EUROPEAN COMMISSION

EUROBAROMETER

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Report Number 56

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Introducing the Eurobarometer

Eurobarometer public opinion surveys ("Standard Eurobarometer surveys") have been conducted each Spring and Autumn since Autumn 1973. From Autumn 2001, they have been conducted on behalf of the Directorate-General Press and Communication (Opinion Polls) of the European Commission. They have included Greece since Autumn 1980 (Eurobarometer 14), Portugal and Spain since Autumn 1985 (Eurobarometer 24), the former German Democratic Republic since Autumn 1990 (Eurobarometer 34) and Austria, Finland and Sweden from Spring 1995 (Eurobarometer 43) 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 in Luxembourg (600) and in 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, comprising 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 Sector : 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 surveys aimed at specific target groups as well as at the public at large. It also conducts qualitative surveys (group discussion, in-depth interview) 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, and Special Eurobarometer surveys (see Annexe D for list), which use the same methodology as standard Eurobarometer*
- *Candidate Countries Eurobarometer, based on the same methodology as standard Eurobarometer, with reports published once each year*
- *Telephone Flash EB, which are also used for special target-group surveys (eg. Top Decision Makers)*
- *Qualitative research ("focus groups"; in-depth interviews)*

The Eurobarometer Website address is:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/

HIGHLIGHTS

This 56th Eurobarometer report presents an analysis of public opinion towards the European Union in Autumn 2001. The survey was carried out one month after the September 11 attacks on the United States and one week after the start of the war in Afghanistan. It appears that these events have significantly affected people's views in many regards. The key findings are:

Marked improvement in key indicators on the European Union

- 54% of EU citizens regard their country's membership of the European Union as a good thing. This is significantly higher than in Spring 2001 (+6 percentage points).

- 52% of those surveyed feel that their country has benefited from its membership of the European Union, seven percentage points more than in Spring 2001.

Greater confidence in the European Union and its institutions

- On average, 53% of EU citizens trust the European Union, up from 41% in Spring 2001, while only 32% lack trust (down from 40%).

- 58% of EU citizens now trust the European Parliament, up from 52% in Spring 2001.

- The public's image of the Commission continues to improve: the confidence rating has risen by 5 percentage points to 50%, the best result since the appointment of the current Commissioners.

- The European Central Bank is also trusted by half of the EU population aged 15 and over.

Growing anxieties

- In the aftermath of 11 September, 86% of Europeans say that they personally fear terrorism (12 percentage points more than one year earlier); 79% fear the proliferation of nuclear, bacteriological or chemical weapons of mass destruction (+17 points) and 64% fear a world war (+19 points).

- Only 16% of those surveyed expect the economic situation in their country to be better in 2002 than in 2001 (8 points less than one year earlier), 36% expect a similar situation (-8 points) and 39% expect a less favourable situation (+15 points).

- Moreover, 42% of those surveyed fear a deterioration of the labour market in their country, an increase of 19 percentage points compared with a year earlier, 32% believe the market will stabilise and only 17% count on an improvement, the lowest figure for five years.

Attitudes to the single currency, the euro

- 61% of those surveyed express support for the euro, compared with 30% who say they are opposed to it. 68% of respondents living in the “EURO 12” countries support the euro, up 2 points from the previous year. In the 3 “pre-in” countries, support for the euro has increased significantly, from 27% to 32%.

- At the time of the survey – a few months before the euro notes and coins were introduced – 47% of respondents from the “EURO 12” countries felt comfortable about using the new notes and coins.

- At least 8 in 10 EU citizens believe that the euro will make life easier for people who travel across borders (87%), that it will make it easier to shop around Europe as all prices will be comparable (83%) and that it will eliminate charges for changing from one currency to another (80%).

Attitudes to enlargement

- Fifty-one percent of respondents are in favour of the enlargement of the European Union to include new countries and 30% are against this. A more detailed question finds that 39% believe that the European Union should be enlarged to include only some of the countries wishing to join, with a further 24% showing unlimited support for enlargement. Only 20% of respondents believe that the EU should not be enlarged to include any additional countries.

- Approximately two in three EU citizens believe than the EU will become more important in the world if it includes more countries and that the EU will be culturally richer. However, a similar proportion of people also feels that, with more countries in the EU, it will become more difficult to make decisions on a European scale.

- Very few people (22%) feel well informed about enlargement although the results are somewhat more positive than in Spring 2001 (+4 percentage points)

Support for a European Union defence policy

- Forty-two percent of EU citizens believe decisions concerning European defence policy should be taken by the European Union, 24% believe these should be taken by the national governments and 20% believe NATO should take these decisions.

Support for European Union constitution

- Sixty-seven percent of EU citizens believe the European Union should have a constitution, up from 62% in spring 2001.

Self-perceived knowledge of the European Union

- Thirty-five 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 only 21% in spring 2001.

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REPORT

Introduction

This report presents the findings from the Eurobarometer survey No. 56 which was fielded shortly after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. In the aftermath of these attacks EU citizens were significantly more likely to trust both their own governments and parliaments and the European Union as a whole. It thus appears that the events of September 11th have substantially altered public opinion in many regards.

The aim of the 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 a number of measures that relate to **people's perceptions of their current situation and their situation in the year to come (overall life satisfaction, fears, and economic developments) in the context of September 11.** The chapter also looks **at people's trust in a number of international institutions.**

Chapter 2 covers questions that **measure people's sense of identity with and pride in the European Union and their own country** and **people's satisfaction with the way democracy works.**

Chapter 3 looks at long-term developments in **public opinion towards the European Union.** Here the standard indicators **- support for EU membership and perceived benefit from EU membership -** are presented. The chapter also reports on **people's perceptions of the speed with which Europe is being built and the role of and trust in the Union's institutions and bodies.** The chapter ends by presenting the results of a question that **measures public support for a European Union constitution.**

Chapter 4 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 over 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 public support for a number of key policy issues.**

Chapter 5 is completely dedicated to **public opinion about the euro** in the months leading up to the introduction of the euro notes and coins. **Support for the euro** is covered, as are **people's underlying attitudes to the euro.** The chapter ends by reporting on **how well informed people feel about the euro** and the extent to which **people have received information about the euro.**

Chapter 6 is completely dedicated to **public opinion about enlargement.** The chapter looks at **support for enlargement** and **people's underlying attitudes to enlargement.** It also analyses the importance people attach to the **Copenhagen criteria**, **how supportive the public is of the candidate countries** and how the **decision-making process should be handled in an enlarged Union.** The chapter ends by reporting on **how well informed people feel about enlargement** and the extent to which **people have received information about it.**

Chapter 7 reports on the **sources used by people when they look for information about the EU** and which of **these sources they prefer.** The chapter also analyses **the public's assessment of how the media cover EU affairs. Self-perceived knowledge** of the EU, its institutions and its policies is also analysed as are **awareness of nine 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 and the perceived importance of the **Belgian Presidency of the Council of Ministers** during the second half of the year 2001.

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

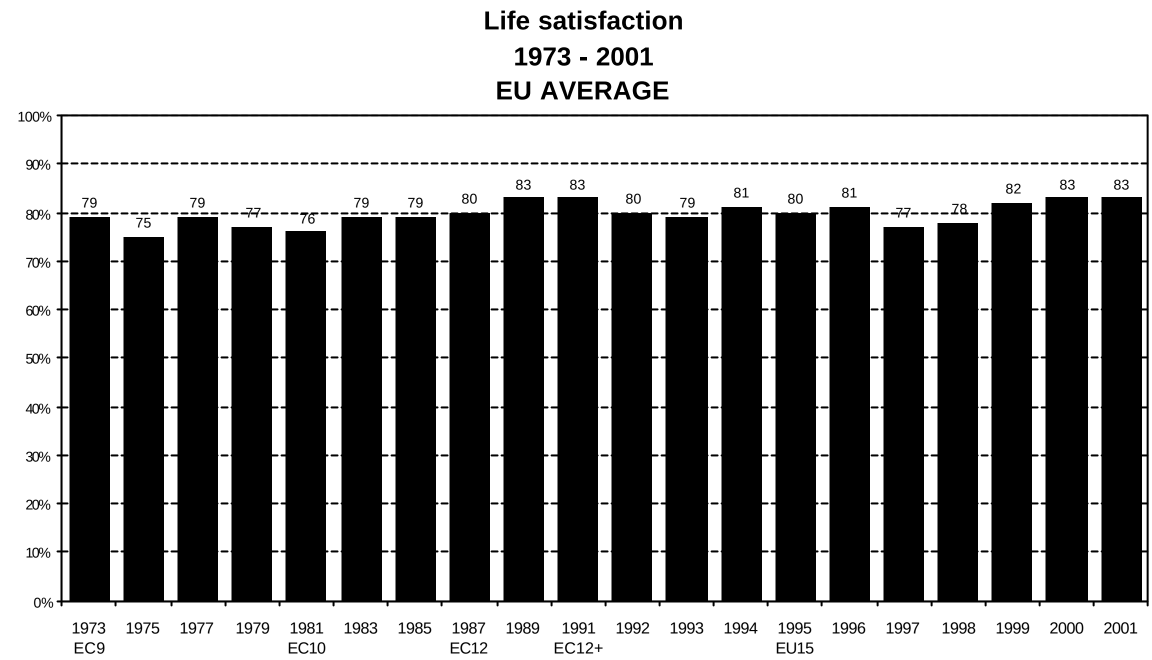
1. The life of EU citizens after September 11

The Eurobarometer survey that forms the basis of this report was carried out one month after the September 11 attacks on the United States and one week after the start of the war against terrorist targets in Afghanistan[1]. The September 11 attacks had an immediate effect on the economy in the European Union, which was already weakening in the months leading up to that day. In this context, the first chapter in this report examines the extent to which European Union citizens are satisfied with the life they lead and what their expectations for the year 2002 are. The chapter also reports on trust in institutions and examines whether people are afraid of a number of things that could happen in the world, one of them being terrorism.

1.1. Life satisfaction and expectations for the year to come

Since its inception in 1973, 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.

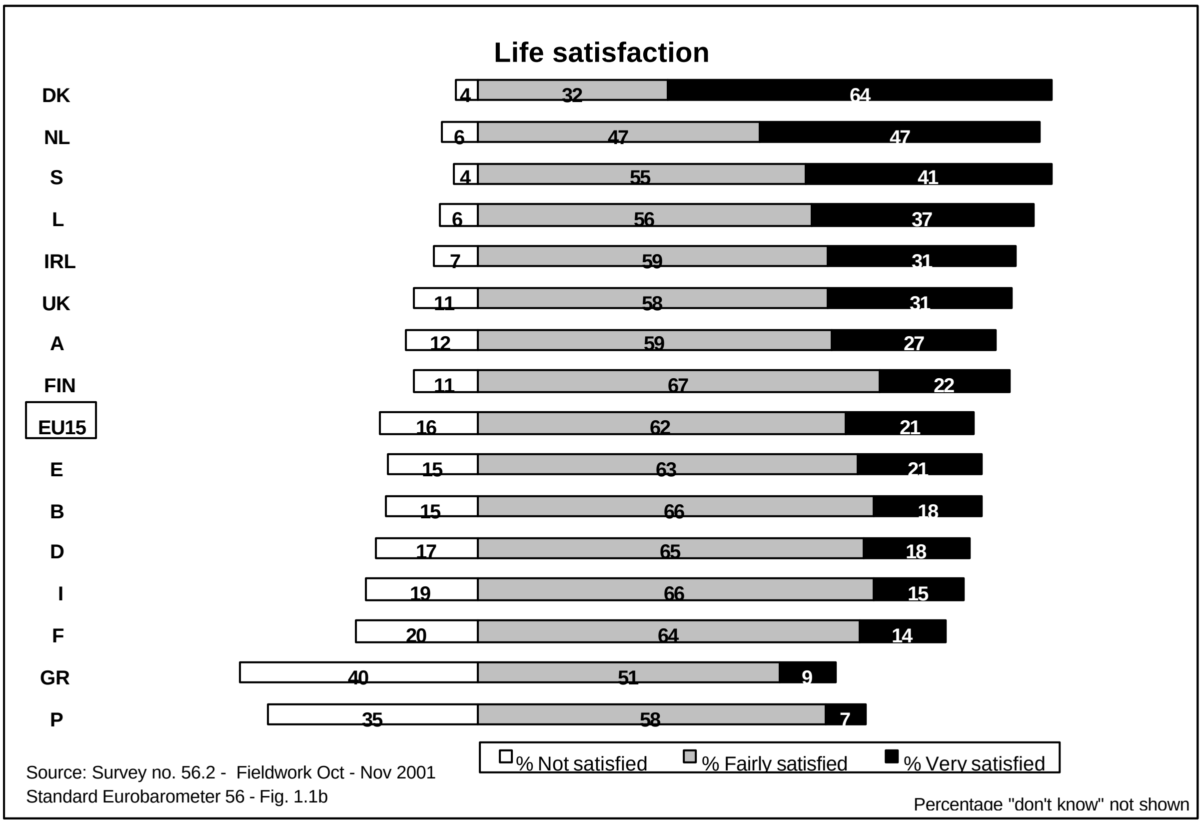
September 11 and its aftermath does not appear to have had an effect on how people judge their current life satisfaction. On average, and like last year, 83% of EU citizens feel very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the life they lead. The graph below shows that, throughout the years, at least 75% of respondents have given a positive assessment of their life.



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 1.1a

The results for Autumn 2001 show that 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 (64%). Other countries where at least 9 in 10 people are satisfied are Sweden (96%), the Netherlands (94%), Luxembourg (93%) and Ireland (90%), with the UK, Finland (89% each) and Austria (87%) not far behind. In Belgium (84%), Spain (83%), Germany (82%) and Italy (81%), satisfaction levels are close to the EU average (83%). Satisfaction levels are below average in Greece (60%), Portugal (65%) and France (78%).

1 Fieldwork period: October 13 to November 19, 2001 – see Annex C1 for exact dates in each country.



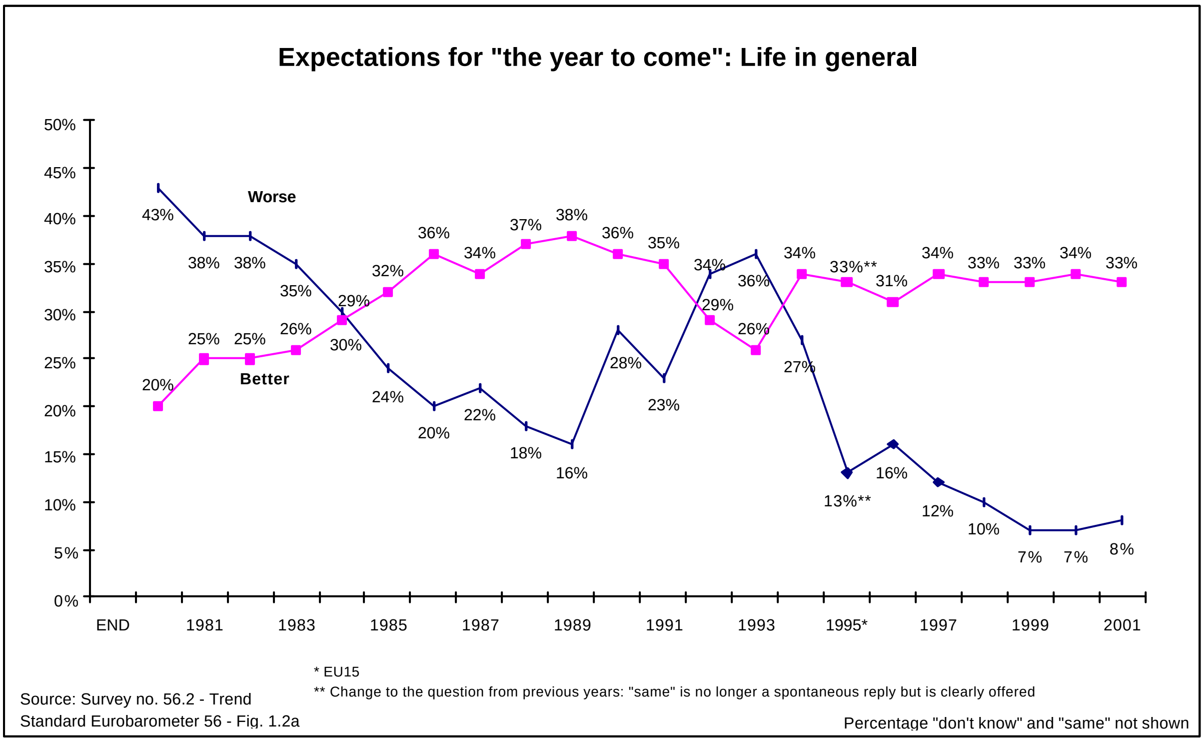
In the majority of countries, no significant change has been recorded since Spring 2001. Greece is the only country where people are now more likely to feel satisfied and Portugal is the only country where the opposite is the case. (Table 1.1a)

The demographic analyses show no significant differences between men and women. Among the four age groups (those aged 15 to 24, 25 to 39, 40 to 54 and 55 and over) we find that the proportion of very satisfied people is higher for the youngest segment of the population (25%) than it is for the other age groups. Unemployed people (62%) are significantly less likely to feel satisfied than are all the other occupational groups identified in the survey (of whom more than 80% are satisfied with their lives). Education is an important predictor of many attitudes. With regard to life satisfaction, we find that people who are still studying (89% satisfied) or people who stayed in school until the age of 20 or older (87% satisfied) are more likely to feel satisfied than people who left school aged 15 or younger (78% satisfied) or aged 16 to 19 (84% satisfied)[2].

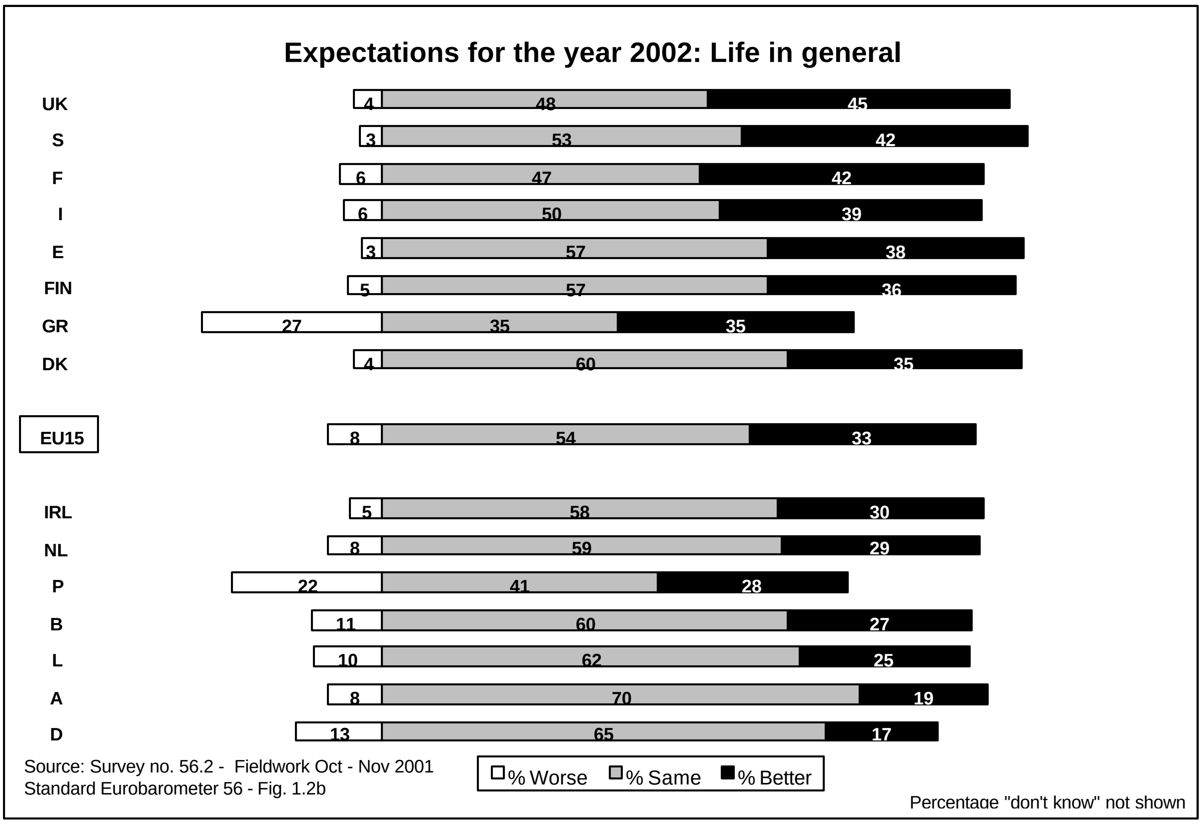
A look at attitudinal indicators shows that people who support their country's membership of the European Union are significantly more likely to feel satisfied (88% satisfied) than people who regard their country's membership as a bad thing (78% satisfied). (Table 1.1b)

Respondents were also asked about their expectations for the year to come. Thirty three percent believe their life in general will be better in 2002, 8% feel it will be worse and 54% believe it will be the same, so that people's forecasts are, like their assessment of the current situation, very similar to their forecasts from a year earlier. Thus the aggregate results do not show that the September 11 attacks and its aftermath have had a significant impact on how people in the EU view their life in general in the year to come.

[2] Appendix C.4 provides more details about the demographic variables.

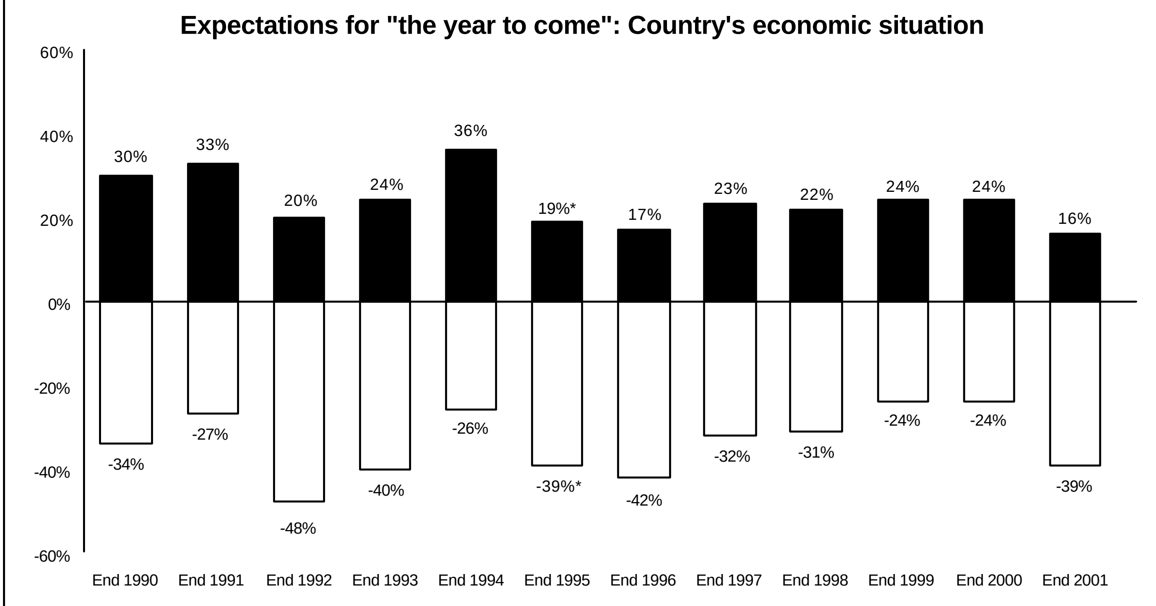


The country results show that people in the United Kingdom (45%) followed by people in Sweden and France (42% each) are most likely to believe that the year 2002 will be better. People in Greece (27%) and Portugal (22%) are most likely to feel that their life in general will get worse in 2002.



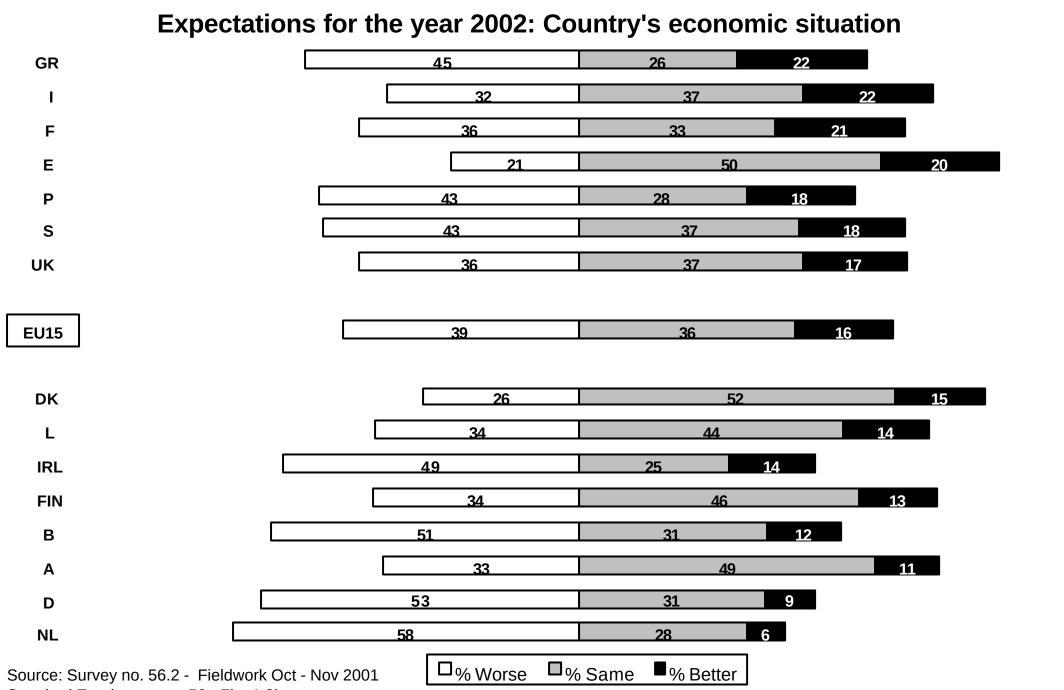
People in the United Kingdom (+7), France (+6) and Denmark (+3) are now much more likely to believe the year to come will be better than the previous year. However, there are several countries where the mood is clearly more restrained. In Greece, people are now less likely to be optimistic and more likely to be pessimistic (-8 and +5 respectively). Other countries where the survey results point to a reduced sense of optimism are Ireland, Luxembourg, Sweden, Italy, Belgium and Germany. (Table 1.2a)

Since 1990, the end-of-the-year question has also measured people's expectations of their country's economy in the year to come. The following graph depicts the aggregate results for the years 1990 to 2001. As can be seen, people are now significantly less optimistic about the economic situation in their country with 16% of those surveyed expecting to see an improvement in 2002 and 39% expecting a worsening of the situation. The net balance of the % "better" minus the % "worse" is now –23 whereas it was zero in the previous two years. Even if September 11 has not affected how people view their life in general, its economic consequences are clearly a matter of concern.



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 1.3a

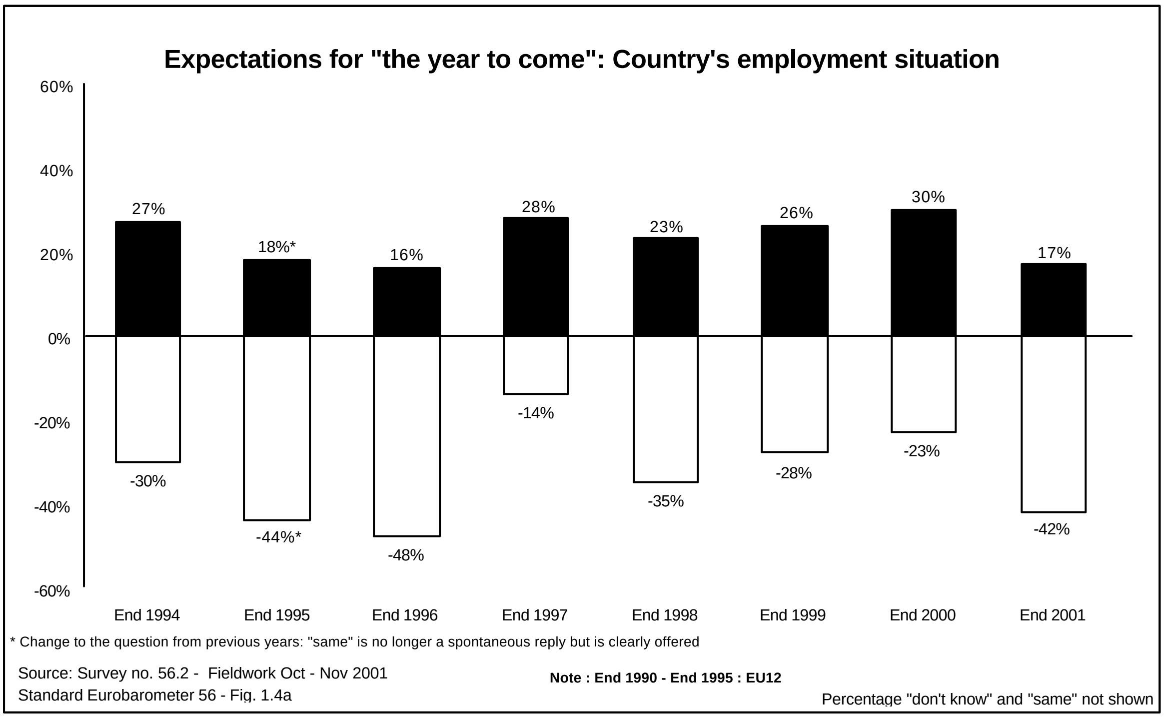
The proportion of respondents who feel that the economic situation in their country will be better in 2002 ranges from 6% in the Netherlands to 22% in Greece and Italy. One only needs to look at the results for the previous year to get a feel for the reduced sense of optimism that appears to affect Europeans after September 11. In Autumn 2000, the view that the economic situation would improve in the year 2001 ranged from 16% in Austria to 32% in Sweden.



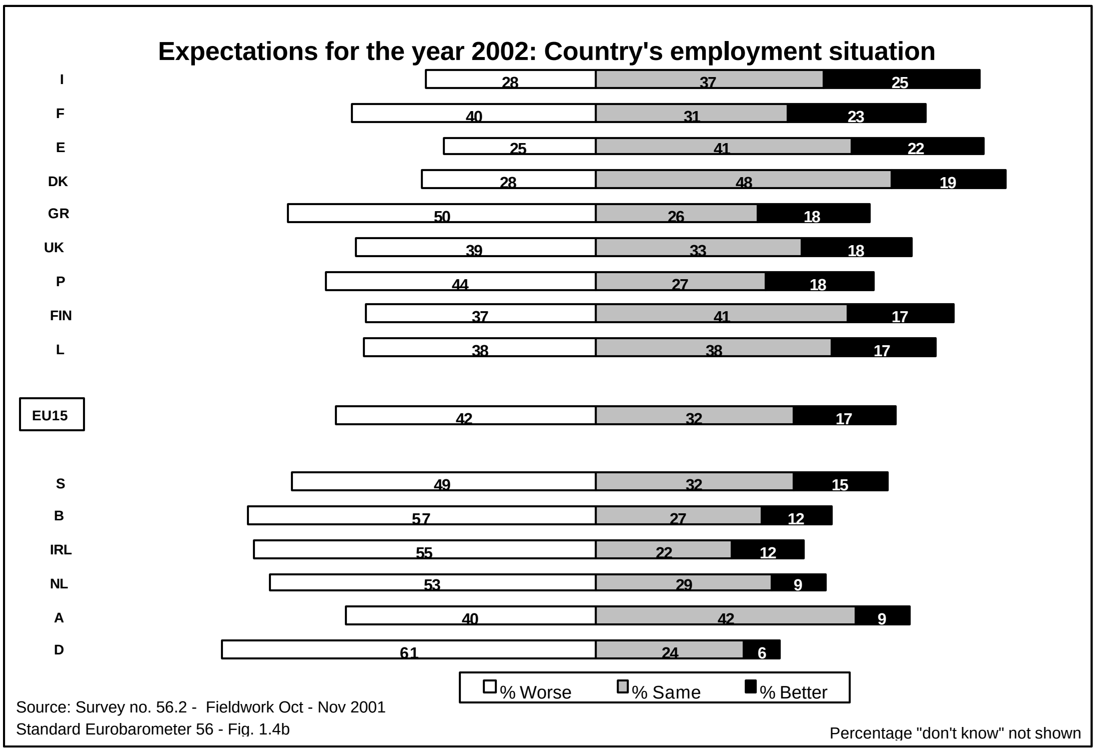
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 1.3b

In nearly all Member States, the assessment of the economic situation is now less optimistic. In the Netherlands, a 17-percentage point drop has been recorded in the proportion of people who feel that the economic situation will improve and a 37-percentage point increase has been recorded in the proportion of people who feel it will get worse. In Ireland, the outlook is nearly as pessimistic (-17, +35). The outlook is least pessimistic in Portugal (+1,+3), Spain (-5,0) and Austria (-5,+2). (Table 1.3a)

In the aftermath of September 11, Europeans are also less likely to feel optimistic about the employment situation in their country. Seventeen percent believe 2002 will be better (30% felt this way about 2001) and 42% believe it will be worse (23% for 2001).

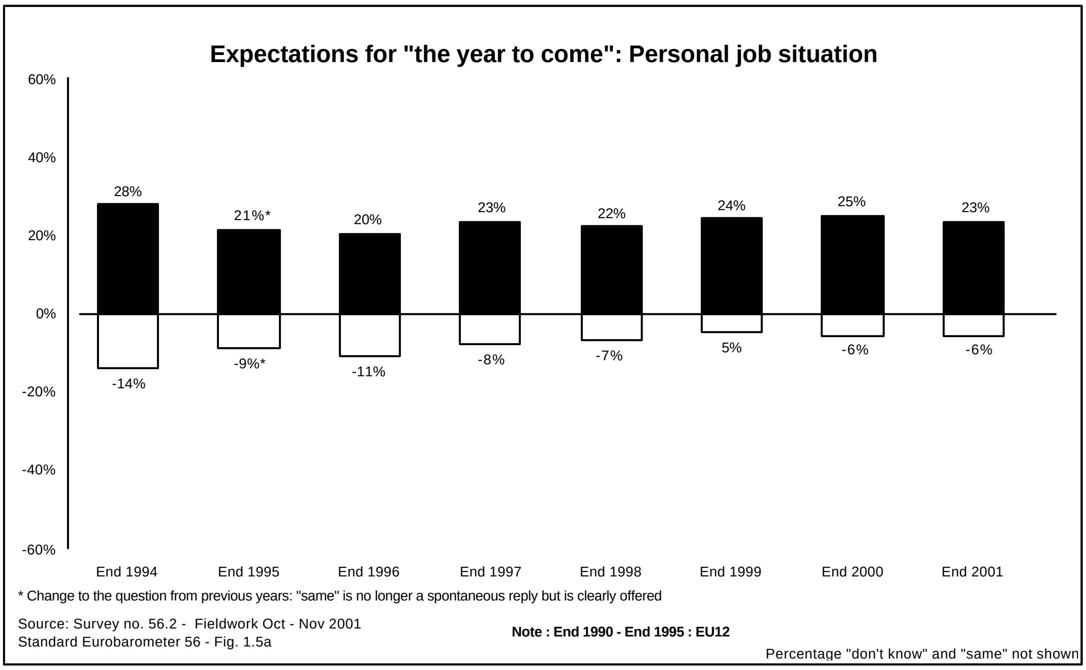


The mood is most optimistic in Italy, where 25% believe the employment situation will improve, followed by France (23%) and Spain (22%). It is most pessimistic in Germany, where 61% believe the employment situation will get worse, followed by Belgium (57%), Ireland (55%) and the Netherlands (53%).

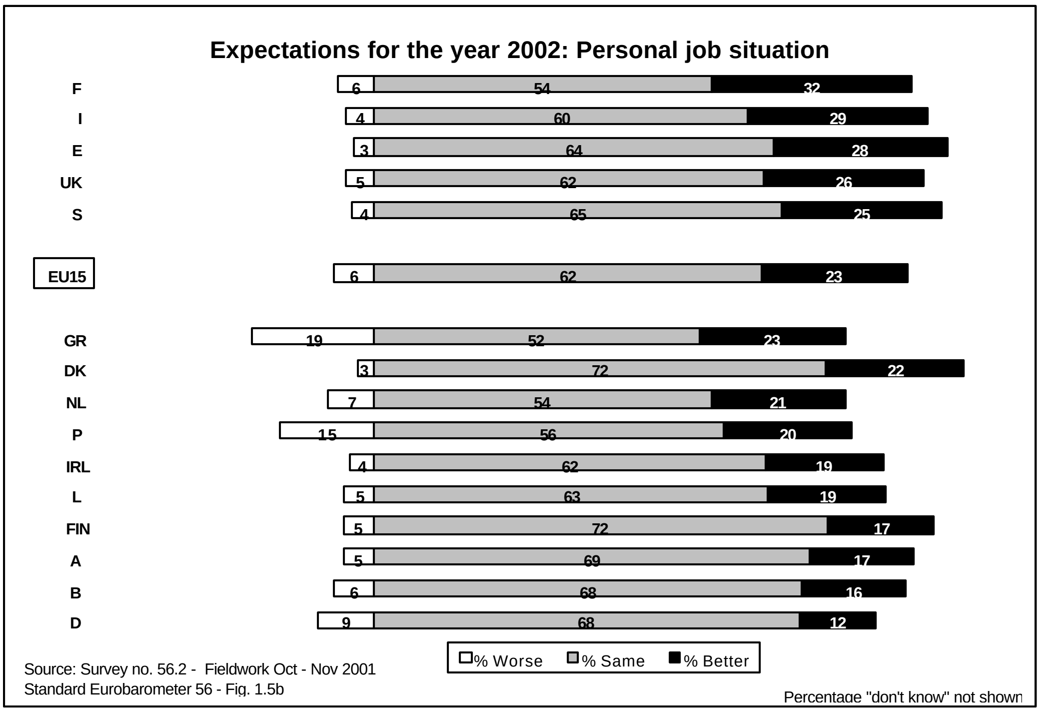


A comparison of the forecast for the year 2002 with the forecast given on last year's survey for the year 2001 indicates that the proportion of people who are optimistic has fallen in all countries, ranging from 1 percentage point in Portugal to 30 percentage points in both Finland and Sweden. The proportion of people who are pessimistic has increased in every Member State but varies considerably from country to country (from +1 in Spain to +48 in Ireland). (Table 1.4a)

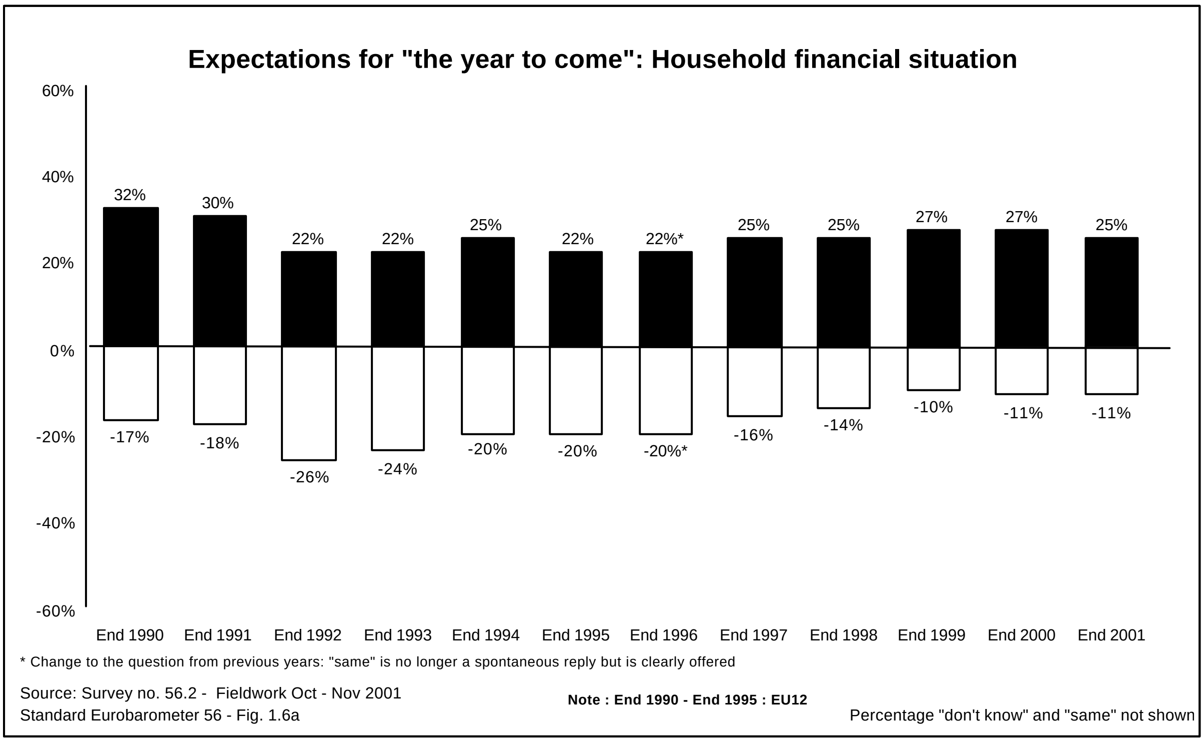
The increased concern about the economy and the employment situation in the Member States does not appear to have affected people's views about their personal job situation or the financial situation of their household. Around 6 in 10 respondents believe both will remain the same in the year 2002.



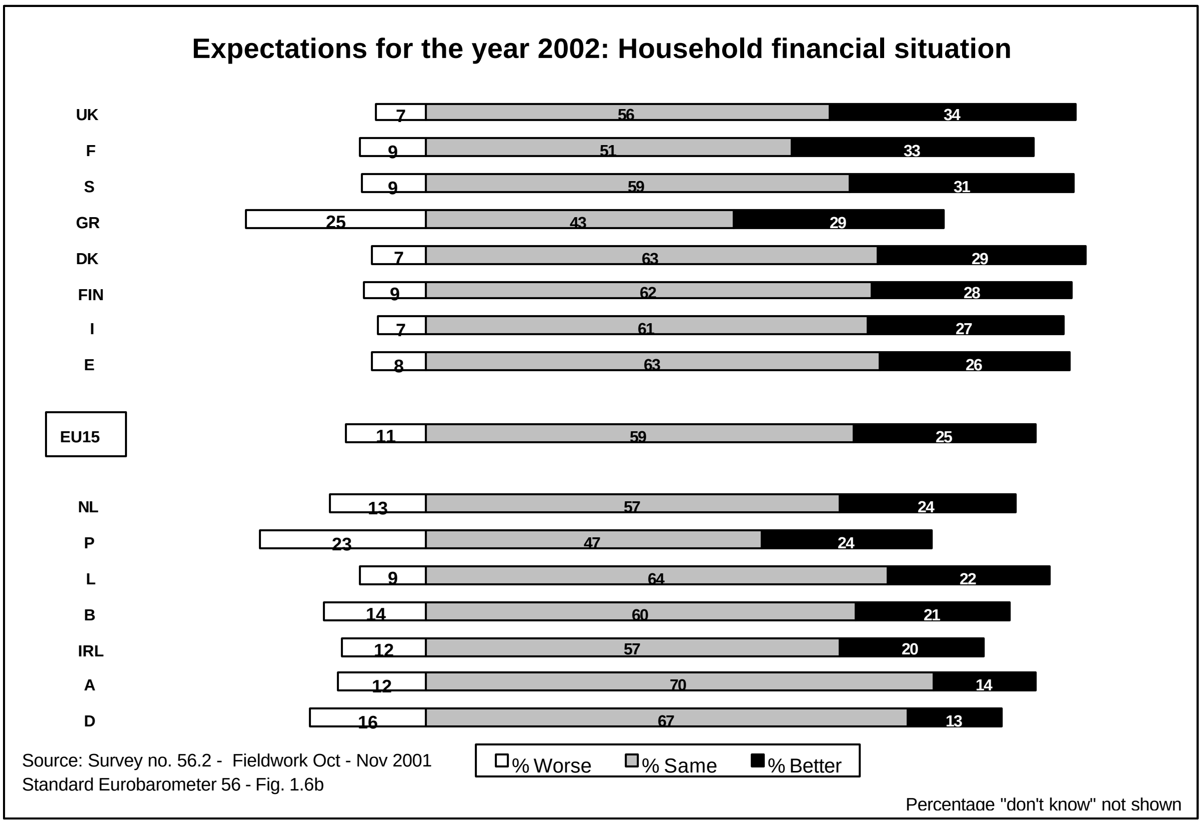
As the graph above shows, people's assessment of their personal job situation in the year to come has been stable in the past few years. However, expectations vary considerably from country to country with people in France most likely to feel that their personal job situation will get better in 2002 (32%), followed by people in Italy (29%) and Spain (28%). People in Greece (19%) and Portugal (15%) are most likely to feel that their personal job situation will get worse; in all other countries fewer than 10% of respondents share this view and in all countries the prevailing attitude is that things will stay the same. (Table 1.5a)



Twenty-five percent of respondents believe the financial situation of their household will improve and 11% believe it will get worse. As the following graph shows, this is very similar to the forecast respondents made at the end of the year 2000.



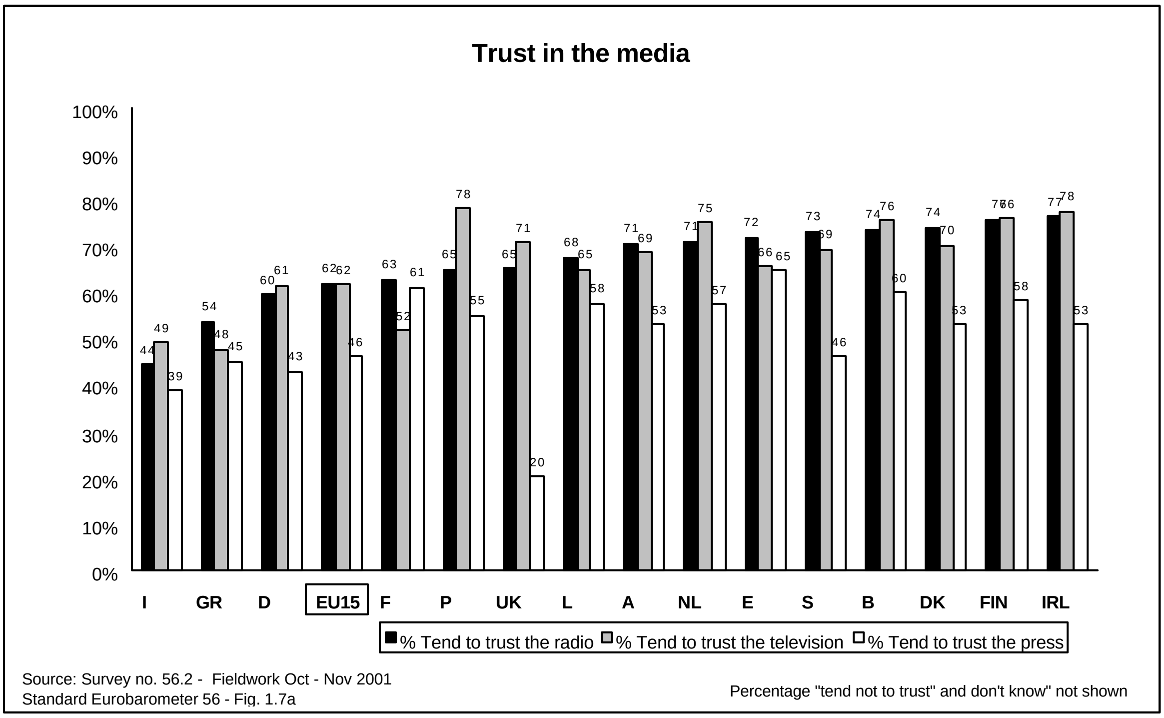
The majority of Europeans expect that their household financial situation will not change in 2002. In every Member State this is the most frequently expressed expectation, ranging from 43% in Greece to 70% in Austria. (Table 1.6a)



Expectations about the year to come vary depending 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 of the EU as a good thing. Thus, we find that people who support their country's membership are more likely to believe that 2002 will be better than are people who oppose their country's membership of the EU. (See tables 1.2b, 1.3b, 1.4b, 1.5b and 1.6b)

1.2. Trust in institutions

As in Autumn 1997, Spring 1999 and Spring 2001, respondents were asked to describe their trust or distrust of a large number of national and international institutions[3]. We begin by looking at people's trust in the media. Sixty two percent of respondents say that they tend to trust radio and television and 46% say that they tend to trust the press.



The country results show that more than 7 in 10 people trust **radio** in Ireland (77%), Finland (76%), Denmark, Belgium (74% each), Sweden (73%), Spain (72%), the Netherlands and Austria (71% each). Trust is least widespread in Italy (44%), followed at a distance by Greece (54%). More than 7 in 10 people in Portugal, Ireland (78% each), Finland, Belgium (76% each), the Netherlands (75%) and the UK (71%) trust **television** whilst trust is again least widespread in Greece (48%) and Italy (49%). Trust in the **press** is highest in Belgium (60%), Finland, Luxembourg (58% each) and the Netherlands (57%). In the UK, only 20% of respondents say they tend to trust the press, but this is 5 percentage points higher than it was in Spring 2001. (Table 1.7a)

A comparison with the Spring 2001 results provides the following information: Trust in television is now more widespread (+4) with the largest increases recorded in the UK (+14), Spain (+10), Finland (+8), Ireland (+7), Belgium (+6) and the Netherlands (+4). However, in Portugal (-4) and Luxembourg (-3) trust is now less broad than it was in Spring 2001. Trust in the press has not changed significantly at the EU15 level but there are some noteworthy shifts at the country level. Broader trust has been recorded in France, Ireland (+7 each), Spain, Finland, Austria, the UK (+5 each) and Denmark (+3) while it is now less widespread in the Netherlands (-8), Luxembourg (-6), Portugal and Italy (-4 each). Trust in radio is now slightly less widespread at the EU15 level (-2) but again we find several large shifts at the country level. In the UK (+7), Belgium (+4) and Finland (+3) we find that trust is now more widespread whilst in Italy (-11), Portugal (-7), the Netherlands (-6) Denmark (-5) and Germany (-4) trust is now significantly less widespread.

[3] The question contains 17 items. Results for all items except the European Union are shown in tables 1.7a to 1.7c. Results for the item measuring trust in the European Union are reported separately in Chapter 3 (see also table 3.5).

Next we look at trust in four public institutions: the national governments, the national parliaments, the civil service and political parties. Like other surveys, Eurobarometer shows that confidence in these institutions is low, although it is significantly higher in Autumn 2001 than it was in Spring 2001 (+5), an outcome which we believe is linked to the events of September 11th[4]. Taken together, 40% of Europeans now trust these four institutions with average trust levels ranging from 31% in Italy to 59% in Luxembourg.

