

## European reactions to the migrant crisis

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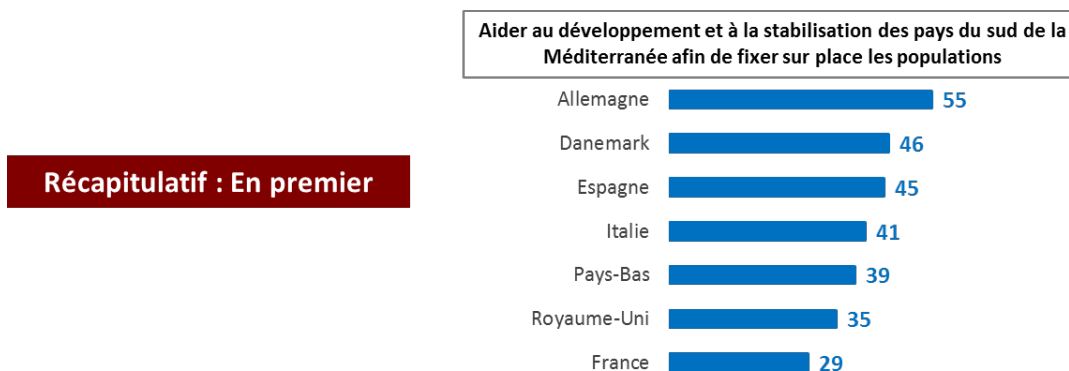
How is European public opinion reacting to the arrival of migrants on the shores of Italy and Greece? What are their perceptions of the profile and number of migrants? How do the citizens of the different European Union (EU) countries regard the solutions put in place by their government? To answer these questions, the Jean-Jaurès Foundation and the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) appointed Ifop to carry out a major opinion poll in seven European countries – France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Denmark, and the UK, based on a sample of 1000 to 1100 people in each country.

### A. Responding to the crisis by assisting with the development of the countries of departure

In view of the magnitude of the migration crisis, European public opinion is united in favour of assisting with the development and stabilisation of southern Mediterranean countries to keep people where they are. This option comes well ahead of developing aid and welcome programmes for immigrants to European countries, tightening border controls or military intervention in Syria. As can be seen in the following chart, the level of public support for assisting with development varies from country to country, but it came out on top everywhere, except in France, where the option “strengthening border controls and combatting illegal immigration” came nominally first, with 30% of votes (by far the highest score noted in the seven countries covered by the survey) compared to 29% for assisting with development.

#### The most effective action for EU countries to resolve the refugee crisis

*Question: For months, migrants have been crossing the Mediterranean by boat and arriving in their tens of thousands on the shores of Italy and Greece. In your opinion, European Union countries should first...? As a first step? And after that?*



In light of these figures, two observations can be made. Firstly, although the migrant crisis and its media coverage have essentially been signalled as urgent, a relative majority of Europeans regard a long-term solution (assisting with development to keep people in place) as being the most effective. This reflects a certain degree of maturity, but also the fact that a large proportion of the European people anticipate that such migration flows are not temporary occurrences and will continue for several years, which is why a long-term response is needed. The second observation concerns France, which seems to be very “closed” on this issue, as is the case for the rest of the survey, even though the arrival of waves of migrants is not a prime concern for France.

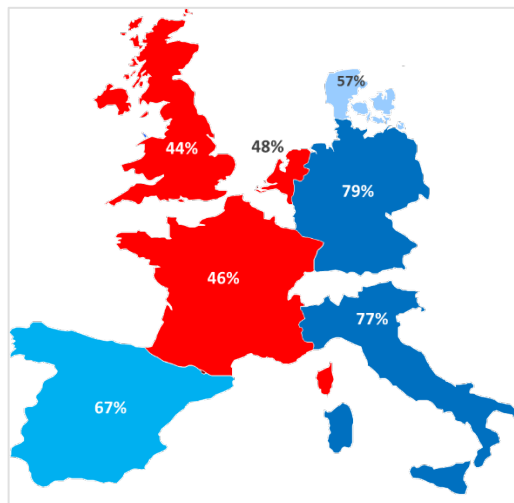
## B. Support for accepting migrants: a divided Europe

Though European public opinion appears to be relatively unanimous regarding the most effective solutions for limiting immigration flows, there are significant differences of opinion on the principle of distributing the migrants among the EU countries and consequently accepting a proportion of them into one's own country. The division has nothing to do with a country's wealth or the geographic proximity between the groups of countries. A different logic applies, as the following map shows: Germany – the primary destination for migrants, on the one hand, and Italy – the main gateway into Europe together with Greece, on the other, stand out as having an extremely high level of support for accepting migrants into their territory and distributing them among other countries, with 79% “favourable” in Germany and 77% in Italy.

### Support for accepting migrants in the different European countries

*Question: Are you in favour of or opposed to the idea that the tens of thousands of migrants arriving on the Italian and Greek shores should be distributed among the different countries of Europe and that [France, Germany, the UK, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Denmark] should welcome a proportion of them?*

