



promoting youth involvement and  
social engagement

## **PROMISE: Promoting Youth Involvement and Social Engagement: Opportunities and challenges for ‘conflicted’ young people across Europe.**

# **Collection of short comparative country reports – PORTUGAL**

**Summary:** The full report presents a collection of standardised country reports from the ten partner countries involved in PROMISE. Using the most recent data available from macro-indicators and surveys, each country report provides a national baseline of the attitudes, activities and social involvement of young people. The macro-indicators used to describe the national context are used consistently throughout to allow comparison.

In particular, each country report provides an overview of the general ‘state of the country’s health’; the situation that young people face; how young people feel about their situation; and what, if anything, they are doing to change it.

We employ a concept of social and political engagement developed for PROMISE that includes four dimensions of engagement: civic activism, formal political participation, activism, and everyday engagement.

This report (Portugal) should be read in conjunction with the Introduction and Appendices document. It was submitted to the EC as part of deliverable D9 (D4.3).

The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, under Grant Agreement no. 693221.



# Portugal




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Population	10,324,611
Population aged 15-29 years old	16.0 %
Population aged 65 years old and above	21.1 %
Birth Rate	8.3
International migrant stock as a percentage of the total population	8.1 %

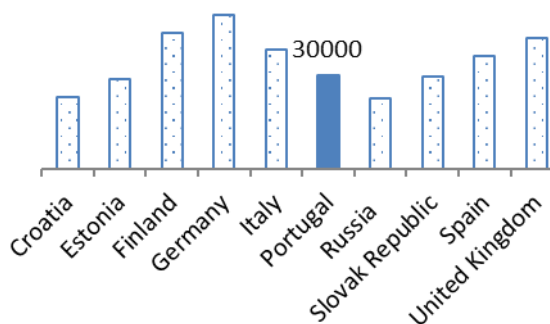
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## 1. Standards of living in Portugal<sup>1</sup>

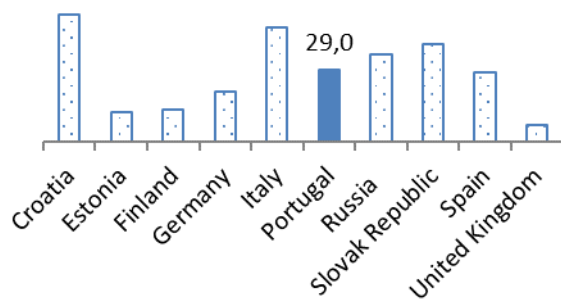
Portugal's economic situation is stabilising in the past couple of years but there is still a reduced overall competitiveness in the economy.

The gross national income per capita (GNI) in Portugal is 30000 (Fig.1.1) and 9.9% of the labour force is currently unemployed (Fig.1.3). Doing business in Portugal is not easy (Fig.1.2). However, the perceived corruption in Portugal was lower than average (global average Corruption Perception Index score in 2016 was a paltry 43) and the perceived Government effectiveness was relatively high (Fig.1.4, Fig1.5).

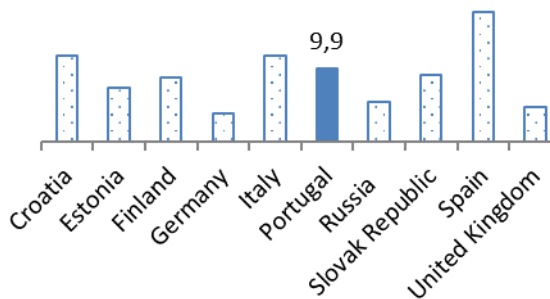
**Fig. 1.1 GNI per capita, PPP (current international \$), 2016**



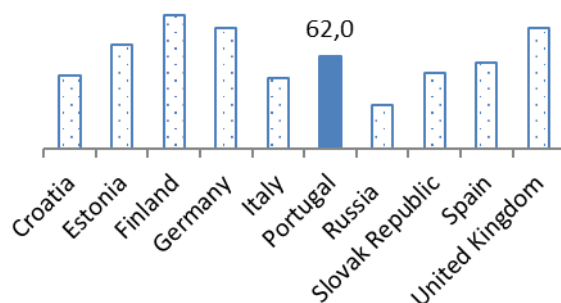
**Fig. 1.2 Ease of doing business index (1=most business-friendly regulations), 2017**



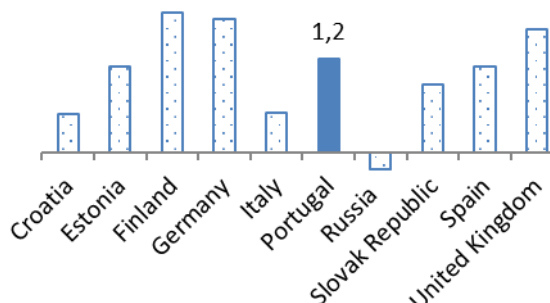
**Fig. 1.3 Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate), 2017**



**Fig. 1.4 Corruption Perception Index - Transparency International (1 to 100; 1= high corruption perceived), 2016**

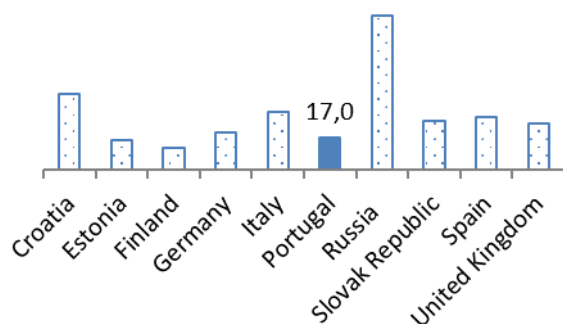


**Fig. 1.5 Government Effectiveness: Estimate, 2014 (-2,5 to 2,5 -2,5=very low effectiveness perceived)**

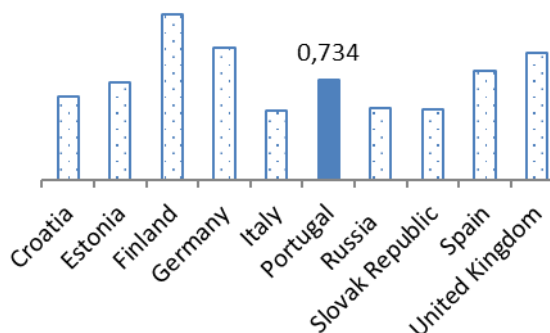


<sup>1</sup> Last available data. Sources: World Bank; Transparency International; Freedom House; Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum); Eurostat; OECDStats. See Appendix for detailed references.

**Fig. 1.6 Freedom of the press (0=best, 100=worst), 2017**



**Fig. 1.7 Global Gender Gap Index (0 to 1, 1= gender equality), 2017**

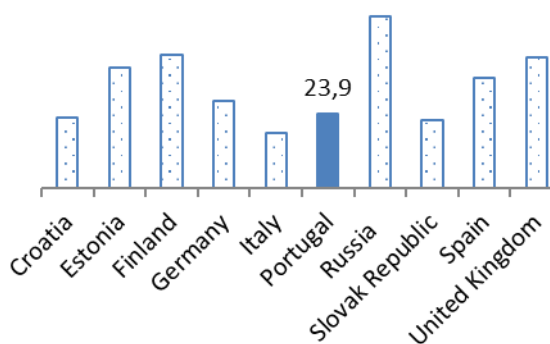


The Freedom House defines freedom of the press as “a media environment where coverage of political news is robust, the safety of journalists is guaranteed, state intrusion in media affairs is minimal, and the press is not subject to onerous legal or economic pressures”. According to these criteria, the press in Portugal is not completely free (17) (Fig.1.6), but it is still among PROMISE project’s countries with the highest freedom of the press.

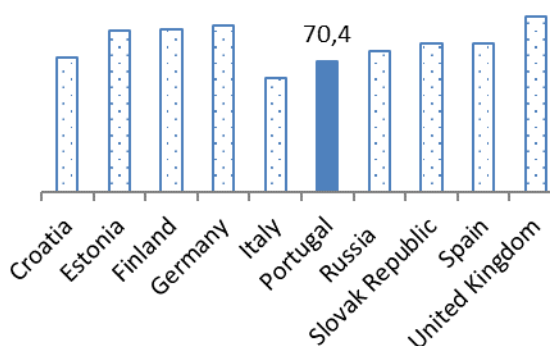
Portugal’s Gender Gap Index is 0.73 which places Portugal in the middle among the PROMISE project’s countries (Fig.1.7) and ranks it at position 33 out of 144 in the Global Gender Gap Report 2017.

Portugal has medium share of population with tertiary education (23.9%) and of internet users (70%) (Fig.1.8, Fig.1.9).

