



## **EUROBAROMETER 58.0**

# **The attitudes of Europeans towards the environment**

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## Summary of the results

- The word "environment" conjures up a wide variety of thoughts that, in equal measure, suggest negative images (pollution, disasters) and positive ideas (pleasant landscapes, protecting the natural world).
- With regard to the present state of the environment, optimistic ideas ("the deterioration of the environment can be halted by changing our way of life", 45%) are almost exactly offset by pessimistic ideas ("human activity has led to irretrievable damage to the environment", 44%).
- The problems linked to industrial safety are the ones that worry Europeans most. But the oldest issues (air, water, etc.) continue to attract considerable attention.
- Overall, concern regarding the risk to the environment is more widespread in the countries of the south of the European Union than in those of the north.
- "Natural disasters", "air pollution", "climate change", "urban problems", and "the destruction of the ozone layer" are the problems about which Europeans most often feel that they are "very well" or "fairly well informed".
- The issues about which Europeans feel least informed (less than 40%) appear to be either issues that are no longer topical (acid rain) or problems of an industrial nature (chemical products, GMOs, industrial waste).
- The favourite media of Europeans as far as information on the environment is concerned are, firstly, television (81%), then newspapers (52%), in third place films or documentaries (25%), then magazines (21%), radio (20%) and, finally, conversations with those around them (14%)
- Half of the respondents feel that they can take useful action regarding the environment while the other half think that their actions in this field make no difference. But the vast majority of them say they are willing to act only "if others also make an effort".

- With regard to the environment, Europeans place their trust, above all, in "environmental protection associations" and "scientists". As it is often evident, businesses come in last place in the trust ratings (1%).
- A third of Europeans see the European Union as "the best level for taking decisions about protecting the environment".
- Of the solutions intended to "most effectively solve environmental problems", more or less the same number of Europeans choose the solution of constraint (stricter regulations) and the idea of persuasion (increase "raising general environmental awareness").

## 1. Perceptions of the environment

### 1.1. General perception (Q37 Q38)

**Table 1**

Q. 37. When people talk about "environment", which of the following do you think of first?  
(SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

1. Pollution in towns and cities
2. Green and pleasant landscapes
3. Earthquakes, floods and other natural disasters
4. Protecting nature
5. The state of the environment our children will inherit
6. The quality of life where I live
7. The responsibility of the individuals for improving the environment
8. Using up natural resources to provide a comfortable way of life
9. None of these (SPONTANEOUS)
10. DK

COUNTRIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>B</b>	27	12	8	25	12	9	4	1	2	1
<b>DK</b>	16	10	4	28	23	7	8	2	2	1
<b>D WEST</b>	13	7	19	26	18	5	10	2	1	1
<b>D TOTAL</b>	12	7	18	27	17	5	10	2	1	1
<b>D OST</b>	11	10	17	30	13	6	9	2	1	2
<b>GR</b>	27	15	9	24	15	4	5	1	1	0
<b>E</b>	32	15	6	26	8	6	4	2	1	1
<b>F</b>	22	7	7	30	12	11	9	1	1	0
<b>IRL</b>	31	12	4	17	13	13	5	2	1	2
<b>I</b>	38	11	5	21	9	7	6	1	1	1
<b>L</b>	15	13	8	25	14	8	13	1	3	0
<b>NL</b>	26	18	5	15	14	4	7	8	3	1
<b>A</b>	15	20	12	17	17	13	4	1	2	1
<b>P</b>	43	8	6	16	6	5	5	1	2	7
<b>FIN</b>	6	22	4	18	20	18	3	5	1	3
<b>S</b>	12	23	7	7	32	6	8	5	1	1
<b>UK TOTAL</b>	31	12	4	12	19	13	4	2	1	2
<b>EU15</b>	25	11	9	22	14	8	7	2	1	1

What words and images do Europeans associate with the word "environment"? For a quarter of those asked, it evokes the phrase "pollution in towns and cities". This negative answer is more frequently chosen in the southern European countries: Portugal (43%) Italy (38%), Spain (32%). This association is also a little more common in cities (27%) and among young people (28%), particularly when they are studying (29% among students).

The answer that comes second (22%) relates not to an observation - pollution - but to an idea of action: "protecting nature". In Germany, particularly in the east (30%), in France (30%) and in Denmark (28%), this is mentioned more often. Concern about "the state of the environment our children will inherit" is cited by 14% of the sample. But this answer is chosen by 32% of Swedes and 23% of Danes. A positive association - green and pleasant landscapes - is selected by 11% of the respondents. This view is more widespread in some European Union countries, which have protected natural areas: Sweden (23%), Finland (22%) Austria (20%). The recent news of flooding explains why the reference to natural disasters, ("earthquakes, floods"), which is picked out by only 9% overall, is cited by 18% of Germans. But it should also be noted that the lower the family income, the more this "pessimistic" view is cited: 12% in the lowest income category compared to 7% in the most well-off bracket.

The last three answer categories – "the quality of life where I live", "the responsibility of the individual for improving the environment" and "using up natural resources to provide a more comfortable way of life" are picked out by only 8%, 7% and 2% of respondents respectively.

**Table 2**

*Q.38 Which of these opinions comes closest to yours? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)*

<b>PAYS</b>	<b>Human activity is currently in harmony with the environment</b>	<b>The deterioration of the environment can be halted by changing our way of life</b>	<b>Human activity can lead to irretrievable damage to the environment</b>	<b>None of these (SPONTANEOUS)</b>	<b>DK</b>
<b>B</b>	5	55	35	3	3
<b>DK</b>	5	38	52	1	4
<b>D WEST</b>	6	41	48	3	3
<b>D TOTAL</b>	6	40	49	2	3
<b>D OST</b>	6	38	54	1	2
<b>GR</b>	1	54	43	0	3
<b>E</b>	5	44	42	3	6
<b>F</b>	2	53	42	2	2
<b>IRL</b>	3	30	23	4	41
<b>I</b>	3	40	48	3	5
<b>L</b>	2	56	37	3	2
<b>NL</b>	3	52	42	2	2
<b>A</b>	7	49	40	3	3
<b>P</b>	9	37	45	2	7
<b>FIN</b>	5	50	40	1	5
<b>S</b>	3	64	31	0	1
<b>UK TOTAL</b>	5	46	40	3	7
<b>EU15</b>	4	45	44	2	4

Has man's action endangered the natural environment, and can the latter be restored or not? Europeans are divided on this point: a very small minority (3%) feels, first of all, that the problem quite simply does not arise because "human activity is in harmony with the environment". Only in one country, Portugal, does the number with this opinion reach 9%.

Apart from that opinion, those asked are split into two groups of almost equal weight: the first asserting that "the deterioration of the environment can be halted by changing our way of life" (45%), the other that "human activity has led to irretrievable damage to the environment" (44%). The first, optimistic attitude is more prevalent in Sweden (64%) and, to a lesser extent, in Greece (54%) and France (53%). It is also more widespread among senior executives (51%) and among those who have continued their education beyond the age of 20 (49%). Pessimism about the effects of human activity is, in contrast, higher in the east of Germany (54% compared to an average of 44%) and in Denmark (54%). Are these judgements linked to a particularly alarmist assessment of the local state of the environment in those two countries?

There are no very strong connections between the two questions just commented on. In other words, the different perceptions of the environment are not necessarily linked to optimistic or pessimistic ideas of the relationships between man and the environment. The only, and understandable exception to this rule is that more of the people for whom the word "environment" conjures up disasters (floods, etc.) think that "human activity has led to irretrievable damage to the environment" (48% compared to an average of 44%).

