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## **ОБЩЕСТВЕННОТО МНЕНИЕ НА ГЕРМАНИЯ ЗА ЕВРОПЕЙСКИЯ СЪЮЗ**

### **PUBLIC OPINION OF GERMANY ABOUT EUROPEAN UNION**

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**Abstract:** The main aim of this study is to indicate Germans' perceptions and opinions about the concept of the EU and to reveal significant shifts in German citizens' public opinion by using selected Eurobarometer indicators for the period of 1999-2008. Results indicate that Germans support the membership of the EU throughout the time period but they attached their country more than EU. Their main fear regarding the building of Europe is the transfer of jobs to other Member States with lower production costs. However it seems that EU has a positive and pecuniary meaning for German citizens.

**Keywords:** Public opinion, German citizenship, national identity

#### **1. Introduction**

European Union examines the opinions and prospects of its citizens and candidate country citizens twice a year. In this context Standard Eurobarometer has been monitoring since 1973 by European Commission. The Report indicates Europeans' perceptions and opinions and significant shifts in European public opinion.

Germany is one of the six founding member of European Union. It has the largest population of any EU country. Germany is a federal republic. In 1990, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the former East Germany and West Germany integrated and a newly united Germany was established. German is the most widely spoken first language in the European Union. It is the world's third largest economy.

The main aim of this study is to analyze Germans' perceptions and opinions about the EU. In order to indicate Germans' opinions and behaviours about EU and significant shifts in German public opinion some selective Eurobarometer questions are analyzed. Consequently this study sheds light on the state of public opinion towards the European Union for Germany between 1999 and 2008.

#### **2. Support for Membership of the European Union**

In order to determine 'support for membership of the European Union' the question asked below:

"Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)'s membership of the European Union is...?" A good thing – bad thing

**Table 1. Support for membership of the European Union**

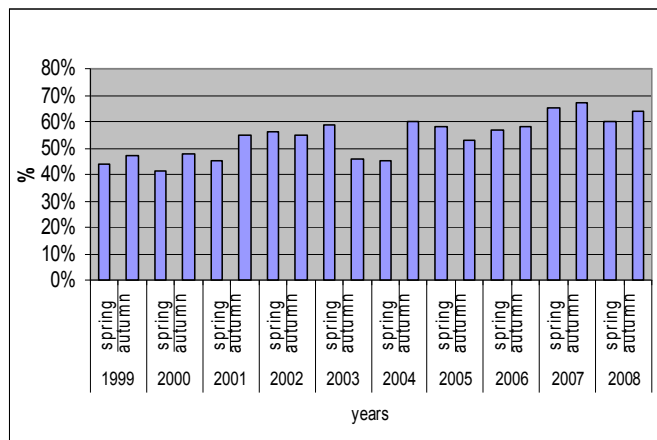
	spring	autumn
<b>1999</b>	44%	47%
<b>2000</b>	41%	48%
<b>2001</b>	45%	55%
<b>2002</b>	56%	55%
<b>2003</b>	59%	46%
<b>2004</b>	45%	60%
<b>2005</b>	58%	53%
<b>2006</b>	57%	58%
<b>2007</b>	65%	67%
<b>2008</b>	60%	64%

**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

According to Table 1, it looks like the support for EU membership has climbed smoothly since spring 1999. Support for membership of the European Union was approximately %45 in 1999. It was 44% in 1999 spring and 47% in 1999 autumn. In the spring of 1999, in EU-15 49% of Europeans regard their country's

membership to the European Union as a good thing. The support of Germany was below the Europe average However German citizens' support for membership of the European Union increases in time and reaches 60% in 2008. Support for membership of the European Union is 60% in spring 2008 and 64% in autumn 2008.

**Figure 1: Support for membership of the European Union**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

In spite of Economic crises, membership of the European Union is still seen as a good thing by an absolute majority of Europeans in 2008. Moreover, this proportion has increased very slightly. Figure 1 indicates the support of EU-27 is

53% in autumn 2008. Germany's support for membership of the European Union is over the EU-27 average. The closest countries in terms of support of European Union are Denmark 64% and Poland 65%.

There is a drop in the Germany's support of European Union between 2003 autumn and 2004 spring. This may be due to the concerns of enlargement. New ten countries joined to European Union. It was the largest enlargement of EU. For example in 2003 Germany's support for the enlargement was 38%, but on the other hand against for enlargement was 42%. Contrarily, support of EU-15 was 47% in 2003 autumn. Finally according to the models which determine the public support for European integration in member states countries the support of German citizens looks like the diffuse support. Even though a drop in 2004 dramatic fluctuations do not observe.

### 3. Image of the European Union

For the first time, this Eurobarometer measures people's image of the European Union with the following question.

"In general, does the European Union conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?"

According to the eurobarometer results, positive image of the European Union is 45% for EU-27 in 2008 autumn. But the positive image of the EU is on the decline since 2007 spring and it may be the result of economic crisis. But although still the majority views, there are now fewer Europeans who have a positive image of the EU. According to the German's, it looks like the image of the European Union is climbing since 2000. While the positive image of the EU was 33% in spring 2000, it reaches to the 48% in autumn 2008. But for the last two years the image of European Union drops from 52% to 48%. This drop may be the deterioration of economic situation because people feel the economic crisis after the second half of the 2007.

**Table 2: Image of the European Union**

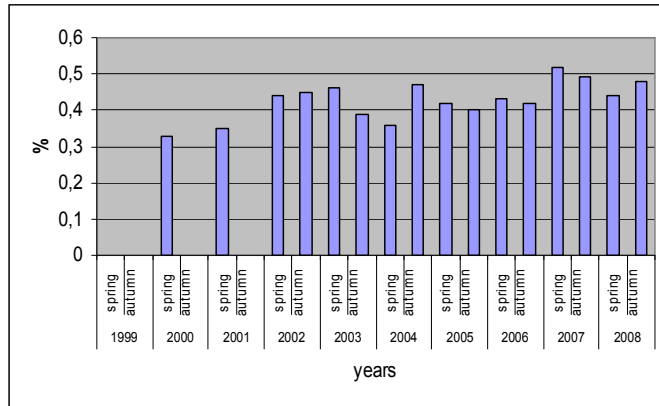
	spring	autumn
<b>1999</b>	-	-
<b>2000</b>	33%	-
<b>2001</b>	35%	-
<b>2002</b>	44%	45%
<b>2003</b>	46%	39%
<b>2004</b>	36%	47%
<b>2005</b>	42%	40%
<b>2006</b>	43%	42%
<b>2007</b>	52%	49%
<b>2008</b>	44%	48%

**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

According to table 2; In spring 2000 first time of that question asked to the Europeans. In this context Germany's aspect was below to the average EU-15 results. However in autumn 2008 the positive opinion of Germany 48% is over the EU-27 average. Besides Germany,

citizens of Portugal and Lithuania's opinions are the same. The positive image of the European Union is 48% each. The ratio of Malta is 49%. The highest proportion of respondents have a positive image of the EU belongs to a new member country Romania (Eurobarometer-70, 2008:48).

**Figure 2: Image of the European Union**



**Source: Eurobarometer Report No:51-70, 1999-2008**

According to the figure 2, the positive image of the European Union dropped 36% in spring 2004. It also may be the result of enlargement in 2004. However generally there is a positive increase in the image of the European Union for Germany.

#### 4. Awareness of EU Institutions

The third question asked to the people is the "Have you ever heard of the ... ?" By asking this question knowledge level of people about EU institutions is measured.

**Table 3: Awareness of EU Institutions**

	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
European Parliament (EP);	86%	89%		88%	84%	89%	84%	90%	88%	87%
European Commission (EC);	74%	73%	72%	73%	70%	72%	69%	73%	72%	72%
Council of Ministers of the EU	59%	53%	57%	59%	54%	60%	54%	60%	56%	54%
European Central Bank. (ECB)	79%	78%	81%	85%	82%	85%	81%	85%	85%	84%
Court of justice	74%	76%	78%	81%	80%	84%	77%	85%	83%	85%
The European Ombudsman	19%	18%	22%	21%	20%	23%	22%	23%	18%	21%
The European Court of Auditors (ECA)	64%	62%	66%	68%	65%	72%	64%	72%	66%	68%
The Committee of the Regions of the EU (CoR)	32%	29%	34%	32%	32%	36%	27%	30%	29%	30%
The Economic and Social Committee of the EU (EESC)	41%	40%	41%	42%	40%	47%	36%	42%	42%	41%
	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	

	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
EP	89%	95%	92%	92%	-	92%	93%	92%	90%	90%
EC	72%	79%	78%	76%	-	79%	82%	80%	77%	77%
Council of Ministers of the EU	58%	63%	58%	60%	-	63%	72%	66%	62%	64%
ECB	85%	88%	85%	81%	-	85%	87%	86%	88%	90%
Court of justice	85%	91%	78%	86%	-	90%	-	89%	-	-
The European Ombudsman	21%	17%	-	22%	-	22%	-	22%	-	-
ECA	71%	73%	-	67%	-	69%	-	69%	-	-
(CoR)	33%	31%	-	25%	-	24%	-	25%	-	-
EESC	44%	48%	-	40%	-	42%	-	45%	-	-

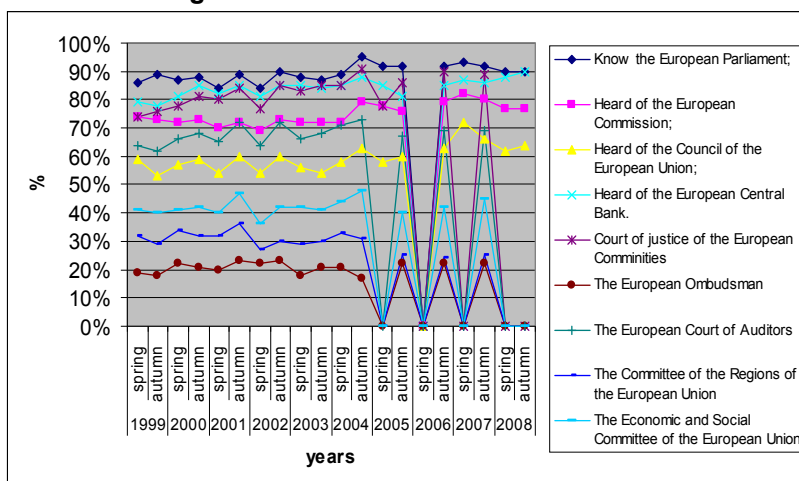
**Source: Eurobarometer Report No:51-70, 1999-2008**

The survey also measures the public's knowledge about the institutions of the European Union. Generally the public is most likely to have heard of the European Parliament and followed by the European Commission. Awareness levels also vary from country to country. In 2000 average awareness level of EU-15 was 58% and the awareness level of Germany was 60%. The most awareness country about EU

institutions is Luxemburg (Eurobarometer-53, 2000:78). Germany is the most awareness country between EU-27 in terms of knowledge of The Court of Justice of the European Communities 89% and The European Court of Auditors 69% in 2007 autumn.

Figure 3 indicates the variation of awareness levels of EU Institutions between 1999 and 2008.

**Figure 3: Awareness of EU Institutions**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

Resembling to the European Union average, the European Parliament remains the institution which Germans are the most familiar: 90% of the people polled have heard of it in 2007 autumn. Then unlike European Union average, Germans are more familiar to the Court of Justice of the European Communities 89%. The third institution which is known commonly is the European Central Bank 86%. Respectively European Commission 80%, The European Court of Auditors 69%, Council of Ministers of the EU 66%, The Economic and Social Committee of the EU 45%, The Committee of the Regions of the EU 25% and The European Ombudsman 22%. This ranking is generally similar for Germany in terms of given years. Top three known institutions are European Parliament, the Court of Justice of the European Communities and the European Central Bank.

#### 4.1. Trust in the European Institutions and National Institutions

Two questions asked to determine the trust in European institutions, European Union and National institutions. Therefore it

is important to explore where Germans stand in the following years. Are Germans more confidence in the European institutions, European Union or National institutions?

First of all to examine trust linked to the European institutions or in other words perception of European Institutions the following question asked to the people.

“And, for each of them, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it?”

In 1999 spring the European Parliament is the institution that the public is most likely to trust (50%), followed by the Court of Justice (44%). The public is most likely to be wary of the European Commission and the Council of Ministers. Many people can't say whether they trust the institutions because they lack an opinion. In this context it can be said that the higher trust of these institutes cause the more knowledge about it. People trust the institutions which they have more knowledge. At the same time Germans are most likely to trust the Court of justice of the European Communities 50%, European central bank 50% and European parliament.

