

THE MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE

Spain



Methodology

AudienceNet conducted an initial online survey amongst 1,000 16-35 year old Spanish residents and a week-long, moderated, online dialogue with 40 Spanish Millennials, segmented as follows: the politically engaged; the mainstream and the politically disaffected.

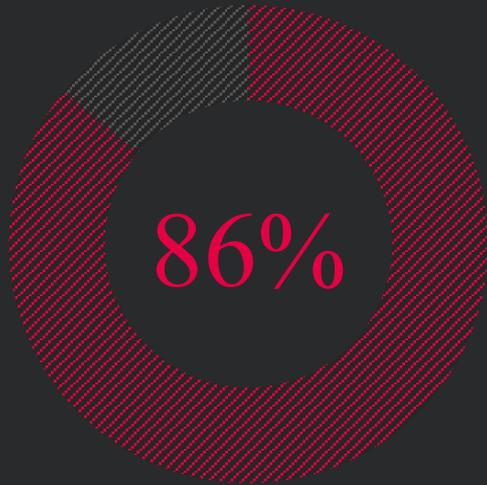
The sample was recruited to be nationally representative of all Spanish Millennials in terms of: age; geographical region; household income and educational attainment levels.



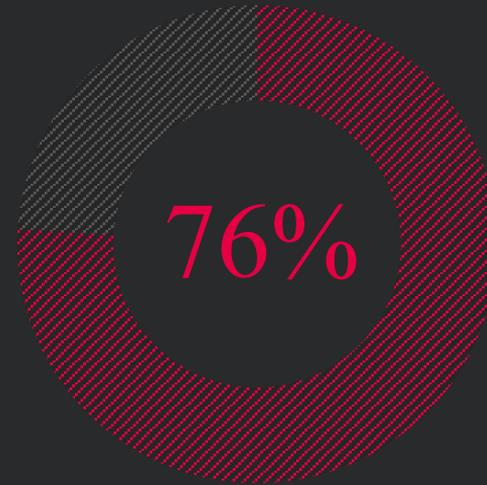
Interest & engagement with politics



Most young people in Spain are happy and optimistic...

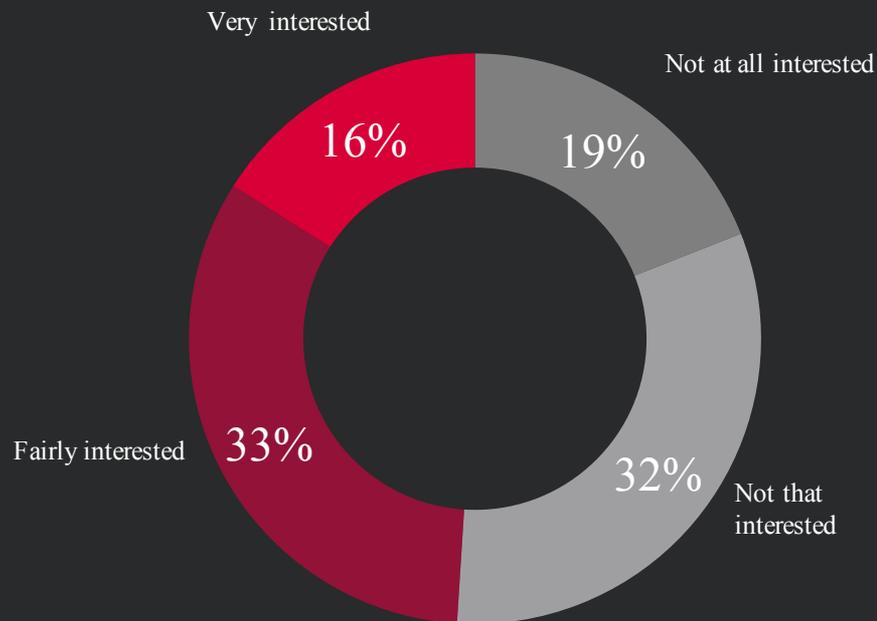


Are generally happy
with their lives



Are optimistic about
their future

...But interest in politics is low

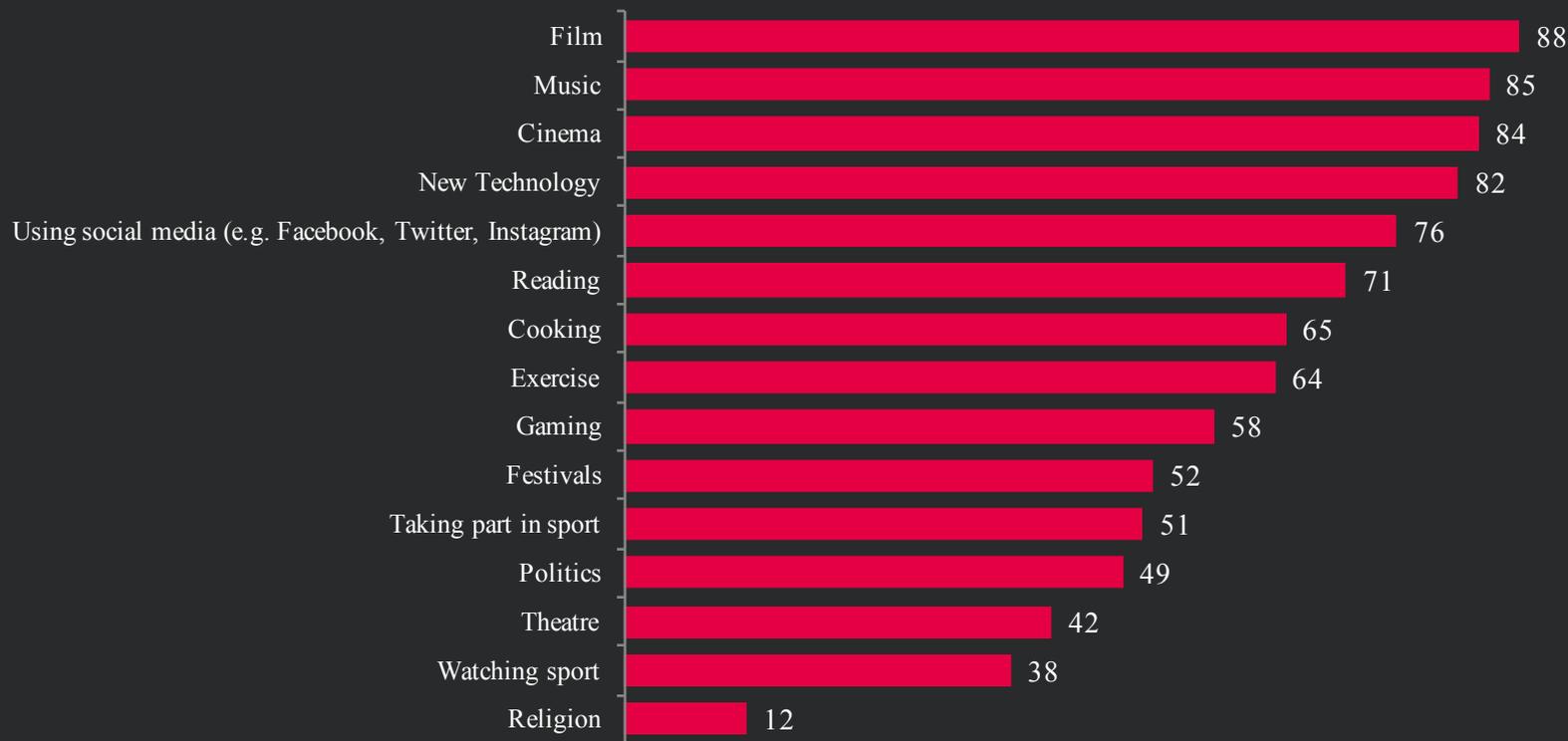


16%

said they were “very interested” in politics

Music & film top the list of interests

(Net %: very interested / fairly interested)



Taking an interest in politics is also not considered to be important

(Rank in order of importance)

1 Being happy

2 Being in good health

3 Being free to do and say what I want

4 Having leisure time

5 Having my voice heard

6 Spending time with friends

7 Spending time with family

8 Equality in society

9 The well-being of society in general

10 Helping others

11 Making money

12 Contributing to society

13 Being successful

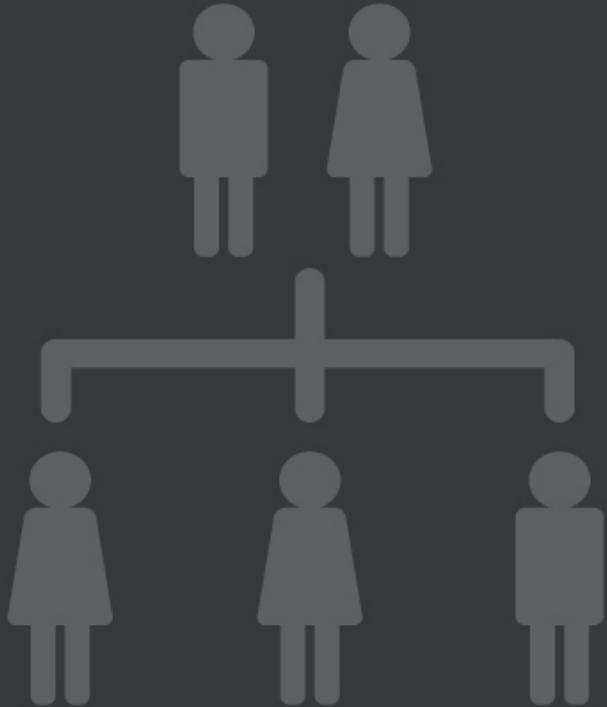
14 Taking an interest in music

15 Being connected to friends via social media

16 Being involved with my local community

17 Taking an interest in politics

Generation gap



47%

feel that their generation is less interested in politics than their parents' or grandparents' generation

31% think the reverse

Why are so few young people interested in politics?

