



Should the EU develop more resilience in times of global challenges?

Outcome report of the 9th round of the European HomeParliaments

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Foreword

Dear friends of the European HomeParliaments,

The 9th round of the European HomeParliaments (EHP) was all about European resilience. On the occasion of the European elections in June, this round of EHP focussed on European resilience. The overarching question of this round of the EHP was therefore: Should the EU develop more resilience in times of global challenges?

From 9 April 2024 to 12 June 2024, around 240 people from three European countries discussed the topic of European resilience and voted on the overarching question and the three specific European policy proposals. The debate focused on investment in European defence, commitment to climate and environmental protection measures and, finally, the introduction of a mandatory European service (e.g. in defence, social areas or environmental protection).

This result report provides an overview of the voting results of the 9th round of the EHP as well as a selection of arguments put forward by the participants.

We hope you enjoy reading, reflecting and thinking about the voting results and hope that the results will inspire you to further develop our European democracy. The future belongs to Europe's democracy!

Yours

Pulse of Europe EHP team

Introduction

2024 is a special year: Europe elected a new parliament. Similar to 2019, this election proved to be very trend-setting and is considered a warning shot for democracy throughout the European Union. As a result, we are more in demand than ever: climate, wars, migration, skills shortages, inflation... we are hardly used to positive news anymore. Instead, frustration is growing among the population. We are in the midst of a 'polycrisis': worry and powerlessness are spreading in Europe, many people are disappointed with politics and criticise it. Around 51 per cent of EU citizens are dissatisfied with the state of democracy and over 40 per cent of EU citizens do not trust the EU institutions¹. A full 64 per cent of people in eastern Germany distrust the EU, the highest figure in the entire European Union². Europe's democracy is under massive pressure: while authoritarian forces such as Russia and China are putting Europe's liberal and democratic societies to the test from the outside, the EU is struggling internally with growing polarisation, scepticism towards democracy, national egoism and a feeling of alienation between citizens and politicians. But there are also lessons to be learnt from crises: Draw strengths from them, learn together for the future and grow together.

In this 9th round of the EHP, we therefore focussed on the topic of European resilience and invited participants to reflect on the question: ***Should the EU develop more resilience in times of global challenges?*** Participants had the opportunity to debate this question and three specific European policy proposals on the future of European resilience. As in a parliament, they were first able to discuss the individual questions with each other and then vote on them individually on a scale of 1 to 10. Together with the results of the numerous other EHPs that took place at the same time in various European countries, the resulting results were channelled into a European opinion poll, which we present to you in this report.

This round of EHPs was not only closely linked thematically to the European elections in June. To mark Europe Day on 9 May 2024, we offered live EHPs at our Pulse of Europe stand on the Festmeile in Frankfurt am Main. Numerous EHPs were carried out on site and a large number of interested parties were made aware of our unique European citizen participation format. Stephanie Hartung (founding member and board member of Pulse of Europe) announced the first interim results of the 9th round of EHPs and engaged in dialogue with the Minister of State for Europe at the Federal

¹ <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2966>

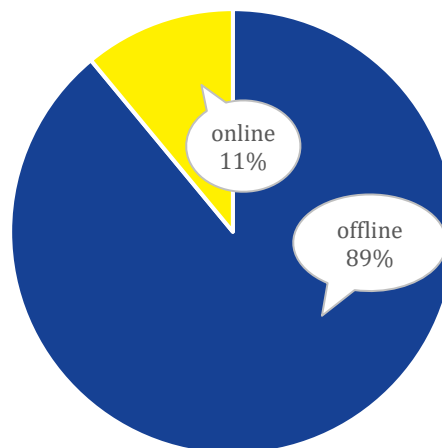
² Standard Eurobarometer 100 Autumn 2023

Foreign Office, Anna Lührmann. The interested parties were able to follow a multi-faceted discussion.

We would like to sincerely thank the City of Frankfurt am Main, the European politicians who contributed to the stage programme as discussion partners and all supporters from the Pulse of Europe community who made this great live event possible - as well as all participants of the European House Parliaments in this round. Together, we succeeded in setting an example for the richness of debate and the resilience of European democracy.

1. Facts and figures on the 9th round of the EHP

A total of **242 people** took part in the 9th round of the EHP.



A total of 27 EHP meetings took place, 24 were held offline and 3 online. 89 per cent of the EHP sessions were therefore held on site and 11 per cent online.

The EHPs were conducted in three different European countries. The majority of the EHPs (17) were organised in Germany, a further six EHPs took place in other European Union countries and one in Switzerland.

2. Political dialogue partners of the 9th round of the EHP

In the 9th round of the EHP, it was once again important to us that the results of the vote on the topic of European citizen participation reach high-ranking European politicians directly and that they take a stand on the issue. We are therefore very

pleased that we were once again able to attract a broad alliance of political dialogue partners for the EHP, covering a wide democratic spectrum.

Katarina Barley, MdEP S&D Group Vice-President of the European Parliament	
Manfred Weber, MdEP EPP Group Chairman of the Group	
Lena Düpont, MdEP EPP Group	
Jutta Paulus, MdEP Greens/EFA	
Sergey Lagodinsky, MdEP Greens/EFA	

Jan-Christoph Oetjen, MdEP,
Renew



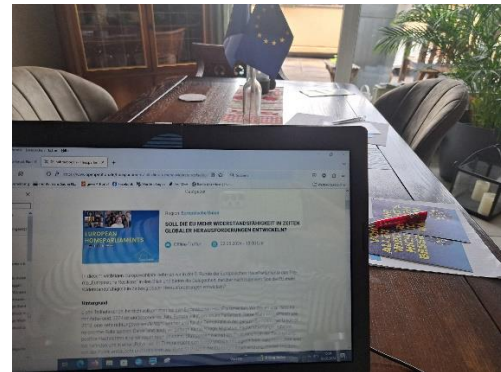
Gaby Bischoff, MdEP
S&D Group



3. Impressions from the 9th round of the EHP

We also received great pictures in this round of the EHP, which document that it can not only be interesting and stimulating to discuss Europe, but that coming together for the EHP is also a lot of fun. At the kitchen table, in the pub, in the classroom, at the Pulse of Europe stand at the Europa-Fest, in the park or in video chat - people of all generations came together in a wide variety of places to discuss and vote on European civic participation. Here are some impressions from all over Europe from the last round of the EHP:



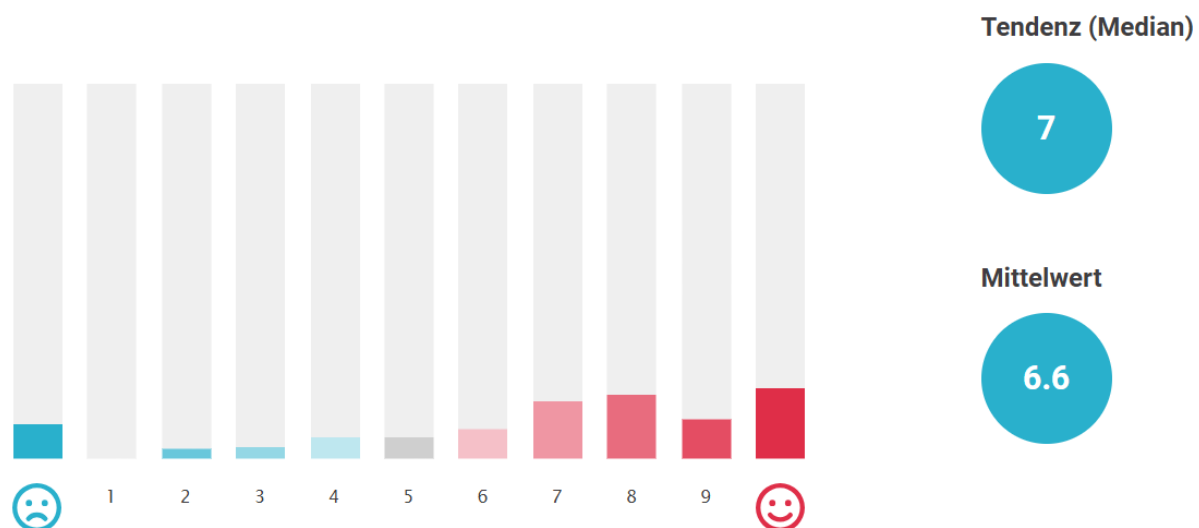


4. Results of the 9th round of the EHP

In the following, we would like to present the voting results on the three specific European policy proposals in the area of European resilience as well as on the over-question. In addition, exciting arguments in favour and against, which the participants contributed to the debate, are presented.

4.1 European defence

The question **‘Should the EU invest in European defence capabilities to such an extent that it can act independently in military conflicts?’** reveals a rather positive opinion.



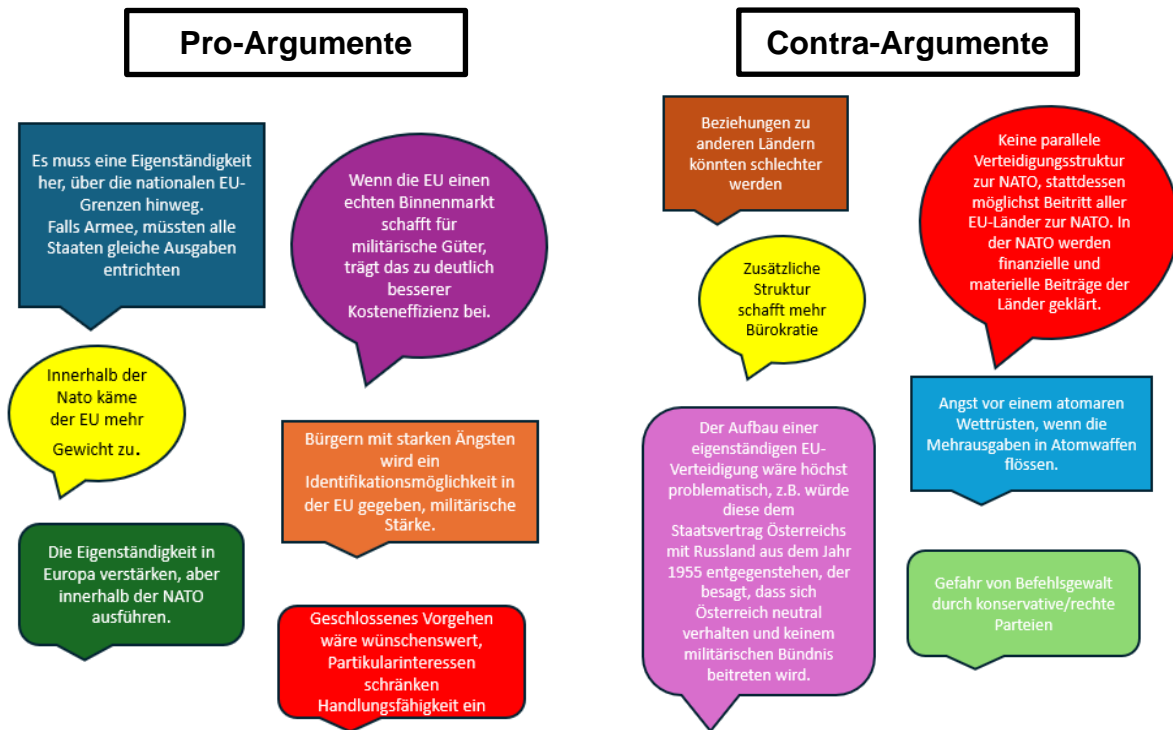
Die Abstimmungsergebnisse setzen sich aus 167 eingetragenen Ergebnissen zusammen.

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On a scale of 1 (absolutely not) to 10 (full agreement), the mean value of the voting results is 6.6. The trend (median) of the vote is 7. Participants voted most frequently with a 10.

