

# EUROBAROMETER 67

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

SPRING 2007

## NATIONAL REPORT

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### CYPRUS

(Areas under the control of the  
Government of the Republic of Cyprus)

This survey was requested and coordinated by Directorate-General  
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# EUROBAROMETER 67.2 – CYPRUS

(Areas under the control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus)

## Executive Summary

Eurobarometer 67.2 is the sixth survey of the Eurobarometer series conducted in Cyprus following its accession to the European Union. Cyprus joined the European Union with the Cyprus problem remaining unsolved and the *acquis communautaire* being implemented only in the areas under the control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus.

*The survey was conducted between 11 April and 7 May a period during which there was some mobility on the Cyprus issue, immediately after the demolition of the wall at the end of Ledra Street on the UN buffer zone in Nicosia. The main events which dominated the media during this period concerned Turkey's EU accession process and the fulfillment of its related obligations, the presidential election process in Turkey and France, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, the third anniversary of Cyprus' accession to the European Union, the discussions concerning the viability of the Social Security Fund in Cyprus, the studies related to the extraction of petroleum off the coast of Cyprus, the upcoming accession of Cyprus to the Eurozone, climate change, the discussion regarding the possible accession of Cyprus to the Partnership for Peace, the arrest of MEP Marios Matsakis by the British Bases authorities, the row with regards to the creation of landfill facilities near the village of Lympia, matters concerning the relations between the two communities on the island, Iran's nuclear program, the arrest of British marines by Iran and the continuing violence in Iraq.*

## A. Life in Cyprus

### **Citizens appear satisfied with their life:**

- The overwhelming majority of citizens (87%) are satisfied with the life they lead.
- The level of satisfaction has fallen marginally by 1 percentage point from the levels recorded in the autumn and spring of 2006.
- A significant increase of 6 percentage points is observed in the segment of the population which is very satisfied.

### **A large number of citizens do not expect changes with regard to their personal situation in the coming 12 months:**

- 45% expect that life in general will remain the same, 35% expect an improvement and 13% a worsening. An increase is observed in the number expecting improvement of their personal situation in comparison with autumn 2006 (28%).
- 54% do not expect changes in the financial situation of their household, 15% expect an improvement and 27% a worsening.

- On their personal employment situation, 61% of citizens predict stability. 12% expect an improvement and 10% a worsening. It is noteworthy that 50% of the population expects working conditions in Cyprus to deteriorate.
- Over time, short-term expectations regarding personal issues appear marginally differentiated.

**Expectations as to the evolution of the national economy and employment conditions are dominated by pessimism:**

- Over half the population expects that both the national economy (53%) and employment conditions (50%) will deteriorate within the next 12 months. Only 14% believe that the national economy will improve and 26% believe it will remain unchanged. (There is increased optimism compared with the autumn of 2006).

**The two main problems worrying citizens remain crime (51%, up by 9 percentage points from autumn 2006) and inflation (28%, down by 11 percentage points from autumn 2006).**

**There is a considerable increase in the level of trust shown by citizens towards the government and parliament:**

- Compared with the Eurobarometer of autumn 2006, the level of trust of citizens towards the government increased from 56% to 64% and the level of trust towards the parliament increased from 51% to 67%.

