



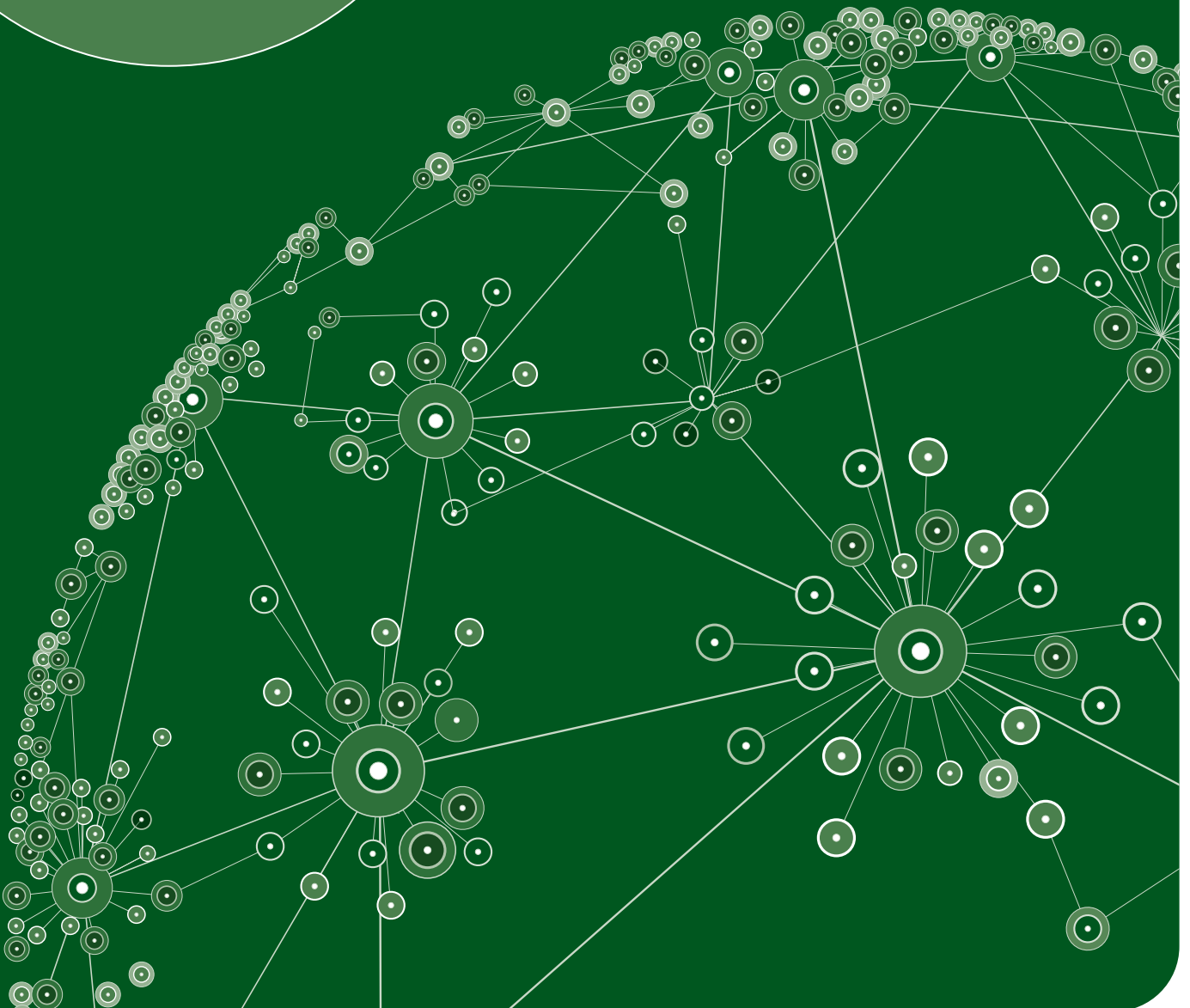
# COVID-19 CRISIS

## IMPLICATIONS AND LESSONS FOR EUROPEAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

COUNTRY STUDY

**ITALY**

December 2022





# PREFACE

This country case study is an integral part of the project COVID-19 crisis: implications and lessons for European social democracy, which the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) conducted in collaboration with the Instituto Cattaneo in Bologna and successfully completed with the invaluable help of Kieskompas in Amsterdam. As a report, this is one of six documents supplementing a comparative study, completed to offer a detailed perspective on Italy.

At its inception in 2020, the founders' ambition was to investigate citizens' attitudes during and after the pandemic. As COVID-19 continued, the two waves of the survey put in the field by Dynata simply captured the opinions in two respective moments—December 2020/January 2021 and October/November 2021—showing how perspectives fluctuated during the profound crisis. All the partners involved in this project wanted to dive deep to gain a comprehensive picture; thus, the survey was comprised of 13 sociodemographic and 63 thematic questions. These allowed for the segmentation of the vast data, which was collected in a sample of 1,000 citizens twice in six countries (France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Sweden, and Poland). Thanks to cross-tabulations and analyses of the overlap of the vote propensity, it was possible to extract very specific answers regarding the trends among diverse groups. There was a special focus on the opinions held by the voters and sympathizers of the centre-left, of course. And, in this spirit, the next pages and the section entitled Key Findings are meant to serve as a piece of policy advice.

After the first wave, FEPS and FES took some time to discuss the initial results internally as well as with circles of experts from the six countries in question. The objective of these discussions was to put the findings in a country-specific context and explain both similarities and points of divergence when making an overall comparison. These debates took place during closed round tables consisting of Members of National Parliaments, Members of the European Parliaments, academics, trade unionists, civil society experts, party strategists and pollsters, youth representatives, and publicists. The organisers remain incredibly grateful to all these individuals for their time, enthusiasm, and input. It is not possible to name them all, as the total number surpassed 200. That said, we would like to mention our gratitude towards the organisations that helped with these events, especially the Centrum im. Ignacego Daszyńskiego, Olof Palme International Center, Foundation Pablo Iglesias, Foundation Rafael Campalans, as well as the respective FES regional Offices in Madrid, Stockholm, Warsaw, Paris, and Rome. The insights gained were invaluable and relevant for this country's case study and the comparative study.

With this in mind, we are eager to present you with this study, thanking again Instituto Cattaneo (including Salvatore Vassallo, Moreno Mancuso, and Federico Vegetti) for all the cooperation in designing the questionnaire and obtaining the data; Dynata for conducting the two waves of surveys; Kieskompas (including André Krouwel and Yordan Kutiyski) whose team engaged with us in several rounds and then completed these important documents. Finally, we would like to thank our colleagues, especially Celine Guedes (FEPS) and Adrianna Hornung (FES), who shouldered all the organizational load.

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*Foundation for European Progressive Studies*



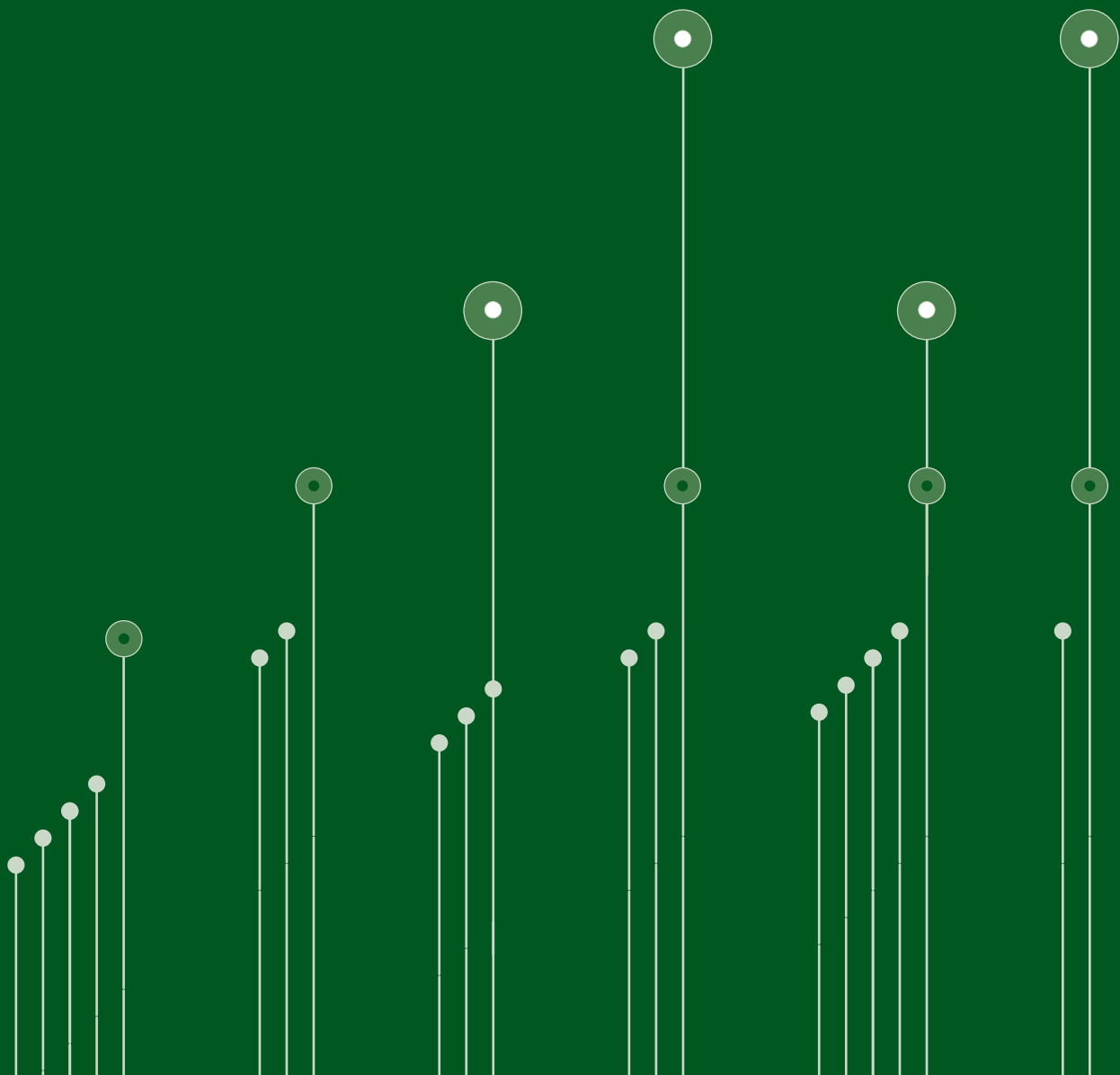
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# SUMMARY

## CRITICISM AND CONCERNS CAN TAKE DIFFERENT POLITICAL COLOURS

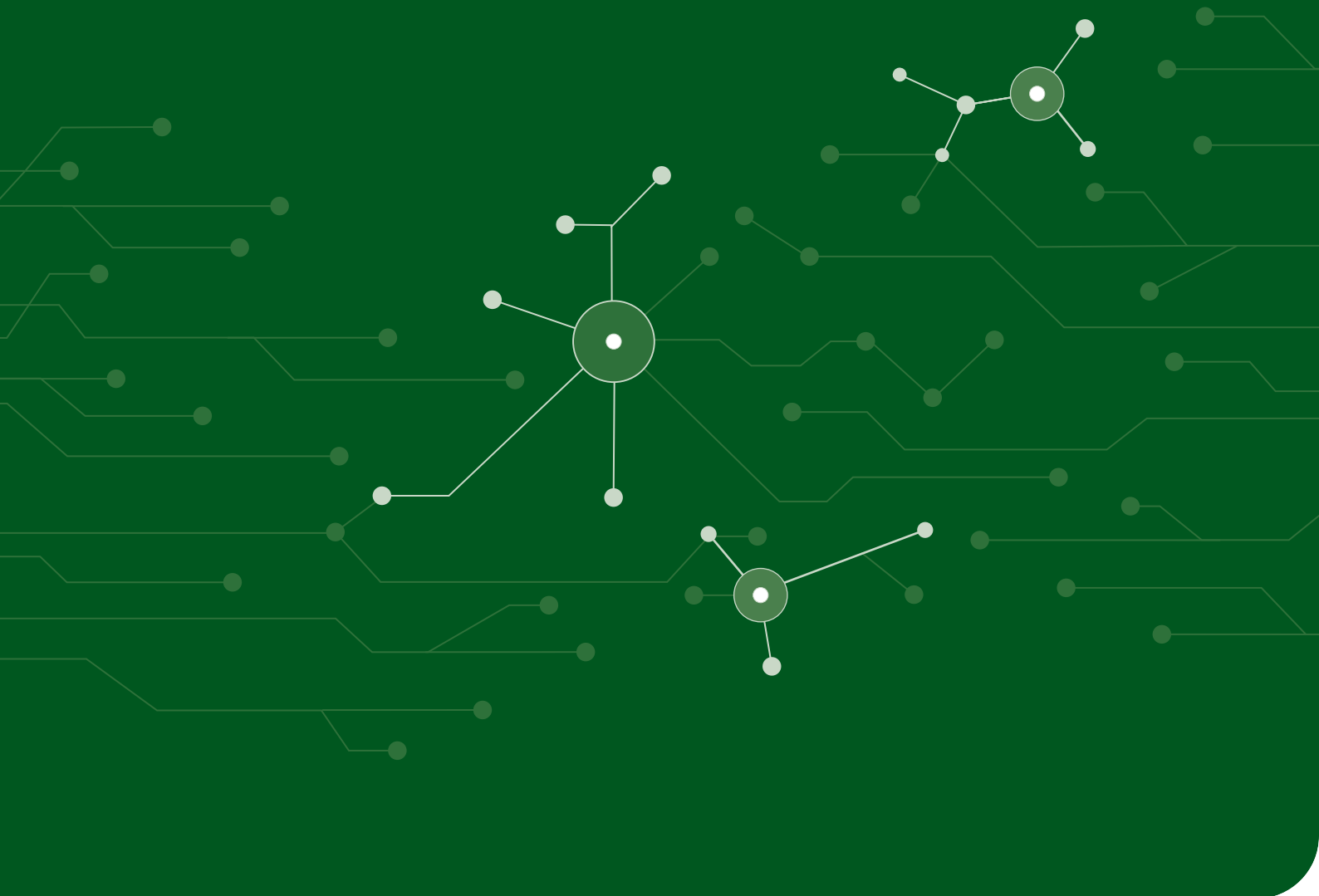


- 1) The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened political and societal divisions in Europe and Italy is no exception, as evidenced by the data analyses presented in this country study. It is notable that many respondents' opinions did not change substantially between 2020 and 2021. While support for the anti-pandemic measures increased, many Italian citizens grew more critical of the general handling of the pandemic, including public spending. Next to an erosion of institutional trust, respondents perceived a deepening of social divisions and their concern about climate change increased.
- 2) The opinions of voters for specific parties and different demographic groups remained largely the same from one year to the other. On pandemic-related matters and overall satisfaction with governance, voters that support the governing party Partito Democratico (PD), as well as Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S) supporters, can be characterised as having the highest levels of satisfaction with the way the pandemic was handled, the highest degree of institutional trust, and the highest likelihood of following government recommendations related to the pandemic.
- 3) Voters of the radical right-wing parties Lega and Fratelli d'Italia (FdI) are particularly critical of the way the government has been handling the pandemic, but also with Italian politics at large. While it is clear that Lega and FdI voters have different, more conservative and government-critical, opinions compared to other sections of the electorate, it appears that Lega voters are somewhat more moderate than their FdI peers.
- 4) Another pattern that emerges from the findings is that many dissatisfied Italian citizens do not have a clear ideological persuasion. This group of voters is predominantly represented within the Lega and M5S electorates. Those on the right are much more cynical when it comes to politics and governance in general.
- 5) Voters with centre-left or centrist orientations are much more likely to support government policies and the way society operates in general.
- 6) When it comes to demographics, the most cynical and politically distrustful respondents can be found among citizens with lower levels of education and income difficulties. Such respondents are much more distrustful, anti-immigration, anti-climate policy, and generally dissatisfied with governance than other demographic groups. Citizens in these groups are also more likely to be critical of the European Union and are less concerned about climate change.
- 7) In terms of age, middle-aged generations (35 to 64) reported being more severely and negatively impacted by the pandemic, specifically as related to deteriorating living and working conditions. At the same time, older respondents expressed a higher degree of support for COVID-19 mitigation measures.
- 8) In sum, the data indicates that there are many different, often polarised, opinions in Italy. The Italian public is largely supportive of the pandemic mitigation meas-

ures. However, Italians have a relatively low degree of institutional trust, and less than half consider their country's EU membership to be a good thing. Nevertheless, most respondents, especially younger generation cohorts, believe immigrants are a benefit to society and are concerned about climate change.



# DATA AND METHODS





This country report offers an in-depth overview of public opinion in Italy by comparing the stances of various demographic and political groups. Respondents were segmented by gender, age, educational attainment, economic well-being, and ideological orientation. Most importantly, voter groups were identified based on respondents' current vote intention. Comparing citizen categories allows policy-makers and political campaigners alike to make informed decisions when targeting specific population groups.

The results compare how the aforementioned groups of respondents answered the various closed-ended survey questions. Questions on the same topic (e.g., support for measures against the COVID-19 pandemic) that use a scale rather than ordinal answer categories were used to create indices after a reliability analysis was performed to confirm that they measure the same concept. For these indices, the mean scores for each respondent group were estimated; the groups were subsequently plotted on two-dimensional scatterplots comprised of two indices. Again, the average mean scores between the two waves were calculated for each voter group.

Two waves of survey data in six countries: France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, and Sweden, were collected by Dynata, in coordination with the Cattaneo institute, in December 2020/January 2021 and October/November 2021, respectively. In Italy, each wave comprises a sample of 1,002 respondents, representative of the demographic composition and political preferences of the Italian population. The questionnaires used in both waves contained largely overlapping questions, allowing for an over-time comparison of public opinion on various socioeconomic issues. Given that there were very minor opinion differences between the two waves for items included in both survey iterations, the average percentage and mean scores for these questions are reported, with several exceptions. The following questions were only asked in the first wave of the survey and, therefore, only results from this wave are reported:

- There are different views on how the national government balanced, in the short run, protecting jobs and protecting public health when responding to the coronavirus pandemic.
- There are different views on how the national government balanced preserving public health and preserving individual freedom when responding to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Some hope to be vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible, others believe that it would be risky to get vaccinated. If the health authorities provide you an opportunity to get vaccinated, how likely is it that you will do so?
- Have you installed the national contact tracing app Immuni on your smartphone?

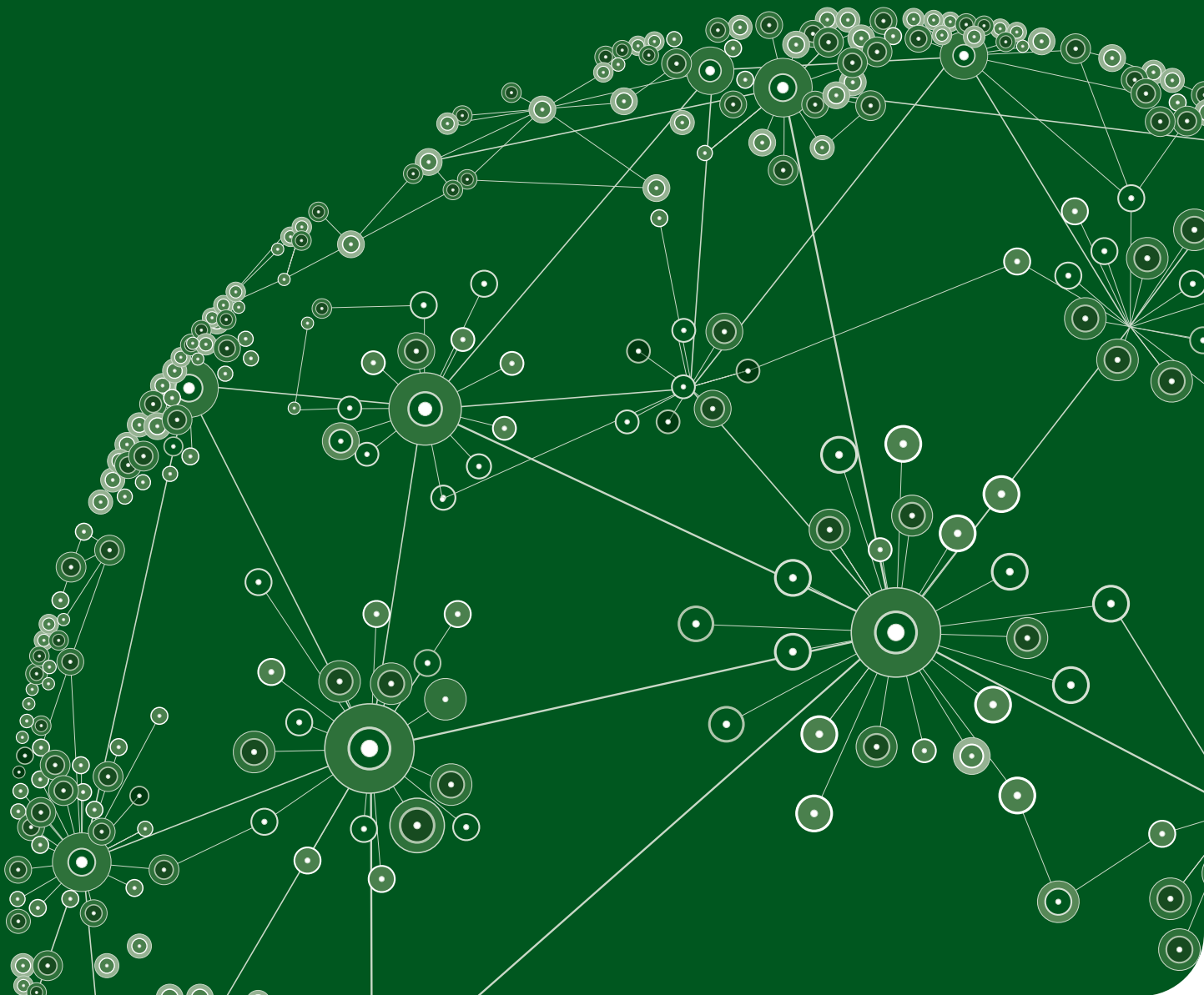
In addition, several questions were only included in the second wave of the questionnaire and, therefore, only results from this wave were reported:

- Some people argue that the COVID-19 vaccination should be mandatory for everyone to stop the pandemic, others that people should always be free to choose whether to get vaccinated or not.
- Compared to the end of 2020, do you think that your own economic situation...
- And thinking about the next 12 months, do you think that your own economic situation...

The indices measuring conspiracy belief, populist sentiments, and the question asking respondents to evaluate the "NextGenerationEU" plan were also included in the second wave only; therefore, only this second wave data is analyzed for these items.

