

Reading G Dreaming of Europe

Dominique Moïsi (1999)

Just as the world of the nineteenth century came to a close with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the war in Kosovo – Europe's first major war since 1945 – sadly marks the continent's entrance into the twenty-first century. This new era begins not only in the same way as the previous one, but more or less in the same place, as if Europe were doomed to reenact one tragic, cursed plot.

The war in Kosovo, which is taking place a mere two-hour flight away for most Europeans, is a most unsettling and humiliating reality. The return of war to the European continent – even if it is in the Balkans and not in our civilized, democratic, united realm – makes the fall of the European Commission in March seem like a minor incident. How can Europe present itself to the world as the harbinger of a universal message, a forward-looking 'European dream', amid the eerily familiar scenes of terrified refugees fleeing Kosovo and the wail of air raid sirens over Belgrade? Some progress has been made: The members of the European Union (EU) are much closer to each other than they

were eight years ago, when war first broke out in the former Yugoslavia. And the West is presenting a united front in Kosovo under the umbrella of NATO. Nevertheless, it is difficult to speak of Europe's progress and be enthusiastic about the quasi-miraculous launching of the euro when Europe is once again a continent at war with itself.

Even as the Cold War has given way to the age of globalization, Europeans have continued to think about themselves and the future of the EU in ways better suited to the past. Their self-image seems frozen in a Cold War-era mindset, when European unity had value only as a defensive hedge against the looming threat of Soviet aggression and the preeminence of the American dollar. European politicians have been much slower to grasp the rules of globalization than their counterparts in business and finance, who understand well the new limits of national power. The idea of a 'United States of Europe' may be laughable, but no more so than the idea of a divided Europe prospering in the global age.

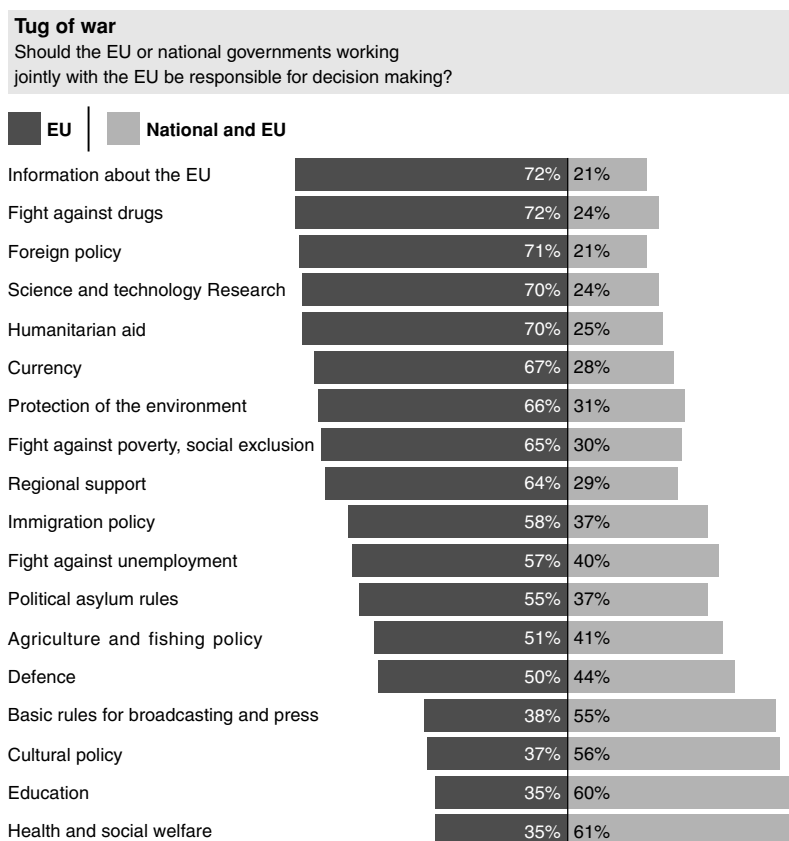
And so, in addition to the three ambitious internal goals that the EU has set for itself – monetary union, institutional reform, and enlargement – Europe faces more fundamental challenges. Against the complex and sometimes chaotic backdrop of globalization, Europe must rethink its notions of sovereignty, space, and perhaps most importantly, of identity. This task has enormous implications not only for how Europeans perceive the EU but also for how they understand their relationship with the United States.

Soul searching

Can national sovereignty still have meaning in a globalized, interdependent world? Europe may dream of becoming a world power in traditional terms, but it cannot go back to what it was at the outbreak of the First World War. Exponential population growth in other parts of the world is shrinking Europe, decreasing the percentage of the global population that calls itself European. And the very notion of power has been ineluctably transformed. As entrepreneurs and civil society have taken on new and important roles, the role of the state has declined; in fiscal terms, for instance, Europe's national governments have had to accept that they are no longer in control of monetary flux. Of course, not all countries have been transformed in the same way and according to the same time line – a major obstacle the EU will have to confront. Countries may be eager to surrender elements of their sovereignty that have already been compromised, but they will likely cling to those that have proved resistant to globalization. Germany, for example, the most monetarily sovereign of all the European

nations, showed enormous initial reluctance to abandoning its national currency.

In terms of security, the traditional notion of sovereignty does not fully correspond to the reality of a Europe whose main guarantor of peace and stability remains the United States through NATO, as seen in both Bosnia and Kosovo. What kind of sovereignty has Europe achieved when that sovereignty is not accompanied by ultimate responsibility? When someone else is in command of the control room, it often creates frustration and encourages irresponsibility; if the war in Kosovo continues, the question remains whether Europeans will ultimately resent an American imposition on their territory. The irony is that the Europeans would be perfectly capable of dealing with a conflict such as Kosovo, both militarily and diplomatically, if only they had the guts and the will to do so and did not espouse the American concept of zero casualties.



Source: *Eurobarometer 50*

Note: Percentage of respondents who answered 'don't know' not shown.

The second major challenge confronting Europe is that of reconceiving its sense of space. Like a rapidly growing child, Europe does not know where its own body begins and ends. Accordingly, the continent can often seem heavy and even clumsy, gracelessly overthrowing objects – such as potential EU applicants – in its path. The EU's dismissive dealings with Turkey are a prime example. Not only did the EU reject the Turkish bid for membership, but it classified Turkey in a dunce-like category of its own, behind weaker applicants such as Bulgaria and Slovakia. The snub only furthered the unfortunate impression first seen in Bosnia, and now in Kosovo, that Islam is not welcome on the European continent. Turkey's desperate and futile attempt to cling to its Kemalist political model, which is neither sufficiently democratic nor religiously tolerant enough for European tastes, combined with its questionable human rights record and chronic political instability, makes it a less-than-desirable potential addition to the EU. But alienating Turkey is an even less-satisfactory option. Turkey is not only Western, it is wholly European; Europe seems to have forgotten that Turkey has long been a key player in its history, especially in the nineteenth century.

Europe has also had difficulty accommodating Russia, a country that is undeniably part of the European space, both historically and culturally. When Russia became a modern state, it chose to be Western. Long before that, Russia was the third Rome of Christianity and the last rampart of Europe at the frontiers of Asia and Islam. But despite these obvious links, Europe maintains a relationship with Russia that is dialectical at best and has been even more ambiguous since Russia's descent into chaos.

In the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union, the West saw only two alternatives in dealing with Russia: 'Engage if we can, contain if we must.' Today, as NATO expands eastward, Russia is in no condition to be engaged, but it should not be simply contained or ignored. Europe, and indeed, the West at large, must define a firm political course toward Russia that will create a more open and stable nation. Nothing would be more dangerous for Europe than to add lazy and anachronistic Cold War reflexes to genuine and selfish indifference.

Beyond the challenges of redefining sovereignty and space lies the crucial issue of forging a new European identity. Europe has become a complex, hybrid construction – federal (or at least federalist) when it comes to monetary policy, but national (or at best intergovernmental) in its foreign and security policies. It is easier to say with assurance that Europe will have a common currency in 2002 than to assume it will ever have a common Middle East policy. If the EU creates a European identity, it does so largely in spite of itself; neither the charisma of the European

Commission nor the vibrant democratic nature of Europe's institutions inspire citizens. The increased self-confidence of the European Parliament is welcome news, but it has yet to be tested; the parliamentary elections of June 1999 should prove telling.

