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## RESULTS ANALYSIS

**from survey for the level of awareness and knowledge of EU policies, and in particular the work of the EP in areas of importance to citizens, the political nature of the EP and the upcoming European Parliament elections in 2019**

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PROJECT: "EUROPE IS HEARS YOUR VOICE - BE ACTIVE!"  
Grand agreement COMM/SUBV/2017/E/0003



## I. INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the results of a survey on the level of awareness and knowledge of EU policies, and in particular the work of the EP in areas of relevance to the citizens, the political nature of the EP and the upcoming 2019 European elections have been prepared under the project "Europe is hears your voice - BE ACTIVE!", Contract № COMM/SUBV/2017/E/0003, co-funded by the EP and Bratstvo 1869 Community Centre Kyustendil.

**Period of implementation:** 01.01.2018 – 30.06.2018

**Principal objective:** The main objective of the project is to raise citizens' awareness of one of the main institutions of the EU - the European Parliament, showing its role not only in promoting democratic decision-making in Europe but also in supporting the struggle for democracy, freedom of speech and expression and fair elections all over the world.

**Specific objective:**

- to promote and multiply among the citizens of South-West Bulgaria / Kyustendil region and Blagoevgrad region a better understanding of the identity, role and political nature of the EP as the only democratically elected EU institution, by organizing information campaigns in different towns and villages, publications in media and dissemination of information materials;



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- to pass on the active involvement of the EP in areas of relevance to EU citizens such as human rights, employment and social affairs, the environment, public health and food safety, the internal market and consumer protection, agriculture and development of rural regions, culture and education, etc., by organizing information campaigns in schools and training for young people;
- to disseminate information, promote dialogue on forthcoming EP elections and stimulate the participation of more citizens in it by organizing information campaigns and EP elections simulation.

**Target groups:**

- citizens from the regions of Kyustendil and Blagoevgrad
- young people aged over 17

**Activities:**

Activity 1. Conducting a survey

Activity 2. Television programs on "Do We Know the Structure and Activities of the European Parliament" and "EP Elections 2019"

Activity 3 Publications in electronic media

Activity 4. "Give your vote" Information campaign

Activity 5. "EP for the benefit of citizens" Training

Activity 6. Information campaign in Kyustendil and Blagoevgrad regions

Activity 7. Simulation of a Campaign "European Parliament elections 2019"

Activity 8. European Elections 2019 - promotional video clip

Activity 9. European Elections 2019 – promotional radio/audio clip

Activity 10. Visualization and publicity



## II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This analysis of the results is based on a survey conducted by Bratstvo 1869 Community Centre Kyustendil in the period January-February 2018 within the project "Europe Hears Your Voice - BE ACTIVE", co-funded by the European Parliament and Bratstvo 1869 Community Centre.

The survey was conducted at national level among citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria and its purpose was to investigate the level of awareness and knowledge of EU policies and in particular the work of the EP in areas of importance to citizens, the political nature of the EP and the forthcoming Euro elections in 2019.

For the purpose of the study was developed questionnaire, which was distributed in the form of a link among the citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria through the online tool Google Forms, through the networks, whose member is the community center - Regional Expert Consulting and Information Centers "Community Centers", Eurodesk, Europe Direct, Youth Information and Consultancy Centers through the website and the Facebook profile of the Bratstvo 1869 Community Centre Kyustendil.

The aim of the questionnaire was to reach as many citizens as possible from the whole country - students, youths, working people, unemployed, NGOs, community centres, schools, municipal and regional structures, media, representatives of ethnic communities, etc.



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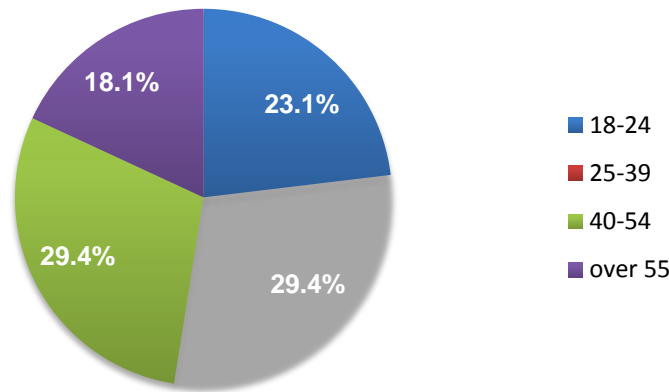
Citizens were asked questions about how well they are familiar with the work of the European Parliament, its status as a political institution, the structure and process of election of parliamentarians, as well as the attitudes of citizens to participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

This analysis has a national scope and summarizes the results of the 524 received questionnaires from citizens over the age of 18 from all over the country.

