

17 September 2013

YouGov Deutschland poll for Open Europe and Open Europe Berlin: German voters' sentiments on the EU

Key findings:

European Parliament and the European Commission are the least trusted institutions: Of 13 domestic and European institutions tested, German voters trust the country's constitutional court (the Bundesverfassungsgericht) the most (**71%** of voters).

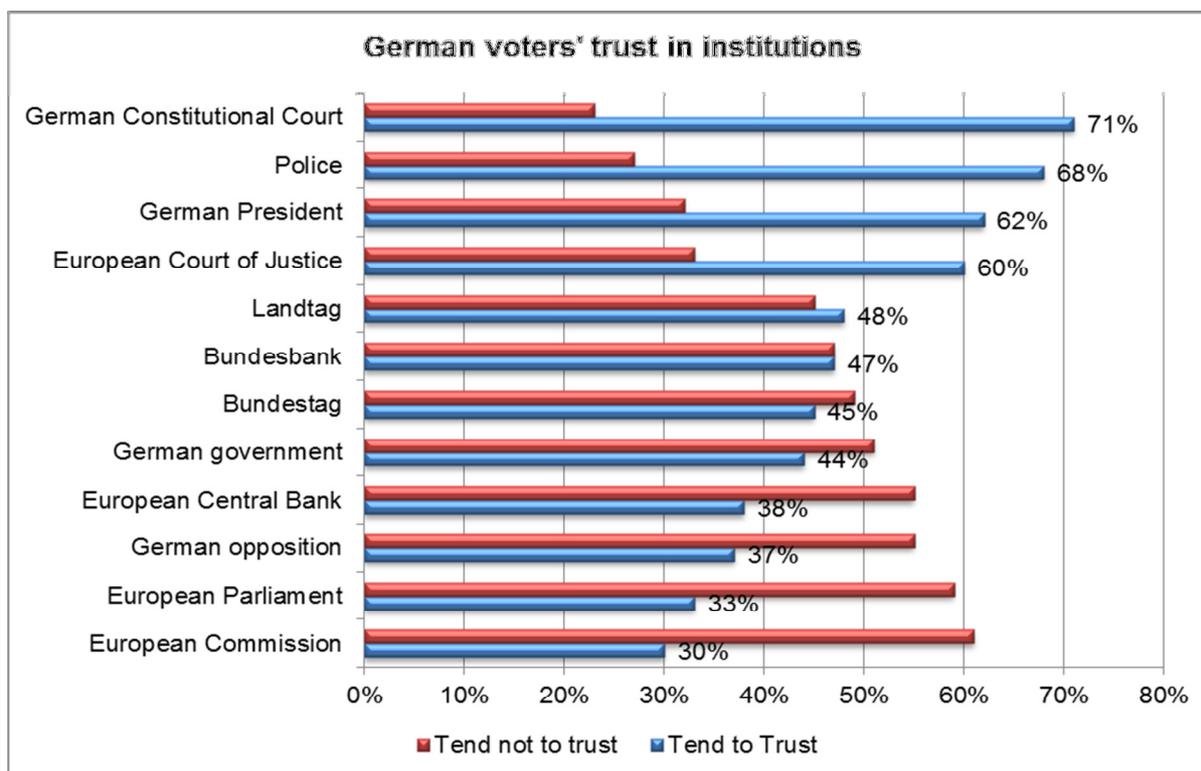
They have the least faith in the European Parliament and the European Commission, which are only trusted by **33%** and **30%** of voters respectively. In contrast, the German parliament and government are trusted by **45%** and **44%** respectively. The Bundesbank has clearly suffered a reputational hit in the crisis, with the same amount (**47%**) now saying they trust it as those who don't. However, only **38%** say they trust the European Central Bank.

The German public's declining trust in the EU institutions is a trend that is also evident in the European Commission's biannual Eurobarometer poll. While **52%** and **46%** of German voters said they tended to trust the European Parliament and the European Commission respectively before the crisis started in Autumn 2007, those figures dropped to **43%** and **34%** in the Eurobarometer Spring 2013 poll.

