

EUROBAROMETER 71

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NATIONAL REPORT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ROMANIA

This survey was requested and coordinated by Directorate-General for Communication.

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

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.

The database analysed in this report has been produced from the EB71 survey.

For Romania, the data were gathered between 12.06.2009 and 28.06.2009, on the basis of a representative sample at national level, of 1012 persons aged 15 years and over. The margin of error of the sample is +/- 3,1% for a trust level of 95%.

EB71 was carried out under the coordination of TNS Opinion&Social, upon the request of the European Commission. Data were collected from the 27 EU Member States, from the 3 candidate countries - Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia -, plus the Turkish Cypriot Community. For technical details about sampling, see the annex on methodological specifications for TNS Opinion&Social.

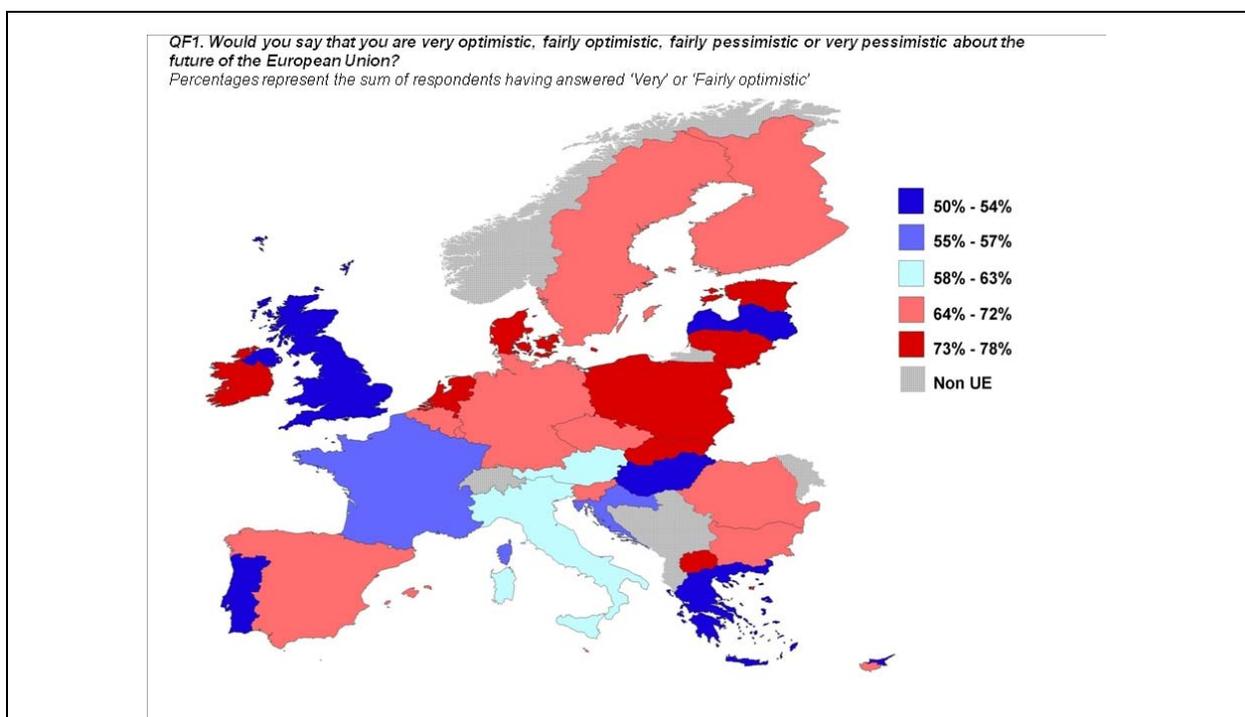
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Synthesis: How do Romanians see living in Europe and how would they want their life to be?

Six months into a year officially declared as one of global economic crisis, Romanians have kept their optimism and traditionally positive image of the EU. Around two thirds of the population aged 15 years and over has a positive image about the EU (62%), expresses its optimism about the Union's future (67%), believes that Romania's membership is a good thing (66%) and that Romania benefits from being an EU Member State (63%).

