

eupinions slides

13 January 2026

Public Attitudes and Member-State Dynamics in Ukraine's EU Accession Process

eupinions data (March 2022 – September 2025)

in dialogue with

“Charting Ukraine’s EU Path: Engaging with Member States”

(Kosmehl, Schlegel, Stewart, 2026)

Isabell Hoffmann

Public Opinion and Member-State Dynamics in Ukraine's EU Accession

EU accession decisions depend on unanimity → public opinion in member states matters.

eupinions Ukraine trends (n=17k+, all 27 member states) trace the mood shift since 2022.

The workshop paper "[**Charting Ukraine's EU Path: Engaging with Member States**](#)" explains why these shifts matter politically.

Goal: Check the empirical mood trends for links with elite-level propositions from the paper. > Survey Questions

1. Should the EU accept new member states in the coming years?
2. Should the EU accept Ukraine as a member of the EU in the coming years?
3. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "The European Union needs a common defence policy."
4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Russia's attack on Ukraine is an attack on all of Europe."
5. Should the EU support Ukraine by delivering weapons?
6. Should your country accept refugees from Ukraine?
7. Do you think the EU should be more independent in terms of its energy supply even if that means energy prices are rising further?
8. Economic and financial sanctions on Russia are supposed to support Ukraine in its war effort. Do you think these sanctions are ...effective or ineffective?

Data's Cross-cutting interpretation

Public fatigue is evident: enthusiasm for enlargement and solidarity measures has cooled markedly since 2022. **Support is higher in Southern Europe** (Spain, Portugal) and **lower in Western Europe** (France, Belgium, Netherlands). **Italy** does not fit into the southern pattern; **Germany** does not fit into the western pattern. **Eastern Europeans (Poland)** remain among the strongest supporters of defence, energy independence, and Ukraine-related policies. Despite declining enthusiasm, majorities still affirm a shared European identity and the need for collective defence.

Paper's main arguments and forward-looking thesis

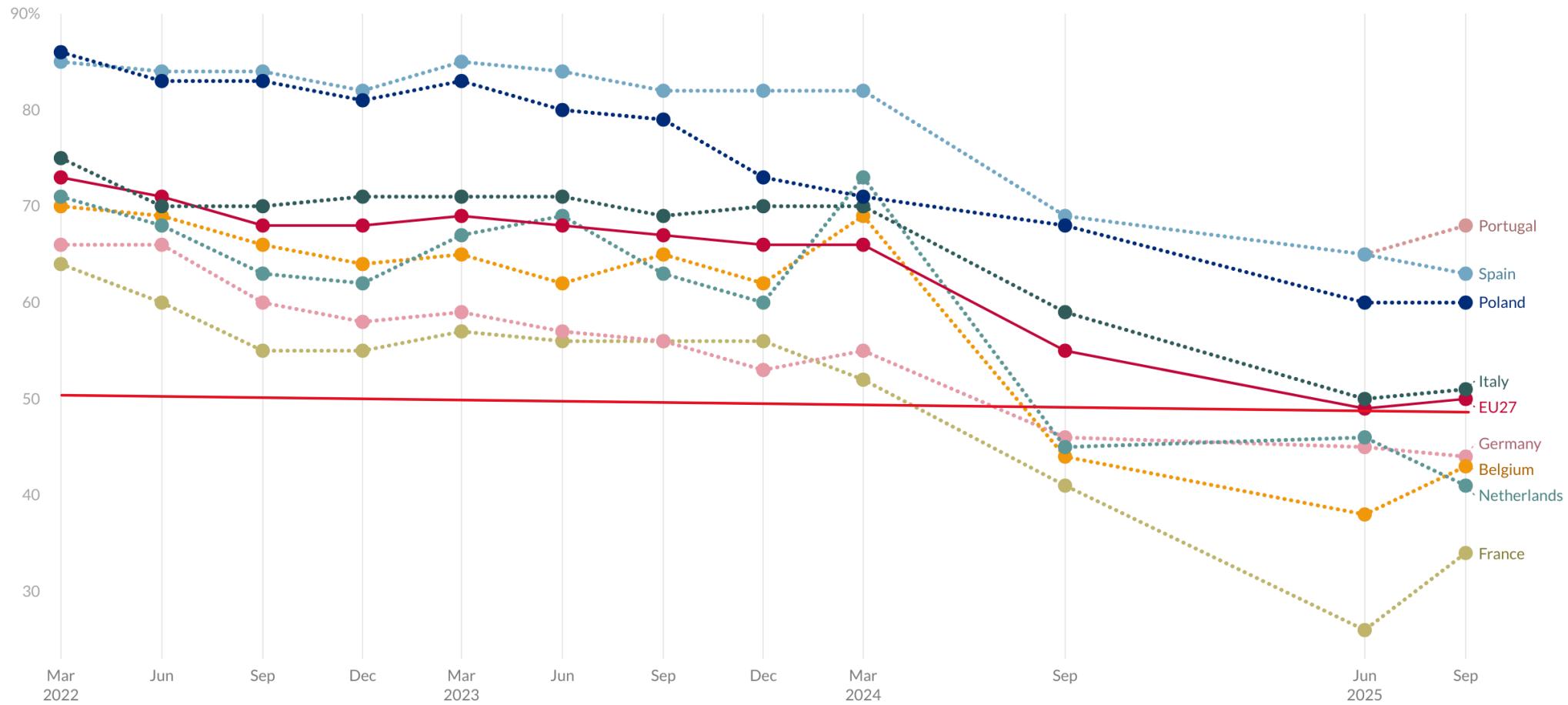
Ukraine's accession faces five clusters of challenges Economic competition (especially agriculture, EU budget redistribution). Rule-of-law and corruption concerns. Historical and minority-rights issues. Decision-making weight / institutional reform. Security dilemmas (Article 42.7 TEU – mutual defence clause).

