

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

# EUROBAROMETER

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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## Introducing the Eurobarometer

*Eurobarometer public opinion surveys ("standard Eurobarometer surveys") have been conducted each spring and autumn since autumn 1973 on behalf of the Directorate-General Press and Communication of the European Commission, Opinion Polls. They have included Greece since autumn 1980, Portugal and Spain since autumn 1985, the former German Democratic Republic since autumn 1990 and Austria, Finland and Sweden from spring 1995 onwards.*

*An identical set of questions was asked of representative samples of the population aged fifteen years and over in each Member State. The regular sample in standard Eurobarometer surveys is 1000 people per country except Luxembourg (600) and the United Kingdom (1000 in Great Britain and 300 in Northern Ireland). In order to monitor the integration of the five new Länder into unified Germany and the European Union, 2000 persons have been sampled in Germany since the Eurobarometer 34: 1000 in East Germany and 1000 in West Germany.*

*In each of the 15 Member States, the survey is carried out by national institutes associated with, the European Opinion Research Group, a consortium of Market and Public Opinion Research agencies, made out of INRA (EUROPE) and GfK Worldwide. This network of institutes was selected by tender. All institutes are members of the "European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research" (ESOMAR) and comply with its standards.*

*The figures shown in this report for each of the Member States are weighted by sex, age, region and size of locality. The figures given for the European Union as a whole are weighted on the basis of the adult population in each country. Due to the rounding of figures in certain cases, the total percentage in a table does not always add up exactly to 100 %, but a number very close to it (e.g. 99 or 101),. When questions allow for several responses, percentages often add up to more than 100 %. Percentages shown in the graphics may display a difference of 1% compared to the tables because of the way previously-rounded percentages are added.*

*This report, which was drawn up by the Directorate-General Press and Communication of the European Commission, Opinion Polls (Head of Unit: Mr. Thomas Christensen), is an internal working document of the European Commission.*

### **Types of surveys in the Eurobarometer series**

*The European Commission (Directorate-General Press and Communication) organises general public opinion, specific target group, as well as qualitative (group discussion, in-depth interview) surveys in all Member States and, occasionally, in third countries. There are four different types of polls available:*

- *Traditional standard Eurobarometer surveys with reports published twice a year*
- *Telephone Flash EB, also used for special target group surveys (e.g. Top Decision Makers)*
- *Qualitative research ("focus groups"; in-depth interviews)*
- *In the near future: Eurobarometer Applicant Countries (replacing the Central and Eastern EB)*

*The face-to-face general public standard Eurobarometer surveys and the EB Applicant Countries surveys, the telephone Flash EB polls and qualitative research serve primarily to carry out surveys for the different Directorates General and comparable special services of the Commission on their behalf and on their account.*

**The Eurobarometer Website address is:**  
**<http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/epo/>**

## HIGHLIGHTS

This 54<sup>th</sup> Eurobarometer report presents an analysis of public opinion towards the European Union in autumn 2000. The key findings are:

### **Support for EU membership and benefit from EU membership**

- The majority of EU citizens support their country's membership to the European Union: 50% see it as a good thing and a further 27% regard it as neither good nor bad. Only 14% oppose their country's membership to the European Union. Forty-seven percent of EU citizens feel that their country has benefited from membership compared to 32% who feel their country has not benefited.

### **Support for the single currency, the euro**

- Support for the single currency is slightly lower than it was in spring 2000 with 55% in favour of it (-3) and 37% against it (+4). In the "EURO 12" countries, 62% of the public supports the euro. In the 3 "pre-in" countries, only 23% of the public is in favour of the euro.

### **Support for enlargement**

- Support for enlargement is obtained from 44% of EU citizens with 35% against it and 21% lacking an opinion. Support for the 13 applicant countries wishing to join the EU ranges from 30% for Turkey to 48% for Malta. However, few people see enlargement as a priority for the European Union (26%).

### **Support for a common defence policy and a common foreign policy**

- Support for a common defence and security policy is widespread (73%) and two in three Europeans believe the European Union should have one common foreign policy (65%).

### **The desired role of the European Union in 5 years**

- In five years' time, 45% of Europeans would like the European Union to play a more important role than it currently does, 28% desire the same role and only 14% desire a less important role.

### **Trust in the Union's institutions**

- Trust in the European Commission is increasing with 46% now saying they trust this institution. In spring 1999, shortly after the resignation of the Santer Commission, only 40% of EU citizens said they trusted the European Commission. The European Parliament (53%) continues to be the most widely trusted of the 9 institutions included in the survey.

### **Participation in European Parliament elections**

- Fifty-two percent of EU citizens have cast their vote in one or more European Parliament elections. 27% of eligible voters have participated in an election. The likelihood that people say they will vote in the next elections is 7 on a scale of 1 to 10.

### **Impact of the European Parliament on everyday life**

- On a scale of 1 to 10, the perceived impact of the European Parliament on everyday life is 4.41. The perceived impact of the national parliaments is 5.64 on the same scale.

### **Knowledge of the European Union**

- Twenty-nine percent of EU citizens know quite a lot to a great deal about the European Union (i.e. those choosing the numbers 6 through 10 on the scale), compared to 26% in spring 2000. However, 30% believe that most of the European Union budget is spent on paying for officials, meetings and buildings when in reality administration costs represent only 5% of the total EU budget.

### **Satisfaction with EU democracy**

- Four in ten Europeans feel satisfied with the way democracy works. However, an equal proportion (43%) feels not very or not at all satisfied.

### **Proud to be European**

- Sixty-two percent of EU citizens feel very or fairly proud to be European and only 29% feel not very or not at all proud.

### **Life satisfaction**

- In comparison to spring 2000 EU citizens are now more likely to feel satisfied with the life that they lead (83% vs. 77%).

### **Expectations about the future**

- Thirty-four percent of EU citizens believe their life in general will improve in the year 2001 and only 7% believe it will become worse. 30% think that their country's employment situation will improve (compared to 26% in autumn 1999), 27% believe their household financial situation will improve, 25% feel that their own job situation will get better, and 24% expect their country's economic situation to get better in the year 2001.

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# REPORT

## Introduction

This first Report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium presents the results of the Eurobarometer survey that was carried out in all Member States from 14 November to 19 December. The aim of this 54<sup>th</sup> report is to give readers an overview of how European citizens feel about the European Union, its policies and its institutions, although a number of other, related, issues are also presented.

The report begins with an examination of **overall satisfaction levels among EU citizens** at the end of the year 2000 while also examines **people's expectations of the first year of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium**, the year 2001.

Chapter 2, entitled "attitudes toward citizenship and democracy", examines the extent to which **people feel attached to Europe** and the extent to which **they feel European** at the end of the year 2000. It also looks at levels of **European pride**, which was asked for the first time. The chapter also looks at the extent to which people are **satisfied with the way democracy works in their country and with the way it works in the European Union**.

Chapter 3 reports on the **sources people use when they look for information about the EU** and which of these sources they prefer. The chapter also presents the public's **assessment of how the media cover EU affairs**. The chapter also looks at the **sources people are most likely to use when they look for information about the European Union** and which **sources of information they prefer**. It also examines **self-perceived knowledge levels about the European Union**, **awareness levels of 9 of the Union's institutions and bodies** and **awareness of how the Union's budget is spent**. The chapter ends with a brief look at awareness levels of the **Presidency of the Council of Ministers** during the second half of the year 2000.

Chapter 4 looks at **long-term developments in public opinion** towards the European Union. Here the standard indicators - **support for EU membership**, **perceived benefit from EU membership** and the **perceived and desired speed of European integration** - are presented. The chapter also looks at the **role played by 9 of the EU's institutions and bodies in the life of the European Union** and at **trust levels in 9 of the Union's institutions and bodies**. Furthermore, the chapter examines **people's fear about European integration**. The chapter ends by presenting the results of another long-standing question that measures the public's **perceived and desired role of the EU in 5 years' time**.

The 5<sup>th</sup> chapter focuses on support for a number of the **Union's current policy issues**. It begins by looking at the extent to which the public favours **joint EU decision-making to national decision-making**. The chapter then examines the extent to which **the public regards the Union's current actions as priorities**, followed by an investigation into **support levels for a number of key policy issues**. Two of these, **the single currency**, **the euro**, and **enlargement** are the subject of more in-depth analyses.

Chapter 6 deals with issues related to the **European Parliament**. As usual, **awareness levels** are presented, as are people's views about the **Parliament's ability to protect the public's interests**. Furthermore, the results of a question asking people **which areas that the Parliament should focus on** are presented. **Intended participation levels in European Parliament elections** are discussed in-depth. The chapter ends with the analysis of two new questions that measure **the impact of both the European Parliament and the national parliaments on daily life**.

The report ends by looking at a number of **other dimensions of life in the European Union**. To be more precise, **trust in the institutions**, **fear of crime** and **use of e-mail and the Internet**.

**We wish to thank all the European Union citizens who have taken part in the survey over the years. Without their participation, this report could not have been written.**



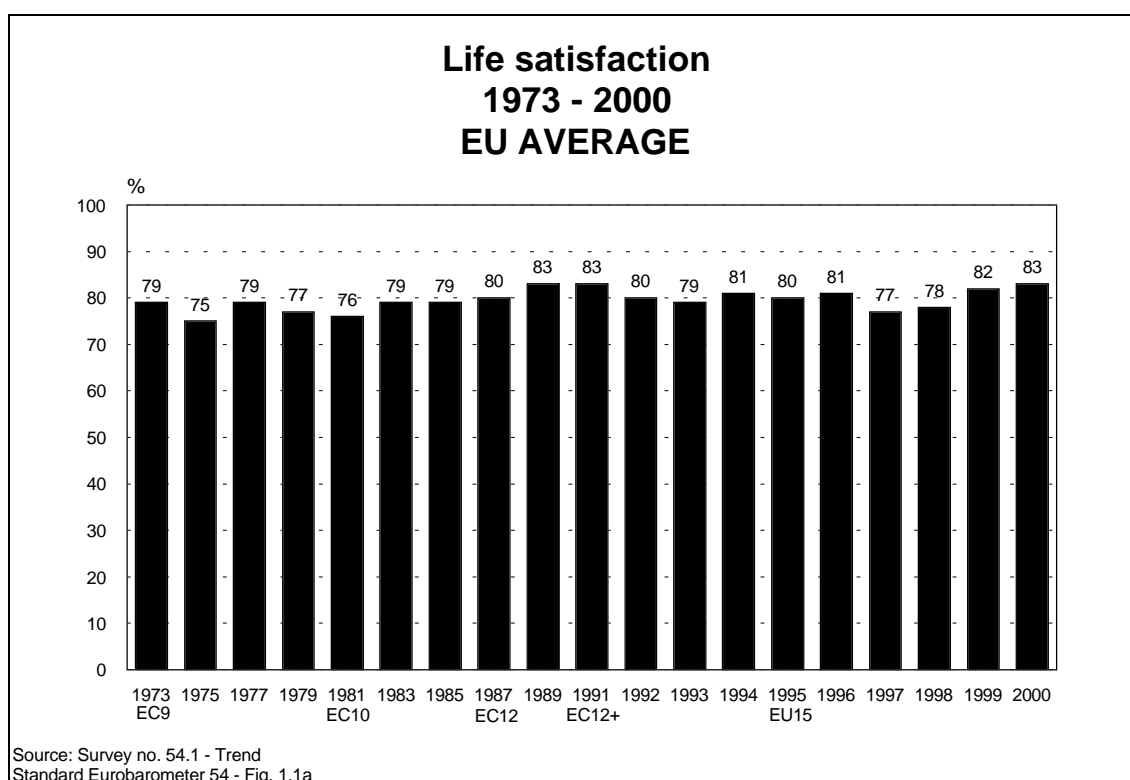
# 1. Life satisfaction and expectations at the eve of the 3rd Millennium

In this chapter, we look at life satisfaction levels among European Union citizens at the end of the year 2000 and we look at their expectations for the year 2001.

## 1.1. Life satisfaction

Since its inception in 1973, the Eurobarometer has regularly asked European Union citizens how satisfied they are with their life in general. This life satisfaction question is a summary measure of how people feel about all things related to their lives, ranging from their personal happiness, their health, their family and their economic situation to their views about society in general.

In autumn 2000, 83% of EU citizens say they are very or fairly satisfied with the life they lead. This is significantly higher than when the question was asked 6 months earlier in the spring of that year (+6) and shows that life satisfaction levels in the EU are currently at a peak. Only in 1989 and 1991 did we find this same high score. This is not to say that satisfaction levels have at times been low. The graph below shows that throughout the years at least 75% of respondents have given a positive assessment of their life. However, the graph does show some variation over time. As one would expect, satisfaction levels are high in periods of economic well-being – which explains the current rise in satisfaction levels – and lower during more difficult times, such as in 1975 when people were feeling the economic effects of the oil crisis.



The following graph shows that the current satisfaction level for the European Union as a whole conceals quite some variation between the individual Member States.



People in Denmark (96%) are most likely to be satisfied with the life they lead. It is the only country where more than half of the population feels very satisfied (59%). Other countries where 9 in 10 people are satisfied are Sweden (95%), the Netherlands (93%) and the UK (90%), with Luxembourg (89%), Finland (88%), Ireland and Belgium (both 86%) not far behind. In Spain (83%), France (82%), Austria and Germany (both 81%), satisfaction levels are close to the EU average. They are below average in Greece (61%), Portugal (68%) and Italy (79%).

In comparison to the spring 2000 measurement, satisfaction levels have most improved in Germany and Italy (both +10 percentage points). Significant improvements are also noted in Belgium (+6), the UK and Portugal (both +5). In the Netherlands, people are now significantly more likely to feel very satisfied (+12) while the proportion of people who feel fairly satisfied has gone down (-10). In Greece, people are expressing more extreme levels of satisfaction: they are both more likely to feel very satisfied (+7) and more likely to feel not at all satisfied (+5). In the other countries, the figures show a small non-significant increase, no change or in the case of Ireland (-2) and Luxembourg (-1) a small non-significant decrease. (Table 1.1a)

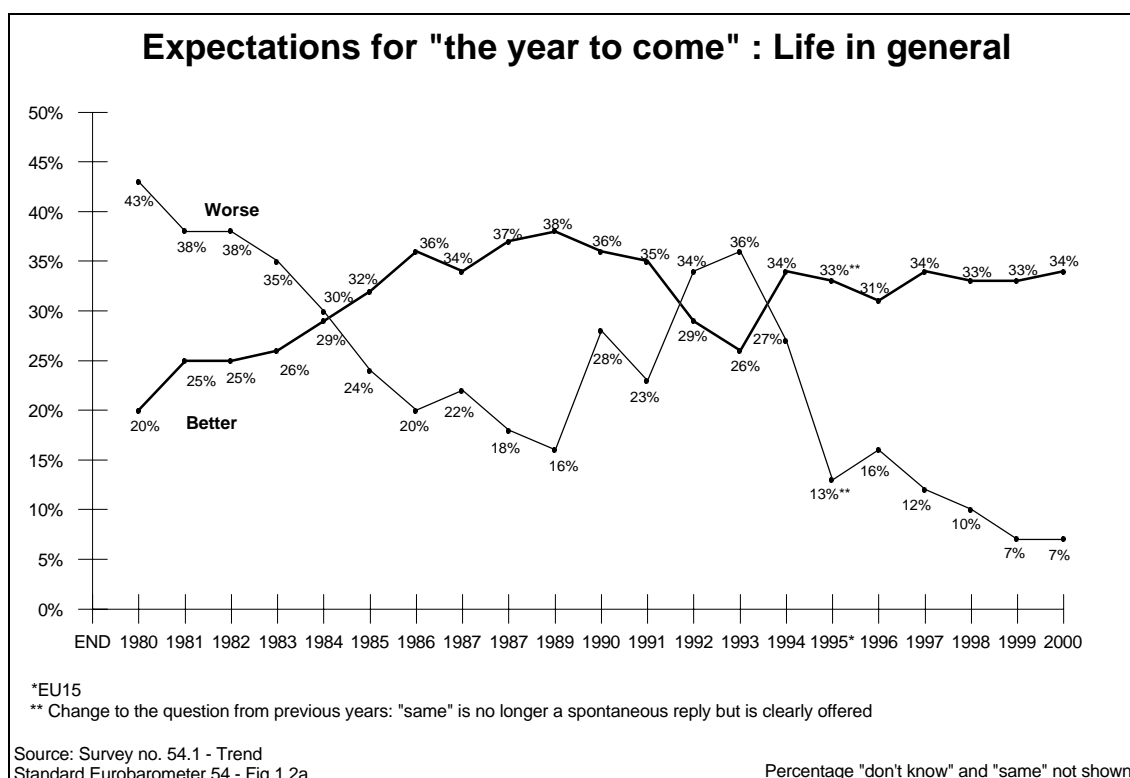
The demographic analyses show that equal proportions of men (83%) and women (82%) are satisfied with the life they lead. There is also very little variation among the four age groups. There are, however, significant differences between the various occupational groups in the population, with managers (92%) significantly more likely to feel satisfied than people in other occupations. Of all the demographic groups, unemployed people (61%) are the least likely to feel satisfied. Education is also an important factor with people who are still studying (91%) most likely to feel satisfied and people who left school aged 15 or younger (79%) least likely to feel satisfied<sup>1</sup>.

Finally, the analyses show that 87% of supporters of the European Union, who are more likely to be managers and to have stayed in school until the age of 20 or older, feel satisfied compared to 76% of people who regard their country's membership as a bad thing. (Table 1.1b)

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C.4 for an explanation of the coding of the demographic variables.

## 1.2. People's expectations for the year 2001

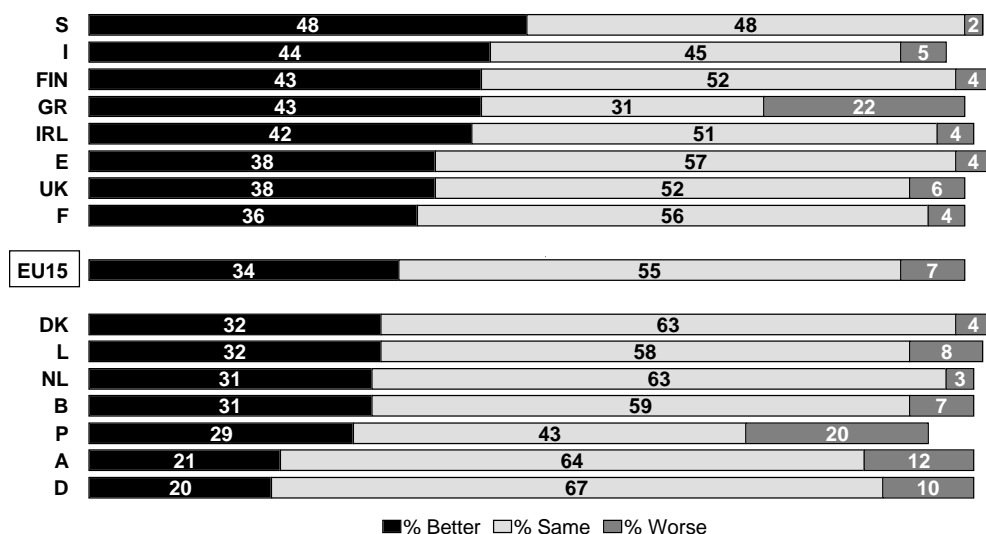
At the end of 1980, only 20% of European Community<sup>2</sup> citizens believed their life in general would be better in the year to come. With 43% of Europeans expecting their life to get worse, the mood was in fact quite pessimistic. After 1984 and until the early nineties, optimism dominated. Although a drop in optimism was noted in 1992 and 1993, the proportion of Europeans who believe their life will be worse has since then steadily declined, reaching a low of 7% in 1999 that has been maintained in the year 2000. The time-trend points to a strong relationship between how people feel about the year to come and the economic situation of their country. During periods of economic growth, people's expectations tend to be much more favourable than they are when the economy is doing less well.



Looking at the individual country results shows that people in Sweden (48%) are most likely to believe that the year 2001 will be better, followed by people in Italy (44%), Finland, Greece (both 43%) and Ireland (42%). Although Greece's optimism rates are among the highest, it is also the country with the highest proportion of people who feel their life in general will get worse (22%), showing a certain extent of polarisation among the Greek public in this respect. What is noteworthy is that the extent of pessimism is considerably more widespread than it was at the end of 1999 (+8) while levels of optimism have not changed significantly (-1). Levels of pessimism are also significantly above average in Portugal (20%; +8). Austria (12%) is the only other country where levels of pessimism are above 10%. (Table 1.2a)

<sup>2</sup> Apart from the 9 countries that were members of the European Community at the end of 1980, the survey included Greece, which joined at the beginning of 1981.

### Expectations for the year 2001: Life in general

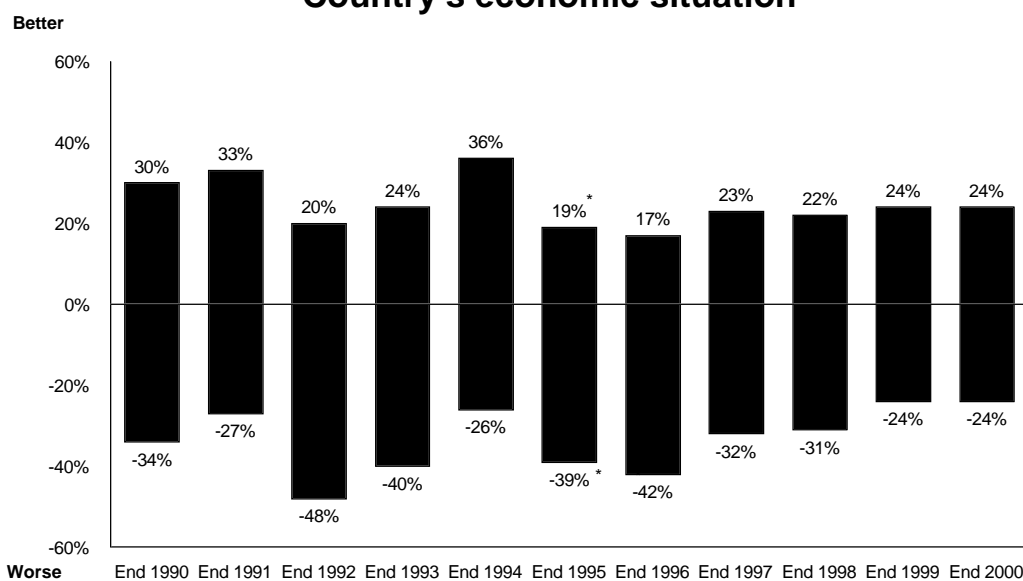


Source: Survey no. 54.1 - Fieldwork Nov - Dec 2000  
Standard Eurobarometer 54 - Fig. 1.2b

Percentage "don't know" not shown

Since 1990, the end-of-the-year question has also measured people's expectations of their country's economy in the year to come. Europe's economic well-being at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is depicted in the graph below. As in autumn 1999, 24% of EU citizens are now optimistic and 24% are now pessimistic. Levels of pessimism have recently been significantly lower than in the early and mid nineties when at times close to half of the population felt that the year to come would be worse.

### Expectations for "the year to come": Country's economic situation



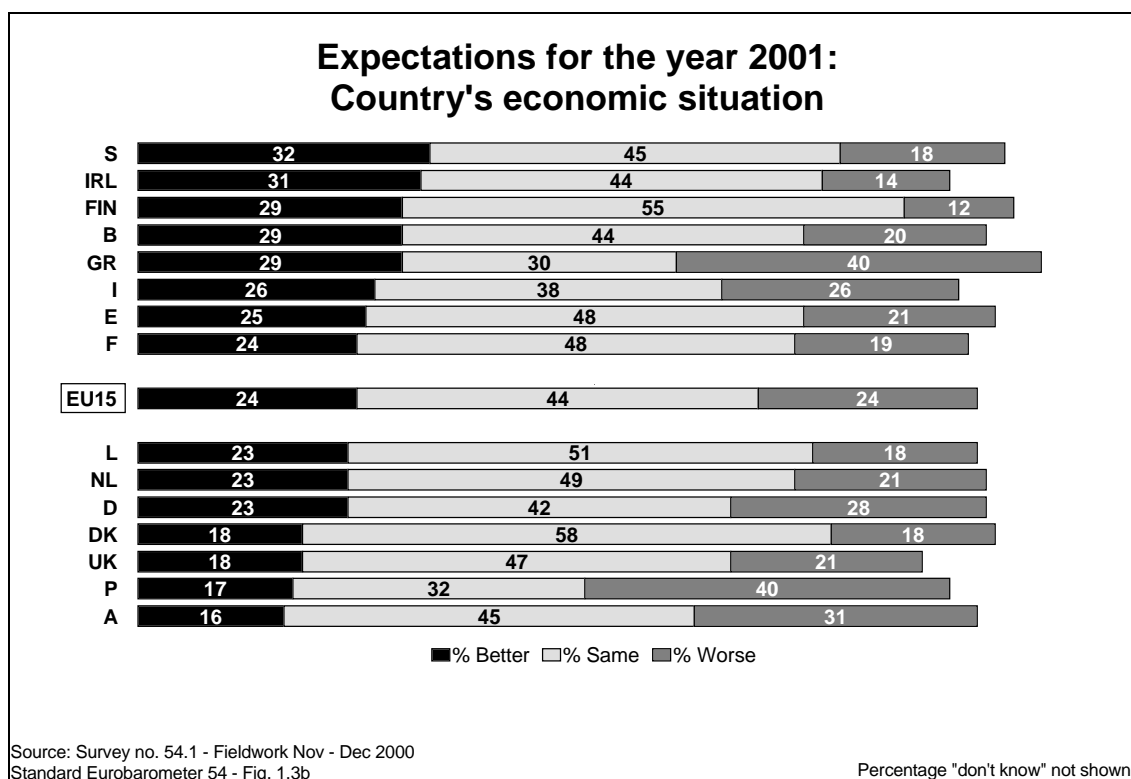
\* Change to the question from previous years: "same" is no longer a spontaneous reply but is clearly offered

Note: End 1990 - End 1995: EU12

Source: Survey no. 54.1 - Fieldwork Nov - Dec 2000  
Standard Eurobarometer 54 - Fig. 1.3a

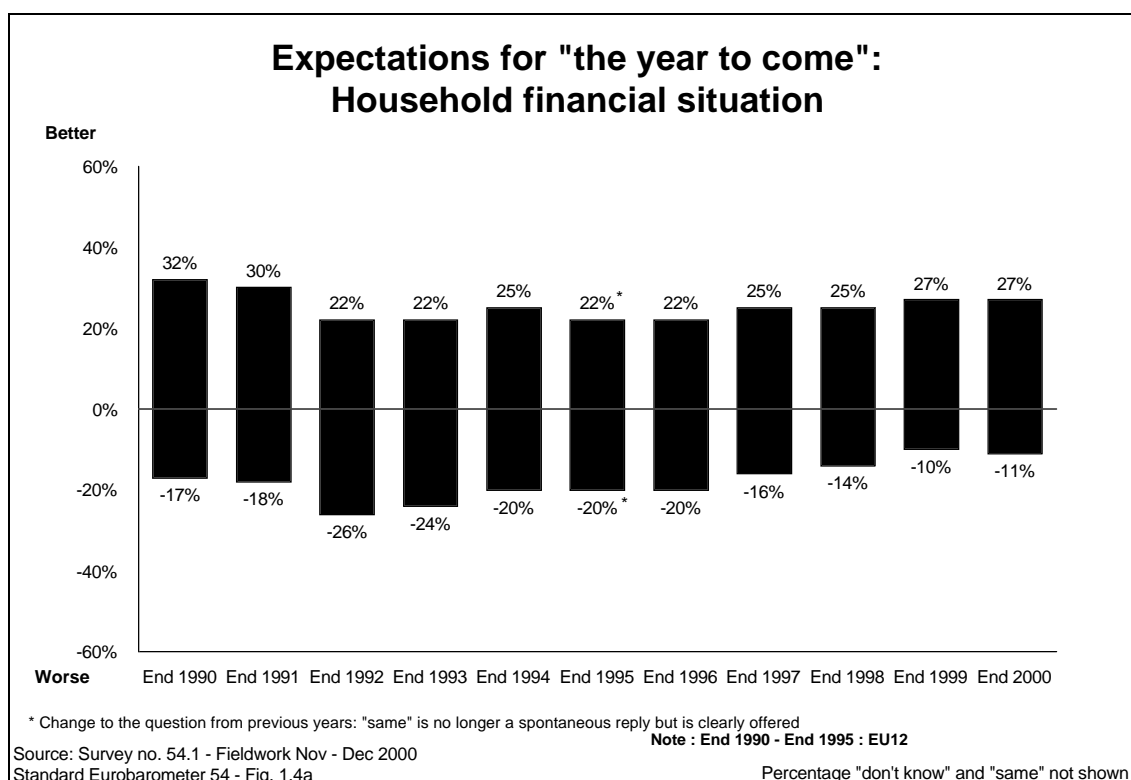
Percentage "don't know" and "same" not shown

There are significant differences between the 15 Member States although these are less pronounced than they were in autumn 1999. Levels of optimism are highest in Sweden (32%) and Ireland (31%), whilst 4 in 10 people in Greece and Portugal (both 40%) expect the economic situation in their country to get worse.

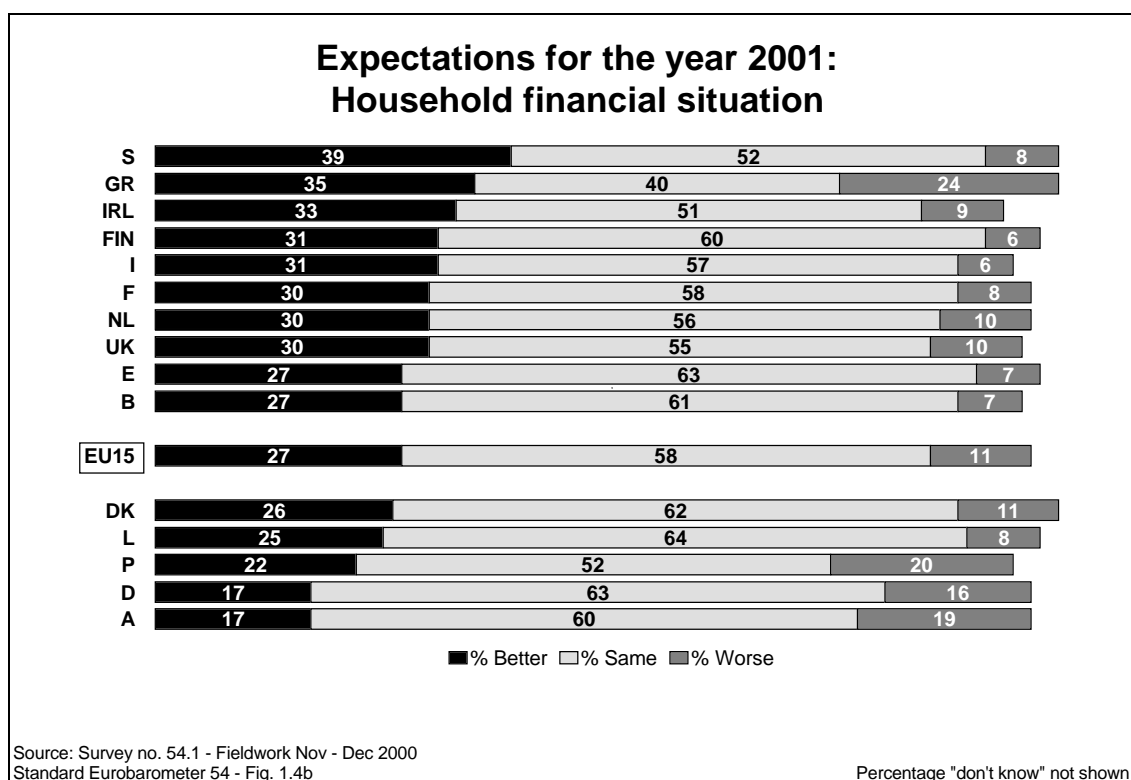


Whereas expectations for life in general tend to be fairly stable from one year to the next within each Member State, expectations about the economic situation in one's country often show large shifts. We find positive shifts in Luxembourg, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France and Italy. The reverse is true in Spain, Ireland and especially in Portugal where an increase of 24 percentage points is recorded in the proportion of people who believe their country's economic situation will get worse in the year to come. We also find a negative shift in the Netherlands and Austria in that people in these two countries are now less likely to believe the economic situation will remain the same and more likely to believe that it will get worse. People in Sweden and Finland are also less optimistic this time around but the mood is not pessimistic, with fewer people believing that the situation in their country will get better and more people saying that it will stay the same. No significant shifts are noted in any of the remaining countries. (Table 1.3a)

Another item that was added to the end-of-the-year question in 1990 measures what people expect to happen in terms of their household financial situation in the year to come.

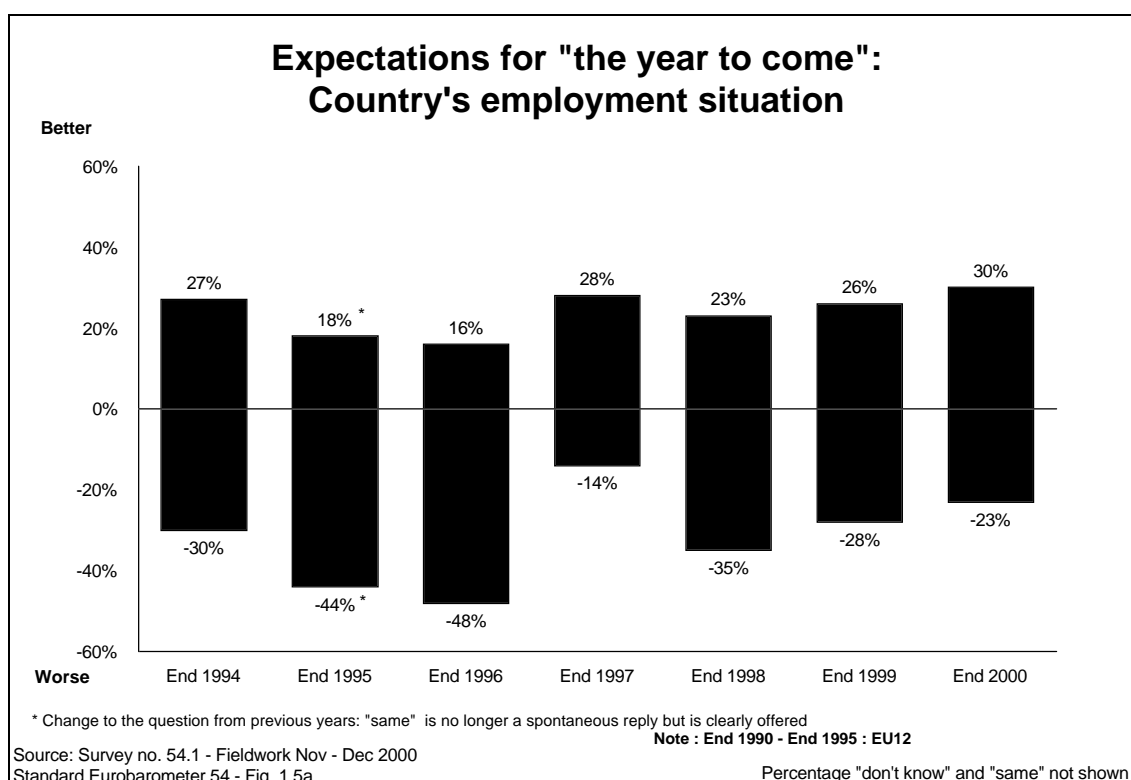


Levels of optimism rose steadily from 22% in 1996 to 27% in 1999 and have remained this high at the end of the year 2000. 11% of people believe their household financial situation will be worse, this being 1% higher than it was at the end of 2000 when the survey recorded the lowest level of pessimism to date. The majority of Europeans expect that their household financial situation will remain the same in 2001 as it was in 2000. In every single Member State, this is the most frequently expressed expectation, ranging from 40% in Greece to 64% in Luxembourg.



Looking at the country results, we find that people in Sweden (39%) and Greece (35%) continue to be most likely to be optimistic. However, there is much less consensus among the Greek public than last year with 24% now saying that they expect the year to come to be worse (+8). In Austria (+9), Portugal (+8) and Ireland (+5) we also find an increase in the level of pessimism. In Austria and Ireland this is (mostly) equalised by a decrease in the proportion expecting their financial situation to stay the same whilst in Portugal a significant drop has been recorded in the proportion of people who believe their financial situation will get better (-9). The level of optimism is lowest in Austria and Germany (both 17%) and after Greece the level of pessimism is highest in Portugal (20%) and Austria (19%). Small negative shifts are noted in Germany and Denmark. In Spain and the UK, people are now more likely to believe their financial situation will remain the same at the expense of levels of optimism. In the Netherlands, we find that more people now lack an opinion than was the case last year. France is the only country where the mood is now truly less pessimistic than it was last year. In Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, Finland and Sweden no significant shifts have been recorded. (Table 1.4a)

Since 1994, the Eurobarometer has measured people's expectations about their country's employment situation. Data from EUROSTAT shows that unemployment has fallen from 11% in 1994 to 8% in 2000. With the continuing drop in unemployment levels, it is not surprising to find that people are more likely to feel good about the employment situation in their country. 30% of EU citizens now expect the employment situation in their country to get better the following year (compared to 26% last year) and only 23% believe it will get worse (compared to 28% last year).



As the following table shows, the unemployment rate at the time of the survey was lower than it was a year earlier in 12 of the 15 Member States. In the Netherlands unemployment levels have stayed at 2.8%, while they rose marginally in Denmark (+0.8%).

**UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED<sup>3</sup>**

	<b>B</b>	<b>DK</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>GR</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>IRL</b>	<b>I</b>
1993.10	9.4	9.7	8.4	NA	23.7	12.3	15.4	10.8
1994.10	10.1	7.6	8.2	NA	23.9	12.1	14.5	11.8
1995.11	10.0	6.6	8.5	NA	22.7	11.8	12.4	11.9
1996.11	9.4	6.1	9.2	NA	21.7	12.4	11.0	12.1
1997.11	9.1	5.1	10.2	NA	20.2	12.3	9.8	12.1
1998.10	8.6	4.2	9.4	NA	18.4	11.8	8.6	12.3
1999.10	8.9	4.2	9.1	NA	15.3	10.7	6.1	11.1
2000.11	8.4	5.0	8.2	NA	13.6	8.9	4.1	10.5

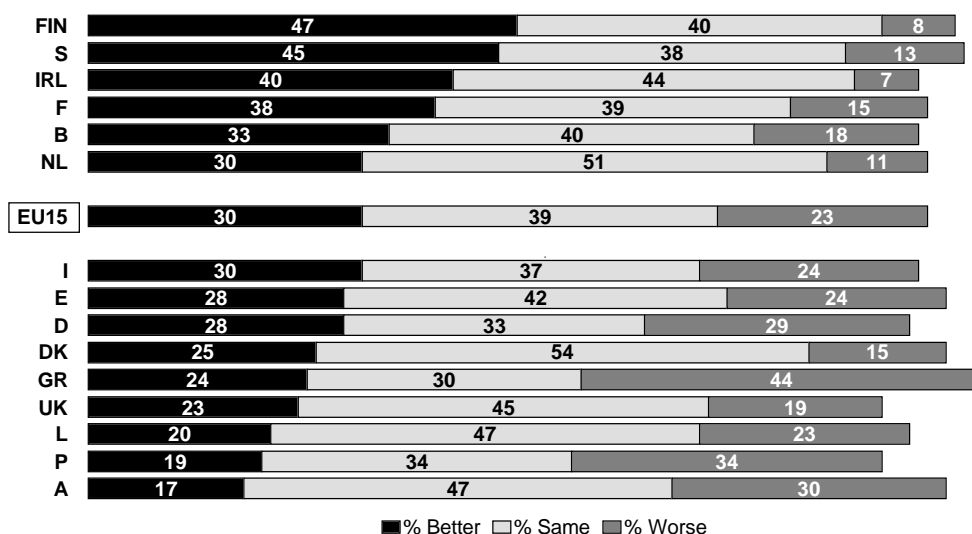
	<b>L</b>	<b>NL</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>FIN</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>EU15</b>
1993.10	2.9	6.9	NA	6.2	18.9	10.4	10.4	11.2
1994.10	3.7	7.1	NA	7.2	17.7	9.4	9.1	11.0
1995.11	2.9	7.0	4.0	7.4	16.2	9.3	8.6	10.8
1996.11	2.8	6.1	4.3	7.1	15.2	10.0	7.9	10.8
1997.11	2.5	4.6	4.4	6.5	11.9	9.0	6.5	10.5
1998.10	2.2	3.6	4.4	4.5	11.0	7.5	6.2	9.8
1999.10	2.7	2.8	4.1	4.3	10.0	6.5	5.9	9.0
2000.11	2.1	2.8	3.2	4.1	9.6	5.6	5.4	8.2

Although the overall situation is very positive, people's expectations vary considerably from country to country. People in Finland (47%), Sweden (45%) and Ireland (40%) continue to be most optimistic although the rank order has changed since last year. People in Greece (44%) continue to be most pessimistic, followed by Portugal (34%). In France, Italy, Germany and Belgium positive labour market developments are mirrored by broadened public optimism when comparing this year's results to last year's. The highest increase in the proportion of positive response is recorded in France (+14), followed by Germany (+9), Belgium (+7) and Italy (+6). Levels of pessimism also declined significantly in Denmark (-8) and the UK (-4), but rather than becoming more optimistic, people are now more likely to feel that the employment situation in their country will remain the same. Despite having some of the lowest unemployment rates in Europe, the Portuguese are much more pessimistic than they were last year (+13). Together with Spain (+9), it is the only country where this is mirrored by a significant decrease in levels of optimism. In the other countries where significant decreases in levels of optimism have been recorded – Ireland (-14), the Netherlands (-13), Sweden (-8), people are now more likely to feel that the employment situation in their country will remain the same. (Table 1.5a)

<sup>3</sup> Source: EUROSTAT News Release N° 1/2001 (figures for Greece are not available). EUROSTAT uses the ILO definition of unemployment for its estimations. October 2000 figures are shown for Denmark and the Netherlands. August 2000 figures are shown for the UK. July 2000 figures are shown for Italy.



### Expectations for the year 2001: Country's employment situation

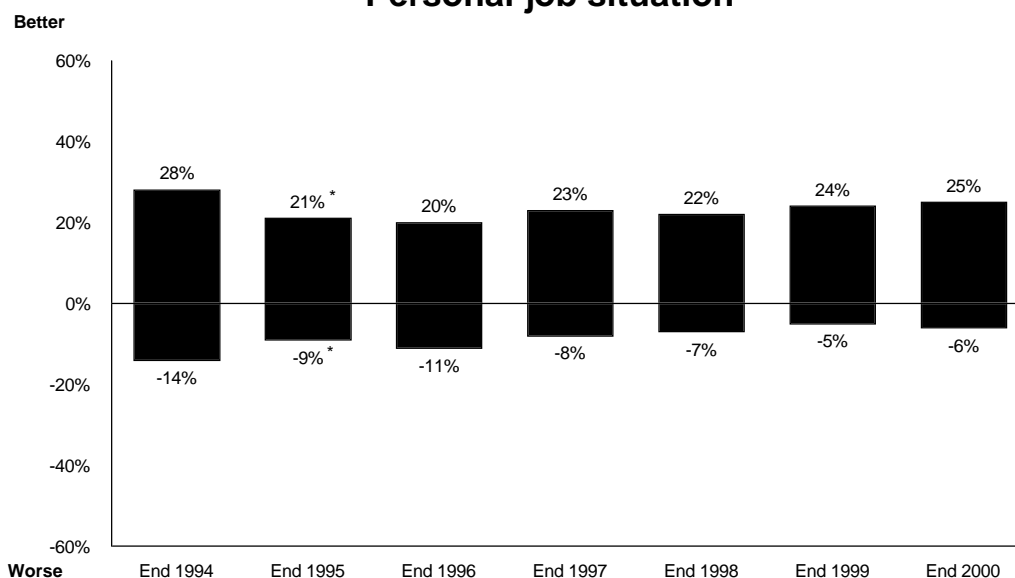


Source: Survey no. 54.1 - Fieldwork Nov - Dec 2000  
Standard Eurobarometer 54 - Fig. 1.5b

Percentage "don't know" not shown

At the EU level, people also seem quite positive when it comes to their personal job situation. At the end of 2000, 25% expect their own job situation to get better and 61% expect it to remain the same. Only 6% of Europeans expect it to get worse in 2001. Due to rounding up, this represents a 1-percentage point increase from last year when the lowest figure was obtained since the Eurobarometer began measuring this expectation at the end of 1994. At that time, people's expectations were more extreme, with a larger segment of the population expecting it to get better (28%) or worse (14%).

### Expectations for "the year to come": Personal job situation



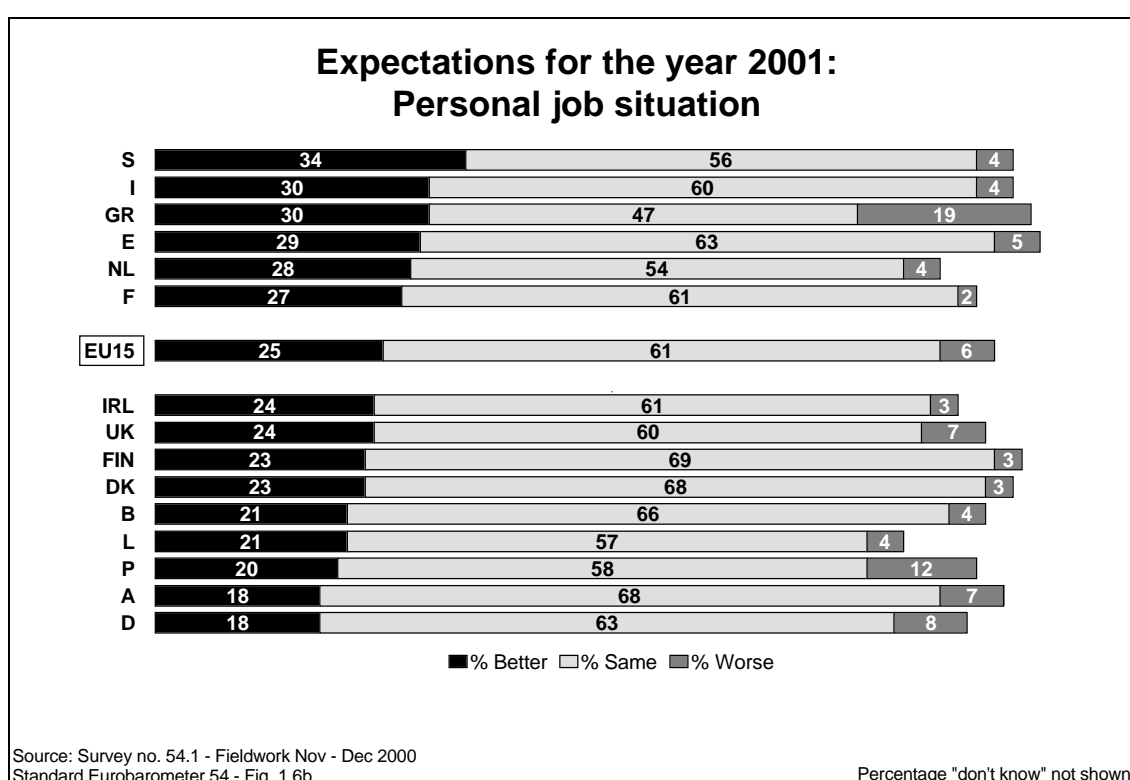
\* Change to the question from previous years: "same" is no longer a spontaneous reply but is clearly offered

Note : End 1990 - End 1995 : EU12

Source: Survey no. 54.1 - Fieldwork Nov - Dec 2000  
Standard Eurobarometer 54 - Fig. 1.6a

Percentage "don't know" and "same" not shown

Once again we find that people's expectations vary considerably from country to country. Sweden tops the list in the proportion of people who believe their personal job situation will get better in 2001 (34%), followed by Italy, Greece (both 30%) and Spain (29%). While the feeling that 2001 will get better is least widespread in Germany and Austria (both 18%), the mood in these two countries is far from pessimistic. The large majority of people in these two countries believe their personal job situation will remain the same and less than 1 person in 10 believes it will get worse. The incidence of pessimistic expectations is below 10% in all other countries with the exception of Greece (19%) and Portugal (12%). In both countries, the mood is less optimistic than it was last year. In Portugal, the proportion of people who believe their personal job situation will be better fell by 8 percentage points and the proportion of people who believe their personal job situation will be worse increased by 5 percentage points. In Greece, the proportion of people who are pessimistic increased by 6 percentage points. Sweden (+5) and the Netherlands (+4) are the only two countries where the mood is now significantly more optimistic. In Austria there are now more people who feel their personal job situation will remain the same resulting in a lower percentage of "don't know" responses. In Denmark the opposite occurred. In all other countries, no significant shifts have been recorded. (Table 1.6a)



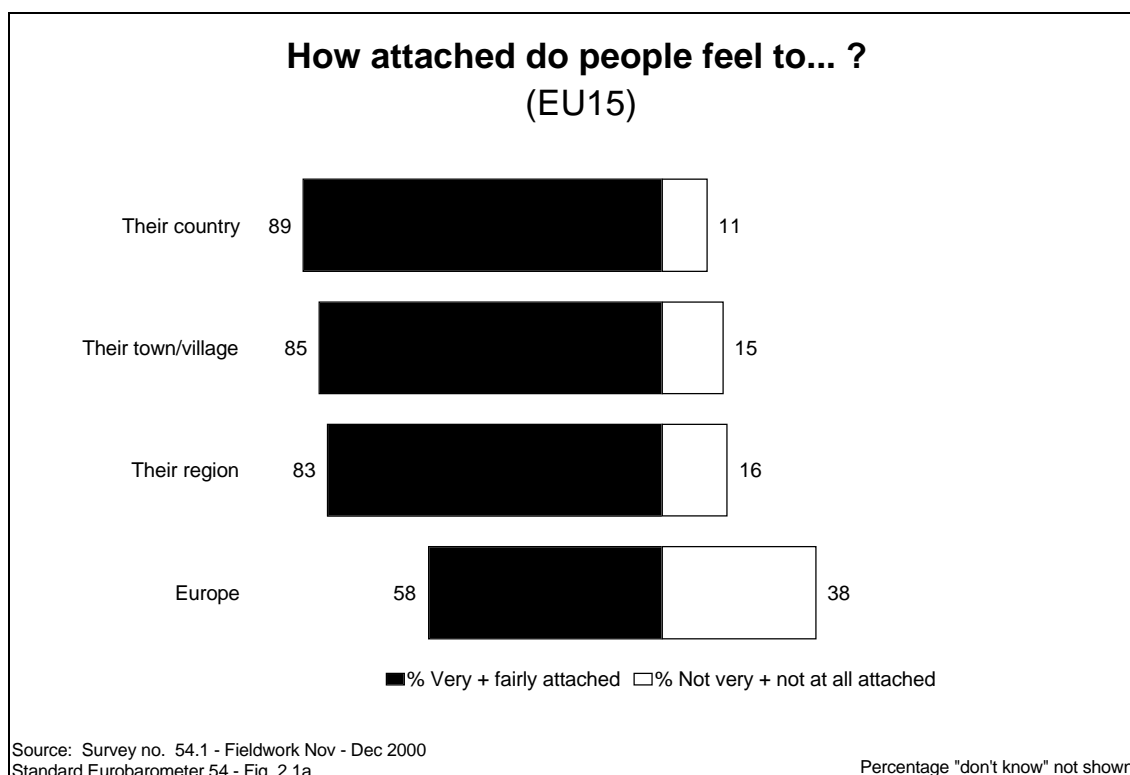
People's expectations about the year to come not only vary from country to country but also depend on a number of socio-demographic factors. Men tend to be more optimistic than women and levels of optimism increase with education and decrease with age. Young and well educated people tend to be more likely than older and less well educated people to consider their country's membership to the EU as a good thing. Thus, we find that people who support their country's membership are more likely to believe that 2001 will be better than people who oppose their country's membership to the EU. (See tables 1.2b, 1.3b, 1.4b, 1.5b and 1.6b)

## 2. Attitudes towards citizenship and Democracy

In this chapter we examine people's attitudes towards citizenship by analysing how attached they feel to their town, country and Europe and by analysing the distinction between national and European identity. We also look at levels of national pride and for the first time present the results of a question that measures the extent to which people feel proud to be European. The chapter also looks at public satisfaction levels with the way democracy works in each of the Member States and with the way it works in the European Union.