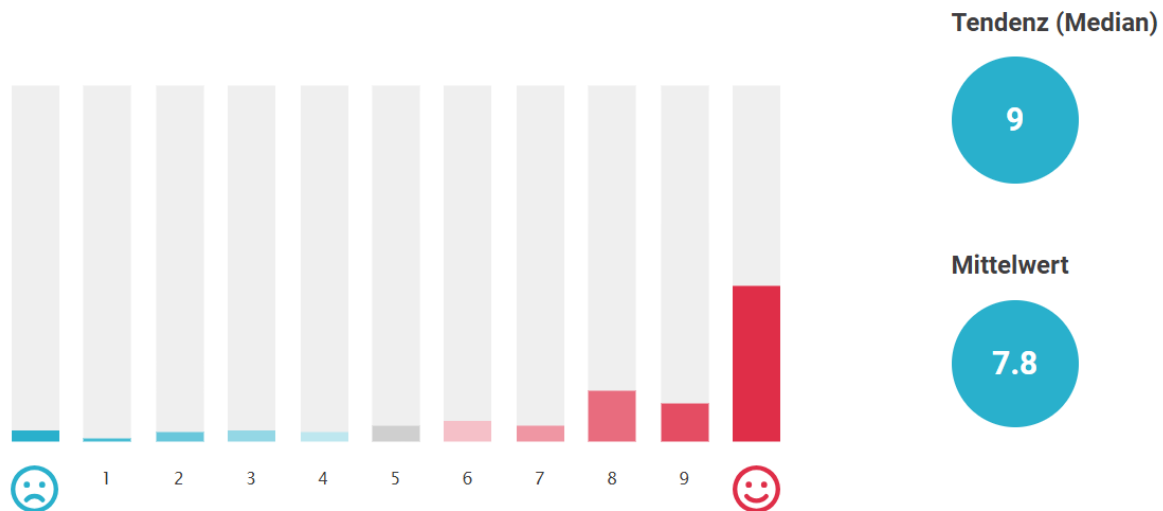
Concerns about over-bureaucratisation and a possible arms race were particularly common in the participants' arguments against the idea. The **possibility of a parallel defence structure** was also mentioned here. At the same time, some participants also saw an independent European defence policy as an opportunity not only to curb particular interests and **increase cost efficiency**, but also to give the EU more weight and say within NATO and thus independence.

The following diagram shows some of the pro and contra arguments put forward by the participants on the issue of a European defence:



4.2 Compulsory service in the EU

With regard to the question **‘Should a compulsory service (e.g. defence, social, environmental) be introduced in the EU that can be performed in all member states?’**, there was a very clear vote in favour of the service.