Member-state diversity: France, Germany, Netherlands: cautious about costs, institutional readiness, CAP impact, rule of law. Poland and Romania: supportive but sensitive to agricultural competition, refugees, and history. Southern and smaller states (Greece, Ireland): broadly supportive, framing accession as a moral and geopolitical necessity but insisting on criteria-based progress.

→ The success of Ukraine's accession hinges on aligning public sentiment with elite-level strategy, maintaining momentum despite fatigue, and crafting tailored communication addressing each state's sensitivities.

Should the EU accept new member states in the coming years?

Support in %



Should the EU accept new member states in the coming years?

Yes No

EU27

50%

50%

Belgium

43%

57%

France

34%

66%

Germany

44%

56%

Italy

51%

49%

Netherlands

41%

59%

Poland

60%

40%

Portugal

68%

32%

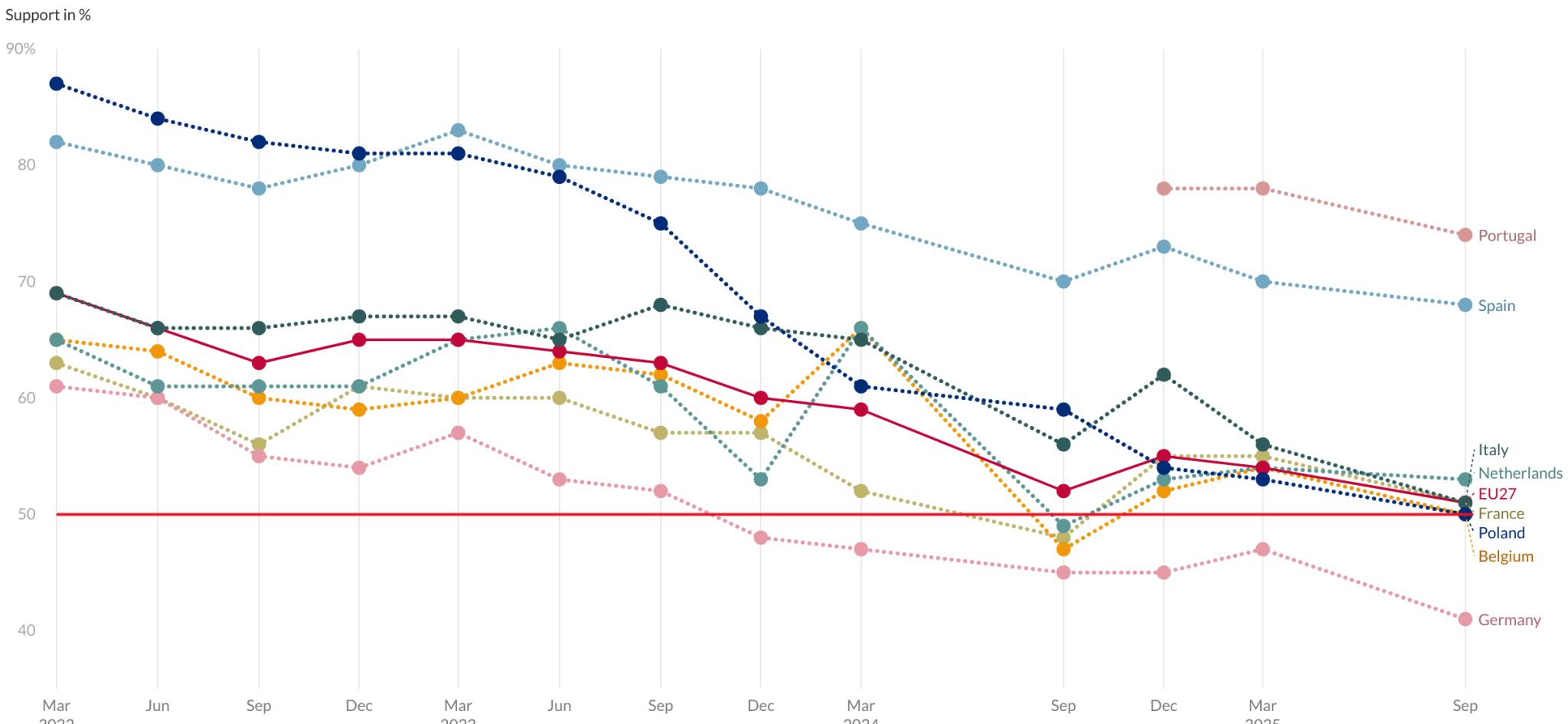
Spain

63%

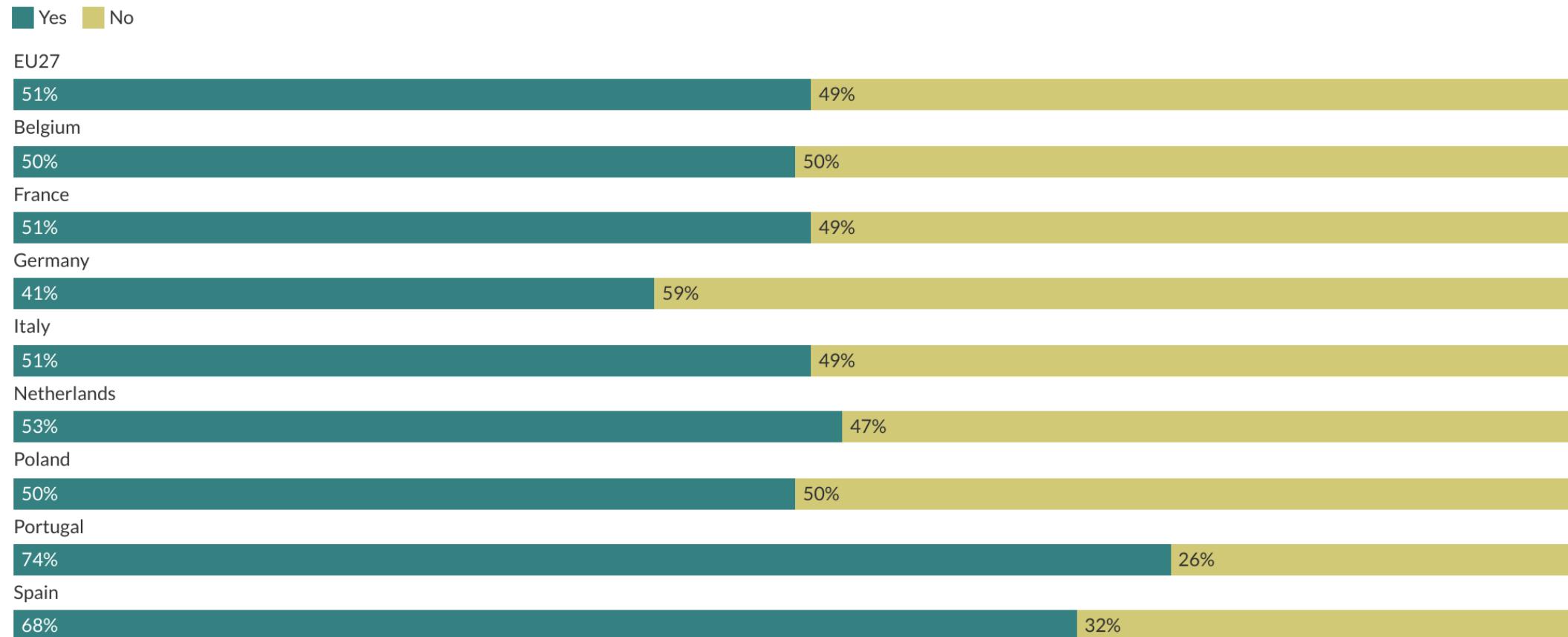
37%

September 2025

Should the EU accept Ukraine as a member of the EU in the coming years?



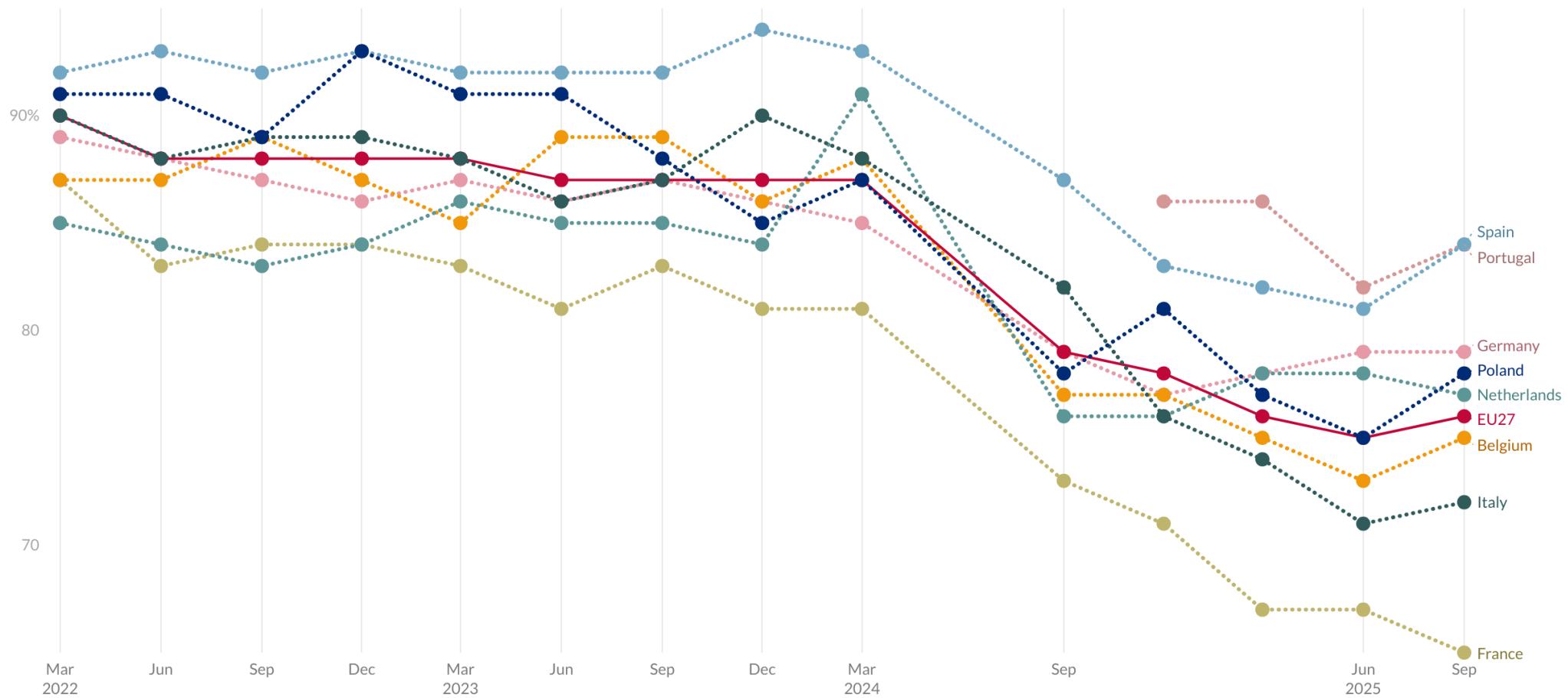
Should the EU accept Ukraine as a member of the EU in the coming years?