**Table 4: Trust in the European Institutions**

	1999 Spring Autumn		2000 Spring Autumn		2001 Spring Autumn		2002 Spring Autumn		2003 Spring Autumn	
EP	43%	48%	46%	47%	47%	55%	55%	58%	56%	50%
EC	28%	33%	34%	36%	37%	42%	42%	47%	44%	40%
Council of ministers of EU	31%	31%	31%		33%	37%	36%	41%	35%	32%
Court of justice	50%	50%	51%	52%	53%	61%	60%	66%	64%	59%
European Ombudsman	15%	17%	18%	17%	18%	20%	20%	22%	16%	16%
ECB	50%	46%	43%	45%	50%	56%	56%	59%	57%	50%
ECA	39%	40%	39%	40%	42%	48%	46%	50%	44%	41%
CoR	19%	22%	23%	23%	22%	28%	23%	26%	22%	20%
EESC	21%	26%	24%	27%	25%	32%	26%	29%	25%	23%
	2004 Spring Autumn		2005 Spring Autumn		2006 Spring Autumn		2007 Spring Autumn		2008 Spring Autumn	

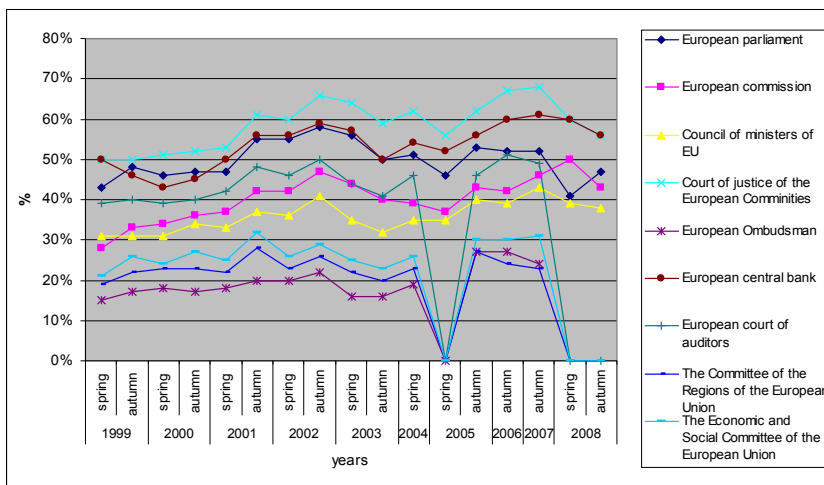
	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
EP	51%	55%	46%	53%	49%	52%	58%	52%	41%	47%
EC	39%	44%	37%	43%	42%	42%	49%	46%	50%	43%
Council of ministers of EU	35%	-	35%	40%	38%	39%	46%	43%	39%	38%
Court of justice	62%	-	56%	62%	-	67%	-	68%	60%	56%
European Ombudsman	19%	-	0%	27%	-	27%	-	24%	-	-
ECB	54%	-	52%	56%	-	60%	65%	61%	60%	56%
ECA	46%	-	-	46%	-	51%	-	49%	-	-
CoR	23%	-	-	27%	-	24%	-	23%	-	-
EESC	26%	-	-	30%	-	30%	-	31%	-	-

**Source: Eurobarometer Report No:51-70, 1999-2008**

It is observed that there is a smooth degree of trust in the individual institutions of the European Union in Germany. As it is observed in figure 4, in autumn 2008, trust in the European parliament was declining compared to other years. On the other hand trust in the Court of Justice of the European Communities and the European Central Bank was increasing compared to all years.

Trust in the Court of Justice of the European Communities and the European Central Bank is 56% in 2008 autumn. It looks like in spite of the deterioration of the economic situation. Germans rely on the European Central Bank. It may be due to a possible defense against the crisis. The European Central Bank decides monetary policy in the euro area.

**Figure 4: Trust in the European Institutions**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

In addition to Germany Denmark and Greece are the other two countries which trust in the Court of Justice of the European Communities. Also The Netherlands and Finland has high level of trust in European Central Bank. Finally trust in the European institutions does not fluctuate. The knowledge and trust level of institutions does not change irregularly.

Second question is asked for to examine the trust in European Union and national institutions.

“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”

Results of this question are shown in Table 5 below. In 1999 spring nearly 4 in 10 EU citizens tend to trust in the European Union. In 2008 spring 50% of Europeans trust in the European Union. Europeans tend to have significantly more confidence in the European Union than in their national institutions.

**Table 5: Trust in the European Union and National Institutions**

	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
EU	31%	-	-	-	33%	48%	42%	-	-	35%
National Parliament	45%	-	-	41%	42%	52%	42%	-	35%	31%
National Government	43%	-	-	-	39%	47%	37%	-	-	24%
Army	61%	-	-	66%	61%	67%	62%	-	62%	64%
	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
EU	35%	47%	39%	39%	41%	38%	56%	39%	43%	43%
National Parliament	29%	-	35%	36%	-	31%	51%	41%	41%	-
National Government	23%	-	27%	28%	-	27%	49%	40%	36%	42%
Army	61%	-	-	72%	-	72%	-	73%	69%	-

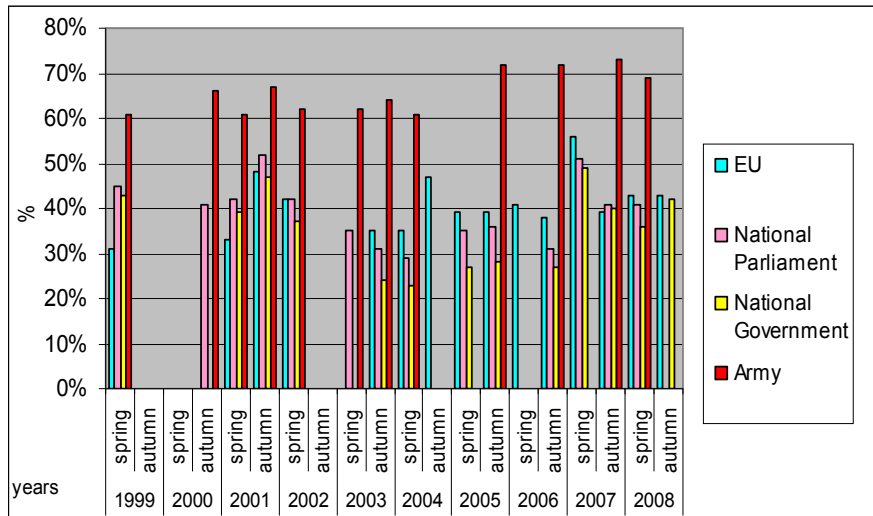
**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

Trust in the European Union was 31% in 1999. It was under the trust level of national government and national parliament. Germans tend to have significantly more confidence in their national institutions than the European Union in 1999. At the same time confidence level of army is considerably more in Germany, it was 61% in 1999.

Trust in the European Union is 43% in 2008 autumn. It seems that trust levels for the EU have slightly decreased when compared to the 2007 spring. The cause of the drop may be the economic crises which began to emerge early 2007 but became influential late 2007 as mentioned before.



