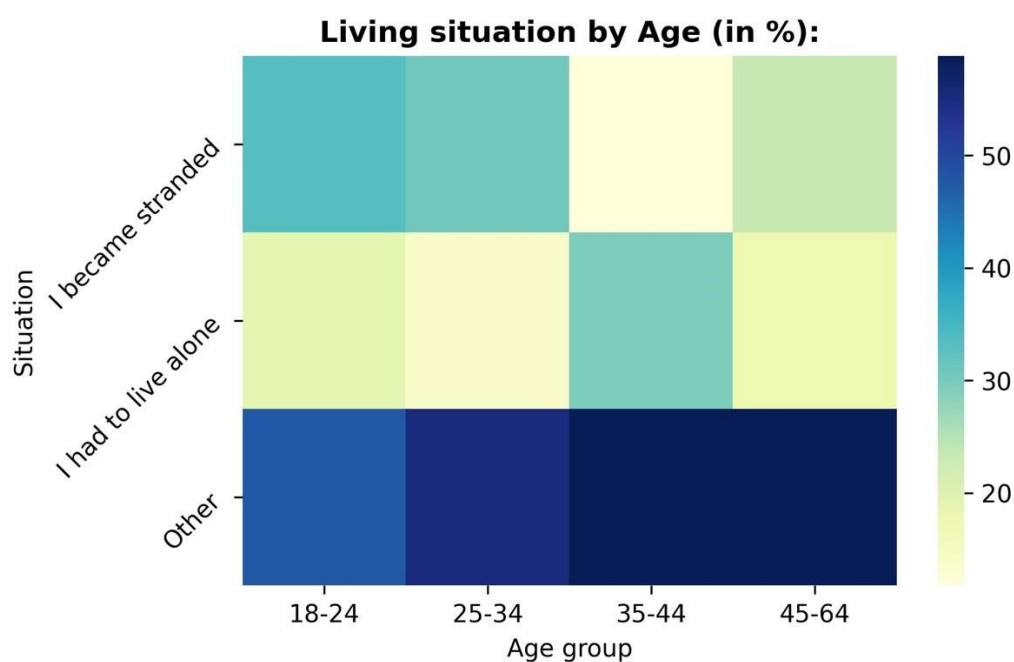


In what way did the COVID-19 crisis affect the lives of EU citizens?

The crisis affected my living situation in the following ways:

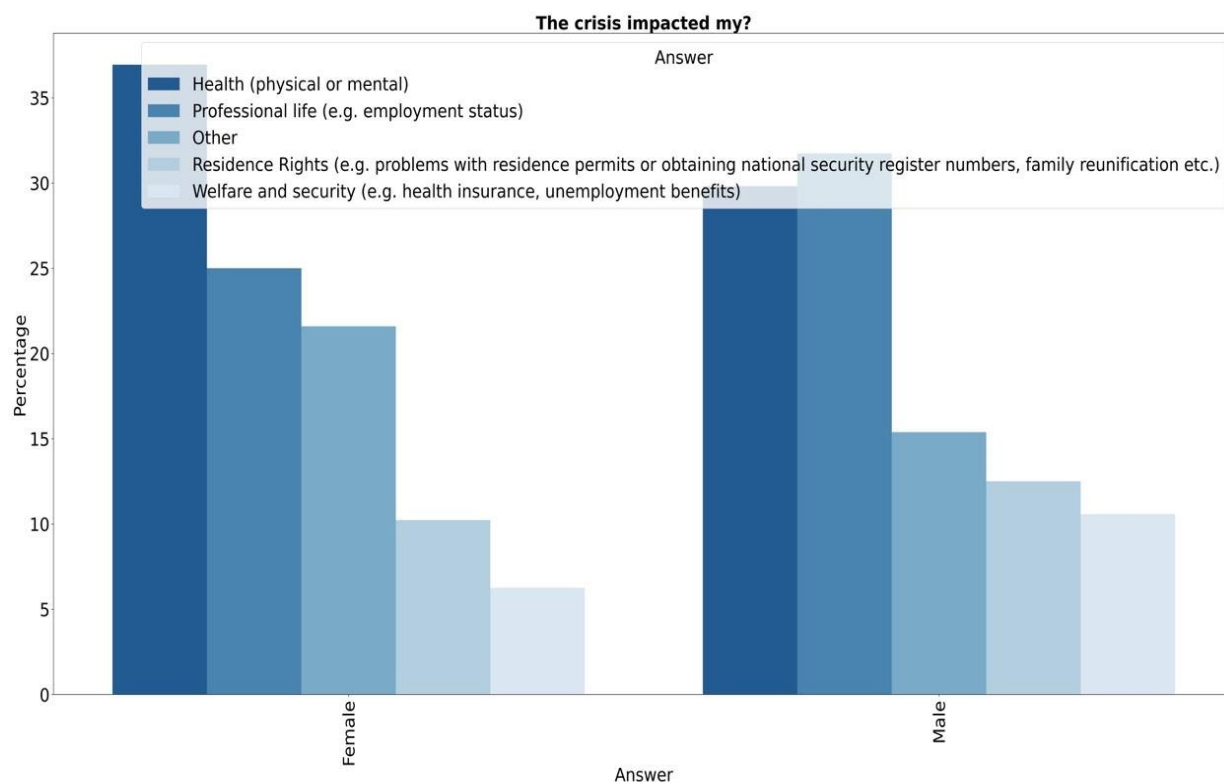


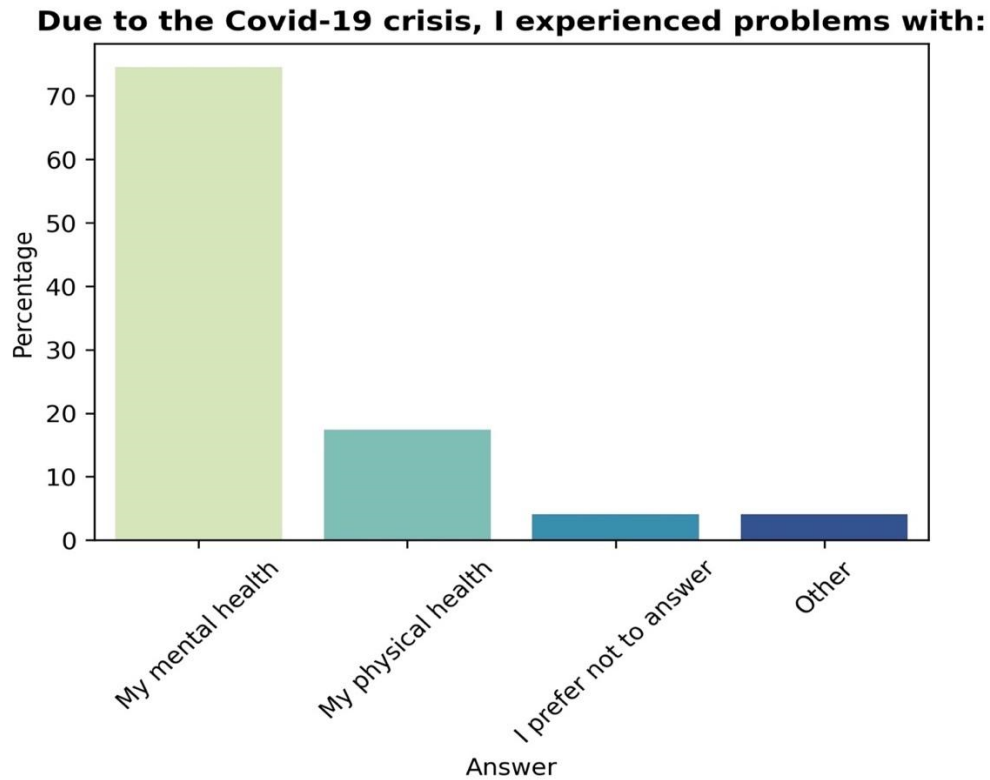
Furthermore, COVID-19 measures impacted the population (divided by age groups) in the following ways:



How did the COVID-19 crisis affect mobile EU citizens in terms of their health, professional and family lives and welfare?

The respondents reported having experienced a variety of problems over the course of the pandemic, including problems with their health (mental or physical), professional lives, as well as problems with their residence and welfare and security rights. Among female^{li} respondents, experiencing health problems was the major challenge (36,9%). Among male respondents, reporting problems pertaining to their professional lives was most prevalent (31,7%).

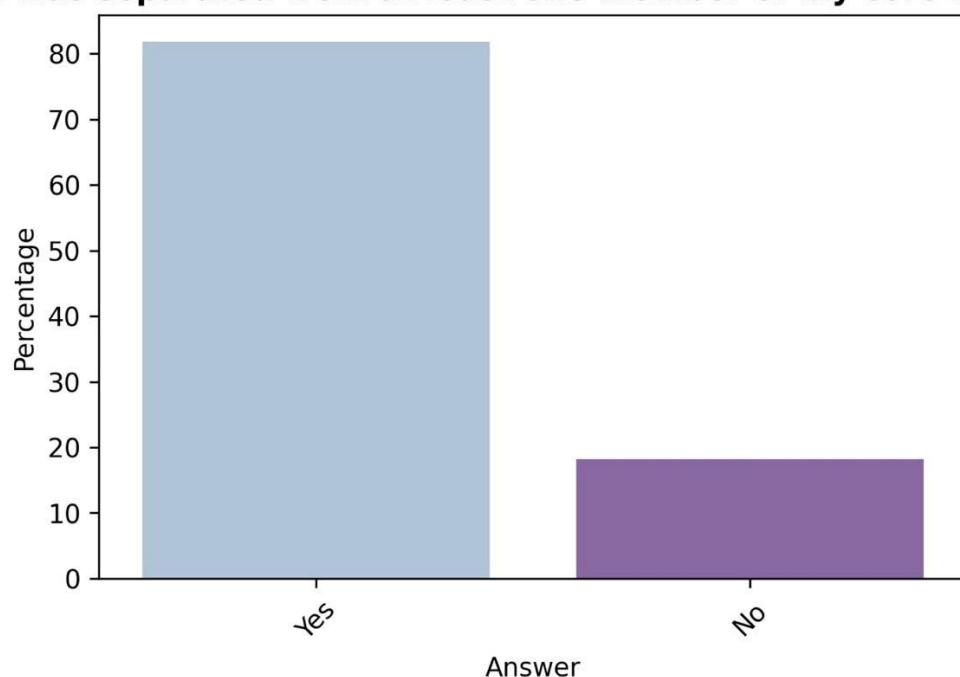




With regards to health, a staggering proportion of our respondents (74,5%) reported having experienced problems with their mental health. As discussed above, our results echo the findings of other research (e.g. Salari et.al 2020) that claims the vast majority of the European Union's population (and beyond) have experienced deterioration in their mental health/ wellbeing over the course of the pandemic. The main contribution of this study, however, is to demonstrate that persons with dual communities of belonging, residing in and commonly less rooted in the host community, were forced to be additionally separated from their community of origin which, compounded by the stress resulting from other problems encountered as non-citizen residents, resulted in the toll taken on their mental well-being being comparatively harsher than usual.

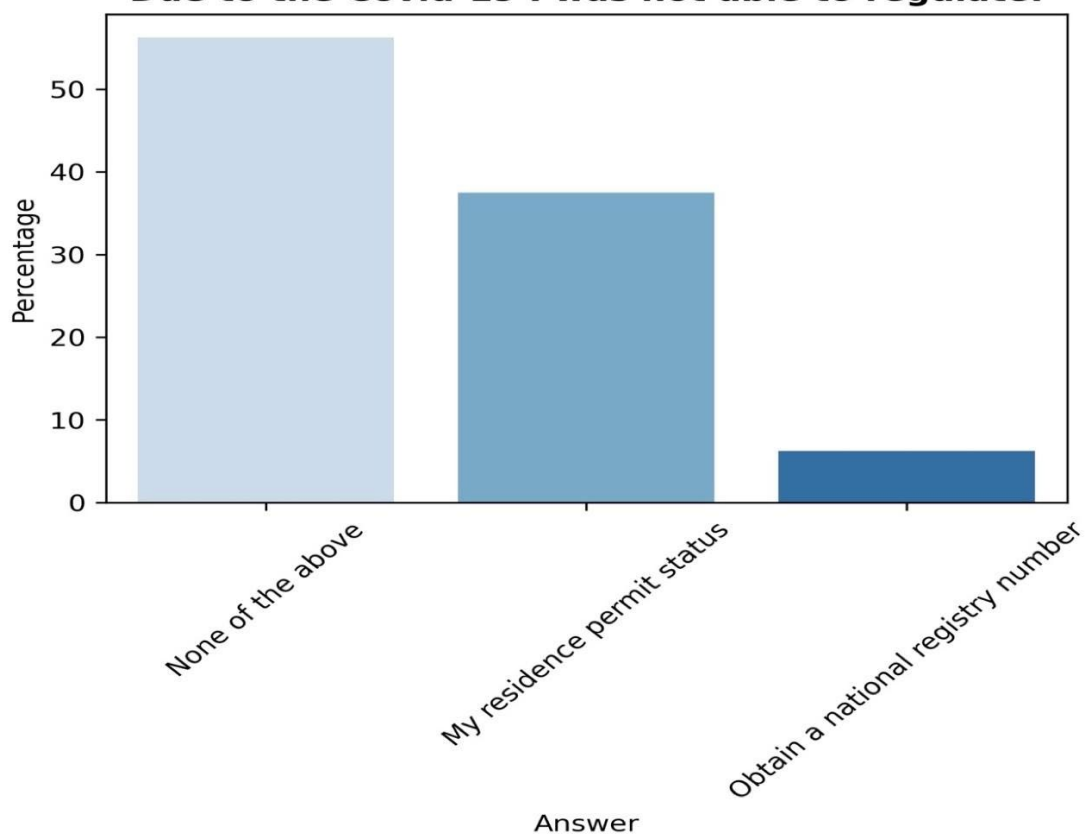
Curtailling freedom of movement within the European Union also meant that a vast majority (81,8%) of mobile EU respondents were separated from at least one member of their core family (partner, children or parents), which would have not happened under normal circumstances.

I was separated from at least one member of my core family:



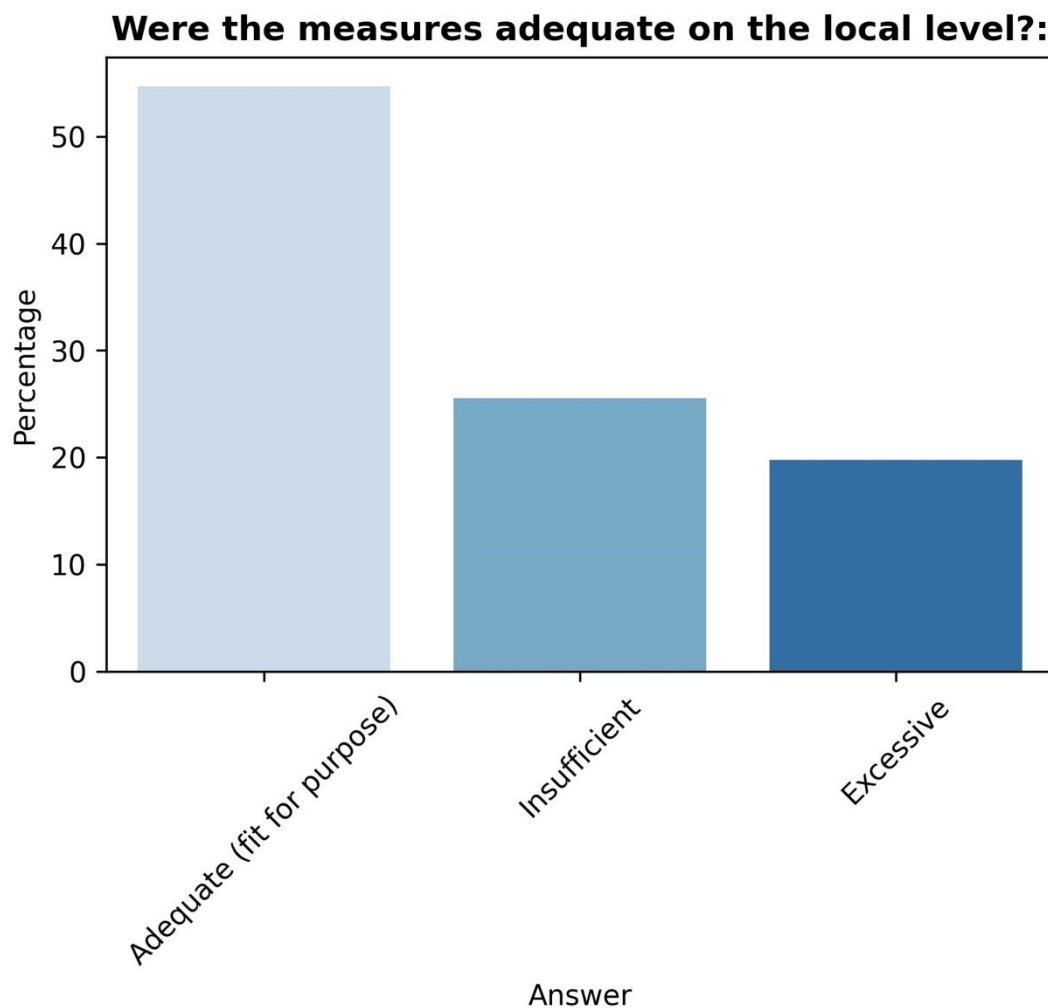
Furthermore, almost 44% of the respondents reported that due to the COVID-19 crisis they experienced problems with the regulation of their residence permit status or with the regulation of their national registry number.

Due to the Covid-19 I was not able to regulate:



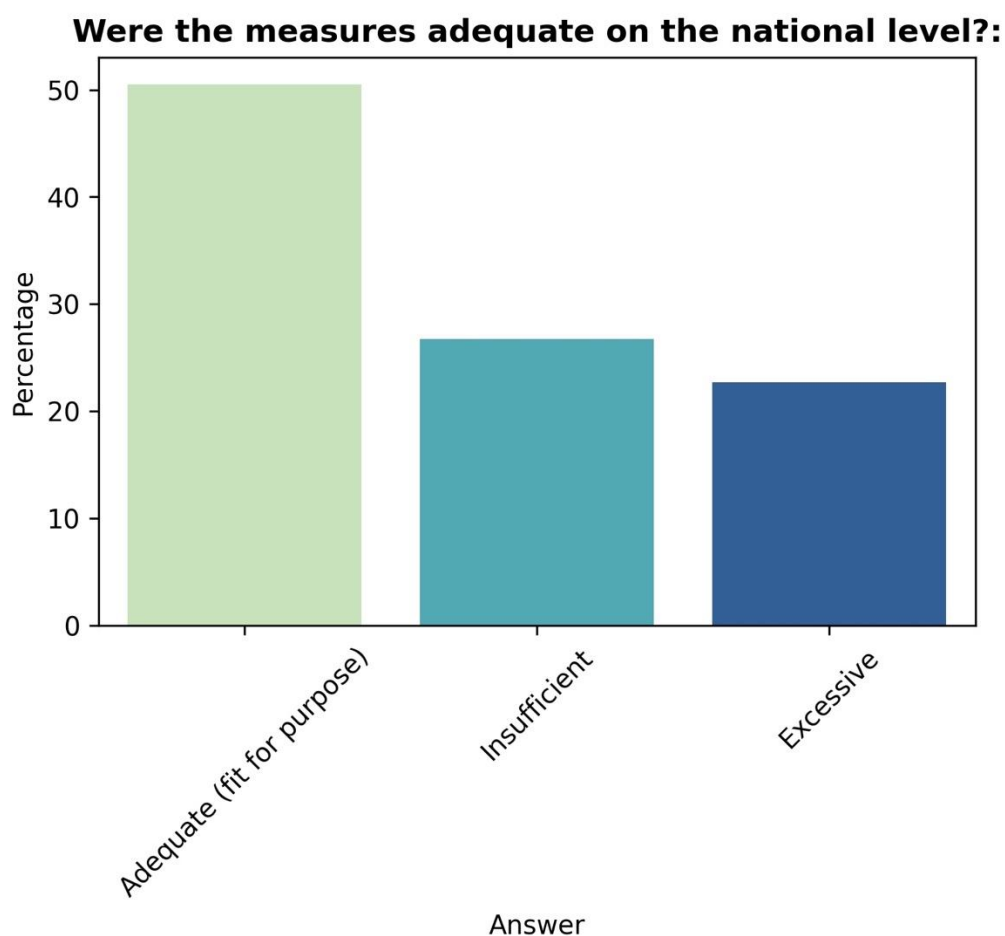
Theme Two: Were the measures taken to contain the pandemic adequate?

The adequacy of the COVID-19 related measures on the local level



Interestingly, when asked about the adequacy of the measures on the local and the national levels, a large proportion of the respondents (50% or more) reported that they consider the measures adequate (fit for purpose). However, when asked about the adequacy of the measures on the EU level, a larger proportion of the respondents (40,5%) answered that the measures were insufficient.

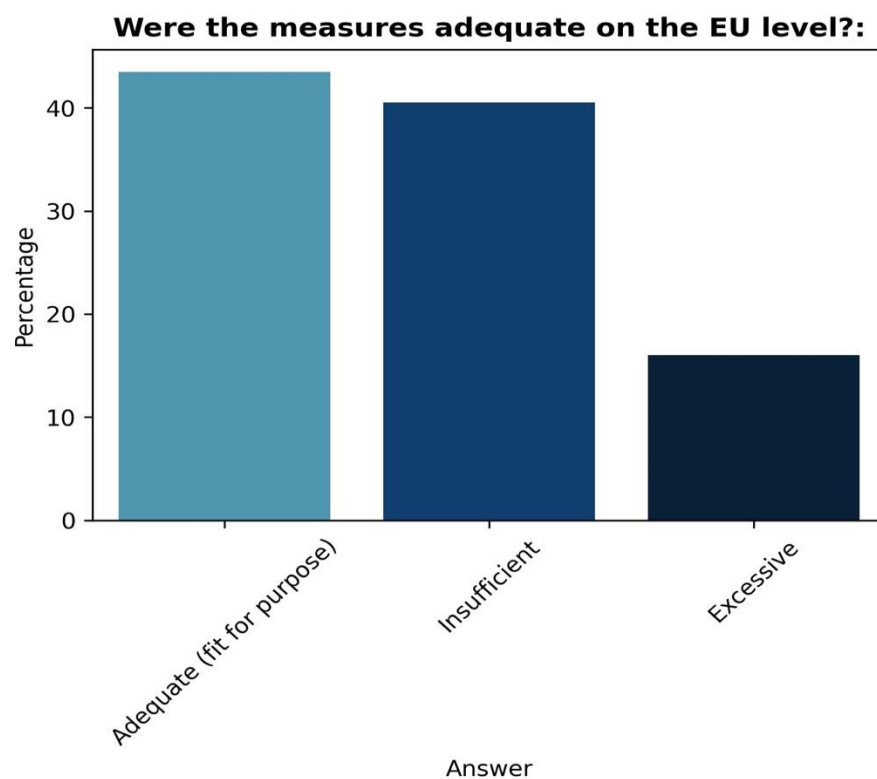
The adequacy of the COVID-19 related measures on the national level



"It seemed as if many countries decided that the most affected countries were on their own and showed certain level of a superiority attitude that was very inadequate for the situation and curtailed their response to the crisis".

Female Respondent, Citizen of Spain, Resident of Germany

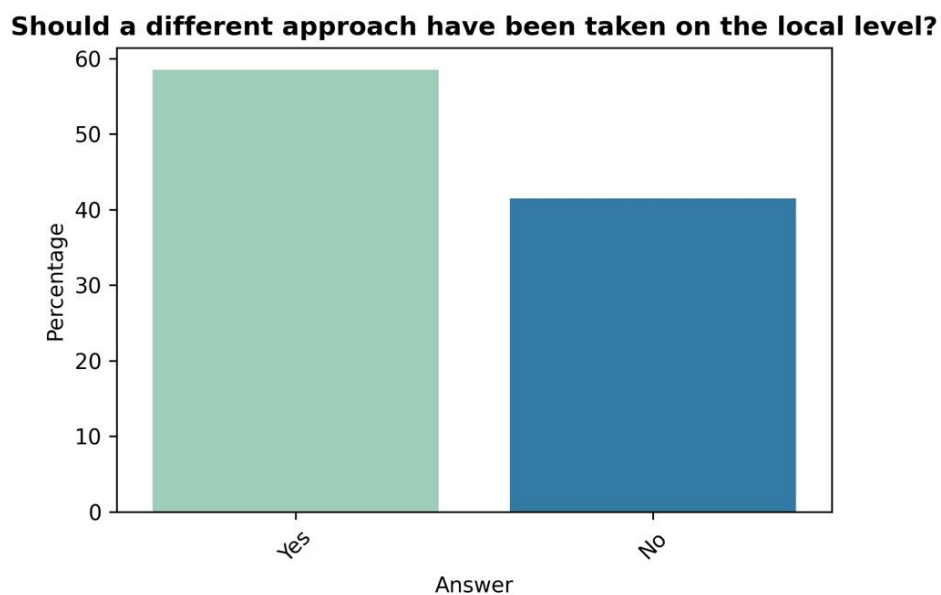
The adequacy of the COVID-19 related measures on the EU level



Theme Three: Should have the EU managed the crisis differently?

