



# Working- Material

For a MANTA-Research  
Workshop

**MANTA**

Mini-Publics And Other New Forms  
Of Participation In Civic Education

# Imprint

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## Introduction

This working material for a MANTA research workshop includes directly applicable problem-based stimulus materials with accompanying methodological information for the classroom. It should be used with our Manual "Didactic orientation of a MANTA research workshop".

We propose a teaching/learning setting based on the didactic approach of research-based learning and combine this with problem-oriented impulses in a research workshop (Haarmann and Lange 2013, p. 77ff.). Our concept of the research workshop aims to enable students to understand and reflect on the complexity of fundamental problems and analyse possibilities for change in a scientifically oriented, self-controlled teaching-learning process.



Tip: Our Blended Learning Training presents material that can be used by teachers for independent study in a continuing education perspective or by pre-service teachers in initial education in a structured format. Further information you can find in our Compendium. It primarily serves as the scientific foundation where theoretical debates are presented alongside case studies.

For a simple implementation of a MANTA research workshop in everyday teaching, the material is structured into five units:

1. Democracy in Crisis?
2. What is political participation?
3. Case-Study: Climate Council Austria
4. Compare EU-perspective, Recommendations, and decision making
5. Design a Mini-Public

These units build on each other in terms of content but can also be used individually. The materials are designed for middle and upper secondary school students.

Pupils bring different backgrounds, interests, experiences and skills to school. One way to do justice to the individual talents of learners is to teach in an internally differentiated way.

Therefore, the difficulty indication used in the task sheets should only be a rough guide.

You can use them to individualise the tasks with different difficulty levels or to expand the number of tasks. We recommend most of the tasks for ages 11 and up. We have marked more difficult tasks for older age groups (14-16 years) with one star and even more complex tasks (e.g. 17 years old and beyond) with two stars.

In our additional Manual, "Didactic orientation of a MANTA research workshop", you will find:

- **Introductory information on the didactic principles of problem-based and research-based learning,**
- **An overview of social science research methods and a guide to research steps.**

Together, these materials and methods are intended to enable a spontaneous implementation of a MANTA research workshop and provide and stimulate an introductory theoretical foundation for the methods used. This manual offers general guidelines, which does not mean every step must be carried out this way.

## 1. Democracy in Crisis?

This first module will address the current state of democracy and some of its challenges.

Duration	Age-group / knowledge	material	competencies
1 lesson. With additional questions, min. 3 lessons	Internal differentiation, starting with 14 years. Basic knowledge of democracy is useful.	Use the statistics, tables and charts from the appendix or research current or local ones.	The students learn political judgment competence. They learn to read and evaluate charts.

### Background information

In recent years, the diagnosis of the crisis of democracy has received renewed attention in both scholarly literature and popular commentary. Many political theorists and analysts have been writing about and speaking about a crisis in contemporary, representative, and liberal democracy. The crisis of contemporary democracies is manifested in the following:

- decreasing voter turnout,
- decreasing levels of citizen participation in other forms of political participation,
- weakening citizens' trust in political representatives and institutions, etc.



Tip:

Learn more about the role of various forms of representation and participation in liberal democracies, as well as the historical issues related to democracy, in our **Blended Learning Training** and in our **Webinar**.

## Ideas and tasks for the classroom

1. ★ Discuss the statistics, table and charts in groups of 4-5 people. [20 min.]
  - a) First overview: What is the chart or table about?
  - b) Explain the chart in detail:  
Make central statements about the chart data, name conspicuous features and minimum and maximum values. Place these statements in the overall context and relate them to each other.
  - c) ★★ Try to identify correlations and read off developments. To do this, you summarise the results and name open questions.
2. Present the graphic or statistic to the plenum.

## Additional information for beginners

First, find out what the chart or table is about. Usually, the topic is written as a heading above the table or graph. In graphical arrangements, very different topics can be presented.

In this first step, you could also determine the graphic format: Is it a table, a pie chart, a column chart, a bar chart or a curve chart?

## Further additional questions (or Internal differentiation; even more advanced; next lesson)

1. ★★ Work out an anonymous survey in your class with the same questions (presented in the material) or add more. Evaluate and generate graphics, diagrams and statistics. Discuss the differences between your class and the data in the charts.
2. ★★ After these units, the topic of democracy can be discussed in more detail.  
For example: Ask students to write a response to these questions first, and then discuss in pairs or small groups and, finally, as a whole class: What does "democracy" mean? What are its benefits as a system of government? What are its disadvantages?

## 2. What is political participation?

The second module asks: What is political participation? Today, the term covers a broad spectrum of meanings and refers to all models, methods, actions, and initiatives that enable people to participate actively in democratic decision-making processes. Transfer to unit 1: Is there a lack of participation - How do you feel about your role in political decision-making?

Duration	Age-group / knowledge	material	competencies & learning objectives
1 lesson. Additional tasks min. 1 lesson	Internal differentiation, starting with 14 years. Basic knowledge of democracy is helpful.	Use the photographs from the appendix or research current or local ones.	The students know different forms of participation ( <i>Internal differentiation: Know the participation pyramid.</i> ) The students determine the advantages and disadvantages of different variants of participation.



Tip:

Learn more about the issue in our Blended Learning Training or in the webinar.

### Ideas and tasks for the classroom

Group discussion [Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5]

- ★ The students look at various photos in a presentation or on printouts. These illustrate, among other things, situations of political participation and scenarios that are not considered political participation.  
*You find the photographs in the appendix.*
- The pupils discuss the following questions in their groups:
  - Do all the photos show forms of political participation? Why and why not? Decide in your group which of the photos shows political participation. Which forms do you know?
  - ★ Collect ways of political participation and arrange them on a poster. The poster should answer: Which activity makes the most sense in your opinion? Which is the most effective way to lend political weight to your issues?
  - Present your poster. Highlight one form of participation and describe what is special about it.