### 2.1. People's attachment to their locality, their region, their country and Europe

The survey measures the degree of attachment people have to their town or village, to their region, to their country and to Europe. At the EU level, nearly 9 in 10 people feel attached to their country and more than 8 in 10 feel attached to their town or village and their region. Attachment to Europe is also quite widespread, with nearly 6 in 10 EU citizens saying they feel very or fairly attached.

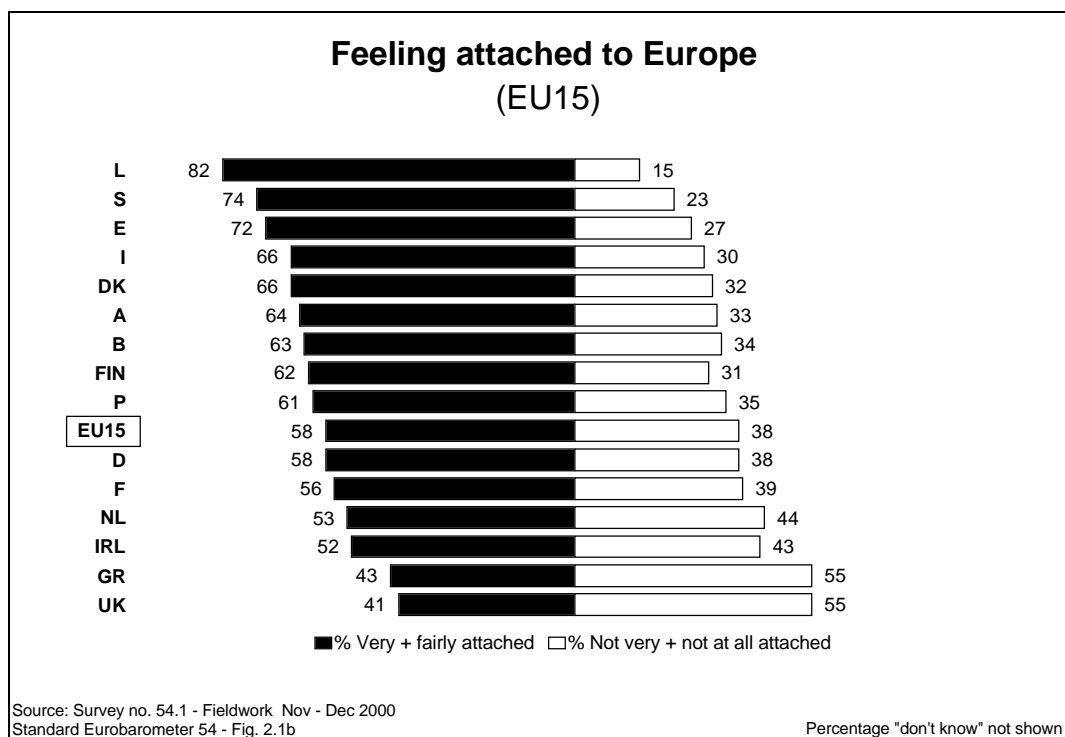


People's attachment to their **town or village** is still very strong in Europe at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium. The country by country analyses show that in 14 Member States more than 3 quarters of the population feels attached to their locality. Only in the Netherlands (66%) are the figures lower. Attachment levels are particularly high in Spain (95%), Portugal (93%), Greece (91%) and Ireland (90%). In Greece, 75% of respondents feel very attached to their town or village. (Table 2.1a)

Seventy-seven percent of people in Greece feel very attached to their **region** and a further 17% feel fairly attached. Other countries where more than 9 in 10 people feel very or fairly attached are Portugal, Spain (both 95%) and Ireland (91%). At 66%, people in the Netherlands are least likely to feel attached to their region. (Table 2.1b)

In comparison to their town, village or region, people are even more likely to feel attached to their country and here we find much less variance between the various nations. In 12 Member States, 9 in 10 people feel attached to their country. In Germany 85% share this view. At 80%, Belgian and Dutch respondents are least likely to say that they feel very or fairly attached to their country. (Table 2.1c)

Looking at the extent to which people feel attached to **Europe**, we find that 82% of people in Luxembourg feel very or fairly attached. Sweden (74%) comes second followed by Spain (72%). People in the UK (41%) and Greece (43%) are least likely to feel attached. In these two countries 55% of people feel not very or not at all attached to Europe. In the 10 remaining Member States more than half of the population feels very or fairly attached to Europe. (See also table 2.1d)

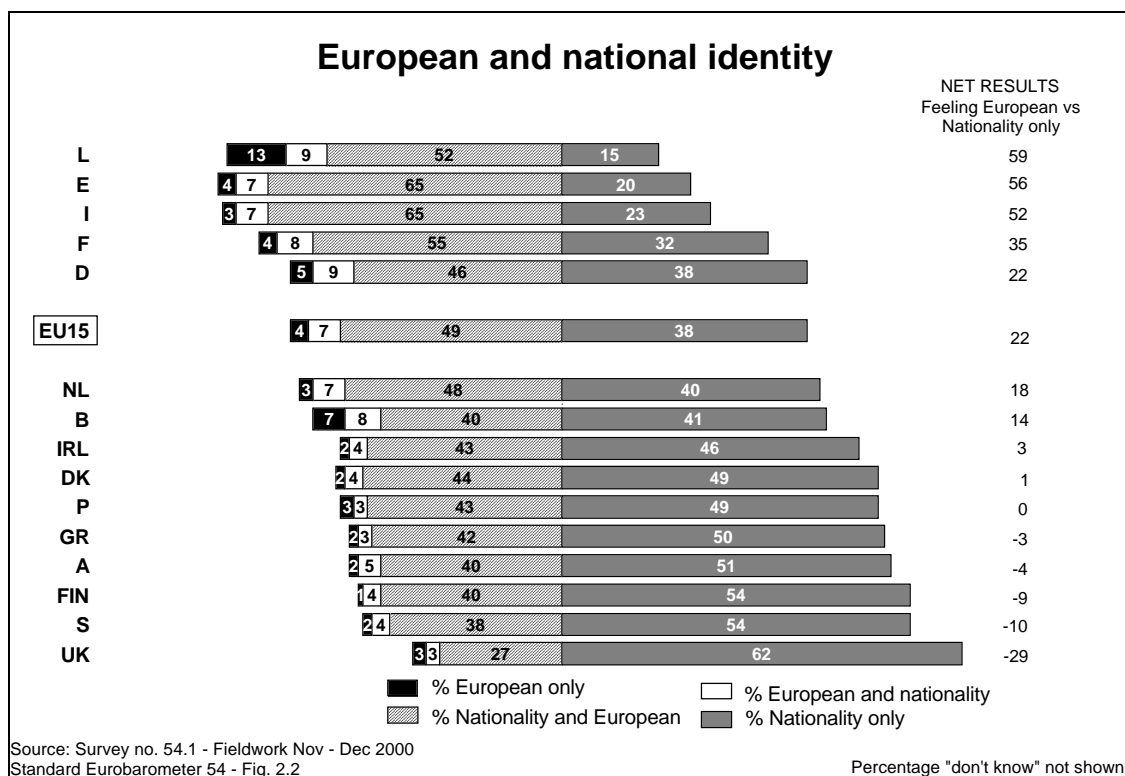


The following table shows that in comparison to spring 1999, when the question was last asked, attachment levels to Europe have improved significantly in Luxembourg, Spain, the Netherlands, the UK (all +4), Sweden and France (both +3). Denmark and Ireland (both -5) are the only two countries where a significant negative shift has been recorded.

Feeling attached to Europe - % that feels very or fairly attached in Spring 1999 (EB51) and Autumn 2000 (EB54)			
Country	Spring 1999	Autumn 2000	% Change
B	63	63	0
DK	71	66	-5
D	58	58	0
GR	41	43	+2
E	68	72	+4
F	53	56	+3
IRL	57	52	-5
I	65	66	+1
L	78	82	+4
NL	49	53	+4
A	62	64	+2
P	61	61	0
FIN	64	62	-2
S	71	74	+3
UK	37	41	+4
EU15	56	58	+2

## 2.2. European and national identity

When asked how they see themselves in the near future, people saying they feel European are in the majority 9 of the 15 Member States, though most do not regard themselves as exclusively European.



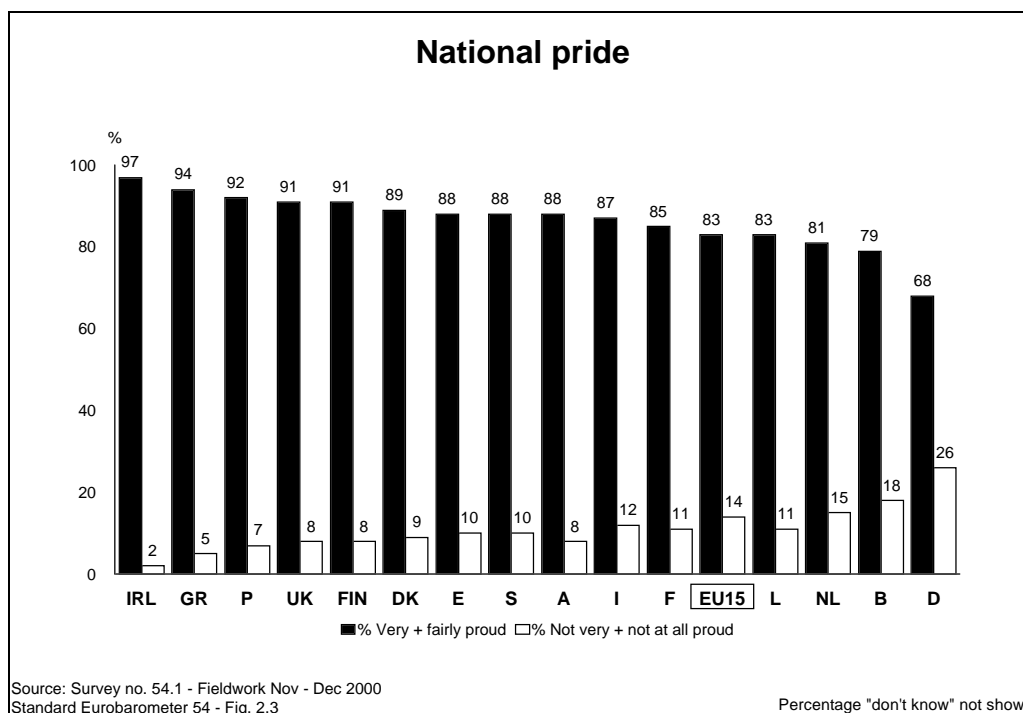
Because Luxembourg contains a high proportion of citizens from other EU countries, we once again find that people in this country are most likely to feel European only (13%), followed by people in Belgium (7%). In all other countries, 5% or less of the population shares this feeling. When we include people who feel somewhat European, Spain tops the list at 76%, followed by Italy (75%) and Luxembourg (74%). The 6 other countries where people who feel (to some extent) European are in the majority are France (67%), Germany (60%), the Netherlands (58%), Belgium (55%), Denmark (50%) and Ireland (49%). In the other 6 countries, people who identify only with their own nationality are in the majority, although in some of these countries this majority is very small. However, in the UK (62%), national identity is clearly the prevailing sentiment.

Although the proportion of people who identify solely with Europe has remained low over time, recent measurements show that people are becoming less likely to identify solely with their own nationality. Consequently, we find that in a number of countries people are more and more likely to have a shared sense of identity with their own nationality on the one hand and with Europe on the other hand. In Luxembourg and Ireland, for instance, the proportion of people that only identifies with their nationality has dropped by 12 and 10 percentage points, respectively since spring 2000. France (+5), Denmark and Portugal (both +3) are the only countries where the proportion of people who identify solely with their own nationality has increased. (Table 2.2a)

The demographic analyses show that people who are still studying (74%) and those who left full-time education by the age of 20 or older (71%) and managers (69%) are most likely to feel to some extent European. Retired people (50%) and people who left school before the age of 15 (49%) are most likely to identify with their own nationality.

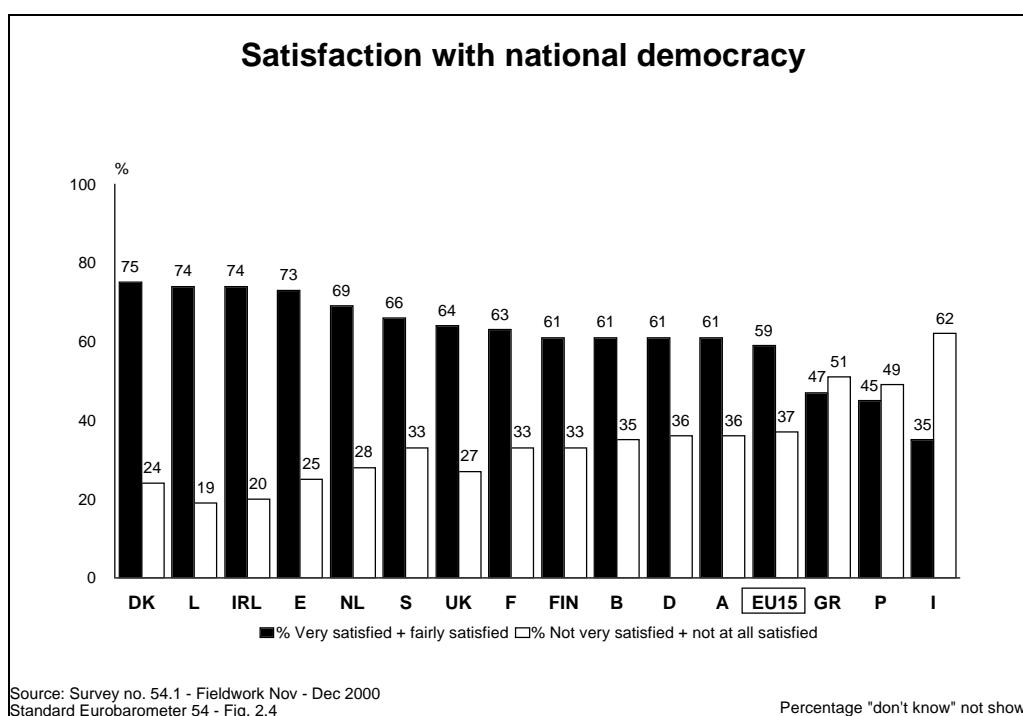
The attitudinal analyses shows that 78% of people who regard their country's membership to the European Union as a good thing feel to some extent European. At the other extreme we find that 72% of people who regard their country's membership as a bad thing identify with their own nationality. The gap between these two groups has increased since spring 2000 when 76% of pro-Europeans felt to some extent European and 69% of euro-sceptics identified with their own nationality. (Table 2.2b)

The following graph shows that the extent to which people are proud of their nationality varies greatly from country to country. People in Ireland are most likely to feel proud (97%) whilst people in Germany are least likely to share this view (68%). (See also table 2.3)



## 2.3. Satisfaction with national democracy

When we look at the way democracy works in the Member States we find that around three-quarters of the people in Denmark, Luxembourg, Ireland and Spain give their country's democracy a positive assessment. The same is true for close to 7 in 10 people living in the Netherlands and Sweden, for around 6 in 10 people living in the UK, France, Finland, Belgium, Germany and Austria and for close to 5 in 10 people living in Greece. Italy (62%), Greece (51%) and Portugal (49%) are the only countries where those who are not satisfied with the way democracy works are in the majority. (Table 2.4a)



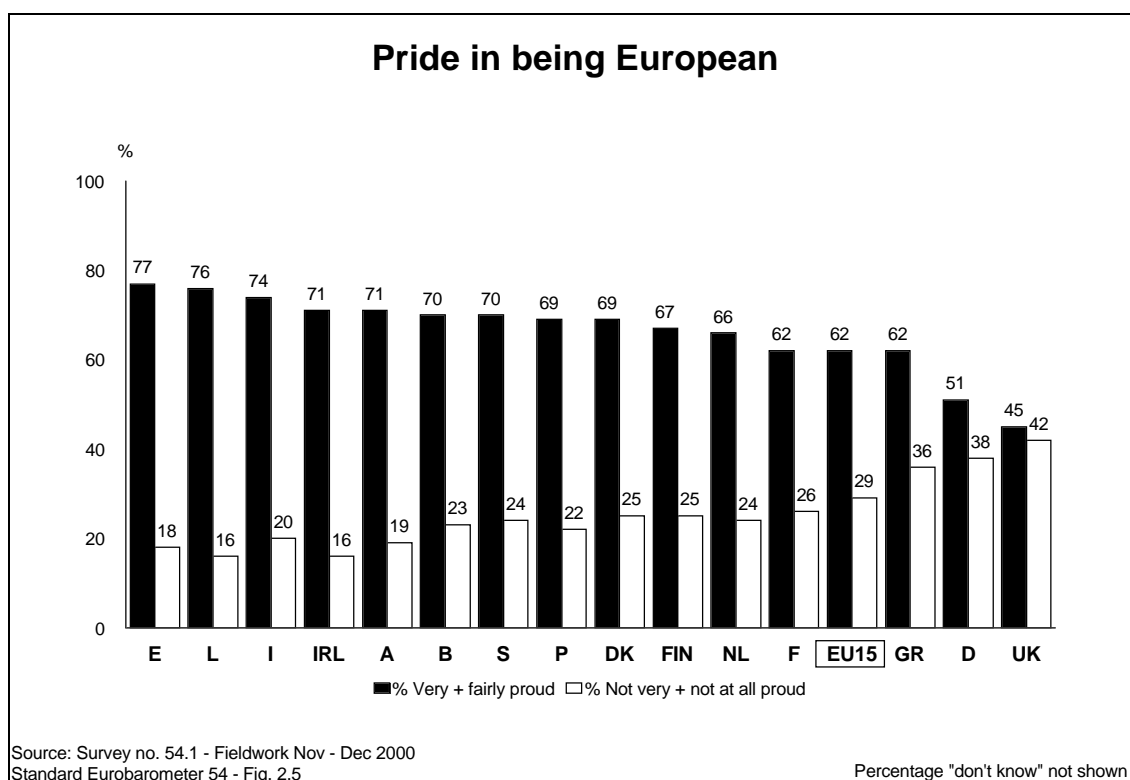
Demographic analyses show that managers (67%) are most likely to feel satisfied with the way democracy works in their country while unemployed people (46%) are the only group with a satisfaction level below 50%. Attitudinal analyses show a 23 percentage-point gap in satisfaction levels between people who see their country's membership to the European Union as a good thing and those who regard it as a bad thing. (Table 2.4b)

## 2.4. Pride in being European

This Eurobarometer survey is the first to have measured the extent to which EU citizens feel proud to be Europeans. The wording of the question is as follows:

*"Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud or not at all proud to be European?"*

The following graph shows that people who feel very or fairly proud are in the majority in all 15 Member States.



Levels of pride are most widespread in Spain (77%), Luxembourg (76% with one third of the population even feeling very proud), Italy (74%), Ireland (71%, with one quarter of the population feeling very proud), Austria (71%), Belgium and Sweden (both 70%). Levels of pride are lowest in the UK (45%) and Germany (51%). In the UK, 19% feels not at all proud. In Germany (11%), this figure is considerably lower. However, even in these two countries, people who feel proud outnumber those who do not feel proud. (Table 2.5a)

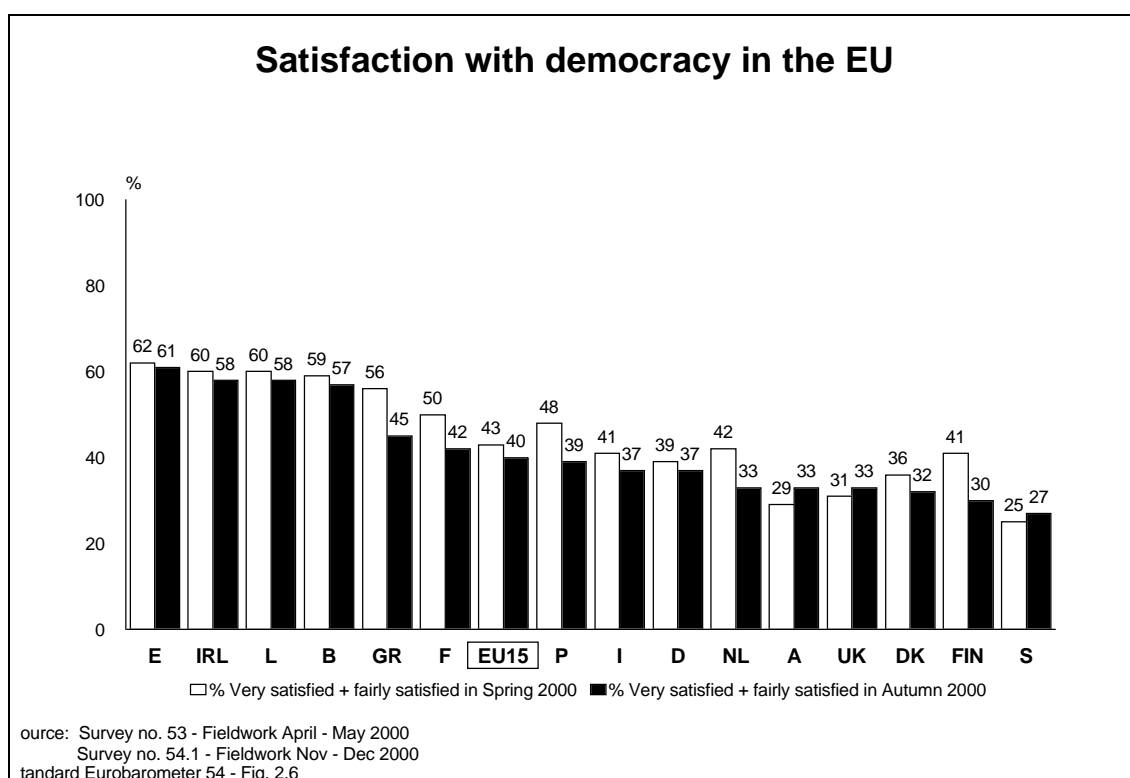
Demographic analyses show no differences between men and women. Among the various age groups, we find a significant difference between people aged below 25 and people aged 40 or older. Among the first group, 69% feels proud to be European, compared to 59% among the latter group. Education is also an important determinant of people's pride. 73% of people who are still studying feel proud, followed by 66% of people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older. Those who left school before they reached the age of 15 are at 57% the least likely educational group to feel proud. Among the various occupational groups we find that other white-collar workers are most likely to feel proud (67%), followed by managers (65%). Unemployed people (56%) are least likely to feel proud. However, there is no demographic group with pride levels below 50%.

The attitudinal analyses show a strong relationship with people's support for the European Union. 78% of those who regard their country's membership as a good thing feel proud to be European, compared to only 29% of those who regard their country's membership as a bad thing. (Table 2.5b)

## 2.5. Satisfaction with the way democracy works in the European Union

In response to the question "how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in the European Union" 40% of respondents say they are very or fairly satisfied and 43% say they are not very or not at all satisfied. The remaining 17% lack an opinion.

The country by country analyses show that satisfaction levels are most widespread in Spain (61%), followed by Ireland, Luxembourg (both 58%) and Belgium (57%). In all other countries, satisfaction levels are below 50% with people in Sweden (27%) least likely to feel very or fairly satisfied.



In comparison to spring 2000, satisfaction levels are now lower in most countries. The largest drop in satisfaction levels is recorded in Greece and Finland (both -11). Significant drops also occurred in the Netherlands, Portugal (both -9), France (-8), Denmark and Italy (both -4). In Belgium, Germany, Spain and Ireland small insignificant drops have been recorded. Only in Austria (+4), the UK and Sweden (both +2) are there now more people who gave a positive verdict. In Austria, public opinion towards the European Union is on the rebound now that the sanctions, which the other Member States imposed against this country, have been lifted. In general the results show that Austrian public opinion towards the European Union is now significantly more positive than it was in spring 2000. (Table 2.6a)

The demographic analyses show that young people (46%) are most likely to feel satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union while unemployed people (34%) are least likely to share this view. The proportion of "don't know" responses varies greatly and to a certain extent explains the differences in satisfaction levels.

Attitudinal analyses show an even larger gap between supporters and opponents of the European Union than the one obtained for satisfaction with national democracy with 55% of supporters feeling satisfied compared to only 14% of opponents. (Table 2.6b)

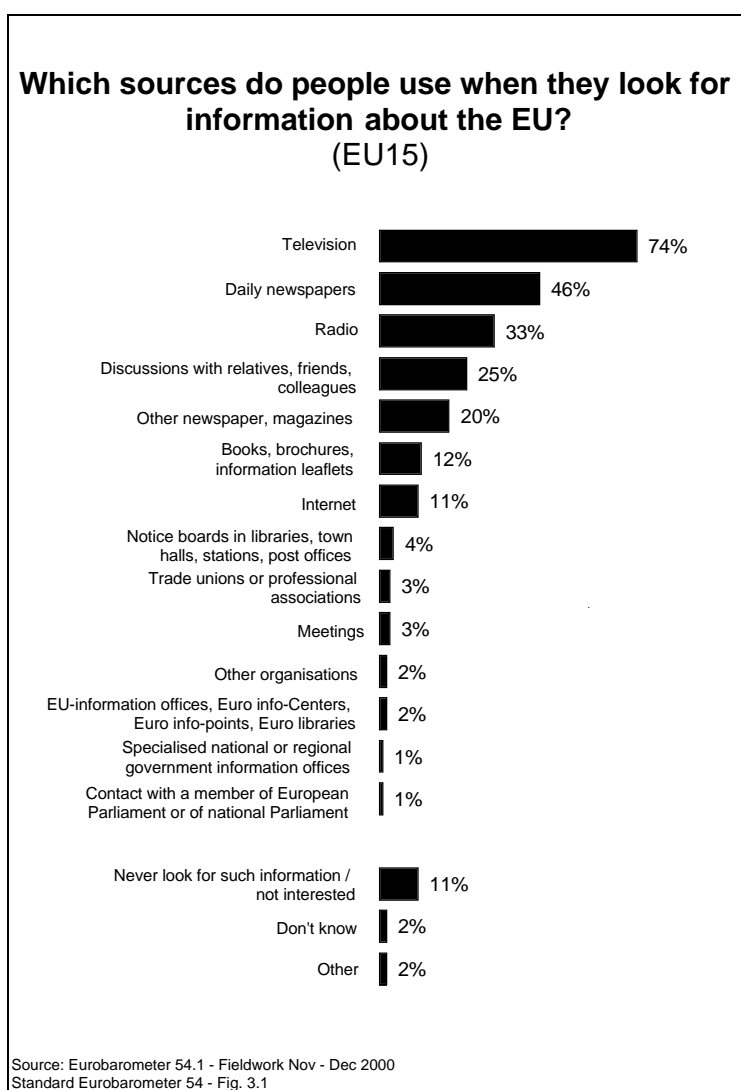


### 3. Sources of information and knowledge levels among EU citizens

In this chapter we look at where people look for information about the European Union and we look at their preferred sources of information. We also analyse how people perceive the media's coverage of EU affairs and we report on people's perceived knowledge of the European Union and their awareness of a number of EU institutions. The public's perception of how the European Union's budget is spent is also analysed.

#### 3.1. Sources of information about the European Union

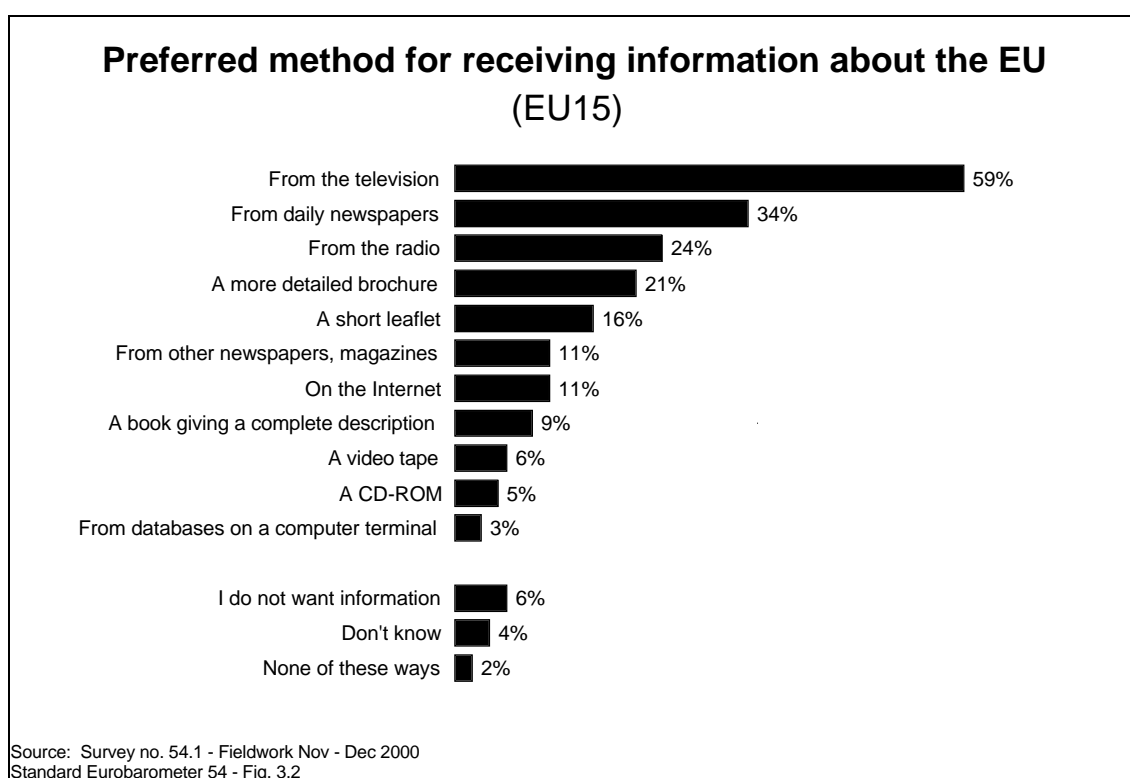
For many years the Eurobarometer has been questioning EU citizens about the sources they use when they look for information about the European Union and as usual we find that the media is the most popular source. 74% of respondents say they turn on the television when they look for information, 46% of respondents read the daily newspapers and 33% listen to the radio<sup>4</sup>. 25% of respondents hold discussions with relatives, friends and colleagues and 2 in 10 respondents turn to other newspapers and magazines when they look for information. 12% of respondents read books, brochures or information leaflets and 11% surf the World Wide Web to obtain information. The other 7 sources listed in the questionnaire are selected by less than 1 in 10 respondents. 11% of respondents never look for information about the European Union, down from 15% in spring 2000. 2 in 100 mention a source not included in the questionnaire or lack an opinion.



<sup>4</sup> Respondents were shown a card listing 14 sources or type of sources and were asked to name all those they use when they look for information about the European Union. They could also mention other sources, say that they never look for information about the EU (not interested) or say they don't know.

The country analyses show that the **television** is the most popular source in all 15 Member States with the proportion of respondents selecting this source ranging from 52% in Ireland to 83% in Germany. The range for **daily newspapers** extends from 18% in Portugal to 68% in Germany. For the **radio** it goes from 17% in Italy and the UK to 56% in Luxembourg. The proportion of people that surfs the **World Wide Web** for EU information ranges from 4% in Portugal, Spain and Greece to 24% in the Netherlands and Sweden.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their preferred method(s) of receiving information about the European Union from a list of 11 pre-defined sources. Not surprisingly, people's preference goes to the three media sources they are most likely to use. 6 in 10 respondents say they prefer the television, more than 3 in 10 say they prefer daily newspapers and more than 2 in 10 respondents list the radio as a preferred source. The Internet is selected by 11% of respondents, up from 9% in spring 2000. The other non-printed information tools, such as videotapes (6%), CD-ROMs (5%) and computer databases (3%) continue to be less popular than printed sources. (Table 3.1)



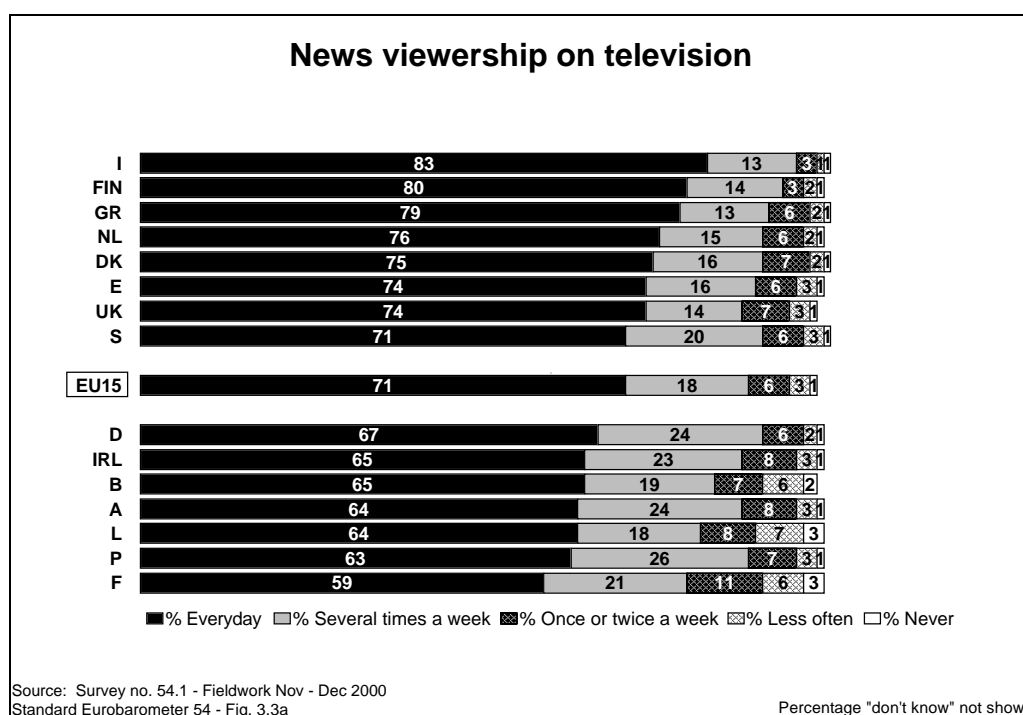
The country analyses show that the **television** is the preferred source in all 15 Member States with people in Denmark (76%) most likely to select it and people in Ireland (43%) least likely to do so. The proportion of people that select **daily newspapers** as one of their preferred sources ranges from 12% in Portugal to 48% in Sweden. The preference for the **radio** ranges from 14% in Ireland to 43% in Denmark. Preference levels for **the Internet** range from 4% in Portugal to 23% in Denmark. (Table 3.2)

### 3.2. The news media and its coverage of EU affairs

We next look at the frequency at which EU citizens watch the news on television, read the news in daily newspapers and listen to the news on the radio.

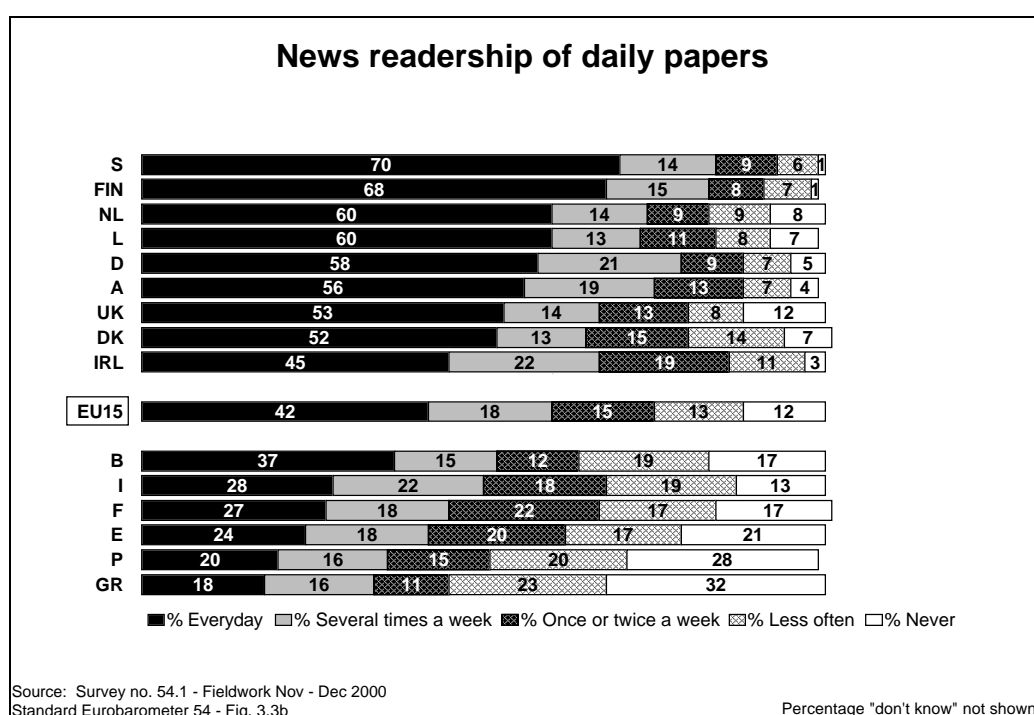
## News viewership on television

As the graph below shows, 71% of respondents watch the news on television on a daily basis, with a further 18% watching it several times a week<sup>5</sup>.



## News readership of daily newspapers

Six in ten respondents read the news in daily newspapers every day (42%) or several times a week (18%)<sup>6</sup>.

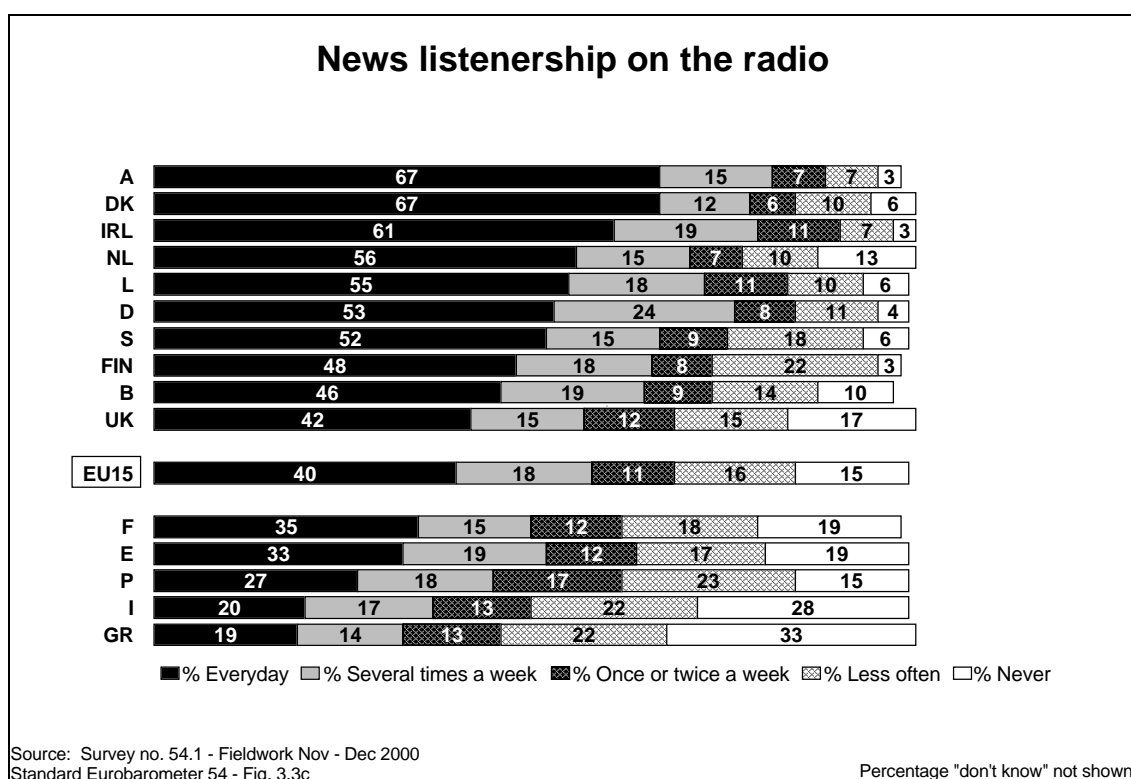


<sup>5</sup> See table 3.3a for country results.

<sup>6</sup> See table 3.3b for country results.

## News listenership on the radio

News listenership on the radio is also fairly common with nearly 6 in 10 respondents doing this every day (40%) or several times a week (18%)<sup>7</sup>.



## News coverage of EU affairs in the media

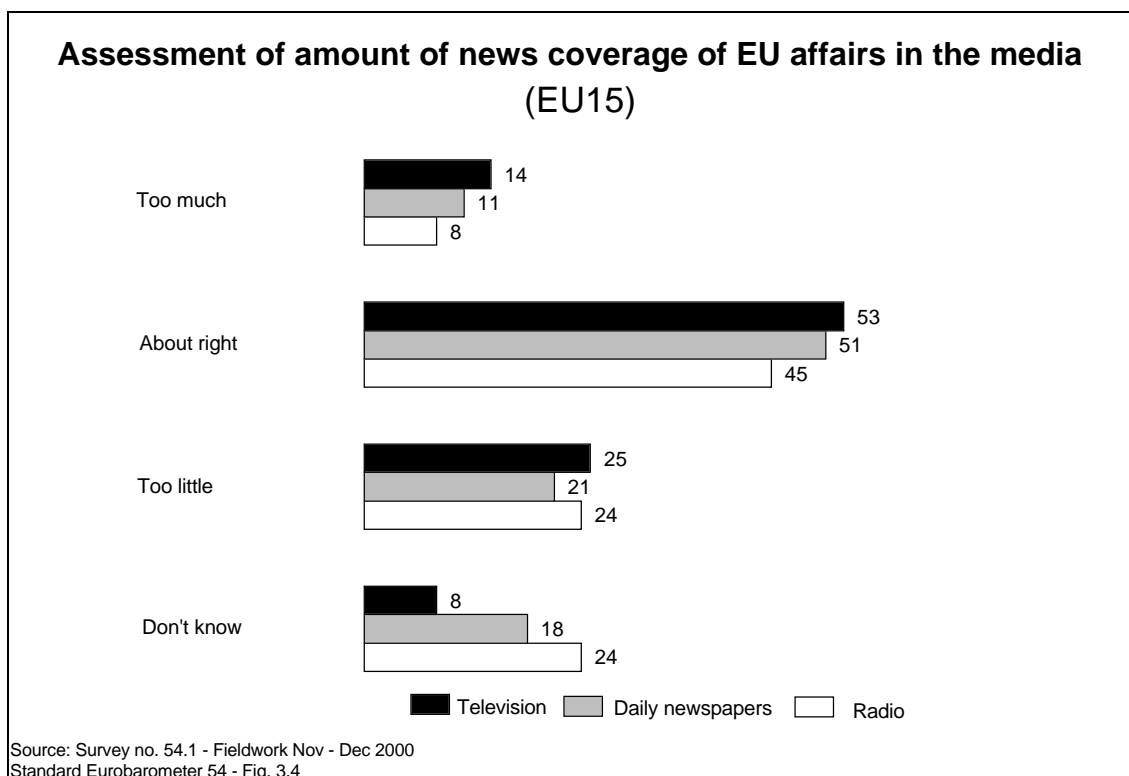
Next, we examine what Europeans think about the amount of coverage dedicated by the media to European Union affairs. Respondents were asked the following question:

*"Do you think that the amount of coverage given to European Union affairs is far too much, too much, about right, too little or far too little in..."*

- the news on (NATIONALITY) television?*
- the news in (NATIONALITY) daily papers?*
- the news on (NATIONALITY) radio stations?"*

As the next graph shows, more than half of EU citizens feel that the television and the daily newspapers provide the right amount of news coverage of EU affairs. For the radio this figure is slightly lower (45%). Only around 1 respondent in 10 feels that the three media provide too much news coverage of EU affairs, leaving a significant proportion of respondents with a sense that there is not enough coverage. 25% feel the television shows too little coverage, 24% feel this way about the radio and 21% feel this way about the daily newspapers. There is also a significant proportion of respondents that lacks an opinion about the amount of news coverage on the radio (24%) and in the daily newspapers (18%).

<sup>7</sup> See table 3.3c for country results.



The country by country results show that people in Italy (37%) are most likely to feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs in the news on **television** is too little, followed by people in Sweden (31%). The proportion of people that feels that the amount of news coverage is too much is highest in Spain (25%) and Greece (23%). In Finland, Belgium (both 67%), Ireland (65%), Denmark (62%) and Austria (60%) at least 6 in 10 people feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs in the news on television is about right. Luxembourg (43%), Greece (46%) and Portugal (47%) are the only three countries where less than 50% of the population shares this view. In comparison to spring 2000, there are now more people who feel that the amount of coverage is about right and fewer people who feel that there is too little coverage.

People in Finland and Ireland are most likely to feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs in the news in **the daily papers** is about right (both 66%), followed by people in Denmark (63%), Belgium (62%), Sweden (61%) and Austria (60%). Other countries where at least half the population shares this view are Germany (55%), the Netherlands (54%), France (51%) and the UK (50%). People in Italy, Sweden (both 27%) and Germany (25%) are most likely to feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs in the daily papers is too little.

When it comes to the **radio**, we once again find that Italy (31%) has the highest proportion of people that feels that coverage of EU affairs is too little, followed by Germany (30%). There are no other countries where more than 3 in 10 people share this view. The Irish most likely to feel that the amount of coverage is about right (65%), followed by the Belgians (61%) and the Finns (60%). The other countries with scores of 50% or above are, in descending order, Denmark, Sweden and Luxembourg.

The measurements in spring and autumn 2000 show that people are becoming more likely to feel that the amount of EU media coverage is about right. Whilst we have noted that a significant minority still feels that there isn't enough media coverage of EU affairs, the data show that the situation is improving. (See tables 3.4a-c)

### Perceived fairness of the media's coverage of EU affairs

More than 50% of EU citizens feels that the media in their respective country cover EU affairs in a fair way. Analyses show that frequent users of the news media are more likely to feel positive about the way the media cover EU affairs than people who use the news media less frequently<sup>8</sup>. However, around a third of the population holds the view that the media's coverage is not fair regardless of how often people use the news media.

As the following table shows, the more often people use the news media, the more likely it is that they judge its coverage of EU affairs as being fair. And as expected, the less often people use the news media, the more likely it is that they can't say whether the media's coverage of EU affairs is fair or not fair.

Perceived fairness of the media's coverage of EU affairs by scores on the Media Use Index			
Media Use Index:	% saying media coverage is very + quite fair	% saying media coverage is not very + not at all fair	% Don't know
+++	59%	29%	12%
++	53%	31%	16%
--	44%	34%	22%
---	34%	30%	36%

People's views also vary depending on how much they feel they know about the European Union<sup>9</sup>. 65% of people who feel they know a great deal (i.e. those who put themselves on points 8 to 10 on the self-perceived knowledge scale) believe the media's coverage of EU affairs in their country is fair, compared to only 41% of people who feel they know very little about the European Union. Among this latter group, 3 in 10 people can't say whether the media's coverage of EU affairs is fair.

