

eupinions slides

February 14, 2024

The Netherlands, the War and the Vote

Dutch Europeans Head to the Ballot Box
as Ukrainians Fight for Freedom:
How Will the War Shape their Vote?

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Dutch residents, their political party preferences and attitudes towards key Ukraine policies

In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion into Ukraine, profoundly altering EU policies and politics. The European Union and its member states have strongly supported Ukraine in its defence.

In the recent Dutch elections, the Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV), a right-wing populist party led by Geert Wilders, emerged as the strongest contender, securing 37 out of 150 seats in the Dutch parliament. Subsequent negotiations to form a government with the VVD, under the leadership of long-time Prime Minister Mark Rutte, alongside the newly formed centre-right parties BBB and NSC, fell through. This political impasse has presented the country with the options of either forming a minority government or calling for fresh elections. Projections suggest potential further gains for Wilders and the PVV in the event of new elections. Notably, the PVV has consistently opposed policies supporting Ukraine.

Against the backdrop of the upcoming European parliamentary elections, this report focuses on the correlation in the Netherlands between individuals' political party preferences and their stance on seven key Ukraine-related policy issues:

1. *Does the European Union need a common defence policy?*
2. *Should the EU support Ukraine by delivering weapons?*

3. *Should your country accept refugees from Ukraine?*
4. *Should the EU accept Ukraine as a member state in the coming years?*
5. *Should the EU become more energy independent of Russia even if that means prices are rising even further?*
6. *Do you think economic and financial sanctions on Russia are effective or ineffective?*
7. *Do you think the reconstruction of Ukraine will be an economic opportunity or an economic burden for the EU?*

For each question, we present the general distribution in the Netherlands, followed by a breakdown based on political party preferences. These insights are based on a survey conducted in December 2023, encompassing nearly 13,000 EU citizens. Our data is representative of the EU as a whole and specifically of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, and Spain. In the Netherlands, we interviewed 1,118 citizens.

Please note

This report “*The Netherlands, the War and the Vote*” is part of *an eight-part series*.

Part 1

- [The War and the Vote](#)

explores the relationship between political orientation and support for Ukraine-related policies across the EU and in seven member states.

Parts 2-8

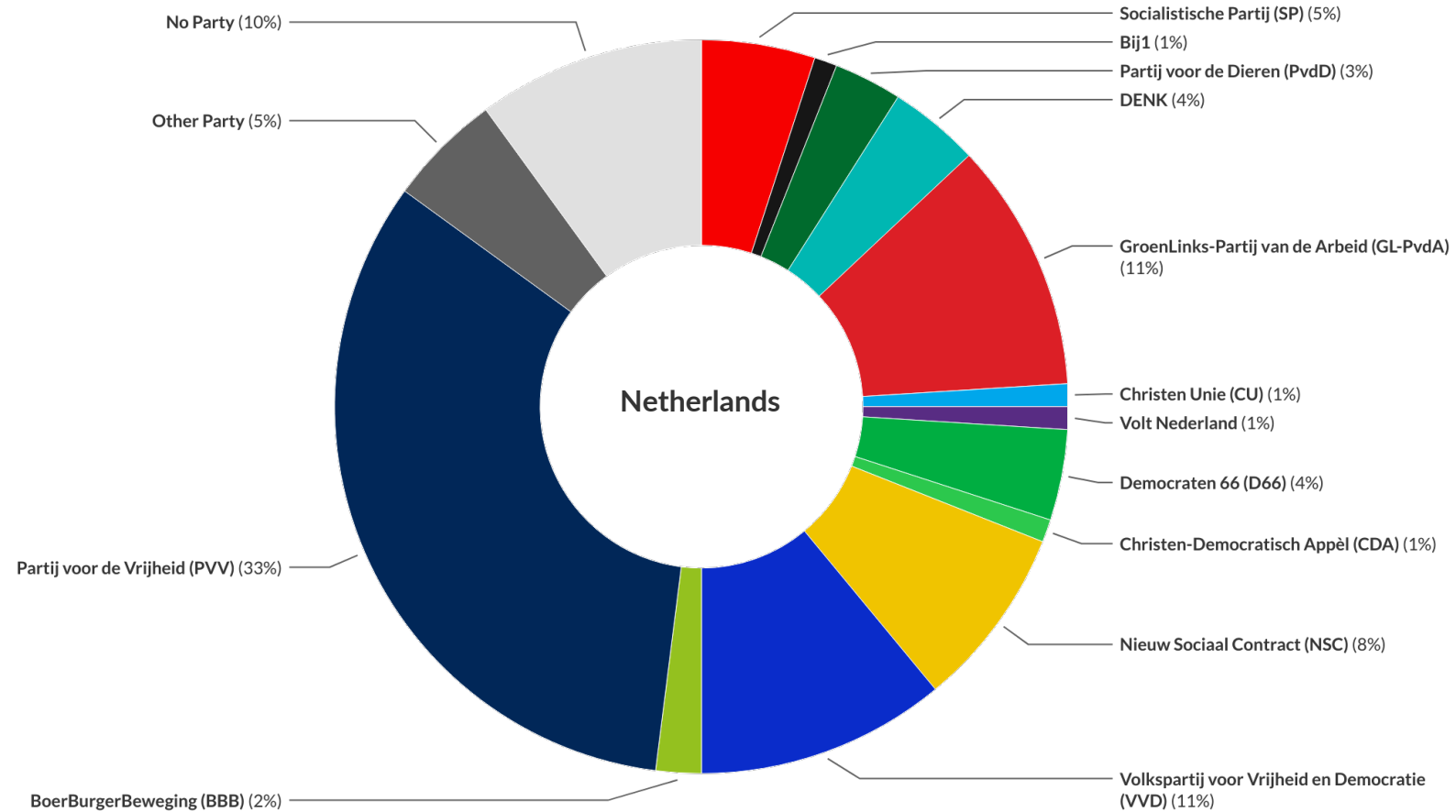
Part 1 is complemented by *seven country reports*, each examining the correlation between political party preferences and the same set of Ukraine-related questions:

- [Belgium, the War and the Vote](#)
- [France, the War and the Vote](#)
- [Germany, the War and the Vote](#)
- [Italy, the War and the Vote](#)
- The Netherlands, the War and the Vote
- [Poland, the War and the Vote](#)
- [Spain, the War and the Vote](#)

An overview:

- 1. Which political party – if any – do you feel close to?**
General distribution (GD) in the Netherlands
- 2. Does the European Union need a common defence policy?**
GD in the Netherlands and by political party preferences
- 3. Should the EU support Ukraine by delivering weapons?**
GD in the Netherlands and by political party preferences
- 4. Should your country accept refugees from Ukraine?**
GD in the Netherlands and by political party preferences
- 5. Should the EU accept Ukraine as a member state in the coming years?**
GD in the Netherlands and by political party preferences
- 6. Should the EU become more energy independent of Russia even if that means prices are rising even further?**
GD in the Netherlands and by political party preferences
- 7. Do you think economic and financial sanctions on Russia are effective or ineffective?**
GD in the Netherlands and by political party preferences
- 8. Do you think the reconstruction of Ukraine will be an economic opportunity or an economic burden for the EU?**
GD in the Netherlands and by political party preferences

Netherlands: Which political party – if any – do you feel close to?



Netherlands: Does the European Union need a common defence policy? By political party preferences