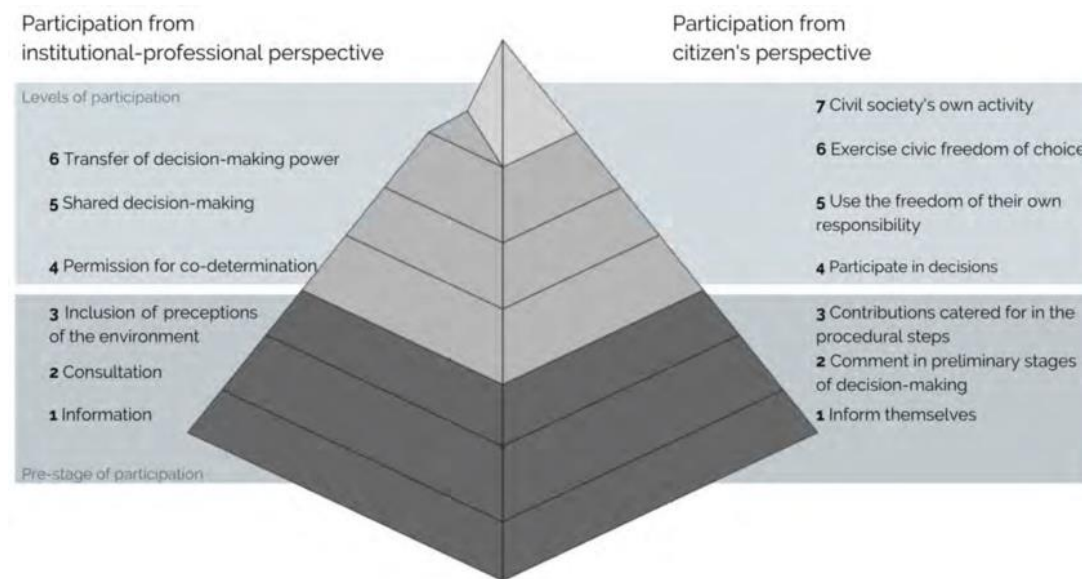
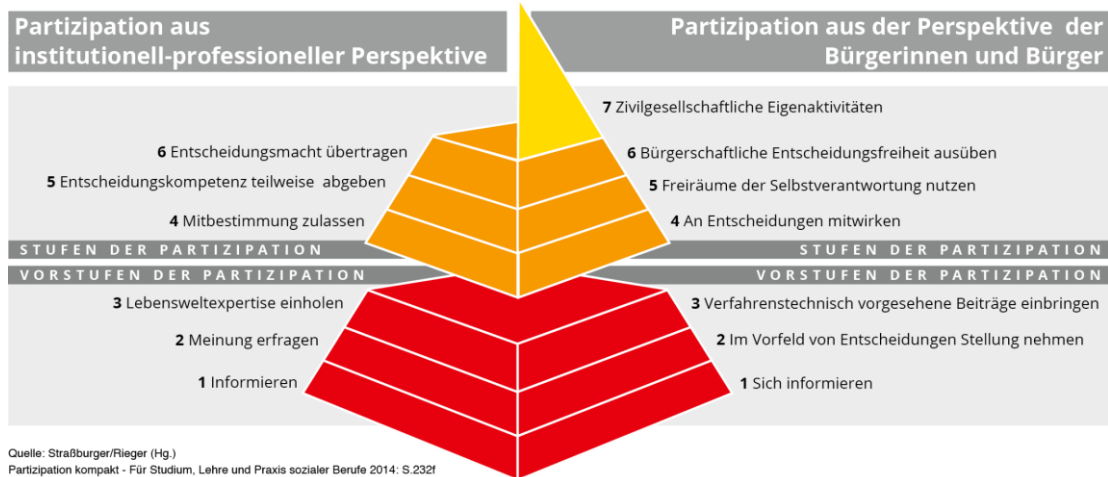
## Additional tasks

- ★★ Elaborate the pyramid of participation. Give each group a diagram of the pyramid as a poster.

Task: Participation can take place at different levels of intensity. Scientists have developed the following pyramid model to illustrate the different degrees of participation in the form of levels. Relate the forms of participation to the different levels of the pyramid and present the poster as described above. Work out the importance of the respective activities for political participation.

- ★ After collecting examples of participation, transfer the participation variants to a real-life example. What does participation in its different levels look like in everyday life, e.g. planning a class trip or redesigning the classroom?
- ★ Open discussion: How do you feel about your role in political decision-making? What role do students and teachers play in a democracy?
- ★ What actions, whether small or large, can you take as an individual to help strengthen democracy in your local community, state, nation, or world?

## Die Partizipationspyramide von Straßburger und Rieger



Source: Integrating competencies for a co-creative urban planning culture - New approaches for the development of public open space - Scientific Figure on ResearchGate. Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Participation-Pyramid-Source-Straßburger-and-Rieger-2019\\_fig3\\_358695191](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Participation-Pyramid-Source-Straßburger-and-Rieger-2019_fig3_358695191) [accessed 13 June, 2023]

### 3. Case-Study: Climate Council Austria

The third unit examines the Austrian Climate Council as an example in a case study. The main features of mini-publics are discussed.

Duration	Age-group / knowledge	material	competencies & learning objectives
1 lesson.	Internal differentiation, starting with 11 years old. Basic knowledge of democracy is helpful.	Use the long or short video about the climate council in Austria. The questions will work with other mini-publics as well.	The students know one basic example of mini-public, they learn political judgement competence.



Tip:

Learn more about the climate council Austria in our [Compendium](#).

## Ideas and tasks for the classroom



1. Watch the video and answer the following questions:

Why is there a need for a mini-public for climate?	
How does the Climate Council work?	
Who are the participants?	
How are they chosen?	
What happens to the results of the Climate Council?	

2. ★ Opportunities and risks

[In 4 groups of 4 or more people]

Collect arguments in favour and against the introduction of mini-publics like the Climate Council in Austria. Then, discuss the pros and cons in class.