## 1.2. Concerns about 25 issues (Q39-1 to 25)

**Table 3**

Overall results *in descending order of % of "very worried" answers*

Q. 39. *At present, are you very worried, fairly worried, not very worried or not at all worried about the following topics? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)*

	EU15
<b>PROPOSITIONS</b>	
Nuclear power and radioactive waste	50
Disasters caused by industrial activities	45
Air pollution	44
Natural disasters	43
Pollution of tap water	43
Pollution of underground water	43
Pollution of the seas and coasts	42
Pollution of rivers and lakes	42
The progressive elimination of tropical rain forests	41
Destruction of the ozone layer	39
Climate change	39
The use of other chemical products	38
The extinction of animals and plants species	37
Industrial waste management	37
The use of pesticides	36
Using up natural resources that cannot be easily replaced	35
Pollution from farming	31
The use of genetically modified organisms	30
Acid rain	29
Domestic and urban waste management	22
Urban problems (traffic, public transport, green spaces, etc.)	21
Environmentally friendly consumption habits	18
Noise	18
Hunting and shooting	17
Damage caused by tourism	17

The level of concern of Europeans regarding 25 issues relating to the environment was measured on the basis of the series of questions listed in Table 3. If the answer indicating the highest degree of concern is considered ("very worried"), the following hierarchy of answers can be observed:



- the first category of issues, at the highest level of between 40% and 50%, consists, firstly, of problems linked to industrial safety (nuclear 50%, industrial disasters 45%), then to environmental problems that could be described as traditional in the sense that they have been mentioned in the media on a very regular basis for at least thirty years or so: air pollution (44%), natural disasters (43%), various types of water pollution (tap water 42%, underground water 43%, sea 42%, rivers and lakes 42%) and "the elimination of tropical forests" (41%). This is probably based on deeply-rooted perceptions;

- the second category groups together issues ranging from around 30% to less than 40%. This includes more recent problems such as destruction of the ozone layer (39%) and climate change (39%), and other ones which are older but have only more recently received any real media coverage, such as pesticides (36%) or pollution from farming (31%), for example;

- the last group (from 17% to less than 30%) includes much newer issues (GMOs, 30%) or, conversely, relatively old but perhaps forgotten ones (acid rain, 29%). In last place in this category are also problems which have a largely unappreciated environmental impact: noise (18%), hunting and shooting (17%) and tourism (17%).

**Table 4**

*% of "very worried" answers in the member countries*

	Greece	Luxembourg	Italy	Portugal	France	UK	Austria	Germany	Denmark	Spain	Ireland	Belgium	Sweden	Finland	The Netherlands	Average
Nuclear	72	65	60	48	60	51	57	44	51	39	52	31	36	43	35	50
Industrial disasters	65	56	53	49	58	39	37	45	33	32	31	27	34	36	34	45
Air pollution	71	61	62	53	59	38	35	32	37	37	32	22	33	38	25	44
Natural disasters	63	56	45	55	52	28	46	55	28	35	26	27	24	29	26	43
Tap water	69	57	50	55	50	45	31	40	52	35	36	29	24	32	19	43
Underground water	64	58	52	49	50	39	35	41	56	30	30	12	41	44	26	43
Sea pollution	68	55	53	51	49	42	33	37	41	33	30	35	37	33	24	42
River pollution	68	56	50	50	49	42	32	36	40	35	32	38	35	35	23	42
Forests	54	59	47	42	46	40	41	41	52	25	25	31	54	42	40	41
Ozone layer	64	50	50	47	44	30	37	42	32	30	27	29	35	28	20	39
Climate	63	50	49	47	44	26	39	44	28	29	25	29	29	26	21	38
Chemical products	64	49	52	42	51	35	37	29	36	29	34	35	26	23	23	38
Extinction of species	58	46	43	42	42	39	34	35	41	27	23	25	35	26	27	37
Industrial waste	62	44	44	41	49	37	30	31	26	26	32	12	26	19	22	37
Pesticides	59	47	51	39	46	33	37	26	36	27	31	20	29	19	23	36
Natural resources	59	37	45	38	36	39	34	30	37	23	26	32	31	34	32	35
Pollution from farming	56	38	41	38	47	30	21	21	29	25	28	33	16	15	18	31
GMOs	55	41	39	32	41	24	33	26	28	18	26	39	21	18	18	30
Acid rain	55	34	43	39	33	22	26	24	21	23	21	43	19	22	13	29
Domestic waste	50	29	28	36	32	24	20	13	9	18	24	12	5	9	7	22
Urban problems	50	26	32	31	21	23	16	13	10	20	19	14	7	7	10	21
Consumption	39	23	22	29	26	17	16	15	7	16	15	18	3	8	9	18
Noise	45	24	29	28	17	16	18	14	10	18	9	10	6	9	9	18
Hunting and shooting	38	17	27	27	12	27	15	9	9	13	13	16	5	7	15	17
Tourism	36	19	21	28	19	13	18	15	7	16	11	31	5	9	13	17

Average:	58	44	44	41	41	32	31	30	30	26	26	26	25	24	21	34
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In table 4, the issues have been placed in descending order of percentages of "very worried" answers (from top to bottom of the table) and, from the **on average** most worried country to the **on average** least worried country (from left to right of the table).

If the average of these percentages is considered, the European countries, from the most to the least worried, are in the following order:

Greece	58
Luxembourg	44
Italy	44
Portugal	41
France	41
UK	32
Austria	31
Germany	30
Denmark	30
Spain	26
Ireland	26
Belgium	26
Sweden	25
Finland	24
The Netherlands	21

Before wondering about the reasons for this classification based on an average, it is interesting to consider to what extent it is the same or otherwise, regardless of the issues cited. On reading table 4, it emerges that, overall, this order is more or less followed: Greece always – that is for all the issues – emerges as the most "worried" country and the Netherlands as the least worried. It is also generally true that, on the more worried side, there are a number of southern European countries (Italy, Portugal but not Spain) while on the less worried side are northern countries (Netherlands, Sweden, Finland). There are, however, a few exceptions to this general rule – indicated by grey shading in table 4 -. Also notable is:

- a relatively higher level of worry in Austria and Ireland regarding the nuclear issue (57% and 52% respectively)
- a sensitivity in Germany to natural disasters, probably caused by recent events (55%)
- greater attention by the Danes to water problems (tap water 52% and underground water 56%)
- a little more concern in Germany about the destruction of the ozone layer (42%) and about climate change (44%)
- more marked worry in France about the chemical risk (51%), perhaps a reflection of the Toulouse chemical factory accident in September 2001 (widely reported in the French press around the very time this survey was carried out)
- a slightly more marked fear in the UK (27%) about hunting and shooting (also perhaps reflecting recent events).

Beyond these – very relative – exceptions, what explanation is there for the fact that the order of classification of the countries is more or less always the same? **For some years, it has been evident that environmental protest - originally arising in the industrialised countries of northern Europe – has, to a large extent, reached the countries of the South.** The reason for this situation could be that, as they were industrialised, the countries of the South saw a rise in standard of living but perhaps a fall in quality of life (damage to the environment, etc.). This survey would confirm this interpretation as it reveals an overall classification that supports, in part, the North-South dimension. The exceptions to this rule must, however, be reiterated: Spain, for example, shows a slightly lower level of fear than Denmark.

Some differences in attitudes can also be observed within the sample (always taking the criterion of the percentages of "very worried" answers) :

- without exception, women are more worried than men, but the discrepancy is greater than or equal to 5 percentage points only in three cases : "natural disasters" (47% compared to 40%), "nuclear power" (53% compared to 48%) and "the use of other chemical products" (36% compared to 41%) ;
- young people are, as a general rule, less worried than older people, but the discrepancies are not substantial, with a few exceptions : "pesticides" (29% among 15-24 year olds, 39% among 55 and + year olds), "natural disasters" (38% among 15-24 year olds, 48% among 55 and + year olds), "chemicals" (32% among 15-24 year olds, 41% among 55 and + year olds) ;
- the differences depending on cultural and social criteria are not the same according to issues : as far as "natural disasters" are concerned, the worry is more marked when the age on completion of education is younger (48% for those who completed their education before the age of 16 compared to 40% among those who continued their education beyond the age of 20). Conversely, however, the more educated appear more sensitive to the problem of "the elimination of the tropical rain forests" (45% compared to 38% for those who completed their education before the age of 16, 49% among senior executives compared to 39% among manual workers) or the "extinction of species" (42% compared to 35% according to the criterion of age on completion of education) ;
- the most marked discrepancies according to ideological positions relate to "nuclear power" (56% on the left compared to 45% on the right) "pollution from farming" (34% compared to 28%), and "industrial disasters" (51% compared to 44%).

