



Standard Eurobarometer



European
Commission

EUROBAROMETER 64.2

PUBLIC OPINION IN EUROPEAN UNION

AUTUMN 2005

NATIONAL REPORT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ROMANIA

Standard Eurobarometer 64.2 / Autumn 2005 – TNS Opinion & Social

The survey was commissioned and coordinated by the Directorate General Press and Communication

The report was produced for the European Commission Delegation in Romania.

The document does not necessarily represent the point of view of the EC Delegation.

The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of its author.

Contents

Themes	3
Declining Euro-Optimism	3
Constant Concerns and Expectations.....	4
Knowledge of EU Consistent with Euro-Indifference	5
Reduced Knowledge but High Demand for Information about EU	6
Reduced but Stable Satisfaction and Declining Optimism	6
Values	7
Decline in low confidence in national institutions	7
European-national identity orientation.....	7
With a mainly „centre” political orientation	8
Interest in energy saving	9

Tables and figures

<i>Table 1. Typology of societies according to the ethnic-identity orientation</i>	<i>8</i>
--	----------

<i>Figure 1. Decline in trust in EU and in Euro-optimism. Romania 2004-2005</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Figure 2. „From the following list of actions, could you tell me what should be, for you, the three actions that the European Union should follow in priority?”, 2004-2005.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Figure 3. Trust in national and international institutions.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Figure 4. Trust in EU by countries, EB64 (answers by „inclined to trust” to the question QA7.13).....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Figure 5. Trust in European Union by countries and education levels.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Figure 6. Pride to be European, by country EB64.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Figure 7. Pride to belong to the nationality specific to the surveyed country, EB 64.....</i>	<i>13</i>

Abbreviations

EB Eurobarometer

EB62 Eurobarometer, data collected for 30 countries in the period 2 October – 8 November 2004, and for Romania in the period 14 – 27 October 2004

EB63.4 Standard Eurobarometer, data collected for 30 countries in the period 9 May – 14 June 2005, and for Romania in the period 23 May – 3 June 2005

EB64.2 Standard Eurobarometer, data collected for 30 countries in the period 11 October – 15 November 2005, and for Romania in the period 13 October – 31 October 2005

EU25 The European Union, data concerning all Member States

EU15 Europe of “the 15” or “the old Member States”

NMS Europe of the 10 new Member States, following the 2004 accession wave

2004/2 EB wave of autumn 2004

2005/1 EB wave of spring 2005

2005/2 EB wave of autumn 2005

Themes

1. The report presents the main results of the Eurobarometer (EB) survey for Romania. This is wave 64 of this survey at European level. In Romania the first national report based on Eurobarometer data was compiled for wave 62, corresponding to the survey of autumn 2004. This report is the third in the Romanian series and analyses data collected by TNS CSOP. The questionnaire included in the annex was applied to a random sample of 1,000 persons between 13 October and 31 October 2005.

2. The new report for autumn 2005 was drawn up as a follow-up to the previous one. This option is justified first of all by the fact that the Romanian social agenda continues to be dominated by the same major themes and the related questions:

Perception of the Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge • popular sentiment (confidence, scepticism, optimism etc.)
Problems and solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romanian problems • the players capable of solving them • social support for accession
Subjective social inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • satisfaction • optimism
Orientations in terms of values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...institutional • ...identity • ...economic • ...political

3. The annexes include technical details and arguments, destined for those who are also interested in the grounds for the interpretations provided in the report.

Declining Euro-Optimism

4. Romanians continue to be the nation with the strongest positive social response to the EU. However, their level of trust in the EU is declining steadily.

4.1. There was a decline from 74% in autumn 2004, to 68% in spring 2005 and again down to 64% in autumn 2005. An even sharper decline is apparent in the proportion of Euro-optimists (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

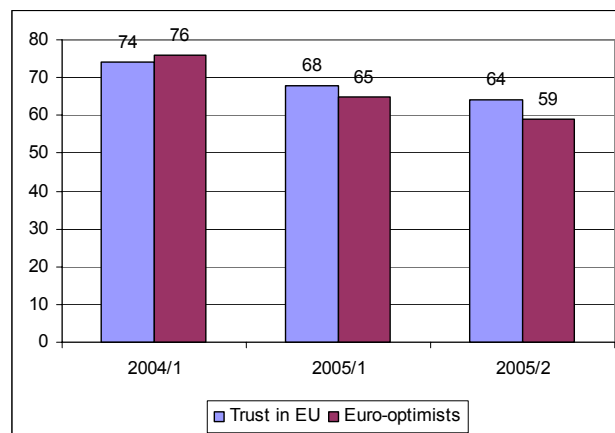


Figure 1. Decline in trust in EU and in Euro-optimism. Romania 2004-2005

4.2. The 6% reduction in the number of Euro-optimists during 2005 is accompanied by an increase in Euro-indifference by an equal amount.

4.3. The most significant loss of confidence in the EU, as far as Romania is concerned, is recorded in rural areas and among the population with a low level of education:

4.3.1. in less than half a year, in rural areas there was a 7% decline in the number of those who have confidence in the EU (as against an only 2% decline in urban areas);

4.3.2. during the same period of time, confidence in the EU decreased among the population with an elementary education level¹ by 11% as against only 4% in the whole sample.

4.4. It emerges from the survey sample that a high level of confidence in the EU in Romania's case is strongly determined by the population's education pattern (Figure 5):

4.4.1. the Romanians with a low education level have relatively little confidence in EU (44%). In a comparison of European countries looking at trust in the EU expressed only by people with a primary education level (not the entire population of the country sample), Romania is placed in the middle of the continental hierarchy as regards confidence in the EU

4.4.2. In the EU confidence hierarchy of the population segment with the highest education level, Romania is placed third, after Portugal and the Republic of Cyprus, while in the hierarchy of people with a medium education level Romania comes second, after Portugal.

5. A similar declining confidence is expressed also in the national, Romanian institutions:

5.1. the most significant decline in confidence is expressed in political institutions, that is Government, Parliament and political parties.

5.2. confidence in the justice system no longer follows the upward course recorded in the previous period between autumn 2004 and spring 2005. In the period between EB63 and EB64, the Romanians' confidence in the justice system has fallen from 35% to 31%. The only 4% difference may be the effect of the change in public perception but also of an evaluation error. However, the level recorded in autumn 2005 is still higher than that of autumn 2004 (26%).

Constant Concerns and Expectations

6. Agriculture, higher taxes and growing drug addiction are the three concerns which Romanians express in connection with the process of European integration. Over the past year, these concerns have continued to be the prevailing ones; moreover, they have slightly increased.

7. Stable, but still at a relatively low level (approx. 20%) are the concerns of a cultural nature, concerning a possible loss of the national identity.

8. Independently from the process of European integration, Romanians perceive the economic situation, the growing prices and unemployment as the main problems of the country.

8.1. Economy and prices figured high among the top three concerns also during the previous survey waves 2005/1 and 2004/2. A new focus of concern is unemployment, raising more fears in autumn 2005 compared with the spring of the same year.

8.2. In terms of its social agenda profile, Romania falls into the same group with Bulgaria, Greece and Portugal. This is a group of predominantly Balkan states (except for Portugal). To the population in these states, the prevailing interest or concern is caused by the economic situation, in particular its components related to unemployment and prices. Crime, health and pensions make up the second most important group of concerns for the population of these states.

9. The Romanians' image of the actions to which the European Union should give high priority is a reflection of the Romanian social agenda.

9.1. If the main problems are the economy and unemployment, then, in the opinion of the average Romanian, the EU policies should be targeted at fighting poverty and unemployment. This type of social reasoning is implicit in the data yielded by the last three Eurobarometer surveys.

9.2. A comparison of the last three Eurobarometer surveys indicates a greater stability of the Romanians' expectations of the EU (Figure 2).

9.3. However, there are several areas in which the Romanians' expectations of the EU have considerably increased: the fight against terror, the fight against drugs and the fight against unemployment.

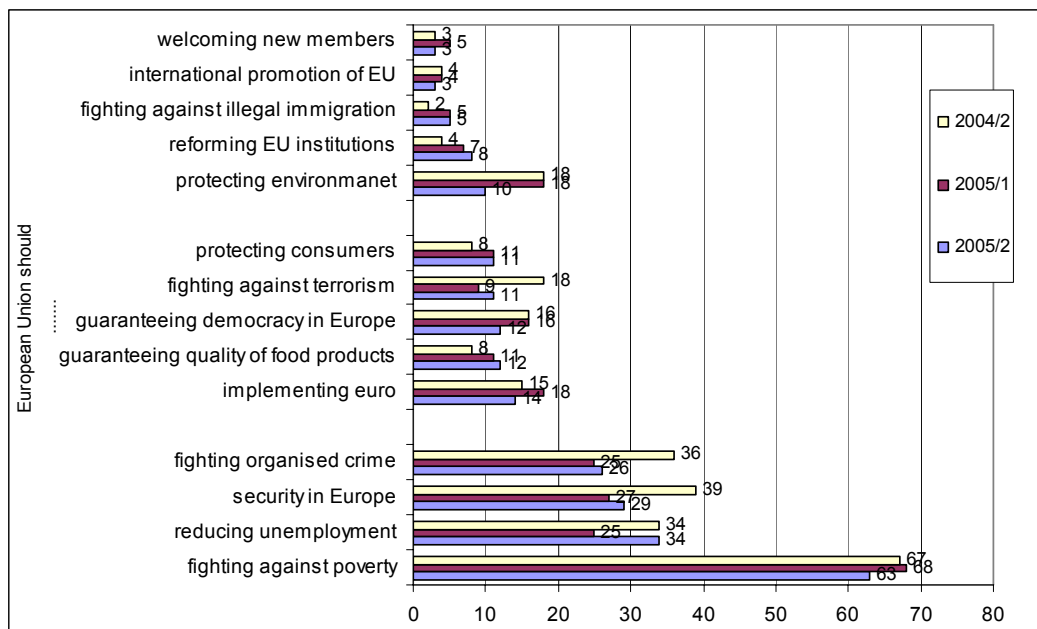


Figure 2., „From the following list of actions, could you tell me what should be, for you, the three actions that the European Union should follow in priority?” 2004-2005

Knowledge of EU consistent with Euro-indifference

10. The percentage of Romanians who, on the basis of simple criteria, can be considered to have a good knowledge of the EU's basic institutions went up between 2004/2 and 2005/1 from 28% to 42%. Between spring 2005 and autumn 2005, their percentage decreased from 42% to 37%.

10.1. How is it possible that they should know less about the EU after they knew more? Is this an evaluation error or a specifically Romanian phenomenon? Most likely neither. “No” is the answer to both questions. A similar decline in levels of knowledge of the EU is

noticeable in the EU15 (by 4%) and in the case of the NMS (by 7%). Probably the French and Dutch attitude towards the European Constitution is symptomatic of a decline in Euro-optimism and an increase in Euro-indifference. A significant rise in Euro-scepticism is seemingly out of the question in both the EU area and Romania.

10.2. The above phenomena seem to favour a decline in the interest to know about the European institutions. The available data support the idea that Euro-optimists are more informed about the EU while indifferent or sceptical people know less about the EU institutions².

Reduced Knowledge but High Demand for Information about the EU

11. The relatively low level of knowledge about the EU is accompanied, in the case of Romanians, by a sentiment of badly needing more information about the Union. The percentage of those who consider that they really need more information on issues related to the EU stands at 32% in Romania, a percentage much higher than in NMS or EU15.

11.1. The need for additional information is greater among those who know than among those who do not know: 40% of the Romanians who gave at least two correct answers to the EU knowledge test say that they need much more knowledge in this domain; but only 27% of those who are less informed say that they need more information about the EU institutions.

11.2. If the psychological mechanism suggested by this finding continues to work, we may expect that those with greater knowledge about the Union will be increasingly informed while those with poor information will be less and less informed. The gap concerning information about European institutions will add to the long series of other social gaps existing in Romania.

Reduced but Stable Satisfaction and Declining Optimism

12. During the period corresponding to the last three EB surveys, a period referred to in short "2004/2 – 2005/1 – 2005/2", medium-term economic optimism (over 5 years) related to one's own household decreased from 64% to 56% and to 49%, respectively. This tendency stands in contrast to the stability of optimism in EU15 (around 40%) and in NMS (close to 40% as well).

13. Also on the decrease is short-term optimism, i.e. optimism about the situation of one's own household in one year's time.

13.1. The major decline from this point of view is recorded especially in rural areas, 18%³, as against an only 5% decline among the urban population. Declining optimism in rural areas is a phenomenon specific to Romania.

13.2. This tendency is not to be found in the NMS or EU15. The prevailing pattern in those countries is that of stable optimism. Financial optimism, for instance, the hope for a better pecuniary situation of one's own household, stood at 17% in autumn 2004 in the NMS, rising to 19% in autumn 2005.

Values

Decline of trust in national institutions

14. During 2005, between spring and autumn, the Romanians' confidence in national institutions declined mainly as regards political institutions:

- from 35% to 23% in Parliament,
- from 43% to 30% in Government,
- from 22% to 12% in political parties.

15. As regards the justice system, the decline in confidence stood at only 4 percentage points, from 35% to 31%. Although still higher than the level recorded in autumn 2004, confidence in the system of justice no longer shows the previous tendency towards growth.

16. The varying decrease in the percentages of confidence in institutions recorded in Romania stands in contrast to the confidence recorded in the EU, which is characterised by stability.

16.1. Confidence in national institutions (political parties, Parliament, Government, justice system) compared with international institutions (EU, UNO) is higher in the EU15 than in Romania or in the NMS (Figure 3).

16.2. This finding can be regarded as signifying a stronger consolidation of the institutions within the EU15 states compared with the situation in NMS and in countries like Romania.

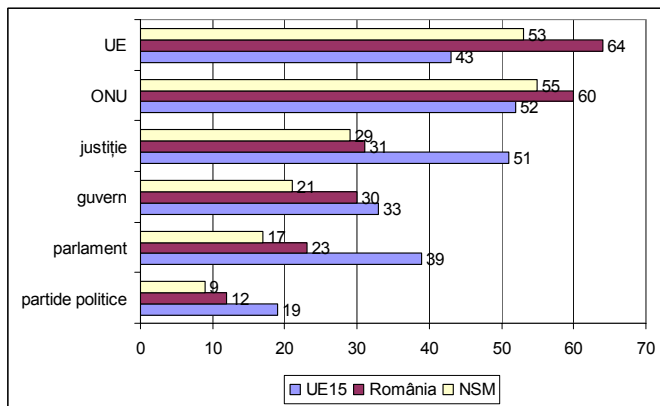


Figure 3. Trust in national and international institutions

17. The most significant difference from EU15 in terms of trust is to be found in connection with confidence in Parliament and in the justice system. The number of Romanians who have confidence in the justice system is twenty percentage points lower than among EU15 citizens. Romanians' confidence in Parliament is sixteen percentage points lower than the confidence expressed by the EU15 population in this institution.

European-national identity orientation

18. The available data allowed for the classification of the surveyed populations into five categories as regards their national and European identity orientation (Table 1, Figure 6, Figure 7).

19. Romania belongs to the group of countries with a European-national orientation: 44% of Romanians say they are equally proud to be Romanians and Europeans. They are joined by another 9% to whom the pride of being European is greater than the pride of being Romanian. It is only in Germany and Slovakia that the percentage of those who set greater store by their European identity compared with the national one comes close to 10%

Table 1. Typology of societies according to the ethnic-identity orientation

• Predominant national orientation	Turkey Greece	Republic of Cyprus Great Britain
• Moderate national orientation	Finland Estonia Latvia	Malta Slovenia
• National-European orientation	Austria The Netherlands Croatia Poland	Ireland Denmark Lithuania Bulgaria
• European-national orientation	Spain France Italy Portugal Romania	Sweden Luxembourg Hungary
• Predominant European orientation	Czech Republic Slovakia	Germany Belgium

20. Pride in being Romanian is stronger among:

- women compared to men
- the old compared to the young
- those who are greater media consumers
- and those who declare that they have a predominant European identity orientation.

21. The affirmation of one's ethnic identity to a greater extent by women compared with men is most likely not so much a gender characteristic, but an occupational one. It is true that 53% of the women interviewed in Romania declare that they are very proud to be Romanian compared with only 48% of the men. However, the situation by occupational category is different. Among workers, liberal professions, owners and office clerks, the percentage of men affirming a strong national identity is higher than that of women.

With a mainly "centre" political orientation

22. Asked about their political orientation, 26% of Romanians give no answer or refuse to answer. Of those who voice an opinion, 40% state they have a "centre" orientation, 32% left-wing orientation and 28% right-wing orientation. Of course, this self-labeling is relative, lacking

a precise ideological foundation, falling into what is called a vague ideology. That things stand in this way is proved by the strong dependence of the options expressed on the social status of the respective persons:

- A left-wing political orientation, in the case of Romania's population, is characteristic of the older people and those with a medium education level in rural areas. In the NMS, this orientation is to be found more frequently among elderly men, with a higher education level and who frequently use the Internet, residents of urban areas. In the case of the EU15 population, the factors which favour left-wing political options are the same as in the NMS, plus higher education as an additional factor.
- A right-wing political orientation, in the case of Romania's population, is characteristic of the people living in villages with a medium and higher education level. In the EU area, this orientation is influenced by gender, age and education. Those who embrace this orientation are mostly elderly men, with medium or higher education, irrespective of the residential environment.
- In Romania, those who claim to have a centre political outlook are mostly men living in rural areas. In the NMS, they are urban residents with a medium or higher education level and who frequently use the Internet.

Interest in energy saving

23. Romania's population is particularly sensitive when it comes to energy consumption. This finding is at least true about the way household appliances are purchased:

- Only 14% of Romanians pay no attention to energy consumption when they buy a light bulb. The corresponding percentages are considerably higher in EU. The percentage of those who pay great attention to this aspect is relatively equal in Romania and among the NMS population (53-54%), but is higher than in the EU15.
- When buying a fridge, Romanians tend to be more careful than EU citizens about aspects related to energy consumption. A similar behaviour and reasoning are noticeable when they buy a car.

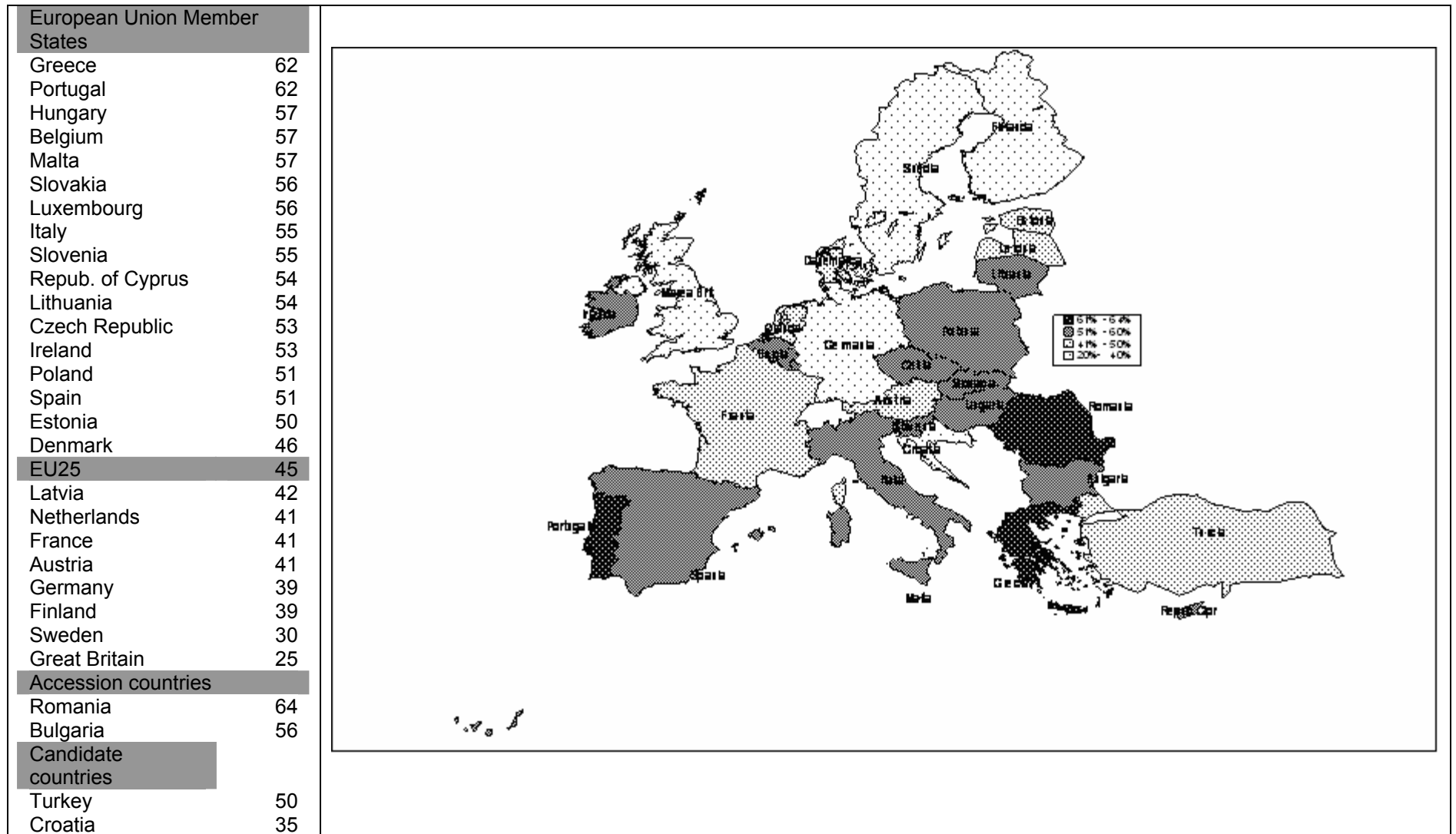


Figure 4. Trust in EU by countries, EB64 (answers by “inclined to trust” to the question QA7.13)