The results of the survey will be used as the basis for the next project activities and for defining specific topics to be promoted and debated through the media and during public events.

### III. INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITIZENS SURVEYED

Filled questionnaires from a total of 524 citizens across the country aged over 18 from all over the country.

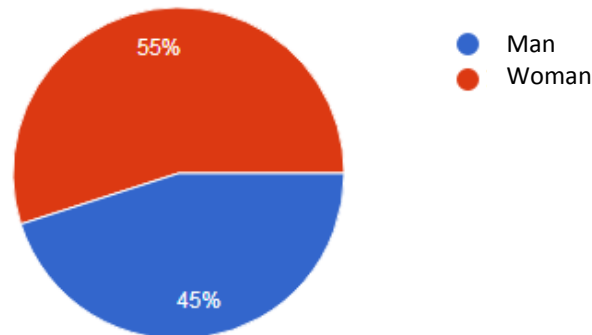


*Figure 1. Age of respondents*

Among respondents prevail participants aged 25-39 years and 40-54 whose percentage is the same - 29.4%. They are followed by respondents aged 18-24 - 23.1% and respondents aged over 55 - 18.1%

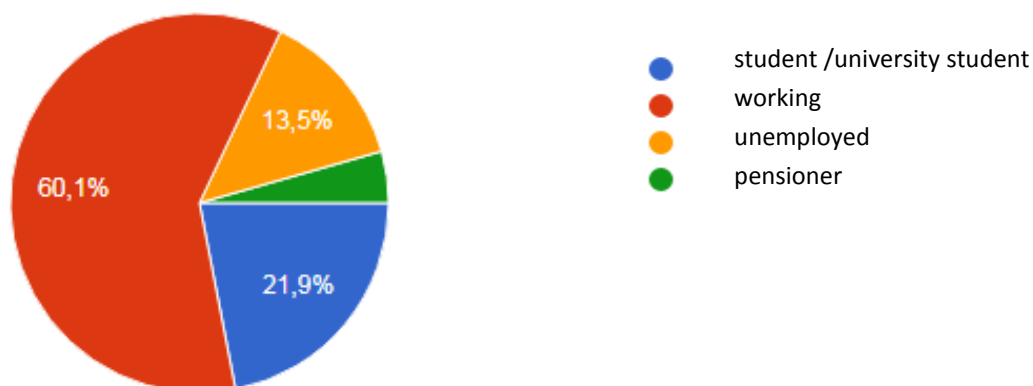
#### **Distribution by gender**

A higher number of respondents who filled the questionnaire were women - 55%, men 45%.



*Figure 2. Distribution by gender*

Among respondents dominate the working people - 60.1 percent. They are followed by students / students - 21.9%, unemployed - 13.5% and pensioners 4.5%



*Figure 3. Status of respondents*

### Geographic scope of the survey conducted

The respondents are from settlements from the Republic of Bulgaria - district centers, municipal centers, as well as small settlements:

Kyustendil	Ruse	Kardzhali	Targovishte
Blagoevgrad	Burgas	Stara Zagora	Dobrinishte
Sofia	Gabrovo	Velingrad	Debrashtitsa
Dupnitsa	Kneja	Yambol	Girchevci
Pernik	Rila	Kostandovo	Durankulak
Sandanski	Kozloduy	Haskovo	Satovcha
Plovdiv	Simitli	pazardzhik	Chuprene
Petrich	Silistra	Treklyano	Patalenitsa
Vidin	Kocherinovo	Septemvri	Professor Ishirkovo
Pleven	Vratza	Chirpan	Sovolyano
Sapareva Banya	Bansko	Belogradchik	Kochan
Razlog	Byala	Topolovgrad	Ognyanovo
Varna	Byala Slatina	Kopilovtsi	Tsarevets
Shumen	Sliven	Vaksevo	
Radomir	Dobrich	Nevestino	
Boboshevo	Belitsa	Brejani	
Bobov dol	Troyan	Sredishte	
Gotse Delchev	Svoге	Fotinovo	



Kozloduy	Zlatia	Straja	Zebil
Alfatar	General Todorov	Kuklen	Dolno Draglishte
Hadjidimovo	Gabrovo	Pobeda	Kraynitsi
Mikrevo	Feldfebel Denkovo	Dinkata	Krasen
Glojene	Marikostinovo	Dragovishtitsa	Kovachevo
Godlevo	Lyulyakovo	Granica	Razgrad
Krasen	Saparevo	Dulovo	Berkovitsa
Nikolichevtsi	Mezdra	Rouyno	Barakovo
Ravnogor	Shumen	Kresna	Strelcha
Lomnitsa	Parvomai	Smilets	Strajitsa
Kazanlak	Gabrene	Krumovgrad	Sitovo
Pazardzhik	Blagoevgrad	Kotlentsi	Montana
Obrochishte	Samokov	Primorsko	Kalugerovo
Voden	Sovolyano	Tavalichevo	Silistra
Targovishte	Svishtov	Sevlievo	Yabalkovo
Perushtitsa	Tryavna	Provadia	General Toshevo
Sestrimo	Vaklino	Bagrentci	Ivailovgrad
Ablanitsa	Slivnitsa	Varvara	Kavarna
Borovan	jilentsi	Pamidovo	Nikopol
Dimitrovgrad	Gorna Oryahovitsa	Lyulyakovo	Satovcha
Yakoruda	Mokrishte	Kardam	Banya
Karabunar	Garlyano	Bojurovo	Karnobat
Rila	Lesichevo	Samuilovo	Mezdra
Yambol	гр. Кърджали	Parvomai	Banya
Pazardzhik	Cherna	Kiten	USA
Zlatograd	Lovech	Pomorie	Austria
Rogozina	Benkovski	Kladentsi	
		Sinitovo	



## IV. SUMMARY OF RESULTS QUESTIONNAIRES

### Question "Do you know the activity of the EP?"

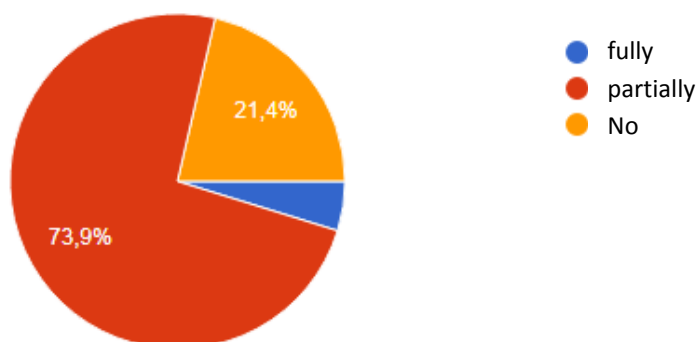


Figure 4.

From the received responses it is clear that 73.9% know of the EP, 21.4% do not know of EP and only 4.7% responded that they fully aware of its activities.

### Question "What is the mandate of MEPs?"

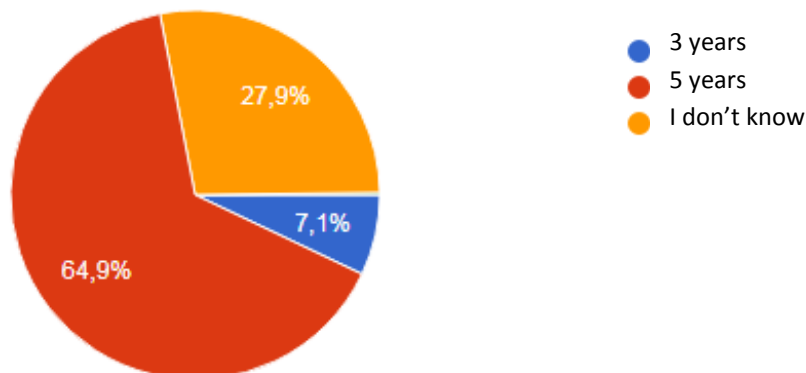


Figure 5.

64.9% of the respondents know that the mandate of MEPs is 5 years, but the percentage is high of respondents who answered they do not know - 27.9 percent.

### Question "How many are the political groups in this EP?"

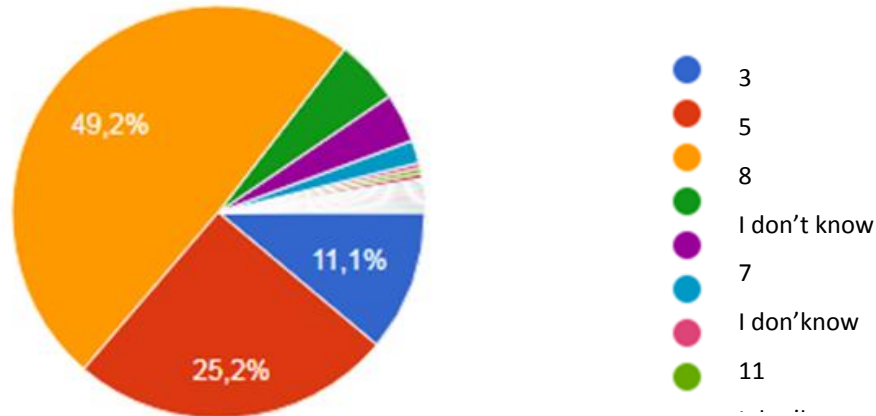


Figure 6.

