



**European Foundation for the
Improvement of Living and
Working Conditions**

The tripartite EU agency providing knowledge to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies

Public support to Ukraine: the impact of social insecurity and anxiety

18th Conference on “Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe”

Villa Vigoni, 8 October 2024

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EU involvement in supporting Ukraine

- On 24 February 2022, Russia launched an unprovoked attack on Ukraine. After two and a half years, the war is still **ongoing**.
- Tens of thousands of Ukrainians civilians and soldiers were injured or killed, and hundreds of thousands Russian soldiers.
- Women and children fled the country in great numbers. There were **4.2 million** under **temporary protection** in the EU in 2023.
- EU provided economic, humanitarian and military support for Ukraine worth over **€118 billion**.



After more than two years, how does the war affect EU population?



- Western governments may face **war fatigue**.
- The war brought a series of **challenges** to the EU countries as well: soaring **inflation** and cost of living, **tensions** between displaced Ukrainians and local communities regarding housing, labour market **barriers** for Ukrainians (Eurofound and FRA, 2023; Eurofound, 2024).
- **Economic insecurity and economic anxiety** are among the main drivers of protectionist agendas on trade (Autor et al., 2020) and conflictual attitudes towards migration (Strain and Veuger, 2019).

Social media: increasing divisions?

Topic of Ukraine as well as social and economic issues – true and perceived – have their reflections in social media

- Discerning true from fake news is not easy, as the **news environment is in constant change** (Tucker et al, 2018)
- Social media **amplify misinformation** by creating echo chambers (Allen, 2022)
- **Pre-existing conspiracy orientation**, as well as **contextual factors** such as distance from the battlefield, increase the chances of believing in misinformation (Ognyanova et al., 2020; Silverman et al., 2021, Zilinsky et al., 2024)
- This could lead to political takeovers by **anti-establishment and alternative parties**, fuelled by distrust (Giuliano and Spilimbergo, 2014; Funke et al., 2016).



What role for social monitoring and analysis?



Provide evidence for understanding the impact of

- **physical and financial wellbeing** and
- **media consumption**

on withdrawing support to the governments' aid to Ukraine



Introducing the data: Living and Working in Europe e-survey

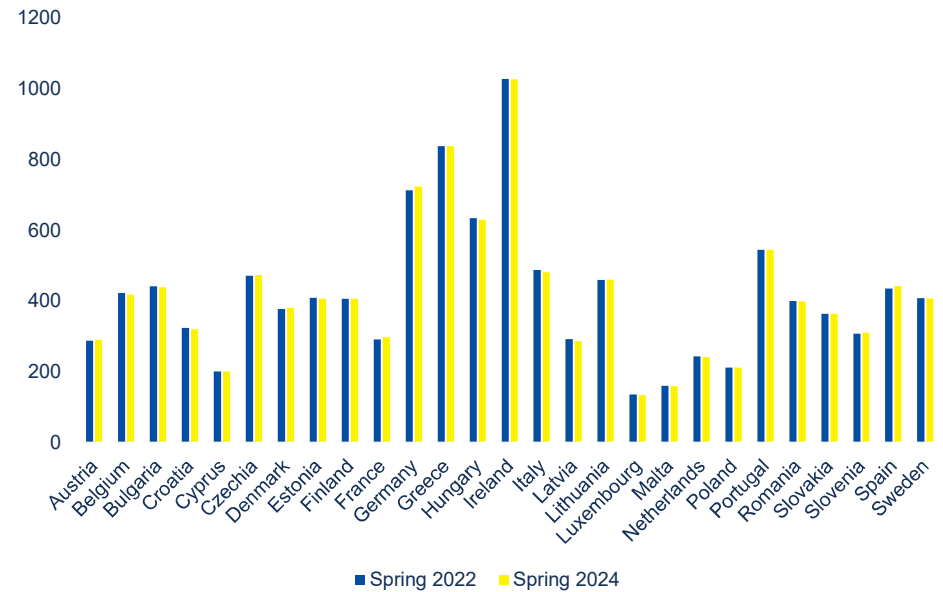
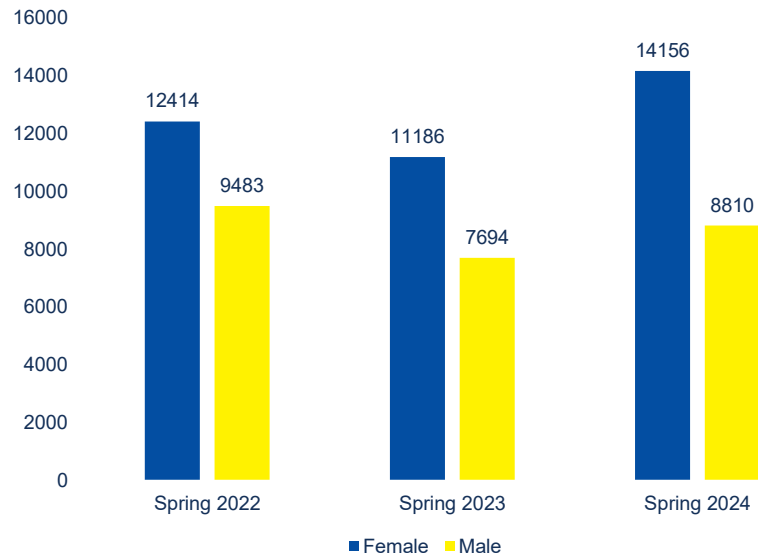
Eurofound's 'Living and Working in Europe' e-survey



- **Online survey**, which Eurofound implemented every Spring since 2020. It is a continuation of the Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey, conducted five times between April 2020 and May 2022, then continued as LWE in 2023 and 2024.
- It is an opt-in survey. The results are weighted a posteriori to reflect the socio demographic composition of the Member States
- Recruitment done on **social media** in order to control ad distribution and targeting
- Current number of respondents (in the 5 publicly available waves): **206,296**
- **Panel structure** available from Spring 2020 to Spring 2024. Every year, the fresh sample can decide to opt-in to the panel. The following year, they would receive an invitation email and reminders

Eurofound's "Living and Working in Europe" e-survey

- Trend and cross-sectional responses: Spring 2022 to Spring 2024.
- A total of **64,210 respondents**:
- Dynamic regressions: Differences in wealth and wellbeing of panelists in Spring **2022** and Spring **2024**
- A total of **11,288 panelists**, distributed as follows:

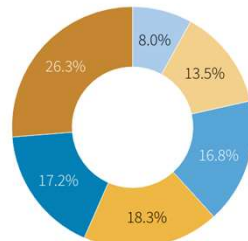
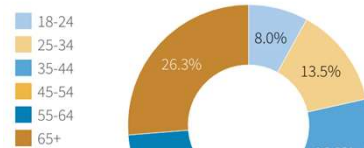


