



Special Eurobarometer 408

SOCIAL CLIMATE

SUMMARY

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

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

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Conducted by TNS Opinion & Social at the request of
Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Survey co-ordinated by Directorate-General Communication

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INTRODUCTION

This summary presents the main results of the fifth in a series of Eurobarometer surveys intended to capture perceptions of the social climate. It examines 15 aspects relating to personal circumstances, the national picture and social protection and inclusion. How do Europeans judge the present situation, how does it compare with five years ago and what are their expectations over the next 12 months – will things improve, worsen or remain the same?

The first in this series of surveys was conducted in June 2009¹, eight months after the financial and economic crisis within Europe began. By June 2010, when the second wave of the survey was conducted², whilst there were signs of improvement in some Member States, the overall position was still one of economic difficulty. Twelve months later, when the third wave was conducted in June 2011³, there had been further improvement in the situation with an increase in EU27 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and a fall in unemployment. However, by the end of 2011, the European debt crisis had worsened, contributing to the falls of the governments of Greece, Italy, Ireland and Spain, and these countries, together with Portugal, receiving a financial bail-out and required to implement austerity measures. By June 2012, when the fourth wave of the survey was conducted⁴, there were signs of a possible recovery, with first quarter GDP – a rough guide to the relative standards of living among Member States – stabilizing after negative growth in the fourth quarter of 2011.

The latest wave of the Social Climate survey was carried out by TNS Opinion & Social network in the 27 Member States of the European Union and in Croatia between the 24th May and 9th June 2013. It evaluates Europeans' current perceptions of their own situation and that of their country. Some 26,680 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed face-to-face at home on behalf of Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion. The methodology used is that of Eurobarometer surveys as carried out by the DG for Communication ("Research and Speechwriting" Unit)⁵.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_315_en.pdf

² http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_349_en.pdf

³ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_370_en.pdf

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_391_en.pdf

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

Note: In this report, countries are referred to by their official abbreviation. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

ABBREVIATIONS			
BE	Belgium	LV	Latvia
CZ	Czech Republic	LU	Luxembourg
BG	Bulgaria	HU	Hungary
DK	Denmark	MT	Malta
DE	Germany	NL	The Netherlands
EE	Estonia	AT	Austria
EL	Greece	PL	Poland
ES	Spain	PT	Portugal
FR	France	RO	Romania
IE	Ireland	SI	Slovenia
IT	Italy	SK	Slovakia
CY	Republic of Cyprus*	FI	Finland
LT	Lithuania	SE	Sweden
HR	Croatia****	UK	The United Kingdom
		EU27	European Union – 27 Member States
		EU15	BE, IT, FR, DE, LU, NL, DK, UK, IE, PT, ES, EL, AT, SE, FI**
		NMS12	BG, CZ, EE, CY, LT, LV, MT, HU, PL, RO, SI, SK***

* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 European Union Member States. However, the 'acquis communautaire' has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the 'CY' category and in the EU27 average.

** EU15 refers to the 15 countries forming the European Union before the enlargements of 2004 and 2007

*** The NMS12 are the 12 'new Member States' which joined the European Union during the 2004 and 2007 enlargements

**** The findings of the survey have been analysed firstly at EU level and secondly by country. At an EU level the results are based on the 27 Member States. Croatia joined the EU on the 1st July 2013 after the fieldwork for this Eurobarometer was completed. It is therefore not included at the overall EU level, but is shown in the country-level analyses.

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*We wish to thank all the people interviewed throughout Europe
who took the time to participate in this survey.*

Without their active participation, this survey would not have been possible.

I. SOCIAL CLIMATE INDEX

This first chapter of the report provides an overview of the current social climate in the EU and how this compares to perceptions held over the last four years. The chapter examines Europeans' overall perceptions of the current situation, taking into account their views on personal circumstances, the national picture and areas relating to social protection and inclusion, and summarising these opinions into a single overall score.

The overall score is based on the results of two questions. The first of these asks respondents how satisfied they are, on the whole, with the life they lead, with answers given on a four point scale from very satisfied to not at all satisfied⁶. The second question asks respondents to judge the current situation in relation to fourteen different areas covering both their personal circumstances and social and economic factors within their country. Responses are invited on a four-point scale ranging from very good to very bad⁷. In order to calculate the overall social climate index, each measure is allocated a score between -10 and 10, as shown below:

Q1: Satisfaction with the life you lead		Q2: Judgement of current situation in 14 areas	
Very satisfied	10	Very good	10
Fairly satisfied	3.33	Rather good	3.33
Not very satisfied	-3.33	Rather bad	-3.33
Not at all satisfied	-10	Very bad	-10
Don't know	Not scored	Don't know	Not scored






























The overall social climate index for each respondent is then calculated as the mean of the scores for each of the fifteen measures (one at Q1 and fourteen at Q2).

The overall social climate index for the EU27 stands at -0.9 in 2013, indicating that Europeans are divided in their assessments of the current situation. This represents a small decline from a score of -0.6 in 2011, and is the lowest index recorded in the series.

As in previous years the index varies considerably between countries. The highest indices are found in the Nordic and Benelux countries, along with Austria and Germany.

⁶ Q1 "On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the life you lead? (READ OUT) Very satisfied, Fairly satisfied, Not very satisfied, Not at all satisfied, Don't know"

⁷ Q2 "How would you judge the current situation in each of the following? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE – ONE ANSWER PER LINE) (READ OUT) The area you live in, Healthcare provision in (OUR COUNTRY), The provision of pensions in (OUR COUNTRY), Unemployment benefits in (OUR COUNTRY), The cost of living in (OUR COUNTRY), Relations in (OUR COUNTRY) between people from different cultural or religious backgrounds or nationalities, The way inequalities and poverty are addressed in (OUR COUNTRY), How affordable energy is in (OUR COUNTRY), How affordable housing is in (OUR COUNTRY), The way public administration runs in (OUR COUNTRY), The situation of the (NATIONALITY) economy, Your personal job situation, The financial situation of

OVERALL SOCIAL CLIMATE INDEX (Evaluation of the current situation)						
		Special EB 315 (2009)	Special EB 349 (2010)	Special EB 370 (2011)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
	EU27	-0.7	-0.7	-0.6	-0.8	-0.9
	DK	2.8	2.4	2.1	2.8	2.8
	LU	2.3	2.5	2.8	2.7	2.6
	SE	1.8	2.3	2.2	2.6	2.3
	AT	1.6	2.3	2.7	2.5	2.1
	NL	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.8	1.9
	DE	0.3	0.7	1.4	2	1.9
	FI	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.5	1.5
	BE	1	0.8	1.2	1.5	1.1
	MT	-0.2	0.2	-0.3	0.1	1
	UK	0	0	-0.1	0.1	0.4
	EE	-0.4	0	-0.3	-0.4	-0.5
	CZ	-0.3	-0.1	-0.9	-0.6	-0.7
	FR	-0.8	-0.8	-1.1	-0.4	-0.9
	IE	-1.8	-1.4	-1.6	-1.5	-1.3
	LV	-2.2	-2.3	-2.7	-1.9	-1.4
	LT	-2.5	-3.1	-2.9	-2.4	-1.6
	SI	-0.5	-0.9	-1.3	-1.4	-2
	SK	-1.6	-0.8	-1.7	-1.8	-2
	PL	-1.3	-1.4	-1.7	-2.6	-2
	HU	-3.7	-3.4	-3.6	-3.8	-2.4
	ES	-1	-0.9	-1.6	-2.1	-2.7
	IT	-1.9	-1.8	-1.1	-3.1	-2.9
	BG	-3.6	-3.1	-3	-2.9	-3.3
	CY	-0.7	-0.8	-1.7	-2.9	-3.4
	PT	-2.3	-2.8	-2.7	-3.2	-3.4
	RO	-2.4	-4.5	-4.4	-3.8	-4
	EL	-3.8	-4.3	-4.6	-5.8	-5.4
	HR	-	-	-	-	-3.5

Denmark has the highest index (2.8), followed by Luxembourg (2.6), Sweden (2.3), Austria (2.1), the Netherlands and Germany (1.9 in each case), Finland (1.5) and Belgium (1.1). Malta and the UK are the only other Member States with a positive index, although it is only marginally so in the UK: Malta (1); and the UK (0.4). These same ten Member States have formed the top ten by overall social climate index in each of the five years of the survey⁸. Greece has been the lowest ranked Member State on this overall

your household, The employment situation in (OUR COUNTRY)? Very good, Rather good, Rather bad, Very bad, Don't know"

⁸ Estonia was ranked equal tenth with the UK in 2010 and equal tenth with Malta in 2011

measure in four of the five survey years, the exception being in 2010, when it was ranked ahead of Romania.