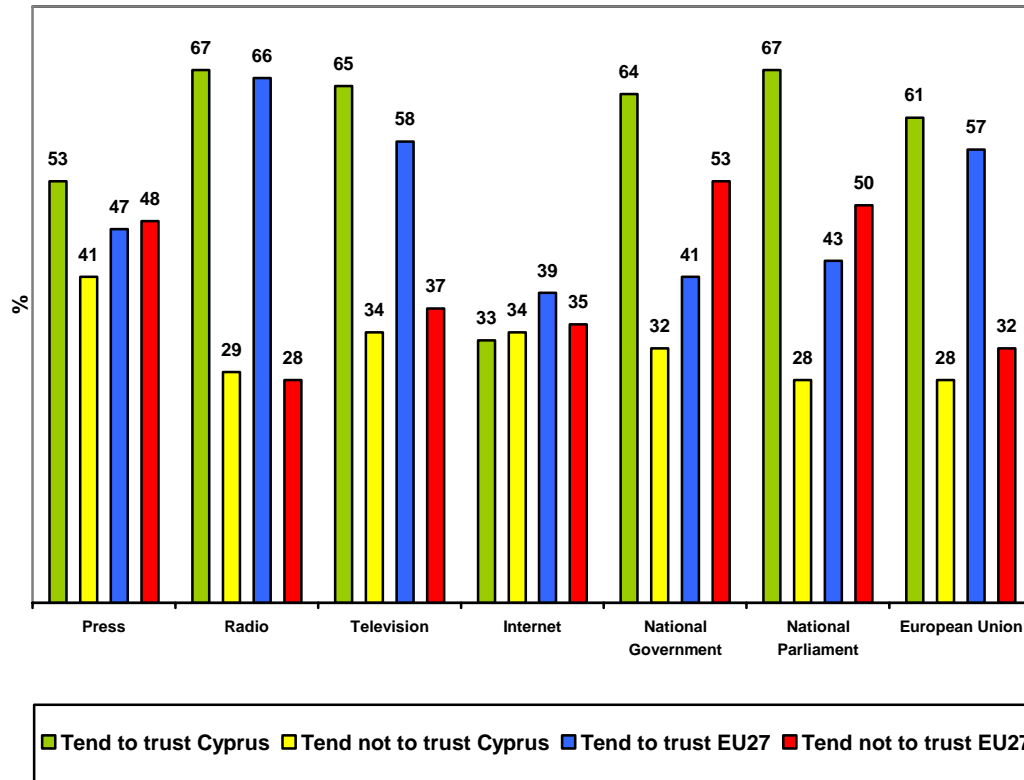
**A majority of public opinion trusts the press. 53% exhibit trust and 41% do not. The corresponding levels for the EU27 are 47% and 48% respectively.**

- 65% of Cypriot citizens trust television, higher than the 58% in the EU27. 33% trust the internet (EU27 39%), 34% do not, with a significant 33% (down from the 45% recorded in autumn 2006) not responding.

## Cypriot citizens continue to exhibit a high level of trust towards the European Union:

- The majority of citizens (61%) trusts the European Union (increased from the 57% in autumn 2006). It is significant that the degree of trust towards the European Union is higher than the EU27 average (57%).