# CHAPTER 1

## PANDEMICS DEEPENED DIVISIONS

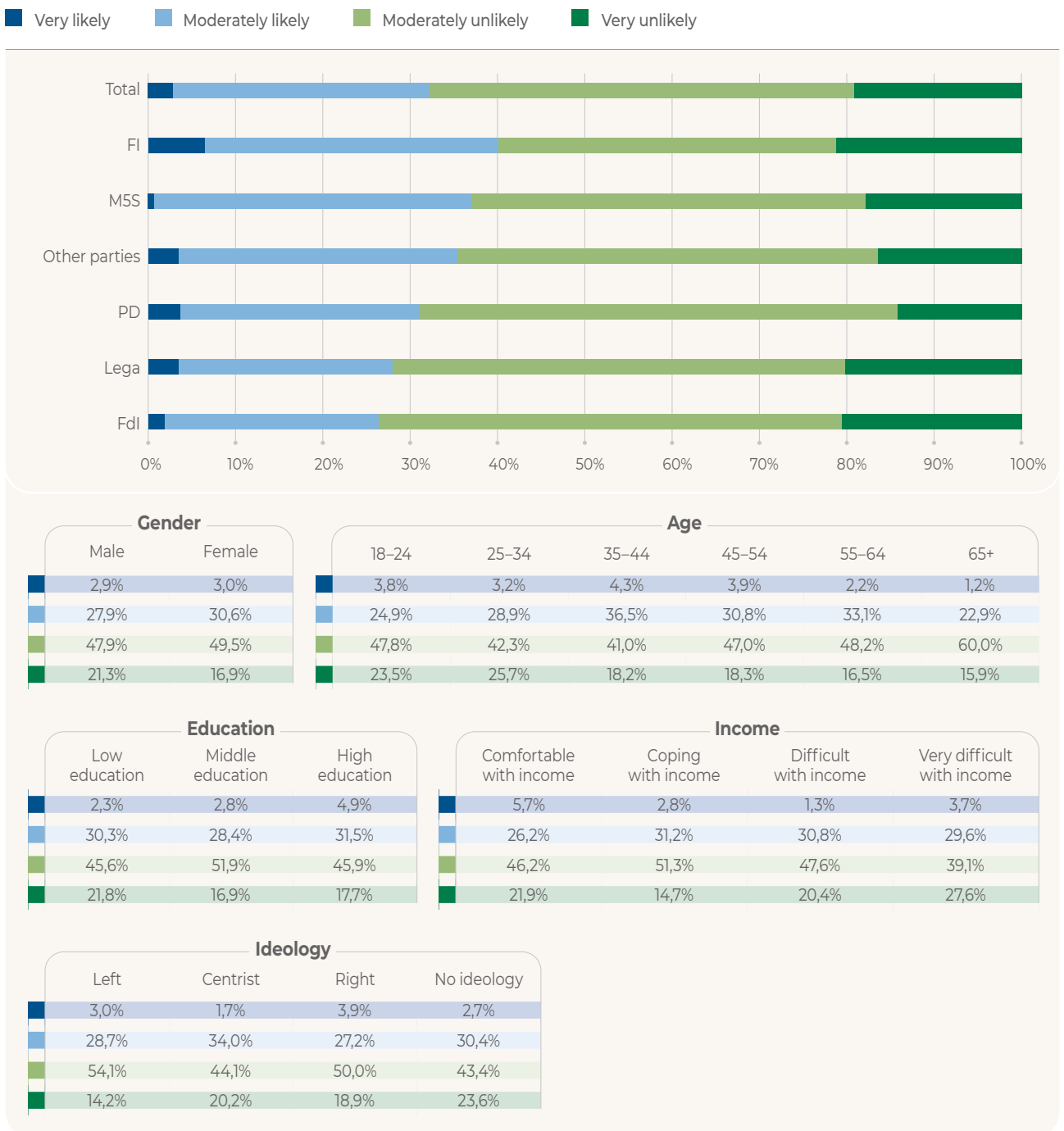


**Likelihood of and Concern about Contracting the Virus**

Despite of danger posed by CovidCOVID-19, the majority of Italian citizens (67.6 per cent) did not think it is likely that they will would contract the virus. Voters of Fdl and Lega are were the least likely to consider expect that they will would contract the virus, while Forza Italia (FI) and M5S voters are were more likely to think they will would get infected. When it comes toBroken down by demo-

graphicsdemographic group, men and those of younger age, along with lower less educated and lower lower-income individuals, considered it is less likely that they will would contract the virus, . When analysed while in terms ofby ideologyideological group, left-wing and centrist voters considered getting infected with CovidSARS-CoV-2-19 a distinct possibility. – tThose with left-wing or right-wing ideology consider it is least likely to contract the virus.

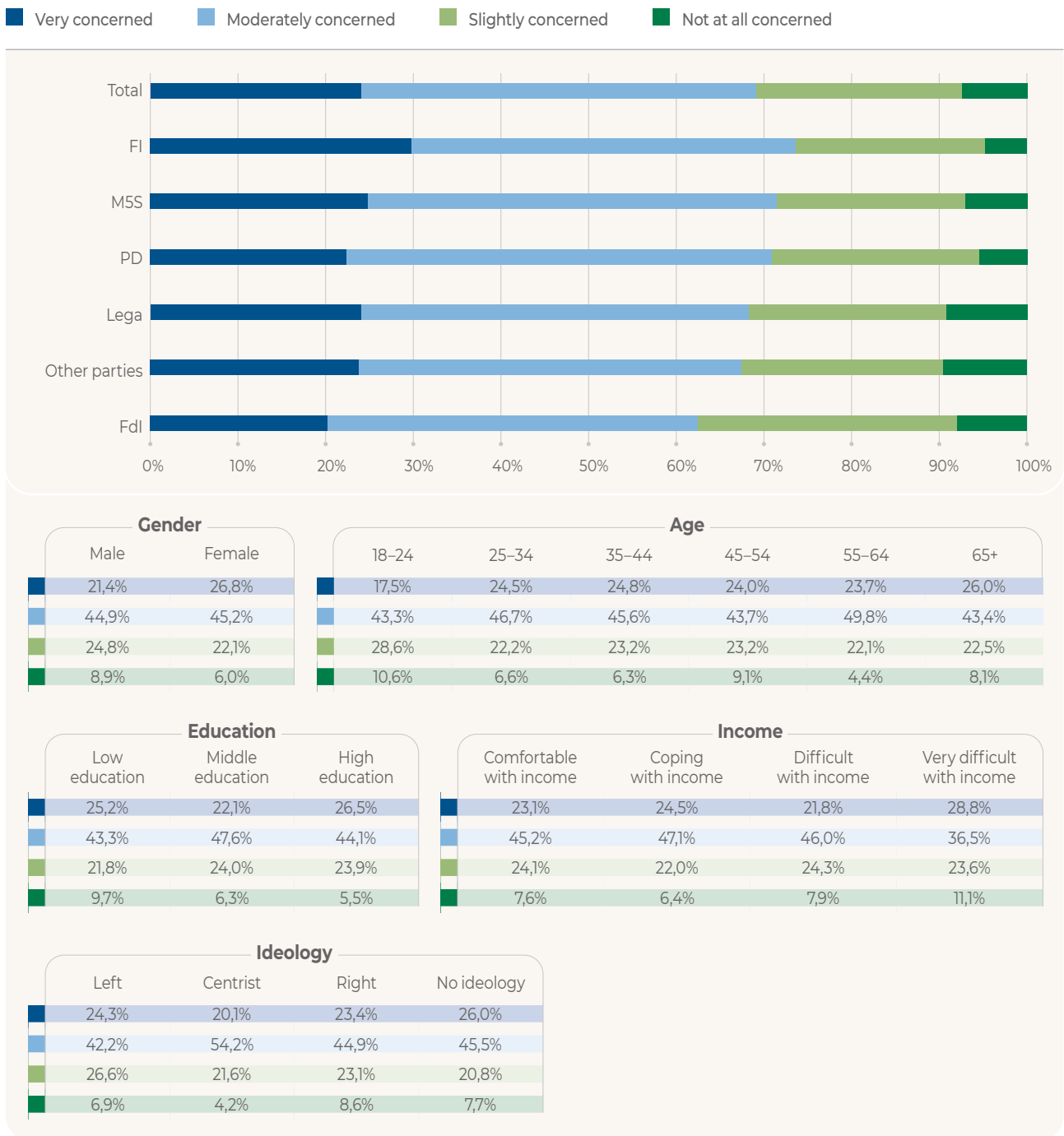
**Figure 1 / Q22 – In your opinion, how likely is it that you will contract COVID-19?**



When it comes to the dangers the virus would pose to individuals' health, it is clear that the majority of Italian citizens (more than 90 per cent) are at least slightly concerned. Fdi voters differ the most from other respondents since about 60 per cent of them are very or moderately concerned about the health risk posed by the COVID-19 infection. Only 7.4 per cent of Italian respondents are not

at all concerned, which is a relatively low number compared to other countries. Women, respondents of older age (particularly those aged 65 or above), left-wing, and centrist respondents are the most concerned with the health risks posed by COVID-19, while differences in income and education do not result in clear-cut opinion differences on this risk.

Figure 2 / Q23 – How concerned are you that a COVID infection might endanger your health?



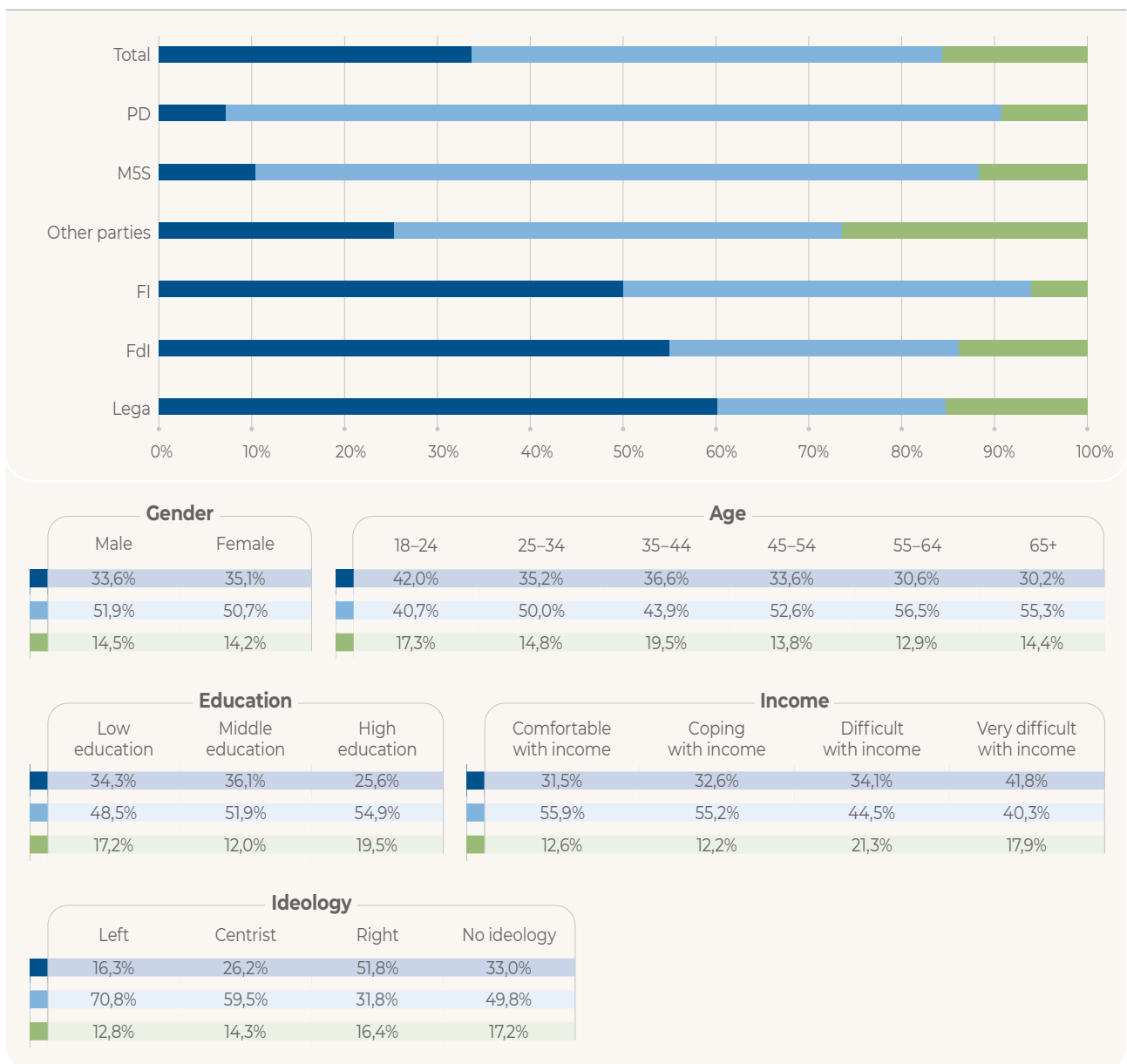
**Evaluations of Government Policy against the Pandemic**

While slightly more than half (50.9 per cent) of Italian citizens deem the government’s response to the pandemic balanced, there are a substantial number of critical voices on the matter: more than 30 per cent of those surveyed think that government measures did not take protecting jobs sufficiently into account, while 15.4 per cent think that the government should have taken stronger measures to protect public health. Voters of centrist and left-wing parties such as PD and M5S are all overwhelmingly support-

ive of the government policies, while Lega, FdI, and FI voters are the most critical of the government’s policies and consider more should have been done to protect jobs. In terms of demographics, younger people, people with lower levels of education, and those struggling the most with their financial situation, who were arguably hardest hit by the pandemic, are most likely to think that the government should have put more focus on protecting jobs. The majority of right-wing voters also tend to think more should have been done to protect jobs.

**Figure 3 / Q38 – Government balance – jobs or public health**

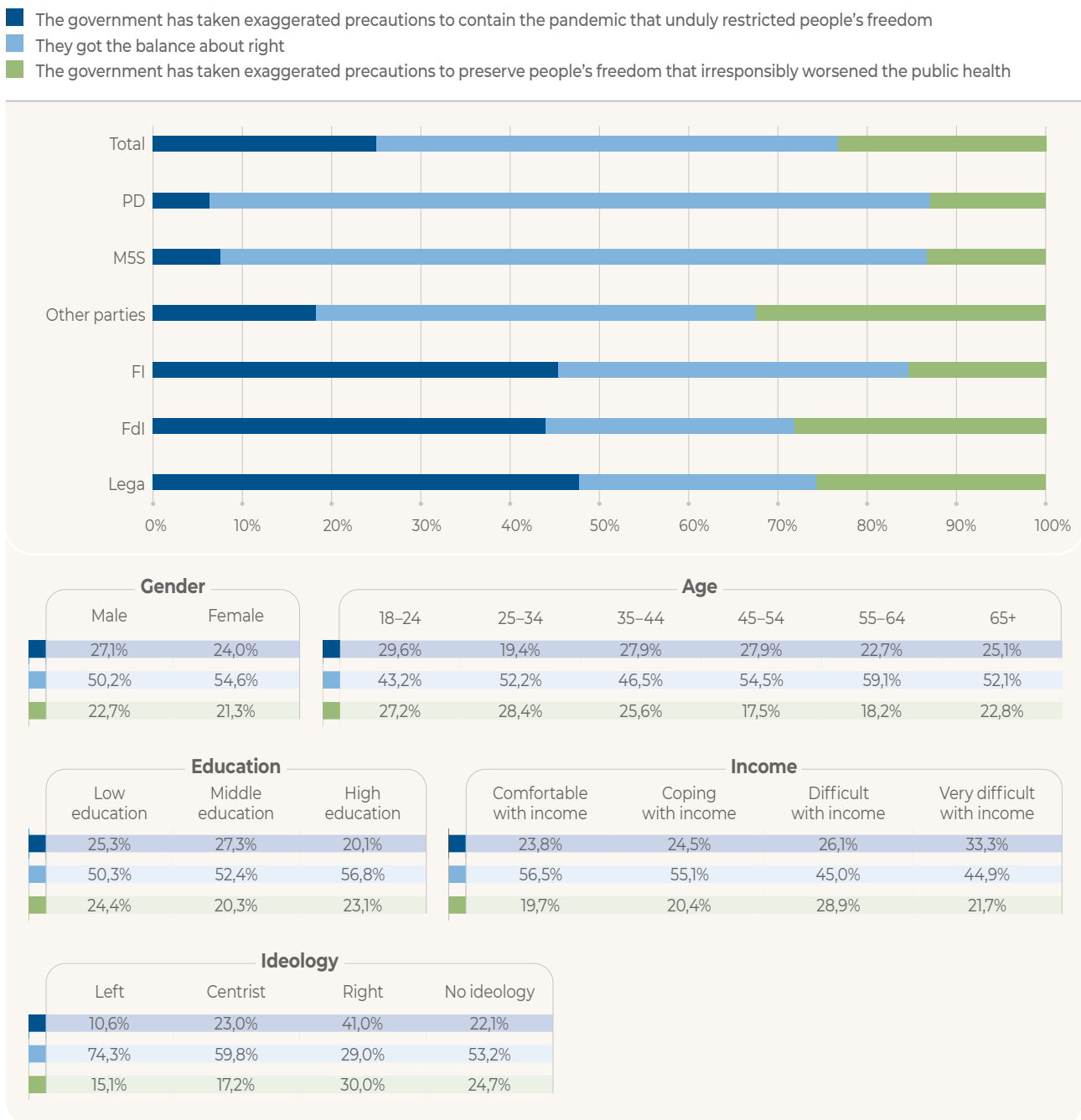
- The government has taken exaggerated precautions to protect public health instead of jobs
- They got the balance about right
- The government has taken exaggerated precautions to protect jobs instead of public health



A similar pattern emerges when looking at how citizens view the government response as a trade-off between preserving people's freedom and protecting public health: a slight majority of 51.8 per cent of Italian respondents consider that the balance was about right, while nearly 25.2 per cent think freedoms were unduly restricted and 23 per cent think the restrictions should have been more

far-reaching. Again, moderate voters in the political centre and on the left are most supportive of the restrictive measures, while those on the right, particularly Lega and Fdl voters, think that freedoms were unduly restricted. Younger citizens, people with lower levels of education, and those in more precarious financial situations were most likely to think that freedoms were unduly restricted.

Figure 4 / Q39 - Government balance - freedoms or public health

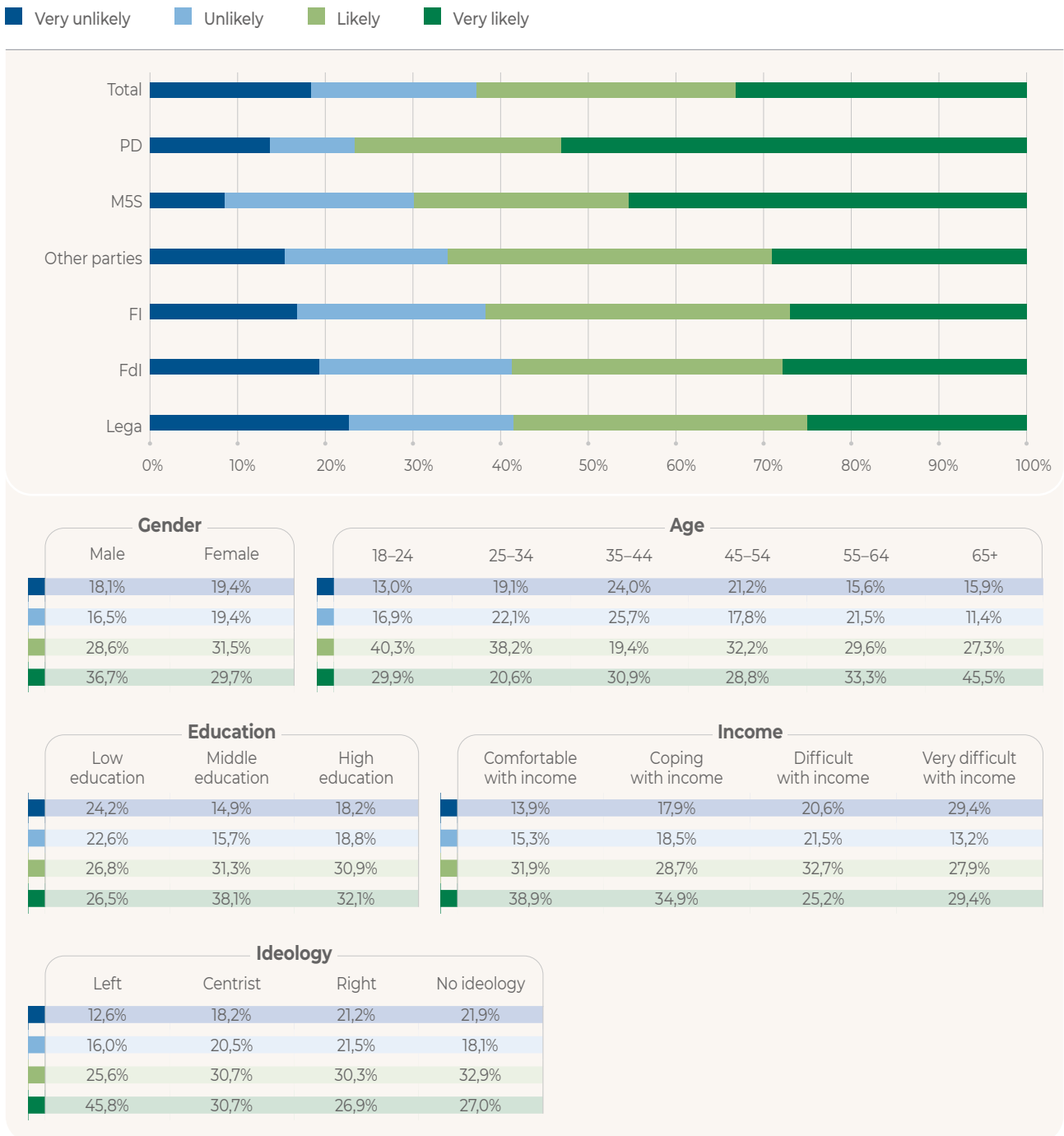


**Likelihood of Getting Vaccinated**

At the time the survey was conducted, 62.5 per cent of the respondents stated that they would get vaccinated if health authorities offered them the opportunity to do so. This number is lower than the current vaccination rate in Italy, which stands at about 84 per cent. Similar to the trends reported above, voters for left-wing parties are most likely to get vaccinated. A majority of all electorates report that they

would get vaccinated, which is not the case in other countries. Women are slightly less likely to say they will get vaccinated than men. In terms of age, the majority of all respondent groups, with the exception of those aged 35 to 44, report that they would get vaccinated. Less educated respondents, those with the lowest income, and those with right-wing ideology or no ideological persuasion are less likely to say they would get vaccinated than other groups.