The overall social climate index has declined in six of these ten Member States since 2012, improved in two (Malta and the UK) and remained the same in Denmark and Finland. The biggest improvement is in Malta (up 0.9 points). It is its most significant improvement in the series, with smaller positive shifts between 2009 and 2010 and 2011 and 2012 (up 0.4 points in each case).

The most notable decline in the top ten Member States since 2012 is in the Netherlands (down 0.9 points). This follows a pattern of small improvements since 2010, which saw the overall index in the Netherlands increase from 2.4 to 2.8 in 2012.

None of these southern European countries show an improvement in the social climate index since 2009. All show a deterioration of at least one point, with the greatest declines in Cyprus, down 2.7 points from -0.7 in 2009 to -3.4 in 2013; Spain, down 1.7 points from -1 to -2.7; Greece, down 1.6 points from -3.8 to -5.4; and Slovenia, down 1.5 points from -0.5 to -2. Among the eastern European Member States in these lowest ranked countries, the biggest decline since 2012 is in Bulgaria (from -2.9 to -3.3), reversing a consistent pattern of improvement since 2009, albeit marginal since 2010. Its 2013 index is still higher than the baseline index of -3.6.

II. CURRENT SITUATION

Having explored Europeans' overall perceptions of the social climate, this chapter of the report looks at the different measures that feed into their overall perception. These are examined in three sections; the first examines four factors related to people's personal situation, the second six (primarily economic) factors related to the national situation in their country and the third five factors related to social protection and social inclusion.

1. PERSONAL

This section focuses on people's current perceptions of their personal situation in four areas: their life in general; the area in which they live; their personal job situation; and the financial situation of their household. The results are reported as indices following the method outlined in Chapter I.

Personal situation					
 EU27	Special EB 315 (2009)	Special EB 349 (2010)	Special EB 370 (2011)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
Your life in general	3.2	3.1	3.5	2.7	2.9
The area you live in	4.2	4.2	4.4	3.8	3.9
Personal job situation	1.4	1.5	1.7	0.9	1.2
Household financial situation	1.2	1.1	1.5	0.8	0.9

For all four indicators, the index is positive. **The area in which Europeans live** in is the most positive indicator with an index of 3.9, an increase of 0.1 point since 2012. However, it is still lower than the indices in 2009-2011 and has declined by 0.5 points from the high of 4.4 in 2011. **'Your life in general'** is the next most positive indicator with an index of 2.9 in 2013, which has increased by 0.2 points from 2012, when it was the lowest in the series, and shows a decline of 0.6 points from the high of 3.5 in 2011.


At the EU level, the overall index of 1.2 for people's **personal job situation** in 2013, which displays an increase of 0.3 points from 2012 when it was at its lowest point in the series. The EU level index for personal job situation is jointly the third highest among the fifteen survey measures⁹. With an EU level index of 0.9, Europeans' overall assessment of their **household's current financial situation** broadly reflects their view of their personal job situation (1.2).

⁹ Along with the EU level index for the national healthcare system

2. COUNTRY

Having explored Europeans' perceptions of their personal situation, this next section of the chapter looks at their views on the national picture, with a particular focus on economic indicators.

Respondents were asked to judge the current situation in relation to six aspects of life in their own country: the cost of living; the affordability of energy; the affordability of housing; the way public administration runs; the economic situation; and the employment situation. As before, the results are reported as indices.

Country situation					
 EU27	Special EB 315 (2009)	Special EB 349 (2010)	Special EB 370 (2011)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
Cost of living	-3	-2.7	-3.4	-3	-3.1
Affordability of energy	-2.2	-2	-2.6	-2.6	-2.5
Affordability of housing	-3.1	-2.7	-3.3	-3.3	-2.9
Public administration	-1.2	-1.3	-1.4	-1.5	-1.6
Economic situation in country	-4.1	-3.6	-2.9	-3	-3.5
Employment situation in country	-4.4	-4	-3.5	-4	-4.2

Whilst the personal situation is perceived to be moderately positive, the country situation is thought about more negatively by Europeans.

Europeans' net evaluation of the **cost of living** in their country is somewhat negative, with an index of -3.1 at the EU level. This is the third lowest overall index across the fifteen survey measures.

People's perceptions of **how affordable energy currently is** in their country are slightly better than their views of the overall cost of living, with an index of -2.5 at the EU level, the fifth lowest EU level index among the fifteen survey measures.

