

EUROBAROMETER 58.0

European Union citizens and sources of information about health

Written by:

Rosario Spadaro

**THE EUROPEAN OPINION
RESEARCH GROUP (EORG)**

For:

**Directorate-General
SANCO**

Survey managed and organised by:

**Directorate-General
Press and Communication
"Public Opinion Analysis"**

March 2003

This opinion poll has been carried out at the request of the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General, managed and organised by the Press and Communication Directorate-General, “Public Opinion Analysis” Unit.

It was carried out between 1st September and 7th October 2002, in all European Union countries, on behalf of the European Opinion Research Group (EORG: a consortium of market research and public opinion agencies, made out of INRA in Belgium – I.C.O. and GfK ad hoc Worldwide).

The questionnaire, technical specifications and names of the agencies associated with this research are all shown in appendix.

This report is in no way binding upon the European Commission.

This report was originally written in English.

This document does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission. All interpretations and opinions expressed in this report are the authors’ own.

Introduction

At the request of the European Commission (Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General), the European Opinion Research Group, a consortium of market research and public opinion agencies, made up of INRA in Belgium – I.C.O. and GfK ad hoc Worldwide carried out wave 58.0 of the STANDARD EUROBAROMETER between 1st September and 7th October 2002. The report deals with the sources of information about health, used by European Union citizens.

In each Member State, the questions found in the report were submitted to a representative sample of the national population aged fifteen and over. A total of 16,067 people were questioned, i.e. an average of around 1,000 people per Member State, except in Germany (2,000: 1,000 in the new Länder and 1,000 in the old Länder), in the United Kingdom (1,300: 1,000 in Great Britain and 300 in Northern Ireland) and in Luxembourg (600). We should also add that the figures for the European Union as a whole shown in this report are a weighted average of the national figures. For each Member State, the weighting used is the share of the national population aged 15 and over within the EU population aged 15 and over¹.

It should also be noted that the total of the percentages shown in the graphs illustrating the report and in the tables shown in appendix may exceed 100% when the respondent is given the opportunity to give several answers to a single question.

When the respondent can only give one answer, this total may also not reach exactly 100%, but will come close (for instance, 99% or 101%), due to rounding figures up or down.

The technical specifications given in appendix list all questions relating to methodology such as polling dates, sample selection, population covered, weighting, confidence limits, etc. We should also give details about some of the terms used in these technical specifications: marginal weighting is based on a variable such as age or gender, whereas cross weighting is based on crossing two variables such as age and gender. NUTS regions are “a classification of the regions of the European Union using a three-level hierarchical structure”. The Eurobarometer is weighted on the basis of NUTS 2 regions.

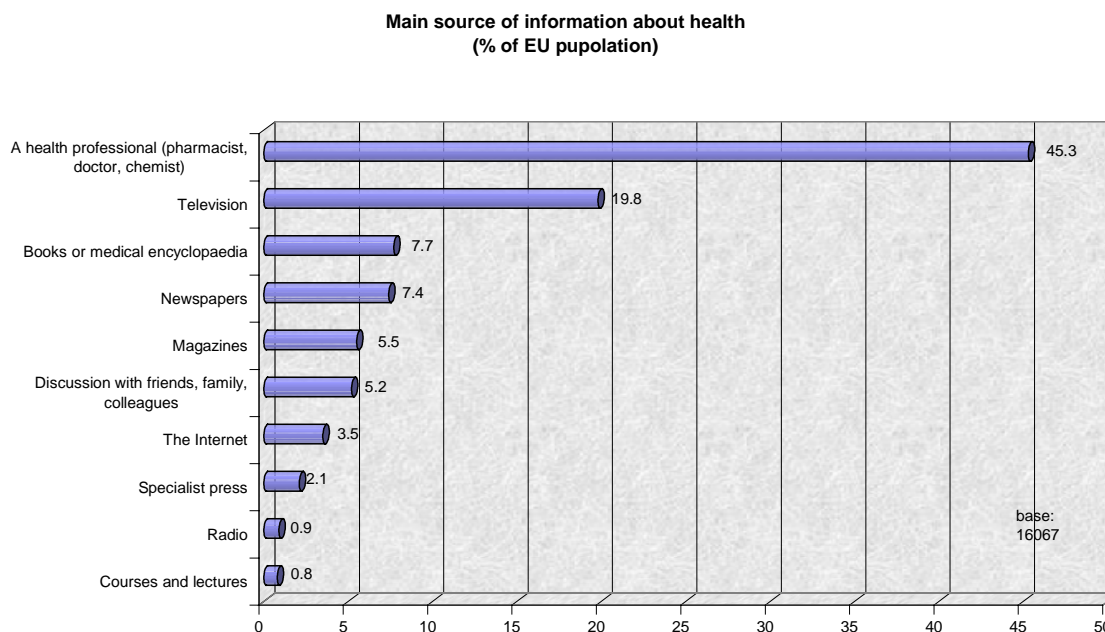
¹ Cf. technical specifications in appendix.

