



Standard Eurobarometer 78

**PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION
Autumn 2012**

NATIONAL REPORT

MALTA

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Directorate-General for Communication.

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

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Standard Eurobarometer 78 / Autumn 2012 – TNS Opinion & Social

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INTRODUCTION

The national report outlines the main findings of Wave 78 of the Standard Eurobarometer. The fieldwork was conducted between 3rd and 18th November 2012. The following are some of the most striking findings:

- In Malta, there is a greater perception of EU citizenship, when compared to results from other countries in the EU27.
- When compared to the average EU27 results, there was a considerably higher percentage of local respondents who have watched a TV program or read a book, newspaper or magazine in a language other than their mother tongue, who socialised with people from another EU country, and who used the internet to purchase a good or service from another EU country. In fact, the International Openness Index for Malta was ranked as the fifth highest across the EU27.
- The Maltese population appears to be deriving more benefits out of EU achievements. In fact, when compared to the previous Standard Eurobarometer wave, there was a substantial increase in the number of respondents residing in Malta who claimed that they have worked, lived or studied in another EU country. Respondents from Malta indicated that they feel they have also benefitted in terms of improved consumers rights when buying products or services in another EU country, less expensive communication costs when using a mobile phone in another EU country, and strengthened rights of air transport passengers in the EU.
- Results show a 9 percentage point increase in the number of respondents living in Malta who believe that the Maltese population is well informed about European matters - a figure that is 23 percentage points higher than the average of the EU27.
- Malta was placed among the top 10 countries whose respondents claimed to use online social networks everyday or almost every day. When compared to EB 76 results, there has also been an increase of 9 percentage points in local respondents who listen to the radio at least once a week, and those who use the internet, while they were also ranked as the least likely, out of all other Member States, to read the written press.
- Overall, there has been an increase in the number of respondents from Malta who used the radio and the internet as a source of information for national and European political matters, while the written press has been used to a lesser extent. Respondents residing in Malta tend to be more interested in national, rather than European, political matters.
- Over a year, online social networks were ranked as the second-most sought source from where local respondents gather news about national and European political matters.
- The number of local respondents who believe that EU matters are being discussed too often on television, the radio, the press and websites, has increased when compared to EB 76 results, yet respondents in Malta generally believe that EU matters are discussed objectively on all these media.
- One-third of respondents living in Malta said that there was no specific type of website, amongst those presented, that they consider useful for finding information regarding the EU. This percentage is the second highest among the rest of the EU27, being preceded by Portugal. In this regard, online social networks have doubled in popularity, when compared to EB 76.
- The majority of local respondents believe that online social networks are a modern way of keeping abreast with political affairs, getting people interested in politics, and are a good way to have one's say on political issues. The percentage of respondents from Malta who agreed to these aforementioned statements was substantially above the EU27 average. Yet, respondents living in Malta still have an issue with trust in relation to these social networks.

1. EU CITIZENSHIP

1.1 Expectations from the EU

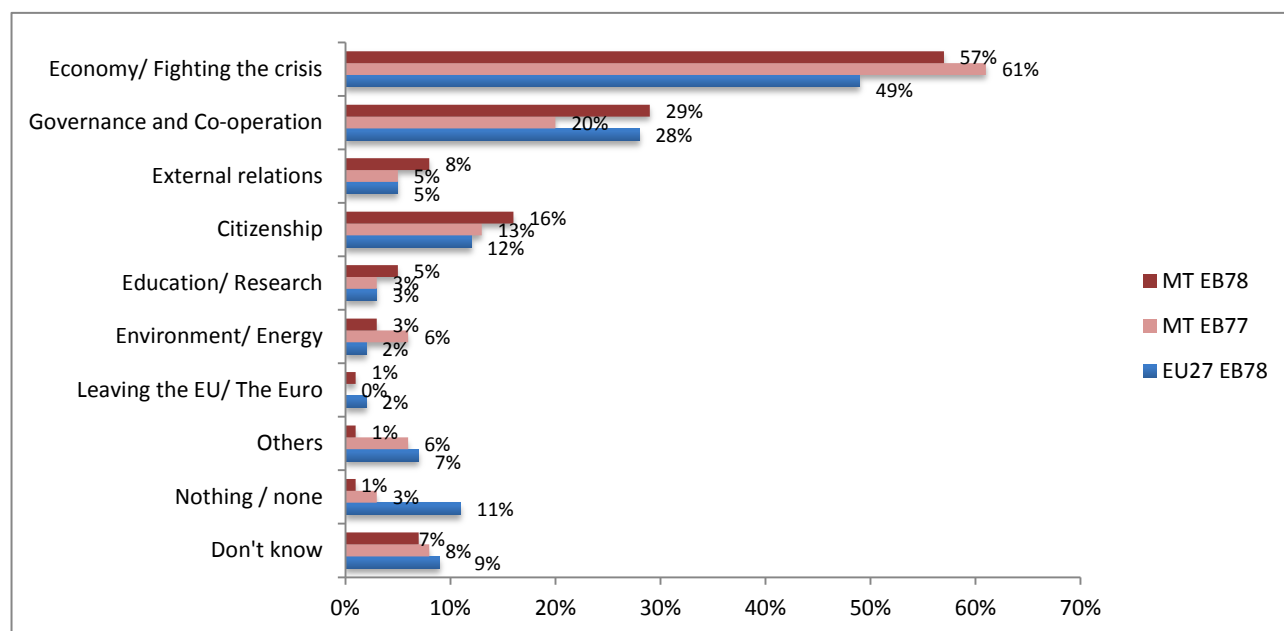
Respondents in the EU27 were asked about what their expectations from the European Union are. Eleven percent of EU27 respondents claimed that they had no expectations from the EU, compared to only one percent of respondents residing in Malta. On the contrary, the majority of respondents from all Member States, and to a greater extent in Malta, mentioned aspects related to the economy and expected that the financial crisis be resolved (*Figure 1*). Governance and citizenship were the second and third most cited aspects as far as expectations from the European Union are concerned.

Each category was sub-divided into a number of other aspects. More specifically, the aspects which respondents mentioned the most were those regarding the economy and fighting the crisis:

- STABILITY: financial security/help in recession/budgetary support/bank support (20% in MT; 10% in EU27)
- EMPLOYMENT: job creations/ employment/ youth employment (18% in MT; 15% in EU27)
- QUALITY OF LIFE: Level of living/ purchase power/ higher salary (14% in MT; 12% in EU27)

Issues related to governance were the second-most mentioned aspects. In particular, most respondents expect co-operation and solidarity between Member states (11% in MT; 12% in EU27).

Figure 1 – Expectations from the EU¹



1.2 Rights of EU citizens

Respondents were then read out three statements regarding European Union citizenship and were asked to indicate the extent to which each corresponds to their own opinion. The vast majority of respondents across the EU claimed that they think of themselves as EU citizens (63%). In Malta, the EU is perceived positively, and this sense of belonging was even stronger among those living in Malta, with more than three quarters of them agreeing that they feel they are EU citizens. Most respondents in Malta also claimed that they were aware of their rights as EU citizens (53%), while on average, respondents in the EU27, were

¹ Eurobarometer 77.3 fieldwork was carried out in May 2012.

not aware of these rights (only 45% answering in the affirmative). The majority of respondents stated that they would like to know more about their rights as citizens of the EU. In fact, three out of every four respondents residing in Malta claimed so (75%). The main findings of Maltese citizens compared to those of the 27 EU Member States are clearly summarised in Figure 2. In Malta, results were significantly higher than the EU27 average, across all three statements.

Figure 2 – Respondents' perception towards EU citizenship and rights of EU citizens

		Yes, definitely	Yes, to some extent	No, not really	No, definitely not	Total 'Yes'	Total 'No'
Feel they are a citizen of the EU	EU27 ²	22%	41%	23%	13%	63%	36%
	MT	38%	38%	14%	9%	76%	23%
Know what their rights are as a citizen of the EU	EU27	9%	36%	37%	17%	45%	54%
	MT	12%	41%	32%	14%	53%	46%
Would like to know more about their rights as a citizen of the EU	EU27	22%	40%	25%	10%	62%	35%
	MT	38%	37%	15%	8%	75%	23%

Respondents who claimed that they would like to know more about their rights as EU citizens³ were then read out a list of specific rights to EU citizens, and were asked to identify the ones which they would like to know more about. Ten percent of local respondents did not choose any particular right, while the rights which were given the most importance by respondents residing in Malta were those related to receiving medical assistance in another EU Member State (44%), benefitting from a consular protection of any EU Member State when they are outside the EU and their own country is not represented there (32%), and working in another EU Member State (26%). On the other hand, the latter was the right which was of most interest to EU27 respondents in general, with 37% of respondents wanting more information about working in another EU Member State. Other rights which EU27 respondents would like to know more about were those related to receiving medical assistance in another EU Member State (32%) and living in another EU Member State (31%). The EU citizen rights which respondents from the EU27 and Malta would like to know more about are summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Rights of EU citizens that respondents would like to know more about

	EU27	MT
Voting in elections in another EU Member State	9%	7%
Living in another EU Member State	31%	17%
Working in another EU Member State	37%	26%
Studying in another EU Member State	14%	17%
Receiving medical assistance in another EU Member State	32%	44%
Buying goods in another EU Member State	13%	18%
Buying services in another EU Member State	9%	13%
Benefitting from a consular protection of any EU Member State when you are outside the EU and your own country is not represented there	19%	32%
Other (SPONTANEOUS)	3%	1%
None (SPONTANEOUS)	14%	10%

² The sample for EU27 amounted to 26,622 respondents, while the sample for Malta amounted to 500 respondents.

³ Respondents who claimed that they would like to know more about their rights as EU citizens amounted to: EU27 - 16,548 respondents; Malta - 374 respondents.