<a href="https://youtu.be/3OPk2XUur04?t=159">https://youtu.be/3OPk2XUur04?t=159</a>  Long version: 40 min. (With complete English subtitles)  	or <a href="https://youtu.be/Z9mgaKpuzcg">https://youtu.be/Z9mgaKpuzcg</a>  short version: 6:46 min. (With youtube translations)  
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## 4. Compare EU-perspective, Recommendations, and decision making

In the fourth unit, students are asked to carry out their research. Where and when did mini-publics take place on which topics? For advanced students, this is followed by a question about the results of mini-publics.

Duration	Age-group / knowledge	material	competencies & learning objectives
1 lesson.	Internal differentiation, starting with 11 years old.	Internet-research. Bring a map of Europe. Make the two texts accessible.	Students learn to research, compare and make judgements independently.

1. Research task: Where else are there mini-publics? Are there any currently? On which subject are they? You can use the table below. [Tip: Students can research specific regions or periods].
2. For which topics are there many mini-publics? Do you have any idea why that might be?



Tip: You can search under the terms mini-publics, citizens' council or citizen panels. A database is listed in our [Compendium](#).

Where?	Topic?	When?

3. Make an overview of mini-publics on a map of Europe.

- Where are the most mini-publics?
- Maybe there is a mini-public in your city or region?
- Why are there mini-publics in specific regions, and why are they not in other regions?



#### 4. ★★ Additional task

Read the two texts by Setälä and O'Leary and compare the positions. What results should mini-publics provide?

Setälä (2021): Advisory, Collaborative and Scrutinizing Roles of Deliberative Mini-Publics. In: Front. Polit. Sci., 25 January 2021, Volume 2 – 2020. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2020.591844>

O'Leary (2019): The myth of the citizens' assembly. In: Politico. <https://www.politico.eu/article/the-myth-of-the-citizens-assembly-democracy>

## 5. Design a Mini-Public

Things get creative in the fifth unit. The students are asked to design their own mini-public.

Duration	Age-group / knowledge	material	competencies & learning objectives
1 lesson.	Internal differentiation, starting with 11 years old. Basic knowledge of mini-publics is necessary.	Table like below	The students learn in a problem-based situation. They learn to make decisions alone and together, which requires them to make critical judgements.



Tip: Basic knowledge of mini-public is necessary. Units 3 and 4 provide good knowledge as a starting point. If mini-publics have not yet been discussed in more detail, written case studies (see compendium) are useful. You can find more background information in the blended learning or webinar.

### Ideas and tasks for the classroom

- 1) Think of a topic where you think a mini-public is useful and necessary. Then, fill in the table below.

Question	Answers
<b>Topic</b>  Why is there a need for a mini-public in this issue?	
<b>Setting</b>  In which setting does the mini-public take place (from community up to region or state)?	
<b>Process</b>  How does the mini-public work?  Is a mini-public the most appropriate tool to address this issue?	
<b>Participants</b>  Who are the participants? How are they chosen?	

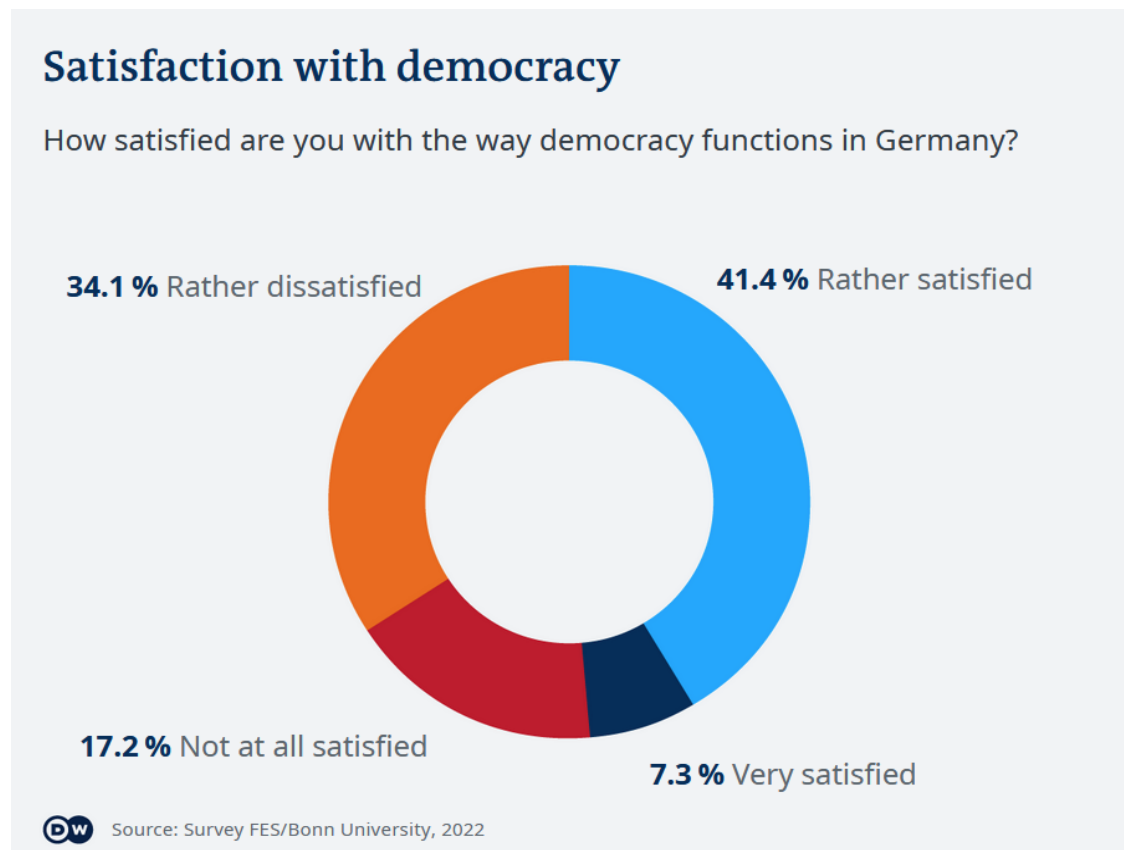
- 2) Compare in class: Are there topics where many people are calling for more citizen participation? Why is that the case? Why not? Which "mini-public" do you think is the most important? Discuss and collect criteria for good mini-publics.