At EU level, the optimism as regards the Union's future is at a similar level (64%). At EU level, the percentage of those with positive opinions as regards their country's membership has, however, fallen to half the population. Thus, 56% of Europeans argue their country benefits from membership, 53% believe that being an EU Member State is a good thing and 45% have a positive image of the EU.

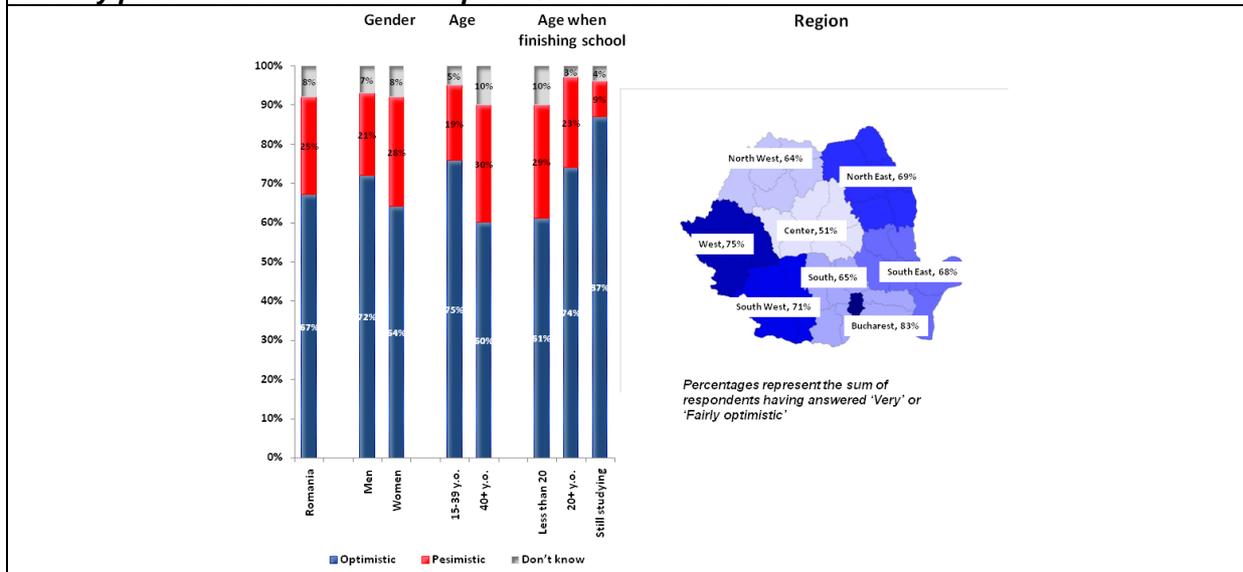


Not all Romanians are the same in terms of optimism about the Union's future. Optimism levels are a function of education, age, gender and place of residence. Thus, the Union's future seems more optimistic to men (72%) than women (64%), young people (75% for those aged under 40) than older ones (60% for those aged over 40), people with higher academic qualifications (74% for those who finished their studies when they were older than 20 years) than those with a lower level of education (61% for those who finished their studies before turning 20).

At regional level, Bucharest residents (83%) and people from the Western region (75%) are the most optimistic as regards the Union's future, while in the Centre region – where the

proportion of Hungarian ethnicity is higher – only a little over half of the population (51%) declared its optimism, a percentage very close to that recorded in Hungary (50%).