1.3 Benefits of EU membership

Positive results of the EU

All respondents were asked to identify the most positive results of the EU. Respondents residing in Malta believe that the most positive results of the EU are peace among the Member States of the EU (45%) and free movement of people, goods and services within the EU (42%). Results from the EU27 in general point towards the same two results but in inverted order. When compared to results from the rest of the EU, local respondents gave more importance to the availability of student exchange programmes such as ERASMUS, and also the level of social welfare in the EU. At the other end of the spectrum, ten percent of local respondents believe that the EU did not bring about any positive results. This result is comparable to what respondents in the rest of the 27 EU countries believe. Figure 4 overleaf lists the factors which respondents believe are brought about as a result of the EU.

Figure 4 – Positive results of the EU

	EU27	MT
Peace among the Member States of the EU	50%	45%
The free movement of people, goods and services within the EU	52%	42%
The euro	25%	23%
Student exchange programmes such as ERASMUS	22%	30%
The common agricultural policy	11%	7%
The economic power of the EU	20%	14%
The political and diplomatic influence of the EU in the rest of the world	20%	12%
The level of social welfare (healthcare, education, pensions) in the EU	18%	29%
Other (SPONTANEOUS)	1%	-
None (SPONTANEOUS)	13%	10%
DK	5%	7%

Actions carried out by respondents

A list of statements was read out to respondents and they were asked to identify whether they have carried out such actions in the twelve months prior to the day of interview. When compared to the EU27 average, local results are consistently higher (*Figure 5 overleaf*). Of particular note is the number of respondents residing in Malta who have watched a TV program (92%) or read a book, newspaper or magazine (60%) in a language other than their mother tongue. The most likely reason for such a high percentage is that despite Maltese being the mother tongue of most residents of Malta, English is also a national language. Moreover, a large percentage of Maltese citizens have significant exposure to Italian through Italian television stations, which until relatively recently were the only ones available other than Maltese ones. In fact, 20% of the Maltese population prefer to watch television in Italian, while 29% prefer to watch television in English⁴.

According to the NSO Census 2005⁵, 4% of the local population are nationals of another EU country, while between January and November 2012, 1,174,518 outbound tourists from European countries were recorded in Malta⁶. Therefore these facts might have had an impact on the number of respondents living in Malta who claimed to have socialised with people from another EU country in November 2012 (66%).

⁴Results are based on the National Statistics Office report – Culture Participation Survey 2011. Fieldwork was conducted in April 2011, with 349,684 individuals aged 16 years and over. The structure of the sample was based on the NSO Census 2005, in order to be representative of the population.

⁵ The most recent Census carried out in Malta was published in 2005 by the National Statistics Office (NSO). The next Census is to be published by 2014.

⁶ Results are based on the NSO report - Outbound tourists: November 2012.

Based on these results, the International Openness Index for Malta was regarded as 'Strong', despite it decreasing by 8 percentage points from EB 77, and in fact, was ranked as the fifth highest across the EU27 (Figure 6).

Figure 5 – Actions carried out by respondents in the 12 months prior to interview