Perceived fairness of the media's coverage of EU affairs by self-perceived knowledge of the European Union			
Self perceived knowledge of EU affairs (score on scale From 1-10):	% saying media coverage is very + quite fair	% saying media coverage is not very + not at all fair	% Don't know
Knows a great deal about the EU (score 8-10)	65%	30%	6%
Knows a bit about the EU (score 4-7)	58%	33%	10%
Knows very little about the EU (score 1-3)	41%	30%	30%

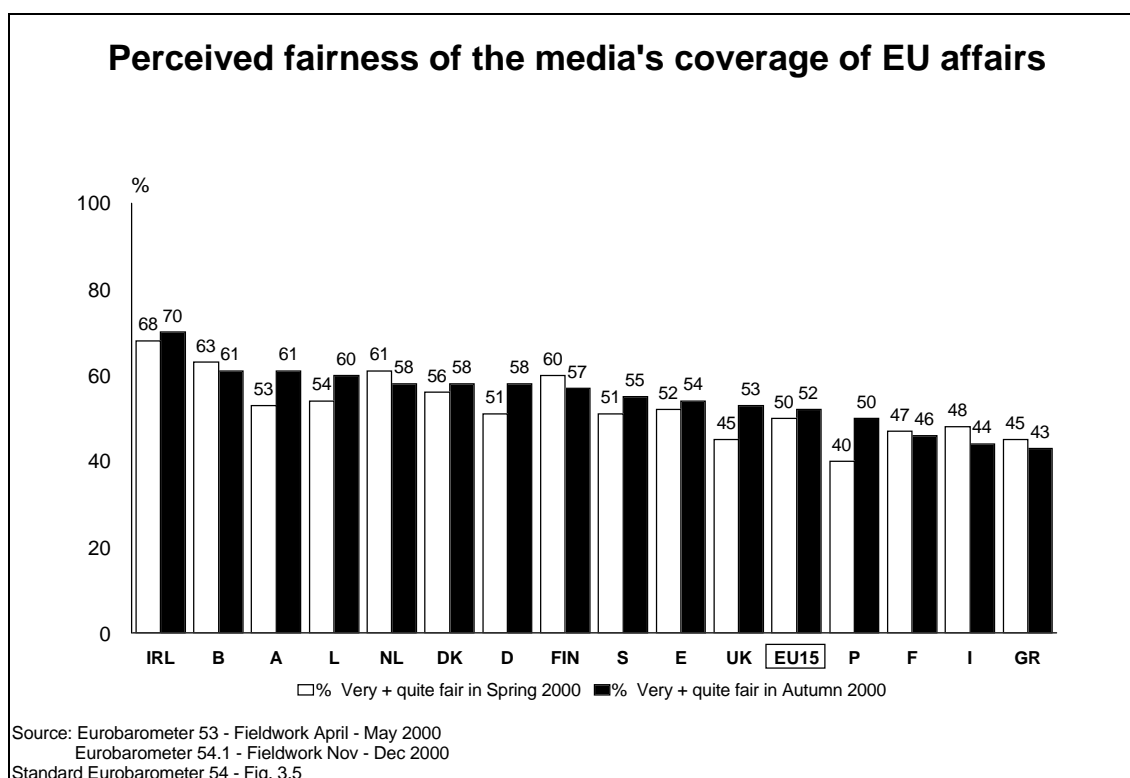
<sup>8</sup> See Appendix C.4 for a definition of the Media Use Index.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix C.4 for a definition of the self-perceived knowledge scale. The next section of this chapter reports on the levels of self-perceived knowledge among the EU population.

People's assessment of whether the media cover EU affairs in a fair way also depends on how they feel about the European Union in general. Those who hold favourable attitudes are far more likely to feel that the media's coverage in their country is fair than those who hold negative attitudes towards the EU are.

Perceived fairness of the media's coverage of EU affairs by people's attitudes towards the European Union			
Attitude:	% saying media coverage is very + quite fair	% saying media coverage is not very + not at all fair	% Don't know
EU membership is a good thing	61%	28%	11%
Proud to be European	58%	28%	13%
Not proud to be European	44%	38%	18%
EU membership is a bad thing	40%	42%	18%

Looking next at how the perceived fairness of the media's coverage varies from country to country shows that, as in spring 2000, people in Ireland are most likely to believe it is very or quite fair (70%; +2). Around 6 in 10 people in Belgium, Austria, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany give their country's media a positive mark. In 5 other countries, more than half of the population believes the media cover European Union affairs in a fair manner with Greece (43%), Italy (44%) and France (46%) as the only three countries where less than half of the population shares this view. In Greece 47% feel that the media's coverage is not fair, with 40% of French and Italian respondents sharing this view.



In comparison to spring 2000, the largest increase in favourable responses is recorded in Portugal (+10), followed by the UK (+8) and Germany (+7). Italy is the only country where a significant drop in favourable responses has been recorded (-4). (Table 3.5a)

The socio-demographic analyses show that managers are most likely to hold the view that the media coverage of EU affairs in their respective country is fair (58%), followed by other white-collar employees (57%), students (56%) and people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older (55%). People who stayed in full-time education until the age of 15 or younger (47%) and retired people (49%) are least likely to share this view. However, there is relatively little spread between the highest and the lowest reported percentage. Generally, we find that the lower the proportion of "don't know" responses is, the more likely it is that a group is of the view that the media covers EU affairs in a fair way. (Table 3.5b)

### 3.3. Self-perceived knowledge of the European Union

For several years the Eurobarometer has asked respondents how much they feel they know about the European Union and to date self-perceived knowledge levels have been relatively low, although the latest results point to a small improvement<sup>10</sup>. The EU15 results presented in the table below show that 29% of EU citizens feel they know quite a lot to a great deal about the European Union (i.e. those choosing the numbers 6 through 10 on the scale), compared to 26% in spring 2000.

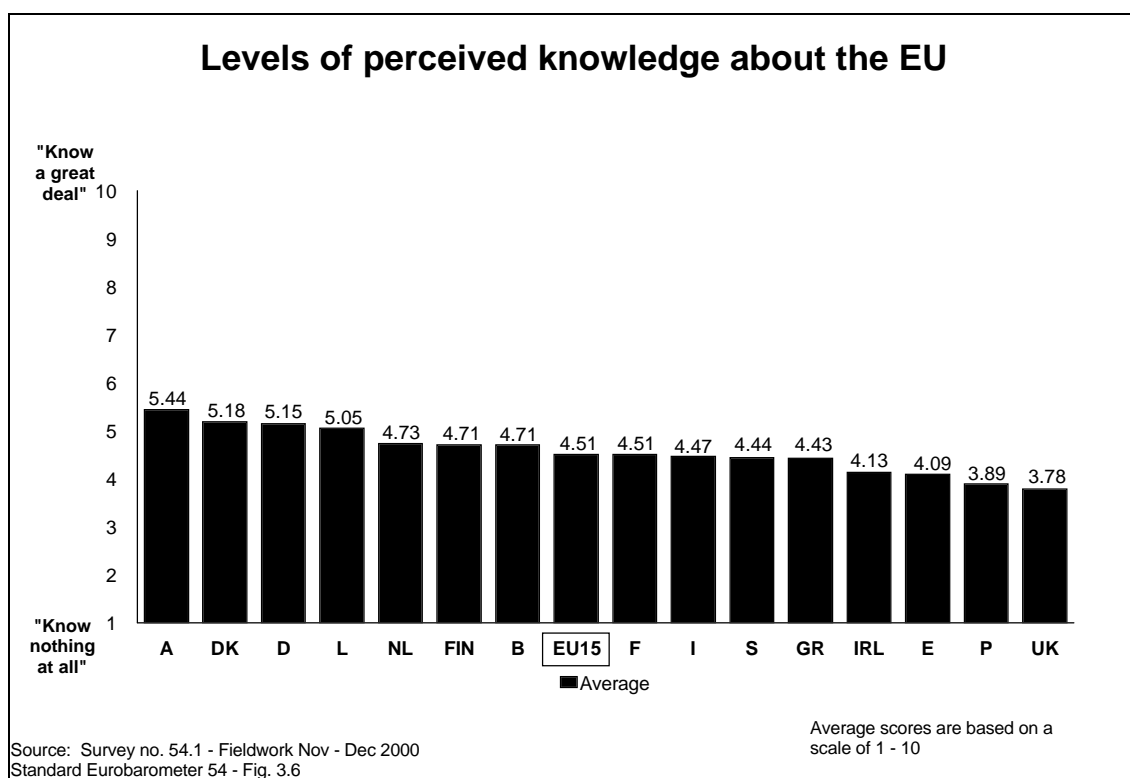
Self-perceived knowledge of EU affairs Autumn 2000 (in %, EU15)	
Scale	%
1 (Know nothing at all)	8
2	9
3	15
4	16
5	20
6	13
7	9
8	5
9	1
10 (Know a great deal)	1
Don't know	2
<b>Average score</b>	<b>4.51</b>

Looking at the country results shows that self-perceived knowledge levels vary significantly from one Member State to the next. The following graph depicts the average scores<sup>11</sup> for each of the 15 countries.

<sup>10</sup> The question is: "how much do you feel you know about the European Union, its policies, its institutions". Respondents were asked to select from a card a number - on a scale from 1 to 10 - which best represents their perceived knowledge about the European Union. The higher the number they select, the more they feel they know about the EU.

<sup>11</sup> The average scores, or means, show the central tendency of the responses and represent the sum of the responses for each of the ten points on the scale times the value of each point divided by the total number of responses.





As in the spring 2000, knowledge levels are highest in Austria, where the average score is 5.44, and lowest in the UK, where the average score is 3.78. With the exception of Italy, where a small non-significant negative shift in knowledge levels has been recorded, knowledge levels have increased in all countries since spring 2000. The highest positive shifts are noted in the 3 Benelux countries (all +.46), followed by Germany (+.43)<sup>12</sup>.

An inspection of the distribution of responses shows that 45% of Austrians feel they know quite a lot to a great deal (i.e. score 6 and higher on the scale) about the European Union. At 42%, people in Germany come in second place followed by people in Denmark (40%), the Netherlands (37%), Belgium (35%), Luxembourg and Finland (both 34%). Portugal (16%) and Spain (18%) are the only two countries where less than 2 in 10 people feel they know quite a lot to a great deal about the European Union. (Table 3.6)<sup>13</sup>

The following table shows the average scores for various socio-demographic groups in the EU. It shows that opinion leaders, managers, people who stayed in full-time education the longest and the most frequent users of the media are the groups that give themselves the highest score on the self-perceived knowledge scale. At the bottom of the table we find people who score lowest on the Opinion Leadership Index and the Media Use Index<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> See Eurobarometer No. 53, figure 5.6.

<sup>13</sup> To make the table easier to read, a recoded version of the scale is presented consisting of four categories: 'know (almost) nothing' - points 1+2; 'know a bit' - points 3 to 5; 'know quite a lot' - points 6 to 8 and 'know a great deal' - points 9+10.

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix C.4 for a definition of these two indices.

Average scores on perceived knowledge scale for various groups at the EU15 level	
Group	Score
Opinion Leadership Index: ++	5.99
Managers	5.75
Educated up to age 20+	5.40
Media Use Index:+++	5.12
Opinion Leadership Index: +	5.04
Men	4.95
Employees	4.83
Self-employed	4.78
Students	4.72
Aged 40-54	4.71
Aged 25-39	4.64
Educated to age 16-19	4.52
<b>Average for EU15</b>	<b>4.51</b>
Media Use Index: ++	4.49
Aged 55+	4.36
Manual workers	4.32
Opinion Leadership Index: -	4.31
Aged 15-24	4.30
Retired	4.27
Unemployed	4.23
Women	4.10
Educated to age 15 or younger	3.79
House persons	3.77
Media Use Index: --	3.72
Media Use Index: ---	3.39
Opinion Leadership Index: --	3.35

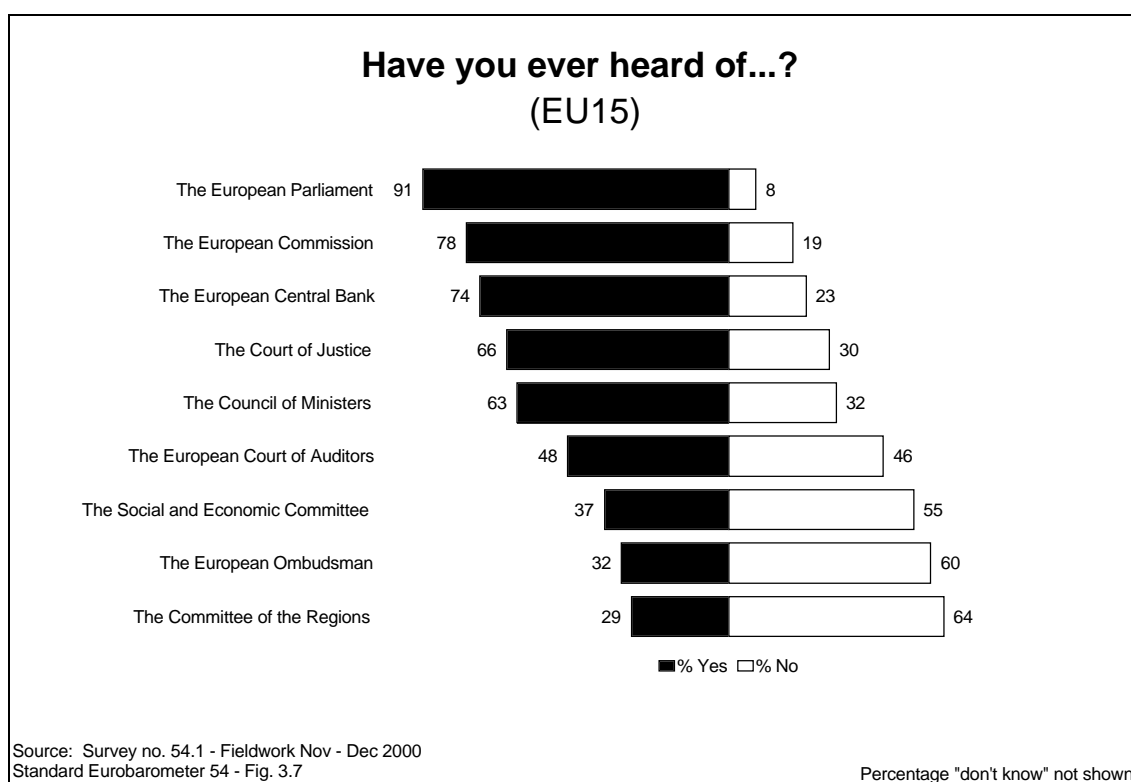
However, when comparing these results with those obtained in spring 2000 we find that the gap between those who feel most knowledgeable and those who feel least knowledgeable is now considerably smaller. In spring 2000 it was 3.08; now the gap is 2.64. The rank order remains more or less unchanged.

### 3.4. Awareness of the European Union institutions and bodies

For the fourth time in a row, the survey has measured public awareness of 9 of the European Union's institutions and bodies<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> The question asks respondents whether they have ever heard of the institution in question. The results of a similar question measuring whether people have recently seen or heard something about the European Parliament through the media are presented in chapter 6. Chapter 4 reports on the extent to which people regard these institutions as important and on the extent to which they trust them.

The public is most likely to have heard of the European Parliament (91%), followed by the European Commission (78%) and the European Central Bank (74%). People are least likely to have heard of the two youngest EU institutions - the Committee of the Regions (29%) and the Social and Economic Committee (37%) - and the European Ombudsman (32%).



Awareness levels have not changed significantly since spring 2000 and the rank order also remains the same<sup>16</sup>.

The country results indicate that awareness levels for the **European Parliament** are above 90% in all countries except the UK, Greece, (both 87%) and Germany (88%). At least 9 in 10 people in Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg (all 95%), Austria and Ireland (both 90%) have heard of the **European Commission**. Greece, Germany (both 73%), Spain, the UK (both 76%) and Italy are the only countries where less than 8 in 10 the people have heard of it. Awareness of the **European Central Bank** is most widespread in Finland (89%) and Luxembourg (88%) and least widespread in Greece (57%) and the UK (58%). People in Denmark (95%) are most likely to have heard of the **Court of Justice**, while people in Italy (46%) are least likely to know of its existence. People in Sweden (90%) are most likely to have heard of the **Council of Ministers**, while awareness levels are lowest in the UK (40%). Awareness of the **European Court of Auditors** is most widespread in Luxembourg and Austria (both 76%) and least widespread in the UK (18%). In the Nordic countries - Denmark (30%) Finland (31%) and Sweden (34%), awareness levels are also below average. People in Luxembourg (62%) are most likely to have heard of the **Social and Economic Committee**, while people in the Netherlands (24%) are least likely to have heard of it. The **European Ombudsman** - Jacob Söderman from Finland – continues to be by far most recognised in his home country (75%). He is least known in Germany (21%). Awareness of the **Committee of the Regions** is most common in Portugal (50%) and Austria (49%), while people in the Netherlands (12%) continue to be least likely to be aware of the existence of this institution. (Table 3.7)

In order to provide a general impression of awareness levels in each of the Member States, we have calculated an average by summing up the percentage of "aware" responses for each institution/body and dividing this by the total number of institutions (9) included in the survey. As the following table shows awareness levels are highest in Luxembourg (where many of these institutions are located) and lowest in the UK.

<sup>16</sup> See Eurobarometer No. 53, figure and table 5.7.

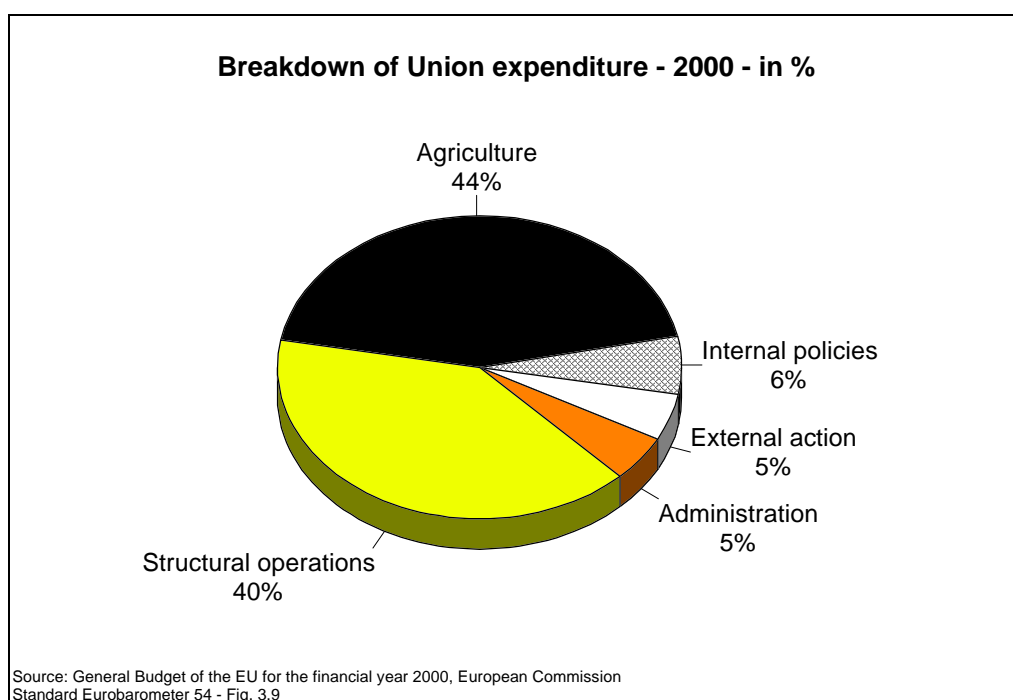
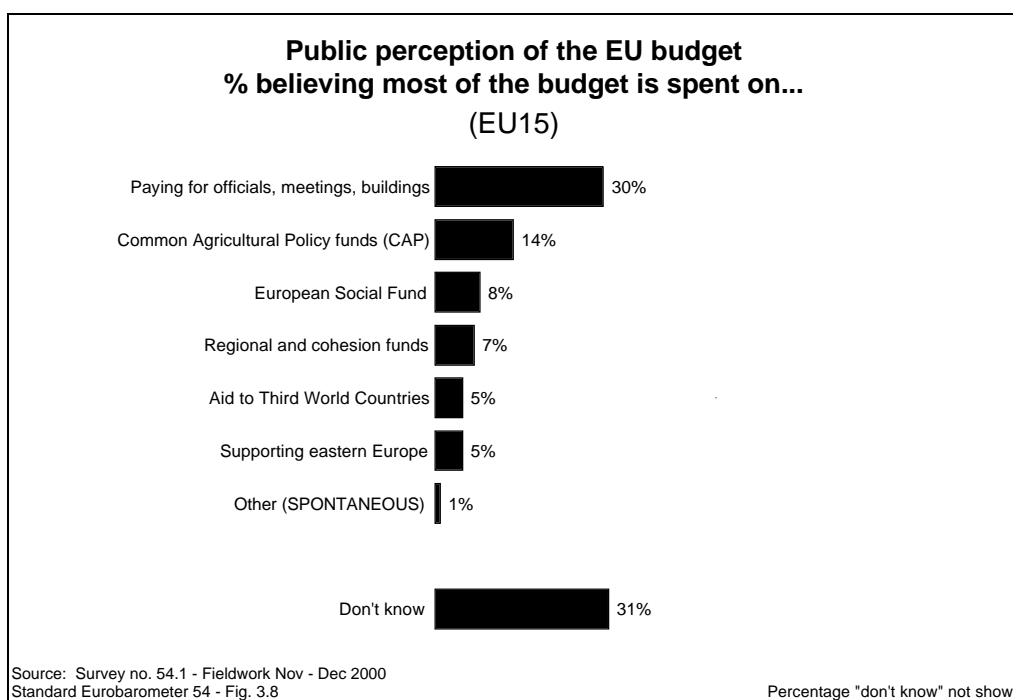
Awareness of the EU institutions and bodies (Average awareness levels for the 9 institutions/bodies, in % by country)	
Country	%
Luxembourg	75
Austria	71
Denmark	69
Finland	69
Ireland	66
Portugal	65
Spain	62
Belgium	61
Sweden	61
Germany	61
Greece	59
France	58
<b>EU15</b>	<b>57</b>
The Netherlands	57
Italy	52
United Kingdom	47

Awareness levels not only vary from country to country but also depend on how knowledgeable people feel they are about the European Union. The following table shows that the more people feel they know about the EU, the more likely it is that they have heard of the EU institutions.

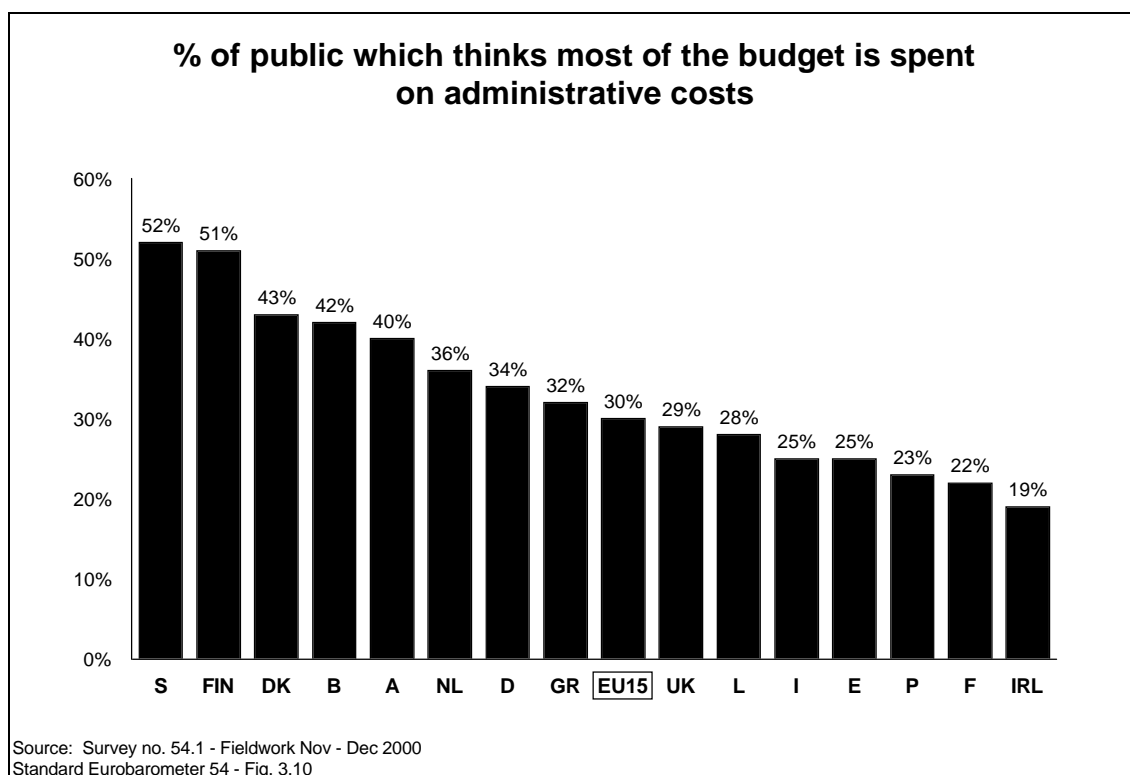
Awareness levels of the EU institutions/bodies by self-perceived knowledge about the European Union (in %)			
Institution:	High knowledge level	Average knowledge level	Low knowledge level
European Parliament	99%	95%	82%
European Commission	95%	85%	62%
Court of Justice	92%	74%	45%
European Central Bank	91%	82%	54%
Council of Ministers	89%	71%	43%
Court of Auditors	77%	56%	28%
Social & Economic Committee	70%	43%	19%
Committee of the Regions	58%	33%	14%
European Ombudsman	54%	36%	20%

### 3.5. Knowledge of how the European Union budget is spent

The lack of knowledge and misconception about how the European Union budget is spent continues to be widespread. 31% of respondents do not know what most of the budget is spent on, with don't know responses ranging from 8% in Denmark to 43% in Portugal. Apart from the 31% of the sample that lacks an opinion, we find that 30% of respondents incorrectly think that most of the Union's budget is spent on paying for officials, meetings and buildings when in reality this accounts for only 5% of total Union expenditure in 2000. Only 14% of respondents are aware that most of the Union's budget is spent on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In 2000, spending on CAP represents 44% of Union expenditure. The second largest amount is set aside for structural operations (40%) but respondents underestimate this expenditure. Less than 10% believe that the European Social Fund (8%) or the regional and cohesion funds (7%) make up most of the Union's budget.



The following graph shows that the proportion that thinks most of the Union's budget is spent on administrative costs is highest in Sweden (52%), Finland (51%) and Denmark (43%) and lowest in Ireland (19%). In autumn 2000, people tend to be even more likely to believe administrative costs represent the largest single expenditure for the European Union than they were in spring 1999, when the question was last asked. In Austria (+10), Italy, Greece (both +9), Sweden and Finland (both +8), the largest increases are noted. Ireland is the only country where people are now less likely to think that administrative costs represent the largest single expenditure, though the change of 1-percentage point is clearly not significant. (See also table 3.8a)



Attitudinal analyses show clear differences between supporters and opponents of the European Union. Those who support the European Union are significantly less likely to think that most of the Union's budget is spent on administrative costs than people who regard their country's membership as a bad thing (25% vs. 44%). Equally, we find that 42% of people who desire a less important role for the EU think that most of the Union's budget is spent on administrative costs compared to only 27% of people who desire a more important role for the European Union.

An interesting finding is that people who feel they know a lot about the European Union are not much less likely to think that most of the Union's budget is spent on administrative costs than people who feel they know very little about the European Union (25% vs. 30%). However, the percentage of "don't know" responses is 3 times higher among the latter group than it is among those with high self-perceived knowledge levels<sup>17</sup>.

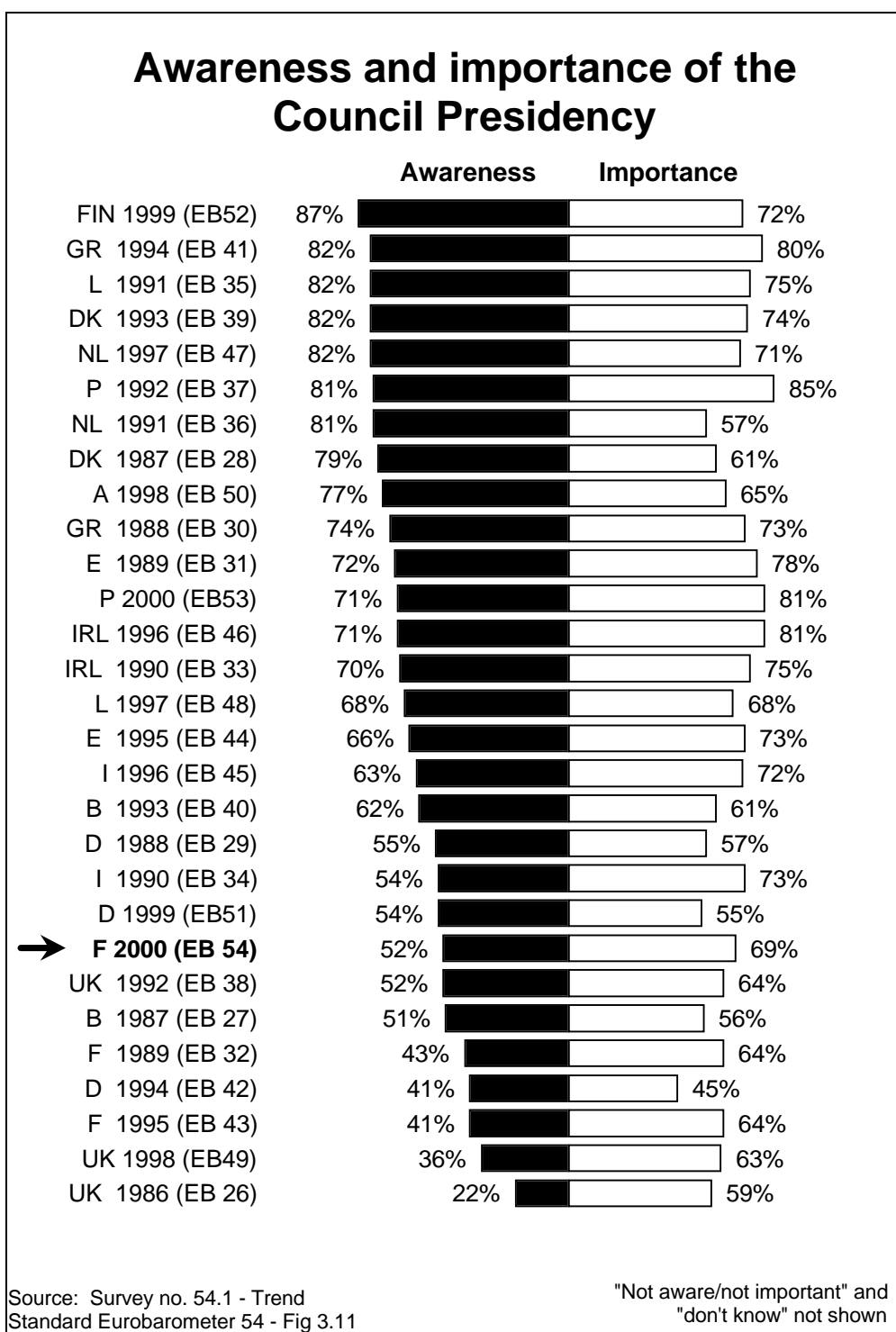
### 3.6. Awareness and importance of the Council Presidency

Since 1986, the Eurobarometer has looked at the awareness and the perceived importance of the Council of Ministers Presidency in the country that presides at the time of the survey<sup>18</sup>. France held the Presidency for the third time during the last six months of the year 2000.

<sup>17</sup> See also Table 3.8b.

<sup>18</sup> Each Member State of the European Union holds in turn the Presidency for a period of six months.

As the following graph shows, 52% of the French were aware that their country held the Presidency. This is considerably higher than when France held the Presidency in 1989 (+9) and in 1995 (+11) although awareness in France tends to be lower than in many other countries. 87% of Finns were aware of their country's Presidency during the last 6 months of 1999. 69% of people in France considered the Presidency an important event, which is also higher than in 1989 and in 1995 when 64% of the French felt this way.

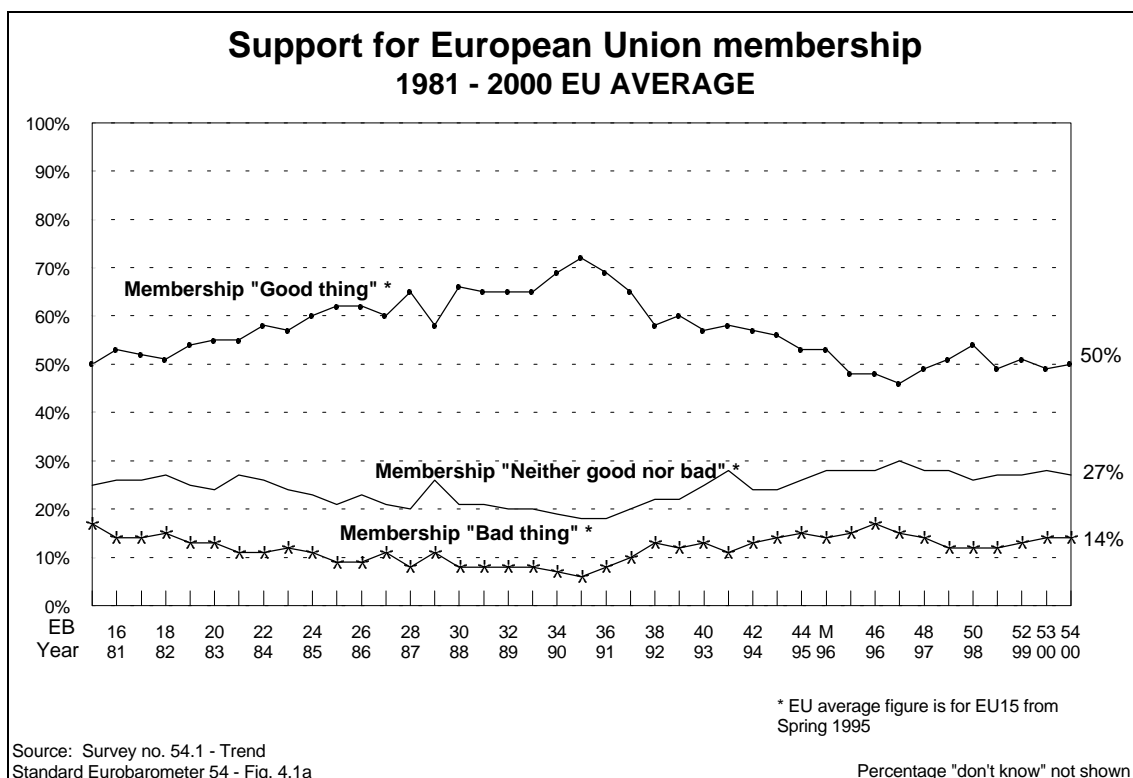


## 4. Attitudes to the European Union in 2000

In this chapter we report on some of the standard indicators of support for the European Union. We also analyse the results of a question that measures people's concerns in relation to the building of Europe. The chapter ends with an analysis of the perceived and desired role of the EU in 5 years' time.

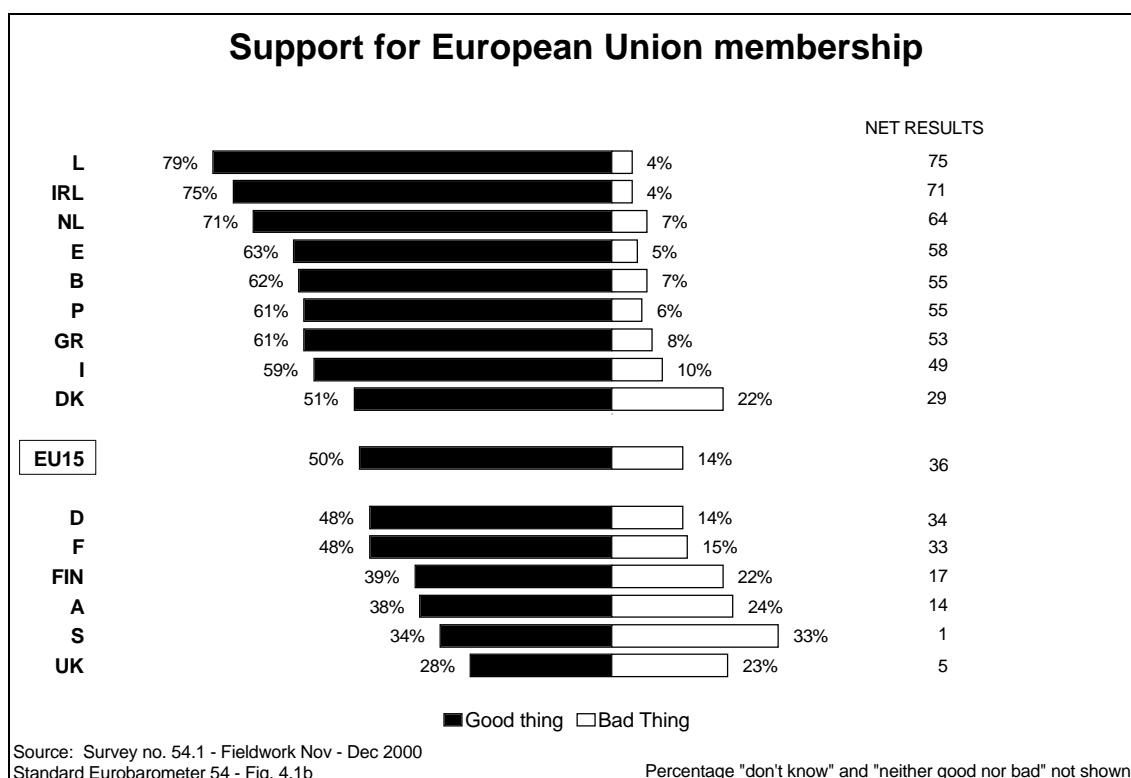
### 4.1. Support for European Union membership

In autumn 2000, half of all EU citizens regard their country's membership to the European Union as a good thing (+1 compared to spring 2000) and 27% see it as neither good nor bad. As in the spring only 14% of the EU public regard their country's membership as a bad thing.



If we look back at the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, we find that support for the European Union was most widespread in spring 1991 when 72% of EU citizens regarded their country's membership as a good thing. Due to a number of factors - the Gulf War, the economic crisis and the high unemployment levels that followed, the debate on the Maastricht Treaty, the war in Yugoslavia, the inclusion of three relatively euro-sceptic nations and the BSE crisis - confidence in the European Union dropped during the mid-nineties, reaching a low of 46% in the spring of 1997. This period of scepticism was followed by a year of renewed optimism so that by autumn 1998 54% again supported their country's EU membership. This optimism was thwarted after the resignation of the Santer Commission on March 15 1999 following allegations of fraud and corruption. Since then, outright support for EU membership has hovered around the 50% mark. However, the Commission's resignation has not made people more likely to view their country's membership negatively. (See also individual country graphs, figs. 4.3a-o)





The graph above shows that close to 8 out of 10 people in Luxembourg support their country's membership to the European Union with more than 7 in 10 people in Ireland and the Netherlands sharing this view. In Spain, Belgium, Portugal, Greece and Italy, around 6 in 10 people support the EU. Denmark is the only other country where support is obtained from more than half of the population (51%), although opposition levels (22%) are significantly above average. As usual, support for EU membership is lowest in the UK (28%) but opposition levels are highest in Sweden (33%).

The trend analyses show a favourable increase in support levels since spring 2000 in Germany (+7), Austria (+5), Luxembourg (+4) and the UK (+3). Though the level of outright support has not changed in Sweden, people are now less likely to see their country's membership as a bad thing (-5). In Spain (-4) and Portugal (-3) we find a slightly lower percentage of people viewing their country's membership as a good thing but the percentage of people who see it as a bad thing has not changed and remains very low in both countries. No significant changes have been recorded in the other Member States. (Table 4.1a)

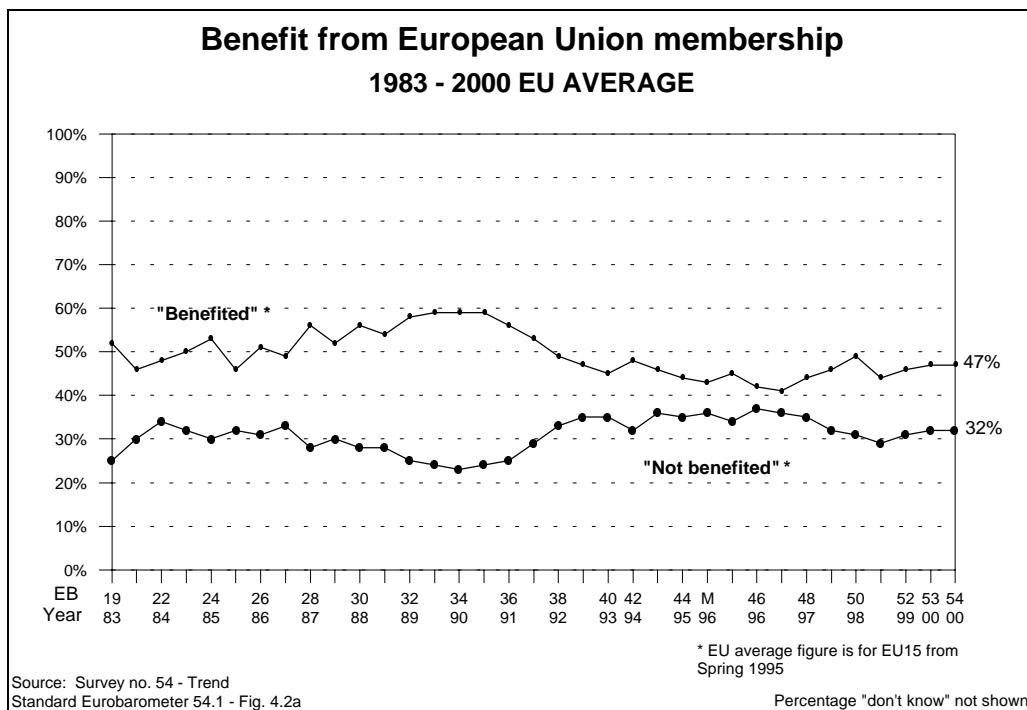
The well-established pattern for the two genders shows that men are more likely than women to regard their country's membership as a good thing (54% vs. 46%) and that women are significantly more likely than men are to lack an opinion (11% vs. 6%).

Education is one of the most important determinants of EU support. Levels of support for the European Union range from 41% among people who left school aged 15 or younger to 62% among people who left full-time education aged 20 or older. People who are still in school are most likely to support the EU (64%). Levels of support decrease by age with those aged 15 to 24 significantly more likely (54%) than those aged 55 and over (45%) to support their country's membership. Analyses of the economic activity scale show a gap of 19 percentage points in support levels between managers (63%) on the one hand and manual workers, people who look after the home and unemployed people (all 44%) on the other hand.

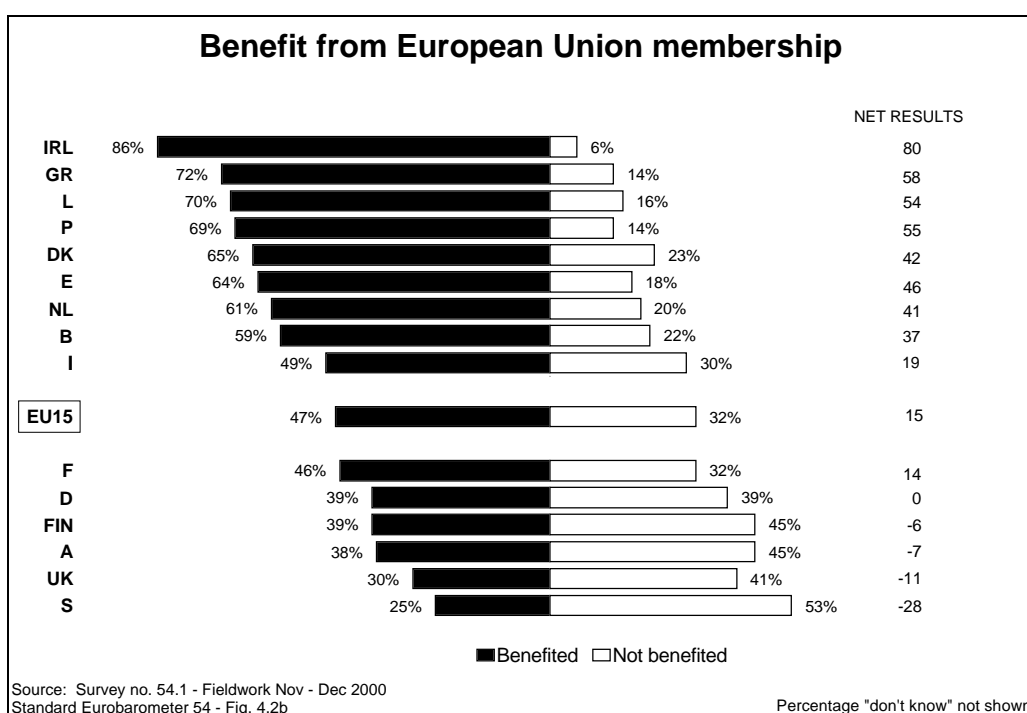
At the attitudinal level, we find a large division in opinion between people who desire a more important role for the European Union and those who desire a less important role. Among those who desire a more important role, 71% regard their country's membership as a good thing, compared to only 19% of people who want the EU to play a less important role. (Table 4.1b)

## 4.2. Benefit from European Union membership

Nearly half of all EU citizens feel that their country has benefited from EU membership (47%) while around 3 in 10 people hold the opposite view (32%). At the EU15 level, no change has been recorded since spring 2000.



People in Ireland continue to be by far most likely to feel that their country has benefited (86%). In Greece, Luxembourg and Portugal around 7 in 10 people share this view, and in Denmark, Spain and the Netherlands this is the case for 6 in 10 people. Public opinion continues to be most negative in Sweden, which is the only country where more than half of the population feels that their country has not benefited (53%).



Despite the low result in Sweden, the data do show an improvement in comparison to spring 2000 when 56% felt that their country had not benefited from EU membership. We also find a positive development in the UK – another country with traditionally low scores – with an increase of 5 percentage points in the proportion of people who feel their country has benefited and a drop of 3 percentage points in the proportion of people who feel their country has not benefited. Other countries where a positive shift has been recorded (either in an increase in the % benefit responses or in a decrease in the % not benefited responses) are Austria, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg. Small negative shifts of 3 to 4 percentage points are recorded in the Netherlands, France, Greece, Portugal and Finland. In the other countries, no significant shifts occurred. (Table 4.2a<sup>19</sup>)

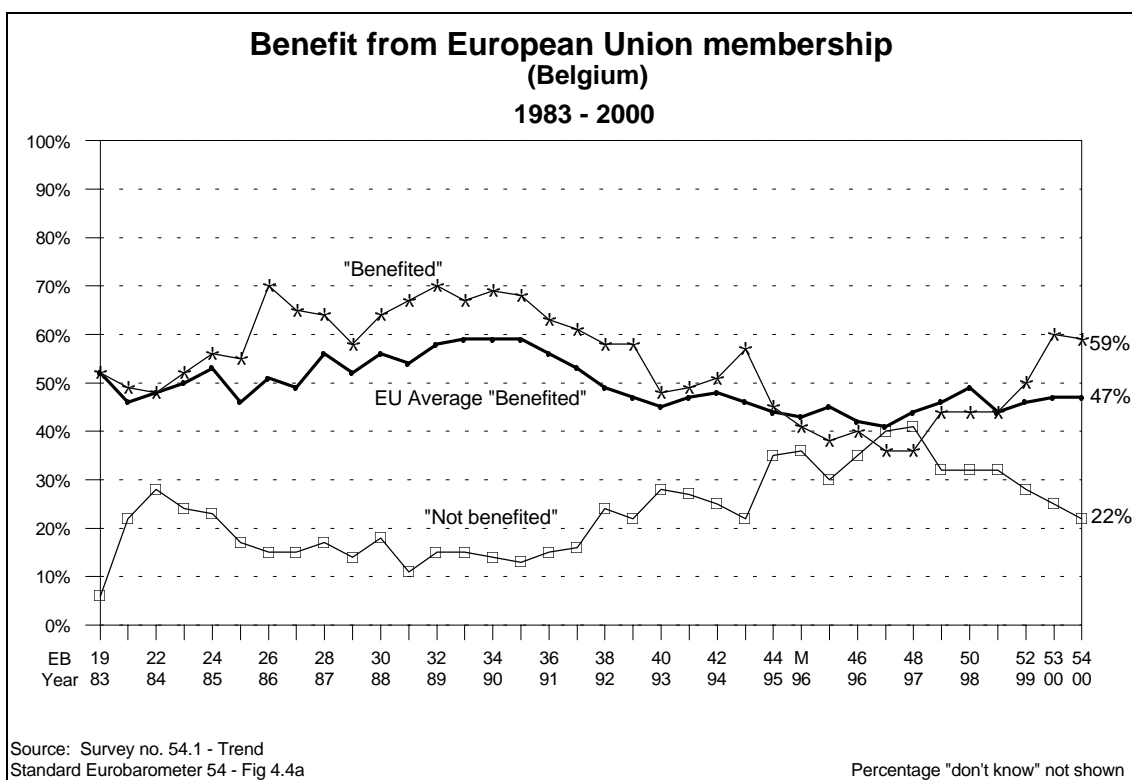
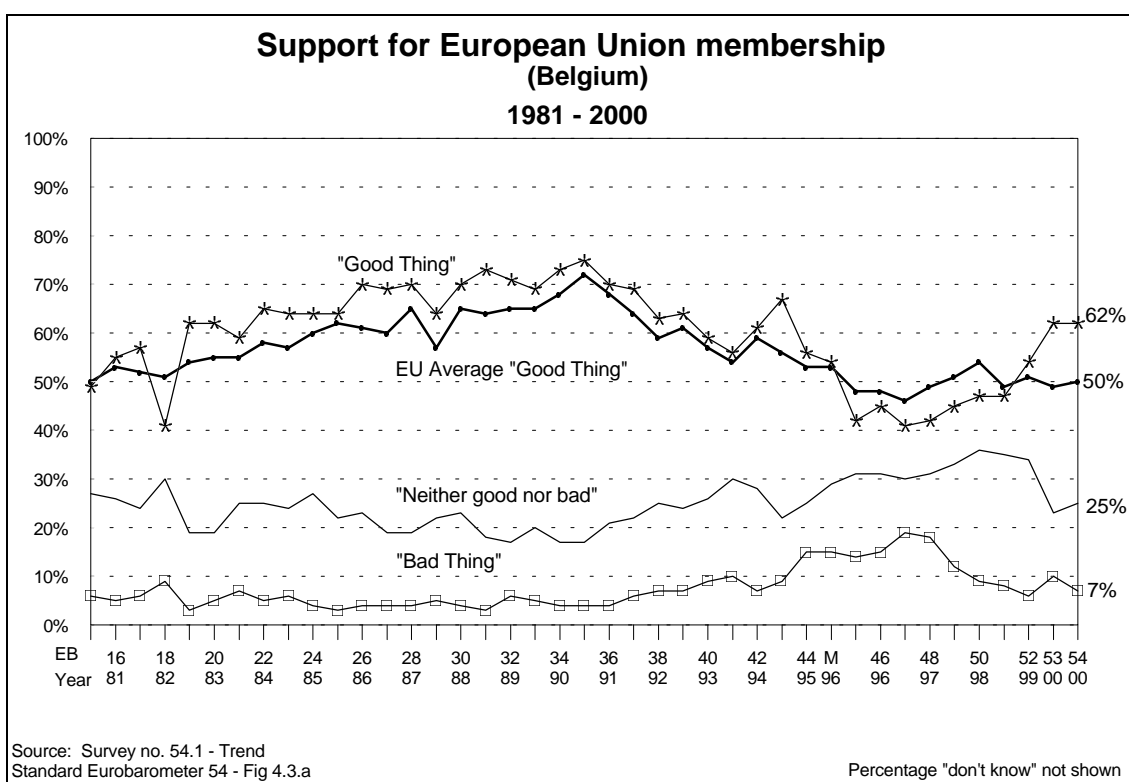
Demographic analyses show that people who stayed in full-time education until age 20 or older (59%) are most likely to feel that their country has benefited, while people who left school aged 15 or younger (39%) are least likely to share this view.