**Figure 5: Trust in the European Union and National Institutions**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

According to table 5 trust levels for the army is the highest in Germany. It is 69% in 2008. But compared to 2007 its level is dropped. Germans tend to have significantly more confidence in the European Union than in their national institutions in 2008. Trust levels for the EU have slightly increased compared to the previous autumn, while slight declines are recorded for national institutions. Trust level for the EU is the highest in Cyprus, Slovakia and Malta. However Trust level for the EU is 50% for EU-27 average. Even Germany's confidence in EU increases it is still under the EU average and also the confidence in national institutions is over the EU-27 average in 2008 spring.

The highest levels of confidence in national Parliaments are observed in the three Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden) while the national Government enjoys the strongest confidence levels in Cyprus, Finland, Estonia and Malta. The levels of confidence in national Parliaments and national Government are 41% and 36% respectively.

Top three more confidence institutions for German citizens are the Court of Justice of the European Communities, the European Central Bank and European

Parliament. Additionally Germans tend to have significantly more confidence in the European Union than in their national institutions in 2008. Trust level for the army is the highest in Germany. It is above the confidence level of EU, national government and national parliament. According to these results it feels like the diffuse support is valid in Germany.

### 5. People's Attachment to Their Locality, Their Region, Their Country and the European Union

The question below looks at how attached citizens feel to the various politico-geographical levels of identity - that is their town or village, their region, their country and Europe.

"People may feel different levels of attachment to their village, town or city, to their country or to the European Union. Please tell me how attached you feel to..."

The survey measures the degree of attachment people have to their town or village, to their region, to their country and to Europe.

The level of attachment to the European Union has fallen slightly both EU average

and Germany. While Germany feels more attached to European Union 58% in 1999 then it decreases to 52% in 2007. However the attachment to the European Union of Germany is over the EU-27 average 49%.

Belgium is the most attached country to the European Union in 2007. The attachment level of Portugal is the same as Germany 52% and Spain 53%.

**Table 6: Attachment to town/village, region, country and European Union**

	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	spring	autumn	spring	autumn	spring	autumn	spring	autumn	spring	autumn
town/village	89%	-	-	86%	-	-	-	89%	-	88%
region	84%	-	-	87%	-	-	-	88%	-	86%
country	86%	-	-	85%	-	-	-	89%	-	86%
Europe	58%	-	-	64%	-	-	-	46%	-	62%
	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	spring	autumn	spring	autumn	spring	autumn	spring	autumn	spring	autumn
town/village	-	88%	89%	-	88%	-	86%	85%	-	-
region	-	89%	88%	-	88%	-	-	-	-	-
country	-	88%	87%	-	88%	-	90%	90%	-	-
Europe	-	69%	66%	-	67%	-	55%	52%	-	-

**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

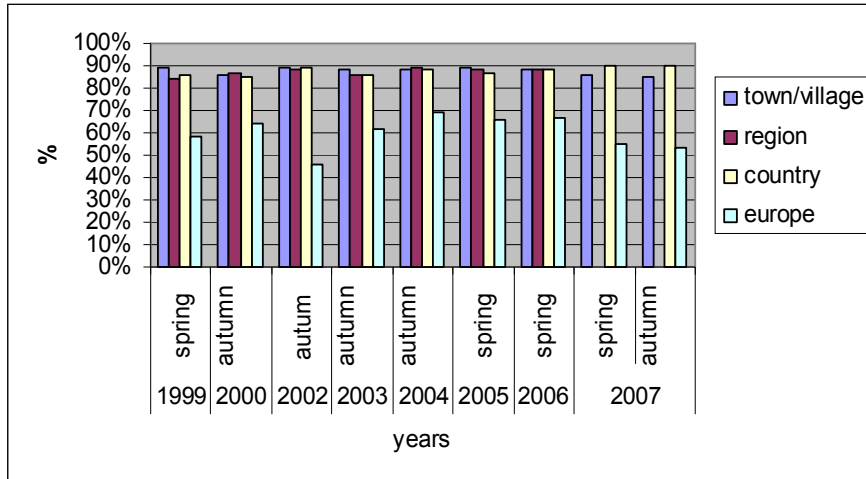
European citizens feel mainly attached to their country then in very similar proportions to their region or their city. The level of attachment of Europeans to their village is 87% and their country is 91% in autumn 2007. This attachment is far stronger than their attachment to the European Union 49%. In terms of attachment levels to village/town decreases slightly in Germany. It was the highest indicator in 1999 but it falls to the second in 2008.

As shown in figure 6, German citizens feel mainly attached to their country 90% then they attached to their town/village 85%

in 2007. Attachment to the town/village and country is the highest in Germany. Attachment to European Union is the lowest for all years. It is 52% in spring 2008.

Ultimately Europeans are less attached to the European Union than to their own country or city/town/village. However, given their trust in the European institutions and their views on the benefits of their country's membership of the European Union, it is clear that the vast majority of Europeans are pleased to be part of the European Union (Eurobarometer-68, 2007:69). It feels like this result can be asserted for Germany.

**Figure 6: Attachment to town/village, region, country and European Union**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

It is mentioned that the stronger feelings of national identity lead to lower levels of support for the European Union. In this context according to the results German citizens attached their country more than European Union.

### 5.1. Pride in Being European

2000 is the first to have measured the extent to which EU citizens feel proud to be Europeans. The wording of the question is as follows:

“Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud or not at all proud to be European?”

**Table 7: Pride in Being European**

Years	Spring	Autumn
1999	-	-
2000	-	51%
2001	-	46%
2002	51%	-
2003	-	49%
2004	-	57%
2005	-	52%
2006	-	52%
2007	-	-
2008	-	-

**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

Sixty-two percent of EU citizens feel very or fairly proud to be European and only 9% feel not very or not at all proud in 2000. 52% of German citizens feel very or fairly proud to be European in 2000. Levels of

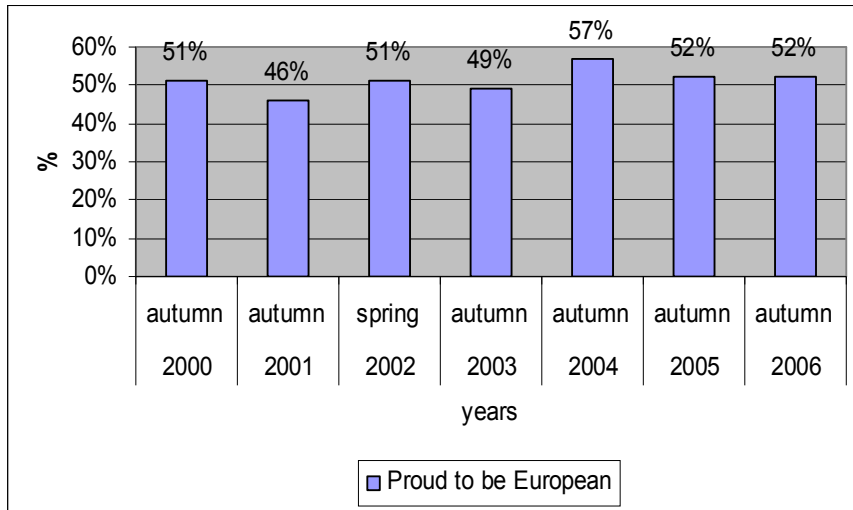
pride are lowest in the UK (45%) and Germany (51%). In the UK, 19% feels not at all proud. In Germany (11%), this figure is considerably lower (eurobarometer, 2000). However, even in these two countries,

people who feel proud outnumber those who do not feel proud.

