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Eurobarometer Survey in Luxembourg

A noteworthy fall in support for the future enlargement of the EU

If unemployment remains the major concern, housing is added to the concerns of the residents of Luxembourg

The first six-month period of 2007 was marked in Luxembourg by a falling rate of unemployment. Although it has always been among the lowest in the EU, it is, nevertheless, a problem on which public opinion is most focussed, in spite of an economic situation marked by a growth rate of more than 6%. To the problems of the labour market are added those of housing and inflation, due to continual rises in prices, the cost of living, in general, and real estate, in particular.

The Eurobarometer 67.2 survey was carried out by the European Commission, in spring 2007, in 30 countries or territories: 27 Member States, two applicant countries (Croatia and Turkey) and the territory of the Turkish Cypriot Community. It provides a picture of the lives of citizens and their perceptions in regard to a range of issues. The image of the European Union and trust in the European and national political institutions are also analyzed.

The sample of the Eurobarometer surveys is approximately 1.000 people per Member State. Luxembourg is an exception with a sample made up of 511 people for the EB 67.2 representative of its population (three-quarters of people with Luxembourgish nationality and a quarter of nationals from the other EU Member States). In its commentary, the special report, prepared on behalf of the Representation of the European Commission in Luxembourg, refers to the *inhabitants* of Luxembourg, an entity that covers not only citizens of Luxembourgish nationality.

A combination of satisfaction with the life they lead and pessimism regarding labour market trends

92% of the inhabitants of Luxembourg are satisfied with the life they lead. The majority not expect that their personal situation will change in the coming year, but within a period of five years, 40% expect an improvement in their personal situation. For the twelve months to come, a deterioration of the labour market in general is expected although fewer people expect a negative evolution of their own professional situation, as was the case in spring 2006.

Trust in national and European institutions and feelings regarding membership of the Union

Since 2005, the trust of the inhabitants of Luxembourg in national institutions and in the European Union again increased, even if they generally have a greater level of trust in institutions compared to the Union as a whole. The most important degree of confidence is towards the Government, followed by the Parliament - la Chambre des députés. We note a rise of 8 points in the level of trust in the EU since the Eurobarometer survey of spring 2006. For 74% of the population of

Luxembourg, belonging to the Union is a good thing. In spite of that, 22% are, however, of the opinion that Luxembourg does not benefit from its EU membership.

The image of the European Union: peace, single currency and cultural diversity

In Luxembourg, the EU benefits from a positive image from 56% of the inhabitants (54% in spring 2006, 58% in spring 2005 and 57% in autumn 2005), 16% (+1 point in one year) have a negative image of it, and 27% gave a 'don't know' response. In particular, the EU represents peace and, on a quasi-identical level, the single currency and cultural diversity.

The term 'globalisation' has a positive connotation for 42% of the citizens of Luxembourg and the first thought which it evokes is the relocation of certain companies to countries where labour is less expensive, increased competition for Luxembourgish companies and opportunities in terms of new outlets for Luxembourgish companies.

Decision-making

63% of Luxembourg citizens agree that the opinion of the national Government is taken into account for each European decision. The fight against terrorism, scientific and technological research and support for areas which have economic difficulties are issues on which decisions should be taken jointly in the European Union, according to respondents; on the other hand, decisions relating to pensions and taxes should be made by the national Government.

Future of the European Union: enlargement and Constitution

The Eurobarometer survey of autumn 2006 showed that Luxembourg was one of the three countries most opposed to the future enlargement of the EU - with only 32% of favorable opinions. In this latest six-month period to be surveyed, the residents of Luxembourg are also very largely opposed to the future enlargement of the European Union. Only a quarter (25%) expressed themselves in favour of continuing the enlargement process. On the other hand, 66% of Luxembourg citizens are in favour of a Constitution for the European Union in the years to come.