There is a large degree of polarisation in the views of supporters and opponents of the European Union: 77% of people who support their country's membership believe their country has benefited, compared to only 8% of those who oppose their country's membership. (Table 4.2b)

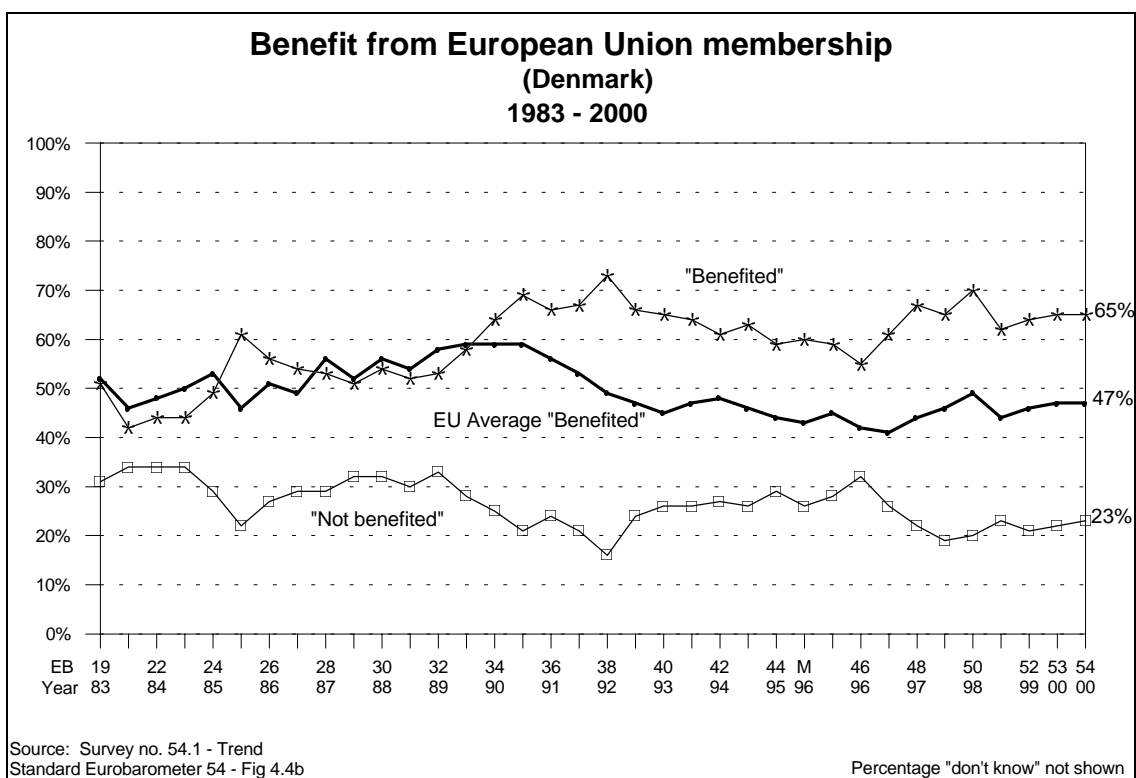
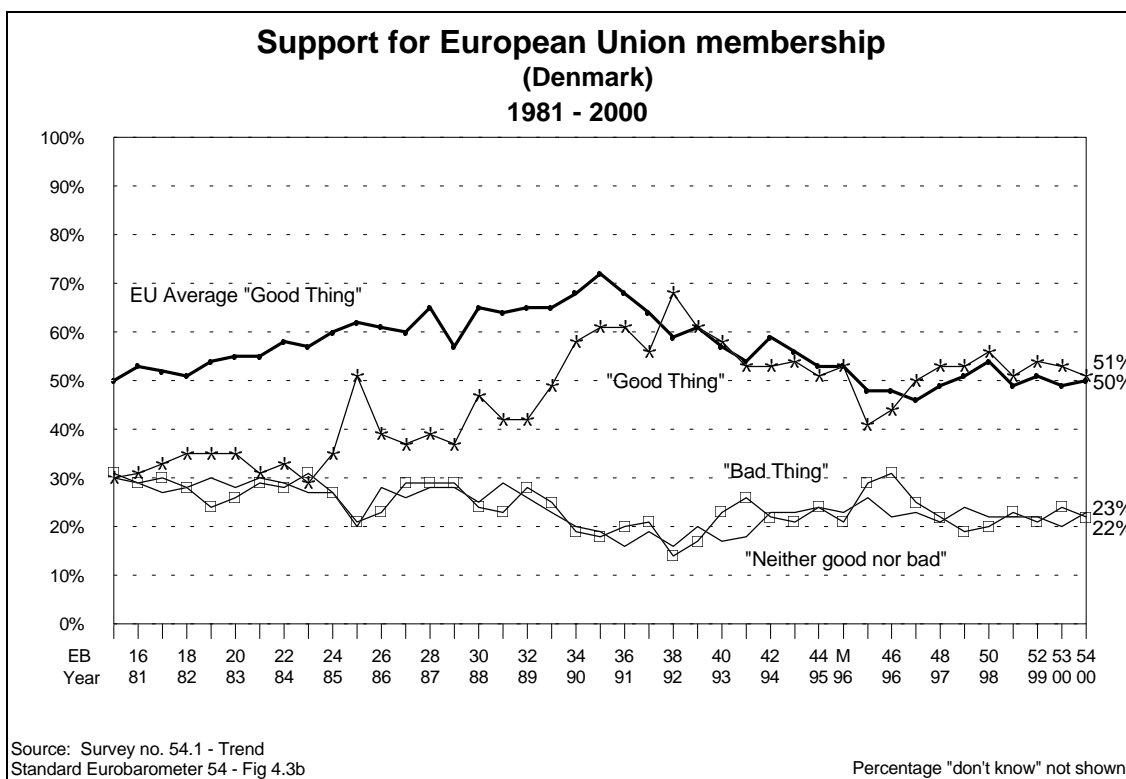
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<sup>19</sup> See also individual country graphs, figs. 4.4a-o.

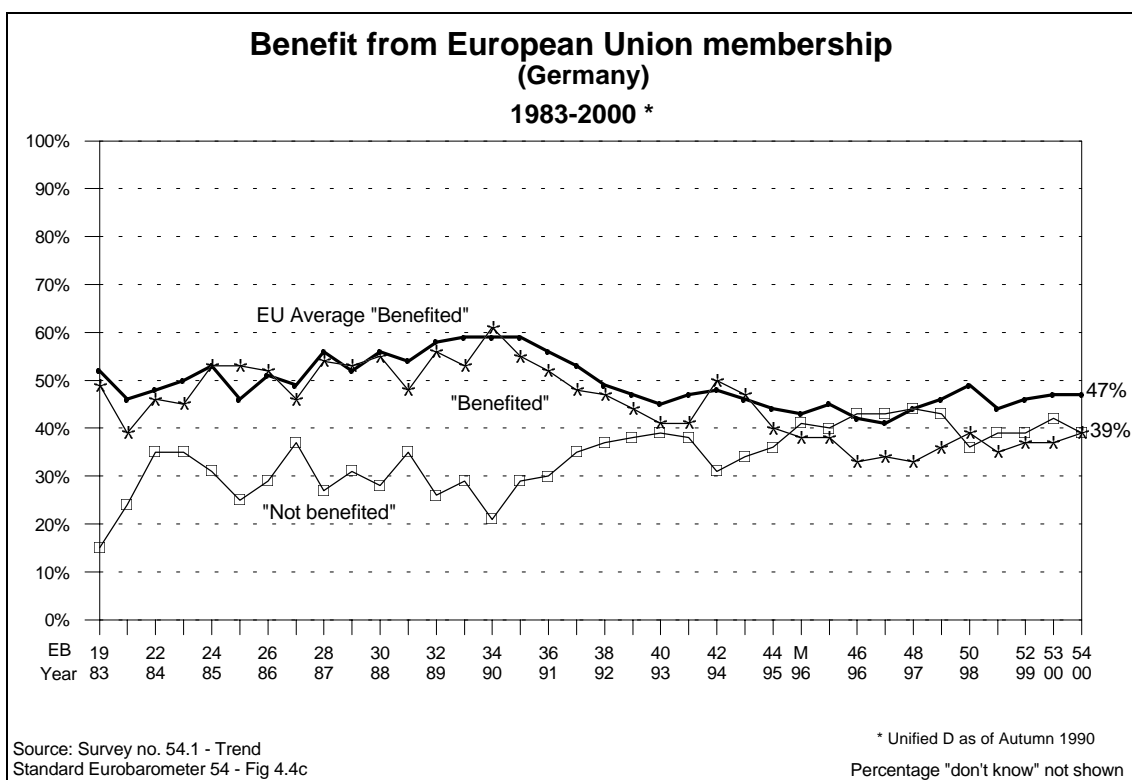
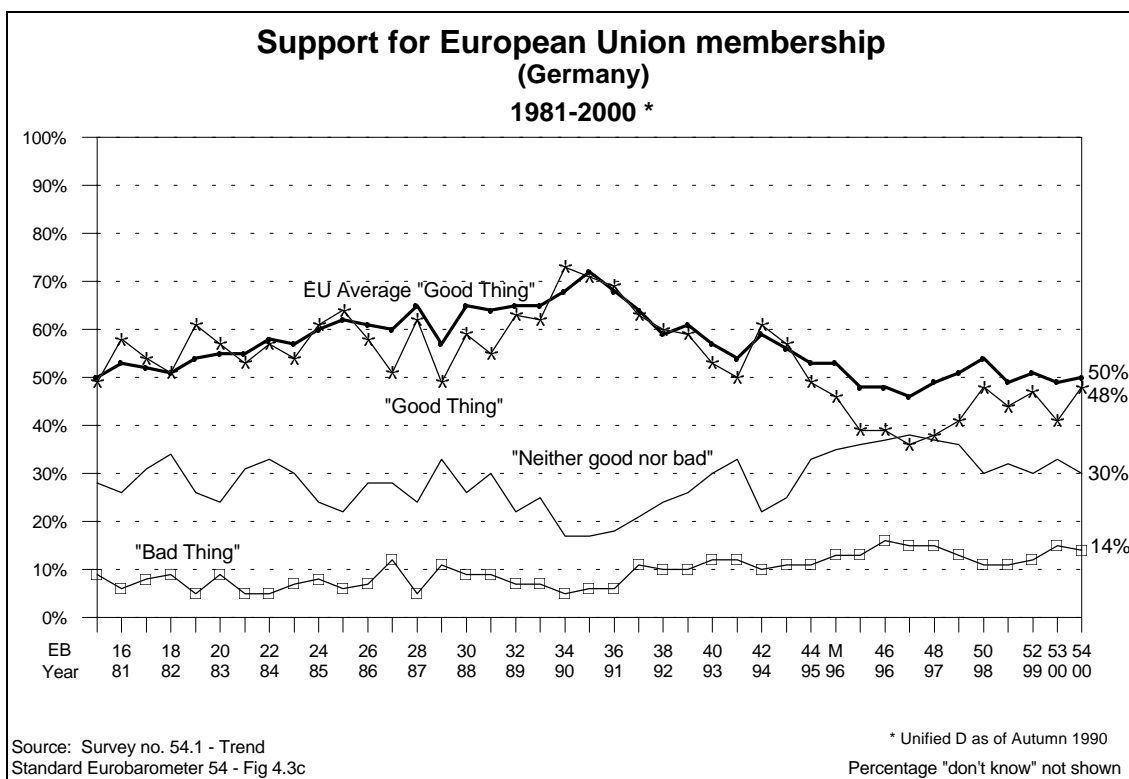
## BELGIUM



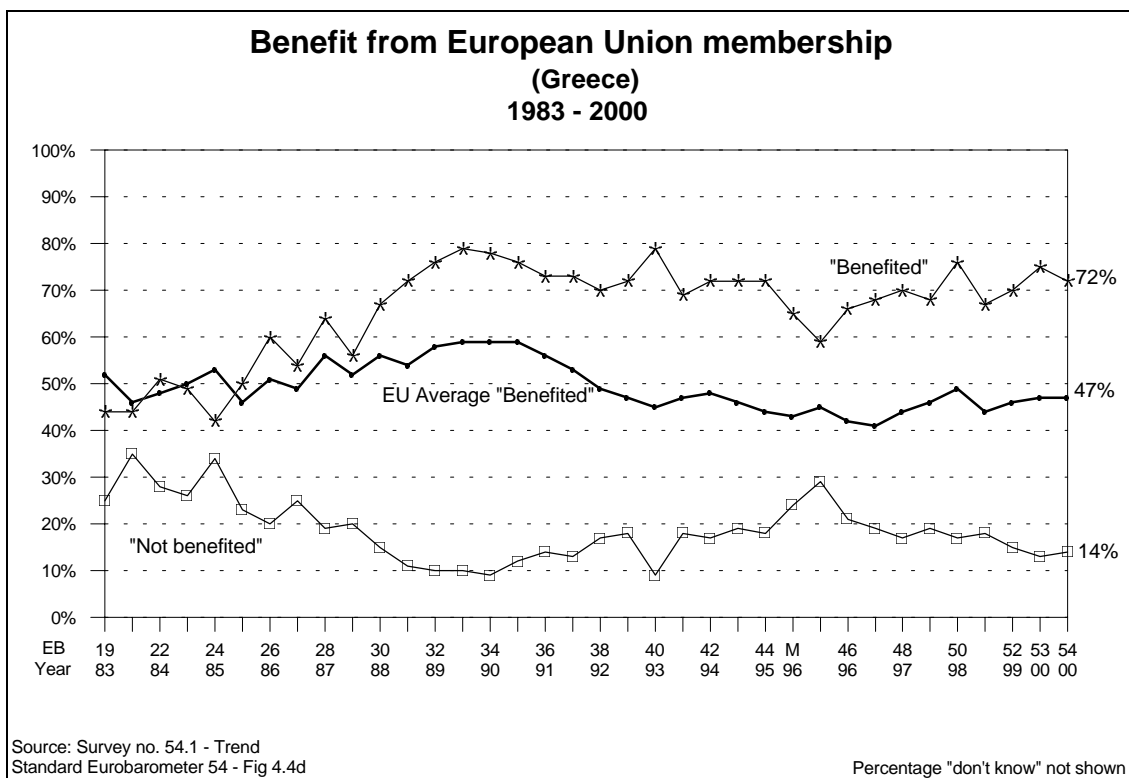
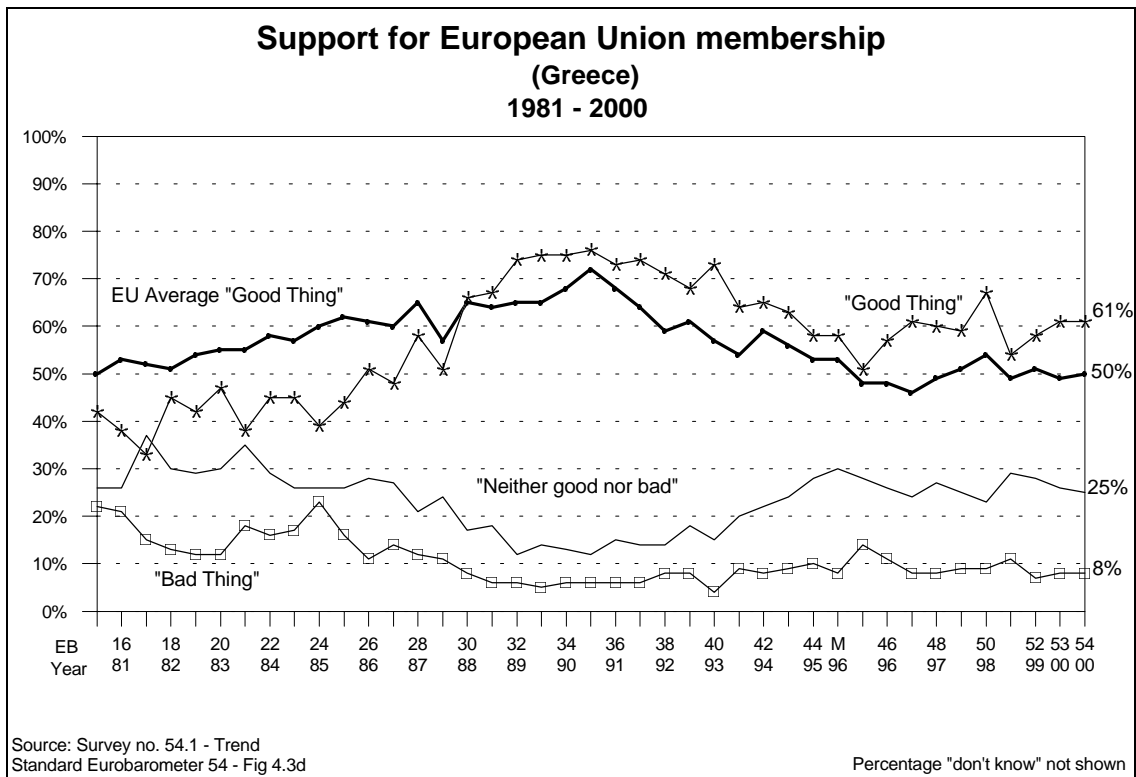
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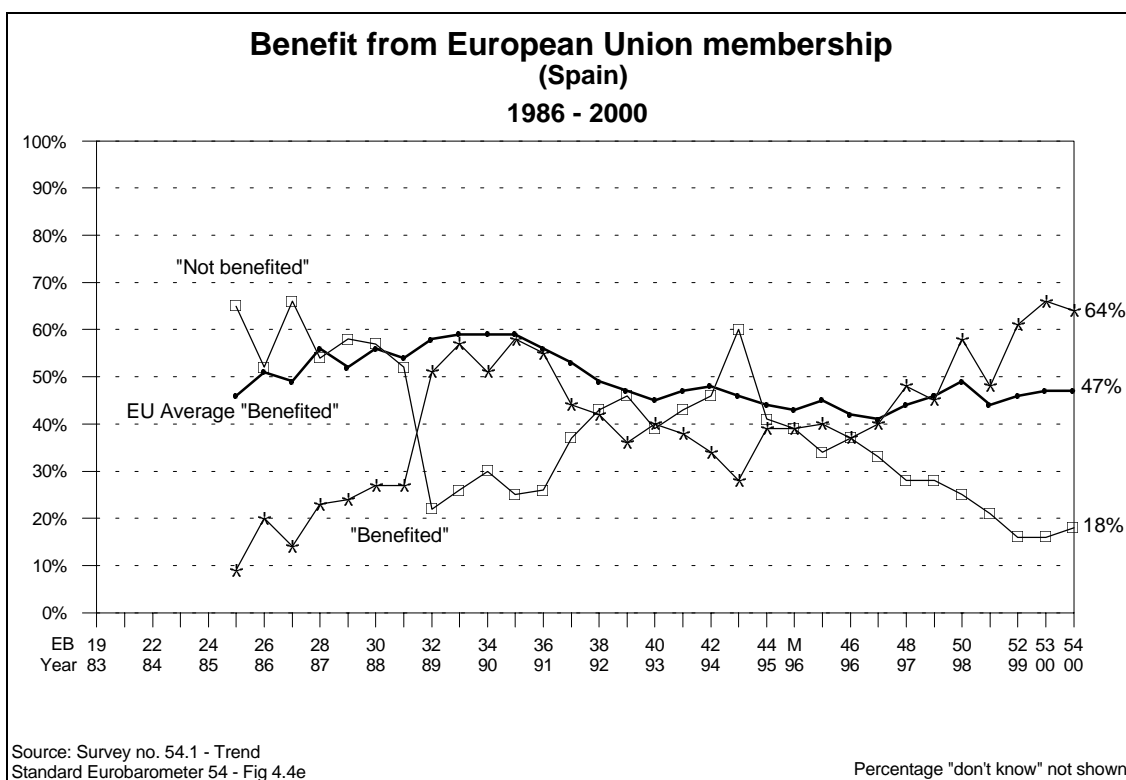
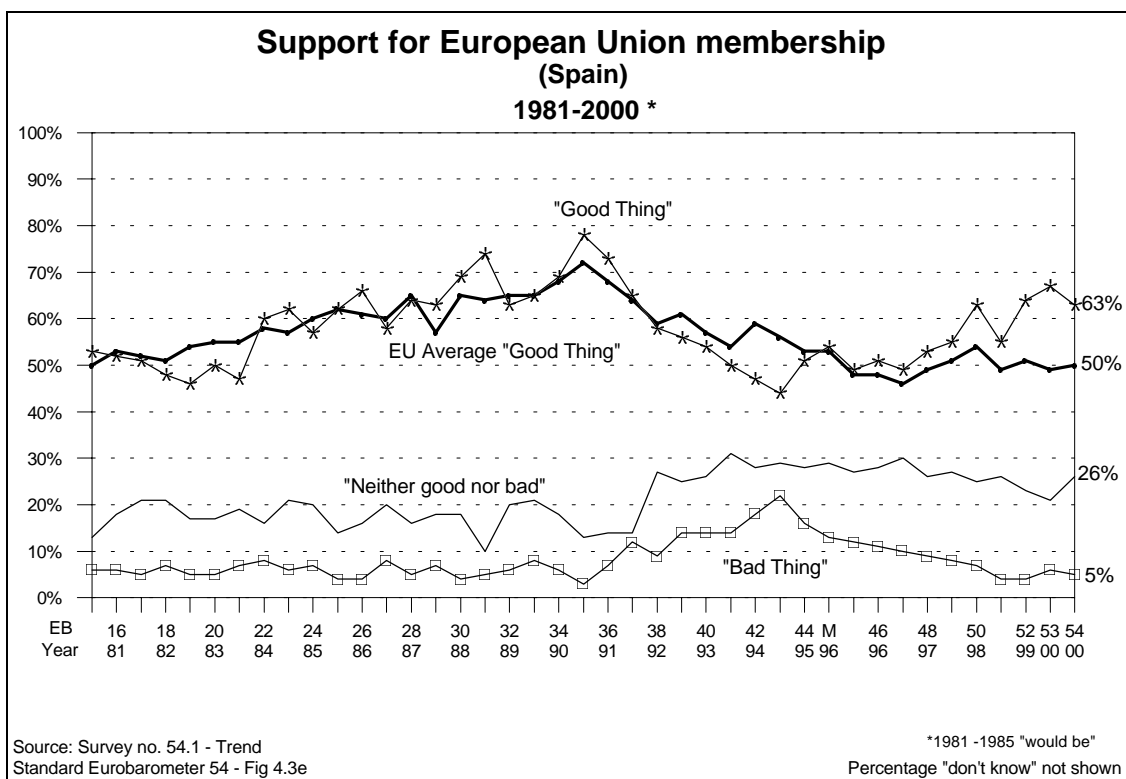
## GERMANY



## GREECE

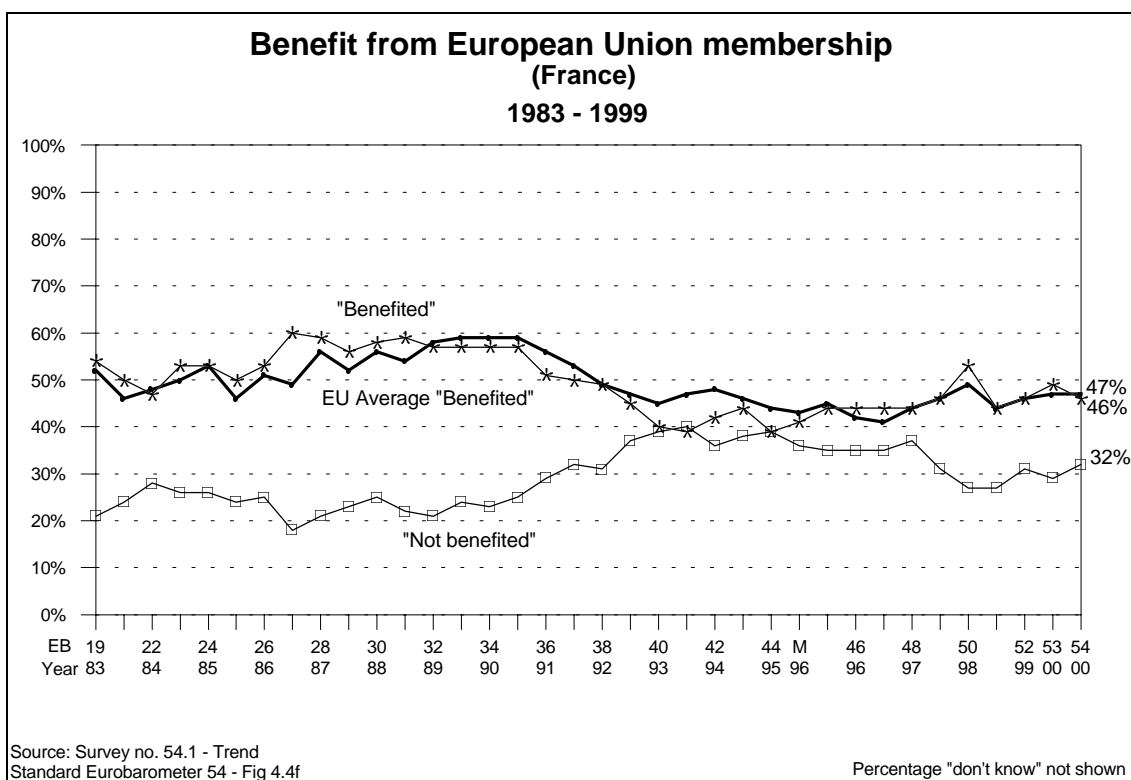
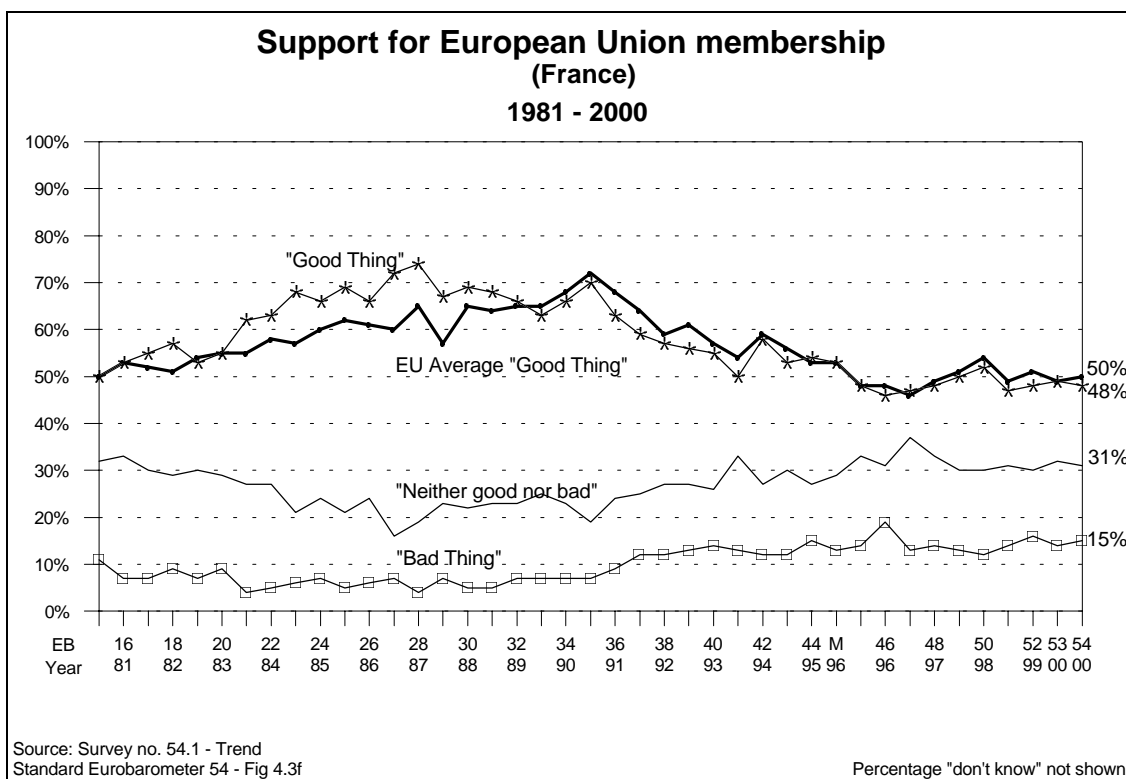


## SPAIN

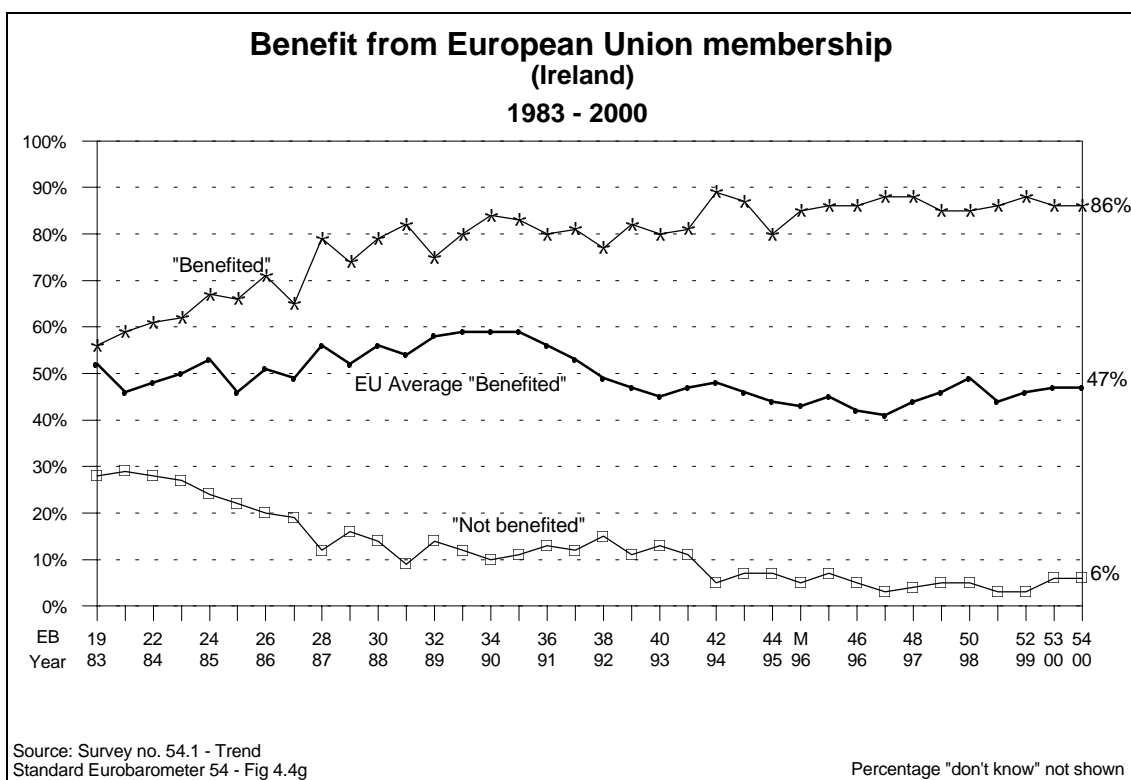
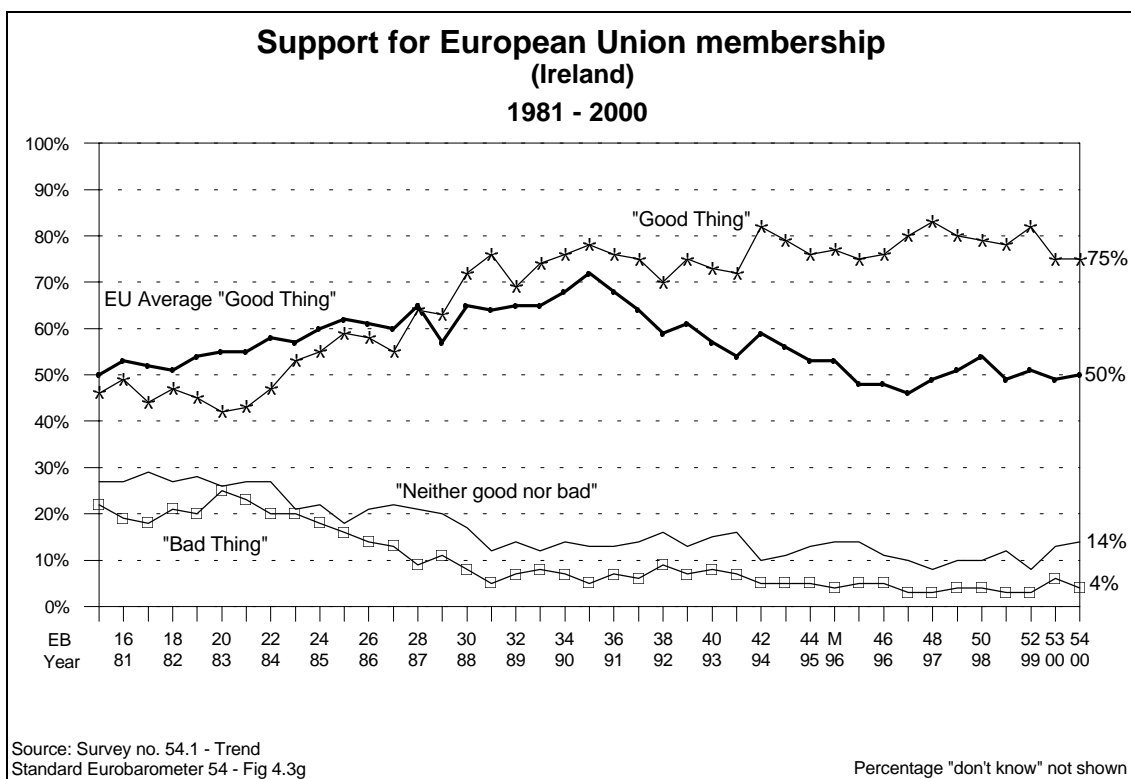




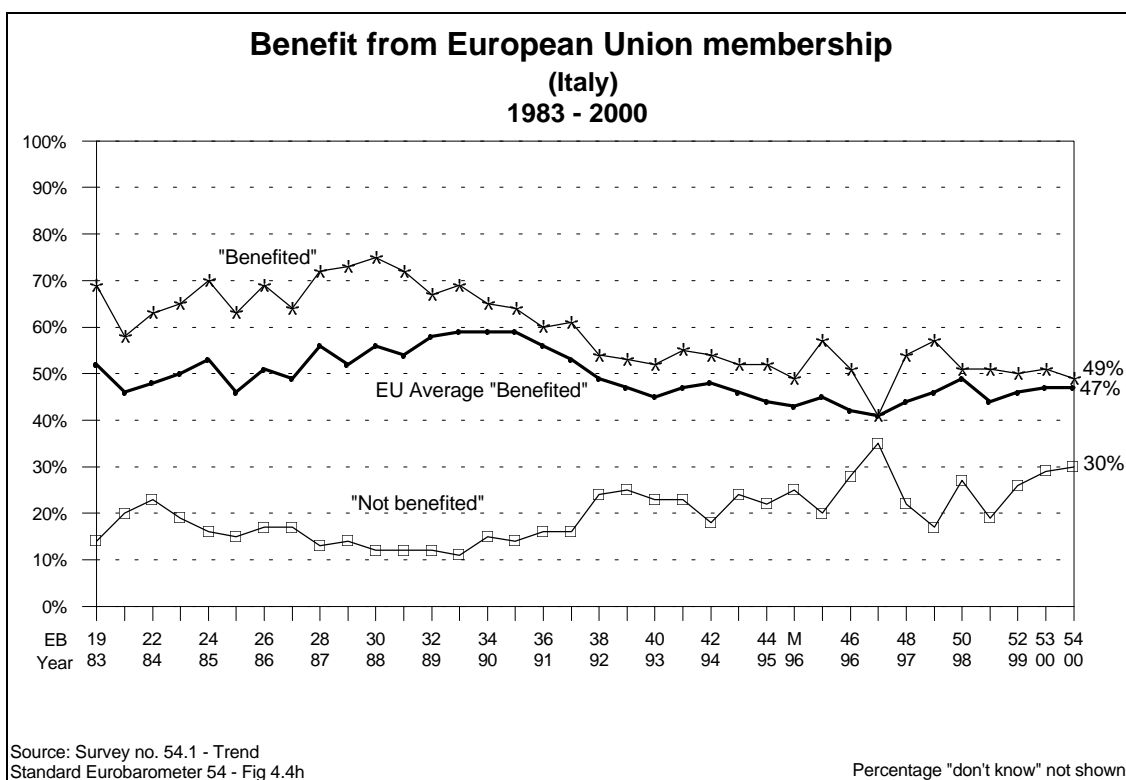
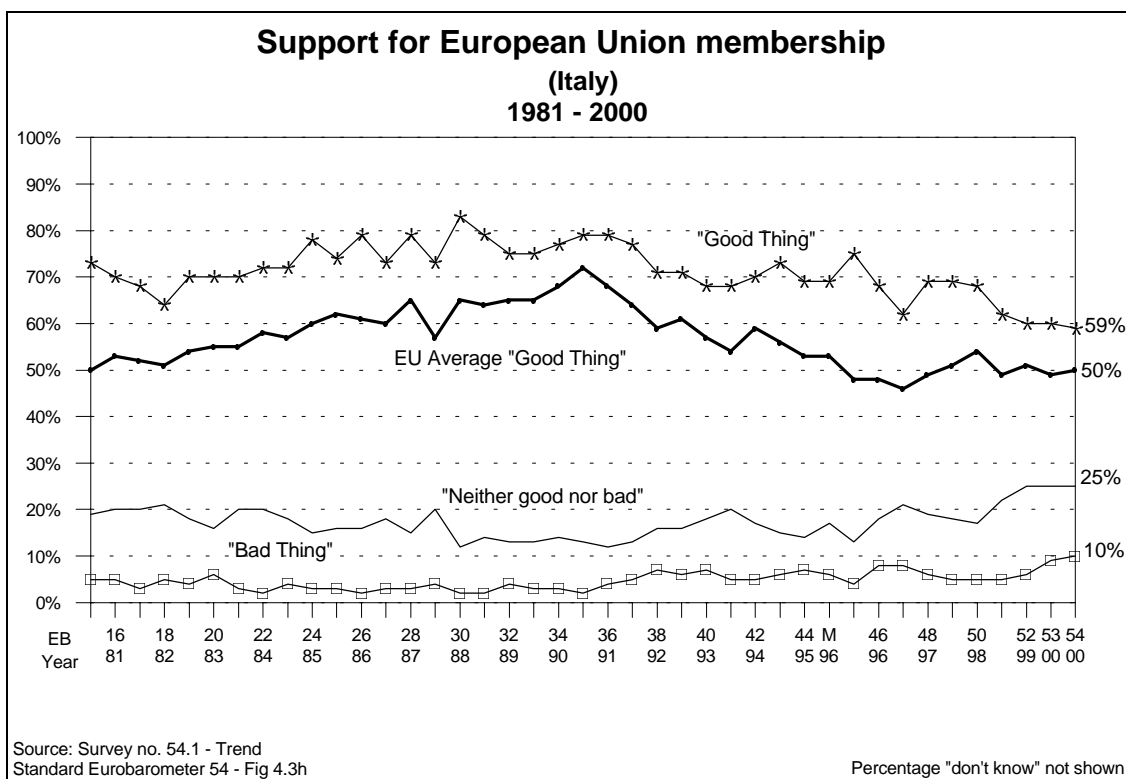
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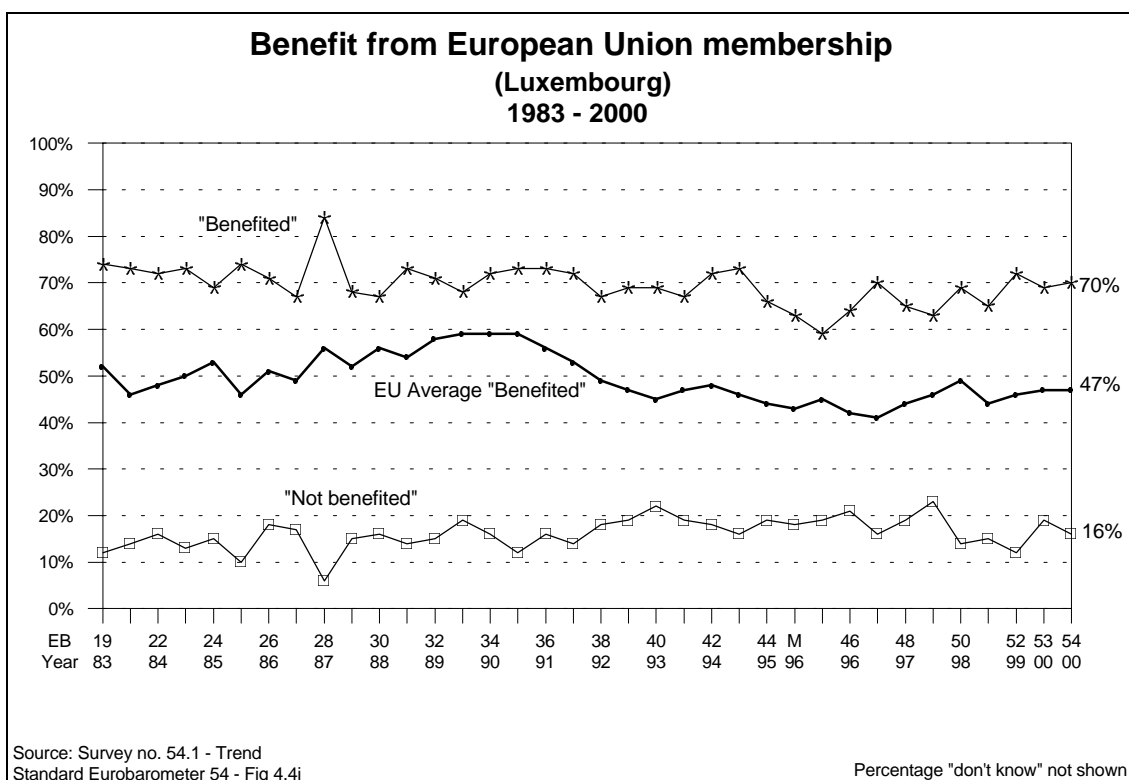
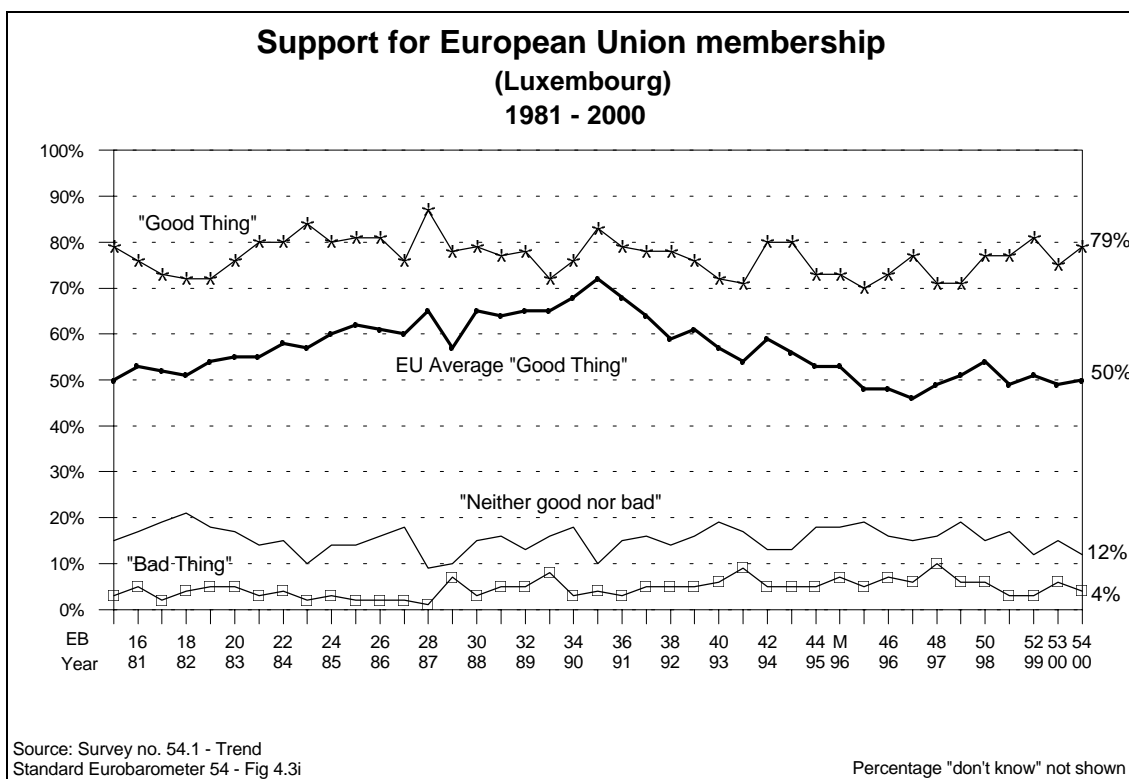
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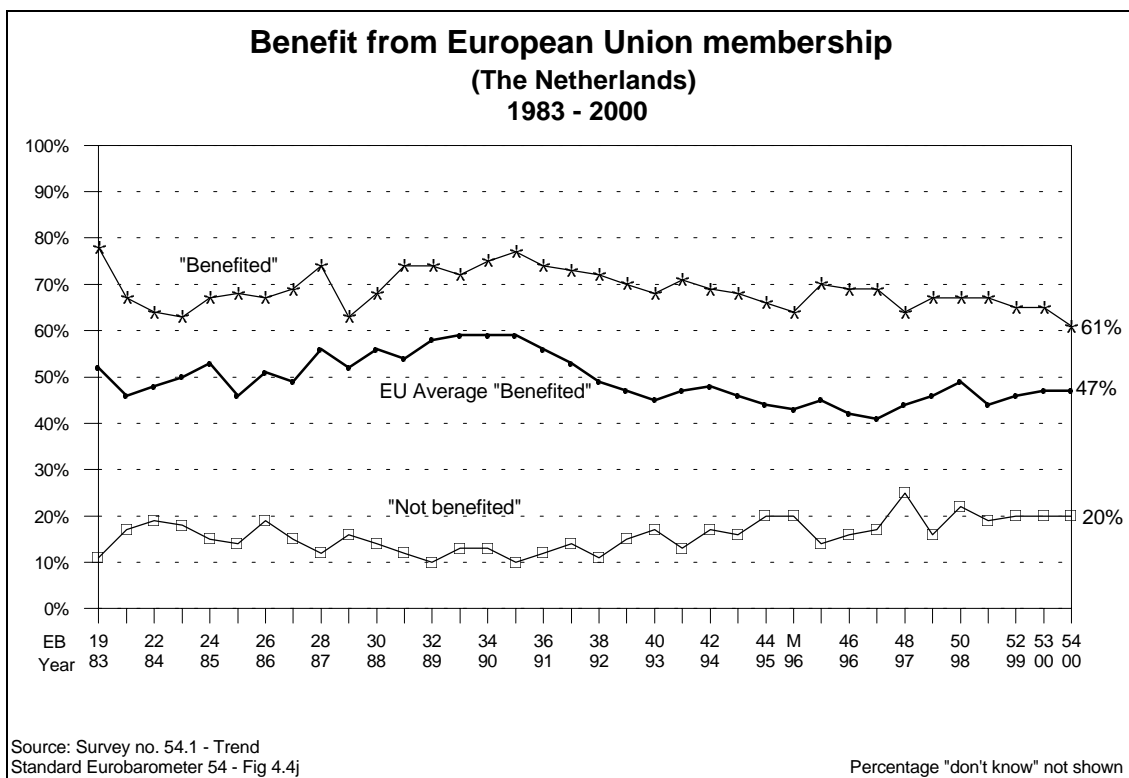
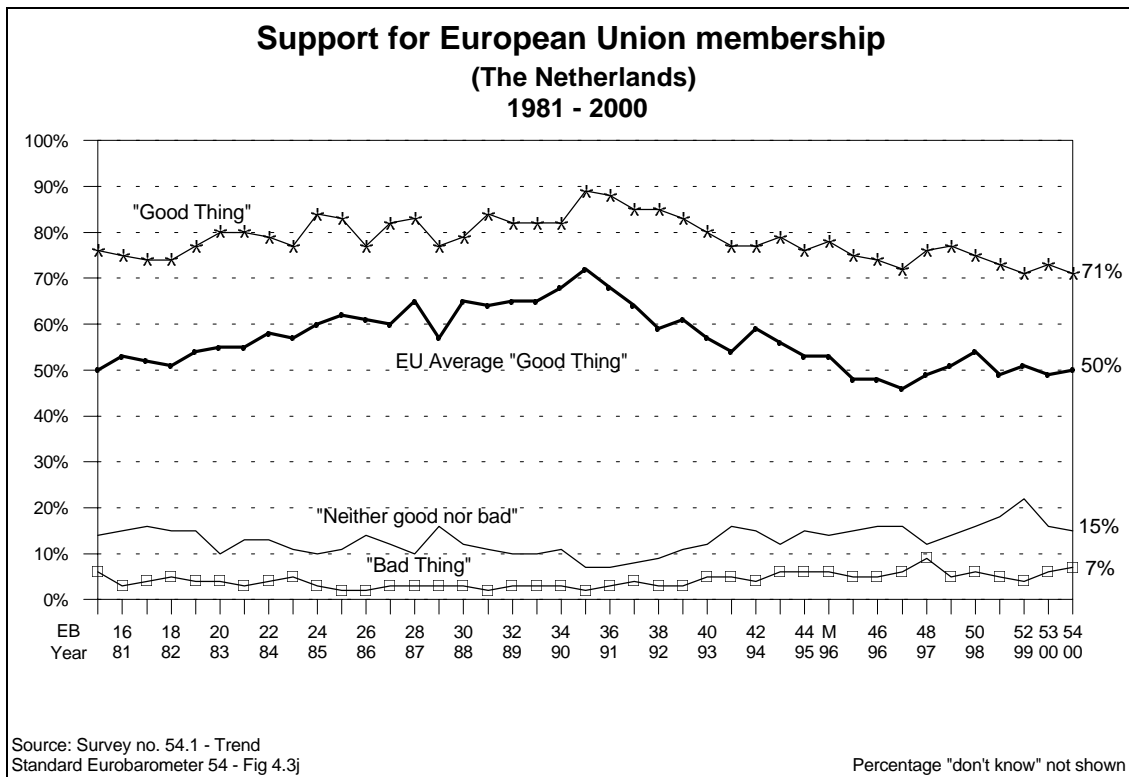
## ITALY