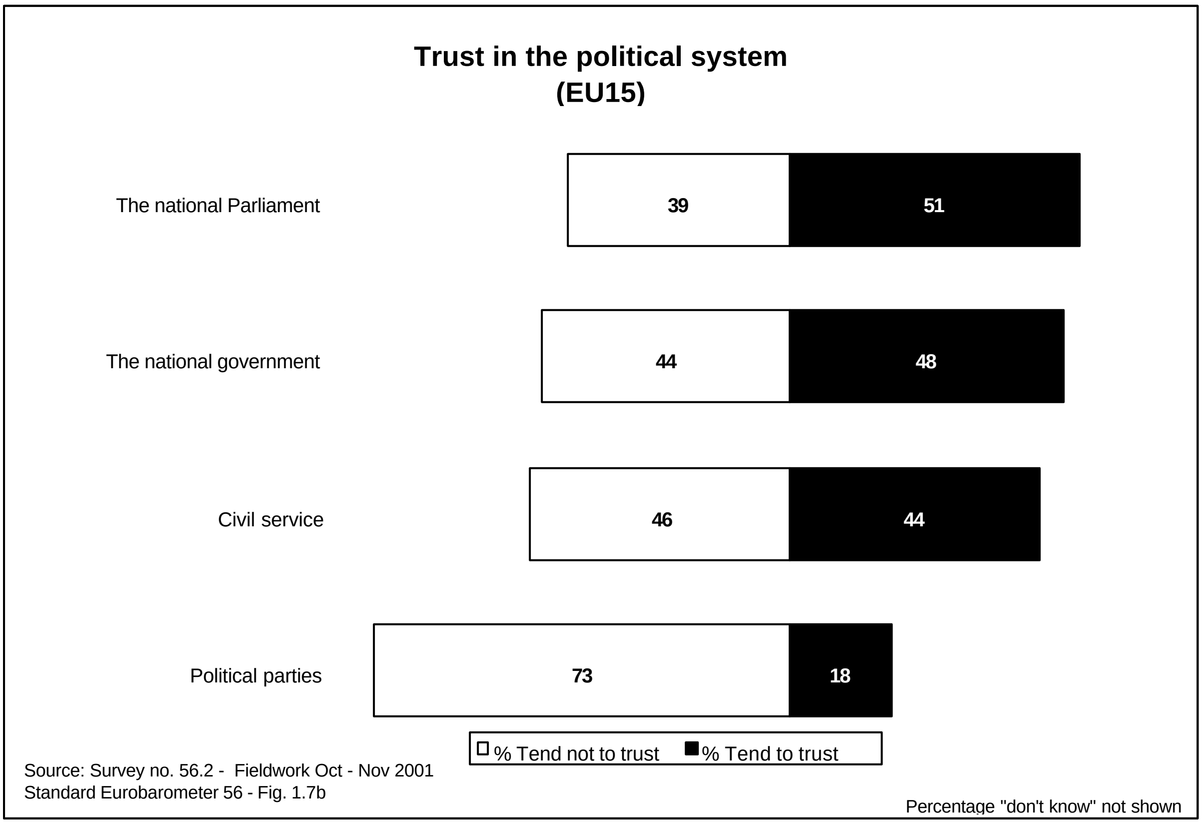
Trust in public institutions (Average trust level of 4 institutions, in % by country)	
Country	**%**
Luxembourg	59
The Netherlands	58
Denmark	58
Sweden	49
Austria	49
Ireland	47
Finland	46
Spain	45
Portugal	45
Belgium	44
Greece	43
Average for EU15	***40***
Germany	40
United Kingdom	38
France	38
Italy	31

In comparison with Spring 2001, we find the largest increase in average trust levels for the four public institutions in Sweden (+9), followed by Greece (+9), Denmark, Belgium (+8 each), the United Kingdom (+7), the Netherlands, Portugal, France and Italy (+6 each). Trust is now more widespread in every single Member State[5].

The next graph depicts the results for each of these four institutions at the EU15 level. It shows that EU citizens are most likely to trust their country's parliament (51%), while only 18% tend to trust the political parties in their country.

[4] The argument being that the terrorist attacks of September 11 have increased people's reliance on their national political system.

[5] See Eurobarometer No. 55, chapter 1.

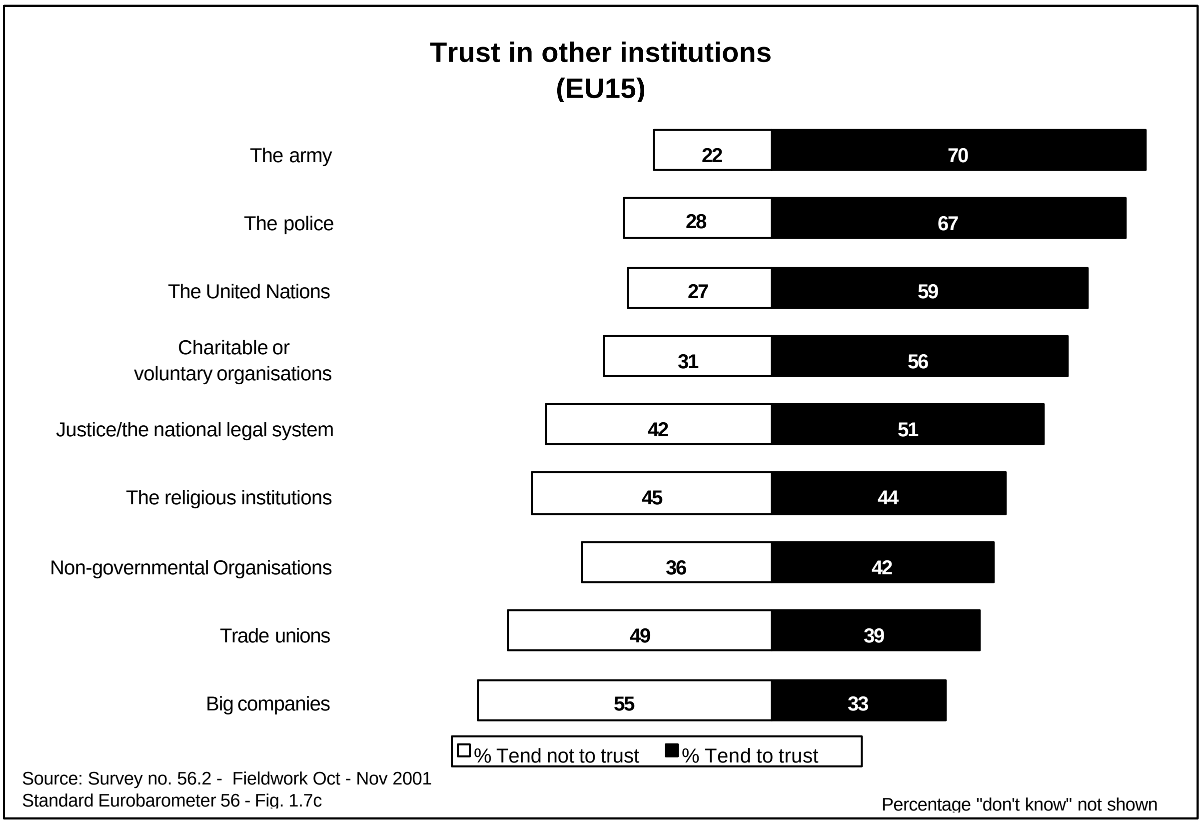


Our analyses indicate that the national governments and parliaments are the primary beneficiaries of the increases referred to earlier but that trust in political parties and the civil service has not changed significantly since Spring 2001. Trust in the national **Parliament** is most widespread in Denmark (73%; +15) and Luxembourg (72%; +8) and least widespread in Italy (43%; +11), France (47%; +12) and the UK (47%; +13). Trust in the national **government** is most widespread in Luxembourg (73%; +5) and the Netherlands (70%; +8) and least widespread in Italy (41%; +12), France (43%; +10) and the UK (43%; +12). Trust in one's country's **civil service** is most widespread in Austria (68%; -1 compared to Spring 2001), followed by Luxembourg (61%; -2), Ireland (62%; 0) and Denmark (58%; +1). It is lowest in Italy (27%; +1) and Greece (34%; +3). Trust in **political parties** is low throughout the Member States and ranges from 13% in Italy (+2) to 36% in Denmark (+2). (Table 1.7b)

The survey also measured trust in the following institutions:

- *The justice / legal system in each country*
- *The police*
- *The army*
- *Religious institutions*
- *Trade unions*
- *Big companies*
- *The United Nations*
- *Non-Governmental organisations*
- *Charitable or voluntary organisations*

The next graph shows that at 70%, EU citizens are most likely to trust the army, followed by the police (67%) and the United Nations (59%). In Spring 2001, the United Nations only achieved sixth place with 48% of EU citizens declaring that they trusted this international organisation. Trust in the army has also increased significantly since Spring 2001 (+7) and it appears that this, together with the broader trust in the United Nations, is linked to people's state of mind in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Trust in big companies is still least widespread (33%). Fewer than 4 in 10 people say they tend to trust the trade unions in their country.



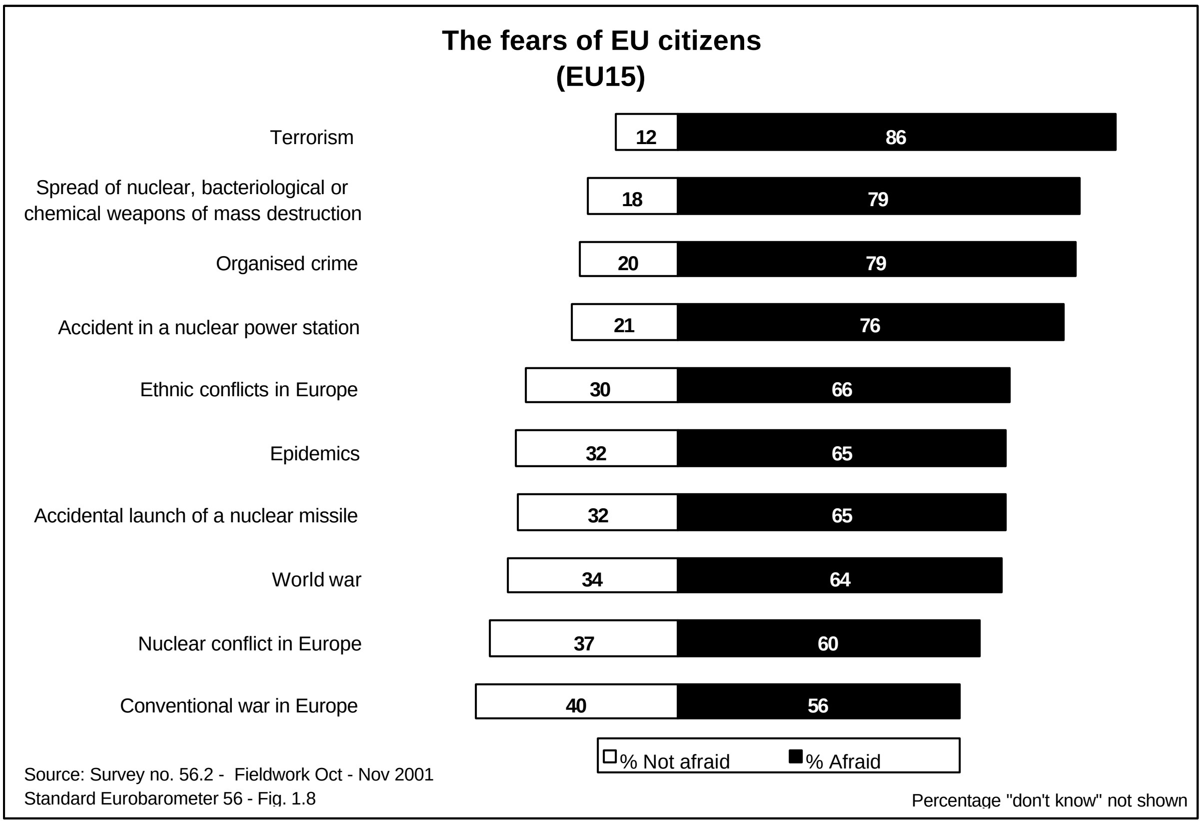
The next table shows which three of these institutions are most widely trusted in each Member State. The **Army** tops the list in 8 of the 15 Member States, takes second place in two countries and third place in four countries. Spain is the only country where it doesn't make the top three but this is not to say that it is not widely trusted (63%). The **Police** now top the list in four countries, come second in 6 countries and third in a further two countries. Greece, Spain and Portugal are the only countries where the Police are not ranked in the top three. The **United Nations** tops the list in Sweden and the Netherlands, comes in second place in four countries and in third place in four countries. In Spring 2001, it was ranked in the top three only in Sweden. **Charities** are ranked within the top three in Spain and France but no longer top the list in these two countries. The **Justice System** is ranked among the top three in Austria, Greece and Germany. **Religious institutions** are ranked among the top three in Finland, Portugal and Greece**. Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)** are ranked in the top three only in Spain, where they top the list. At 67%, trust in NGOs is significantly higher in Spain than it is in the other Member States. None of the other institutions are ranked among the top three. (See also table 1.7c[6])

[6] For a comparison with spring 2001 results, see Eurobarometer 55, tables 1.4a-c.

Top Three Most Widely Trusted Institutions (in %, by Member State)			
Belgium		**Luxembourg**	
The army	62	The police	70
The United Nations	57	The United Nations	68
The police	54	The army	65
Denmark		**The Netherlands**	
The police	90	The United Nations	68
The army	83	The police	67
The United Nations	82	The army	67
Germany		**Austria**	
The police	74	The police	78
The army	67	The justice system	73
The justice system	61	The army	70
Greece		**Portugal**	
The army	88	The army	77
The justice system	69	The United Nations	68
Religious institutions	65	Religious institutions	67
Spain		**Finland**	
NGO's	67	The army	89
The United Nations	66	The police	88
Charities	65	Religious institutions	71
France		**Sweden**	
The army	66	The United Nations	77
Charities	63	The police	74
The police	57	The army	71
Ireland		**United Kingdom**	
The army	78	The army	82
The police	70	The police	65
The United Nations	68	The United Nations	59
Italy			
The army	67		
The police	67		
The United Nations	65		

1.3. The fears of EU citizens in the context of September 11th

The Autumn 2001 survey repeated a question, first asked in Autumn 2000, that measures whether people are afraid of ten things that could have disastrous effects for the world. The results show the effect that September 11th and its aftermath have had on people. In comparison to Autumn 2000, we find a 19 percentage point increase in the fear of a world war, a 17 percentage point increase in the fear of the spread of nuclear, bacteriological or chemical weapons of mass destruction, a 16 percentage point increase in the fear of nuclear conflict in Europe, a 12 percentage point increase in the fear of terrorism and an increase of 11 percentage points in the fear of a conventional war in Europe.



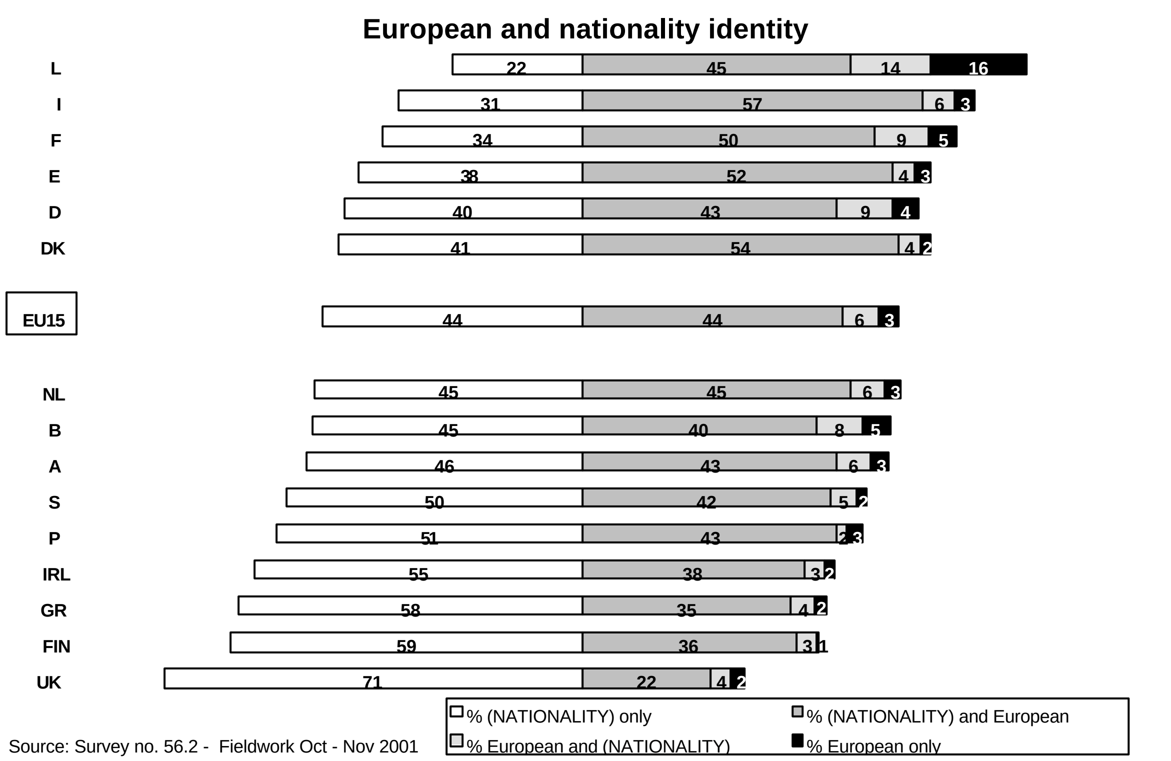
At 86%, respondents are now most likely to be afraid of terrorism, followed by the spread of nuclear, bacteriological or chemical weapons of mass destruction (79%). This is not to say that people are not afraid of other things. In the EU, 79% of citizens are afraid of organised crime and 76% fear an accident in a nuclear power station but no significant increases have been recorded since the previous measurement. (Table 1.8)

2. Identity, Pride and Democracy

In this chapter we examine the extent to which EU citizens feel European and are proud to be European. The chapter also looks at public levels of satisfaction with the way democracy works in each of the Member States and with the way it works in the European Union.

2.1. European and national identity

Fifty-three percent of EU citizens feel to some extent European, compared with 44% who only identify with their own nationality. In 9 of the 15 Member States, the European sentiment outweighs the exclusive identification with one's nationality.



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 2.1

The proportion of people who don't identify with their own nationality and who feel European only is highest in Luxembourg (16%), which has the highest proportion of citizens from other EU countries. A further 59% feel European as well as Luxembourgeois. In the other Member States, the proportion of people who feel European to some extent ranges from 28% in the UK to 66% in Italy.

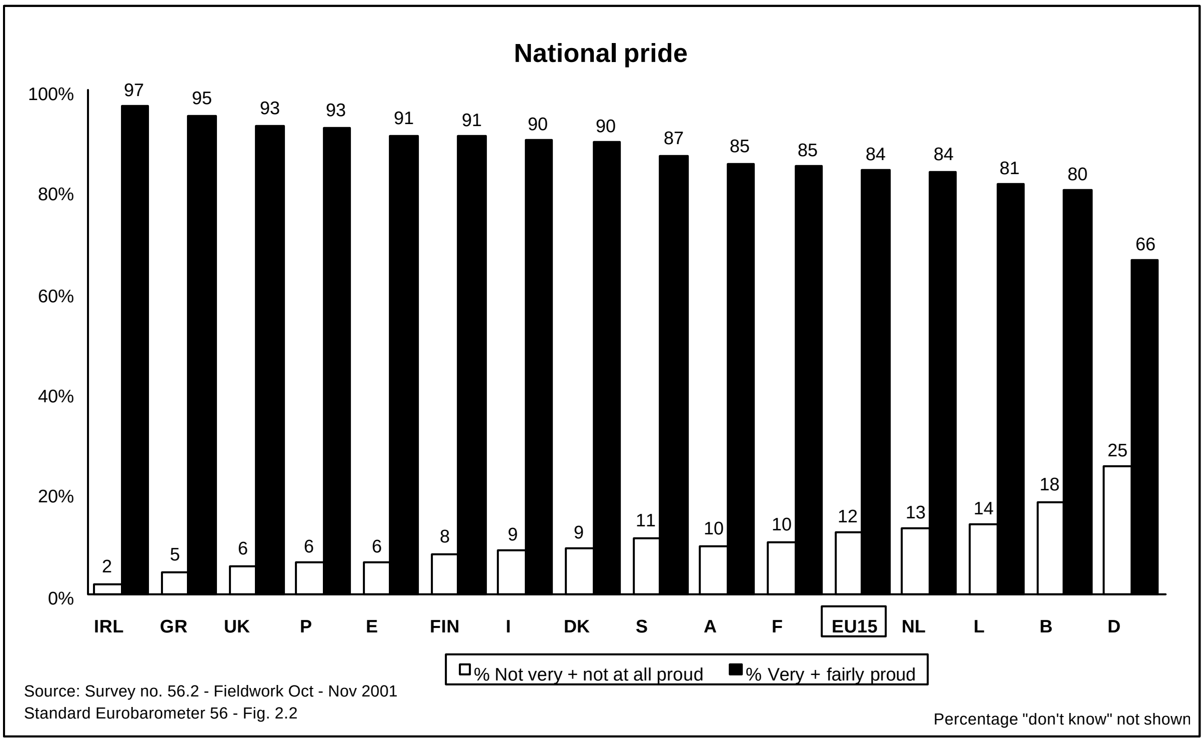
Despite the widespread sense of being European, we find that in many Member States there are now more people who identify only with their own nationality than in Autumn 2000. In Spain, an 18 percentage point increase has been recorded in this respect, followed by a 9 percentage point increase in the UK and Ireland, an 8 percentage point rise in Greece and Italy and a 7 percentage point increase in Luxembourg. Denmark (-8), Austria (-5) and Sweden (-4) are the only countries where the proportion of people who identify solely with their own nationality has gone down since Autumn 2000. (Table 2.1a)

The demographic analyses show that people who left full-time education at the age of 20 or older, those who are still studying (69% each) and managers (68%) are most likely to feel to some extent European. Retired people (54%) and people look after the home (53%) are most likely to identify with their own nationality.

The attitudinal analyses show that 70% 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 73% of people who regard their country's membership as a bad thing identify with their own nationality. However, the gap between these two groups is smaller than it was in autumn 2000 when 78% of pro-Europeans felt to some extent European and 72% of euro-sceptics identified with their own nationality. (Table 2.1b)

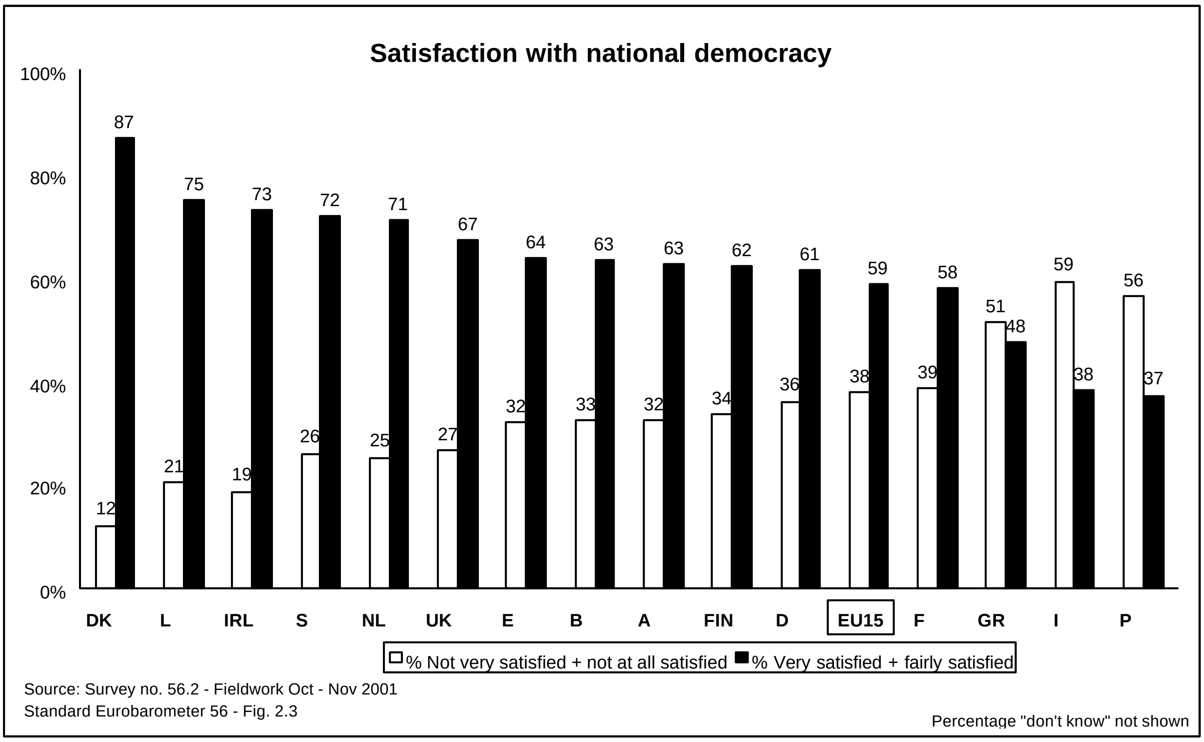
2.2. Feelings about one's country

The following graph shows that more than 8 in 10 EU citizens are proud of their nationality, with results ranging from 66% in Germany to 97% in Ireland. (See also table 2.2)



Six in ten EU citizens (59%) are very or fairly satisfied with the way democracy works in their country. Among the Member States, satisfaction is by far most widespread in Denmark with nearly 9 in 10 Danes (87%) satisfied with the way democracy works in their country. In Luxembourg, Ireland, Sweden and the Netherlands more than 7 in 10 people give their country's democracy a positive assessment. The same is true for over 6 in 10 in the UK, Spain, Belgium, Austria, Finland and Germany and nearly 6 in 10 people in France. Italy (59%), Portugal (56%) and Greece (51%) are the only countries where those who are not satisfied with the way democracy works in their country outnumber those who are satisfied. (Table 2.3a)

Demographic analyses show that managers (66%) are most likely to feel satisfied with the way democracy works in their country while unemployed people (47%) are the only group with a satisfaction level below 50%. Attitudinal analyses show a gap of 17 percentage points 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. In Autumn 2000, this gap was 23 percentage points. (Table 2.3b)



2.3. Pride in being European and satisfaction with European democracy

This is the second time that the Eurobarometer survey has measured the extent to which EU citizens feel proud to be European using the following question:

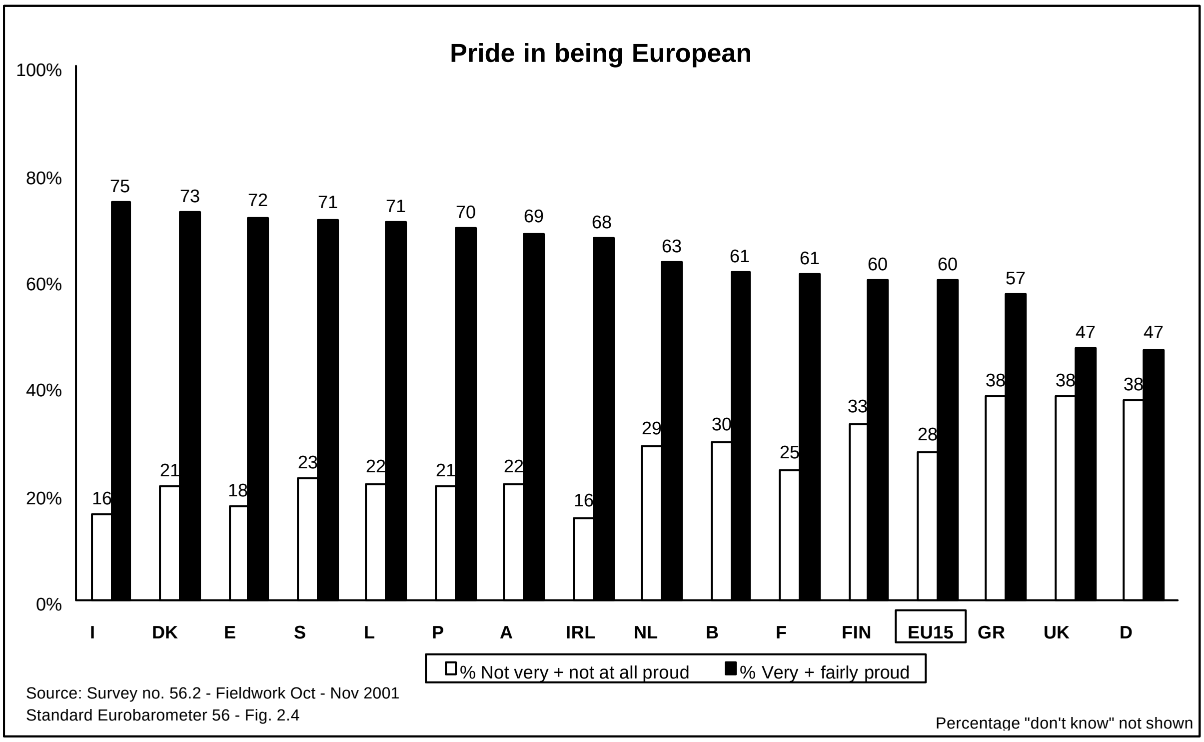
> *"Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud or not at all proud to be European?"*

Six in ten EU citizens feel very or fairly proud to be European, around 3 in 10 feel not very proud or not at all proud and 1 EU citizen in 10 lacks an opinion. The following graph shows that people who feel very proud or fairly proud are in the majority in all 15 Member States.

Pride in being European is most widespread in Italy (75%), Denmark (73%), Spain (72%), Sweden, Luxembourg (71% each) and Portugal (70%). The proportion of people that feels proud to be European is lowest in Germany and the UK (47% each). In the UK, 17% feel not at all proud to be European but in Germany (11%), this figure is considerably lower.

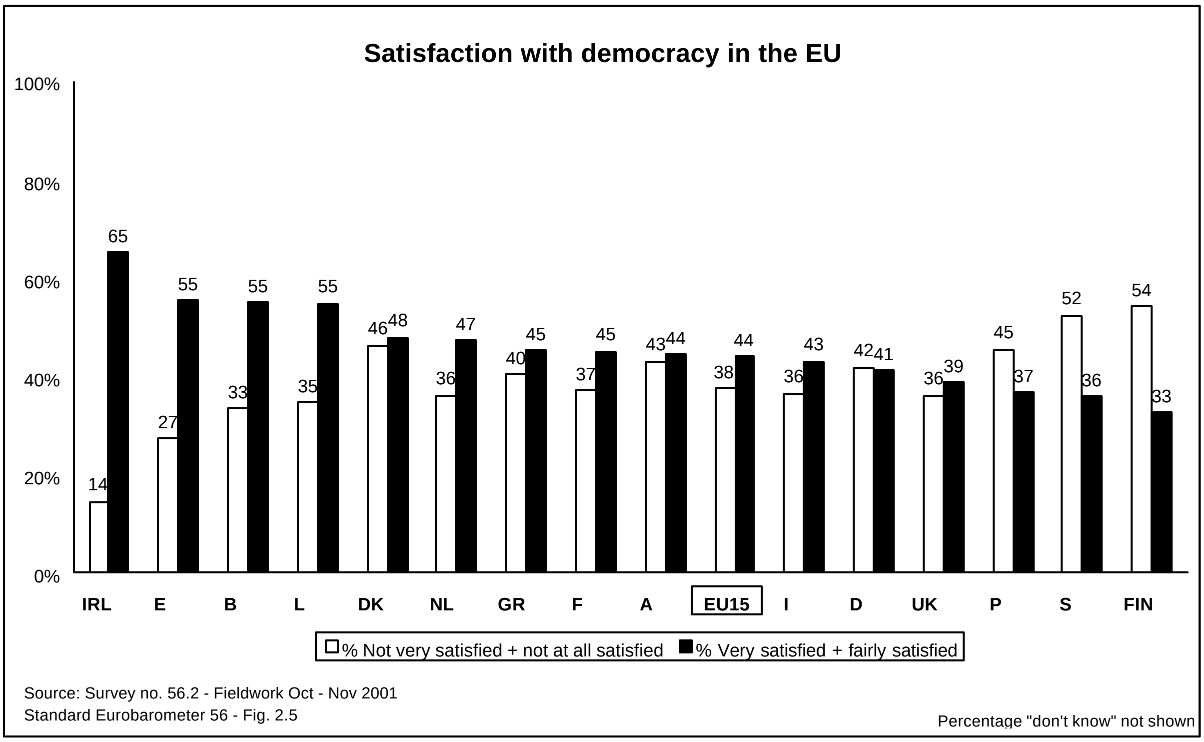
In comparison with Autumn 2000, people in Denmark are now more likely to feel proud to be European (+4). In the UK, Italy, Sweden, Portugal, Belgium and France no significant changes have been recorded whilst in the remaining countries people are now somewhat less likely to feel pride with the largest decreases recorded in Finland (-7), Greece, Luxembourg, Spain (-5 each) and Germany (-4). (Table 2.4a)

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, 65% feel proud to be European, compared to 58% among the latter group. Education is also an important determinant of people's pride: 69% of people who are still studying feel proud to be European, followed by 68% 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 16 are at 56% the educational group least likely to feel pride in being European. Among the various occupational groups we find that other white-collar workers are most likely to feel pride (68%), followed by managers and self-employed people (65% each). Unemployed people (49%) are least likely to feel proud to be European.



The attitudinal analyses show a strong relationship between attitudes to membership of the EU and people's support for the European Union. Seventy five percent of those who regard their country's membership as a good thing feel proud to be European, compared to only 31% of those who regard their country's membership as a bad thing. (Table 2.4b)

Respondents were also asked how satisfied they are with the way democracy works in the European Union. A significant improvement has been recorded since Autumn 2000, with 44% of respondents now saying that they are very satisfied or fairly satisfied (+4) and 38% (-5) saying that they are not very satisfied or not at all satisfied. The remaining 19% lack an opinion.



The country analyses show that satisfaction with democracy in the EU is most widespread in Ireland (65%), followed by Spain, Belgium and Luxembourg (55% each). In all other countries, less than 50% of the population is satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union but in several countries (The Netherlands, France, Italy, Greece, the UK, Denmark and Austria) this is nevertheless the majority view. Finland (54%) and Sweden (52%) are the only countries where more than half of the population feels not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union.

In comparison to Autumn 2000, satisfaction with EU democracy has increased by 17 percentage points in Denmark. Other significant improvements have been recorded in the Netherlands (+15), Austria (+11), Sweden (+9), Ireland (+7), Italy, the UK (+6 each), Germany (+5) and France (+3). Spain and Luxembourg are the only two countries where satisfaction is now significantly less widespread than it was in Autumn 2000. (Table 2.5a)

The demographic analyses show that young people (51%) are most likely to feel satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union while unemployed people (38%) 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.

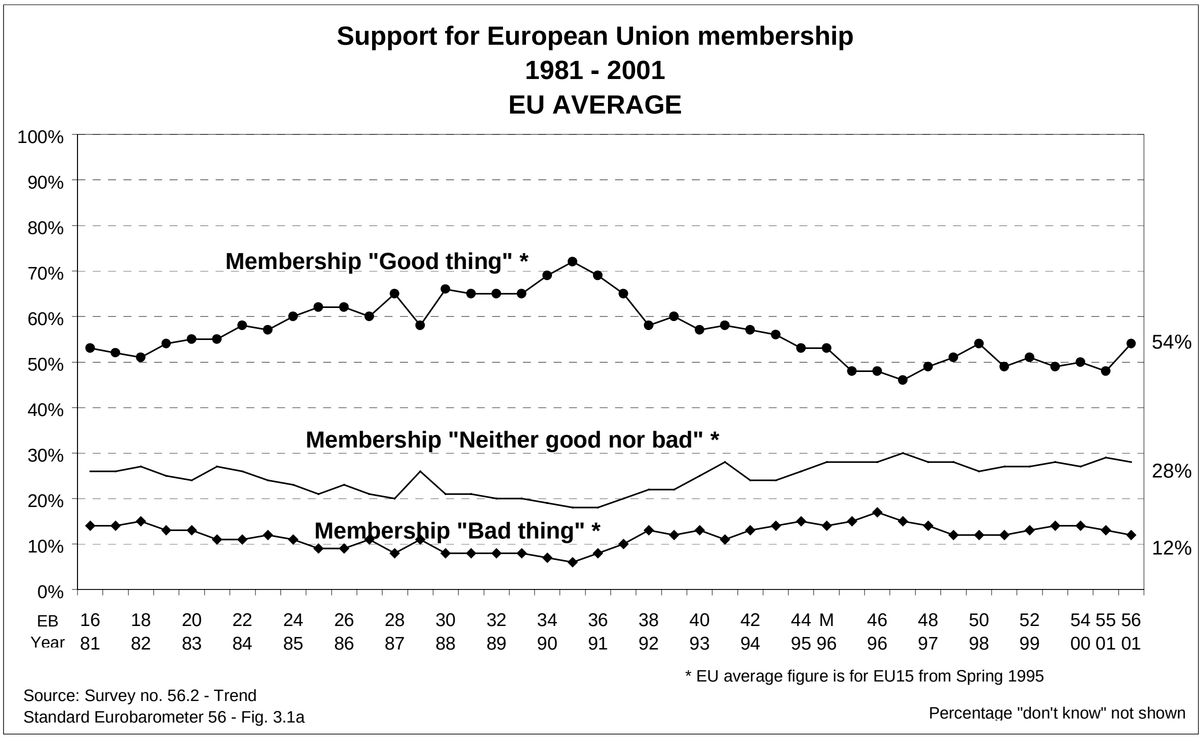
Attitudinal analyses show an even larger gap between supporters and opponents of the European Union than the one obtained for satisfaction with national democracy with 56% of supporters feeling satisfied compared to only 21% of opponents. (Table 2.5b)

3. The core indicators of support for the European Union

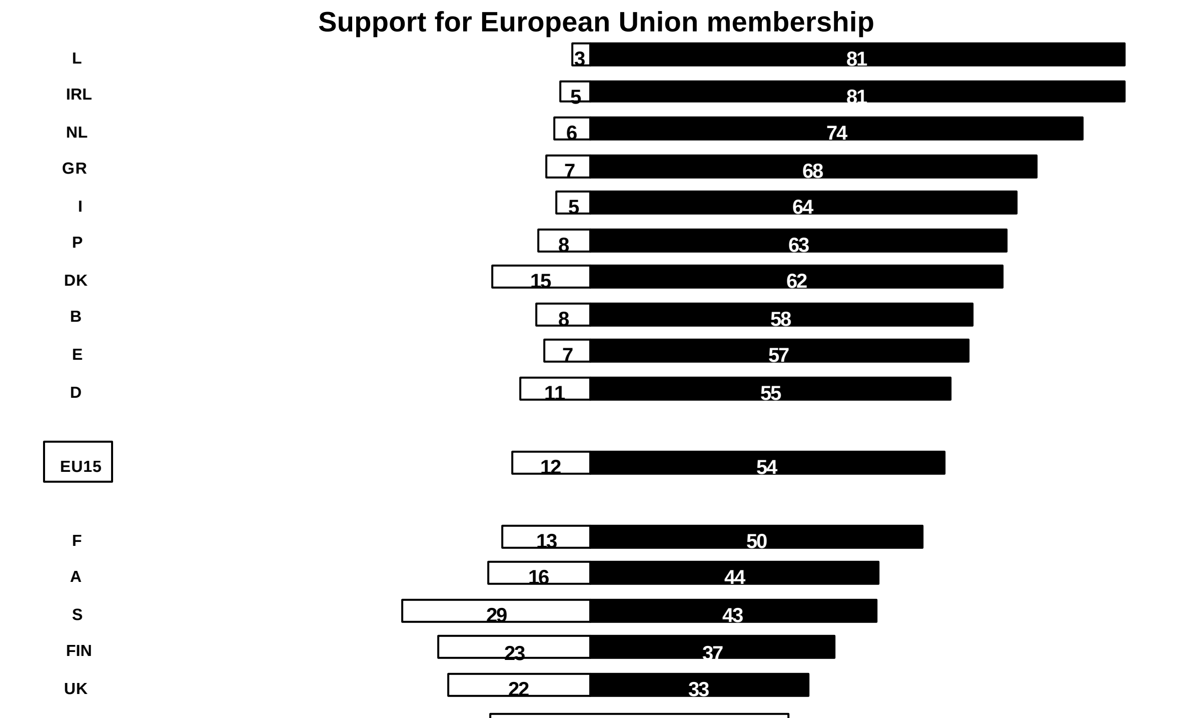
In this chapter we look at developments in some of the standard indicators of support for the European Union. The overall indication is that EU citizens are now more likely to hold favourable views about the Union than they were in Spring 2001. These improvements need to be analysed in the context of the current sense of uncertainty that is affecting all Western nations as a result of the events on the 11th of September, the subsequent war in Afghanistan and the increased economic slowdown.

3.1. Support for European Union membership

Over a period of six months, support for European Union membership has risen by six percentage points to 54%. EU citizens are now less likely to lack an opinion (-3) about their country's membership to the EU or to regard it as neither good nor bad (-1). The proportion of people who see their country's membership as a bad thing has consistently been low and now stands at 12% (-1 since Spring 2001).



Support for EU membership has returned to the same level that obtained prior to the resignation of the Santer Commission and hopefully marks an end to a period of lack of interest and apathy towards the European Union. However, support is still not as broad as it was at the beginning of the 1990's, when 72% of EU citizens regarded their country's membership of what was then still the European Community as a good thing. (See also individual country graphs, figs. 3.3a-o)



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.1b
Percentage "don't know" and "neither good nor bad" not shown

The graph above shows that more than 8 in 10 people in Luxembourg and Ireland (both 81%) support their country's membership of the European Union. In the Netherlands (74%) more than 7 in 10 people support their country's membership and in Greece, Italy, Portugal and Denmark more than 6 in 10 people share this view. Opposition to EU membership ranges from 3% in Luxembourg to 29% in Sweden, but unlike in Spring 2001, there are now no longer any countries where those who regard EU membership as a bad thing outnumber those who see it as a good thing.

The trend analyses show that support for EU membership has increased in all countries except Spain (where 57% continue to regard their country's membership as a good thing). The largest increases in support have been recorded in Denmark (+14), Greece, the Netherlands (+11 each), Germany, Austria and Sweden (+10 each). (Table 3.1a)

Men continue to be more likely than women are to regard their country's membership as a good thing (57% vs. 51%) although the gap is now much smaller and more than half of the female population now supports the EU membership of their country. Education continues to be a powerful explanatory variable of attitudes to the European Union. Levels of support for the European Union increase with education with only 45% of people who left school aged 15 or younger seeing their country's membership as a good thing compared to 67% of people who left full-time education aged 20 or older or who are still studying. Age is also an important variable with those aged 15 to 24 significantly more likely (59%) than those aged 55 and over (48%) to support their country's membership. Analyses of the economic activity scale show a gap of 25 percentage points in support levels between managers (68%) on the one hand and unemployed people (43%) 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, 74% regard their country's membership as a good thing, compared to only 22% of people who want the EU to play a less important role. (Table 3.1b)

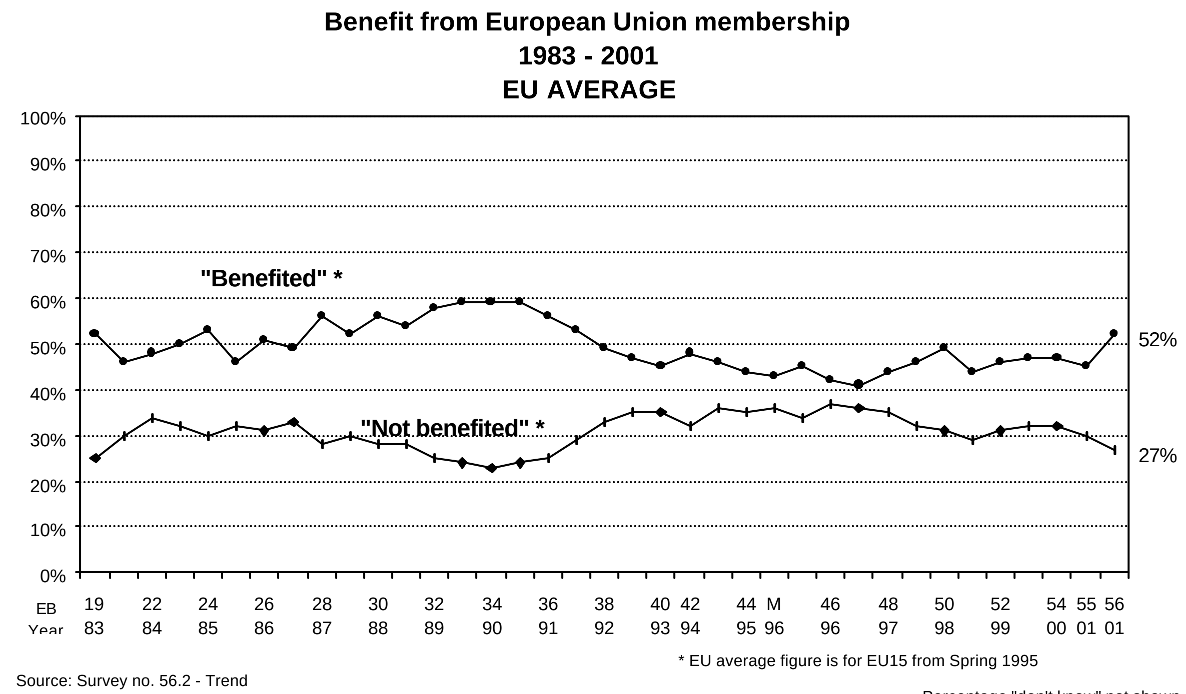
A very important predictor of support for EU membership is the extent to which people feel knowledgeable about the Union, its institutions and its policies[7]. Our analyses show that people who feel they know a lot about the European Union are much more likely to regard their country's membership as a good thing than people who feel they know very little are.

Support for EU Membership by Self-Perceived Knowledge (in %, for EU15)

Country's membership to the EU is:	Low knowledge level	Average knowledge level	High knowledge level
A good thing	40%	60%	74%
Neither good nor bad	34%	26%	14%
A bad thing	14%	11%	9%
Don't know	13%	4%	2%
Total	101%	101%	99%

3.2. Benefit from European Union membership

At 52%, EU citizens are now also more likely to feel that their country has on balance benefited from being a member of the European Union. This is the highest level recorded since 1991 and represents a 7-percentage point increase since Spring 2001. The proportion of people who feel that their country has not benefited has decreased by 3 percentage points and the proportion of people without an opinion has decreased by 4 percentage points.

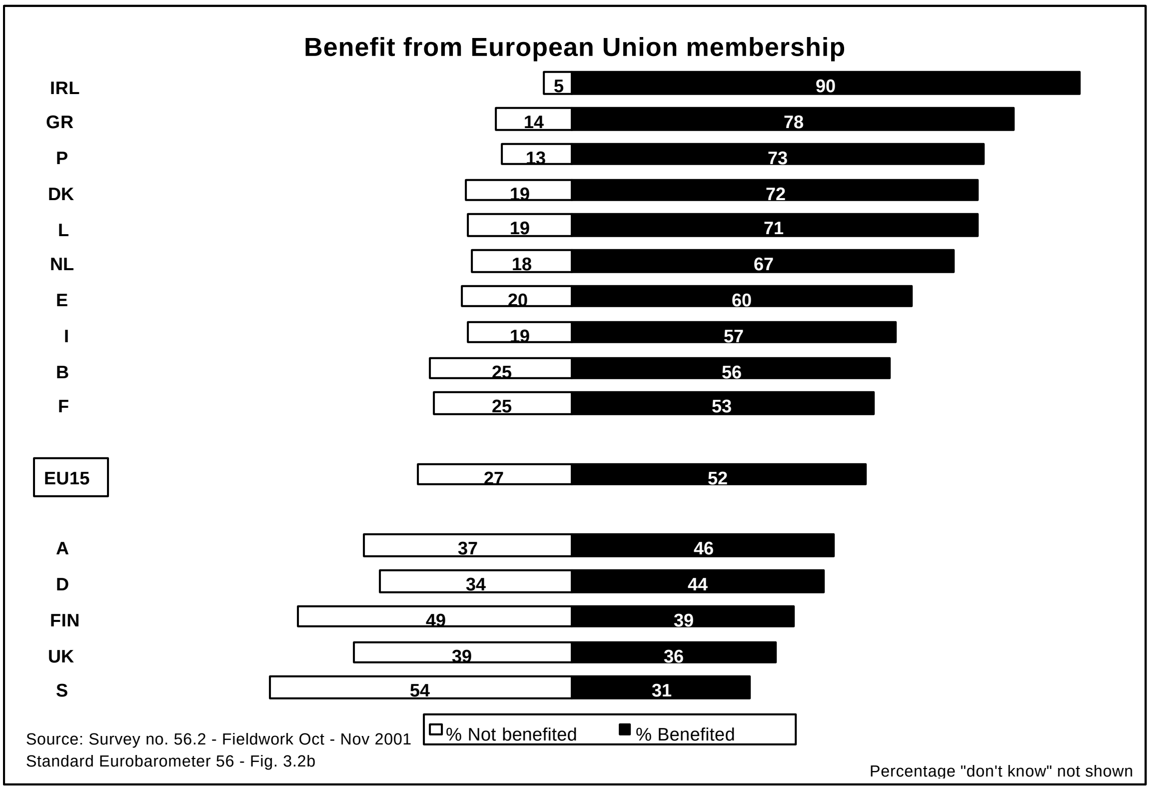


Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.2a

7 The measurement is obtained by asking people to indicate on a scale of 1 to 10 how much they feel they know about the European Union, its institutions and its policies. People who place themselves on points 1-3 of the scale are classified as having a low knowledge level, those with scores 4-7 are classified as having an average knowledge level and those with scores 8-10 are classified as having a high knowledge level. See chapter 7 for more information about this question.

Nine in ten people in Ireland (90%) now feel their country has benefited, up from 83% in Spring 2001. In Greece, close to 8 in 10 people feel their country has benefited (78%), followed by Portugal (73%), Denmark (72%) and Luxembourg (71%). Sweden (31%), the UK (36%) and Finland (39%) are the only 3 countries where less than 4 in 10 people share this view and where those who feel that their country has not benefited are in the majority. (See also individual country graphs, figs. 3.4a-o)

In all 15 Member States, the figures have improved since Spring 2001, with the highest increases in the percentage of people that feel their country has benefited being recorded in Denmark (+11), Greece (+9), Italy, Austria (+8 each), Ireland and the UK (+7 each). (Table 3.2a)



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.2b

Demographic analyses show that students (66%) are most likely to feel that their country has benefited, while unemployed people and people who left school aged 15 or younger (43% each) are least likely to share this view.