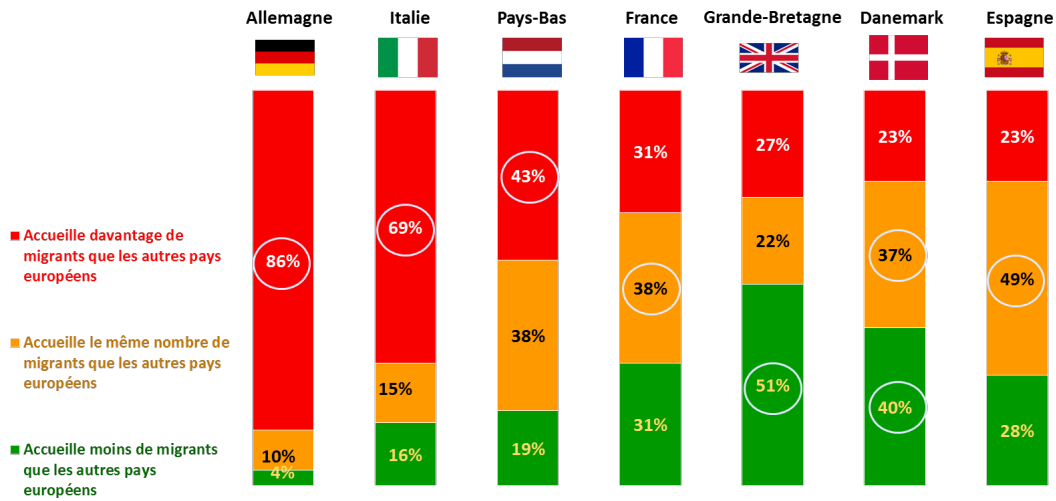
**% of “Favourable” responses**



Obviously, these figures indicate a very significant degree of openness on this subject on the part of these two societies, but the respondents might also have chosen this option because it includes the principle of redistribution of the burden, which rests first and foremost on their two countries: 86% of Germans and 69% of Italians, by far the highest response totals to this question, think that their country accepts more migrants than the other member countries.

## Opinion on the effort made by one's own country to accept migrants compared to other European countries

Question: Do you think our country accepts fewer than or the same number of migrants as other European countries?

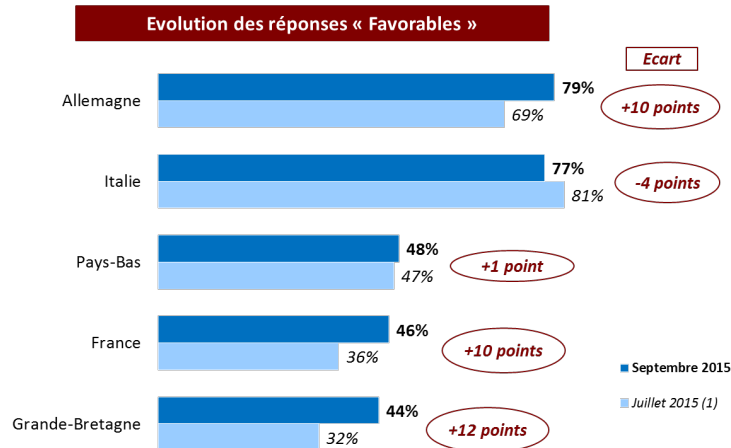


In contrast with these two states that are very much at the forefront when it comes to accepting migrants, the UK with only 44% people in favour, France (46%) and the Netherlands (48%), nations that are very different from each other, make up the block that are opposed to accepting migrants. Denmark (57%) and Spain (67%) are broadly situated in the pro-acceptance camp. These very marked differences in attitude between European countries can in part be explained by the positions taken by the national political leaders, but they also explain them. If a European agreement on sharing has been so hard to come by, it is because a number of national leaders have stuck doggedly to very hard positions, knowing that they would have the support of public opinion in their country.

Though there is significant disparity between countries concerning the willingness to accept a proportion of the migrants into their territory, various countries have experienced an “Aylan effect” (named after the little Syrian boy, whose lifeless body was seen in photos around the world at the beginning of September). Between July (during which the Ifop had conducted a different survey on the subject) and the end of September (the date of this poll), support for accepting migrants, already very high in Germany, increased by 10 points. But there was a similar increase in France and the UK, where public opinion had initially been much less well disposed.

### An “Aylan effect” more marked in some countries than others

Question: Are you in favour of or opposed to the idea that the tens of thousands of migrants arriving on the Italian and Greek shores should be distributed among the different countries of Europe and that [France, Germany, the UK, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Denmark] should welcome a proportion of them?



(1) Etude Ifop pour Le Figaro réalisée du 28 juin au 2 juillet 2015 par questionnaire auto-administré en ligne auprès d'un échantillon de 5996 personnes dans les pays suivants : France : 1002 personnes ; Allemagne : 997 personnes ; Pays-Bas : 995 personnes ; Grande-Bretagne : 1002 personnes et Italie : 1000 personnes, représentatif de la population des différents pays âgée de 18 ans et plus.

The publication of those photos undoubtedly played a part in the change of opinion, but reports and despatches on the number of victims (whether in Mediterranean shipwrecks or the death of 70 migrants in a refrigerated lorry in Austria), which punctuated the news throughout the summer of 2015, no doubt also had an impact.

Contrary to what might have been expected, support for accepting migrants is not weaker in the most directly exposed areas. For example, 74% of Bavarians state that they are in favour of accepting migrants (and, it should be remembered, sharing them among the different member states), which is close to the German average score of 79%. The same situation occurs in Italy with support as high as 78% in the south and the islands, compared to the average of 77%, and even in Spain – 67% of the whole country compared to 65% in the southern regions.

These very slight regional variations reflect the fact that the migrant issue is largely addressed on a national basis, as a problem affecting the whole country, and not as a local issue. In this context, the question takes on an eminently political dimension and creates a left-right split throughout Europe. As the following table shows, there is a difference of 30 to 40 points on average between the responses of sympathisers on the left and right on supporting the acceptance of migrants, except in Germany, which is run by a coalition government, where the difference is “only” 18 points.

**Accepting migrants: an indicator of the left/right divide throughout Europe**  
**% of “Favourable” responses**

	Sympathisants de gauche	Sympathisants de droite	Ecart
• Italie	92%	61%	<b>+31 points</b>
• Allemagne	90%	72%	<b>+18 points</b>
• Espagne	81%	51%	<b>+30 points</b>
• Danemark	81%	37%	<b>+44 points</b>
• France	70%	29%	<b>+41 points</b>
• Pays-Bas	68%	35%	<b>+33 points</b>
• Grande-Bretagne	66%	27%	<b>+ 39 points</b>

Angela Merkel’s very strong commitment to welcoming migrants has also unquestionably had an impact on the opinion of CDU/CSU voters, who show the highest level of support for accepting migrants of all right-wing voters in Europe, with 72% in favour, 43 points more than witnessed in French Republicans, for example. This extremely open attitude on the part of the German Christian-Democratic voters also helps to explain the relative slightness of the left/right split on the issue in that country.