* A handful of respondents moved to a different country

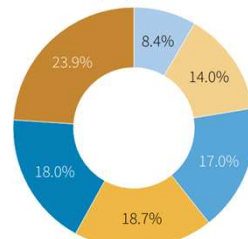
Who are the respondents:

Cross-sectional sample

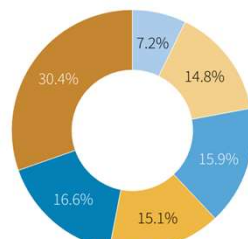
Age of respondents



Spring 2022

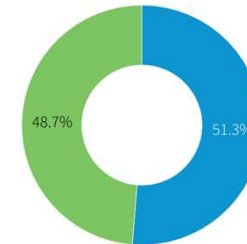


Spring 2023

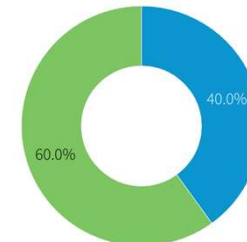


Spring 2024

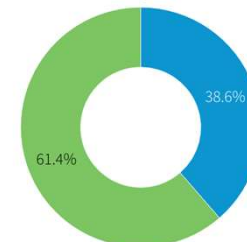
Degree of urbanisation



Spring 2022

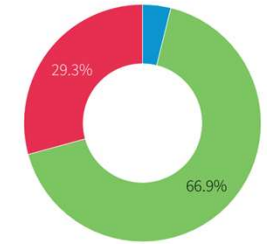


Spring 2023

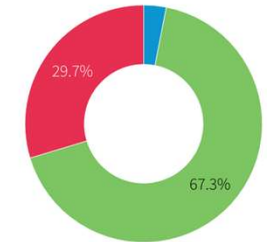


Spring 2024

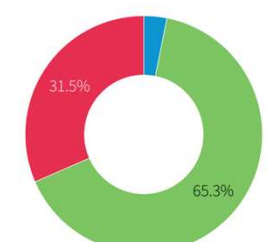
Education attainment



Spring 2022



Spring 2023

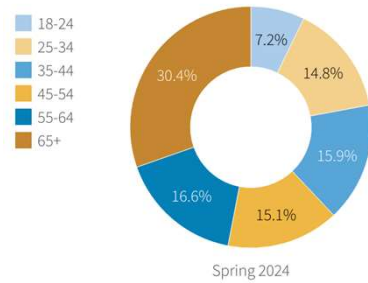


Spring 2024

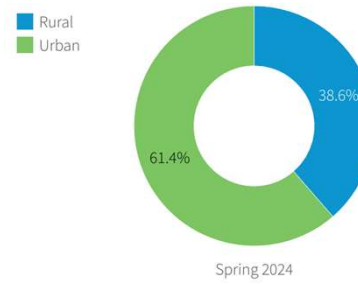
Primary education: 3.9% in 2022, 3.1% in both 2023 and 2024
 All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology

Comparing cross-sectional and panel in 2024

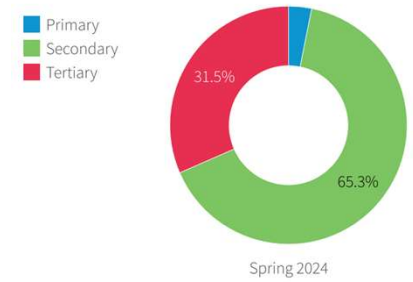
Age of respondents



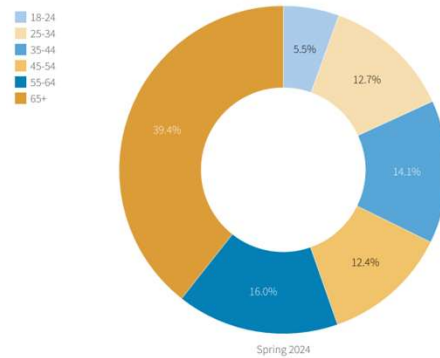
Degree of urbanisation



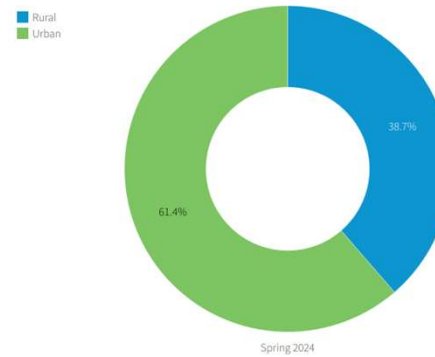
Education attainment



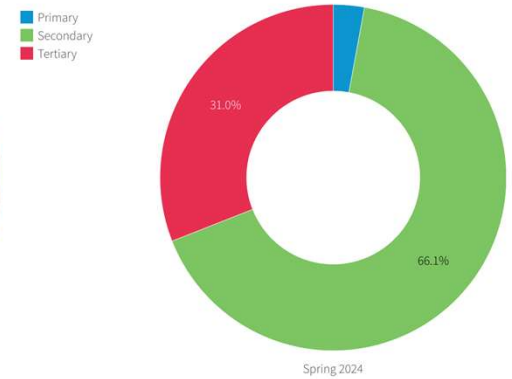
Age of respondents - PANEL



Degree of urbanisation - PANEL



Education attainment - PANEL

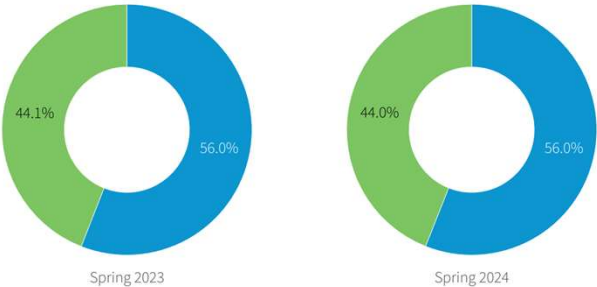


Primary education: 3.1% for cross-sectional sample, 2.9% for panel
All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology

Deprivation and economic uncertainty slightly reduced

Social and material deprivation

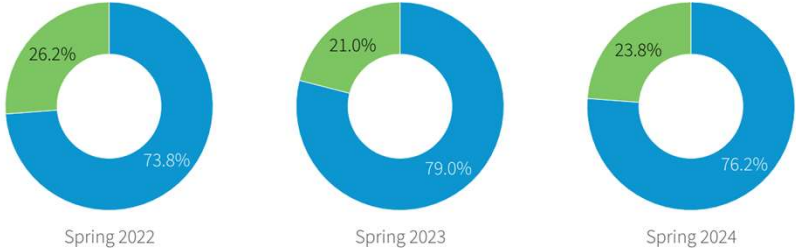
■ No deprivation
■ At least one deprivation



Replied "YES" to one of the following: Replace worn-out clothes with some new ones; Have two pairs of fitting shoes; Spend a small amount of money each week on yourself; Have regular leisure activities; Get together with friends or family for a drink or meal at least once a month; Have an internet connection