When asked why their generation was less interested in politics, the primary factors cited were the high level of corruption, broken promises and a feeling of disappointment in politicians.

“Young people show little interest because from an early age they have always seen corruption, deceit, wrong doings, etc. And they have no hope that anything will change, regardless of which political representative is in power.”

“In my opinion, the people of my generation are not really interested in politics because in the times in which we live there is a general disappointment with politicians.”

“Politics. One of the big issues. Clearly, politics is essential for the functioning of today's Western societies like ours. Another thing is whether these societies work adequately. As I mentioned in an earlier post, I think the Spanish are not doing very well.”

“The truth is that I am gradually losing interest in politics because it is always more of the same old thing. Promises, promises! But when push comes to shove, politicians fail to fulfil all what they promise and, worst of all, they only look after their own interests instead of the populations' interests, which should be the main point. I think young people agree with me, trust has been lost and with it the interest as well.”

Why are so few young people interested in politics? (Cont.)

Others argued that young people are less interested in politics because they don't have as much to fight for. Some also argued that politicians had let young people down by not engaging with the issues they care about, leading to a lack of political interest.

"I think young people are less interested in politics than our parents were because, unlike them, most youngsters are born having it all and, generally, are well-off. While it is true that we have encountered a huge economic crisis and had to enter the job market in this climate, (which has also made young people get a little more organized) is still nothing compared to what our parents' generation went through. On the other hand, ongoing corruption cases are causing disbelief in politics among young and older people..."

"It is understandable that people my age are not interested as much (in politics), because politicians today generate little or no confidence, politics today is worn down and old fashioned. Political parties should get updated. When you've made your political career (you have been president or minister) you should retire and make way for the new generations, you should know when to end your political career."

"One of the "greatest achievements" of the Spanish government has been decreasing interest in politics among the youngsters. "Education" and "citizenship" are shown to us as an acceptance of the "welfare state" as we receive it. No effort has been made to adapt or change it to the moral laws that are instructed to us. And this only diverts my lack of interest about matters I don't know about, wanting to abandon the drive needed to learn."

Taking part

6% said that they have attended a political meeting compared to 26% who said that they have taken part in a protest/demonstration

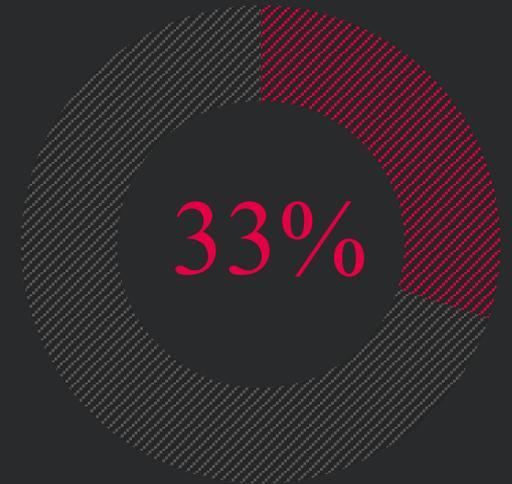
6%

Take part in
political meetings

26%

Take part in
protests/demonstrations

This compares to 7% who
take part in religious
meetings/events and...



who take part in team
sports



Politicians connecting with young people



20%

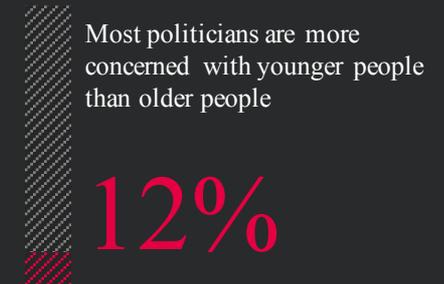
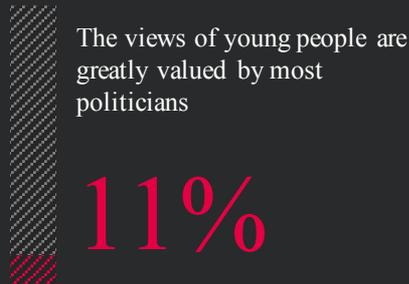
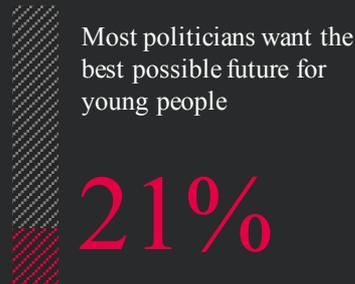
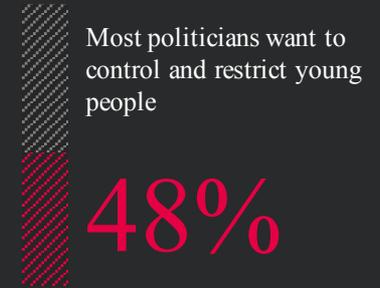
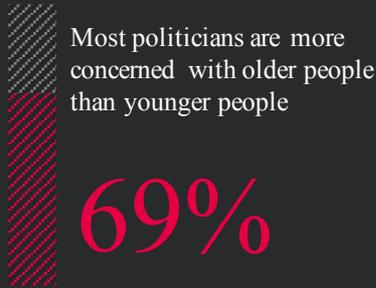
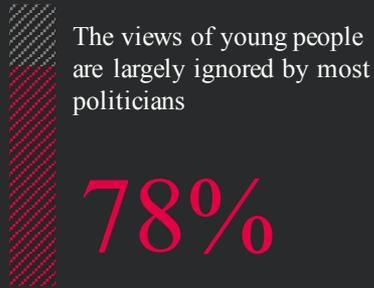
felt confident that they and their peers
could make themselves heard

41%

think very few, if any, politicians
encourage young people to get
involved in politics

% agreeing with statements

78% of Spanish millennials think that politicians ignore the views of young people.

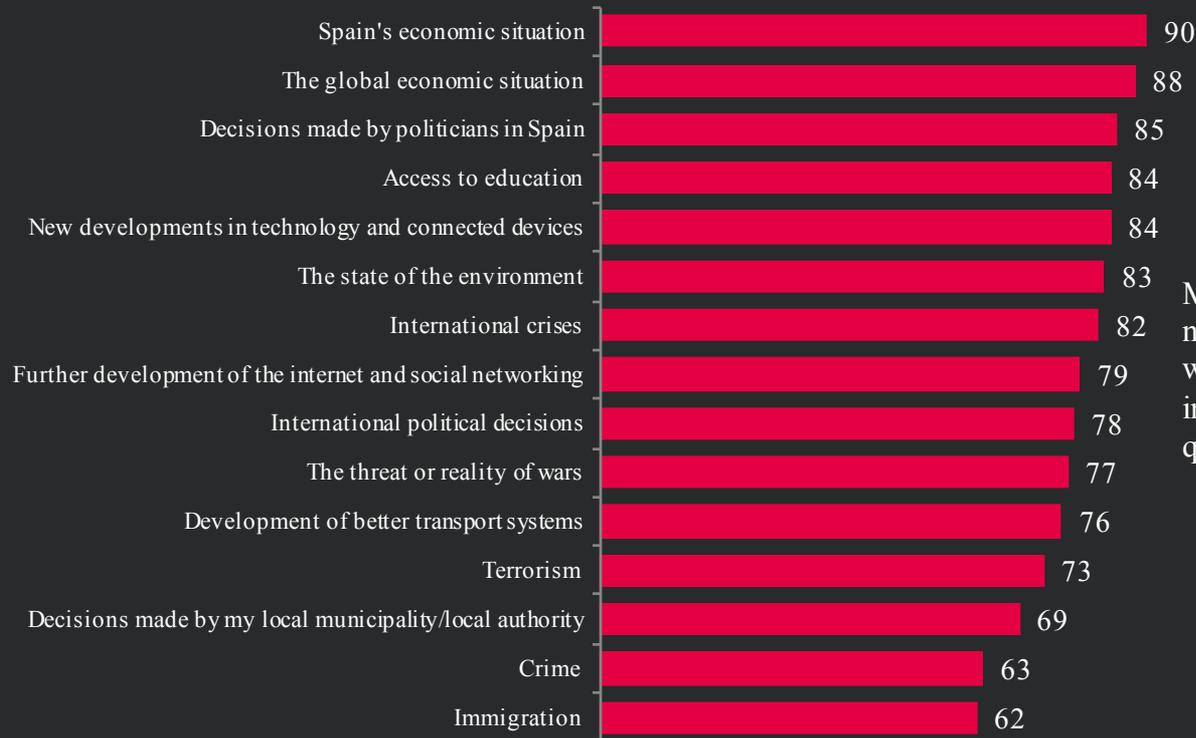


Looking to the future...



