



*Standard Eurobarometer*



European  
Commission

# EUROBAROMETER 74

PUBLIC OPINION ON THE EUROPEAN UNION

## AUTUMN 2010

NATIONAL REPORT

CROATIA

Standard Eurobarometer 74 / Autumn 2010 – TNS Opinion & Social

This opinion poll was commissioned and coordinated by the DG for Communications.  
This report was produced for the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Croatia.  
This dossier does not represent the position of the European Commission.

Interpretations and opinions stated hereby are solely that of the author.

## ***Introduction***

The Standard Eurobarometer opinion poll is carried out twice a year. The present one, 74<sup>th</sup> (EB 74) is the thirteenth one including Croatia. Talking to the responders in their homes in the period from 12 to 28 November the agency Puls collected answers.

In the year between the last two Eurobarometer national reports on Croatia (for EB 73 just a short summary was published) the European economy slowly started getting out of the recession. In Croatia numerous corruption affairs have been revealed. The Gross Domestic Product continued plunging and the number of unemployed people exceeded 300.000. The Government introduced the so called crisis tax on salaries to repeal it end 2010.

In the accession negotiations by the time of closing this opinion poll Croatia had 34 opened Chapters – only the Chapter on *Other Issues* remaining to be opened - and 25 closed Chapters.

The Standard Eurobarometer opinion poll, commissioned by the European Commission Directorate General for Communications, was carried out by the consortium TNS Opinion & Social. For Croatia data were processed and reported on by Brussels-based senior correspondent to Večernji list, Stojan de Prato.

The main areas of this opinion poll are as follows:

1. **Opinion climate:** a) Satisfaction with way of life; b) Short-term expectancies; c) Trust in the institutions; g) Trends
2. **Opinions on the European Union:** a) Perception of the EU; b) EU Accession; c) Union policies
3. **European Union Enlargement process:** a) Support to Croatia's EU accession b) Support to accession of other Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries;
4. **Profiles:** a) Political affiliation; c) Communication means

A representative sample of citizens over 15 years of age, amounting to a total of 465.386.179 in the total area where the opinion poll was carried out, of which 3.749.400 in Croatia, included a total of 30.780 responders – 26.723 citizens in the EU 27 Member States, 1.000 in Croatia, 1.000 in Turkey, 1.056 in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 501 in Island and 500 members of the Turkish Cyprian community. The term European in this report refers to a citizen, male or female, of the European Union and the term Croatian to a citizen, male or female, of Croatia.

## 1. Opinion climate

### 1.1 Satisfaction with way of life

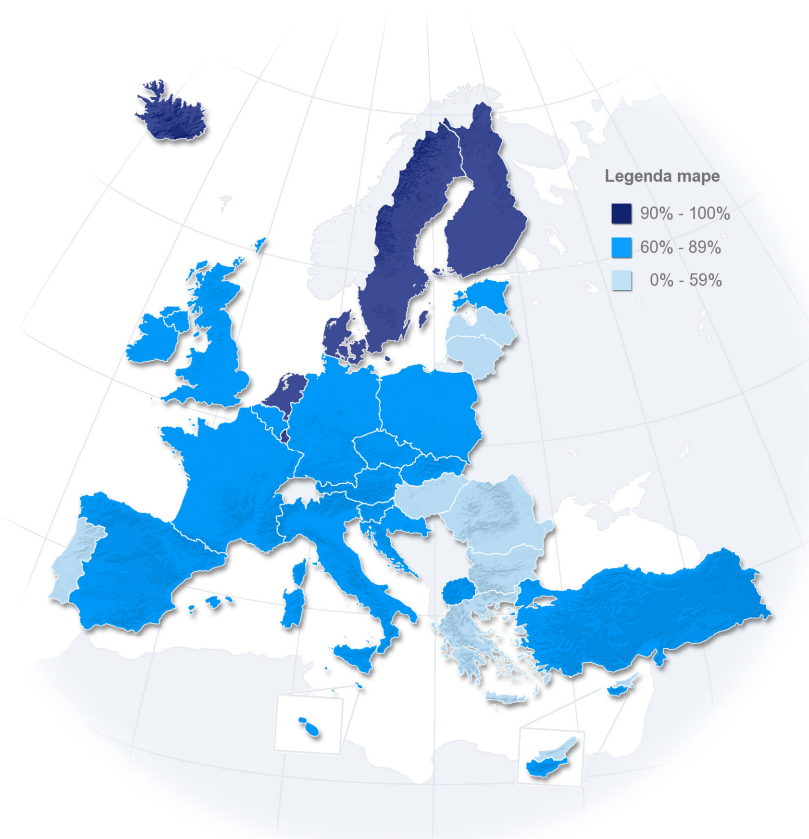
Question: QA1: Overall, are you very satisfied, rather satisfied, not particularly satisfied or not at all satisfied with your way of life?