**Fig. 1.8 % People with tertiary education (25-64 years old), 2016**



**Fig. 1.9 Internet users (per 100 people), 2016**



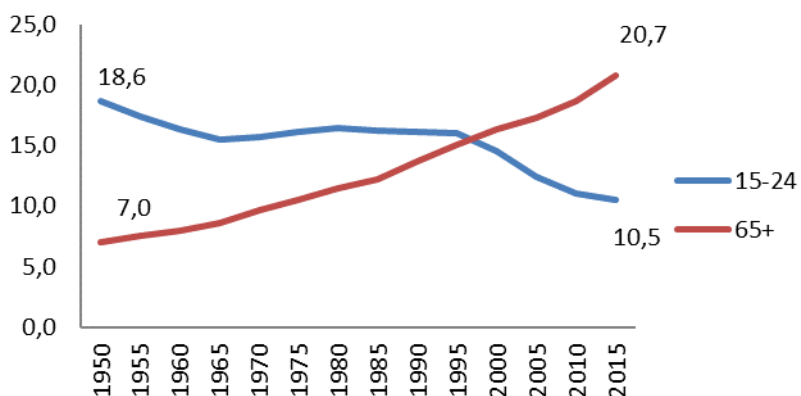
## 2. Being young in Portugal

### 2.1 Demographic situation

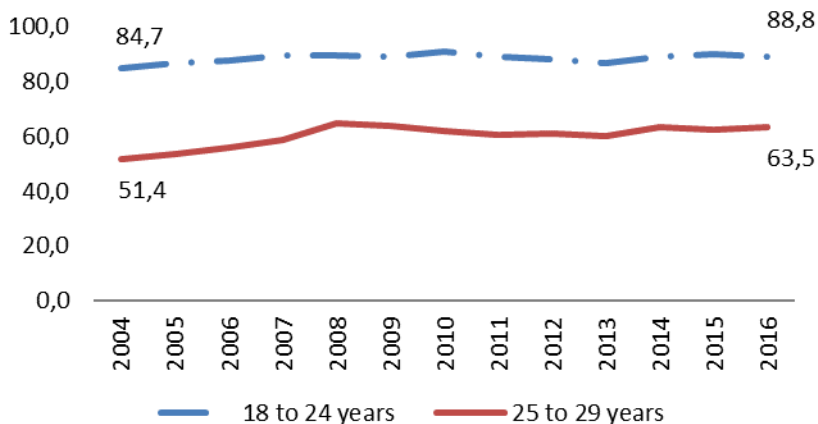
The demographic transition in Portugal reflects in a complete overturn of the share of the youngest and oldest age-groups in the population. In the past 65 years, the proportion of youth aged 15-24 dropped from 19% to 10%, while the share of the people older than 65 years increased from 7% to 21%, and nowadays they represent more than one fifth of the Portuguese population (Fig.2.1).

In the past 12 years the share of youth aged 25-29 years who still live with their parents increased from 51.4% to 62.4% (Fig.2.2).

**Fig. 2.1. Demographic trends in Portugal 1950-2015:  
proportion of people aged 15-24 years old vs 65  
years old and more**

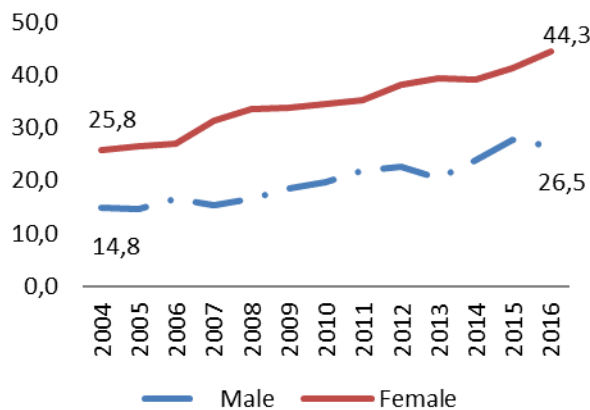


**Fig. 2.2 Percent of young people (18-29 years old)  
living with parents 2004-2016**



## 2.2 Education & Labour market in Portugal

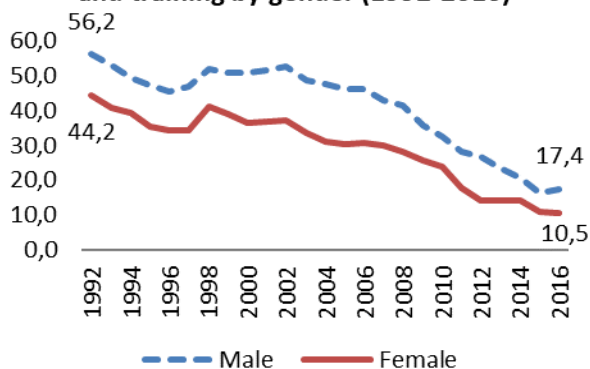
**Fig. 2.3 Percentage of young people aged 25-29 with tertiary education (2004-2016) by gender**



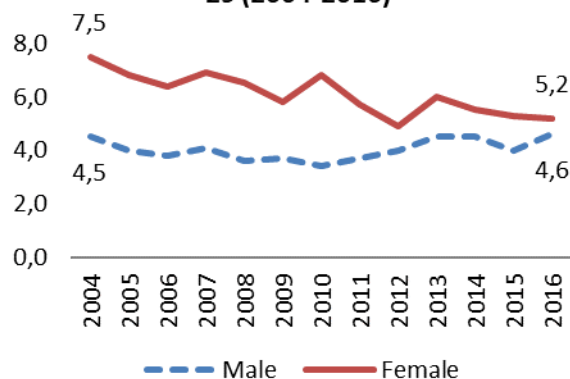
Since 2004, the share of youth with a tertiary education steadily increased, particularly in the case of women: today almost 45% of the women between 25-29 years old have a university degree (Fig.2.3).

The Portuguese school system made many efforts to keep more youth in education: since 1992 the percentage of early school leavers decreased from about 50% to 13%, and again women appear to be more engaged in the school system (Fig.2.4). Considering a broader age group (15-29 years old), the share of youth who is not in employment, education, training (NEET), is somewhat bigger in the case of women (although over the past twelve years this has dropped overall from 7.5% to 5.2%), and was quite stable over the same period in the case of men (about 4.5%). Over the time-period, the percentage of NEET women fluctuated much more than that of NEET men (Fig.2.5).

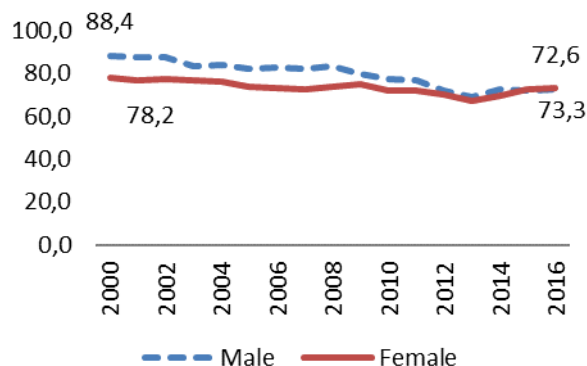
**Fig 2.4 Early leavers from education and training by gender (1992-2016)**



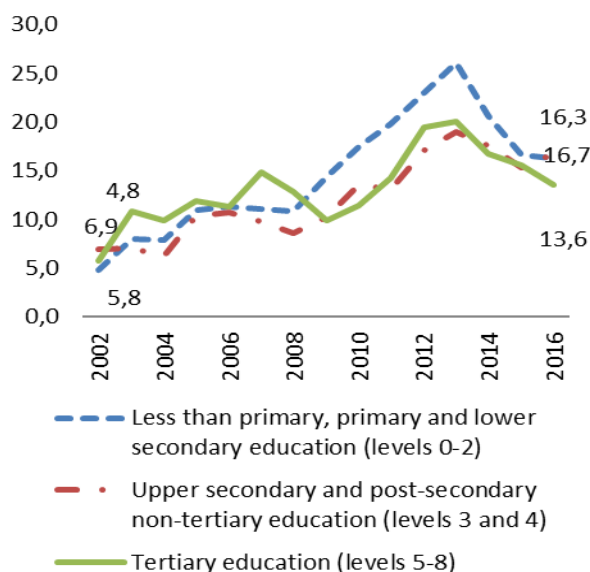
**Fig. 2.5 Percentage of NEET aged 15-29 (2004-2016)**



**Fig. 2.6 Youth (25-29 years old)  
employment by gender (2000-2016)**



**Fig. 2.7 Portugal's youth  
unemployment rate (25-29 years old)  
by educational attainment (2012-  
2016)**

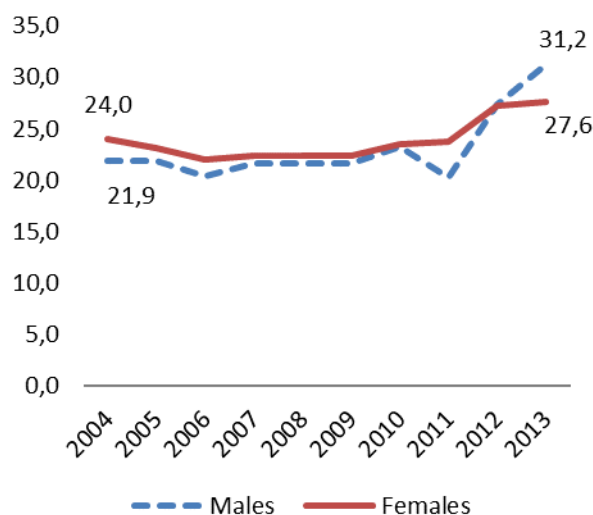


Regardless of gender, currently more than one out of four Portuguese youth aged 25-29 years old are not employed (Fig.2.6). Moreover, there has been a negative trend in employment rates over the past 16 years, especially in the case of men.

This overall rise in Portuguese youth unemployment rates is evident regardless of educational attainment (Fig. 2.7). Between 2007 and 2013 there was a more rapid increase in unemployment rates, especially among youth with the lowest educational level (from 4.8% to 26%). But since 2013 there was a notable decrease in unemployment rates, again more pronounced among youth with the lowest educational level.

