

PESTICIDES: PLAY IT SAFE!

Opinion poll shows Europeans are opposed to gambling with pesticides.



CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
<hr/>	
1. INTRODUCTION	5
Play it safer! say Europeans	6
<hr/>	
2. EU CITIZENS WORRY ABOUT RISKS TO FOOD, HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT	7
<hr/>	
3. EU CITIZENS WORRY ABOUT PESTICIDES AFFECTING THEIR HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT	10
Only a quarter of Europeans agree that the benefits of pesticides outweigh their risks	12
(Low) trust in governments to prioritise health and the environment when deciding on pesticides	13
— Binding food growing rules protect health and environment	14
— Integrated Pest Management as an obligation to reduce pesticide use	14
A truly precautionary approach to pesticides reassures EU citizens	15
Immediate application of the precautionary principle with newly available data on toxicity	17
Glyphosate should be banned in the EU	18
<hr/>	
4. LESSONS FOR POLICYMAKERS: IMPROVE REGULATIONS AND BE AMBITIOUS	19
EU citizens reiterate calls for pesticide reduction	19
— Concerns about health	20
— Biodiversity, ecosystems and long-term food security	21
— Scientists support the ban on glyphosate	21
— Strong support to ban a pesticide if new evidence shows damage to health or environment	22
Respond to citizens and science by effective SUR	22
Key recommendations for policymakers	23
<hr/>	
ANNEX 1: Methodology	24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a public opinion poll on attitudes to pesticide use in six Member States of the European Union: Denmark, France, Germany, Poland, Romania and Spain. The six countries were chosen to give a good indication of attitudes across the EU as a whole in all its geographical, climate, political and economic diversity. The survey was conducted in August 2023 by the European Public Affairs team of the market research agency Ipsos, on behalf of Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe. The survey addresses various issues related to farming, food production, pesticides, as well as their impact on citizens' health and the environment.

The healthiness of food is a concern for 75.0% of respondents. Citizens in Denmark and Germany voice lower-than-average levels of concern (45.3% and 63.1% respectively), while those in France, Poland, Spain and Romania articulated a higher-than-average level of concern (over 83%).

The environmental effects of farming and food production worry 79.5% of respondents, with only respondents from Denmark showing a lower-than-average level of concern (62.6%).

As many as 81.8% of respondents are **concerned about the environmental impact of pesticide use**, with modest divergence across the six member-states included in the survey.

77.7% of respondents agree that **the use of pesticides is harming the environment**, with the highest agreement in France (82.5%) and Poland (80.3%).

The impact of pesticides on respondents' and their families health worries 75.9% of respondents. Respondents in Poland and Romania expressed the highest level of concern about the health impact of pesticides (80.4% and 84.1% respectively), while those in Denmark and Germany showed a somewhat lower level of concern (62% and 69.8% respectively).

The survey participants expressed different levels of **trust in national governments to prioritise people's health and the environment when deciding on the use of pesticides**. Those in Spain and Denmark expressed the highest levels of trust. In contrast, around half of Romanians (50,3) do not trust their government to protect them against pesticides. This number is 46,7% in France and 44,8% in Poland.

Three in five (59,0%) respondents agree that farmers should always use methods of preventing or controlling pests and diseases that carry the least risks for human health and the environment or else lose access to EU financial support. There is a modest divergence between the countries on this measure.

As many as 73,2% of respondents are in favour of **making Integrated Pest Management rules (IPM) mandatory** for farmers in the EU. (Remark: it is already mandatory since 2014, but it is not enforced by EU countries.)

When offered a range of **buffer zones between areas where pesticides are used and sensitive areas** (such as schools, kindergartens, hospitals, elderly homes, nature-protected areas and water bodies) as many as 41,8% cumulatively opted for the two largest buffer zone options, namely 1.000 metres and 3.000 metres.

As many as 85,3% of respondents in the countries polled are in favour of **halting the use of a specific pesticide if new scientific evidence emerges** indicating that a particular pesticide may cause harm to human health and/or the environment - until more is known. There is minor variation in this result across the surveyed EU member states. The majority of respondents (61.9%) believe that **glyphosate**, the most widely used herbicide in the EU, **should be banned in the EU**, with the figure rising to 70.5% in France and 68.3% in Germany.

These results indicate:

- a fairly universal high level of concern about risks to food, health and the environment;
- respondents across the EU are concerned, in particular, about the use of pesticides and their effect on the priorities of health and the environment;
- a preference for a precautionary approach to the regulation and use of pesticides, including the elimination of risk by banning controversial pesticides, including glyphosate.

We believe these results can be understood as a clear call from the citizens involved to play it safer with pesticides and be ambitious with regulations and pesticide reduction.

1.

INTRODUCTION

European citizens are deeply concerned about the negative impacts of pesticides on their health, food safety, and the environment. This survey report finds that - when it comes to regulating pesticides - a clear majority of Europeans want to play it safer and not take risks with them.

The use of pesticides has been a societal issue and subject of debate between the agrochemical industry, farmer unions, politicians and civil society for decades. In recent years, many publications have highlighted the effects of pesticides on human health, the environment and biodiversity. Pesticides are losing popularity and increasingly becoming a concern for citizens, scientists and institutions. The more we know about them, the less comfortable we are with their continued use.

The way EU Member States and the European Commission have implemented the current pesticide legislation has proven to be insufficient in reducing the exposure of

citizens and harm to the environment. To tackle this shortcoming, the European Commission published a proposal for a Regulation on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products (SUR) in June 2022 as part of its commitment under the European Green Deal to reducing pesticide use and risk in the EU by 50%.

Many EU citizens are concerned about the risks of pesticide use, as is regularly shown by Eurobarometers^{2,3,4}. The outcome of the Conference on the Future of Europe, the successful European Citizens Initiatives 'Save Bees and Farmers' and 'Stop Glyphosate' are clear signs of this concern. Citizens feel the need to protect their health and the environment from the toxicity of synthetic pesticides.