Household arrears

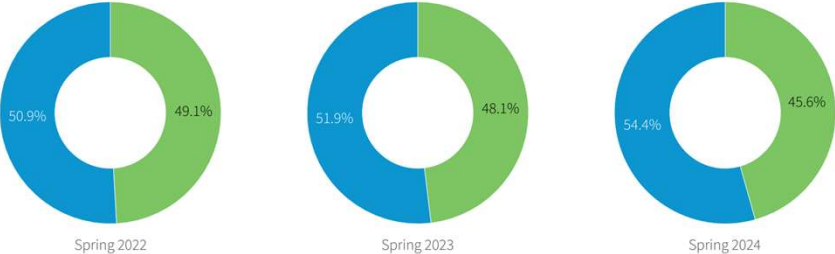
■ No arrears
■ At least one arrears



Replied "YES" to one of the following: Rent or mortgage payments for accommodation; Utility bills, such as electricity, water, gas; Payments related to consumer loans, including credit cars overdrafts (to buy electrical appliances, a car, furniture, etc.); Telephone, mobile or internet connection bills; Payments related to informal loans from friend or relatives not living in your household; Payments for healthcare or health insurance; Student loans

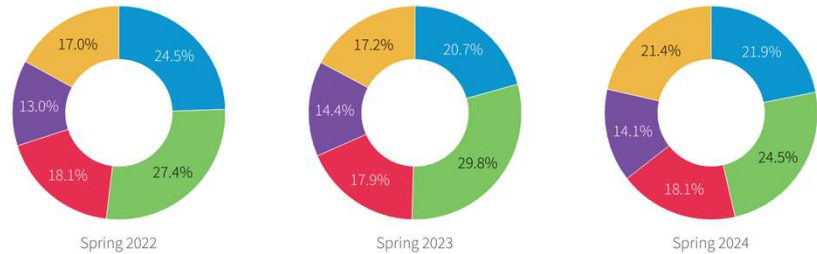
Making ends meet

■ Difficult
■ Easy



Household savings

■ No savings
■ Less than 3 months
■ 3-6 months
■ 6-12 months
■ More than 12 months

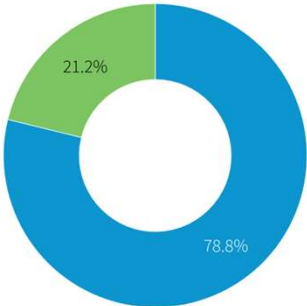


All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology

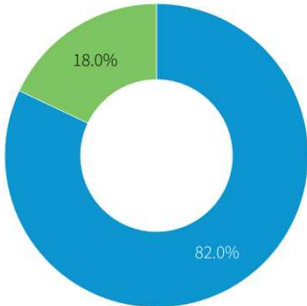
Panelists are slightly better off

Household arrears - PANEL

- No arrears
- At least one arrear



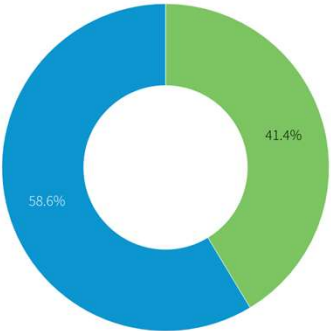
Spring 2022



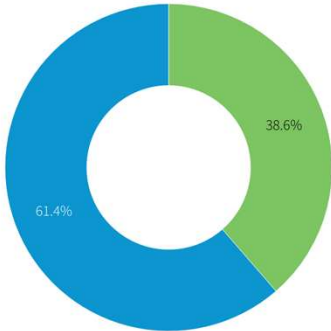
Spring 2024

Making ends meet - PANEL

- Difficult
- Easy



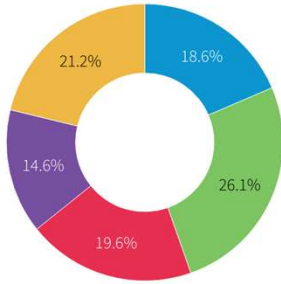
Spring 2022



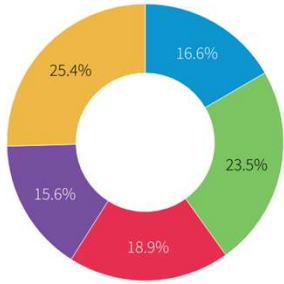
Spring 2024

Household savings - PANEL

- No savings
- Less than 3 months
- 3-6 months
- 6-12 months
- More than 12 months