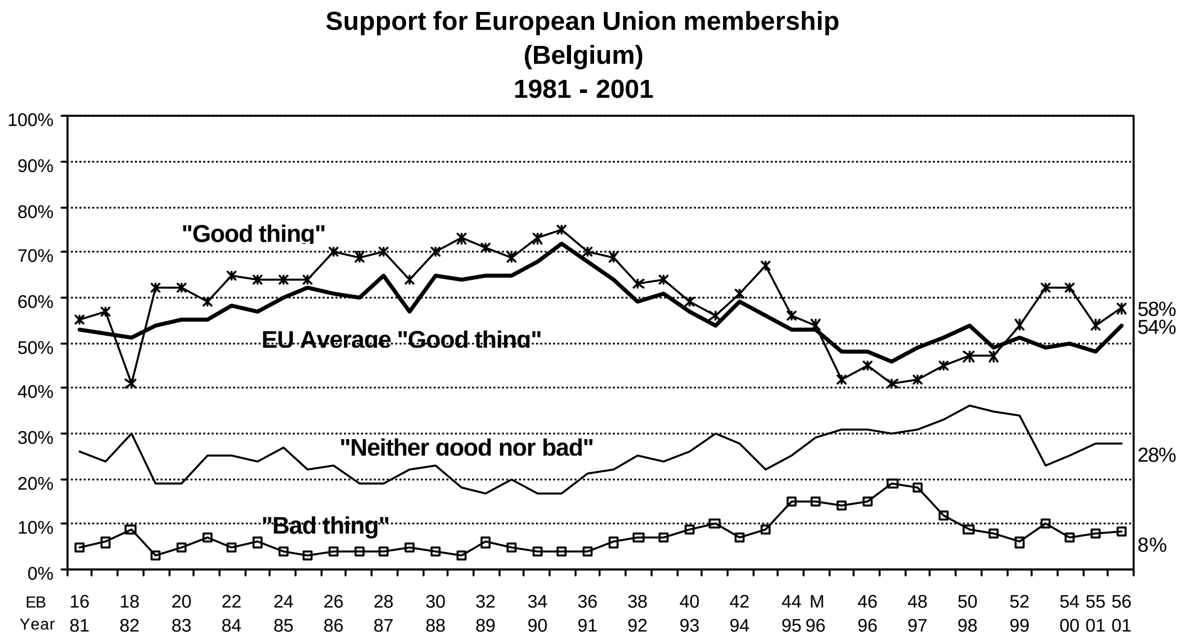
Supporters and opponents of the European Union are clearly divided on this issue: 79% of people who support their country's membership believe their country has benefited, compared to only 10% of those who oppose their country's membership. (Table 3.2b)

The cross-tabulations by self-perceived knowledge show that 71% of people with a high knowledge level feel their country has benefited, compared to 39% of people with a low knowledge level.

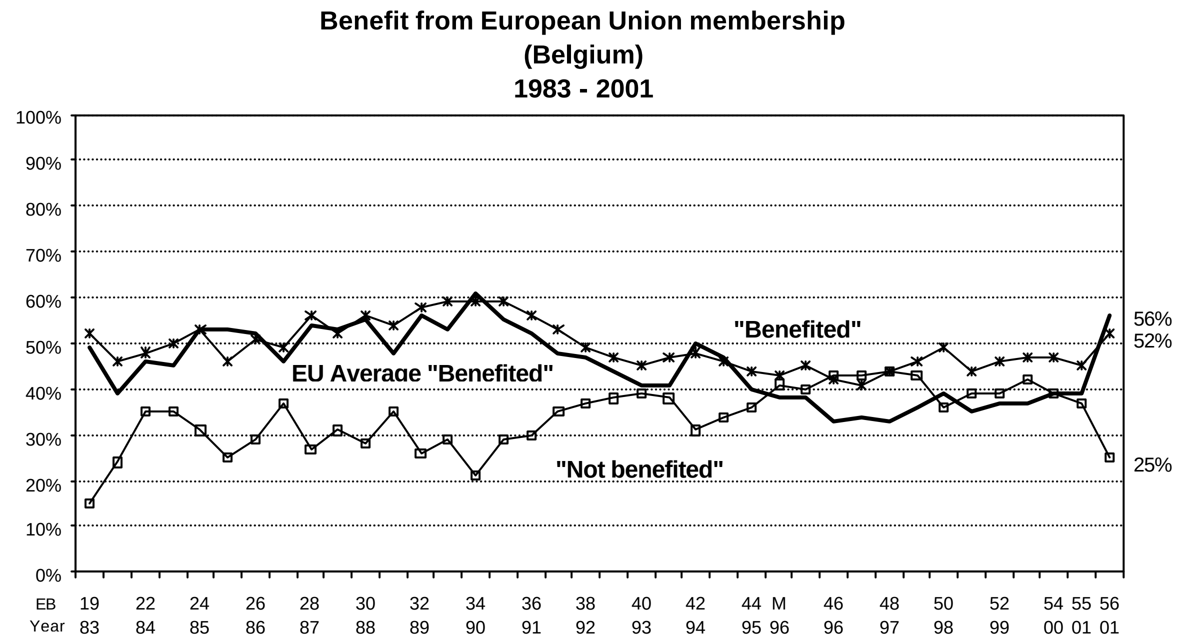
Benefit from EU Membership by Self-Perceived Knowledge (in %, for EU15)

Country has::	Low knowledge level	Average knowledge level	High knowledge level
Benefited	39%	58%	71%
Not benefited	30%	27%	19%
Don’t know	31%	16%	10%
Total	100%	101%	100%

BELGIUM

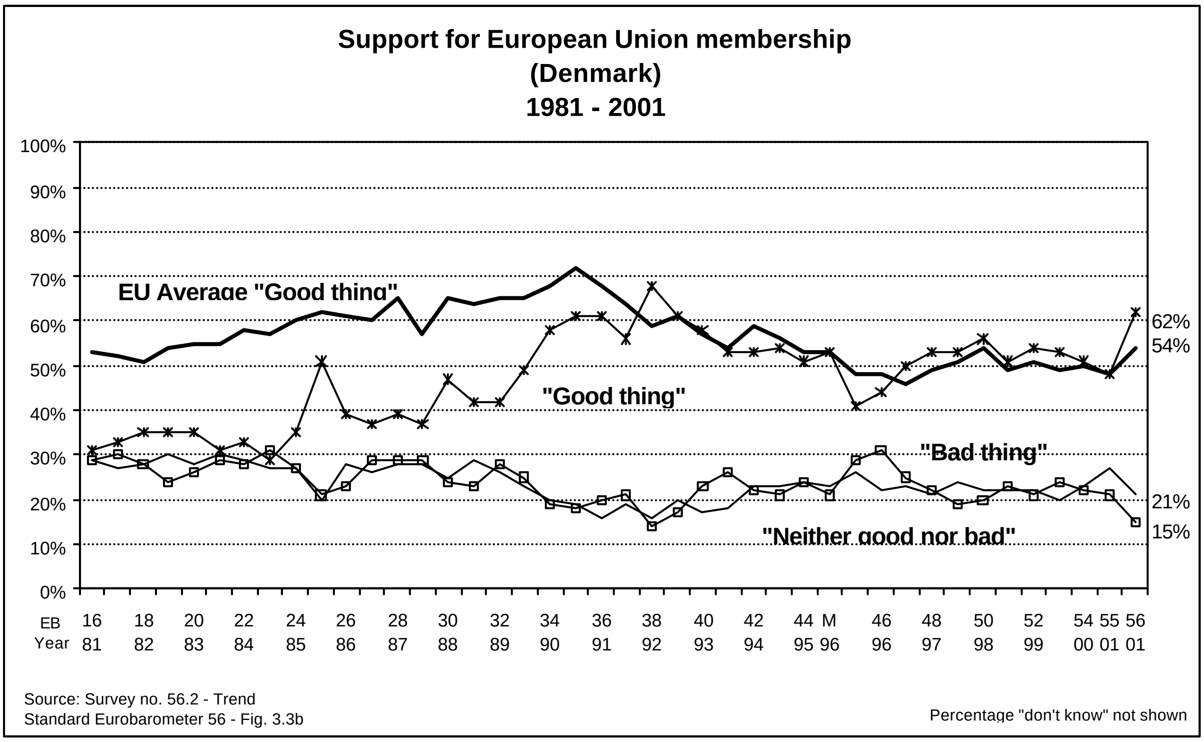


Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3a
Percentage "don't know" not shown

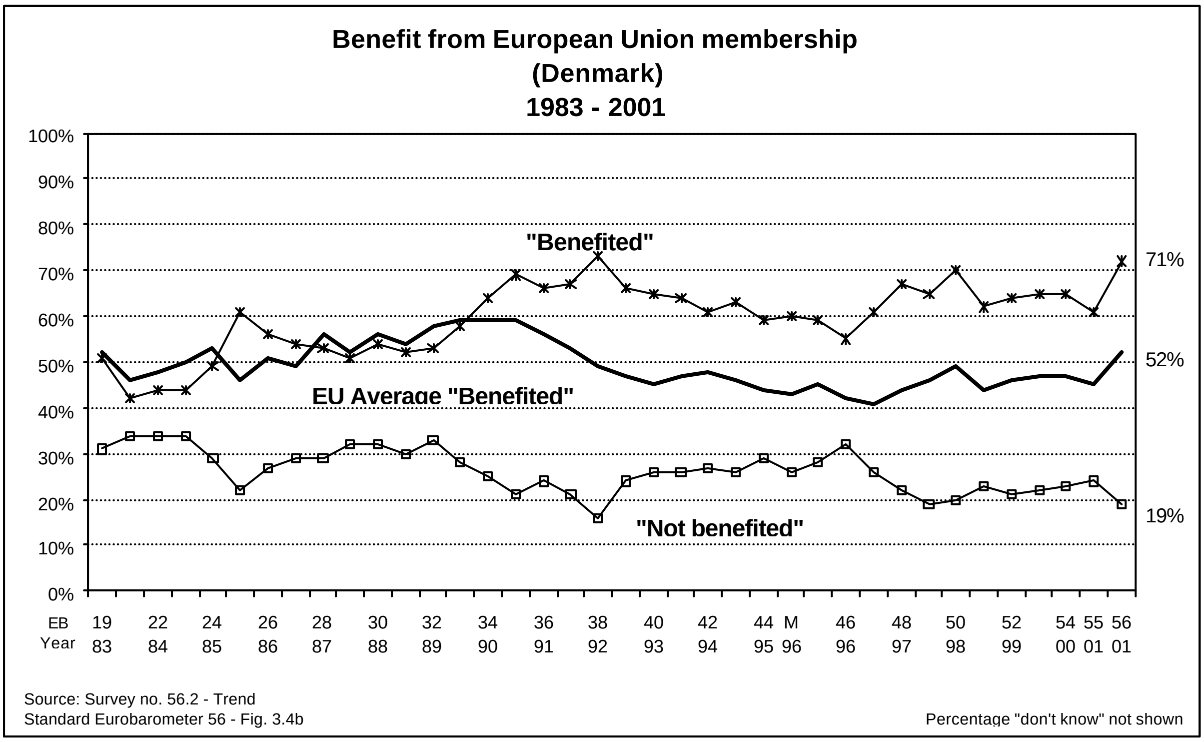


Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4a
Percentage "don't know" not shown

DENMARK

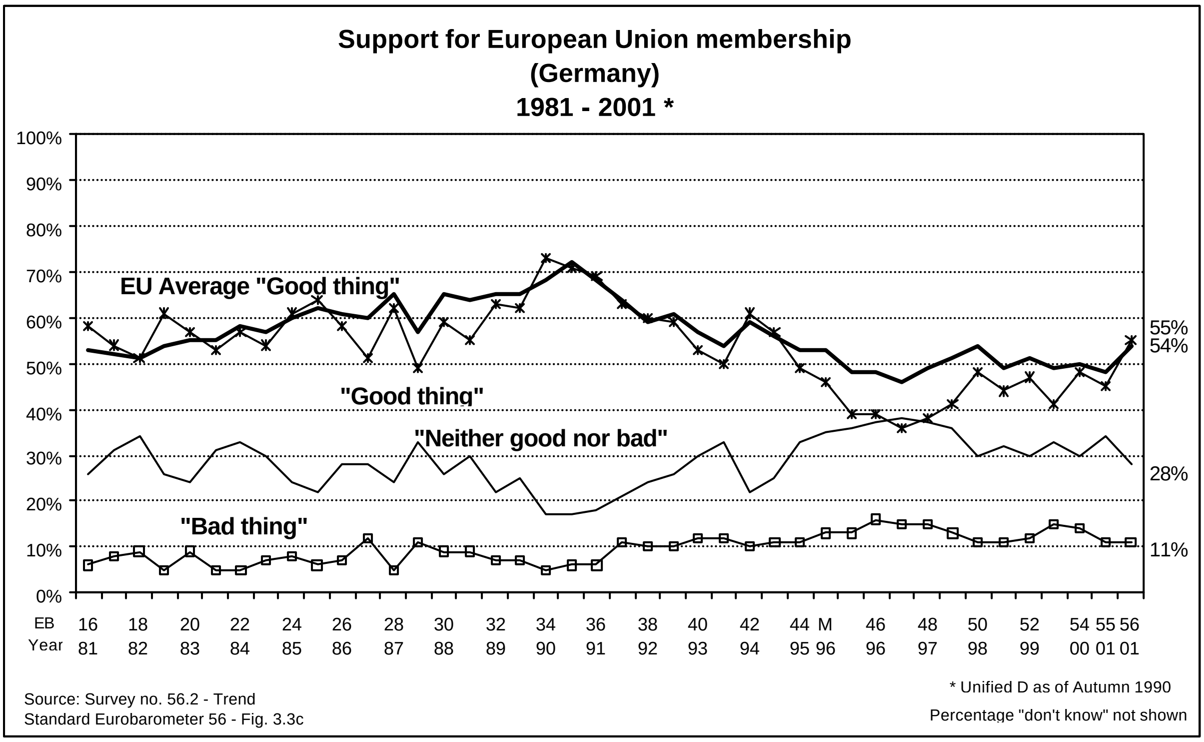


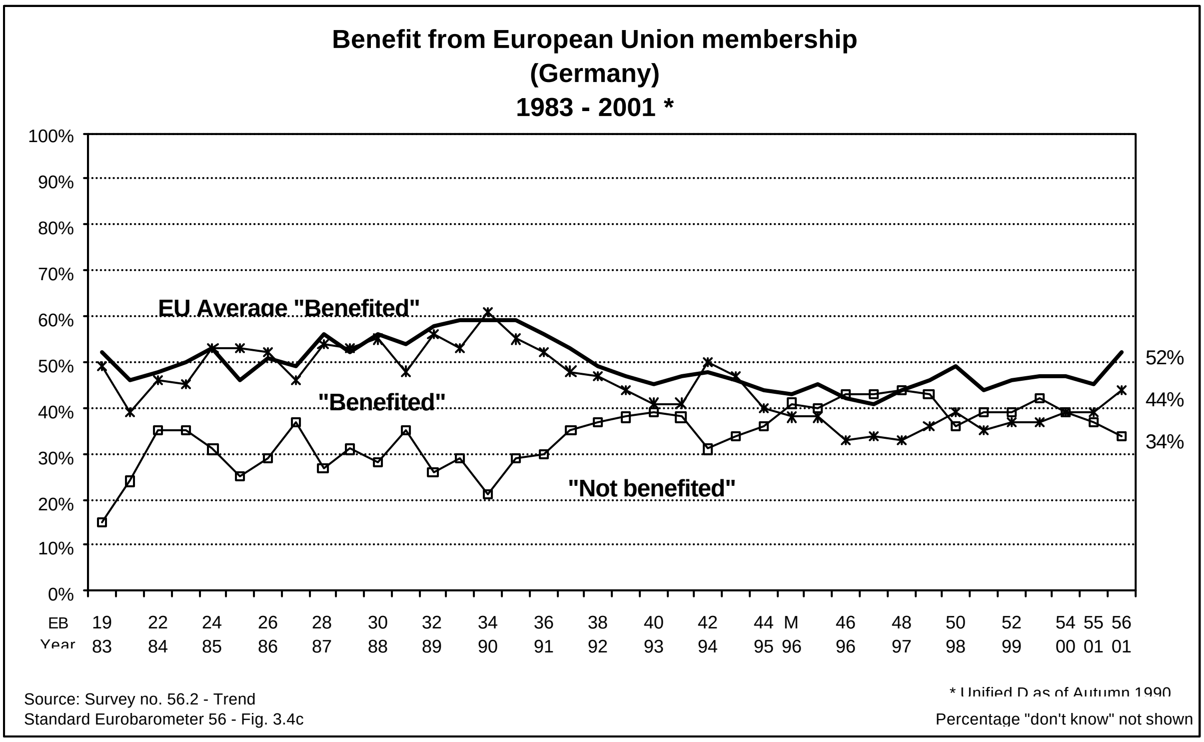
Support for European Union membership
(Denmark)
1981 - 2001
EU Average "Good thing"
"Good thing"
"Bad thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
62%
54%
21%
15%
EB
Year
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3b
Percentage "don't know" not shown



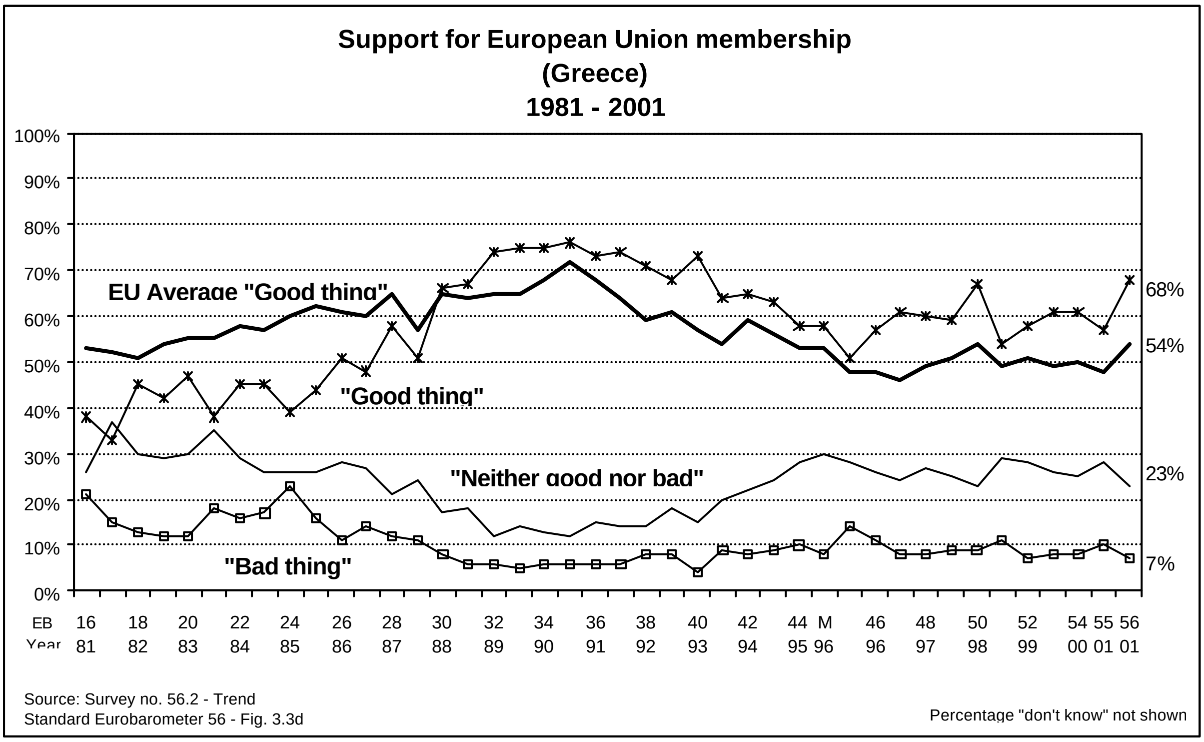
Benefit from European Union membership
(Denmark)
1983 - 2001
"Benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Not benefited"
71%
52%
19%
EB
Year
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4b
Percentage "don't know" not shown

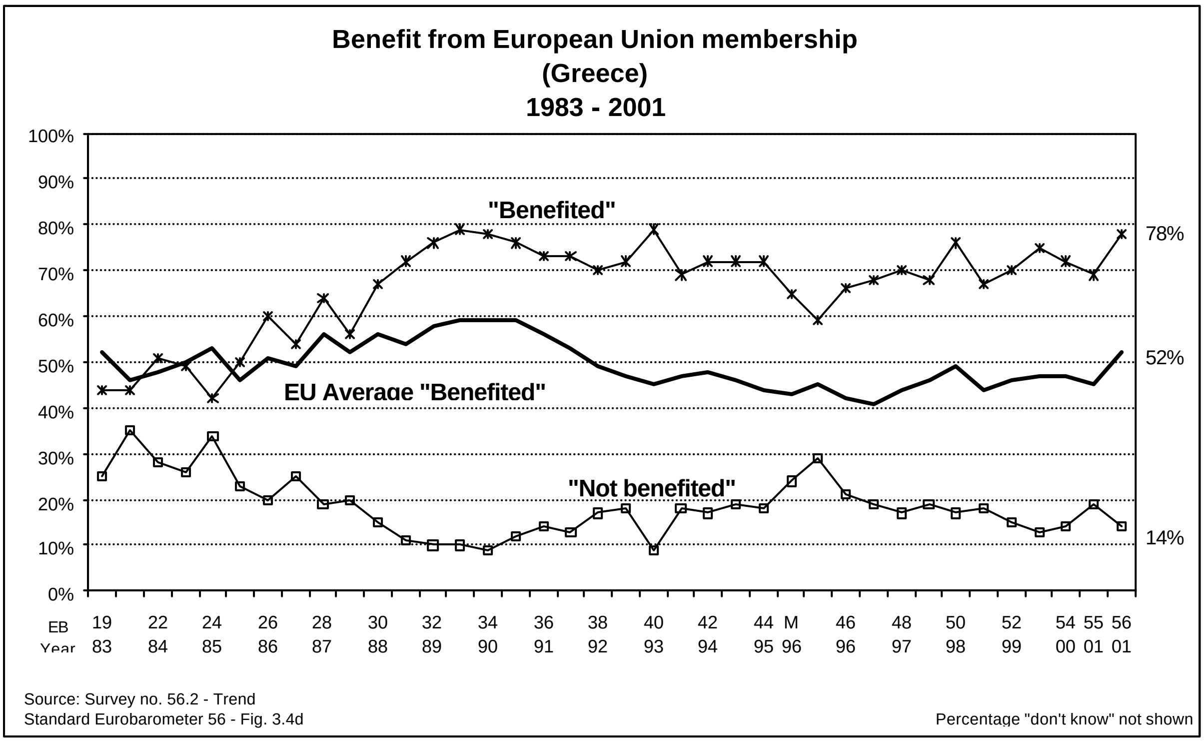
GERMANY


Support for European Union membership
(Germany)
1981 - 2001 *
EU Average "Good thing"
"Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
55%
54%
28%
11%
EB
Year
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3c
* Unified D as of Autumn 1990
Percentage "don't know" not shown

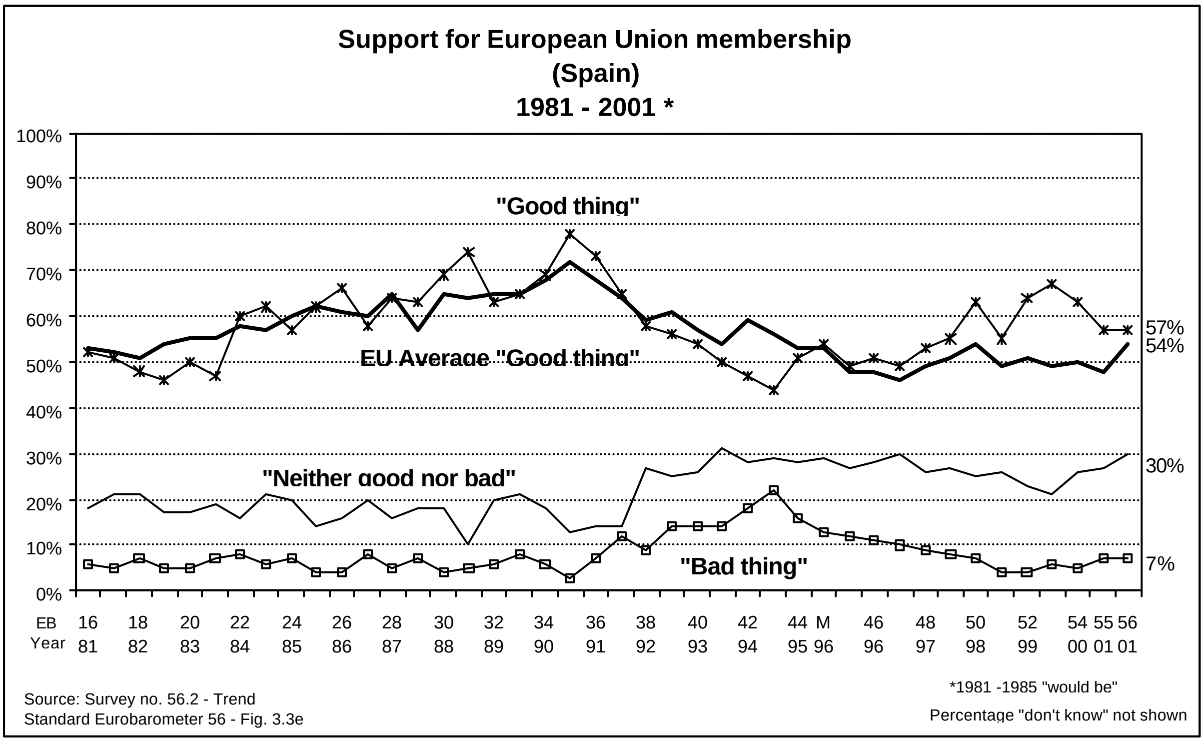

Benefit from European Union membership
(Germany)
1983 - 2001 *
EU Average "Benefited"
"Benefited"
"Not benefited"
52%
44%
34%
EB
Year
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4c
* Unified D as of Autumn 1990
Percentage "don't know" not shown

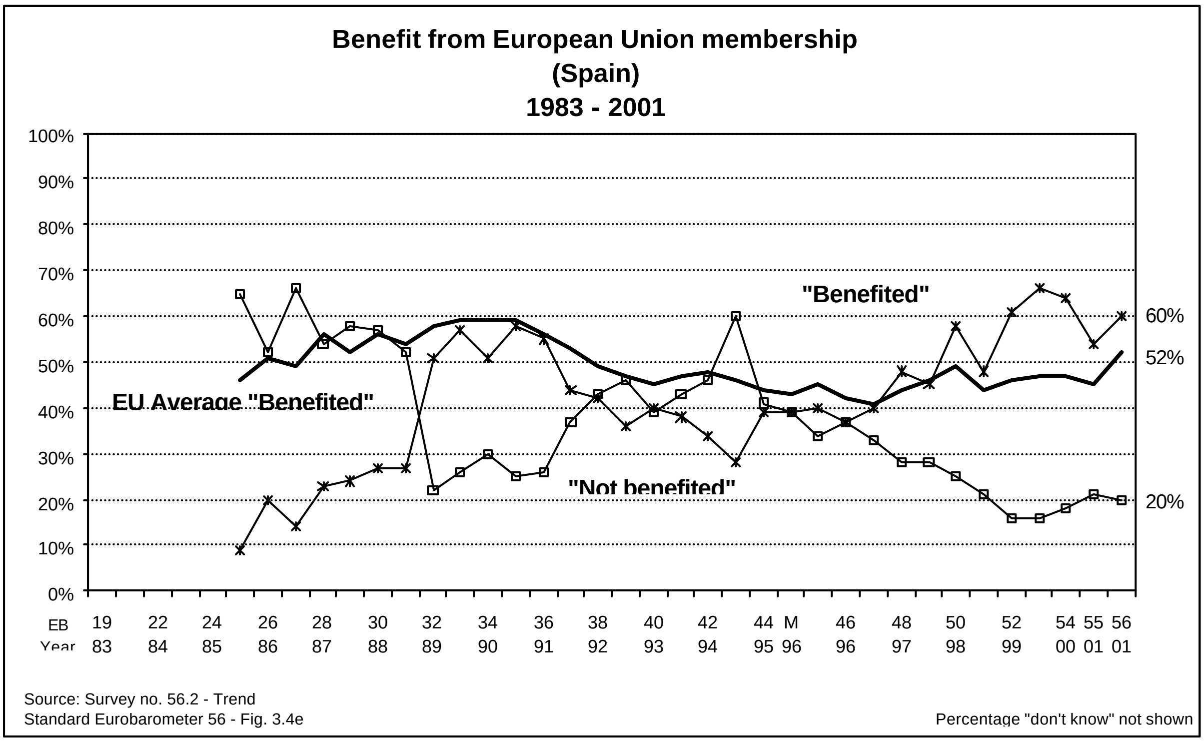
GREECE


Support for European Union membership
(Greece)
1981 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
EU Average "Good thing"
"Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
68%
54%
23%
7%
EB 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3d
Percentage "don't know" not shown

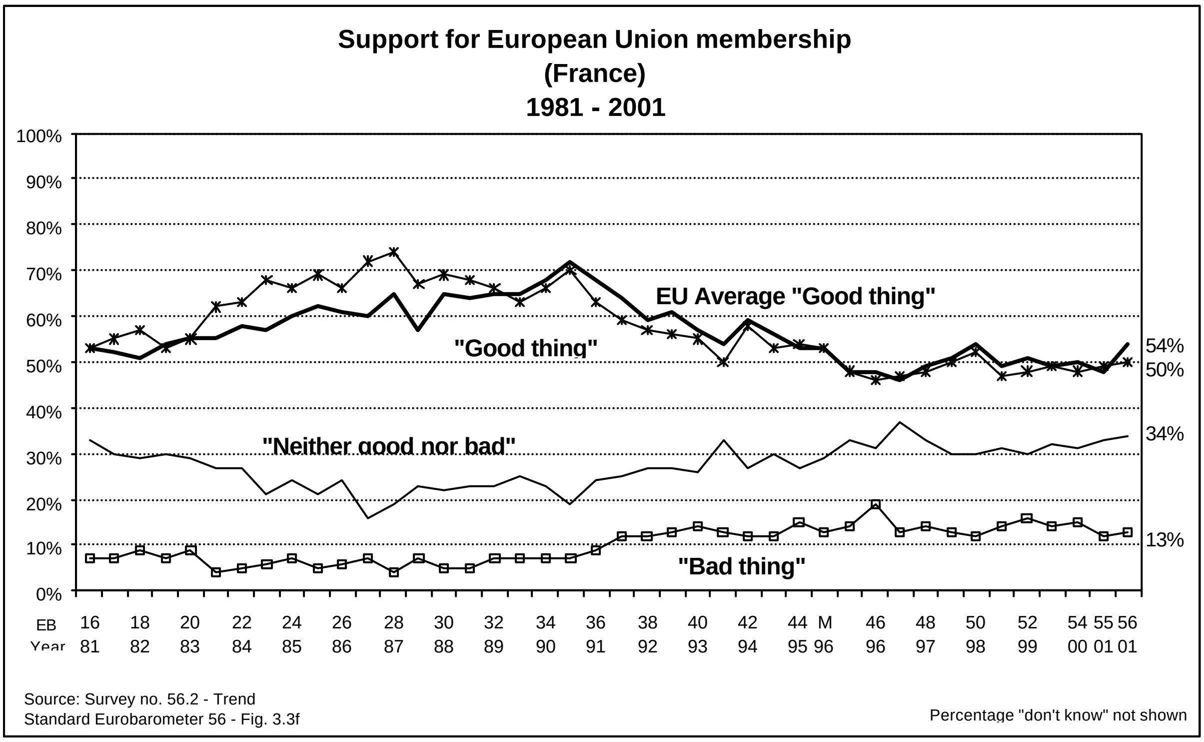

Benefit from European Union membership
(Greece)
1983 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Not benefited"
78%
52%
14%
EB 19 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4d
Percentage "don't know" not shown

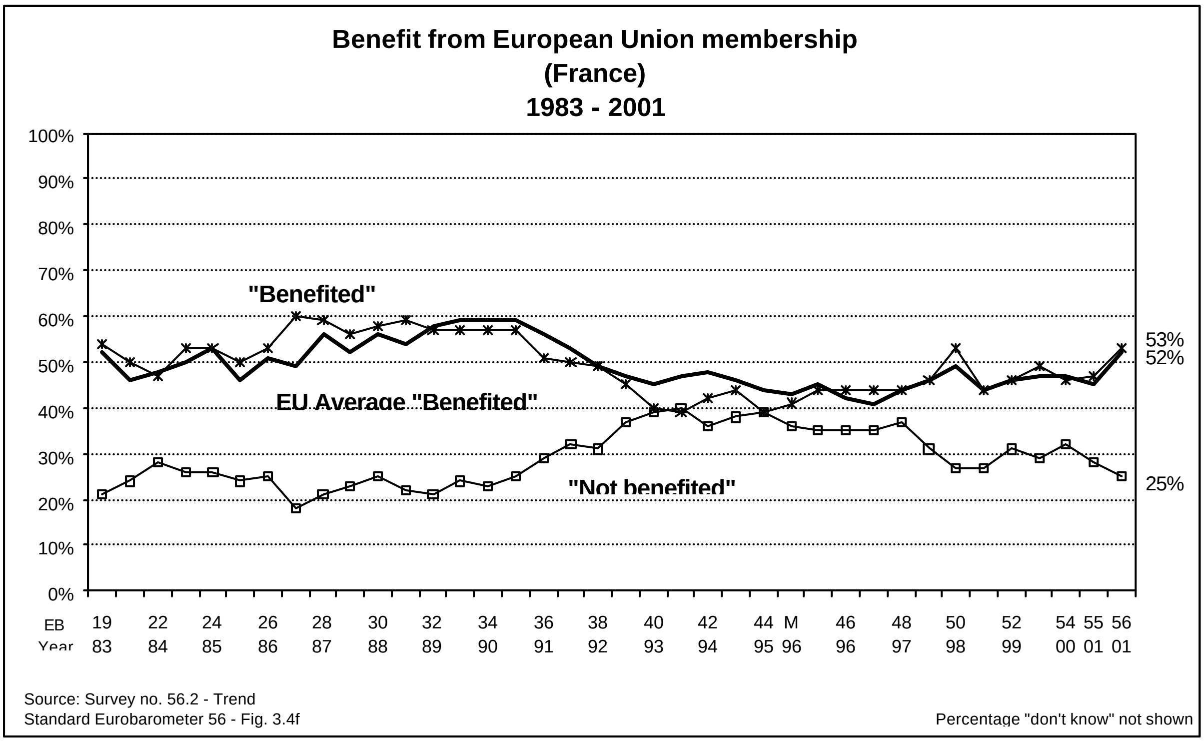
SPAIN


Support for European Union membership
(Spain)
1981 - 2001 *
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Good thing"
EU Average "Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
57%
54%
30%
7%
EB 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
*1981 -1985 "would be"
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3e
Percentage "don't know" not shown

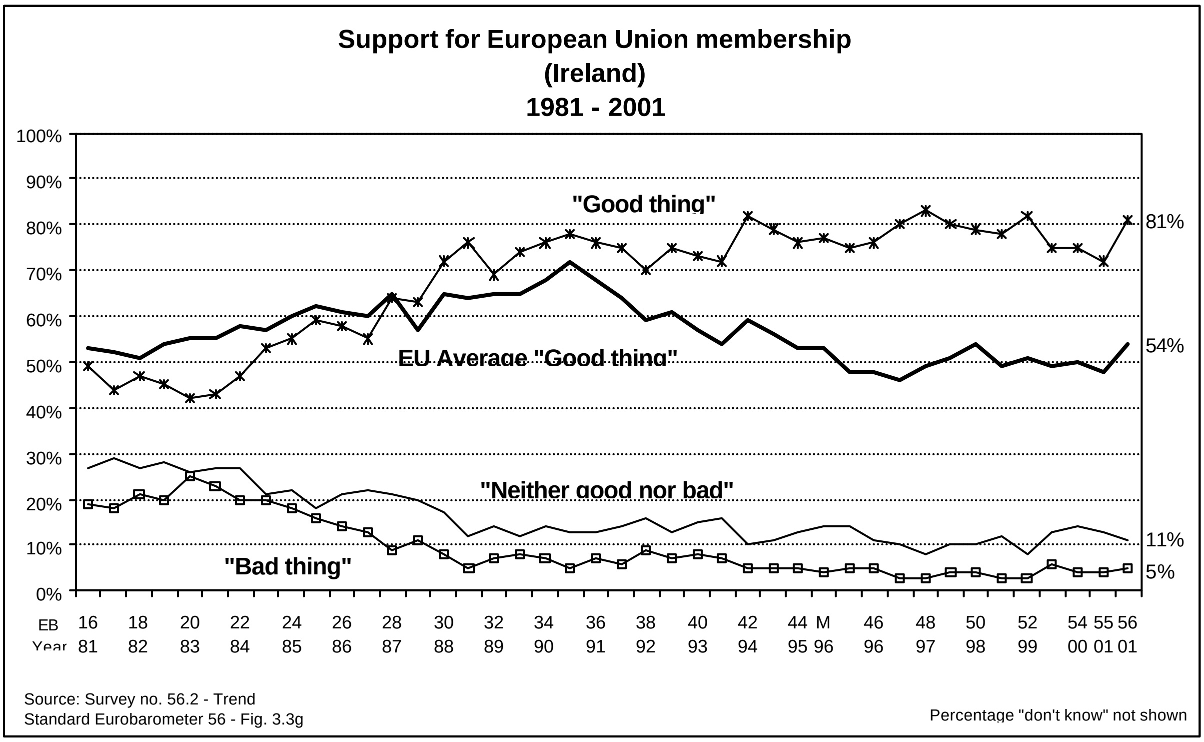

Benefit from European Union membership
(Spain)
1983 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Not benefited"
60%
52%
20%
EB 19 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4e
Percentage "don't know" not shown

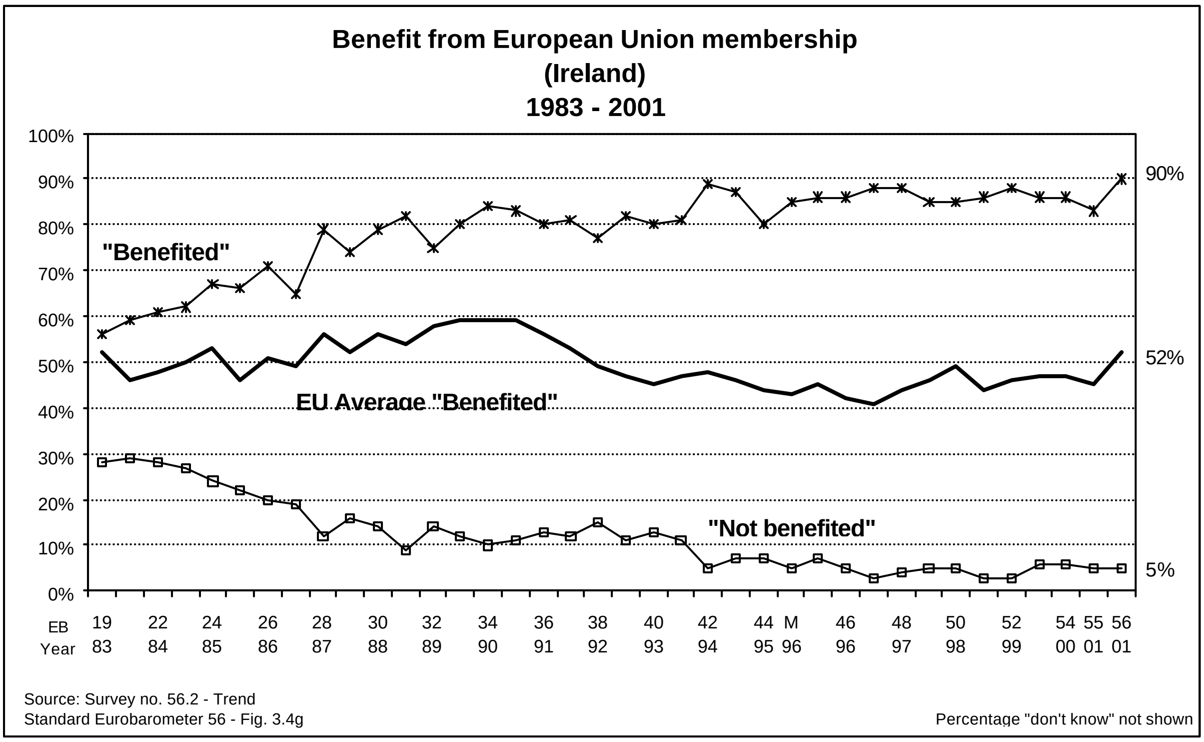
FRANCE


Support for European Union membership
(France)
1981 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
EU Average "Good thing"
"Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
54%
50%
34%
13%
EB 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3f
Percentage "don't know" not shown

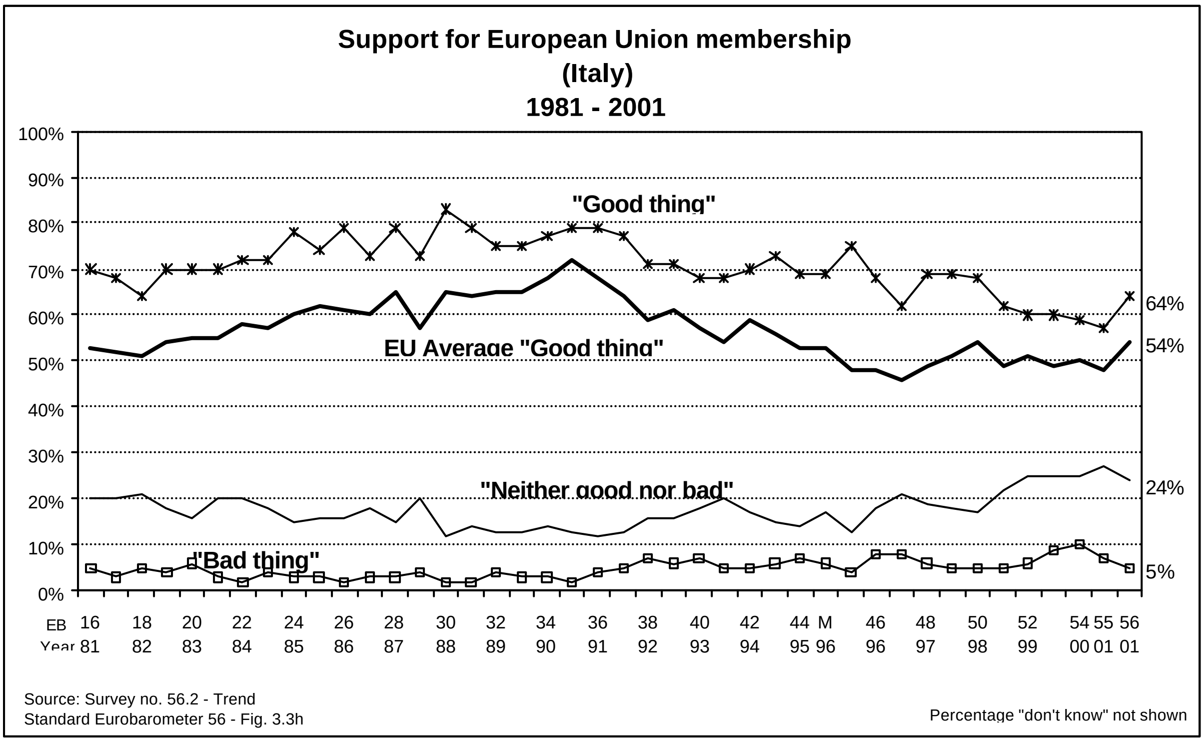

Benefit from European Union membership
(France)
1983 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Not benefited"
53%
52%
25%
EB 19 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4f
Percentage "don't know" not shown

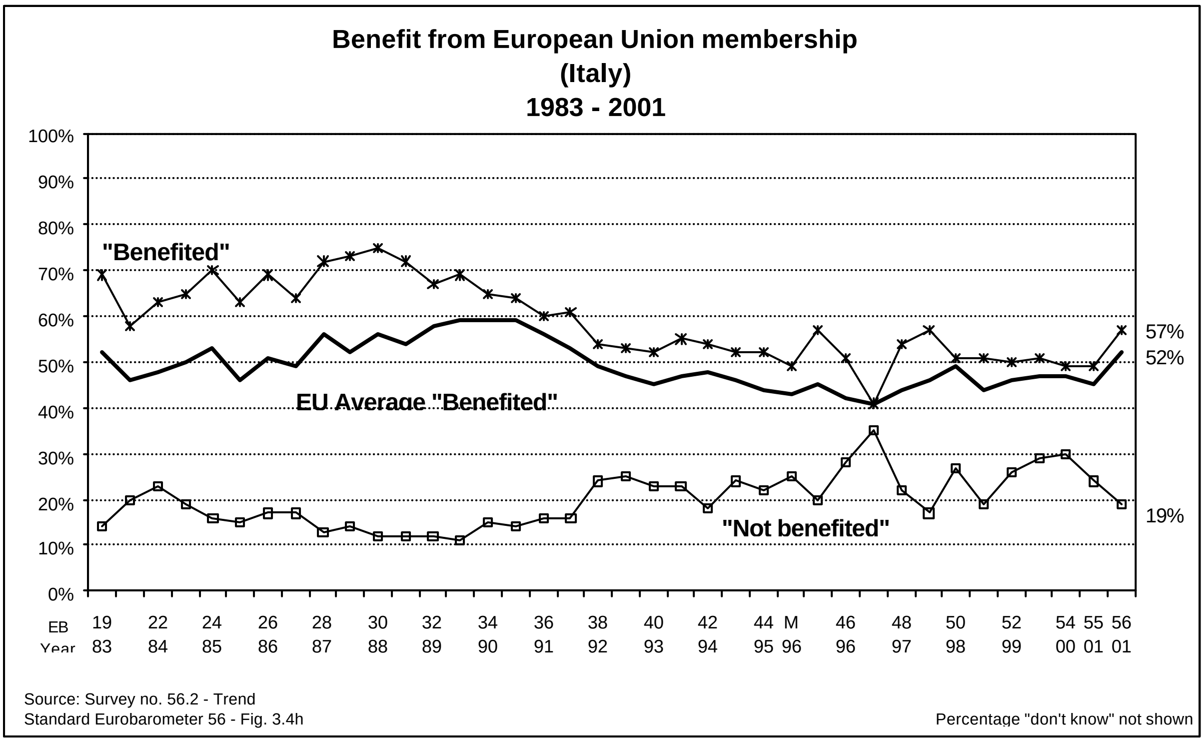
IRELAND


Support for European Union membership
(Ireland)
1981 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Good thing"
EU Average "Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
81%
54%
11%
5%
EB 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3g
Percentage "don't know" not shown

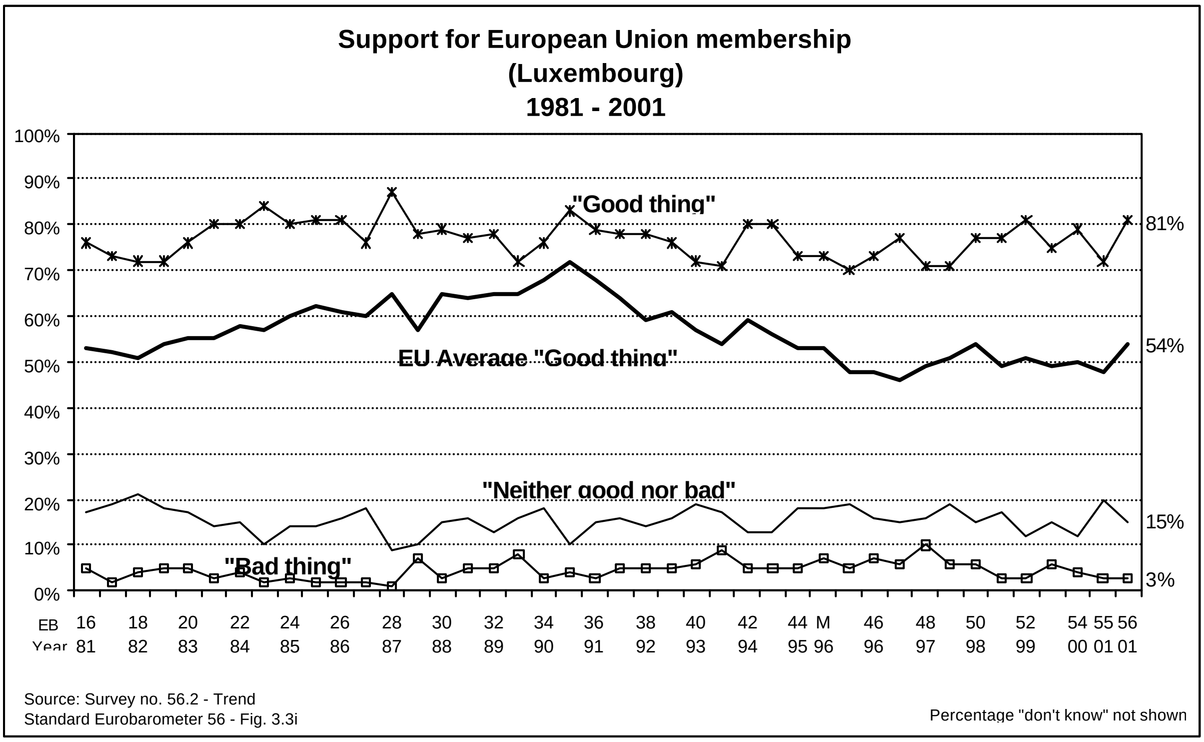

Benefit from European Union membership
(Ireland)
1983 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Not benefited"
90%
52%
5%
EB 19 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4g
Percentage "don't know" not shown

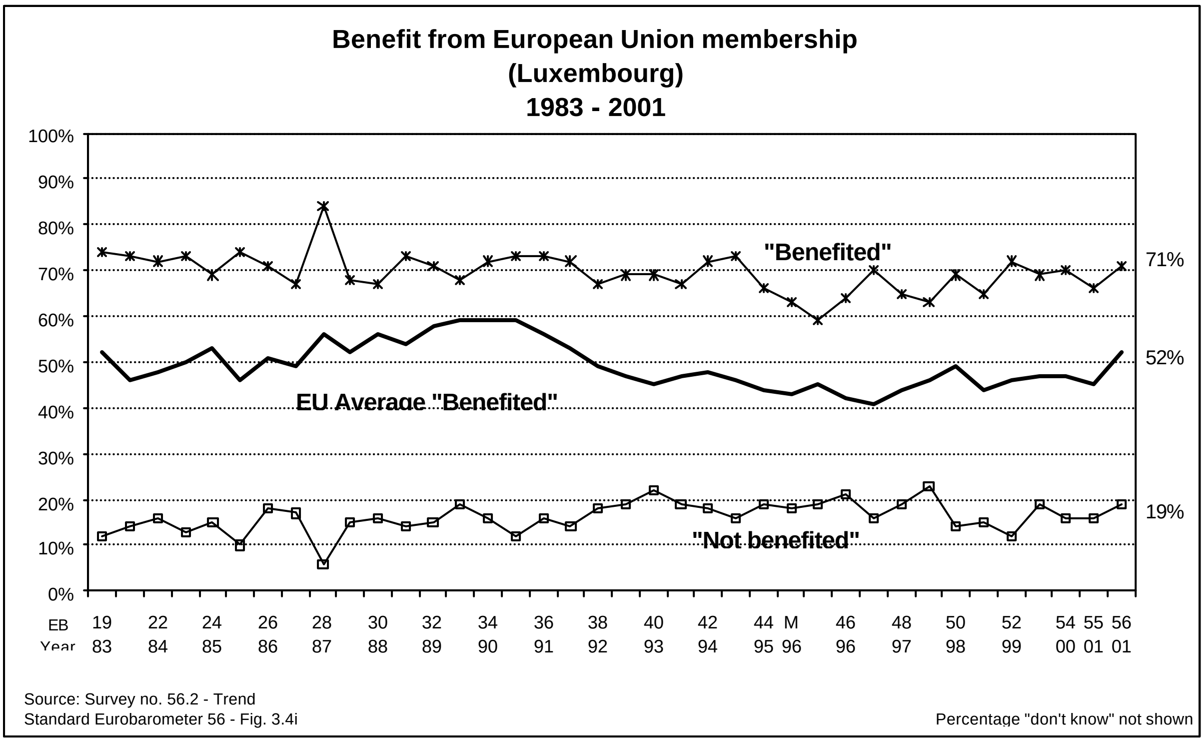
ITALY


Support for European Union membership
(Italy)
1981 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Good thing"
EU Average "Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
64%
54%
24%
5%
EB 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3h
Percentage "don't know" not shown

