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EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

AUSTRIA

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Austria

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Austria

Austrian attitudes towards the country's membership of the EU have improved

Forty six percent of respondents in Austria think that Austria's membership is 'a good thing'. Only 13% consider it 'a bad thing', while 35% cannot decide on either opinion. To 49% of respondents, Austria has benefited all in all from being a member state, although 33% think that it has not benefited and 19% could not tell if it has or not.

On both dimensions, i.e. membership itself and the level of advantage for the country, opinions have become more positive than ever since Austria joined the Union in 1995. Austrians also evaluate the Union's image more often positively (37% 'very positive' or 'fairly positive') than negatively (17%), while 41% feel that the image is a "neutral" one.

Similarly, they perceive personal advantages achieved through EU membership more often than not (28% see more advantages as a result of membership, 17% see more disadvantages, and 47% see as many advantages as disadvantages).

Satisfaction with how democracy works nationally and in the EU varies

Eight percent are 'very satisfied' and 45% are 'fairly satisfied' with democracy in the EU, while 34% are not satisfied. The level of satisfaction with democracy in Austria itself is higher: 72% are 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied', while only 25% state that they are 'not very satisfied' or 'not at all satisfied'. Furthermore, Austrians are more likely to be satisfied with democracy in their own country than are respondents in most other countries, while their perceptions of democracy in the EU correspond with the average ratings elsewhere.

Austrians now perceive that the speed of building Europe is faster than before; this perceived speed approximates well to their desired speed for building Europe.

Austria faced severe floods last summer, as did other countries, particularly the new lander in Germany.

In this context, 51 % of respondents in Austria regarded EU membership as an advantage, while only 5% saw it as a disadvantage; however, 33% recognised neither advantage nor disadvantage. The views of respondents in Austria resemble the pattern of opinion found in Eastern Germany.

Among the European institutions, Austrians trust above all the Court of Justice

Sixty two percent 'tend to trust' the Court of Justice, while 20% 'tend not to trust' it. The European Central Bank (58% 'tend to trust', 22% 'tend not to trust') and the European

Parliament (58% 'tend to trust', 25% 'tend not to trust') enjoy only slightly less credibility. About half of the population trusts the European Court of Auditors (51%), the European Commission (51%) and the Council of Ministers (47%). The balance of trust is also positive towards the European Ombudsman and the Economic and Social Committee, as well as towards the Convention.

For all the institutions, the balance of trust has become more positive than it was in Spring 2002. Explicit statements of trust have increased as much as distrust has decreased. This development could be due to a greater visibility and hence a greater awareness of the EU during the past few months, related to the debates on enlargement, the economy and the budget, as well as the domestic policy context. This survey was conducted during the 2002 election campaign for the National Assembly, where European politics played a secondary, but mostly positive, role.

Among the top policy areas prioritised are the fight against illegal immigration and guaranteeing the quality of food products.

Among the top policy areas prioritised by respondents in Austria (over 80% for each of these areas) are the fight against unemployment, the fight against international terrorism, the protection of the environment, maintaining peace and security in Europe, the fight against poverty and social exclusion, guaranteeing the quality of food products and the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking as well as against illegal immigration.

Three in four respondents also place a high value on guaranteeing the rights of the individual and respect for the principles of democracy in Europe. These are seen to be as important as protecting consumers and guaranteeing the quality of other consumer products.

Regarding the perceived effectiveness of EU actions, however, opinions diverge. Action by the European Union to implement the Euro and to maintain peace and security in Europe receives a higher effectiveness rating than action meant to guarantee the rights of the individual and respect for the principles of democracy in Europe, the fight against international terrorism or action taken to welcome new member states.

Austrians attribute low effectiveness to EU action in the fight against unemployment (41%). They perceive deficiencies in the EU's effectiveness in the fight against unemployment and in guaranteeing social measures, the areas that they prioritise most highly.

Two in three of the Austrian population (66 %) advocate a European Constitution

Two thirds of all Austrian respondents favour an European Constitution, while only 9% explicitly oppose it.

The President of the European Commission should be directly elected by the citizens of the European Union according to 33 % of respondents, but 30 % prefer an election by the majority of the EU Parliament, and only 20 % advocate nomination by Heads of State.

More than two in three respondents (68 %) propose that the national right of veto should be retained for the most important or sensitive decisions to preserve essential national interests; only 16 % think it should be given up in order to make the EU more efficient. Austrians are among the strongest supporters of the national veto, which is generally held in high esteem by the smaller member states. However, in no member state do a majority of respondents advocate the abolishment of the national veto.

Austrians consider themselves more informed about enlargement than do the populations in almost all other member states.

Moreover, the self-attributed level of knowledge about enlargement has significantly increased over time: 30% of Austrians felt 'very well' or 'well informed' about enlargement in Spring 2001, 38% felt the same in Autumn 2001, 45% felt informed in Spring 2002 and almost half (48%) in Autumn 2002.

In Autumn 2002, 18% advocate enlargement for all candidate countries and 47% for only some of them, while 22% oppose enlargement altogether. By now, Austrian attitudes differ very little from those across the EU on average.

Austrians, however, differentiate clearly among the candidates for enlargement.

Hungary's accession is supported by 66%, and a majority of respondents also welcome Malta, Cyprus and Slovenia as members. Attitudes towards Czech and Slovak membership have significantly improved as well. Voices for and against the entry of these last two countries are more or less equally strong. A relative majority also advocates membership of the three Baltic States.

Evaluations of the assumed effects of enlargement continue to diverge.

A majority expects that the more member states the Union has, the more important it will be in the world. In addition, a majority believes that enlargement will bring about cultural enrichment and increase peace and security in Europe.

At the same time, Austrians fear that it will be much more difficult to make decisions on a European scale, that enlargement will cost more for the existing member states, and that Austria will receive less financial aid. Fifty seven percent stress the necessity of institutional reforms before enlargement takes place. However, positive attitudes have increased compared to Spring 2002.

The remaining fears about enlargement still tend to focus on concrete topics (costs and unemployment), while the hopes raised by enlargement typically relate to more abstract notions (such as the EU's position in the world and cultural enrichment).

The assumed main beneficiaries of enlargement are above all big businesses (76% expect they will profit), young people (47%) and people living in big cities (31%). Austrians display more scepticism regarding beneficial consequences for the unemployed, for employees in general, as well as for old people and people living in the countryside; and they clearly identify small companies (50%) and farmers (57%) as groups which would lose out as a result of enlargement. This pattern strongly resembles Austrian expectations related to their own country's entry into the EU in the early 1990s.

All in all, 51% of Austrian respondents advocate enlargement and 31% oppose it. In Spring 2002, the percentage of supporters was clearly lower (45 %) and that of opponents higher (36%). In other words, Austrian opinion now approximates the EU average. Austrians have become more enlargement-friendly (and less anti-enlargement) than, for example, people in the UK or Germany (whether Western or Eastern Germany) and, above all, France.

Attitudes towards enlargement clearly differ depending on socio-demographic variables, though: supporters of enlargement are more likely to have received higher education; older people tend to be more sceptical; and women are likely to have more reservations than men are. However, general attitudes towards the European Union and the self-declared level of knowledge about enlargement are factors of greater importance.

Self-attributed knowledge about the EU, its policies and institutions is high in Austria

Twenty six percent consider themselves 'very well informed' or 'well informed', a belief which has successfully been tested with a series of questions on factual knowledge. Nevertheless, direct election of the members of the European parliament is less popular among Austrians than it is in most other member states.

Austrians turn above all towards the mass media to seek information about the EU, its policies and institutions.

The importance of television (73 %) ranks before daily newspapers (58 %), radio (48%) and other newspapers and magazines (31 %). Twenty seven percent mention discussions with relatives, friends and colleagues or the Internet (15%) as their sources of information.

The importance of the mass media as a source of information becomes even clearer from the data on preferred sources. In other words, the data show once more the important role played by reports in the mass media, particularly for the less well-educated groups whose information-seeking behaviour shows little differentiation.

Half of all Austrian respondents consider the replacement of the national currency by the Euro to be a 'very good' (18%) or a 'fairly good' thing (31%).

Eighteen percent also feel 'very comfortable' and 44% feel 'fairly comfortable' about using the Euro, although 33% do not feel comfortable. This level of comfort in using the Euro ranks slightly above average within the Euro zone countries.

At the emotional level, 53 % feel even 'very attached' or 'fairly attached' to the common European currency, against 42% who feel 'not very attached' or 'not at all attached'. Fifty eight percent report an attachment to the Schilling, to which, however, 37% feel 'not very attached' or 'not at all attached'.

Sixty one percent suspect that prices have been rounded up generally, while 27% believe that rounding up concerns certain areas only.

All in all, the introduction of the single currency emerges as a success story. For a great part of the Austrian population it represents a common European symbol. The same is true for the European flag: it 'stands for something good' for 70% of the Austrian population.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

BELGIUM

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Belgium

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March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Belgium

Introduction

The current Eurobarometer 58.1 is based on a survey that was carried out in Belgium and the other 14 Member States of the European Union during the course of Autumn 2002. Two main areas were studied: The Belgian stance on the European Union as a whole and their stance on EU enlargement. These aspects constitute the two main sections of the report. Some information has also been gathered to give a quick overview on the Belgian citizens themselves. This information can be found in the first section entitled "A look at the Belgian Citizens". A total of more than 16 000 people were surveyed within the 15 Member States, of whom 1037 were Belgian. For each nationality, those conducting the survey ensured that sociocultural and socio-professional trends were taken into consideration. Thus, we were able to clarify or define several results on the basis of:

- Region of origin
- sex
- age
- level of studies
- profession

Besides these variables, we also compared several results with those obtained in previous Eurobarometer reports, in particular the Eurobarometer 56.3 (Spring 2002) and the Eurobarometer 57 (Summer/Autumn 2002).

1. A look at Belgian Citizens

In this first section, certain elements have lead to explain the position adopted by the Belgians in relation to the European Union and its enlargement.

- The Belgians don't seem to be very interested in politics. They don't discuss it often.
- The Belgians are not pessimistic people. They confess to being rather satisfied with their personal life, and in general, they have a positive outlook for 2003 towards their personal or household situation. They think, or hope in any case, that their economic situation will be better. In any event, they don't consider that they will spend much more than they did in 2002.
- The Belgians, just like all EU citizens, also have certain fears. We have noticed that in this area, those surveyed were rather affected by current events, considering that the three possible threats they fear the most are international terrorism (feared by 76% of the population), organised crime (feared by 72% of the population) and the proliferation of arms of mass destruction (feared by 61% of the population).

2. The Belgians and the European Union

2.1. What Belgians think of the European Union

2.1.1. The European flag

A large majority of the Belgian population recognises the European flag and knows that it represents something to do with the European Union, the Community, the Common Market, or the Council of Ministers of the EU. Only 3% of the population don't know what it symbolises. Overall, **the Belgian population believes that the European flag is a good symbol** for Europe. They are 6% ahead of other Europeans interviewed to hold this belief. The Belgians are also more numerous than other Europeans in believing that the European flag represents something good (71%). However, they are less enthusiastic about the fact that the European flag is placed beside the Belgian flag on all the official buildings in the country.

2.1.2. Being a Member State of the European Union

- Advantages for Belgium of being a Member State

Most Belgians surveyed believe that **it is rather good that Belgium is part of the European Union**. The majority of this opinion are the citizens of Brussels, followed by the Flemish and then the Walloons. Very few Belgians reckon that it is a bad thing. The Belgians are positive towards their membership, as **they believe in general that their country has benefited from belonging to the European Union**. A large majority of the citizens of Brussels (76%) believe that Belgium benefits from being an EU Member State. The Flemish (55%) and the Walloons (50%) are slightly less numerous in believing this.

- Personal advantages for Belgian citizens

Most Belgians have gained personal advantages from Belgium's membership to the European Union. The citizens of Brussels are particularly positive on this aspect. It should be noted that none of the three Belgian regions have an average below the community average. Among the different sociocultural and socio-professional categories, those who believe to have personally benefited from many advantages are:

- Youths from 15-24 years old and from 25-39 years old
- Those who studied until the age of 20 or over, or those still studying
- Those in managerial positions, self-employed workers and students.

On the contrary, those who believe that EU membership doesn't give rise to any personal advantages are:

- Those over the age of 40
- Those who finished their education before the age of 20
- Those unemployed and and house persons.

2.1.3. The European Institutions

The European Parliament and the European Commission are the two most well known institutions among the Belgians. In fact, 94% of the Belgians have heard of the Parliament and

87% have heard of the Commission. The institutions the least well known by the Belgians are also the same for other EU citizens. These are the Committee of the Regions, the Economic and Social Committee, the Convention on the future of Europe, and the European Ombudsman. It is also worth noting that those most sceptic towards the European Union are also 10% below the others to have heard of the various institutions.

The citizens of Brussels are still in majority on recognising the various institutions. On the contrary, those least able to recognise them are the Flemish.

Importance and confidence given to the European Institutions

Two European Institutions can be distinguished in particular from the others: **The European Parliament and the European Commission**. According to the Belgians, **these two institutions are the most important and most trustworthy**.

The next institutions listed by those surveyed are the Court of Justice of the EU, the Council of Ministers of the EU, the European Central Bank, and the Court of Auditors.

Finally, the four least important institutions which carry the least votes of confidence, are the European Ombudsman, the Convention, the Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions. It should be noted that the classification corresponds exactly to that of the recognition of the institutions. **The more the Belgians know about an institution, the more importance and public confidence they associate with it.**

Those from Brussels are more numerous than their equivalent counterparts from the other two regions to believe that the European Institutions play an important role in the European Union.

2.1.4. The Belgian stance on several important issues

▪ Decision-making

When the Belgians are interrogated on whether decisions should be made on a national or European scale, the answers vary according to the issue in question. The closer the issues affect the individuals (education, health, social security, police, justice, etc.) the more the Belgians believe that the decisions should be taken by the Belgian Government. On the contrary, the less the issue affects their individual lives (defense, humanitarian aid, aid for regions in economic difficulty, the fight against international terrorism, against drugs etc.), the more they believe that the European Union should take the decisions.

In priority, the areas for which decisions should be taken together within the EU are:

- Foreign policy towards countries outside the European Union (81% in favour of a community decision)
- Information on the European Union, its policies and institutions (80% in favour of a community decision)
- The currency (79% in favour of a community decision)
- Scientific and technological research (75% in favour of a community decision)
- Humanitarian Aid (72% in favour of a community decision)

With regard to the European defense policy, 43% of those questioned reckon that the European Union should take the decisions on this issue. This is followed by 30% who believe that NATO should take such decisions. Finally, only 15% believe that national governments should take charge of this issue.

▪ Constitution, right of veto, President of the Commission

With regard to the existence of a European Constitution, 24% of the Belgian population interrogated do not know whether the EU should have a common Constitution or not with all the member countries.

A large majority of those who replied believe that the EU should have a Constitution (58% were for and 18% against).

Then with regard to maintaining or abandoning the right of veto, once again 23% of the people didn't respond. Of those who did respond, **a majority of them (47%) thinks that the right of veto should be kept in order to preserve national interests in Belgium.** The others, who are less numerous (30%), wish that the right of veto were abandoned in order to make the EU more efficient.

Finally, **48% of those interrogated believe that the Commission President should be elected directly by the citizens of the European Union.** 27% esteem that the Commission President should be elected by a majority in the European Parliament. Very few Belgians (7%) believe that the heads of state and governments of the EU should nominate the Commission President.

- Various issues

Some actions and policies were submitted to those interrogated and they were asked if they were for or against them. The three propositions which got the most positive responses are:

- Teaching children in school how the EU institutions operate (85% positive responses)
- A Monetary Union with a single currency, the Euro (81% positive responses)
- A common security and defense policy for all EU members (79% positive responses).

2.1.5. Priority and efficiency of actions within the EU

- **7 actions were regarded as a priority by more than 85% of the Belgians surveyed.** We can see that **several of these actions concern issues of security.**
 - Fighting against terrorism (91%)
 - Fighting against organised crime and drug trafficking (91%)
 - Maintaining peace and security in Europe (90%)
 - Fighting against unemployment (90%)
 - Fighting against poverty and social exclusion (87%)
 - Guaranteeing the quality of foodstuffs (86%)
 - Protecting the environment (85%)
- **The actions which show the most discrepancy between priority and efficiency are :**
 - Preserving peace and security in Europe (priority : 3rd place ; efficiency : 2nd place)
 - Guaranteeing the quality of foodstuffs (priority et efficiency : 6th place)
 - Protecting the environment (priority : 7th place ; efficiency : 9th place)
 - Being closer to European citizens (priority : 12th place ; efficiency : 10th place)

In this case, Belgian expectations have been met.

- **The three areas in which the Belgian expectations are the least satisfied are :**
 - Fighting against terrorism (priority : 1st place ; efficiency : 12th place)
 - Fighting against organised crime and drug trafficking (priority : 2nd place ; efficiency : 13th place)
 - Fighting against unemployment (priority : 4th place ; efficiency : 14th place)

2.1.6. The Belgians and the Euro

Few Belgians believe that the new currency is a very good thing. They are rather of the opinion that "the Euro is neither a good nor a bad thing" and that "the Euro is rather a good thing." The majority of the people of the opinion that it is rather a good thing are the citizens of Brussels, those in managerial positions and those who studied beyond the age of 20. The people who are less enthusiastic towards the new currency all have a negative image in general of the EU, namely those over the age of 55, those who only studied until the age of 15, the house persons or retired.

The Belgians are quite relaxed towards how easy or difficult the Euro is to use. Those aged 15-39 are the most comfortable with using it, whereas those aged over 40 are slightly less comfortable with the Euro.

When the Euro was introduced all the prices were converted. Most Belgians (69%) feel that prices were rounded off to the nearest high figure in all sectors. On the contrary, only 2% believe that the prices were rounded off to the nearest low figure in all sectors. Others esteem that prices increased in some sectors and dropped in other sectors.

2.2. EU knowledge and information

2.2.1. Knowledge of the European Union

Knowledge of the European Union is average in Belgium. According to the survey, only 1 Belgian in 4 knows that there is a European anthem and that the European Community was founded just after the Second World War. Very few people surveyed know that there is an EU Day and many make the mistake in thinking that there are 12 Member States. However, Belgian knowledge is still slightly better than the level of knowledge in other EU countries. The citizens of Brussels know the most about the European Union. The Flemish and Walloons come next.

On a professional scale, those in managerial positions and independent workers have the highest level of knowledge on Europe. On the contrary, those unemployed or house persons have the lowest level.

2.2.2. Sources of information used and preferred

The five top sources used by the Belgians when seeking information on the EU are:

- television (used by 68% of those interrogated)
- daily newspapers (used by 36% of those interrogated)
- radio (used by 26% of those interrogated)
- Internet (used by 15.5% of those interrogated)
- Other newspapers and magazines (used by 12.5% of those interrogated).

Television, daily newspapers and radio are the top three media sources that are the most reliable and beneficial for the Belgians. This phenomenon can also be clearly seen in previous Eurobarometer reports. When the Belgians are asked what sources they prefer for EU information, these three media sources are always the first mentioned.

33% of those interrogated declared that they have never sought information on the European Union.

The five most preferred sources of information for the Belgians are:

- television (chosen by 74% of those interrogated)
- daily newspapers (chosen by 30% of those interrogated)

- radio (chosen by 29% of those interrogated)
- detailed brochures (chosen by 17% of those interrogated)
- Internet (chosen by 16.5% of those interrogated). It should be noted that the Internet is more valued among youths aged 15-24.

In general, the Belgians prefer to be informed via materials (television, radio, Internet, books, etc.) than by services (meetings, MEPs, information services, etc.). Only those working in managerial positions and employees declare to be interested in services.

3. The Belgians and EU enlargement

3.1. What Belgians think of enlargement

3.1.1. Enlarge or not?

The Belgians are not all of the same opinion with regard to EU enlargement. 17% of them think that the European Union should enlarge to all countries wishing to join, and 43% believe that the EU should only enlarge to some countries wishing to join, but not all of them. If the two figures are combined, we can see that 60% of those interrogated are not against the procedure. Only 26%, or one Belgian citizen in four, are totally against enlargement and believe that the EU should not let any more countries join.

On a whole, if we take a look at all the variables, we can conclude that **those who are most positive towards enlargement**, no matter what the issue is, are:

- Citizens of Brussels
- Youths from 15-24 years old and from 25-39 years old
- Those who studied beyond the age of 20, or those still studying
- Those in managerial positions, self-employed workers, manual workers and students.

On the contrary, **those who are the most negative towards enlargement** are:

- The Walloons (the Flemish are somewhere in between the Walloons and the citizens of Brussels)
- Those over the age of 55
- Those who didn't continue their studies beyond the age of 15 or who finished their studies between the ages of 16 and 19
- Those retired, house persons or without a job.

3.1.2. Involvement in political debate

In the first section, we saw that Belgians are not very interested in politics and political debates. This phenomenon can be confirmed in this section on enlargement. On a whole, those interrogated consider that they have very little to do with the political debate on enlargement. We have noticed that the Belgian average is inferior to the community average.

3.1.3. The image of European and candidate countries

The Belgians don't look on all the EU candidate countries as being the same. They have their favourites. The **four countries that the Belgians would welcome the most in the EU** are:

- Malta (52% votes in favour)
- Cyprus (48% votes in favour)
- Hungary (44% votes in favour)
- Poland (44% votes in favour)

These countries have been the favourites for some time now as the same four countries were also at the top of the list in the Eurobarometer 57 report.

The countries with the least favourable image have also remained the same. The **four countries with the least favourable votes** are:

- Lithuania (37% votes in favour)
- Slovenia (35% votes in favour)
- Romania (34% votes in favour)
- Turkey (30% votes in favour)

Of these four countries, Lithuania, Slovenia and Turkey were also among the last four featuring on the list of preferred candidates in the previous report.

With the help of the different variables gathered during the survey, we know that in the case of all of the countries, **those who tend to give more favourable votes in general** are:

- Youths between the age of 15-24
- Those who are still studying
- Those in managerial positions, manual workers and students.

On the contrary, **those who tend to give the least favourable votes** are:

- Those over the age of 55
- Those who didn't continue their studies beyond the age of 15
- Managers¹, employees and those without a job.

The Belgians have not commented in detail as to why they prefer some countries to others.

Nevertheless, we know that they don't believe that the CEECs have advanced that much with respect to aspects such as the environment, standards of living or corruption since the fall of the Berlin wall.

Those questioned also expressed their preferences for other countries in Europe, which are not candidates for EU Enlargement. Switzerland, Norway and Iceland carry a very positive image for the Belgians, as was the situation in the Eurobarometer 57 report.

3.1.4. Consequences of enlargement

If the Belgians are faced with a series of consequences resulting from enlargement, their reactions are not very clear-cut. It is not really possible to draw up a very positive or very negative trend as to how they see things. We are dealing with **an alteration between positive and negative consequences**, of which the three main ones (listed by more than 65% of those interrogated) are as follows:

- The more members there are in the European Union, the more important it will be throughout the world (positive consequence given by 70% of the people)
- If there are more members, it will be much more difficult to make decisions on a European scale (negative consequence given by 69% of the people)
- If there are more members, the EU will be richer on a cultural level (positive consequence given by 66% of the people)

This list continues as follows:

¹ Managers or those in managerial positions have been among those casting favourable votes and those casting unfavourable votes. This can be explained by the fact that they tend to vote differently depending on their country: very much in favour or not at all in favour.

- After enlargement, Belgium will become less important within Europe (negative consequence given by 49% of the people)
- If there are more EU members, more peace and security can be guaranteed in Europe (positive consequence given by 49% of the people)

A majority of the Belgians also consider that enlargement will be more costly to the countries which are already members and thus that they do not agree with giving the candidate countries financial aid before they join the EU.

Finally, it is obvious that enlargement will have repercussions on a number of various socio-professional groups. If the Belgians believe this, the only group that will really benefit from enlargement is that made up of large businesses and the only group having nothing to gain or lose are students. All the other groups will suffer from this evolution, especially fishermen and farmers.

3.2. Informing Belgians about enlargement

3.2.1. Are the Belgians informed?

The Belgians are badly informed on enlargement, no matter what the region of origin, age, level of education, or profession of those interrogated may be. Of course there are some disparities in the results. For example, we were able to see that those from Brussels consider themselves slightly more informed than those from other regions. Among the different groups of people interrogated, **those who believe they are the most informed are:**

- Men
- Those between the ages of 40 and 54
- Those who continued their studies beyond the age of 20
- Those in managerial positions and those self-employed

Those who believe they are the least informed are:

- Women
- Those over the age of 55
- Those who did not continue their studies beyond the age of 15
- Those without a job, house persons or retired

3.2.2. How are they informed?

The first observation that we can make is that the Belgians prefer to be informed via tools (television, radio, the press, the Internet, books, etc.) than by services (meetings, information centres and services, MEPs, etc.)

Next, we have noticed clearly that **television, radio and daily newspapers are the preferred media sources** that the Belgians use when seeking information on enlargement. Their

preference has remained constant, and can also be noted in previous reports. This preference not only concerns enlargement but also any other information on the European Union as a whole. In this present report, most people have heard of enlargement via these three media sources. The television is listed by 53% of the people, radio and newspapers by 22%.

Other sources of information which are used include other newspapers and magazines (9%) and the Internet (4%) as favourites. The Internet is a source of information most readily used by youths aged 15-24 (8%).



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

DENMARK

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Denmark

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March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Denmark

This Executive Summary presents the overall results from Eurobarometer 58.1. The survey was conducted in Denmark between 30 September 2002 and 28 October 2002.

The main conclusions of the survey are as follows:

1. Enlargement

Danes are positive towards enlarging the EU with selected countries

67% of Danes wish to enlarge the EU with only some of the candidate countries, while 15% wish to enlarge the EU with all candidate countries. Consequently, 82% of the Danish population support enlargement to some extent.

Connection between level of knowledge about the EU and attitude towards enlargement

There is a connection between the level of knowledge that people believe to have about the EU and their attitude towards enlargement. The tendency is that the more knowledge people believe themselves to have about enlargement, the more positive they are towards it.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are the favoured Candidate Countries – but Turkey faces resistance

74% of the Danes are in favour of the admission of Estonia and Latvia, while 73% are in favour of the admission of Lithuania. This is an increase in support since the last Eurobarometer Survey in Spring 2002.

Only 27% of Danish respondents are in favour of admitting Turkey into the EU. This is a decrease compared to the last survey.

Norway, Iceland and Switzerland are welcome in the EU – if they wish to join

92% of the Danes are in favour of the admission of Norway into the EU, while the corresponding figure for both Iceland and Switzerland is 89%. Only 32% are in favour of the admission of Albania.

A larger EU will increase the difficulties in decision-making at the European level

78% of the Danes believe that decision-making at the European level will be more difficult if more countries are admitted into the EU.

67% say that enlargement of the EU is likely to ensure peace and security in Europe.

A further 67% believe that the new EU members will lead to Denmark receiving less financial support from the EU.

A majority of women believe that they are not well informed about enlargement

56% of women do not feel that they are not well informed about the enlargement of the EU. For men the corresponding figure is 44%.

Nearly one fourth of Danes do not engage in discussions about enlargement

24% of the Danes claim that they do not participate in any political debates about enlargement.

The level of information about enlargement has improved

Since the last Eurobarometer Survey there has been a 10 percentage point fall in the proportion of those who feel that they are not well informed about enlargement.

Danes believe that large companies will benefit significantly from the enlargement

According to Danish respondents, large companies will be the big winners after enlargement: 79% of them say that they believe that enlargement is to the advantage of large companies. Only 14% believe that the enlargement will be a disadvantage to large companies.

Central and Eastern European countries have become more democratic since 1989

76% of the Danes believe that the Central and Eastern European countries have become more democratic since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Only 12% say that this is not the case.

2. Power and competence of EU

The European Parliament is the most important institution

The European Parliament, the European Court of Justice, and the European Commission are the three most important institutions for the life in the EU. The European Court of Justice is the most trusted of all the EU institutions, with 71% of Danes expressing confidence in it.

Health and social services should remain a national matter

83% percent of the Danes want decisions about health and social services to be made by the Danish government, rather than jointly by the EU.

Only 40% of the Danes want immigration laws to be regulated by the EU

40% of the Danes express a wish that laws on political asylum should be regulated jointly by the EU while 58% want it to remain a national matter.

Environmental protection, peace, and security should be main priorities of the EU

94% of the Danes believe that protection of the environment is an area that should be prioritised by the EU, although 57% of them find that the EU is not very efficient in this area.

Age and attitude towards the EU effort in specific areas

Generally, young people in the age group 15-24 are the least critical about the effort of the EU in specific areas.

3. Knowledge, satisfaction and image

Only a few Danes believe that they have a high level of knowledge about the EU

On a scale from 0 to 10 (where 10 equals a high degree of knowledge) only 4% of the Danes rate their own knowledge of the EU as 9 or 10.

The European Parliament is the best known EU institution

98% of the Danes have heard about the European Parliament, which makes it the best known EU institution in Denmark.

93% have heard about the European Commission.

Both Danish and European

57% of the Danes consider themselves to be both Danish and European citizens

Great satisfaction with Danish democracy

32% of the Danes are very satisfied with Danish democracy, while 56% are somewhat satisfied. In total, 88% of the Danes are satisfied with democracy in Denmark.

Level of education and assessment of the EU membership

64% of those Danes who were 20 years of age or older when they completed their education, believe that the EU is a good thing. The corresponding percentages for those who completed their education earlier lie between 39 and 55%.

Ireland and Greece have had the greatest advantage of their EU membership

The populations in Ireland and Greece believe that their countries are the ones who have benefited most of their EU membership.

More EU supporters among young people

50% of the respondents in the age group 15-24 years believe that the image of the EU is either positive or very positive, but the corresponding figure is 41% for the group aged 55 years or more.

Development of the EU progresses too fast

The Danes believe that the current speed of building the EU is too fast.

The importance of the EU in the everyday life of Denmark is decreasing

In the period between the Eurobarometer of December 1999 and the current survey there has been a 9 percentage point fall in the expectation of the Danes about the importance of the EU in their everyday life during the next five years. 45% of the Danes want the EU to have the same role during the next five years as it goes now, while 19% want the EU to play a less important role.

4. Danish reservations

Decisions about European defence policy should be made by NATO

39% of the Danes believe that decisions regarding European defence policy should be made by NATO, while 27% believe that the EU should handle these decisions. 24% want the national government to take this responsibility.

Positive attitude towards the Euro

A total of 52% of the Danes believe that it would be very good or fairly good to replace the Danish Krone with the Euro. 18% are neutral, while 28% believe that it would be very bad or fairly bad to abandon the Krone.

Among those Danes who have personal experience of the Euro, a total of 49% feel either very comfortable or fairly comfortable with the new currency, while 13% feel very uncomfortable or fairly uncomfortable. 38% of this group are undecided.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

FINLAND

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Finland

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Finland

Public opinion in Finland about the European Union, enlargement, the euro and the different institutions and decision-making process of the European Union

Introduction

The report presents Finnish public opinion on the European Union in general, on the enlargement of the European Union and the euro and on different institutions and the decision-making process of the European Union. The report is based on the analysis of results obtained from the Eurobarometer survey that was carried out in Finland and the other member states of the European Union in October and November 2002.

1. The attitudes of Finns towards the European Union in general

The Finns were asked to estimate, using a scale from 1 to 10¹, how much they feel they know about the European Union, its policies and its institutions. The Finns estimate their average level of knowledge about the EU to be 4.99. Men (average 5.31) feel they know more about the European Union than women (4.39). Demographic analysis shows that people in the age groups 40-54 years (5.19) and 25-39 years old (5.13) feel they know more than average about the European Union. Managers (5.80), students (5.27) and other white-collar workers (5.26) also estimate they know more than average about the EU. Geographically people living in Uusimaa (5.25) feel they know more about the EU than people living in other regions. The people living in Eastern Finland (4.71) estimate their level of knowledge about the EU to be the worst in the whole of Finland.

Those Finns who feel that Finland's membership of the European Union is a good thing estimate their level of knowledge to be higher (5.17) than do those who feel that Finland's membership is a bad thing (4.61). Also, people who tend to think that they trust the European Union feel that they know more about the EU (5.17) than those who tend to think they cannot trust the European Union (4.95). The same difference in knowledge is seen between Finns who are in favour of enlargement of the European Union and of the euro and those who are not in favour of these.

When looking for information about the European Union, its policies and its institutions, Finnish respondents mostly use television and daily newspapers as their sources of information. Three in four Finns (75%) look for information about the European Union on television and 58% in the daily newspapers. The Finns are not so interested in looking for information about the European Union via the European Union's own information points. Only 6 % of Finns look for information

¹ 1 = know nothing at all, 10 = know a great deal

about the EU through EU info on notice boards in libraries, town halls, railway stations and post offices or through the European Union information offices, Euro-info Centres, Euro-info Points and Euro-libraries. One in ten never looks for information about the European Union or is not interested in looking for such information.

The Finns feel a very high degree of attachment to their country, region and their home town, with 96 % of the Finns feeling very or fairly attached to Finland, 89 % feeling very or fairly attached to their region and 85 % feeling very or fairly attached to their home town. However, only a quarter of Finnish respondents feel very or fairly attached to the European Union. Three in four Finns feel not very attached or not at all attached to the European Union.

Among those groups which are most likely to feel very attached or fairly attached to the European Union are the younger generation, the age group 15-24 years old and those who completed their studies aged over 19 years (both 28 %), students (33 %) and managers (30 %). Of those that feel that Finland's membership of European Union is a good thing, 43 % feel very attached or fairly attached to the European Union. Of those Finns who are in favour of the euro, 34 % feel very attached or fairly attached and of those who are in favour of enlargement, 33 % are very attached or fairly attached to the European Union.

Two in five Finns feel that, generally speaking, Finland's membership of the European Union is a good thing. One in five think it is a bad thing and 37 % feel it is neither a good nor a bad thing. In particular, managers (56 %), 15-24 years old (54 %), students (53 %), people living in Uusimaa (53 %) and the better educated, i.e. those who were aged over 19 when they completed their studies (51 %), are more likely than average to feel that Finland's membership of the European Union is a good thing. Also, those who are in favour of the euro (57 %) and enlargement of the Union (55 %) are more likely than average to feel that Finland's membership is a good thing.

Taking everything into consideration 42 % of the Finns feel Finland has, on balance, benefited from being a member of the European Union. Men (47 %) more than women (38 %) feel that Finland has benefited from the membership in the EU. Fifty nine percent of Finns also think that Finland being a member of the European Union has brought them personally more advantages than disadvantages, while 21 % feel that Finland's membership has brought them personally more disadvantages than advantages. In particular, managers (39 %), students (32 %) and 15-24 years old (30 %) think that Finland being a member of the European Union has brought them personally more advantages than disadvantages.

On a scale from 1 to 7² Finns feel the current speed of building Europe is on average 4.52. However, the Finns would like to slow it down. In Finland, the average desired speed of building Europe is 4.11. Men more than women would prefer to slow down the speed of building Europe. With regard to age groups, the 15-24 years old (4.44) desire Europe to be built more speedily than those aged over 55 years old (3.99). Demographic analysis shows also that students (4.42)

² 1 = standstill, 7 = runs as fast as possible

would like a quicker pace of building Europe than other professional groups. People living in Uusimaa would, on average, prefer a speed of 4.31, but people living in Northern Finland prefer 3.82.

Most Finns feel that maintaining peace and security in Europe (92 %), fighting organised crime and drug trafficking (87 %) and guaranteeing the quality of food products (86 %) should be a priority for the European Union. It is noticeable that 69 % of Finns think that welcoming new member countries should not be a priority among the actions that the European Union could undertake.

2. Finnish attitudes to enlargement and the euro

In comparison with citizens of other member states, Finns feel very well informed about the enlargement of the European Union. Three in five Finns feel they have been very well informed or well informed about the enlargement. However, 38 % of the Finns feel they have been not very well informed or not at all well informed about the enlargement.

Men (68 %) more than women (55 %) feel well informed about enlargement. Also managers and the better-educated feel better-informed about enlargement than do other socio-demographic groups. Geographically, people living in Southern Finland feel better informed than the others - 65 % of them feel well informed about enlargement - while people living in Eastern Finland feel the worst informed - 56 % of those in Eastern Finland feel well informed and 42 % feel not well informed.

Those who are in favour of enlargement feel better informed about it than those who are against it. Sixty eight percent of those who are in favour of enlargement and 53 % of those who are against it feel well informed about enlargement. Thirty one percent of those in favour of enlargement and 46 % of those against enlargement say they are less than well informed about the enlargement of the EU.

More than half of the sample of Finnish respondents would prefer the European Union to enlarge to include only some of the countries wishing to join, while only 21 % of the Finns feel the European Union should be enlarged to include all the countries wishing to join. Sixteen percent of Finns feel that the European Union should not be enlarged by any additional countries.

A large majority of Finns (73 %) think that big businesses will benefit as a result of the enlargement. More than half (57 %) also believe that the young will benefit from the enlargement. On the other hand, the majority of Finnish respondents feel that farmers (68 %) and fishermen (65 %) will lose out as a result of enlargement. The proportions of the citizens believing that the farmers and the fishermen will lose out as a result of the enlargement are higher in Finland than in any other member state of the European Union. A majority of Finns (52 %) also believe that people living in the countryside are among those who will lose as a result of the enlargement.

Finnish respondents are particularly in favour of Norway, Switzerland and Iceland becoming part of the European Union in the future. More than 80 % of them are in favour of the membership of each of these countries.

A majority is also in favour of the membership of each of the ten candidate countries that are set to join the EU in 2004, except for Slovenia. Slovenia is favoured by 43% of Finns, 45% are in favour of Bulgaria and 34% are in favour of Romania becoming part of the European Union in the future. However, they are not so keen on accepting the former Yugoslav countries, Albania or Turkey as members of the European Union. A majority of Finnish respondents is against each of these countries becoming part of the European Union.

Almost half the sample (47%) feels that replacing the Finnish markka by the euro was a very good or a fairly good thing, while 23 % feel that it was a fairly bad or a very bad thing. One fourth of the Finns find it neither a good thing nor a bad thing.

A larger proportion of men (51 %) than of women (38 %) approves of the replacement of the Finnish markka by the euro. A larger proportion of the younger generation than of the older generation thinks that the introduction of the euro is a good thing.

The groups who are most satisfied with the introduction of the euro are managers (67 % find introduction of the euro a very or a fairly good thing), students (59 %), other white collars (56 %) and manual workers (51 %). On the other hand, the least satisfied are the unemployed (26 %) and house persons (28 %). A majority of the people living in Uusimaa (57 %) find the introduction of the euro a very or a fairly good thing whereas only 37 % of the people living in Eastern Finland feel the same way.

Finns feel quite comfortable about using the euro, with 80 % feeling very comfortable or fairly comfortable about using the euro. Only 19 % feel not very comfortable or not at all comfortable about using the new currency. A significantly larger proportion of those who are in favour of the introduction of the euro (93 %) than those who are against it (52 %) feel comfortable about using the euro. The younger generation and the better-educated are most likely to feel comfortable about using the euro.

In the regions, people living in Uusimaa feel the most comfortable about using the euro. The proportion of people living in Northern Finland who feel comfortable about using the euro is smaller than in the other regions even though, even in Northern Finland, three in four people feel comfortable about using the euro.

The Finns do not personally feel very attached to the single European currency, the euro. A majority feels that they are not attached to it, while only 36 % do feel attached to it.

On the other hand, 62 % of the Finns personally still feel attached to the old Finnish markka. Those who are most attached to the markka are house persons (of whom 84 % still feel very attached or fairly attached to the markka) and the unemployed (74 %).

3. Finnish attitudes towards institutions and decision-making processes in the European Union

Almost every Finn has heard about the European Parliament (98 %) and the European Commission (97 %). At least three in four Finns have heard about the European Central Bank, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Ombudsman and the Council of Ministers of the European Union. On the other hand, more than half have never heard about the European Court of Auditors, the Convention of the Future of the European Union, the Committee of the Regions of the European Union nor the Economic and Social Committee of the European Union.

A majority of Finns tend to trust the European Ombudsman, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Central Bank and the European Commission. On the other hand, three in ten Finns do not trust the three main institutions of the European Union: the Council of Ministers of the European Union, the European Commission and the European Parliament.

Forty one percent of Finns are very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union, but 39 % are not very satisfied and 9 % are not at all satisfied. Men are slightly less satisfied than are women, since half of all men and 47 % of women are not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union.

Socio-demographic analysis shows that a majority of the self-employed (56 %), the retired (53 %) and the unemployed (51 %) feel unsatisfied with democracy in the European Union. Students are the most satisfied with the democracy in the EU - 58 % of them are very or fairly satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union.

A majority of Finnish respondents (51 %) tend to think that decisions concerning European defence policy should be taken by national government, while 35 % would give the right of decision to the European Union and only 5 % to NATO.

A majority (54 %) also thinks that the European Union should have a Constitution, compared to 30 % who do not find it necessary. In particular, women (59 %), those over 55 years old (60 %), the retired (63 %) and those who finished their studies before the age of 16 (66 %) tend to think that the European Union should have a Constitution.

A majority of Finns (65 %) tend to think that the right of veto that each member state has for the most important or sensitive decisions should be retained in order to preserve essential national interests. Only 24 % of Finns would be ready to give it up in order to make the European Union more efficient.

4. Conclusions

The main findings of this Eurobarometer survey with regard to the attitudes of the Finns towards the European Union in general are:

- Finns estimate their level of knowledge about the European Union, on a scale from 1 to 10³, to be 4.99. Men estimate their level of knowledge about the EU higher than women do. Managers, students and other white-collar workers think that they have a higher than average knowledge level about the EU.
- Two in five Finns tend to think that, generally speaking, Finland's membership of the European Union is a good thing. Two in five Finns also feel that Finland has, on balance, benefited from being a member of the European Union.
- Finns feel that the current speed of building Europe is faster than they would like it to be. On a scale from 1 to 7⁴ Finns feel the current speed of building Europe is on average 4.52 while they would like it to be 4.11 on average. Men are more likely than women to wish to slow down the speed are.

With regard to the enlargement of the European Union and the euro, the main findings about Finnish attitudes can be summarized as:

- On a European scale, Finns feel very well informed about the enlargement of the European Union. Those people who are in favour of enlargement feel better informed about it than those who are against it.
- A majority would prefer the European Union to enlarge to include only some of the countries wishing to join. Finns are particularly in favour of Norway, Switzerland and Iceland becoming part of the European Union in the future. A majority of them are also in favour of nine of the ten countries set for accession in 2004. Slovenia is the exception – only 43 % of the Finns are in favour of the accession of Slovenia.
- A majority of Finns tend to think that big businesses will benefit as a result of the enlargement. Similarly, a majority believes that the young will benefit from enlargement, but that farmers and fishermen will lose out.
- The Finns feel quite comfortable about using the euro. Four in five feel comfortable about using the euro, while only one in five is not comfortable about using the new currency.

³ 1 = know nothing at all, 10 = know a great deal

⁴ 1 = standstill, 7 = runs as fast as possible

The main findings with regard to Finnish attitudes about the different institutions and the decision-making processes of the European Union are:

- Two in five Finns feel very or fairly satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union. Almost as many are not very satisfied and 9 % are not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU.
- A majority thinks that the European Union should have a Constitution, but nearly a third of respondents disagree. A large majority feels that the right of veto of each member state should be retained, while only one in four would be ready to give it up.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

FRANCE

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
France

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for France

Eurobarometer 58.1, a public opinion poll, was carried out for the European Commission in all fifteen Member States of the European Union. In France, 1004 people were interviewed during October 2002.

This report sums up the main points of the Eurobarometer poll. It is organised into five sections.

Section 1 gives an overview of opinion in France. It focuses particularly on fears and expectations for the year 2003.

Section 2 shows how the French obtain information on the EU. Among other issues, it deals with the information supplied on the topic of enlargement.

Section 3 deals with the image of the European Union, general knowledge about the European institutions and support for the single currency.

Section 4 describes French attitudes towards the enlargement of the EU.

Finally, section 5 is concerned with the ongoing debate about the future of Europe. It focuses on EU priorities, on the principle of an European constitution and on the election of the President of the Commission.

1. An overall review of French opinion

- A large majority of the French (78%) are very satisfied (12%) or quite satisfied (66%) by their life. These figures remain fairly stable compared to the previous survey in Spring 2002. As usual, respondents distinguish between their personal well-being and the general situation in the country.
- Concerning the general situation, expectations for the year 2003 are quite gloomy: 41% expect the economic situation to get worse, 33% expect it to remain the same and only 18% expect it to get better. Forty four percent of the French think unemployment will increase, whereas 32% think it will remain the same. Only 18% think it will decrease.
- In a international situation full of potential crises, there are mounting fears about international terrorism (88%, +1%), organised crime (80%, +10%) and arms proliferation (75%, +11%). 52% of the respondents fear a world war (+4%).

2. Information about the European Union

- The survey confirms television as the dominant mass medium. Sixty eight percent of the French get information on the EU from television, 41% from newspapers and 34% from the

radio (multiple answers possible). Only 13% of the respondents use the Internet to get information, although this represents an increase from only 3% in December 1999 and 8% in January 2000.T

- To obtain information about the EU in the future (multiple answers possible), the respondents continue to prefer television (63%), followed by radio and newspapers (31%), brochures and leaflets (22%), magazines (16%) and the Internet (15%). Other sources, such as videotapes, CD-ROMs, Euro-information offices and computer databases are widely ignored by the population.
- Nearly four French respondents out of five (79%) feel “not very well informed” (53%) or “not informed at all” (26%) about enlargement. Once again, the main source of information is television (60%), followed by newspapers (28%), radio (25%) and magazines (14%). It is noteworthy that one French respondent out of four never looks for information on this topic.
- Amongst those who are opposed to enlargement, we find the same tendencies at a higher degree: they get information from television (57%), newspapers (25%) and radio (23%), and are very unlikely to use other sources (Internet, information points, brochures and leaflets). Finally, 31% never look for information about enlargement.

3. French Public Opinion and the European Institutions

The general indicators show a growing support for the European institutions. For nearly every question, the figures are now very close to the EU average.

- 52% (+5 since Spring 2002) of the respondents consider their country's membership of the European Union to be a good thing; 12% (-2) think it a bad thing and 32% (-3) neither good nor bad. Furthermore, 51% (+1) consider their country has benefited from belonging to the European Union, while 28% think the reverse. These figures are similar to the EU average.
- A majority (53%, +4) of the French population have a fairly good (45%) or very good (8%) image of the European Union. Only 17% have a fairly bad (12%) or a very bad (5%) image of it.
- 71% (+4) of the French citizens are now in favour of the euro, whereas the opposition has fallen to 26% (-2). This figures contrast with the overall trend within the eurozone, where support for the common currency has slightly declined.
- Some European institutions are far better known than others. A large majority of the French population have heard of the Parliament (95%), the Commission (87%), the Council (73%), the European Central Bank (71%) and the Court of Justice of the European Communities (70%). The other institutions are however little known. In particular, only 27% (with a

surprising drop of 4% since Spring 2002) have heard of the Convention on the Future of Europe.

- Trust in the European institutions has considerably increased since the previous survey. The European Parliament comes first (62%, +7), followed by the European Commission (57%, +7), the Court of Justice (51%, +8), the European Central Bank (44%, +4). These confidence ratings are the highest since people were first been asked about them in 1999.

4. French attitudes towards Enlargement

- **France remains the only country with a majority of opponents to enlargement. Only 41% are in favour, whereas 49% are opposed to it¹. Furthermore, 34% of the population believe that no new members should be admitted to the EU.**
- **None of the applicant countries obtains a majority of public consent. Poland comes first (40% for and 47% against), followed by Malta (36% for and 49% against), Hungary (35% for and 50% against), the Czech Republic and Cyprus (33% for and 52% against it), Bulgaria (30% for and 55% against), Slovakia (26% for and 56% against), Lithuania (25% for against 57%), Estonia and Latvia (24% for and 58% against), Slovenia (23% for and 59% against), Romania (23% for and 61% against) and Turkey (23% for and 64% against).**
- **However, it is noteworthy that each of these countries (except Romania) has gained support of between 2 and 8 points compared to the previous survey. The increase is particularly spectacular for Poland (+8), the Czech Republic (+7), Cyprus and Malta (+6), but also for Turkey (+4).**

5. The Future of European Integration

- French public opinion is not very different from that in other EU member states. When asked what the EU's priorities should be, the French ask for more integration in some areas such as the fight against terrorism, the protection of the environment and consumer defence. On the other hand, they are mostly against a transfer of justice, education and health policies.
- A large majority approves the principle of a common foreign policy (67%, +7) and common security and defence (77%, +6). Forty nine percent of French citizens think that decisions concerning defence should be taken by the European Union, 21% think that they are a matter for the national governments and only 16% think they should be taken by NATO.

- France is among the Member States which most strongly support the idea of a European constitution: 68% of the French are in favour and only 7% against. The support for a constitution has gained 9 points since the previous survey.
- When asked how the President of the Commission should be chosen, 46% are in favour of direct election (+5); 22% support an election by the majority of the European Parliament (-4); 18% prefer an appointment by the heads of state and government (+2); 17% do not know. These figures are quite different from the EU average (40% for direct election, 28% for election by the majority of the European Parliament and 14% for appointment by the heads of state and government).

Conclusion

In spite of the deterioration of the international situation (which appears through lower indicators), French attachment to the European institutions remains strong and is even increasing. For instance, the support for the euro has risen by several points in France, while it has somewhat decreased in most of the countries of the eurozone. This recovery appears to show that a certain euroscepticism, which was typical of French opinion over the last few years, is fading away. In almost all areas, France presents figures which are very close to the European Union average. The support for the idea of a European constitution and of a common foreign policy has greatly increased and is now stronger in France than in most other Member States.

French opinion is only different in one respect: its attitude towards enlargement of the Union. Specific action in this field is more necessary than ever. The example of the euro shows that an extended campaign can turn a sceptical public into a more favourable one. This specific action might take three forms:

- A co-operation strategy with the major media: as for the written press, it would be useful to publish the basic facts of the enlargement in the form of permanent inserts. These should include the names of the applicant countries, the accession schedule and the way the process will take place. It is important to involve the local press, especially in the most reluctant areas (Nord/Pas-de-Calais, Méditerranée, Bassin Parisien except for Ile-de-France). Partnership with television channels raises specific problems. A recent example was the way the television dealt with the Summit of Copenhagen. Instead of presenting the results of the Summit, it showed images of... smuggling of stolen cars in the Kalingrad enclave! Similarly, the Convention is almost totally absent from television programs. However, poll after poll, television and (to a lesser extent) radio have proved to be the main sources of information. The European institutions should encourage editorial staff, without interfering with their choices, to present as

¹ The latest « Eurobarometer Flash » (November 2002) gives a very different picture of the French opinion.

often as possible the technical questions mentioned above. One could also think of more entertaining presentations (television quizzes including questions about enlargement, programs about the daily life in the applicant countries).

- Information campaigns specifically aimed at the opponents of enlargement (senior citizens, farmers, fishermen, women, low income groups): it is particularly difficult to reach this audience, which does not actively look for information on European topics. It is therefore not very useful to focus on new technologies (the Internet, CD-ROM and computer databases), which are hardly ever used by these groups. Therefore, information on enlargement should be supplied by organisations close to these groups (i.e. trade unions or associations) and especially by popular media like television.

- A pedagogical partnership with schools and universities: experience shows that due to a strong 'bottom-up' information effect, informing children amounts to informing their parents. However, the teachers themselves are not informed enough on the issues of enlargement. Together with the national authorities, the European institutions could launch an action to "instruct the instructors".



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

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March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Germany

Germany within Europe 2002

On the threshold of Enlargement, the EU faces a major task

Thomas Hanßen, Dr. Christian Holst
INRA Deutschland

Main results

There is decreasing pessimism in the population at large with regard to the economy and the labour market. At the same time, fear of a military conflict is rising strongly among the younger population.

- Even though the proportion of Germans who expect a worsening of the economic and employment situation in 2003 has decreased, this percentage remains at a level above 50%.
- With regard to their personal job situation, only one in ten Germans fears that things will be worse in 2003. One in five Germans expects the financial situation of their own household to deteriorate. The majority does not expect any changes in their personal life for 2003.
- The level of satisfaction with life in general in Germany is at about the EU average. However, life satisfaction is significantly lower in East Germany than it is in West Germany.
- Between April and October 2002, citizens' fears of terrorism, military conflicts, organised crime, and nuclear accidents have been on the rise, after they had decreased between Autumn 2001 and April 2002.
- In April 2002, peoples' fears with regard to a variety of issues was lowest among the 15 to 24 year olds. Six months later, however, this age group is the one which is most worried about the possibility of a military conflict.

Support for EU enlargement is on the rise among Germans

- The general support for enlargement as well as the support for the accession of individual countries has grown between April and October 2002. However, German support remains lower than the EU average.
- More than half of German respondents are in favour of the accession of only some of the candidate countries.
- In April 2002, only the accession of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Malta were supported by a majority of Germans. Since October 2002 Estonia and Latvia now also enjoy the same level of support. Overall, a majority of all EU citizens supports the accession of nine of the candidate countries. Between April and October three additional countries (Estonia, Latvia

and Lithuania) joined the group of six that already attracted this level of support in April of 2002 (Hungary, Czech Republic, Malta, Poland, Cyprus and Slovakia).

- The negative expectations of the consequences of the enlargement have decreased somewhat between April and October 2002, while positive expectations have increased over the same period of time.