Europeans' evaluation of the **affordability of housing** in their country is similar to their view of the overall cost of living, with an index of -2.9 at the EU level. This index has improved since 2012 (up 0.4 points from an index of -3.3).


Europeans' overall judgement of the way that **public administration runs** in their country is negative, but less so than for the five other measures covered in this section, with an index of -1.6 at the EU level.

Europeans' perceptions of the **current economic situation** in their country are negative overall, and more negative than their views on the cost of living. The index of -3.5 at the EU level makes it the second lowest rated aspect of life among the fifteen measured in the survey. Perceptions have worsened since 2012 (down 0.5 points). Having said this, the index is an improvement on the score of -4.1 recorded in 2009, and similar to the score of -3.6 recorded in 2010.

Europeans assess the **employment situation** in their country more negatively than they do any of the other dimensions they are asked about in the survey, with an index of -4.2 at the EU level. The index has declined from -4 in 2012, and is at its second lowest level in the series, slightly better than the score of -4.4 recorded in 2009.

3. SOCIAL PROTECTION AND INCLUSION

The final section in this chapter examines Europeans' satisfaction with aspects of social protection and inclusion in their country. Respondents are asked to evaluate five specific areas: provision of healthcare; provision of pensions; unemployment benefits; relations between people from different cultural or religious backgrounds, or nationalities; and the way in which inequalities and poverty are addressed. As before, the results are reported as indices.

Social protection and inclusion					
 EU27	Special EB 315 (2009)	Special EB 349 (2010)	Special EB 370 (2011)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
Healthcare provision	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2
Pension provision	-1	-1.2	-1.5	-1.4	-1.5
Unemployment benefits	-1.2	-1.4	-1.2	-1.4	-1.6
Relations between different cultural backgrounds/ nationalities	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.3
Inequalities and poverty	-2	-2.2	-2.5	-2.1	-2.4

For the five indicators, only two are positive, whereas the relations between different cultural backgrounds or nationalities seem to particularly divide Europeans in their perceptions.

Europeans' overall evaluation of healthcare provision in their country is positive, although only slightly, with an overall index of 1.2. **Healthcare provision** is the third highest rated of the fifteen dimensions covered in the survey.

Europeans' net judgement of **pension provision** in their country is slightly negative, with an index of -1.5 at the EU level. Apart from a small improvement in the index in 2011, there has been a slight deterioration over the five years of the survey from a high of -1 in 2009. The 2013 index is at the same level as that seen in 2011 (-1.5).

Europeans' overall satisfaction with **unemployment benefits** in their country is at a similar level to their satisfaction with pension provision, with an index of -1.6 at the EU level. The index has declined slightly since 2012, when it was -1.4, and is now at its lowest level in the series.

As mentioned previously, Europeans are divided in their perceptions of the **relations in their country between people from different cultural or religious backgrounds or nationalities**, with an index of 0.3 at the EU level. This compares with an index of 0.4 in 2012, and 0.3 in both 2009 and 2010, and is slightly above the lowest level recorded in 2011 (0.1). However, there is less national variation on this measure than on any of the other survey measures.


Overall, Europeans have a negative view of **the way in which inequalities and poverty are addressed** in their country, with an index of -2.4 at the EU level, a decline on the index of -2.1 in 2012, and only a slight improvement on the low point of -2.5 recorded in 2011.

III. EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

The final two chapters of the report examine whether Europeans think that things will improve, get worse or remain the same in the forthcoming year, and how they perceive the current situation compared with five years ago - is it better, worse or similar?

1. PERSONAL SITUATION

On each of the measures relating to respondents' personal circumstances, most Europeans expect things to remain unchanged in the next twelve months, with a broadly even balance of opinion among the remainder between those who expect things to be get better and those who think they will get worse¹⁰.

Personal situation (Expectations for the next 12 months)	Better		Worse		Same	
	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
 EU27						
General life situation	22%	23%	17%	16%	58%	58%
Residential area	13%	14%	11%	12%	73%	73%
Personal job situation	16%	17%	14%	13%	59%	60%
Household financial situation	17%	17%	20%	21%	59%	59%

Around three quarters of Europeans (73%) anticipate no change in their local area, with 14% expecting things to get better and 11% things to get worse. Around three in five (58%) expect no change in their life in general, with around one in four (23%) anticipating an improvement and one in six (16%) believing that their life will get worse.