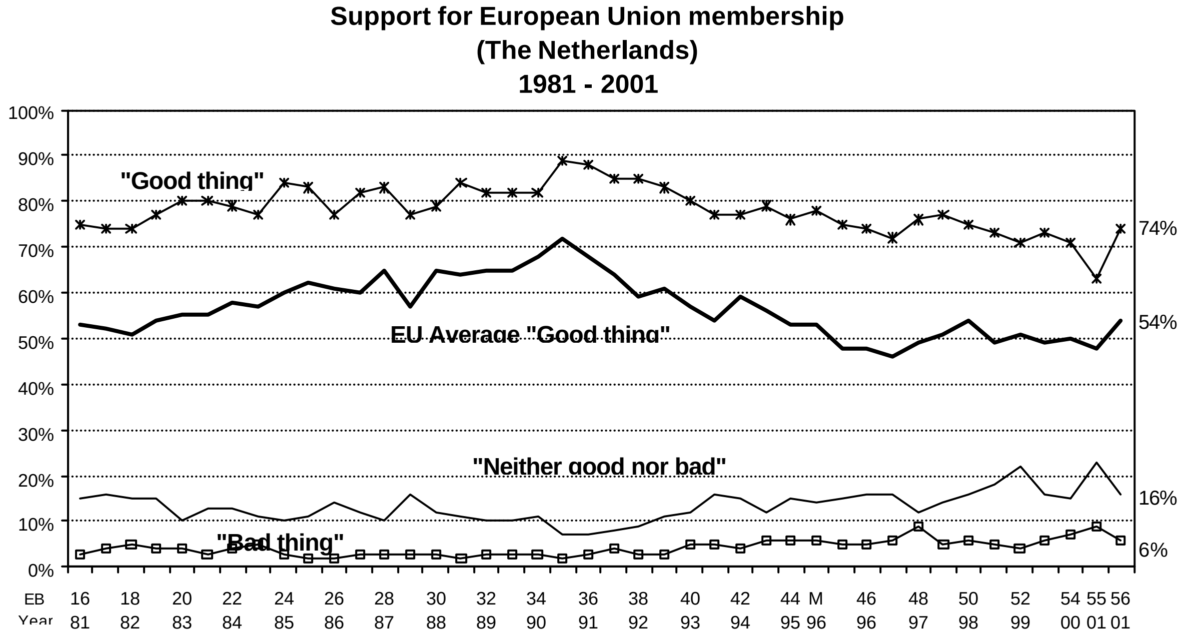

Benefit from European Union membership
(Italy)
1983 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Not benefited"
57%
52%
19%
EB 19 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4h
Percentage "don't know" not shown

LUXEMBOURG


Support for European Union membership
(Luxembourg)
1981 - 2001
"Good thing"
EU Average "Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
81%
54%
15%
3%
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
EB 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3i
Percentage "don't know" not shown

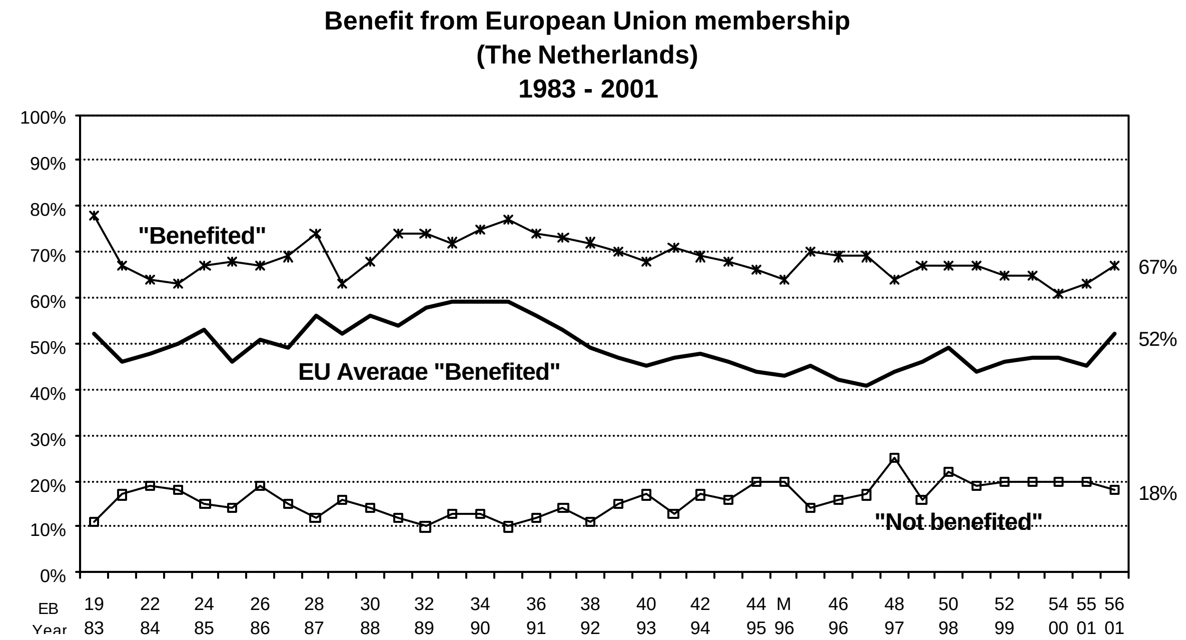

Benefit from European Union membership
(Luxembourg)
1983 - 2001
"Benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Not benefited"
71%
52%
19%
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
EB 19 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4i
Percentage "don't know" not shown

THE NETHERLANDS



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3j

Percentage "don't know" not shown

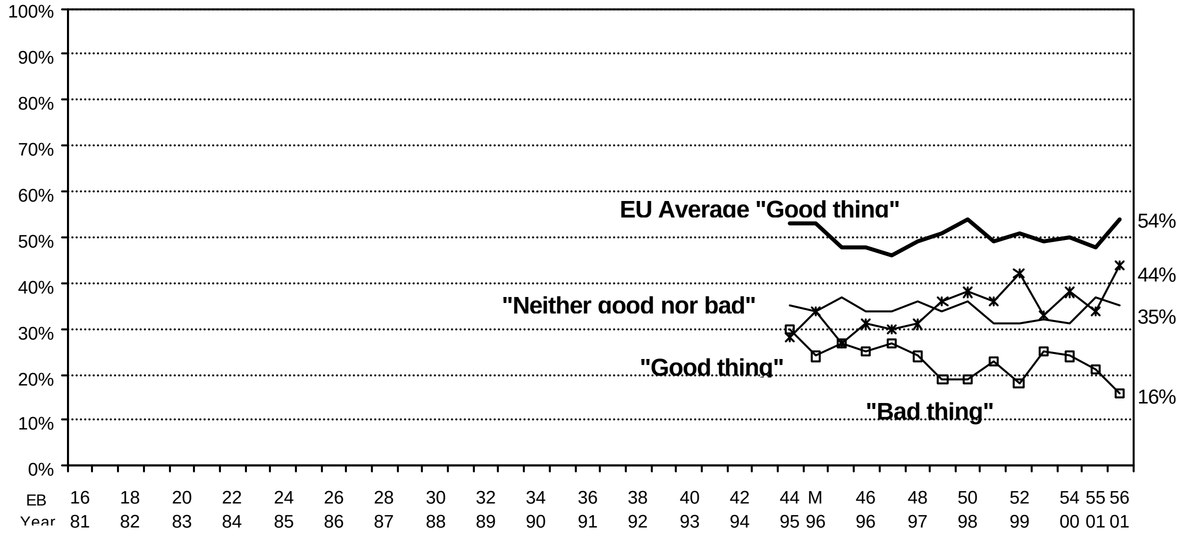


Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4j

Percentage "don't know" not shown

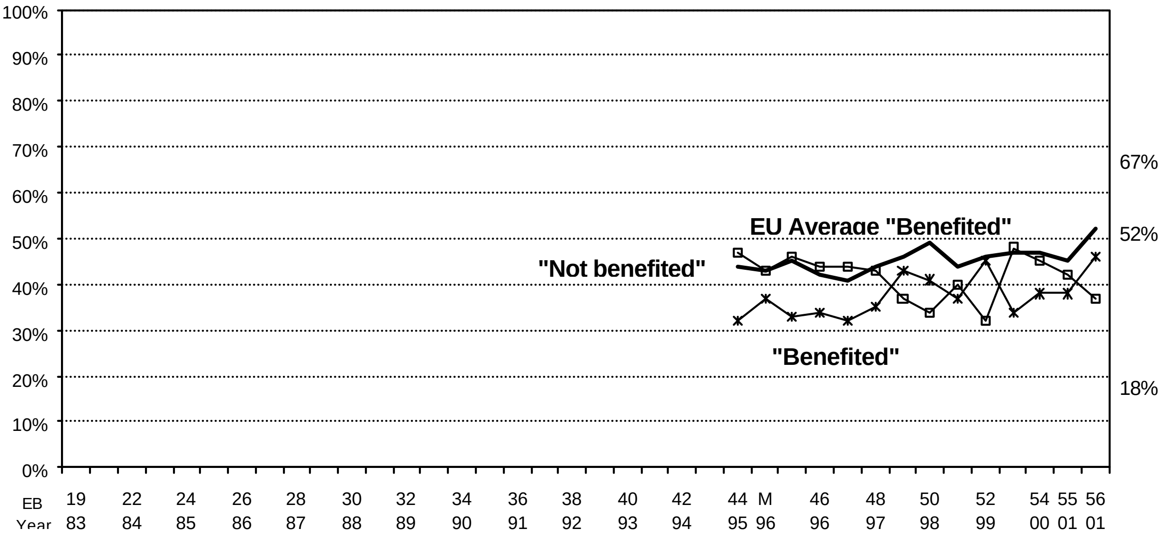
AUSTRIA

Support for European Union membership
(Austria)
1981 - 2001



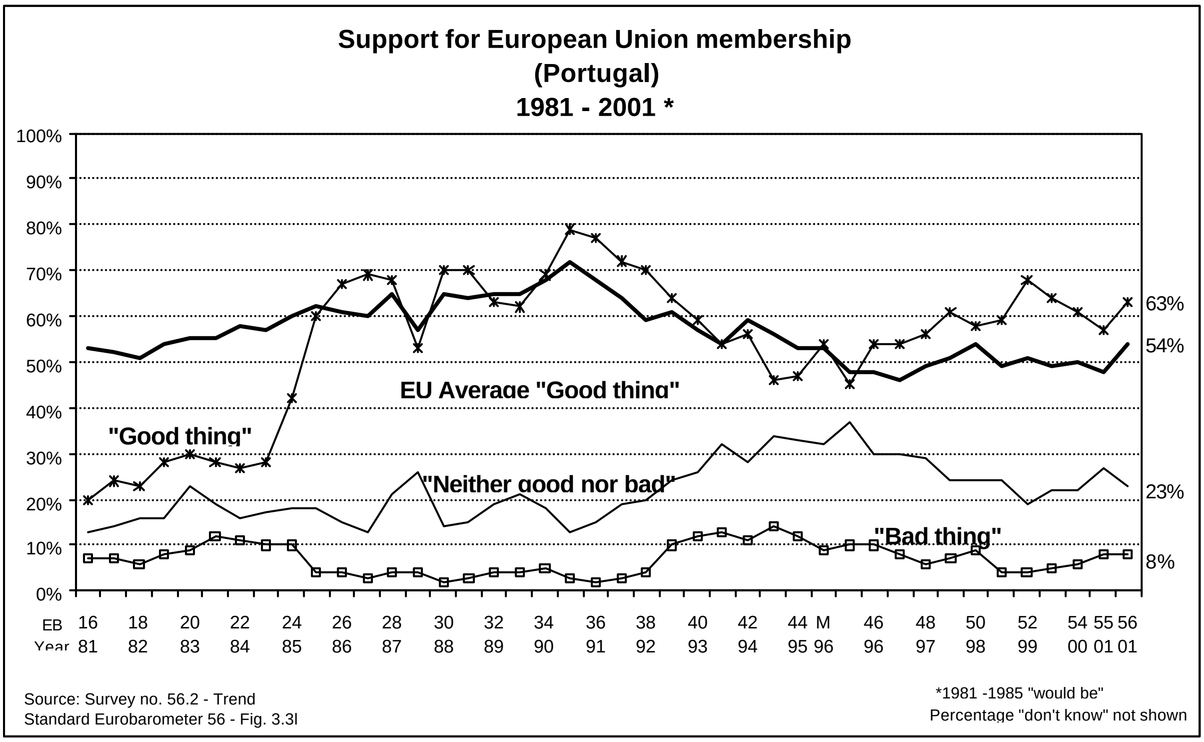
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3k
Percentage "don't know" not shown

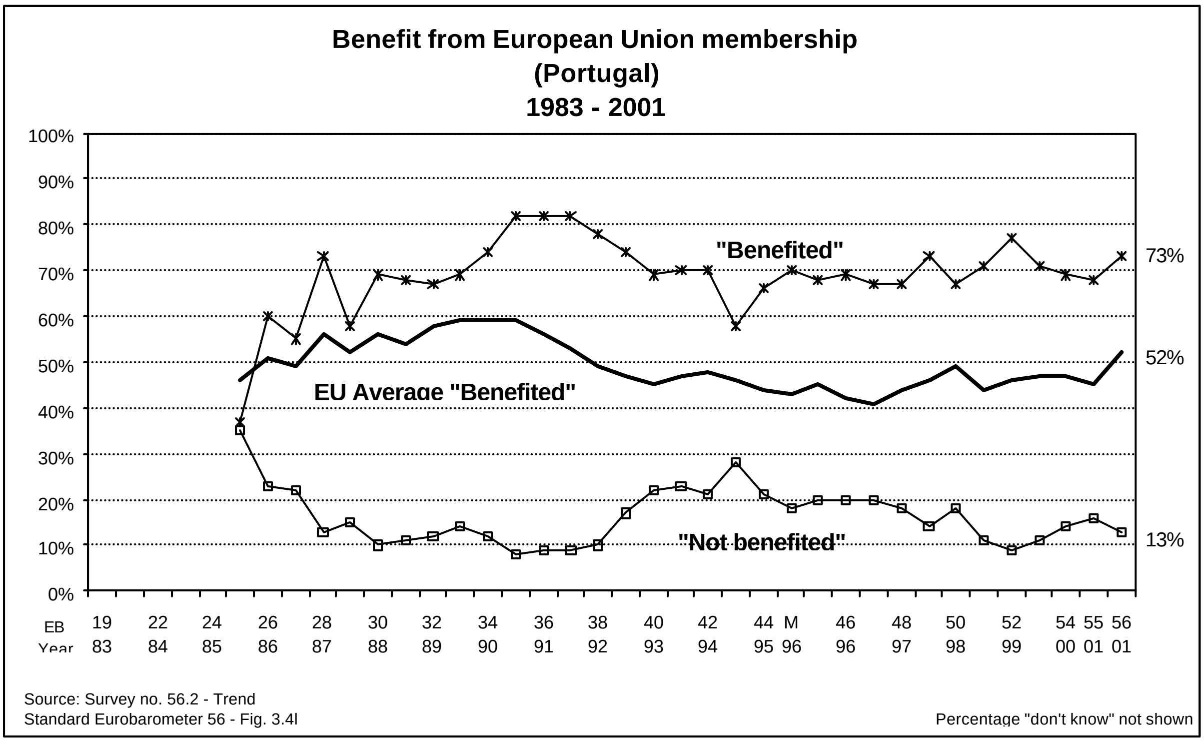
Benefit from European Union membership
(Austria)
1983 - 2001



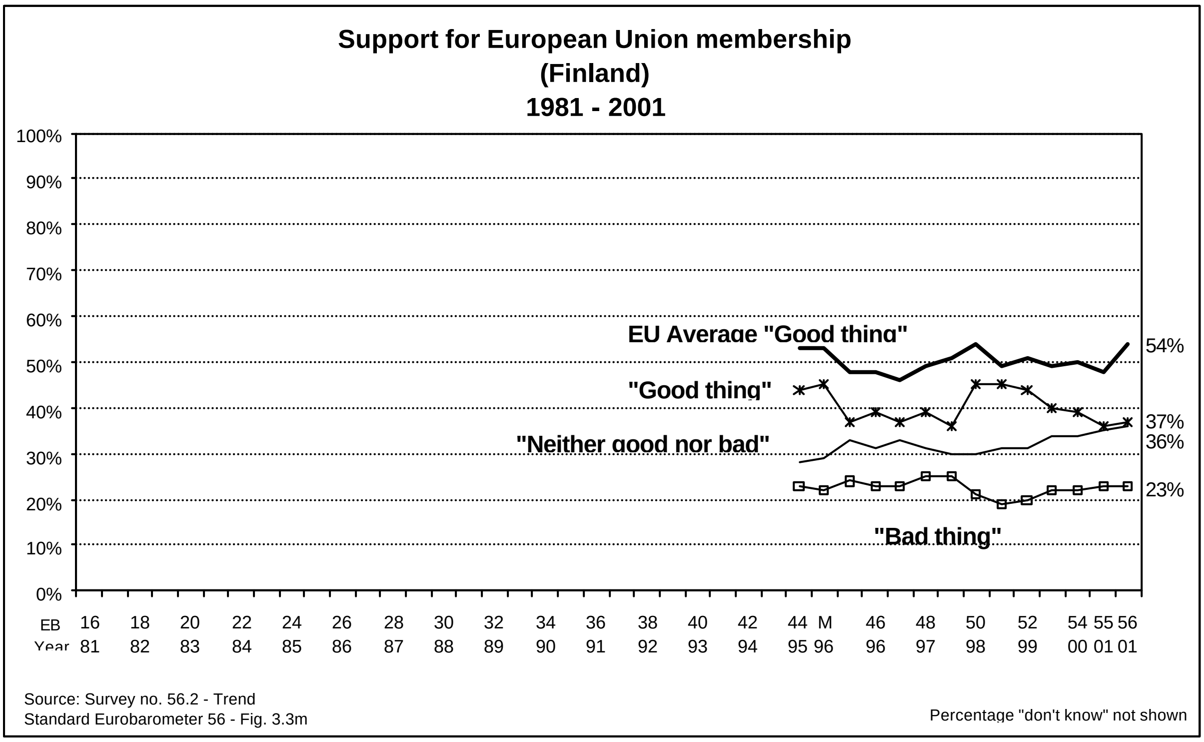
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4k
Percentage "don't know" not shown

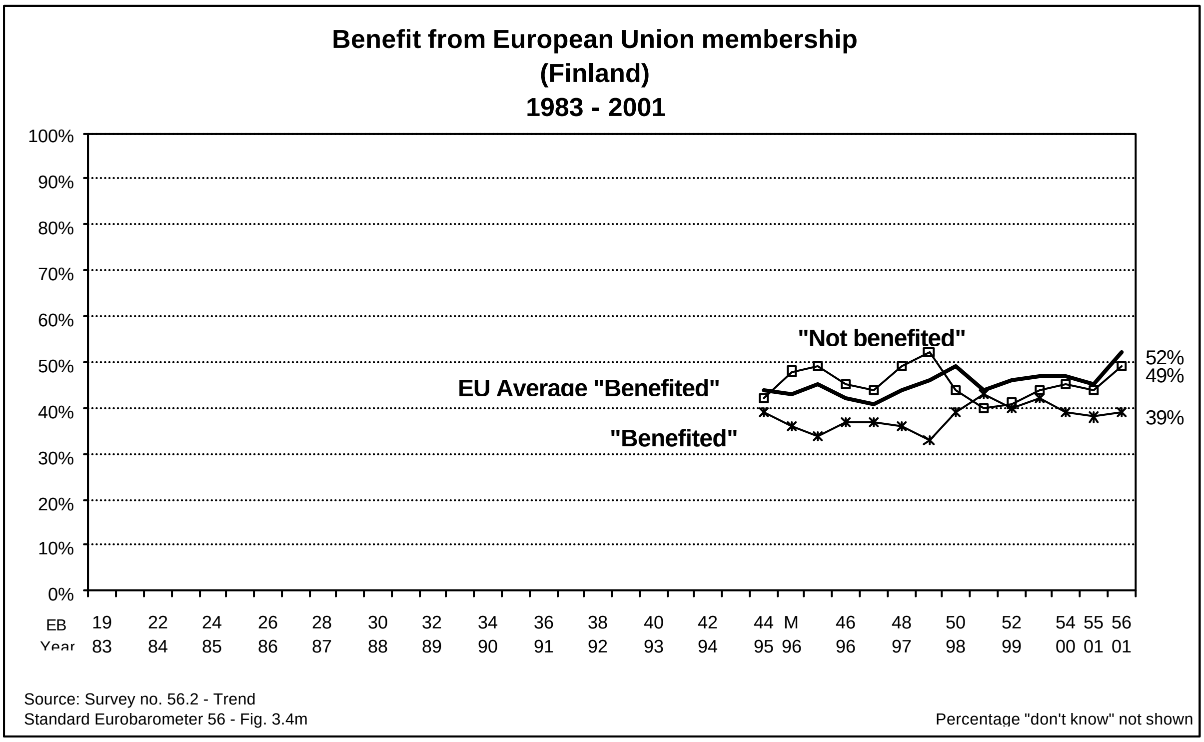
PORTUGAL


Support for European Union membership
(Portugal)
1981 - 2001 *
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
63%
54%
23%
8%
EU Average "Good thing"
"Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
EB 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3l
*1981 -1985 "would be"
Percentage "don't know" not shown

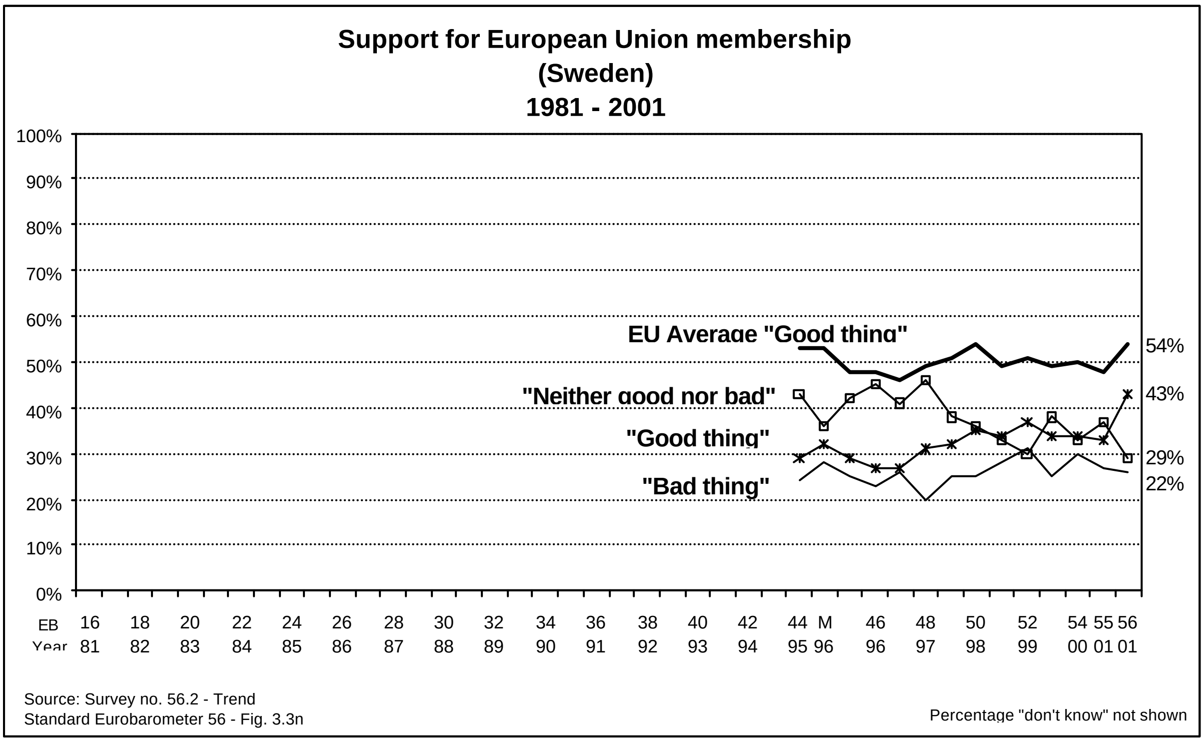

Benefit from European Union membership
(Portugal)
1983 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
73%
52%
13%
"Benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Not benefited"
EB 19 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4l
Percentage "don't know" not shown

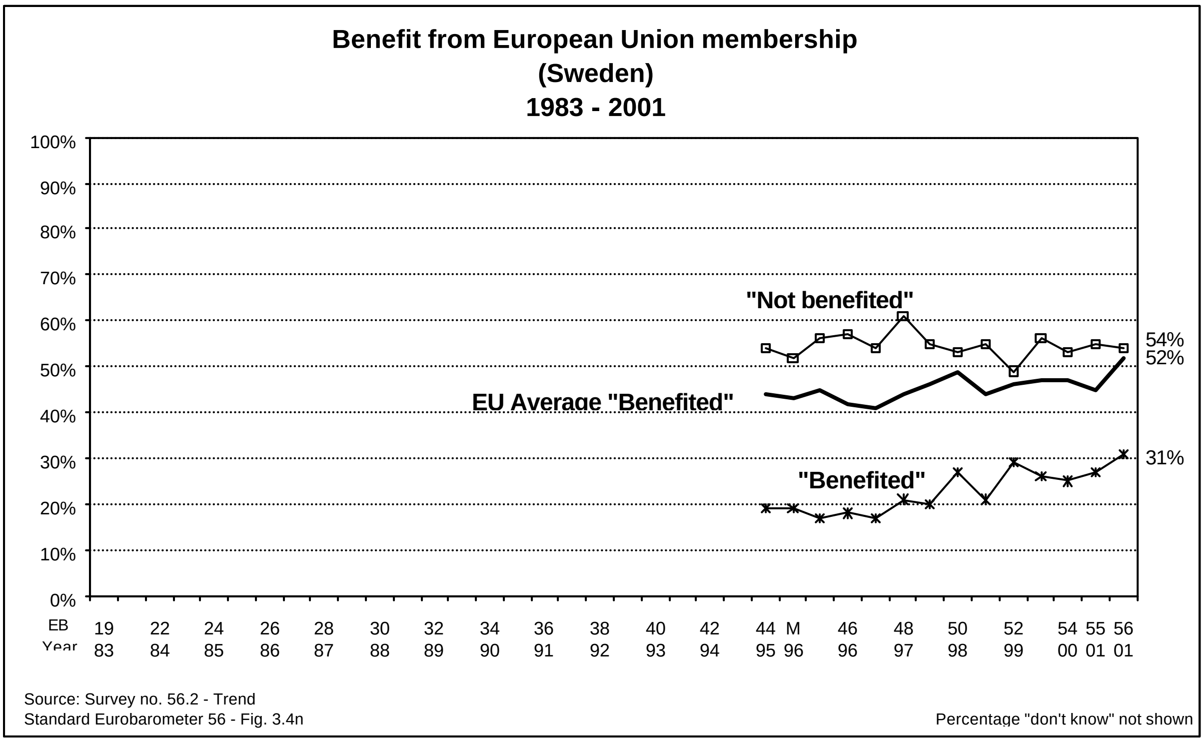
FINLAND


Support for European Union membership
(Finland)
1981 - 2001
EU Average "Good thing"
"Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Bad thing"
54%
37%
36%
23%
EB
Year
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3m
Percentage "don't know" not shown

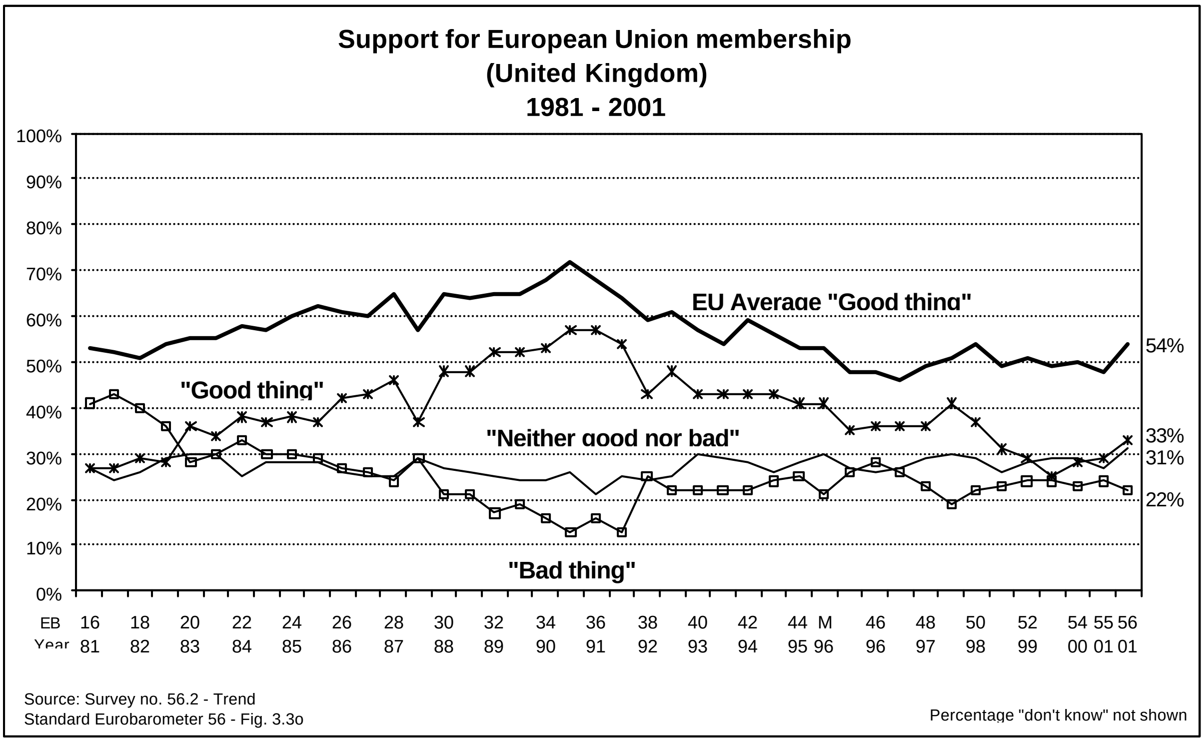

Benefit from European Union membership
(Finland)
1983 - 2001
"Not benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Benefited"
52%
49%
39%
EB
Year
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4m
Percentage "don't know" not shown

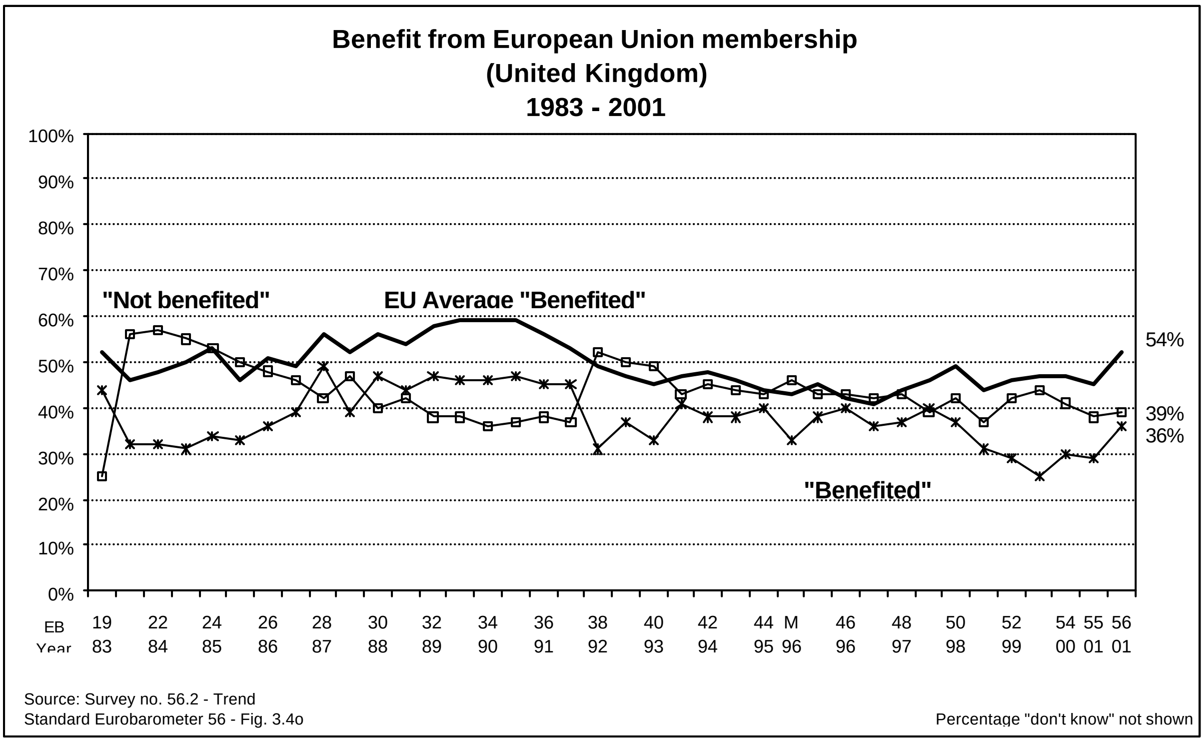
SWEDEN


Support for European Union membership
(Sweden)
1981 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
EU Average "Good thing"
"Neither good nor bad"
"Good thing"
"Bad thing"
54%
43%
29%
22%
EB 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.3n
Percentage "don't know" not shown


Benefit from European Union membership
(Sweden)
1983 - 2001
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
"Not benefited"
EU Average "Benefited"
"Benefited"
54%
52%
31%
EB 19 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 M 46 48 50 52 54 55 56
Year 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 96 97 98 99 00 01 01
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.4n
Percentage "don't know" not shown

UNITED KINGDOM



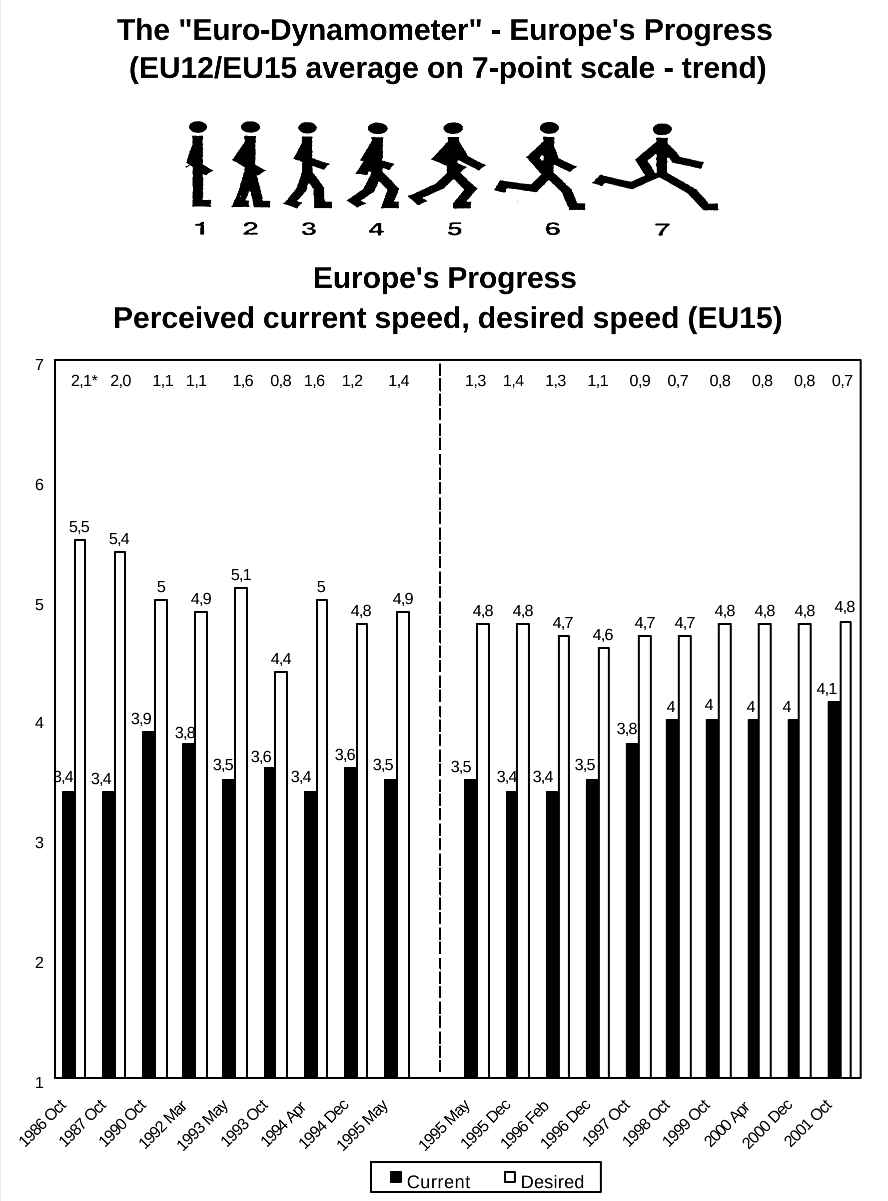


3.3. The speed of European integration

Since 1986, Eurobarometer 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 4.14. This is slightly faster than in previous years (up by 0.18 since Autumn 2000). The average speed at which people would like Europe to progress has increased to 4.82, compared to 4.75 in Autumn 2000. However, the gap of 0.7 between the perceived and desired speed remains much smaller than it was in 1986 (2.1) when the question was first asked.



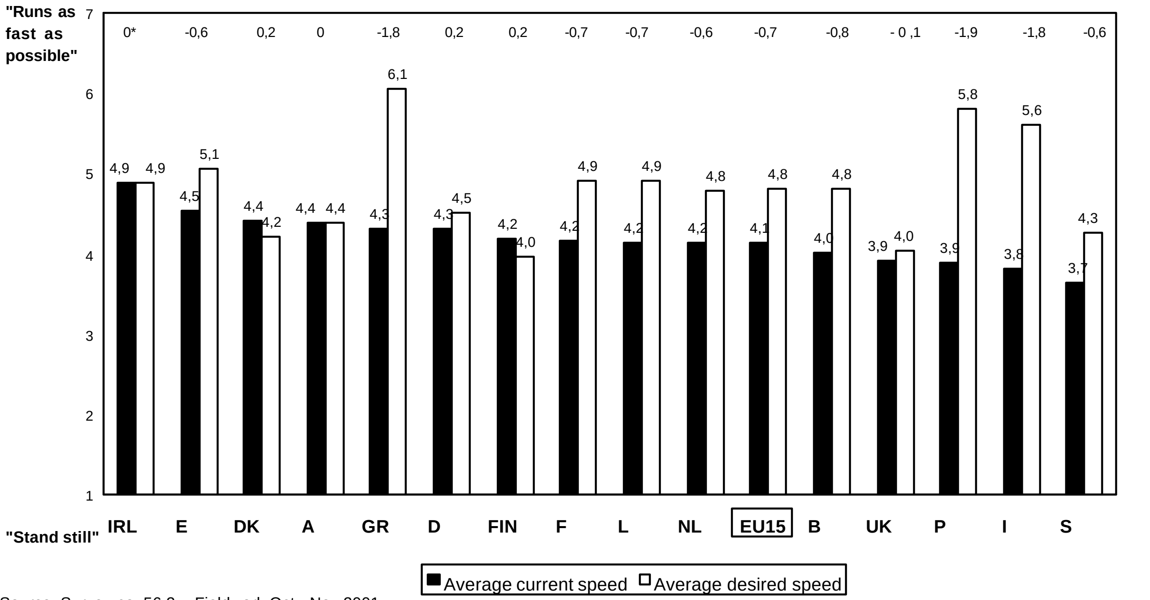
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.5a
* Scale-value difference "desired" minus "current"

The perceived speed of unification varies considerably from country to country. It is highest in Ireland (4.9) and lowest in Sweden (3.7). A comparison of the latest results with those from the previous year shows that in most countries people feel that the unification of Europe is now developing at a greater speed. The highest increases have been recorded in France (+0.39), the Netherlands (+0.33) and Austria (+0.30). Belgium (-0.33) and Finland (-0.31) are the only countries where people now perceive the speed of Europe's unification to be significantly slower than in the last year. (Table 3.3a)

People in Greece would like Europe to be built at the fastest speed (6.1, up from 5.9 in Autumn 2000), followed by people in Portugal (5.8) and Italy (5.6). The desired speed is now lowest in Finland and the UK (4.0 each.). However, in the UK, we find that the desired speed has increased significantly (+0.38). The same is true in Denmark (+0.34). Spain is the only country where the desired speed is now considerably lower (-0.24). (Table 3.3b)

As the graph below shows, in most countries people perceive that Europe is not being built as fast as they would like it to be. If we subtract the average desired speed from the average current speed we find the largest negative (desired speed is faster than current speed) net difference in Portugal, Italy and Greece. Denmark and Finland are now the only countries where the current perceived speed is faster than the desired speed.

The "Euro-Dynamometer" - Europe's Progress
Perceived current speed - desired speed



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.5b
* Scale-value difference "desired" minus "current"

The next table shows how people's views towards the European Union in general are related 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.

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 in explaining the variation that we find in people's views of the perceived and desired speed of European integration.

"The Euro-Dynamometer" Average scores among people with pro-, neutral and anti-EU attitudes (EU15)			
EU attitudes:	**Average current speed**	**Average desired speed**	**Difference current minus desired**
Pro-EU attitudes:			
EU membership is a good thing	4.21	5.32	-1.11
Country has benefited from EU	4.26	5.33	-1.07
Neutral EU attitudes:			
EU membership is neither good nor bad	4.03	4.51	-0.48
Anti-EU attitudes:			
Country has not benefited from EU	3.95	3.91	+0.04
EU membership is a bad thing	4.10	3.21	+0.89

3.4. The role of the Union's institutions and bodies

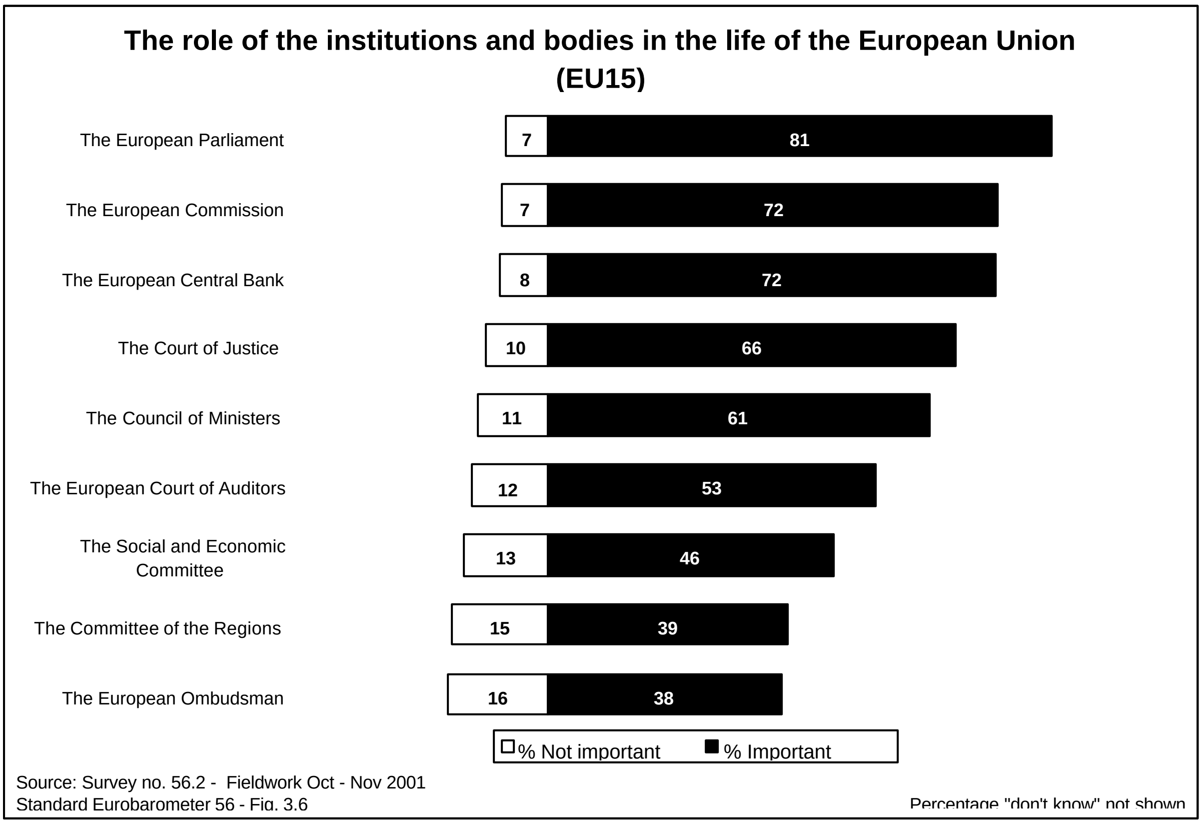
For the sixth time in a row, Eurobarometer has examined public opinion towards a number of the Union's institutions and bodies. Respondents were asked whether they think nine of the Union's institutions and bodies play an important role or not in the life of the European Union. The institutions and bodies 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 Economic and Social Committee[8].

As the graph below shows, at 81% the EU public is most likely to feel that the European Parliament plays an important role in the life of the European Union. The European Commission and the European Central Bank come next (72% each), followed by the Court of Justice (66%). The public is least likely to believe that European Ombudsman (38%) and the Committee of the Regions (39%) play an important role but these low results are largely explained by the fact that not many people are familiar with the European Ombudsman and the Committee of the Regions.

In comparison to Spring 2001, we find that people are now more likely to regard the institutions as important. On average, the increases range from 4 percentage points for the European Ombudsman to 8 percentage points for the European Central Bank and the Economic and Social Committee[9].

The country by country analyses show that the proportion of people who feels that the **European Parliament** plays an important role ranges from 75% in the UK to 92% in Luxembourg. This last country also has the highest percentage of people (90%) who feel that the **European Commission** plays an important role. Germany (65%) and the United Kingdom (66%) are the only countries where fewer than 7 in 10 people share this view. The view that the **European Central Bank** plays an important role is also most widespread in Luxembourg (87%). Only 53% of people in the UK share this view. In all other countries, at least 7 in 10 people feel the ECB plays an important role in the life of the European Union, with 69% of people in Greece holding this opinion. (Table 3.4)

8 Public awareness of these institutions/bodies is discussed in chapter 7.
9 For Spring 2001 results, see Eurobarometer No. 55, page 75.



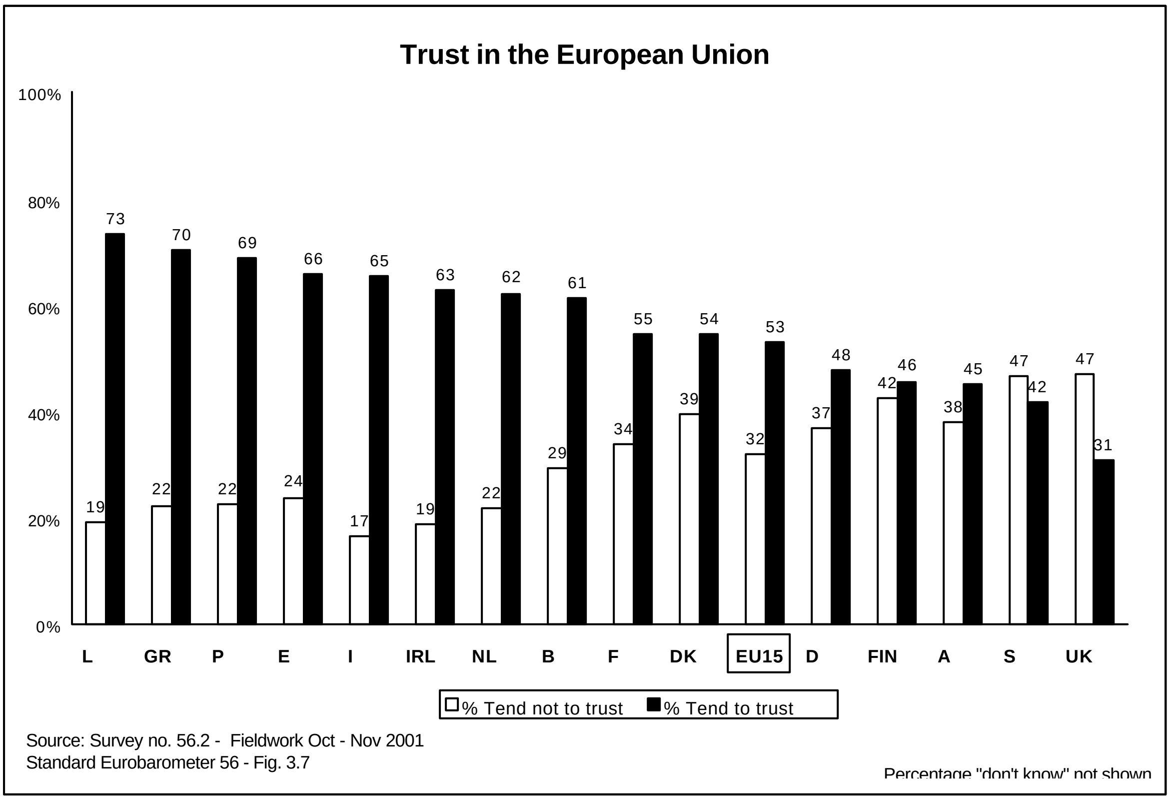
3.5. Trust in the European Union and its institutions and bodies

The survey also measures the extent of in these nine institutions and bodies. First, we look at trust in the European Union as a whole. On average, 53% of Europeans say they tend to trust the Union, 32% say they tend not to trust it and 15% lack an opinion[10]. This is the most positive result since the question was first asked in Autumn 1997. At that time, only 37% of EU citizens said they trusted the EU. In Spring 1999, the figure increased to 39% and in Spring 2001, 41% tended to trust the European Union.