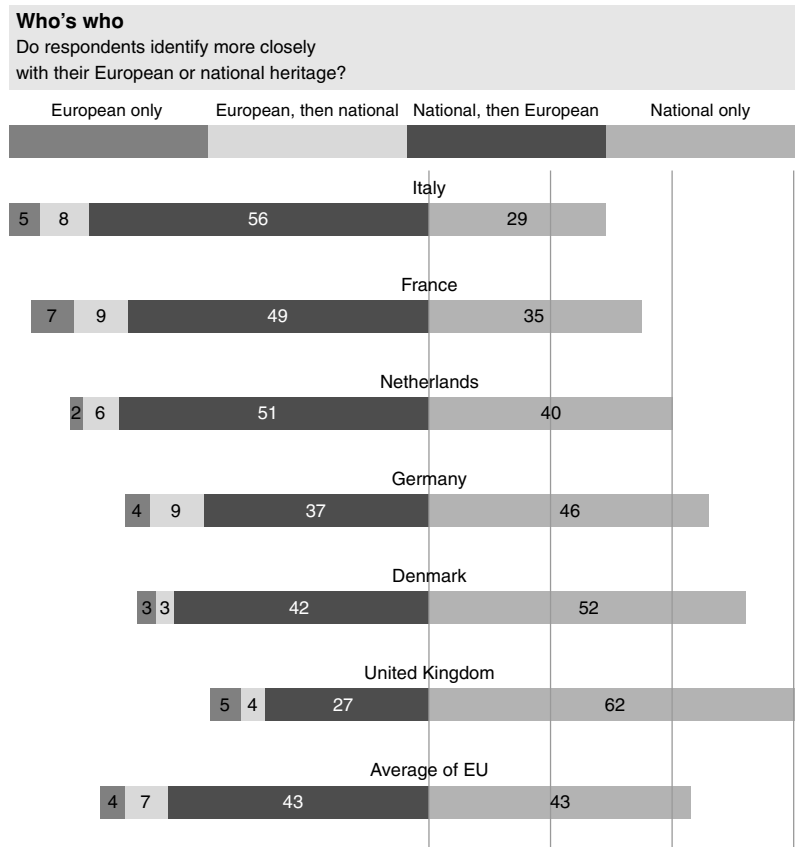
So how will Europeans progress toward a common identity? The process can only begin once each country agrees to sacrifice part of its individuality on the altar of Europe. The Germans, for example, must get beyond their reluctance to use force and become comfortable with the notion that military power is an essential ingredient of national strength. For the French and British, such sacrifice means adopting new attitudes toward the United States that go beyond reflexive criticism from Paris and knee-jerk support from London.

At the same time that it struggles to balance elements of federalism and nationalism, Europe will see its regions take on increased responsibility for issues such as finance and education. This multi-layered construct will have a major impact on Europeans: Like the union they live in, they, too, will possess local, national, and continental identities. In the Europe of tomorrow, one will be simultaneously Scottish, British, and European; Breton, French, and European; or Catalan, Spanish, and European.

Acknowledging these multiple identities could be a source of strength and creativity for Europeans. To negate them in favor of a monolithic identity, as do those in France who cling to the sanctity of the republic, is to fight a losing battle. Diversity has always been a key element of Europe's greatness, and in today's global world that diversity should be enlarged, reinforced, and celebrated. The movie *Elizabeth*, which was made in England by a director of Indian origins, proves that a confluence of cultures can make for an extraordinarily original and profound artistic vision. Similarly, an Algerian actor named Smaim has transformed the way Molière is being performed in France. One day, no doubt, a French director from the Maghreb will create a movie about the French Revolution that transforms the way the French look at their past and themselves.

The euro will doubtless contribute to the evolution of European identity, although the change may be slower to materialize than its proponents would like. The impact of the euro goes far deeper than that of mere currency; it has powerful psychological and emotional dimensions as well, particularly for the younger generation. Young people, who are already traveling from country to country without having to show identification, are impatiently awaiting the euro, wondering why they must continue to change money in a borderless continent. In France, very young children understood the value of the new currency in relation to the franc as soon as it was

introduced, despite the complex calculations necessary to convert from one to the other. They knew instinctively that this was to be their currency as Europeans, a realization prompted in part by an effective school-based campaign. Their parents, however, are proving to be much slower at getting used to the idea. To the older generation, the euro remains too abstract and distant to be meaningful.



Source: Eurobarometer 50

Note: Percentage of respondents who answered 'don't know' not shown.

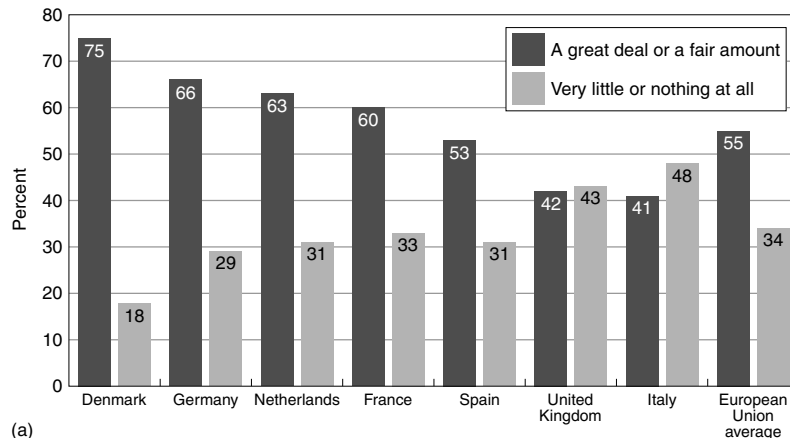
Three's company

It would probably take a Pirandello to do justice to the question of what the EU really means to its various members. Any attempt at such analysis risks falling prey to clichéd stereotypes and prejudices. Perhaps the most interesting dimension is the evolutionary one: How have Europe's 'Big Three' (England, France, and Germany) changed in their approaches toward and perceptions of Europe?

In the eyes of the French, it is Germany that has changed most radically. For 40 years or so, Europe and NATO protected Germans from both themselves and the ghosts of their past. Much like the Japanese in the 1970s and 1980s, the Germans were traditionally proud of their economic performance but insecure about their national character and consequently eager to be enveloped into the European fold. Today, however, Germans are less satisfied with their performance but, with the coming to power of a new generation that has not known the horrors of the Second World War, they are much happier and more secure with who they are. Europe is no longer a protection against their past but rather a natural extension of themselves. They have learned that by being more German, they will not become less European, but rather more normal and natural Europeans. 'Agenda 2000', which

Coming together

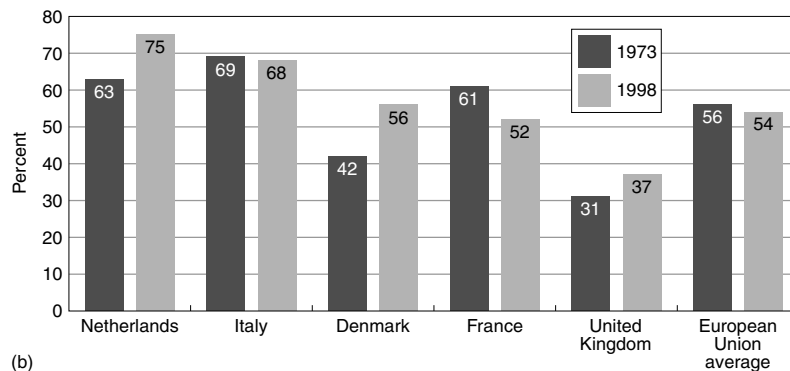
How much has European integration achieved during the past 50 years?



(a)

Satisfaction guaranteed

Percent saying EEC/EU membership is 'a good thing' in Autumn 1973 and Autumn 1998



(b)

Source: *Eurobarometer 50*

Note: 1973 results for Great Britain only. European Union (9) reflects results of same 9 countries of the EEC polled in 1973.

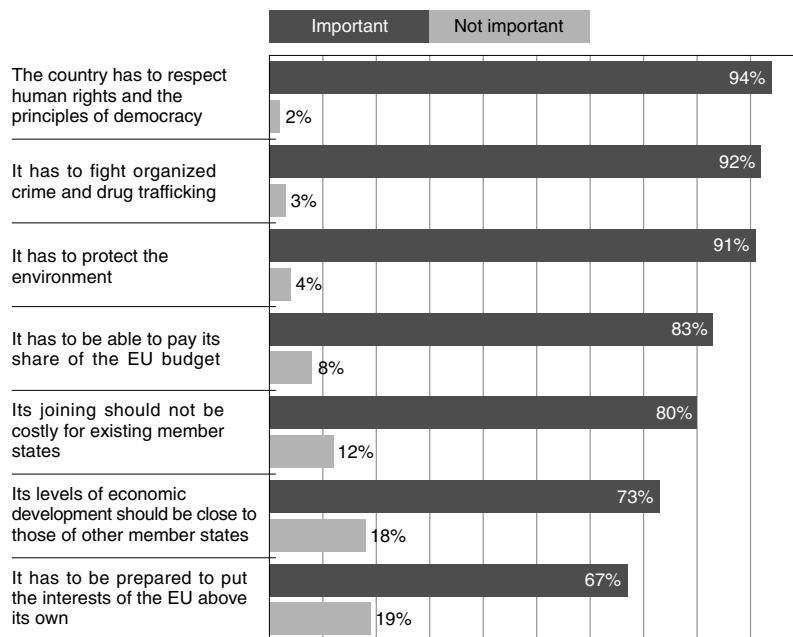
details the main challenges facing the EU, will doubtless contribute to the creation of a Germany that actively asserts its self-interests, much like France does.