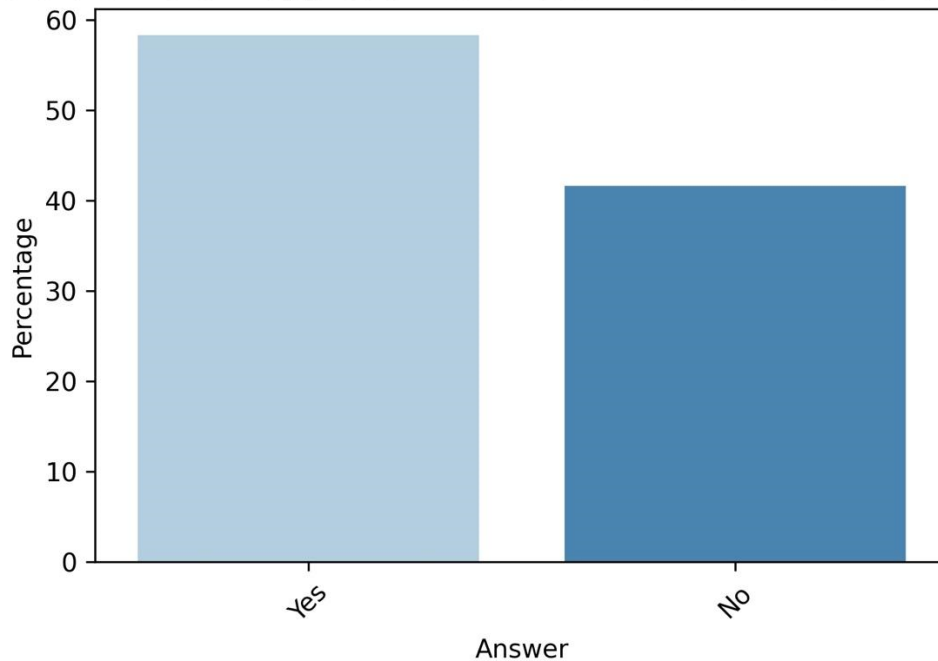
This section is dedicated to surveying the opinions of mobile EU citizens about whether the European Union and its Member States could have dealt with the crisis in a different way on the local, national or EU levels. Furthermore, this chapter investigates the views of EU citizens regarding the different actors that were involved in managing the crisis and asks them which actors could have acted in a different manner. Finally, this chapter delves into the opinions of EU citizens about whether more powers should have been given to the EU to manage the COVID-19 crisis.

Even if you consider the measures taken to contain the spread of COVID-19 to be adequate, do you think that a different approach should have been taken at the local level in managing the crisis?



Even if you consider the measures taken to contain the spread of COVID-19 to be adequate, do you think that a different approach should have been taken at the national level in managing the COVID-19 crisis?

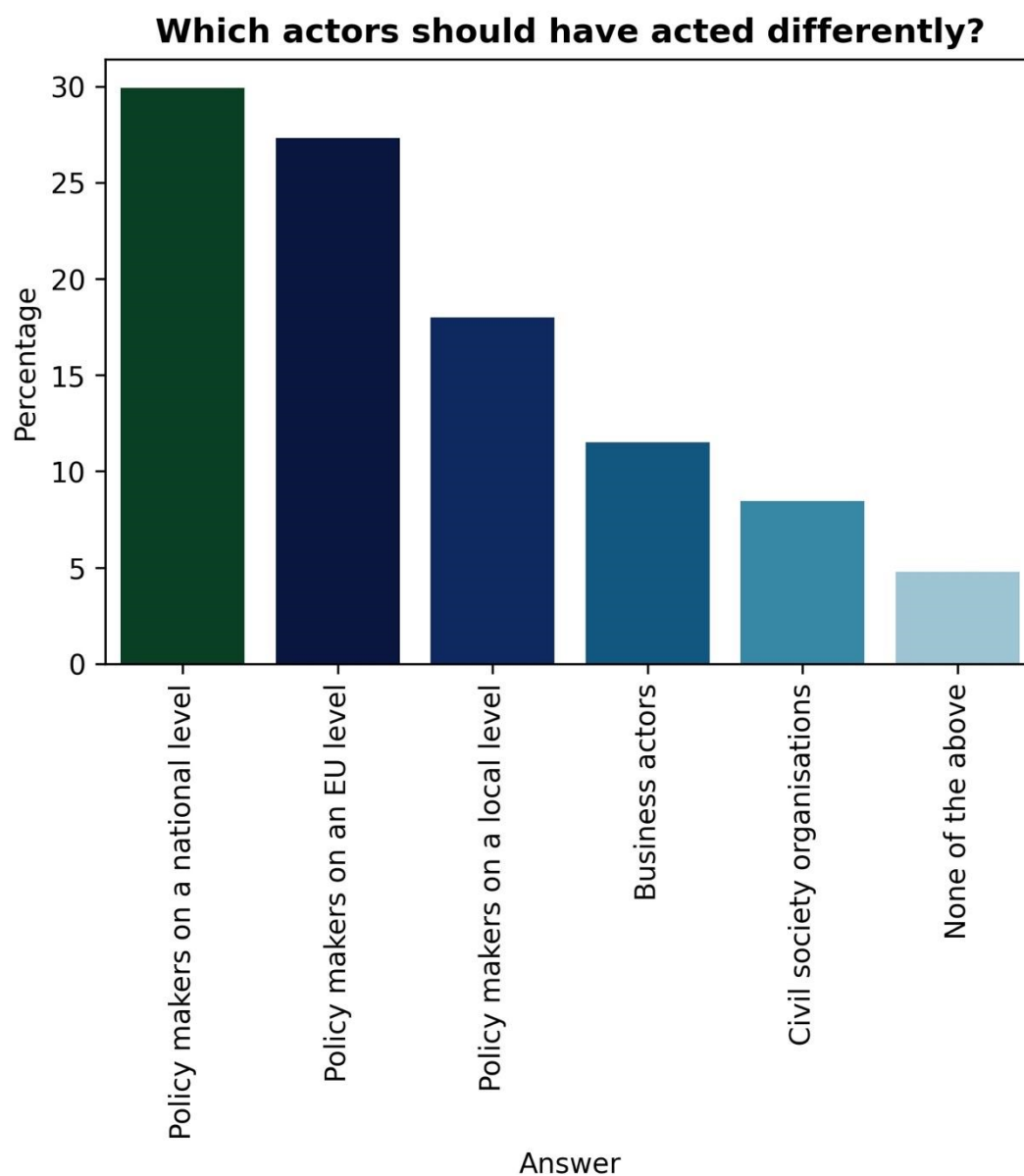
Should a different approach have been taken on the national level?



A large proportion of the respondents answered that they believe a different set of measures should have been adopted on both the local and national levels to deal with the COVID-19 crisis (64,6% and 58,3% respectively).

When asked about the type of actors that should have acted differently in managing the crisis, approximately 30% answered that policy makers on the national level should have acted differently, and 27,3% answered that EU policy makers should have taken a different approach.

Which actors in your opinion should have acted differently?



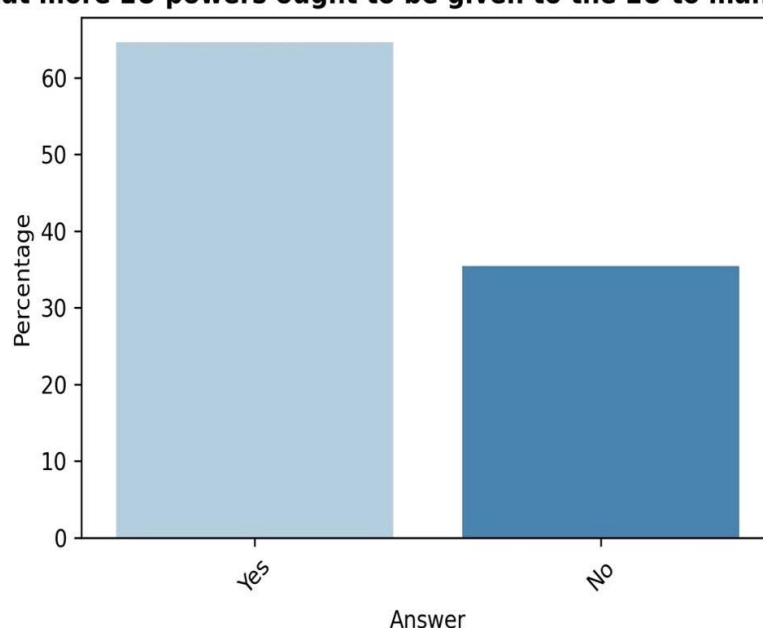
More power to the EU to manage crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic?

The COVID-19 crisis swiftly and dramatically underlined the costs of uncoordinated action^{lii} to crises like these. It revealed some of the major shortcomings of the European Union and its level of integration. Especially in the beginning of the pandemic, a lack of solidarity and taking unilateral action by Member States showed that the level of integration within the EU is seriously lacking in depth.

This is reflected in the opinions of our respondents. The majority of them, almost 65%, answered that more power should be given to the EU to deal with crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

These views are also reflected in the following comments left by some of our respondents:

Do you think that more EU powers ought to be given to the EU to manage crises like these?

