

EUROBAROMETER 74

AUTUMN 2010

INFORMATION ON
EUROPEAN POLITICAL MATTERS

REPORT

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This survey was requested and coordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication ("Research and Speechwriting" Unit).

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission.

Standard Eurobarometer 74

Autumn 2010

INFORMATION ON EUROPEAN POLITICAL MATTERS

Survey conducted by TNS Opinion & Social at the
request of the European Commission –
Directorate-General Communication

Coordinated by the European Commission –
Directorate-General Communication

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PRESENTATION

This Eurobarometer (EB74) survey conducted in autumn 2010¹ examines in detail the way in which Europeans use the media, against a background of constantly changing media consumption habits, driven in particular by the increasing importance of online versions of newspapers and magazines, and social networks.

In this survey, Europeans were first asked about the level of information on European political matters, both within their country and individually. Next, we analyse whether Europeans trust the media and how they use them – in particular as regards information concerning the European Union. This Eurobarometer also examines how Europeans perceive the quantity and objectivity of the media coverage of the European Union. Finally, a last section focuses more specifically on social networks as a political communication tool: do Europeans consider that are a credible and effective channel for political activism?

The full report of the Standard Eurobarometer 74 carried out in autumn 2010 consists of several volumes. The first volume analyses the results of the historical indicators of the Standard Eurobarometer. Three other volumes describe the state of European public opinion on the financial and economic crisis; the Europe 2020 strategy; information on European political issues. This volume is devoted to the last subject.

The general analysis and the socio-demographic analyses are based on the average results in the 27 Member States. This average is weighted so that it reflects the actual population of each Member State. The averages for previous years represent the results obtained in all the Member States of the European Union, as it was composed at the time the survey was conducted.

* * *

¹ This survey was carried out between mid-November and early December 2010. Please consult the technical specifications for the exact fieldwork dates in each country.

The methodology used is that of the Eurobarometer surveys of the Directorate-General Communication ("Research and Speechwriting" Unit). A technical note concerning the interviews carried out by the institutes of the TNS Opinion & Social network is annexed to this report. It specifies the method used for the interviews and the confidence intervals².

The Eurobarometer's web site can be consulted at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

We wish to thank the people interviewed throughout Europe who gave their time to take part in this survey. Without their active participation, this survey would not have been possible.

² The results tables are included in the annex. It should be noted that the total of the percentages in the tables of this report may exceed 100% when the respondent can give several answers to the same question.

In this report, the countries are represented by their official abbreviations. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

ABBREVIATIONS

EU27	European Union – 27 Member States
DK/NA	Don't Know/No Answer
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czech Republic
DK	Denmark
DE	Germany
EE	Estonia
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
CY	Republic of Cyprus*
CY (tcc)	Area not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus
LT	Lithuania
LV	Latvia
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	The Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden
UK	United Kingdom
HR	Croatia
TR	Turkey
MK	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**
IS	Iceland

* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 European Union Member States. However, the "*acquis communautaire*" is suspended in the part of the country that is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews conducted in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are recorded in the category "CY" and included in the EU27 average. The interviews conducted in the part of the country not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are recorded in the category "CY(tcc)" [tcc: *Turkish Cypriot Community*].

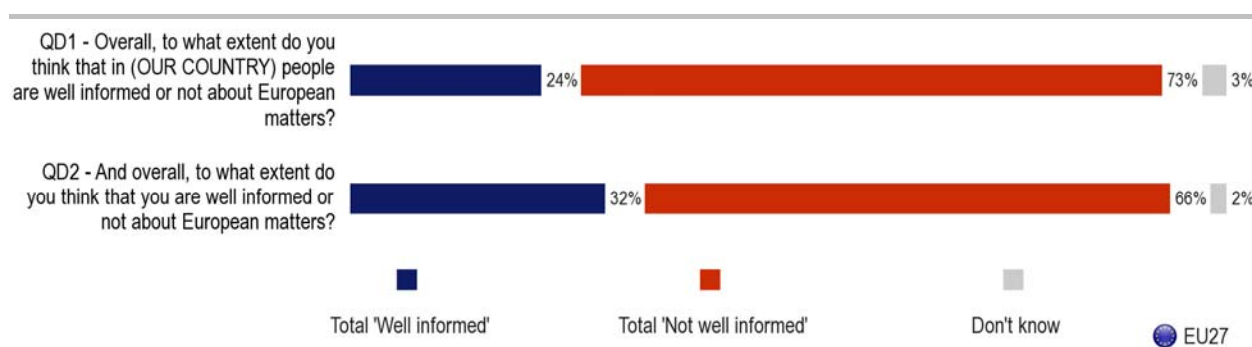
** Provisional code which does not prejudice in any way the definitive nomenclature for this country, which will be agreed following the conclusion of negotiations currently taking place at the United Nations.

1. THE LEVEL OF INFORMATION ON EUROPEAN POLITICAL MATTERS

- A large majority of Europeans consider that they are ill-informed about European political matters -

Europeans feel that they are ill-informed about European political matters, both nationally and individually. Thus, almost three-quarters of Europeans (73%) consider that *citizens in their country* are ill-informed about European issues, compared with 24% who consider that they are well-informed³.

Except for Luxembourg, where 55% of respondents consider that residents in their country are well-informed about European issues, an absolute majority of respondents in all EU countries feel that they are ill-informed on these issues. This feeling is the most widespread in Spain (85%), Cyprus (85%), France (81%), Greece (81%), the Netherlands (81%) and Sweden (80%). It is significantly below the European average in Slovakia (54%) and Malta (50%).



Individually, two-thirds of Europeans (66%) admit that they are ill-informed about European matters, compared with 32% who consider that they are well-informed⁴.

Luxembourg (56% versus 43%) and Slovakia (50% versus 49%) are the only two countries where a majority of respondents consider that they are well-informed about European issues. A majority of respondents in all the other countries say that they are ill-informed, although the size of the majority varies considerably, from 51% in Ireland and 53% in Slovenia, to 73% in France, 74% in Cyprus, 77% in Portugal and 80% in Spain.

³ QD1. Overall, to what extent do you think that in (OUR COUNTRY) people are well informed or not about European matters?






⁴ QD2. And overall, to what extent do you think that you are well informed or not about European matters?

This feeling of being ill-informed may explain why 46% of Europeans currently consider that they do not understand how the EU works and why 42% gave the wrong answer to at least one of three simple questions on the European Union (the number of Member States, how MEPs are elected and whether or not Switzerland is a member)⁵.






The sense of being ill-informed about European matters is strongly influenced by social and educational variables. Although this is the majority impression in all categories of the population, it is nevertheless far more widespread in the most modest and least educated categories. 56% of the respondents who studied beyond the age of 19, 53% of those who place themselves at the top of the social scale and 51% of managers admit to feeling ill-informed about European matters, compared with 77% of those who left school before the age of 16, 78% of those who place themselves at the bottom of the social scale and 71% of manual workers.

⁵ See the section on the EU and its citizens in the first volume of the autumn 2010 Eurobarometer (EB74).

QD1 Overall, to what extent do you think that in (OUR COUNTRY) people are well informed or not about European matters?

	Total 'Well informed'	Total 'Not well informed'	Don't know
EU27	24%	73%	3%
 Gender			
Male	25%	72%	3%
Female	20%	76%	4%
 Age			
15-24	22%	74%	4%
25-39	23%	74%	3%
40-54	25%	72%	3%
55 +	23%	73%	4%
 Education (End of)			
15-	20%	75%	5%
16-19	24%	73%	3%
20+	24%	73%	3%
Still studying	24%	73%	3%
 Respondent occupation scale			
Self-employed	27%	69%	4%
Managers	26%	72%	2%
Other white collars	26%	72%	2%
Manual workers	22%	75%	3%
House persons	17%	79%	4%
Unemployed	19%	78%	3%
Retired	24%	72%	4%
Students	24%	73%	3%
 Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	15%	80%	5%
From time to time	22%	75%	3%
Almost never	25%	72%	3%
Self-positioning on the social scale			
Low (1-4)	16%	80%	4%
Medium (5-6)	24%	73%	3%
High (7-10)	31%	67%	2%

QD2 And overall, to what extent do you think that you are well informed or not about European matters?

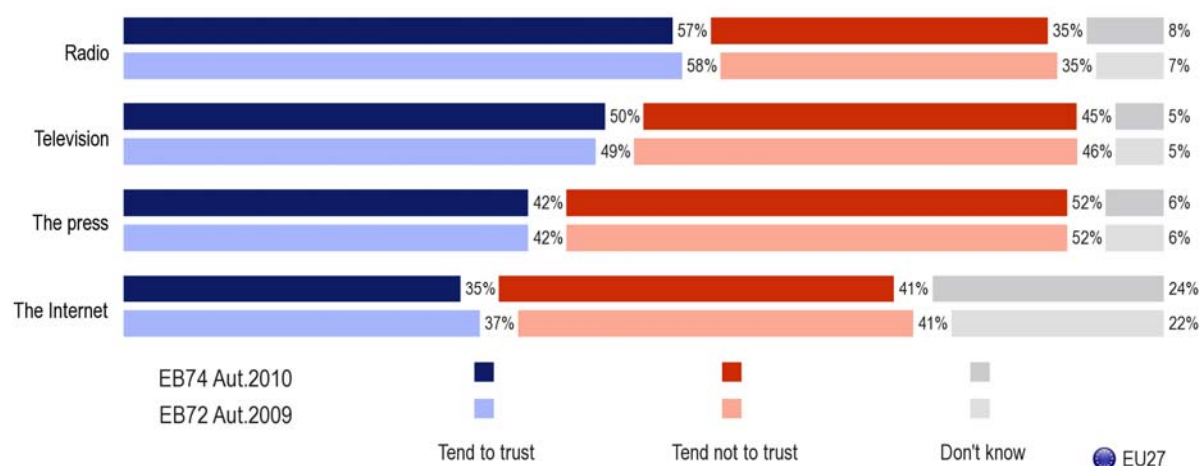
	Total 'Well informed'	Total 'Not well informed'	Don't know
EU27	32%	66%	2%
 Gender			
Male	40%	59%	1%
Female	26%	72%	2%
 Age			
15-24	28%	70%	2%
25-39	33%	65%	2%
40-54	34%	64%	2%
55 +	33%	65%	2%
 Education (End of)			
15-	21%	77%	2%
16-19	32%	66%	2%
20+	43%	56%	1%
Still studying	32%	66%	2%
 Respondent occupation scale			
Self-employed	40%	58%	2%
Managers	48%	51%	1%
Other white collars	36%	62%	2%
Manual workers	28%	71%	1%
House persons	20%	78%	2%
Unemployed	23%	76%	1%
Retired	34%	64%	2%
Students	32%	66%	2%
 Difficulties paying bills			
Most of the time	20%	78%	2%
From time to time	27%	71%	2%
Almost never	38%	61%	1%
Self-positioning on the social scale			
Low (1-4)	21%	78%	1%
Medium (5-6)	32%	66%	2%
High (7-10)	46%	53%	1%

2. TRUST IN THE MEDIA

- Trust in the media remains relatively fragile and limited -

There have been no significant changes in overall levels of trust in the media since this question was last asked in autumn 2009 (EB72). Europeans continue to place the most trust in radio. A small absolute majority (50%) trust television. However, respondents tend not to trust the Internet (though a quarter expressed no opinion), or the press. At least a third of Europeans distrust radio, while almost half tend not to trust television and more than half distrust the written press: a significant proportion of public opinion today distrusts the media.⁶

QA12a. I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it.



⁶ QA12a. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it? The press/radio/television/Internet.

57% of Europeans tend to trust radio, while 35% do not trust it and 8% have no opinion. This ratio is unchanged since autumn 2009. Greece is the only EU country where a majority of respondents distrust this medium (61%). In all other countries, trust is widespread, with the highest scores in Sweden (78%), Slovakia (77%) and Finland (76%). However, it is considerably below the European average in Spain (47% versus 42% for distrust).

The trust-distrust ratio is more evenly divided for television. 50% of Europeans trust this medium, while 45% tend not to trust it and 5% have no opinion. The ratio was 49% - 46% in autumn 2009.

Trust is dominant in 23 countries, to varying extents which range from 50% in Malta and Poland to 71% in Finland and the Czech Republic. Four Member States go against the general European trend, with a majority of respondents in Greece (78%), France (63%), Spain (56%) and Italy (52%) distrusting this medium.

A relative majority of Europeans distrust the Internet. 41% of respondents say that they distrust this medium, versus 35%. The 'DK' rate (24%) is far higher than for the other media. This can undoubtedly be explained not only by the penetration rate of this medium (a significant minority of Europeans still do not have Internet access), but also by the multitude of sources posting information on the Internet (news professionals, bloggers, etc.). Trust has declined by two points since autumn 2009, while distrust is unchanged. Respondents in the United Kingdom (27%), France (29%), Spain (30%) and Germany (30%) are the least likely to trust the Internet as a source of information. Trust is the highest in Slovakia (57%), the Czech Republic (55%) and Denmark (52%).

Finally, **Europeans are very wary of the written press**, in proportions identical to those of autumn 2009. 52% of respondents do not trust the written press, versus 42%, and 6% expressed no opinion. Distrust is dominant in 16 EU countries, with the highest scores in the United Kingdom (79%) and Greece (71%). Trust is dominant in 10 countries and is highest in the Netherlands (65%), Austria (59%), Slovakia (59%) and Belgium (59%). Respondents are split down the middle in France (48% in both cases).

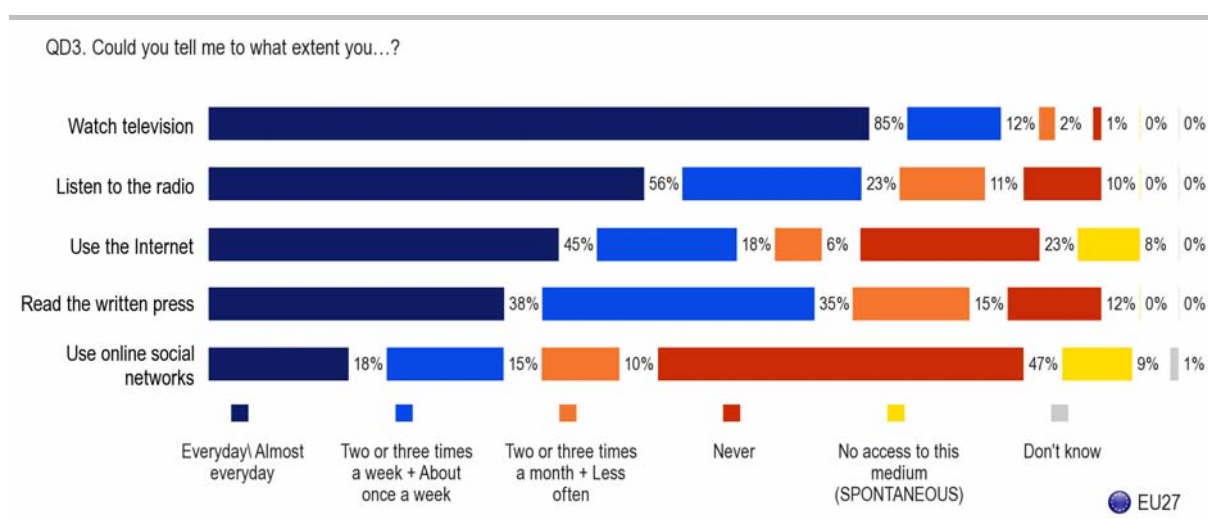
3. MEDIA CONSUMPTION

*- Television remains the only mass medium in Europe;
social networks remain the monopoly of young people -*

This Eurobarometer survey clearly shows that television remains the main mass medium in Europe, the one which has the biggest place in the life of Europeans, which is the most used as a news source and with which they are the most familiar. It also puts the influence of online social networks on public opinion into perspective.



3.1 The use of the media in general

The frequency with which the various media are used shows that **television** is still by far the preferred medium of Europeans⁷.





⁷ QD3. Could you tell me to what extent you (watch television/listen to the radio/read the written press/use the Internet/use online social networks)? : Every day/almost every day, two or three times a week, about once a week, two or three times a month, less often or never?



85% of respondents said that they watch it every day and 97% at least once a week. Therefore, almost the whole of the European population watches television.

QD3.1 Could you tell me to what extent you...?									
Watch television									
	Everyday/ Almost everyday	Two or three times a week	About once a week	Two or three times a month	Less often	Never	No access to this medium (SP.)	DK	At least once a week
EU27	85%	10%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	97%
 Age									
15-24	78%	14%	3%	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	95%
25-39	81%	12%	3%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	96%
40-54	84%	11%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	97%
55 +	92%	5%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	98%
 Education (End of)									
15-	92%	5%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	98%
16-19	87%	9%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	98%
20+	81%	12%	3%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	96%
Still studying	73%	17%	5%	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	95%



With television, radio is the only medium to be used on a daily basis by more than half of Europeans: 56% of Europeans listen to the **radio** every day and 79% at least once a week.

QD3.2 Could you tell me to what extent you...?									
Listen to the radio									
	Everyday/ Almost everyday	Two or three times a week	About once a week	Two or three times a month	Less often	Never	No access to this medium (SP.)	DK	At least once a week
EU27	56%	16%	7%	3%	8%	10%	0%	0%	79%
 Age									
15-24	48%	21%	9%	3%	9%	10%	0%	0%	78%
25-39	57%	19%	8%	2%	7%	7%	0%	0%	84%
40-54	60%	15%	7%	3%	7%	8%	0%	0%	82%
55 +	55%	13%	6%	2%	9%	14%	1%	0%	74%
 Education (End of)									
15-	46%	14%	7%	3%	11%	17%	1%	1%	67%
16-19	58%	17%	7%	2%	8%	8%	0%	0%	82%
20+	63%	15%	6%	3%	6%	7%	0%	0%	84%
Still studying	47%	21%	11%	3%	8%	10%	0%	0%	79%

45% of Europeans use the **Internet** on a daily basis, while 63% use it at least once a week.



QD3.4 Could you tell me to what extent you...?									
Use the Internet									
	Everyday/ Almost everyday	Two or three times a week	About once a week	Two or three times a month	Less often	Never	No access to this medium (SP.)	DK	At least once a week
EU27	45%	13%	5%	2%	4%	23%	8%	0%	63%
 Age									
15-24	75%	12%	4%	2%	2%	4%	1%	0%	91%
25-39	63%	15%	5%	2%	4%	8%	3%	0%	83%
40-54	45%	17%	7%	2%	5%	18%	6%	0%	69%
55 +	20%	9%	4%	1%	4%	44%	17%	1%	33%
 Education (End of)									
15-	13%	8%	3%	1%	3%	51%	20%	1%	24%
16-19	42%	16%	6%	2%	5%	21%	8%	0%	64%
20+	65%	13%	4%	2%	4%	9%	3%	0%	82%
Still studying	85%	9%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	97%

38% of Europeans read the **written press** every day, but 73% do so at least once a week. The crisis faced by the daily newspapers explains the first figure, while the second figure can be attributed to the better performance of magazines.

QD3.3 Could you tell me to what extent you...?									
Read the written press									
	Everyday/ Almost everyday	Two or three times a week	About once a week	Two or three times a month	Less often	Never	No access to this medium (SP.)	DK	At least once a week
EU27	38%	20%	15%	5%	10%	12%	0%	0%	73%
 Age									
15-24	22%	23%	20%	7%	13%	15%	0%	0%	65%
25-39	32%	24%	16%	6%	12%	9%	0%	1%	72%
40-54	40%	20%	16%	5%	9%	10%	0%	0%	76%
55 +	47%	14%	12%	4%	8%	15%	0%	0%	73%
 Education (End of)									
15-	34%	13%	13%	5%	12%	22%	1%	0%	60%
16-19	37%	21%	16%	6%	10%	10%	0%	0%	74%
20+	47%	20%	14%	4%	8%	6%	0%	1%	81%
Still studying	24%	25%	19%	7%	13%	12%	0%	0%	68%

Levels of trust are therefore limited and fragile, though this does not prevent widespread media consumption. It is possible at once to express distrust of television and watch it every day.

Finally, only a minority of Europeans use **online social networks**: 18% use them every day and 33% at least once a week. If we add together the 47% who never use social networks and the 9% who do not have access to them, fully 56% have nothing whatsoever to do with them. Although social networks are used by only a minority of the European population, their use seems to be a common, firmly entrenched practice among young respondents: two-thirds of those aged 15-24 use these networks at least once a week and as many as 50% of the same age group use them on a daily basis. This is particularly true of young people in Sweden (88%), Denmark (79%), Malta (73%), Spain (72%) and the Netherlands (70%). The 15-24 age group is the only socio-demographic category in which a majority of respondents regularly use social networks.

QD3.5 Could you tell me to what extent you...?									
Use online social networks									
	Everyday/ Almost everyday	Two or three times a week	About once a week	Two or three times a month	Less often	Never	No access to this medium (SP.)	DK	At least once a week
EU27	18%	9%	6%	3%	7%	47%	9%	1%	33%
 Age									
15-24	50%	16%	8%	3%	6%	15%	2%	0%	74%
25-39	26%	15%	8%	5%	10%	32%	3%	1%	49%
40-54	11%	9%	6%	4%	10%	53%	6%	1%	26%
55 +	3%	3%	2%	1%	5%	66%	19%	1%	8%
 Education (End of)									
15-	4%	3%	2%	1%	3%	66%	20%	1%	9%
16-19	16%	9%	6%	3%	9%	48%	8%	1%	31%
20+	20%	12%	8%	4%	10%	41%	4%	1%	40%
Still studying	58%	17%	6%	3%	5%	10%	1%	0%	81%

This question on media consumption shows therefore that Europeans still use traditional media more frequently than the Internet. If, quantitatively speaking, the use of the Internet now outstrips *daily* press consumption, Internet consumption still lags behind that of radio and television. This can be explained by the fact that **Internet consumption remains very uneven and varies according to the age and social position of respondents** (91% of young people aged between 15 and 24 use the Internet at least once a week, compared with 83% of the 25-39 age group, 69% of the 40-54 age group and 33% of those aged 55 or over; these proportions are 78% for those who place themselves at the top of the social scale and 49% of those at the bottom respectively), **whereas television and radio consumption are far more homogeneous across the categories**. The Internet has established itself as a mass medium for the younger and more advantaged categories, but not for the older generations and disadvantaged classes. 75% of those aged 15 to 24 and 63% of those aged 25 to 39 use it every day, compared with only 20% of those aged 55 or over. 85% of students and 65% of those who studied the longest use the Internet on a daily basis, compared with only 13% of the least educated respondents.

- A quarter of Europeans rarely use the media -

We have used these answers to construct a media consumption index in order to pinpoint the media exposure of Europeans⁸. A third of Europeans (33%) have a very high consumption index, 43% a high index, 21% a low index and 3% a very low index. In short, a quarter of Europeans do not use the main media. However this proportion is far higher in five EU countries: Portugal (49%), Romania (49%), Greece (47%), Bulgaria (42%) and Spain (37%).

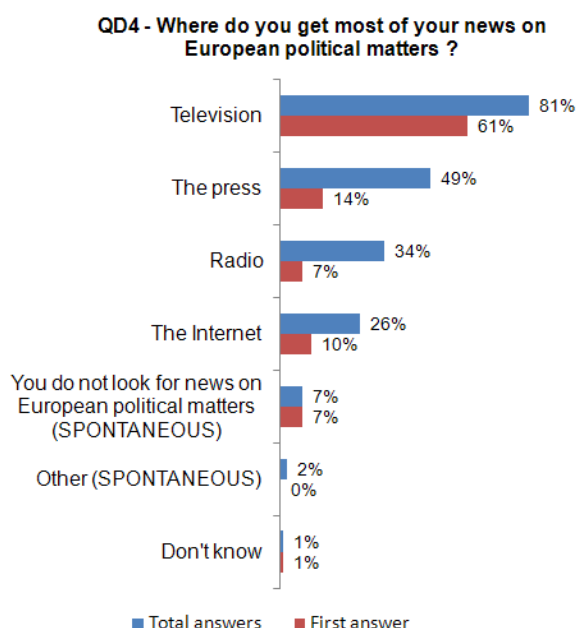
The media consumption index varies considerably according to the social status of respondents. The more educated the respondents, the higher they place themselves on the social scale, and the more they are interested in the news, the higher their media consumption index is likely to be.