Answers: Overall "Satisfied"

 DK	97%
 SE	96%
 NL	96%
 LU	95%
 FI	94%
 UK	89%
 BE	89%
 DE	87%
 SI	85%
 FR	84%
 AT	84%
 IE	83%
 CY	82%
 CZ	81%
 PL	78%
 MT	78%
 EU27	78%
 ES	76%
 SK	74%
 EE	72%
 IT	71%
 LV	58%
 LT	56%
 HU	50%
 EL	49%
 RO	46%
 PT	45%
 BG	38%
<small>* CY (tcc)</small>	57%
 HR	67%
 TR	66%
 MK	61%
 IS	99%

Pitanje: QA1. Sveukupno gledajući, jeste li svojim životom vrlo zadovoljni, prilično zadovoljni, ne naročito zadovoljni ili niste uopće zadovoljni?

Odgovori: Ukupno 'Zadovoljan'



While satisfaction with the way of life stagnates in the European Union, in Croatia satisfaction with the way of life has increased by four percent points with respect to a year before.

In the EU still the most satisfied are the citizens of Denmark (97%), followed by those in The Netherlands and Sweden (96%), Luxembourg and Finland (94%). Absolutely the most satisfied are the citizens of Island, even 99%. Less than half of the responders are satisfied in Bulgaria (38%), Portugal (45%), Romania (46%) and Greece (49%), and an even lesser percentage of satisfied citizens than in Croatia was recorded in Hungary (50%), Lithuania (56%), among Cyprus Turks (57%), in Latvia (58%), Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (61%) and Turkey (66%).

## b) Short-term expectancies

**What do you think the next 12 months will like be when it comes to ...?**

(In parentheses percentages from autumn 2009)

	Better		Worse		Same		Do not know	
	EU	RC	EU	RC	EU	RC	EU	RC
<b>Your life in general</b>	26%	23%	15%	28%	56%	48%	3%	1%
	(26%)	(22%)	(15%)	(29%)	(56%)	(43%)	(3%)	(6%)
<b>Economic situation in the country</b>	24%	13%	31%	57%	41%	27%	4%	3%
	(28%)	(11%)	(31%)	(57%)	(37%)	(29%)	(4%)	(3%)
<b>Economic situation in the household</b>	20%	19%	19%	30%	58%	49%	3%	2%
	(21%)	(14%)	(19%)	(35%)	(57%)	(49%)	(3%)	(2%)
<b>Employment situation in the country</b>	23%	12%	35%	63%	38%	22%	4%	3%
	(22%)	(9%)	(40%)	(66%)	(34%)	(22%)	(4%)	(3%)
<b>Personal employment situation</b>	19%	17%	10%	20%	60%	50%	11%	13%
	(19%)	(11%)	(11%)	(21%)	(59%)	(50%)	(11%)	(18%)
<b>Economic situation in the EU</b>	21%	27%	27%	24%	40%	40%	12%	9%
	(30%)	(25%)	(21%)	(25%)	(38%)	(39%)	(11%)	(11%)

In Croatia citizens who do not have any short-term expectancies as to changes in their life make an ever increasing majority, however still below half. Those expecting negative changes still exceed those expecting positive changes, although there are somewhat less pessimists and slightly more optimists than a year ago. In the EU on the other hand the climate in the mean time has not changed at all.