Similar proportions expect no change in their job situation and household finances (60% and 59% respectively). Those who expect their job situation to change are divided between those expecting things to get better (17%) and those thinking that they will worsen (13%), with the remainder (10%) unsure how the situation will change. Fewer respondents (3%) are uncertain how their household finances will change, with one in five (21%) expecting them to get worse and one in six (17%) thinking that they will improve.

Although these figures are very similar to those reported in 2012, it is worth noting that people in EU15 are more optimistic than those in NMS12, especially in regards to their

¹⁰ Q3 "What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to....? (ONE ANSWER PER LINE) (READ OUT) Your life in general, The area you live in,Your personal job situation, The financial situation of your household....Better, Worse, Same, Don't know"
NB The statements relating to national situation and social protection and inclusion are also asked in this question


job situation (19% thinking it will improve, 12% expecting it to get worse, compared with 13% and 16% respectively in NMS12), their life in general (24% expecting it to improve, 16% believing it will get worse, compared with 20% and 20% respectively in NMS12) and their household finances (18% thinking it will improve, 20% expecting it to get worse, compared with 16% and 24% respectively in NMS12).

At a national level, the Member States that tend to have the most consistently positive views in terms of their current personal situation are Sweden, Estonia and Latvia, followed by Denmark and Malta.

2. COUNTRY

This section covers Europeans' perceptions of what they think will happen in the next 12 months in six areas relating to their own country: the cost of living; how affordable energy is; how affordable housing is; the country's economic situation; its employment situation; and the way in which public administration is handled¹¹.

As in 2012, the large majority of Europeans expect either no change in these areas or think things will get worse, with few believing the situation will improve.

Country situation (Expectations for the next 12 months)	Better		Worse		Same	
	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
 EU27						
Economic situation	16%	15%	42%	42%	38%	40%
Employment situation	16%	15%	42%	43%	38%	39%
Cost of living	9%	8%	57%	57%	32%	33%
Affordability of energy	10%	10%	52%	48%	35%	39%
Affordability of housing	11%	11%	43%	43%	42%	42%
The way public administration is run	11%	9%	25%	27%	59%	59%

Most Europeans (57%) expect the **cost of living** in their country to get worse, with a third (33%) thinking it will stay the same and less than one in ten (8%) expecting it to

¹¹ Q3 "What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse, or the same, when it comes to? (ONE ANSWER PER LINE) (READ OUT) The cost of living, How affordable energy is in (COUNTRY), How affordable housing is in (COUNTRY), The way public administration runs in (OUR COUNTRY), The economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY),The employment situation in (OUR COUNTRY)

get better. Expectations concerning the **affordability of energy** are broadly similar, with just under half of respondents (48%) saying it will worsen, just under two fifths (39%) anticipating no change and one in ten (10%) expecting it to improve.

In relation to the economy, the employment situation and the affordability of housing Europeans are divided between those thinking things will get worse and those thinking the situation will stay the same:

- 42% expect **the economy** to get worse, 40% it will stay the same, 15% expect it to improve ;
- 43% expect **the employment situation** to get worse, 39% think it will stay the same, 15% anticipate improvement;
- 43% expect the **affordability of housing** to get worse, 42% expect no change, 11% expect it to become better.

The majority (59%) expect no change **in the way public administration is run**, although the balance of opinion is negative, with just over a quarter (27%) expecting things to get worse and less than one in ten (9%) thinking they will improve.

Europeans' views on how things will change in the short term are similar to those found in 2012. Europeans are slightly more optimistic about energy affordability remaining the same (+4 percentage points from 35% to 39%), with a corresponding decrease in the proportion expecting energy to become less affordable in the next 12 months (-4 points from 52% to 48%).


3. SOCIAL PROTECTION AND INCLUSION

The final section of this chapter examines Europeans' expectations as to what will happen to areas of social protection and inclusion over the next year¹².

As in 2012, most Europeans expect no change in the five areas of social protection and inclusion or think things will get worse, with small minorities anticipating improvements. When compared with perceptions of the national situation, Europeans are more likely to expect things to remain the same and less likely to think they will get worse.