In 10 of the 15 Member States, more than half of the people surveyed trust the EU with trust most widespread in Luxembourg (73%), Greece (70%) and Portugal (69%). People in the UK are least likely to trust the European Union. Together with Sweden, it is now the only country where those who lack trust form a majority. In Spring 2001, people lacking trust in the EU were in the majority in 7 Member States.

The improvement recorded at the EU15 level holds in all Member States with the largest positive shifts found in Sweden and Denmark (+17 each). At 6 percentage points each, the smallest increases have been recorded in Portugal and the UK. Though the increase in trust corresponds in many countries with a decrease in the lack of trust, there are several countries where broader trust has replaced widespread lack of interest. (Table 3.5a)

[10] This question is part of a larger battery of questions. The other trust items are discussed in Chapter 1 (see Tables 1.7a-c).



Trust levels not only vary from country to country, they also depend on how people generally feel about their country's membership to the EU. Our analyses indicate that 71% of people who regard their country's membership as a good thing trust the European Union. Conversely, 71% of those who regard it as a bad thing say they tend not to trust it.

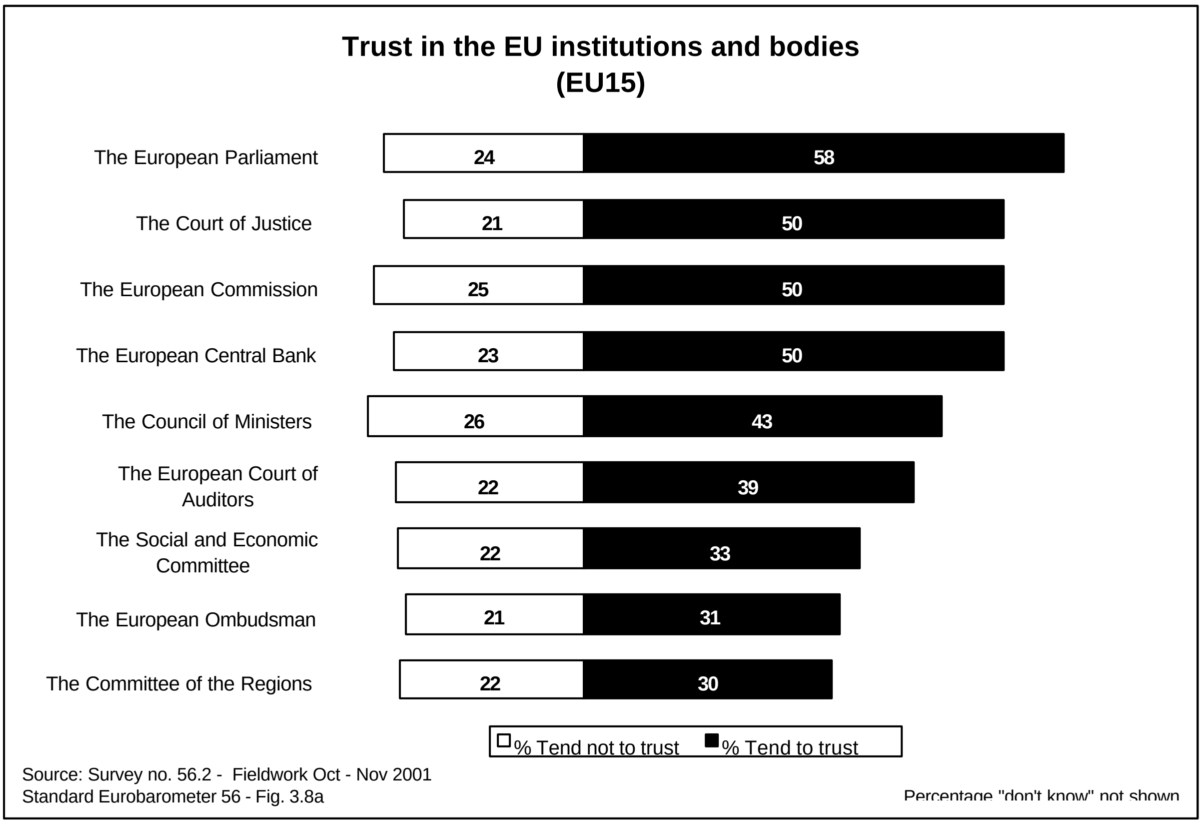
Equally important and informative is the relationship between trust and self-perceived knowledge about the European Union. As the table below shows, the more people feel they know about the European Union, the more likely it is that they trust it.

Trust in the EU by Self-Perceived Knowledge of the EU (in %, for EU15)

	Low knowledge	Average knowledge	High knowledge
% Tend to trust	42	58	71
% Tend not to trust	37	30	23
% Don't know	21	12	6
% Total	*100*	*100*	*100*

Demographic analyses show that men are somewhat more likely than women to both trust and lack trust in the European Union with women more likely to lack an opinion. The youngest age group (58%) is significantly more likely to trust the European Union than older people are. Among the various educational groups we find that people who are still studying are most likely to trust the EU (63%) with 49% of people who left school before the age of 16 saying they trust it. At 42%, unemployed people represent the occupational group that is least likely to trust the EU. (Table 3.5b)

Next we look at trust levels for nine institutions and bodies. Although trust in these institutions and bodies varies 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 Economic and Social Committee and the European Ombudsman. These partly explain why trust, as shown in the following graph, is so low.



At 58%, the European Parliament receives most widespread trust, followed by the Court of Justice, the European Commission and the European Central Bank (50% each). Trust in the institutions and bodies is now significantly broader than it was in Spring 2001, with the recorded increases ranging from 5 percentage points for the European Ombudsman and the European Commission to 8 percentage points for the European Central Bank[11].

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 Member States with the exception of Finland. It tops the list in nine countries, comes in second place in two countries and in third place in a further three countries. The **Court of Justice** tops the list in Luxembourg, Denmark, Germany and Sweden, comes in second place in the Netherlands, Finland and Austria and in third place in Belgium and the UK. The **European Commission** is second most trusted in eight countries while the **European Central Bank** tops the list in the Netherlands, takes second place in two countries and third place in eight countries. The **Council of Ministers** is one of the top three in Spain and Greece. The **European Ombudsman**, who is Finnish, is the most trusted institution in his home country. (See also table 3.6)

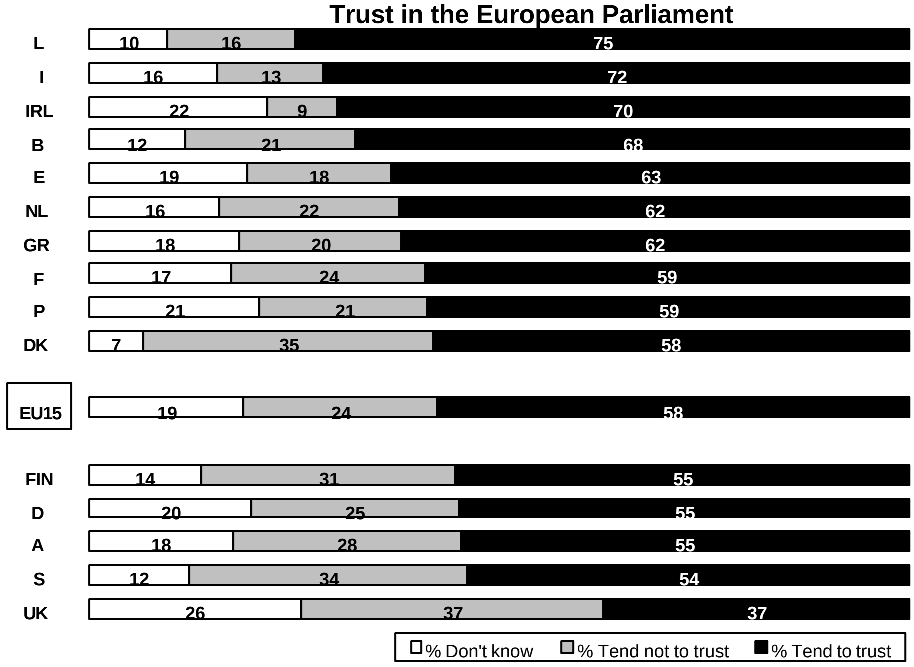
[11] See Eurobarometer Report 55, table 2.7.

TOP THREE MOST WIDELY TRUSTED EU INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES (IN %, BY MEMBER STATE)	
Belgium	
European Parliament	68
European Commission	61
Court of Justice	58
Denmark	
Court of Justice	74
European Central Bank	60
European Parliament	58
Germany	
Court of Justice	61
European Central Bank	56
European Parliament	55
Greece	
European Parliament	62
European Commission	54
Council of Ministers	53
Spain	
European Parliament	63
European Commission	59
Council of Ministers	55
France	
European Parliament	59
European Commission	54
European Central Bank	48
Ireland	
European Parliament	70
European Commission	64
European Central Bank	61
Italy	
European Parliament	72
European Commission	62
European Central Bank	57
Luxembourg	
Court of Justice	76
European Parliament	75
European Central Bank	70
The Netherlands	
European Central Bank	67
Court of Justice	65
European Parliament	62
Austria	
European Parliament	55
Court of Justice	54
European Central Bank	54
Portugal	
European Parliament	59
European Commission	58
European Central Bank	54
Finland	
European Ombudsman	64
Court of Justice	63
European Central Bank	59
Sweden	
Court of Justice	56
European Parliament	54
European Central Bank	54
United Kingdom	
European Parliament	37
European Commission	35
Court of Justice	32

Looking next in more detail at the country results for the **European Parliament**, we see that three-quarters of the population in Luxembourg trust it, as do around 7 in 10 people in Italy (72%) and Ireland (70%) and more than 6 in 10 people in Belgium (68%), Spain (63%), the Netherlands and Greece (both 62%). This view is also held by a majority of the people in all remaining countries except in the UK where public opinion on this issue is divided. The proportion of "don't know" responses is substantially lower than in Spring 2001 and ranges from 7% in Denmark to 26% in the UK. In comparison to Spring 2001, trust levels have increased significantly in all Member States, with the highest rises recorded in Sweden (+10), the UK (+9) and Germany (+8)[12].

[12] See Eurobarometer Report No. 55, table 2.7.

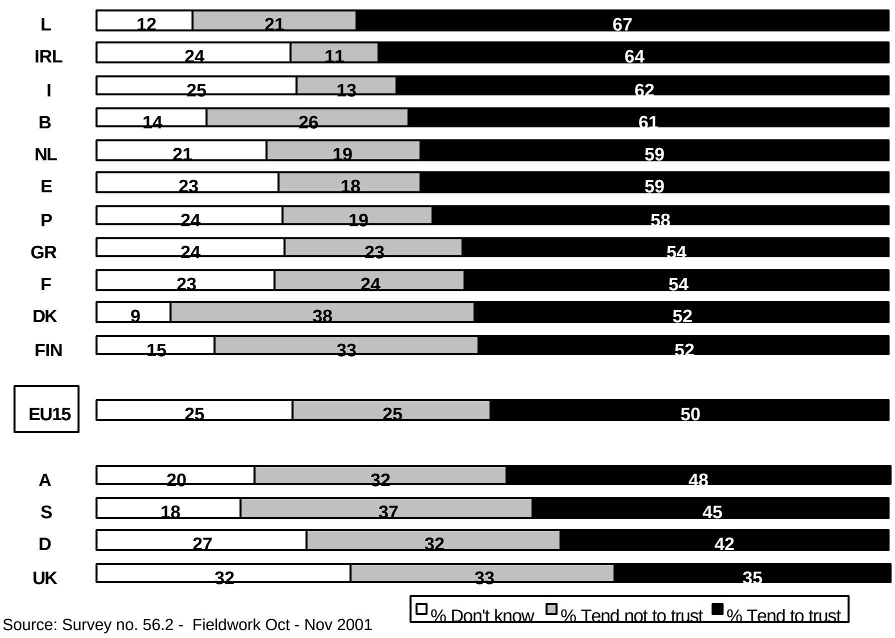
Trust in the European Parliament



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.8b

Looking at the country by country results for the **European Commission** shows that in all Member States this institution is trusted by a majority of the people – the first time that this is the case since the measurement was first made in Spring 1999. Trust is most widespread in Luxembourg (67%) and Ireland (64%), followed by Italy (62%) and Belgium (61%). The UK (35%), Germany (42%), Sweden (45%) and Austria (48%) are the only countries where less than half of the population trusts the European Commission. In comparison to Spring 2001, trust has increased in all Member States, with the largest increases recorded in the UK (+10), Austria (+9), Portugal and Sweden (+7 each)[13]. The proportion of "don't know" responses ranges from 9% in Denmark to 32% in the UK, again substantially lower than in Spring 2001.

Trust in the European Commission



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 3.8c

[13] See also Eurobarometer Report No. 55, table 2.7.

Finally, we look at the median trust level for the nine institutions and bodies in each of the Member States[14]. As the following table shows, the median is highest in Luxembourg (65%) and lowest in the UK (22%).

Trust in the EU institutions and bodies

(Median score - % saying tend to trust for the 9 institutions and bodies, by country)

Country	Median
Luxembourg	65
Ireland	56
Belgium	54
The Netherlands	53
Portugal	52
Finland	52
Denmark	49
Greece	48
France	46
Italy	45
Spain	45
Austria	45
Sweden	45
EU15	***43***
Germany	42
United Kingdom	22

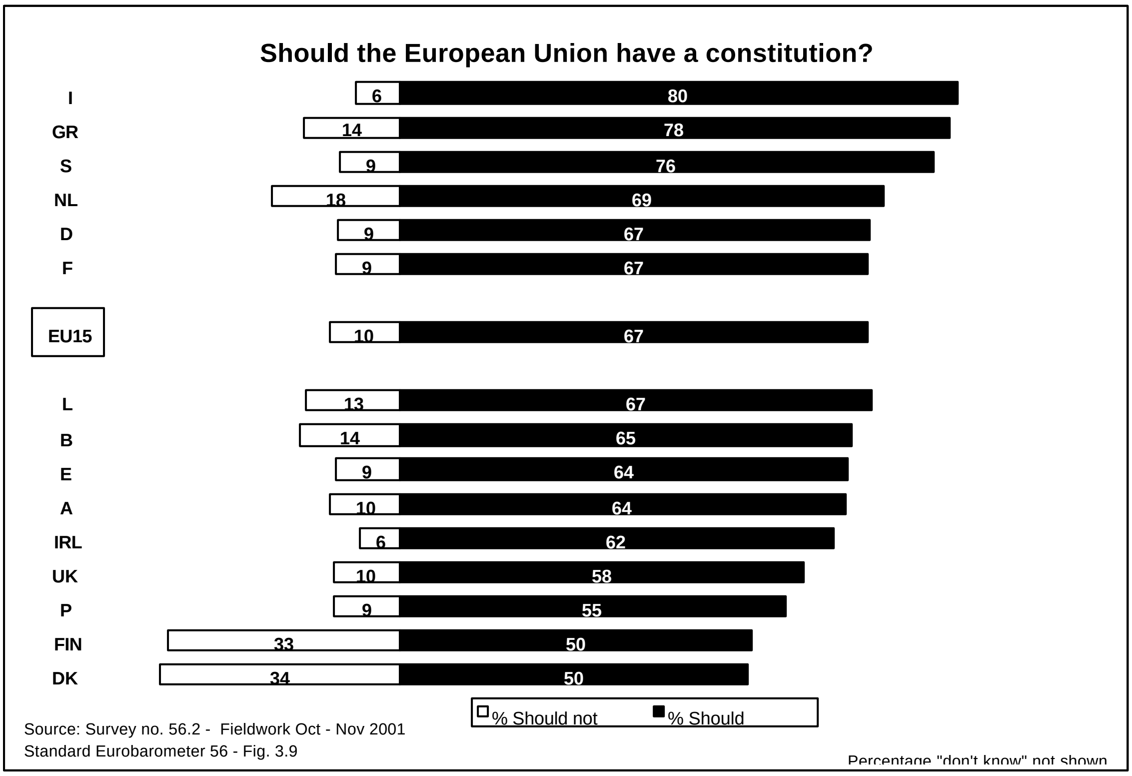
3.6. Support for a European Union constitution

Support for a European Union constitution has increased by 5 percentage points since Spring 2001 and is now obtained from two-thirds (67%) of all EU citizens aged 15 and over. Only 1 person in 10 (10%) believes the Union should not have a constitution. The remaining 23% lack an opinion.

In all 15 Member States, support is obtained from at least half of the public. Nonetheless, there is considerable variation among the countries with support levels ranging from 50% in Denmark and Finland to 80% in Italy. The level of "don't know" responses is lower than it was in Spring 2001 (-6). The level of opposition to a constitution remains low, at around only 1 in 10 people in most countries, but with Denmark (34%) and Finland (33%) as the clear exceptions.

In comparison to Spring 2001 support for a constitution increased in all countries except Belgium (-2), the Netherlands (-1) and Portugal (no change). The largest increases have been recorded in the UK (+14), Sweden (+11) and Luxembourg (+10). (Table 3.7a)

[14] We show the median '% trust' score rather than the average, as the median is the appropriate measure of central tendency in distributions with extreme values. Once again readers are reminded that low levels of trust are mostly off-set by high levels of "don't know" responses, not by high levels of distrust.



The demographic analyses show that support for a constitution is highest among people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older (75%), managers and the self-employed (74% each). Opposition to a constitution is low, differences in support levels being mostly explained by relatively large variations in the proportion of "don't know" responses.

As one would expect, people who feel they know a lot about the European Union are significantly more likely than those who feel they know too little to hold an opinion. The following table shows that support levels are significantly higher among the first group (82%) than they are among the second group (55%).

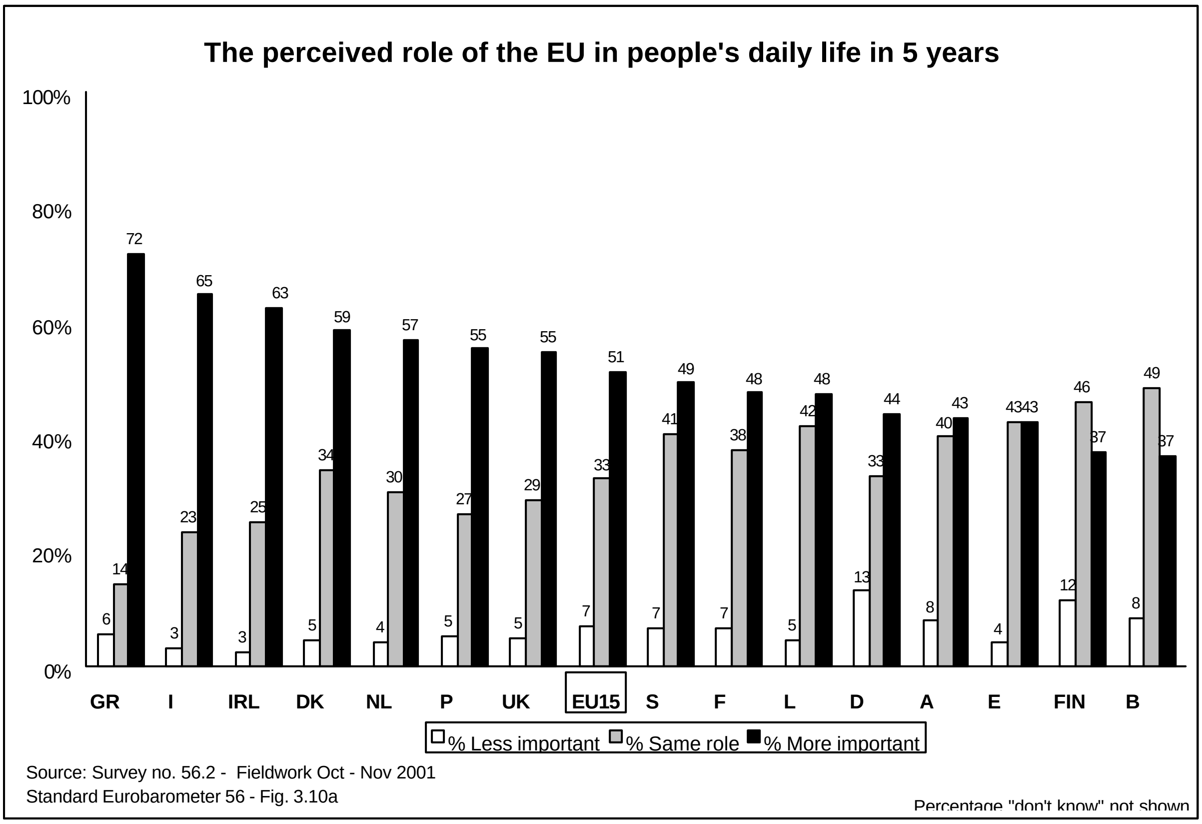
Support for an EU constitution by knowledge about the EU (in %)			
	Low knowledge level	**Average knowledge level**	**High knowledge level**
% Should	55	73	82
% Should not	9	11	11
% Don't know	36	17	7
% Total	*100*	*101*	*100*

It should come as no surprise to find that supporters of the EU are more likely to favour a constitution than its opponents are (77% vs. 53%). Twenty percent of people who consider their country's membership of the European Union as a bad thing oppose a constitution, compared to 8% of people who support their country's EU membership. (Table 3.7b)

3.7. 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, 33% believe it *will* play the same role and only 7% believe it *will* play a less important role.

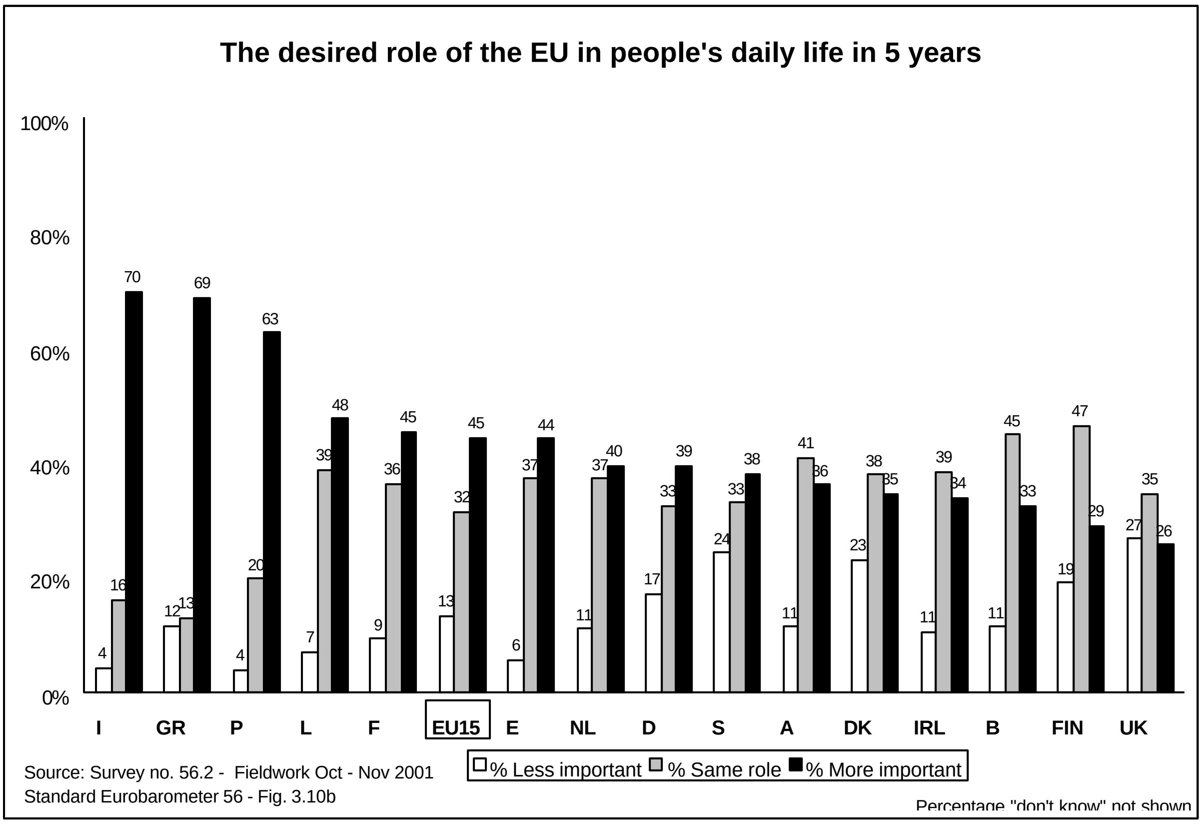


People in Greece (72%), Italy (65%) and Ireland (63%) are most likely to hold the view that the European Union will play a more important role in five years' time. At least half of the population shares this view in a further four countries and in all remaining countries except Finland and Spain it is the majority view. In Finland, the proportion of people who feel that the EU will play the same role (46%) outnumbers the proportion of people that believes the EU will play a more important role (37%). In Spain equal proportions (43%) hold both views. The view that the EU will play a less important role is low throughout the Member States and ranges from 4% in Spain and the Netherlands to 13% in Germany.

In comparison to the previous measurement (Autumn 2000) we find that in most countries people are now more likely to think that in 5 years' time the EU will play a more important role in their daily life. The highest increases were recorded in Greece (+9), Luxembourg (+8) and Ireland (+7). In Spain (-10) and Belgium (-6), people are now less likely to believe this to be the case and more likely to feel that the Union will play the same role in 5 years' time. (Table 3.8a)

An analysis of the demographic variables shows that the proportion of people who believe that the EU's role will be less important is under 10% for all demographic sub-groups included in the analyses, except in the case of attitudes to the EU. Sixteen percent of those who view their country's membership of 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 4% of those who regard EU membership as a good thing. (Table 3.8b)

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, 32% desire the same role, with only 13% desiring a less important role for the European Union.



People in Italy (70%) and Greece (69%) are by far most likely to want the EU to play a more important role in their daily life, followed by Portugal at 63%. Although less than half of the population wants the EU to play a more important role in the remaining countries, it is nonetheless the majority opinion in Luxembourg, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden. In Finland, Belgium, Austria, Ireland, Denmark and the UK the most frequently expressed desire is for the EU to continue to play the same role. The UK is the only country where there are (marginally) more people who want the EU to play a less important role (27%) than there are people who want it to play a more important role (26%).

In comparison to Autumn 2000, we find positive shifts in Greece (+10), Sweden, Luxembourg, Denmark (+7 each), Finland (+6), the Netherlands (+4), Germany and Austria (+3 each). In Spain and Belgium (the two countries where, as already noted, fewer people now believe the EU will play a more important role) we find that people are much more likely to desire the EU's role to stay as it is (+11 and +9, respectively) and less likely to desire a more important role for the EU (-12 and –7, respectively). A similar trend has been recorded in Portugal and France. (Table 3.9a)

The attitudinal analyses show that people who support their country's EU membership (61%) are much more likely than people who regard it as a bad thing (17%) to desire a more important role for the EU. Forty five percent 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 fewer than 2 in 10 people, regardless of sex, age, economic activity or years of schooling. (Table 3.9b)

4. EU decision-making, priorities and key policy issues

In this chapter the results of questions that measure people's opinions with regard to the main activities of the European Union are analysed. The chapter looks at which of these activities the public wants to be decided jointly within the EU, which the public regards as priorities and it analyses the extent to which the public supports some of the key policies. In chapters 5 and 6, public opinion on two of these policies – the euro and enlargement – is discussed in greater detail.

4.1. Support for joint EU decision-making

A standard question asks respondents whether decisions in 26 policy areas where the Union has, to varying degrees, decision-making competencies should be taken at national or at EU level. One item, on the fight against international terrorism, has been added to the list for the first time.

On average, 57% of the public supports joint EU decision-making in these areas and it is favoured over national decision-making in 18 of the 26 areas.

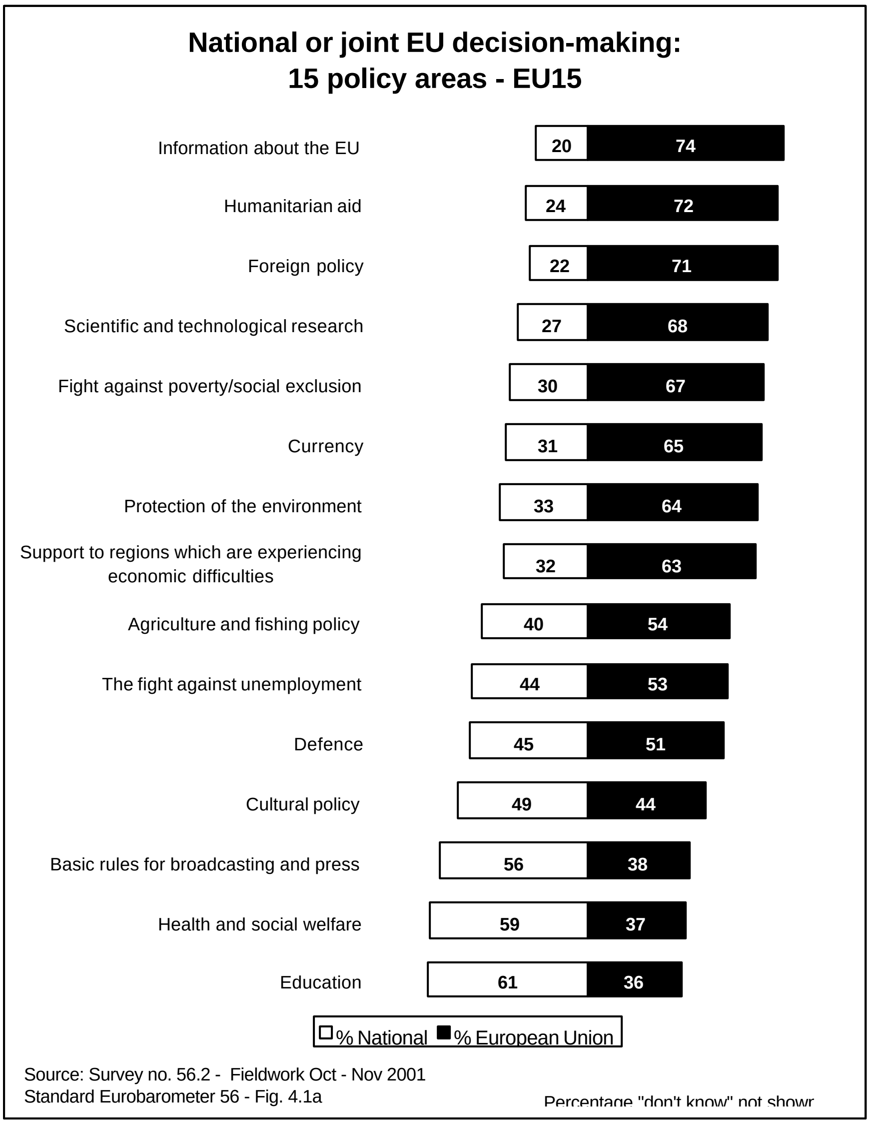
SUPPORT FOR JOINT EU DECISION-MAKING BY COUNTRY

Country	Average level of support for EU decision-making (for 26 areas, in %)	Number of areas where EU decision-making is more popular than national decision-making
Italy	67%	23
Greece	67%	23
Spain	64%	22
Belgium	60%	18
France	57%	18
EU15	***57%***	***18***
Germany	57%	15
The Netherlands	56%	17
Luxembourg	56%	15
Ireland	51%	14
Austria	49%	15
Denmark	46%	13
Portugal	46%	12
United Kingdom	45%	11
Sweden	45%	12
Finland	41%	12

In nine of the 15 Member States, more than half of the population favours joint EU decision-making over national decision-making in the 26 policy areas covered in the survey. Support for EU decision-making is most widespread in Italy and Greece, where it is favoured over national decision-making in 23 of the 26 areas. People in Finland are, on average, least likely to want the EU to take decisions, but in the United Kingdom there are fewer areas where the EU is favoured over national decision-making.

If we exclude the new item from our analyses, we find that in most countries people are now more likely to favour joint EU decision-making than they were when the question was previously asked in Autumn 2000[15].

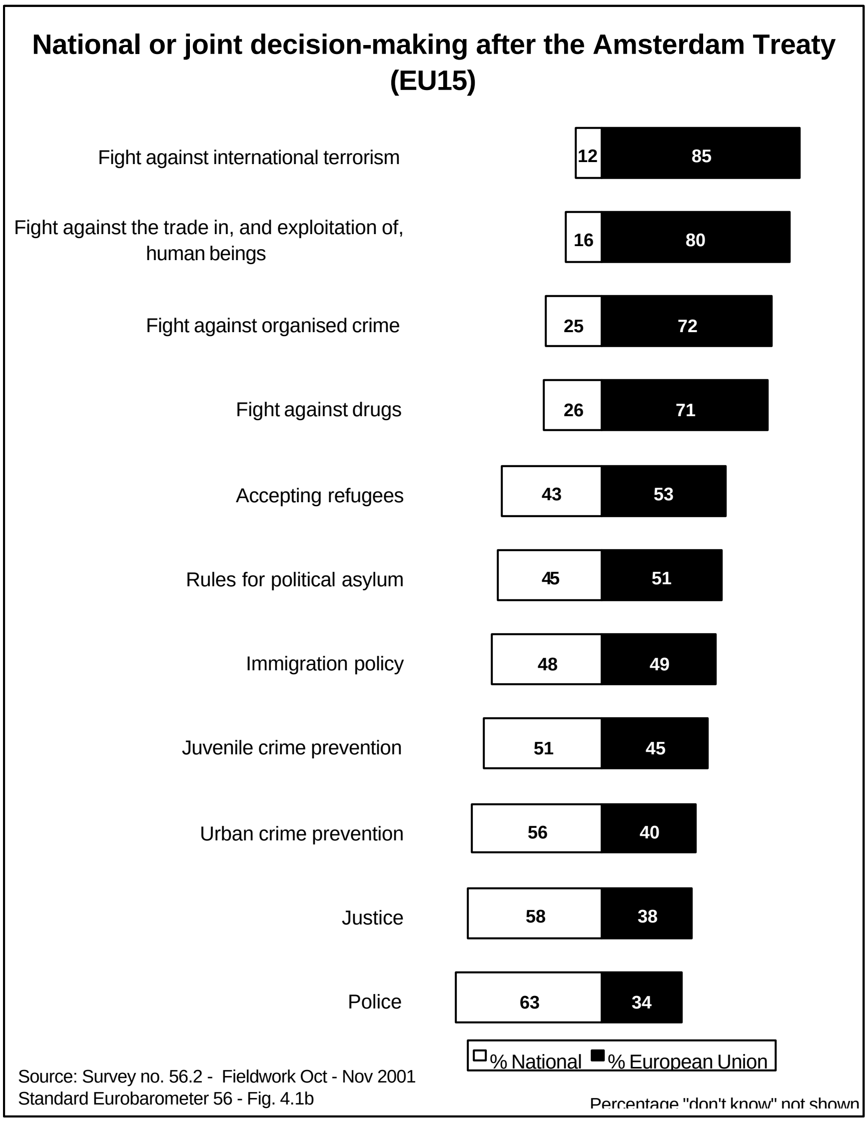
In the survey the question is divided into policy areas covered by the 3 pillars of the Maastricht Treaty and new policy areas, most of which are covered by the Amsterdam or Nice treaties. We first look at people's views concerning the Maastricht Treaty policy areas.



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 humanitarian aid, foreign policy, 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 welfare and broadcasting rules for the media.

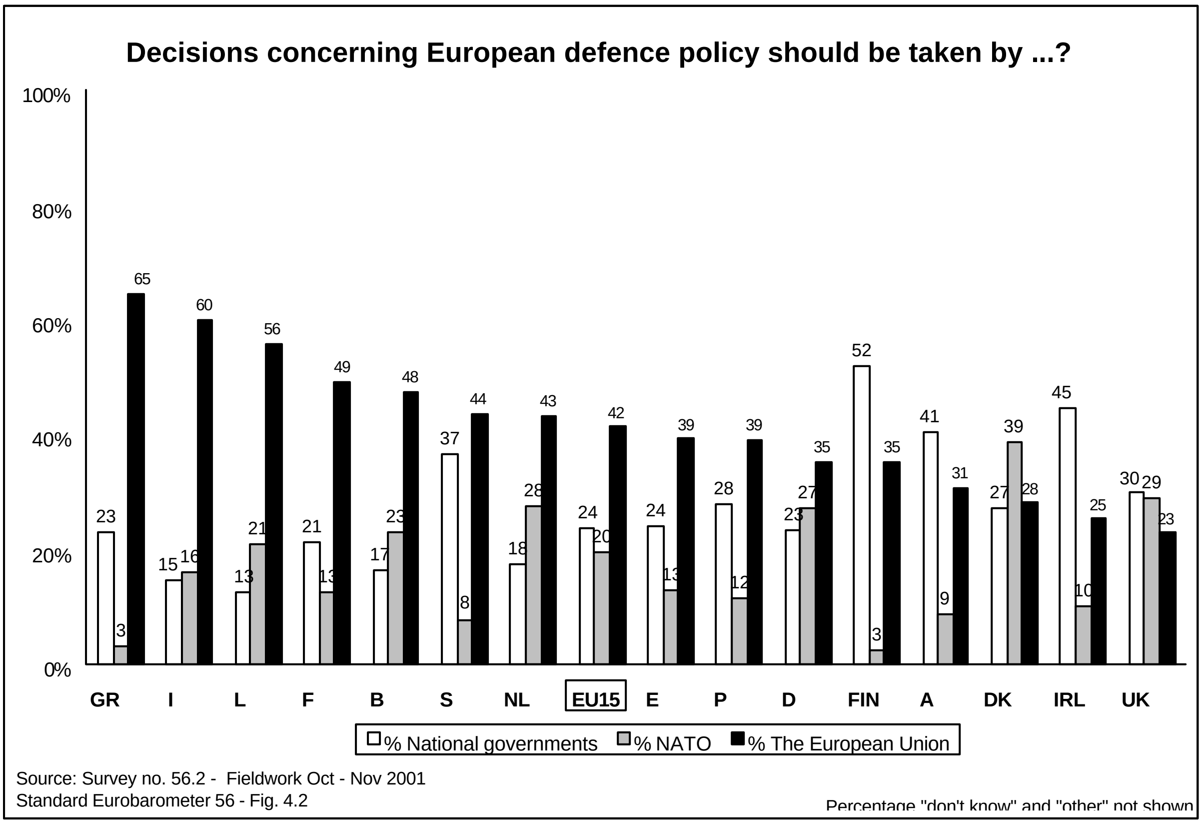
15 In Autumn 2000, EU decision-making was favoured over national decision-making in 15 of the 25 areas and was on average the favoured option for 52% of people.

Looking next at the other areas we find that 85% of EU citizens believe the EU, rather than their national government, should make decisions about the fight against international terrorism. It is the area where people are most likely to favour EU decision-making.



As for the other post-Amsterdam policy areas, we find that support for EU joint decision-making is most widespread when it comes to the fight against human trade and exploitation while people are most likely to support national decision-making in the areas of policing, justice and urban crime prevention. (See also table 4.1)

Another question that asks respondents whether decisions concerning European defence policy should be taken by national governments, by NATO or by the European Union shows that the EU is by far the most favoured option (42%). Only 20% believe NATO should take decisions concerning European defence policy and 24% want this to be done by the national governments.



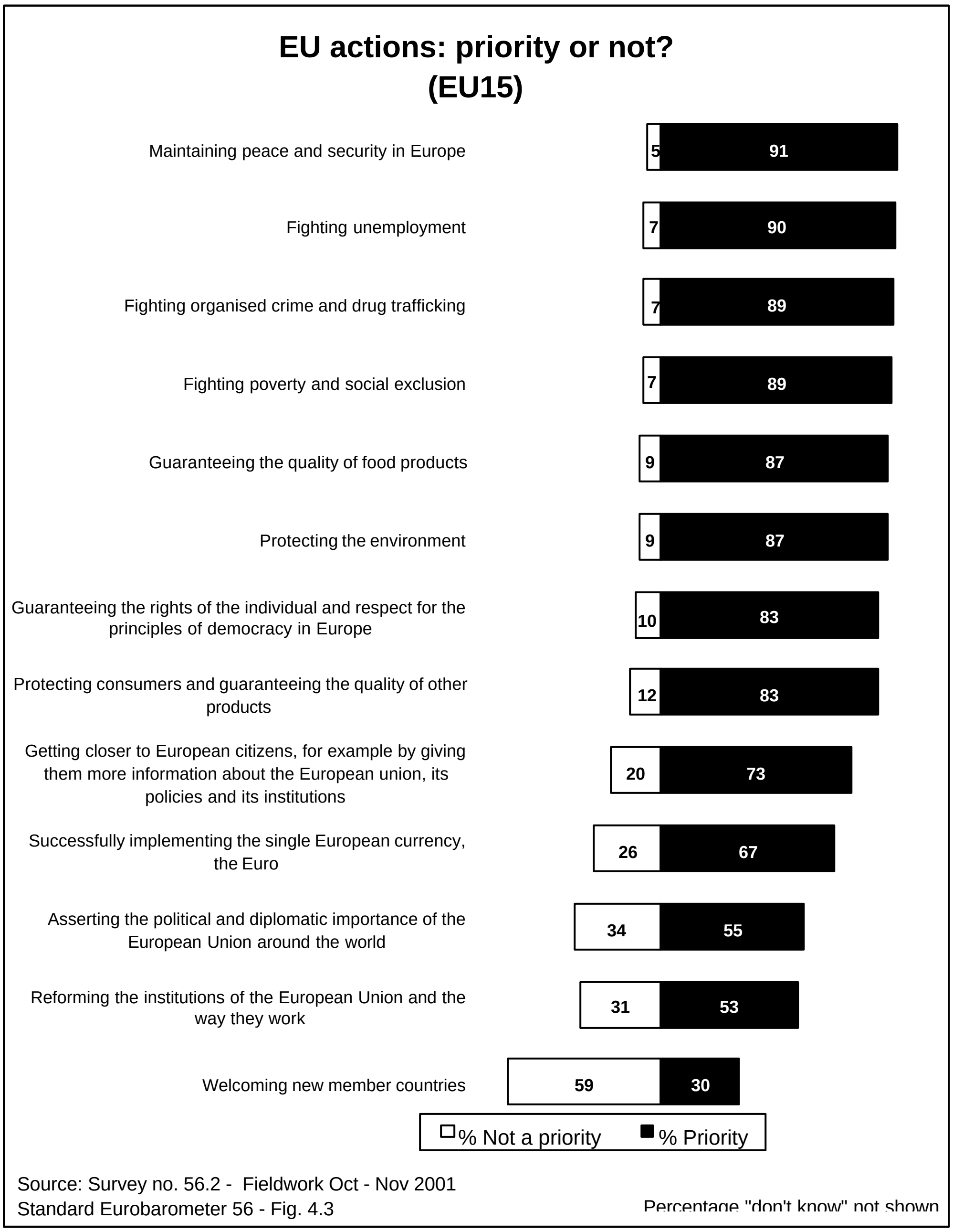
The country results show that people in Greece are most likely to want these decisions to be taken by the European Union (65%), followed by people in Italy (60%) and Luxembourg (56%). The EU is also the most widely favoured decision-making body in France, Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Germany. In Finland, 52% of people want decisions concerning European defence policy taken by national governments while 35% believe this should be done by the European Union and only 3% believe NATO should take these decisions. In Ireland (45%) and Austria (41%), the public also prefers that these decisions be taken by national governments while in the United Kingdom equal proportions favour the national governments (30%) and NATO (29%) and in Denmark the majority of people believe these decisions should be taken by NATO (39%). (Table 4.2)

4.2. Support for the Union's priorities

For many years, Eurobarometer has included a question that measures the extent to which the public views the Union's current actions as priorities[16].

With a war being fought at the time of the survey by the United States and its allies in Afghanistan to destroy the terrorist network held responsible for the attacks against America on September 11th, it comes as no surprise that EU citizens are most likely to believe that maintaining peace and security in Europe should be a priority for the European Union, with 91% of EU citizens holding this view. However, there are many other issues that the large majority of EU citizens also view as priorities. For example, 90% feel that the fight against unemployment should be a priority for the EU, 89% feel this way about the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking and about the fight against poverty and social exclusion. For 87% of EU citizens, guaranteeing the quality of food products and protecting the environment are other issues that the Union should treat as priorities.

[16] For a description of the Commission's Work Programme for the year 2001, please see http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/off/work_programme/index_en.htm.

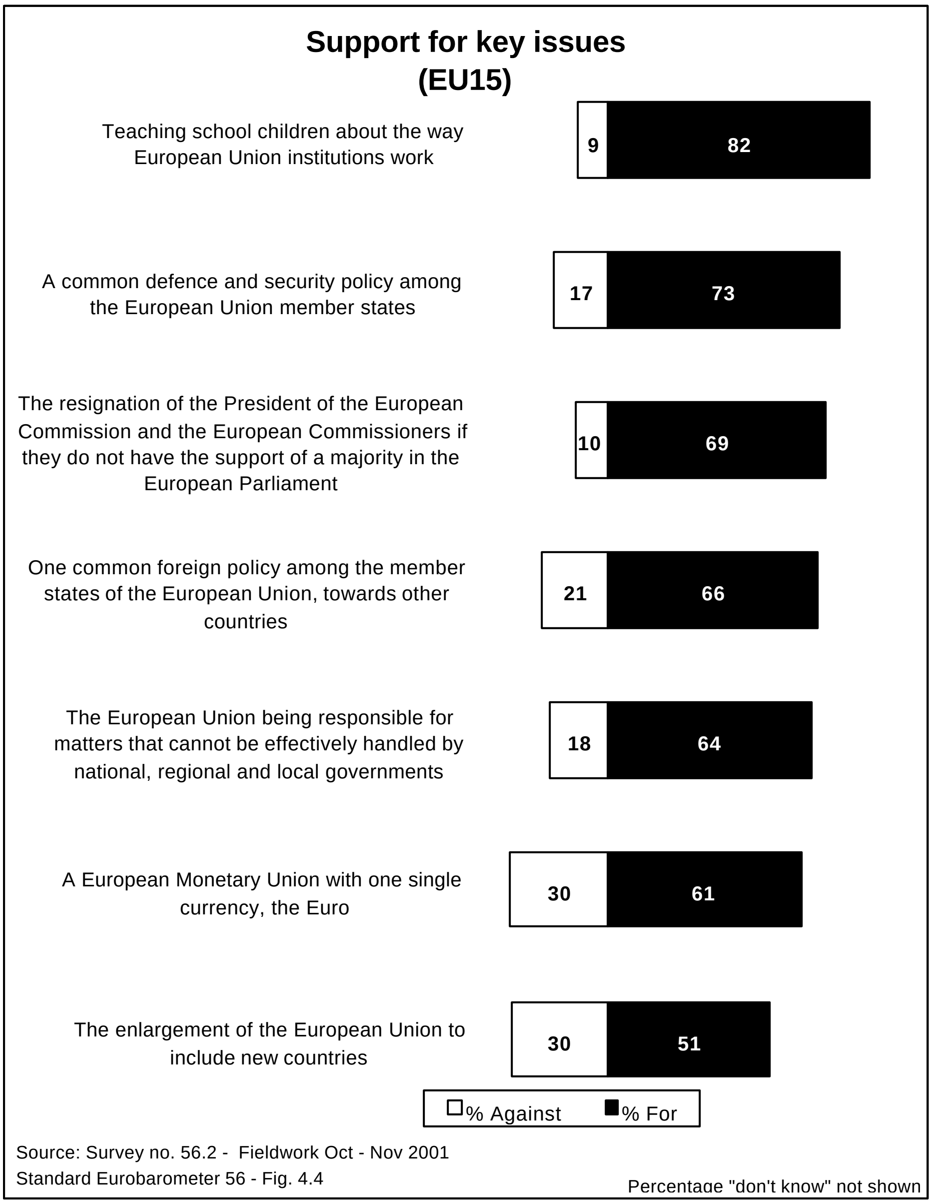


The next table shows the top three priorities for the European Union in each Member State. **Maintaining peace and security in Europe** tops the list in six of the 15 Member States, is the second priority in five countries and the third priority in three countries. Portugal is the only country where it doesn't make the top three but it is nonetheless considered a priority for the European Union as a whole (93%). The **fight against unemployment** tops the list of priorities in five countries, comes in second place in two countries and in third place in a further two countries. It does not make the top three in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Sweden. The **fight against organised crime & drug trafficking** tops the list in Sweden, Ireland and Belgium, comes in second place in Finland and the United Kingdom and in third place in six further countries. It does not make the top three in Germany, Spain, Italy and Greece. The **fight against poverty and social exclusion** is one of the three highest priorities in Greece, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain and Germany. **Protecting the environment** tops the list in Denmark, comes in second place in Sweden and in third place in Finland and the United Kingdom. **Guaranteeing the quality of food products** makes the top three in Luxembourg and Italy. (See also table 4.3)

Top Three Priorities for the European Union (in %, by Member State)	
Belgium	
Fighting crime & drugs	90
Fighting unemployment	90
Peace & security	87
Denmark	
Protecting environment	95
Peace & security	94
Fighting crime & drugs	94
Germany	
Fighting unemployment	89
Peace & security	89
Poverty & social exclusion	87
Greece	
Fighting unemployment	97
Poverty & social exclusion	96
Peace & security	96
Spain	
Fighting unemployment	92
Peace & security	92
Poverty & social exclusion	90
France	
Peace & security	94
Fighting unemployment	94
Fighting crime & drugs	93
Ireland	
Fighting crime & drugs	93
Peace & security	92
Fighting unemployment	92
Italy	
Peace & security	92
Guaranteeing food quality	92
Fighting unemployment	91
Luxembourg	
Peace & security	97
Guaranteeing food quality	95
Fighting crime & drugs	95
The Netherlands	
Peace & security	92
Poverty & social exclusion	92
Fighting crime & drugs	90
Austria	
Fighting unemployment	88
Peace & security	85
Fighting crime & drugs	85
Portugal	
Fighting unemployment	95
Poverty & social exclusion	93
Fighting crime & drugs	93
Finland	
Peace & security	91
Fighting crime & drugs	89
Protecting environment	86
Sweden	
Fighting crime & drugs	97
Protecting environment	97
Peace & security	96
United Kingdom	
Peace & security	86
Fighting crime & drugs	86
Protecting environment	85

4.3. Support for key issues

A standard element of the survey consists of measuring 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.



A look at the four items that concern current policy matters shows that:

- Seventy-three percent of EU citizens are in favour of **one common defence and security policy among the EU Member States**. Support is most widespread in Luxembourg (89%), Italy (85%), Belgium and Greece (81% each). Opposition is most widespread in Finland (44%).

- Support for a **common foreign policy among the Member States of the European Union** is obtained from 2 in 3 EU citizens. Support is most widespread in Luxembourg, Greece (81% each) and Italy (80%) whilst people in Finland (36%), the UK, Sweden (35% each) and Denmark (32%) are most likely to oppose a common foreign policy.

- In the final months prior to the introduction of euro notes and coins, 68% of people living in the 12 euro-zone countries but only 32% of the people living in the three countries outside the euro-zone (Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom) are in favour of a **European monetary union with one single currency**[17].

- More than half of all EU citizens (51%) favour **the enlargement of the European Union to include new countries**[18].