Finally, some results can be compared with those of a Eurobarometer survey conducted in 1999<sup>1</sup> on the same subject. The question concerning the extent to which Europeans are worried about the environment had been asked at that time. But the topics chosen or the phrasing were not the same. Therefore, the comparison has to be limited to identical items. In total, ten topics have been phrased exactly in the same way or in a similar way in both surveys.

**Table 5**

% of answers "Very worried" in 1999 and in 2002

<b>PROPOSITIONS</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>Discrepancy</b>
Air pollution	35	44	+ 9
Natural disasters	22	43	+ 21
Pollution of the seas and coasts	32	42	+ 10
Pollution of rivers and lakes	27	42	+ 15
The progressive elimination of tropical rain forests	39	41	+ 3
The extinction of animals and plant species <sup>2</sup>	27	37	+ 10
Industrial waste management	35	37	+ 2
Urban problems (traffic, public transport, green spaces, etc.) <sup>3</sup>	23	21	-2
Hunting and shooting	15	17	+ 2
Damage caused by tourism	10	17	+ 7

From the comparison it appears that in most cases, the level of concern about the damage to the environment has risen in Europe. This rise is particularly noticeable in the case of "natural disasters" (+21) and some damages to the natural environment (rivers and lakes ,+15 - seas and coasts, +10 - animal and plants species, +10 - air pollution, +9). Attitudes seem to be more stable as far as "industrial waste" is concerned (+2) or "urban problems" (-2) but the phrasing of these two items were not identical in 1999 and in 2002.

<sup>1</sup> Eurobarometer 51.1, Spring 1999

<sup>2</sup> Phrasing of 1999 was slightly different : "The disappearance of certain types of plants, animals and habitats throughout the world"

<sup>3</sup> Phrasing of 1999 : "Urban problems (traffic in towns, noise, pollution)"

## 2. Information on the environment

### 2.1. Information on 25 issues

**Table 6**

*Overall results in descending order of % of "very well + fairly well informed" answers*

*Q.40 For each of these topics, can you tell me if you feel very well, fairly well, fairly badly or very badly informed? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)*

<b>PROPOSITIONS</b>	<b>UE15</b>
Natural disasters	64
Air pollution	53
Climate change	53
Urban problems (traffic, public transport, green spaces, etc.)	52
Destruction of the ozone layer	52
Domestic and urban waste management	49
Pollution of the seas and coasts	48
Environmentally friendly consumption habits	46
The extinction of animals and plants species	46
Pollution of rivers and lakes	46
The progressive elimination of tropical rain forests	45
Noise	45
Pollution of tap water	43
Disasters caused by industrial activities	42
Hunting and shooting	39
Using up natural resources that cannot be easily replaced	39
Pollution from farming	39
The use of pesticides	38
Nuclear power and radioactive waste	38
Pollution of underground water	37
Acid rain	35
Damage caused by tourism	34
The use of other chemical products	32
The use of genetically modified organisms	30
Industrial waste management	29

With regard to the same issues for which the degree of concern was measured, Europeans were asked how well "informed" they felt they were. The results of this question are shown in table 6, where the different subjects have been put in descending order of the degree of information ("very well" or "fairly well informed").

The results reveal the following classification:

- "Natural disasters", "air pollution", "climate change", "urban problems" and "destruction of the ozone layer" are problems about which Europeans most often feel "very well" or "fairly well informed" (more than 50%). This first category clearly includes either relatively old environmental problems, which have therefore become familiar (air pollution for example), or very topical issues and hence with an extremely high profile in the media (climate change, destruction of the ozone layer).
- A second group, for which the levels of information vary from 42% to 49%, consists of often more complex problems or ones less systematically dealt with by the media (extinction of species, destruction of forests).
- The issues about which Europeans feel least informed (less than 40%) include either issues that have become less topical (acid rain) or problems of an industrial nature (chemical products, GMOs, industrial waste).

One might have expected the most feared problems to be also those about which Europeans feel least well informed. But analysis shows that this assumption is wrong: there is no strong statistical link between fear of these different environmental problems and information about these same problems.

**Table 7**

*% of "very" or "fairly well informed" answers in the member countries.*

	Finland	Denmark	Luxembourg	The Netherlands	Italy	Austria	Sweden	Germany	UK	Greece	Belgium	Ireland	Portugal	Spain	France	Average
Natural disasters	85	80	84	71	65	73	70	77	68	51	58	51	46	50	49	64
Air pollution	79	65	70	60	64	55	61	55	51	51	48	43	49	41	46	53
Climate	81	65	68	63	61	61	61	58	57	48	45	41	43	39	38	53
Urban problems	65	63	66	61	64	55	54	42	58	50	50	51	43	51	48	52
Ozone layer	79	63	65	58	55	59	63	59	57	42	46	41	42	40	37	52
Domestic waste	76	67	68	56	55	53	69	60	39	35	49	41	36	39	38	49
Sea pollution	76	67	59	58	61	47	64	47	46	50	43	42	40	41	38	48
Consumption	69	65	57	53	47	51	51	58	42	34	37	42	33	37	36	46
River pollution	72	64	58	54	57	50	56	46	43	48	41	42	41	40	32	46
Extinction of species	63	63	57	56	52	51	48	47	52	40	37	35	38	36	34	46
Forests	72	70	63	66	49	54	56	52	49	35	38	33	36	30	32	45
Noise	60	49	56	48	46	54	35	47	44	41	41	41	45	43	45	45
Tap water	62	75	59	42	52	48	35	47	37	49	37	41	39	37	33	43
Industrial disasters	66	46	56	48	48	42	39	45	42	42	39	40	37	34	34	42
Hunting and shooting	60	45	45	40	46	43	37	27	56	36	29	40	35	28	42	39
Natural resources	61	53	45	50	46	48	46	40	45	38	30	37	33	31	27	39
Pollution from farming	59	69	52	48	46	49	43	38	36	41	39	39	34	30	34	39
Pesticides	50	62	46	40	51	39	45	37	40	36	34	32	39	31	28	38
Nuclear	62	48	50	48	41	44	63	44	37	38	32	34	23	29	26	38
Underground water	64	72	55	46	49	51	43	42	30	39	37	30	32	26	25	37
Acid rain	53	40	46	53	44	45	34	39	36	34	33	31	29	23	19	35
Tourism	47	34	43	43	37	44	24	38	34	30	32	29	29	31	28	34
Chemical products	38	42	43	35	46	34	30	29	32	36	29	30	33	27	23	32
GMOs	34	43	38	31	39	36	26	27	36	29	25	24	25	22	21	30
Industrial waste	44	40	43	33	36	39	29	27	29	31	30	33	30	25	21	29
Average	63	58	56	50	50	49	47	45	44	40	38	38	36	34	33	43

In table 7, the issues have been placed in descending order of percentages of "very or fairly well informed" answers (from top to bottom of the table) and, from the on average most to least well-informed countries (from left to right of the table).



If the average of these percentages is considered, the European countries, from the best to the least informed, come in the following order:

Finland	63
Denmark	58
Luxembourg	56
The Netherlands	50
Italy	50
Austria	49
Sweden	47
Germany	45
UK	44
Greece	40
Belgique	38
Ireland	38
Portugal	36
Spain	34
France	33

**The order obtained can be explained, in part, by cultural differences: Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands are countries in which the average age on completion of education is high compared to other European countries and their higher level of information can therefore be explained by that.** Conversely, Ireland, Portugal and Spain are lower in the cultural hierarchy. But this explanation does not apply to all the countries. It is difficult to explain, in particular, why the French feel so ill-informed.

Finally, the details in table 7 show that this order of answers from the best to least informed is quite regular irrespective of the issue under consideration.