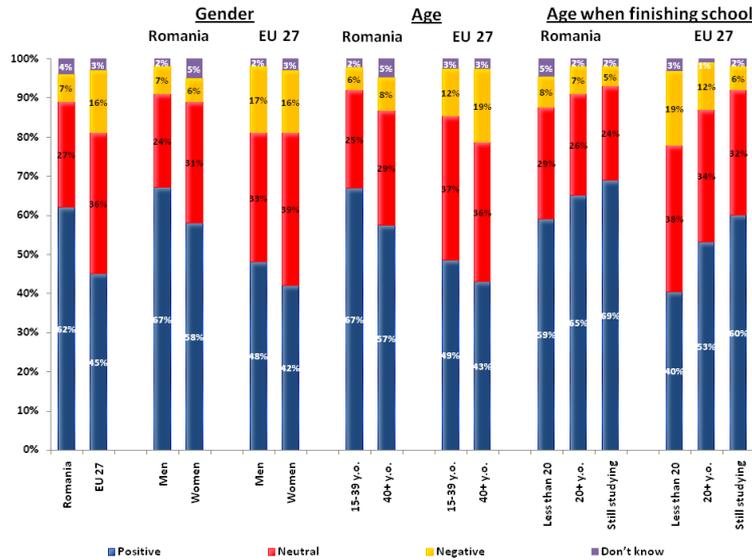
Would you say about yourself that you are very optimistic, rather optimistic, rather pessimistic or very pessimistic about the European Union's future?



Although there is a significant difference between the EU's image in Romania and that at the Union level, a similar structuring of opinions can be observed. Thus, both in Romania and the EU in general, there is a higher percentage of men than women who have a positive image about the EU. More than two-thirds (67%) of Romanian men have a positive image of the EU, while only 58% of the Romanian women feel the same way. At the EU level, the difference between the percentage of men (48%) and women (42%) with a positive image of the EU is 6 percentage points.

In terms of respondents' age, both in Romania and the EU on the whole, younger people (aged under 40) tend to have a more positive image of the EU. In Romania, there are 10 percentage points between the younger and older people with a positive image of the Union.

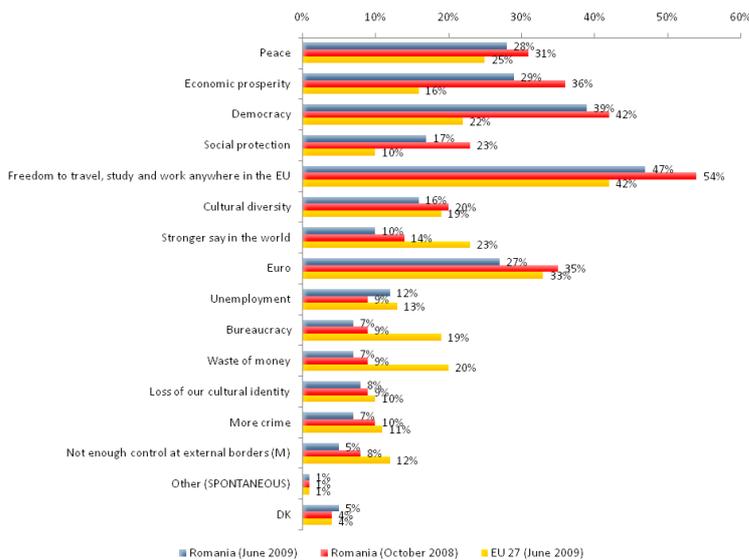
On the whole, the image of the EU is for you a very positive, rather positive, neutral, rather negative, very negative one?



Besides gender and age, the education level also influences perceptions about the EU. The Union is better perceived amongst people with higher education levels. In Romania, 59% of those who finished their studies before turning 20 have a positive image of the EU, while over two-thirds (65%) of those that have continued their studies after this age share this perception. At EU level, the difference between the two percentages is even bigger, with 40% of people with lower education levels and 53% with higher education levels perceiving the EU positively. Both in the EU and Romania, the percentage of people still studying having a positive image of the EU is higher than for both categories mentioned earlier, age playing a determining role.

The Union's positive image is closely linked with what it means, at personal level, for Romanians. Personal meanings of the Union are both functional and symbolic, as values. For Romanians, the EU represents mainly the freedom to travel, study or work wherever on its territory (47%), democracy (39%), economic prosperity (29%), peace (28%), the euro (27%) and social protection (17%). The positive signal received by Romanians, in the context of this economic crisis, especially as regards the functional relation with the EU, is that – compared with October 2008 – perceptions about EU values do not change. If topics pertaining directly or not to the economic sector have reduced in significance (freedom to travel, study or work from 54% to 47%, economic prosperity from 36% to 29%, euro from 35% to 27%, social protection from 23% to 17%), aspects such as democracy or peace have not witnessed significant variations¹ (democracy from 42% to 39% and peace from 31% to 28%). This stability in terms of values may be an indicator of the fact that EU is more than the non-reimbursability of funds for Romanians, a significance that could also result in symbolic support in a non-favourable economic situation.

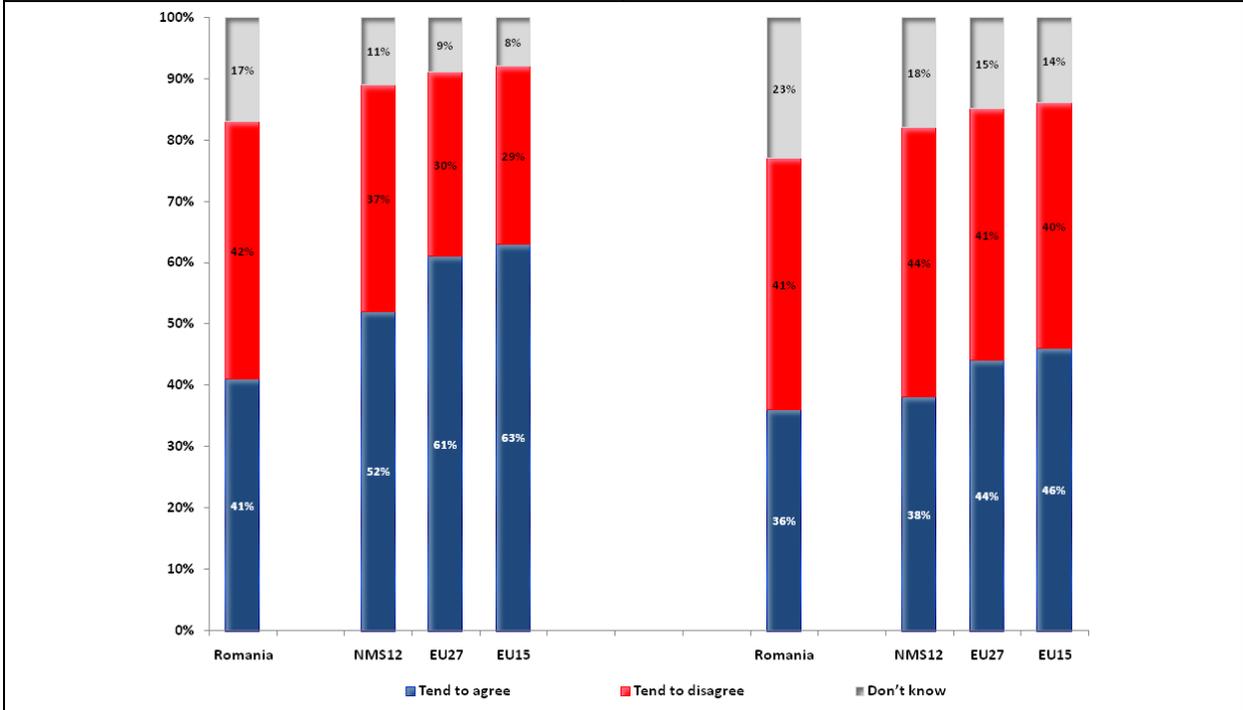
¹ In order to be significant in statistical terms, the difference must be of minimum ± 3 percentage points.