Spring 2022



Spring 2024

All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology

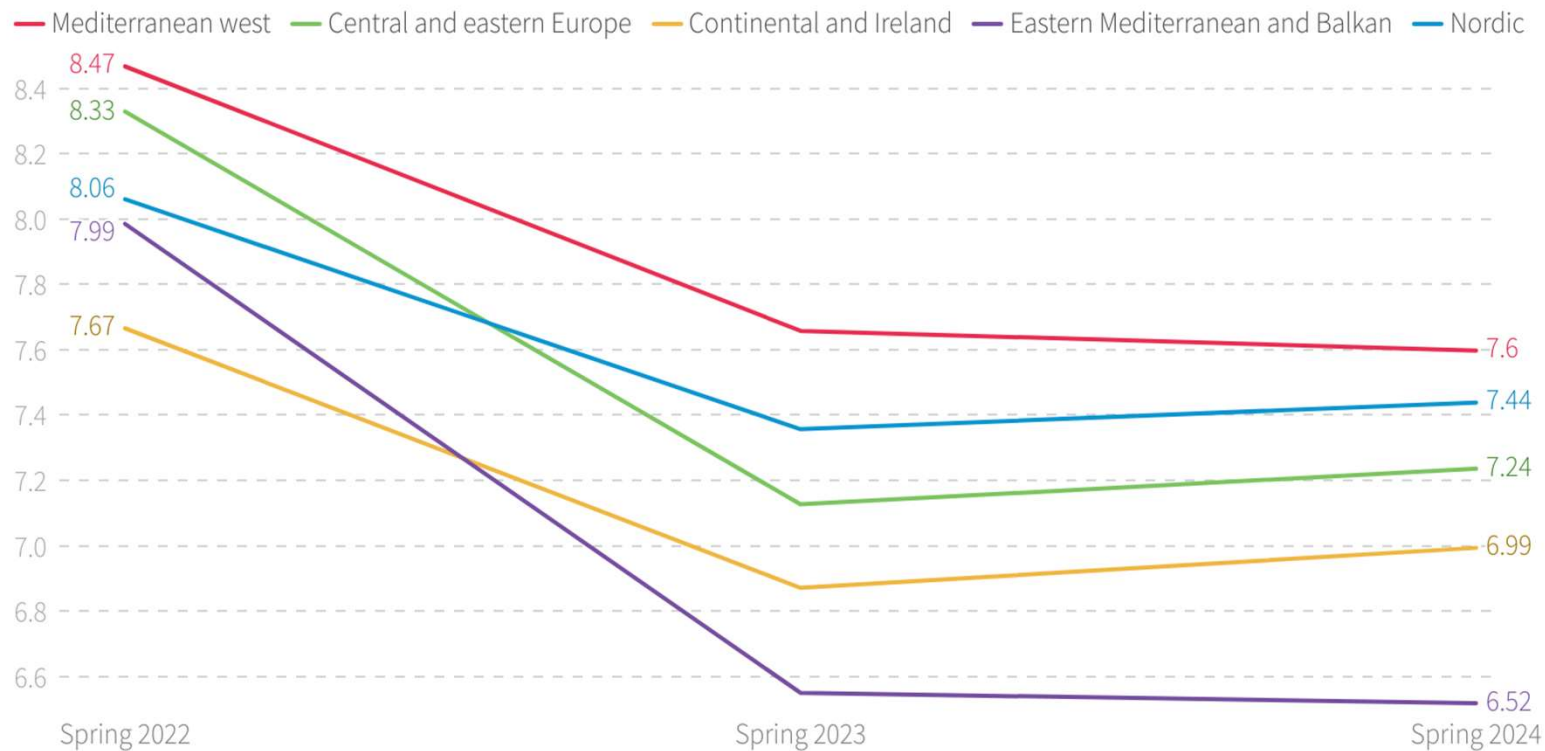


Support to Ukraine: cross-sectional findings over time

War concerns decreased significantly over time...

Concerned about the war in Ukraine

Regional weighed average of respondents in Spring 2022, 2023 and 2024



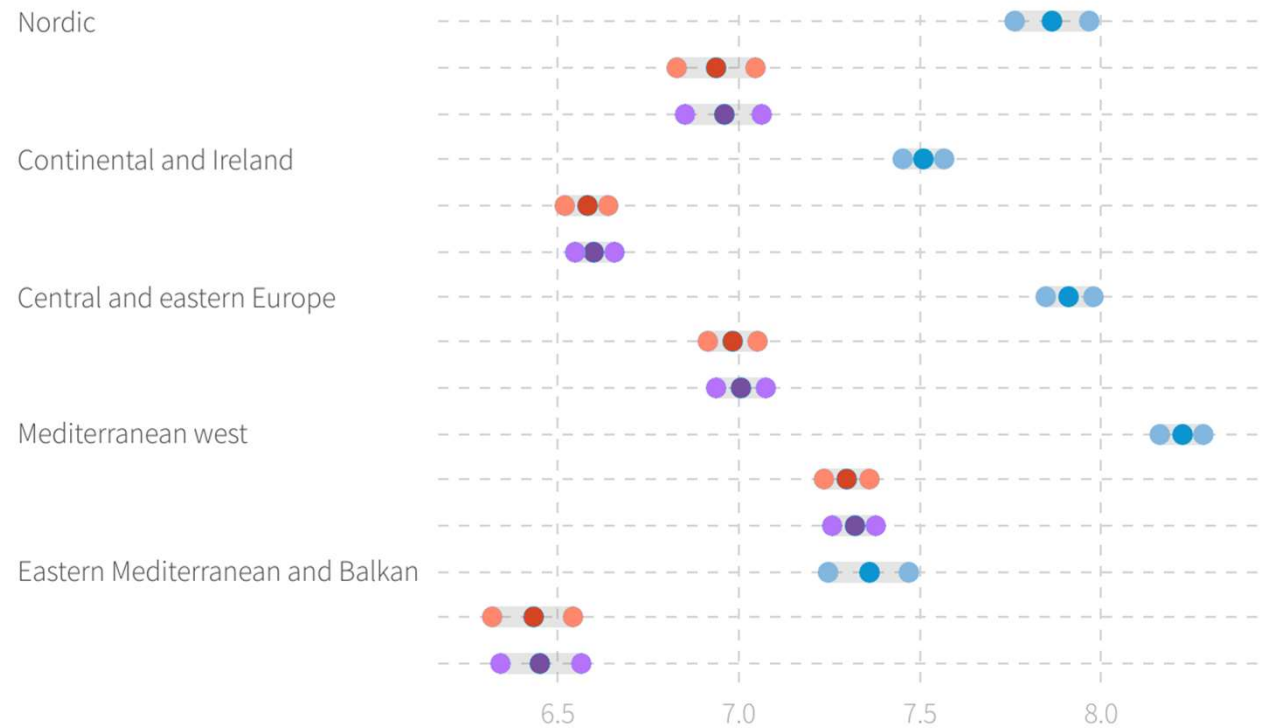
Scale: 0 - not at all concerned, 10 - very concerned

All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology

... and it holds true when controls are added

Concerned about the war in Ukraine

The three bars represent the estimated marginal means for 2022, 2023 and 2024.



Results are averaged over the levels of: employment status, urbanisation, gender, education attainment and country

Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey

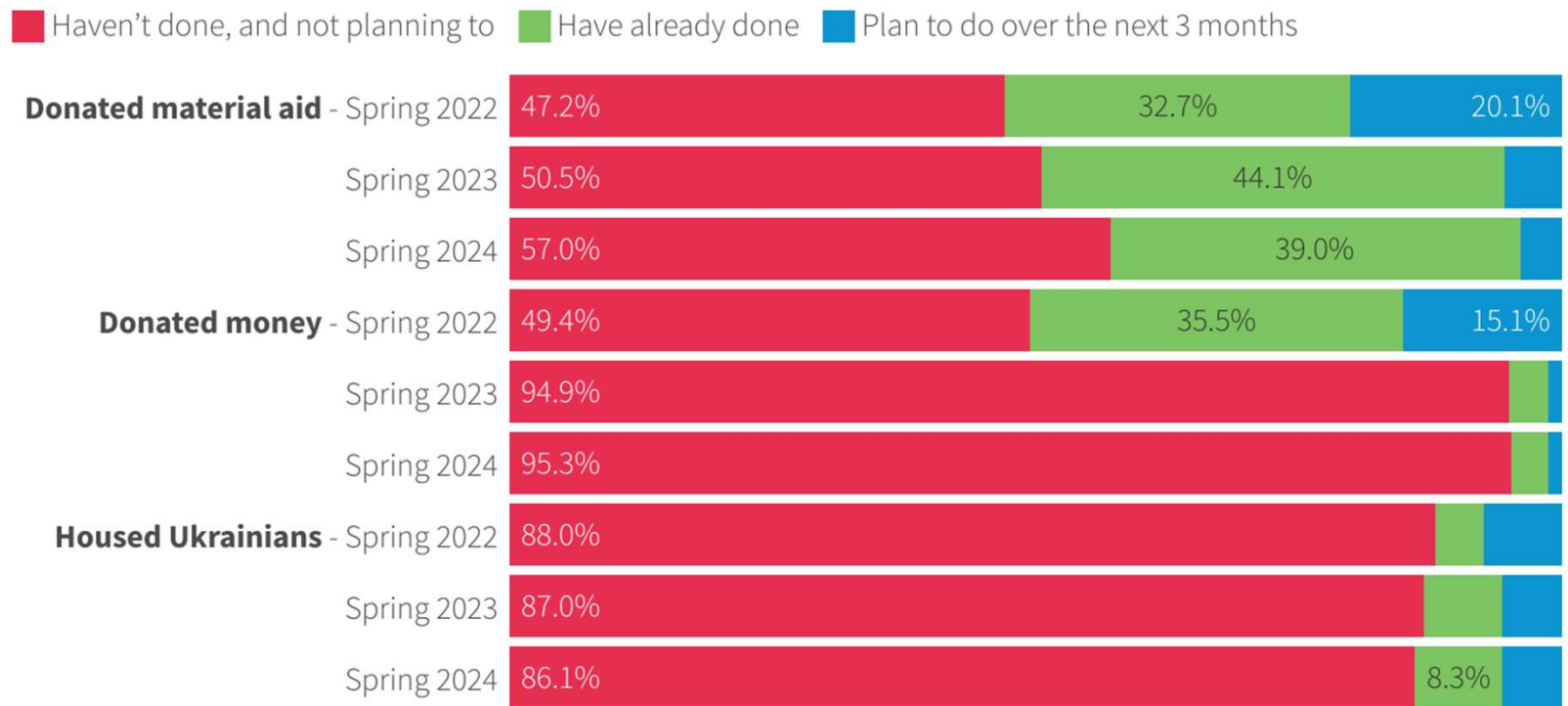


Scale: 0 not at all concerned, 10 = very concerned



Solidarity dwindled after the start of the war, especially monetary aid

Personal aid to Ukrainian refugees



Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey



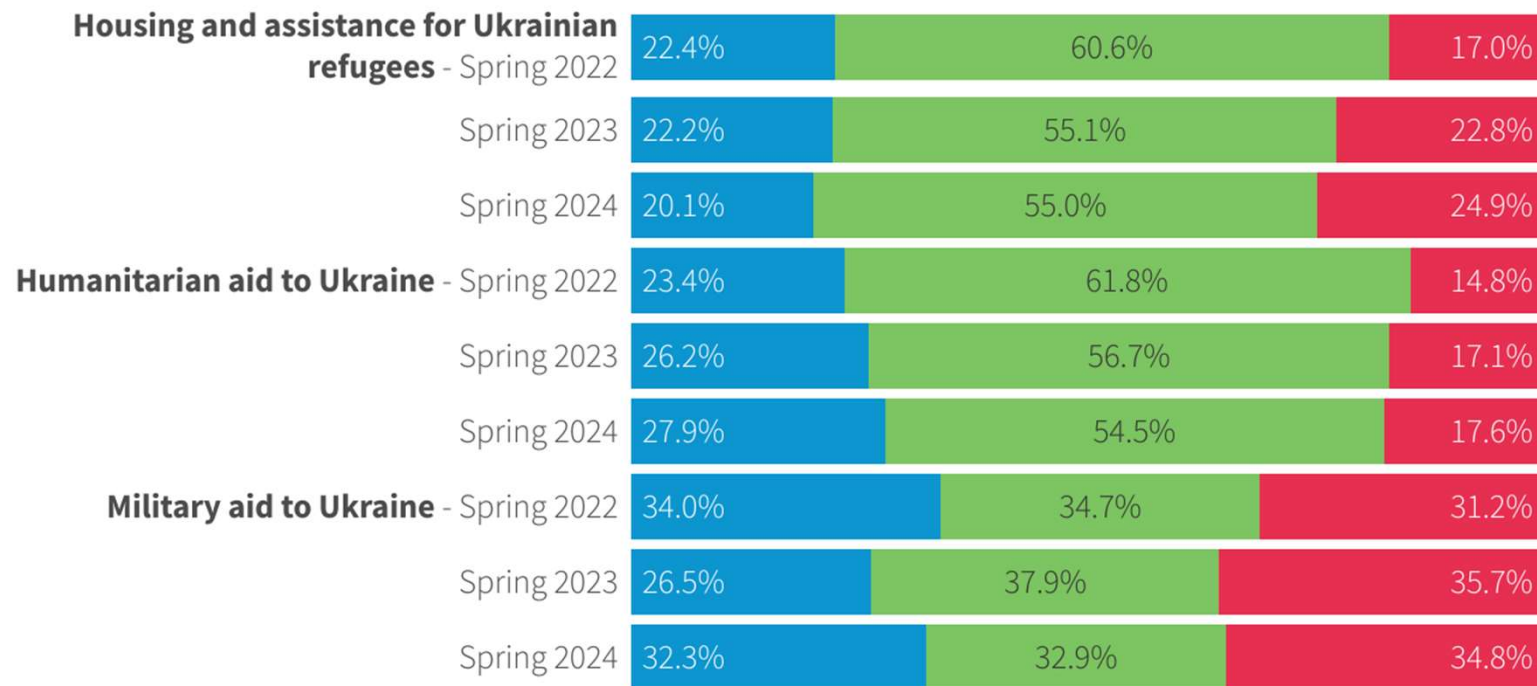
All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology



Support for housing Ukrainians decreased between 2022 and 2024

Own government's response to war in Ukraine

■ Too little
 ■ Right amount
 ■ Too much



Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey



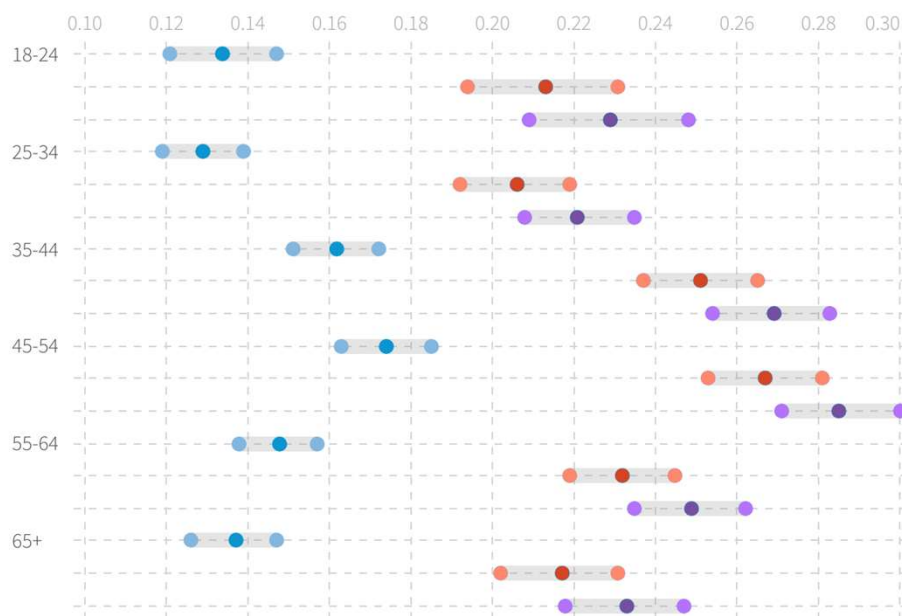
All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology



Young people support Ukraine more

Probability of answering "too much" to the statement "Your country's response to housing and assistance for Ukrainian refugees"

The three bars represent the estimated marginal means for 2022, 2023 and 2024.