**Figure 5 / Q52 – Likelihood of getting vaccinated**

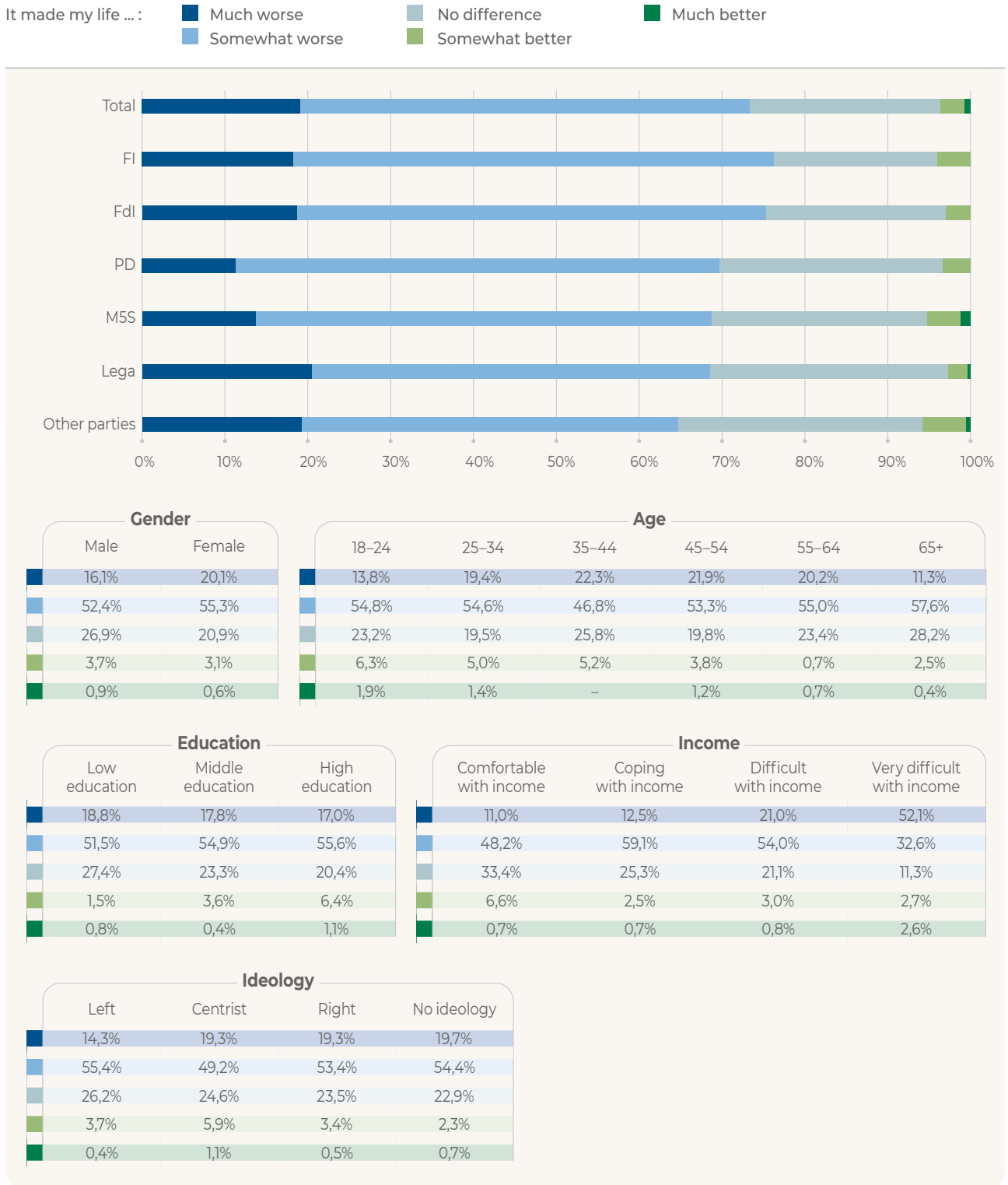


### The Impact of COVID-19 on Quality of Life and Working Conditions

There is very little variation among the different population segments when it comes to the impact of the pandemic on the quality of people’s lives: more than 70 per cent of Italians report that they have been affected negatively. Still,

FI and Fdi voters have felt the most negative impact on their lives. Women and those with lower incomes experienced a higher degree of quality of life deterioration, while there are no substantial differences between different age and education groups. The same is the case when it comes to ideology.

Figure 6 / Q74 – Overall, how would you assess the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the quality of your life?

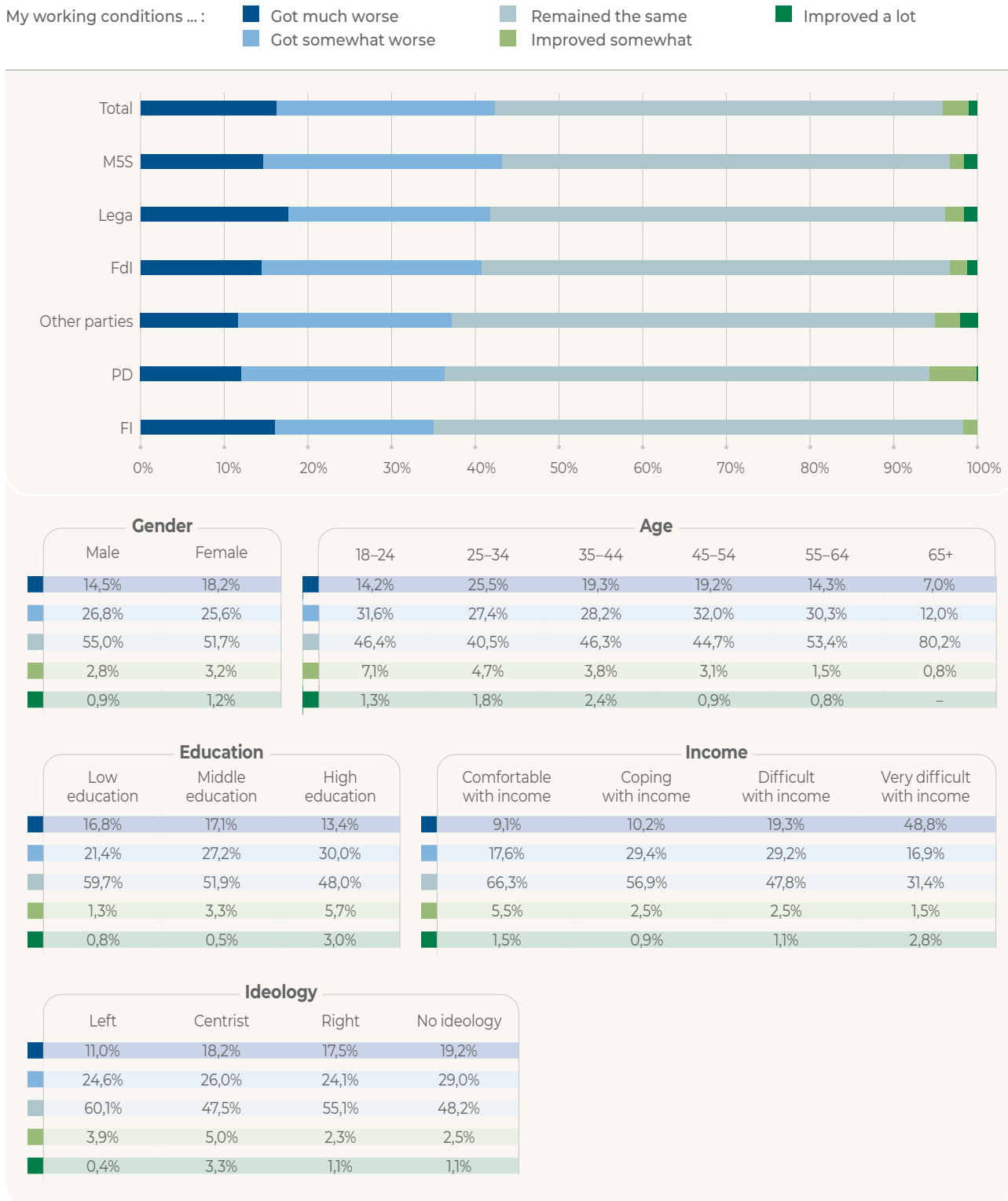




Most Italian respondents report that their working conditions were unaffected by the pandemic (53.7 per cent). Nevertheless, M5S and Lega voters report a much more substantial deterioration of their working conditions than the more centrist FI and PD voters. Those reporting to

have been most negatively affected by the pandemic are typically younger respondents, those with lower levels of educational attainment, and lower-income individuals. Respondents with left-wing orientations report being slightly less negatively affected by the crisis.

Figure 7 / Q75 – How would you assess the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on your working conditions?

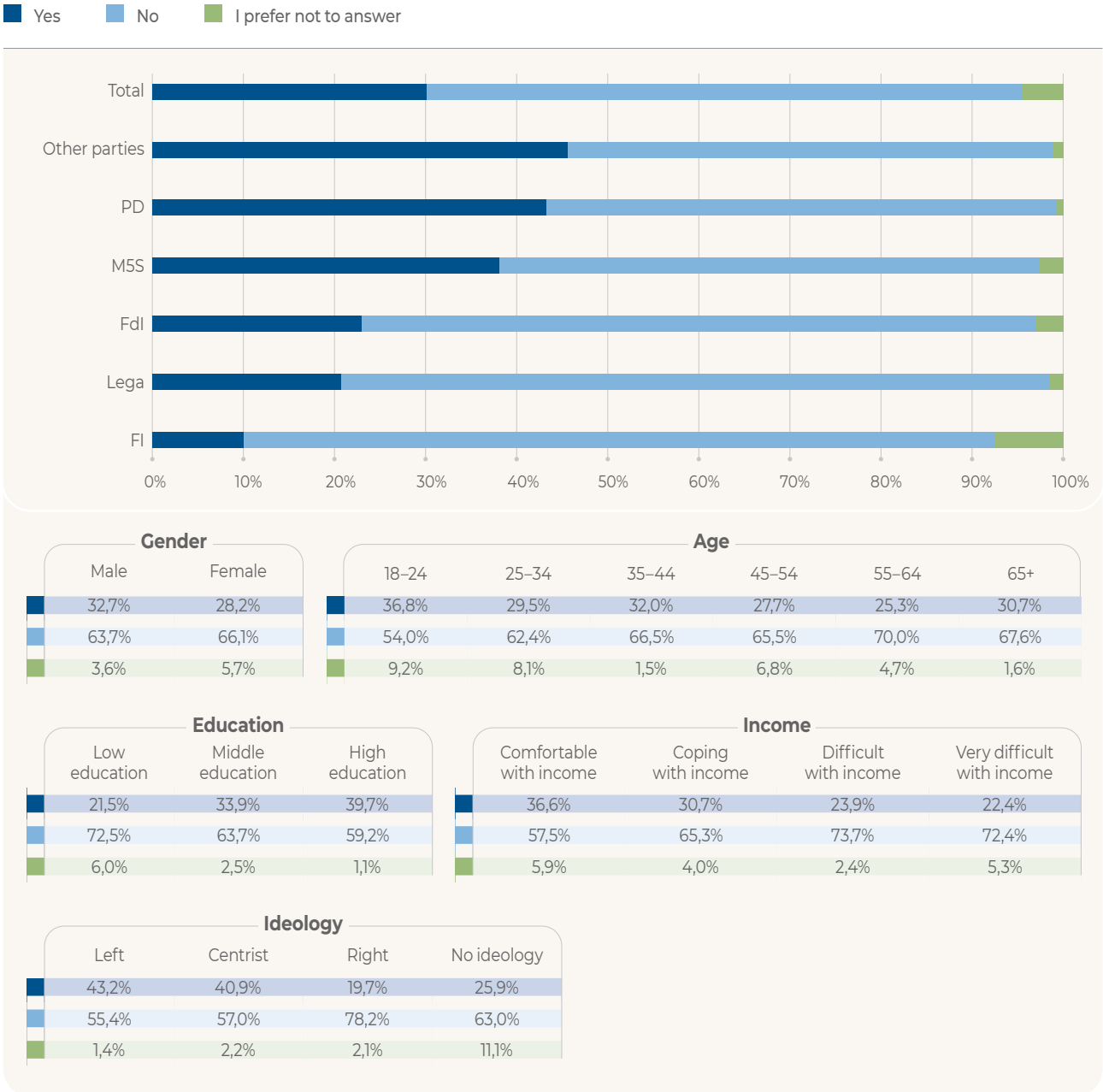


**COVID-19 Contact Tracing App**

A rather underwhelming proportion of respondents have installed Italy's national contact tracing app (Immuni) – a mere 30 per cent. Voters of the governing M5S and PD parties were more likely to have installed the app compared to other voter

groups, especially FI and Lega. People with lower levels of education and precarious economic conditions were the least likely to have installed the contact tracing app. Moreover, right-wing voters and those claiming no ideological orientation were less likely to have installed the contact tracing app.

**Figure 8 / Q61 – Have you installed on your smartphone the national contact tracing app (Immuni)?**

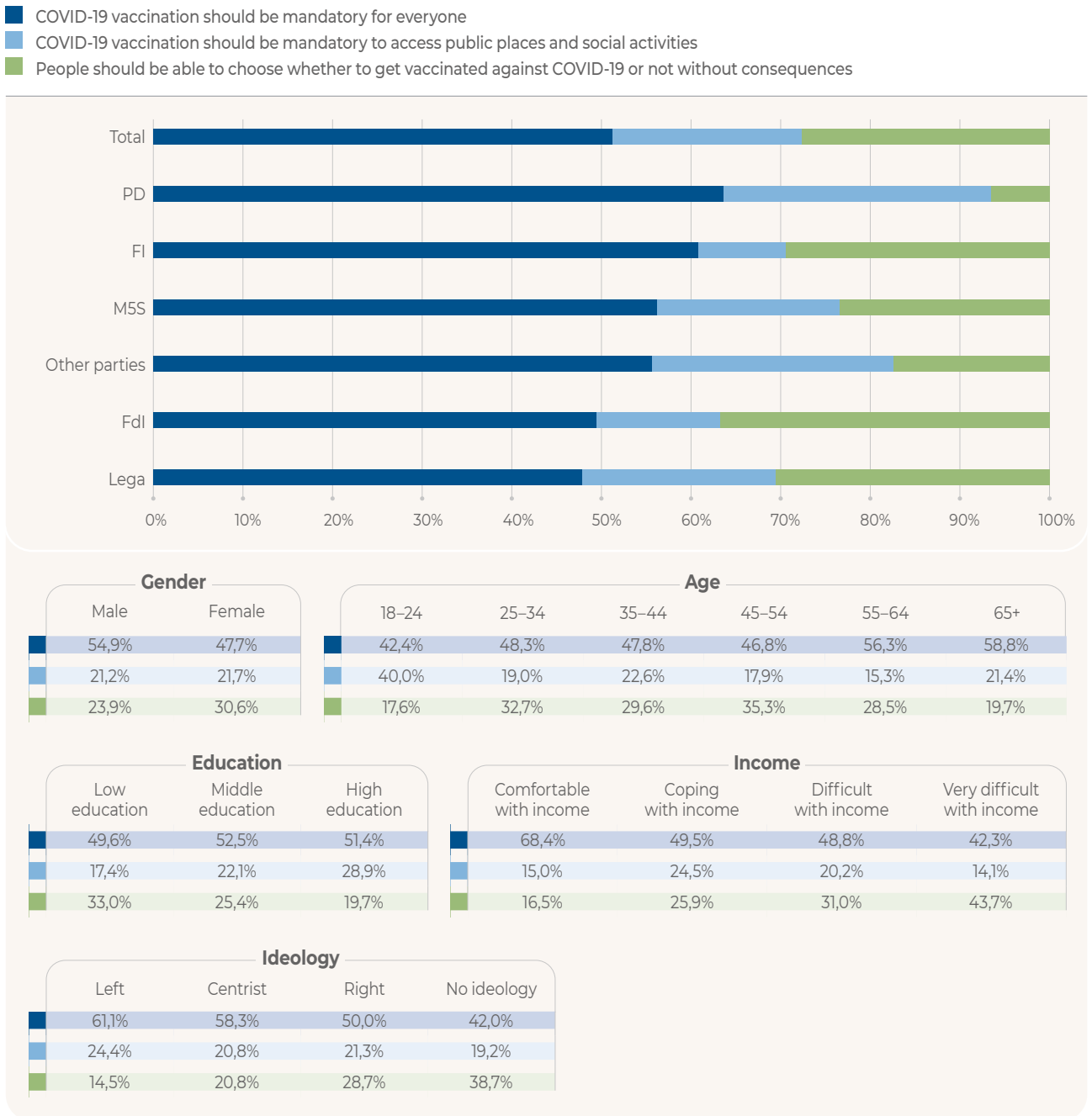


**Mandatory Vaccination**

More than 70 per cent of Italian respondents believe there should be some form of mandatory vaccination against COVID-19. Voters of the centrist PD, FI voters, M5S voters, and those who vote for smaller parties are most supportive of mandatory vaccination, whereas Lega and Fdl voters are most opposed. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that support for mandatory vaccination is widespread among all voter groups. When broken down by demo-

graphic group, men are more likely than women to support mandatory vaccinations, along with older voters, those with higher incomes, and those with left-wing ideology. Highly educated respondents are more likely to be supportive of requesting vaccine proof for public space access compared to other voter groups. Respondents who struggle with their financial situation or have no declared political ideology are most opposed to mandatory vaccination.

**Figure 9 / Q21G – Mandatory vaccination**



**Public Perception, Institutional Trust, and Support for COVID-19 Measures**

The Support for COVID-19 Mitigation Measures Index comprises five separate questions; respondents were asked to evaluate the measures various institutions have taken to respond to the pandemic. The institutional trust index is generated from six separate questions that ask respondents to what extent they trust various national and international institutions on a 10-point scale, where 0 means “no trust at all” and 10 means “complete trust”. All questions used in the scatterplots are asked with a 10-point scale answer category. For all indices included in the country report, lower scores indicate a low level of support or agreement with what is measured, while higher scores account for a high level of support. In sum, a lower institutional trust index score signifies a lower degree of institu-

tional trust. The average values of numerous respondent groups are reported in a two-dimensional scatterplot with the various population segmentations based on age, gender, educational attainment, difficulty coping with income, political orientation, and party support.

There is a clear linear relationship between the two indices: the more institutionally trustful respondents are, the more likely they are to support COVID-19 mitigation measures. In particular, voters of the moderate centrist and the left-wing parties and those with higher incomes are most supportive of the measures and also have the highest levels of institutional trust, along with voters from the older generation. Fdl voters and the respondents in the most precarious economic situations have substantially lower degrees of trust and are less likely to support COVID-19

**Figure 10 – Support für Covid Measures**



mitigation measures compared to voters of the left-wing and moderate parties and FI, the highly educated, and the economically well-off. Interestingly, Lega voters are much more supportive of the measures than Fdl voters.

When it comes to perceptions of who has benefitted from the public spending during the pandemic, it is clear that right-wing respondents, Fdl and Lega voters and those on the lowest steps of the economic ladder perceive that the wealthiest have benefitted the most from public spending for economic recovery. Ideologically cen-

trist and left-wing respondents, those aged 18 to 24, those with higher incomes, and respondents who vote for M5S and PD are less likely to believe that public spending has benefitted the wealthiest. However, it is important to note that the question on the vertical axis is a 10-point scale, meaning that all respondent groups in the graph score above the scale's mean. This suggests that the public is rather dissatisfied with the handling of public spending during the pandemic. There is a general and widespread perception that the pandemic increased existing societal inequalities.

Figure 11 – Beneficiaries of Public Spending



When it comes to the perception that pandemic mitigation measures go against constitutional and democratic principles, it is clear that Italians are divided on the matter. Fdl and Lega voters are an outlier, along with people with lower levels of educational attainment, those struggling with their income, those aged 45 to 54, and those on the

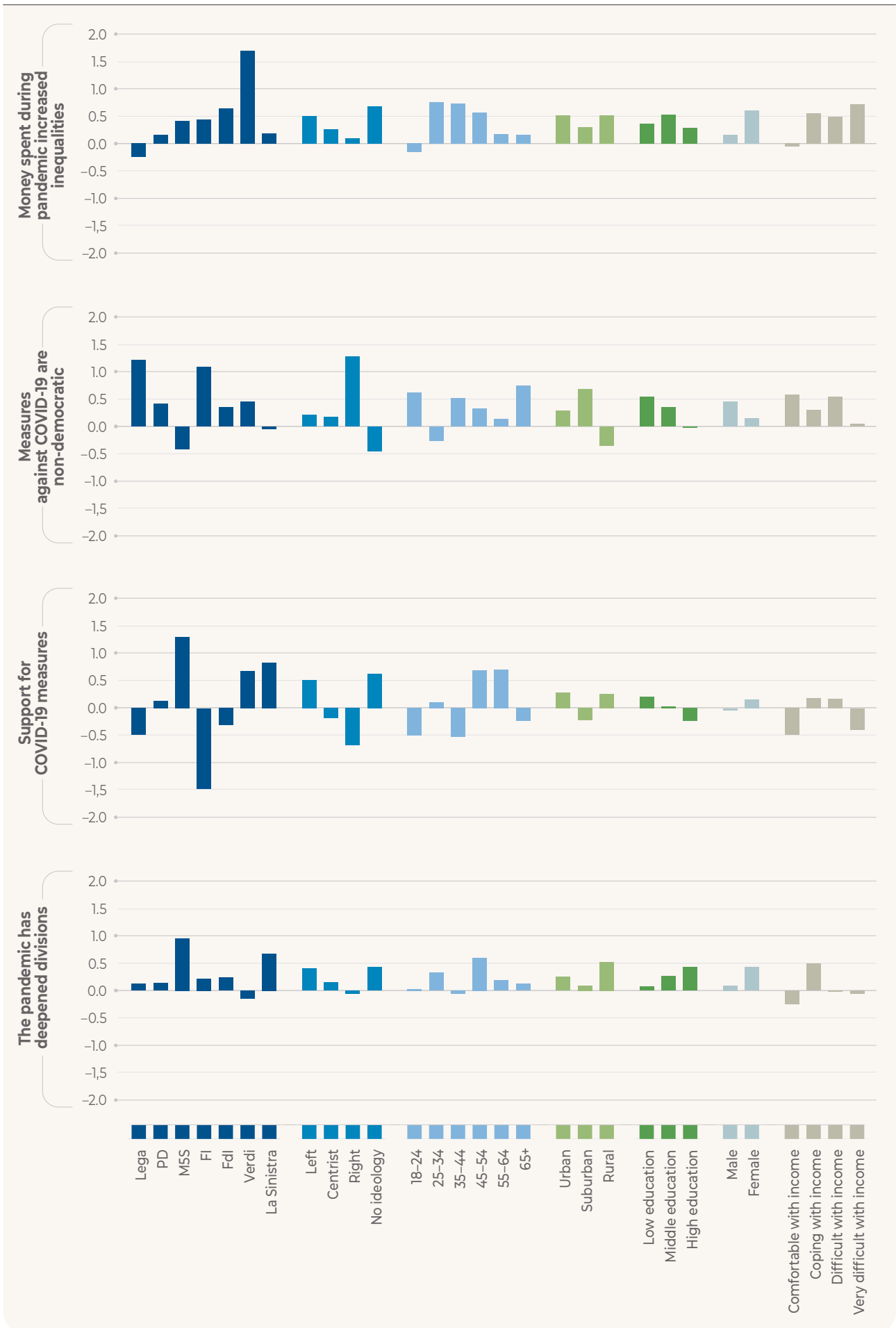
political right. However, many respondent groups have a rather moderate position on the matter. Respondents that are older than 65 and younger than 25, those comfortable with their income, and PD or M5S voters are least likely to think that the government's response to the pandemic was unconstitutional and anti-democratic.