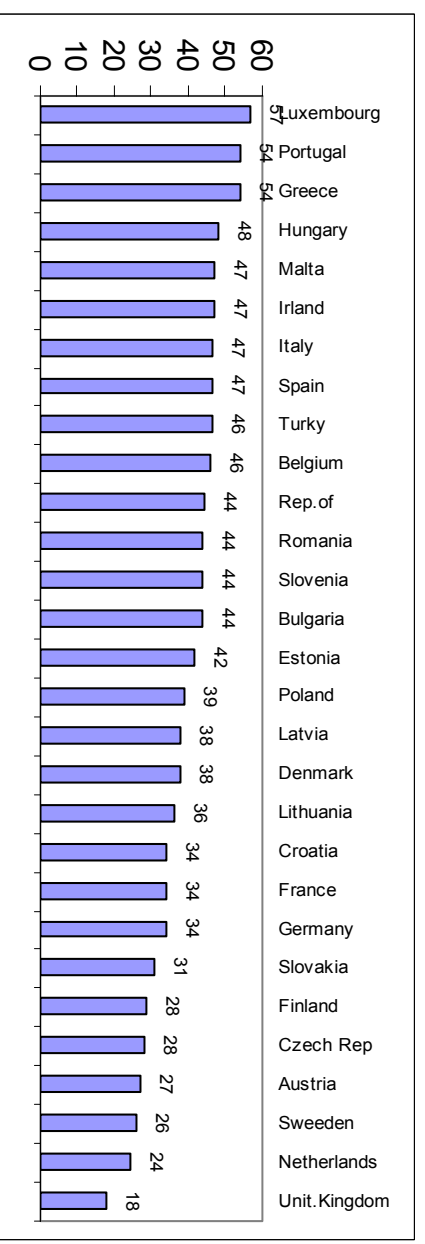
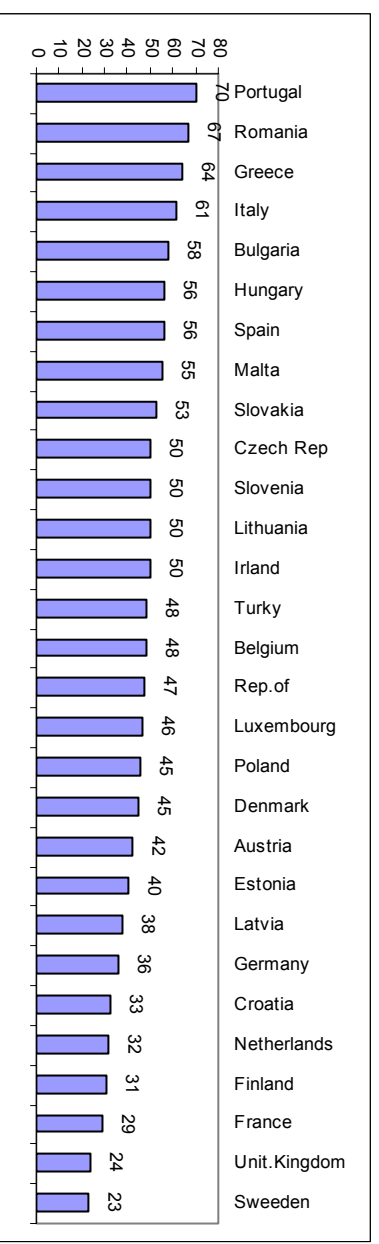
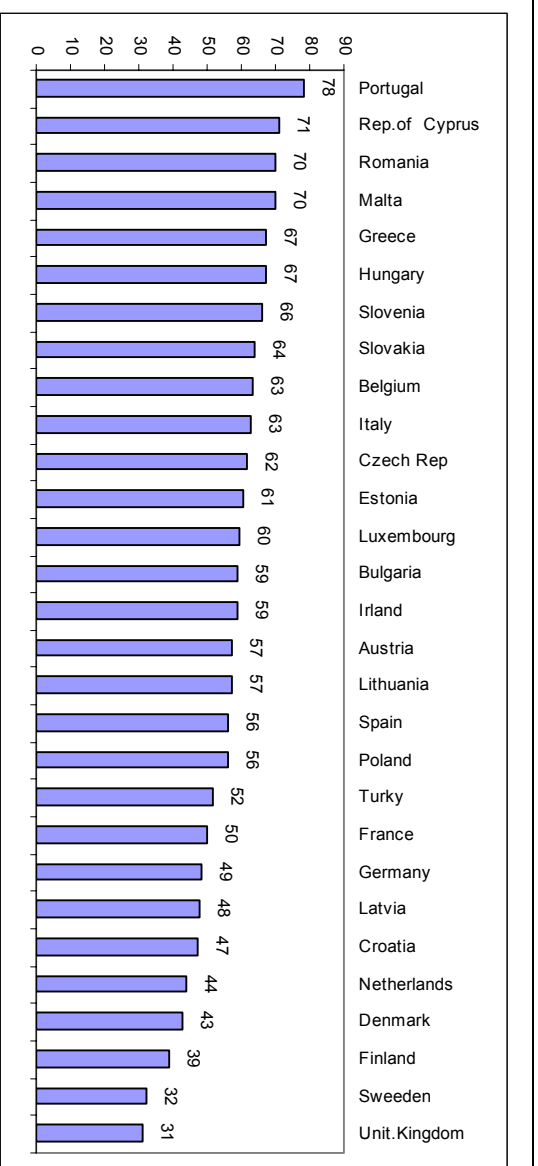