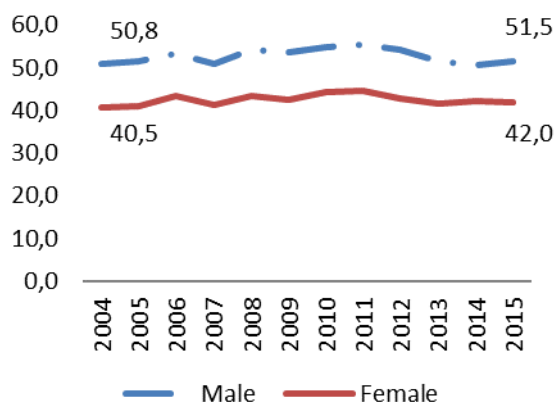
Almost one third of the Portuguese youth is at risk of poverty (Fig.2.8), and the trends for both genders were quite stable until 2010. However, in 2011 the risk of poverty dropped – particularly for men – and since then has increased markedly.

**Fig. 2.8 Portuguese youth at risk of  
poverty or exclusion rate by gender  
(2004-2013)**



## 2.3 Health and well-being

**Fig. 2.9 Percentage of young people who perceive their health as good/very good by gender (2004-2015)**



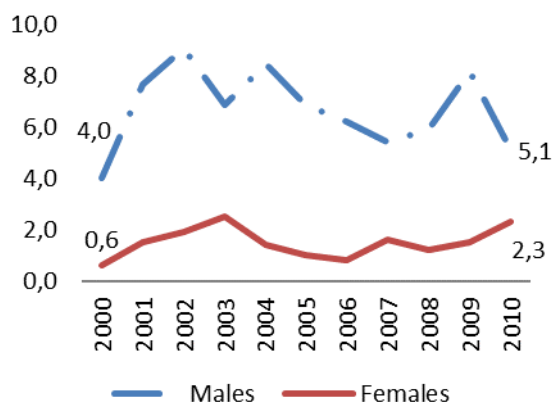
About 50% of Portuguese men and about 40% of Portuguese women perceive their health as good or very good, and this trend is steady between 2004 and 2015 (Fig. 2.9). At the same time, in the oldest group of youth (aged 25-29) four times more women than men reported depressive symptoms, while in younger age groups there were no such gender differences (Fig. 2.10).

The suicide rate is generally higher for men than women. (Fig. 2.11). Among women, there were moderate peaks in the suicide rate in 2003, 2007 and 2010, while among men there were evident peaks in 2002, 2004 and 2009. There is a slight overall increase in the rates for both genders.

**Fig. 2.10 Percentage of youth with current depressive symptoms by gender and age group (2014)**



**Fig. 2.11 Crude death rate per hundred thousand inhabitants by suicide of young people (2000-2010)**



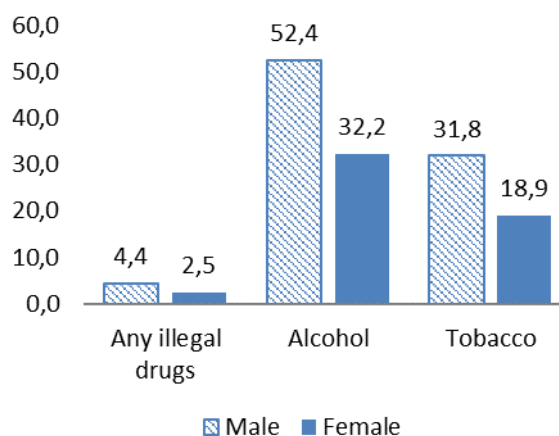


## 2.4 Use of Substances and Crime

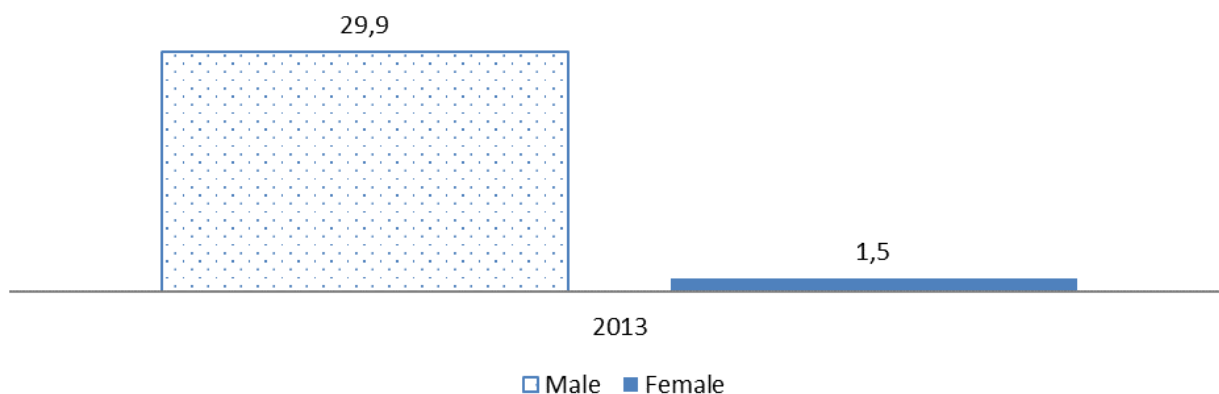
In 2015 (Fig. 2.12) about 42% of the Portuguese youth admitted to having consumed alcohol in the last month, about 25.5% of them smoked tobacco, and 3.5% used illegal drugs. Men tend to use these substances more than women do, and the difference is especially evident for alcohol consumption.

In 2013, there were imprisoned 30 men per hundred thousand inhabitants and 1.5 women per hundred thousand inhabitants (Fig. 2.13).

**Fig. 2.12. Percentage of aged 15-29 who in the last month used... ( 2015)**



**Fig. 2.13 Juvenile prisoners per hundred thousand inhabitants (2013) by gender**



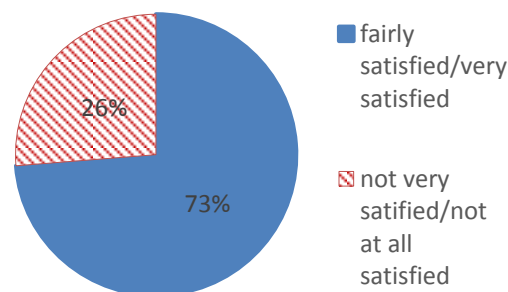
### 3. What do young people in Portugal think and feel?

This section aims to provide an overview of the young Portuguese perception and evaluation about the current situation in their country, and how they feel in such context. Young people in Portugal appear satisfied with the way democracy works in their country, although most of them express distrust in political parties. The majority of young people in Portugal are dissatisfied with the national economy and employment opportunities, and have the feeling that they have been marginalised by the economic crisis. Also, they do not perceive that they are being heard, either at the national or at the European level. However, most of the Portuguese youth declare to be satisfied with their life, and hold optimistic views of their own future as well as the future of next generations in Portugal and in the EU. Also, young people in Portugal express trust in Law and Order institutions, and think that immigrants positively contribute to Portugal and that country should help refugees.

#### 1.1 Perception of opportunity/constraints

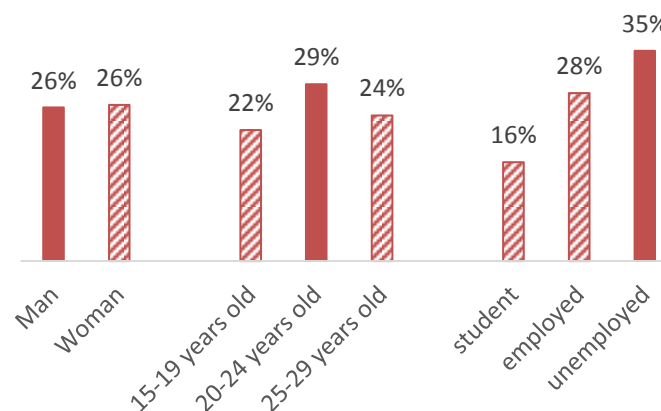
##### 3.1.1 Portuguese and European situation

**Fig. 3.1. Are you satisfied with the way democracy works in Portugal?**

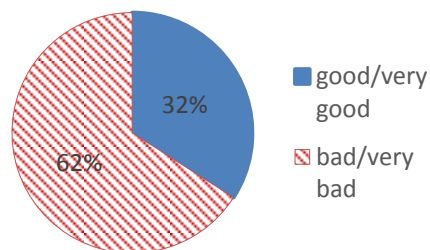


About three quarters of young respondents are satisfied with the way democracy works in Portugal, without major gender and age differences (Fig.3.1, Fig.3.2). Unemployed youth show the highest levels of dissatisfaction (35%). (Fig.3.2).

