

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 (GMT) 29th of JANUARY 2018

WIN

End of the Year Europe Survey

“Attitudes towards Independence in Europe”

End of Year Survey, carried out by WIN, shows that the referendum in the whole of the country is the option with the greatest support when a region claims independence

After economic crisis that affected to the set of European Union, it seems an awakening of the cultural and identities conflicts in different European countries has occurred.

In accordance with the last report of the World Economic Forum (WEF), political tensions are being generated, which could be extended to some EU countries. Countries like Spain, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy or the Netherlands have been affected. The most striking episode was the self-determination referendum that was held in Catalonia, which was contrary to Spanish legislation.

With the purpose of analysing the sensitivity of the independence claims, the global network Worldwide Independent Network of Market Research (WIN) has carried out a research in seven countries that helps analysing the state of opinion about this phenomenon.

The sample of the study has been superior to 7,000 online interviews. Fieldwork has been carried out by the members of WIN in their respective countries.

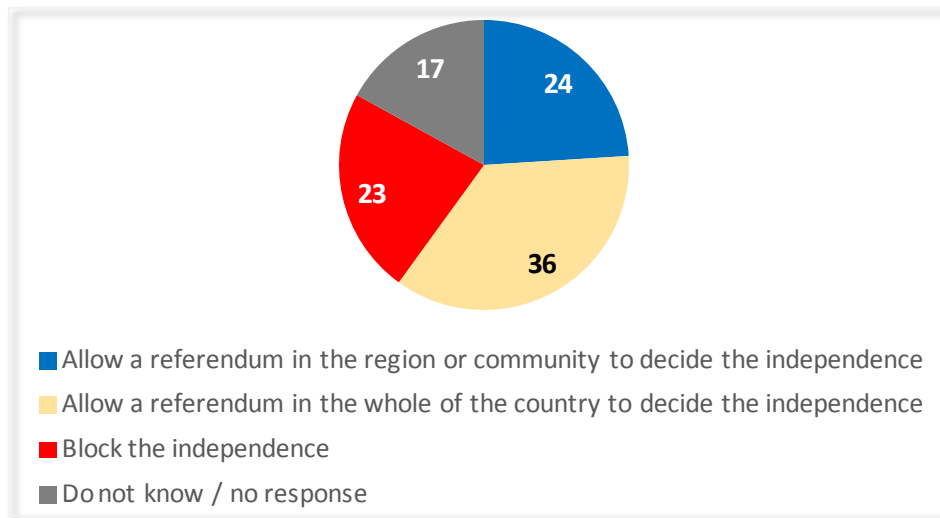
France	1,066 surveyed by BVA
Germany	1,000 surveyed by Produkt + Markt
Ireland	1,001 surveyed by Red C Research and Marketing
Italy	1,007 surveyed by DOXA
Netherlands	1,027 surveyed by Motivaction International
Spain	1,016 surveyed by Instituto DYM
United Kingdom	1,004 surveyed by Opinion Research Business (ORB)

The question that was asked was: *“If a region or community of your Country tried to gain independence, what should the Government of your country do?”* The response options were:

- 1. Allow a referendum in the region or community to decide the independence*
- 2. Allow a referendum in the whole of the country to decide the independence*
- 3. Block the independence*
- 4. Do not know/ no response*

MAIN RESULTS

SUPPORT FOR RIGHT TO DECIDE – TOTAL 7 COUNTRIES



Allow a referendum in the whole of the country is the most supported option among Europeans citizens (36%). The rest is divided by 24% in favour of a referendum in the region or community to decide the independence, 23% that would reject this possibility and 17% that do not support any of the alternatives.