Factors affecting future quality of life

(‘Very big effect’ or ‘some effect’ %)



Millennials think “the national economic situation” will be the top factor influencing their future quality of life.



Time Travel Activity | **their own future**

The participants were asked to imagine that they could travel 20-30 years in to the future and describe what they think their lives would be like. Most thought they would be working and have started families. There were some, however, who were sceptical about whether they would be able to find a job in Spain.

“In 20 years I hope to have improved professionally, have a bigger family, have the mortgage paid... have progressed as a person.”

“In 20 or 30 years’ time I would expect my life to be stable in all ways. I would be working in my own business, sustaining my family and enjoying life.”

“I see myself as a parent but I struggle to see myself working if the job situation is similar to the current one.”

“I imagine my life working as I do now, and hopefully with professional success.”

“I imagine myself teaching at my University and perhaps being the dean of the Faculty of Geography and History at the University of Valencia.”

“I would be with my husband and son in a house and I would go to work at my school.”

Time Travel Activity | Spain

When asked what the country might be like in 20-30 years time, most were optimistic and hoped to see their country thrive with new technology, renewable energy, jobs and stability. Some mentioned they thought Catalonia would be independent.

“Perhaps there would be changes in the use of renewable energy, which will take a leading role at the expense of oil and petrol use.”

“In 20 years’ time I hope not to be living in Spain but in an independent Catalonia. In fact, I think it’ll be like that, even if it takes a while.”

“As for Spain, I think the country would also be strong, with stable politics and jobs, decent wages and promising education, full of opportunities and more developed technologically. Homosexuals and people of other races or ethnicities would be fully integrated in our society. I truly hope nothing will stay like it is now.”

“On the other hand, Spain would have changed: maybe the country would have become a federal state. I doubted if Catalonia or Euskadi will continue to be part of this country. Surely the existing territorial problems will cause major changes in the short/medium term. There’ll be institutional system changes, change in parties’ systems...”

Time Travel Activity | Government

When we asked what the government might be like in 20-30 years time, most people were optimistic that there would be a stable, more representative, government and that corruption would be eliminated. Many thought that elections would be online or would be more technologically advanced in some way.

“Regarding the government, it will continue being a parliamentary democracy but a multiparty system will be more than consolidated. Spanish politics will no longer be about two parties and an absolute majority government will have extinguished. Governments on their own will give way to coalition governments and the PM will not necessarily come from the party with more votes.”

“The government would be a parliament, as it is now, but with a developed participatory system that will often call upon its citizens to give their opinion through assemblies or something similar. The voting process would be very similar to how it is now but with some added technological tools to eliminate the use of paper.”

“Regarding changes in government and the voting process, it is something that I have thought about many times but I cannot imagine how it could be. Maybe, hopefully, we will have reached a system in which there is not so much inequality and we all live better.”

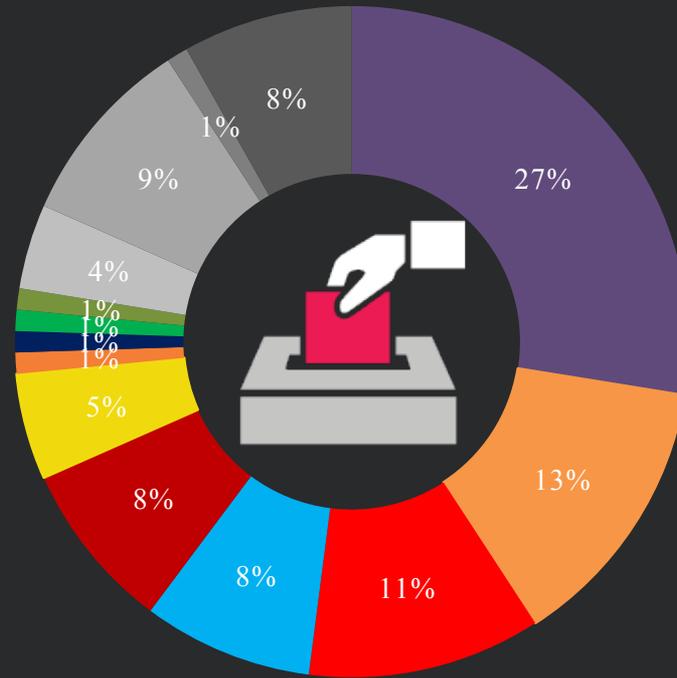
Voting



If there was an election tomorrow...

85%

Said that they would vote



- Podemos
- Ciudadanos
- Izquierda Unida
- Partido Popular (PP)
- Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE)
- Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC)
- Compromís
- DL Convergencia
- Unidad Popular
- EH Bildu
- Other (Please state)
- Don't know
- None of the above
- Not prepared to say

Key reasons for not wanting to vote

1

Lack of trust in politicians

2

All parties and politicians are the same

3

They do not like any of the political options

4

They don't support the current political system

5

There isn't a party that represents their views

Key factors that might encourage an interest in voting

#1

If I trusted politicians more

#2

If my vote really made a difference

Why politicians aren't trusted

The main reasons why politicians generally weren't trusted was because of numerous corruption scandals, continuously letting people down by not living up to their promises and not listening to citizens' needs and problems.

“Young people do not trust politicians in our country because the political class of this country does not represent their interests, starting with the age of these representatives. Younger politicians would represent better the wide age diversity of the country's population. In my opinion, politics are not at odds with youth, neither with experience. Having more experience in politics does not mean to better understand the interests of the citizens, but as it has been shown, it means increasing corruption among politicians.”

“Nobody trusts politicians, because they never meet absolutely any of their promises. You can't trust absolutely any, because for what I've seen so far, they don't really care about the population. Their speeches are only aimed to criticize the opposition and to trick us so that we vote for them. Once they rise to power, everything remains the same.”

“I think this country's youth has learned their lesson with politicians. Too many corruption cases have come to light (and surely more are to come). On the other hand, most of the things politicians promise in their electoral programs never come to completion, whether they're things that look pretty feasible as well as things that seem rather farfetched. I don't think it is possible to classify some parties as more trustworthy than others. In my opinion that comes with every politician's own personality, they're just human beings.”

Trustworthy politicians?

The majority of participants could not think of any politicians who they trust. The politicians who were mentioned most as being relatively trustworthy were Alberto Garzón, Pablo Iglesias and Julio Anguita.

“At national level Alberto Garzón deserves my trust, I think so far he has shown to be an honest politician that’s close to the people. I think he is a humble person with clear ideas.”

‘I give a vote of confidence to Pablo Iglesias because, although I don’t share many of his ideas, he has no fear about showing unpopular ideals. Alberto Garzón also inspires my confidence.’

“Ada Colau in Barcelona. Once she made it to Barcelona’s Council she failed to apply all her program simply because it’s impossible for her to apply it. For example, Gabriel Rufián, deputy for Esquerra Republicana, is very active in social networks. Messages less "elaborated", clear and direct ideas, drive, short-term solutions”

“Trust is earned, no prime minister since Suarez, has committed to meet citizens’ demands. I trusted Anguita and, unfortunately, the list of Spanish politicians I trust ends here.”

“I could highlight José Mujica for his humility and strength fighting against inequalities. And I highlight a quote of his that I really like: "People who really like money should be expelled from politics because otherwise we end up mortgaging people’s confidence”

Building trust in politics

Ideas for how politicians could better connect with younger people and win their trust included more frequent interactions between the politicians and the young generation, listening and taking an interest in their problems, asking for their opinions on different issues and keeping their political promises. It was also argued that younger politicians would be better able to build trust.

“I think politicians should start by understanding trust is something you have to win and that only through their own actions (not words) they will get.”

“Change should begin with creating coherent policies in education that develop judgmental ability and the use of advisory independent neutral bodies.”

“The only way in which politicians can connect with young people is to make policies for the young people. If a young person can benefit from the work of a politician, that young person will pay attention to what he/she has to say.”

“In my opinion, politicians should be closer and clearer to winning the trust of young people. Getting closer would help politicians to know more about citizens’ problems and thus propose possible and realistic goals instead of impossible or unattainable objectives. I think humility and sincerity are the key to connect to any citizen.”