On the other hand, in the frame of the ongoing negotiations in the European Parliament and the European Council, the proposal from the European Commission received fierce opposition from a series of political parties and Member States.

1 <https://www.pan-europe.info/eu-legislation/eu-pesticide-reduction-sustainable-use-regulation-sur>

2 <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/corporate/pub/eurobarometer22>

3 <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2241>

4 <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/corporate/pub/eurobarometer19>

Play it safer! say Europeans

With this survey, conducted in collaboration with the market research and public opinion specialist Ipsos, we wanted to find out what EU citizens think about the most discussed and opposed provisions of pesticide reduction and the renewal of the authorisation of glyphosate.

We find that citizens across selected EU countries, more specifically - representative samples of citizens in France, Germany, Denmark, Poland, Spain and Romania - are no longer content with playing "Russian roulette" with pesticides. The way regulators allow risk-taking into the use of pesticides in our agriculture and food production is a potentially lethal game of chance and European citizens are overwhelmingly opposed to such risk-taking: As many as 3

out of 4 (76%) worry about how the use of pesticides in farming and food production is affecting their health and the health of their family, and 82% of citizens are concerned about the environmental impact of pesticide use.

In this report, we first learn about EU citizens' concerns about health and environmental risks related to food production (Chapter 2). We then learn more about their concerns about the way pesticides, in particular, are regulated and used (Chapter 3). We summarise the resulting conclusions and offer our "translation" of the survey results into recommendations for policy action at the EU level which listens to and addresses the shared concerns of citizens across the EU (Chapter 4).

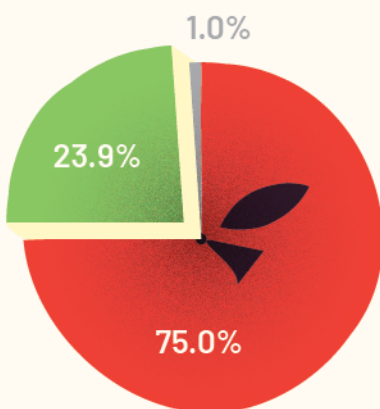
2.

EU CITIZENS WORRY ABOUT RISKS TO FOOD, HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

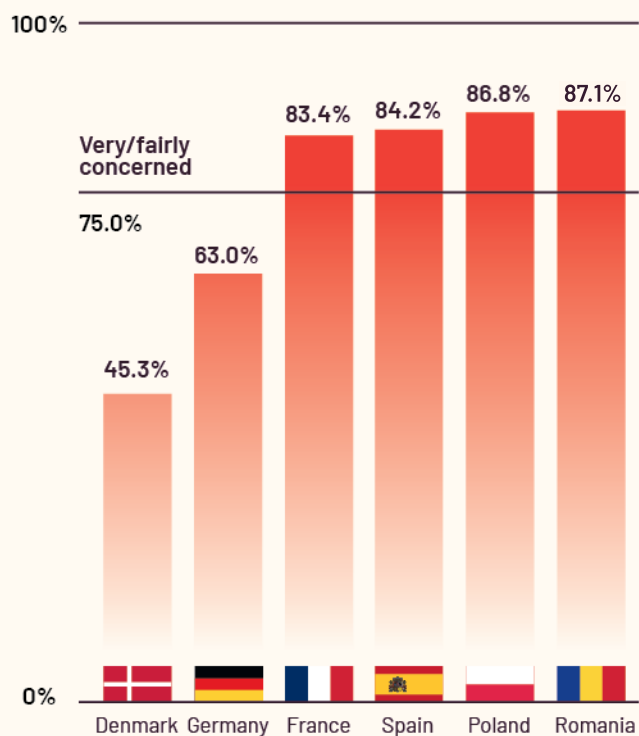
As many as three quarters, or just over 75% of respondents, are concerned about the **healthiness of food** items. This concern, however, is not equally shared across the six member states surveyed. Citizens of Denmark and Germany are notably less worried than average about the healthiness of food, with 45% and 63% of respondents, respectively, voicing their concerns.

On the other hand, respondents in the remaining four member states, namely France, Poland, Spain and Romania, all reported levels of concern about the healthiness of food around mid-80 percentiles, or around 10 percentage points higher than the average for the six member states included in the survey.

How concerned, if at all, are you about the healthiness of food items



Very/fairly concerned
Not very/not at all concerned
N/A or DK



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

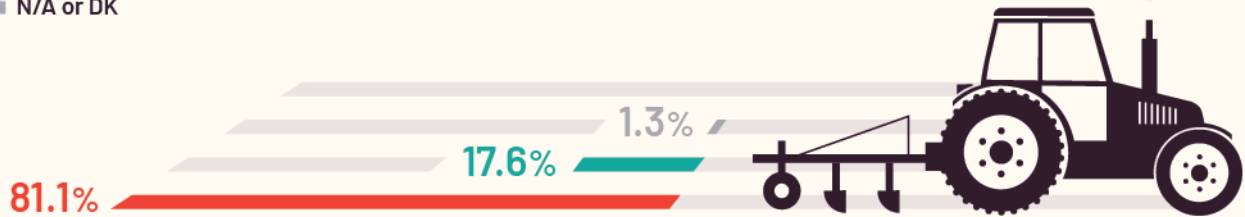
81% of respondents are concerned about how **climate change** is impacting farming and food production - a concern shared, with modest variations, across the six member states.