## Appendix

### Unit 1: statistics, tables and charts

#### Graphic 1

##### Satisfaction with democracy



From Deutsche Welle, Germany: "Trust in democracy still strong, survey finds", 2023  
(<https://www.dw.com/en/germany-trust-in-democracy-still-strong-survey-finds/a-65451290>)

Source: Survey "Trust in Democracy in Times of Crisis", by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) / Bonn University, 2023.

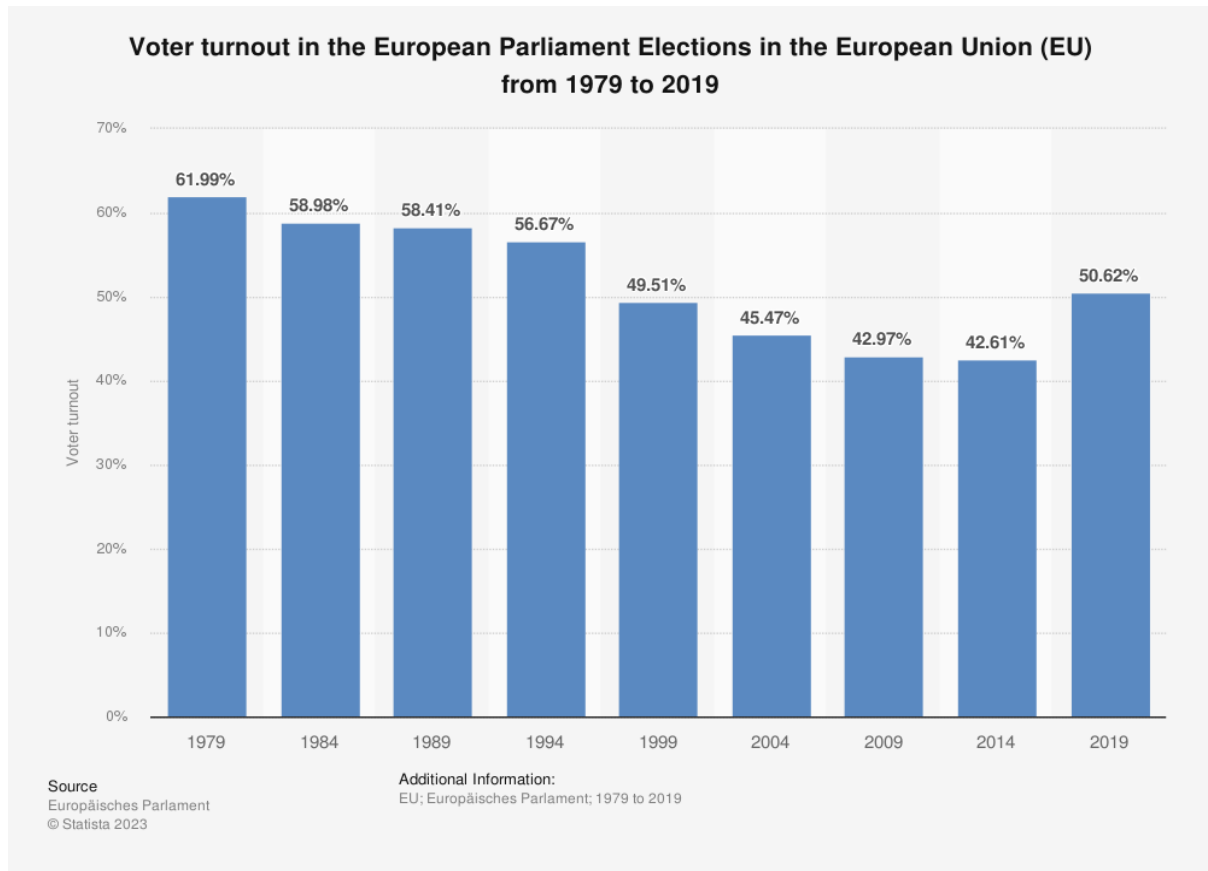
#### More about the methodology of the survey:

The study is based on a representative survey of German voters aged 18 and over in private households. The survey was conducted as a mixed-mode survey, i.e., a telephone survey combined with an online one. The survey period was from 11 July to 9 August 2022. The representative random sample comprised 2,536 respondents (1,658 telephone interviews and 878 online interviews)



## Graphic 2

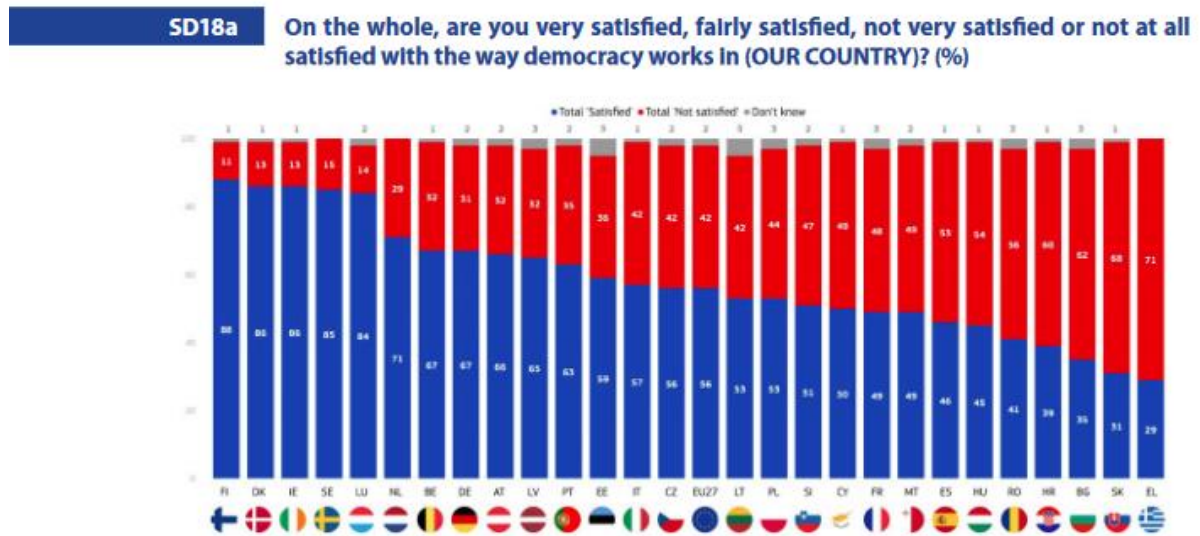
### Voter turnout in the European Parliament Elections in the European Union (EU) from 1979 to 2019