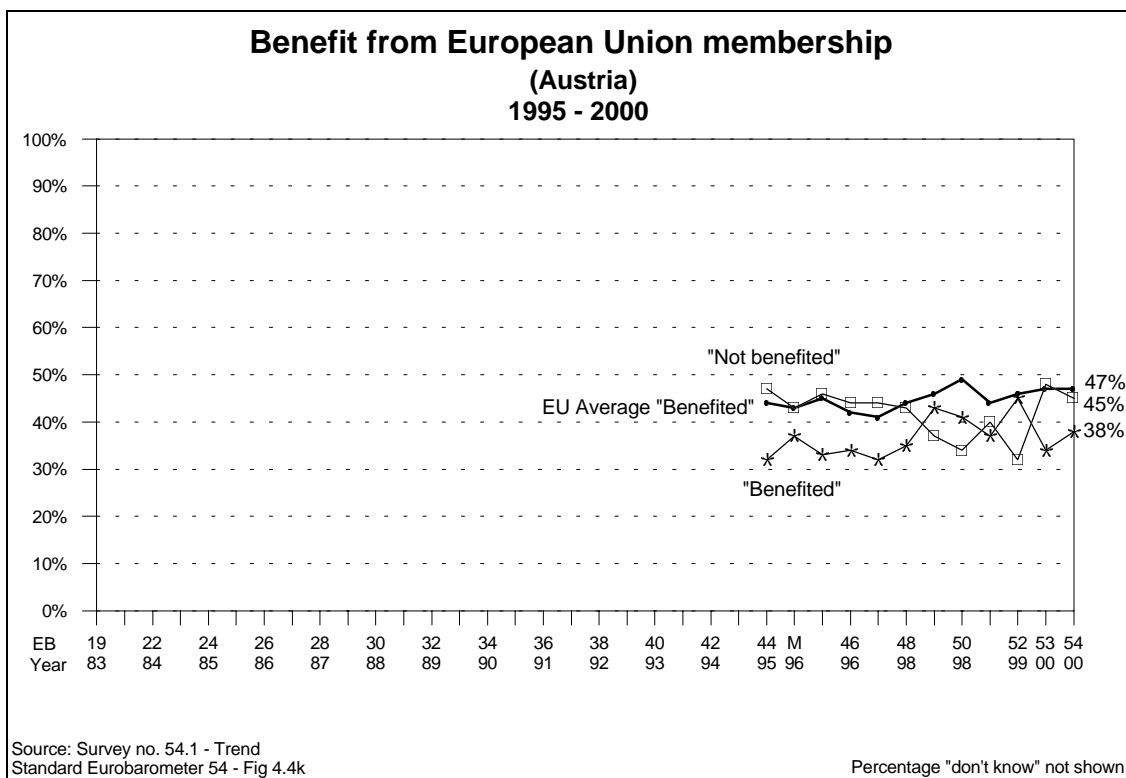
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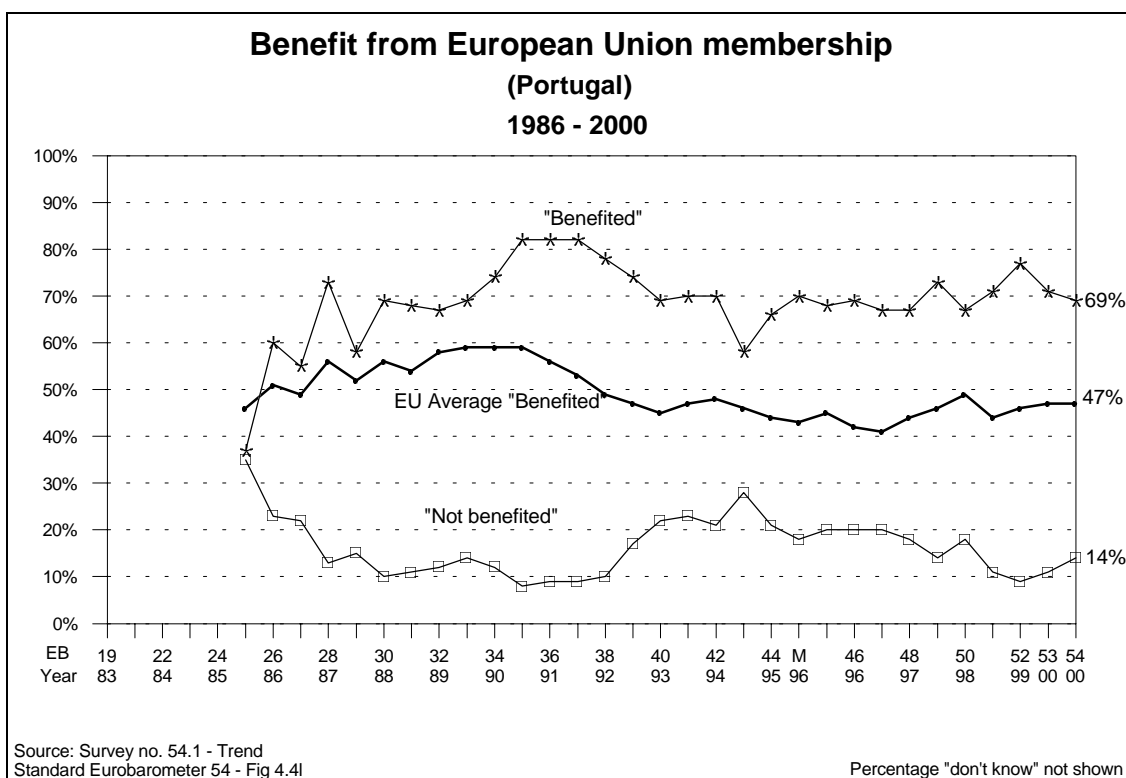
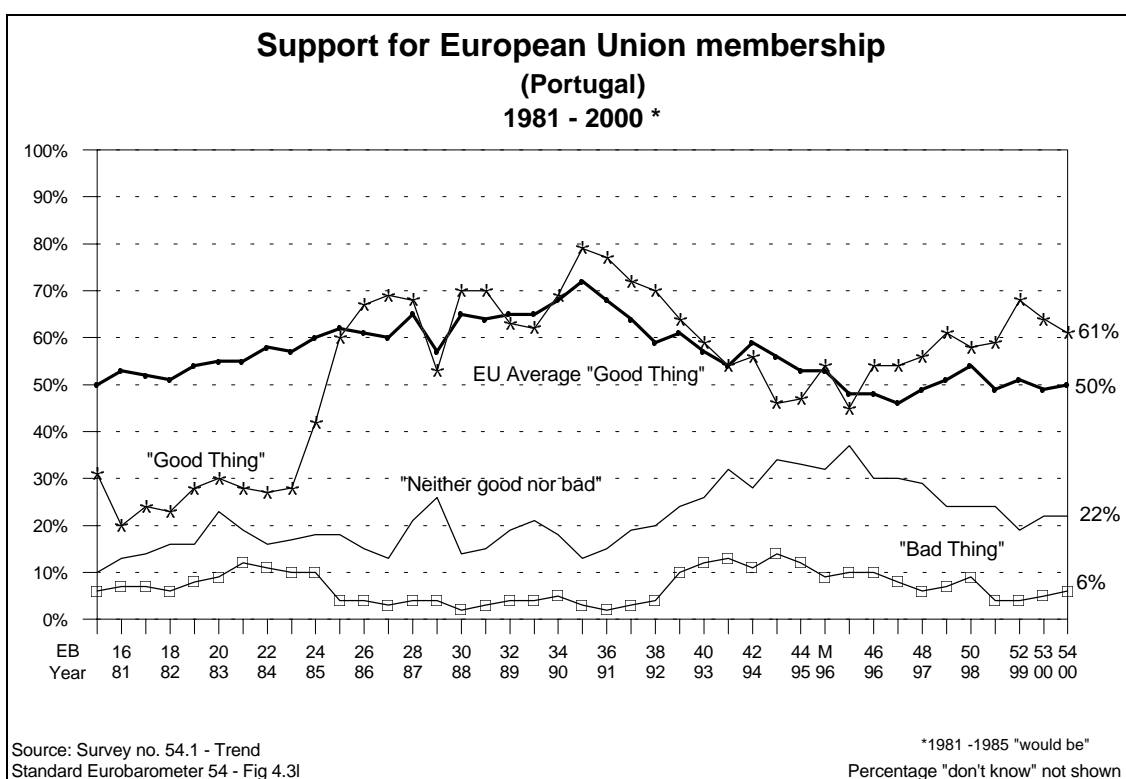
## THE NETHERLANDS



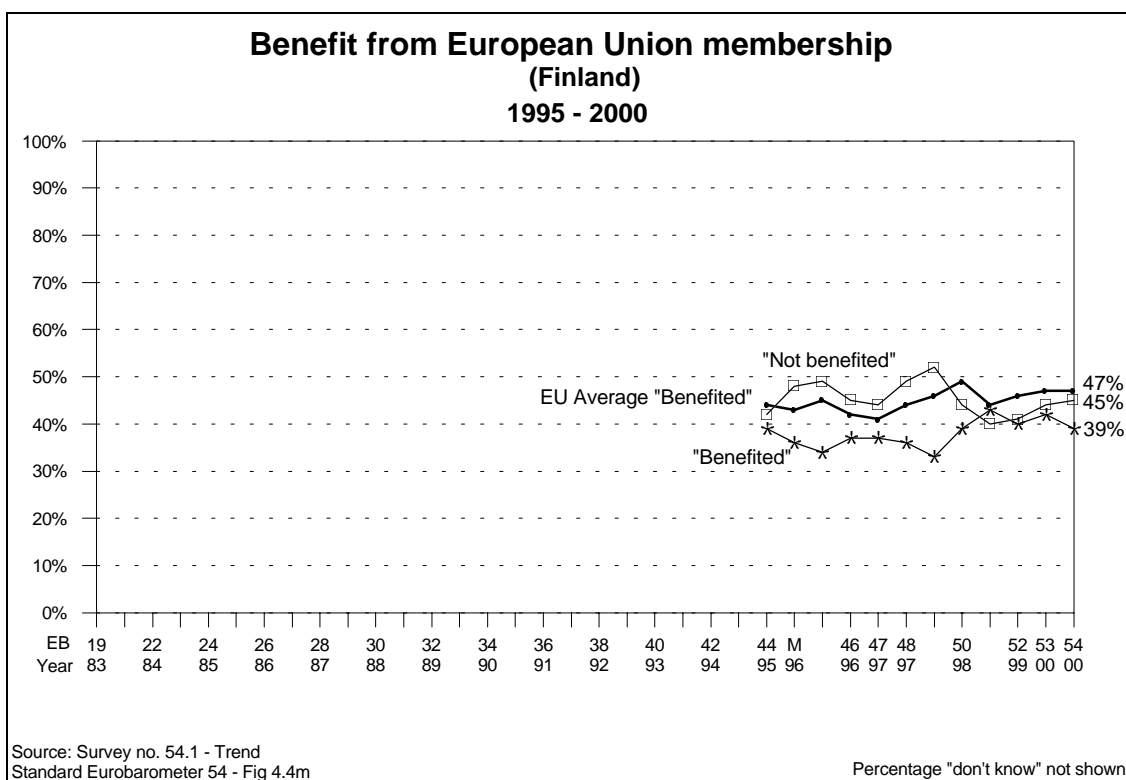
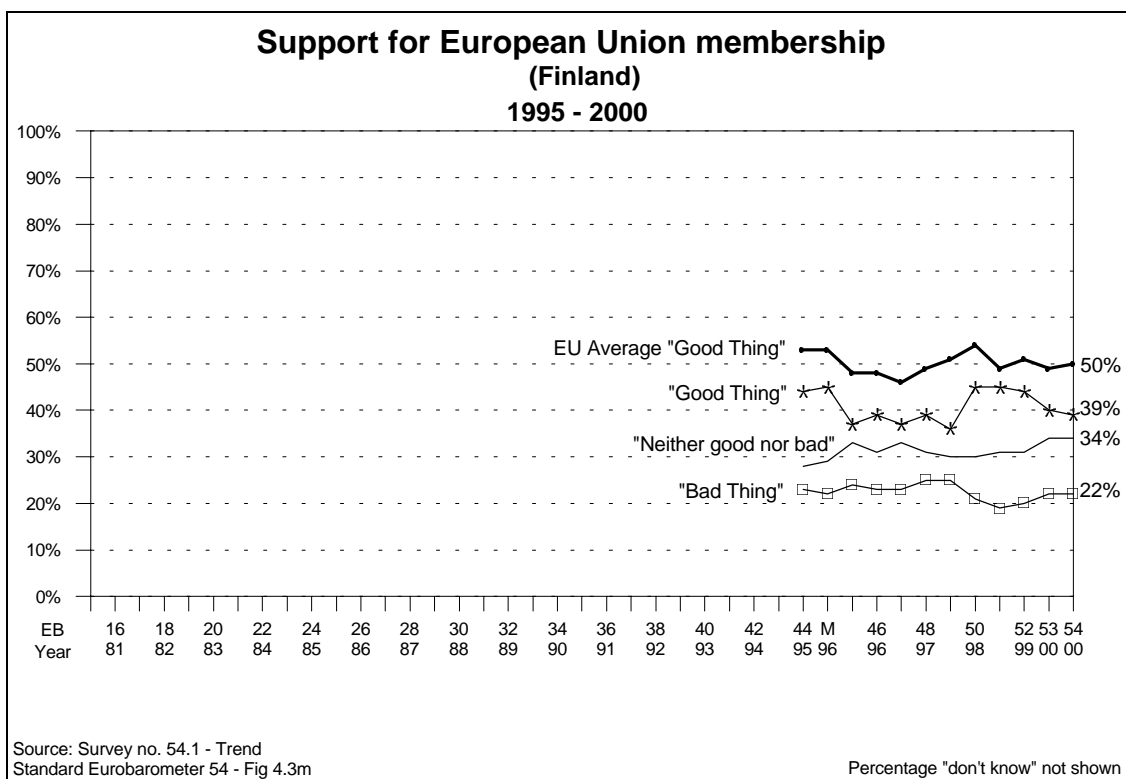
## AUSTRIA



## PORTUGAL

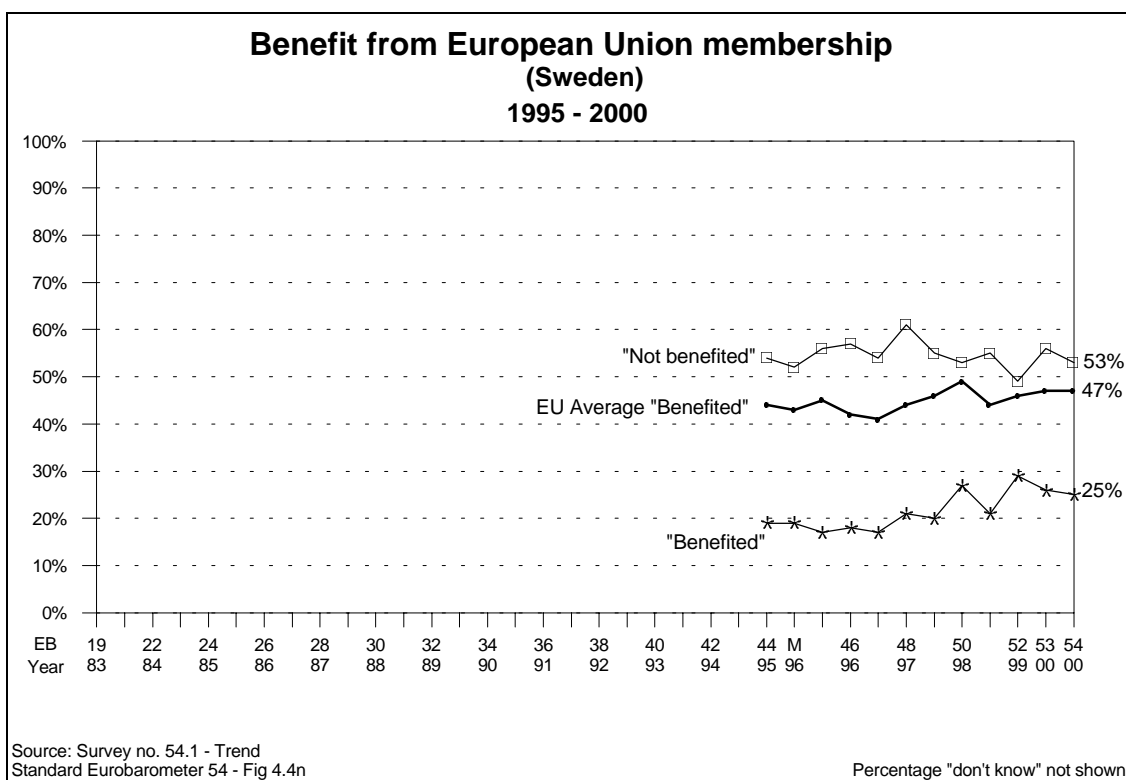
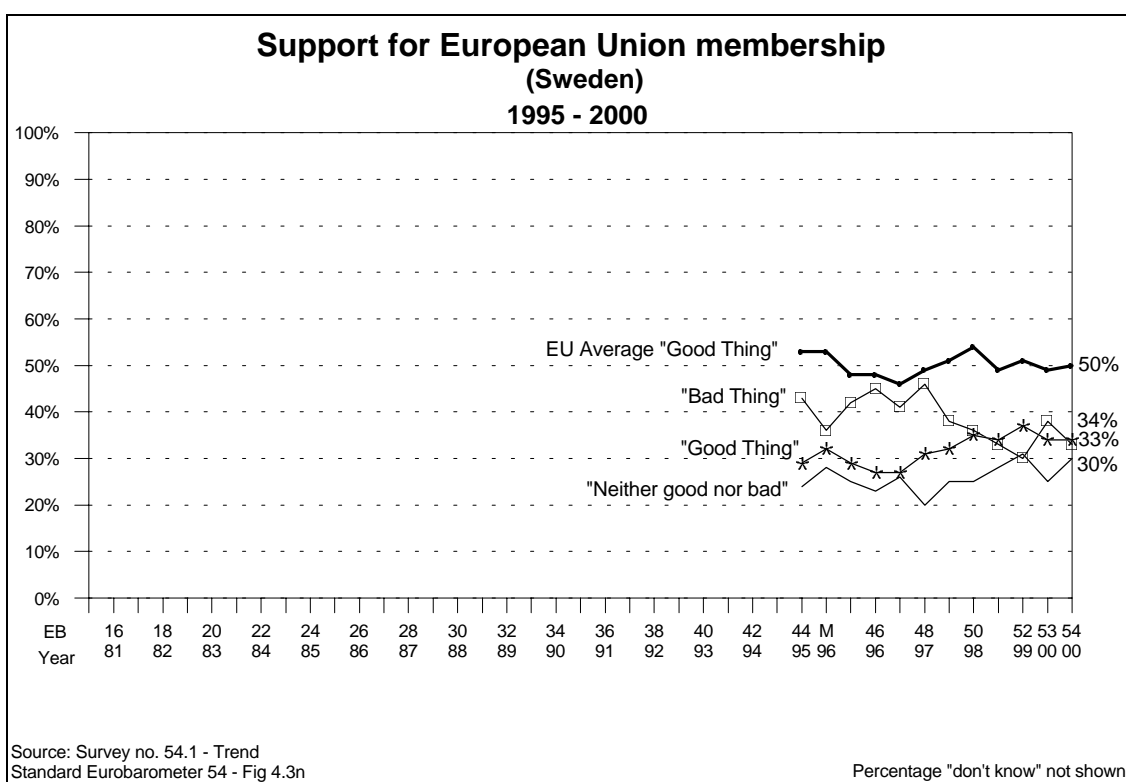


## FINLAND

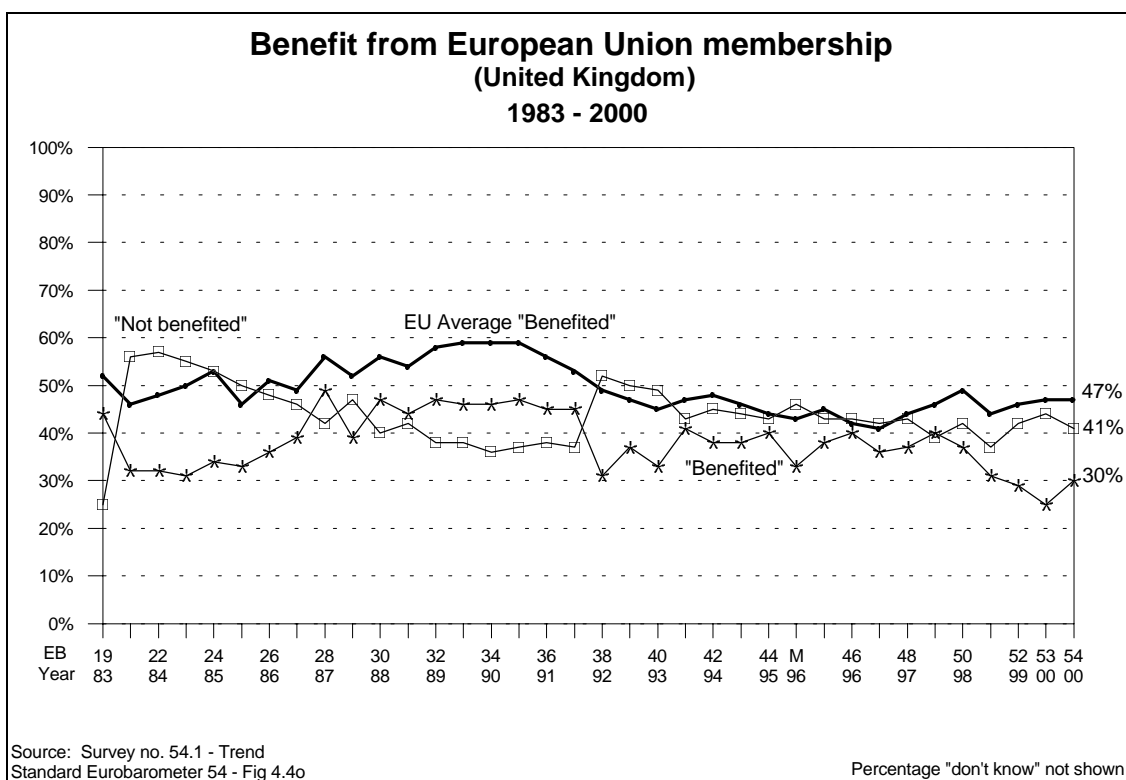
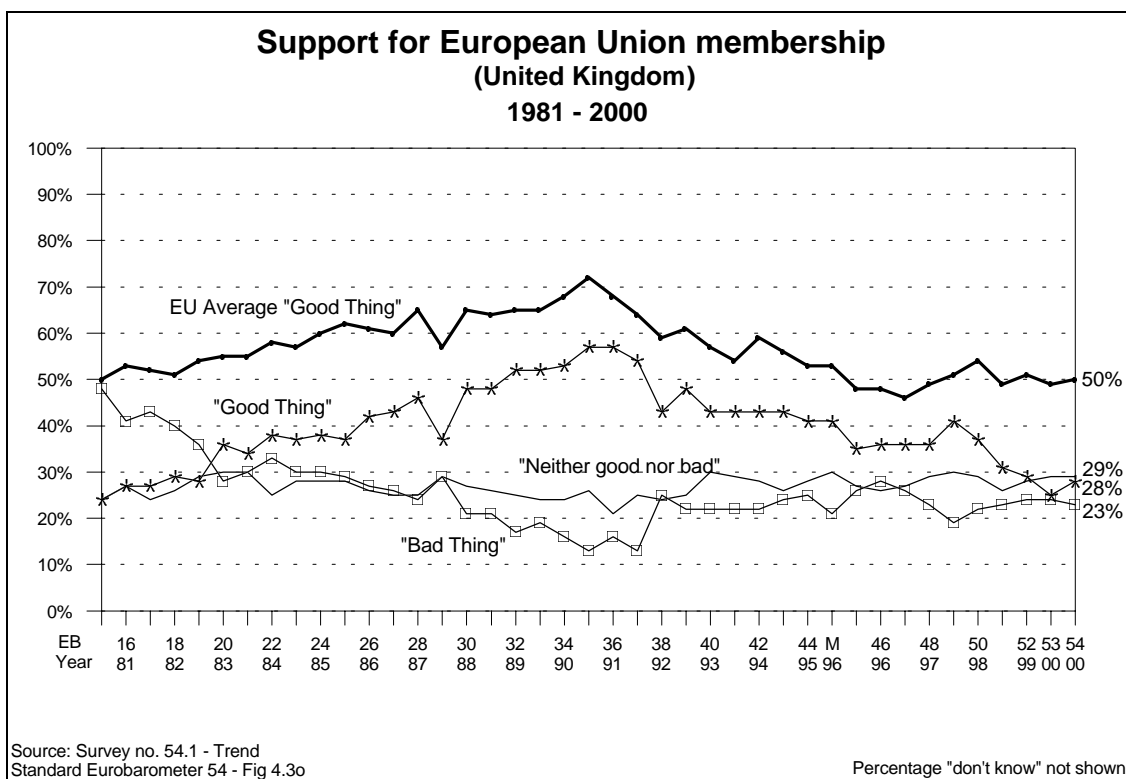




## SWEDEN



## UNITED KINGDOM



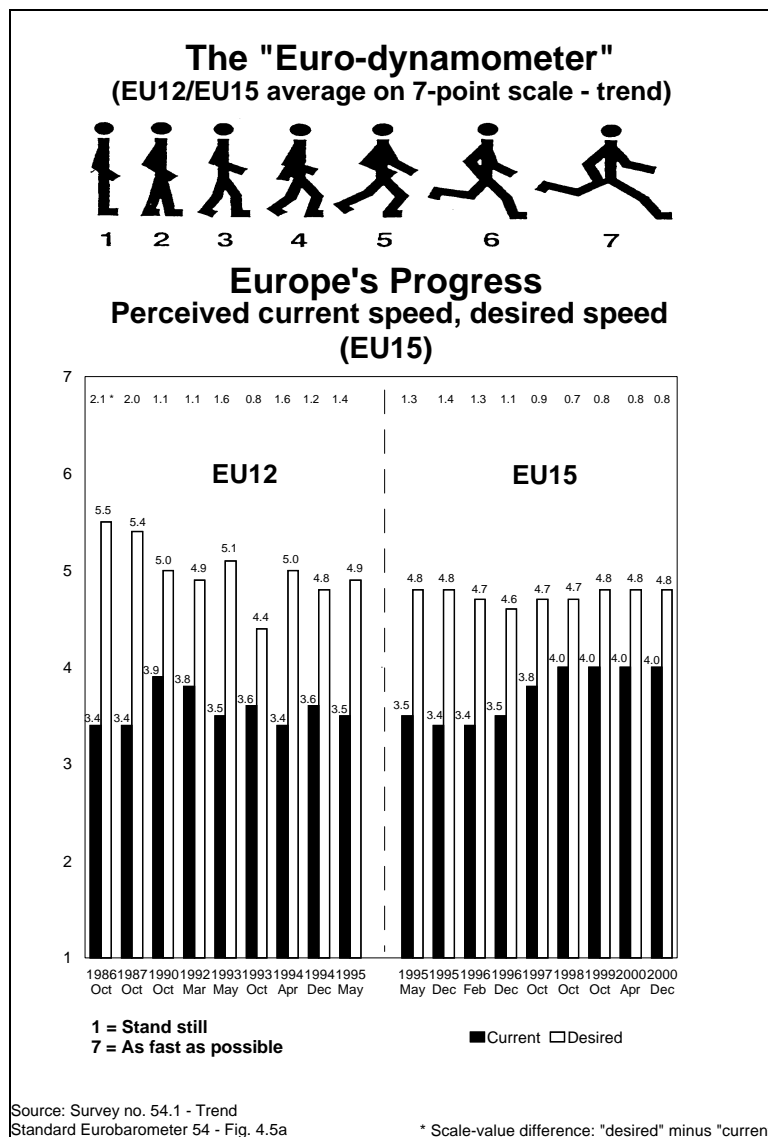
### 4.3. The speed of European integration

Since 1986, the survey has measured public opinion about the perceived and desired speed of European integration with the following question:

*a. In your opinion, what is the current speed of building Europe? Please look at these people (show card). N°1 is standing still; N°7 is running as fast as possible. Choose the one which best corresponds with your opinion of the current speed of building Europe.*

*b. And which corresponds best with what you would like? (Show same card)*

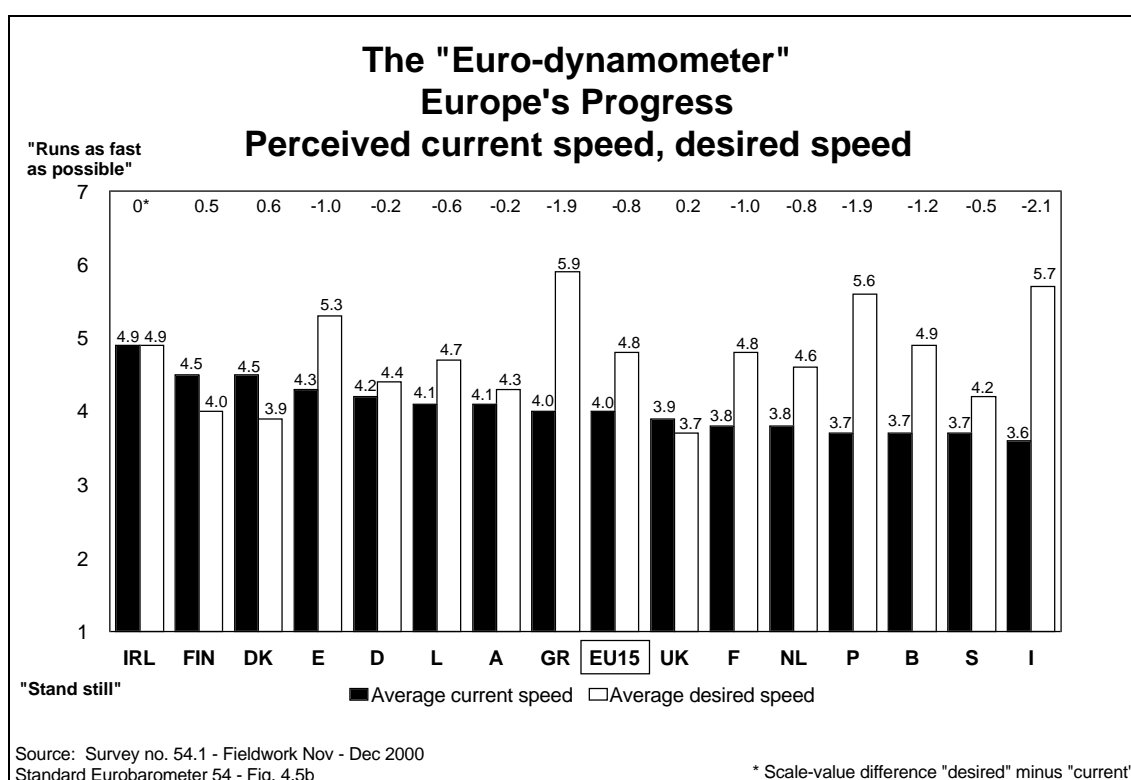
On a scale of 1 to 7, the average speed at which people believe Europe is being built is exactly 4. This has been the same during the three previous measurements and as in previous years, people would like Europe to progress at a faster speed (4.9). However, when we compare recent results to the earliest measurements in 1986 and 1987 we find that the gap between the perceived and desired speed has become considerably smaller. As the figure below shows, the latest measurement shows a net score difference of 0.8 compared to a difference of 2.1 in 1986.



The perceived speed of unification varies considerably from country to country. It is highest in Ireland (4.9) and lowest in Italy (3.6). Comparing the autumn 2000 results with those obtained in the spring shows that people in Luxembourg (+.23), Austria (+.21) and Italy (+.15) are now more likely to feel that the unification of Europe is developing at a greater speed. In Greece, Ireland (both -.15) and Belgium (-.12) people now rate the speed of Europe's unification as slightly slower. (Table 4.3a)

People in Greece would like Europe to be built at the fastest speed (5.9), followed by people in Italy (5.7), Portugal (5.6) and Spain (5.3). The desired speed is lowest in the UK (3.7), down from 4.2 in spring 2000. Since spring 2000, the average desired speed has remained fairly stable in the other Member States. (Table 4.3b)

As the graph below shows, the gap between the speed at which Europe is perceived to be progressing and the speed at which people desire it to progress varies significantly from country to country. In most countries people would like to see Europe built at a faster speed than what they perceive it to be with the largest positive net difference found in Italy, Portugal and Greece. Denmark, Finland and the UK are the only countries with a small negative net difference between the perceived and desired speed. Ireland stands out in being the only nation where the perceived speed is not only the highest but also perfectly matches the desired speed.



The next table shows how people's views towards the European Union in general relate to their feelings about further integration. As expected, people with pro-European views would like Europe to progress faster than it currently does, whereas people with anti-European views would like it to progress slower than it currently does. This indicates that general attitudes to the European Union are good predictors of how people feel about the speed of European integration.

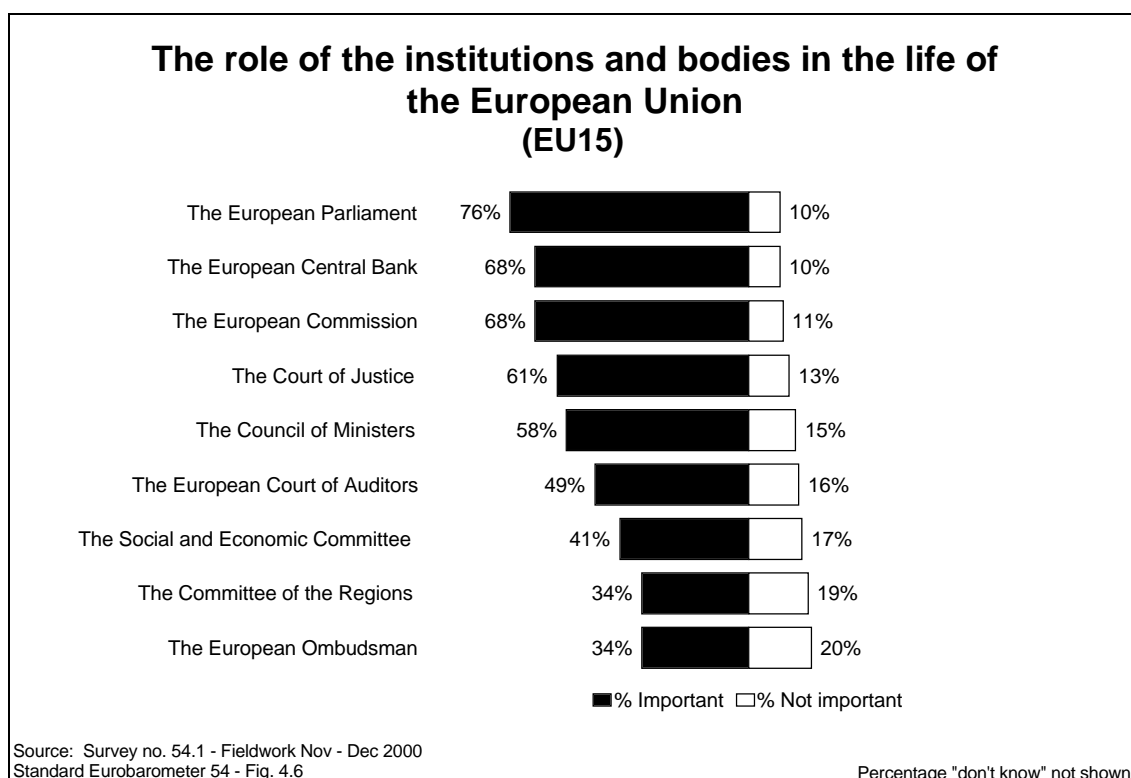
<b>"The Euro-Dynamometer"</b> <b>Average scores among people with pro-, neutral and anti-EU attitudes (EU15)</b>			
<b>EU attitudes:</b>	<b>Average current speed</b>	<b>Average desired speed</b>	<b>Difference desired minus current</b>
<b>Pro-EU attitudes:</b>			
Desires more important role of EU	3.86	5.50	+1.64
EU membership is a good thing	4.03	5.34	+1.31
<b>Neutral EU attitudes:</b>			
EU membership is neither good nor bad	3.88	4.50	+0.62
EU's role should not change	4.01	4.37	+0.36
<b>Anti-EU attitudes:</b>			
EU membership is a bad thing	3.85	3.09	-0.76
Desires less important role of EU	4.24	3.22	-1.02

An analysis of the socio-demographic groups in the population shows that all would like Europe to progress faster than they feel it is currently progressing. This indicates that socio-demographic factors are not as important as the country variable and the attitudinal variables are in explaining the variation we find in people's views of the perceived and desired speed of European integration.

#### 4.4. The institutions and bodies of the European Union

For the fourth time in a row the Eurobarometer has examined public opinion towards a number of the Union's institutions and bodies. Respondents were first of all asked whether they think 9 of the Union's institutions and bodies play an important role or not in the life of the European Union. The institutions and bodies included in the survey are the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, the Court of Justice, the European Ombudsman, the European Central Bank, the European Court of Auditors, the Committee of the Regions and the Social and Economic Committee<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Public awareness of these institutions/bodies is discussed in chapter 3.



As the graph shows, people are most likely to believe that the European Parliament (76%), the European Central Bank and the European Commission (both 68%) play an important role in the life of the European Union. The public is least likely to believe that the European Ombudsman and the Committee of the Regions (both 34%) play an important role. In comparison to spring 2000, people are now significantly more likely to feel that the Social and Economic Committee plays an important role (+3). Non significant increases are also noted for the European Central Bank (+2), the Council of Ministers and the Committee of the Regions (both +1). The '% important' responses for the other institutions has not changed since spring 2000<sup>21</sup>.

The country by country analyses show that the proportion of people that feels that the **European Parliament** plays an important role in the life of the European Union is highest in Luxembourg (88%) and more than 8 in 10 people in Italy, Sweden, Ireland, Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands share this view. It is lowest in the UK (62%), the only country where less than 7 in 10 people feel that the European Parliament plays an important role in the life of the European Union. Luxembourg (85%) also has the highest percentage of people that feel the **European Commission** plays an important role. Ireland (82%) takes second place, followed by Denmark (81%). The UK (56%) and Germany (61%) are the only countries where less than 7 in 10 people share this view. People in Luxembourg and the Netherlands (79%) are most likely to feel that the **European Central Bank**, which is headed by a Dutchman, plays an important role. Only 45% of people in the UK share this view. In all other countries more than 6 in 10 people feel the ECB plays an important role in the life of the European Union. (Table 4.4)

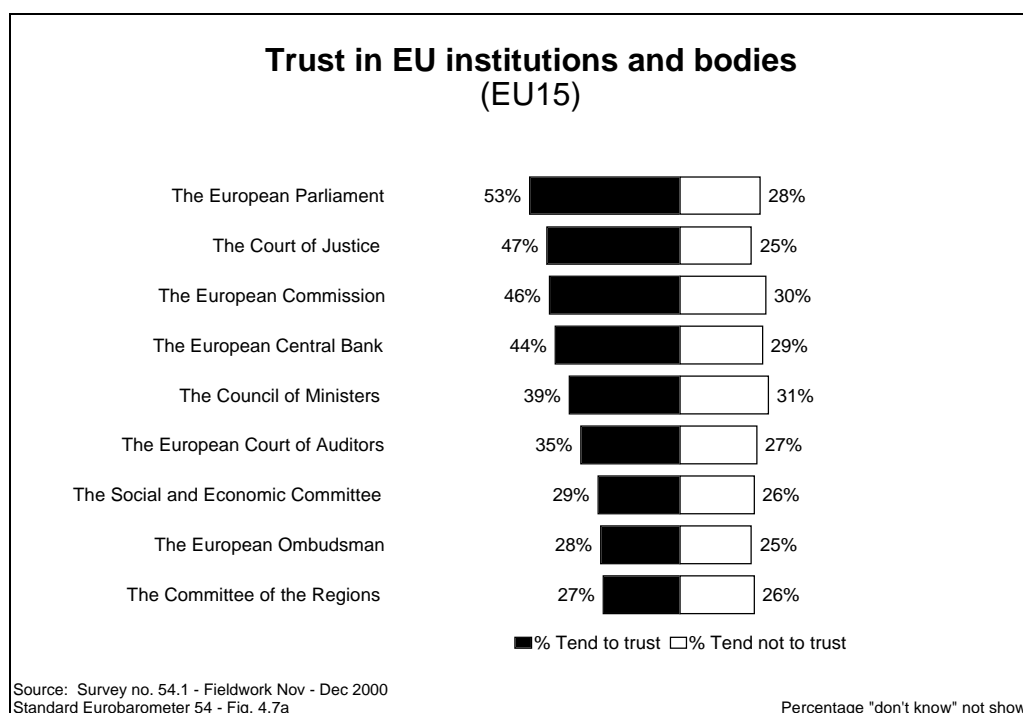
To provide an overall view of the extent to which people feel that the EU institutions and bodies play an important role in the life of the European Union, the following table lists the median score<sup>22</sup> for each Member State. Luxembourg has the highest median score (75%), followed by Sweden (71%) while the UK (35%) has the lowest score.

<sup>21</sup> See Eurobarometer Report 53, table 2.7.

<sup>22</sup> We show the median '% important' score rather than the average, as the median is the appropriate measure of central tendency in distributions with extreme values. The average scores are significantly lower because of the low values observed for the European Ombudsman and the Committee of the Regions, about which many people lack an opinion.

<b>Importance of the EU institutions and bodies</b> <b>(Median score - % saying important for the 9 institutions and bodies, by country)</b>	
Country	Median
Luxembourg	75
Sweden	71
Ireland	67
Belgium	67
Austria	65
The Netherlands	64
Finland	63
Denmark	62
Portugal	62
France	62
Greece	61
Spain	60
Germany	58
<b>EU15</b>	<b>58</b>
Italy	53
United Kingdom	35

Respondents were also asked whether they trust the 9 institutions and bodies. Although trust levels vary significantly between the 15 Member States, the first thing to note is the high proportion of “don’t know” responses, particularly for the Committee of the Regions, the European Ombudsman (both 47%) and the Social and Economic Committee (45%). These partly explain why levels of trust, as shown in the following graph, are so low.



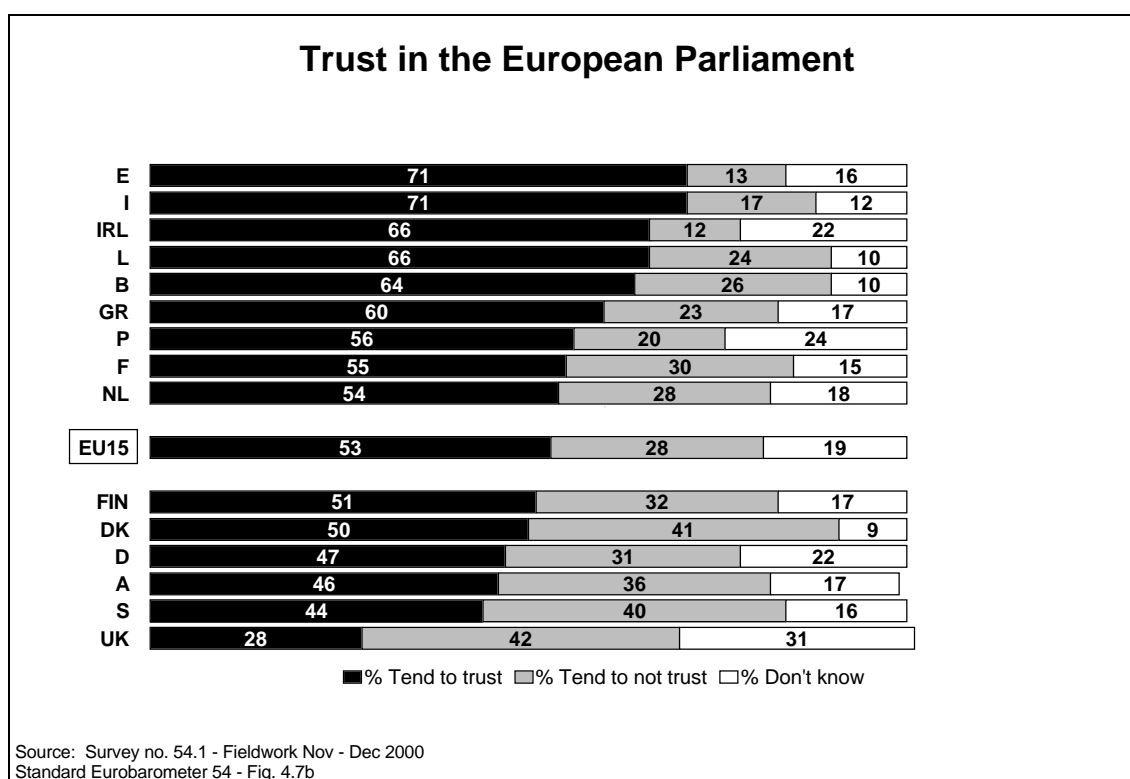
At 53%, the European Parliament is the institution most likely to be trusted by EU citizens, followed by the Court of Justice (47%) and the European Commission (46%). The proportion of people that say they do not trust these institutions or bodies ranges from 25% for the European Ombudsman and the Court of Justice to 31% for the Council of Ministers.

The next table shows the three most widely trusted institutions and bodies in each Member State. The **European Parliament** makes the top three in all 15 Member States. It tops the list in 9 countries, comes in second place in five countries and in third place in the Netherlands. The **Court of Justice** tops the list in 5 Member States, comes in second place in three countries and in third place in a further four countries. It doesn't make the top three in Spain, Italy and Portugal. The **European Commission** comes in second place in 6 countries and in third place in 3 countries. It doesn't make the top three in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland and Sweden. The **European Central Bank** comes in second place in the Netherlands and in third place in Denmark, Germany, Italy, Austria and Sweden. Spain (56%) is the only country where the **Council of Ministers** makes the top three. The **European Ombudsman**, who is Finnish, tops the list in his home country (53%) but does not make the top three in any of the other Member States. None of the other institutions and bodies make the top three. (See also table 4.5)

TOP THREE MOST WIDELY TRUSTED EU INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES (IN %, BY MEMBER STATE)			
Belgium		Luxembourg	
European Parliament	64	European Parliament	66
European Commission	57	Court of Justice	63
Court of Justice	52	European Commission	60
Denmark		The Netherlands	
Court of Justice	66	Court of Justice	66
European Parliament	50	European Central Bank	65
European Central Bank	48	European Parliament	54
Germany		Austria	
Court of Justice	52	Court of Justice	48
European Parliament	47	European Parliament	46
European Central Bank	45	European Central Bank	45
Greece		Portugal	
European Parliament	60	European Parliament	56
Court of Justice	54	European Commission	52
European Commission	52	European Central Bank	51
Spain		Finland	
European Parliament	71	European Ombudsman	53
European Commission	62	European Parliament	51
Council of Ministers	56	Court of Justice	51
France		Sweden	
European Parliament	55	Court of Justice	53
European Commission	49	European Parliament	44
Court of Justice	48	European Central Bank	43
Ireland		United Kingdom	
European Parliament	66	European Parliament	28
European Commission	63	Court of Justice	27
Court of Justice	57	European Commission	24
Italy			
European Parliament	71		
European Commission	61		
European Central Bank	52		



Looking next in more detail at the country results for the **European Parliament** shows that people in Spain and Italy (both 71%) are most likely to trust it. People in the UK (42%), Denmark (41%) and Sweden (40%) are most likely to lack trust in the European Parliament. The proportion of “don’t know” responses ranges from 9% in Denmark to 31% in the UK.



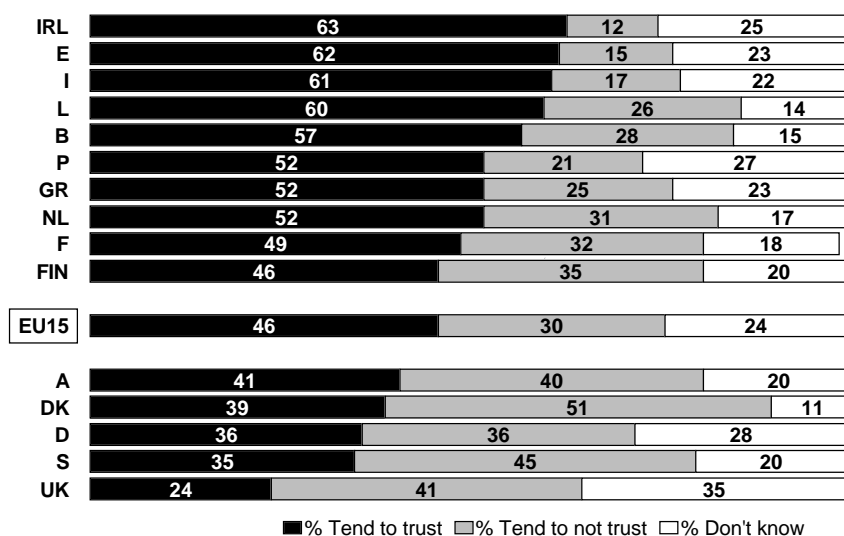
In comparison to spring 2000 trust levels have most increased in Austria (+6), following the lifting of sanctions that had been imposed against this country by the 14 other Member States. Other significant improvements are noted in Spain (+5), Italy, Sweden (both +4), Luxembourg and Belgium (both +3). The largest drop in the proportion of people that lacks trust in the Parliament is recorded in Sweden (-7). Though outright trust has not increased in the Netherlands, the percentage of people that lacks trust has dropped significantly (-6).

