

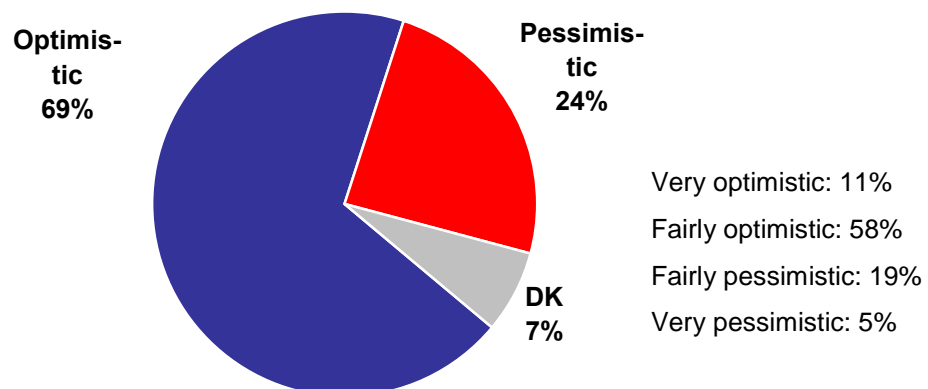


TNS POLLING & SOCIAL FACTS AND FIGURES – EUROBAROMETER

EUROPEANS ENVISAGE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE EU

London (UK), July 19th, 2007 – Almost 7 out of 10 Europeans express optimism (69%: 58% fairly optimistic and 11% very optimistic) with regards to the future of the European Union, with just under a quarter saying they are pessimistic (24%: 19% fairly pessimistic and 5% very pessimistic), according to the findings of the latest Standard Eurobarometer survey conducted by TNS Opinion for the European Commission.

Level of optimism about the future of the EU – EU 27 percentage
Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of the European Union...?



Source: TNS Opinion for the European Commission – Eurobarometer 67

The survey, which interviews nearly 30,000 people across the 27 Member States, the two candidate countries and the Turkish Cypriot Community, also shows that in every single country surveyed, an absolute majority of citizens are optimistic about the future of the EU. This is even the case in the two countries that are not members of the EU, with figures of 53% and 52% seen in Croatia and Turkey respectively. Amongst the Member States, Austria is the country with the lowest proportion of optimists (53%).

Optimism is slightly more prevalent in the 12 new member states, where the average figure is 74% compared to 68% for the EU15 countries. Therefore, it is three of the new member states that record the highest levels of optimism: Poland (82%), Slovenia (80%) and Estonia (77%). The 77% score is also recorded in Denmark.

Views here are very strongly related to whether someone is favourable or not towards the European Union. For example, out of respondents who are of the opinion that their country's membership of the European Union is a good thing almost 9 in 10 (87%) say that they are optimistic about the future of the Union. Of those who think that membership is a bad thing, the level of optimism falls to one third (32%). Hence, it is the same socio-demographic categories who are more favourable to the EU that are also more optimistic about its future: the young and the most educated.

Level of optimism about the future of the EU – percentage per country

	Optimistic	Pessimistic	DK	Very optimistic	Fairly optimistic	Fairly pessimistic	Very pessimistic
EU 27	69%	24%	7%	11%	58%	19%	5%
New Member States 12	74%	18%	8%	13%	61%	15%	3%
EU 15	68%	25%	7%	10%	58%	20%	5%
Poland	82%	10%	8%	14%	68%	9%	1%
Slovenia	80%	18%	2%	15%	65%	16%	2%
Denmark	77%	19%	4%	17%	60%	16%	3%
Estonia	77%	18%	5%	9%	68%	16%	2%
Germany	75%	19%	6%	13%	62%	16%	3%
Ireland	75%	12%	13%	15%	60%	8%	4%
The Netherlands	75%	22%	3%	5%	70%	20%	2%
Romania	75%	14%	11%	18%	57%	12%	2%
Slovakia	75%	22%	3%	12%	63%	19%	3%
Spain	74%	15%	11%	14%	60%	13%	2%
Lithuania	74%	18%	8%	13%	61%	16%	2%
Belgium	73%	23%	4%	7%	66%	19%	4%
Cyprus	70%	20%	10%	16%	54%	14%	6%
Luxembourg	69%	27%	4%	13%	56%	23%	4%
Malta	69%	22%	9%	20%	49%	15%	7%
Sweden	69%	25%	6%	9%	60%	21%	4%
Italy	68%	24%	8%	10%	58%	19%	5%
Greece	67%	32%	1%	14%	53%	23%	9%
Bulgaria	66%	19%	15%	10%	56%	17%	2%
Czech Republic	66%	31%	3%	10%	56%	27%	4%
France	61%	35%	4%	5%	56%	29%	6%
Finland	61%	36%	3%	4%	57%	28%	8%
Turkish Cypriot Community	60%	29%	11%	24%	36%	20%	9%
Latvia	60%	35%	5%	7%	53%	31%	4%
Hungary	58%	36%	6%	6%	52%	29%	7%
Portugal	57%	32%	11%	13%	44%	26%	6%
UK	57%	33%	10%	9%	48%	23%	10%
Austria	53%	38%	9%	8%	45%	29%	9%
Croatia	53%	41%	6%	11%	42%	29%	12%
Turkey	52%	28%	20%	24%	28%	15%	13%