Recent shakeups on the political scene also point to a more confident, pro-European Germany. The very difficult start of the newly elected Schroeder government was reminiscent of the shaky beginnings of France's pink-red coalition in 1981, with its combination of inexperience, after 23 years in the opposition, and leftist ideology. The abrupt departure of Oskar Lafontaine, Schroeder's powerful – and fiercely leftist – minister of finance, worried some observers that a full-fledged crisis was imminent. But Lafontaine's resignation was an isolated incident that should not shake anyone's confidence in Germany's stability. The new Berlin Republic will be as democratic and European as the Republic of Bonn, if not more so.

Perhaps the most spectacular change in attitudes and policy toward Europe has taken place in Tony Blair's Great Britain. Blair's policies may still be unclear or superficial, his actions unfocused, and the timetable uncertain, but the direction is clear and irreversible: 'Destination Europe', the EU's catchphrase for unification, represents a fundamental change in both the way the British perceive themselves in the world and in their

Enlarged and in charge

Importance of EU-enlargement criteria



Source: *Eurobarometer 50*

Note: Percentage of respondents who answered 'don't know' not shown.

relation to the continent. For nearly 50 years, the British saw in their special relationship with the United States what the French saw in Europe: a way to increase their influence. But now France and Great Britain have worked out a mutual surrender of sorts. The French have accepted that there is no good alternative to NATO. The British have realized that they have no choice but to embrace Europe.

The devolution of Scotland will also push the British toward a more European orientation; a 'disunited kingdom' needs Europe more than ever.

Much like France and Germany, the British will slowly recognize that there is no essential contradiction between being English and being European. London has already crossed the Channel. Some British industrialists, such as John Weston, the head of British Aerospace, may be sending the wrong message by pitting shareholders' interests against those of the nation; Weston recently ruffled European feathers with his eleventh-hour decision to merge British Aerospace with British defence giant GEC-Marconi rather than with Dasa, the German arm of DaimlerChrysler. Yet public-opinion polls clearly indicate that with a combination of resignation and hope, the British are increasingly accepting that their future is in Europe and that the euro will one day be their currency.

Of the Big Three, the country that has changed the least in its perception of Europe may be France. For Paris, Europe remains what it has always been: the ultimate yardstick by which to measure the success or the failure of a policy. France's connection to Europe is its only hope of one day escaping American dominance and building a multipolar world; it is also the best means of prompting domestic reform. Confronted with huge stumbling blocks and rigidity, France sees in Europe the unique opportunity to impose the kinds of long overdue political and economic reforms that are difficult to enact without some form of external pressure.

If something is slowly changing in the French attitude toward Europe, it is France's commitment to its marriage of convenience with Germany. Paris has begun to recognize that although there is no alternative to the Franco-German pairing, it is no longer a sure thing. It is too early to say whether a 'Club of Three' with Great Britain will replace the traditional 'Club of Two', but such an institutional dialogue, with its high-level networking, is in the making and is already starting to have an influence. The three key European players have rarely been so close to each other in their centrist, socioeconomic visions.

What about the other members of the European Club? For Italy, Europe remains a source of identity, legitimacy, and pride. Italy is proud of its economic performance and the vitality of its civil

society, but uncertain of its political identity. Its position as a member of Europe's core group in monetary, economic, and political terms is therefore crucial and has had a calming effect on the Italian peninsula, reducing the temptation to make irrational socioeconomic choices. Former Italian prime minister Romano Prodi's accession to the presidency of the European Commission will only further reinforce Italy's European orientation.

In the case of more recent EU members, joining Europe was a symbol of a renewed democratic legitimacy. Today, no one would question the solidity, stability, or the vibrant modernity of a country such as Spain or, to a lesser degree, Portugal – an observation that would have been laughable 20 years ago. The system works. It is even working for countries that are not yet members of the EU, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland. Their accession calendar may be slowing down, but they already behave as if they were members of the club.

Perchance to dream

One of the most difficult challenges facing the EU today, especially since the beginning of the war in Kosovo, is that of redefining itself in relation to the United States. America needs a more confident Europe; the more self-confident Europe is, the more balanced and healthy the transatlantic relationship will become. Much of the lingering anti-Americanism that exists in Europe, particularly in France, can be blamed on the continent's inferiority complex. Assuming Europe gets through the war in Kosovo without too much loss of self-esteem, the euro will ultimately play an important role in boosting the continent's self-image. But even if the euro eventually can challenge the pre-eminence of the dollar, it is by no means an immediate cure-all. We may all be feeling a bit more European since the euro debuted in January 1999. But the euro will not, for instance, enable the European film industry to compete with Hollywood.

In the past, Europe and the United States were united by a common nightmare: the Soviet Union. Today, they have to develop common dreams. For these, they might look to the world of science, where the quest to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge can be viewed in human, and not national, terms. Working together, Europe and the United States can explore both the infinitely vast – the reaches of space – and the infinitely small – the intricate universe of the human brain or the minute workings of subatomic particles. Such common dreams imply shared responsibilities and would force Europeans and Americans to work and think together in ways that could only cement their political bonds.

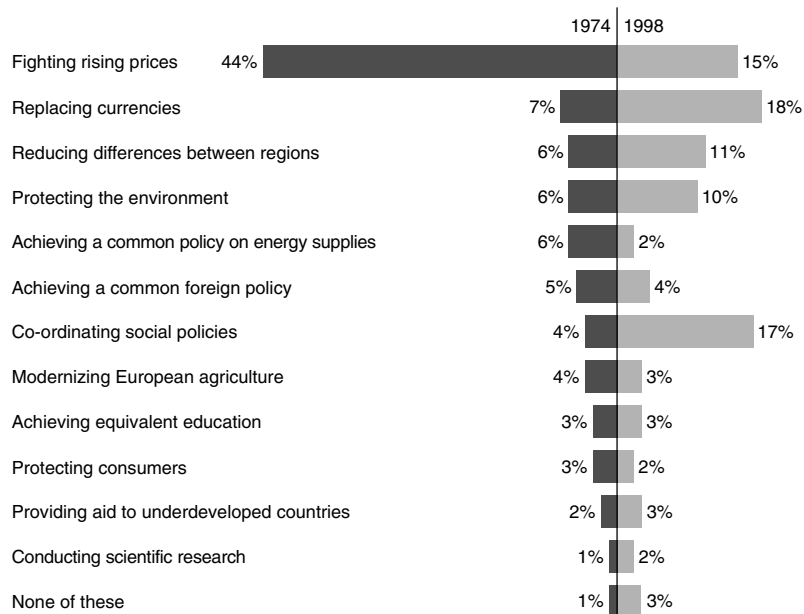
Europe and the United States will also have to find a new balance in their relationship. They each must understand that

they have a lot to learn from the other beyond the stereotypes and prejudices they have developed as allies, partners and rivals. Beginning with Alexis de Tocqueville, Europeans have traditionally seen one primary lesson to be learned from America: that of democracy, with its unique equilibrium between the various branches of government and its model of transparency and accountability. Historically, America has also been Europe's saviour and guarantor; many Europeans continue to look to America as an insurance policy against the uncertainties of the future, from the return of a xenophobic and authoritarian Russia and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to the violence of ethnic fragmentation. Although Washington is far from perfect, a world without America would no doubt be a much more dangerous and messy place.

Beyond these traditional roles, however, America can provide valuable socio-economic lessons to Europe, especially in terms of handling unemployment. The much-discussed Third Way is an attempt to combine America's free market traditions, with their emphasis on flexibility, inventiveness, and risk-taking, with European social-democratic principles.

Bumps on the road

Most important problems for the EU in 1974 and 1998



Source: *Eurobarometer 50*

Note: 1974 figures reflect survey of 9 nations comprising the European Economic Community; 1998 figures reflect survey of 15 nations comprising the European Union. Percentage of respondents who answered 'don't know' not shown.

America must also recognize what it can learn from Europe. Whatever the subtle differences between various Centre-Left European governments, there is an enviable European model that combines economic growth with social concern. The Asian crisis put an end – at least for now – to the largely artificial debate between Western and Asian values by demonstrating the need for democratic accountability to ensure stable economic growth. Asia's fall from grace has reinforced the European notion that although the European system may not be the most dynamic, ultimately it remains the most fair and stable. The European model shows that even in a global age, the economic logic of the market alone cannot answer all the questions raised by globalization. In short, a world market does not create a world community. Ultimately, a new equilibrium needs to be forged between the individual and the community that may fundamentally transform the very concept of politics.

The United States will continue to be the only true global superpower as long as it possesses all the currencies of power, both hard and soft. Although America may be contested in its 'hard' role as security benefactor, and derided in the person of its president, it has an unchallenged monopoly on the 'soft' power of dreams. In Kosovo today, Slobodan Milosevic is not only fighting against NATO; he is implicitly fighting against Steven Spielberg. American war movies such as *Schindler's List* and *Saving Private Ryan* stir up collective memory and sound a call for action as powerful as that of the most vocal and persuasive hawk. In a world craving youth and modernity, the very people who denounce America's unilateral power still think and dream America. Walt Disney's famous maxim —'If you can dream it, you can do it' – may accurately reflect the philosophy behind the euro, but the euro alone does not and will not constitute a healthy European dream. And the return of war to the continent may do more to inspire nightmares than encourage dreaming.

The idea of Europe has long been sold to Europeans as their best protection against the ruinous ghosts of past wars or, during the Cold War, against the lurking Soviet threat. Today, Europe is still presented as a kind of protective shield, but now it is held up as a safeguard against future troubles. Nevertheless, one day, in a world made more balanced by the euro, Europeans will become secure enough that they no longer need to define themselves against the United States. They will instead define themselves with the United States, in a joint effort to make the world safer and better.

The new European identity is slowly emerging. The process will be slow and necessarily confused, and its success will depend in part on our ability to define a positive message – a new European dream – to replace the negative ones of the past. Europeans must

adapt John F. Kennedy's lesson and ask not what Europe can do for them, but what Europe can do for the world. The first step may lie in our own Balkan backyard, where we are faced with a regional battle with universal stakes. Europe must stand up for common decency and make a unified statement against the unchecked use of violence to achieve political ends. It is only by taking this kind of decisive action – by articulating what we believe in and where we are headed together – that the contours of a new Europe will begin to take shape.

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Source: 'Dreaming of Europe', *Foreign Policy*, vol.115, Summer 1999, pp.44–59.

Reading H Goodbye to all that?

Tony Judt (1996)

The essence of the Franco–German condominium around which Western Europe was built lay in a mutually convenient arrangement: that the Germans would have the economic means and the French would retain the political initiative. In the very first years, of course, the Germans had not yet acquired their present wealth and French predominance was real. But from the mid-1950s this was no longer true; thereafter France's hegemony in West European affairs rested upon a nuclear weapon that the country could not use, an army that it could not deploy within the continent itself, and an international political standing derived largely from the self-interested magnanimity of the three victorious Powers at the end of the war. The unspoken premise of France's relations with West Germany was this: you pretend not to be powerful and we'll pretend not to notice that you are.

Franco–German relations in the 1960s and '70s resembled nothing so much as those of Austria and Prussia in the early nineteenth century. The Austrians saw no great danger, and some advantage, in Prussia's becoming rich and influential among the industrializing north Germans, so long as the Habsburgs were recognized as the senior partner in German-speaking Europe and respected accordingly. By the time they realized that formal seniority was an empty honor and that Prussian prosperity carried with it both the desire for extended influence and the capacity to enforce that desire, it was too late: defeated and then patronized, the Austrians were a secondary power with no role inside a henceforth united Germany. Of course, there is no question of France suffering yet another (military) defeat at German hands, but in all other respects the analogy is revealing.

Thus 1989, with the collapse of the Iron Curtain and the creation of a Germany far larger and wealthier than France, brought to an end a unique period in French diplomatic history. From 1951 to 1989 France has enjoyed that special freedom of action – and an accompanying illusion of real power – that comes from being allied to a strong but unthreatening neighbor and being, for the first time in centuries, well distanced from the only possible threat to its security, far to the east. What this easy political primacy hid from most French eyes was the steady decline in France's real presence in Europe.

One economic datum may illustrate the point. In 1990 a chart of French economic influence (measured by the reciprocal importance of its trade with other countries) would show that the presence of France was limited to the states in the Europe of Nine – that is to say, the original Six plus Britain, Ireland, and Denmark. Germany, in contrast, already encompassed within its range of economic influence not only the Europe of Fifteen but also most of the rest of the continent to the south and east. The significance of this is clear. Between 1951 and 1990 France did little more than stand its ground while the German economy expanded across the whole continent. France had become a regional power, confined to Europe's western edge; Germany, even before unification, was once again the great power of Europe. ...

Since 1989 there has been a return of memory and with it, and benefiting from it, a revival of the national units that framed and shaped that memory and give meaning to the collective past. This process threatens to undermine and substitute for the inadequacies of the Europe-without-a-past. Thus for many years, in France or Germany, nationalist rhetoric was discredited by its close association with the memory and language of Nazism or the Pétain regime ('Travail, Famille, Patrie'). This self-censure has all but disappeared except among an older generation of left-wing intellectuals, nowadays largely ignored. After two decades during which identification with Europe seemed to be replacing association with a nation, 'Euro-barometer' opinion polls are suggesting a reverse trend. In Germany, Denmark, Spain, Portugal and the U.K. a majority or near majority of those asked in 1994 saw themselves in the coming years as identifying *uniquely* with their own nation.

Why is this? In the first place, 'Europe' is too large and too nebulous a concept around which to forge any convincing human community. And it is not psychologically realistic to posit, along lines favored by the German writer Jürgen Habermas, a local and supranational duality of communities around which allegiances may form, prudently shorn of the dangerous emphasis on 'identity' associated with the historical

national unit. It does not work. It is also an echo of the reductivist fallacy, the curiously nineteenth-century belief shared by classical economists and Marxists alike, that social and political institutions and affinities naturally and necessarily follow economic ones. There is no doubt that production, commerce, and finance are now organized globally, and that continental, interregional organisms are the likely future of European economic life. But we have no good reason to believe that other aspects of human existence can or should follow suit. Ever more harmonized trading networks and empire-wide commercial links did nothing to bind together the centrifugal components of late-nineteenth-century Austria-Hungary.

Within the last two generations Western Europeans have lost or abandoned many of the traditional integrative institutions of modern public life. The role of family, church, school, or army is negligible today in most western countries, when compared to the situation half a century ago. Political parties and trade unions no longer perform the organizational and pedagogic function they served in Europe for more than a century. At the same time that economic pressures are tempting governments to reduce the acquired benefits of public welfare, the familiar building blocks of what the French call *solidarité* are dropping away. It may well be that the nation – with the community of memory that it represents and the state that embodies it, with its familiar and appropriately scaled frame – is the only remaining, as well as the best-adapted, source of collective and communal identification. Given the dramatic collapse of the great abstract universal goals of the Socialist utopia, and the untenable promise of an ever larger *and* ever more prosperous continental union, the virtues of a social unit based on geographical propinquity and rooted in the past rather than the future have perhaps been under-stated. In any case, more attention to the virtues of the nation and its state on the part of respectable politicians (and, by contrast, less attention to the wonders of ‘Europe’) might help retrieve it from the arms of its more extremist suitors.

One way or another, the state is likely to be needed in the future. The conventional nation-state is going to be much sought after in the next few years to assist in the preservation of the social fabric, whether by coercion or redistributive intervention, however unpopular this may be in the privileged ‘super-regions.’ It is not only in former Communist states that the self-regulating virtues of the unrestricted market appear to have been over-sung. The much-maligned ‘interventionist state’ may have been prematurely consigned to the dustbin of history; it might be better not to partition, decentralize, or

reduce its capacities too much and too soon. The years after World War II saw the dramatic restoration of the social and economic functions of nation-states in Western Europe, and this process was aided by the 'Europeanizing' of their problems; the years after 1989 will require a rehabilitation of the nation-state's political and cultural credibility if Europe itself is to remain afloat.¹

It is not, after all, as though the 'nation-state' were an ancient political form that has had its day. It is, in fact, the most modern of political institutions. Even the political institutions of long-established countries such as France or Britain or the Netherlands acquired their modern function and political shape only in the course of the nineteenth century. And the nation-state is peculiarly well adapted to the modern need for civic responsibility and active and effective political participation. Subnational regions or 'micro-states' inevitably look beyond their frontiers for allies and assistance to enable them to achieve objectives for which they lack domestic resources. Or they are vulnerable to absorption by a larger, aggressive, expanding neighboring country. Oversized transnational units suffer a perennial 'democratic deficit' – which is precisely the charge to which the European Union is now exposed and to which it will remain especially susceptible. They may or may not function well in the administration of things, but when it comes to governing people they are too large, too distant, and therefore inevitably break up into their constituent parts. It is as well to ensure that those parts have not been weakened beyond repair.

The gravest weakness of the nation-state itself is its implicitly exclusive quality: France for the French, etc. Historically, this characteristic defect has been the source of its decline. Multinational states (Yugoslavia, Belgium) break apart; homogenous single-nation states (Poland, Portugal) are the uncommon (sometimes tragic) product of history and cannot be invented; 'stateless' minorities everywhere are weak or persecuted and seek their own territory, of necessity at someone else's expense. If 'Europe' were indeed a solution to this dilemma – if the free movement of peoples, abolition of frontiers, and intermixing of nations could really be achieved – it would certainly be worth almost any price in institutional overkill and economic inequality. If 'Europe' now means a true, definitively cosmopolitan solution to the parochial provincialism and dangerously exclusivist cultures of nation-states, then it would be a desirable goal, for all its imperfections.

Unfortunately, this is not the case. Far from opening up, 'Europe' since 1989 has been steadily if somewhat furtively

engaged in closing in upon itself. For the reasons I have suggested, the European Union cannot realistically promise its members a future as secure and as prosperous as its past. The unique combination of circumstances that prevailed in the Community's early years has passed and will not come again. It is even less likely that this same Union will open itself to new and poorer members on anything like the terms hitherto accorded. The recently touted German idea of a small inner core of European states moving at full speed toward integration and setting demanding macro-economic criteria for membership in their club is merely the latest evidence that the future of Europe will be on German terms or not at all.

¹For the argument that the European Community came into being, functionally speaking, in order to save the domestic economies of its members, see Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1992).

Source: Judt, T. (1996) *A Grand Illusion? An Essay on Europe*, London, Penguin, pp.86–88, 118–123.

Reading I Eurobarometer 62 – public opinion in the European Union

Being a member of the European Union today

European Union membership: a good thing?

– The majority of European citizens are pleased that their country is a member of the European Union –

[...] Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)'s membership of the European Union is ...? – a good thing – a bad thing – neither good nor bad.

After the accession of 10 new Member States to the European Union, the views of citizens concerning membership of the European Union have evolved positively. More than half of the people interviewed consider today that European Union membership is a good thing for their country (56%), which represents a significant increase of 8 points since the last survey six months ago. Such results have not been seen since 1995.

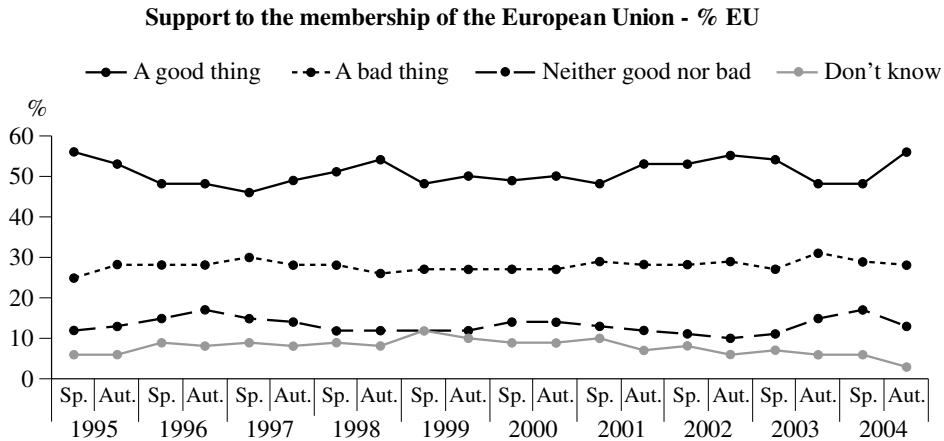


Figure 1 Support to the membership of the European Union – % EU

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.7

However, a detailed analysis of the results, reveals a less clear-cut situation:

- First, the view that European Union membership is a good thing for their country is mainly to be found among citizens of the old Member States, being expressed notably by 85% of respondents in Luxembourg and more than 70% of respondents in Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain.
- At the same time, it seems to be too early for citizens of the new Member States to judge the impact of being a member of the European Union. Indeed the number of 'neutral' answers is particularly high in those countries. That is in particular the case of more than 40% of respondents in Latvia and the Czech Republic, but also in Slovenia, Slovakia and Poland.

It is to be noted that, in terms of support, the United Kingdom is in 25th place (see overleaf).

The benefits of belonging to the European Union

– A strong increase in the perceived benefits –

[...] Taking everything into consideration, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?

If European citizens view positively the fact that their country is part of the European Union, it is because they can perceive the benefits of membership. A[t] the end of 2004, 53% of

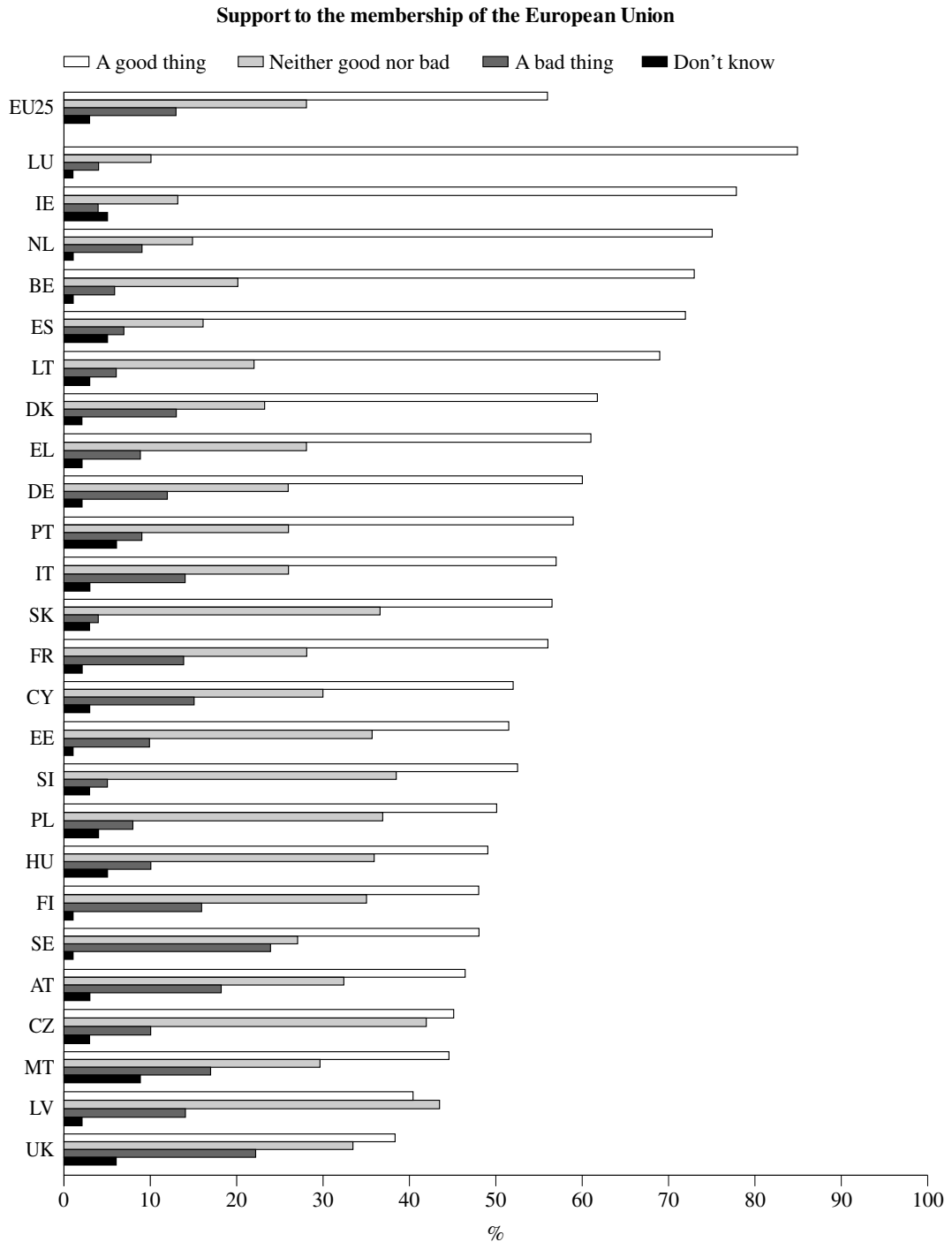


Figure 2 Support to the membership of the European Union

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.8

Note: Key to abbreviations follows at the end of the Reading.

European citizens interviewed consider that on balance their country has benefited from belonging to the European Union, compared with 34% who are of the opposite view. This positive view has increased by 6 points over six months and has now reached a level not previously seen over the last ten years. Nevertheless, the increase seems to reflect more a fall in the number of people previously undecided (-6 points) than a real change of mind among people who are negative on this point and for which the percentage has remained stable.

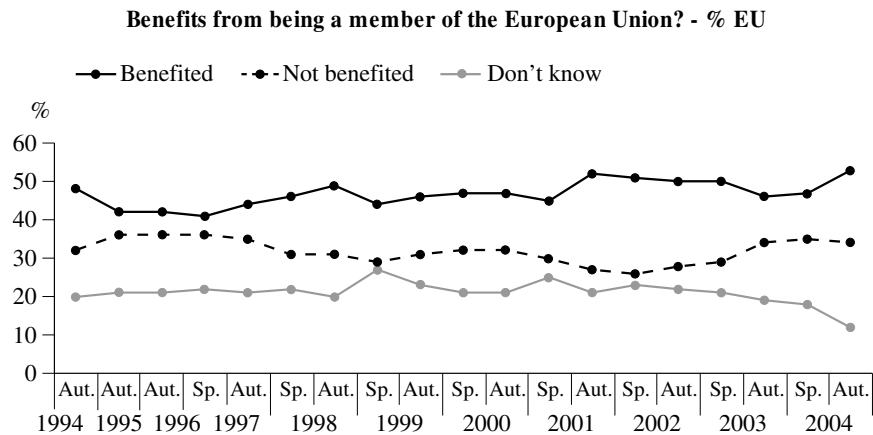


Figure 3 Benefits from being a member of the European Union? – % EU

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.9

Irish respondents have the highest score among European citizens who perceive the benefits of European Union membership (87%). Citizens in Lithuania (78%), Greece (76%), Belgium and Luxembourg (72%) very much share this positive view.