Better, Worse, Same, Don't know" NB The statements relating to personal situation and social protection and inclusion are also asked in this question

¹² Q3 "What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to.....? (ONE ANSWER PER LINE) (READ OUT)The healthcare system in (OUR COUNTRY), The provision of pensions in (OUR COUNTRY), Unemployment benefits in (OUR COUNTRY), Relations in (OUR COUNTRY) between people from different cultural or religious backgrounds or nationalities, The way inequalities and poverty are addressed in (OUR COUNTRY)? Better, Worse, Same, Don't know" NB Measures relating to personal situation and the national picture are also included in this question

Social protection and inclusion (Expectations for the next 12 months)	Better		Worse		Same	
	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
 EU27						
Healthcare system	12%	11%	32%	33%	53%	53%
Provision of pensions	11%	8%	40%	41%	44%	44%
Unemployment benefits	9%	8%	37%	38%	46%	45%
Relations between people from different cultural backgrounds	13%	12%	25%	28%	57%	56%
The way inequalities and poverty are addressed	13%	11%	31%	32%	52%	53%

Just over half of Europeans (53%) think **the healthcare system** in their country will remain the same in the next 12 months, with a third (33%) thinking it will get worse and 11% that it will get better.

In relation to **pension provision**, Europeans are divided between thinking it will stay the same (44%) and thinking it will deteriorate (41%), with 8% expecting it to improve. Views on **unemployment benefits** are broadly similar, with 45% anticipating no change, 38% expecting them to get worse and 8% thinking they will improve.

In terms of **relations between people from different cultural or religious backgrounds or nationalities**, most (56%) think there will be no change, around a quarter (28%) expect relations to worsen and 12% think they will get better.

A small majority (53%) expect the way their country addresses **inequality and poverty** to remain unchanged, with three in ten (32%) thinking that this will deteriorate and 11% believing it will improve.


On these five measures the most notable differences compared with 2012 are a small increase from 25% to 28% of respondents expecting relations between people from different cultural or religious backgrounds or nationalities to worsen; a small decrease, from 11% to 8%, in the proportion expecting pensions provision to improve; and a small drop, from 13% to 11%, in the proportion anticipating that there will be an improvement in the way their country addresses inequality and poverty.

IV. CHANGES IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

This final chapter examines Europeans' perceptions of whether the current situation is better or worse, or unchanged, relative to the situation five years ago for each of the 15 measures¹³.

1. PERSONAL SITUATION

Europeans are most likely to think that their personal situation is similar to five years ago in relation to their local area and personal job situation. In terms of general life and household financial situation Europeans are divided between those thinking things have stayed the same and those believing the situation has got worse. Across all four measures, where respondents do perceive things to have changed, they are more likely to say that they have got worse than that they have improved:

Personal situation (Changes in the last 5 years)	Improved		Got worse		Stayed about the same	
	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
 EU27						
General life situation	22%	23%	37%	37%	40%	39%
Residential area	16%	17%	24%	23%	58%	58%
Personal job situation	15%	15%	28%	29%	47%	47%
Household financial situation	15%	16%	40%	41%	43%	42%

The majority of Europeans (58%) think that **the area they live** in has not changed compared with five years ago, with about one in six (17%) thinking it has got better and one in four (23%) that it has become worse.

Just under half of Europeans (47%) perceive no change in their **personal job situation** in recent years, while 15% say that their situation has improved in this respect, compared with almost twice as many (29%) reporting that it has got worse. Europeans present a more negative view of how the **financial situation** of their household has changed compared with five years ago. While more than two in five (42%) say that it has not changed, a similar proportion (41%) perceive it to have deteriorated, whilst only 16% say that it has improved.

In terms of their **life in general**, just under two in five Europeans (39%) say that things have stayed about the same compared with five years ago, with a broadly similar

¹³ Q4 "Compared with five years ago, would you say things have improved, got worse or stayed about the same when it comes to....? (ONE ANSWER PER LINE) (READ OUT) Your life in general, The area you live in, Your personal job situation, The financial situation of your household" Improved, Got worse, Stayed about the same, Don't know


proportion (37%) saying that they have got worse and just over one in five (23%) that they have improved.

The results are very similar to those in 2012. When turning to the differences between Europeans who live in the EU15 and those who are resident in the NMS12, people in EU15 are more positive about their life in general, their job situation and their household finances. However, perceptions about the local area is more positive for those in NMS12.

2. COUNTRY

This section covers Europeans' perceptions of six areas: the cost of living, energy and housing affordability, the national economy and employment situation, and the way public administration is handled¹⁴.