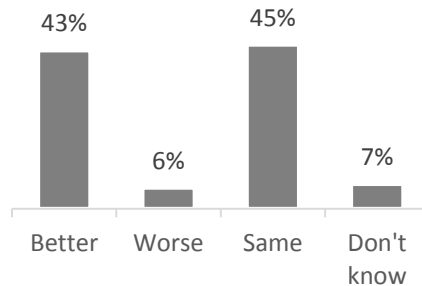
**Fig. 3.2 Young people not satisfied with democracy in Portugal by gender, age, employment status (%)**



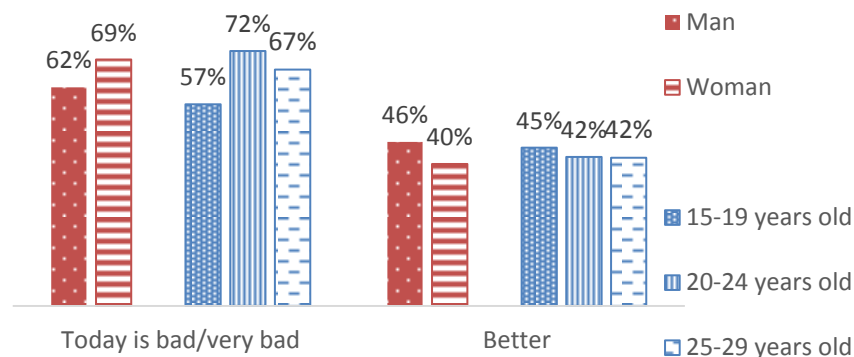
**Fig. 3.3 How would you rate the situation of the Portuguese economy**



**Fig. 3.4 What are your expectations for the next 12 months: the Portuguese economy will be...**

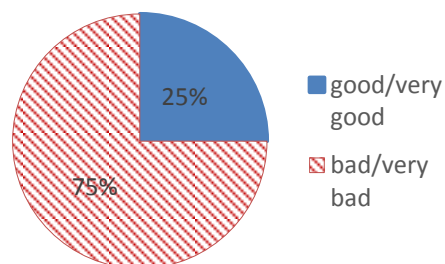


**Fig. 3.5 Evaluation on the current Portuguese economy and expectations for the future by gender and age**

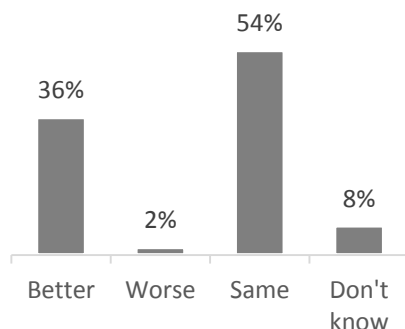


62% of the Portuguese youth rate negatively the Portuguese economy (Fig. 3.3) and the 75% rate negatively employment situation (Fig. 3.6). While about half of Portuguese youth think that the situation will not change in the next year, about 40% of Portuguese youth hold optimistic expectations that the economy and the employment situation will be better (Fig. 3.4, Fig. 3.7). Women and youth aged 20-24 years old are the most critical of the current economic situation, while expectations of future positive changes in the economy and employment are pretty much same regardless of gender and age (Fig. 3.5, Fig. 3.8).

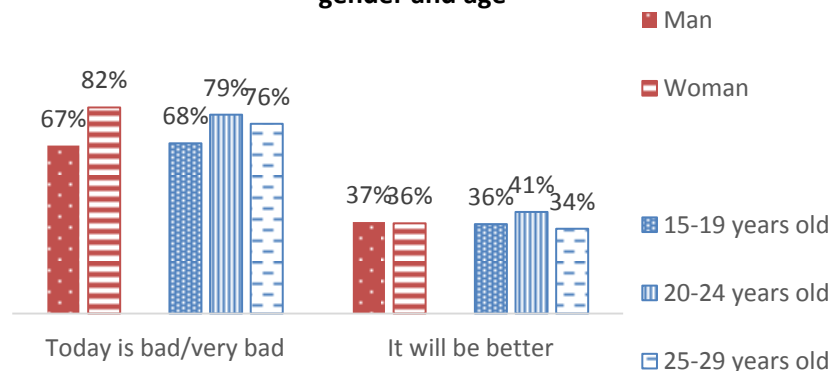
**Fig. 3.6 How would you rate the employment situation in Portugal?**



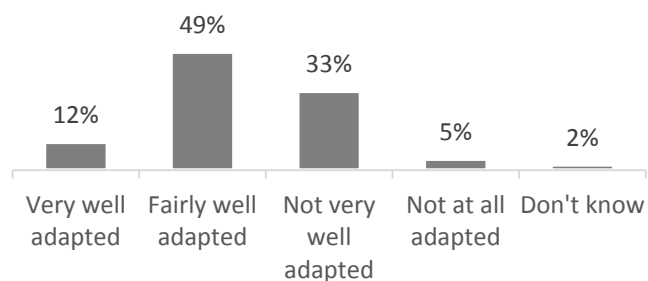
**Fig. 3.7 What are your expectations for the next 12 months: the employment situation in Italy will be...**



**Fig. 3.8 Evaluation on the current Portuguese employment, and expectations for the future by gender and age**

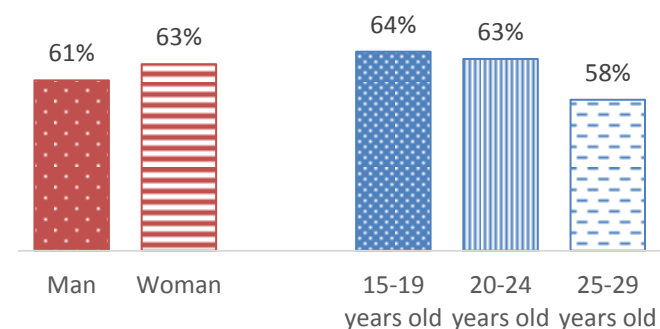


**Fig. 3.9 Do you think that in Portugal the education system is adapted or not to the current world of work?**



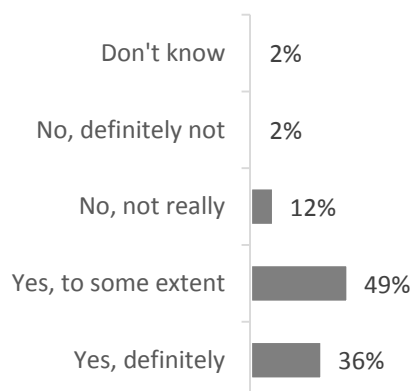
The majority of Portuguese youth think that the education system is well (very or fairly) adapted to the needs of the labour market (Fig. 3.9), although such opinion is less prevalent among those aged 25-29 years (Fig. 3.10).

**Fig. 3.10 "The education system is well adapted to the current world of work", by age and gender**

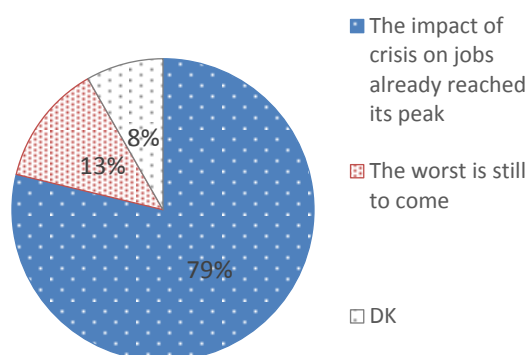


The majority of young people in Portugal (85%) think that youth have been marginalised by the economic crises (Fig. 3.11), whereas for about 80% of them the impact of the economic crisis on the job market has already reach the peak (Fig. 3.12). Such opinion is more prevalent among those aged 25-29 years (Fig. 3.13).

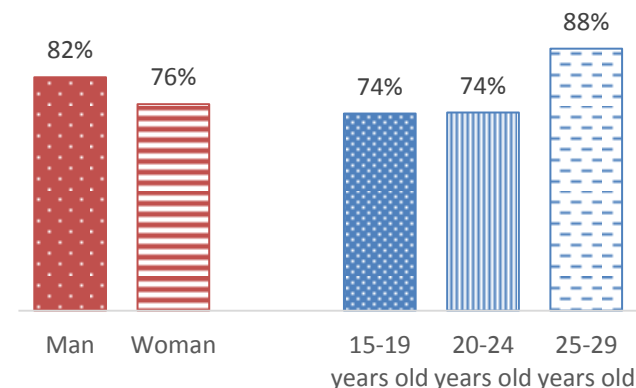
**Fig. 3.11 Do you have the feeling that young people have been marginalized by the economic crisis**



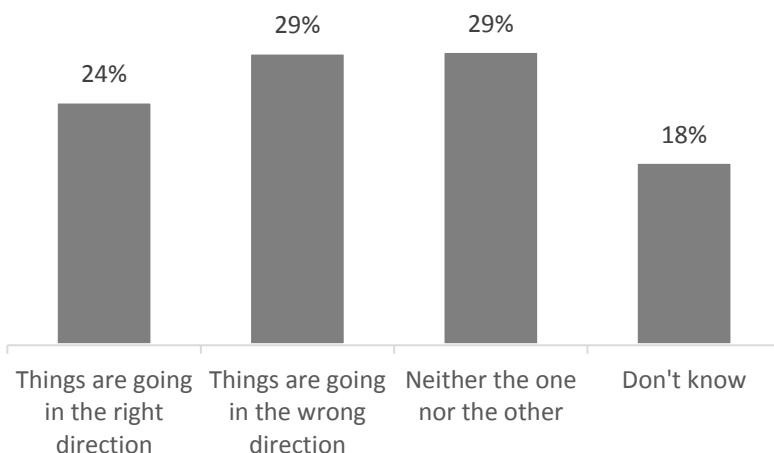
**Fig. 3.12 What to you think about the impact of the economic crisis on the job market?**



