‘A citizen revolt? Increased EU-scepticism across Europe ’

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Overview

• Latest trends in EU-scepticism
  – Key statistics
  – Link to Euro-crisis
• EU-scepticism and the Nobel Peace Prize
  – The case for and against the award in the media
• Reflections
  – Is the EU a worthy NPP recipient?
Key trends: EU-scepticism

QA14 In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?

- Total 'positive'
- Neutral
- Total 'negative'
- Don't know

- Sp.2006: 50%, 32%
- Aut.2006: 46%, 34%
- Sp.2007: 52%, 31%
- Aut.2007: 49%, 31%
- Sp.2008: 48%, 34%
- Aut.2008: 45%, 34%
- Jan.-Feb. 2009: 43%, 35%
- Sp.2009: 45%, 36%
- Aut.2009: 48%, 35%
- Sp.2010: 42%, 37%
- Aut.2010: 40%, 38%
- Sp.2011: 40%, 38%
- Aut.2011: 41%, 31%
- Sp.2012: 39%, 31%

- Sp.2006: 15%, 2%
- Aut.2006: 17%, 3%
- Sp.2007: 15%, 2%
- Aut.2007: 14%, 2%
- Sp.2008: 15%, 3%
- Aut.2008: 17%, 2%
- Jan.-Feb. 2009: 17%, 3%
- Sp.2009: 16%, 2%
- Aut.2009: 15%, 2%
- Sp.2010: 19%, 2%
- Aut.2010: 20%, 2%
- Sp.2011: 20%, 2%
- Aut.2011: 26%, 2%
- Sp.2012: 28%, 2%
QA13 I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it.

Answer: Tend to trust

- The (NATIONALITY) government
- The (NATIONALITY) Parliament
- The European Union

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EU-scepticism and the crisis

- 60% of EU citizens think the worst is yet to come (unemployment)
  - Majority (>50%) in 20 countries
- 84% think EU countries will have to work more closely together
- 51% expect the EU to deal with the economy and fight the crisis
  - 63%: the EU has sufficient power and tools to defend the economic interests of Europe in the global economy

BUT:

- 21% think the EU will be able to take effective actions against the crisis
- 51% remain sceptical as to whether the EU is going in the right direction to exit the crisis
  - 31% wrong direction
  - 20% neither right or wrong direction
Targets: EU and member state leaders; ECB, EU Comm

Opposing the EU system as a whole

Awakening of national stereotypes, nationalism, populism

‘Us’ and ‘them’: Greeks vs. North, people vs. elites
EU-scepticism in context

- Most Greeks and other Europeans want ‘another Europe’, but a Europe nevertheless
  - The EU is not a business club; built on ‘peace-prosperity-democracy’
  - Reject the tyranny of ‘one-way’ ideology
  - Reject discounts in democratic processes

**BUT:**

- Not immune to populist arguments

- Trust in EU Parliament and Court remains higher than other EU institutions
  - Elections most important means to have their say in the EU for 60% of citizens (Standard EB77)
QD6. Which of the following elements would best strengthen your feeling about being a European citizen?

- A European social welfare system harmonised between the Member States (healthcare, education, pensions, etc.)
  - 37% (EB77 Sp.2012) vs 34% (EB73 Sp.2010)

- Being able to move to any EU country after your retirement and to take your pension with you
  - 24% (EU27) vs 27% (EB77 Sp.2012)

- European emergency response service to fight international natural disasters
  - 19% (EU27) vs 23% (EB77 Sp.2012)

- Participating in national debates about the future of Europe*
  - 10% (EU27) vs 0% (EB73 Sp.2010)

- You do not want to be a European citizen/ You do not feel that you’re a European citizen (SPONTANEOUS)
  - 6% (EU27) vs 5% (EB73 Sp.2010)

- None (SPONTANEOUS)
  - 8% (EU27) vs 7% (EB73 Sp.2010)

- Don't know
  - 7% (EU27) vs 7% (EB73 Sp.2010)

21% in Greece and Cyprus
EU scepticism in context

• Most important elements of European identity
  – **The Euro** (41%)
    • But opinions split 52-40 for and against the euro/monetary union
  – **Democratic values** (40%)
  – **Culture; History** (26% each)
    • Economy, values and culture also seen as main elements for the feeling of community among EU citizens

• **Feel citizens of the EU: 61%**
  – Majority in all countries except Italy and the UK; 50-50 in Greece and Bulgaria
The EU as Nobel Peace prize winner
Reactions in the media

• The case for
  – 60 years of peace in Europe
  – Prosperity, democracy and EU citizenship

• The case against
  – The EU is in crisis: The EU is not prize-worthy
  – Currently a social and economic war waged against EU people
  – The EU does not always promote peace / protect human rights
Reflections

• The EU: Worthy Peace Prize winner?
  – 60 years of peace and prosperity in Europe: Undeniable
  – Award is vague and shies away from critique
    • EU and member state political elites not worthy of prize
      – Democratic ‘discounts’
      – Corruption
      – Armaments and armed interventions
    • EU peoples worthy of the prize
      – NPP could have gone to people of the EU, with European Parliament as representative recipient

BUT

– NPP has reminded all what the EU ought to be about
– NPP critique based on EU-scepticism on shaky ground
  • EU citizens do not wish the abolishment of the EU
    – Euroscepticism has many hues
Which of the following do you think is the most positive result of the EU? And then:

- Peace among the Member States of the EU
- The free movement of people, goods and services within the EU
- The euro
- The economic power of the EU
- The political and diplomatic influence of the EU in the rest of the world
- Student exchange programmes such as ERASMUS
- The level of social welfare (healthcare, education, pensions) in the EU
- The common agricultural policy
- Other (SPONTANEOUS)
- None (SPONTANEOUS)
- Don't know

Questions and comments welcome,
Thanks for listening!