

EUROBAROMETER 66

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

AUTUMN 2006

NATIONAL REPORT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

1. State of opinion

As in previous Eurobarometer* public opinion surveys, in the autumn 2006 survey, respondents' level of satisfaction with life on the whole was below the European average in Slovakia. While in Slovakia 72% of respondents were very satisfied or fairly satisfied, in the EU25 it was 82% of respondents. In spite of enduring lower levels of satisfaction with the life they lead, it can be seen that since 2003, there has been a continuous upward growth in the levels of satisfaction of Slovak citizens compared with EU25 countries on the whole. This trend has been confirmed by the results of the survey undertaken in autumn 2006 when, compared to the survey undertaken in spring 2006, we can observe 6 percentage points growth in the number of satisfied citizens.

Although in assessing satisfaction with the life they lead Slovak citizens' figures are markedly below the European average, in the case of their expectations for the next twelve months concerning their life in general, Slovaks' opinions hardly differ from those of EU25 citizens as a whole. More than half of Slovak citizens do not expect any change, one-third expect improvement and only 14% expect a worsening of their life in general. In the case of expectations for the next 12 months relating to life in general, we can observe a gradual and significant decrease (by 10 points over the last year) in the number of Slovak citizens who expect worsening of their life in general compared with autumn 2005. It seems that Slovaks, as was the case for satisfaction with their life on the whole, are becoming significantly less negative and pessimistic than in the past.

As far as the expectations for the next 12 months related to the economic situation in the country are concerned, Slovakia belongs to the countries in which more people expect worsening of the situation rather than an improvement. In spite of this, within the European Union, the citizens of the Slovak Republic belong to the more optimistic. In the EU25, only 20% of citizens expect that the economic situation in their country will be better in the next 12 months, while in Slovakia 28% of citizens expect improvement. Worsening of the economic situation is expected by 30% of Slovak citizens, that is 5 points less than in the EU25. From the point of view of trends, since autumn 2005, in Slovakia, we can observe a significant decrease in the number of citizens who expect a worsening of the situation – by 8 points compared with the survey undertaken half a year ago and by 18 points compared with the survey undertaken one year ago.

Citizens of the Slovak Republic are, compared with the EU25 citizens, tuned more optimistically as far as their expectations for the next 12 months related to the employment situation in their country are concerned. Also, the trend concerning the expectations of the Slovak citizens relating to the employment situation in Slovakia is similar to the trend of expectations relating to the economic situation in the country. Since autumn 2005, there are marked decreases in the number of Slovaks who expect a worsening of the employment situation in Slovakia (6 points compared with the previous survey) and there is a 12-point difference compared with the survey undertaken one year ago. However, as far as expectations for the next 12 months in regard to the personal job situation are concerned, Slovaks are more pessimistic than EU25 citizens. Only 17% of Slovak respondents expect an improvement, i.e. 6 points below the European average. Moreover, 16% of Slovak respondents (8 points more than in the EU25) expressed no opinion on this question, which shows a higher degree of uncertainty of Slovak citizens concerning their personal job situation. Thus, the only positive element is the trend of a modest, but gradual, decrease in the number of Slovaks who expect the worsening in their personal job situation in the next 12 months.

The Eurobarometer No 66 public opinion survey was the first one to have taken place since the change of the government following the June 2006 parliamentary elections. This change has had significant implications on the trust of the citizens regarding some institutions. Trust in the Slovak Parliament has risen compared with the previous survey,

* This National Report for the Representation of the European Commission in Slovak Republic was written by Ivan Kuhn.

which was undertaken in the spring 2006 (before the elections), by 11 points from 27% to 38%. Trust in the Slovak Government has risen by 18 points from 21% to 39%. Trust in political parties has also risen from 10% to 16%.

However, Slovaks still trust more in the European Union than in national institutions. 62% of Slovak respondents stated that they trust the EU, which is 9 points more than in the previous survey. Trust of Slovak citizens in the European Union over the long term is above the European average, in autumn 2006 it was 17 points higher.

In autumn 2006, 61% of Slovaks considered their country's EU membership to be a good thing, which is 6 points more than in spring 2006 and 11 points more than in autumn 2005. At the same time, the figure for those who think that Slovak membership of the Slovakia in the EU is neither a good nor a bad thing has dropped by an equivalent amount. Only 6% of Slovak citizens think that their country's EU membership is a bad thing. Thus, Slovaks again appreciate their country's EU membership more than citizens in the EU25 as a whole. In the European Union, on average, 53% citizens (8 points less than in Slovakia) consider their country's EU membership to be a good thing and, conversely, 16% of EU25 citizens (10 points more than in Slovakia) think that their country's membership is a bad thing.

Slovaks also tend to be more positive concerning the assessment of the benefits of EU membership. As many as 71% of Slovak citizens, that is 17 points more than citizens in the EU25 as a whole, believe that their country has benefited from EU membership.