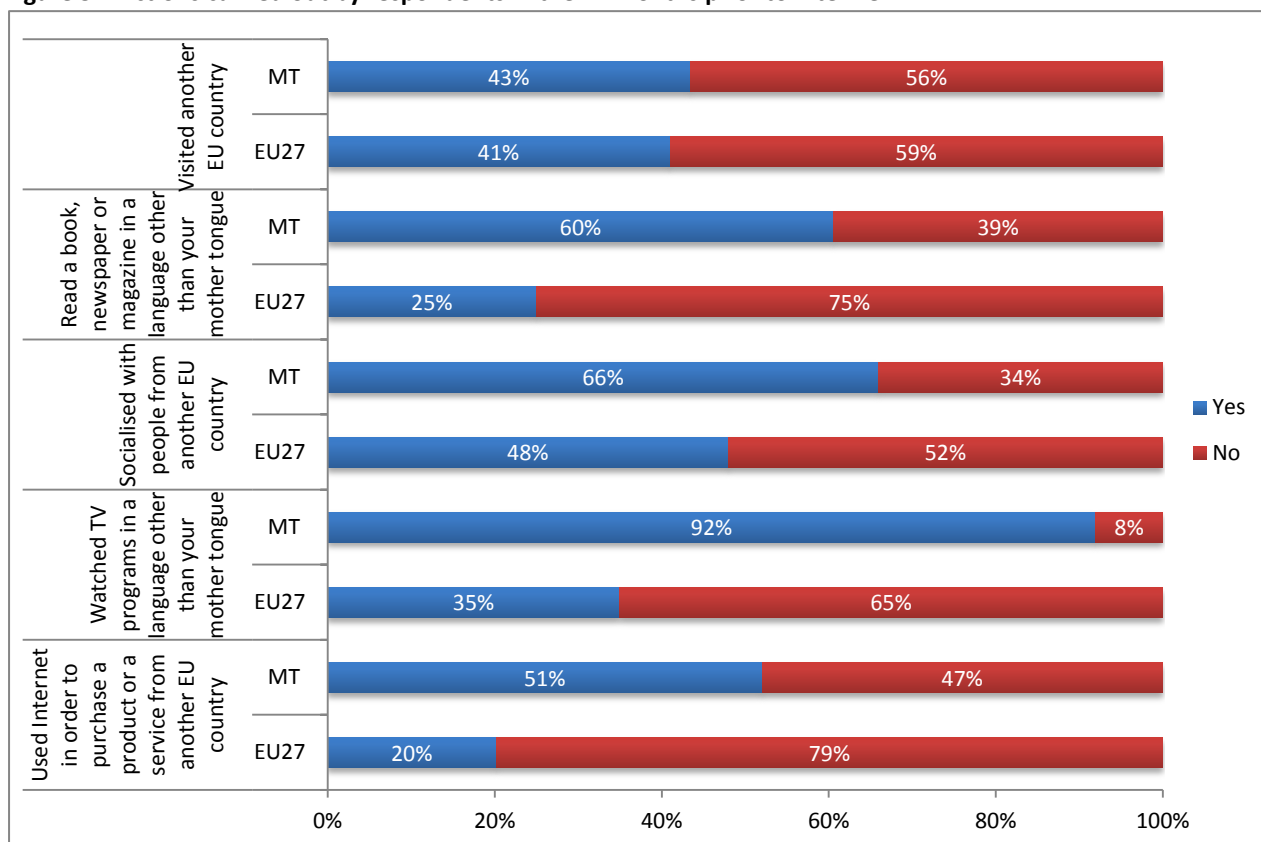
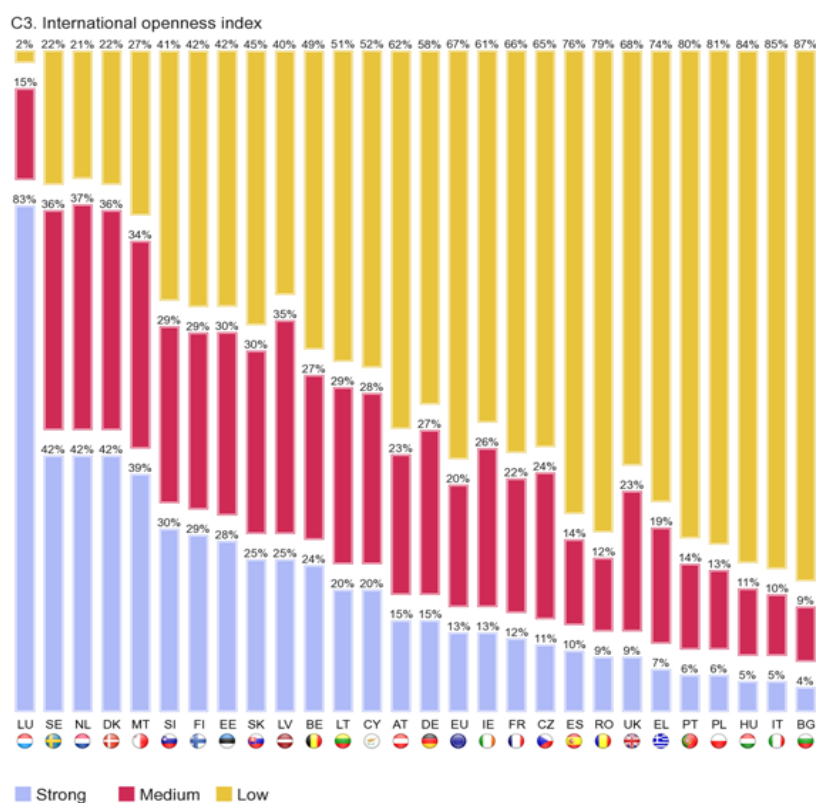


Figure 6 – International Openness Index



A number of achievements related to the EU were then read out to all respondents, who were then asked to indicate whether they have personally benefitted or not from each of the achievements. A noteworthy EU achievement which Maltese residents feel they have benefitted considerably from, was access to less expensive flights and a wider choice of airlines (44%). The introduction of low cost airlines operating to Malta may have affected such a high percentage, when compared to the EU27 average. There was also an increase in the number of respondents residing in Malta who claimed that they have worked, lived or studied in another EU country, when compared to the previous Standard Eurobarometer wave⁷. Given the fact that Malta is a small island, Maltese residents are benefitting from the freedom of movement that EU membership has created, and seeking opportunities in other EU countries. This is also evident in the fact that 49% of respondents residing in Malta claimed that they have benefitted from the lack of, or reduced, border control when travelling abroad. Moreover, scholarship schemes and educational exchange programs, such as ERASMUS, have encouraged a greater number of students to travel abroad to study (12%).

There was also a greater number of local respondents than the EU average, who claimed to have benefitted from improved consumers rights when buying products or services in another EU country (53%), less expensive communication costs when using a mobile phone in another EU country (47%), and strengthened rights of air transport passengers in the EU (38%). The adoption of the new EU regulation on roaming tariffs, released in June 2012, probably had a bearing in this regard. It is aimed at minimising the difference between domestic tariffs and roaming tariffs, therefore creating an internal market for mobile communication services⁸. The EU achievements that local and EU27 respondents claimed to have benefitted from are shown in Figure 7 below and overleaf, compared to results from EB 77.

