PREFERENCES, POWER AND COALITION BUILDING
Findings from the ECFR expert survey 2015

KEY FINDINGS

PREFERENCES
POWER
COALITIONS
CASE STUDIES

Copyright: ECFR 2016
Author: Josef Janning, Senior Policy Fellow
Research Assistance: Christoph Klavehn, Bettina Böhm

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RETHINK: EUROPE
Instructions

• This interactive PDF presents specific results of Rethink: Europe, a joint initiative of ECFR and Stiftung Mercator.

• The presentation is structured in chapters. The main body of information is in the chapters Preferences, Power and Coalitions. Key Findings has a one page summary.

• The chapter Case Studies has analysis on select EU member states or group of states.

• The chapter Methodology gathers information on the survey design and process.

• For instructions how to navigate the pages, click on this paragraph
How to navigate these pages?

- Clicking on a tile on the start page takes you directly to the respective chapter.
- Clicking the start page symbol in the top right corner will always take you back to the start page.
- Clicking on the title of a page within a chapter will take you back to the beginning of that chapter.
- Clicking on a text box like this one will open pages with more detail.

To begin surfing the pdf, click on the symbol up there to get to the start.
Preferences

Germany is most often mentioned as a like minded partner. It also leads the rating on responsiveness followed by The Netherlands and Sweden.

Asked which partner governments contact first, Germany and France are on top, followed by the UK, Italy and Poland. Among the smaller countries, priority contacts are the Dutch and Swedish governments.

Greece, the United Kingdom and Hungary have disappointed partners most.

Power

Germany is clearly seen as the most influential member state, more relevant even in the area of foreign and security policy. France is in solid second place; the UK is seen as much weaker in all regards.

Among the smaller member states, The Netherlands and Sweden are named as most influential.

Coalitions

Most respondents expect to see more coalitions in future, helping to prepare decisions among the 28. Coalitions will become more permanent and less ad hoc.

Two thirds also expect to see one or several cores emerging from permanent coalitions; respondents are split over the desirability of that trend.

Should cores develop, deeper integration on economic and social integration or on energy have some acceptance among the expert panel. All other areas of deeper integration receive only marginal support.
Methodology overview

Expert survey: Coalition building in the EU

Building on earlier work with practitioners from governments and think tankers, ECFR launched an expert survey in the summer of 2015 (data collection between mid-May and early August). Civil servants, experts from think tanks, but also members of parliaments, media and NGOs were invited to answer a set of 20 questions dealing with patterns and preferences of member state interaction, the role of large member states, and the prospects of coalition building in the EU.

297 responses were received, covering all EU member states except for Croatia, Cyprus, and Lithuania. Participation varied greatly among member states with over 50 respondents from Germany and just one response from Romania. Results are not representative and should be read with some care. Role and place of the respondents in their national context, however, speak for a fair assessment of the prevailing view in the respective member state for all countries with multiple responses.
Target group has been reached well with over 2/3 of all responses from the two core target groups.

Foreign and security policy was given as the area of specialisation for most respondents (41%), followed by EU affairs in general (37%) and EMU/Single Market (14%).
The number of responses varies greatly among member states. However, five or more responses from the core target group of a member state indicate sufficient validity.
Respondents appear to judge their own country quite accurately. There is only minor deviation in results when assessment on one’s own country is taken out.
Respondents appear to judge their own country quite accurately. There is only minor deviation in results when assessment on one’s own country is taken out.
The survey contained 17 questions on substance, listed below.

Interaction among EU member states

4. In your view or experience, which member states generally share many of your country’s interests and preferences on EU policies? Select up to 5 member states from the list.

5. On EU matters, which member state government(s) would your government generally contact first and/or most? Select up to 5 member states from the list.

6. In dealing with other member states, which governments have shown to be most responsive or are easiest to work with? Select up to 5 member states from the list.

7. In your view, what are the reasons for responsiveness or ease of interaction? Multiple answers possible.

8. Please identify member states which have disappointed your government, because they have not been responsive or have not shown interest in cooperating with your government. Multiple answers possible.
Role and influence of individual member states

9. Here is a list of the so-called large member states. Considering the past 5 years, please rank the list according to their overall influence or impact on EU policy.

10. This time, considering the past 5 years, please rank the same list according to each country’s influence or impact on EU fiscal policy.

11. This time, please rank the same list according to each country’s influence or impact on EU foreign, security and defence policy.

12. Large member states aside, here is a list of seven other member states. Compared to the large six they are smaller in population but highly developed and affluent. Considering the past 5 years, please rank these countries according to their overall influence or impact on EU policy.

13. Large or affluent member states aside, here is a list of eleven more member states. Considering the past 5 years, please rank these countries according to their overall influence or impact on EU policy.

14. In general, impact or influence of member states depends on a number of factors. Please indicate the relevance of the factors listed below.

For questions 9-13: Either select the rank number in the box or drag names to rank position.
Coalitions and EU policy making

15. A key role of coalitions among EU member states is to build consensus prior to debate and decisions. Which of the statements below best describes the significance of consensus building by coalitions?

- Consensus building among a group is essential to get to decisions among 28 member states. Consensus building among a group is important for my country even though it may not prescribe the final decision.
- Consensus building among a group is helpful to prepare decisions among 28 member states but not meant to prescribe outcomes.
- Consensus building among a group has little shaping influence on EU decision making.
- Other (please specify)

16. In your view or from your experience, which of the following statements best describes the nature of coalitions among member states?

- Coalitions tend to form ad-hoc and around specific policy issues.
- Coalitions tend to form ad-hoc and cut across several policy areas.
- Coalitions tend to be more permanent and are mostly issue specific.
- Coalitions tend to be more permanent and cut across several policy areas.

17. Looking ahead, do you expect to see more or less coalition building among member states?

18. Do you expect future coalition building to become more permanent, possibly forming one or several political cores?
Continued: Coalitions and EU policy making

19. In your view, is coalition building and/or the formation of one or several cores desirable?
  • Coalitions are desirable but should not lead to the formation of cores.
  • Coalitions are desirable but there should only be one core.
  • Coalitions and several cores are desirable.
  • Neither coalitions nor cores are desirable; the EU should only develop as a whole.
  • Don’t know / none

20. Assuming that coalition building could lead to a differentiation of integration (in the sense of building cores of deeper integration), which of the projects listed below would your government likely want to engage in?
  • Economic and social union as a follow up to monetary union (within the eurozone)
  • Tax union (harmonizing all or some direct/indirect taxes)
  • Energy union (creating a single energy market with a single energy trade policy)
  • Full integration of immigration and asylum policy
  • Fully integrated border control, including a common border policy
  • Defence union (full integration of armed forces)
  • None
  • Other (please specify)
Results: Preferences

- Germany is listed most often as a like-minded partner in the EU. In a web view it has the most connections.

- Germany and France are seen as most important contact points, followed by UK, PL and IT. Among the smaller, NL and SE stand out.

- In terms of responsiveness, The Netherlands (26%) and Sweden (23%) receive the highest marks after Germany (39%). Main reasons for smooth interaction are shared interest and record of cooperation.

- Greece, the United Kingdom and Hungary have disappointed partners most.

- Note: There is a special section with more analysis on these network questions. To access this section click here.
Preferences: The Top 10 like-minded member states

In your view or experience, which member states generally share many of your country’s interests and preferences on EU policies? Countries listed were most often named among the five choices respondents could make.

What really matters is who selected which countries?
Preferences:
The network of like-mindedness

Top 30%

Q4 Total
more important
less important

RETHINK: EUROPE
Preferences:
The network of like-mindedness

Q4 Top 30%
- Top 5%
- Top 10%
- Top 20%
- Top 30%

Back to Total
Preferences: Who contacts whom first?

Q5 Top 30%
- Top 5%
- Top 10%
- Top 20%
- Top 30%

More
Germany
Preferences: Who contacts whom first?

Top 30%
Germany

Q5 total
more important
less important

RETHINK: EUROPE
Preferences: Who contacts whom first?