Source: European Parliament, 2020 via Statista, 2023. (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/300427/eu-parlament-turnout-for-the-european-elections>)

### Graphic 3 ★

How does democracy work in your country?

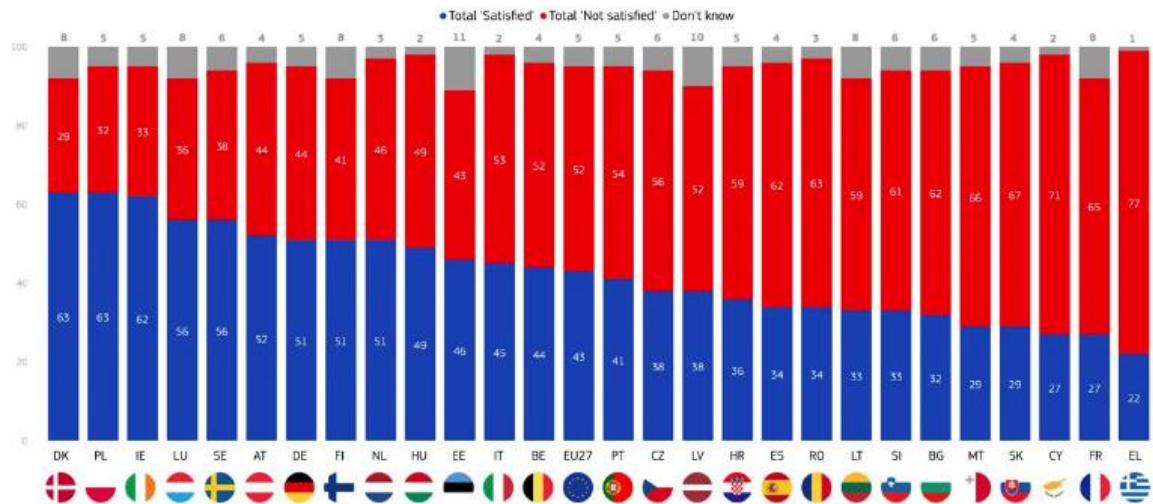


Source: Velasco Monasterio, G., Alpoegger, M., El Koura, Y., Mounier, A., & Zühlke, O. (2023). European Parliament Eurobarometer: Democracy in action one year before the European elections. European Parliament.

#### Graphic 4 ★

Political parties taking into account the interests of people like you.

#### QA11.8 How satisfied or not are you with the following aspects of democracy in the European Union? Political parties taking into account the interests of people like you (%)

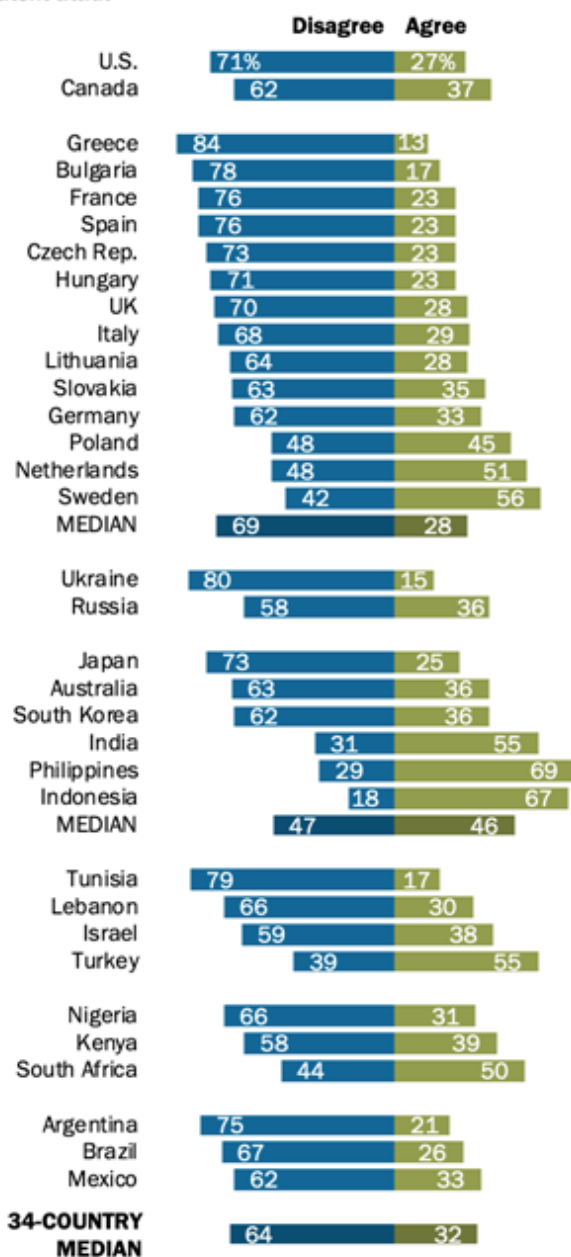


Source: Velasco Monasterio, G., Alpoegger, M., El Koura, Y., Mounier, A., & Zühlke, O. (2023). European Parliament Eurobarometer: Democracy in action one year before the European elections. European Parliament.