Figure 7 – EU achievements that respondents have benefitted from

		Has benefitted	Has not benefitted
No\ less border controls when travelling abroad	EU27 EB 78	41%	54%
	MT EB 78	49%	47%
	MT EB 77	44%	53%
Improved consumers rights when buying products or services in another EU country	EU27 EB 78	20%	73%
	MT EB 78	53%	41%
	MT EB 77	50%	45%
Less expensive communication costs when using a mobile phone in another EU country	EU27 EB 78	26%	68%
	MT EB 78	47%	49%
	MT EB 77	39%	57%
Receiving medical assistance in another EU country	EU27 EB 78	12%	82%
	MT EB 78	19%	77%
	MT EB 77	10%	87%
Strengthened rights of air transport passengers in the EU	EU27 EB 78	17%	75%
	MT EB 78	38%	57%
	MT EB 77	34%	62%
Working in another EU country	EU27 EB 78	11%	83%
	MT EB 78	11%	85%
	MT EB 77	5%	93%
Living in another EU country	EU27 EB 78	11%	83%
	MT EB 78	12%	84%
	MT EB 77	7%	92%
Studying in another EU country	EU27 EB 78	9%	85%
	MT EB 78	12%	84%

⁷ Eurobarometer 77.3 fieldwork was carried out in May 2012.

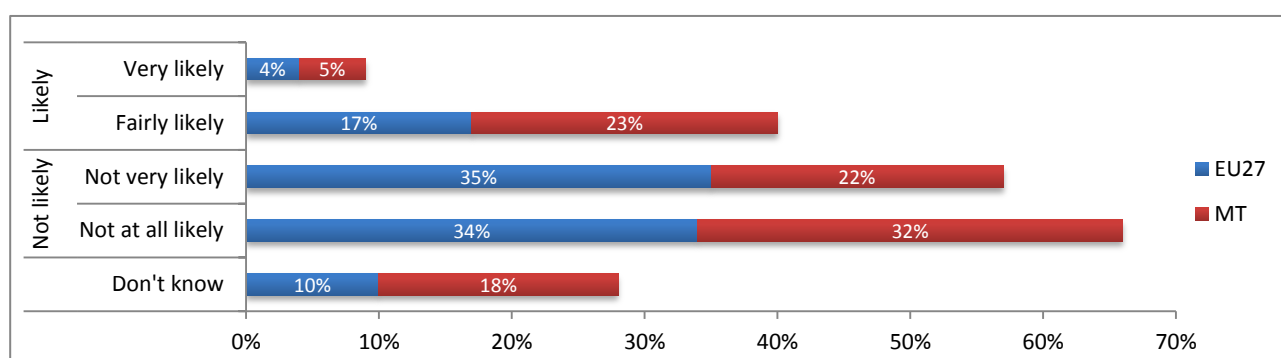
⁸ EuroLex archive: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:172:0010:01:EN:HTML>

	MT EB 77	5%	93%
Less expensive flights and a wider choice of airlines ⁹	EU27 EB 78	26%	68%
	MT EB 78	44%	53%
	MT EB 77	–	–

1.4 European Citizens' Initiative

When asked about the likelihood of making use of the European Citizens' Initiative, the majority of respondents, both throughout the EU27 (69%) and also in Malta (54%), claimed that they were not likely to make use of such an initiative. There was a relatively high percentage of respondents from Malta who did not know how to answer such a question – possibly due to low level of awareness of what this initiative entails.

Figure 8 – Use of the European Citizens' Initiative



Regardless of whether respondents were likely to make use of the European Citizens' Initiative or not, they were asked to point out the field they were most likely to focus on, if they were to make use of this initiative. Employment was the most mentioned topic by both local and EU27 respondents (41% in MT; 38% in EU27). Education was mentioned as the second-most important topic to bring forward, while the issue of pensions was the third most mentioned topic by all respondents. EU27 respondents also mentioned fundamental rights of EU citizens, while respondents in Malta mentioned the environment. An interesting finding is that, when compared to the rest of the EU countries, Malta had the highest percentage of respondents who mentioned the field of sport (10%) and the lowest percentage of respondents who mentioned agriculture (3%), crime (3%) and terrorism (1%). The issue of taxation, has doubled in importance for local respondents since EB 77 results (7% in EB 77; 14% in EB 78). Once again, a high 'Don't know' answer could relate to the lack of awareness of the European Citizens' Initiative.

Figure 9 – Fields most likely to make use of the European Citizens' Initiative

	EU27	MT
Employment	38%	41%
Environment	19%	22%
Pensions	22%	22%
Education	24%	32%
Sport	4%	10%
Enlargement of the EU	6%	4%
Taxation	20%	14%
Mobility of EU's citizens	9%	11%
Common foreign and security policy	9%	4%

⁹ This statement was not included in EB 77.3.