Top 30%
More

RETHINK: EUROPE
Preferences: Responsiveness and ease of interaction

Top 30%

Q6 total
more important
less important

RETHINK: EUROPE
Preferences: Responsiveness and ease of interaction

Q6 Top 30%
- Top 5%
- Top 10%
- Top 20%
- Top 30%

Back to Total
Preferences: Which countries have disappointed its partners?

Please identify member states which have disappointed your government, because they have not been responsive or have not shown interest in cooperating with your government. Multiple answers possible.
Preferences: Which countries have disappointed BENELUX most?

Please identify member states which have disappointed your government, because they have not been responsive or have not shown interest in cooperating with your government. Multiple answers possible.
Preferences: Which countries have disappointed its partners?

Q8 Top 30%
- Top 5%
- Top 10%
- Top 20%
- Top 30%

Back to Table
Results: Power

• Germany is overwhelmingly seen as the most influential member state: 94.1% rank it top in general (92% on fiscal matters); still 45% rank it top on foreign policy, security and defence, still ahead of FR (35%) and UK (16%).

• Among the affluent smaller EU members, The Netherlands and Sweden are seen as having the biggest influence on EU policies.

• Greece and Ireland stand out among the those member states not covered by the other two groups.

• The United Kingdom is seen in a marginal position in the context of the “Big Three”. It’s lead role is not even seen in foreign & security policy and defence.
Power: Germany leads the large state ranking in all dimensions

How do the Germans view themselves?

How consensual is the judgement among respondents from different countries?

How do the Germans view themselves?
Power: Germany leads the large state ranking in all dimensions

... even when comparing the views from Berlin, Paris & London

See other comparisons? Views differ more on foreign affairs, security and defence

How do the Germans view themselves?
Power: The German view does not differ by much, with some interesting deviations. FR and PL more important in ext. affairs in the German view. PL and ES seen as more important, IT seen as less important compared to the view of all respondents.
Power: The French view is less positive on France, but more positive on UK and Italy

Biggest difference of the German and French view shows on fiscal policy
On CSDP Paris sees London as more relevant than Berlin
Power: The British view...

UK overrates its impact on foreign affairs, security and defence, while it feels much less influential on fiscal matters compared to the overall view of the country.
Power: The impact of the 6 large members („Big Six“) as seen by:

All

![Bar chart showing the impact of the Big Six as seen by All CSDP, with DE, FR, UK, IT, PL, and ES on the x-axis and the impact level on the y-axis. The Impact value ranges from 1 to 6, with 6 being the highest possible value and 1 being the lowest.]}
Power: The impact of the 6 large members („Big Six“) as seen by:
All – DE

6 being the highest possible value and 1 being the lowest
Power: The impact of the 6 large members („Big Six“) as seen by:
All – DE – FR
Power: The impact of the 6 large members („Big Six“) as seen by:
All – DE – FR – UK
Power: The impact of the 6 large members („Big Six“) as seen by:
All – DE – FR – UK – BENELUX
Power: The impact of the 6 large members („Big Six“) as seen by:
All – DE – FR – UK – BENELUX – PL.
The graphs show high consensus on the ranks of Germany and France on the upper end, on Spain at the lower end; higher spread for the other three large member states.
Power: the consensus matrix

The affluent smaller countries (the middle bar) differ in their view:

- more critical on the four largest countries,
- more positive on Poland and Spain

How do the "Big Three" compare?

How do the Germans view themselves?
Top rank and second rank: Germany at the top, France in solid second place, UK nowhere seen as top or second most influential country.
Power: The Netherlands and Sweden are key states among the rich and small Country groups.
Power: The rich and small in comparison

Rich & small more critical on NL than the other groups

Less affluent smaller countries more positive on NL and SE than the other groups

Belgium, a classic key state receives no high marks among all groups
Power: Among the rest, Greece, Ireland and Portugal are seen to have most impact

The graphs show significant spread for most countries, indicating strong diversity of views

Spread by country
Power: The comparison of the Top 3

Consensus over Greece is quite strong

Ireland seen in top rank by the Irish

Portugal’s ranking shows the spread which is typical for all other countries
Results: Coalition building

• 90% expect to see more coalition building among member states in the future.

• The majority (53%) views consensus building among a group as essential to get to decisions among 28 member states.

• The majority (58%) expects coalitions among member states to be more permanent than ad hoc.

• 69% expect coalitions to form one or several cores within the EU.  
  • 50% do not approve of that.

• Deeper integration of a core group would be supported on economic and social union by 38%, on energy union by 30%. All other options figure well below 10%.
Coalitions:
More coalition building in the future

Very strong consensus among EU countries and within policy elite
Coalitions: Group consensus essential for decision making

Many see consensus building by coalitions as important to get things done.
Coalitions:
Many expect them to be more permanent

Significant variation across and within member states
Only UK and Latvia show 100% pro permanent coalitions
Coalitions: Core building is widely expected but less liked

69% expect coalition to form one or several cores
Opposition strongest in SE, IE, CZ, UK, BG, DK, AT
Coalitions: Deeper integration
Clear preference for econ & social, energy

Q20 Assuming that coalition building could lead to a differentiation of integration (in the sense of building cores of deeper integration), which of the projects listed below would your government likely want to engage in?

- Fully integrated border control, including a common border policy
- Economic and social union as a follow up to monetary union...
- Tax union (harmonizing all or some direct/indirect...)
- Energy union (creating a single energy market with a single energy...)
- Defense union (full integration of armed forces)
- Full integration of immigration and asylum policy

Some support for Defence Union only in GR, BE, EE & among Eurocrats
Case Studies

- **Poland**: Strong focus on Germany, critical on France and of Visegrad partners, fairly positive view of the UK, focused on Sweden among affluent smaller countries.
- **Germany**: Strong focus on the other “Big Six”-states and on the 7 affluent smaller members, among them especially on the Netherlands and Austria.
- **The Netherlands**: Strongest of the 7 affluent smaller members, focused on Benelux, Germany and France.
- **The Nordics and the BENELUX**: Clearly, the Netherlands and Sweden are seen as good partners with comparatively strong impact among their peer group and among the EU at large.
- **Italy**: Very close to other Mediterranean states, different view of its place among the large member states, critical of the "Big Three".
- **Spain**: Ranked last among the Big Six, but sees itself ahead of Poland, strong focus on southern EU-neighbourhood.
Metadata: Poland

- 40 participants
- comparatively low government participation
- “Others” come from universities (5), Central Bank (1), banking (1), business (1)
- Strong participation from CFSP/CSDP background

Professional position within member state

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<td>Culture, education, research</td>
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Power: Poland’s view of the “Big Three” compared to the self-image of Germany, France and the UK

PL sees more impact for FR and UK in general EU affairs than resp. national elites

Reverse picture on foreign affairs, security & defence: PL sees DE as stronger, FR and UK as weaker than resp. national elites
Preferences: The Top 10 most like-minded member states from the Polish perspective

France is missing, Germany in the lead with Lithuania and Sweden

UK listed but on the lower end

Visegrad group partners all at the end of the list
Preferences: Top 10 most disappointing member states from the Polish perspective

France at the top of the list, Germany at the bottom of the Top 10

All other large member states except Spain have disappointed

Visegrad group partners all listed here
Preferences: Poland's Top 5 partners most responsive or easiest to work with

- Germany and Sweden at the top of the list
- No Visegrad group partner listed here
Preferences: Top 5 countries Poland will contact first or most

- Germany and France at the top of the list
- Just one Visegrad group partner listed here
- 7 affluent small: Sweden among Top 5
Power: The Polish view on the impact of the „Big Six“

More critical of its own impact than the average
More positive on the impact of the United Kingdom
Power: How does Poland view the 7 affluent smaller members compared to their own average view?

- FI
- NL
- AT
- BE
- SE
- DK
- LU

weaker - stronger
In your view, is coalition building and/or the formation of one or several cores desirable?