If it is too soon for the citizens of the new Member States to express an opinion on this aspect, it is notable, on the other hand, that citizens in certain old Member States have a somewhat negative view of the benefits of membership. That is the case in Sweden, Austria and Finland (the three countries which, until last May, were the most recent European Union members), where approximately 45% of interviewees consider that their country has not benefited from belonging to the European Union. That is also the case in the United Kingdom.

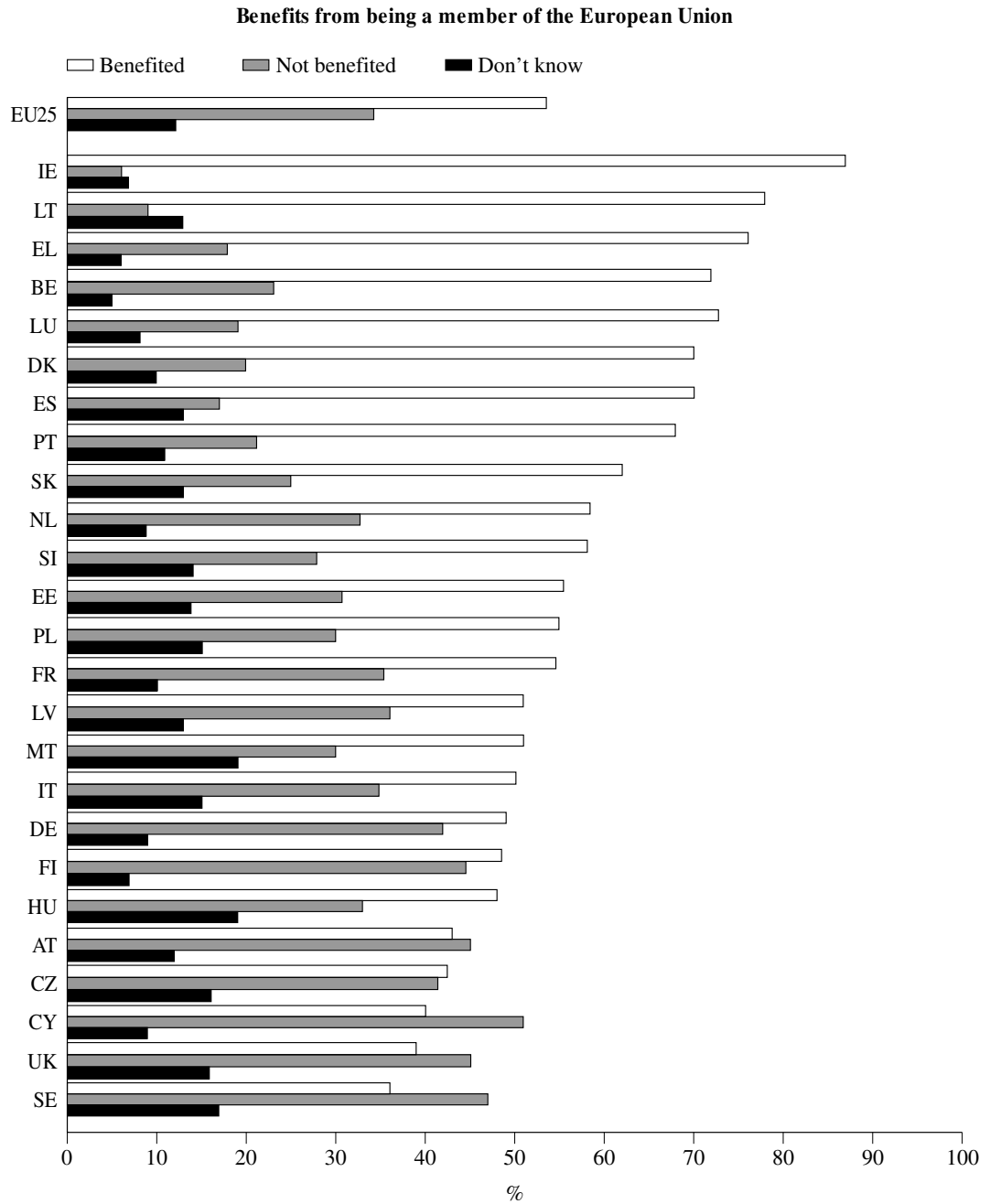


Figure 4 Benefits from being a member of the European Union

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.10

[...]

The European Parliament

– 57% of interviewees trust the European Parliament –

The latest survey, carried out just after the European elections which for the first time concerned 25 Member States, shows that confidence in the European Parliament has increased; 57% of interviewees in the 25 Member States have confidence in the European Parliament, i.e. an increase of 3 points compared with last spring. A comparison of results shows that the public at large has always tended to have more confidence in the European Parliament than in the Commission. It is also interesting to note that in terms of changes in the views of respondents, the confidence curves of the two institutes move generally in the same direction.

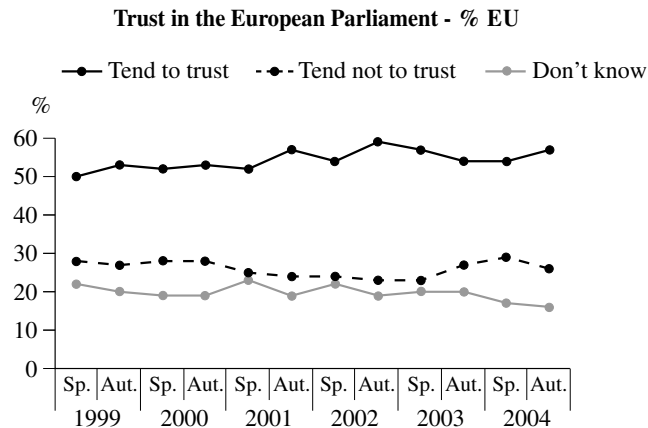


Figure 5 Trust in the European Parliament – % EU

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.15

At the level of the Member States, the degree of confidence differs to a fairly considerable extent. The countries which have the most confidence in the European Commission and Parliament are Luxembourg, Belgium and Ireland. Conversely, British citizens seem to have mixed feelings on this subject, since fewer than four respondents out of ten have confidence in these two European institutions. In the United Kingdom, a relative majority tend to mistrust the European Parliament (41%).

Among the new Member States, respondents in Slovakia, in particular, seem to have more confidence than their neighbours in these two institutions compared to their neighbours.

It is also noteworthy that Germans seem to have more confidence in the European Parliament than in the Commission: in terms of levels of confidence there is a difference of 11 points between the two institutions.



Figure 6 Trust in the European Institutions % ‘Tend to trust’

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.16

Support for a European Constitution

– More than two thirds of respondents support the idea of a European Constitution –

[...] What is your opinion on each of the following statements? Please tell me for each statement, whether you are for it or against it. A constitution for the European Union.

It is worth recalling that the vast majority of interviews were conducted in the weeks preceding the adoption of the Constitutional Treaty by the Council on 29 October 2004 in Rome.

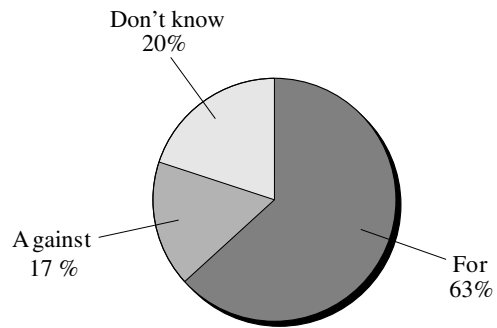
European Union citizens are in favour of the idea of a European Constitution since 68% of respondents are in favour of such a legal instrument. This percentage has increased by 5 points since the beginning of the year. It is interesting to note that this increase concerns part of the people who felt unable to express an opinion last spring. In other words, that part of the population which was undecided six months ago now seems to have switched to the pro-Constitution camp.

Nevertheless, this result must not be seen as an indication of the voting intentions of the countries which are considering holding a referendum or have already announced that they will be organising a referendum on the Constitutional Treaty. It translates solely the extent to which people support the concept of a Constitution for the European Union and not an assessment of the content of the text proposed for ratification in the Member States, and even less an indication of voting intentions in a possible referendum.

In Belgium, Slovenia, Germany and Luxembourg, approximately eight people out of ten support the concept of a Constitution for the European Union. In terms of intensity, citizens of the United Kingdom and above all Denmark remain the least favourable to the idea of a European Union Constitution.

Also noteworthy is the large number of interviewees who do not feel able to take a view on the issue. That is the case in particular in Portugal, notwithstanding the fact that Portugal will be one of the first countries to organise a referendum in 2005. The same indecision on this issue is to be found in Latvia, Ireland, Estonia and Sweden.