September 2025

The European Union needs a common defence policy.

Support in %



The European Union needs a common defence policy.

■ Agree ■ Disagree

EU27

76%

24%

Belgium

75%

25%

France

65%

35%

Germany

79%

21%

Italy

72%

28%

Netherlands

77%

23%

Poland

78%

22%

Portugal

84%

16%

Spain

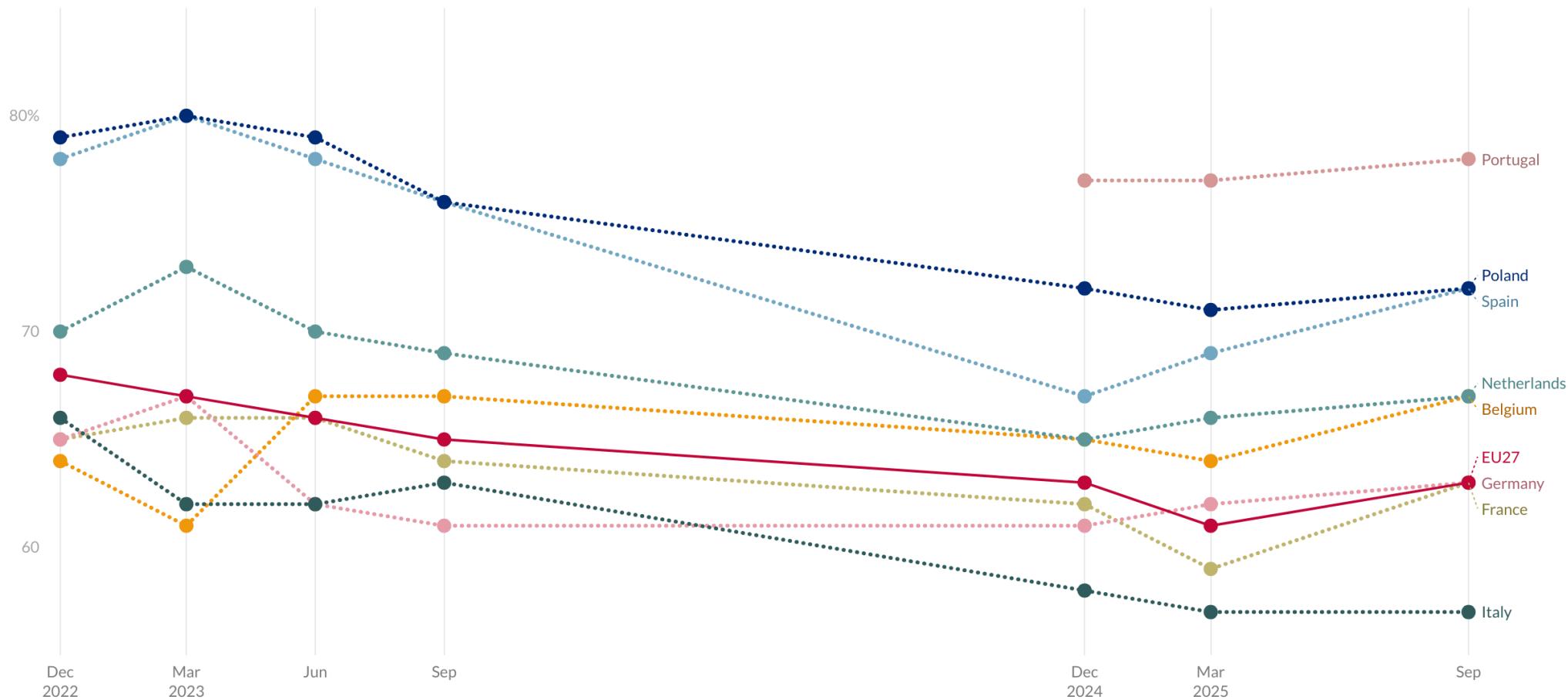
84%

16%

September 2025

Russia's attack on Ukraine is an attack on all of Europe.

Support in %



Russia's attack on Ukraine is an attack on all of Europe.

