



## **Standard Eurobarometer 78**

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

### **NATIONAL REPORT**

### **UNITED KINGDOM**

This survey has been requested and co-ordinated by the European Commission,  
Directorate-General for Communication.

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

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**Standard Eurobarometer 78 / Autumn 2012 – TNS Opinion & Social**

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## 1. RESPONDENTS' EXPECTATIONS OF THE EU

*QD1.2: Regarding the "European Union", please tell me what you expect from it?*

### **Economic crisis**

Only 29% of UK respondents expect the EU to be involved in fighting the economic crisis, the smallest percentage in any Member State. This compares with virtually half (49%) of EU respondents as a whole.

### **Socio-demographic analysis<sup>1</sup>**

This view is held by 31% of male respondents, but only 26% of female respondents.

Age has a major influence on these data. 41% of respondents aged 15 to 24 (the youngest age band) believe the EU should focus its efforts in this area, compared with just 22% of those aged 55 or over (the oldest age band).

There is a similarly wide variation based upon levels of education. 34% of those educated to age 20 or beyond (the most educated segment) feel that fighting the economic crisis should be the EU's prime objective, compared with just 18% of those educated to age 15 or under (the least educated segment).

39% of the unemployed and 42% of students hold this view, compared with 23% of the self-employed.

### **Governance and cooperation**

Here the UK and EU27 figures are relatively similar, with 20% of UK respondents and 28% of EU27 respondents citing this as an aspect where they expect EU action.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

While no clear patterns emerge on the basis of education or age, there is a noticeable disparity between the 13% of students and 14% of house persons and the 28% of managers and other white-collar workers.

### **Citizenship**

Just 12% of EU27 respondents and 11% of UK respondents view citizenship as an expectation of the EU.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

While no patterns are apparent by gender or age, this issue receives noticeably higher support (19%) from the most educated segment, compared with 6% of the least educated.

4% of house persons and 5% of manual workers see this as an area to which the EU should accord priority, compared with noticeably higher figures of 18% of managers and 20% of the self-employed.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, the socio-demographic analysis refers solely to UK data.

## 2. POSITIVE RESULTS OF THE EU

*QD4T: Which of the following do you think is the most positive result of the EU?*

Respondents were asked to select from a list of eight subjects the two most positive results of the EU (ranging from student exchange programmes and social welfare to the Common Agricultural Policy and the euro).

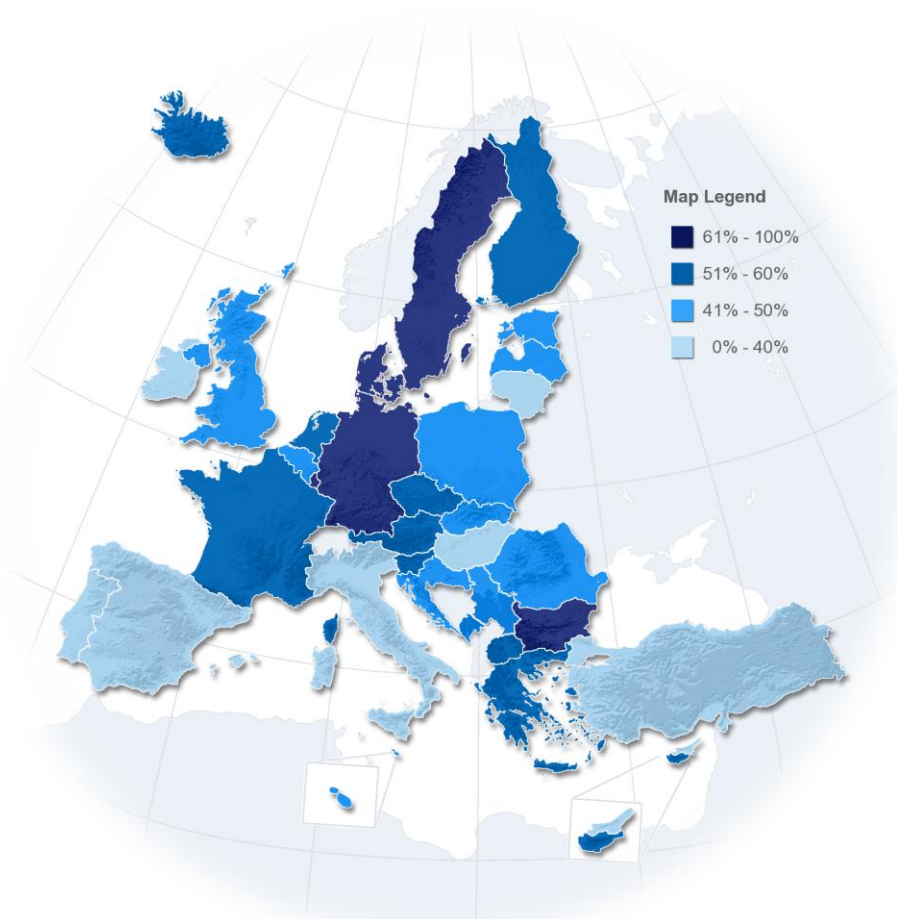
### Peace

In the UK, the most positive benefit of membership is seen to be peace among the Member States.

	DE	71%
	SE	66%
	DK	64%
	BG	63%
	LU	61%
	FR	60%
	CY	59%
	AT	57%
	SI	56%
	CZ	55%
	FI	54%
	NL	53%
	EL	51%
	EU	50%
	RO	49%
	PL	49%
	EE	48%
	MT	45%
	UK	44%
	BE	43%
	SK	43%
	LV	42%
	HU	40%
	IE	39%
	LT	37%
	ES	35%
	IT	30%
	PT	25%
	TR	36%
	IS	57%
	MK	56%
	ME	47%
	RS	46%
	HR	45%
	TR	36%

Question: QD4T. Which of the following do you think is the most positive result of the EU? Firstly? And then?

Answers: Peace among the Member States of the EU



50% of EU27 respondents and 44% of UK respondents select this benefit, although this figure has fallen slightly from 53% (EU27) and 46% (UK) since the previous Eurobarometer poll (EB 77) in May 2012.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

Men (47%) give this a higher rating than women (42%).

Support is strongest (at 58%) among those aged 55 or over.

More than half (52%) of the most educated segment see this as the most positive result of the EU, compared with just 36% of those educated to age 15 or under.

Particularly high figures are also noted among the self-employed (52%).

### **Free movement**

Across the EU27, the free movement of people, goods and services is now seen as the most positive result of the EU, replacing peace, which was the most popular choice in previous editions of Eurobarometer. The EU27 figure for free movement is now 52%, compared with 37% in the UK, a figure unchanged since EB77.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

Education is the most significant influence in this set of data, with 61% of the most educated seeing free movement as the most positive result of the EU, compared with 23% of those who left school at the earliest opportunity.

While 32% of women see this as the most positive result of the EU, the figure among men is considerably higher at 42%.

No clear patterns emerge with regard to age, except that support falls noticeably among the oldest respondents, with figures of 30% for those aged 65 to 74 and 20% for those aged 75 or over.

More than half (52%) of managers and 49% of other white-collar workers see this result of the EU as being positive, compared with just 34% of house persons and 26% of the retired.

### **No positive results**

It should be noted that 31% of UK respondents spontaneously say that they do not believe the EU has produced any positive results. This figure is more than twice as large as the corresponding EU27 average of 13%.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

Just 22% of the youngest age group believes that the EU has produced no positive results, compared with 35% of those aged 40 or over.

A similar variation was seen by levels of education, with just 20% of those educated to the highest level holding this negative view, compared with 41% of those who left school at the earliest opportunity.

### 3. BENEFITTING FROM THE EU'S ACHIEVEMENTS

*QD6: For each of the following achievements of the EU, could you tell me whether you have benefitted from it or not?*

There is an important distinction to be drawn between recognising the achievements of the EU and actually benefitting from them. Accordingly, among eight different achievements, only a minority of EU citizens consider they benefit from any of them. The table below shows for each achievement details of the proportion of EU and UK citizens who are aware of benefiting from them.