**Support to a constitution for the
European Union - EU15**
EB61 - Sp. 2004



**Support to a constitution for the
European Union - EU25**
EB62 - Aut. 2004

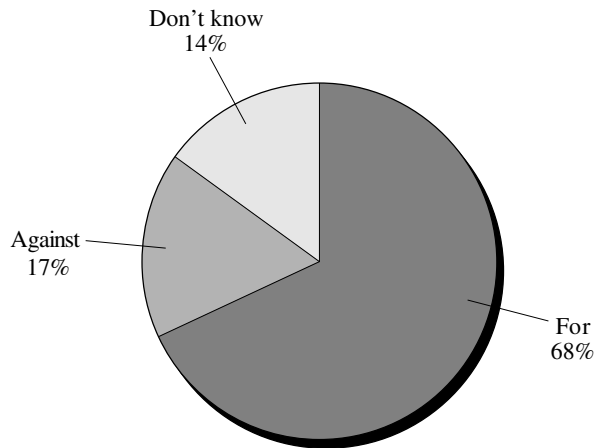


Figure 7 Support to a Constitution for the European Union – EU 15 and EU 25
Source: European Commission, 2004, p.17

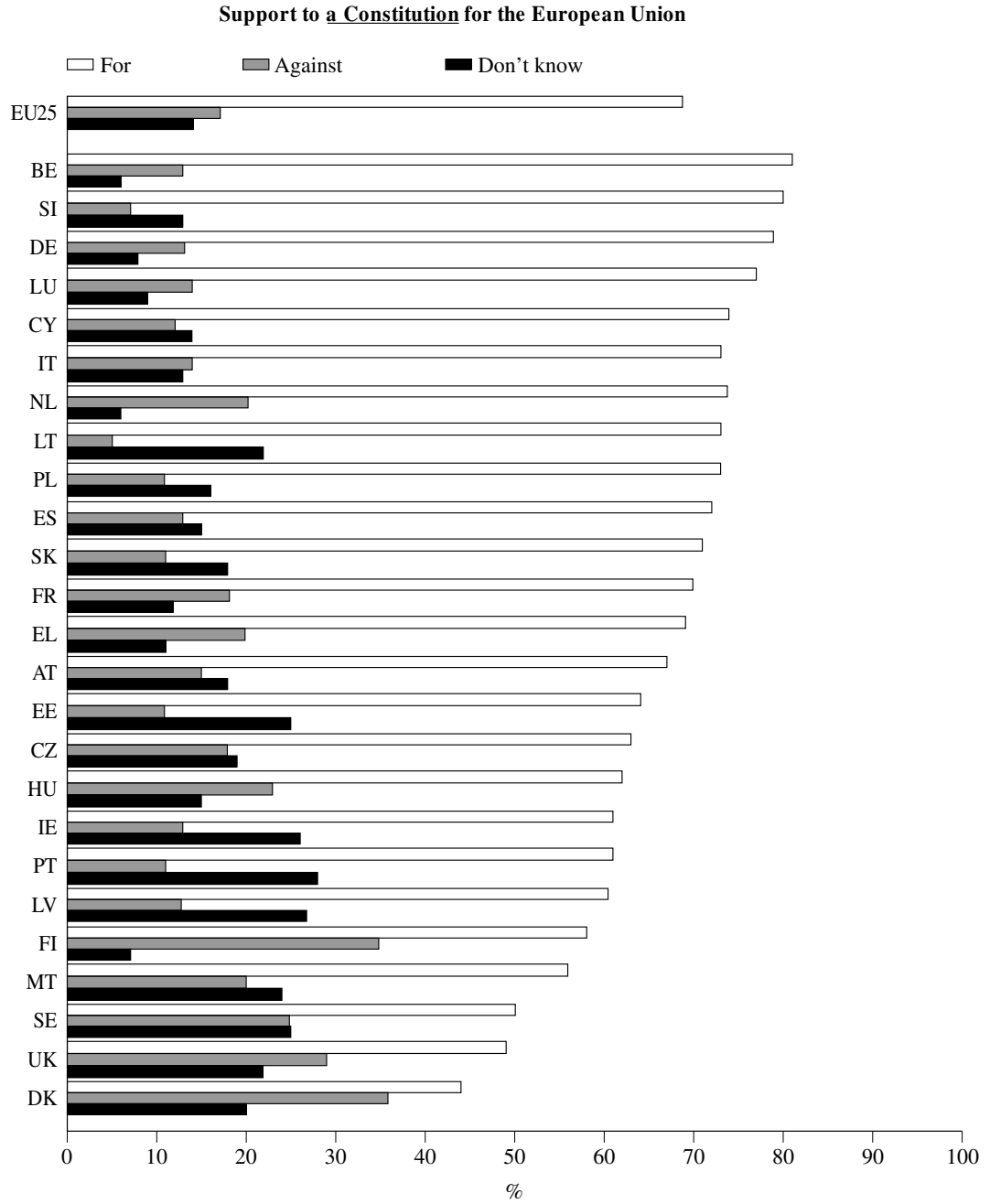


Figure 8 Support to a Constitution for the European Union

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.18

[...]

Common foreign and security policy

Support for a common foreign and security policy

– Support is as strong as 10 years ago –

What is your opinion on each of the following statements?
Please tell me for each statement, whether you are for it or against it. A common defence and security policy among European Union member states.

It would appear that European public opinion is more than ever receptive to Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) questions.

Within the enlarged European Union, support for a common security and defence policy is now 78%, i.e. a significant increase of 5 points since spring 2004. It has not enjoyed such a strong level of support since 10 years ago.

This increased support can be explained above all by an important drop in the number of ‘don’t knows’ in earlier surveys and by the integration of the favourable opinions expressed essentially in the new Member State in the average of the 25 Member States. In other words, respondents are more inclined to express an opinion on this question because they are more sensitive to the issue.

Although Belgians, Slovenians and Germans are most in favour of a common safety and defence policy (close to 90% are in favour), it is to be noted that support in Sweden and Finland is more mixed, where more than one citizen in three is against the CSDP (39% and 36% respectively), as well as in the United Kingdom (60% in favour with 27% against).

Support to a common defence and security policy among the European Union member states - % EU

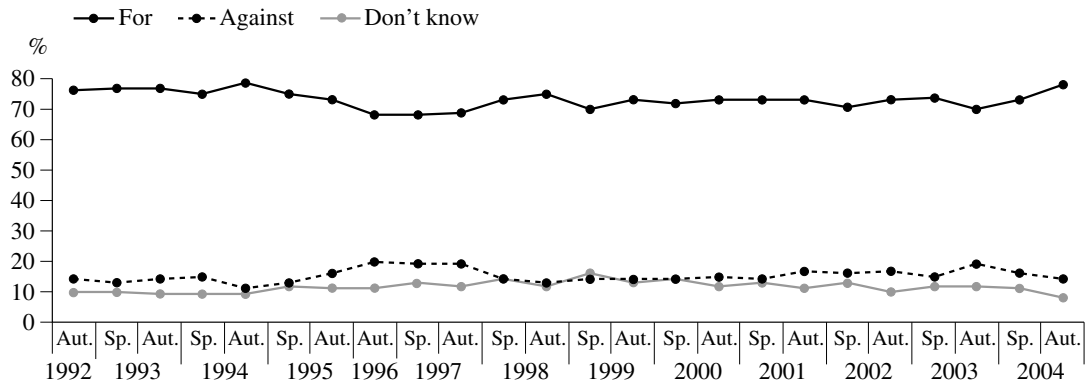


Figure 9 Support to a common defence and security policy among the European Union member states – % EU

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.22

Support to a common defence and security policy among European Union member states