**Fig. 3.13 "The impact of crisis on jobs already reached its peak", by age and gender**



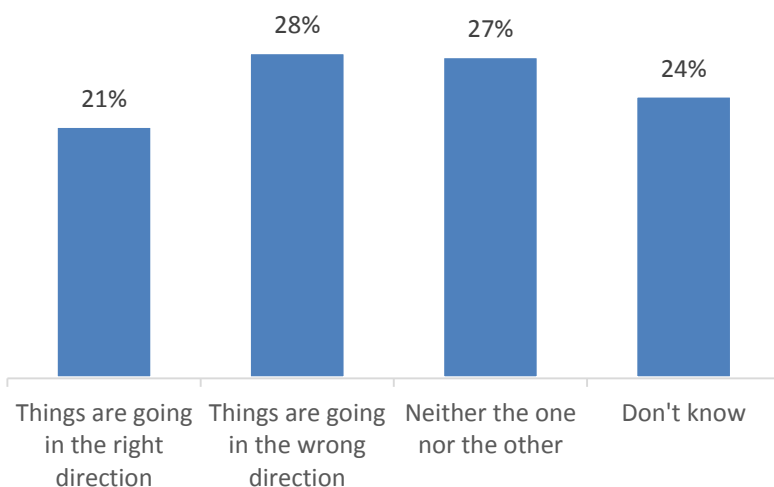
**Fig. 3.14 Direction things are going in Portugal (%)**



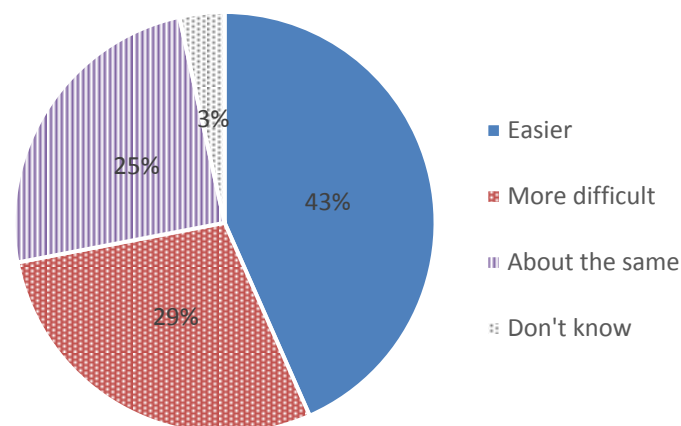
When asked to evaluate the direction things are going in Portugal and in Europe, almost one third of Portuguese youth think that things are going in the wrong direction, although about one quarter (or one fifth for the EU) think that things are going in right direction. However, the majority of Portuguese youth either don't know, or could not say if the direction of change is right or wrong (47% in the case of Portugal, and 51% in the case of the situation in the EU) (Fig. 3.14, Fig. 3.15)

Although the majority of Portuguese youth (43%) have positive expectations about life for the next generation in the EU, a significant portion of youth (29%) have pessimistic views (Fig. 3.16).

**Fig. 3.15 Direction things are going in the EU (%)**

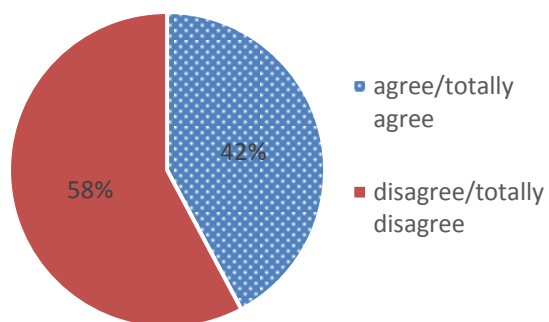


**Fig. 3.16 Do you think that life for the next generation in EU will be... (%)**



### 3.1.2 Perceived agency

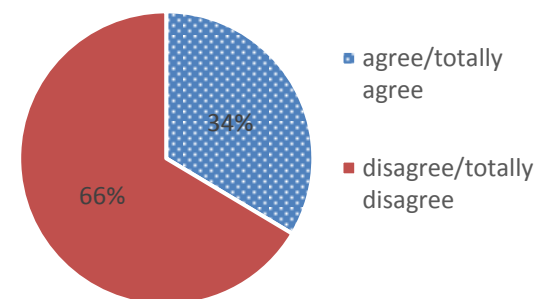
**Fig. 3.17 "My voice counts in Portugal"**



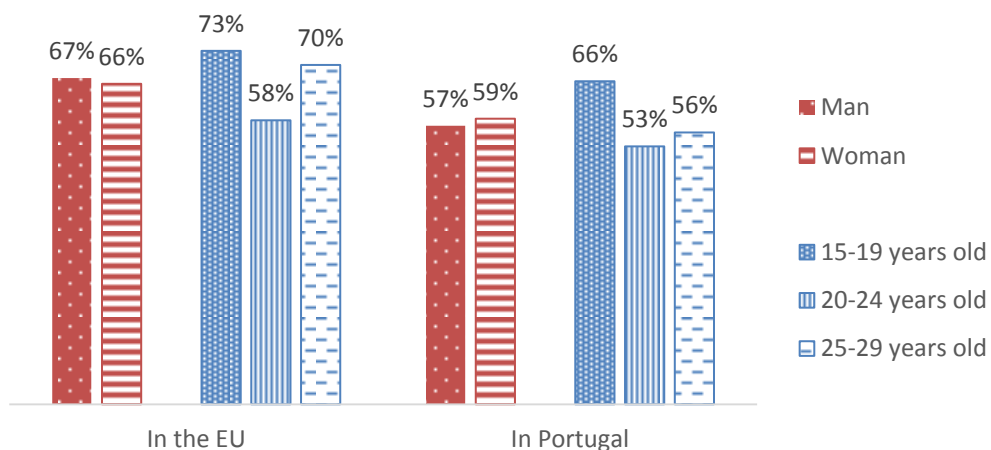
Generally, the majority of young people living in Portugal feel that they are not being heard, either at the national or at the European level (Fig. 3.17, Fig. 3.18). However, about 40% perceive that their voices count at the national level and one third that their voices count at the EU level.

This feeling of not being heard is the same regardless of gender, while it tends to be stronger among the youngest age-group (Fig. 3.19).

**Fig. 3.18 "My voice counts in EU"**

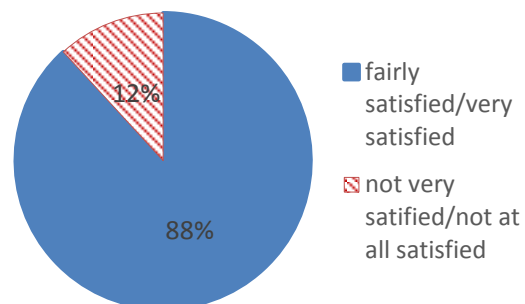


**Fig. 3.19 "My voice does not count" by gender and age**



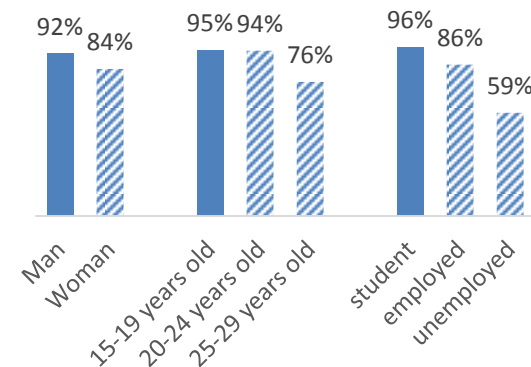
### 3.1.3 Personal situation

**Fig. 3.20 Are you satisfied with your life in general?**

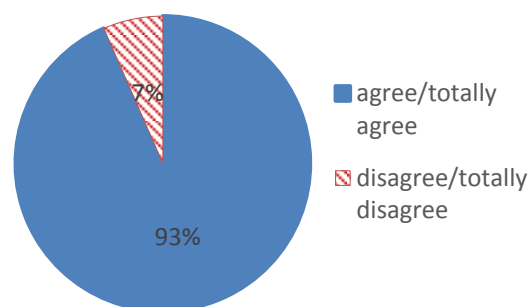


Despite the negative evaluation of their country's situation, most of the Portuguese youth declare to be satisfied with their life (Fig. 3.20), this is mainly the case of men and the under 25s (Fig. 3.21), while satisfaction with life is less frequent among the unemployed.

**Fig. 3.21 Young people satisfied with their life by gender, age, employment status**

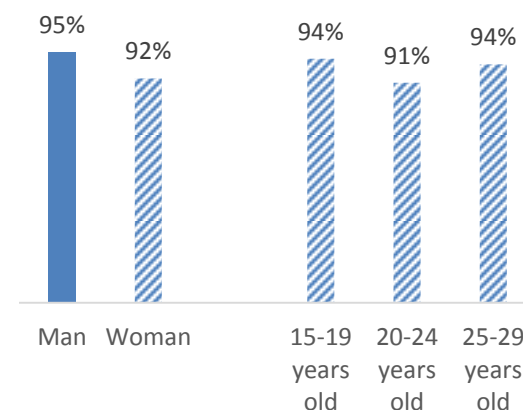


**Fig. 3.22 % agreement: "You have confidence in the future"**

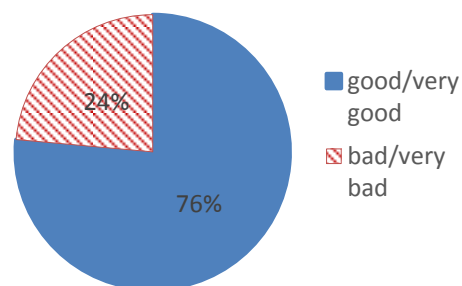


Regardless of gender and age, more than 90% of young Portuguese are quite optimistic about the future (Fig. 3.22, Fig. 3.23).