Factors contributing to voting decision

(% 'Great Extent' or 'Some Extent')

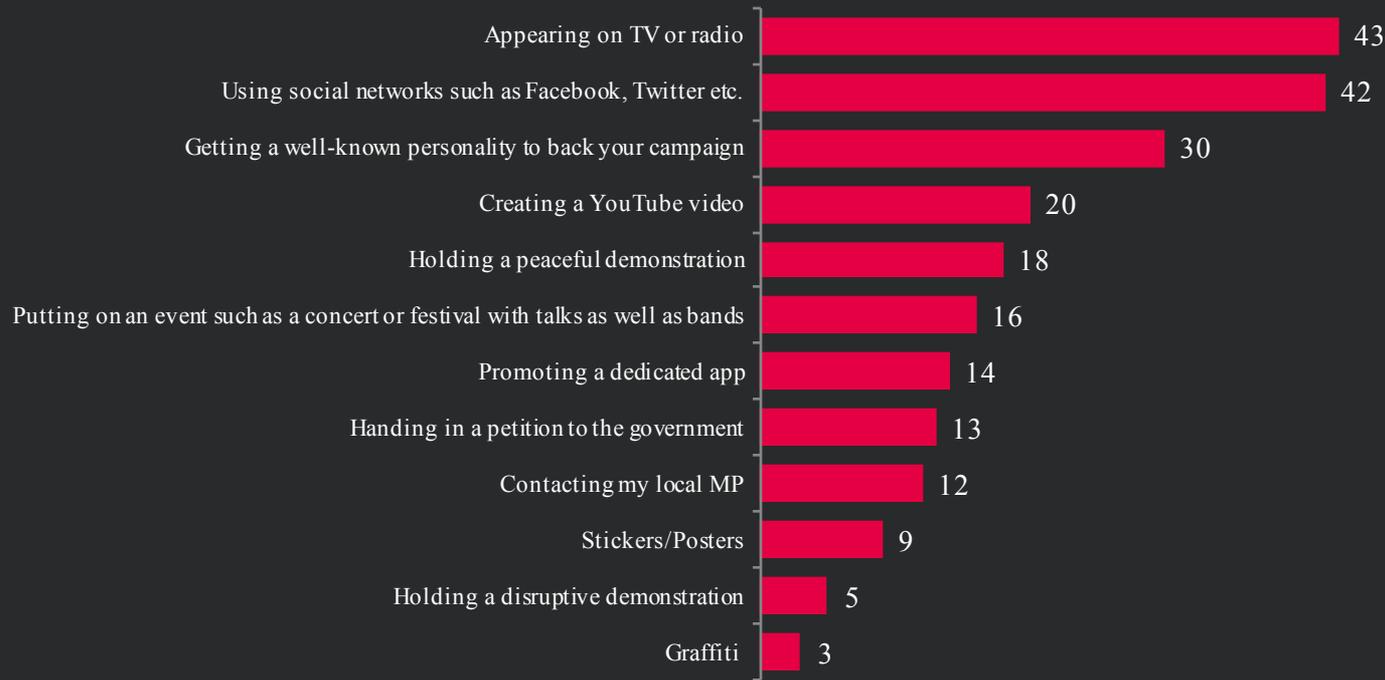


Views about the leaders of each party was seen as the key factor. Social media and other online factors were fairly low down the list as millennials expect the main campaigns to take place using traditional media (TV and radio).

Means they would use to start a political campaign

(‘extremely useful’ %)

If they were to start their own campaign, however, Spanish millennials would be more likely to focus their efforts on social media



Preferred message for encouraging more younger people to vote...

49% “Younger people need to vote - it’s their future”

32% “Voting really does make a difference”

19% “Voting is your responsibility”

What would they do differently?

If the Spanish millennials were involved in starting a new political campaign themselves, they would campaign both via TV and social media. They would engage the public in their campaign, use simple language and lots of images in their materials. For Spanish millennials, honesty and transparency would be key in the campaign.

“I would give greater participation and importance to citizens, putting aside the “starring” role of the politician in power. I would organize meetings where proposals to improve the country’s issues would be made and later implemented by the party. I would spread the campaign more or less according to how current existing campaigns are doing it. I would publish the campaign in all social networks available, radio stations, television, word of mouth in towns and cities...”

“Transparency. Talk with figures and real data, showing an open campaign in which what is done can be seen, the projects that are to be carried out and, especially, how they will be carried out. There is no point talking about reducing public spending if how it will be reduced is not mentioned, once in power, cuts are made where it hurts the most to later spend that money in useless, worthless "matters". It would be a campaign with marked targets and deadlines for its implementation.”

“To make the campaign different I would allow citizens to participate (no other party does this) and I don’t mean participating at the polls but on the proposal of measures, for example. To spread my campaign, I would use dynamic and attractive media channels such as social media or YouTube. The fact that people will be invited to participate and communicate at all times could lead to clarify and even solve issues and doubts as well as encouraging citizens to participate. ”

Poster Campaign

The respondents were asked to work together to develop ideas for posters that would encourage young people to get engaged in politics. They preferred simple language and colourful imagery.

“I would use ordinary language, far from the language that has been used historically in politics, a language that truly represents the whole of society. I would use a fresh image that would encourage young people to participate, away from the serious image portrayed by politicians today. And, of course, I would stick these posters in universities, pubs, concerts, festivals... and places usually crowded by young people.”

A few more of the top rated wording suggestions:

“Vote for the future! Only you can change it.”

“If you participate you will be walking towards the world that you want to build.”

“We are all politics”

The ‘ideal’ candidate

When we asked who their ideal candidate was, many said that gender and clothing didn’t matter, although some females did say they would like to see more female politicians. The most important characteristics for a candidate to have were humility, honesty and confidence.

“I think gender, age, where he lives or what clothes he wears are not relevant for a political candidate. The bottom line is to be himself, NOT PRETENDING TO BE. He would be humble, coherent, sensible and honest, with innovative ideas, creative and with ability to manage change. He should be approachable, realistic, must have his feet on the ground and promote economic equality and social policies beyond his personal, his party, third parties or corporate interests.”

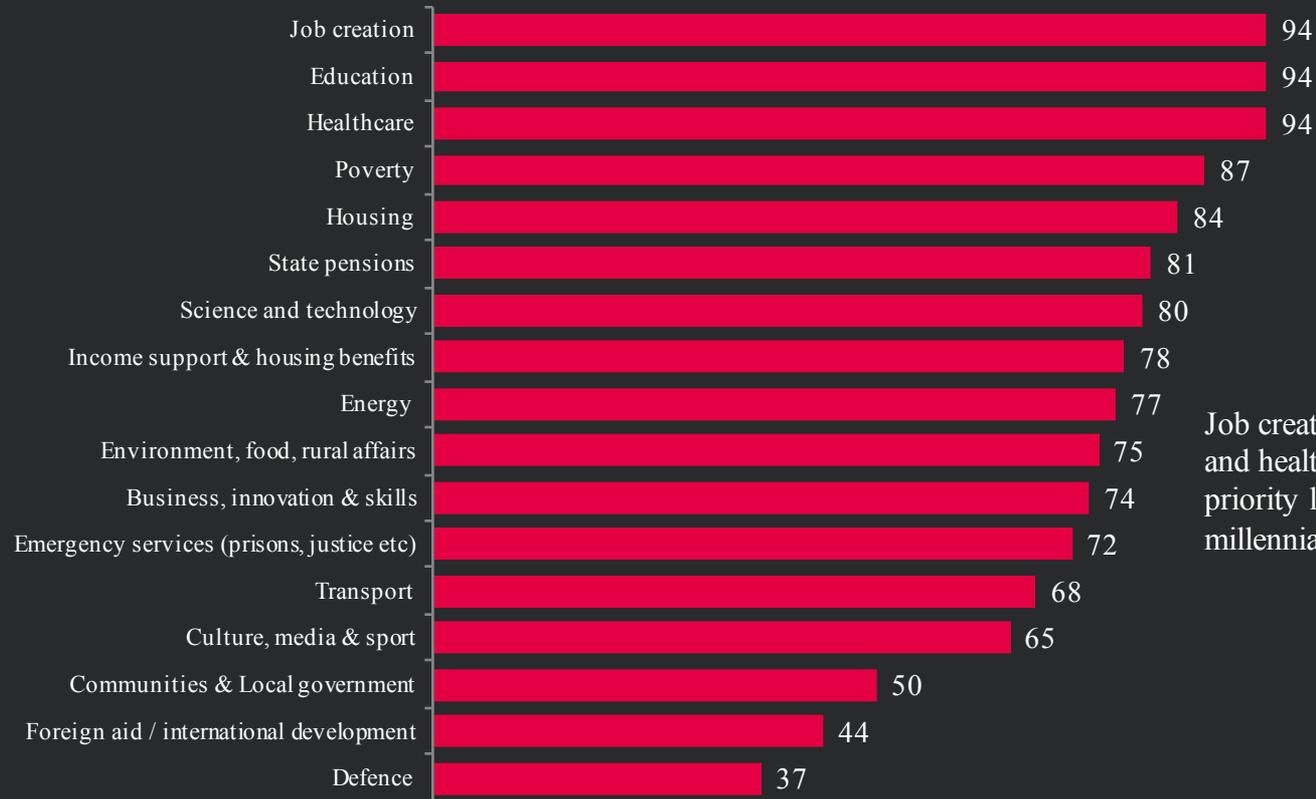
“Woman in her 40s. She lives in Madrid and is a strong woman who knows what she wants and knows how to get it. She would spend her weekends with her family. People would value her dedication, effort and accomplishments. I think she would be a very good candidate, someone who knows what we have been through and stops it from happening again. She won’t steal or manipulate.”

“Anyhow, it would be nice having a campaign led by a woman, because when it comes to being in the run for the government presidency there has not yet been any. This person must be liberal, open to new ideas, committed, honest, entrepreneurial, brave and feisty but firm, with strong convictions and ability to lead at the same time. She should have the ability to put herself in other people’s skin when it is time to act. That being so, it would be precisely those qualities that people would appreciate.”

The issues that matter



High Priority for Public Spending (%)



Job creation, education and healthcare topped the priority list for Spanish millennials.



