

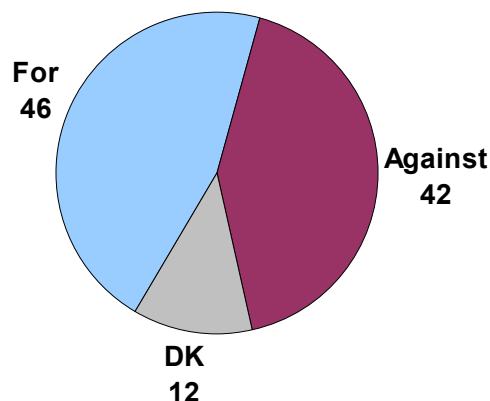


TNS POLLING & SOCIAL FACTS AND FIGURES – EUROBAROMETER

Europeans divided about further EU enlargement

London (UK) February 1st, 2007 – As the fifth round of European Union enlargement includes Bulgaria and Romania, Europeans are divided regarding the support to further enlargement. While 46 percent of EU citizens support such idea (up 1 point since Spring 2006), 42 percent continue to oppose it¹, according to the findings of the latest wave of the Eurobarometer survey, conducted by TNS Polling & Social for the European Commission.

Support to further enlargement of the European Union
EU25 - percentage



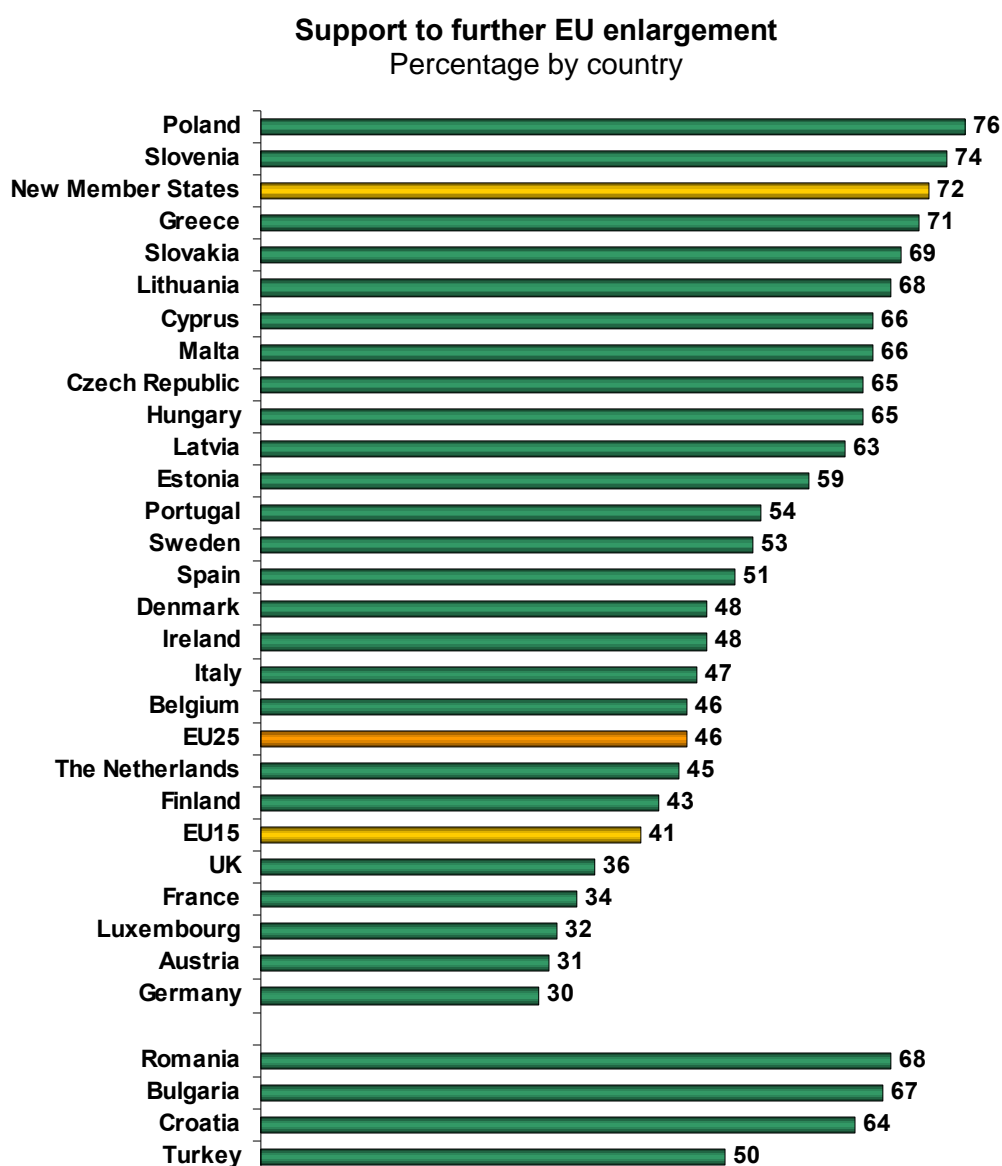
Source: TNS Opinion & Social for the European Commission – Eurobarometer 66

The survey, which interviews nearly 30,000 people across the 25 Member States, the two acceding countries, the two candidate countries and the Turkish Cypriot Community, also shows that Germany, France and UK are strongly opposed to enlargement, with Poland, Slovenia and Greece as the most enthusiastic.

