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## EUROPEANS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT WHAT 1983 WILL HOLD

Will 1983 be a better or a worse year than 1982? Most Europeans think it will be worse, according to a recent survey of public opinion in the 10-nation European Community (EC). Continuing the trend recorded in recent years, pessimists in their assessments of what the new year will hold (38 percent) outnumbered optimists (25 percent) among the 9,689 Europeans surveyed for the latest edition of Euro-Barometer, a public opinion study conducted twice each year for the European Communities Commission.

The new Euro-Barometer survey revealed that most Europeans expect the climate for industry to deteriorate in 1983 with an upsurge in labor strikes and industrial disputes. The same pessimism was reflected in expectations for international relations this year. However, a smaller majority now expects trouble on the international scene than they did a year ago. In the longer term view, the number of Europeans who think that there is a probability of world war within the next 20 years fell to 18 percent, compared with 24 percent at the end of 1981 and 34 percent at the end of 1980. The Irish (25 percent) are on the average a little more apprehensive about the threat of world war than other Europeans, while the Greeks (9 percent) and the Danes (10 percent) are far less worried about that prospect.

On the economic front, the survey revealed that 38 percent of the interviewees feel that their household financial situation is worse now than it was twelve months earlier (compared with 15 percent who made the opposite claim), while 62 percent think that the general economic situation of their country has deteriorated (compared with 14 percent who think it has improved).

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How happy are Europeans? The recent findings show that 18 percent surveyed claimed to be "very happy", 59 percent to be "fairly happy" and 21 percent "not too happy". The Dutch are well in the lead in the happiness sweepstakes (with 44 percent claiming to be "very happy"). The Greeks and Italians are the least pleased with their lots, with only 10 percent and 9 percent, respectively, claiming to be "very happy".

As for their views on the European Community, there is still vague consensus in favor of the unification of Western Europe: an average of 70 percent "for" and 14 percent "against". A majority is in favor of a united Europe in all ten member states, even in Denmark and the UK, where sentiments ran most strongly against European unity. However, this consensus has declined almost everywhere since 1973, particularly in Germany.

Ten years ago the Germans were far more ardent supporters of unification than the French; today the opposite is true. However, in both these countries seven or eight out of every ten persons surveyed expressed "broad support" for efforts being made to unify Western Europe. When expressions of broad support for European unity were tested with more probing questions, much of this support proved rather weak. For example, only 33 percent of Europeans would be prepared to make a personal sacrifice, such as paying a little more tax, to help another country through economic difficulties; 54 percent rejected this idea completely, with the British the most strongly opposed.

The interest shown in the Community by citizens of Spain and Portugal, the EC's newest prospective members, was found to be slight overall. The level of interest was somewhat higher in Spain than in Portugal, but has tended to decline in both places as Community membership negotiations with the two countries has dragged on. Six Spaniards out of ten (59 percent) and one Portuguese in three (31 percent) support European unification and a slightly smaller proportion (48 percent of Spaniards and 24 percent of Portuguese) think that Community membership would be a good thing for their country.

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