Assessment of Germany's EU-membership is increasingly positive

- Fifty nine percent of Germans consider their country's EU- membership to be a good thing. This is higher than the EU average and represents a rise of 7 percentage points between April and October 2002
- 46 percent of Germans and 50 percent of EU citizens feel that their respective countries benefit from EU-membership. When asked to assess whether EU membership is an advantage in the context of disaster relief following the floods of the summer of 2002, 58% of Germans, as well as of EU citizens, say that the affected countries were helped by their membership of the EU.
- German respondents see European integration as progressing at a higher speed than do EU respondents on the whole. Nevertheless, Germans, like other EU citizens, would like this speed to increase.
- A relative majority of Germans is satisfied with the way democracy works within the European Union.
- Between April and October 2002 there has been an increase in trust towards the EU institutions as well as an increase in the assessment of the institutions' importance – both in Germany as well as in the EU as a whole.
- Those institutions that have an independent supervisory function, such as the European Court of Justice, the European Central Bank, and the Court of Auditors enjoy a higher degree of trust and importance among the Germans than in the EU as a whole. Even though the degree of trust and importance of the European Commission and the Council of Ministers has improved in Germany, those levels still remain lower than the EU-average.

A majority of citizens support direct election of the president of the European Commission

- A small relative majority of Germans is now in favour of the direct election of the president of the European Commission. For the EU as a whole, the narrow majority in favour of the direct election has increased between April and October.

- 7 out of 10 Germans, and a similar proportion of EU citizens as a whole, feel that the President of the European Commission and the Commissioners should resign, if they lose the support of a majority in the European Parliament.
- More than 60 percent of Germans, as well as EU citizens, favour a constitution for the European Union.
- In light of the forthcoming enlargement of the EU, about half of the Germans and the same share of the EU citizens overall are in favour of maintaining the right of veto in order to preserve essential national interests.

Citizens want the EU to be in charge of foreign and security policy

- A large majority of Germans is in favour of a common security and defence policy, as well as a common foreign policy towards non-EU countries.
- EU citizens feel that fighting unemployment should be the first priority for the European Union. Other high-priority issues are maintaining peace and security in Europe, the fight against terrorism, organised crime and illegal immigration, fighting poverty and social exclusion, the protection of the environment and consumers.
- Three quarters of the Germans and two thirds of the EU citizens think that the EU acts effectively in maintaining peace and security in Europe. More than half of the citizens think that the EU is effective in fighting terrorism and consumer protection and about 50 percent trust the EU to effectively protect the environment. With regard to the high priority areas such as unemployment, poverty and social exclusion, less than half of Germans and EU citizens trust the EU to act effectively.
- Both Germans and EU citizens as a whole, think that decisions in the areas of foreign policy towards non-EU countries, fight against terrorism, poverty and social exclusion, as well as the protection of the environment should be made jointly within the European Union instead of by the national governments alone. However, Germans, in contrast to EU citizens as a whole, feel that the responsibility for the fight against unemployment should be with their national government, despite their belief that this topic should also have highest priority on the EU agenda.

Positive attitudes towards the Euro are shrinking noticeably

- The majority of Germans and of EU citizens as a whole continues to be in favour of the European Monetary Union, even though this support has gone down slightly.
- Between April and October 2002, in Germany and across the EU as a whole the share of the population considering the introduction of the Euro a good thing has decreased.

- 9 out of 10 Germans and EU citizens think that there were price increases following the currency changeover. About three out of four respondents even say that they have noticed general price increases in all areas.

Considerable knowledge gaps with regard to the European Union

- Even though Germans consider themselves to be among the best informed citizens of the EU, they were able to answer only two out of five knowledge questions about the EU better than the EU average. This actually places them in the group of five countries with the lowest level of knowledge on EU issues.
- Only four out of ten Germans (and EU citizens) know that the members of the European Parliament are elected by the citizens of the EU Member States through universal suffrage.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

GREECE

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Greece

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

January 15, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Greece

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1. Introduction

Between March 1st October 2002 and November 5th 2002, the European Opinion Research Group, a consortium of market and public research agencies, carried out wave 58.1 of the standard Eurobarometer, on request of the European Commission Directorate-General Press and Communication, Public Opinion Analysis Unit.

2. Overview of Greek Public Opinion

- Lack of interest in **political discussions** is observed, since 51% of Greek respondents appear occasionally to discuss political matters with friends, and 3 out of 10 respondents state that they never get involved in discussions of a political nature.
- A majority of respondents in Greece are fairly satisfied with the life they lead, but have **negative or low life expectations for the year 2003**: they feel that things will be worse with respect to the economic situation in Greece (57%), the financial situation of their household (36%), and the employment situation in Greece (56%). A slight difference is observed in expectations concerning the personal job situation, where 54% of Greek respondents believe that this will remain the same in 2003.
- The majority of Greek public opinion predicts significant **increases in the cost of living** over the next six months, as it expects to spend more on housing (47%), clothing (71%), food (73%), health (68%), transport (67%) and leisure (67%) in this period.
- Greeks are more **fearful** than other EU citizens about international terrorism (GR: 86%, EU15: 82%), organized crime (GR: 88%, EU15: 76%), and a nuclear power station accident (GR: 87%, EU15: 71%). A substantial difference between Greeks and other EU citizens is noticed when they asked if they are afraid of the possibility of a world war: 72% of the Greek sample replied 'yes', but only 57% of EU citizens overall.
- Greeks, in general, believe that since **the fall of the Berlin wall** in 1989, the Central and Eastern European countries have become more democratic (65%) and richer (38%). They also believe that these countries have worked hard to prevent corruption (48%) and to improve their environmental situation (44%).
- Greeks, more than the other citizens of the EU, have a strong negative opinion about the **international role that the United States** tend to play regarding peace (73%), the fight against

terrorism (59%), and poverty (73%), the world growth (65%) and the environmental protection (68%).

3. Greek Positions on and Perceptions of the EU

- The **European flag** has a high positive symbolic importance in the consciousness of the Greek citizens (76%), although the majority of the Greek sample does not identify with the European flag (55%). Nevertheless, Greeks support the idea of placing the European flag next to the national one in all public buildings in Greece (65%).
- The average level of knowledge about the European Union is felt to be moderately satisfactory, falling at the middle, 5, of a decimal scale from 1 to 10. The self-assessment of '**Euro-knowledge**' by Greek citizens shows a relative lack of self-confidence, while it is clear that Greeks do not feel they get enough information on the European Union, its policies or its institutions.
- 34% of Greek respondents are not aware that the members of European Parliament are elected directly by the European citizens, **while 56% believe that the European Union consists of 12 member-states.**
- The main '**Euro information sources**' for Greeks are television broadcasts (72%), the daily press (31%) and discussions with friends and relatives (26%). Further, 72% of those who are interested in looking for information about the European Union prefer to get such information from television. Only 27% prefer the daily press, while 24% would like a detailed booklet or pamphlet.
- 6 out of 10 Greeks estimate that in the next five years the European Union will play a more important role in their daily lives (62%). This outcome will find the Greek sample satisfied, as **7 out of 10 Greeks would like the European Union to have an enhanced role in their daily lives.**
- Greeks believe that the European Union is being built at a moderate speed. On a scale from 1 (standing still) to 7 (running as fast as possible), Greek public opinion believes that the current speed of building Europe is between 4 and 5, with percentages of 32% and 21% respectively. However, a high percentage of Greek respondents (42%) believe that the **speed for the building of Europe should be accelerated**, with a desired speed of building Europe at point 7 of the speed scale. It should be noted that only 15% of all EU respondents chose this point of the speed scale as their desired speed of building Europe.

4. Being a Member of the European Union

- The majority of the Greek population has a positive view of the country's membership in the European Union, while **74% of respondents declare that Greece has benefited from being a member**. The Irish (82%) and the Greeks are the most satisfied – among all EU citizens - by their countries' membership of the EU.
- 1 in 2 Greeks think that Greece being a member of the European Union has resulted, at a **personal level**, in as many advantages as disadvantages, while 29% believes that the country's membership has brought more personal advantages.
- Greeks appear to be the most attached, when compared to the other European citizens, to their country (GR: 77%, EU15: 50%). In addition, **43% of the Greek public opinion does not feel very attached to the European Union** (EU15: 36%).
- Accordingly, Greeks (52%) primarily view themselves as solely Greek, while **42% feel a sense of dual identity**, viewing themselves in the near future as primarily Greek and secondarily European.
- With respect to the serious floods which some EU member states faced within the last few months, Greek citizens perceive the **membership** of their country in the European Union as an advantage (69%) as they trust the Union to help them recover from such disasters.

5. A Member State's position towards EU enlargement

- **The great majority of Greeks (76%) is in favour of the enlargement of the European Union.** It is worth mentioning that this is not only the highest percentage reached by all European respondents, with Danish public opinion in second place at 71%, but it is also 7 percentage points higher than Greek support for enlargement in the last Eurobarometer survey (EB 57.1).
- However, Greeks are critical about the way that enlargement is achieved, as **61% believe that the EU should be enlarged to include only some of the countries wishing to join**.
- Greek public opinion (75%) believes that the forthcoming enlargement of the European Union will secure peace and will enhance security in Europe. However, **1 in 2 Greeks is afraid that enlargement will lead to an increase in unemployment**. In addition, 55% feel that, because of enlargement, Greece will receive less financial funding from the EU. The probability of Greece having less political power after enlargement does not seem to constitute a serious fear for a considerable percentage of respondents (47%).
- **6 out of 10 (61%), believe that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) will be disadvantaged as a consequence of enlargement**, as well as firms involved in the fishing industry and agriculture (52% and 55% respectively).

- A majority of Greeks (percentages more than 60%), **support the accession of all candidate countries to the European Union, with the exception of Turkey**, on which 76% of Greek respondents take a negative stand.
- Moreover, when examining the possibility of other countries from the European Economic Space and the Balkans joining the European Union, Greek respondents appear to comprehend the minimal criteria for countries to be considered candidates for enlargement. They prefer the accession of countries such as Switzerland, Norway and Iceland to become full members of the European Union, in contrast to Albania, for example, where **67% of Greek respondents are not in favour of Albania becoming a member of the European Union**.
- The majority of the Greek public opinion (59%) **feels that it does not participate in the political dialogue about the enlargement** of the European Union.
- **Greeks do not feel very well informed about enlargement (49%)**. It is particularly revealing that only 2 out of 100 Greeks feel very well informed with regard to the question of enlargement.

6. EU Institutions and Bodies

- Nine out of 10 Greeks (88%) are in favour of the introduction of courses in the **school curriculum** on how the institutions of the EU operate.
- According to Greek respondents, the **European Parliament is the institution that plays the most important role in the European Union (82%)**. Most respondents declare ignorance of some EU institutions, such as the European Court of Auditors (52% *have not heard of it*), the Committee of the Regions (54% *have not heard of it*), the European Ombudsman (49% *have not heard of it*) and the Convention on the Future of Europe (49% *have not heard of it*).

7. EU and the National Government

- Greek public opinion appears to be **fairly satisfied (41%) with the way democracy functions in both national and European levels**.
- Respondents were asked to express their on whether decision making on a number of areas should be made independently by the national government or jointly with the European Union. A large majority of Greek citizens appear to take a positive stand in regard to the formation of EU common policies and joint decision making, in all but one (defence) of the fifteen areas mentioned (e.g. environment, currency, humanitarian aid, health, education). **58% of Greeks believe that decisions on defence should be taken at a national level**.
- More than 6 out of 10 Greeks (63%), support the idea of the European Union undertaking actions when the national, local and regional government cannot effectively handle issues.

- The percentage of the Greek respondents who wish NATO involvement in issues related to European defence policy is lower than in any other Member State.

8. European Union Principles and Basic Rights

- **Greek citizens (78%) believe that the European Union should have a Constitution.** This is the highest percentage in favour of a constitution among all Member States (EU15: 65%).
- Eighty two percent of Greek respondents believe that the **President of the European Commission and the European Commissioners** should resign if they do not have the majority support of the European Parliament.
- Furthermore, 34% of Greek citizens think that the European Parliament should elect the President of the European Commission, while **47% of Greeks believe that the citizens of the European Union should directly elect the President of the Commission.**
- The great majority of Greek respondents (82%) think that the **national right of veto** on important or sensitive decisions must be retained, in order to preserve essential national interests.

9. Common EU Policies on Critical Sectors

- Greek public opinion appears to favour (79%) the development of a **common foreign policy** among the EU member states towards other countries.
- Similarly, Greeks support (79%) the principle of a **common European defence and security policy** among the EU member states.

10. The Euro in Circulation: Greek attitudes in the post-euro era

- Greek public opinion **(71%) strongly supports a European Monetary Union with a single currency (euro)**, while 26% of the Greeks respondents is against (increase of 10% compared to the last survey - EB 57.1).
- 37% of Greek respondents *feel very comfortable* with the use of the euro. An additional **39% of respondents feel comfortable using the euro.**
- As a result of the move to the Euro, Greek respondents (88%) find that **prices have been generally rounded up.**

- Almost 7 in 10 Greeks appear still to be attached to the drachma. The percentage who feel **very attached to their old currency** is higher in Greece (37%) than in any other country in the EU (EU15: 25%).



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

IRELAND

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Ireland

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Ireland

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1. The EB57 national report on Ireland, which dealt with Irish public opinion as of spring 2002, showed that Irish attitudes to the European Union and to Ireland's membership of the Union were characterised by widespread approval of Irish membership, widespread perception of the benefits of membership, including personal benefits, and a widespread positive image of the EU. However, these positive attitudes were accompanied by low levels of engagement with and knowledge of European affairs.
2. Two reports on attitudes and behaviour in the two Irish referendums on the Nice Treaty conducted on behalf of the European Commission Representation in Ireland showed that the second Irish referendum on the Nice Treaty saw a marked improvement in communication and a substantial increase in people's sense that they could understand the issues at stake. The improvements in communication were concentrated in the mass media (television, radio and newspapers) and in interpersonal discussion of the issues. On the other hand, the evidence relating to the second referendum also showed that the communication process had its limits and that there was very little spillover from an understanding of the issues raised by the Treaty of Nice to a more general understanding of the institutions of the Union and how they work.
3. The present report deals with Eurobarometer 58 (autumn 2002) and focuses on
 - (a) current evaluations of aspects of the European Union,
 - (b) further analysis of the degree of engagement with EU issues among Irish people,
 - (c) evidence on Irish people's perception of and attitude to the scope and speed of European integration,
 - (d) attitudes to the impending enlargement of the European Union and
 - (e) evidence on Irish people's evaluation of the role of the United States in the international system.
4. The timing of the Eurobarometer 58 survey (autumn 2002) also makes it possible to compare attitudes at the time of the second referendum to attitudes some six months previously and, in this way, to gain some additional insight into the impact of the second referendum campaign.

5. Over the last two years, Irish public opinion towards European integration as measured by the standard Eurobarometer indicators, has been somewhat volatile. In autumn 2000 and spring 2001 support for integration experienced two successive falls. These falls were an important aspect of the attitudinal background against which the first referendum on the Nice Treaty took place. Although, in the wake of the first referendum and the defeat of the treaty, there was a substantial recovery in support for integration in autumn 2001, the two most recent surveys (spring 2002 and autumn 2002) again saw two successive falls in the level of support for integration.
6. Despite the decline in overall support for integration between spring and autumn 2002, certain specific attitudes to European integration changed in a positive direction over this same period. These changes included an increase in Irish people's trust in various European institutions. For example, confidence in the European Parliament rose nine percentage points to 61 per cent as did confidence in the Commission (to 57 per cent). Confidence in the Council of Ministers showed the biggest increase (up 14 percentage points to 50 per cent). Trust in the Convention on the Future of the European Union also grew substantially - from 24 per cent to 36 per cent.
7. This suggests that the greater degree of engagement with European issues that accompanies a referendum, while it may not lead to changes in overall attitude to European integration or to the European Union, can bring about improvement in more specific evaluations of particular institutions or aspects of integration.
8. Part of the explanation of the changes just mentioned lies in a change in people's engagement with European issues. Such change is indicated by the extent to which people are willing to take a position on a particular issue rather than giving a don't know or non-committal response. The extent of attitude formation in this sense increased substantially in the case of the Convention on the Future of the European Union and in the case of the Council of Ministers between spring and autumn 2002. However, the net effect of these and related increases in attitude formation was simply to bring the Irish level of attitude formation up to the European average
9. It is also notable that, familiarity with some (but only some) of the EU institutions increased in Ireland between spring and autumn 2002. The European Parliament, the European Commission and European Central Bank showed no change in overall exposure/familiarity between these two time periods. On the other hand, familiarity with the Court of Justice rose 12 percentage points, familiarity with the European Court of Auditors rose 10 percentage points, familiarity with the Convention on the Future of the EU rose nine percentage points and familiarity with the Council of Ministers rose seven percentage points.
10. More detailed statistical analysis of the evidence of familiarity with the European institutions in the Union as a whole and in Ireland indicates that, unlike the people of the Union as a

whole, Irish respondents do not experience the Council of Ministers as an integral part of a tripartite policy-making structure involving the Commission, the Parliament and the Council. Given the importance of the role the Council of Ministers plays in the European decision-making process and its relevance to any evaluation of that process, there is clearly room for substantial improvement in Irish people's understanding of this aspect of the European decision-making process.