The three most frequently cited achievements are analysed in more detail after the table.

*Table 1: QD6 For each of the following achievements of the EU, could you tell me whether you have benefitted from it or not?*

	<b>UK EB78 (EB77 in brackets)</b>	<b>EU27 EB78</b>
<b>No/fewer border controls</b>	32% (36%)	41%
<b>Improved consumer rights when buying from another Member State</b>	20% (26%)	20%
<b>Reduced roaming charges in the EU</b>	25% (24%)	26%
<b>Medical assistance in another Member State</b>	14% (19%)	12%
<b>Strengthened rights for air passengers in the EU</b>	21% (20%)	17%
<b>Working in another Member State</b>	10% (13%)	11%
<b>Living in another Member State</b>	12% (13%)	11%
<b>Studying in another Member State</b>	8% (9%)	9%

#### **No/fewer border controls**

In the most cited example, 41% of EU27 respondents say they have benefited from no/fewer border controls when travelling, compared with a UK figure of 32%.

#### **Socio-demographic analysis**

Making up the 32% for the UK are 35% of men and 28% of women.

While no patterns are noted by age, a substantial 54% of the most educated, compared with just 19% of those who left school aged 15 or before, say they have benefitted from this.

46% of managers say they have benefitted from reduced border controls, compared with just 21% of house persons.

### **Reduced roaming charges in the EU**

25% of UK respondents and a very similar 26% across the EU as a whole say they have benefitted from reduced roaming charges in other Member States.

#### **Socio-demographic analysis**

These reduced costs benefit, above all, younger and better educated respondents. Accordingly, 36% of 15 to 24 year olds and 42% of the most educated say they have benefitted, compared with 18% of those aged 55 or over and just 12% of the least educated.

37% of managers and 36% of other white-collar workers consider they have also benefitted from lower roaming charges, compared with just 17% of the unemployed and 14% of the retired.

### **Strengthened rights for air passengers in the EU**

21% of UK respondents have benefitted from this EU achievement, compared with an EU27 average of 17%.

#### **Socio-demographic analysis**

While no clear patterns emerge by analysis of age, there is a marked variation between the 35% of the most educated respondents and the 11% of the least educated who consider they have benefitted.

Just 12% of the retired and 14% of house persons feel they profit from strengthened air passenger rights, compared with 38% of other white-collar workers and 27% of managers.

#### **4. LIKELY AREAS OF USE OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE (ECI)**

*QD8: And, whether or not you think you might make use of it, or not, if you were to do so, in which of the following fields would you be most likely to use the European Citizens' Initiative?*

15% of EU27 respondents and 33% of UK respondents give a "don't know" response to this question.

##### **Employment**

Employment is the subject that produced a 38% average response across the 27 Member States, making it the EU27's top priority. The UK figure is at 25%, compared to 32% six months ago in EB77, and is the top priority of UK respondents.

##### **Socio-demographic analysis**

Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is a marked variation by age on the issue of employment, with 44% of the youngest age group, compared with 11% of those aged 55 or over, saying they would use the ECI for employment issues.

Similar variations are seen by levels of education, with employment being selected by 42% of those still studying, 26% of those educated to age 20 or beyond and a relatively small 17% of those who left school at the earliest opportunity.

Again, as might be anticipated, the subject of employment is selected by 40% of the unemployed, compared with 17% of the self-employed and 10% of the retired.

##### **Education**

Education generated a response of 19% among UK respondents, compared with 24% for the EU27. In both cases, education is the second most likely area of use of the ECI.

##### **Socio-demographic analysis**

It is unsurprising to observe that this field is selected by 36% of 15 to 24 year olds and 49% of those still studying, compared with only 7% of those aged 55 or over and 8% of those who left school as soon as they were able. Education was also selected by 29% of the unemployed.

##### **Immigration**

Compared with an EU27 average of just 12%, where it is ranked as the least important issue, 16% of UK respondents would like to use the ECI to address immigration, making it the third most important issue for UK respondents. This figure is, however, considerably down from the 21% in EB77.