As regards expectancies as to the economic situation in the country, both Croatians and Europeans are noticeably bigger pessimists. But, while in the EU the majority does not expect changes, in Croatia the majority of responders expect the situation to get worse.

While in Croatia optimism regarding the development of the economic situation in the EU is slightly growing, pessimism among Europeans has noticeably increased although the majority on both sides does not expect any changes.

## 1.3 Trust in the institutions

### 1.3.1 To which extent do you trust each of the following institutions?

(In parentheses percentages from autumn 2009, if the question was asked)

	Tend to trust		Tend not to trust		Do not know	
	EU	RC	EU	RC	EU	RC
Government	28% (29%)	9% (12%)	67% (65%)	87% (84%)	5% (6%)	4% (4%)
Parliament	31% (30%)	9% (12%)	62% (63%)	87% (84%)	7% (7%)	4% (4%)
Domestic judiciary	47% (43%)	20% (15%)	48% (51%)	76% (80%)	5% (6%)	4% (5%)
Political parties	15% (16%)	5% (4%)	80% (79%)	91% (92%)	5% (5%)	4% (4%)
Army	70% (64%)	55% (46%)	21% (26%)	37% (42%)	9% (10%)	8% (12%)
Police	64%	42%	32%	53%	4%	5%
Religious institutions	40%	50%	50%	44%	10%	6%
Trade unions	38%	32%	49%	61%	13%	7%
Corporations/big companies	30%	17%	59%	76%	11%	7%
Small and medium companies	66%	40%	24%	50%	10%	10%
European Union	43% (48%)	37% (34%)	45% (40%)	53% (57%)	12% (12%)	10% (9%)
European Parliament	48% (50%)	41% (36%)	37% (33%)	42% (43%)	15% (17%)	17% (21%)
European Commission	44% (46%)	40% (34%)	36% (32%)	43% (44%)	20% (22%)	17% (22%)
Council of the EU	40% (41%)	41% (36%)	34% (31%)	42% (43%)	26% (28%)	17% (21%)
European Central Bank	43% (44%)	41% (34%)	37% (33%)	42% (41%)	20% (23%)	17% (25%)
United Nations	50% (55%)	44% (44%)	34% (30%)	45% (42%)	16% (15%)	11% (14%)

Trust in the Government in Croatia continued to drop and now less than one tenth of the responders have trust in it. In the EU countries as well, distrust in the national government is more pronounced than trust, but still trust is significantly higher than in Croatia. While Europeans are divided regarding trust in the judiciary, in Croatia it is distinctly low, even if it has increased slightly in the past year. Trust in political parties is the lowest ever both in the EU and in Croatia while trust in the army is the highest.

The number of Croatians who trust European central institutions is four times higher than the number of those trusting national authorities.

## 1.7 Trends

### 1.8.1 Would you say that in your country, and in the EU, things are in general going in the right or the wrong direction?

(In parentheses percentages from autumn 2009)

	Right		Wrong		Neither right nor wrong		Do not know	
	EU	RC	EU	RC	EU	RC	EU	RC
<b>In the country</b>	27% (30%)	8% (12%)	53% (47%)	80% (71%)	17% (19%)	10% (15%)	3% (4%)	2% (2%)
<b>In the European Union</b>	30% (40%)	37% (33%)	39% (28%)	31% (30%)	20% (20%)	26% (28%)	11% (12%)	6% (9%)

The majority of both Croatians and Europeans think that things in their countries are going in the wrong direction. But, while in the EU they make for slightly over half of the citizens, in Croatia they represent four fifths.

Regarding the trends in the EU the responders are quite divided. But, while the number of pessimists is significantly increasing, in Croatia optimists became part of the majority.