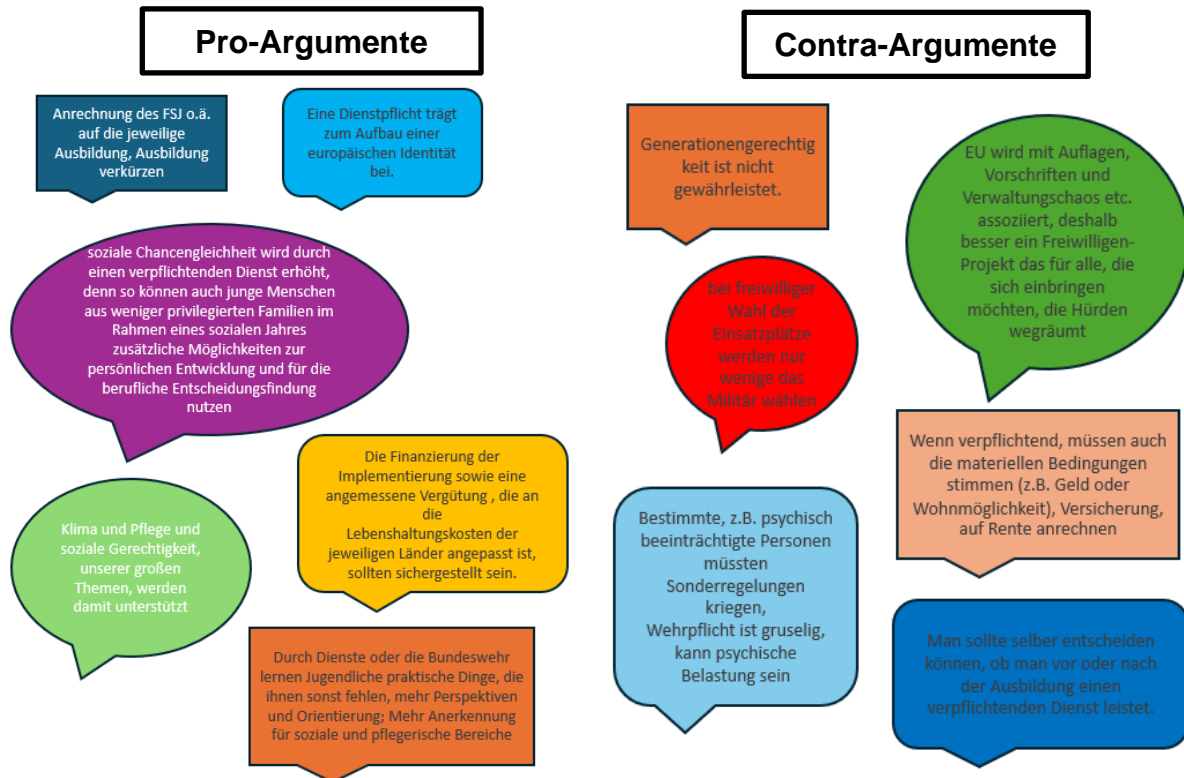
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The mean value of the votes in the EHP is 7.8 on a scale of 1 to 10, with a median of 9 and most participants voting 10.

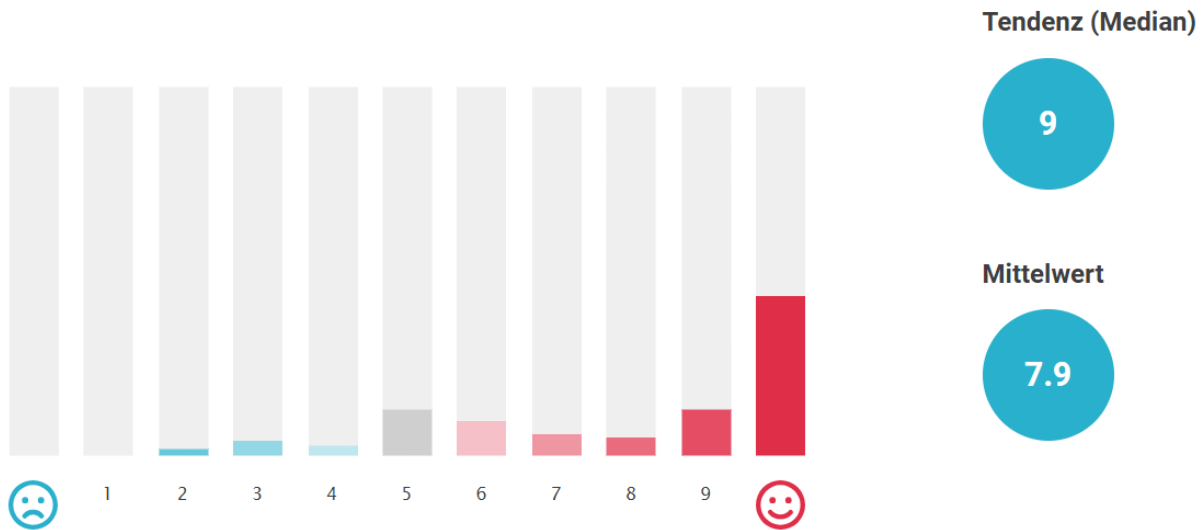
The participants' main positive aspects of the proposal are that it would enhance **European identity** and increase **equal opportunities for young people**. It would also increase recognition in the areas of defence, care and social affairs. In addition to the **lack of intergenerational fairness**, the participants also criticised the practicability of the proposal. The **expected bureaucratic burden** is also criticised, as is the problem of compulsory service. Solutions that are based on voluntary participation are mentioned as a better alternative.