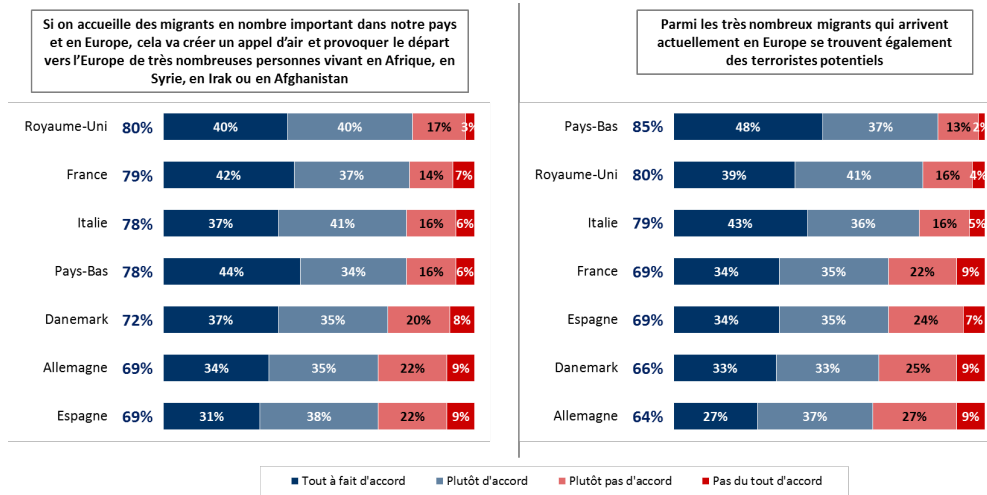
**C. Consensus on the pull factor risk, a widespread concern about the potential terrorist threat...**

Although, as we have seen, European opinions vary greatly on the issue of accepting migrants, there is a growing consensus on certain ideas or predictions relating to the crisis. This applies to the pull factor risk, for example. Between 70% and 80% of respondents in different countries agree that “if we accept large numbers of migrants into our country and into Europe, it will create a pull factor and cause many people living in Africa, Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan to move to Europe.” This concern is of course most acute in the countries that are most resistant to welcoming migrants (80% in the UK and 79% in France), but it also reaches a high level in the countries that are most in favour of accepting migrants: 78% in Italy and 69% in Germany and in Spain.

Another anxiety widely shared right across the continent, between 64% (in Germany) and 85% (in the Netherlands) of Europeans think that “the large numbers of migrants currently arriving in Europe include potential terrorists”. This threat has notably been made by the Islamic State, which announced that it had smuggled fighters into the flow of migrants arriving on our shores. The fact that Syria has become one of the main departure points has also strengthened this anxiety, to the extent that this possibility even seems to be seen as a certainty by a high proportion of the population. 39% of Britons, 43% of Italians and as many as 48% of the Dutch say that they strongly agree with this opinion, even though since the beginning of this crisis, no attacks have been made in Europe by people arriving among the flow of migrants and no network or cell made up of migrants has officially been dismantled by the security services. In the same vein, it should be noted that the fear of terrorist infiltration is not limited to countries that have recently been hit by jihadist attacks (66% in Denmark and 69% in France) but also affects countries that have been spared (85% in the Netherlands).

### A consensus on the pull factor risk and widespread anxiety about the terrorist threat

Question: Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following opinions?



On the basis of these figures, we can measure the extent of these anxiety-inducing perceptions that the migrant crisis has stirred up so powerfully. These images and concepts have long been used by the extreme right and part of the right, and now been taken up in a more or less weakened form by a large majority of the European peoples.

Behind the concept of the pull factor lies the whole theme of the uncontrollable migratory wave that is going to engulf everything. This kind of imagery can be noted in the remarks made by Marine Le Pen who, during a meeting in Essonne on 13 September 2015, referred, for example, to “a tidal wave of which only the first ripples have touched us”, but also in those made by leaders of the right. Interviewed on 14 September by the internet site *L'Opinion*, the Republican deputy of Haute-Savoie, Bernard Accoyer, stated: “France should re-establish control of borders, particularly those with Italy, because the wave of migrants that has arrived in Germany is obviously going to come to us”. Nicolas Sarkozy used the same water-related metaphor to refer to this crisis when he stated in a meeting: “A main pipe explodes in a house, and water pours out into the kitchen. The repairman arrives and says I have a solution: we’ll keep half in the kitchen, put a quarter in the living room, the other quarter in the parents’ bedroom and, if that’s not sufficient, there is always the children’s room”<sup>1</sup>. However, this type of image and portrayal has widely crossed the boundaries of the right and, as the poll results show, has become a framework for interpreting and understanding this migratory crisis that is shared by the masses. It has become part of common language. As an example, there was an article in *Le Parisien*, the general public’s newspaper of choice, entitled “The floodgates have opened! Another wave of migrants has its eye on Europe”<sup>2</sup>. In this article, they quoted Mirwais, a candidate for exile queuing at the Kabul passport office, who said he had seen images on the television of tens of Germans holding placards with “Refugees welcome” written on them, and had said to himself: “The floodgates are open, this is our best chance of getting to Europe”.

And so we go from the migratory flow to the migratory wave, and then to the human tide. This key idea of a human tide was notably coined in the famous book by Jean Raspail *Le camp des Saints* (*The Camp of the Saints*) which tells of the arrival on the Côte d’Azur of a mass of migrants from the Indian subcontinent piled onto makeshift boats, and the French state’s inability to oppose this peaceful invasion. It is perhaps

<sup>1</sup> Meeting on 18 June 2015 at l’Isle-Adam in Val-d’Oise.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Parisien*, 9 September 2015.

no coincidence that this book, published in 1973, has just been reissued in Germany, just as this country is faced with the arrival on its territory of several hundred thousand migrants. Neither is it a coincidence that the right-wing magazine *Valeurs Actuelles* recently had as a front page headline: “Raspail: the prophet”<sup>3</sup>. Another related term of reference that is also used and which carries similar connotations: the major Barbarian invasions. During the meeting already mentioned, Marine Le Pen said “Unless the French people take action, the invasion of migrants we are enduring will be every bit as bad as that of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and may have the same consequences.” By taking this period with all its negative connotations as a reference, Marine Le Pen is referring to the *Camp des Saints* matrix to convey what is happening: a flood caused by the inability of public authorities and citizens to react when faced with a migratory wave, which is admittedly peaceful but has serious consequences for a vulnerable welcoming civilisation.