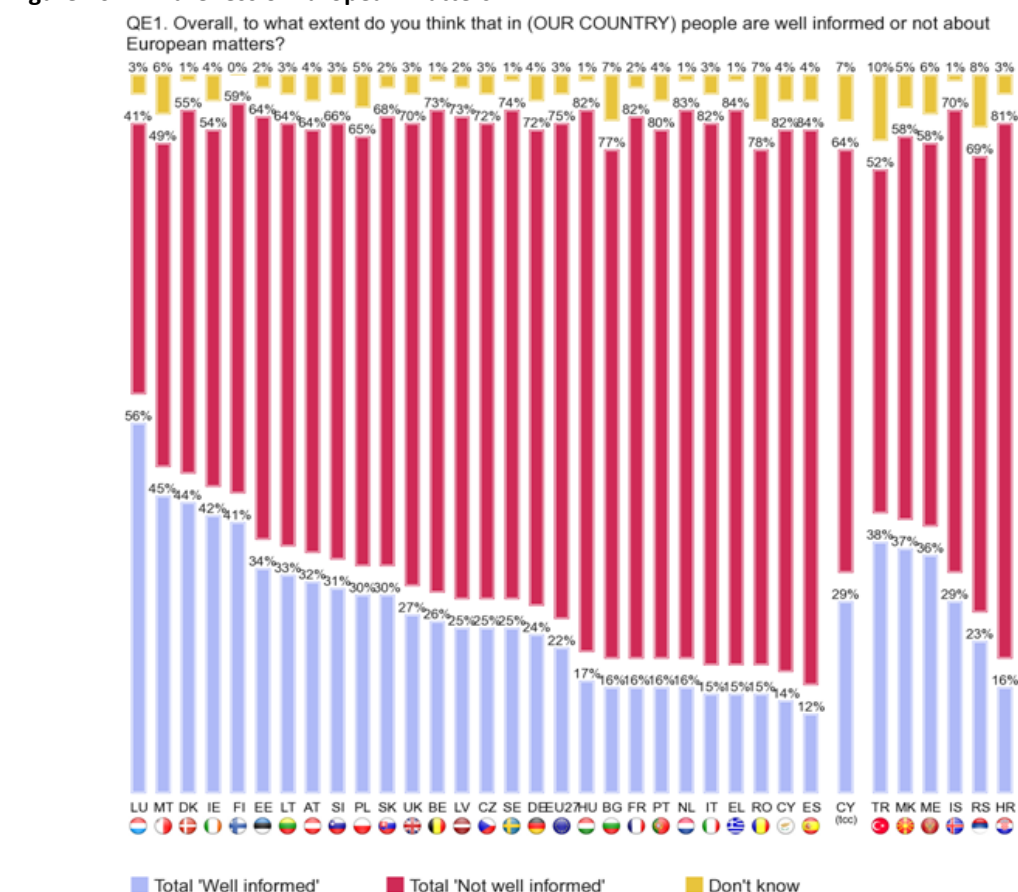
Agriculture	8%	3%
Immigration	12%	16%
Energy	13%	21%
Crime	13%	3%
Terrorism	6%	1%
Consumer protection	20%	21%
Problems with your national government	12%	10%
Fundamental rights of EU's citizens	22%	18%
Other (SPONTANEOUS)	1%	3%
DK	15%	19%

2. INFORMATION ON EUROPEAN POLITICAL MATTERS

2.1 Awareness of European matters

European citizens were asked about the extent to which they think their country's population is well informed about European matters. Results show a 9 percentage point increase in the number of respondents living in Malta who believe that the Maltese population is well informed (36% in EB 76¹⁰; 45% in EB 78). This figure is 23 percentage points higher than the general belief of citizens throughout the EU27. Nevertheless, almost half of local respondents still believe that the local population is generally not well informed about European matters (49%), making Malta the second to last European country in this regard – preceded only by Luxembourg (41%). There has also been an increase of 6 percentage points on a personal level, of respondents living in Malta who claimed that they themselves were well informed about European matters – a result which is 14 percentage points higher than the EU27 average.

Figure 10 – Awareness of European matters



¹⁰ Eurobarometer 76.3 fieldwork was carried out in November 2011.

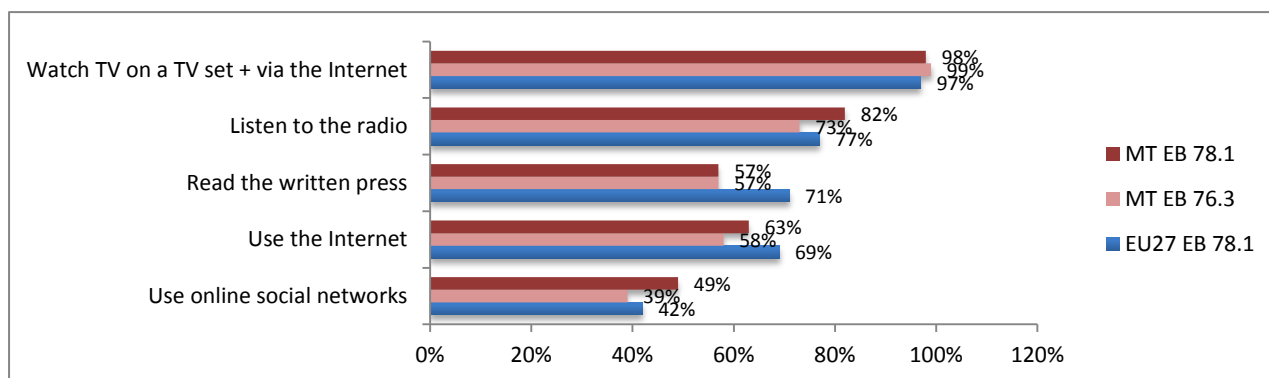
2.2 Use of media for national and EU political matters