■ Agree ■ Disagree

EU27

63%

37%

Belgium

67%

33%

France

63%

37%

Germany

63%

37%

Italy

57%

43%

Netherlands

67%

33%

Poland

72%

28%

Portugal

78%

22%

Spain

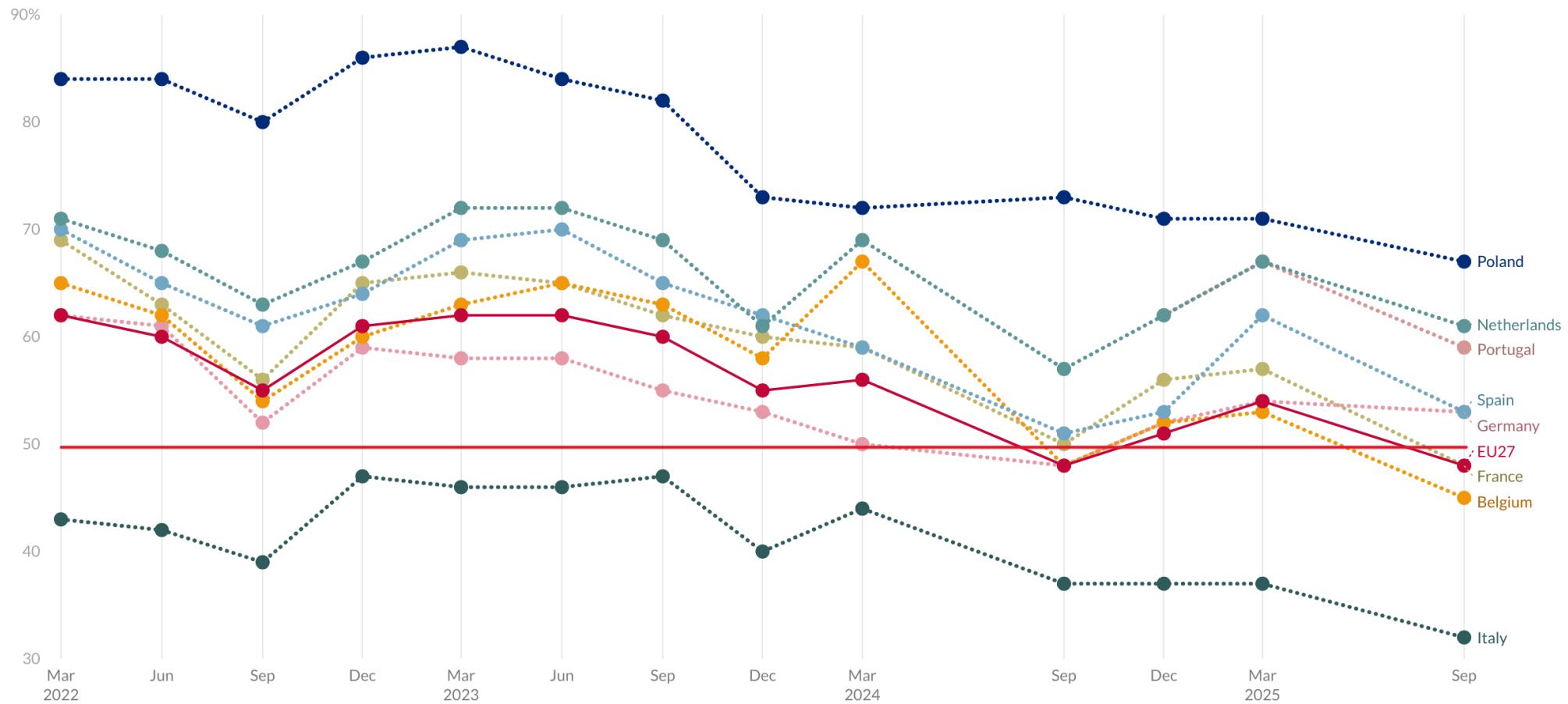
72%

28%

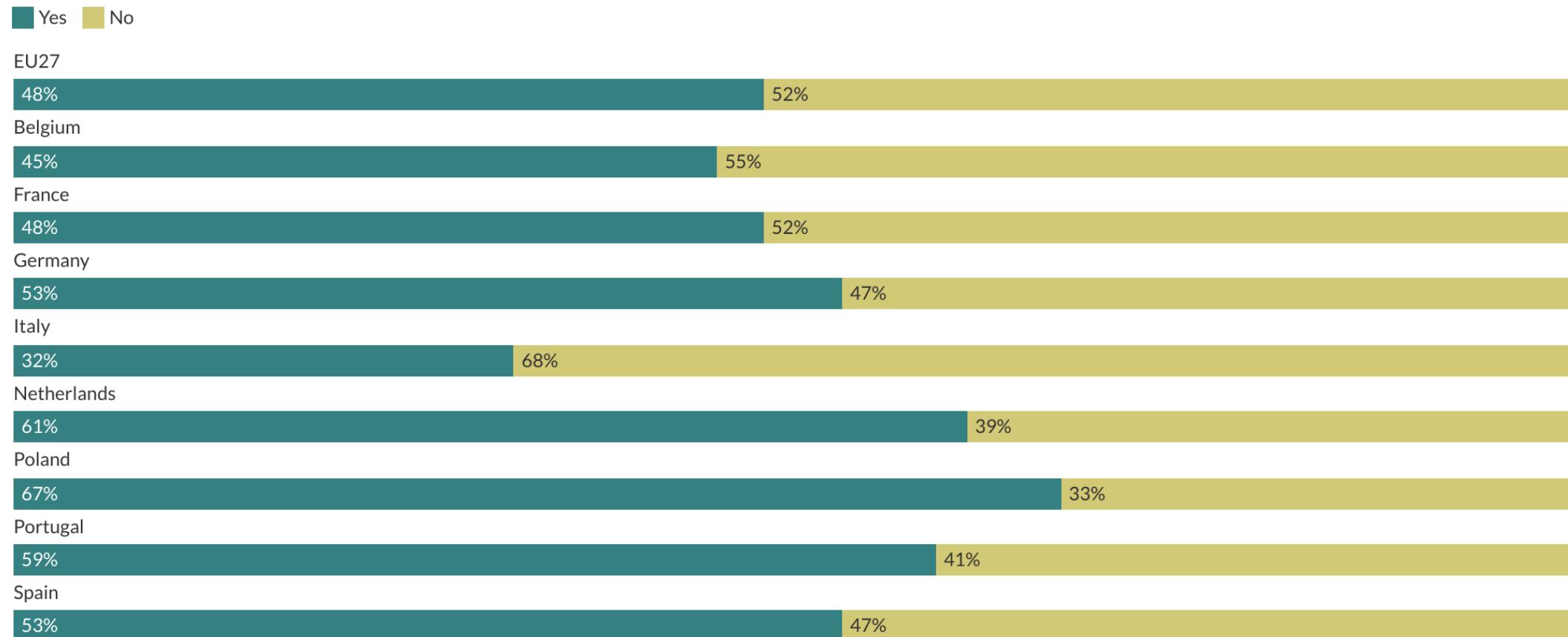
September 2025