Graphic 5 ★ ★

## Do elected officials care about ordinary citizens?

% who \_\_\_ most elected officials care what people like them think



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q50a.

"Democratic Rights Popular Globally but Commitment to Them Not Always Strong"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: Pew Research Center (2020).

Democratic Rights Popular Globally but Commitment to Them Not Always Strong,

(<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/02/27/attitudes-toward-elected-officials-voting-and-the-state/>)

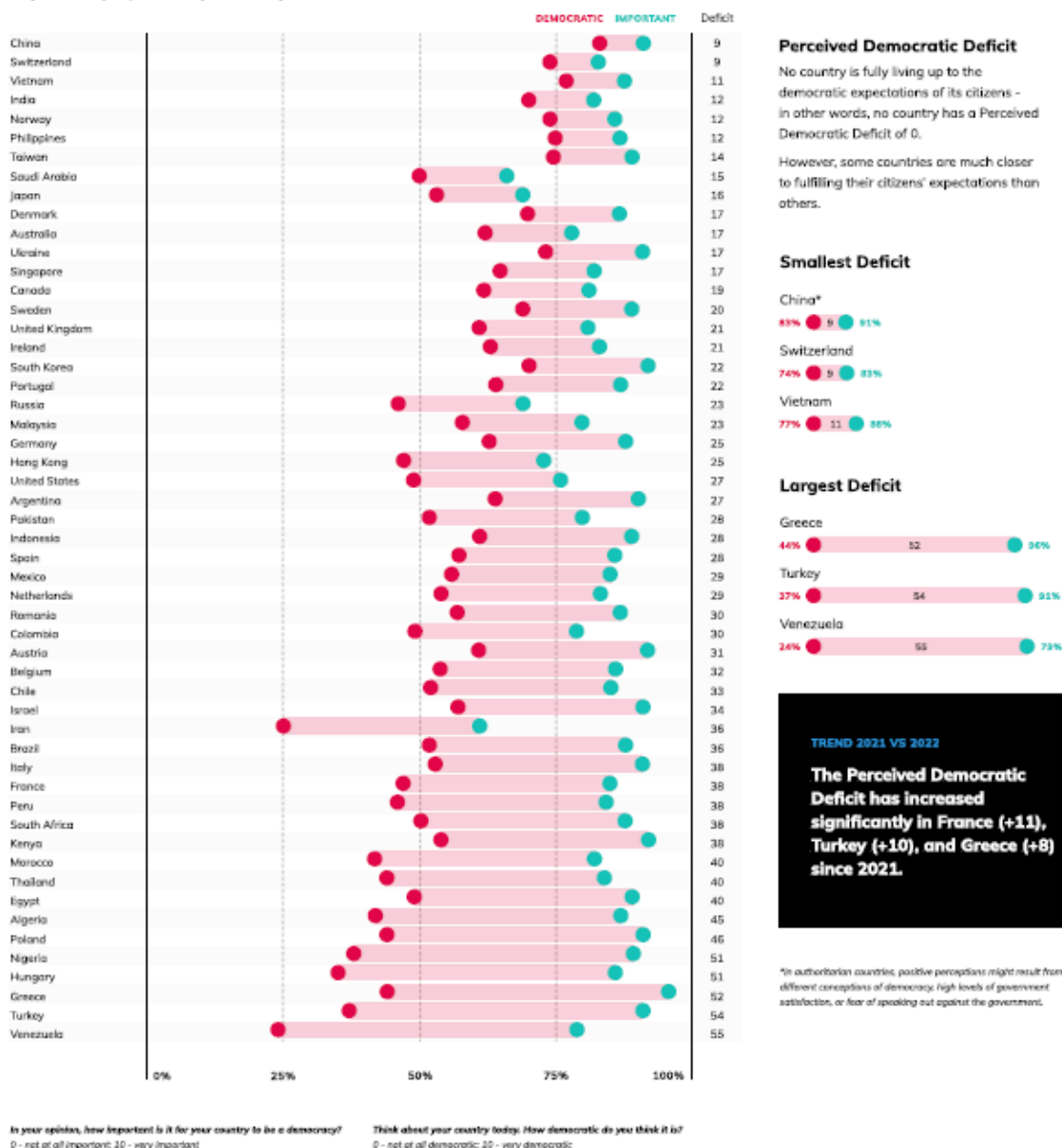
Further information on the methodology and the sample sizes can be found here:

(<https://www.pewresearch.org/methods/feature/international-methodology/all-survey/all-country/2019/>)

Graphic 6 ★★

## Governments are not living up to the democratic expectations of their citizens

% say that democracy is important vs. % say that their country is democratic



Source: Democracy Perception Index (2022), 10 (<https://www.allianceofdemocracies.org/initiatives/the-copenhagen-democracy-summit/dpi-2022/>)

Further information on the methodology: The survey presents an overview of a study conducted by Latana and the Alliance of Democracies in the spring of 2022, between 30 March and 10 May. The sample of n=52,785 online-connected respondents was drawn across 53 countries, with an average sample size of around 1,000 respondents per country. Nationally representative results were calculated based on the official distribution of age, gender, and education for each country's population, sourced from the most recent and available data from Barro Lee & UNStat and census.gov. The average margin of error across all countries sampled is (+/-) 3.2 percentage points.

## Graphic 7 ★★

### Youth and Satisfaction with Democracy: Reversing the Democratic Disconnect?



**Figure 5:** Satisfaction “deficit” among millennials, 1995–2020, relative to baby boomers, across 75 countries of the world. In the 1990s, the gap was in “surplus” as millennials were more satisfied with democracy than their parents’ generation. However, the gap has since turned negative, as millennials have become dissatisfied at a faster rate than older generations. Change from 1995–2020 statistically significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level, based on population-weighted standard errors.