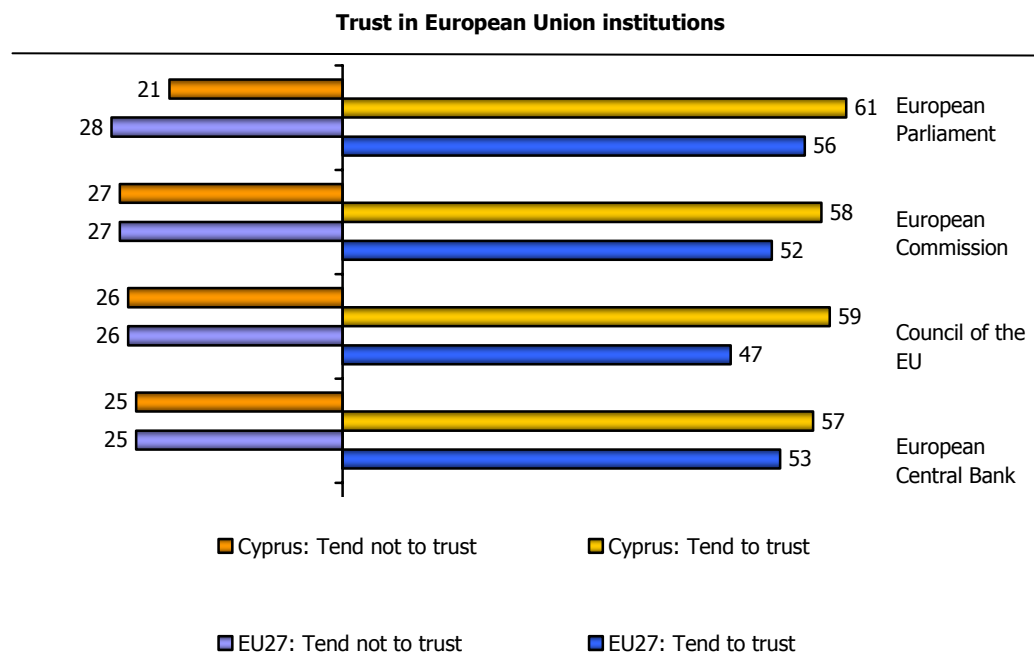
Trust in institutions



## B. Europeans and the European Union

### The majority of citizens trust the main institutions of the European Union:

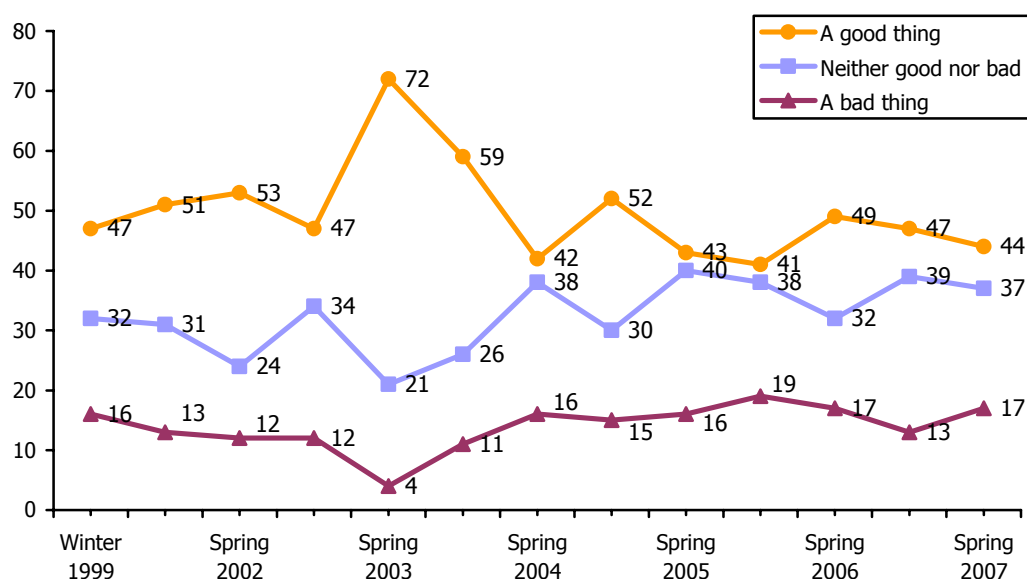
- Trust in the European Parliament is expressed by 61% of Cypriots, in the European Commission by 58%, in the Council of the European Union by 59% and in the European Central Bank by 57%. All of the percentages have increased since autumn 2006 survey and are higher than the EU27 average.



**Half the citizens residing in areas under the control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus view membership of the European Union positively. The majority of citizens believes that membership is a positive thing (44%), 17% considers it a negative thing and the remaining 37% neither positive nor negative.**

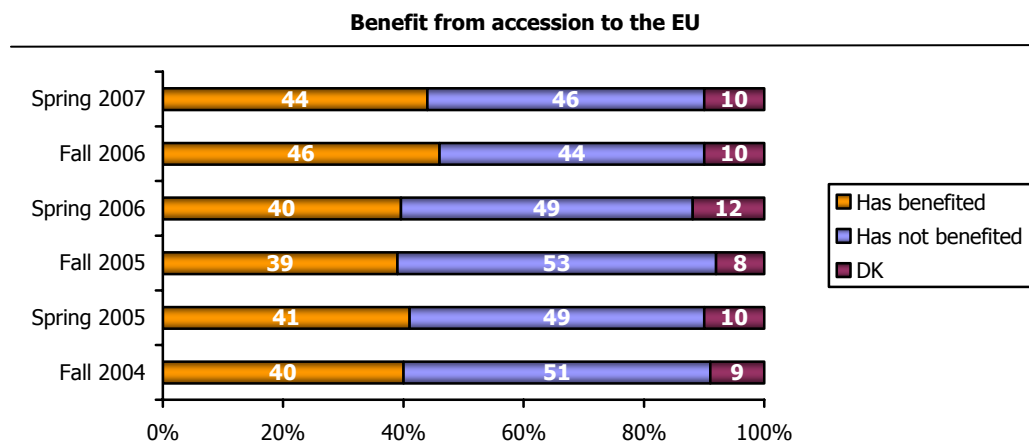
- The incidence of positive opinions is reduced compared with previous Eurobarometer surveys.
- Cyprus ranks sixth lowest amongst EU member states in the level of positive opinion with regard to membership of the European Union.

