

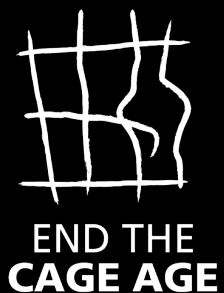
# “End the Cage Age” European Citizens’ Initiative: EU Commission’s failure to deliver on its commitments



OLGA KIKOU, COMPASSION IN WORLD FARMING EU



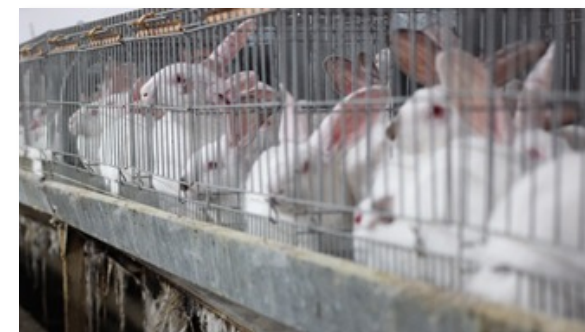
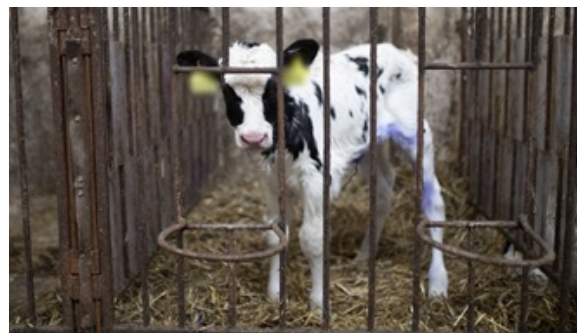
# 'End the Cage Age' European Citizens' Initiative (ECI)



300 million farmed animals are caged in the EU each year

**'End the Cage Age' European Citizens' Initiative invited the European Commission to propose legislation to prohibit the use of:**

- cages for farmed rabbits, pullets, broiler breeders, layer breeders, quail, ducks and geese and enriched cages for laying hens
- farrowing crates for sows
- sow stalls
- enclosed calf pens







## Final votes - Second voting session

Subject	AM	Voting	+	-	0
<b>(RC9-0328/2021) Belarus vote: resolution as a whole</b>		<b>678</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>(RC9-0324/2021) Afghanistan vote: resolution as a whole</b>		<b>683</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>(B9-0296/2021) End the Cage Age vote: resolution as a whole</b>		<b>680</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>85</b>



**The European Commission made a legally-binding commitment to adopt a legislative proposal on banning cages for all species named in the ECI**







**1.4**

**MILLION  
VERIFIED SIGNATURES**



**6<sup>th</sup>**

**INITIATIVE TO FINISH  
OUT OF ONLY 10**



**1<sup>st</sup>**

**& ONLY INITIATIVE  
WITH CLEAR COMMITMENT**







## The EU Commission was planning to reform its food policy, including to revise the animal welfare laws (Farm to Fork strategy in 2020)

- **Proposals for animal welfare, including banning of cages, scheduled to be delivered by Q3 2023**
- **Proceeded with a number of actions to prepare for the legislation (REFIT process)**
- **Asked for scientific evidence from its food agency EFSA, which concluded farmed animals should be free from cages**
- **Conducted consultations and interviews with stakeholders**







- **2023: year of broken promises – The End of the Cage Age ECI was derailed**
- **Most other new laws for farmed animals & the environment were not delivered or weakened, severely damaging the agricultural part of the EU’s Green Deal (‘Farm to Fork’ Strategy)**





# The attack on science

- **The industry lobbyists claimed the EU's scientific conclusions were not "impartial" and included "serious scientific errors"**
- **They took out their guns for hire — be it scientists or journalists, to manufacture propaganda & cloud the truth about animal farming**

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## Lobby groups fought 'hard and dirty' against EU ban on caged farm animals

Legislation now appears to be on hold after ferocious pushback from powerful farming lobbies







- **Their fear-mongering tactics included spreading inflated economic analyses and alarmist fears of food security linked to the Ukraine war**
- **They managed to hijack the narrative & divert attention from the fact that it is speculation on the financial markets that drove the cost-of-living crisis**