Source: R. Foa, A. Klassen, D. Wenger, A. Rand, and M. Slade. (2020). “Youth and Satisfaction with Democracy: Reversing the Democratic Disconnect?”. Cambridge, Centre for the Future of Democracy. ([https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/youth\\_and\\_satisfaction\\_with\\_democracy.pdf](https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/youth_and_satisfaction_with_democracy.pdf))



## Unit 2: Photography title and rights:

Photo 1

Children participate



From BDKJ Diözesanverband Paderborn, 2017, ([https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Jugendbeteiligung\\_Unsere\\_Meinung\\_z%C3%A4hlt\\_BDKJ-Paderborn.jpg](https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Jugendbeteiligung_Unsere_Meinung_z%C3%A4hlt_BDKJ-Paderborn.jpg)), CC BY 3.0.

Photo 2

The Hemicycle of the European Parliament in Strasbourg during a plenary session in 2014



Photo by David Iliff. 2014, ([https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:European\\_Parliament\\_Strasbourg\\_Hemicycle\\_-\\_Diliff.jpg](https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:European_Parliament_Strasbourg_Hemicycle_-_Diliff.jpg)), CC BY-SA 3.0.

Photo 3

Crowd marching at a rally.



Photo by Robin Erino from Pexels. 2017, (<https://www.pexels.com/de-de/foto/menschenmenge-die-auf-einer-kundgebung-marschiert-2975498>), CC BY\_SA 3.0.



Photo 4

Ballot for the election in German Bundestag 2021

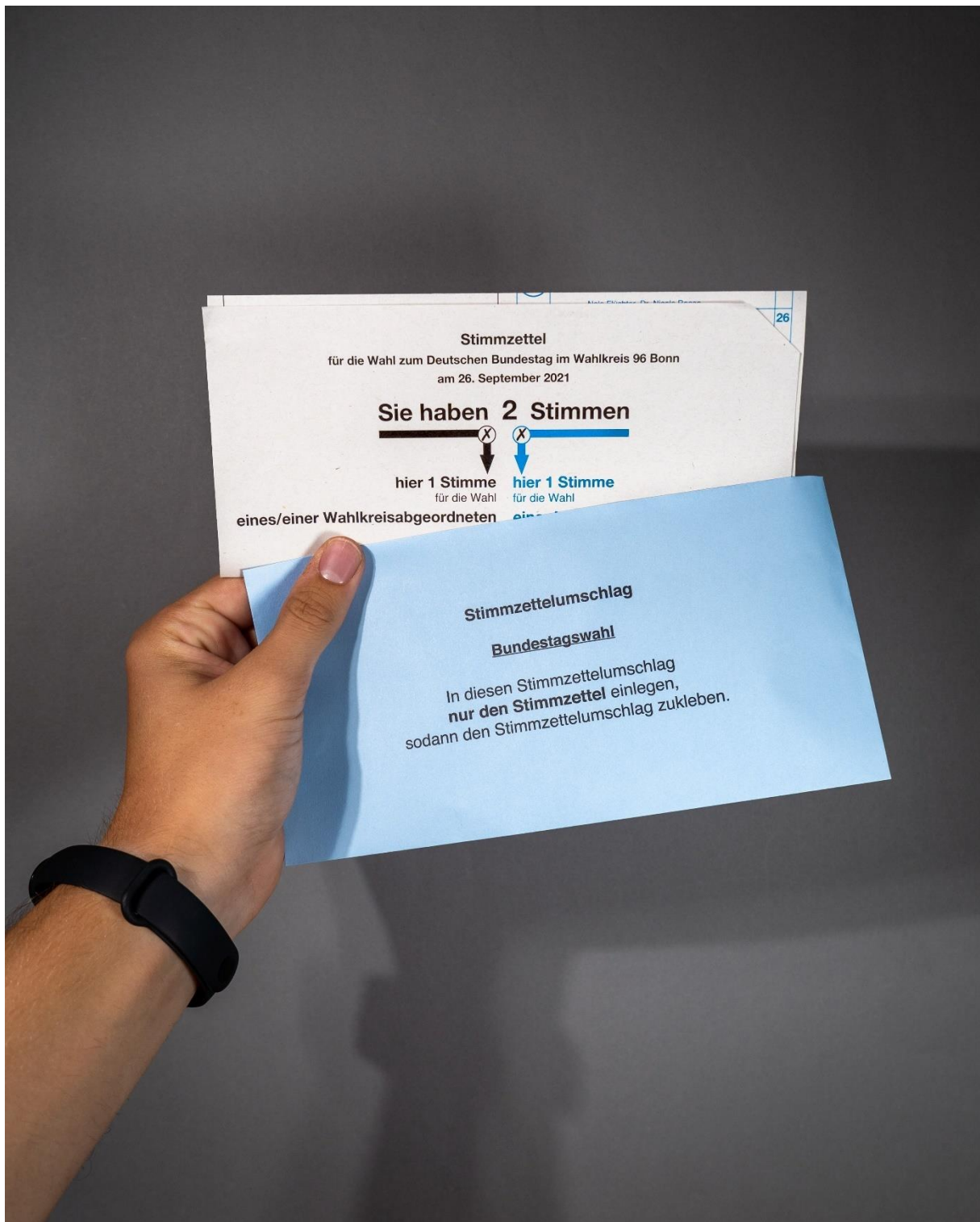


Photo by Mika Baumeister, from Unsplash. 2021, (<https://unsplash.com/de/fotos/eine-hand-die-ein-stuck-blaues-papier-halt---1MomLr05w> ), CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

Photo 5

Members of the Citizens' Assembly vote on the wording of the ballots that were to be subsequently voted on, in the Grand Hotel, Malahide, Co Dublin.



Photo by Maxwell's from The Irish Times, via Participedia. (<https://participedia.net/method/42589>), CC BY-NC-SA 3.0.