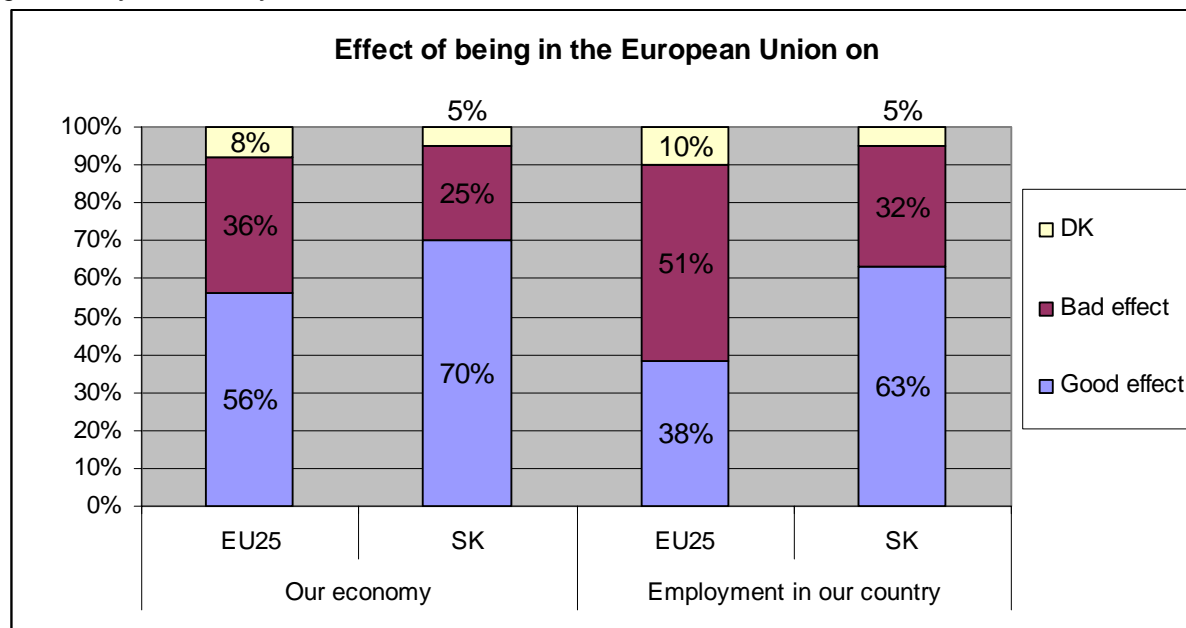
Citizens of the Slovak Republic consider unemployment and the economic situation to be the two most important issues in their country. Unemployment is considered to be one of the two most important issues by 44% of Slovaks which is 4 points more than in the EU25. The economic situation is considered to be one of the two most important issues in Slovakia by 36% of citizens which is 13 points above the European average. With the exception of the view on unemployment as the most important issue in their country, Slovaks' opinions differ significantly from the European average. The most visible difference is in the case of the view of Slovak and EU25 citizens on the economic situation, immigration and terrorism. Immigration is considered to be one of the two most important issues in Slovakia by only 3% of citizens which is 18 points less than in the EU25 and terrorism is considered to be an important issue by only 6% of Slovaks which is 9 points less than the European average.

Slovaks have a positive viewpoint on the European Union also as regards the role of the EU in maintaining peace in the world, in the fight against terrorism, the growth of the world economy, protection of the environment and the fight against poverty. In Slovakia, as well as in the Czech Republic, 79% of citizens assess positively the influence of the EU on peace in the world thus placing both states at the top of the "chart" of the 25 EU Member States. Slovakia also occupies the top position in the EU25 "chart" as far as the positive assessment of the influence of the European Union in the area of the fight against terrorism is concerned, although, in this case, Slovakia, with 74% of respondents assessing positively the role of the EU, is in third place, 1 point behind the Czech Republic and Lithuania. Slovakia, with 71%, is ranked third – this time behind Lithuania (76%) and Estonia (74%) – as far as the positive assessment of the role that the EU plays in the growth of the world economy is concerned. The positive view that Slovaks have on the role that the European Union plays in maintaining peace in the world and in the fight against terrorism has an impact on the high level of support for a common European foreign, defence and security policy among Slovak citizens.

2. Economy and Employment

Slovak citizens, in comparison with EU25 citizens, assess more positively the effect of their country's membership on the national economy and on employment at national level. Membership of the Union has a very good effect or a fairly good effect on the national economy, according to 70% of Slovak citizens, which is 14 points above the European average. The effect of Slovakia's membership on employment at national level is assessed positively by 63% of Slovaks, a figure which is 25 points more than in the EU25 as a whole.

Question: People disagree about the advantages and disadvantages of Slovakia (YOUR COUNTRY) belonging to the European Union. I am going to read out some points and, for each one, I would like you to tell me if Slovakia (YOUR COUNTRY) being in the European Union has a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad effect.



Slovaks, like EU25 citizens in general, consider the improvement of education and professional training to be the best tools to improve the performance of the European economy. This alternative is preferred by 63% of Slovak respondents and by 65% of EU25 respondents. However, Slovaks rank in second place investment in transport infrastructure (motorways, railways, etc.), while EU25 citizens rank in second place investment in research and innovation. Slovaks assign this alternative to third place. Investment in transport infrastructure is considered to be one of the best tools for the improvement of the performance of the European economy by 59% of Slovaks, a figure which is 22 points above the EU25 average. Support for this alternative for improving the performance of the economy is increasing over time. Over the last year, support for investment in transport infrastructure has increased by 14 points. The increase in the legal number of working hours as one of the alternatives for improving the performance of the European economy is preferred by only 5% of Slovak and 10% of the EU25 citizens.

With regard to the answers to this question, we can assume that at least Slovak respondents had in mind the Slovak rather than the European economy and therefore they tend to support more investment in transport infrastructure than investment in research and innovation, although the difference in the preferences between these two alternatives is not big. The reason is probably the fact that in Slovakia we have observed an enormous increase in foreign investment. However, the majority of investors have located their facilities near existing or soon-to-be-built highways. Therefore, a significant part of the Slovak population, especially in central and eastern Slovakia, perceives the building of the transport infrastructure as an important, if not a decisive, factor for the growth of the national economy.

Slovakia traditionally belongs to the countries whose citizens assess more positively the situation of the European economy than the situation of their national economy. The situation of the national economy is assessed as very good or rather good by 34% of Slovak citizens (46% in the EU25). On the other hand, the situation of the European economy is assessed as very good or rather good by 77% of Slovak citizens (58% in the EU25). Even more negative is the assessment of the employment situation on the domestic labour market. Only 12% of respondents identified the current employment situation in Slovakia as very good or rather good (27% in the EU25), while 88% of Slovak respondents identified the current employment situation at national level as rather bad or very bad (70% in the EU25).


3. European Political Union

Slovaks traditionally belong to the group of countries giving strongest support to the development of European integration towards European political union. In autumn 2006, 77% of Slovak respondents supported such a development. This ranked Slovakia first, together with Slovenia, among the 25 EU Member States in their support for European political union, 26 points above the European average. One year ago, Slovakia also ranked first, with 72% support, 1 point ahead of Slovenia.

Question: QA11. Are you, yourself, for or against the development towards a European political union?

Answers: For

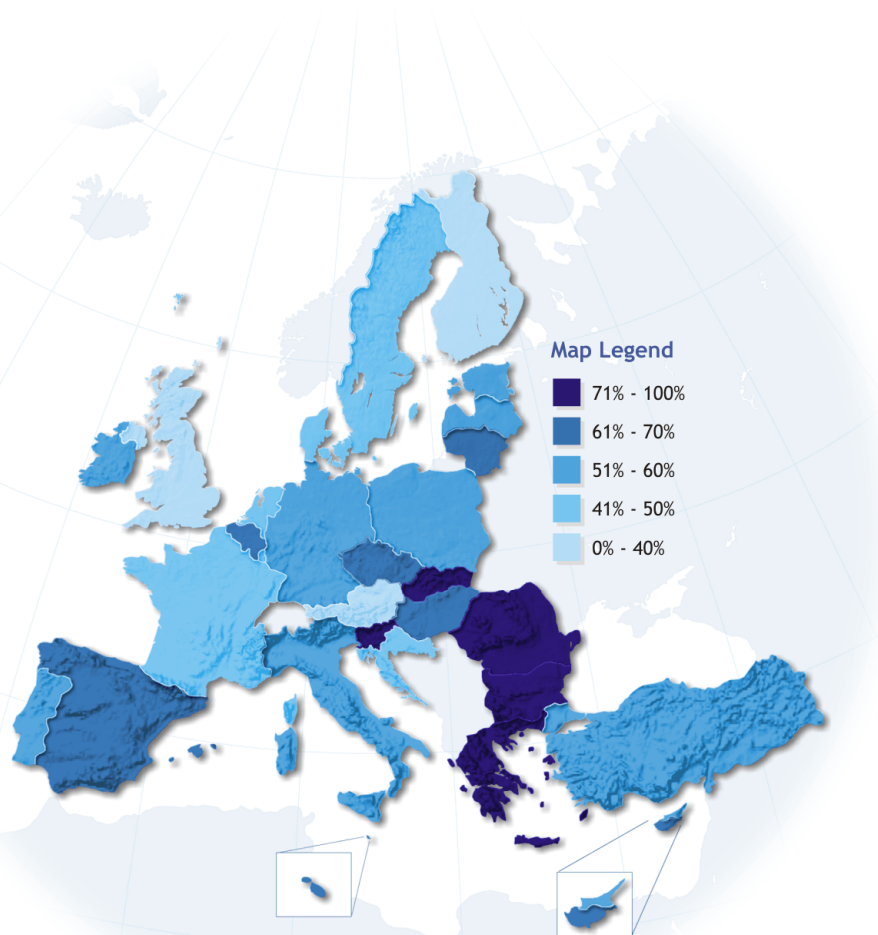
Country Results

 Slovakia	77%
 Slovenia	77%
 Greece	73%
 Czech Republic	69%
 Cyprus*	68%
 Lithuania	67%
 Spain	65%
 Malta	63%
 Hungary	62%
 Belgium	61%
 Poland	60%
 Germany	59%
 Estonia	59%
 Latvia	59%
 Italy	58%
 Portugal	57%
 Ireland	55%
 European Union (25)	54%
 The Netherlands	50%
 France	49%
 Luxembourg	49%
 Denmark	42%
 Sweden	42%
 Austria	40%
 Finland	36%
 United Kingdom	31%

* CY(tcc) = 56%

Other Countries

 Romania	74%
 Bulgaria	72%
 Turkey	55%
 Croatia	50%



More important than a strongly felt attitude towards what is not a clearly defined European political union is the attitude to practical aspects, which, with the greatest probability, would determine the exclusive competencies of the European political union or limit the sovereignty of member states. In this sense, the opinions of Slovak citizens do not correspond with the probable competencies of the European political union. A majority (58%) of Slovak citizens (45% in the EU25), thinks that decisions on agriculture and fisheries should be made exclusively by their national government and only 40% of Slovaks (49% in the EU25) think that decisions in this area should be made jointly within the European Union. In the case of taxation, even more Slovak citizens 80%, compared with 69% in the EU25, want to keep this competence as the exclusive domain of their national government and only 17% (27% in the EU25) would prefer that decisions in the area of taxation should be taken jointly within the European Union.

Only 7% of Slovaks (18% in the EU25) want decisions on the fight against terrorism to be made exclusively by their national government and 91% (79% in the EU25) think that decisions in this area should be taken jointly within the EU. Similarly, only 19% of Slovaks (32% in the EU25) insist that defence and foreign policy should be the domain of their national government and 79% (64% in EU25) would prefer that decisions in this area are taken jointly within the European Union. In the same sense, 86% of Slovak citizens (75% in the EU25) have a positive attitude towards the common security and defence policy of the European Union while only 10% oppose it (16% in the EU25).

Thus, the majority of Slovaks insist that two key areas – taxation and agricultural policy – remain the subject of sovereign decision-making of the Slovak Republic and its authorities. It is a paradox that, in fact, already today, the sovereignty of Slovakia in the area of agriculture is limited by the EU's Common Agricultural Policy and the Slovak Parliament or the Slovak Government cannot make decision on national agricultural policy independently of the EU or without reaching agreement with other EU Member States or without ensuring they are in line with the CAP.

Slovaks, however, have great expectations from the European Union in the areas of fighting unemployment and fighting poverty and social exclusion. Exactly half of Slovak respondents (43% in the EU25) have chosen fighting poverty and social exclusion as one of three actions that the European Union should follow as a priority. 49% of respondents (9 points more than in the EU25) have chosen fighting unemployment as one of three priorities of the EU. In third place, 43% of Slovaks rank maintaining peace and security in Europe in third place as a priority of the EU. The order of the first three priorities is the same in Slovakia and in the EU25, although in Slovakia each of these three priorities gained a greater percentage of votes of respondents than the European average. The opinions of Slovak citizens differ from the opinions of EU25 citizens concerning maintaining peace and security in Europe, which, as a priority, was chosen by 14 points more Slovaks than citizens of the EU25 and also in their view on the fight against illegal immigration, which, in contrast, was only chosen by 6% of Slovak citizens - 13 points below the European average. Looking at trends, in Slovakia, a dramatic increase of 14 points can be seen regarding the priority of maintaining peace and security in Europe. This could confirm the thesis that the "Slovak vision" of European political union is rather a kind of foreign policy and security/defence alliance that should provide security guarantees to Slovakia.

The adoption of the Constitution of the European Union is supported by 67% of Slovaks (63% in the EU25), and only 18% are against it (21% in the EU25). A majority of Slovak citizens as well as EU25 citizens think that the European Union would become stronger in the world, more democratic, more efficient, more transparent, more competitive economically and more socially-minded if the Treaty on the European Constitution is adopted. In all the aspects mentioned, Slovak responses were more positive than the European average. The majority of Slovak citizens associate themselves with the opinion that the European Constitution is necessary to ensure that the European institutions work well. 69% of Slovak respondents (8 points more than in the EU25) share this view.

4. Enlargement

Slovakia, since joining the European Union, belongs to those countries, whose citizens support further enlargement of the EU the most, in spite of considerable variation in the support in the period from spring 2004 to autumn 2006. In autumn 2006, 69% of Slovaks support the further enlargement of the EU – a figure that is 23 points above the European average and, at the same time, is 11 points more than in spring 2006. Greatest support among the citizens of the current Member States of the European Union, including those in Slovak Republic, relates to the membership of Switzerland and Norway. However, the order as to which countries should take the next two places is different in Slovakia to the EU25. While the European average for the third “most wanted” country in the EU is Iceland, in Slovakia, Slavic Croatia and Bulgaria got higher support than the Nordic island state. Croatia’s membership of the European Union is supported by 84% of Slovak citizens (50% in the EU25) and Bulgaria’s membership by 75% of Slovaks (46% in the EU25). Iceland follows behind Bulgaria, which joins the Union on 1 January 2007, in the Slovak ranking with 73% support its membership of the European Union (69% in the EU25).

The order of the other places of the desired membership ranking is the same in both Slovakia and the EU25, although Slovaks express greater support for the aspirations of the individual prospective applicants for membership than do the citizens of the EU25 as a whole. It is interesting that the membership of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine – countries which are either only in the early stage of negotiations on their EU accession or have not even made an official application for membership - has, in fact, the same level of support of Slovak citizens as Romania, which becomes an EU member on 1 January 2007. Serbia lags slightly behind the five above-mentioned countries.

The only two countries in the survey that have not received the support of the majority of Slovak respondents for their EU membership are Albania and Turkey. The membership of Albania is supported by only 36% of Slovak citizens (32% in the EU25) and of Turkey by only 33% of Slovaks (28% in the EU25). In the case of these two countries, Slovak opinion differed least of all from the opinion of respondents within the whole EU25. It should be noted that after Bulgaria and Romania join the European Union, Turkey, together with Croatia, will become the two top aspirants for EU membership.

The reason for the negative view of Slovaks on Turkish EU membership is not the geographic location of the country because as many as 71% of Slovak respondents (that is 15 points more than in the EU25) totally agree or at least tend to agree, that Turkey partly belongs to Europe by its geography. Slovakia is even one of the four EU Member States, in which a majority of the adult population totally or partly agrees that Turkey partly belongs to Europe by its history. This opinion was expressed by 57% of Slovak respondents – a figure that is 17 points above the European average.

Among the reasons that lead to the negative standpoint of EU25 citizens, including Slovakia, towards Turkey’s EU membership is apprehension regarding the cultural differences between Turkey and the EU Member States, as well as concern about immigration. As many as 64% of Slovak respondents and 61% of EU25 respondents think that the cultural differences between Turkey and the European Union Member States are too significant to allow it to join the EU. An even greater number (74%) of Slovak respondents and 66% of EU25 respondents are afraid that Turkey’s joining could risk favouring immigration to more developed countries in the European Union. On the other hand, a majority of Slovak and EU25 citizens do not think that Turkey’s accession to the European Union would strengthen security in this region, because only one-third of respondents agreed with this view.

5. Values of European Citizens

Although, in comparison with previous Eurobarometer surveys, the numbers of Slovak respondents who expressed their feeling that they do understand how the European Union works and the numbers of those who tend to believe that their voice counts in the European Union have risen, Slovaks still belong within the group of EU Member States that are less informed and less self-confident. As many as 62% of Slovaks do not think that their voice counts in the European Union – a figure that is 7 points less than in spring 2006. Only 31% of Slovak citizens believe that their voice counts in the EU - an increase of 10 points compared with the previous Eurobarometer survey. The majority of Slovaks (53%) still do not think that they understand how the European Union works - a drop of 4 points since the last survey, and 40% of them believe that they do understand how the EU works - an increase of 6 points from spring 2006. In spite of the positive trend, the level of understanding of the EU institutions, competencies and decision-making processes among Slovak citizens is very low.

Only 10% of Slovak respondents feel very much involved in European affairs. Thus Slovakia finds itself at the bottom of the table of the 25 EU Member States. It is a remarkable finding, taking into consideration that citizens of the Slovak Republic are some of the greatest supporters of European political union and therefore greater involvement in European affairs could be expected. Low levels of involvement in European affairs are probably related to the answers to one of the previous questions on the weight of the voice of Slovak citizens in the European Union.

In spite of the fact that more than a half of Slovak respondents (56%, 10 points more than in the EU25) expressed the opinion that the place of religion in their society is too important, in many other areas, Slovaks hold more conservative than liberal views. Only 19% (25 points below the European average) agree with the authorisation of homosexual marriages throughout Europe and only 12% (20 points less than in the EU25) agree with the authorisation of the adoption of children by homosexual couples throughout Europe.

As many as 73% of Slovak respondents (9 points more than in the EU25) think that free competition is the best guarantee for economic prosperity. Also, 64% of Slovak respondents (62% in the EU25) feel that the State intervenes too much in their lives, but, at the same time, approximately the same proportion of respondents (66% in Slovakia and 64% in the EU25) agree with the proposition that there is a need for more equality and justice even if this means less freedom for the individual.