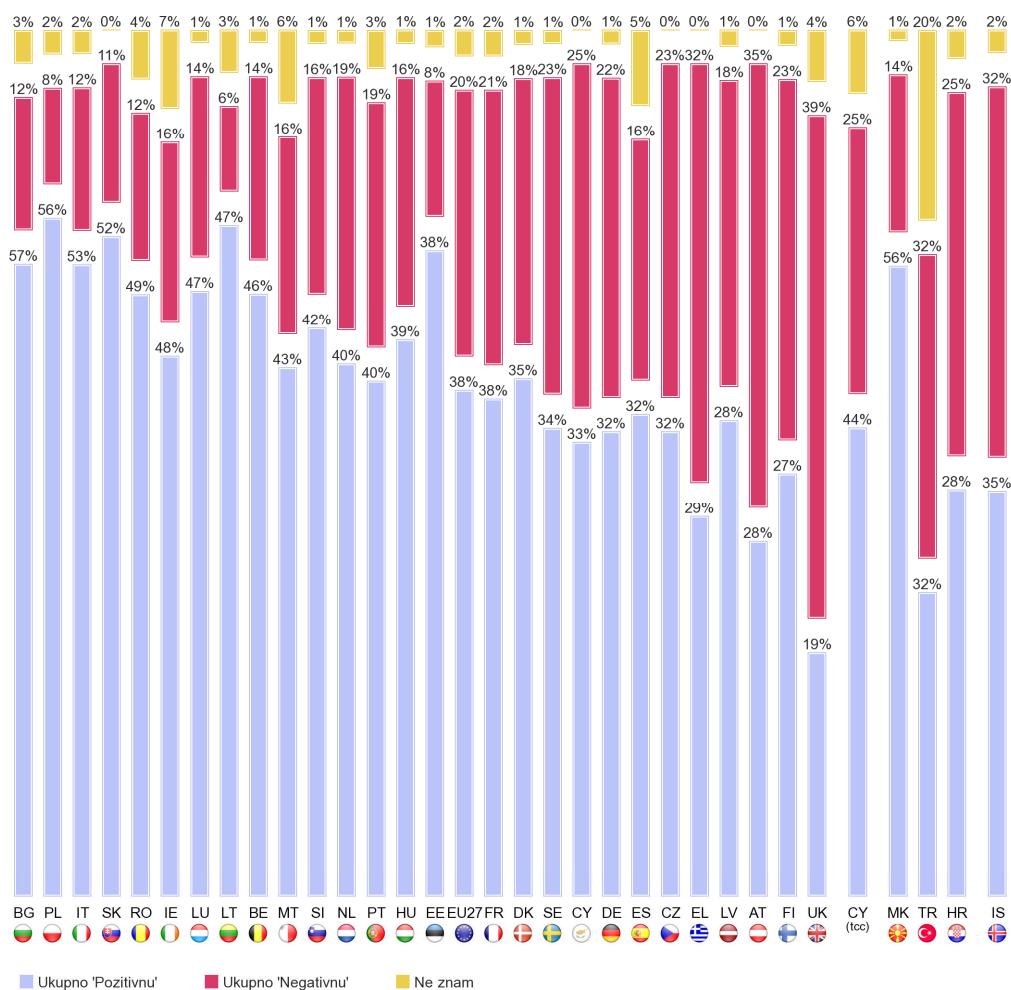
## 2. Opinions on the European Union

### 2.1 Perception of the EU

#### 2.1.1 In general the EU for you has a positive, negative or neutral character?

Question: QA13: Generally speaking, the conception the EU provokes in you is very positive, rather positive, neutral, rather negative or very negative?

QA13. Općenito gledajući, izaziva li Europska unija u Vama vrlo pozitivnu, prilično pozitivnu, neutralnu, prilično negativnu ili vrlo negativnu predodžbu?



**Legend: light blue: overall "positive" – red: overall "negative" – yellow: do not know**

Among Europeans there are still significantly more of those thinking positively about the EU, but their number decreased by 10 per cent points in the past year. Among Croats, there are now three per cent points more of those thinking positively about the EU, while a year ago there were seven per cent points more of those thinking negatively.

A lesser number of those thinking positively about the EU than in Croatia was only recorded in Finland (27%), and in the only two countries in which Eurosceptics are more numerous than Euro-optimists Austria (26:35%) and the United Kingdom (19:39%).