Source: TNS Opinion for the European Commission – Eurobarometer 67

The general optimism of citizens regarding the future of the EU is reflected in their opinions on how the Union will evolve in specific areas. Respondents were asked whether they considered a series of statements would probably or probably not come to pass.

On these four topics, it is worth noting that we do not observe major differences in opinions between the 12 new Member States and the "EU15" Member States.

Agreement with four predictions about the EU in 50 years

For each of the following, please tell me if according to you, in 50 years from now, the European Union...?

	EU27	EU15	NMS12
Will be a leading diplomatic power in the world	61%	63%	55%
Will have its own army	56%	57%	56%
Will have its own president directly elected by European citizens	51%	53%	46%
Will only be a secondary economic power	31%	32%	27%

Source: TNS Opinion for the European Commission – Eurobarometer 67

Results show that over 6 in 10 (61%) say that they think that the EU will be a leading diplomatic power in the world. Under a quarter disagree (22%), while 17% 'don't know'. There are no states where the average level of agreement is exceeded by a spectacular amount, although over 7 in 10 Germans (72%) and Greeks (71%) foresee the EU being a major diplomatic player in 50 years' time. However, there are three countries where this forms the minority view: Finland (44% vs. 47%), Slovenia (42% vs. 45%) and Croatia (37% vs. 46% probably not). In Latvia, opinions are even (40% vs. 40% and 20% of 'don't know' answers).

Over half (56%) Europeans think the EU will have its own army. Just over a quarter (26%) disagree, with 18% unable to form an opinion. Positive answers are the most prevalent in Cyprus (73%) and Greece (66%) and is in fact more common than the contrary view in all countries surveyed. In many countries, however, citizens struggle to evaluate the idea of an EU army, with very high 'don't know rates' in Bulgaria, Malta (both 42%), Romania (39%), Ireland (34%). In general, this type of response is higher in the NMS12 countries (25%) than in the EU15 (16%). In Turkey, the recorded figure is 44%.

In the sphere of the EU's internal politics, 51% feel that, at some point, over the next half a century the EU will have its own directly elected President. 30% say that this will probably not come to pass, with 19% unable to say one way or the other. The belief that this will happen is most widespread in Greece (71%). Conversely, scepticism runs high in the Nordic countries and the Netherlands: Those saying that they do not anticipate a directly elected President account for 60% in the Netherlands, 55% in Denmark and Finland and 51% in Sweden.

Finally, on the matter of the economy, 49% do not think that in 50 years the EU will only be a secondary economic power, with 31% agreeing and 20% unable to answer. The countries showing

the most optimism on the EU's future economic prospects are the Netherlands (69% 'probably not'), Germany (68%) and Sweden (64%). We note that these are all countries where the national economic situation is well-perceived. Conversely, the highest levels of scepticism exist in Cyprus (56% 'probably') despite the fact that the vast majority of Cypriots consider the domestic economy to currently be functioning well. High levels of scepticism about the EU's economic future are also seen in Greece (48%), Slovenia and UK (both 45%), Finland (41%) and Denmark (40%).

Marita Carballo, Global Head of TNS Polling & Social, comments: "Fifty years after the Treaty of Rome, the European project has accomplished great achievements and is expected to continue to do so in the future, as shown by the levels of optimism recorded by the Eurobarometer survey amongst Europeans, who believe the EU will consolidate its progress both in the economic and political fields in the next five decades".

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Note to Editors

About TNS Polling & Social Facts and Figures:

The Eurobarometer report was posted at the following website on June 2007:
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_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 research conducted between April and May 2007. 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: 10th of April to the 15th of May 2007

Number of interviews conducted: 29,222 persons interviewed face-to-face in the 27 Member States of the EU, the two candidate countries (Croatia and Turkey) and the non-government controlled area of Cyprus.

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

Marita Carballo, Global Head of TNS Polling & Social

Tel: +44 (0) 7739 856 902 or email: marita.carballo@tns-global.com

Leendert de Voogd, Managing Director, TNS Opinion

Tel: +32 (0) 2 66 118 66 or email: leendert.devoogd@tns-opinion.com

Stuart Ridsdale, International PR Manager, TNS

Tel: +44 (0) 208 967 4787 or email: stuart.ridsdale@tns-global.com

Liz Kearney / Emily Luscombe, Camargue

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7636 7366 or email: ekearney@camarguepr.com