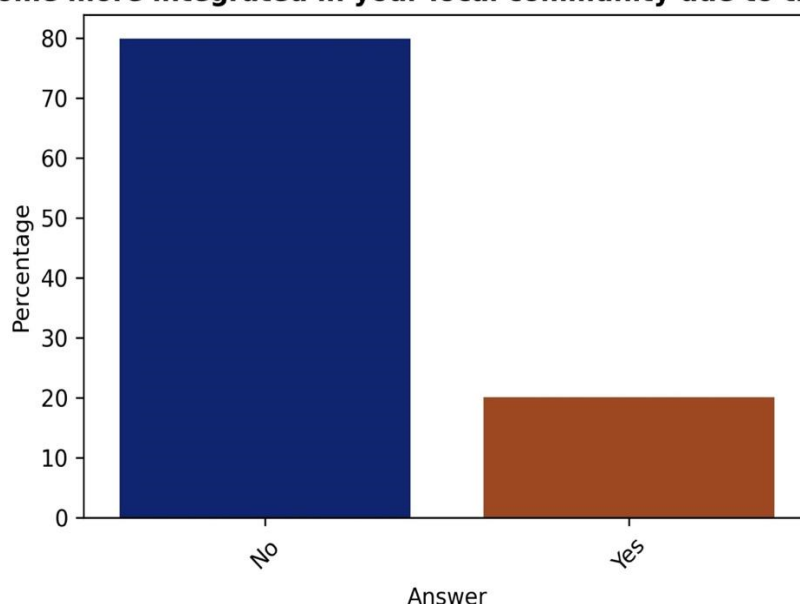


Theme Four: Social Integration

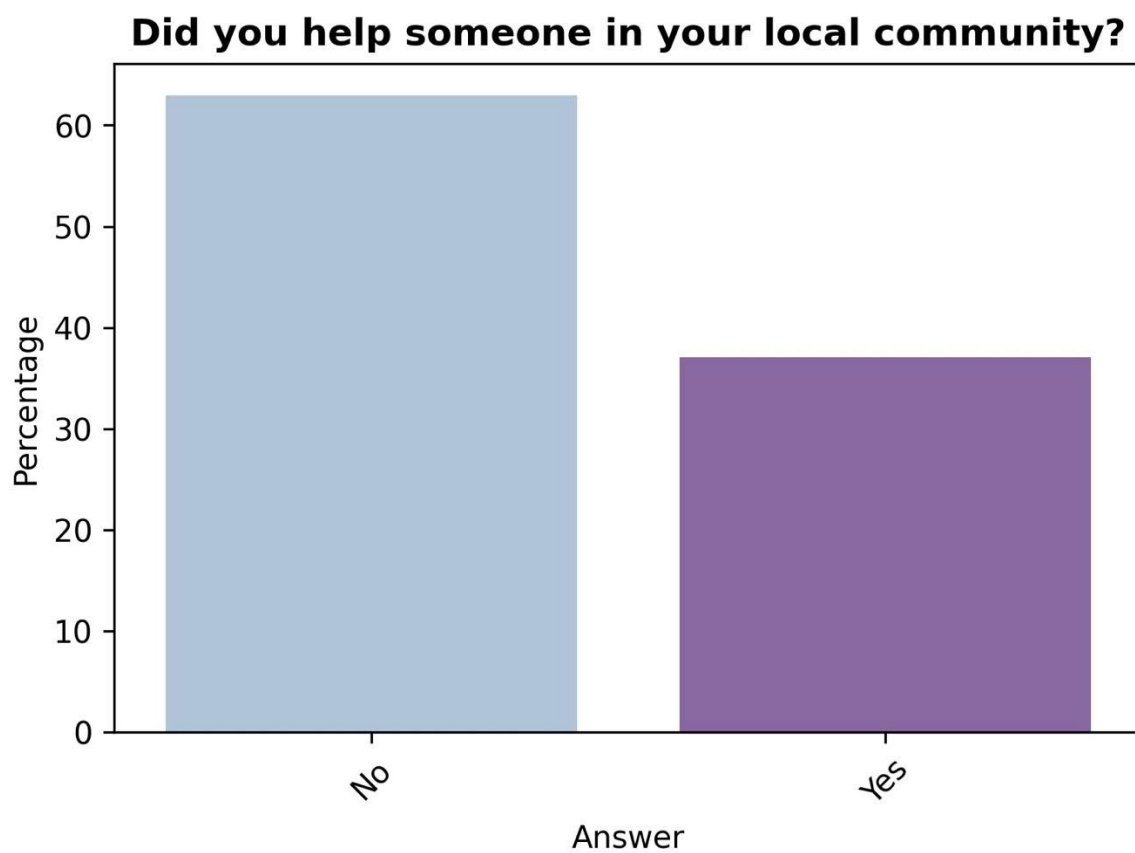
This part of the survey grapples with the question whether mobile EU citizens became more integrated in their local communities over the course of the pandemic. Due to the imposed lockdown measures and without the possibilities for frequent travelling, we assumed that the European citizens would become more integrated in their communities. Surprisingly, however, our survey results show that our expectations were not met. Almost 80% answered that they did not become more integrated in their local communities, whereas 62,9% answered that they neither helped anyone during the crisis, nor did anyone help them.

Integration in the local communities

Did you become more integrated in your local community due to the Covid-19 crisis?



EU citizens helping each other during the crisis

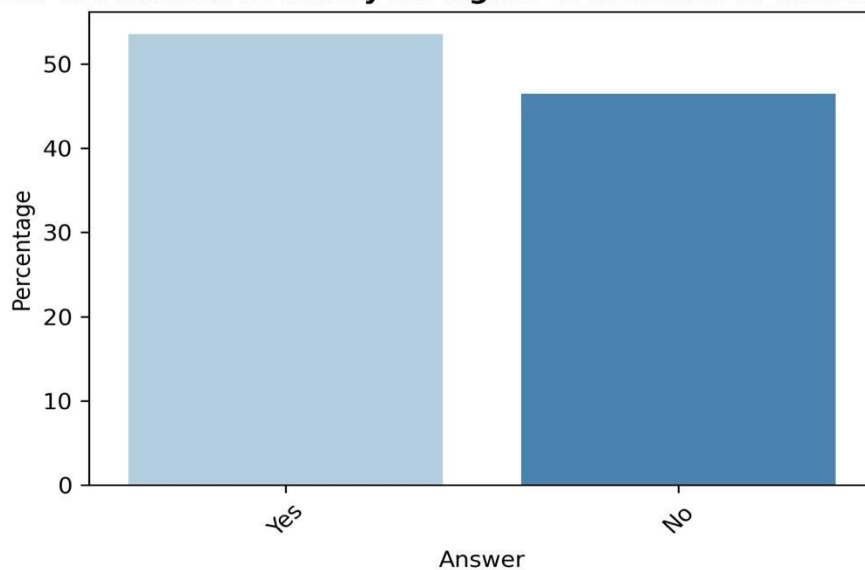


Theme Five: The COVID-19 Pandemic and its Impact on the Freedom of Movement

At the beginning of the pandemic, almost all Member States of the European Union took unilateral decisions such as the closure of borders and airports and implemented unprecedented social-distancing measures. The “new reality” caused major disruptions to all EU citizens, particularly those who work and reside in a Member State different to one where they have arranged their lives as a result of freedom of movement. Hence, the goal of this part is to understand how mobile EU citizens perceived the proportionality of the measures that limited their rights to freedom of movement.

In my opinion, the measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately limited my right to freedom of movement:

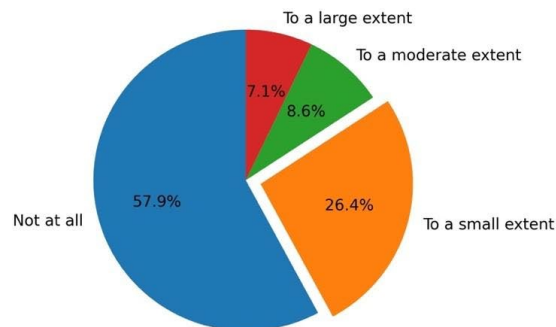
Did the measures limit your rights to freedom of movement?:



When asked whether, in their opinion, the measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately limited their right to freedom of movement, 53,5% of the respondents answered “yes”. Furthermore, the measures that limited the freedom of movement came as a surprise to many EU citizens, as illustrated in the following chart.

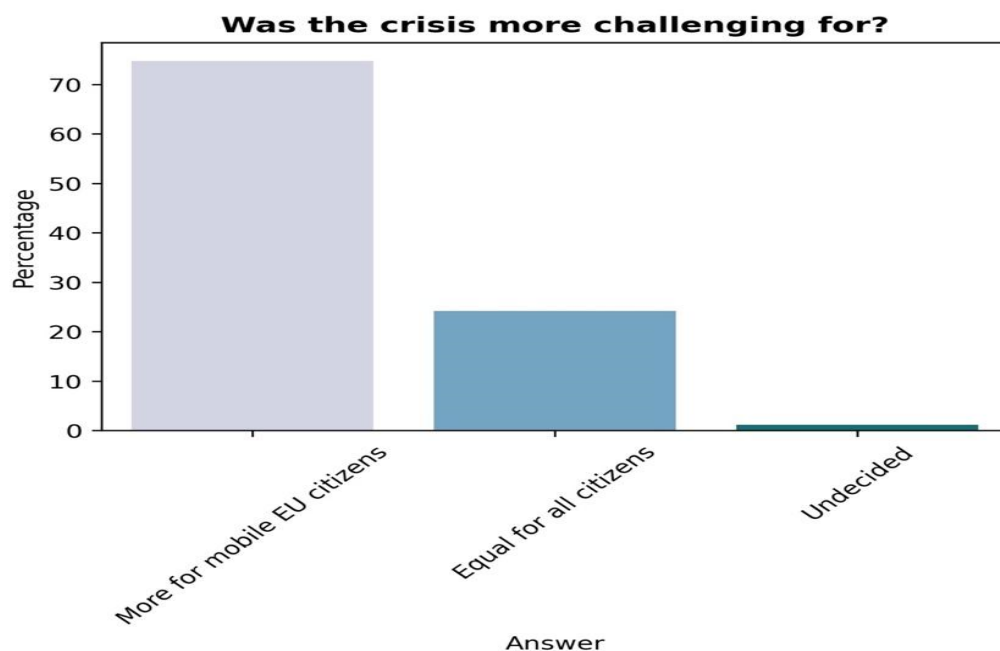
Suspension of the freedom of movement before the COVID-19 pandemic

Before the COVID-19 emergency, did you consider the suspension of the freedom of movement to be a likely occurrence?



The graph above clearly shows that the vast majority of our respondents (84,3%) either believed that the suspension of the freedom of movement in the European Union was not at all a likely occurrence or considered it only to a small extent possible.

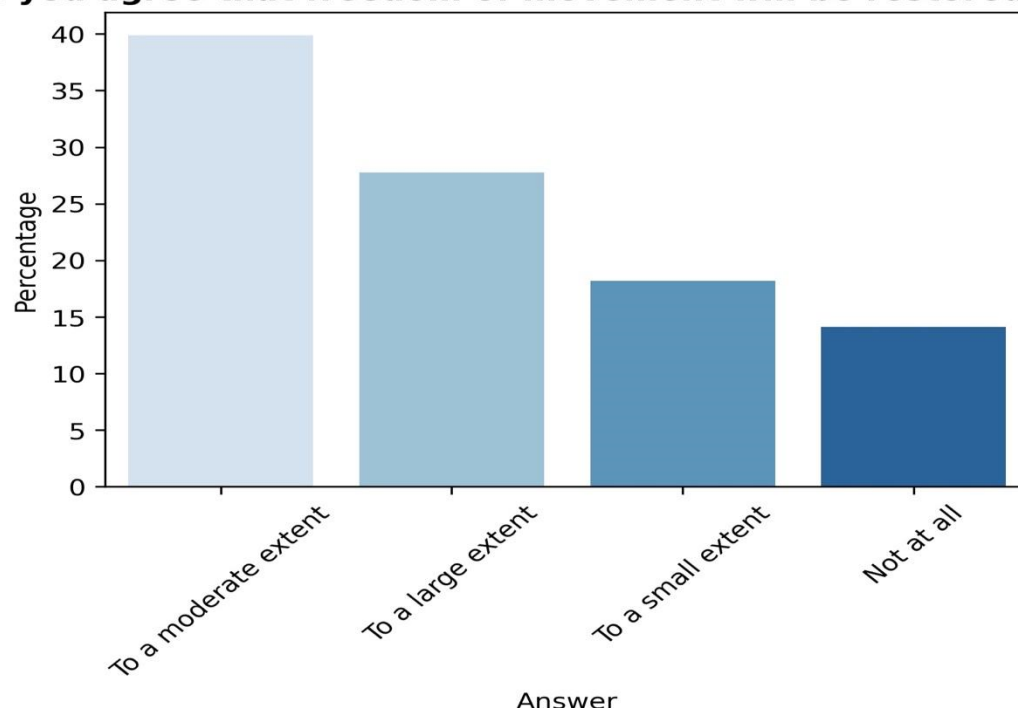
COVID-19 and its challenges: mobile EU citizens vs. other citizens



Furthermore, a large majority of our respondents (more than 70%) perceived COVID-19 as more challenging for them than for EU citizens living in their countries of origin. This answer is in line with our hypothesis that mobile EU citizens had to endure a *"double lockdown"*: being both separated from their families and enduring the lockdown measures in their communities of residence. While the majority of our respondents expressed surprise at the introduction of the measures that limited their freedom of movement, many also showed optimism with regards to the process of full restoration of the freedom of movement within the European Union. 39,8% of the respondents believe *"to a moderate"*, and 27,7 % to a *"large extent"* that the freedom of movement across the European Union will be restored easily.

