

Parlemeter 2015

[30-11-2015]

The European Parliament's Parlemeter 2015 survey was carried out in the 28 EU Member States, by TNS opinion, between **19 and 29 September 2015**.

The survey was the subject of **two separate publications**. The first was on the issue of **migration** and the economic and social situation. It was published on 14 October 2015, on the eve of the European Council.

The second publication deals more specifically with the **European Parliament** and issues relating to attachment and belonging to the European Union, identity, citizenship, priority policies and values.

As regards the EU, it should be remembered that **the field survey was conducted at the height of the recent wave of migration** and at a time of intensive discussions about the future of the EU, including economic and monetary union. NB: the survey was carried out before the fatal terrorist attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015.

When looking at these results the reader should bear in mind that **the European average figures are weighted, with the six most heavily populated Member States accounting for around 70% of the average in each case**.

Main results

[Part I - The main challenges facing the EU: migration and the economic and social situation](#)

- While Europeans still see **unemployment as the most pressing challenge** the EU will have to face (with a score of 49%, it was down 6% on the June 2013 results), **immigration had leapt up the agenda** in the space of two years (to score 47%, i.e. 33% more), putting it in second place.
- Most Europeans favoured **a common global approach to migration policy**, both in terms of decision making at EU level (66% approved) and with regard to priority financial support for the Member States bearing the brunt of immigration (62%); they also favoured a legal migration procedure that would be the same in all Member States (79% approval).
- With regard to the **distribution of asylum seekers among the EU Member States**, nearly 8 out of 10 respondents (78%) thought that the number of asylum seekers should be better distributed among all the Member States. Within that group, 75% thought the distribution of asylum seekers should be determined at EU level on the basis of binding quotas. In several Member States, however, that view was far from enjoying majority support.
- At EU level, an **absolute majority of respondents considered that their countries needed legal migrants** to work in certain sectors of the economy (51%), although in 11 countries that view did not command a majority.

- When asked about **the presence in their country of nationals of other Member States**, a majority of respondents (56%) across the EU agreed it was a good thing, but in 11 countries that was not the majority view.
- Similarly, a large majority (66%) at EU level felt that the presence of other nationals **enriched the cultural life of their country** – a view shared by most people in all but four countries where it failed to command a majority.
- In relation to the **pace of EU integration**, a majority of respondents believed it was better to **wait** until all Member States were ready before stepping up the development of common policy in a given field (48%, down 1% against the 2014 score). Fewer respondents, although slightly more than previously (41%, up 2%), believed that integration should be stepped up **without waiting** for all the Member States.
- The replies to a question about the Member States' response to the crisis showed a marked reversal in the prevailing view since the last survey, in September 2011. A majority of respondents (51%, up 10%) thought that the **Member States had tended to act 'individually'**. The proportion who believed there had been coordinated action by Member States had fallen markedly (to 39%, down 9%).
- The crisis: where do matters stand? In response to this question too there had been significant changes of view: many people still believed that **the crisis is going to last for many years** but they were fewer than in 2011 (32%, a fall of 9%). On the other hand, there was a clear increase in the number who felt **we are already returning to growth** (20%, up by 12 points).

Part II – European Parliament Parlemeter survey

- The results showed that **more people were interested in EU policies** (54%, up by 11 points since 2013). Part of the explanation lies in the **European and international context** in which the survey was conducted, and this had a noticeable influence in all the areas covered. When people were asked, for example, what the European Parliament's policy priorities should be, the number emphasising the need for **immigration policy to be framed in concert with immigrants' countries of origin** continued to rise as it had done in 2014 (to 38%, up by 13 points).
- It is important to bear in mind that, behind the EU-level results, **there were large variations from country to country**.

For example, while overall **support for European Union membership was up** (with 55% seeing it as a good thing, an increase of 1% since 2014), there were major disparities here among the Member States.

Similarly, more than 7 out of 10 respondents across the EU (72%, the same proportion as in 2013) believed **there was more uniting than separating Europeans**, but the national results diverged by up to 27 points.

- Europeans who felt **their countries had benefited from EU membership** (60%, up 6% since June 2013) based this view mainly on the Union's contribution to economic growth (35%) and to peacekeeping and a strengthening of security (32%), as well as the fact of cooperation between their countries and other Member States (31%).
- The **values of democracy and freedom** were still seen by the respondents as the **main components of European identity** (49% took this view, a 2% increase since 2014).

When asked what could **strengthen EU citizenship**, the highest-scoring reply was a harmonised system of **social protection** (favoured by 45%, an increase of 13%).

- While **Europeans still have a good level of awareness of the European Parliament**, the survey showed that their **image** of it **was deteriorating** (24% had a positive image of the EP, 6% fewer than in 2014), especially in those Member States most exposed to any worsening of the migration crisis.
- People considered that **the European Parliament plays an important role** (72% thought so, a 4% increase since 2013), but national-level results varied widely on the question of what Parliament's **future role should be** (44% of respondents thought it should have a 'more important' role, 3% fewer than in 2014).
- **Four Europeans in 10** (40%) had confidence in the European Parliament, chiefly because they saw it as having a democratic role in the working of the EU.
- For the second time in a Parlemeter survey, **Europeans were asked about the likely situation of their country if it were not part of the EU**. They were asked to assess whether their country would do better, worse, or neither better nor worse in a range of policy areas. As in 2014, most respondents felt that their country would not do better without the EU in all the fields they were asked to consider.

In the areas of **agriculture and immigration**, however, the results **varied hugely**. A majority in certain Member States believed that their country would do better in these areas outside, rather than within, the EU.

- European citizens felt that, within the EU, the **voice of their country counted more than their own voice**. The national-level results showed a decline in 19 countries in the number of people who felt their voices counted in the EU.

Further information

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/EN/20150630PVL00108/2015-parlemeter>

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