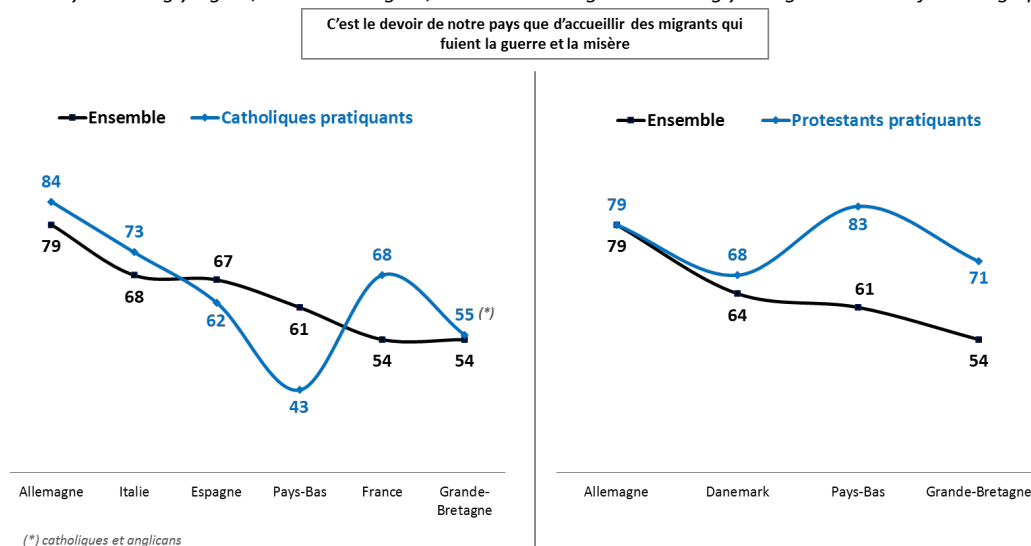
#### D. ... for all that, a large majority of Europeans consider it to be our duty to welcome refugees

Although these anxiety-inducing perceptions are powerful, entrenched and widespread, whether they involve demographic submersion or terrorist infiltration, nevertheless a large majority of Europeans consider that even if these risks exist, morality dictates that faced with this humanitarian tragedy, we must open our doors. This moral imperative is referred to more often in countries most in favour of accepting migrants. 79% of Germans share this opinion (with 42% “strongly agreeing”), along with 68% of Italians, 67% of Spanish, but “only” 54% of the French and British, populations less favourable to accepting migrants, as has been seen. So there is a strong correlation between the responses to these two questions, and moral duty seems to be a strong motivation for accepting migrants.

This duty of charity and solidarity with regard to these people fleeing war and poverty concerns all categories of the population, but as might logically be expected, it can be seen to resonate even more sharply among practising Christians, whether they be Catholic, Anglicans or Protestants, as the following chart shows.

#### The duty to welcome migrants: a notion generally more widespread among practising Catholics and Protestants

Question: Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following opinions?

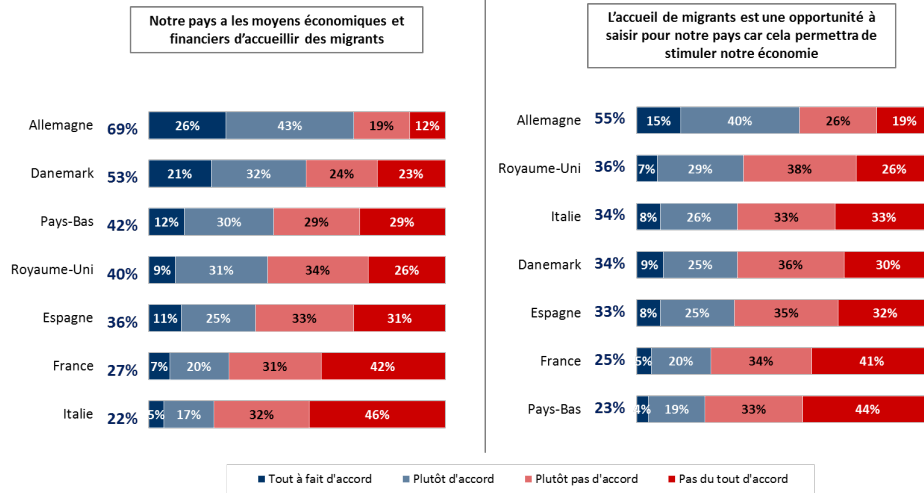


<sup>3</sup> *Valeurs Actuelles*, 8 April 2015.

## E. Apart from in Germany: strong doubts about countries' financial capacity to welcome migrants and about the economic benefits

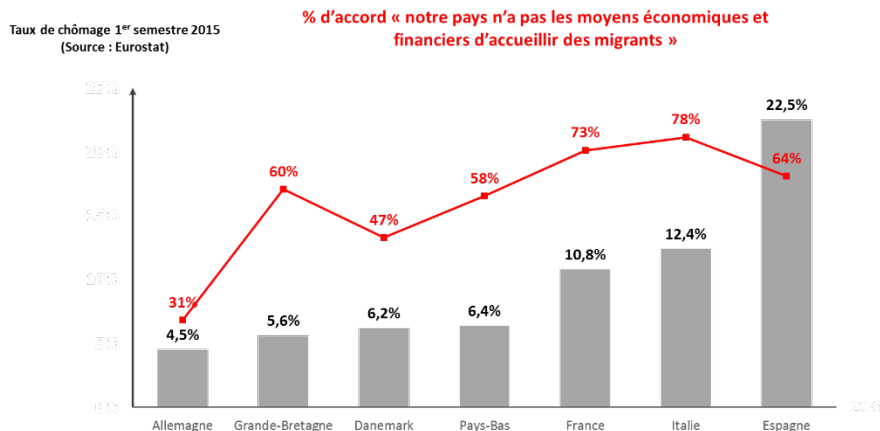
While respect for moral values acts as a shared lever for accepting migrants, at the same time, the economic dimension of the issue advocates against acceptance, except in Germany.