78%

believed in the importance of equality
of sexual orientation in society

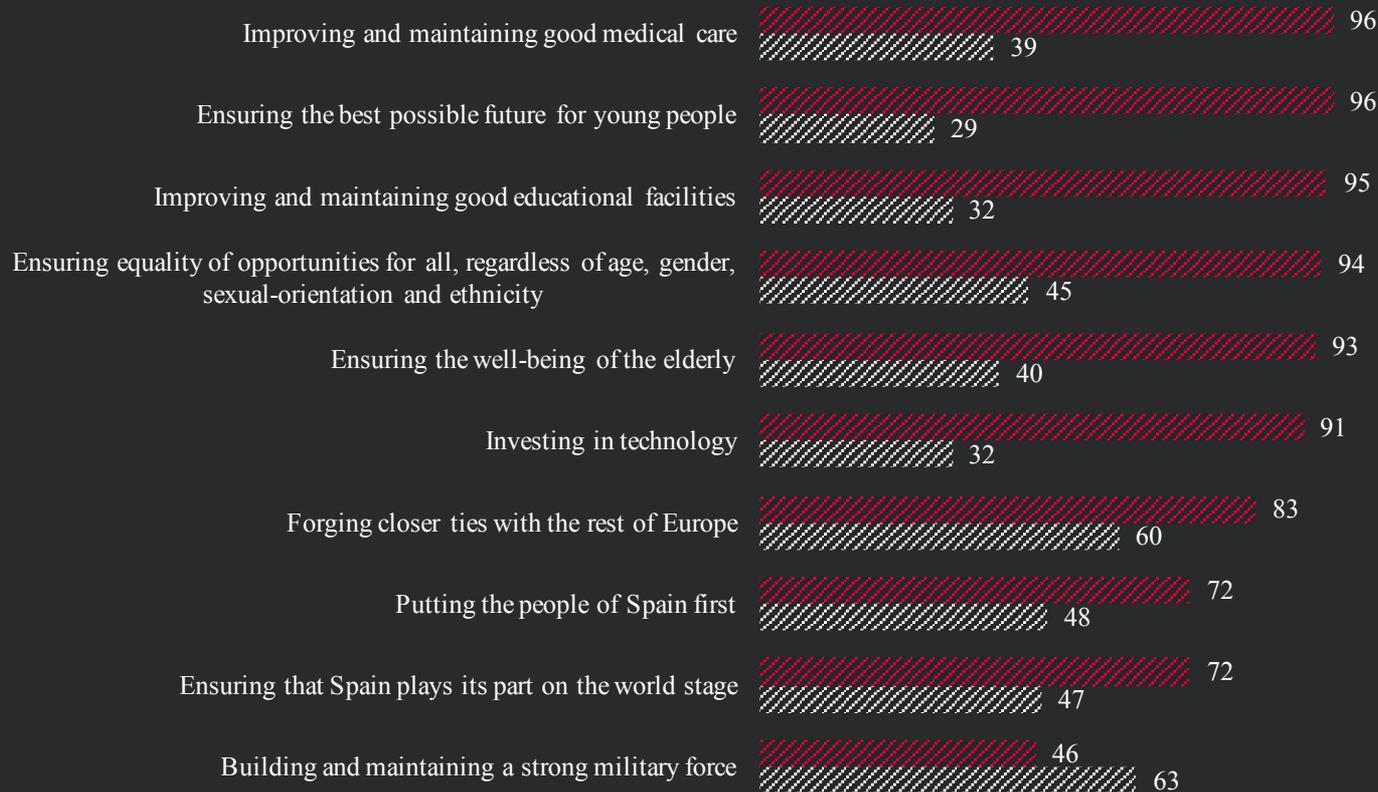


82%

believed in the importance of equality
for all genders in society

WHAT SHOULD POLITICIANS WORK TOWARDS? (%)

To what extent do they deliver on the following? (%)



The issues that matter

When asked to talk about which issues were the most discussed in recent times, the key topics to emerge were unemployment, corruption and education.

“The main issue right now is to reach an agreement and to be able to form a government, I think this is what they should focus on right now. After this is done, it will be possible to start working on the other important issues. For me, unemployment is particularly important because most people of my age are affected by it.”

“The big problem is that who can fix it is a mediocre, corrupt political class that favours ineptitude above experience, problem solving ability and honesty.”

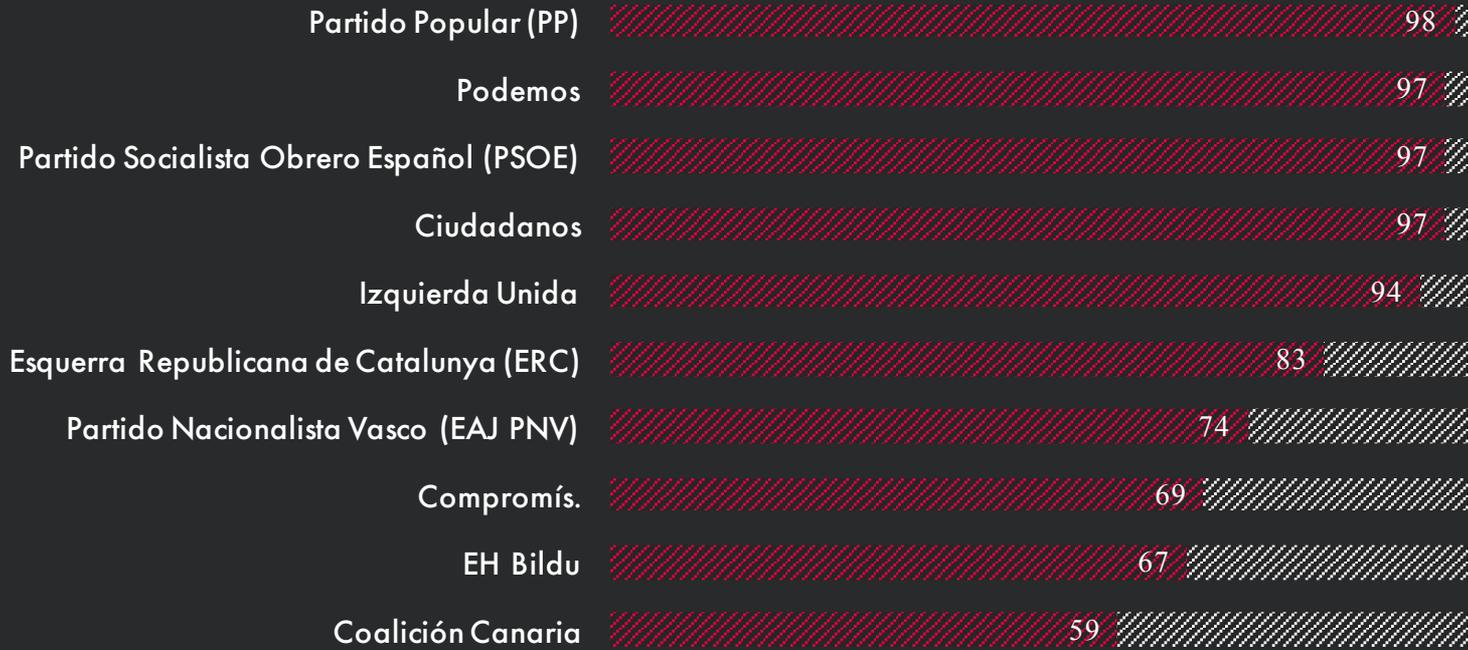
“Among my friends, we are concerned about the job situation. Many of us are unemployed and there are no opportunities, as much as we look for them, and when you finally find something, work clauses are often “slave” type of clauses and always on temporary basis. Many of us should be living an independent life by now, but knowing about the economic situation is likely that, after the abundant plunder to pensions funds, we’ll not be entitled to a retirement pension after all.”

“Politicians should be discussing which are the primary needs of the country and focus on addressing them. But the needs of the majority of the population, not those of the politicians. Education and public health seem, to me, to be suffering budget cuts and it should not be like that because they are two of the most important things. Or this is my opinion as a citizen. Unfortunately, I don’t think it’s in my hands to correct anything!”