Positive perceptions of the EU are in contrast with considerations about Romania's status within the Union. Even if Romanians have more positive perceptions about the EU than the European average, they are more reserved as regards the country's status within it. 41% of Romanians believe their country's voice matters within the EU and only a little over one third of them (36%) that its interests are well taken into consideration. These results show a certain *malaise* at the level of perceptions on the way Romania is treated within the Union and the existence of expectations as regards expressing national interests. Currently, no data are available to indicate to which extent this is about the country's low self-esteem, of a poor relative accepted into a club due to interests at stake, or the perception of state representatives as being incapable of promoting the country's interests within the Union.

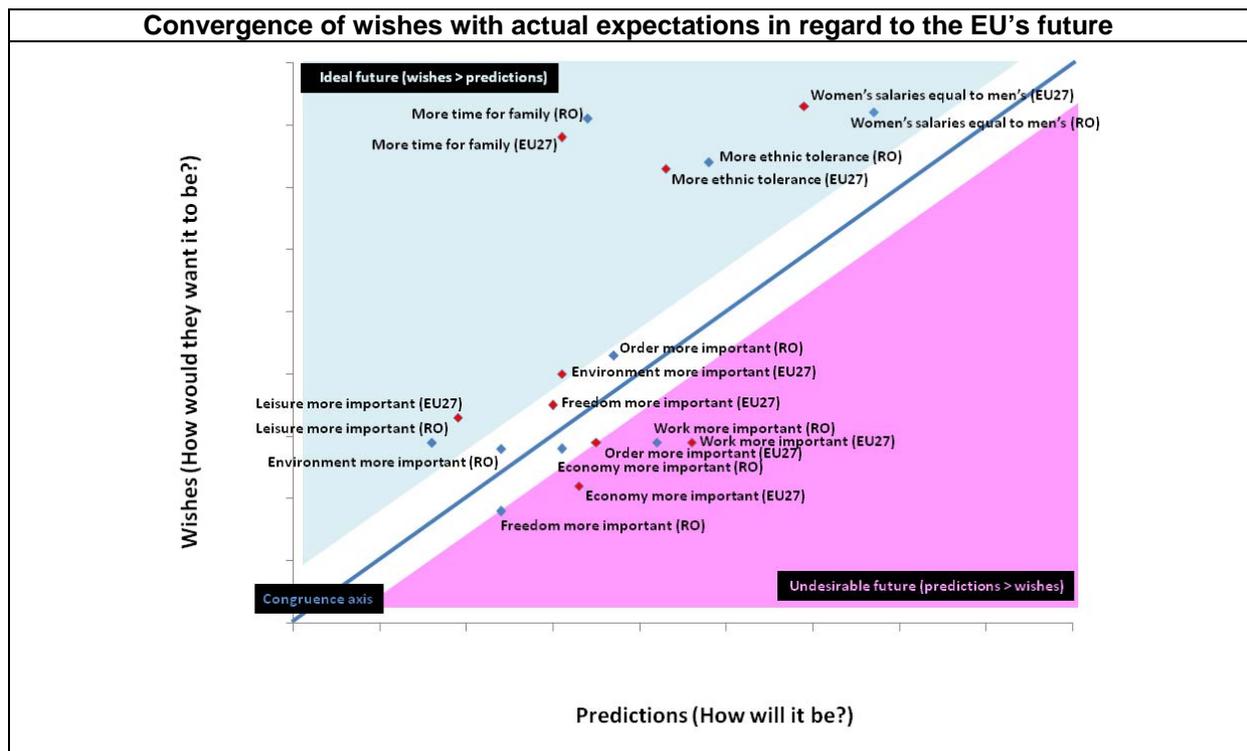
Do you tend to agree or disagree with the following statement?
Romania's voice counts within the European Union

Do you tend to agree or disagree with the following statement?
Romania's interests are well taken into account within the European Union



Romania being an EU Member State with equal rights seems to be still perceived by respondents as an aspiration. We have become members of the club, but our voice is not really heard and our interests are not really taken into account. We trust the Union, we benefit from membership but, on the whole, the balance sheet seems quite modest.