## 2.2 EU accession

### 2.2.1 Is Croatia's EU accession good or bad?

(In parentheses percentages from autumn 2009)

	RC
<b>Good</b>	27% (24%)
<b>Bad</b>	29% (37%)
<b>Neither good nor bad</b>	41% (35%)
<b>Do not know</b>	3% (4%)

Even if the number of Croatians who think that Croatia's EU accession is bad still exceeds the number of those who think it is good, there are slightly more Euro-optimists than a year ago. A large number of Eurosceptics has now joined the ones who do not have an opinion about accession and who are now the most numerous.

### 2.2.2 Do you think that your country has (will have) benefits from EU accession?

(In parentheses percentages from autumn 2009)

	EU	RC
<b>Yes</b>	50% (56%)	39% (37%)
<b>No</b>	39% (31%)	46% (54%)
<b>Do not know</b>	11% (13%)	15% (9%)

The majority of Europeans still thinks that membership in the EU brings benefits to their country, but their number is decreasing. Pessimists still represent the majority in Croatia, nevertheless lesser than a year ago. The number of optimists has slightly increased, and even more former pessimists are now in the category of those who do not know the answer to that question.



## 2.3 Union policies

### Are you for or against a European Union with the following policies?

(In parentheses percentages from autumn 2009, if the question was asked)

	For		Against		Do not know	
	EU	RC	EU	RC	EU	RC
<b>European monetary union with the Euro as common currency</b>	58% (60%)	67% (59%)	35% (33%)	26% (30%)	7% (7%)	7% (11%)
<b>Common foreign policy</b>	65%	74%	25%	18%	10%	8%
<b>Continuation of the enlargement process to other countries</b>	43% (46%)	66% (56%)	45% (43%)	23% (26%)	12% (11%)	11% (18%)
<b>Common defence and security policy</b>	75%	77%	17%	15%	8%	8%

The common defence and security policy is the most popular, in similar percentages, among Europeans and Croatians. Second for both is the common foreign policy; the percentage of Croatians being significantly higher than that of Europeans. Third for both Europeans and Croatians is the European monetary union with the Euro as common currency, which is again significantly more popular in Croatia than in the EU. While even two thirds – ten per cent points more than a year ago – are in favour of continuation of the EU enlargement process, Europeans are divided regarding enlargement, the opponents having in the mean time become a slight majority.

Opponents to enlargement are most numerous in Austria (67%) and Germany (65%), and they represent the majority in the United Kingdom, Finland, Belgium, France, Luxemburg and The Netherlands.