Question: Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following opinions?



As the charts above show, whether it is to do with forecasting the economic and financial capacities of the country to accept migrants, or the opportunity for economic growth that accepting them would offer, the responses in almost all countries are mainly negative. In both cases, the Germans stand out clearly as showing strong optimism, while the Latin nations clearly consider that they do not have the financial resources: 78% of Italians, 73% of the French and 64% of the Spanish. In both cases, the state of the economy (and in Germany's case the need for a young workforce to keep the export machinery running smoothly) has had an impact on the responses. Thus, when these responses are viewed in the light of an indicator such as the unemployment rate, which gives an overall picture of the state of the national economy, opinions are seen to be strongly indexed to objective reality.

### Perceived economic capacity for accepting migrants and unemployment rate per country





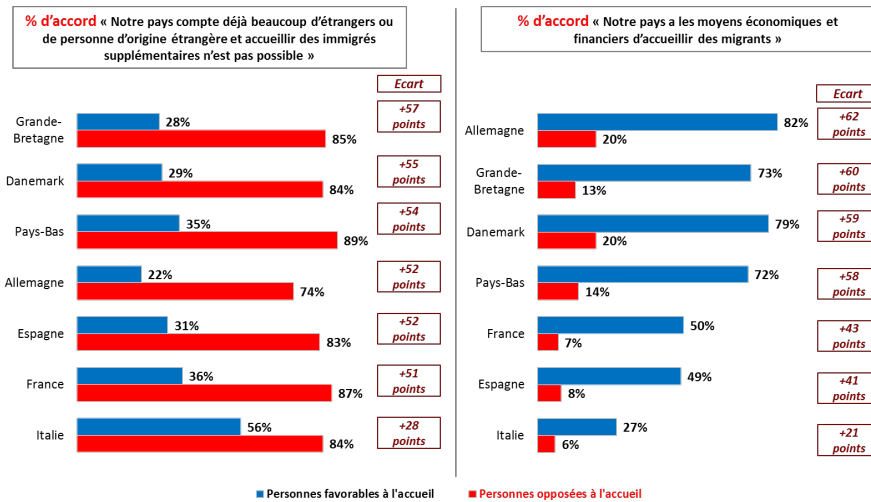
The states of southern Europe, which suffer from the highest unemployment rates, are where the doubts about the country's economic and financial capacities to accept migrants are the most widespread. Conversely, in Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark, the level of confidence is clearly higher. The UK stands out as having a much more negative or "closed" perception of its capacity to accept immigrants in relation to what its economy would seem to allow based on its unemployment rate.

## **F. A vast majority consider that the integration capacity for the migrant population has already been reached**

The economic and social cost is not the only barrier to welcoming migrants. In France, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK, 6 out of 10 people interviewed agree (and around 30% strongly agree) with the idea that "our country already has a lot of foreigners or people of foreign origin and it is not possible to accept any more immigrants". In the Netherlands, the idea that the country had already reached absorption capacity was defended at the beginning of the 2000s by the populist leader Pim Fortuyn, who stated on a regular basis: "No more Muslims should get in here. I think 16 million Dutch people are enough. The country is full". It can be seen that now, at the time of the migrant crisis, 63% of Dutch people share that view. The score is lower, although still a majority in Denmark (53%) and it is only in Spain (48%) and above all in Germany (33%) that this is a minority opinion.

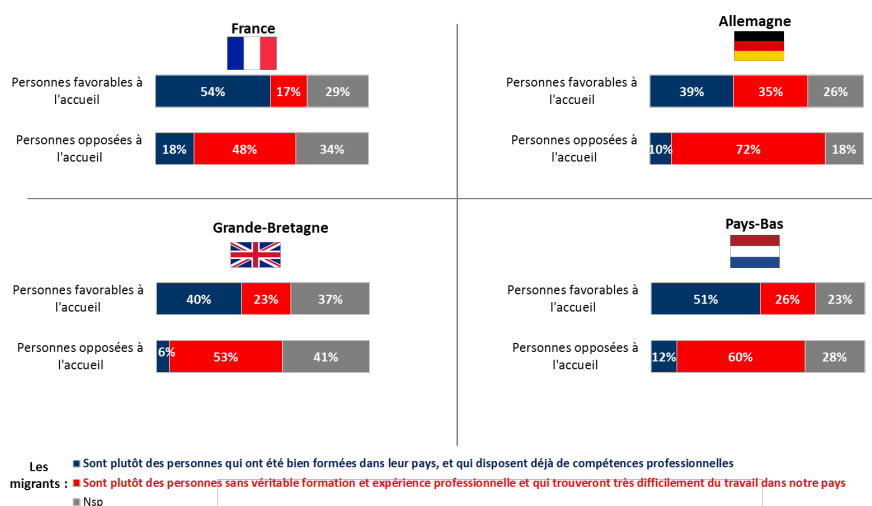
It has been seen that on some of the ideas tested, there was a consensus between the different public opinion groups (positively – "it is our duty to welcome migrants"; and negatively – "welcoming huge numbers will cause a pull factor"), while variations between countries emerged, for example, with regard to knowing if the integration capacity had been reached. In the second phase, we had to try and determine which among the items tested contribute the most to shaping people's position (for/against) with regard to accepting migrants. To do this, we compared the differences in responses to these various items between those favourable and those opposed to accepting migrants, on a country by country basis. The bigger the differences in response to an item, the more this opinion tested would be divided on the issue of accepting. After analysing all the results, it turns out that in virtually all countries, it is the economic capacity to cope with accepting migrants and society's capacity to integrate new foreigners that are the main factors in shaping opinions on willingness to accept migrants – and not the terrorist threat or the duty of solidarity. As the following charts show, there are often differences of 50 to 60 points on these two items between people favourable to accepting migrants and those who are opposed to it.