The data are collapsing in order to category collapsing. The answers of very

proud and fairly proud are evaluated together

**Figure 7: Pride in Being European**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

Close to 6 out of 10 respondents declare to feel proud to be European 59% in 2006. On average, citizens living in the 10 new Member States are more likely to feel proud to be European than their counterparts in the 15 'old' Member States. New member states have greater European pride. According to figure 7, 52% of people proud of European but Germans pride level is under the European average (EU-25). Pride in being European in Cyprus 50% and Estonia 53% is close to Germany. Countries where over a quarter lack pride are Germany 29% and Greece 26%. 13% of German citizens feel themselves not be European. Autumn 2004 is the highest level to feel proud to be European in unlike other

years. Constitution for Europe adopted in June 2004 after the participation of ten new countries in 01.05.2004 and then a new process begun. This may be a reason of highest level. Indicators of this period are also higher than other years for each question.

## 6. The Benefits of Membership of the EU

In order to determine the benefits from European Union membership the following question asked to the European citizens.

"Taking everything into account, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?"

**Table 8: Benefit From European Union Membership**

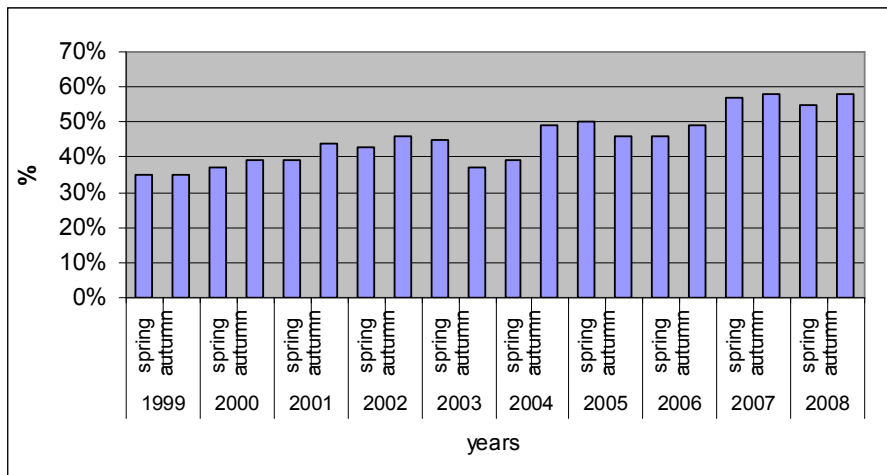
	spring	autumn
<b>1999</b>	35%	35%
<b>2000</b>	37%	39%
<b>2001</b>	39%	44%
<b>2002</b>	43%	46%
<b>2003</b>	45%	37%
<b>2004</b>	39%	49%
<b>2005</b>	50%	46%
<b>2006</b>	46%	49%
<b>2007</b>	57%	58%
<b>2008</b>	55%	58%

**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

For the Europeans the proportion of citizens who feel that their country has benefited from EU membership stands at 44% in the spring of 1999. Table 8 indicates, 35% German citizens benefited from European Union membership and it is observed that they benefited less than the

European citizens; because their level is under the EU-15 average. Austria 37% and United Kingdom 31% were the other least benefited countries. 39% of Germans thought that they did not benefit from European Union membership.

**Figure 8: Benefit From European Union Membership**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

A majority of Europeans think that their country has on balance profited from membership 56% in autumn of 2008. On the other hand 31% of Europeans think that their country is not benefited from European Union Membership. Ireland and Estonia is

the highest proportion of people who feel their country has benefited in autumn 2008.

Since the spring of 1999, significant positive developments are noted in Germany where the proportion of people who feel their country has benefited

increased significantly. As it is shown in figure 8, the proportion of German citizens that feels that their country has benefited from EU membership stands at 58% in the autumn of 2008. It's over the EU-27 average. The proportion of German people who feel their country has benefited from EU membership increased. The people who feel their country has not benefited drops and reaches 33%. Majority of Germans think that their country has benefited from European Union membership.

### 6.1. Personal Benefits of Membership of the European Union

First time in spring 2002 a new question has asked the respondents to determine the

meaning of and personal feelings about the EU.

The question: "What does the European Union mean to you personally?" comprises these options: Peace, Economic prosperity, Democracy, Social protection, Freedom of movements, Cultural diversity, Stronger say in the World, Euro, Unemployment, Bureaucracy, Waste of money, Loss of cultural identity, More crime and Not enough control at external frontiers. Not enough control at external borders, waste of money, bureaucracy, more crime, unemployment and loss of cultural identity are the negative connotations.

**Table 9: Personal Benefits from the European Union**

	2002 spring	2003 Spring Autumn		2004 Spring Autumn		2003 Spring Autumn		2006 Spring	2007 Spring	2008 Spring
Peace	46%	43%	46%	44%	52%	53%	54%	54%	48%	41%
Economic prosperity	19%	17%	13%	15%	14%	15%	19%	14%	16%	12%
Democracy	-	-	-	30%	28%	36%	37%	37%	27%	24%
Social protection	12%	12%	8%	11%	7%	12%	13%	9%	8%	7%
Freedom of move.	47%	54%	51%	51%	57%	58%	56%	57%	56%	55%
Cultural diversity	32%	35%	33%	35%	38%	34%	47%	39%	36%	27%
Stronger say	33%	33%	30%	31%	33%	49%	36%	28%	32%	21%
Euro	54%	54%	56%	58%	57%	31%	49%	50%	53%	46%
Unemployment	24%	26%	24%	31%	33%	34%	32%	34%	24%	19%
Bureaucracy	30%	28%	32%	35%	37%	34%	37%	37%	39%	36%
Waste of money	28%	28%	35%	40%	39%	38%	43%	43%	37%	37%
Loss of cultural identity	8%	10%	12%	13%	13%	11%	14%	14%	9%	8%
More crime	30%	31%	33%	41%	40%	34%	36%	35%	37%	32%
External frontiers	27%	31%	34%	34%	34%	33%	41%	33%	20%	30%