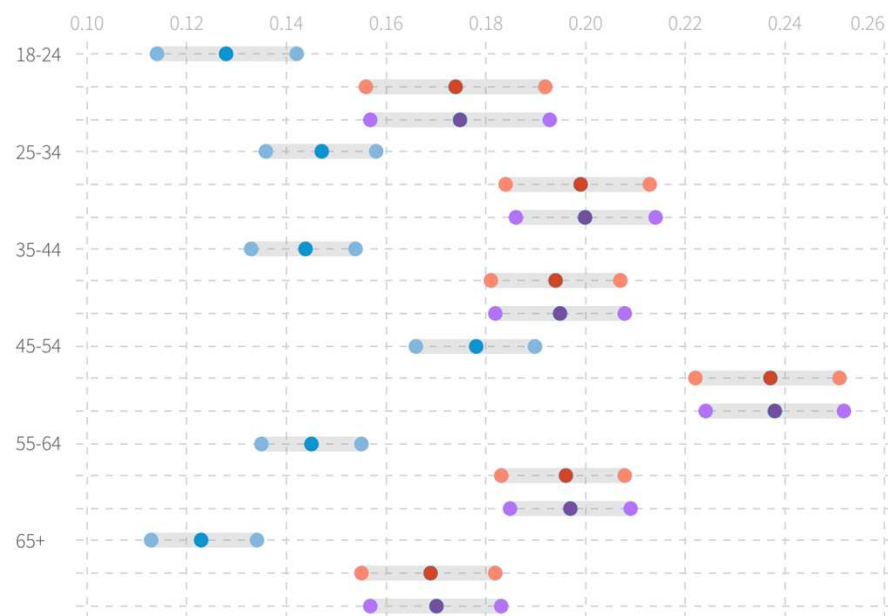
Results are averaged over the levels of: employment status, urbanisation, gender, education attainment and country

Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey



Probability of answering "too much" to the statement "Your country's response to providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine"

The three bars represent the estimated marginal means for 2022, 2023 and 2024.



Results are averaged over the levels of: employment status, urbanisation, gender, education attainment and country

Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey

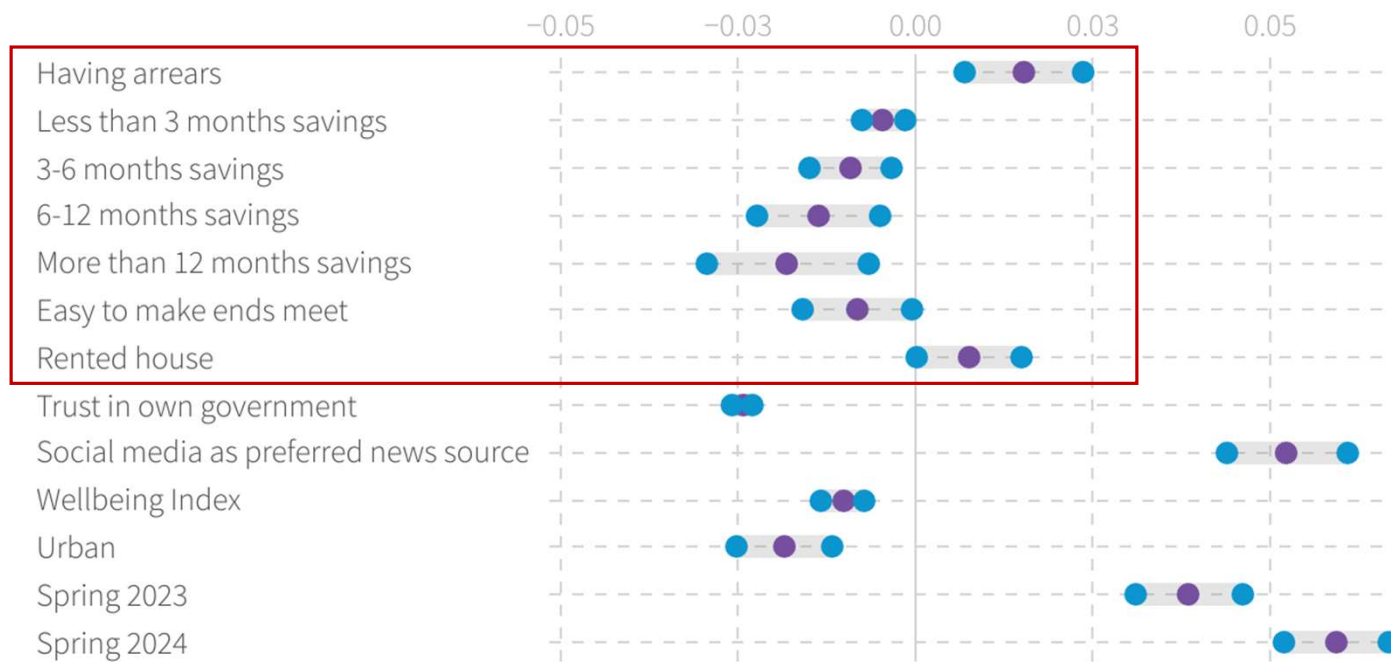


Housing Ukrainians: it's 'too much support' for those without financial stability

Similar results are found for humanitarian aid and military support, with economic insecurity and social media driving the withdrawal

