



*Standard Eurobarometer*



European  
Commission

# EUROBAROMETER 65

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

## SPRING 2006

NATIONAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**CYPRUS**  
**TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY**

Standard Eurobarometer 65 / Spring 2006 – TNS Opinion & Social

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## **Standard Eurobarometer 65 for the Turkish Cypriot Community (TCC)**

This research is the 4th Standard Eurobarometer carried out within the Turkish Cypriot Community. The field work was carried out between 29 March 2006 and 15 April 2006 using face-to-face interviews with a sample of 500 by KADEM, under the auspices of TNS Opinion & Social, a consortium created between Taylor Nelson Sofres and EOS Gallup Europe.

This survey was carried out through the request of the Directorate General Communication, across 25 EU Member States as well as Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot Community.

**The members of the Turkish Cypriot Community will be referred to as Turkish Cypriots throughout this Executive Summary.**

**74% of Turkish Cypriots who participated in the study said they are satisfied with their lives.**

74% of Turkish Cypriots who participated in the study said they are satisfied with their lives. This percentage is lower than the EU 25 average (81%). When we look at the overall distribution, we can see that 31% said they are very satisfied with their lives, while 44% said fairly satisfied, 20% fairly unsatisfied and 5% not satisfied.

**There is a 5-percentage point decrease in the percentage of Turkish Cypriots who are satisfied with their lives, compared with the Eurobarometer 64 results.**

The Eurobarometer 64 study, which took place during October 2005, showed that 79% of Turkish Cypriots were satisfied with their lives. A 5-percentage point decrease in the level of life satisfaction among Turkish Cypriots between October 2005 and March 2006 is observed.

In contrast to this decreasing figure within the Turkish Cypriot Community, there has been an increase of 1 percentage point in the EU 25 average of life satisfaction since October 2005.

Looking at the life satisfaction trend of the TCC since 2004, this is the first time there has been a decrease in the level of life satisfaction.

When the levels of satisfaction of different age groups are compared, we can see that the 15-24 age group and the 25-39 age group respectively are those that are the most satisfied with their lives.

**Parallel to the decrease in the level of life satisfaction among Turkish Cypriots, the optimistic expectations about the future are now replaced with the feeling that various aspects of life will remain the same in the future.**

When asked about their expectations for the future on different topics, Turkish Cypriots who participated in the study showed optimism in terms of life in general becoming better in the future. Nevertheless, on all other topics (namely financial situation of the household, personal employment, employment in the community and

economic situation of the community) Turkish Cypriots think the situation in the future will remain the same as today.

**Nevertheless, Turkish Cypriots say the situation today is better than the situation 5 years ago.**

Although there is a decrease in their optimism with regard to the future, Turkish Cypriots remain positive (56%) that life today is better than it was 5 years ago. 34% of Turkish Cypriots said life today was the same as it was 5 years ago, while only 9% said it had got worse.

**While there seems to be a decrease in the optimism regarding expectations about the Turkish Cypriot Community's future, Turkish Cypriots still are optimistic about personal issues.**

When asked about their expectations on how their personal situation will change in the next 5 years, 55% of Turkish Cypriots said they expect it to improve. Although this percentage is well above the EU 25 average (39%), it is 4 percentage points lower than the Eurobarometer 64 results for the Turkish Cypriot Community.

55% optimism puts the TCs at the top of the EU 25 optimism rankings with regard to their personal situation in the future.

As was the case for answers given to some of the other questions, we can see that the 15-24 age group has the most positive expectations about the future in terms of their personal situation.

**Turkish Cypriots feel a high level of attachment to their city, region and community. Nevertheless, the level of attachment Turkish Cypriots feel towards Europe is lower than the EU 25 average.**

90% of the Turkish Cypriots who participated in the survey said they are very attached to the city they live in. This percentage is above the EU 25 average.

When it comes to attachment to the region, again, 90% of Turkish Cypriots said they feel this attachment. Similarly, this percentage is above the EU 25 average.

91% of Turkish Cypriots said they feel attached to the TCC, which is slightly above the EU 25 average (90%).

In order to determine the levels of attachment to Europe and the European Union, the sample was divided into two, where one half was asked whether they feel attached to Europe and the other to the European Union. Only 50% of the TCs who were asked the question said they feel attached to Europe, while close to half said they do not feel this attachment. This level of attachment is low compared to the EU 25 average (63%).

When we compare the answers given by different age groups, we can see that the 15-24 and 25-34 age groups respectively are the ones that feel the most attached to Europe within the Turkish Cypriot Community.

An even lower percentage of Turkish Cypriots who were asked this question said they feel attached to the European Union than those who feel attached to Europe.

Only 40% of Turkish Cypriots who were surveyed said they feel attached to the EU. The EU 25 average on this topic is 50%.

Similarly, when the levels of attachment between different age-groups towards the EU are examined, it can be seen that the 15-24 age groups feels most attached to the EU. Additionally, the 15-24 age group feels more attached to the EU than to Europe, which is counter to the tendency within the TCC overall and EU 25 average.

**Turkish Cypriots feel that the two biggest problems facing the TCC are unemployment and the economic situation.**

The biggest problem facing the Turkish Cypriot Community was cited to be unemployment (47%), while the second biggest is the economic situation (45%). These answers are identical to the EU 25 average answers.

**Turkish Cypriots who participated in the study said they trust the EU more than they trust the UN.**

Trust among Turkish Cypriots towards the EU is 51%, while it is only 48% towards the UN. Additionally, Turkish Cypriots showed a great level of distrust towards political parties (63%).

**Opinions of Turkish Cypriots on different topics are as follows:**

Turkish Cypriots who participated in the study think the situation of the European economy (82%) and their personal financial situation (62%), as well as the standard of living (57%) and the economic situation (49%) within the community are **good**, while the situation of employment (64%), social welfare (49%) and environment (48%) within the TCC is **bad**.

**The European Parliament is the most trusted institution for Turkish Cypriots within the EU.**

It has been observed that the institution trusted most by the Turkish Cypriots within the EU is the European Parliament (55%), while the least trusted institutions are the European Central Bank and the European Court of Justice (49%).

While the level of trust felt by Turkish Cypriots towards the European Commission over time has been unstable, it is now on the rise (54%).

The same can be said with regard to the level of trust towards the European Parliament.

**The majority of Turkish Cypriots (64%) feel EU membership will be a good thing for the community.**

Nevertheless, compared to the EB 64 results, there has been an 8-percentage point decrease in the percentage of Turkish Cypriots who feel this way.

In this question, it was observed that the most optimistic age group among Turkish Cypriots with regards to whether EU membership will be a good thing for the Turkish Cypriot Community is the 25-39 age group (71%), while the least optimistic is the 55+ age group.

**When asked whether they think EU membership will be advantageous, 69% Turkish Cypriots said yes.**

Nevertheless, there has been a 7-percentage point decrease in the level of positive responses among TCs compared with the EU 64 results. Similarly, the 15-24 and 25-34 age groups (77%) are the most optimistic with regard to the advantages of EU membership on the TCC.

**The EU has a positive image (61%) among Turkish Cypriots.**

The EU's positive image is highest within the 25-39 age group (72%). Although there has been a decrease in the positive image of EU among Turkish Cypriots, compared with the October 2005 results, the EU's image among Turkish Cypriots is still more positive than the EU 25 average (50%).

**EU means peace and economic welfare to the Turkish Cypriots.**

When asked what the EU means to them personally, Turkish Cypriots listed peace (49%) and economic welfare (48%). Compared with the EB 64 results, there has been an increase in the percentage of TCs who associate the EU with peace.

There is a general tendency within the EU 25 to associate the EU with freedom of travel and education throughout the EU (50%), Euro (39%) and peace (33%).

**46% of Turkish Cypriots said they understand how the EU works.**

This percentage is equal to the EU 25 average.

**Turkish Cypriots know more about the European Parliament than any other institution within the EU.**

In order to measure the level of awareness of different institutions within the EU, in the EB 65 survey, the names of various institutions were listed and respondents were asked whether they have heard these names in the past. 84% of Turkish Cypriots had heard about the European Parliament in the past.

The results of this question are similar to the levels of trust TCs feel towards EU institutions, which suggests that TCs tend to trust institutions they are more aware of.

**Turkish Cypriots feel they have a level of knowledge on the EU, which is above the EU 25 average.**

When asked to rate their perceived level of knowledge about the EU on a 1 to 10 scale, Turkish Cypriots rated their level of knowledge on the EU as (5.1), which is above the EU 25 average of 4.5.

**The average number of correct answers given by TCs to questions asked about the EU is equal to the EU 25 average.**

When asked various questions about the EU (such as whether the EU is made up of 15 Member States, whether Members of the European Parliament are elected by direct suffrage, and whether the majority of the EU budget is spent on administrative and staff costs) to measure their real level of knowledge on the EU, TCs had 45% of correct answers (equal to the EU 25 average) and 22% of incorrect answers (lower than the EU average of 34%).

**Turkish Cypriots think the most important EU institution is the European Parliament.**

When asked which institution they think is the most important in the workings of the EU, Turkish Cypriots listed the institution they know most about, namely the European Parliament.

**TCs expect that the EU will play a larger role in their daily lives in the future.**

67% of Turkish Cypriots said they expect the EU to play a larger role in their daily lives within the next 5 years.

**Nevertheless, the percentage of TCs who want the EU to play a larger role in their daily lives in the future is lower.**

Only 54% of Turkish Cypriots said they want the EU to play a larger role in their daily lives in the future.

Here, an opposite tendency within the Turkish Cypriot Community compared to the EU 25 average can be seen. The EU 25 average shows 41% of EU citizens who expect the EU to play a larger role in their daily lives in the future and a higher percentage of 46% who want the EU to play a larger role in their daily lives in the future.

On the other hand, this tendency is reversed in the TCC. While a higher percentage of Turkish Cypriots (67%) expect the EU to play a larger role in their daily lives within the next 5 years, only 54% of TCs want this to happen.

**Turkish Cypriots do not think the EU will play either a positive or a negative role on the problems facing the Community.**

Turkish Cypriots who listed unemployment and the economic situation as the biggest two problems facing the TCC, do not think the EU will play a positive or negative role (55% and 49% respectively) on these problems. Nevertheless, Turkish Cypriots think the biggest positive effect of the EU would be on the economic situation (32%).

**The biggest fear Turkish Cypriots have over the EU integration is the possibility of an increase in drug trafficking and international organized crime.**

When asked to comment about possible problems associated with the further development of the EU, Turkish Cypriots listed drug trafficking and an increase in international organized crime (54%), as well as the loss of national identity and culture (49%) as their fears.

**Turkish Cypriots want the EU's priorities to be the fight with unemployment and poverty respectively.**

Those who participated in the survey were asked to select at most three answers from a list of answers given to the question: 'what do you want the priorities of the EU to be?' The Turkish Cypriot Community feels that the fight against unemployment and poverty should be the priority of the EU. These are also the same as the overall EU 25 average responses.

It can be seen that TCs feel the EU should be working on the two topics they listed as the biggest problems facing their community: namely unemployment and the economic situation.

**Turkish Cypriots prefer to get their information on the EU from television.**

When asked where they get their information on the EU, Turkish Cypriots listed television (80%) and daily newspapers (61%) as their main sources of information. These answers are in line with the EU 25 average.

**Turkish Cypriots prefer to watch television.**

When asked how often they use different forms of media, Turkish Cypriots said they prefer to watch television. 74% of Turkish Cypriots said they watch TV every day, while there was no one among the TC poll that said he/she never watches TV.

The second most favoured media channel of Turkish Cypriots is daily newspapers with 56% of TCs reading newspapers daily.

While the TC rates of following the TV and newspapers daily is above the EU 25 average, (66% and 35% respectively), TCs are below the EU 25 average (40%) when it comes to listening to radio daily.

**Turkish Cypriots feel the local TV and press give too much information about the European Union**

About half of the Turkish Cypriots who participated in the study think television (47%) and press (43%) have too much information/news on the EU, while 39% and 41% respectively think that the information these media carry is enough.

On the other hand, Turkish Cypriots think local radio gives less information about the EU compared with the other media forms. 37% of Turkish Cypriots believe the information provided by radio on the EU is sufficient while 34% think it is too much.

**Similarly, Turkish Cypriots feel the local TV and press give too much positive information about the European Union.**

While Turkish Cypriots believe television (48%) and press (45%) are too positive with regard to the EU, they think local radio is less positive (38%).