The screenshot shows the Agence Europe website. At the top left is the Agence Europe logo and a '70' anniversary badge (1953-2023). At the top right are navigation links: HOME, ABOUT, and SU. The main headline reads: 'End of cages in agriculture, first impact assessment presented by *Copa-Cogeca*'. Below the headline is the date and location: 'Brussels, 01/06/2023 (Agence Europe)'. A dark red banner across the middle contains the 'EUROPEAN LIVESTOCK VOICE' logo on the left and a hamburger menu icon on the right. Below the banner, the date '31.05.2023' is displayed. The main article title is 'THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ADEQUATE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE ANIMAL WELFARE LEGISLATIVE REFORM'. To the left of the article is a photograph of sheep grazing in a green field. To the right is a 'LATEST POSTS' sidebar with three entries: 12.12.2023 'Citizens know meat production is not the main cause of GHG emissions', 30.11.2023 '"Reputation" is the greatest challenge of the livestock and meat value chain', and 23.11.2023 'EMA reports a further decline in antibiotics sales for animals'.



**The factory farming industry tried to undermine the credibility of the campaigners and journalists, with the hope to silence its critics and scare away other potential "troublemakers"**




European Livestock Voice  
@LivestockVoice



We rarely comment on press articles, but when the accusations are crude and the insinuations misleading, well..

The articles co-published by @guardian & @LHreports on our actions around animal welfare reform are sensationalist and ultimately feed easy populism.

Why ?

 A Thread

Tuesday, 12 December 2023



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## Listen to science - but only if it has been approved by animal welfare NGOs

Monday, 19 June 2023

By Miguel Ángel Higuera and Pekka Pesonen





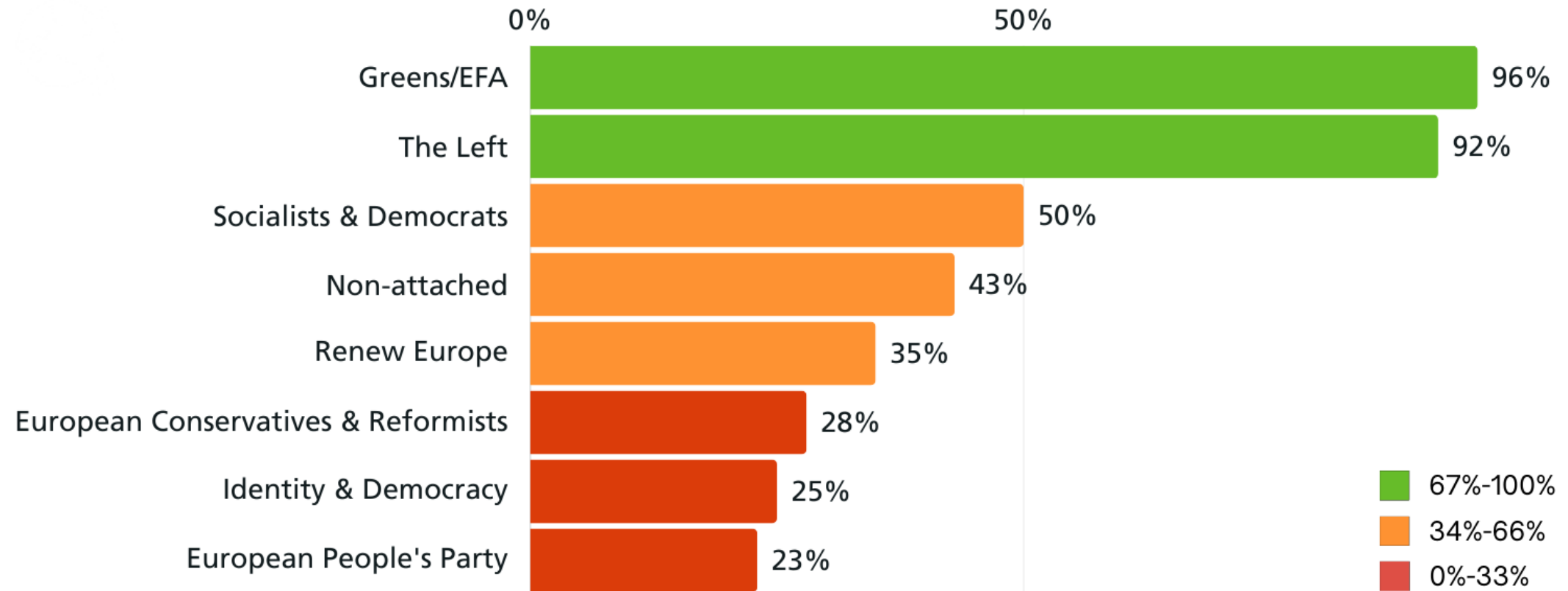


**The lobbies used the opportune timing ahead of this year's European elections and recruited European conservatives – including Commission President von der Leyen – who has pushed back on the animal welfare revolution**