Politicians/Political parties

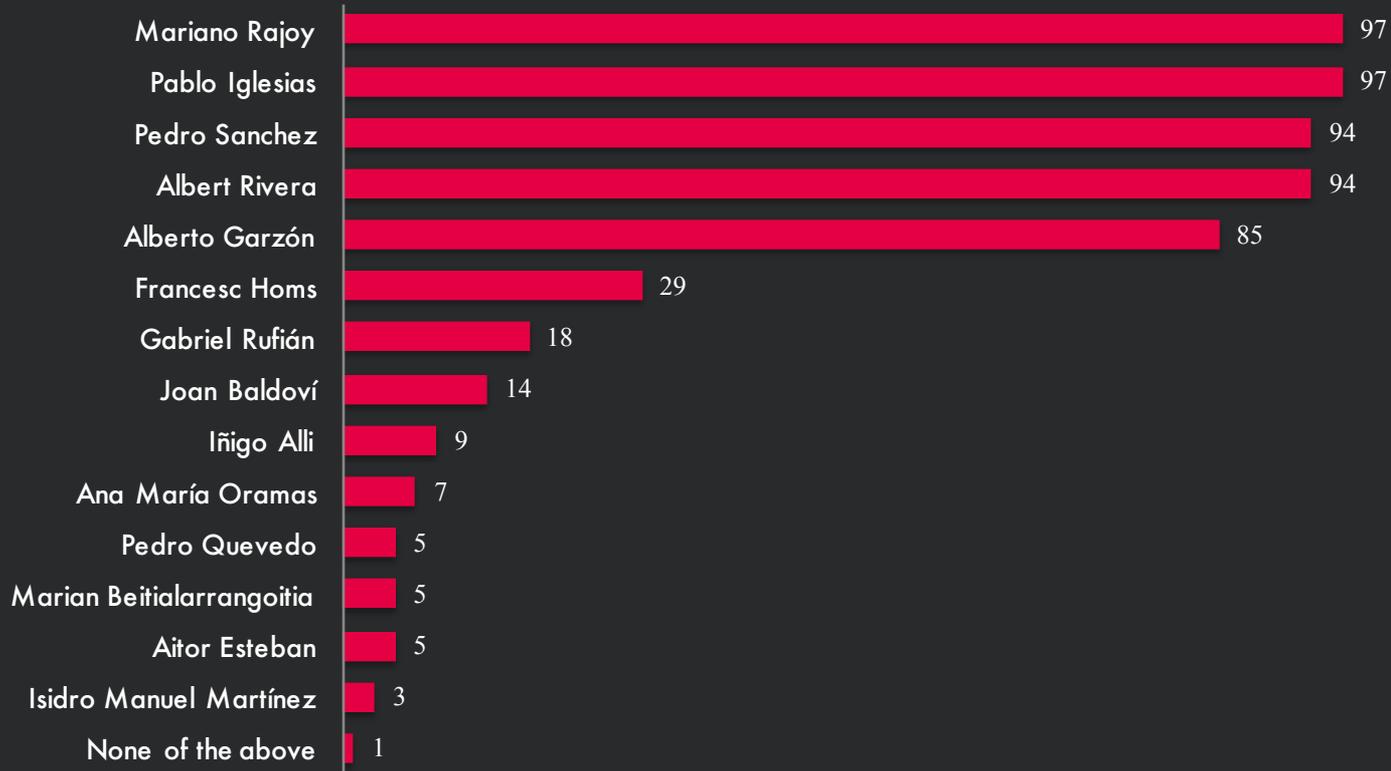


Awareness of political parties (%)

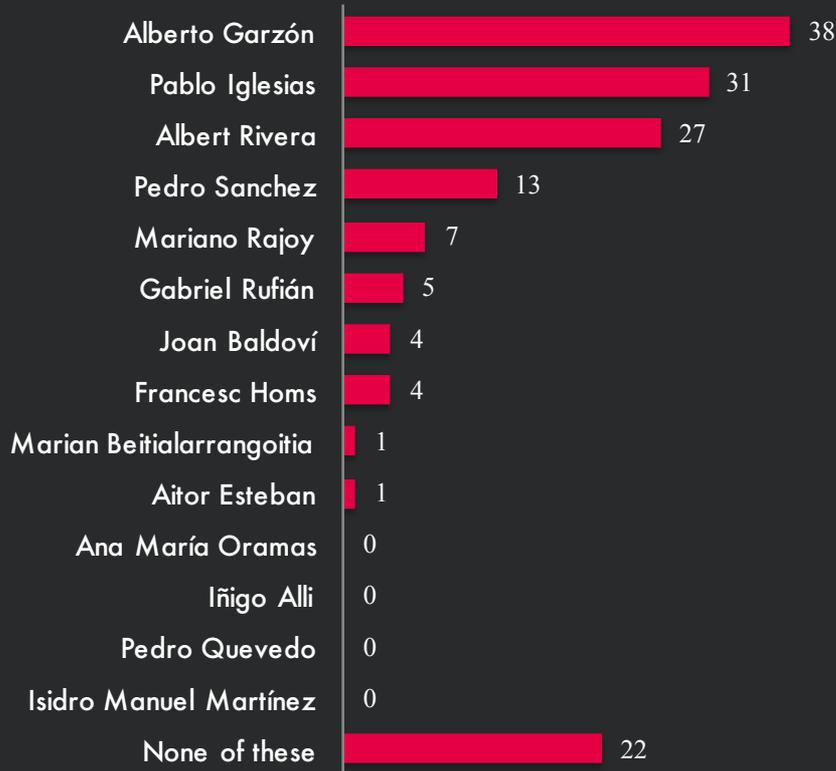


Awareness was very high for all the top parties

Awareness of politicians (%)



Proportion who like each politician (%)



Write a letter to your local mp

Dear Mr. XXXX,

This country has suffered a major economic crisis in recent years. The middle and lower classes have suffered all kinds of cuts and tax increases in order to safeguard the skeleton of our welfare system. Many people have suffered pay cuts, layoffs or have not been able to find work due to lack of supply, in particular the youth collective.

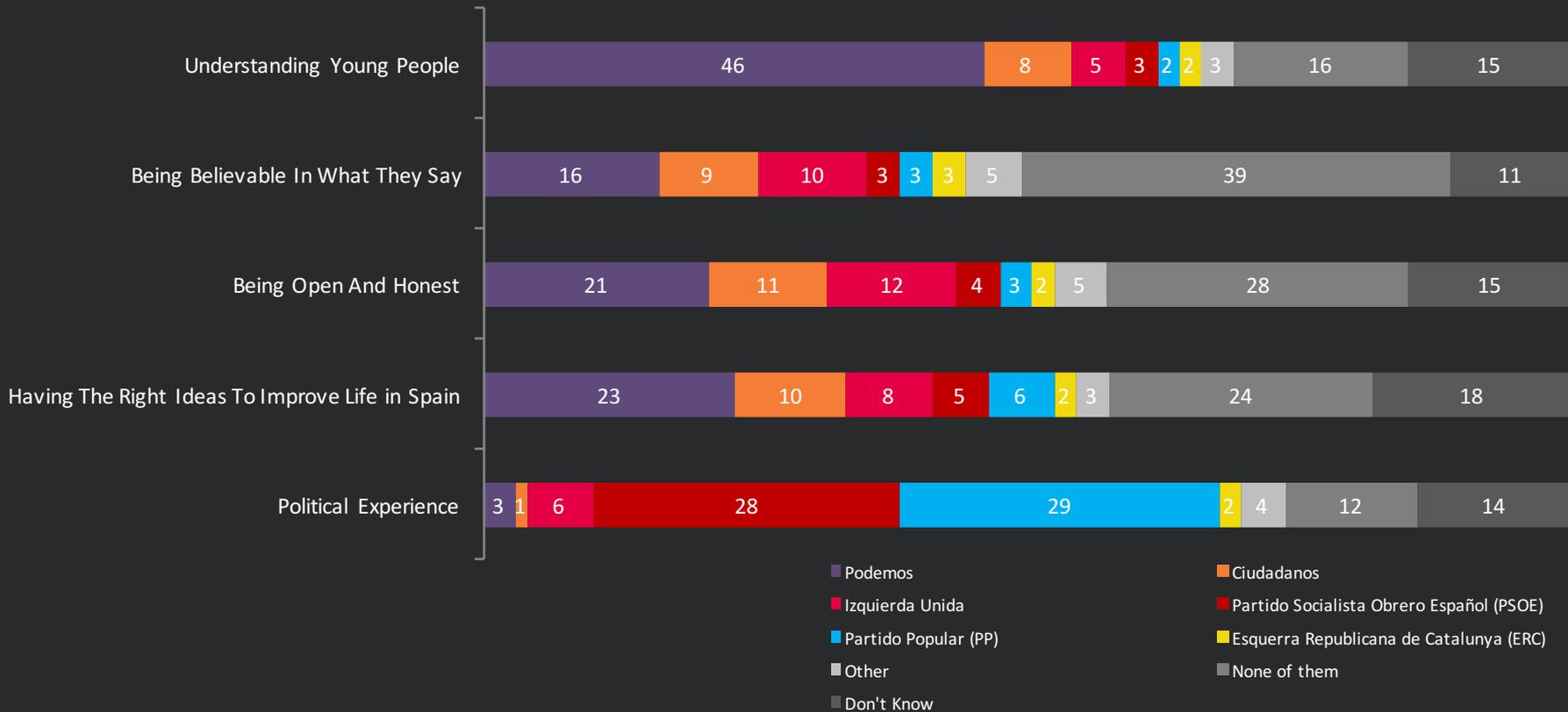
Instead, banks have been rescued with money from taxpayers without giving back anything in return, the rich have seen proportionally reduced tax burdens with the latest financial reforms introduced by the government, big businesses have benefited from compensation for their failures (eg: Castor or *Autopistas radiales de Madrid*), millionaire concessions (AVE, high speed train) or simply by allowing monopolistic practices (energy or oil companies) or not taxing the disproportionate increase in profits of multinationals when they were laying off or cutting working conditions to its employees. In addition, inequality in our country has steadily increased: the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer.

We must reverse this situation. We are in a market economy and businesses and people operate freely. But it is time for those who have more to make an additional effort to reverse the effects of this endless crisis with tax increases to higher incomes, especially capital incomes, reduce tax benefits, ending the SICAB, pursue fraud tax and institutionalized corruption ...