**Source: Eurobarometer Report No: 51-70, 1999-2008**

For close to half of the respondents surveyed the European Union means the

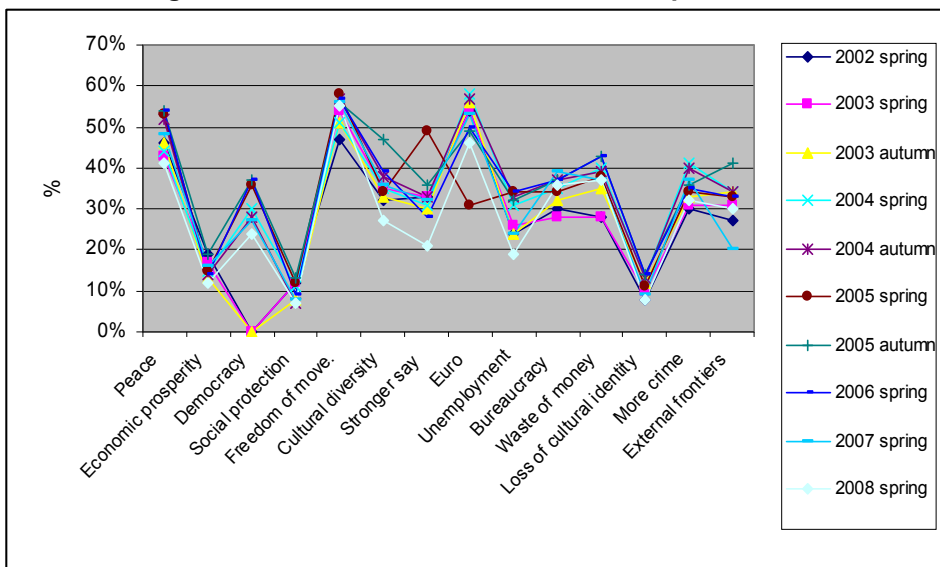
freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU-15 in spring 2002. For 49%, the

European Union is synonymous with the euro. For three in ten respondents, the EU represents peace and a stronger say in the world.

The freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the European Union makes the top three in all Member States. According to

table 9, in Germany more than half of the people surveyed the European Union means euro, freedom of movements and peace in spring of 2002. Then the people surveyed find the European Union bureaucratic and people concerns European Union causes more crime.

**Figure 9: Personal Benefits from the European Union**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

Similar with 2002 in spring 2008, for European citizens (EU-27) European Union means the freedom to travel, study and work any where in the EU, euro and peace. In this context Germany citizens' personal feeling is the same as Europeans. Figure 9 shows, for more than half of the German citizens European Union means the freedom to travel, study and work any where in the EU 55%, euro 46% and peace 41%. Then they find EU cultural diversity and democracy. The German citizens find the European Union waste of Money 37%, Bureaucracy 36% and cause more crime 32%. According to the findings it seems that for German citizens, the European Union has a positive and pecuniary meaning. In this context it feels like Germans aspects to

the European Union is utilitarian. This can be suggestion of utilitarian model.

### 6.2. Expectations of General Germany Citizens

Europeans are asked to state their expectations on aspects related to their lives in general, their households' financial situation as well as the economic and employment situation in their country.

"What are your expectations? be better, worse or the same, your life in general, the economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY), the financial situation of your household, the employment situation in (OUR COUNTRY), your personal job situation, the economic situation in the European Union".

**Table 10: Expectations of German Citizens**

	1999 Spring Autumn		2000 Spring Autumn		2001 Spring Autumn		2002 Spring Autumn		2003 Spring Autumn	
	Life in general	-	22%	-	20%	-	17%	-	18%	-
Household financial situ.	-	18%	-	17%	-	13%	-	15%	-	11%
Country's economic situ.	-	19%	-	23%	-	9%	-	15%	-	13%
Country's employment situ.	-	19%	-	28%	-	6%	-	14%	-	10%
Personal job situation	-	17%	-	18%	-	12%	-	14%	-	12%
EU's economic situ.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2004 Spring Autumn		2005 Spring Autumn		2006 Spring Autumn		2007 Spring Autumn		2008 Spring Autumn	
Life in general	17%	20%	20%	21%	21%	19%	25%	20%	22%	15%
Household financial situ.	11%	13%	14%	14%	14%	12%	18%	15%	16%	13%
Country's economic situ.	13%	13%	17%	18%	19%	19%	41%	25%	15%	9%
Country's employment situ.	8%	10%	15%	16%	15%	18%	44%	27%	25%	9%
Personal job situation	12%	14%	14%	14%	15%	15%	19%	17%	17%	14%
EU's economic situ.	-	-	-	-	-	-	28%	21%	14%	8%

**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

EU citizens believe that their life in general would be better in the year to come. 33% of Europeans expecting their life would be better and 7% of Europeans worse, the mood was in fact quite optimistic in autumn 1999. While 24% of European citizens believed their countries Economic situation get better, 25% Europeans were optimistic

about their household financial situation, 26% of people expected their country's employment situation would be better and in EU-15 24% of people were optimistic about their personal job situation in autumn 1999.

German citizens were less optimistic relatively to Europeans their expectations



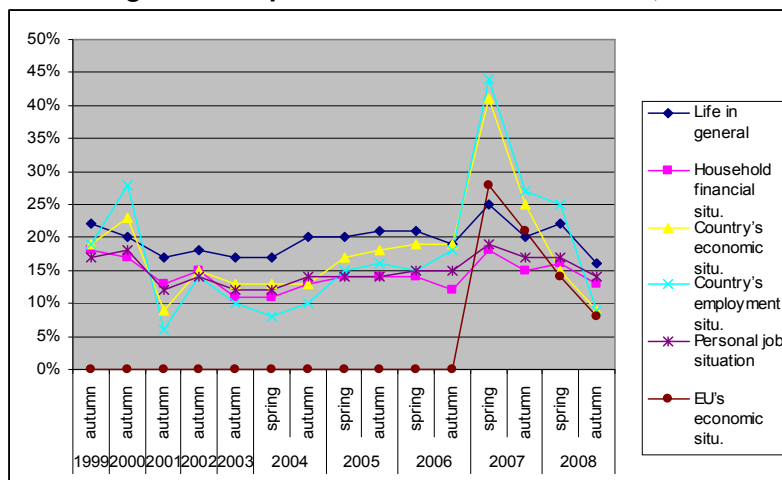
about to get a better life was 22%. Expectations for Germany's Economic situation and employment situation were 19%. The unemployment rate in 1999 was 9.1% in Germany (Eurobarometer-52, 1999:7). For this reason the Germans who believed the country's employment situation would be worse were 40%. Germany was the most pessimistic among the 15 European countries. Also Germany and Italy both 31% expected the economic situation to get worse. In spite of these pessimistic feelings 17% of Germans were positive about their personal job situation. The large majority of people in this country believed their personal job situation would remain the same 65%.

As it is shown in figure 10 expectations of German citizens increased in autumn 2000. Especially they were more optimistic for the Germany's Economic situation 23% and employment situation 28%. At the March 2000 special European Council in Lisbon, the European Union set itself the goal of becoming the most competitive and knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. The so-called 'Lisbon Strategy' is designed to enable the Union to regain the

conditions for full employment and shows the Unions commitment to fight unemployment (Eurobarometer-54, 2000:68). In addition to these developments Germany is the biggest economy of the Euro zone. Expectations in the growth of German economy increase the expectations of German citizens. German government was expected the economic growth 2.4% for 2000 while it was 1.3% in 1999 (Ülsever, 2000). During periods of economic growth, people's expectations tend to be much more favorable than they are when the economy is doing less well. For these reasons the expectations of Germans increased in autumn 2000. Nevertheless Europeans expected their economic situation 24 % and employment situation 30% would be better.

In autumn 2001 Germans expectations dropped sharply. They expected the economic situation to get worse. Respectively only 9% and 6% of Germans were positive about the Germany's economic and employment situations. Other indicators also dropped in 2001. A down fall in the expectations of both Europeans and Germans may be cause of the September 11 attacks and Afghanistan war.

**Figure 10: Expectations of German Citizens, 1999-2008**



Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70

Because this report was carried out one month after the September 11 attacks on the United States and one week after the start of the war against terrorist targets in Afghanistan. The September 11 attacks had an immediate effect on the economy in the European Union, which was already weakening in the months leading up to that day. In addition to these Germany could not reach the economic growth level as declared before. Low Growth rate level, high unemployment rates, troubles in social security reform and ascending income taxes affected the expectations of Germans.

Then autumn 2002 indicators slightly increased. Germans citizens began to feel optimistic but they were still the lowest country which had positive expectations. People may have started to feel optimistic after they the shock of 2001.

In spring 2007 the majority of Europeans are satisfied with the life they currently lead. However expectations of German citizens increased dramatically in early 2007 especially about the employment and economic situation of Germany. 44% and 42% of German citizens believed that Germany's employment and economic situation would be better and 28% of them believed Economic situation in the EU would be better. This increase may be the reason of the decrease of unemployment rates in Germany. Unemployment rate was 7.5% according to ILO and German economic recovery was firmly led by exports. Exportation of Germany increased. Its share of international trade raised from 8.6 per cent in 2000 to 10 per cent in 2007. The election of Angela Merkel as chancellor has also contributed to the shift in perceptions (Benoit, 2007).

In the second half of the 2007 expectations of Germans begun to drop. This decelerating may be the cause of economic crisis. Crisis began to feel by people autumn 2007. Then these pessimistic feelings continue in 2008. Economic expectations on European public

opinion, this shifted to an economic 'feel-bad factor' in spring 2008. In autumn the negative economic climate spread to all aspects of life. The 'feel-bad factor' is not only affecting people's general sense of well-being but is also making them much more pessimistic and cautious in their attitudes towards public life: the world faces a crisis that some describe as the worse of the industrial era, and Europeans are seriously worried about its consequences.

24% of Europeans and 16% of Germans feel their life in general will be better in autumn 2008. More than half of the Europeans 51% and Germans 59% feel their life in general will be the same. Only 15 % of Europeans and 9 % of Germans expected their country's economic situation will be better. 57% of Germans are pessimistic. Respectively 14% and 13% of people expected their personal job situation and financial situation of your household will be positive. While 13% EU-27 citizens have positive expectations about the employment situation of their county, more than half of the Europeans 53% have negative expectations. In Germany also 9% of people feel that their Germany's employment situation will be better. Majority of German citizens 56% expected that employment situation in Germany will be better worse.

## **7. Fears about the Building of Europe, EU**

In order to measure the extent to which the public fears the ongoing process of European integration or in other words in order to examine the various fears of European citizens with regard to the building of Europe, respondents were asked the following question:

"Some people may have fears about the building of Europe, the European Union. Here is a list of things which some people say they are afraid of. For each one, please tell me if you - personally - are currently afraid of it, or not?"

**Table 11: Fears about the European Union**

Fears	1999	2000	2002	2004		2005	
	spring	autumn	spring	spring	autumn	spring	autumn
Economic crisis	-	-	51%	55%	53%	59%	52%
Less power small countries	16%	14%	-	-	20%	19%	23%
More drugs/crime	64%	60%	61%	71%	72%	65%	71%
Unemployment increasing	-	-	74%	-	-	-	-
Language used less	41%	38%	-	43%	44%	39%	42%
Rich countries pay	54%	50%	-	71%	68%	68%	74%
Enlargement expensive	57%	57%	-	-	-	-	-
Loss of social benefits	64%	57%	66%	69%	62%	60%	64%
Loss of identity/culture	42%	42%	34%	42%	37%	35%	38%
End of national currency	49%	61%	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer of jobs	68%	64%	-	78%	85%	84%	84%
Farmers difficulties	48%	48%	-	58%	64%	56%	62%
Less subsidies	48%	41%	-	-	-	-	-

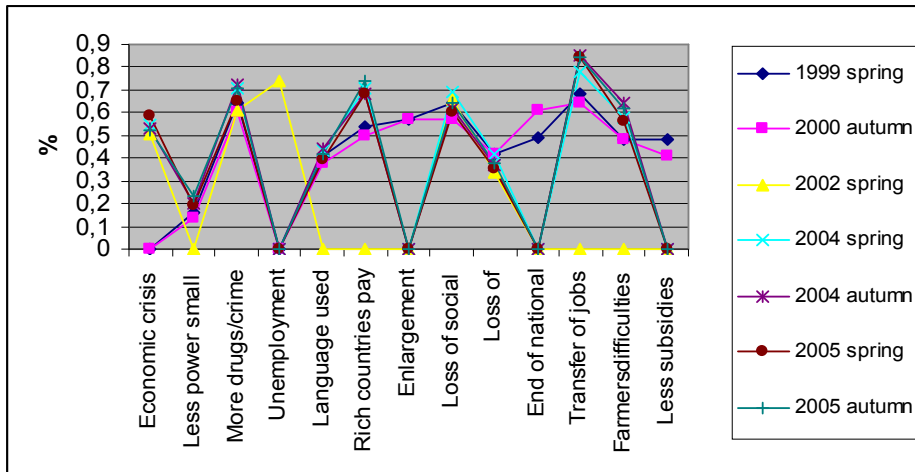
**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

In spring of 1999 the idea of jobs transferring to countries which have lower production costs is most likely to scare people in the context of closer unification 61%, followed by an increase in drug trafficking and international organized crime 57% for EU-15. According to Table 11, the three most widespread fears in Germany was transfer of jobs 68%, loss of social benefits and more drugs and crime. The fear of more crime is also seen in the answers of the 8th question. As Germany other 6 countries had the most widespread fear about the transfer of jobs to countries which have lower production costs namely Sweden 78%, France 76%, Belgium 71%, Germany 68%, the Netherlands and Austria both 63%. Like Germany, citizens of these

countries afraid of losing their jobs because of the European integration.

