

EUROBAROMETER 74

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Autumn 2010

NATIONAL REPORT

UNITED KINGDOM

Representation of the European Commission in the United Kingdom

A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AS TO HOW THE EU FUNCTIONS

- Understanding is key to trust
- 56% of UK respondents say they do not understand how the EU works
- Across the EU, the figure is better but 46% of those polled still say they lack basic understanding

THE UK's 'DON'T KNOW' ELEMENT

- There is a high UK 'dont know' level throughout EB74 compared with EU-27 averages. E.g. when asked what the EU means to them personally, the UK's 'don't know' response is 13% - nearly twice the next highest figures of 7% seen in Poland and Estonia
- The EU average was just 4%

EDUCATION IS A KEY FACTOR IN UNDERSTANDING

- Amongst the best educated (to age 20 or more) of UK respondents, only 39% do not understand how the EU works
- Amongst the least educated, this figure reaches nearly two-thirds (65%) of those polled

EDUCATION IMPROVES PUBLIC ATTITUDES TO THE EU

- While only 9% of those who left school at 15 or less have a positive view of the EU, this figure almost quadruples to 35% amongst the most educated

A MORE POSITIVE VIEW OF THE EU IS HELD BY YOUNGER PEOPLE

- A quarter (26%) of the youngest age-group have a positive view of the EU compared with just 11% of those aged 55 or more

WORKING TOGETHER ACROSS THE EU TO SOLVE THE FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS

- A substantial majority (79%) of the UK poll felt joint EU-27 action was the way to solve this crisis
- Support was broadly based by occupation ranging from 72% among manual workers to 92% of the self-employed

A CLEAR MAJORITY OF THE UK POLL FAVOURS JOINT EU DECISION-MAKING IN CERTAIN KEY AREAS

- Action against terrorism – 62%
- Scientific and technological research – 61%
- Protecting the environment – 55%

• FREEDOM TO TRAVEL, STUDY AND WORK THROUGHOUT THE EU IS SEEN AS A BENEFIT BY SOME GROUPS

- Cited by 31% of the UK poll, 46% of the most educated saw this as a major benefit compared with just 15% of those leaving school aged 15 or less
- 36% of those aged 26 to 39 and 33% of the youngest age-group and 40 to 54 year olds compared with 24% of those aged 55+ see this aspect of the EU as being a major benefit

UK CITIZENS DISTRUST THEIR NATIONAL POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS MORE THAN THEY DISTRUST THE EU

- 68% of UK respondents do not trust their government
- 66% of do not trust their Parliament
- 64% do not trust the EU

ON A PERSONAL BASIS, UK CITIZENS HAVE FOUR MAJOR CONCERNS*

- Rising prices/inflation was the No. 1 personal concern cited by 36% of the poll
- The economic situation was mentioned by 21% of the poll
- 19% of those polled were worried about pensions
- Unemployment concerned 18% of the poll

* Multiple responses were allowed to this question