**In nearly all countries, it is the economic capacity to cope with accepting migrants and society's capacity to integrate new foreigners that are the main factors in shaping opinions on willingness to accept migrants**



Similarly, the perception of the qualification level of migrants differs greatly between people favourable to accepting migrants and those opposed. In France, for example, 54% of those on the side of “pro-acceptance” consider that migrants tend to be people who have been well trained in their country and already have professional skills, while a relative majority (48%) of those opposed to acceptance consider that migrants tend to lack any real training or professional experience and that they will have great difficulty finding work in our country. As can be seen in the following chart, the same dichotomy can be seen in other European countries.

**In almost all countries, the perceived qualification level of migrants correlates closely with the willingness to accept them**



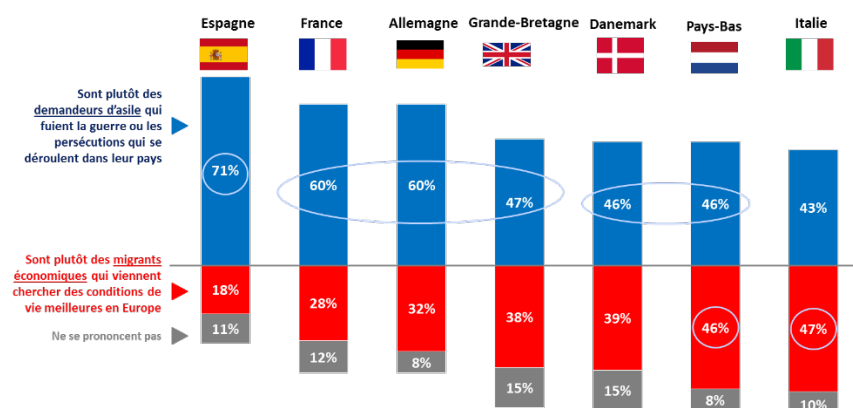
Perceiving migrants as difficult to integrate in the labour market reinforces scepticism about the economic opportunity to be gained by accepting them and sustains the idea that the national economy will not be able to afford to accept them, an argument that has been seen to be a strong contributory factor in creating an opposition to acceptance.

## G. In five countries out of seven, a clear majority think that migrants are primarily asylum seekers

Whereas assessment of the qualification level of migrants fluctuated greatly among countries and there was no consensus on the subject, it appears that opinions coincide on their status. A large or even very large majority of Europeans regard migrants mainly as asylum seekers fleeing war or persecution in their own countries rather than economic migrants who are coming in search of better living conditions in Europe.

### The perceived status of migrants

Question: To the best of your knowledge, the migrants who are currently arriving in Europe in their tens of thousands...?



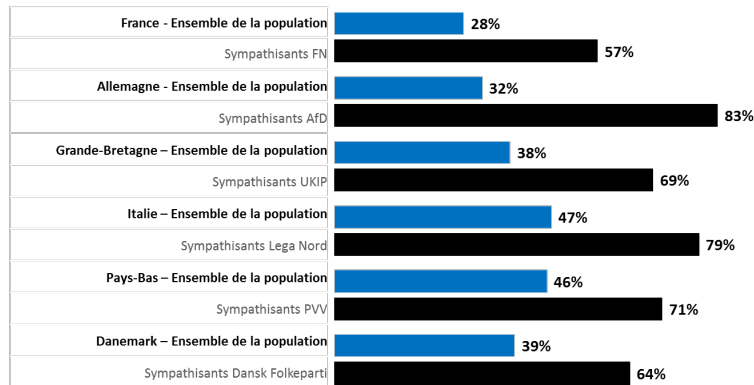
The perceived status of migrants is an important issue, because it will determine whether the right of asylum is to be granted, and one might assume that support or opposition for acceptance would therefore depend on it to a large extent. The legitimacy and moral obligation of accepting refugees fleeing war ly seem more obvious than those of granting economic migrants access to one's country. Yet, contrary to what might be expected, it seems that in the end this variable plays a less important part, insofar as there is no correlation at the country level between the perception of migrants' status and the position regarding their acceptance. So, German and Spanish public opinion, which as we have seen is overwhelmingly in favour of accepting migrants, is also strongly convinced that we are dealing with asylum seekers. However, this assessment of migrants' status is also made by roughly the same proportion of French people, who are among the most closed to acceptance, even though they predominantly perceive migrants as asylum seekers. Similarly, and to show that there is no link between the two subjects, a relative majority of Italians (47% against 43%) think it is primarily a matter of economic migrants and yet Italy has shown the second highest rate of support for acceptance of migrants after Germany.

It might also be noted that the fact that Italy stands out as having the highest response rate on associating migrants with economic immigrants can perhaps be partly explained by the country's geographical position. The massive influxes accepted by Italy are predominantly from Sub-Saharan Africa via Libya and effectively consist primarily of economic migrants, while Syrian refugees predominantly use the routes that provide access to the heart of Europe passing through Turkey and the Greek islands.

Still on the subject of the perceived status of migrants, it should also be noted that in all countries, the idea that it is a matter of economic migrants and not asylum seekers is consistently more common among supporters of national populist groups. As can be seen on the following chart, the deviation from the national average is 25 or 30 points except in Germany, where it reaches 51 points, with supporters of the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD, Alternative for Germany) appearing to be completely out of step with the rest of Germany on this subject.