The pro and contra arguments put forward by the participants are summarised below:



4.3 Accelerating the green transformation

The next proposal, to accelerate the green transformation within the EU, is also viewed rather favourably in most EHPs. In relation to the question ‘Should the EU accelerate the green transformation in the energy, mobility and agricultural sectors?’, a very favourable vote can be identified.



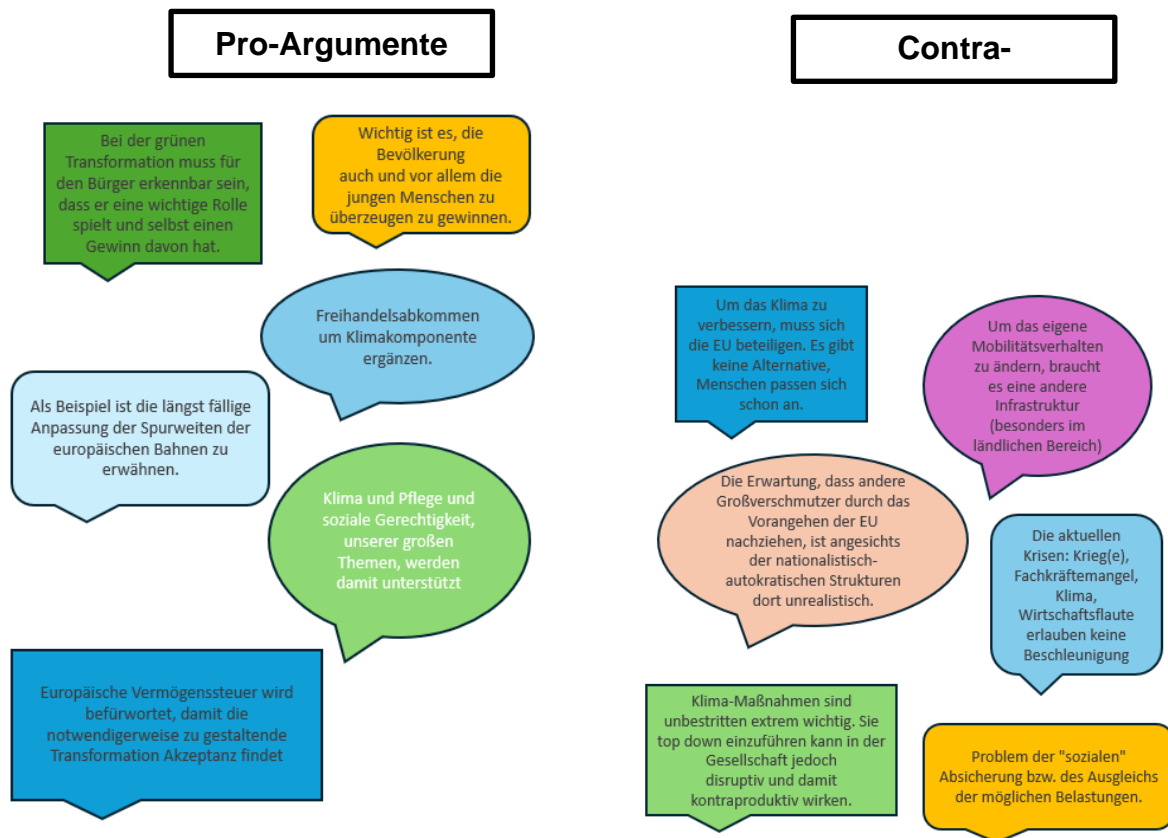
Die Abstimmungsergebnisse setzen sich aus 164 eingetragenen Ergebnissen zusammen.

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On a scale of 1 to 10, the mean score for this European policy proposal was 7.9, with a median of 9. The majority of participants voted 10 on this question.