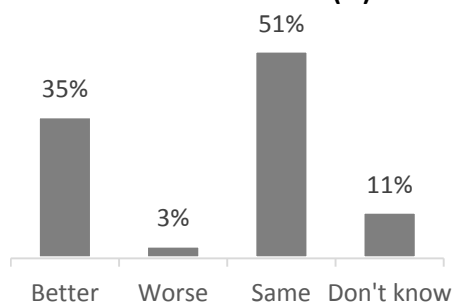
**Fig. 3.23 Young people who have confidence in the future by gender and age**



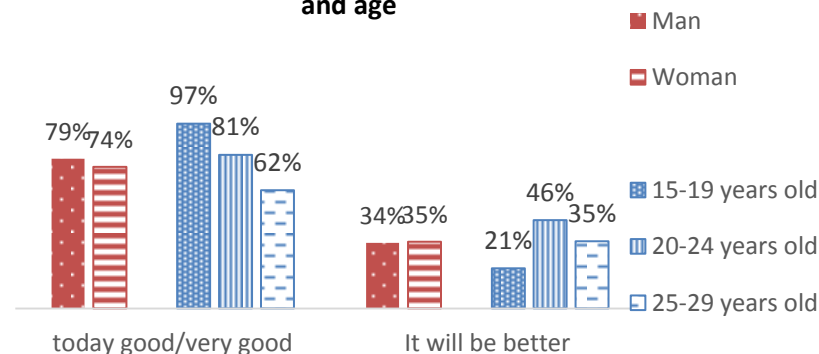
**Fig. 3.24 How would you rate your personal job situation?**



**Fig. 3.25 What are your expectations for the next 12 months: your personal job situation will be... (%)**

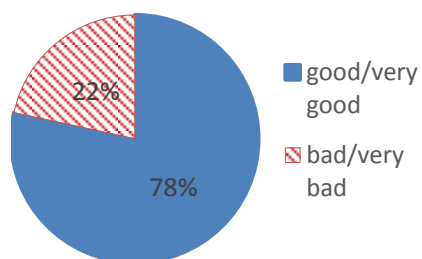


**Fig. 3.26 Evaluation on the current personal job situation, and expectations for the future by gender and age**

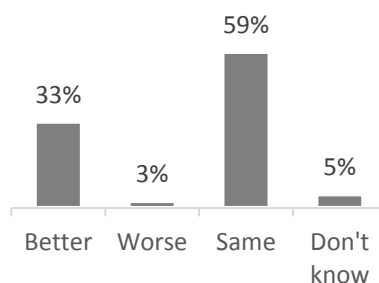


Portuguese young people seem to evaluate much better their personal current situation than the national one. Two thirds rate their personal job situation as good or very good (Fig. 3.24) and only 3% have a negative expectation about the future (Fig. 3.25). The current situation is rated highest by those aged 15-19, while the most optimistic for the future are those aged 20-24 years old. The evaluation regarding the household's financial situation displays quite similar trends (Fig. 3.27 - 3.29).

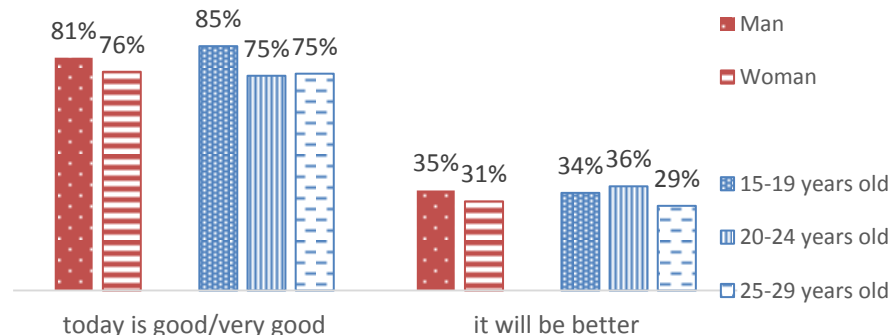
**Fig. 3.27 How would you rate your household financial situation?**



**Fig. 3.28 What are your expectations for the next 12 months: the financial situation of your household will be...**



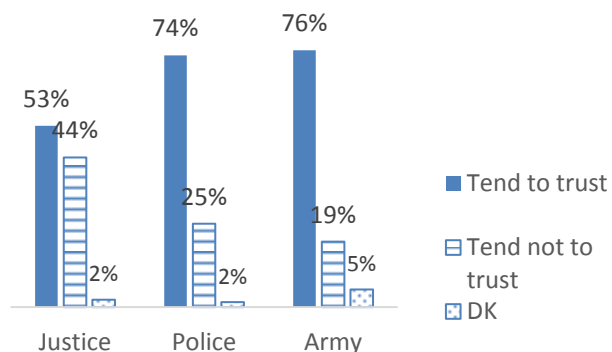
**Fig. 3.29 Evaluation on the current household's financial situation, and expectations for the future by gender and age**



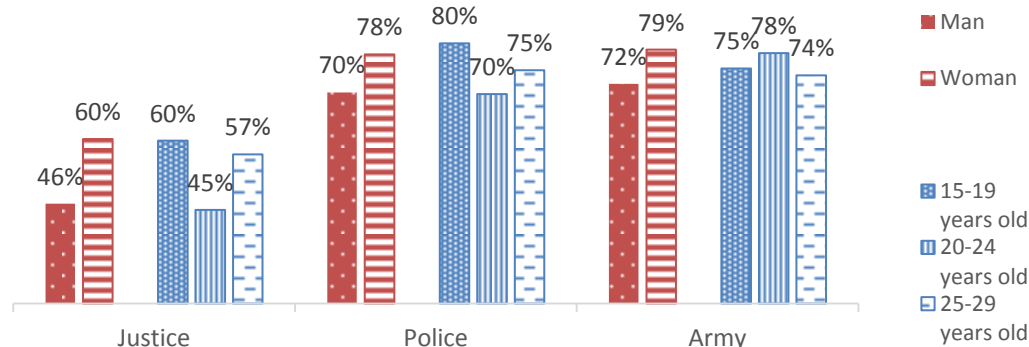


## 3.2 Relation with authority

**Fig. 3.30 Trust in Law & Order institutions**

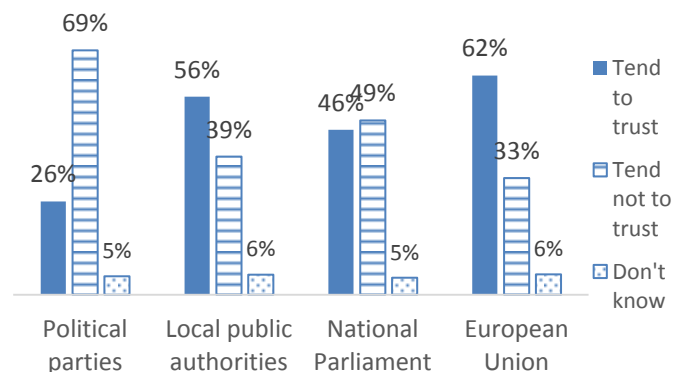


**Fig. 3.31 Young people who tend to trust in Law & Order institutions, by gender and age**

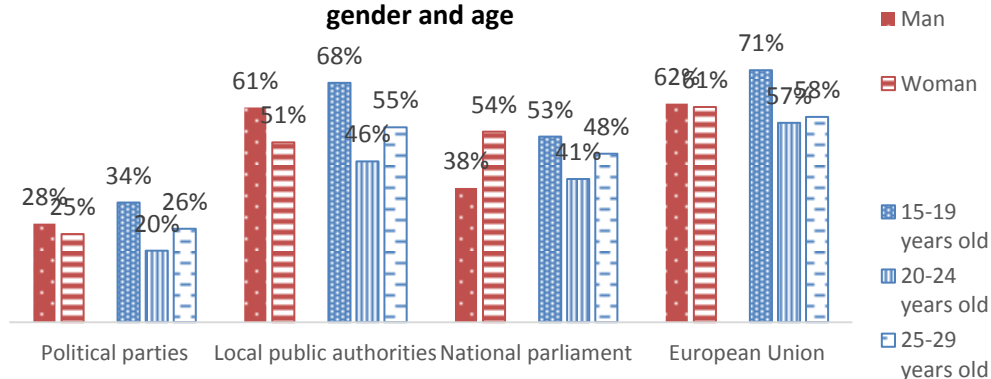


Most young people express trust in Law and Order institutions (in particular: the Police and the Army) (Fig. 3.30), especially women and often the youngest (Fig. 3.31). However, youth manifest also a strong distrust in political parties (69%) and national parliament (49%). They had more trust in local public authorities (56%), and the EU (62%) (Fig. 3.32). The youngest age-group consistently appear as the least critical toward political institutions. At the same time, more men than women trust local public authorities, while more women than men trust the national parliament (Fig. 3.33).

