Special Eurobarometer: How fair do Europeans think life in the EU is?

According to the Eurobarometer, a majority of Europeans think that most things that happen in their lives are fair and that they have equal opportunities to get ahead. Nevertheless, they have concerns about the equal application of justice and political decisions in their country. The vast majority also feel that income inequalities are too great and governments should address them, while less than half believe that equality of opportunity and their social status have improved over time.

Do we all have the same opportunities in life?

People are more likely to perceive things to be fair if they are better educated, younger, and better-off.

Respondents are less optimistic about fairness in specific fields.

Justice always prevails over injustice.

Political decisions are applied consistently to all citizens.

(*) Substantial regional disparities in answers.
Are differences in income acceptable?

Income differences are too great

- 96% (EU average)
- 94% (Austria)
- 59% (France)
- 51% (Sweden)

Governments should take measures to reduce differences.

- 84% (EU average)
- 81% (Austria)
- 96% (France)
- 51% (Sweden)

What helps in getting ahead in life?

- Knowing the right person: 92%
- Working hard: 93%
- Education: 94%
- Health: 98%

- Being of a specific birth gender: 46%
- Being of a specific ethnic origin: 52%
- Having political connections: 56%
- Coming from a wealthy family: 64%

How have opportunities to get ahead changed?

Opportunities to get ahead have become more equal compared to 30 years ago.

- 46% (EU average)
- ≥70% (EU average)
- ≤25% (EU average)

What do citizens think of immigration and globalisation?

- Globalisation is a good thing:
  - 47% Agree
  - 21% Disagree

- Immigration is a good thing:
  - 39% Agree
  - 33% Disagree

For more information: