



## Flash Eurobarometer 400

# INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO IN THE MORE RECENTLY ACCEDED MEMBER STATES

## SUMMARY

Fieldwork: April 2014

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

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission.  
The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

## **Flash Eurobarometer 400**

### **Introduction of the euro in the more recently acceded Member States**

Conducted by TNS Political & Social at the request of  
the European Commission,  
Directorate-General Economic and Financial Affairs  
(DG ECFIN)

Survey co-ordinated by the European Commission, Directorate-  
General for Communication  
(DG COMM "Strategy, Corporate Communication Actions and  
Eurobarometer" Unit)

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**Technical specifications**

## INTRODUCTION

All EU Member States are to adopt the common currency, the euro, once they have fulfilled the criteria defined in the Maastricht Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (with the exception of Denmark and the UK, which have a specific opt-out from these Treaty provisions). There is no common strategy or fixed timetable for the introduction of the euro in the Member States that joined in or after 2004, but the Treaty does require them to join the euro area at an undefined date in the future.

The European Commission keeps track of general opinions, levels of knowledge and familiarity with the single currency among citizens of the respective countries in view of the introduction of the euro in the Member States that joined the EU in 2004 or later. This survey is the sixteenth of its kind, following earlier Flash Eurobarometer surveys in the period 2004–2013.

The main themes of this report are an examination of:

- levels of knowledge about and experience of the euro among citizens in the NMS7
- citizens' feelings about how well they have been informed and their preferred information channels
- NMS7 citizens' perceptions of, and support for, the single currency
- their expectations about the adoption of the euro and the potential inconveniences they foresee.

It should be noted that "average" perceptions might change because of the different composition of samples in comparison to previous rounds: Slovenia was dropped from the surveys in 2007, Malta and Cyprus in 2008 and Slovakia in 2009. Estonia was excluded as of May 2011, and Latvia is omitted from this latest edition for the first time. In addition, Bulgaria and Romania joined the surveys from autumn 2007, with Croatia added this year.

This questionnaire is comparable with those conducted previously for some questions, although several have been amended and some new questions have been added (though there are no new questions in the latest wave).

This survey was carried out by the TNS Political & Social network in the seven Member States that joined the European Union in recent years and have not yet adopted the euro (the "NMS7") between 22 and 24 April 2014. Some 7,017 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed via telephone in their mother tongue on behalf of the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN). The methodology used is that of Eurobarometer surveys as carried out by the Directorate-General for Communication "Strategy, Corporate Communication Actions and Eurobarometer" Unit<sup>1</sup>. A technical note on the manner in which interviews were conducted by the Institutes within the TNS Political & Social network is appended as an annex to this report. Also included are the interview methods and confidence intervals<sup>2</sup>.

### Note

#### ABREVIATIONS

NMS7 The seven Member States that joined the European Union in the recent years and have not yet adopted the euro (2004, 2007 and 2013)

BG Bulgaria  
CZ Czech Republic  
LT Lithuania  
HU Hungary  
PL Poland  
RO Romania  
HR Croatia

\*\*\*\*\*

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

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm)

*We would like to take the opportunity to thank all the respondents across the continent who have given of their time to take part in this survey.*

*Without their active participation, this study would simply not have been possible.*

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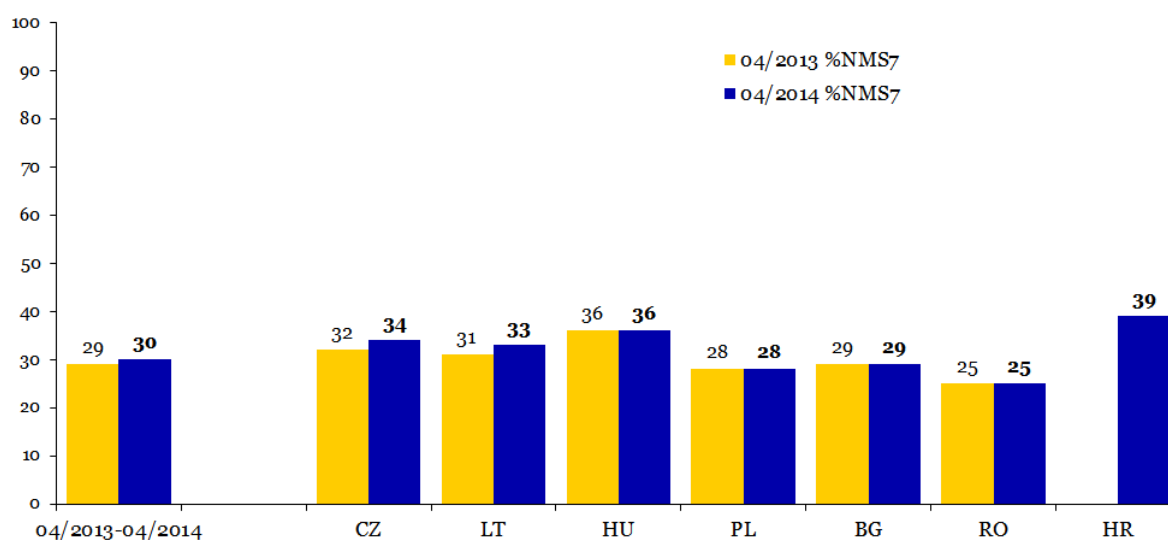
<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> The results tables are included in the annex. It should be noted that the total of the percentages in the tables of this report may exceed 100% when the respondent has the possibility of giving several answers to the question.

## I. AWARENESS OF THE EURO

When asked how many EU countries have already introduced the euro, three out of 10 NMS7 respondents (30%) give the correct answer: 18<sup>3</sup>. The number of respondents who know the correct number of euro area countries ranges from 39% in Croatia to 25% in Romania. The proportion of people giving this answer increased slightly in the Czech Republic (34%, +2) and Lithuania (33%, +2), while remaining unchanged elsewhere.

### Number of current euro area countries (% correct answers: "18" in 04/2014 / "17" in 04/2013)



Q5a. According to you, how many EU countries have already introduced the euro?  
% of correct answers, by country

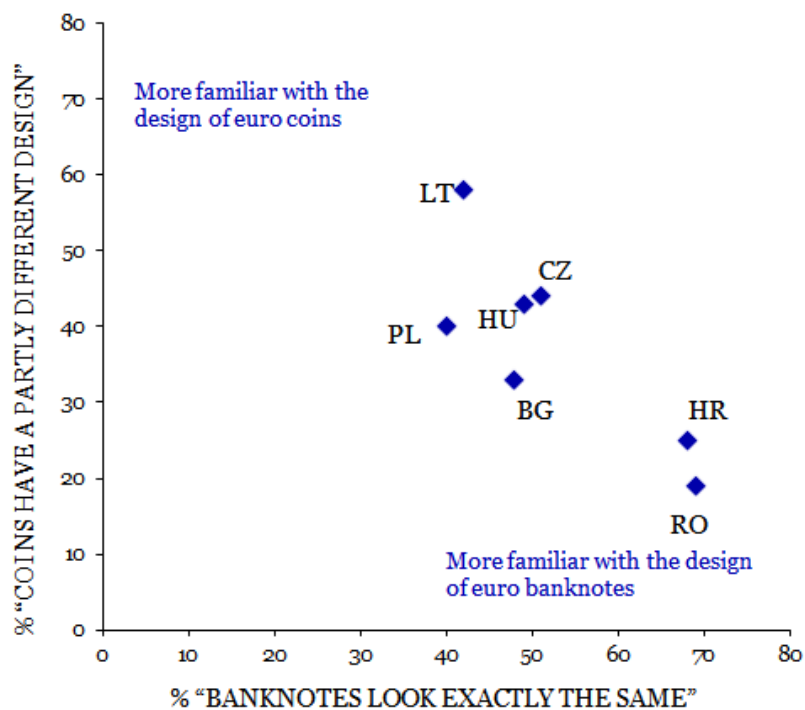
When asked about the current conditions of euro membership, over seven out of 10 NMS7 respondents (72%, no change since 2013) think – incorrectly – that their country can choose whether or not to adopt the euro. This remains the highest proportion of respondents ever to have given this answer in the history of the survey. Just under a quarter of respondents (24%, no change) correctly say that their country cannot choose.

<sup>3</sup> The euro area comprised of 12 countries in 2004, rising to 13 in 2007; 15 in 2008; 16 in 2009; 17 in 2011 and 18 in 2014. The answer options for this question have been adapted to reflect the situation at the time of the surveys.

Turning more specifically to the design of euro coins and banknotes, respondents were asked whether they thought they had the same design from country to country. Overall, a majority (51%) of respondents correctly think that euro banknotes look exactly the same in all countries that use it whilst just over a third (35%) of NMS7 respondents know that euro coins have partly different designs from country to country

The graph below shows, respondents in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland have similar levels of awareness about the designs of euro banknotes and coins. In Croatia and Romania, respondents are much more familiar with euro banknotes, while in Lithuania there is greater awareness when it comes to the design of coins.

**The design of the euro banknotes and coins**



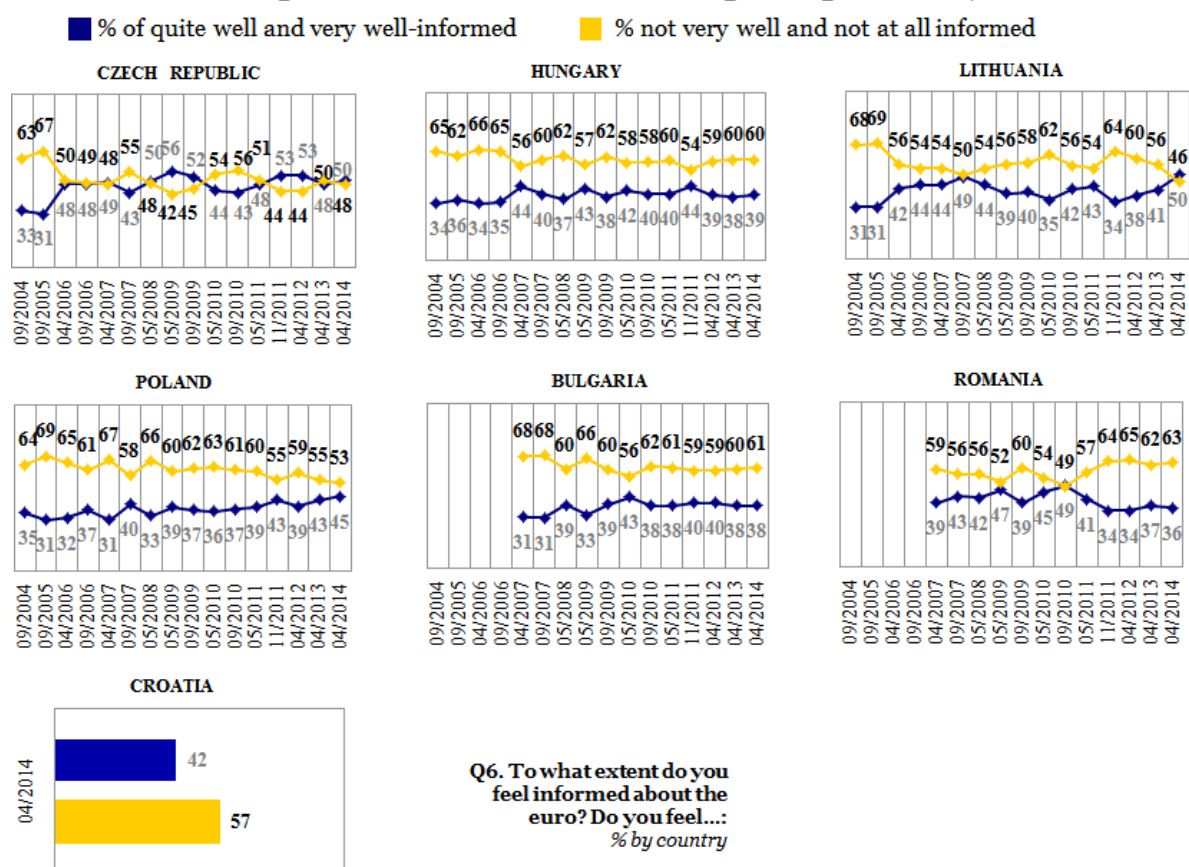
Q3-Q4. What do you think, which of the following statements is correct?  
% by country

## II. INFORMING CITIZENS ABOUT THE EURO

A majority of NMS7 respondents (56%, -1 compared with 2013) do not feel well informed about the euro: 44% say they are not very well informed, and 12% say they are not at all well informed.

In Lithuania more respondents feel well informed about the euro than feel not well informed, by a margin of 50% to 46%. This is a major turnaround from 2013, when 56% of people in Lithuania felt they were not well informed, and only 41% felt well informed. This is also true in the Czech Republic, where a narrow majority of people (50% vs. 48%) say they are well informed – a reversal of the situation in 2013, when 50% said they were poorly informed. In the other five countries, a majority of respondents say they are not well informed

### Evolution of self-perceived information level regarding the euro, %



All respondents were asked whether they would trust information provided on the changeover to the euro from eight particular institutions or groups. A majority of respondents say they would trust information provided by their national central bank (76%, +1 compared with 2013) and by European institutions (59%, +3).

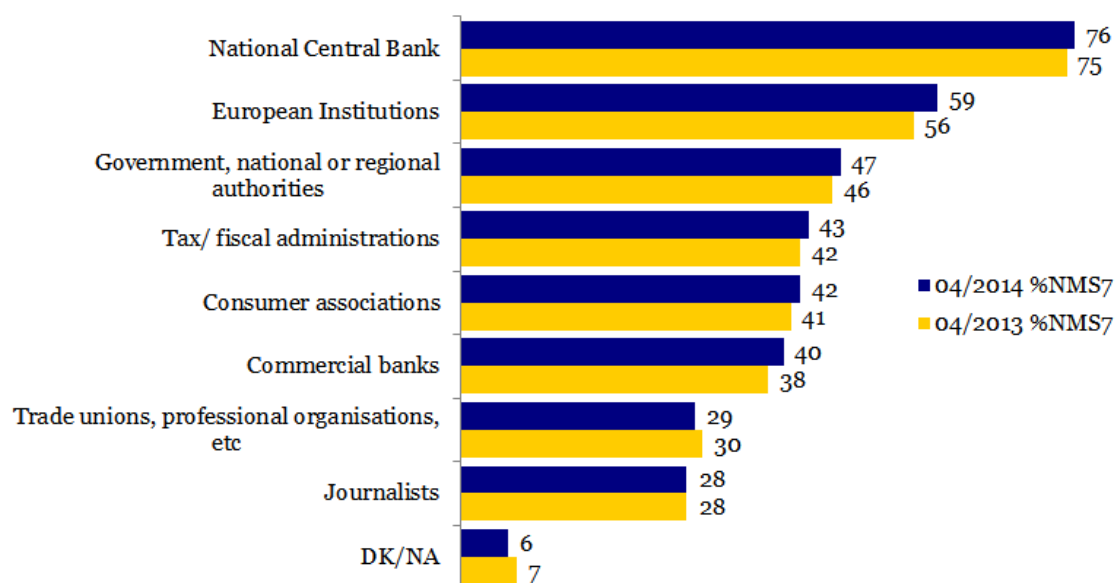
At the other end of the scale, less than three out of ten respondents say that they would trust information provided by trade unions, professional organisations, etc., and (29%, -1) or by journalists (28%, =).



The national central bank continues to be the most trusted source of information in all seven countries, with the degree of trust in this institution ranging from 84% in the Czech Republic to 48% in Croatia, while in Croatia trust in all providers of information is relatively low.

European institutions are the next most trusted sources of information in six of the seven countries (the exception being the Czech Republic). The degree of trust placed in European institutions ranges from 65% (+11) in Hungary to 42% in Croatia. In Lithuania, trust in European institutions stands at 62% (+4).

### Trusted distributors of information on the euro



**Q8 For each of the following institutions or groups, please tell me if you would trust information they provide on the changeover to the euro?**

Base: all respondents, % NMS7

Respondents in the more recently acceded Member States were then asked about what specific activities or events should be part of the campaign.

Over 50% of respondents feel that six out of the seven activities under discussion – the exception being leaflets/brochures – ought to be included. Seven out of 10 respondents (72%, +1 compared with 2013) think the dual display of prices in shops is essential. Approximately two thirds of people (68%, +1) think the dual display of amounts on bills is also important, and that the dual display of totals on one's pay slip should be included (65%, +1).

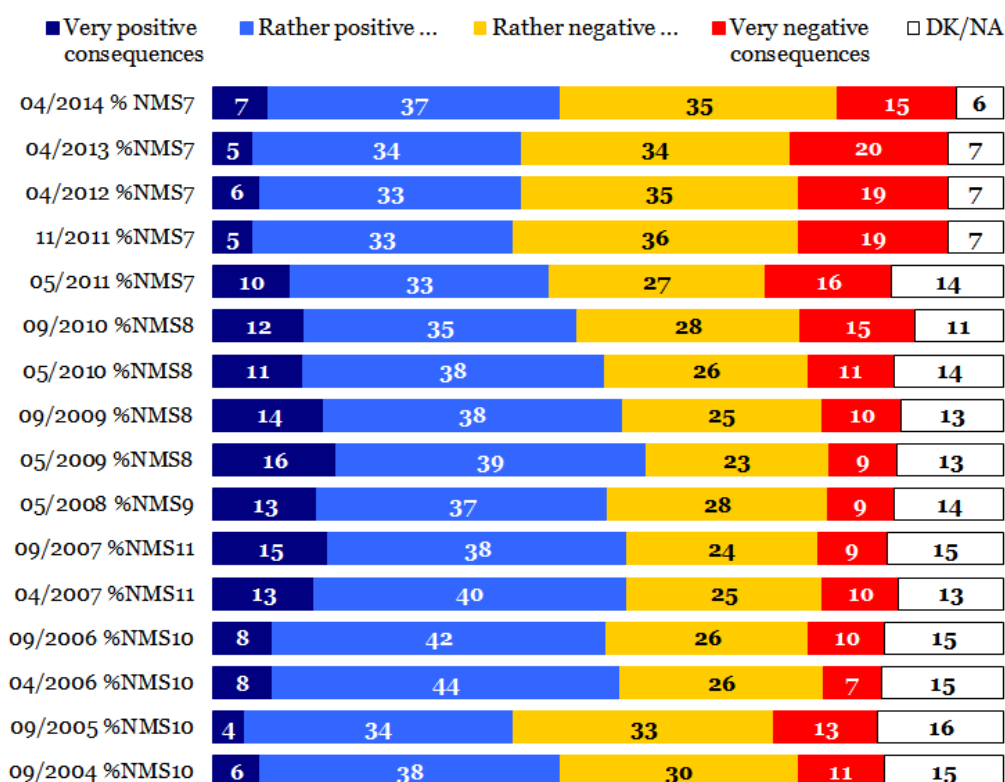
The dual display of prices in shops is seen as the most important aspect of the information campaign in all seven countries, with the number of people who mention this ranging from 84% in both Hungary and Lithuania to 66% in Croatia.

### III. THE EURO: PERCEPTIONS AND SUPPORT FOR ITS INTRODUCTION

All respondents were asked whether they think the introduction of the euro would have positive or negative consequences for their country.

A majority of respondents (50%, -4 compared with 2013) think the consequences would be negative for their own country, with 15% (-5) saying they would be very negative and 35% (+1) saying they would be rather negative. Meanwhile, over four out of 10 respondents (44%, +5) think the consequences for their country would be positive. This is the best result in terms of positive sentiment towards joining the euro since September 2010, when 47% felt that joining would be positive at a national level.

#### Consequences of the introduction of the euro at a national level



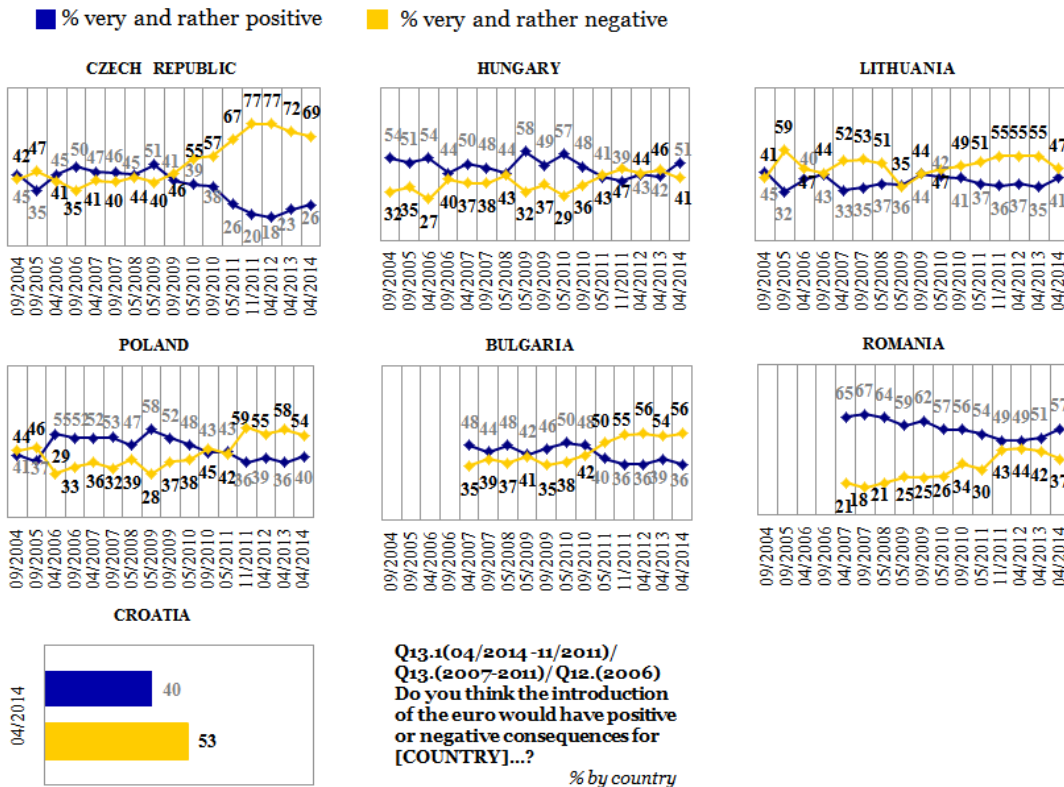
Q13.1(04/2014-2011)/Q13.(2007-2010)/Q12(2006). Do you think the introduction of the euro would have positive or negative consequences for [COUNTRY]...?

In previous waves of the survey, Romania was the only NMS7 country in which a majority of respondents thought the introduction of the euro would have positive consequences for their country. While this remains true in Romania (57% positive vs. 37% negative), a majority of people in Hungary (51% vs. 41%) now also take this position.

However, elsewhere the prevailing view is that introducing the euro would have negative consequences nationally. This is especially so in the Czech Republic (69% negative vs. 26% positive), followed by Bulgaria (56% vs. 36%), Poland (54% vs. 40%), Croatia (53% vs. 40%), and Lithuania (47% vs. 41%).

Since 2013, the number of respondents anticipating positive consequences has increased in Hungary (+9), Romania (+6), Lithuania (+6), Poland (+4), and the Czech Republic (+3), with Bulgaria (-3) recording the only decline.

**Consequences of the introduction of the euro at a national level, %**



As with the respondents' expectations of the national consequences of introducing the euro, personal expectations have also become noticeably more positive, reaching their highest point since May 2010, when 48% of people thought the personal impact of joining the euro would be positive. The latest result is also not far below the 49% peak recorded in May 2009.

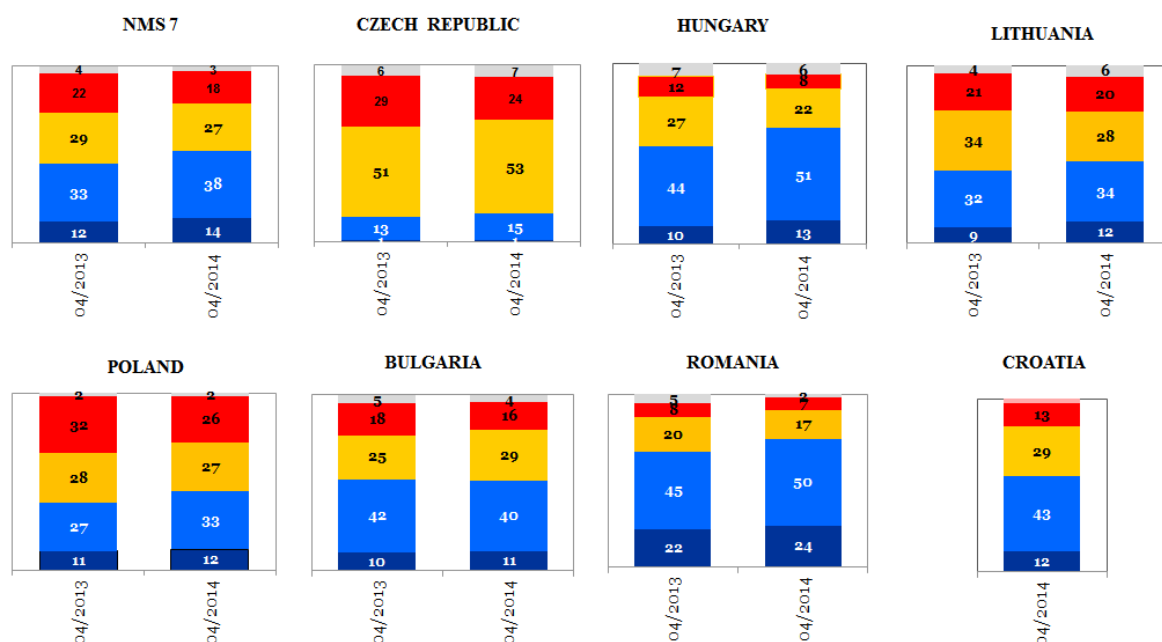
A majority of people (52%, +7 compared with 2013) say they are in favour, while 45% (-6) oppose the idea. This is an important shift from 2013, when a majority of people opposed joining the euro by a margin of 51% to 45%.

More than half of respondents are in favour of introducing the euro in four countries: Romania, where 74% are in favour (versus 24% against); Hungary (64% vs. 30%); Croatia (55% vs. 42%); and Bulgaria (51% vs. 45%). However, in the remaining three countries, being against the euro’s adoption is still the majority opinion.

**General support for the introduction of euro**

■ Very much in favour of its introduction   ■ Rather in favour of its introduction   ■ Rather against its introduction  
 ■ Very much against its introduction   ■ DK/NA

Q14. Generally speaking, are you personally more in favour or against the idea of introducing the euro in [COUNTRY]?  
 % by country



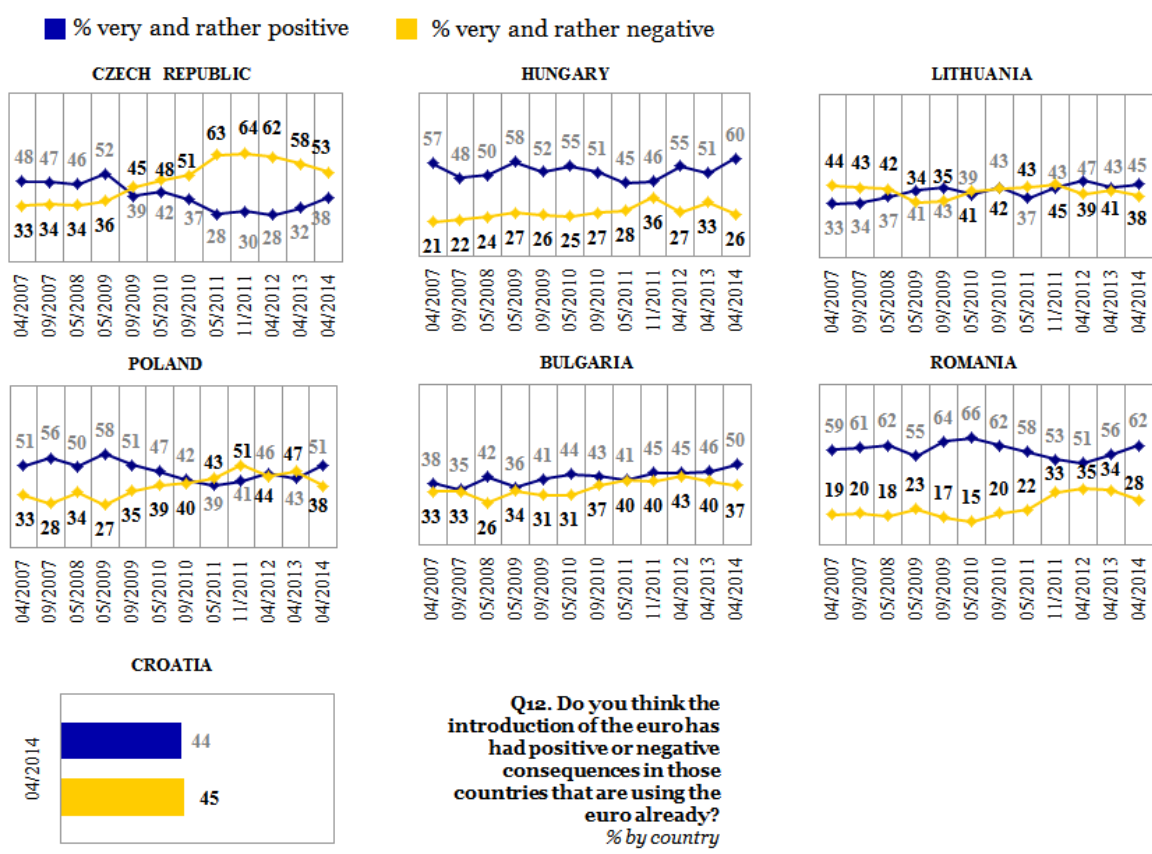
Since 2013, the proportion of people in favour of introducing the euro has increased substantially in Hungary (+10), Poland (+7), Romania (+7) and Lithuania (+5). There was a smaller increase in the Czech Republic (+2), and a marginal decline in Bulgaria (-1).

### IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ADOPTING THE EURO

All respondents were asked whether they think the introduction of the euro has had positive or negative consequences in the countries that are using the euro already. A majority (52%, +6 compared with 2013) think the euro has had positive consequences in those placed, with 6% (+1) saying it has been very positive, and 46% (+5) saying it has been rather positive. Less than four out of 10 respondents (37%, -6) think the euro has had a negative impact in those countries.

The latest results show a positive shift in the perception of the impact of the euro in euro area countries, with the proportion of people who see its effect as positive reaching its highest level since September 2009 (also 52%). Only once, in May 2009 (53%), have more people regarded the consequences of the euro as positive in the countries already using it.

#### Consequences of the introduction of the euro in those countries already using the euro, %



In four of the seven NMS7 Member States a majority of respondents think that the euro has had positive consequences in the countries that are already using it. These are: Romania, where 62% (+6) think the consequences have been positive, and 28% (-6) think they have been negative; Hungary (60%, +9 vs. 26%, -7); Bulgaria (50%, +4 vs. 37%, -3); Poland (51%, +8 vs. 38%, -9). Whilst in Lithuania, just a relative majority see positive consequences in euro area countries (45%, +2) and 38% (-3) see negative consequences.

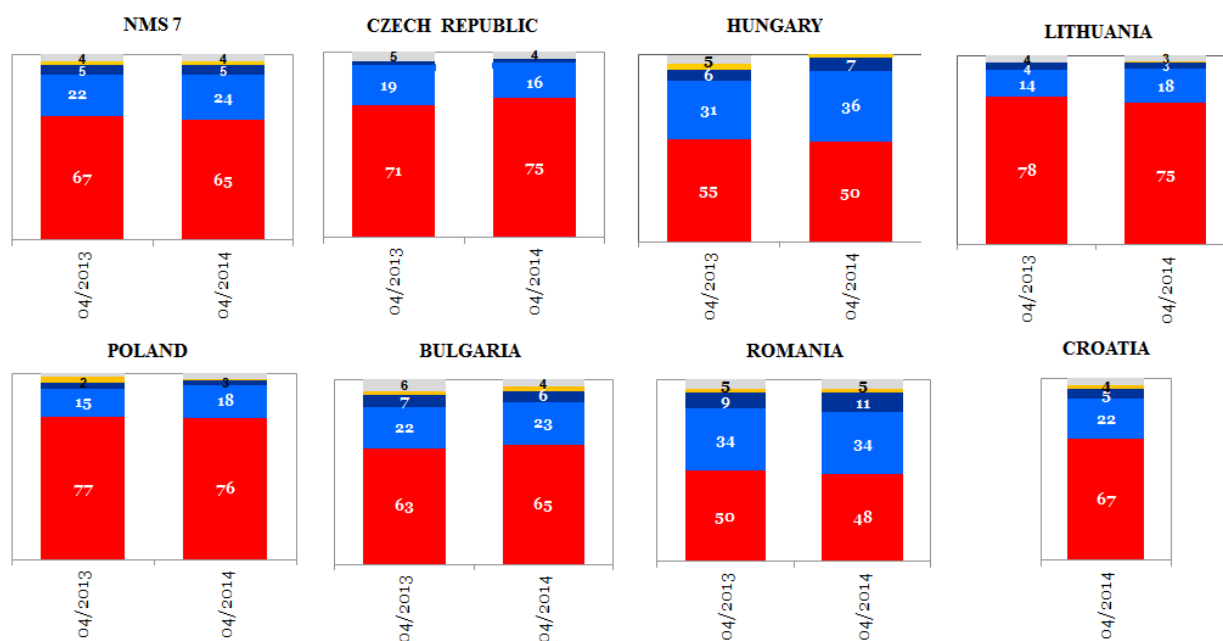
Since 2013, the number of people who think the euro has had positive consequences has increased in all six countries: Hungary (+9), Poland (+8), Romania (+6), the Czech Republic (+6), Bulgaria (+4), and Lithuania (+2). The increase in Poland means that a majority of people there now think the euro has had positive consequence, a reversal on the situation in 2013 when a majority thought the consequences were negative (47% vs. 43%).

Having considered the general consequences of euro introduction, all respondents were then asked what impact, if any, the introduction of the euro will have on prices in their country. Nearly two thirds of respondents (65%, -2 compared with 2013) think the changeover will increase prices, while 24% (+2) think it will help keep prices stable. Just 5% (=) think introducing the euro will help reduce prices.

### Will the changeover to the euro increase prices ?

■ Will increase prices   ■ Will help keep prices stable   ■ Will help reduce prices   ■ No impact   ■ DK/NA

Q16 What impact, if any, do you think the introduction of euro will have on prices in [OUR COUNTRY]?  
% by country



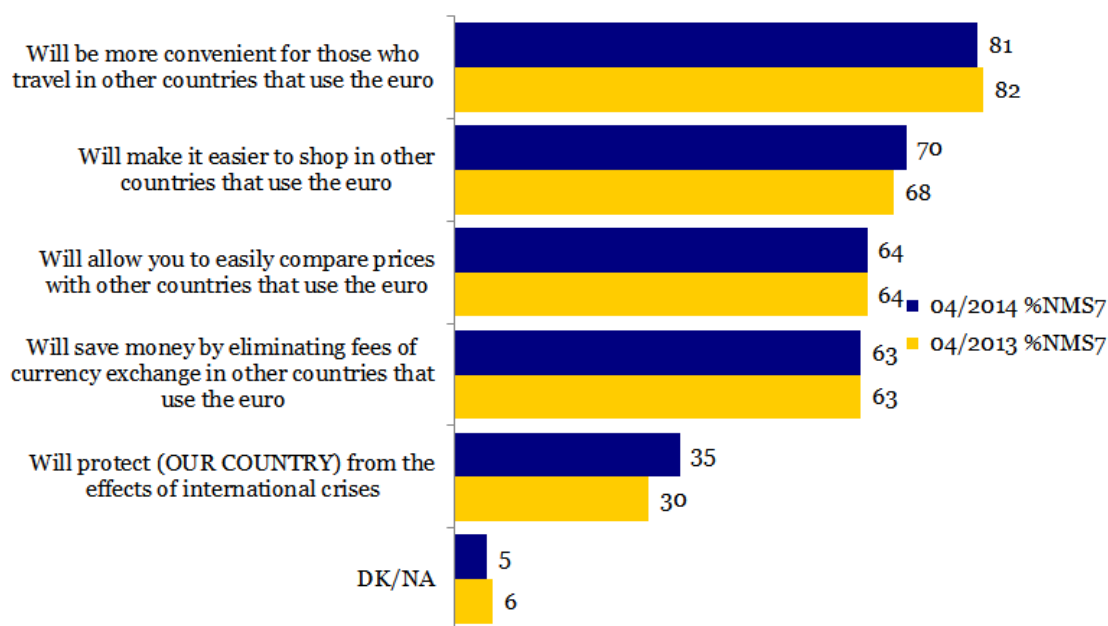
A majority of respondents in all seven countries think that introducing the euro will increase prices, ranging from the 76% of people who take this view in Poland to the 48% who think so in Romania. Hungary (36%) has the highest proportion of people who think the euro will help keep prices stable, while the Czech Republic (16%, -3) has the lowest. Romania (11%, +2) also has the highest number of people who think the euro will help to reduce prices.

In four countries, fewer respondents now think that introducing the euro will cause prices to rise, namely: Hungary (50%, -5), Lithuania (75%, -3), Romania (48%, -2) and Poland (76%, -1). However, the opposite trend can be observed in the Czech Republic (75%, +4) and Bulgaria (65%, +2).

Following on from the discussion of the economic and political consequences of joining the euro, about the section discusses the more practical consequences of introducing the currency.

A majority of people think their country will benefit in four of the five ways under discussion. Four fifths of people (81%, -1) think that it will be more convenient for those who travel in other countries that use the euro, while seven out of ten respondents believe that joining will make it easier to shop in other countries that use the euro (70%, +2). However, only around a third of respondents think that introducing the euro will protect their country from the effects of international crises (35%, +5).

### Practical consequences of the euro changeover



Q17 Do you think that the euro...?Base: all respondents, % NMS7

*(Multiple answers possible)*

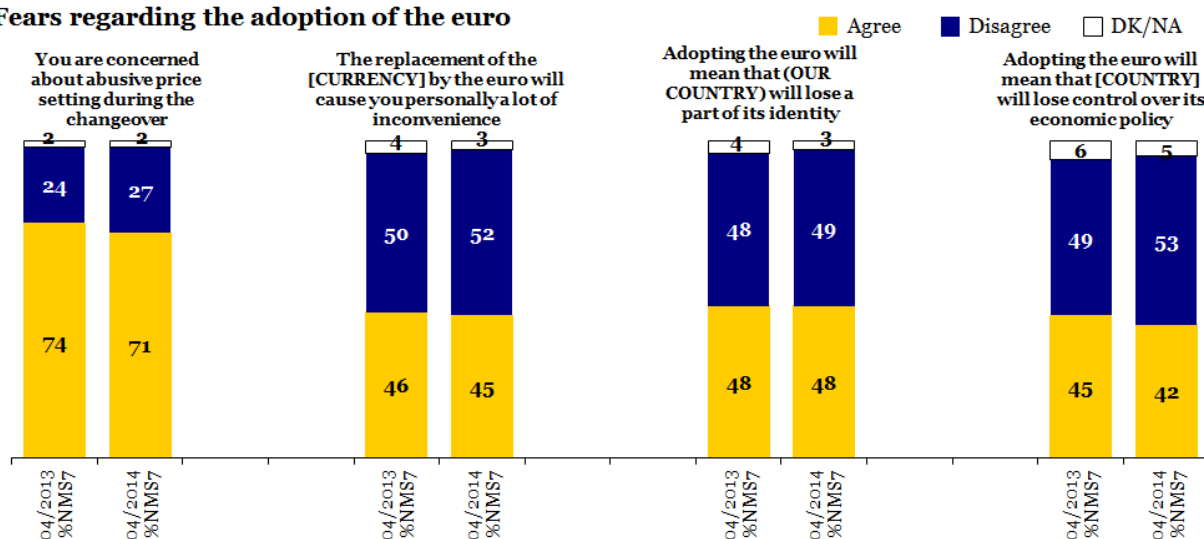
In all seven countries, the most popular answer is that upon joining the euro "**it will be more convenient for those who travel in other countries that use the euro**", with the number of people who say this ranging from 89% in the Czech Republic to 65% in Croatia.

After considering the likely benefits of introducing the euro, respondents were then asked about some potential inconveniences of joining the currency. Specifically, they were asked whether they agree or disagree with four statements about the effect that the changeover will have on them personally.

Seven out of ten respondents (71%, -3 compared with 2013) say they are concerned about abusive price setting during the changeover. However, less than half of the respondents agree with the other three statements:

- 48% (=) agree that **adopting the euro will mean that their country will lose a part of its identity**, versus 49% (+1) who disagree;
- 45% (-1) agree that **the replacement of their national currency will cause them a lot of personal inconvenience**, versus 52% (+2) who disagree;
- and 42% (-3) agree that **adopting the euro will mean that their country will lose control over its economic policy**, versus 53% (+4) who disagree.

#### Fears regarding the adoption of the euro



Q19.1-4. Could you tell me for each of the following statements if you agree or disagree...?

A substantial majority of people in all NMS7 countries say they are concerned about abusive price setting following the changeover. The number of respondents who express concern about abusive price setting ranges from 78% in Bulgaria, to 64% in Hungary. The level of concern declined somewhat in Lithuania (70%, -5) and Poland (74%, -4), while changing relatively little elsewhere.

The level of concern about the personal inconvenience remains high by the historical standards of the survey, but has stabilised, having remained at 45-46% for four surveys in a row. However, the gap between the proportion of people who agree and disagree has widened somewhat, having been at 46% vs. 50% in April 2013.

The number of respondents who think that adopting the euro will result in their country losing control over its economic policy has fallen to 42%, from 45% in 2013. A majority of people (53%, +4) do not agree that this will happen. However, the level of agreement with this statement remains historically quite high, following a jump from 34% in May 2011 to 43% in November 2011.



## **TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

**FLASH EUROBAROMETER 400****"Introduction of the euro in the more recently acceded Member States"****TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

Between the 22nd and the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2014, TNS Political & Social, a consortium created between TNS political & social, TNS UK and TNS opinion, carried out the survey FLASH EUROBAROMETER 400 about the "Introduction of the euro in the more recently acceded Member States".

This survey has been requested by the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs. It is a general public survey co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication ("Strategy, Corporate Communication Actions and Eurobarometer" Unit). The FLASH EUROBAROMETER 400 covers the population of the respective nationalities of the more recently acceded European Union Member States, resident in each of the seven Member States and aged 15 years and over. The survey covers the national population of citizens as well as the population of citizens of all the European Union Member States who are resident in these countries and have a sufficient command of the national languages to answer the questionnaire. All interviews were carried using the TNS e-Call center (our centralized CATI system). In every country respondents were called both on fixed lines and mobile phones. The basic sample design applied in all states is multi-stage random (probability). In each household, the respondent was drawn at random following the "last birthday rule".

TNS has developed its own RDD sample generation capabilities based on using contact telephone numbers from responders to random probability or random location face to face surveys, such as Eurobarometer, as seed numbers. The approach works because the seed number identifies a working block of telephone numbers and reduces the volume of numbers generated that will be ineffective. The seed numbers are stratified by NUTS2 region and urbanisation to approximate a geographically representative sample. From each seed number the required sample of numbers are generated by randomly replacing the last two digits. The sample is then screened against business databases in order to exclude as many of these numbers as possible before going into field. This approach is consistent across all countries.

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+
BG	Bulgaria	TNS BBSS	1.000	22/04/2014	24/04/2014	6.537.510
CZ	Czech Rep.	TNS Aisa s.r.o	1.000	22/04/2014	24/04/2014	9.012.443
HR	Croatia	HENDAL	1.002	22/04/2014	24/04/2014	3.749.400
LT	Lithuania	TNS LT	1.000	22/04/2014	24/04/2014	2.829.740
HU	Hungary	TNS Hoffmann Kft	1.004	22/04/2014	24/04/2014	8.320.614
PL	Poland	TNS OBOP	1.000	22/04/2014	24/04/2014	32.413.735
RO	Romania	TNS CSOP	1.011	22/04/2014	24/04/2014	18.246.731
<b>TOTAL NMS7</b>			<b>7.017</b>	<b>22/04/2014</b>	<b>24/04/2014</b>	<b>81.110.173</b>