**Opinion on the accession of Cyprus**



**Over time, the percentage of citizens who believe that Cyprus has benefited from accession to the EU remains stable:**

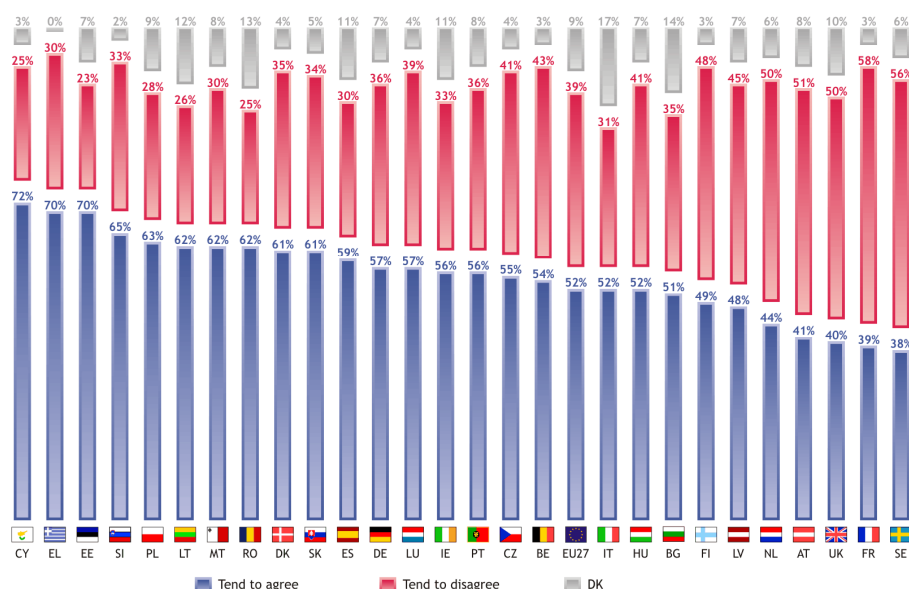
- 44% of citizens believe that Cyprus has benefited from its accession to the European Union. This percentage remains below the EU27 average (59%) and shows a reduction of 2 percentage points from autumn 2006. The percentage which believes that Cyprus has not benefited is at 46%, an increase of 2% from the autumn survey.



**The vast majority of Cypriots (72%, the highest in the EU) feel safer because Cyprus is a member of the EU. One in four (25%) answered that they do not feel safer.**

Question: QA34a.1. Please tell me for each statement, whether you tend to agree or tend to disagree.

Option: I feel I am safer because (OUR COUNTRY) is a member of the EU



**More than half the citizens (53%) state that they have a positive image of the European Union:**

- The percentage of citizens with a positive image exceeds the percentage of citizens who believe that Cyprus's membership is a good thing (44%) and that Cyprus has benefited from its membership in general (44%). Similar results were observed in previous Eurobarometer waves.

**More than half the citizens state that they understand the way the European Union works:**

- With 51% of citizens (drop of 7 percentage points since autumn 2006) stating that they understand the way the European Union works, Cyprus is ranked amongst the top seven countries with the highest stated understanding of the way the EU works.

**The majority of citizens are aware of the institutions of the European Union:**

- A strong majority of citizens have heard of the European Parliament (88%), the European Commission (87%), the Council of the European Union (85%), and the European Central Bank (78%).



**Citizens in the areas under the control of the Republic of Cyprus describe their knowledge with regard to European political affairs as not so good. The same applies across the member states:**