⁸ Media consumption index – To construct this index, we allocate points to the answers to the question QD3.1-5: "Everyday" (code '1') =3p, "2 or 3 times a week" (code '2-3') =2p, "Less often" (code '4-5') =1p, "Never" (code '6-7') =0.

On that basis, we have developed the following media consumption index: Very high (++) = 12-15p, High (+) = 8-11p, Low(-) = 4-7p, Very low/Never(--)= 0-3p.

3.2 Media vehicles for information on European political matters

- Television is by far the main vehicle for information on European matters -



When asked about their *main* source of news on European matters, 61% of Europeans mentioned television, a very long way ahead of the press (14%), Internet (10%) and radio (7%). This order of preference is the same in all EU countries. For Europeans, therefore, TV news broadcasts remain the main source of information on Europe⁹.

After identifying their main news source, respondents could then indicate other sources they used to get news on European matters. The combined answers show, first, the undisputed supremacy of television and, secondly, the ability of the traditional media to hold their own against the Internet. With a total score of

81%, television outscores the press (49%), radio (34%) and the Internet (26%).

Television's dominant role as the main source of news on European matters is overwhelming in all EU countries. However, the press is a major source of news in Finland (79%), Sweden (69%), Austria (66%), Luxembourg (64%), the Netherlands (62%), Germany (62%) and Italy (54%).

Radio as a source of news on European matters did not achieve an absolute majority in a single EU country: the highest score of 46% was recorded in Belgium, Slovakia and Estonia.

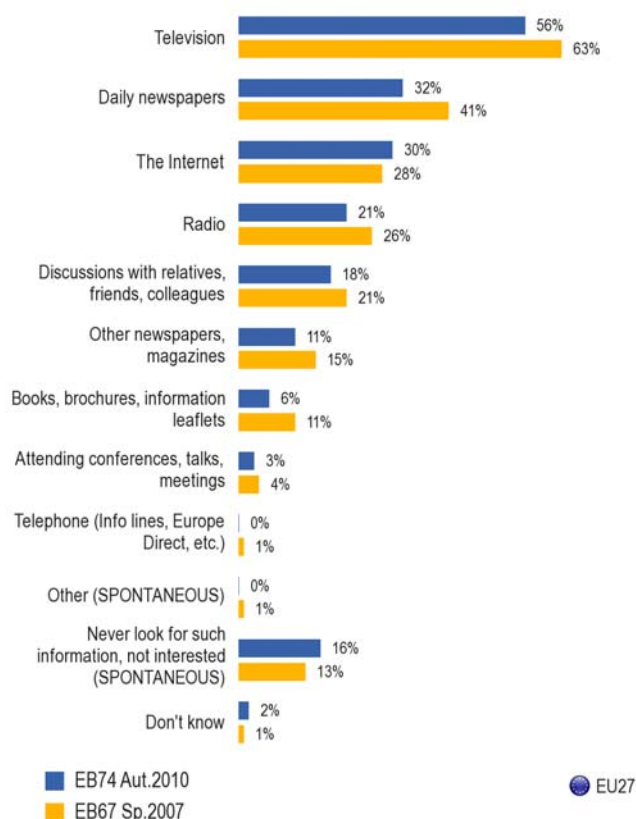
Finally, the highest scores for the Internet as a news source were recorded in Latvia (46%) and Estonia (45%).

⁹ QD4. Where do you get most of your news on European political matters? Firstly? And then?

3.3 Preferred media for searching for information on the European Union

Europeans were then asked to indicate which sources they use when looking for information on the European Union¹⁰, its policies and its institutions. This question, unlike the previous, presupposed an active search for information. 56% of Europeans again mentioned television, despite the fact that the use of this medium has more passive connotations than an active information search. **In any event television was the only medium that was mentioned by an absolute majority of respondents.**

QD5. When you are looking for information about the European Union, its policies, its institutions, which of the following sources do you use?



Daily newspapers (32%) were the second most frequently mentioned source used when looking for information on the EU, closely followed by the Internet (30%), and ahead of radio (21%), discussions with relatives, friends and colleagues (18%) and magazines (11%). Books, brochures and information leaflets (6%) and attending conferences and seminars (3%) remain fairly marginal sources of information. Even in the event of an active search for information and despite the fact that it is clearly the most appropriate search tool, the Internet still ranks behind television, though it has overtaken radio. It is also striking that when respondents search for information on the EU, they do not turn most to the medium which they trust the most (radio being the most trusted medium).

Reliance on the traditional media as the preferred source of information on the EU has however declined since spring 2007 (EB67), when this aspect was last measured. The use of the daily press as the main source of information has decreased by 9 points, while the use of television has declined by 7 points and radio by 5 points. At the same time, the Internet is the only medium whose score has risen during this three year period (+2 percentage points), even if this increase remains very modest.

¹⁰ QD5. When you are looking for information about the European Union, its policies, its institutions, which of the following sources do you use? (multiple answers possible)

An analysis of the results by country reveals a number of differences: television is ranked in first place in almost all EU countries, the exceptions being Finland (56%), Sweden (52%), the Netherlands (51%) and Estonia (49%), where the Internet obtained the highest score. Respondents in Denmark are also more likely than average in Europe to mention the Internet (52%). The Nordic countries therefore stand out by their far greater use of the Internet than elsewhere in Europe when searching for information on the EU and its policies.

Respondents in Austria (59%), Germany (47%), Luxembourg (45%) and the Netherlands (45%) are more likely than Europeans on average to rely on the daily press for information.