The discrepancies observed based on socio-demographic variables are as follows:

- For all the problems considered, women say that they are less well informed than men do. The discrepancy between men and women ranges from 3% to 9%. It is highest for nuclear power (42% of information among men compared to 34% among women) and with regard to deforestation (49% compared to 42%).

- The differences according to age are not always the same way around: usually, the young people (15-24 years) say they are more "well informed" than the older people do (55 + years). This rule is particularly confirmed in five cases for which the discrepancy between the two extreme age categories is greater than 5 percentage points: sea pollution (51% compared to 46%), extinction of the species (49% compared to 43%), the dwindling of natural resources (43% compared to 36%), air pollution (57% compared to 50%) and, above all, GMOs (34% compared to 26%). On the other hand, in some cases, the rule is reversed and it is the oldest who say they are better informed: this is true, for example, of pollution from farming (36% compared to 41%) and of tap water pollution (39% compared to 45%).
- The differences according to cultural level are significant. They are summarised in table 8, in which the different problems have been classified according to the discrepancy in level of information between the most and least well educated.

**Table 8**

*% of "very well" or "fairly well informed" answers according to age on completion of education (in order of discrepancy between "Up to 15 years of age" and "20 + years of age")*

Age of ending education	Up to 15 years	16 – 19 years	20+ years	Still studying	Gap between "Up to 15 years" and "20+ years"
Ozone layer	40	53	61	57	-21
Climate	42	53	62	57	-20
Forests	36	45	54	52	-18
Nuclear	29	37	46	45	-17
Urban problems	45	52	61	57	-16
Consumption	38	46	54	49	-16
Domestic waste	43	48	58	49	-15
GMOs	21	29	36	40	-15
Natural resources	32	38	47	48	-15
Extinction of species	37	46	51	53	-14
Air pollution	46	51	60	63	-14
Acid rain	29	34	43	38	-14
Sea pollution	41	47	55	56	-14
Natural disasters	58	63	71	68	-13
Industrial disasters	36	41	49	46	-13
Underground water	32	36	45	39	-13
River pollution	41	44	52	50	-11
Pesticides	33	37	45	44	-11
Industrial waste	24	28	34	34	-11
Tourism	29	34	40	37	-11
Chemical products	27	31	37	36	-10
Noise	41	46	50	46	-9
Tap water	39	43	47	42	-8
Pollution from farming	37	38	44	40	-7
Hunting and shooting	37	39	43	41	-6

**This table indicates that the lack of information for the least well-educated is often about issues of a global nature and with a strong scientific connotation, such as the problem of the ozone layer (discrepancy –21), global warming (discrepancy –20), deforestation (discrepancy –18) or nuclear power (discrepancy –17).** The issues which produce the least discrepancy in level of information according to age on completion of education are more concrete and more local issues such as hunting and shooting (discrepancy –6 ) pollution from farming (discrepancy –7 ) or pollution of tap water (discrepancy –8).

The same kinds of discrepancies are evident – but a little less pronounced – when considering differences according to the occupation of the person asked: usually, the discrepancy with the popular categories is – as in the above table – more pronounced for global issues and issues of a scientific nature than for more local ones.

- Finally, there are discrepancies according to ideological positions: as a general rule, the respondents who tend more towards "the left" (boxes 1 and 2 of the left-right scale) claim to be better informed than those who tend more towards "the right" (boxes 9 and 10 of the scale). These differences are more marked for global type issues such as "the destruction of the ozone layer" (61% on the left compared to 42% on the right) or "climate change" (61% on the left compared to 45% on the right).

## 2.2. Favourite sources of information

**Table 9**

Q. 44. Which are your three main sources of information about the environment?(SHOW CARD - READ OUT- MAX 3 ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

1. Newspapers
2. Magazines
3. Television
4. The radio
5. Films, documentaries
6. Conversations with relatives/family/friends/neighbours/colleagues
7. Book
8. The Internet
9. Publications/brochures/information material
10. Events (conferences, fairs/exhibitions, festivals, etc)
11. Public authorities
12. School/educational institutions
13. Specialist environmental protection associations or charities (Greenpeace, etc)
14. Others (SPONTANEOUS)
15. I am not interested in environment (SPONTANEOUS)
16. DK

COUNTRIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<b>B</b>	47	22	78	23	22	9	7	7	8	3	7	8	13	1	2	1
<b>DK</b>	58	10	82	26	25	16	4	11	13	2	9	7	10	1	0	1
<b>D WEST</b>	64	22	87	27	15	16	7	5	8	2	2	4	7	0	1	1
<b>D TOTAL</b>	62	22	87	27	14	16	7	6	8	2	2	4	7	0	1	2
<b>D OST</b>	57	21	86	29	13	16	6	8	9	1	3	5	4	0	0	2
<b>GR</b>	33	13	76	14	28	27	7	2	6	2	1	6	18	1	0	1
<b>E</b>	40	18	79	17	21	16	3	4	5	2	3	3	8	1	3	3
<b>F</b>	47	27	81	25	33	16	5	4	5	4	3	5	8	1	1	0
<b>IRL</b>	58	13	71	28	23	7	6	7	9	1	6	8	12	0	3	3
<b>I</b>	38	32	76	9	39	10	6	5	6	5	2	7	17	1	0	1
<b>L</b>	54	31	78	20	29	10	8	7	8	5	2	6	10	0	0	0
<b>NL</b>	66	20	84	17	23	14	4	10	14	1	6	4	17	0	0	0
<b>A</b>	53	21	70	25	22	15	8	10	10	3	5	8	16	1	1	1
<b>P</b>	32	13	84	10	19	14	3	5	2	2	4	7	8	1	1	5
<b>FIN</b>	72	17	84	25	13	12	4	7	17	2	10	6	10	0	0	2
<b>S</b>	77	6	84	29	20	16	6	7	12	2	7	7	12	1	0	0
<b>UK TOTAL</b>	61	15	82	18	28	13	7	7	7	1	4	7	8	1	2	1
<b>EU15</b>	52	21	81	20	25	14	6	6	7	3	3	5	10	1	1	1

The favourite media of Europeans as far as information on the environment is concerned are, firstly, television (81%), then newspapers (52%), in third place films or documentaries (25%), then magazines (21%), radio (20%) and finally conversations with those around them (14%).

The countries of northern Europe – Sweden, Finland, Netherlands and Germany - clearly most often cite "newspapers" (77%, 72%, 66% and 63% respectively) and, to a lesser extent, "radio" (29% for example in Sweden). In some Mediterranean countries, particularly France and Italy, the choice is more for "magazines" (32% in Italy) and films or documentaries (39% in Italy, 33% in France).

These cultural practices also differ according to the socio-demographic groups the respondents belong to. For example, the youngest (15-24 years of age) use newspapers much less (41% compared to an average of 52%) but films more (30% compared to 25% on average) and the Internet (10% compared to 6% on average). Similarly, the more educated (those who left the education system at 20 or more) read magazines more (29% compared to 21% on average) but pay a little less attention to television (75% compared to 81%).

### 3. Individual behaviour and public policies

#### 3.1. Individual actions

Table 10

Q.41 Which of these opinions comes closest to yours? (READ OUT – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

COUNTRIES	The environment is an issue beyond my control as an individual	My actions can make a real difference to the environment	None of these (SPONTANEOUS <sup>o</sup> )	DK
B	30	52	11	7
DK	42	51	4	3
D WEST	35	56	4	5
D TOTAL	36	56	4	5
D OST	38	54	5	3
GR	56	36	4	4
E	30	39	15	15
F	58	30	9	3
IRL	37	45	6	12
I	50	36	9	6
L	33	54	12	1
NL	39	51	7	3
A	33	52	9	6
P	34	45	9	13
FIN	26	66	5	3
S	26	63	5	6
UK TOTAL	48	39	7	6
EU15	43	43	8	6

To what extent did the persons interviewed have the feeling that the environment is a field in which they have the ability to act? In the whole sample, the two opinions – "a field beyond my control" or "a field in which my actions can make a real difference" – are perfectly balanced: 43% in both cases.