■ Agree ■ Disagree

Netherlands

All



Parties - Netherlands

SP



Bij1



PvdD



DENK



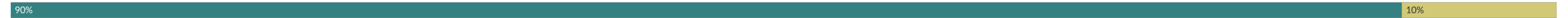
GL-PvdA



CU



Volt Nederland



D66



CDA



NSC



VVD



BBB



PVV



Other Party

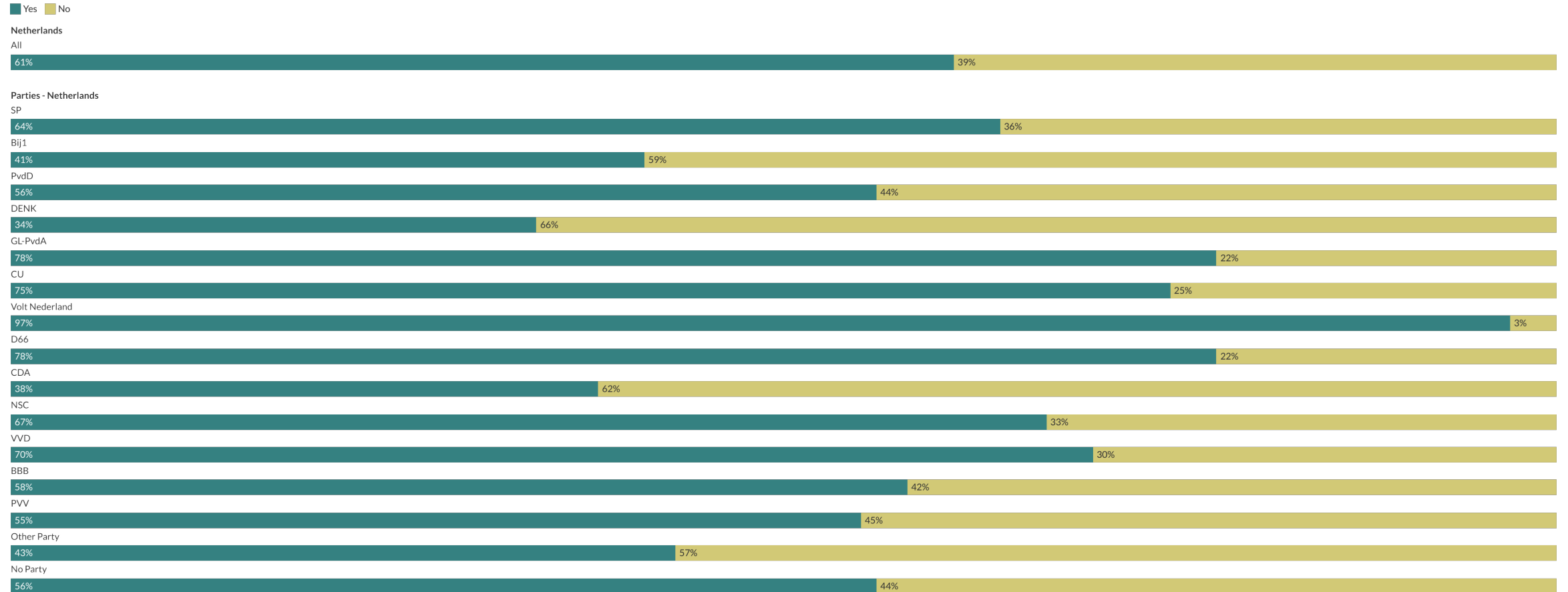


No Party