Significant drops in trust levels have been recorded in Greece (-6), Portugal (-5), Finland (-4) and France (-3). In these countries, with the exception of Finland, we find a significant increase in the percentage of the population that does not trust the Parliament (Greece:+8; Portugal and France:+4)<sup>23</sup>.

Looking at the country by country results for the **European Commission** shows that around 6 in 10 people in Ireland, Spain, Italy and Luxembourg trust it. Denmark is the only country where more than half of the population does not trust the European Commission (51%). Last spring this was the case in Sweden, where 45% (-8) now distrust in the Commission. However, people who distrust the Commission are still in the majority in Sweden. The only other country where this is the case is the UK. The German population is divided, with 36% saying they trust it and 36% saying they do not trust it. The proportion of “don’t know” responses ranges from 11% in Denmark to 35% in the UK.

<sup>23</sup> See Eurobarometer Report 53, table 2.8.

## Trust in the European Commission



Source: Survey no. 54.1 - Fieldwork Nov - Dec 2000  
Standard Eurobarometer 54 - Fig. 4.7c

The following table shows how trust levels have evolved since spring 2000. Trust levels have not changed significantly in countries that are not included in the table.

Trust in the European Commission Percentage-point change since spring 2000			
	Change in % tend to trust	Change in % tend not to trust	Change in % don't know
<b>Positive shifts:</b>			
Spain	+6	-1	-5
Italy	+3	-4	+1
Luxembourg	+3	-4	+1
Sweden	+1	-8	+6
Belgium	0	-3	+2
<b>Negative shifts:</b>			
Portugal	-5	+4	+1
France	-5	+4	+1
Denmark	-3	+4	-1
Greece	+2	+7	-10

Finally, we look at the median trust level for the 9 institutions and bodies in each of the Member States. As the following table shows, the median is highest in Ireland (54%) and lowest in the UK (17%).

Trust in the EU institutions and bodies (Median score - % saying tend to trust for the 9 institutions and bodies, by country)	
Country	Median
Ireland	54
Spain	53
Luxembourg	53
The Netherlands	48
Belgium	46
Finland	46
Portugal	45
Italy	44
Greece	42
France	41
Austria	41
Denmark	39
<b>EU15</b>	<b>39</b>
Germany	36
Sweden	35
United Kingdom	17

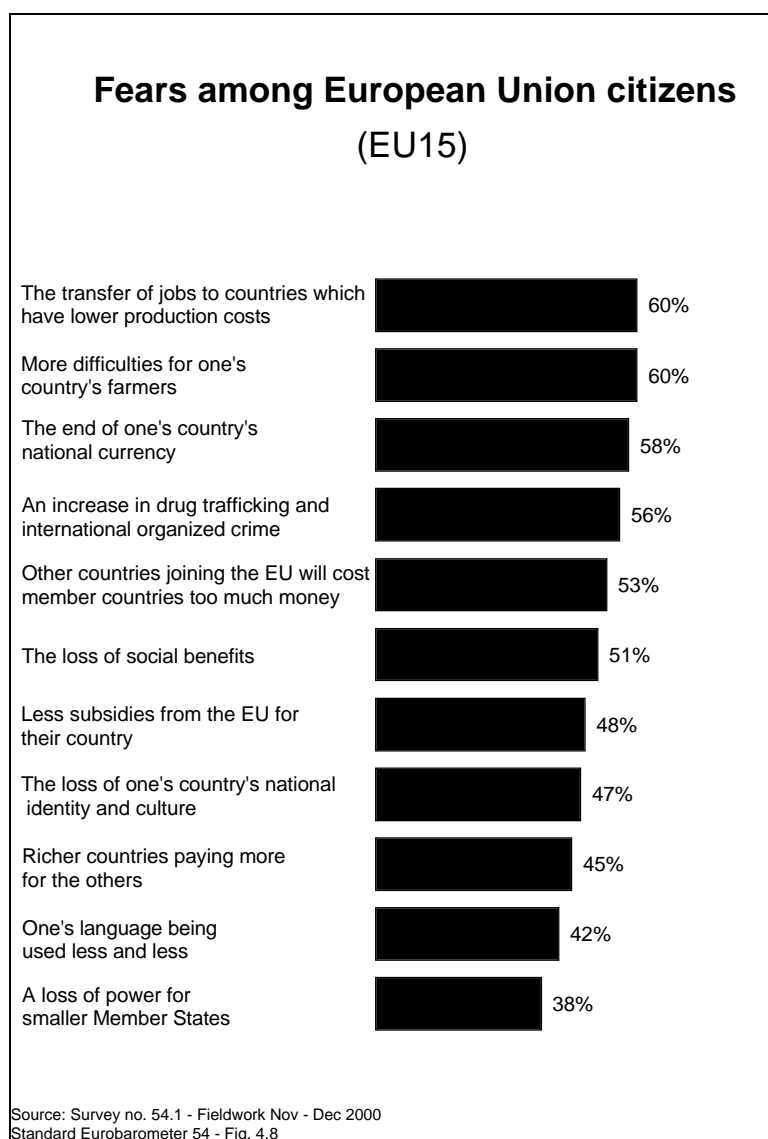
#### 4.5. Fears among European Union citizens

In order to measure the extent to which the public is concerned about the ongoing process of European integration, respondents were asked the following question:

*Some people may have fears about the building of Europe, the European Union. Here is a list of things which some people say they are afraid of. For each one, please tell me if you - personally - are currently afraid of it, or not?<sup>24</sup>*

People are most likely to fear that the building of Europe will lead to the transfer of jobs to countries which have lower production costs and to more difficulties for their country's farmers (both 60%). Close to 6 in 10 people also fear the impending end of their national currency. With the single currency now in operation in 12 of the 15 Member States, this fear has increased significantly since the question was last asked in spring 1999 (+7). In Greece, which joined the single currency in January 2001, we find an increase of 11 percentage points to 78%, making it the country where people are most likely to be afraid of the end of their national currency. More than half of the public is also afraid that the building of Europe will result in an increase in drug trafficking and international organised crime (56%), that other countries joining the EU will cost member countries too much money (53%) and that social benefits (51%) will be lost.

<sup>24</sup> Respondents were presented with a list of eleven items. The full item text is shown in table 4.6.



With enlargement no longer just a far removed possibility, people are now also significantly more likely than they were in spring 1999 to fear that other countries joining the EU will cost member countries too much money and that their farmers will have more difficulties (both +4). The only other issue which people are now more likely to fear is that their language will be used less and less (+3)<sup>25</sup>.

The following table shows the three most widespread fears in each country.

<sup>25</sup> See Eurobarometer Report 51, table 3.3.

TOP THREE MOST WIDESPREAD FEARS (IN % AND PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE SINCE SPRING 1999, BY MEMBER STATE)			
Belgium		Luxembourg	
Transfer of jobs	69;-2	More drugs and crime	69;-3
More drugs and crime	62;+5	Language used less	63;+3
Difficulties for farmers	60;+4	Transfer of jobs	62;-4
Denmark		The Netherlands	
More drugs and crime	62;-6	Difficulties for farmers	65;+8
Transfer of jobs	61;-5	Transfer of jobs	64;+1
Small countries less power	61;+1	Enlargement expensive	58;+3
Germany		Austria	
Transfer of jobs	64;-4	Transfer of jobs	62;-1
End of national currency	61;+12	Loss of social benefits	61;+9
More drugs and crime	60;-4	More drugs and crime	60;+3
Greece		Portugal	
Difficulties for farmers	79;+10	More drugs and crime	76;+9
End of national currency	78;+11	Difficulties for farmers	76;+8
More drugs and crime	75;+15	Less EU subsidies	64;+8
Spain		Finland	
Difficulties for farmers	67;+5	More drugs and crime	78;-1
Less EU subsidies	62;+3	Transfer of jobs	69;-1
Loss of social benefits	56;+5	Difficulties for farmers	69;0
France		Sweden	
Transfer of jobs	73;-3	More drugs and crime	76;-1
Difficulties for farmers	68;-4	Transfer of jobs	69;-9
Enlargement expensive	65;+5	Difficulties for farmers	64;+5
Ireland		United Kingdom	
More drugs and crime	60;-4	End of national currency	66;+1
Transfer of jobs	59;-5	Difficulties for farmers	64;+6
Less EU subsidies	59;-1	Loss of national identity	61;-7
Italy			
End of national currency	54;+10		
Difficulties for farmers	52;+12		
Transfer of jobs	49;+5		

The **transfer of jobs to countries with lower production costs** is the most widespread fear in 4 Member States, the second most widespread fear in 5 countries and the third most widespread fear in 2 further countries. It does not make the top three in Greece, Spain, Portugal and the UK. However, we find that in many countries people are now less likely to be afraid of this than they were in spring 1999 with the largest drop recorded in Sweden (-9). The fear that **farmers will have more difficulties** is the most widespread fear in Greece, Spain and the Netherlands. It is the second most widespread fear in 4 countries and the third most widespread fear in 3 further countries. It does not make the top three in Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg and Austria. In most countries people are now more likely to hold this fear with the largest increase recorded in Italy (+12). An **increase in drug trafficking and international organised crime** is the most widespread fear in 6 Member States, the second most widespread fear in 1 country and the third most widespread fear in 3 countries. The only countries where it does not make the top three are Spain, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

The end of the national currency tops the list in the UK and Italy and comes in second place in Greece and Germany. In all these countries people are now more likely to be afraid of this than they were in spring 1999. The fear that one's country will receive **less subsidies from the European Union** comes in second place in Spain and in third place in Portugal and Ireland. France and the Netherlands are the only two countries where the **cost of enlargement** makes the top three. The fear that people will **lose social benefits** comes in second place in Austria and in third place in Spain. The UK is the only country where the fear that European unification will lead to a **loss of identity and culture** makes the top three. Denmark is the only country where the fear that **smaller Member States will lose power** makes the top three. Luxembourg is the only country where the fear that European unification will lead to **less use of their language** makes the top three. (See also table 4.6).

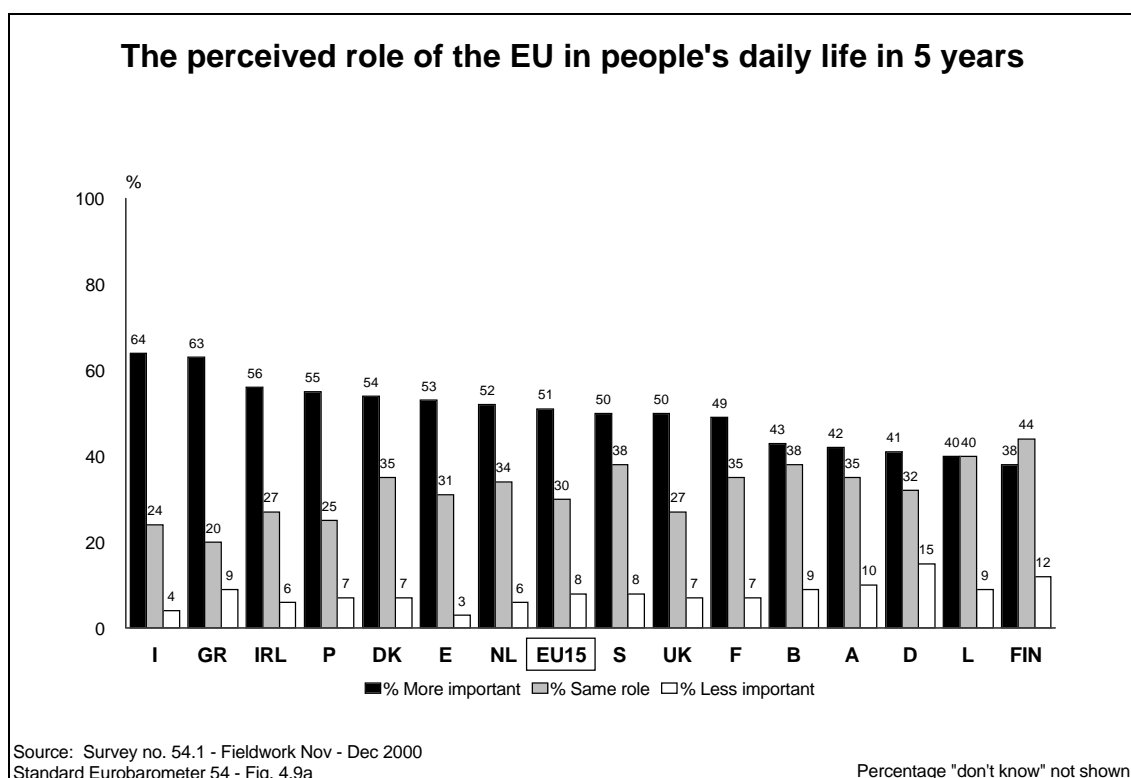
Finally, we look at the average fear level in each Member State. As the following table shows, the average percentage of respondents saying they are currently afraid is highest in Greece (67%) and lowest in Italy (42%).

<b>Fear in the building of Europe</b> <b>(Average score for '% currently afraid'</b> <b>responses for 11 items, by country)</b>	
<b>Country</b>	<b>% Average</b>
Greece	67
France	59
Finland	59
Luxembourg	55
Portugal	55
United Kingdom	53
The Netherlands	53
Belgium	53
Sweden	52
Austria	51
<b>EU15</b>	<b>51</b>
Ireland	51
Denmark	50
Germany	48
Spain	46
Italy	42

#### 4.6. The expected and desired role of the EU in five years' time

Having looked at the current state of public opinion about the European Union, we end this chapter by looking towards the future.

Fifty-one percent of Europeans believe that in five years' time the European Union *will* play a more important role in their daily life, 30% believe it *will* play the same role and only 8% believe it *will* play a less important role.

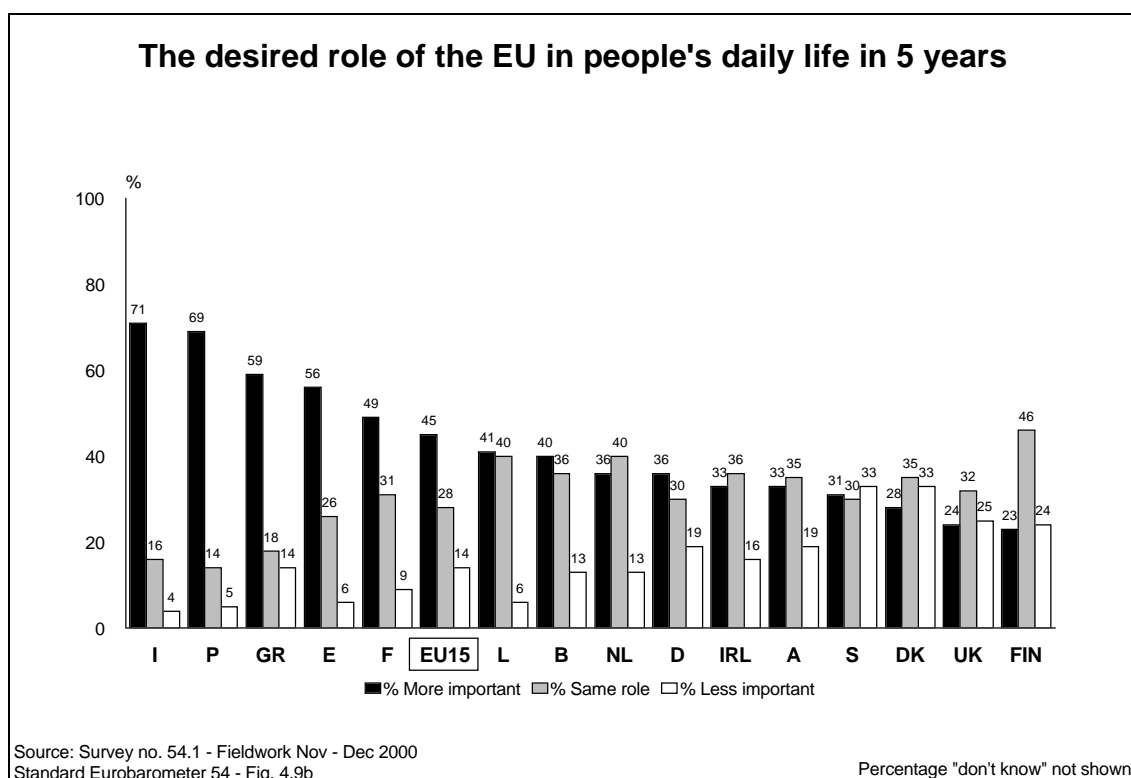


People in Italy (64%) and Greece (63%) are most likely to hold the view that the European Union will play a more important role in five years' time. At least half of the population shares this view in a further 8 countries. In the other countries, public opinion is somewhat more divided. However, Finland is the only country where the proportion of people that feels the EU will play the same role (44%) outnumbers the proportion of people that believe the EU will play a more important role (38%) and in Luxembourg both views are held by an equal share of the population (40%). The view that the EU will play a less important role is low throughout the Member States and ranges from 3% in Spain to 15% in Germany.

In comparison to the previous survey (spring 2000) we find that people in Greece, the UK (both +7), Austria (+6) and Ireland (+4) are now more likely to think that in 5 years' time the EU will play a more important role in their daily life. In Denmark (-6), Luxembourg (-5) and Sweden (-3) people are now less likely to share this view and more likely to feel that it will play the same role. (Table 4.7a)

An analysis of the demographic variables shows that the proportion of people that believes that the EU's role will be less important is 10% or less for all demographic sub-groups included in the analyses. However, when it comes to attitudes to the EU we find a more of a division of views. 20% of those who view their country's membership to the EU as a bad thing say that in 5 years' time the EU will play a less important role in their daily life compared to only 5% of those who regard EU membership as a good thing. (Table 4.7b)

Looking next at the role people *would like* the European Union to play in their daily life in 5 years' time shows that 45% of Europeans desire a more important role, 28% desire the same role, with only 14% desiring a less important role for the European Union.



People in Italy (71%) and Portugal (69%) are by far most likely to want the EU to play a more important role in their daily life with close to 6 in 10 people in Greece (59%) and Spain (56%) sharing this view. Although in none of the other countries more than half of the population wants the EU to play a more important role, it is nonetheless the majority opinion in France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany. In Finland, the Netherlands, Ireland, Austria, Denmark and the UK the most frequently expressed desire is for the EU to continue to play the same role. However, in Denmark and the UK there are more people who want the EU to play a less important role than there are people who want it to play a more important role. Sweden is the only country where those who want the EU to play a less important role outnumber those who desire the same role or a more important role.

In comparison to spring 2000, we find positive shifts in Austria, Luxembourg, Spain, France and Sweden and negative developments in Greece, Ireland, Finland and Denmark. In Belgium and Sweden we find increases in the proportion of people desiring the same role at the expense of wanting a more important role. (Table 4.8a)

The attitudinal analyses show that people who support their country's EU membership (64%) are four times more likely than people who regard it as a bad thing (16%) to desire a more important role for the EU. 46% of the latter group would like the EU to play a less important role in 5 years' time. At the demographic level we find that the view that the EU should play a less important role is held by less than 20% of the population, regardless of sex, age, economic activity or years of schooling. (Table 4.8b)



## 5. Support for current policy issues

Whereas the previous chapter has presented an overall picture of public support for the European Union by analysing the results of the survey's main indicators, this chapter focuses on support for some of the Union's current policy issues.

### 5.1. Support for joint EU decision-making

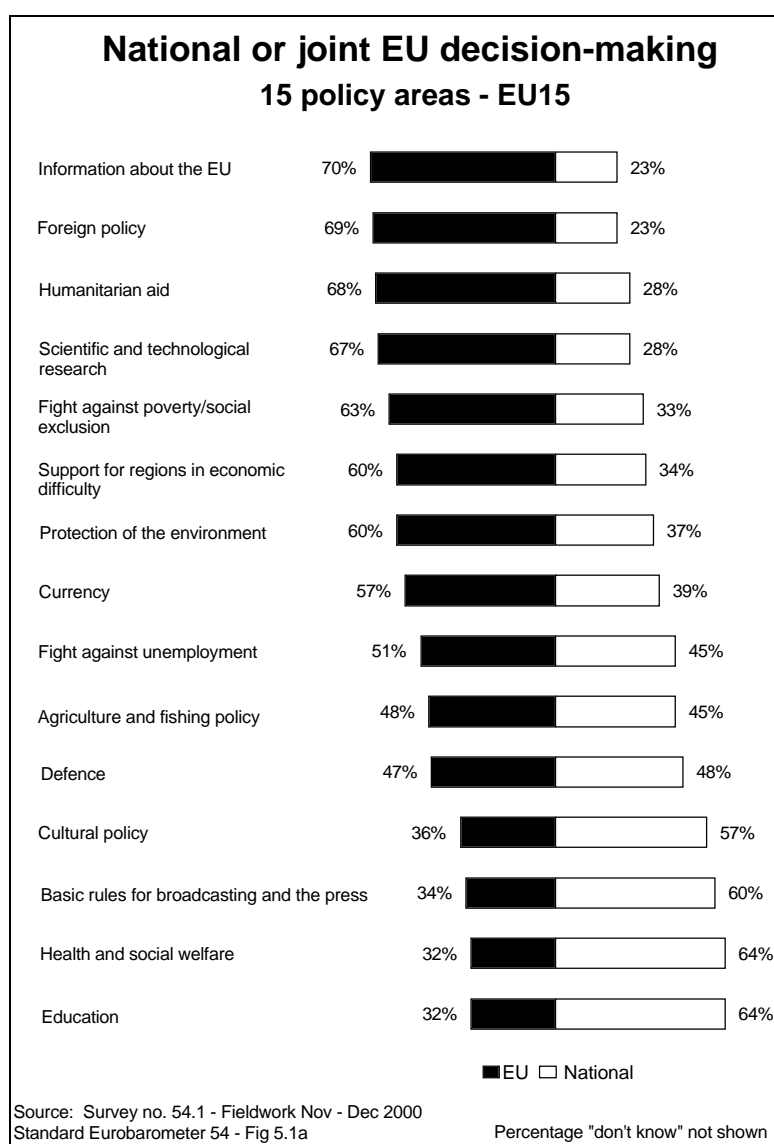
We begin by looking at the results of a question that asks whether decisions should be taken at national or at EU level. It lists 25 policy areas over which the Union has, to varying degrees, decision-making competencies. On average, 52% of the public supports joint EU decision-making in these areas and it is favoured over national decision-making in 15 of the 25 areas. At the EU15 level, no significant changes have been recorded since the previous survey (spring 2000)<sup>26</sup>.

SUPPORT FOR JOINT EU DECISION-MAKING BY COUNTRY		
Country	Average level of support for EU decision-making (for 25 areas, in %)	Number of areas where EU decision-making is more popular than national decision-making (25 areas maximum)
Italy	62%	18
Belgium	57%	17
France	56%	17
Spain	56%	17
The Netherlands	56%	16
Luxembourg	54%	16
Germany	53%	14
<b>EU15</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>15</b>
Greece	51%	15
Ireland	49%	12
Austria	45%	13
Portugal	41%	8
Denmark	39%	10
Finland	38%	9
UK	37%	8
Sweden	37%	8

<sup>26</sup> In spring 2000, EU decision-making was also favoured over national decision-making in 14 of the 25 areas and on average 52% of people supported it.

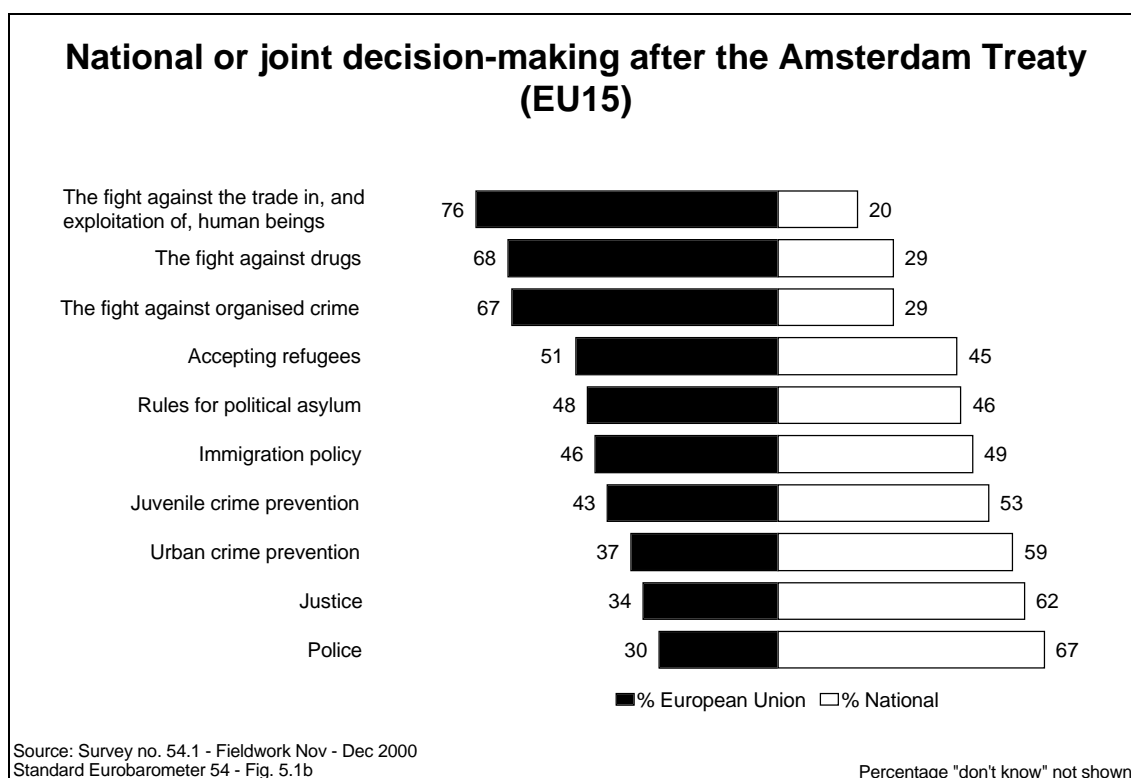
Support for EU decision-making continues to be highest in Italy where it is favoured over national decision-making in 18 of the 25 policy areas. In the spring, the Netherlands came in second place with an average score of 61%. It now comes in fourth place. Greece, where support for EU decision-making increased by 8 percentage points, has improved its position in the rank order. In this country EU decision-making is favoured over national decision-making in 15 of the 25 areas, compared to only 11 areas in spring 2000. The UK is no longer at the bottom of the list, with an increase in support of 5 percentage points. People in this country now favour EU decision-making over national decision-making in 8 of the areas, compared to only 5 in spring 2000. No change has been recorded in Sweden, placing it at the bottom of the list.

In the survey the question is divided into policy areas covered by the 3 pillars of the Maastricht Treaty and the new policy areas covered by the Amsterdam Treaty. We first look at people's views concerning the Maastricht Treaty policy areas.



Support for joint EU decision-making continues to be most widespread when it comes to information about the EU, its policies and institutions. The next four areas in which the public is most likely to support joint EU decision-making are foreign policy, humanitarian aid, science and technological research and the fight against poverty and social exclusion. People are least likely to want EU decision-making for education, health and social policy and broadcasting rules for the media.

When it comes to the Amsterdam Treaty policy areas, we find that support for EU joint decision-making is most widespread for the fight against human trade and exploitation while people are most likely to support national decision-making in the areas of policing and justice.

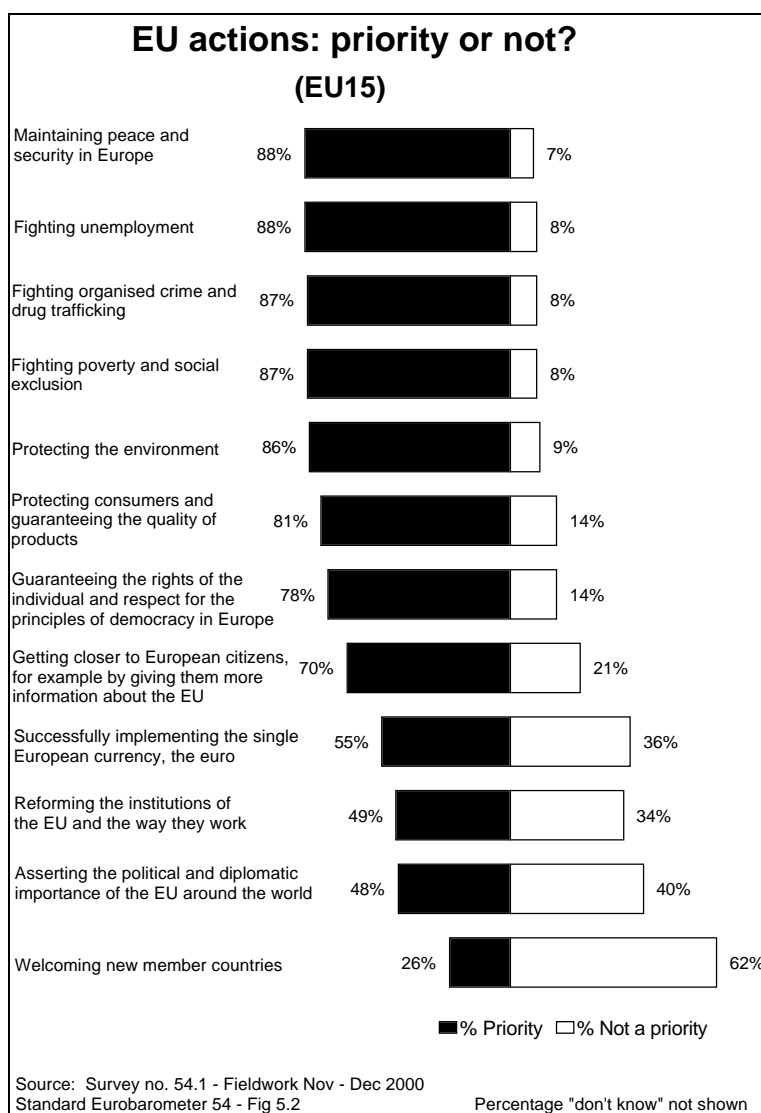


One can conclude from these results that people support joint EU decision-making in areas that either transcend national borders or have a limited impact on their day-to-day life but want the national governments to decide in areas that concern them, their families or their country more directly. This is in line with the Union's subsidiarity principle. (Table 5.1)

## 5.2. Support for the Union's priorities

The Eurobarometer also measures the extent to which the public regards some of the Union's current actions as priorities<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> For a description of the Commission's Work Programme for the year 2000, please see [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/off/work/2000/index\\_en.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/off/work/2000/index_en.htm).



At the March 2000 special European Council in Lisbon, the European Union set itself the goal of becoming the most competitive and knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. The so-called 'Lisbon Strategy' is designed to enable the Union to regain the conditions for full employment and shows the Union's commitment to fight unemployment. On average, 88% of EU citizens feel that the fight against unemployment should be a priority for the EU, with country results ranging from 75% in the UK to 96% in Greece and Portugal. On a related issue, we find that 87% of EU citizens feel that fighting poverty and social exclusion should be a priority with country results ranging from 76% in the UK to 95% in Portugal and Greece.

More than 8 in 10 Europeans also believe that maintaining peace and security in Europe, fighting organised crime and drug trafficking, protecting the environment and protecting consumers and guaranteeing the quality of products should be priority actions for the European Union.

At the time of the survey and leading up to the December 20-21 European Summit in Nice, the Member States were engaged in an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) with a view to reforming the institutions of the European Union in preparation for enlargement<sup>28</sup>. There are large differences in opinion from country to country on the topic of reform with people in Denmark (71%) most likely to consider it a priority for the EU and people in the UK (42%) least likely to share this view.

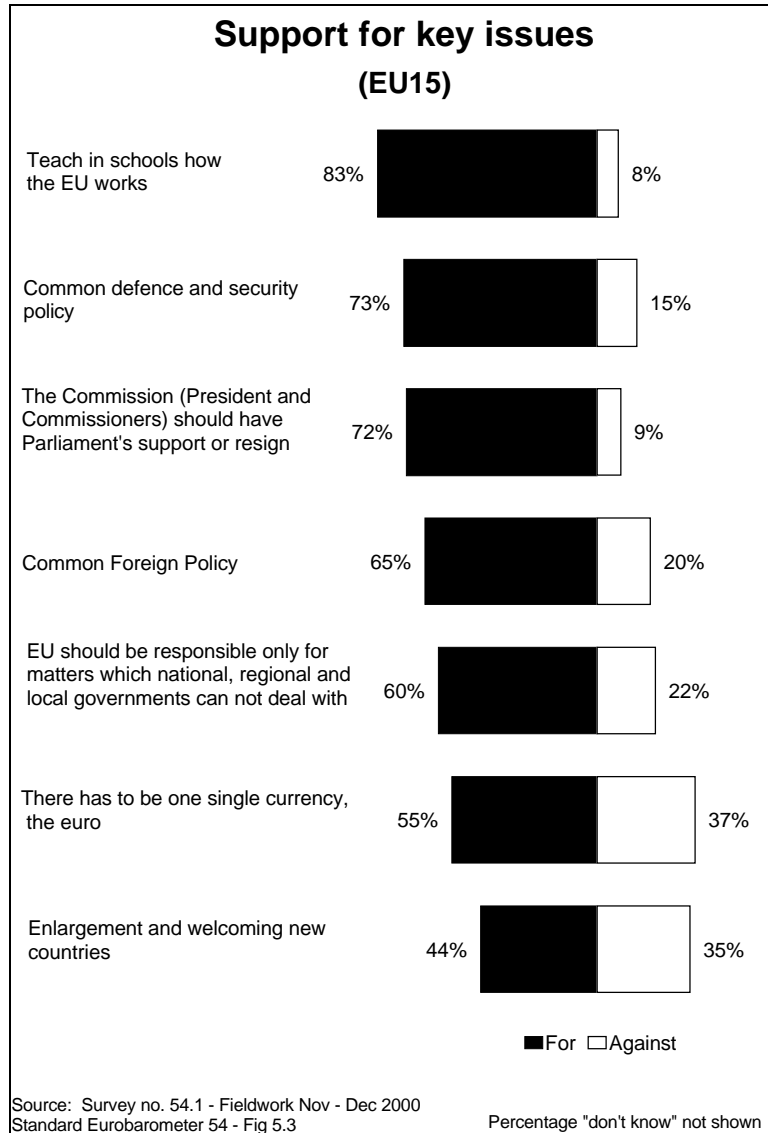
The graph shows that EU citizens are less likely to consider issues that imply a change to the current situation as priorities. Hence we find that the public is least likely to regard enlargement as a priority<sup>29</sup>. (See also table 5.2)

<sup>28</sup> For more details please see <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/index.htm>

<sup>29</sup> See sections 5.7 to 5.10 for a more detailed look at public support for enlargement.

### 5.3. Support for key issues

Since 1993 the Eurobarometer has gauged public opinion towards a number of key issues of the European Union. Some of the issues are clear cut policy matters while others relate to democratic processes which govern the way the European Union functions.



In all 15 Member States, there is widespread agreement that children should be taught in school about the way European Union institutions work, with support levels ranging from 71% in the UK to 92% in Sweden.

The Nice Treaty, agreed by the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the European Union on 20 and 21 December 2000, speaks of a progressive framing of a common defence policy. On average 73% of EU citizens are in favour of a common defence policy, with people in Belgium most likely to support it (84%) and people in Finland (40%) and Denmark (38%) most likely to oppose it. Support for a common foreign policy is obtained from 65% of EU citizens, with highest support levels recorded in Italy (77%) and highest opposition levels again recorded in Finland (41%) and Denmark (40%).

One of the priorities for the European Union that we have not yet discussed is promoting new forms of European governance. Governance defines the rules, processes and practices, which determine how European powers, are exercised: accountability, visibility, transparency, coherence and effectiveness. The exercise of governance at European level is based on the accountability of the executives to the duly elected assemblies and also on the effective involvement of the public in devising and implementing the decisions, which concern them.

The notion of a European Governance<sup>30</sup> seems to be particularly popular in countries where the public is more sceptical about the European Union and where many people feel that the EU has too much power and that there are insufficient measures to control this power. Thus, we find the highest support levels for the item stating that the President of the European Commission and the European Commissioners should have the support of the majority in the European Parliament in Denmark (88%), Finland (83%) and Sweden (82%).

Support for the principle of subsidiarity, the notion that the European Union should only be responsible for matters that can not be effectively handled by national, regional and local governments, stands at 60%. People in Italy (72%), Ireland (71%) and Greece (70%) are most likely to favour this principle while support is lowest in the UK (45%).

Support for the single currency stands at 55% and is discussed in more detail in section 5.4 below. 44% of EU citizens agree with the statement that the European Union should be enlarged and include new countries. Enlargement is discussed in detail in sections 5.7 to 5.10. (Table 5.3)

The following table shows the average support level for the survey's 7 key issues in each Member State<sup>31</sup>. As can be seen, support for these key issues tends to be highest in Greece and Italy and lowest in the UK.

AVERAGE % SUPPORT FOR 7 KEY ISSUES BY COUNTRY	
Country	Average % Support
Greece	77
Italy	76
Belgium	73
Luxembourg	71
Spain	70
Ireland	67
The Netherlands	66
France	66
Germany	65
<b>EU15</b>	<b>64</b>
Portugal	63
Austria	62
Denmark	61
Sweden	60
Finland	59
United Kingdom	45

<sup>30</sup> For more information about European Governance, see:  
[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/governance/index\\_en.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/governance/index_en.htm)

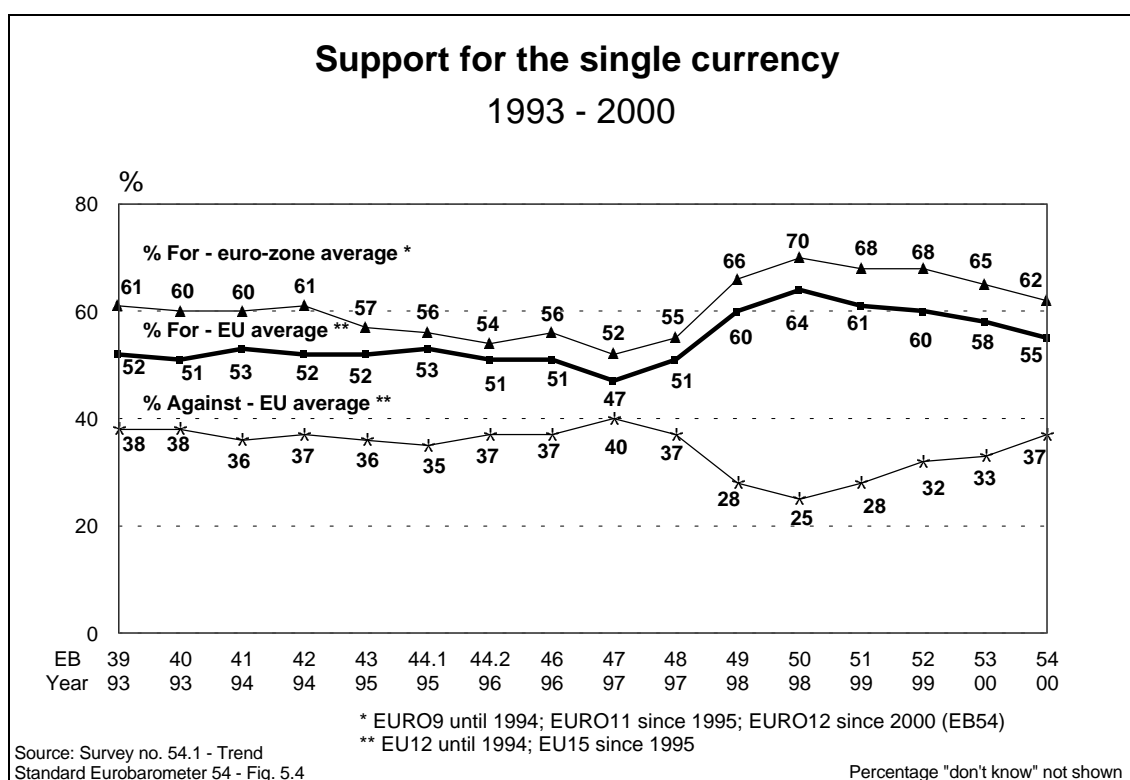
<sup>31</sup> Readers should note that in some countries low support levels are matched by a high level of 'don't know' responses and not by high opposition levels.

## 5.4. Support for the single currency

At the time of writing 12 of the 15 Member States<sup>32</sup> have introduced the European single currency, the euro. Greece joined the euro-zone in January 2001, having now met the economic conditions required for joining the single currency. The Danish public rejected joining the single currency in their September 2000 referendum by a margin of 6%. 47% of the Danes voted in favour of joining the single currency.

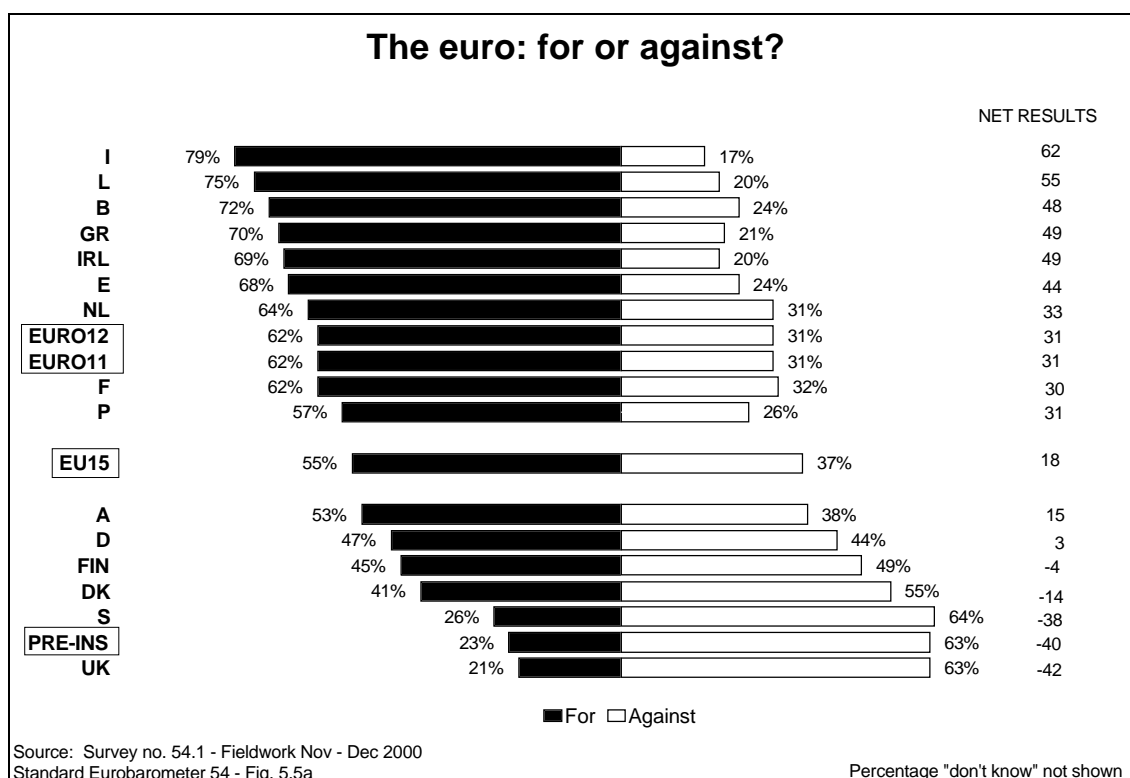
The autumn 2000 Eurobarometer results show that 55% of EU citizens are of the opinion that there has to be one single currency, the euro, which replaces the national currencies of the Member States of the European Union whilst 37% are against this. The remaining 9% lack an opinion. Support for the euro is significantly higher in the "EURO 12" countries than it is in the "pre-in" countries (62% vs. 23% - the average support level in the "EURO 11" countries is also 62%).

The following graph shows how public support for the euro has evolved since the Eurobarometer first measured it in 1993.



As can be seen, public support rose sharply in the period just prior to the 1 January 1999 introduction of the euro, reaching a high of 64% in autumn 1998. Whilst the euro is delivering the expected benefits for the European economy, its value vis-à-vis the major foreign currencies like the US Dollar has fallen significantly since its introduction. Though it is now again becoming stronger, at the time of the survey the value of the euro had hit record lows. This perceived weakness of the euro might help explain why public support has been slipping ever since its introduction. However, people are still much more likely to be in favour of the euro than they were when it was first decided to have a single currency, back in 1993.

<sup>32</sup> These are Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. Throughout the remainder of this report we will refer to this group as the "EURO 12" countries. Because Greece was technically speaking not yet part of the euro-zone at the time of the survey, we also include information about the "EURO 11" countries, that is all countries listed above except Greece. The 3 countries outside the euro-zone are Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom. They will be referred to as the "pre-in" countries.



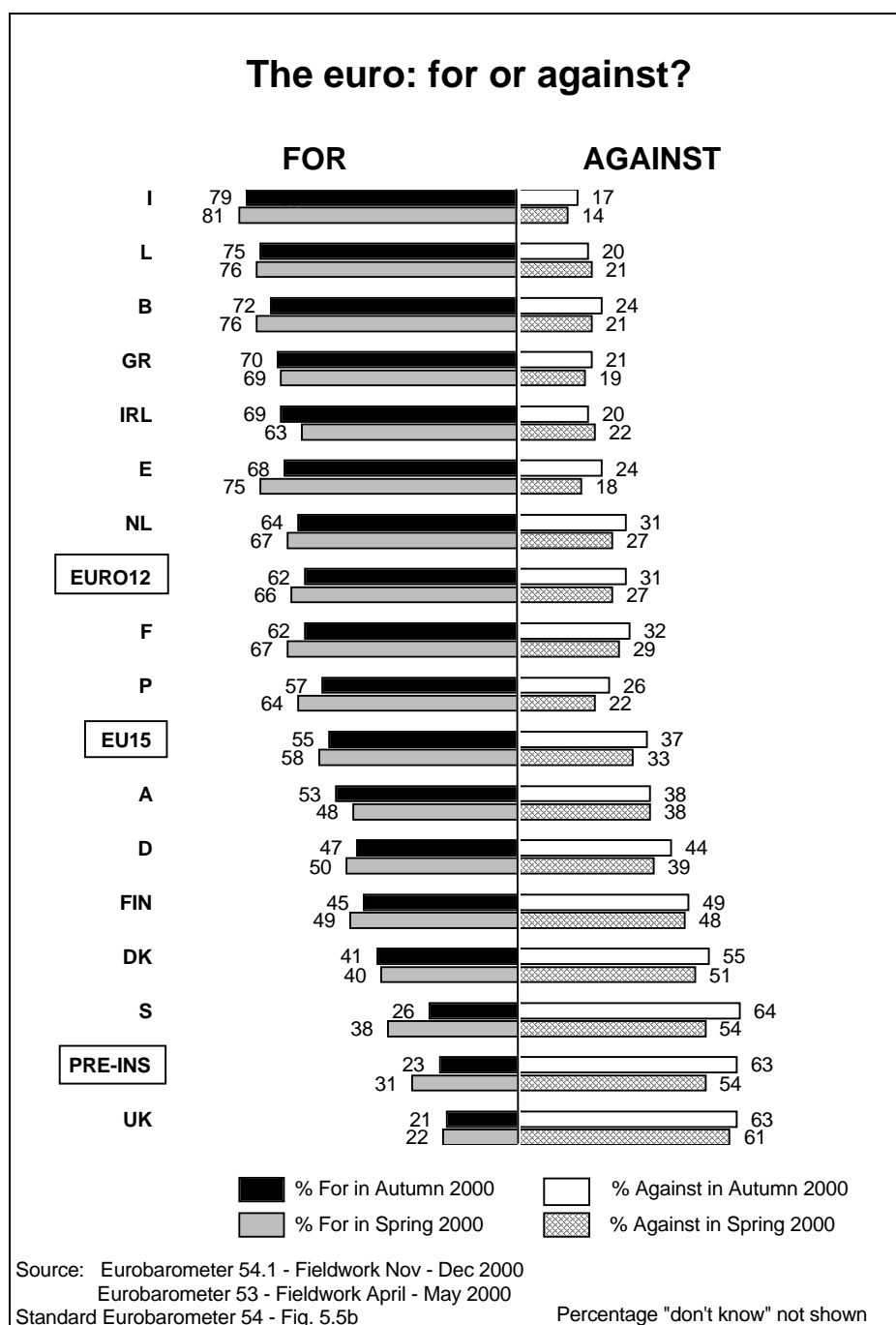
As the graph above shows, support for the euro among the "EURO 12" countries is highest in Italy (79%), with at least 7 in 10 people in Luxembourg, Belgium and Greece in favour of the euro. In Ireland, Spain, the Netherlands and France more than 6 in 10 people support the euro while this is the case for more than 5 in 10 people in Portugal and Austria. Support in Germany stands at 47% with 44% of Germans against the euro. Finland is the only "EURO 12" country where opponents of the euro outnumber supporters, albeit only by a margin of 4%.

Among the "pre-in" countries, support is highest in Denmark (41%) while in the UK and Sweden less than 3 in 10 people are in favour of the euro. In all three countries opposition to the euro is obtained from more than half of the population.

An analysis of shifts in support levels since spring 2000 in the "EURO 12" countries shows that support for the euro only increased in Ireland (+6) and Austria (+5), with no significant changes recorded in Italy, Luxembourg and Greece. Significant drops in support have been recorded in Spain, Portugal (both -7), France (-5), Belgium, Finland (both -4), the Netherlands and Germany (both -3).

Looking at the "pre-in" countries shows that people in Denmark are now more likely to be against the euro (+4) and less likely to lack an opinion (-5). It appears that the Danish "euro" referendum has had a large impact in Sweden where we find that public support for the euro has fallen from 38% to 26%. Public opinion in the UK does not seem to have been affected by the Danish referendum. (Table 5.4a)





Among the various demographic groups in the population support for the euro is highest among students (67%), followed by managers (66%), people that stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older and self-employed people (both 65%). Retired people and those who left full-time education before reaching 16 (both 45%) are least likely to support the euro.