Government has done too much to house Ukrainians

Average marginal effect for the cross-sectional sample over 2022, 2023 and 2024



Results for age, gender, employment status and region not displayed

Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey





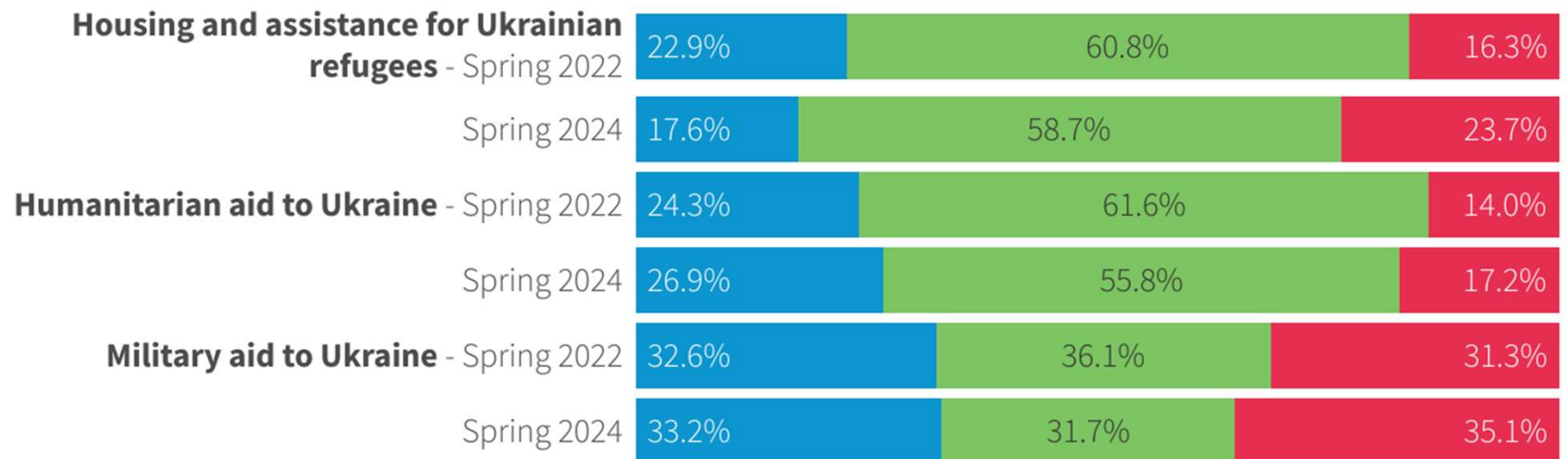
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Support to Ukraine: changes over time - panel data analysis

Among panellists, support for housing dwindled too

Own government's response to war in Ukraine - PANEL

■ Too little ■ Right amount ■ Too much



Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey



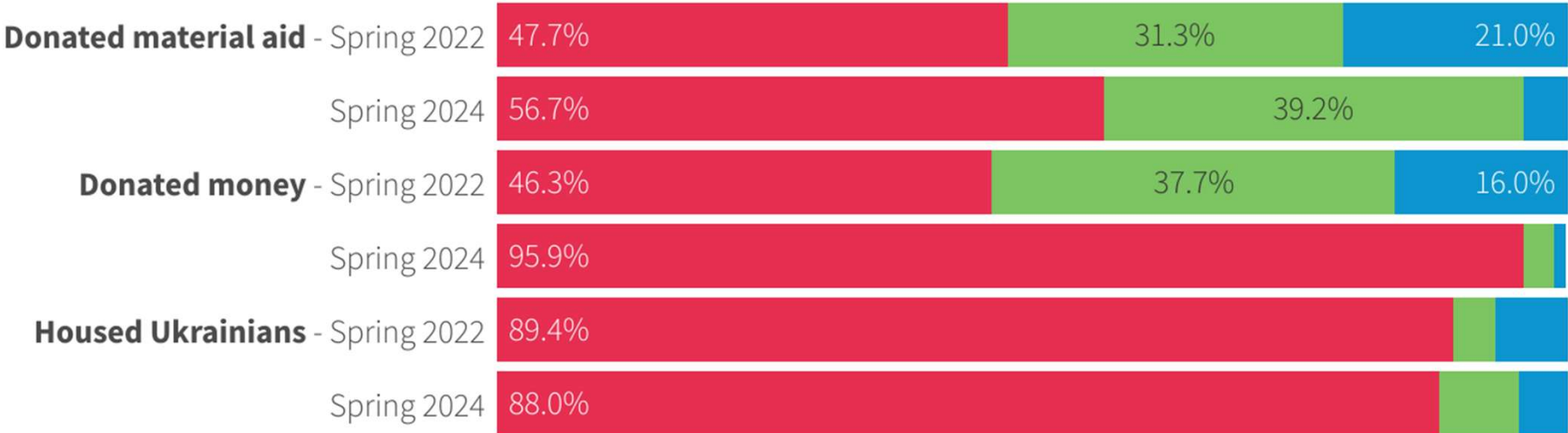
All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology



Similarly, providing aid decreased

Personal aid to Ukrainian refugees - PANEL

■ Haven't done, and not planning to ■ Have already done ■ Plan to do over the next 3 months



Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey



All percentages are weighted by applying a post-stratification methodology

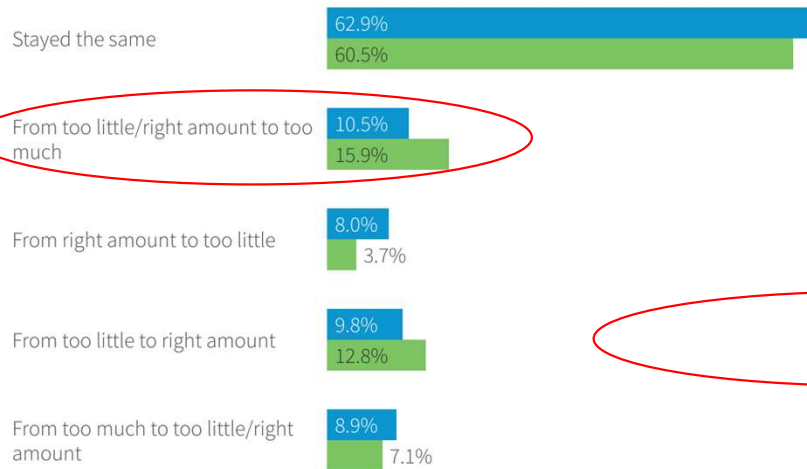


Changing opinions when people struggle to make ends meet

Support for government's measure in housing Ukrainians

Change calculated based on answers in 2024 and 2022 for "making ends meet"

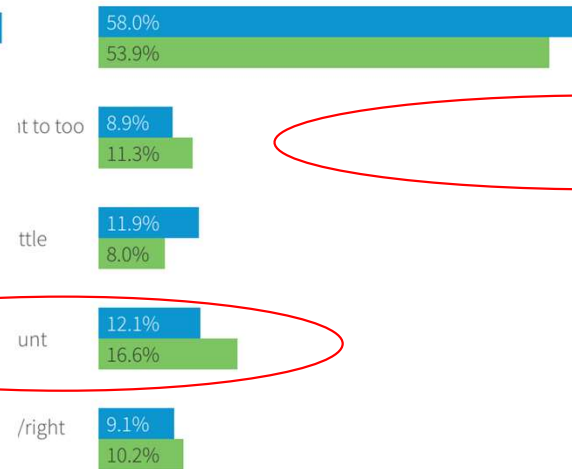
■ Became / was already easy ■ Became difficult



Government's measure in providing aid

Change calculated based on answers in 2024 and 2022 for "making ends meet"