But these two attitudes, feeling of effectiveness or feeling of powerlessness, vary quite widely in the different European Union countries. For a better understanding, in table 11 the balance of these two attitudes has been calculated (% effectiveness - % powerlessness) and the countries classified according to the value of that discrepancy, from the most optimistic to the most pessimistic.

**Table 11**

*% and discrepancy of answers with respect to two opinions concerning the ability to affect the environment by one's own actions.*

	<b>1 It is beyond my control</b>	<b>2 My actions do make a difference</b>	<b>Other answers</b>	<b>Discrepancy 2-1</b>
<b>Finland</b>	26	66	8	40
<b>Sweden</b>	26	63	11	37
<b>Belgium</b>	30	52	18	22
<b>Luxembourg</b>	33	54	13	20
<b>Germany</b>	36	56	8	20
<b>Austria</b>	33	52	15	19
<b>Netherlands</b>	39	51	10	13
<b>Portugal</b>	34	44	21	10
<b>Spain</b>	30	39	30	9
<b>Denmark</b>	42	51	7	9
<b>Ireland</b>	37	45	18	8
<b>UK</b>	48	39	12	-9
<b>Italy</b>	50	35	14	-15
<b>Greece</b>	56	36	8	-21
<b>France</b>	58	30	12	-28
<b>Total</b>	43	43	14	0

The classification observed in table 11 reveals marked differences between countries of the North, such as Finland, Sweden and Belgium, which have more confidence in their ability to take action in the field of the environment, and the countries of the South, Italy, Greece and, above all, France, which are distinctly more pessimistic.

The socially or culturally-advantaged groups also show a more marked optimism. Thus, 55% of managers and 52% of the more educated have confidence in their ability to act (compared to an average of 43%).

Finally, there is a low but significant statistical relation between the feeling of being informed (question 40) and the confidence that individual actions can make a difference<sup>4</sup>.

To clarify the attitudes of individuals with regard to personal action to help the environment, they were asked to specify which of the following statements most accurately reflected the situation:

<sup>4</sup> We have calculated the correlation coefficient (Pearson's R) between the number of times people say that they are "Very or fairly well informed" (Q40), i.e. between 0 and 25 times, and the proportion of "my actions can make a real difference". The coefficient obtained (0.13) is significant at the 0.001 level.

**Table 12**

Q.42 Which of these statements reflects best your personal situation? (SHOW CARD - READ - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

1. *I am making an effort to take care of the environment, and it is having an impact*
2. *I am making an effort to take care of the environment, but it will only have an impact if others also make an effort*
3. *I am not making an effort to take care of the environment because it doesn't have any impact as long as others do not make an effort*
4. *I do not know what to do to take care of the environment*
5. *I don't care about environmental issues (SPONTANEOUS)*
6. *None of these (SPONTANEOUS)*
7. *DK*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>PAYS</b>							
<b>B</b>	11	72	6	7	1	2	2
<b>DK</b>	15	74	6	3	0	1	1
<b>D WEST</b>	19	64	11	4	0	1	2
<b>D TOTAL</b>	19	64	10	4	0	1	2
<b>D OST</b>	21	63	8	4	0	1	2
<b>GR</b>	5	74	9	10	1	1	1
<b>E</b>	8	51	22	12	1	3	3
<b>F</b>	12	72	6	6	1	2	1
<b>IRL</b>	9	59	10	11	2	3	7
<b>I</b>	7	66	9	10	1	5	3
<b>L</b>	25	63	6	6	0	1	0
<b>NL</b>	21	68	4	4	1	2	1
<b>A</b>	17	62	12	3	2	2	3
<b>P</b>	9	53	16	11	2	2	8
<b>FIN</b>	25	63	4	5	1	1	2
<b>S</b>	22	63	6	6	1	1	1
<b>UK TOTAL</b>	6	64	10	13	2	3	2
<b>EU15</b>	12	65	10	8	1	2	2

The overall results show that Europeans favour an active attitude but, at the same time, want their action to be part of a wider solidarity (I am making an effort but it will only have an impact if others also make an effort: 65%). The attitude that could be called purely altruistic (I am making an effort and it is having an impact) corresponds to only 12% of cases. At the other extreme, 10% of those acknowledge that their attitude is of the 'wait-and-see' type (I am not making an because it doesn't have any impact as long as others do not make an effort).



**Table 13**

*Attitudes towards environmental actions in the member countries.*

	Belgium	Denmark	Germany	Greece	Italy	Spain	France	Ireland	Luxembourg	Netherlands	Portugal	UK	Finland	Sweden	Austria	Total
1. Individual efforts and impact	11	15	19	5	6	8	12	9	24	21	9	6	24	22	17	12
2. Efforts but impact only if others do so too	72	74	64	74	66	51	72	59	63	68	53	64	63	63	61	65
3. No effort because others don't	6	6	10	8	9	22	6	10	6	4	16	10	4	6	12	10
4. I don't know what to do	7	3	4	10	9	12	6	11	5	4	11	13	5	6	3	8
5. Don't care	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	2	1	1	0	2	1
6. None	2	1	1	1	4	3	2	3	1	1	2	3	1	1	2	2
DK	2	1	2	1	3	3	1	7	0	1	8	2	2	1	3	2

In table 13, these different attitudes were compared in the member countries: the results show that:

- "altruistic" type tendencies (individual efforts) affect 24% of Finns and 22% of Swedes
- "solidarity" attitudes (effort but only if others do the same) are more frequent in Denmark (74%), Greece (74%), Belgium (72%) and France (72%)
- "wait-and-see" type of answers (no effort because others don't) are over-represented in Spain and Portugal.

On the other hand, it appears that the higher the education level is, the more frequent are "solidarity attitudes" (51% amongst those who are the least educated, 71% amongst those who left full-time education at 20 or later). Though, the youngest are likely to choose a "wait-and-see" type of answer (15% amongst the age category "15-24" versus 8% amongst the "55s and over")

### 3.2. Trust

**Table 14**

*Q. 45. Who do you trust when it comes to environmental issues? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - MAX. 3 ANSWERS POSSIBLE)*

<b>PROPOSITIONS</b>	<b>EU15</b>
Environmental protection associations	48
Scientists	35
Consumer associations and others citizens' organisations	23
Television	18
European Union	13
National government	12
Teachers at school or university	12
Regional / local government	11
Political parties standing for environment (Greens, etc.)	10
Newspapers	9
Family/neighbours/friends/colleagues	7
None of them (SPONTANEOUS)	7
DK	6
The radio	4
Trade Unions	2
Companies	1

Whom should we trust when it comes to environmental problems? The results show that "environmental protection associations" and "scientists" enjoy the highest level of trust among the public (48% and 35% respectively). The influence of voluntary associations is confirmed by the third place assigned to "consumer associations" (23%). Television is cited by 18% of respondents, with other media occupying a modest position (newspapers 9%, radio 4%). Of the political institutions, the EU comes in first place with 13%, national and regional governments occupy similar levels (12% et 11%). Finally, as can be regularly observed, businesses come last in this vote of confidence (1%).