Should the EU support Ukraine by delivering weapons?

Support in %



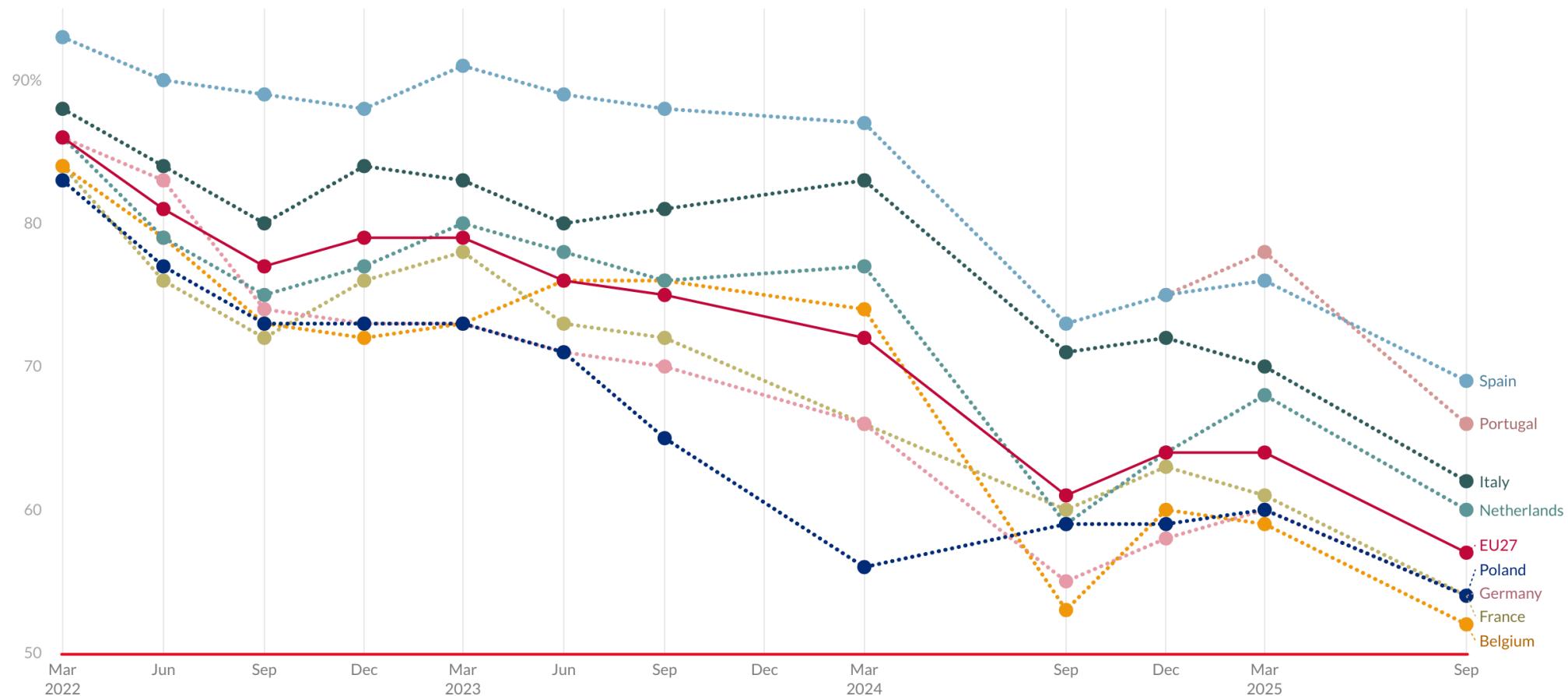
Should the EU support Ukraine by delivering weapons?



September 2025

Should your country accept refugees from Ukraine?

Support in %



Should your country accept refugees from Ukraine?