##### **Socio-demographic analysis**

There are relatively insignificant variations in terms of gender, age and education. The only data that are noticeably out of line are the 22% of the unemployed, compared with 11% of the self-employed.



## **5. WHICH EU RIGHTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT?**

*QD3a: About which rights as a citizen of the EU would you like to know more?*

To respond to this question, respondents were asked in the previous QD2.3 whether they would like to know more about their rights.

Nearly half (49%) of UK respondents and a third (35%) of EU27 respondents say they are not interested, meaning this question was answered by a much reduced sample.

Among the seven options given, there are three areas in which UK citizens are particularly interested with respect to their rights as EU citizens.

### **Receiving medical assistance in another Member State**

Nearly a quarter (23%) of UK respondents would like to know more about their rights to medical assistance in another Member State, compared with 18% across the EU as a whole.

#### **Socio-demographic analysis**

Women (28%) are noticeably more interested in learning more about this subject than men (22%).

The desire for information is also stronger among the least educated (35%), compared with 17% of those still studying.

High figures are also noted among managers and the retired (29%) and house persons (33%).

### **Working in other Member States**

Nearly one in five (18%) of UK respondents is interested in information on working in other Member States, compared with 21% across the EU27 as a whole.

#### **Socio-demographic analysis**

This subject is of more interest to men (20%) than women (15%).

It is of little interest to those aged 55 or over or those educated to age 15 or under, where the figure is only 6%.

A high figure of 34% is noted among other white-collar workers, compared with just 13% of managers.

### **Living in another EU Member State**





























16% of UK respondents (down from 22% in EB77) would like to know more about their rights to live in another EU Member State. This figure is now close to the EU27 average of 15%.

#### **Socio-demographic analysis**

While no substantial variations are noted by gender, age or education, a relatively high figure of 23% is noted among the self-employed and house persons.

## 6. BELONGING TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

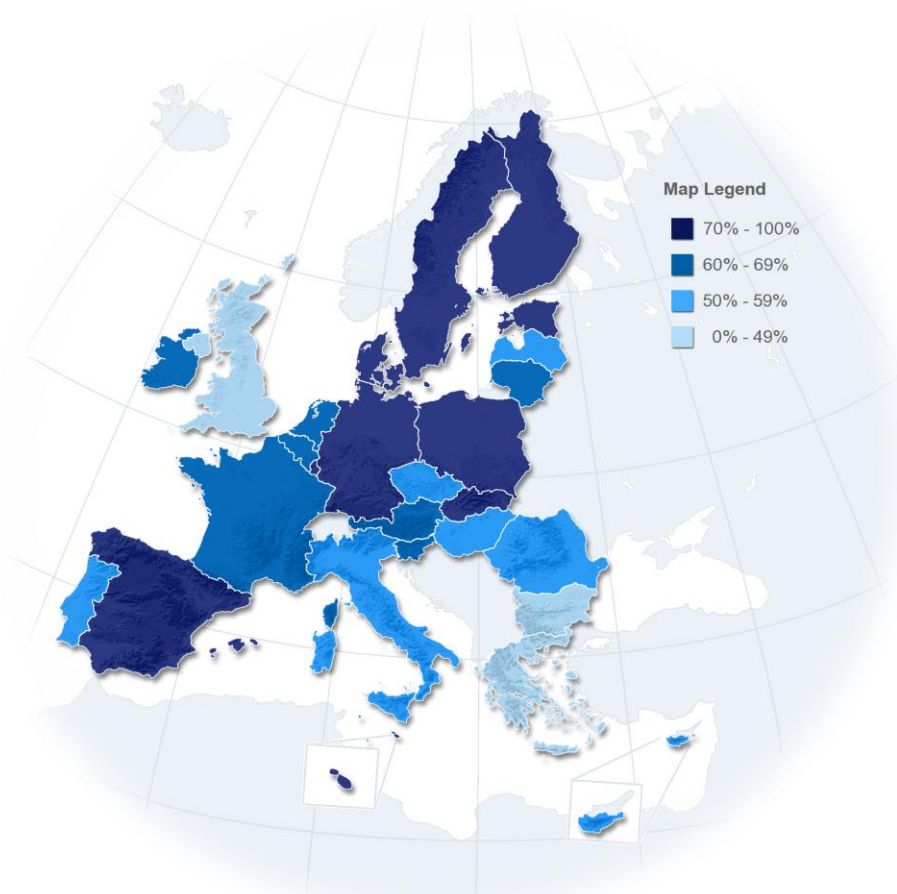
### QD2.1: Do you feel you are a citizen of the EU?