The most important personal values of the Slovaks, as well as of the citizens of the EU25, are peace, human rights and the respect for human life. Respondents in both groups rank peace in first place which is considered to be one of the most important values by 63% of Slovak respondents, while the European average is 52%. In the EU25, citizens rank in second place respect for human life, which is considered to be one of the most important values by 43% respondents – a figure that is 9 points more than in Slovakia. 42% of Slovaks rank in second place human rights as one of the most important values (41% in EU25).

Slovaks agree with the citizens of the EU25 also on the order of three values that best represent the European Union. These values are democracy, peace and human rights. Democracy is considered to be one of the three values representing the EU by 50% of Slovak respondents – a figure that is 12 points more than in the EU25. Peace and human rights are considered to be values representing the EU by 43% of Slovak respondents, while in the EU25 the figures are 38% for human rights and 36% for peace respectively.



























We can, therefore, state that, from the point of view of respondents, the European Union represents at least two out of three most important values of Slovak and EU25 citizens, namely peace and human rights. Democracy which, in the opinion of respondents, is the value that best represents the EU, finds itself in fourth place in the ranking of personal values of both Slovak and EU25 citizens. On the other hand, respect for human life, which is one of the most important values of Slovak and particularly EU25 citizens, is only, according to a very small proportion of respondents, a value representing the European Union. From the opposite point of view, solidarity and support for others, which is, according to a

considerable percentage of respondents one of the values best representing the EU, is placed very low in the ranking of the most important personal values of Slovak and EU25 citizens.





Last, but not least, we can state, that while less than half of EU25 citizens (49%) think that, in terms of shared values, the European Union Member States are very close or fairly close to each other, in Slovakia, this opinion is shared by as much as 72% of citizens – a figure that is the highest in all the EU25 countries. This is apparently also one of the reasons why the opinions of Slovak citizens are more partial to the further integration of European states than the European average, both in the sense of enlargement, as well as in the sense of deepening of European integration.

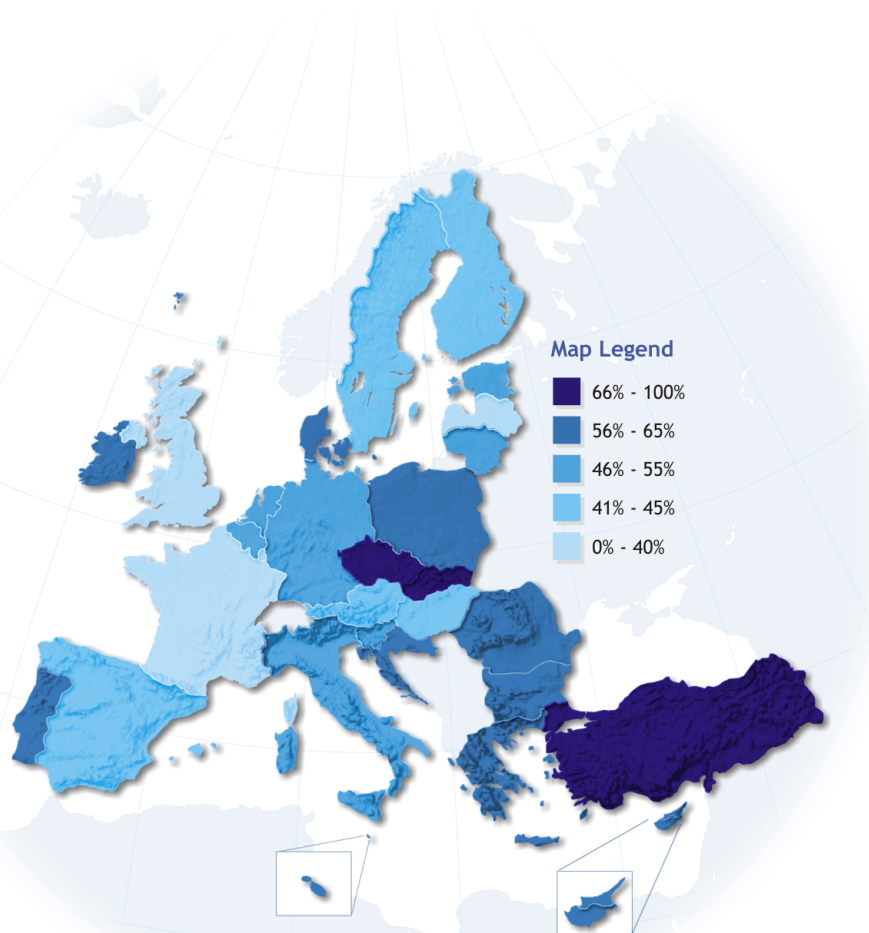
Question: QA49. In your opinion, in terms of shared values, are European Union Member States...?