Only half of the respondents (49.2%) know that the political groups in the European Parliament are 8, the other respondents' answers are distributed as follows:

- 25.2% think the political groups are 5
- 11.1% responded that the political groups were 3
- the remaining 14.5% responded that they did not know or said any other answer

### Question "Describe what are the powers of the EP?"

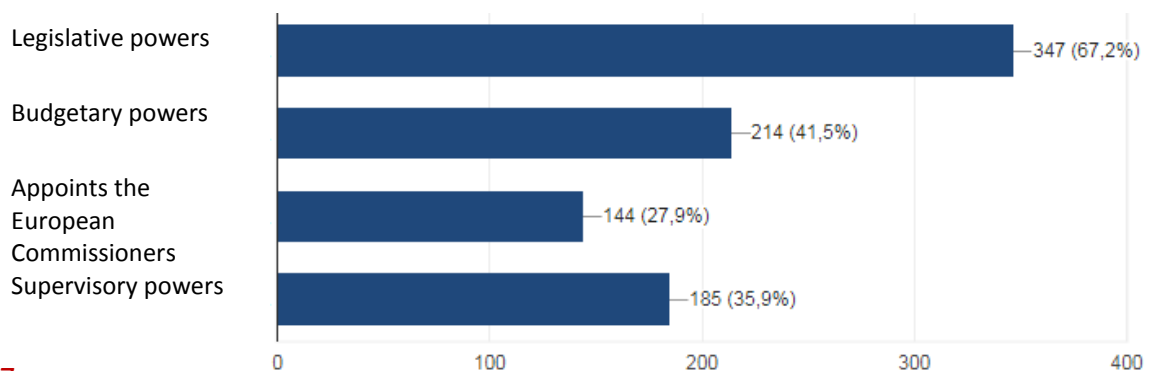
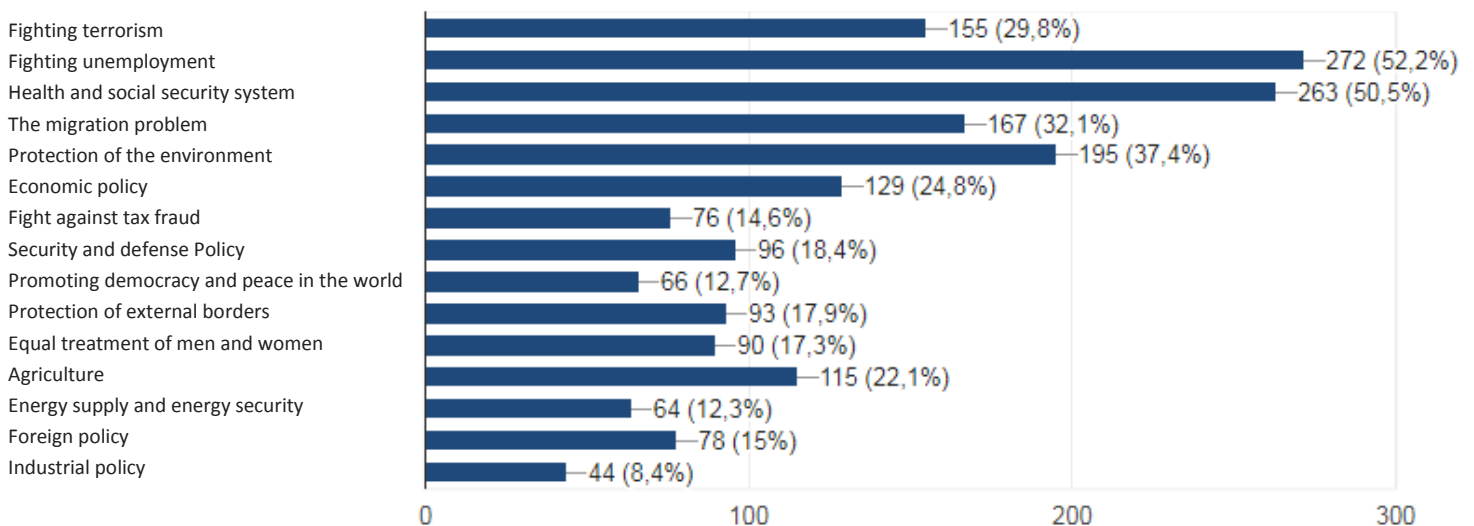


Figure 7.

