

Economic, Political and Social Identity in the European Union

Professor John Wilton

Lecture 7

European Union identity today

Lecture 7

Web sites for information referred to in this lecture are:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb62/eb62first_en.pdf

www.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb74_pub_en.pdf

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb82/eb82_citizen_en.pdf

Eurobarometer 62 from Autumn 2004
(fieldwork carried out in
October/November 2004)

Eurobarometer 74 (fieldwork Oct/Nov.
2010, published Feb. 2011)

Eurobarometer 82 (fieldwork Oct/Nov
2014)

Lecture 7

Eurobarometer 62 (Autumn 2004)

EU membership good thing (56%). Plus 8 percentage points from Eurobarometer 61 (Spring 2004). Highest level of support since 1995.

- But, view that EU membership is a good thing for their country mainly found amongst the citizens of old Member States (85% Luxembourg, 77% Ireland, 75% Netherlands, 73% Belgium, 72% Spain)

Lecture 7

- Oct/Nov 2004 Eurobarometer poll 53% of EU citizens considered their country had benefited from belonging to the EU
- 34% thought their country hadn't benefited.
 - Positive view Plus 6 percentage points from survey Feb/Mar 2004 - reached a level not seen over previous 10 years

Lecture 7

IMAGE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- 50% had a positive image of the EU in Oct/Nov 2004 survey – an increase of 6 percentage points on Spring 2004 survey
- 33% were neutral about the EU image
- 15% had a negative perception of the image of the EU

Lecture 7

From this the Eurobarometer 62 report suggested that:

- *“This constant trend reflects once again the gap which exists between the wishes of citizens for more Europe and their perception of the current situation.”*
(p.29)

Lecture 7

Eurobarometer 74 (Autumn 2010): Most important *personal values* for EU citizens -

- human rights 47%
- peace 44%
- respect for human life 41%
- democracy 29%
- individual freedom 23%
- rule of law 22%
- equality 19%

Lecture 7

Eurobarometer 74 (Autumn 2010):

- When asked to select the values that best represent the E.U., Europeans gave priority to the values which are the most important for them personally:
 - human rights 38%
 - democracy 38%
 - peace 35%

Lecture 7

Eurobarometer 74 (Autumn 2010):

Perceptions of what the E.U. represents for E.U. citizens:

- freedom to travel, study and work
anywhere in E.U. 45%
- Euro 40%
- peace 24%
- democracy 23%
- cultural diversity 23%
- stronger voice in world 23%
- BUT,** - waste of money 25%

Lecture 7

Eurobarometer 74 (Autumn 2010):

- 38% of Europeans surveyed had a positive image of the European Union
(= minus/decline of 10 percentage points in comparison with Eurobarometer 72 in Autumn 2009 – effect of Euro crisis?)
- Eurobarometer 62 (Autumn 2004) 50% had positive image of E.U.

Eurobarometer 82 (Autumn 2014)

45% of respondents felt attached to the E.U.
(9% felt 'very attached')

52% did not feel attached to E.U.

'Sense of E.U. citizenship is predominant,
but in slight decline between Spring 2014
survey and Autumn 2014 survey

63% Autumn 2014 identified themselves as
citizens of E.U in some way (35% did not)
(65% did in Spring 2014)

Eurobarometer 82 (Autumn 2014)

Self-identification as EU citizens decreases with age:

71% of 15 to 24 year olds

66% of 25 – 39 year olds

64% of 40 – 54 year olds

59% of 55 year olds and over

Higher among those who studied up to the age of 20 and beyond (73%) than among those who left school at 15 or earlier (48%)

Eurobarometer 82 (Autumn 2014)

VALUES:

- Peace 40%
- Human Rights 36%
- Democracy 31%

IMAGE OF THE E.U.

- 39% positive
- 22% negative
- 37% neutral