



*Standard Eurobarometer*



European  
Commission

# EUROBAROMETER 62

## PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

### AUTUMN 2004

#### NATIONAL REPORT

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### **SPAIN**

The survey was requested and coordinated by the Directorate General Press and Communication.

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

# **Eurobarometer 62.0 – National Report Spain**

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Between the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October and the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2004, EOS Gallup carried out wave EB62 of the Standard Eurobarometer on the request of the European Commission Press and Communication Directorate-General's Public Opinion Analysis Unit. The study includes a Standard National Report and an Executive Summary focusing on the main conclusions about public opinion in Spain. It is also used as a framework for recommendations to the EC Representation in Spain. This executive summary summarises the most important conclusions of the Spanish report.

The Spanish EB62 Report was structured around 5 themes of analysis, as seen in the table of contents. For each of these themes, a list of topics is covered, such as public opinion and information on European issues or personal satisfaction with EU actions and policies. Socio-demographic analysis of the data is undertaken in order to further investigate some of the findings of the Spanish case. Additionally, the main trends arising from a series of results of consecutive Eurobarometer surveys are described for selected questions.

The main novelties of EB 62 in respect to earlier editions relates to the inclusion of an analysis of Spanish public opinion regarding feelings about being European, the European Constitution and fears as to the future of Europe. The report also focuses on issues such as the public's trust in the EU, its institutions, policies and activities, as well as the increased satisfaction with the way the EU works.

In this Eurobarometer survey, the Spanish public appears to feel more European than before, and wants the EU to have a stronger role to play in issues like immigration, the fight against terrorism and information on EU matters. Overall, Spaniards have become considerably more positive in respect to European matters in the last two years.

**Theme 1: The climate of Spanish public opinion:**  
**Personal satisfaction, expectations of the Spanish public regarding the future and the main concerns of Spanish citizens**

In this edition of the Eurobarometer poll, Spanish optimism has increased in comparison with the last edition, EB61, undertaken last spring. Although Spanish optimism about the present is higher than that of other Europeans, there is still a medium level of optimism as regards their hopes for the coming year. Spaniards seem to be more satisfied with their country's economic situation but rather pessimistic about their personal household and job situation where they believe things in 2005 will be the same as in 2004. Rising prices/inflation and housing are important concerns among the Spanish group.

More in detail:

- 46% of the Spanish poll feels that their lives have improved during the last five years.
- 86% of them feel satisfied with the life they lead.
- 47% think that their life will be the same in the next twelve months. Another 41% think that life in the next year will be better (Table 1).
- 58% feel that their personal job situation will be the same in the year to come.
- 59% believe that terrorism is one of the most important problems in Spain, while unemployment (30%) and immigration (24%) are the second and third most important issues about which the Spanish are currently concerned.
- 62% of men think that terrorism is the main problem confronted by Spain in contrast to 57% of women.

**Table 1: Expectations for the next twelve months among Spanish public**

|   | <b>Better</b> | <b>Worse</b> | <b>Same</b> | <b>DK</b> |
|---|---------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| your life in general                      | 41            | 10           | 47          | 2         |
| the economic situation in Spain           | 23            | 31           | 39          | 6         |
| the financial situation in your household | 30            | 15           | 53          | 2         |
| the employment situation in Spain         | 23            | 36           | 35          | 6         |
| your personal job situation               | 27            | 11           | 58          | 4         |

## **Theme 2. Being a Member of the European Union today: Spanish feelings regarding EU membership, the benefits of belonging to the European Union and the European Union's image among Spanish public**

Among the Spanish public surveyed, there is a positive evaluation of their country's EU membership with a figure of +16 points higher than the EU25 average. In this edition of the survey, it is seen once more that the Spanish public associates closely with Europe and that each time they have a stronger feeling of being both Spanish and European.

- In the same vein, 72% of the group feels that being an EU member state is a good thing. 16% thinks that being part of the EU is neither a good nor a bad thing.
- Within the Spanish poll, it can be seen that 78% of men and 67% of women think that membership is something good, as do 76% of those working as self-employed, 77% of students and 68% of manual workers.
- 42% of the poll thinks that the EU's image is more or less positive, while another 33% thinks it is neutral.
- While 70% feel that Spain has benefited from being a member state, 17% hold the contrary view.
- For the majority of Spaniards (57%), the EU means above all the euro. The freedom to travel, study and work throughout the EU was a meaning that was also strongly associated with the EU, according to 45%.
- Economic growth, cultural diversity and having a stronger voice in the world are also of importance to the Spanish public with 32%, 31% and 25% respectively citing these aspects of the EU.

### **Theme 3. Trust in the European Institutions: The European Commission and the European Parliament**

In general, the Spanish appear to have high trust levels in the European institutions, as well as in some international ones.

- Men and women show the same high levels of trust in the EU, in comparison with other EU member states.
- 57% of Spaniards say they trust the European Commission and 64% say they trust the European Parliament, while the respective averages for the EU-25 are 52% for the Commission and 57% for the Parliament.
- Similarly, the Spanish public demonstrates high levels of trust for the rest of the European institutions and bodies, like the EU Ombudsman and the Council of Ministers, with 54% and 55% of the group respectively saying that they trust these institutions.
- 65% of Madrid citizens say that they trust the Commission and 72% the EU Parliament, with Madrid the region in Spain with the highest levels of trust in the EU institutions.
- The Spaniards (after the Belgians, Greeks, Slovenians and Lithuanians) are the nations with highest levels of trust in EU institutions.
- Spanish men and women feel higher levels of trust in the European Parliament than in the Commission: 70% of men and 57% of women say they trust the Parliament, while only 63% of men and 51% of women say they trust the Commission.

**Theme 4. Spanish feelings towards European integration:  
Spanish support for a European Constitution, Support for future  
enlargement and the speed of European integration**

- According to 57% of Spaniards, the European Union means above all the euro. 45% think that the EU means the possibility to travel, study and work in other countries of the EU.
- 41% of Spaniards say the EU evokes hope while 34% say it evokes trust.
- According to the Spanish poll, if the EU were to be scrapped tomorrow, 42% would feel very sorry, while 48% would be indifferent.
- Of the various scenarios presented, the transfer of employment to other EU countries with lower production costs is a major fear according to 64% of the Spanish poll.
- 65% of Spaniards fear that there will be more difficulties for Spanish farmers.
- In this edition of Eurobarometer, it can be seen that 72% of the Spanish poll supports the idea of an EU Constitution.

**Table 2: Are you in favour or against the existence of a Constitution for Europe?**

|            | <b>In favour</b> | <b>Against</b> |
|------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Sex</b> |                  |                |
| Men        | 77%              | 13%            |
| Women      | 67%              | 13%            |
| <b>Age</b> |                  |                |
| 15-24      | 67%              | 20%            |
| 25-39      | 76%              | 12%            |
| 40-54      | 77%              | 11%            |
| 55 +       | 64%              | 13%            |

- Spain is one of the European Union member states most in favour of enlarging Europe to include all those countries willing to join. It is noteworthy, however, that its figure has become closer to the EU-25 average in this edition.

### **Theme 5: Spanish opinion on a common foreign and security policy**

- Among the Spanish group there is a strong belief that EU common security and defence policies are of great importance.
- 71% favour the European Union having a rapid military reaction force that can be sent quickly to trouble spots when an international crisis occurs.
- 78% agrees that when an international crisis occurs, European Union member states should agree a common position (EU25 average: 83%).
- 79% of the Spanish poll favours the EU having a foreign policy that is independent of that of the USA.
- Among the various occupational groups making up the Spanish sample, we observe that there is strong consensus as to the immigration policy that the EU should have.
- Similarly, there is a consensus about the policy for those seeking political asylum in the EU, with 75% of the Spanish group saying they agree with the existence of a common EU policy for asylum seekers.

## **CONCLUSIONS EB 62**

Overall, the Spanish public shows a great interest in EU-related issues, although they seem to have a low level of knowledge on the main topics and policies.

- 58% feel that their personal job situation will be the same in the year to come.
- 59% believe that terrorism is the most important problem faced by their country, while unemployment (30%) and immigration (25%) are ranked as the second and third most important issues.
- Spaniards feel that the EU has a good image in the media.
- 42% have a more or less positive image of the EU seems, while 33% have a neutral one.
- 57% of Spaniards say the EU means the euro to them personally, and 45% the freedom to travel, study and work throughout the member countries.
- Economic growth (32%), cultural diversity (31%) and having a stronger voice in the world (25%) are all aspects of the EU cited as being of importance to the Spanish poll.
- 57% of the Spanish poll trusts the European Commission, while 64% trust the European Parliament. The EU-25 average is 52% for the Commission and 57% for the Parliament.
- The Spanish public (after the Belgians, Greeks, Slovenians and Lithuanians) are those with highest levels of trust in EU institutions among the EU member states.
- If the EU were to be scrapped tomorrow, 42% of Spaniards would feel very sorry but 48% say they would feel indifferent.
- Of the various scenarios presented, the transfer of jobs to other EU countries with lower production costs is a major fear of 64% of the Spanish poll.
- In this edition of Eurobarometer, it can be seen that the Spanish (72%) feel very supportive of the existence of a EU Constitution.
- 71% favour the European Union having a rapid military reaction force that can be sent quickly to trouble spots when an international crisis occurs.
- 78% of the Spanish poll agrees in that when an international crisis occurs, European Union member status should agree a common position (EU25 average: 83%).