 LU	87%
 FI	78%
 MT	76%
 DK	74%
 DE	74%
 PL	74%
 SE	73%
 EE	73%
 ES	73%
 SK	71%
 IE	69%
 BE	68%
 SI	68%
 NL	67%
 FR	66%
 LT	64%
 EU	63%
 AT	63%
 PT	59%
 LV	57%
 CY	55%
 CZ	54%
 HU	54%
 RO	51%
 IT	51%
 UK	48%
 BG	47%
 EL	46%

Question: QD2.1. For each of the following statements, please tell me to what extent it corresponds or not to your own opinion.

Option: You feel you are a citizen of the EU

Answers: Total 'Yes'



At the time of the fieldwork for EB77 (May 2012), there was a substantial gap between the 42% of UK respondents feeling they were EU citizens and the 57% taking the contrary view. In just 6 months, this gap has closed from 15 to 3 percentage points, with 48% of UK respondents now feeling they are EU citizens and 51% taking the opposite view. This is a significant and rapid change that will be interesting to track in the future. Over the same period, the figure for EU27 respondents has risen from 61% to 63%.

### Socio-demographic analysis

Young people in the UK are much more inclined to view themselves as EU citizens. The figure reaches 69% of 15 to 24 year olds, compared with 41% of those aged 55 or over. Only one in three (33%) of UK citizens aged 75 or over see themselves as EU citizens.

A similar marked differentiation is noted by level of education, with just 30% of the least educated holding this view, compared with 62% of those educated to age 20 or beyond and three-quarters (75%) of those still studying.

**A. ARE YOU WELL INFORMED ABOUT EUROPEAN MATTERS?**

*QE2: Overall, to what extent do you think you are well informed or not about European matters?*

36% of UK respondents consider themselves "well informed" about European matters – a figure significantly higher than the 31% EU27 average.

**Socio-demographic analysis**

Noticeably more men (45%) than women (28%) feel well informed.

While no patterns are seen by age, 51% of those educated to age 20 or over say they are well informed, compared with 26% of those who left school at age 15 or before.

High scores of 48% are seen among managers and students, compared with just 32% of manual workers and house persons.

**B. SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THE EUROPEAN UNION**

*QE 5a: Where do you get most of your news on European political matters?*

**Television**

Although showing a slight decline of two percentage points since the last time this question was asked in EB76 (winter 2011), 53% of UK respondents say their first source of information on European matters was television.

Across the EU as a whole, the figure is now 58%, showing a slight fall from the 61% noted in EB76.

**Socio-demographic analysis**

56% of women, compared with 50% of men, select television as their prime source of news on European matters, and it is selected by 60% of those aged 55 or over.

While only 47% of the most educated opt for this medium, the figure rises to 65% among the least educated.

A particularly high percentage (70%) of house persons uses television for this purpose.

**Internet**

In all 27 Member States, the Internet is the only information source which has seen an increase in its usage. Across the EU, the figure rose from 10% to 12%, while in the UK it rose from 12% to 13%.

Although the percentages in the UK, at 13%, are identical for the Internet and the press (see below), there are numerically more UK respondents obtaining their EU-related information from the Internet than from the press, thereby making the Internet the second most important choice of medium.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

17% of men use the Internet as their first choice for news on European political matters, compared with just 9% of women. The medium also finds higher usage among 15 to 24 year olds (24%) and the most educated (24%), compared with people aged 55 or over (4%) and the least educated (3%).

While only 1% of the retired and 8% of house persons choose this medium, the figure rises to 50% of managers and 23% of students.

### **Press**

The press is cited as a source of information by 13% of UK and 11% of EU respondents.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

Among the respondents who opt for this medium, 15% are men and 11% women.

There are twice as many people aged 55 or over (18%), compared with 9% of people between 15 and 39.

While there are just minimal variations by level of education, there is a major difference between the figures of 18% for the retired and 6% for house persons.

### **Radio**

Radio is now a minor player in this area, with just 8% in the UK and 7% across the EU.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

While no noticeable patterns emerge by gender or age, 12% of the most educated use radio as a source of information, as do 19% of the self-employed, 12% of managers and 11% of the unemployed.

**C. AMOUNT OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE EUROPEAN UNION**

*QE10.1: Generally speaking, do you think that the British media talks too much, about the right amount, or too little about the EU?*

**Television**

While approximately half (48%) of UK respondents believe that television gives the EU sufficient air time, there is a notable 27% who believe there is too little coverage. 55% of EU respondents think the amount is right.

**Socio-demographic analysis**

30% of men, as opposed to 23% of women, believe television gives too little coverage.

While there are only minor variations by age and education, a high proportion (36%) of managers and the unemployed believe television gives too little exposure to the EU.

**Internet**

39% of UK respondents give a "don't know" response about the level of EU coverage by Internet sites. 43% say the coverage is sufficient, compared with a very similar EU27 average of 42%.

**Socio-demographic analysis**

No noticeable patterns emerge on an analysis of socio-demographic data.

**Press**

49% of UK respondents view press coverage of the EU as sufficient, while 19% say it is too much and 16% too little. Across the EU, 56% think press coverage is sufficient.

**Socio-demographic analysis**

No noticeable patterns emerge on an analysis of socio-demographic data.

**Radio**

While 23% of UK respondents give a "don't know" response, 44% believe radio coverage of the EU is sufficient. This, however, leaves more than a quarter (26%) of respondents who believe the coverage is too light. Across the EU, 48% of those polled believe radio coverage is sufficient.