**Table 15**

*% of trust in the member countries.*

	Sweden	Finland	The Netherlands	Denmark	Germany	Italy	Belgium	Austria	Luxembourg	Greece	France	Ireland	Portugal	UK	Spain	Average
Environmental associations	66	45	49	49	59	55	44	47	49	53	41	44	30	38	41	48
Scientists	61	44	46	44	34	33	42	30	31	41	37	27	23	33	26	35
Consumer associations	26	17	26	33	30	21	17	19	19	13	33	14	11	15	15	23
Television	12	23	18	11	24	7	27	20	16	17	18	20	26	18	14	18
European Union	6	10	13	6	9	33	16	8	16	15	9	11	23	5	14	13
National government	16	18	21	13	9	19	9	13	19	12	8	10	21	7	14	12
Teachers	21	16	16	15	11	9	14	14	9	18	8	17	11	16	7	12
Regional / local government	8	14	6	14	5	21	10	16	16	9	17	8	5	7	10	11
Political parties standing for environment	14	12	12	13	7	10	9	6	13	13	10	16	10	12	13	10
Newspapers	5	18	9	6	15	2	9	12	9	4	10	12	4	8	5	9
Family/neighbours, etc.	6	8	6	9	9	3	6	10	7	7	7	9	6	8	6	7
The radio	3	4	2	3	4	1	6	9	3	2	5	7	2	4	3	4
Trade Unions	3	3	4	3	1	2	2	3	4	4	2	3	2	2	1	2
Companies	1	2	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	0	2	1	4	1	1	1
Average	18	17	16	16	16	16	15	15	15	15	15	14	13	12	12	

In table 15, the different institutions and parties involved in the issues have been placed in descending order of percentages of "trust" answers (from top to bottom of the table) and, from the **on average** most trusting country to the **on average** least trusting country (from left to right of the table).

The order of average level of trust per country is as follows :

Sweden	18
Finland	17
The Netherlands	16
Denmark	16
Germany	16
Italy	16
Belgium	15
Austria	15
Luxembourg	15
Greece	15
France	15
Ireland	14
Portugal	13
UK	12
Spain	12

The North/South dimension that is expressed in this series of answers corresponds to a well-known phenomenon that we have encountered on several occasions here: overall, the northern European countries, which are more informed and more trusting, appear less worried about environmental problems. There are exceptions to this rule however: Great Britain, for example, comes in last place in terms of overall trust.

Table 15 also shows that the order in which trust is established, from the highest degree – associations – to the lowest degree – businesses – is reproduced quite consistently regardless of which Member States are considered. But some particular cases can be emphasised (shaded grey in table 14) :

- trust in the academic world (scientists, teachers) is particularly high in Sweden
- trust in consumer associations is stronger in Denmark, France and Germany
- the European Union and the regional government are more highly valued in Italy.

The degrees of trust in the institutions mentioned also vary according to socio-demographic and political characteristics as follows:

- the youngest place more trust in teachers, scientists and environmental protection associations (the discrepancies between the age category “15-24” and the “65s and over”, are + 13, +12 and + 10 respectively)
- more or less the same variations are evident according to age on completion of education : for example, 26% of those who did not continue their education beyond the age of 15 trust scientists compared to 42% of those who studied past the age of 20.
- finally, there is a massive difference in attitudes between left and right in terms of trust in environmental protection associations: among those who put themselves on the right (boxes 9 and 10 of the political scale), 40% trust those associations, compared to 59% on the left (boxes 1 and 2 of the political scale).

### 3.3. Environmental policies

**Table 16**

Q. 46. Which level do you think is the best for taking decisions about protecting the environment? (SHOW CARD – READ OUT – MAX. 2 ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

PROPOSITIONS	EU15
European Union	33
National government	30
Local government	27
United Nations (U.N.)	21
Regional government	18
DK	14
Others (SPONTANEOUS)	2

A third of Europeans see the European Union as "the best level for taking decisions about protecting the environment". The choice of "national government" (30%) is followed by local government (27%), then comes the United Nations, being chosen by 21% of the sample, and regional government (which is not, in fact, relevant for all the member countries) by 18%.

**Table 17**

*Choice of level of environmental governance in the Member States.*

	Belgium	Denmark	Germany	Greece	Italy	Spain	France	Ireland	Luxembourg	The Netherlands	Portugal	UK	Finland	Sweden	Spain	Average
European Union	43	39	38	30	42	35	28	28	40	52	35	15	24	34	22	33
National government	23	43	31	33	24	23	28	25	28	41	31	31	41	57	27	30
Local government	25	32	18	49	25	15	46	34	34	23	20	29	36	39	33	27
United Nations (U.N.)	14	25	25	10	17	16	19	16	25	27	16	25	18	35	10	21
Regional government	15	16	13	20	27	16	22	10	0	15	8	14	30	7	30	18
Others	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	5	1	0	2	1	1	2	2

This hierarchy of choice is not reproduced in the same way in all the Member States:

- the respondents from the Netherlands place more trust in the European Union (52%) ; the same is true, to a lesser extent, of the Belgians (43%) and Italians (42%)
- in Sweden and Denmark there is more trust in national government (57% and 43%)
- the Greeks and French choose local government more (49% and 46%).

On the other hand, hardly any significant variations in these choices can be seen on the basis of socio-demographic data. The only appreciable difference is that the most educated (education beyond the age of 20) favour the European level (41% compared to an average of 33%).

**Table 18**

*Q. 43. Roughly, how much current (NATIONALITY) legislation about the environment, do you think, originates from the European Union? (READ OUT – ONE ANSWER ONLY)*

COUNTRIES	None	Less than half	Half	More than half	All of it	DK
<b>B</b>	7	20	17	13	4	39
<b>DK</b>	2	25	29	27	2	16
<b>D WEST</b>	5	34	15	12	1	33
<b>D TOTAL</b>	5	33	14	12	2	34
<b>D OST</b>	5	31	12	12	2	38
<b>GR</b>	3	12	15	27	8	36
<b>E</b>	7	19	9	8	3	55
<b>F</b>	6	28	16	8	3	39
<b>IRL</b>	3	12	15	20	7	43
<b>I</b>	7	20	13	9	3	49
<b>L</b>	5	16	21	16	3	39
<b>NL</b>	3	32	19	19	4	23
<b>A</b>	4	26	18	10	2	40
<b>P</b>	5	13	12	9	3	57
<b>FIN</b>	1	28	28	24	4	16
<b>S</b>	4	38	24	19	2	14
<b>UK TOTAL</b>	3	17	15	23	5	38
<b>EU15</b>	5	24	15	13	3	40

Knowing "how much national legislation about the environment originates from the European Union" is not easy and it is not surprising to note that 40% of Europeans give no answer to this question. This "no answer" choice is even higher in Portugal (57%), Spain (55%) and Italy (49%).

If this first phenomenon is put to one side, it is interesting to compare the relative weight of two groups

- those who feel that environmental regulations originating from Europe account for zero or less than half

- and those who, conversely, think that these regulations account for half or more than half.

In the whole sample, these two groups are of more or less equal weight: 29% for the former compared to 31% for the latter. But the member countries do not assess these proportions in the same way and two very differentiated groups of countries emerge:

- the first assess the influence of European legislation as greater; this includes Greece, Denmark, Ireland and Finland
- the second, on the other hand, underestimates the influence of European legislation ; this includes, in particular, Germany, France and Spain.

Analysis of these answers according to socio-demographic characteristics again reveals the difficulty of the question since 50% of those who did not continue their education beyond the age of 15 give no answer (compared to 29% of those who continued beyond the age 20). It is also noted that the tendency to underestimate the influence of European legislation tends to decrease slightly the higher the level of education.

**Table 19**

Q. 47. *In your opinion, which of the following would make it possible to most effectively solve environmental problems? (SHOW CARD – READ OUT – MAX. 3 ANSWERS POSSIBLE)*

PROPOSITIONS	EU15
Making national/European Union regulations stricter, with heavy fines for offenders	48
Raising general environmental awareness	45
Better enforcement of existing environmental legislation	40
Only taxing those who cause environmental problems	36
Giving environmental NGOs/associations seeking to protect the environment more say in decisions about protecting the environment	24
Higher financial incentives to industry, commerce and to citizens	14
DK	7
Making everyone pay more in taxes, prices, etc. to cover environmental costs	6
Relying on initiatives from industry, farmers, etc.	6
Others (SPONTANEOUS)	1
None of these (SPONTANEOUS)	0

The persons interviewed were offered a range of solutions which "could most effectively solve the environmental problems" and asked to select three (out of eight) of them. The hierarchy of the choices shows that the preference for constraint (stricter regulations) is selected by 48% of the sample while, conversely, the idea of persuasion (increasing "general environmental awareness") groups together a similar proportion (45%). But the regulative solution is reinforced by the option consisting of "better enforcement of existing environmental legislation" (40%) and by the desire to "tax only those who cause environmental problems" (36%).