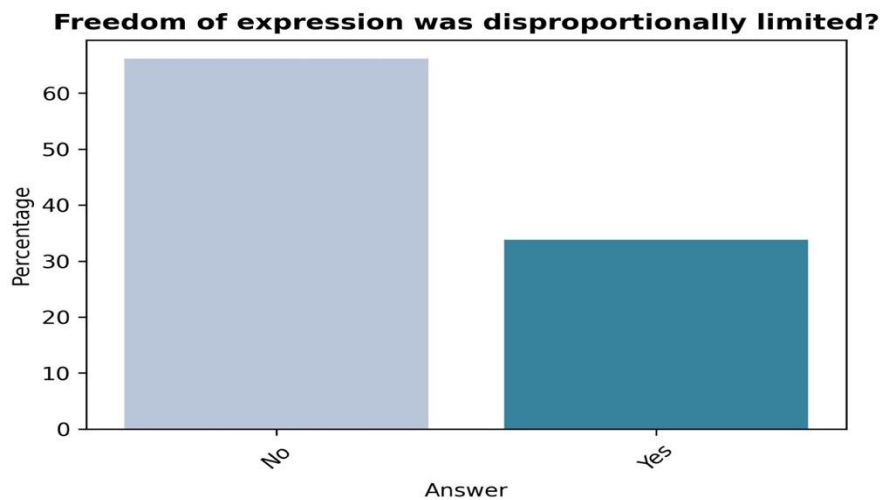
Restoration of the Freedom of Movement within the European Union

Do you agree that freedom of movement will be restored easily?:

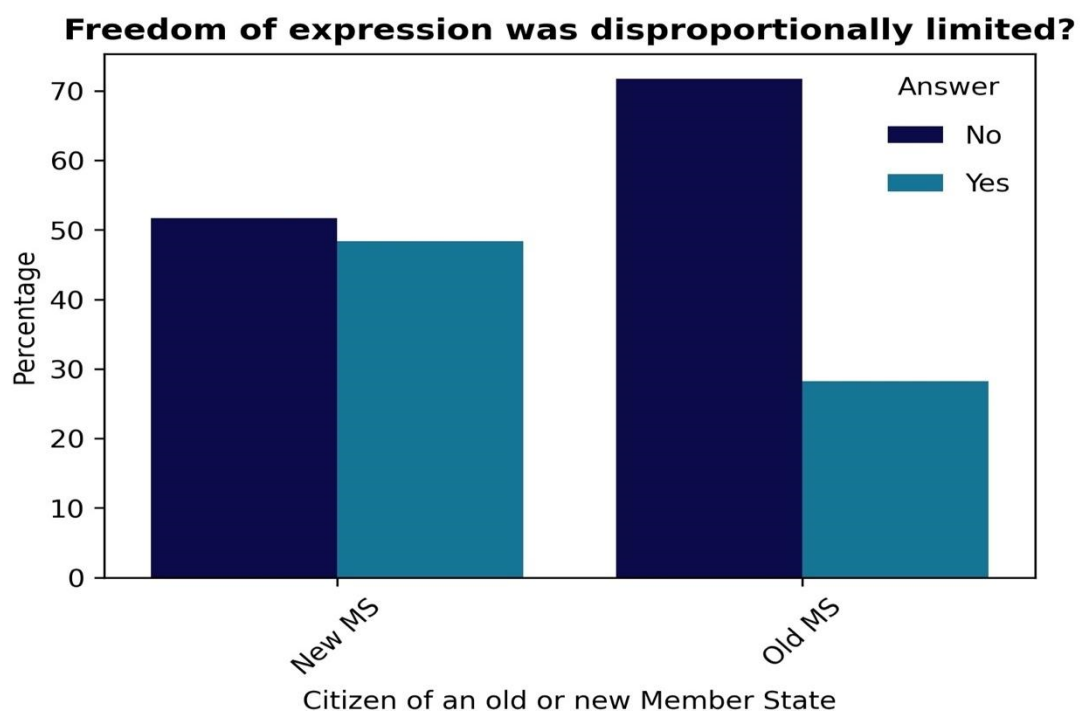


With regards to freedom of expression, assembly and association, the majority of our respondents (66,1%) answered that the COVID-19 measures did not disproportionately limit their right to freedom of expression, assembly and association. Interestingly, however, we got different findings when we split the response between the “New” and the “Old” Member States (those that entered the European Union before 2004 and after) of the European Union. For this answer, we decided to split the Member States into two groups as the national responses to the COVID-19 outbreak varied among countries along these lines. Some countries introduced unilateral temporary emergency measures that – to a certain degree - limited, suspended or violated the rights of citizens. The COVID-19 measures introduced in some countries, such as the Hungarian state of emergency and the announced derogation from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) by Bulgaria, caused concerns with regards to possible violations of constitutional rights. Such concerns became particularly prominent during the beginning of the crisis^{liii}.

The COVID-19 measures and the right to freedom of expression, assembly and association (all Member States)



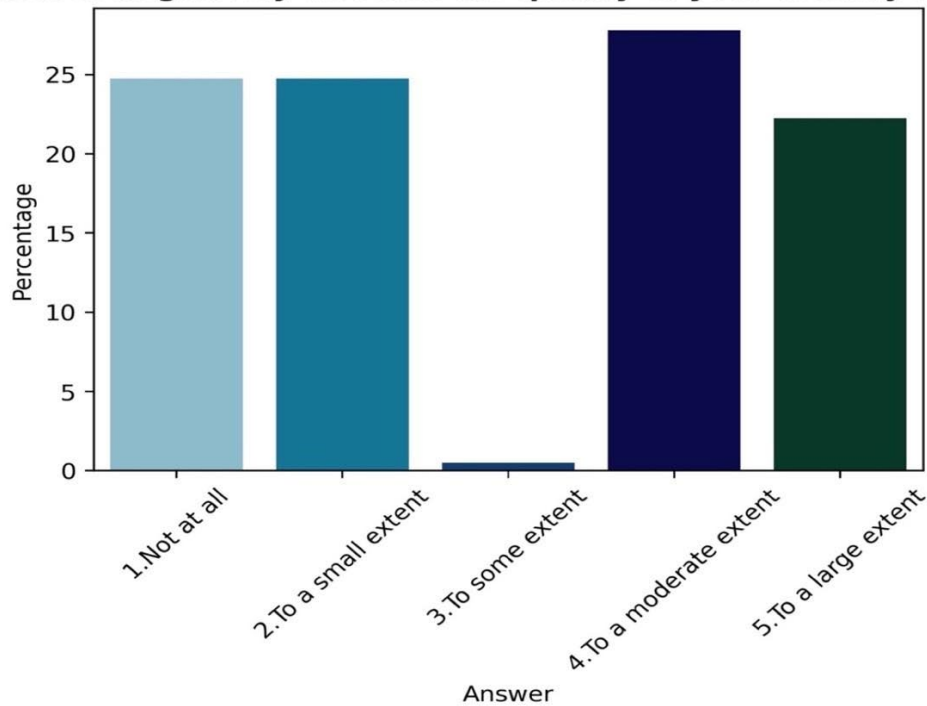
The COVID-19 measures and the right to freedom of expression, assembly and association ("New" vs. "Old" Member States)



While a large majority of respondents of the "Old" Member States (71,7%) answered that the measure *did not limit* their freedom of expression, assembly and association, only 51,6% of the "New" Member States agreed with this statement. As the next chapter delineates in more detail, we received similar responses with regards to questions on the quality of democracy as well.

Theme Six: The COVID-19 Crisis and the Quality of Democracy

Did measures negatively affected the quality of your country's democracy?

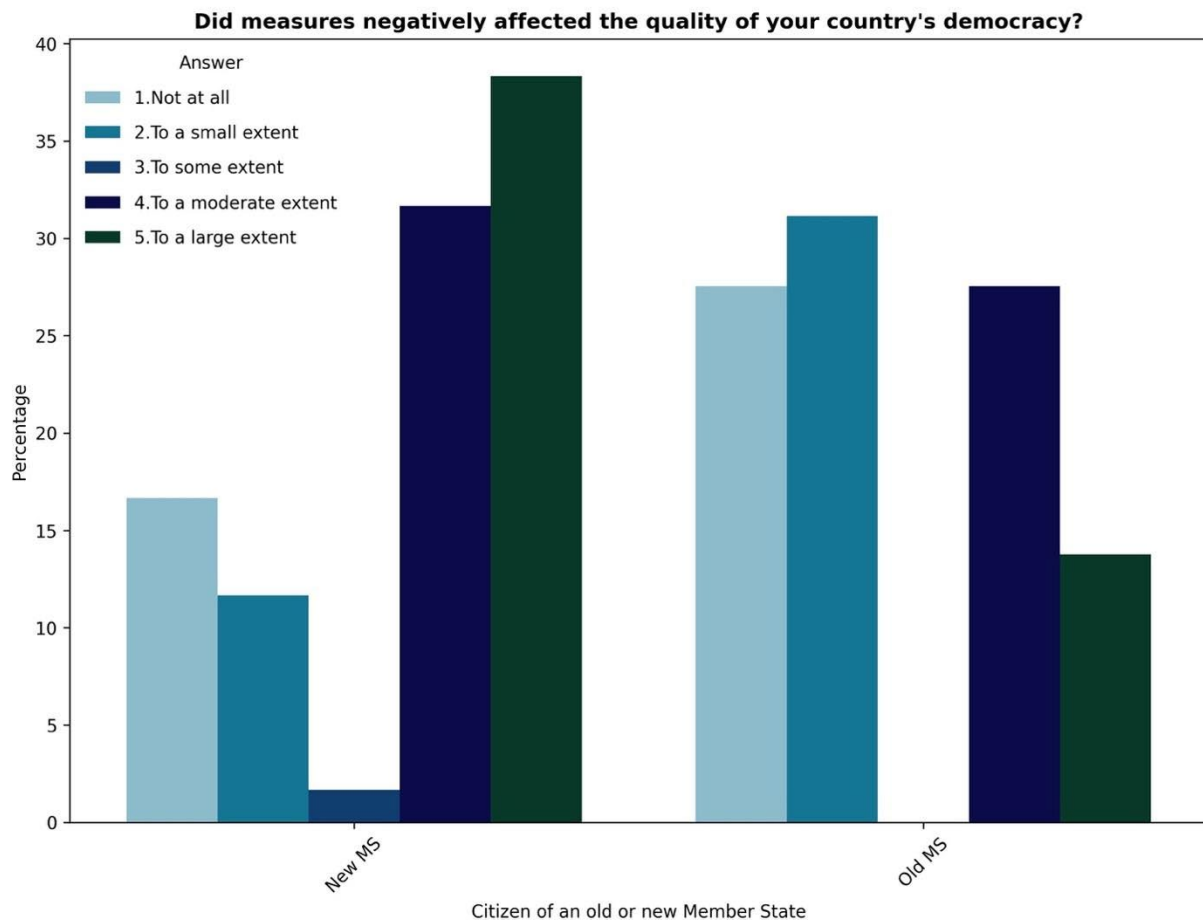


The last part of this survey aims at understanding how our respondents perceived the nexus between the measures aimed at containing the spread of the virus and the state of democracy across the European Union since the onset of the pandemic.

The COVID-19 measures and their impact on the quality of democracy (all Member States)

Our findings show that 27,7% of respondents answered that the measures adopted impacted the quality of democracy in their countries “to a moderate” extent, whereas 22,2% believe the measures impacted the quality of democracy to a “large extent”. An equal number of respondents (24,7%) answered that the measures either did not impact the quality of democracy at all or that they did so only to a small extent. Interestingly, however, we got different results when we split the answers into two groups: the first group representing the “Old” Member States and the second group the “New” Member States.