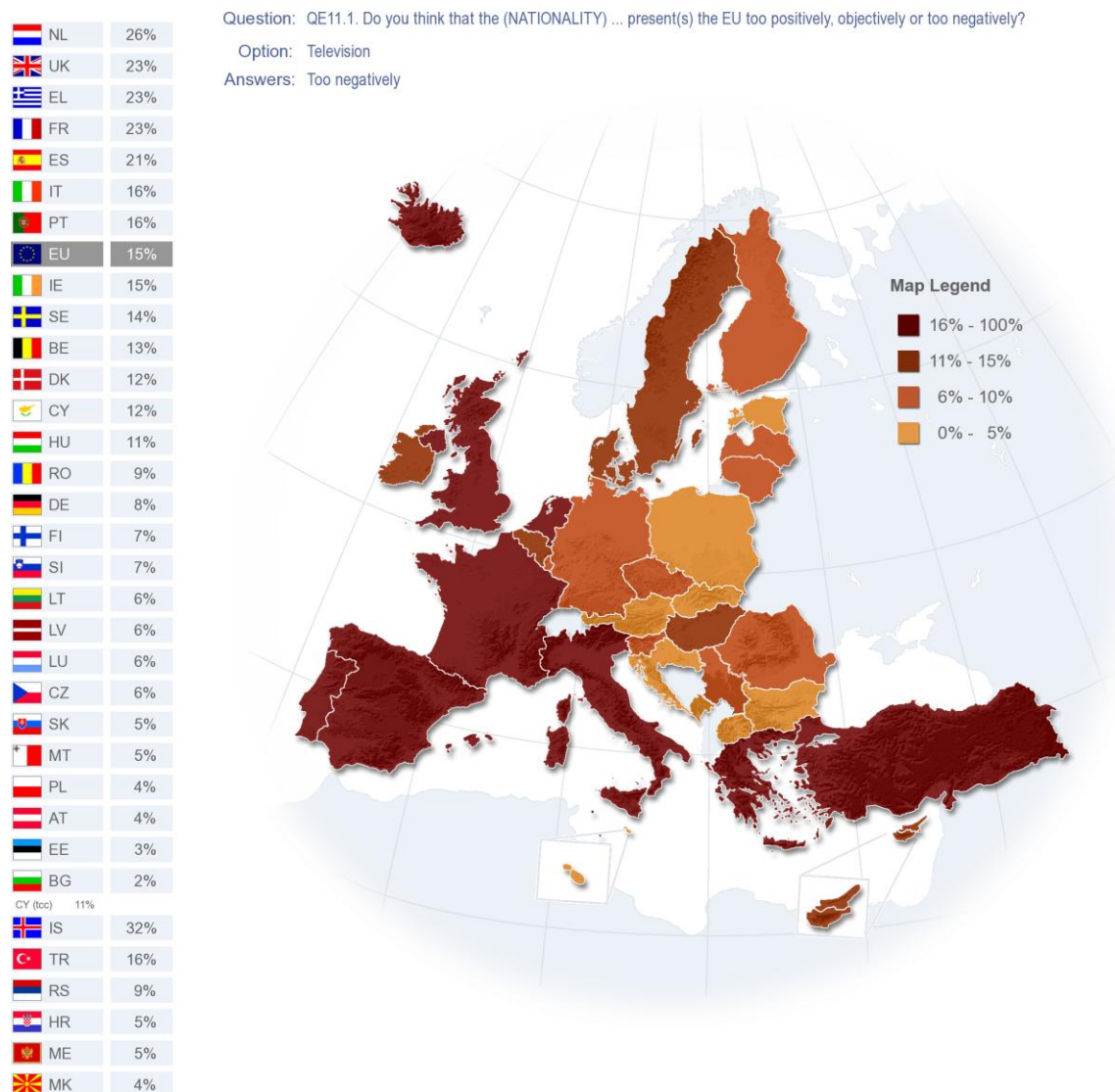
**Socio-demographic analysis**

33% of the youngest age group believes that there is too little information on the EU on the radio, compared with 22% of the oldest age group. There are no other significant variations in the data.

## D. OBJECTIVITY OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE EUROPEAN UNION

QE 11.1: Do you think that the UK media present the EU too positively, objectively, too negatively?

### Television



While 47% of UK respondents think that television presents the EU objectively, almost a quarter (23%) believe it is presented too negatively. Across the EU, only 15% of respondents think the EU is presented too negatively.

### Socio-demographic analysis

While no clear patterns emerge on an analysis of gender, age or education, a difference is evident on analysis by occupation, with 28% of the self-employed and 33% of managers believing television presentation is too negative, compared with just 9% of house persons.

## **Internet**

With regard to the Internet, 46% of respondents in both the UK and the EU27 give a "don't know" response.

Of those who gave an opinion in the UK, 70% say the medium is objective, 12% say it presents the EU too positively, while 17% say that the presentation is too negative.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

No noticeable patterns are observed by gender or age, and the data samples are too small to be statistically valid.

## **Press**

38% of UK and 51% of EU27 respondents believe the press presents the EU in an objective manner.

However, while only 14% of EU27 respondents believe the presentation is too negative, this rises to 28% in the UK.

In fact, when the "don't know" factor is removed, more than one in three (36%) UK respondents giving an opinion believe that a negative view is presented by the press.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

There are noticeably more men (33%) than women (24%) who believe the press treats the EU too negatively.

Just 25% of the least educated think press attitudes towards the EU are too negative, compared with 41% of those educated to age 20 or beyond.

A similar disparity is noted by occupation, with 35% of managers, 39% of the unemployed and 40% of the self-employed also taking the view that press presentation is too negative – a view held by just 14% of house persons.

## **Radio**

46% of UK respondents and 52% of EU27 respondents believe radio presents the EU objectively.

10% of UK respondents and 11% of EU27 respondents perceive the presentation as too positive, compared with 13% (UK) and 10% (EU27) who see it as too negative.

### **Socio-demographic analysis**

Men (16%) hold a firmer belief than women (12%) that radio presents the EU too negatively.

This view is also held by 19% of the most educated, compared with 14% of those who left school at the earliest age.