Answers: Very close to each other + Fairly close to each other

Country Results		
 Slovakia	72%	
 Czech Republic	68%	
 Greece	63%	
 Malta	63%	
 Cyprus*	62%	
 Poland	59%	
 Ireland	58%	
 Portugal	58%	
 Denmark	56%	
 Italy	54%	
 Slovenia	52%	
 Germany	51%	
 The Netherlands	50%	
 European Union (25)	49%	
 Estonia	48%	
 Belgium	47%	
 Lithuania	47%	
 Austria	45%	
 Finland	45%	
 Sweden	45%	
 Hungary	44%	
 Spain	43%	
 Luxembourg	37%	
 United Kingdom	37%	
 France	34%	
 Latvia	29%	

* CY(tcc) = 56%

Other Countries		
 Turkey	66%	
 Bulgaria	62%	
 Croatia	62%	
 Romania	60%	



Conclusion

The level of satisfaction with life on the whole in Slovakia is still lower than the European average, although, in Slovakia, from 2003, we can observe moderate but continuous growth in levels of satisfaction. Over the last year, a significant decrease in the number of Slovak citizens who expect worsening of their life on the whole has been observed. Over the last year, a significant fall in the number of citizens who expect worsening of the economic situation in Slovakia in the next twelve months can also be seen. From autumn 2005, there have been major decreases in the number of Slovaks who expect a worsening of the employment situation in Slovakia. Citizens of the Slovak Republic are, compared with the citizens of the EU25, more optimistic as far as their expectations for the next 12 months relating to the employment situation in their country are concerned. However, as far as expectations relating to their personal job situation in the next 12 months are concerned, Slovaks are more pessimistic than EU25 citizens.

After the change of the government, which took place following the June parliamentary elections, trust in the national parliament and government has increased significantly in comparison with the previous survey. However, Slovaks still trust the European Union more than national institutions.

Slovaks assess their country's EU membership more positively than citizens of the EU25 in general. Slovaks also more markedly than the European average tend to agree with the view that their country has benefited from EU membership. Citizens of the Slovak Republic regard unemployment and the economic situation to be the two most important issues of their country.

Slovaks have a positive view of the European Union also as in regard to its role in maintaining peace in the world, fighting terrorism, the growth of the world economy, protection of the environment and in fighting poverty. Slovak citizens, in comparison with EU25 citizens in general, assess more positively the influence of their country's EU membership on the national economy and employment. Slovakia traditionally belongs to the group of countries whose citizens assess more positively the situation of the European economy than the situation of the national economy. Slovak citizens, like EU25 citizens, consider the improvement of education and professional training to be the best tools to improve the performance of the European economy.

Slovaks are traditionally among the greatest supporters of the development of European integration towards European political union. A majority of Slovaks, however, insist that two key policy areas – taxation and agriculture – should remain the subject of sovereign decision-making of the Slovak Republic and its authorities. Slovak citizens, however, have great expectations from the European Union in the areas of fighting unemployment and fighting poverty and social exclusion. Slovaks are willing to give up - at least partially if not completely - the sovereignty of their country in the area of foreign, defence and security policy, including the fight against terrorism, which would be probably competencies that would become the subject of decision-making of the European political union were it to be established. Slovaks also support another substantial building block of European political union, namely the European Constitution.

Slovakia, since joining the EU, belongs to the countries whose citizens are the greatest supporters of the further enlargement of the Union. Switzerland, Norway, Croatia and Bulgaria are the countries that receive greatest support from Slovak citizens. The only two countries whose EU membership did not receive the support of the majority of Slovaks are Albania and Turkey.

Slovaks agree with the citizens of the EU25 on the ranking of three values that best represent the European Union. These values are democracy, peace and human rights. From the point of view of respondents, the European Union represents at least two out of three most important values of Slovak citizens, namely peace and human rights. In Slovakia, there is the highest proportion, of any of the twenty-five EU member states, of people who have feeling that, in terms of shared values, European Union Member States are very close or fairly close.

EUROBAROMETER “Standard” 66.1 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between the 6th of September and the 10th of October 2006, TNS Opinion & Social, a consortium created between Taylor Nelson Sofres and EOS Gallup Europe, carried out wave 66.1 of the EUROBAROMETER, on request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General Press and Communication, Opinion Polls.

The EUROBAROMETER “Standard” is part of wave 66.1 and covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, resident in each of the Member States and aged 15 years and over. The EUROBAROMETER “Standard” has also been conducted in the two acceding countries (Bulgaria and Romania) and in the two candidate countries (Croatia and Turkey) and in the Turkish Cypriot Community. In these countries, the survey covers the national population of citizens of the respective nationalities and the population of citizens of all the European Union Member States that are residents in those countries and have a sufficient command of one of the respective national language(s) to answer the questionnaire. The basic sample design applied in all states is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each country, a number of sampling points was drawn with probability proportional to population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to population density.

