

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3413/03  
by Olivier Duhamel (PSE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Eurobarometer

A question on countries which represent 'a threat to world peace' in a recent Eurobarometer poll has upset certain countries, particularly Israel and the USA. One could, of course, debate the appropriateness of asking such a question, and even the way it has been formulated. Nobody doubts that a sort of 'halo effect' means that countries involved in military operations (domestic or foreign) which are to a greater or lesser extent the subject of dispute in the media risk, for that very reason, having a negative image worldwide.

At the very least, it would be preferable to pose the question in a slightly modified form, by asking 'For each of the leaders of the following countries, tell me if, in your opinion, he or she represents a threat to world peace or not' and adding 'the Palestinian Authority' to the list. Does the Commission intend in future to put the question in this form, rather than give up altogether on a useful indicator for understanding patterns of public opinion within the Union?

It would be interesting, furthermore, to investigate - as Eurobarometer has already done in the past - how much each individual questioned trusts his own nation and each of the other nations we wish to study.

Does the Commission believe that trust between nations is a 'sine qua non' of European integration and international life? If so, is the Commission prepared to put such a question again in the near future?