- A large number of respondents are aware of the powers of the European Parliament:
- 67.2% responded to "legislative powers"
- 41.5% responded to "budget powers"
- 35.6% responded to "supervisory powers"

**Question "Among the topics or policies that are being discussed in the European Parliament, for which you would like to get more information?"**



*Figure 8.*

From the responses received it is clear that the themes and policies that citizens are interested priority are:

- Fighting unemployment - 52.2%
- Health and social security system - 50.5%
- Protection of the environment - 37.4%
- The migration problem - 32.1%

- Fighting terrorism - 29.8%
- Economic policy - 24.8%
- Agriculture - 22.1%
- Security and defense Policy - 18.4%
- Protection of external borders - 17.9%
- Equal treatment of men and women - 17.3%
- Foreign policy - 15%
- Fight against tax fraud -14.6%
- Promoting democracy and peace in the world - 12.7%
- Energy supply and energy security - 12.3%
- Industrial policy- 8.4%

**Question "Which of the following is the best way our voice to be heard?"**

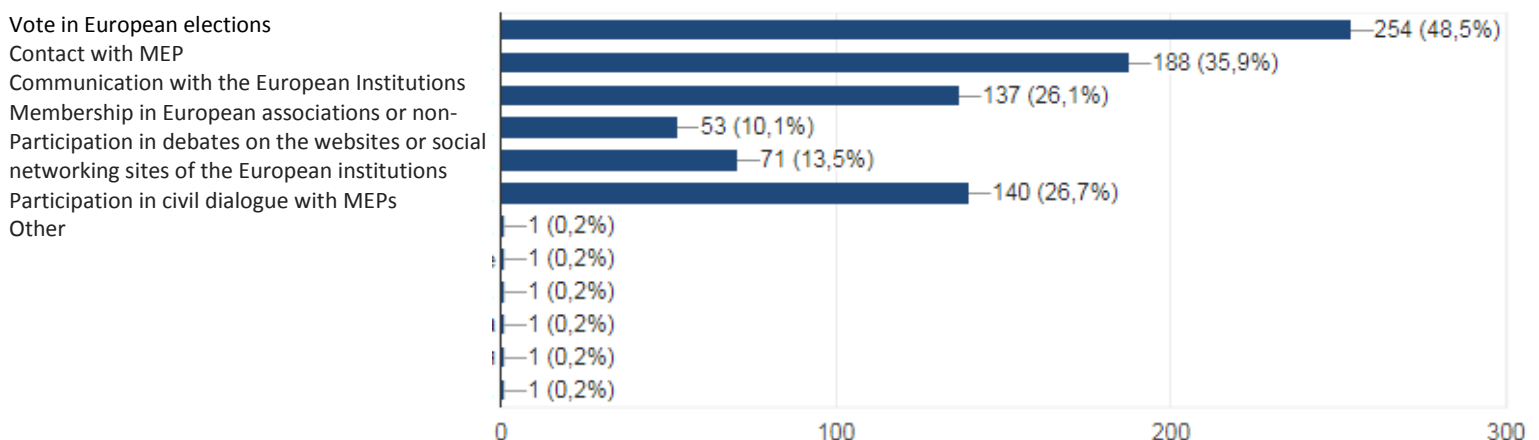
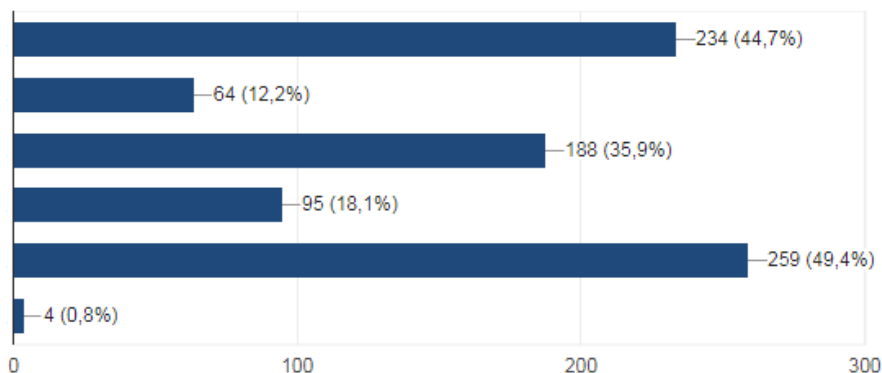


Figure 9.