How concerned, if at all, are you about impact of climate change on farming and food production

Very/fairly concerned

Not very/not at all concerned

N/A or DK

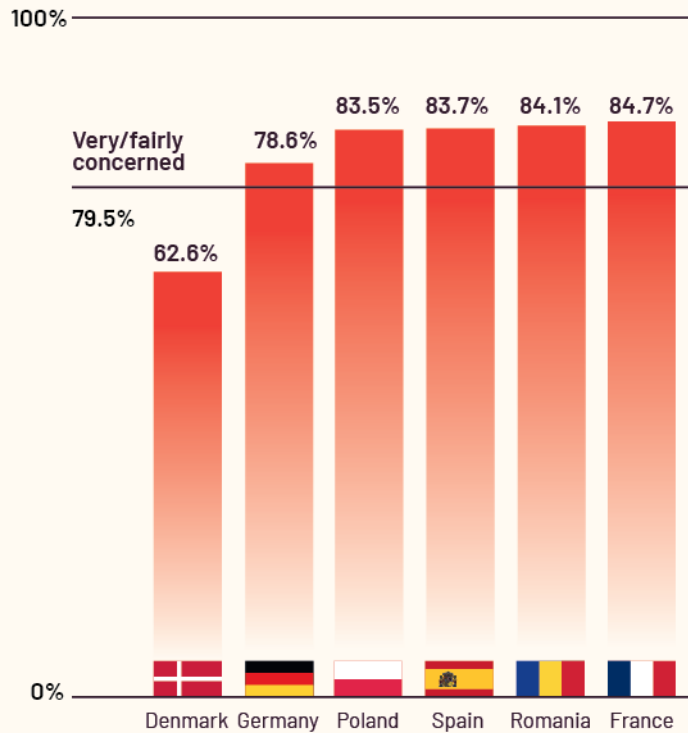
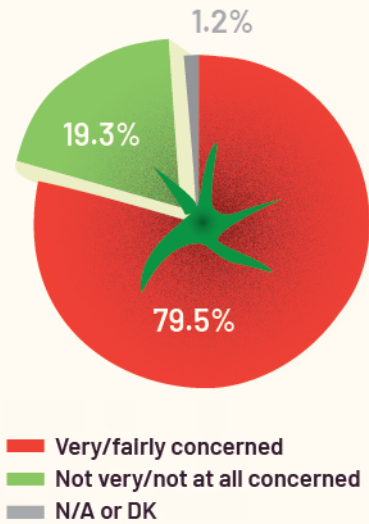


All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

Intensive farming systems are being cited for their negative impact on climate, which back-fires in form of climate-change-linked weather events: floods, droughts, wildfires, and consequently, soil loss - the loss of the very basis of food production.

80% of the survey respondents expressed concern about the **environmental effects of farming and food production methods**. While the figure is lower than average in Denmark, at 62.6%, it rises to 78.6% in Germany, and to a higher still 80+% in France, Poland, Spain and Romania.

How concerned, if at all, are you about environmental impact of farming and food production methods



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

These results indicate that European citizens are very much aware of the increased pressure(s) on our food systems and the environment, including those resulting from climate change. They are highly concerned about their combined impact on the healthiness of food and the environmental

effects of farming and food production methods.

In the next section, we report on respondents' attitudes to the use of pesticides and to a variety of related issues.

3.

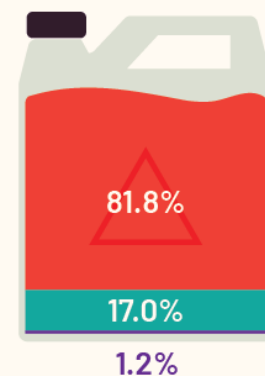
EU CITIZENS WORRY ABOUT PESTICIDES AFFECTING THEIR HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT



Europeans across the six EU member states included in this survey are concerned (81.8%) about the environmental impact of the use of pesticides in farming and food production. There is modest variation between the countries on this measure.

How concerned, if at all, are you about environmental impact of pesticides use in farming and food production

- Very/fairly concerned
- Not very/not at all concerned
- N/A or DK



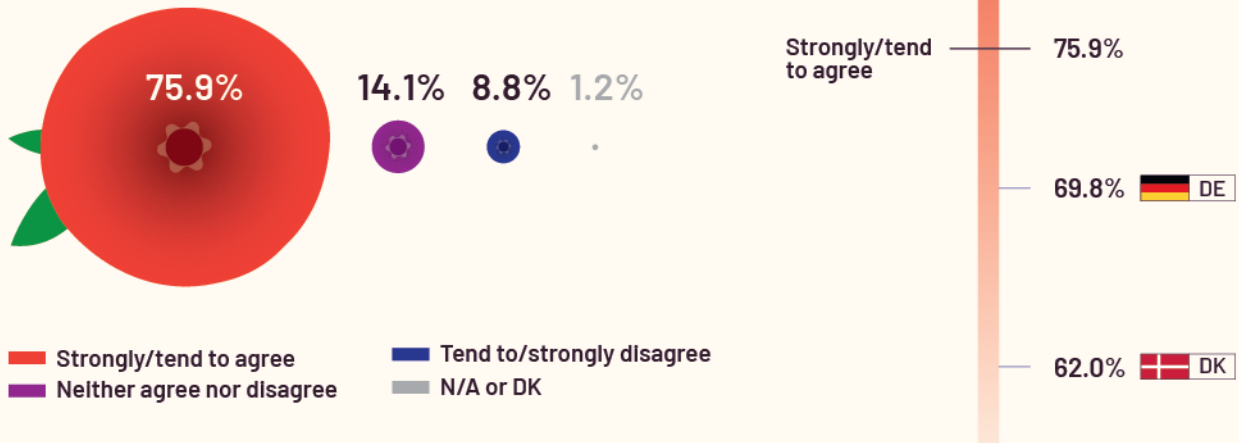
All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

Besides affecting the targets, pesticides influence the environment, namely soil, air, water, and living organisms, micro- and macroflora and fauna, and humans. Pesticides do not impact exclusively the area of application. Runoff, leaching and pesticide drift can carry pesticides into distant aquatic environments or other fields,

grasslands, human settlements, houses and natural areas.