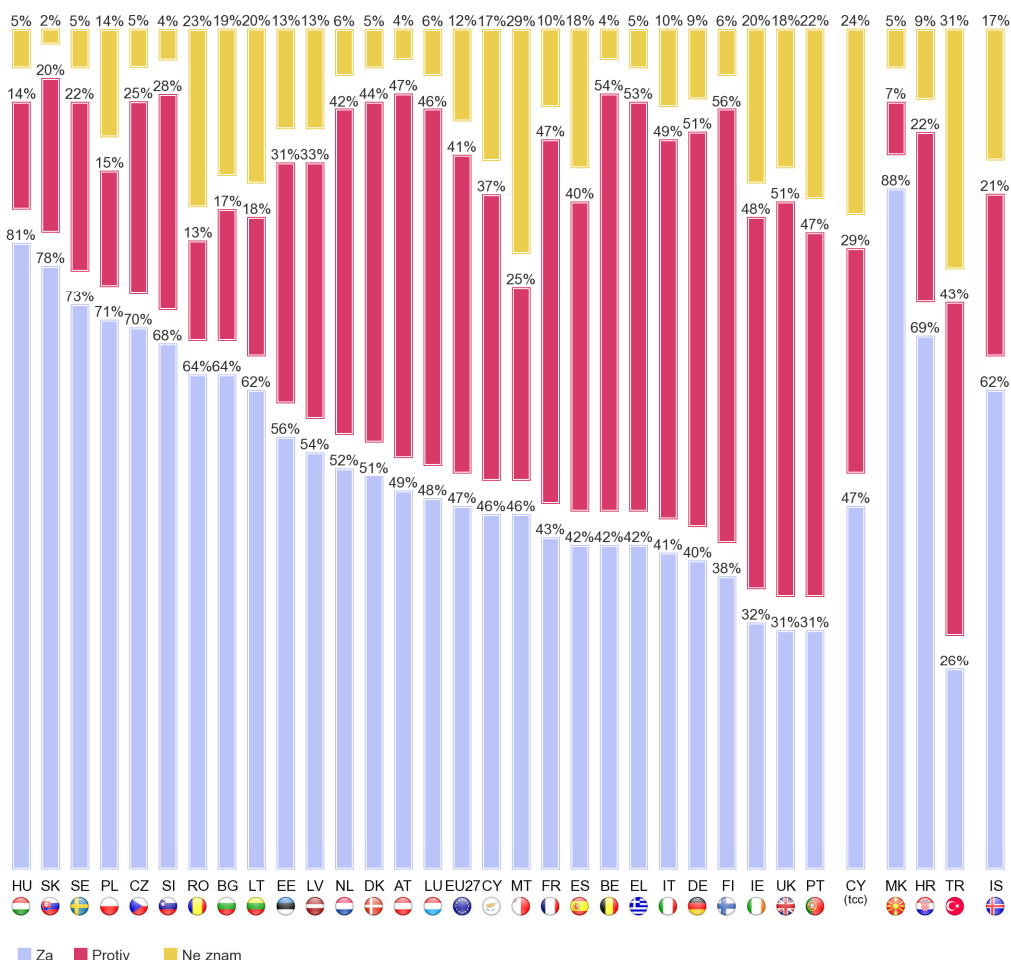
### 3. European Union Enlargement process

#### 3.1 Support to Croatia's EU accession

Question: QA20.6: Are you for or against future accession to the European Union of each of these countries?

QA20.6. Za svaku od slijedećih zemalja i teritorija recite jeste li za ili protiv da u budućnosti postane dio Europske unije?

Hrvatska



Legend: light blue: for – red: against" – yellow: do not know

The majority of European responders continue to support Croatia's EU accession, but that majority, since spring 2008, when the question was last asked, decreased by five per cent points, and is now below half. At the same time the number of opponents to Croatia's EU accession increased by seven per cent points. Two points less than then, but still more than two thirds of Croatian responders support Croatia's EU accession.

Opponents to Croatia's EU accession are most numerous in Finland (56%), Belgium (54%), Greece (53%), the United Kingdom and Germany (51%), and they represent less than half in Italy, Ireland, France, Portugal and Turkey. Supporters of Croatia's EU accession are most numerous in the Former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (88%), Hungary (81%), Slovak Republic (78%), Sweden (72%), Poland (71%) and Czech Republic (70%). Supporters of Croatia's EU accession are above half in Slovenia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Denmark, a below half in Austria, Luxemburg, Cyprus and Spain.

### 3.2 Support to EU accession of other countries

(In parentheses percentages from spring 2008, when the question was last asked)