- 48.5% of respondents believe that by voting in European elections their voice will be heard;
- For 35.9% of respondents, contact with a MEP is important;
- 26.7% mentioned as a response participation in civil dialogue with MEPs;
- 26.1% noted the answer "communication with the European institutions";
- 13.5% believe that their voice will be heard if they engage in debates on the websites or social networking sites of the European institutions;
- For 10.1% of respondents, membership in European associations or non-governmental organizations is important.
- Among the answers given below, which are below 1%, the answers of the respondents predominate - I have no opinion, I have no idea, etc.

**Question "Choose the right statement for the EP. (more than one response is possible)**

The European Parliament elects the candidate for President of the European Commission by a majority of its component members  
Each Member State has an equal number of members in the European Parliament  
National political parties compete in EP elections  
When MEPs are elected, most of them decide to join transnational political groups  
Every five years, EU citizens choose who to represent them in the European Parliament  
Other



*Figure 10.*

The answers received from the respondents give an idea of the degree of citizen awareness and knowledge of the activities of the European Parliament:

- 49.4% of the respondents have stated the correct assertion that every five years EU citizens choose who to represent them in the European parliament
- 44.7% have indicated the correct assertion that the European Parliament elects the candidate for President of the European Commission by a majority of its constituent members
- 35.9% have indicated the correct assertion that national political parties compete in EP elections
- 18.1% have indicated the correct assertion "When MEPs are elected, most of them decide to join transnational political groups"
- 12.2% of respondents believe that each Member State has the same number of members in the European Parliament

### Question "How much do you agree or disagree with each assertion?"

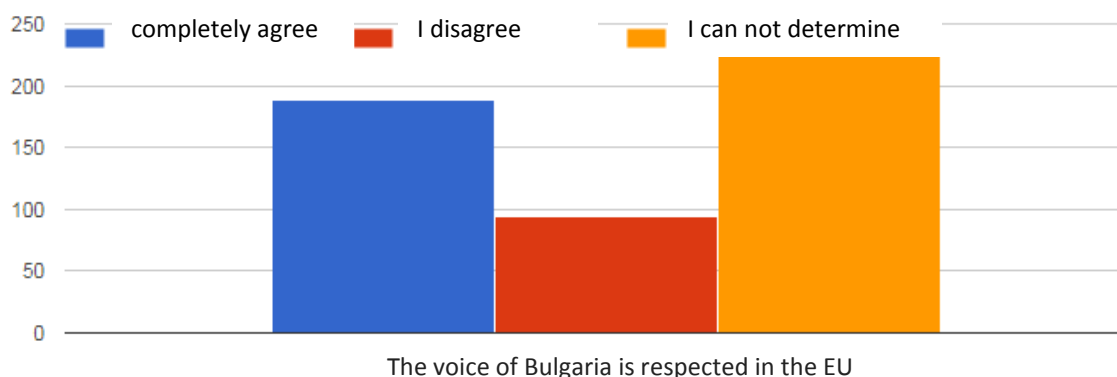
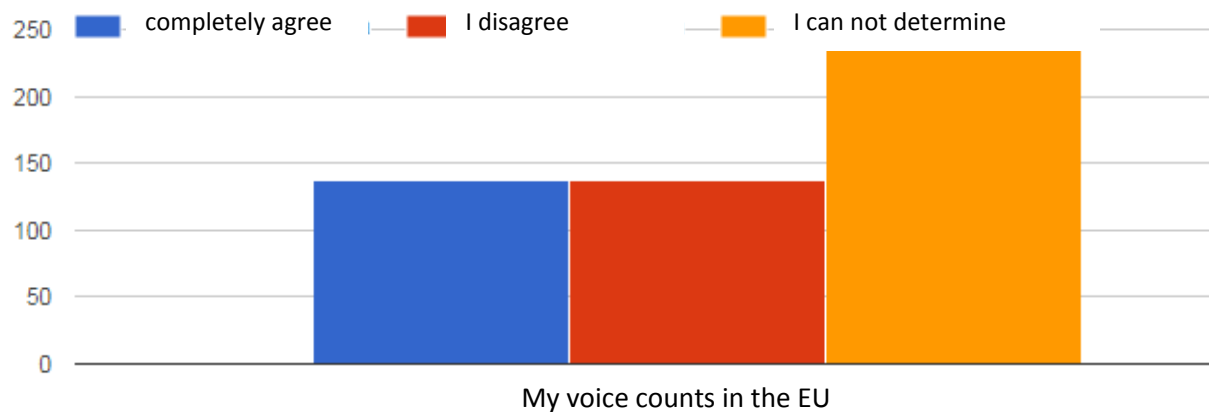


Figure 11.