Analysing, in comparative terms, Romanians' wishes and expectations as regards life in the Union in 2030, we witness convergence in terms of importance granted to order vs freedom and environmental protection vs economic growth. As regards Romanians' wishes that will not be fulfilled in 20 years' time, they refer to time spent with family, more importance granted to spare time, salary equality between men and women, as well as increased ethnic tolerance. On the other hand, life in 2030 seems to focus on work, an aspect that both Romanians and Europeans in general do not favour.



More than 8 out of 10 Romanians (81%) wish they could live in a society that would allow for more time to be spent with the family, a percentage that is close to EU average (78%).

Nevertheless, this rather traditional approach does not seem to be in line with Europeans' expectations as regards life in the future. If 78% of Europeans declare they would want a society where they could have more time to spend with their family, only 31% of them believe that the Europe of 2030 will be such a society. The gap is similar for Romanians – 81% would like to spend more time with their family, but only 34% believe this will happen in the future.

Most Romanians (82%) would prefer a society in which women would receive the same pay as men for the same levels of competences and experience, this being close to the European average (83%). Countries recording results over the average are the Nordic ones (Sweden 99%, Denmark 96%, Finland 95%), while the lowest percentages of people favouring such a situation are observed in Hungary (73%), Italy (74%) and the Czech Republic (77%).

Only two-thirds of Romanians (67%) believe that, in 2030, women will receive equal pay to men, while the EU average is even lower (59% of Europeans believe this will happen).

The gap between hopes and expectations is 15 percentage points for Romanians, significantly lower than the EU average (24 points).

Although not amongst the top countries that most favour order, Romanians do prefer it (43%) to personal freedom (18%), while 30% of the population would give both the same level of importance.

On the other hand, one third of Romanians (37%) believe that, in 2030, in the European Union, order would prevail, while 24% argue the same for personal freedom, and 21% put the two values at the same level in terms of importance. Results in the 27 EU Member States as a whole are comparable: 35% favour order, 30% personal freedom and 21% argue they will both be equally important.

Romania offers a balanced image as regards preference for work, spare time or both. Equal percentages (29%) of people favour work and spare time, while 34% argue they should both have the same importance in tomorrow's Europe. At EU level, 29% of respondents favour work, 33% spare time and 32% both.

Romanians are very close to the European average in terms of expectations too. 42% of Romanians believe work will prevail in Europe, in 2030, compared with the European average (46%). 16% of Romanian respondents argue in favour of spare time, as compared with 19% of people at European level. 23% of both Romanians and Europeans declare work and spare time should be equally important in tomorrow's Europe.

Three-quarters of Romanians (74%) declare their preference for a Europe more tolerant of ethnic and religious minorities, with 10% of people arguing for less tolerance and 7% for keeping the status quo. Similar opinions were expressed at European level: 73% for a more tolerant society, 10% for a less tolerant one and 12% arguing for no changes.

Almost half of Romanians (48%) believe Europe will be more tolerant in 20 years' time, 5 percentage points higher than the EU average (43%). Less than a quarter (23%) argues Europe would be less tolerant, compared with the EU average of 31%. 12% of Romanians and 16% of Europeans claim there will be no changes in this respect in Europe, in 2030.