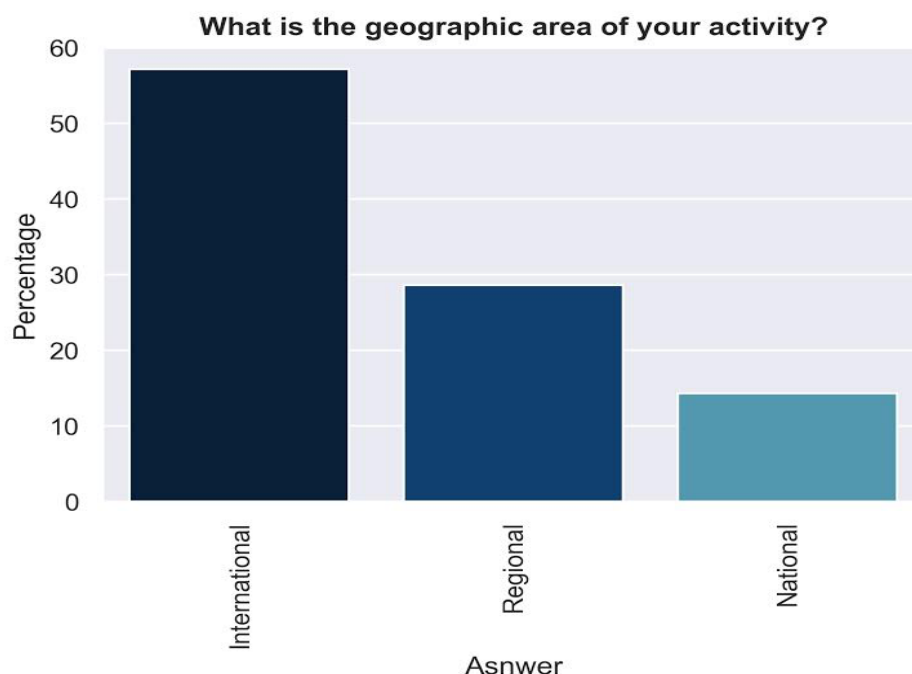
The COVID-19 measures and their impact on the quality of democracy (Old vs. New Member States)



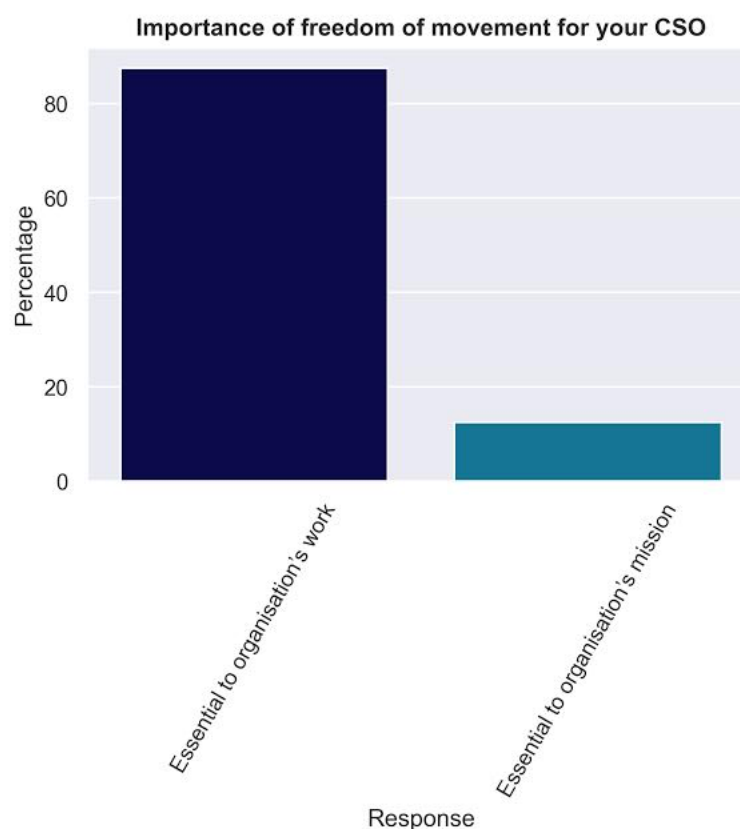
When we compare the answers between the citizens of the “Old” and the “New” Member States we find a substantial difference between the answers of the two groups. A much larger proportion of citizens of the “New” Member States (38,3%) answered that the COVID-19 measures impacted the quality of democracy to a “large extent”, whereas only 13,7% did so from the “Old” Member States.

Annex II: The COVID-19 Crisis and the Voice of European Civil Society

In the remaining part of our study, we discuss the research findings from the second survey titled *“The Role of European CSOs in the COVID-19 world”*. The survey aimed to understand the ways in which the COVID-19 crisis, and the introduced measures to contain its spread, began to change the needs, aims and *modus operandi* of civil society organisations dealing, in one way or another, with freedom of movement in the European Union. As a reminder, we framed this study in terms of a dichotomy of pandemic theatres of war and care. In the lines that follow, we will report on how civil society organisations that took part in this crowdsourcing exercise – 21 of them in total – see their altered role of caring for their beneficiaries in the pandemic and beyond. We projected the classification of the respondent organisations in two ways.



Firstly, we asked the respondents to declare the geographic scope of their activities – whether they are subnational/regional, national or international i.e. EU-level organisations. We did so because the problems and needs identified during the pandemic can differ depending on the geographic area(s) in which they operate, as our findings will show. The majority of organisations that took part in the survey were international or European. This probably stems from the fact that ECAS also operates on this level and its calls for participation are most easily reached by similar organisations in its network.

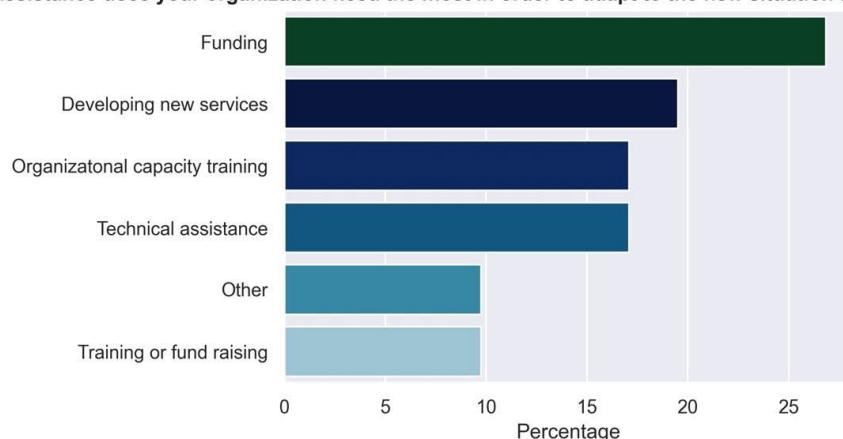


Secondly, although all surveyed organisations deal with mobility in Europe, it was important to differentiate between those that have this as part of their core mission and those that are affected by the suspension of freedom of movement in the Union in general, be it because parts of their staff remained stuck in another Member State, because the implementation of their projects hinged on cross-border activities, or as their work concerned an element of internationality in another instrumental or substantial way. As the graph above shows, albeit essential only to the core mission of some, mobility remains vital for the work of all CSOs in our survey.

In light of these considerations, our intention was not to duplicate already existing efforts by creating yet another generalist survey for CSOs in the pandemic^{liv} or to provide another space where a wide plethora of various CSO resources for handling the crisis could be gathered.^{lv} Instead, our findings from the second survey presented in this annex will be divided into two sections. One will investigate what those CSOs that specifically work around mobility in Europe realised during the pandemic about their needs for successful work. Then, in the second section, we move on to exploring what lessons can be learnt for the future of organised civic work on the freedom of movement and mobility in Europe.

What needs have emerged for mobility-centered CSOs?

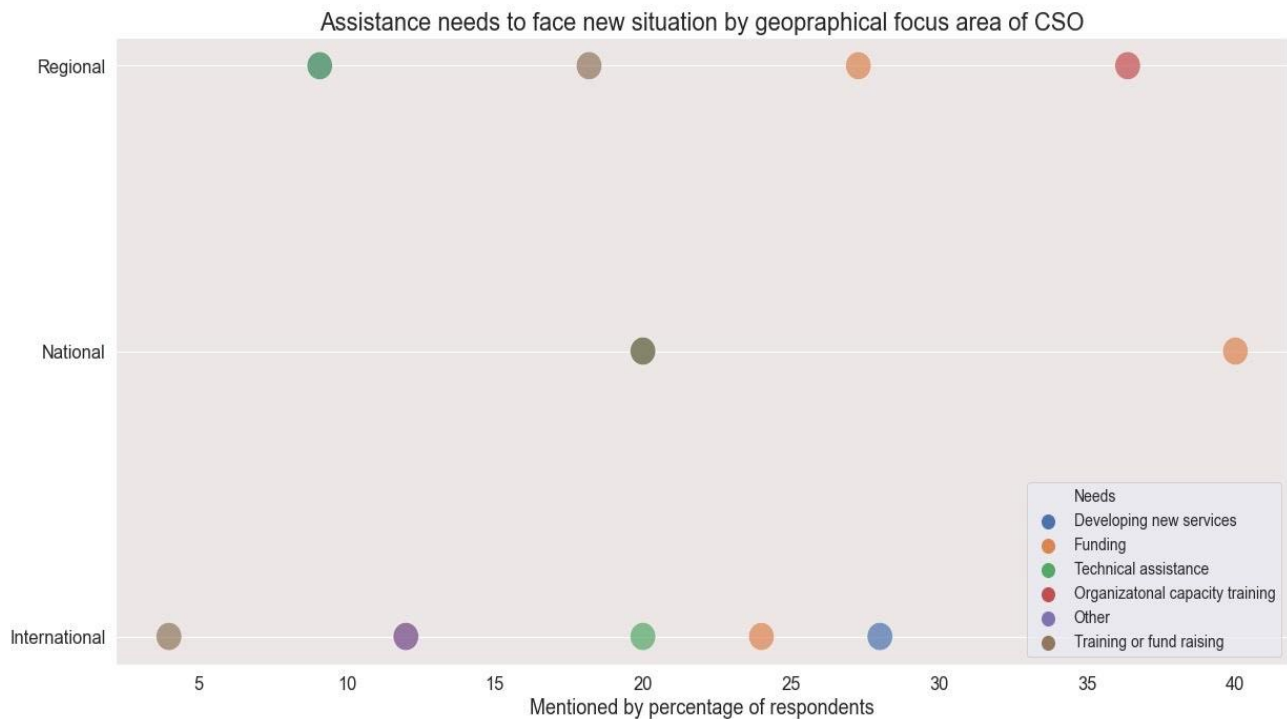
What assistance does your organization need the most in order to adapt to the new situation and deliver its mission successfully?



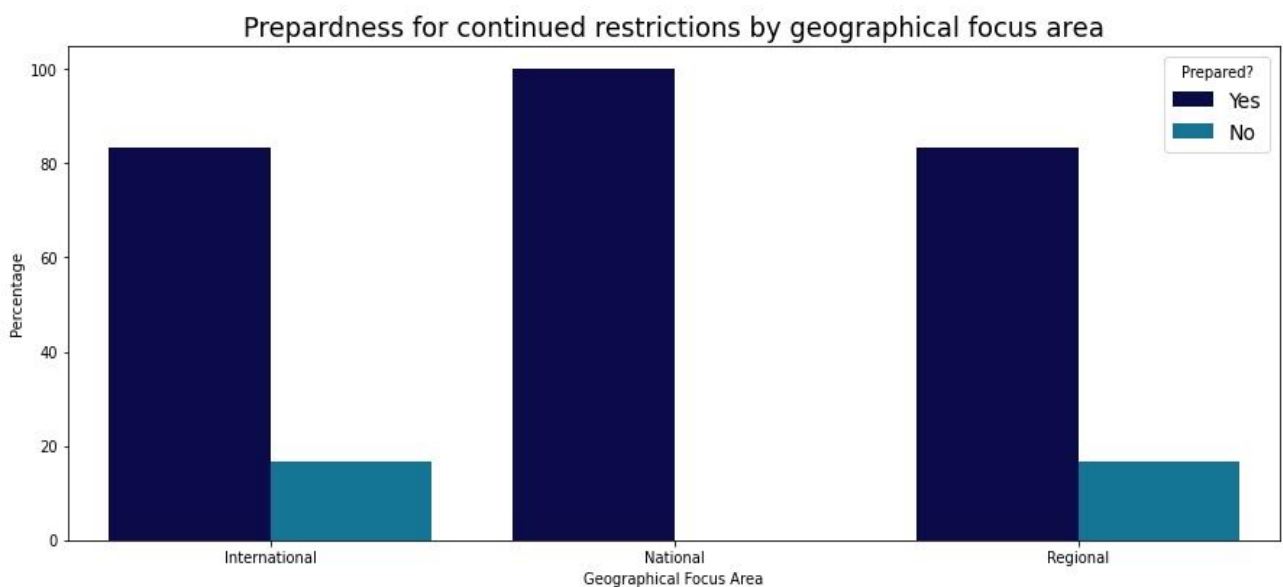
According to our results, the prevalent need of CSOs dealing with mobility in the EU is that of funding. With many ongoing streams of funding uncertain in these challenging times, and the fate of many ongoing projects yet to be determined, the majority of organisations ranked this as the most pressing challenge. Interestingly enough, with training on fundraising ranking the lowest among offered answers, it becomes evident that the scarcity of funding offers is what they identify as the point of weakness and not their own ability to attract new funding. It is followed by the realisation that the new 'normal' brought about by the pandemic will, in descending order of importance, require:

- a) Developing new services – CSOs need to address the changes such as the digitalisation of work and increasing hurdles to cross-border cooperation by providing an innovated catalogue of services for their beneficiaries that corresponds to their altered needs during and after the pandemic. Organisations are currently conducting needs assessments to discover exactly what these are, but, according to the follow-up open-ended answers, the bulk of the adaptation seems to revolve around switching to the online provision of services.
- b) Organisational capacity-building – CSOs recognise that all the changes they are undergoing require fresh approaches to organising their daily work, HR and time-and-risk-management.
- c) Technical assistance – finally, not all organisations are equally well prepared for the digital shift. Around 17% of respondents report the need for technical assistance either in the form of actual hardware or skills for mastering the craft of effective civic telework during the pandemic.