11. Turning to the issue of the level (national or European) at which various policy issues should be decided, there was evidence of some increase in support for the Europeanisation of certain issues between spring and autumn 2002. The changes, which were modest, tended to be concentrated in the area of justice and home affairs, including the fight against drugs, the fight against organised crime, immigration policy, rules for political asylum and urban crime prevention. It is noteworthy that these increases in support for the Europeanisation of issues that lie mainly in the justice and home affairs area occurred during a period in which a wide range of European policy issues were being discussed in the context of the second referendum on the Nice treaty.
12. Detailed statistical analysis of Irish people's priorities regarding actions that might be undertaken by the European Union points to the existence of two distinct dimensions of concern underlying these priorities. The first dimension relates to major problems on the agenda of every European government, while the second dimension focuses on the European integration process itself. This poses somewhat of a dilemma for the Union. On the one hand, the citizens of Ireland (and of the Union as a whole) would like the European Union to treat all the most difficult problems facing European societies as priorities. On the other hand, actions designed to consolidate or strengthen integration, and which might therefore beef-up the Union's capacity to deal with some of these pressing problems, constitute a separate dimension that is regarded as salient by a significantly smaller proportion of the citizens.
13. This brings us to the question of attitudes to the speed of European integration. The results derived from combining data from two questions - one on the perceived speed of building Europe and the other on the preferred speed of building Europe - are quite revealing in regard to Irish attitudes to integration. On this measure Ireland moves from the front rank of supporters of integration (as per, for example, the membership indicator) to the other end of the scale where it is fourth from the bottom on a descending scale defined by the proportions regarding the pace of integration as too slow. This puts Irish public opinion in quite different company - nestling between Sweden and Austria though still some way ahead of Finland and Denmark. This suggests that, when it comes to the pace of European integration, Irish people tend to prefer the *status quo* or the *status quo ante*, though there is a significant minority (about one-quarter) that is prepared to forge full-speed ahead.

14. Reservations about the speed of building Europe do not seem to adversely affect Irish people's attitude to enlargement. Support for enlargement increased in Ireland over the period under consideration and is among the highest in the EU. It should be noted however that more detailed statistical analysis allows of people's expectations regarding the consequences of enlargement shows that the positive consequences that Irish people see as following from the enlargement process tend to be of an intangible sort, whereas the negative expectations, which are almost equally widespread, relate to much more tangible and material matters (this contrast is also found in public opinion in the Union as a whole).
15. Similar statistical analysis of people's expectations regarding the consequences of enlargement for various social and economic groups and sectors points to a broad distinction between a traditional economic and social sector and a modern economic and social sector. Thus the first dimension of expected winners and losers is defined mainly by expectations in regard to the outcome for fishermen, farmers, people living in the countryside, and small companies. The second dimension is defined by expectations regarding the effect of enlargement on young people, urban dwellers, big businesses, ethnic minorities.
16. In short, the evidence suggests that Irish people (and people in the European Union as a whole) see the rewards of enlargement as accruing to the more modern social and economic sectors while expectations regarding the traditional economy and society either lean towards a perception of losses for the groups involved or are unclear or divided.
17. Ireland ranks seventh among the member states in terms of exposure to information about enlargement. When it comes to the subjective sense of being informed about enlargement, Ireland ranks sixth. In the light of Ireland's tendency towards lower engagement with European issues, these rankings are not bad. However, when we look at the sense that people have of participating in political debate about enlargement, Ireland is at the top of a ranking of countries in terms of the proportion feeling either a great deal or somewhat involved in such a debate. Given the tendency noted at several points in this report for Ireland to lag behind in terms of public engagement with European issues, the fact that it is at the top of the ranking in terms of a sense of participation in political debate about enlargement is remarkable and is, no doubt, a direct reflection of having held two referendums in which the enlargement issue played a prominent role
18. Opinion in the member states of the European Union on the question of the role the United States plays in relation to peace in the world varies widely. The range extends from plus 14 percentage point net rating in Britain to a minus 60 percentage point rating in Greece. Ireland (net rating of plus four percentage points) ranks next to Britain in favourable assessments of the role of the United States in relation to peace and just ahead of Denmark and Italy. Public opinion in all the other member states of the European Union takes a negative view of the

role of the United States, the least negative being West German public opinion and the most negative being public opinion in Greece.

19. In contrast to the rating on the question of peace in the world, the United States is positively rated by the majority of member states of the European Union in relation to the fight against terrorism. Ireland's rating of the United States in this regard (plus 37 percentage points) slips from second to fourth position.
20. Turning to the economic, social and environmental aspects of the role of the United States, there is a net favourable evaluation of the role of the United States in relation to growth of the word economy in a majority of the member states. On the other hand, there is an overwhelmingly negative net evaluation of the role of the United States in relation to the fight against poverty and to the protection of the environment. On all three issues Irish public opinion is the most favourably disposed towards the role of the United States. The Irish public's evaluation of the role the United States on the economic front is a net positive 36 points. On the question the role of the United States in the fight against poverty, Irish opinion is evenly divided, while, on the question of the United States and the environment, Irish opinion shifts marginally towards the negative side with a net evaluation of -4 points. The severest critic of the United States on all three issues is again Greece, followed this time by France.
21. Taking the data on all the dimensions of evaluation of the role of the United States into account, it is clear that Irish public opinion occupies quite a distinct position among the member state of the European Union.
22. In the conclusion to the previous report (EB 57) in this series, it was emphasised that the implications of any particular configuration of public opinion towards the EU depends on the institutional and political context within which ratification of EU treaties takes place. It was also noted that the requirement to hold referendums on EU treaty changes puts additional demands on Irish citizens, placing them in the position of making decisions on complex issues and requiring them to have higher rather than average levels of knowledge of and engagement with these issues. The evidence considered in this report and the evidence from the special survey of the second referendum on the Nice Treaty both indicate that people's degree of engagement with European issues can be strengthened and improved by an effective process of campaigning and communication. The challenge is to ensure that such engagement is not just specific to the issues in a particular referendum and to the duration of the referendum campaign. The evidence suggests that there is in fact a need for a permanent communication campaign to improve the capacity of people to deal with the on-going series of complex issues raised by the on-going process of European integration.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

ITALY

Survey carried out for the European
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Italy

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March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Italy

1. The Institutions and policies of the European Union

The general knowledge level of EU institutions and politics is still low, although it has shown a slight improvement. Italians confirm their “pro-EU” attitude, although in a less marked way than in the past, and hope that the speed of building Europe will accelerate.

On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 stands for total lack of knowledge and 10 for a maximum level), the average knowledge of the Italian sample (4.62) is slightly above the European average (4.4), but is still lower than the minimum required level of knowledge. Italy shows a slight decrease in knowledge of the EU compared to the average level measured in June 2002 (4.66). On a scale of 1 to 10, 18% of Italians consider themselves as being at level 5. A relative majority (48%) is in the range between 1 and 4, while 34% are in the levels between 6 and 10. When the present data are compared with the average from June 2001 (4.02), we see that Italians tend to be better informed than in the past about the EU institutions and politics. Italy ranks 8th among the 15 member states.

The lack of knowledge is confirmed by the replies given by Italian respondents to some questions regarding the European Union: 62% think it is true that the European Union is made up of 12 member States, while only 19% say that such an assertion is false. Only 45% know that the EU has its own anthem (EU average 43%) and 39% do not know of the existence of a Europe Day (EU average 30%). Only 46% of Italians know that Members of the European Parliament are elected by the citizens, while 33% do not know this (EU average 36%).

The main instruments which Italians use to get information on the EU are TV (74%), daily newspapers (46%), magazines (29%), discussions and debates with friends and relatives (26%) and the Internet (16%). Less than 2% of them turn to EU information desks or national and regional info-centres. The sources which Italians think should deliver more information are mainly TV (55%), daily newspapers (31%), books offering an overall description (19%), generic pamphlets (16%), specific brochures (17%), magazines (20%), Internet (16%) and radio (14%). TV is confirmed in its role as the principal instrument of information on EU issues, but daily newspapers and magazines have also increased in importance. There has been no change in the use of the Internet.

The four EU institutions that Italians are most familiar with are the European Parliament (95%), the European Commission (81%), the European Central Bank (75%) and the Council of the EU (75%). These four institutions are also the ones that, according to most Italians, play a key role in EU activity and which Italians tend to trust the most. In particular, the European Parliament occupies the first place for importance (84%) and for confidence (70%), followed by the European Commission (which 77% of Italian respondents consider important and which 63%

trust), the European Council (71% importance, 55% confidence) and the European Central Bank (72% importance, 54% confidence).

Compared to other member states, Italians are more likely to give a positive assessment of their country's membership of the European Union. In particular, 61% consider it in a positive light, 7% consider it negatively, while 27% do not have a clear opinion. The corresponding EU averages are 55% positive, 10% negative and 29% neutral. Just over half (51%) of the Italian sample think their country has benefited from becoming a Member of the Union (EU average 50%), while 27% deem that no benefit has accrued (EU average 28%). In any case, most Italians express a favourable evaluation of the European Union: on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 stands for a totally positive evaluation and 5 for a totally negative evaluation), the Italian average reaches 3.76, second only to Ireland (3.84).

Italians express a stronger feeling of attachment to their local, regional and national affiliations than the EU average. This trend is also displayed in their bond to the EU. Ninety two percent of Italians declare they are very attached or quite attached to their city, 89% are very attached or quite attached to their region and 94% are very attached or quite attached to their country. Sixty two percent of the Italian sample express a strong or fairly strong bond with EU, against the EU average of 45%. On a scale from 1 to 4 (where 1 stands for the minimum degree of attachment to the EU and 4 for the maximum degree), the Italian average is, at 2.7, second only to that in Luxembourg (3.02). In the near future, 65% of the Italian sample see themselves as being first Italians and then Europeans and only 8% as Europeans first and then Italians. A small minority of 3% see themselves as only Europeans, while 22% express the feeling of being only Italians.

Most Italians are of the view that EU construction is proceeding at a slow pace. On a scale from 1 to 7 (where 1 stands for standstill and 7 for top speed), the average of the answers given by the Italian sample is 3.73 (the second lowest after the British position), against the EU average of 4.89. The feeling that EU construction is not proceeding at sufficiently high speed is confirmed by the replies given to the question: at what speed would Italians like the European Union to be built? Italians are actually in favour of acceleration: on a scale from 1 to 7 (where 1 stands for minimum speed and 7 for top speed), the average would like to "run" at 5.61 speed, against the EU average of 4.89. Greece, with a desired speed of 5.99, is the only country whose desired speed of European construction exceeds that desired in Italy. In this, Italy runs counter to most of the rest of the Union, in which the desired speed is slower than the perceived speed.

An absolute majority of Italians (79%) think that the European Union should endorse a Constitution. Only 5% are not in favour of this hypothesis. The percentage of Italians who were in favour of an EU Constitution is above the average surveyed among EU citizens (65%), thus underlining the major "pro-EU" attitude evident in Italy. Seventy percent of Italian respondents think that the President of the European Commission should be elected and not appointed by the Heads of State or Governments of the member countries. In particular, 33% consider that the

President of the European Commission should be elected by the majority of the European Parliament, while 37% are in favour of a direct election by EU citizens.

The impact of 11 September can easily be sensed in the range of EU policies which Italians consider a priority: the fight against terrorism (92.5%) and the preservation of peace and security in Europe (92.1%), occupy the two top positions, followed by two issues relevant to employment and economic conditions: the struggle against unemployment (91.4%) and poverty (91.2%). On a scale from 1 to 4 (where 1 stands for the minimum level of effectiveness of the EU action and 4 for the maximum level), Italians say that the EU is most effective in guaranteeing peace (3.02), introducing the Euro (3.0) and guaranteeing democracy (2.96). On the other hand, action taken by the EU to fight unemployment (2.53), fight illegal immigration (2.57) and poverty and social exclusion (2.66) is deemed less effective. After 11 September, terrorism represents the greatest fear felt by both Italians and EU citizens in general: 92% of those interviewed in Italy and 82% of EU citizens indicate terrorist attacks as their greatest concern. The rise of organized crime is also a source of worry for most Italians (89%) and EU citizens (76%). Among the greatest fears felt by Italians are concern about the possible proliferation of nuclear, bacteriological or chemical weapons of mass destruction; this feeling is shared by 50% of the sample interviewed. It is worth recalling that this survey was carried out before the tensions that have recently emerged between the US and Iraq.

2. The Euro

There has been a sharp drop in the overall positive attitude of Italians towards the single currency. However, the majority of Italian respondents continue to support the euro.

Fifty two percent of those interviewed in Italy judge the introduction of the single currency positively, against the EMU average of 45%. But 23% still consider it as a negative event (Eurozone average 28%), while 24% of Italians and 26% of EMU citizens do not see any relevant impact in its introduction. It is worth noticing that 16% of Italians (Eurozone average 12%) consider the introduction of the single currency to be a 'very good thing' while 36% of the Italian sample regard it as a 'fairly good thing' (Eurozone average 33%). Ten percent of Italian respondents said it was a 'fairly bad thing' (Eurozone average 15%), while the answer 'very bad thing' was given by 15% both in Italy and in the Eurozone.

Seventy six percent of Italians are in favour of the European Single Currency, a result above the Eurozone average (71%), while only 19% express dissatisfaction with the single currency, relative to the Eurozone average of 24%. In the three countries which did not adopt the Euro (i.e. Sweden, Denmark and Great Britain), the percentage of those who are not in favour of the Single currency reaches 57%.

Although most Italians (52%) consider that the introduction of the single currency has been a very good thing, or at least a fairly good thing, current data indicate a sharp drop in this positive judgement relative to May 2002. In particular, the average positive assessment in Italy has fallen from 72% to 52%, while the average negative judgement has risen from 9% to 23%. Only 16% of Italians now hold the view that the introduction of the euro is a very good thing, compared to 26% previously. The percentage of those who see it as a fairly good thing have decreased from 44% to 36%. On the other hand, the percentage of those who see the introduction of the euro as a fairly bad thing has risen significantly from 5% to 10%, as has the percentage of those who think it a very bad thing (from 4% to 13%).

After an excellent launch, the euro now finds it difficult to replace the lira in the daily life and affections of Italians: 47% of the sample feel very or quite attached to the new currency, against the Euro-zone average of 42%. But the majority of Italians (52%) admit to feeling little or no attachment to the single currency (Euro-zone average 58%). The difficulty that Italians have in abandoning the lira is confirmed by the high level of attachment to the old Italian currency. In fact, 71% of Italians (against the Euro-zone average of 61%) still express a strong or fairly strong feeling of attachment to the old currency, while only 28% declare little or no attachment to the lira. Among citizens in the Euro-zone, Italians are the people who most regret their old currency: on a scale from 1 to 4 (where 1 stands for the minimum level of attachment and 4 for the maximum level), the Italian average is 2.94, followed by Greece (2.93) and the Netherlands (2.87).

As regards the ease of use of the single currency, on a scale from 1 to 4 (where 1 stands for lack of ease and 4 for the maximum ease), Italians stand at 2.7. In particular, 19% declare they feel totally comfortable with the use of the euro, and 45% feel fairly comfortable. But 23% feel not very comfortable and 13% are not comfortable at all. With respect to the rounding of prices, 83% of Italians are of the view that they have in general been rounded upwards. This view is largely shared by the average Euro-zone citizen (77%).

3. The Enlargement of the European Union

Italians are among those most favourable towards the enlargement process of the EU, but their knowledge of the issues at stake and their involvement in the political debate remain limited. They approve of the current candidate countries, with the exception of Turkey.

The low level of knowledge and information of Italians about enlargement issues, which had already emerged in the previous Eurobarometer, has been clearly confirmed. Only 15% of the Italians surveyed felt that they were well informed or fairly well informed (EU average 22%), whereas 84% of those interviewed said they considered themselves scarcely informed or not at all informed on the subject (EU average 77%).

Overall, 64% of those interviewed in Italy say that they are in favour of enlarging the EU (EU average 52%), while 19% are against it (EU average 30%). The Italians continue to be among the most favourable to the EU enlargement process, behind the Greeks (76% in favour), the Danes (71%) and the Irish (67%). The total percentage of the people interviewed in Italy who are in favour of enlargement have increased from 61% to 64%, while those against it remain stable at 30%. Forty nine percent of Italians have heard about enlargement on TV, 26% have come to know of it from the daily newspapers, 16% from other periodicals or magazines and 10% from the radio and discussions with friends and relatives. A limited number mention the Internet (5%).

Sixty three percent of Italians and 58% of all EU citizens think that, before proceeding to enlargement, the EU ought to reform its own institutions. Only 14% of Italian respondents and 13% of EU respondents consider institutional reforms to be unnecessary.

Only 26% of the Italian sample feel they are sufficiently involved in the political debate that accompanies the enlargement of the EU, while 67% feel they are not well versed enough in the subject. In the EU at large, the corresponding percentage rises to 71%, while those who feel sufficiently involved are a mere 21%. It must also be pointed out that only 35% of Italians consider that enlargement is a policy to which the EU should grant priority, while 54% hold the opposite opinion. The data confirm the tendency already shown in previous surveys for Italians to hold an attitude that is more favourable than average towards widespread enlargement. Thirty three percent are willing to accept all the countries that ask to join (EU average 22%), and 53% are in favour of the enlargement to just some of the candidate countries (EU average 52%). Only 11% of Italians are against any type of enlargement, compared with the 21% average surveyed among all EU citizens.

The majority of those interviewed are in favour of accepting the current candidates, but a high proportion of people are "not sure". The countries that meet with the highest rate of approval are the Czech Republic, Malta, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Cyprus. The lowest approval ratings are given to the Baltic nations. Among the thirteen candidate countries, six obtain approval ratings of over 50% in favour of their entry into the Union. They are, in order, the Czech Republic (68%), Malta (65%), Poland (60%), Hungary (61%), Cyprus (54%) and Slovakia (51%).

For twelve countries out of thirteen the percentage of people interviewed who are in favour of their accession is higher than those who oppose it. The only exception is Turkey, which is the country whose request for accession receives the highest negative response. Of the Italian respondents, 48% were unfavourable to Turkey, 33% were in favour, 19% were uncertain. The three Baltic republics were only slightly more popular in Italy, with 43% favourable and 37% unfavourable. A relative majority of Italians are also against the entry of Macedonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Yugoslavia and Albania. Croatia, with 43% in favour and 40% against, is the only country whose possible accession into the EU meets with the approval of the relative majority sampled.

We must not ignore, however, the high proportion of people interviewed who expressed no opinion about any of the thirteen candidate countries: this is the question that received the most numerous 'don't know' responses in the course of the entire survey. The percentage of 'don't knows' ranged from a minimum of 14% for Hungary to a maximum of 20% for Lithuania. Such data would seem to confirm the lack of knowledge or familiarity with the candidate countries among Italians.