A large number of respondents can not determine whether Bulgaria's voice is respected in the EU.

The second preferred answer is for respondents who believe that Bulgaria's voice is respected in the EU.

The third preferred answer is for respondents who believe that Bulgaria's voice does not count in the EU.



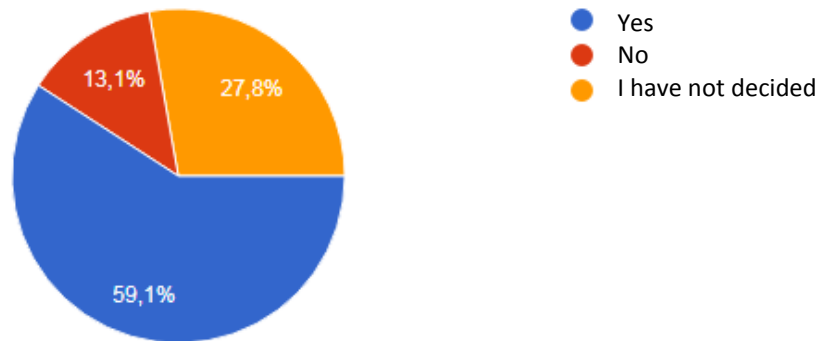
*Figure 12.*

Similar responses were received from respondents in terms of the statement "My voice counts in the EU".

The largest is the number of citizens who can not determine whether their voice is respected in the EU.

An equal number of votes received the other two responses - "Totally agree" and "Do not agree".

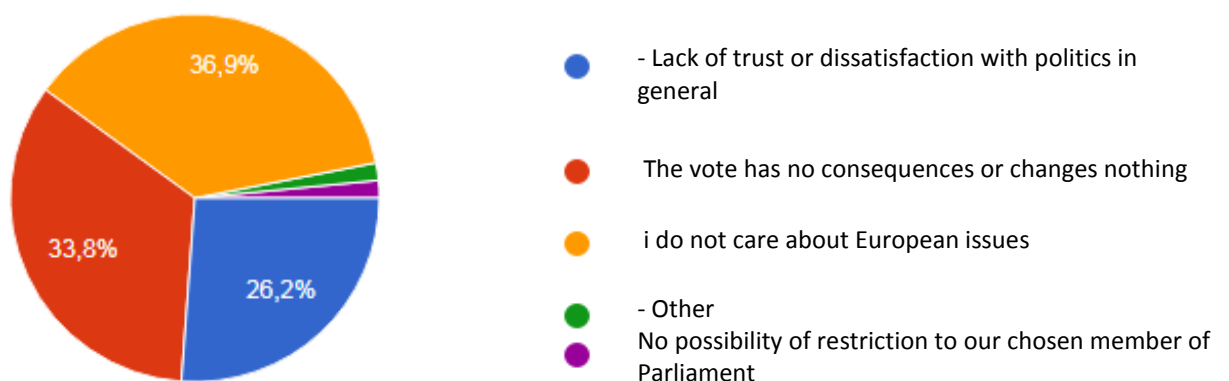
**Question "Will you participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections for Parliament in 2019?"**



*Figure13.*

More than half of the respondents - 59.1% responded with "Yes" who would participate in the EP elections in 2019, 27.8% of the respondents answered "I have not decided" and the percentage of those who hesitate is 13.1%.

65 respondents answered "No", 36.9% said they were not interested in European affairs, 33.8% said the vote did not change anything, 26.2% did not trust and were not satisfied with politics as a whole.



*Figure 14.*



"Yes" answered 309 respondents, being able to choose up to 3 answers the question "What is your motivation to participate in elections?".