Three-quarters of respondents are concerned about how the use of pesticides in farming and food production is affecting their health or their family's health (75.9%).

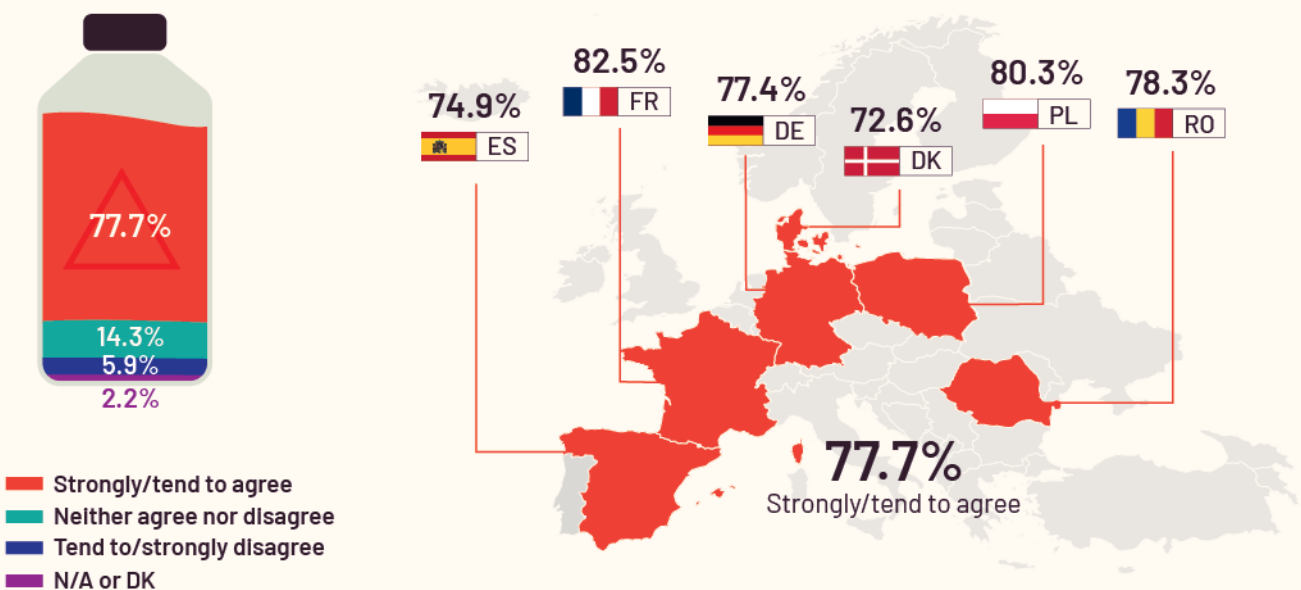
Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree?
I worry about how the use of pesticides in farming and food production is affecting my health/my family's health



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

The vast majority of respondents (77.7%) agree that the use of pesticides in farming and food production is harming the environment. This opinion is shared by respondents in all six EU member states with modest variations in percentiles. The strongest convictions is held in France (82.5%) and Poland (80.3%).

Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree?
The use of pesticides in farming and food production is harming the environment



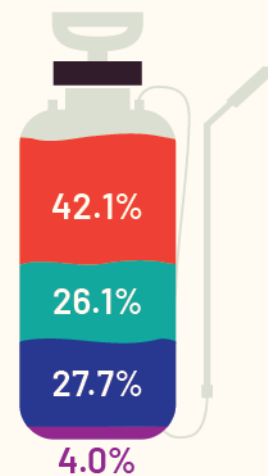
All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

Only a quarter of Europeans agree that the benefits of pesticides outweigh their risks

Only 27.7% of respondents tend to or strongly agree with the basic notion that the use of pesticides in farming and food production carries more benefits than risks, while 42.1% disagree. Disagreement is the highest in France (48.9%) and Romania (52.6%).

Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree?
The use of pesticides in farming and food production carries more benefits than risks

- Strongly/tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to/strongly disagree
- N/A or DK



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

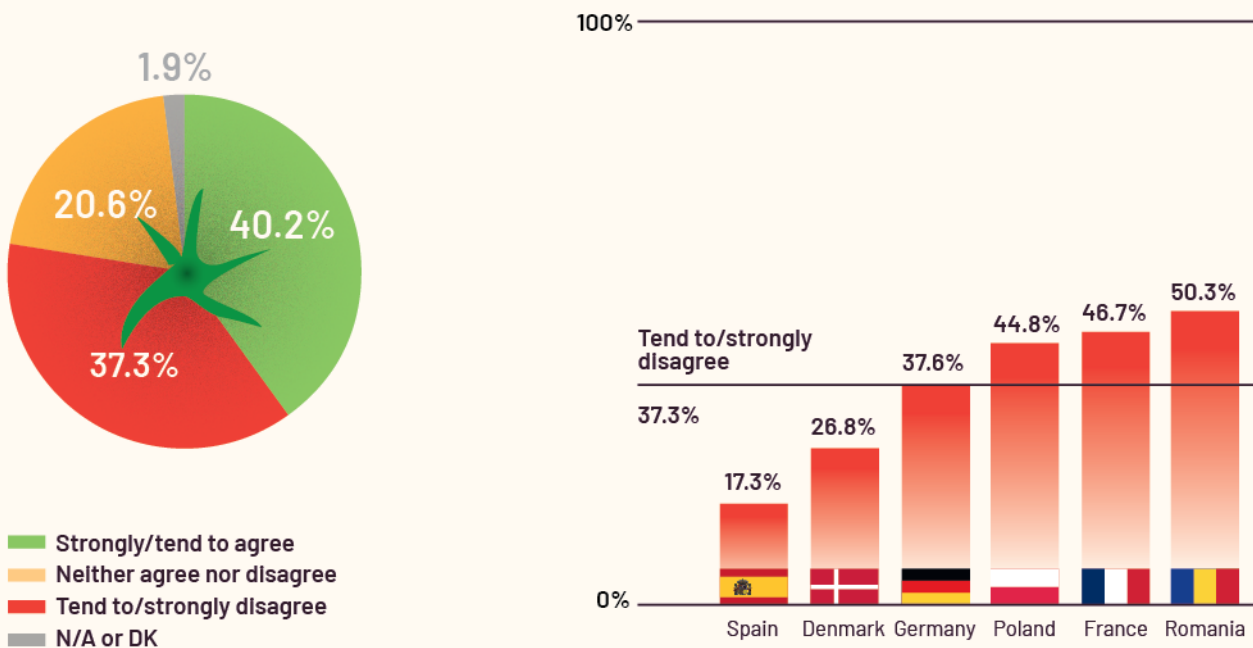
(Low) trust in governments to prioritise health and the environment when deciding on pesticides