## MEP voting record for farmed animals, by EP group



Source: Compassion in World Farming (2023) EU votes for farmed animals: <https://bit.ly/3tow33S>

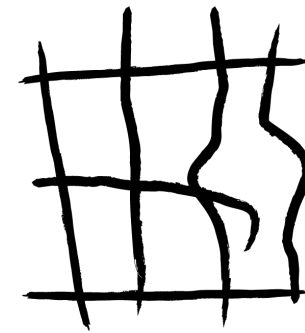


# Where are we now?



- **ECIs: A decade of existence, over 100 registered, ten surpassed the threshold of 1 million signatures, five dedicated to animals**
- **End the Cage Age: the only ECI with a clear positive commitment by the Commission**
- **By not delivering on this commitment the Commission prioritizes big business interests over those of citizens and risks making the ECI instrument de facto void**
- **Treaty obligations ignored, future of the instrument is questioned**
- **The Commission's lack of action is contributing to a loss of trust in the EU Institutions**

**Half of the 10 successful ECIs were for animals**

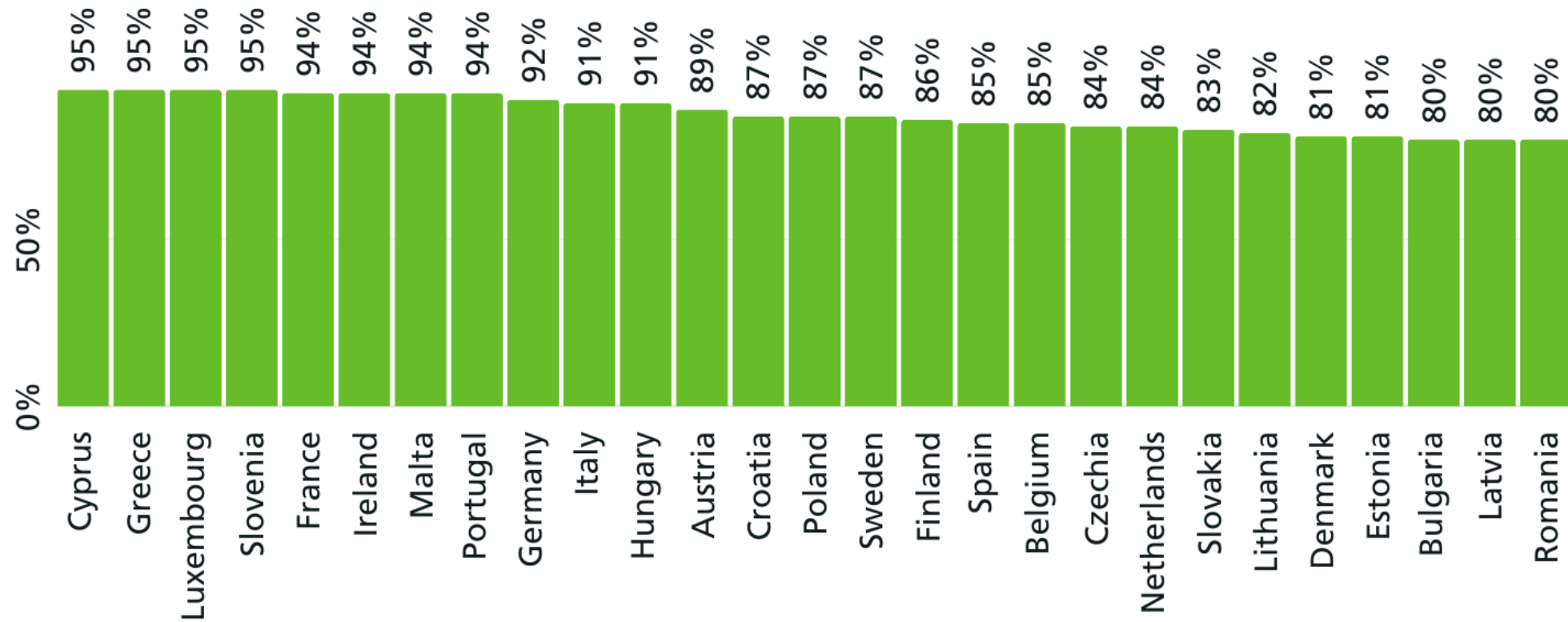


**END THE  
CAGE AGE**





## Animals should not be kept in individual cages



Source: Special Eurobarometer 533 (2023) Attitudes of Europeans towards animal welfare