Получени са следните отговори:

- I exercise my civil right to vote - 79.3%
- because I can contribute to change - 37.2%
- because I am feel European or EU citizen – 35.9%
- I am interested in EU issues - 29.1%
- To support a particular political party that I sympathize - 5.2%
- Oher -0.3%

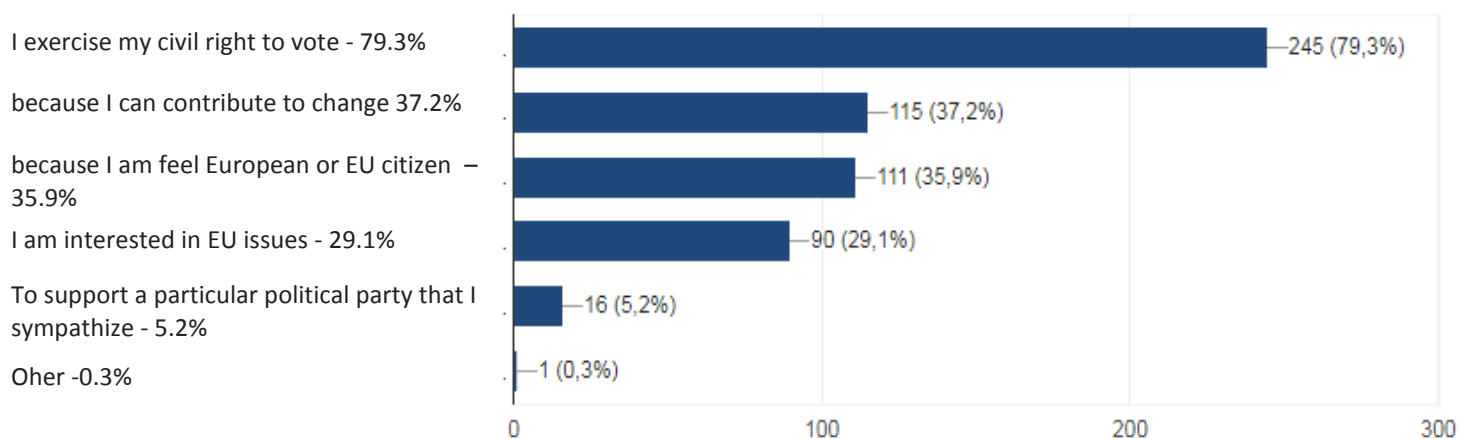


Figure 15.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the survey conducted:

1. The percentage of women and men included in the study is almost equal - 55% of women and 45% of men.
2. Among the respondents, the population aged 25-39, 40-54 and 18-24, who are working, students and students in university and unemployed, the most economically active part of the population, predominate among the respondents.
3. Citizens surveyed who have the right to vote in elections to the European Parliament are not well aware of the EP's activities, functions, structure and powers. This shows the need to raise citizens' awareness of the EP as an institution that plays an important role in the life of the citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria as a member state.
4. The percentage of respondents who have not decided whether to participate in the EP elections is high - 40.9%. They have said "No" or "I have not decided" answers. Among the most often cited reasons are "lack of trust or dissatisfaction in terms of policy as a whole", "voting has no or nothing to change" and "I do not care about European issues." The responses indicate poor motivation and lack of interest in the upcoming European elections and the need for actions that affect the citizens so that they become active and participate in the upcoming EP elections.

5. The percentage of respondents who responded to the statements "The voice of Bulgaria is respected in the EU" and "My voice is respected in the EU" have been highlighted as "I can not determine" and "I disagree". Summarized answers indicate mistrust and skepticism towards the EU, which defines low interest and low motivation to participate in the upcoming European elections in 2019.
6. According to respondents, the best way to hear their voice is to „Vote on European elections”, „Contact with MEPs”, „Participate in civil dialogue with MEPs” and „Participate in debates on websites or social networking sites of the European institutions”.
7. Respondents who have answered "Yes" to the question "Will you participate in the upcoming EP elections in 2019" have argued that they have stated as a priority "I fulfill my civil right to vote", "because I can contribute for change ", " because I feel European or the EU citizen "and" I am interested in EU issues".

In conclusion it can be said that citizens need:

- more information about the structure, political nature, functions, powers, activity, etc. of the European Parliament;
- increasing their motivation to decide to vote in the upcoming elections in 2019;
- increasing their activity in the political life of the EU, showing the importance of EP activities for the different spheres of citizens' lives;

- Increasing confidence in the European Union as a whole, because a strong European Parliament means more influence for each of us, making decisions that affect the life and everyday life of each one of us, greater opportunities to deal with the challenges, more opportunities for changing what needs change, more confidence in keeping what we want to keep.

And last but not least we expect to influence and increase the turnout at EP elections in 2019 in Kyustendil District.



*The current analysis does not claim to be comprehensive and national representation, and provides a snapshot of the awareness of respondents about the functions and activities of the EP and the attitudes of citizens to vote in the upcoming elections.*

*The responsibility for this study is at the Bratstvo 1869 Community Centre Kyustendil and in no way reflects the official opinion of the European Parliament.*