Figure 12 – Covid Measures and Constitutional Rules





Figure 14





When it comes to the differences between the results in the two waves, we report how the mean values for each index changed for each sociodemographic respondent group. There is a clear pattern: most respondent groups agree more strongly in 2021 compared to 2020 that the pandemic has deepened divisions between people. Support for the COVID-19 measures has also increased substantially among nearly all voter groups. While nearly all respondents believe to a large extent that money spent during the pandemic increased inequalities, they were split on whether the measures are undemocratic.

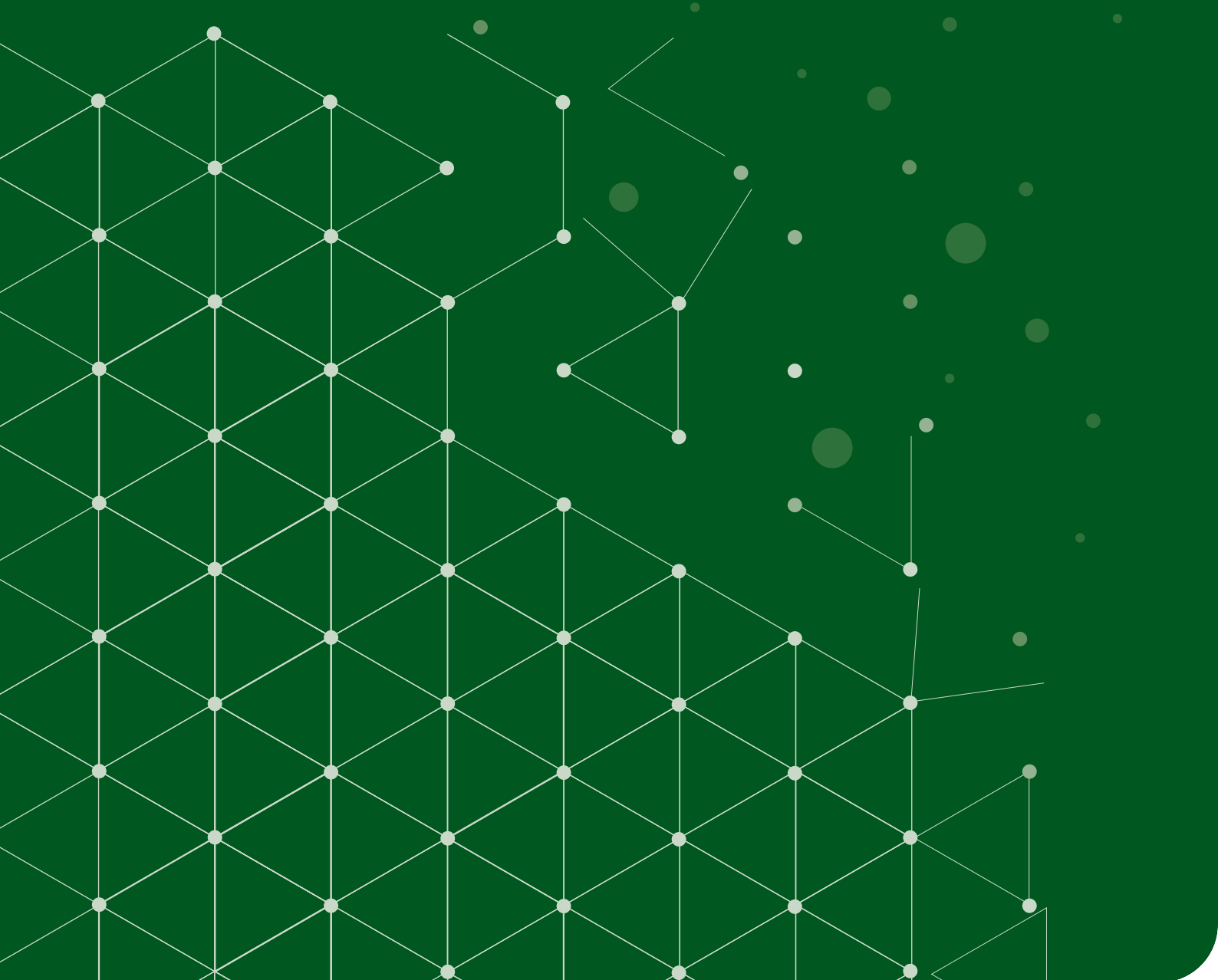
## KEY FINDINGS 1

- Although the majority of Italian respondents understand the COVID-19 pandemic has a serious impact of on public health, society is rather polarized when it comes to the anti-pandemic measures taken by the government and the vaccination campaign.
- While the vast majority of Italians are concerned that the virus would endanger their health if they get sick, the majority did not consider it likely that they would contract the virus. Voters of FdI and M5S were least likely to be concerned about the virus.
- More than half of Italians consider that the government has taken appropriate measures to protect public health, regardless of the impact these measures had on the economy and personal freedoms. Those with economic difficulties and right-wing political ideologies along with FdI and Lega voters were most critical of the anti-pandemic measures.
- The majority of all respondent groups reported a willingness to get vaccinated. FdI and Lega voters, however, as well as less educated respondents and those with income difficulties, were less likely to say they would vaccinate.
- When it comes to deterioration of quality of life and working conditions in relation to the pandemic, the majority of the Italian public reports a negative effect, particularly on their quality of life, while most Italians' working conditions remained largely the same. Nevertheless, it is clear that both the lifestyle and work of those on the bottom of the economic ladder, as well as Lega, FdI, and M5S voters were most negatively affected by the pandemic.
- Most Italians believe that there should be some form of mandatory vaccination, at least when it comes to accessing public events. FdI, Lega, and FI voters, less educated respondents, those with income difficulties, and respondents with no political ideology are most likely to oppose mandatory vaccinations.
- The more institutionally trustful respondents are, the more likely they are to support COVID-19 measures. In particular, voters of the moderate centrist and the left-wing parties, older respondents, and those with higher incomes are most supportive of the measures against the pandemic and also have the highest levels of institutional trust.
- The perception that measures against the pandemic go against constitutional and democratic principles is a divisive matter. FdI and Lega voters, those struggling with their income, those aged 45 to 54, those on the political right, and respondents with no ideology are most likely to believe that the measures have taken democratic freedoms away.
- Nearly all respondent groups agreed to a larger extent in 2021 than in 2020 that the pandemic has deepened divisions between people.



# CHAPTER 2

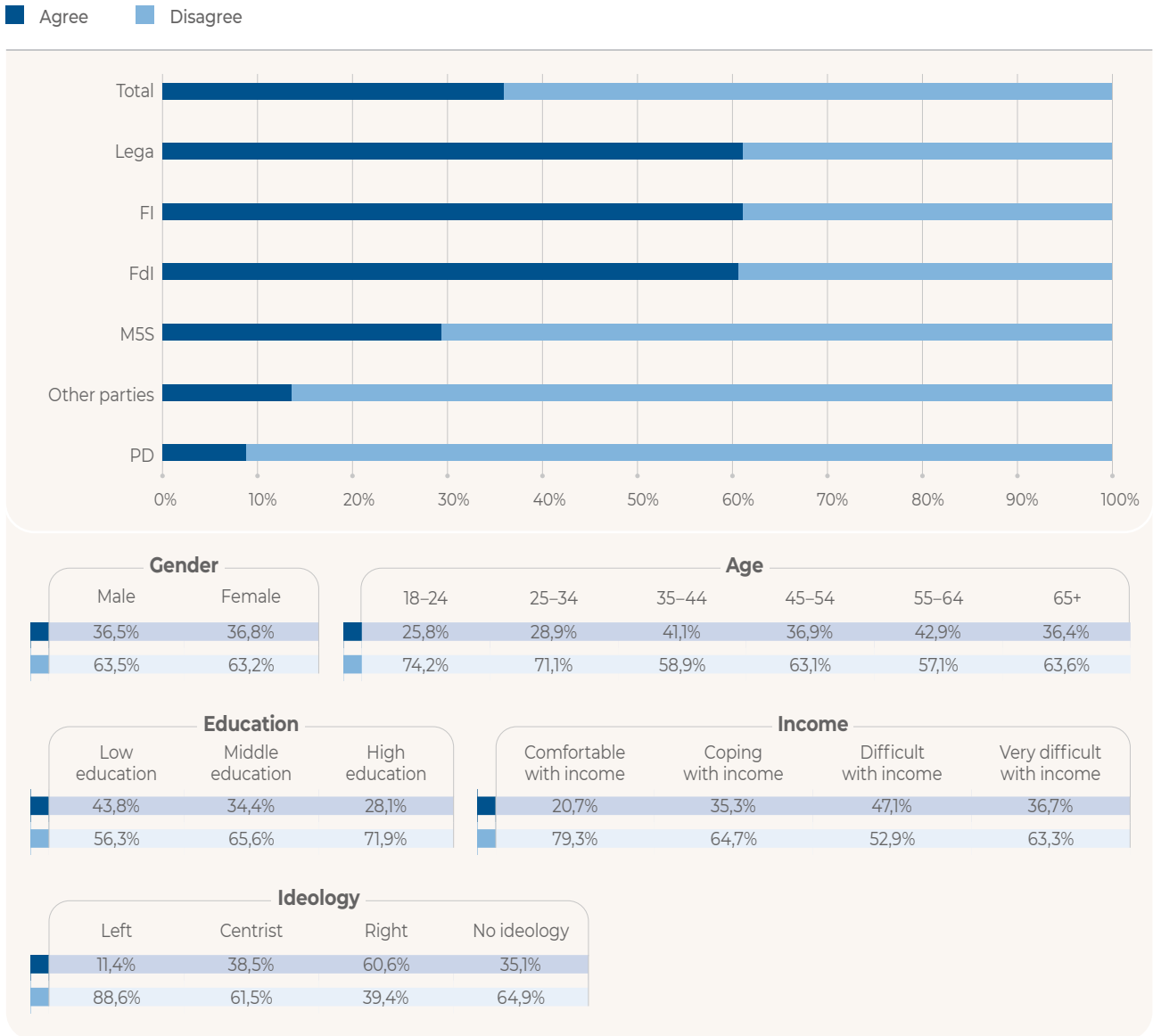
## CRISIS-INDUCED SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CONSPIRACY THEORIES



When it comes to conspiracy belief, the proposition stating that “the virus is a biological weapon intentionally released by China” has the largest degree of support among Italians compared to other pandemic-related conspiracy theories: 36.2 per cent of those surveyed state that they believe in this theory. Lega and FI voters are most likely to

agree with the proposition, while PD and M5S voters are least likely to do so. Middle-aged respondents, those with less education, those most precarious in terms of income, as well as respondents with right-wing ideologies are more likely to believe in this conspiracy theory than other groups.

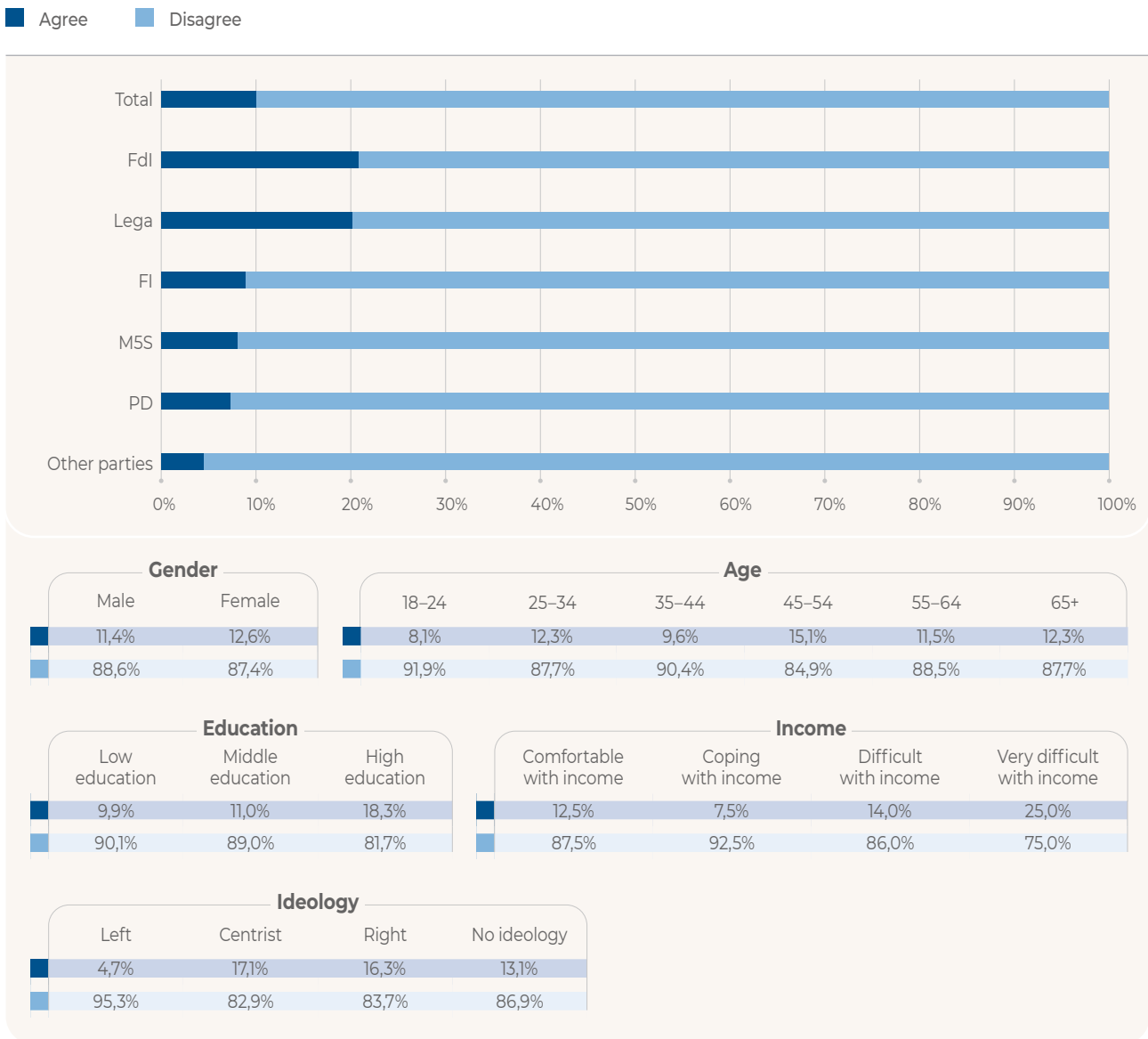
Figure 15 / Q57XB – “The virus is a biological weapon released by China”



Another conspiracy theory addressed in this survey is the proposition that “5G technology is causing the coronavirus to more quickly”. This theory has a low degree of support: 9.6 per cent of those surveyed state that they believe in the theory. FdI and Lega voters are most likely to agree with the proposition, while PD and smaller par-

ty voters are least likely to do so. Middle-aged respondents, those with middle education, those least likely to cope with their income, as well as respondents with right-wing and centrist ideologies are more likely to believe in this conspiracy theory compared to other demographic groups.

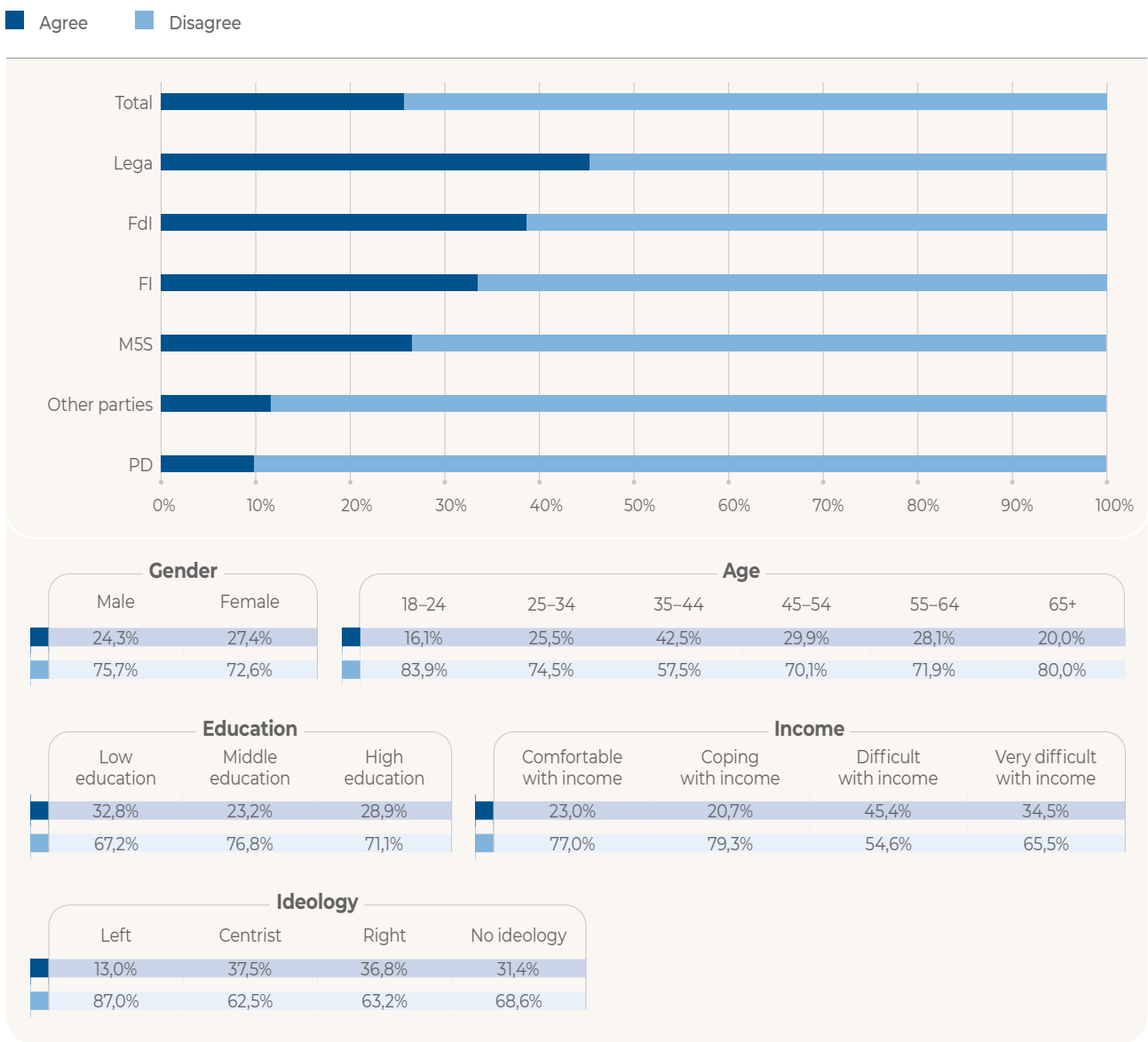
Figure 16 / Q57XB – “5G technology is causing the coronavirus to spread more quickly”



A rather high degree of agreement among the Italian populace was found for the conspiracy theory “The virus has been spread by multinational pharmaceutical companies now ready to make huge profits by selling the vaccine” — 25.6 per cent of those surveyed stated that they believe in the theory. Many Lega and FdI voters agree with

the proposition, while PD and smaller party voters are least likely to do so. The less educated, those aged 55 to 64, the economically precarious, and those on the political right are more likely to believe that multinational pharmaceutical companies have spread the virus for their own economic gain.

**Figure 17/Q57XB – “The virus has been spread by multinational pharmaceutical companies so they can make huge profits by selling the vaccine”**



The proposition stating that “the coronavirus is a hoax” has the lowest degree of support; only 4.2 per cent of those surveyed doubt that the virus is a genuine threat. Again, Lega and Fdi voters and FI supporters are most likely to agree with the proposition, while PD and M5S voters are least likely to think that COVID-19 is a hoax.

Figure 18 / Q57XB – “The coronavirus is a hoax”



## KEY FINDINGS 2

- Given that conspiracy theories about the COVID-19 pandemic were prevalent during the first two years of the pandemic, it comes as no surprise that a large proportion of Italian citizens profess that certain conspiracy theories are true.
- Fdl, Lega, and FI voters are notably more likely to believe in conspiracy theories than other voter groups, along with less educated and older respondents, as well as those with income difficulties.
- Two conspiracy theories (that the virus was intentionally released by China and that it is spread by pharmaceutical corporations on purpose) have the largest degree of support among the Italian public: 36 and 26 per cent, respectively.
- A substantial number of respondents also agree with the two other conspiracy theories, even though one would expect otherwise, given their very unlikely propositions: 10 per cent of respondents agreed with the statement that 5G technology helps the virus spread more quickly, while 4 per cent agreed with the statement that the coronavirus is a hoax.
- Contrary to popular belief, the data suggests that there is a widespread belief in conspiracy theories in Italy. These findings could indicate that, in times of crisis, public opinion is more susceptible to suggestive messages disseminated by populists and organizations with potentially anti-democratic aims.