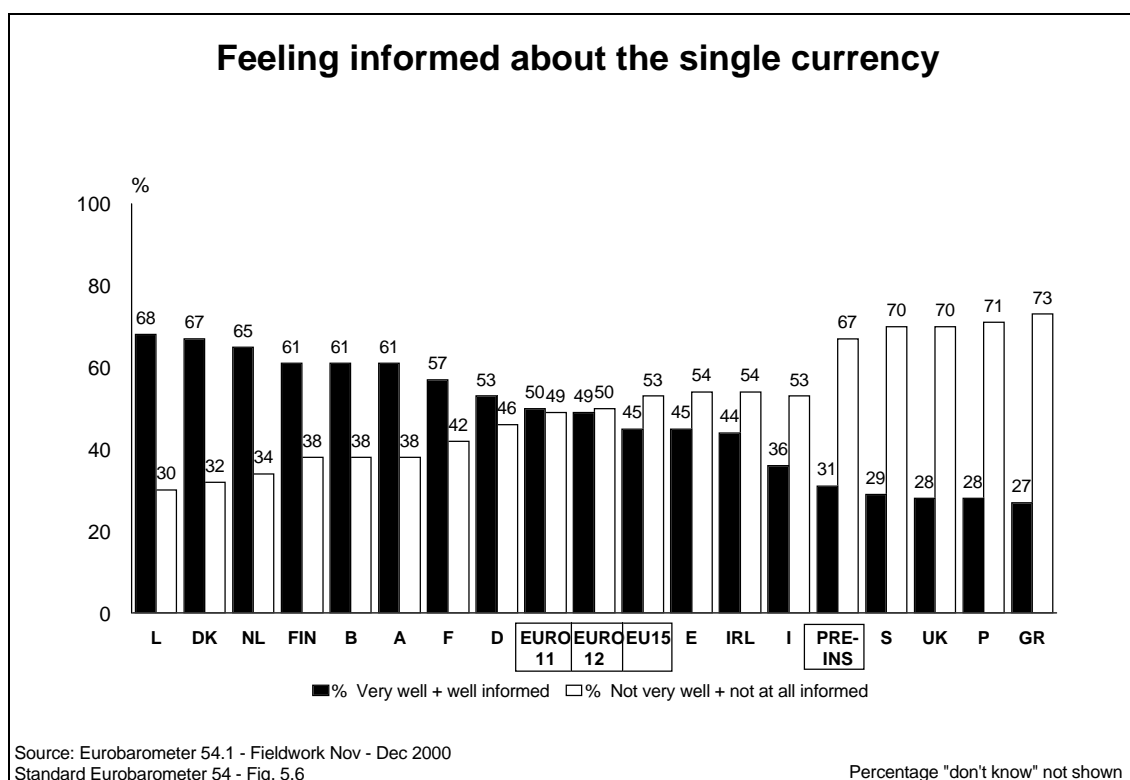
At the attitudinal level we find that the gap between those who regard their country's membership as a good thing (78%) and those who regard their country's membership as a bad thing (16%) remains very large. (Table 5.4b)

As the following table shows, support for the single currency also depends on how well informed people feel about the euro.

Support for the single currency			
	% in favour of the euro	% against the euro	% don't know
Feels very well / well informed about the euro	66%	29%	5%
<b>EU15 Average</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Feels not very / not at all well informed about the euro	45%	44%	11%

## 5.5. Information about the single currency

In autumn 2000, 45% of EU citizens feel well informed about the single currency. 53% of respondents say they do not feel well informed with 2% lacking an opinion, which in essence is the same as not feeling informed.



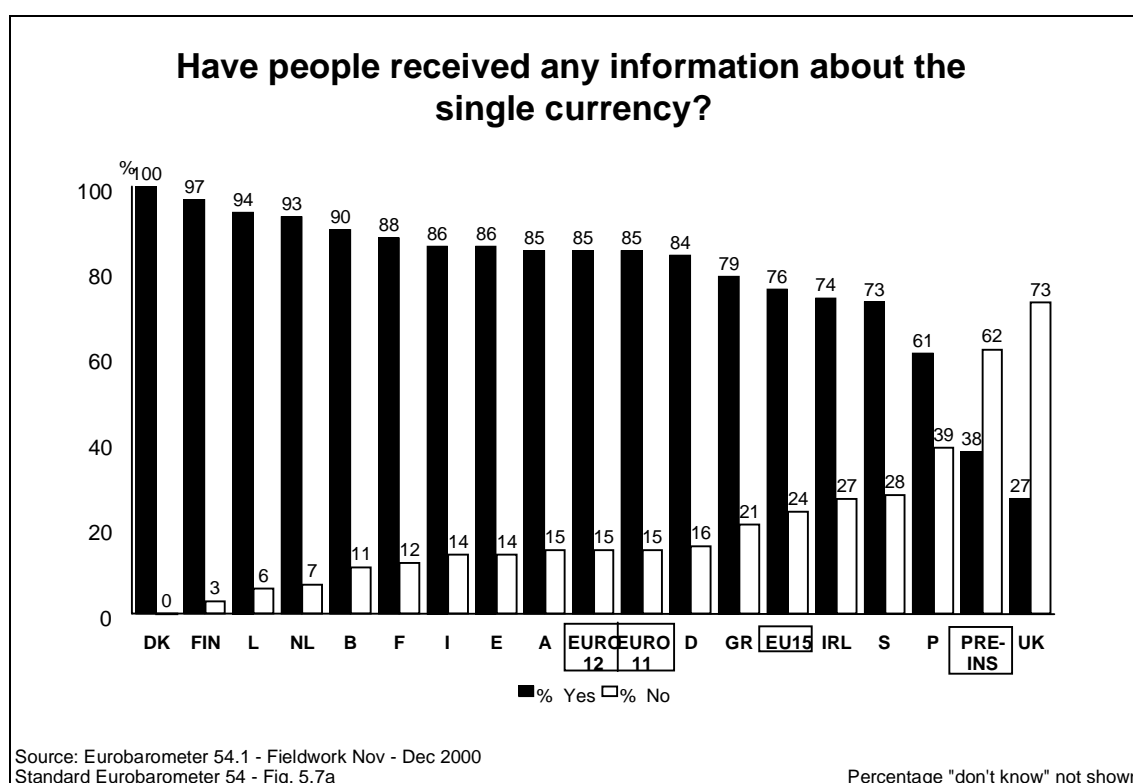
The country analyses show that levels of feeling informed continue to be higher in the "EURO 12" countries (49%) than they are in the "pre-in" countries (31%), although the gap is smaller now that Greece is part of the euro countries. Looking first at the "EURO 12" countries shows that people in Luxembourg (68%) are most likely to feel well informed, followed by people in the Netherlands (65%) and Finland, Belgium and Austria (all 61%). People in Greece (27%) and Portugal (28%) continue to be least likely to feel well informed. Italy (36%) is the only other "EURO 12" countries where less than 4 in 10 people feel well informed.

Comparing these results with those obtained in spring 2000 shows that Ireland is the only "EURO 12" country where levels of feeling informed improved significantly (+3). The largest decrease has been recorded in the Netherlands (-10), followed by Finland (-7), Italy (-5) and Portugal (-4). No significant changes are noted in the other "EURO 12" countries.

Looking next at the "pre-in" countries shows that 67% of people in Denmark feel very well or well informed. This is significantly higher than in spring 2000 (+19), with the increase clearly related to the fact that the Danish public received a lot of information about the euro in the lead up to the September 2000 euro referendum. In the UK and Sweden, the level of feeling informed about the euro continues to be low, with less than 3 in 10 people feeling well informed. (Table 5.5a)

Whilst feeling informed about the euro clearly depends on whether a person lives in a "EURO 12" country or in a "pre-in" country, feeling informed about the European Union in general is another important determinant. 82% of people who feel they know a great deal about the European Union feel well informed about the euro, compared to only 20% of people who feel they know very little about the European Union. Levels of feeling informed also depend on whether people (say they) have already received information about the euro. 55% of respondents who say they have already received information about the euro feel well informed about it, compared to only 15% of those who say they have not received any information about the euro. Levels of feeling well informed also differ significantly between supporters (56%) and opponents (36%) of the European Union<sup>33</sup>.

The following graph shows that 3 in 4 EU citizens say they have received information about the euro.



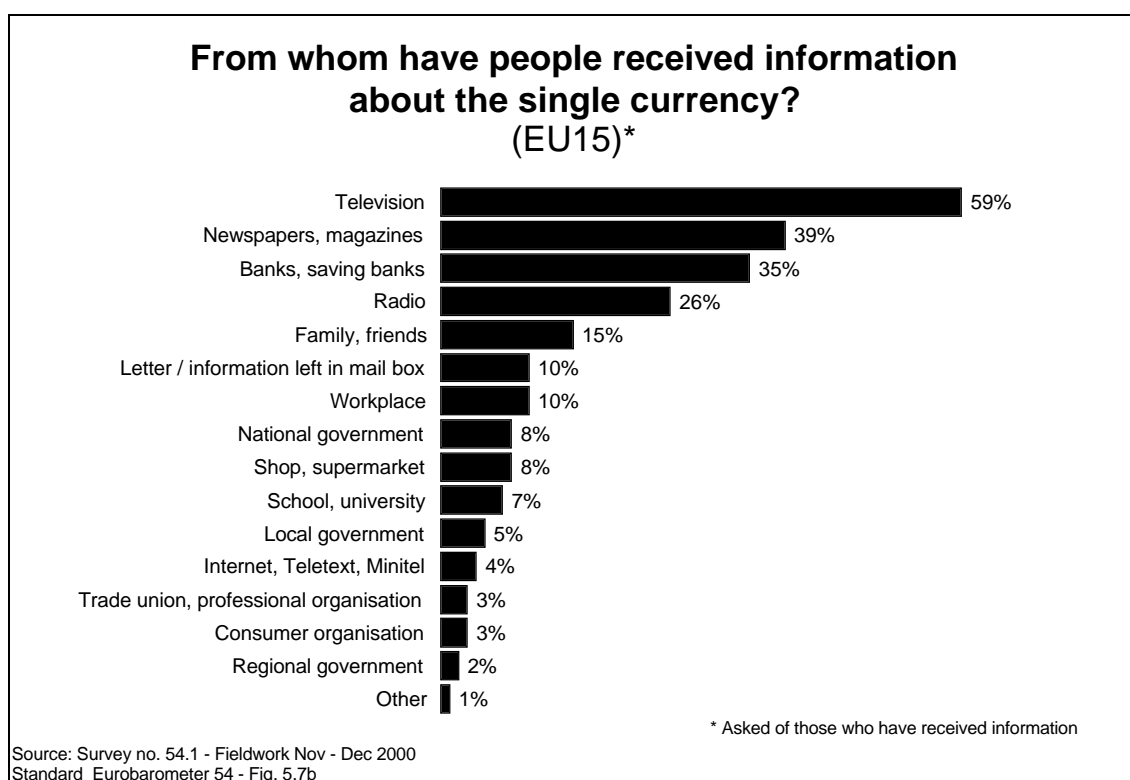
Among the "EURO 12" countries, the proportion of people that has received information about the euro is highest in Finland (97%), Luxembourg (94%), the Netherlands (93%) and Belgium (90%). In France, Italy, Spain, Austria and Germany at least 8 in 10 people say they have received information. People in Portugal (61%) are least likely to have received information about the single currency, followed by Ireland (74%) and Greece (79%). The proportion of Greek respondents who say they have received information about the euro has not changed significantly since spring 2000, despite the fact that Greece was about to join the single currency at the time of the survey.

<sup>33</sup> See table 5.5b for analyses by gender, age, economic activity and terminal education age.

In a number of "EURO 12" countries, the number of people that say they have received information about the euro has increased significantly. These are the Netherlands (+11), Ireland (+9), Austria (+7) and Belgium (+3). Portugal (-7) is the only country where a significant drop is recorded.

Among the three "pre-in" countries, we find that all the Danish respondents have received information about the single currency from their local government. Again, this is clearly related to the euro referendum held in Denmark in September 2000. When the question was previously asked in spring 2000, which was before the start of the euro referendum campaign, only 70% of Danes had received information about the single currency. 73% of people in Sweden and only 27% of people in the UK have received information about the single currency. In these two countries no significant change has been recorded since the spring 2000 survey.

As the following graph shows, people are most likely to say that they have received information about the euro on television (59%). Close to 4 in 10 respondents say they have received information through the written press (39%) or from financial institutions (35%) and around a quarter of respondents say they have received information from the radio (26%). All other sources included in the questionnaire are listed by less than 2 in 10 respondents<sup>34</sup>.



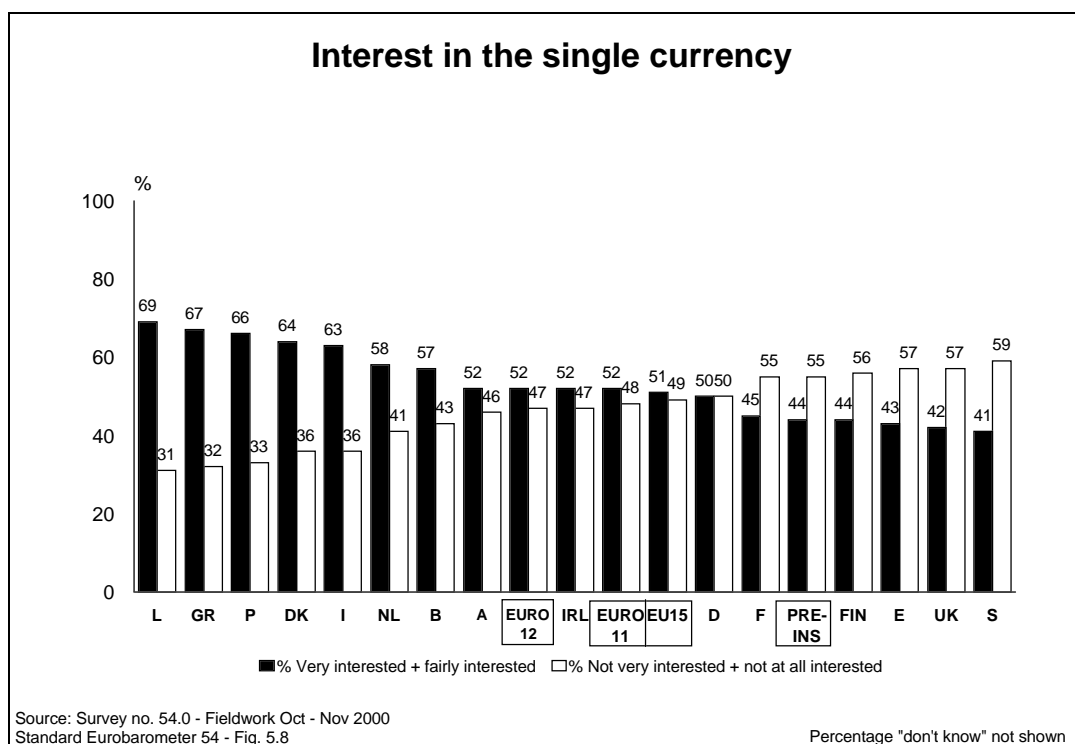
The next table shows that the television, newspapers and magazines and financial institutions are the three most frequently mentioned sources in all "EURO12" countries, except Spain, Greece and Portugal. In Spain and Greece, the radio instead of financial institutions is one of the three most frequently mentioned sources and in Portugal friends and family come in third place. Logically, financial institutions also do not make the top three in countries that have not yet introduced the euro. In Denmark, instead of financial institutions, local government comes in first place, which as already noted, provided all Danish respondents with information about the single currency. In Sweden and the UK the radio replaces financial institutions. Between nations, there is, however, great variation in the number of people that say they have received information from each of the sources. (See also table 5.6)

<sup>34</sup> The combined total of the responses is greater than the percentage of people who have received information because respondents could list any of the sources presented to them from whom they had received information. For spring 2000 results, see table 3.6 in Eurobarometer Report No. 53.

TOP THREE MOST MENTIONED SOURCES FROM WHICH PEOPLE HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION ABOUT THE EURO (IN %, BY MEMBER STATE)			
<b>Belgium</b>		<b>Luxembourg</b>	
Television	68	Television	67
Financial institutions	48	Financial institutions	57
Newspapers, magazines	41	Newspapers, magazines	52
<b>Denmark</b>		<b>The Netherlands</b>	
Local government	100	Television	80
Television	79	Financial institutions	61
Newspapers, magazines	57	Newspapers, magazines	60
<b>Germany</b>		<b>Austria</b>	
Television	64	Television	56
Newspapers, magazines	54	Financial institutions	53
Financial institutions	49	Newspapers, magazines	45
<b>Greece</b>		<b>Portugal</b>	
Television	62	Television	49
Newspapers, magazines	30	Newspapers, magazines	17
Radio	20	Friends and family	17
<b>Spain</b>		<b>Finland</b>	
Television	75	Television	75
Newspapers, magazines	34	Newspapers, magazines	65
Radio	32	Financial institutions	46
<b>France</b>		<b>Sweden</b>	
Financial institutions	65	Television	63
Television	63	Newspapers, magazines	56
Newspapers, magazines	38	Radio	34
<b>Ireland</b>		<b>United Kingdom</b>	
Financial institutions	35	Television	19
Television	34	Newspapers, magazines	13
Newspapers, magazines	26	Radio	8
<b>Italy</b>			
Television	71		
Newspapers, magazines	43		
Financial institutions	26		

## 5.6. Interest in and knowledge of the single currency

The results of a question that was asked once before in autumn 1999 enables us to see the extent to which the public is interested in the single currency. Looking first at the EU15 results shows that 12% of the public regards the euro as a topic they are very interested in, 38% are fairly interested, 32% are not very interested and 17% are not at all interested. As the following graph shows, interest levels vary considerably from country to country.



Among the "EURO12" public, people in Luxembourg (69%), Greece (67%) and Portugal (66%) are most likely to be very or fairly interested in the euro, with around 6 in 10 people in Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium sharing this view. In Ireland and Austria, the proportion of people that is interested outnumbers those that are not very or not at all interested by a small margin, whereas in Germany public opinion is divided. In Spain, Finland and France people who say they are not very or not at all interested in the single currency outnumber those who do feel interested.

In comparison to autumn 1999, we find that in all "EURO 12" countries except Greece and France people are now less likely to feel interested and more likely to not feel interested. The largest negative shifts are recorded in the Netherlands and Austria (both -11), Portugal, Finland, Germany and Italy (all -7).

Among the "pre-in" countries, interest levels are most widespread in Denmark (64%). In Sweden and the UK the proportion of people that does not feel interested is significantly higher than the proportion of people that is interested in the single currency.

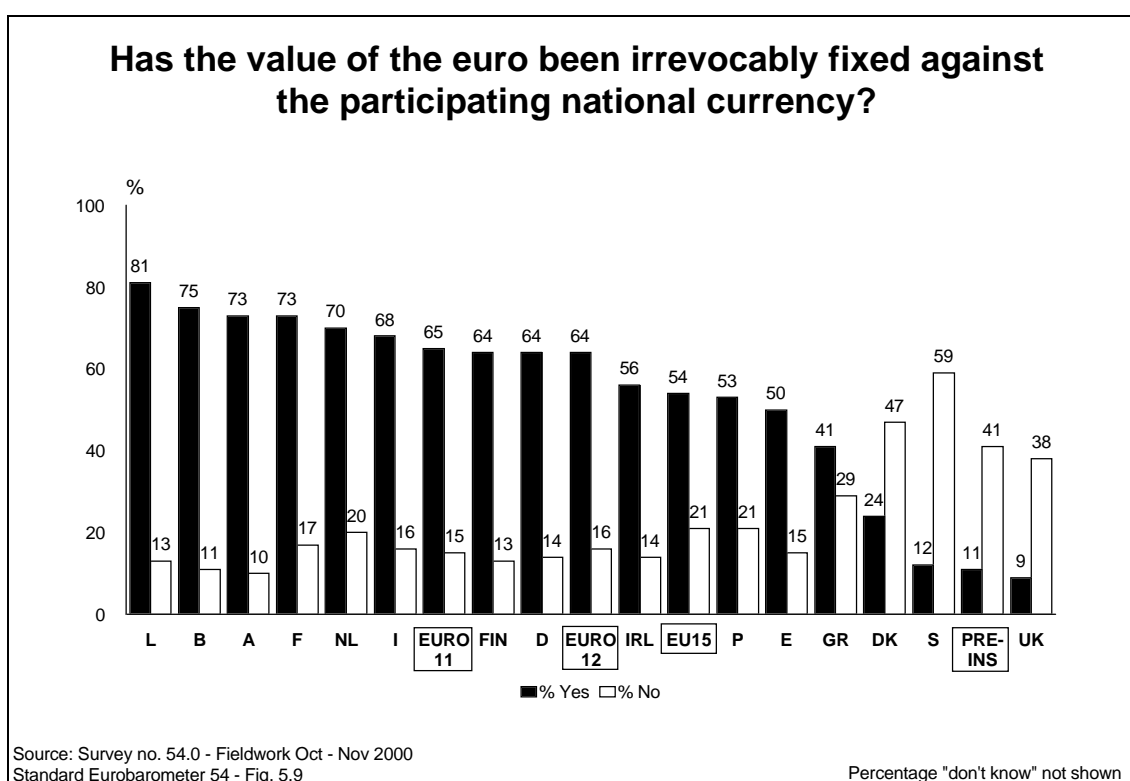
The trend analyses show that people in Denmark are now more likely to feel interested in the single currency (+6). In the other two countries, the reverse is true. (Table 5.7a)

The demographic analyses show that men are significantly more likely than women are to be interested in the single currency (55% vs. 46%). Among the various age groups we find that those aged 25 to 54 are more likely to be interested (53%) than younger (50%) and especially older citizens (47%) are. 61% of people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older are interested compared to only 42% of people who left school by the age of 15 or younger. Among the various occupational groups we find that managers are most likely to show interest in the euro (71%) while only 41% of unemployed share this view. (Table 5.7b)

The following table shows that 70% of people who feel well informed are interested in the euro, compared to only 38% of people who do not feel well informed.

Feeling interested in the euro by feeling informed about it			
	Feels very well or well informed	Feels not very well or not at all well informed	EU 15 average
% Very + fairly interested	70	38	51
% Not very + not at all interested	30	61	49
% Don't know	0	1	1
% Total	100	100	101

To measure people's knowledge of the euro, respondents were asked whether the value of the euro has been irrevocably fixed against their national currency. In the "EURO 12" countries, the correct answer is "yes", whereas the currencies of the 3 "pre-in" countries have not been fixed against the euro so here the correct answer is "no".



Among the "EURO 12" countries, public knowledge about this facet of the euro is most widespread in Luxembourg where 81% of the people know that the value of the euro has been irrevocably fixed against the Luxembourg Franc. Knowledge levels are also above average in Belgium (75%), Austria, France (both 73%), the Netherlands (70%) and Italy (68%). At the time of the survey, the value of the euro had not yet been irrevocably fixed against the Drachma. Yet only 29% of Greek respondents gave the correct answer. Even if the value of the euro had already been fixed, most Greek respondents would have given an incorrect answer. A low level of knowledge on such a technical element is to be expected, especially considering the fact that the changeover had not yet taken place in Greece at the time of the survey.

In comparison to autumn 1999, we find that knowledge levels are now lower in most "EURO 12" countries, with the largest drops in the percentage of respondents who correctly answered that the euro has been irrevocably fixed against their currency recorded in Portugal (-6), Ireland, the Netherlands and Austria (all -5). In Greece, people are now significantly more likely to say that the euro has been irrevocably fixed against the Drachma (+11). Though this was at the time of the survey the incorrect answer, the euro was fixed against the Drachma a few weeks after fieldwork ended. However, we also find an increase in the proportion of people who said this was not yet the case (+4).

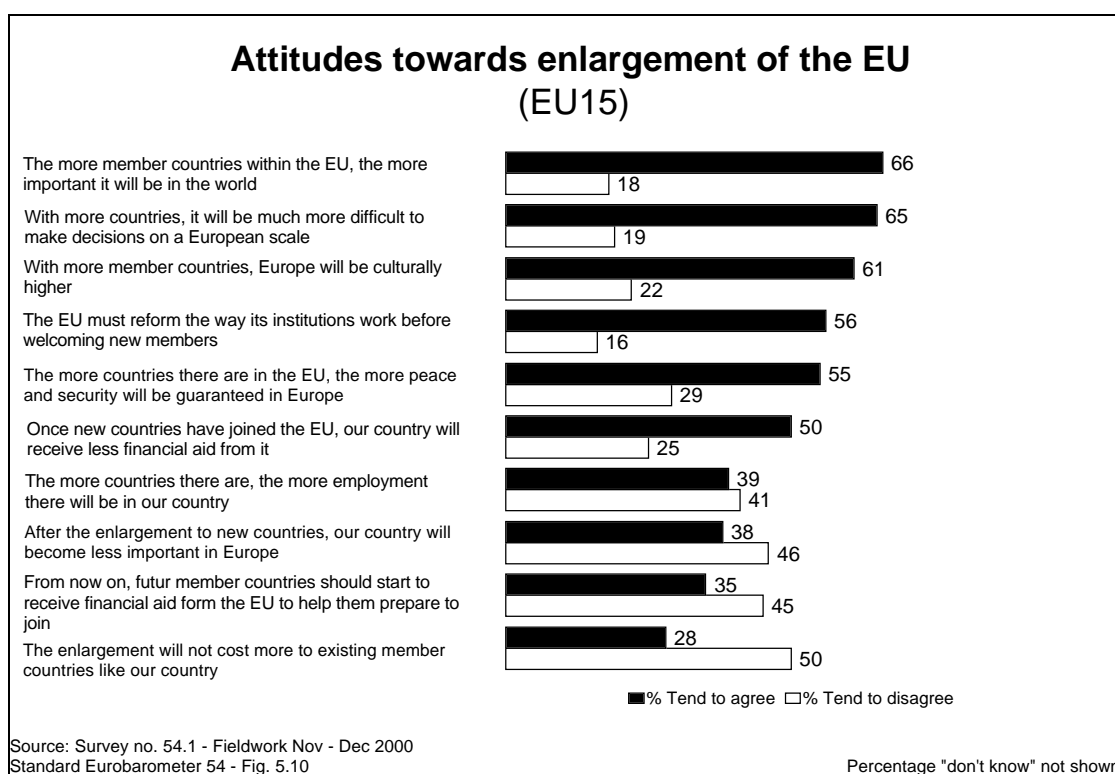
Among the "pre-in" countries, we find the highest proportion of correct replies in Sweden (59%) and the lowest proportion of correct replies in the UK (38%). In Sweden, people are now significantly more likely to give a correct answer than they were in autumn 1999 (+6). The distribution of correct and incorrect answers did not change significantly in Denmark. In the UK, we find an increase in "don't know" responses (+5). It should be noted that the proportion of "don't know" responses is high throughout the Member States. (Table 5.8)

## 5.7. Attitudes to enlargement

The European Union is planning to enlarge to the South and the East and new countries should be in a position to join the Union in a few years' time. There are currently 13 applicant countries that are taking part in the accession process<sup>35</sup>.

Despite the relatively low proportion of people that believes enlargement should be a priority for the European Union and that is in favour of welcoming new countries, as described in sections 5.2 and 5.3 above, the results of a battery of questions that measures people's underlying attitudes towards enlargement show that people view some of the aspects of enlargement in quite a positive light.

The majority feel that the Union will be more important in the world if it includes more countries (66%) while only 38% believe that their own country will become less important as a result of enlargement. 61% of EU citizens regard a Union that consists of more member countries as a cultural enrichment and 55% believe that a larger Union will guarantee more peace and security.



<sup>35</sup> The 13 applicant countries are Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. More information about enlargement can be found at: <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/index.htm>.



Many Europeans also share the official view that the Union's institutions must be reformed (56%) as there is widespread concern that with more countries it will be much more difficult to make decisions on a European scale (65%).

However, when we look at how people perceive the economic implications of enlargement it becomes easier to understand why enlargement is a concern for many Europeans. 50% of EU citizens believe that enlargement will cost their own country more money. People in Denmark (67%), the Netherlands (66%), Germany (64%) and Austria (62%) are particularly inclined to feel this way. Many people also suspect that the budget will be shared differently with 50% feeling that once new countries have joined, their country will receive less financial aid. People from Ireland, Portugal (both 67%), Denmark (66%), Greece (64%), Sweden and Finland (both 62%) are most likely to hold this view.

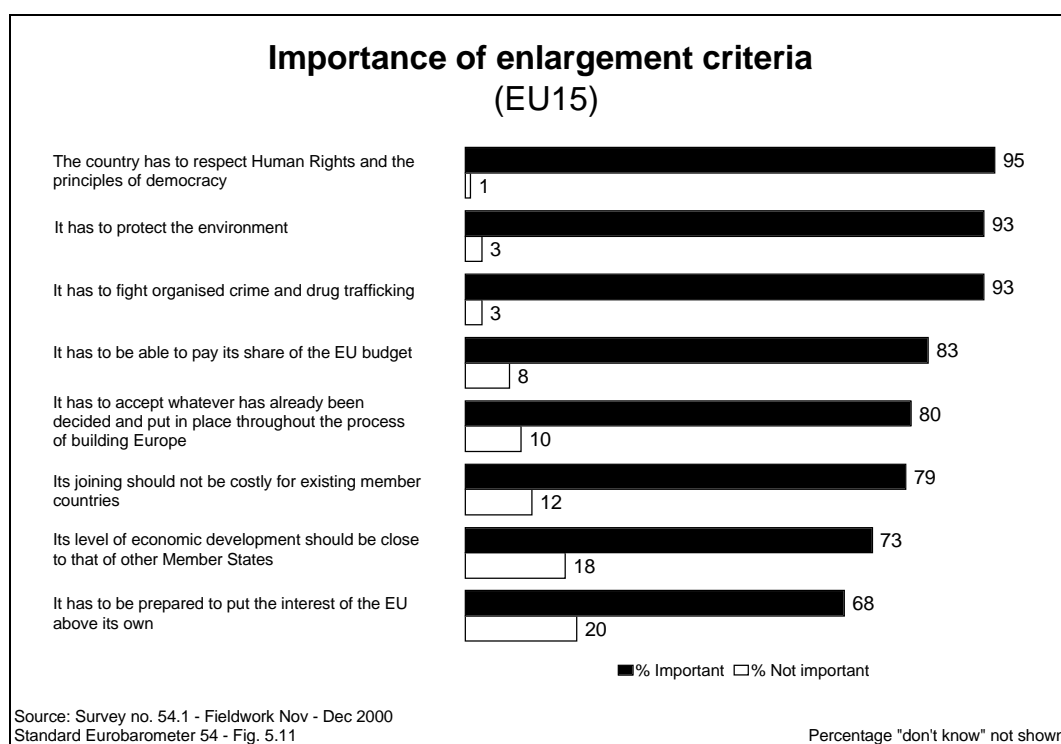
Many people also express their economic concerns by not wanting the European Union to provide future member countries with financial aid to help them prepare to join (only 35% agree that this should happen). Greece (67%) and Ireland (51%) are exceptional in being the only countries where at least half of the people feel that the applicant countries should start to receive financial aid, despite the fact that many people in these two countries feel that enlargement could result in less funding for their country. It may well be that people hope that the amount of financial aid their country receives is less likely to be reduced if the European Union starts funding the applicant countries during the accession phase.

Furthermore, the results show that 41% of Europeans disagree with the statement "the more countries there are, the more employment there will be in our country", which in effect indicates that people fear that enlargement will lead to higher unemployment levels. This concern is most widespread in Denmark (62%), Italy (54%), Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden (all 53%).

The proportion of 'don't know' responses for all the statements about enlargement continues to be substantially higher than what we usually find on this survey, suggesting that there is room for public opinion to improve. (Table 5.9)

## 5.8. Criteria that applicant countries should meet

While economic issues thus clearly influence people's views about enlargement, results from a battery of questions which asks people to judge the importance of a number of criteria in deciding whether countries should join the European Union or not shows that these are not the only important issues for people.



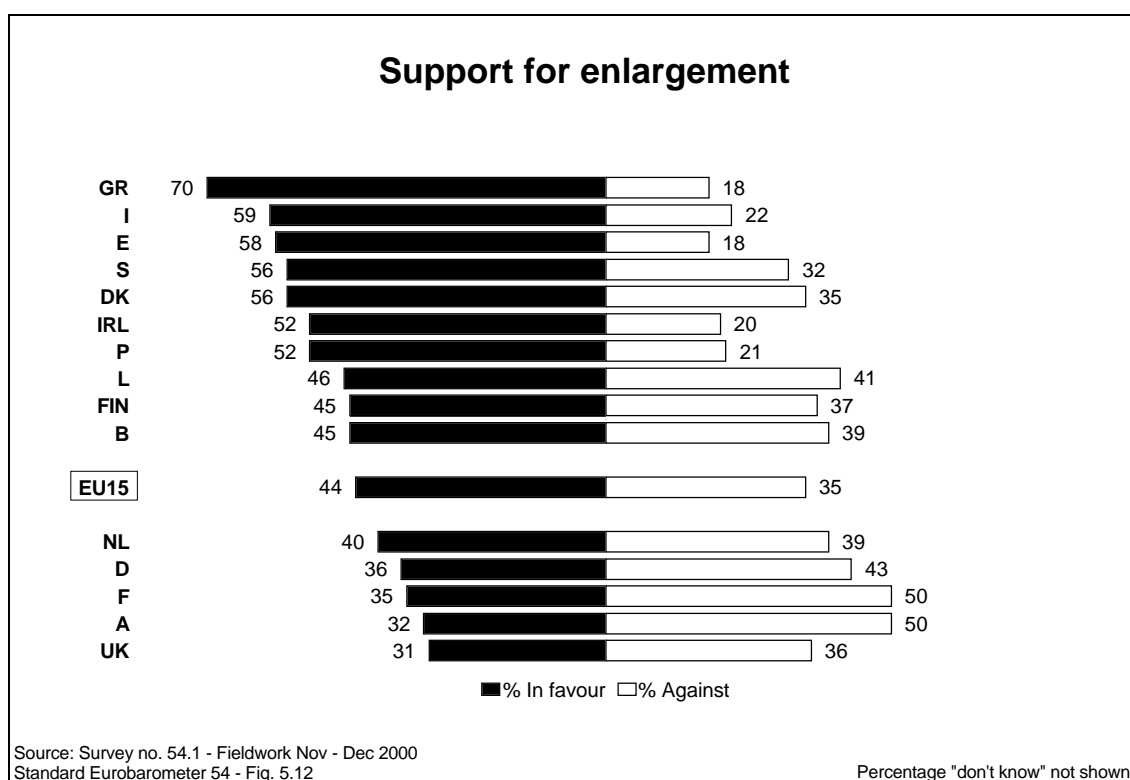
More than 9 in 10 people feel that countries wishing to join the EU should a) respect Human Rights and the principles of democracy, b) fight organised crime and drug trafficking and c) protect the environment if they wish to join the European Union. The large majority (80%) also feels that applicant countries have to accept whatever has already been decided and put in place throughout the process of building Europe. The public's concern about the financial implications of enlargement is evident from the widespread importance placed on the criterion that applicant countries have to be able to pay their share of the EU budget (83%) and that their joining should not be costly for existing member countries (79%). People are somewhat less concerned about the economic development of the applicant countries (73%). People are least likely to feel that the requirement for countries to put the interests of the EU above their own (68%) is an important criterion. However, public opinion on this criterion varies considerably from country to country with around 3 in 4 people in France, Germany, Luxembourg, Ireland and Belgium believing it is important, compared to only 35% of people in Denmark. (Table 5.10)

## 5.9. Support for enlargement

This Eurobarometer is the first to include a question that directly measures public support for enlargement. The question is as follows:

*"What is your opinion of the following statement: the European Union should be enlarged and include new countries. Please tell me whether you are for or against it?"*

The results show that 44% of EU citizens are in favour of enlargement and that 35% are against it. As is typical of any questions relating to enlargement, quite a large segment of the population lacks an opinion (21%). The following graph shows that support levels vary significantly among the 15 Member States.



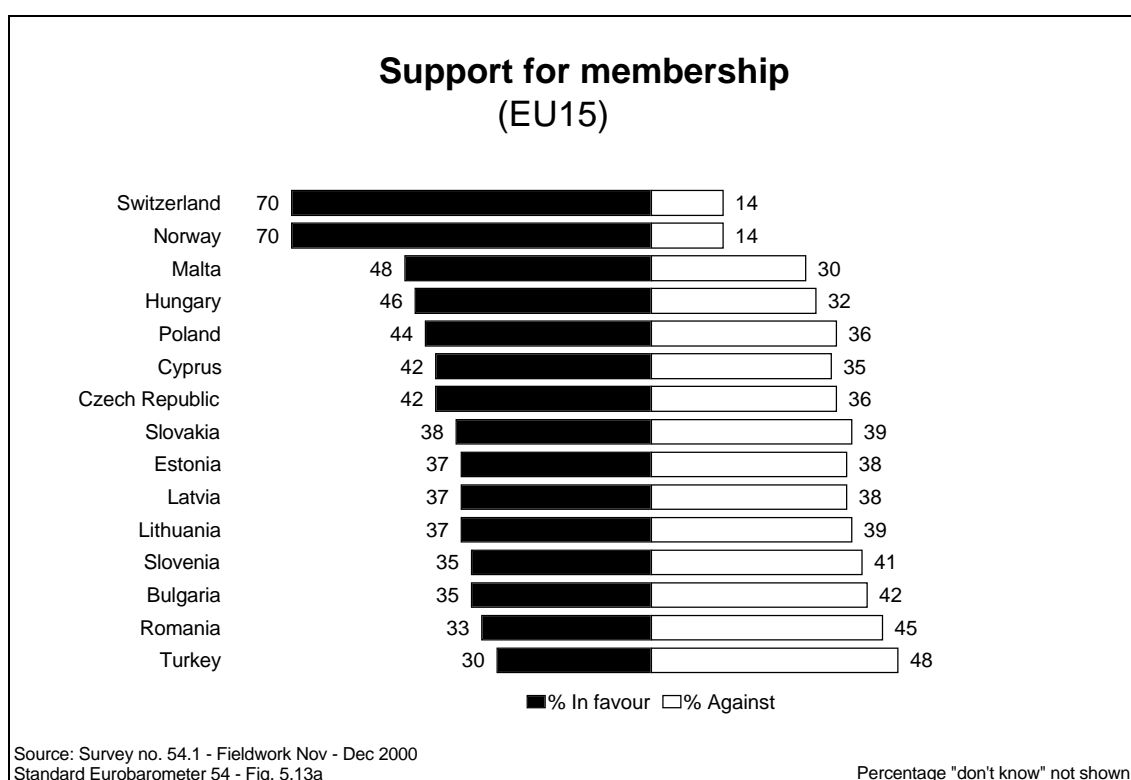
As can be seen, people in Greece are most likely to be in favour of enlargement (70%), followed at a distance by people in Italy (59%) and Spain (58%). Opposition levels are highest in France and Austria (both 50%). There is a large spread in the number of "don't know" responses, which range from 9% in Denmark to 33% in the UK. (Table 5.11a)

The demographic analyses show that support for enlargement is most widespread among students (53%) and people who stayed in education until the age of 20 or older (52%) and least widespread among retired people (37%). However, the large variation in the number of “don’t know” partly accounts for the differences in support levels. Opposition levels range from 28% among students to 38% among retired people.

Attitudinal analyses show that support for enlargement clearly depends on whether people support the European Union in the first place. The analyses show that 60% of people who regard their country’s membership of the EU as a good thing are in favour of enlargement, compared to only 19% of people who see their country’s membership as a bad thing. (Table 5.11b)

## 5.10. Which countries should join?

In this final section on enlargement we look at the extent to which the public supports the membership of each of the applicant countries. We also look at what people think of Norway and Switzerland joining the European Union and we look at how people would feel if the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia countries would join the EU.



People’s support varies greatly depending on a) which country you ask them should join and b) which country they themselves are from. Looking at the 13 applicant countries shows that support is highest for Malta to join the EU (48%) but the graph does not show the large differences in opinion between the people from the 15 Member States with support ranging from 31% in France to 67% in Greece. Hungary comes in second place with support ranging from 30% in France to 65% in Sweden; for Poland, support ranges from 25% in Austria to 68% in Sweden; for Cyprus, it ranges from 28% in France to 84% in Greece and for the Czech Republic it ranges from 27% in Austria to 63% in Sweden.

At 30%, support for Turkey is least widespread and ranges from 21% in Austria to 43% in Spain. At the EU level, opposition levels range from 30% for Malta to 48% for Turkey. At this stage, public opinion on enlargement has still not crystallised with many people continuing to opt for the “don’t know” response when asked about their support for countries to become part of the European Union.

The next table shows how support for enlargement varies between the Member States by showing the average percentage of the population that is in favour of the 13 applicant countries joining the European Union.

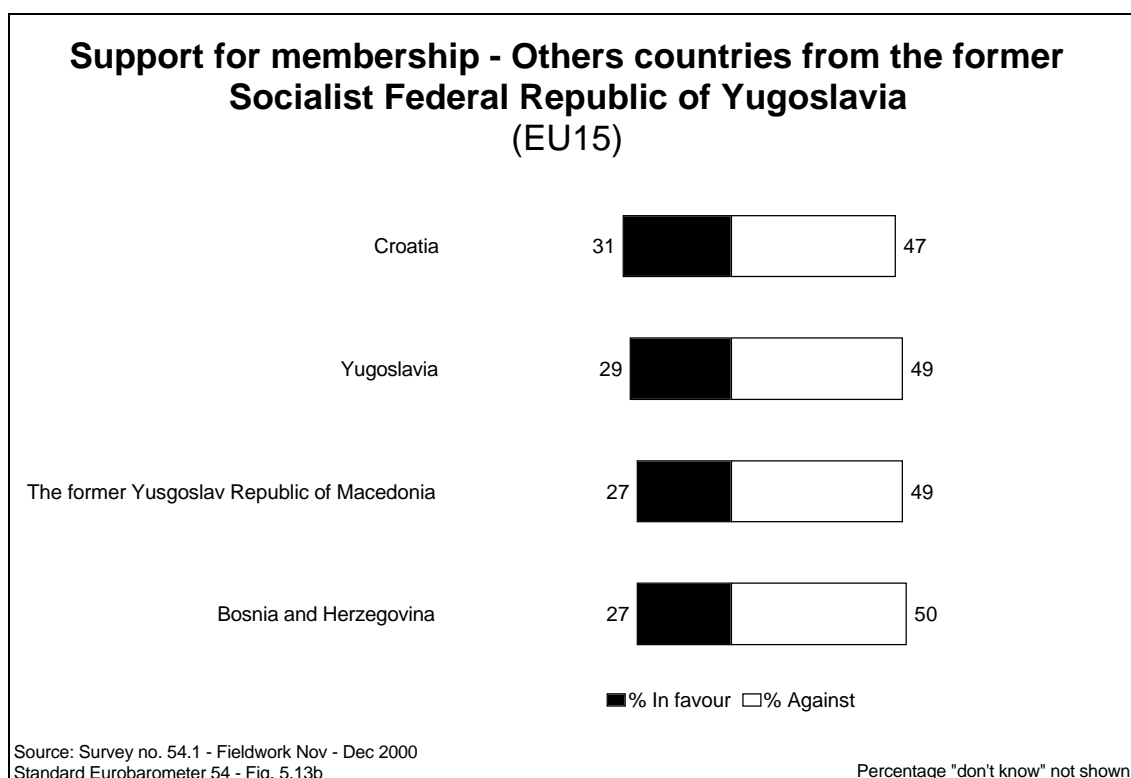
AVERAGE % IN FAVOUR OF THE 13 APPLICANT COUNTRIES JOINING THE EU (BY COUNTRY)	
Country	Average %
Sweden	59
Greece	57
Denmark	55
Italy	49
The Netherlands	46
Spain	46
Finland	45
Ireland	41
Portugal	41
<b>EU15</b>	<b>39</b>
Luxembourg	38
Germany	35
United Kingdom	34
Belgium	33
Austria	28
France	26

On average, people in Sweden (59%) are most likely to support enlargement while people in France (26%) are the least supportive<sup>36</sup>.

Looking next at support for Switzerland and Norway (both 70%) shows that they are the public's favourites despite the fact that these two Western European nations at the moment are not planning to join the Union. Support for Switzerland ranges from 57% in the UK to 85% in the Netherlands; for Norway it ranges from 56% in the UK to 88% in Denmark. (Table 5.12a)

When it comes to the countries that together represented the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia we find that people make little distinction between them with support ranging from 27% for Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to 31% for Croatia.

<sup>36</sup> For the average level of support in each Member State in autumn 2000, see page 55 of the Eurobarometer Report No. 53.



This lack of distinction is true in most Member States<sup>37</sup>, with the exception of Greece where people are least likely to support the membership of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (47%) and most likely to support the membership of Yugoslavia (63%).

Average support levels for these four countries are lower than they are for the 13 applicant countries and the rank order of countries is also quite different. (Table 5.12b)

### 5.11. Decision-making in an enlarged Union

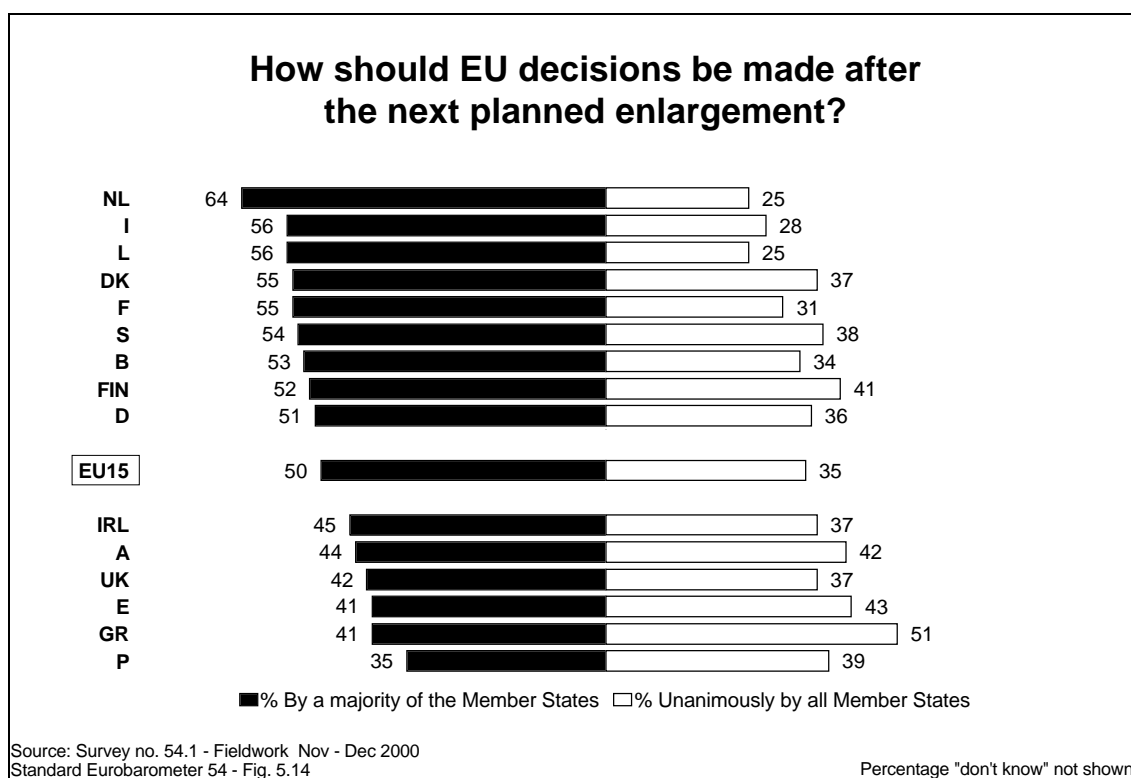
As was mentioned earlier, the European Union needs to change the way it works in a number of different areas before new countries can join. A Union of 28 member countries can not have the same decision-making system that is currently in place (which requires many decisions to be taken unanimously) as it would be very difficult to reach the unanimous agreement of so many countries. At the European Council in Nice, held on 20-21 December 2000, the Heads of State and Government reduced the number of areas where unanimous decision-making is required and agreed to fundamentally change the number of votes required to reach agreement using majority voting.

The Eurobarometer has measured how the public feels about majority voting with the following question:

*After the planned enlargement of the European Union, the number of Member States will increase from 15 to more than 25. In your opinion, should European Union decisions then be made unanimously by all Member States or by a majority of the Member States?*

<sup>37</sup> See table 5.11b for individual country results.

The results show that the public tends to support majority voting in an enlarged Union with 50% of respondents opting for this choice over 35% who prefer unanimity. We find a significant shift in favour of majority voting since spring 2000 (+5).



Looking at the country results shows that people in the Netherlands (64%) are by far most likely to favour majority voting followed by people in Luxembourg, Italy (both 56%), France and Denmark (both 55%). Greece is now the only country where more than 50% of the public wants EU decisions to be taken unanimously.