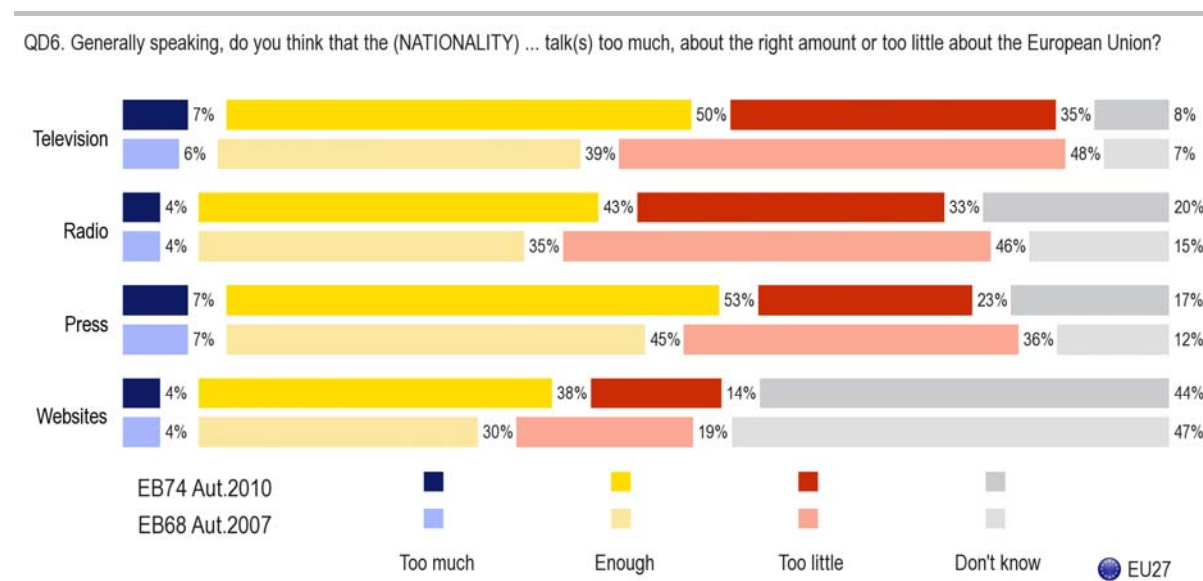
Therefore, although television is still the mass medium, there are national differences in media consumption.

There are also social and generational differences. The age divide is particularly striking for this question: television and the Internet (47% and 48% respectively) are ranked more or less equally as a means of searching for information by respondents aged 15 to 24, while those aged 55 or over rely overwhelmingly on television ahead of the Internet (62% versus 13%). The choice of medium also depends on the respondent's occupation. Higher socio-professional categories are far more likely than the modest categories to use the Internet: 57% of managers have used it to search for information on the EU, compared with only 30% of manual workers and 11% of pensioners.

4. MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

4.1 The quantity of information on the European Union

Although a large majority of Europeans feel that they are ill-informed about the European Union, they nevertheless consider that the coverage of the EU by the various media is “sufficient”. Whichever medium is considered, significant minorities of respondents consider that there is “too little” information about the EU¹¹.



50% of respondents consider that **television** coverage of the European Union in their country is sufficient, while 35% consider that there is too little TV coverage and 7% that there is too much. 8% expressed no opinion.

The coverage devoted to the UE by **national radio broadcasts** is seen as sufficient by 43% of European citizens, insufficient by 33% and excessive by 4%. 20% gave no answer.

53% consider that **press** coverage of the EU is sufficient, while 23% think that it is insufficient and 7% think that it is excessive. 17% expressed no opinion.

Finally, the quantity of information on the EU available on the **Internet** is seen as sufficient by 38% of respondents, insufficient by 14% and excessive by 4%. The 'DK' rate (44%) is very high for this question.

¹¹ QD6. Generally speaking, do you think that the (NATIONALITY television/radio/press/websites) talk(s) too much, about the right amount or too little about the European Union?

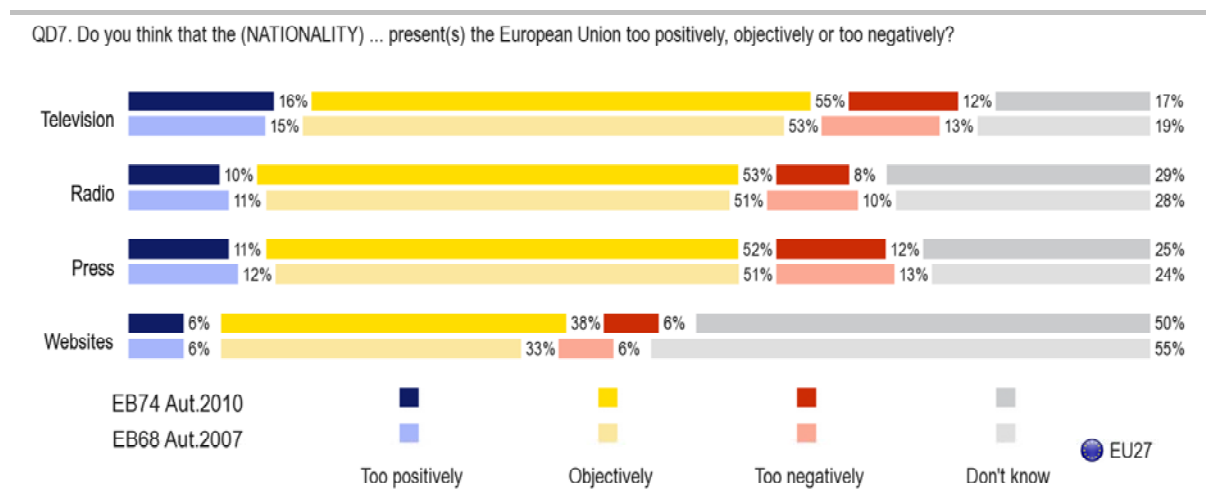
The most educated respondents and opinion leaders are more likely than the European average to want the media to give more coverage to the European Union, particularly in the case of television (43% for the respondents who studied until the age of 20 or beyond, 43% for opinion leaders ++, compared with 35% for Europeans as whole), radio (38%, 41%, versus 33%) and, to a lesser extent, the press (28%, 28%, versus 23%) and the Internet (17%, 15%, versus 14%).

There have been significant changes in this indicator since autumn 2007 (EB68). For all the types of media reviewed, the proportion of Europeans who consider that coverage of European matters is sufficient has increased strongly: + 11 points for television and +8 for radio, the press and the Internet. At the same time the percentages of Europeans who consider that media coverage is insufficient have fallen sharply. Thus, whereas three years ago a relative majority of Europeans considered that television and radio did not give enough coverage to European matters, a majority now consider that this coverage is sufficient. This significant change can undoubtedly be explained by the media coverage of European issues in recent years (in particular the Treaty of Lisbon, the European elections in 2009 and the EU's measures to deal with the economic and financial crisis).