Around two-thirds of citizens in Spain (66.2%) and around half in Denmark (48.8%) agree that they trust their respective national governments to prioritise public health and the environment when regulating the use of pesticides. On the other hand, around half of citizens in France (46.7%), Poland (44.8%)

and Romania (50.3%) tend to, or strongly disagree that they trust their national governments in this respect. In Germany, 39.2% of citizens voiced their trust in their government, in between the aforesaid two cohorts.

Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree?

When it comes to making decisions about the use of pesticides, I trust the government to prioritise protecting the health of citizens and the environment



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

The distrust in governments indicates that citizens know that pesticides are harmful and regulations and control are not good enough.

Binding food growing rules protect health and environment

59% of respondents believe that farmers should always use the methods of preventing/controlling pests and diseases that carry the least risks, or else lose access to EU financial support.

33% of the European Union (EU) budget goes toward supporting farming and agriculture. Farmers currently use different methods to prevent or control pests and diseases.

Which of the following statements, if any, comes closest to your own view?

Farmers should be free to choose what they use, without any outside interference. **9.4%**

Farmers should be free to choose what they use but public authorities should first advise them on methods. **23.8%**

Farmers should always use methods that carry the least risks, or else lose access to EU financial support. 59.0%

None of the above **2.6%**

I don't know **5.2%**

All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

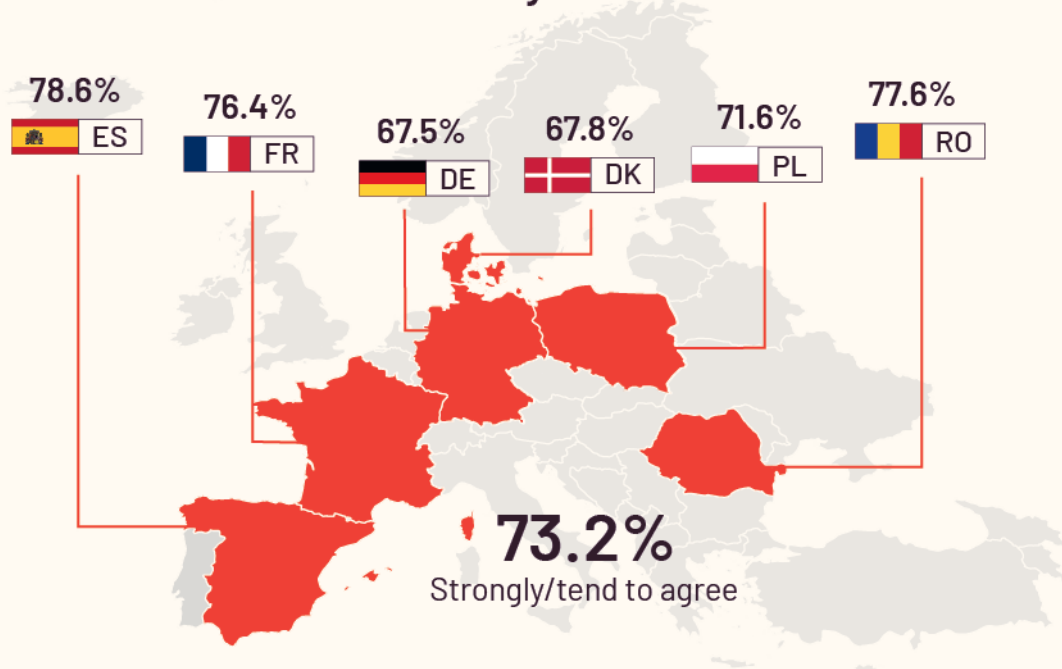
Integrated Pest Management as an obligation to reduce pesticide use

Almost three-quarters (73%) of all respondents in the countries surveyed are in favour of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)⁵ rules being made mandatory for farmers in the EU. At the country level, the figure ranges from 67.5% in Germany, to 78.5% in Spain.

⁵ Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a set of rules aimed at preventing pests or diseases in plants and reducing the need for pesticides. Under these rules, pesticides are used only as a last resort, if needed, after all other measures have been tried.

<https://www.pan-europe.info/sites/pan-europe.info/files/public/resources/reports/integrated-pest-management-working-with-nature.pdf>

Do you agree or disagree that IPM rules should be mandatory for farmers in the EU?



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

A truly precautionary approach to pesticides reassures EU citizens

A high percentage of respondents (42% cumulatively) opt for large buffer zones of 1000 to 3000 meters between sensitive areas and places where pesticides are used. Sensitive areas are schools, kindergartens, hospitals, elderly homes, nature-protected areas and water bodies. Buffer zones would help to protect citizens, as well as these areas from the potential negative impacts of pesticides.

The European Commission is proposing to limit the use of pesticides in and/or around places like public parks and green spaces, other outdoor leisure sites like nature reserves, and residential areas, to protect citizens and the environment.

Which of the following statements, if any, comes closest to your own view?