On the whole, the Italians tend to have a rather optimistic outlook on enlargement. The majority stress its positive aspects, while the opinion that sees enlargement as a potential source of increased unemployment and higher costs is very much less widespread in Italy than elsewhere. The positive outcome of enlargement that most appeals to an absolute majority of Italians (76%) is that an increased number of member countries will result in greater cultural wealth for the Union. Seventy percent also think that the increase in the number of Member States will also result in more international importance for the EU. In addition, 55% of Italians agree that a greater number of member States will guarantee peace and safety in Europe. Italians do not foresee enlargement as causing a rise in unemployment. Only 33% consider this to be a possibility, compared to 50% who disagree. Enlargement is not seen to threaten the importance of Italy in the EU: only 27% believe that the entry of new member States will result in diminished importance for Italy.

The three negative outcomes of enlargement that the Italians consider to be the most significant are: the costliness of the process, the loss of effectiveness of the decision-making process in a broadened Europe and the decrease in EU funds assigned to Italy. The data appear more significant if considered together with the high percentage of people interviewed who agree that the EU needs to adjust its own working mechanisms before proceeding with enlargement. A relative majority (48%) of Italian respondents are convinced that enlargement will result in an increase of costs for the current EU member States. Only 31% do not think that enlargement will weigh more heavily on EU finances. However, 41% think that, when the newcomers enter the EU, Italy will receive less financial aid from Europe; 37% do not share this opinion.

Italian respondents think that the greatest benefit from enlargement will be reaped by large enterprises. This is the opinion of 63% of those interviewed, only 8% disagree. According to 48%, enlargement is an opportunity for young people and, according to 35%, ethnic minorities will gain from it as well. Differences of opinion are less marked with respect to the effect of enlargement on the unemployed (26% think they will benefit, 24% will not) and on the employed (according to 15% they will benefit, to 13% they will not).



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

LUXEMBOURG

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Luxembourg

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

A majority of Luxembourg citizens would restrict enlargement to certain candidate countries

The proportion of opponents to enlargement has risen slightly

When asked to say to what extent the European Union should enlarge, people in Luxembourg have definite and, at the same time, restrictive views: 61% of them (4 points up compared to May 2002) compared with 46% at Community level, believe that the EU should confine itself to taking in only some of the candidate countries, while only 15% (+1 point), compared with 20% Community-wide, believe that all the countries wishing to join should be allowed in. 18% (+1 point) are opposed to enlargement.

The results for Luxembourg have changed since the last Eurobarometer (57.1) conducted in May 2002: the percentage of those in support of enlargement to include all European countries has risen from 14% to 15%. The percentage of opponents to enlargement has risen in Luxembourg, going up from 17% to 18%, while at Community level it has fallen from 21% to 19%.

This was revealed by the Eurobarometer 58.1 survey conducted by the European Commission in October 2002. The survey gives a general overview of what Europeans think about enlargement, the information they receive about the EU and their general interest in political matters. The survey allowed for Luxembourg's special demographic situation, with a sample comprising 71% Luxembourg nationals and 29% nationals of other EU Member States. In the commentary, the special report produced by the Commission representation therefore refers to "people in Luxembourg", a broader concept than Luxembourg nationals proper.

Can this apparent coolness towards enlargement be attributed solely to lack of information? More than one third (37%, +5 percentage points) of people in Luxembourg feel that they are well or very well informed about enlargement, whereas the European average is only 21% (+1 point).

As other related topics were covered by the special reports "Luxembourg and enlargement" in relation with the Eurobarometers 132.1 and 132.2. It is useful to refer to these surveys.

Decision-making will be more difficult

Various questions were asked about the potential impact of enlargement. Throughout the EU and also within Luxembourg, the tendency is the same, although the percentage in Luxembourg endorsing the proposed statement is above the EU average in all cases. In Luxembourg, 86% of those questioned (EU: 66%) believe that the decision-making process will become more difficult with more Member States, 79% (EU: 66%) believe that the EU will gain in importance in the world. For 77% (EU: 64%) the EU will be richer culturally, for 66% (EU: 58%) reform of the institutions will be inevitable ahead of enlargement, and for 50% (EU: 51%) peace will be more secure (the latter being the only statement for which the EU percentage is higher than that for Luxembourg).

The main fear expressed by Luxembourg citizens concerning the future Europe is that their country will receive less financial aid from the EU (51%, EU: 52%); this is followed by the increase in unemployment (50%, EU: 44%) and the country's reduced importance (46%, EU: 39%). Will enlargement cost more for the current Member States? 26% of people in Luxembourg think so, compared with 24% EU-wide.

People in Luxembourg continue to see the right of veto as an essential prerogative, with 67% (stable) stating that it must be retained in order to preserve national interests, compared with only 53% (+3 points) of all those questioned throughout the Union. In the EU overall, nearly 24% (-1 point) are in

favour of dropping it in order to improve the effectiveness of the EU, the figure in Luxembourg being only 21% (+4 points).

Sound knowledge of European matters

The three main sources of information on the EU used by people in Luxembourg are television (85%), daily newspapers (63%) and the radio (57%). This tendency is similar throughout the EU, although the percentages are substantially lower.

The vast majority of those questioned in Luxembourg (83%, +2 percentage points compared with May 2002) are in favour of their country's membership of the EU, a view shared by only 55% (+1 point) of citizens across the EU.

Close on three quarters (72%, +2 points) of those questioned in Luxembourg believe that their country has benefited from membership of the EU, an opinion shared by only 50% (-1 point) of citizens EU-wide. More than a quarter of all Europeans surveyed (28%) claim that their country has not benefited from EU membership, compared with 17% in Luxembourg (stable).

A positive image of the Union and the institutions

The positive image which people in Luxembourg have of the EU is reflected in their views on the impact that integration has on their private life. 42% (+3 points) feel that EU membership has offered them more or even far more advantages, while 49% (stable) think that the EU has brought as many advantages as disadvantages. For the EU as a whole these rates are not as high, at 27% (-1 point) and 46% (+4 points) respectively.

People in Luxembourg are very familiar with the Community institutions, no doubt because a number of them have headquarters in the capital or meet there; the scores are in all cases above the EU average. 98% (EU: 92%) of those questioned know the European Parliament, 95% (EU: 80%) the European Commission, 92% (EU: 72%) the Court of Justice, 93% (EU: 74%) the European Central Bank and 88% (EU: 66%) the Council of Ministers.

The European Ombudsman (Luxembourg: 37%, EU: 36%) and the Committee of the Regions (Luxembourg: 35%, EU: 29%) are the least well known institutions.

The logical consequence of the above answers is that people in Luxembourg have far more confidence in the Community institutions than the Community average. The Court of Justice (77%, EU: 54%) leads the field, followed by the European Parliament (75%, EU: 59%), the European Commission (74%, EU: 53%), the European Central Bank (72%, EU: 49%) and the Council of Ministers (67%, EU: 45%).

The European Ombudsman ranks last in the Luxembourg replies, at 39%. In last place at European level comes the Convention on the future of the EU with a score of 29%; even though it brings up the rear in Luxembourg too, it still has 52% favourable replies on confidence.

A broadly positive image for two thirds of people in Luxembourg

66% (+6 points) of Luxembourg residents have a very positive or fairly positive image of the EU, compared with only 50% (+1 point) Europe-wide.

On average, 32% (+1 point) of European citizens have a neutral image of the EU, compared with 26% (-2 points) of people in Luxembourg.

14% (unchanged) of European citizens have a rather, or even very, negative image of the EU, while this is the case for only 7% (-2 points) of people in Luxembourg.

In favour of teaching children about how the EU works

Various proposals for EU activities were put to those questioned. EU-wide, the proposal which scored the highest level of agreement was that of teaching schoolchildren about how the EU works (84%), followed by the common security and defence policy (73%). Next came the principle of the President and Members of the Commission resigning in the absence of a majority in the European Parliament (69%) and a common foreign policy (67%). EU enlargement received the least support, at 52% of the votes.

Luxembourg citizens give first place to the proposal to teach schoolchildren about how the EU works (93%), followed by monetary union (89%) and the common security and defence policy (88%). As for the EU as a whole, enlargement comes last, with 56% support.

In favour of slightly speeding up European integration

Comparing the speed of European integration with someone running, 31% of those questioned in Luxembourg thought it was progressing at medium speed at present, although they would prefer a slightly faster pace. This tendency is the same in the EU as a whole, although the percentages are lower (27% as regards current medium speed, 22% in favour of a speeding up slightly).

First a national of one's own country, then European

94% of those questioned in Luxembourg feel fairly, or even very, attached to Luxembourg. 75% feel attached to the EU.

As a rule most of those questioned consider themselves, for the near future, firstly nationals of their own country and, secondly, Europeans, the rates being 49% (+1 point) for the EU as a whole and 51% (+8 points) in Luxembourg.

The sense of belonging to one's own country is stronger throughout the EU: the percentage of those who believe they have only their own nationality (38%, unchanged) is far higher than in Luxembourg (18%, -9 points).

A sense of being first European and then a national of one's own country is felt by 14% (+2 points) of people in Luxembourg but only 7% (stable) of Europeans in general.

While 3% (-1 point) of European citizens consider themselves Europeans alone, the figure is 14% (stable) in Luxembourg.

Health and social security must remain the responsibility of national authorities

In Luxembourg and throughout Europe in general, health, social security and education are seen by the majority of those questioned as matters for the national government alone.

The euro can now be considered part and parcel of everyday life in Luxembourg, as 79% of people there think the single currency is a good thing. Only 10% would have preferred to keep the old national currency.

Support for the direct election of the Commission President

Three possible options were proposed for the designation of the President of the European Commission: direct election by citizens, election by the European Parliament or appointment by the heads of state or government. Direct election (47%, +5 points) is the method favoured in Luxembourg, well ahead of election by the European Parliament (27%, -3 points). The matter is less clearcut for the EU in general, with 39% (+5 points) in favour of direct election and 28% (-3 points) in favour of election by the European Parliament. Appointment by heads of state or government is supported by only 18% (stable) of those questioned in Luxembourg and 14% (stable) of all EU citizens.

Low expectations as regards employment in 2003

What do people in Luxembourg expect in 2003? 53% of those questioned think that the employment situation in the country will be worse (EU: 44%). As regards the professional and financial situation of the household, 69% and 65% respectively think there will be no change. 57% expect life in general to remain the same. 41% of those questioned in Luxembourg think the economic situation in the country will be worse in 2003.

61% of Europeans think their professional situation will remain the same, 55% think that their household finances will remain the same, and 51% expect life in general to remain unchanged. As regards the economic situation in the EU, 41% think it will be worse than in 2002.

High recognition of the European flag

Almost all (99%) of those questioned in Luxembourg spontaneously recognise the European flag, compared with 92% at European level.

People in Luxembourg are also more attached to the European flag than most EU citizens. For 93% (EU: 80%), the European flag represents a symbol for Europe, and for 82% (EU: 66%), something positive. 61% (EU: 43%) identify with the flag and 53% (EU: 51%) would like to see it displayed on all public buildings alongside the national flag.

Most people satisfied with the functioning of democracy in their country and in the EU

Close on four fifths of Luxembourg citizens are satisfied with the functioning of democracy in their country, compared with only 59% of Europeans in general.

In Luxembourg, almost two thirds, i.e. 65% of those questioned are satisfied with the functioning of democracy in the EU, compared with only 47% of Europeans in general.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

NETHERLANDS

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
The Netherlands

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March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for the Netherlands

1. Personal lives

- The majority of the Dutch people are either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the life they lead.

For 2003 the majority expects to have the same or even a better financial situation in their household. The expectations for the Dutch economy and employment are a little less optimistic. Around 60% expect the economic and employment situation in the Netherlands to be worse in 2003.

In the forthcoming six months they generally expect to spend the same amount on things such as health, food or transport.

- 69% of Dutch respondents are afraid of international terrorism; this is followed by fear of organised crime and of ethnic conflicts in Europe. The Dutch are less afraid of a conventional or nuclear war in Europe.
- Almost half of the Dutch will see themselves first as Dutch and then as European. 40% indicate that they see themselves as only Dutch. Very few people see themselves as only European.
- A majority of the Dutch people feels attached to the Netherlands. There are more people who do not feel attached to the European Union than people who do.

2. The European Union

- Almost all (95%) Dutch respondents are familiar with the European flag. They also know that it stands for Europe, the European Union, the Common Market, etcetera.
- When asked about how much they feel they know about the European Union, most Dutch people fall between 4 and 6 on a scale ranging from 1 (know nothing at all) to 10 (know a great deal).
- When they are looking for information about the European Union they primarily make use of the traditional mass media such as television and newspaper. Dutch people would also prefer to get information about the European Union from television, daily newspaper or other newspapers.
- A majority (69%) thinks that the Netherlands' membership of the European Union is a good thing and they also find that the Netherlands has benefited from their membership. 41% think that the membership of the Netherlands of the European Union has brought

them personally as many advantages as disadvantages and 32% indicate that it has brought them more advantages.

- For 40% of the Dutch, the European Union conjures up a fairly positive image and for 40% this is a neutral image.
- More than 80% of the Dutch people have heard of the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the European Court of Justice. Between 60% and 65% of the Dutch also trust these institutions. European institutions such as the Committee of the Regions or the European Ombudsman are less known, most people have not heard of them.
- The Dutch are less satisfied about the functioning of democracy in Europe than that they are satisfied with the functioning of democracy in the European Union: 56% are satisfied with the democracy in the Netherlands, while 44% are satisfied with the democracy in the European Union.
- More than half of the Dutch think that decisions concerning education, broadcasting rules, humanitarian aid, cultural policy, the police and the fight against unemployment should be taken by the Dutch government. On the other hand, they think that decisions concerning foreign policy, information about the European Union, the currency, the fight against terrorism and organised crime or protection of the environment should be taken together within the European Union.
- Most (89%) of the Dutch are in favour of teaching school children about the way the European institutions work. A majority is also in favour of a common foreign policy, common defence policy and the European Union being responsible for matters that cannot be effectively handled by national governments.
- Almost all (91%) Dutch people find that maintaining peace and security in Europe should be a priority, this is followed by the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking, the fight against poverty and the fight against unemployment. The issue that ranks last on the list of priorities is enlargement, 39% of the Dutch people feel that this should be a priority.
- More than 70% of the Dutch think that action taken by the European Union is or would be effective for maintaining the peace and security in Europe, the successful implementation of the Euro and guaranteeing the quality of food.
- There is disagreement about whether action is or would be effective in reforming the European Union and its institutions, the fight against unemployment, the fight against illegal immigration and the fight against organized crime. Around half of Dutch respondents think that EU action is effective, the other half think that it is not.

- 48% of the Dutch hold the opinion that it is a good thing that the Euro replaced the national currency. Thirty-four percent find this to be a bad thing. A majority feel comfortable about using the Euro. Almost all Dutch people think that the prices have been rounded up in all areas. The Dutch people feel more attached to the national currency than to the Euro, 65% are attached to the national currency while 67% indicate that they are not attached to the Euro.
- Most (73%) Dutch people think that the European Union should have a constitution. Forty-two percent of the Dutch would favour the option of a President of the European Commission who was directly elected by the citizens of the European Union. This is followed in popularity by the option of the President being elected by a majority of the European Parliament. Only 12% would like to have a President elected by Heads of State or governments.
- For most people, building up Europe could go at a faster speed than the current speed.

3. Enlargement of the European Union

- 63% of the Dutch people want to enlarge the European Union with some of the candidate Member States. A majority (50% – 60%) would be in favour of Malta, Hungary, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia and Poland becoming part of the European Union. Less than 40% would be in favour of Slovenia, Bulgaria, Turkey and Romania to join the European Union. There are more people who would be in favour of Norway, Switzerland and Iceland to join the European Union than that there are people who are in favour of the current candidate countries.
- More than 75% of the Dutch people think that after accession it will be more difficult to take decisions at a European level and that the European Union will be more important in the world with more Member States. Sixty three percent think that the European institutions must reform before welcoming new Member States. Less than 40% think that there will be more unemployment in the Netherlands after enlargement. Only 17% agree with the statement that enlargement will not cost more for existing member States such as the Netherlands.
- According to most Dutch people, big companies will profit most from enlargement while farmers, fisherman and old people will lose out as a result of enlargement.
- 52% of the Dutch do not feel very well informed about the enlargement of the European Union, 17% feel not at all informed and 27% feel well informed. When looking for information about enlargement, most people make use of television, newspapers and the radio. Very few make use of a member of the European Parliament, trade associations, books, brochures or EU information centres.

- Most Dutch people do not have the feeling that they are participating in the political debate about enlargement. Only 27% feel that they are participating somewhat, while 28% feel that they are not participating very much and 37% feel that they are not participating at all.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

PORTUGAL

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Portugal

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Portugal The European Union, Enlargement and the Future of the EU

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Commission in Portugal*

1. The European Union

1.1. Information about the European Union, its policies and institutions

The majority of the Portuguese feel uninformed about the European Union. Since 1999, when this question was put to EU citizens for the first time, Portugal has systematically been one of the countries where the feeling of lack of information is most widespread. This feeling is strongest among certain groups in Portuguese society, namely those on lowest income, the elderly, the least educated and the women.

Yet an average of 54% of the Portuguese gave correct answers to a small quiz about the EU, a percentage which is substantially higher than the corresponding EU average of 41%. It is necessary to highlight that these two types of data do not refer to the same kind of information about the EU: the feeling of lack of information relates to the *current* policies of the EU and its institutions, whereas the quiz measures relatively basic knowledge about the EU, such as the number of member countries and the date when it was founded.

1.2. Attitudes towards Portugal's membership of the EU

The majority of Portuguese agree that membership of the EU is a good thing (56%), and has brought benefits to Portugal (64%). A longitudinal perspective however, shows that since 1999, the Portuguese consensus regarding the benefits accruing to the country from EU membership has declined by 13 points from 77%. Concerning affective attitudes towards the EU in 1999, 68% of the Portuguese considered that being a member of the EU was a good thing, but by 2002 this percentage has decreased to 56%. This trend is contrary to opinions in Spain and Greece, where the positive consensus on membership has increased since 1999. Moreover, the consensus on benefits accruing from membership of the EU is lower among the elderly, the less educated, those on lowest income, and those who are dissatisfied with democracy in Portugal and the EU.