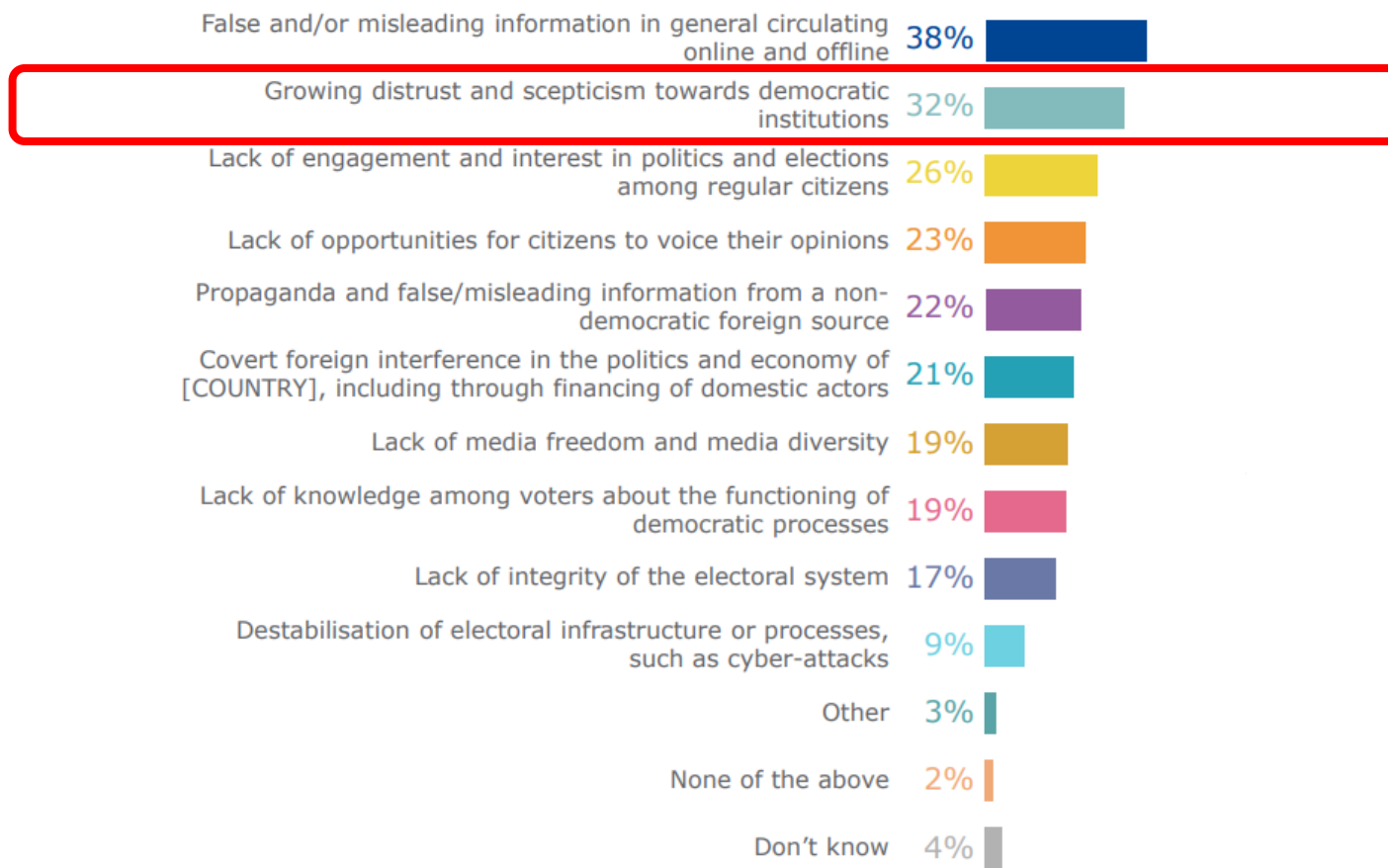
0%-33% 34%-66% 67%-100%





**Growing distrust & skepticism towards democratic institutions is the second biggest threat to democracy, according to Europeans**