- Neither coalitions nor cores are desirable; the EU should only develop as a whole.
- Coalitions are desirable but should not lead to the formation of cores.
- Coalitions are desirable but there should only be one core.
- Coalitions and several cores are desirable.
- Don’t know / none

65% of Polish experts reject core building
54 participants
- balanced cross-section between government, politics and think tanks/NGOs
- “Others” diverse: ambassador/ex ambassador (2), consultant (2), government adviser (1), NGOs (1), government affairs industries (1), universities (1)
- Relatively low representation of CFSP/CSDP (Germany 29%, general result 41%)

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Preferences: The Top 10 most like-minded member states from the German perspective

7 affluent small members and Weimar Triangle the most like-minded

UK not even on the list
Preferences: The Top 10 most disappointing member states from the German perspective

Top 3 reflects overall opinion

None of the affluent small members listed, but 3 of the large member states

But: Overall opinion sees Germany on rank 6
Preferences: Germany’s Top 10 partners most responsive or easiest to work with

All of the 7 affluent small members and the Weimar Triangle listed

Usual suspects of like-mindedness but one land sticks out: UK

Strong focus on the neighbouring countries
Preferences: The Top 5 countries Germany will contact first or most

Weimar Triangle at the top

For Germany, the Netherlands are the most important of the 7 affluent small members
Power: The impact of the „Big Six“ in the German view

Accurate self-perception, but slight overestimation of France and Poland, in contrast to the UK and Italy
Power: How does Germany view the 7 affluent smaller members compared to their own average view?

weaker - stronger

- DK
- SE
- BE
- AT
- NL
- FI
- LU

RETHINK: EUROPE
Coalitions: Desirability and the formation of cores in the German view

Is coalition building and/or the formation of one or several cores desirable?

Overall without Germany
- 42% believe coalitions are desirable but should not lead to the formation of cores.
- 26% think coalitions are desirable but there should only be one core.
- 15% believe coalitions and several cores are desirable.
- 12% see neither coalitions nor cores as desirable; the EU should only develop as a whole.
- 5% are unsure/don’t know.

Germany
- 35% believe coalitions are desirable but should not lead to the formation of cores.
- 14% think coalitions are desirable but there should only be one core.
- 7% believe coalitions and several cores are desirable.
- 2% see neither coalitions nor cores as desirable; the EU should only develop as a whole.
- 7% are unsure/don’t know.

Overall opinion refuses core building, whereas 42% of the German respondents find it desirable.
10 participants
Strong representation of government employees
Other: self-employed

Professional position within member state

- Government (civil servant, all levels)
- Think tank, interest group or NGO
- Other (please specify)

Answer Options

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Power: The impact of the 7 affluent small
The Dutch view

NL more critical of its own role (2nd rank among NL responses)

Comparison to “Big Six”:
See NL on rank 1, clearly ahead of SE

BENELUX seen as more relevant by NL than by all
Preferences: Top 5 most like-minded member states from the Dutch perspective

Dutch view: Not all Nordics or Benelux partners listed

Overall view: NL mentioned most often after Germany and France (75 for NL to 113 for DE and 77 votes for FR in total)
Preferences: Top 5 member states the Netherlands will contact first or most

Dutch view:
Benelux partners after Germany and UK;
Nordics not listed

External perception:
NL not among Top 5 but listed directly behind

Benelux partners:
BE and LU put NL before FR and DE
Preferences: The Netherlands’ Top 5 partners most responsive or easiest to work with

Dutch view: BENELUX and Germany are most responsive or easiest to work with

Overall view: NL (60 votes) mentioned most often after Germany (92 votes)
Coalitions: NL likes energy union, economic & social union, defence union

- Economic and social union as a follow up to monetary union (within the eurozone)
- Energy union (creating a single energy market with a single energy trade policy)
- Defense union (full integration of armed forces)
- Tax union (harmonizing all or some direct/indirect taxes)
- Full integration of immigration and asylum policy
- Fully integrated border control, including a common border policy
- None

Countries who share Dutch preferences the most: Bulgaria, Estonia and Poland
### Professional position within member state