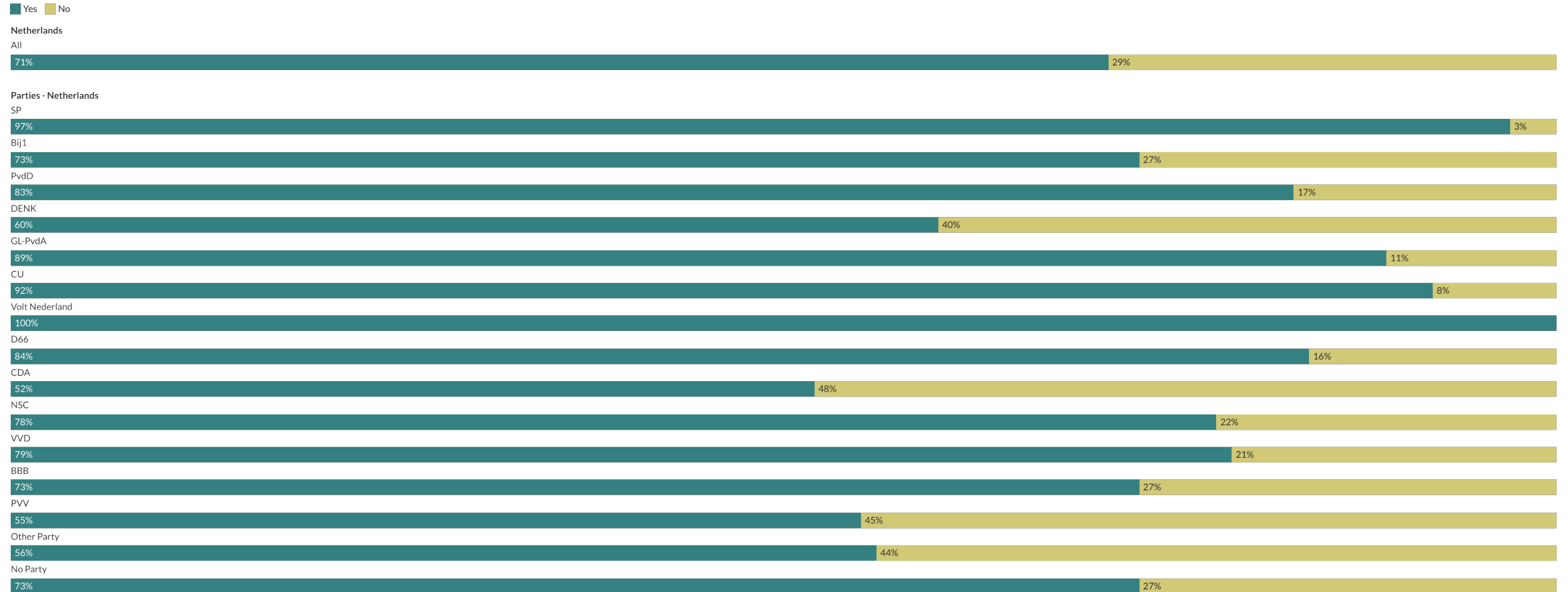
December 2023

Netherlands: Should the EU support Ukraine by delivering weapons? By political party preferences



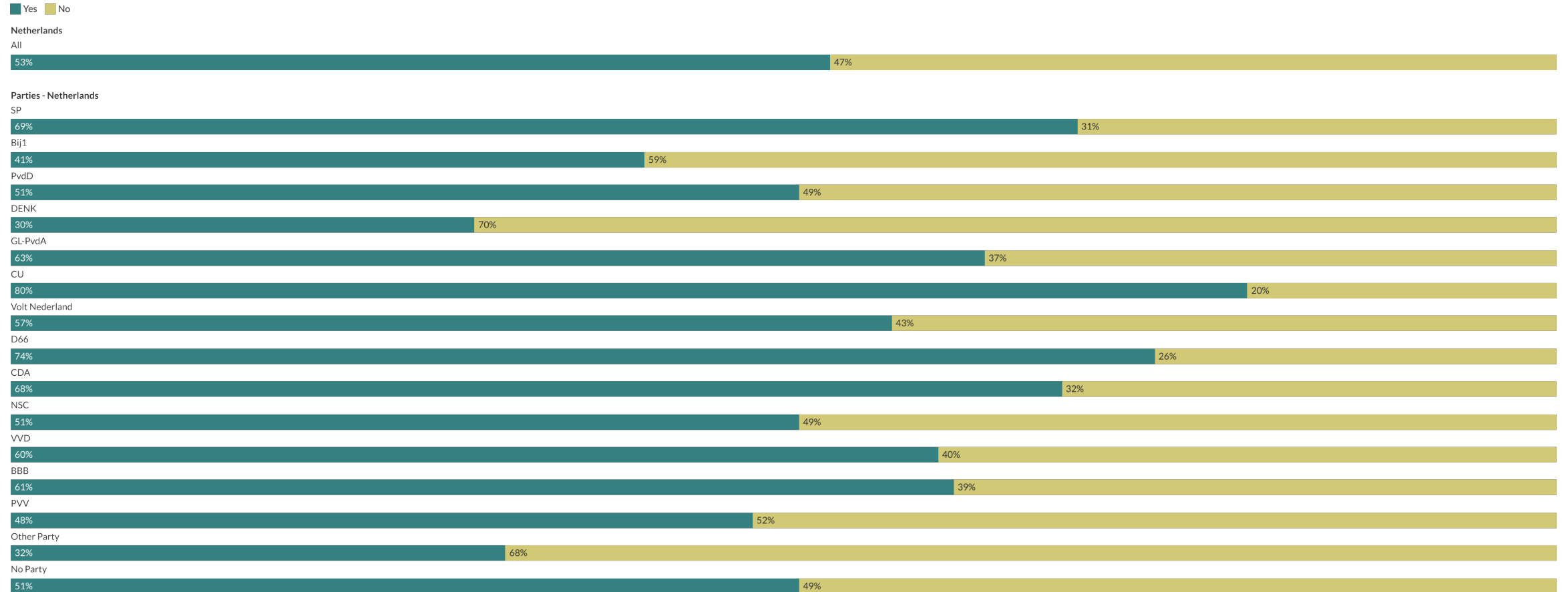
December 2023

Netherlands: Should your country accept refugees from Ukraine? By political party preferences