Table of contents

<u>1. SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTH</u>	5
<u>2. INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTH ON THE INTERNET</u>	7
<u>3. TRUST IN SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTH</u>	9
<u>APPENDICES</u>	12
<u>ENGLISH QUESTIONNAIRE</u>	13

1. Sources of information about health

When asked about their **main source** of information about health, a large proportion of EU citizens mentioned health professionals (pharmacists, doctors, etc.). This is especially the case for Ireland and Spain where 61.9% and 61.8% respectively stated so.

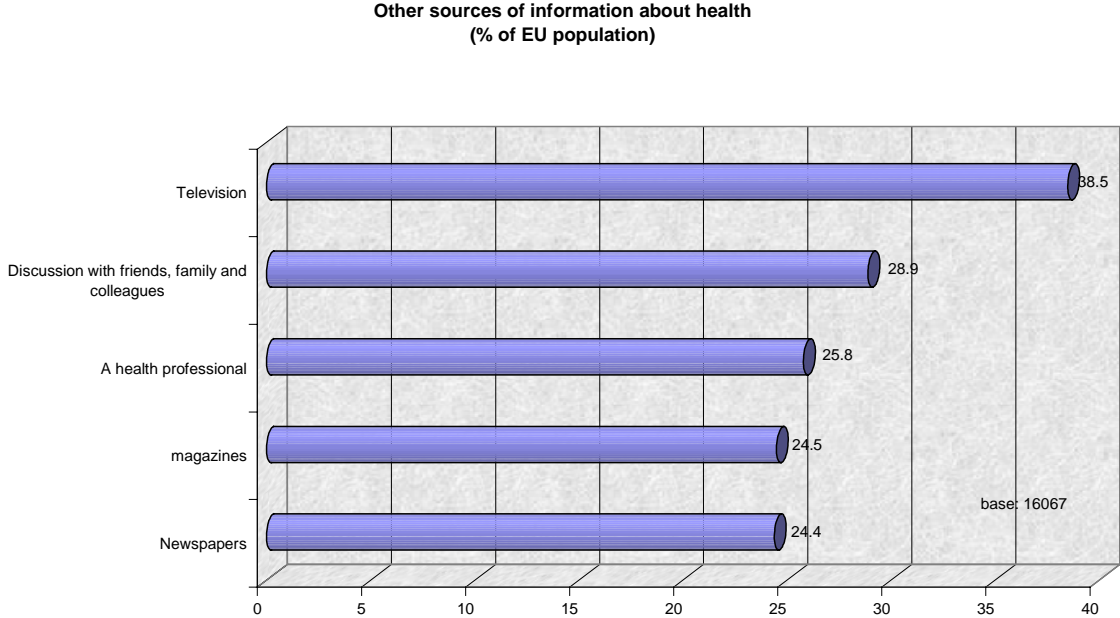


One fifth of respondents stated that television was their main source of information about health. This tendency is confirmed in the new Länder and in France where 34.7% and 28.1% respectively gave this answer.

Women are more likely to choose health professionals than men (46.4% for the former vs. 44.2% for the latter) as main source of information about health. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to use television (20.9% against 18.9% of women).

Health professionals will be more consulted by elderly people (51.9% for the "55+" against 38.3% for the "15-24") and by people with a lower education (54.9% for people who ended full-time education at 15 years old or younger against 39.4% of people who ended it at 20 or older). Also, house persons (52.7%) and retired people (51%) will more likely use this source of information than those in the other occupational categories.

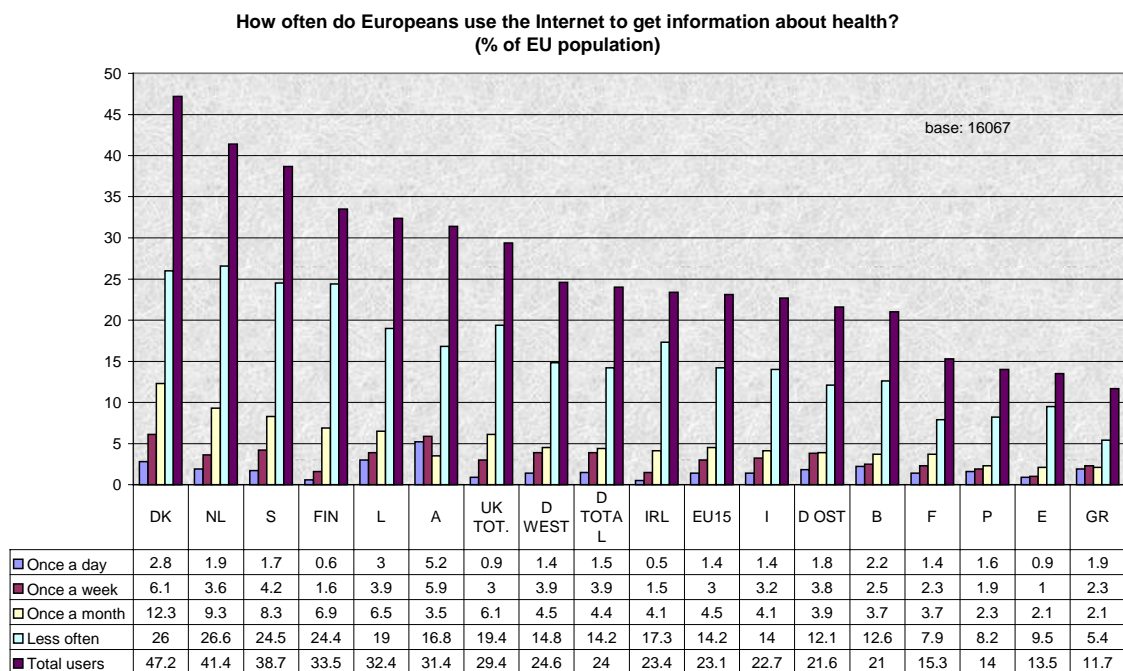
When asked to say what are the **other sources** of information about health, 28.9% of EU citizens mention discussions with friends, family and colleagues, another quarter newspapers and magazines (24.4% and 24.5% respectively).



2. Information about health on the Internet

A small proportion (23.1%) of people within the European Union use the Internet to get information about health. In Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and Luxembourg this proportion reaches respectively 41.4%, 38.7%, 33.5% and 32.4% of people. In Greece (11.7%), Spain (13.5%), Portugal (14%) and France (15.3%) on the other hand, people are the least likely to use Internet for this purpose.

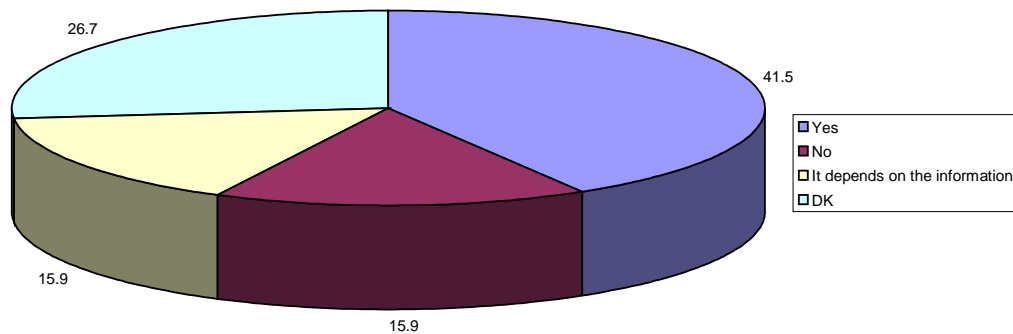
14.2% use it less than once a month, 4.5% once a month, 3% once a week and 1.4% once a day.



Nevertheless, a majority of people (41.5%) within the European Union think that the Internet is a good way to get information about health. This opinion is especially prominent in Denmark (62.3%), the Netherlands (60.7%), Luxembourg (54.9%) and the UK (51.1%).

15.9% of people think it depends on the information sought and other 26.7% cannot decide.

The Internet, good way to get information about health?
(% of EU population)



Men use more the Internet than women to get information about health. They are indeed 24.7% to have stated so, against 21.7% of women. The proportion of users drops with age: 35.3% in the 15-24 age group, 32.6% in the 25-39, 24.1% in the 40-54 and 8.3% in the older age group (55+). Furthermore, length of education makes a significant difference as for the Internet usage: 37.4% of those who left school at the age of 20 (or older) use the Internet to get information about health whilst this proportion reaches only 5.8% amongst those who left full-time education at the age of 15 (or younger).

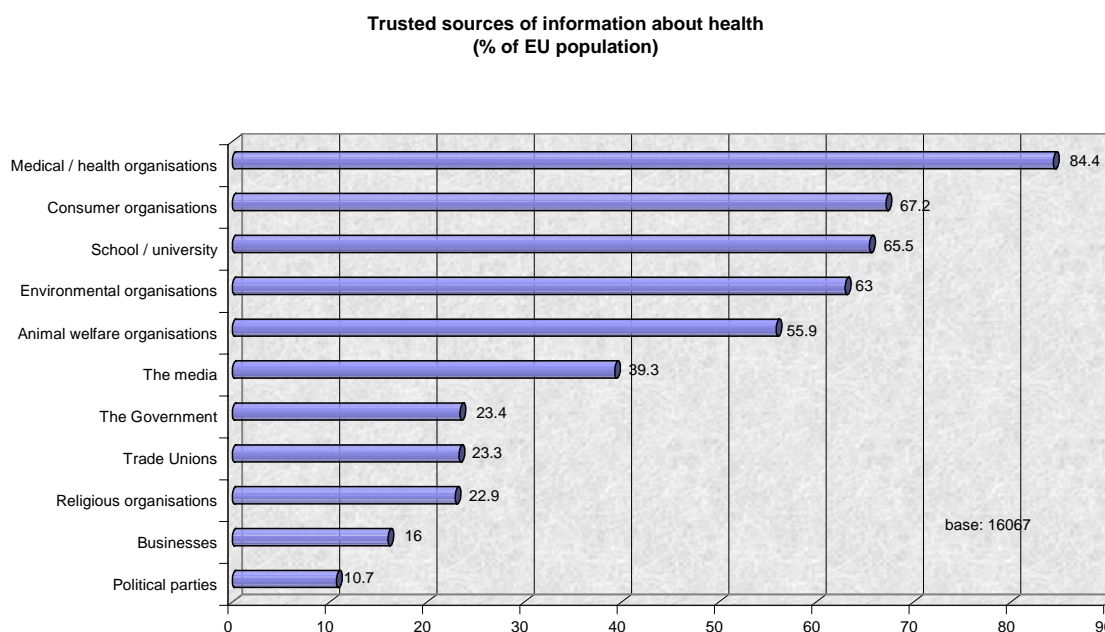
Managers (44.6%) and students (42.2%) tend to surf the Internet more than in the other occupational categories to get information about health.

There is a small difference in opinion between men and women about the Internet being a good way to get information about health. The former are 42.8% to give a positive answer (against 40.3% of women). Furthermore, 29% of women cannot decide (against 24% of men).

This positive attitude about the Internet is a given amongst young people in contrast to older people (55.7% in the 15-24 age group vs. 26% of people over 55), and amongst educated people in contrast to less educated people (52.5% of people who left full-time education at 20 and beyond vs. 25.9% of people who stopped at 15 or before). The majority of students, managers and other employees express the same positive attitude.

3. Trust in sources of information about health

Results show that **Medical / health organisations** (such as The Red Cross, Médecins sans frontières, etc.) are the source of information about health people trust the most. This is the case in all the EU countries where, on average, 84.4% of people have stated so. This level of trust is the highest in Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands with 92.6%, 91.6% and 91% of people respectively, having given this answer.

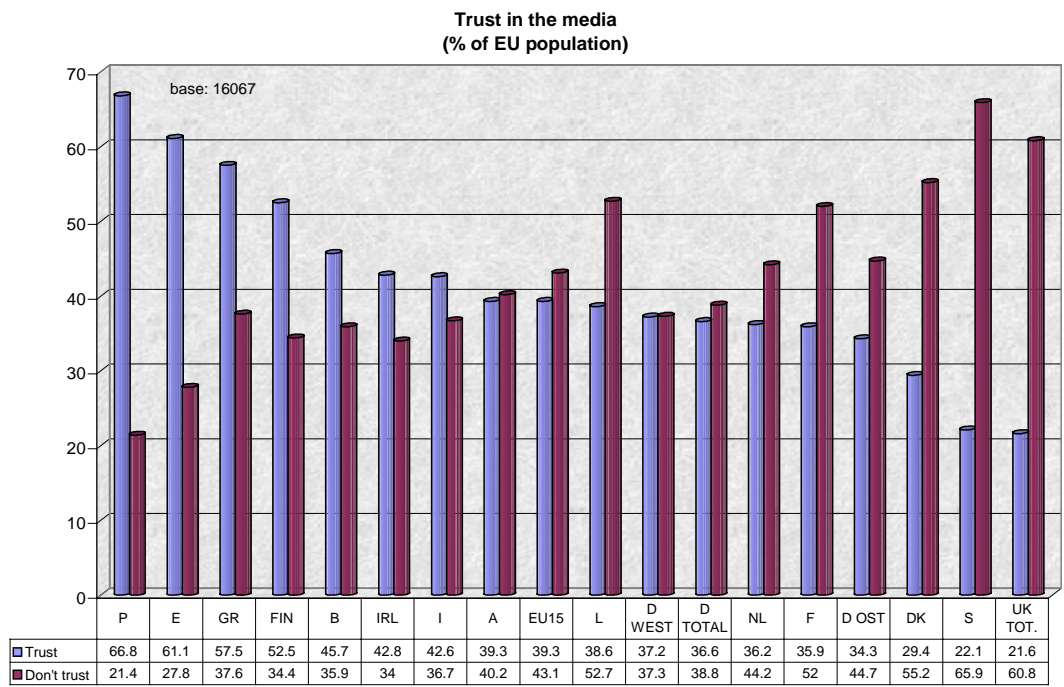


The second most trusted source of information, mentioned by 67.2% of respondents, are **consumer organisations**. The country-by-country breakdown shows that this feeling is shared throughout the European Union, except in the UK where people appear more suspicious (40% of “don’t trust”). In Ireland, almost a quarter of the population cannot decide (23.8% of “DK”).

School / University and environmental organisation are also mentioned by respectively 65.5% and 63% of interviewees.

The least trusted sources of information are **political parties and businesses** (respectively 10.7% and 16% of people trust them). In the UK, this level of trust is the lowest for both sources as respectively 5.6% and 9.4% of respondents stated so.

The media do not enjoy a unanimous good reputation as 43.1% of people in the European Union do not trust them while 39.3% do so. A closer look at national results shows that Portugal (66.8%), Spain (61.1%), Greece (57.5%), Finland (52.5%), Belgium (45.7%), Ireland (42.8%) and Italy (42.6%) have a positive opinion about this source of information while in Sweden, the UK, Denmark, Luxembourg, France and the Netherlands it is rather negative (respectively 65.9%, 60.8%, 55.2%, 52.7%, 52%, 44.2% of “don’t trust”). A less clear-cut



opinion is found in Germany and Austria.

There is no significant difference between men and women about their level of trust in medical / health organisation, consumer organisations, school / university or environmental organisations. However, women tend to trust more religious organisations and animal welfare organisations than men do. The latter are more likely than women not to trust environmental organisations, businesses and media. Results are summarised in the next page table:

	Men		Women	
	<i>Trust</i>	<i>Don't trust</i>	<i>Trust</i>	<i>Don't trust</i>
Medical/health organisations	84.1	10.1	84.7	9
Consumer organisations	67.6	21.1	66.8	19.8
School/university	66.7	21.4	64.3	21
Environmental organisations	62.1	25.6	63.8	21.3
Animal welfare organisations	54.7	30	57	25.2
Religious organisations	19.8	63	25.8	57.1
Business	16.2	67.8	15.9	66.2
Media	38.1	45	40.4	41.4

As far as age is concerned, young people tend to trust more than their elders environmental associations, animal welfare organisations, and school / university.

<i>Level of trust</i>	15-24	55+
School / university	73.9	59.9
Environmental organisations	65.4	58.3
Animal welfare organisations	59.3	51.2

The level of trust in consumer organisations, environmental organisations and school / university tend to increase with the level of education. However, people with higher education tend to trust religious organisations less than people who stopped full-time education at 15 or younger.

<i>Level of trust</i>	Up to 15 years	16-19 years	20+ years
Consumer organisations	61.3	67.5	73.8
School/university	59.6	62	72.5
Religious organisations	30.5	20.6	19.1

APPENDICES

English questionnaire

- Q. 33. a) What is your main source of information about health in general?
Please select your answer from this list. (SHOW CARD - ONE ANSWER ONLY)
- b) And which are your other sources of information? (SHOW SAME CARD - MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

	READ OUT	Q. 33.a.	Q. 33.b.
		MAIN SOURCE	OTHER SOURCES
1	The Internet	1	1,
2	Books or medical encyclopaedia	2	2,
3	Newspapers	3	3,
4	Magazines	4	4,
5	Specialist press	5	5,
6	Television	6	6,
7	Radio	7	7,
8	Discussion with friends, family, colleagues	8	8,
9	A doctor / a health professional (pharmacist / chemist)	9	9,
10	Courses and lectures	10	10,
11	Others (SPONTANEOUS)	11	11,
12	DK	12	12,

EB58.0 – NEW

- Q. 34. Do you think the Internet is a good way to get information about health?
- Yes..... 1
- No 2
- It depends on the information (SPONTANEOUS) 3
- DK 4

EB58.0 – NEW

Q. 35. How often do you use the Internet to get information about health? (READ OUT – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

- Once a day..... 1
 Once a week 2
 Once a month..... 3
 Less often 4
 Never 5
 I don't use the Internet (SPONTANEOUS)..... 6
 DK..... 7

EB58.0 – NEW

Q. 36. For each of the following sources of information about health in general, please tell me if you trust it or not?

		TRUST	DON'T TRUST	DK
1	Consumer organisations	1	2	3
2	Environmental organisations	1	2	3
3	Animal welfare organisations	1	2	3
4	Political parties	1	2	3
5	Trade unions	1	2	3
6	Religious organisations	1	2	3
7	The government	1	2	3
8	Businesses	1	2	3
9	School and university	1	2	3
10	Medical / Health organisations (eg. Red Cross, Médecins sans frontières)	1	2	3
11	The Media	1	2	3

EB58.0 – NEW

STANDARD EUROBAROMETER 58.0 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between 1 September 2002 and 7 October 2002, the European Opinion Research Group, a consortium of Market and Public Opinion Research agencies, made out of INRA in Belgium – I.C.O. and GfK Worldwide, carried out wave 58.0 of the standard Eurobarometer, on request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General Press and Communication, Opinion Polls.

The Standard EUROBAROMETER 58.0 covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, aged 15 years and over, resident in each of the Member States. The basic sample design applied in all Member States is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each EU 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.

For doing so, the 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 Member States according to the EUROSTAT NUTS 2 (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective EU-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 were selected as every Nth address by standard random route procedures, from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn, at random. All interviews were face-to-face in people's home and in the appropriate national language.

<u>COUNTRIES</u>	<u>INSTITUTES</u>	<u>N° INTERVIEWS</u>	<u>FIELDWORK DATES</u>	<u>POPULATION 15+ (x 000)</u>
Belgium	INRA BELGIUM	1074	2/9 – 4/10	8,326
Denmark	GfK DENMARK	1000	1/9 – 4/10	4,338
Germany(East)	INRA DEUTSCHLAND	1009	1/9 – 18/9	13,028
Germany(West)	INRA DEUTSCHLAND	1036	1/9 – 19/9	55,782
Greece	MARKET ANALYSIS	1001	2/9 – 2/10	8,793
Spain	INRA ESPAÑA	1000	3/9 – 4/10	33,024
France	CSA-TMO	1004	2/9 – 24/9	46,945
Ireland	LANSDOWNE Market Research	999	3/9 – 30/9	2,980
Italy	INRA Demoskopea	992	5/9 – 30/9	49,017
Luxembourg	ILRes	599	4/9 – 30/9	364
The Netherlands	INTOMART	998	1/9 – 2/10	12,705
Austria	SPECTRA	1008	3/9 – 25/9	6,668
Portugal	METRIS	1000	3/9 – 29/9	8,217
Finland	MDC MARKETING RESEARCH	1000	2/9 – 1/10	4,165
Sweden	GfK SVERIGE	1000	1/9 – 7/10	7,183
Great Britain	MARTIN HAMBLIN LTD	1014	2/9 – 4/10	46,077
Northern Ireland	ULSTER MARKETING SURVEYS	306	4/9 – 23/9	1,273
TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS		16067		

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. For all EU member-countries a national weighting procedure, using marginal and intercellular weighting, was carried out based on this Universe description. As such in all countries, minimum gender, age, region NUTS 2 were introduced in the iteration procedure. For international weighting (i.e. EU averages), INRA (EUROPE) applies the official population figures as provided by EUROSTAT in the Regional Statistics Yearbook (data for 1997). The total population figures for input in this post-weighting procedure are listed above.

The results of the Eurobarometer studies are reported in the form of tables, datafiles and analyses. Per question a table of results is given with the full question text in English, French and German. The results are expressed as a percentage of the total. The results of the Eurobarometer surveys are analysed and made available through the Directorate-General Press and Communication, Opinion Polls of the European Commission, rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels. The results are published on the Internet server of the European Commission: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/epo>. All Eurobarometer datafiles are stored at the Zentral Archiv (Universität Köln, Bachemer Strasse, 40, D-50869 Köln-Lindenthal), available through the CESSDA Database <http://www.nsd.uib.no/cessda/europe.html>. They are at the disposal of all institutes members of the European Consortium for Political Research (Essex), of the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (Michigan) and of all those interested in social science research.

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:

Observed percentages	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Confidence limits	± 1.9%	± 2.5%	± 2.7%	± 3.0%	± 3.1%

**STANDARD EUROBAROMETER 58.0
CO-OPERATING AGENCIES AND RESEARCH EXECUTIVES**

The European Opinion Research Group EEIG
P.a. INRA (EUROPE) - European Coordination Office SA/NV
Christine KOTARAKOS
159, avenue de la Couronne
B -1050 BRUSSELS – BELGIUM
Tel. ++/32 2 642 47 11 – Fax: ++/32 2 648 34 08
e-mail: christine.kotarakos@eorg.be

BELGIQUE	INRA BELGIUM 159, avenue de la Couronne B-1050 BRUXELLES	Ms Verena MELAN verena.melan@inra.com	tel. fax	++/32 2 642 47 11 ++/32 2 648 34 08
DANMARK	GfK DANMARK Sylows Allé, 1 DK-2000 FREDERIKSBERG	Mr Erik CHRISTIANSEN erik.christiansen@gfk.dk	tel. fax	++/45 38 32 20 00 ++/45 38 32 20 01
DEUTSCHLAND	INRA DEUTSCHLAND Papenkamp, 2-6 D-23879 MÖLLN	Mr Christian HOLST christian.holst@inra.de	tel. fax	++/49 4542 801 0 ++/49 4542 801 201
ELLAS	Market Analysis 190 Hymettus Street GR-11635 ATHENA	Mr. Spyros Camileris markanalysis@marketanalysis.gr	tel. fax	++/30 1 75 64 688 ++/30/1/70 19 355
ESPAÑA	INRA ESPAÑA C/Alberto Aguilera, 7-5° E-28015 MADRID	Ms Victoria MIQUEL victoria.miquel@inra.es	tel. fax	++/34 91 594 47 93 ++/34 91 594 52 23
FRANCE	CSA-TMO 30, rue Saint Augustin F-75002 PARIS	Mr. Bruno JEANBART bruno.jeanbart@csa-tmo.fr	tel. fax	++/33 1 44 94 59 10 ++/33 1 44 94 40 01
IRELAND	LANSLOWNE Market Research 49, St. Stephen's Green IRL-DUBLIN 2	Mr Roger JUPP roger@lmr.ie	tel. fax	++/353 1 661 34 83 ++/353 1 661 34 79
ITALIA	INRA Demoskopea Via Salaria, 290 I-00199 ROMA	Mrs Maria-Adelaide SANTILLI Santilli@demoskopea.it	tel. fax	++/39 06 85 37 521 ++/39 06 85 35 01 75
LUXEMBOURG	ILReS 46, rue du Cimetière L-1338 LUXEMBOURG	Mr Charles MARGUE charles.margue@ilres.com	tel. fax	++/352 49 92 91 ++/352 49 92 95 555
NEDERLAND	Intomart Noordse Bosje 13-15 NL - 1201 DA HILVERSUM	Mr. Remko VAN DEN DOOL Remko.van.den.dool@intomart.nl	tel. fax	++/31/35/625 84 11 ++/31/35/625 84 33
AUSTRIA	SPECTRA Brucknerstrasse, 3-5/4 A-4020 LINZ	Ms Jitka NEUMANN neji@spectra.at	tel. fax	++/43/732/6901 ++/43/732/6901-4
PORTUGAL	METRIS Av. Eng. Arantes e Oliveira, 3-2° P-1900 LISBOA	Ms Mafalda BRASIL mafaldabrasil@metris.pt	tel. fax	++/351 21 843 22 00 ++/351 21 846 12 03
FINLAND	MDC MARKETING RESEARCH Ltd Itätuulenkuja 10 A FIN-02100 ESPOO	Mrs Anu SIMULA anu.simula@gallup.fi	tel. fax	++/358 9 613 500 ++/358 9 613 50 423
SWEDEN	GfK SVERIGE S:t Lars väg 46 S-221 00 LUND	Mr Rikard EKDAHL rikard.ekdahl@gfksverige.se	tel. fax	++/46 46 18 16 00 ++/46 46 18 16 11
GREAT BRITAIN	MARTIN HAMBLIN LTD Mulberry House, Smith Square 36 UK-London Swip 3HL	Mrs. Lisa LUCKHURST lisa.luckhurst@martinhamblin.co.uk	tel. fax	++/44 207 222 81 81 ++/44 207 396 90 46