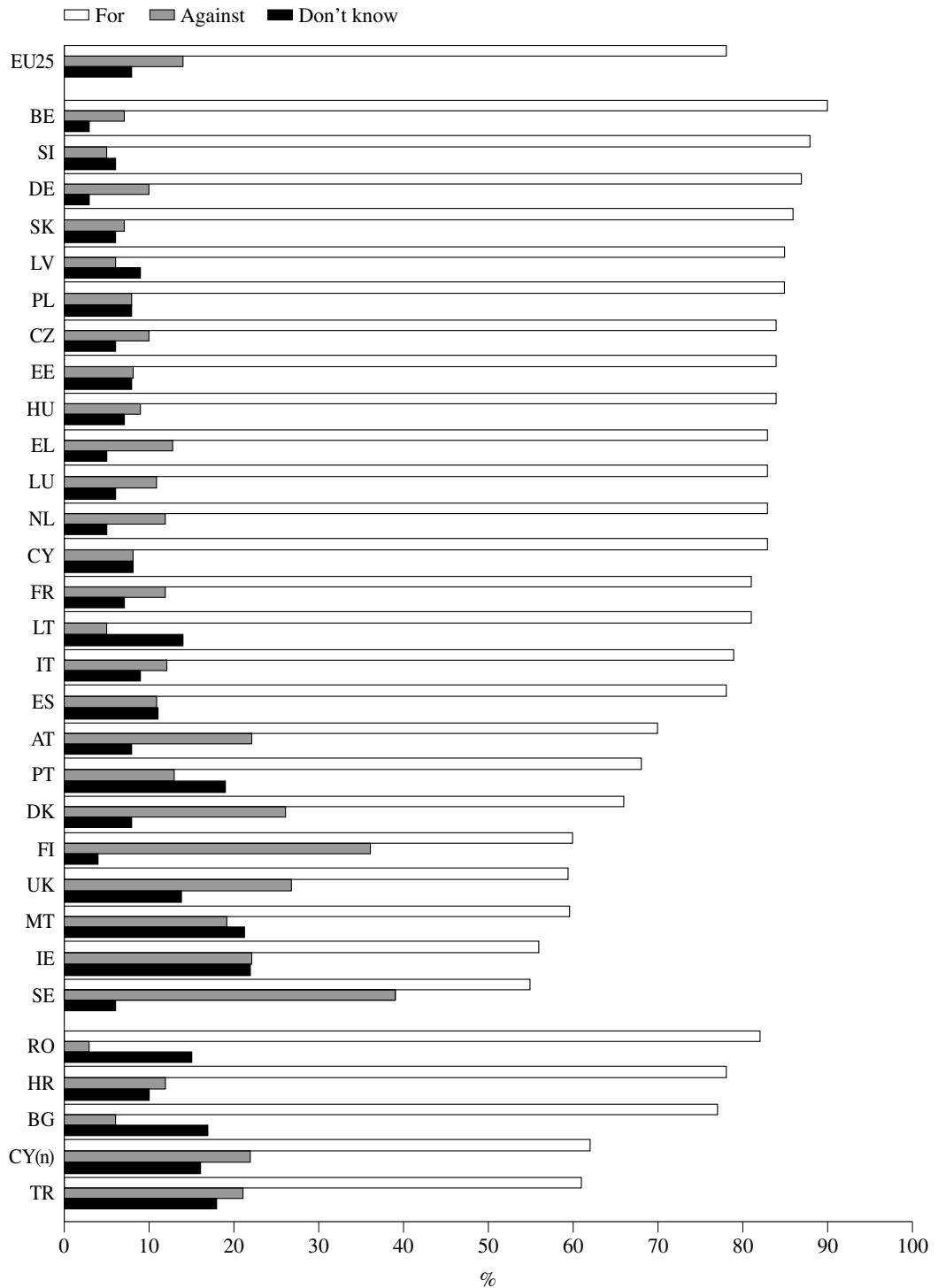


Figure 10 Support to a common defence and security policy among European Union member states

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.23

Finally, it is interesting to note that support for a common security and defence policy is particularly strong in the countries which recently joined NATO (Poland and the Czech Republic especially).

[...]

The speed of European construction

– Citizens want European construction to be speeded up –

- a) In your opinion, what is the current speed of building Europe? Please look at these figures. No.1 is standing still, No.7 is running as fast as possible. Choose the one which best corresponds with your opinion of the current speed of building Europe.
- b) And which corresponds best to the speed you would like?

In order to measure the perception of the speed of European construction, the Eurobarometer uses a visual graph showing an individual on the move and linked to values. An average is calculated on that basis. This question distinguishes between the perception of the actual speed of construction and the desired speed.

As regards the average of the 25 European Union Member States, it is to be noted that the desired speed of European construction is above the perceived speed of construction. **This constant trend reflects once again the gap which exists between the wishes of citizens for more Europe and their perception of the current situation.**

Moreover, even if the perception of the current speed of European construction has weakened slightly compared with the scores recorded on the eve of enlargement, the desired speed is at a level comparable to that observed last spring.

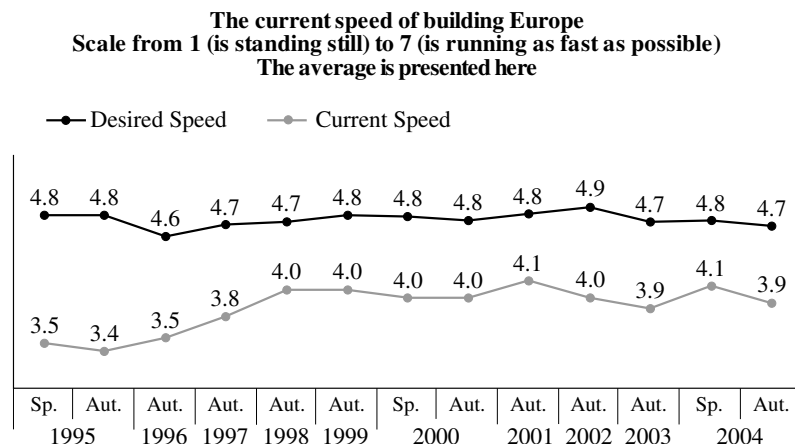


Figure 11 The current speed of building Europe; scale from 1 (is standing still) to 7 (is running as fast as possible); the average is presented here

Source: European Commission, 2004, p.29

Conclusion

The Eurobarometer autumn 2004 survey was carried out in a context of rapid change at institutional and political levels. The main conclusions that can be drawn are as follows:

- European public opinion is sensitive to all changes related to European construction and has developed significantly with regard to several indicators.
- First of all, European citizens are more optimistic as regards the future and are more satisfied with their personal situation than six months earlier.
- Following enlargement, more than one respondent in two (56%, +8 points) now supports membership of the European Union; the perception of the benefits linked to membership is also stronger (53%, +6 points).
- The European Union has a more positive image on the basis of 25 Member States compared to 15 Member States: one interviewee in two now perceives the European Union positively (51%, +6 points).
- Trust in the European Commission and Parliament has increased and is now at respective proportions of 52% (+4 points) and 57% (+3 points) of citizens.
- The idea of the European Union adopting a Constitution continues to gain ground: more than two thirds of interviewees are in favour of the idea (68%, +5 points).
- It would seem that European Union citizens consider that the enlargement, integrating ten new Member States was accomplished successfully. They are even in favour of a further enlargement of the European Union in the coming years (53%, +16 points).
- In a particularly turbulent international context, a vast majority of the people interviewed support a common security and defence policy (78%, +5 points) as well as a common foreign policy (69%, +3 points).
- The perception of the role played by the United States internationally has deteriorated in recent years, while there has been slight progression in the perception of the European Union's international role: 61% of interviewees believe that the European Union plays a positive role in promoting world peace (+1 point), compared with only 22% for the United States (-5 points).
- The above elements confirm the wish to see European construction speeded up.

Source: European Commission (2004), 'Public opinion in the European Union: First Results', *Eurobarometer 62*, Autumn 2004, Brussels, Directorate General Press and Communications, Europa website www.europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb62/eb62first_en.pdf (accessed 18 March 2005), pp.7–10, 15–18, 22–23, 29–30.

<i>Abbreviations</i>	<i>Countries</i>
AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
DK	Denmark
FR	France
FI	Finland
D-E	Germany (East)
D-W	Germany (West)
EL	Greece
UK	Great Britain
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
LU	Luxembourg
NL	The Netherlands
PT	Portugal
ES	Spain
SE	Sweden
CY	Cyprus (South)
CZ	Czech Republic
EE	Estonia
HU	Hungary
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
MT	Malta
PL	Poland
SK	Slovakia
SI	Slovenia
BG	Bulgaria
RO	Romania
TR	Turkey
HR	Croatia
CY (n)	Cyprus (North)

Acknowledgements

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Text

Seton-Watson, H. (1985) 'What is Europe, where is Europe? From mystique to politique,' *Encounter*, Vol. LXV, No. 2, July/August 1985, Encounter Ltd; Churchill, W. S. (1946) 'The tragedy of Europe', *Speeches of Winston Churchill*, Cassell. Reproduced with permission of Curtis Brown Ltd, London, on behalf of the Estate of Sir Winston S. Churchill. Copyright Winston Churchill 1945; Monnet, J. (1978) in Mayne, R. (trans) *Memoirs*, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd. Copyright © Jean Monnet, reproduced by permission of Librairie Artheme; Delors, J. (1988) 'Extracts from a speech', *TUC Congress Report, 1988*, Trades Union Congress; *Foreign Policy*, 115, Summer 1999; Judt, T. (1996) 'Goodbye To All That?' (excerpts), *A Grand Illusion? An Essay on Europe*, Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Copyright © 1996 Tony Judt. Text and tables from Eurobarometer No. 62 (2004). Copyright © European Communities.

Figures

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Tables

Table 2.1: Gardner, B. (1996) *European Agriculture: Policies, Production and Trade*, Routledge, by permission of Taylor and Francis; Table 2.2 (part): Adapted from Hill, B. E. (1984) *The Common Agricultural Policy: Past, Present and Future*, Methuen and Co, by permission of Taylor and Francis; Tables 2.3: Adapted from the Eurostat Website, http://europa.eu.int/geninfo/copyright_en.htm, © European Communities, 1995–2004; Table 2.5: *The Common Agricultural Policy Explained* (2004). Copyright © European Communities; Table 2.9: *Agriculture in the European Union: Statistical and Economic Information* (2003). Copyright © European Communities.

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