# CHAPTER 3

## PD VOTERS REMAINED AMONG THE “ECONOMICALLY COMFORTABLE”





**Changes in Economic Situation between 2020 and 2021**

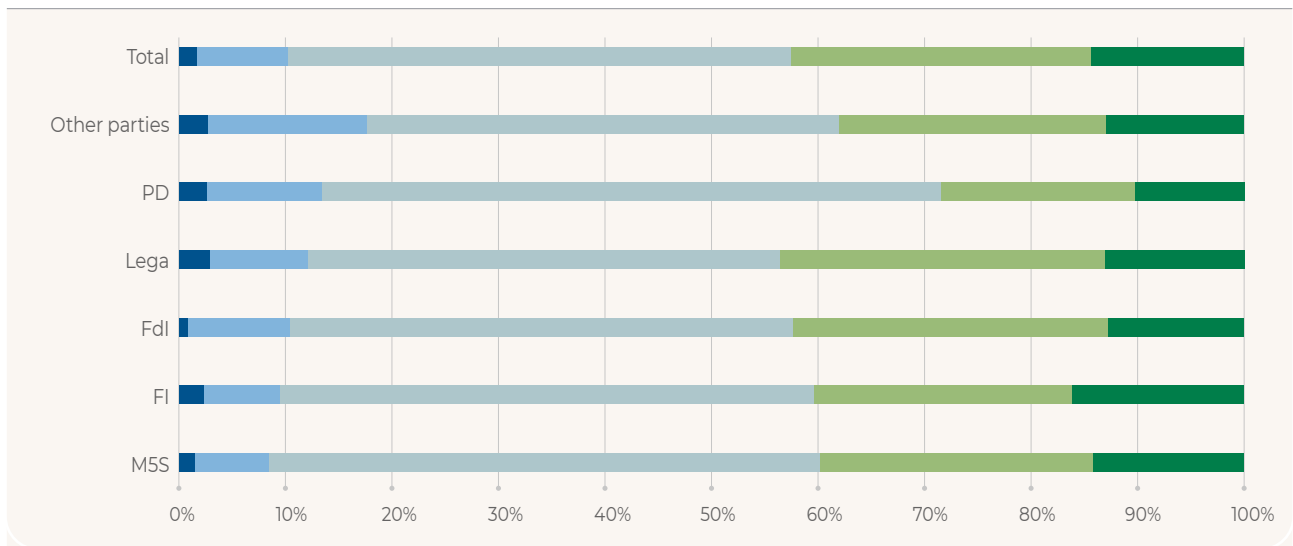
A large minority of Italian respondents (47.3 per cent) state that their economic situation has remained the same from 2020 to 2021. Understandably, only 11 per cent state that their situation has improved, while for about 42 per cent of respondents, their economic situation has deteriorated since 2020. PD and smaller party voters reported having experienced the largest degree of improve-

ment, while the opposite is true for Lega and FDI voters. PD voters are also the voter group whose economic situation remained largely unchanged compared to 2020. The proportion of respondents with a deteriorating economic situation is similar within nearly all voter groups, yet less prominent among older respondents, those with higher education and high incomes and those with a left-wing ideology.

**Figure 19 / Q27 – Changes in Economic Situation between 2020 and 2021**

Compared to the end of 2020, do you think that your own economic situation ...

■ Got a lot better   
 ■ Got a little better   
 ■ Stayed the same   
 ■ Got a little worse   
 ■ Got a lot worse



**Gender**

	Male	Female
Got a lot better	1,9%	1,8%
Got a little better	14,6%	12,4%
Stayed the same	50,4%	48,2%
Got a little worse	22,2%	25,9%
Got a lot worse	11,0%	11,8%

**Age**

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Got a lot better	3,6%	1,4%	1,6%	1,1%	2,7%	1,7%
Got a little better	27,7%	10,3%	15,7%	16,0%	10,1%	8,3%
Stayed the same	41,0%	44,1%	47,6%	44,0%	50,0%	59,9%
Got a little worse	20,5%	31,0%	20,4%	25,1%	25,7%	22,7%
Got a lot worse	7,2%	13,1%	14,7%	13,7%	11,5%	7,4%

**Education**

	Low education	Middle education	High education
Got a lot better	2,1%	1,7%	1,7%
Got a little better	10,1%	14,7%	17,1%
Stayed the same	49,2%	48,9%	50,3%
Got a little worse	26,8%	23,5%	20,0%
Got a lot worse	11,9%	11,2%	10,9%

**Income**

	Comfortable with income	Coping with income	Difficult with income	Very difficult with income
Got a lot better	4,5%	1,2%	0,8%	4,2%
Got a little better	21,1%	15,5%	8,8%	5,6%
Stayed the same	60,9%	57,3%	41,2%	15,5%
Got a little worse	9,8%	20,1%	36,6%	25,4%
Got a lot worse	3,8%	6,0%	12,6%	49,3%

**Ideology**

	Left	Centrist	Right	No ideology
Got a lot better	2,5%	3,1%	1,5%	1,2%
Got a little better	15,2%	18,4%	15,8%	8,3%
Stayed the same	56,9%	51,0%	43,8%	47,0%
Got a little worse	19,2%	15,3%	27,6%	28,1%
Got a lot worse	6,2%	12,2%	11,4%	15,4%

**Future Economic Outlook**

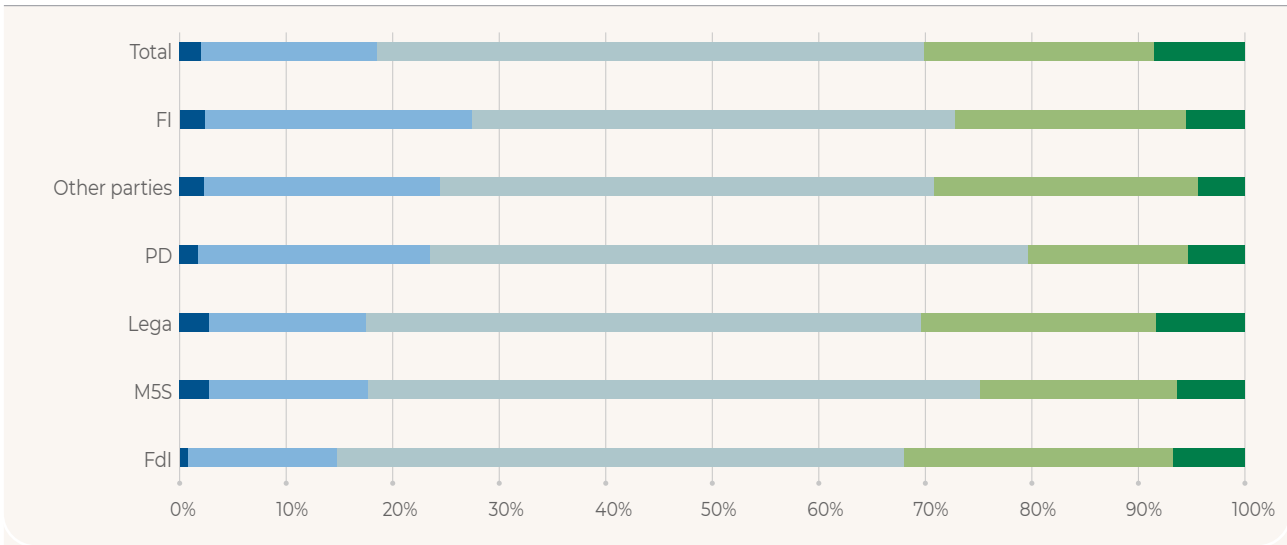
When it comes to their economic expectations for the next 12 months, 51.5 per cent of respondents expected that their economic situation would not change. More respondents were pessimistic (30 per cent) than optimistic (18.5 per cent). FI voters were the most positive when it

came to their expectations for the coming year, while Fdl voters were the most negative. Also, the youngest respondents, those with higher levels of education, those more comfortable with their income, and left-wing or centrist respondents had the most positive economic expectations for the next 12 months.

**Figure 20 / Q28 – Economic outlook for the next 12 months**

And thinking about the next 12 months, do you think that your own economic situation ...

Will get a lot better   Will get a little better   Will stay the same   Will get a little worse   Will get a lot worse



**Gender**

	Male	Female
Will get a lot better	2,8%	2,0%
Will get a little better	19,8%	19,4%
Will stay the same	50,7%	51,7%
Will get a little worse	20,4%	18,6%
Will get a lot worse	6,3%	8,2%

**Age**

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Will get a lot better	3,7%	2,9%	3,7%	1,8%	2,9%	0,8%
Will get a little better	42,0%	29,7%	24,6%	18,6%	10,9%	8,3%
Will stay the same	35,8%	43,5%	47,6%	52,1%	55,8%	59,3%
Will get a little worse	16,0%	15,9%	17,1%	21,0%	18,1%	24,9%
Will get a lot worse	2,5%	8,0%	7,0%	6,6%	12,3%	6,6%

**Education**

	Low education	Middle education	High education
Will get a lot better	1,9%	2,4%	3,5%
Will get a little better	14,1%	21,7%	25,7%
Will stay the same	54,6%	49,3%	48,5%
Will get a little worse	21,2%	20,5%	14,0%
Will get a lot worse	8,2%	6,1%	8,2%

**Income**

	Comfortable with income	Coping with income	Difficult with income	Very difficult with income
Will get a lot better	7,0%	1,4%	1,2%	2,9%
Will get a little better	29,5%	19,7%	15,7%	8,8%
Will stay the same	54,3%	59,1%	45,0%	29,4%
Will get a little worse	7,8%	16,2%	30,9%	25,0%
Will get a lot worse	1,6%	3,6%	7,2%	33,8%

**Ideology**

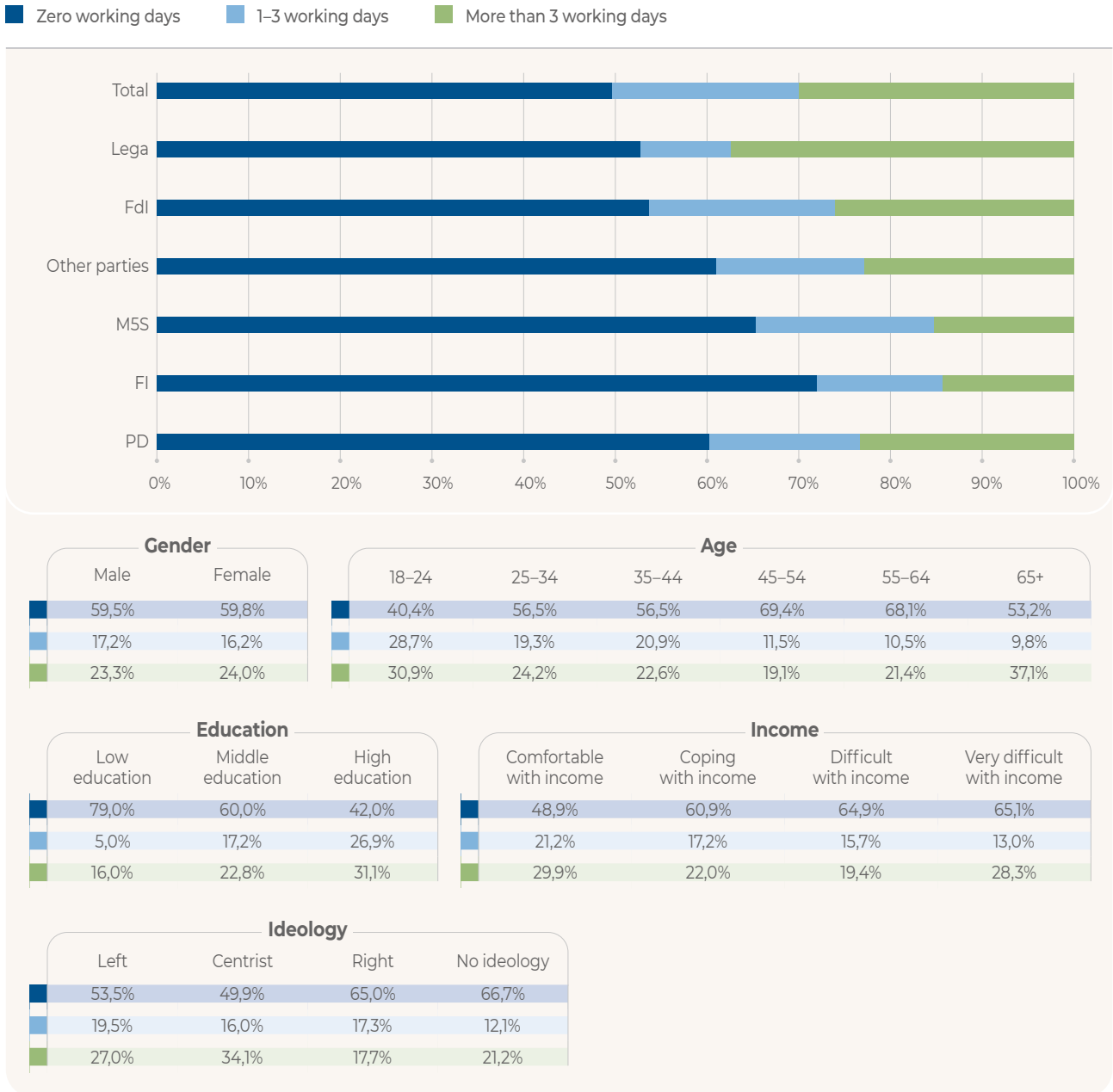
	Left	Centrist	Right	No ideology
Will get a lot better	2,2%	7,5%	1,5%	1,9%
Will get a little better	23,0%	21,5%	18,9%	16,8%
Will stay the same	52,6%	49,5%	53,8%	48,3%
Will get a little worse	18,6%	11,8%	20,1%	21,8%
Will get a lot worse	3,6%	9,7%	5,7%	11,2%

**Working from Home**

The majority of all voter groups, with the exception of PD voters, had not worked from home during the previous week before the survey was administered in November 2020 and November 2021. Lega voters were the least likely to have worked from home, while PD, FI, and M5S

voters spent the most time working from home. The youngest and oldest respondents, those with higher comfort levels with their income, and respondents with higher levels of educational attainment were more likely than other groups to have recently worked from home.

**Figure 21 / Q9 – “During the last week, how much time have you spent working from home?”**



**Income Situation**

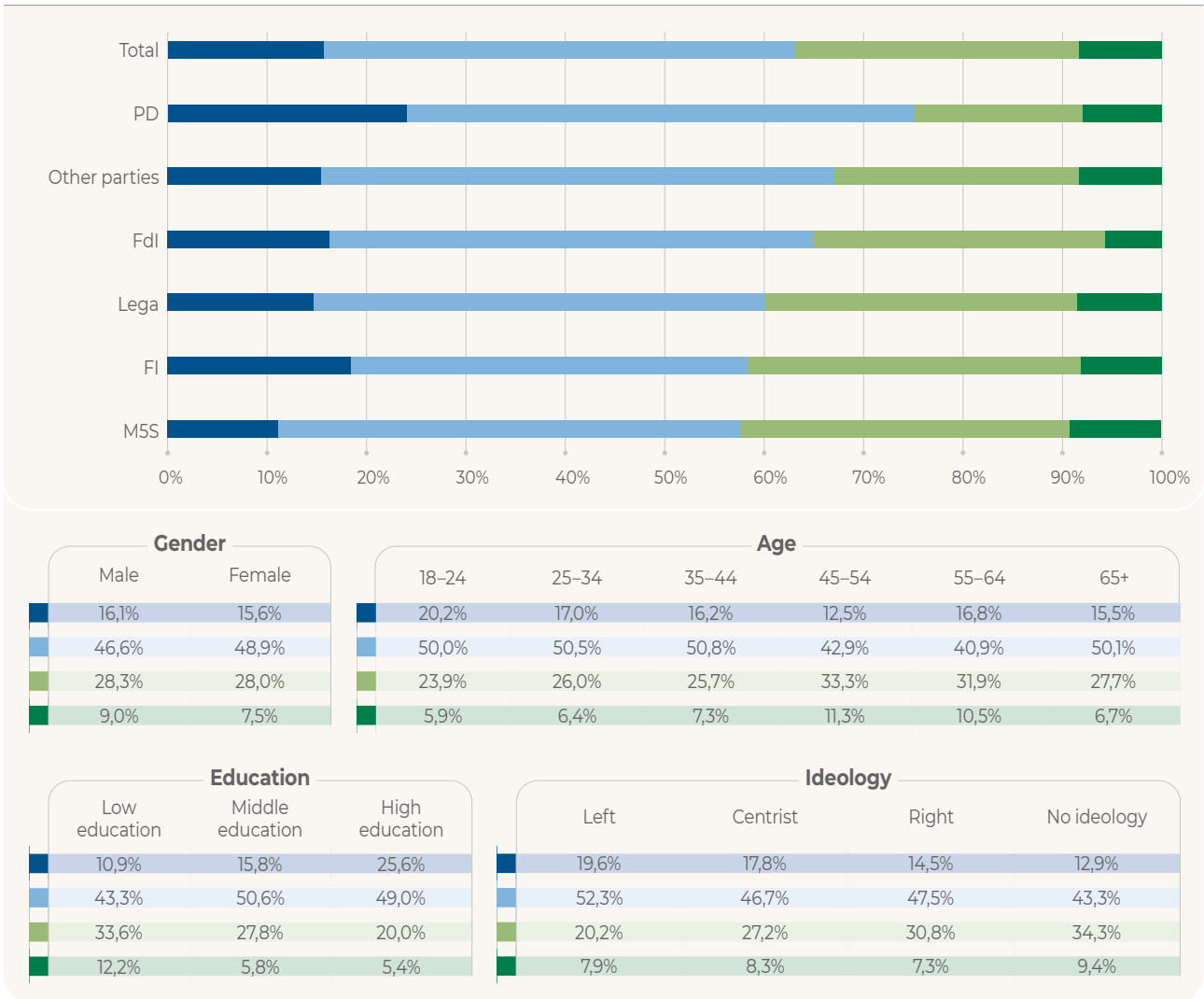
The majority of Italian citizens (62.2 per cent) report that they live comfortably or cope well with their income. The voter groups experiencing the most economic difficulties

are voters of M5S and FI, while PD voters are predominantly reported to be well-off economically. The less educated and people without an ideological orientation are the most economically precarious sectors of the population.

**Figure 22 / Q12 – Income situation**

Which of these descriptions comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays?

■ Living comfortably    
 ■ Coping    
 ■ Finding it difficult    
 ■ Finding it very difficult

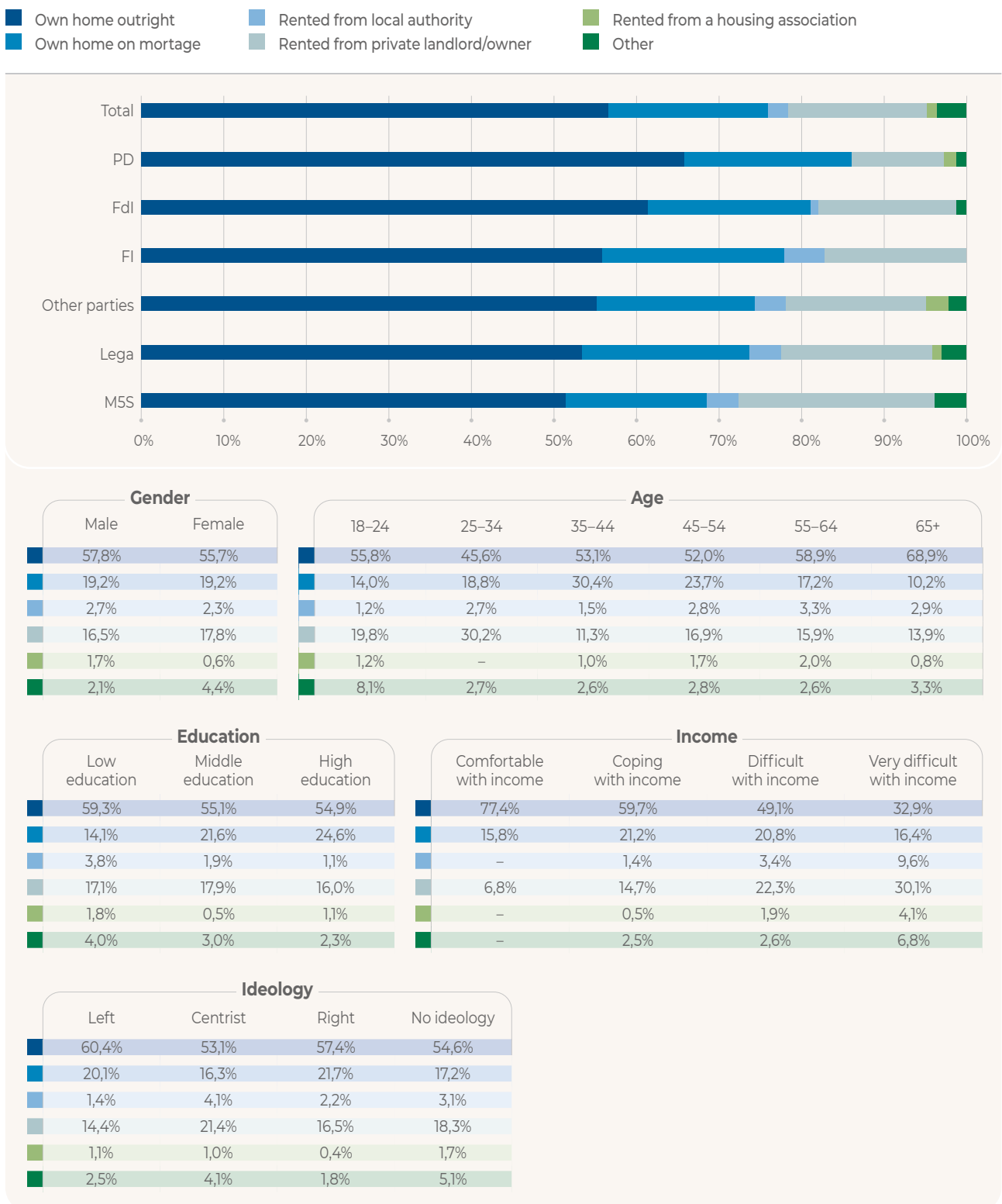


**Homeownership**

When it comes to homeownership, it is clear that PD and FdI voters are more likely to own a home outright compared to other voter groups. However, it is worth noting that home ownership in Italy is higher than the Western European average, with nearly 60 per cent of respondents owning a house outright. While men are slightly more likely than women to own a home, it comes as a surprise that respondents aged 18 to 24 are substantially more likely to own a home compared to respondents aged 25 to 54. Education is clearly related to

home ownership, as evidenced by the finding that those with higher education are much more likely to own a home on a mortgage than other education categories. Interestingly, less educated respondents are more likely to own a home outright than other education categories. Income is the strongest predictor of home ownership: the higher income a person has, the more likely they are to own a home. There are no substantial differences when it comes to ideology, apart from the finding that left-wing aligned respondents are slightly more likely to own a home compared to other ideological groups.