**The idea that migrants are economic migrants and not asylum seekers is consistently more common among supporters of national populist groups.**

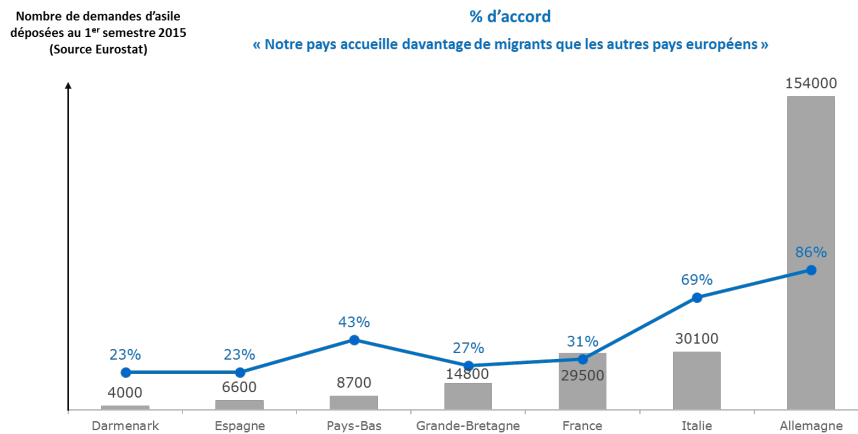
**% de réponses « Sont plutôt des migrants économiques qui viennent chercher des conditions de vie meilleures en Europe »**



It can also logically be assumed that these same supporters of national populist groups are more likely than average (with variance of 10 to 15 points according to country) to think that their country is accepting more migrants than the other European nations. If one compares country by country the responses to this question on the efforts being made in comparison with other states and the number of asylum applications registered in the first half of 2015, (more comprehensive statistics on the total arrivals of migrants are not available), there is quite a high correlation between the reality of the flows and the perception the respondents have of them.

In Denmark and in Spain, where the number of asylum applications is objectively lowest, the smallest proportion of “Our country accepts more migrants than other European countries” responses is recorded. Conversely, these response figures are highest in Germany and Italy, which are currently the countries that are accepting the most migrants. However, the following chart indicates what appears to be an anomaly. In fact, while the number of asylum applications registered is nearly identical in France and Italy (around 30,000 over the first half of the year) and these two countries have a comparable population size, 69% of Italians consider that their country accepts more migrants, as compared to only 31% of French people. This variance can presumably be explained by the fact that the mass arrivals of migrants that Italy has to deal with do not by any means all lead to asylum applications, many of the migrants being economic migrants. The reality and the images of these overcrowded boats arriving daily on the Italian shores make a profound impression on people’s minds, but are not necessarily reflected in the official statistics of asylum applications.

## The perception of flows of asylum seekers is fairly compatible with the volumes objectively recorded in each country

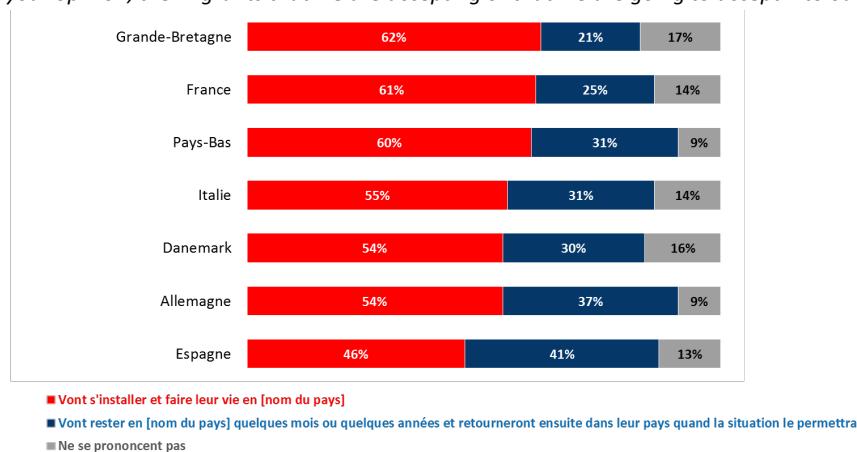


### H. What are the more long-term prospects?

In all the European countries, a large majority thinks that migrants are going to make a life for themselves in Europe and settle long term in the host country. Only a few respondents in each country are convinced by the idea that migrants might just be passing through and that they intend returning to their country at a later stage, when the situation allows it. The prevalent picture in people's minds is therefore definitely not that of temporary exile. It can also be seen that there is no correlation on a country by country basis between the perception of migrants being asylum seekers fleeing war (and therefore more likely to be inclined to return to their own country at a later stage) and the forecast of the length of their stay in Europe. The two opinions are independent, and a majority of Europeans think that it is a matter of permanent immigration or settlement, regardless of the motives for leaving the country of origin. Consequently, this forecast has a significant impact on the attitude to acceptance. The countries whose populations most anticipate permanent immigration (France, the UK and the Netherlands) are also the most resistant to acceptance. And conversely, it is in the most "open" countries that the idea that migrants will only stay for a few months or years is most widespread.

### Forecast of the length of stay of migrants

Question: In your opinion, the migrants that we are accepting or that we are going to accept into our country ...?

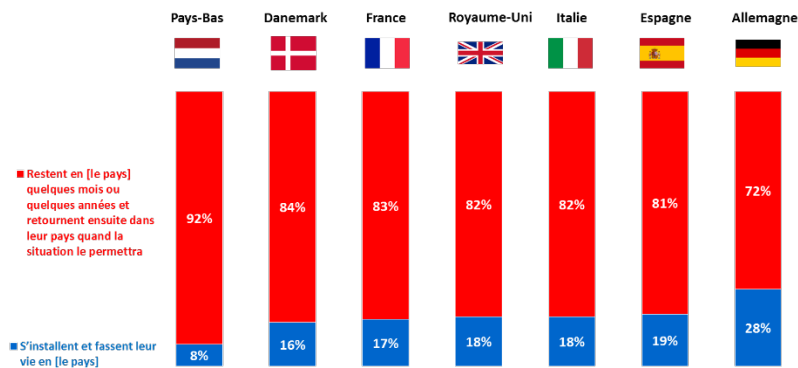


In Spain, this opinion is no doubt based on a recent precedent: the rapid departure after the beginning of the crisis in 2008-2009 of a large proportion of the South American immigrants, who had arrived several years earlier to take advantage of the strong period of growth in Spain

If a broad consensus is emerging in Europe on the forecast of how long migrants will stay, the figures coincide even more and are even higher when it comes to the issue of what the various European people want. However, these wishes clash with the forecast... Effectively, between 72% and 92% of those surveyed do not want migrants to make a life for themselves in Europe. As one might logically expect, it is in the countries most resistant to acceptance (the Netherlands, France, the UK, and Denmark) that they most want the migrants' stay to be just temporary. But even in the three states that are most favourable to acceptance, an overwhelming majority (82% in Italy, 81% in Spain and 72% in Germany) of participants hope the migrants will only stay in the country for a few months or years.