Yes No

EU27

57% 43%

Belgium

52% 48%

France

54% 46%

Germany

54% 46%

Italy

62% 38%

Netherlands

60% 40%

Poland

54% 46%

Portugal

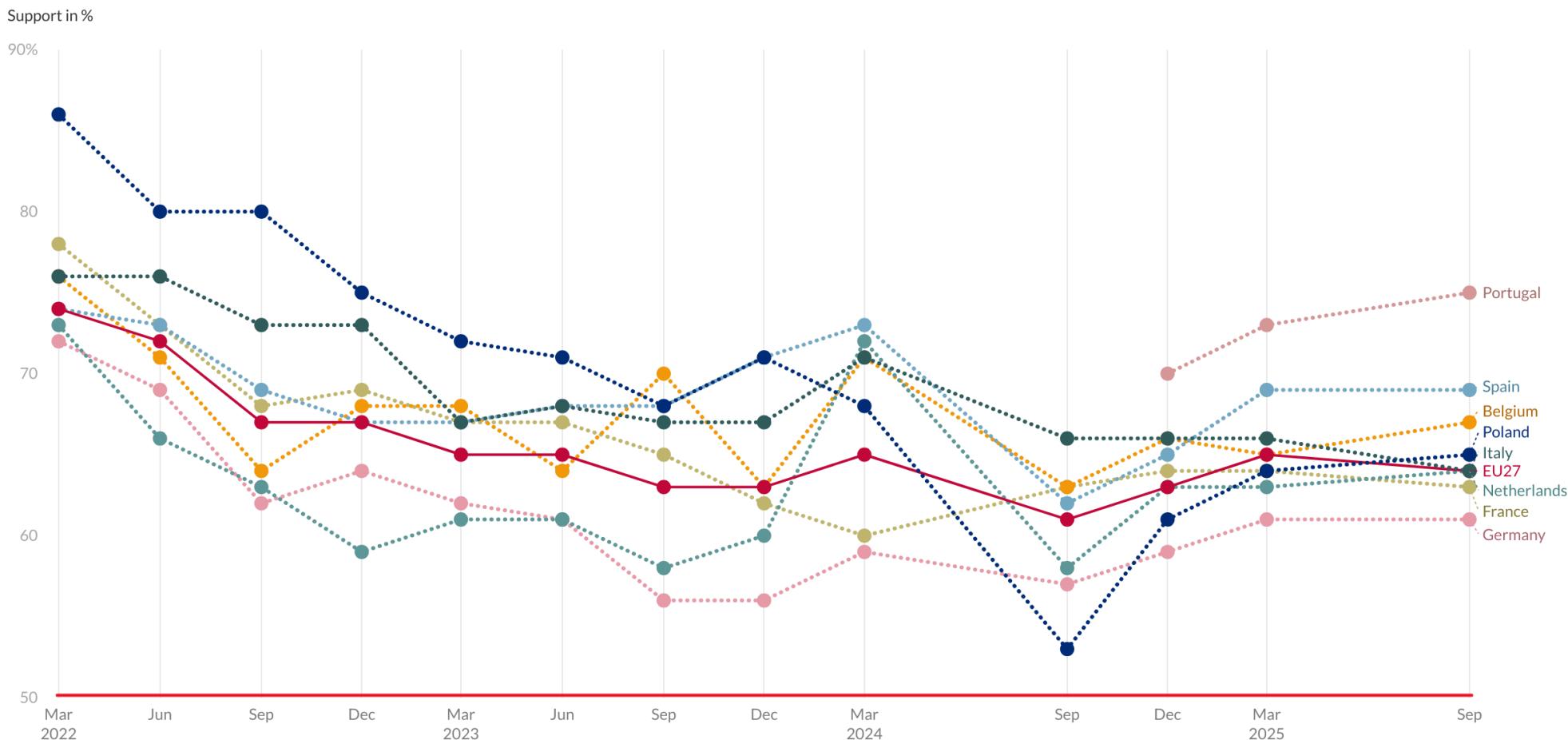
66% 34%

Spain

69% 31%

September 2025

Do you think the EU should be more independent in terms of its energy supply even if that means energy prices are rising further?



Do you think the EU should be more independent in terms of its energy supply even if that means energy prices are rising further?