**Figure 23 / Q12B – Homeownership**



## KEY FINDINGS 3

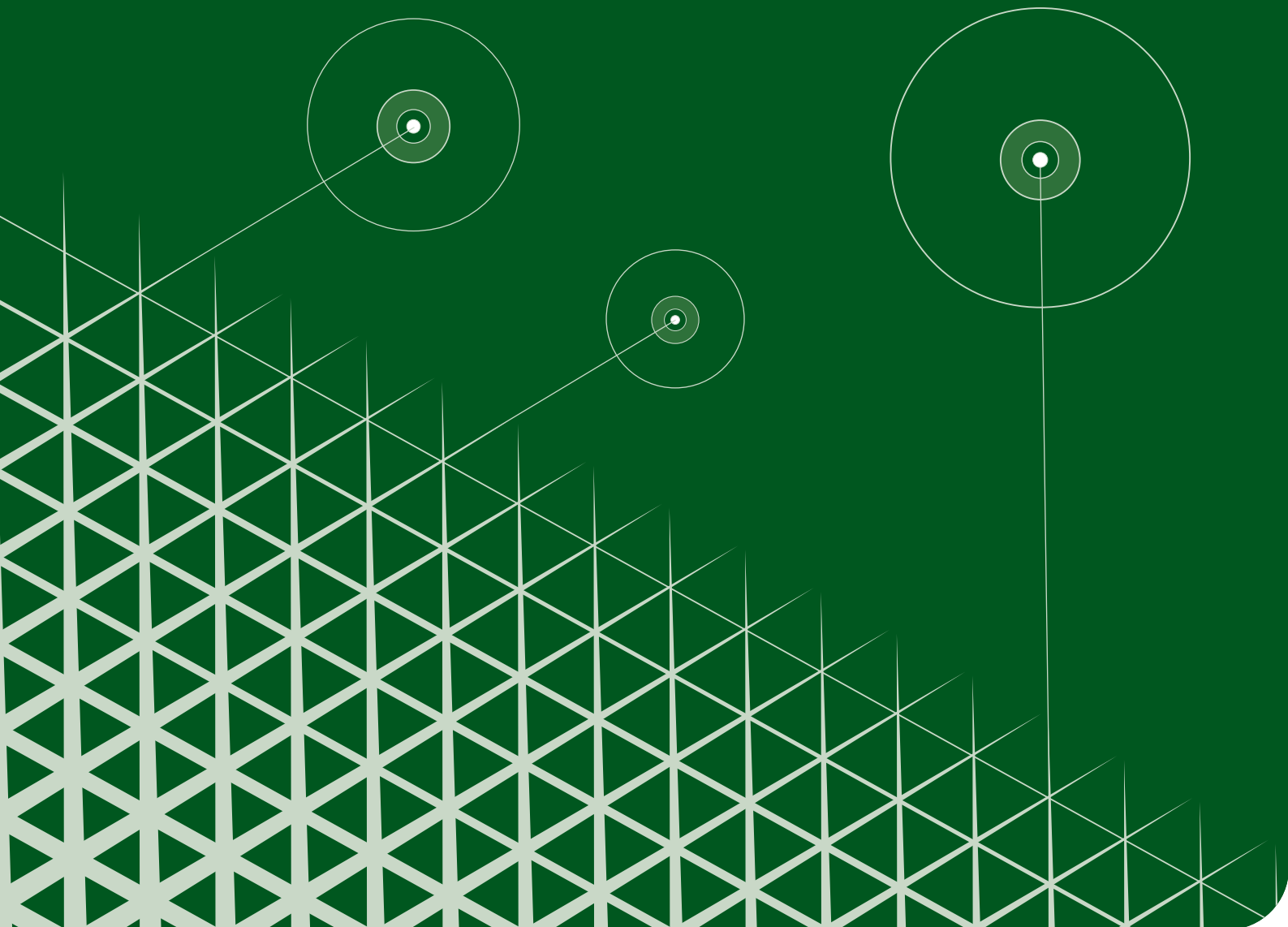
- Although a majority of Italians report that their economic situation stayed the same or improved from 2020 to 2021, more than 40 per cent of respondents say it has deteriorated. Lega and FdI voters, along with respondents who reported difficulties coping with their income, were most likely to also report a deterioration of their economic situation.
- Most Italians had a positive and/or neutral economic outlook for the upcoming year (2022). FI, PD, and small party voters, as well as younger respondents had the most positive expectations, whereas FdI, M5S, and Lega voters, as well as older respondents and people in a difficult economic situation have the most negative expectations.
- When it comes to income, more than 60 per cent of Italians report that they live comfortably or at least are able to cope with their current income. PD voters are the economically most comfortable voter group, along with younger and highly educated respondents. M5S voters and less educated respondents are most likely to experience income difficulties.
- PD and FdI voters are more likely to own a home outright compared to other voter groups.
- Income is also a predictor of home ownership: the higher income a person has, the more likely they are to own a home.





# CHAPTER 4

## THE GROWING CONCERN ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE





**EU Membership**

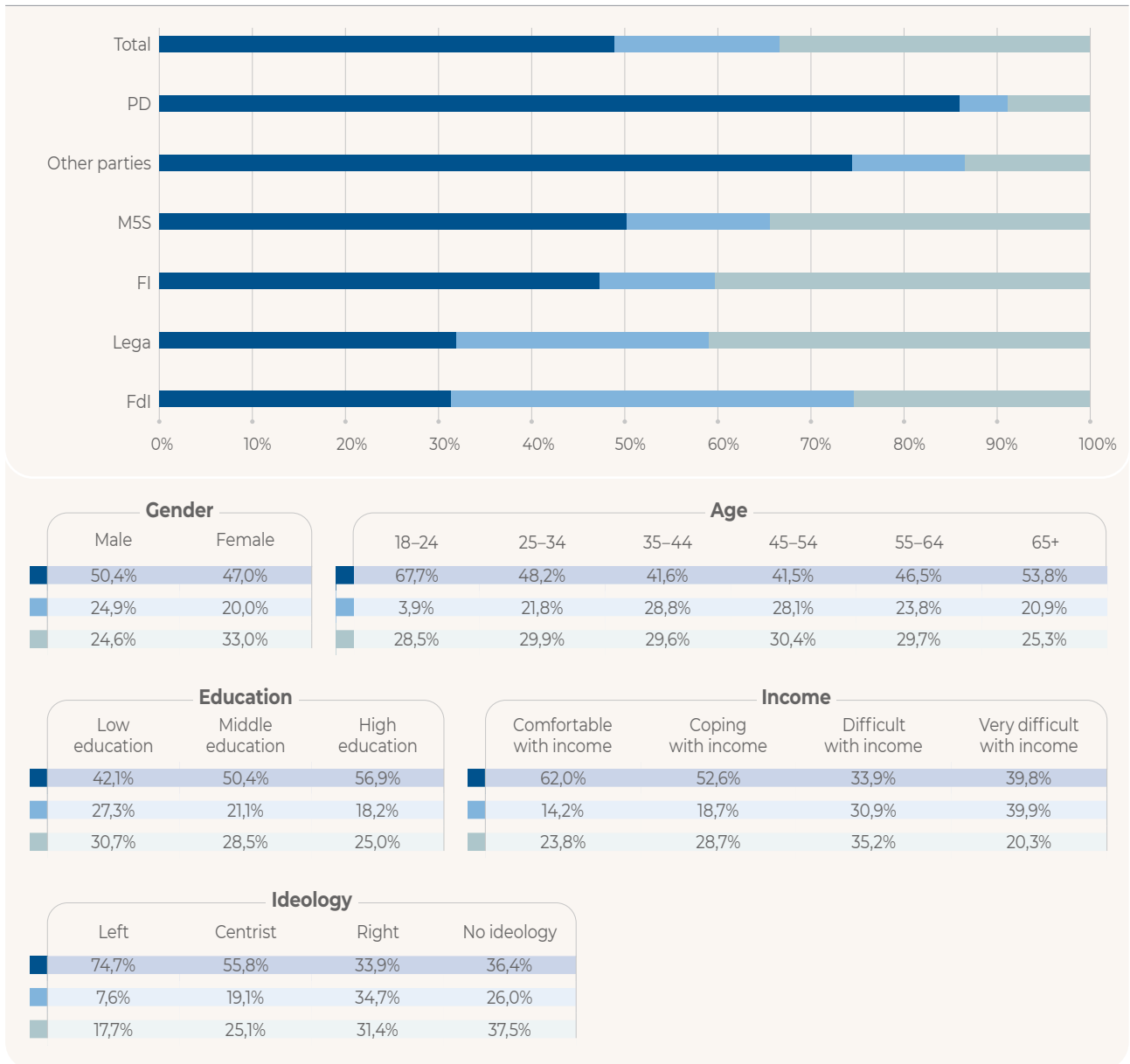
Slightly less than half of Italian respondents consider their country's EU membership to be a good thing. Meanwhile, 21.1 per cent perceive EU membership negatively. The results differ by vote choice, with PD and smaller party voters being most positive about Italy's EU membership. FdI

voters are most likely to think Italy's EU membership is a bad thing. In terms of demographics, men, respondents aged 35 to 54, the less educated, those with difficulties coping with their income, and right-wing respondents are most likely to perceive Italy's EU membership as a bad thing.

**Figure 24 / Q20 – Membership in the EU**

Generally speaking, do you think that your national's membership of the EU is ...?

■ A good thing   ■ A bad thing   ■ Neither good nor bad



**Economic Regulation by the State**

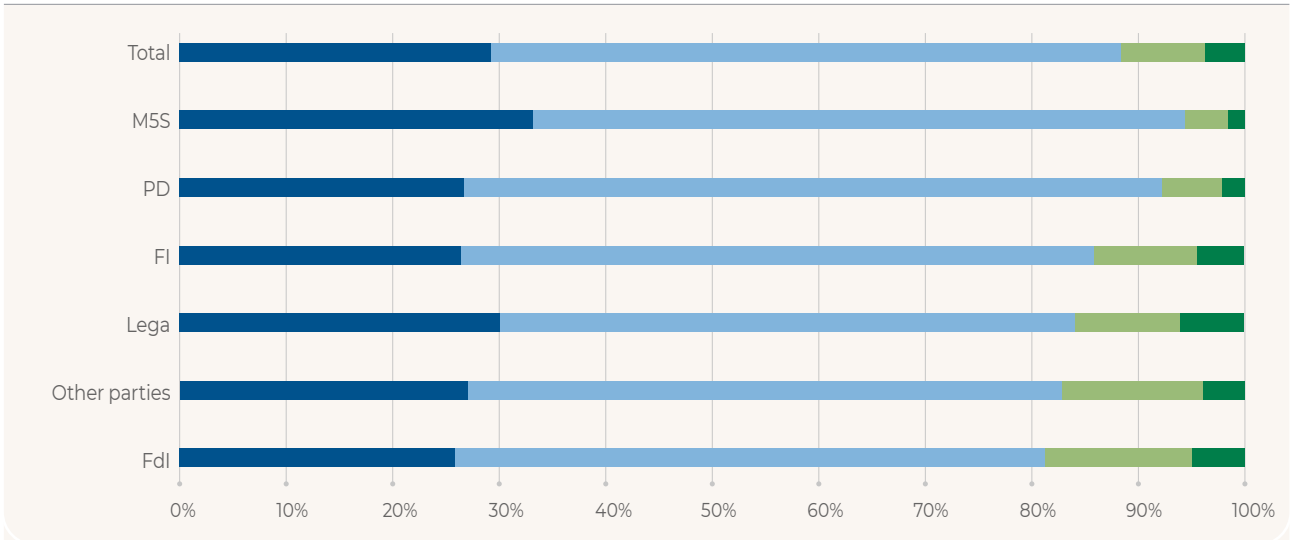
In what can be seen as good news for the (moderate) left, a clear majority (88.6 per cent) of Italian respondents agree that the state should play a greater role in regulating the economy. M5S and PS voters agree with this proposition the most, while, surprisingly, FI voters are third in line, followed by Lega and FdI voters. More than 80 per

cent of all voter groups (strongly) agree with the proposition. Men are notably more likely to disagree with the statement, along with older generations and highly educated respondents. Unsurprisingly, those with higher incomes and people with a right-wing ideological orientation are also more likely to disagree that the state should play a greater role in regulating the economy.

**Figure 25 / Q41C – State regulation of the economy**

“The state should play a greater role in the regulation of the economy”

Agree strongly    Agree    Disagree    Disagree strongly



**Gender**

	Male	Female
Agree strongly	29.2%	25.7%
Agree	57.2%	63.8%
Disagree	10.2%	8.4%
Disagree strongly	3.5%	2.1%

**Age**

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Agree strongly	32.9%	31.7%	24.3%	29.3%	22.0%	26.6%
Agree	57.9%	57.9%	64.2%	54.1%	71.2%	59.6%
Disagree	6.6%	8.7%	7.5%	13.4%	4.5%	11.9%
Disagree strongly	2.6%	1.6%	4.0%	3.2%	2.3%	1.8%

**Education**

	Low education	Middle education	High education
Agree strongly	26.5%	27.4%	27.5%
Agree	62.1%	61.8%	57.9%
Disagree	9.5%	8.5%	10.5%
Disagree strongly	1.9%	2.3%	4.1%

**Income**

	Comfortable with income	Coping with income	Difficult with income	Very difficult with income
Agree strongly	38.2%	25.6%	18.9%	34.3%
Agree	46.5%	63.8%	69.1%	50.0%
Disagree	12.5%	8.5%	10.1%	7.1%
Disagree strongly	2.8%	2.1%	1.8%	8.6%

**Ideology**

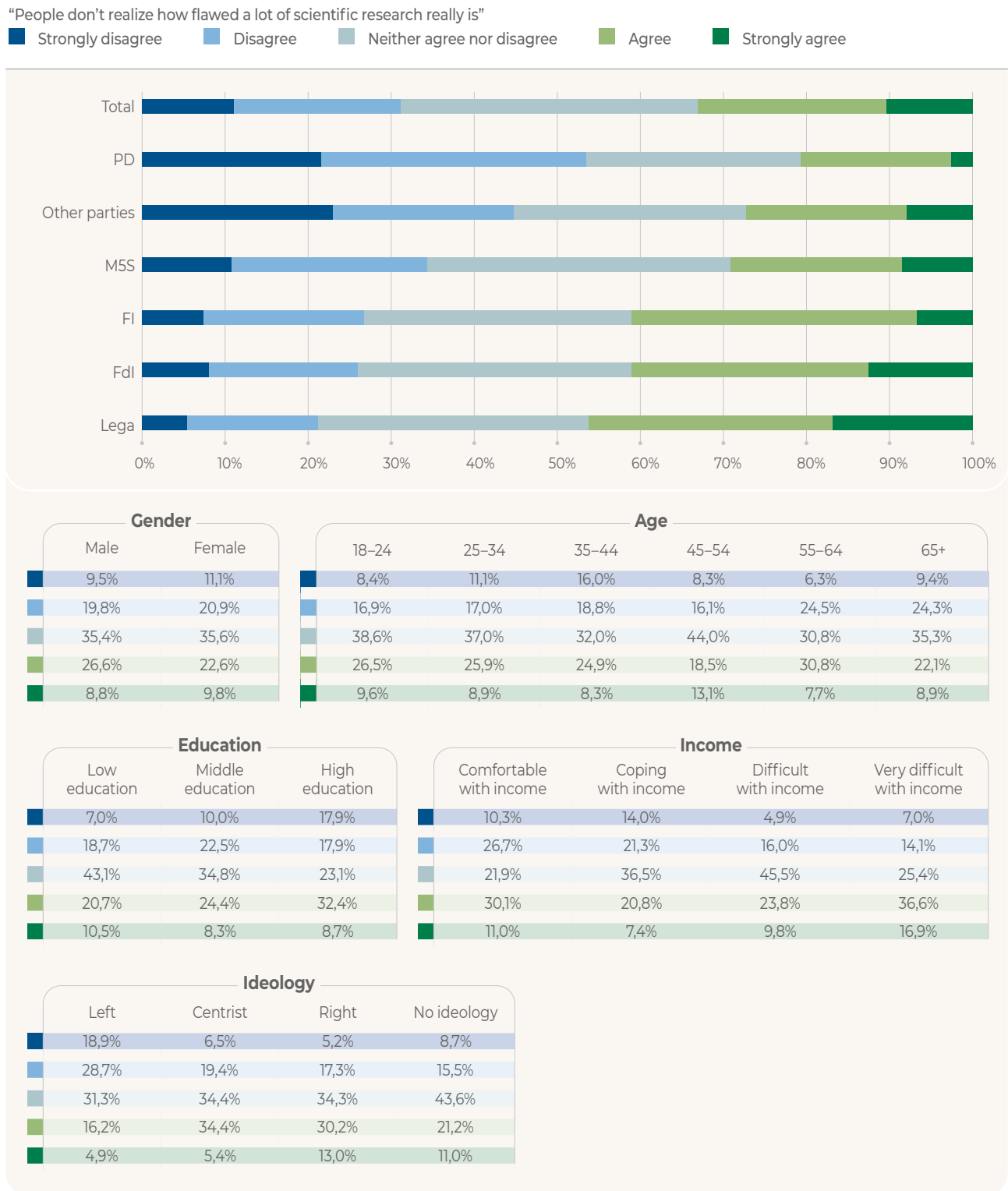
	Left	Centrist	Right	No ideology
Agree strongly	25.8%	19.5%	27.5%	31.1%
Agree	65.1%	65.5%	56.2%	60.5%
Disagree	7.1%	12.6%	11.8%	7.1%
Disagree strongly	2.0%	2.3%	4.6%	1.3%

**Science Scepticism**

When it comes to distrust in science, a common sentiment among citizens critical of the way the COVID-19 pandemic is handled, Italians are rather divided. When asked if they agree or disagree with the statement “people don’t realise just how flawed a lot of scientific research really is”, 33 per cent agreed, and only 31.9 per cent disagreed. The propor-

tion of respondents who agreed with the statement were mostly Lega, FdI, and FI voters and a smaller selection of M5S and PD voters. Men, highly educated respondents, those with lower incomes, and respondents who identify as right-wing were all more likely to agree that science is more flawed than people realise, although the degree of agreement is relatively similar among all demographic groups.

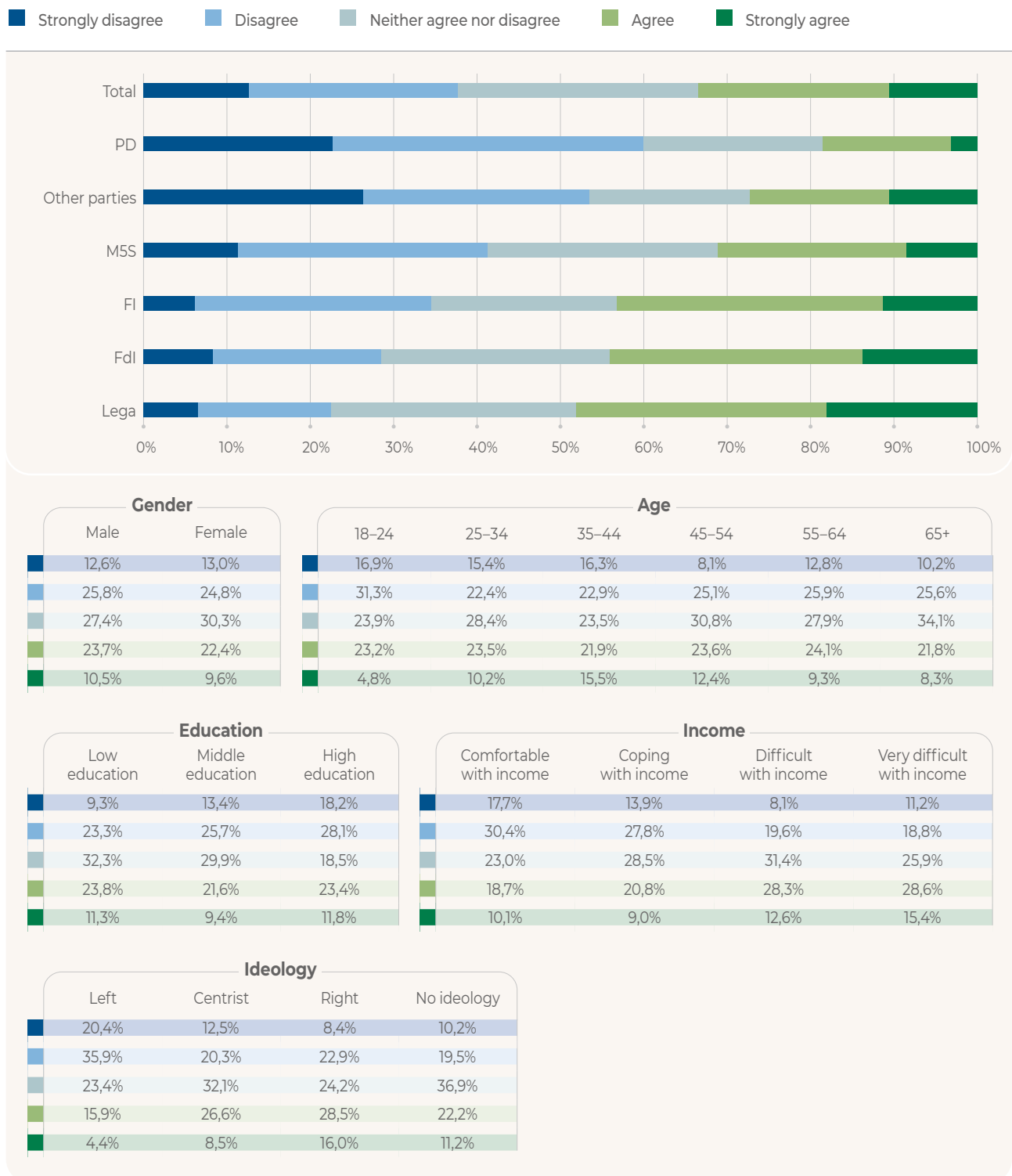
**Figure 26 / Q53 – Science Scepticism**



Many respondents are also concerned with the influence of scientists in society, although the proportion here is relatively smaller: 33.4 per cent of those surveyed agree with the proposition compared to 37.7 who disagreed; 28.9 per cent neither agree nor disagree with the proposition. The voters of Lega, FdI, and FI are more worried about the influence of scientists on society, while

PD, smaller party, and M5S voters are the least likely to be worried about the influence of scientists. Respondents aged 35 to 44, those struggling with their income, and people with right-wing and centrist ideologies are more likely to be concerned about the influence of scientists on society compared to other demographic groups.

