

# EUROBAROMETER 67

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

## SPRING 2007

NATIONAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Denmark

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

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## Summary

This report presents the findings of the Eurobarometer-survey completed between 10 April and 14 May 2007.

The report sheds light on the attitude Danes have towards their own life, the situation in Denmark, as well as their attitudes towards the European Union.

## The Danes' contentment and expectations

### - Danes among the most satisfied in Europe

Optimism continues to be high in Denmark. Consumer confidence is high and unemployment is historically low. This may explain why Danes are so satisfied personally.

### - Great expectations for the upcoming year

Generally, Danes expect their own situation, as well as Denmark's, to improve or remain the same in the year ahead. Only a minority expects the situation will get worse in the year ahead. This is primarily the case when it comes to the expectations Danes have regarding the EU's economic situation.

### - Danes situation has improved over last five years

A majority of Danes believes their current situation is improved compared with five years ago. Only one out of ten Danes believes their current situation is worse than five years ago. Here, the retired are over-represented.

### - Positive outlook of the coming five year

The Danes' satisfaction with life is reflected in their expectations for the future where the outlook is positive. Hence, half of all Danes expect their situation to improve in the course of the next five year.

### - The environmental situation is better in Denmark than the EU average

In a variety of fields, Danes believe the situation to be better in Denmark than is the case for the EU overall. The environmental situation, in particular, is perceived to be better; whereas the energy costs for Danish consumers are perceived to be higher than in other EU countries.

### - Health care: The number one priority for Danes

According to Danes, health care is the most important issue Denmark is facing currently. Environmental protection and crime are also prioritised highly by Danes.

Contrary to the EU27 average, Danes do not consider unemployment to be one of the most important problems facing the country.

# **Danes' knowledge on and attitude towards EU policies**

- **Danes partly informed on European political matters**

Only four out of ten Danes believe they are informed on European political matters, of which the majority are only somewhat informed. Nevertheless, a higher percentage of Danes believe themselves to be informed compared with the average EU27 citizen.

- **Danes knowledgeable about the environment**

Specifically, in regard to the EU, Danes are mostly knowledgeable on issues concerning the environment, defence and foreign policy, as well as the fight against terrorism

- **Danes lack knowledge about initiatives taken in fellow member countries**

The majority of Danes believe they are not well-informed on initiatives in other EU member countries. Nonetheless, Denmark ranks highest among the countries that are most knowledgeable.

- **Decision-making authority**

Problems such as the fight against terrorism and protection of the environment should be solved in the EU framework, according to Danes. On the other hand, Danes believe that problems with a more immediate feel, such as pensions and tax, should be decided on by the Danish government.

- **Two speed Europe**

Both Danes and the average EU citizen believe that those countries which are ready to intensify the development of a common European policy in certain important areas should do so without having to wait for the others. However, the percentage of Danes with this attitude has fallen since the last Eurobarometer-survey in autumn 2006.

- **European integration**

Danes have a positive view on further European integration in areas such as defence, security and foreign policy. Likewise, a majority of Danes believes children should be taught on how EU institutions work. However, Danes are sceptical with regard to the further geographical expansion of the EU and also with regard to a European constitution.

- **Danes' attitude on social concepts**

Generally, Danes associate something positive with a number of social concepts. Specifically, Danes associate something positive with the welfare state, flexibility and competitiveness. Protectionism is one term that a majority of Danes do not associate anything positive with.

## European integration through 50 years

- **Most positive result of EU-integration: peace among member countries**

Almost half of all Danes believe peace among the member states of the EU to be the most positive result of European integration. Almost as many believe the most positive result is the free movement of people, goods and services within the EU.

- **Danes and enlargement**

Every fifth Dane is positively surprised by the consequences of the latest EU enlargement(s). Every fourth Dane believes the enlargement is as positive as they expected, while every third Dane believes the enlargement is neither positive nor negative.

- **Hope and satisfaction is associated with the anniversary of the Rome Treaty**

Every fourth Dane associates hope with the anniversary of the Rome Treaty, and every fifth Dane associates satisfaction with it. Thus, many Danes associate something positive with the anniversary of the treaty. Yet four out of ten Danes do not associate anything with the anniversary.

- **Denmark's voice counts in the EU**

A majority of Danes believes that Denmark's voice counts, although the biggest countries have the most power in the EU.

- **Danes among the most optimistic concerning the EU's future**

Danes are positive when asked to the future of the European Union. In fact, Denmark is one of the most optimistic countries within the EU.

- **EU will be a leading diplomatic power in the world**

According to the Danes, the EU will be a leading diplomatic power in the world in 50 years. Moreover, Danes believe that EU will have a more powerful currency than the dollar with the Euro, and that EU will have its own army.

- **Danes' desire an EU foreign policy independent of US foreign policy**

Danes tend to agree on the desire to have an EU foreign policy independent of US foreign policy. Also, a majority agrees that the EU should have a common immigration policy towards people from outside the EU. Unlike the average EU27 citizen, only little more than a half of Danes believes that the EU should have its own Foreign Minister.

- **Economy creates a feeling of community according to Danes**

According to Danes, economy, values and history mostly create a feeling of community among European Union citizens. However, the opinion of Danes does not provide a clear-cut picture, and a number of other factors are believed to influence the feeling of a community.

- **European Institutions should emphasize environment issues**

The environment is the area most emphasized by Danes, when asked what issues European institutions should focus on in the years to come. Danes perceive this issue to be a greater priority than do their European neighbours. Generally, though, the Danes agree with other European citizens.

## **Globalisation**

- **Association with globalisation**

Half of all Danes associate globalisation with opportunities for Danish companies in terms of new outlets. Every third Dane associates globalisation with the relocation of companies to countries where labour is cheaper.

- **Danes' attitude towards the EU's influence on globalisation**

Danes believe that the European Union enables European citizens to better benefit from the positive effects of globalisation. Furthermore, half of all Danes believe the European Union helps to protect us from the negative effects of globalisation. Compared with the previous survey from autumn 2006, Danes are becoming more positive

## **Climate**

- **Attitude towards global warming**

Danes and EU27 citizens alike believe global warming is a matter that should be dealt with by the European Union urgently.

- **Attitude towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions**

In addition, together with their European neighbours, Danes believe the European Union should urgently put new policies in place to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% by 2020. Hereby, European citizens fall behind the proposal from the European Commission of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

## **Protection of data**

- **Danish law protects the use of personal data**

Danes have great confidence in the Danish law protecting the use of personal data. In fact, Danes are the most confident of all citizens in this respect in the EU.

- **Knowledge of data protection**

About half of all Danes feel they are knowledgeable about rules and regulations for protecting the personal data of citizens. Denmark is the country that is most knowledgeable on this matter.

- **Danes believe police access to personal data outweigh the inconveniences**

A little more than half of all Danes believe that the benefits arising from police access to personal data outweigh the inconveniences. Danes are among the countries with the biggest share that

believe this to be the case. This share should be seen in light of Danes' confidence in data protection, as well as the relatively large share of Danes who are aware of the rules and regulations in this area.