**Fig. 3.32 Trust in political institutions**

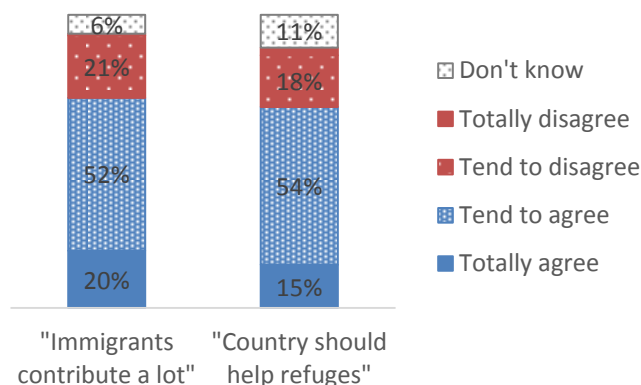


**Fig. 3.33 Young people who tend to trust in political institutions by gender and age**



### 3.3 Opinion on social issues

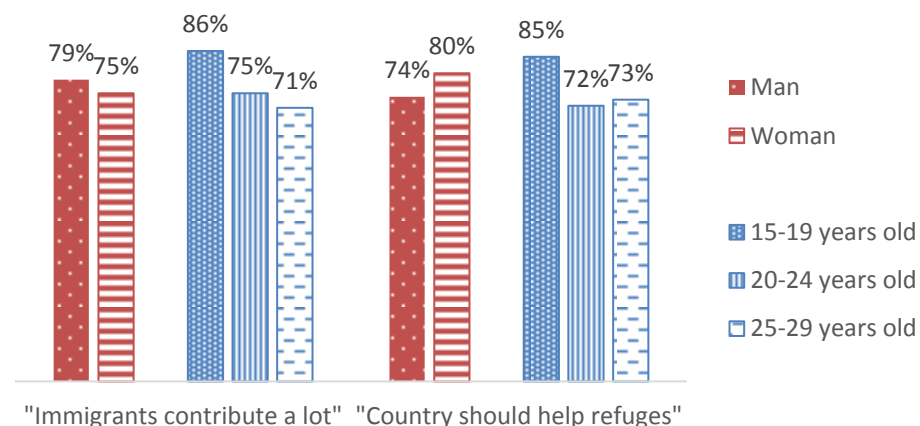
**Fig. 3.34 Percentage of agreement on statements regarding migration**



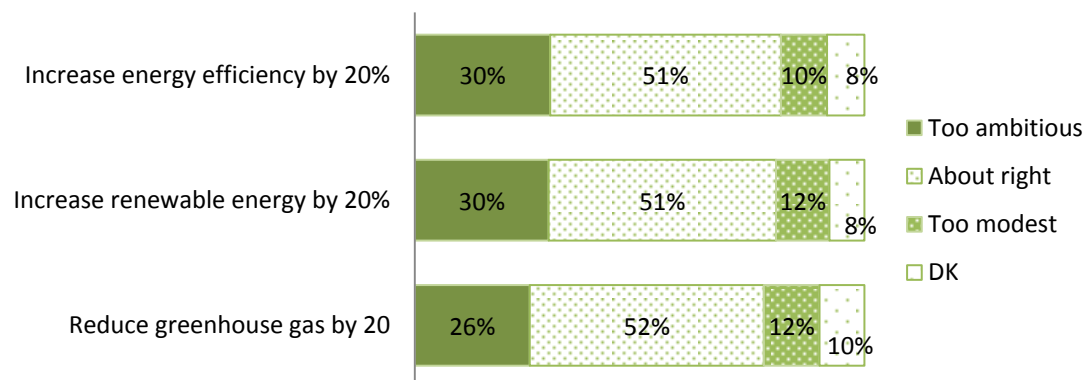
The majority of youth in Portugal think that immigrants positively contribute to Portugal and that the country should help refugees (about 70%) (Fig. 3.34). These feelings are the most present among the youngest age-group (Fig. 3.35).

Talking about the EU's H2020 goals related to the environment, about half of Portuguese youth find them appropriate while almost one third of Portuguese youth think that these goals are too ambitious (Fig.3.36)

**Fig. 3.35 Young people who agree with these statements by gender and age**



**Fig. 3.36 Do you find these H2020 goals... (%)**

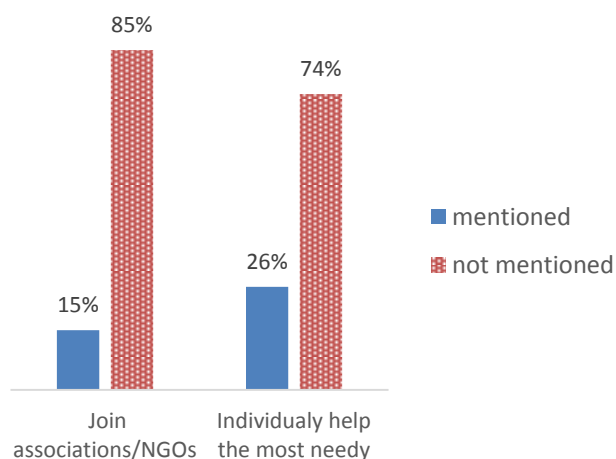


## 4. Engagement and Social Change

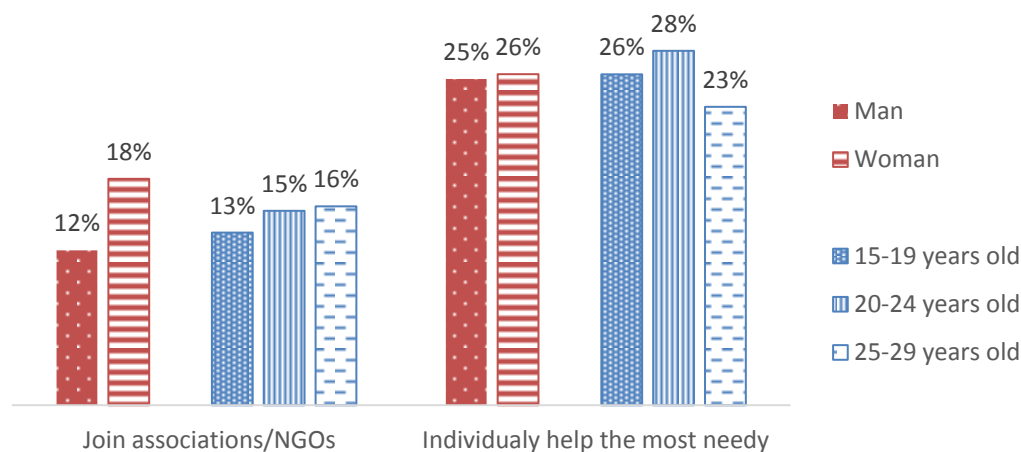
In this section we provide information about young people's social and political engagement, including aspects of civic engagement, formal political participation, activism, and everyday engagement. In most of the cases, findings are based on questions regarding which forms of participation do young people think are the most effective.

### 4.1 Civic engagement

**Fig. 4.1 Best ways of participating in the public life in EU - civic engagement (%)**



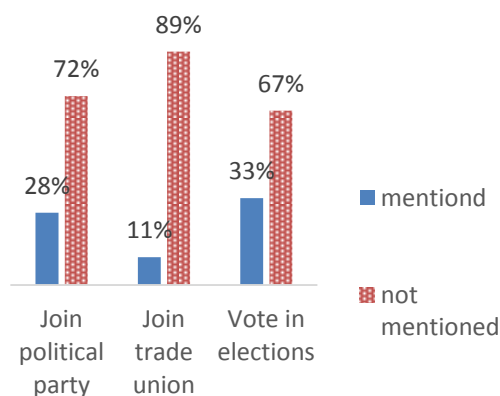
**Fig. 4.2 Best ways of participating in the public life in EU - mentioned civic engagement by gender and age**



Civic engagement as participation in civic society organisations is not particularly popular among Portuguese youth. When asked about the best ways to participate in the public life of the EU, membership in such organisation is mentioned only by 15% of the sample (Fig. 4.1). This way of civic engagement is less frequently mentioned by men than women (Fig. 4.2). Regardless of gender and age, individual actions of helping the most needy are more often mentioned (by about one quarter of the sample) as the best way of participation (Fig.4.1; Fig. 4.2).

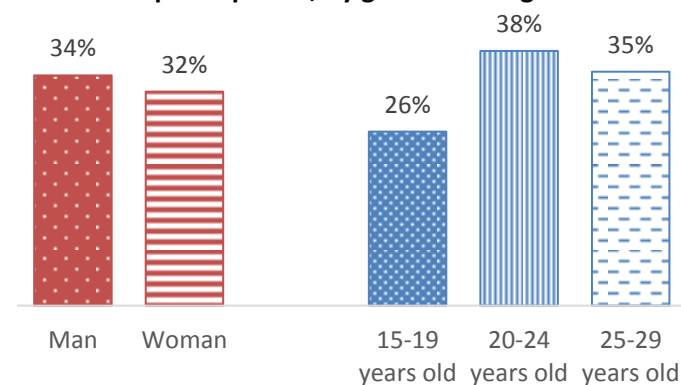
## 4.2 Formal political participation

**Fig. 4.3 Best ways of participating in the public life of EU -Formal traditional participation (%)**



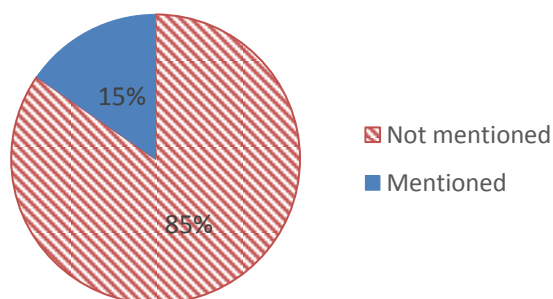
For Portuguese youth joining a trade union is not considered a good way to be active in public life in Europe. At the same time, joining political party or voting in elections are considered as the best ways of participating in the public life in the EU by about one third of youth, regardless of gender (Fig. 4.3). Among the youngest age-group, voting is less considered to be one of the best ways of participating than among older age groups (Fig.4.4).