In order to do so, the sampling points were drawn systematically from each of the "administrative regional units", after stratification by individual unit and type of area. They thus represent the whole territory of the countries surveyed according to the EUROSTAT NUTS II (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective nationalities in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas. In each of the selected sampling points, a starting address was drawn, at random. Further addresses (every Nth address) were selected by standard "random route" procedures, from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn, at random (following the "closest birthday rule"). All interviews were conducted face-to-face in people's homes and in the appropriate national language. As far as the data capture is concerned, CAPI (*Computer Assisted Personal Interview*) was used in those countries where this technique was available.

ABBREVIATIONS	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	FIELDWORKDATES	POPULATION 15+
BE	Belgium	TNS Dimarso	1.003	6/09/2006 - 1/10/2006	8.650.994
CZ	Czech Republic	TNS Aisa	1.091	7/09/2006 - 26/09/2006	8.571.710
DK	Denmark	TNS Gallup DK	1.003	9/09/2006 - 10/10/2006	4.411.580
DE	Germany	TNS Infratest	1.525	8/09/2006 - 4/10/2006	64.361.608
EE	Estonia	Emor	1.000	8/09/2006 - 2/10/2006	887.094
EL	Greece	TNS ICAP	1.000	6/09/2006 - 3/10/2006	8.693.566
ES	Spain	TNS Demoscopia	1.003	6/09/2006 - 5/10/2006	37.024.972
FR	France	TNS Sofres	1.007	6/09/2006 - 30/09/2006	44.010.619
IE	Ireland	TNS MRBI	1.000	6/09/2006 - 10/10/2006	3.089.775
IT	Italy	TNS Abacus	1.006	7/09/2006 - 5/10/2006	48.892.559
CY	Republic of Cyprus	Synovate	503	6/09/2006 - 1/10/2006	596.752
CY (tcc)	Turkish Cypriot Comm.	KADEM	500	7/09/2006 - 30/09/2006	157.101
LV	Latvia	TNS Latvia	1.015	8/09/2006 - 9/10/2006	1.418.596
LT	Lithuania	TNS Gallup Lithuania	1.000	6/09/2006 - 2/10/2006	2.803.661
LU	Luxembourg	TNS ILReS	500	6/09/2006 - 4/10/2006	374.097
HU	Hungary	TNS Hungary	1.005	6/09/2006 - 25/09/2006	8.503.379
MT	Malta	MISCO	500	7/09/2006 - 4/10/2006	321.114
NL	Netherlands	TNS NIPO	1.018	6/09/2006 - 5/10/2006	13.030.000
AT	Austria	Österreichisches Gallup-Institut	1.016	6/09/2006 - 5/10/2006	6.848.736
PL	Poland	TNS OBOP	1.000	9/09/2006 - 4/10/2006	31.967.880
PT	Portugal	TNS EUROTESTE	995	6/09/2006 - 2/10/2006	8.080.915
SI	Slovenia	RM PLUS	1.031	6/09/2006 - 5/10/2006	1.720.137
SK	Slovakia	TNS AISA SK	1.023	13/09/2006 - 26/09/2006	4.316.438
FI	Finland	TNS Gallup Oy	1.000	7/09/2006 - 4/10/2006	4.348.676
SE	Sweden	TNS GALLUP	1.013	7/09/2006 - 2/10/2006	7.486.976
UK	United Kingdom	TNS UK	1.308	6/09/2006 - 7/10/2006	47.685.578
BG	Bulgaria	TNS BBSS	1.035	6/09/2006 - 20/09/2006	6.671.699
RO	Romania	TNS CSOP	1.047	7/09/2006 - 29/09/2006	18.173.179
HR	Croatia	Puls	1.000	7/09/2006 - 27/09/2006	3.722.800
TR	Turkey	TNS PIAR	1.005	6/09/2006 - 4/10/2006	47.583.830
TOTAL			29.152	6/09/2006 - 10/10/2006	444.406.021

For each country a comparison between the sample and the universe was carried out. The Universe description was derived from Eurostat population data or from national statistics offices. For all countries surveyed, a national weighting procedure, using marginal and intercellular weighting, was carried out based on this Universe description. In all countries, gender, age, region and size of locality were introduced in the iteration procedure. For international weighting (i.e. EU averages), TNS Opinion & Social applies the official population figures as provided by EUROSTAT or national statistic offices. The total population figures for input in this post-weighting procedure are listed above.

Readers are reminded that survey results are estimations, the accuracy of which, everything being equal, rests upon the sample size and upon the observed percentage. With samples of about 1,000 interviews, the real percentages vary within the following confidence limits:

Observed percentages	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Confidence limits	± 1.9 points	± 2.5 points	± 2.7 points	± 3.0 points	± 3.1 points

Different rounding methods having been adopted for the EU graphs and the volumes, as a result the figures shown may differ by a point with the sum of individual cells.