Figure 5. Trust in European Union by countries and education levels

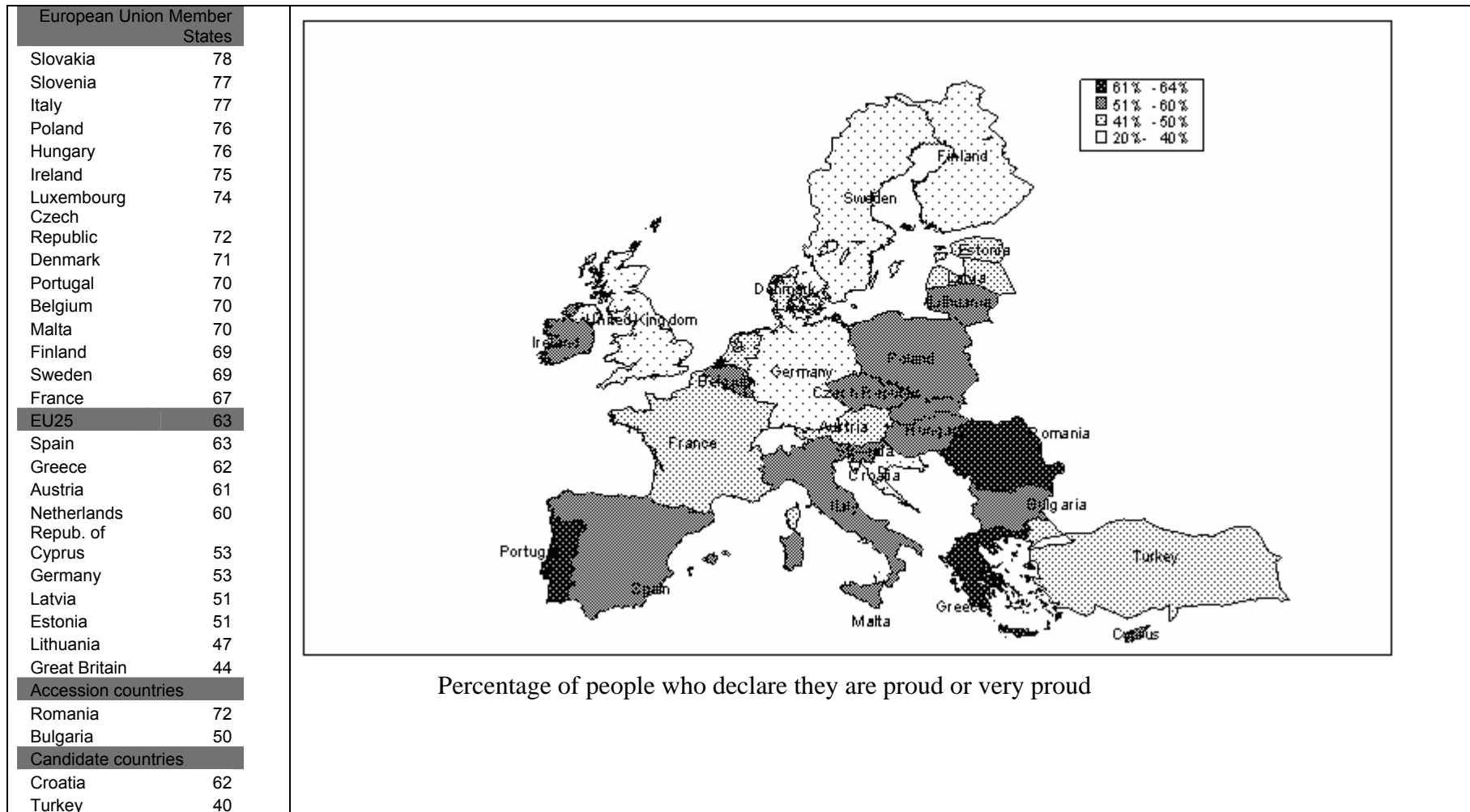


Figure 6.Pride in being European, by country EB64

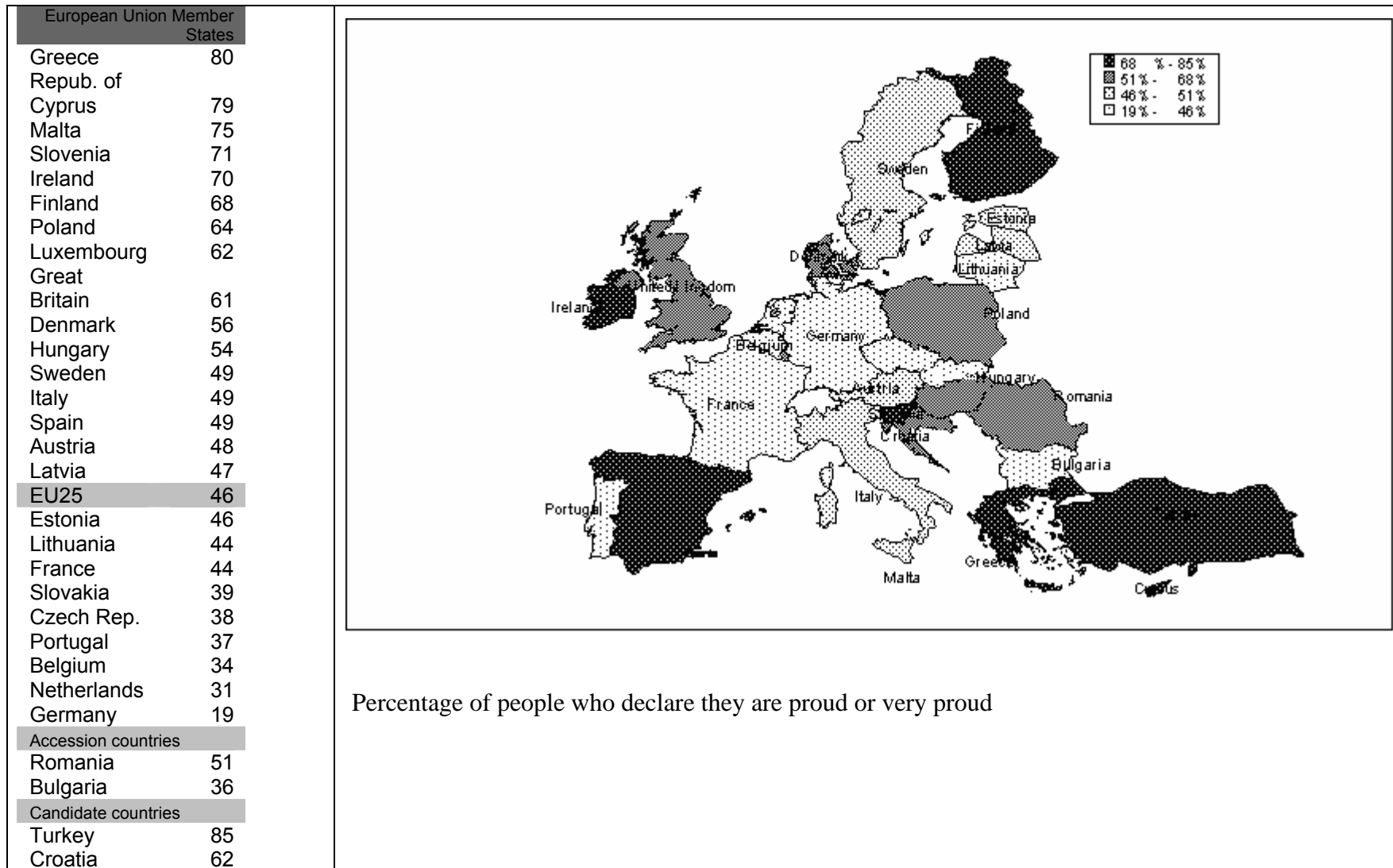


Figure 7. Pride in belonging to the nationality specific to the surveyed country, EB 64

Notes

¹ Rather conventionally, the population with an elementary level education is considered to be formed of those who finished the last education cycle at the age of maximum 15 years. The medium level of education is identified with the last education cycle finished at the age between 16 and 18 years, and the higher education level is identified with the last education cycle finished at the age of over 19 years. These school finishing age thresholds are used in order to facilitate comparability between countries with different education systems. A fourth education category in EB surveys is made up of those who still attend school, those who have not been schooled at all and those who did not answer the question concerning education. In the last three survey waves, the distribution of the Romanian sample according to the education criterion indicates a better comparability between the last two waves than that between the 2005 waves and the 2004/2 wave. This finding is based on the 11% decrease in the “other” category between 2004/2 and 2005/1 and the corresponding change in the “elementary” and “medium” categories.

Level of education	2004/2	2005/1	2005/2
elementary	15	20	21
medium	36	41	41
higher	23	25	24
other (still attending school, NA)	25	14	14*
	100	100	100

* 10 percentage points of the 14% can be accounted for by those who still attend a school cycle.

² 52% of the Euro-indifferent people in Romania failed to give a correct answer to any of the four test-questions about EU. The percentage of Euro-optimists stood at only 31%. Of course, the relation knowledge-optimism can be a two-way relation. In the case under consideration the dominant direction probably is from Euro-optimism to knowledge. The increases in the European stock of knowledge about EU remain to be explained by factors specific to each and every country.

³ This decline in financial optimism by 14 percentage points occurred in the period 2004/2 - 2005/1 and by only 4 percentage points in the period 2005/1 – 2005/2. The 14% point decline may be associated also with the changes mentioned in the education pattern of the sample (see Note 1).