- **Government (civil servant, all levels)**: 33%
- **Politics (parliament, political party)**: 7%
- **Think tank, interest group or NGO**: 33%
- **Other (please specify)**: 27%

**Answer Options**

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<td>Economics, single market, trade, energy, environment</td>
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### Nordics

- **Nordics** have 15 respondents in total
- **DK 6, SE 5, FI 4**
- **Others**: Former minister and parliamentarian, business, military staff of ministry of defence, professor and board member
Benelux have 17 respondents in total
- NL 10, BE 5, LU 2
- Majority of responses from government
- Other: Self-employed
- Most participants work on EU Affairs at large or on external affairs

Professional position within member state

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development/Humanitarian assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
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Power: The NORDIC view on the impact of the “Big Six”

Slightly more critical view of the UK, slightly more positive view of Germany compared to all respondents
Closer to the overall view than BENELUX countries
Power: The BENELUX view on the impact of the “Big Six”

More critical on the impact of Germany and France, stronger role of the smaller among the large, like FR view of UK as more influential on fiscal matters than seen by all.
Power: The impact of the 7 affluent small member states as seen by: The Nordics

The Nordic view

7 being the highest possible value and 1 being the lowest

NL | SE | FI | BE | DK | LU | AT
Power: The impact of the 7 affluent small member states as seen by: Nordics - BENELUX

The Nordic view

The Benelux view

7 being the highest possible value and 1 being the lowest
Power: The impact of the 7 affluent small member states as seen by: Nordics – BENELUX – All Affluent 7

The Nordic view
The Benelux view
All affluent 7

7 being the highest possible value and 1 being the lowest

NL
SE
FI
BE
DK
LU
AT
Power: The impact of the 7 affluent small member states as seen by: Nordics – BENELUX – All Affluent 7 – Big Six.
Preferences: The Top 10 like-minded member states from the Nordic view

In your view or experience, which member states generally share many of your country’s interests and preferences on EU policies?

- Germany
- Netherlands
- Sweden
- Finland
- UK
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Austria
- France
- Belgium

Germany and Netherlands ahead of Nordics

Denmark last one of the Nordics listed

Luxembourg is not among the Top 10
Preferences: The Top 10 like-minded member states from the BENELUX view

In your view or experience, which member states generally share many of your country’s interests and preferences on EU policies?

Belgium and Luxembourg listed ahead of the Netherlands

All Nordics among the Top 10 states of like-mindedness
Preferences: 5 member states to contact first or most from the Nordic view

On EU matters, which member state government(s) would your government generally contact first and/or most?

Number of votes for a state, respondents could select up to 5 states

- **Netherlands and Sweden** first or most contacted after Germany
Preferences: 5 member states to contact first or most from the BENELUX view

On EU matters, which member state government(s) would your government generally contact first and/or most?

Belgium ahead of Netherlands and Luxembourg
Preferences: Top 10 partners the Nordics find most responsive or easiest to work with

In dealing with other member states, which governments have shown to be most responsive or are easiest to work with?

Sweden most responsive in the Nordic view

All of the BENELUX states are listed
Preferences: Top 10 partners the BENELUX find most responsive or easiest to work with

In dealing with other member states, which governments have shown to be most responsive or are easiest to work with?

Belgium clearly seen as most responsive or easiest to work with among the BENELUX states
Preferences: The Top 5 most disappointing member states from the Nordic and BENELUX perspective

Please identify member states which have disappointed your government, because they have not been responsive or have not shown interest in cooperating with your government. Multiple answers possible.

The Nordics are undecided here: No one seems to have been very disappointing

The BENELUX go with the general mainstream opinion: Top 3 are UK, Greece and Hungary, too
Coalitions: Desirability and the formation of cores in the Nordic and BENELUX view

In your view, is coalition building and/or the formation of one or several cores desirable?

- Coalitions are desirable but should not lead to the formation of cores.
- Coalitions are desirable but there should only be one core.
- Coalitions and several cores are desirable.
- Neither coalitions nor cores are desirable; the EU should only develop as a whole.
- Don't know / none

The Nordics strongly refuse the formation of cores, in contrast to the BENELUX.