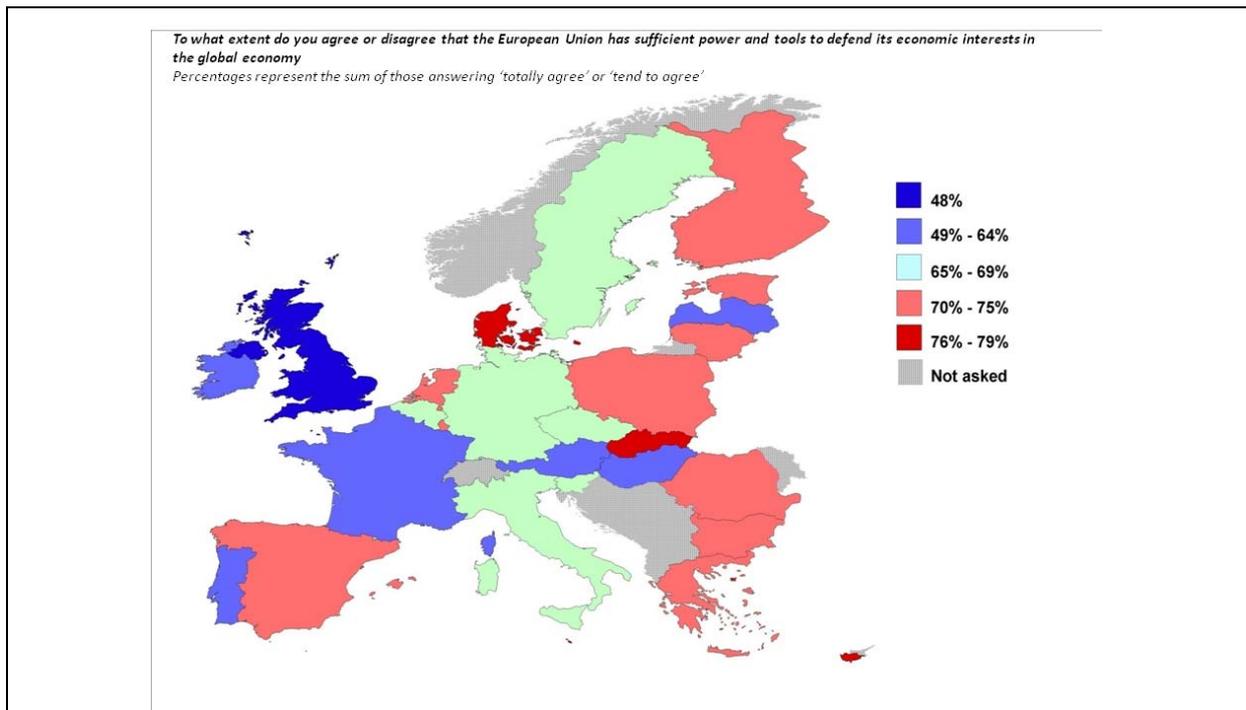
As for economic growth vs environmental protection, Romanians are equally split between the two with 28% of them arguing priority should be given to the economy in 2030, while 28% consider the environment should get the top priority spot. One third (35%) would prefer both to be accorded equal importance. Comparing figures with those at EU level, a higher percentage of those who favour the economy can be observed in Romania (EU average: 22%) and a lower proportion of people who favour the environment (EU average: 40%).

As regards expectations for 2030, 31% of Romanians believe the economy would represent the main priority (close to the EU average of 33%). Around a quarter (24%) of Romanian respondents – less than the EU average of 31% – argue that future Europeans would put the environment first. And another quarter (23%) – of both Romanians and Europeans – considers the economy and environment would be of similar importance in 2030.

In the context of the economic crisis, Romanians have higher expectations (compared with the rest of Europe) of their national government to fight the crisis (24% compared with 12% at EU level). Nevertheless, the EU is cited in first place as regards efficient action to fight the effects of the crisis in both Romania (29%) and the EU27 (21%).

Moreover, most European (66%) and Romanian citizens (75%) believe the European Union has enough strength to defend its economic interests in the global economy. The most trusting are the Danish (79% claim to be totally or partially in favour of this statement), Slovaks and Cypriots (78%), Maltese (77%). They are followed by Romanian (75%), Spanish (74%), Polish (74%), Finnish (74%), Luxembourg (73%), Lithuanian (73%), Dutch

(72%), Greek (72%), Bulgarian (72%) and Estonian respondents (70%). At the other end of the scale are ranked the British (48%), Hungarian (59%), Austrian (59%) and Irish (58%).



As priority measures that the Union should take to fight the crisis, support for SMEs and big companies is cited by 32% of Europeans and 24% of Romanians, while investments in infrastructure and in education and research systems is cited by 28% of Europeans and 24% of Romanians.