On this question five countries, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden stand out in that, for each of these media, the proportion of respondents who consider that there is not enough information on the EU is far higher than the European average. We will illustrate this with the scores for television, but this trend exists for all the media reviewed. Significant proportions of respondents in France (52%), the Netherlands (50%), Denmark (43%), Italy and Sweden (41% in both countries) think that television coverage of European news is insufficient. It seems therefore that demand for European news is far higher in these countries.

4.2 The objectivity of the way the European Union is presented

A majority of Europeans consider that the news disseminated by national media about the European Union is objective¹². 55% of respondents consider that to be the case for television, while 16% think that it presents the EU too positively and 12% too negatively, 53% for radio (versus 10% for “too positively” and 8% for “too negatively”) and 52% for the press (versus 11% “too positively” and 12% “too negatively”).



Greece is the only country to stand out, in that the number of respondents who consider that the three media present the EU too positively is considerably above the European average. For example, 38% of respondents in Greece consider that television presents the European Union too positively.

Almost four out of ten Europeans (38%) consider that websites present the European Union objectively, while 6% think that they are too positive and 6% also think that they are too negative. The 'DK' rate for this question is very high at 50%. This can be partly explained by the results reported above: a majority of Europeans do not use the Internet to obtain information on the EU, so they cannot express an opinion. In addition, it is reasonable to assume that the diversity and heterogeneity of the information available on the Internet (depending on the sites consulted) undoubtedly makes it difficult to express an opinion on its impartiality.

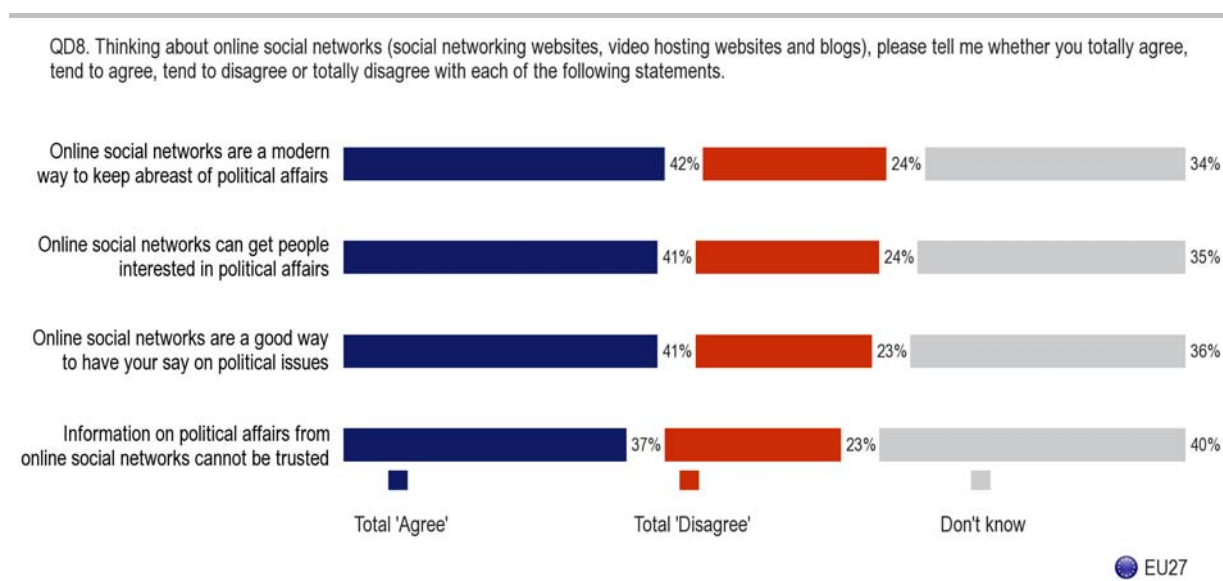
There have not been any significant changes in the way Europeans perceive the objectivity of the media since the autumn 2007 Eurobarometer.

¹² QD7. Do you think that the (NATIONALITY television/radio/press/websites) present(s) the European Union too positively, too objectively or too negatively?

5. SOCIAL NETWORKS

Finally, this survey provides an opportunity to **take stock of European opinion regarding online social networks**. As noted previously, only a minority of Europeans use social networks, around a third, and they play no role in the life of two-thirds of citizens. This explains the high 'DK' rates (between 34% and 40%) recorded for this question on the image of social networks.

This being said, social networks tend nevertheless to enjoy a good image and are considered, at least by those who are familiar with them and use them, as useful sources of information and means of political expression¹³.



More than four out of ten Europeans (42%) consider that “online social networks are a modern way to keep abreast of political affairs”, while 24% disagree and 34% expressed no opinion. Respondents in the Nordic countries (63% in Sweden, 59% in Finland and 55% in Denmark), Latvia (58%), Greece (57%) and Slovakia (56%) are the most convinced that these networks are a modern political information channel.

41% agree that “online social networks can get people interested in politics”, while 24% disagree and 35% expressed no opinion. This idea has the strongest support in the same countries as those mentioned above.

¹³ QD8.1. Thinking about social networks (social networking websites, video hosting websites and blogs), please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with each of the following. 1. Online social networks are a modern way to keep abreast of political affairs. 2. Information on political affairs from online social networks cannot be trusted. 3. Online social networks can get people interested in political affairs. 4. Online social networks are a good way to have your say on political issues.

41% of Europeans also agree that “online social networks are a good way to have your say on political issues”, while 23% disagree and 36% expressed no opinion. Once again respondents in the Nordic countries, Greece, Latvia and Slovakia are the most convinced that social networks are a good way for citizens to participate in the political debate.

People who use social networks are logically far more convinced than Europeans on average of the usefulness of social networks. 66% of those who use social networks at least once a week consider that they are a good way of keeping abreast of political affairs. In addition, 67% consider that they are an appropriate way for citizens to express their views on political issues.

In short, just over four out of ten Europeans are now convinced that online social networks have a valid role to play in political matters. This proportion is considerably higher in six countries, including the Nordic countries whose Internet consumption is above the European average.

However, the public remains somewhat cautious about the type of information disseminated by social networks and accordingly they are not currently seen as an impartial and objective medium. **Thus 37% of Europeans consider that “information on political affairs from online social networks cannot be trusted”,** while 23% feel that there are no reasons to call into question its reliability and 40% expressed no opinion. Respondents in the countries which are the most positive about the utility of social networks share these doubts as to the reliability of the information posted on such networks, as do the most assiduous users of these networks: 53% of those who use them at least once a week say that the information cannot be trusted.

