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Euroconsumers unveils results of its 2nd survey on the level of trust in institutions and image of big companies

Brussels - 4 October 2021 - Euroconsumers has issued the results of its second survey on the level of trust and knowledge in institutions and the overall image of international companies, carried out in Belgium, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. In 2016, a similar survey focusing on institutions was also conducted. This new edition shows that the level of trust in the European Parliament, although still low, has increased in recent years. Companies with the best image include Google, Decathlon, Microsoft, and Ikea.

Trust in the European Parliament has increased although it remains low

- **Low level of trust** - When asked to rate the level of trust in the European Parliament from 1 to 10, Belgium scored the lowest with an average trust in the European Parliament at 4.1, against 4.6 in Spain, 5.0 in Italy and 5.4 in Portugal. The survey found that the more knowledge about the European Parliament citizens have, the higher the trust they place in the institution.
- **Although the level of trust increases** – The percentage of respondents who declared high trust in the European Parliament *for defending citizen interests* has gone up in all 4 surveyed countries ranging from an increase of +3 points in Belgium (from 7% to 10%) to +7 in Spain (from 5% to 12%), +8 in Italy (from 5% to 13%) and +13 in Portugal (from 9% to 22%). The number of citizens who express high *overall trust* in the European Parliament has gone up in all 4 countries from +5 in Belgium (from 5% to 10%), to +7 in Spain (from 4% to 11%), +11 in Portugal (from 9% to 20%), and +12 in Italy (from 4% to 16%).
- **The level of knowledge decreases** - It is also worth noting that in Belgium, home to most of the EU institutions, the level of knowledge of the European Parliament¹ has slightly decreased compared to 2016. Only 22% of respondents had at least 4 correct answers out of 5, compared with 27% in 2016. In Italy and in Spain the level of knowledge of the European Parliament has also decreased but less than in Belgium.

¹ Respondents were asked to respond with “true”, “false” or “I don’t know” to five factual statements about the European Parliament. The statements were: “Some members of the European Parliament Assembly are not elected, but directly nominated by the government of the member state”, “The number of European Parliament members per country is defined on basis of its population size”, “European Parliament and European Commission are one and the same”, “The European Parliament can approve European Directives but cannot take legislative initiatives” and “Any citizen of the European Union can, individually or in association with others, submit a petition to the European Parliament (on subjects related to the European Union activity)”

International companies have a good image overall

Citizens were asked to rate from 1 to 10 the overall image they have of several private companies on the basis of their spontaneous knowledge, perception and personal experience. Although there are slight differences per country, **Google is the company with the best overall image in all four countries with an average score of 7 points**, followed by Decathlon at 6.7 and Ikea and Microsoft in a tie at 6.6. Results also suggest that the younger respondents are, the better they tend to perceive multinational corporations.

Consumer organisations remain the most trusted

Respondents of each country were asked about their knowledge and their overall trust in several national and international institutions and organisations. In all four countries, consumer organisations always score amongst the most trusted national entities. In Portugal and Belgium, they even hold the top spot.

“The results of our survey show the importance for institutions and other stakeholders to partner with key consumers organisations such as Euroconsumers and its national organisations in Belgium, Spain, Italy and Portugal” said **Els Bruggeman, Head of Policy and Enforcement at Euroconsumers**, “Not only to translate and diffuse policy decisions, but above all to help build effective solutions that will be supported and trusted by citizens.”

“Consumer and citizen trust is more important than ever, now that we have a unique opportunity to rebuild our economy in a more sustainable and responsible way after the Covid-19 pandemic,” added **Marco Pierani, Director of Public Affairs & Media Relations at Euroconsumers**. “Euroconsumers is ready to collaborate with institutions and businesses, as this is the time to show leadership and seize this opportunity to create a better future for our world.”

Methodology of the survey

The survey was carried out in Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain in March and April 2021. The samples reflect the distribution of each national population in terms of age, gender, region and educational level. Overall, the sample size is 5.314 people aged 18-75 years old.



About Euroconsumers

Gathering five national consumer organisations and giving voice to a total of more than 1.5 million people, Euroconsumers is the world's leading consumer cluster in innovative information, personalised services and defence of consumer's rights. We work closely together with Consumers International to ensure consumers are safe, that markets are fair and benefit from honest relations with businesses and authorities. Our European member groups are also part of the umbrella network of BEUC, the European Consumer Organisation. Together we advocate for EU policies that benefit consumers in their daily lives.