
LESS THAN HALF OF BRITS, CZECHS AND ITALIANS WOULD VOTE TO REMAIN IN THE EU

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If a referendum on EU membership were held across the bloc today, a majority in favour of remaining would be impossible to reach in the UK, Czech Republic and Italy, according to the latest Eurobarometer released by the European Parliament on Thursday (25 April).

A total of 45% of Brits, 47% of Czechs and 49% of Italians would support EU membership. Meanwhile, the votes to leave would reach 37%, 24% and 19%, respectively.

The number of undecided votes would be 32% in Italy, 29% in Czech Republic and 18% in the UK.

But a large majority of Europeans across the bloc would still vote to remain part of the EU family.

The most enthusiastic about the membership are the Dutch (86%), the Irish and Luxembourgish (both 83%), the Swedes (81%) and the Germans (80%).

The poll was published less than one month before Europeans start voting on 23 May to pick their representatives for the European Parliament.

In the case of Italy, the authors noted that the results were encouraging because the vote to remain increased by five percentage points over the past six months, and the results for vote to leave dropped by five points in the same period to 19%.

While not even one Italian in five would thus support their country leaving the EU, the impact of the current political debate might also be reflected in the third answer category: Compared to all other EU countries, Italian respondents are the most unsure, with 32% saying they would not know what to do in case of a referendum, the authors wrote.

The survey asked 27,973 Europeans between 19 February and 4 March and noted an overall increase of undecided voters in 13 countries, including the UK.

While half a year ago, only 12% of Brits were unsure about their vote, that number increased in March to 18%.

This increase reflected growing public insecurity in the face of political uncertainty in the UK, the survey said.

Far-right leaders gather in Prague ahead of EU vote

Prague will on Thursday (24 April) host a meeting of populist far-right party leaders seeking unprecedented success in European elections next month following a steep rise of anti-EU movements across Europe.

Britain, the Czech Republic and Italy are among those countries where the benefits of the EU are less perceived. A total of 58% of Czechs, 54% of Brits and 41% of Italians believe that they benefited from being part of the Union.

Austrians and Greeks (57%) are also part of the group that is less enthusiastic about the EU family.

Still, an average of 68% of respondents in EU27 said the membership has been beneficial to their country, the highest level since 1983.

But despite the overall positive stance toward the European project, many respondents are unhappy with the current situation.

Half of Europeans believe things are going in the wrong direction in the EU, especially for Greek and French voters (66%), Italians (58%) and Czechs (56%).

Furthermore, only 51% feel that their voice counts in the EU, compared with 62% in their own countries.

Partly because of this, more Europeans (27%) are uncertain and see the EU as neither a good thing nor a bad thing, an increase in 19 member states.

Kaynak/Source: