

EUROBAROMETER 68

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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NATIONAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SLOVENIA

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I. LIFE IN SLOVENIA

Slovenians are still less satisfied with their life than EU citizens on average, although they remain the most satisfied among the new member states. However, they are slightly less optimistic about the future than previously.

87% of Slovenians surveyed are satisfied with the life they lead, which is 4 percentage points less than 6 months ago. Slovenia is in the upper half of the list, measuring satisfaction with life and above the EU average (80%). Slovenians are still in first place regarding satisfaction with life among those member states that joined the Union in 2004.

The majority of Slovenians (52%) are not expecting changes in their life in 2008, 26% are expecting a better life, and 20% are expecting life to get worse. The share of Slovenians, who are expecting life to be worse, in general, has increased from 7% to 20% over the last six months.

The assessment of the economic situation in Slovenia remains unchanged compared to the results of the last Eurobarometer. 44% of Slovenians are not expecting changes in the economic situation in 2008. 25% are expecting a strengthening of the Slovenian economy, whilst 28% are expecting it to worsen.

Slovenians are a little less optimistic regarding the economic situation in the EU over the next 12 months than half a year ago. 6 percentage points fewer Slovenians (26%) than half a year ago think that the EU economic situation will be better. The share of those who think that the economic situation will decline has increased by 4 percentage points; and is 17%. 48% of Slovenes do not expect change regarding the economic situation of the EU.

63% of Slovenians consider inflation as the priority task that has to be dealt with by the Slovene government. .

II. SLOVENIA AND THE EU

EU membership of Slovenia is good; Slovenia has benefited from EU membership

The opinion that Slovenian membership of the EU is a good thing is around the European average (58%). In Slovenia, the opinion that EU membership is a good thing, has declined by 2 percentage points (to 56%), while the EU27 average has increased by 1 percentage point. The share of Slovenians who think that membership of the EU is a bad thing, is 6 percentage points lower than the EU27 average.

71% of Slovenians surveyed are convinced that their country has benefited from being a member of the EU. The EU27 average is 58%.

Voice of Slovenia counts; Slovenes convinced that Slovenia will be more influential in the future

69% of Slovenians are convinced that the voice of their country counts in the EU. 56% of Slovenians think that Slovenia will become more influential in the EU in the future.

Slovenians are well aware that Slovenia is holding the 6-month Presidency of the EU Council from the 1st of January 2008

In the autumn 2007 survey, 85% of Slovenians were aware that their country would take over the presidency of the EU Council on 1 January 2008. 86% of Slovenians said that the Presidency is important for Slovenia, whilst 11% expressed the opinion that holding the Presidency is unimportant.

Slovenians still have a high level of trust towards the EU. They are in third place (together with the Belgians and the Greeks) with 65%.

The Slovenian government should decide about pensions, health and social welfare; the fight against terrorism is the priority area at EU level

Slovenians think that the most important areas in which their national government should take decisions are pensions (57%), health and social security (57%), along with taxation (52%) and the fight against unemployment (52%).

The most important areas where Slovenia should take joint decisions within the EU are the fight against terrorism (84%), scientific and technological research (77%), defence and foreign affairs (75%) and the fight against crime (73%).

III. EU IN THE EYES OF SLOVENIAN CITIZEN

More Slovenians are convinced that their voice counts in the EU; the feeling of involvement in European affairs is similar to that of half a year ago

More Slovenians are convinced that their voice counts in the EU (now 43% compared with 39% half a year ago). Half of Slovenians still think their voice does not count in the EU, but this share is 5 percentage points below that of half a year ago.

As was the case in the last Eurobarometer, the share of Slovenians who do and do not feel very much involved in European affairs is much the same. 26% of Slovenians feel very much involved in European affairs, which is above the EU27 average (20%). The share of Slovenians who do not feel very much involved in European affairs (71%) is lower than the EU27 average (74%).

59% of Slovenians understand how the European Union works, which is above the EU27 average (40%). Respondents tested their knowledge about the EU by replying to some statements. 66% of Slovenians correctly said the statement that the EU currently consists of 15 Member States is false (EU27 average was 52%). 73% of Slovenians correctly stated that the presidency of the EU Council rotates among member states every six months. Slovenians made most errors regarding the

statement that the euro area currently consists of 12 Member States. Only 35% of Slovenian respondents correctly stated the statement was false. The corresponding EU27 average was 26%.

Good knowledge and trust in European institutions among Slovenians

Most Slovenians (96%) have heard about the European Parliament; the European Commission (91%) ranks second, followed by the EU Council (86%), the Court of Justice of the European Communities (84%) and the European Ombudsman (83%). Awareness of the European institutions has increased by 1 to 2 percentage points since the last survey. Regarding their awareness of EU institutions Slovenians are high above the EU27 average.

Trust in the European institutions has remained at almost the same level as half a year ago and above the EU average.

Slovenians are well informed about European political affairs

Slovenia is the only member state in the EU27 where more respondents answered that they think they are well informed about European political affairs (50%) than not well informed (47%). Slovenia tops the EU27 list regarding that question. Slovenians think that their media give adequate coverage to the EU. More than half of respondents think that the media present the EU in an objective way.

IV. EU POLITICS AND FUTURE

Slovenians are still among the largest supporters of EU policies, although with a slight fall in support

The current Eurobarometer showed that Slovenians' support of EU policies decreased by a few percentage points. In spite of that, support for EU policies remains very high.

Slovenian support for European Monetary Union with a single currency, the euro, is at 86%, which puts Slovenia in second place within the EU27. Half a year ago, support for EMU was 91%. Support for a common defence and security policy among EU Member States is 86%, which is 2 percentage points lower than half a year ago. 81% support for a common foreign policy stays at the same level as half a year ago. The same applies to support for the further enlargement of the EU, where Slovenian support decreased by one percentage point and is 66%.

Slovenian support for the concept of enhanced cooperation decreased from 56% to 46%.

Optimism regarding the future of the EU is still high despite a slight decrease

Slovenians remain fairly optimistic about the future of the European Union. Despite a decrease from 80% to 73% over the past six months, they remain above the EU27 average (66% optimistic and 26% pessimistic).

Slovenes listed the following issues as the priority areas on which the European institutions should focus in future in order to strengthen the European Union: social and environmental issues, the fight against crime, solidarity with poorer regions and internal market.