However, in comparison to spring 2000, we find that majority voting has significantly increased in popularity in Greece (+11), while the proportion that prefers unanimity has fallen by 7 percentage points. Other countries where majority voting has become more popular at the expense of unanimous decision-making are Austria (+13/-10), Italy (+7/-14), France (+5/-5) and Belgium (+5/-3). In Germany and Portugal we also find an increase in the percentage of people that support majority voting (both +4) but without a significant change in support for unanimity. Then there are countries where support for majority voting stayed the same but where support for unanimity fell. These are Luxembourg (-7), the Netherlands and Sweden (both -3). In the UK and Ireland, we find that the public is now less likely to lack an opinion, leading to an increase both in support for majority voting (both +5) and in support for unanimity (+7 and +6, respectively). Finland and Denmark are the only countries where unanimous voting has increased in popularity at the expense of support for majority voting. In Finland support for majority voting has fallen by 7 percentage points while support for unanimity has increased by 7 percentage points. In Denmark we find a drop in the former and an increase in the latter of 3 percentage points. Spain is the only country where public opinion has not changed since spring 2000. (Table 5.13a)

The demographic analyses indicate that people who left full-time education aged 20 or older (62%) are most likely to favour majority voting, followed by managers (60%) and other employees (55%). People who left full-time education before the age of 16 (41%) are least likely to favour it. However, majority voting is the favoured decision-making method among all demographic groups

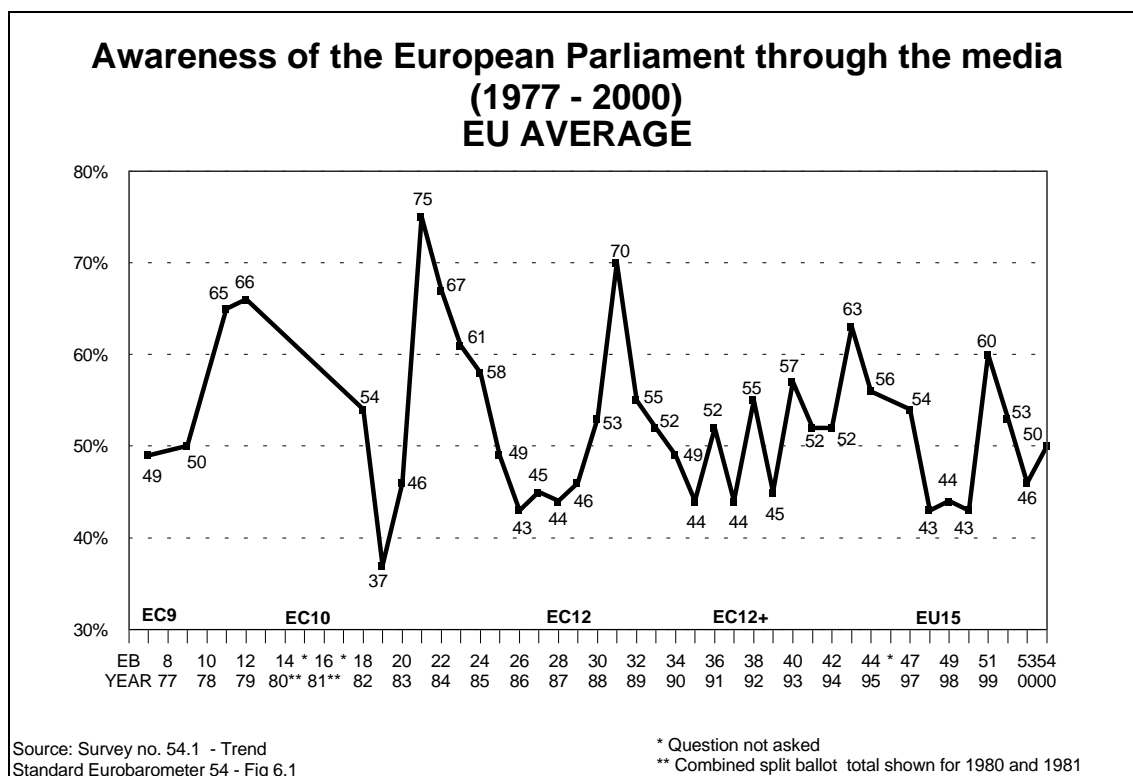
At the attitudinal level we find that 58% of people who support the EU prefer majority voting, compared to 42% of those who regard their country's EU membership as a bad thing. Among this group, this method of decision-making is as popular as unanimous voting (41%) is. (Table 5.13b)

## 6. The European Parliament

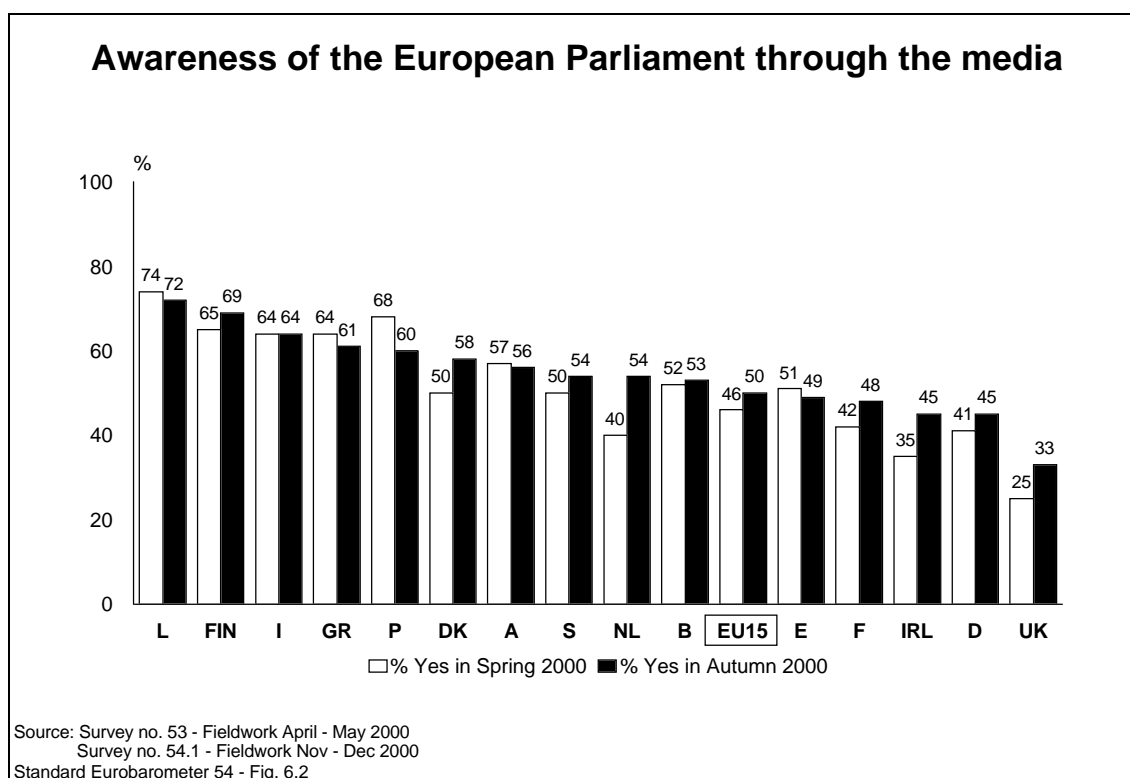
This chapter looks at a number of issues that concern the European Parliament, including participation in its elections and awareness levels of this European institution. The chapter also reports on the results of two new questions that look at the perceived impact of the European Parliament and of the national parliaments on daily life.

### 6.1. Awareness of the European Parliament through the media

Since 1977, the Eurobarometer has measured the extent to which the public has recently seen or heard anything about the European Parliament in the papers, on the radio or on television. The latest measurement shows that 50% of EU citizens have received information about the European Parliament through these three media. This is higher than in spring 2000 (46%) but still lower than in spring 1999 (60%), when the European Parliament had received widespread media attention because of the June 1999 European Parliament elections. As the following graph shows, awareness levels are always highest around the time of elections.



People in Luxembourg (72%) are most likely to have recently seen or heard something about the European Parliament through the media, followed by people in Finland (69%), Italy (64%) and Greece (61%). In the UK (33%) less than 4 out of 10 people have recently seen or heard anything about the European Parliament in the papers, on the radio or on television. Together with Ireland (45%), it is the only country where people who have not recently seen or heard something about the European Parliament are in the majority.



As the graph above shows, since spring 2000 awareness of the European Parliament has increased significantly in the Netherlands (+14), Ireland (+10), Denmark, the UK (both +8), France (+6), Finland, Sweden and Germany (all +4). Portugal (-8) and Greece (-3) are the only countries where significant drops in awareness levels have been recorded. (Table 6.1a)

At a demographic level, we find that awareness of the European Parliament is highest among managers (62%), people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older (61%) and self-employed people (60%). Awareness levels are lowest among people who look after the home (42%) and people who left full-time education before the age of 16 (43%).

The following table shows that there is a large gap in awareness levels between people who feel they know a lot about the European Union and people who feel they know very little.

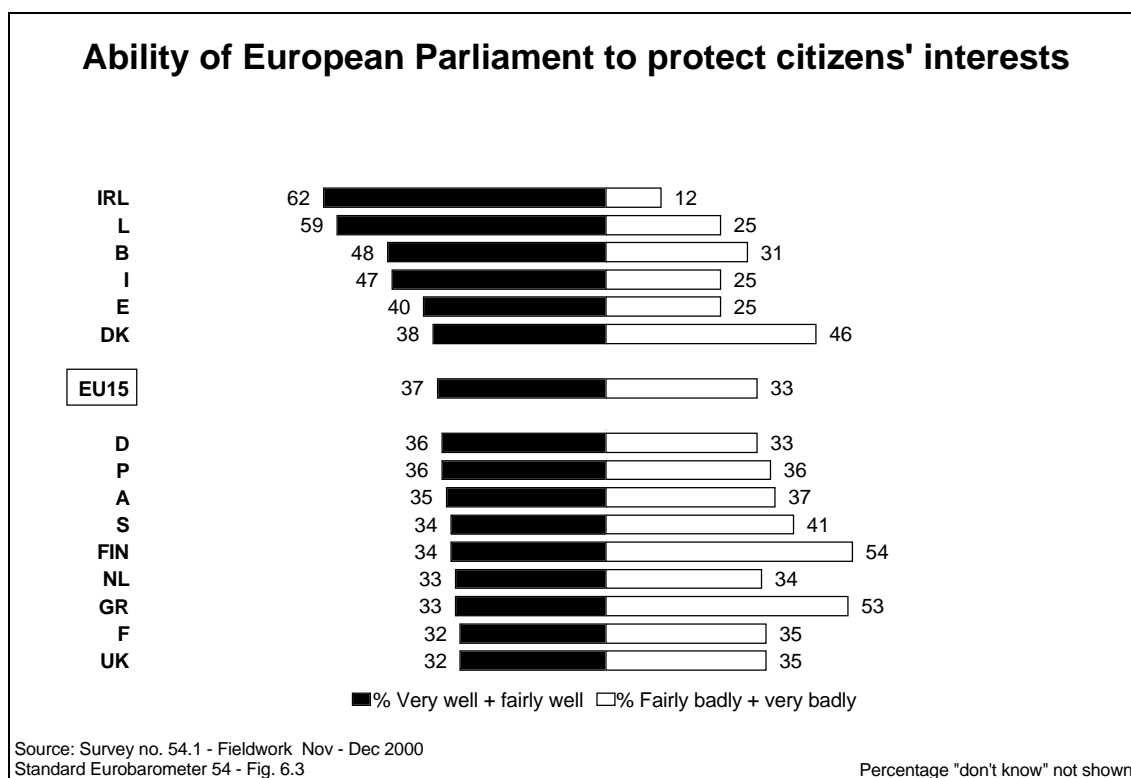
Awareness of the European Parliament through the media by self-perceived knowledge levels			
Have you recently heard or read anything about the EP?	High Knowledge level	Average knowledge level	Low Knowledge level
% Yes	79	56	31
% No	17	36	60
% Don't know	4	8	10
% Total	100	100	101

Furthermore, the analyses point to a 16 percentage point gap in awareness levels between people who regard their country's membership to the EU as a good thing and those who see it as a bad thing. (Table 6.1b)



## 6.2. Citizens' interests

The survey also measures the extent to which EU citizens feel the European Parliament protects their interests. 37% of EU citizens feel their interests are very or fairly well protected by the European Parliament and 33% feel their interests are fairly or very badly protected. 3 in 10 people can't say whether their interests are well or badly protected by the European Parliament.

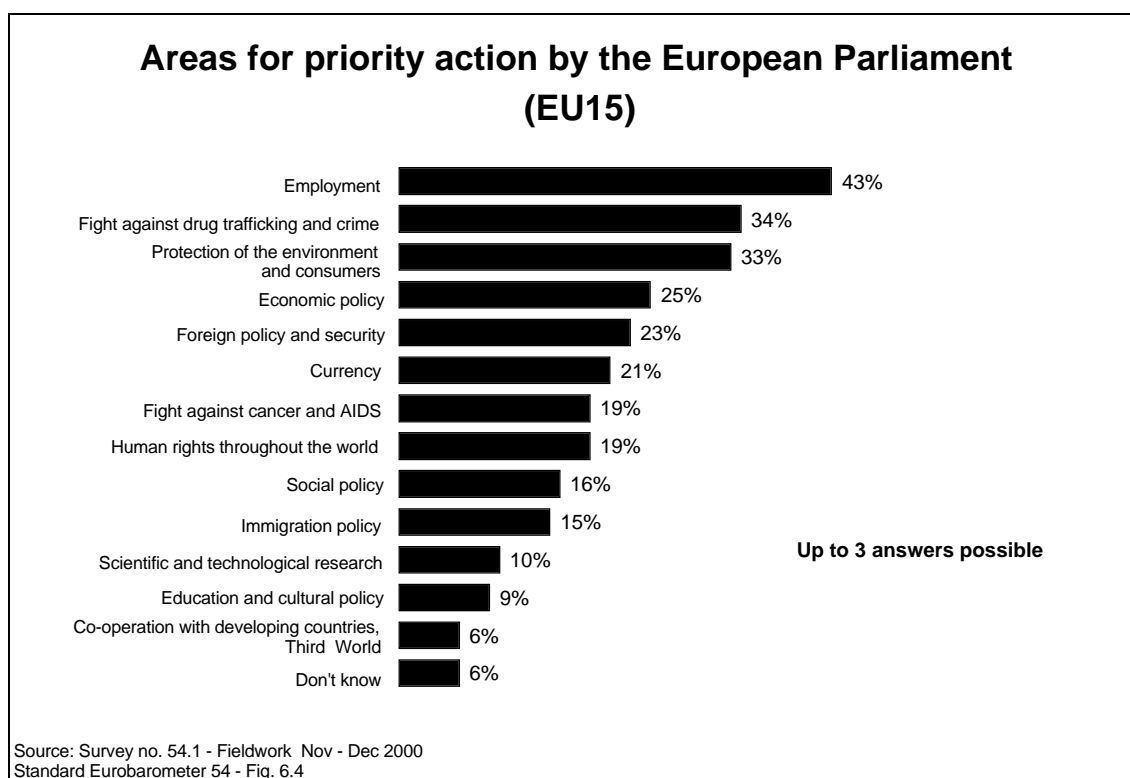


Country analyses show that people in Ireland are most likely to feel that the European Parliament does a good job in protecting the interests of citizens (62%), followed by people in Luxembourg (59%). Satisfied respondents outnumber dissatisfied respondents in Belgium, Italy, Spain and Germany. In the other countries dissatisfied respondents are in the majority although Finland (54%) and Greece (53%) are the only countries where more than half of the population feels that the European Parliament does not protect citizens' interests. The percentage of "don't know" responses is high and ranges from 13% in Finland to 35% in Spain. (Table 6.2)

The survey also measures which area(s) EU citizens want the European Parliament to focus on in order to defend their interests<sup>38</sup>.

According to 43% of EU citizens, the European Parliament should pay particular attention to **employment**. The next most popular area is **the fight against drug trafficking and organised crime**, mentioned by 34% of EU citizens, followed by **environmental and consumer protection** (33%). In Chapter 4 we already noted that the large majority of EU citizens regards these 3 areas as priorities for the European Union as a whole. Areas that do not affect people directly, like the Third World (6%) and research (10%) are much less popular as is education (9%) which many people believe should be the responsibility of national governments.

<sup>38</sup> Respondents were shown a card listing 13 policy areas and were able to choose a maximum of 3 of these areas.



The next table shows that in 8 of the 15 Member States **employment** is the number 1 area to which the European Parliament should pay attention. It comes second in Ireland and the UK and third in Germany and Luxembourg. It does not make the top three in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. People in Spain (54%), Greece, France (both 53%), Italy (51%) and Belgium (50%) are most likely to want the European Parliament to pay particular attention to this area while people in Denmark (24%), the Netherlands (26%) and Sweden (27%) are least likely to share this view.

**The fight against drug trafficking and organised crime** tops the list in Sweden (54%), Ireland (48%), the Netherlands (40%) and the UK (39%). It comes second in Portugal (47%), Finland (46%), Denmark (44%), Belgium (38%), Germany (34%), Italy and Luxembourg (both 33%) and third in France (29%). It does not make the top three in Spain (20%), Greece (26%) and Austria (31%).

**Protection of the environment and of the consumer** tops the list in Denmark (59%) and Luxembourg (43%). It comes second in Sweden (50%), France (45%), the Netherlands (36%) and Spain (30%) and third in Belgium (37%), Finland (36%), Austria (34%), Italy (31%) and the UK (29%). It does not make the top three in Greece (26%), Portugal, Ireland and Germany (all 27%).

**Economic policy**, which at the EU15 level is the fourth most popular area, makes the top three in Greece (41%) and the Netherlands (31%) but people in Germany (33%) are as likely as the Dutch to consider it a priority for the European Parliament. People in Denmark (15%), Sweden (16%) and the UK (17%) are least likely to share this view.

**Foreign policy and security** tops the list in Germany (35%) but is chosen more frequently as a priority in Greece (43%) where it comes in second place. It also makes the top three in Austria (37%), with more than 3 in 10 people in Finland also considering it a priority. At 9%, people in Portugal are least likely to consider it a priority for the European Parliament.

**The fight against cancer and AIDS** makes the top three in Ireland (32%) and Portugal (27%). Less than 2 in 10 people in Greece (12%), Austria (14%), Germany (15%), Italy (16%), Finland (17%), and Spain (18%) share this view.

**Human rights throughout the world** makes the top three in Sweden (39%), Denmark (30%) and Spain (26%). The Netherlands (26%), Ireland (25%) Luxembourg and the UK (both 22%) are the other countries where more than 2 in 10 people share this view.

TOP THREE PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN THE MEMBER STATES (IN %)			
Belgium		Luxembourg	
Employment	50	Environment/Consumers	43
Drugs & crime	38	Drugs & crime	33
Environment/Consumers	37	Employment	33
Denmark		The Netherlands	
Environment/Consumers	59	Drugs & crime	40
Drugs & crime	44	Environment/Consumers	36
Human rights	30	Economic policy	31
Germany		Austria	
Foreign policy & security	35	Employment	39
Drugs & crime	34	Foreign policy & security	37
Employment	34	Environment/Consumers	34
Greece		Portugal	
Employment	53	Employment	48
Foreign policy & security	43	Drugs & crime	47
Economic policy	41	Cancer / AIDS	27
Spain		Finland	
Employment	54	Employment	49
Environment/Consumers	30	Drugs & crime	46
Human rights	26	Environment/Consumers	36
France		Sweden	
Employment	53	Drugs & crime	54
Environment/Consumers	45	Environment/Consumers	50
Drugs & crime	29	Human rights	39
Ireland		United Kingdom	
Drugs & crime	48	Drugs & crime	39
Employment	36	Employment	33
Cancer / AIDS	32	Environment/Consumers	29
Italy			
Employment	51		
Drugs & crime	33		
Environment/Consumers	31		

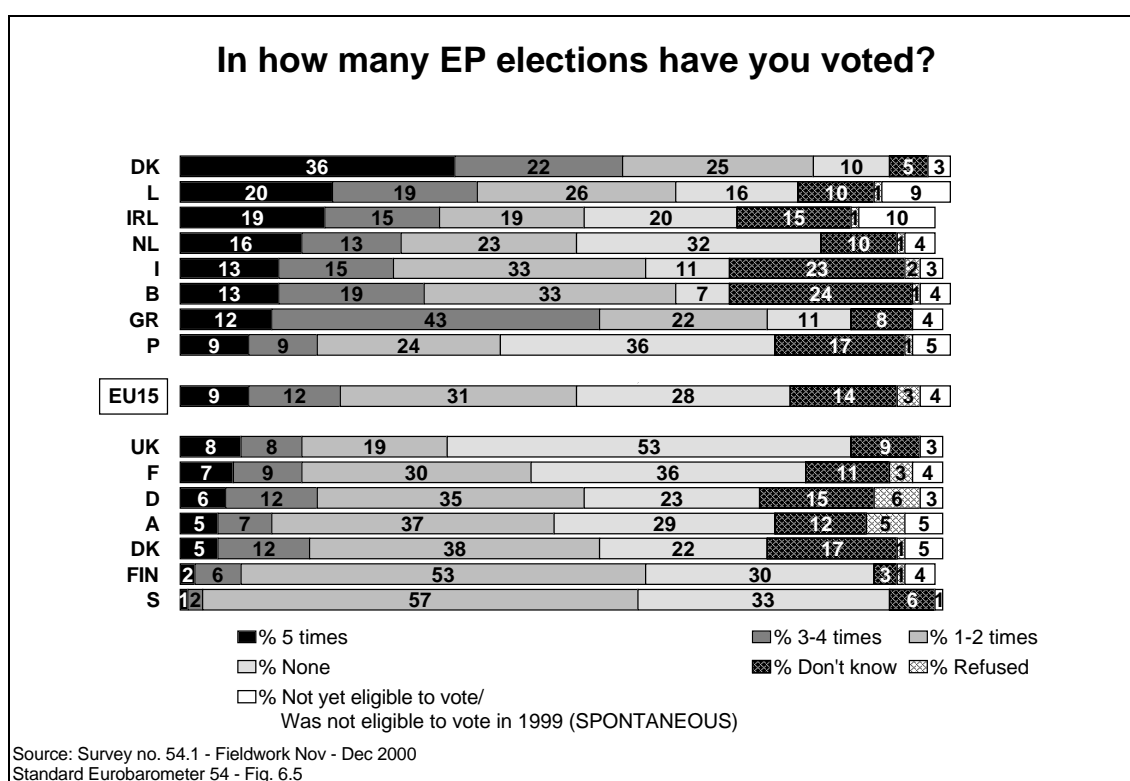
The remaining areas do not make the top three in any of the Member States. **Currency** receives most widespread mention in Germany (28%) and least widespread mention in Sweden (6%) and Denmark (7%). **Social policy** is most widely viewed as a priority in Germany, France and Belgium (all 21%), while people in the UK (8%), Denmark and Sweden (both 10%) are least likely to feel this way. Germany (22%) is the only country where at least 2 in 10 people choose **Immigration policy** while less than 10% choose it in Greece, Portugal (both 3%), Finland (7%), Luxembourg (8%), Sweden and Spain (both 9%). The view that **scientific and technological research** should be a priority ranges from 3% in Portugal to 14% in Sweden. The view that **Education and cultural policy** should be a priority ranges from 6% in France, Germany and Italy to 20% in the Netherlands. For the **Third World** the range extends from 3% in Belgium and Greece to 10% in Denmark. (See also table 6.3)

### 6.3. Participation in European Parliament elections

In this Eurobarometer, respondents were asked in how many European Parliament elections they have voted since they turned 18.

To date there have been 5 direct European Parliament elections, with the first having taken place in 1979 and the latest in June 1999. At the time of the first elections, there were only 9 Member States. Greece joined in 1980, Spain and Portugal joined in 1985 and Austria, Finland and Sweden joined in 1995. This means that only people in the 9 countries that were members in 1979 could have voted all 5 times and this only if they were already 18 in 1979. Elections have been held 4 times in Greece, 3 times in Spain and Portugal and twice in Austria, Finland and Sweden. People living in East Germany were able to vote for the first time in 1994.

The following graph shows the percentage of respondents in each country that has voted once or twice, three or four times and five times. The graph also shows the percentage of people that has never voted, that is/was not eligible to vote and that can not or refuses to answer the question<sup>39</sup>.



Because of the different number of times people could have voted in EP elections, depending on which country they are from and on their age, it is very difficult to compare participation levels among the 15 Member States and the clearest picture is perhaps obtained if we look at the percentage of eligible voters that has never voted. The results show that 53% of eligible UK voters have never participated in a European Parliament election, followed at a distance by 36% in France and Portugal, 33% in Sweden and 32% in the Netherlands. Abstention levels are lowest in Belgium (7%), Denmark (10%) and Greece (11%). (Table 6.4a)

The demographic analyses show that 26% of people aged 15 to 24 have voted once or twice. It is clear that because of their age, many of these young people have never voted (43%). This is also true for people who are still studying (35%) who also tend to be young. If we compare the abstention rate among the other groups, we find that it is highest for unemployed people (36%) and lowest for people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older, managers and self-employed people (all 19%).

<sup>39</sup> Looking at the percentage of respondents that claim to have voted 5 times it is clear that many have answered the question incorrectly, as it is impossible to have voted this many times in 6 of the 15 Member States.

The attitudinal analyses show that abstention levels are significantly higher among people who regard their country's membership to the European Union as a bad thing (38%) than they are among people who support their country's membership to the European Union (21%). As one would expect, abstention levels are also much higher among people who do not intend to participate in the next European Parliament elections (67%) than they are among people who do intend to cast their vote (12%). (Table 6.4b)

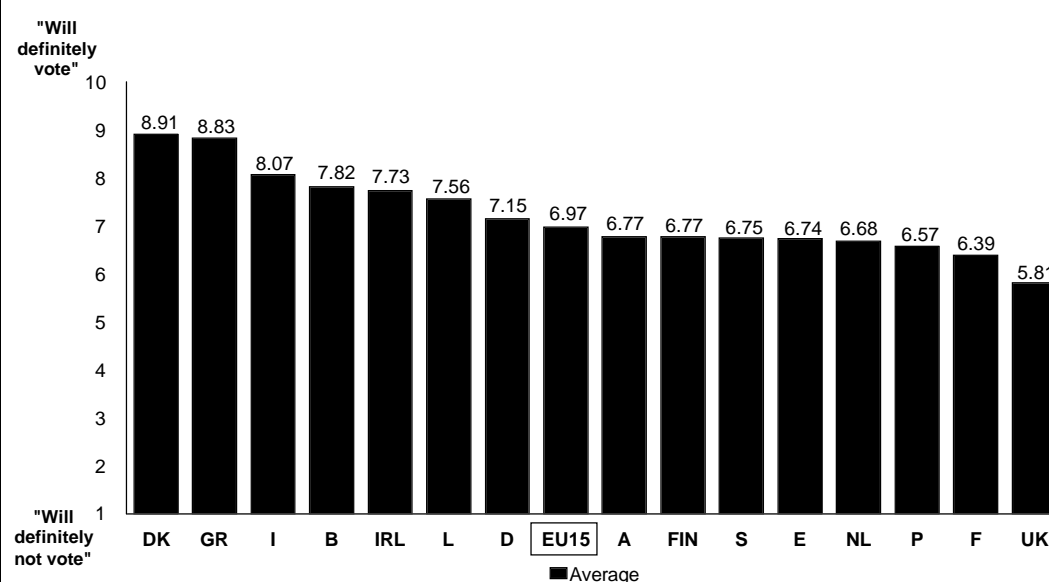
The following table shows that abstention levels also depend on how much people feel they know about the European Union. As can be seen, the higher the self-perceived knowledge level, the less likely it is that a person abstains from voting in European Parliament elections.

% of people that has never voted in EP elections		
Low knowledge of the EU	Average knowledge of the EU	High knowledge of the EU
39%	23%	14%

These analyses have provided some insight into how participation levels vary from country to country and how they depend on people's demographic characteristics, their likelihood to vote and their knowledge of and attitude towards the European Union.

Another measure of people's participation in European Parliament elections is obtained by asking respondents how likely it is that they will vote in the next European Parliament elections. Respondents were shown a card with a scale which goes from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates that they will definitely not vote and 10 indicates that they will definitely vote.

### Participation in next EP elections - likelihood that people will vote



Source: Survey no. 54.1 - Fieldwork Nov - Dec 2000  
Standard Eurobarometer 54 - Fig. 6.6

Average scores are based on a scale of 1 - 10

The graph above shows the average likelihood scores for each Member State. The higher the score, the more likely it is that respondents from that country will vote in the next elections. As can be seen, the highest score is obtained in Denmark (8.9), followed by two countries where voting is compulsory, namely Greece (8.8) and Italy (8.1). We find the lowest average score in the UK (5.8), which indicates that as a nation, the British are least likely to vote in the next EP elections.

If we look at the percentage of respondents that say they will definitely vote, in other words those choosing point 10 on the scale, we find that this is highest in Denmark (69%) and Greece (60%). In Austria (24%), Portugal (25%), the UK, Spain (both 26%), Finland (27%), France (28%), the Netherlands and Germany (both 29%) less than 3 in 10 respondents indicate that they will definitely vote. Table 6.5a in the Appendix shows for each country the percentage of people choosing points 1-3, 4-7 and 8-10 on the scale and the percentage of "don't know" responses.

The demographic analyses show that there is less spread in terms of the average scores, which range from 6.5 for the youngest age group to 7.8 for people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older. This shows that socio-demographic characteristics are a less powerful indicator of people's likelihood to vote than the country where they live is.

As expected, the attitudinal analyses show that whether people support their country's membership to the EU is a very strong indicator of their likelihood to participate in the next EP elections. The average score for people that regard their country's membership as a good thing is significantly higher (7.8) than it is for people that regard their country's membership as a bad thing (5.8). Table 6.5b in the Appendix shows for each demographic and attitudinal group the percentage of people choosing points 1-3, 4-7 and 8-10 on the scale and the percentage of "don't know" responses.

People's self-perceived knowledge of the European Union also has a strong influence on people's propensity to vote. The average scores shown in the table show that the higher the self-perceived knowledge level is, the more likely it is that a person will vote in European Parliament elections.

Average EP Voting Likelihood Scores		
Low knowledge of the EU	Average knowledge of the EU	High knowledge of the EU
5.9	7.4	8.3

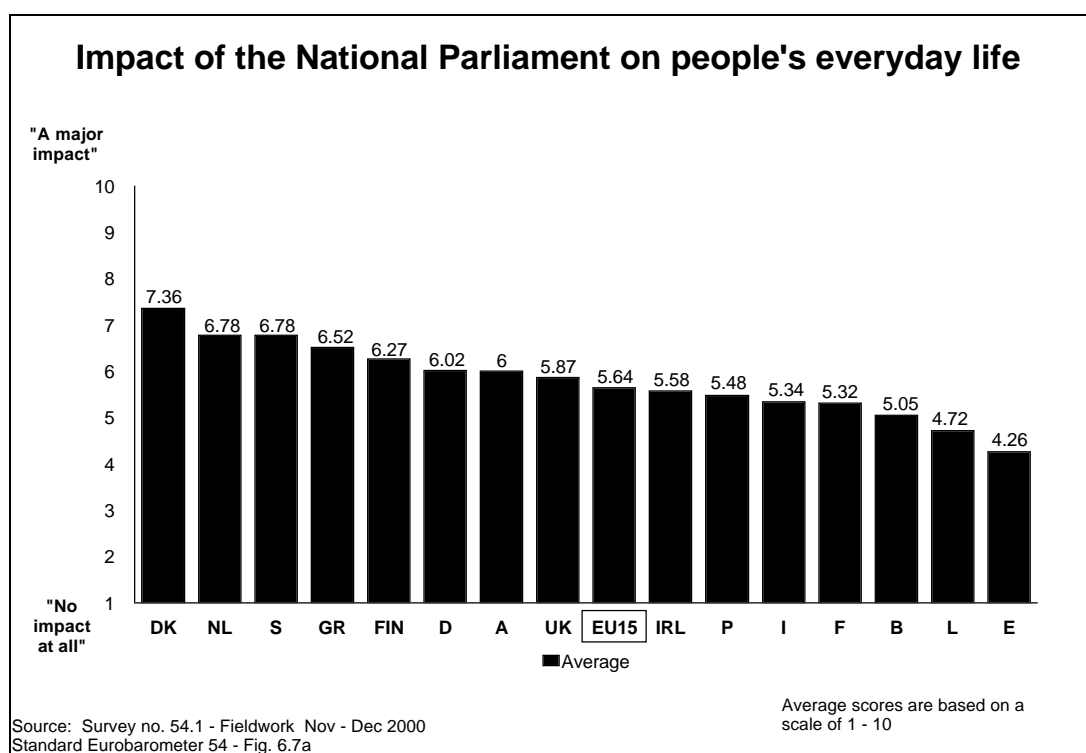
#### 6.4. Impact of European and national Parliaments on daily life

It is the first time that the Eurobarometer has measured the extent to which people feel that both the European Parliament and the national parliaments of the Member States have an impact on everyday life. Respondents were shown a scale that goes from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates that they feel that the (European / National) Parliament has no impact at all on everyday life and 10 indicates that it has a major impact.

The table below shows the EU15 results for the **national parliaments**. As can be seen 20% of EU citizens feel their national parliament has very little impact (i.e. those choosing the numbers 1 through 3 on the scale), 46% feel it has a considerable impact (points 4 – 7 on the scale) and 26% feel it has a major impact (points 8 –10 on the scale). The remaining 9% of respondents did not feel able to judge the impact of their national parliament on everyday life.

Impact of national parliaments Autumn 2000 (in %, EU15)	
Scale	%
1 (No impact at all)	10
2	4
3	6
4	8
5	16
6	10
7	12
8	13
9	5
10 (Major impact)	8
Don't know	9
<b>Average score</b>	<b>5.64</b>

The following graph shows that the average impact scores vary significantly from country to country and range from 4.3 in Spain to 7.4 in Denmark. Comparatively speaking, this means that people in Denmark rate the impact of their national parliament as larger than people in Spain tend to do.



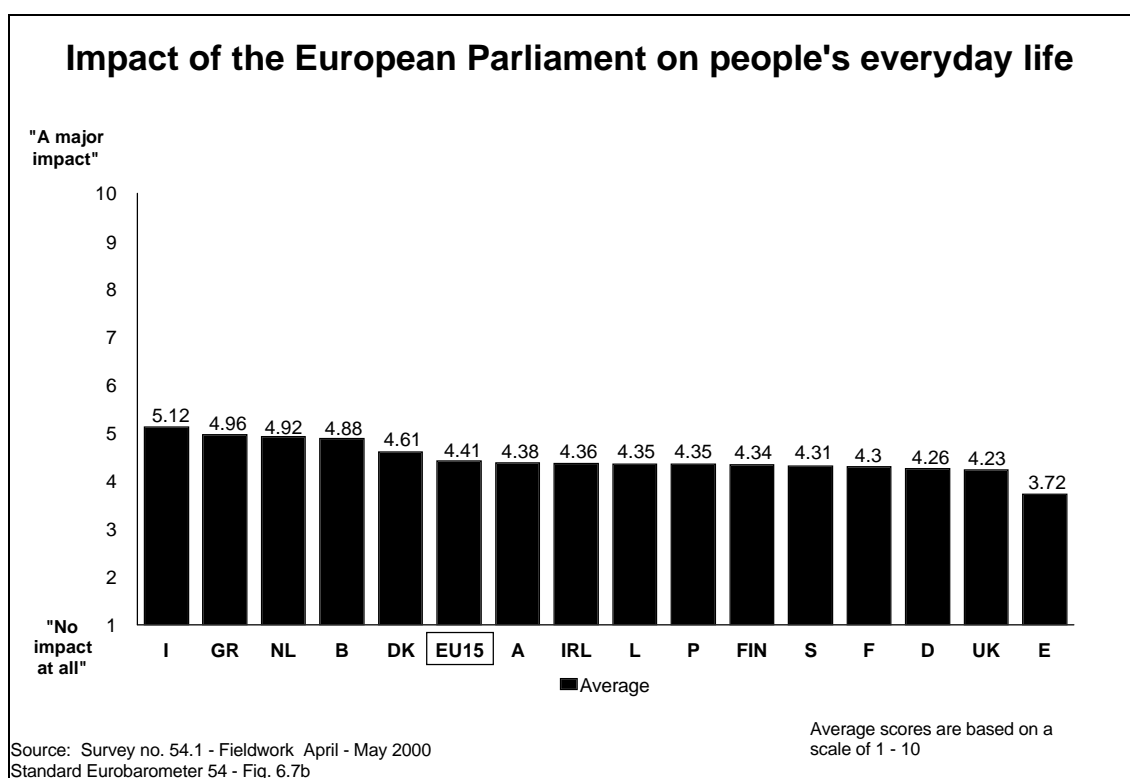
If we look at the two extreme points on the scale, namely point 1 and point 10, we find that respondents from Luxembourg are most likely to feel that their national parliament has no impact at all (22%). In the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden only 2% of respondents chose point 1 on the scale. At the other extreme we find that 18% of Danish respondents feel that their national parliament has a major impact, followed by 14% of Greek respondents and 11% of Swedish, British, German and Irish respondents. Only 2% of Spanish respondents and 4% of Belgian respondents chose point 10 on the scale. (See also table 6.6<sup>40</sup>)

<sup>40</sup> To make the table easier to read, a recoded version of the scale is presented consisting of three categories: "Little impact" – points 1-3; "Average impact" – points 4-7; "Major impact" – points 8 – 10.

Next we look at the extent to which the public feels the **European Parliament** has an impact on everyday life. As can be seen in the following table 33% of EU citizens feel the European Parliament has very little impact, 46% feel it has a considerable impact and 10% feel it has a major impact. The remaining 12% of respondents did not feel able to judge the impact of the European Parliament on everyday life.

Impact of European Parliament Autumn 2000 (in %, EU15)	
Scale	%
1 (No impact at all)	14
2	8
3	11
4	11
5	18
6	10
7	7
8	5
9	2
10 (Major impact)	3
Don't know	12
<b>Average score</b>	<b>4.41</b>

The following graph shows that in comparison to the scores for the national parliaments, the average impact scores for the European Parliament vary less significantly from country to country. They range from 3.7 in Spain to 5.1 in Italy.





If we look at the percentage of respondents that feels the European Parliament has a considerable impact on everyday life (i.e. those choosing points 8 – 10 on the scale), we find that this is lowest in Spain (5%) and highest in Greece (17%). The proportion of “don’t know” responses varies significantly and ranges from 6% in Denmark to 18% in Austria. (See also table 6.7a<sup>41</sup>)

As one would expect there is a strong relationship between people’s likelihood to vote and the perceived impact of the European Parliament. The results show that 54% of people who are not very likely to vote feel the European Parliament has little impact on daily life, compared to 25% of those who are very likely to vote. Amongst the latter group, 14% feels that the European Parliament has a major impact on daily life. (Table 6.7b)

The following table shows the average scores for various socio-demographic groups in the EU. It shows that people who feel they know a lot about the European Union and opinion leaders believe the European Parliament has the most impact. At the bottom of the table we find people who score lowest on the Self-perceived knowledge scale and Opinion Leadership Index<sup>42</sup>.

Impact of the European Parliament Average scores for various groups at the EU15 level	
Group	Score
High EU knowledge	5.54
Opinion Leadership Index: ++	5.23
Managers	4.88
Educated up to age 20+	4.75
Opinion Leadership Index: +	4.70
Average EU knowledge	4.63
Employees	4.60
Men	4.55
Aged 40-54	4.54
Self-employed	4.43
Aged 25-39	4.43
Educated to age 16-19	4.42
<b>Average for EU15</b>	<b>4.41</b>
Students	4.40
Aged 55+	4.39
Manual workers	4.36
Retired	4.29
Women	4.27
Unemployed	4.22
Aged 15-24	4.21
Opinion Leadership Index: -	4.20
House persons	4.17
Educated to age 15 or younger	4.13
Opinion Leadership Index: --	3.82
Low EU knowledge	3.65

<sup>41</sup> Again, the scale presented in the table has been recoded into three categories: “Little impact” – points 1-3; “Average impact” – points 4-7; “Major impact” - points 8 – 10.

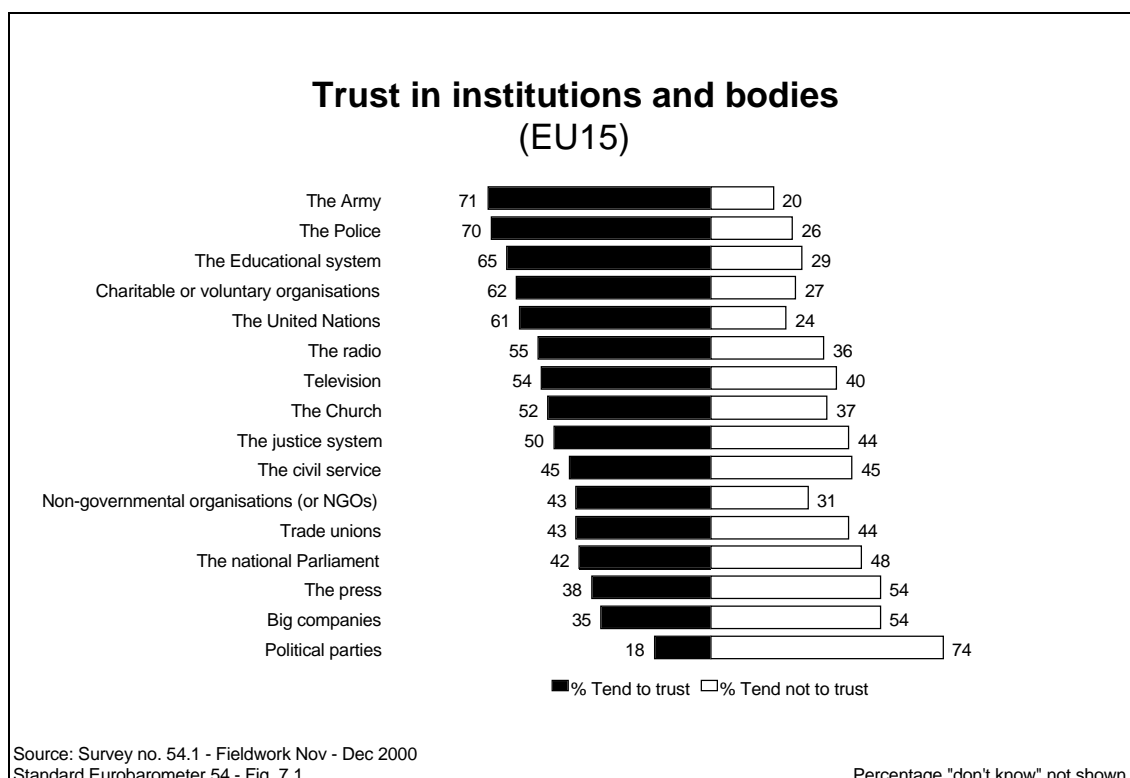
<sup>42</sup> See Appendix C.4 for a definition of these two indices.

## 7. Other dimensions of the European Union

In this chapter we briefly look at a number of other issues that were covered on the autumn 2000 Eurobarometer surveys. The results for many of these questions will be analysed in more detail in special Eurobarometer reports<sup>43</sup>.

### 7.1. Trust in institutions

One of the autumn 2000 Eurobarometer questions measures whether people have trust in 16 different institutions or organisations. The following graph depicts the results.

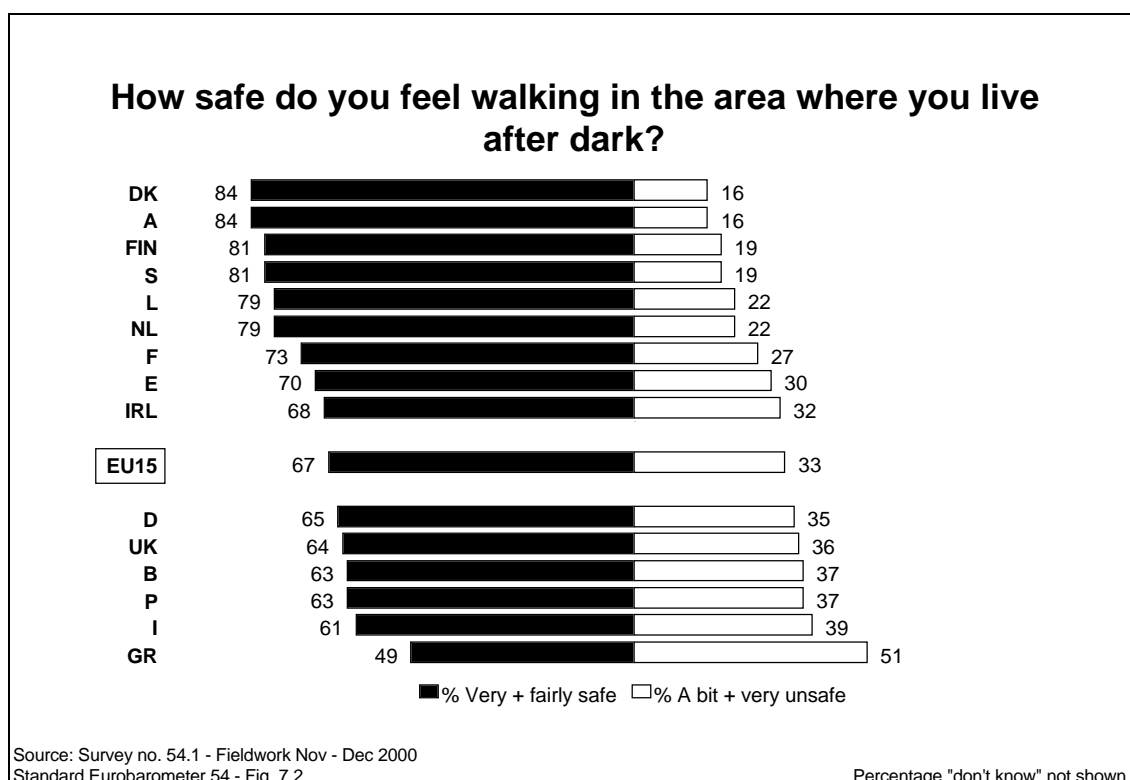


As can be seen, people are most likely to trust the army (71%). Looking at the country results, we find that trust levels range from 65% in Spain to 91% in Finland. The police is the second most widely trusted institution (70%) with trust levels ranging from 47% in Greece to 93% in Denmark. At 65%, the educational system comes in third place, with trust levels ranging from 45% in Greece to 88% in Denmark. People are least likely to place trust in their country's political parties (18%) with trust levels ranging from 13% in Italy to 41% in Luxembourg. (Table 7.1)

### 7.2. Fear of crime

The autumn 2000 survey also looks at how safe people feel walking alone in the area where they live after dark. This well-established fear of crime measure shows that 23% of Europeans feel very safe, 44% feel fairly safe, 23% feel a bit unsafe and 10% feel very unsafe.

<sup>43</sup> See Appendix D for more information on special Eurobarometer surveys and reports.

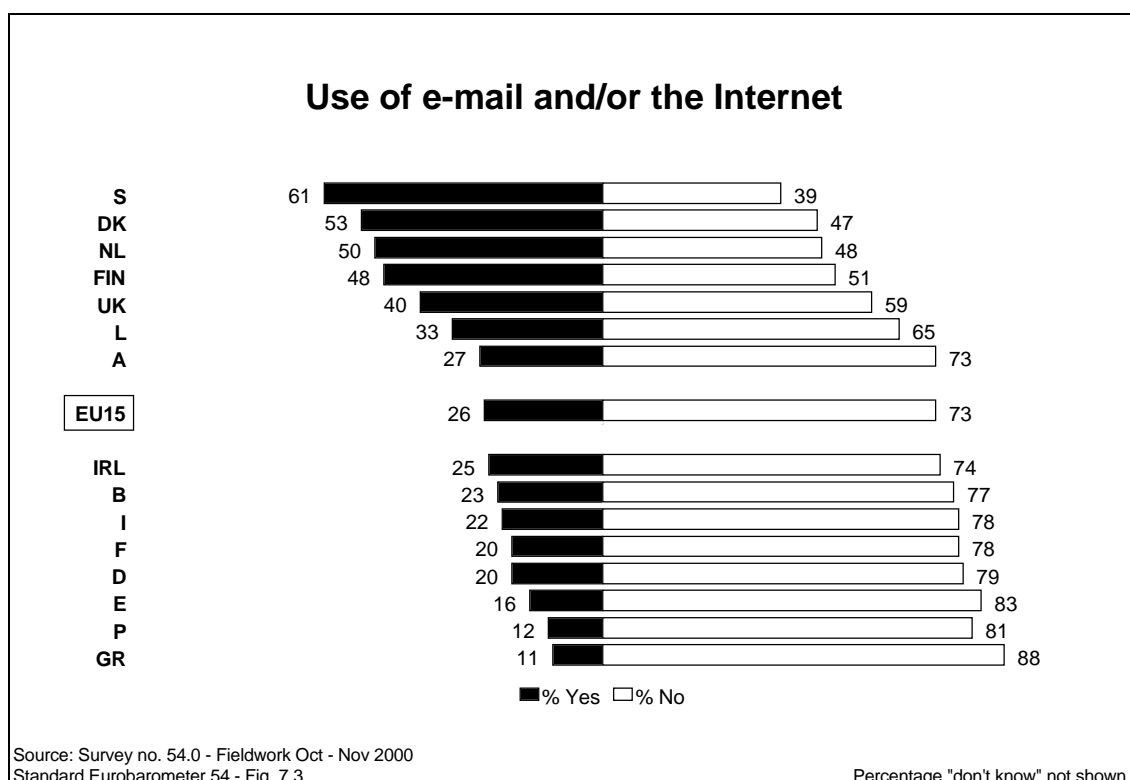


The country by country analyses indicate that fear of crime is least widespread in Denmark and Austria where 84% of the people feel very or fairly safe. In Finland, Sweden (both 81%), Luxembourg and the Netherlands (both 79%), more than 3 in 4 people also feel very or fairly safe. Fear of crime is most widespread in Greece, where 51% of the people feel a bit or very unsafe. It is the only country where more than half of the population feels unsafe walking alone in the area where they live after dark. (Table 7.2a)

The demographic analyses show that fear of crime is significantly more widespread among the female population than it is among the male population with 77% of men feeling safe, compared to only 58% of women. Age is also an important predictor of fear of crime with old people significantly less likely to feel safe than young people. Thus we find that only 59% of people aged 55 and over feel safe compared to around 7 in 10 people aged below 55. Equally, we find that levels of feeling safe are low among other groups where the elderly are strongly represented, namely retired people (57%) and those who left school before the age of 15 or younger (58%). Among all the demographic groups included in the analyses we find that managers (80%) are most likely to feel safe walking alone in the area where they live after dark. (Table 7.2b)

### 7.3. Use of e-mail and the Internet

Finally, we present the results of a question which show that, on average, 26% of EU citizens use e-mail and/or the Internet.



As the graph above shows, the use of e-mail and/or the Internet varies greatly between the 15 Member States. In Sweden 61% of our respondents use it, followed by 53% in Denmark and 50% in the Netherlands. Use of e-mail and/or the Internet is lowest in Greece (11%), Portugal (12%) and Spain (16%). The previous Eurobarometer Report showed that connection rates ranged from 6% in Greece to 48% in Sweden. Denmark and the Netherlands were the only two other countries where more than 4 in 10 households had connections<sup>44</sup>. (Table 7.3a)

Demographic analyses show that managers are most likely to use e-mail and/or the Internet (61%), followed by people who left full-time education at the age of 20 or older and people who are still studying (both 57%). It is lowest among the elderly. The results show that only 4% of retired people use it, 6% of people aged 55 and over and 7% of people who left school before they reached 16. (Table 7.3b)

<sup>44</sup> See Eurobarometer Report No. 53 – chapter 7.