**Table 20**

*Better solutions for solving environmental problems in the Member States.*

	Belgium	Denmark	Germany	Greece	Italy	Spain	France	Ireland	Luxembourg	The Netherlands	Portugal	UK	Finland	Sweden	Austria	Total
Making regulations stricter	42	48	52	62	49	47	44	47	50	61	44	41	41	57	42	48
Raising general awareness	46	55	46	35	47	32	47	43	51	48	34	45	53	74	40	45
To apply the legislation	38	50	51	41	33	27	36	42	30	48	32	39	46	52	41	40
Taxing those who cause environmental problems	43	35	35	29	38	30	49	36	28	43	22	30	31	25	36	36
To imply NGOs	11	24	28	24	33	26	21	23	27	10	23	18	24	23	26	24
Financial incentives	17	16	22	10	8	7	11	14	12	13	9	19	22	16	16	14
Taxes for everyone	5	6	6	12	4	6	5	7	7	8	10	7	6	5	12	6
Relying on industries	12	4	3	4	4	5	8	7	7	5	11	6	9	4	10	6



The choice of these different solutions within the Member States varies according to the following reasoning:

- Greece, the Netherlands and Sweden favour "stricter regulations" (62%, 61% and 57%), more than other countries do
- but the Swedes also more often select the idea of "raising general environmental awareness" (74% compared to an average of 40%)
- in France, there is support for the idea of applying the "polluter pays" principle (49% compared to an average of 36%)
- finally, the idea of "giving environmental NGOs more say", which is selected by only 24% of all Europeans, is chosen by 33% of Italians.

The differences observed according to socio-demographic variables are quite limited. It is evident, however, that the more educated (education beyond the age of 20) tend to favour more often the solution of persuasion since 50% of them are in favour of the principle of "raising environmental awareness" compared to 36% among those who did not pursue their education beyond the age of 15.

It is also evident that 30% of those who put themselves on the left of the political scale (positions 1 and 2) prefer the idea of "giving environmental NGOs more say" compared to 18% for those who put themselves on the right (positions 9 and 10).

**Table 21**

*Q. 48. Do you feel that you know more about environmental problems or environmental solutions? (READ OUT – ONE ANSWER ONLY)*

<b>COUNTRIES</b>	<b>Environmental problems</b>	<b>Environmental solutions</b>	<b>DK</b>
<b>B</b>	61	12	27
<b>DK</b>	84	4	12
<b>D WEST</b>	78	6	17
<b>D TOTAL</b>	78	6	17
<b>D OST</b>	79	5	16
<b>GR</b>	81	7	12
<b>E</b>	69	8	23
<b>F</b>	69	8	23
<b>IRL</b>	67	6	27
<b>I</b>	72	6	22
<b>L</b>	88	6	7
<b>NL</b>	74	10	16
<b>A</b>	74	6	20
<b>P</b>	66	6	28
<b>FIN</b>	86	6	8
<b>S</b>	88	4	7
<b>UK TOTAL</b>	73	5	22
<b>EU15</b>	73	7	20

The feeling of being more aware of "environmental problems" than solutions is very predominant as it concerns around three-quarters of the sample (73%) compared to a very small minority (7%) who think they "know the solutions".

The only feature that distinguishes the different member countries here is their tendency to acknowledge an ability to answer this question: in Portugal and Ireland, for example, more than a quarter of those asked assume no position (28% and 27% respectively of "no answer" choices).

Analysis of the answers according to socio-demographic variables confirms the difficulty that some respondents experience in deciding where they stand regarding this question: 27% of those who completed their education at the age of 15 give no answer. For the remainder, the feeling of being more aware of "environmental problems" than "solutions" is very widespread.

## **APPENDICES**

## English questionnaire

Q. 37. When people talk about "environment", which of the following do you think of first?  
(SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Pollution in towns and cities .....	1 (447 – 448)
Green and pleasant landscapes .....	2
Earthquakes, floods and other natural disasters.....	3
Protecting nature .....	4
The state of the environment our children will inherit.....	5
The quality of life where I live .....	6
The responsibility of the individuals for improving the environment .....	7
Using up natural resources to provide a comfortable way of life .....	8
None of these (SPONTANEOUS) .....	9
DK .....	10

EB58.0 – NEW

Q. 38. Which of these opinions comes closest to yours? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Human activity is currently in harmony with the environment.....	1 (449)
The deterioration of the environment can be halted by changing our way of life...	2
Human activity can lead to irretrievable damage to the environment .....	3
None of these (SPONTANEOUS).....	4
DK .....	5

EB58.0 – NEW

Q. 39. At present, are you very worried, fairly worried, not very worried or not at all worried about the following topics?  
(SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

	READ OUT	VERY WORRIED	FAIRLY WORRIED	NOT VERY WORRIED	NOT AT ALL WORRIED	DK
1	Destruction of the ozone layer	1	2	3	4	5 (450)
2	Climate change	1	2	3	4	5 (451)
3	Acid rain	1	2	3	4	5 (452)
4	The extinction of animals and plants species	1	2	3	4	5 (453)
5	The progressive elimination of tropical rain forests	1	2	3	4	5 (454)
6	Hunting and shooting	1	2	3	4	5 (455)
7	Natural disasters	1	2	3	4	5 (456)
8	Disasters caused by industrial activities	1	2	3	4	5 (457)
9	Pollution of tap water	1	2	3	4	5 (458)
10	Pollution of the seas and coasts	1	2	3	4	5 (459)
11	Pollution of rivers and lakes	1	2	3	4	5 (460)
12	Pollution of underground water	1	2	3	4	5 (461)
13	Pollution from farming	1	2	3	4	5 (462)
14	Damage caused by tourism	1	2	3	4	5 (463)
15	The use of genetically modified organisms	1	2	3	4	5 (464)
16	The use of pesticides	1	2	3	4	5 (465)
17	The use of other chemical products	1	2	3	4	5 (466)
18	Air pollution	1	2	3	4	5 (467)
19	Nuclear power and radioactive waste	1	2	3	4	5 (468)
20	Noise	1	2	3	4	5 (469)
21	Urban problems (traffic, public transport, green spaces, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5 (470)
22	Using up natural resources that cannot be easily replaced	1	2	3	4	5 (471)
23	Environmentally friendly consumption habits	1	2	3	4	5 (472)
24	Domestic and urban waste management	1	2	3	4	5 (473)
25	Industrial waste management	1	2	3	4	5 (474)

EB58.0 - NEW

Q. 40. For each of these topics, can you tell me if you feel very well, fairly well, fairly badly or very badly informed?  
(SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

	READ OUT	VERY WELL	FAIRLY WELL	FAIRLY BADLY	VERY BADLY	DK
1	Destruction of the ozone layer	1	2	3	4	5 (475)
2	Climate change	1	2	3	4	5 (476)
3	Acid rain	1	2	3	4	5 (477)
4	The extinction of animals and plant species	1	2	3	4	5 (478)
5	The progressive elimination of tropical rain forests	1	2	3	4	5 (479)
6	Hunting and shooting	1	2	3	4	5 (480)
7	Natural disasters	1	2	3	4	5 (481)
8	Disasters caused by industrial activities	1	2	3	4	5 (482)
9	Pollution of tap water	1	2	3	4	5 (483)
10	Pollution of the seas and coasts	1	2	3	4	5 (484)
11	Pollution of rivers and lakes	1	2	3	4	5 (485)
12	Pollution of underground water	1	2	3	4	5 (486)
13	Pollution from farming	1	2	3	4	5 (487)
14	Damage caused by tourism	1	2	3	4	5 (488)
15	The use of genetically modified organisms	1	2	3	4	5 (489)
16	The use of pesticides	1	2	3	4	5 (490)
17	The use of other chemicals products	1	2	3	4	5 (491)
18	Air pollution	1	2	3	4	5 (492)
19	Nuclear power and radioactive waste	1	2	3	4	5 (493)
20	Noise	1	2	3	4	5 (494)
21	Urban problems (traffic, public transport, green spaces, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5 (495)
22	Using up natural resources that cannot be easily replaced	1	2	3	4	5 (496)
23	Environmentally friendly consumption habits	1	2	3	4	5 (497)
24	Domestic and urban waste management	1	2	3	4	5 (498)
25	Industrial waste management	1	2	3	4	5 (499)