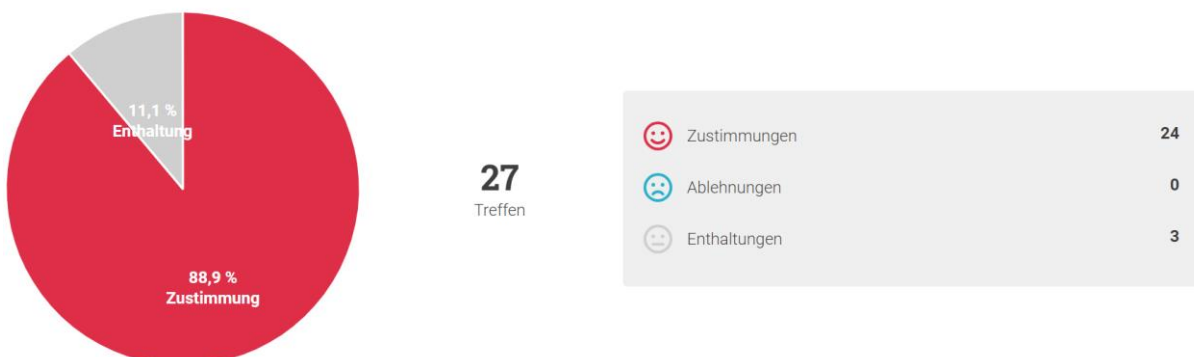
Participants criticised the proposal primarily because the current crisis-ridden global situation **does not allow for any acceleration**. The **top-down approach** was also criticised, as was the unresolved issue of social security. In contrast, the inclusion of climate components in free trade agreements could have an accelerating effect. It is also important to win over the **broad mass of the population** for the rapid implementation of the green transformation.

Important arguments in favour and against, which were put forward in the discussion on the pace of the green transformation at the EHP, are presented below:



4.4 Supra-question: Should the EU develop more resilience in times of global challenges?

The participants are very much in agreement with regard to the specific European policy proposals and the voting results on the key question 'Should the EU develop more resilience in times of global challenges?' are a clear sign of this.



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In 88.9 per cent of the EHPs held, the majority voted in favour of more European resilience. No EHP voted against the idea. In 11.1 per cent of the EHPs held, the majority abstained on the question of more resilience in Europe.

The voting results therefore send a clear signal to our political dialogue partners: Many EU citizens want a more resilient EU. How exactly this should be tackled is an exciting topic that needs to be discussed in future EHPs.

5. Results webinars and video messages on the 9th round of the EHP

At the end of the 9th round of the EHP, a total of four exciting and well-attended results webinars were held with our political dialogue partners Katarina Barley (MEP, S&D), Lena Düpont (MEP, EPP), Jutta Paulus (MEP, Greens/EFA) and Sergey Lagodinsky (MEP, Greens/EFA). The results of the 9th round of the EHP were discussed in detail in all the results webinars. Of course, the political dialogue partners also cast a vote and thus positioned themselves on the voting results. They also expressed different attitudes to the questions and results than the voting behaviour of the members of the House of Representatives. After the presentation of the results, there was also a controversial discussion with the webinar participants. In addition to the topics of the 9th EHP round, other political challenges also emerged, which were discussed intensively.

In particular, the insight into the first plenary days of the European Parliament in the new legislative period and a look behind the scenes inspired many participants and created a great deal of transparency. Many thanks to all political dialogue partners and all participants for the successful events!

In addition to the interesting results webinars, we also received video messages from our political dialogue partners, including [Manfred Weber \(MEP, EPP\)](#), [Gaby Bischoff \(MEP, S&D\)](#) and [Jan-Christoph Oetjen \(MEP, Renew\)](#). We hope you enjoy watching and discussing!

In conclusion, the 9th round of the European HomeParliaments has sent a strong signal: Europe's citizens want a resilient EU that is better prepared for future challenges. The intensive discussion with political representatives has shown that there are different approaches to achieving this goal. Further discussion and engagement with this topic is therefore essential, also in view of the global challenges.

The results of the EHP are a valuable contribution to the political debate. The positive response and the high level of commitment of the participants show that the EHP format is always an important building block for European citizen participation. We look forward to the next exciting rounds and the further development of the discussions!