Respondents' age, more than their profession, financial situation or level of education (though the latter plays a role), is the main factor which shapes views on social networks. Positive perceptions of these networks decrease linearly with age: 59% of those aged 15 to 24, 53% of those aged 25 to 39, 43% of the 40-54 age group and 26% of those aged 55 or over consider, for example, that online social networks are a good means of keeping abreast of news. A last illustration of this generation gap is the fact that 60% of those in the 15 to 24 age group see social networks as a good means of expressing their views, compared with only 23% of those aged 55 or over.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

From 11 November to 1 December 2010, TNS Opinion & Social, a consortium created between TNS plc and TNS opinion, carried out the STANDARD EUROBAROMETER 74, at the request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General Communication, "Research and Speechwriting" unit.

The STANDARD EUROBAROMETER 74 covers the population aged 15 years and over who are nationals of one of the European Union Member States and resident a Member State. The STANDARD EUROBAROMETER 74 was also conducted in the four candidate countries (Croatia, Turkey, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Iceland) and in the Turkish Cypriot Community. In these countries, the survey covers the national population and the citizens of all the European Union Member States who are resident in these countries and have a sufficient command of the national languages to answer the questionnaire. The basic sample design applied in all states is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each country, a number of sampling points was drawn with probability proportional to population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to population density.

In order to do so, the sampling points were drawn systematically from each of the "administrative regional units", after stratification by individual unit and type of area. They thus represent the whole territory of the countries surveyed in accordance with the EUROSTAT NUTS II (or equivalent) and with the distribution of the resident population in each country in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas. In each of the selected sampling points, a starting address was drawn at random. Further addresses (every *n*th address) were selected by standard "random route" procedures from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn at random (following the "closest birthday rule"). All interviews were conducted face-to-face in people's homes and in the appropriate national language. For data capture, CAPI (*Computer Assisted Personal Interview*) was used in those countries where this technique was available.

ABBR.	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	FIELDWORK DATES		POPULATION 15+
BE	Belgium	TNS Dimarso	1.003	11/11/2010	01/12/2010	8.866.411
BG	Bulgaria	TNS BBSS	1.000	12/11/2010	22/11/2010	6.584.957
CZ	Czech Rep.	TNS Aisa	1.024	12/11/2010	25/11/2010	8.987.535
DK	Denmark	TNS Gallup DK	1.049	11/11/2010	27/11/2010	4.533.420
DE	Germany	TNS Infratest	1.609	12/11/2010	28/11/2010	64.545.601
EE	Estonia	Emor	1.000	12/11/2010	29/11/2010	916.000
IE	Ireland	MRBI	1.007	11/11/2010	25/11/2010	3.375.399
EL	Greece	TNS ICAP	1.000	11/11/2010	25/11/2010	8.693.566
ES	Spain	TNS Demoscopia	1.001	15/11/2010	28/11/2010	39.035.867
FR	France	TNS Sofres	1.036	12/11/2010	29/11/2010	47.620.942
IT	Italy	TNS Infratest	1.019	12/11/2010	24/11/2010	51.252.247
CY	Rep. of Cyprus	Synovate	504	11/11/2010	28/11/2010	651.400
LV	Latvia	TNS Latvia	1.003	12/11/2010	28/11/2010	1.448.719
LT	Lithuania	TNS Gallup Lithuania	1.005	12/11/2010	28/11/2010	2.849.359
LU	Luxembourg	TNS ILReS	513	11/11/2010	27/11/2010	404.907
HU	Hungary	TNS Hungary	1.031	12/11/2010	28/11/2010	8.320.614
MT	Malta	MISCO	500	12/11/2010	27/11/2010	335.476
NL	Netherlands	TNS NIPO	1.040	12/11/2010	27/11/2010	13.288.200
AT	Austria	Österreichisches Gallup-Institut	1.000	11/11/2010	28/11/2010	6.973.277
PL	Poland	TNS OBOP	1.000	12/11/2010	28/11/2010	32.306.436
PT	Portugal	TNS EUROTESTE	1.018	19/11/2010	29/11/2010	8.080.915
RO	Romania	TNS CSOP	1.001	12/11/2010	25/11/2010	18.246.731
SI	Slovenia	RM PLUS	1.004	11/11/2010	28/11/2010	1.748.308
SK	Slovakia	TNS AISA SK	1.031	12/11/2010	28/11/2010	4.549.954
FI	Finland	TNS Gallup Oy	1.005	11/11/2010	29/11/2010	4.412.321
SE	Sweden	TNS GALLUP	1.020	12/11/2010	30/11/2010	7.723.931
UK	United Kingdom	TNS UK	1.300	12/11/2010	30/11/2010	51.081.866
TOTAL EU27			26.723	11/11/2010	01/12/2010	406.834.359
IS	Iceland	Capacent	501	12/11/2010	29/11/2010	252.277
CY(tcc)	Turkish Cypriot Community	Kadem	500	12/11/2010	28/11/2010	143.226
HR	Croatia	Puls	1.000	12/11/2010	28/11/2010	3.749.400
TR	Turkey	TNS PIAR	1.000	11/11/2010	29/11/2010	52.728.513
MK	Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	TNS Brima	1.056	13/11/2010	21/11/2010	1.678.404
TOTAL			30.780	11/11/2010	01/12/2010	465.386.179

For each country a comparison between the sample and the universe was carried out. The universe description was derived from Eurostat population data or from national statistics offices. For all countries surveyed, a national weighting procedure, using marginal and intercellular weighting, was carried out based on this universe description. In all countries, gender, age, region and size of locality were introduced in the iteration procedure. For international weighting (i.e. EU averages), TNS Opinion & Social applies the official population figures as provided by EUROSTAT or national statistic offices. The total population figures for input in this post-weighting procedure are listed above.

Readers are reminded that the results of a survey results are estimates, the accuracy of which, all else being equal, depends upon the sample size and upon the observed percentage. With samples of about 1,000 interviews, the real percentages vary within the following confidence limits:

Observed percentages	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Confidence limits	± 1.9 points	± 2.5 points	± 2.7 points	± 3.0 points	± 3.1 points