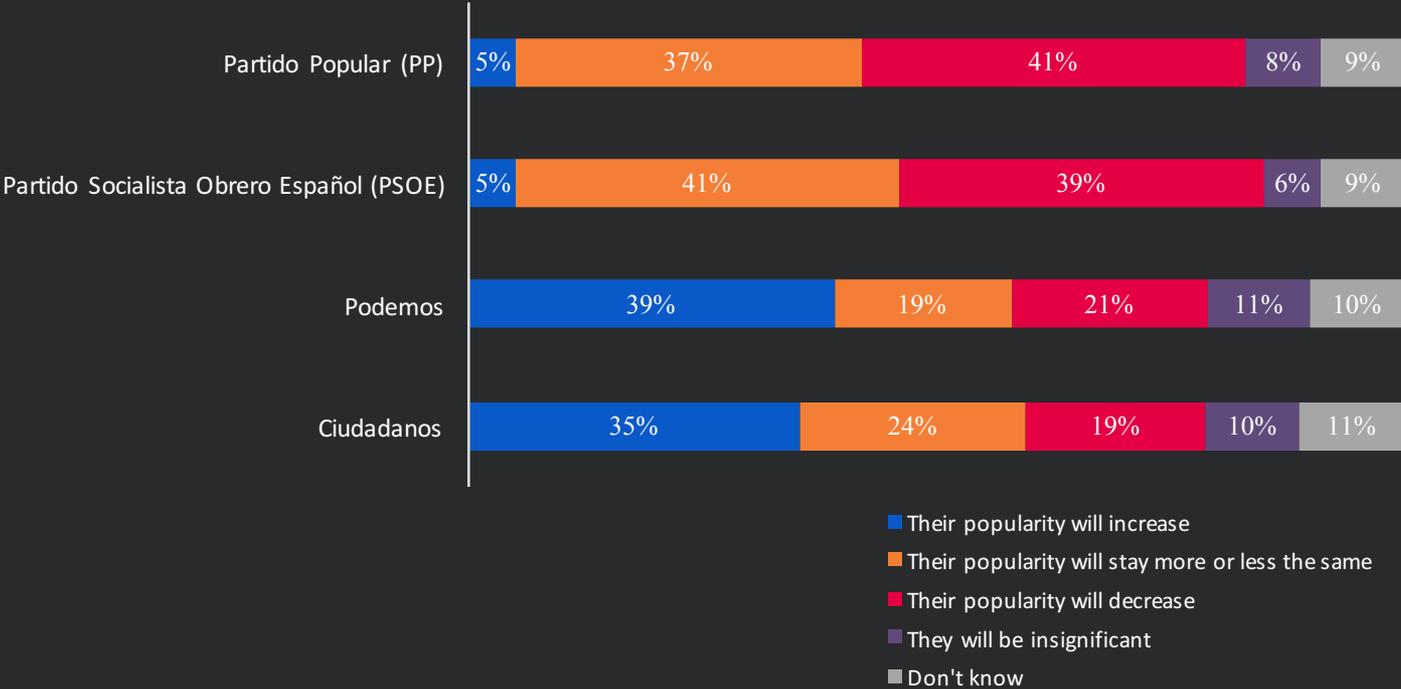
Our country should be a pioneer in this field, similar to the exemplary European Nordic countries. I hope the day comes when inequality is reduced and not necessarily at the expense of the rich (which could further increase his fortune), but because those who have less can afford to have more than the previous year. And this can be achieved by implementing courageous, progressive and socially fair policies.

A citizen

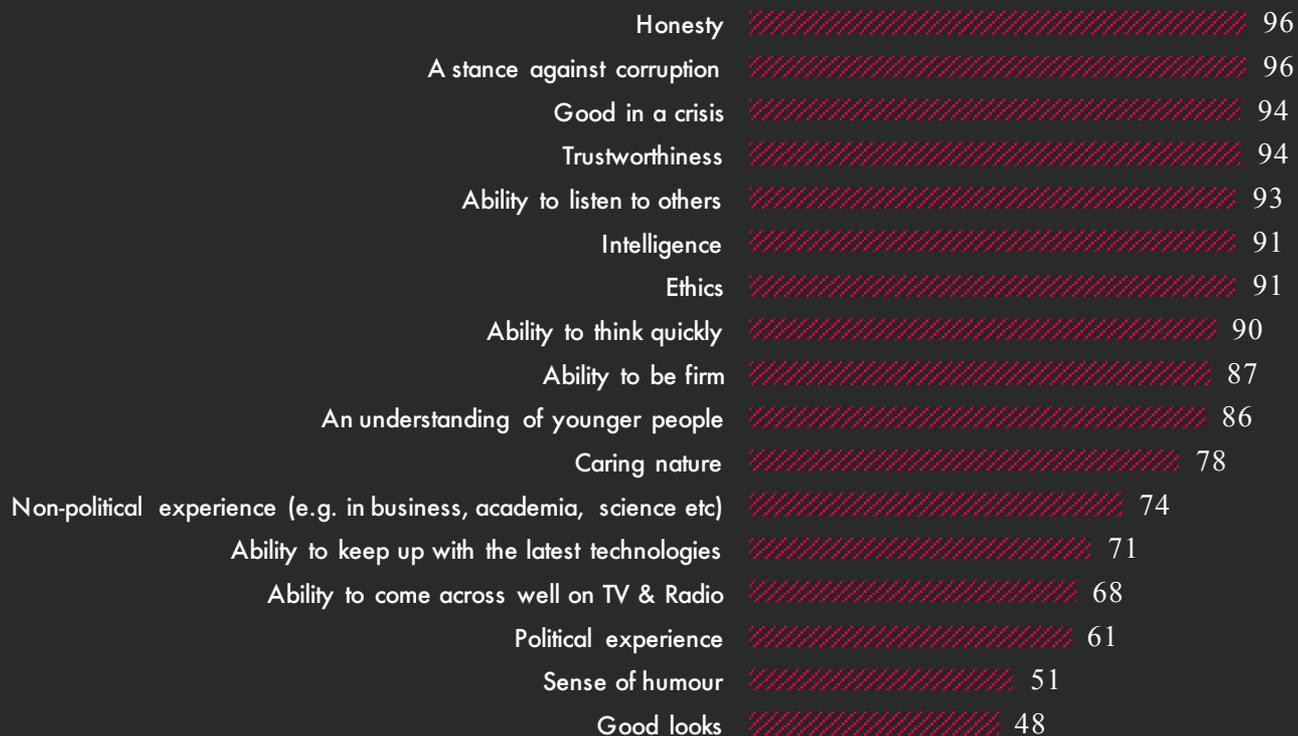
Which party ranks the highest for...



Over the next 15-20 years, what do you think will happen to the following parties?



Important qualities for an elected politician (%)



Electoral reform

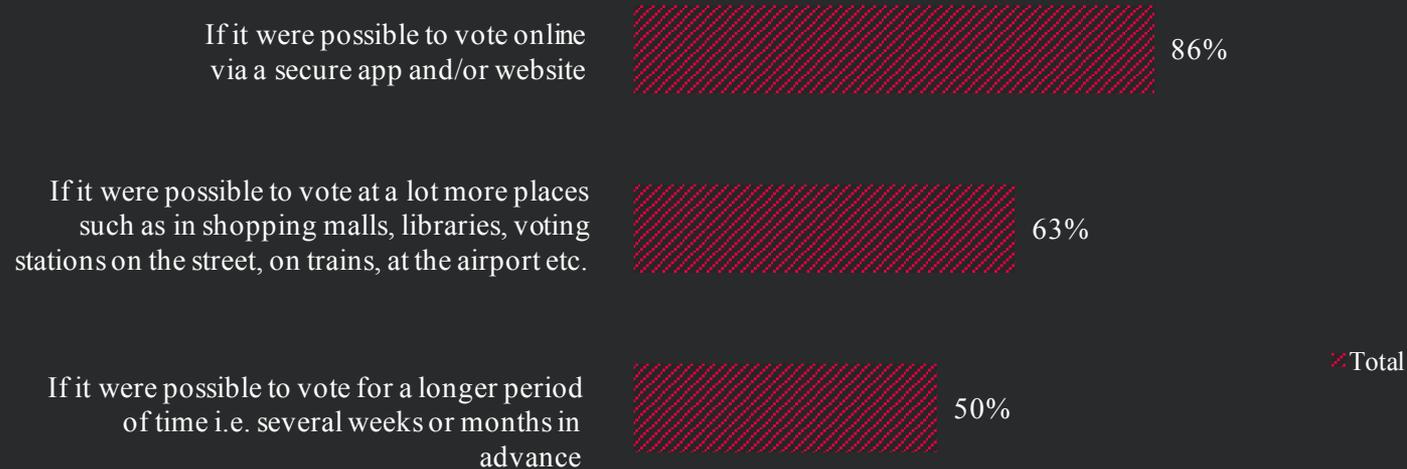


What would encourage more people to vote?