<i>Pesticide use should not be banned anywhere</i>	4.1%
<i>Pesticide use should be banned in such places, but not beyond these places</i>	11.5%
<i>Pesticide use should be banned within three meters of these places</i>	5.7%
<i>Pesticide use should be banned within 50 meters of these places</i>	8.2%
<i>Pesticide use should be banned within 100 meters of these places</i>	10.9%
<i>Pesticide use should be banned within 1000 meters (1 kilometre) of these places</i>	16.6%
<i>Pesticide use should be banned within 3000 meters (3 kilometres) of these places</i>	25.2%
<i>Don't know/no opinion</i>	17.9%

All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

Immediate application of the precautionary principle with newly available data on toxicity

In total, 85% of respondents agree with halting the use of a pesticide if new scientific evidence emerges indicating that a particular pesticide may cause harm to human health and/or the environment. There is only minor variation across the surveyed EU member states on this measure.

The high percentage of respondents who agree strongly with this statement (61.1%) points to the magnitude of public concern about the potential risks of pesticides that are currently approved for use. This is likely due to the fact that pesticides are known to have a number of negative health and

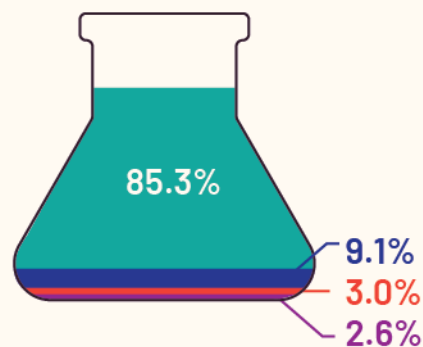
environmental impacts, including cancer, reproductive problems, and damage to the nervous system.

The fact that a majority of respondents support stopping the use of a pesticide even if there is only limited scientific evidence of its harmful effects is also significant. This suggests that people are in favour of the **precautionary principle** when it comes to the use of chemicals that could potentially harm their health and the environment, which is in line with this often neglected provision of EU law.

Imagine that new scientific evidence emerges indicating that a particular pesticide may cause harm to human health and/or the environment.

Do you agree or disagree that the use of that pesticide should be halted by public authorities until more is known?

- Strongly/tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to/strongly disagree
- N/A or DK



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

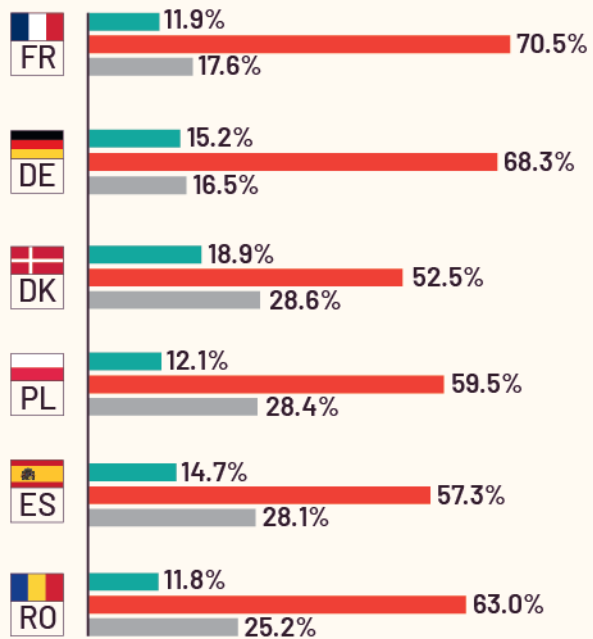
Glyphosate should be banned in the EU

A majority of respondents (62%) believe that the use of glyphosate, one of the most commonly used pesticides in the EU (e.g. Roundup), should be banned in the EU, with the figure rising to 70.49% in France and 68.33% in Germany.

Experts currently disagree on the health risks associated with glyphosate. One public authority has classified glyphosate as a "probable carcinogenic" (i.e. that it may cause cancer in humans). Another public authority has classified glyphosate as "probably not carcinogenic".

Given these different opinions, which of the following comes closest to your own view?

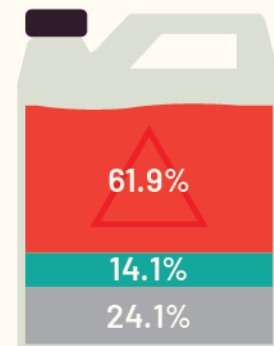
- The use of glyphosate should continue to be allowed in the EU
- The use of glyphosate should be banned in the EU
- Don't know/ no opinion



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

Given these different opinions, which of the following comes closest to your own view?

- The use of glyphosate should continue to be allowed in the EU
- The use of glyphosate should be banned in the EU
- Don't know/ no opinion



All respondents in the six Member States surveyed (6,059)

4.

LESSONS FOR POLICYMAKERS: IMPROVE REGULATIONS AND BE AMBITIOUS



The results of the poll show broad public support for ambitious EU pesticide legislation. European citizens don't want to take risks when it comes to their food, their health and the environment.

Survey results suggest there is a strong appetite for decreasing pesticide use and risk. Further, there is notable consistency in attitudes across different EU member states (Denmark, France, Germany, Poland, Romania and Spain). In Poland and Romania,

citizens express the same or a higher concern about the impact of pesticide use on health and the environment as in France and Germany.

This poll allows policymakers to draw important lessons regarding the ongoing negotiations on the SUR proposal, the glyphosate file as well as current procedures for pesticide authorisation in general.

EU citizens reiterate calls for pesticide reduction

The results of this poll confirm the demands and concerns that citizens have expressed multiple times, such as in the Conference for the Future of Europe, through multiple Eurobarometer surveys, public consultations and 2 European Citizens Initiatives (ECI's).