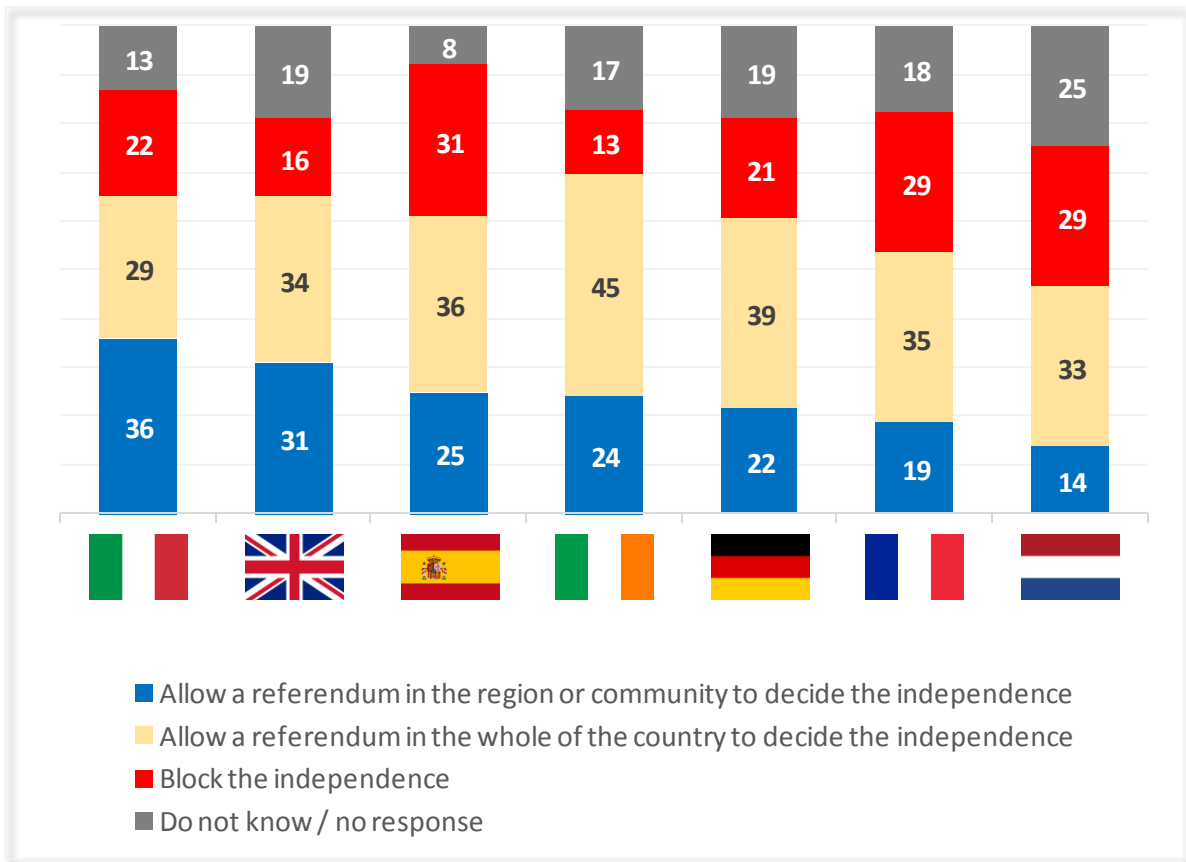
SUPPORT FOR RIGHT TO DECIDE – BY AGE
(Total respondents: 7.121)

AGE	Allow a referendum in the region or community to decide the independence	Allow a referendum in the whole of the country to decide the independence	Block the independence	DK/NA
16–24	29	36	17	18
25–34	26	37	18	20
35–44	25	35	22	18
45–54	25	34	23	17
55–64	24	34	27	15
65+	18	39	32	12

In all age segments, allow a referendum in the whole of the country is the most supported option. However, it is detected that there is more support among the younger towards the possibility of a referendum exclusively in the regions that claim the independence, while among the elderly, the rejection of independence is superior.

SUPPORT FOR RIGHT TO DECIDE BY COUNTRY

There are important differences between the countries surveyed. Hold a referendum in the whole of the country would be the majority option in all countries except for Italy. In this country, where the independence of *Padania* was a historical reclamation of the Lega Nord and there is still a demand for greater autonomy for these regions, the preferred option would be the referendum in the region or community to decide the independence (36%).



In the UK, marked by the Scottish independence referendum (2014) as well as the presence of the Welsh nationalism or the question of Northern Ireland, the support toward the referendum in the region or community to decide the independence is remarkable (31%). Nevertheless, 34% of British would defend to hold a referendum in the whole of the country and 16% would reject any pro-independence project.

One of the most divided countries is Spain, where apart from Catalan nationalism there are other strong nationalist movements in The Basque Country and, to a lesser extent, in Galicia. 36% of Spaniards would defend a referendum in the whole of the country, 31% would refuse any pro-independence project and 25% would support a referendum in a particular region.

Countries where the referendum in the whole of the country would get more support would be Ireland (45%), with the historical conflict of Northern Ireland, and Germany (39%).

By last, in France and Netherlands, we find the least support toward a referendum in a particular region. In France, whose State has been characterized by a Jacobin centralizing tradition, there is a claim from the Corsican nationalism (*The Corsican specificity*). French society, in case of considering the question of the independence of a region, would back up the referendum in the whole of the country (35%) or would reject the independence (29%). Just 19% of French would be in favour of a referendum in a particular region.

In the Netherlands, where there are also independence claims in the province of Friesland, neither the citizens would be favourable to a referendum in a particular region (14%) as a referendum in the whole of the country (33%).

Carlos Clavero, President of DYM:

“The study that I present has been carried out in European countries where there are nationalist movements that demand the revision of the status of their regions within the borders of some States.

Citizens of these countries would not be mostly in favour of that regions within a state that could decide their independence exclusively through a referendum. Their preferable option is the referendum in the whole of the country. Possibly they fear that accepting independence referendums only in regions that demand independence could open the door to a fragmentation of their countries, with the consequent political, economic and social weakening.

We also witness the consolidation in Europe of nationalisms that unified sovereign states, as in Italy or Germany was in the nineteenth century. And since the beginning of the 20th century, new and old nationalisms have proliferated, claiming their singularity and, in extreme cases, their separation from already constituted States. This political context is an important challenge for Europe, which will have to find the most appropriate solution.”