1.3 Attitudes towards the EU and its policies

1.3.1 Feelings of Belonging and Trust towards Institutions

Fifty seven percent of the Portuguese identify with the EU flag, and 67% agree that it should be seen on all public buildings next to the Portuguese flag. Both of these percentages are above the corresponding EU average. Looking beyond diffuse attitudes towards the EU to attitudes towards the political processes, we found that in Portugal the percentage of respondents who are satisfied with the way democracy works in the EU (41%) is lower than the EU average (47%).

1.3.2 The Euro

The adoption of the Euro in Portugal can be considered a success. Eighty one percent of the Portuguese say they feel at ease using the new currency and 72% feel attached to the Euro, while the European averages are 58 and 33% respectively. Also, 49% of respondents, a value higher than the EU average, consider that joining the Euro was a good thing, whereas 24% disagree with that. These values become even more significant if we take into account the fact that 74% of Portuguese consider that with the adoption of the Euro, all prices have generally been rounded up.

2. Enlargement

2.1 Information and participation

The overwhelming majority of the Portuguese say they feel uninformed about EU enlargement. Eighty four percent of the Portuguese respondents replied that they feel “not very well” or “not at all” informed. These results are slightly worse than the EU average (77%). However, with the exception of Finland, there is no other country where the perception of having information about enlargement exceeds the perception of lack of information.

Regarding participation in the enlargement debate, only 21% of the Portuguese feel that they are participating in that debate. Surprisingly, the percentage of Portuguese who feel “not very well” or “not at all” informed is larger than the percentage of those who feel that they have not participated in the political discussion on enlargement: 77%.

2.2 Attitudes towards enlargement

Sixty percent of Portuguese respondents are in favour of enlargement, while 20% say that they are against it. Comparing to EB57 there has been a slight decrease in non-response and consequently the percentage of Portuguese in favour of enlargement has risen. These are very positive results in the European context, where on average 52% declare themselves in favour of enlargement and 30% against it.

The most preferred option among Portuguese would be to enlarge the EU by a few countries (34% of respondents). This is followed by the option “enlarge to all countries” (27%) and the alternative “not to enlarge at all” (just 17%). Eurobarometer also asked respondents to evaluate efforts being made by candidate countries concerning political development. The lack of information of the Portuguese regarding European matters must be emphasised: the percentage of non-response is consistently very high.

The majority of the Portuguese are optimistic concerning some of the political consequences of enlargement but not about the economic consequences. The two political consequences where there is most agreement are: after enlargement Europe will be culturally richer (66% agree) and gain greater importance in the world (67% agree). Respondents are relatively less optimistic about peace and security, with 55% agreeing that enlargement will contribute to it. On the other hand 46% believe that Portugal will become less important in the EU as a result of enlargement.

Concerning the economic consequences of enlargement, the Portuguese are rather pessimistic. The majority anticipate an increase in unemployment (52%) and a decrease in the transfer of EU funds to Portugal (69%), as a result of enlargement. When asked to identify the social groups which will lose out as a result of enlargement, the Portuguese most often mention fishermen, farmers and people who live in the countryside.

Finally, compared to other issues, enlargement is not a very high priority for the Portuguese: for 48% it is not a priority at all. Still, this is higher than the EU average, where fully 58% do not consider enlargement a priority. However, if we exclude those who did not reply, only 34% were against enlargement compared to 31% in the EU. This question has been put to the European public for 5 years now, since 1998 but its importance has not grown significantly over that time. In spite of some public debate and national referenda on the subject, both in the EU and especially in Portugal, the percentage of respondents who consider enlargement to be a priority has grown at a relatively low rate.

3. Portugal and the Future of the European Union

3.1 Fears and Policy Priorities

The Portuguese are the EU citizens most concerned with issues related to guarantees of personal security. Eighty% of them are afraid of ten typical potential threats, such as a world war, a nuclear conflict in Europe, international terrorism etc. Still, it is important to emphasise that, generally speaking, most EU citizens in other member states also fear for their security in relation to these threats.

With respect to the EU actions that the Portuguese would like to see as priorities for EU policy, two issues stand out as the most important: personal and economic security. Ninety-five percent think that fighting unemployment, terrorism, poverty and social exclusion are priorities. These issues are also the actions which most Portuguese think that the EU would be “very” or “fairly” effective in carrying out. One of the most striking results here is the high percentage of Portuguese (68%) who think that the EU either is or should be “fairly effective” or “very effective” in guaranteeing the rights of the individual and respect for the principles of democracy in Europe.

3.2 Political Competences of the States and the EU

As already seen in Eurobarometer 57, but now with even more intensity, the Portuguese believe that decisions in a great number of policy areas should be taken jointly within the EU, instead of by the government alone. The only areas where just over half of the Portuguese consider decisions should be handled only by the Portuguese Government, without interference of the EU, are police and justice, education and basic rules for the median comparison, the EU averages for national sovereignty in these issues are slightly higher, at around 60%.

Concerning a common European defence policy, a near majority of Portuguese citizens would like to see decisions taken at the EU level, while 26% would prefer that the Portuguese government make this type of decisions. These values are slightly higher than the EU average.

3.3 The Institutional Reform of the EU

Over the years, the percentage of Portuguese who consider institutional reform in the EU to be a priority has been increasing. At the moment, 71% hold this opinion – a value that exceeds the EU average by 19 points. Only Denmark shows a higher percentage of agreement in this question.

The majority of the Portuguese agree with most of the possible measures suggested for EU reform. For instance, 63% of them share the opinion that the EU should have a Constitution, while only 7% think otherwise. However, the Portuguese are more reluctant to support the idea of each member state giving up its right of veto in order to make the EU more efficient: only 16% of respondents support this measure, while 48% are against it. In both examples, the Portuguese results match the EU average.

Concerning the way the President of the European Commission should be appointed, 35% of the Portuguese would prefer the President to be elected directly by EU citizens. The EU average for this category is 40%.

4. Concluding remarks in relation to EU information strategy

The analysis of the Portuguese data in Eurobarometer EB58 shows two strong patterns of attitudes towards the EU. Generally speaking the feeling of information is low, be it about the EU

as a whole, the process of enlargement, the process of reform of the institutions, or even certain EU institutions. Although this feeling of lack of information is widespread, it is felt more acutely by certain social groups such as those who have the least education, those who are in the lowest income bracket, and the elderly. When we turn to the analysis of attitudes towards integration, such as perceived benefits of membership of the EU, feelings towards enlargement and institutional reform, what we find is that these same groups have relatively more negative and pessimistic views on the EU than the national average. This leads to the assertion that lack of information breeds discontent and negative attitudes. Moreover, there is an issue group, namely those who are dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Portugal, which also has a relatively negative attitude towards the EU.

Bearing in mind the above, we can make a few recommendations regarding the EU strategy for information in Portugal. It is necessary to take into account the fact that, in Portugal, television is by far the preferred medium of communication, and also the medium by means of which most respondents declared they would like to receive information about the EU. In addition to television, the Portuguese also listen to the radio and read newspapers, although in smaller percentages. One priority would therefore be to propose the discussion of EU matters in these three media, with greatest emphasis on television. An important issue may be the training of journalists on European issues. This may be a simple form of raising awareness of the European agenda as well as improving the coverage of EU affairs.

Focus groups might be a good starting point to understand the reasons for which certain social groups are relatively less favourable towards EU matters. One of the aims of these focus groups could be to understand how these individuals would like to be informed, and what matters they would like to see discussed. The findings would then allow the EU to form a coherent strategy of communication towards these specific groups.

Finally, two further strategies may be employed in order to disseminate information about the EU. Firstly, organizing events at the local council level might contribute to a greater awareness of the EU. Secondly, in order to reach young people, we suggest the promotion of school seminars on the EU, which could be presented by university students. The EU could train these university students, who would then visit secondary schools where these issues would be discussed.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

SPAIN

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Spain

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Spain

1. Introduction

Eurobarometer 58.1 was carried out between 1st October 2002 and 5th November 2002. This executive summary contains the most important conclusions of the Spanish report. The report analyses three issues: i: information on the EU, ii: the euro and iii: enlargement.

For each of the topics, we look at public opinion about European issues and personal satisfaction with EU actions and policies. We also analyse the socio-demographics of the data and perform some trend analysis for selected questions.

2. Spanish public opinion and information on EU issues

In this first section we look at the general outlook of Spanish public opinion and national information about European Union issues. The focus is on the general feelings of the public in terms of life satisfaction, their future prospects and their attachment to Europe. This analysis also looks at the sources preferred by the public for obtaining information on Europe, the general image of the EU as perceived by Spanish public and Spanish feelings of future attachment to Europe.

2.1 Overall life satisfaction and future life expectations of Spanish citizens

- The Spanish seem in general to discuss political matters 'occasionally' with friends.
- Almost two thirds of respondents (62%) say that they feel 'fairly satisfied' with the life they lead.
- Spanish public opinion feels positive about the future and seems to believe that things will be either the same or better in the future, although they say that they will spend less in the next 6 months on daily expenditure.

2.2 General knowledge and sources of information about the EU

- Most Spanish respondents (70%) have seen the EU flag and most recognise it.
- The Spanish public feels that it doesn't know enough about EU issues; on a scale from 1 to 10, most respondents say that their level of knowledge is 5.
- The most popular sources for obtaining information about European issues are TV, the radio and the daily press. These are also the most preferred sources by the public for obtaining more information on Europe.

2.3 Feelings of attachment to the EU

- In general Spanish citizens seem to have a very positive image of Europe. Around 68% of respondents believe that membership of the EU is 'a good thing' for Spain.
- Trend analysis shows that, in the last year, there has been a recovery of respondents saying that membership of the EU is a 'good thing'.
- The majority of respondents feel that the EU will play a more important role in their lives in the future, with men having this feeling more than women. In general, the public feels that the EU has a positive image and that Spain's membership has brought them advantages.
- Around 48% of respondents feel 'fairly satisfied' with how democracy works in Europe. Generally there is a good level of trust in the European institutions and in the EU as a whole.
- The Spanish public feels that, in general, decisions should be made jointly by the Spanish government and the EU. However, on issues as public health and social security, they prefer decisions to be made only by the Spanish government.
- Most respondents, around 73%, say that they are in favour of a common foreign policy towards other countries among the member states of the European Union.
- In the same way, 96% think that policies such as 'fighting unemployment' are a priority for the EU.
- The Spanish public does not feel very attached to the EU. While 33% feel 'fairly attached' to the EU, 38% feel 'not very attached' to it.

3. Opinions of the Spanish Public about the Euro

3.1 Introduction

In this section, we analyse Spanish opinion about the introduction of the euro. First we look at how comfortable the Spanish sample is about using the euro and their degree of attachment to it. We also look at public opinion on the consequences for prices of the introduction of the euro.

3.2 Spanish attitude and feelings of attachment to the euro

- The attitude of the public to the introduction of the euro seems to be very positive. Most respondents say that the common currency is a good thing.
- Half of all respondents feel 'very comfortable' using the euro, but a quarter said that they 'did not to feel very comfortable' with it.

- Women, the unemployed and people responsible for looking after the home are the respondents who feel least comfortable with using the euro

3.3 Spanish sentiments on the prices alter the euro

- The majority of respondents, 89%, believe 'that prices have been generally rounded up in all areas'.
- The feeling that prices have been rounded up is shared by all groups in the Spanish sample, including both sexes and all age groups.
- There are some differences between the different regions of Spanish; of those living in Galicia, in the north of the country, 98% and 93% think that prices have been rounded up compared to only 83% in Madrid.

3.4 Conclusions

In general, the Spanish sample show that they have a positive attitude to the single currency. Most believe that this is a good thing for their country, and they feel quite comfortable in using it. The respondents who feel least attached to the euro are women, retired people and those responsible for looking up the home.

4. Spanish attitudes to enlargement

4.1 Introduction

In this section, we will look at Spanish opinion about enlargement. As in earlier Eurobarometer surveys, the process of enlargement is examined via the level of information on it obtained by the public and the level of knowledge they have about countries that are candidates for EU membership. We also look at the level of participation in the debate about enlargement as well as attitudes to the international role played by the EU.

4.2 How do Spanish see the EU in the future?

- Trend analysis of the data shows that there is a significant increase in those saying that 'the EU should be enlarged to include only some of the countries wishing to join', when asked about what they preferred for the immediate future of the EU.
- Half of respondents (51%) say that they do 'not participate at all' in the debate about enlargement.
- When asked about which country would they be 'in favour of' or 'against' it becoming part of the EU in the future, the majority of the Spanish public was in favour of most of the countries.

Only opinion in Turkey seems to be divided: while 39% said that they were in favour of Turkey becoming a member of the EU, another 34% were against.

- 'Enlargement will not cost more for existing member countries like Spain': one third of respondents agree with this statement, while 42% disagree. The regions that seem to fear this least are Pais Vasco and Navarra, where 52% disagree with the statement.
- A majority of respondents disagree that the more countries there are in the EU, the more unemployment there will be in Spain. While men seem to disagree more with this statement, women seem to be more divided in their opinion: 37% agree and 36% disagree with this statement.
- Farmers and fishermen are the two economic groups that are thought to be most affected by enlargement.

4.3 Information about enlargement:

- Half of all respondents says that they are 'not very well informed' about enlargement.
- While 26% of men think that they feel 'well informed', only 15% of women say the same.
- Of those who say that they are in favour of enlargement, 53% say that they are 'not very well informed'.
- The sources that have been used to obtain information about enlargement are TV, radio and daily press. These continue to be the preferred sources for obtaining information on Europe.

4.4 Conclusions

In general, respondents do not feel very well informed about enlargement. More information is needed in order for them to be able to evaluate the consequences of enlargement on the Spanish economy, and more information is needed in order for them to recognise the candidate countries.

Although respondents feel that Spain will receive less economic help after enlargement, they also feel that Europe will be richer culturally and feel positive about the importance of the EU in the world after this process.

Respondents also think that a constitution is needed for the EU.

5. General conclusions

- In general, Spanish respondents feel 'well informed' about European issues.
- Information is obtained largely through TV, radio and daily press, which continue to be the preferred sources of the public for information on Europe. Some respondents said that they would prefer a detailed brochure.
- The Spanish public feel that their country's membership of the EU is 'a good thing'.
- In general, Spanish respondents say that they are 'fairly satisfied' with EU actions and policies, but feel that more should be done on social issues like fighting unemployment or poverty and social exclusion. These are seen as priority actions for the EU.
- Spanish respondents say that they feel Spanish first and then European. Very few say that they will feel more European in the future. Some say that they will feel only Spanish in the future.
- Most respondents believe that the introduction of the euro is 'a good thing', but almost one third say that it is 'neither a good nor a bad thing'.
- Women and retired are the groups that feel least comfortable when using the euro. They are also the respondents who feel 'not very attached' to the single currency.
- The majority of respondents think that, after the introduction of the euro, prices have been in general rounded up in all sectors.
- The degree of information that the public has on enlargement seems to be very weak. The feeling of 'not being well informed' is confirmed again by this Eurobarometer survey.
- The Spanish feel very positive about the situation in the candidate countries. Most respondents think that the situation in these countries is better now, that they work harder to prevent corruption and that they are richer since the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989.
- A majority feel that some parts of the Spanish economy (e.g.: fishermen, farmers) are going to lose as a result of enlargement.
- Respondents feel that Spain will receive less economic help from the EU after enlargement, although they feel that the EU will be richer culturally as a result.
- Most respondents agree that the EU needs a constitution.

Overall, this Eurobarometer shows that Spanish public opinion has improved its knowledge about EU issues, actions and policies. Respondents feel better informed in general, although more information is needed around the process of enlargement about which respondents feels less well informed. Also, respondents are negative about some of the consequences of enlargement, where they think that different sectors of the economy will lose out. Regarding the euro, the public feels fairly comfortable with it, although women and retired people feel less attached to it than others. For this reason, more needs to be done so that these groups feel closer to the EU, since the same respondents say that the EU will play a less important role in their lives in the future.

Mara Bozini Andiónach



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

SWEDEN

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
Sweden

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for Sweden

Summary

This national report is based on an opinion poll that was carried out in the EU Member States in October 2002. The aim of the opinion poll is to give the European Commission an overview of the views of the EU citizens. The aim of this report is to focus on attitudes and perceptions of the Swedes on pertinent EU issues.

When the EU and EU average is mentioned below, the figures include Sweden.

How much do Swedes feel they know about the EU?

Swedes feel that they know more about the EU than does the average EU citizen. The average level of knowledge about the Union in Sweden is 4.7 on a scale from 1 to 10. The EU average is 4.4.

Sources of information and preferences of Swedes

Eighty-five percent of Swedes say that they are interested in looking for information about the EU. The corresponding figure in the EU is 80%. Fourteen percent of Swedes say that they never look for information about the EU or that they are not interested, a much lower number than in the EU as a whole, where the equivalent figure is 19%. This also shows that the number of people in Sweden claiming that they are not interested in searching for information is lower than was discovered in earlier Eurobarometers.

Most Swedes claim to get their information from the media. The most important source of information is the television (76%), followed by the newspapers (68%) and the radio (41%). The extent to which Swedes use certain sources of information about the EU, for example newspapers and the Internet, is greater than the EU average. When Swedes were asked to give their preferred sources of information, they mentioned the same sources as they already used.

European integration

The perceived speed of the European integration among Swedes is slower than that perceived by the average EU citizen. It is clear that Swedes, like most EU citizens, would like to see an increase in the speed at which Europe is integrated. The opinions in the EU as a whole on how fast the EU should be integrated in the future indicate that the average EU citizen would like the pace of European integration to be higher than the average Swede.

What do citizens think about democracy in Sweden and the EU?