	For		Against		Do not know	
	EU 27	RC	EU 27	RC	EU 27	RC
<b>Switzerland</b>	75%	77%	16%	12%	9%	11%
	(77%)	(77%)	(13%)	(13%)	(10%)	(10%)
<b>Norway</b>	74%	80%	17%	10%	9%	10%
	(78%)	(79%)	(12%)	(11%)	(10%)	(10%)
<b>Island</b>	60%	78%	28%	11%	12%	11%
	(71%)	(77%)	(16%)	(12%)	(13%)	(11%)
<b>Montenegro</b>	36%	66%	48%	24%	16%	10% (9%)
	(41%)	(63%)	(41%)	(28%)	(18%)	
<b>Ukraine</b>	37%	70%	51%	19%	12%	11%
	(43%)	(69%)	(42%)	(20%)	(15%)	(11%)
<b>Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b>	35%	72%	50%	17%	15%	11%
	(40%)	(71%)	(43%)	(20%)	(17%)	(9%)
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	35%	74%	51%	15%	14%	11%
	(40%)	(73%)	(44%)	(17%)	(16%)	(10%)
<b>Serbia</b>	34%	61%	53%	29%	13%	10% (9%)
	(38%)	(51%)	(47%)	(40%)	(15%)	
<b>Kosovo</b>	29%	66%	57%	24%	14%	10%
	(34%)	(65%)	(50%)	(25%)	(16%)	(10%)
<b>Albania</b>	29%	65%	58%	24%	13%	11%
	(34%)	(65%)	(51%)	(25%)	(15%)	(10%)
<b>Turkey</b>	30%	64%	59%	25%	11%	11%
	(31%)	(59%)	(55%)	(31%)	(14%)	(10%)

A significant majority of Croatians supports EU accession of each of the above countries. In the EU, on the other hand, responders are not in favour of accession of the Western Balkans countries, Turkey and Ukraine.

## 4. Profiles

### 5.1 Political affiliation

**Where do you position as to political affiliation from left to right?**

(In parentheses percentages from autumn 2009)

	EU	RC
<b>Left</b>	27% (26%)	30% (28%)
<b>Centre</b>	35% (36%)	34% (34%)
<b>Right</b>	20% (18%)	16% (13%)
<b>Refuse to answer</b>	8% (8%)	8% (9%)
<b>Do not know</b>	10% (12%)	12% (16%)

In Croatia the number of the most numerous ones positioned in the political centre stagnates, while the number of left affiliated ones, as well as the number, almost twice less numerous, of right affiliated ones, is increasing.

In the EU too the number of left affiliated ones and slightly less numerous right affiliated ones is increasing, while centre affiliated ones are the most numerous, although slightly less than a year ago.

### 5.2 Communication means

**What telecommunication means do you use?**

(In parentheses percentages from autumn 2009)

	EU	RC
<b>Land line telephone</b>	71% (70%)	87% (85%)
<b>Mobile telephone</b>	88% (85%)	84% (80%)
<b>Home Internet access</b>	65% (61%)	51% (43%)
<b>Office Internet access</b>	29% (29%)	23% (22%)
<b>Other Internet access</b>	22% (21%)	20% (16%)

The percentage of land line telephony users is again slightly increasing both in Croatia and in the EU. The number of mobile phone owners is increasing even more on both sides, which are significantly more numerous in the EU and slightly less numerous than in Croatia, than land line telephone owners. Home Internet access is available to the majority of Croatians and almost two thirds of Europeans. But both Croatians and Europeans do not use Internet much in the work place.

## **5. Conclusion**

Among Croatians, worn out by the economic crisis the end of which is nowhere to be seen, dissatisfaction with the economic situation and unemployment rate in the country is extremely high, and they expect it to get even worse. Even four fifths of Croatian responders think that things in the country are moving in the wrong direction.

Optimism regarding personal life, situation as to own employment and household finances, is again slightly increasing, but pessimism still prevails and the average Croatian is still a significantly bigger pessimist than the average European.

Not even a tenth of responders trust the Government and the Parliament, and four fifths do not trust the judiciary.

Trust in the EU and central European institutions is however many times higher than that in the domestic ones and the situation and trends in the EU are generally perceived significantly more favorably than the ones in Croatia.

Croatians are no longer the biggest Eurosceptics; more Eurosceptics are again among the British, but also Fins and Austrians. For the majority of Croatians the EU has a neutral character and those seeing the EU positively are again in the majority over the ones seeing it negatively.

A great majority of Croatians supports common European policies, including the Euro as common currency and is in favour of continuation of the Union enlargement process. In that context over two thirds of Croatians support EU enlargement to Croatia.

An overly long accession process has led to resignation and apathy of Croatians towards the EU. This is partly due to lack of substance public debate on the EU in Croatia because today only sensational news find their way to the media and the Government information campaign has not yet even started.