



Interest in EU affairs has grown in recent years, reveals latest opinion poll

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Europeans are increasingly interested in European affairs, and a majority want to be informed on what happens at EU level, reveals a recently-published Eurobarometer survey. The economic crisis remains a key concern, as it has done since 2008, and a majority of Europeans also wants to see the European Parliament play a bigger role in tackling it than at present.

Half (51%) of respondents said they were interested in European affairs, a clear increase (+ 7%) since 2006 (when the question was first asked). This may be a consequence of the recent Europeanisation of national political debates, suggests the poll.

European Parliament's role

Asked how they perceive Parliament's role, 75% of respondents said they thought it important, with 54% wanting it to play a bigger one in the near future.

The share of respondents with a positive image of Parliament rose slightly between November 2011 and November 2012 (from 26 to 27%), while the share with a negative image also rose by 2 percentage points (to 28%). 43% of respondents have a neutral image of Parliament (2 percentage points down on 2011).

The share of respondents reporting that they had recently heard of the European Parliament was 64%, i.e. 22 percentage points up on autumn 2007, when the 2009 European elections were a year and half away, as the 2014 elections are now. However, this media recall rate is slightly down on that of 2011.

Tackling poverty is still the top concern

As in previous surveys, an absolute majority of respondents saw tackling poverty and social exclusion as the first priority to be pursued by Parliament (53%, +3 compared to 2011). Coordination of economic policies ranked second with 35% (-2), followed by improving consumer and public health protection with 30% (-1).

These are the key findings of a Eurobarometer survey on the European Parliament, conducted between 17 November and 2 December 2012, of 26,739 European citizens from the 27 member states. For further details, see link to the right.

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