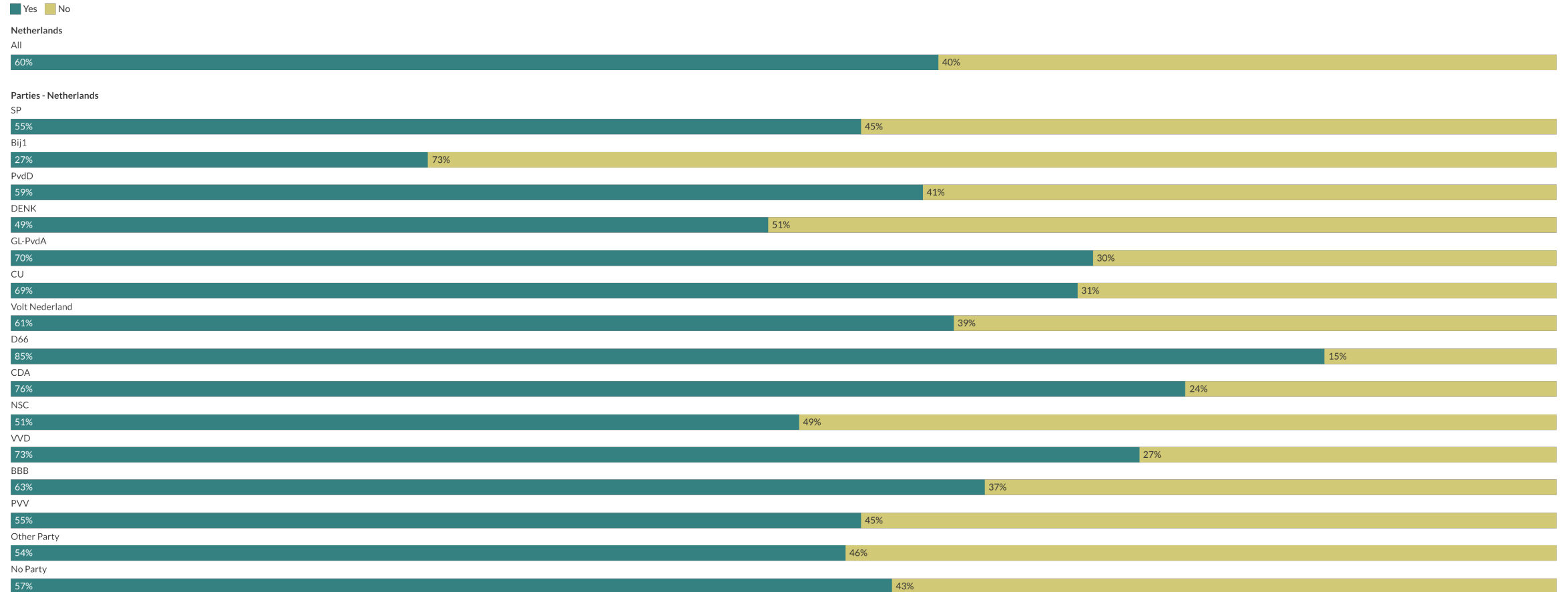
December 2023

Netherlands: Should the EU accept Ukraine as a member of the EU in the coming years? By political party preferences