The Swedes are satisfied with democracy at the national level: 77 % of the respondents are very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the way democracy works in Sweden. When it comes to democracy in the EU, however, the Swedes are more sceptical. The number of people that are unsatisfied with how democracy works at EU level is higher than the number of people who are satisfied. With regard to national democracy, Swedes are far more satisfied than the average EU citizen. The situation is reversed with regard to democracy in the EU, with which Swedes are less satisfied than the EU citizens in general.

What views do Swedes have about the EU?

Compared to respondents in the EU as a whole, Swedes are more likely to think that it is a bad thing that their country is a member of the EU. A smaller number of Swedes think that it is a good thing that Sweden is a member, but a considerably larger number of Swedes does not think so. The number of Swedes who think that Sweden's EU membership is a good thing has increased by 5 points since the last Eurobarometer, from 38% to 43%. The number of Swedes who think that it is a bad thing has decreased by 4 points, from 27% to 23%. The attitude towards Sweden's membership has swung back and forth since 1995. The number of Swedes believing that the EU membership is a good thing increased considerably in December 2001, and has remained relatively stable since.

How do Swedes see the European Union ?

A comparison between the overall perception of the EU in Sweden and in the EU as a whole shows that Swedes in general are more negative. A considerably higher percentage of Swedes are negative towards the EU (30% compared to 13% in the EU as a whole), and a significantly lower percentage is positive (36% compared to 50%). However, it seems that Swedes are gradually becoming more positive. The number of Swedes that are negative has decreased by 14% since June 2001.

Is EU membership an advantage or disadvantage for Sweden?

Almost one third of Swedes think that Sweden has benefited from joining the EU, whereas almost half of them disagree. Half of all EU citizens think that their country has benefited from joining the EU, whereas approximately one quarter of EU citizens think the opposite.

An analysis of the trends over time shows that the number of Swedes who think that Sweden has benefited from membership was relatively stable over last year, but that there has been a slight decrease in the number that have an opposite view.

Half of the EU population and almost half of Swedes think that the EU membership has brought them as many advantages as disadvantages on a personal level. Almost one quarter of the Swedes and one quarter of the EU population thinks that membership has brought more advantages, while one Swede in eight and one EU citizen in eight hold the opposite view.

National and European identity of Swedes

Half of the Swedes see themselves as Swedish only, while half of the EU citizens see themselves both as national citizens and as Europeans at the same time. It is clear that Swedes have a stronger national identity than Europeans have as a whole.

Knowledge in Sweden about the European institutions

Swedes seem to have a broad awareness of the three major European institutions, namely the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council of Ministers. According to the poll, almost everyone in Sweden (99%) has heard of the European Parliament. A significant proportion of Swedes have also heard about the Court of Justice and the European Central Bank. Only one quarter of Swedes answered that they have heard of the European Ombudsman and 34% of the Convention on the future of the European Union. If the Swedish results are compared to the EU average, it can be concluded that a significantly larger number of Swedes have heard of the Council of Ministers, whereas significantly fewer Swedes have heard of the European Court of Auditors, than have their fellow citizens in the EU.

How important are the European institutions ?

Regarding the question on whether or not the European institutions play an important role, the same pattern can be observed as regarding the knowledge of the institutions. The institutions best known to the Swedes are those perceived as playing the most important role.

Do Swedes tend to trust the European Institutions ?

Swedes do not seem to put a great deal of trust in the European institutions. The institution that Swedes tend to trust the most is the Court of Justice (58%), followed by the European Central Bank (52%) and the European Parliament (51%). None of the other institutions have reached the same level of trust among the Swedes.

Which actions should the EU prioritise ?

Swedes think that the EU should prioritize a large number of actions in the future. A large majority of them think that it is important that the EU should be brought closer to the European citizens and that the rights of the individual and respect for the principles of democracy in

Europe are safeguarded. Protecting the environment and social issues such as tackling unemployment are actions that Swedes regard as priority areas, as well as fighting crime and maintaining peace and security in Europe. On the other hand, successfully implementing the single European currency, the Euro, and asserting the political and diplomatic importance of the European Union around the world are actions that are not viewed as priorities by the general public in Sweden.

With a narrow margin, a majority of Swedes think that welcoming the new Member States is an action that should be prioritized. Although Swedes seem to have some doubts about enlargement, they still seem to be more positive towards the process than EU citizens in general. Compared to the EU-average, far more Swedes think that the EU should prioritize this (55% compared to 31%).

Are Swedes for or against the EMU and the Euro ?

Half of all Swedes claim that they are for the EMU and the Euro, compared to over half of the Danes, almost one third of the Brits and seven out of ten of the people in the Euro zone. Two fifths of the Swedes and the Danes say that they are against the EMU and the Euro, compared to more than half of the Brits and only a quarter of the people in the Euro zone.

How attached are Swedes to their national currency (the Krona)?

Almost half of the Swedes think that it would be a good thing if the Euro replaced the national currency, compared to over half of the Danes and a quarter of the British. Half of the British think that it would be a bad thing if the Euro replaced their national currency, compared to less than a third of the Swedes and the Danes.

Half of the Swedes feel comfortable using the Euro, compared to almost two thirds of EU-citizens. One quarter of Swedes have not yet used the Euro. It should be noted that, on average, more Swedes than EU citizens say that they are very comfortable with using the Euro.

Are Swedes for or against enlargement?

The majority of Swedes tell us that they have a positive attitude towards enlargement. Almost two thirds of them say that they are for enlargement, compared to approximately half of EU citizens. Almost one third of the EU citizens say that they are against EU-enlargement, compared to almost a quarter of Swedes.

Which countries would Swedes be in favour of becoming members of the EU?

Swedes are more positive than the EU citizens on average towards all countries listed in the poll, although they are more positively inclined towards the accession of the Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and the Baltic States than the joining of countries in Central and Eastern Europe or in the Balkans. Over one third of Swedes accept the accession of all countries that wishes to join the EU, compared to one fifth of EU citizens on average. Almost one fifth of Swedes and EU citizens alike think that the EU should not be enlarged. Compared to earlier Eurobarometers, the number of people in Sweden that think that the EU should not be enlarged at all has decreased dramatically during the last year. After reaching a level of 33% in the spring of 2002, it is now down to 17%, the same level as was found in Eurobarometer conducted in 2001.

What do Swedes know about enlargement?

One quarter of the Swedes feel that they are well informed about enlargement, compared to the EU average of one fifth. Almost one quarter of Swedes think that they are not at all well informed about enlargement, compared to one fifth of EU citizens. Even if in reality there are no major differences, it seems as though Swedes feel better informed than the average EU citizen. The number of Swedes that feel that they are well informed has steadily increased in the Eurobarometers.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of enlargement according to Swedes?

By allowing more states to become members of the EU, Swedes feel that peace and security will be guaranteed in Europe. Further, Europe will be culturally richer and the EU will become more important in the world. Perceived negative aspects are that enlargement will cost more for existing member countries, that Sweden will become less important in Europe after enlargement and that Sweden will receive less financial aid from the EU. Swedes do not think that the EU should help future member countries financially, before they join. Concerning the future governance of the EU, a majority of Swedes think that it will be much more difficult to make decisions at European level when there are more countries and, as a consequence, that the EU must reform the way its institutions work before welcoming new members. The Swedish views on these issues have not changed dramatically from the previous Eurobarometer.

Constitution of the EU

Almost two thirds of EU citizens think that the EU should have a Constitution, compared to approximately half of Swedish respondents. Conversely, almost one third of Swedes think that the EU should not have a Constitution, compared to only one tenth of the EU citizens.

President of the European Commission

On average, Swedish respondents are more likely than the average EU citizen to think that the European Parliament should elect the President of the European Commission, while EU citizens are more likely to want citizens of the European Union directly to elect the president. A majority of Swedes and EU citizens alike think that the president of the European Commission should either be elected by the European Parliament or directly by the citizens of the European Union. Almost four fifths of Swedish respondents think that the President of the European Commission and the Commissioners should resign if they do not enjoy the support of a majority of the European Parliament.

Right of veto

Nearly two thirds of the Swedish respondents think that the right of veto that every Member State of the EU can exercise when the most important or most sensitive decisions are taken should be retained in order to preserve essential national interests – this compares to just over half of all respondents across the EU. Roughly one quarter of the Swedes, as well as of all EU citizens, think that the right of veto should be abolished in order to make the European Union more efficient.

National responsibility or responsibility at the EU level?

Three out of five Swedes feel that the EU should be responsible for matters that cannot be efficiently handled by national, regional and local governments, a share that is a fraction lower than the EU average. Slightly more than one quarter of the Swedes are against the EU being responsible for matters that cannot be more efficiently handled by national, regional and local governments, compared to nearly one fifth of the EU citizens.

The persons polled were asked in which specific policy areas they think decisions should be made by the national government as opposed to being made jointly within the European Union. It should be noted that Swedes think that, in most policy areas, decisions should be made by the national government. However, there are four areas in particular where a large majority of the Swedes think that decisions should be made jointly within the EU. These areas are information about the EU, the fight against organised crime, the fight against trafficking and exploitation of human beings and the fight against international terrorism.



EUROBAROMETER 58 - NATIONAL STANDARD REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

UNITED KINGDOM

Survey carried out for the European
Commission's Representation in
United Kingdom

"This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission. Any interpretations or opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone"

March 3, 2003

Executive Summary of the National Report for the United Kingdom

Between 1 October 2002 and 5 November 2002, Eurobarometer 58 was carried out for the European Commission across the fifteen Member States of the European Union.

While this main report was being written, the Editor's attention was brought to a larger piece of research (Flash Eurobarometer 137) conducted by telephone in the UK, which surveyed more than 6000 respondents between 11th and 26th November 2002. Information gleaned from this second survey is included as additional material, but only where the subjects are identical and an additional view may usefully be added to the main report. A key finding of this Flash Eurobarometer is that the level of 'don't know' responses was substantially reduced by using a telephone interview technique which, although tending to polarise views, may produce a more accurate picture of peoples' deeper attitudes. The two sets of results and analysis are kept totally separate.

Interest in Politics

If the level of discussion about political matters is one of the benchmarks of interest in politics, the UK is one of the EU's least involved countries : 42% of those polled in the UK said they never discussed politics with friends - a figure only matched or exceeded by Belgium (42%), Spain (47%) and Portugal (52%).

Life satisfaction of EU citizens

Citizens who said they were "very satisfied" with their lives made up nearly two thirds (64%) of respondents in Denmark and more than a third of those in Luxemburg, the Netherlands and Sweden. This compares with an EU average of 19% and 30% in the UK.

Expectations for own life in General in 2003

When asked about their life in general, respondents across the EU were on average upbeat about prospects for the coming year.

While 51% believed their lives would be the same, more than a third (34%) believed they would be better. Only 11% thought their lives would be worse.

The UK had higher expectations than the EU average with 43% believing life would be better. At the other end of the spectrum, 39% of the Portuguese and 26% of Greeks believed their lives in general would be worse.

Expectations of the economic situation in Member States

Views across the EU had a broadly negative tone when respondents were asked their expectations of the economic situation in their country for 2003.

In the results to this question, an average of 41% of all EU citizens believed the economic situation would worsen in their country.

The Financial Situation in own household

On an individual household basis there is, however, evidence of a much higher level of confidence. 55% of the EU believe their household's financial situation will remain the same and 24% believe it will be better. Leaving aside 5% "don't knows", only 16% believe their **personal situation** will be worse. Strangely this figure is less than half of the 41% who believe their **country's** economic situation will get worse.

Expectations for the Employment situation

The expectations for the employment situation in Europe as a whole seem to be gloomy. On average across the EU, 44% believe the employment situation will become worse and only 16% believe it will be better. The UK figures show a relatively high level of confidence with only 30% believing the situation will get worse on a country wide basis.

When the same respondents were asked to assess job prospects on an individual basis, there is a feeling of optimism which is at odds with the gloomy view in the previous table where 44% of those polled believed the **job situation in the country as a whole** would worsen. This is in stark contrast to the low figure of 8% of EU citizens believing that their own **personal job situation** will deteriorate.

The European Emblem

WE find that there is a low level of recognition of the European flag in the UK (73%) compared with an EU average of 89% and figures of 98% in Luxembourg and Denmark.

Those people who said that they had seen the European flag were then asked what it signified. In five countries more than 95% identified it correctly, while in the UK this figure was only 77%

Knowledge of the European Union

Once again the UK scores low in this part of the survey relating to the level of knowledge of the policies and institutions of the European Union.

Preferred sources of Information on the European Union

Short leaflets as well as more detailed brochures were popular methods not listed in the current methods of getting information.

Is membership of the European Union a good or bad thing?

Overall there is a slight increase in the number of people in the European Union who believe that their country's membership of the EU is a good thing - from 53% to 55% since Spring 2002.

But this total figure hides country by country variations such as an increase in support from Austria (37% to 46%) and Sweden (38% to 43%) which contrasts with a decline from Finland (47% to 41%) and Portugal (62% to 56%).

There are also substantial variations in the basic figures. For example 83% of those polled in Luxembourg and 74% of Irish people saw membership as a "good thing" compared with only 31% of the UK poll.

Has membership of the EU brought benefits to your country?

Again there are substantial country by country variations. While in the EU as a whole, half of those polled (50%) believed that their country had received benefits, the constituent parts of this total ranged from 82% in Ireland to 31% in Sweden and 30% in the UK.

The image of the EU

On average 50% of those polled across the EU have a positive view of the EU. However this hides figures as different as 69% in Ireland and 29% in the UK.

Personal advantages brought by your country's EU Membership

Approximately half of those polled in the EU (46%) believe that it has personally brought them as many advantages as disadvantages. However, on average, more than a quarter of those polled (27%) believe that there were more advantages while only 15% believed that membership had brought them disadvantages. Within these broad figures there are also wide variations. For example while 15% of the Irish group believed membership had personally brought them many more advantages, this was a feeling echoed by only 2% of the UK sample. The UK's "don't know" contingent made up nearly one in five of those polled.

How important a role will the EU play in your life in five years time?

On average across the Union just over a third of people (38%) believed the role would be the same while 45% believed it would be more important. In the UK 47% believed the role would be more important.

Overall Trends in the Awareness of European Institutions

A positive sign to emerge is the increased awareness of European Institutions across the Union when the average figures for the EU are analysed. In the few months separating this Eurobarometer survey from the last one in Spring 2002, there has been an appreciable increase in the level of awareness of nine of these ten bodies.

Trust in European Institutions

The constant feature that emerges is the low level of trust from the UK sample. In all instances the figures showed that the percentage of people in the UK tending not to trust European institutions was higher than the percentage that tended to trust them.

This is the exact opposite of the EU average where in the case of all ten institutions, more people tended to trust them than not.

Teaching Children about the way European Institutions work

The teaching of children about the way Europe works, is supported by 84% of all EU respondents. In Luxembourg, Finland and Sweden the support figures exceed 90%. This overall figure is 3% higher than the figure in Spring 2002 and shows the importance of this issue across the Union.

In the UK the level of support for this in Eurobarometer 58.1 is a relatively low 75% while in Flash 137 it increases to 86%.

Current Fears of EU Citizens

In the UK, respondents were considerably more nervous of external events than the average EU Citizen. The Portuguese and the Greeks were also evident as “worried nations”. It is worth noting the sharp increase in the level of concern in both the UK specifically and the EU as a whole.

Defence in Europe

Respondents were asked whether decisions concerning EU policy should be taken by the national government, by NATO or by the European Union. The UK was very keen on decisions

taken by NATO and of those polled a third (33%) favoured this organisation. Only Denmark (39%) gave more support.

Overall however, there was strong backing for the EU to take decisions in the field of defence and on average this had the support of 44% of all EU respondents. The Italians supported it very strongly with 64% of those polled in favour.

A European Monetary Union with one single currency –The Euro

On average across the EU, 63% of those polled were in favour of one single currency. 30% were against it and 7% said they did not know.

However when the figures are split up there is, as might be expected, a major divide between the 12 members of the Euro zone and the three countries outside it (UK, Denmark and Sweden). While the Eurozone-12 were 71% in favour, this figure tumbles to only 33% for the three non-Eurozone countries.

The Euro replacing the national Currency

In the three countries of the EU that are not members of the Eurozone, respondents were asked about their attitude to the Euro replacing the national currency. The UK stood out as the country least receptive to the idea with 50% of those polled considering it to be a fairly bad (17%) or very bad (37%) thing.

The Debate on Enlargement

Across Europe there appears to be a low level of involvement in this area with only 21% of those polled feeling they were contributing either a “great deal” or “somewhat” to the debate. This compares with an even lower 9% in the UK.

How well informed are you on enlargement?

The highest percentage of people (45%) considering themselves not at all well informed was from the UK. In contrast, by far the highest level of information was claimed by the Finns where 61% of those polled considered themselves well or very well informed.

EU Attitudes towards the United States

Respondents were asked their views of the role of the USA in five areas.

On the question of *world peace* virtually one in two (46%) Europeans held a negative view of the US's role in this area. Making up the average EU figure of 32% of those polled who took a

positive stance towards the US's role regarding world peace were 42% of respondents in Ireland and 47% of those in the UK. At the other end of the spectrum were just 13% of the Greeks.

While the US was seen to have a negative effect on world peace, its role as world policeman in the *fight against terrorism* was more appreciated across the EU, with 54% of those polled believing the USA played a positive role. Major support came from two thirds of the UK (68%). This is in contrast to low levels of support from Greece (26%) and Spain (29%).

There was a wide spread of opinion in EU opinion relating to America's role in the *growth of the world economy* with the positive camp representing 38% of EU respondents being only slightly ahead of the 34% whose viewpoint was negative. Greece was once again the least convinced country with 64% taking a negative view of the US.

The USA received little support in its role as the *defender of the poor*. Nearly half the EU poll (49%) had a negative view in this area with only 20% being positive.

EU opinion towards America's role in *protecting the environment* is also low. Only 16% across the Union took a positive view – notably 31% in Ireland and 24% in Portugal were included in this figure. Two Nordic countries (Denmark and Sweden) did not even achieve double digit support in this positive section. The negative vote averaged 57% across the EU and accounted for more than two thirds of those polled in Denmark, Greece, France and Luxembourg.