Use of Media at least once a week

Respondents were asked to identify how often they watch television on a TV set and via internet, listen to the radio, read the written press, use the internet, and use online social networks. The overall extent of use of these media by Maltese and EU27 respondents is comparable and is considered to be very high (42% in MT; 44% in EU27).

Similar to results in EB 76, the vast majority of respondents across the EU27 claimed to watch television (on a TV set or via internet) at least once a week. Although use of online social networks was ranked as the least popular activity that is carried out at least once a week, there has been an increase of 7 percentage points in the number of EU27 respondents and an increase of 10 percentage points in local respondents, who claimed to make use of this media at such frequency. In fact, Malta was placed among the top 10 countries whose respondents claimed to use online social networks everyday or almost every day (39%). When compared to EB 76 results, there has also been an increase of 9 percentage points in local respondents who listen to the radio at least once a week (73% in EB 76; 82% in EB 78). Respondents living in Malta were ranked as the least likely, out of all other Member States, to read the written press (31%). A considerable change has been seen in the number of respondents from Malta who claimed that they have never used the internet. The number of these respondents has decreased by 13 percentage points since EB 76, and this makes it comparable to the EU27 average percent of non-users (26% in MT; 22% in EU27).

Figure 11 – Frequency of media use at least once a week



Acquiring news on national and European political matters

When asked about the source from where they get their news about national and European political matters, the majority of both local and European respondents mentioned the television as their primary source. Overall, there has been an increase in the number of respondents from Malta who used the radio and the internet as a source of information for national and European political matters, while the written press has been used to a lesser extent. Respondents residing in Malta tend to be more interested in national, rather than European, political matters and in fact 10% of these respondents claimed that they do not look for news about European political matters, compared to 3% who do not look for news about national political matters.

Respondents who use the internet to inform themselves about national¹¹ and European¹² political matters, were asked to name the type of websites that they generally resort to. Information websites were the most

¹¹ Respondents who get information on national political matters on the internet: EU27 – 8,201 respondents; Malta - 173 respondents.

popular for both Maltese and EU27 respondents, to gather news about national and also European political matters. Over a year¹³, online social networks have increased substantially in importance, more so in Malta, and were ranked as the second-most sought source from where respondents who live in Malta, gather news about national and European political matters. Moreover, blogs have also increased in popularity as a source for local respondents to gather news about national political matters (9% in EB 76; 16% in EB 78).

With regard to institutional and official websites, both respondents residing in Malta and in other Member States, have a relatively high level of trust in this source of information, and in fact, 37% of Maltese and 38% of respondents in EU27 claimed that they trust institutional and official websites more than other websites. Yet, 11% of local respondents and 10% of EU27 respondents said that they do not trust any information that is on the internet. In the case of Malta, this finding is 4 percentage points greater when compared to November 2011 results¹⁴.

Generally, respondents from all Member States find information about the EU, its policies and institutions, from television or the internet. The latter has increased in popularity with respondents who live in Malta, where, over one year, 6% more local respondents started searching for EU-related information from this source. The number of local respondents who claimed that they do not look for information about the EU, its policies and institutions, has decreased substantially (22%), and is at par with the EU27 average (20%).

2.3 Attitudes towards EU Information

Citizens of EU countries were asked about the extent to which they think the citizens of their country discuss the EU on television, radio, the press, and websites. On the whole, respondents from all EU countries believe that EU matters are discussed enough by the citizens in their own country, across all these types of media. Despite this, the number of respondents who live in Malta and believe that EU matters are being discussed too often on all these media, has increased when compared to EB 76 results. When compared to the EU27, there is a relatively higher percentage of people in Malta who could not identify the extent of exposure of EU matters in the media, however there seems to be no particular reason which led to this result.

Figure 12 – Extent of EU matters discussed on the media

		Too much	Enough	Too little	DK
Television	MT EB 76	15%	47%	25%	13%
	MT EB 78	23%	42%	23%	12%
	EU27 EB 78	11%	55%	27%	7%
Radio	MT EB 76	8%	38%	20%	34%
	MT EB 78	14%	39%	23%	24%
	EU27 EB 78	6%	48%	27%	19%
Press	MT EB 76	10%	42%	16%	32%
	MT EB 78	15%	43%	15%	27%
	EU27 EB 78	10%	56%	18%	16%
Websites	MT EB 76	6%	31%	10%	53%
	MT EB 78	9%	31%	11%	49%
	EU27 EB 78	6%	42%	12%	40%

¹² Respondents who get information on European political matters on the internet: EU27 – 7,540 respondents; Malta – 151 respondents.