[17] Chapter 5 provides a detailed analysis of public opinion towards the single currency.
[18] Chapter 6 provides a detailed analysis of public opinion towards enlargement.

The following table shows the average support level for the four policy matters in each Member State.

AVERAGE % SUPPORT FOR 4 CURRENT POLICY MATTERS BY COUNTRY	
Country	**Average % Support**
Greece	78
Luxembourg	76
Italy	76
The Netherlands	71
Belgium	69
Spain	69
Germany	65
Portugal	64
EU15	**63**
Denmark	61
France	60
Ireland	60
Austria	59
Sweden	57
Finland	51
United Kingdom	40

As can be seen, people in Greece, Luxembourg and Italy are most likely to support the Union's current policies, whilst opposition is most widespread in the United Kingdom[19].

Looking next at the other items included in the question shows that:

- The majority of EU citizens are in favour of **teaching school children about the way the European Union institutions work**, with support levels ranging from 66% in the UK to 92% in Sweden.

- Nearly 7 in 10 EU citizens are for the **resignation of the president of the European Commission and the European Commissioners if they do not have the support of a majority in the European Parliament**, with support levels ranging from 54% in the UK to 82% in Finland.

- Sixty-four percent of EU citizens are in favour of the **European Union being responsible for matters that cannot be effectively handled by national, regional and local governments**, with support levels ranging from 49% in the UK to 76% in Greece.

[19] The United Kingdom shows the highest percentage of "don't know" responses, which have resulted in these low support levels and which are not matched by higher than average opposition levels for all items.

The following table shows the average support level for these three items in each Member State.

AVERAGE % SUPPORT BY COUNTRY	
Country	**Average % Support**
Luxembourg	81
Greece	79
Finland	78
Italy	78
Denmark	77
The Netherlands	77
Sweden	77
Belgium	75
Germany	75
Ireland	73
Austria	73
France	72
EU15	***72***
Spain	70
Portugal	68
United Kingdom	56

As can be seen, the rank order of countries for these three items is quite different than it is for the four policy items, although Luxembourg and Greece are again in top position. Finland, Denmark and Sweden, however, are now much higher in the rank order. The low average support registered in the United Kingdom, and to some extent in Portugal and Spain, is again due to the explanation provided in footnote 19. (See also table 4.4)

5. The euro

The survey was carried out three months before the twelve Member States[20] that introduced the European single currency started using euro notes and coins. This chapter looks at support for the euro in the euro-zone countries and in the three countries that have not introduced the euro. The chapter also analyses how comfortable people feel about using the euro, how informed they are, whether they have received information and reports the results of a battery of items that measures people's underlying attitudes to the single currency.

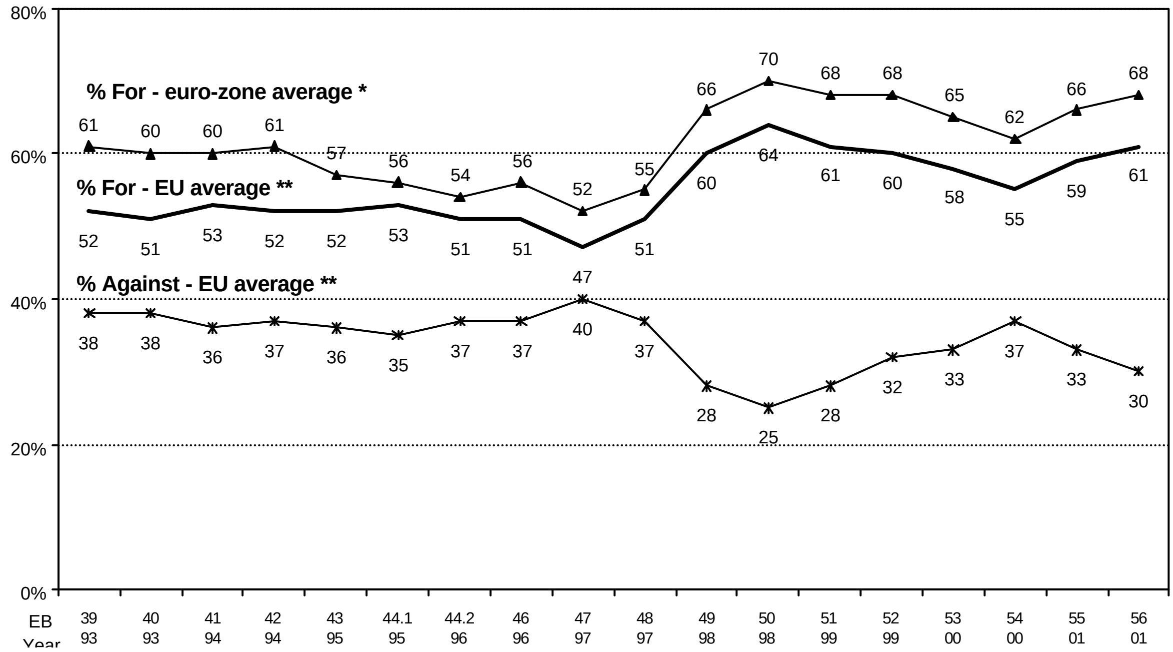
5.1. Support for the single currency

The Autumn 2001 Eurobarometer results show that 61% of EU citizens support European monetary union with a single currency, the euro, that 30% of EU citizens are against this and that 9% lack an opinion. Support for the euro is significantly higher in the "EURO 12" countries than it is in the "pre-in" countries (68% vs. 32%).

On the Autumn 2001 survey, the question wording for the item measuring support for the euro was changed, the previous formulation having been "there has to be a European monetary union with one single currency, the euro". However, there is no clear pattern amongst the responses by country which would indicate that this change of wording has affected people's responses. Thus, whilst some caution needs to be taken in the interpretation of the results, a comparison of the Autumn 2001 survey with the previous survey reveals a small improvement in support for the euro.

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

Support for the single currency
1993 - 2001 (EU12 - EU15)



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Trend
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 5.1

* EURO9 until 1994; EURO11 since 1995; EURO12 since 2000 (EB54)
** EU12 until 1994; EU15 since 1995

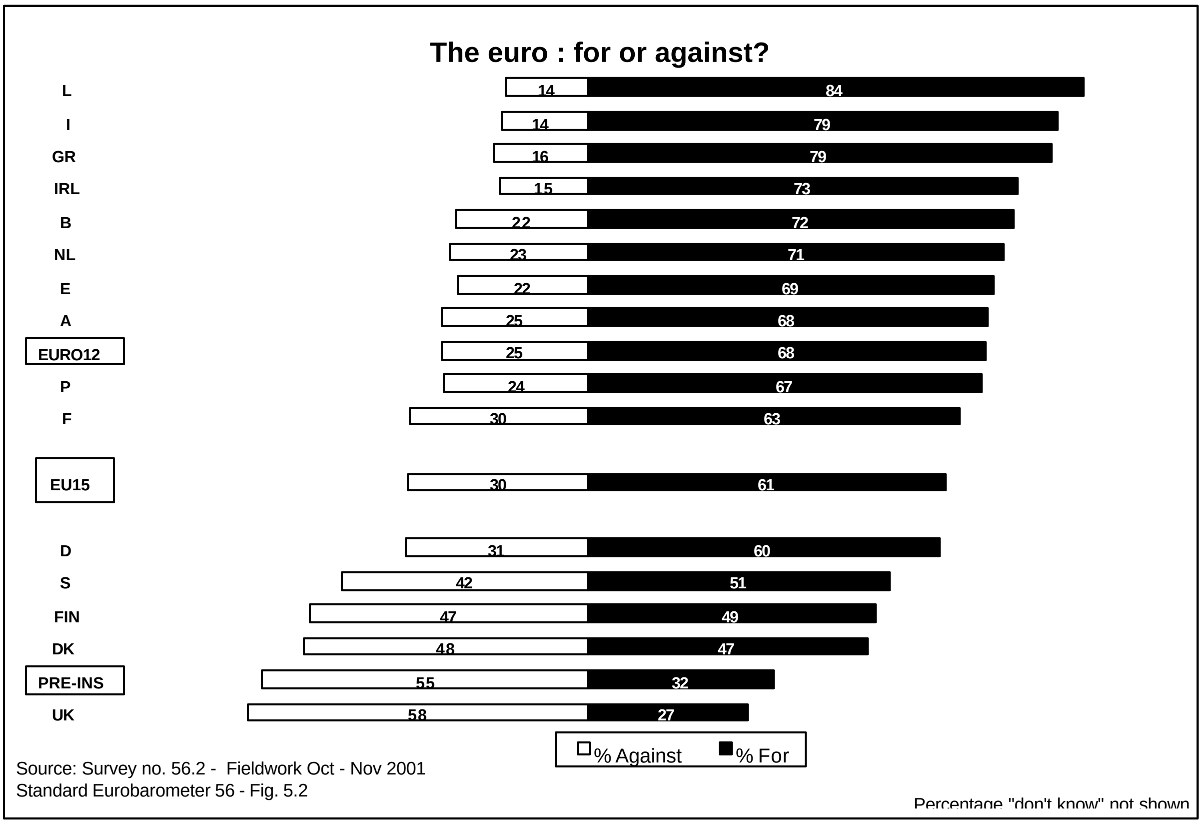
Percentage "don't know" not shown

[20] 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. 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 can be seen, public support for the euro reached a high of 64% in Autumn 1998, just prior to its introduction on 1 January 1999. In Autumn 2000, support dropped to 55% but has since increased to reach its current level of 61%. Opposition to the euro is now 3 percentage points lower than it was in Spring 2001 and 7 percentage points lower than it was in Autumn 2000.

In the "EURO 12" countries, support for the euro is most widespread in Luxembourg (84%), followed by Italy, Greece (79% each), Ireland (73%), Belgium (72%) and the Netherlands (71%). In Finland, public opinion is most divided with 49% for the euro and 47% against it.

In comparison to Spring 2001 public support for the euro improved in Austria (+9), Portugal (+8), Greece, Germany (+7 each), the Netherlands (+5) and Luxembourg (+3) but is now less widespread in France, Italy (-4 each) and Belgium (-3). No significant change has been recorded in the other four countries.



Among the "pre-in" countries, support for the euro is obtained from more than half of the people in Sweden (51%), which reflects a very marked shift in public opinion since Spring 2001 when only 29% were in favour of the euro. We also find a significant strengthening of support in Denmark (with an in increase of 7 points in the percentage for and a decrease of 8 points in the percentage against). Even though 47% of Danes are now for the euro, public opinion clearly remains divided. British public opinion continues to be predominantly anti-euro with only 27% in favour and 58% against. (Table 5.1a)

Among the various demographic groups in the population, support for the euro is highest among people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older (73%), self-employed people (72%), students (71%) and managers (70%). Opposition levels are highest among unemployed people (41%) but among all socio-demographic groups, supporters of the euro outnumber its opponents.

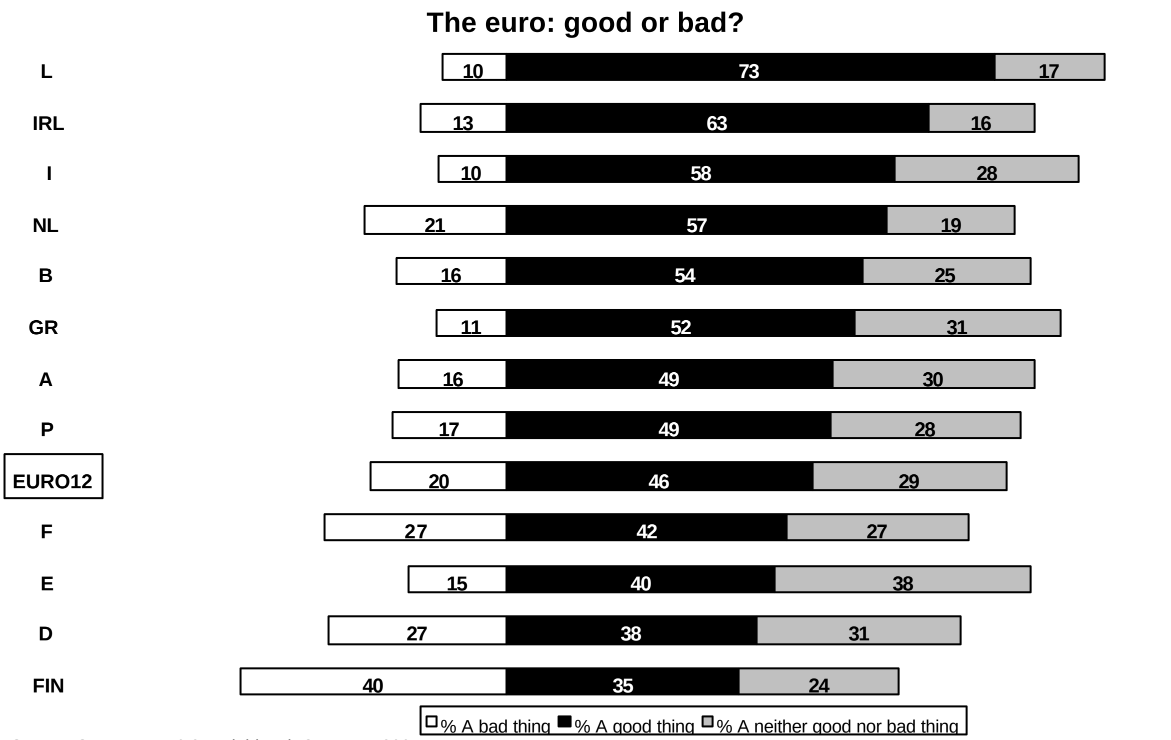
At the attitudinal level we find that the gap in support levels between those who regard their country's membership as a good thing (81%) and those who regard their country's membership as a bad thing (19%) remains very large. (Table 5.1b)

The survey also includes the following new measure of support, asked of respondents in the 12 euro-zone countries only:

> *"On 1st January 2002, the national currency will be replaced by the euro. Do you think that it is a very good thing, a fairly good thing, neither a good nor a bad thing, a fairly bad thing or a very bad thing?"*

The distribution of answers on the new question is quite different from the traditional "support" question because respondents are given more answer options, whereas the "traditional" question forces them to choose between being for or against the single currency. Hence we find that on the new question, 46% of people in the "EURO 12" countries believe that it is a good thing that the euro will replace the national currencies, 29% view this as neither good nor bad and 20% see this as a bad thing.

Another factor that may further contribute to a lower level of "outright" support for the euro lies in the question wording which makes specific reference to the fact that the euro will replace the national currencies. This significantly changes the context in which respondents think about the euro.



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 5.3

As the graph above shows, people in Luxembourg are most likely to regard the euro as a good thing (73%), followed by people in Ireland (63%), Italy (58%) and the Netherlands (57%). More than half of the people in Belgium and Greece also regard it as a good thing. In every country except Finland this group greatly outnumbers the group that regards the euro as a bad thing, a view that is held by less than 2 in 10 people in 8 of the 12 euro-zone countries. In the Netherlands, 21% believe the euro is a bad thing and in Germany and France 27% hold this view. In Finland the euro is seen as a bad thing by 40% of the people, compared to 35% who believe it is a good thing. (Table 5.2a)

The following table shows that despite the lower level of support that is obtained with this new question, the rank order among the countries is quite similar to the "traditional" support question.

SUPPORT FOR THE EURO BY COUNTRY		
Country	**% For**	**% Good thing**
Luxembourg	84	73 (1)
Italy	79	58 (3)
Greece	79	52 (6)
Ireland	73	63 (2)
Belgium	72	54 (5)
The Netherlands	71	57 (4)
Spain	69	40 (10)
Austria	68	49 (7)
EU12	***68***	***46***
Portugal	67	49 (8)
France	63	42 (9)
Germany	60	38 (11)
Finland	49	35 (12)

The cross-tabulation of these two questions further shows how closely they are related, since 64% of people who support the euro see it as a good thing compared to only 7% of people who oppose the euro. Equally 63% of those who oppose the euro see it as a bad thing compared to only 5% of those who support the euro in principle.

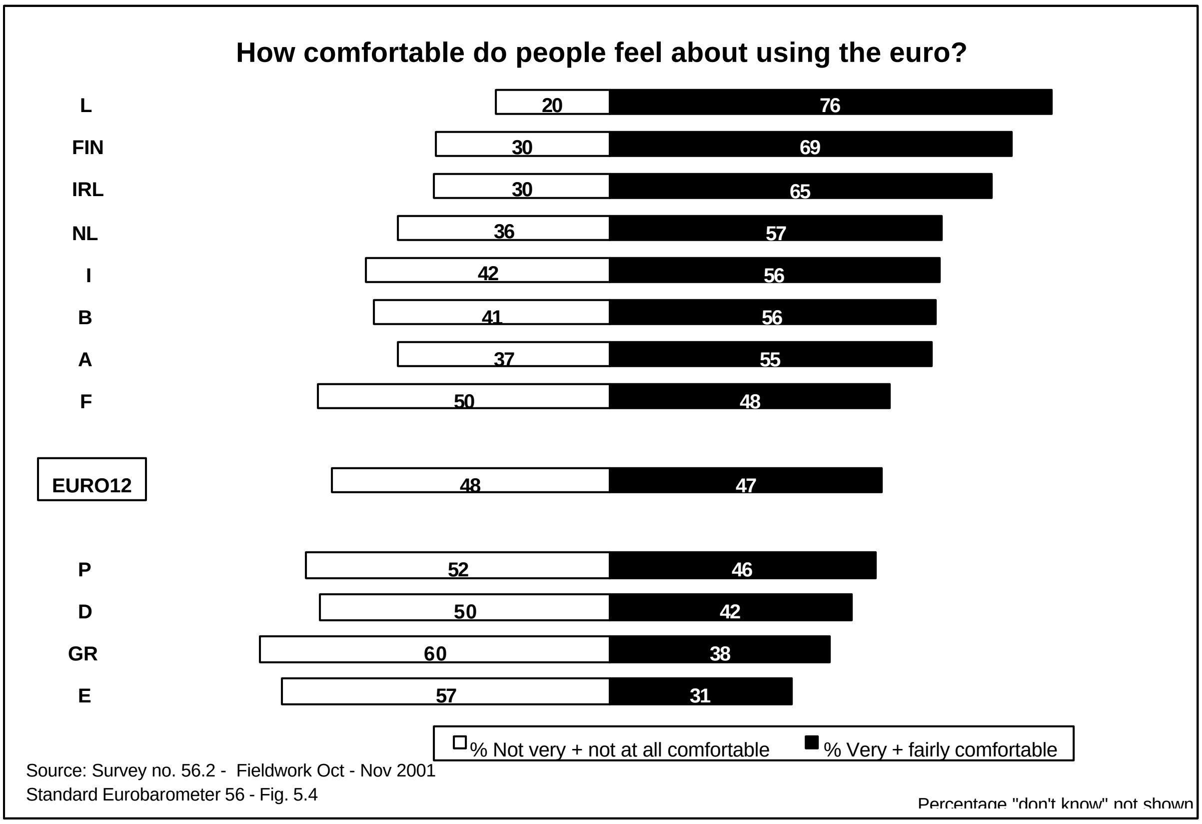
The demographic analyses show that men are significantly more likely than women are to believe that it is a good thing that the euro will replace the national currencies (53% vs. 40%). The analyses also reveal an age effect, with people aged 55 and over significantly less likely to view the euro as a good thing (39%) than younger people (49%). The age at which people left full-time education is also important: 58% of people who stayed in school until age 20 or older believe the euro is a good thing, compared to only 34% of people who left school aged 15 or younger. (Table 5.2b)

5.2. Attitudes to the euro

Another new question, again asked only of respondents in the 12 euro-zone countries, measures how comfortable people feel about using the euro.

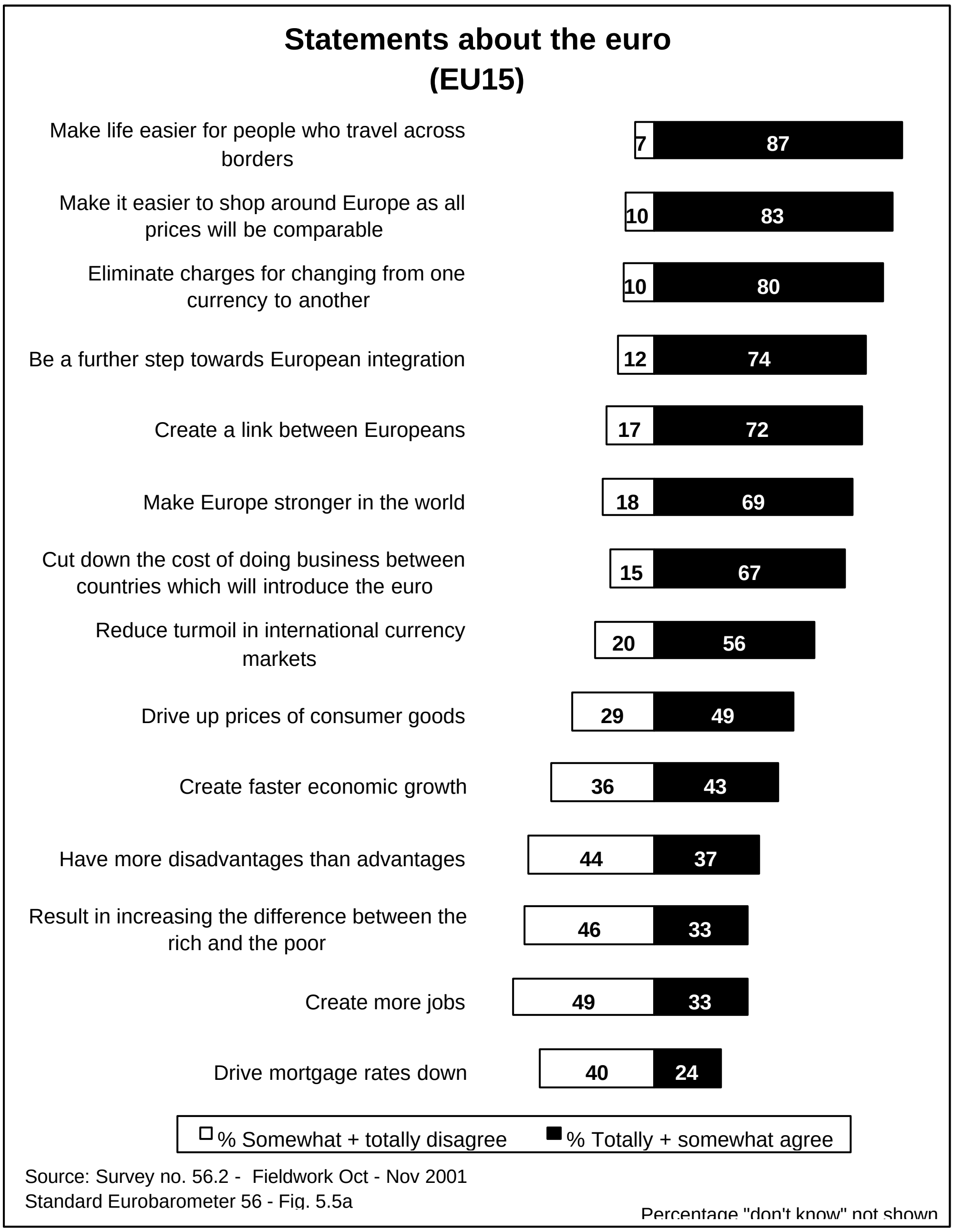
As the graph below shows, more than 3 in 4 people in Luxembourg feel comfortable about using the euro. Finland comes in second place (69%), despite the finding that support for the euro is lowest in this country. In Spain and Greece, people are far less likely to feel ready with 60% of Greek respondents declaring that the do not feel very comfortable or not at all comfortable. In Spain, this figure is 57% but a further 12% lack an opinion, which in itself is not exactly a statement of confidence. (See also table 5.3a)

There are significant differences among people who support the euro and those who oppose its existence. Of people who support the euro, 61% feel comfortable about using it, compared to only 15% of those who are against the euro.



The demographic analyses show that 55% of men feel comfortable about using the euro compared to only 39% of women. This may help explain why women are less likely to regard the euro as a good thing. The age effect is also clearly present, with only 39% of people aged 55 and over feeling comfortable compared to 50% of younger people. In terms of education we find that people who stayed in full-time education until age 20 or older are twice as likely to feel comfortable as people are who left school before reaching age 16 (62% vs. 31%). There are equally large differences among the various occupational groups: 66% of managers feel comfortable about using the euro while only 33% of unemployed people feel this way. (Table 5.3b)

The survey also included a battery of statements with which respondents could totally agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or totally disagree. The aim of the statements was to obtain a better understanding of people's underlying attitudes to the euro.

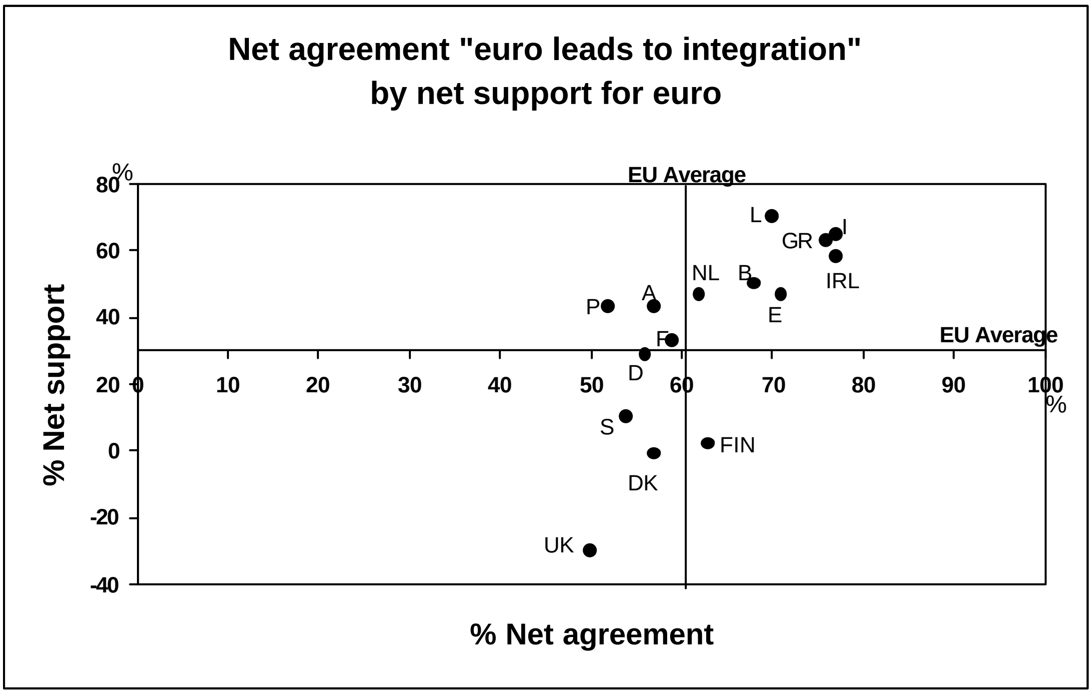


Overall, the EU public tends to be more likely to see advantages than disadvantages in the euro, with 44% disagreeing with the statement that the euro will have more disadvantages than advantages and 37% agreeing with it.

The practical implications of the euro are widely seen as an advantage rather than a disadvantage. The results show that the large majority of EU citizens agrees that the euro will make life easier for people who travel across borders (87%), that it will make it easier to shop around Europe as all prices will be comparable (83%) and that the euro will eliminate charges for changing from one currency to another (80%).

For three in four EU citizens, the euro represents a further step towards European integration. To better understand the relevance of this finding we have deducted the total percentage of "disagree" responses from the total percentage of "agree" responses in each country to obtain a net agreement for each country. We then compared this net agreement with net support for the euro (using the same formula as described above).

As the following graph shows, there are a number of countries where the sentiment that the euro represents a further step towards European integration is positively linked to support for the euro at the aggregate country level. These are Italy, Luxembourg, Greece, Ireland and to a lesser extent, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands. In these six nations, both the proportion of people who agree that the euro leads to further integration and the proportion of people who support the idea of the euro are above the EU average. In Finland, these aggregate analyses appear to indicate that the relationship between further integration as a result of the euro and support for the euro is negative.



In Austria and Portugal, support for the euro is above average, but the percentage of people who feel that the euro leads to further integration is below average (which in Portugal is largely due to a high proportion of "don't know" responses). The results for France are more or less on par with the EU average. In Germany, support for the euro is also on par with the EU average but the percentage of people who feel the euro leads to further integration is slightly below the EU average.

The three "pre-in" countries all appear in the bottom left hand quarter of the graph. What this means is that in these countries support for the euro and agreement that the euro leads to further integration are both below average. Nonetheless, in all three countries the majority of people believe that the euro will lead to further integration. This finding supports the hypothesis that opposition to further EU integration is one of the reasons why support for the euro is low in these countries.

Seventy-two percent of EU citizens believe that the euro will create a link between Europeans. This view is held by more than 8 out of 10 people in Ireland (85%), Luxembourg (84%) and Italy (83%). At 57%, people in the Netherlands are least likely to feel that the euro will create a link between Europeans.

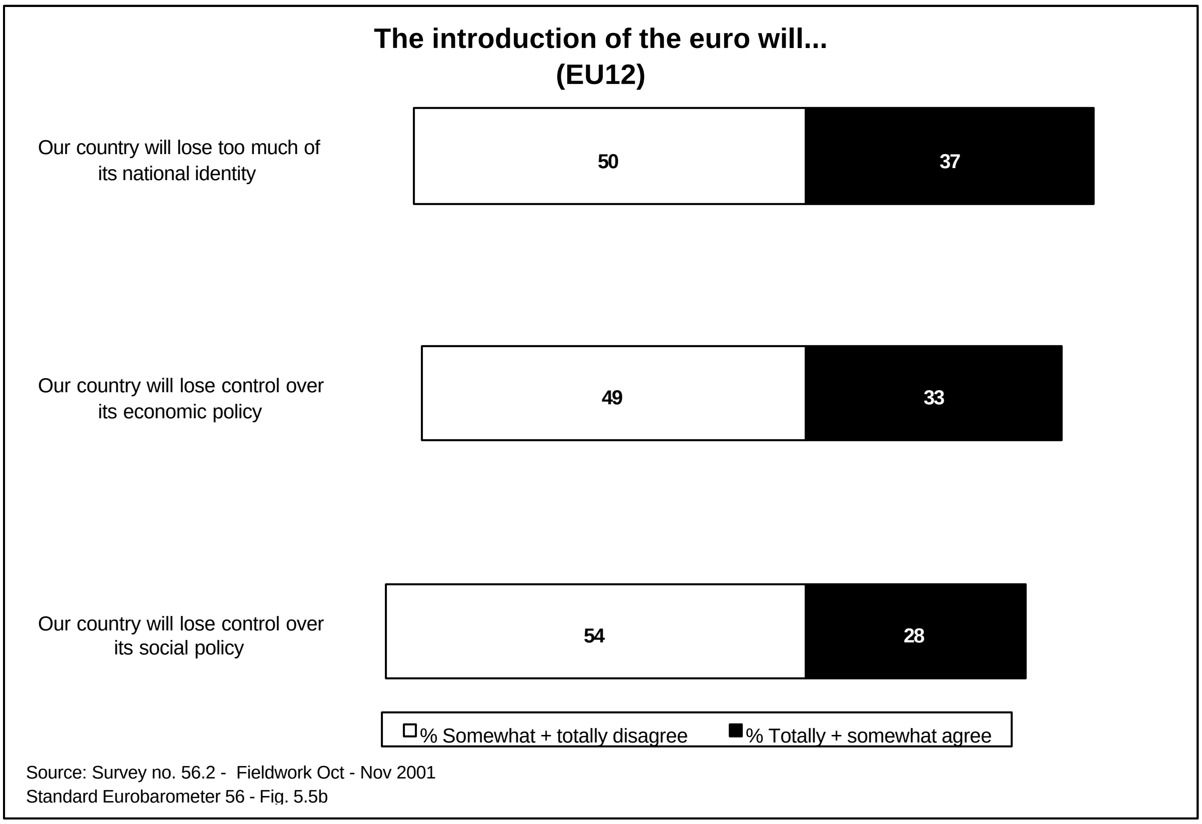
Nearly 7 out of 10 EU citizens agree that the introduction of the euro will make Europe stronger in the world. This is the majority view in each Member State with agreement levels ranging from 52% of the people in the UK to 88% of people in Luxembourg.

Looking at how the euro is perceived from an economic perspective, we find that 67% of EU citizens believe that the euro will cut down the cost of doing business between countries in the euro-zone, 56% believe it will reduce turmoil in international currency markets and 43% agree that the euro will create faster economic growth.

Optimism about the euro is less widespread among EU citizens with regard to the following aspects. Nearly half of all EU citizens agree that the introduction of the euro will drive up prices of consumer goods and 33% believe it will increase the difference between the rich and the poor. Only 33% believe the euro will create more jobs. The battery also included a statement asking respondents whether they agree or disagree that the introduction of the euro will drive mortgage rates down. Forty percent of respondents disagree, 37% lack an opinion and only 24% believe this will happen. (See also table 5.4)

In the "EURO 12" countries, respondents were asked three further questions that measure whether people feel that the introduction of the euro will imply that their country will lose a) control over its economic policy, b) control over its social policy and c) too much of its national identity.

The majority of people in the "EURO 12" countries disagree with these three statements. Only 28% agree that the introduction of the euro will imply that their country will lose control over its social policy and 33% feel this way with regards to their country's economic policy. On average, 37% agree that the introduction of the euro will imply that their country will lose too much of its national identity.



The following table shows the average percentage of "agree" responses for the three items in each of the 12 countries. As can be seen, people in Luxembourg and Italy are on average least likely to agree with these three statements. Agreement is most widespread in Finland and Greece[21].

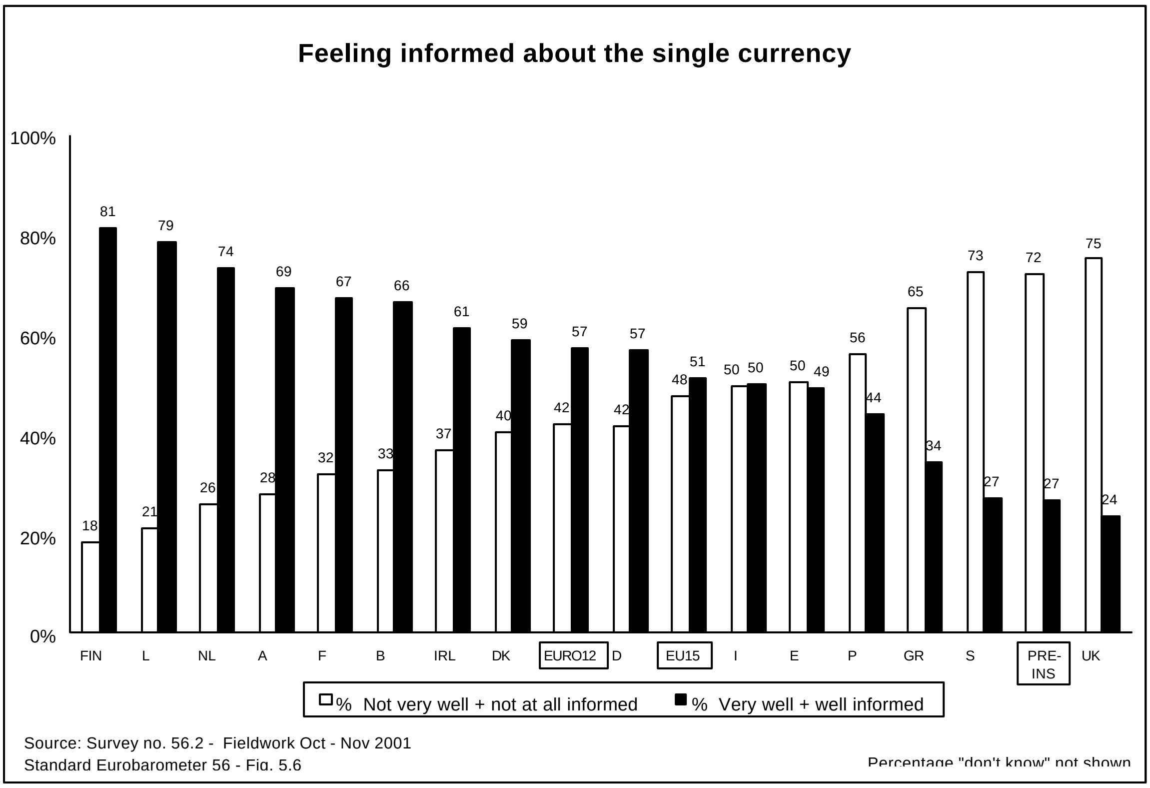
[21] Country frequencies for each item can be found in table 5.4.

AVERAGE % "AGREE" RESPONSES FOR 3 EURO ITEMS ASKED IN "EURO 12" BY COUNTRY	
Country	**Average % "Agree"**
Luxembourg	21
Italy	24
Spain	26
Belgium	30
The Netherlands	32
Portugal	32
EU12	***33***
Austria	34
Germany	35
France	41
Ireland	42
Greece	43
Finland	44

5.3. Information about the euro

The final section of this chapter examines the extent to which EU citizens feel well informed about the euro, whether they have received information about it and from whom they have received this information.

The proportion of EU citizens that feels well informed about the euro has increased by 10 percentage points since Spring 2001 and is now above 50% for the first time since the measurement began several years ago. Forty eight percent of EU citizens say they do not feel well informed compared to 58% in Spring 2001 and the remaining 1% lack an opinion.



The country analyses show that people in the "EURO 12" countries continue to feel more informed about the euro (57%) than people in the "pre-in" countries (27%). Looking first at the "EURO 12" countries, we see that people in Finland (81%) are most likely to feel well informed, followed by people in Luxembourg (79%) and the Netherlands (74%). People in Greece (34%) and Portugal (44%) are least likely to feel well informed. In Spain and Italy half of the population feels well informed. In the other “EURO 12” countries, more than half of the population feels well informed about the single currency.

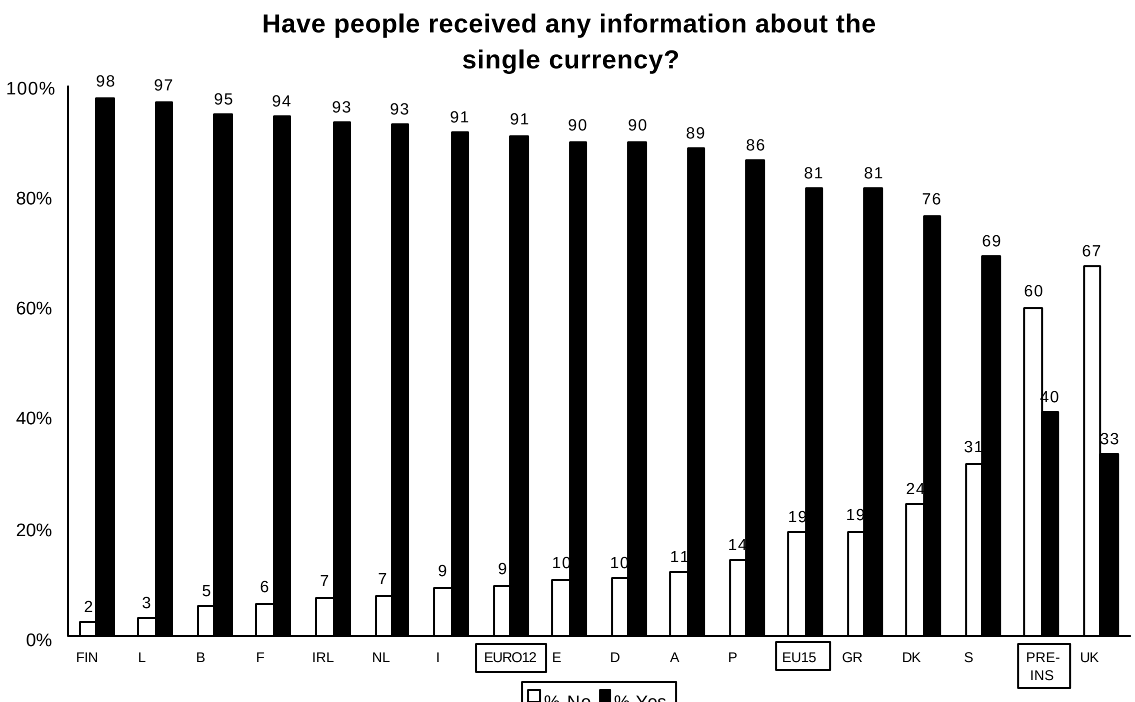
In comparison to Spring 2001, the percentage of people who feel well informed has increased in all “EURO 12” countries. The largest increases have been recorded in Ireland (+23 percentage points), Luxembourg (+21), Italy (+18), Portugal, Finland (+17 each) and Germany (+15).

In the "pre-in" countries, the percentage of people who feel well informed about the euro has for obvious reasons not increased as significantly as it has in the “EURO 12” countries. The Danes are still most likely to feel well informed (59%). In Sweden (27%) and the UK (24%; +4), people still tend not to feel well informed but significant improvements have been recorded in both countries since Spring 2001. (Table 5.5a)

The attitudinal analyses show that 63% of people who are in favour of the euro feel well informed, compared to 35% of those who are against the euro. The analyses also show that there are large differences depending on how knowledgeable people feel they are about the European Union in general. Among the small group that regards itself as very knowledgeable, the proportion who feel well informed about the euro is 80%. Among those who feel they have an average knowledge of the EU, this proportion falls to 62% and among those who feel they know very little this is only 29%. Finally, the analyses show that 63% of those who regard the European Union as a good thing feel well informed, compared to only 40% of those who regard the European Union as a bad thing.

The demographic analyses show that men are significantly more likely than women to feel well informed about the euro (59% vs. 44%). There is a clear gap between people who are younger than 55 and those aged 55 and over. Fifty four percent of the younger age group feels well informed, compared to only 45% of the older age group. Levels of feeling informed strongly depend on the age at which people left full-time education. People who completed their studies aged 20 or older (70%) are twice as likely to feel well informed than people who completed their studies before the age of 15 (35%). Among the various occupational groups, we find that managers are most likely to feel well informed (68%) whilst only 37% of people looking after the home feel well informed. (Table 5.5b)

The following graph shows that 81% of EU citizens say they have received information about the euro.



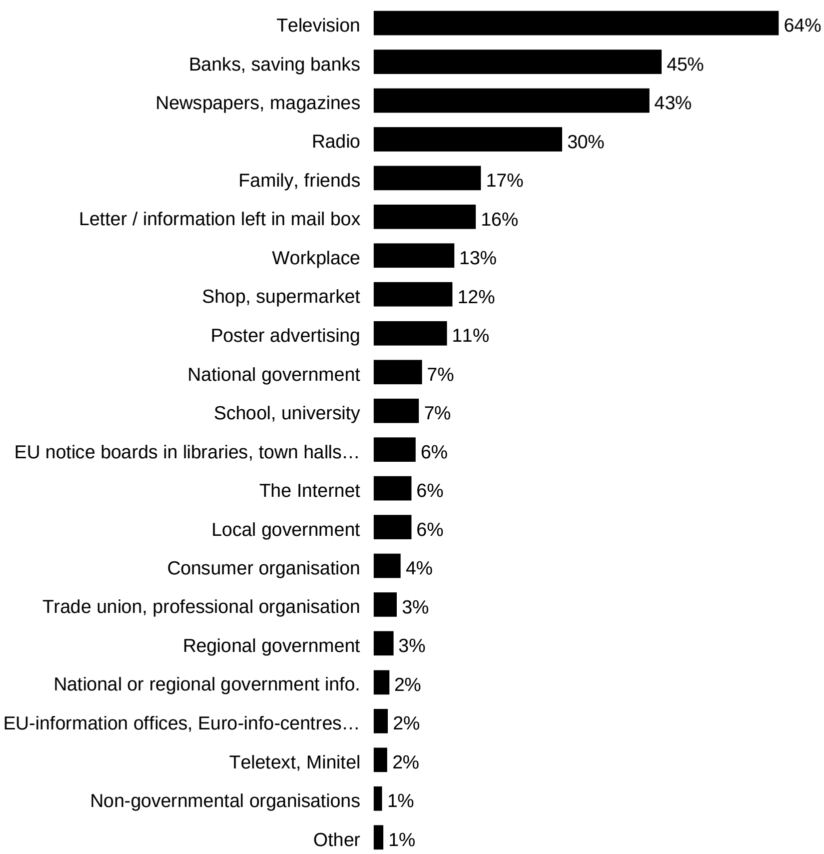
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 5.7a

Among the "EURO 12" countries, the percentage of respondents who indicate receipt of information about the euro ranges from 81% in Greece to 98% in Finland. In comparison to Spring 2001, we find a 16 percentage point increase in Ireland, a 10 percentage point increase in Belgium and a 9 percentage point increase in Portugal. In the other countries, smaller increases have been recorded except for the Netherlands where the percentage of respondents who indicate receipt of information has gone down from 96% to 93%.

Among the three "pre-in" countries, we find that 76% of Danish respondents have received information about the single currency, in comparison to 86% in Spring 2001 and 100% in Autumn 2000, prior to the September 2000 euro. In Sweden, as in Spring 2001, 69% of the population say that they have received information. In the UK, 33% have received information about the single currency, up from 24% in Spring 2001.

As the following graph shows, people are most likely to say that they have received information about the euro on television (64%), a result that was also obtained in Spring 2001. Forty five percent of respondents say they have received information from financial institutions, up from 33% in Spring 2001. The percentage of respondents who say they have received information through the written press (43%) is the same as it was in Spring 2001. Three in ten respondents say that they have received information from the radio. All other sources included in the questionnaire are listed by fewer than 2 in 10 respondents[22].

From whom have people received information about the single currency? (EU15)*



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 5.7b

* Asked to those who have received information

[22] 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 2001 results, see table 3.5 in Eurobarometer Report No. 55.

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 Greece, Ireland and Finland. In Greece, the radio replaces financial institutions as one of the three most frequently mentioned sources. In Ireland and Finland, information received through the mail comes in second place. It is perhaps to be expected that financial institutions are not among the three most important sources of information in the "Pre-in" countries. In these countries, radio comes in third place.

Our analyses indicate that receiving a letter through the mail or receiving information in one's mail box appears to be a particularly effective method of informing people. The highest increases in the percentage of people who feel well informed about the euro are found in countries with a large percentage of respondents who received information about the euro this way. (See also table 5.6)

TOP THREE MOST MENTIONED SOURCES FROM WHICH PEOPLE HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION ABOUT THE EURO (IN %, BY MEMBER STATE)

Belgium	
Television	67
Financial institutions	65
Newspapers, magazines	47
Denmark	
Television	65
Newspapers, magazines	50
Radio	40
Germany	
Television	69
Financial institutions	62
Newspapers, magazines	60
Greece	
Television	69
Newspapers, magazines	33
Radio	24
Spain	
Television	76
Financial institutions	53
Newspapers, magazines	33
France	
Television	73
Financial institutions	71
Newspapers, magazines	49
Ireland	
Television	56
Through mail/letter box	49
Radio	44
Italy	
Television	74
Newspapers, magazines	46
Financial institutions	36

Luxembourg	
Television	79
Financial institutions	71
Newspapers, magazines	68
The Netherlands	
Television	68
Financial institutions	66
Newspapers, magazines	50
Austria	
Financial institutions	60
Television	57
Newspapers, magazines	50
Portugal	
Television	71
Financial institutions	32
Newspapers, magazines	21
Finland	
Television	79
Through mail/letter box	78
Newspapers, magazines	68
Sweden	
Television	60
Newspapers, magazines	50
Radio	36
United Kingdom	
Television	23
Newspapers, magazines	17
Radio	12

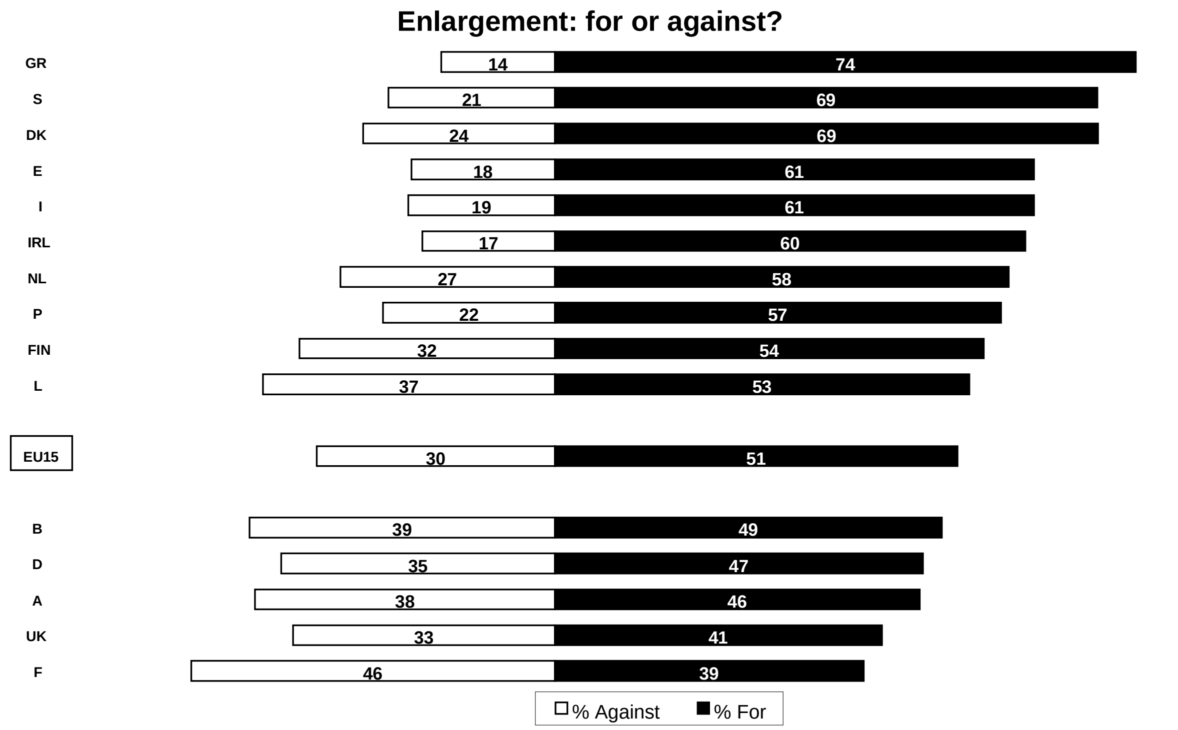
6. The enlargement of the European Union

The Commissioner responsible for enlargement of the European Union, Gunther Verheugen, describes enlargement as a “unique and historic task to further the integration of Europe by peaceful means, extending a zone of stability and prosperity to new members”. This enlargement is without precedent in terms of scope and diversity with 13 countries taking part in the process[23].

This chapter examines support for enlargement among EU citizens and looks at people’s underlying attitudes to enlargement. The chapter also looks at the extent to which EU citizens feel informed about enlargement and whether they have received information about this important subject.