Europeans widely perceive the national situation to have deteriorated compared with five years ago across five of the six indicators. Opinions on the way in which public administration is run are divided between those who think it has got worse and those who think it has not changed:

Country situation (Changes in the last 5 years)	Improved		Got worse		Stayed about the same	
	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
 EU27						
Economic situation	10%	10%	70%	71%	18%	17%
Employment situation	9%	8%	70%	71%	18%	18%
Cost of living	2%	3%	82%	81%	14%	15%
Affordability of energy	4%	5%	73%	69%	20%	23%
Affordability of housing	5%	6%	67%	66%	24%	24%
The way public administration is run	5%	5%	41%	43%	49%	47%

Most respondents think the situation is worse than it was five years ago in terms of the **cost of living** (81%), **the national economy** and **employment situation** (both 71%), **the affordability of energy** (69%) and **housing** (66%). A large minority (43%) think


¹⁴ Q4 "Compared with five years ago, would you say things have improved, got worse or stayed about the same when it comes to.....? (ONE ANSWER PER LINE) (READ OUT) The cost of living, How affordable energy is in (COUNTRY), How affordable housing is in (COUNTRY), The way public administration runs in (OUR COUNTRY), The economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY), The employment situation in (OUR COUNTRY) Improved, Got worse, Stayed about the same, Don't know" NB The statements relating to personal situation and social protection and inclusion are also asked in this question

the way public administration is handled has got worse, while only 5% think it has improved.

The results are broadly similar to those in 2012 but there has been a small drop in the proportion of Europeans thinking energy affordability has become less affordable from 73% to 69% and corresponding increases in the proportions thinking energy affordability remains the same as it did five years ago (from 20% to 23%) and those believing it is now more affordable (from 4% to 5%).

3. SOCIAL PROTECTION AND INCLUSION

As was the case in 2012, the large majority of Europeans perceive the five areas of social protection and inclusion to have got worse or remained the same compared with five years ago, with few respondents perceiving them to have improved.

Social protection and inclusion (Changes in the last 5 years)	Improved		Got worse		Stayed about the same	
	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)	Special EB 391 (2012)	Special EB 408 (2013)
 EU27						
Healthcare system	8%	8%	50%	49%	40%	40%
Provision of pensions	4%	4%	58%	56%	32%	32%
Unemployment benefits	6%	5%	49%	50%	33%	32%
Relations between people from different cultural backgrounds	11%	10%	37%	40%	47%	46%
The way inequalities and poverty are addressed	7%	7%	46%	47%	43%	41%

Around half of Europeans (49%) think that the **healthcare system** in their country has got worse in the last five years. Four in ten (40%) think it has stayed the same and less than one in ten (8%) think it has improved. Perceptions concerning **unemployment benefits** are similar, with half of respondents (50%) thinking they have got worse, a third (32%) that they have remained the same and only 5% that they have got better.

In relation to **pension provision**, the balance of opinion is more negative, with more than half of Europeans (56%) believing that provision has deteriorated, a third (32%) that it has stayed the same and only 4% that it has got better.

In terms of **relations between people from different cultural or religious backgrounds or nationalities**, the most common view (46%) is that there has been no change, but the overall balance of opinion is negative, with four in ten (40%) thinking things have got worse, compared with 10% who think that relations have improved.

In relation to the way that **inequality and poverty** is addressed, almost half (47%) of Europeans think things have got worse, a slightly smaller proportion (41%) believe they have remained unchanged, with only 7% thinking they have got better.

The overall picture of Europeans' perceptions on these measures remains broadly similar to that presented in 2012. There has been a small increase in the proportion of Europeans thinking that relations between people with different cultural and religious backgrounds or nationalities have worsened compared with five years ago, from 37% in 2012 to 40% in 2013. There has been a small decrease in the proportion thinking that pension provision has worsened, from 58% to 56%.

People in EU15 are more likely than those in NMS12 to think that the situation has worsened in relation to the relations between people from different cultural, religious or national backgrounds (43% thinking they have worsened, 10% that they have improved, compared with 28% and 9% respectively in NMS12); pension provision (58% thinking it has worsened, 4% that it has improved, compared with 51% and 5% respectively in NMS12); the way the country addresses inequality and poverty (48% thinking it has worsened, 8% believing it has improved, compared with 43% and 6% respectively in NMS12).

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

EUROBAROMETER SP408

Social Climate

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between the 24 May and 9 June 2013, TNS opinion & social, a consortium created between TNS plc and TNS opinion, carried out the wave 79.4 of the EUROBAROMETER survey, on request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General for Communication, "Research and Speechwriting".