Public opinion on regard to further enlargement continues to show large cleavages between the Member States. New Member States are significantly more positive about the enlargement than in the former EU15 countries (72 percent versus 41 percent

¹ QA25_4. What is your opinion on each of the following statements? Please tell me for each statement, whether you are for it or against it. Option: Further enlargement of the EU to include other countries in future years

respectively). Since Spring 2006, public opinion has shifted significantly within some of the Member States and support is now the strongest in Poland (76 percent, up 4 points), followed by Slovenia (74 percent; up 1 point). Next come Greece (71 percent; up 15 points) and Slovakia (69 percent; up 11 points), which have recorded the largest increases in support. In UK and in Spain, support has fallen considerably (36 percent; down 8 points and 51 percent; down 4 points respectively). Support continues to be the lowest, despite increases, in Germany (30 percent; up 2 points), Austria (31 percent; up 4 points), Luxembourg (32 percent; up 5 points) and France (34 percent; up 3 points).



Source: TNS Opinion for the European Commission – Eurobarometer 66

The results of the study conducted by TNS Opinion also show that European citizens are divided regarding certain economic impacts. Almost seven out of ten interviewees

believe that the enlargement of the EU increases the support for the development of candidate and potential candidate countries (66 percent) and makes the EU the biggest trade player in the world (47 percent). New Member States are more willing to believe this (61 percent versus 44 percent for EU15). On the other hand, the enlargement is seen as a dynamic that increases the settlement of workers coming from future member states (73 percent) and the jobs transferring to countries where labour is cheaper (75 percent).

EU citizens underline positive political aspects of enlargement though perceptions differ significantly between New Member States and EU15. EU25 average indicates that 63 percent of Europeans believe that the enlargement strengthens the EU in general. Once again, this trend is stronger in the New Members States (74 percent) than in the EU15 (60 percent).

Europeans' agreement with different statements - percentages

<i>"EU enlargement..."</i>	EU 25	EU 15	NMS10
<i>...strengthens the EU in general"</i>	63	60	74
<i>...strengthens the EU's role on the international scene"</i>	67	66	77
<i>...ensures peace and stability on the European continent"</i>	67	65	79
<i>...facilitates progress towards a political unification in Europe"</i>	62	60	72
<i>...increases dissensions and political instability in Europe"</i>	46	49	35
<i>...reduces capacity for Europe to speak with a common voice in the world"</i>	37	37	36
<i>...hinders any political unification project in the EU"</i>	34	35	26

Source: TNS Opinion for the European Commission – Eurobarometer 66.2

In social terms, Europeans also see positive and negative impacts of the EU enlargement. Eight in ten respondents think that enlargement facilitates mobility of people like students or businessmen (82 percent), enriches cultural diversity (71 percent) and is a chance to extend the EU high standard of living into Europe (61 percent). All these aspects are more frequently mentioned among the New Member States (89 percent, 81 percent and 74 percent respectively). Conversely, six out of ten European citizens believe that the enlargement increases illegal immigration and 42 percent believes it brings reduction in living standards (this percentage is lower on the New Members where 32 percent hold this belief). Forty-one percent of the EU 25 population consider that the enlargement makes cultural identities and traditions disappear.

The Eurobarometer also inquired about the actions that the EU should follow as a priority. Fighting against poverty, social exclusion and unemployment is in the first place with 43 percent of Europeans standing for this aspect. Coming next to the most often mentioned priority is maintaining peace and security in Europe (27 percent) and fighting against organized crime and drug trafficking (23 percent).

Marita Carballo, Global Head of TNS Polling and Social, comments “European Public Opinion is divided regarding further enlargement of the EU. The Eurobarometer results show discrepancies between New Member States –generally more supportive and more positive about the benefits of this policy- and former EU15 countries. EU oldest members seem to be experiencing some “enlargement fatigue”, notably Germany, France and UK which, in spite of adhering to the political project, are concerned about the economic implications of new inclusions”.

Ends

Note to Editors

About TNS Polling & Social Facts and Figures:

The Eurobarometer report was posted at the following website on December 2006:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/standard_en.htm

The European Commission has made data from this report available to relevant media since it was first published. To the best of our knowledge, the findings in the attached press release have not been released.

These findings are based on TNS Opinion & Social research conducted between March and May 2006. All data discussed in the above announcement is based on the opinions of those surveyed. TNS will only support data which is published, in the context we have presented it and our own interpretation of these findings. We cannot be held responsible for any other interpretation.

As a leading information provider, TNS wants to cast new light on currently debated topics presenting data collected on a European or International basis. TNS Polling & Social Facts & Figures will be published twice a month.

Methodological background:

Fieldwork: 6th of September to the 10th of October 2006

Number of interviews conducted: 29,152 persons interviewed face-to-face in the 25 Member States of the EU, the two acceding countries (Bulgaria and Romania), the two candidate countries (Croatia and Turkey) and the non-government controlled area of Cyprus.

About TNS

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For more information and detailed results on a country-by-country basis, please contact:

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