¹³ Eurobarometer 77.3 (November 2011) compared to Eurobarometer 78.1 (November 2012).

¹⁴ These findings were based on respondents who use the internet: EU27 – 19,344 respondents; Malta – 330 respondents

Respondents were then asked about whether they believe that the Maltese media presents the EU too positively, objectively, or too negatively, on the television, radio, press and websites. Respondents living in Malta generally believe that EU matters are presented objectively on television (40%), the radio (37%) and the press (37%). Although the majority of respondents could not give an answer with regard to EU matters discussed on websites, a high percentage of respondents from Malta believe that information transmitted through this medium, is also objective in nature. Overall, results show that in Malta, when compared to the rest of the EU countries, the percentage of respondents who believe that EU matters are portrayed too positively, is higher. The data for Malta also shows a high percentage of 'Don't know' answers.

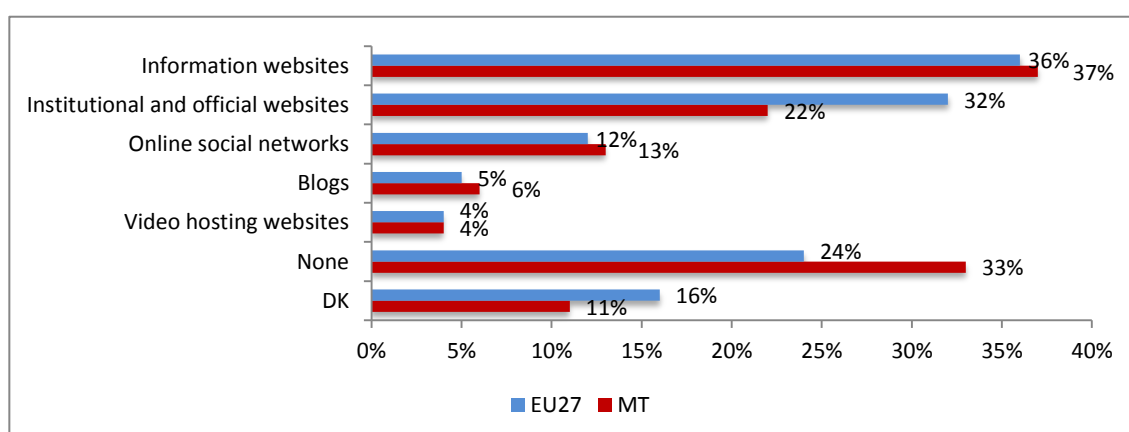
Figure 13 – Extent of objectivity when presenting EU matters on the media

		Too positively	Objectively	Too negatively	DK
Television	MT EB 76	19%	42%	6%	33%
	MT EB 78	29%	40%	5%	26%
	EU27 EB 78	17%	53%	15%	15%
Radio	MT EB 76	15%	33%	5%	47%
	MT EB 78	22%	37%	5%	36%
	EU27 EB 78	11%	52%	10%	27%
Press	MT EB 76	15%	35%	5%	45%
	MT EB 78	20%	37%	4%	39%
	EU27 EB 78	12%	51%	14%	23%
Websites	MT EB 76	11%	27%	2%	60%
	MT EB 78	9%	34%	3%	54%
	EU27 EB 78	6%	40%	8%	46%

2.4 Useful websites to acquire information about EU matters

European citizens were asked to identify the type of website which they find useful when looking for information about the EU. One-third of respondents living in Malta (33%) said that there was no specific type of website, amongst those presented, that they consider useful to find information regarding the EU. This percentage is the second highest among the rest of the EU27, being preceded by Portugal (44%). From the respondents who provided an answer, almost two in every five Maltese citizens would find it useful to have information regarding the EU on information websites (such as websites of newspapers, news magazines) (37%), and one in every five respondents from Malta would prefer institutional and official websites such as government websites (22%). Online social networks have doubled in popularity with those living in Malta, when results are compared to EB 76 (6% in EB 76; 13% in EB 78).

Figure 14 – Websites useful for gathering EU information



2.5 Attitudes towards online social networks

Respondents were provided with four statements regarding online social networking websites and their use for information on political affairs. They were asked to what extent they agreed with each, regardless of whether they personally made use of online social networks or not. When compared to EB 76, there is an overall increase in the number of respondents living in Malta who agreed with all four statements presented - 50% or more of respondents agreed. The percentage of respondents from Malta who agreed to these aforementioned statements was substantially above the EU27 average. In particular, local respondents believe that online social networks are a modern way of keeping abreast with political affairs (70%), getting people interested in politics (69%), and are a good way to have one's say on political issues (61%). The latter is an inevitable result of the interactive atmosphere that has been created with the introduction of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube, where communication is two-way rather than one-way, as it was in traditional forms of broadcasting or marketing. However, respondents living in Malta still have an issue with trust in relation to these social networks, and in fact the number of respondents from Malta who claimed that political information on online social networks cannot be trusted has increased by 13 percentage points from EB 76, up to 50%. Figure 15 shows the attitudes towards online social networks used for political affairs.

Figure 15 – Attitudes towards political information on online social networks