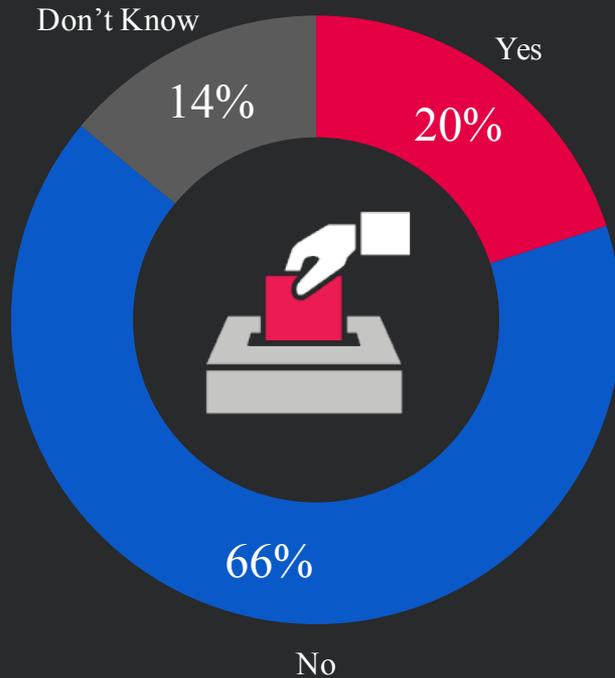
(% 'Very significantly encourage...' or 'Would go some way to encouraging...')

Young Spanish people show great confidence in the power of connected technology and online voting to increase participation.

There is also substantial support for extending the locations where one can vote and some minor support for prolonging elections.



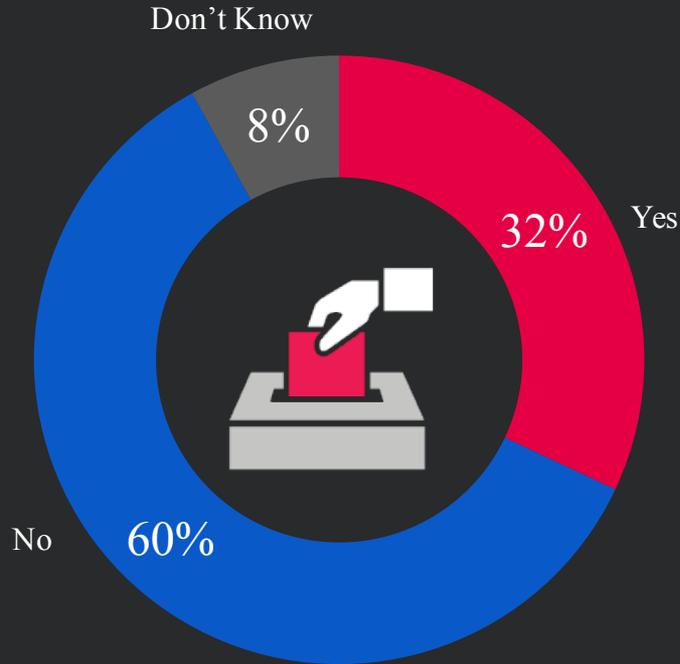
Should 16 and 17 year olds be given the opportunity to vote?



25%

Of those aged 16-18 said “yes” – 16 and 17 year olds should be given the opportunity to vote

Should it be made compulsory to vote?



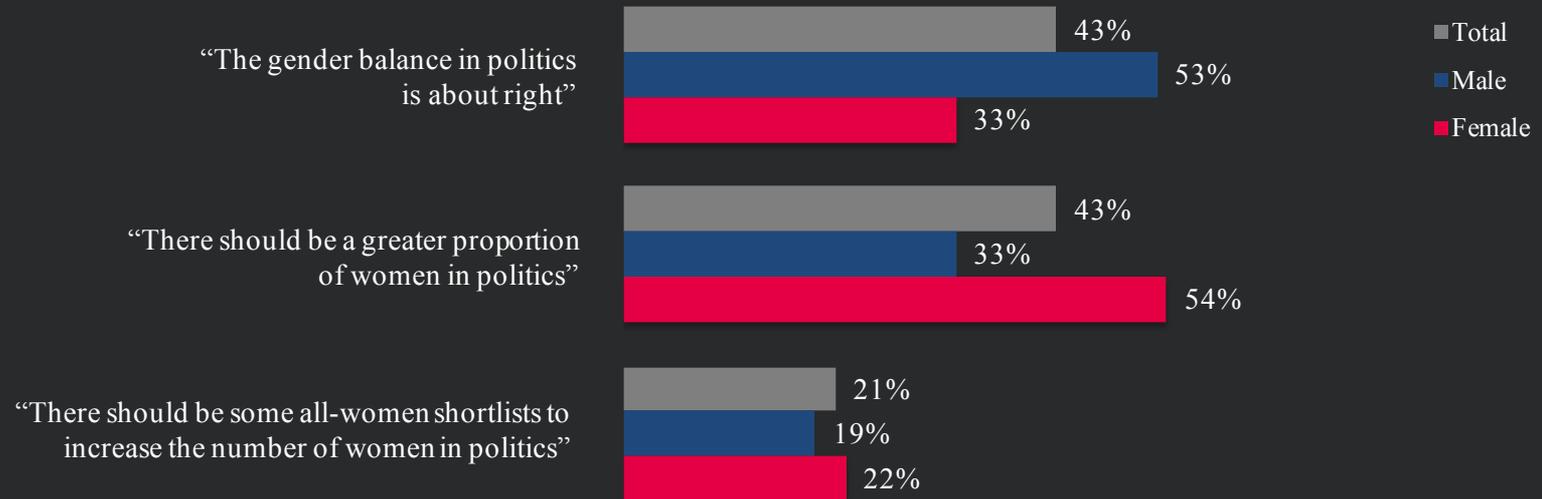
34%

Of those aged 26-35
said “yes” - voting
should be made
compulsory

Women in politics

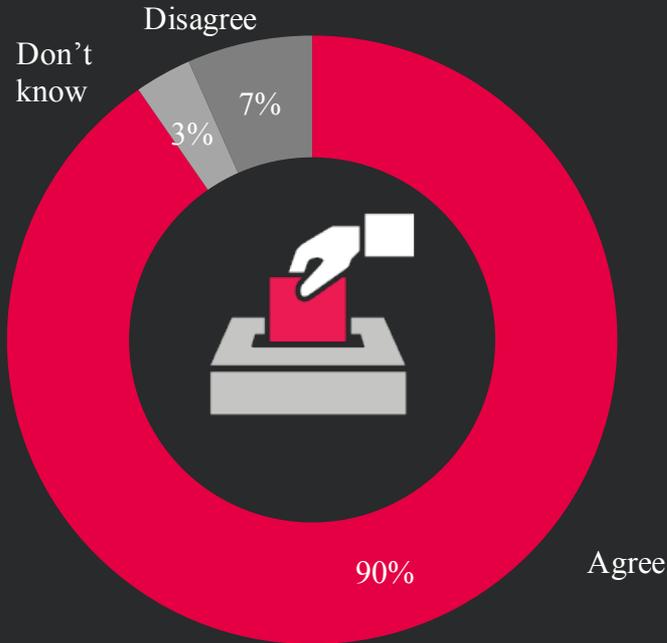
(% who agree with each statement)

More than half of female Spanish millennials felt there should be greater representation. About a fifth of millennials think there should be some all-women shortlists. Over half of males feel the gender balance in politics is about right.



Corruption in Spain

“Compared to other European countries, Spain experiences more corruption amongst authorities” (Net figures)

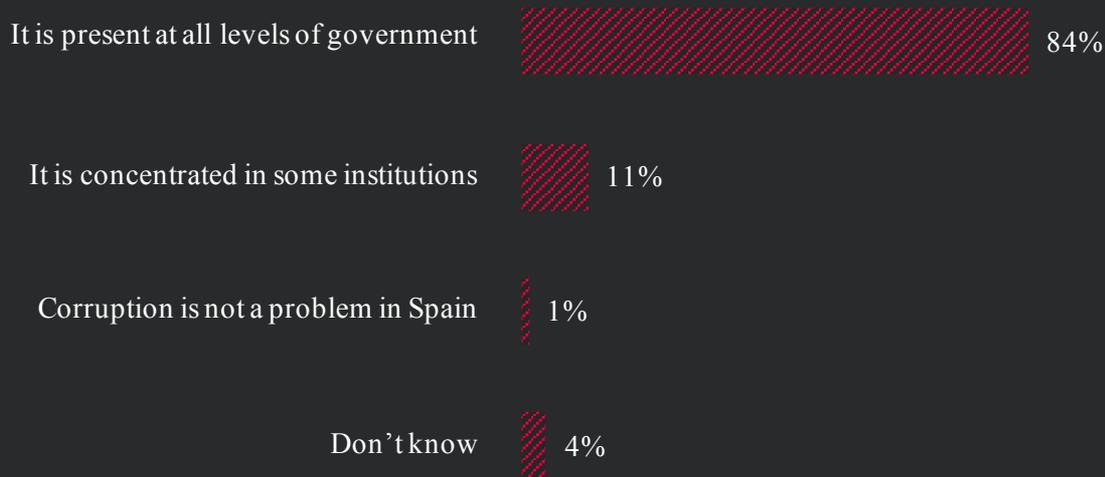


60%

Of those surveyed
strongly agreed with
this statement

Is corruption present at all levels of government or is it concentrated in some institutions?

The majority of Millennials thought there was corruption at all levels of government.



Which institutions have the highest concentration of corruption?

All saying corruption is concentrated in some institutions (Base 115 respondents)