But Nordics and BENELUX share preferences for the same projects: When asked about projects, they both list the foundation of an Energy Union, an Economic and Social Union and a Defence Union.

RETHINK: EUROPE
### Metadata: Italy

- 28 participants
- Very diverse response spectrum
- Participation by media professionals above average
- Others: Former ambassador and professor for international relations (1), Italian agency of energy efficiency (1), pensioner former civil servant (1), academics (2), corporate (1), international organization (1) and company (1)

#### Professional position within member state

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Response Count</th>
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<td>Government (civil servant, all levels)</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<td>Politics (parliament, political party)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Think tank, interest group or NGO</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>4%</td>
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#### Answer Options

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
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<td>Foreign and Security Policy, Defence Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Affairs in general</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics, single market, trade, energy, environment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture, education, research</td>
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</table>
Power: The Italian view on the impact of the “Big Six”

Italy’s self-evaluation is rather mainstream and content with 4th rank
But: on fiscal policy Italians see country in 3rd place, on foreign, security and defence policy in 5th place
Preferences: The Top 5 most like-minded member states from the Italian perspective

Italy sees significant like-mindedness with other Mediterranean states

UK not listed among Top 5
Preferences: Top 5 partners Italy will contact first are most likely France, Germany, UK, Spain, Portugal.

France is seen as the major partner among the “Big Six” states, ahead of Germany.
Preferences: Top 5 member states most responsive from the Italian perspective

Sweden surprisingly listed right after three large states – the only one among the seven affluent small

* Same number of votes for Belgium, Netherlands, Poland and UK
Preferences: Top 10 most disappointing member states from the Italian perspective

First ranks occupied by the “Big Three”

Many Central and Eastern countries among Top 10, but no southern country listed
Coalitions: Italy's strong focus on asylum and immigration policy

Assuming that coalition building could lead to a differentiation of integration (in the sense of building cores of deeper integration), which of the projects listed below would your government likely want to engage in?

- Economic and social union as a follow up to monetary union (within the eurozone)
- Energy union (creating a single energy market with a single energy trade policy)
- Full integration of immigration and asylum policy
- Fully integrated border control, including a common border policy
- Defense union (full integration of armed forces)
- None

57% of the Italian participants approve projects related to Italy being a major transit zone for refugees and migrants. In the overall view, the projects of immigration, asylum policy and border control are listed by 16% only.
Metadata: Spain

23 participants
Strong participation from think tanks, interest groups or NGOs
Response count shows overrepresentation of experts from the policy area of FSDP
Others: University institute, Public Affairs at Bank

Professional position within member state

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign and Security Policy, Defence Policy</td>
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<td>European Affairs in general</td>
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<td>Justice and Home Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development/Humanitarian assistance</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>
Power: The Spanish view on the impact of the “Big Six”

Spain sees itself on rank 5 ahead of Poland

Clear difference between general and Spanish view on CSDP
Preferences: The Top 5 most like-minded member states from the Spanish perspective

The Spanish political class is mostly focused on its southern neighbourhood.
Preferences: The Top 5 states Spain would contact first or most

Germany features prominently only on this question; a consequence of its importance in the EU, but not of a closer relationship with Spain.
Preferences: The Top 5 member states most responsive from the Spanish perspective

Spain very clearly has a regional Mediterranean outlook

UK not listed

Spain sees Belgium as very responsive and like-minded

But: When it comes to ranking the seven affluent small member states according to their influence, Spain plays Belgium on rank 6 out of 7
Preferences: Top 10 most disappointing member states from the Spanish perspective

Very different from the Italian view which puts the Big Three in top here

Surprising also to see Finland among Top 3
Among core building options Spanish respondents find the creation of an economic and social union most attractive. A defence union plays no role at all.

Assuming that coalition building could lead to a differentiation of integration (in the sense of building cores of deeper integration), which of the projects listed below would your government likely want to engage in?