- In the EU public consultation on the Common Agricultural Policy in 2017⁶ respondents showed a concern for environmental challenges, such as the prevention of biodiversity loss and prevention and reduction of water pollution (pesticides, fertilizers).
- Also in 2017, more than 1 million citizens asked the European Commission and the Member States, through a successful ECI, for a ban on glyphosate⁷.
- The final report of the Conference for the Future of Europe (2022)⁸ included the need to drastically reduce pesticide use.
- The 2022. Eurobarometer survey on Food safety in the EU⁹ listed pesticide residues in food as the most frequently selected concern related to food safety.
- In 2022, more than 1 million citizens raised their voice again, through the ECI 'Save Bees and Farmers'¹⁰, for phasing out 80% of pesticides by 2030 and 100% by 2035. Of the 9 successful ECI's that have been submitted to the European Commission, 2 were focused on pesticides.

Concerns about health

People and animals are impacted by pesticides through different exposure routes (inhalation, ingestion, dermal absorption, indoor dust). The Poll results show that three-quarters of respondents are concerned about how the use of pesticides in farming and food production is affecting their health or their family's health (75.9%). Respondents were the most concerned in Romania (84.1%) and Poland (80.4%).

6 https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-06/summary-public-consul-modernising-simplifying-cap_2017_en_0.pdf

7 <https://www.pan-europe.info/press-releases/2022/10/eu-commission-gives-green-light-1-million-valid-signatures-save-bees-and>

8 https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/06619e05-eaee-11ed-a05c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en?_publicationDetails_PublicationDetailsPortlet_source=287012074

9 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-09/EB97.2-food-safety-in-the-EU_report.pdf

10 <https://www.savebeesandfarmers.eu/eng>

Biodiversity, ecosystems and long-term food security

In 2022, 668 scientists warned that *“political efforts to abandon the sustainability targets of the Farm to Fork strategy (including pesticide use) do not shield us from the current crisis, they rather worsen it and make the crisis permanent”*¹¹. Soon after, 739 scientists called for an ambitious Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation, as *“The heavy use of pesticides in agriculture is strongly linked to declines in insects, birds, biodiversity in terrestrial and aquatic systems and detrimental impacts on global public health”*¹². The vast majority of participants in the current survey (77.7%) agree that the use of pesticides in farming and food production is harming the environment.

Very recently, 6.000 scientists¹³ expressed their support for the EU’s Green Deal, and rejected the argumentation against the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation and the Nature Restoration Law. They highlight that evidence shows that restoring nature and reducing the use of agrochemicals 1) is essential for maintaining long-term production capacity and enhancing food security, 2) can help generate new employment opportunities and stimulate innovation, 3) serves an investment with a high return rate and multiple beneficiaries across society and 4) can foster a transition to sustainable production and consumption models.

Scientists support the ban on glyphosate

Many independent scientists have published on the risks of glyphosate and glyphosate-based formulations on human health and the environment. They have stressed the significant gaps and shortcomings of the risk assessment carried out by EFSA and ECHA. Carcinogenicity, genotoxicity, neurotoxicity, oxidative stress, damage to the gut, endocrine disruption, certain ingredients of glyphosate, the long-term impact of glyphosate-based formulations (the ‘complete’ pesticides) and impacts on the environment (soil, water and biodiversity) have not been adequately addressed in EFSA’s assessment. Significant knowledge gaps, and also substantial scientific evidence show that a high level of protection from human health and the environment has not been demonstrated¹⁴.

The majority of respondents in the survey believe that the use of glyphosate, one of the most commonly used pesticides in the EU (e.g. Roundup), should be banned in the EU (62%), with as many as 70.49% in France and 68.33% in Germany favouring a ban on this pesticide.

11 https://zenodo.org/record/6461468#.Y_4YHuuZOoJ

12 https://zenodo.org/record/7472705#.Y_uv10uZOoJ

13 https://conbio.org/images/content_groups/Europe/Scientists_support_SUR_and_NRL_Full_Preprint11.7.2023.pdf

14 <https://www.pan-europe.info/expert-meeting-shows-glyphosate-not-safe-health-and-environment#>

Strong support to ban a pesticide if new evidence shows damage to health or environment

As many as 85% of respondents, with only minor variations across the surveyed EU member states, are in favour of halting the use of a pesticide if new scientific evidence emerges indicating that a particular pesticide may cause harm to human health and/or the environment – until more is known.

Citizens showed strong support for applying the precautionary principle, as taken up in EU pesticide legislation.

Respond to citizens and science by effective SUR

The European Commission published the draft Regulation on Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products (SUR)¹⁵ in June 2022 as part of its commitment to reducing pesticide use in the EU. The current Directive on the sustainable use of pesticides¹⁶ did not meet expected goals¹⁷, and with this new proposal, the Commission wants to achieve the reduction targets from the European Green Deal and its Farm to Fork¹⁸ and Biodiversity¹⁹ strategies.

The SUR sets legally binding targets at the EU level to reduce by 50% the use and risk of chemical pesticides as well as the use of more hazardous pesticides by 2030. The core of the SUR also includes full implementation of Integrated Pest Management and the protection of sensitive areas. The SUR is an urgently needed response to the concerns

of EU citizens about the risks of pesticide use to human health, the environment and biodiversity.

These concerns have been strongly confirmed by the current opinion poll.

This legislation is still being negotiated by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU. The proposed Regulation aims to establish a number of measures and rules to decrease the use and risks of pesticides, including:

- Legally binding targets to reduce by 50% the use and risk of chemical pesticides and the use of the more hazardous pesticides by 2030.
- Strict new rules to enforce environmentally

15 <https://www.pan-europe.info/eu-legislation/eu-pesticide-reduction-sustainable-use-regulation-sur>

16 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2009/128/2009-11-25>

17 Implementation assessment on SUD by the European Parliamentary Research Service (2018), Report on the SUD of the European Commission (2020) Report on the SUD of the European Court of Auditors (2020)

18 https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en

19 https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en

friendly pest control: a comprehensive new enforcement framework to ensure that all farmers practice Integrated Pest Management 'IPM'. IPM entails applying alternative methods of pest control first, before chemical pesticides can be used as a last resort measure, if an economic threshold is exceeded. This framework includes nationally legally binding crop-specific rules for the implementation of IPM.