EB58.0 - NEW

Q. 41. Which of these opinions comes closest to yours? (READ OUT – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

The environment is an issue beyond my control as an individual .....	1 (500)
My actions can make a real difference to the environment .....	2
None of these (SPONTANEOUS).....	3
DK .....	4

EB58.0 - NEW

Q. 42. Which of these statements reflects best your personal situation?  
(SHOW CARD - READ - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

I am making an effort to take care of the environment, and it is having an impact .....	1 (501)
I am making an effort to take care of the environment, but it will only have an impact if others also make an effort .....	2
I am not making an effort to take care of the environment because it doesn't have any impact as long as others do not make an effort.....	3
I do not know what to do to take care of the environment .....	4
I don't care about environmental issues (SPONTANEOUS).....	5
None of these (SPONTANEOUS).....	6
DK .....	7

EB58.0 – NEW

Q. 43. Roughly, how much current (NATIONALITY) legislation about the environment, do you think,  
originates from the European Union? (READ OUT – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

None .....	1 (502)
Less than half .....	2
Half.....	3
More than half .....	4
All of it .....	5
DK .....	6

EB58.0 - NEW

Q. 44. Which are your three main sources of information about the environment?  
(SHOW CARD - READ OUT- MAX. 3 ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

Newspapers .....	1, (503 – 518)
Magazines .....	2,
Television.....	3,
The radio .....	4,
Films, documentaries.....	5,
Conversations with relatives/family/friends/neighbours/colleagues .....	6,
Books .....	7,
The Internet .....	8,
Publications/brochures/information material .....	9,
Events (conferences, fairs/exhibitions, festivals, etc.) .....	10,
Public authorities.....	11,
School/educational institutions .....	12,
Specialist environmental protection associations or charities (Greenpeace, etc.).....	13,
Others (SPONTANEOUS).....	14,
I am not interested in environment (SPONTANEOUS).....	15,
DK .....	16,

EB58.0 – NEW

Q. 45. Who do you trust when it comes to environmental issues?  
(SHOW CARD - READ OUT - MAX. 3 ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

National government .....	1, (519 – 535)
Regional / local government .....	2,
European Union .....	3,
Companies .....	4,
Trade Unions .....	5,
Political parties standing for environment (Greens, etc.).....	6,
Environmental protection associations .....	7,
Consumer associations and others citizens' organisations .....	8,
Scientists .....	9,
Teachers at school or university .....	10,
Family/neighbours/friends/colleagues .....	11,
Television.....	12,
The radio.....	13,
Newspapers.....	14,
Other (SPONTANEOUS).....	15,
None of them (SPONTANEOUS).....	16,
DK.....	17,

EB58.0 - NEW



Q. 46. Which level do you think is the best for taking decisions about protecting the environment?  
(SHOW CARD – READ OUT – MAX. 2 ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

Local government .....	1, (536 – 542)
Regional government .....	2,
National government .....	3,
European Union .....	4,
United Nations (U.N.) .....	5,
Others (SPONTANEOUS) .....	6,
DK .....	7,

EB58.0 - NEW

Q. 47. In your opinion, which of the following would make it possible to most effectively solve environmental problems?  
(SHOW CARD – READ OUT – MAX. 3 ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

Making national/European Union regulations stricter, with heavy fines for offenders....	1, (543 – 553)
Better enforcement of existing environmental legislation .....	2,
Making everyone pay more in taxes, prices, etc. to cover environmental costs.....	3,
Only taxing those who cause environmental problems .....	4,
Relying on initiatives from industry, farmers, etc. ....	5,
Giving environmental NGOs/associations seeking to protect the environment more say in decisions about protecting the environment .....	6,
Higher financial incentives to industry, commerce and to citizens .....	7,
Raising general environmental awareness .....	8,
None of these (SPONTANEOUS).....	9,
Others (SPONTANEOUS).....	10,
DK .....	11,

EB58.0 – NEW

Q. 48. Do you feel that you know more about environmental problems or environmental solutions?  
(READ OUT – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Environmental problems .....	1 (554)
Environmental solutions .....	2
DK .....	3

EB58.0 - NEW

## STANDARD EUROBAROMETER 58.0 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between 1 September 2002 and 7 October 2002, the European Opinion Research Group, a consortium of Market and Public Opinion Research agencies, made out of INRA in Belgium – I.C.O. and GfK Worldwide, carried out wave 58.0 of the standard Eurobarometer, on request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General Press and Communication, Opinion Polls.

The Standard EUROBAROMETER 58.0 covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, aged 15 years and over, resident in each of the Member States. The basic sample design applied in all Member States is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each EU 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.

For doing so, the 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 Member States according to the EUROSTAT NUTS 2 (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective EU-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 were selected as every N<sup>th</sup> address by standard random route procedures, from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn, at random. All interviews were face-to-face in people's home and in the appropriate national language.

COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	FIELDWORK DATES	POPULATION 15+ (x 000)
Belgium	INRA BELGIUM	1074	2/9 – 4/10	8,326
Denmark	GfK DENMARK	1000	1/9 – 4/10	4,338
Germany(East)	INRA DEUTSCHLAND	1009	1/9 – 18/9	13,028
Germany(West)	INRA DEUTSCHLAND	1036	1/9 – 19/9	55,782
Greece	MARKET ANALYSIS	1001	2/9 – 2/10	8,793
Spain	INRA ESPAÑA	1000	3/9 – 4/10	33,024
France	CSA-TMO	1004	2/9 – 24/9	46,945
Ireland	LANSDOWNE Market Research	999	3/9 – 30/9	2,980
Italy	INRA Demoskopoea	992	5/9 – 30/9	49,017
Luxembourg	ILRes	599	4/9 – 30/9	364
The Netherlands	INTOMART	998	1/9 – 2/10	12,705
Austria	SPECTRA	1008	3/9 – 25/9	6,668
Portugal	METRIS	1000	3/9 – 29/9	8,217
Finland	MDC MARKETING RESEARCH	1000	2/9 – 1/10	4,165
Sweden	GfK SVERIGE	1000	1/9 – 7/10	7,183
Great Britain	MARTIN HAMBLIN LTD	1014	2/9 – 4/10	46,077
Northern Ireland	ULSTER MARKETING SURVEYS	306	4/9 – 23/9	1,273
	TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	16067		

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. For all EU member-countries a national weighting procedure, using marginal and intercellular weighting, was carried out based on this Universe description. As such in all countries, minimum gender, age, region NUTS 2 were introduced in the iteration procedure. For international weighting (i.e. EU averages), INRA (EUROPE) applies the official population figures as provided by EUROSTAT in the Regional Statistics Yearbook (data for 1997). The total population figures for input in this post-weighting procedure are listed above.

The results of the Eurobarometer studies are reported in the form of tables, datafiles and analyses. Per question a table of results is given with the full question text in English, French and German. The results are expressed as a percentage of the total. The results of the Eurobarometer surveys are analysed and made available through the Directorate-General Press and Communication, Opinion Polls of the European Commission, rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels. The results are published on the Internet server of the European Commission: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/epo>. All Eurobarometer datafiles are stored at the Zentral Archiv (Universität Köln, Bachemer Strasse, 40, D-50869 Köln-Lindenthal), available through the CESSDA Database <http://www.nsd.uib.no/cessda/europe.html>. They are at the disposal of all institutes members of the European Consortium for Political Research (Essex), of the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (Michigan) and of all those interested in social science research.

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%	± 2.5%	± 2.7%	± 3.0%	± 3.1%

**STANDARD EUROBAROMETER 58.0  
CO-OPERATING AGENCIES AND RESEARCH EXECUTIVES**

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