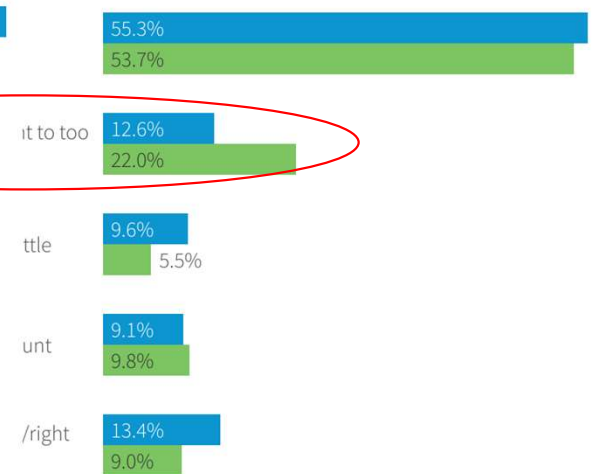
■ Became / was already easy ■ Became difficult



Government's measure in providing aid

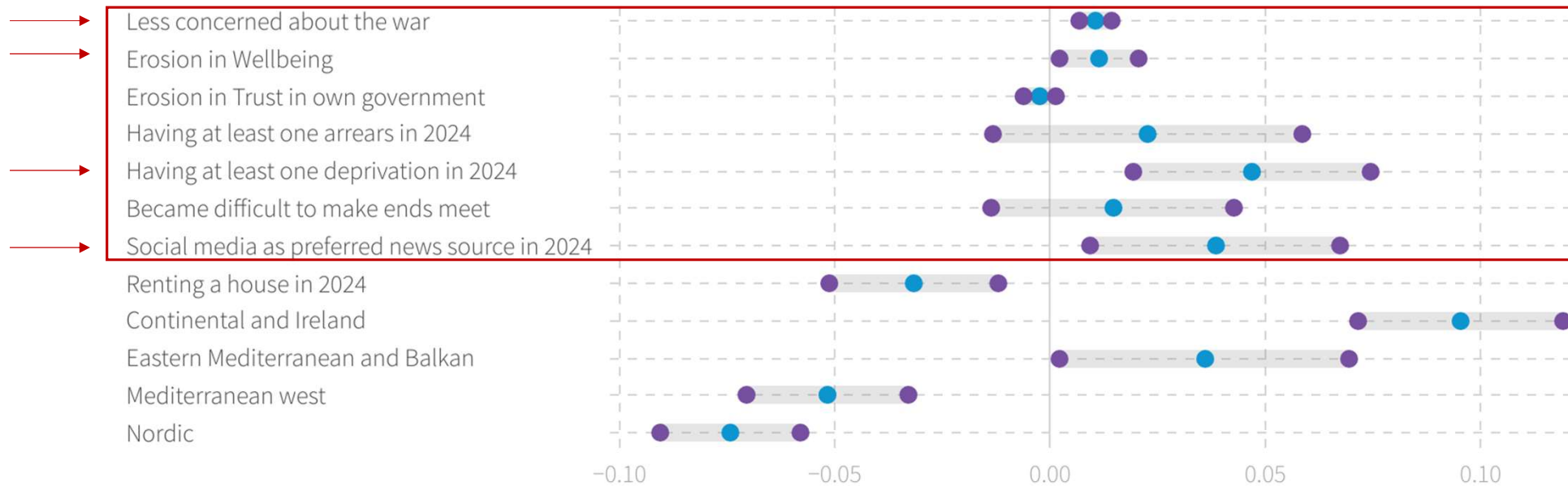
Change calculated based on answers in 2024 and 2022 for "making ends meet"

■ Became / was already easy ■ Became difficult



Type of media source and economic insecurity drive withdrawal

Average Marginal Effect - Support government in housing Ukrainians, 2022-2024



Withdrawal is coded, 1- from too little/right amount in 2022 to too much in 2024; 0- all other cases. Distribution: 1-1200, 0-7762. Results for age, gender, employment status and degree of urbanisation are not displayed. The change for concerned about the war, wellbeing and trust were computed by subtracting 2022 value to 2024.

Source: Living and Working in Europe, Eurofound e-survey, panel data 2022-2024

Similar results were found for withdrawing support for humanitarian and military aid, with social media and economic insecurity driving the effects

Summarising the results

- In terms of personal action in support of Ukrainians, the support was highest in the first year of war (2022); the numbers lowered in 2023 yet did not decline much further in 2024 (donating money had the biggest decline) – this is in parallel to the dynamics of **being concerned about the war: highest at first, and stabilizing in subsequent years**.
- Among the types of government assistance to Ukraine/Ukrainians asked about in the survey, **support to housing has dwindled** more than other types.
- However, the support to providing humanitarian and military aid has been **remarkably stable** – such as the proportion of those saying there is ‘too much’ support having a minor increase from 2022 to 2023, and being stable from 2023 to 2024 (slide 17). Similar stability is seen among the panelists – comparing the breakdown of ‘too little’, ‘right amount’ and ‘too much’ support between 2022 and 2024 (slide 21).
- Stability of public support for Ukraine is also noted by other recent sources (Krastev & Leonard, 2024)

Findings regarding trust and engagement

Both a cross-sectional and panel data from the e-survey confirm the following:

- Cultural and trust issues have strong **economic roots**
- Social exclusion, **deprivation** and **erosion of wealth** are factors that hinder altruistic societies and may contribute to **war fatigue**
- However, the relative stability in the proportion of those who see too little support for Ukraine may suggest that the **war fatigue in society is limited** and may first emanate from governments themselves rather than from society at large
- However, **social media** for news consumption and eroding **trust** may lead to withdrawing popular support, as has been uncovered in the specific analysis of those who shift to saying that there is ‘too much’ of the government support for Ukrainians

Are policies for nurturing civic engagement and trust sufficient and efficient?

The current EU policies for promotion of democracy entail:

- Recommendation to promote **free, fair and resilient elections**
- common transparency standards
- protecting the EU democratic sphere
- promoting institutional trust
- protecting an open public debate from covert interference
- The more recent European Democracy Action Plan addresses current issues such as foreign interference in elections, fake news, disinformation and transparent party funding.
- Since the Lisbon Agenda in the 2000s, social cohesion has been a central policy goal, achieved through modernizing social policies, regional redistribution, and *new forms of governance involving active citizenship*.
- Challenge: investing in **inclusive participatory processes**



Stay tuned for more:

This analysis is part of a larger research report tackling political and issue polarisation:

Eurofound (forthcoming, 2025): ***Social cohesion and inclusive participation in a polarised Europe***

It builds on previous Eurofound research on social cohesion:

- 2018: [Societal change and trust in institutions](#)
- 2022: [Fifth round of the Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey: Living in a new era of uncertainty](#)
- 2022: [Maintaining trust during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- 2024: [The political dimension of social cohesion in Europe](#)

**Questions, comments, you
want to get in touch?**

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Thanks!



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