One important caveat should be mentioned here. The responding organisations are not all equally affected by the suspension of the freedom of movement and the related changes to their work and funding. As the graph below shows, national organisations are relatively better off and have fewer needs in comparison to those operating at the subnational or European level. This makes sense since they are eligible for more sources of (national) funding and their work is not exposed to the whims of border closures to the same extent since the scope of their work remains national in most cases. In contrast, as made clear by our survey, European and regional organisations are disproportionately impacted and find themselves in a more precarious position.

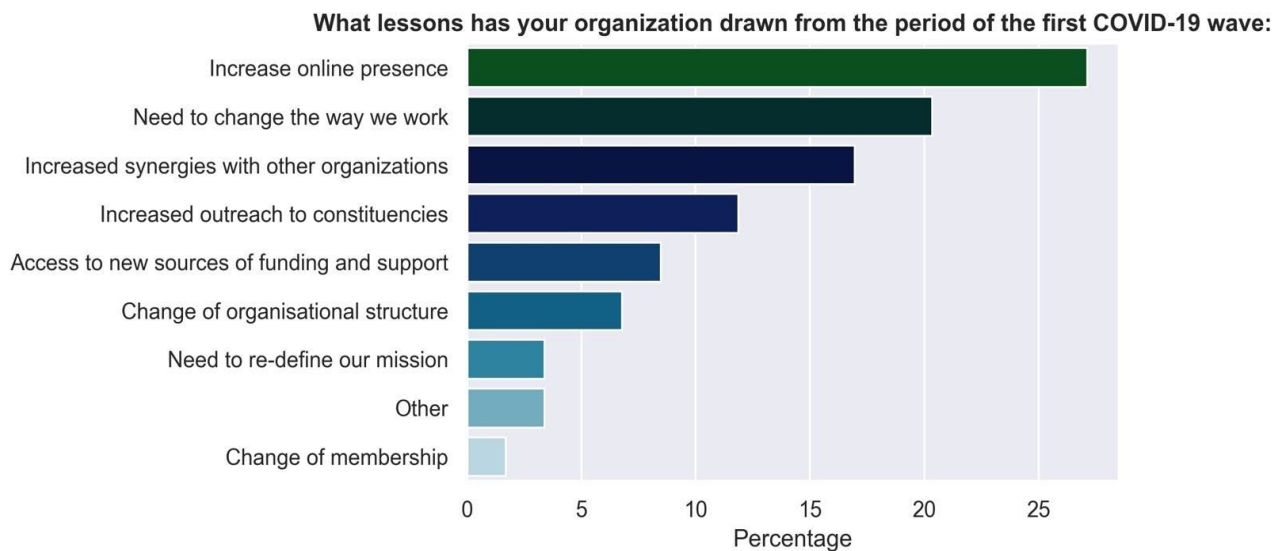


This is also echoed in their replies to our question on the level of preparedness for the prolonged continuation of COVID-19 restrictions until the risk of transmission of the virus is lowered by a widely available vaccine. Again, national organisations are better prepared to endure the emergency than those working at the levels above and below.



The Way Ahead for European Civil Society

We conclude the presentation of our findings with a forward-looking chapter. Looking ahead, we asked civil society organisations to answer a set of questions sketching their vision of the role of civil society in restoring and advancing the freedom of movement rights of EU citizens as the pandemic slowly subsides.



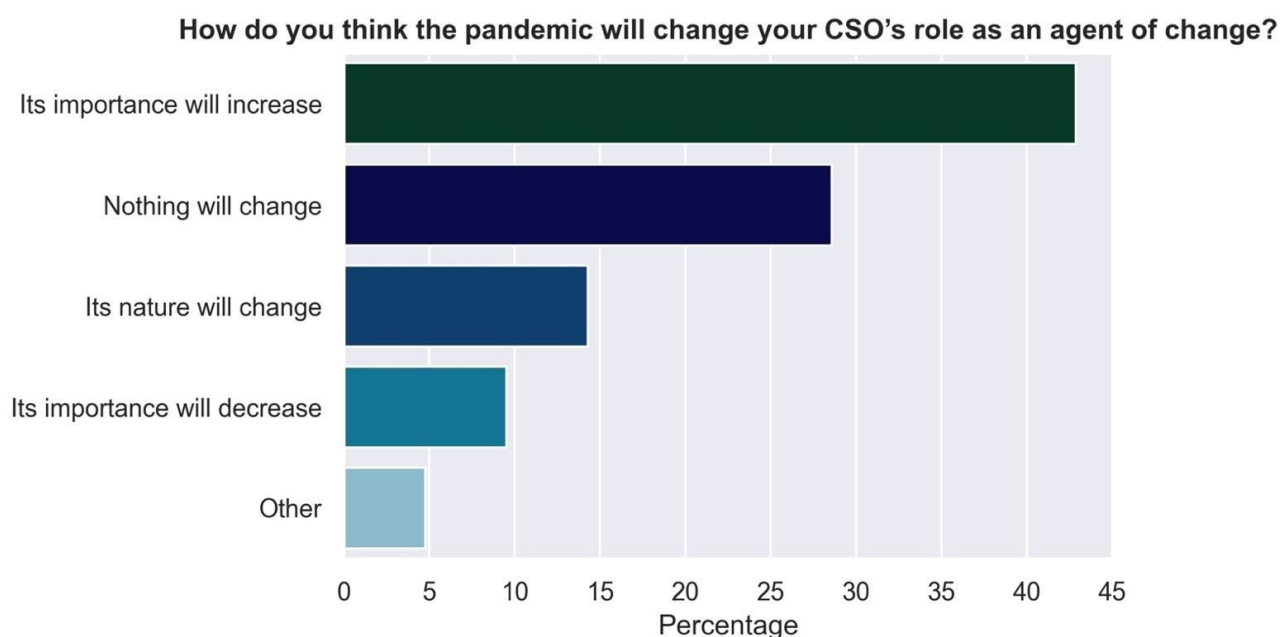
To begin with, we wanted to know what key lessons were learnt during the first COVID-19 wave relevant for their future work. As confirmed in other answers, the most important lesson was the transition to their presence online (more than quarter of respondents) which is likely to remain a feature of their work even when the situation normalises. Two very important additional lessons that follow were:

- a) The need for synergies with other organisations, and
- b) The need to recalibrate and enhance their outreach to constituencies.

Moreover, to provide the context for their future work, we wanted to hear the voice of CSOs on behalf of their constituencies and see what, in their opinion, are the most important long-term consequences of the pandemic that will have to be tackled via CSO action. We provide the most interesting answers in the table below:

What do you consider to be the most important long-term impact of the coronavirus pandemic on EU citizens that will be relevant for your work?
The dramatic economic and social consequences of the pandemic, as well as the increase of intolerance - Slowing economic development - Loss of jobs - Rising poverty and inequality - Greater pressure of migrants on the EU borders - Worse psychological condition of the population - Less funds for CSO - Strengthening illiberal democracies
1) The economic consequences. 2) A widened education gap.
Social crisis including increasing poverty...
Economies will suffer and so will vulnerable groups.
falling back into nationalism
The need for systematic change.
Positive: - increased awareness importance of transparency - many webinars which have actually helped bring the community working on transparency and openness together - it's far easier to participate in events in Brussels without travelling/living there -- let's make sure that we do not lose that. Negative: Economic crisis with the threats it will bring to democracy, such as possible rise in populism and social instability
The economic impact will be enormous. There might also be an impact on EU collaboration in terms of healthcare.
The EU has unfortunately not worked together as closely as necessary to find the proper response - almost all action has been taken at Member State level. This is detrimental to the EU as a Union. Rapidly changing restrictions has not been made as clear about travel and the freedom of movement within the EU, frustrating those who are already unclear about what the EU does for them.
a huge economic crisis and destabilization of trust in democratic institutions and the EU
The EU realized the Commission has a coordinating role that is crucial. Freedom of movement was blocked when the Commission did not act fast enough.
Economic recession and long term psychological effects
More disconnection from people, more loneliness and feelings of isolation. More dependence and addiction to the online environment. Increased polarisation due to info silos and disinfo and lack of skills and opportunities to discuss issues among groups who don't necessarily agree with you.
So many- hard to choose one. Major impact on how we will deal with health care and policies, change of future of work in EU are the two key ones I would say.
Enhanced adoption of digital technologies by business and government.
Work from the home by very different fields. E-platform diversity, that is open to people.

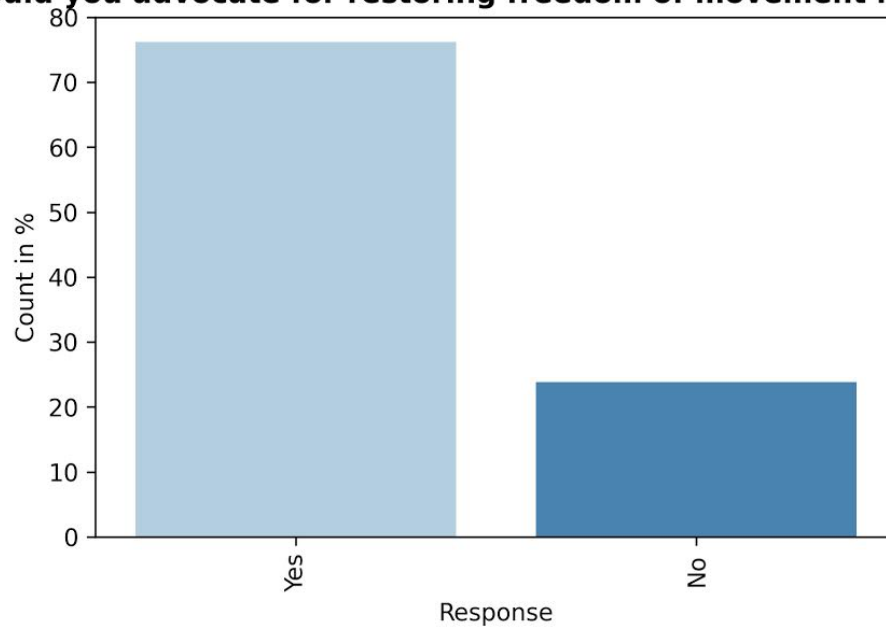
The sheer variety of societal problems above demonstrates that CSOs will have no shortage of issues to address. What is already clear at this point is that most of the issues are actually problems that were already present before but have been aggravated by the health crisis which acted as a catalyst. But what will be the role of CSOs in this context? Our respondents agree that the role of civil society is bound to increase (almost 45%). Almost 30% of respondents find, in addition, that this change is not merely one of scale but that the very nature of CSOs and their position in relation to citizens and the state/Union will undergo a change:



Some of the open-ended answers provided at the invitation to elaborate their choices were very illuminating. When asked whether they feel that the nature of civic activism is changing, some focused on the ‘here’ and ‘now’ and bemoaned the detrimental effects that the pandemic-induced digitalisation of citizenship and activism has had on physical ways of being politically active. For example, one respondent stated that “Yes, inability to meet in person, strike and organise physically has an impact on momentum, interest and continuation of activism efforts.” Nevertheless, the majority of responses received see this as both a challenge *and* an opportunity.

Finally, to conclude our probing into the perceptions and plans of CSOs for the future, we asked them if they would be willing to advocate for the restoration of freedom of movement once the health risk permits as such. As the graph below demonstrates, almost 4/5 of responses were positive, which is an excellent result. In order to make sure we understand the reasons behind potential negative answers, we also introduced a control question asking why they would not pursue this course of action in case of a negative answer. This made it clear that the small minority of those who were against mobilisation around the banner of restoring the freedom of movement in the EU opted for that answer because they thought that CSOs should wait until the crisis is over for reasons of solidarity, public responsibility or political prudence. Therefore, it is encouraging to report that all surveyed organisations are in favor of synergies, coordinated efforts and campaigns to rebuild the cardinal freedom and EU citizens’ rights. Their dissent is only temporal and regards the appropriate starting point of such activities. To the extent that this survey represents the views of EU civil society, transnational, collaborative and innovative efforts to restore mobility in the European Union is a key priority. Their message: We need to start moving forward together again!

