



Standard Eurobarometer



European
Commission

EUROBAROMETER 65

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

SPRING 2006

NATIONAL REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY LUXEMBOURG

This survey was requested and coordinated by Directorate-General Communication.

This report was produced for the European Commission's Representation in Luxembourg.

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Decline of trust in the European institutions and in the positive judgment about membership of the EU

Unemployment remains the major preoccupation

The year 2006 was marked in Luxembourg by a growing unemployment rate. Even though it is one of the lowest in the EU, it is the problem most focused on by public opinion, in spite of the economic situation being marked by an increase of 4%. To the problems of the employment market may be added that of inflation and that of the public deficit, of the national budget, a deficit which Luxembourg was able to escape until now. Luxembourg has seen its first semester dominated, at national level, by tough negotiations between the social partners (unions – employers – government) to try and maintain Luxembourg's model which exists since 1974 with the objective of reforming the country's structures of by consensus. These negotiations were finalized in April following the acceptance of a number of measures, in particular moderation in wage increases and various fiscal increases.

The Eurobarometer 65.2 carried out by the European Commission in spring 2006 the 25 EU member countries, looks at the life of citizens and the perception and image that respondents have of the EU and their trust in European and national political institutions.

The Eurobarometer Survey sample requires that +/- 1.000 persons be interviewed in each EU country. Luxembourg's quota for EB 65.2 was 503 due to the fact that three-quarters of the population are Luxembourg nationals and one-quarter of the population are nationals of other European countries. In his comment, the special report, which was prepared for the Representative of the European Commission in Luxembourg, is referring to Luxembourg's population overall, rather than uniquely residents of Luxembourgish nationality.

Between satisfaction with the way of life and pessimism regarding the employment market

92% of Luxembourg's citizens are satisfied with their way of life. Most citizens do not expect that their personal situation will change in the years to come, but within five years, more than 39% expect an improvement in their personal situation. Even if they expect, in the twelve months to come, a worsening in the general market situation, few people expect a negative evolution in their own professional situation. This acknowledgment is identical to spring 2005 except that in spring 2006, the underlying pessimism has risen.

Luxembourg, cosmopolitan: 45% of citizens have at least one parent born abroad

45% of the citizens in Luxembourg have at least one parent born abroad and only 55% of the parents of the people questioned are both born in Luxembourg. In other words, just under half the population has at least one parent born abroad, mainly from the member countries of the European Union. 39,6% of the resident population in Luxembourg had foreign nationality on 1 January 2006.

The energy crisis

Facing the problems related to energy supply and the increase in energy prices, Luxembourg citizens want more information on energy to be supplied by the public authorities, as well as the introduction of fiscal measures to promote an efficient use of energy. To the general question, if one was ready to pay

more for energy that was renewable, one in two persons in Luxembourg said that they were willing to do so; at an EU level, it is only one in three. Luxembourg is in second place, behind Denmark. However the citizen expresses a big preference for a reduction in energy consumption rather than paying more in the future.

Trust in national and European institutions stays at a high level, but crumbles

The residents of Luxembourg, in general, place great trust in their institutions. In first place, they rank their government (65%), then their Parliament (58%), followed by their legal system (53%) - with scores all of which have been decreasing since the spring 2005 Eurobarometer. In Luxembourg, the seat of several European institutions, trust is far greater than in other EU countries in general. It can be seen that for the second year in a row, there is a decrease in trust in the European institutions among citizens of Luxembourg; this is a case of a slow erosion of a stable 1 to 5 points per year and varies from one institution to another. On the other hand, at European level, after a year of decrease, there has been an increase in trust of between 1 and 5 points depending on the institution.

Luxembourg judges its membership of the EU favourably with 72% holding positive opinions (a fall of 8 percentage points since spring 2005 after a decrease of 5 points in one semester). This only represents the fourth score in the overall ranking by the member countries, a classification where Luxembourg was normally first. This result is matched by the 71% of Luxembourg's citizens feeling that their country has gained from its EU membership – a figure that has not varied much over the same period.

The image of the European Union: Freedom of movement, common currency and peace

In Luxembourg, the EU has a positive image among 54% of the population (58% in autumn 2005, 57% in fall 2005); 15% of the population (+ 4 points in one year) hold a negative image and 29% decline to give an opinion. For the population of Luxembourg, the EU mainly represents the freedom of movement with an almost identical level for the common currency and peace which dropped 6 points in one year. The sense of belonging to their country is important to nine out of ten citizens both in the EU and in Luxembourg; however, Luxembourg residents feel slightly more attached to Europe (LU: 76%; EU: 63%) and the EU (LU: 64% ; EU: 50%) than the average EU citizen.

Information about the European Union

The television is slightly ahead of the other media as a general information source both in Luxembourg and in the EU overall. Television, newspapers and radio are the primary information sources when citizens are questioned about the means they use to inform themselves about the EU. A majority is of the opinion that there is sufficient information about the European Union in the media. Half of the people agree that the information delivered is objective, a quarter disagrees and the rest decline to give an answer.