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Optimism about the future of the EU is on the rise, according to latest Eurobarometer surveys

Only a year after the UK voted to leave the European Union, optimism about the future of the EU is increasing and trust in the EU is now at its highest level since 2010. In addition, close to half of Europeans are now optimistic about the state of their national economy. Respondents were also asked about their views on current challenges faced by the EU – terrorism has overtaken immigration as the major challenge felt by citizens, followed by the economic situation, the state of Member States' public finances, unemployment and crime. For the first time, 11 non-EU countries were also polled and a majority of respondents say they have a positive view of the EU. The two surveys, the "[Spring 2017 – Standard Eurobarometer](#)" and the "Flash Eurobarometer '[Future of Europe – Views from outside the EU](#)'", were conducted through face-to-face interviews – a total of 33,180 people were interviewed across the EU Member States and in the candidate countries for the Standard Eurobarometer – and through telephone interviews – a total of 11,035 people were interviewed in 11 non-EU countries for the Eurobarometer on views from outside the EU. More information is available in the press release [online](#).
(For more information: Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382)

State aid: Commission approves prolongation of the Polish resolution scheme for cooperative and small commercial banks

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, the prolongation of the Polish resolution scheme for twelve months. The scheme was initially [approved in December 2016](#). The measure will continue to be available for cooperative banks and small commercial banks with total assets below €3 billion, only if they are found to be in distress by the competent national authorities. The objective of the scheme is to facilitate the work of the Polish resolution authorities, should a concrete case and need arise for it. The Commission found the prolongation of the scheme to be in line with EU State aid rules, in particular the [2013 Banking Communication](#) and EU banking rules. More information will be available on the Commission's

[competition](#) website in the public [case register](#) under the case number SA.48302 once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

State aid: Commission approves prolongation of Polish credit union liquidation scheme

The European Commission has authorised, under EU State aid rules, the seventh prolongation of the Polish credit union liquidation scheme for twelve months. The measure will continue to be available for credit unions that are member-owned entities and provide loans, savings accounts and payment services only to their membership. Credit unions fall outside the scope of the bank resolution regime in Poland. The Commission found the prolongation of the scheme to be in line with EU State aid rules, in particular its [2013 Banking Communication](#). This is because it is well targeted, proportionate and limited in time and scope. The scheme was initially [approved in February 2014](#) and has been prolonged several times since then, the last time in [March 2017](#). More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website in the public [case register](#) under the case number SA.48256 once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

State aid: Commission approves the re-introduction of the Danish resolution scheme for small banks

The European Commission has authorised, under EU State aid rules, a Danish resolution scheme for small banks with total assets below €3 billion. It is open to banks that would be found to be in distress by the competent national authorities. The objective of the scheme is to facilitate the work of the Danish resolution authorities to wind up a small bank should a concrete case and need arise for it. The Commission found the notified scheme compatible with EU State aid rules, in particular the [2013 Banking Communication](#), and EU banking rules. The Commission initially approved the scheme in [September 2010](#). It has been prolonged and amended several times since then until December 2015. Today's authorisation is granted for twelve months. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website in the public [case register](#) under the case number SA. 44031 once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

Mergers: Commission clears creation of joint-venture between ChemChina and AKC

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control by China National Chemical Corporation

(ChemChina) of China, and Asahi Kasei Corporation (AKC) of Japan, over two newly created companies constituting a joint venture. The joint venture will be active in the research, development, production, marketing, and sale of a number of chemical products in China. ChemChina is active worldwide in the production of a wide range of chemical products. AKC is active worldwide in the production of fibres, chemical products, electronics materials, pharmaceutical products, medical devices and housing. The Commission concluded that the transaction would raise no competition concerns because the joint venture has no actual or foreseen activities in the European Economic Area. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#) under the case number [M.8422](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Eurostat: Les prix à la production industrielle en baisse de 0,1% dans la zone euro

En juin 2017 par rapport à mai 2017, les prix à la production industrielle ont diminué de 0,1% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et de 0,2% dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En mai 2017, les prix avaient reculé de 0,3% dans la zone euro et de 0,4% dans l'UE28. En juin 2017 par rapport à juin 2016, les prix à la production industrielle ont progressé de 2,5% dans la zone euro et de 2,6% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (For more information: Vanessa Mock – Tel.: +32 229 56194; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229 80379)

[Upcoming events](#) of the European Commission (ex-Top News)

June 2017 compared with May 2017 – Industrial producer prices down by 0.1% in euro area – Down by 0.2% in EU28

In June 2017, compared with May 2017, industrial producer prices fell by 0.1% in the **euro area** (EA19) and by 0.2% in the **EU28**, according to estimates from **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. In May 2017 prices decreased by 0.3% in the **euro area** and by 0.4% in the **EU28**.