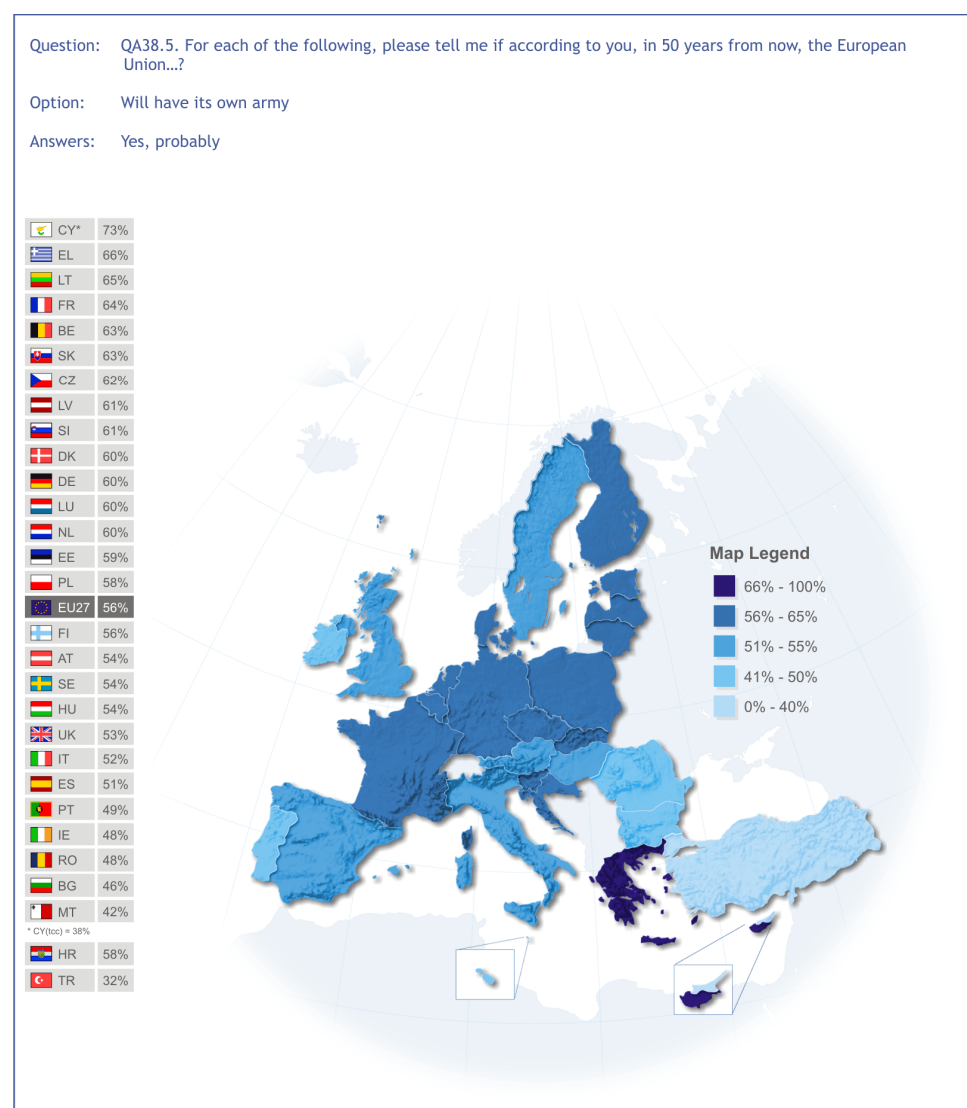
- Only 20% of Cypriot citizens answered positively with regard to their level of knowledge on European political affairs, while 79% answered negatively. The corresponding levels in the EU27 are 30% and 68%.
- Only 10% of Cypriots never look for information about the European Union. Of those who do, 68% rely on television, 36% on daily newspapers and a significant 28% on the internet.

**According to Cypriot citizens, in order to strengthen the European Union in the future, the main priority of European institutions in the coming years should be the fight against crime (33%).**

- Following, in order of preference, are social issues (32%) and environmental issues (32%). The main priorities set by European citizens as a whole are environmental issues (34%) and the fight against crime (33%).

**69% (a decrease of 6 percentage points) of those asked support a European Union constitution, and 17% are against (an increase of 5 percentage points). The equivalent average percentages for the EU27 are 66% in support and 20% opposed.**

**73% of citizens in areas under the control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus share the opinion that, in 50 years, the European Union will have its own army, the highest percentage recorded in the EU. The corresponding number for the EU27 is 56%.**



**50% of Cypriots are in favour of a European Monetary Union with a common currency, the Euro; 45% are against.**

- The equivalent averages in the EU 27 are 63% for and 31% against. The highest support is recorded in Slovenia with 91% and the lowest in the United Kingdom with 29% in favour.

**61% of Cypriots have the opinion that the EU will have, with the Euro, a more powerful currency than the dollar, in 50 years' time.**

- The highest level of positive opinion on the matter is recorded in the Netherlands with 72%, whilst the EU27 average stands at 61%.