Yes No

EU27

64%

36%

Belgium

67%

33%

France

63%

37%

Germany

61%

39%

Italy

64%

36%

Netherlands

64%

36%

Poland

65%

35%

Portugal

75%

25%

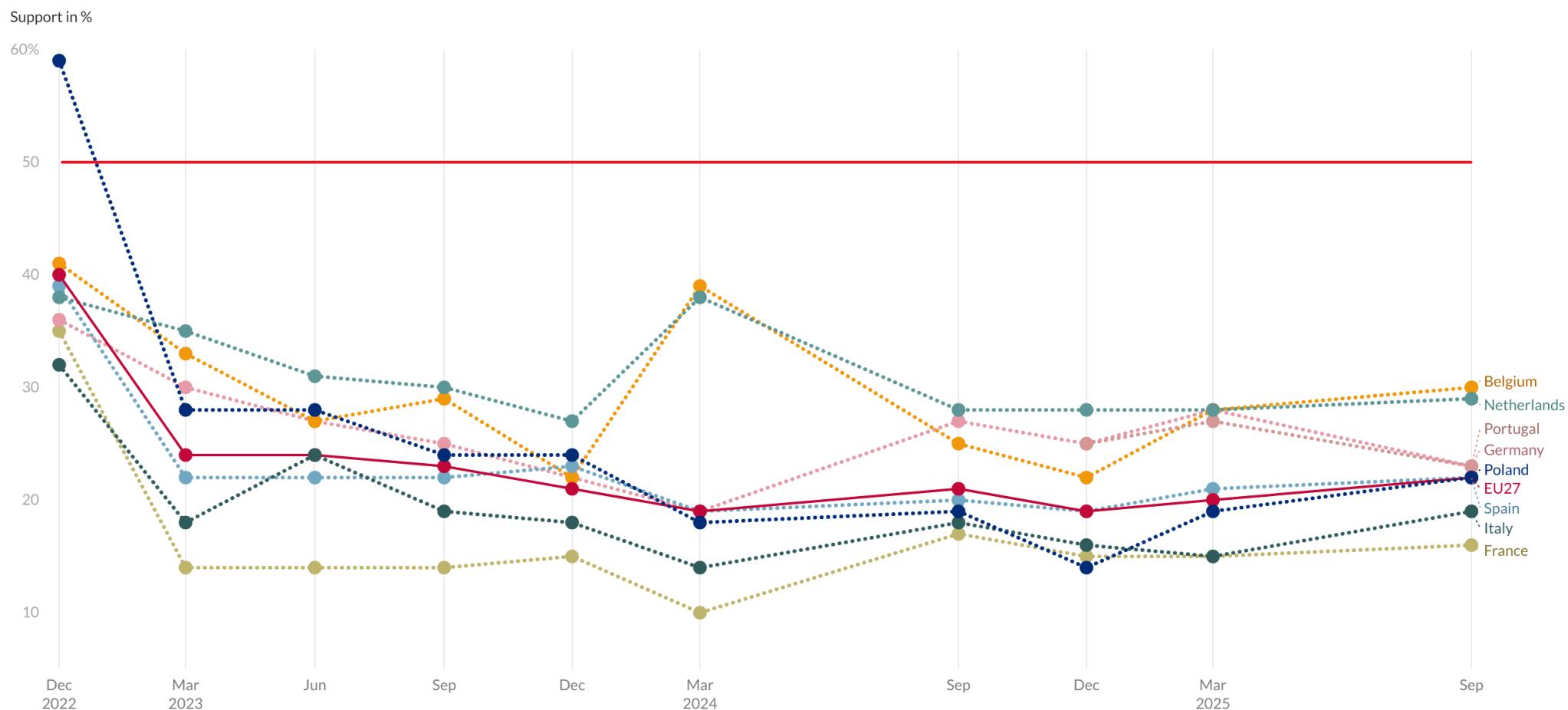
Spain

69%

31%

September 2025

Economic and financial sanctions on Russia are supposed to support Ukraine in its war effort. Do you think these sanctions are ... effective?



Economic and financial sanctions on Russia are supposed to support Ukraine in its war effort. Do you think these sanctions are:

Effective Ineffective Don't know

EU27

22% Effective 53% Ineffective 25% Don't know

Belgium

30% Effective 45% Ineffective 25% Don't know

France

16% Effective 53% Ineffective 31% Don't know

Germany

23% Effective 52% Ineffective 25% Don't know

Italy

19% Effective 55% Ineffective 26% Don't know

Netherlands

29% Effective 36% Ineffective 35% Don't know

Poland

22% Effective 66% Ineffective 12% Don't know

Portugal

23% Effective 57% Ineffective 20% Don't know

Spain

22% Effective 53% Ineffective 25% Don't know

September 2025

Public Opinion and Member-State Dynamics in Ukraine's EU Accession

Across the EU, eupinions data (March 2022 – September 2025) show that early-war solidarity has matured into a quieter, more conditional form of support. Enthusiasm for Ukraine's EU membership has fallen from around 65 % in 2022 to just over 50 % in 2025, mirroring a general cooling toward further enlargement.

Yet Europeans continue to think in strategic terms: three quarters favour a *common defence policy* and almost two thirds see Russia's attack as "an attack on all of Europe." Security remains the strongest shared narrative even as social and economic patience erodes.

Support now depends on how governments manage *domestic costs and expectations*. The pattern is not uniform. **France and the Netherlands**, though sceptical of enlargement in general, are *more positive about Ukraine itself*—a sign of moral and geopolitical solidarity. **Germany**, by contrast, is broadly pro-enlargement but *more cautious toward Ukraine*, reflecting fiscal and security prudence. Southern Europe stays consistently supportive, while Poland's enthusiasm has levelled off.

The workshop paper's call for *country-sensitive engagement* aligns closely with these trends: sustaining momentum will require clear sequencing of costs and benefits and communication that frames Ukraine's accession as an investment in Europe's collective security and democratic resilience.

About eupinions

eupinions is an independent platform dedicated to gathering and analysing data on European public opinion. We provide insights into what Europeans think about current political issues and emerging megatrends.

Every quarter, we conduct surveys across all EU member states in 22 languages.

Our data is representative of the population in terms of age, gender, and country/region.

eupinions is a Bertelsmann Stiftung project. The data is collected by Latana.

For more information, visit www.eupinions.eu!

Methodology note

The samples analysed in this report were drawn by Latana (formerly Dalia Research) in September 2025 (n=17,288) across all 27 EU member states. Our samples reflect current population distributions in terms of age (18-69 years), gender, and region/country. In order to obtain census representative results, the data were weighted using the most recent Eurostat statistics.

Any references to cross-country differences in this report are limited to those countries with sufficiently large sample sizes: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Spain.

Considering the sample size and design effect (1.34), the margin of error is 0.9%, calculated at a confidence level of 95%.



Visit us



eupinions.eu

Follow us

@eupinions.bsky.social

Imprint

© January 2026
Bertelsmann Stiftung
Carl-Bertelsmann-Straße 256
33311 Gütersloh
www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de

Responsible for content

Isabell Hoffmann
Daniela Schmidt
Phone: +49 30 275 788 126
isabell.hoffmann@bertelsmann-stiftung.de