Photo 6

Protesters advocating boycott of KFC



Photo by Dave Hogg from Royal Oak. 2007, (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2112943>), CC BY 2.0,



Photo 7

Yellow vest movement protest in Rouen 2019



Photo by Daniel Briot from Rouen (France) via Wikimedia Commons. 2019, ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2019-01\\_Manif.\\_Rouen-26-2019-02-02\\_\(46048165335\).jpg#/media/File:2019-01\\_Manif.\\_Rouen-26-2019-02-02\\_\(46048165335\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2019-01_Manif._Rouen-26-2019-02-02_(46048165335).jpg#/media/File:2019-01_Manif._Rouen-26-2019-02-02_(46048165335).jpg)), CC0 1.0.

Photo 8

Social media like

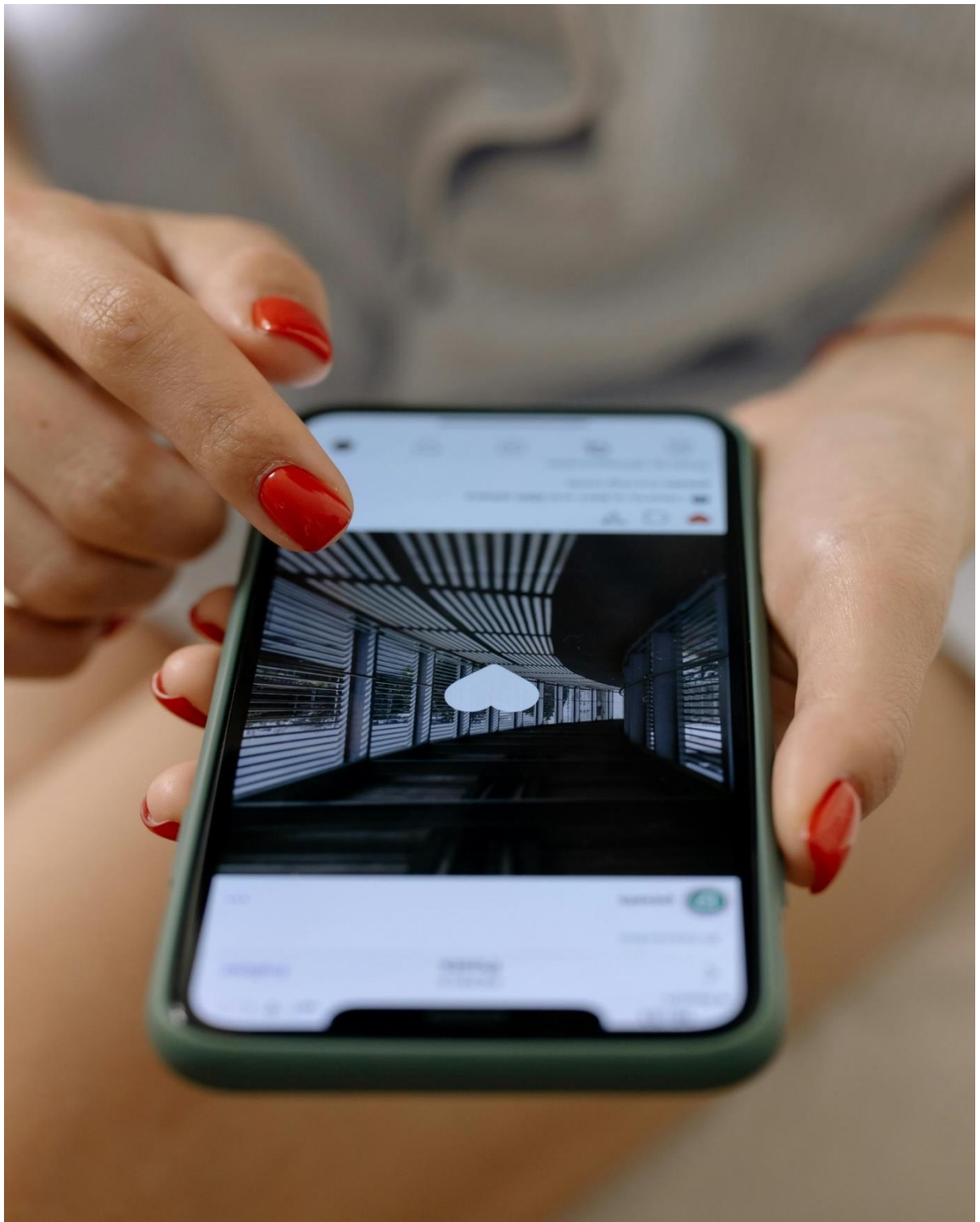


Photo by cottonbro studio from Pexels. 2020, (<https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-pressing-like-button-on-instagram-feed-on-black-android-phone-6963585/>), CC BY\_SA 3.0.



Photo 9

City council - Meeting of the Isselburg City Council, Nordrhein-Westfalen.



Photo by Ziko via wikimedia commons. 2011, (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=13746263>), CC BY-SA 3.0.

Photo 10

Road blockade of the last generation in Berlin.



Photo by Stefan Müller via Wikimedia commons. 2022, (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=114773807>) , CC BY 2.0.



Photo 11

Union strike



Photo by Tony Zohari from Pexels, 2023 (<https://www.pexels.com/de-de/foto/strasse-fahnen-menge-menschen-menge-17041527> ), CC BY\_SA 3.0



Photo 12

Occupy Wall Street Group Discussion



Photo by shankbone via Wikimedia commons. 2011, (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=16542631>) , CC BY 3.0,

Photo 13

Occupied coal loading bridge



Photo by Ende Gelände via wikimedia commons. 2016, (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=49173214>), CC BY-SA 2.5

Photo 14

School Assembly of students and teachers at Summerhill school



Photo by Felix Augustinowski via Wikimedia Commons. 2014, ([https://commons.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Schulversammlung\\_in\\_Summerhill\\_-\\_Kinder.jpg](https://commons.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Schulversammlung_in_Summerhill_-_Kinder.jpg)), CC BY-SA 2.5



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