The EUROBAROMETER survey wave 79.4 covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, resident in each of the Member States and aged 15 years and over.

The EUROBAROMETER survey wave 79.4 has also been conducted in Croatia where the survey covers the national population of citizens and the population of citizens of all the European Union Member States that are residents in this country 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 according to the EUROSTAT NUTS II (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective nationalities 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 Nth 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. As far as the data capture is concerned, CAPI (*Computer Assisted Personal Interview*) was used in those countries where this technique was available.

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 below.

Readers are reminded that survey results are estimations, the accuracy of which, everything being equal, rests 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:

Statistical Margins due to the sampling process (at the 95% level of confidence)											
<i>various sample sizes are in rows</i>						<i>various observed results are in columns</i>					
	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	
	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	
N=50	6,0	8,3	9,9	11,1	12,0	12,7	13,2	13,6	13,8	13,9	N=50
N=500	1,9	2,6	3,1	3,5	3,8	4,0	4,2	4,3	4,4	4,4	N=500
N=1000	1,4	1,9	2,2	2,5	2,7	2,8	3,0	3,0	3,1	3,1	N=1000
N=1500	1,1	1,5	1,8	2,0	2,2	2,3	2,4	2,5	2,5	2,5	N=1500
N=2000	1,0	1,3	1,6	1,8	1,9	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,2	2,2	N=2000
N=3000	0,8	1,1	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,6	1,7	1,8	1,8	1,8	N=3000
N=4000	0,7	0,9	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	N=4000
N=5000	0,6	0,8	1,0	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,3	1,4	1,4	1,4	N=5000
N=6000	0,6	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,3	1,3	N=6000
N=7000	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,2	1,2	N=7000
N=7500	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	N=7500
N=8000	0,5	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	N=8000
N=9000	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	N=9000
N=10000	0,4	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	N=10000
N=11000	0,4	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	N=11000
N=12000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	N=12000
N=13000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	N=13000
N=14000	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	N=14000
N=15000	0,3	0,5	0,6	0,6	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	N=15000
	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	
	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%	

ABBR.	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	FIELDWORK DATES		POPULATION 15+
BE	Belgium	TNS Dimarso	1.006	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	8.939.546
BG	Bulgaria	TNS BBSS	1.025	25/05/2013	02/06/2013	6.537.510
CZ	Czech Rep.	TNS Aisa	1.026	24/05/2013	06/06/2013	9.012.443
DK	Denmark	TNS Gallup DK	1.010	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	4.561.264
DE	Germany	TNS Infratest	1.505	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	64.336.389
EE	Estonia	Emor	1.008	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	945.733
IE	Ireland	IMS Millward Brown	1.001	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	3.522.000
EL	Greece	TNS ICAP	1.002	25/05/2013	08/06/2013	8.693.566
ES	Spain	TNS Demoscopia	1.008	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	39.127.930
FR	France	TNS Sofres	1.053	24/05/2013	08/06/2013	47.756.439
IT	Italy	TNS Italia	1.025	25/05/2013	07/06/2013	51.862.391
CY	Rep. of Cyprus	Synovate	506	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	660.400
LV	Latvia	TNS Latvia	1.018	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	1.447.866
LT	Lithuania	TNS LT	1.023	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	2.829.740
LU	Luxembourg	TNS ILReS	502	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	434.878
HU	Hungary	TNS Hoffmann Kft	1.033	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	8.320.614
MT	Malta	MISCO	500	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	335.476
NL	Netherlands	TNS NIPO	1.013	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	13.371.980
AT	Austria	Österreichisches Gallup-Institut	1.034	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	7.009.827
PL	Poland	TNS OBOP	1.000	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	32.413.735
PT	Portugal	TNS EUROTESTE	1.007	28/05/2013	09/06/2013	8.080.915
RO	Romania	TNS CSOP	1.053	25/05/2013	04/06/2013	18.246.731
SI	Slovenia	RM PLUS	1.005	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	1.759.701
SK	Slovakia	TNS Slovakia	1.000	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	4.549.955
FI	Finland	TNS Gallup Oy	1.003	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	4.440.004
SE	Sweden	TNS GALLUP	1.000	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	7.791.240
UK	United Kingdom	TNS UK	1.314	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	51.848.010
TOTAL EU27			26.680	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	408.836.283
HR	Croatia	Puls	1.000	25/05/2013	09/06/2013	3.749.400
TOTAL EU28			27.680	24/05/2013	09/06/2013	412.585.683