- Ban or restriction on pesticides in sensitive areas, such as public areas and ecologically sensitive areas.
- Support by the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in 5-year transition period
- Mandatory training for all pesticide users.
- Increase access to biocontrol and other pesticide alternatives.

The SUR proposal has faced strong attempts to severely water down its key provisions. For example, the key provisions on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) face opposition, with many trying to weaken the obligations, such

as the provisions on binding crop-specific rules. However, it was exactly the lack of binding provisions and a clear framework on IPM that led to a lack of implementation of IPM through the Directive on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (dir. (EC) 128/2009, SUD), and hence to a severe lack of protection of citizens and the environment.

The Poll results show clear support of citizens for mandatory IPM rules (73% in favour). Further, 59% of respondents think farmers should always apply the measures which carry the least possible risk, or otherwise lose access to EU financial support. These results show a strong support of citizens for conditionality and a binding framework to prevent agricultural production from causing harm to human health and the environment.

The SUR proposal of the European Commission includes the implementation of 3m buffer zones around sensitive areas. A high percentage of Poll respondents (42% cumulatively) opt for much larger buffer zones (e.g., 1000 meters or 3000 meters) between sensitive areas and those where pesticides are used.

Key recommendations for policymakers

- Address the concerns of EU citizens.
- Apply the precautionary principle, as requested by EU law, to assure a high level of protection of human health and the environment.
- Preserve and strengthen the key provisions of the SUR proposal, including binding provisions on IPM and crop-specific rules, and extensive protection of sensitive areas. Buffer zones around sensitive areas should be as wide as possible, at least in the range of 100-500m and preferably wider, given the available information of pesticide drift and the risk

of pesticide exposure for human health and biodiversity. Also, houses, gardens and roads should be protected by wide buffer zones, since most citizens spend the largest amount of their time at home.

- Support a ban on Glyphosate, given the substantial scientific evidence on risks for human health and the environment on the one hand, and the substantial knowledge gaps on the other hand.
- Ambitiously address current gaps in EU pesticide authorization, to adequately protect citizens and the environment.

ANNEX 1: Methodology

The survey was conducted by the market research agency Ipsos, using Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) or online methodology. For the purpose of this survey, six EU Member States were chosen, taking into account geographical, climate, political and economic aspects, to provide a good indication of the views of EU citizens as a whole. The survey was conducted among samples of approximately 1,000 citizens per country.

Demographics: The survey includes responses from a total of 6059 participants. The participants are distributed among different countries, age categories, and gender.

Countries: Countries chosen for the survey are France, Germany, Denmark, Poland, Spain, and Romania, each contributing around 16-17% of the total respondents.

Age Categories: The age distribution is fairly balanced, with the highest percentage falling in the age group 60+ (25.1%), followed by 45-54 (17.6%), 35-44 (16.7%), 55-64 (16.3%), 25-34 (15.1%) and 18-24 (9.33%).

Gender: The survey participants are roughly evenly split between males (48.32%) and females (51.68%).

Time: The survey was conducted from 3 to 10 August 2023.

Agency: The partner agency that conducted the survey is [Ipsos](#). (European Public Affairs team).

Concerns and Attitudes: The survey addresses various concerns related to farming, food production, pesticides, and environmental impact. Participants were asked to express their level of concern and agreement/disagreement on these issues.

About Ipsos

Founded in 1975, Ipsos is the third largest market and public opinion research company in the world – and currently the only large global research company primarily managed by researchers and focused entirely on research. Headquartered in Paris, Ipsos maintains 250 locally incorporated offices across 90 countries globally, comprising a total of c20,000 employees.

The survey was conducted between 3 and 10 August 2023 in six EU Member States: France, Germany, Romania, Poland, Spain, and Denmark. In each country, the target population was adults aged 18 and over and the target sample size was 1,000 per country. In total, 6,059 interviews were completed across the six countries.

The survey was conducted using Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) or online methodology, with the sample drawn from Ipsos' nonprobability/volunteer Online Access Panels. Prospective respondents were randomly sampled, with quotas applied to ensure a representative sample. Quota sampling aims to represent the major characteristics of the population of interest by sampling a proportional amount of each. For this project, quotas were set, and the profile of the emerging sample was monitored, in terms of gender, age and region (not interlocked), based on the latest available population statistics.

To ensure a homogenous approach across countries and minimise potential errors, questionnaire programming, data cleaning, and analysis were fully centralised. Post-survey corrective weighting was applied to the data as follows: 1) "in country" or national weights were applied for each country surveyed, based upon gender, age group and geographic region; 2) cross-country weights were calculated to allow estimates to be obtained for the whole sample and for any combination of countries such that the weighted sample size for each country would be proportionate to the size of its eligible population.

About PAN Europe



PAN Europe works to eliminate dependency on chemical pesticides. We support agroecological farming methods that prevent pests and if needed use safe sustainable pest control methods. A substantial reduction in pesticide use is urgent to improve public and workers' health and protect the environment. The precautionary principle should be leading, for it is the basis of the EU pesticides law.

PAN Europe's vision is to achieve high agricultural productivity of healthy food by truly sustainable agricultural production systems in which agrochemical inputs and environmental damage are minimised, and where local people control local production using local varieties.

We are the European branch of the Pesticide Action Network active in 60 countries worldwide working to minimise the negative effects of hazardous pesticides and to replace their use with ecologically sound and socially just alternatives. PAN Europe brings together 47 consumer, public health, and environmental organisations, trades unions, women's groups and farmer associations from across Europe.