Figure 27 / Q53 – “I am concerned by the amount of influence that scientists have in society”

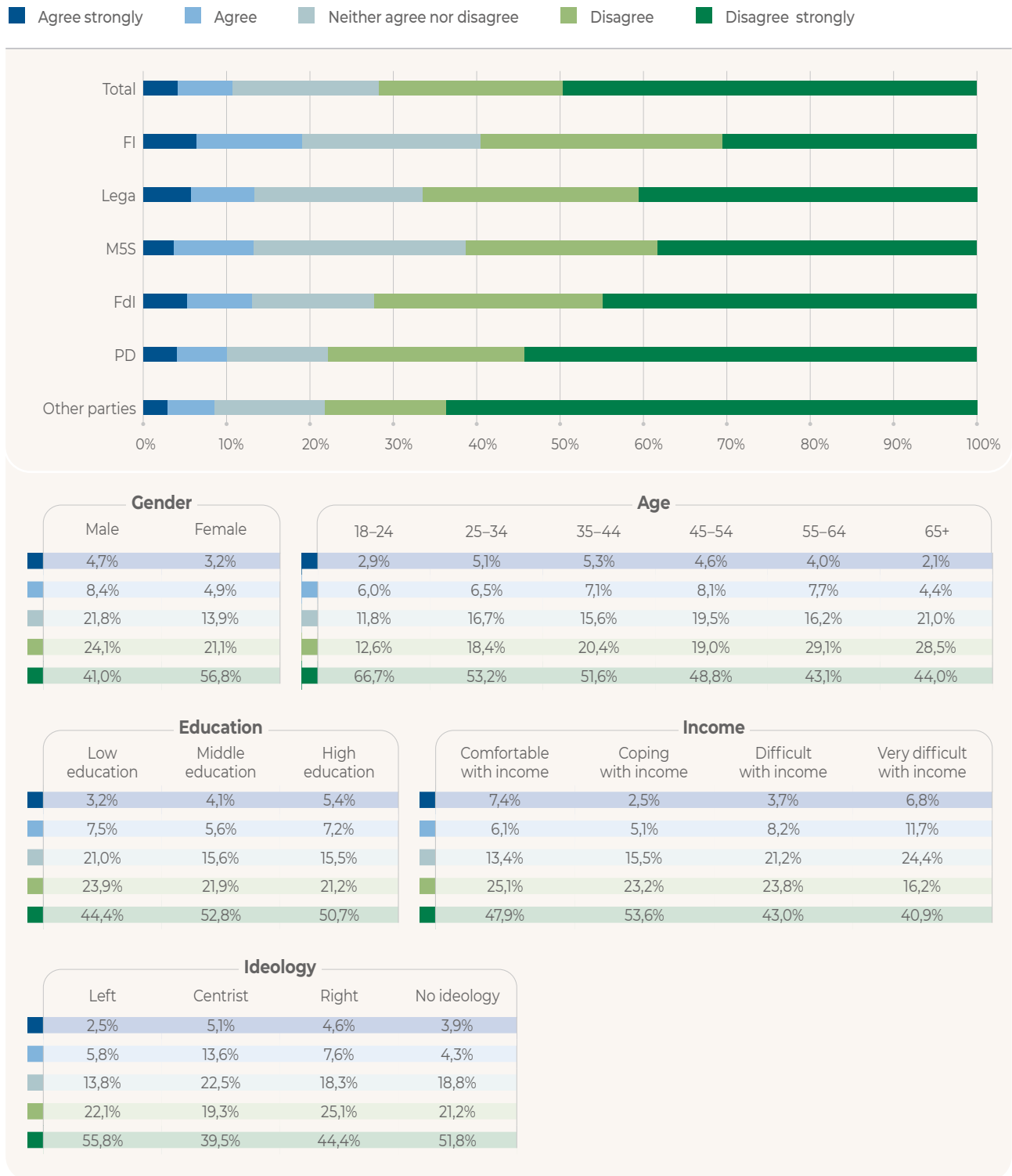


**Opinions on Gender Inequality**

When it comes to traditional gender roles when jobs are scarce, there is overwhelming opposition to this proposition across the Italian public at large: 71.8 per cent of respondents (strongly) disagree with the proposition. Nevertheless, voters of the right-wing parties FI and Lega are most likely

to agree with prioritising male employment over female employment. In terms of demographics, men, middle-aged respondents, highly educated, and economically precarious respondents are more likely to agree with the proposition. Interestingly, with regard to political orientation, centrist respondents agree with the statement the most.

**Figure 28 / Q64 – “Men should have more right to work than women when jobs are scarce”**



**Support for Immigration, Opinions on Climate Change, Populism, and the NextGenerationEU Program**

The Support for Immigration Index is comprised of two separate scales, which asked respondents whether immigrants are a benefit to the country’s economic development and whether they culturally enrich the country. The Institutional Trust Index is comprised of six separate questions that ask respondents to what extent they trust various national and international institutions (please see the section on methodology for more information). The aver-

age values of numerous respondent groups are reported in a two-dimensional scatterplot.

Ideologically left-wing respondents, voters of PD and smaller left-wing parties, those with the most comfort with their incomes, and respondents with the highest levels of education are the most supportive of immigration in Italy. In opposition, FdI and Lega voters, respondents on the ideological right, and those most struggling with their income are the least supportive of immigration.

**Figure 29 – Support for Immigration**



A majority of Italian citizens are seriously concerned about climate change for future generations, as evidenced by the graph above: all respondent groups, including Fdl and Lega voters, score above the average on the scale of concern about climate change. As was to be expected, Verdi voters

are most concerned about climate change, as are voters of the other left-wing parties and people aged 35 to 44. Right-wing and older respondents, those with lower levels of educational attainment, urban respondents, and those struggling financially are least concerned about climate change.

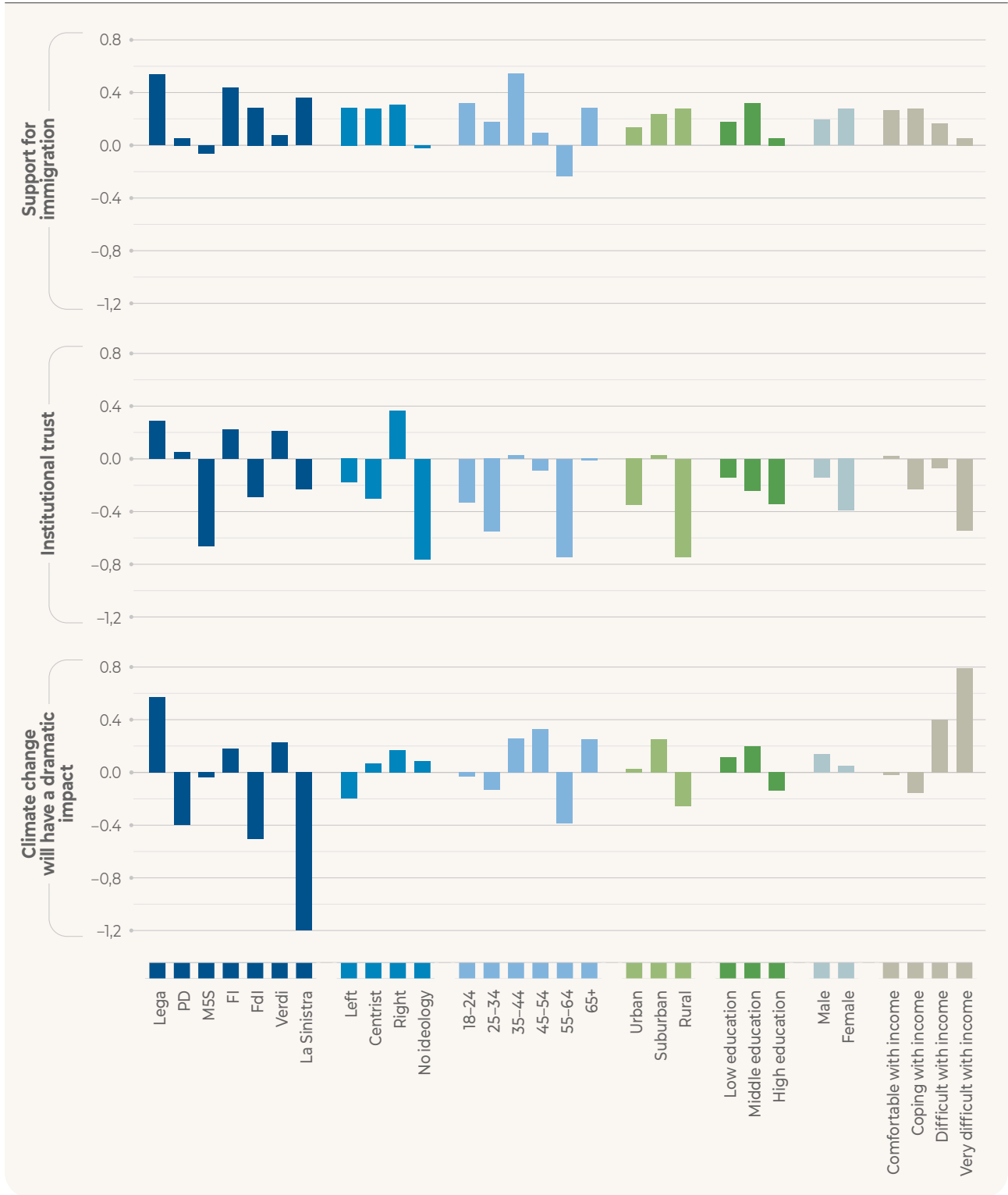
Figure 30 – Impact of Climate Change



In terms of change over time, most voter groups were now more concerned about climate change in 2021 than in 2020. In particular, Lega voters and those aged 35 to 44 had a marked increase in concern. Meanwhile, institutional trust has declined among most respondent groups, in-

cluding M5S voters, respondents without ideology, and those living in rural areas. The changes in support for immigration are mixed, with support increasing particularly among respondents with income struggles and declining among La Sinistra voters.

Figure 31





A substantial number of Italian respondents believe in at least one conspiracy theory, as measured by the high average scores (higher than 5 out of 10) on the Conspiracy Theory Belief Index among all respondent groups, including PD voters. Fdi voters, respondents with income difficulties, and those with no political ideology are most sus-

ceptible to conspiracy theories, along with the less educated, M5S and FI voters, and people aged 55 to 64. In contrast, left-wing and environmental party voters, those comfortable with their incomes, younger respondents, and those with higher levels of educational attainment are less likely to believe in conspiracy theories.

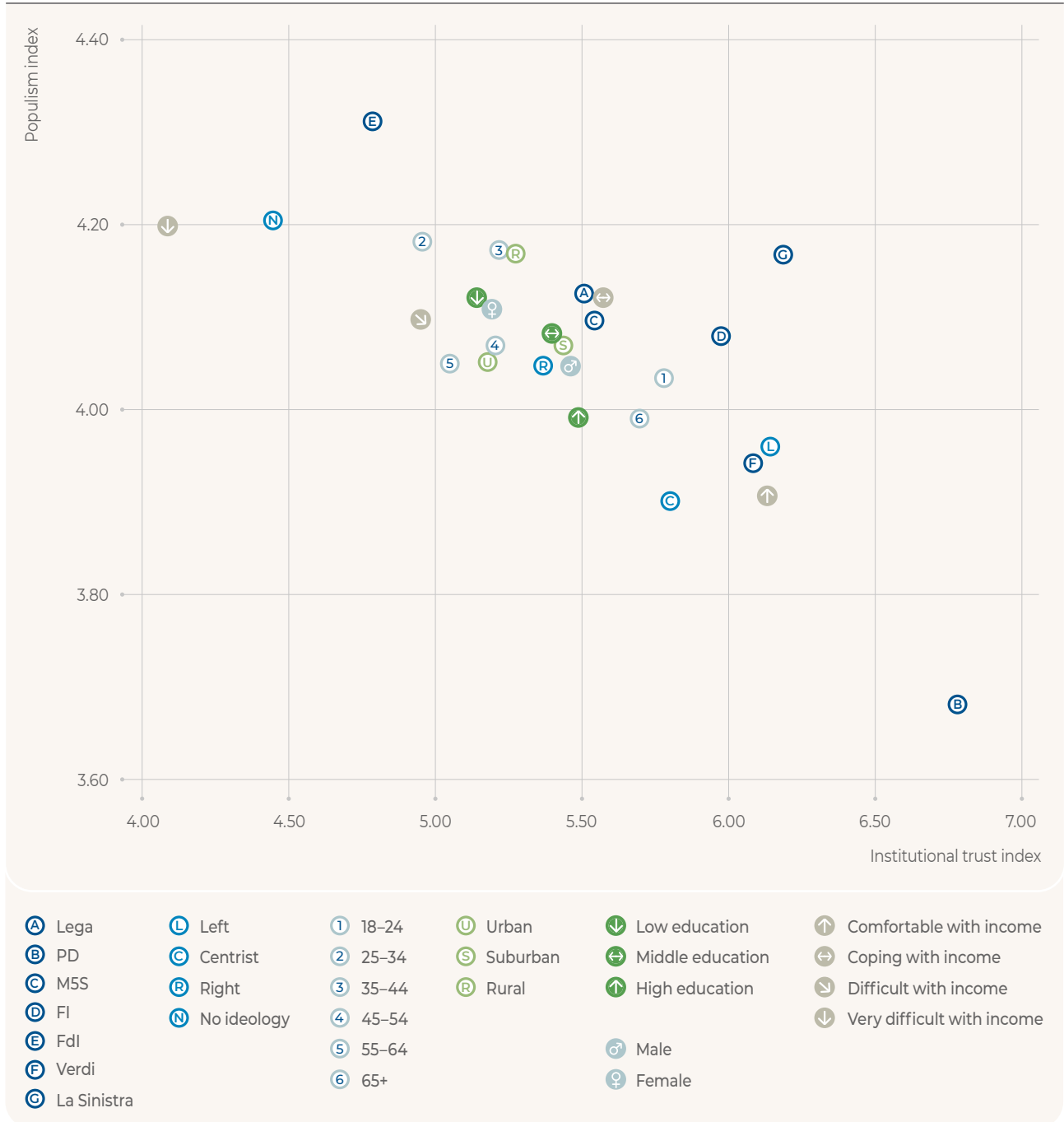
Figure 32 – Belief in Conspiracy Theories



When it comes to populism, as measured by anti-elitist sentiments, it is clear that FdI voters, along with respondents with income difficulties, no ideology, and those aged 25 to 44 are among the most populist respondent groups.

Political centrists, PD voters, and respondents comfortable with their income are among the least populist demographic groups.

Figure 33 – Followers of Populism



The 'NextGenerationEU' plan, put forward by the European Commission as a strategy for transforming societies and economies in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, enjoys moderate support among the Italian public. PD voters are notably most optimistic about the plan, along

with those who have a left-wing political orientation and those comfortable with their income. Conversely, Fdl voters, respondents experiencing economic difficulties, respondents with lower levels of education, and people aged 25 to 34 are the least supportive of the plan.

Figure 34 – Support NextGenerationEU Plan



## KEY FINDINGS 4

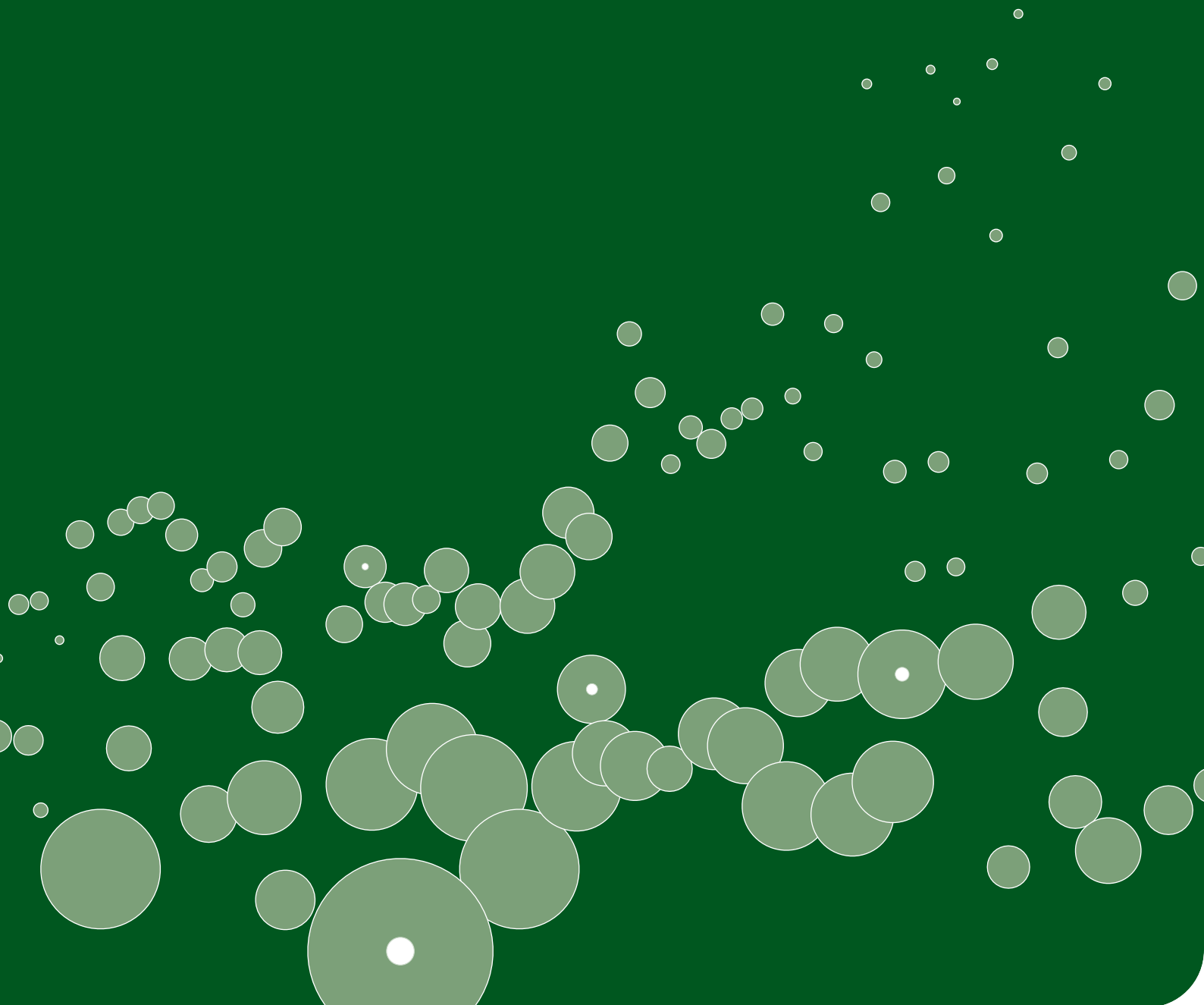
- Although relatively few Italians perceive their country's EU membership negatively, there is a substantial proportion of respondents who are ambivalent towards the EU. PD and smaller party voters are most positive about Italy's EU membership, while FdI voters and people with income difficulties are most likely to think that their country's EU membership is a bad thing.
- A clear majority (nearly 90 per cent) of Italian respondents agree that the state should play a greater role in regulating the economy. The proportion of those who agree is higher than 80 per cent among all voter groups.
- The results suggest that there is a substantial distrust in science. The voters of Lega, FdI, and FI parties are the most distrustful, while PD voters are most likely to see science positively.
- A very small number of Italians believe that men should have a job priority when employment positions are scarce. FdI and Lega voters are most likely to agree with the proposition, along with respondents who have income difficulties.
- Party preference, age, and education are the strongest predictors of support for immigration, with voters of left-wing parties, higher educated, and younger respondents being most positive towards immigrants. In contrast, respondents with right-wing ideology and income difficulties are most likely to oppose immigration.
- All respondents are at least somewhat concerned with climate change, even those traditionally sceptical about the human influence on climate, such as those with lower levels of educational attainment and right-wing respondents. Nevertheless, citizens are unlikely to accept measures against climate change that will directly impact their economic situation negatively, such as increasing energy prices.
- Belief in conspiracy theories (based on an index containing questions unrelated to the pandemic) is most widespread among FdI, FI, Lega, and M5S voters. Respondents with income difficulties, less education, or no ideology are also susceptible to conspiracy theories, pointing to the overall cynical worldview or many respondents in these demographic categories. PD voters and left-wing respondents are the least likely to believe in conspiracy theories.
- The most populist respondent groups are FdI voters, along with respondents with income difficulties and no political ideology. PD voters and centrist respondents are the least populist voter groups in Italy.
- When it comes to the 'NextGenerationEU' plan, it is clear that it is supported the most by voters of the centrist and left-leaning parties, while FdI voters, as well as people with no ideology or income difficulties, have a rather negative evaluation of the policy program.





# CHAPTER 5

## THE NON-IDEOLOGICAL ARE THE LARGEST GROUP OF VOTERS



**Political Ideology**

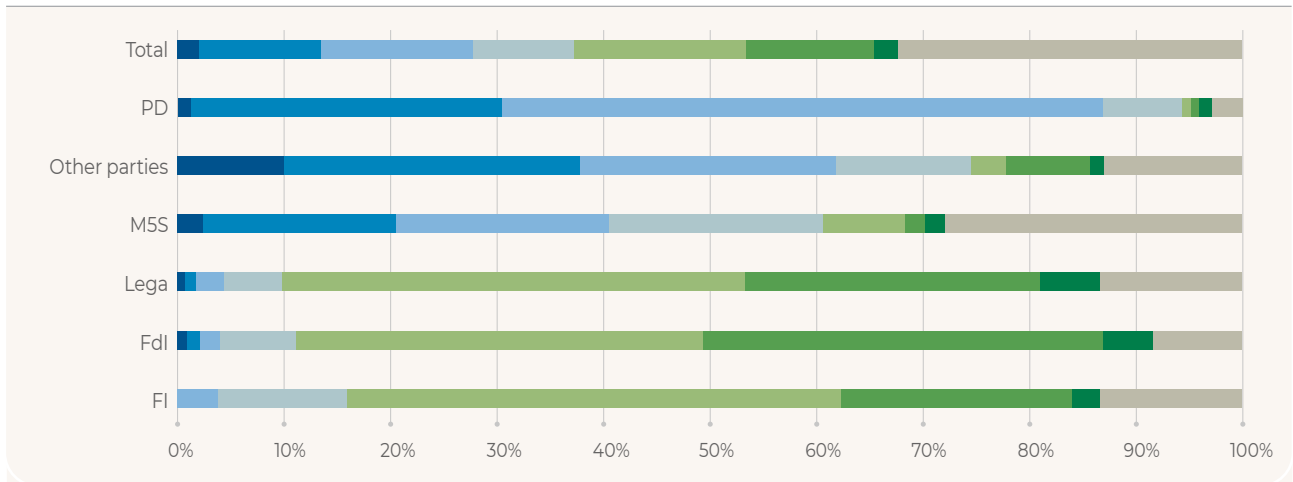
A very logical and consistent pattern arises from data gathered connecting political orientation to party choice. More than half of those with a left or right-leaning political orientation consider themselves centre-left or centre-right. Clearly, a large majority of Italians think of themselves as moderate

centrists. This is in sharp contrast to the dominant political discourse in which the extremes often dominate; yet, they are clearly a minority! In fact, the largest proportion of Italian respondents (32.5 per cent) do not identify with left or right ideology. Only very small proportions of Italian voters position themselves on the political extremes: less than 7 per

**Figure 35 / Q71 – Political ideology**

Consider the following labels. Which one best expresses the way you define yourself politically?