Would you advocate for restoring freedom of movement in the EU?



Endnotes

ⁱ What do Europeans think of the Schengen Area? Results of the Special Eurobarometer on Schengen, 4 December 2018, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/what-do-europeans-think-schengen-area-results-special-eurobarometer-schengen_en

ⁱⁱ European Union Citizenship and Democracy, Flash Eurobarometer 485, Fieldwork in February-March 2020, Publication in July 2020, Available at:

<https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/90369>

ⁱⁱⁱ European Parliament (2020), Uncertainty/EU/Hope - Public Opinion In Times Of Covid-19, Third Round, Public opinion survey commissioned by the European Parliament, A Public Opinion Monitoring Study, Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/files/be-heard/eurobarometer/2020/public opinion in the eu in time of coronavirus crisis 3/en-covid19-survey3-report.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/files/be-heard/eurobarometer/2020/public%20opinion%20in%20the%20eu%20in%20time%20of%20coronavirus%20crisis%203/en-covid19-survey3-report.pdf)

^{iv} Eurofound (2020), Living, working and COVID-19, COVID-19 series, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. Available at:

https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef20059en.pdf

^v Erasmus Student Network (2020), Student Exchanges in Times of Crisis - Research report on the impact of COVID-19 on student exchanges in Europe, Available at: <https://esn.org/covidimpact-report>

^{vi} ¹ *Your Europe Advice* is an online EU advice service provided by legal experts from ECAS operating under contract with the European Commission. *Your Europe Advice* consists of a team of approximately 60 lawyers who cover all 24 official EU languages and are familiar both with EU law and national law in all EU countries.

^{vii} The former received 205 responses from citizens, whereas the latter received responses from 23 CSOs whose work centers on mobility in the EU.

^{viii} The first one, titled “*The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on mobile EU citizens’ rights*”, offers unique insights into the views of mobile EU citizens affected by the pandemic. In contrast to other studies that examine the effects of the Covid-19 crisis from the point of view of policymakers and experts, our *citizen-centric* study offers a different perspective. It aims at gathering information on citizens’ views and perceptions about the executive changes that resulted in the limitations of their rights and freedom to move within the EU. Our study also differs from others looking at citizens’ perceptions in general. It focused on a particular section of the population that is rarely consulted – mobile Europeans, who embody freedom of movement in the EU the most. The second survey gives voice to civil society professionals across the European Union and solicits proposals on possible ways to fully restore freedom of movement of mobile EU citizens in the aftermath of the crisis. Whereas the priority clearly lies with the citizens themselves, it was the opinion of ECAS that there would be clear added value in soliciting the opinion of those civil society organizations that directly work with and depend on mobility in Europe.

^{ix} This right is conferred directly on every EU citizen by Article 21 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and is enshrined in Article 45 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Article 21(1) TFEU stipulates that every citizen of the EU has the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, subject to the limitations and conditions set out in the Treaties and by the measures adopted to give them effect. The respective limitations and conditions are to be found in Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the EU and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC,

72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC, OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77 (hereinafter also referred to as the “Free Movement Directive”). Moreover Article 45 TFEU confers on every EU citizen the right to take up employment in any Member State and reside there for that purpose.

^x European Commission (2020), Only 11 Schengen Members Have Notified EU for Reintroduction of Internal Border Checks, press statement, 21 March 2020.

^{xi} European Commission (2020), Covid-19 Guidelines for border management measures to protect health and ensure the availability of goods and essential services 2020/C 86 I/01, OJ C 861, 16 March 2020, p. 1-4, Art. 21

^{xii} European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), ‘Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU - Fundamental Rights Implications - Bulletin 1’, 8 April 2020, <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2020/covid19-rights-impact-april-1>.

^{xiii} Vlagyiszlav Makszimov, ‘Hungary’s state of emergency law is a ‘blank cheque’ to Orban, critics say, *Www.Euractiv.Com* (blog), 23 March 2020, Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/justice-home-affairs/news/hungarys-state-of-emergency-law-is-a-blank-cheque-to-orban-critics-say/>

^{xiv} Vlagyiszlav Makszimov, ‘Coronavirus Derogations from Human Rights Send Wrong Signal, Say MEPs’, *Www.Euractiv.Com* (blog), 24 March 2020, Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/justice-home-affairs/news/coronavirus-derogations-from-human-rights-send-wrong-signal-say-meps/>

^{xv} Blaz Zgaga, ‘During the coronavirus pandemic Janša’s Slovenia is turning into a military state overnight’, *Nacional* (blog), 27 March 2020, Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/justice-home-affairs/news/coronavirus-derogations-from-human-rights-send-wrong-signal-say-meps/>

^{xvi} J.J.H. Weiler (2020), ‘COVID, Europe, and the Self-Asphyxiation of Democracy’ in: Maduro, Miguel Poiras; Kahn, Paul W.. *Democracy in Times of Pandemic* (p. 141). Cambridge University Press. Kindle Edition, p. 146-147.

^{xvii} European Commission Press Release. 8 May 2020. Coronavirus: Commission invites Member States to extend restrictions on non-essential travel to the EU until 15 June, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_823

^{xviii} European Commission, 13.05.2020. Communication: Towards a phased and coordinated approach for restoring freedom of movement and lifting internal border controls, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication_freemovement.pdf

^{xix} European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), ‘Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU - Fundamental Rights Implications - Bulletin 3’, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 30 June 2020, <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2020/covid19-rights-impact-june-1>.

^{xx} European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), 3.

^{xxi} The so-called ‘interesting’ cases include those involving a new issue, recurrent cases, ‘Catch-22’ situations involving conflicting rules which end up ‘trapping’ the EU citizen in question, cases indicating a grey area and a gap in the EU law and, finally, business cases. They are selected by the 59 legal experts who reply to the thousands of questions received by Your Europe Advice. Out of the 5997 eligible cases handled from April until June, the experts’ encoded 932 interesting cases for this report (equaling the 15.5 % cited above). The proportion of interesting cases identified by experts decreased during the second half of the year due to the reduced number of COVID-19 enquiries which were marked as interesting (cca 11%). The settling down of the situation was both the result of more certainty about the rules and the correction of some initial mistakes by national authorities.

^{xxii} Issing, O. (2020). The COVID-19 crisis: A Hamilton moment for the European Union?. *International Finance*, 23(2), 340-347.

- ^{xxiii} Krastev, I., & Leonard, M. (2020). Europe's pandemic politics: How the virus has changed the public's worldview. ECFR Policy Briefs, 24. Available at: https://ecfr.eu/publication/europes_pandemic_politics_how_the_virus_has_changed_the_publics_worldview/
- ^{xxiv} European Commission, EU4Health 2021-2027 – a vision for a healthier European Union, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/health/funding/eu4health_en
- ^{xxv} European Commission, Overview of repatriation flights, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/overview-repatriation-flights_en
- ^{xxvi} European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The European Council and the Council on COVID-19: Temporary Restriction on Non-Essential Travel to the EU, 16 March 2020, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0115&from=EN>
- ^{xxvii} Communication from the Commission, Guidelines concerning the exercise of the free movement of workers during COVID-19 outbreak 2020/C 102 I/03.
- ^{xxviii} Re-open EU website, Available at: <https://reopen.europa.eu/en>
- ^{xxix} Council Recommendation (EU) 2020/1475 on a coordinated approach to the restriction of free movement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, OJ L 337, 14.10.2020, p. 32.
- ^{xxx} Politico, Commission publishes full text of UK-EU Brexit trade agreement, Article published on 26 December 2020, Available at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/commission-publishes-full-text-of-uk-eu-brexit-trade-agreement/>
- ^{xxxi} Jorge Valero, EU leaders unlock historic €1.8 trillion budget deal, Euroactiv blog, published on 11 December 2020, Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/news/eu-leaders-unlock-historic-e1-8-trillion-budget-deal/>
- ^{xxxii} Ahrendt et al., 'Living, Working and COVID-19' (Eurofound, 28 September 2020).
- ^{xxxiii} European Parliament (2020), "Uncertainty/EU/Hope...", op. cit., p. 18.
- ^{xxxiv} Schengen Visa Info News, "Love Is Not Tourism" – Binational Couples Separated by Borders Call on EU to Lift Entry Restrictions, Available at: <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/news/love-is-not-tourism-binational-couples-separated-by-borders-call-on-eu-to-lift-entry-restrictions/>
- ^{xxxv} E.g. CNN, Denmark allows cross-border 'sweethearts' to reunite -- if they can prove they've been in a relationship for 6 months, Available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/05/26/europe/denmark-coronavirus-border-couples-intl/index.html>
- ^{xxxvi} European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), 'Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU - Fundamental Rights Implications - Bulletin 5'. Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2020-coronavirus-pandemic-eu-bulletin-roma_en.pdf
- ^{xxxvii} Margareta Matache and Jacqueline Bhabha, 'Anti-Roma Racism Is Spiraling During COVID-19 Pandemic', *Health and Human Rights Journal* (blog), 7 April 2020, <https://www.hhrjournal.org/2020/04/anti-roma-racism-is-spiraling-during-covid-19-pandemic/>.
- ^{xxxviii} FEANTSA, Homeless in Europe (Magazine), Autumn 2020. Available at: https://www.feantsa.org/public/user/Resources/magazine/2020/Full_Magazine_Autumn_2020.pdf
- ^{xxxix} For a more detailed account of issues encountered by EU citizens that were reported to YEA, see: ECAS (2020), *Grey areas in the Free Movement Directive – ECAS call for a new Communication on Directive 2004/38/EC*, Submitted to DG JUST in October 2020.
- ^{xl} ILO, COVID-19, and the world of work: Impact and policy responses, 18 March 2020. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_738753.pdf
- ^{xli} European Parliament Briefing, April 2020, Coronavirus and the World of Work, available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/649395/EPRS_BRI\(2020\)649395_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/649395/EPRS_BRI(2020)649395_EN.pdf)
- ^{xlii} Ahrendt et al., 'Living, Working and COVID-19'.
- ^{xliii} European Commission, Science for Policy Briefs. *Telework in the EU before and after Covid-19: where we were, where we head to.*

^{xliv} Nader Salari et al., 'Prevalence of Stress, Anxiety, Depression among the General Population during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis', *Globalization and Health* 16, no. 1 (6 July 2020): 57, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-020-00589-w>.

^{xliv} Eliza Cheung, 'How Can We Tackle a Growing COVID-19 Caused Mental Health Crisis? - World', ReliefWeb, 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/how-can-we-tackle-growing-covid-19-caused-mental-health-crisis>.

^{xlvi} Freedom House, 'NEW REPORT: Democracy under Lockdown - The Impact of COVID-19 on Global Freedom', 2 October 2020, <https://freedomhouse.org/article/new-report-democracy-under-lockdown-impact-covid-19-global-freedom>.

^{xlvi} Freedom House.

^{xlvi} Nicolaidis, Kalypso (2020), *Reimagined Democracy in Times of Pandemic*, In: Maduro, Miguel Poiars; Kahn, Paul W.. *Democracy in Times of Pandemic* (p. 171). Cambridge University Press. Kindle Edition.

^{xlvi} E.g. United Nations, CSOs Response to COVID-19, Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/civil-society/csos-response-covid-19>

ⁱ E.g. Civil Society Europe, COVID-19: Civil Society at the Forefront, Available at: <https://civilsocietyeurope.eu/covid-19-civil-society-at-the-forefront/>

^{li} With regards to gender, the respondents could choose between the following categories: "female", "male" and "other". However, as only one respondent identified as "other", this category is not sufficiently representative and it is omitted from the analysis.

^{lii} Alemanno, 'Coronavirus and Europe's Incomplete Union - How the Coronavirus Tests European Democracy'.

^{lii} Freedom House, 'NEW REPORT'.

^{liv} E.g. United Nations, CSOs Response to COVID-19, Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/civil-society/csos-response-covid-19>

^{lv} E.g. Civil Society Europe, COVID-19: Civil Society at the Forefront, Available at: <https://civilsocietyeurope.eu/covid-19-civil-society-at-the-forefront/>