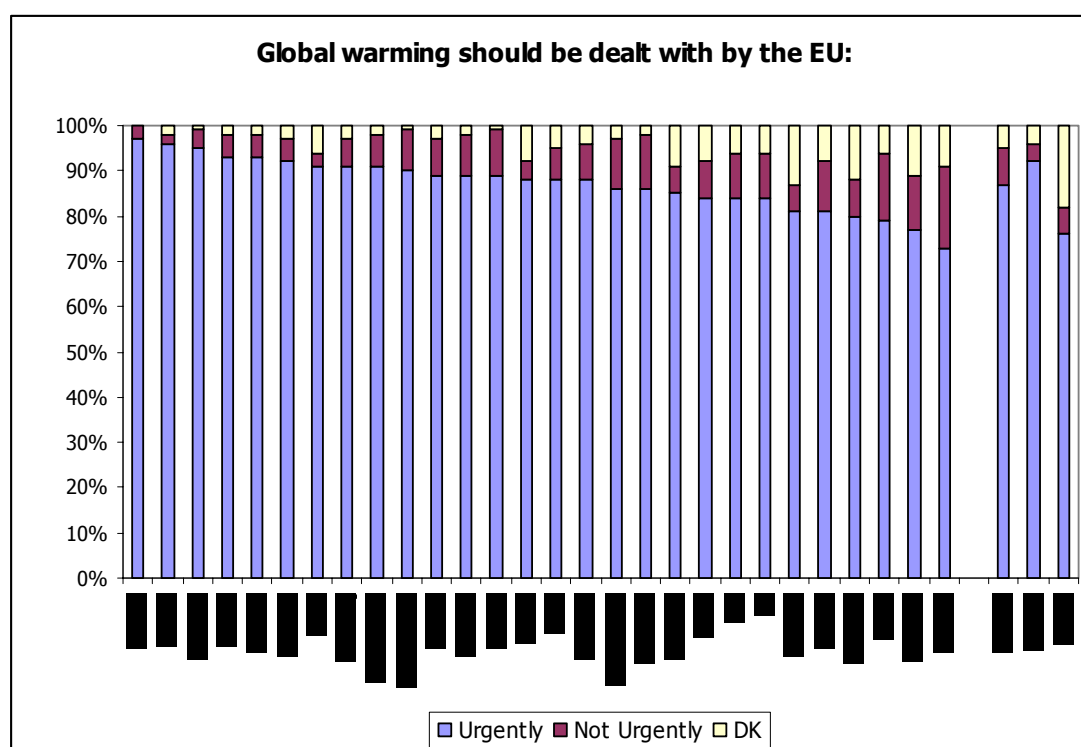
**Public opinion in Cyprus is split with regard to globalization, with 44% of respondents considering it a negative thing and 39% a positive one.**

- 27% of citizens associate the term globalization with foreign investment in Cyprus, and 25% with increased competition for Cypriot companies.
- 37% of Cypriots agree that the EU helps to protect them from the negative effects of globalization, and 46% agree that the European Union enables European citizens to better benefit from the positive effects of globalization.

**The majority of Cypriots (65%) are in favour of further enlargement of the European Union, with only 20% against.**

- The EU27 average on further enlargement of the European Union is 49% in support and 39% against.
- On the matter of a European Monetary Union, 50% of Cypriots are for it, 79% are for a common foreign policy among the Member States of the EU, 91% are for a common defence and security policy, and 69% are for a constitution for the European Union.

**The overwhelming majority of Cypriots (96%) believe that global warming is an issue that should be dealt by the European Union urgently.**



- 94% of citizens believe that the European Union should urgently put new policies in place to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% by 2020.

**Nearly half the citizens in the areas under the control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus believe that national legislation protects them from the use of personal data by third parties (46%).**

- 62% of Cyprus's citizens say that they are not well-informed with regard to the rules and requirements for protecting the personal data of citizens in their country. The average in the EU is 60%.
- With regard to giving law enforcement authorities access to personal data for the purpose of fighting crime and terrorism, only 23% of Cypriots consider it an unwarranted intrusion into citizens' personal affairs (EU27 26%).

|   | CYPRUS % | EU27 % |
|---|----------|--------|
| <b>It is an unwarranted intrusion into citizen's personal affairs</b> | 23       | 26     |
| <b>Compared to the benefits, it is only a minor inconvenience</b>     | 40       | 44     |
| <b>It is not an intrusion at all</b>                                  | 30       | 19     |
| <b>DK</b>   | 7        | 11     |

**With regard to the issues that most create a feeling of community among European Union citizens, Cypriots ranked, in first place, the issue of culture (30%), followed by values (27%), and religion (25%). On the issue of religion, Cyprus is among the top four ranked EU Member States.**

- The equivalent top issues for the EU in whole are culture and economy with 27% each, followed by history with 21%.