6.1. Support for enlargement

As already reported in Chapter 4, 51% of respondents agree with the statement that the European Union should be enlarged to include new countries. Thirty percent disagree with this statement and 19% lack an opinion. The latest Eurobarometer results point to a significant positive shift in public opinion since Spring 2001, when 43% of respondents were in favour. The increase of 8 percentage points means that this is the first time that the Eurobarometer has found an absolute majority in favour of enlargement[24].



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 6.1
Percentage "don't know" not shown

As the graph above shows, support for enlargement is most widespread in Greece (74%), Sweden and Denmark (69% each). France is the only country with more people who oppose enlargement (46%) than people who are in favour of it (39%).

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[23] The 13 candidate 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/overview.htm.

[24] Readers should note that the wording of the statement was amended from “The European Union should be enlarged to include new countries” to “The enlargement of the European Union to include new countries”. It is possible that this change in wording has slightly affected the answers. The current results should be understood with this change of wording in mind.

Bearing in mind that the wording of the statement was amended, we find that support for enlargement increased significantly in all countries bar Ireland where public opinion has remained stable. The largest increases have been recorded in Sweden and Denmark (19 percentage points each), followed by the Netherlands (+16), Austria (+13), Germany (+12), Italy and Luxembourg (+10 each). (Table 6.1a)

Differences in support levels between men and women are largely explained by the fact that women are more likely than men to lack an opinion. There are, however, real differences in opinion between the four age groups with the youngest age group (57%) significantly more likely to support enlargement than people aged 55 and over (46%). Support levels are highest among people who left full-time education aged 20 or over (62%) and lowest among people who left full-time education before they reached the age of 16 (45%).

The attitudinal analyses show that 65% of people who support their country's membership of the European Union are in favour of enlargement, compared to only 25% of those who regard their country's membership as a bad thing. (Table 6.1b)

The next table shows that views about enlargement also vary significantly depending on how knowledgeable people feel they are about the European Union. Sixty five percent of people who feel very knowledgeable about the European Union are in favour of enlargement while 40% of those who feel they know very little are against enlargement. One noteworthy result is the high proportion of people who lack an opinion among the group with a low self-perceived knowledge score. If we take into account the fact that 40% of EU citizens belong to this category, it becomes obvious that in order to mobilise public opinion in favour of enlargement, action needs first to be undertaken to ensure that more people feel knowledgeable about the European Union, its policies and its institutions.

Relationship between support for enlargement and self-perceived knowledge of the European Union

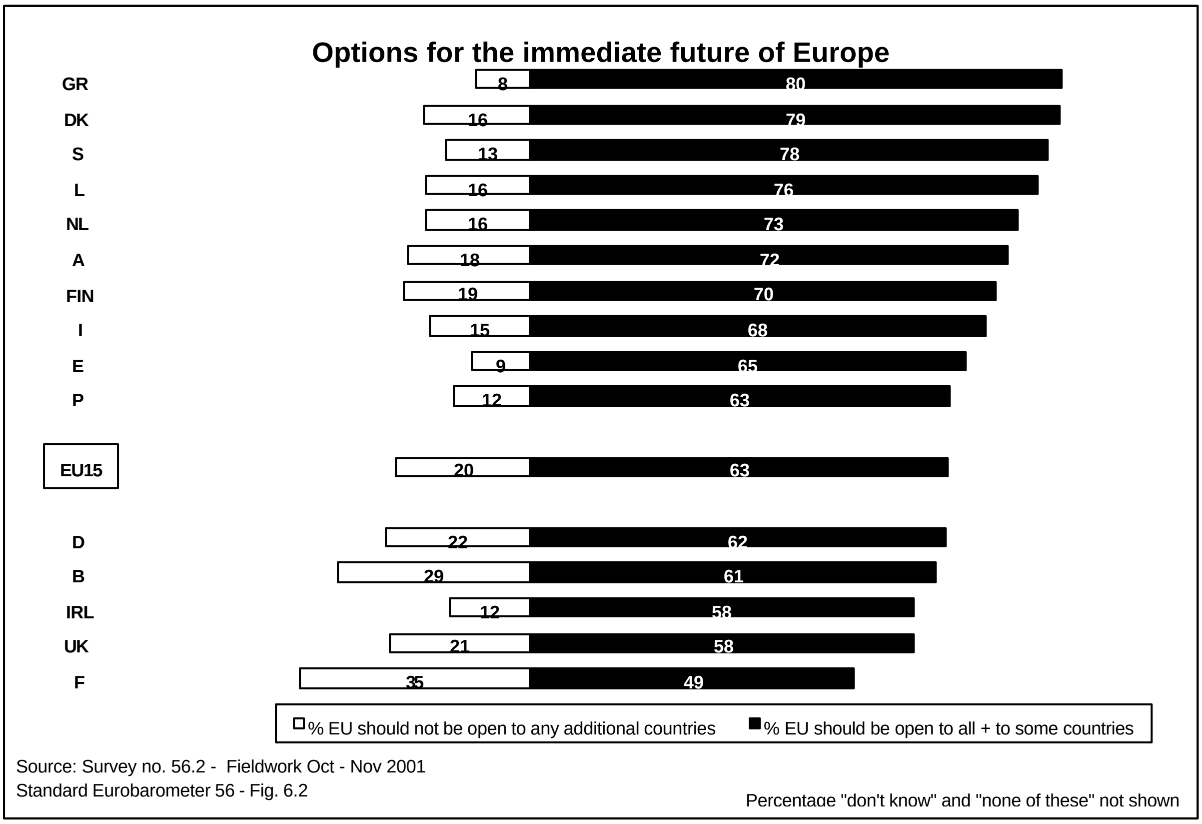
Enlargement:	Self-perceived knowledge: Low	Average	High
	%	%	%
For	40	56	**65**
Against	32	30	25
Don't know	**28**	14	10
Total	100	100	100

Since the basic question "Enlargement: for or against" does not take account of the fact that the 13 candidate countries will not join the Union simultaneously, another question that measures support for enlargement was included in the survey. Respondents were asked:

"Which of these three options do you prefer for the immediate future of Europe?
a) The European Union should be enlarged to include all the countries wishing to join
b) The European Union should be enlarged to include only some of the countries wishing to join
c) The European Union should not be enlarged to any additional countries
None of these (spontaneous)
Don't Know"

As in Spring 2001, the most favoured option among EU citizens is that the European Union should be enlarged to include only some of the countries wishing to join with 39% holding this view, compared to 44% in Spring 2001.

Twenty-four percent of respondents show unlimited support for enlargement by choosing the first answer option, namely that the European Union should be enlarged to include all countries wishing to join. In Spring 2001, 21% of respondents chose this option. However, we find that the proportion of respondents who believe the European Union should not be enlarged to include any additional countries (the third answer option) has also increased from 16% in Spring 2001 to 20%.



The country results show that people in Greece are most open to enlargement with 80% believing that the EU should be open to all or to some countries. In Denmark (79%), Sweden (78%) and Luxembourg (76%) more than three-quarters of the population shares this view.

If we look specifically at support for unlimited enlargement we find that this is most widespread in Spain (40%), Sweden (37%) and Portugal (36%). In Spain and Portugal this is the majority view. In Ireland, public opinion is quite divided with equal proportions showing unlimited support and limited support for enlargement (29% each).

In all other Member States, limited enlargement is the most popular solution for the immediate future of Europe. Support for this kind of enlargement is most widespread in Denmark (63%) and Luxembourg (58%) and is favoured by more than half of the people in the Netherlands (54%), Austria and Greece (51% each).

France is the only country where more than 3 in 10 people believe the European Union should not be enlarged to any additional countries (35%). This view is shared by 29% of people in Belgium, 22% of people in Germany and 21% of people in the UK. In all other countries, fewer than 2 in 10 people oppose enlargement. The proportion of “don’t know” responses ranges from 3% in Denmark to 29% in Ireland. (Table 6.2a)

In comparison to Spring 2001 we find significant shifts in a number of countries. These are[25]:

POSTIVE SHIFTS	
Austria:	Increase in unlimited support (+5) and limited support (+4)
Luxembourg:	Increase in unlimited support (+4) and limited support (+4)
Sweden:	Increase in unlimited support (+6) at expense of limited support (-3) and opposition (-3)
Spain:	Increase in unlimited support (+12) at expense of limited support (-17)
Greece:	Increase in unlimited support (+9) at expense of limited support (-8)
Ireland:	Increase in unlimited support (+6) at expense of limited support (-8)
NEUTRAL SHIFTS	
United Kingdom:	More polarisation with increase in unlimited support (+9) and opposition (+5)
Germany:	More polarisation with increase in unlimited support (+3) and opposition (+5)
The Netherlands:	More polarisation with increase in unlimited support (+3) and opposition (+5)
Portugal:	More “don’t know” responses (+18) at expense of unlimited support (-5) and limited support (-16)
NEGATIVE SHIFTS	
France:	Increase in opposition (+12), drop in unlimited support (-6) and limited support (-6)
Belgium:	Increase in opposition (+7) at expense of limited support (-5)
Italy:	Increase in opposition (+3) at expense of limited support (-4)

The demographic analyses show that there is relatively little variation among the different socio-demographic groups in the population. Support for unlimited enlargement ranges from 21% among retired people to 29% among unemployed people. For limited enlargement, support is most widespread among people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older (48%) and least widespread among unemployed people, those who left school aged 15 or younger and unemployed people (32% each). Opposition to enlargement ranges from 15% among students to 23% among retired people and those who left full-time education aged 16 to 19. The proportion of people who disagree with any of these three options is low for all demographic groups. The level of “don’t know” responses ranges from 7% among people who stayed in full-time education until the age of 20 or older to 20% among people who left full-time education aged 15 or younger. (Table 6.2b)

When we cross-reference the responses of this measure of support with the responses to the “for or against” measure of support, we find that:

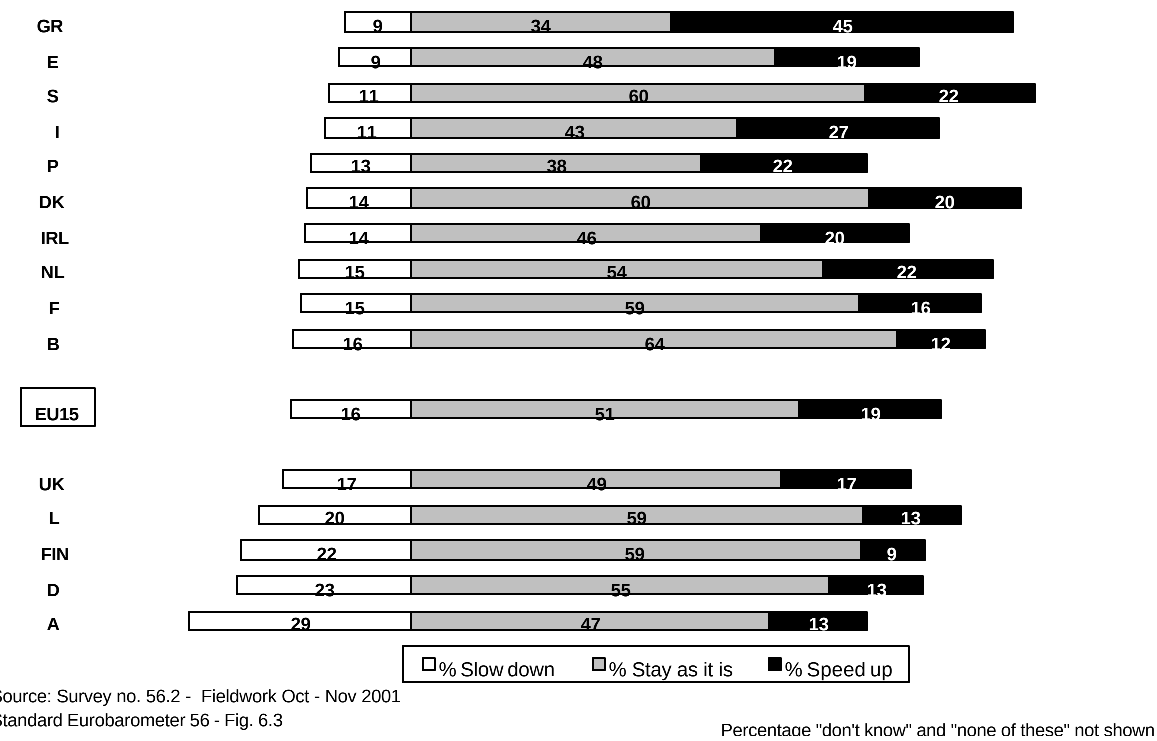
- Thirty-nine percent of people who support enlargement believe that enlargement should include all countries wishing to join, compared to 7% of people who oppose enlargement.

- Support for limited enlargement is obtained from 46% of people who are in favour of enlargement and 29% of people who, when not given the choice, oppose it.

- Only 6% of people who favour enlargement, when forced to choose between the two extremes, believe that the EU should not be enlarged to include any additional countries, compared to 48% of people who oppose enlargement.

Other analyses show that respondents who want the enlargement process to speed up are much more likely to favour an unlimited enlargement (49%) than are those who want the process to slow down (11%).
The results for the question about the speed of enlargement are that 51% of respondents feel that it should stay as it is, 19% want it speeded up and 16% want it slowed down. The remaining 15% lack an opinion.

[25] See also table 6.2a.



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 6.3

The country results show that people in Greece are by far most likely to want the process of enlargement to speed up (45%). In fact, this is the majority opinion in Greece. In all other countries, the majority view is that the speed of the process should stay as it is. In Belgium (64%), Denmark and Sweden (60% each), this view is held by 6 in 10 people and in Luxembourg, Finland and France (59% each) it is held by nearly 6 in 10 people. The view that the enlargement process should slow down is most widespread in Austria (29%), Germany (23%), Finland (22%) and Luxembourg (20%). In all other countries, less than 2 in 10 respondents want the process to be slowed down.

In comparison to Spring 2001, the overall trend is that people are now more inclined to want the speed of the process to stay as it is. In the Netherlands, we note a positive development in that people are now more likely to want the process to speed up. The increase in the number of people who want the process to stay as it is in Luxembourg, Greece and Finland is also positive in that there are now fewer people who believe the process should slow down. However, in Portugal, Italy, Belgium and France there are now significantly fewer people who want the process to speed up. (Table 6.3a)

The demographic analyses show that the proportion of people who want the process of enlargement to speed up ranges from 16% among people aged 55 and over to 25% among students. Managers (21%) are the only socio-demographic group where more than 20% want the process to slow down.

Again we find that the most favoured option is for the speed of enlargement to stay as it is, regardless of whether people support or oppose enlargement. However, among those who support enlargement, we find that 30% want the process to speed up, while 30% of those who are against enlargement believe the process should slow down. (See also table 6.3b)

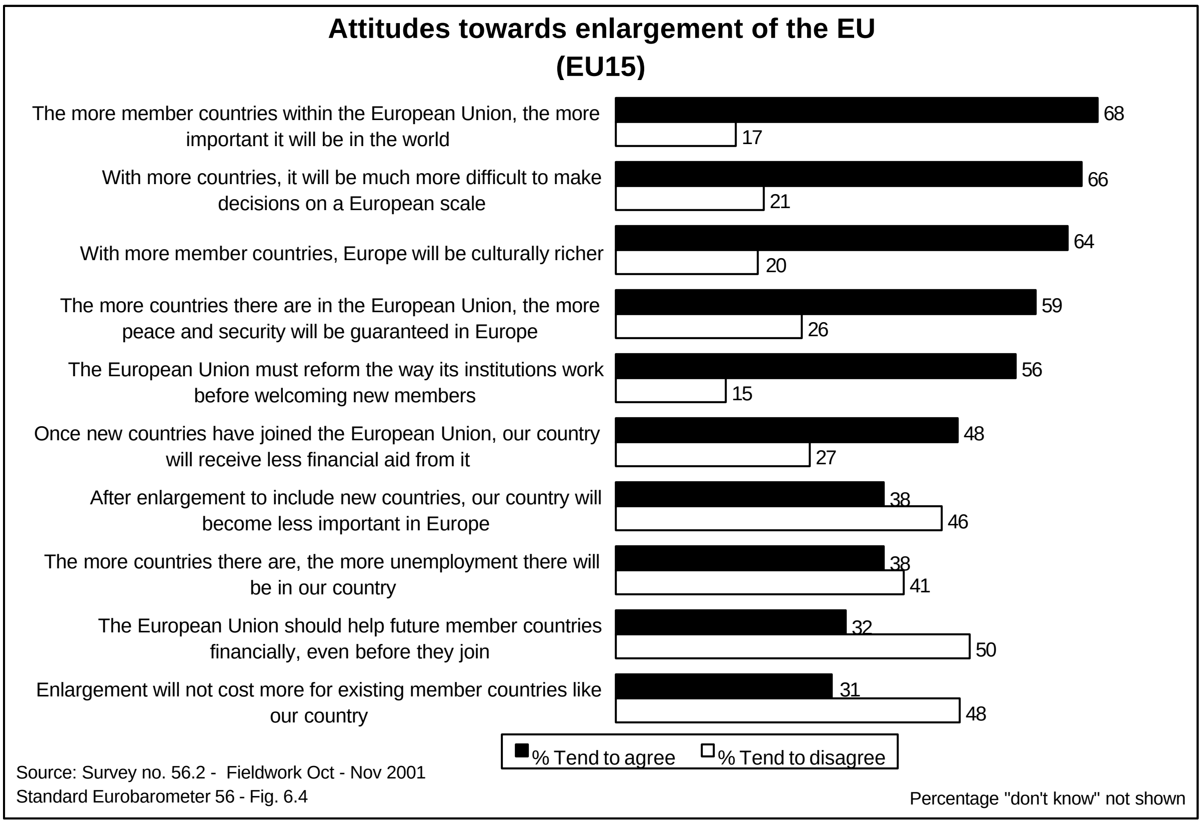
6.2. Attitudes to enlargement

In this section we look at people's underlying attitudes towards enlargement to gain a better understanding of the public's somewhat hesitant stance. However, analysis of these underlying attitudes shows that for many people enlargement also has quite a few positive aspects.

Overall, the results of the Autumn 2001 survey are more positive than those obtained in Spring 2001, helping to explain why support for enlargement is generally speaking now more widespread[26].

The majority of EU citizens feels that the Union will be more important in the world if it includes more countries (68%) while only 38% believe that their own country will become less important as a result of enlargement. Sixty four percent of EU citizens regard a Union that consists of more member countries as a cultural enrichment and 59% believe that a larger Union will guarantee more peace and security.

The largest shift in attitude since Spring 2001 has been among those who agree that enlargement would bring more peace and security to Europe (+9 percentage points). The proportion disagreeing with the statement has decreased by 6 percentage points. Other major shifts have occurred among those who do not agree that their country will become less important after enlargement (+6) and among those who agree that enlargement will not cost more for existing member countries (+6). The proportion of those who disagree that there will be more unemployment in their country after enlargement has increased by the same number of points as the proportion of those who do not agree that candidate countries should receive financial help (+5).



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 (66%).

However, the tendency to be hesitant about enlargement becomes easier to understand when we look at the perceived economic implications. Only 31% of EU citizens agree that enlargement will not cost their own country more money. Many people also suspect that the budget will be shared differently with 48% feeling that once new countries have joined, their country will receive less financial aid. Furthermore, we find that quite a few EU citizens do not want future member countries to receive financial aid from the European Union to help them prepare to join (only 32% agree that this should happen), while 38% of Europeans fear that enlargement will lead to higher unemployment levels in their country. (Table 6.4)

The following table shows the differences in opinion between people who support enlargement and those who oppose it for each of these ten attitudinal items.

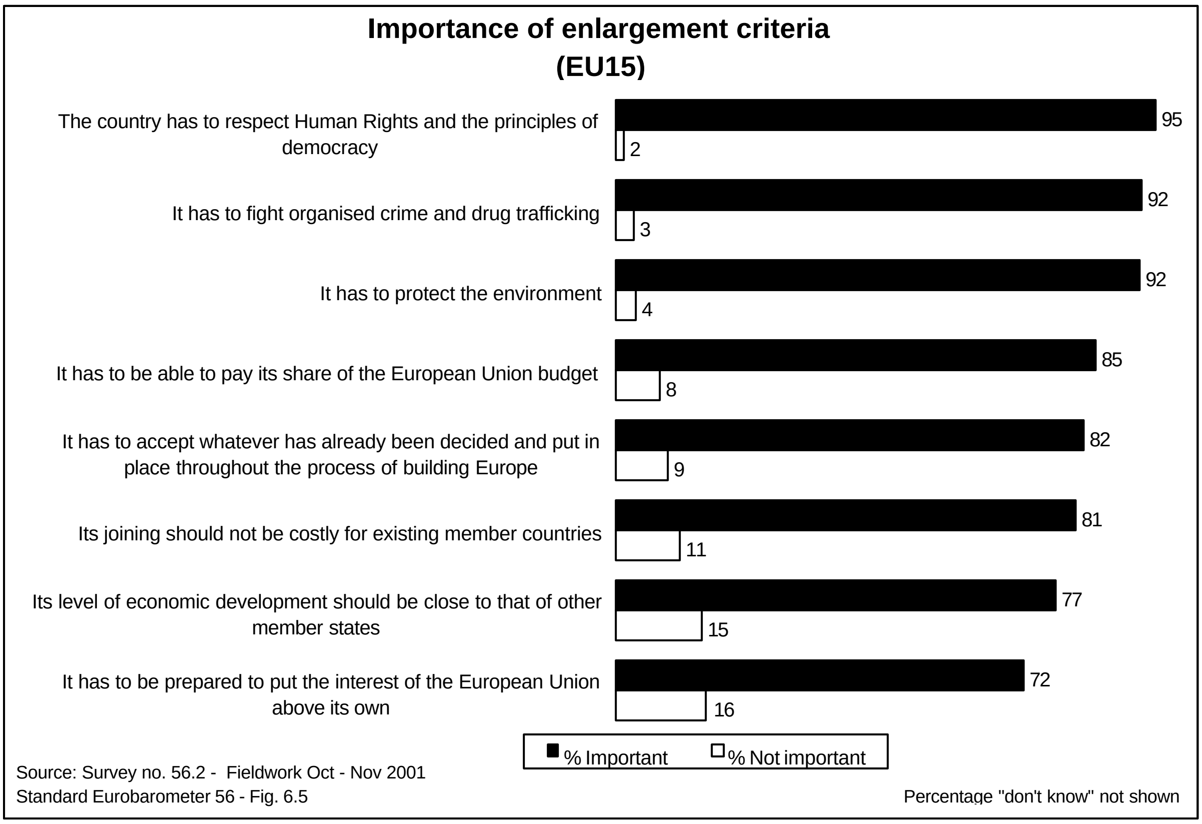
[26] See Eurobarometer Report No. 55, table 3.9a.

Relationship between attitudes to enlargement and support for enlargement		
Attitudes to enlargement:	**Support for enlargement**	
	For	**Against**
	%	**%**
Positive attitudes:		
EU more important	**84**	50
EU culturally richer	**79**	47
More peace and security	**76**	39
Financial aid to new members	**43**	21
Not cost more	**40**	22
Neutral attitude:		
Reform institutions	61	59
Negative attitudes:		
More unemployment	30	**57**
Country less important	34	**52**
Less aid to country	46	**59**
More difficult to make decisions	63	**77**

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

6.3. Criteria that candidate countries should meet

The survey also includes a battery of questions which asks people to judge the importance of the enlargement criteria which the candidate countries must meet in order to join the European Union.

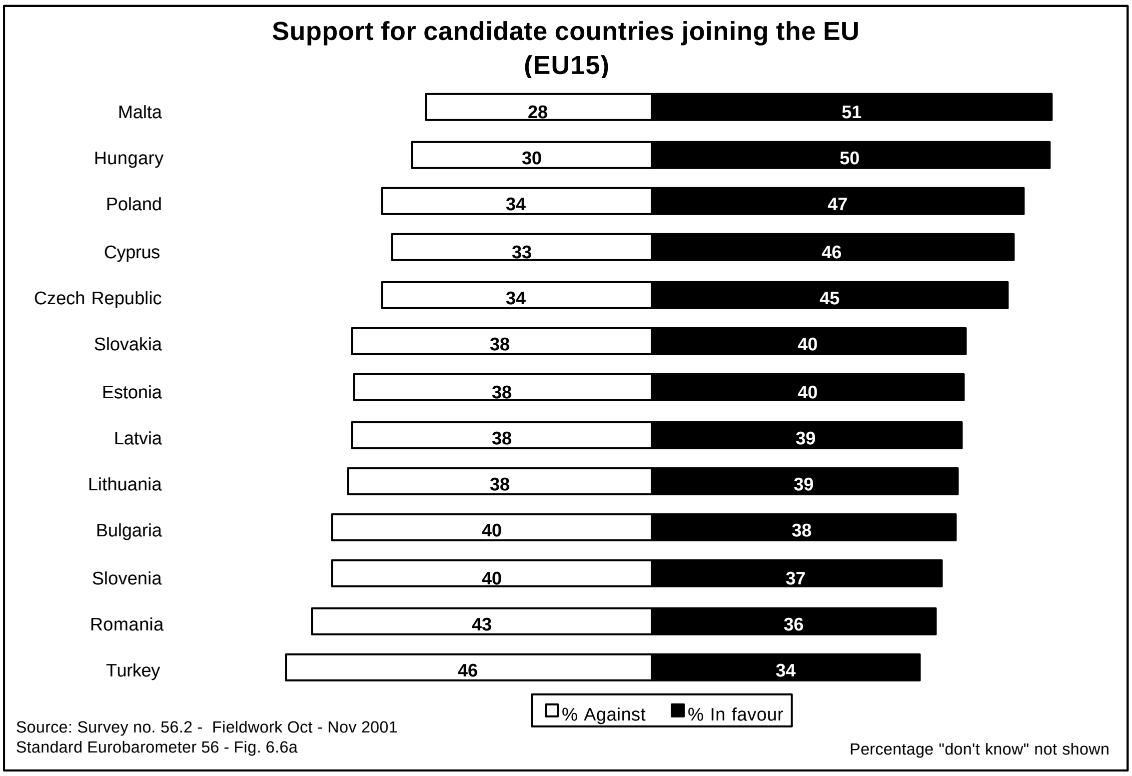


More than 9 in 10 people feel that the candidate countries should a) respect Human Rights and the principles of democracy, b) fight organised crime and drug trafficking and c) protect the environment if they wish to join the European Union. The large majority (82%) also feel that candidate countries 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 candidate countries have to be able to pay their share of the EU budget (85%) and that their joining should not be costly for existing member countries (81%). More than three quarters of EU citizens (77%) feel that it is important that the level of economic development in an candidate country should be close to that of the other Member States. Seventy two percent of people consider it important that candidate countries put the interests of the EU above their own. People in Denmark (42%), Finland (50%), Sweden (52%) and the UK (58%) are significantly less likely than people in other countries are to regard this criterion as important. (Table 6.5)

6.4. Which countries should join?

In this section we look at the extent to which the public supports the membership of each of the 13 candidate countries. The survey also asked respondents whether they would support the membership of a number of EFTA countries, Albania and the countries that used to all be part of Yugoslavia.

Public opinion varies greatly depending on a) the country which respondents are being asked about and b) the EU Member State that respondents live in. Looking firstly at the 13 candidate countries, we find that people are most likely to be favour of Malta (51%) joining the Union, followed by Hungary (50%), Poland (47%), Cyprus (46%) and the Czech Republic (45%).



As can be deduced from the figures presented in the graph above, public opinion on enlargement has still not crystallised. Many people continue to opt for the “don’t know” response when asked about their support for countries to join the European Union, even though the proportion of “don’t know”s has decreased since this question was asked in Autumn 2000. The relative ordering of support for each country has stayed the same as in Autumn 2000, but the level of support for accession has increased for all countries, by between 4 percentage points (for Hungary, Czech Republic, Estonia, Bulgaria and Turkey) and one percentage point (for Malta). The proportion of respondents who are against accession has also shown some movement, ranging from an increase of 3 percentage points against Romania to a decrease of one point against Hungary, the Czech Republic and Turkey.

What the graph does not reveal are the large differences that exist among the 15 Member States in the extent to which people support the membership of the candidate countries. To show this variance we have calculated the average percentage of the population that is in favour of the 13 candidate countries joining the European Union.

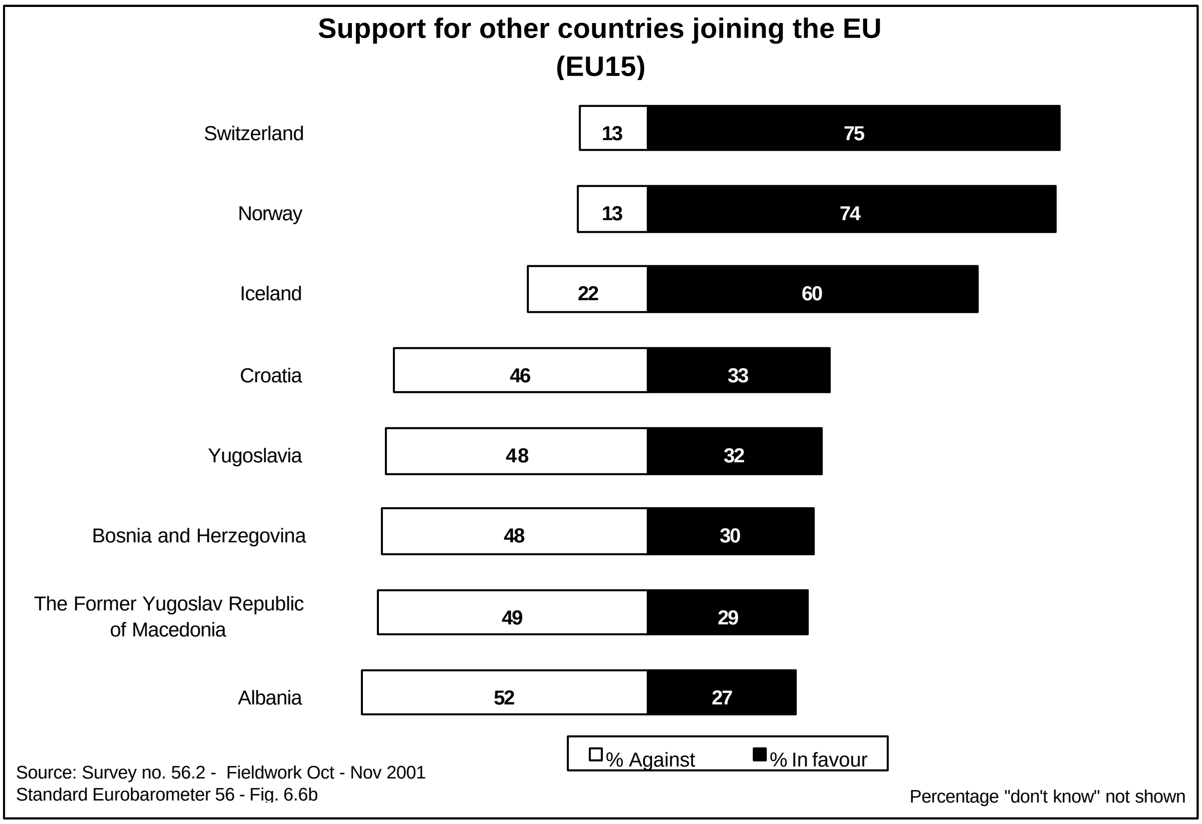
Average % in favour of the 13 candidate countries joining the EU (by country)	
Country	**Average %**
Sweden	67
Greece	61
Denmark	58
Spain	50
The Netherlands	47
Finland	47
Italy	46
Portugal	46
Luxembourg	46
Ireland	46
Belgium	42
EU15	***42***
United Kingdom	40
Germany	39
Austria	39
France	26

On average, people in Sweden (67%) are most likely to be in favour of the candidate countries joining the EU while support in France (26%) tends to be least widespread. In comparison with Autumn 2000, people are now on average more likely to support the EU membership of the candidate countries, with an increase of 8 percentage points recorded at the EU15 level[27]. (Table 6.6a)

Looking next at the other countries included in the survey, we see that support for the EFTA countries is most widespread with 75% in favour of Switzerland becoming part of the EU, 74% in favour of Norway joining and 60% favouring the admission of Iceland.

With regard to the countries that together represented the former Republic of Yugoslavia, we find that people make little distinction between them, with support ranging from 29% for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to 33% for Croatia. Twenty seven percent of EU citizens are in favour of Albania joining the European Union[28].

[27] For the average level of support in each Member State in Autumn 2000, see page 84 of the Eurobarometer Report No. 54.
[28] See also table 6.6b



6.5. Decision-making in an enlarged Union

With enlargement in mind, the Heads of State and Government reduced the number of areas where unanimous decision-making is required when they met during the European Council in Nice[29].

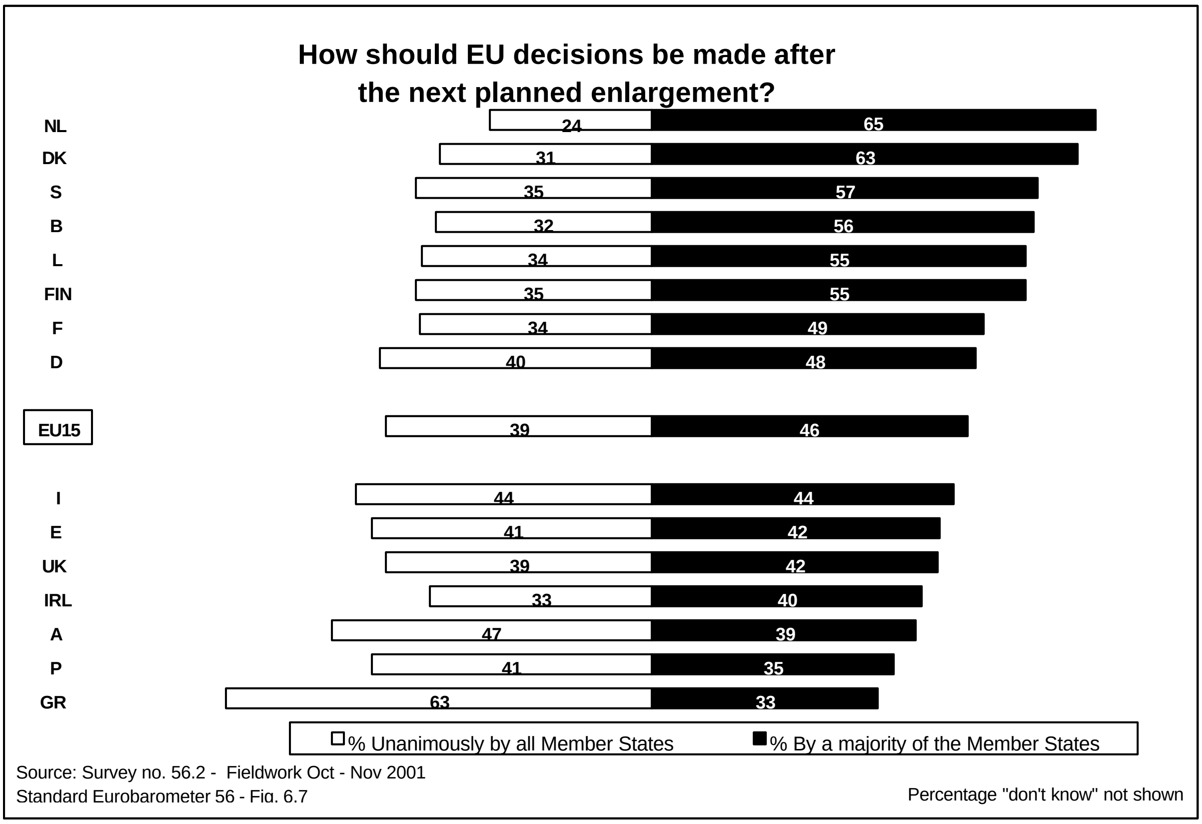
Eurobarometer measured how the public feels about majority voting with the following question:

> *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?*

The results show that the public tends to support majority voting in an enlarged Union with 46% of respondents opting for this choice over 39% who prefer unanimity.

The country results show that people in the Netherlands (65%) and Denmark (63%) are by far most likely to favour majority voting. In Sweden (57%), Belgium (56%), Luxembourg and Finland (55% each) more than half of the population favours majority voting. This is also the favoured method in the five big Member States although to a less marked degree. In Greece, 63% of people believe that European Union decisions should be taken unanimously by all Member States after enlargement. This finding is in sharp contrast to the widespread support registered in Greece for enlargement. Austria is the only other country where those supporting majority voting are in the minority but since support for enlargement is less widespread in Austria this finding is quite as surprising.

[29] For more information about the Nice Treaty, see http://ue.eu.int/presid/conclusions.htm.



In comparison to Spring 2001, majority voting has significantly increased in popularity in Denmark (+9), Sweden, Luxembourg (+5 each) and the United Kingdom (+3). In Germany (+9), Portugal (+7) and Greece (+3), on the other hand, we find significant increases in support for unanimous voting. People in Luxembourg are now more likely to hold an opinion, be it that they favour unanimous voting or majority decision-making. (Table 6.7a)

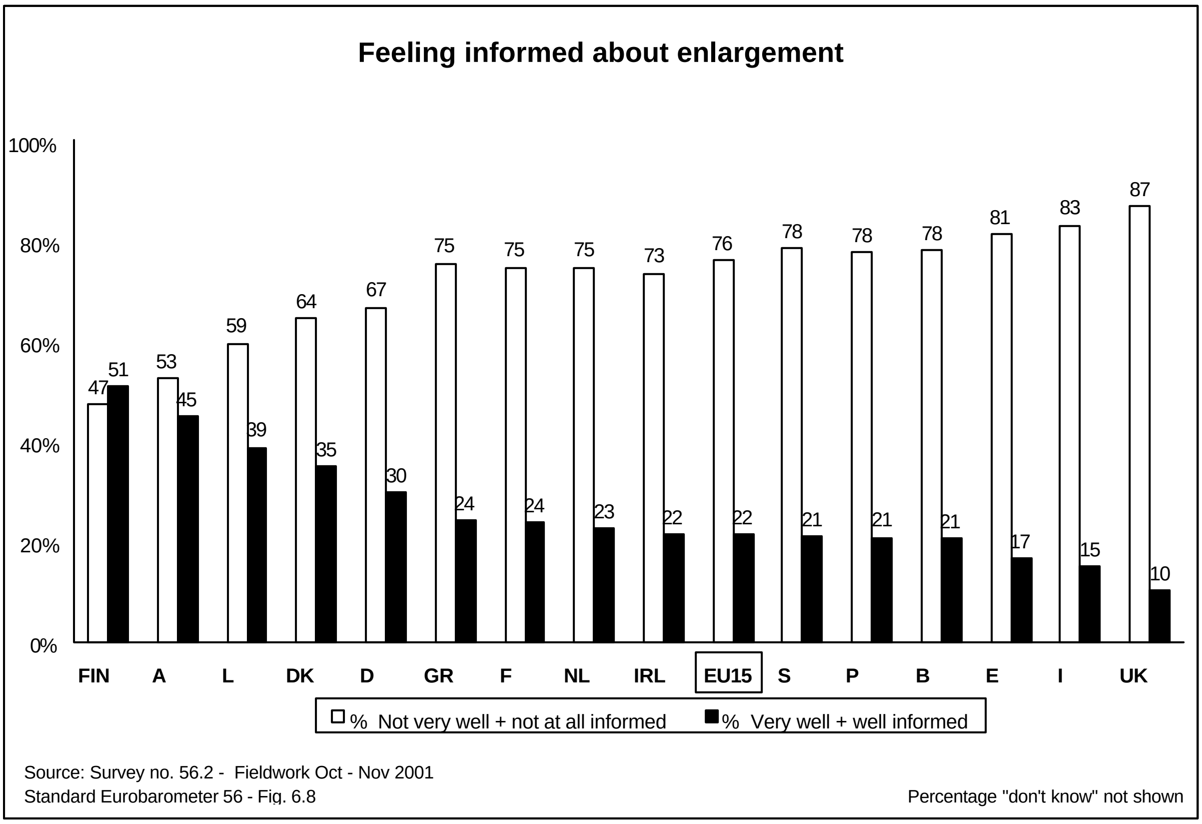
The demographic analyses indicate that managers (59%) are most likely to favour majority voting, followed by people who left full-time education aged 20 or older (58%). Unemployed people and those who left full-time education before the age of 16 (40% each) are least likely to favour it. Unemployed people are the only demographic group where unanimous voting is more popular than majority voting, albeit by only a small margin.

At the attitudinal level we find that 54% of people who support the EU prefer majority voting, compared to 37% of those who regard their country's EU membership as a bad thing. Among the latter group, unanimous voting is the favoured method of decision-making in an enlarged Union (45%). (Table 6.7b)

6.6. Feeling informed about enlargement

For the second time the survey has measured the extent to which the public feel well informed about enlargement. The results show that the proportion of EU citizens who feel well-informed (22%) is still very low although a significant increase has been recorded since Spring 2001 (+4). On the other hand, 76% feel not very well or not at all well informed, compared to 78% at the previous measurement.

The country results indicate that Finland is the only country where just over half of the population feels well informed about enlargement (51%), with Austria in second place (45%). People in the UK (10%), Italy (15%) and Spain (17%) are least likely to feel well informed about enlargement.



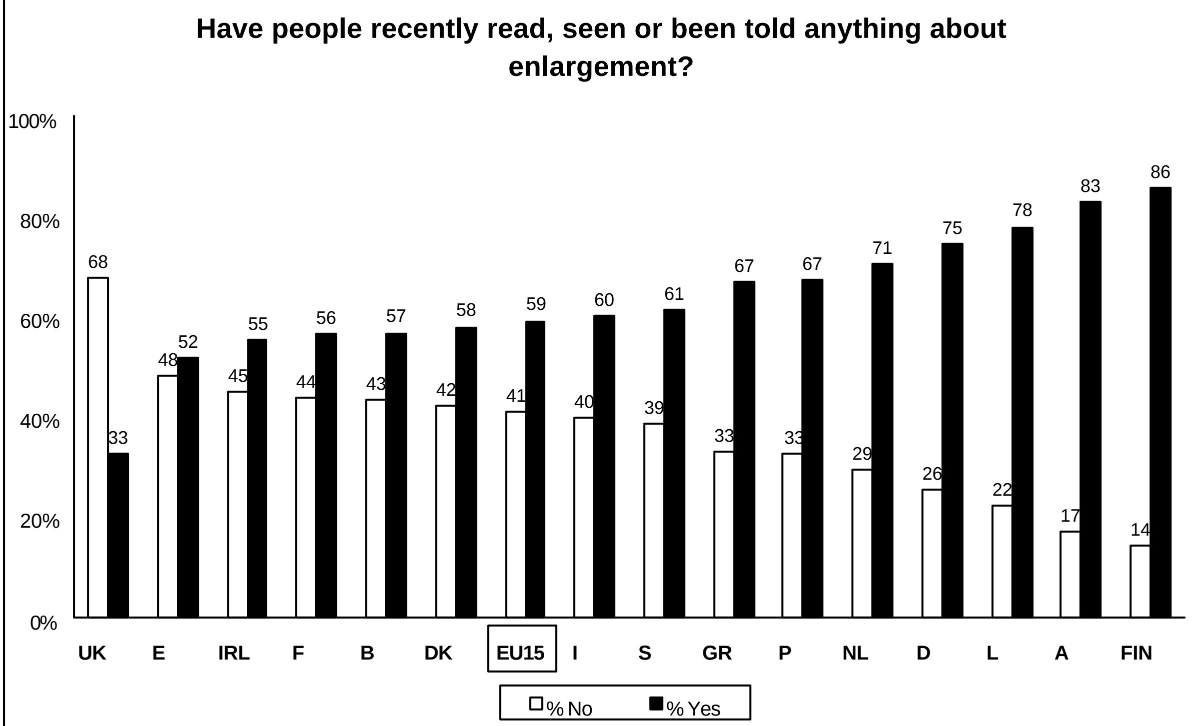
In comparison to Spring 2001, we find significant improvements in a number of Member States with increases in the percentage of people who feel well informed reaching 15 percentage points in Austria, 12 percentage points in Luxembourg, 10 percentage points in Ireland and 9 percentage points in the Netherlands. Denmark is the only country where people are now significantly less likely to feel well informed about enlargement, down from 40% in spring 2001 to 35% in Autumn 2001. (Table 6.8a)

The demographic analyses show that the proportion of people who feel well informed about enlargement ranges from 13% among people who look after the home and among unemployed people to 38% among managers. Levels of feeling informed are somewhat higher among people who support (unlimited or limited) enlargement than they are among people who believe the European Union should not be enlarged. (Table 6.8b)

6.7. Information about enlargement

In this survey, respondents were also asked for the first time whether they had recently read, seen or been told anything about enlargement. On average, 59% of respondents indicate that this is the case. A quarter (25%) say they never look for such information or are not interested and 16% don't know or can't remember.

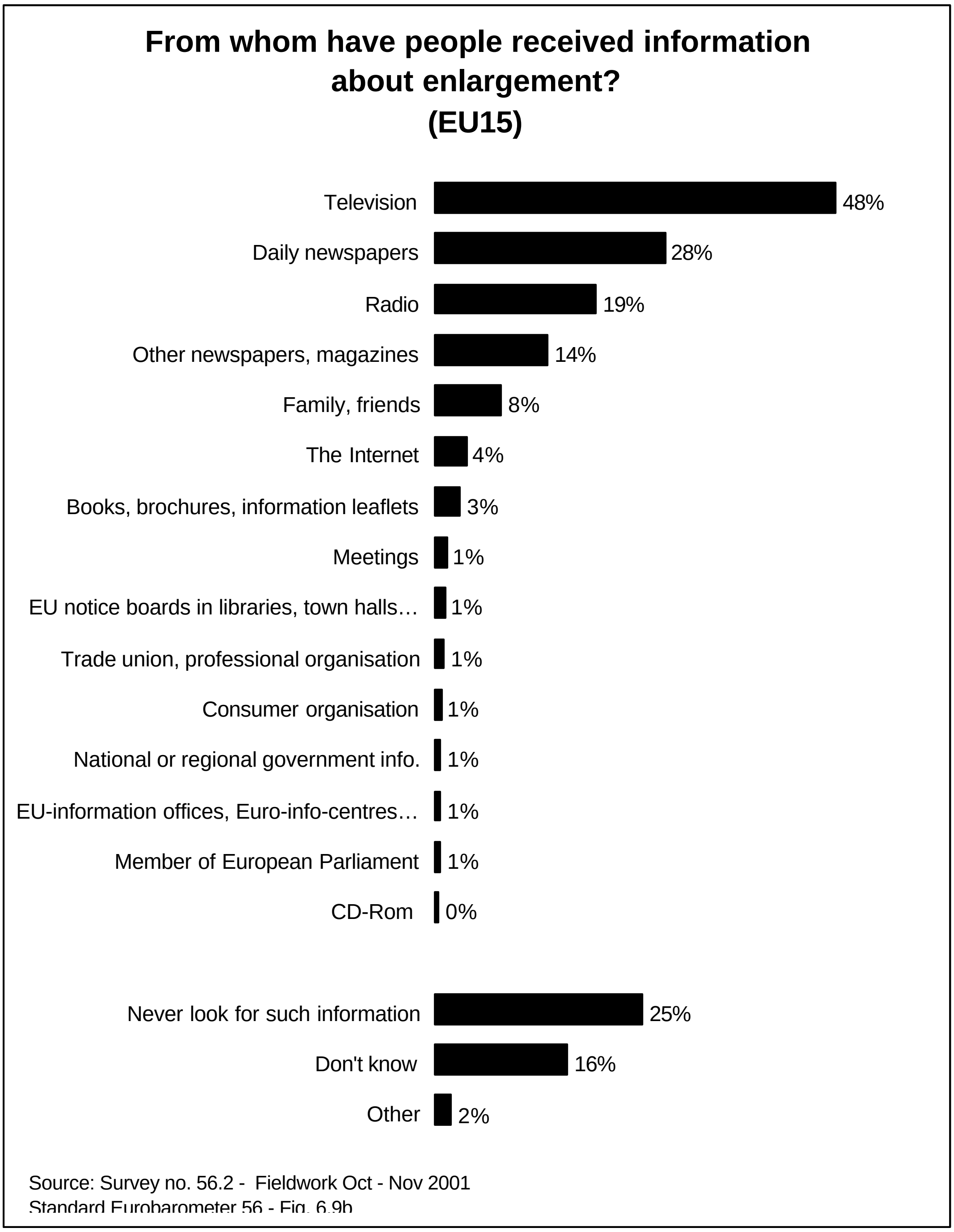
As the graph below shows, there are large variations between the Member States, which explain to some extent why levels of feeling informed about enlargement vary so much. At 86% Finnish respondents are most likely to have recently read, seen or been told anything about enlargement. As we saw earlier, Finland is also the country with the highest proportion of people that feel well informed about enlargement. Austrians are second most likely to feel well informed about enlargement with 83% having recently read, seen or been told something about it. People in the UK are least likely to have recently read, seen or been told anything about enlargement (33%) and least likely to feel well informed about it.



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 6.9a

The proportion of people who never look for information about enlargement or who are not interested also varies significantly among the Member States. In Spain (37%), the UK (34%) and France (33%) this applies to more than 3 in 10 respondents. In Finland (9%) and Austria (11%) this applies to only 1 respondent in 10. (Table 6.9)

Respondents who indicated that they had recently read, seen or been told anything about enlargement were shown a card and asked from which sources they had received the information. The results show that 48% of EU respondents had recently seen something about enlargement on television, 28% had recently read something about it in a daily newspaper and 19% had recently heard something about it on the radio.