- Economic and social union as a follow up to monetary union (within the eurozone)
- Tax union (harmonizing all or some direct/indirect taxes)
- Energy union (creating a single energy market with a single energy trade policy)
- Full integration of immigration and asylum policy
- Fully integrated border control, including a common border policy

Question on the formation of cores: 41% of Spanish respondents find coalitions and several cores desirable in comparison to only 29% of all participants.
Network Graphics Special: Instructions

• This section lets you explore four of the questions on interaction patterns (questions 4, 5, 6 and 8) in greater detail.

• From the menu on the right of each network page select member states or country groups for a highlighted view of their connectivity.

• Click the icon in the upper left corner to get back to the question selection.

• To go back to the main presentation start page, click the icon in the upper right corner on question selection page.

• To start Network Graphics Special click here.
Q4

In your view or experience, which member states generally share many of your country’s interests and preferences on EU policies? (selection of up to 5 member states)

Q5

On EU matters, which member state government(s) would your government generally contact first and/or most? (selection of up to 5 member states)

Q6

In dealing with other member states, which governments have shown to be most responsive or are easiest to work with? (selection of up to 5 member states)

Q8

Please identify member states which have disappointed your government, because they have not been responsive or have not shown interest in cooperating with your government. (multiple possible)
Countries that share many interests and preferences
Countries that share many interests and preferences.
Countries that share many interests and preferences
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Countries that share many interests and preferences
Countries that share many interests and preferences
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most

Total
AT
DE FR UK
PL IT ES
BE NL LU
SE DK FI
BeNeLux
Nordics
Baltics
Visegrád
South

Top 3
Q8 Q6 Q4 Q5
Government contacted first or most

Total

BeNeLux
Nordics
Baltics
Visegrád
South

Q4  Q5  Q6  Q8
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most

Total
AT
DE FR UK
PL IT ES
BE NL LU
SE DK FI
BeNeLux
Nordics
Baltics
Visegrád
South

Q4 Q5 Q6 Q8

Home
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most

Total
- BeNeLux
- Nordics
- Baltics
- Visegrád
- South

Top 3
- AT
- DE
- FR
- UK
- BE
- NL
- LU
- PL
- IT
- ES
- SE
- DK
- FI

Q3
Q4
Q5
Q6
Q8

Home
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most

Q4  Q5  Q6  Q8

Total  Top 3
AT
DE  FR  UK
PL  IT  ES
BE  NL  LU
SE  DK  FI
BeNeLux
Nordics
Baltics
Visegrád
South
Government contacted first or most

Total  Top 3
AT  
DE  FR  UK  
PL  IT  ES  
BE  NL  LU  
SE  DK  FI  
BeNeLux  
Nordics  
Baltics  
Visegrád  
South  

Q4  Q5  Q6  Q8  

Home
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most

Top 3
- AT
- DE
- FR
- UK

BeNeLux
- BE
- NL
- LU

Nordics
- SE
- DK
- FI

Baltics
- SE

Visegrád
- SK
- CZ
- HU

South
- EE
- LV
- LT
- CY
- MT
- RO
- PT
- SI
- SI
- NL
- LU
- BE
- FR
- DE
- AT
- IT
- ES
- PL
- FI

Q4  Q5  Q6  Q8
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most

Top 3

AT
DE FR UK
BE NL LU
PL IT ES
SE DK FI

BeNeLux
Nordics
Baltics
Visegrád
South
Government contacted first or most

Total
AT
DE  FR  UK
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BE  NL  LU
SE  DK  FI
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Nordics
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South

Q4  Q5  Q6  Q8

Home
Government contacted first or most
Government contacted first or most

Total
AT
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Visegrád
South

Q4 Q5 Q6 Q8

Home
Government contacted first or most
Governments rated most responsive or easiest to work with
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Total
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BE NL LU
SE DK FI
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Nordics
Baltics
Visegrád
South

Q4 Q5 Q6 Q8
Governments rated most responsive or easiest to work with
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Thank you for reading!

RETHINK: EUROPE IS AN INITIATIVE OF

EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
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