As observed in figure 11, in autumn 2005 the transfer of jobs is the main fear of European citizens. The main fear is the same as that noted six years earlier, namely the transfer of jobs to other Member States with lower production costs 73%. Next, approximately six out of ten respondents are worried at the rich countries pay more. The increasing cost for the Member States of building Europe 62% is the second biggest fear among the member states. Other fears are the increasing difficulties facing national farmers 62%, and the increase in crime and drug trafficking 60%.

**Figure 11: Fears about the European Union**



**Source: Standard Eurobarometer Report Number 51-70, 1999-2008**

The main fear of German citizens is the same as European citizens, the transfer of jobs to other Member States with lower production costs. 84% of German citizens are afraid of losing their jobs as well as 1999. In addition to Germany the transfer of jobs is a cause for concern for almost nine out of ten citizens in Belgium 87%, Greece 87%, France 87% and Finland 85%. But this is a less a less concern for some countries such as Romania 37%, Bulgaria 41%, Lithuania 46% and Latvia 47%. The second fear of German citizens is the increasing cost for the Member States of building Europe 74%. Germany is also one of the rich countries which contribute the budgetary of European Union. Third concern of Germany is the same as her concern in 1999, an increase in drug trafficking and international organized crime 71%. Other fears of Germany in autumn 2005 are loss of social benefits 64%, the increasing difficulties facing national farmers 62%, Economic crisis 52%, the gradual loss of their national language 42%, a loss of national identities and cultures 38%. Finally, concern about a loss of power for smaller member states seems to be the least worrying aspect for German citizens 23%. Also according to models fears of Germans can be a suggestion of utilitarian

model because their concerns are general about materialistic.

### 8. Conclusion

This study examines the opinions of the German citizens with 10 questions by using Standard Eurobarometer results between 1999 and 2008. According to the analysis results, Germany supports the membership of the European Union throughout the time period. It was 44% in spring of 1999 then increases in time and reaches 60% in 2008. At the same time, the image of the European Union is positive for German citizens. While it was 33% in spring 2000 increased to 48% in autumn 2008. In spite of a drop in spring 2004 and autumn 2007, general aspect about the image and support of European Union is positive. According to the models which determine the public support for European integration in member states countries the support of German citizens looks like the diffuse support. Even though a drop in 2004 dramatic fluctuations do not observe.

In terms of awareness of EU Institutions, resembling to the European Union average, the European Parliament remains the institution which Germans are the most familiar: 90% of the people have heard of it in 2007 autumn. Then other two institutions which German citizens are more familiar to

the Court of Justice of the European Communities 89% and European Central Bank 86%. At the same time the top three more confidence institutions for German citizens are the Court of Justice of the European Communities, the European Central Bank and European Parliament. Additionally Germans tend to have significantly more confidence in the European Union than in their national institutions in 2008. Trust level for the army is the highest in Germany. It is above the confidence level of EU, national government and national parliament. According to these results it feels like the diffuse support is valid in Germany.

Germans citizens feel mainly attached to their country 90% then they attached to their town/village 85% in 2007. The stronger feelings of national identity lead to lower levels of support for the European Union. In this context according to the results German citizens attached their country more then European Union. Therefore it seems that national identity model is not valid for this analysis. On the other hand majority of Germans think that their country has benefited from European Union membership. While Germans thought their country benefited less from the European Union membership in 1999, significant positive developments are noted and the proportion of people who feel their country has benefited increased significantly in 2008. Germany citizens' personal feeling about the benefit from the European Union membership the freedom to travel, study and work any where in the EU 55%, euro 46% and peace 41% in 2008. The German citizens find the European Union waste of Money 37%, Bureaucracy 36% and cause more crime 32%. Consequently according to the findings, it seems that for German citizens, the European Union has a positive and pecuniary meaning. In this context it feels like Germans aspects to the European Union is utilitarian. This can be suggestion of utilitarian model.

Expectations of people effected from not only internal factors of the country but also external factors of other countries such as

economic crises, wars and world political climate. In autumn 2008 under the influence of economic crisis 24% of Europeans and 16% of Germans feel their life in general will be better. Only 15 % of Europeans and 9 % of Germans expected their country's economic situation will be better. 57% of Germans are pessimistic. Respectively 14% and 13% of people expected their personal job situation and financial situation of your household will be positive. While 13% EU-27 citizens have positive expectations about the employment situation of their county, more than half of the Europeans 53% have negative expectations. In Germany also 9% of people feel that their Germany's employment situation will be better. Majority of German citizens 56% expected that employment situation in Germany will be better worse. Consequently in autumn 2008 the negative economic climate spread to all aspects of life both Europeans and Germans.

At the end German citizens have some fears with regard to the building of Europe. In this context the main fear of German citizens is the same as European citizens the transfer of jobs to other Member States with lower production costs. Other fears of German citizens are respectively the increasing cost for the Member States of building Europe, an increase in drug trafficking and international organized crime, loss of social benefits, the increasing difficulties facing national farmers, economic crisis, the gradual loss of their national language, a loss of national identities and cultures and lastly a loss of power for smaller member states. Also according to models fears of Germans can be a suggestion of utilitarian model because their concerns are general about materialistic.

To sum up, while general aspect about the image and support of European Union is positive for Germans they attached their country and trust their army more than European Union. Almost half of the German citizens feel proud to be European is under the EU average. They generally heard of EU institutions and they trust the institutions

which they have more knowledge. Court of justice, European central bank and European parliament are the most trusted institutions. Even though the economic crisis. Germans continue to rely on the European Central Bank. While Germans thought their country benefited less from the European Union membership in 1999, significant positive developments are noted in 2008. Germans' personal feeling about the benefit from the European Union membership mainly about freedom to travel, study and work, euro and peace as European citizens (EU-27). This indicates that EU has a positive and pecuniary meaning for Germans. Generally German

citizens' expectations were less optimistic than Europeans, such as to get a better life. Their biggest fear about the ongoing process of European integration is losing their jobs as well as other citizens of EU. First of all, they are afraid the transfer of jobs to other member states with lower production costs afterwards they are afraid the increasing cost for the member states of building Europe because Germany one of the rich countries which contribute the budgetary of European Union. It can be inferred from the study that generally Germans' aspects and opinions can be a suggestion of utilitarian model.

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