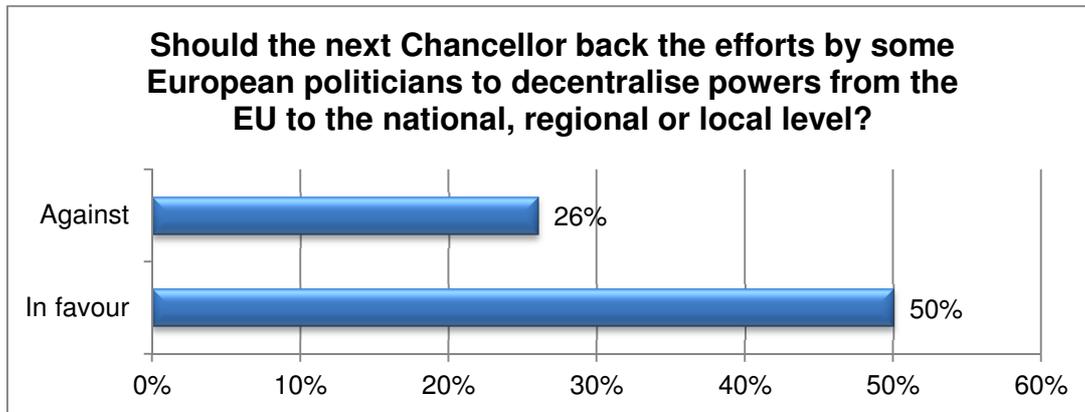
For more information, please contact Open Europe on 0044 (0)207 197 2333; Nina Schick on 0044 (0)752 21 159 34 or Mats Persson on 0044 (0) 779 94 606 91. For Open Europe Berlin, contact Professor Dr Michael Wohlgemuth on 0049 (0)30 2758 1365

www.openeurope.org.uk

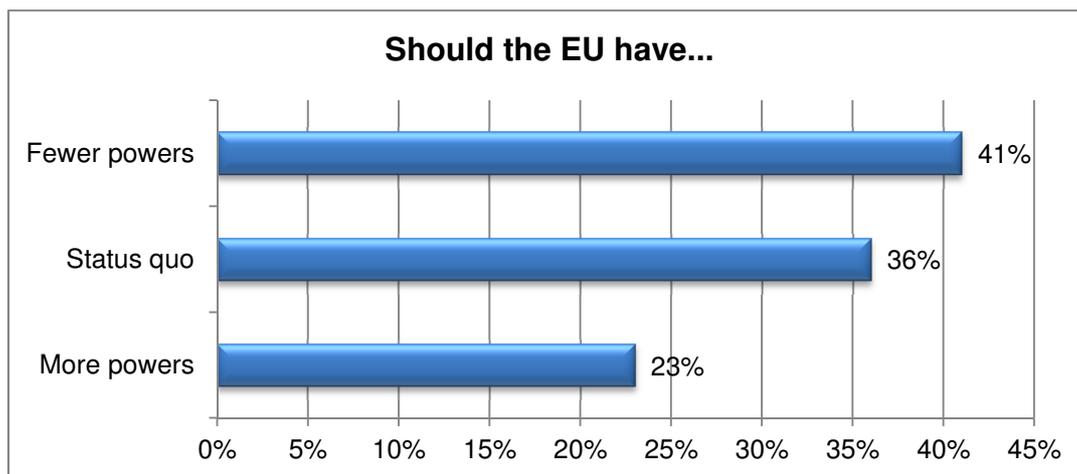
[Follow us on Twitter](#)



Strong support for devolving powers from the EU to member states: By a margin of **two to one** (50% in favour, 26% against), German voters say the next German Chancellor should back the efforts by some European politicians to decentralise powers from the EU to the national, regional or local level.