**Fig. 4.4 Voting is one of the best ways of participation, by gender and age**



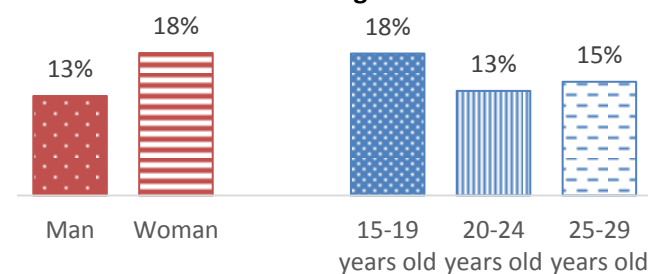
## 4.3 Activism

**Fig. 4.5 Attend demonstrations is one of the best ways of participating in the public life in the EU - Activism**



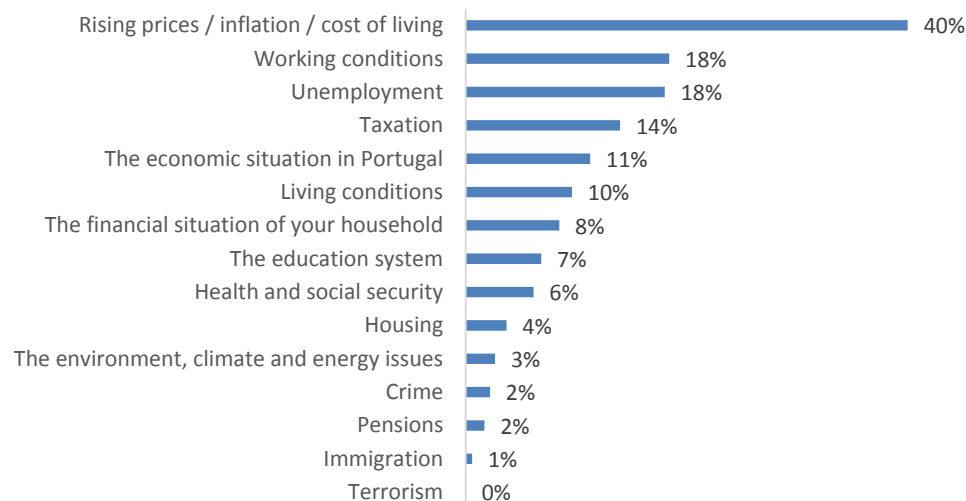
Only 15% of the youth in Portugal recognises the participation in demonstrations as one of the best ways to make young people's voice heard (Fig. 4.5). Women and the youngest opted a bit more for this type of political action (Fig. 4.6).

**Fig. 4.6 Attending demonstrations is one of the best ways of participation by gender and age**



## 4.4 Everyday Engagement

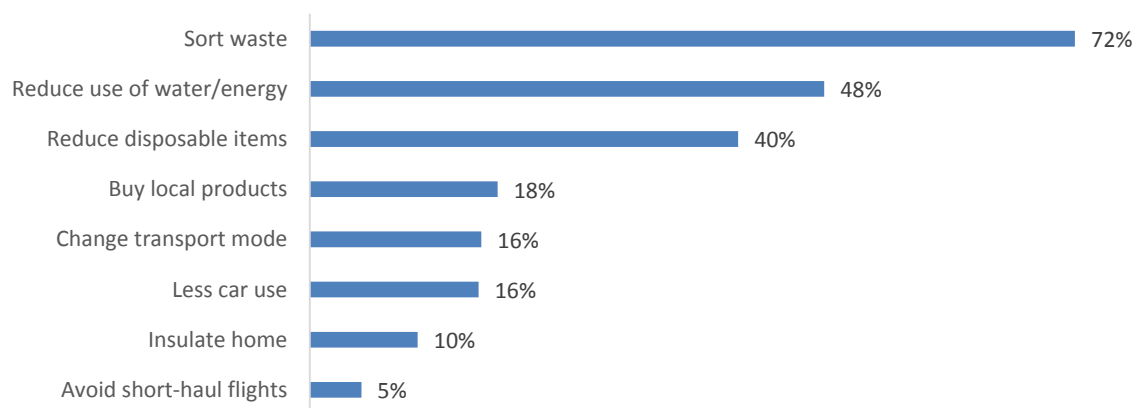
**Fig. 4.7 What are the most important issues you are facing at the moment? (%) [max 2 answers]**



The most important issue for about 40% of the youth in Portugal is the cost of living/prices (Fig. 4.7). Other important issues young people are facing in Portugal are work conditions, unemployment and taxation. Generally, it seems that youth in Portugal is mainly concerned with economic aspects of their lives, while issues in other spheres (e.g. Environment, Crime, Pensions, Immigration, Terrorism) are less important for them.

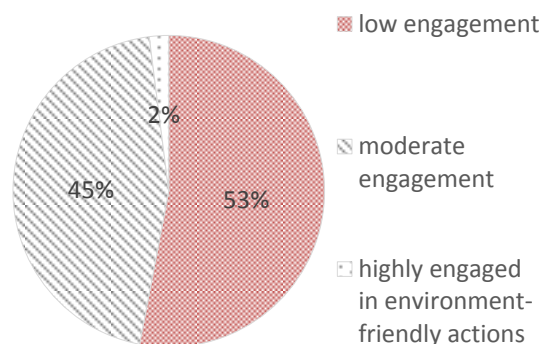
The majority of Portuguese youth actively include pro-environmental routines in their daily life. Almost two thirds of them sort waste, about a half reduce their use of water/energy, and 40% reduce their use of disposable items (Fig. 4.8).

**Fig. 4.8 Which of these steps have you taken personally to protect the environment?**

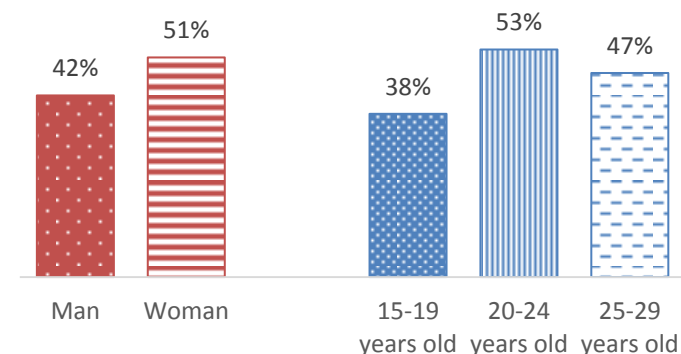


Based on participation in the number of different environmental-friendly actions, we can consider different levels of youth's everyday engagement (Fig. 4.9). About 1 out of 2 Portuguese youth shows a low engagement (1 or 2 actions), and a bit less of them show moderate engagement (3-5 actions), while only a few (2%) indicate high engagement (6-8 actions). Within the group of moderate/highly engaged, there are less men than women, and fewer of the youngest age--group (Fig. 4.10)

**Fig. 4.9 Engagement in environmental-friendly actions**

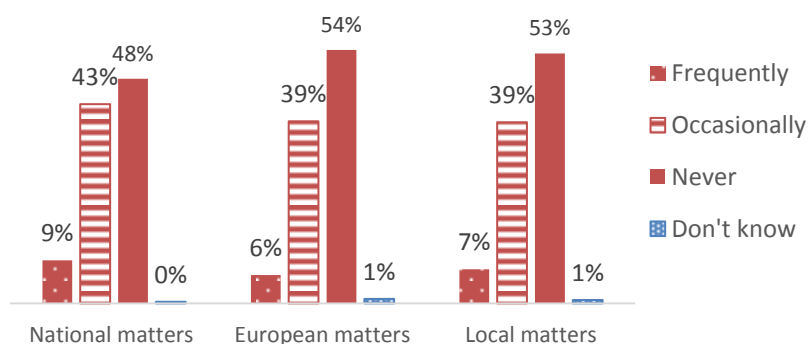


**Fig. 4.10 Moderate/high pro-environmental engagement by gender, age, place of living (%)**

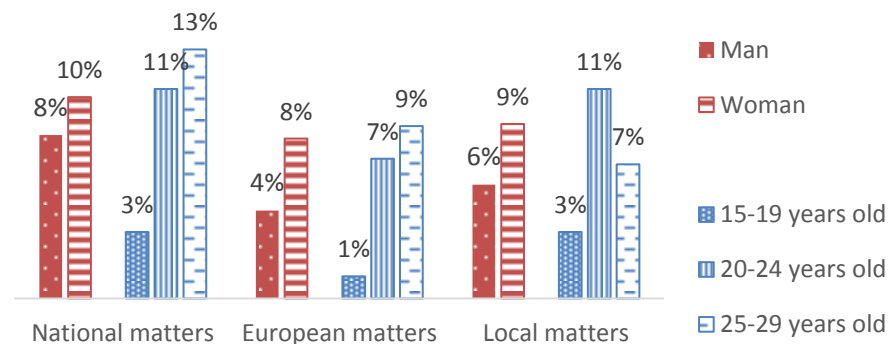


Only a minority of Portuguese youth (less than 10%) often discuss any political matters with their friends and relatives, while about 40% do it only occasionally (Fig. 4.11). Among the young people who often discuss politics (Fig. 4.12), women and the oldest age-group appear as the most involved in such talks on national and European matters, while those aged 25-29 talk about local matters. The youngest ones almost never talk to others about politics, regardless of whether the matters are at the local, national, or European levels.

**Fig. 4.11 How often do you discuss political matters with your friends or relatives? (%)**



**Fig. 4.12 Youth who frequently discusses political matters by gender and age**





promoting youth involvement and  
social engagement



## Project Identity

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<b>FUNDING SCHEME</b>	Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), Societal Challenge 6 – Europe in a changing world: inclusive, innovative and reflective societies", call YOUNG-2015.
<b>DURATION</b>	May 2016 – April 2019 (36 months).
<b>BUDGET</b>	EU contribution: 2 500 000 €.
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