December 2023

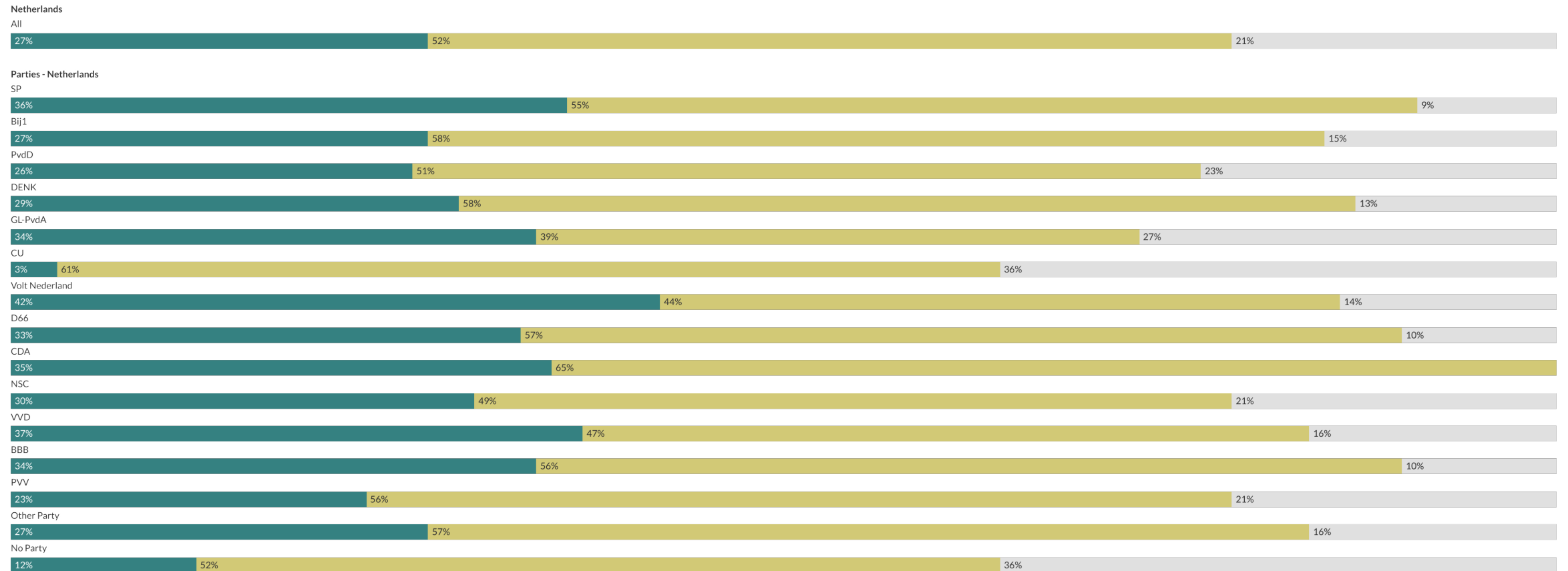
Netherlands: Should the EU become more energy independent of Russia even if that means prices are rising even further? By political party preferences



December 2023

Netherlands: Do you think economic and financial sanctions on Russia are effective or ineffective? By political party preferences

Effective Ineffective Don't know



December 2023

Netherlands: Do you think the reconstruction of Ukraine will be an economic opportunity or an economic burden for the EU? By political party preferences

■ Economic opportunity ■ Economic burden

Netherlands

All

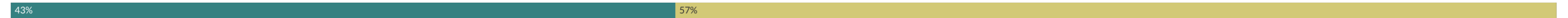


Parties - Netherlands

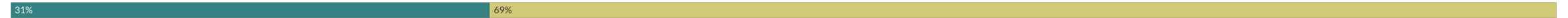
SP



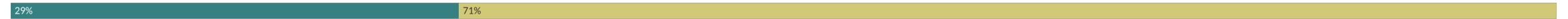
Bij1



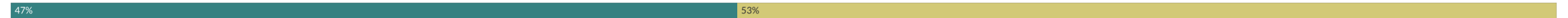
PvdD



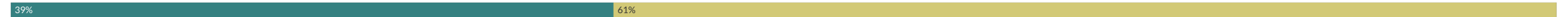
DENK



GL-PvdA



CU



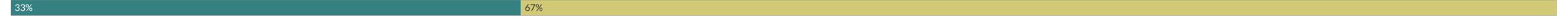
Volt Nederland



D66



CDA



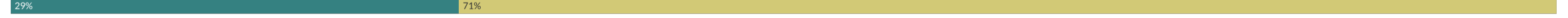
NSC



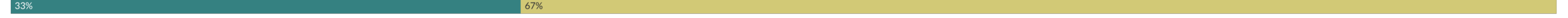
VVD



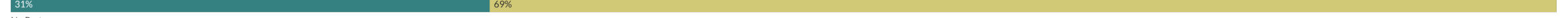
BBB



PVV



Other Party



No Party



December 2023

Conclusions

As EU citizens prepare for the upcoming European Parliament elections in June, closely followed by the nomination of a new European Commission, our aim in this country report was to assess public sentiment and explore more deeply how Ukraine-related policies intersect with party preferences in the Netherlands.