### An overwhelming majority of Europeans want the migrants to return to their countries after a few months or years

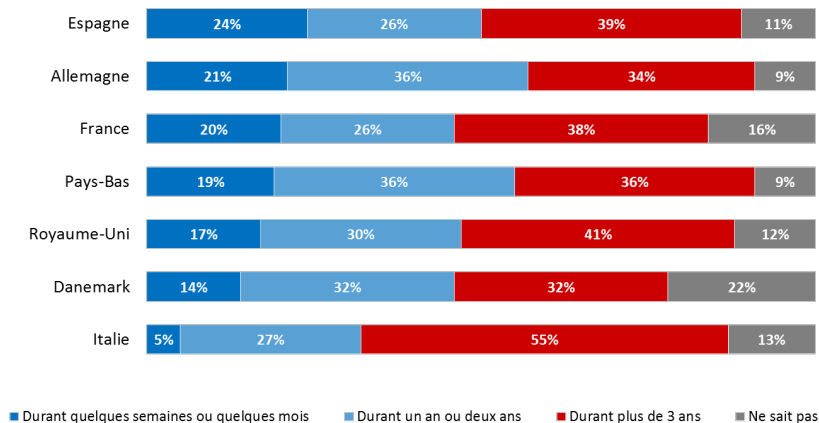
Question: *And do you want the migrants that we are accepting or are going to accept into our country ...?*



The scale of these figures and the dramatic discrepancy between the wishes and the forecast throw a different light on the outpourings of generosity observed and suggest that serious tensions on the subject can be expected in the future. That is all the more true in a context where European public opinion anticipates long-term continuation of the rate of migrant arrivals. Effectively, only a quarter at most of the population thinks that the flows will dwindle in a few weeks or months. In different countries, between a quarter and a third forecast a continuation of this migratory crisis for one or two years, and an even more significant proportion (between a third and a half of the country's population) foresees three years or more.

## A large majority of Europeans think migrants will continue to arrive at this rate for one or two years, or even more

Question: In your opinion, the arrivals in Europe that we are currently seeing of tens of thousands of migrants will continue at the same rate...?



It is in Italy, a country which has for several years been faced with the uncontrolled influx of tens of thousands of migrants on its shores, that the forecast is the most pessimistic, as if this experience had created a deep-rooted belief that this phenomenon is uncontrollable and of an unprecedented scale. Only 5% of Italians consider it to be a temporary phenomenon that will come to an end within a few months, as opposed to 55% who think the crisis will last three years or more.

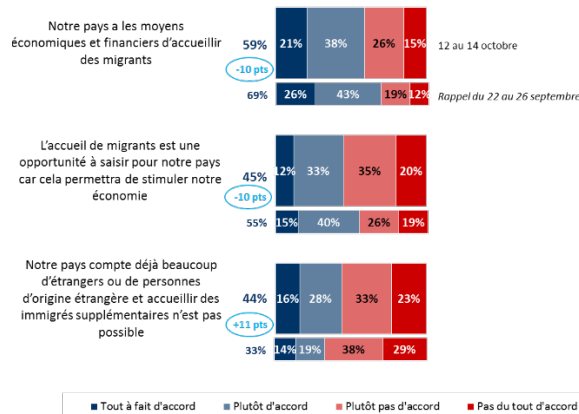
The expectation of a continuation of this rate of arrival of very large populations – populations that are also thought will settle permanently in European countries, a scenario that, as we have seen, is overwhelmingly rejected throughout the whole of Europe – could cause growing tension on this issue.

### I. German opinion remains predominantly favourable to accepting migrants but has significantly hardened in the space of a few weeks

The trends in opinion we have observed in Germany, currently the most affected country, when carrying out the second wave of the survey only three weeks after the first poll, are moving in this direction to a certain extent. Certainly, support for the acceptance of migrants on German territory (and distribution of the migrants between states) remains very high, with 75% of Germans still in favour, a decrease of only 4 points compared to the previous survey. Nevertheless, behind this apparent stability, several indicators converge in the direction of a hardening of German public opinion on this sensitive issue. Thus, on the items that were previously seen to have a strong influence on shaping attitudes towards acceptance of migrants, the changes that have taken place over a period of only three weeks are striking. Now, 59% of Germans think their country has the economic and financial means to accept migrants, a decrease of 10 points. There is also a decrease of 10 points in support of the idea that accepting migrants is an opportunity to stimulate growth. At the same time, there is an 11 point increase for the item “Our country already has a lot of foreigners or people of foreign origin and it is not possible to accept any more immigrants.”

## A significant decline in the forecast of the possibility of integration and Germany's economic capacity to accept migrants and turn it into an opportunity for growth

Question: Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following opinions?



Of particular note, when analysing the results in detail, it is found that the commitment of Angela Merkel, who recently defended her position when she guested on a big television show, is causing her electoral base to continue to hold on the issue of migrants and therefore to support it. On the other hand, the dropout rate is much more striking among the left-wing electorate. For example, 68% of CDU/CSU supporters adhere to the idea that Germany has the economic and financial resources to accept migrants, a drop of only 3 points compared with the previous poll. There is a drop of 12 points among the leftist electorate (though 75% of them are still in favour). Similarly, support for the idea that Germany already has a large number of foreigners or people of foreign origin is stable among Christian-Democrat voters (35% compared to 36% three weeks ago) whereas it has increased by 14 points on the left, to reach 32%.

Another indicator of a rapid hardening of German opinion is that 80% of people surveyed only wanted migrants to stay a few months or years in Germany, this score being an 8 point increase on the previous poll. In the same spirit, the tightening of border controls and the fight against immigration have gained 7 points and are now in second place on the list of top priority actions and have symbolically overtaken the development in Germany of migrant aid and welcome programmes.