[Full text available on EUROSTAT website](#)

A European spring? Latest Standard Eurobarometer shows Optimism is on the rise

Close to a majority of Europeans are now also optimistic about the state of their national economy. Trust in the European Union is growing – it is at its highest level since 2010, and support for the euro is greater than it has been since 2004. Moreover, a majority of respondents, from eleven non-EU countries polled for the first time, say they have a positive view of the EU. These are some of the key results from the latest Standard Eurobarometer survey published today with the Flash Eurobarometer survey “Future of Europe – Views from outside the EU”.

I Optimism about the future of the European Union and the state of national economies

The future of the European Union: most Europeans are optimistic and their trust in the EU institutions is growing

A majority of Europeans (56%) are optimistic about the future of the EU – an increase of six percentage points compared to autumn 2016. The most significant increases can be observed in France (55%, +14 points since last Autumn), Denmark (70%, +13 points) and Portugal (64%, +10 points).

Trust in the EU continues to be on the rise and stands at 42% (up from 36% in autumn 2016 and 32% in autumn 2015). It has increased most strongly in France (41%, +15 points), in Denmark (56%, +11 points) and in Estonia (55%, +11 points). It has also increased by 10 points in Germany, reaching 47%.

As in the two previous surveys of spring and autumn 2016, the levels of trust in national parliaments and governments have also increased to 36% and 37% respectively, but remain below the levels of trust in the EU.

40% of Europeans have a **positive image of the EU** (+5 points since autumn 2016) with the number of respondents with a positive image increasing in 24 Member States, in particular in France (40%, +11 points), Denmark (42%, +10 points) and Luxembourg (57%, +10 points).

Finally, 68% of Europeans **feel they are citizens of the EU**, which is the highest level ever shown by this indicator.

The economy: more positive feelings and strong support for the euro

Close to half of Europeans think that the **current situation of their national economy** is ‘good’ (46%, +5 percentage points since autumn 2016). This proportion has increased significantly in recent years (+20 points since

spring 2013; +26 points since spring 2009).

Although large differences remain between Member States, positive assessments of the situation of national economies are gaining ground in 22 Member States, in particular in Finland (59%, +19 points), Portugal (33%, +18 points), Belgium (60%, +11 points) and Hungary (41%, +11 points).

In the euro area, close to three-quarters of respondents support the euro (73%, +3 points), which is the highest score reached since autumn 2004. 80% of respondents or more support the euro in six countries: Slovakia, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Slovenia and Luxembourg.

II For the first time, terrorism is seen as the major challenge facing the EU

Terrorism is now on top of the issues that citizens cite when it comes to challenges that the EU is currently facing (44%, +12 percentage points since autumn 2016). **Immigration**, which has been a top concern since spring 2015, is now the second most frequently cited challenge (38%, -7 points). It is well ahead of **the economic situation** (18%, -2 points), **the state of Member States' public finances** (17%, unchanged) and **unemployment** (15%, -1 points). Terrorism is the number one concern for the EU in 21 Member States while this was the case in one country only in autumn 2016. Terrorism and immigration are mentioned as the top challenges in all countries except for Portugal and Sweden.

At the national level, the main concerns remain unemployment (29%, -2 points) and immigration (22%, -4 points) although both are declining. Health and social security are now in the third place (20%, +2 points), followed by terrorism for which the increase is noticeable (19%, +5 points). The economic situation, which was the main concern at the national level in autumn 2011, is now in fifth place (16%, -3 points).

III Future of Europe – Views from outside the EU survey

For the first time, the Eurobarometer survey assessed the image of the European Union in eleven non-EU countries^[1]. These countries represent 49% of the world population and 61% of global GDP. In the three most populated of these countries (China, India and the USA), at least three quarters of respondents have a positive view of the EU.

Respondents in most of the countries covered by the survey have a positive view of the EU: 94% in Brazil, 84% in China, 83% in India, 76% in Japan, 79% in Canada, 75% in the USA, 67% in Australia and 54% in Turkey. At the same time respondents in countries closer to the EU (Russia, Norway and Switzerland) tend to have mixed feelings (between 43% and 46% have a positive view of the EU).

The survey also shows that **the EU is globally perceived as “a place of stability in a troubled world”** in the countries polled – with important differences, from 82% in India thinking that way to 49% in Turkey – but this is not the case in Russia where only 33% share this view and 61% the opposite.

Background

The “Spring 2017 – Standard Eurobarometer” (EB 87) was conducted through face-to-face interviews between 20 and 30 May 2017. A total of 33,180 people were interviewed across the EU Member States and in the candidate countries^[2].

The Flash Eurobarometer 450 “Future of Europe – Views from outside the EU” was conducted through telephone interviews between 20 and 25 February 2017. A total of 11,035 people were interviewed in 11 non-EU countries.

The Standard Eurobarometer ‘First results report’ published today outlines Europeans’ attitudes towards the EU, as well as citizens’ main concerns and perceptions of the economic situation.

For More Information

– [Standard Eurobarometer 87](#)

– The report for the Flash Eurobarometer survey 450 [“Future of Europe – Views from outside the EU”](#)

^[1] Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America

^[2] The 28 European Union (EU) Member States, five candidate countries (the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania) and the Turkish Cypriot Community in the part of the country that is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus.

[2017](#)

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