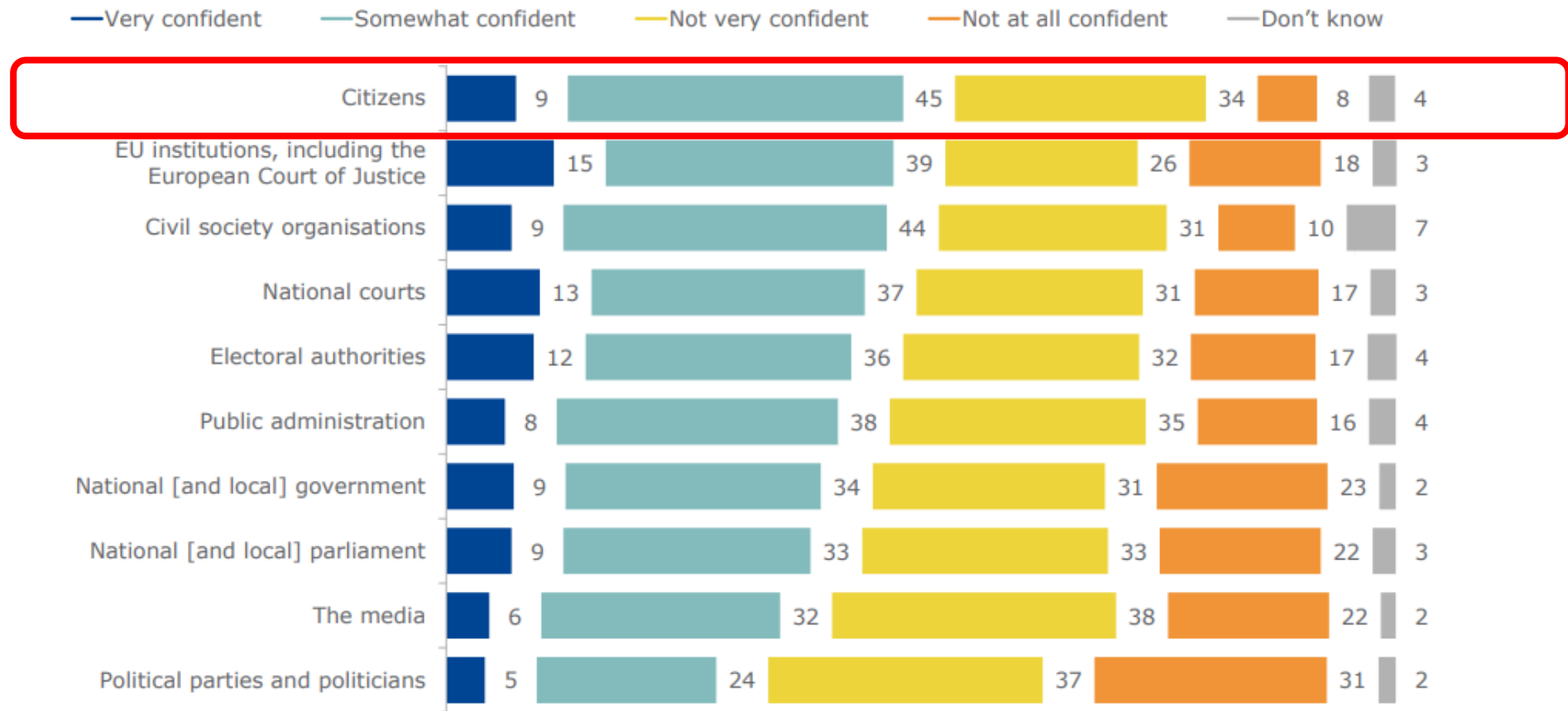
**Q3** In your view, which of the following are the most serious threats to democracy in [COUNTRY]? (Up to three answers allowed, % EU27)





**Europeans trust citizens to defend democracy more than anyone else – including the EU institutions**

**Q10** How confident are you in the following when it comes to defending democracy in your country? (% EU27)



Source: Flash Eurobarometer 528 (2023), Citizenship and democracy





## Advocacy work

**This year, after EU elections, we will inform new politicians of the 'End the Cage Age' ECI**



Looking at options, incl. legal action

**The Citizens' Committee of the End the Cage Age has sent the EU Commission a letter of formal notice**