The next table shows that the television is the most frequently mentioned sources in all 15 Member States. Daily newspapers are the second most important source in 11 countries and the third most important source in three countries. Greece is the only country where daily newspapers do not make the top three. The radio takes second place in Denmark, France and Greece and third place in all other countries except Portugal and Italy. In Portugal, discussions with relatives, friends and colleagues makes the top three and in Italy and Greece other newspapers and magazines make the top three. (See also table 6.9)

Top Three most mentioned Sources from which People have received Information about Enlargement (in %, by Member State)

Belgium	
Television	48
Daily newspapers	24
Radio	22
Denmark	
Television	50
Radio	27
Daily newspapers	24
Germany	
Television	63
Daily newspapers	47
Radio	29
Greece	
Television	60
Radio	21
Newspapers, magazines	17
Spain	
Television	45
Daily newspapers	18
Radio	17
France	
Television	44
Radio	21
Daily newspapers	21
Ireland	
Television	39
Daily newspapers	28
Radio	21
Italy	
Television	47
Daily newspapers	22
Newspapers, magazines	14

Luxembourg	
Television	65
Daily newspapers	48
Radio	47
The Netherlands	
Television	59
Daily newspapers	36
Radio	25
Austria	
Television	64
Daily newspapers	45
Radio	39
Portugal	
Television	61
Discussions	13
Daily newspapers	11
Finland	
Television	77
Daily newspapers	51
Radio	40
Sweden	
Television	53
Daily newspapers	38
Radio	28
United Kingdom	
Television	20
Daily newspapers	15
Radio	9

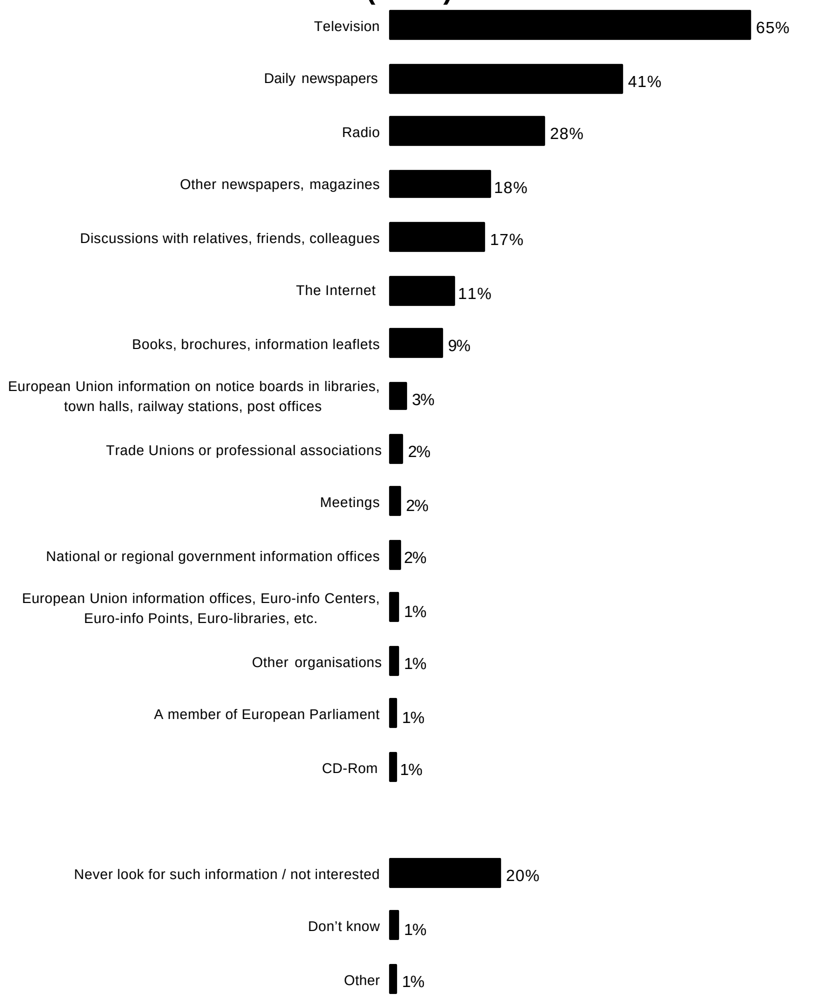
7. Knowledge of the European Union

This chapter looks at how people look for information about the European Union and which sources they prefer. 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 budget is spent is also analysed.

7.1. Sources of information about the European Union

Eurobarometer regularly questions EU citizens about the sources they use when they look for information about the European Union. As usual, the results indicate that the public are most likely to use the media: 65% of respondents say they turn on the television when they look for information, 41% of respondents read the daily newspapers and 28% listen to the radio[30]. All other sources are used by fewer than 2 in 10 EU citizens.

Which sources do people use when they look for information about the EU? (EU15)

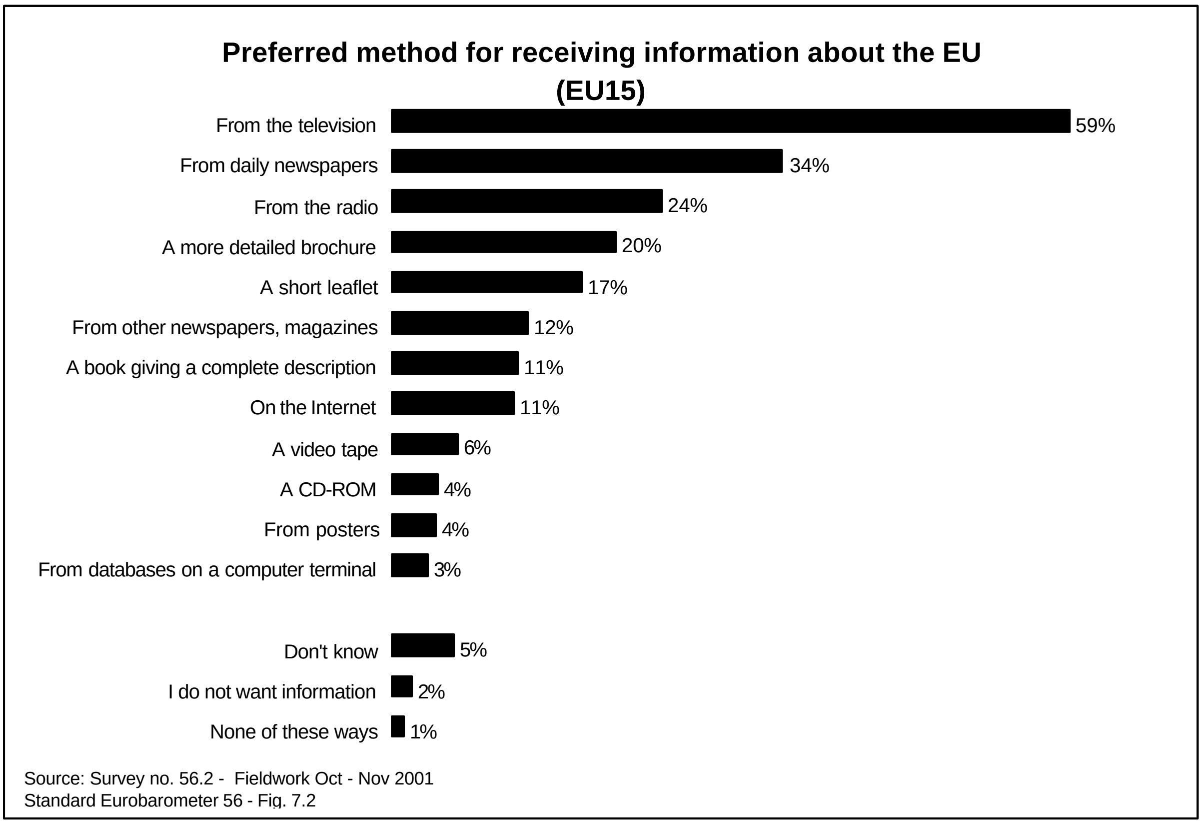


Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 7.1

30 Respondents were shown a card listing 15 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.

As can be seen from the graph above, 20% of respondents never look for information or are not interested. This figure varies greatly from country to country. In Luxembourg only 3% of respondents gave this reply whereas more than 33% of people in Spain never look for information about the European Union or are not interested in such information. (Table 7.1)

The survey also regularly asks respondents 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: 59% of respondents say they prefer the television, 34% say they prefer daily newspapers and 24% list the radio as a preferred source. The Internet is selected by 11% of respondents. The other non-printed information tools, such as videotapes (6%), CD-ROMs (4%) and computer databases (3%) continue to be less popular than printed sources[31].

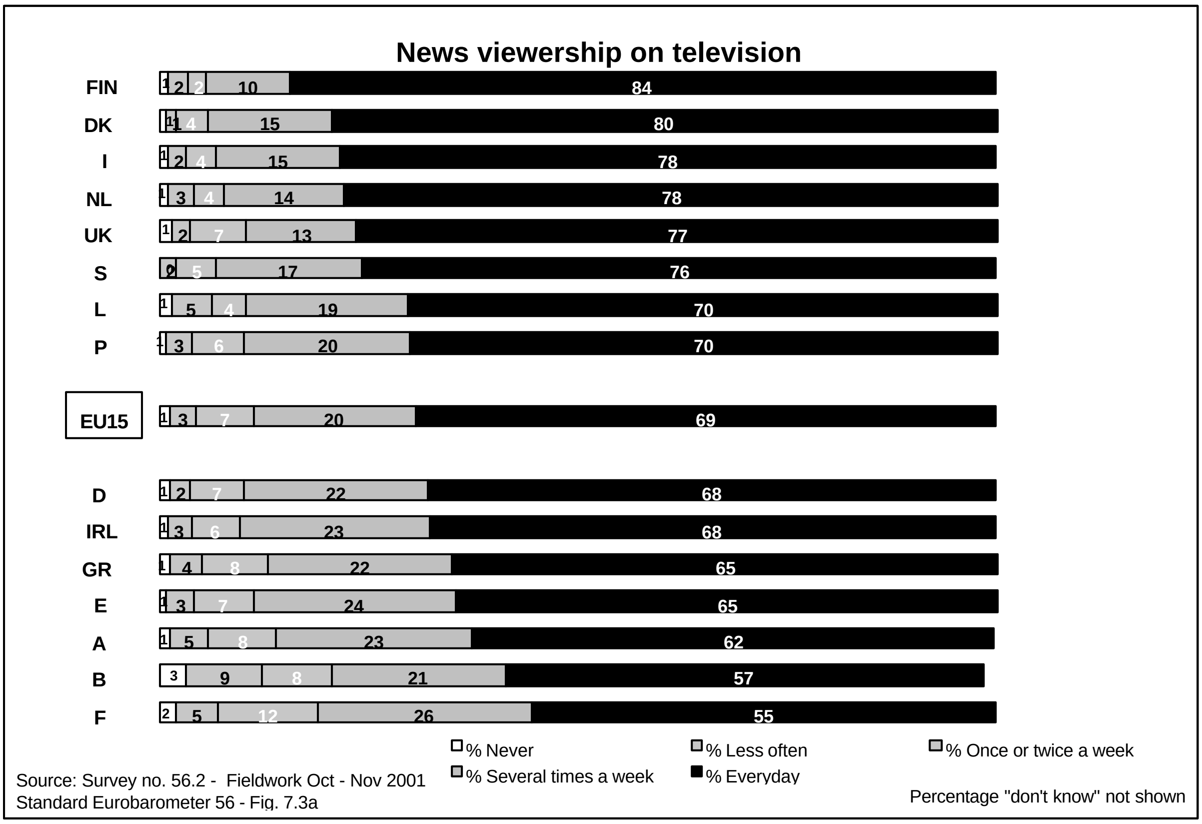


7.2. The news media and its coverage of EU affairs

News viewership on television

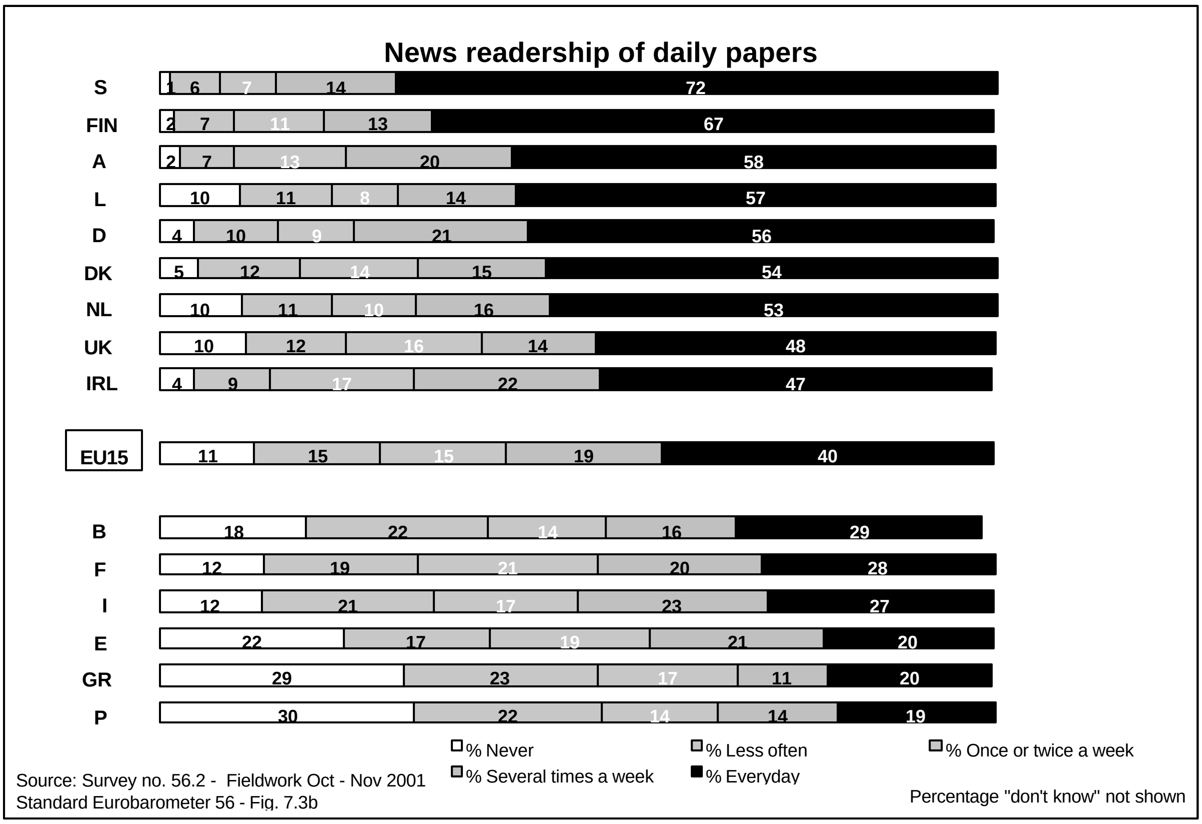
As the graph below shows, 69% of respondents watch the news on television on a daily basis, with a further 20% watching it several times a week[32].

[31] See table 7.2 for country results.
[32] See table 7.3a for country results.



News readership of daily newspapers

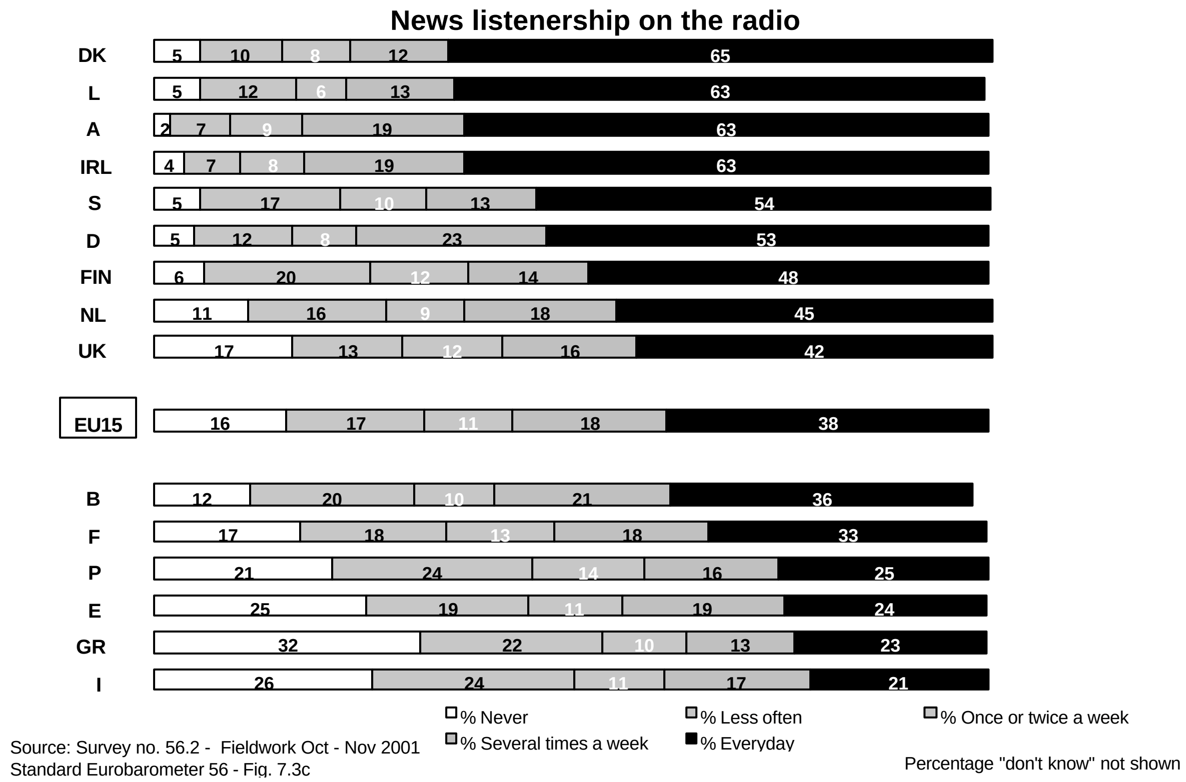
Four out of ten respondents read the news in daily newspapers every day, with a further 19% reading a daily newspaper several times a week [33].



33 See table 7.3b for country results.

News listenership on the radio

Close to 4 out of 10 respondents listen to the radio every day (38%) and 18% do this several times a week[34].



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 7.3c

News coverage of EU affairs in the media

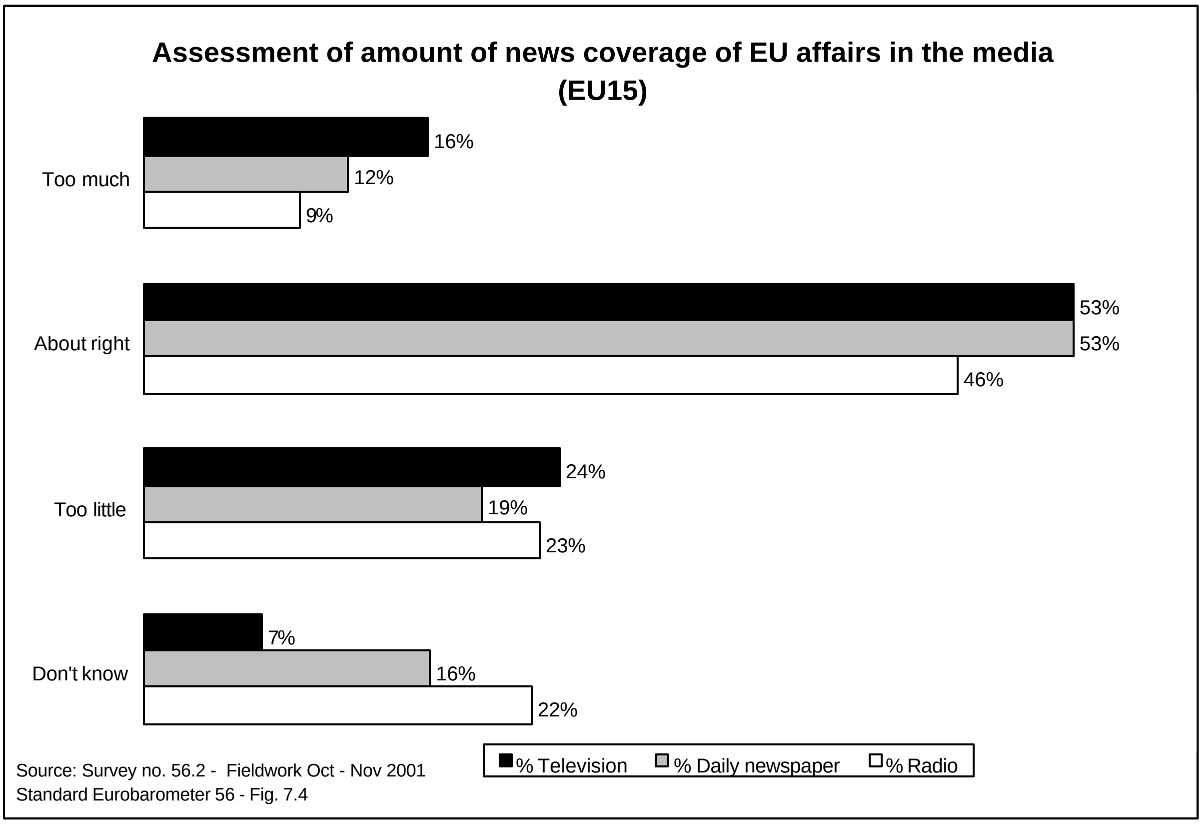
Next, we examine what Europeans think about the amount of coverage dedicated by the media to European Union affairs. Respondents were asked the following question:

"*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…*

a) the news on (NATIONALITY) television?
b) the news in (NATIONALITY) daily papers?
c) 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 (46%). Whilst only a small minority of respondents feels that the three media provide too much news coverage of EU affairs, there are quite a few respondents that find the amount of coverage lacking. Twenty four percent feel that television shows too little coverage, 23% feel this way about the radio and 19% feel this way about the daily newspapers.

[34] See table 7.3c for country results.



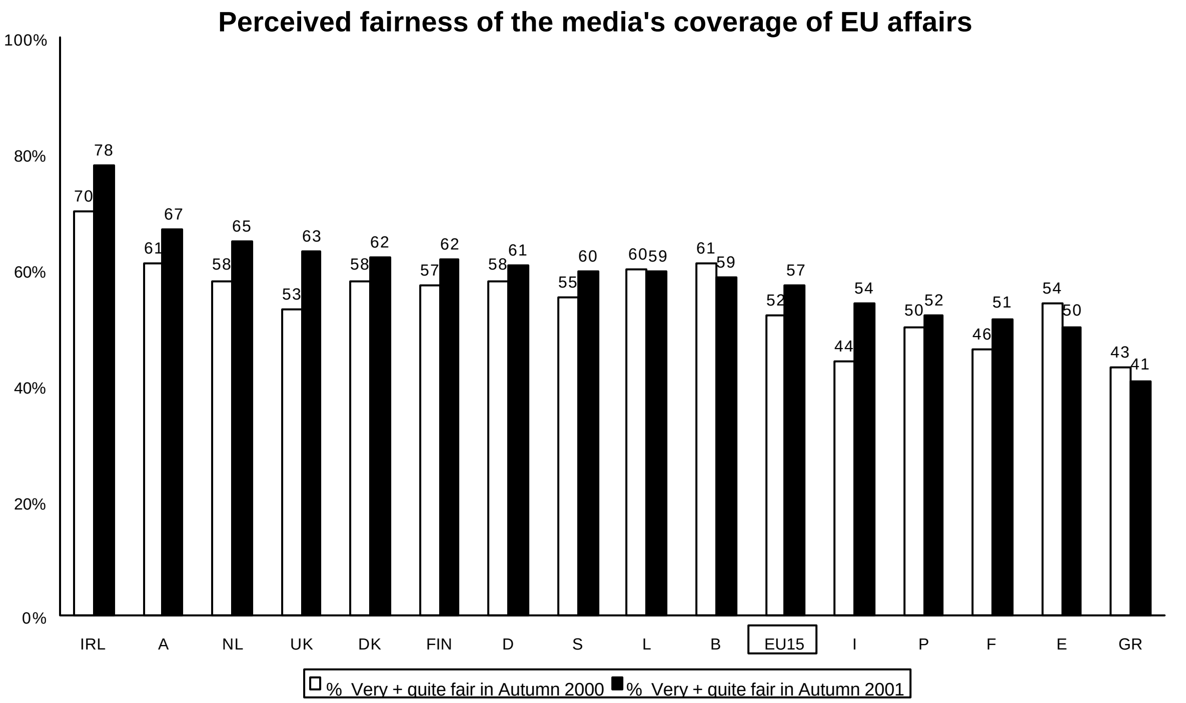
The country by country results show that people in Luxembourg (43%) are most likely to feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs in the news on **television** is too little, followed by people in Italy (34%), Denmark (33%), Greece (31%) and the Netherlands (30%). The proportion of people who feel that the amount of news coverage on television is too much is highest in Spain (28%) and Portugal (26%). In Finland (69%), Ireland (66%), Belgium (65%), Austria (64%) and Sweden (63%) more than 6 in 10 people feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs in the news on television is about right. Luxembourg (38%), Greece (40%), Spain and Portugal (47% each) are the only countries where less than 50% of the population shares this view. (Table 7.4a)

People in Finland are most likely to feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs in the news in **the daily papers** is about right (69%), followed by people in Austria (67%), Ireland (66%), Sweden (63%) and Denmark (62%). Other countries where more than half the population shares this view are the Netherlands, Belgium (58% each), France, Luxembourg, Germany (56% each) and the UK (53%). People in Italy (27%) are most likely to feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs in the daily papers is too little. (Table 7.4b)

The Netherlands (30%), Italy (29%), Germany (28%) and Denmark (27%) have the highest proportion of people that feels that coverage of EU affairs on the **radio** is too little. The Irish are most likely to feel that the amount of coverage is about right (66%), followed by Austrians (64%). At 14% and 16% respectively, people in Greece and Spain are most likely to feel that the amount of coverage given to European affairs on the radio is too much. (Table 7.4c)

Perceived fairness of the media's coverage of EU affairs

Fifty-seven percent of EU citizens feel that the media in their own country covers EU affairs in a fair way, 27% feel this is not the case and 16% lack an opinion.



Source: Eurobarometer 54.1 - Fieldwork Nov - Dec 2000
Eurobarometer 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 7.5

The country results show that, as in Spring and Autumn 2000, people in Ireland are most likely to believe the media in their country cover EU affairs in a very fair or quite fair manner (78%). More than 6 in 10 people in Austria, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland and Germany also give good marks to their country's media. In all other countries except Greece, at least half of the population believes the media cover European Union affairs in a fair manner. In Greece, 41% share this view but 48% feel that their country's media coverage of EU affairs is not fair.
The EU public is now more likely that it was in Autumn 2000 to judge the coverage of EU affairs by their country's media as fair, the largest increases being recorded in the United Kingdom and Italy (+10 each). Spain is the only country where a significant drop in favourable responses has been recorded (-4). (Table 7.5a)

We also analysed whether media usage influences people's views about the fairness of the media's coverage of EU affairs. 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. Those who use the media least frequently are most likely to judge it as not very fair or not at all fair. As expected, the less often people use the news media, the more likely it is that they are unable to say whether media coverage of EU affairs is fair or not fair[35].

Perceived fairness of the media's coverage of EU affairs by scores on the Media Use Index

Media coverage is:	Media Use Index +++	Media Use Index ++	Media Use Index --	Media Use Index ----
Very + quite fair	65%	56%	50%	39%
Not very + not at all fair	25%	28%	29%	31%
Don't know	11%	15%	21%	30%
Total	101%	99%	100%	100%

35 See Appendix C.4 for a definition of the Media Use Index.

People's views also vary depending on how much they feel they know about the European Union[36]. Sixty nine percent 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 46% of people who feel they know very little about the European Union. Among this latter group, around 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 EU			
Media coverage is:	**High knowledge**	**Average knowledge**	**Low knowledge**
Very + quite fair	69%	63%	46%
Not very + not at all fair	25%	28%	26%
Don't know	6%	9%	28%
Total	100%	100%	100%

People's assessment of whether the media cover EU affairs in a fair way also depends, albeit to a less strong extent, on how they feel about the European Union in general. Sixty five percent of people who regard their country's membership of the EU as a good thing feel that the media's coverage in their country is fair compared to 51% of those who regard their country's membership as a bad thing .

The socio-demographic analyses show that unemployed people are the only group where less than 50% feel that media coverage of EU affairs is fair. At 65%, managers are most likely to hold this view. (Table 7.5b)

7.3. Self-perceived knowledge of the European Union

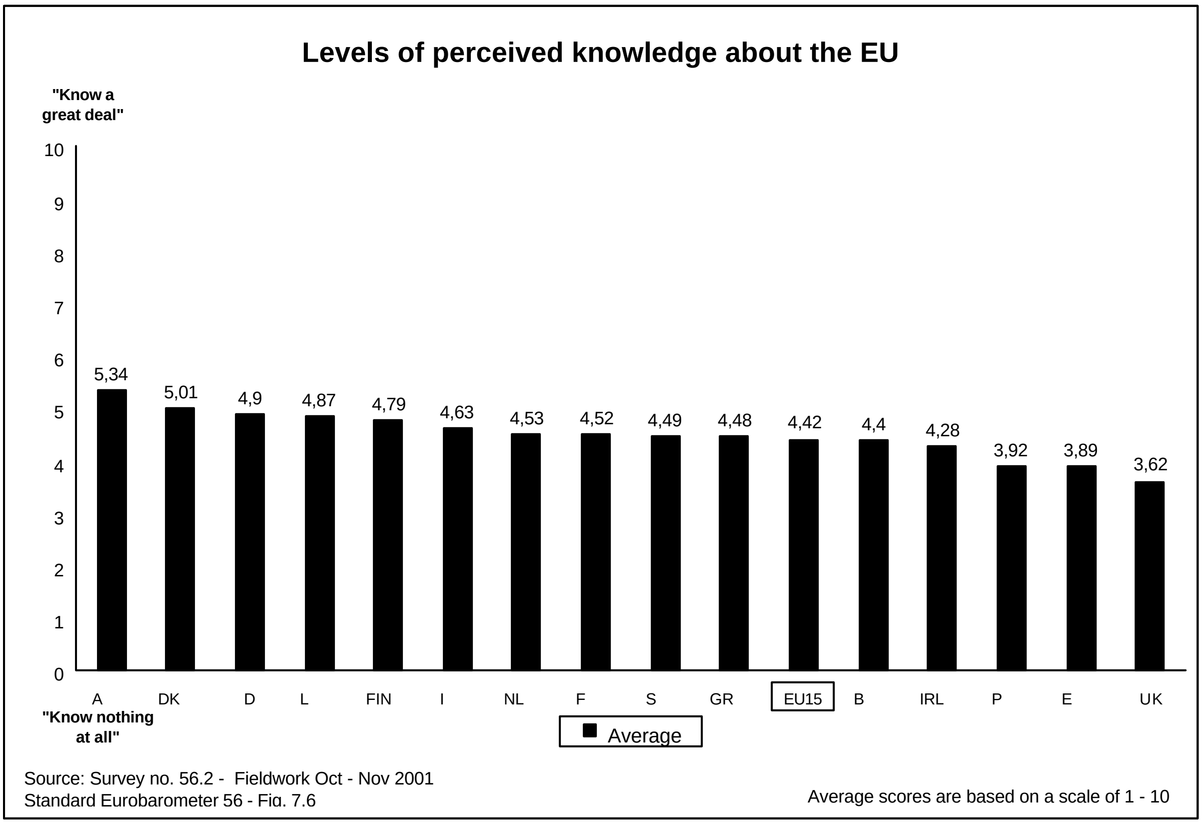
As another standard feature, Eurobarometer asks respondents how much they feel they know about the European Union[37]. The EU15 results presented in the table below show that 28% of EU citizens feel they know quite a lot to a great deal about the European Union (i.e. those choosing the numbers 6 through 10 on the scale). This is much higher than in Spring 2001, when the result was 21%.

Self-perceived knowledge of EU affairs Autumn 2001 (in %, EU15)	
Scale	**%**
1 (Know nothing at all)	7
2	10
3	16
4	17
5	20
6	13
7	8
8	5
9	1
10 (Know a great deal)	1
Don't know	3
Average score	***4.42***

[36] 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.

[37] 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.

The following graph depicts the average scores[38] for each of the 15 countries. It shows that self-perceived knowledge levels vary significantly from one Member State to the next.



As in Spring 2001, knowledge levels are highest in Austria, where the average score is 5.34, and lowest in the UK, where the average score is 3.62. An inspection of the distribution of responses shows that 44% of people in Austria feel they know quite a lot to a great deal (i.e. score 6 and higher on the scale) about the European Union. At 37%, people in Denmark come in second place followed by people in Germany (35%), the Netherlands, Finland (34% each), Italy (31%) and Belgium (30%). In the United Kingdom (15%), Spain (17%) and Portugal (18%), fewer than 2 in 10 people feel that they know quite a lot or a great deal about the EU. (Table 7.6[39])

In all countries self-perceived knowledge levels are now higher than they were in Spring 2001, with recorded increases in the average score ranging from 0.08 in Spain to 0.69 in Ireland[40].

The following table shows the average scores for various socio-demographic groups in the EU. It shows that opinion leaders, managers and people who stayed in full-time education the longest are most likely to 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 Media Use Index[41].

[38] The average scores represent the sum of the responses for each of the ten points on the scale multiplied by the value of each point and divided by the total number of responses.

[39] 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.

[40] For Spring 2001 average scores, see Eurobarometer Report 55, figure 4.6.

[41] See Appendix C.4 for a definition of the indices shown in the table.

Average scores on perceived knowledge scale for various groups at the EU15 level	
Group	**Score**
Opinion Leadership Index: ++	5.59
Managers	5.51
Educated up to age 20+	5.21
Media Use Index:+++	4.95
Opinion Leadership Index: +	4.89
Self-employed	4.87
Students	4.75
Men	4.74
Employees	4.72
Aged 40-54	4.57
Aged 25-39	4.55
Average for EU15	***4.42***
Educated to age 16-19	4.38
Media Use Index: ++	4.36
Aged 15-24	4.32
Manual workers	4.26
Aged 55+	4.24
Opinion Leadership Index: -	4.20
Retired	4.17
Women	4.12
Unemployed	4.00
Media Use Index: --	3.87
Educated to age 15 or younger	3.79
House persons	3.76
Opinion Leadership Index : --	3.45
Media Use Index: ---	3.38

When comparing these results with those obtained in Spring 2001 we find that the gap between those who feel most knowledgeable and those who feel least knowledgeable is now slightly bigger. In Spring 2001 it was 1.99; now the gap is 2.21.

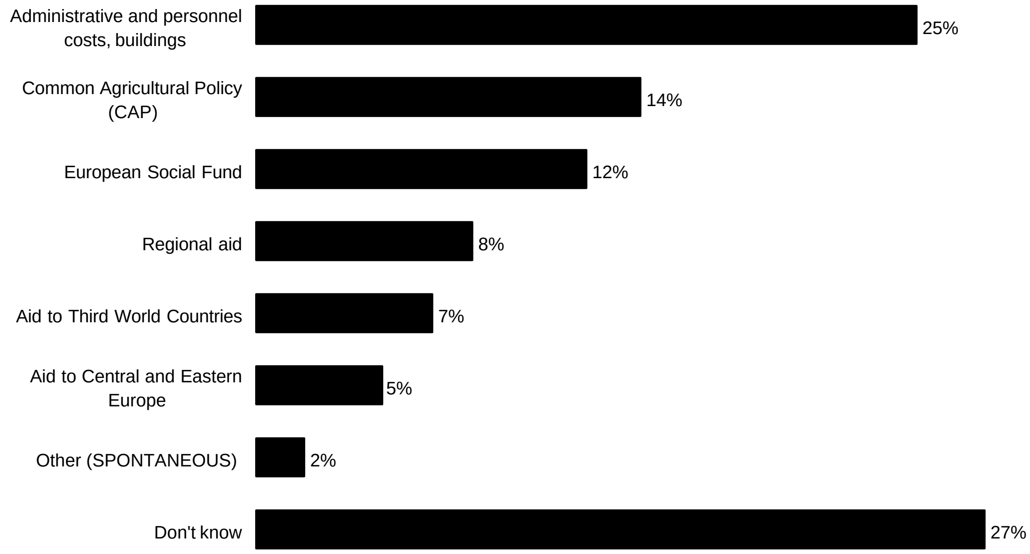
The attitudinal analyses indicate that the average score for people who feel well informed about the euro or about enlargement is significantly higher (5.13 and 5.78, respectively) than it is for people who do not feel well informed about these two issues (3.65 and 4.05, respectively). The average score for people who support their country's membership of the EU is 4.87, compared to 4.12 for people who regard their country's membership as a bad thing. (See also table 7.6b)

7.4. Knowledge of how the European Union budget is spent

Another regular feature in Eurobarometer is a question about how respondents think most of the European budget is spent. The latest results show a slight improvement compared to Autumn 2000 when the question was previously asked. However, people's responses still point to a widespread lack of knowledge and many misconceptions about this issue.

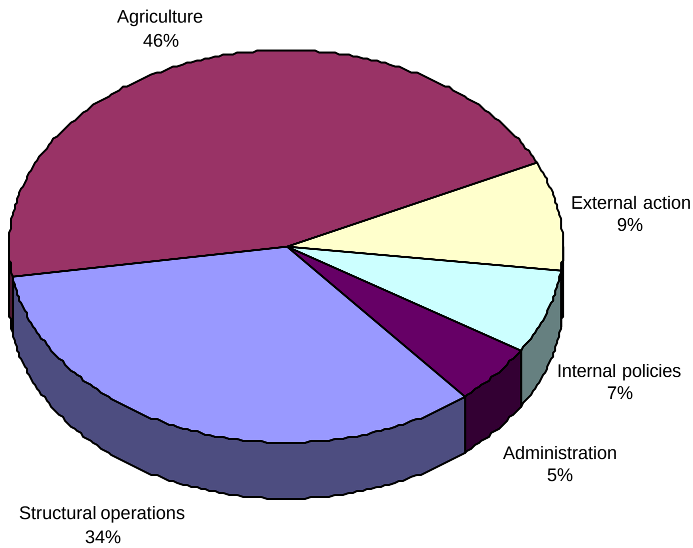
Twenty-seven percent of respondents do not know what the biggest EU expenditure is, with “don't know” responses ranging from 6% in Sweden to 39% in Portugal. Furthermore, we find that a quarter of respondents think (incorrectly) that most of the Union's budget is spent on paying for officials, meetings and buildings when in reality these expenditures accounted for only 5% of total EU expenditure in 2001. Only 14% of respondents are aware that most of the Union's budget is spent on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In 2001, spending on CAP represented 46% of Union expenditure. The second largest amount is set aside for structural operations (34%) but respondents underestimate this expenditure. Only 12% say that the European Social Fund makes up most of the Union's budget and only 8% believe that it is spent on regional aid.

Public perception of the EU budget
% believing most of the budget is spent on…
(EU15)



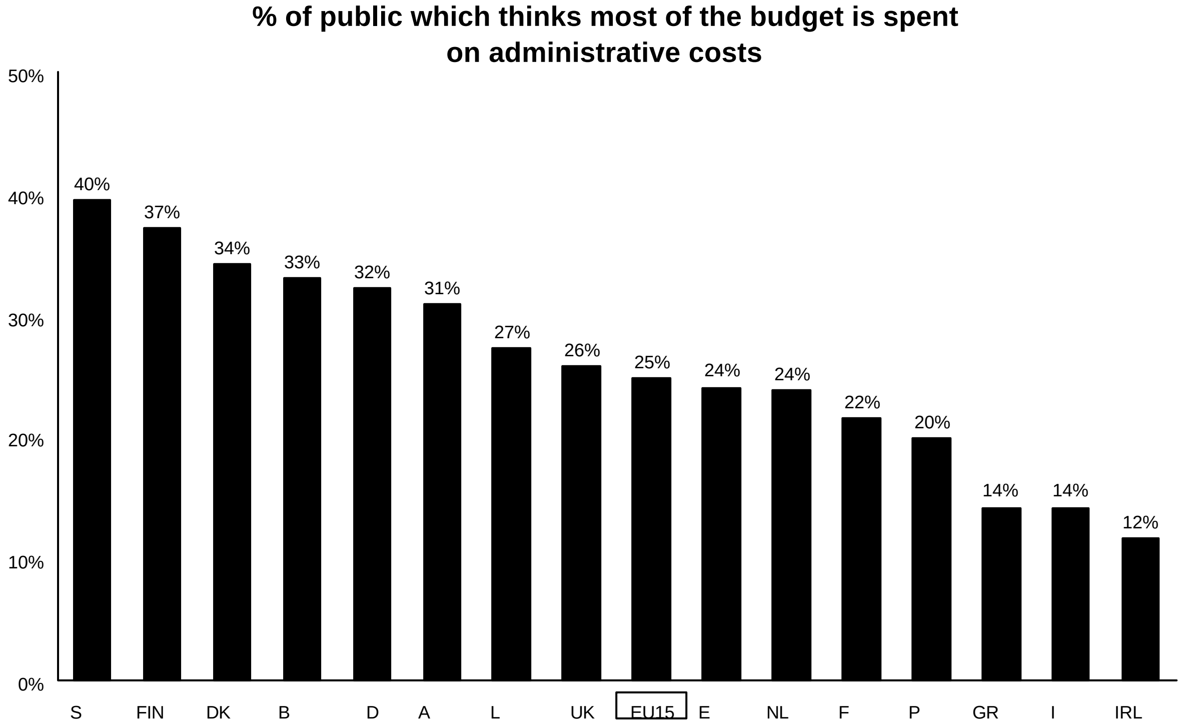
Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 7.7

Breakdown of Union expenditure - 2001 - in %



Source: General Budget of the EU for the financial year 2001, European Commission
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 7.8

The following graph shows that the proportion who think that most of the Union's budget is spent on administrative costs is highest in Sweden (40%), Finland (37%) and Denmark (34%) and lowest in Ireland (12%). However, we find that people are now significantly less likely to believe that administrative costs represent the largest single expenditure for the European Union than they were in Autumn 2000, when more than half of the people in Sweden and Finland held this view. (Table 7.7a)



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 7.9

The view that most of the European Union budget is spend on administrative costs does not depend on people's socio-demographic group. Attitudinal analyses also show relatively little variation, although people who support the European Union are significantly less likely to think that most of the Union's budget is spent on administrative costs than are people who regard their country's membership as a bad thing (24% vs. 32%). (Table 7.7b)

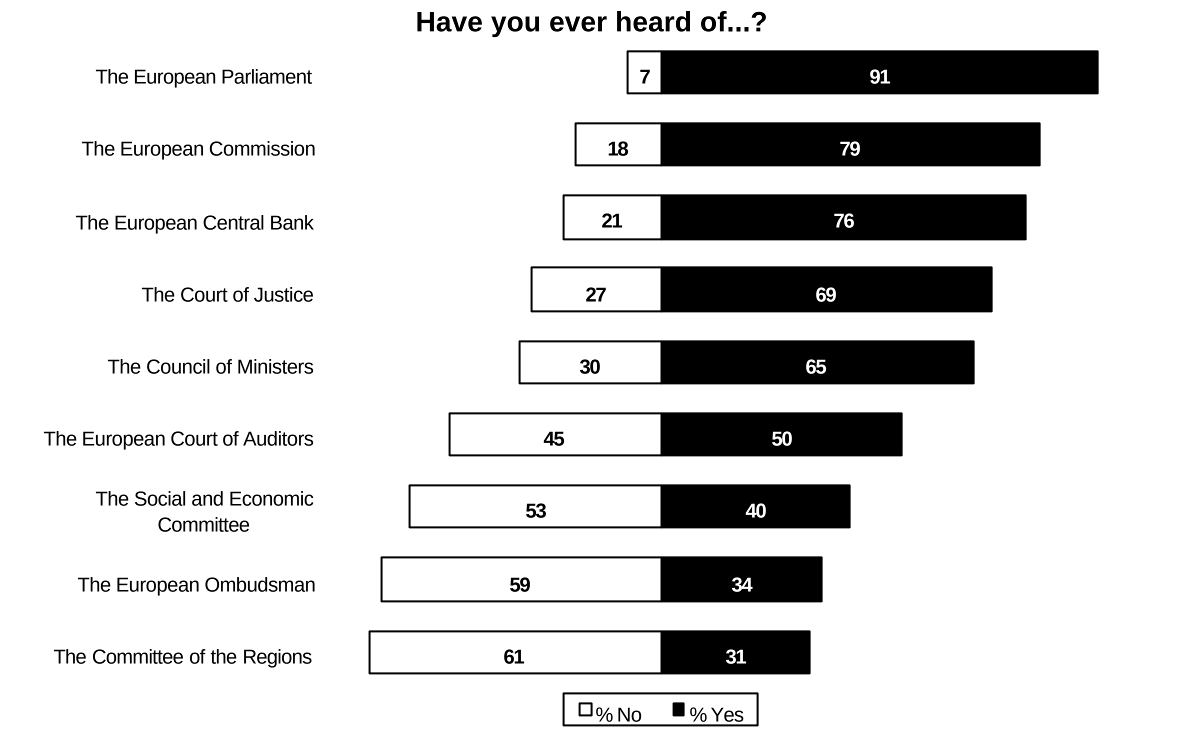
7.5. Awareness of the European Union institutions and bodies

For the sixth time in a row, the survey has measured public awareness of nine of the European Union's institutions and bodies[42].

The public is most likely to have heard of the European Parliament (91%), followed by the European Commission (79%) and the European Central Bank (76%). People are least likely to have heard of the two youngest EU institutions - the Committee of the Regions (31%) and the Economic and Social Committee (40%) - and of the European Ombudsman (34%). Awareness levels for all nine institutions and bodies are now higher than they were in Spring 2001[43].

[42] The question asks respondents whether they have ever heard of the institution in question. Chapter 3 reports on the extent to which people trust these institutions.

[43] See Eurobarometer No. 55, figure 4.7 and table 4.8.



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 7.10
Percentage "don't know" not shown

Awareness of the **European Parliament** ranges from 81% in Greece to 98% in Denmark. For the **European Commission** awareness ranges from 72% in Germany to 95% in Luxembourg. Awareness of the **European Central Bank** is most widespread in Luxembourg (92%) and least widespread in Greece and the UK (61% each). People in Denmark (96%) are most likely to have heard of the **Court of Justice**, while people in Italy (51%) are least likely to know of its existence. People in Sweden (91%), continue to be most likely to have heard of the **Council of Ministers**, while awareness levels are lowest in the UK (39%). Awareness of the **European Court of Auditors** is most widespread in Luxembourg (76%) and least widespread in the UK (13%). People in Luxembourg (63%) are also most likely to have heard of the **Economic and Social Committee**, while people in the Netherlands and the UK (28% each) 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 (79%). He is least known in Germany and Italy (23% each). Awareness of the **Committee of the Regions** is most widespread in Portugal (54%), while people in the UK (15%) are now least likely to be aware of the existence of this institution. (Table 7.8)

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 by dividing this by the total number of institutions (9) included in the survey. As the following table shows, people in Luxembourg (where many of these institutions are located) are most likely to have heard of the nine institutions and bodies while this is least likely to be the case in the UK.

Awareness of the EU institutions and bodies (Average awareness levels for the 9 institutions/bodies, in % by country)	
Country	**%**
Luxembourg	75
Finland	71
Austria	70
Denmark	69
Portugal	68
Ireland	67
Germany	63
Spain	63
France	62
Belgium	61
EU15	***60***
The Netherlands	60
Sweden	59
Greece	59
Italy	57
United Kingdom	47

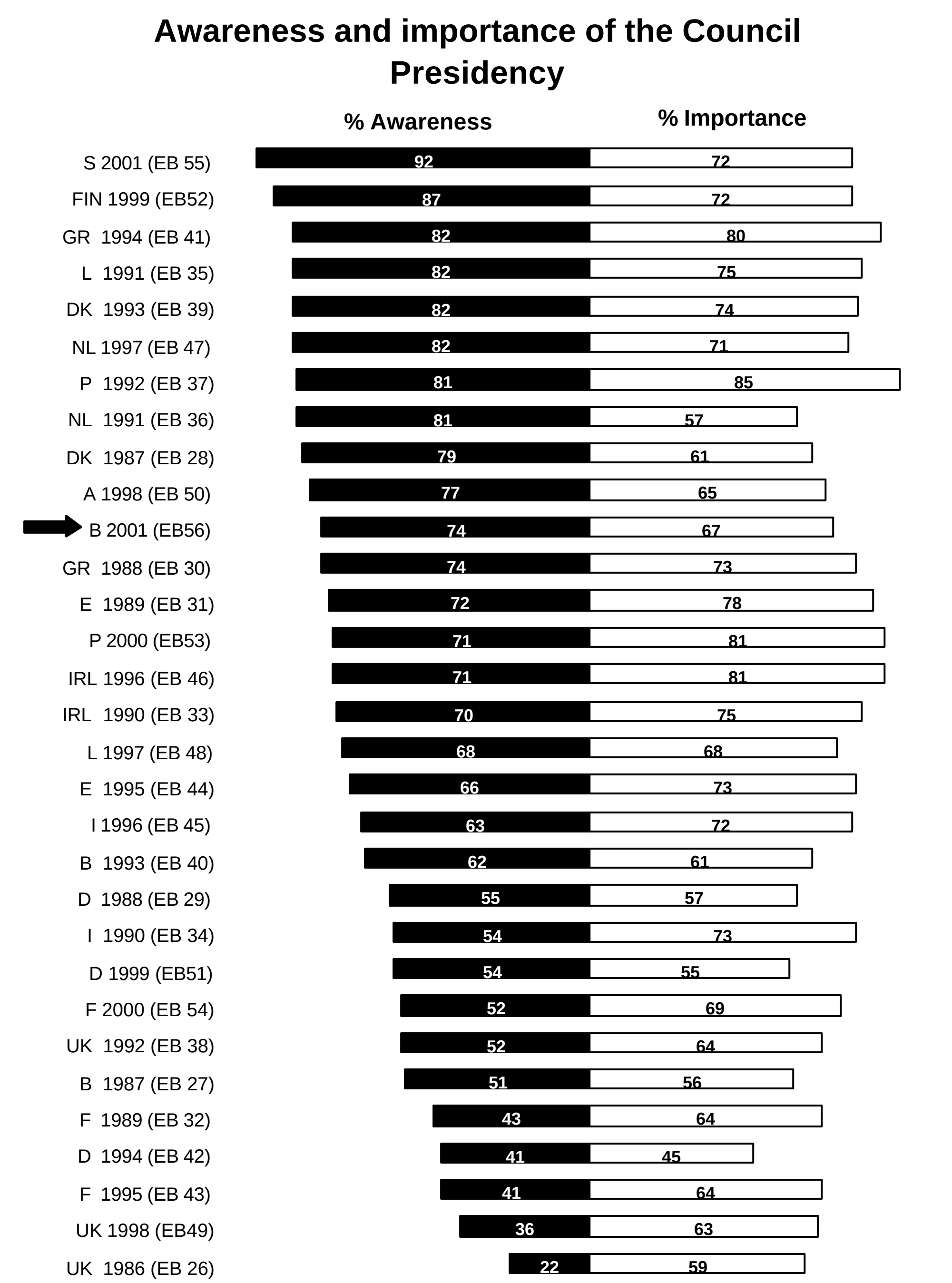
Awareness levels not only vary from country to country but also depend on how knowledgeable people feel about the European Union. The following table shows that the more people feel they know about the EU, the more likely it is that they have heard of the EU institutions.

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	98%	95%	85%
European Commission	94%	86%	65%
European Central Bank	92%	84%	61%
Court of Justice	88%	77%	52%
Council of Ministers	88%	74%	47%
Court of Auditors	76%	58%	32%
Social & Economic Committee	70%	47%	22%
Committee of the Regions	60%	36%	17%
European Ombudsman	54%	38%	23%

7.6. Awareness and importance of the Council Presidency

Since 1986, Eurobarometer has looked at awareness of and the perceived importance of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in the country that presides at the time of the survey[44]. Belgium held the Presidency during the last six months of the year 2001.

As the following graph shows, 74% of the people in Belgium were aware that their country held the Presidency. This is higher than when Belgium previously held the Presidency in 1993 and 1987. Sixty seven percent of people in Belgium consider the Presidency to be an important event, which is also higher than in 1993 and 1987.



Source: Survey no. 56.2 - Fieldwork Oct - Nov 2001
Standard Eurobarometer 56 - Fig. 7.11

[44] Each Member State of the European Union in turn holds the Presidency for a period of six months.