Radical Left Left Center-Left Center Center-Right Right Radical Right None of these



**Gender**

	Male	Female
Radical Left	1,9%	1,8%
Left	10,2%	12,4%
Center-Left	18,0%	11,5%
Center	11,6%	7,8%
Center-Right	19,8%	13,0%
Right	12,7%	10,8%
Radical Right	2,0%	1,9%
None of these	23,8%	40,8%

**Age**

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Radical Left	2,3%	2,0%	2,1%	2,0%	3,0%	1,2%
Left	12,6%	9,3%	9,3%	9,3%	13,9%	13,5%
Center-Left	11,0%	10,7%	15,8%	11,0%	15,9%	19,0%
Center	10,2%	9,7%	9,6%	11,2%	8,6%	8,6%
Center-Right	13,2%	8,7%	14,0%	18,8%	16,2%	21,3%
Right	5,2%	9,0%	16,5%	15,2%	9,3%	12,5%
Radical Right	1,1%	2,7%	3,1%	2,0%	2,3%	0,8%
None of these	44,4%	48,0%	29,7%	30,6%	30,8%	23,1%

**Education**

	Low education	Middle education	High education
Radical Left	1,8%	1,9%	1,7%
Left	8,8%	12,9%	13,0%
Center-Left	13,0%	14,5%	19,0%
Center	7,9%	8,4%	16,1%
Center-Right	16,5%	16,3%	15,6%
Right	11,4%	12,9%	11,9%
Radical Right	1,9%	2,0%	1,7%
None of these	38,7%	31,1%	21,0%

**Income**

	Comfortable with income	Coping with income	Difficult with income	Very difficult with income
Radical Left	3,5%	2,0%	1,0%	2,0%
Left	12,1%	13,1%	7,0%	15,5%
Center-Left	20,0%	16,3%	12,0%	10,0%
Center	11,1%	9,7%	9,5%	10,0%
Center-Right	19,2%	17,5%	17,1%	9,4%
Right	9,0%	11,8%	16,1%	10,7%
Radical Right	0,7%	2,1%	1,2%	7,3%
None of these	24,4%	27,4%	36,2%	35,0%

**Ideology**

	Left	Centrist	Right	No ideology
Radical Left	6,7%	-	-	-
Left	40,9%	-	-	-
Center-Left	52,4%	-	-	-
Center	-	100,0%	-	-
Center-Right	-	-	53,6%	-
Right	-	-	39,9%	-
Radical Right	-	-	6,5%	-
None of these	-	-	-	100,0%

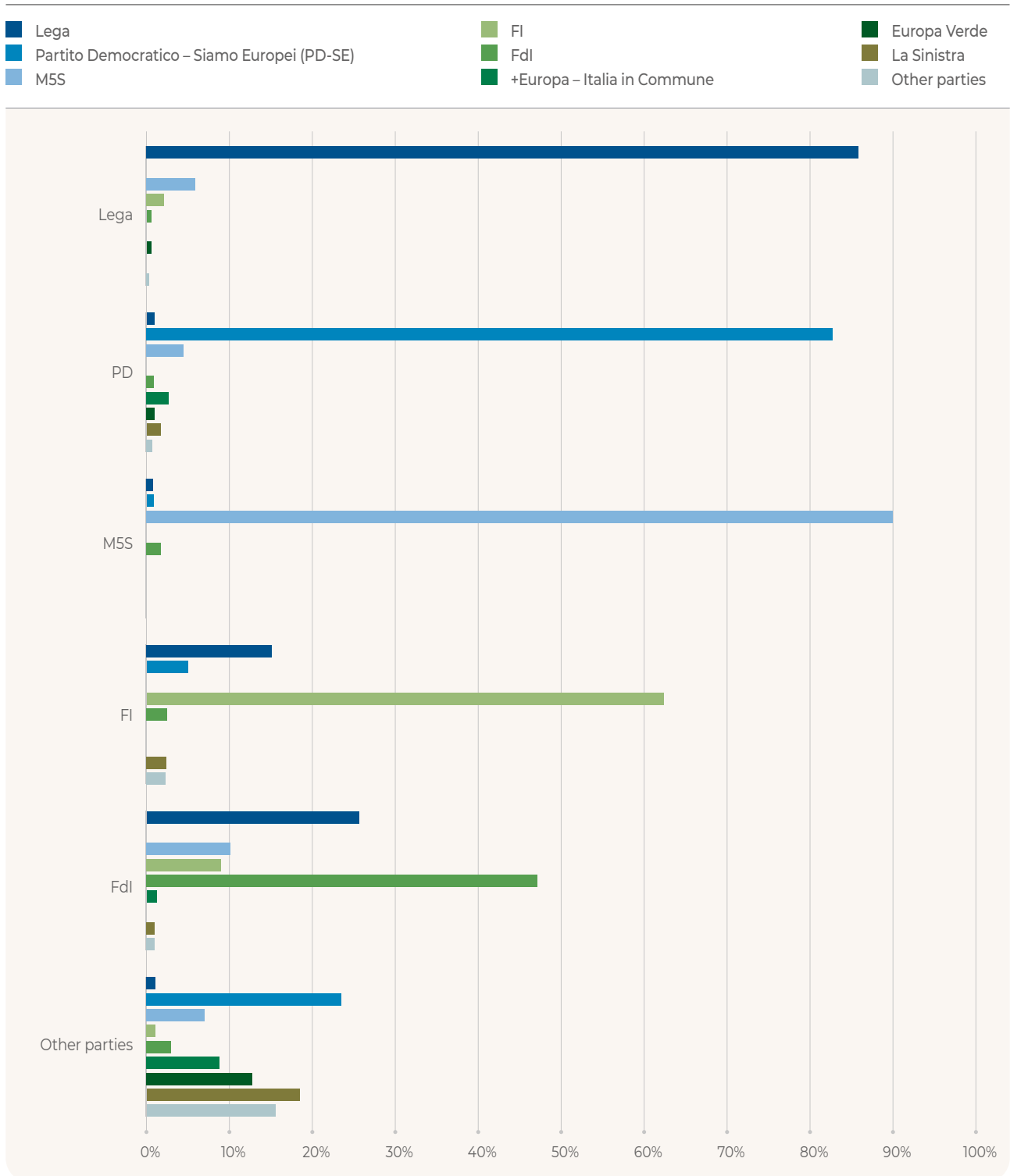
cent on each ideological side. Those considering themselves on the radical left primarily vote for smaller parties, with very few aligning themselves with PD or M5S. In fact, large majorities of the PD electorate consider themselves centre-left.

The most right-wing voters are found within the Fdi electorate. Not a single FI voter identified as a centrist. Instead, the largest proportion of centrist voters can be found within the M5S electorate. While men and those aged 65+ are more likely to identify as right-wing, women, the less educated, and those with economic difficulties are more likely to report no ideological orientation.

**Vote Recall in the 2019 European Parliament Elections**

Most respondents who voted for a particular party in the 2019 European elections were still planning to vote for the same party if a national election was held at the time of data collection. M5S voters are the most loyal ones to their party — 89.9 per cent of them were still planning to vote for the party in a national election, while only 47.2 per cent of Fdi voters stated they would do so. There appears to be a notable electoral migration from Fdi to Lega.

**Figure 36 – Which party did you vote for at the European Election of 2019?**



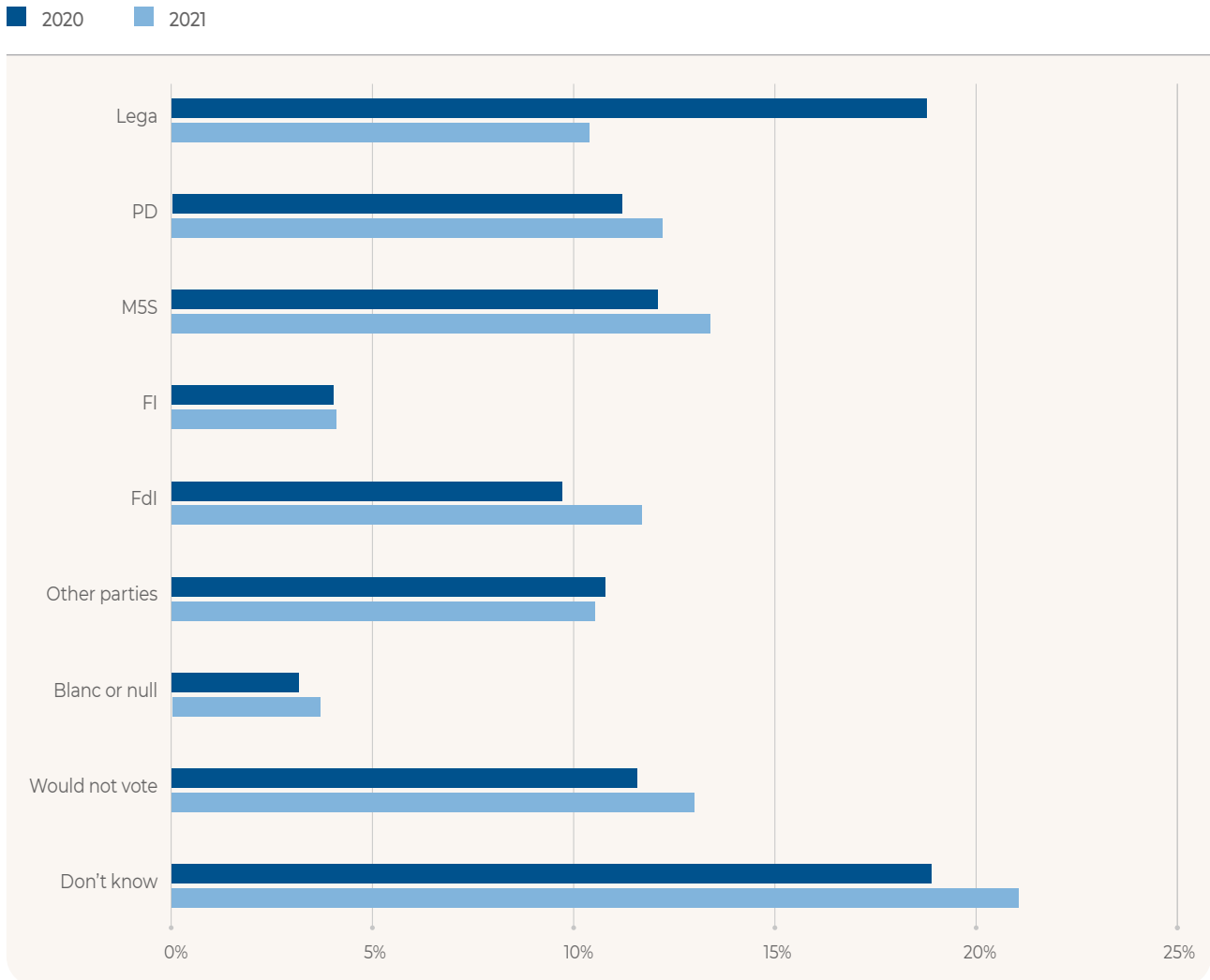


### Vote Intention Changes from 2020 to 2021

There are notable changes between 2020 and 2021 when it comes to voting intention in Italy. Most importantly, support for Lega dropped substantially from 2020 to 2021 (from 18.8 per cent to 10.4 per cent). This decline has likely benefitted FdI, which enjoyed a minor increase in sup-

port. Respondents were also more likely to vote for PD and M5S, while support for FI remained stable. Given the rise of respondents who answered that they don't know which party they would vote for, it is likely that many disillusioned Lega voters had not made a choice yet in November 2021.

Figure 37 – If there were a national general election tomorrow which party would you vote for?



## KEY FINDINGS 5

- Respondents who identify with radical ideologies, on both the left and the right, comprise less than 4 per cent of the Italian electorate, while respondents with no ideology are the biggest respondent group. PD is the party which enjoys the support of most left-leaning voters, while FdI voters are most likely to identify as right-wing.
- Most people who voted for a certain party in the 2019 European elections reported they would still likely vote for the same party in a national election. M5S was most likely to retain its voters, while people who voted for FdI in 2019 were most likely to change their party preference.
- The reported changes in voting behaviour from 2020 to 2021 show that support for PD, M5S, and FdI increased, whereas it has substantially declined for Lega.



# CHAPTER 6

## RELIGION IS LOSING ITS INFLUENCE

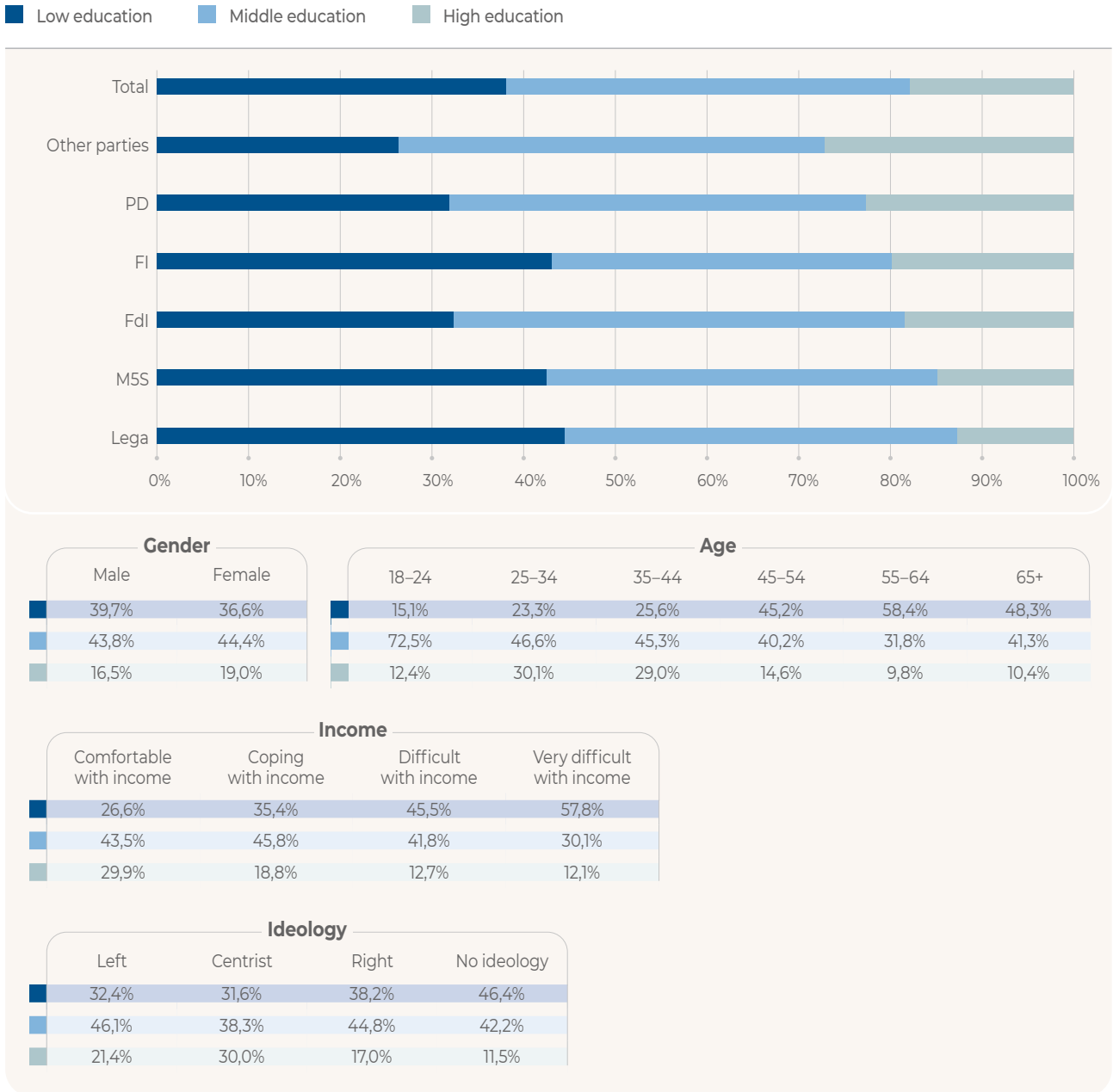


**Education**

In terms of education, PD voters and those who vote for smaller parties are the groups with the largest proportions of highly educated respondents, while the groups with the smallest proportion of higher educated respondents are M5S and Lega voters. The data suggests that ed-

ucation and income are linked, given that most of those with economic difficulties also tend to have less education. People with no clear ideological orientation also tend to be less educated than people who identify with a left or right-leaning ideology.

**Figure 38 – Education**



**Religious Service Attendance**

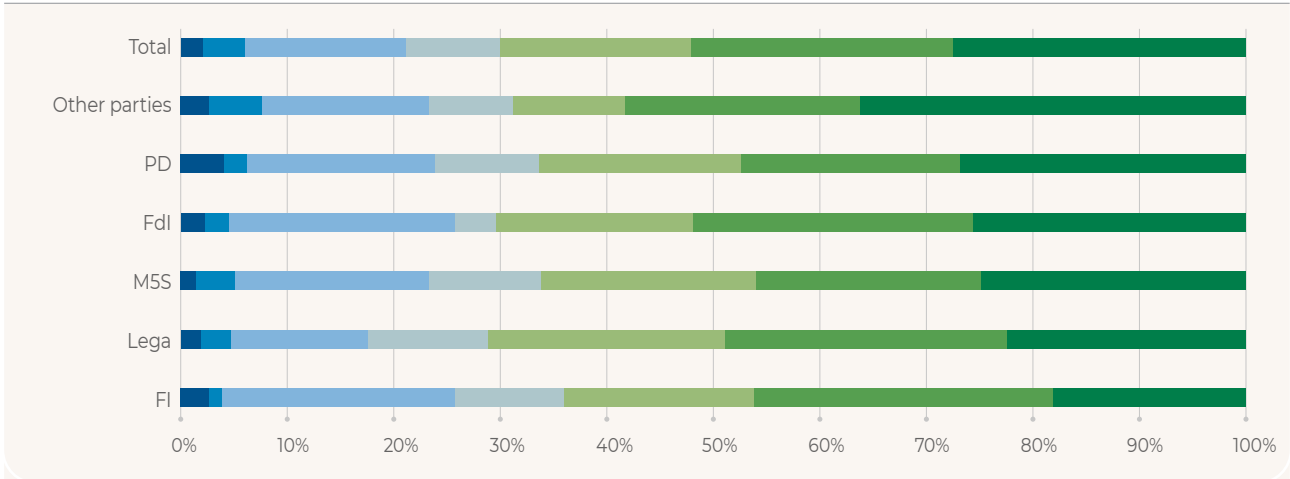
When it comes to religious service attendance, slightly more than 20 per cent of Italians attend such services more than once a week. People who vote for smaller parties and PD are least likely to attend religious services,

while FI voters are most likely to attend religious services often. All parties – including the Union – have become parties of the ‘secularised majority’ that only attend religious services less often than special holidays or never attend a religious service.

**Figure 39 / Q11 – Religious Service Attendance**

In general, apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend religious services?

- Every day
- More than once a week
- Once a week
- At least once a month
- Only on holidays
- Less often
- Never



**Gender**

	Male	Female
Every day	2,2%	1,9%
More than once a week	3,5%	4,3%
Once a week	15,6%	14,9%
At least once a month	8,6%	8,8%
Only on holidays	16,8%	19,6%
Less often	24,4%	23,7%
Never	29,0%	26,8%

**Age**

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Every day	6,4%	1,9%	2,4%	2,0%	1,7%	1,7%
More than once a week	3,8%	4,8%	4,0%	3,2%	3,1%	4,0%
Once a week	12,2%	13,0%	15,5%	16,7%	11,6%	18,0%
At least once a month	9,6%	8,5%	10,4%	8,6%	8,9%	7,2%
Only on holidays	16,0%	16,7%	18,6%	18,4%	17,5%	19,1%
Less often	18,1%	25,9%	20,6%	26,4%	28,1%	24,6%
Never	33,9%	29,3%	28,4%	24,7%	29,1%	25,3%

**Education**

	Low education	Middle education	High education
Every day	1,8%	1,5%	3,8%
More than once a week	4,1%	3,2%	5,1%
Once a week	11,4%	17,4%	17,6%
At least once a month	8,3%	8,3%	10,9%
Only on holidays	16,3%	19,0%	19,9%
Less often	29,2%	21,8%	20,1%
Never	29,0%	28,7%	22,6%

**Income**

	Comfortable with income	Coping with income	Difficult with income	Very difficult with income
Every day	6,3%	1,3%	0,8%	3,9%
More than once a week	5,5%	3,4%	4,1%	2,7%
Once a week	19,8%	15,9%	11,7%	13,5%
At least once a month	10,7%	8,7%	9,8%	4,7%
Only on holidays	15,2%	18,7%	20,8%	13,5%
Less often	18,6%	23,1%	28,4%	27,5%
Never	23,9%	28,9%	24,4%	34,3%

**Ideology**

	Left	Centrist	Right	No ideology
Every day	2,7%	2,8%	1,5%	1,6%
More than once a week	3,4%	7,8%	2,5%	4,4%
Once a week	16,1%	20,8%	15,4%	11,8%
At least once a month	8,8%	13,2%	8,1%	7,9%
Only on holidays	13,8%	21,4%	20,9%	18,3%
Less often	21,1%	18,1%	26,0%	28,1%
Never	34,1%	15,9%	25,7%	28,0%

## KEY FINDINGS 6

- Education is usually a good predictor of party preference, with higher educated respondents voting for centrist parties and lower educated respondents overrepresented among the far-right electorate. This is also the case in Italy, where Lega and M5S voters are least likely to have higher education and PD voters and the supporters of smaller parties are most likely to have higher levels of education.
- Religion has been increasingly losing its importance in Western democracies, including Italy, where about 30 per cent of respondents say they attend such services regularly. Voters of M5S and FI attend religious services most often, while voters of PD and smaller parties are least likely to ever attend such services.

## AUTHORS

### **About Kieskompas (Election Compass)**

Kieskompas is an independent scientific research institute specialising in quantitative data analysis, opinion polling, and voter profiling. Founded by Dr André Krouwel in collaboration with the VU University Amsterdam in 2006, Kieskompas is a market leader in the development and innovation of Voting Advice Applications (VAAs), used by more than 30 million people. Kieskompas is embedded in the academic community and is driven by a team of established researchers with a strong focus on political science, data science, and statistics. The company is best known for creating a methodology for visually displaying the positions of political parties in country-specific political landscapes in its VAAs. These online tools have been developed in collaboration with local academics in more than 40 countries, generating large-N datasets suitable for in-depth analyses.

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ISBN 978-3-98628-382-7

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This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Parliament.