In summary, our findings are as follows:

- Those affiliated with parties on the centre-left demonstrate the strongest support for Ukraine policies.
- Support tends to be higher in the political centre than on either end of the political spectrum.
- Overall, support is strongest among those aligned with the D66, GL-PvdA and SP parties.
- Overall, support is weakest among those aligned with the PVV.
- Overall, support is stronger among VVD adherents than among PVV adherents.
- Among those aligned with parties in negotiations to form a government coalition, we found support is strongest among VVD adherents, followed by NSC, BBB, and then PVV adherents. However, the PVV won a third of the vote in recent national elections, giving it the largest base of the three parties.

An analysis of each graph shows the following patterns:

- **European Defence Policy:** Support for a unified European defence policy is robust across all subgroups. Among parties with a larger base, D66, GL-PvdA and VVD garner the most support, with over 90% endorsing the idea. Even supporters of the populist right-wing PVV agree to the concept (83%). While there may be disagreements on the specifics, the idea attracts considerable support, regardless of party preference.
- **Weapons Delivery:** Among the political parties with significant followings, support for weapons delivery is strongest among those aligned with the D66 (78%), GL-PvdA (78%), and VVD (70%). It is weakest among those aligned with Denk (34%). Interestingly, a majority of PVV supporters agree with the EU delivering weapons to Ukraine (55%).
- **Refugee Acceptance:** Support for accepting Ukrainian refugees is strongest among SP (97%), GL-PvdA (89%) and D66 (84%) adherents. It is weakest among those aligned with the PVV (55%), the country's most popular party at present.
- **EU Membership for Ukraine:** Overall, support for Ukraine's EU membership has seen a downturn in recent months. When examining preferences within the most popular parties, support for Ukraine's EU membership is strongest among those aligned with the D66 (74%), SP (69%), and GL-PvdA (63%) parties. It is weakest among those who prefer the Denk party (30%) and relatively weak among PVV adherents (48%).

- **Energy Independence:** Those aligned with the D66 (85%) show the strongest support for energy independence from Russia, followed by those who prefer the VDD (73%) and GL-PvdA (70%). Once again, support is weak among both PVV and SP adherents (55% each).
- **Effectiveness of Sanctions:** A slim majority of Dutch respondents believe that economic and financial sanctions imposed on Russia are ineffective (52%). Among the major political parties, this belief is strongest among those aligned with the Denk (58%), D66 (57%), and PVV (56%) parties. Supporters of Mark Rutte's VVD are more optimistic, with only 47% stating that they consider the sanctions to be ineffective.
- **Reconstruction of Ukraine:** A majority of Dutch respondents believe that the reconstruction of Ukraine will be an economic burden (61%). Amongst the parties with a substantial number of supporters, exceptions include SP and D66 adherents, who see instead an opportunity (64% and 54%, respectively). However, 67% of those aligned with Geert Wilders' PVV believe the reconstruction of Ukraine will be an economic burden.

About eupinions

eupinions is an independent platform for European public opinion. We collect and analyse data on European public opinion and comment on what Europeans think about current political issues and megatrends.

Every quarter, we collect samples from each EU member state in 22 languages. Our data is representative with regard to age, gender, education and country/region.

eupinions is a Bertelsmann Stiftung project. The data is collected by Latana.

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Methodology note

The samples analysed in this report were drawn by Latana in December 2023 (n=13,299) across all 27 EU member states. Our samples take into account current population distributions with regard to age (16–70 years), gender and region/country. In order to obtain census representative results, the data were weighted using the most recent Eurostat statistics.

Any references to differences between countries in the report pertain only to the seven countries with sufficiently large sample sizes: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Spain.

Given the sample size and design-effect considerations, the margin of error is 0.9% at a confidence level of 95%.

Thank you!



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