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No. 21/1983  
November 28, 1983

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## YOUNG EUROPEANS EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON POLITICS, VALUES AND PERSONAL LIVES

Young Europeans are most afraid of unemployment and most hopeful about science and technology. They show little involvement in European affairs, and almost half of them are dissatisfied with the way democracy works in their country. Their friendships represent the most satisfactory aspect of their lives.

Those are among the findings of a 1982 survey of 3,867 young people in the 10 member states of the European Community, as described in a new report by the Commission of the European Communities. Politically, the 15- to 24-year-olds interviewed were slightly to the left of their elders. But on many issues, the survey found, younger and older Europeans had quite similar viewpoints. (Adults were also interviewed to provide a basis of comparison.)

On a question about satisfaction with life, for example, nationality was a stronger influence than age. About 80 percent in all age groups said they were fairly or very satisfied with life. But the average level of satisfaction ranged from 2.69 (on a four-point index) in Greece to 3.52 in Denmark.

At the time of the survey, 41 million Europeans were in the 15-24 age group. Almost one-third were employed, while 44 percent were in school, 6 percent were in job training and 11 percent were unemployed and seeking work.

Young Europeans expressed their concern about employment in several ways. Fifty-one percent, for example, thought it was possible or very likely they would fail to find a job they needed during the next two years. Almost half of those who were unemployed said there were "absolutely no jobs available in my area," while 20 percent said there were no jobs that suited their qualifications. Many jobhunters - 29 percent - said they had been seeking work for more than a year.

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Furthermore, when asked to evaluate the main areas of their lives, young people expressed the least satisfaction with job and career prospects. On a five-point index, the average level of satisfaction for that area was 3.35. Most satisfactory were friendships (4.38) and relationships with parents (4.21), followed by housing (3.96), love/romance (3.94) and holidays and leisure activities (3.78).

The top three fears of young people, which paralleled those of older Europeans, were an increase in unemployment because of automation, a rise in crime and terrorism and the despoiling of natural life. Like their elders, they were least worried about a reduction in their country's influence, or a reduction in Europe's influence.

Seventy percent of the young Europeans interviewed lived with their parents, 13 percent with a spouse, 5 percent with a girlfriend or boyfriend, 3 percent with roommates and 5 percent alone.

Survey participants also expressed views on the following subjects:

**HOPES.** Scientific and technological developments offer the most hope for the future, young people said. They also gave high rankings to national understanding and goodwill, and prospects for the standard of living. They attached the least importance to relations between local and national governments and the unification of Europe.

**POLITICS.** Forty-four percent of young people said they were fairly or very satisfied by the way democracy works in their country, but the level of satisfaction varied by nationality. Italians were the least satisfied, registering 1.89 on a four-point index, while the Danes were the most satisfied (2.72). Other levels of satisfaction were Belgium, 2.38; France, 2.42; Greece, 2.51; Netherlands, 2.53; United Kingdom, 2.57; Ireland 2.60; Luxembourg, 2.63; Germany, 2.65.

Feelings of national pride were not as prominent among young people as among adults. Only 26 percent of young Europeans said they were very proud of their nationality, compared with 40 percent of adults. The difference was particularly pronounced in Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Greece. In most countries, feelings of national pride and satisfaction with democracy were strongly correlated.

Young people were only slightly more likely than their elders to favor revolutionary action to change society - 8 percent, compared with 4 percent. Sixty-one percent supported gradual reforms, while 22 percent agreed that society must be "valiantly defended against subversive forces." Young Europeans were somewhat less likely than adults to be involved in a political party (29 percent, compared with 33 percent), but they showed stronger support for antiwar and environmental movements. Forty-eight

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percent of young people, for example, said they strongly approved of antiwar movements, compared with 39 percent of all Europeans.

VALUES. Fewer young people (49 percent) than adults (66 percent) described themselves as religious. World peace was the cause the most young people (65 percent) said they would support, even if it required personal sacrifices. Other causes that attracted a relatively high level of support were human rights (51 percent) and freedom of the individual (44 percent). Low-ranking causes were the unification of Europe (8 percent), religious faith (10 percent) and defense of one's country (18 percent).

ATTITUDES TOWARD EUROPE. A majority of young people said they favored efforts to unify Western Europe and believed their country's membership in the European Community was a good thing, but 44 percent said they would be indifferent if the Community were "scrapped." In general, young people are less interested in European problems than adults, the survey found. Many - 71 percent - said they were not sufficiently informed about the European Community. That suggests that an information campaign is in order, the report on the survey states.

Copies of The Young Europeans are available free from the European Community Information Service, 2100 M Street, N.W., Suite 707, Washington, D.C. 20037; (202) 862-9500.

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