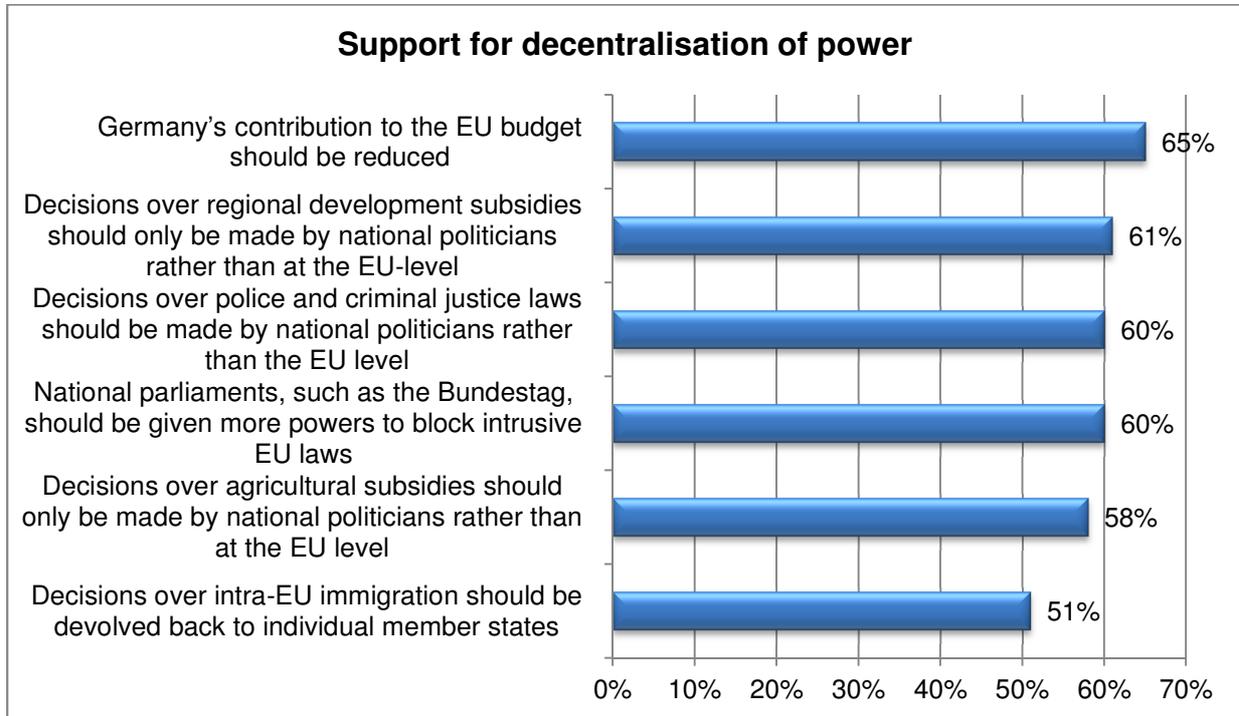
Similarly, when given three options, a slimmed down EU proved the most popular, with **41%** of voters saying they want the EU to have fewer powers, versus **36%** who favour the status quo and only **23%** who want the EU to have more powers.



A majority of German voters support less Brussels involvement in at least eight EU policy areas: When various individual policies were tested, a majority of Germans wanted less EU involvement in at least eight policy areas, also expressing strong support for boosting the role of national parliaments:

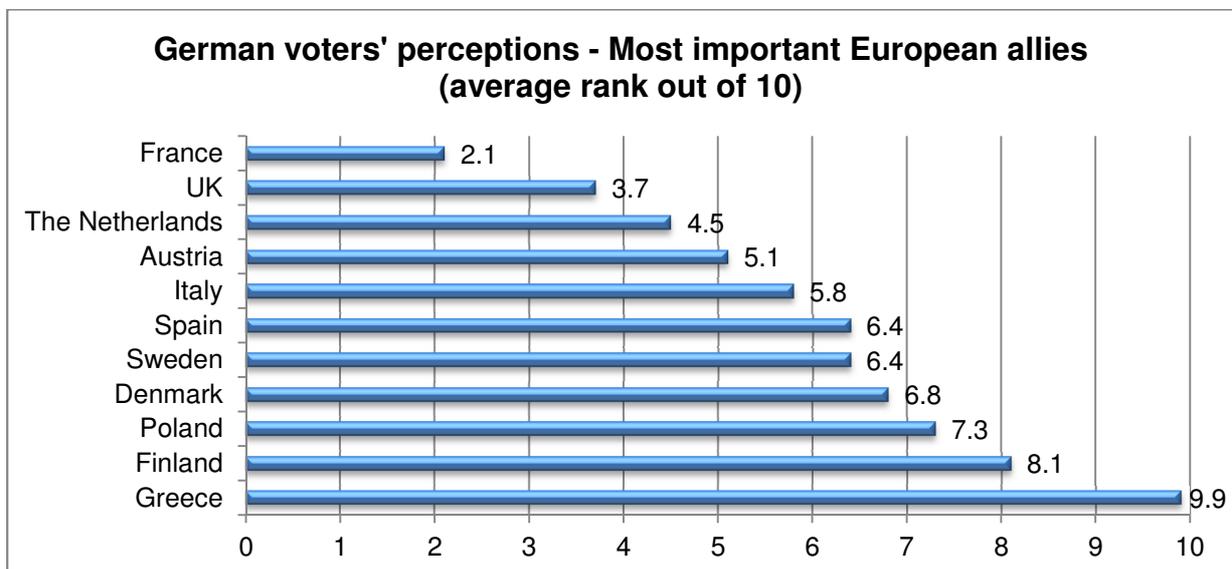
- **Six in ten (60%)** voters think national parliaments should be given more powers to block unwanted EU laws (**25%** disagreed.)
- **61%** thought decisions over regional development subsidies should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU-level (**24%** tend to disagree.)
- **58%** thought agricultural subsidies should be national (**26%** disagreed).
- **Almost two-thirds (64%)** want to reduce Germany’s contribution to the EU budget (**20%** disagreed.)
- **Six in ten** voters said decisions over criminal justice, data protection and employment laws should be made by national politicians rather than at the EU level (**26%, 27%** and **24%** disagree respectively.)

- **Just over half (51%)** think decisions on intra-EU immigration should be made at the national level (**30%** disagreed.)
- Fisheries, food standards and climate change were examples of areas where a majority of Germans appear to support continued EU involvement.

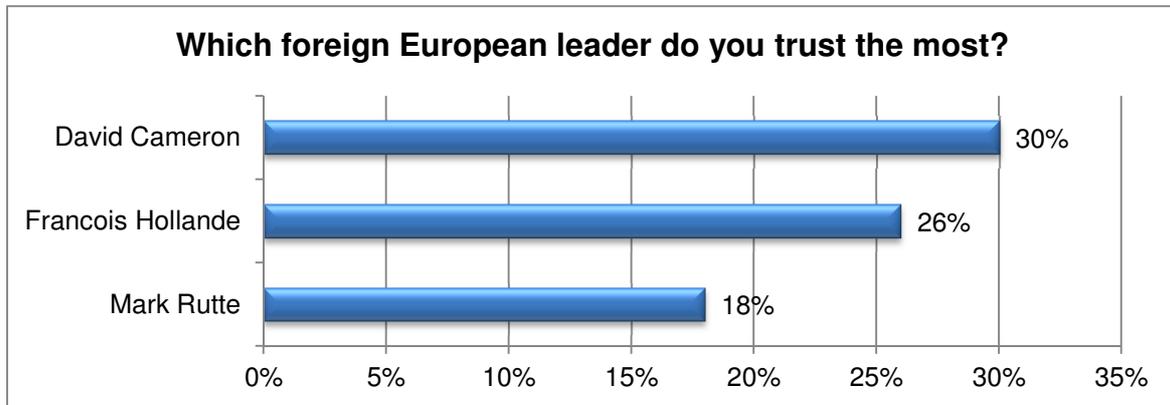


Efforts to save the euro should not undermine the single market: Two thirds (67%) of voters said decisions made to stabilise the euro should not be allowed to impinge on the EU's common market or undermine countries who don't share the single currency.

France still considered the most important ally for Germany: When asked to rank countries in order of their political and economic importance to Germany, France remains the uncontested leader being ranked first by 61% of voters. The UK was second being ranked first by 19% of voters. The graph below shows countries average rank out of 10, with the lowest score ranking highest.



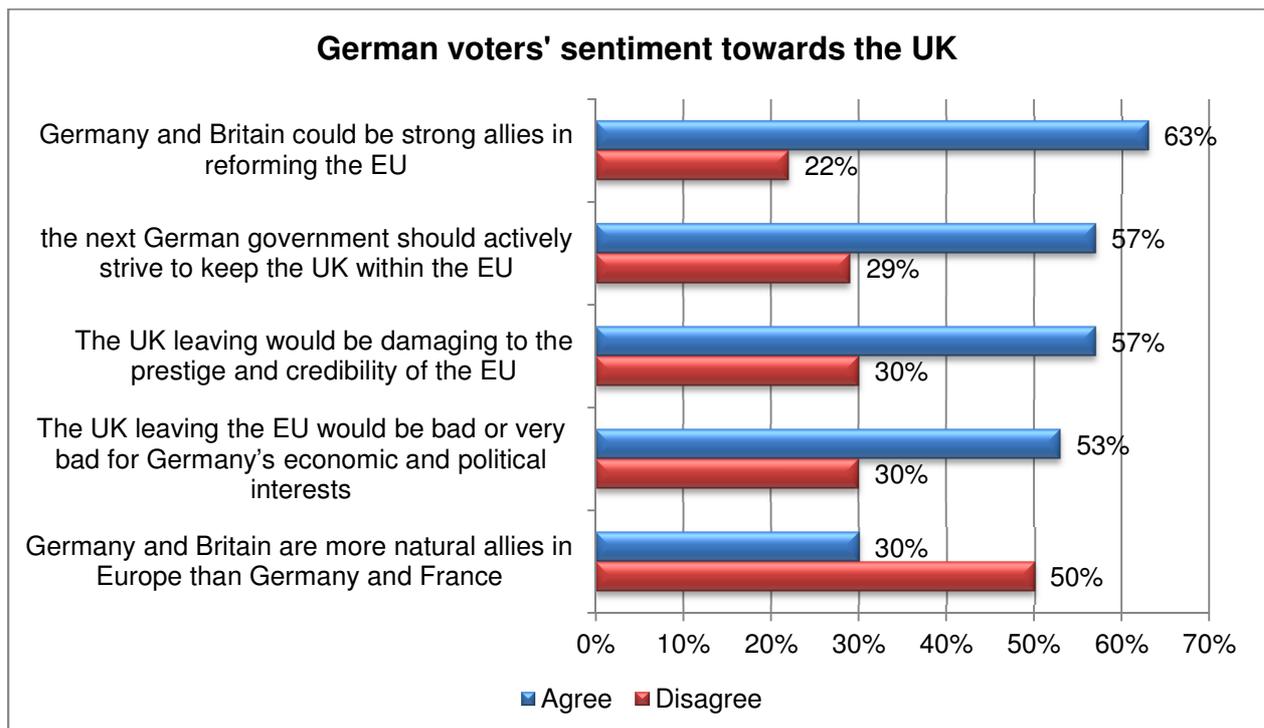
But Hollande is less popular: However, when asked to rank European leaders in order of how much voters trust them, the largest share of respondents (30%) put David Cameron top, with 26% ranking Francois Hollande the highest, followed by Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte (ranked first by 18% of voters).



Strong support for keeping the UK in the EU: A majority (53%) said the UK leaving the EU would be very bad or bad for Germany’s economic and political interests (30% disagreed). 57% said the UK leaving would be damaging to the prestige and credibility of the EU – the same share who said that the next German government should actively strive to keep the UK within the EU.

Whilst 63% of voters said Germany and Britain could be strong allies in reforming the EU, half disagreed with the statement that “Germany and Britain are more natural allies in Europe than Germany and France.” One third (32%) strongly agreed or agreed that Britain was a more natural ally than France.

Somewhat surprisingly, 83% tend to highly value or value the contribution of the financial sector to the European economy



Full Questions and Answers

How much trust do you have in the following institutions?

The German government (44% tend to trust, 51% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **11%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **33%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **31%**
- (4) No Trust **19%**
- (99) Don't Know **5%**

The German opposition (37% tend to trust, 55% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **5%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **32%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **35%**
- (4) No Trust **19%**
- (99) Don't Know **8%**

The Bundestag (45% tend to trust, 49% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **8%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **37%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **34%**
- (4) No Trust **14%**
- (99) Don't Know **7%**

The German President (62% tend to trust 32% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **23%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **39%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **21%**
- (4) No Trust **11%**
- (99) Don't Know **6%**

Your Landtag (48% tend to trust, 45% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **8%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **40%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **32%**
- (4) No Trust **13%**
- (99) Don't Know **7%**

The Bundesbank (47% tend to trust, 47% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **11%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **36%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **31%**
- (4) No Trust **16%**
- (99) Don't Know **7%**

The Police (68% tend to trust, 27% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **19%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **49%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **21%**
- (4) No Trust **6%**
- (99) Don't Know **5%**

The German Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht) (71% tend to trust, 23% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **30%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **41%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **16%**
- (4) No Trust **7%**
- (99) Don't Know **6%**

The European Commission (30% tend to trust, 61% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **4%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **25%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **42%**
- (4) No Trust **19%**
- (99) Don't Know **10%**

The European Parliament (33% tend to trust, 59% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **6%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **28%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **39%**
- (4) No Trust **20%**
- (99) Don't Know **8%**

The European Central Bank (38% tend to trust, 55% tend not to trust)

- (1) Fully Trust **6%**
- (2) Tend to Trust **32%**
- (3) Tend not to Trust **35%**
- (4) No Trust **19%**
- (99) Don't Know **7%**

The European Court of Justice (60% tend to trust, 33% tend not to trust)

- Fully Trust **19%**
- Tend to Trust **41%**
- Tend not to Trust **23%**
- No Trust **11%**
- Don't Know **7%**

Excluding the field of monetary policy, which of the following comes closest to your own view?

“The EU should have more powers than it has now and we should make more decisions at the European level.” **23%**

“The EU should keep the powers it has now, but should not be given more.” **36%**

“The EU should have less powers than it has now and we should take more decisions at a national or local level.” **41%**

Some European politicians have said that, where possible, more powers should be decentralised from the EU to the national, regional or local level. Do you think the next German Chancellor should support such efforts to decentralise powers to member states and keeping the EU involved only where it manifestly adds value?

(1) Yes **50%**

(2) No **26%**

(99) Don't know **24%**

With the previous question in mind, do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Decisions over intra-EU immigration should be devolved back to individual member states

(51% tend to agree, 30% tend to disagree.)

(1) Strongly Agree **21%**

(2) Agree **31%**

(3) Disagree **22%**

(4) Strongly Disagree **8%**

(99) Don't Know **19%**

National parliaments, such as the Bundestag, should be given more powers to block intrusive EU laws

(60% tend to agree, 25% tend to disagree)

(1) Strongly Agree **23%**

(2) Agree **37%**

(3) Disagree **18%**

(4) Strongly Disagree **7%**

(99) Don't Know **15%**

Germany's contribution to the EU budget should be reduced

(64% tend to agree, 20% tend to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree **31%**
- (2) Agree **34%**
- (3) Disagree **15%**
- (4) Strongly Disagree **5%**
- (99) Don't Know **16%**

Decisions over police and criminal justice laws should be made by national politicians rather than the EU level

(60% tend to agree, 26% tend to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree **25%**
- (2) Agree **35%**
- (3) Disagree **18%**
- (4) Strongly Disagree **8%**
- (99) Don't Know **14%**

Germany should be able to negotiate its own free trade deals with the rest of the world

(62% tends to agree, 23% tends to disagree.)

- (1) Strongly Agree **24%**
- (2) Agree **38%**
- (3) Disagree **17%**
- (4) Strongly Disagree **6%**
- (99) Don't Know **15%**

Decisions over national employment laws should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU level

(60% tends to agree, 24% tends to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree **24%**
- (2) Agree **36%**
- (3) Disagree **17%**
- (4) Strongly Disagree **7%**
- (99) Don't Know **16%**

It should be made easier for German businesses to trade in other EU countries

(75% tends to agree, 10% tends to disagree.)

- (1) Strongly Agree 31%
- (2) Agree 44%
- (3) Disagree 8%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 2%
- (99) Don't Know 15%

Decisions over national health and safety laws should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU level

(57% tends to agree, 29% tends to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree 23%
- (2) Agree 34%
- (3) Disagree 20%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 10%
- (99) Don't Know 14%

The European Parliament ought to be scrapped altogether

(28% tend to agree, 55% tend to disagree.)

- (1) Strongly Agree 11%
- (2) Agree 16%
- (3) Disagree 30%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 25%
- (99) Don't Know 18%

Decisions over fishing policy should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU level

(36% tends to agree, 49% tends to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree 13%
- (2) Agree 22%
- (3) Disagree 28%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 21%
- (99) Don't Know 15%

Decisions over agricultural subsidies should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU level

(58% tend to agree, 26% tend to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree 21%
- (2) Agree 37%
- (3) Disagree 17%

(4) Strongly Disagree **9%**
 (99) Don't Know **15%**

Decisions over food standards regulation should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU level

(49% tend to agree, 39% tend to disagree.)

(1) Strongly Agree **24%**
 (2) Agree **25%**
 (3) Disagree **24%**
 (4) Strongly Disagree **15%**
 (99) Don't Know **12%**

Decisions over energy and climate change policies should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU-level

(37% tend to agree, 50% tend to disagree)

(1) Strongly Agree **14%**
 (2) Agree **23%**
 (3) Disagree **30%**
 (4) Strongly Disagree **20%**
 (99) Don't Know **13%**

Decisions over regional development subsidies should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU-level

(61% tend to agree, 24% tend to disagree)

(1) Strongly Agree **23%**
 (2) Agree **38%**
 (3) Disagree **17%**
 (4) Strongly Disagree **6%**
 (99) Don't Know **15%**

Decisions over protection of citizens' data should only be made by national politicians rather than at the EU-level

(60% tend to agree, 27% tend to disagree)

(1) Strongly Agree **28%**
 (2) Agree **32%**
 (3) Disagree **18%**
 (4) Strongly Disagree **9%**
 (99) Don't Know **13%**

Decisions made to stabilise the euro should not be allowed impinge on the EU's common market or undermine countries who don't share the single currency

(67% tend to agree, 14% tend to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree **23%**
- (2) Agree **44%**
- (3) Disagree **12%**
- (4) Strongly Disagree **2%**
- (99) Don't Know **19%**

Please rank the following countries in order of their political and economic importance to Germany within the EU, starting with the most important. (Ranking determined by average points out of 10, with the lowest average ranking highest.)

1. France (Ranked 1st by 61%) **2.1**
2. UK (Ranked 1st by 19%) **3.7**
3. The Netherlands (Ranked 1st by 4%) **4.5**
4. Austria (Ranked 1st by 6%) **5.1**
5. Italy (Ranked 1st by 1%) **5.8**
6. Sweden (Ranked 1st by 1%) **6.4** **AND** Spain (Ranked 1st by 1%) **6.4**
7. Denmark (Ranked 1st by 1%) **6.8**
8. Poland (Ranked 1st by 2%) **7.3**
9. Finland (Ranked 1st by 1%) **8.1**
10. Greece (Ranked 1st by 2%) **9.9**

Please rank the following European leaders in order of how much you trust them starting with the most trusted. (Rankings determined by average points out of 10, with the lowest average ranking highest.)

1. Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte (Ranked 1st by 18%) **3.3**
AND French President Francois Hollande (Ranked 1st by 26%) **3.3**
2. UK Prime Minister David Cameron (Ranked 1st by 30%) **3.4**
3. Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann (Ranked 1st by 17%) **3.6**
4. Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk (Ranked 1st by 5%) **5.2**
6. Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy (Ranked 1st by 1%) **5.6**
5. Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta (Ranked 1st by 1%) **5.9**

7. Portuguese Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho(Ranked 1st by 1%) **6.6**

8. Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras(Ranked 1st by 1%) **8.1**

In 2017, the UK could hold a referendum on whether the country should remain a member of the EU. On a scale of 1-4, do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

The EU and Germany would be better off if the UK left

(27% tend to agree, 54% tend to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree 7%
- (2) Agree 20%
- (3) Disagree 34%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 20%
- (99) Don't Know 19%

The UK leaving the EU would be bad or very bad for Germany's economic and political interests.

(53% tend to agree, 30% tend to disagree.)

- (1) Strongly Agree 14%
- (2) Agree 40%
- (3) Disagree 21%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 9%
- (99) Don't Know 16%

The UK leaving the EU would be damaging or very damaging for the prestige and credibility of the EU

(57% tend to agree, 29% tend to disagree)

- (1) Strongly Agree 22%
- (2) Agree 35%
- (3) Disagree 19%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 10%
- (99) Don't Know 14%

The next German government should actively strive to keep the UK within the EU

(57% tend to agree, 25% tend to disagree.)

- (1) Strongly Agree 18%
- (2) Agree 39%
- (3) Disagree 17%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 8%
- (99) Don't Know 17%

Germany and Britain could be strong allies in reforming the EU

(63% tend to agree, 22% tend to disagree.)

- (1) Strongly Agree 20%
- (2) Agree 43%
- (3) Disagree 16%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 6%
- (99) Don't Know 15%

Germany and Britain are more natural allies in Europe than Germany and France

(33% tend to agree, 50% tend to disagree.)

- (1) Strongly Agree 9%
- (2) Agree 23%
- (3) Disagree 35%
- (4) Strongly Disagree 15%
- (99) Don't Know 18%

What do you see as the main cause of the eurozone crisis?

- The financial crisis driven by excessive risk taking in financial centres such as New York and London” 17%
- Problems with the design of the euro such as the one-size-fits-all monetary policy 20%
- Peripheral eurozone states taking on unsustainable levels of government debt 11%
- A combination of all of the above 52%

On a scale of 1-4, how highly do you value the contribution of the financial sector to the European economy?

(83% tend to think highly, 8% not.)

- (1) Very highly 43%
- (2) Highly 40%
- (3) Not very highly 6%
- (4) Not at all 2%
- (99) Don't Know 9%

Do you think that replicating Germany's 'Agenda 2010' reforms in struggling eurozone countries can help solve the eurozone crisis?

- (1) Yes 29%
- (2) No 38%
- (99) Don't Know 32%

Methodology Note

YouGov Deutschland interviewed 1,010 adults online between 21 and 26 August 2013. Data were weighted to be representative of German adults aged 18+. Data were also weighted to past vote recall.

Total percentages may not add up exactly due to rounding. For a full breakdown of the poll and the questions, click here:

http://www.openeurope.org.uk/Content/documents/Media/YouGov_Ergebnis-Tabellenband_OpenEurope_20130829-2.xlsx